

**From Crisis  
to Surviving  
to  
Thriving:  
Our  
Journey  
with Ben So  
Far**

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## Essential Questions

1. What are some stages of the journey we are on with our children with special needs?
2. What principles and strategies can help us move from crisis to survival mode to beginning to thrive to consistently thriving?



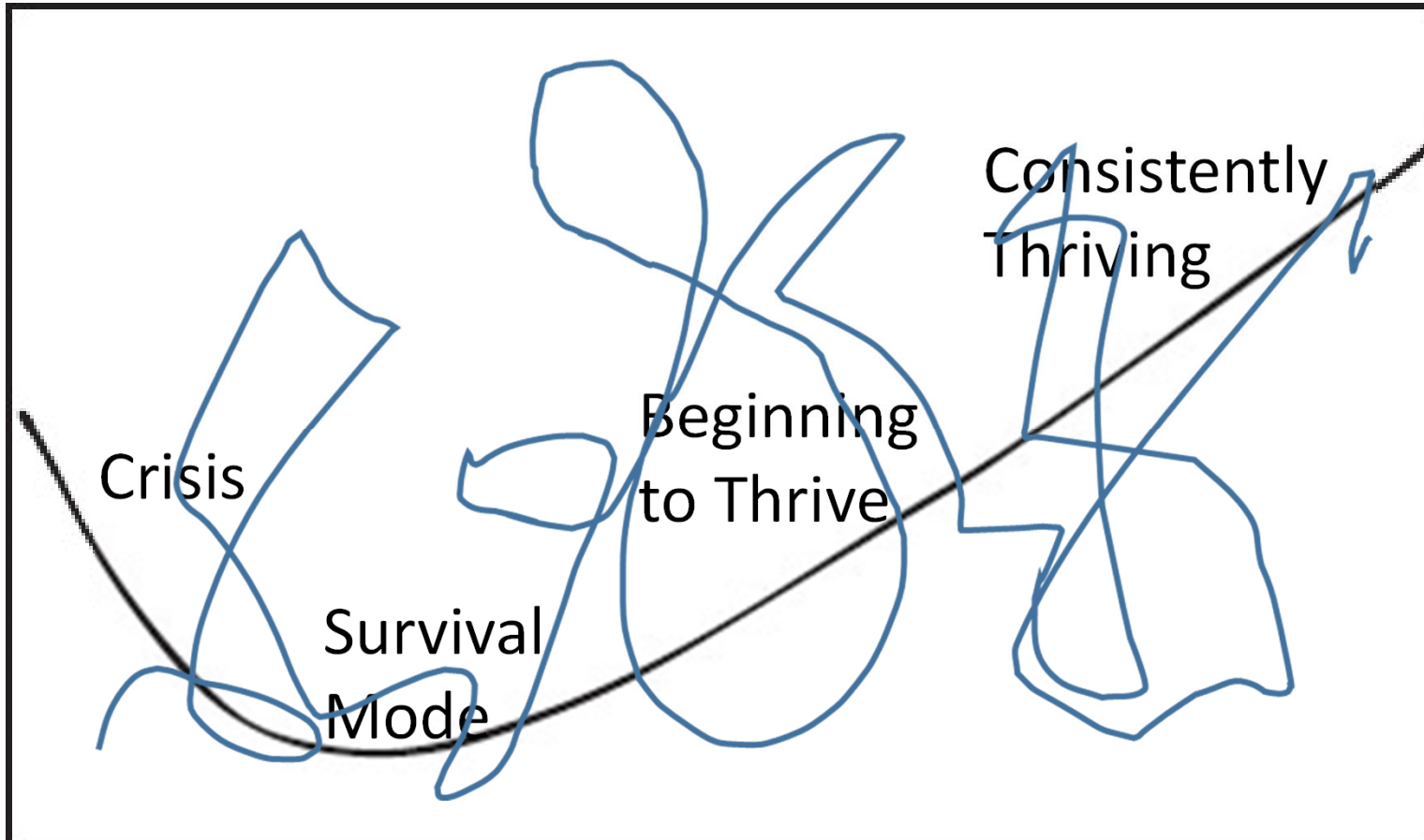
*Breakout/Introductions:*

*Share your name and a bit about your child. What has the parenting journey been like for you during COVID?*

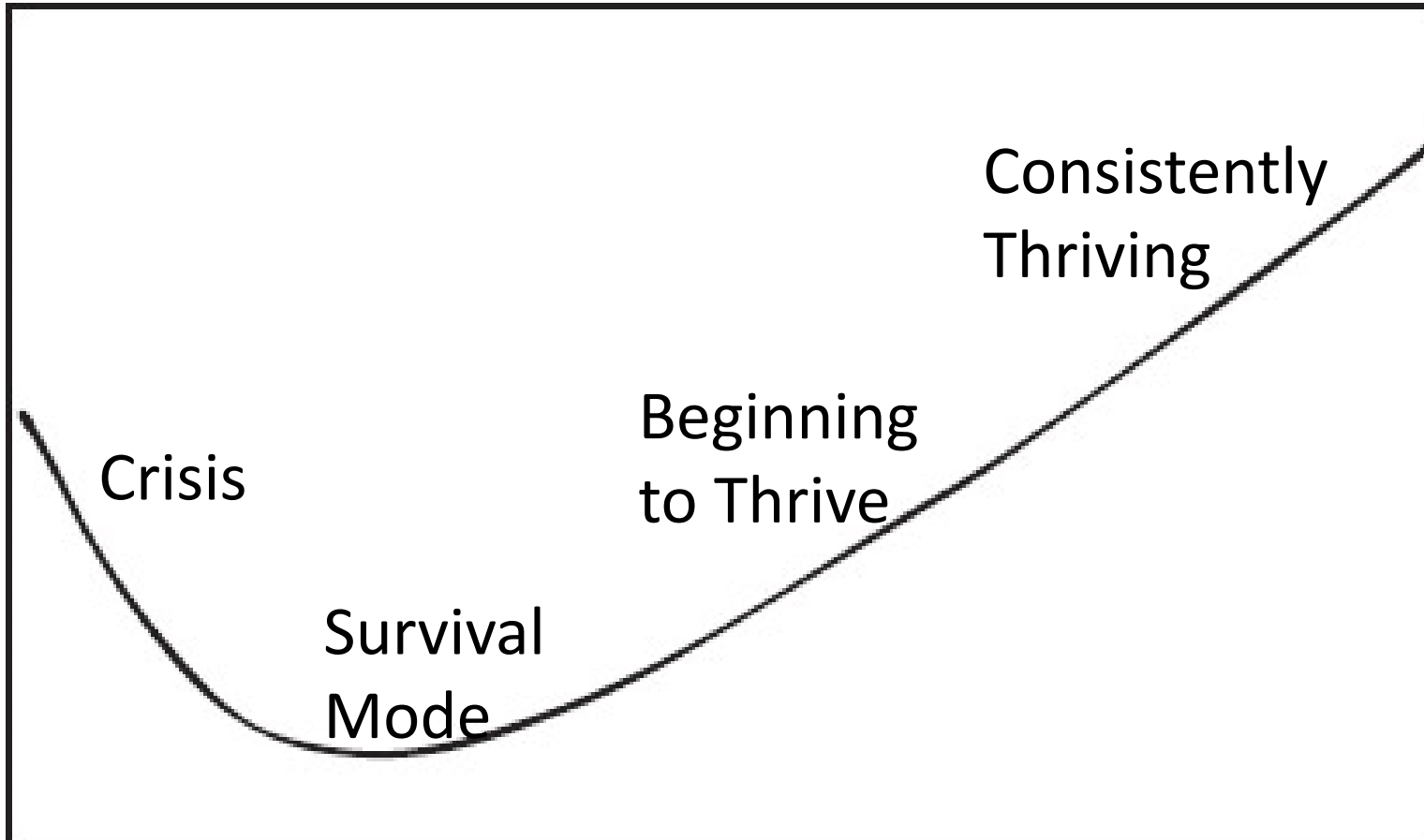
**How the parenting  
journey often feels:**



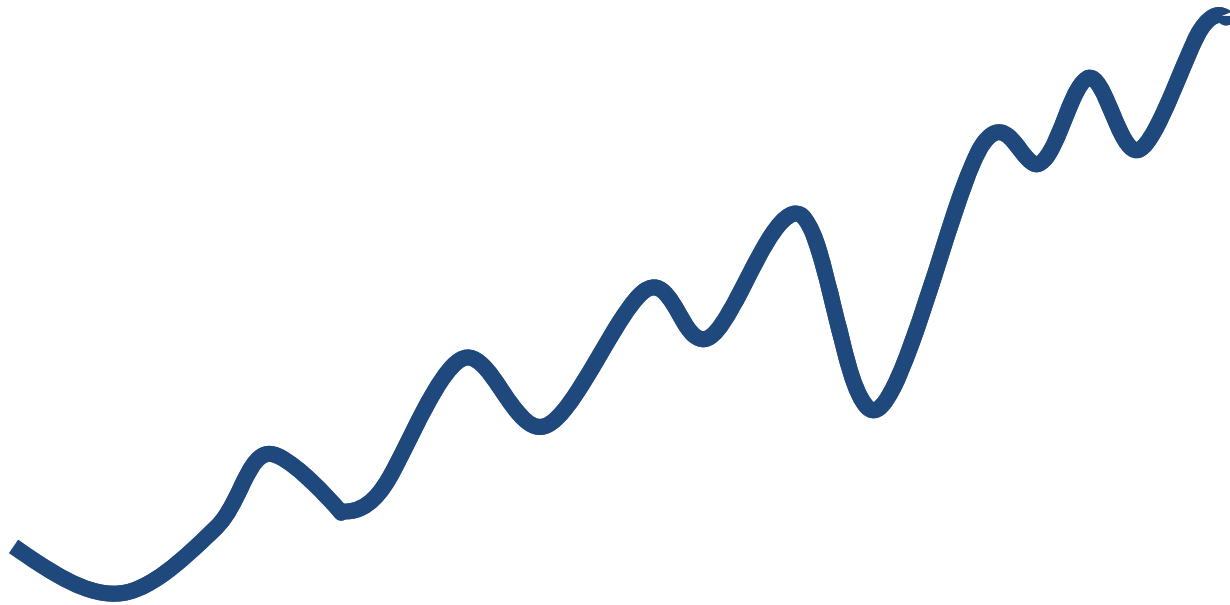
# The Underlying Learning Curve



# The Underlying Learning Curve



## The Process Over Time





# Experiencing Crisis



Photo source: [campedimotivation.com](http://campedimotivation.com)



# Characteristics of Crisis

- o We're in free fall.
- o Immobilized by pain
- o Shattered hopes
- o Death of our old life
- o Feelings of utter inadequacy: "I can't do this."
- o Lack of support systems
- o Lack of self-care
- o In need of foundational principles and strategies

# When In Crisis...

## **Embrace Foundational Principles:**

- o Our child is a gift.
- o This is our life.
- o We GET to do this.
- o We say yes to what's healthy for our family and child, and no to what is unhealthy (the principle of Boundaries).
- o Self-care is essential: spirituality, humor, sanity, health.

# Survival Mode

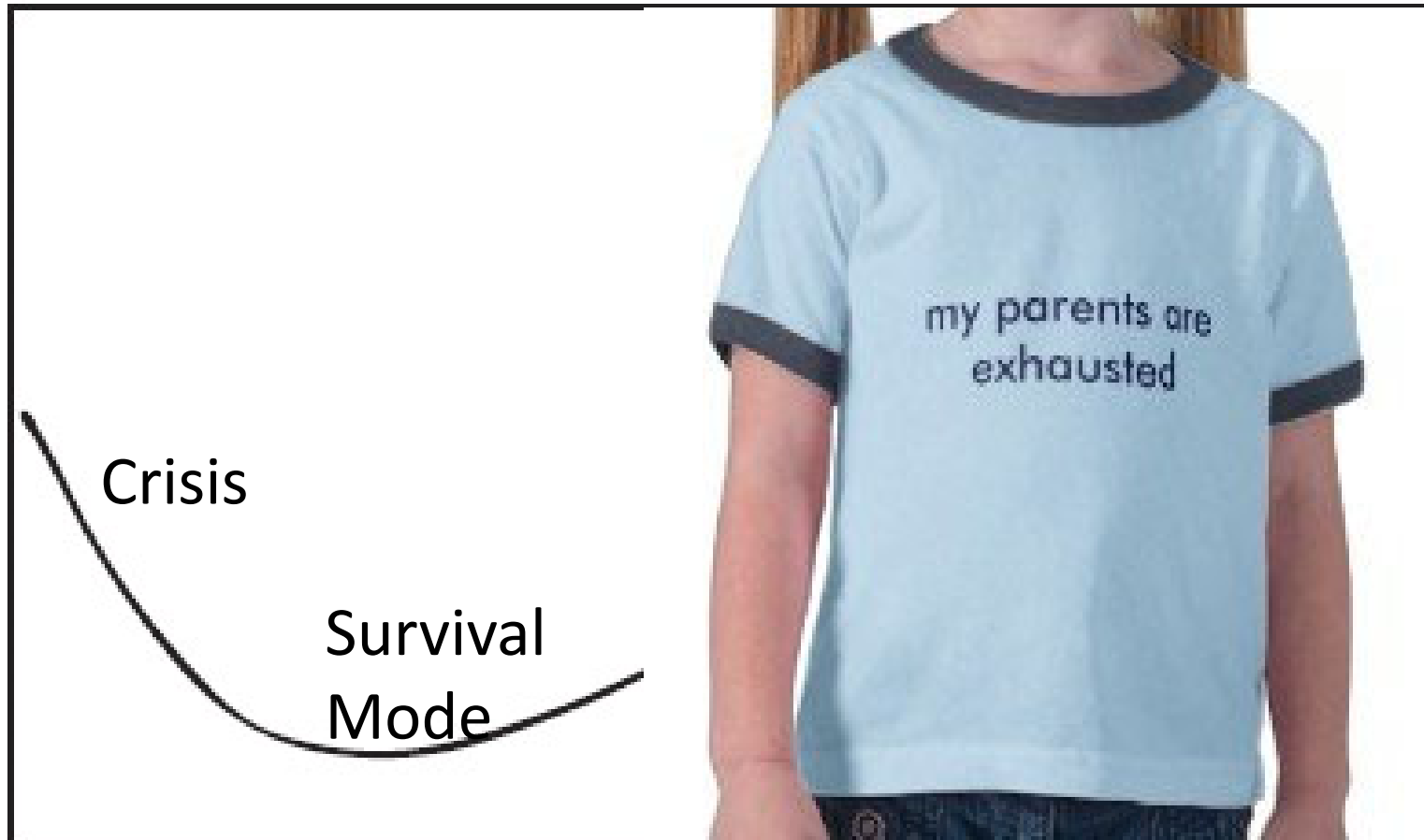


Photo source: [dadandburied.com](http://dadandburied.com)

# Characteristics of Survival Mode

- o Beginning to practice self-care
- o Working through stages of grief
- o Seeking support (e.g., early intervention, counseling, child care)
- o Starting to establish some routines
- o Grappling with the new normal
- o Beginning to make healthy choices
- o Recognizing need for a growth mindset

# When in Survival Mode...

## **Cultivate a Growth Mindset:**

- o We believe growth is possible for all of us.
- o We embrace challenges and don't give up easily.
- o We work on growth strategies as a way to move forward.
- o We prioritize self-care: spirituality, humor, sanity, health

## *Discussion:*

*Of these principles and strategies (e.g., value affirmations, self-care, boundaries, growth mindset), which have been or might be most important to help you move through crisis and start moving beyond survival mode?*

# Beginning to Thrive



Beginning  
to Thrive



# Characteristics of Beginning to Thrive

- o Attending to self-care
- o Solidifying growth mindset
- o Building win-win strategies
- o Continuing to establish boundaries
- o Beginning to create support teams
- o Cultivating agreement in core relationships (marriage, support teams, etc.)
- o Acting on the question: What works for us?

# To Begin to Thrive...

## Build Win-Win Strategies

- o We separate the person from the problem.
- o We focus on our interests and don't stake out positions.
- o We seek win-win solutions.
- o We use external criteria (*Getting to Yes*, Ury)
- o We consistently practice Boundaries.
- o We don't make significant decisions without Agreement.

# Consistently Thriving



Consistently  
Thriving

Photo source: [chronicle.augusta.com](http://chronicle.augusta.com)

# Characteristics of Consistently Thriving

- o Consistently practicing self-care
- o Consistently creating support teams
- o Consistent support systems in place
- o Continuous growth for us, our child, and our relationships
- o Assessing and responding to changes, challenges, and crises and moving forward

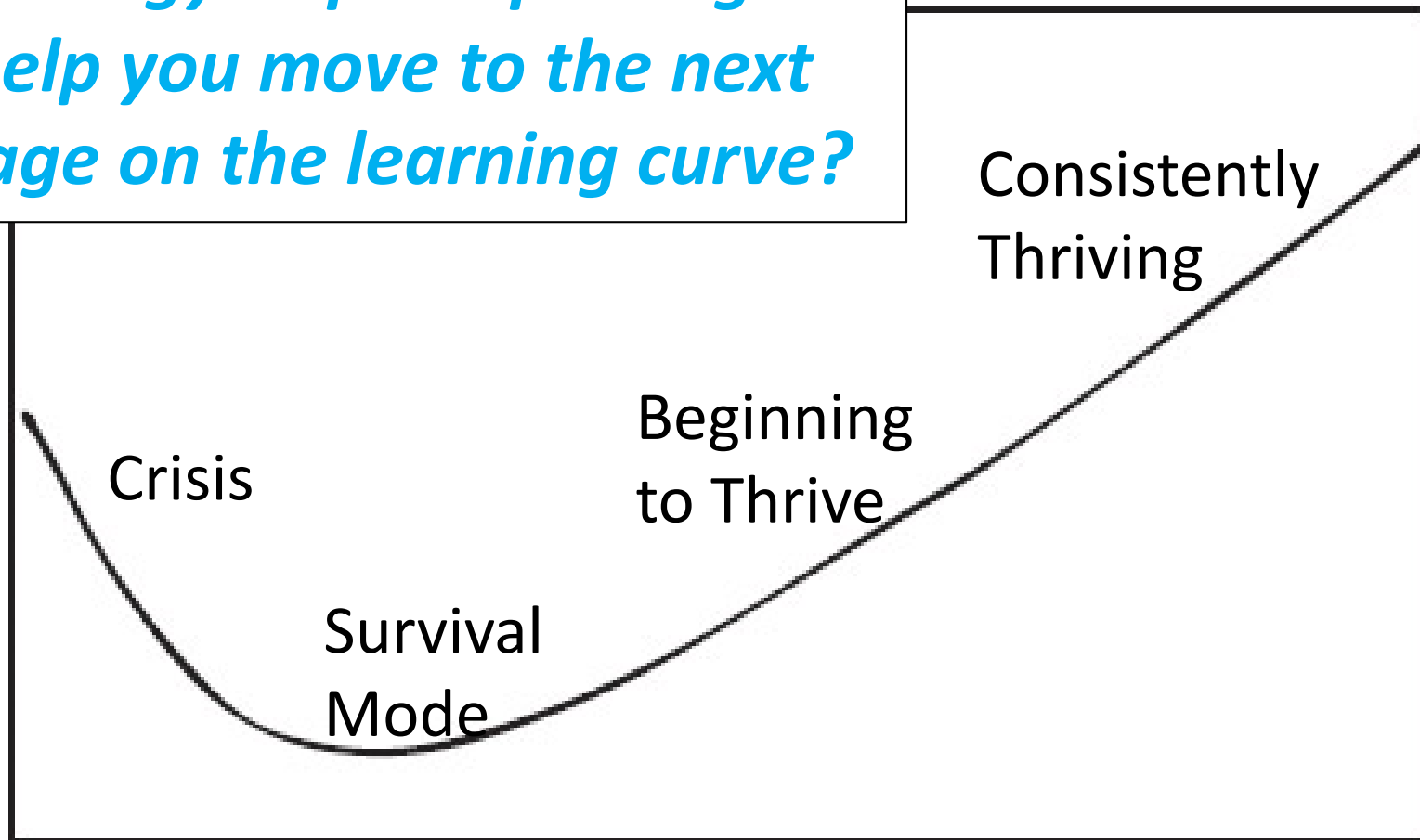
# To Thrive Consistently...

## **Create Support Teams**

- o We recognize that we can't do this alone.
- o We recognize that there are people who want to be partners with us.
- o We collaborate with those who are willing to be part of a team to support our child.
- o We work toward healthy outcomes for our child and others.
- o We recognize that 'thriving' is building a village where we can experience joy and hope.

## ***Discussion:***

***Where are you on the learning curve at this point? What strategy or principle might help you move to the next stage on the learning curve?***



# Q&A - Discussion