

HISTORICAL TRAUMA AMONG NATIVE AMERICANS

Presented by:
Dr. Tami De Coteau, PhD
Licensed Clinical Psychologist
DeCoteau Trauma-Informed Care & Practice, PLLC
www.decoteaupsychotherapy.com

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What Is Trauma?

- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder – variety of symptoms following exposure to a traumatic event. Clinical presentation varies among individuals and may include:
 - Fear-based re-experiencing, emotional, and behavior symptoms.
 - Anhedonia or dysphoric mood and negative thoughts.
 - Arousal
 - Dissociation
 - Combination of all of these
- Other Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders
 - Reactive Attachment Disorder – relationally inhibited and emotionally withdrawn
 - Disinhibited Social Engagement Disorder – socially disinhibited

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What is Trauma?

- Definition: A response to a negative event(s) that exceeds the individual's ability to cope
- 6 primary risk factors:
 1. Prenatal Stress
 2. Prenatal Substance Exposure (80% of foster children)
 3. Birth Trauma/Early Hospitalization
 4. Abuse (sexual, physical, emotional)
 5. Neglect
 6. Traumatic Incidents (violence, disaster, separations, multiple placements, etc.)

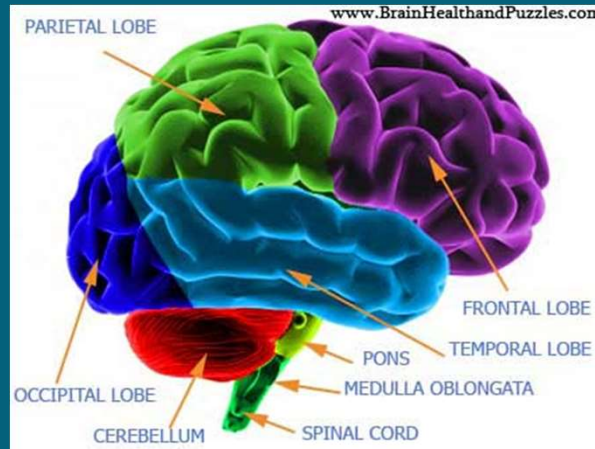
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What is Trauma?

- Big "T"
- Little "t"
- Complex Developmental
 - Relational
- Historical
- Transgenerational/Intergenerational

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The Human Brain



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Neuroplasticity

- Neuroplasticity has a clear age-dependent determinant
 - Although plasticity occurs over an individual's lifetime, different types of plasticity dominate during certain periods of one's life and are less prevalent during other periods.
 - In other words, there are "windows of opportunity" for full acquisition of skill to occur
- The environment plays a key role in influencing plasticity.
 - The brain is shaped by the characteristics of a person's environment and by the actions of that person

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Brain Development

- ▣ Bottom Up – from primitive to most complex
- ▣ Brain development is sequential. More complex systems are dependent on development of less complex systems.
- ▣ For normal brain development to occur there must be specific patterns of activity at specific times during development = *sensitive periods*
- ▣ Experiences (positive or negative) during sensitive periods organizes brain systems.
- ▣ Therefore, trauma during early childhood can effect all future functional capabilities!

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Activity Across Brain Regions				
Brain Region	Functions	Critical Period	Experiences needed	Functional Maturity
Cortex	Thinking, Planning, Reasoning, Creativity, & Sensory Integration	3 - 6 years	Complex conversations, social interactions, exploration, safe, fed, secure	Adult
Limbic	Emotion, Attachment Memory, & Sensory Integration	1 - 4 years	Complex movement, social experience, narrative	Puberty
Diencephalon	Sensory Motor & Sensory Processing :	6 months - 2 years	Complex rhythmic movement, simple narrative, affection	Childhood
Brain Stem	State Regulation & Sensory Processing	In utero – 9 months	Rhythmic, patterned input, engaged caregiving	Infancy

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Trauma Leads to Problems with Sensory Integration

- The more effective our brain is at processing sensory input, the more effective our behavioral output will be.
- 90% of children with trauma have sensory difficulties.

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Trauma Leads to Problems with Attachment

- Attachment is a system in the brain that that develops to ensure infant safety and survival
- The comfort, pleasure, and calm and balanced attuned interaction between the infant and caregiver creates a sense of safety within the infant
- Forms the basis for:
 - all future relationships
 - sense of self-worth
 - resilience to stress
 - ability to regulate own emotions
 - make sense of life
 - create meaningful connections with others

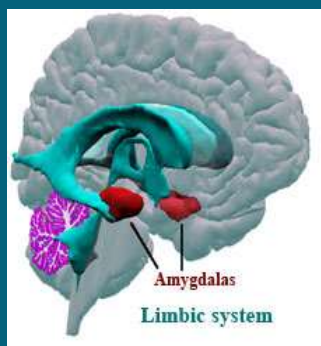
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Problems of Traumatized Youth

- Impulsivity
- Hyperactivity
- Distractibility & Inattention
- Dysphoria
- Emotional Numbing
- Social Avoidance
- Dissociation
- Sleep Problems
- School Failure
- Anger
- Eating Difficulties
- Relationship Difficulties
- Aggression/Violence
- Substance Abuse
- Disrespectfulness
- Refusal to attend school
- Refusal to follow instructions
- Regressed or delayed development
- Sensory Issues

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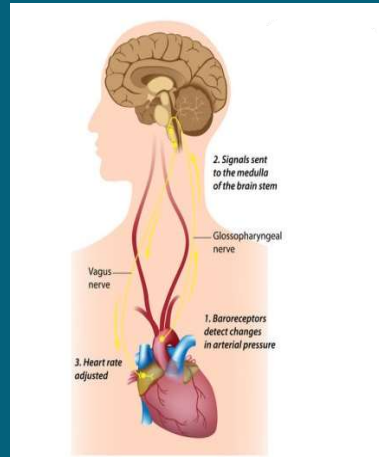
Amygdala



- Part of the limbic system
- Limbic system is active in-utero. Therefore infant is born with feelings!
- Primary role is processing of memory, decision-making and emotional reactions
- Important role in expression and modulation of aggression
- Survival based
- “Boss” of the limbic system

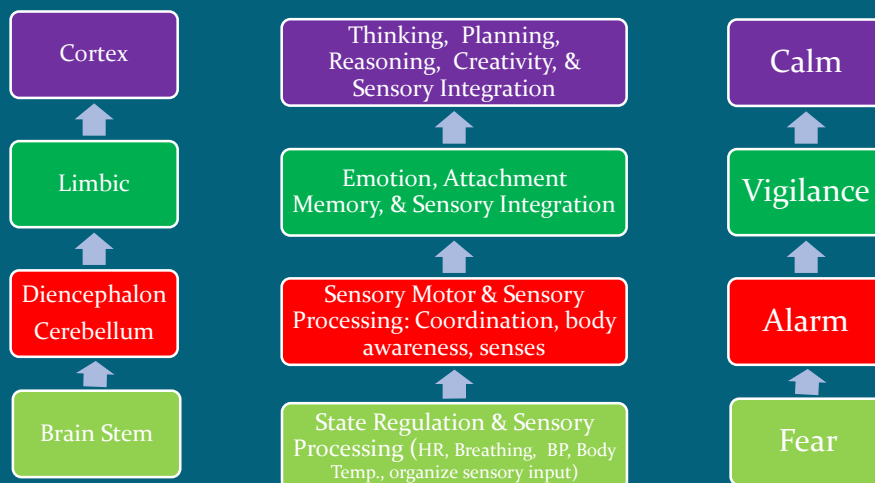
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Trauma & Visceral Feelings



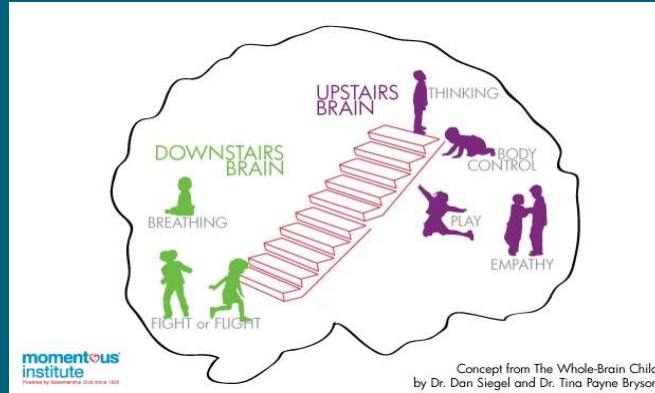
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Fight, Flight, or Freeze



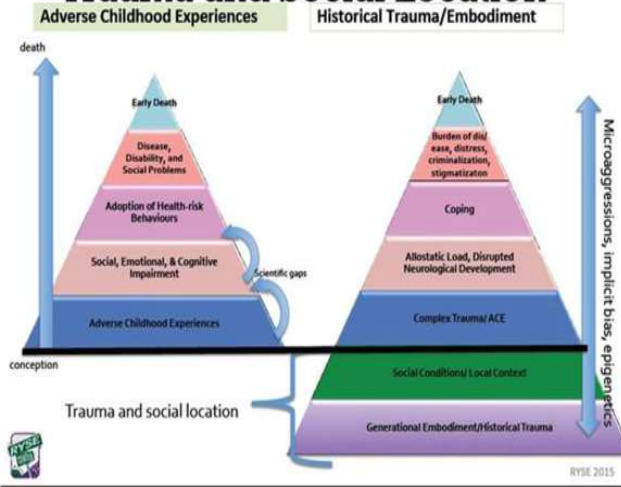
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Trauma & The Brain

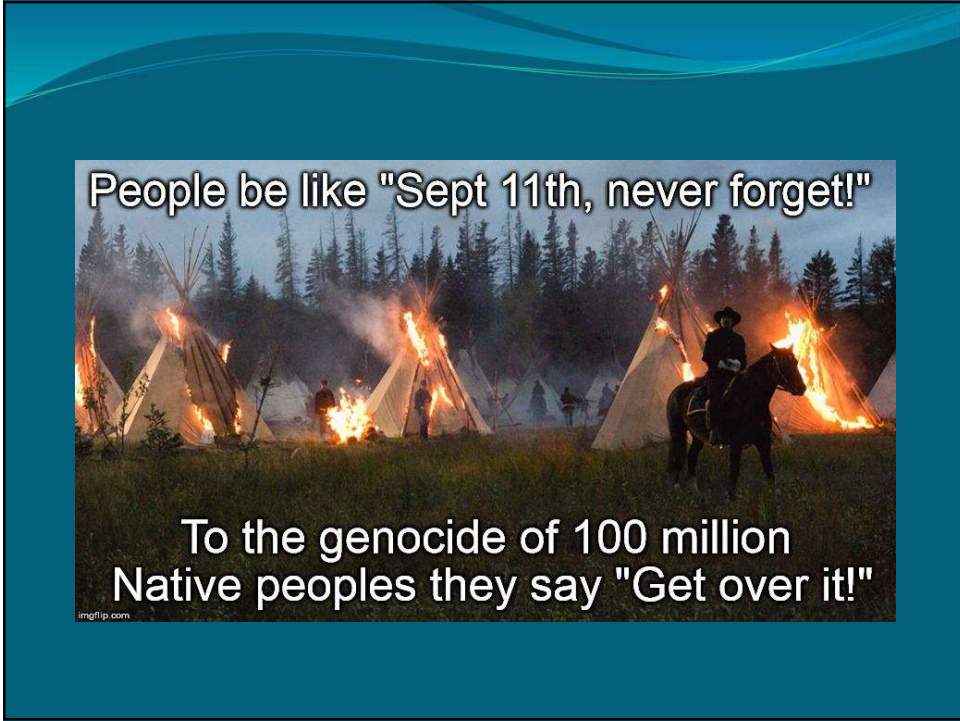


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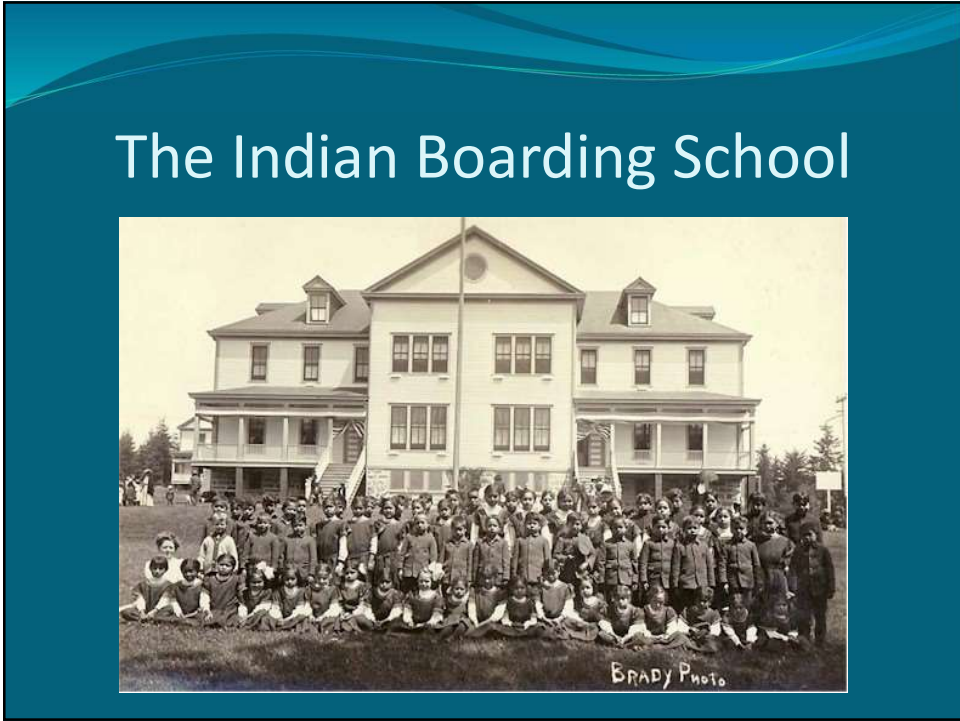
Trauma and Social Location



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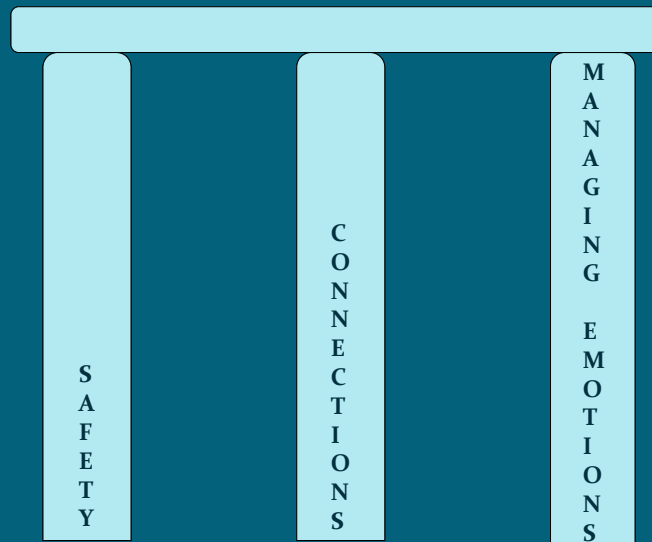
How Does Trauma Impact Relationships?

- Attachment problems arise from repeated experiences of failed emotional connection
 - Abuse; neglect; trauma; prolonged separation; multiple caregivers; maternal depression and/or substance addiction; lack of harmony between child and parent; inexperience mother with poor parenting skills
- Attachment problems are passed on from one generation to the next unless repair occurs



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3 Pillars of Trauma-Informed Care



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Healing Trauma

Support the Body

- Mindfulness
- Movement
- Rhythm
 - Food
 - Water
 - Sleep

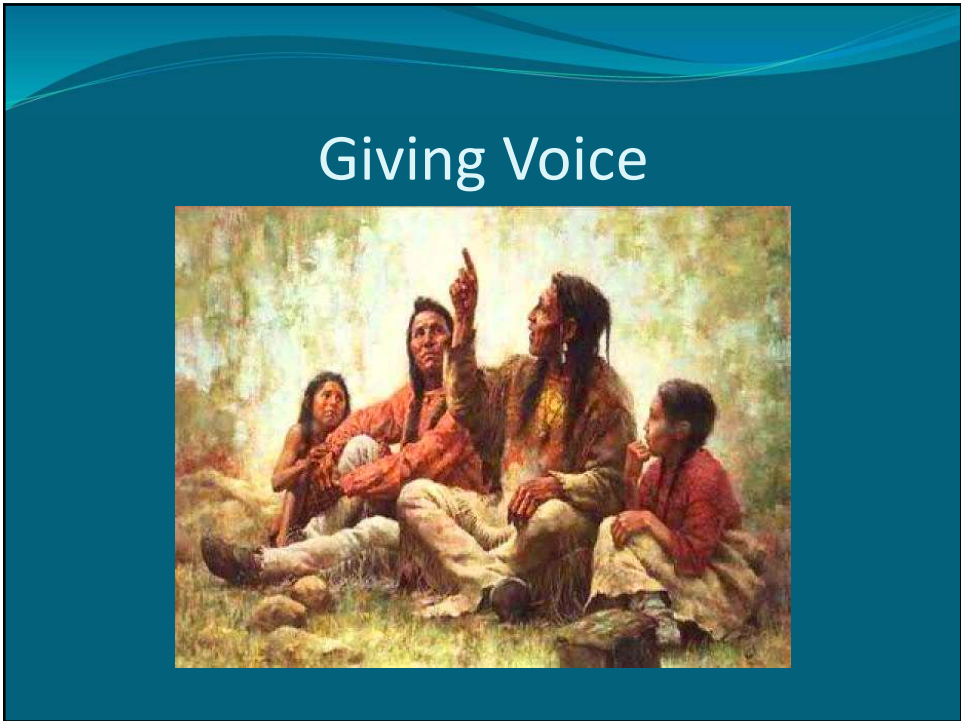
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