



RECLAIMING Youth at Risk

ReclaimingYouthAtRisk.org

Emotional Wellbeing Forum

Larry K. Brendtro, PhD

London, England

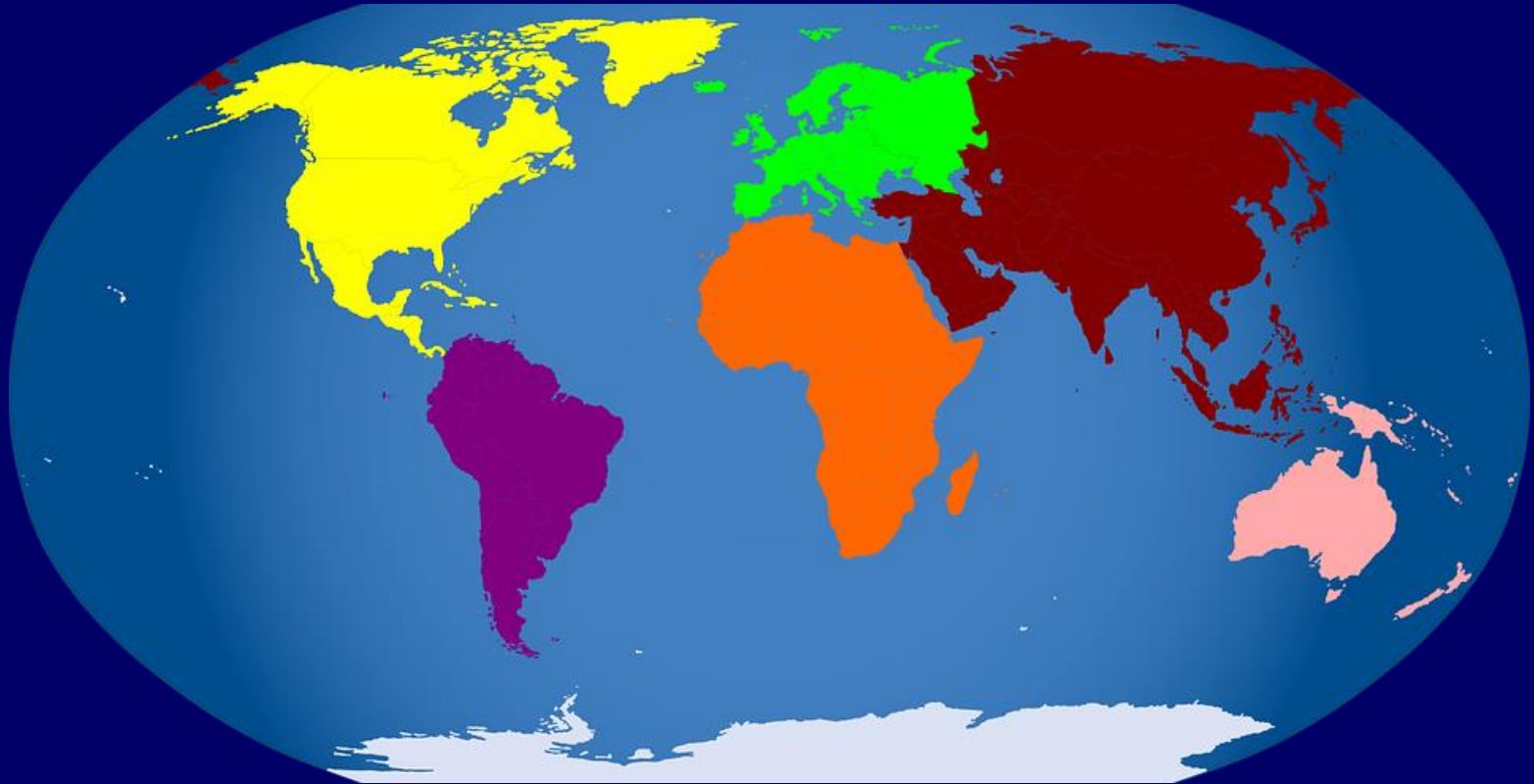
November 22, 2017



Digital copies of this presentation:
ReclaimingYouthAtRisk.org/handouts



Reclaiming Youth at Risk



Research

Training

Consultation

Thriving

Children, Youth, and Families



A free subscription to this
online journal available at:

GrowingEdgeTraining.com



**25th Annual
Black Hills Seminars**

July 2018

Emotional Wellbeing



Adversity and Trauma

Resilience and Health

Designer Genes

Restoring Wellbeing

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Household Stressors

1. Substance abuse
2. Parent separation/divorce
3. Mental illness
4. Domestic violence
5. Criminal Behavior

Abuse

6. Psychological
7. Physical
8. Sexual

Neglect

9. Physical
10. Emotional





1. Substance Abuse



2. Parent Separation or Divorce



3. Mental Illness



4. Domestic Violence



5. Criminal Behavior



6. Psychological Abuse



7. Physical Abuse



8. Sexual Abuse



9. Physical Neglect



10. Emotional Neglect

Death

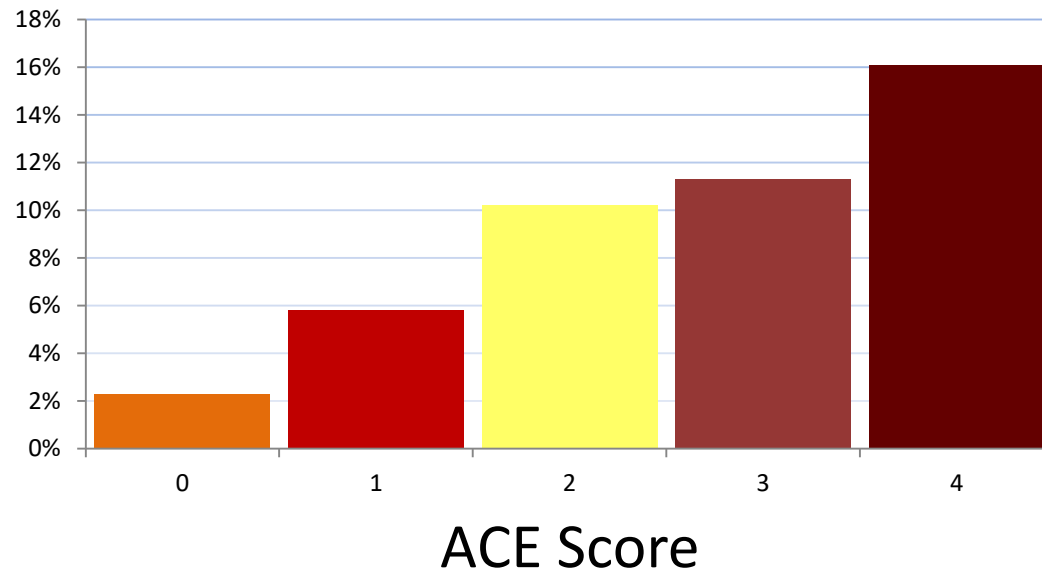


Birth



ACES and Lifetime Alcoholism

Percent Reporting Alcoholism



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Questionnaire

<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>

Prior to your 18th birthday did you experience:

- 1. Emotional Abuse** - Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
- 2. Physical Abuse** - Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
- 3. Sexual Abuse** - Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?
- 4. Emotional Neglect** - Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
- 5. Physical Neglect** - Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Did it seem as though your parents or guardians didn't take care of you, ie. take you to the doctor if you needed it etc.?
- 6. Loss of Parent** - Was a biological parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason?
- 7. Domestic Violence** - Was your parent or guardian: Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at them? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Repeatedly hit for at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun / knife?
- 8. Family Member with Addiction** - Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
- 9. Family Member with Depression or Mental Illness** - Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did they attempt suicide?
- 10. Family Member Incarcerated** - Did a household member go to prison?

[acestoohigh.com/
got-your-ace-score](http://acestoohigh.com/got-your-ace-score)

Adverse Childhood Experiences

What are some other adverse experiences?





What is Trauma?

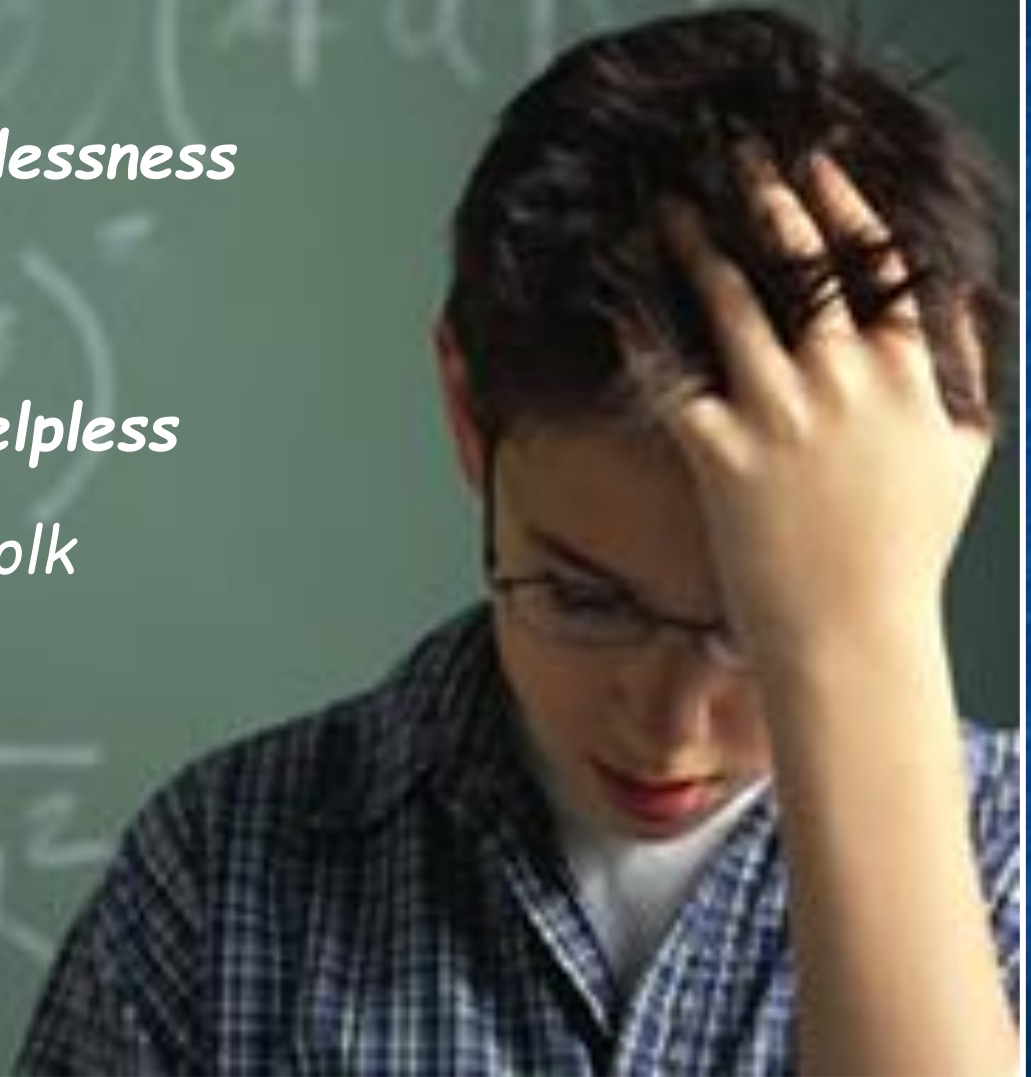
Trauma Reactions

Fear, terror, helplessness

- Bruce Perry

Threatened and helpless

- Bessel van der Kolk





Simple Trauma
one overwhelming
traumatic event



Complex Trauma
ongoing exposure to
fear and helplessness

Relational Trauma

(aka Developmental Trauma)

Multiple, prolonged, adverse events, often beginning in early childhood relationships.

Includes physical, emotional, and educational neglect and maltreatment.

Bessel van der Kolk

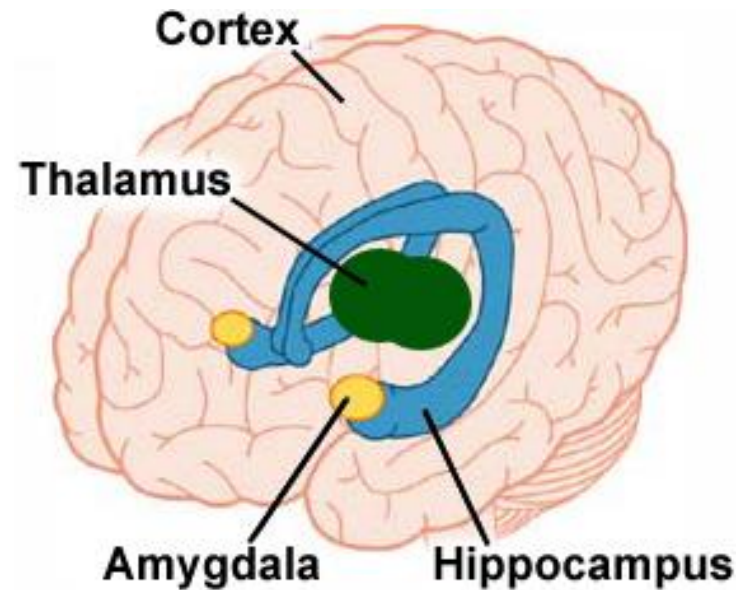


Racial and Cultural Trauma





Top Down Trauma
Overwhelming Events



Bottom Up Trauma
Overwhelmed Brain

Brain-based Attachment Related Trauma





Children need secure attachments to calm their fears.




But some children find touch to be aversive.



Average
Expectable
Environment

Dante Cicchetti, PhD, University of Minnesota

When environments fall outside the expectable range, normal development is impeded and often goes awry.



Maltreated children may exhibit disruption in emotional regulation, attachment, peer relationships, and self-worth.

(Cicchetti & Valentino, 2006)



From Mother to Child

Mothers of abused and neglected infants report insecure relationships, abuse, and neglect in their own childhoods.



Mothers receiving parenting training or infant-parent therapy developed stronger attachments to their child. But child protection services did not improve parenting.

Dante Cicchetti

DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL
MANUAL OF
MENTAL DISORDERS

FIFTH EDITION

DSM-5™

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

Developmental Trauma Yields Many Diagnoses Beyond PTSD

Phobic Disorders

Separation Anxiety

Conduct Disorder

Bipolar Disorder

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Reactive Attachment Disorder

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity
Disorder

Disruptive Mood Dysregulation
Disorder



The kids who need the most love
will ask for it in the most unloving of ways.

Russell Barkley

Pain Based Behavior

- James Anglin



Physical and social pain use the same deep brain circuits.



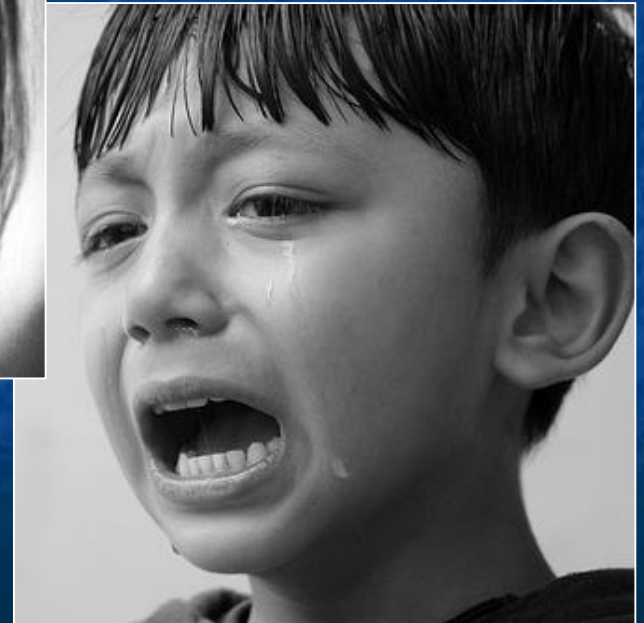
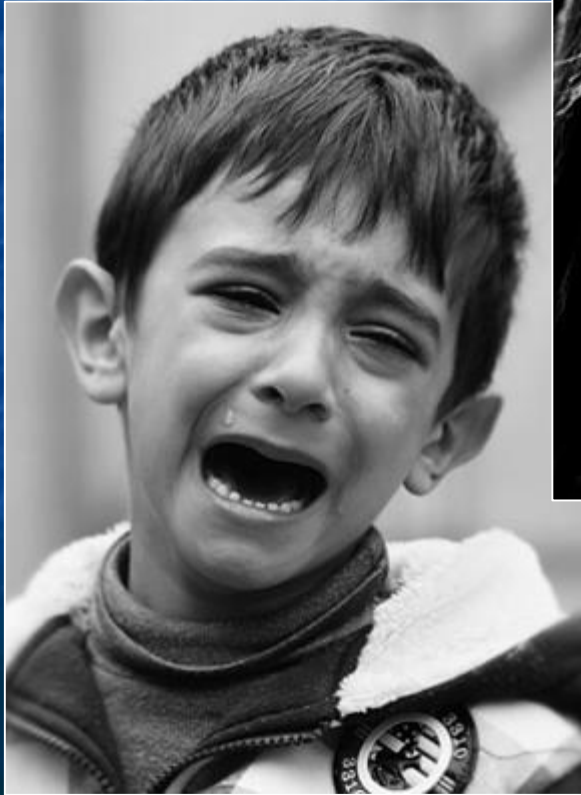
*Seldom did careworkers
acknowledge or respond
sensitively to the inner
world of the child.*

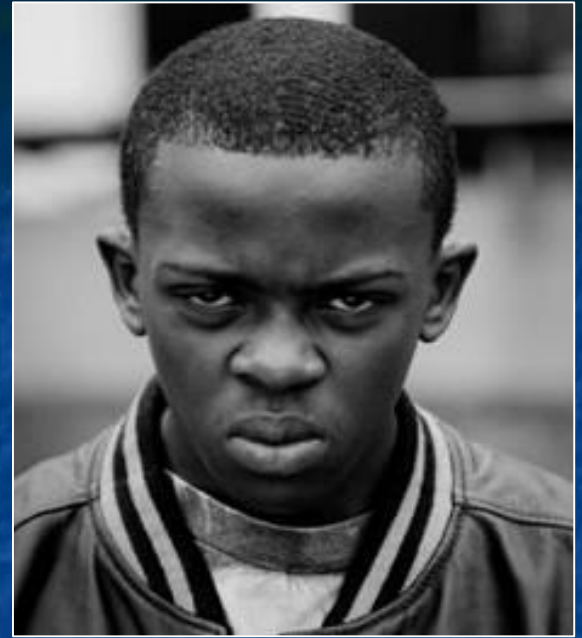
*Instead they would react
with controlling demands
and warn of possible
consequences.*

James Anglin



*How do we respond to
pain-based behavior?*





Focus on Needs Instead of Pathology

Abraham Maslow



Prevention:
Children thrive when essential developmental needs are met.



Maladjustment:
Most emotional and behavioral problems come from unmet developmental needs.



Healing:
Positive growth comes as we nurture unmet growth needs.

Emotional Wellbeing



Adversity and Trauma

Resilience and Health

Designer Genes

Restoring Wellbeing

Revised Edition

RECLAIMING YOUTH AT RISK

Our Hope for the Future



Larry K. Brendtro | Martin Brokenleg | Steve Van Bockern

Foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu



Children's growth needs are
universal across all cultures.

Martin Brokenleg

Circle of Courage Values



generosity

independence



belonging



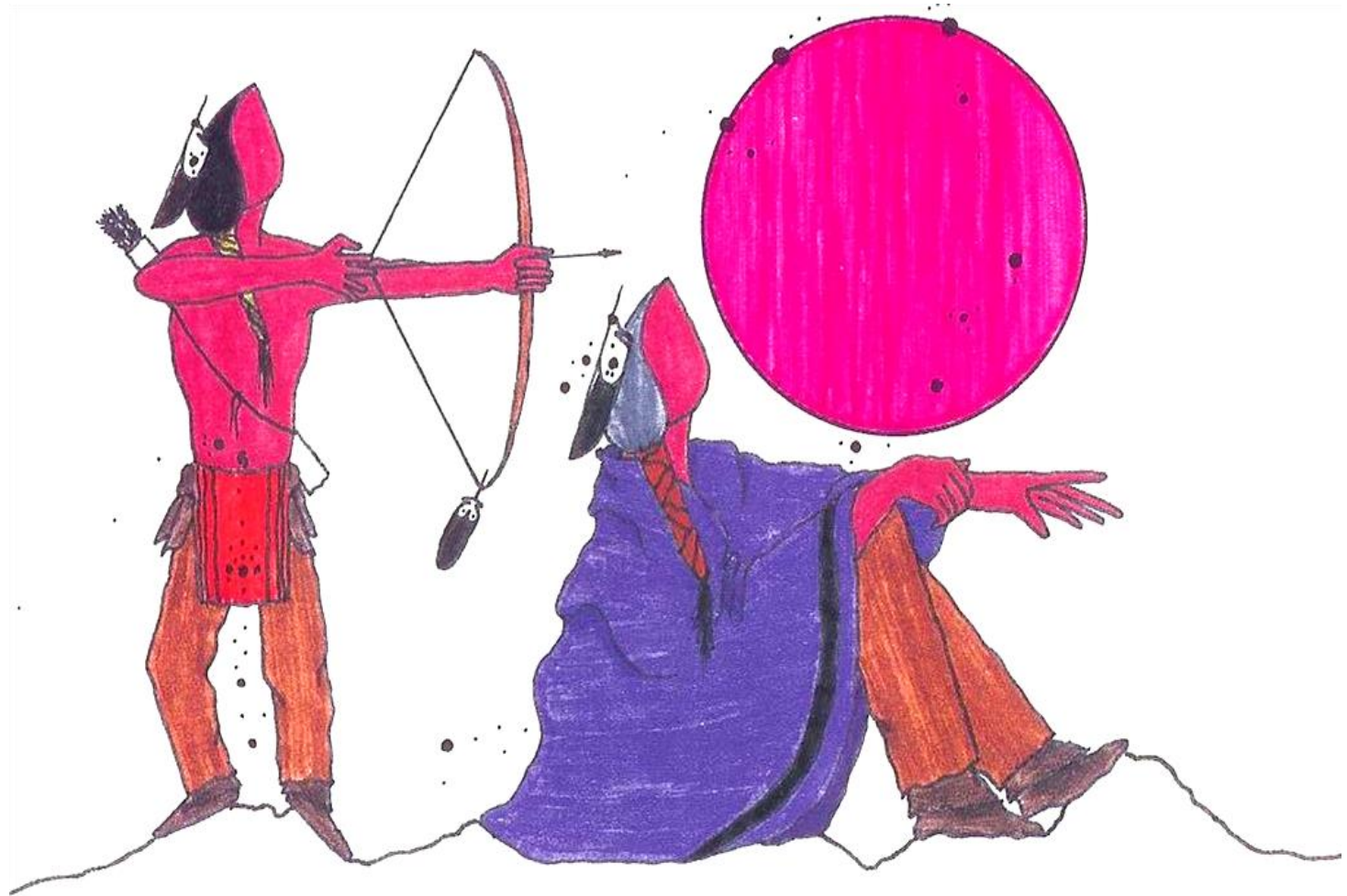
mastery



Belonging



Mastery



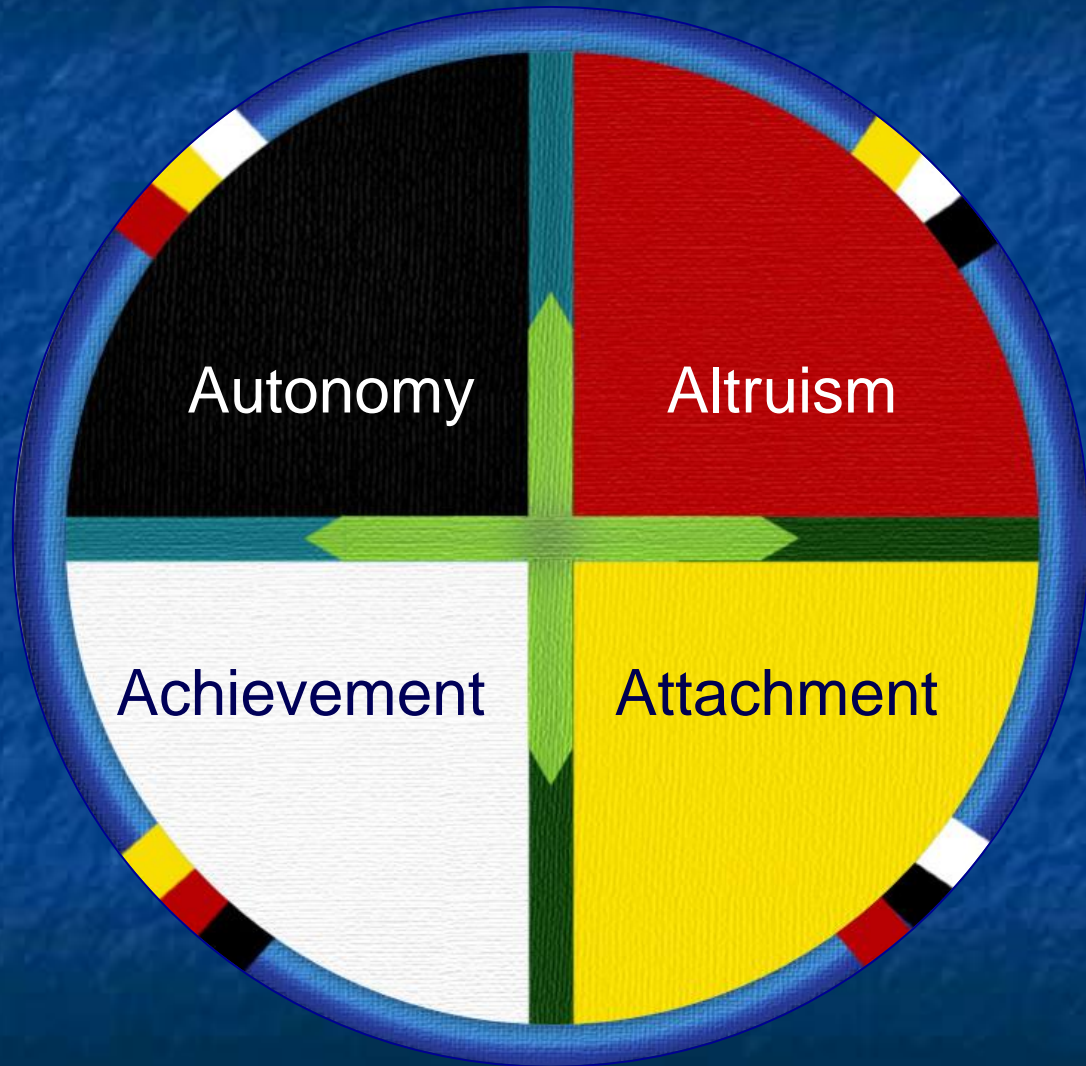
Independence



Generosity



Biosocial Needs





Developmental Relationships

The Active Ingredient
in all successful outcomes in
family, school, community, or
treatment environments.

Julien Li & Megan Julian
University of Pittsburgh

IODENT

CAVITY FIGHTING TOOTHPASTE
Fluoride



NET WT 6.4 OZ (181g)

CAVITY PROTECTION & EXTRA BREATH FRESHENING

Regular Flavor

freshmint

Sensitive Toothpaste

NET WT. 4.3 OZ (122g)

Anti-cavity Fluoride
Toothpaste for
Sensitive Teeth

Colgate
Anticavity Toothpaste

Cavity
Protection

Active Ingredient: Flouride

Purpose

Sodium monofluorophosphate 0.76% (0.15% w/v fluoride ion).....Anticavity



Meeting developmental needs is essential for optimal growth.

Urie Bronfenbrenner
1979

1. A strong, caring bond
2. Increasingly complex tasks
3. Shift power to the learner
4. A relationship of reciprocity

Attachment
Achievement
Autonomy
Altruism

Biosocial Growth Needs	Attachment	Achievement	Autonomy	Altruism
Hierarchy of Human Needs <i>Maslow, 1943</i>	Belongingness	Esteem	Self-Actualization	Self-Transcendence
Foundations of Self Worth <i>Coopersmith, 1967</i>	Significance	Competence	Power	Virtue
Developmental Relationships <i>Bronfenbrenner, 1979</i>	Emotional Attachment	Increasingly Complex Tasks	Shift Power to The Learner	Reciprocity of Relationships
Circle of Courage Cultural Values <i>Brokenleg, 1990</i>	Belonging	Mastery	Independence	Generosity
Resilience Research <i>Benard, 2004</i>	Social Competence	Problem Solving	Autonomy	Purpose
Resilient Brain Modules <i>Masten, 2014</i>	Attachment	Mastery Motivation	Self-Efficacy	Spirituality & Purpose
Anchor Project Resilience Wheel <i>May, 2017</i>	Belonging	Achieving	Empowerment	Purpose

Biosocial Drives are linked to Survival Drives

Avoidance
prevent pain



Approach
seek pleasure

HANDBOOK OF
APPROACH
AND
AVOIDANCE
MOTIVATION

Cultures of Respect

Safety



Adventure

Cultures of Coercion

Reward



Punish

Brain-Based Drives Developmental Needs

Attachment

Achievement

Autonomy

Altruism



Belonging

Mastery

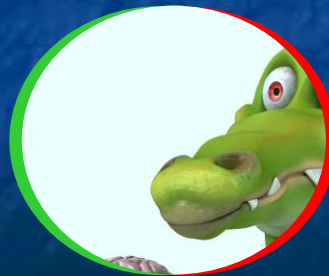
Power

Generosity

Social Brain

Avoidance

Approach

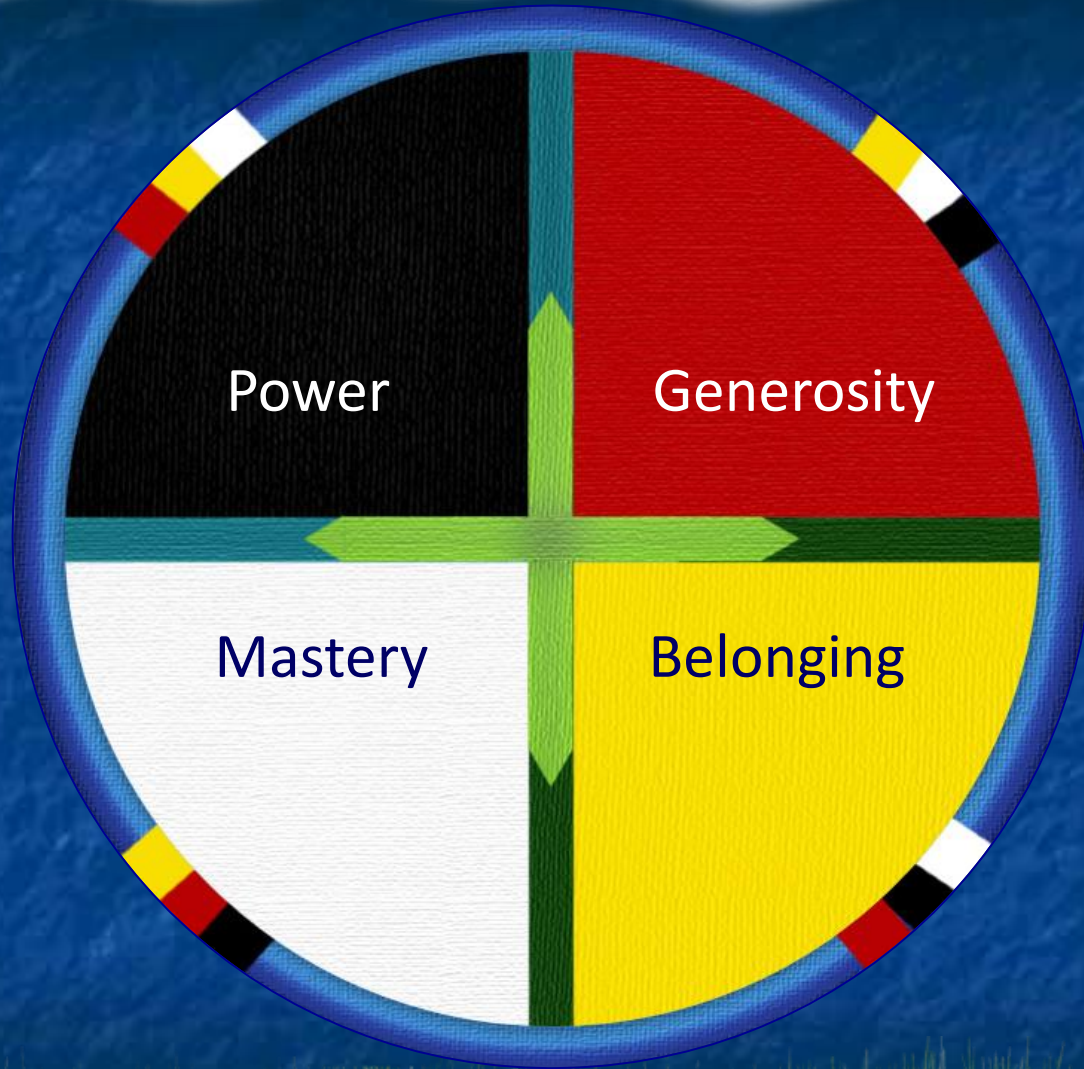


Safety

Adventure

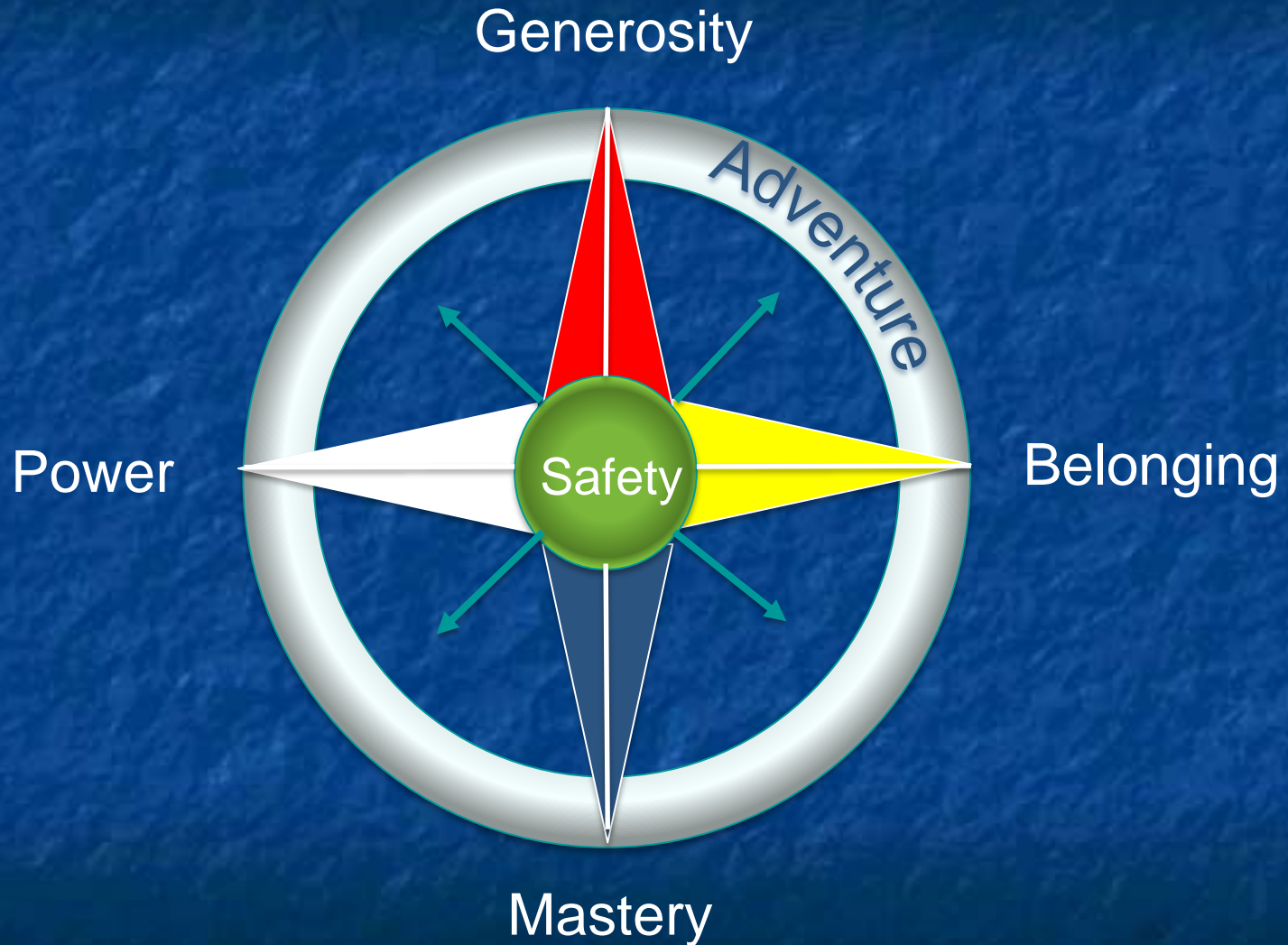
Survival Brain

Adventure



Safety

The Resilience Compass

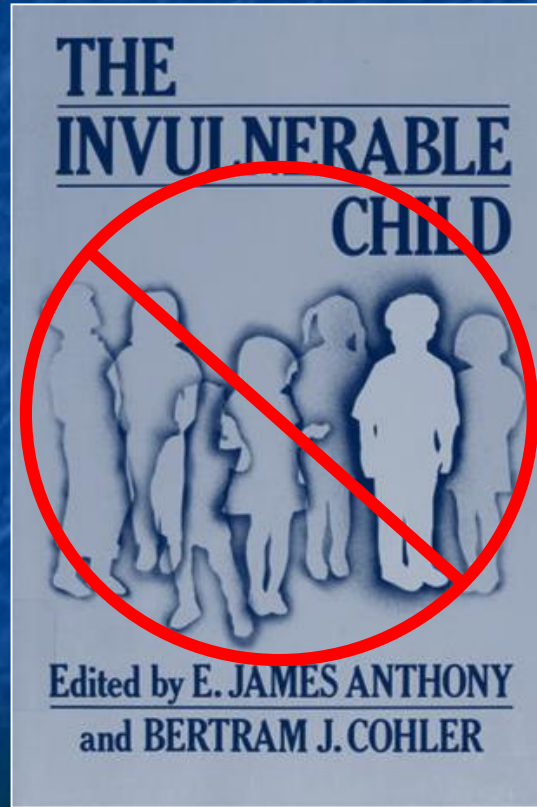


Resilience

A silhouette of a person jumping over a rock at sunset. The person is in mid-air, with arms and legs extended, as if performing a parkour move. The background features a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over a landscape with mountains and a city. The sky is filled with scattered clouds, some illuminated by the sun.

Re-sil-i-ence
from Latin *resilire*, “to leap back.”
Resilience means bouncing back
from difficult life experiences.

T F Resilient children have rare traits of invulnerability.



Risk and Resilience are Human Universals



The world breaks everyone and, afterward,
many are strong at the broken places.

Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*

VULNERABLE BUT INVINCIBLE

A Study of Resilient Children



EMMY E. WERNER • RUTH S. SMITH
FOREWORD BY NORMAN GARMEZY

Kauai Resilience Study

With positive connections,
a majority of persons will be
able to surmount almost
any risk condition.

Emmy Werner



Roots of Resiliency

Children who showed resilience were loved regardless of behavior, intelligence, or physical attractiveness.



Children who often got negative responses from others were vulnerable.

Children who often got positive responses from others were stress-resistant.



Ordinary Magic

Resilience is not Rare
but the ordinary magic
of the adaptive minds,
brains, and bodies of
children in families,
relationships, and
communities.

Ann Masten
University of Minnesota

Emotional Wellbeing



Adversity and Trauma

Resilience and Health

Designer Genes

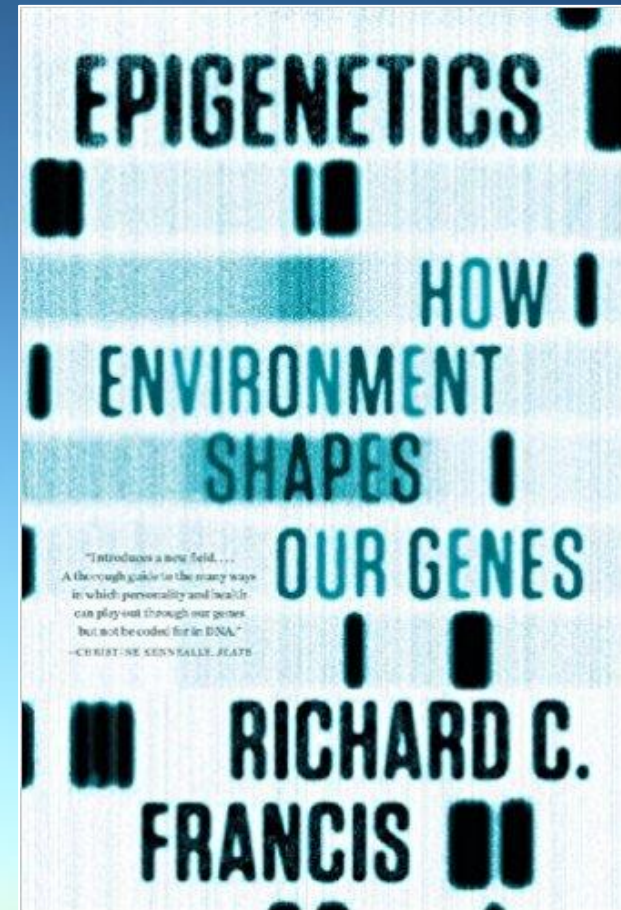
Restoring Wellbeing



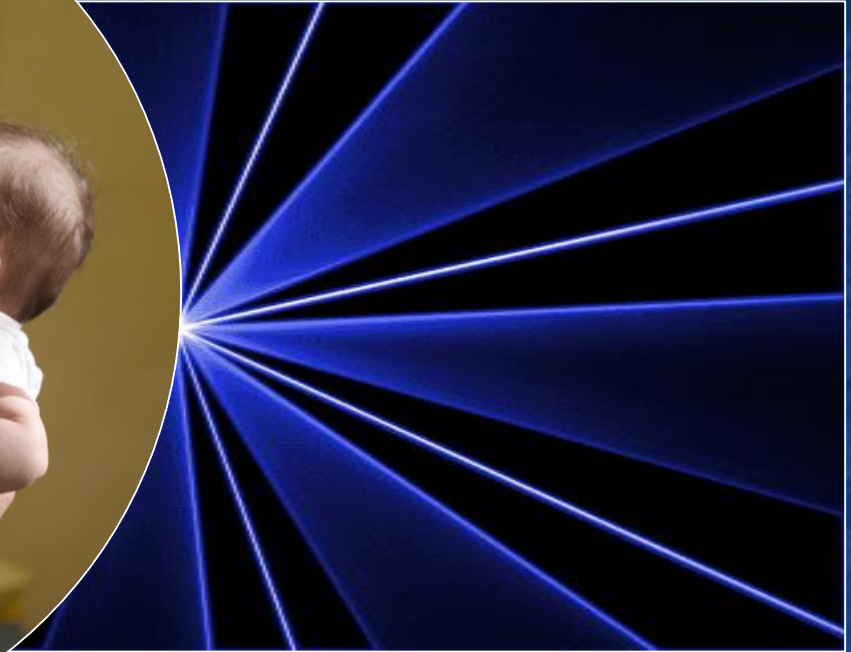
Humans have highly resilient brains.

And 84% of our genes affect the brain.

Epi is Greek
for *on top of*.



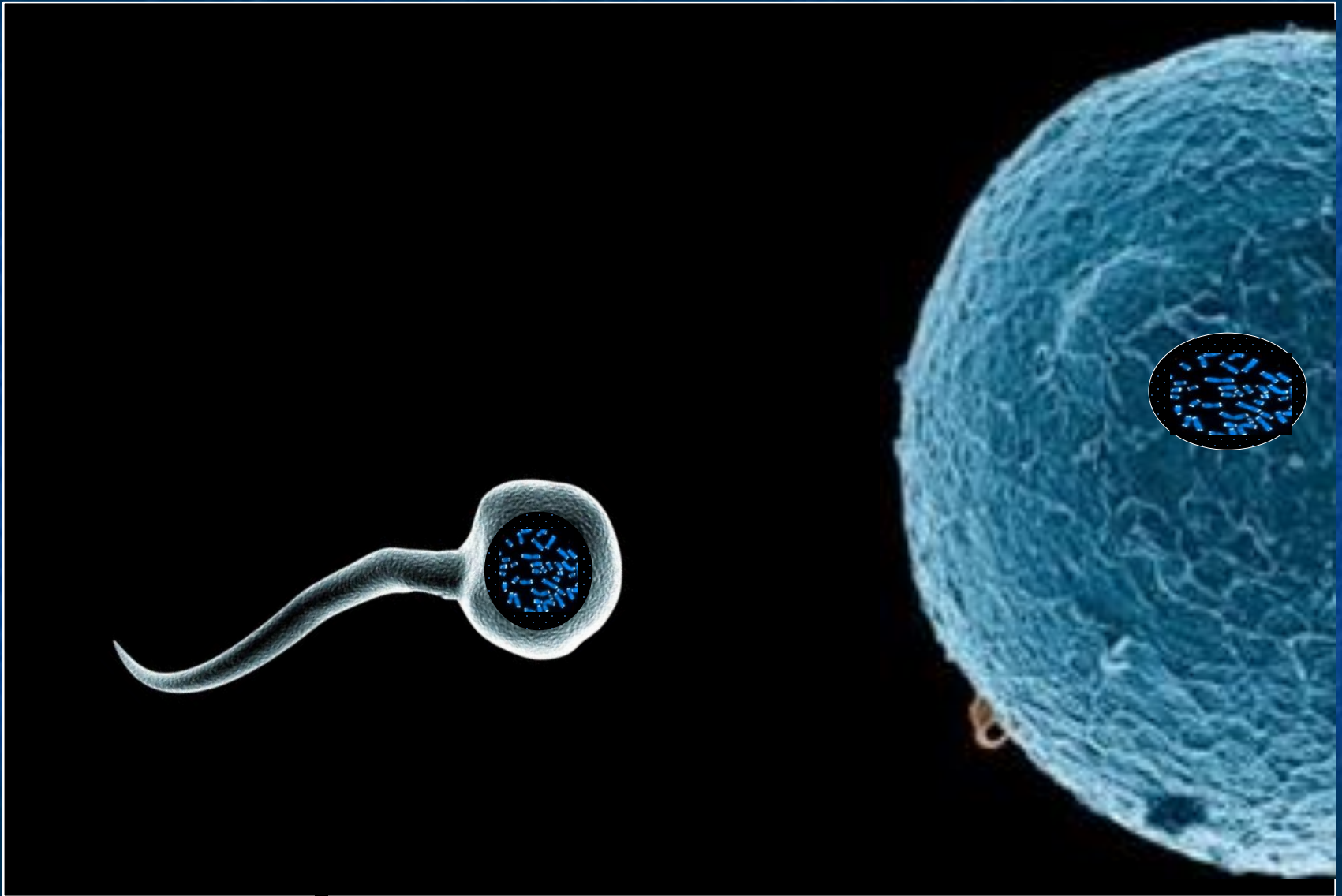
Epigenetics



If genes were fixed, humans would be locked in one way of responding. Instead, life experiences turn genes off or on to adapt to the environment.

Bruce Perry

The sperm and egg each bring 23 chromosomes.

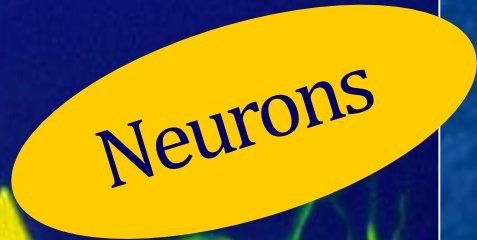
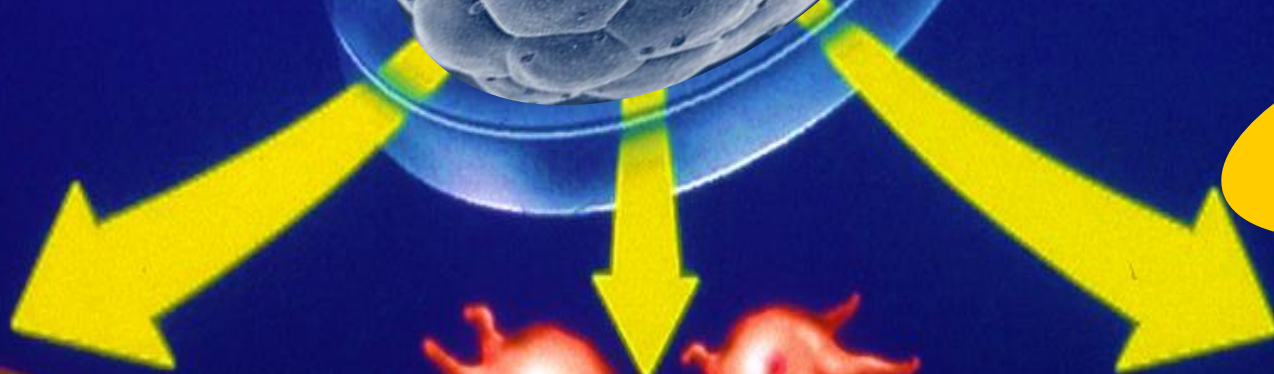
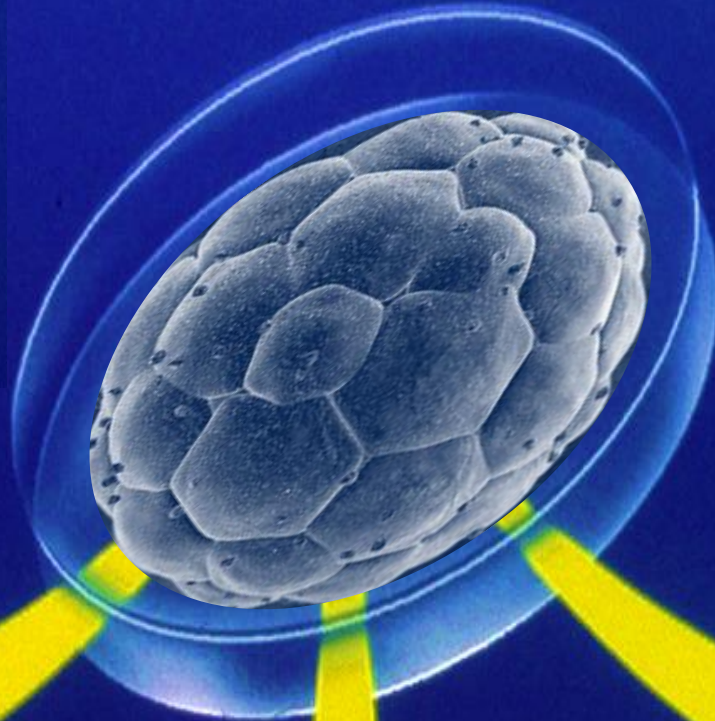




Embryonic Stem Cells

Our very first cells can become any of more than 200 types of cells in the human body.

Embryonic Stem Cells Specialize



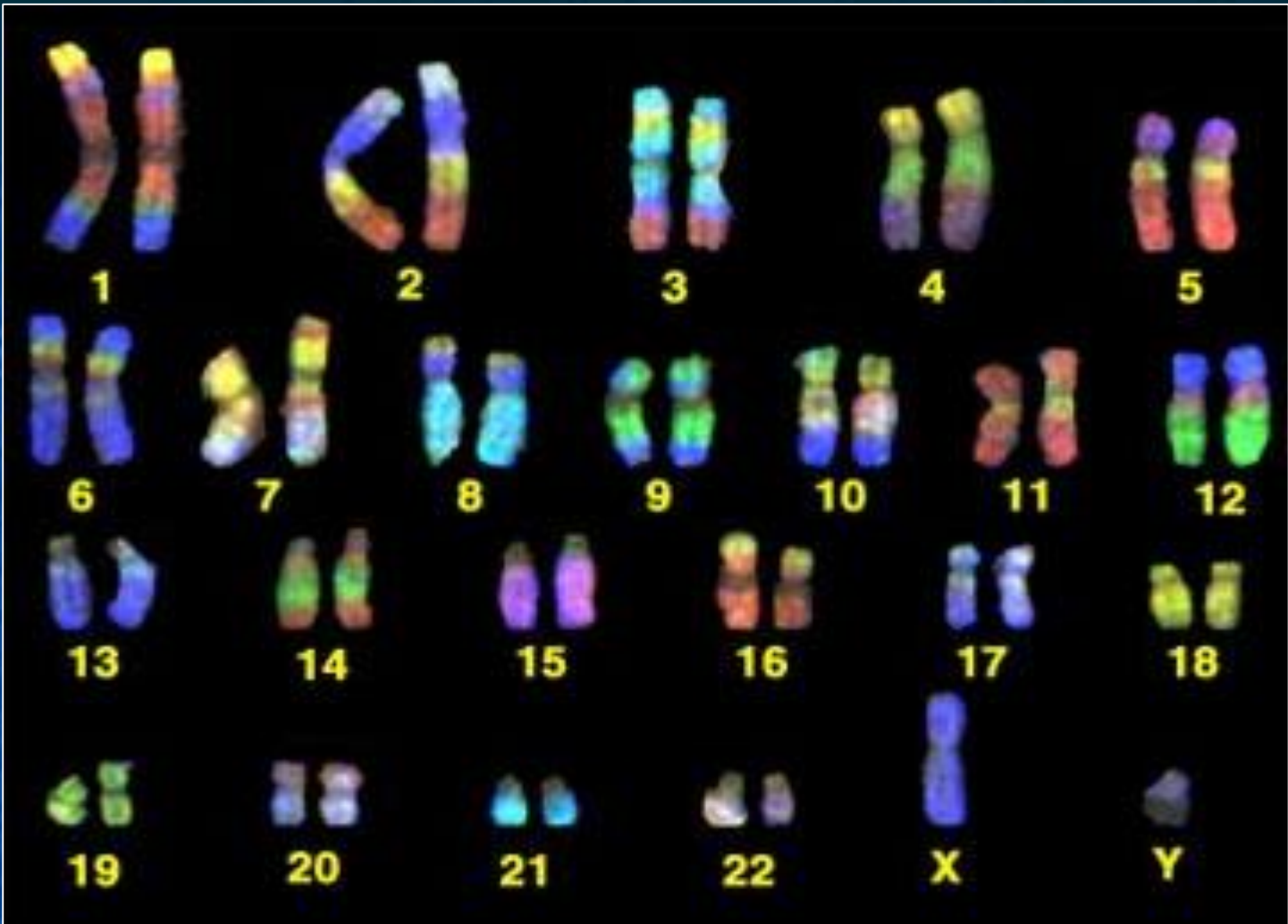
Neurons



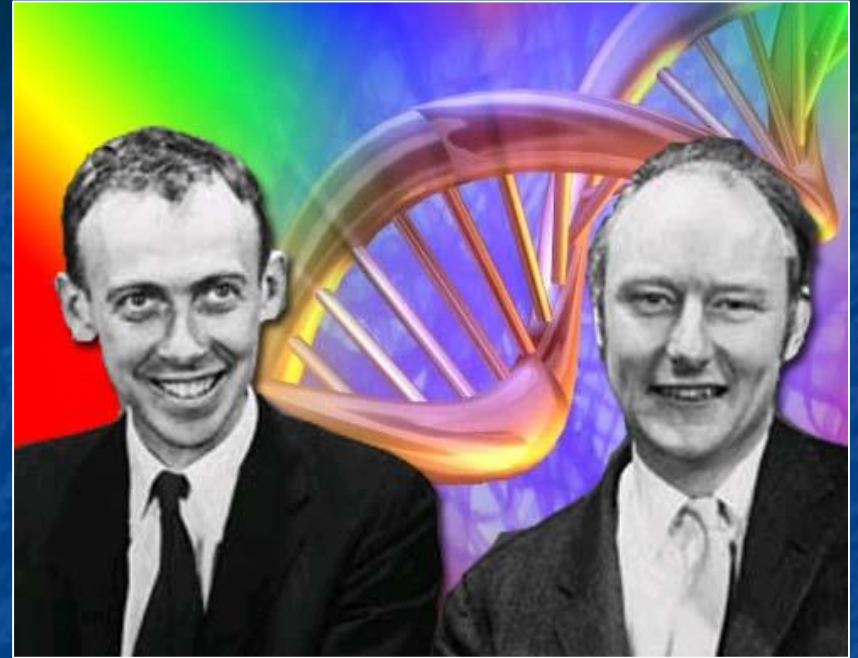
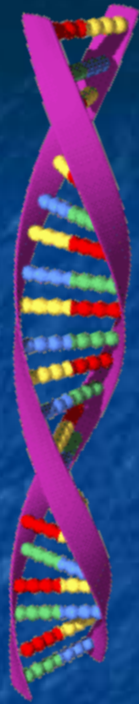
Blood



Muscles



Twenty-three pairs of chromosomes are packed in the nucleus of virtually all of our 20 trillion body cells.



Watson and Crick first described the double helix chromosome in 1953.

But genes only make up 5% of the DNA. Crick called the rest “Junk DNA.”

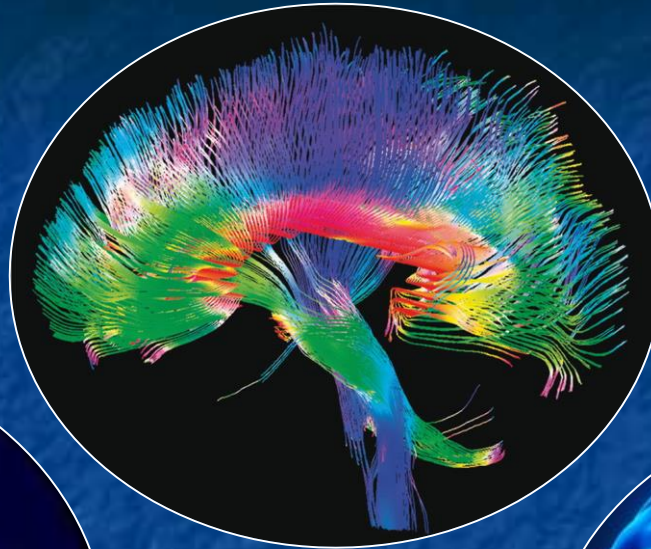


So-called “Junk DNA” actually contains four million *epigenetic switches* that can turn genes on and off.

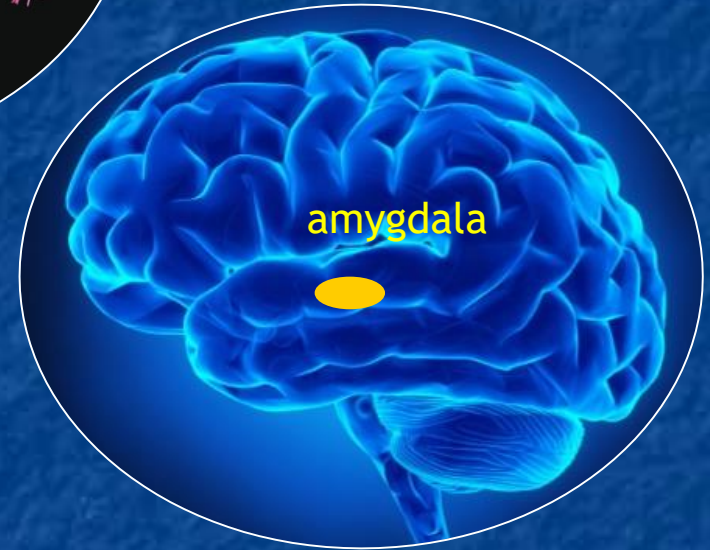
Epigenetic effects can be brief or long term.



Resetting your circadian clock in a new time zone



Connecting neurons for long-term learning

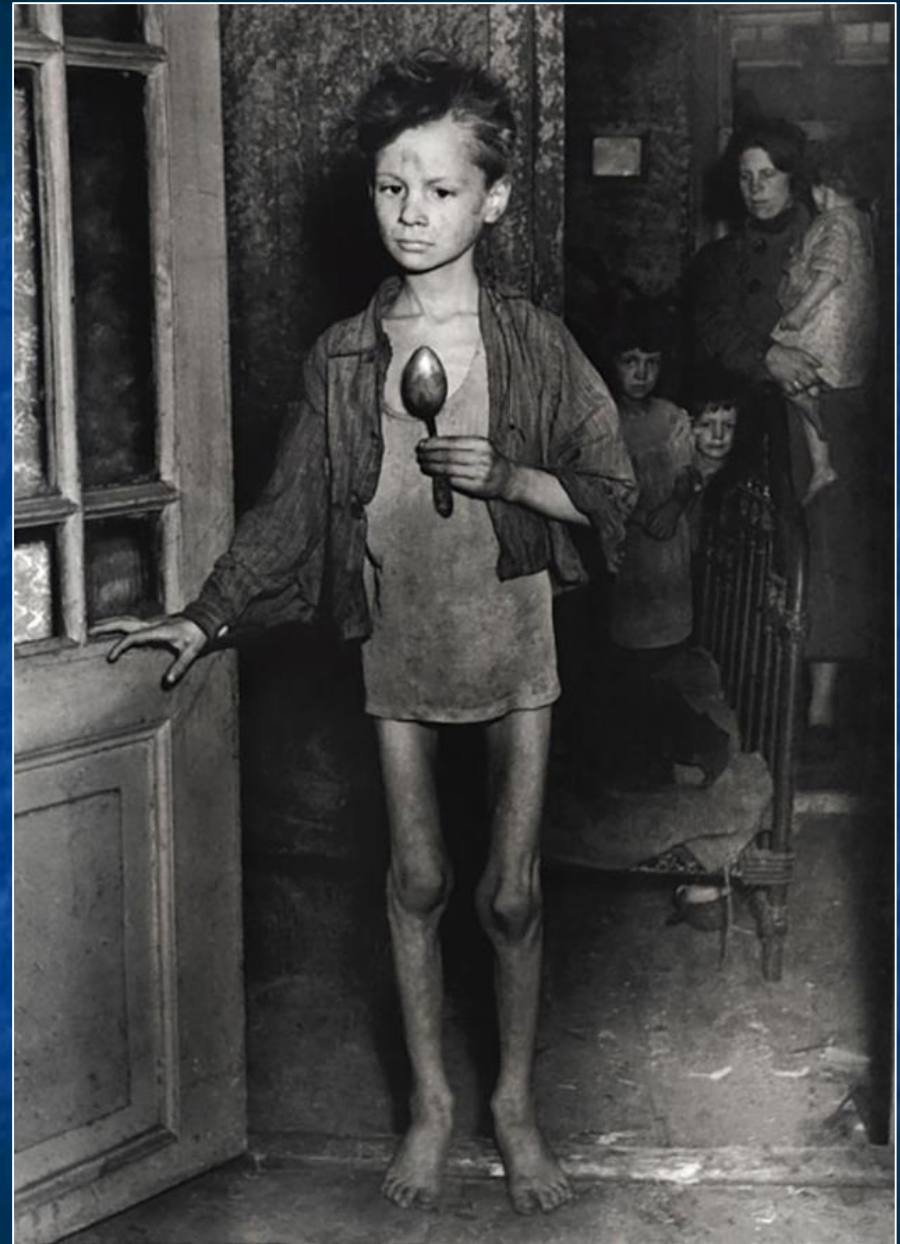


Passing trauma effects to future generations

The Dutch Hunger Winter (1944-45)

Children conceived in this famine were tiny but stored fat to survive. Following the war, they became obese.

Children and grandchildren in later generations were small at birth and likely to become obese and diabetic.



Neglectful Mothering



Nurturing Mothering



Michael Meaney, McGill University



REACTIVE

Fearful

Avoidant

Dysregulated



RESILIENT

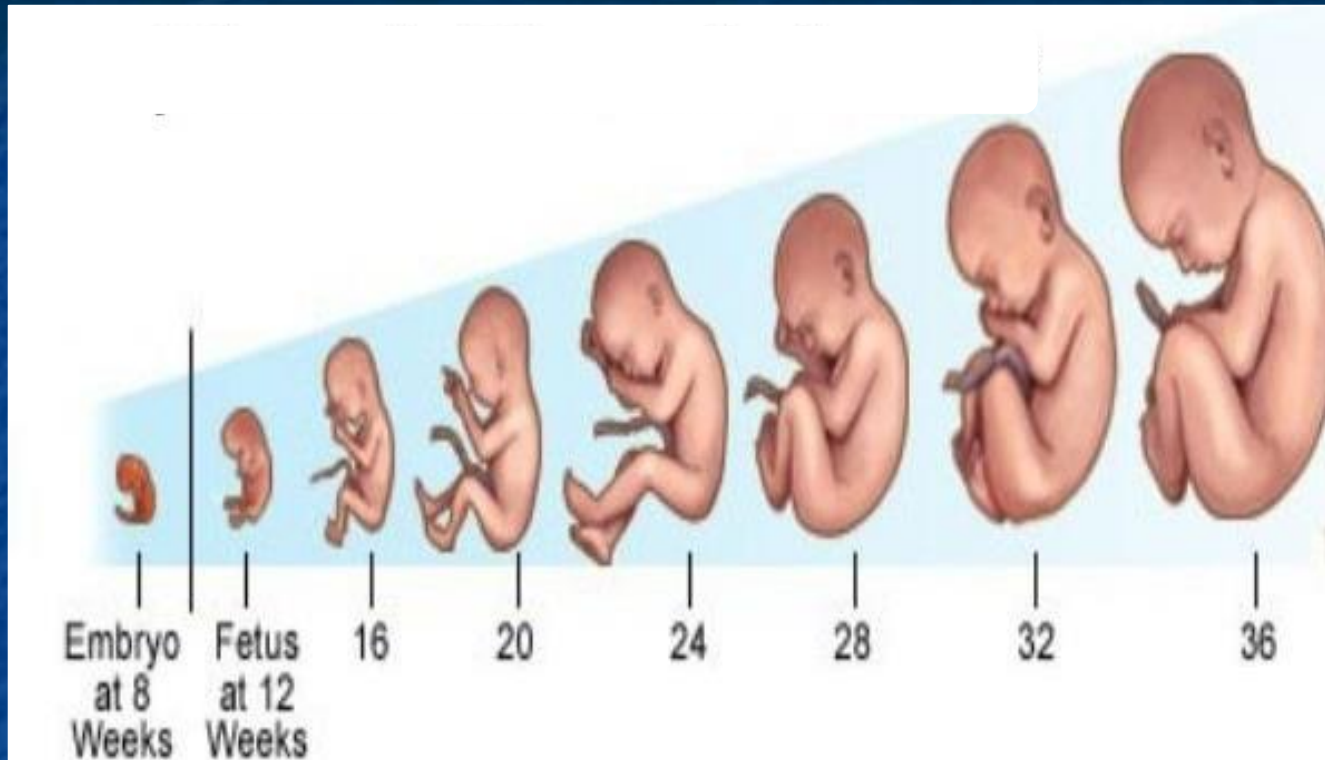
Social

Curious

Intelligent



Epigenetics is highly influential in early development.



Epigenetics is most potent during the fetal stage when an average of 250,000 new neurons are created each minute throughout pregnancy.



Fetal Epigenetics

Diet

Drugs

Alcohol

Poverty

Smoking

Pollution

Cultural Trauma

Epigenetics has Potent Parental Effects



Stress System
Personality

Neuroplasticity
Intelligence

Immune System
Health

Metabolism
Growth

Bisphenol A



Mother and daughter—which is which?



Boys who smoke before puberty can produce harmful epigenetic changes in male offspring.



Cultural and racial trauma can
affect up to four generations.

Kuzawa & Sweet



Epigenetics and Social Class

Obesity

Diabetes

Heart Problems

Mental Illness

Early Death



Technology has produced 83,000 substances not natural in human history. Exposure can affect health and growth and is related to autism, aggressiveness, and learning problems.

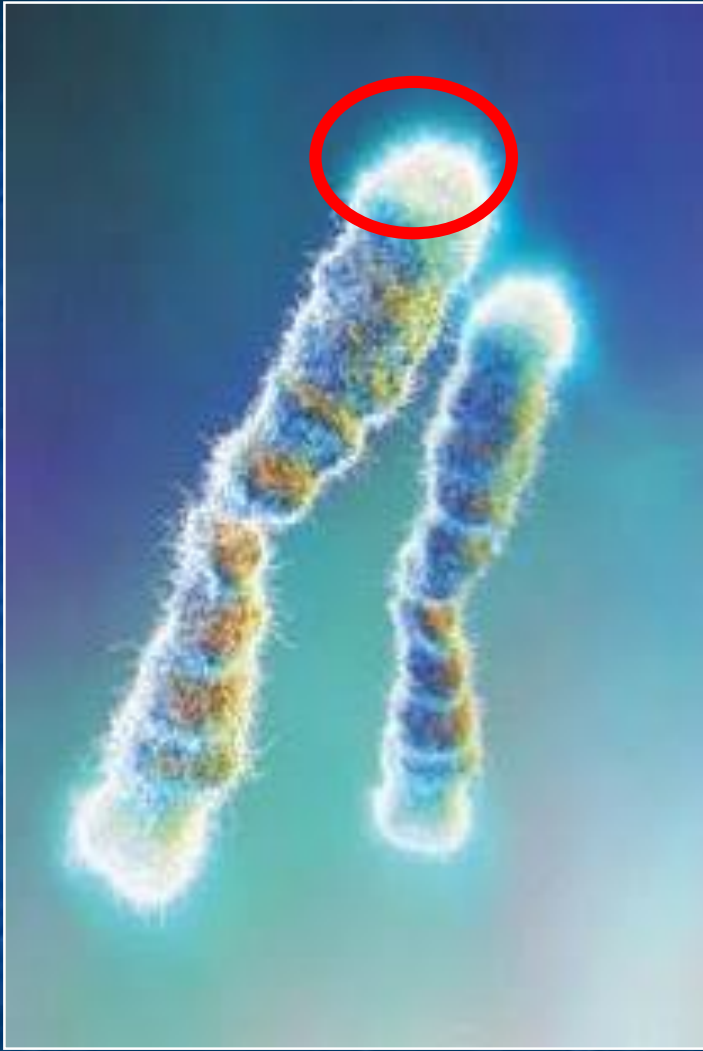
Grandjean & Landrigan

Each capsule contains your medication plus a treatment for each of its side effects.



“Side Effects” is a marketing term for changes in genes from what can be toxic chemicals.

Michael Meaney



Telomeres: Our Human Aging Clock

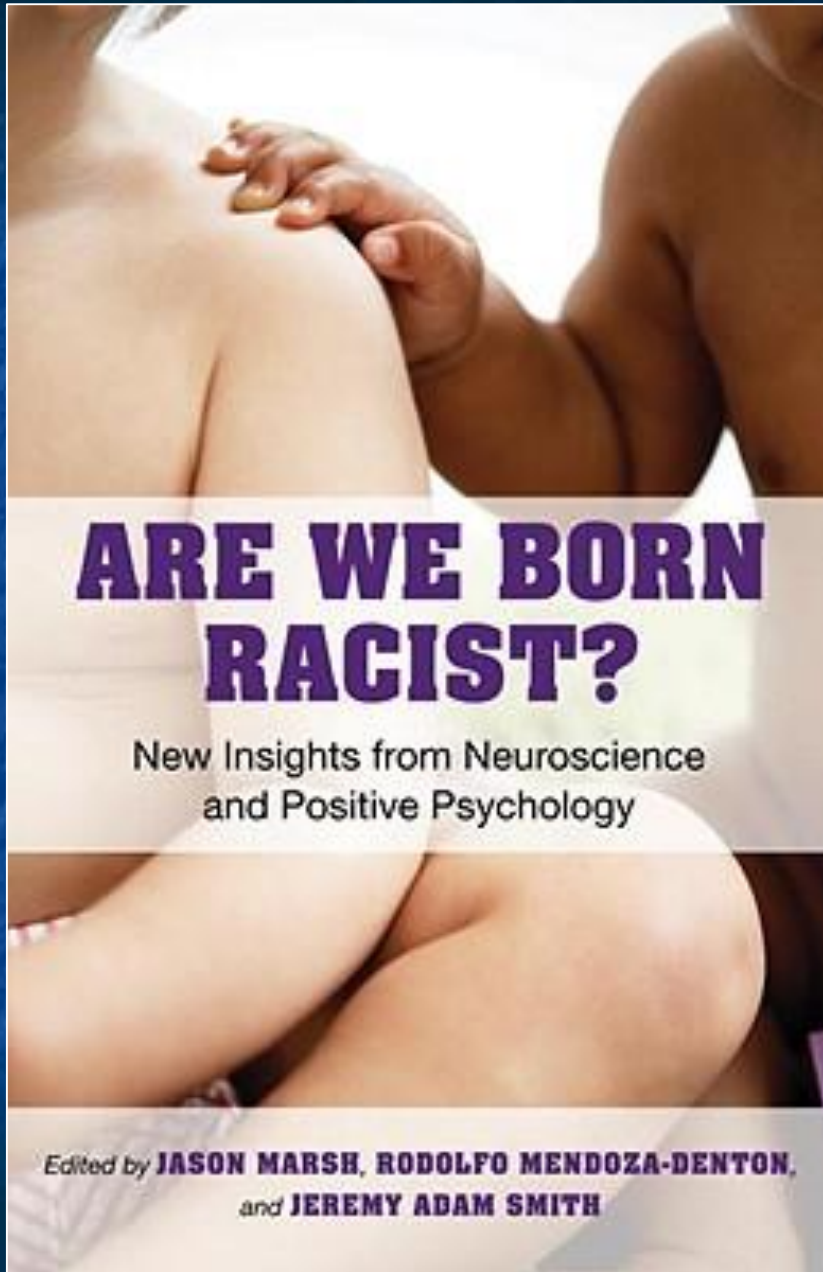
These are protective caps on chromosomes which shorten with age.

When telomeres wear away, the cell becomes cancerous or dies.



Extreme Stress Erodes Telomeres

Children exposed to domestic violence, physical abuse, or frequent bullying show significantly more telomere loss between ages 5 and 10.

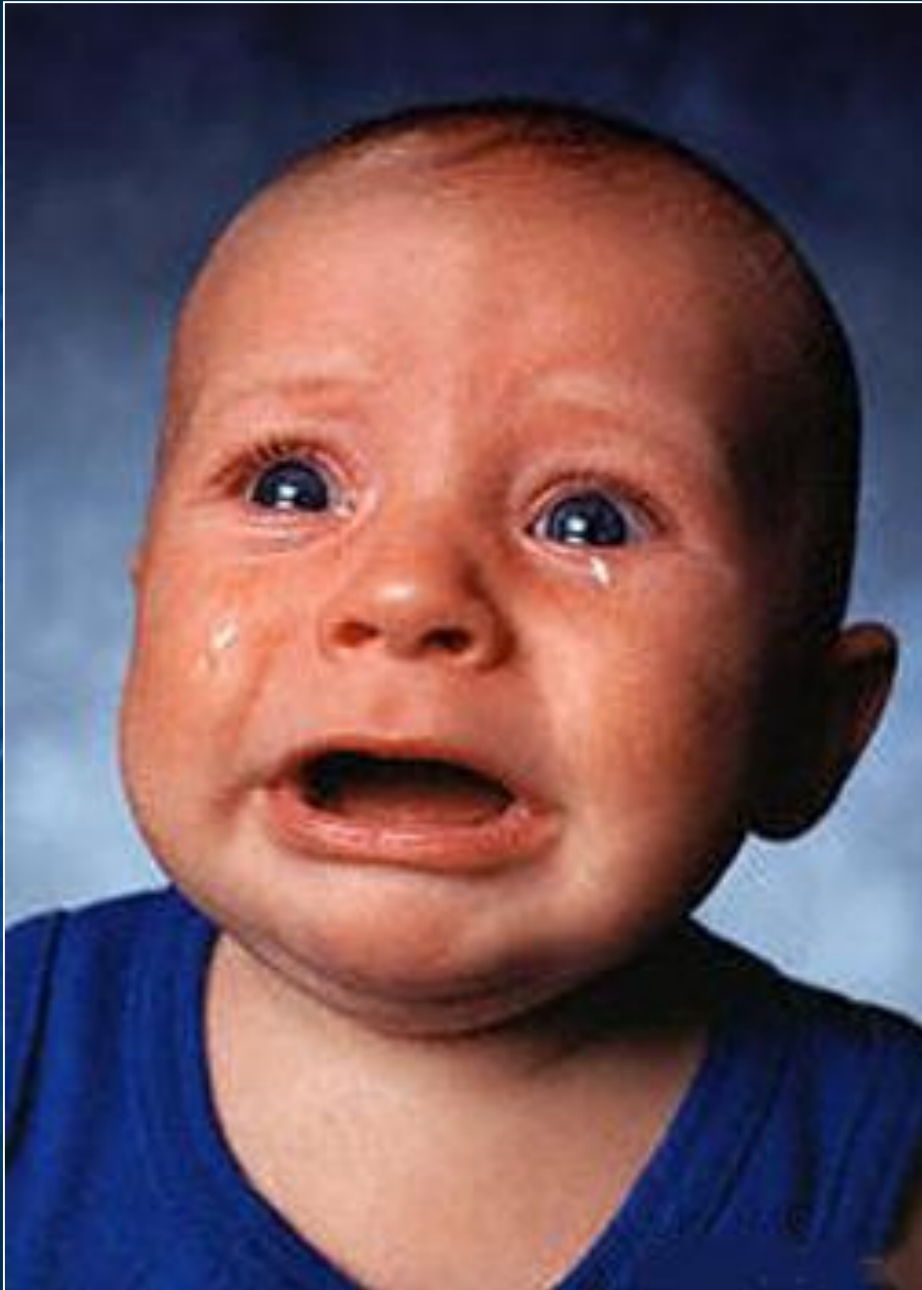


Racism and Epigenetics

Persons threatened by our highly diverse society experience chronic stress which leads to chronic health and emotional problems.

“Building friendships with people of other races seems to eliminate unhealthy stress . . . each new interaction can be greeted as a challenge instead of a threat.”

(Page-Gold, 2010, p. 44)



Temperament and Epigenetics

The interaction of
temperament and
environment is the heart
of epigenetics.

(Nowakowski, Schmidt, &
Hall, 2010)



Jerome Kagan
Harvard University

5HTT Serotonin Genes come in 2 sizes



Long

Short



Look on the bright side.
Children with LL alleles ignore
threat and attend to the positive.
(Low Amygdala reactivity)



You need to be careful.
Children with SS alleles are
cautious and attend to threat.
(High Amygdala reactivity)

(Sugden et al., 2010)

BOLD: Low Reactive Temperament



These youth may be impulsive and may feel less fear, anxiety, or guilt.

With achievement, love, and limits, they become positive leaders. But neglectful or indifferent parenting and teaching makes them vulnerable to developing antisocial behavior.

(Kagan, 2010)

TIMID: High Reactive Temperament



These youth are more easily conditioned by fear, shame, or power assertion.

With sensitive parenting, they become confident and conscientious. But maltreatment and neglect can cause deep emotional disturbance.

(Kagan, 2010)

Plasticity Genes: Evolution has made some children more dependent on nurturing by adults, others less so.



The Good News



Meeting growth needs builds resilient brains.
Epigenetic problems are potentially reversible.

Emotional Wellbeing



Adversity and Trauma

Resilience and Health

Designer Genes

Restoring Wellbeing

Three Pillars of Transforming Care

Trauma and Resilience
in the Other 23 Hours



Howard Bath



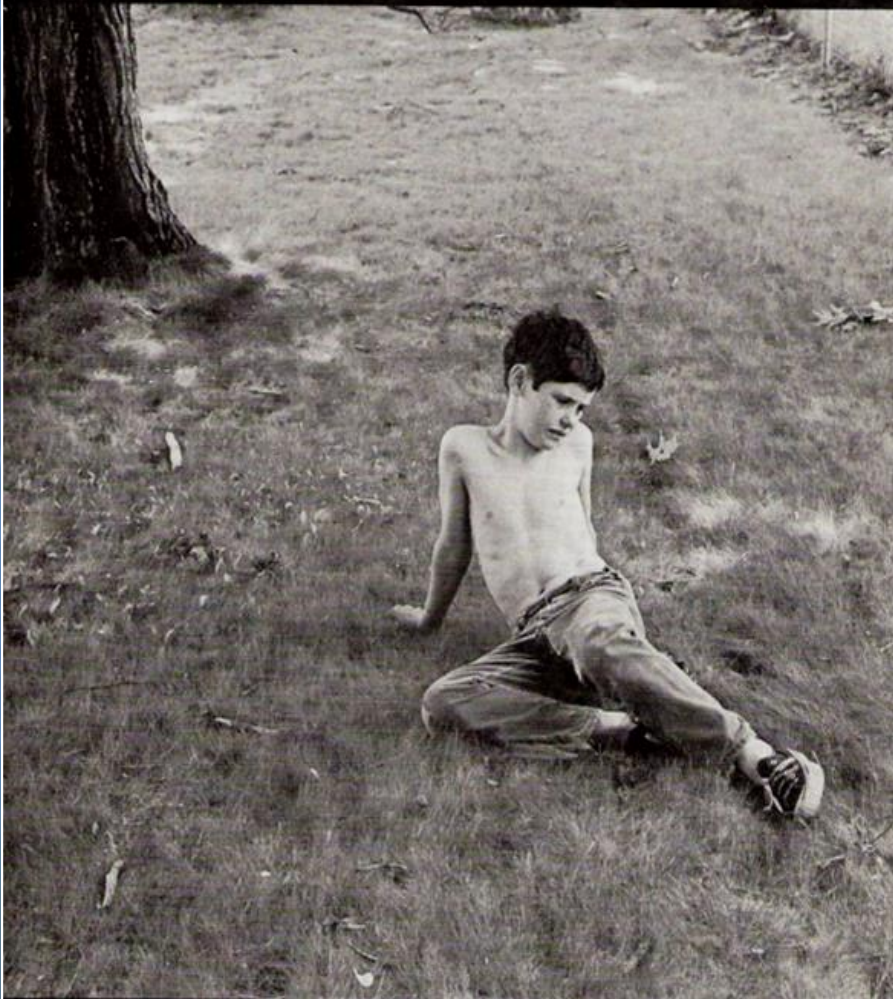
John Seita



The other 23 hours

Albert E. Trieschman
James K. Whittaker
Larry K. Brendtro

foreword by
David Wineman



*Parents, counselors,
teachers, coaches,
direct-care workers,
case managers, and
others are all in a
position to help a
child heal.*

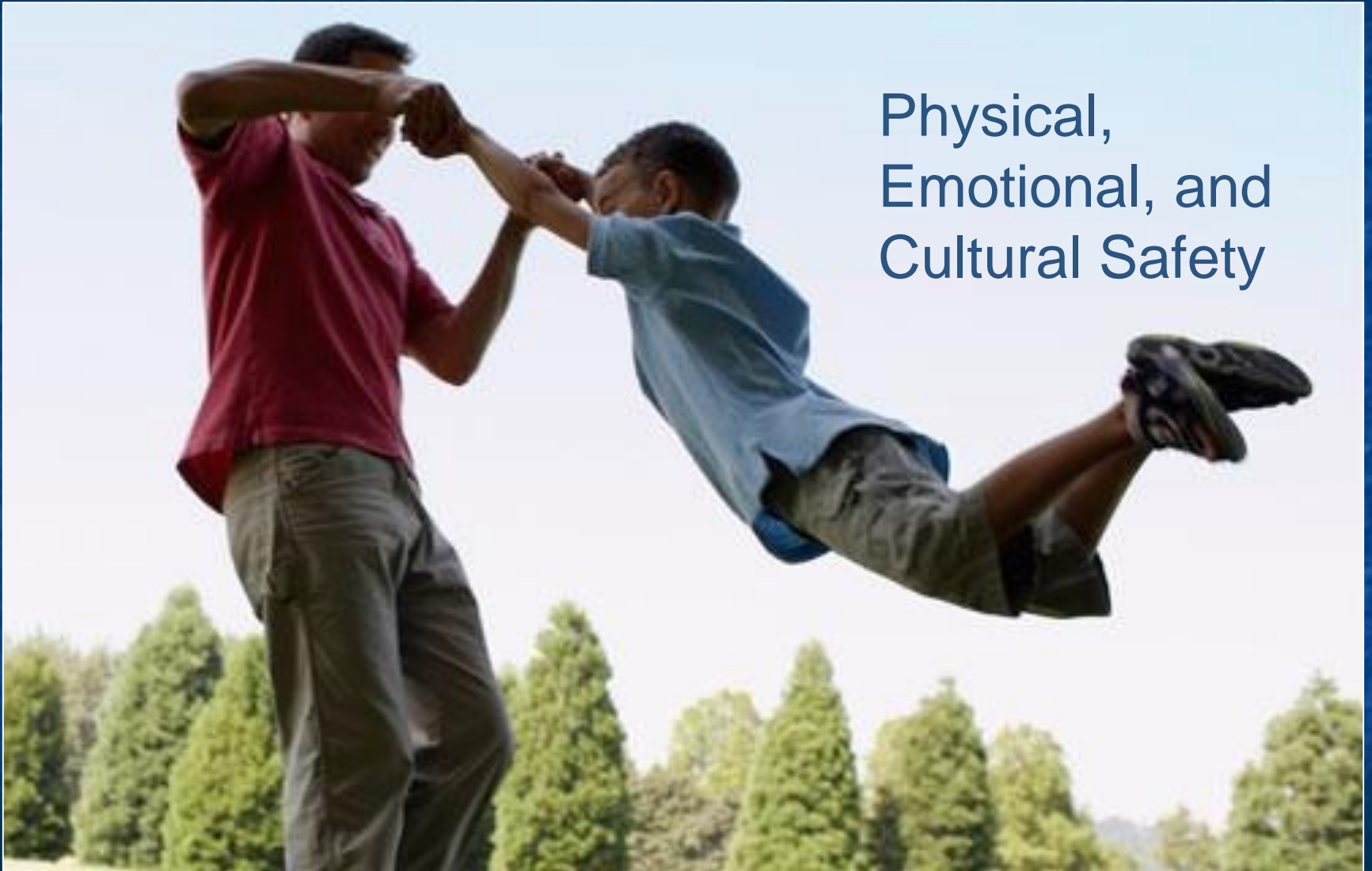
Greenwald



Healing relationships need not always involve psychotherapy. Many people recover from trauma exposure in the context of family, friendships, and other relationships.

Briere & Scott

1. Safety



Physical,
Emotional, and
Cultural Safety



*The traumatized child's
primary concern is safety*

Greenwald



Distrust = Unsafe

A child refusing offers of emotional connection is feeling unsafe.

Cournos, 2002, p. 149

ATTACHMENT



John Bowlby

S
A
F
E
T
Y



Mary Ainsworth

2. Connecting

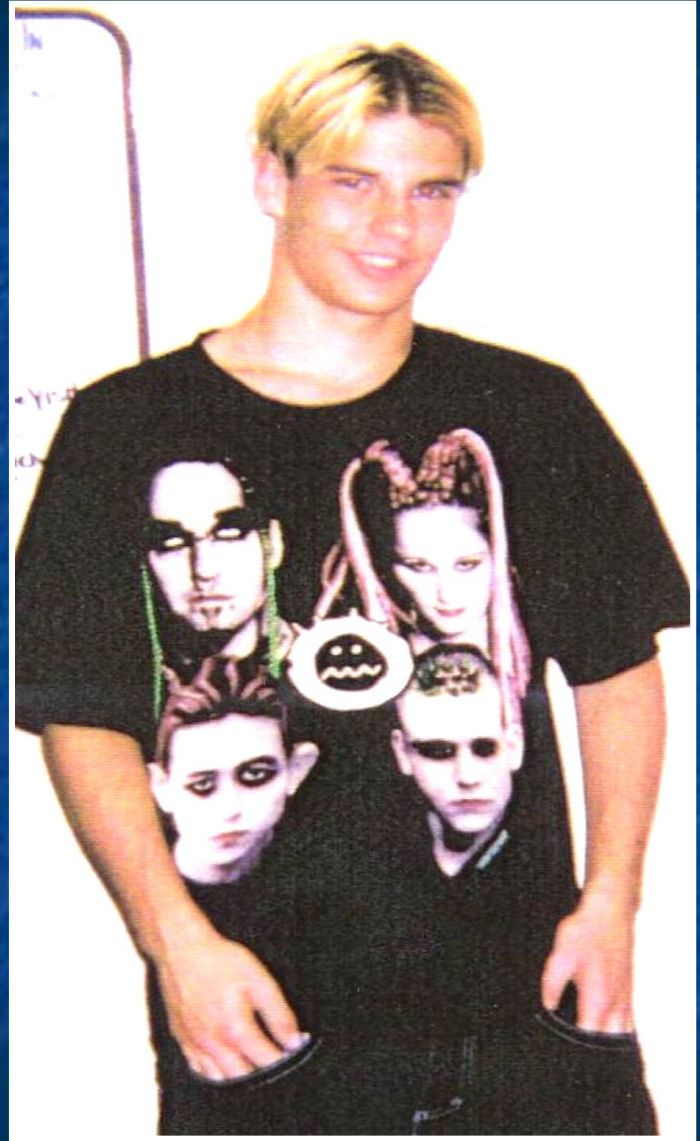
Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love.

Perry & Szalavitz, 2006



Bids to Connect





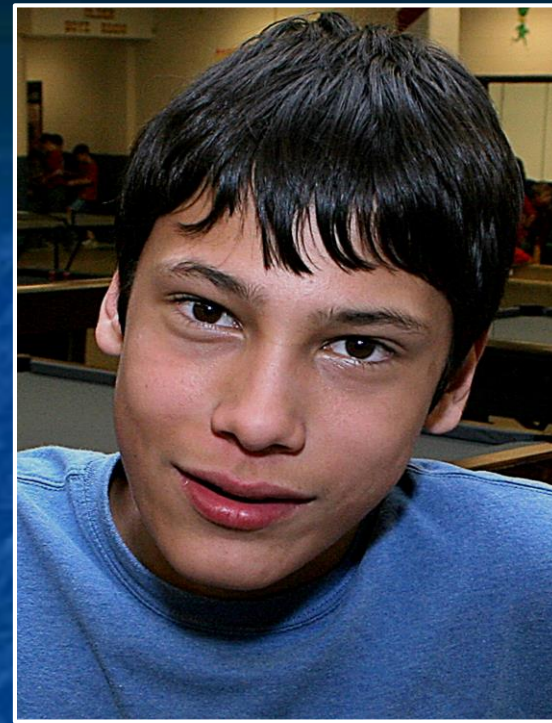


Adversarial Encounters

Distrust. Youth believes adult won't care, understand, or help.

Antagonism. Youth and adult are in conflict and power struggles.

Alienation. Rancor leads to aggression or avoidance.



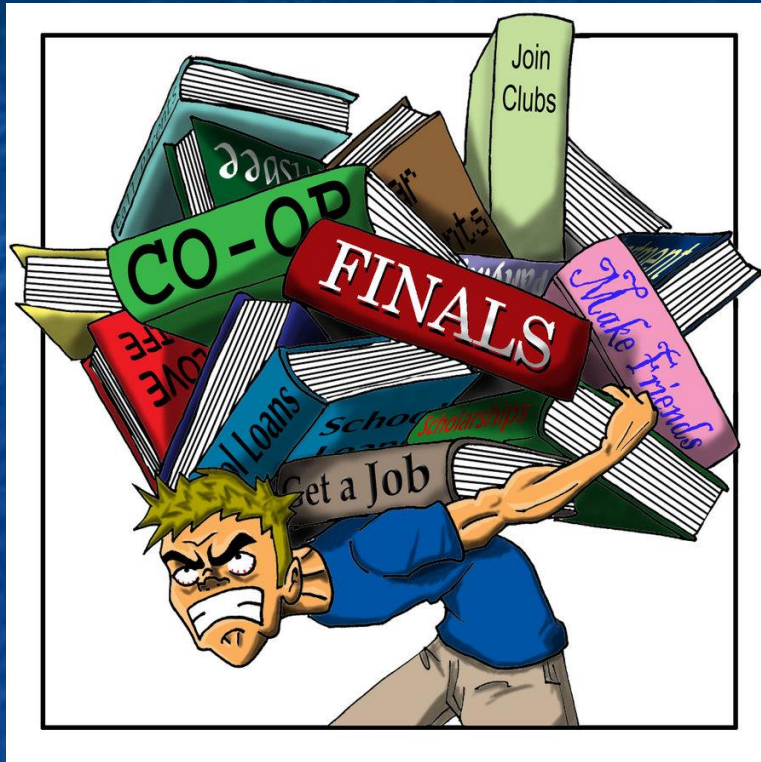
Positive Alliances

Trust. Youth believes the adult cares, understands, and can help.

Cooperation. Youth and adult work together to solve a problem.

Attachment. Mutual attraction develops from working together.

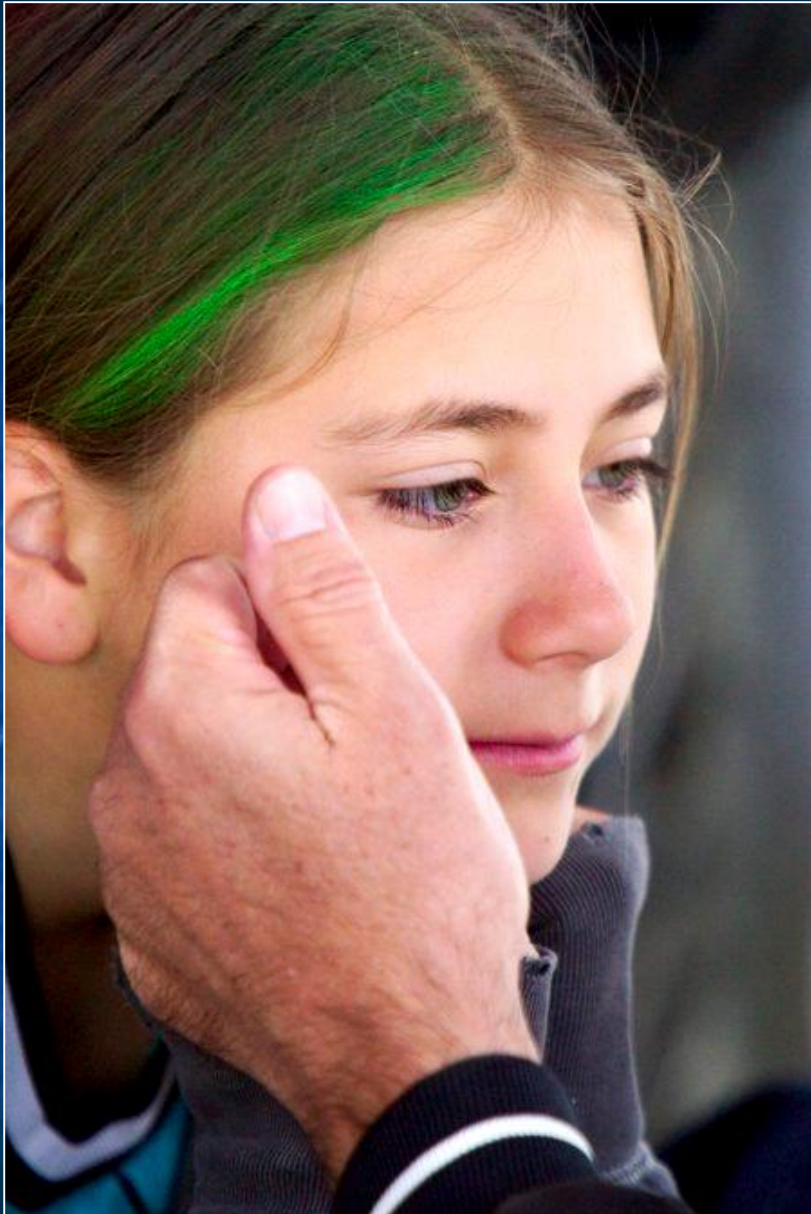
3. Coping



COPING I: Capacity to manage external challenges and threats.



COPING II: Capacity to keep one's inner balance and regulate emotions.



Self-Regulation

Distressed children need to “borrow” the emotional control of the adult brain. As the child is comforted, mirror neurons enable the child to regain composure. “Co-regulation” of emotions is the foundation of all self control.

Howard Bath

What is the primary effect of relational trauma?



- a. Impaired Trust
- b. Impaired Learning
- c. Emotional Numbing
- d. Emotional Dysregulation



Emotional Dysregulation



A breakdown in the capacity to regulate internal states like fear, anger, and sexual impulses.

van der Kolk (2005)

How do children learn emotional regulation?



They borrow their caregiver's calm brain.



Calming Cycles: Teaching Self-Regulation

Vera Fahlberg, 2012





Children learn self-regulation through attachment with caregivers.



Calming Together

Soothing caregivers help traumatized children to regulate their mental states and gain emotional control.



Co-Regulation

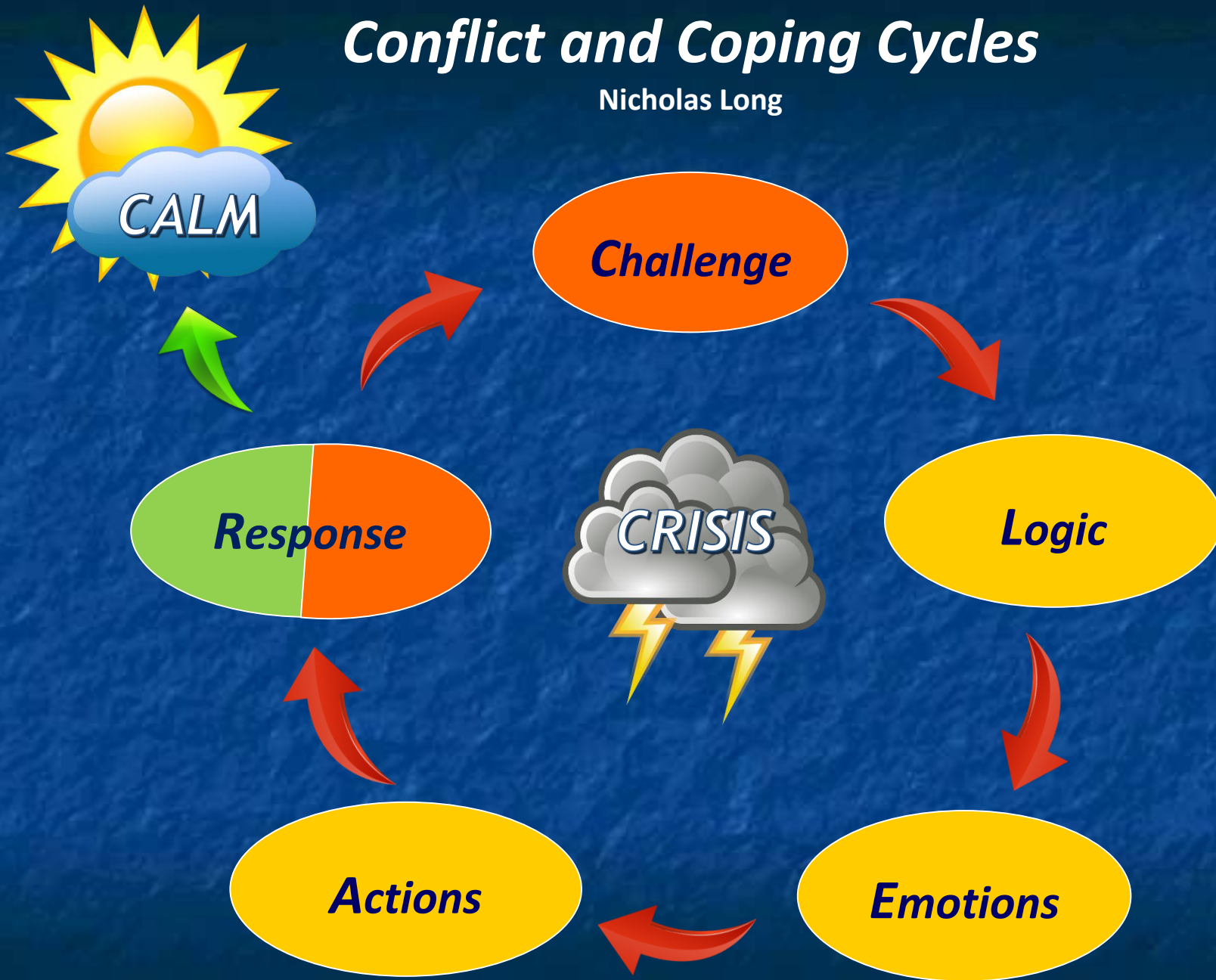
Goal: Help the youth to calm
Soothing and respectful tone
Attune to the youth's needs
Focus on the youth's feelings
Helpers manage emotions

Coercive Regulation

Goal: Stop bad behavior
Loud and hostile tone
Ignore the youth's needs
Focus on the youth's behavior
Helpers vent emotions

Conflict and Coping Cycles

Nicholas Long



Five Decades of Research

Resilience rests fundamentally on relationships. Suniya Luthar

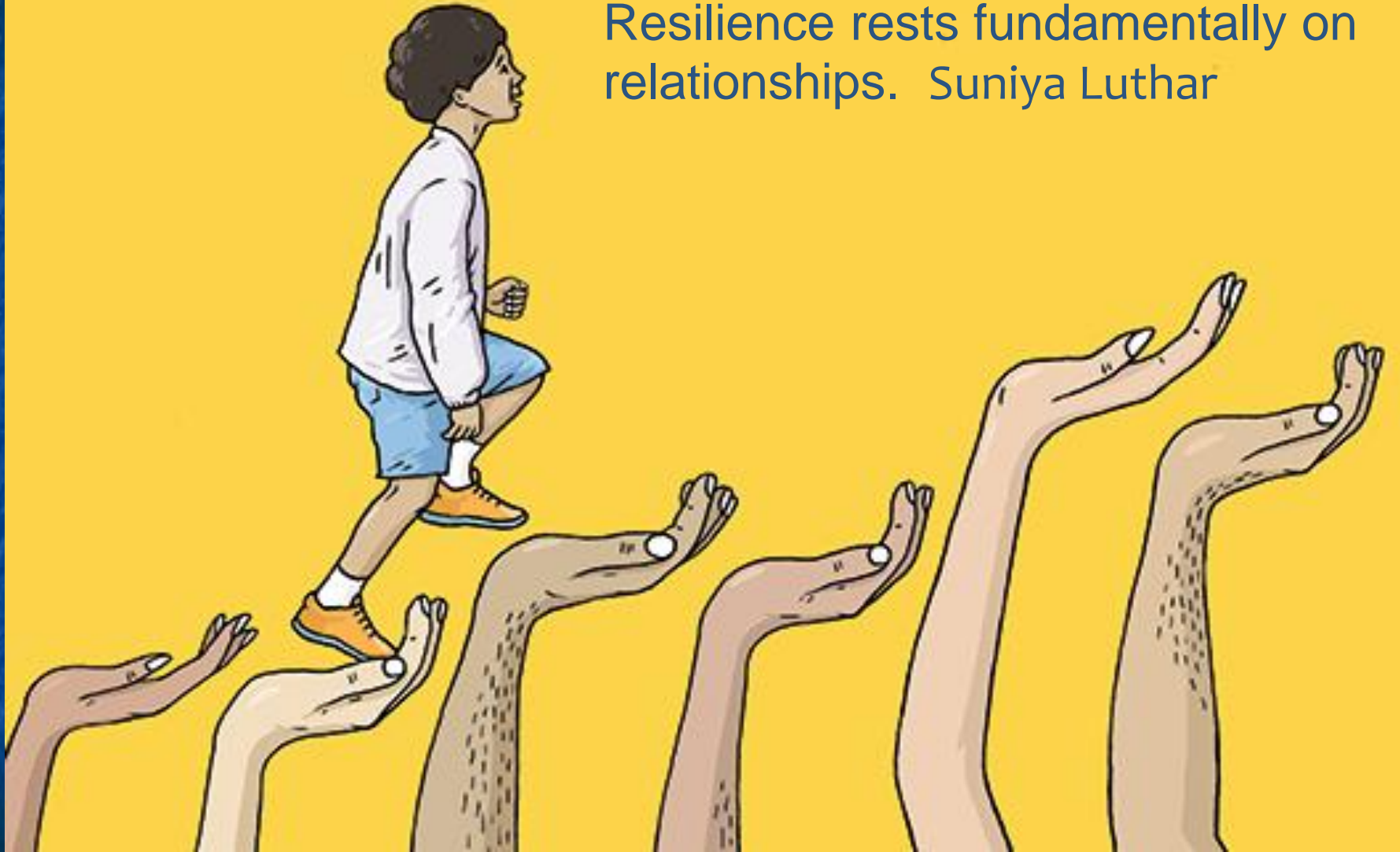


Illustration by Scott Menchin

Can I trust you?

Do you like me?





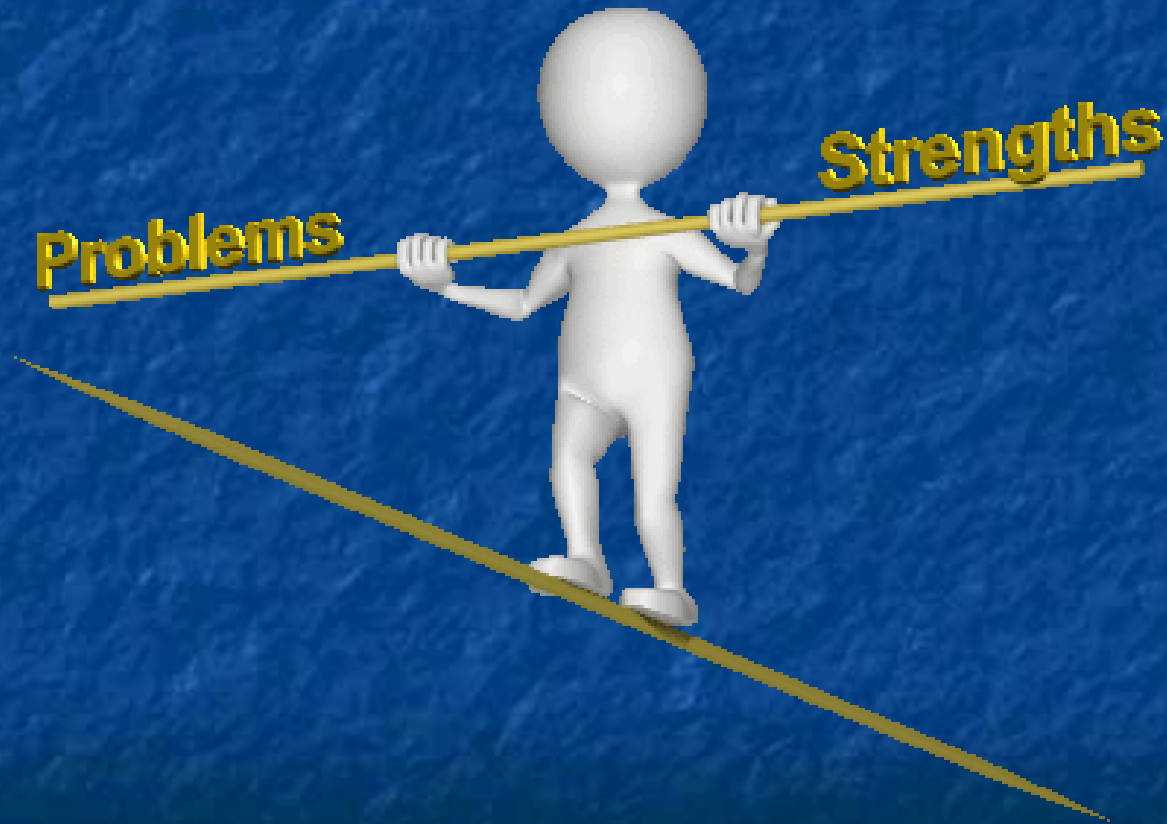
EXCLUSION
triggers
SHAME



BELONGING
triggers
PRIDE

Glance at Problems, Gaze at Strengths

JC Chambers



Developing Strengths Versus Fixing Flaws



Working on strengths enhances personal growth more than seeking to correct one's deficiencies.

(Meyers et al., 2015)

Rolling with Resilience: Building Family Strengths



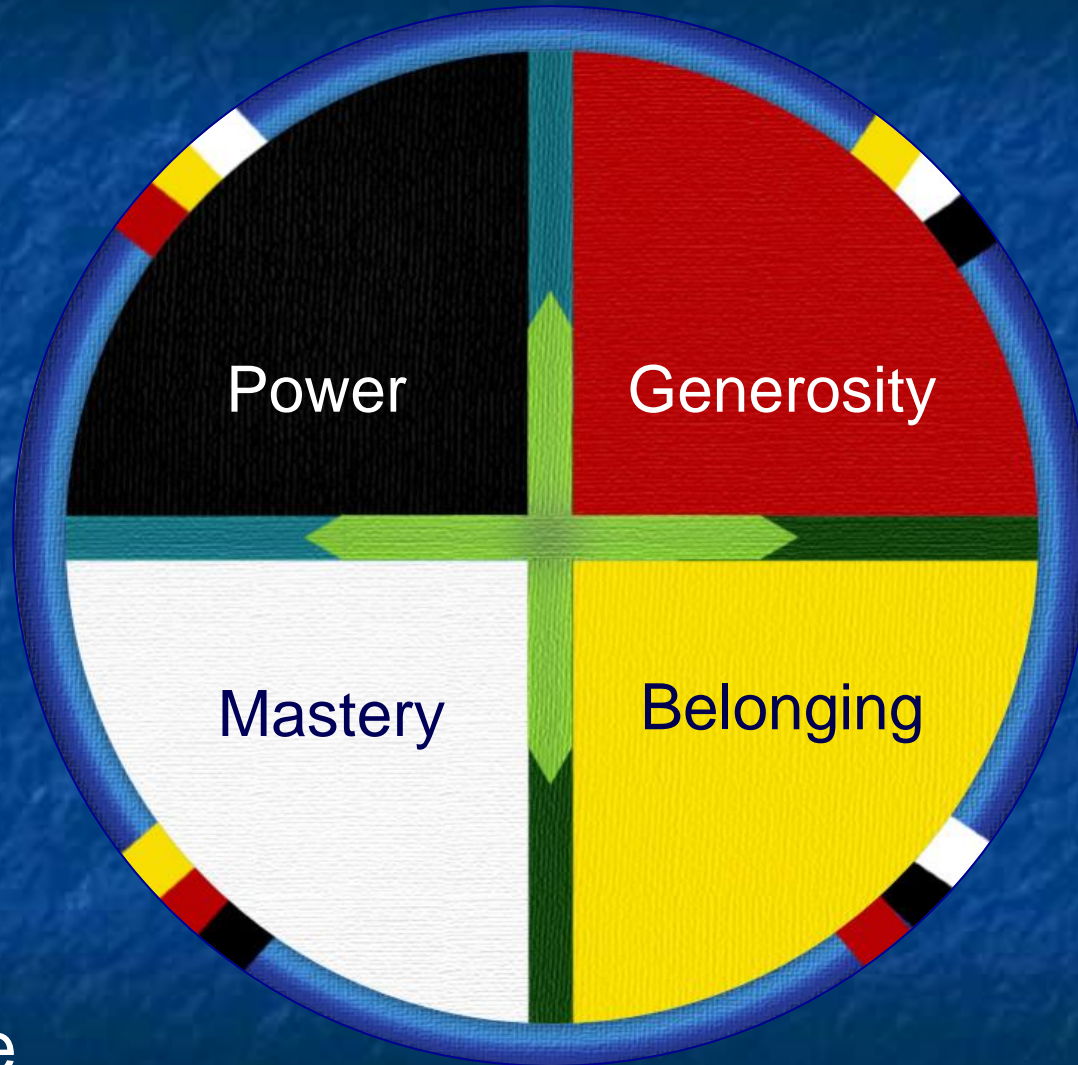
Adults Shape Youth Cultures

1. Team cohesion
2. Team involvement
3. Belief in program
4. Optimism about youth



The Road to Resilience


Adventure



Adults also share these same needs.

Safety

Safety

A silhouette of a woman and a child walking together against a bright, golden sunset sky. The woman is on the right, holding the child's hand. The child is on the left, walking towards the right. The sky is filled with soft, glowing clouds. The foreground is dark, showing the silhouettes of trees and a fence line.

Protection from physical,
emotional, and cultural harm

Belonging



Connections in mutual
relationships of support

Mastery



Possessing strengths and talents that are nurtured

Power



Gaining self-confidence while
respecting the dignity of others

Generosity

The image features two silhouetted figures on a dark, sloping hill. The figure on the left is crouching and reaching out with both hands towards the right. The figure on the right is standing and leaning forward, also reaching out with both hands towards the left. The background is a dramatic sky at sunset or sunrise, with soft, wispy clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and blue. The overall mood is one of connection and support.

Showing compassion and
concern in a purposeful life

Adventure



The courage to embrace
new challenges and flourish

Digital copies of this presentation:
ReclaimingYouthAtRisk.org/handouts

