


This is Your Brain on
Trauma
Understanding Challenging and
Difficult Behaviors in the Classroom

with
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bci
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**Why are Andy and Billy,
two children who appear
to be so similar on the
surface, so drastically
different at every level?**

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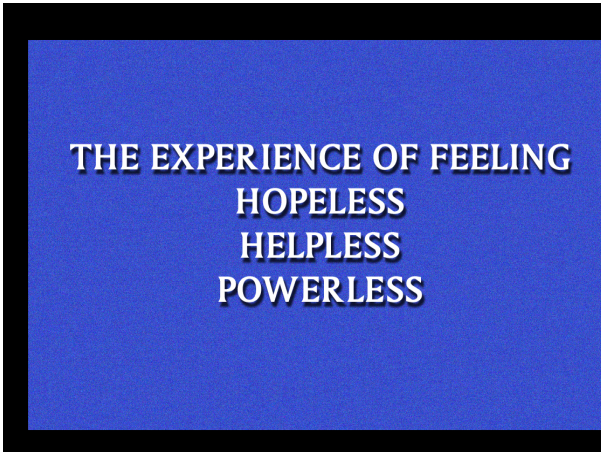


“Andy” **“Billy”**

TRAUMA

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Survey Says...

What do children need at school to make learning better?

Physiological
- Having snack time. - Being able to eat a snack when I need it. - More snacks
Safety
- Make kids stop bullying me. - I didn't like school because of the bullies! - I didn't like the bullies. They should stop being mean to me.
Relationship / Love
- If I had more friends. - Teachers who like you. - Being with my teacher. - Knowing that I am waking up to a happy family.
Esteem
- I liked my teachers alot better this year because they understood me. - I didn't like school because I did not do so well. - I liked school because I did well!

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Hierarchy of Learning

Learning	motivation, learning, creativity, problem solving, memory, curiosity
Esteem / Self-Love	self-esteem, self-respect, confidence, respect of others, respect by others, desire to achieve
Relationship / Love	friends, teachers, school administrators, counselors, school personnel, family
Safety	physical safety, emotional safety, freedom from bullies, freedom from harsh punishment
Physiological	breathing, freedom from hunger and thirst, rested, homeostasis, regulation

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Two Important Terms

Regulation:
The ability to experience and maintain stress within ones window of tolerance. Generally referred to as being calm, focused, or relaxed. This term is utilized by literally every scientific discipline.

Dysregulation:
The experience of stress outside of ones window of tolerance, generally referred to as being stressed out or in a state of distress. It is believed that affect dysregulation is a fundamental mechanism involved in all psychiatric disorders (Dr. Allan Shore - *Affect Dysregulation and Disorders of the Self*)

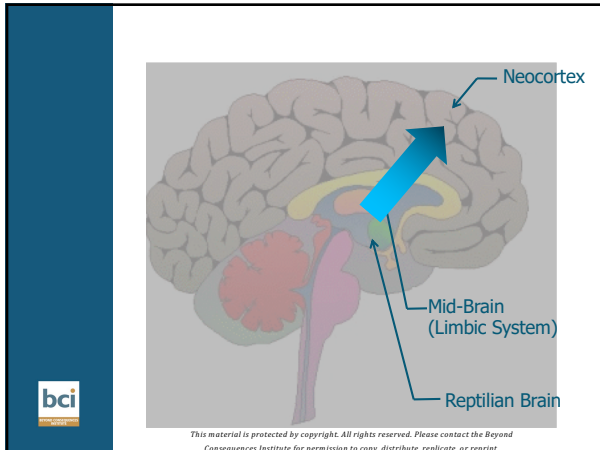
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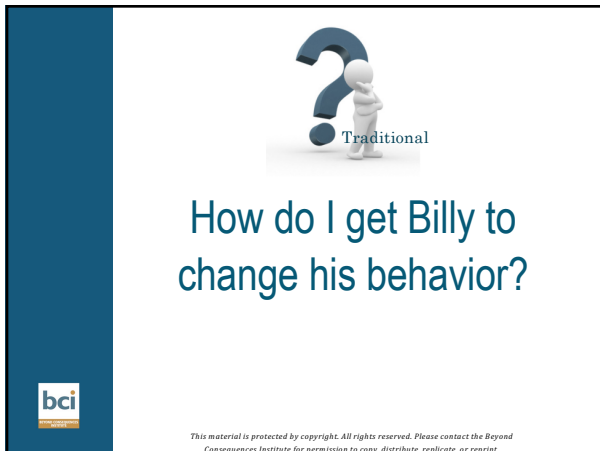
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive • Engaged • Focused • Calm 	
Dysregulation	Regulation	Dysregulation
Hyper-arousal		Hypo-arousal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to focus or sit still • Cannot adhere to rules • Aggressive • Resistant to directives • Argumentative • Anxious before tests • Impulsive 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defiant • Withdraws from peers • Tardy • Absent • Disassociates—shuts down • Avoids tasks • Numbs out— "I don't care."
Risky/impulsive behaviors		Paranoia

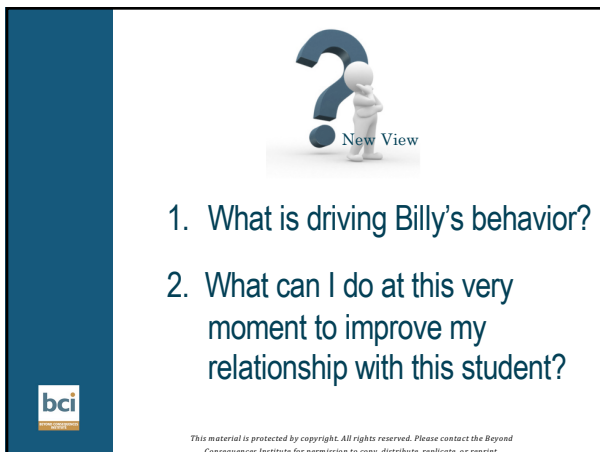
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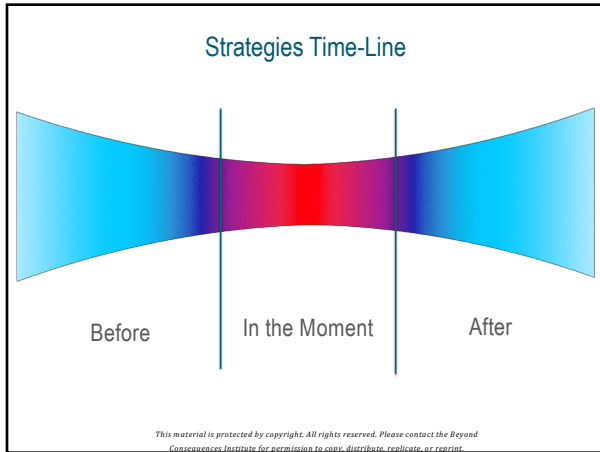
The diagram shows a sagittal cross-section of the human brain. A large blue arrow points to the **Neocortex** at the top. A smaller blue arrow points to the **Mid-Brain (Limbic System)** in the center. A third blue arrow points to the **Reptilian Brain** at the base of the brain.

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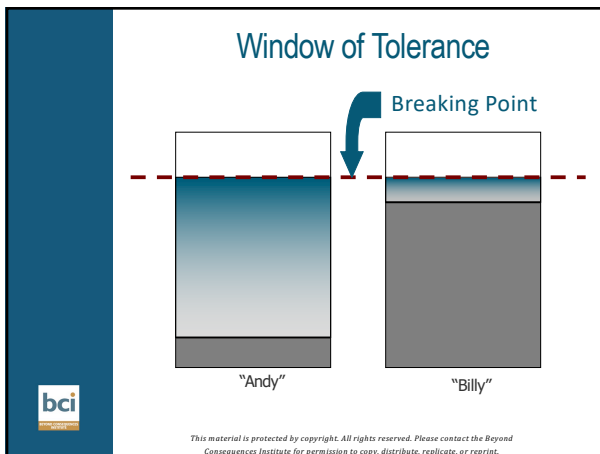


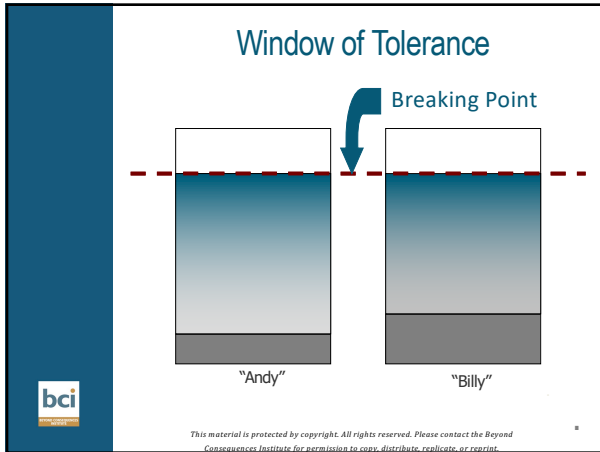


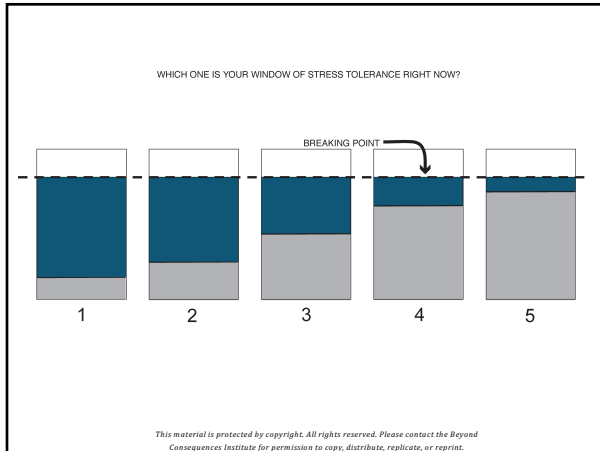


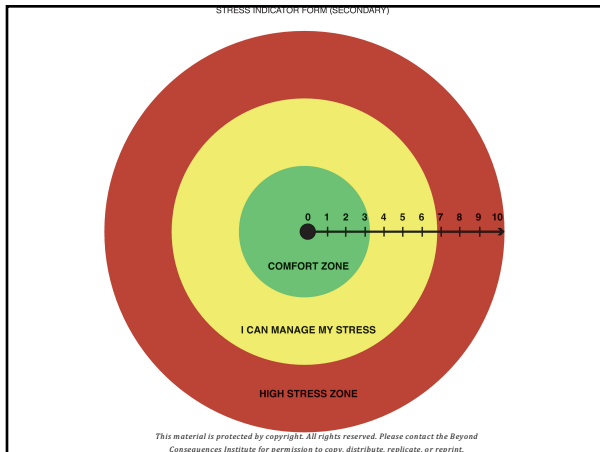
- Before: Pro-Active Strategies**
- Build and Develop Relationships
 - Regulating Activities to Calm the Brain and Increase the Window of Stress Tolerance
 - Help with Transitioning
 - Create a Regulating Environment
 - Movement
 - Address Developmental Deficits
 - Create a "Family" Culture
 - "Safety First"
 - **Make School Fun**
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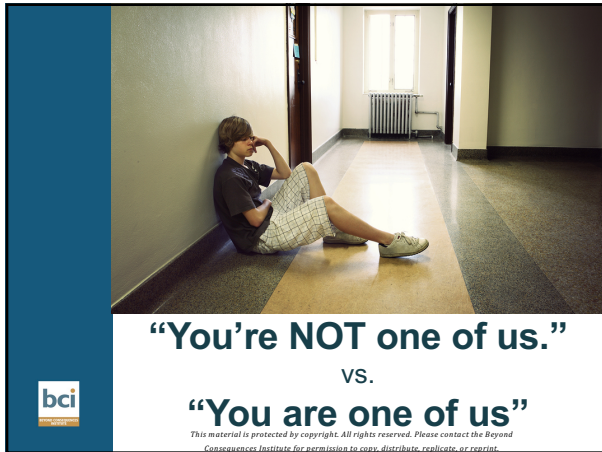


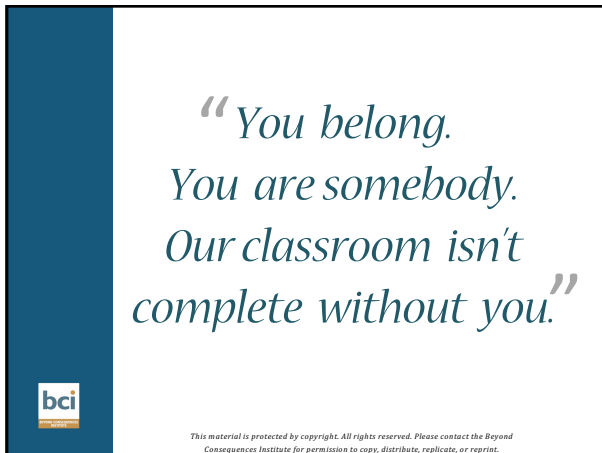


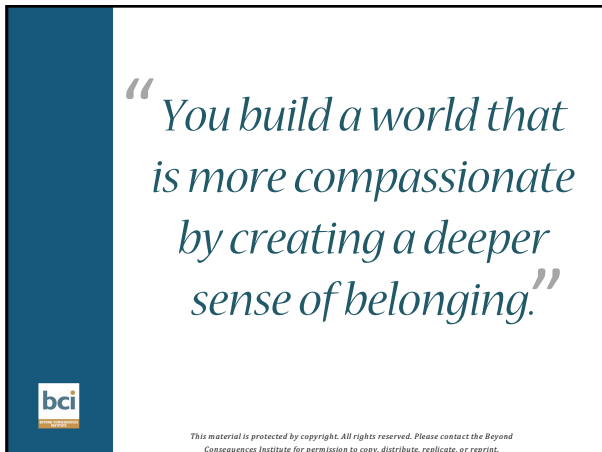












Mantras*

Teacher: "Who's safe?"
Student: "I am safe."

Teacher: "All of the time or some of the time?"
Student: "All the time!"

Teacher: "Who is in charge to keep you safe?"
Student: "You are in charge to keep me safe."

Teacher: "All of the time or some of the time?"
Student: "All the time!"

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Strategies Time Line

Before In the Moment After

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Beyond Consequences Sequence

1 2 3 4 5

1 **DYSREGULATED**

2 Listen
Connect
Empathize
Accept
Tolerate
Validate
Love

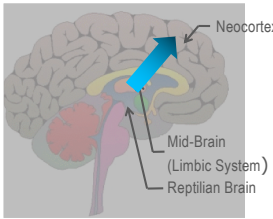
3 **REGULATED**

4 Rationalize
Problem Solve
Discipline
Consequences
Give Logic
Practice
Project Future
Situations

5 **BILLY INTEGRATES BACK INTO THE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

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Bottom-Up Control



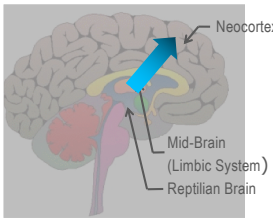
Neocortex
Mid-Brain (Limbic System)
Reptilian Brain

Ineffective:

1. Excessive questioning
2. Lecturing
3. Giving logic
4. Asking to make a better choice
5. Comparing
6. Promising a prize/reward
7. Standing over the student
8. Encouraging
9. Reacting
10. Raising your voice
11. Ignoring
12. Threatening
13. Adding points to a point chart
14. Time-out
15. Minimizing
16. Giving rational thinking
17. Expressing anger

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Bottom-Up Control



Neocortex
Mid-Brain (Limbic System)
Reptilian Brain

Effective:

1. Connecting
2. Slowing down
3. Understand
4. Breathing
5. Time-in
6. Gentle touch (sometimes)
7. Regulating
8. Sitting
9. Quieting
10. Joining
11. Maximizing
12. Expressing Passion
13. Relating
14. Supporting
15. Exploring
16. Empathy
17. Validating
18. Accepting
19. Engaging
20. Apologizing

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“ Discipline has to come from a place of “me with you” instead of “me against you.” ”


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CHEAT SHEET

Sample Relationship-Based Responses to Use When Billy Becomes Dysregulated and Stressed

- "Looks like you're having a hard day."
- "Help me to understand what's going on."
- "How can I help?"
- "I know it is hard, but the more you keep it inside of you, the harder it gets."
- "I need to know how bad it was for you."
- "You're not in trouble."
- "How did that make you feel?"
- "Stay with it, Billy. You're not alone in it."
- "Open up to the pain. You're safe now, so let it out."
- "I had no idea this was so hard for you!"
- "Breathe. Take a deep breath." *(Take a deep breath to model it for your child).*
- "I've gotta have it...I need to have your feelings."
- "You don't have to carry it all."
- "That's too much pain to have all by yourself. Can you share it with me?"
- "I want to understand you better and if I know how you feel, I'll be able to do what you need me to do."
- "I believe in you, no matter how you feel."
- "Give yourself permission to have a voice. I'm listening."
- "I can handle whatever you went through/whatever you're feeling."
- *Use your own story to connect: "I remember when I was a little girl/boy and a friend of mine was really mean to me..."*


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After: Teaching the Lesson

- Review what happened
- Spend time rebuilding the relationship
- Re-regulate
- Teach coping skills
- Teach social skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, emotional intelligence
- Address developmental deficits
- Reinforce the "Family" culture
- Adjust your expectations, if needed
- **Build self-esteem, self-awareness**

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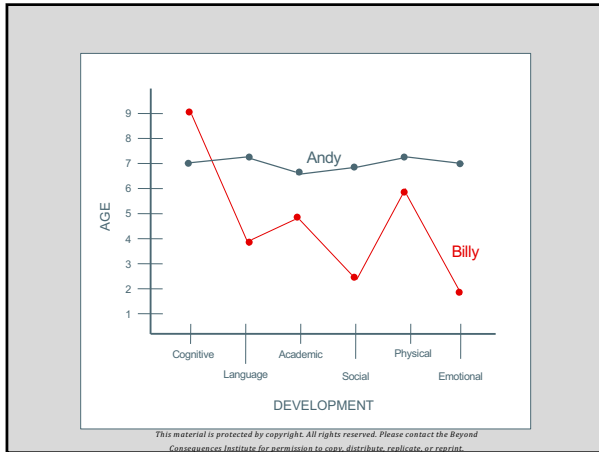


Developmental Deficits

- **Cognitive development**
 - Concrete and black and white thinking
 - "More gifted than the gifted children"
- **Language development**
 - Language deficits impede understanding
 - Acting out takes place of expression
- **Academic development**
 - Trauma impacts attention, concentration, information processing, and organization
- **Social development**
 - Threatened by children their own age
 - Have to learn how to interact appropriately (been in survival)
- **Physical development**
 - "Failure to Thrive"
- **Emotional development**
 - Typically VERY immature

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Autism & PDD Picture Stories & Language Activities Social Skills at Home
Ages: 3-8 Grades: PreK-3

This program uses a proven formula for making social skills "stick"—familiar characters, predictable routines, and memorable, concrete behaviors. Loveable Matt and Molly help things go smoother at home by showing youngsters the right and wrong ways to act.

Outcomes

- Improves social skills at home
- Process verbal information through matching sentences and pictures
- Answer yes/no and wh- questions
- Sequence and predict events in a story

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Social Language Development Scenes Adolescent for Group Therapy
Ages: 12-18 Grades: 7-Adult **Bestseller**

This flexible format—an attention-grabbing illustration on the front and a variety of stimuli on the back—targets a wide range of social skills perfect for groups or one-on-one therapy.

Outcomes

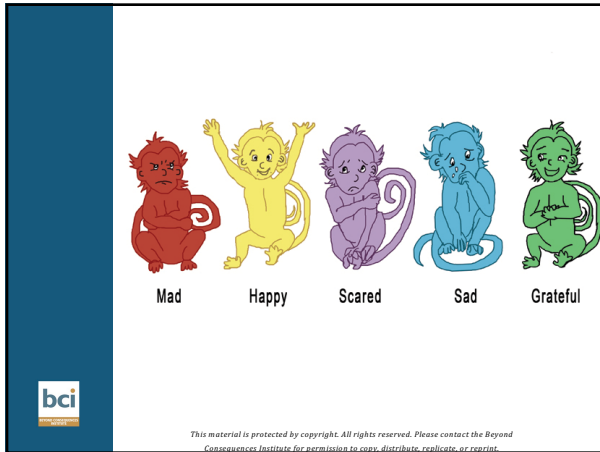
- Make and keep friends
- Consider other people's perspectives and respond appropriately
- Accurately interpret idioms and sarcasm
- Identify and solve problems

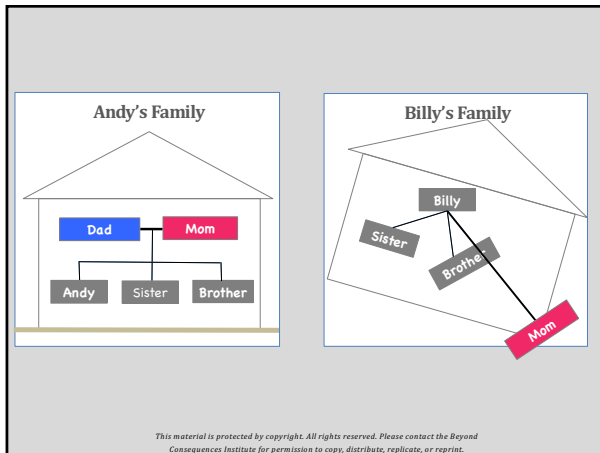
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Sample Pages

The emphasis is on using real-life, higher-demand social language skills.



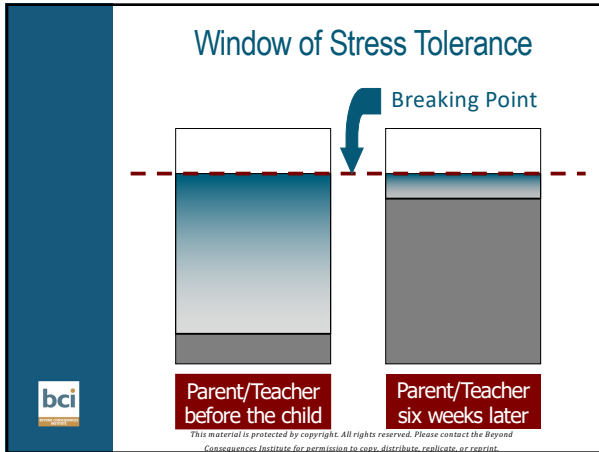


A Child's Belief System Following Trauma:

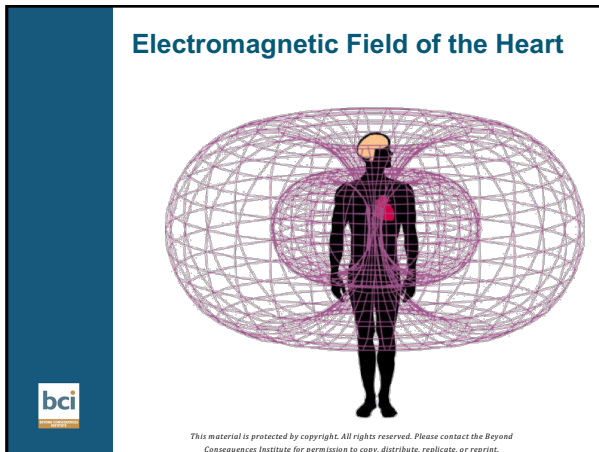
"I'm not lovable."
 "I don't deserve to be on this planet."
 "Adults are unsafe.
 Never trust them."
 "I'm on my own."
 "I'm not good enough."

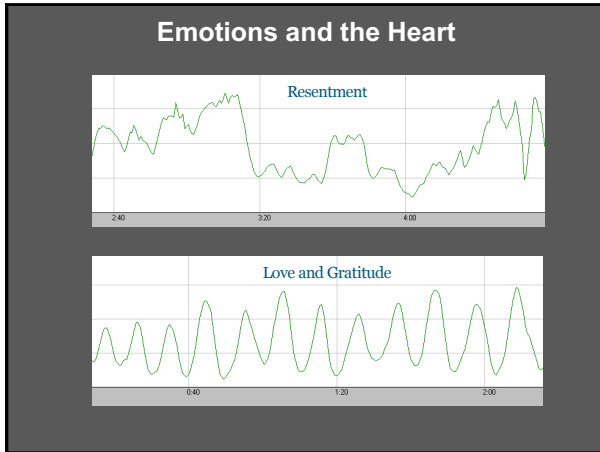
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- ### How Does This Make You Feel?
1. Worthless
 2. Unsuccessful
 3. Bad
 4. Invalidated
 5. Frustrated
 6. Up Against a Wall
 7. Trapped
 8. Worn-out
 9. Disappointed
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Survey Says...

Did you like school this past year? Why or why not?

"Yes, because I had the best teacher ever and she helped my class become a family."

(5th Grader)

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Survey Says...

Did you like school this past year? Why or why not?

"We had a class pet named Bunny Foo Foo I liked."

(5th Grader)

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Survey Says...

"If I had my baby sister at school, it would be better."

(3rd Grader)

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Survey Says...

"Being with my teacher makes school better."

(1st Grader)

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