

The Brain & Early Relationships

- Connection is a biological imperative (S. Porges)
- Emotionally enriched environments build the brain
- The parent-child relationship is regulating the genome of the baby from the last trimester of pregnancy through the second year of life.
- Attachment system is a Joy system in the first year – intended to bring high levels of positive affect (joy, interest excitement, enjoyment) for both! (A. Schore)

8/14/2019

3

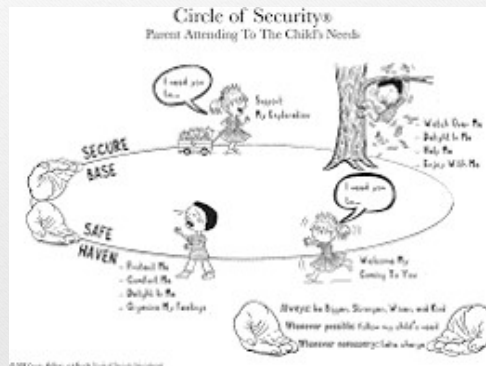
The Brain & Early Relationships

- Our brains are always scanning for safety/danger
- Our brains use social cues, internal sensations and external stimuli to determine if it is safe (S. Porges)
- Early adversity or toxic stress without the support of a secure primary caregiver interrupts brain development and leads to greater likelihood of mental health and physical health dis-eases (ACES study).
- Support from nurturing adults can buffer the long term effects of early adversity and toxic stress.

8/14/2019

4

How do we build a secure attachment?



8/14/2019

5

"Attachment Theory is a Regulation Theory"

Allan Shore, various publications

Arousal-Relaxation Cycle



8/14/2019

Graphic from www.beyondtwoworlds.com

6

Upstairs/Downstairs Brain

Upstairs Brain

Allows us to think before we act
Decision-making
Control over emotions & body
Focus/concentration
Empathy
Self awareness



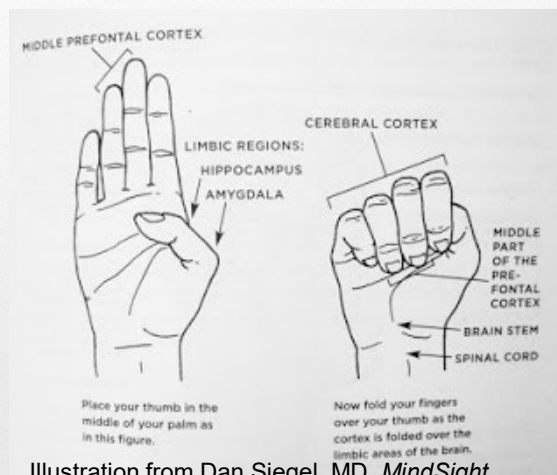
Downstairs Brain

Allows us to act before we think
Fight/Flight response
Emotional reactions
Bodily functions

Source: Siegel & Bryson "The Whole Brain Child"
8/14/2019

7

Hand Model of the Brain



8/14/2019

Illustration from Dan Siegel, MD *MindSight*

8

THE BRAIN

LEFT

- later to develop
- logical • linguistic
- literal • linear
- concerned with outside world
- likes to analyze
- likes lists
- wants to know why?
- connects with outer experiences

RIGHT

- quicker to develop
- holistic • gut feelings
- nonverbal
- autobiographical
- concerned with inner world
- cares about big picture
- cares about feelings and emotions
- soothes self
- heart sends signals to right
- concerned with whole

Paper53 Image by P. Becker

Dan Siegel Feb 2013

8/14/2019

Integration


- Separate but working together as a functional whole.
- Distinct properties.
- Linked and working in harmony.
- Integrated relationships promote linkages and honor differences
- Integration = FACES (Flexible, Adaptive, Coherent, Energized, Stable)
- FACES = a good definition of mental health, resilience (Daniel J. Siegel – *MindSight*)

8/14/2019

10

What influences ones ability to co-regulate and eventually regulate independently?

- Genetics and Biology
- Temperament
- Relationships
- Experiences



8/14/2019 11

Strategies for Supporting Co-Regulation

8/14/2019 12

Adults

- Self-awareness – Monitor and Modify (D. Siegel)
- Breath
- Mindfulness
- Focused attention
- Self-care

8/14/2019

13

Infants and Toddlers

- How do we support co-regulation with babies?
 - Paying attention to our own states and moods.
 - Observing baby's temperament and signals.
 - Providing enough support for comfort and learning.
 - Showing baby what he/she CAN do.
 - Creating routines that offer comfort and safety (Baby Doll Circle Time, Becky Bailey video).

Modified from ZeroToThree.org, *School Readiness: Birth to Three, Self-Control*

8/14/2019

14

Toddler & Preschool-aged Children

- "Connect and Redirect"
 - Consider the needs of both sides of the brain
 - Connecting activities:
 - Redirecting activities:
- "Engage, Don't Enrage"



Adapted from Siegel and Bryson, *The Whole-Brained Child* (2011)

8/14/2019

15

Toddler & Preschool-aged Children

- "Use It or Lose It"
- "Name it to Tame It"
- "Move It or Lose It"



Adapted from Siegel and Bryson, *The Whole-Brained Child* (2011)

8/14/2019

16

Contact information:

Jeri Lea Kroll, LMSW, IMH-E® (IV)

810.623.5737

jerileak@gmail.com

jerileakroll.com

Facebook – Jeri Lea Kroll, LMSW

8/14/2019

17