



Boosting Children & Parents' Mental Health in Challenging Times

November 13, 2021

Presented for NPU Children's Ministries

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Community Meeting Check-In

- How are you feeling today?
- What are your goals for today?
- Who can help you with that?

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma

- Video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccKFkcfXx-c&t=225s>
- 3 Realms of ACEs
 - ACEs can occur in the household, the community or in the environment and causes toxic stress

What is Trauma?

- Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well being. (SAMHSA).
- Bessel van der Kolk says trauma is specifically an event that overwhelms the central nervous system, altering the way we process and recall memories. "Trauma is not the story of something that happened back then," he adds. "It's the current imprint of that pain, horror, and fear living inside people."

The Triune Brain

- Brain stem and cerebellum: reactionary, fight/flight/freeze
- Limbic system: emotions, memories, habits, attachments
- Neo-cortex: reasoning, rationalizing, imagination, abstract thought, language

The Stress Response

- When stress presents itself, the amygdala reaches out to the hippocampus and cortisol is released
- Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn, Flock

Cortisol Flooding

- When the brain is flooded with cortisol, it pools on the frontal cortex, this leads to changes in attention, impulse control, sleep, fine motor control, dysregulation in many functions and can affect the frontal cortex from fully developing.

The Power of Hugs

- Strengthens the immune system
- Makes us more patient
- Perfect treatment for stress and anxiety
- Builds self-esteem especially in children
- Releases dopamine: source of good feelings and motivation
- Helps us get through painful or stressful situations

Gratitude

- <https://lifesolutions.io/gratitude-can-heal-trauma-and-change-your-life/>
- <https://why.org/segments/your-brain-on-gratitude-how-a-neuroscientist-used-his-research-to-heal-from-grief/>

The Vagus Nerve

- What is the Vagus Nerve
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-NCs11OU5w>
- Stimulating the Vagus Nerve
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSAvPgqQ2L0>

Flip our Lid

- When our brain is working efficiently both upper and mid brain are communicating effectively. Information comes in and is processed logically. Sometimes too much information is coming in for the upper brain to process and it disconnects. We “flip our lid” and can no longer access the functions provided by the upper brain.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xeDcPBD5Fk>

The Brain is an Organ

- The brain is an organ and we need to do things in order to take care of our brain
- Things that will benefit our brain
 - Sleep
 - Exercise
 - Nutrition
 - Water
 - Sunshine
 - Nature

Resilience

- Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors.
- Attributes that lead to resilience:
 - Competence
 - Connection
 - Contribution
 - Coping skills
 - Control
 - Character
 - Confidence

Trauma-Informed Care

- Creating a safe environment
- Supporting and teaching emotional regulation
- Building relationships and connectedness

Sanctuary Model

- Promotes safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-informed community.
- Instead of “What’s wrong with you?” ask “What’s happened to you?”
- Sanctuary model <http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/>
- <http://www.thesanctuaryinstitute.org/about-us/the-sanctuary-model/>

Supporting and Teaching Emotional Regulation

- Where do I feel in my body?
 - <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/where-do-i-feel>

Breathing Techniques

- Businessman posture
- Inhale grace, exhale praise
 - Exhaling is longer than when you inhale
 - Deep breathing
 - <https://qz.com/quartz/1132986/neuroscientists-have-identified-how-exactly-a-deep-breath-changes-your-mind/>
 - Pizza breathing
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OriRtvN-yxE>

Building Relationships and Connectedness

- “Relationships matter: the currency for systemic change was trust, and trust comes through forming healthy working relationships. People, not programs, change people.”
— [Bruce D. Perry, The Boy Who Was Raised As a Dog: And Other Stories from a Child Psychiatrist's Notebook: What Traumatized Children Can Teach Us About Loss, Love and Healing](#)

Brain Breaks

- <https://www.weareteachers.com/brain-breaks-for-kids/>
- <https://www.pgsd.org/cms/lib07/PA01916597/Centricity/Domain/43/Brain%20Breaks.pdf>

Resources:

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- Monnat, S. M., & Chandler, R. F. (2015). Long-term physical health consequences of adverse childhood experiences. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 56(4), 723-752. doi:10.1111/tsq.12107
- Perry, B. D., & Szalavitz, M. (2017). *The boy who was raised as a dog*. New York, NY: Hachette Book Group.
- Kolk, B. V. (2015). *The body keeps the score*. New York, NY: Penguin Publishing Group.
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/well/mind/breathe-exhale-repeat-the-benefits-of-controlled-breathing.html>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/workings-well-being/201703/how-heal-the-traumatized-brain>
- <https://s3.amazonaws.com/nicabm-stealthseminar/Trauma2017/confirmed/NICABM-TreatingTraumaMasterSeries-Module4TalkBack-Dysregulation&Hypoarousal.pdf>
- <https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/types/breathwork>
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- <https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S1878929317301962?token=320B9922F0728663DA8A4923EB0BCB7DE83E27EF41786018A6985E54993CB6B1C955F9579F6F30F99377AA423D41168A>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6397949/pdf/ENEURO.0284-18.2019.pdf>
- <https://positivepsychology.com/international-eye-contact-experiment/>
- <https://neurosciencenews.com/eye-contact-social-interaction-10808/>