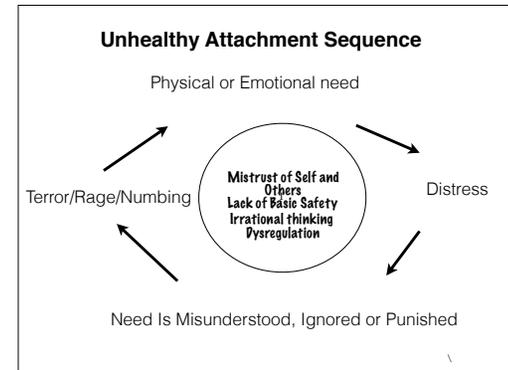
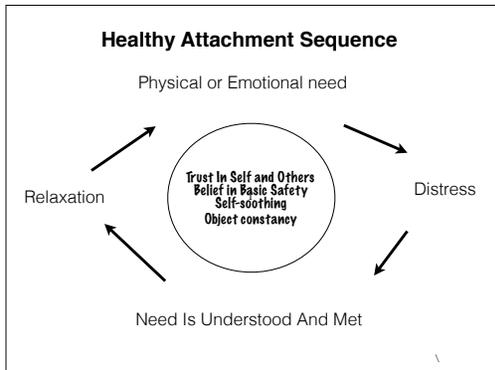
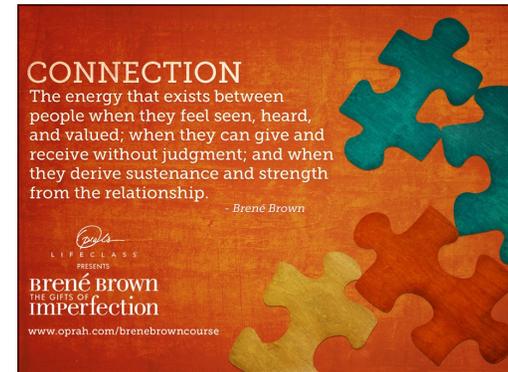


**Relationships And Connection Are Key To Resilience**

Building a positive relationship with a client is the main predictor of the benefit of any psychotherapy intervention (Horvath & Greenberg, 1989, 1994; Martin, Garske, & Davis, 2000).

Interpersonal connectedness at school plays a big role in academic motivation and success (Martin & Dowson, 2009 review).



**The Importance of Basic Safety**

When we are feeling connected and calm, we believe we are generally safe in the world.

Basic safety brings us out of survival mode and allows higher order processes to occur like the development of:

**Problem Solving  
 Perspective Taking  
 Empathy**

This is true for practitioners and patients

"Traumatized people chronically feel unsafe inside their bodies: The past is alive in the form of gnawing interior discomfort. Their bodies are constantly bombarded by visceral warning signs, and, in an attempt to control these processes, they often become expert at ignoring their gut feelings and in numbing awareness of what is played out inside. They learn to hide from their selves."  
 — Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* p. 97

The Common Factor  
 Underlying Trauma Symptoms is:

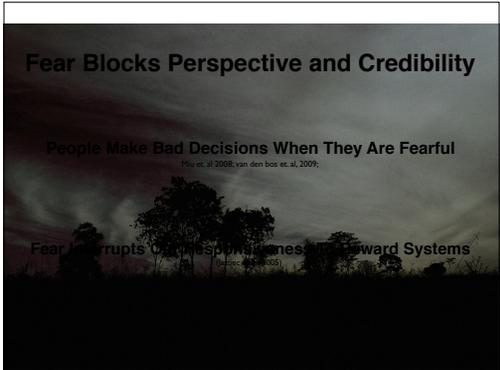
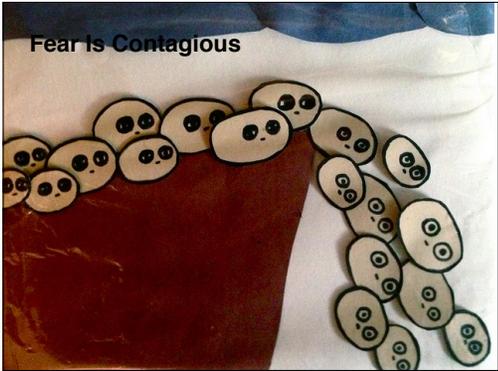
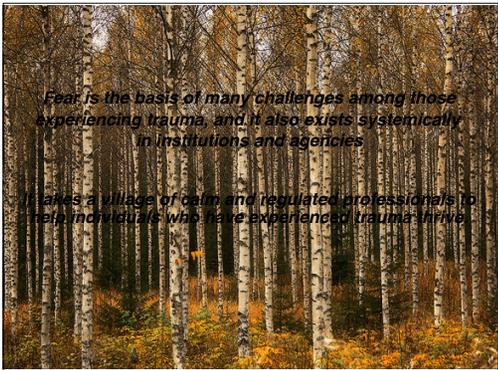
**Fear**

Things register as trauma when things are too fast and intense to be dealt with or processed in the moment, and when we feel alone or unsafe or insignificant in the world.

When working with trauma, we must slow down and connect intentionally with ourselves and with others so that all feel seen and heard.

**Understanding Common Behaviors as Fear**

- Defensiveness/ Reluctance to Try
- Fear of Failure/Judgment/Punishment
- Worry
- Fear of The Unknown
- Impulsivity
- Fear of Losing Out/Helplessness
- Trouble Focusing/ Addiction
- Fear of The Present Moment
- Tearfulness, Aggression
- Primary Fear Response



### Co-Regulation

**Auto regulation** is the ability to self regulate independently. It is the ability to calm oneself down when agitation rises to the upper limits of tolerance and also to wake oneself up when lethargic or down

**Interactive (psychobiological) regulation** utilizes relationships to mitigate breaches in the window of tolerance, and to stimulate or calm oneself.

From Allan Shore (Pat Ogden)

### Fear Chain: Who is Afraid of What?

- Chief
- Director
- Supervisor
- Case Manager
- Provider
- Client

|  |                      |                              |                      |                          |   |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
|  | <b>Chain of Fear</b> |                              | <b>Chain of Calm</b> |                          |   |
|  | ↓                    | <u>Pressure re: Outcomes</u> | Director             | <u>Patience/Advocacy</u> | ↓ |
|  | ↓                    | <u>Hopeless Statement</u>    | Supervisor           | <u>Sees Progress</u>     | ↓ |
|  | ↓                    | <u>Mistrust</u>              | Practitioner         | <u>Trust</u>             | ↓ |
|  | ↓                    | <u>Symptoms Up</u>           | Patient              | <u>Symptoms Down</u>     | ↓ |

### So How Do We Create Calm Connected Systems?

### Connection and Co-Regulation are Key

Building a positive relationship with a client is the main predictor of the benefit of any psychotherapy intervention (Horvath & Greenberg, 1989, 1994; Martin, Garske, & Davis, 2000).

"Team spirit" is an important protective factor for keeping clinical professionals emotionally healthy (Collins & Long, 2003).

Stress at work is reduced when people talk about their challenges and experiences with colleagues and supervisors (Salston & Figley, 2003).

### Don't: Minimize Triggers

### Well-Meaning Minimization:

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Child: I can't find my lunchbox!     | Adult: It's ok, I'm sure it will turn up   |
| Child: No I need it right now!       | Adult: Well I don't see it. Don't worry we'll just put your lunch in a paper bag for today |
| Child: I need my lunchbox!           | Adult: Don't worry, you won't be in trouble for losing it.                                 |
| Child: I <u>need my lunchbox!!!!</u> |  |

### Do: Practice Radical Empathy

### Radical Empathy

- Adults allow themselves to fully feel a child's distress
- Adults recognize that humans are generally doing the best they can
- Students don't want to melt down at school any more than adults do at work
- Adults consider what would have to happen for them to have a commensurate meltdown in a given setting
- Adults accept that children's triggers have this level of emotional intensity

The key is not to convince a student that their concern isn't a problem or jump to offer potential fixes.

The key is to communicate genuine empathy with student distress so that they trust us to help them solve their problem.

"When we attune with others we allow our own internal state to shift, to come to resonate with the inner world of another. This resonance is at the heart of the important sense of "feeling felt" that emerges in close relationships. Children need attunement to feel secure and to develop well, and throughout our lives we need attunement to feel close and connected."

Dan Siegel from "Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation:

### Empathic Responding:

**Student: I can't find my lunchbox!**

**Student: I don't know where it went!**

**Student: I had it this morning but now it's gone!**

**Student: Yes and now I'm going to starve!**

**Adult: Oh goodness I am sorry to hear that.**

**Adult: Oh wow, have you been without it a long time?**

**Adult: Losing things is an awful feeling, I can tell it is really important to you.**

**Adult: This sounds like a really difficult situation. I've lost things before too and it's the worst feeling. Would you like some help?**

## Current Conceptualization of Mindfulness

1. Focused attention on present moment experience
2. Open and accepting attitude toward experience

Dag, Reed & Pines, 2011.

### 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Exercise

- 3 Part Breathing
- Breath Counting

## Mindfulness is Particularly Helpful for Calm Connection Because...

### A Mindful State Mimics Secure Attachment

(Snyder, R., Shapiro, S., Treleaven, D. 2012. Attachment theory and mindfulness. J Child Fam Studies, 21, 709-717)

Supercharges co-regulation by promoting attunement (Siegel, 2007)

## Questions To Carry Out

How do we build calm connection at your organization? Can we create strategic alliances?

How can we develop concrete strategies to support each other? Regular meetings/communication board?

Could we implement movement and/or mindfulness during lunch breaks?

How can we keep progress going? Monthly check-ins?

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