“Mom, there’s a monster in the closet”

How do attachment, trauma and anxiety disorders interact?

ISSTD Congress Washington
What has been seen

Cannot be unseen
Trauma?

• The classic vision of trauma
  ↓

• from the perspective of a traumatizing event
  ↓

• characteristics
Trauma ?

– PTSD (Posttraumatic Stress Disorder)
  • Criterion A: (traumatic event)
    “exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence”

– Leonore Terr
  “a sudden, unexpected, overwhelming intense emotional blow or a series of blows assaults the person from outside”
Trauma ?

– **Van der Kolk: Developmental trauma disorder**
  • “Significant disruptions of protective caregiving as the result of repeated changes in primary caregiver, repeated separation from the primary caregiver or exposure to severe and persistent emotional abuse”

– **Bowlby**
  • “any event that seriously threatens the attachment relationship”
“Hidden traumas”

The form of traumatization

↓

Child’s experience of threat

↓

Totally dependable on his caregiver

↓

limited behavioral and cognitive coping capacities
“Hidden traumas”

Experiences of threat include the threat of separation from the caregiver having little response to the signals of distress.
“Hidden traumas”

In the interaction between child and caregiver

Not an obvious event

Caregiver’s unavailability

Caregiver’s inability to modulate

the

affective dysregulation
Relational trauma

• Allen Schore
  – “Exposure to chronic misattunement and prolonged states of dysregulation in the context of the Early attachment relationship”
  – “It refers to unobvious, invisible trauma”
  – “It results in an altered development and deficient functioning of the primary affect-regulating system”
  – “Early relational trauma is a likely precursor of later developmental trauma”
Attachment

• Attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space (Ainsworth, 1973; Bowlby, 1969).
  – Persistent and ongoing (from the cradle till the grave)
  – Directed toward a specific person
  – Emotionally significant
  – Characterized by seeking security, comfort and pleasure
THE ABC OF ATTACHMENT
(Siegel & Hartzell, 2004)

- **Attunement**: parents use of their own internal state to help regulate the infant
- **Balance**: a child’s achievement of balance between its body, emotions and state of mind
- **Coherence**: sense of internal integration and interpersonal connectedness to others acquired by the child through its relationship with its parents
Attunement
Attunement

- Sensitive responsiveness
- Mentalization
- Reflective functioning
- Containment
- Shared pleasure/ play
Balance
Balance
Mother as external regulator

growth-facilitating emotional environment

\[ \downarrow \]

a child to develop an internal system

\[ \downarrow \]

adaptively regulate

\[ \leftarrow \quad \rightarrow \]

arousal  psychobiological states
(affect, cognition, and behavior)
Balance
Mother as external regulator

Contingent responsivity

she appraises the nonverbal expressions of

infant’s internal arousal affective states

regulates them

communicates them to the infant
Coherence
Coherence
Sense of self

The availability of a reflective caregiver

↓

Secure attachment

↓

Facilitates the development of theory of mind

↓

"She thinks of me as thinking and therefore I exist”

↓

Child "find itself in the other”

↓

"giving back to the baby the baby's own self"

(Winnicott, 1967)
Early attachment trauma
Early attachment trauma

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Early childhood trauma
  - Physical
    - Psychological
    - Sexual
  - Physical
    - Psychological
  - Social
  - Stressful events
    - Quality of the relationship

attachment trauma
Early attachment trauma

- Stressful events in the relationship
- Quality of the relationship
- Stressful events outside the relationship
EAT and stressful events in the relationship

- Prenatal trauma

- Birth trauma

- Disruptions in the attachment bond
  - by physical unavailability/inaccessibility
  - by psychological unavailability/inaccessibility
EAT and stressful events outside the relationship

• Frequent moves or placement.
• Undiagnosed or painful illnes.
• Early medical interventions.
• Absence of the father.
• Bereavement.
• Parental stress.
• Fearful or chaotic environment.
• Traumatic childbirth.
Quality of the attachment relationship

• Attachment style of the parent

• How do parents mentally process attachment-related information

• Quality of parenting
The quality of parenting

We are hardwired to be held in the mind and heart of another.
The quality of parenting

– Attunement
  • Sensitive responsiveness
  • Reflective functioning
  • Mentalization
  • Containment
  • Play

– Balance
  • External regulation
Features of EAT?

- Early attachment trauma?
  - Caregiving relationship
  - Early
  - Repetitive
  - Chronic (over time)
  - Multiple
  - Adverse impact on the development of a secure attachment relationship
Severity of EAT

• EAT and the overlap with complex trauma
  – Interpersonal stressor
  – Multiple
  – Repeated
  – Cumulative
  – Developmentally vulnerable times

• Early stage:
  – The impact on the brain
  – Developmentally
    • Margret Mahler: Individuation – separation model
Developmental Consequences of EAT

• Developmental immaturity along five core dimensions of development: (Pia Mellody)
  – self esteem (less than versus better than),
  – boundaries (too vulnerable versus invulnerable),
  – reality issues (bad/rebellious versus good/perfect)
  – dependency (too dependent versus needless/wantless)
  – moderation (too little versus too much self-control)
Consequences of EAT

- Affectregulation
- Attachment style (IWM)
- Body
- Neurobiology
- Sense of self
- Cognition
- Dissociation
EAT and affectregulation
EAT and affect regulation

Effective regulation

Effective Emotional Regulation

Child experiences catastrophic anxiety and terror.

Child's emotions are regulated.

Child cries

Adult soothes and thus communicates, verbally and non-verbally, that they recognise the feeling and it will be ok.

But

Parent briefly becomes anxious too.

Manages their own emotions quite quickly. The adult can cope with it.

Over time, when the child experiences this on most occasions (it does not need to be all of the time) they acquire the capacity, through developing neural networks, to regulate their own emotions.
EAT and affect regulation

Ineffective regulation

Ineffective Emotional Regulation

Child experiences catastrophic anxiety and terror.

Child continues to feel catastrophic anxiety and terror.

Child cries

The adult cannot soothe and therefore communicates (verbally and non-verbally) that the feeling is indeed frightening and catastrophic.

Parent/ Carer finds the baby's cry frightening/punishing/overwhelming etc.

Adult cannot cope with it

Over time, when the child experiences this on most occasions, the child fails to develop capacity to regulate their own emotions.
- 7 emotional circuits at birth
- Subcortical neurocircuitry of the mammalian brain
- Environmental experiences.

- EAT ➔ the circuits don’t flow
- EAT ➔ no integration ➔ dissociated states
- EAT ➔ no self
- EAT ➔ no embodiment
EAT and affect regulation

EAT: disruption in the attachment bond

↓

Over activating the panic-grief brain network

↓

Increased activation of the SEEKING system ("protest")

↓

Increased hopelessness and withdrawal ("despair")

↓

Decreased SEEKING behaviors ("detachment")
EAT and Internal Working Model
EAT and Internal Working Model

– Internal working model (IWM)
  • Memories of attachment interactions \(\rightarrow\) accessibility
  • Mental representations of self/others
  • Cognitive structure
  • Typical emotions
  • Implicit memory
  • Open to modification
EAT and Internal Working Model
EAT and cognition
EAT and cognition

• Negative IWMs of self:
  – Increased appraisals of normal life circumstances as threatening
  – Difficulty in suppressing thoughts
  – A tendency to devalue oneself in threatening situations

• Negative IWMs of others:
  – failure to suppress when the individual is experiencing high cognitive loads
EAT and the body
EAT and the body

- Attachment dynamics play out at the physical level
- Via the body-to-body communication
- The nature and quality of the attachment relationship.
- Ways in which a mother relates to and responds to her own physical and bodily needs
- The child relate to his own body.
- Sense of bodily sense
EAT and dissociation
EAT and dissociation

Early attachment trauma
  ↓
Attachment insecurity
  ↓
Disorganized attachment
  ↓
Dissociation
EAT and dissociation

Dissociative phenomena

- Hyper- aroused
  - Flashbacks
  - Full immersion in the experience

- Hypo- aroused
  - Freeze
  - Detachment from the experience
  - Depersonalization/Derealisation
Anxiety

• “Anxiety” and “fear”
• Separate entities in the neuroscientific community.
• Fear is the physiological reaction to something in our external or internal environment.
• Anxiety on the other hand is the psychological and emotional reaction to the afore mentioned environmental stimulus.
• Anxiety is the conscious worry and sense of subconscious unease
The anatomy of anxiety

• Short cut or The high road
Short cut/ Emergency hot line

• Quickly getting the body to be alerted
• Sensory information
• Thalamus (processing hub for sensory cues)
• The amygdala (fear center)
• The locus coeruleus
• Responsible for a lot of the classic symptoms of anxiety
• Evolutionary method of survival
• The fight or flight
High road

• Conscious mind comes into gear
• Sensory information
• Thalamus (processing hub for sensory cues)
• Cortex
• Analyzes the raw data coming in
• Decision if a fear response is required
Anxiety and stress regulation
Anxiety and stress regulation

• Autonomic nervous system (ANS)
  – It regulate the autonomic, somatic aspects of the stress responses
  – Specific behavior and physiological responses

  – ANS: = system of balance
    • Sympathetic = “accelerator” = fight/flight
    • Parasympathetic = “brakes” = rest/digest
Anxiety and stress regulation

• Stephen Porges (2001)
  – The Polyvagal Theory:
    • ANS = hierarchical system that responds to environmental challenges
    • Three different subsystems
      – Parasympathetic ventral vagal (Social engagement system)
      – Sympathetic arousal (fight/flight)
      – Parasympathetic dorsal vagal (freeze responses)
Anxiety and stress regulation

Porges

Porges’ View of the ANS
The metaphor of safety

Environment: outside and inside the body

Nervous System

Safety

- Optimal arousal level
- Rest and digest
- Parasympathetic ventral vagal system
- “Social Engagement System”
- Eye contact, facial expression, vocalization

Danger

- Hyperarousal
- Increased Heart Rate
- Sympathetic System
- Mobilization – “fight-flight”
- Dissociated rage, panic

Life threat

- Hypoarousal
- Decreased Heart Rate
- Parasympathetic dorsal vagal system
- Immobilization—"freeze"
- Dissociated collapse

Source: Wheatley-Crosbie, adapted from Porges, 2006

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Attachment and neuroendocrine responding

- HPA-axis
Attachment and neuroendocrine responding

• Early life experiences program the HPA- axis
• Context of caregiving and the quality of this
• Features of the parent- child relationship can potentiate or inhibit the HPA stress response
• Gunnar (1994) separation from parents as - evolving loss of control over proximity
  - loss of the mother’s help in controlling/regulating the internal and external environment
• EAT activates the HPA -axis
Anxiety and Locus of control

- The extent to which an individual perceives personal control over events in one’s environment.
Early environment and control-related beliefs

- Parenting:
  - Secure base: Care versus indifference
    Care: consistently and contingently responsive
    \[\downarrow\]
    Internal locus of control
  - Safe haven: overprotection versus autonomy
    Autonomy: independence and encourage the development of new skills
    \[\downarrow\]
    Internal locus of control
Secure base: Attachment behavioral system

Bowbly (1982)

Attachment bond

Maintenance and regulation of safety

Caregiver as a secure base

Child’s sense of safety

Allying his fear
Safe haven: The exploratory system.

Safety

Urge to explore

Satisfy curiosity

Desire new experiences

Sense of effectiveness and competence

Joy/exhilaration/ exuberance/ pride
Disruptions in the attachment bond
Crucial role of fear

Fear

It activates attachment behavior and curtails exploration.

“Especially activated by the mother being or appearing to be inaccessible” (Bowlby, 1998)

Caregiver’s inaccessibility and non-responsiveness

Primary danger in the child’s emotional world

Anxiety becomes the driving force of the attachment system
Disruptions in the attachment bond

• Fear of abandonment is among the most anxiety-provoking situations in childhood

• Psychological/ emotional disruptions:
  – Inappropriate response
  – Stressful life episodes
  – Suicide threat
  – “Ghosts in the nursery”
  – Parent psychopathology
  – Relationship problems
Defensive exclusion (Bowlby 1980)

Strategy of the child

Excluding all aspects of his experience

The child sacrifice:

- fullness of his reality
- relationships
- affective inner life
Defensive exclusion (Bowlby 1980)

• Goal:
  – To deal with alarm and fear of relational loss
  – Maintain relational closeness
  – Compensate for the failure of the affect-facilitating environment
  – Deal with anxiety produced by the failure of the AT figure to help the child to feel safe
Anxiety : the mother of all psychopathology
Anxiety: the mother of all psychopathology

No feeling of safety
↓
Anxiety
↓
Reaction to the non-availability or nonresponsiveness
↓
Aloneliness
↓
Defense arise: reestablish safety
optimize the caregiving
↓
Exclude the affective experiences that threatens
Subtypes of anxiety

• Central defenses that serve to manage and contain anxiety/fear
  – Panic disorders with or without agoraphobia
  – Phobias, including specific phobias and social phobia
  – Social anxiety disorder
  – OCD: unwanted, intrusive, persistent thoughts or repetitive behaviors.
  – Stress disorders: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and acute stress disorder
  – Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD).
  – Anxiety disorder not otherwise specified
Consequences of EAT resulting in anxiety disorders

- Affectdysregulation ➔ Affectphobia
- IWM ➔ Social Phobia/ Fear of failure
- Cognition ➔ OCD
- Body ➔ Hypochondria/ Health anxiety
- Dissociation ➔ Anxiety disorders
EAT ➔ Affectdysregulation ➔ Affectphobia
EAT ➞ Affectdysregulation ➞ Affectphobia

• Affect regulation
  – awareness of the feeling
  – identifying what it is
  – the modulation of that affective experience

• When not achieved
  ↓
  the arousal generated by that affect remains unmodulated as well
  ↓
  Anxiety
EAT ➔ Affectdysregulation ➔ Affectphobia

- EAT = lack of contingent and responsive mirroring
- Affectdysregulation
- Emotions are feared
- Anxiety prompts an defensive reaction
- Defense push the feeling back down
- Safety is restored
EAT ➔ Affectdysregulation ➔ Affectphobia

• Triangle of conflict
EAT ➔ Affectdysregulation ➔ Affectphobia

• Triangle of conflict
EAT ➔ IWM ➔ Anxiety

MY ANXIETIES HAVE ANXIETIES.
EAT ➔ IWM ➔ Anxiety

• Dismissive style and anxiety = dealing but not feeling

  Sacrifices his affective life

  ↓

  Minimize the importance of the relationship

  ↓

  Fear of closeness

  Suppressing his emotional charge
EAT ➔ IWM ➔ Anxiety

- Preoccupied style and anxiety = “feeling but not dealing”

  Cannot let go relationnaly
  Cannot modulate own affect
  ➔ Relational maintenance
  ➔ Cost his independent functioning and exploration
  ➔ To much anxiety
  ➔ Separation anxiety
  ➔ Grief, anxiety and defensive exclusion of anger
EAT ➔ IWM ➔ Anxiety

- Fearful style and anxiety = “not feeling not dealing”
  - Intense anxiety
    - Rupture the organization of:
      - cognition
      - Behavior
    - Fragment the integrity of the self
      - Dissociation and splitting
    - Prevent more dis-integration
BLOWFISH WITH SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER

Don't puff up like an idiot.
Don't puff up like an idiot.
Don't puff up like an idiot.
EAT ➔ IWM ➔ Social Phobia

• EAT
• Lack of appropriate response when the child is
  – Frightened
  – Threatened
  – Seeks proximity
• World = threatening and unsafe
• Self = incompetent in different life domains
EAT ➔ IWM ➔ Social Phobia

• Attachment anxiety
  • Negative feelings about the self
    – Low self esteem
    – Worthlesness
  • Negative feelings about others
    – Others will lack acceptance and support
  – Give rise to perfectionism
    • Perfect social performance
      – To assure acceptance
      – To ensure loss will not happen
  • Hypervigilance to threat
EAT ➔ IWM ➔ Social Phobia

• IWM:
  – Feelings
  – Thoughts

• Projection of feelings and thoughts to another person

• Believe the other feels/ think that way about you

• Causes anxiety

• Withdrawal and avoidance
EAT ➔ Insecure attachment ➔ Fear of failure
EAT ➔ Insecure attachment ➔ Fear of failure

- Lack of secure base
- Ongoing concerns about attachment security
- The caregiver not being available, accepting or unconditionally responsive
- Not safe enough to explore
- Avoidance of danger
- Avoidance of failure
- Fear of failure
EAT ➔ Parent-child role-reversal ➔ Fear of failure

- EAT
- Lack of secure base
- Disorganized attachment
- Role reversal (the child behaves like a parent towards the caregiver)
  - Punitive behavior
  - Caregiving behavior
    - e.g., the child assists, guides, encourages, soothing, or is overly cheerful or solicitous
- Failure experiences
EAT and health anxiety

I looked up my symptoms on the internet and I'm worried that I might be dead!
EAT and health anxiety

• Caregiver not securely attached to his body
• Child is deprived of the safety, security, and containment
• Physical needs left unattended
• Resulting in an insecure body attachment
• Vulnerability to concerns about bodily functioning
• A way to seek help from those who were unresponsive (“attachment cry”)
Anxiety disorders and attachment cry
Anxiety disorders and attachment 
cry

- EAT
- Dissociation
- Traumatic memories
- EP (emotional parts)
- The action system of defense
- Panic system (Panksepp, 1998)
- A desperate call for closeness and 
  reconnection
EAT and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- OCD ➔ Intrusive thought
  ➔ appraised as dangerous or threatening
  ➔ need to be neutralized
  ➔ obsession

- Attachment fundamental in formation of IWM of self and others.

- May influence the development of obsessive beliefs
EAT and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

• IWM : 4 domains
  – Self-esteem:
    • I’m bad
    • I’m worthless
  – Competence
    • I’m a failure
    • I can not
  – Safety
    • I’m in danger
    • I will die
  – Responsibility
    • It is my fault
    • I am guilty
Dissociation and anxiety disorder
Dissociation and anxiety disorder

• Dissociation from
  – Emotion
    ➔ affectphobia
  – Body
    ➔ health anxiety

• Panic disorder
  ➔ depersonalization/ derealisation (hypo-aroused)

• Agorafobie
  ➔ avoidance (hyper-aroused)
Anxiety treatment = Trauma treatment

• Phase-oriented:
  – Stabilization phase:
    • FAFA
    • Improving daily life
    • Emotion focused therapy
    • Affectregulation
    • Mentalization
    • Restructuring IWM
    • The therapeutic alliance
    • CBT
    • Presence
  – Confrontation phase
  – Integration phase
Anxiety = 4 levels

• Physiology:
  – Heart rate/ fatigue/ stomach pain/ muscle tension/ numbing/ nausea

• Cognitive:
  – Self- critical/ fearful/ catastrophizing/ forgetfullness/ concentration

• Emotional
  – Fear/ worry/ anger

• Behavioral
  – Avoidance/ impulsivity/ trembling voice/ avoiding eye contact/ fight- flight- freeze
Wheel of awareness

Wheel of awareness (Dan Siegel)

Inner sensations (Body)

External sensations (Senses)

HUB = Awareness

RIM = Focus of Attention

Inner connections (Thoughts, Emotions, Memories, Images)

External connections (People, Things)
Upstairs / Downstairs brain

- **Downstairs brain:**
  - Brain stem and limbic region
  - Basic bodily functions, emotional reactivity, attachment, fight/flight/freeze

- **Upstairs brain:**
  - Cerebral cortex
  - Decision making, planning, self-understanding, control over emotions and body, empathy, morality, executive functioning
Vertical integration

- Cortical: Abstract Thought, Concrete Thought, Affiliation, "Attachment"
- Limbic: Sexual Behaviour, Emotional Reactivity, Motor Regulation, "Arousal"
- Midbrain: Appetite/Satiety, Sleep, Blood Pressure, Heart Rate, Body Temperature
- Brainstem:
Psychotherapy interventions

• Bottom up
  – Grounding
  – Breathing
  – Movement
  – Touch

• Top down
  – Interoception
  – Mindfulness
  – Mentalization
  – Engaging the upstairs brain

• Brain to brain
Stabilization
Therapy: Calming the physiology

• Recognition

**Physical Effects of Anxiety Disorders**

- Dizziness, decreased sex drive, irritability
- Increased muscle tension
- Rapid breathing & breathlessness
- Heart palpitations
- Increased blood pressure
- Nausea or diarrhoea
- Sweating
- Chest pain
Therapy: Calming the physiology

Early Warning Signs
- goosebumps
- hair on end
- butterflies in tummy
- wobbly knees
- stuck feet
- tears
- shaky body
- tight throat
- sweaty palms
- thumping heart
- feel like going to the toilet
FAFA: First aid for anxiety

• Grounding
• Breathing
• Here and now
• Dual awareness
• Safe place
Therapy: calming the physiology

- Grounding:
Therapy: calming the physiology

- Grounding: the tree exercise
Therapy: calming the physiology

• Grounding: the tree exercise
Therapy: calming the physiology

- Diafragmatic breathing
Therapy: calming the physiology

- Diafragmatic breathing
Feeling anxiety?
Do a "grounding" tool.

Look around you. Find 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste. This is called "grounding." It's helpful to do whenever you feel anxious.

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Dual awareness

Another Grounding Technique

Dual Awareness Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right now I am feeling ...</td>
<td><em>Current emotion</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And sensing in my body ...</td>
<td><em>3 sensations</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because I am remembering ...</td>
<td><em>Name only</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, I am here now ...</td>
<td><em>Place, date, time</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And I can see ...</td>
<td><em>3 things you can see around you</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And I can hear...</td>
<td><em>3 things you can hear around you</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And I can feel ...</td>
<td><em>3 things you can feel on your body</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So I know that ... name only...</td>
<td>is not happening anymore.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Safe place
Safe place script

• Image an Actual or Imaginary place with positive associations, where s/he feels safe, comfortable, peaceful or calm.
• Enhancement
  – What do you see/ hear/smell/taste/feel
• Say: “I know that I’m save”
• Say: “I feel safe”
• Which sensations do you experience in your body right now?
• Cue word
Safe place script
Therapy: calming the physiology
Long term

• Meditation
• Relaxation
• Yoga
• Safe touch
• Sports/ movement
Therapy: Affect regulation
Therapy: Affectregulation

- Identifying (awareness + naming)
- Regulating
- Expression
Affectregulation: Awareness of the feeling

WHAT’S GOING ON INSIDE ME AT THIS MOMENT?

Don’t analyze, just watch.  ~Eckhart Tolle
Affectregulation: Awareness of the feeling in the body
“Name it to tame it”

• Dan Siegel
  – Integrating the right and the left brain
  – Feeling in the right side of the brain
  – To make sense of what happens, use the left and link it to the right.
  – Name the inner experience
  – The left hemisphere names what’s going on to the right
  – The whole system calms down
Affectregulation: Awareness of the feeling in the body
Emotional flooding
Emotional blocking
Emotion barometer

- Freezing
- Bitter Cold
- Icy
- Frosty
- Cold
- Shivering
- Chilly
- Goosebumps
- Cool
- Balanced
- Cloudy
- Misting
- Drizzling
- Sprinkling
- Raining
- Heavily Raining
- Pouring
- Storming
- "Nor'easter"
- Flooding
Up- regulation

• Focus on humor
• Think about a positive experience
• Focus on a certain aspect of the situation
• Express positive feelings
• Share your feeling with others
• Build on positive experiences
• Increase the number of pleasant things
• Focus on goals
• Build a life worth living
• Changing our appraisals of a situation.
• Modulating our responses in the situation.
Down regulation

• Perceive bodily signals (interoceptive sensitivity)
• Use reappraisal
• Name the emotion
• Increase the opposite feeling
• Changing our bodies (rest)
Therapy: Cognition
Therapy: Cognition

- **EAT:**
  - Stuck in the actual mode
  - No differentiation between in- and outside world
  - Thoughts = reality (obsessive thoughts)

- Pretend play
- Here and now
- Presence
Therapy: Cognition

• Stop!

• Container exercise
Therapy: Cognition

- Distraction (do something!)

- Another thought
Restructuring the internal working model

Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind. “Pooh!” he whispered.

“Yes, Piglet?”

“Nothing,” said Piglet, taking Pooh’s paw. “I just wanted to be sure of you.”
Restructuring the internal working model

• Corrective relational experiences
• Affect regulation
• Dual awareness
• Dis-identification
• Resource development
• Inner child work
Restructuring the internal working model. Therapist as secure base

- (Bowlby, 1977). The therapist as an attachment figure
- assist the client in exploring past and present attachment relationships
- understanding how such relationships contribute to current internal working models and his or her difficulties.
- Through such exploration, client can revise internal working models and develop adaptive views of self and other.
Dis-identification
Dis-identification

- I have a body, but I am more than my body. I am the one who is aware: the self, the center. My body may be rested or tired, active or inactive, but I remain the same, the observer at the center of all my experience. I am aware of my body, but I am more than my body.

- I have emotions, but I am more than my emotions. Whether I feel excited or dull, I recognize that I am not changing. I have emotions, but I am more than my emotions.

- I have an intellect, but I am more than my intellect. Regardless of my thoughts and regardless of how my beliefs have changed over the years, I remain the one who is aware, the one who chooses--the one who directs my thinking process. I have an intellect, but I am more than that.

- I am a center of pure awareness. I am the one who chooses. I am the self.
Resource development

• Resource-focused interventions can be conceptualized as including a wide range of methods and foci encompassing
  – Physical well-being
  – Spiritual well-being (meditation, prayer…)
  – Creativity (creative arts, movement and music therapies…)
  – Ego resources (assertiveness training, mentalization, self-care, empowerment techniques…)
  – Self-capacities (self-regulation skills, such as relaxation training…)
Resource development

• ‘Resources’ are defined phenomenologically as anything that helps the client’s autonomic nervous system return to a regulated state.
  - the memory of someone close to them who has helped them
  - a physical item that might ground them in the present moment
  - other supportive elements that minimize distress.
Inner child work

• Gestalt therapy: “Empty chair”

• John Bradshaw (”Homecoming”)

• Inner child writing

• Imagine your inner child
Reconnecting with the body
Reconnecting with the body

- Safe touch
- Bodyscan
- Chacrawork
- Peter Levine
- Pat Ogden
Reconnecting with the body/ Peter Levine

• The goal of Self-Holding:
  – To calm the nervous system
  – Bring the Self back into the body
  – Develop more body awareness
  – Train one’s own nervous system to remember what normal is like.
Somatic experience/Peter Levine

- Self-holding
Somatic experience/ Peter Levine

- **Self hug**
- **Goal:** To feel the body as container. To develop our container.
Somatic experience/ Peter Levine

• The felt sense = awareness of sensations, energies and emotions

• **Goal:** Develop the ability to be in tune with and describe your felt sense
Sensorimotor Psychotherapy/ Pat Ogden

**Auto and Interactive Somatic Resources**

- **Somatic Resources for Interactive Regulation**
  - Proximity
  - Boundaries and Defense
  - Reaching out, holding on and letting go

- **Somatic Resources for Auto Regulation**
  - Grounding
  - Alignment
  - Containment
  - Centering

Ogden 2002
EMDR

Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing
EMDR

• Identify the event that started the fear, and subsequent events that contributed to the fear, and place these on a timeline
• The first, the worst, the last
• Future template
• Video check/mental video
• Homework assignments
Therapeutic relationship
Therapeutic relationship

- Vitalizing attunement
- Attunement = psychobiological synchrony
  - Right- brain to right- brain
  - Implicit self to implicit self
  - Sense of safety
Right brain to right brain

• becoming an adaptive attachment figure to the client
• create new experiences of the client’s self in relation to the therapist
• Being reliable, available, attuned, empathic, helpful in the therapeutic alliance
• Those repeated experiences over time will grow new neural patterns
• Will internalize a secure base
Right brain to right brain

- help clients learn to regulate their feelings
- feel safe to experience them
- learn to empathize with other people’s feelings
- be able to manage and shift their inner emotional states
- be able to respond to other people in appropriate connecting ways
- help clients be more comfortable with feelings/intimacy/connection
- help them deal with all feelings and all relationships in an open undefended way.
It's been a rough week, but I made it...How about you?