

What is it that **AFFECTS** us the **MOST**?

facing separation

EXPERIENCING OR FACING
THE LACK OF OR THE LOSS OF
CLOSENESS
WITH THOSE TO WHOM WE ARE
ATTACHED

7

SEPARATION EXPERIENCES IN CHILDHOOD

- birth of a sibling
- parents not getting along
- parent absent for periods of time
- parents not living together and not getting along
- sibling ill or with special needs
- parent having a new partner
- parent having multiple partners
- separation from biological parents (foster care or adoption)
- adverse family conditions (ACES study – trauma)
- parent being ill

8

What happens when we are **FACING SEPARATION**?

THE BRAIN IS **MOVED TO** **FIX THE PROBLEM**

=

E-MOTION

9

THREE PRIMARY EMOTIONS EXPERIENCED IN THE FACE OF SEPARATION

MOVED TO RESTORE PROXIMITY

PURSUIT

FACING SEPARATION

ALARM

FRUSTRATION

MOVED TO CAUTION AND TO AVOID THAT WHICH ALARMS

MOVED TO EFFECT CHANGE AND TO FIX THE PROBLEM

G. Neufeld, PhD.

10

LIMBIC SYSTEM - EMOTIONAL BRAIN

EMOTION moves us in ways that **serve** our **SURVIVAL**

Pre-frontal cortex

AMYGDALA
"smoke detector"

HYPOTHALAMUS
All systems "GO"

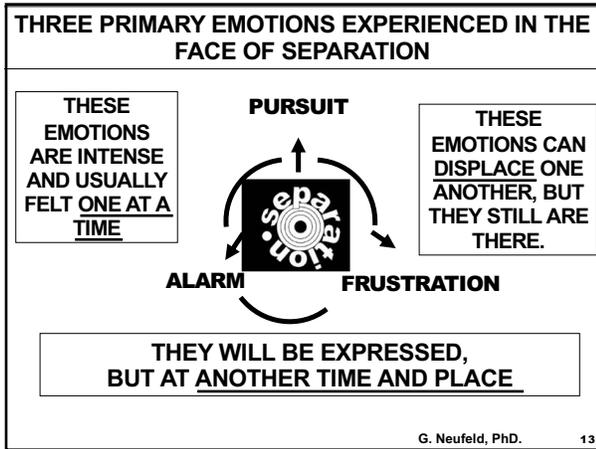
HIPPOCAMPUS
Memory

11

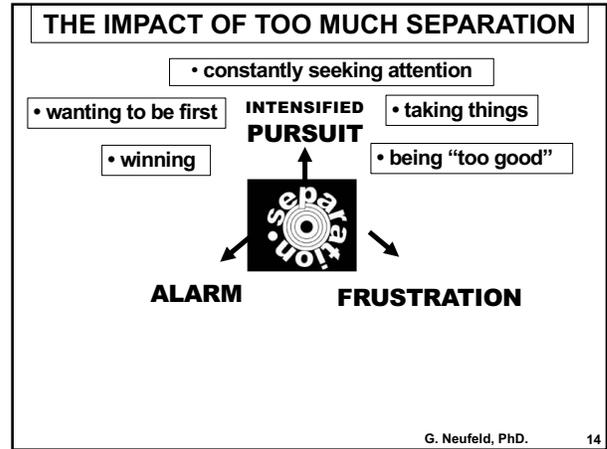
SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM the system of **ACTIVATION**

- **Cortisol** – increase blood sugar – suppress immune system
- **Adrenaline** – increases heart and respiratory rate
- **Norepinephrine** – responsible for vigilant concentration
- **Growth Hormone** – increases glucose
- Constricts blood vessels
- Suspends "rest & digest"
- Sharp Increase in Breathing & Heart Rate
- Blood diverts to Muscles

12



13



14

CASE STUDY

Marie (7) and Jason (10) are siblings living with their mother and father in the country. They travel to school every day by bus for over an hour. Both children have behavioural problems that the school staff are concerned about.

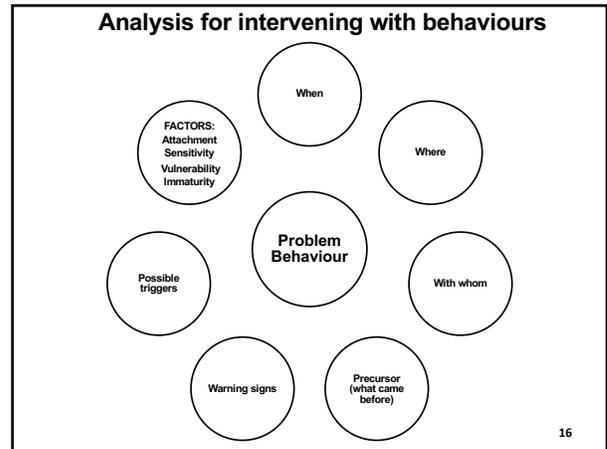
Marie tends to be more reactive, yelling at her friends and teachers when things don't go her way.

Jason will often run out of the classroom and find a place to hide. The principal tries to get him to talk about what is bothering him, but he won't say anything except that he won't go back to class.

Their mother has struggled with cancer for the past 3 years, going back and forth to hospital. She is now in remission. Their father was out of work while his wife was ill but now that she is better, he has taken a job in Western Canada and can only be home every few weeks.

15

15



16



17

CASE STUDY

One morning the children were playing with shovels in the school yard with the melting snow. Within minutes after Marie got off the bus she grabbed one of the shovels and hit another child with very little provocation or preamble.

18

18

Emotion becomes FEELING when it is FELT or becomes conscious

The EMOTION that arises when something is NOT WORKING.

It is meant to move us to CHANGE or BE CHANGED (leaves = Adaptation)

FEELING
"It's not working."
FRUSTRATION
EMOTION

adrenaline
cortisol
heart rate
blood pressure

19

FRUSTRATION turns into ATTACK

BEHAVIOUR
FEELING
BRAIN PROTECTS
EMOTION

- Impatience
- Abruptness
- Rudeness
- Irritability
- Screaming
- Hitting
- Fighting
- Physical outbursts
- Tantrums
- Meltdowns

FRUSTRATION
EMOTION

adrenaline
cortisol
heart rate
blood pressure

20

Why does our brain protect us?

It protects us from being overwhelmed by that which makes us feel

TOO VULNERABLE
or
TOO WOUNDED.

21

21

Too much separation
Too much shame
Too much alarm

- It's not safe to depend or be vulnerable.
- It's not safe to express what I am feeling.
- The world is overwhelming and there is no one who can keep me safe.

Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences

22

Analysis for intervening with behaviours

Attachment Frustration: Dad away, mother sick

FACTORS: Attachment, Sensitivity, Vulnerability, Immaturity

When: After getting off the bus

Where: In the playground

With whom: Other children

Problem Behaviour: Hitting with a shovel

Possible triggers: Children were laughing – she thought they were laughing at her

Warning signs: ?

Precursor (what came before): Long bus ride Children were teasing her

23

23

UNDERSTANDING WHAT WE SEE

From: This behaviour has to stop.

FRUSTRATION and AGGRESSION

To: She's experiencing too much **frustration** – Too much is not working in her life.

How can I help to reduce frustration?

Beware: Consequences and Time Out, just increase frustration. Incentive systems displace the Frustration with Pursuit, and the Frustration is usually displaced to another time and place.

24

CASE STUDY

One morning the children were playing with shovels in the school yard with the melting snow. Within minutes after Marie got off the bus she grabbed one of the shovels and hit another child with very little provocation or preamble.

WHAT DID THE SCHOOL DO?

Sadly, they had to suspend Marie (School Code of Conduct) to show the child who was hurt that they were protecting her.

While they were waiting for the mother to come, they talked to Marie gently and found out about the teasing on the bus. She also told them that she missed her Dad.

PLAN: To have an adult meet Marie at the bus in the morning to do a Check-in. If she seemed frustrated to take her to a quiet space to talk or draw. If she was full of attacking energy to bring her to the newly created Emotions Room.

25

FRUSTRATION and AGGRESSION

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/frustration-and-aggression> **

- Read Chapter 14 in "Reclaiming our Students"
- Watch Recording of Webinar
- Read articles and Infographics
- Consult the Placemat for how to identify and to find Ideas for intervention
- Explore relevant parts of the website

** Password: CEBMmembers

26

UNDERSTANDING WHAT WE SEE

ANXIETY and ALARM



WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

27

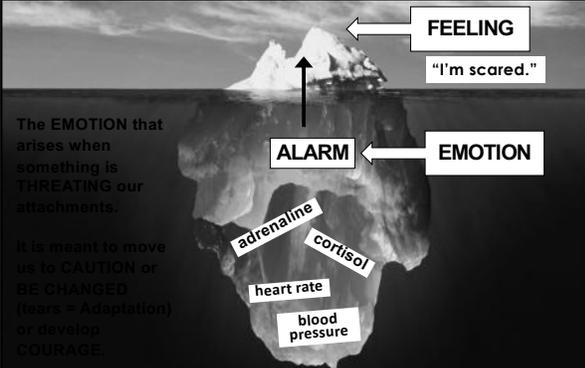
CASE STUDY

On the day that Marie was suspended, Jason had a major anxiety attack just after lunch. The substitute teacher had asked the students to hand in an assignment that they should have completed. Jason got upset and left the room without asking permission.

He paced in the hallway muttering to himself, "I don't know what's wrong with me – my head is bursting – I'm crazy...." He was pulling at his hair and waving his hands frantically.

28

Emotion becomes FEELING when it is FELT or becomes conscious

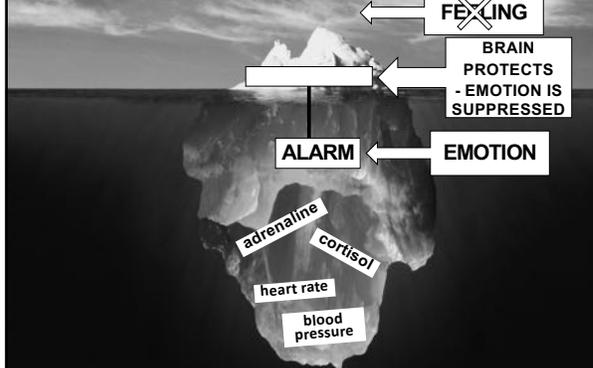


The EMOTION that arises when something is THREATING our attachments.

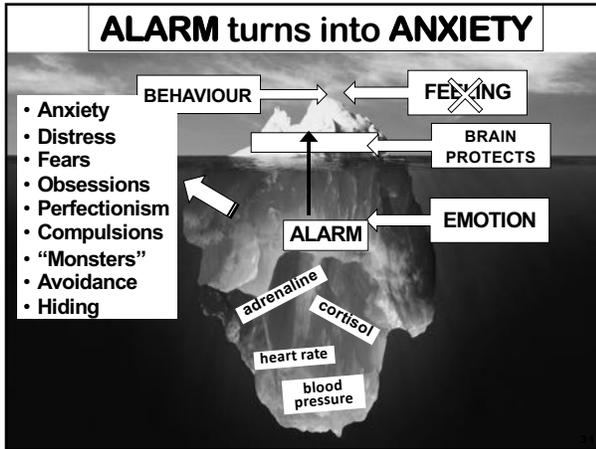
It is meant to move us to CAUTION or BE CHANGED (learn = Adaptation) or develop COURAGE.

29

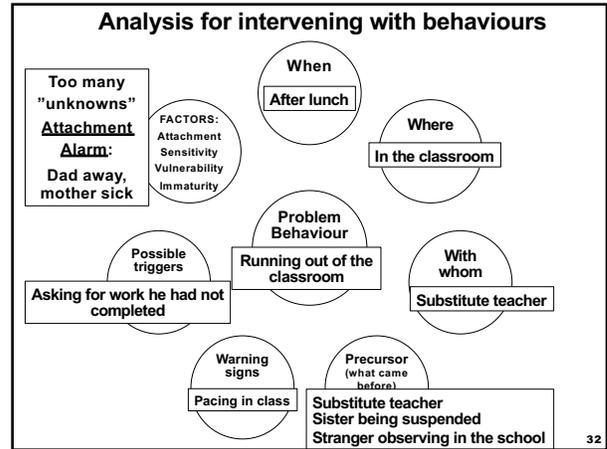
ALARM turns into ANXIETY



30



31



32

UNDERSTANDING WHAT WE SEE

From: He needs to get out of there. He needs to stay in the classroom.

ANXIETY and ALARM

To: He's experiencing too much **alarm**.

How can I help reduce the alarm?

Beware: Incentive systems often displace Alarm with Pursuit – but the Alarm is still there and may come out in other ways – obsessions, compulsions, anxiety attacks at home.

33

CASE STUDY

Jason got upset and left the room without asking permission. He paced in the hallway muttering to himself, “I don’t know what’s wrong with me – my head is bursting – I’m crazy....” He was pulling at his hair and waving his hands frantically.

WHAT DID THE SCHOOL DO?

The principal, who knew Jason the best, went to talk to him to find out where he would like to go to feel safe. They decided on the computer room. Jason did not want to talk or to have an adult with him. The behaviour technician went to get Jason’s “blankie” and let him know that it was on the door handle, if he needed it.

PLAN: This was already in place. When things were “too much” for Jason, he was allowed to go to a designated “safe place” in the school – usually under the stairs where there were pillows and a curtain. They also reassured him that being upset was OK.

34

ANXIETY and ALARM

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/anxiety-and-alarm> **

- Read Chapter 8 in “Reclaiming our Students”
- Watch Recording of Webinar
- Read articles and Infographics
- Consult the Placemat for how to identify and to find Ideas for intervention
- Explore relevant parts of the website

**** Password: CEBMmembers**

35

UNDERSTANDING WHAT WE SEE

RESISTANCE and OPPOSITION

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

36

CASE STUDY

Kerry (6) had significant behavioural problems since being in Daycare. She was placed in special Behaviour class.

She lived with his mother and father and little brother. Her mother worked at a demanding job and also had a home business that kept her busy in the evenings and on the weekend. Her father acknowledged that he had difficulty managing his reactions to Kerry's behaviour and so often withdrew so as not to react inappropriately. As a result Kerry spent most time on the weekend on her bicycle roaming the neighbourhood and being with older girls.

Kerry was often very oppositional. When the teacher greeted her warmly at the beginning of the day – she would respond by saying she hated her.

On one occasion, when the class was baking cookies, the teacher asked the children not to break their popsicle sticks (used for tasting the dough). Kerry looked at the teacher and then broke the popsicle stick.

37

37

RESISTANCE and OPPOSITION

the CounterWill instinct

... is a pushing back against the will of others
or a defensive reaction to perceived control
and coercion

COUNTERWILL is NOT a learned response, but an
EMOTIONAL REACTION based in INSTINCT

38

38

COUNTERWILL

is a primary instinct that serves defenses:

- when the student **feels too vulnerable** and so pushes the adult away or refuses to do work that would show vulnerability or inadequacy.
- when the student in the Alpha mode and **wants to be the one in charge** and decide for himself.
- when the student is **attached to peers** and refuses to follow the adult lead.
- when the student has **hypersensitivities** and the environment is overwhelming – sensory overload – the student pushes back at any requests.

39

39

COUNTERWILL IN PANDEMIC TIMES

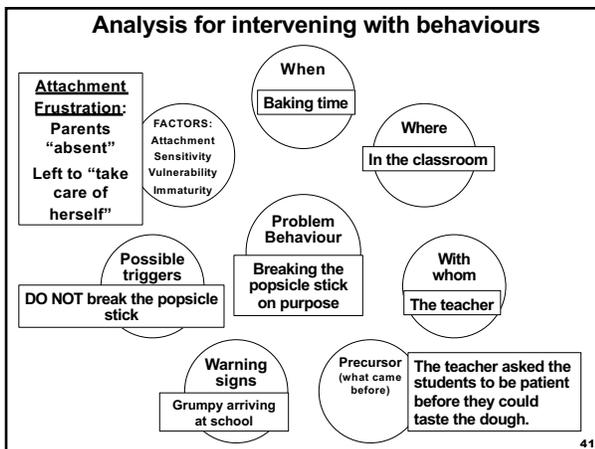
- COUNTERWILL can be “kept at bay” by Alarm
 - Children will comply to keep safe
- BUT COUNTERWILL will manifest itself when safety is not the issue – AND even when safety is the issue because:

**WHEN THERE ARE TOO MANY “HAVE TO’S”
THERE WILL BE PUSH BACK SOMEWHERE!**

 - Children may
 - not want to do work
 - refuse to do work
 - not follow directions as expected
 - not be able to handle transitions
 - do the OPPOSITE
 - seem **unmotivated** and lethargic

40

40



41

UNDERSTANDING WHAT WE SEE

From: She's being rude. She won't listen or do what I ask.

RESISTANCE and OPPOSITION



To: She's feeling **overwhelmed**.
How can I help her to manage a world that seems too much?

Beware: Consequences and Time Outs just confirm to the student that adults don't understand that their world is not manageable. Incentives are often rejected as they are seen as another way adults want to control the world. Find ways to avoid a power-struggle while still staying in charge.

42

42

CASE STUDY

Kerry was often very oppositional. When the teacher greeted her warmly at the beginning of the day – she would respond by saying she hated her. On one occasion, when the class was baking cookies, the teacher asked the children not to break their popsicle sticks (used for tasting the dough). Kerry looked at the teacher and then broke the popsicle stick.

WHAT DID THE TEACHER DO?

She had to send Kerry away from the group. The Technician went to speak with her – not to ask why she did it, but to notice that this happened and it was a shame. “Sometimes we do things without meaning to.”

PLAN: To continually remind themselves that Kerry “needed” to take care of herself. To give her time and space to respond to a request. When she says, “No”, to recognize it as a way of managing an unpredictable, unsafe world. To be open to her changing her mind. To find as many ways as possible to reassure her that they would take care of her.

43

RESISTANCE AND OPPOSITION

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/resistance-and-opposition> **

- Read Chapter 11 in “Reclaiming our Students”
- Watch Recording of Webinar
- Read articles and Infographics
- Consult the Placemat for how to identify and to find Ideas for intervention
- Explore relevant parts of the website



**** Password: CEBMmembers**

44

SENSORY ISSUES AND SENSITIVITY

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/sensory-issues> **

- Read articles and Infographics
- Explore relevant parts of the website



**** Password: CEBMmembers**

45

MATURATION
The IMMATURE BRAIN:

has a **HARD TIME** managing strong emotions and making “good decisions” because it is **not ready to:**

1. **find information efficiently** and quickly due to an under-developed **Cerebellum**
2. see the “**whole**” picture due to an under-developed **Corpus Callosum** – poor Left / Right Hemisphere communication
3. **tempering** their emotional reactions with conflicting thoughts and feelings due to an under-developed **Prefrontal Cortex**

As a result these children often **KNOW better** but **cannot DO better** as Emotion overwhelms REASON. Behaviour will improve when maturation occurs, but **THIS TAKES TIME.**

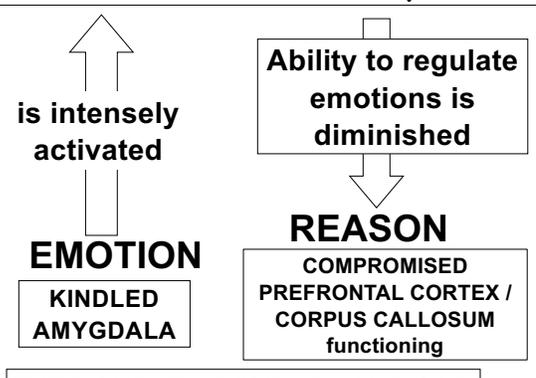
46

VULNERABILITY PRINCIPLES

1. Growth requires softness – which means being vulnerable.
2. When the brain senses it is too vulnerable, it protects itself
3. When the brain is **protecting** itself, it cannot be growing.
4. Children who have had Adverse Childhood Experiences (complex trauma) have:
 - kindled amygdala resulting in more intense emotional reactions to alarm and frustration
 - slower development in the Corpus Callosum and Pre-frontal Cortex

47

Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences



THE DOUBLE INVISIBLE HANDICAP

48

EMOTIONS AND LEARNING

When SURVIVAL is at stake – especially facing separation,

- the AROUSAL and ATTENTION systems are highly involved
 - **ALARM** is given HIGH PRIORITY
 - Emotions are activated
 - We now **MUST** pay attention to
 - what is threatening us and
 - what could save us

This affects the student's ability to learn new material, to retain what they are learning and to apply what they know. Doing schoolwork is hard for them and exhausting. They are often "working harder" than the other students but producing less. When told to make up work – at breaks or for homework they become discouraged or frustrated.

49

49



When a flower
doesn't bloom you fix
the environment
in which
it grows,
not the
flower.

- Alexander den Heijer

50

50

INTERVENTION PRINCIPLES

1. Preserve and maximize the **Attachment** relationship
2. Respect and compensate for the level of **Immaturity**
3. Protect the **Vulnerability**
4. Come along-side the **Emotional** experience by allowing Emotional Expression and encouraging Play

For specifics please view: "Managing Behaviour without Rewards":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNAXC8HU4Tg>

51

51



“The gardener does not make a plant grow.
The job of a gardener is to create optimal conditions.”
— Sir Ken Robinson

52

52

Eva de Gosztanyi, Martine Demers, Catherine Korah
Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management

www.cebm.ca

Members site password: CEBMmembers



A website that helps schools to use a developmental-trauma-responsive-attachment friendly approach

53

53

CHALLENGES

** Password: CEBMmembers

https://www.cebm.ca/ **



54

54