# COUNTERWILL

The instinct to push back, resist, oppose, and defy when feeling controlled or coerced

ADULT OVEREACTIONS TO KID'S COUNTERWILL CAN LEAD TO ATTACHMENT INSECURITY

### RESISTANCE CAN BE HEALTHY OR A SIGN OF STUCKNESS

#### SIGN OF DEVELOPMENT

Common in preschoolers & teens due to growth as separate self and wanting to "do it myself"

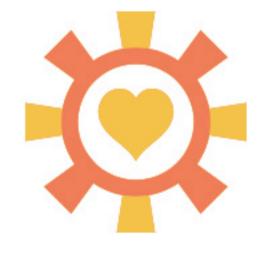
#### SIGN OF STUCKNESS

Common in kids who are not deeply attached or dependent on the adults who are responsible for them

### COUNTERWILL INSTINCTS CAN BE EXPRESSED AS ...

- to do the opposite of what is expected
- resist, counter, balk and talk back
- be noncompliant and defiant
- be preoccupied and atracted to taboos
- act quarrelsome and argumentative





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#### MYTHS ABOUT COUNTERWILL

- the child has a strong will that needs to be broken
- the child is stubborn and it is hereditary
- the child is trying to test limits or seek power
- the child is doing it on purpose to make parent mad

# DON'T LET IT BREAK THE CONNECTION

- \* don't use separation as a consequence
- \* don't take counterwill personally
- \* reflect resistance as natural
- \* keep your reactions to counterwill in check
- \* repair damage done from counterwill fallout

## STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING COUNTERWILL

- \* collect before directing
- \* be less explicit with directions
- \* use play to orchestrate transitions
- \* refrain from using a commanding tone
- \* refrain from SHOULD's, HAVE TO statements