Repairing the Road to Regulation:

TRUST, CULTURAL AND THEIR ROLE IN DYADIC SAFETY EXPERIENCES

WITH DR. MEGAN WILSON

This presentation in a nutshell:

The good news…

Babies and toddlers are ridiculously adorable

This presentation in a nutshell Part 2

The bad news…

Babies and toddlers are vulnerable
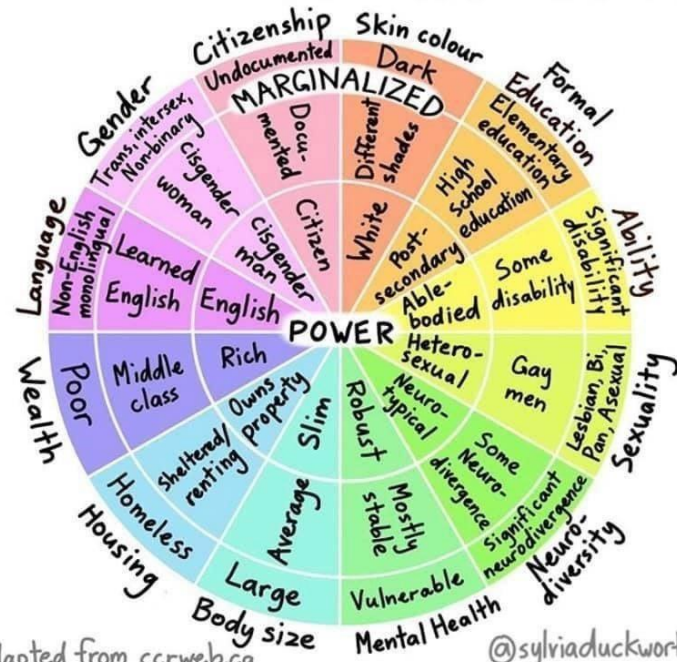
This presentation in a nutshell

Good News Part 2 ....

▶ Attachment relationships can be repaired with systemic responses which allow for high quality caretaking

Our lenses for this time…

- Child Development Theories
- Attachment Theory
- Biopsychosocial Model
- Intersectional Identities
- Anti-racism, equity, and inclusion

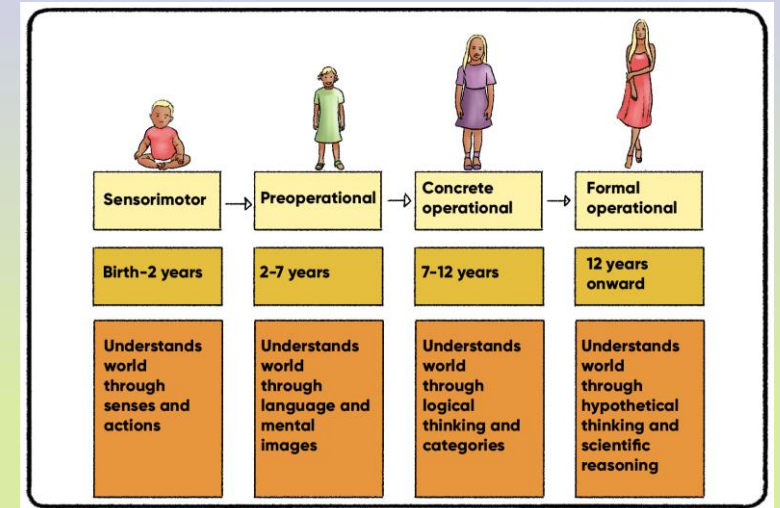Wheel of Power/Privilege — Adapted from ccrweb.ca @sylviaduckworth

Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

Approximate Age	Psychosocial Crisis/Task	Virtue Developed
Infant - 18 months	Trust vs Mistrust	Hope
18 months - 3 years	Autonomy vs Shame/Doubt	Will
3 - 5 years	Initiative vs Guilt	Purpose
5 -13 years	Industry vs Inferiority	Competency
13 -21 years	Identity vs Confusion	Fidelity
21- 39 years	Intimacy vs Isolation	Love
40 - 65 years	Generativity vs Stagnation	Care
65 and older	Integrity vs Despair	Wisdom

(C) The Psychology Notes Headquarters - https://www.PsychologyNotesHQ.com

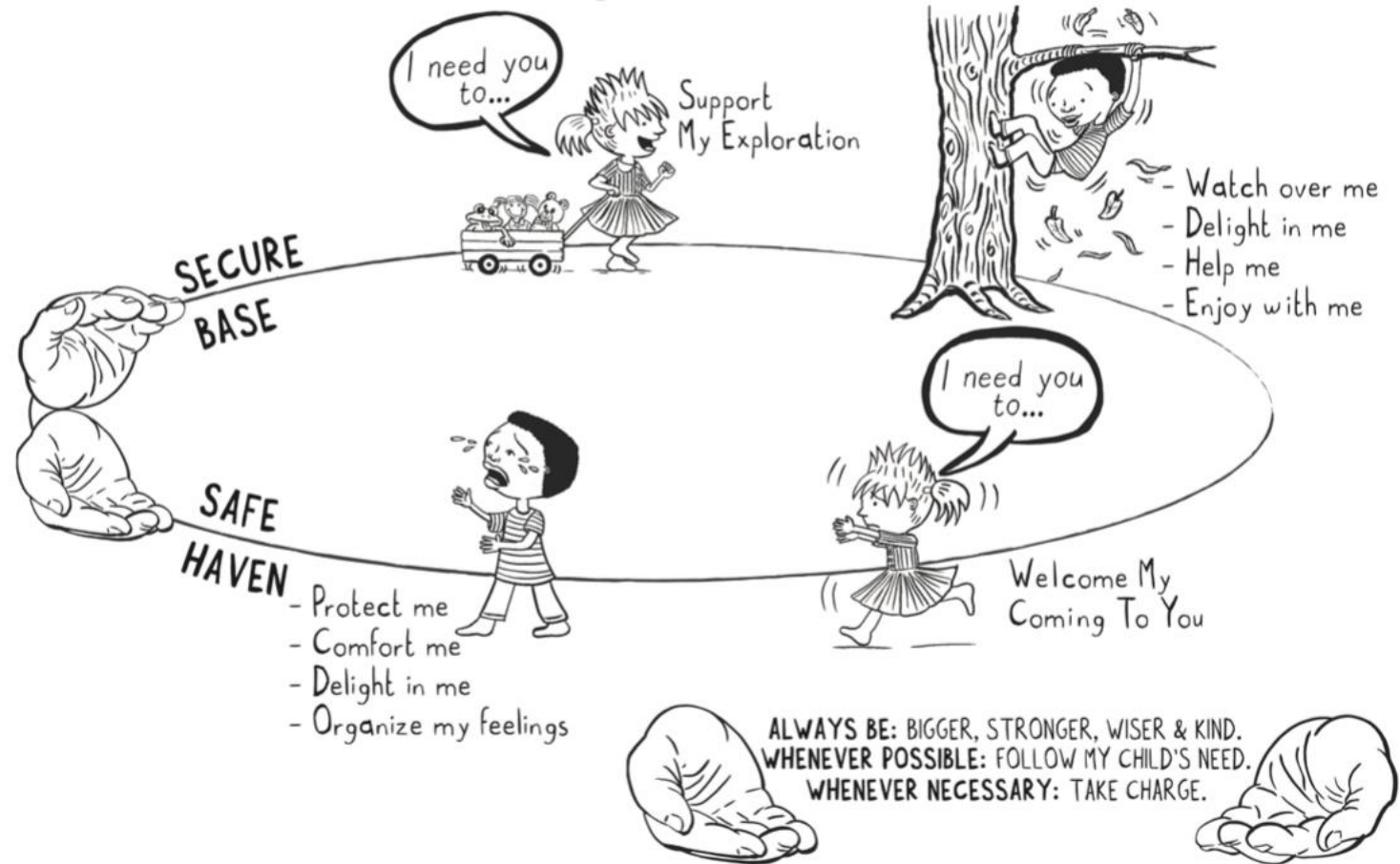| Sensorimotor	Preoperational	Concrete operational	Formal operational
Birth–2 years	2–7 years	7–12 years	12 years onward
Understands world through senses and actions	Understands world through language and mental images	Understands world through logical thinking and categories	Understands world through hypothetical thinking and scientific reasoning

https://practicalpie.com/piagets-theory-of-cognitive-development/

Introducing Safety and Trust

Trust is a prerequisite to comfort

Circle of Security®

Parent Attending To The Child's Needs

I need you to... Support My Exploration

- Watch over me
- Delight in me
- Help me
- Enjoy with me

SECURE BASE

SAFE HAVEN
- Protect me
- Comfort me
- Delight in me
- Organize my feelings

I need you to... Welcome My Coming To You

ALWAYS BE: BIGGER, STRONGER, WISER & KIND.
WHENEVER POSSIBLE: FOLLOW MY CHILD'S NEED.
WHENEVER NECESSARY: TAKE CHARGE.

What does a caregiver need to provide consistent security

► 1) Access to safety

   ► The caregiver lives in a world where they are safe and anticipate safety, the ability to return to safety when danger occurs

   ► Ability to define safety in a way that keeps the child safe

   ► Access to safety into other relationships; environments so that they can safely receive respite from community

► 2) Attention/ Attunement

   ► Caregiver has attentional capacity to think of the child in a nearly constant manner.

   ► Caregiver can know that the child is a separate human entity with distinct experiences (mentalization)

► 3) Ability Repair

   ► Notice ruptures, ask for forgiveness, and explain their mistakes

   ► Verbal processing; patience; affective tolerance

Window of Tolerance

Hyper-Arousal : Hypervigilance; High ANS activation; Cognitive focus is sharp and acute; emotionality high; somatic awareness in overwhelm

Regulated Zone

Hypo-Arousal: Dissociative; High ANS activation; Cognitive focus is loose and disoriented; Emotionality is low; Somatic awareness is low or even lost

Experiential Excursions

Re-visiting our own safe havens creating a memory map of your care-receiving experience

-Experiential Excursions are challenge by choice. People have importantly differing emotional tones which become activated when reflecting on their caregiving. Be mindful to keep yourself in a zone of active learning and present awareness about your needs as you notice your associations
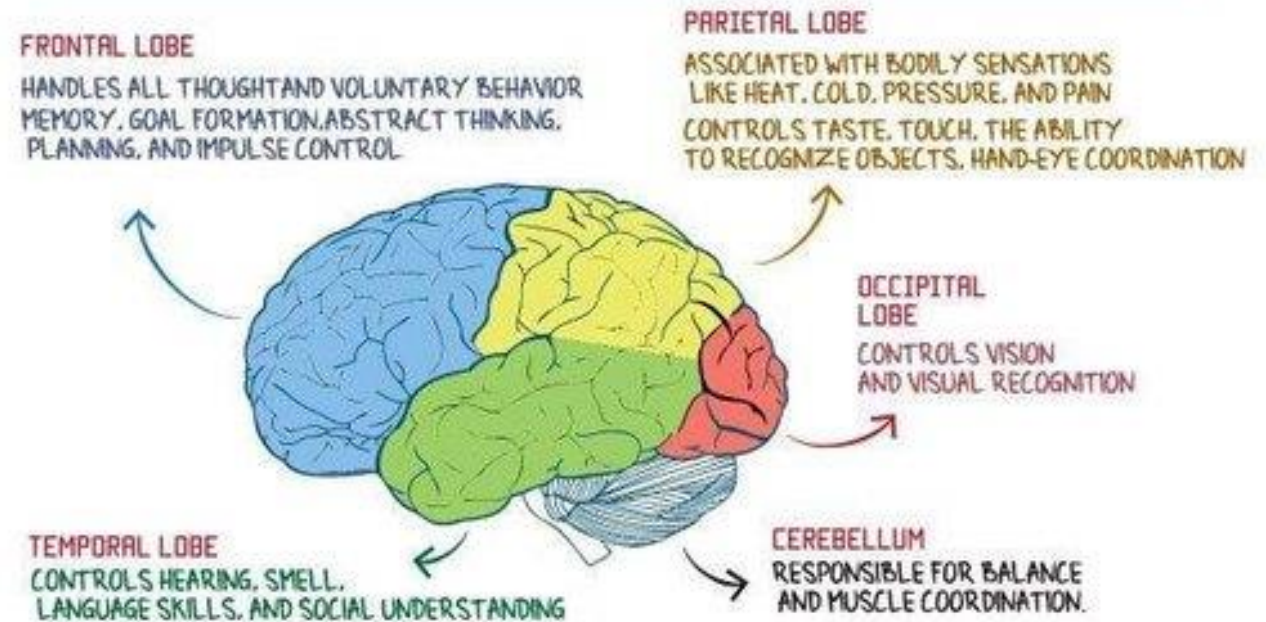
► "At the beginning these two things, the real and the imaginative life, are one and the same thing, because the infant at the beginning does not perceive objectively, but lives in a subjective state, being the creator of all. Gradually, in health the infant becomes able to perceive a world that is a not-me world, and to attain this state the infant must be cared for well enough at the time of absolute dependence."

D.W. Winnicott

Developmental problems associated with neglect in <u>first 5 years</u>

90% OF A CHILD'S BRAIN DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS BEFORE AGE 5

FRONTAL LOBE
HANDLES ALL THOUGHT AND VOLUNTARY BEHAVIOR MEMORY. GOAL FORMATION. ABSTRACT THINKING. PLANNING. AND IMPULSE CONTROL

PARIETAL LOBE
ASSOCIATED WITH BODILY SENSATIONS LIKE HEAT. COLD. PRESSURE. AND PAIN
CONTROLS TASTE. TOUCH. THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE OBJECTS. HAND-EYE COORDINATION

OCCIPITAL LOBE
CONTROLS VISION AND VISUAL RECOGNITION

TEMPORAL LOBE
CONTROLS HEARING. SMELL. LANGUAGE SKILLS. AND SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING

CEREBELLUM
RESPONSIBLE FOR BALANCE AND MUSCLE COORDINATION.

SOURCES:
HTTP://WWW.URBANCHILDINSTITUTE.ORG/WHY-0-3/BABY-AND-BRAIN
HTTP://WWW.BABYCENTER.COM/INSIDE-A-CHILDS-MIND-A-VISUAL-GUIDE
HTTP://WWW.CREMEDELACREME.COM/PRESCHOOL_TIPS/YOUR_CHILDS_BRAIN_DEVELOPMENT.HTM
HTTP://BRAININSIGHTS.MYSHOPIFY.COM/BLOGS/NEWS/5291502-IT-HAPPENS-IN-THE-BRAIN-AND-IT-BEGINS-EARLY
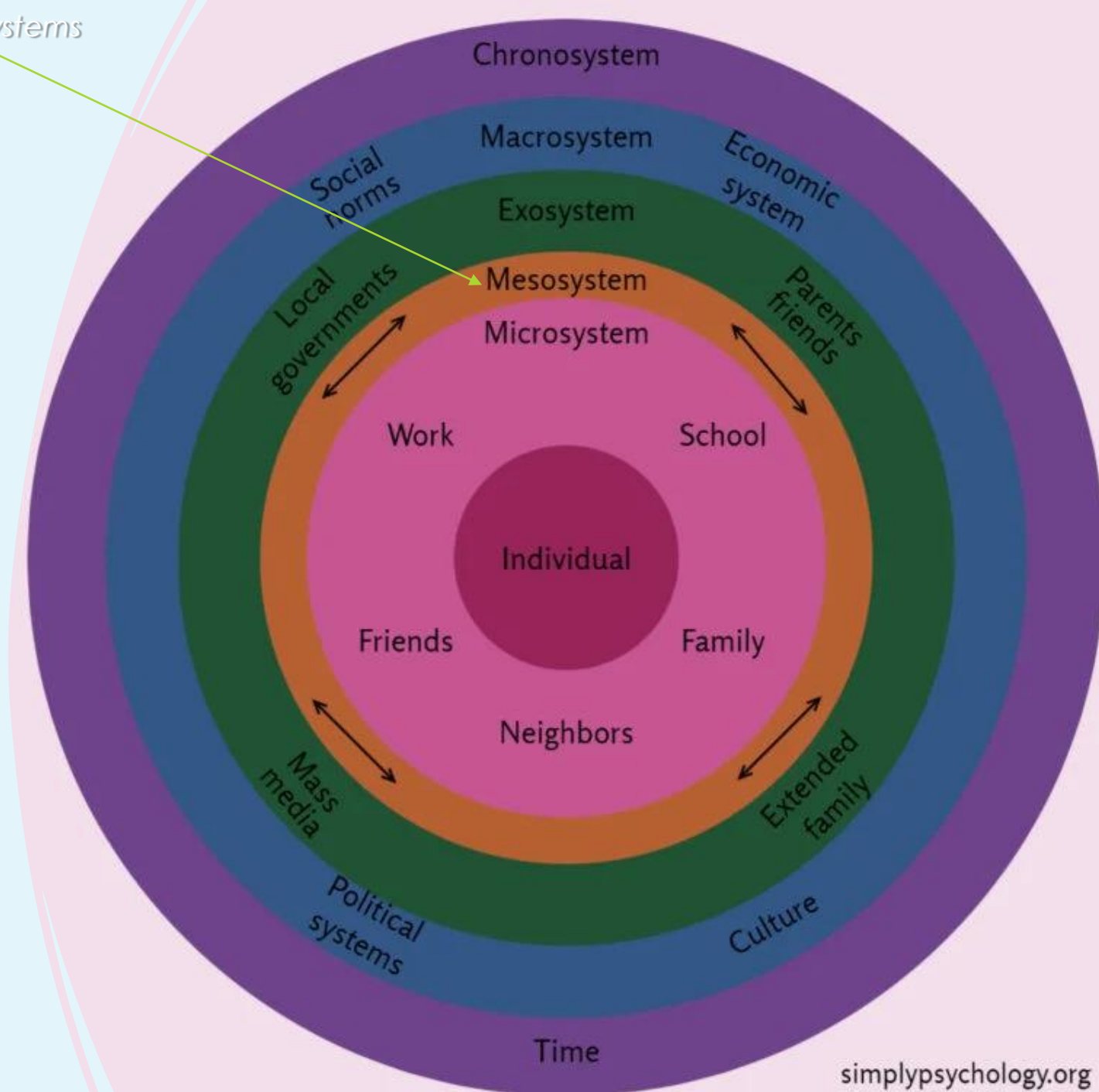HTTP://BRAINMIND.COM/BRAINLECTURE?.HTML

Foundations of Bonding

- Caretaking activities such as feeding, bathing, comforting, and putting to sleep offer opportunities for wiring down the message "You are here for my needs."

- Eustress is not a bad thing in the attachment process- it allows the child to gradually experience the stress of the world in a digestible way.

- Interplay between independence and interdependence

- Internalization of the child giver's positive regard into self-worth

A Village is *not* enough

When the economic
system and cultural
value system
Around the child and
family are not
organized with
The child's safety in
mind

Chronosystem
Macrosystem
Economic system
Social norms
Exosystem
Mesosystem
Parents friends
Local governments
Microsystem
Work
School
Individual
Friends
Family
Neighbors
Mass media
Extended family
Political systems
Culture
Time

simplypsychology.org

Social-Political Factors Harming Attachment

Poverty and hunger in children in the USA
Housing crisis

PERCENT OF WORKERS WITH ACCESS TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE 2010-2021

Legend:
- Private industry workers
- State and local government workers
- Civilian workers
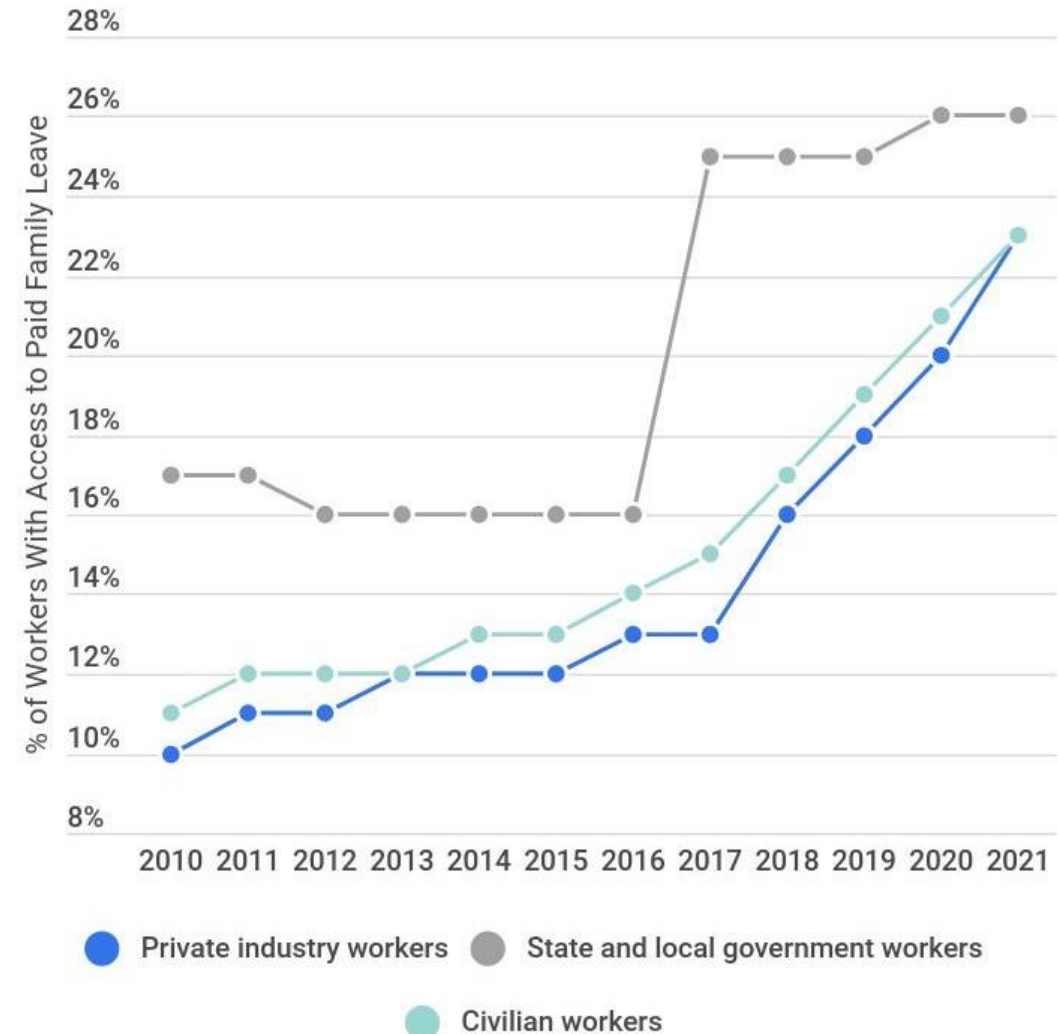
10 Weeks Old looks like….

They can:

▶ Hold their heads up…. A little

▶ Roll over….. Maybe

▶ Track moving objects across a room… A little

Average pay for childcare workers

▶ According to the US Bureau for Labor Statistics: Annual salary for childcare worker as of 2022 is $27,853

    ▶ Comparable to BEGINNGING pay at:

        ▶ Target Cashier ~$24,000

        ▶ McDonald Employee ~$23,920

        ▶ Dog walker ~$29,473

        ▶ Front end Associate at Hannafords in NH ~$23,400

Result: We equate the care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with entry level positions the workforce and made it difficult for devoted childcare providers to have a living wage while caring for the young.

Ghosts in the Nursery

Negative impact on adults within insecure attachment dyads
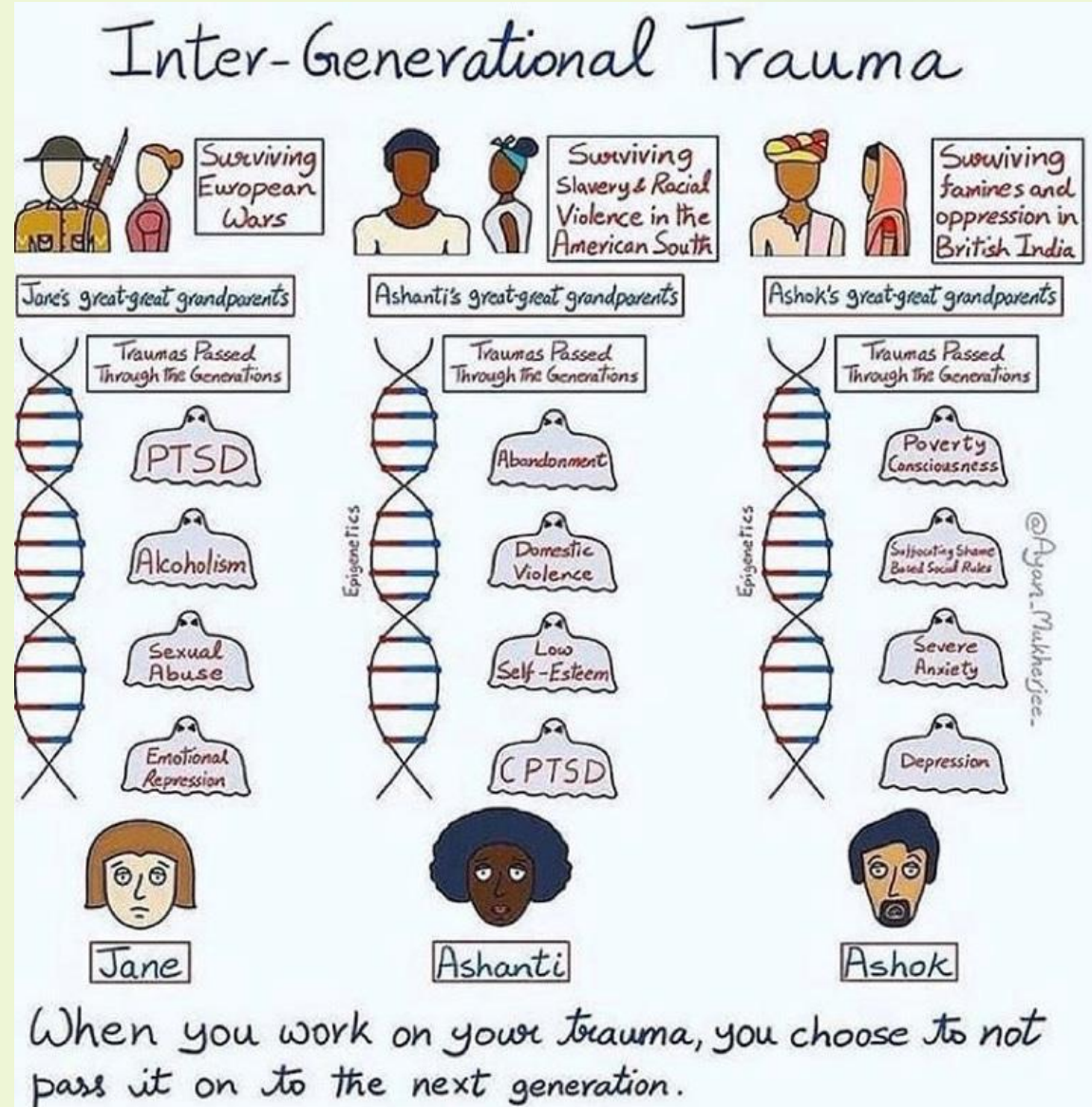
Group Discussion

- What other social factors do you see having negative effects on attachment systems?

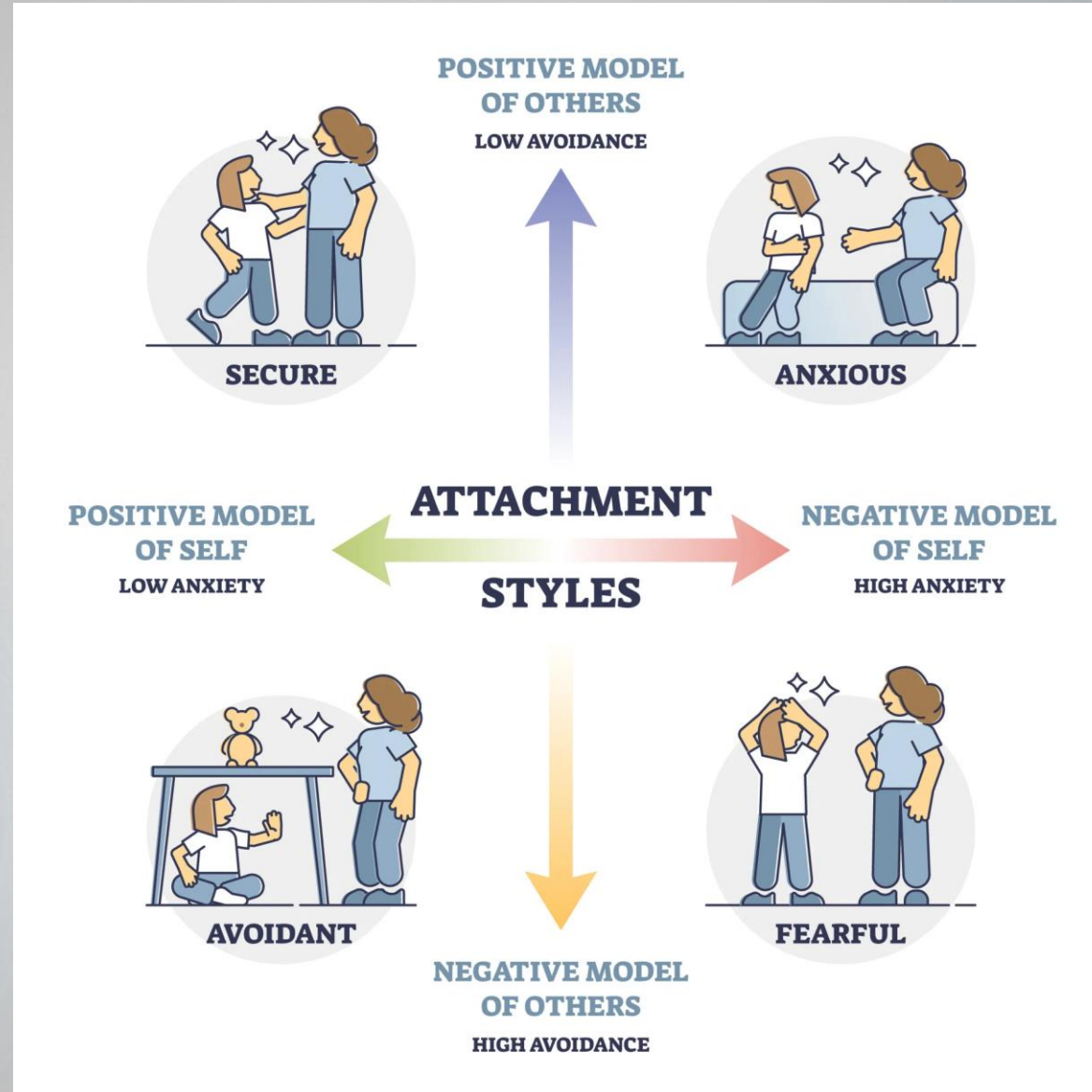# Parental Stress Levels Post-Covid 19

Healthy/ "Good Enough"

"Secure attachment lays the foundation for a child's future relationships and overall well-being."

Mary Ainsworth

POSITIVE MODEL OF OTHERS
LOW AVOIDANCE

SECURE

ANXIOUS

POSITIVE MODEL OF SELF
LOW ANXIETY

ATTACHMENT
STYLES

NEGATIVE MODEL OF SELF
HIGH ANXIETY

AVOIDANT

FEARFUL

NEGATIVE MODEL OF OTHERS
HIGH AVOIDANCE

Disorganized

When attachment is NOT good enough

- When attachment does not provide sufficient safety and trust the infant or toddler enters a state of chronic stress that becomes toxic to their development

  - **Physically**, they are inundated with stress hormones, have more feeding and sleeping problems, and have a more difficult time calming down after distress

  - **Emotionally**, they are more likely to be in a state of fearfulness which may result in a fracturing of their attentional skills, lack of mastery of their emotional reactions, and dissociation from their somatic feedback loops.

  - **Interpersonally**, they are less likely to seek out the care and attention of selectively identified safe adults to meet their needs

When Attachment Provides No Safety

▶ Non-organic Failure to Thrive

  ▶ Different from **organic failure to thrive** which can result from biological reasons for insufficient nutritional absorption, metabolic issues, or parasitic infection

  ▶ **Non-organic failure to thrive** is more commonly linked to, "Emotional deprivation as a result of parental withdrawal, rejection or hostility; or economic problems that affect nutrition, living conditions and parental attitude."

  ▶ Challenges in research on the topic due to combining these two types of FFT

http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/failure-tothrive#:~:text=Economic%20problems%20that%20affect%20nutrition,not%20having%20formal%20meal%20timess

How Can we Grow Thriving Attachment Systems?

Interpersonal Communication

Emotional Attunement

Access to the Attention of Available Adults

Access to Consistent Safety

Repairing damaged attachment

- ***Consistent safety*** means: the absence of danger and sufficient access to sustenance, protection, and comfort… think hierarchy of needs here.

- ***Attunement***
  - Emotional landscape mapping. I know the sense of your feelings because I have been there before with you. I have sensed this into my own body and can interpret it, support your ability to make meaning around it, and offer you comfort and understanding

- ***Repair***
  - Even when things go wrong, we can find our way back. I will guide us.

Hierarchy of Needs for Secure Attachments

Joy

Repair Skills

Attunement

Attention

Community

Safety/trust

Repairing

- Modeling **accountability**
  - "I didn't come when you called me."

- Open **curiosity** and **validation**
  - "I wonder what you felt? Maybe you were scared I would not come at all."

- **Appreciation** of closeness
  - "I am so glad you let me know what this was like for you."

- **Rebuilding**: I will learn from this and offer new protection
  - "I am going to let you know when I do laundry in the basement first from now on."

Being a North Star

"In quiet moments in the dark when we are alone- let us look inwards and see a light that shows the way."

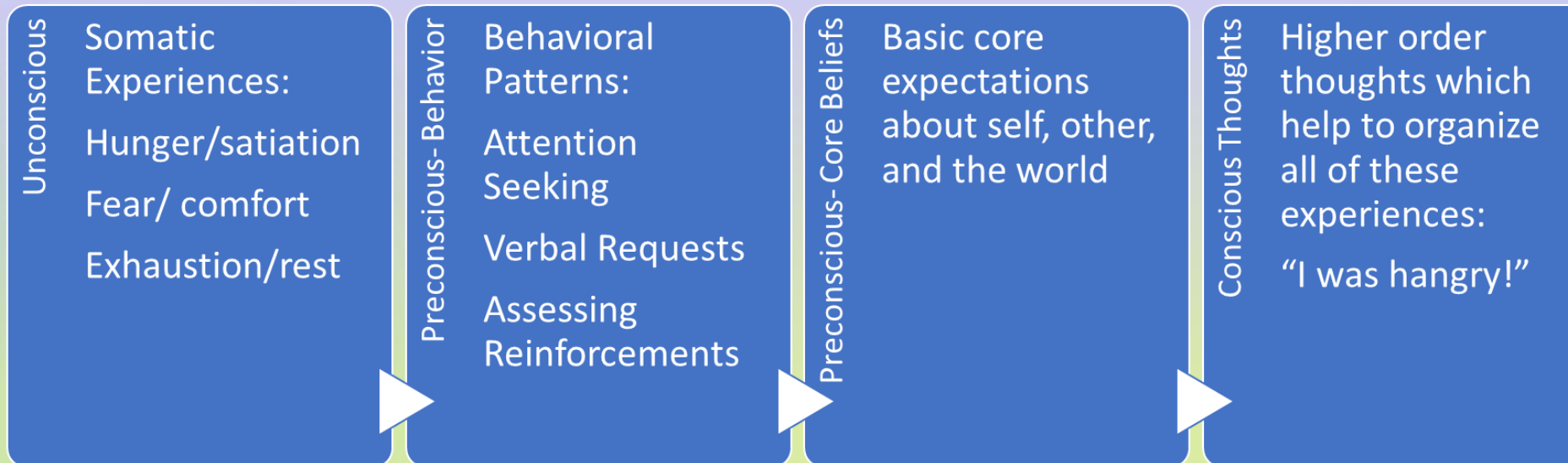▶ *Mentalization- a process of internalizing the world*

Experience: I am alone and unable to soothe my needs

Mentalization: My caregiver will come for me and I will not be in this state permanently
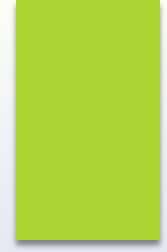
Experience: I am alone and unable to soothe my needs

Mentalization: There is no end in sight to this distress and I am the only one able to help me

Order of Thought and Understanding

Unconscious

Somatic Experiences:

Hunger/satiation

Fear/ comfort

Exhaustion/rest

Preconscious- Behavior

Behavioral Patterns:

Attention Seeking

Verbal Requests

Assessing Reinforcements

Preconscious- Core Beliefs

Basic core expectations about self, other, and the world

Conscious Thoughts

Higher order thoughts which help to organize all of these experiences:
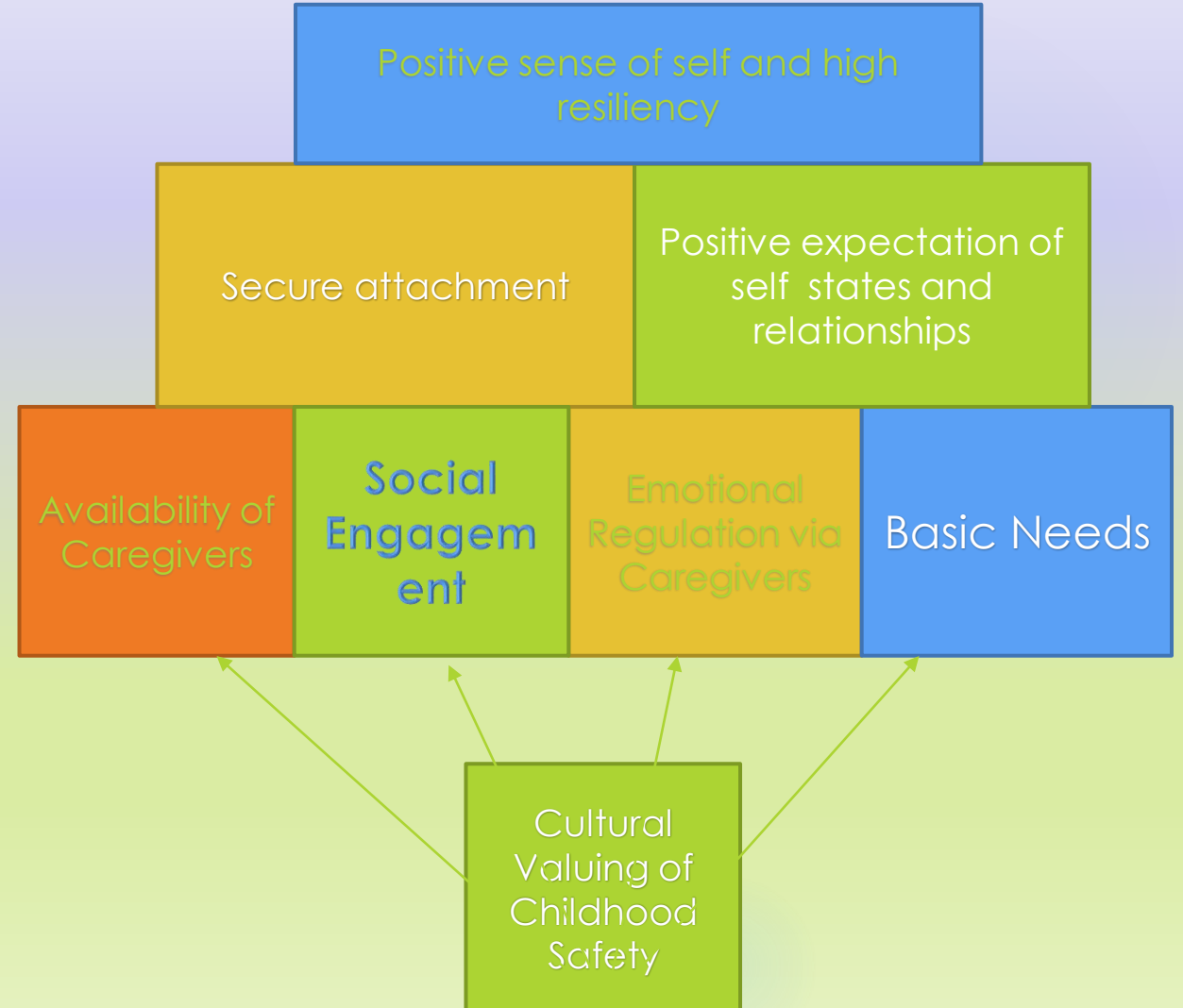
"I was hangry!"

When attachment is damaged

Experiential Excursion

When did you last feel comfort? What allowed this?

An Approach to a Culture of Thriving Attachment

Positive sense of self and high resiliency

Secure attachment

Positive expectation of self states and relationships

Availability of Caregivers

Social Engagement

Emotional Regulation via Caregivers

Basic Needs

Cultural Valuing of Childhood Safety

Beyond Good Enough Security

Static
Security

Secure Enough

Thriving
Security

More than a village

- The village

Honoring the contributions

Further Learning Suggestions

- https://www.wisdomweavers.world/