



Foundations of Infant Early Childhood Mental Health: Care, Co-Regulate, & Co-Create

INFANT EARLY CHILDHOOD

MENTAL HEALTH

THE PENNSYLVANIA KEY

In support of Pennsylvania's
Office of Child Development &
Early Learning

Your Presenters:

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Learning Objectives

Participants will:



- Build knowledge of the foundations of Infant Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH)
- Develop skills in framing challenging and interfering behaviors as areas of need and areas for growth in IECMH capacities of connection and regulation
- Gain concrete, IECMHC aligned strategies for preventing and impacting challenging behaviors

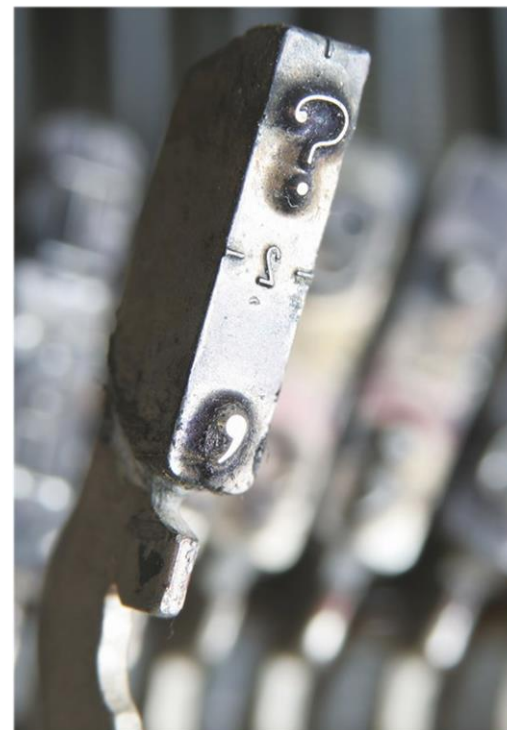
Learning Invitations

- Please approach this content as a learner.
- We encourage you to offer each other, and us, support, feedback, corrections, and alternate perspectives.
- We invite you to engage with curiosity, compassion, and courage.
- Please expect and accept non-closure. It is OK to hang in uncertainty and not rush to quick solutions.

(BARWE, n.d.)

What are we doing here?

- Reintroduce yourself, to yourself
 - Why are you here?
 - No really, what's your why for being here... in this room? In your profession?
- Get to know your neighbor
 - Your Name & Role
 - Your Why(s)
 - One thing you LOVE about your work





Introduction to Infant Early Childhood Mental Health

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health is...

The developing capacity of the child from birth to age 5 to:

- form close and secure adult and peer relationships;
- experience, manage(regulate), and express a full range of emotions;
- explore the environment and learn -

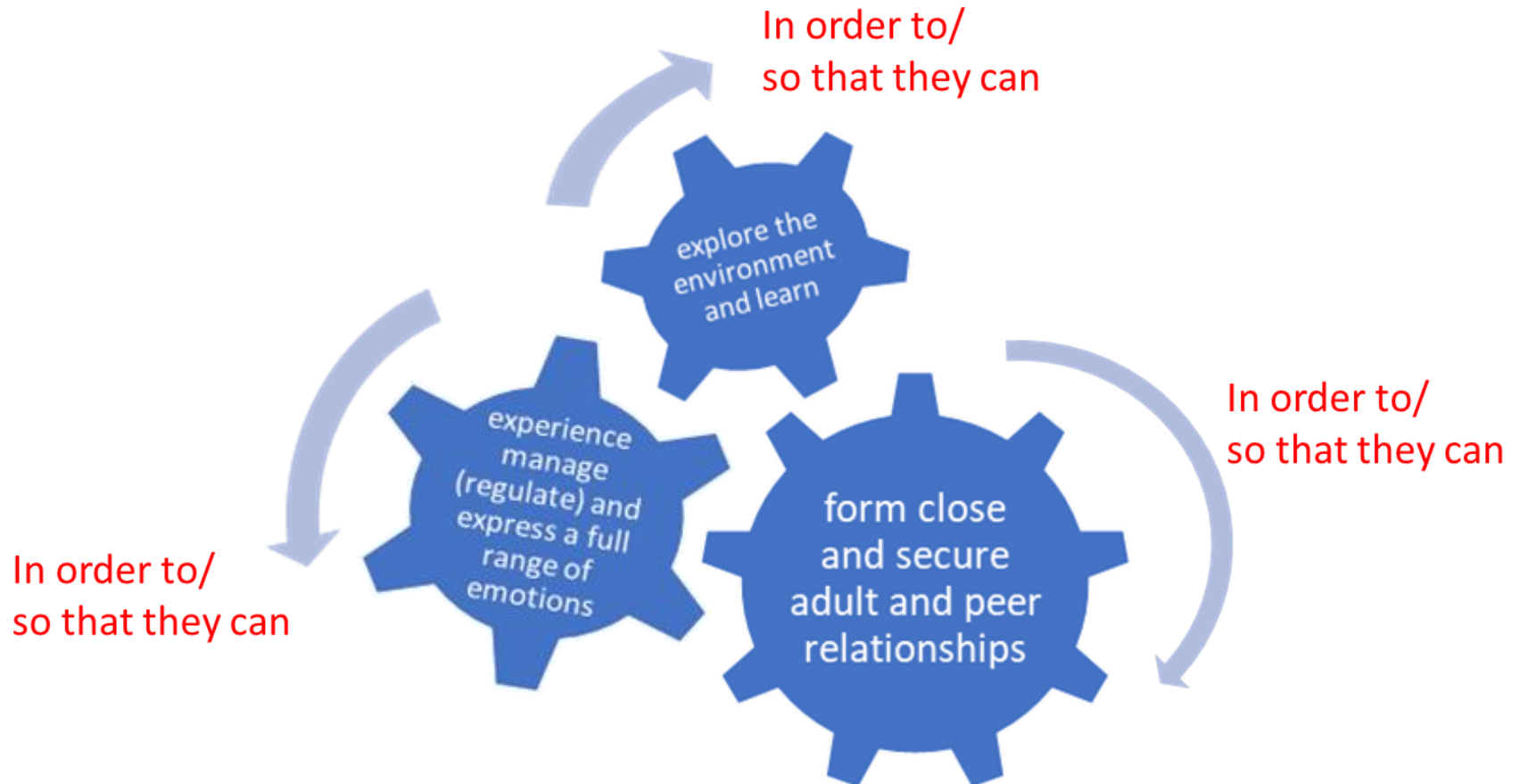
all in the context of family, community, and culture.

(ZERO TO THREE, 2017)

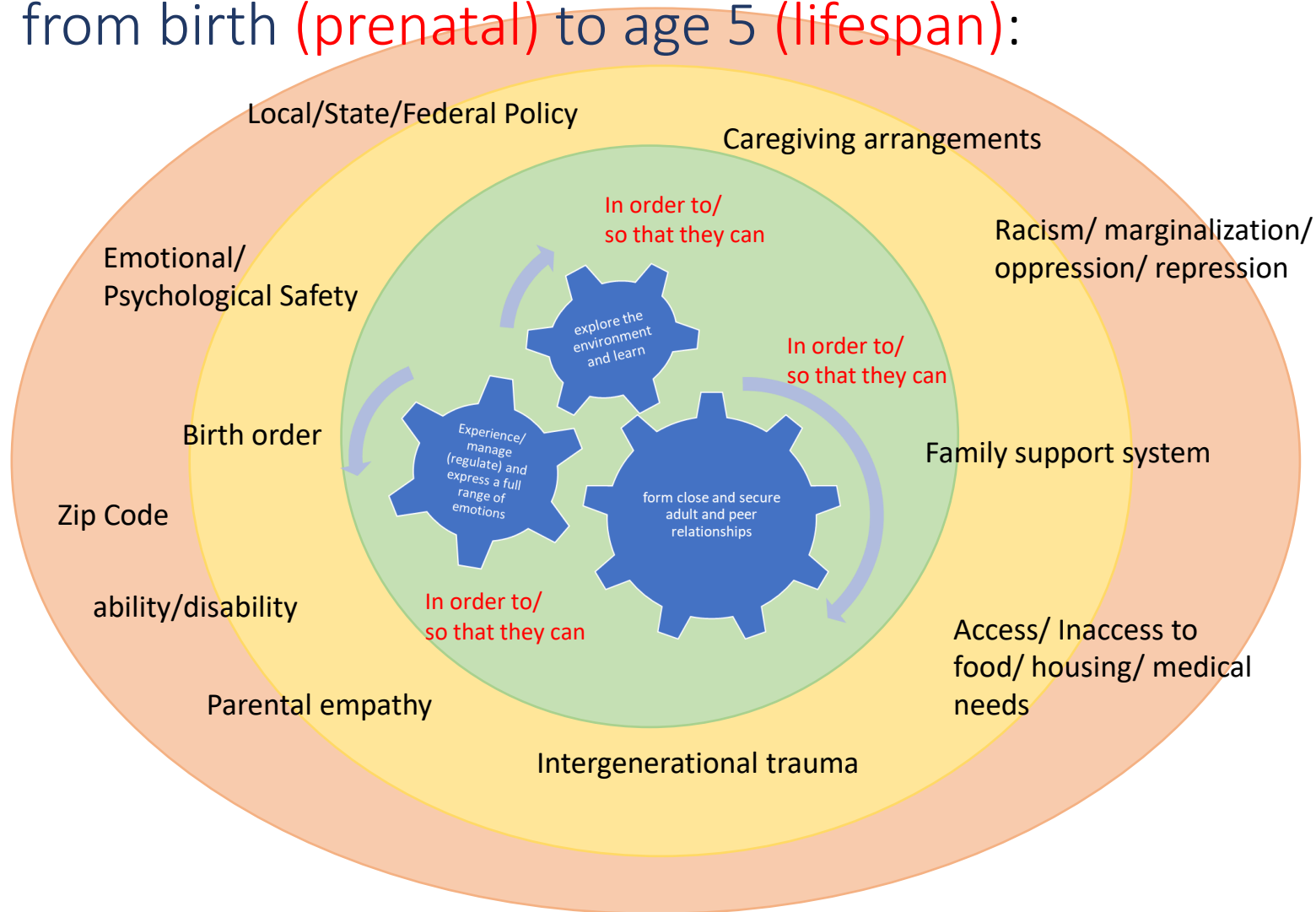


Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

is... the developing capacity of the child from birth
(prenatal) to age 5 (lifespan):



Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health is... the developing capacity of the child from birth (prenatal) to age 5 (lifespan):



Foundations of IECMH = Foundations for Development & Learning



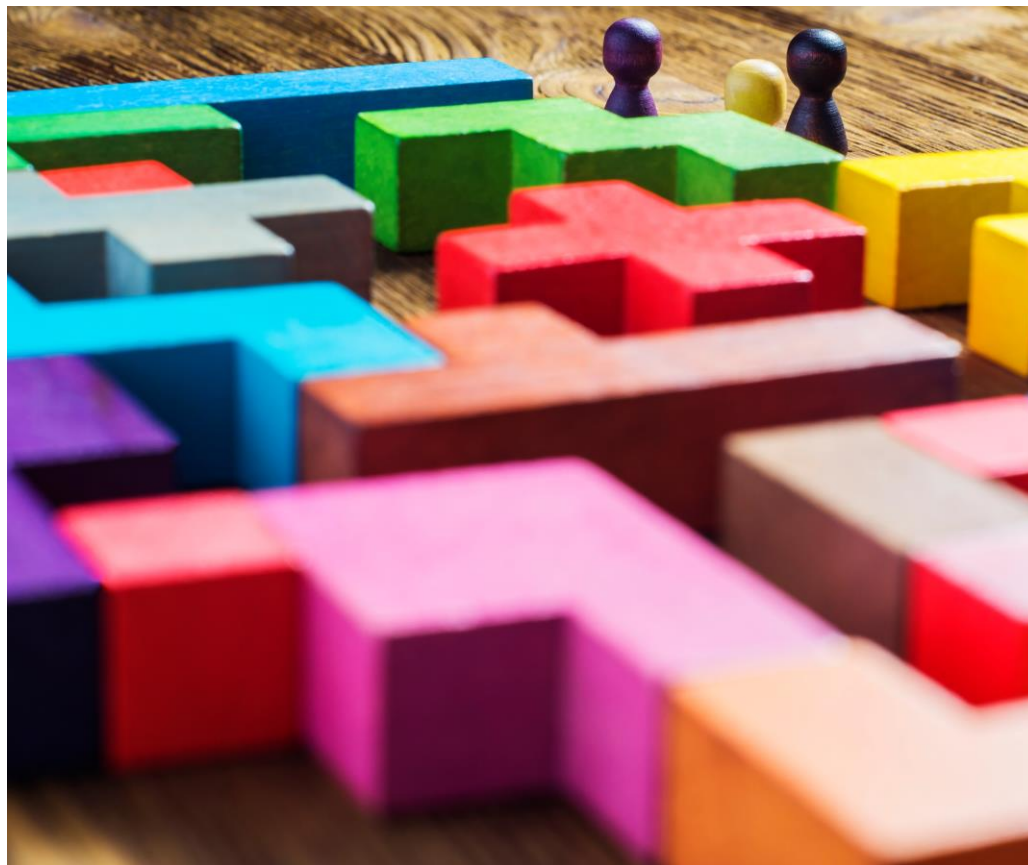


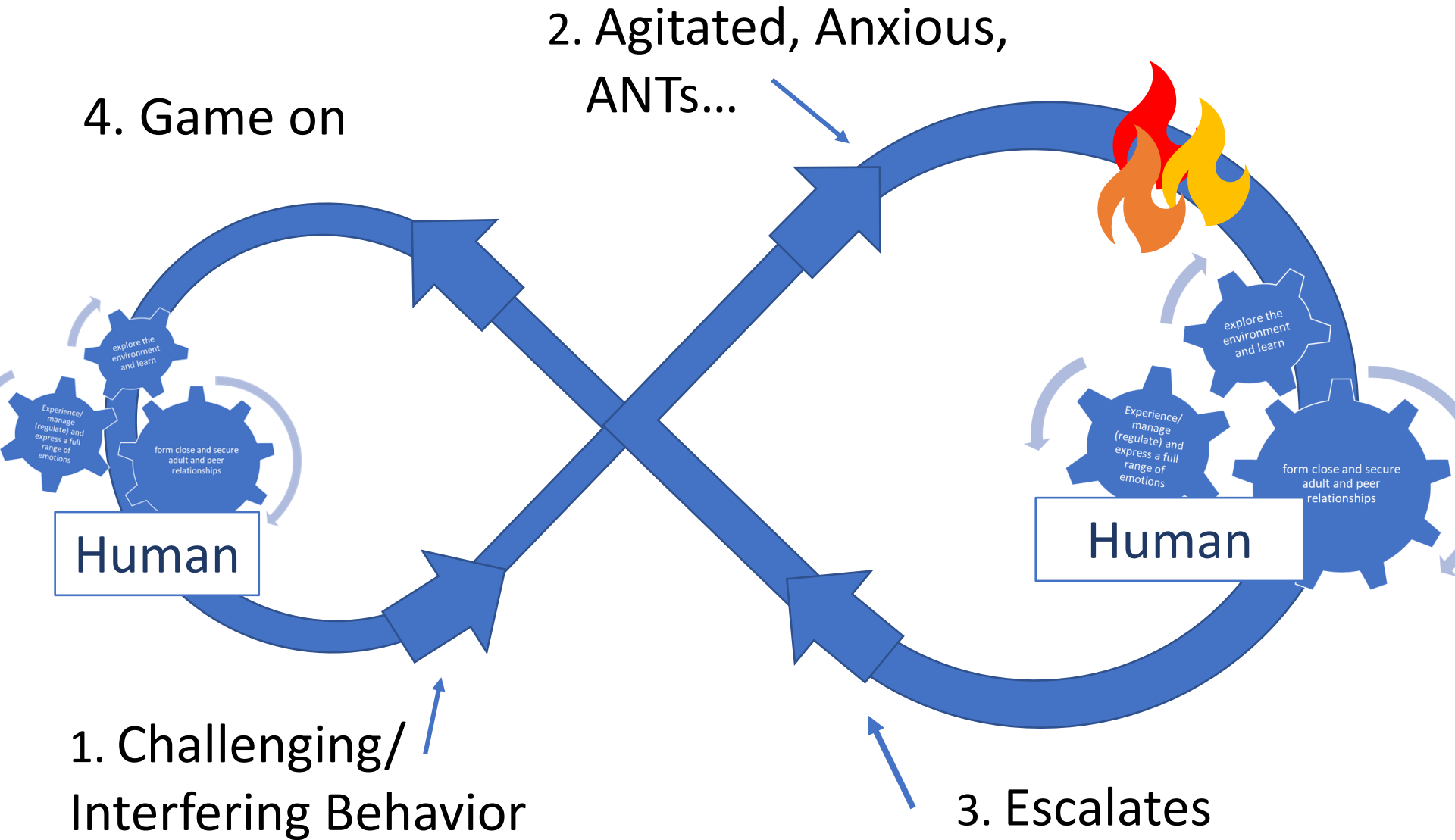
Challenging & Interfering Behavior: Barriers to engagement, uptake, learning and development

Challenging and Interfering Behavior

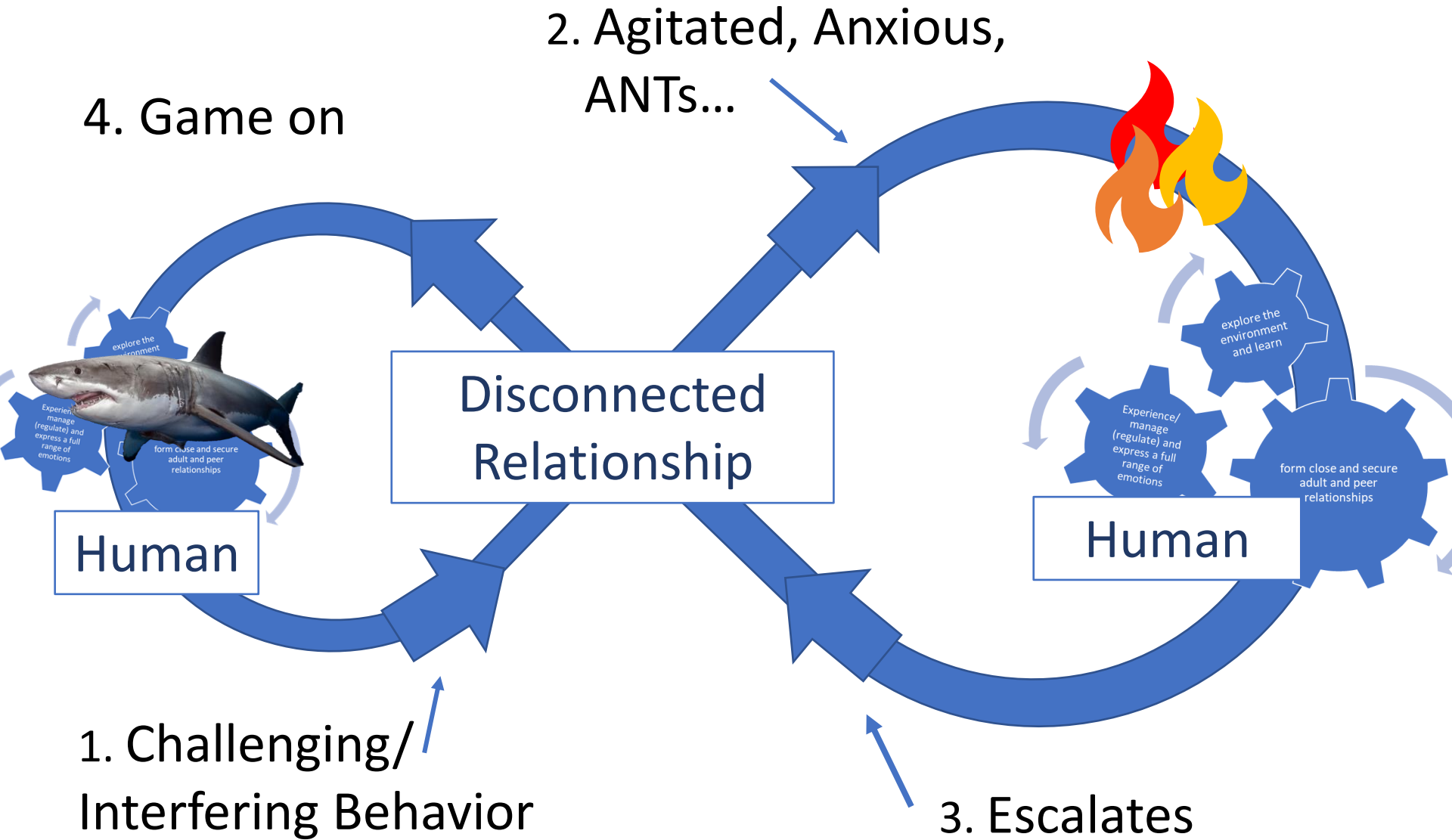
Any repeated pattern of behavior, or perception of behavior, that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults.

(Smith & Fox, 2003, p. 5).











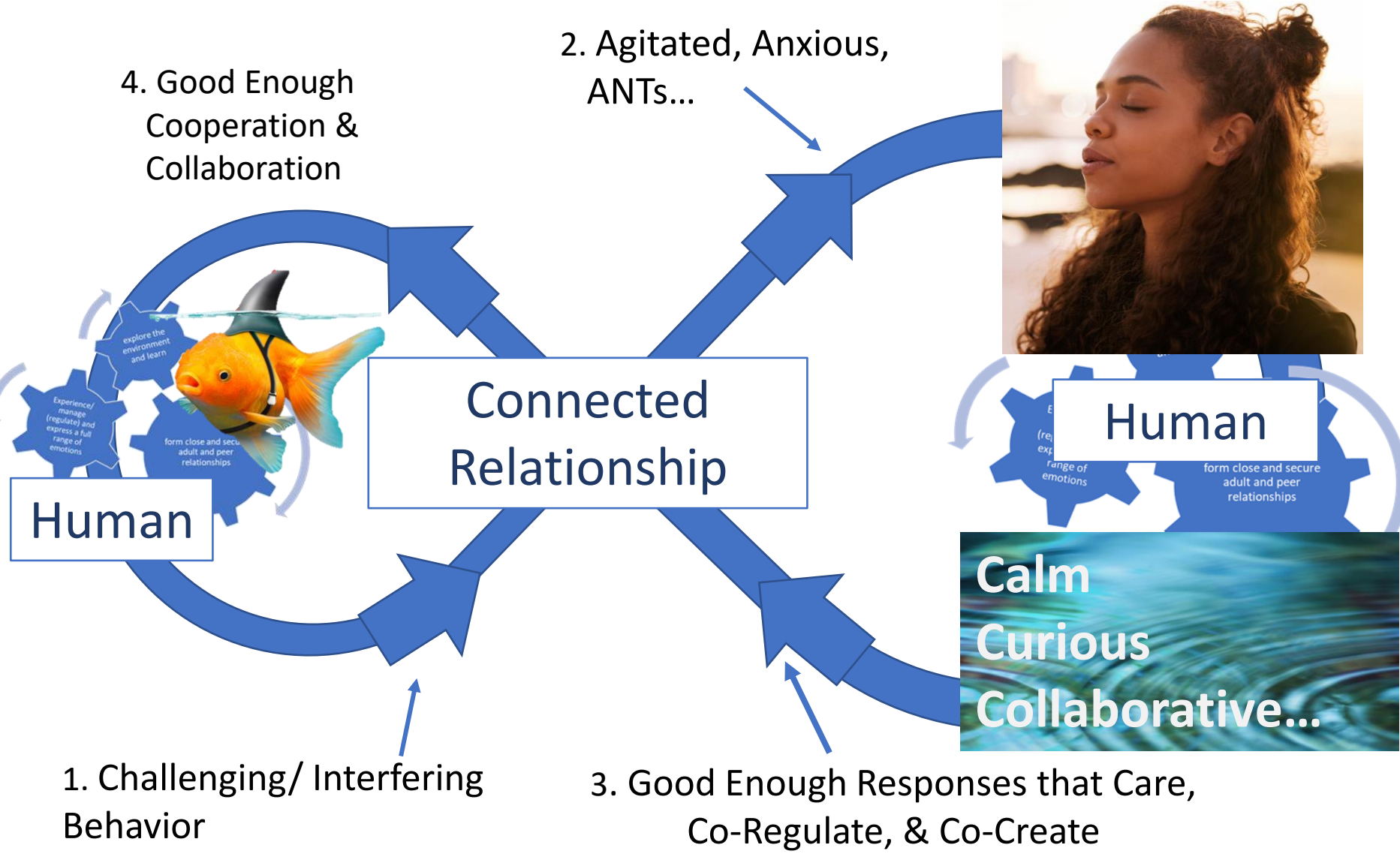
Reframe: Misbehavior vs. Stress behavior

Misbehavior (top-down) – Behavior that is intentional, optional, responsive and enacted from a calm, connected state

Stress Behavior (bottom up) – Behavior that is impulsive, reactive, and enacted from an overwhelmed nervous system.

Adapted from: Center for Early Education and Development, 2022;
The MEHRIT Centre, 2015







First Foundations: Caring & Co-Regulation

Caring, Co-Regulating

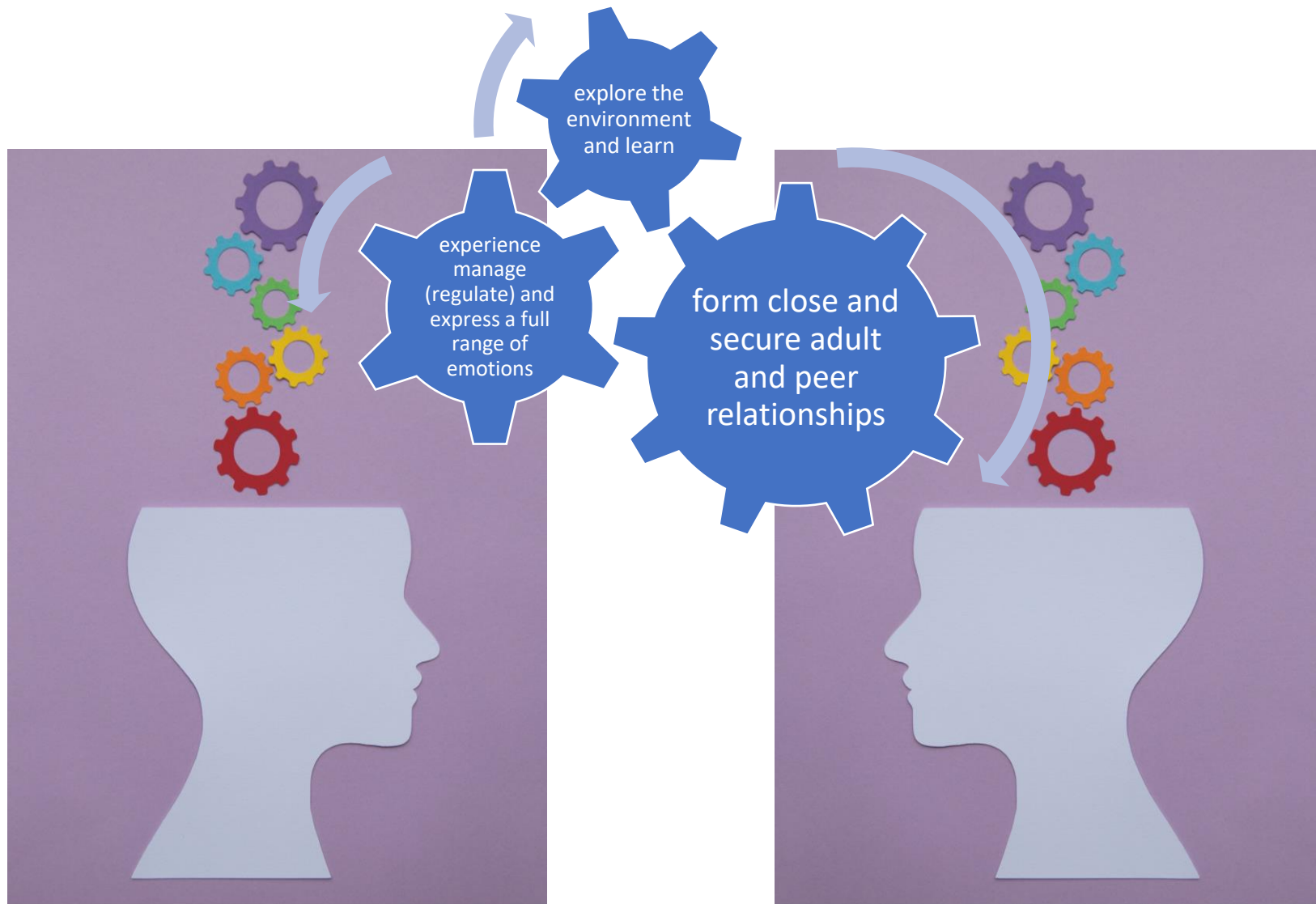


Caring, Co-Regulating

How did it *feel* to
remember when
someone was
there for you?

What did the
person *actually do*
that made a
difference?






Foundations of IECMH = Foundations for Development & Learning



When a flower
doesn't bloom, you fix the
environment in which
it grows, not the flower.

—Alexander Den Heijer





Yes, You Can! Practices that Promote Infant Early Childhood Mental Health

Care, Co-Regulate, and Co-Create: A framework for practice

3. **CO-CREATE** healthy environments, to promote capacity to...



explore the environment and learn

1. **CARE TO CONNECT**, to promote capacity to...

experience manage (regulate) and express a full range of emotions

form close and secure adult and peer relationships

2. **CO-REGULATE** experience, to promote capacity to...

Care to Connect:

Promotes capacity to form close and secure adult and peer relationships.

Connection Builders

- Care-giving, Alloparenting
- Partnership
- Curiosity
- Presence
- Repair

Connection Barriers

- Professional Detachment
- Expert model
- Assumptions, Biases, Prejudices
- Present
- Ignoring

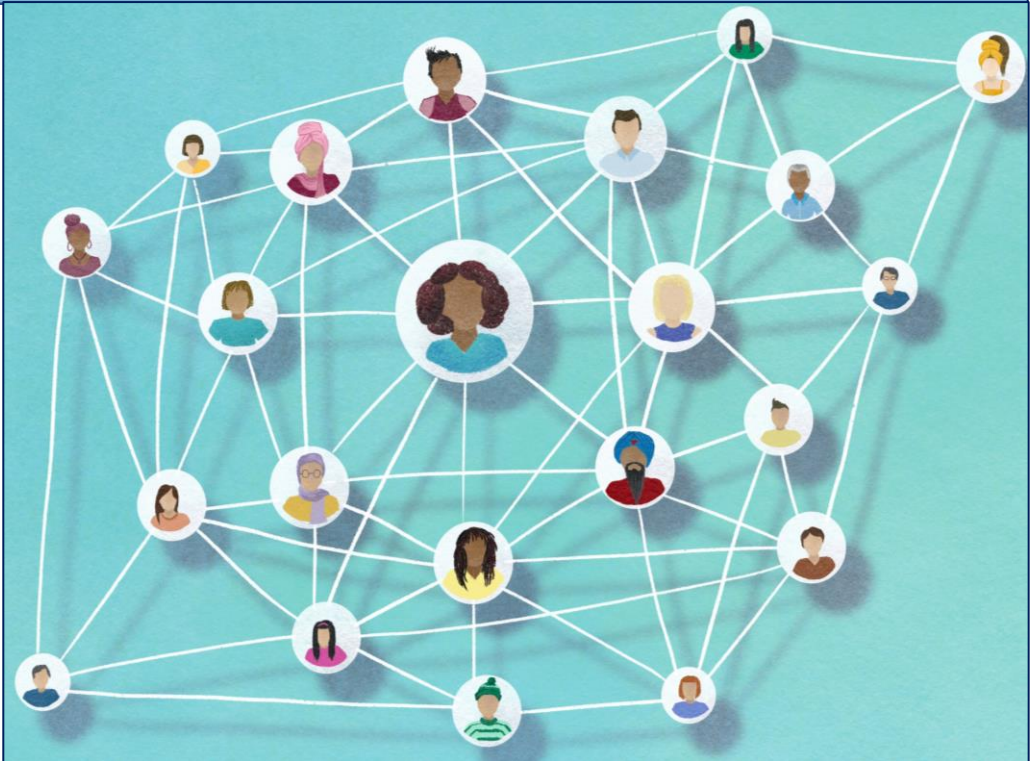


Care to Connect:

Promotes capacity to form close and secure adult and peer relationships.

Types of Connections

- Primary attachment relationships
- Secondary attachment relationships and alloparents
- Peer relationships
- Comfort items



Co-Regulate Experience:

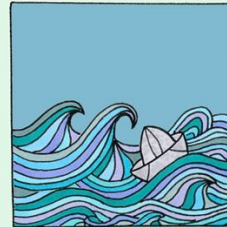
Promotes capacity to experience, manage(regulate), and express a full range of emotions.

Emotional Co-Regulation

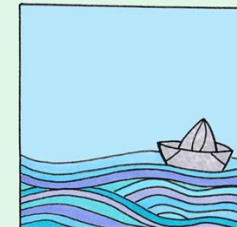
“When a child is in internal distress, that negative experience can be shifted by an interaction with a caregiver who attunes to and cares for her. She might still suffer, but at least she won’t be alone in her pain”

Daniel Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson Ph.D.. (2020) The Power of Showing up. Refrigerator Sheet

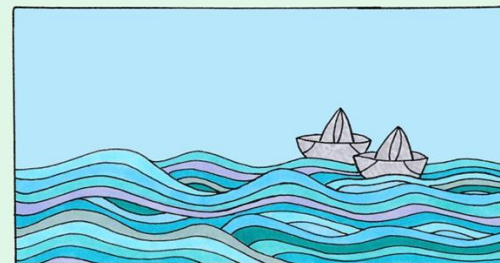
WHEN THEIR STORM



MEETS OUR CALM



CO - REGULATION OCCURS



@kwiens62



Co-Regulate Experience:

Promotes capacity to experience, manage (regulate), and express a full range of emotions.

Regulation Builders

- Adult Self-Regulation
- Validation
- Empathy
- Responsivity
- Play-full

Regulation Barriers

- Do as I say, not as I do
- Invalidation
- Disconnection
- Reactivity
- Fear



Co-Create Healthy Environments:

Promotes capacity to explore the environment and learn.

Leaning Builders

- Mutuality
- Collaboration
- Just right challenges
- Accommodations

Learning Barriers

- Controlling behavior
- Rewards/Punishments
- Pushing/preventing
- Intolerable stress





Yes, You Can! Process to Promote Infant Early Childhood Mental Health



2. Agitated, Anxious, ANTs...

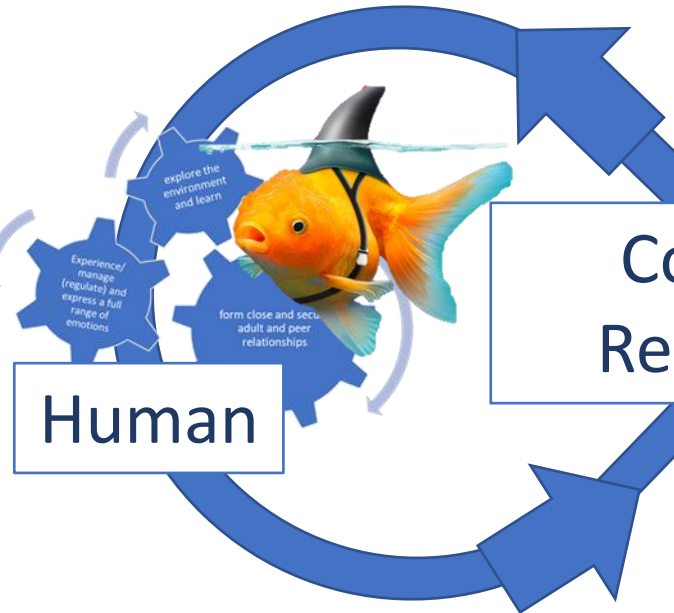
4. Good Enough Cooperation & Collaboration

Connected Relationship

Human

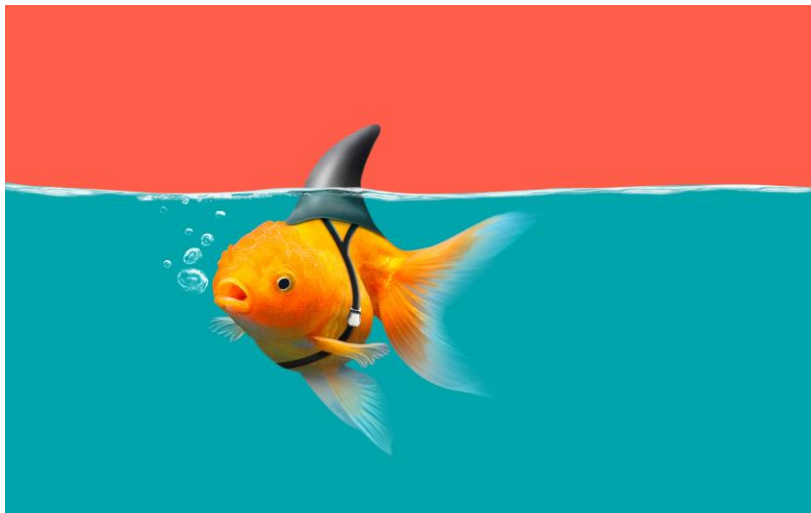
1. Challenging/ Interfering Behavior

3. Good Enough Responses that Care, Co-Regulate, & Co-Crete



Invest in Foundations of IECMH: Reframe the Behavior

See more of this...



and less of this...



When to reframe...The IECMH ABC's

When I am in my...

- Anxiety
- Fear - Afraid
- Anger
- Agitation
- Aggression
- All or Nothing
- Ants...

I can **BREATHE** into my

- Compassion
- Collaboration
- Calm
- Connection
- Curiosity
- Courage
- Creativity
- Confidence

Invest in Foundations of IECMH: Care, Co-Regulate, & Co-Create

Get more of this...

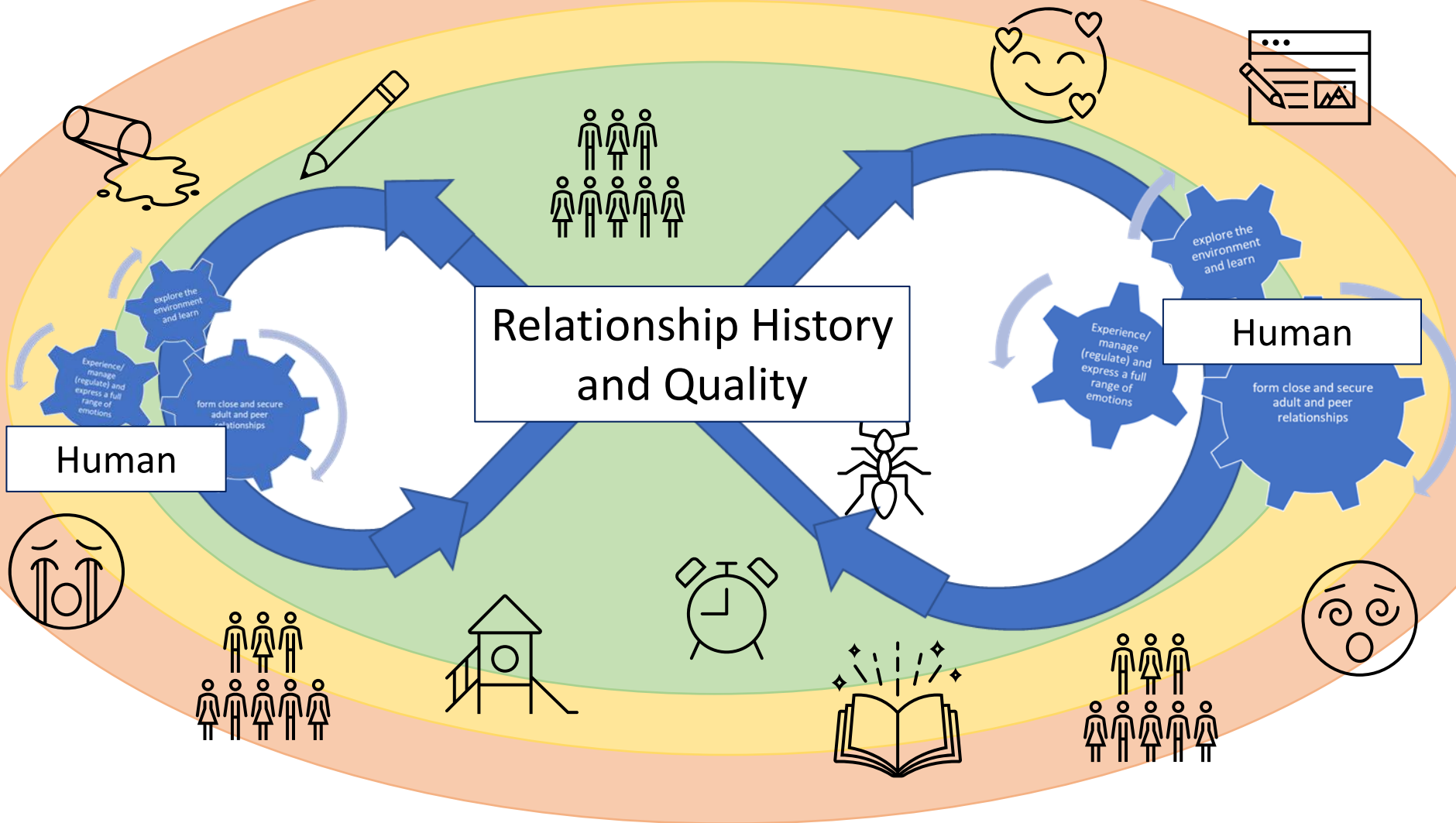


and less of this...





Often, it's more complicated...



Virtual Office Hours

IECMH Consultants are **available by appointment** via telephone or video conference.

Find next steps for:

- Child Social-Emotional Concerns
- Child Behavioral or Developmental Concerns
- Emotional Well-being of Teachers and Caregivers
- Partnering with Families

Appointments held **two Fridays per month.**

The Pennsylvania Key IECMHC Virtual Office Hours

The Pennsylvania Key Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) Program is offering a new service: **IECMHC Virtual Office Hours**

Are you looking for support with:
• Relationships or emotion regulation?
• Helping a child who is struggling with behavior?
• Helping teachers and families with self-care?

The Pennsylvania Key IECMHC Virtual Office Hours

Are you looking for support with:
• Helping your child who is struggling with behavior, friendships, or managing their feelings?
• Helping your child with challenging behavior in child care or at home, but not sure what to do next?

The Pennsylvania Key Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) Program is offering a new service for families: **IECMHC Virtual Office Hours**

IECMHC Virtual Office Hours are available at no cost to families across Pennsylvania. IECMH Consultants are available by appointment via telephone or video conference. IECMH Consultants offer a listening ear and professional guidance to help you find next steps for:

- Child Social-Emotional Concerns
- Child Behavioral or Developmental Concerns
- Emotional Well-being of Teachers and Caregivers

Who can request IECMHC Virtual Office Hours?
Services are available at no cost to families across Pennsylvania. We invite:

- Teachers, directors, and staff in child care programs
- Families with children attending Early Intervention (Birth-3 & 3-5)

How can IECMHC Virtual Office Hours help you and your family?
IECMHC Consultation helps adults better respond to children's social-emotional needs. Caregivers' reflective practice skills help them:

- Figure out what's really going on
- Reflect and respond to problem behaviors
- Build partnerships with families
- Share community resources
- Consider your next steps

How can you request an IECMHC Virtual Office Hour?
Appointments are held on the second and fourth Fridays of each month. To request an appointment, register here.

Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Virtual "Office Hours"



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“Children [people] with challenging behavior follow people first and rules second. Put simply, if they like us they’ll feel safe, and if they feel safe, they’ll relax, and if they relax they’re more likely to comply [cooperate] and to learn.”

Debbie Breeze. December 5, 2017.

TEDxNantwich. (5:19)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXSJKIRpmHs