



Looking beyond behavior to see underlying needs

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Thinking of your child as
behaving badly
disposes you to think
of punishment.

Thinking of your child as
*struggling to handle
something difficult*
encourages you to help
them through their
distress

All children
and families
have
strengths and
needs – it is
our job to
discover and
name them.

A family-centered
agency culture
drives family-
centered care.

You don't really
know someone if
all you know is
the bad stuff.

Change is
supported by
building on
existing or
new-found
strengths.

Basic Values and Assumptions

What's
the
story?

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MAN KILLS DOG



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How does the story change?

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MAN KILLS DOG ATTACKING BABY



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CONTEXT MATTERS

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THE WORLD'S FAVORITE NEWSPAPER

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MAN KILLS DOG ATTACKING BABY, BABY STARTED IT



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Would
you...



Traditional System Centered Language	Individualized Person Centered Language
Acting out/uncontrollable/out of control	Adaptive patterns of behavior, do what works or what has worked in the past and became a habit, dysregulated and needs help to calm down
Has anger management problems	Threatened (perceived or real), sensitized survival (fight, flight) response, fearful, mistrusting, self-protective
Willfully naughty, makes bad choices, bad on purpose	Adaptive patterns of behavior to ensure safety and control, difficulty thinking things through, habit
Pushes buttons	Creates predictability using behavior, adverse worldview
Manipulative	Seeks to get needs met or communicate through behavior
In need of consequences to motivate change	Needs effective interventions to heal and learn new skills, can make good choices when calm
Doesn't follow through, uncooperative, resistant, noncompliant	Mistrusting/suspects a hidden agenda, rule conflict, stages of change, uncertain about the unknown, lacks skills or confidence or support, the cost is greater than the benefit of change
Confrontational, belligerent	Mistrusting, feels threatened, needs control to feel safe
Pathological, dysfunctional, inappropriate behavior	Adaptive/generalized stress response, misunderstood, functional behavior displayed outside the original context, feels good
Checked out, disinterested, doesn't care	Dissociative stress response (mental flee, re-experiencing, triggered, overwhelmed, pre-occupied, hypervigilant
Attention seeking, needy	Relationship seeking, needs attunement, opportunity for co-regulation or soothing

Language Matters

“He is aggressive.”



“He acts aggressively.”



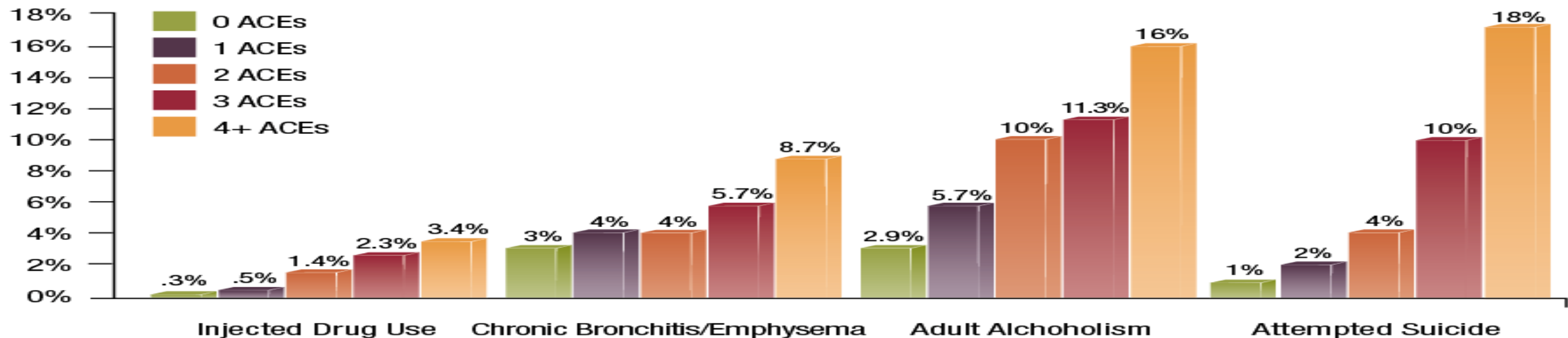
“He reacts with aggression
when he feels unsafe.”



**“He sometimes hits people when
they enter his personal space
and he feels unsafe.”**

Adverse Childhood Experiences

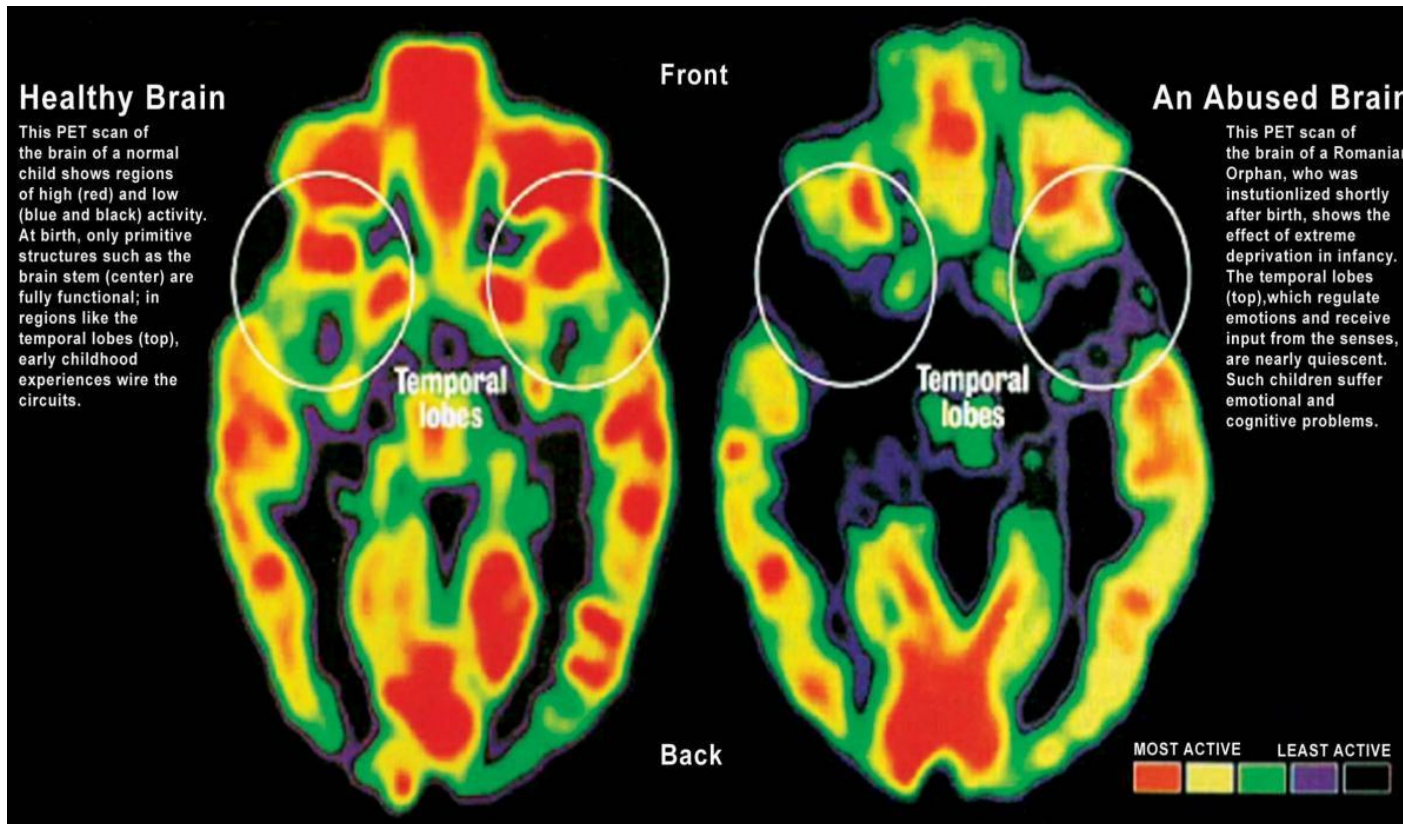
Abuse	Neglect	Household Dysfunction	Urban ACEs
Physical	Physical	Mental Illness	Witnessing Community Violence
Emotional	Emotional	Domestic Violence	Feeling unsafe in the neighborhood
Sexual		Incarcerated relative	Bullied
		Divorce	Racism/Discrimination
		Substance Abuse	Foster Care





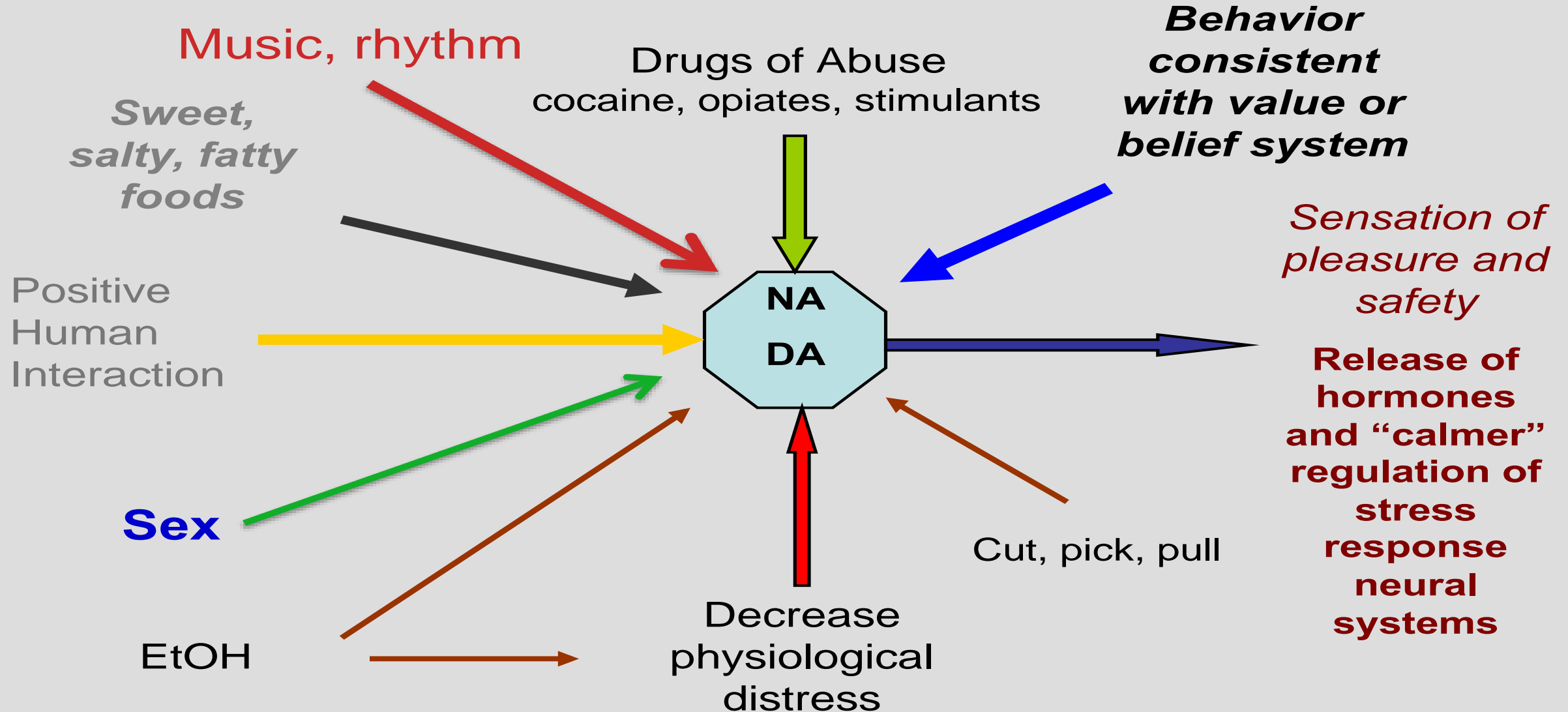
Pathways of purpose

Toxic stress changes the brain



- ✓ Limbic System
- ✓ Amygdala & Hippocampus
- ✓ Cerebellar Vermis
- ✓ Corpus Colosseum

Stimulation of “Reward” Neural Systems in the Human Brain: *Multiple Mediators*



Adaptive Response	Rest	Vigilance	Freeze	Flight	Fight
Hyperarousal Continuum	Rest	Vigilance	Resistance	Defiance	Aggression
Dissociative Continuum	Rest	Avoidance	Compliance	Dissociation	Fainting
Primary <i>secondary</i> Brain Areas	F-CORTEX <i>Cortex</i>	CORTEX <i>Limbic</i>	LIMBIC <i>Midbrain</i>	MIDBRAIN <i>Brainstem</i>	BRAINSTEM <i>Autonomic</i>
Cognition	Abstract	Concrete	Emotional	Reactive	Reflex
Mental State	CALM	AROUSAL	ALARM	FEAR	TERROR

Needs	Problems	Goals	Services
Something the person would express if they could	Labels the issue, but offers no solution	Something we can imagine for someone else	Defines the action
Express compelling reason from the person	Barriers to meeting the need	Addresses system priorities or mandates	Implemented to meet a court order or requirement
Defines why the action is important	What the action addresses	Framed as “needs to” or a command	The action
Unifying concept that cuts across all 3 levels of service	Addresses the behavior	Identifies the goals Justifies the service	Includes 3 levels: existing service, intervention and support (service provider, provider strategies, task shifting)
Changes infrequently and remains consistent until the need is met			Frequently changes based on new information and access
Lets us know what drives the behavior and provides information on how to help	Describes the behavior	Focuses on behavioral presentation	Reward or consequence for behavior



Why needs vs goals or services

Listening for needs:

WTF



Describe the behavior

- what does it sound like?
- what does it look like?
- when does it happen?
- what happens before it?
- when doesn't it happen?
- who does it/doesn't it happen with?



Establish the function of the behavior

- sensory seeking/avoiding (under/over stimulation)
- seeking regulation (has a soothing/calming effect)
- seeking relationship/connection or attention
- seeking control or power to feel safe
- escape or avoidance due to fear (failure, perceived threat, seeking safety or escaping triggers)
- adaptive pattern developed and reinforced in response to prior experiences but problematic outside the original context/setting
- pessimistic or untrusting worldview
- seeking to get needs met: control, acceptance/belonging, reward (feels good)
- skill deficit or developmental delay, doesn't have the skills or executive functioning capabilities required to do something else



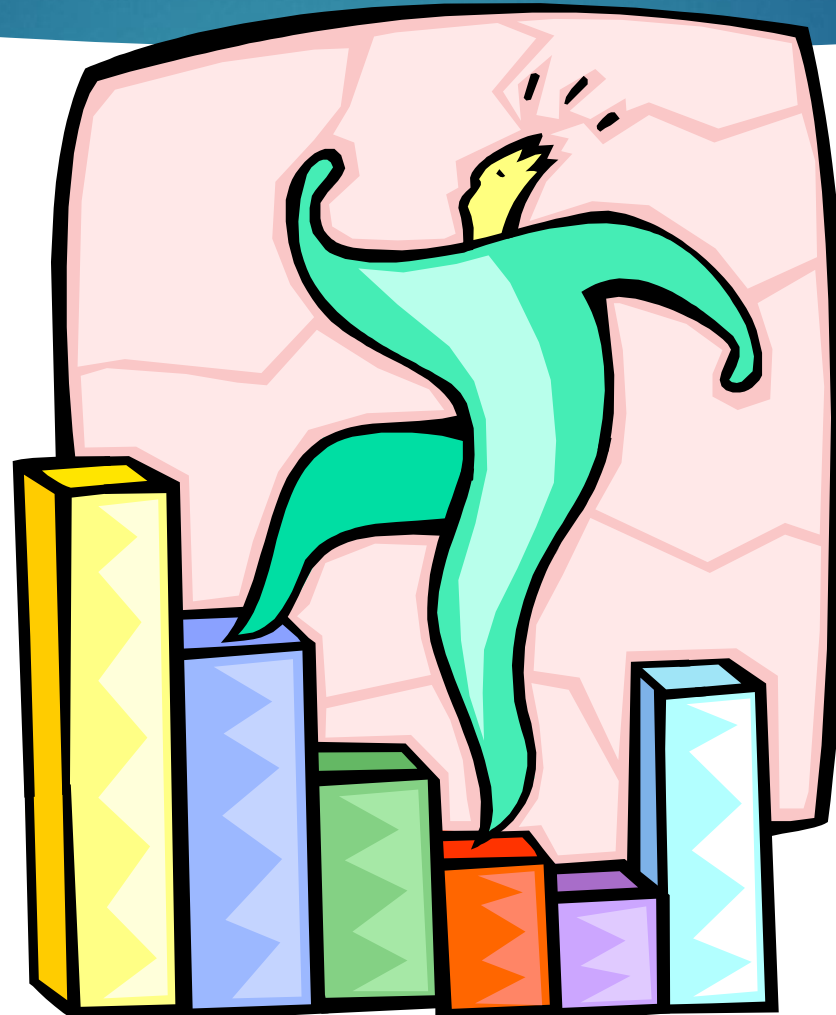
**Unmet
Need**

Adaptations vs Expectations



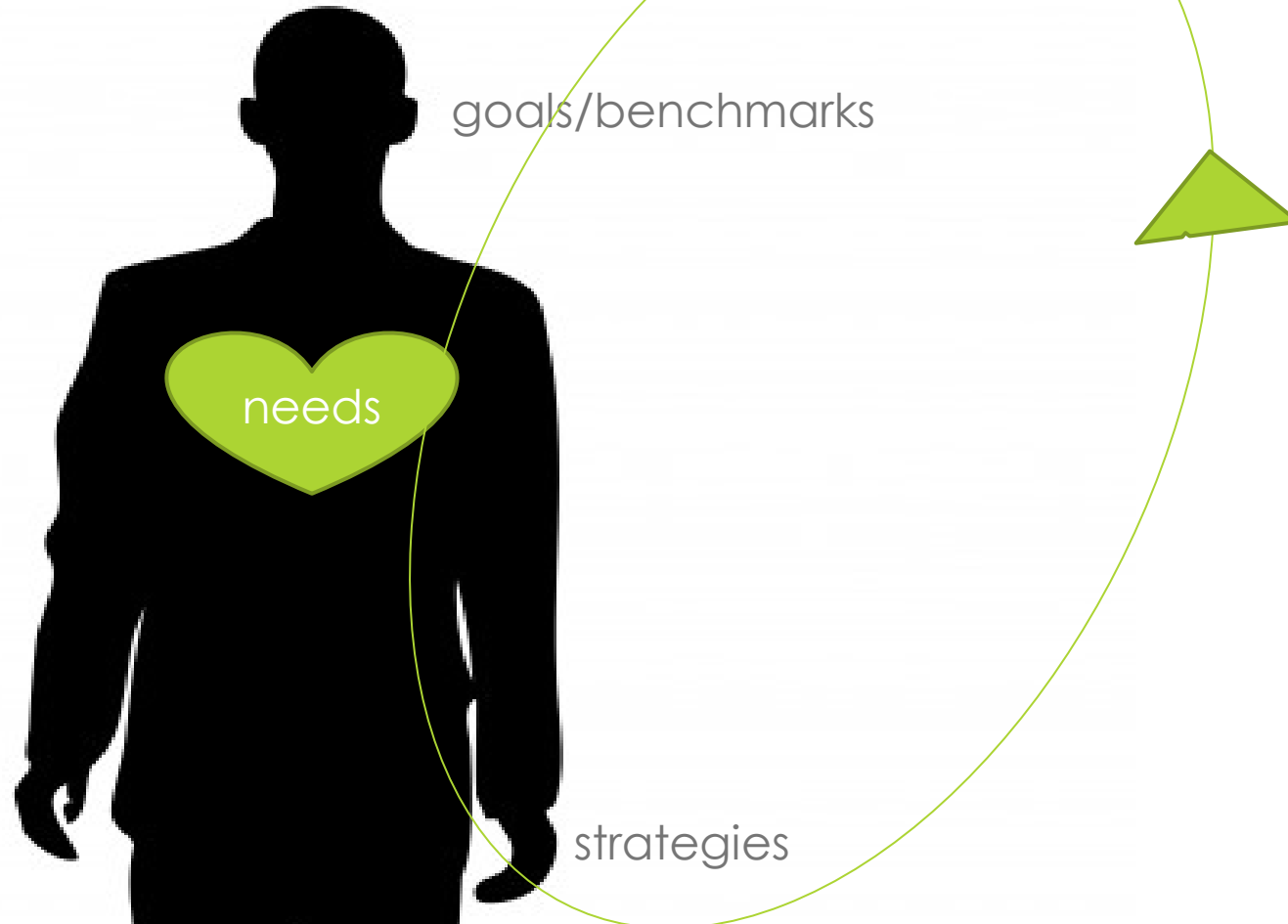
Turning stumbling blocks into steppingstones

Reframing is not:
Making excuses
Avoiding
responsibility
Painting a pretty
picture
Changing the story



Reframing is:
Providing
explanation
Response Ability
Acknowledging
multiple truths
Telling the whole
story

Information moves from our head to our heart through our hands



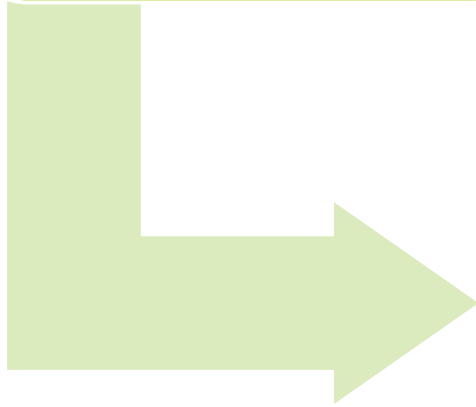


- “Why do I have to keep telling you to take out the garbage, just do it!”
- “What’s the point of going to school anyway, the teachers are mean and I don’t know how to do the work.”
- “Get off my back about it, who cares if I smoke weed with my friends, it’s not that serious.”

“Needs” Talk with Teams

Disguising a service as a need

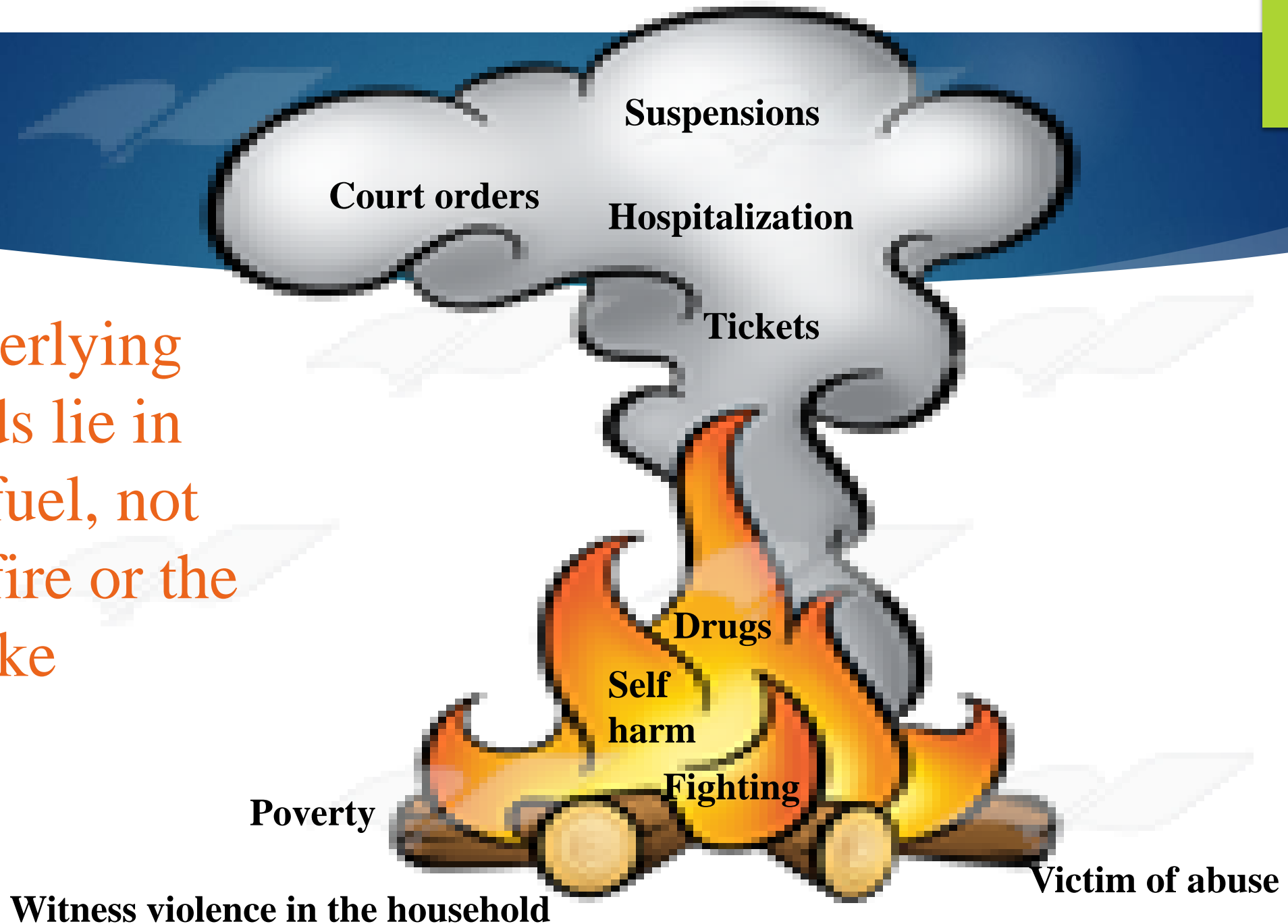
- He needs special education placement
- The family needs counseling
- He needs to take his meds regularly



Ask

- What do you hope will be accomplished through this?
- Why do you think this is important to (not for) the person?
- How will you know when it has been successful?

Underlying
needs lie in
the fuel, not
the fire or the
smoke



Destination: Vision

EXIT:
Needs



Mile 365:
Goals



We see what we are looking for



The image features a blue gradient background. In the center, two black silhouettes of people are shown from the waist up, facing each other and holding a horizontal rope. The person on the left has curly hair and is wearing a long, thin skirt or dress. The person on the right is wearing a short-sleeved shirt and pants. In the top right corner, there is a small, solid green rectangle. The text "Crisis Planning" is written in white, sans-serif font across the lower middle of the image.

Crisis Planning

Problem: J doesn't come home on time and Mom gets upset and yells resulting in J leaving again

Need: Mom needs to know that when J leaves the house he can still be trusted

Goal: J would be home on time 3 nights per week

Strategies:

Neighbor agreed to give J his old watch with an alarm and teach him how to set it.

Uncle will remind J before he leaves the house to set his watch 30 min. before curfew so he has time to get home on the bus.





For more
information

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