

The Art of Loving and Letting Go:
Essential Knowledge for Foster Parents
in a More Progressive Age

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Prepared for PEI Foster Family Federation
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Who is Robert Wright?

- Social Work Private Practitioner
- *Mental Health @ WSP
- *Ex. Dir. FCS Cumberland
- *Ex. Dir. Child & Youth Strategy
- African Nova Scotian MH & Addiction Initiative
- Foster and Adoption Parent



The Day

- 9:15 Overview, Questions, Trends, Future, Q&A
- 10:30 BREAK TIME!
- 10:45 Attachment
- 12:00 LUNCH TIME!
- 1:00 Erickson's Developmental Model
- 2:30 Teens, Conclusions, Legal Limits, Q&A

Overview

- Fostering Trends and Challenges
- Needed Knowledge for Professional Fosters
 - Attachment
 - Psycho-social development
 - Trauma
- Skills and Techniques
 - Competent Care/ Meeting Needs
 - Normalize Deficits
 - Truth to Tragedy
 - Power of Knowing
 - Showing Normal Crazy

Your Questions

Children and Fostering

- Children are little adults. Fostering, an exchange: care and education for labour
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-kE3CC2uDc>
(1:24:00 – 1:27:17)
- Children are orphans or delinquents. Fostering reimbursed volunteers: shelter and “correction”
- Children are victims of harm. Fostering professionals well compensated team members providing treatment for complex harm
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxsVIClobT4>

Foster Care Trends

- The number of children in care is climbing
- Increasing demand for and on foster families
- Number of foster homes is decreasing
- Foster parents working more extensively with parents, extended family, permanent home

Future of Foster Care

- Family based care with comprehensive, collaborative care plans acknowledged as having best outcomes
- Foster care is professionalizing increasing need for training and better compensation
- More focus on clinical, education, transition outcomes
- More collaboration among Child Protection, Education, Mental Health, Community Agencies and Foster Parents as a professional team

Losing Isaiah Clip

- Loving and letting go
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEDWjeRGMks&nohtml5=False>

Future of Fostering Q & A



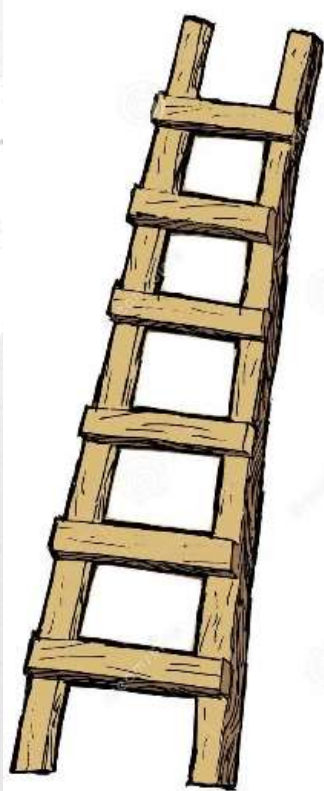
BREAK TIME

memegenerator.net

Attachment/Development/Trauma



*Trauma can seriously
disrupt development*



We grow in steps and stages
Each step builds on the ones
before it

Attachment is the first and
most important rung

Attachment Definition

- “. . . An affectionate bond between two individuals that endures through space and time and serves to join them emotionally (Kennell 1976)”

Attachment Theory

- Major theorist is John Bowlby
- Established in first 1-2 years of life
- Similar to Erickson's infancy stage
- Foundation of identity, emotional regulation, and all relationships

4.
Quiescence

1.
Feel Need

Trust
Security/Safety
Attachment

3.
Need Met

2.
Express
Need



Ainsworth Strange Scenario

Access Visits

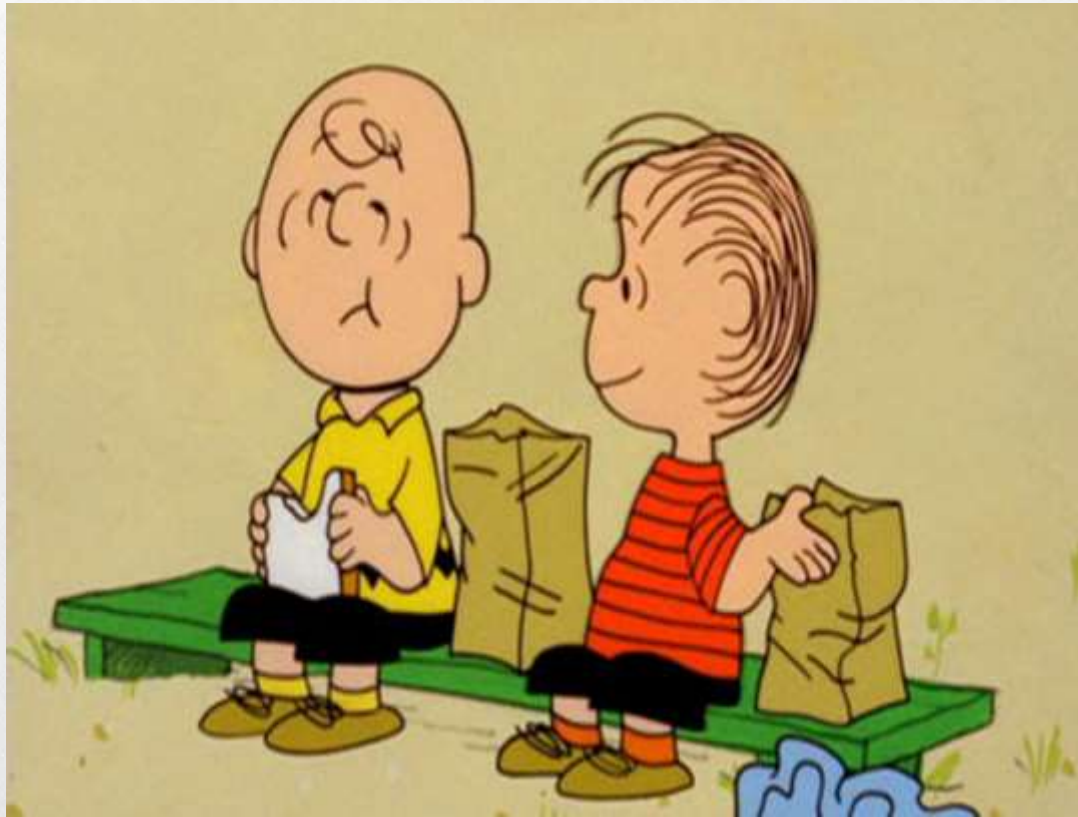
- Ainsworth a student of Bowlby develops scenario
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsewNrHUUU>
- Consider access visits
 - Separation from foster parent
 - Transport = transition (FSW is stranger?)
 - Greeting parents = reunion
 - Separation from parent
 - Transport = transition (FSW is stranger?)
 - Greeting foster parent = reunion

Attachment Types

Secure	Secure to explore; upset at parting; happy to reunite
Anxious-Resistant Insecure	Limited exploring; distress at parting; ambivalent at reunion
Anxious-Avoidant Insecure	Limited exploring; limited distress at parting; ignores reunion
Disorganize/Disoriented Attachment	Fearful and stressed; contradictory emotions; seeks comfort but calm does not endure
Reactive Attachment/Social Engagement Disorder	Indiscriminant seeking of comfort; resistant to being comforted

Attachment Q&A

Lunch Time!



Erickson's Psycho-social Development

- Development occurs in stages
- Each stage has developmental tasks
- Each stage has a central crisis
- Development is cumulative
- Unsuccessfully achieved stages will have observable consequences

TABLE 10.1**ERIKSON'S STAGES OF PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Stage (approximate age)	Issues	Description of Task
<i>Infancy (to 1 year)</i>	<i>Trust vs. mistrust</i>	If needs are dependably met, infants develop a sense of basic trust.
<i>Toddlerhood (1 to 2 years)</i>	<i>Autonomy vs. shame and doubt</i>	Toddlers learn to exercise will and do things for themselves, or they doubt their abilities.
<i>Preschooler (3 to 5 years)</i>	<i>Initiative vs. guilt</i>	Preschoolers learn to initiate tasks and carry out plans, or they feel guilty about efforts to be independent.
<i>Elementary school (6 years to puberty)</i>	<i>Competence vs. inferiority</i>	Children learn the pleasure of applying themselves to tasks, or they feel inferior.
<i>Adolescence (teen years into 20s)</i>	<i>Identity vs. role confusion</i>	Teenagers work at refining a sense of self by testing roles and then integrating them to form a single identity, or they become confused about who they are.
<i>Young adulthood (20s to early 40s)</i>	<i>Intimacy vs. isolation</i>	Young adults struggle to form close relationships and to gain the capacity for intimate love, or they feel socially isolated.
<i>Middle adulthood (40s to 60s)</i>	<i>Generativity vs. stagnation</i>	In middle age, people discover a sense of contributing to the world, usually through family and work, or they may feel a lack of purpose.
<i>Late adulthood (late 60s and up)</i>	<i>Integrity vs. despair</i>	When reflecting on his or her life, the older adult may feel a sense of satisfaction or failure.

Erickson Made Simple



Parenting as Treatment

- Children with challenges need treatment
- All treatment must be supported by therapeutic parenting
- Detailed social history from parents and child protection, must inform treatment and parenting
- To be respected members of team foster families must demonstrate knowledge, skill, discretion

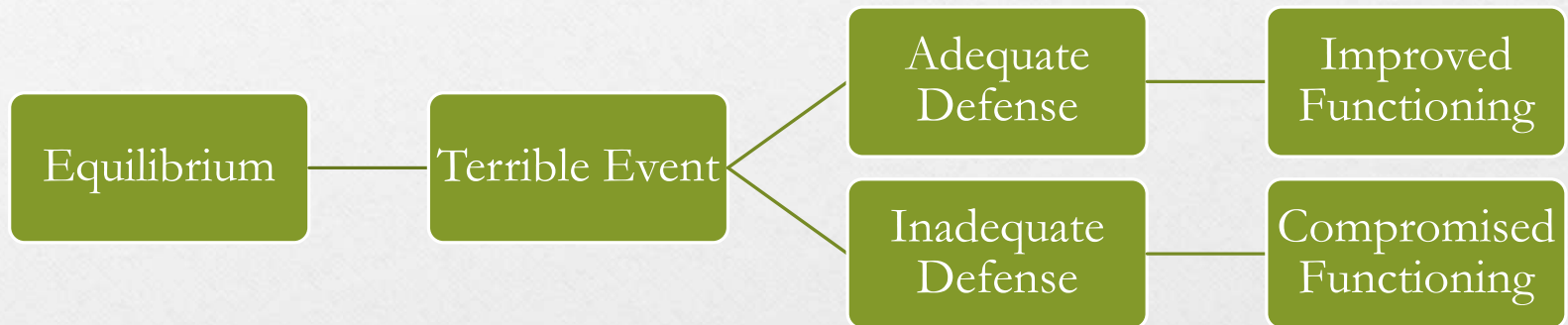
Psychosocial Q&A

Trauma Definition

Trauma is an enduring emotional response to a terrible event after an initial psychological defense. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms.



Psychological Model of Trauma



That which does not kill me makes me stronger . . . F. Nietzsche

Trauma Model

- Explains flashbacks, explosive anger, memory disruption, dissociation
- Understanding how trauma works helps us understand how to intervene

Trauma Q&A

Afternoon Break?



Working With Adolescents

- Challenges related to disruptions in development
- Understanding developmental deficits key to interventions
- “Power of Knowing”
- All children require parenting. Can you accurately describe the parenting needs of the youth you work with and coach effective parenting?

Working With Adolescents

- Self-protection “denial challenged provokes blame and attack” - Good Will Hunting Painting Scene
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AvxR5vVgY4>
- “Power of Knowing” – GWH Park Scene
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM-gZintWDc>
- Affective intervention – GWH It is not your fault
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYa6gbDcx18>

Working With Adolescents Q&A

Final Thoughts Q&A

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