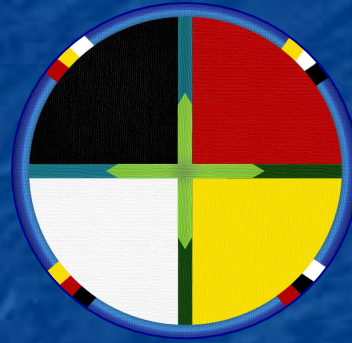


Putting the Circle of Courage into Practice

Larry K. Brendtro



The Circle of Courage

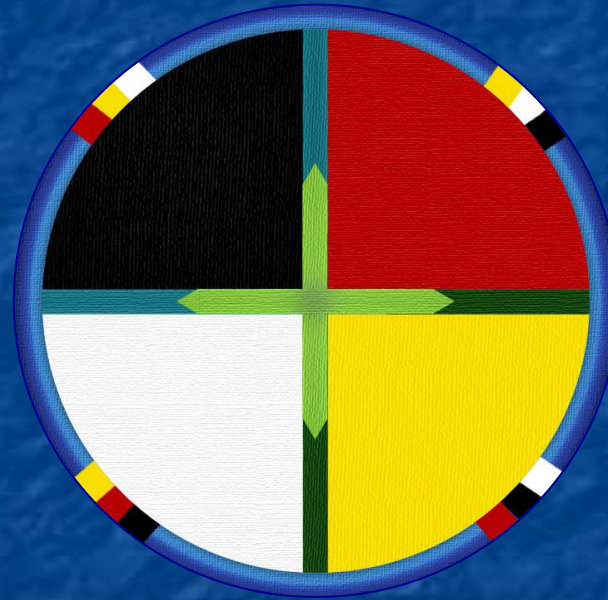
Native Wisdom

Trauma

Courage

Resilience

Reclaiming





ENTERING

PINE RIDGE
INDIAN RESERVATION

LAND OF THE OGLALA SIOUX
CHIEFS
RED CLOUD BLACK ELK CRAZY HORSE





ANNA AND NOAH BROKENLEG
Survivors of the boarding school era
who kept their Lakota culture alive.



Across cultures and life span, all humans have the same needs.

MARTIN BROKENLEG

THIRD EDITION

RECLAIMING YOUTH AT RISK

Futures of Promise

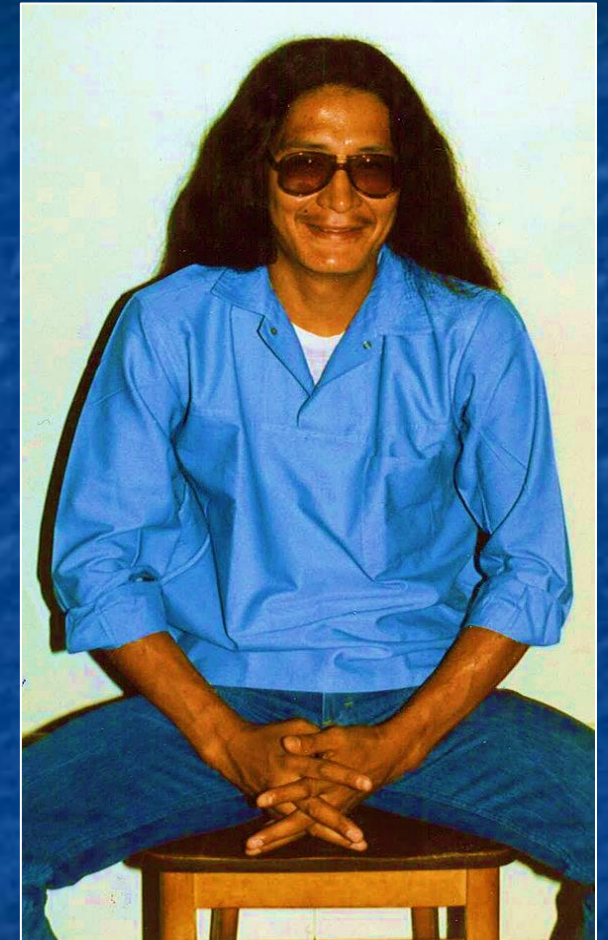
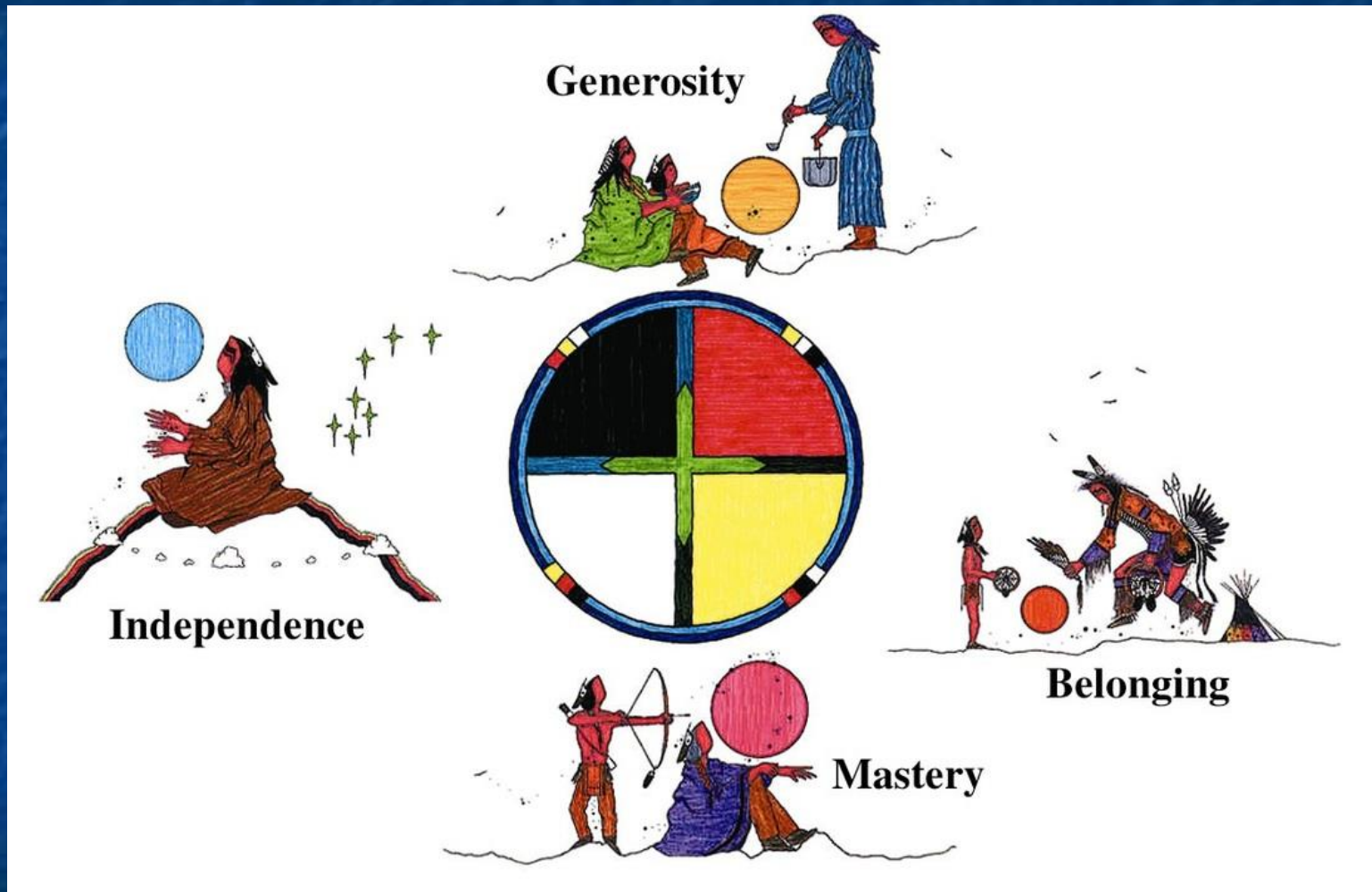
Larry K. Brendtro | Martin Brokenleg | Steve Van Bockern



Larry K. Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, Steve Van Bockern

Augustana University, Sioux Falls, SD

The Circle of Courage

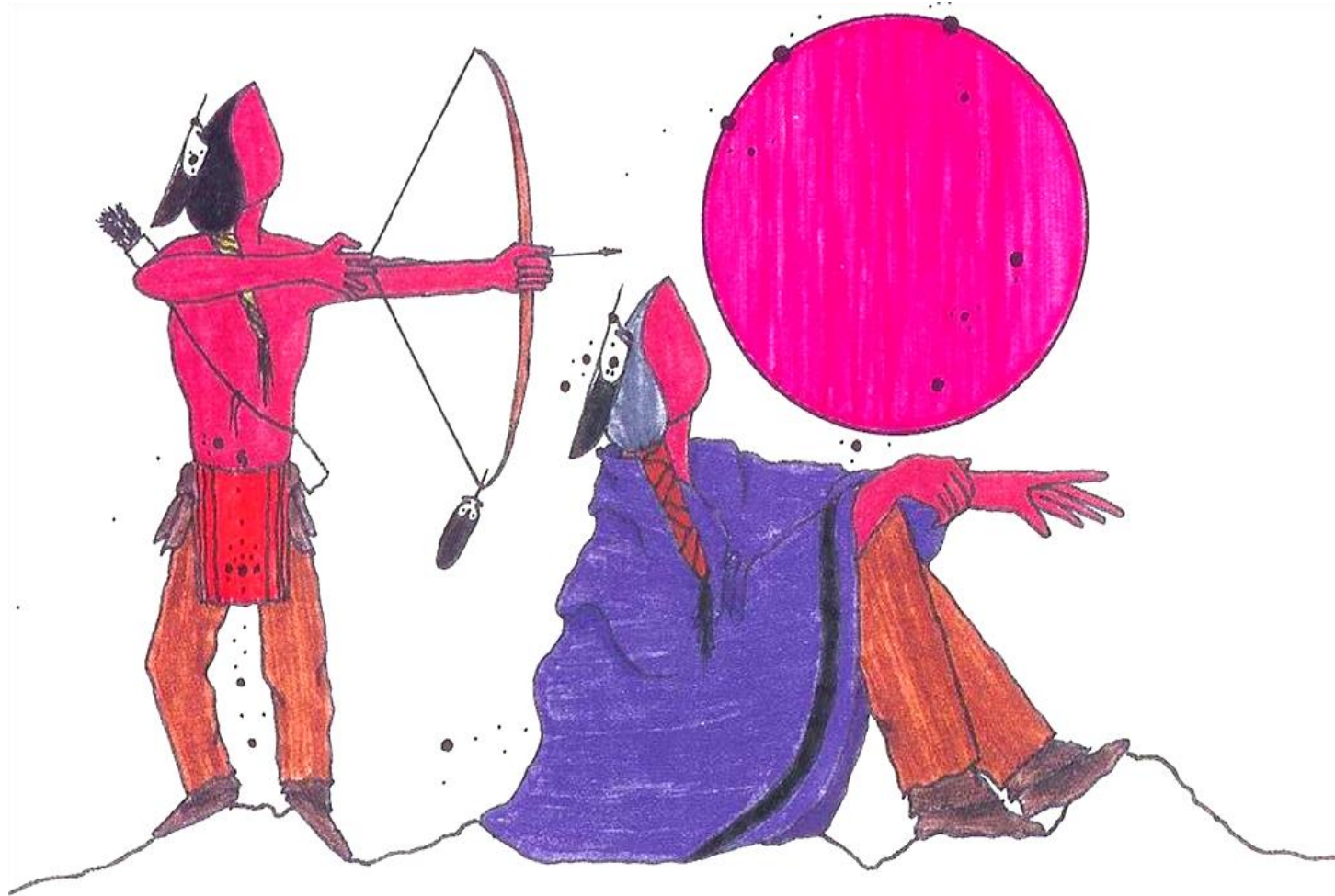


GEORGE BLUE BIRD
Lakota Artist

Spirit of Belonging



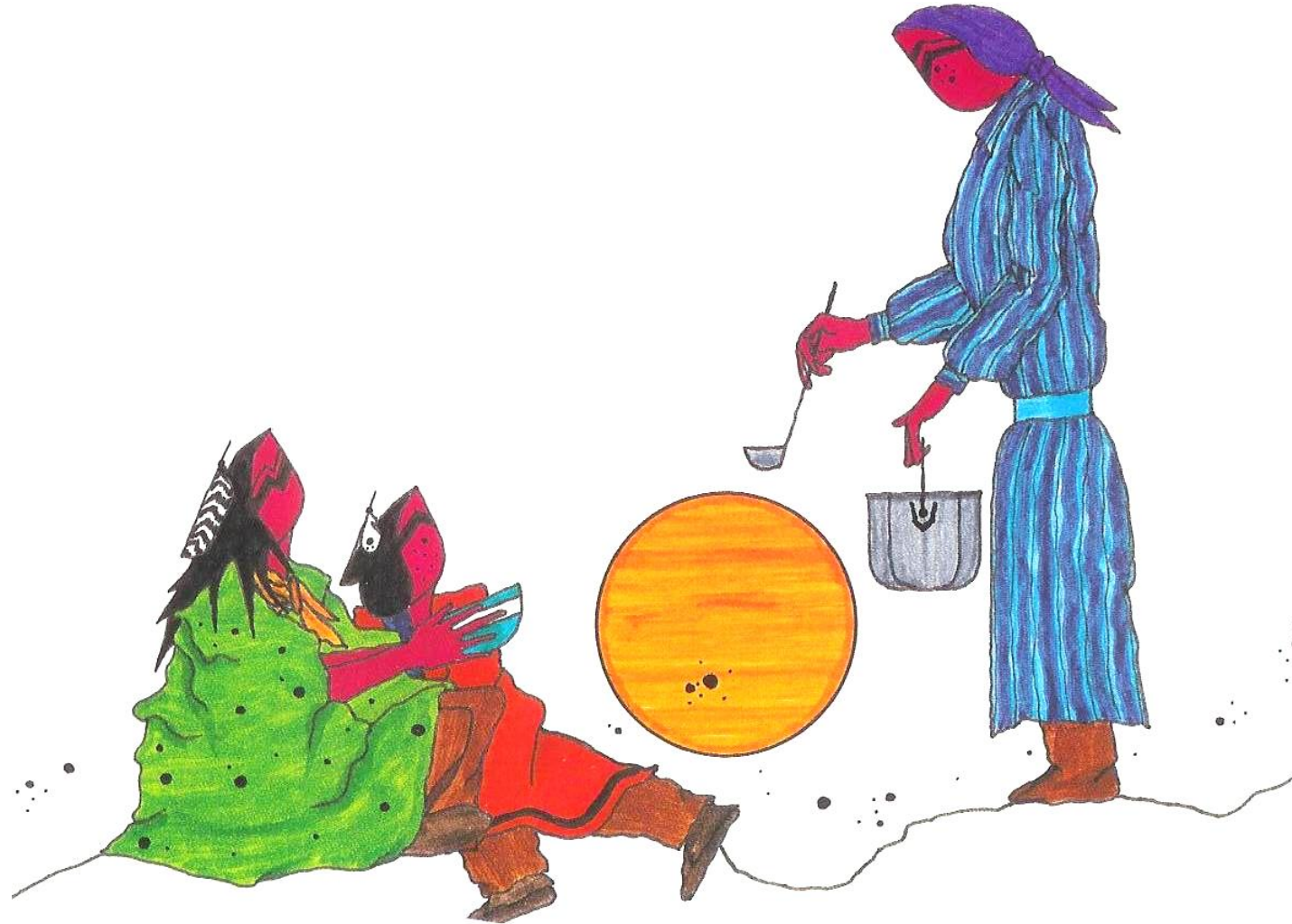
Spirit of Mastery



Spirit of Independence



Spirit of Generosity





A First Nations carver expresses the Circle of Courage in this totem.

What is the *Active Ingredient* in
successful work with youth at risk?

JUNLEI LI & MEGAN JULIEN

“Developmental Relationships”

URIE BRONFENBRENNER



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

Belonging

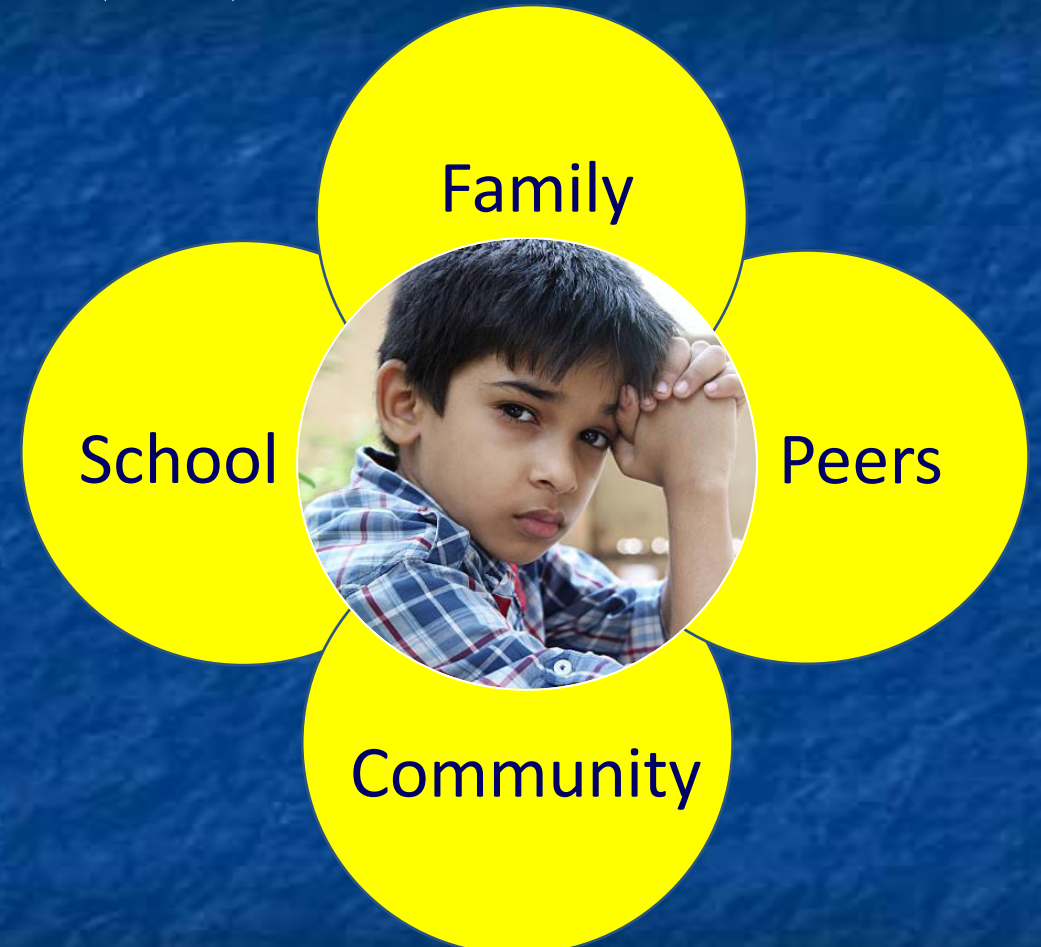
Mastery

Independence

Generosity

The Ecology of Childhood

URIE BRONFENBRENNER



Children thrive when needs are met and are at risk when needs go unmet.



Traditional cultures focus on meeting needs of children.

BARBARA ROGOFF



Connection to Caring Adults



Connection to Positive Peers

Genes for Generosity



For 99% of our history, we lived in hunter-gatherer groups.
Our genetic code equips us to thrive in cultures of cooperation.

PETER GRAY

Survival of the ~~Fittest~~ Most Compassionate



Sympathy is the most powerful human instinct.

CHARLES DARWIN

Humans developed **prosocial brains** and **cultural values**.



Massai Word *OSOTUA*: Help anyone in need.

Origins of Democracy: The Iroquois Great Law of Peace



- ◇ Children are sacred
- ◇ Leaders are servants
- ◇ Women share power
- ◇ Decision by consensus

Formed at the solar eclipse of 1142



For a million years, humans have evolved to thrive in egalitarian groups.
For 10,000 years, cultures of coercion have disrupted human harmony.

CHRISTOPHER BOEHM

The Circle of Courage

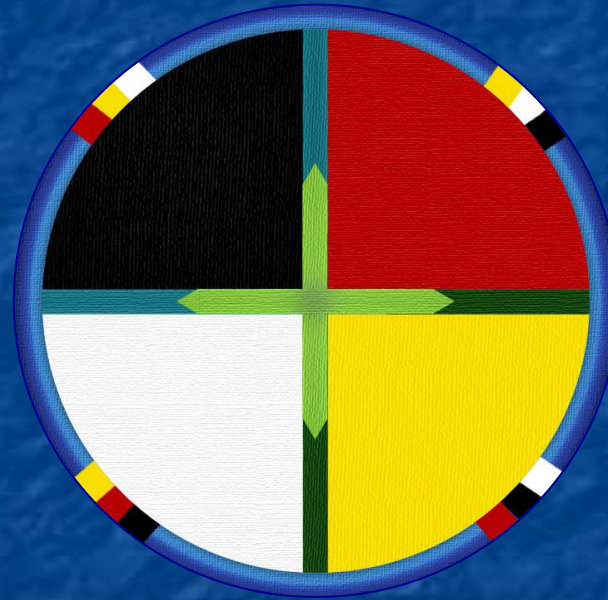
Native Wisdom

Trauma

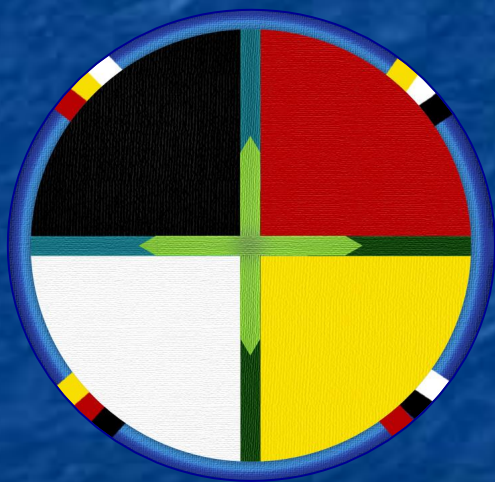
Courage

Resilience

Reclaiming



Trauma



Adverse Childhood Experiences

Kaiser Permanente and Center for Disease Control



Household Stress

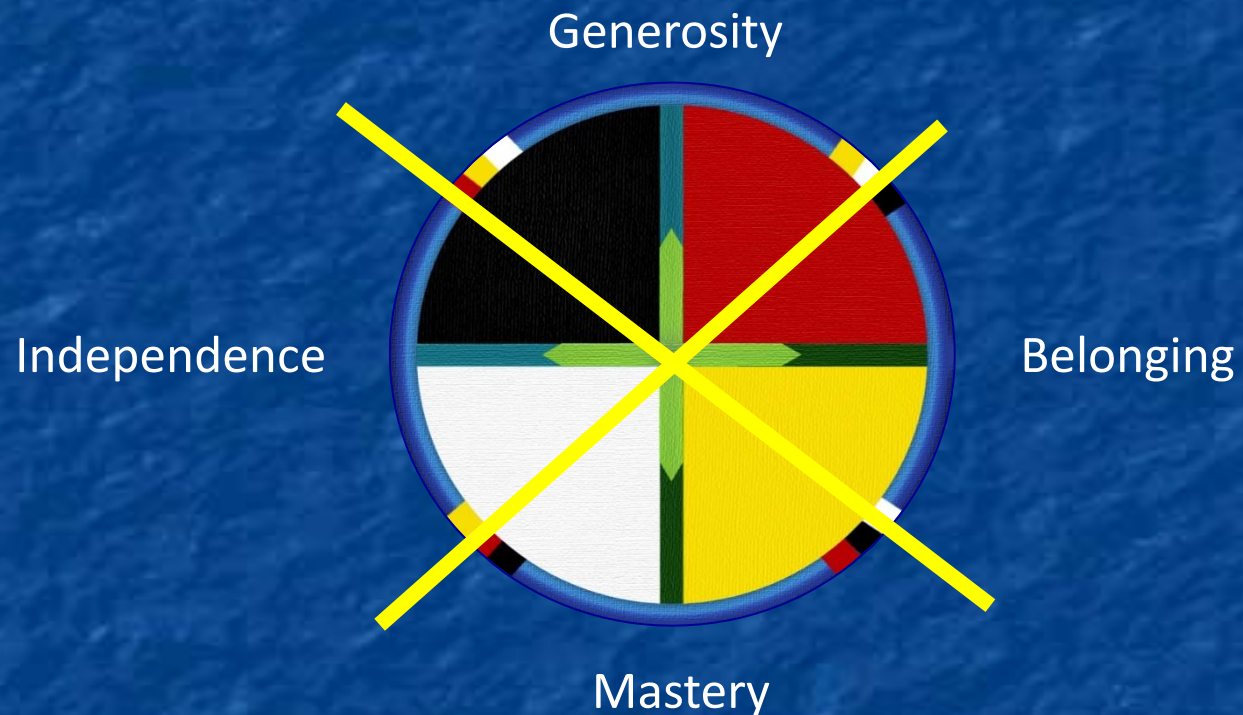
1. Divorce or separation
2. Substance abuse
3. Domestic violence
4. Criminal behavior
5. Mental illness

Abuse and Neglect

6. Psychological abuse
7. Physical Abuse
8. Sexual Abuse
9. Physical Neglect
10. Emotional Neglect

What is missing from this list?

Adverse events become traumatic when they block basic needs.





Felt safety which has to be determined by each individual, includes emotional, physical, and relational security.

KARYN PURVIS



Pain-Based Behavior

JAMES ANGLIN

University of Victoria



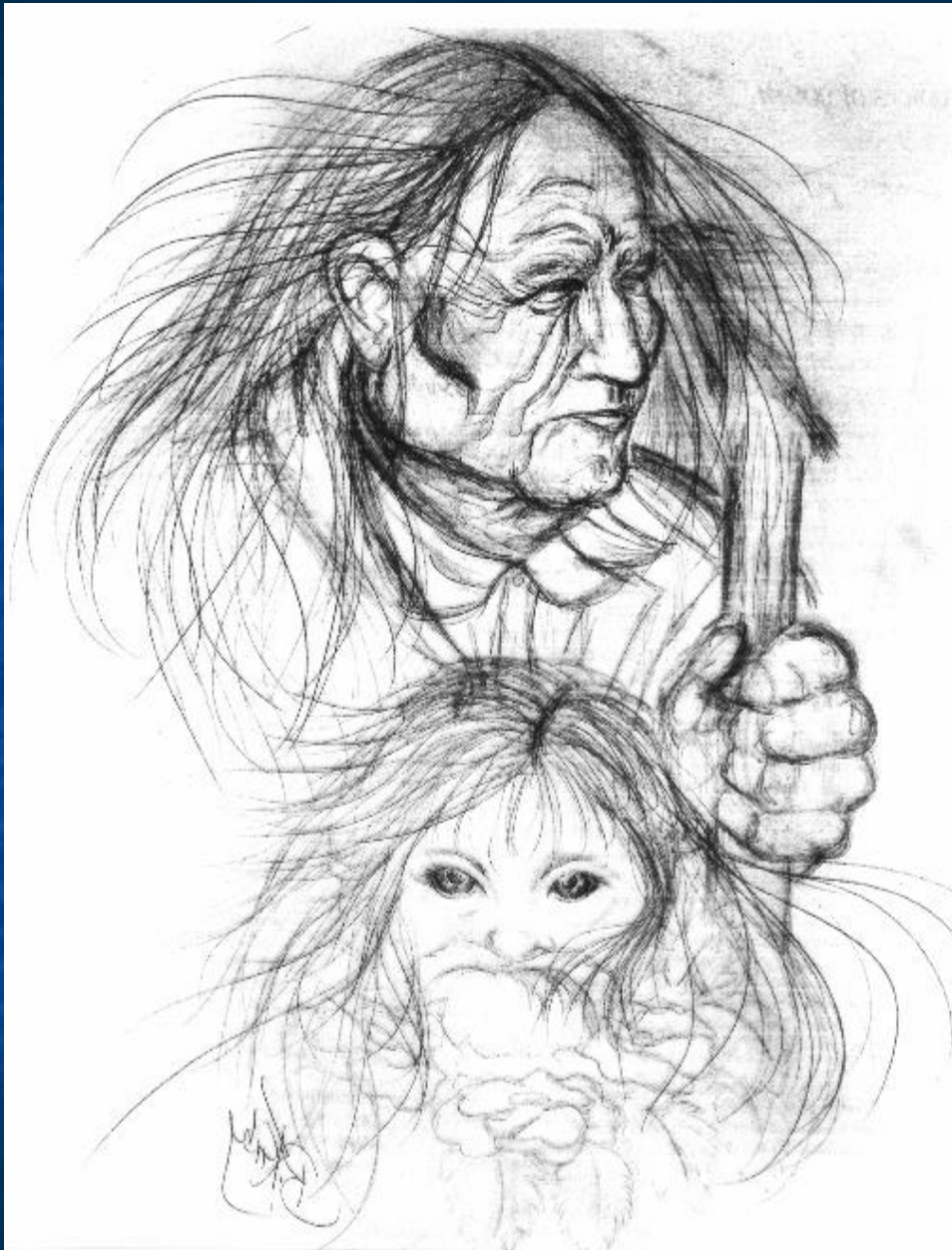
Physical and social pain use
the same brain pathways.

The amygdala spots unexpected events signaling danger or opportunity.



AMYGDALA

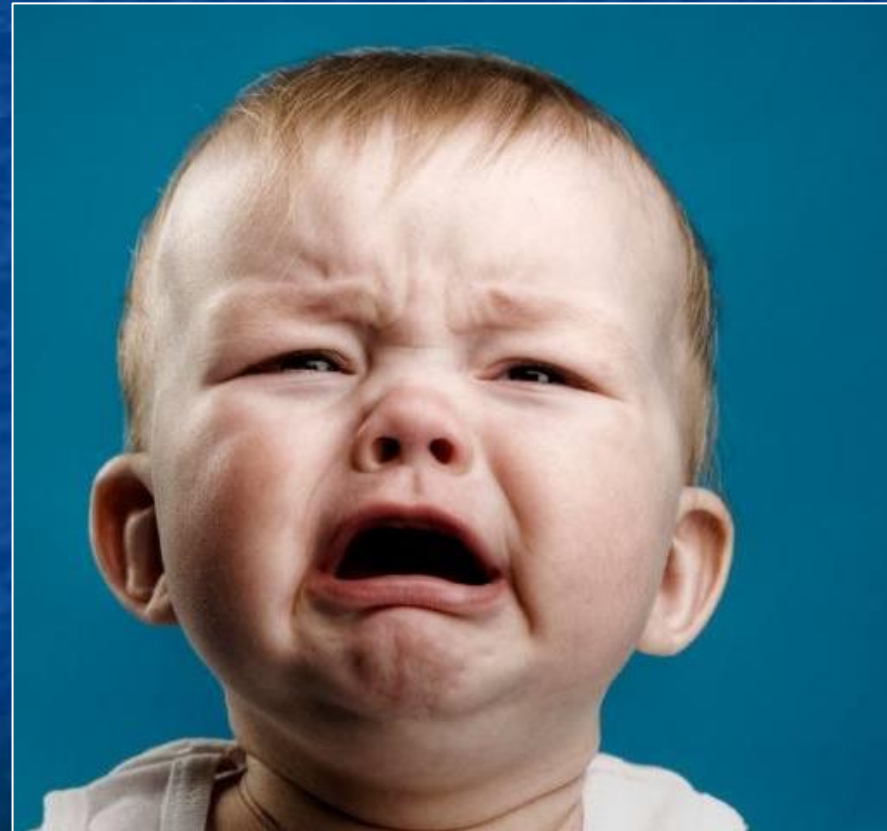
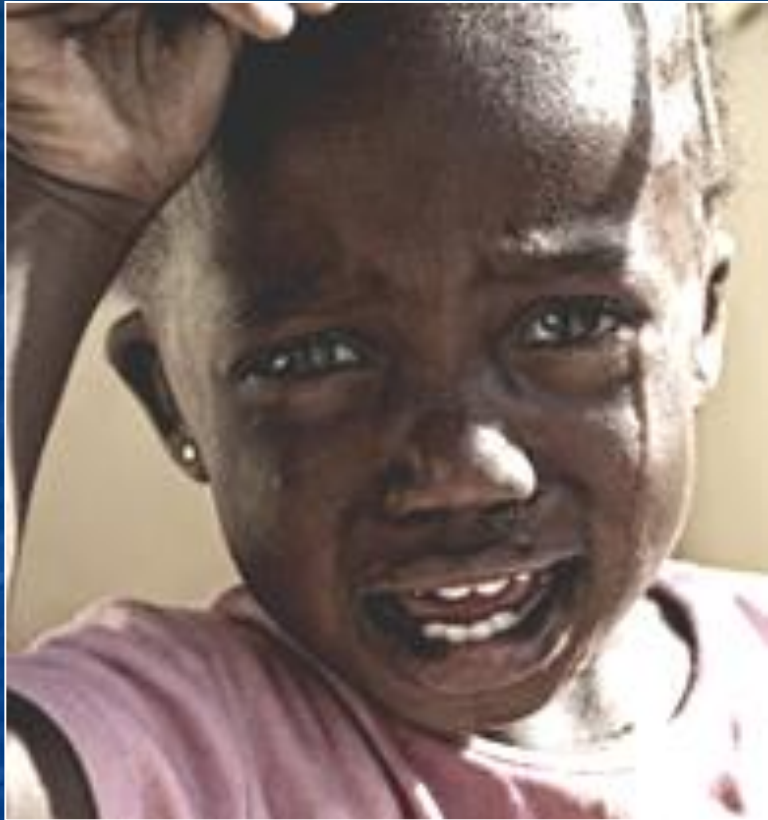




A teen girl draws this image of her childhood trauma.

What does this art tell us about her pain?

How do we respond to Pain-Based Behavior?





The Path to Trauma



Trauma

Toxic Stress

Lack of Support

Adverse Events



Defining Trauma and Loss



Threatened and helpless

BESSEL VAN DER KOLK

Fear, terror, helplessness

BRUCE PERRY



Simple Trauma
One overwhelming
traumatic event



Complex Trauma
Multiple highly
stressful events



Developmental Trauma

(also called Relational Trauma)

Results from multiple, prolonged, adverse events, often beginning in early childhood relationships.

Includes physical, emotional, and educational neglect and maltreatment.

BESSEL VAN DER KOLK

Which is the primary effect of relational trauma?



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



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

BESSEL VAN DER KOLK

Racial and Cultural, and Identity Trauma





Touch, the most elementary tool we have to calm down,
is proscribed from most therapeutic practices.

BESSEL VAN DER KOLK



Numbing the Pain

I didn't want no one to love any more. I had been hurt too many times. So I began to learn the art of blocking out all emotions and shut out the rest of the world. The door would open to no one.

RICHARD CARDINAL

Cry from the Diary of a Métis Child



Historic Distrust

Youth from dominated groups initially may not trust helpers of a different race.

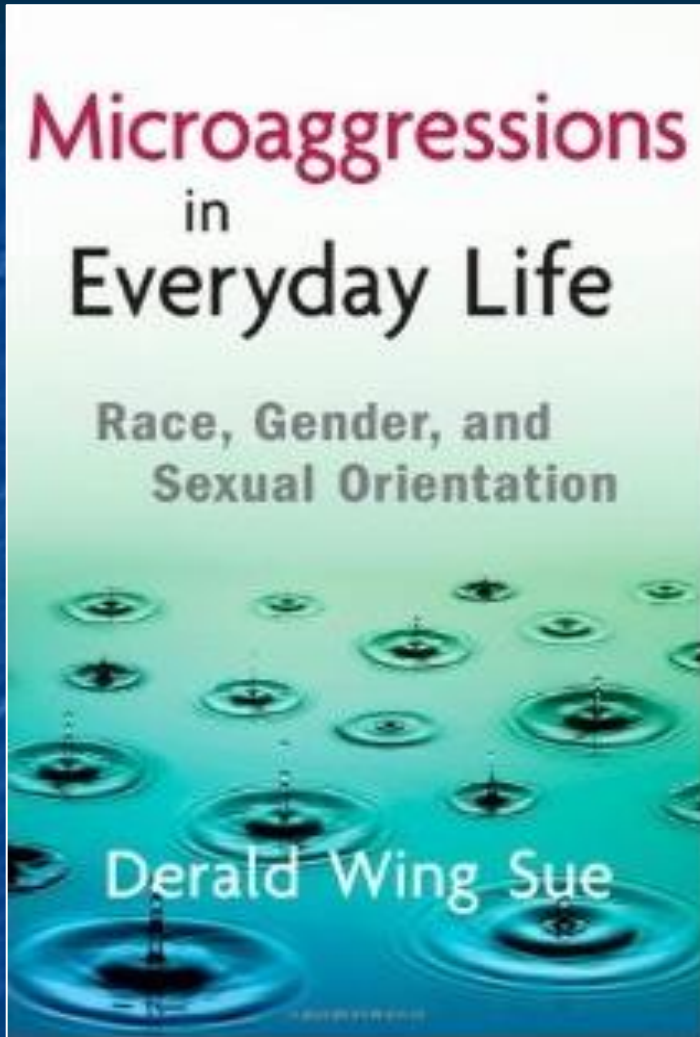
MARTIN BROKENLEG



Historical Trauma

Cultural oppression results in cumulative emotional wounds across generations.

MARIA YELLOW HORSE BRAVE HEART



Rude or insulting verbal or nonverbal acts that demean a person can cause traumatic stress.



Peers as Protectors

In Indigenous communities, older children teach and protect their younger relatives in daily activities and in play.

Adults teach the skills necessary for survival to youth who then teach those skills to younger children.

MARTIN BROKENLEG



Healing Trauma

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

RICKY GREENWALD
Child Trauma Handbook



The Deficit Question: “What is wrong with you?”

The Trauma Question: “What has happened to you?”

The Resilience Question: “What is strong with you?”

The Circle of Courage

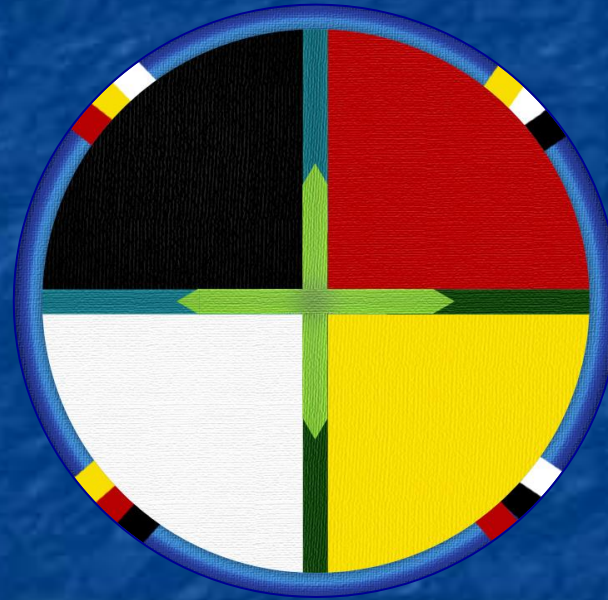
Native Wisdom

Trauma

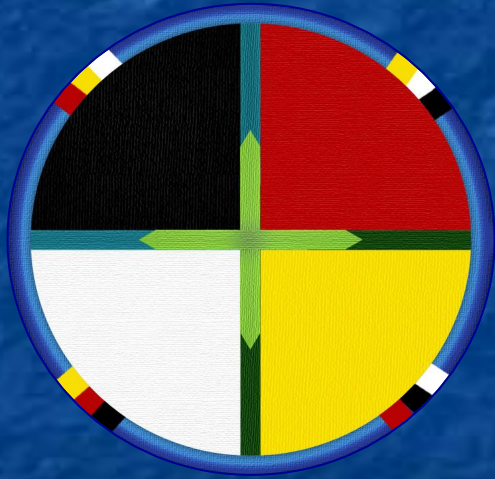
Courage

Resilience

Reclaiming



Resilience





VOICES OF PIONEERS

Every trauma survivor I've met is resilient in his or her way, and every one of their stories inspires awe at how people cope.

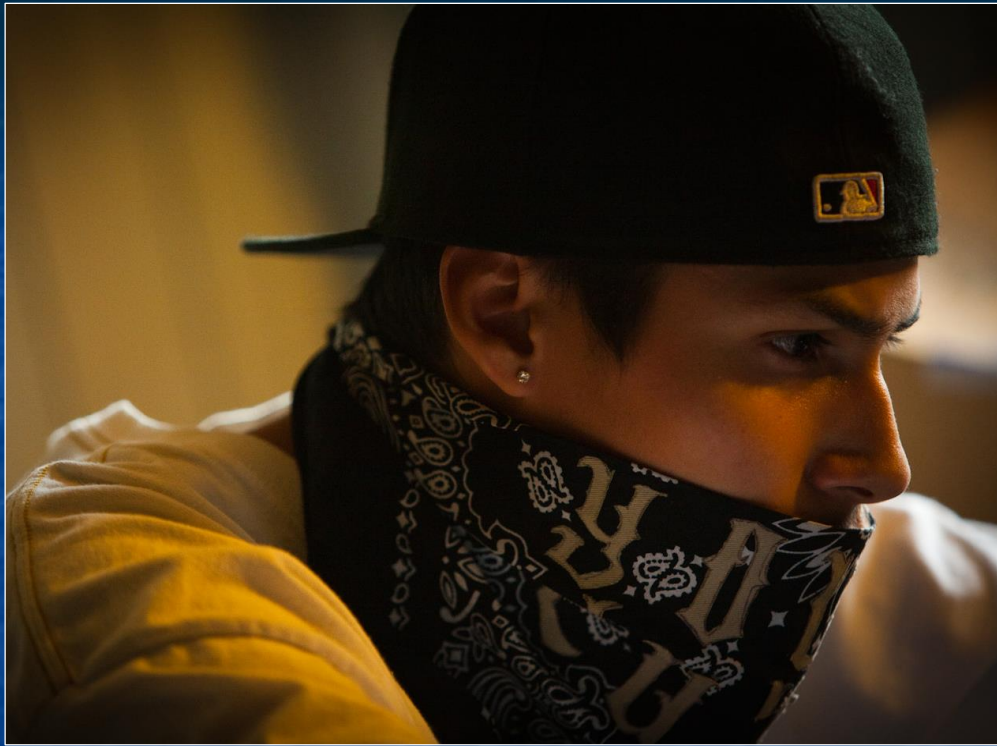
BESSEL VAN DER KOLK



What is Resilience?

Re-sil-i-ence: from Latin *resilire*, “to leap back.”

It means bouncing back from difficult life events.



The Deficit Model

Problems are symptoms of deviance or mental disorder.

Interventions focus on behavior control and medication.



The Resilience Model

Problems are attempts to cope with difficult challenges.

Interventions focus on building relationships and meeting needs.

VULNERABLE BUT INVINCIBLE

A Study of Resilient Children

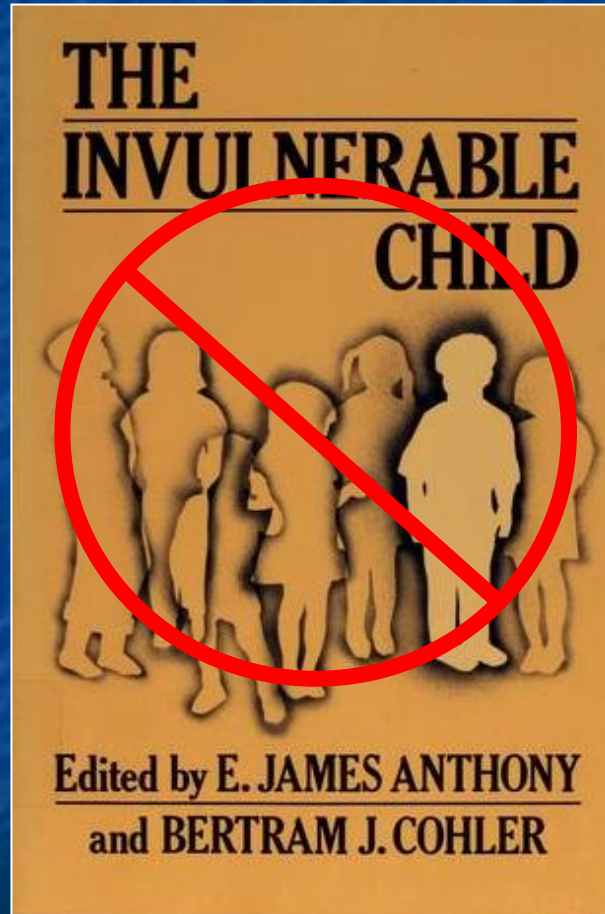


EMMY E. WERNER • RUTH S. SMITH
FOREWORD BY NORMAN GARMEZY

Kauai Resilience Study

Followed children born in 1955
for over a half century. This was
the classic early research on
“resilience”

T F Resilient children have personality traits of invulnerability.



False: Risk and resilience are universal.



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

ERNEST HEMINGWAY, *A Farewell to Arms*



Recruiting Relational Support

Resilience is related to extraversion, intelligence, and social skills.
But resilience is not a personality trait. Instead, persons with these attractive qualities are better able to recruit relational support.

Roots of Resiliency

Resilient children were loved despite their behavior, intelligence, or attractiveness.



Youth who received positive responses were stress resistant.

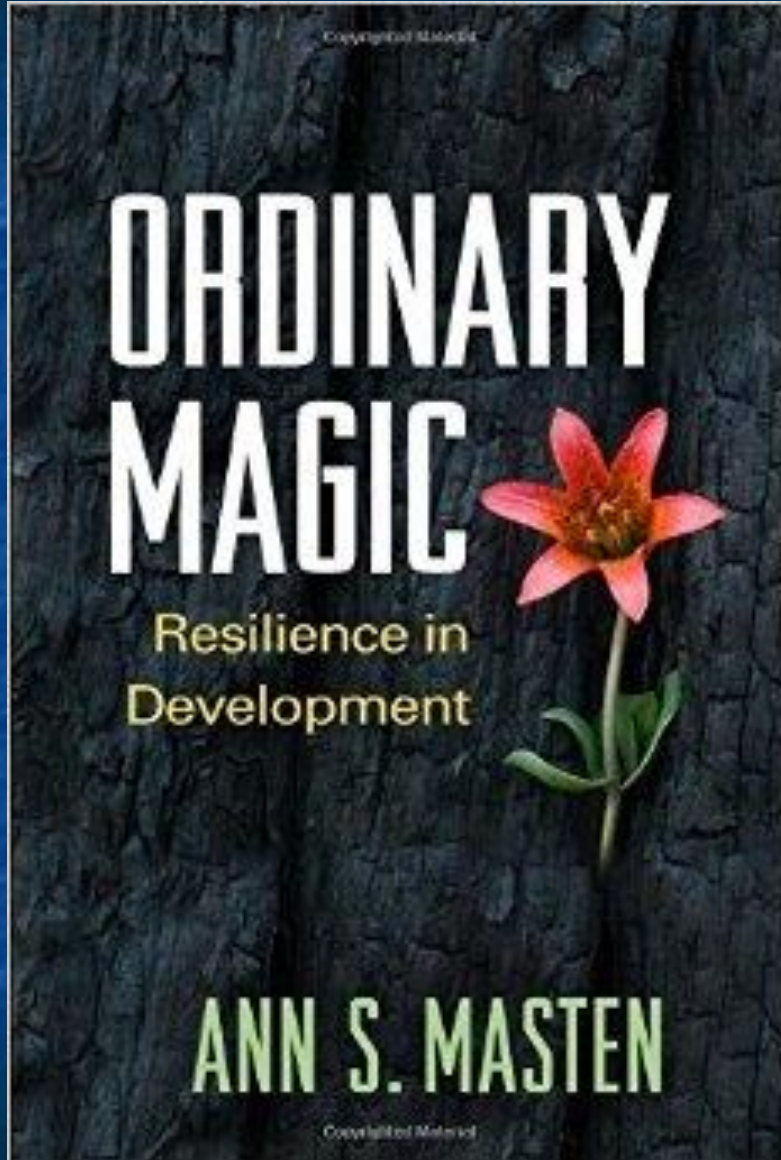


Youth who received negative responses were vulnerable.



The Steeling Effect: Surmounting challenge builds coping strengths.

MICHAEL RUTTER



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

ANN MASTEN





Grit: Passion and Perseverance

IQ and “natural talent” do not drive success. Rather, persons who develop interest in some area engage in serious practice and reach high levels of excellence.

ANGELA DUCKWORTH



With positive connections, a majority can surmount almost any risk.

EMMY WERNER



Healing Relationships

Relationships are the agent of change,
and the most powerful therapy is love.

BRUCE PERRY & MAIA SZALAVITZ



With positive connections, a majority can surmount almost any risk.

EMMY WERNER

The Path to Resilience





To build resilience, we focus our efforts on what matters most.

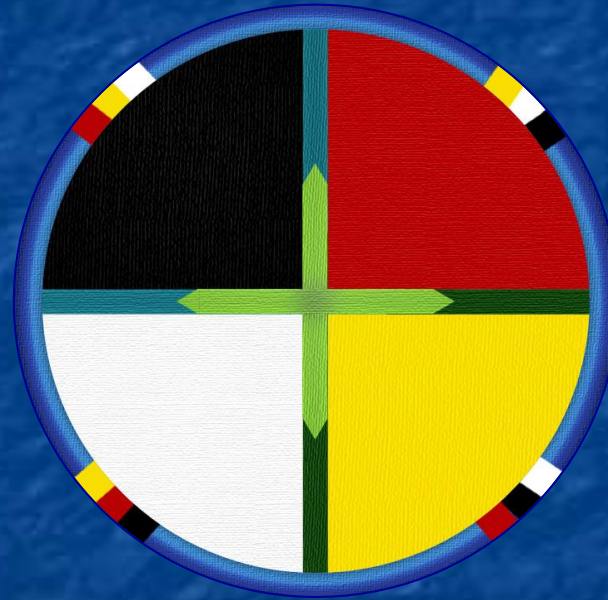
EMMY WERNER
1929-2017

The Circle of Courage

Native Wisdom

Trauma

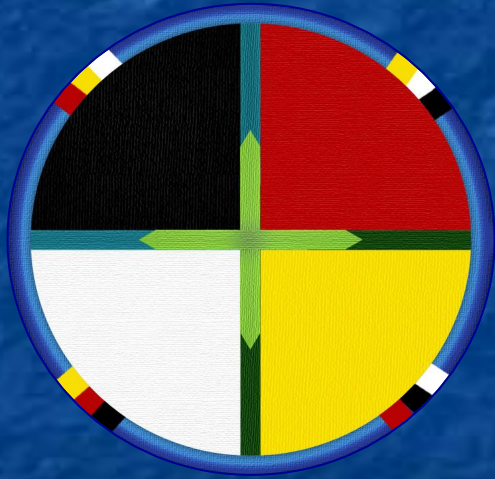
Resilience



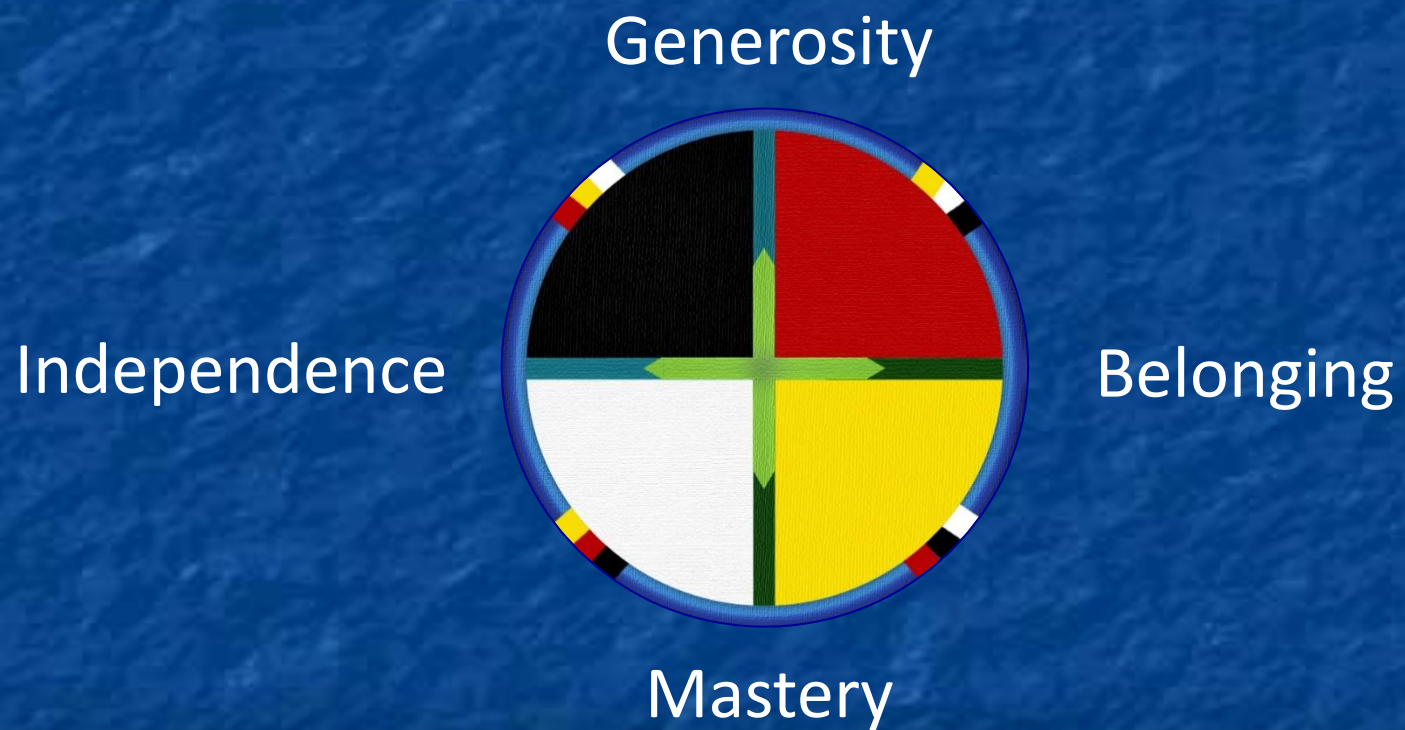
Courage

Reclaiming

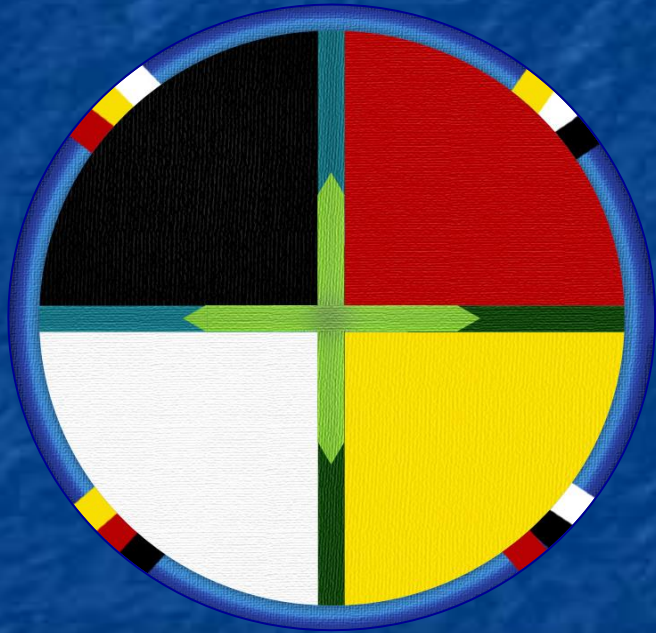
Courage



The Circle of Courage



Belonging





Babies are Primed for Hugging





Indigenous Wisdom

The old are dedicated to the service of the young as their teachers and advisors, and the young in turn regard them with love and reverence.

OHIYESA
[CHARLES EASTMAN]

The Soul of the Indian, 1911



The Prime Need

Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her.

URIE BRONFENBRENNER

Humans have two chemicals for bonding



OXYTOCIN tames aggression and fear. Females have more oxytocin for use in *nurturing*.

VASOPRESSIN can enhance aggression. Males have more vasopressin for *protecting*.

Trust and
Bonding



EROS

Oxytocin
Moments



PHILIA



AGAPE



Hugging releases oxytocin fostering trust and bonding.



Laughter is also an oxytocin high.



Bids to Connect
include behavior,
emotions, physical
appearance, and
verbal conversation.

What are some bids
young people make?

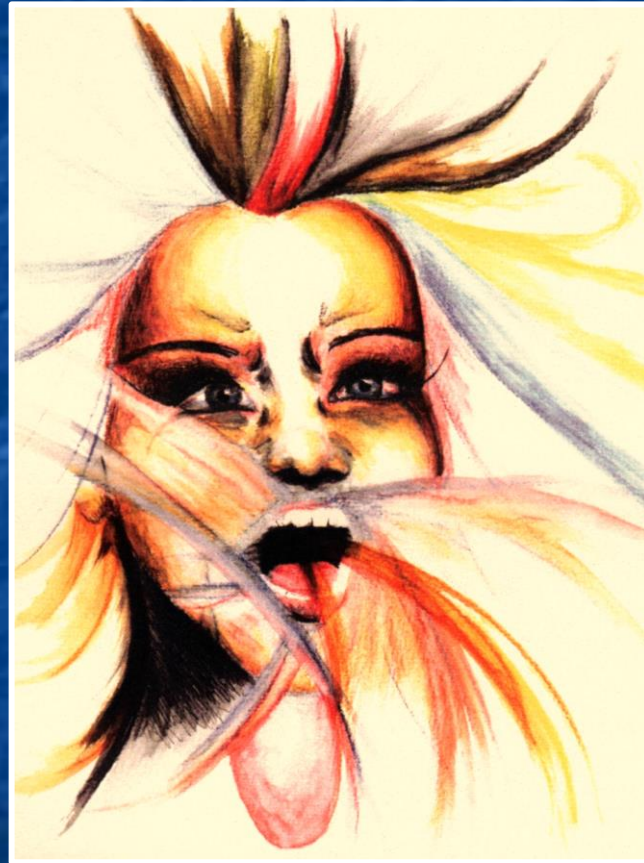


Disconnected youth desperately pursue “substitute belongings.”

KARL MENNINGER



Connected to Gangs



Connected to Chemicals



Abusive Relationships

Shame



Exclusion → Shame

Feeling at risk of rejection.

Belonging Emotions



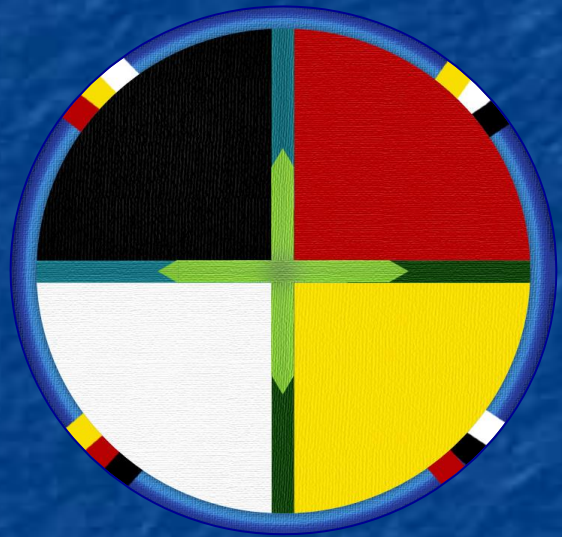
Pride



Belonging → Pride

Feeling accepted by others.

MASTERY









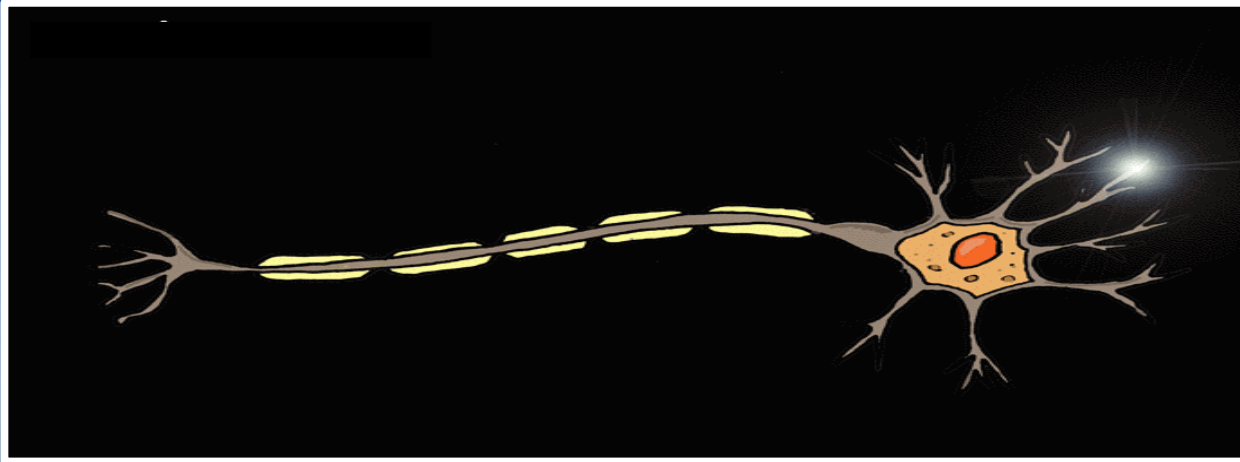
All children have an inborn drive to learn and master.



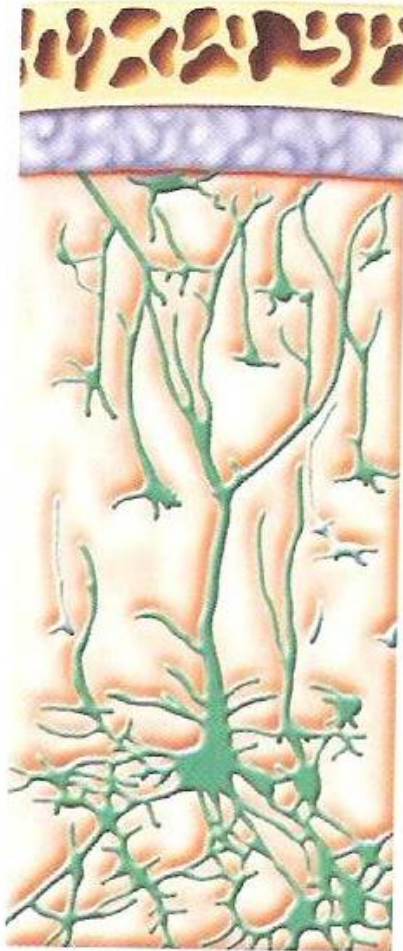
The brain grows when challenged. Mastering difficulty builds intelligence.

CAROL DWECK

Mastery grows
myelin on brain
pathways.

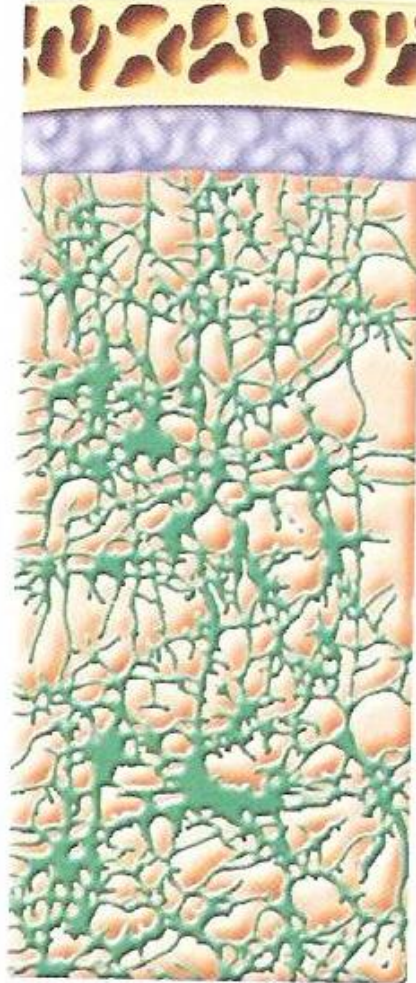


9 Months



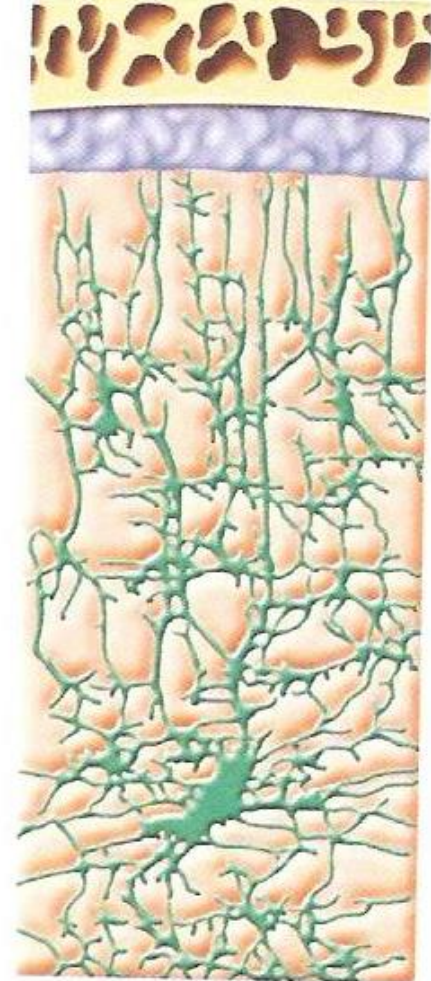
9 months

2 Years



2 years

4 Years

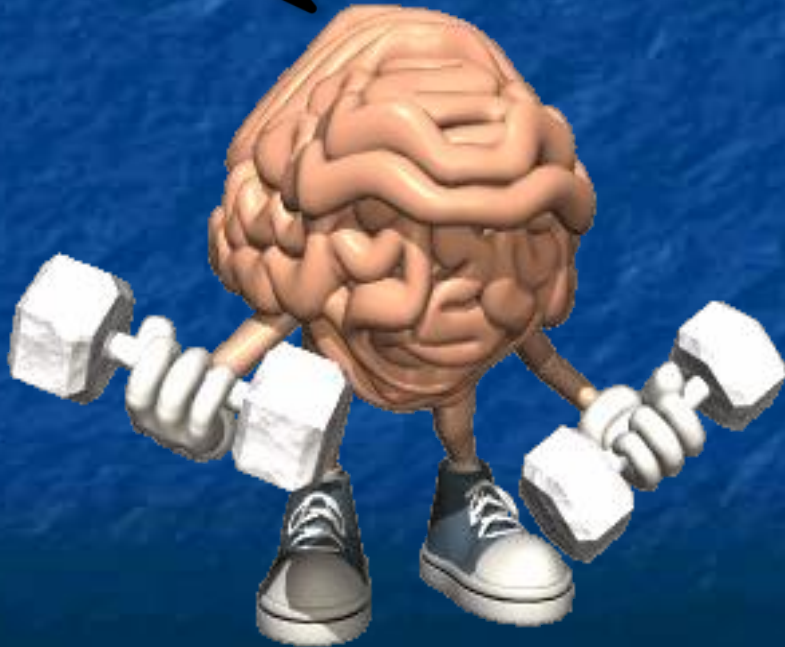


4 years

Growth or Fixed Mindsets

CAROL DWECK

*I can make
myself smart.*



*I just wasn't
born smart.*



Task Motivation

I want to learn.



Egoistic Motivation

I want to look good.





School Failure erodes self-worth and predicts poor long-term outcomes.



School Success has a lasting effect on life adjustment despite other problems in the family or community.



Reframing Failure

*Try again.
Fail again.
Fail better.*

SAMUEL BECKETT

SCHOOLS THAT MATTER:
Teaching the Mind,
Reaching the Heart



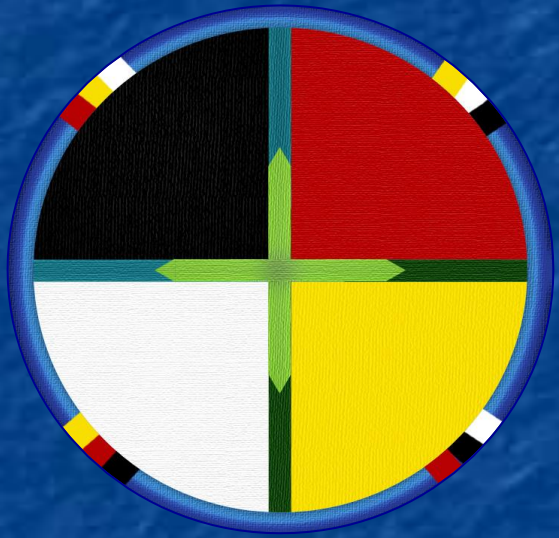
Steve Van Bockern



Schools That Matter focus on meeting developmental needs.

Steve Van Bockern

INDEPENDENCE





AUTONOMY: The inborn drive for Independence



PEOPLE ARE
AWESOME

Independence Requires **Self-Regulation**



Inner-Control

Managing inner emotions and impulses



Coping with Challenges

Managing external problems and stressors

Independence Requires **Self-Confidence**



Belief in one's power to cope with challenges.

How do children learn emotional regulation?



They borrow their caregiver's calm brain.



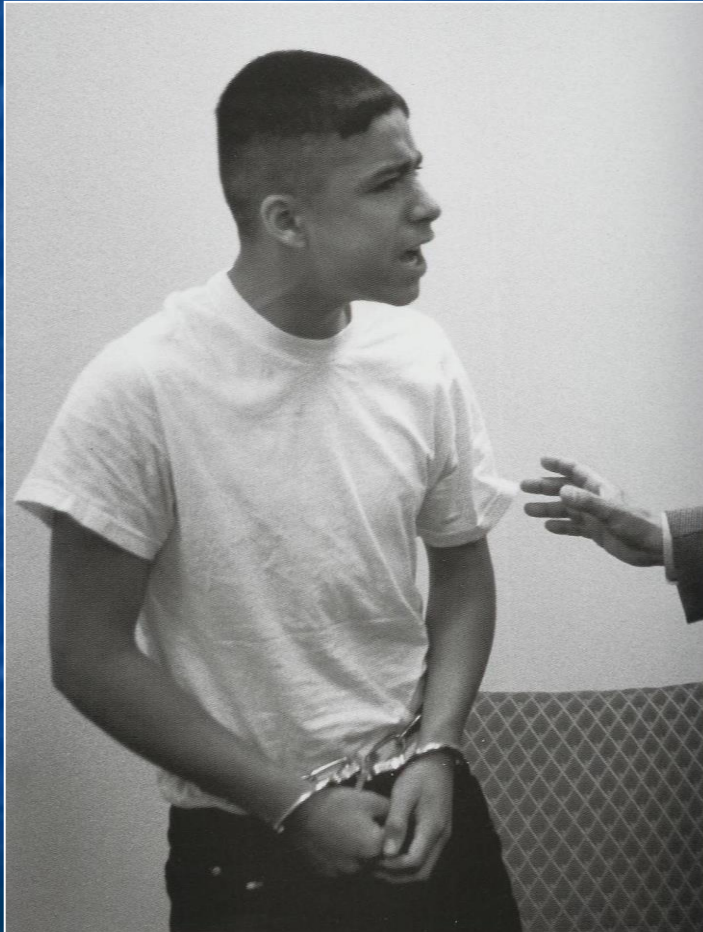
CAREGIVERS meet their NEEDS



Reacting to Problems or Responding to Needs?

Reacting

- Controlling the person
- Harsh aggressive tone
- Retaliating to hostility
- Punishing problems



Responding

- Calming the person
- Concerned assured tone
- Defusing hostility
- Solving problems

Rethinking Discipline

MARTIN HOFFMAN



Power Assertion



Problem Solving



Using problems as learning opportunities.

CLEAR SOLUTIONS

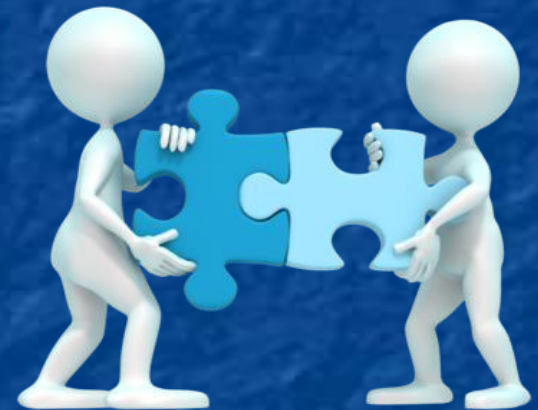
Brain's Natural Problem-Solving Process



CONNECT

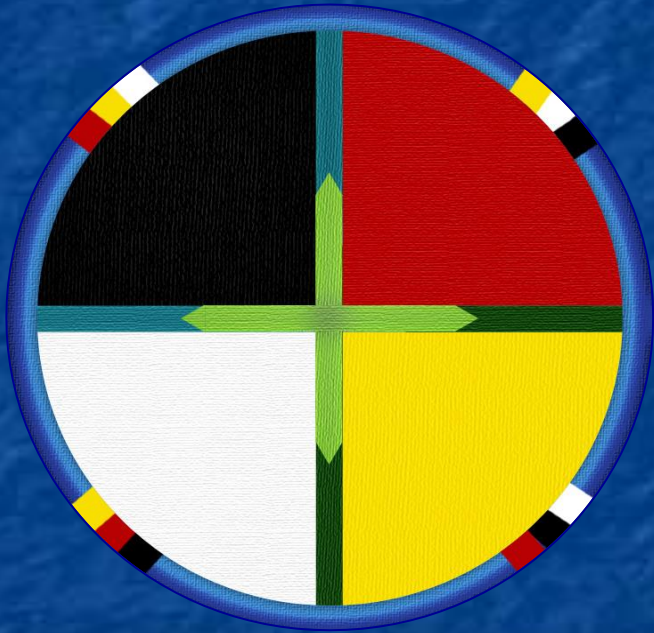


CLARIFY



RESTORE

Generosity





ALTRUISM: The inborn motivation for Generosity.



Amazing Sports Lab Japan via Storyful

TYT NETWORK
THE YOUNG TURKS



Maslow and the Blackfoot People in Alberta, Canada

Maslow's summer of 1938 with the Blackfoot First Nation transformed his perspective on human behavior.

While he had assumed power was the primary human motivation, this culture was built on generosity and the people lived in harmony.

ABRAHAM MASLOW



Altruism and
Empathy are Inborn

MAX PLANCK
INSTITUTE
Germany



Helping, sharing, and consoling in early childhood is the best predictor of later school achievement.



Teaching the core value of kindness.



Do our schools
promote values of
respect and caring?

LEARNING BY HELPING

Barbara Rogoff, Angélica López Fraire, & Lucía Alcalá



LEARNING BY HELPING

Barbara Rogoff, Angélica López Fraire, & Lucía Alcalá





Cross-age helping is
essential for positive
development.

URIE BRONFENBRENNER



Helping gives proof of one's worth—being of value to others.



The Joy of Giving

When persons being helped return kindness, the circle of reciprocity is complete. This unleashes the shared feeling of joy.

NEL NODDINGS

The Circle of Courage

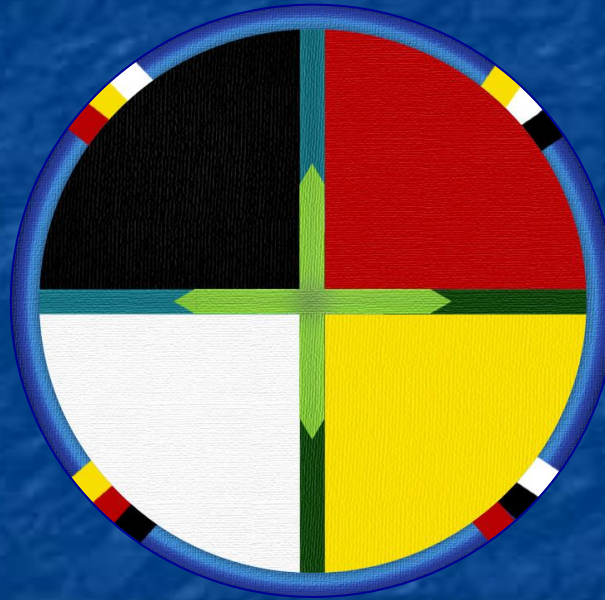
Native Wisdom

Trauma

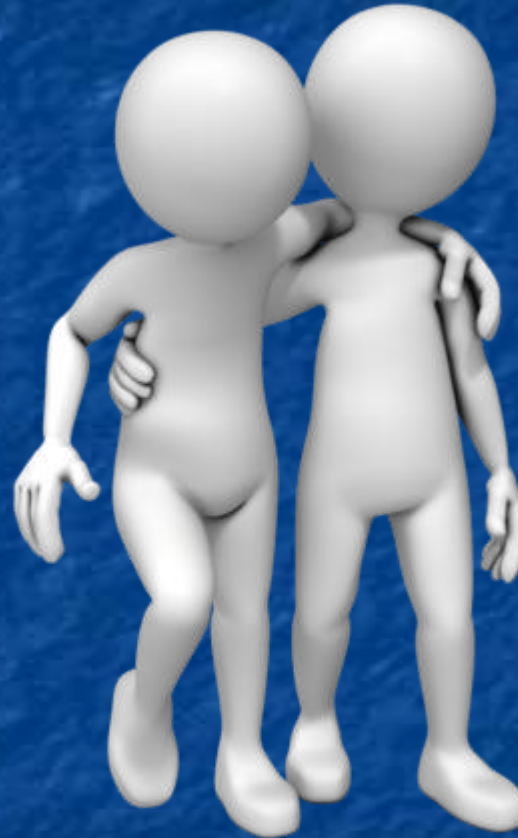
Courage

Resilience

Reclaiming



Reclaiming





CONNECT



Strategies for connecting with adult-wary kids.



Use problems as learning opportunities.

“Please coach me, don’t scold me.”



Provide fail-safe relationships.

“Don’t give up on me.”





Increase dosages of nurturance.
"I need to know you really care."



Don't crowd.

"If you get too close, I will back away."



Decode the meaning of behavior.

"I try to hide what I really think."



Model respect to the disrespectful.
“Your respect helps build mine.”



Enlist youth as colleagues.
"I am the only real expert on me."



Touch in small ways.
"I am watching you very carefully."



Give seeds time to grow.

"I am still learning."



Strengthen spiritual roots.

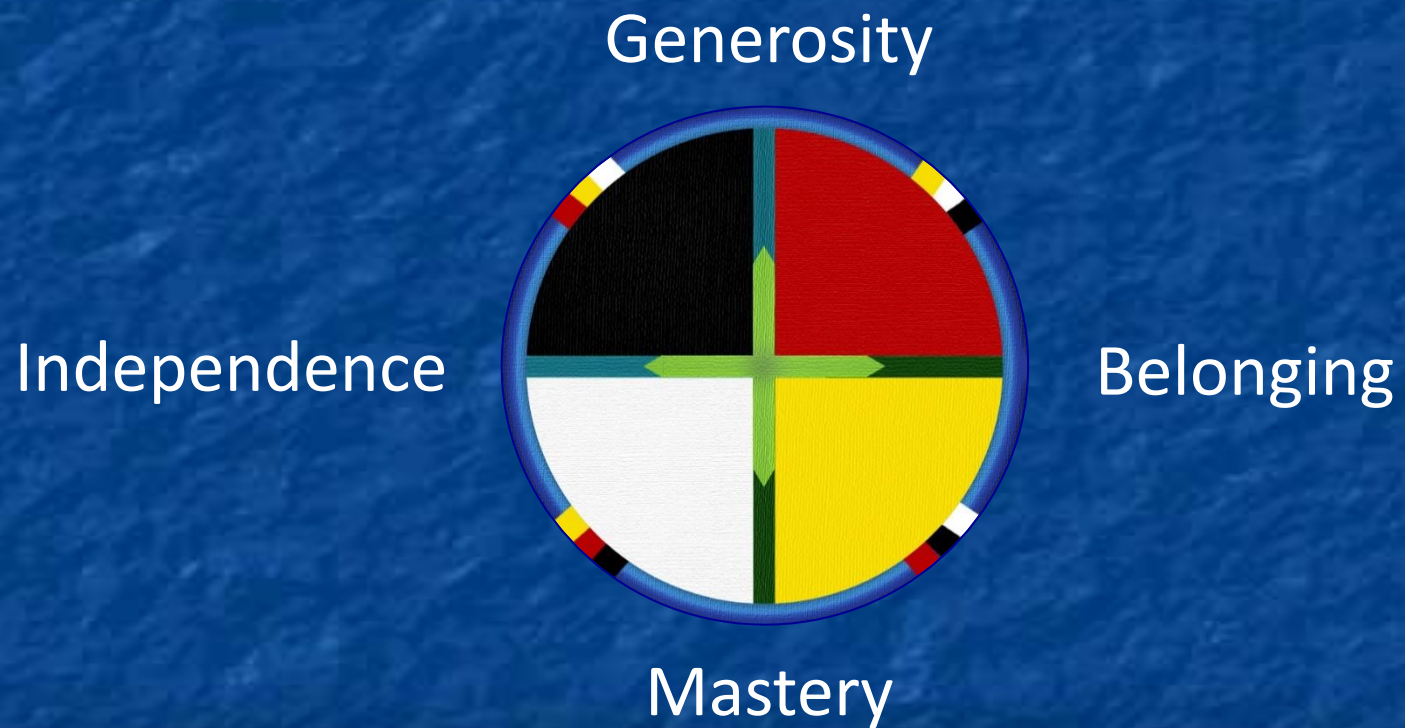
"I need to find a purpose for my life."



Grandfather,
what is the purpose of life?

CREE ELDER
EDDIE BELLEROSE

The Circle of Courage



Putting the Circle of Courage into Practice

Larry K. Brendtro

