

Together We



RISE

Wellness & Resilience Framework™

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Tanager

Welcome to RISE

You hold stories all day.
You sit across from trauma.
You navigate behaviors that are really nervous systems in survival.
You make decisions inside systems stretched thin.
You are asked to be steady when others cannot be.

RISE is for you.

It was born at the intersection of science, story, and soul.
It grew from one persistent question:

What helps people rise — even after hardship?

For over a decade, I listened.
Studied trauma and attachment.
Sat with those struggling —
and the adults who love and lead them.

I searched not only for what wounds us,
but for what heals us.

The RISE Framework emerged from that work.
It is grounded in four beliefs:

- Everyone has greatness within them.
- We all long to be our best selves.
- The world is deeply connected.
- Every moment offers a chance to build resilience and wellness.

Together We RISE is not just a book. It is a framework for being.

Let this small booklet be a doorway. An invitation.

So that, together, we can RISE.

RISE Wellness & Resilience Framework

The RISE Framework is built around four interconnected domains that nurture both the inner and outer work of resilience.

In this framework, RISE is being used as an acronym. Together, they form a pathway toward wellbeing and resilience that honors the whole person.

	Foundations	<p>Theories informing the RISE Wellness and Resilience Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neuroscience • Attachment Theory • Family Systems • Restorative Practices
R	Relationships	<p>The elements for engaging in authentic relationships rooted in emotional intelligence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences • The You Intervention • Characteristics
I	Indicators of Wellbeing	<p>The conditions for fostering a sense of psychological wellness and resilience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Connection and Belonging • Meaning and Purpose • Efficacy
S	Social & Emotional Development	<p>The skills for developing regulatory interactions with self, others, and the world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Affect Management • Relational Rhythms • Healthy Choices
E	Enhancements	<p>The experiences that integrate the whole person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body • Mind • Spirit



A Story: The Phone Call

The phone rang.
My dad was hysterical.

Third OWI. Sitting in the car. Police behind him.
He needed me to fix it.

My body moved before my mind could think.
Keys. Purse. Out the door.

Planning. Plotting. Strategizing.
Heart pounding.
Urgency in my fumes.

I was already halfway there when I realized what I was doing.

I was performing a role I had carried since childhood —
the stabilizer,
the rescuer,
the one who fixes chaos.
The one who fights the storm.

But I had a baby at home.
A husband.
A life I had built.

I pulled the car over.

My hands were shaking.

For the first time, a different
thought surfaced:

I can't save him.

With tears in my eyes, I turned the car around.



When the Past Hijacks the Present

Our nervous systems are brilliant record keepers.

Long before we have language, we have adaptation.
Before insight, we have survival.

The nervous system encodes roles designed to keep us safe —
the disrupter, the peacekeeper, the achiever, the saboteur,
the invisible one, the fighter, the caretaker.

What begins as armor can quietly become identity. In moments of
activation, we do not choose — we repeat.

The body moves faster than cognition. The past overlays the present.
Urgency rises. Muscles tighten. Breath shortens. Perspective narrows.

Dysregulation feels like emergency. Like intensity is truth.

This is not weakness. It is wiring.

And it is what happens inside the bodies of those we support.
Behavior is often a nervous system trying to survive.
Externalization. Shutdown. Defiance. Withdrawal.
Not character flaws —
adaptive responses shaped by stress and experience.

Here is the turning point:
Healing begins when we learn to pause.

When we RISE, we begin with relationships.
We cultivate the indicators of wellbeing.
We strengthen social and emotional capacity.
We nurture and enhance.

This is where healing and transformation meet — through your
presence.

Be a bright place. You matter more than you know.



RISE Invitation

Before your next session or shift.
Before your next meeting.
Before you cross the threshold.

Pause.

Place both feet on the floor.
Let your back be supported.
Take one slow breath in. And a longer breath out.

Notice where your body feels tight.
Notice where it feels steady.
No fixing. Just noticing.

Now gently ask yourself:

- Who do I want to be for those I support – especially on the hard days?
- What did I need from an adult when I was young?
- Where in my own story am I still healing?
- How might those unhealed places shape the way I show up?
- What kind of presence am I practicing becoming?

Pause there.

Consider:

- When someone I care for remembers me years from now, what do I hope they felt in my presence?
- What is my deeper “why” day-to-day?

Let your shoulders soften.

You are not just managing others. You are shaping environments.
You are shaping experiences. You are shaping possibilities.

When you are ready, return –
not just as an adult, but as a regulated presence.

This is how we RISE.
One pause at a time.



Be a Bright Place

People are not broken.

They are patterned by stress, trauma, and systems that often misunderstand behavior as defiance rather than adaptation.

But here is the truth we don't say enough —
relationships and systems are made of nervous systems.

Burned-out or unhealed adults cannot co-regulate others.
Fear-based leadership trickles downward.
Unprocessed trauma recreates itself organizationally.

This booklet is a beginning. An invitation.



Inside *Together We RISE*,
you will find:

- Deep personal stories
- Theories that inform us
- Reflective RISE invitations
- Poetry woven through restoration
- Practical tools for parents, helpers, leaders, and systems

If something in these pages felt familiar —
the rest of the journey is waiting.

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Visit us online:

tanagerplace.org/rise-book

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We do not rise alone. We RISE together.

Each of us carries a spark of greatness—a light the world deeply needs. RISE takes readers on a journey through what it means to be human: to struggle, to heal, and to grow. Blending research with real stories of transformation, this book shows how resilience can be lived, breathed, and built together. A practical and heart-centered guide, it invites us all to rise—and brighten the world around us.

Meet the Author



Tonya Hotchkin is a Marriage and Family Therapist and Trauma Practitioner who leads Clinical Care and Programming at Tanager in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She is the creator of the RISE: Wellness and Resilience Framework, bringing together science, story, and soul to nurture healing.



Rooted in compassion and authenticity, Tonya's work reflects a deep belief in the resilience of children, families, and communities— and is shaped not only by her professional experience, but also by her life as a mother to three beautiful children.

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