

Mental Strength Expert Unveils Proprietary 10-Category Mentally STRONG Method for Women

Mentally STRONG founder Dr. Cristi Bundukamara reveals the 10 categories that sort grief, trauma and anxiety.

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO, UNITED STATES, August 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Mentally STRONG](#), the Colorado Springs practice founded by mental strength expert and psychiatric nurse practitioner Dr. Cristi Bundukamara, has unveiled the 10 categories inside the proprietary [Mentally STRONG Method](#). Bundukamara detailed the system during a recent appearance on the It's HERTIME podcast with host Cody Sanders, where she walked the host through it live on air. The categories sort everything a person is carrying so each piece gets the treatment it actually needs. More than 7,000 people have moved through the method in the practice's first seven years.

Most mental health advice hands a woman one tool and expects it to cover everything. Positive thinking gets pointed at grief. Discipline gets pointed at exhaustion.

Bundukamara, a mental strength expert with more than 25 years of clinical practice, says that is the real failure. Overwhelm is not one problem but several tangled together, and one tool applied to a tangle does nothing.

That is what the 10 categories are for. Inside the Mentally STRONG Method, negative thinking is one category. Grief, trauma, anxiety, triggers and spiritual conflict each get their own, and each one is worked differently.

Positive thinking belongs to the negative thinking category and nothing else. It collapses the moment it is asked to carry grief, which is why so many capable women conclude the problem must be them.

The separation between grief and trauma is the one Bundukamara says almost nobody makes. Trauma lodges in the body and can be released. Grief is the story, and it stays.



Cristi Bundukamara, Founder, Mentally STRONG



Everybody needs a system
for their mental strength,
not just grasping at straws”
Cristi Bundukamara

"It's actually clinically not true," Bundukamara said of the five stages of grief during her appearance on the It's HERTIME podcast. "That formula was researched on hospice patients, not hospice family members, not the people left behind."

Once the categories are sorted, the Mentally STRONG Method runs on three words: think, organize and choose. Think means slowing down enough to see a thought for what it is, because a loud thought is not the same as an accurate one. Organize is the sorting itself.

Choose is where the change happens, as a person decides from where they are going rather than what they are feeling. Bundukamara describes the full sequence as a flywheel that builds momentum the longer it runs.

The entry point is a tool she calls the thought map. A person writes one word in the center, then bubbles out the factors around it, when it first appeared in childhood and how it touches their spiritual life. She calls it 20 years of journaling in 20 minutes.

"Learning how to think and organize those things so that we can make choices in line with what we want, with insight and vulnerability, is true mental strength," Bundukamara said on the show.

That framing is also why she rejects grit as the goal. Callusing over pain is not strength, and discipline and willpower are not the answer.

Dr. Cristi Bundukamara did not build any of this in a classroom. A retired U.S. Navy veteran and psychiatric nurse practitioner with a doctorate, she lost her son Johnny in a drowning accident, her son Reggie to a rare neurodegenerative condition in 2016, her daughter Miah unexpectedly and later her husband to the same condition.

She built the method while it was happening, then opened the practice in 2019 to teach it. She is the author of "Pain & Purpose: My Journey to Mental Strength" and the subject of the documentary "Strength in Vulnerability." Today she runs Mentally STRONG coaching programs, intensives and events.

Her clients are capable, high-functioning women, typically 35 to 60, who look steady from the outside and are quietly running on empty. They can explain their own patterns in detail and still cannot change them. The practice has generated more than \$15 million in revenue over seven years serving that woman.

"Everybody needs a system for their mental strength, not just grasping at straws," Bundukamara said.

Women navigating grief, burnout or major life change can learn the 10 categories with mental strength expert Dr. Cristi Bundukamara at www.mentallystrong.com.

About Mentally STRONG

Mentally STRONG trains mental strength as a skill for adults working through grief, burnout and major life change. The Colorado Springs practice was founded by Dr. Cristi Bundukamara, a mental strength expert, psychiatric nurse practitioner and retired U.S. Navy veteran who created the Mentally STRONG Method, and it runs private coaching, 90-day programs, intensives, events, online training and a Raising Mentally STRONG Kids curriculum. Its work centers on high-functioning women who want a repeatable mental system they can run under real pressure.

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