



Connection Counts

With Hannah Simnett

*Who Am I
& what we do ...*



Trauma Informed & Responsive



Attachment-Focused



**Supporting children
to feel safe, seen,
soothed & secure**



Question ...



**WHAT DO WE THINK ARE THE
TOP REASONS WHY YOUNG
PEOPLE ARE NOT COMING TO
SCHOOL?**



These are the top 6 reasons ...

Poor Grades



Illness



Mental Health



Bullying



Being a young carer



Poverty

Statistic ...

**IN 2022, 67.5% OF
TEACHERS TOOK SICKNESS
ABSENCE WITH AN AVERAGE
OF 9.5 DAYS FOR EACH
TEACHER.**

... Similarly off with stress or trauma!

TRAUMA

What is Trauma?



physical wound vs invisible wound ...

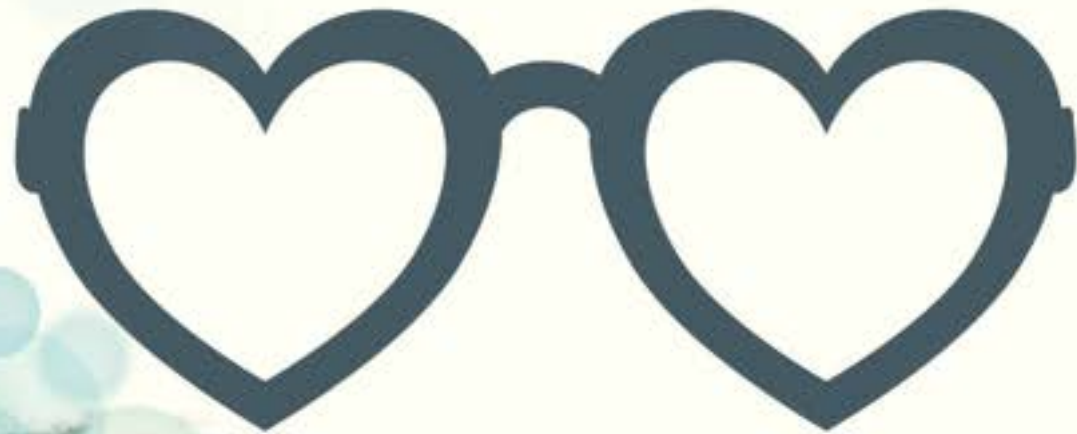
TRAUMA IS A WOUND ...

**HOW CAN WE SUPPORT THAT
WOUND?**



What is your lens?

Our background, trauma, triggers, beliefs & values, our parents, culture.



Based on experiences and our internal working model we see the world differently to each other. Two people may interpret behaviour in different ways. Our experiences build our lenses, our view of the world.



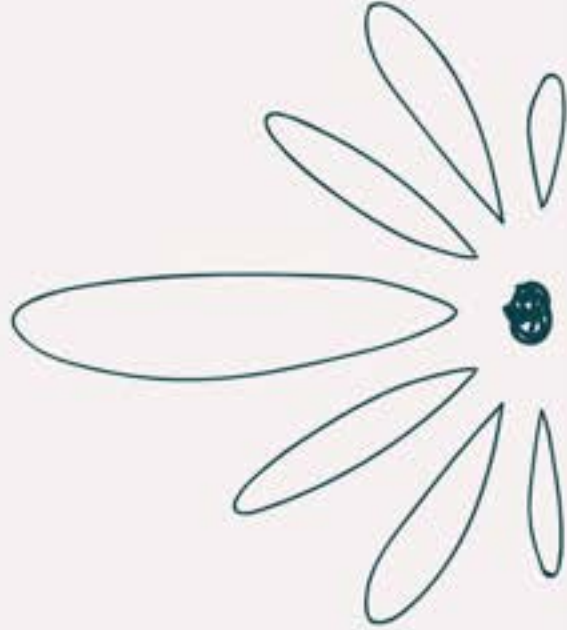
4S'S OF ATTACHMENT

Imagine that these 4 little love tanks are in every child's heart. Each tank represents one of the 4S's. If there is a deficit in any of those tanks, then children will go in search of anything that could fill up those tanks.

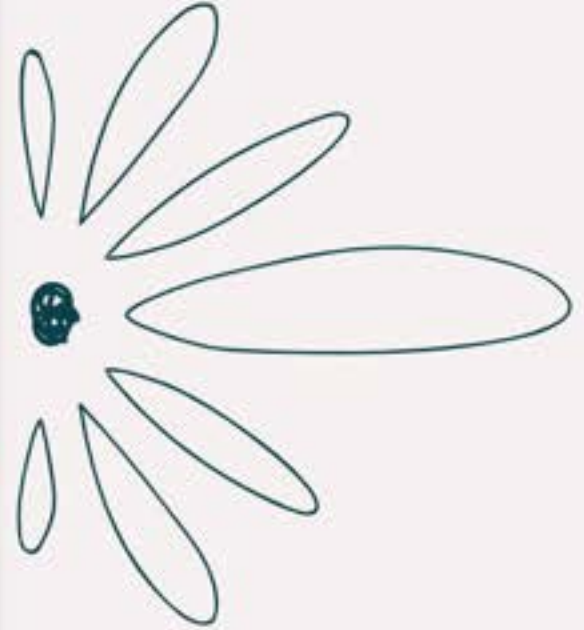
Safe, seen, soothed & secure
(Siegel & Bryson)

Discussion Point ...

SAFE, SEEN, SOOTHED & SECURE

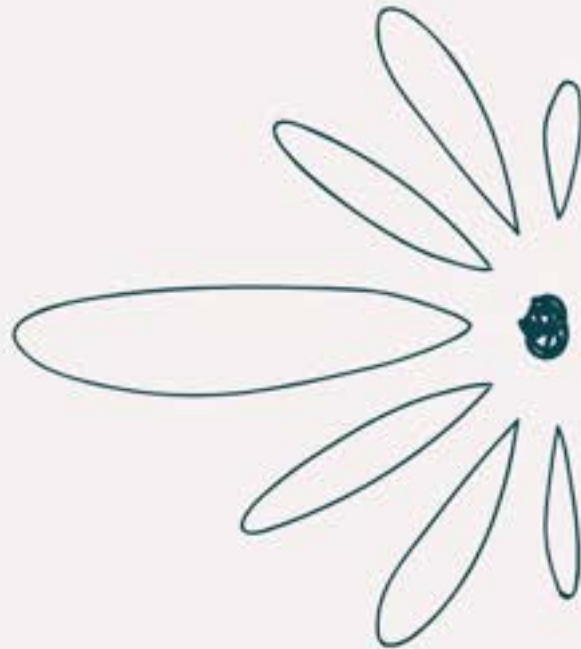


**If the 4s's are NOT
present, how
could this impact
the child?**

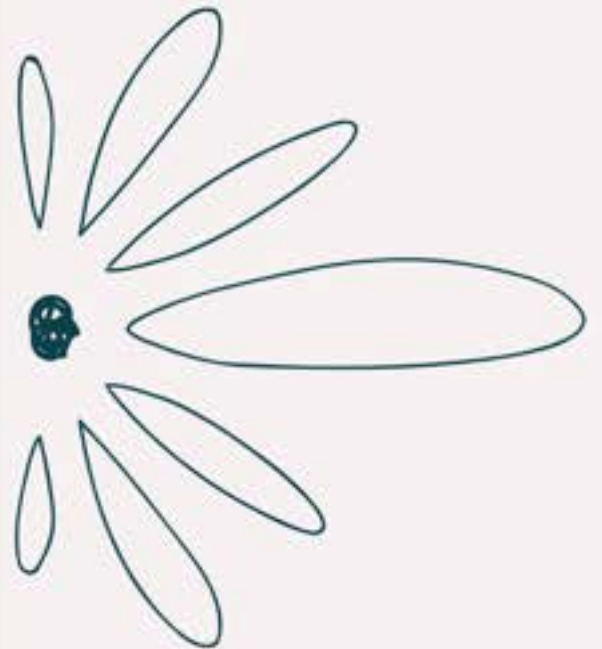


Discussion Point ...

SAFE, SEEN, SOOTHED & SECURE



If the 4s's ARE
present in the
classroom, how
could this impact
the child?



“To feel safe”
“To feel noticed”

“

“I trust my teachers / I like my teachers.”

Q.

What makes the best teacher ?
Year 9: Fairfax School 2019

“My teachers like me! & to
smile.”

“My teachers remember me”



“A persons behaviour has
more to do with their own
internal struggle, than it ever
did with you.”

Behaviour is communication!

“Communicating with a
misbehaving child isn't a
reward, its a lifeline.”

67% OF THE AVERAGE
CLASSROOM HAVE
EXPERIENCED ONE TRAUMA,
OR MORE.



Tools to support these children ...



Empathy



Kindness



Compassion



Connection

THESE ARE KEY FOR EFFECTIVE SUPPORT



**TRAUMA
INFORMED**



**TRAUMA
RESPONSIVE**

WEAVING
& INFUSING

TRAUMA-INFUSED & TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE SYSTEM: A CULTURAL & PARADIGM TRANSFORMATION

VALUES &
PRINCIPLES

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Sketch
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THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Design,
Building,
Space



SUPERVISION

Performance
Reviews &
Appraisals



TEAM Meetings,
Working Group, Feedback,
& Communication Forums



Meaningful CONSULTATION
& Decision-Making in ALL Aspects
*by those with lived experience
& multiple different voices*



THE RECRUITMENT

Job Description PROCESS
Communication
Interview
Feedback
Induction



LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

 POSITIVE
ROLE MODEL



- ✓ EMPATHETIC
- ✓ COMPASSIONATE
- ✓ SUPPORTIVE
- ✓ CURIOUS
- ✓ COMMITTED
- ✓ COLLABORATIVE

EVERY INTERACTION

is
IMPORTANT

TYPE & CHOICE OF
LANGUAGE



The Organisation's
VISION.

 MISSION.
 VALUES

POLICIES

& PROCEDURES
& LEGISLATION

EVALUATION & MONITORING



STAFF WELLNESS,
WELL-BEING & SELF-CARE



TRAINING
& CONTINUING WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT



MATERIALS



ASSESSMENT

SCREENING & Tools

TYPES OF SERVICES
AND APPROACHES

OFFERED
&
AVAILABLE



The importance of greetings & goodbyes ...

Anxiety-levels

Self-esteem



Focus

Belonging

Learning

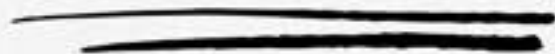


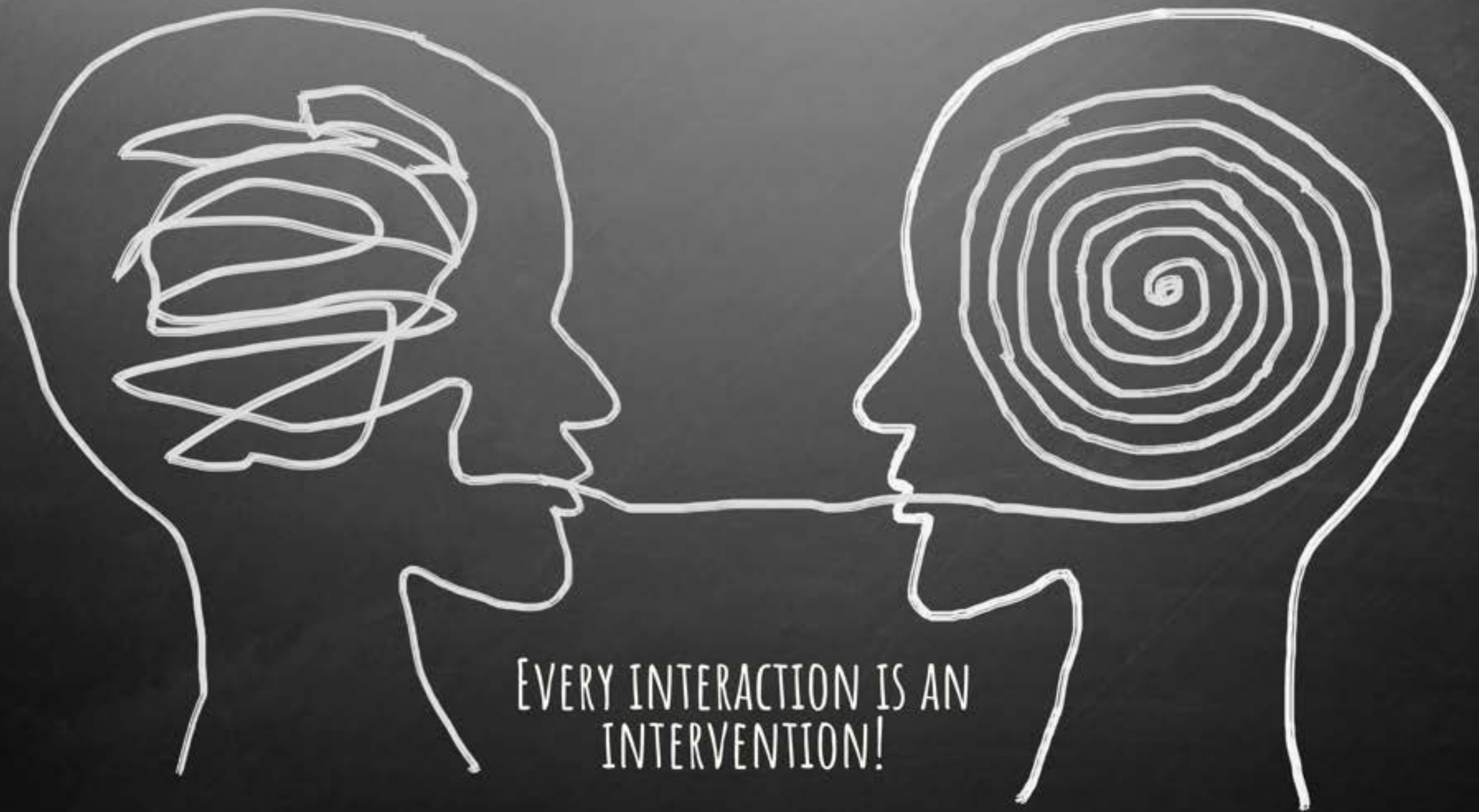
≡Welcome≡ *strategy*

SMILE! & WARM GREETING

USING NAMES

RELATIONAL TOUCH POINT





What kills connection ...

Shame

Judgement

IN YOUR CLASSROOM ... CAN CAUSE DAMAGE

Damaging connection ... Do not...

- Ever place the child in a position of no escape
- Use destructive criticism , sarcasm or belittling methods to humiliate
- Remind the child of previous incidents
- Divulge personal information in front of a group
- Make unrealistic threats
- Make insensitive or ridiculing remarks
- Lose your temper
- Make 'you will' statements
- Get involved in arguments
- Disagree with other adults present
- Inflate the situation out of proportion – pick your battles



**A CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW THAT YOU
HAVE THEIR BACK AND THAT THEY
CAN TRUST YOU, EXPRESS EMOTION
AND FEEL SAFE WITH YOU. IF YOU
CANT ACCEPT THEM ON THEIR WORST
DAY, THEY WONT GET CLOSE TO YOU
ON THEIR BEST.**



Sympathy

Drives
disconnection

Empathy

Drives
connection

Compassion

Empathy in
action



Model of Empathy

A

Acknowledge

B

Breathe

C

Curiosity



Empathy In Action ...

E

Eye contact!

M

Muscles of facial
expressions!

P

Posture!

A

Affect!

T

Tone of voice

H

Hearing the whole
person

Y

Your response!

(Helen Riess, 2018)

BEING A DETECTIVE!

safe, seen, soothed & secure

What is happening?

How can I reach them?

Best way to communicate?

What is being said / not being said?

heart shaped decisions!





**HOW MUCH MONEY IS IN
YOUR BANK ACCOUNT?**

COURAGE



COURAGE MEANS TO 'BARE ALL,
TO BARE YOUR WHOLE SELF.'

-Brene Brown-

**It takes courage to respond. We need to be
mindful around what questions we ask.**





Some Facts ...



Brains in pain cannot learn!

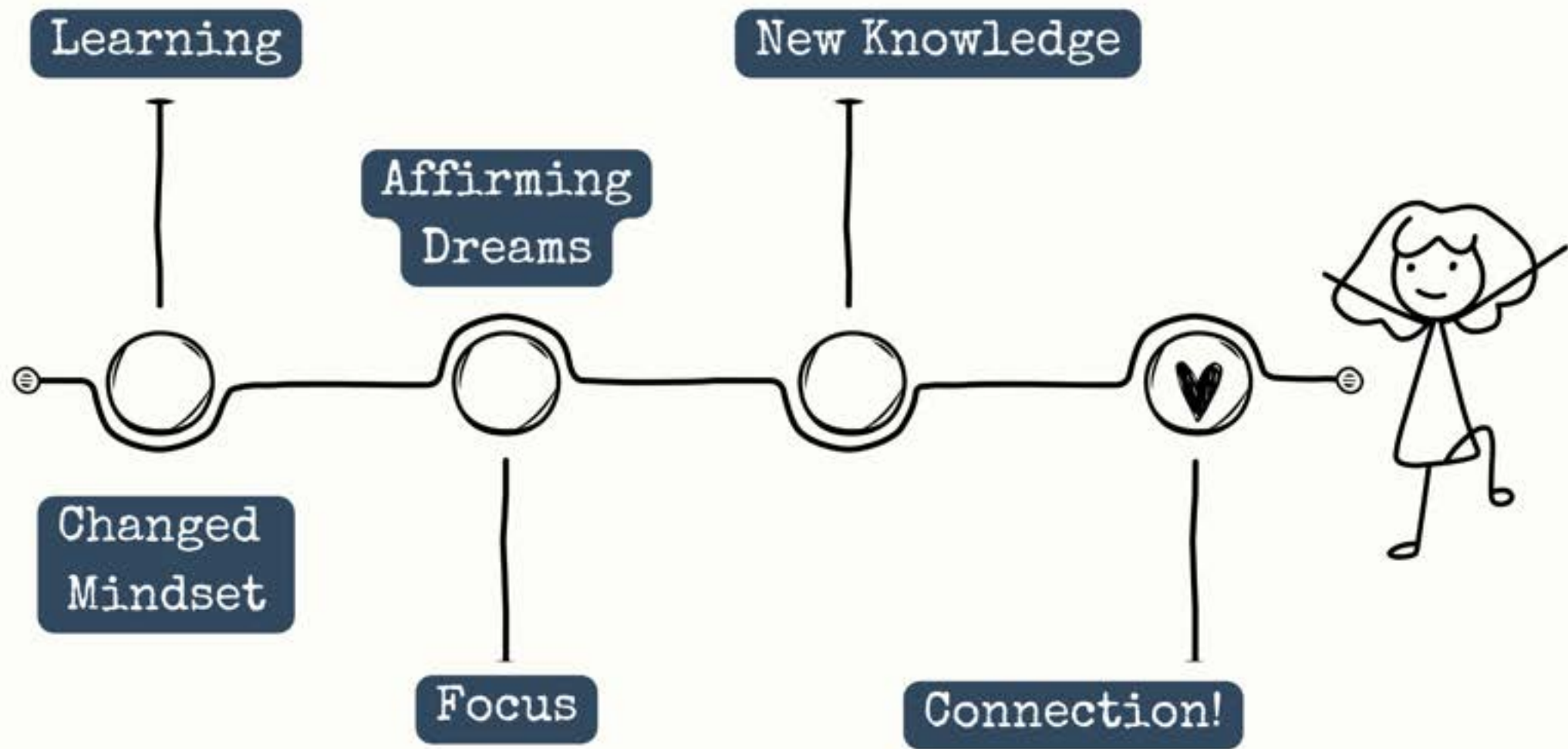
Triggered 45 minute threat cycle means that a child can't engage.

Where there is shame, there is pain.

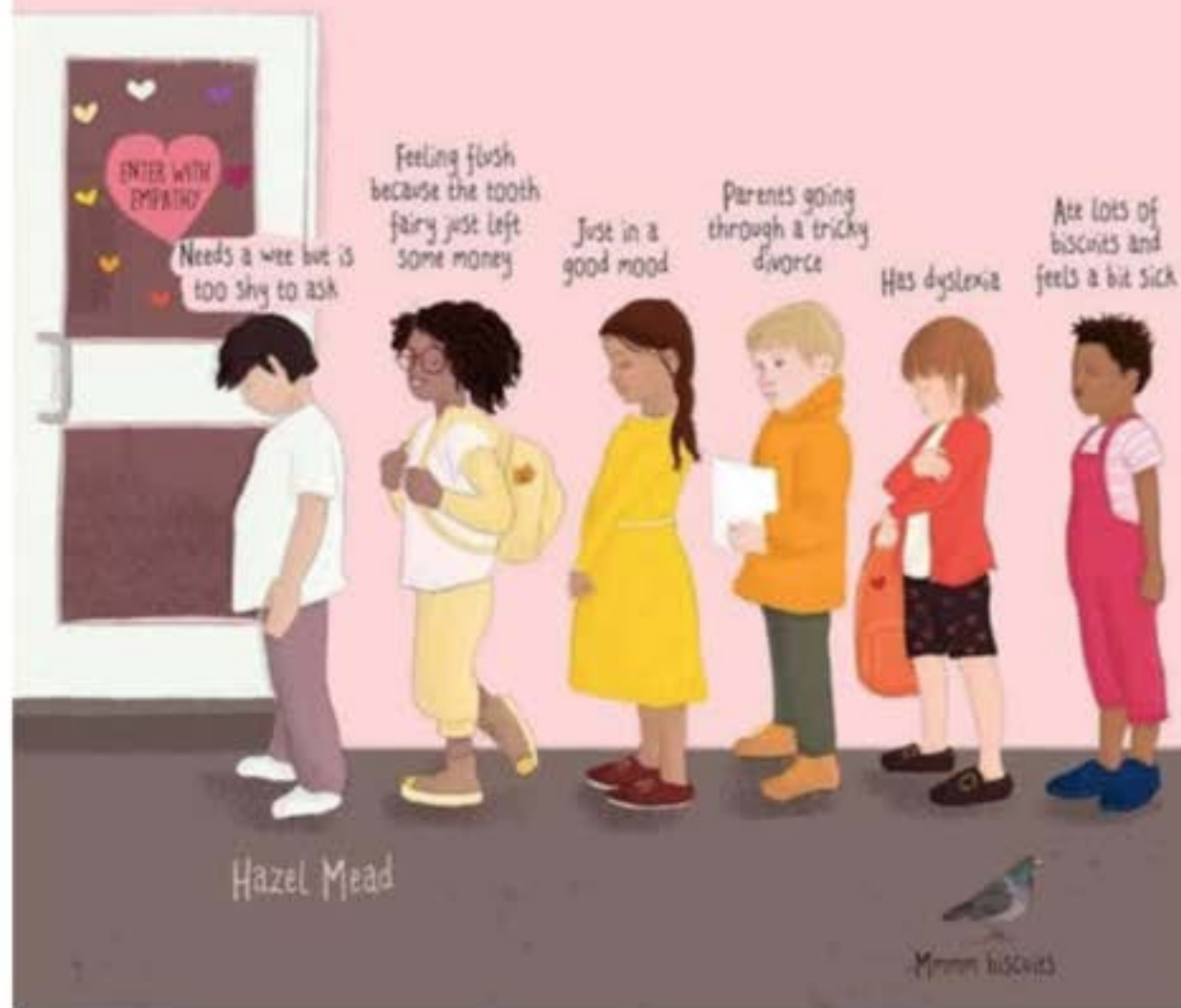
Your welcome is as important as your ending.

Isolation and exclusion will never build connection, they will break trust.

"You will never make a child feel better by making them feel worse about themselves."



YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN PEOPLE'S LIVES



Enter with Empathy





Enter with Empathy



Role Play!

Scenario one

In this scenario, you will be faced with a student who does not want to engage with anything to do with university.

In their words 'university is full of posh white people.'

- How could we manage this with understanding and compassion?
- How do you think they could be feeling?

Role Play!

Scenario two

There is a teacher present who keeps interfering. This is making it difficult for you to maintain the focus of the room, and keep the students engaged.

- How could you work together on this to create a calm and engaging classroom environment?

Connection before correction!

Every interaction is
an intervention.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO NOT JUDGE?

Watch this video ...

[“Don’t Judge – A Short Movie”](#)

WHAT IS A TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOL?

Watch this video ...

[Sticks & Stones by Sticks and Stones by Ton
Mazzone | A poem on Childhood Trauma &
Mental Health](#)

Where Connection Counts

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Connection Counts Podcast

Take a listen!

Take a listen to our Connection Counts podcast where we meet with professionals in the field to discuss a range of topics relating to connection, trauma and supporting children.

CONNECTION PODCAST



SCAN THE QR CODE TO FIND THE PODCAST ON SPOTIFY