DDP CANADA:
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SOCIAL BUFFERING AND DELIGHTING: PROMOTING THE CHEMISTRY OF COMFORT AND JOY IN CHILDREN WITH BLOCKED TRUST

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Story of 2 girls

Attachment-focused treatment and compassion-driven care

Interstate travel: from state of defensive disengagement to state of open engagement

Coregulating the child’s polyvagal journey: from deep states of self defense upward to social engagement

Integrated self:
- Sometimes I get scared
- Sometimes I get sad
- Sometimes I get silly
- Sometimes I get mad

Active self defense: fight or flee

Safe to engage

Passive defense: freeze and dissociate

Fragmented self:
- Frozen part
- Angry part
- Social part
- Good me
- Bad me
- “Feeling dead”
COMFORT AND JOY: SEPARATE DYADIC SYSTEMS FOR BUILDING LOVING BONDS

CAN I TRUST YOU TO COMFORT ME?

DOUBLE STRENGTH PARENT-CHILD BONDS

CAN I TRUST YOU TO ENJOY MY PRESENCE AND TAKE DELIGHT IN BEING WITH ME?

COMFORT PLUS JOY

MY FIRST STORY: I’M WORTHY OF CARE AND A SOURCE OF DELIGHT
COMFORTING PRESENCE: SOCIAL BUFFERING

EXPERIENCING PREDICTABLE RELIEF FROM DISTRESS AND THE PAIN OF SEPARATION

MY FIRST STORY: I’M WORTHY OF CARE AND CAN GET HELP WHEN I NEED IT

THE SCIENCE OF SOCIAL BUFFERING: NIM TOTTENHAM AND JAMES COAN PLUS SOCIAL EPIGENETICS

YOUR PRESENCE CALMS MY AMYGDALA BY TRIGGERING RELEASE OF OXYTOCIN FROM MY HYPOTHALAMUS AND HELPS ME MAKE A LOT OF OXYTOCIN RECEPTORS FOR HELPING ME HAVE SAFE LOVING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FUTURE
Joy (Delighting) the Lucky Child’s First Story of Self

Parent-Child Mutual Reward/Pleasure System: Dopamine, opioids, oxytocin, etc

“Delighting”

You are my sunshine

I am sunshine: that’s my story and I’m stickin’ to it

Endorphins, oxytocin, dopamine,
VIRTUOUS CYCLE OF COMFORT AND JOY IN PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP: SHIFTING CHEMISTRY

DROP IN OXYTOCIN AND ENDORPHINS: COMFORT SEEKING

SOCIAL BUFFERING: TRIGGERING RELEASE OF OXYTOCIN TO THE CHILD’S AMYGDALA..... “AHHHH”

PLAY: DELIGHTING TRIGGERING ENDORPHIN RELEASE AND DOPAMINE

REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT…
No comfort, no joy: the neurobiology of bearing the unbearable

PAIN SUPPRESSION: NO NEED FOR COMFORT

JOY SUPPRESSION: DYSPHORIC MOOD, ANHEDONIA, NEGATIVISM

DYNORPHIN: THE "OTHER" OPIOID

BEHAVIORAL SET FOR SURVIVING WITHOUT COMFORT AND JOY: PROVISIONING, CONFABULATION, HOARDING, SELF SOOTHING, BEFRIENDING STRANGERS, ETC
NO COMFORT, NO JOY: BLOCKING THE PAIN OF REJECTION TO ENDURE POOR CARE

DYNORPHIN

DORSAL ANTERIOR CINGULATE: “SUFFERING”

INSULA: HOW MUCH DOES IT HURT?

PAIN OF REJECTION AND ABUSE

OXYTOCIN  ENDORPHIN  SEROTONIN  DOPAMINE

PAIN AND SUFFERING SYSTEM

SURVIVING WITHOUT COMFORT AND JOY: DYSPHORIA, ANHEDONIA, DISSOCIATION, DEPERSONALIZATION, DEREALIZATION
CAN’T GET NO SATISFACTION: DYNORPHIN SUPPRESSES SEROTONIN

EARLY CHILDHOOD STRESS $\rightarrow$ DYNORPHIN $\rightarrow$ CHRONIC DYSPHORIA ANHEDONIA

Endorphin: Chemistry Of joy/euphoria
Dopamine: Chemistry Of reward and mobility
Oxytocin: Chemistry of Trust/bonding
Serotonin: Chemistry Of SATISFACTION
 BLOCKED TRUST: FROM CHEMISTRY OF PAIN SUPPRESSION TO “ASOCIAL” BEHAVIOR

EARLY LIFE EXPERIENCES OF NEGLECT AND ABUSE

DYNORPHIN: SUPPRESSION OF PAIN, SENSATIONS, FEELINGS

BLOCKED FEELINGS OF PAIN, REJECTION, AND SADNESS

ATTACHMENT-FOCUSED TX: GETTING BENEATH THE “BAD” BEHAVIOR

- EMPATHY DEFICIT
- DIFFERENT REALITY AND “TRUTH”: SWEAT-FREE “LYING” AND CONFABULATION
- SELF RELIANCE: PROVISIONING/“STEALING” OF NON-ESSENTIALS
- CHRONIC MISTRUST AND HYPERVIGILANCE AROUND OTHERS
- NEED TO CONTROL OTHERS
BLOCKED SOCIAL PAIN: SURVIVING THE LACK OF GOOD CONNECTIONS BY SUPPRESSING THE PAIN OF DISCONNECTION

When SHE can’t show it, you have to know it. She needs you but SHE’S AFRAID TO FEEL SAD! SO HELP HER FEEL SAFE ENOUGH TO BE SAD AND TO BE JOYFUL.

OH, AND REMOVE THAT DYNORPHIN BLOCK, PLEASE.
Decision-making in safe and unsafe environments: the “SPEED VS ACCURACY TRADEOFF (SAT)”

**SAFE**

GRANDPA PRETENDING TO BE MAD: 4-500 MSEC

EVIDENCE ACCUMULATION: SLOWER, MORE ACCURATE: “MINDED ACTION”

PLAYFULNESS REAWAKENS THE BLOCKED POTENTIAL TO SEE AND HEAR GOOD INTENTIONS IN THE FACE AND VOICE OF OTHERS

**UNSAFE**

MEAN EYES: DANGER

ULTRA FAST “MINDLESS” DEFENSIVE ACTION: 120 MILLISECONDS
DEFENSIVE ACTION WITH NO CORTICAL PROCESSING OF SENSORY INFORMATION PLUS NUMBING OF FEELINGS AND PAIN SUPPRESSION: DISSOCIATION PLUS HYPERVIGILANCE

SC
Superior colliculus

PAG
Periaqueductal gray

dynorphin

Vision
Hearing
touch

Attack
Flee
freeze
Compassionate State of Mind towards the Defensive Child

NEW STORY: LOVABLE ME

SOCIAL BUFFERING: DISARMING EFFECTS OF AMYGDALA WHISPERING

EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN RE-VALUING OF “SELF”: BAD ME TO VALUED ME

STORY TELLING

PACE
PARENTAL STROOP TEST: WHEN COMPASSION AND SELF DEFENSE COMPETE

LONG TERM GOAL: STAY OPEN AND COMPASSIONATE

IMMEDIATE URGE: DEFEND MYSELF