


## DDP-informed Parenting with PACE

Building Security for Children with Developmental Traumas

 Kim S Golding

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### Overview

- Developmental Trauma
- Difficulties stemming from developmental trauma
- Therapeutic relationships
- Reflective functioning and mentalization to increase regulation and stay open and engaged
- Supporting Children
- Connection and correction supporting behaviour whilst building security



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## Developmental Trauma



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'The most traumatic aspects of all disasters involve the shattering of human connections. And this is especially true for children. Being harmed by the people who are supposed to love you, being abandoned by them, being robbed of the one-on-one relationships that allow you to feel safe and valued and to become humane – these are profoundly destructive experiences. Because humans are inescapably social beings, the worst catastrophes that can befall us inevitably involve relational loss. As a result, recovery from trauma and neglect is also all about relationships – rebuilding trust, regaining confidence, returning to a sense of security and reconnecting to love'

(Perry & Szalavitz, 2006, p 231 -232)



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### In the Beginning

- Early parent-infant interactions provide a foundation for the later development of an attachment.
  - » Attunement.
  - » Sensitive responsiveness.
  - » Empathy.
- Provides the experience necessary for healthy brain development.
- Promotes development of social, emotional, cognitive and physical health.
- When child does not get this early experience it leads to relationship difficulties, making the task of parenting more complex.



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If you feel safe and loved, your brain becomes specialized in exploration, play and co-operation; if you are frightened and unwanted, it specializes in managing feelings of fear and abandonment.

Van Der Kolk, B. (2014) The body keeps the score. Mind, brain and body in the transformation of trauma. Viking, Penguin, p56



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Complex Trauma

- When an individual is exposed to multiple traumatic events with an impact on immediate and long-term outcomes.

When complex trauma:

- Occurs through childhood, with early onset,
- Is chronic and prolonged,
- Within the family (interpersonal),
- Impacts on development.

= Developmental Trauma 

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Developmental Trauma

Developmental traumas, caused by a child's attachment figures, either through their own actions or through failing to protect them from the actions of others, have comprehensive and severe consequences.



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Developmental Trauma

There are 4 key difficulties of developmental trauma which leads to problems in attachment, and trusting in caregiving.

1. Blocked Trust
2. Fear of relationships
3. Need to miscue attachment needs
4. Profound sense of shame

All of these are linked to a fear of abandonment and a strong need to remain in control.



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**Developmental Trauma**

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- Developmental trauma is devastating for a child because it interferes with the formation of a secure attachment bond.
- The child loses their primary source of safety and stability.
- This leads to disturbed attachment patterns of relating to others. The child-parent relationship is the source of trauma.
- This interferes with attachment formation, leaving the child feeling helpless and abandoned



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**Developmental Trauma**


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Child attempts to exert control:

- By disconnecting from social relationships.
- By acting coercively towards others.
- By restricting processing of what is happening around them.

This can result in lifelong problems with increased risk of additional trauma exposure as the child struggles to:

- Regulate emotion and manage stress
- Manage sense of shame and experience empathy for others
- Use language to solve problems



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"Traumatized children rarely discuss their fears and traumas spontaneously. They also have little insight into the relationship between what they do, what they feel, and what has happened to them."

(van der Kolk, 2005 p405)



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Harry's Early Experience

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Reflection



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Difficulties Stemming from Developmental Trauma

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Difficulty One:  
Loss of Trust in Infancy

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**Development of Trust in Infancy:  
Good Enough Parenting**

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- Attuned parenting matched to emotional needs of child.
- Provides experience of intersubjective relationship.
- Offers Attachment Security.

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- Development of Trust
- Experience of unconditional relationship, loved 'no matter what'.



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**Moving to Toddlerhood**

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- Begins to develop autonomy and to assert independence.
- Structure and supervision becomes important.
- Parent sets limits and socializes child according to cultural norms.

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- Trust developed in infancy allows child to believe in parent's good intentions.
- Knows relationship remains unconditional.
- Accepts limits on behaviour because knows will be loved no matter what.



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**Development of Mistrust in Infancy:  
Frightening Parenting**

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- Frightening early environment.
- Parenting is not attuned to emotional needs and little intersubjective connection.
- Attachment experience is frightening and disorganizing.
- Loss & separation. Multiple caregivers.

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- Development of Mistrust
- Relationship is conditional. Child feels loved 'only if'.



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### Moving to Toddlerhood Including Change of Caregiver

- Child has more healthy parenting experience.
- Parents have missed sequential opportunity to build trust and then set boundaries.
- Parent tries to offer unconditional relationship at the same time as setting limits on behaviour.

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- Ordinary parenting is experienced as predicting abandonment and pain.
- Do not trust in parent's good intentions, but becoming controlling in interactions.
- Child resists authority and opposes parental influence. Feels safer to influence without being open to influence = controlling.
- Mistrust is strengthened, and blocked trust develops.



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### Moving Out into the World

- Early attachment relationships provide a template for the development of relationships outside of the home, including in school.
- This impacts on adults supporting the children, who can become a further source of fear for the children.
- This can also impact on peer relationships as children adapt their controlling patterns of behaviour to manage these relationships.
- Children with blocked trust have learnt to fear reciprocity and to resist being open to the influence of others. They do not learn the normal give and take of relationships.
- The controlling attachment behaviours are generalized to all relationships, and, without support, the child does not get a chance to experience other ways of relating.



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### The Impact of Trauma on the Nervous System

- The impact of trauma is a biological process.
- In particular, it has a big impact on the development of the nervous system.
- Understanding this can help with understanding the reason why children are more often behaving defensively rather than being open and engaged,
- and how this in turn can pull others into being defensive; making it hard for them to remain open and engaged.
- Social monitoring system is sensitized by early experience of maltreatment.
- Alert for signs of rejection, anger, neglect.
- Social engagement system inactive
- Social defence system active



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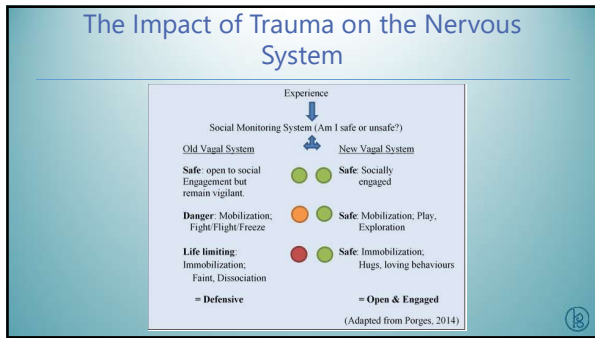
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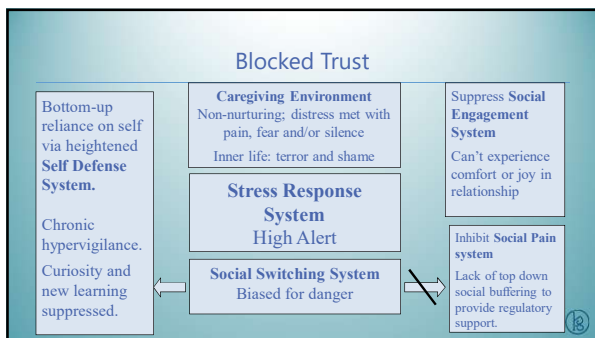
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### What is Blocked Care

- When caring for a child/YP is hard, and especially when parent is rejected, resilience is eroded.
- The parent develops feelings of hopelessness.
- Belief in parenting ability is challenged.
- The parent tries to remain open and engaged to the child, but this becomes too painful. Biological impact, as caregiving systems switch off.
- The parent also withdraws from the intersubjective relationship already rejected by the child.
- Parenting becomes a task. Joy in child and parenting is lost. Hard to like or have empathy for the child.



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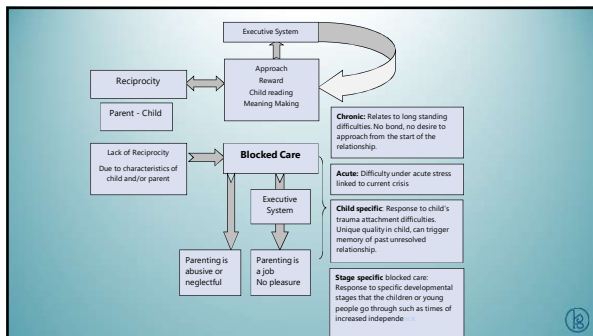
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### Millie and her Mother

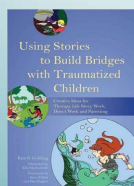


Illustration by Julia MacConville



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**SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO MISTRUST**

- Children who experience blocked trust learn to resist authority and to oppose parental influence. They are also resistant to the influence of others.
- They do not trust in parents' good intentions or in unconditional support and love. They have core beliefs linking this to a sense of badness. They therefore struggle to believe that other adults have good intentions towards them
- They trust in themselves rather than others and thus are controlling in their behaviours.
- Control means that are not open to influence and this feels safer.



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**SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO MISTRUST**

- Parent has to provide parenting that builds trust and provides socialization at the same time rather than sequentially. Without trust ordinary parenting feels like abandonment and pain. 'You do not love me. I am not good enough. You will hurt me and leave.
- Teachers need to provide support that offers understanding, empathy and unconditional support. This will build trust.
- Without this ordinary school discipline becomes further proof of the child's badness, leading to excessive shame, defensive responding and emotional distress. The child is not in a state to learn from the discipline.



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**Intersubjectivity, Shame, and Attachment**

Mistrust in infancy impacts on :

- Development of capacity for an intersubjective relationship which is feared
- Development of an identity which becomes organized around feelings of shame
- Development of attachment relationships organized around insecurity and lack of safety.
- Generalization of this to a range of later relationships.



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Difficulty Two:  
Fear of Intersubjective Relationships



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Intersubjectivity

- Safety and intersubjectivity are interwoven
- Trevarthen studied infant intersubjectivity. The contingent and responsive relationship between parent and child.
- Parents discover what is unique about their baby.
- Baby discovers he can influence the parent.
- Primary intersubjectivity
- Leads to secondary intersubjectivity
- Impacts on the developing sense of an autonomous self.
- Lack of intersubjectivity – parent and child experience shame



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
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Intersubjectivity

- Intersubjective experience = reciprocity. Children are open to influence and enjoy influencing.
- Lack of intersubjectivity leads to social defensiveness. Need to take control of relationships rather than engage in mutual influence.
- Children who experience neglect lack early intersubjective experience. They feel not special and not loveable.
- Children who experience anger, fear, or rejection experience terror and shame. They learn to avoid intersubjective experience.
- Living with alternative parents – child continues to avoid intersubjective experience.
- This impacts on carer's beliefs about self as a parent leading to a sense of failure, feel unsafe with child.
- Carer also withdraws from intersubjective experience.



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### INTERSUBJECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN SCHOOL

- The children enter school fearful of the influence of others and unable to enter into intersubjective relationships.
- They try to control the relationships with teachers and peers in a range of different ways because this feels safer, and they don't know how to relate differently.
- They are also resistant to support to experience different ways of relating because they distrust the good intentions of others, and fear that they are not good enough in the eyes of the others.
- Adults need to keep offering these experiences so that the child discovers that reciprocal relationships are safe. They can then learn different ways of relating that are less defensive.
- When the children respond less defensively they will be more open to curiosity and learning. Now they can fully benefit from education.



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### Difficulty Three: Living with Shame



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### Understanding and Managing Shame

- Shame is a complex emotion that develops later than the development of more straightforward feelings or emotions such as anger, joy or sadness.
- Shame is uncomfortable for children who learn to limit shame-inducing behaviours.
- Shame is protective, it helps children to learn socially acceptable behaviour and thus to be able to develop relationships.
- This experience of shame is integrative.



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### When Shame is Disintegrative

- Children do not experience attunement-relationship rupture/shame-re-attunement cycle but instead they experience unregulated shame that overwhelms them.
- Many experiences of disintegrative shame leads to shame becoming part of core-identity. 'I am a shameful person', leads to chronic anger and controlling behaviours.
- Children need appropriately graded doses of shame and support & reassurance to help them manage this, or the shame engulfs them.
- Children feel alienated and defeated, never quite good enough to belong. Trapped in shame, abandoned. Shame becomes toxic.
- Children experience difficulty regulating emotion & thinking rationally. Thus unable to respond flexibly or to control impulses.
- Children need to develop defences against overwhelming shame.



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### The Shield Against Shame



- Behavioural management strategies increase shame.
- Connection with emotional experience regulates shame.
- As anxieties, worries and fears are understood behaviours reduce.
- Then child can experience remorse and make amends.
- Connection before correction reduces shame and improves behaviour



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
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### Impact on Attachment

- Difficulties of trust, intersubjectivity and shame impact on the development of the attachment relationship.
- In particular the way that children signal their need for nurture.
- The dance of attachment becomes organized by these difficulties.



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Difficulty Four:  
Miscuing through hidden  
needs

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Attachment

- Attachment = Safety. Bowlby highlighted the innate drive to attach, which provides the safety to explore. When children feel safe they engage socially and are receptive to learn from another person.
- We are most healthy when we are in social-emotional relationships. Lack of safety = hypervigilance to the environment.
- Developmentally traumatized children find parents more frightening than strangers. They anticipate that all parents will hurt them.
- These children avoid relationships.
- Parents feel rejected and experience a sense of failure in their parenting.



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Those who cannot remember the  
past are condemned to repeat it.  
Santayana. The Life of  
Reason, vol1, Scribner 1905

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"When you feel you know the  
future you can be sure that your  
are reliving the past....because  
nobody knows the future."

(Annie Rogers, A Shining Affliction,  
Penguin, 1993)



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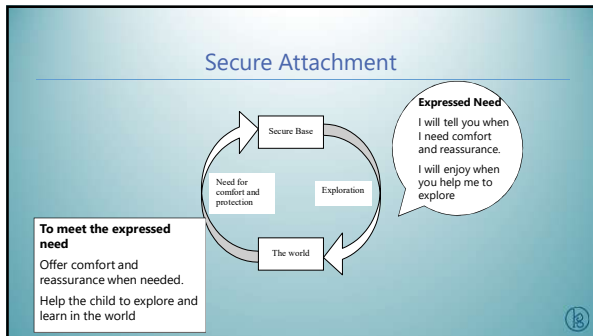
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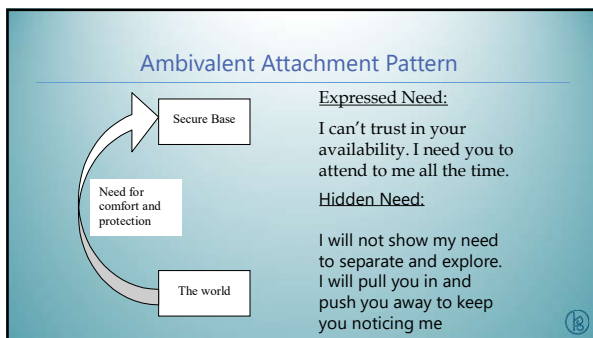
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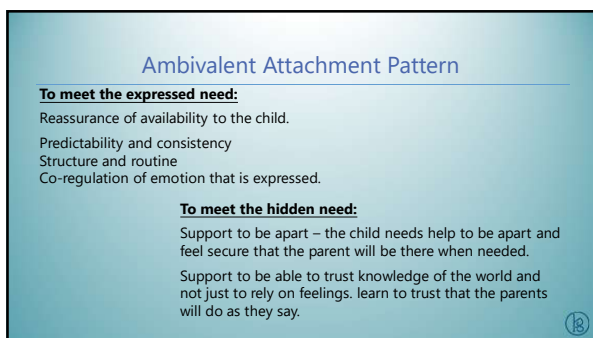
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I didn't know what was happening. In my fear that she would leave me, I didn't want her to know, I suppose I didn't want to know myself, how much she mattered to me.....  
Always I would do something to see if the relationship would hold."

Annie Rogers  
A shining Affliction, Penguin 1995

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### Avoidant Attachment Pattern

**Expressed Need:**  
I will act like I want to explore even when I need comfort  
I will not show my need for comfort and reassurance

**Hidden Need:**  
I will do it by myself, I fear my need of you. I will push you away

The diagram illustrates the Avoidant Attachment Pattern. It features three boxes: 'Secure Base' at the top, 'The world' at the bottom, and 'Exploration' in the center. A curved arrow starts from 'Secure Base', goes down and right to 'Exploration', then down and left to 'The world', and finally loops back up and right to 'Secure Base'.

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### Avoidant Attachment Pattern

**Gently challenge the expressed need**

- Help child to feel comfortable needing and being helped by parent.

**To meet the hidden need**

- Help to feel comfort and safety with the parent.
- Support to accept nurturing.
- Co-regulation of emotion that is hidden.
- Help to trust emotion and to know that it will be acceptable to others.

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"People who know the family remark to his mother on how well behaved he is. But it isn't good behaviour. He simply does not know how to behave as an ordinary child. So if he is angry he does not show it. And if he is sad, if something happens that reduces him to tears, he goes upstairs and hides away to weep. The boy lives inside his head because it is by far the safest place he knows."

(Fergal Keane All of these people London: Harper Perennial pp54-55)

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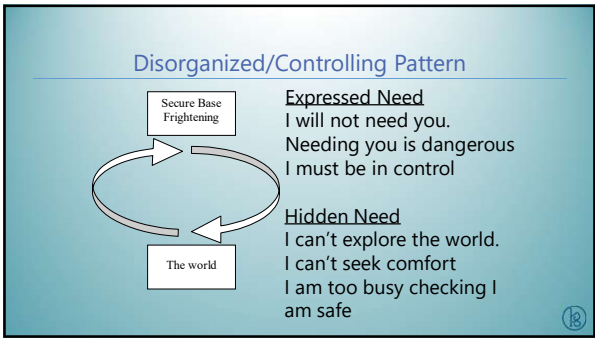
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### Disorganized/Controlling Pattern

**Meeting expressed needs**

- Help child to trust in your ability to meet their need
- Help child to trust in your ability to keep them safe

**Meeting hidden needs**

- Need help to feel safe.
- Need a low stress environment.
- Need help to trust feeling and thinking
- Need help to develop emotional regulation and reflective function abilities.

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"People vanish and return, people vanish and never return. "Carry me, carry me," the chant of a child's terror of vanishing. People vanish and then turn up again to love and to torment. A child wishes they would vanish again."

Annie Rogers A shining Affliction, Penguin 1995

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**Attachment in School**

- Children learn to relate to familiar adults in school using the template of their attachment relationships.
- Thus children will also misread the teachers and other educational staff about their needs.
- The avoidant children act as if they don't need support (self-reliance), the ambivalent child will demonstrate a need for support however they are feeling but will not respond to the support that is offered (attention needing).
- Teaching staff are left feeling ineffectual and with a sense of failure with the child. They may respond to these feelings defensively.

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**When attachment and connection feel dangerous**

- Prior experience influences how child responds.
- Needs can be presented in a distorted or hidden way.
- Need to be available & responsive and gently challenging.
- Challenge beliefs –
  - Parents and close adults can't keep you safe/ are dangerous.
  - I am so bad nothing you can do or say will change this.
  - I should take care of you, not expect you to take care of me.

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## Building Therapeutic Relationships

### DDP-informed Parenting



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## What are Therapeutic Relationships

Support that can meet the needs of the developmentally traumatized child:

- Parents and close adults trigger fear – haven of safety has been source of fear in past.
- Need to help child to feel safe with being supported.
- And remain healthy and well whilst managing the impact of supporting a child who fears you – whether they demonstrate this fear through rejection (I can't reach this child) or clinginess (I can't soothe this child).



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
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## Central Qualities Needed

Abilities to help the parent to stay open & engaged to the child; and to move back to this state when feeling defensive

- Good reflective functioning which leads to a capacity to be mind-minded.
- Ability to emotionally regulate when feeling under stress.
- This open & engaged state helps the parent with the attitude of PACE



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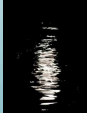
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### Open & Engaged Support

When parents are open & engaged it offers the child connection, helping the child with:

- Relationship
  - Regulation
  - Reflection



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### What is an Open & Engaged Relationship?

- Each is open to the influence of the other.
- Able to reflect, notice and make sense of internal experience.

*Eg A parent might be trying to help her child complete homework but the child is refusing to co-operate. The parent notices that she is feeling frustrated and hopeless. She is able to be compassionate to herself and acknowledge that this child can evoke these feelings in her. She is then able to stay curious about her child; wondering why she is refusing. She wonders if the child is anxious that she won't get it right. She comments how hard it is to start something when you are not sure if you will be able to do it. The child is then able to tell her that she did not understand the teacher's instructions.*



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
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### What is Defensive?

- A closed, non-engaged state.
- Can be in response to the defensive state of the other.
- Leads to negative emotions eg anger, frustration, hopelessness.
- Leads to feelings of failure and lack of enjoyment in the relationship.



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### Defensive Responding

- We can defend against feeling defensive by prematurely moving to problem-solving,
- We can try to change what the other person feels through nagging, lecturing, reassuring .
- Or we can become angry or withdraw from the relationship.
- Lose capacity to reflect, become evaluative and judgmental of self and/or other.
- Emotional connection is lost.




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### Defensive breeds Defensive


Children who have been hurt within attachment relationships view current relationships through the lens of this hurt.

- Impacts on Internal Working Model – 'I will be hurt; you will hurt me.'
- Leads to development of FEAR of relationships.
- This impacts on the ability to heal from the trauma.

And

The parents experience fear in child as rejection or failure. They too become defensive.

- This impacts on the way they support the child.
- This too can impact on the developing relationship




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Open & Engaged	Defensive
Open to influence in here and now experience.	Not with you in your experience of them. Fear of future, despair of past.
Connected, good eye-contact.	Poor eye contact.
Playful, enjoyment in relationship.	Poor ability to be playful and no enjoyment.
Feels understood and accepts our acceptance.	Feels misunderstood, communicated via anger, frustration or withdrawn.
Curious and reflective.	Incurious and reactive.
Open and receptive to empathy.	Rejects empathy. Experiences anger and shame.




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Adult	Child
Stays open & engaged.	Able to move to open & engaged also.
Uses PACE	Feels better understood.
Avoids judgement and evaluation of internal experience.	Acceptance reduces defensiveness.
Holds their mind with your mind. Stay connected and present.	Shares present experience, or past memory.
Connect through wondering about other's experience, convey with storytelling voice,	Child becomes open & engaged with your experience of him, and revises own experience of himself.
Builds narrative of experience.	Help child know and feel his story.

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Marian Feels a Failure: Take One




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**Relationship**

- It is at the challenging times that children need connection most.
- Parents need to find ways to connect with the children at the times that they most want to put some distance between them.
- This openness to the relationship even at these difficult times builds trust.
- The child experiences the security of knowing that they are unconditionally loved by those parenting them.




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### Regulation

- Many of the challenging behaviours stem out of dysregulated emotion.
- Alongside this levels of shame are increasing.
- Notice also the child who dissociates rather than dysregulates; because these children are less challenging to others their struggles with emotion can be missed.



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### Regulation

- Parents need to attend to the regulation of the emotional experience that these children are immersed in. Emotional connection allows the parent to help the child to regulate.
- This approach to supporting children is regulatory based rather than behaviour based. Behaviour is still supported, but this behaviour support is successful because it is based upon the child being helped to regulate.



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### Regulation based parenting with PACE

As stress increases arousal also increases; changes what the child is open to.

- CALM. Arousal is low. Rational and open to reflection. Verbal child can join in with PACE, open to playfulness and curiosity as well as the connection that acceptance and empathy brings.
- AROUSED. Emotional arousal increases, appears younger and more concrete in ability to think. She might still be open to PACE but is less likely to engage with curiosity. Her reflection has reduced.



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- **ALARMED.** Increasingly emotional, reflected in behaviour and increasingly immature functioning. Dysregulation is increased. The child needs you to be curious on her behalf so that you can communicate via genuine acceptance and empathy (A&E). She will not be able to reflect with you.
- **FEARFUL.** Very reactive. A&E might still reach her if clear and simple with a high level of acceptance for her experience.
- **TERROR.** Full fight and flight response. Hang on and keep the both of you safe. PACE via A&E is aimed at reducing the panic. Convey acceptance in your voice but the words are less likely to reach her until the terror subsides and she starts to go down the arousal continuum again. Now is a time for a high level of nurture. Only later will the child be calm enough to engage with you in PACE again.

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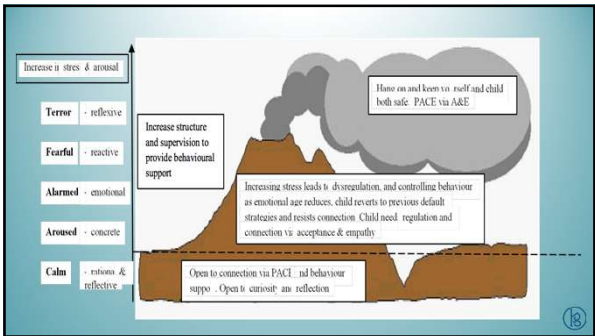
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".....it is a clinical commonplace that only after a patient has become emotionally aware of how and what he is feeling can therapeutic change be expected."

John Bowlby, 1969/1997




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### Reflection: Discovering the Story

- A younger or more immature child needs the parent to reflect on her behalf. Just as with toddlers, the parent lets the child know that he understands and can make sense of the child's behaviour.
- The younger or less mature child is told the story of what just happened.
- A more mature child is developmentally able to reflect on her behaviour, but needs help with regulation first.
- Now the story can be created together. The child is able to sit with the parent and think about her experience.



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### Reflection

- Using PACE and having a story-telling attitude strengthens the connection between parent and child.
- Start with the child's experience, and make sense of this before helping the child to consider the viewpoint of anyone else involved.
- Curiosity and understanding is communicated as internal experience is explored and accepted.
- Empathy flows naturally as the child's thoughts and feelings are more deeply understood.



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### Reflection

- This is a slowing down in support. Staying with the child's own experience for longer strengthens the connection between parent and child, whilst providing further regulatory support.
- Now the child is ready to reflect on the consequences of her behaviour. Instead of shame she can experience guilt and remorse. The parent is on hand to help her with this, supporting her efforts to make amends.



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### Reflection

- One of the strengths of this approach is that the consequences for the behaviour can also be part of the building of the relationship.
- Instead of adult imposed
- It also means figuring out what the parent can do to support the child with this.



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### Reflective Functioning and Mentalization to increase Regulation and to stay Open & Engaged

Being Mind-minded



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### Develop the Capacity for being Mind-minded

- Being open to noticing and understanding your own internal experience; your thoughts, feelings, belief, hopes, worries etc.
- Practice remaining open to emotional experience; noticing what you are experiencing and regulating this experience with support from others.



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### Developing the Capacity for being Mind-Minded

- Reflecting on this experience will increase your capacity to remain open & engaged to yourself, allowing you to move more easily from defensive to open & engaged when responding to others.
- Regular mindfulness practice has also been shown to be useful for restoring balance in the brain, strengthening healthy reflection and regulation.



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"Past experiences, in particular unresolved trauma, prevent us from being present to those who are in front of us, because it biases our perceptions. To be a mindful and effective therapist it is vital that we know how our own biases and wounds restrict our ability to be fully present to our patients. When we, as therapist, impose old (unconsciously held) stories on our clients' reality, they feel it and are likely to be retraumatized rather than healed."

Dan Siegel Chapter 7 Beyond the prison of implicit memory: mindful path to well-being. P155 (in Sieff 2015)



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### Mind-Minded

- Being mind-minded means you are able to understand and take into account the mental state of yourself or another person; ie what you or they might be thinking, feeling, wishing; believing; desiring etc.
- This internal experience is neither right nor wrong it just is.
- This ability to be reflective can help you move away from the legacy of your attachment history leading to earned security.
- We are all helped by being able to be mind-minded, able to notice and have compassion for our own internal experience.
- This in turn can help us notice and have empathy towards the internal experience of others.



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### Mind-Mindedness to Self

- If we are able to notice our own thoughts, feelings, beliefs, worries and fears we will be able to stay open & engaged to others.
- We will notice and accept our internal experience.
- Parents will be less defensive within their parenting.



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### PACE: The Application of Mind-Mindedness



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### Apply PACE to yourself

- Be compassionate to yourself by providing PACE for yourself.
- By allowing yourself to be playful and staying curious about your experience you will be accepting and empathic to yourself.
- Understanding, connecting and being compassionate towards your own internal experience will build resilience.
- Being with others who can have PACE for you is also helpful
- Helps you to stay open and engaged to others even when experiencing stress.



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### PACE Begins with You

- Playfulness: is the lighter side of discovering inner experience. This exploration does not need to be deep and serious, it can also be light and playful. Playfulness conveys a sense of confidence and hope for the future.
- Acceptance: creates psychological safety. The focus is on acceptance of internal experience. In accepting inner experience we are not judging ourselves or others, this is how we feel, think, hope – it is neither right or wrong it just is. We might evaluate behavior but not the inner experience.

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- Curiosity: when we curiously explore we come to know ourselves and others more deeply. When we direct non-judgmental curiosity toward our experience we will become more accepting and empathic towards ourselves. This will help us to be curious about others, leading to acceptance and empathy for them.
- Empathy: is the outcome of our curiosity and acceptance. Acceptance + Empathy = Compassion. As we know ourselves better we also experience more compassion towards ourselves.

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### Supporting Children

PACE facilitates therapeutic relationships that can heal and open the door to a new future.



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### Being Mind-Minded

- Parents treat the children as individuals with their own minds.
- They understand that the child has thoughts, feelings, beliefs and desires which might be different to their own.
- They help the child to discover his own mind, to organize his experience and eventually to help him put into words what he is experiencing.
- This in turn increases the capacity for regulation that has begun to develop within the relationship with an attuned, sensitive parent.



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“There is evidence that just one relationship with a caregiver....who is capable of autobiographical reflection, in other words a caregiver who provides a high reflective self-function, can enhance the resilience of an individual. Through just one relationship with an understanding other, trauma can be transformed and its effects neutralized or counteracted.”

(Fosha, 2003).



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### PACE



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## Play

- A playful attitude conveys optimism, that things can change.
- Demonstrates that the other is experienced positively - joy in the relationship.
- Notice the strengths and uniqueness of the other and takes pleasure in these.
- Experience this relationship as unlike past relationships.
- Experience having a positive impact on the other.
- Builds to provide experience of reciprocal enjoyment within the relationship.



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## 'Whatever man can do seriously he can do playfully'

Bruner, 1977



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## Acceptance

- Accept and don't evaluate wishes, thoughts, feelings, beliefs and desires.
- Acceptance means becoming aware of and understanding the inner life of another without trying to change it.
- Demonstrate that other's inner life is safe with you. You are not judging, nor trying to change this inner experience.
- Reduce shame through acceptance of person, and difference from behaviour.



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## Curiosity

- An attitude of not knowing.
- Tentative wondering coming out of experience of the other.
- Curiosity is the search for alternative stories about events, conversations and actions.
- If we are not curious we make rapid judgements leading to non-reflective action.
- This can shut down our relationship with another.



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Parenting that builds relationships is parenting that is also curious and reflective



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## Empathy

- The ability to feel with someone.
- Show the other that whatever emotion they experience you are sharing this experience.
- Experience emotion whilst staying regulated ie experience anger without getting angry.
- Through empathy we build relationships and make connections.
- Through empathy, we are expressing our understanding of the other.



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'We survive because we can love.  
And we love because we can  
empathize – that is stand in another's  
shoes and care about what it feels  
like to be them.'

Szalavitz & Perry, 2010



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'Empathy helps us to stay with the feelings  
for longer, avoiding a precipitous desire to  
reassure, to make things better or to solve  
the problem. We instead share the  
experience, leading to a deeper relationship  
within which we might eventually be able to  
help, built on a more solid foundation of  
understanding and acceptance.'

(Golding & Hughes, 2012)



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Playfulness, Acceptance Curiosity, and Empathy

- We cannot directly change another's experience,  
or the way it is communicated through language  
or behaviour.
- But we can change our response to it.
- If we respond differently, over time we will  
notice the other change the way he or she  
behaves or communicates.



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### PACE

- Play brings pleasure and joy, a fun connection.
- Curiosity, the search for knowing when you do not know.
- Curiosity leads to different understanding. You come to know the other's story more fully.
- With different understanding can come a deeper acceptance of the other and his experience.
- The other experiences this increased understanding and acceptance through empathy.
- Empathy builds safety. The other feels more secure in being deeply understood.
- P, the playful approach, brings ACE alive.



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### PACE: an attitude for connected relationships

- Each component has a special contribution, but only together will PACE work to its maximum.
- Curiosity = the mind, contributing to thinking and understanding
- Empathy = the heart, focused around feeling.
- Acceptance = the key that allows mind and heart to work together.
- Playfulness brings it all to life.



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### PACE as an attitude, a way of being

- PACE is an attitude which helps children to feel more secure.
- The parents change their responses to the children without expectation that the child will change.
- If PACE is used as a technique to change behaviour, acceptance is reduced. This is likely to lead to resistance.
- The child experiences the parents disappointment in him.
- Children will react to this with shame, as they experience not being good enough for the parents. This can end up strengthening the behaviour instead.
- When the parent sits alongside the child, understanding and accepting his experience, the child experiences a sense of being good enough, of unconditional acceptance.



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## Connection with Correction

Supporting behaviour whilst building security



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## PACE AND BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

- PACE does not mean that parents will tolerate behaviour which is unacceptable to them.
- By connecting with PACE before discipline understanding is increased. The child is more likely to respond to the discipline as a result.
- PACE is maintained alongside the discipline so that it becomes a way of supporting the child's behaviour.
- Through the connection that PACE brings the child will experience shame being regulated. Now the child can experience guilt and wants to make amends.
- Consequences become collaborative rather than imposed by the parents, and the ongoing PACE before, during and after discipline allows the child to continue to feel understood, and unconditionally accepted.



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## Acceptance is the Key

- Can we accept that the child is hurting, fearful and lacking in trust?
- Can we accept the child's need to feel in control?
- Without acceptance the child picks up our disappointment in her.
- This reinforces the hurt, fear and lack of trust.
- With acceptance the child builds trust.
- Now she can allow us to gently guide her in to new ways of being, feeling our acceptance when these become too hard again.



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### Acceptance is a Challenge

- Parents experience fear, hurt and lack of trust from the child as rejection or failure.
- This can trigger memories of other relationships which lead to similar feelings.
- This can lead to defensiveness.
- This impacts on their support to the child.
- This too can impact on the developing relationship.
- Parents need compassion and acceptance for themselves.
- Parents need compassion and acceptance from others.



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### Marian Feels a Failure: Take Two



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### PACE & Behaviour Support

- PACE empowers discipline and behaviour support.
- Discipline is provided with understanding.
- It guides and teaches the child.
- Child experiences discipline in a more open and trusting manner.
- PACE expresses unconditional love.
- Child is confident of parent's good intentions and belief in him.
- PACE brings you back to the relationship.



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"In a time so filled with methods and techniques designed to change people, to influence their behavior, and to make them do new things and think new thoughts, we have lost the simple but difficult gift of being present to each other".

Henri J. M. Nouwen, Donald P. McNeill, Douglas A. Morrison



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Principles for Supporting with PACE

**PRINCIPLE ONE: PACE, a consistent feature. Discipline brought in as needed.**

- PACE before discipline: Helps child to feel emotionally connected.
- PACE with discipline: Helps to maintain this connection when the child is at her most vulnerable; experiencing shame, and fear.
- PACE following the discipline: Provides the child with a continuing sense of being unconditionally accepted; repairing any ruptures in the relationship.



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Principles for Supporting with PACE


**PRINCIPLE TWO: Two hands;**

Connection with Correction and no Correction without Understanding

- Hand one: Warmth, Nurture and Curiosity.
- Hand two: Structure, Discipline and Boundaries

**PRINCIPLE THREE: Sandwich**

- Discipline in form of boundaries and consequences is sandwiched between Attunement and Interactive repair.



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Principles for Supporting with PACE

**PRINCIPLE FOUR: Parent takes responsibility for relationship with child**

- Don't punish with the relationship
- Take breaks when needed if it is practically possible.
- Take responsibility for relationship repair.

**PRINCIPLE FIVE: Understanding first**

- Don't lecture and delay problem solving.
- Don't rush to reassure.
- Reassure to give hope rather than to make yourself feel better.



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Principles for Supporting with PACE

**PRINCIPLE SIX: Provide appropriate level of structure and supervision**

- Notice child's emotional maturity and adjust expectations in line with this.
- If the consequences are piling up it is a sign that the child needs increased structure and supervision alongside empathy.



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Principles for Supporting with PACE

**PRINCIPLE SEVEN: Help the child to manage shifts between playfulness and authority.**

- Mistrusting children struggle with authority.
- When a parent needs to use their authority for keeping the children safe; providing a boundary and structuring the environment the children will revert to controlling behaviours.
- Shifting from playful times ('companionship mode') to an authority mode' is difficult, Baylín & Hughes (2016)
- These relational transitions can lead to very rapid shifts in the children towards anger and meltdown.
- The parent needs to find a way to stay open and empathic to the children's struggles in letting them have a benevolent authority over them.



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**Connection with Correction  
Parenting in the Moment**

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1. Notice and deal with immediate actions.
2. Notice impact on self. Compassion for self.
3. Notice the child. What regulation is needed?
4. Curiosity and understanding
5. Connection with acceptance and empathy.
6. Correction – collaborative consequences.
7. Relationship Repair



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**In Conclusion**

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
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**In Conclusion**

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When child-caregiver relationship is source of insecurity and even more so when it is traumatic for child:

- Interferes with development of trust, attachment formation and capacity to enter into an intersubjective relationship.
- Child feels helpless, abandoned and lost in shame.
- Child develops a pattern of expressing and hiding needs to maintain some fragile feeling of security with parent.
- Meeting expressed needs maintains insecurity
- Parent has to also gently challenge to meet hidden needs.
- Parent may also withdraw from the intersubjective relationship as they experience rejection, hostility or clinginess.



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**In Conclusion**

- These early relationships provide a template which guides the child in future relationships.
- Patterns of relating tend to get replicated as the child moves into other environments such as school.
- Teachers and educational staff can get pulled into defensive patterns of responding.
- This increases the emotional distress of the child leading to dysregulated, dissociated and controlling patterns of behaviour.
- Shame and fear of relationships are reinforced.
- The child's trauma and defensive responding reduces capacity to engage in learning.
- This also impacts upon peer relationships.



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**In Conclusion**

- Therapeutic parenting informed by DDP builds in more connection whilst continuing to provide behaviour support.
- This increases safety, builds trust, increases reciprocity.
- Child experiences emotional co-regulation.
- Reduces traumatization.
- Child experiences healthy dependency through intersubjective and attachment relationship.
- Healthy dependency provides the foundation for successful independence.
- Therapeutic relationships contain and manage behaviour whilst maintaining the emotional connection.



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"Let us not underestimate how hard it is to be compassionate. Compassion is hard because it requires the inner disposition to go with others to places where they are weak, vulnerable, lonely, and broken. But this is not our spontaneous response to suffering. What we desire most is to do away with suffering by fleeing from it or finding a quick cure for it."

(Henri J. M Nouwen, 2011)

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