

# **Get off the Crisis Rollercoaster:** Effectively Responding to Crisis in Your Family



Terebinth Counseling

# Zoom Etiquette

- Please keep your video for the most complete participation.
- Please keep yourself on mute unless you're talking to minimize distractions
  - Use the Raise Hand feature if you have a question
  - Use the chat to interact
- Do not multi-task to ensure that you get the most out of the class
- Please do not move your camera more than necessary.



# Class Expectations

- **Participation.** Please share your thoughts, experiences, and questions.
- **Confidentiality.** In order to encourage sharing, please don't share anything said in class with anyone outside class.
- **Free of Condemnation.** As you share your thoughts and experiences, please remember that we all have our own strengths and needs. If something needs to be addressed directly, the trainer will do it.



# ***Reasons for Crisis Behavior***

# Why do people have crisis?

- Developmental Delays and Mental Health Concerns
- Emotional Challenges and Trauma
- They have not yet learned a socially appropriate way to achieve their goals.
- Negative behavior has been directly taught or modeled.
- Negative behavior has been intentionally or unintentionally rewarded.



# Developmental Delays and Mental Health Challenges

- Issues in communication, which causes frustration
- Behind their same-aged peers, causing them to behave “younger” than their chronological age.
- May not be cognitively able to learn certain skills.
- May be so focused on “holding it together” in some areas, that others cannot be focused on.



# Learning and Rewards

- Contrary to some assumptions, people are naturally inclined to learn negative behavior.
  - For example, who taught you to lie?
- Some children are directly taught negative behavior.
- Most negative behavior is the result of a child trying it and having it accidentally rewarded by an adult who does not know how to respond effectively.
  - For example, giving into a tantrum.



# Emotional Challenges and Trauma

- Some negative behavior is developed as a coping skill to deal with trauma or other emotional challenges.
  - For example, substance use to avoid pain.
- Let's learn a few concepts to discuss how our brain works and how to change it to improve behavior.





# The Triune Brain

## The Thinking Brain.

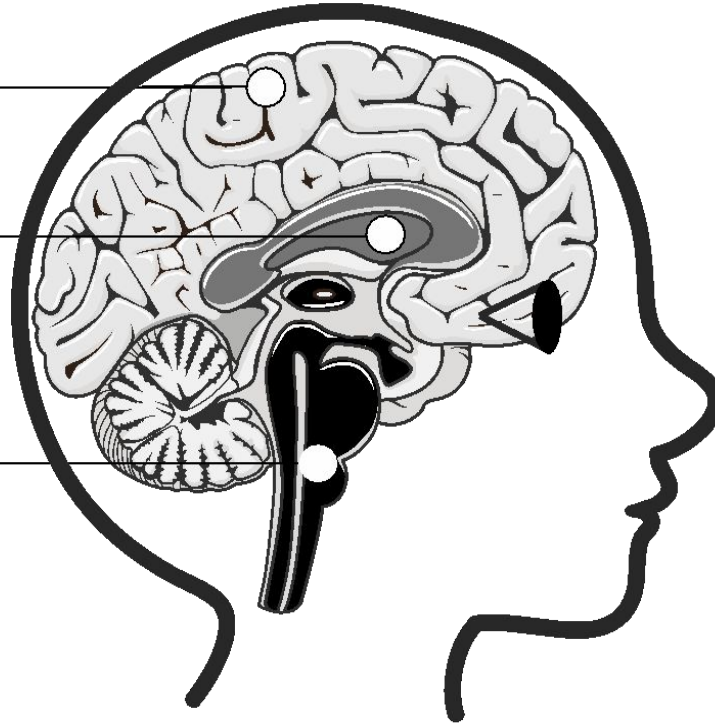
This is the **neocortex**, responsible for higher functions such as reasoning, language, creativity, and abstract thought.

## The Emotional Brain.

This part of the brain is also called the **limbic system** and is the center for emotions, emotional behavior, and motivation. Within this part of the brain is the **amygdala**, also known as the **sentry**. The role of the amygdala is to determine whether or not something is a threat.

## The Survival Brain.

This system of the brain (the **brain stem**) also known as the **reptilian brain**, is responsible for survival functions such as breathing, heart rate, circulation, and most bodily (autonomic) functions that do not require conscious thought.

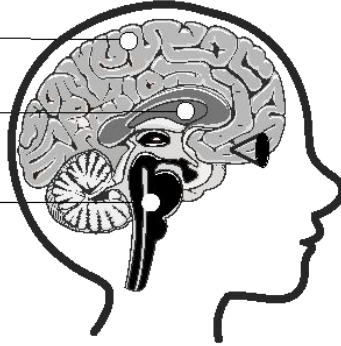


# The Triune Brain and Trauma Driven Perception

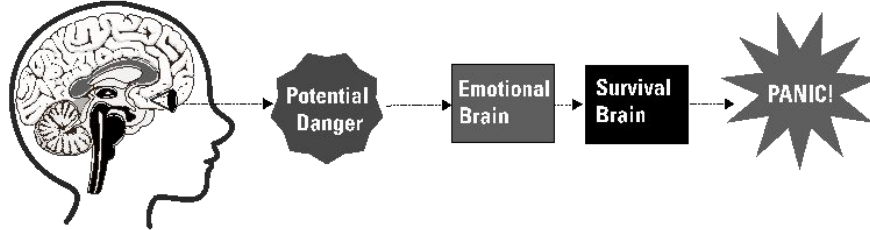
**Thinking Brain: Neocortex**  
Controls thinking and reasoning

**Emotional Brain: Limbic System**  
Controls emotions and feelings

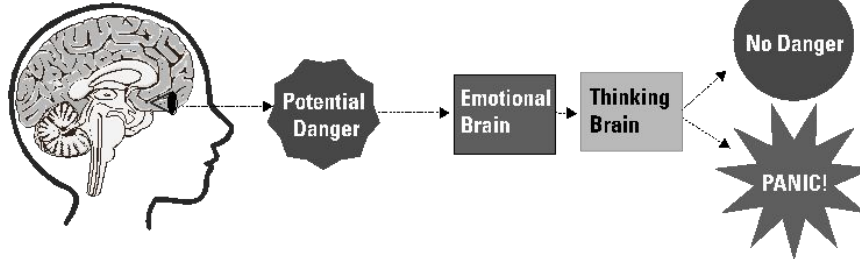
**Survival Brain: Brain Stem**  
Controls survival functions



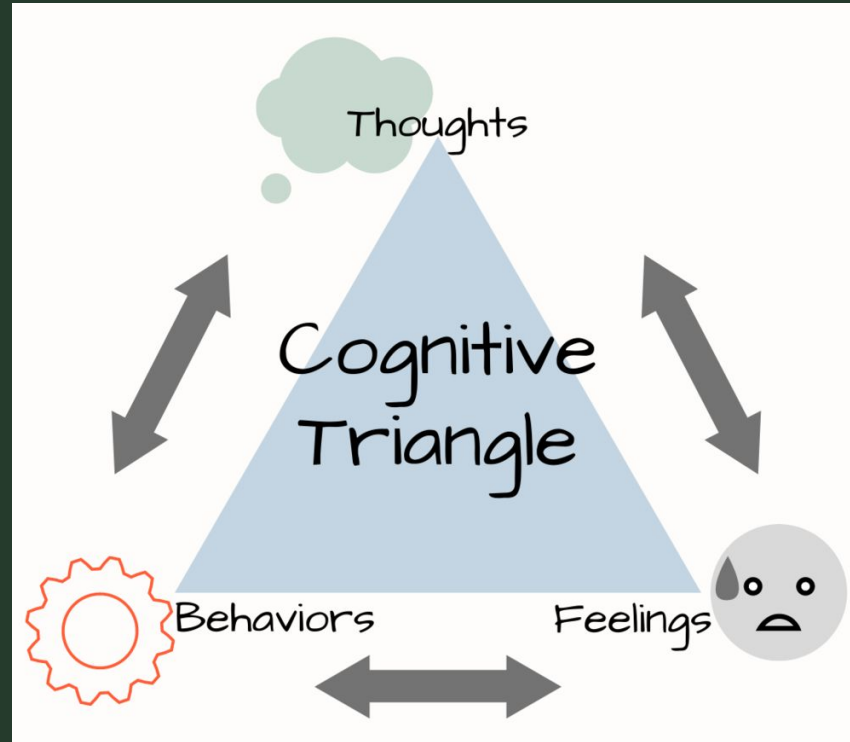
## Trauma Driven Perception



## Rational Perception



# Cognitive Behavioral Triangle



# Using co-regulation...

- Self-regulation: ability to use coping skills to de-escalate on your own.
- Co-regulation: using your emotional ability to help another person de-escalate.



# Reacting versus Responding

- Reacting: using your survival brain or established habits in a crisis without thinking them through.
- Responding: using your thinking brain to decide on a response based on the information you gather about the situation.



## **A crisis occurs when...**

...a child is unable to regulate their emotions and their fight, flight, or freeze response takes over



# The goal of crisis intervention...

- Support: provide immediate emotional and environmental support to increase a child's sense of safety
- Teach: help a child learn and practice new ways to regulate their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.



# STRESS MODEL OF CRISIS

Create a Healing Environment  
Develop Trusting Relationships  
Provide a Sense of Safety  
Practice New Skills

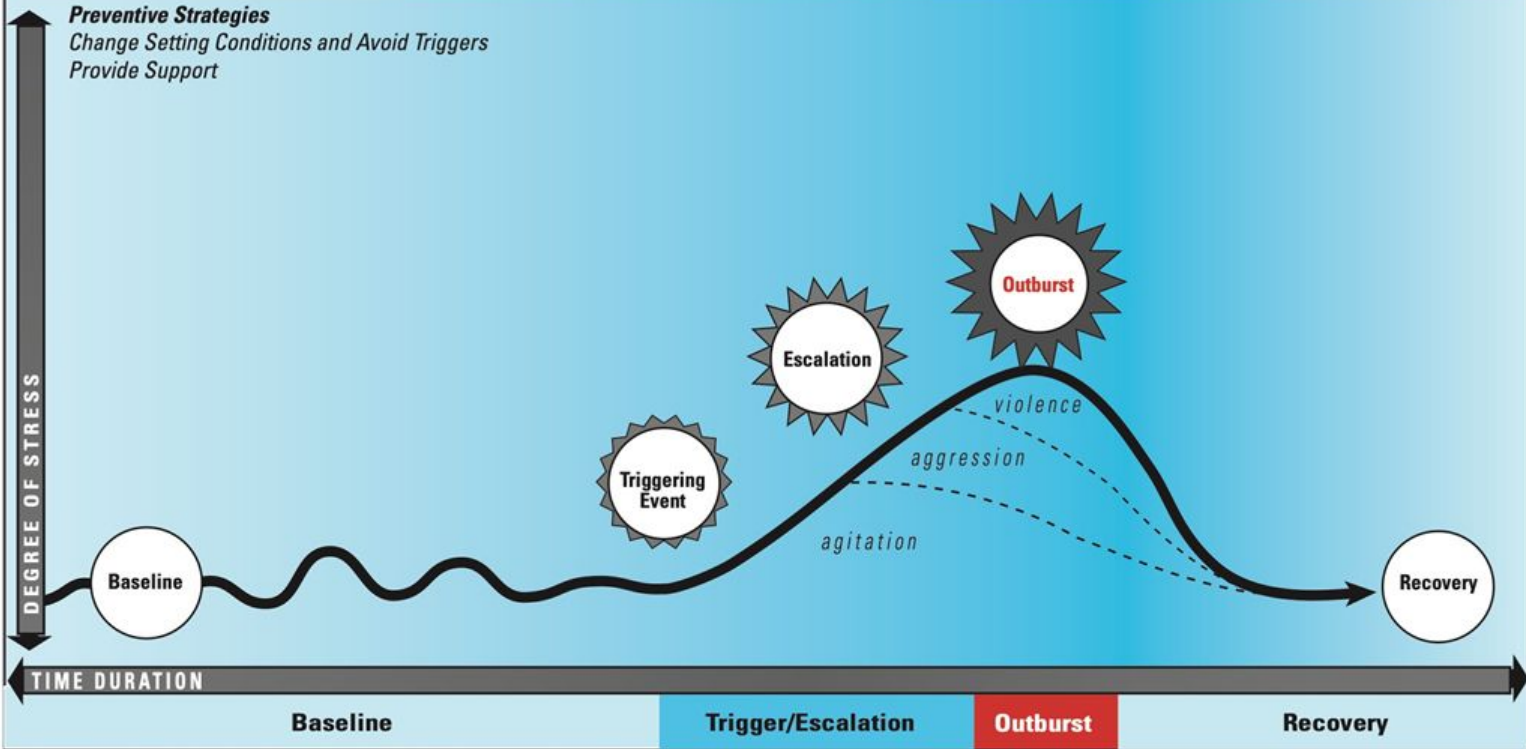
Reduce Stress and Anxiety

Keep Everybody Safe

Learn From What Happened

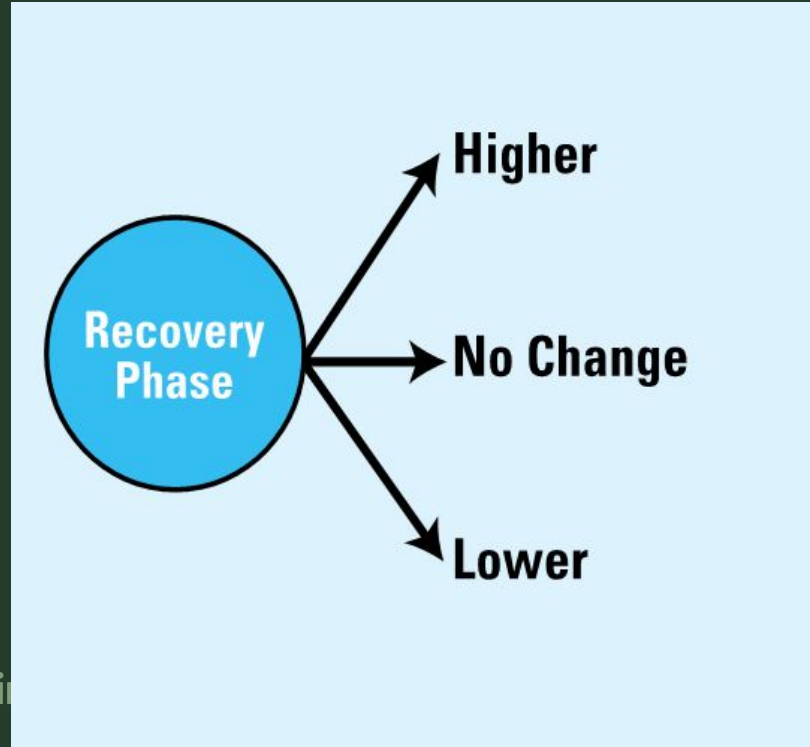
## Preventive Strategies

Change Setting Conditions and Avoid Triggers  
Provide Support





# Recovery Phase Outcomes...



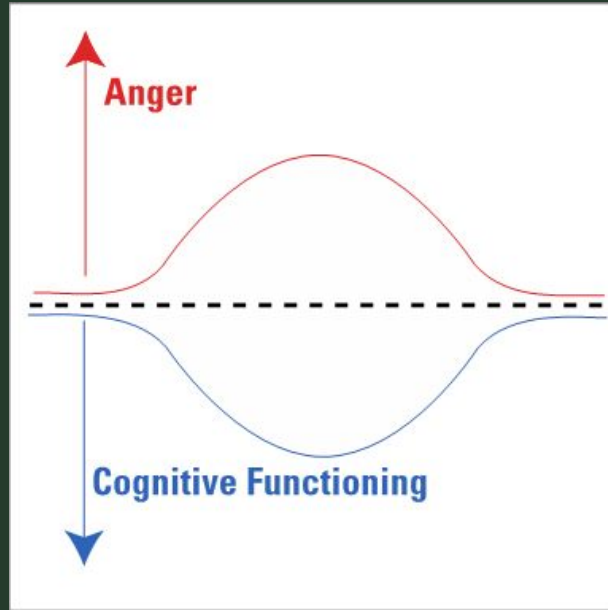
# ***Four Questions***

# Four Questions We Ask in a Crisis Situation

1. What am I feeling? How do I want the child to experience me in this moment?
2. What does the child think, feel, need, and want? How is the child experiencing me in this moment?
3. How is the environment affecting the child?
4. How do I best respond?



# What feelings do you have in a crisis?



The more emotional you are, the dumber you act.



**Exercise control over your feelings to remain calm.**



# FEELINGS, NEEDS, AND BEHAVIORS



**Engage to child to drain off emotions and diffuse pain-based behavior.**

**Assess the child's reaction constantly and change your response accordingly**



**What are ways that the environment negatively impacts a child in crisis?**





**Provide environmental support by managing the environment to neutralize potential triggers, targets, and weapons.**



# ***Behavior Support Techniques***

# Behavior Support Techniques

- Managing the Environment
- Prompting
- Caring Gesture
- Hurdle Help
- Redirection and Distractions
- Proximity
- Directive Statements
- Time Way



# ***Emotional First Aid***

# Adults can help children by...

- Seeing the incident from the child's perspective and use reflective and empathic responses.
- Giving enough emotion and environmental support to being the situation within the child's ability to manage.
- Helping the child see the connection between thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
- Encouraging children to be responsible for their behaviors.
- Celebrating their efforts and successes.



# Goals of Emotional First Aid

- Provide immediate support to reduce emotional intensity
- Identify and help resolve the underlying issues causing distress
- Keep the child in the activity



# Strategies for Emotional First Aid

- Drain off emotions (reflective and emphatic statements)
- Clarify events
- Maintain the relationships and lines of communication
- Plan an appropriate response, including anticipating potential problems
- Mediate the situation, if needed.



# ***Final Tips***



**“When you, then you.”**

**Earn normal activities by positive behavior,  
rather than removing it for bad behavior.**



# Pre-teaching

- Give initial praise
- Identify the skill and give examples.
- Describe the appropriate skill steps
- Provide a rationale
- Practice and Praise

**Do this any time the misbehavior is anticipated.**



# Effective Praise

- Give brief praise.
- Describe the positive behavior.
- Provide a rationale.
- Give a positive consequence, if appropriate.

**Do this any time the skill is used appropriately.**



# Corrective Teaching

- Give initial praise or empathy.
- Describe the negative behavior.
- Describe or demonstrate the skill, including the steps.
- Give rationale.
- Practice
- Be encouraging throughout.

**Do this any time the skill is not used appropriately.**



# ***Designing Rewards and Consequences***

# Effective Consequences are...

- Based on the child's age and ability
  - Ask, "How will they best learn from this?"
- Based on how the real-world works
- Based on counteracting why the negative behavior works
- Clear
  - "If you choose to yell, you will need to spend time in your room."
- Applied consistently
  - "Let your yes be yes and your no be no."



# Effective Consequences are...

- Natural and Logical
  - Ask, "What is the real-world result of the behavior?"
- Proportional to the behavior.
- Enforceable
- Positive and Negative
  - "When you positive behavior, then positive consequence."
  - "If you negative behavior, then negative consequence."



# Communicating consequences

- Goal is learning, not revenge
- Discuss in advance, if possible
  - We don't know all consequences in advance
- Present calmly, without anger or blame





# ***Discussion and Questions...***

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