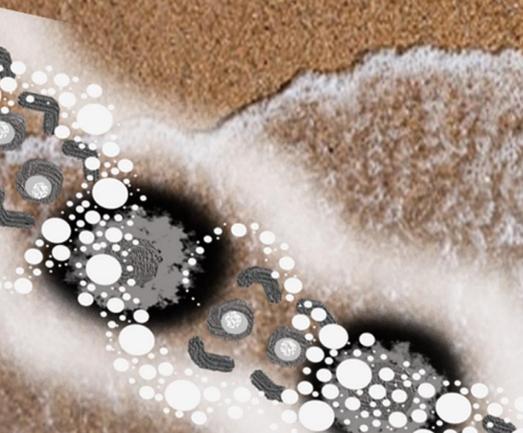


Aboriginal
Wellbeing Conference



Aboriginal Wellbeing Conference

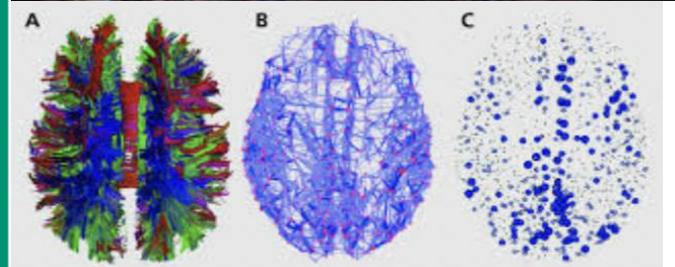
**DIFFERENT FORMS OF EMPATHY
HOW NEUROSCIENCE IS NOW CATCHING UP WITH WAYS OF CONNECTING**

Different forms of Empathy:

How Neuroscience is now catching up with ways of connecting

Carolyn Cousins

carolyntunedin@gmail.com

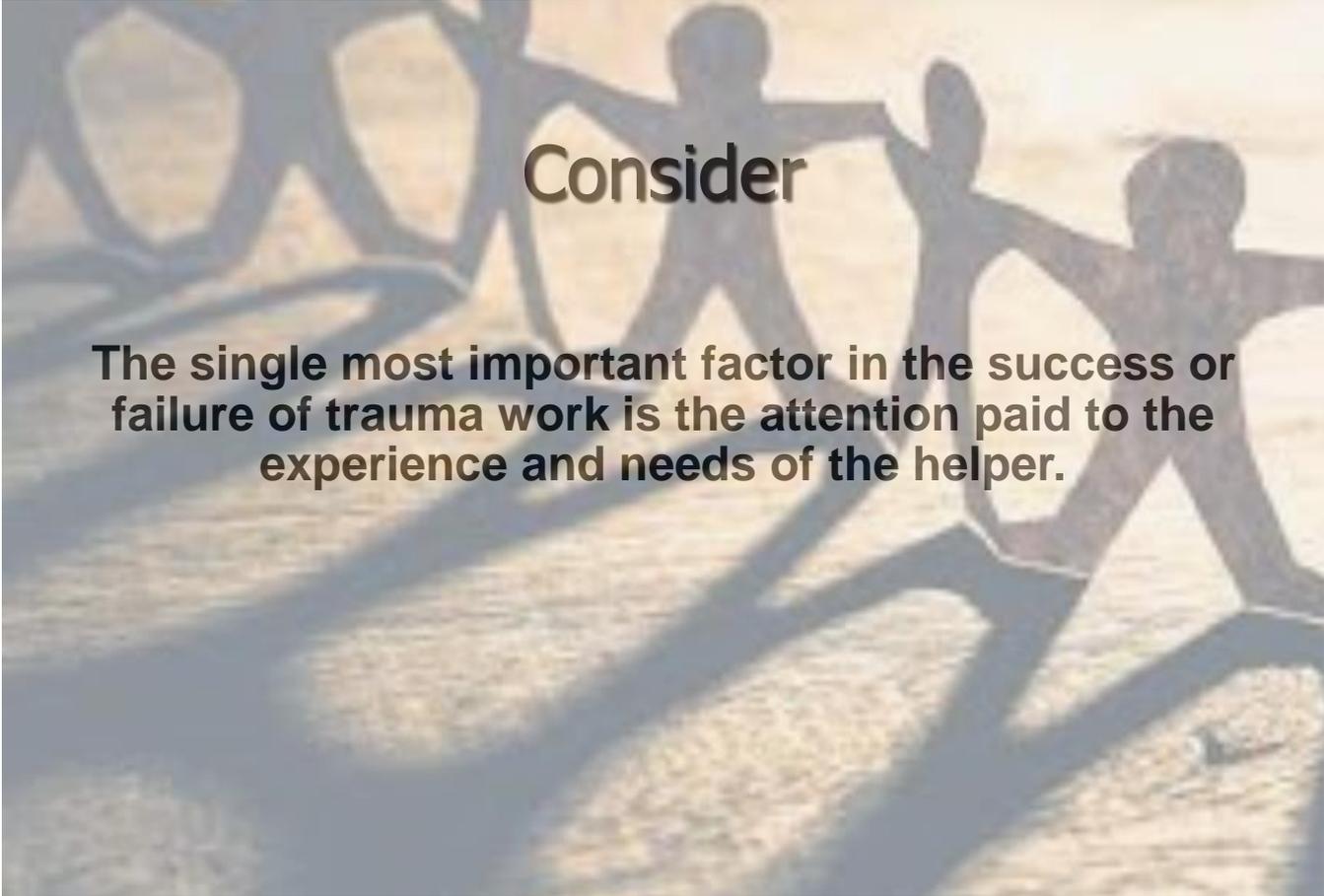




A Stance of Cultural Humility

My approach to practice is guided by values through acknowledgment of your essence; this ensures commitment to cultural humility which will inform our approach to cultural safe practice.

(Murray-Garcia & Tervalon 2012)



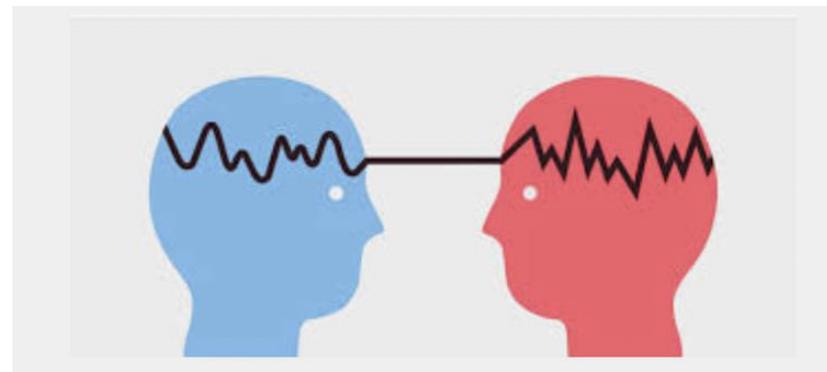
Consider

The single most important factor in the success or failure of trauma work is the attention paid to the experience and needs of the helper.



CONNECTION AND EMPATHY

- So, how does empathy and connection develop and what does it look like?



- From Neuroscience – to ways of knowing and being

Mapping our empathy – Mirror Neurons



Supporting First Nations ways....

- **Richer relational environments – extended family environments**
- **Collective Parenting – complex and reciprocal obligations**
- **Protection against risk – greater number of carers**
- **Nurturing, educating and keeping each other safe**
- **Anticipation and planning for children's needs**

Lawrie and Cousins (2018) Reclaiming Our Safe Ways of Parenting – How Trauma

Research is supporting Aboriginal ways of child rearing

The security of an Aboriginal child would be derived from:

- ✓ A network of regular caregivers &
- ✓ Acceptance in their community
- ✓ Enduring relationship with more than one carer

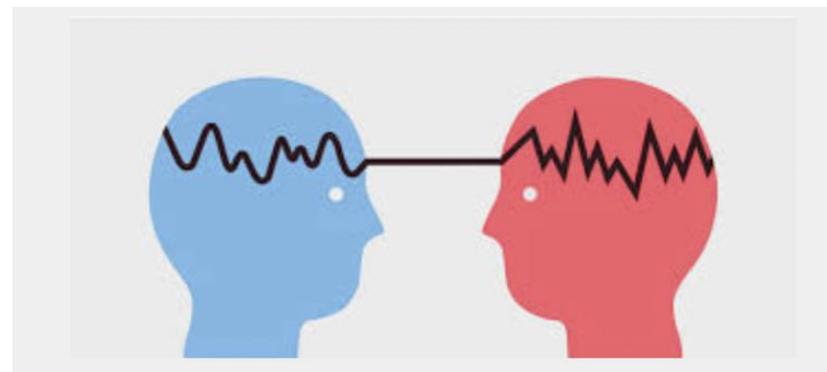
Yeo, S (2003) Bonding and Attachment of Australian Aboriginal Children. Child Abuse Review. 12:292 - 304





CONNECTION AND EMPATHY

- So, how does empathy and connection develop and what does it look like?



- From Neuroscience – to ways of knowing and being

Empathy types and Impacts

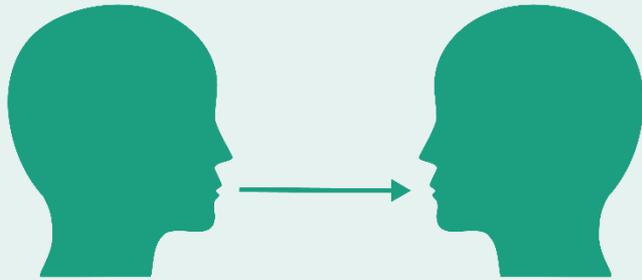
Emotive Empathy

Distanced / Cognitive Empathy

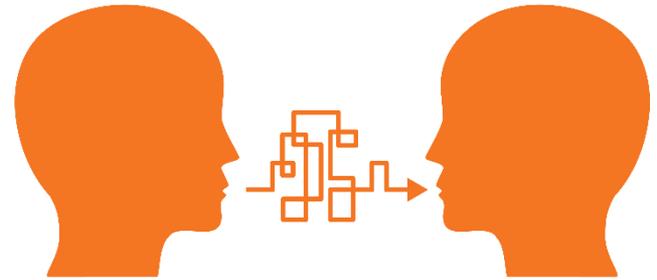
Compassionate / Justice / Action Empathy

Degree of Visual Empathy

PHONE COMMUNICATION



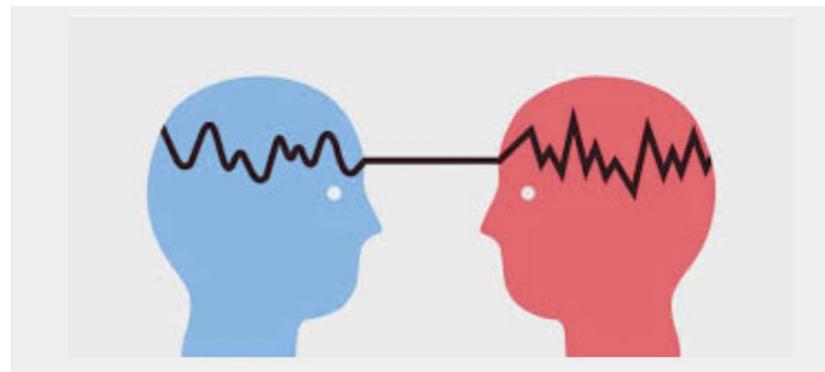
VIDEO COMMUNICATION





CONNECTION AND EMPATHY

- So, how does empathy and connection develop and what does it look like?



- From Neuroscience – to ways of knowing and being

“Paradox of our work – we need empathy, but that empathy makes us more vulnerable”

Kate Cairns





THE 'JOURNEYING WITH' CHANGES US

VICARIOUS TRAUMA - is the transformation or change in a worker's inner world as a result of responsibility for, and empathic engagement with, traumatised people. We witness - with our feelings - and we feel not only compassion, but also responsibility, and varying degrees of helplessness and agency.

(Pearlman & Saavitne 1995)

VICARIOUS RESILIENCE - we not only are affected and impacted by the difficult and traumatic stories we hear, but also that we are boosted and encouraged by the strength, abilities and recovery shown by the people we work with, even in the most difficult of circumstances. We find inspiration through working with those who have overcome/or who are continuing to deal with, adversity.

(Hernandez, Gangsei and Engstrom 2007)

IMPACTS OF (OVER) CONNECTION AND RESPONSIBILITY

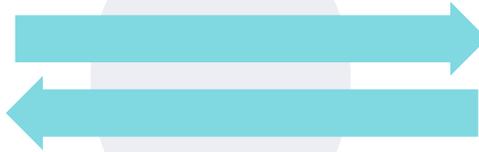
DISCONNECTION

Disconnection &
detachment, diminished
empathy



ZONE OF FABULOUSNESS

Collective ethics, collaborative,
innovative & justice doing



ENMESHMENT

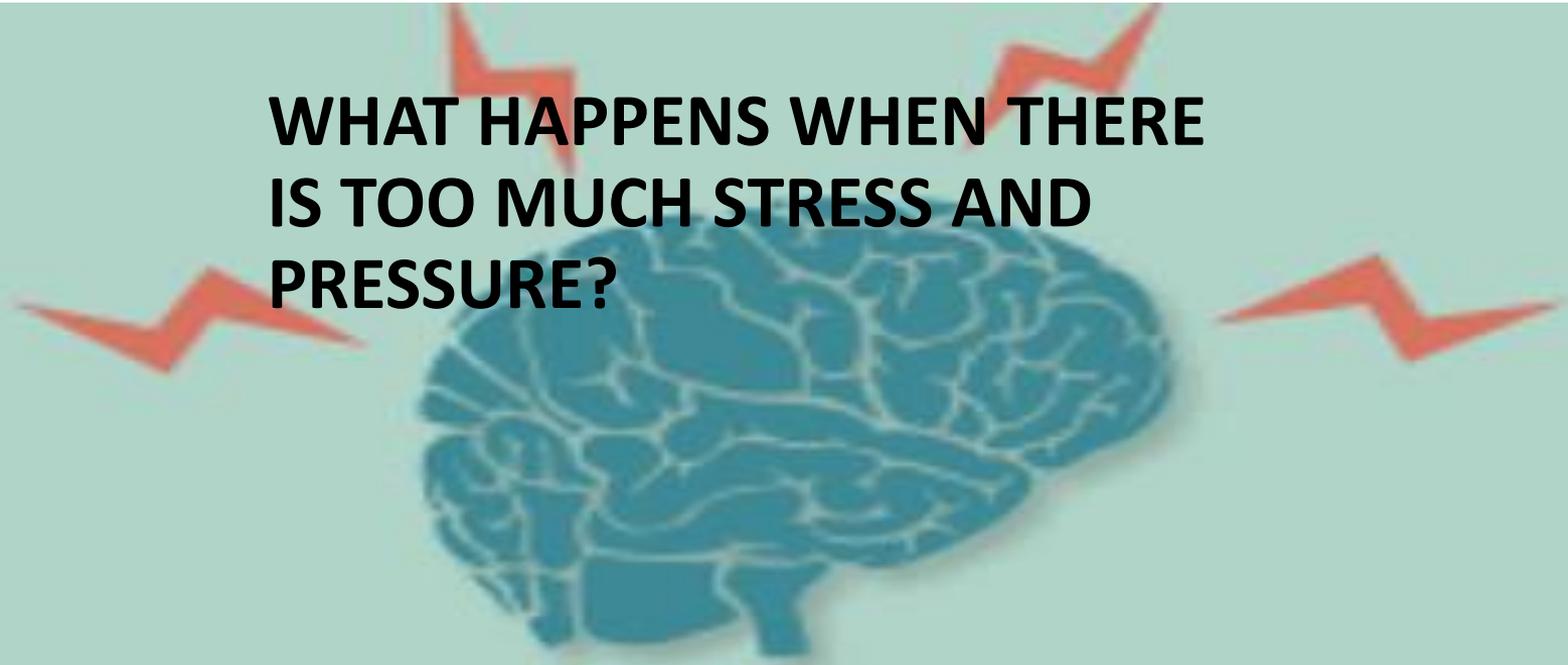
Moving in too close &
transgressing boundaries



MOVING UP AND DOWN THE RIVER



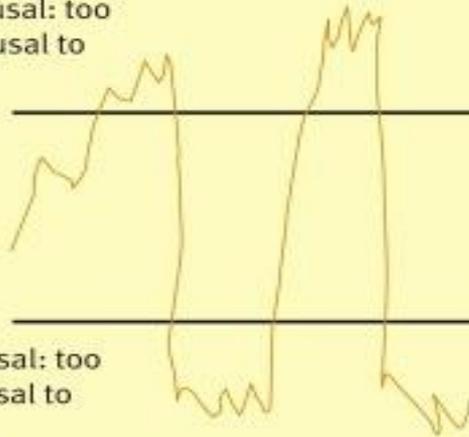
**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE
IS TOO MUCH STRESS AND
PRESSURE?**



WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

The 'window of tolerance': maintaining optimal arousal for trauma-focused therapy

Hyperarousal: too much arousal to integrate



Emotional reactivity
Hypervigilance
Intrusive imagery
Obsessive/cyclical cognitive processing
Tension, shaking, ungrounded

↑
'Window of tolerance'
Optimal arousal zone
↓

Hypoarousal: too little arousal to integrate

Flat affect
Inability to think clearly
Numbing
Collapse

(Adapted from Ogden and Minton 2000)¹⁰



NOTICE



SENSORY PROFILE

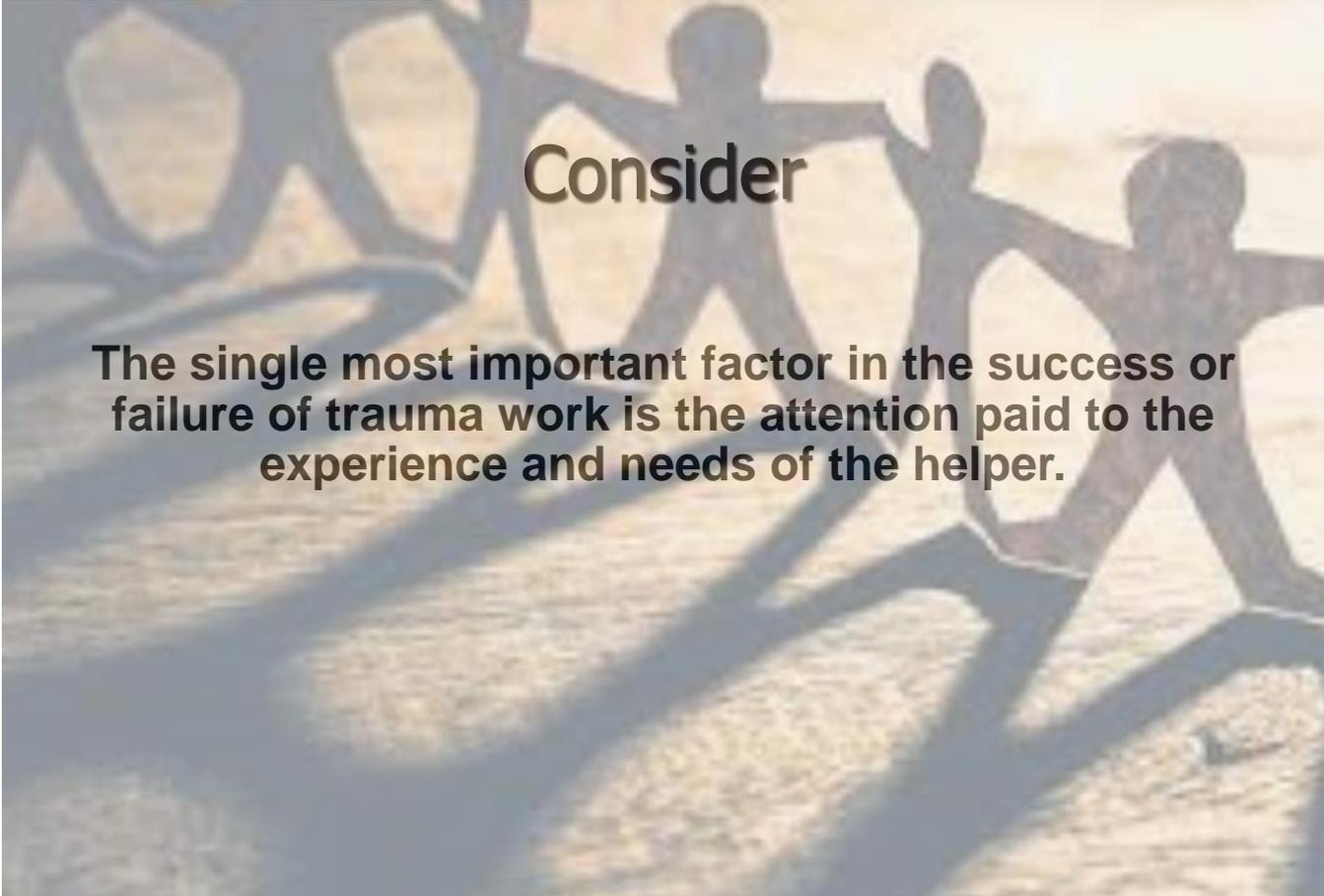
PAYING ATTENTION TO
YOUR NEEDS



CONNECTION



WHAT IS MINDFULNESS FOR YOU?



Consider

The single most important factor in the success or failure of trauma work is the attention paid to the experience and needs of the helper.



Paying attention to what brought us into the work; what sustains us; what renews us. Reconnection and re-empowerment