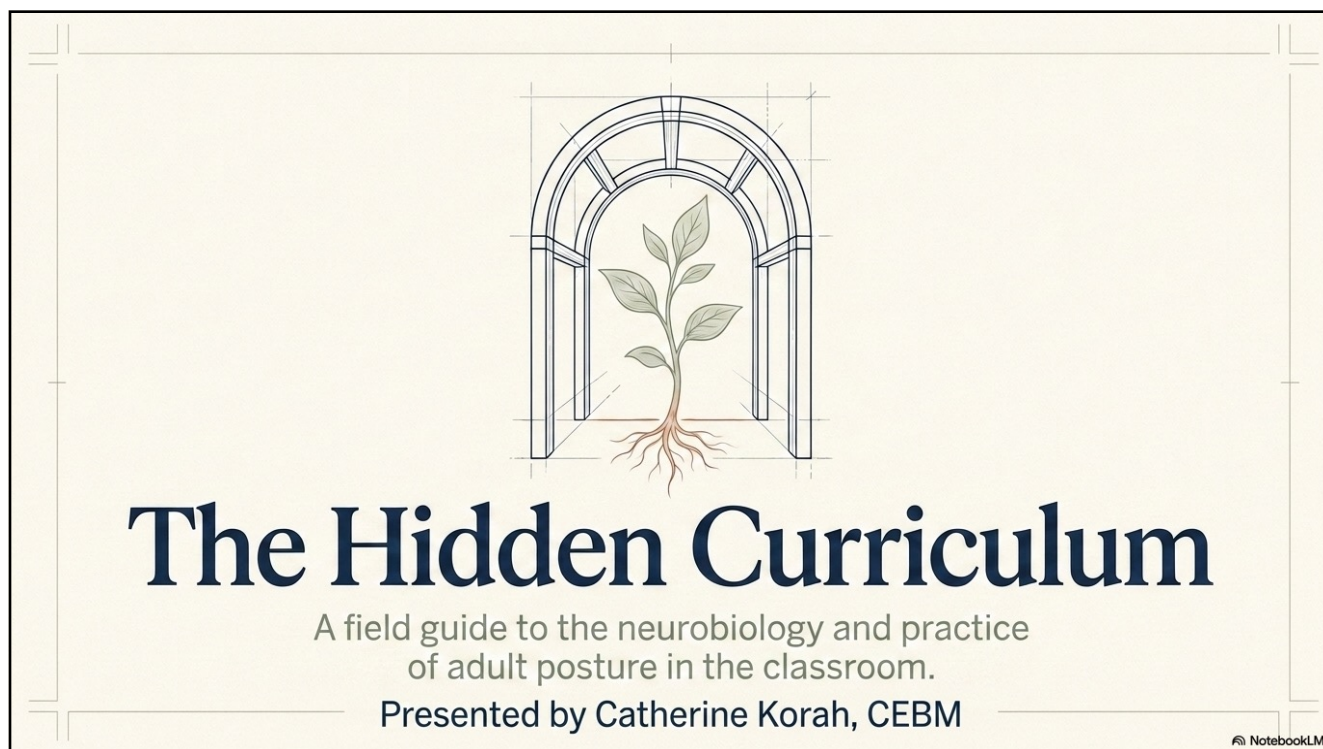
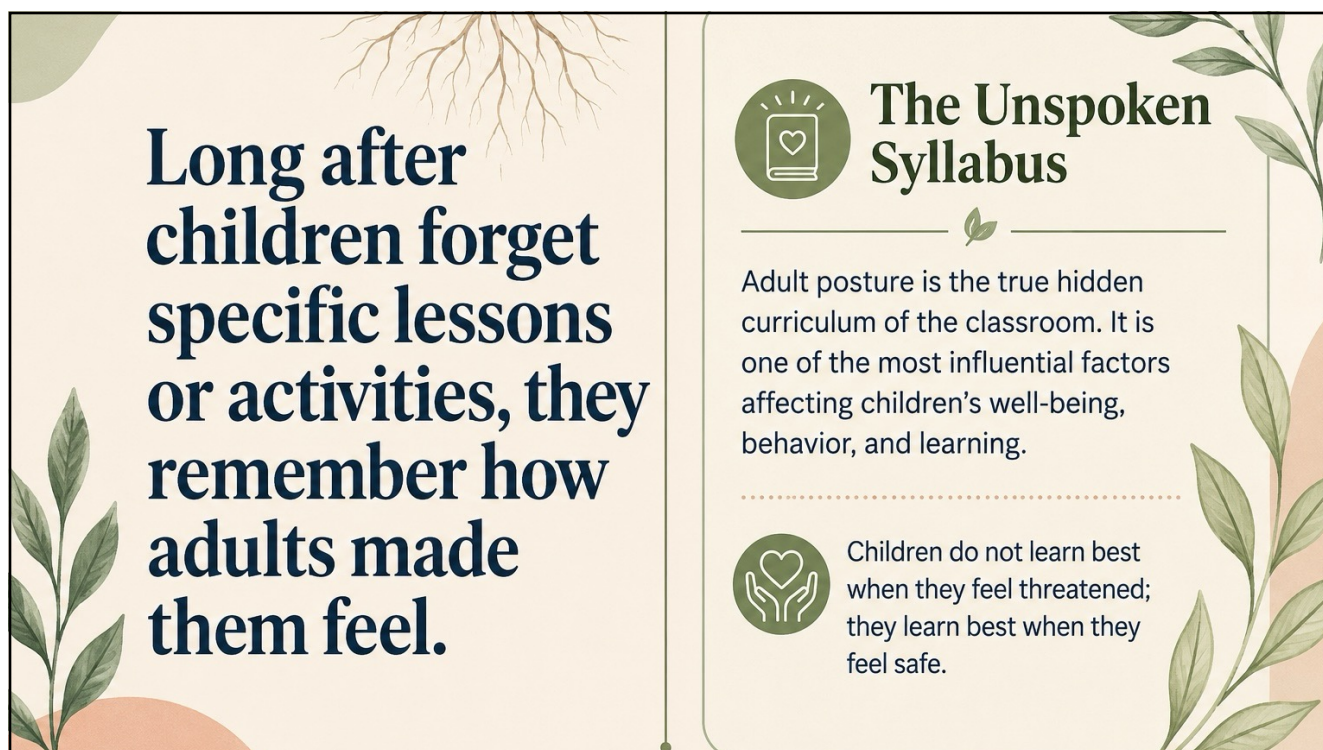




1



2

How Students Experience Adults



Educators often evaluate themselves based on their **intentions**.



Students evaluate adults based on their **experiences**.



An adult may intend to be:

- **firm**
but be experienced as frightening.



An adult may intend to be:

- **efficient**
but be experienced as dismissive.



An adult may intend to be:

- **consistent**
but be experienced as rigid.



Reflective practice
therefore requires asking:



- How might my behavior feel to this student?
- What message is my body communicating?
- Does my presence increase safety or threat?
- Would I feel regulated if I were interacting with me?



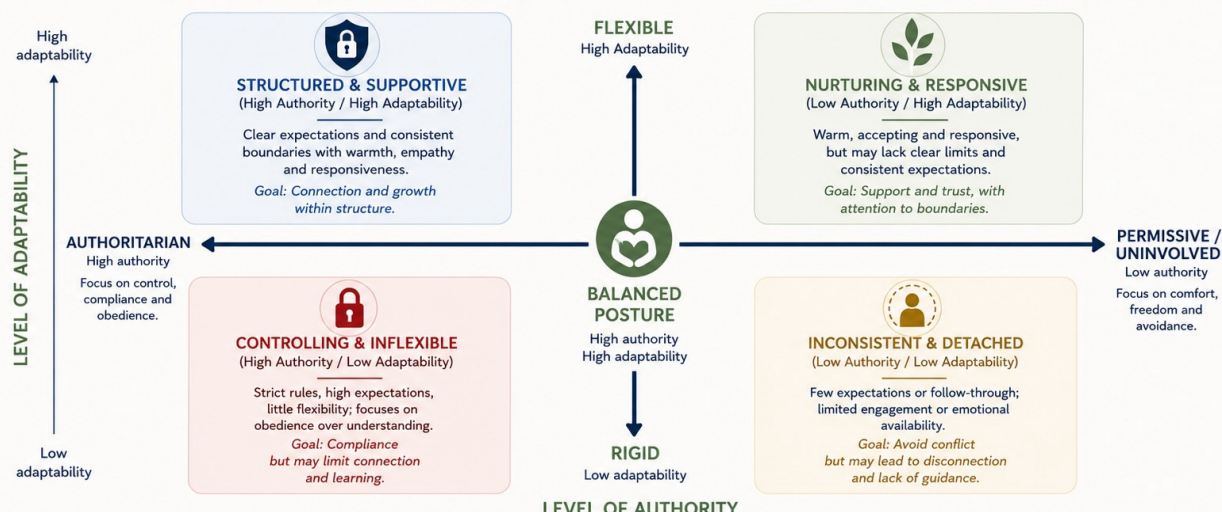
This perspective encourages **humility** and **continuous growth**.



3

The Adult Posture Continuum

Our posture is shaped by how we balance authority and adaptability.



Where do you situate yourself on the posture continuum?



The goal is not perfection— it's awareness.
Awareness leads to intentionality.
Intentionality creates impact.

4

THE POSTURE AUDIT

- ☐ Do children experience me as safe and approachable?
- ☐ How do I respond when children are distressed?
- ☐ Am I leading with connection before correction?
- ☐ Do my words communicate dignity and respect?
- ☐ Am I reacting to behavior, or understanding what is driving it?
- ☐ What emotional climate am I creating in my classroom?

NotebookLM

5

THE ARCHITECTURE OF POSTURE: PARADIGM SHIFT

Shifting the Posture: Control vs. Connection

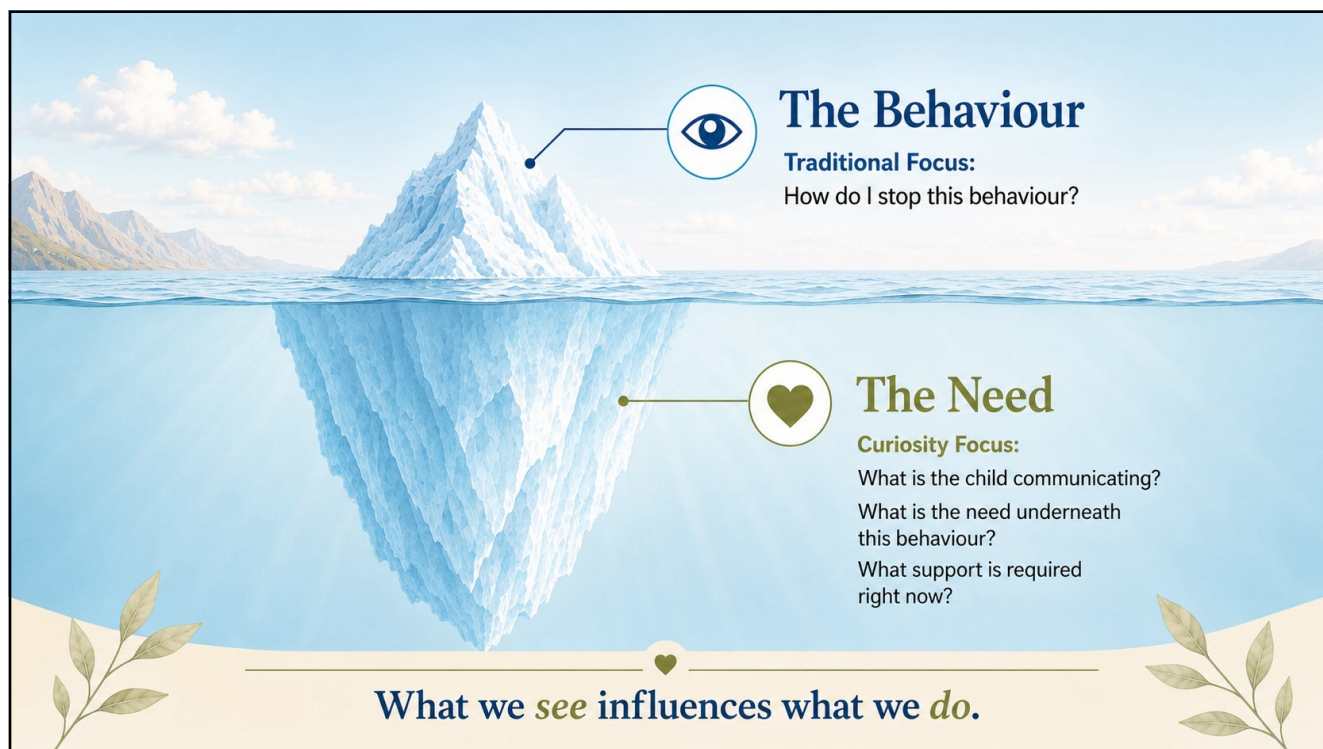
	 CONTROL PARADIGM <i>Traditional Control</i>	 CURIOSITY PARADIGM <i>Relational Connection</i>
 THE CORE QUESTION	How do I make this child behave?	How do I help this child succeed?
 THE FOCUS	Reacting to the visible disruption (The tip of the iceberg).	Uncovering the unmet need driving the action.
 PRIMARY GOAL	Gaining compliance, stopping disruptions, enforcing rules	Understanding the child and addressing the root need
 THE ADULT'S ROLE	Enforcer of rules and authority	Guide and supporter
 CHILD'S EXPERIENCE	Feels managed, judged, or threatened.	Feels understood, connected, and safe to cooperate.
 THE LIKELY OUTCOME	Power struggles, resistance, or shame	Maintained expectations combined with the support needed to meet them




When we shift our posture, we shift outcomes.
 From controlling behavior to connecting with the child.
 From managing moments to building trust that lasts.



6



7

The Power of Adult Posture

Benefits of a Strong and Confident Adult Posture in the Classroom

A calm, confident adult is one of the most powerful influences on a child's emotional regulation, behaviour, and learning.

A strong adult posture is not about being authoritarian. It is about being calm, emotionally regulated, relationally connected, and confidently in charge.

1 Creates Emotional Safety A calm, predictable adult communicates: "You are safe." "I can handle this." "You don't have to manage my emotions." Benefits • Reduced anxiety • Greater sense of security • Increased engagement • Improved regulation	2 Supports Co-Regulation Students borrow regulation from regulated adults before they can regulate themselves. Benefits • Faster de-escalation • Fewer power struggles • Reduced intensity • Long-term self-regulation	3 Strengthens Relationships A confident, caring adult communicates: "I'm here." "I can help." "I won't abandon you." Benefits • Stronger relationships • Greater cooperation • Increased trust • Higher engagement	4 Reduces Challenging Behaviour Consistent emotional leadership reduces the need for students to test limits. Benefits • Fewer behavioural incidents • Reduced conflict • Less oppositional behaviour • Greater classroom stability	5 Builds Student Confidence Confident adults provide support without rescuing or taking over. Benefits • Increased resilience • Greater persistence • Improved problem-solving • Higher self-efficacy	6 Improves Learning The brain learns best when it is regulated and feels safe. Benefits • Increased attention • Better executive functioning • Improved performance • Greater participation	7 Models Emotional Regulation Students learn by watching how adults respond to stress, mistakes, and conflict. Benefits • Increased emotional intelligence • Improved conflict resolution • Better peer relationships • Stronger SEL skills	8 Creates Consistency & Predictability Predictable adults help students feel secure and conserve mental energy for learning. Benefits • Reduced anxiety • Increased independence • Improved transitions • Greater classroom responsibility	10 Protects Adult Well-Being Strong posture helps educators stay grounded, set boundaries, and respond rather than react. Benefits • Less burnout • Reduced compassion fatigue • Greater job satisfaction • Increased professional confidence
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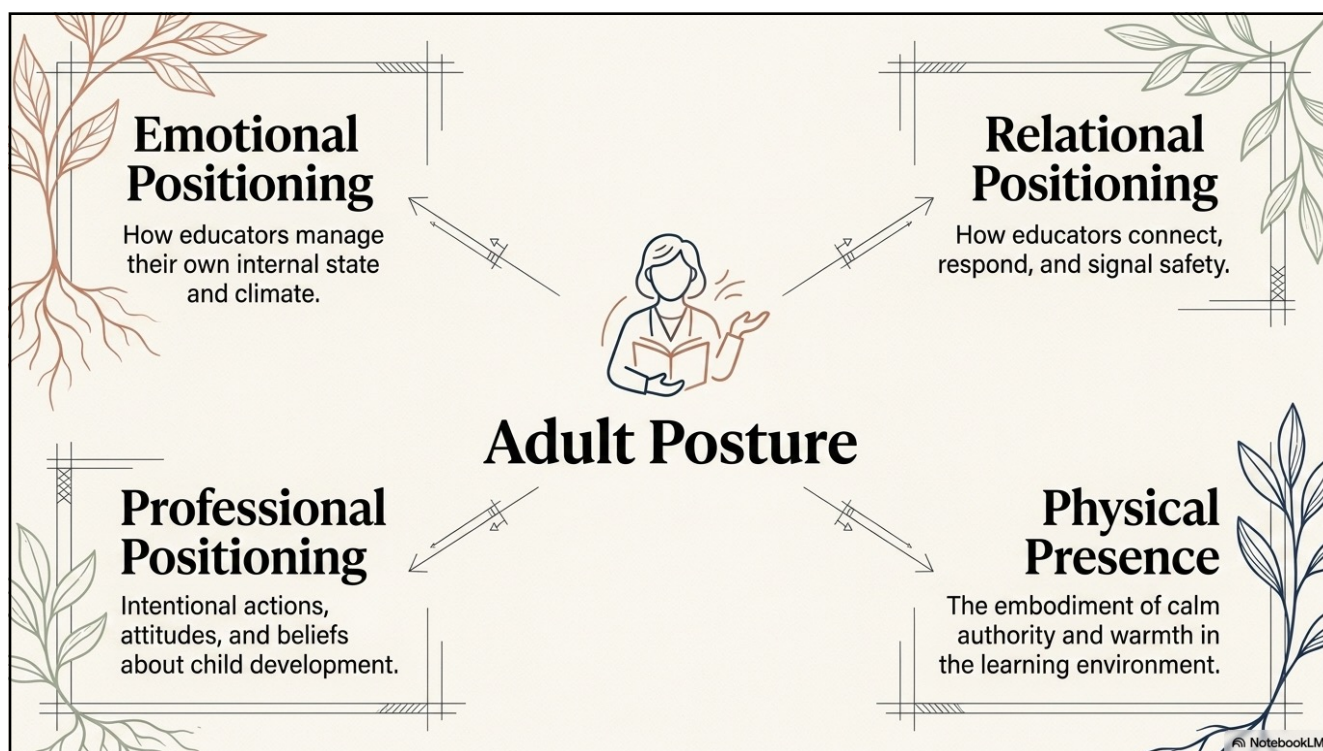
KEY TAKEAWAY
A strong adult posture is not about being the loudest, strictest, or most controlling person in the room. It is about becoming the calmest, safest, and most emotionally grounded presence.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF ADULT POSTURE

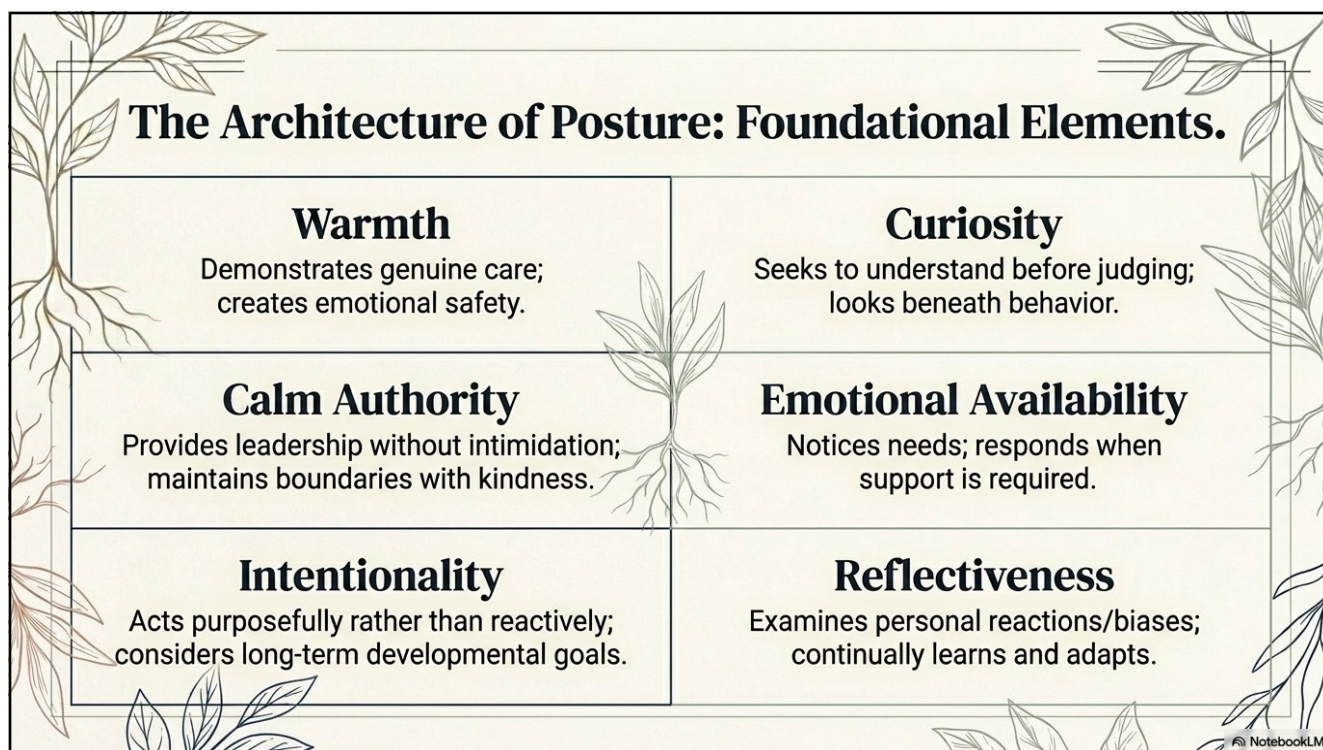
Emotional Climate Students feel safe, calm, and supported.	Relationships Trust, belonging, and cooperation increase.	Behaviour Fewer power struggles and more proactive problem solving.	Learning Greater engagement, attention, and academic success.	Self-Regulation Students gradually internalize regulation skills.	Culture Increased respect, empathy, and psychological safety.	Well-Being Reduced stress and greater resilience for educators.
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“When educators consistently embody this posture, they become a source of stability from which students can explore, learn, take risks, recover from mistakes, and develop the capacities needed for lifelong success.”

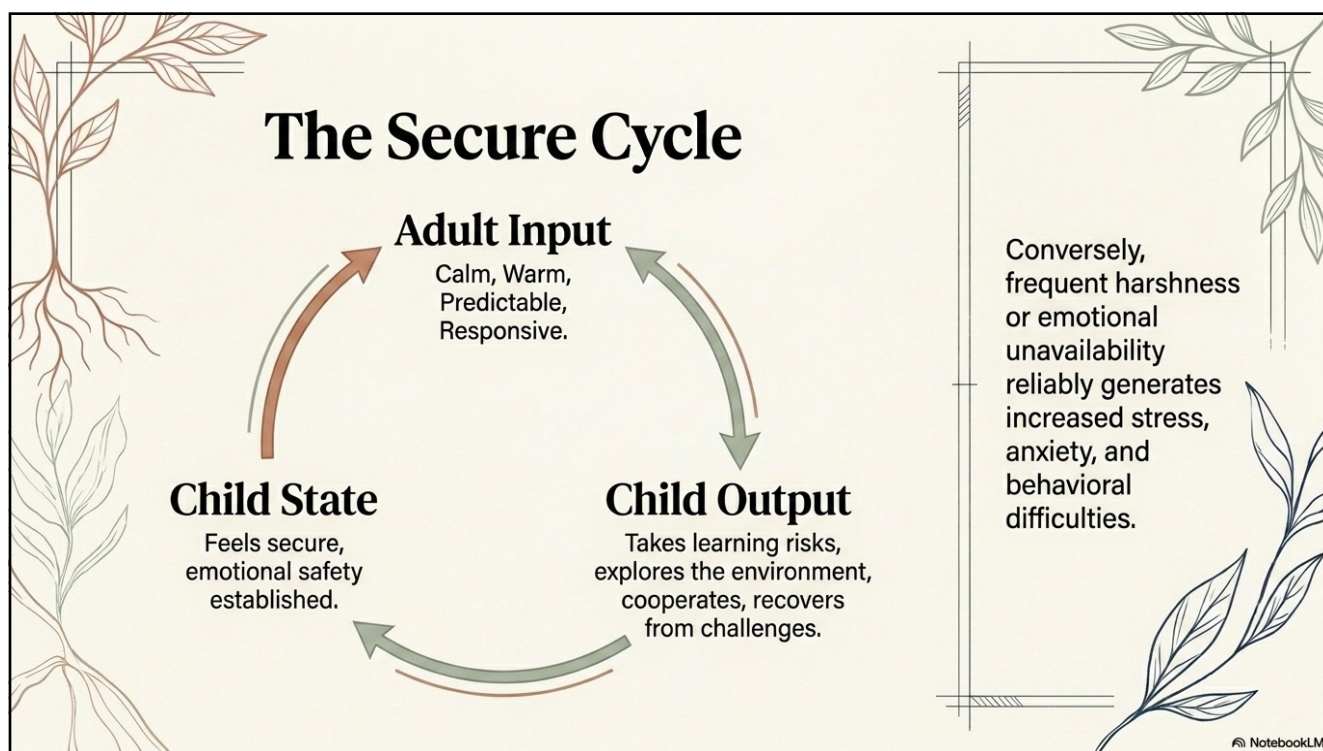
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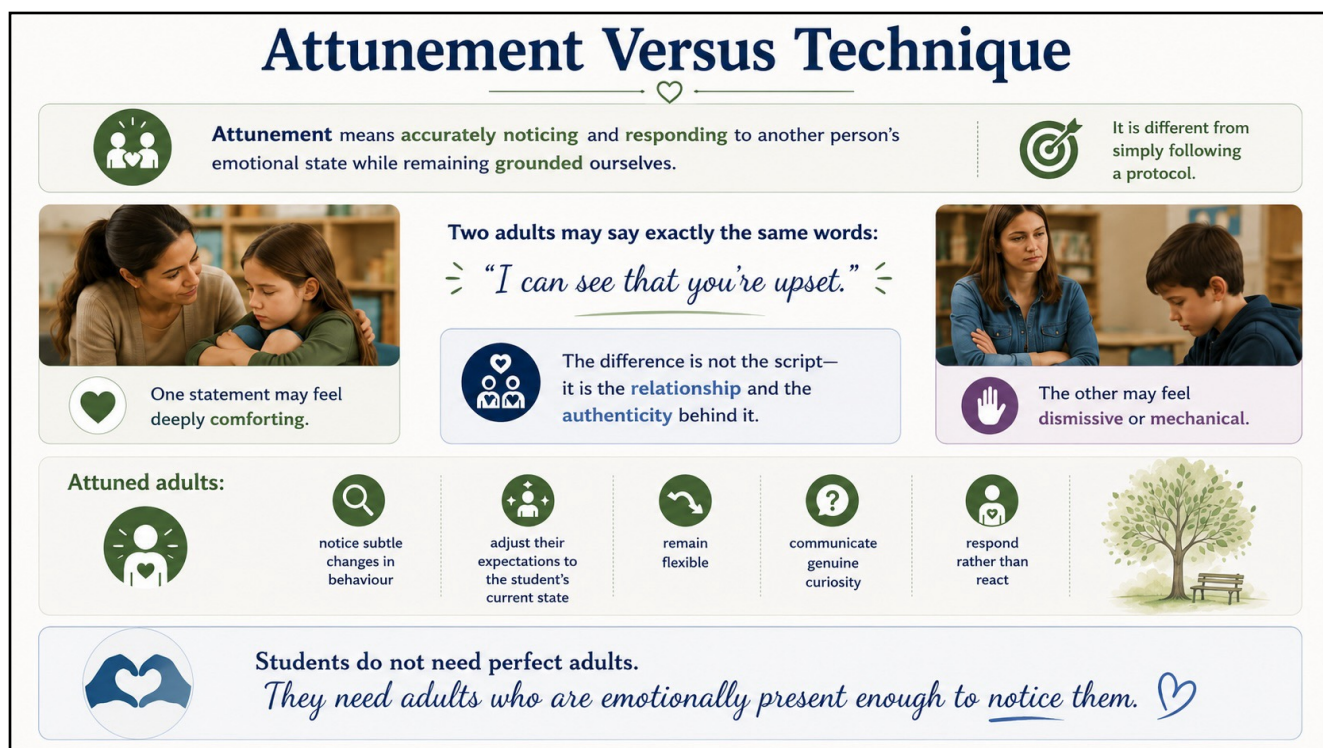
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10



11



12

Adult Authenticity



Students quickly recognize **authenticity**.



They do not expect adults to be **perfect**.



They expect adults to be **genuine**.



AUTHENTICITY MEANS:



acknowledging mistakes



apologizing when necessary



modelling emotional regulation



demonstrating humility



showing consistency between words and actions



When adults repair relational ruptures, they teach one of the most valuable lessons children can learn:

Relationships can experience difficulty and still remain safe.



This models **resilience** rather than **perfection**.



13

Relational Trust as a Protective Factor



Trust develops through thousands of **predictable interactions** rather than occasional grand gestures.



Students build trust when adults are:



emotionally consistent



respectful



dependable



fair



calm during conflict



available after mistakes

Relational trust creates psychological safety.



When trust is strong:

✓ students seek help earlier

✓ they tolerate challenge more effectively

✓ they recover more quickly from setbacks

✓ they accept feedback more readily

✓ they remain engaged despite difficulties



Trust functions as a **protective factor** that buffers stress and supports learning.



14



Relationship *as the* Foundation for Cooperation





Children are naturally more inclined to *cooperate* with adults with whom they feel *safe, connected, and valued*. When children experience adults as allies rather than adversaries, they are more likely to:

-  Accept guidance
-  Follow expectations
-  Repair mistakes
-  Seek help when needed
-  Take responsibility for their actions



This is because *relationship creates influence*.
The strongest source of adult influence is not authority alone but connection.



“ As developmental psychologist Gordon Neufeld often emphasizes, children are most receptive to guidance from adults to whom they feel attached.
Connection opens the door to cooperation. ”



15



Relationship creates influence and unlocks receptivity to guidance.



“Friction vs. Flow” Comparison Matrix

	Disconnected Adult Posture	Connected Adult Posture
 Limits & Boundaries	 Experienced as criticism, control, or rejection. 	 Easily accepted limits; trusts the adult behind the boundary. 
 Mistakes	 Defensiveness and shame. 	 Willingness to learn from correction and repair mistakes. 
 Difficult Situations	 Resistance. 	 Cooperation and seeking help when needed. 

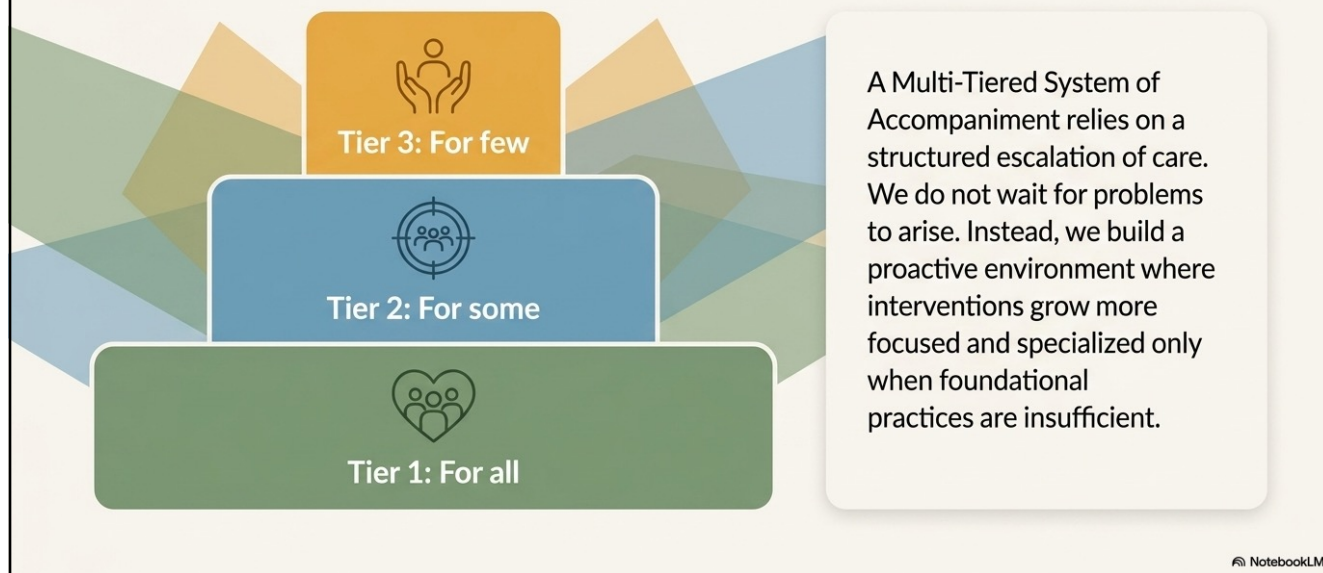


Children are more likely to follow the lead of adults they feel connected to than adults who simply hold authority over them.

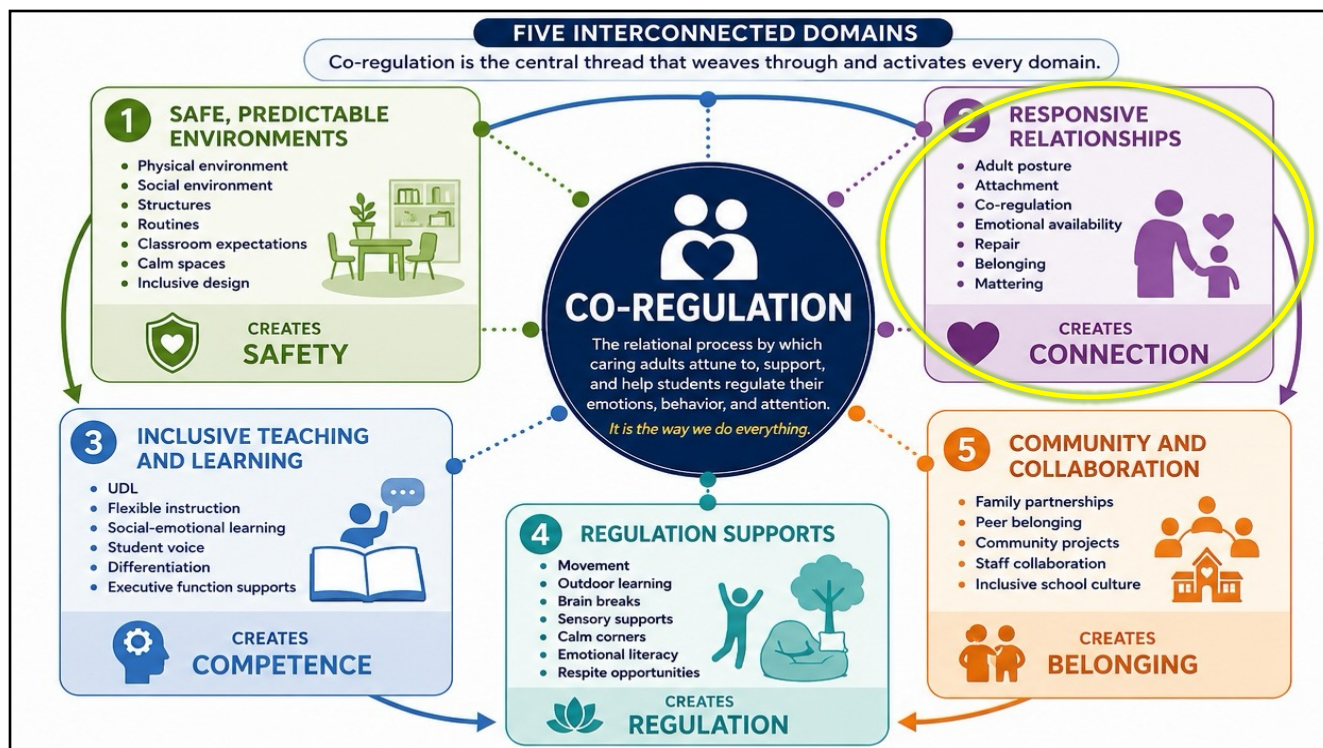


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Support scales with student needs



17



18

Considering all the elements involved

