



Resilience(y) in Military-Connected Families: Balancing Demands and Capabilities

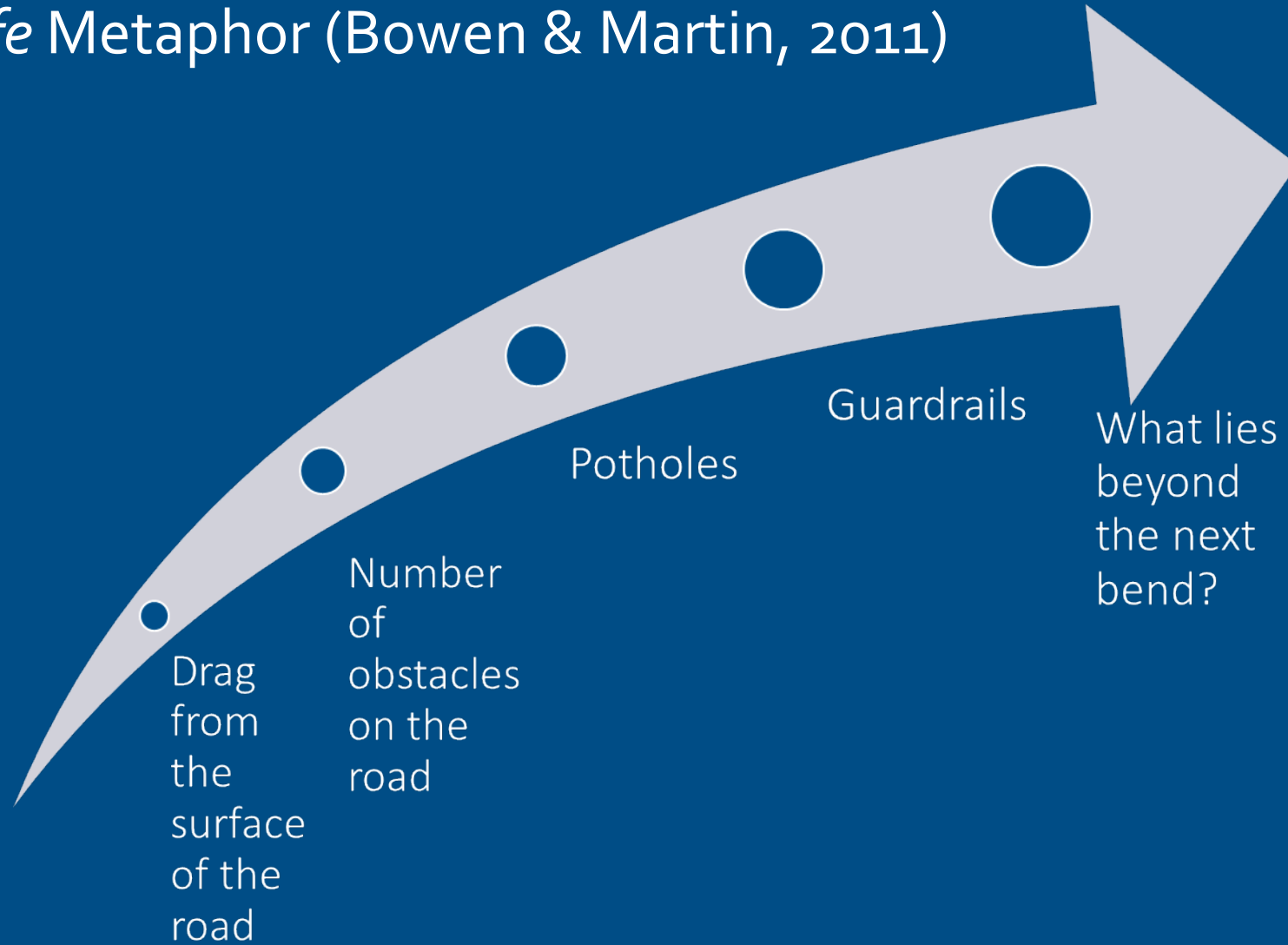
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Road of Life Metaphor (Bowen & Martin, 2011)



Formal and informal supports

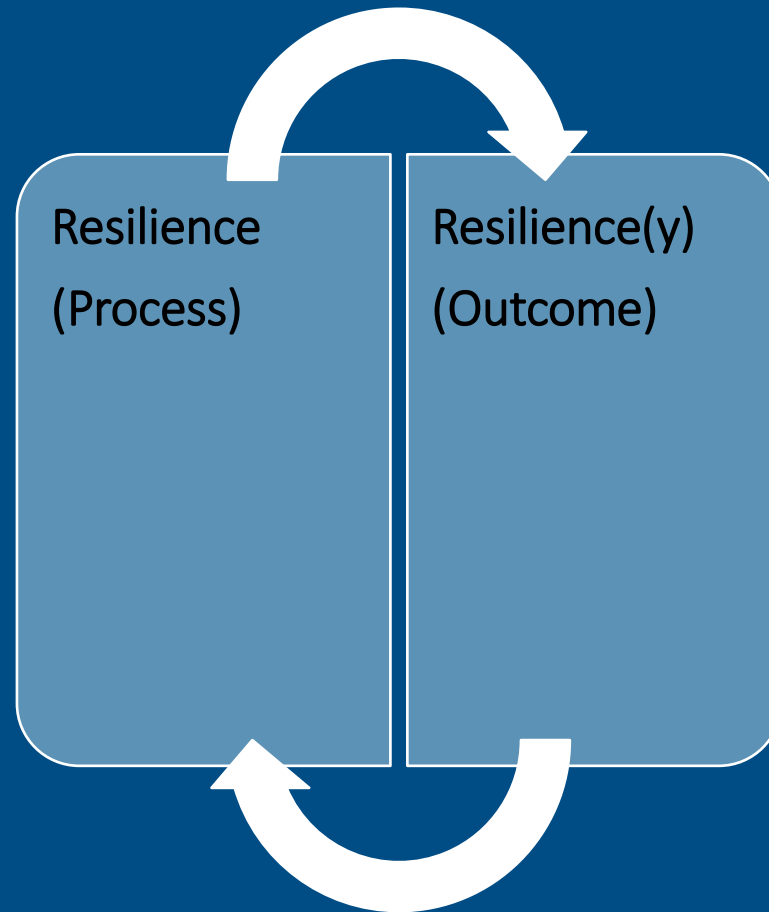
Formal supports act as instruments of socialization, support and social control – include both military and civilian agencies

Informal supports include group associations, unit-based support groups, and networks of intimate and non-intimate relationships

Formal and informal supports are reciprocally related



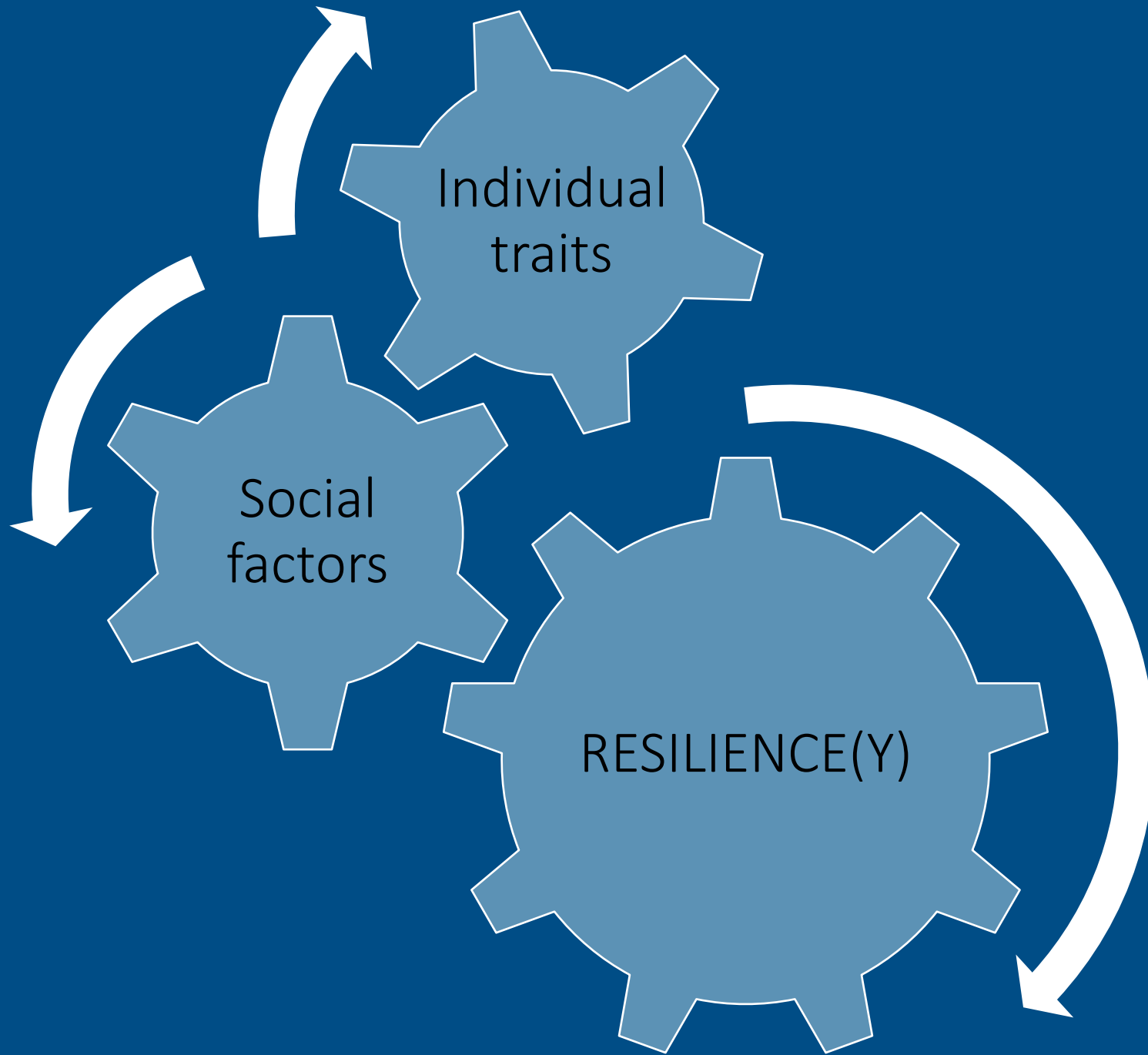
Resilience/y: Process and Outcome (Bowen & Martin, 2011; Patterson, 2002)



Family resilience

- “...the path a family follows as it *adapts and prospers* in the face of *stress*, both in the *present* and *over time*. Resilient families respond *positively* to these conditions in unique ways, depending on the context, developmental level, the interactive combination of risk and protective factors, and the family’s shared outlook.”

(Hawley & DeHaan, 1996, p. 293)



Family Resilience/y

Resist

- Innate capacities
- Invulnerability to stressors

Recover

- Return to a previous state of well-being

Reconfigure

- Capacity to rebound from adversity with new skills and strengths

Ordinary magic...

Masten, 2001

Demands

Capabilities

Daily hassles

**Chronic and/or
acute stressors &
conflicts**

Monitoring

Managing

Mobilizing



Demands

Daily hassles and chronic and/or acute stresses and conflicts that may be normative or non-normative (Patterson, 2002)



Capabilities

Capabilities are
“resources, which are
what the family has, and
coping behaviors, which
are what the family does”
(Patterson, 2008, p. 215)



Demands – *daily hassles and chronic/acute stressors*

- *Well, last week when I went to his, like, I went to his psychologist appointment with him last week, and we were discussing other potential options he should go for, like, if there is any other treatment available for him.*
- *I know I am far from being the only one to do this, but when I left my job to be more present for him, I did not work at first, but I had no salary. It was problematic...sadly I felt alone trying to lift a mountain.*

Capabilities – *what families do and what they have*

- Monitoring

- *I think to kind of get through this, you have to develop some additional skill sets to kind of find your way to help de-escalate, to have better insight, to sometimes just be a little bit more honest in talking about what's happened. Like, even to say to him, like, to be able to say, "What's going on?" "This is a good day." "It's a bad day." "What happened?" rather than kind of ignoring it, and kind of ploughing through it.*

Capabilities – *what families do and what they have*

- Monitoring

- *Um, it just, you know, sometimes it's, it's almost like walking on glass. It's tiptoeing around situations. Judging the mood before, um, advancing a, a, a subject, or a conflict... it's just kind of...judge the mood first...*

Capabilities – *what families do and what they have*

- Monitoring

- *My son's a lot more intuitive...he's much more, he picks up on every, what's going on with everyone, so. He'll sometimes come to me, he goes, "Dad was really off today," and I'll say, "Yeah." Or I'll say, "This is not a good day," right? And, or, you know, it's like, "Dad's really cranky." He'll be, like, "Yeah. This is what happened." So he, he and I can talk about it.*

Capabilities – *what families do and what they have*

- Managing

- *He would miss a lot of his appointments or he'd be late or he didn't write it down. So it took me a long time to convince him and make him write it in his family calendar. So we have iPhones so we share the calendar together so he can see my appointments but I also can see his. So I can kind of help him, remind, like, "Oh, did you think of this?" you know, "For this doctor's appointment did you need blood tests?" you know. "Did you think about it?" Sometimes it's hard because I give reminders and he feels like I mother him. There's been a bit of a struggle to keep the two apart.*

Capabilities – *what families do and what they have*

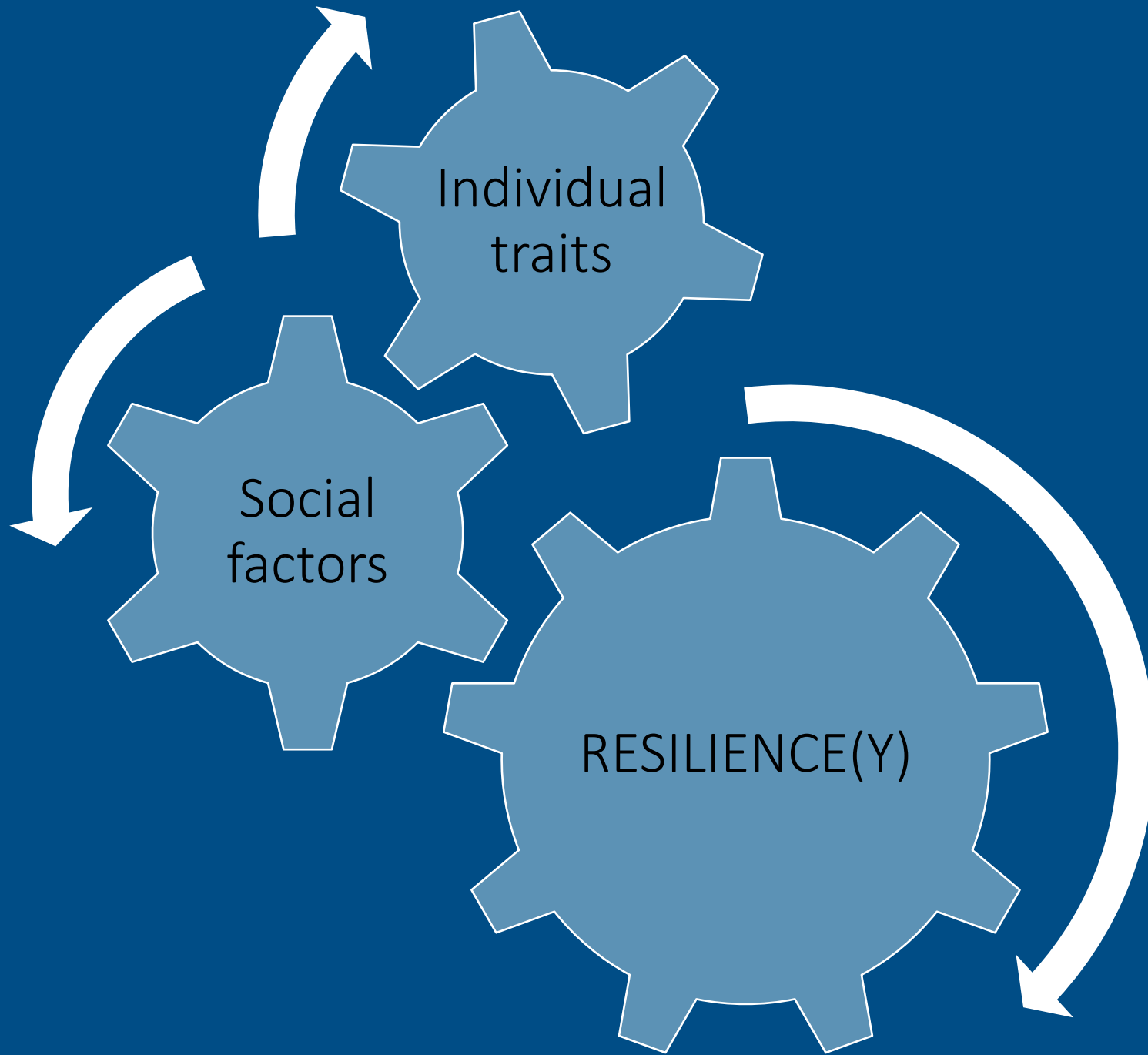
- Managing

- *Basically, it's like I just try to handle everything so that he doesn't have to deal with it. Because the less he has to deal with, the less break-downs, melt-downs we have.*

Capabilities – *what families do and what they have*

- Mobilizing

- *A lot of the services that were put in place for him were done by either my mother or me. So we really, like, mobilized everything for him for him to be able to get back up on his feet, to like, live a relatively normal life.*
- *I know what has to be done. I know where to go to get this. I know where to do that. You know, which is the role of a social worker.*



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Demands

Capabilities

Conclusions

- Developing and maintaining resilience(y) involves *work* for military/veteran family members (*monitoring, managing, and mobilizing*).
- Family and community resources are capabilities and have the potential to buffer demands and enhance the capacity for resilience(y).

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