

**Bringing Hope Home:**

The 3 Rs of Successful Trauma Resolution & The Top 5 Resilience Factors

Carol Hudgins-Mitchell, M.Ed.; LSW; NBCCH  
 Mary Vicario, LPCC-S  
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**Safety First:**  
 HOW TO CREATE AND PROMOTE FEELINGS OF SAFETY  
 BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER SESSIONS

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## What is Safety and Why Does It Matter?

Safety is the Cornerstone of our ability to Connect and Regulate.



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## SAFETY The Building Block of Connection

- Our first experiences of safety occur in relationship.
- SAFETY (and fear) are felt first at a visceral (physically in the body) level
- Messages are then sent from the **viscera** (tissue surrounding our internal organs) up through the body into the brain (cortex)
- **What are your safe relational images? Where do you feel them in your body?**

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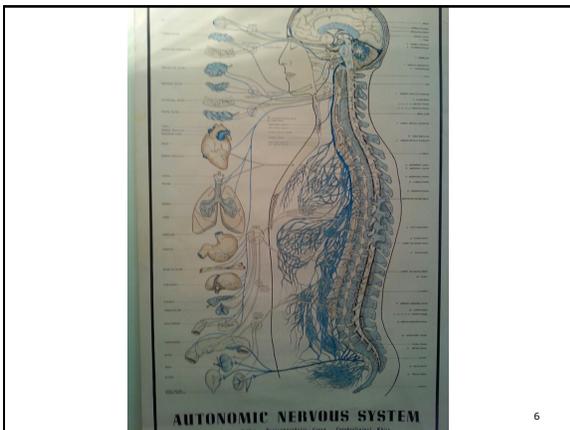
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## Belief Systems: The Merging of Implicit and Explicit Memory

### Implicit

- o Majority of memory is implicit
- o Implicit memory – includes sensory (visceral or body), emotional and procedural (picture) memory
- o Often called “early memory”
- o Most important social and emotional lessons occur during our earliest years, so we have little or no explicit memory of this because our hippocampus is not matured yet

### Explicit

- o Is language based
- o As a child matures, explicit memory starts and is woven together with implicit memory
- o Our implicit “early lessons” when woven into explicit memory become “facts of life” belief systems that we seldom think to question

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## Types of Safety

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### o Physical Safety:

The ability to keep one’s body safe from harm.

(Bloom, 2010)

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## Types of Safety

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- o Psychological/ Emotional Safety: The ability to be safe with one’s self and other, and having access to environments where it is safe to express yourself & your feelings  
(Bloom, 2010)



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**Types of Safety**

**Social Safety:** The ability to be safe in groups, which includes people respecting each other and their differences. (Bloom, 2010)

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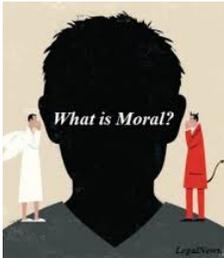
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**Types of Safety**



o **Moral Safety:**

Access to environments that support honesty and justice. For example not being asked to keep secrets for anyone. (Bloom, 2010)

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**Unfelt Safety**

**Feeling Unsafe = Feeling**

**Response/Behavior**

Unnoticed, unimportant	Attention Seeking
Vulnerable	Agitation, bullying
Lost	Risk Taking
Unwanted, Unworthy	Disinterested in Life
Trapped	Self-injury

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When ...

<p><b>I am feeling</b></p> <p>Unwanted, unworthy, disinterested in life, full of self hatred &amp; deserving of harm</p> <p>Trapped &amp; am self injurious...</p>	<p><b>I need</b></p> <p>To be included, affirmations, encouragement &amp; reasons to care &amp; people to care about me.</p> <p>Attention to my pain, a band aid, nurturance, to be asked, "How can I help you feel safe?"</p>
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The Safety Script:  
Socializing Without Shame

“This is a safe place, and I won’t let anyone \_\_\_\_\_ you, so I can’t let you \_\_\_\_\_, because this is a safe place.”

Trauma Informed Supports: What Brain Science Tells Us About What Relational Revolution Amy Banks, MD & Mary Vicario, LPCC-S Works Mary Vicario, LPCC-S 15

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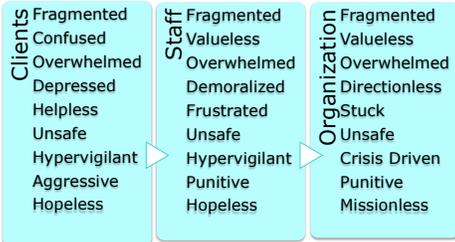
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## Parallel Process (Bloom, 2010)



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## Tips for Explaining Therapy: Making Therapy Make Sense

Stress that therapy is NOT a punishment or a consequence for behavior.

- **NEVER SAY:** "I am going to tell your therapist on you." Therapist ARE NOT principals.
- **Say:** It is a safe place to talk about anything you want.
- **Say:** What you tell this person, they do not tell anyone unless you want them to tell or unless someone is hurting you and then they will help you be safe.

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## Tips for Explaining Therapy: Making Therapy Make Sense

- **Say:** That they do not have to talk with the therapist. People cannot say yes, until they are allowed to say no. After a lifetime of being taught compliance, it is important for them to understand that therapy is a choice.
- **Do not** expect the therapist to tell you what the person you support has discussed.
- **Do** ask the therapist for help with ways to assist the person you support in feel safe. They can help you replace control with comfort.

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## The Three R's of Trauma Treatment

It is never one thing. Trauma comes and is experienced in layers

Eliana Gil

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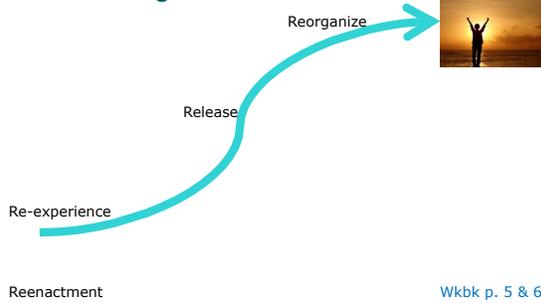
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## Moving from Reenactment



Wkbk p. 5 & 6

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## Reenactment

Is intense, joyless repetitive behavior that is connected with some aspect of the trauma. This is done in an "unconscious" (implicit) manner.

The person is not aware of it or why they do it, since it's driven by an implicit memory, not "conscious" (explicit) memory.

Wkbk pp. 6 & 7

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Posttraumatic Play Vs. Normal Play

<b>Posttraumatic Play is</b>	<b>Normal Play is</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Intense</li><li>o Joyless</li><li>o Repetitive</li><li>o Often self focused</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Spontaneous</li><li>o Joyful</li><li>o Creative and varies over time</li><li>o Seeks to share enjoyment with others</li></ul>

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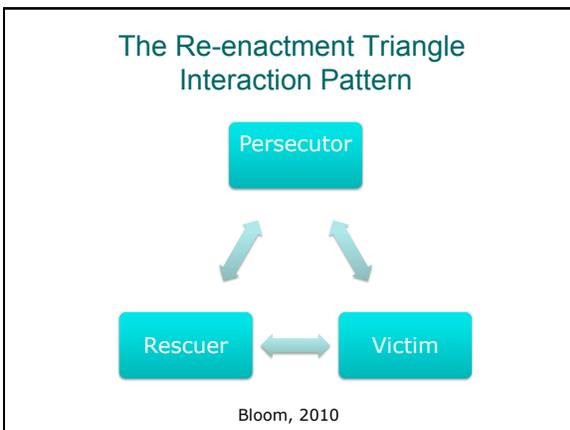
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### 4 Key Questions for Recognizing Re-enactment

1. Are we helping to bring about positive change?
2. In what ways?
3. If not, are we re-enacting something?
4. How do we change the outcome?

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### Using S.E.L.F. to address Re-enactment

(Bloom, 2010)

- o **S**afety: What concerns you?
- o **E**motions: What are you feeling and where in your body do you feel it?
- o **L**oss: What are you afraid of losing?
- o **F**uture: What do you want for your future & what are you willing to give up for it? (All change includes loss.)

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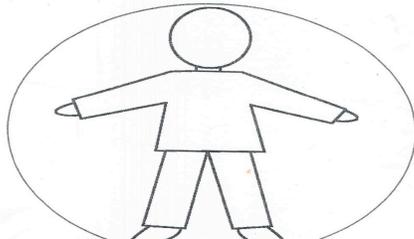
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Working with Visceral Memories and Feelings?  
Where do you feel it in your body?



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**Types of Problem Sexual Behaviors that Can Arise from Re-enactment**

- Sexually preoccupied (thought, language, art, tunnel vision)
- Compulsive behaviors, such as excessive masturbation, often not responsive to limits
- Sexual acting out on others

***In children, these precocious sexualized behaviors occur only through experience or exposure***

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**Intervention for Denial**

“Right now I know it’s important for you to believe that you did not do that, but we’re going to keep talking about and working on these things.”

~Eliana Gil, (2013)

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**The Expressive Therapies Continuum**  
(Kagen & Lucebrink):  
**Turning Re-enactment into Re-experiencing**

1. Water play
2. Soap & water (Sugar scrub)
3. Shaving Cream Play with a messy tray
4. Finger Paints
5. Constructive play
6. Drumming
7. Bouncing a ball (Greenspan)
8. Nurturing play with baby dolls

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**Re-experience:** When the individual is able to

1. **express the trauma** experiencing whatever levels of pain, anger, loss, or other emotions are elicited by a detailed memory of the event
2. **not feel irrationally responsible** for having caused the event.

Gil, (1990)

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**Re-experience Treatment Goal/  
Objective:**

- o Client will play, act out, illustrate, discuss or describe traumatic experience, name their feelings connected with the traumas and will state and behave as if they know they are not responsible for the trauma. (Place the blame for the trauma on the perpetrator)

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When they share their trauma with me, what do I do?

1. **Reflect** back to them with compassion what you heard.
2. **Honor** their courage for surviving and sharing. "You have worked hard to survive. Thank you for sharing what happened and what you did to survive with me."
3. **Connect** them with safety & supports.

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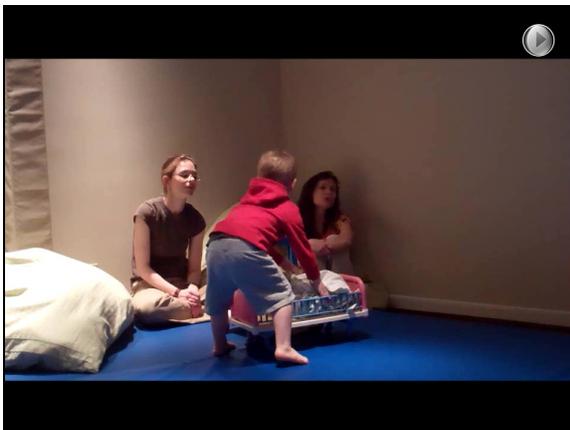
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**Release:** The individual is able to:

1. **Understand that the experience occurred in the past** and does not see or react to the experience as a clear and recurring danger in the present. (This is the cognitive part of self-regulation)
2. **No longer feels devastated by the memory** of the event (This is the emotional part of self-regulation)

Gil, Eliana (1990)

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### Release Treatment Goal/Objectives Client will:

Play, act out, illustrate, discuss or describe the experience as occurring in the past and not fear its re-occurrence in the present and no longer feels devastated by the event. (For example, acting out, nightmares after visits or other reminders of the event ceases. Triggers decrease)

Be able to play, act out, illustrate, discuss or describe the event without fear or other negative emotional or behavioral consequences (actions).

Intense anger outbursts will be replaced by calming play, art, music, self-talk, problem solving, and other coping skills.

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**Reorganize:** The individual is able to:

1. **Live their life without feeling compelled to relive or repeat** the traumatic event either consciously or unconsciously.
2. **Define their life without the trauma being the central organizing piece** of who they are and how they live their life; consciously, unconsciously, and chemically.

Gil, Eliana (1990)

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**Reorganize Treatment Goals/Objectives:**  
**Client will:**

- develop safe age appropriate connection with peers and adults.
- engage in spontaneous play that seeks to share enjoyment and connection with others instead of re-enacting the trauma.
- describe when they feel safe
- identify and make things happen in positive ways. (Seek positive attention.)
- make positive self statements that does not involve the trauma or behaviors they learned from the trauma.
- demonstrate trust of safe adults and peers and develop safe consistent attachments.
- The trauma no longer affects their daily life.

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**Resiliency and You:**  
Building Resiliency in Those We serve & Ourselves

"Most therapeutic change happens outside of therapy."  
(Gaskill & Perry, 2014, p. 186.)

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**5. Autonomy (Agency):**

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When do you feel in control?

- How do you define power and control?
  - Is it **power and control over** others?
  - Is it **power with** others?
  - Is it **power to** make things happen?
- How was power and control used to hurt you? What kind of power and control was that?
- How do you create power with others, so together you have the power to contribute to the greater good?

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## The Lose – Lose of Power Struggles

### If you WIN the Power Struggle...

You are now associated with the perpetrator; the person who had power over them and hurt them.

### If you LOSE the Power Struggle...

You are now associated with the person who did not protect them and had no power.

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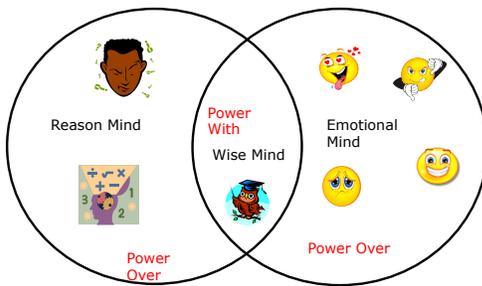
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## Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Wise Mind = Agency



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## Collaborative Problem Solving AKA: There is a Hole in my Sidewalk = Agency



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More Solutions =  
More choices & More Agency



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The Top 5 Resilience Factors

4. Self Esteem

- A. Sense of Self – Personal Preferences likes & dislikes
- B. Sense of Self – Worth  
When do you feel loved and valued.
- C. Sense of Self-efficacy –  
How do I affect change? How do I make things happen?

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**Sense of Self**  
Personal Preferences/Likes and Dislikes

- Developing an understanding of one's personal preferences through identifying one's likes and dislikes is the basis for the development of a sense of self; an inner core.
- Belief systems, moral codes, and conscience start with one's personal preferences.
- It is the most basic building block of the rudder that helps a person steer through life.

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## Sense of Self Worth (When Do I Feel Loved & Valued?)

Jean Baker Miller (1976) calls these the "Five Good Things" that result from "growth fostering mutually enhancing relationships."

1. Zest
2. Clarity
3. Increased sense of worth
4. Creativity/Productivity
5. Desire for more connection

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## Exploring Circles of Connection with The Circles Curriculum by, James Stanfield



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**Sense of Self Efficacy AKA Self Direction**  
 The ability to effect change/to make things happen/ to have an impact

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- Is the basic building block of our ability to function in the world.
- Is a core value of Western Cultures like ours a driving force in how we socialize our children
- It allows us to
  - try new things,
  - set goals,
  - work toward those goals, and
  - recover when we experience set backs
  - to feel independent, calm, and capable.

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**What Makes Me Me?**

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What makes me happy? (Sense of Self)

When do I feel loved? (Self-worth)

When do I feel proud? (Self-efficacy & worth)

When do I feel in charge? (Self-efficacy)

When do I feel safe? (Sense of self)

What do I do to be safe? (Self-efficacy)

What are my comfort foods, things, habits, people? (Sense of self & self-worth)

How do I put my comfort things in my life? (Self-efficacy)

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**The Top 5 Resilience Factors**

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**3. External Support Systems**

- Friends
- Pets
- Extended Family
- Neighbors
- People at Church
- Even Positive Fantasy

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What was Michael Jackson's  
First solo #1 hit song?

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Michael Jackson's First solo #1 hit  
SONG WAS:

Ben



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Affiliation

with a cohesive supportive group that works together  
toward a positive goal

Scouts  
Sports  
4 H  
Church Youth Group

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## The Top 5 Resilience Factors



Positive Experiences with people outside the abusive environment, especially people in positions of authority

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## Top Five Resilience Factors

The Top 5 Resilience Factors

5. Autonomy (What do I have control over and how to make things happen?)
4. Self Esteem

Sense of Self – Personal Preferences (likes & dislikes)

Sense of Self Worth – When do you feel loved and valued.

The Five good things from mutually enhancing relationships.

1. Zest
2. Clarity
3. Increased sense of worth
4. Creativity/Productivity
5. Desire for more connection

Sense of Self-efficacy – How do I affect change – what do I have power and control over – How do I make things happen?

3. External Support Systems (Can be a person, pet, fantasy)

2. Affiliation (with a cohesive supportive group)

1. YOU! Positive Experiences with people outside their abusive environment, especially people in positions of authority

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**Resiliency**  
In Action!



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