

Knowledge is Power

Consulting & Wellness Services



Ariel Haubrich,
M.Ed Psych



Mental Health 101

What is mental health?

Mental health is “the capacity of each and all of us to **feel, think and act** in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face.

It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity.”

~Public Health Agency of Canada





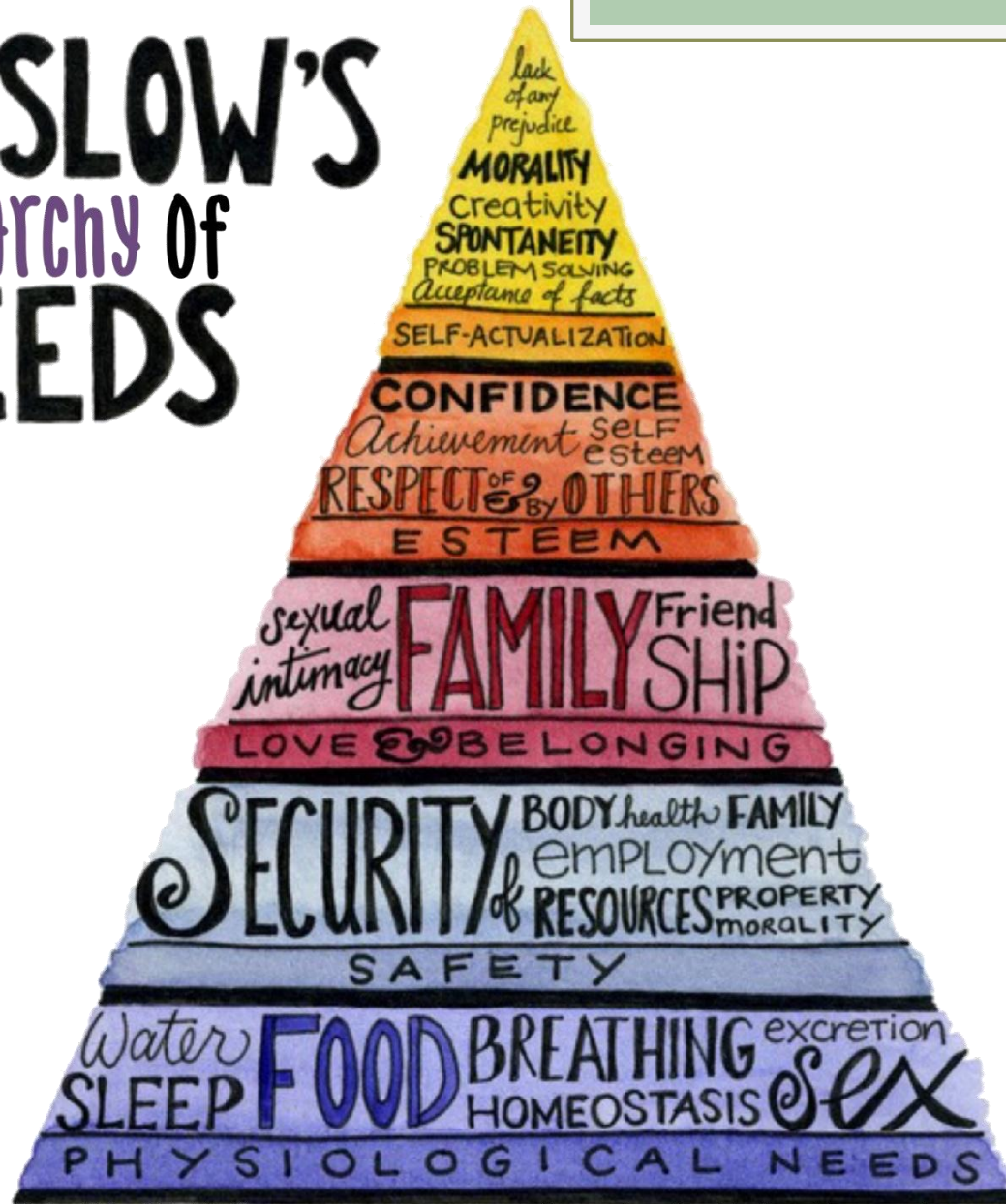
The things that contribute to
positive mental health:



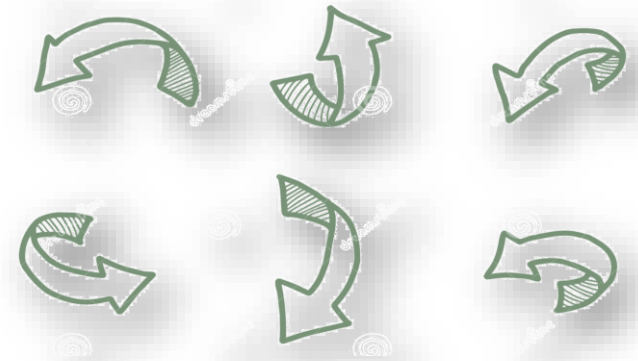
“The Big 5”

- Healthy eating/ Active Living
- Healthy/ connected relationships
 - Hobbies & interests
- Involvement/ engaged in “community”
- Positive thinking/ Hope/ Perspective

MASLOW'S Hierarchy of NEEDS



Continuum of Mental Health to Mental Illness



Mental
Health

Mental Health
Challenges

Mental
Illness



Mental Health “Challenges”



- When the “big 5” or basic needs are in conflict, out of balance, threatened or absent
 - i.e. grief, loss, esteem challenges, relationship problems, bullying, body image, conflict, poverty, transition, stress, etc.
- We ALL have mental health challenges/ issues

Things that challenge our mental health

- Stress
- Grief
- Conflict
- Loss
- Physical Illness
- Addiction
- Major Life events
- Isolation
- Trauma
- Abuse/ Assault
- Financial strain/ lack of resources
- Worry/ Fear
- Low confidence/ Self Esteem
- Current Events





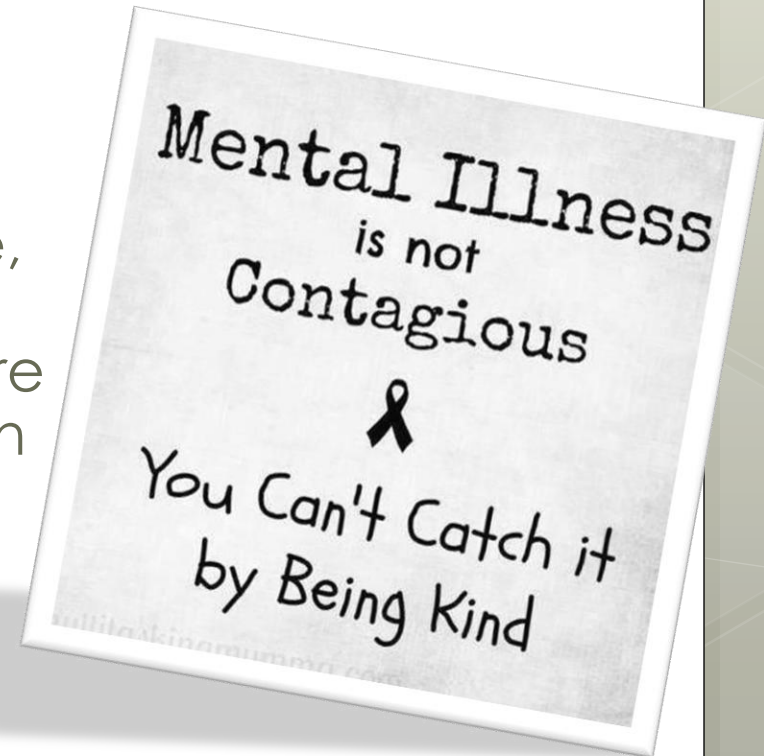
What is the definition of Mental Illness/ Disorder?

A mental disorder causes major changes in a person's thinking, emotional state and behavior, and disrupts the person's ability to work and carry out their usual personal relationships.

- A medical condition or disease that meets specific criteria for diagnosis. i.e. depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Schizophrenia, Anorexia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, etc.
- There is a diagnostic process (note how it differs from dynamics in mental health “challenges” or “issues.”)
- Consider those who are labelled with mental health “issues” and the wide gamut that entails. Schizophrenia is not the same as being bullied, and PTSD and grief are not the same; don't lump them together. and it's not fair to either dynamic to compare them.

Some thoughts on mental illness...

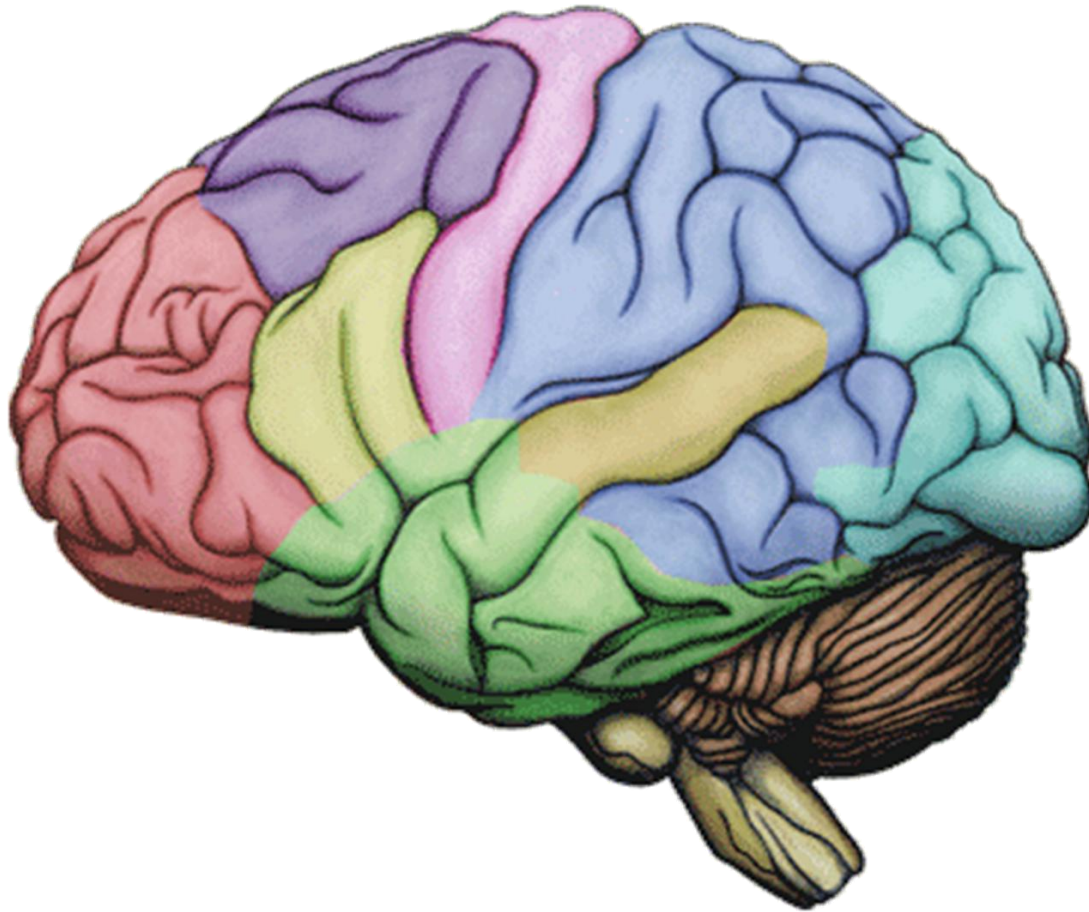
- Symptoms, manifestations and impacts at each of the cognitive, emotional and behavioral are different for each individual as are the “big 5” influences or factors in their life
- The “same” situation is never actually the same
- All mental illness exists on a continuum (mild, moderate, severe), AND
- Mental illness is not “static”
 - Beware the “good days and bad days” standards/ expectations

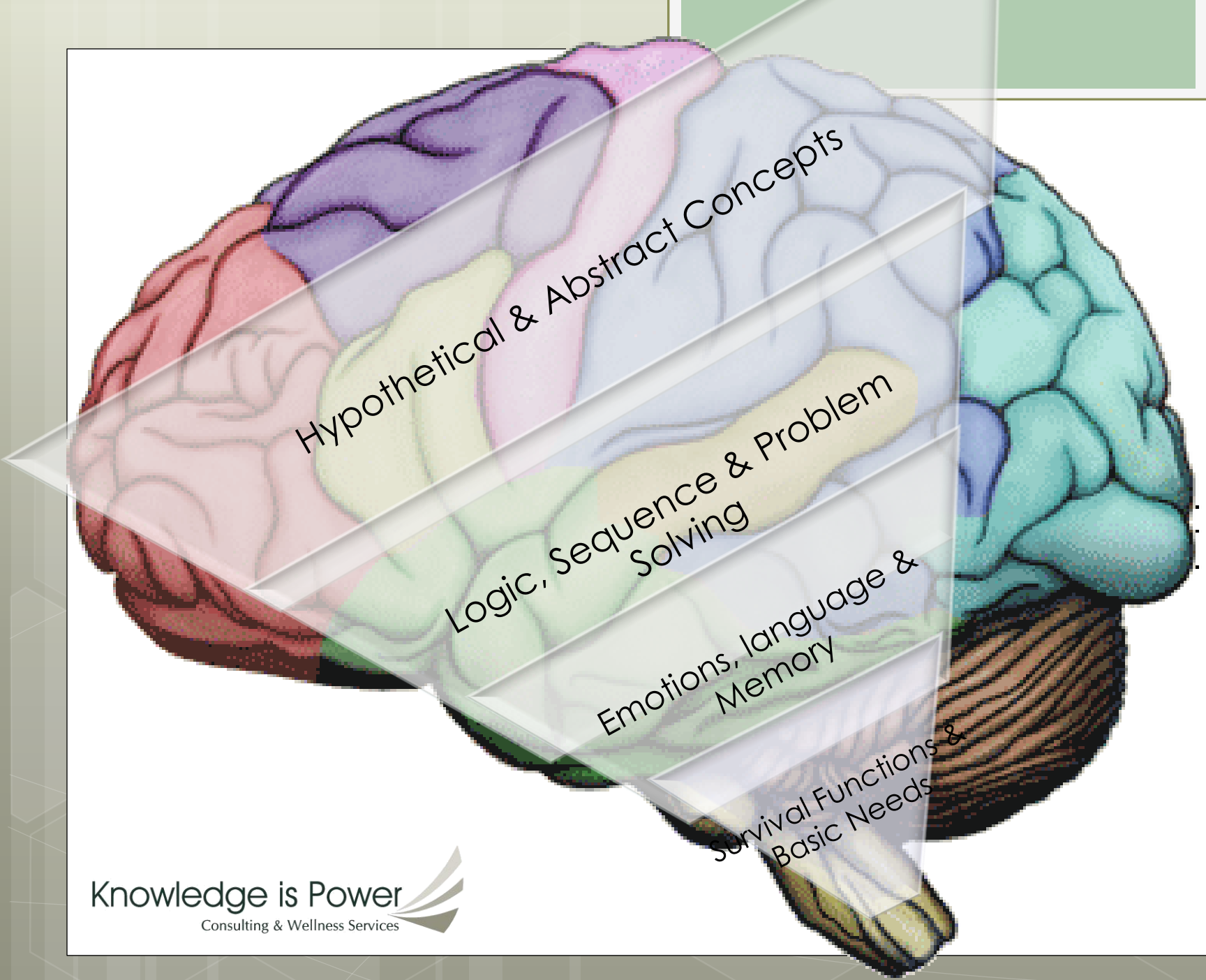




S
T
I
G
M
A

Our Brains & Our Mental Health





Hypothetical & Abstract Concepts

Logic, Sequence & Problem Solving

Emotions, language & Memory

Survival Functions & Basic Needs

What should I watch for?

- A change in BASELINE behavior, especially among the BIG 5 and MASLOW's HEIRARCHY
- These changes show a consistent pattern of:
 - Change in intensity or duration of the emotion, thought pattern or behavior
 - Interference in daily living (ability to take care of ones self, carry on personal relationships & go to work or school)



Common Mental Illnesses for Youth

Mood Disorders → Depression
Bipolar Disorder

Behavior Disorders → ADD/ ADHD
Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorders → Autism Spectrum
Asperger's Syndrome
Pervasive Developmental Disorder

Substance Use Disorders → Addictions
Substance Induced Disorders

Eating Disorders → Anorexia Nervosa
Bulimia Nervosa
Binge Eating Disorder

Anxiety Disorders → Separation Anxiety
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
PTSD/ Acute Stress Disorder
Phobias
Generalized Anxiety Disorder

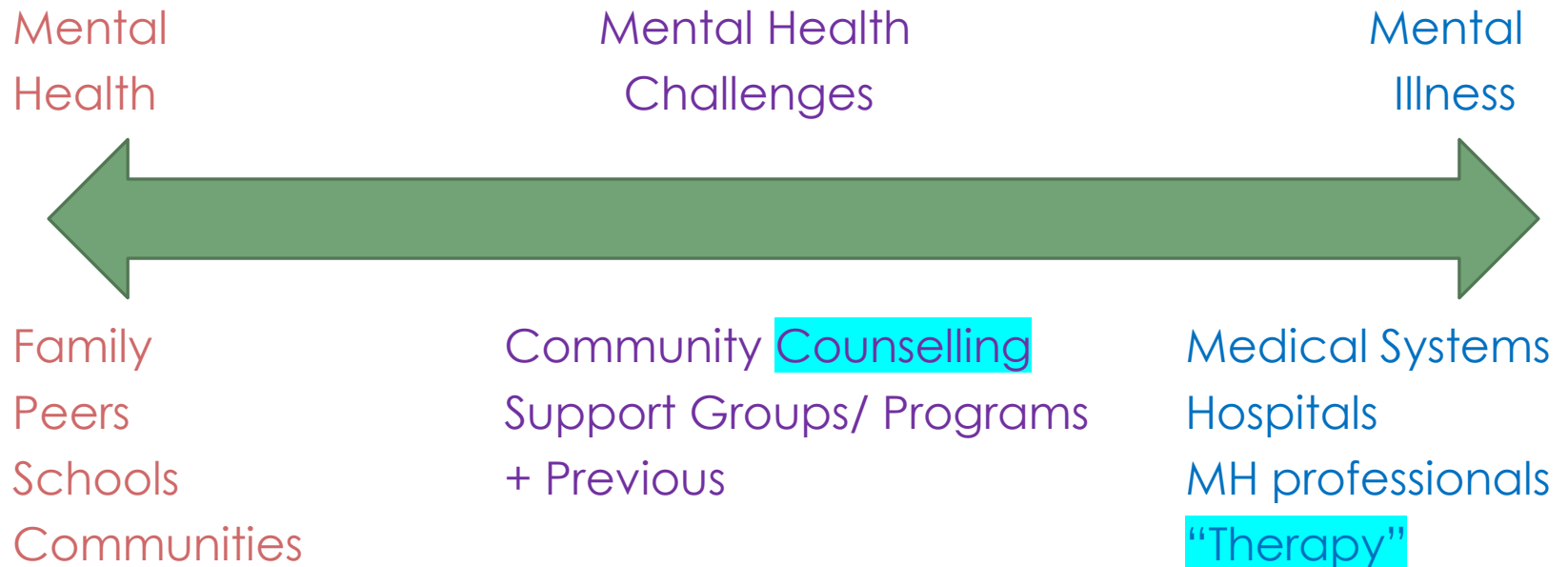
What about
self-harm?

Where do I go from here?



- What is the difference between counselling & therapy?
- What tools does each professional use?
- How do I access them?
- The frustration and failure we have and why...
 - This child doesn't need to be medicated
 - I don't have the skillset for treating...
 - They won't see them/ waiting list
 - What do you want me to do about it?
 - Each system is clogged by the other

Continuum of Mental Health to Mental Illness



The systems that most effectively and efficiently serve & support them

How Systems Differ

- The “tools” available to them
- the models/ mandates they follow (specific to organizational goal)
- Belief systems, models of delivery, experience, research-base and education level
- Practice
 - What's the difference between counselling, therapy and psychiatric intervention?
- Legislation/ Privacy/ Consent
- Referral Process
 - CFSA
 - Mental Health/ AHS Addictions
 - Counselling Svc
 - Crisis responses
- Length of Service
- Documentation
 - What do I need to document



What Can I do in MY role?



Vitamin C



- 1. Connection**
- 2. Consistency**
- 3. Competence**
- 4. Control**



Connection





2 Seconds

Greeting students or clients

- Saying Hello, High Fives, Fist Bump, Wave, Smile, Nod, Use their name, **touch**- i.e. Hand on shoulder, hand-shakes
- Acknowledges their presence and importance
 - Some students lead very lonely lives, some may even go through the day at school without speaking to anyone...
- Affects their **biology**... What's in a smile???



Mirror Neurons

- Are neurons that fire in your brain not only when you do something but when you see someone else do it
- These have been linked to empathy and emotions
 - Getting angry or excited during a sports event
 - Crying at a heart-wrenching movie
- Our brains are acting as if we are the one playing the sport and or taking part in the movie
- Why is this important?
 - If seeing something done fires the same neuron in our brains as if we had done this, others reactions and actions are (biologically) linked to how we feel and act
 - Smiling at a student makes a huge impact as the students neurons will fire as if they had smiled themselves or had that emotion

2 Minutes

- Having a quick conversation
 - Asking how they are doing, how their weekend was, what their plans are for Christmas break
 - Congratulate them on an accomplishment (genuinely)
- Pay attention to their conversations with others, and use this to start your own conversation and show interest
- Use humor (get some good jokes!)
- Show interest by playing music they like in your classroom or office



2 Hours



- Have an actual conversation with them... About regular everyday stuff. Get to know who they are, their favourite activities, their friends, etc. (These conversations shouldn't always be "goal-oriented...")
- Volunteer for extra-curricular and community activities. Being a coach or advisor allows you to get to know youth on a personal "real-life" level.
- Go to local events where youth are participating (watch a hockey game, go to the recitals).
- Be on "Supervision" (interaction). Being present & available is huge: open doors...



Consistency

WHAT YOU DO
EVERY DAY
MATTERS
MORE THAN
WHAT YOU DO
ONCE IN A WHILE.

- Try as much as possible to find a routine (even if it's a new routine). The brain loves predictability, boundaries and familiarity
- Create rules and clear expectations. Kids thrive (they rebel, but their brains thrive) on this...
- Whenever possible, prepare for any changes that may arise (new bus driver, new bell schedule, new teacher etc.)
- Have rewards and consequences followed through on. And make them matter (they should be meaningful)
- Some people appreciate “transition” or comfort items when their world is a bit chaotic or major change is happening...a tangible consistent
- **What you do every day, matters more than what you do every once in a while...**

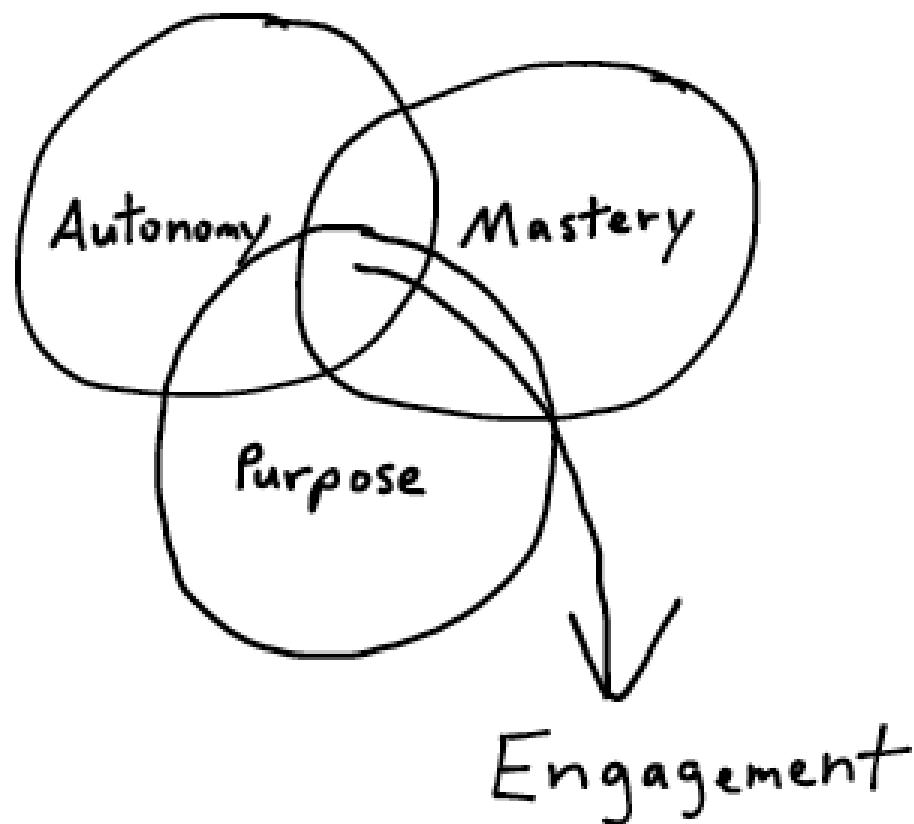
Competence



- Find *SUCCESS* wherever you can
- Have students teach you something
- Recognize and celebrate all types of achievement & ability
 - Diversify your “awards”
 - Step outside the batter's box (try extracurricular that isn't athletic)
 - Set a good example of TRYNG/ learning something new
 - Screw up
 - Try again
 - Create a safe environment for all of this trying and screwing up to happen
 - Learn together
 - Help kids explore new talents, opportunities, etc
 - Encourage their other supports in this
- Realize the very real anxieties of the fear of failure and negative judgement from adults AND peers



Control



- Provide whenever and wherever possible

“Voice & Choice”

- Give them a choice without giving them a choice
- Hear their concerns/ provide opportunity for open discussion (*check your own need for control.....*)
- Work through the problem solving process/ hypothetical solutions or directions and let them try a few...
- Recognize and celebrate autonomy!

- Consider the number of **Non-**
Negotiables

- Remember that they are at a difficult time in terms of what they have any control over & the expectations are of them (*not a child/ not an adult....*)



What about that reeeeaadaallllyyy
difficult kid...?



Some things to consider with these kids...

- Know this: you will pay for the actions of those who go before you
- They are perpetually in 'fight or flight' for survival
- They will test you to see if you'll bail
- Less. Is. More.
- There are some things that have been destroyed. Do not try to fix them; instead create something new
- They may not actually "know" that you care...

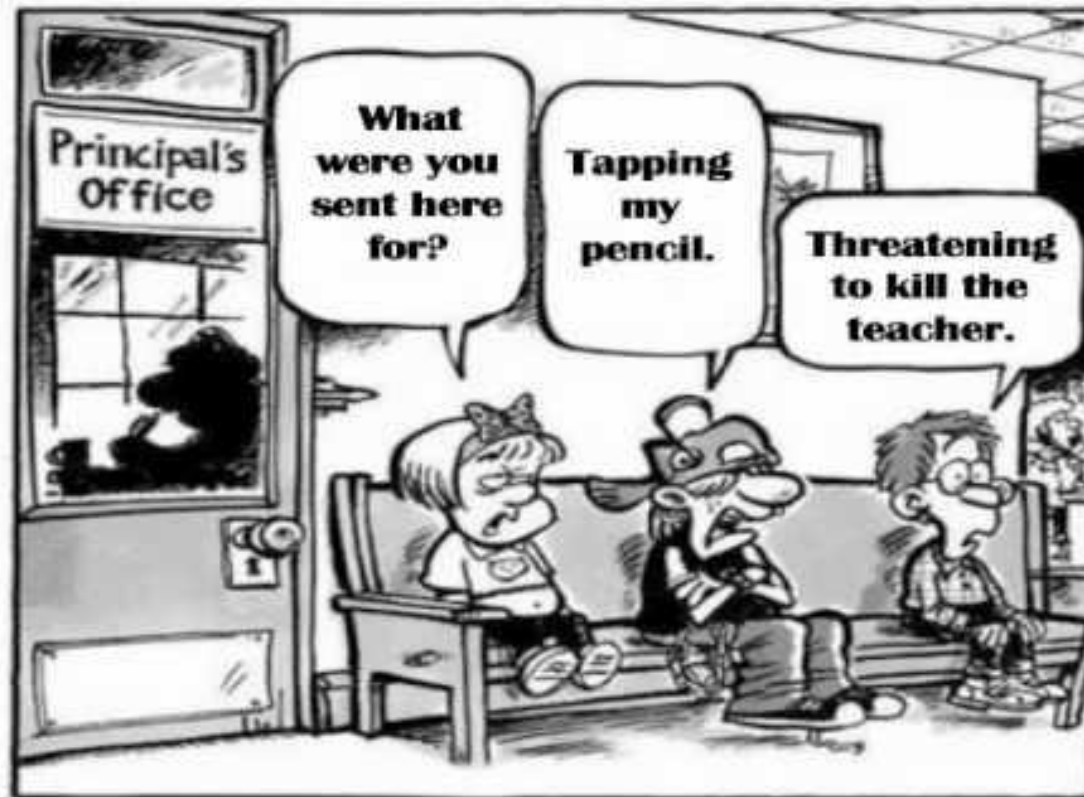


Dynamics/ Queries Specific to Our System

- “Everything to everyone” setting
- Rural dynamics/ lack of supports
- “Ground Zero” for many crises
- School-based health services
- Funding/ Coding Requirements
- Classroom accommodations/ dynamics
- One-on-one vs. groups
- The “wrong” system and the “right” system at the same time depending on the kid/ situation
- Dynamics beyond our control
- Differing legislation/ FOIP
 - What am I required to keep confidential? Who and how do I tell?



The Role of Schools is changing....



I'M SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A... TEACHER

I am a counselor and psychologist to a problem-filled child,
I am a police officer that controls a child gone wild.

I am a travel agent scheduling our trips for the year,
I am a confidante that wipes a crying child's tear.

I am a banker collecting money for a ton of different things,
I am a librarian showing adventures that a storybook brings.

I am a custodian that has to clean certain little messes,
I am a psychic that learns to know all that everybody only
guesses.

I am a photographer keeping pictures of a child's yearly
growth,

When mother and father are gone for the day, I become both.

I am a doctor that detects when a child is feeling sick,
I am a politician that must know the laws and recognize a
trick.

I am a party planner for holidays to celebrate with all,
I am a decorator of a room, filling every wall.

I am a news reporter updating on our nation's current events,
I am a detective solving small mysteries and ending all sus-
pense.

I am a clown and comedian that makes the children laugh,
I am a dietitian assuring they have lunch or from mine I give
them half.

When we seem to stray from values, I become a preacher,
But I'm proud to have to be these people because ...
I'm proud to say, "I am a teacher."

Facing the Giants





Thank you!

Knowledge is Power

Consulting & Wellness Services



www.knowledge-power.ca