

Creative Pathways to Resilience: Effective Interventions for Children and Adolescents after Traumatic Loss

Northwest Conference
on Childhood Grief
Safe Crossings
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Resilience



if flowers can grow
through blankets of melting snow,
there is hope for me

t.k.gregson

**In the midst of winter,
I found there was,
within me, an
invincible summer...**



**...no matter how hard the world
pushes against me, within me, there's
something stronger –
something better,
pushing right back.**

~Albert Camus



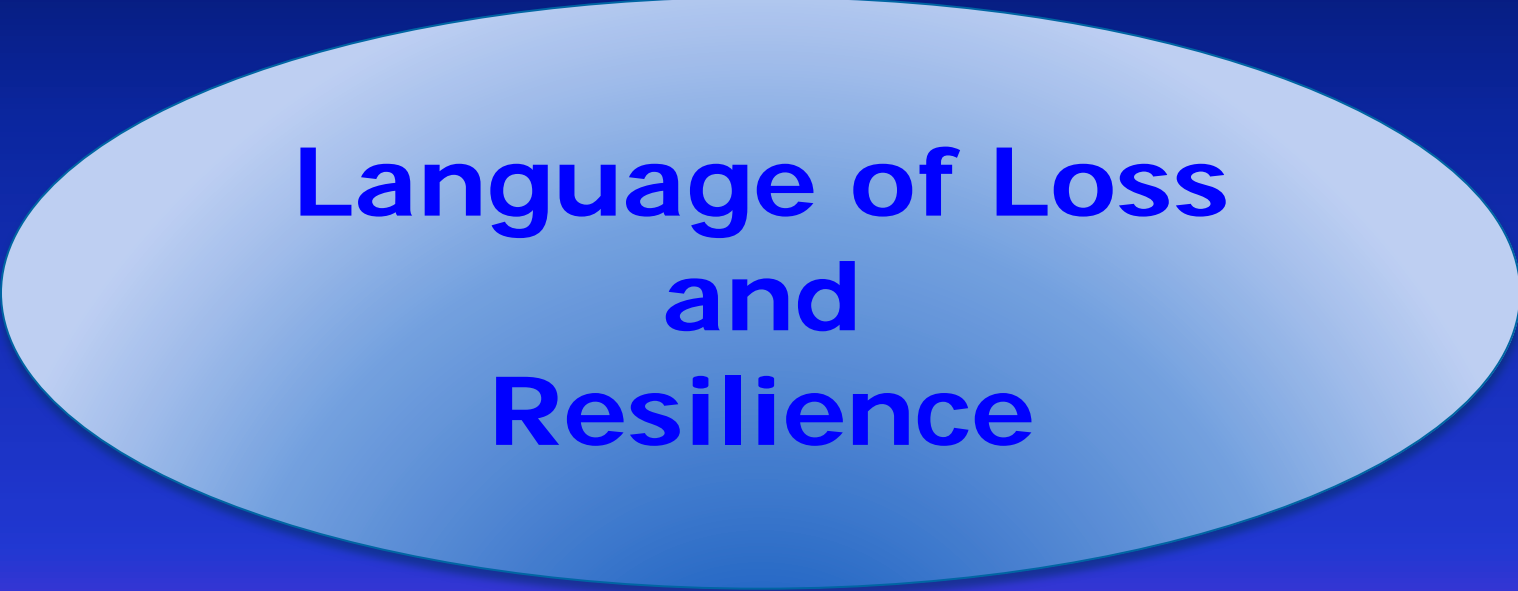
INTENTION

REFLECTIONS ON RESILIENCE

RISKS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

REMINDERS, RESOURCES, AND REVELATIONS



**Language of Loss
and
Resilience**

RESILIENCE: To “withstand”

Capacity of a system to withstand or recover from significant disturbance that threatens its adaptive functioning, viability, or development. ~ Masten (2013)

...also the strength and ability of families, schools, and communities to provide children with things they need to adapt and thrive.

www.resilienceproject.org

Bereavement as Trauma: Loss of an attachment figure...

*...like an earthquake that shakes the foundation of a person's life...
Bereavement makes the commonplace foreign* Shear (2007)

Relearning the World

Reweaving the web of daily life

Carrying the pain of loss

Learning to love in separation

Attig, (2011)



Fostering Resilience after Trauma

5 factors that influence positive adaptation

1. Trauma characteristics
2. Child's own resources
3. Child's family characteristics
4. Community support
5. **Developmental path**



~ Cloitre (2004), Masten (2001),

Factors in Childhood Bereavement

Age

Developmental Stage

Cognitive Level

Temperament

Past coping at home,
school, with peers

Hobbies/interests

Medical history

Past losses

Type of death

(sudden, anticipated,
stigma, preventability),

Contact with deceased

Expression of “goodbye”

Relationship to deceased

Social supports

Grief reactions

Grief response

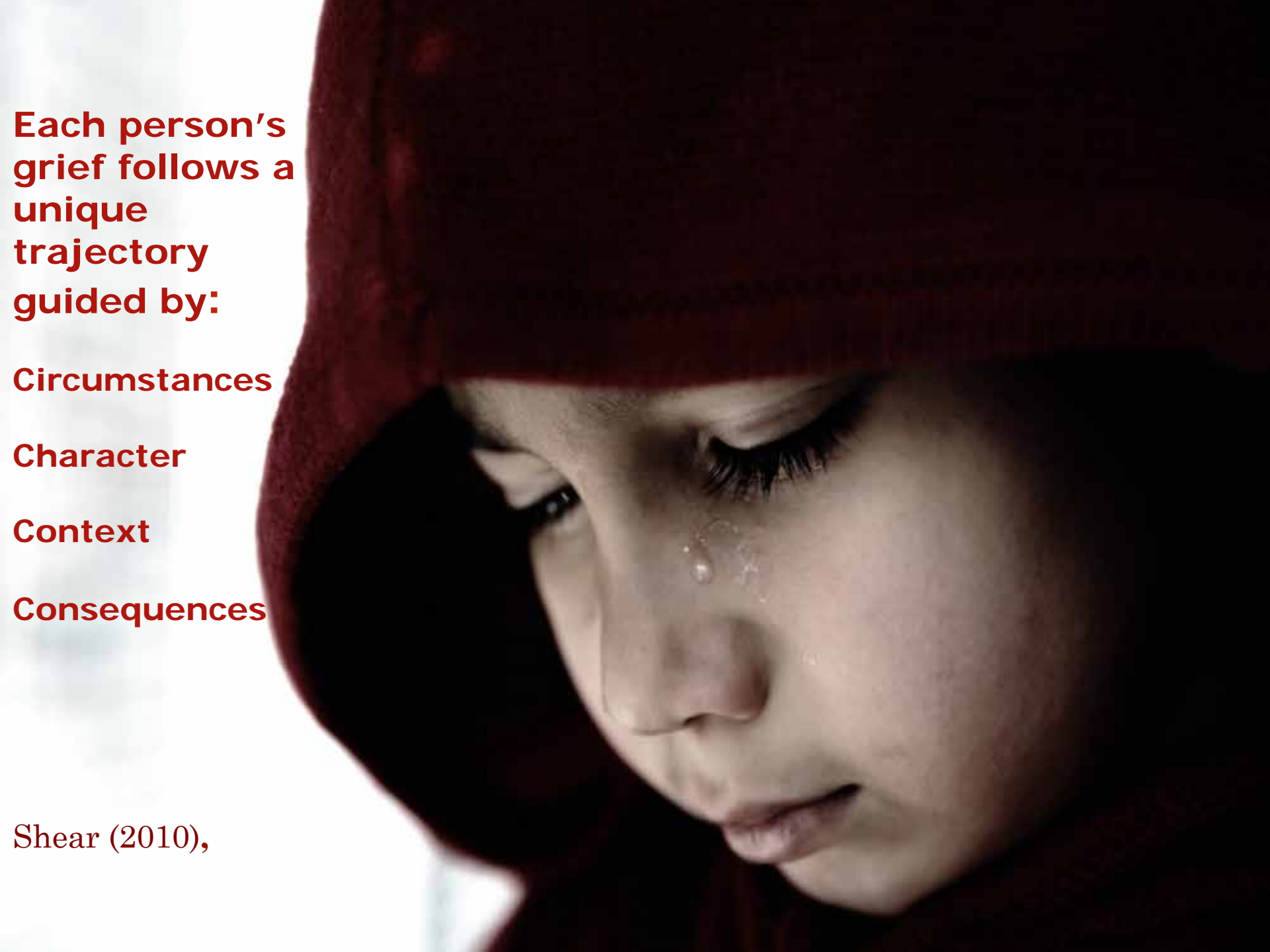
Family, Social, Spiritual, Cultural ~ Values, Rituals, Beliefs

NCTSN Core Curriculum on Childhood Trauma Task Force (2012). *The 12 core concepts: Concepts for understanding traumatic stress responses in children and families.* www.nctsn.org

Key Factor: Caregiver-Child Relationship

Best predictor of the child's adjustment is the ability of the surviving parent/caregiver to function and provide nurturance and support

Silverman (2009), Worden (2009)

A close-up photograph of a young girl wearing a red headscarf, looking down with a tear on her cheek. The background is dark and out of focus.

**Each person's
grief follows a
unique
trajectory
guided by:**

Circumstances

Character

Context

Consequences

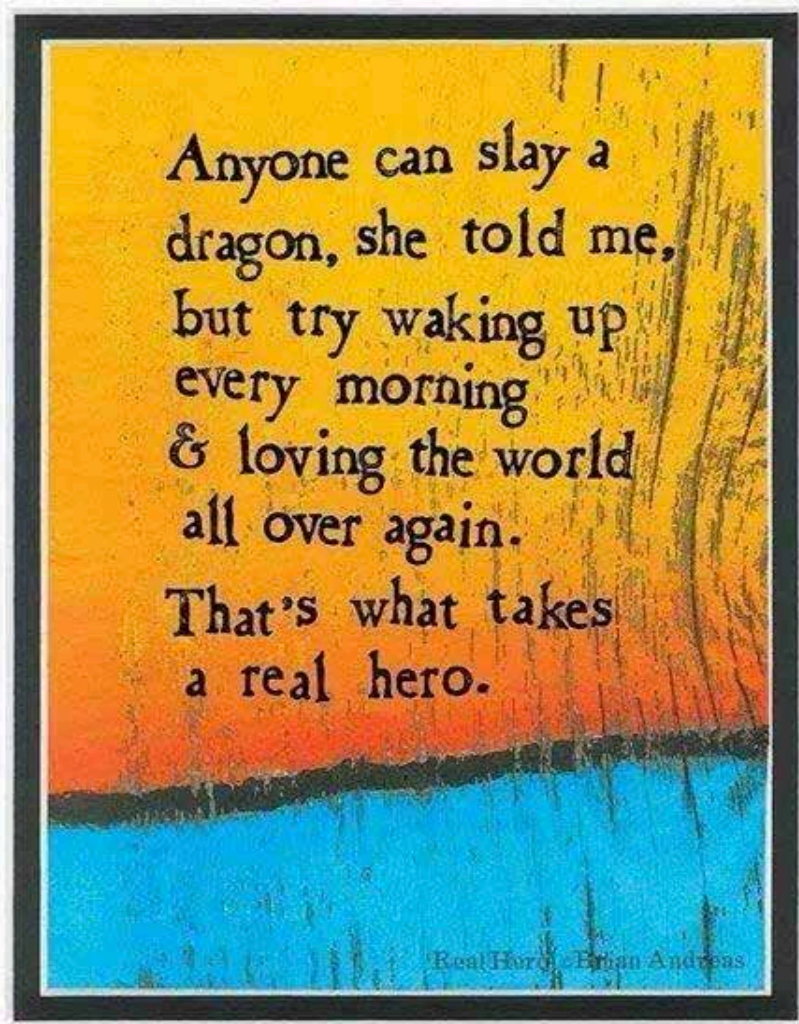
Shear (2010),



Death Chamber,
Edward Munch

RESILIENCE

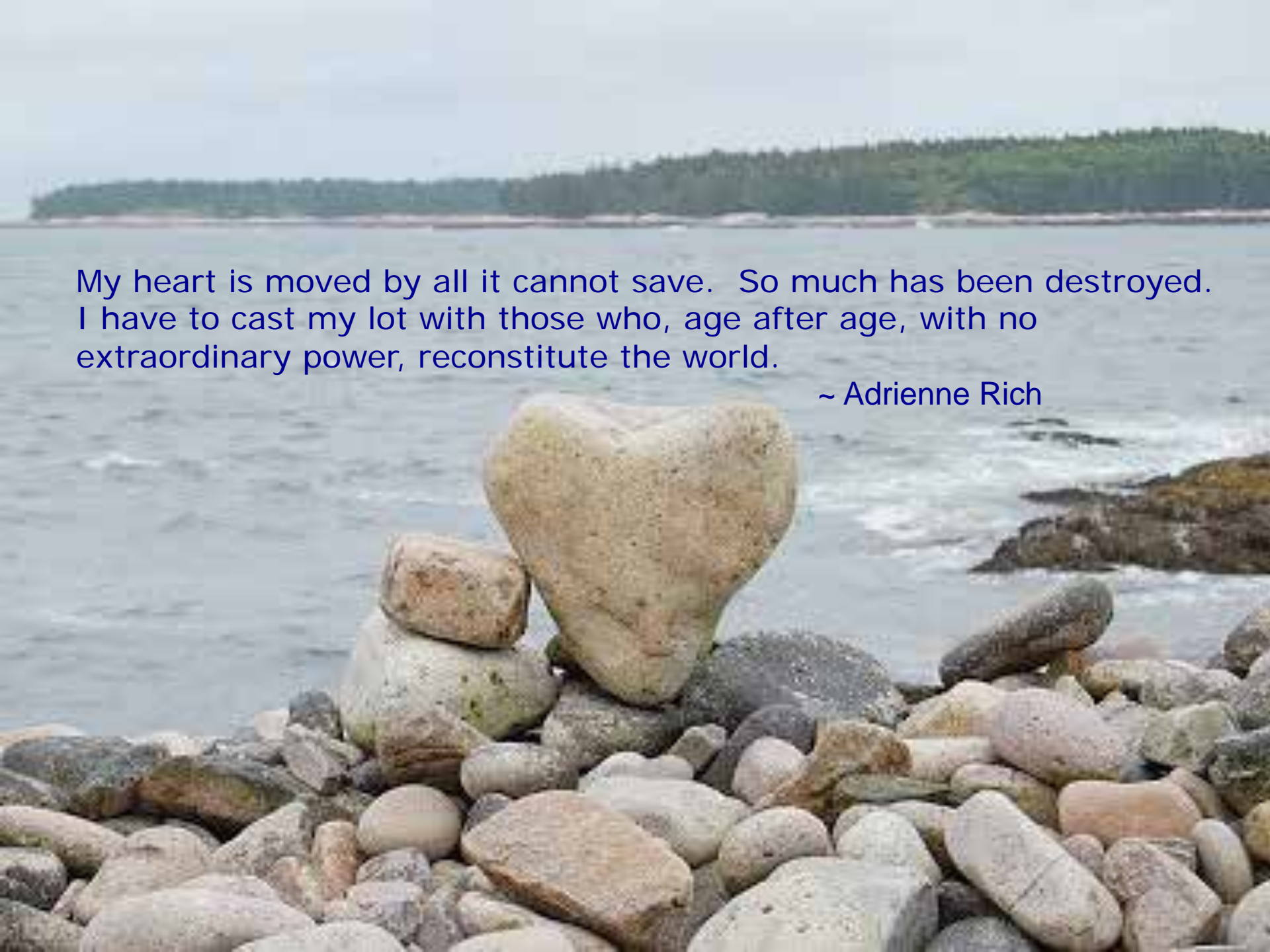
*One family's
story of hope
and healing*



Anyone can slay a
dragon, she told me,
but try waking up
every morning
& loving the world
all over again.

That's what takes
a real hero.

Real Hero © Brian Andreas

A photograph of a rocky coastline. In the foreground, a large, smooth, light-colored rock is shaped like a heart. It is surrounded by other smooth, rounded rocks of various colors (tan, grey, brown). The ocean is in the middle ground, with gentle waves breaking against the shore. In the background, a long, low island or headland covered in dense green forest stretches across the horizon under a grey, overcast sky.

My heart is moved by all it cannot save. So much has been destroyed.
I have to cast my lot with those who, age after age, with no
extraordinary power, reconstitute the world.

~ Adrienne Rich

KEEPER OF THE LIGHT



Music, Harvey Reid

To keep a lamp burning we have to
keep putting oil in it ~ Mother Teresa



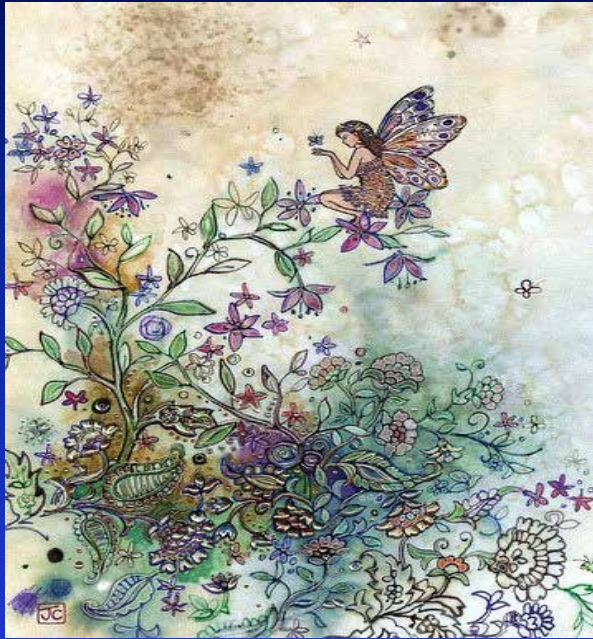


Images of Light



Why I Wake Early,
Mary Oliver

Resilience: The Magical Ingredient



Resilience is the magical ingredient that helps propel someone beyond adverse circumstances to not just surviving but thriving...

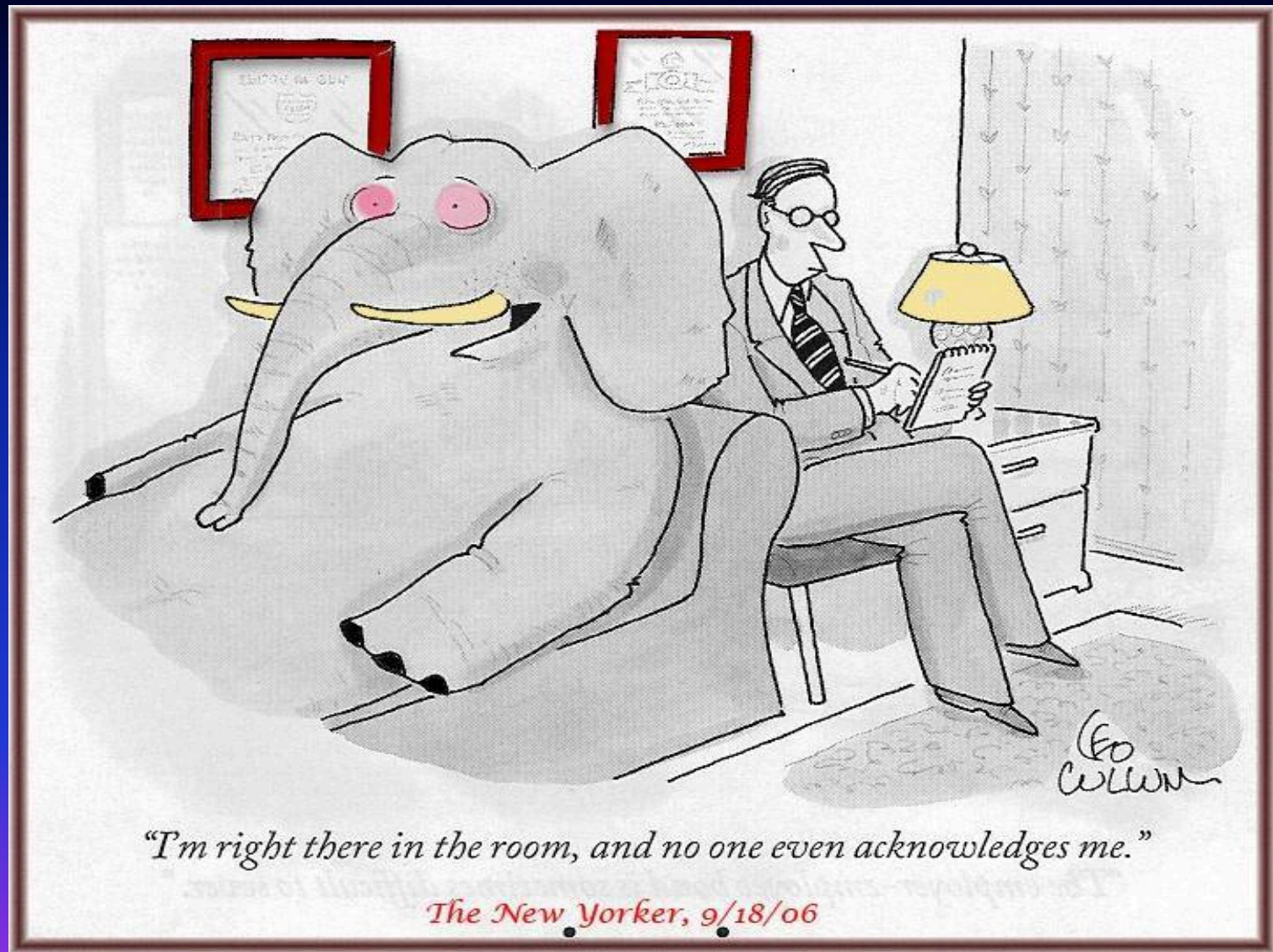
~ International Resilience Research Project (2013)

WONDER
&
JOY





Susan Paradis, *Rise and Shine*
From *My Mommy*



"I'm right there in the room, and no one even acknowledges me."

The New Yorker, 9/18/06

★ SEEN

★ SOOTHED

★ SAFE

★ SECURE

Daniel Siegel, MD



Exquisite Witness

Jeffreys (2011)

It takes a village to say goodbye...



7 C's

Competence

Confidence

Connection

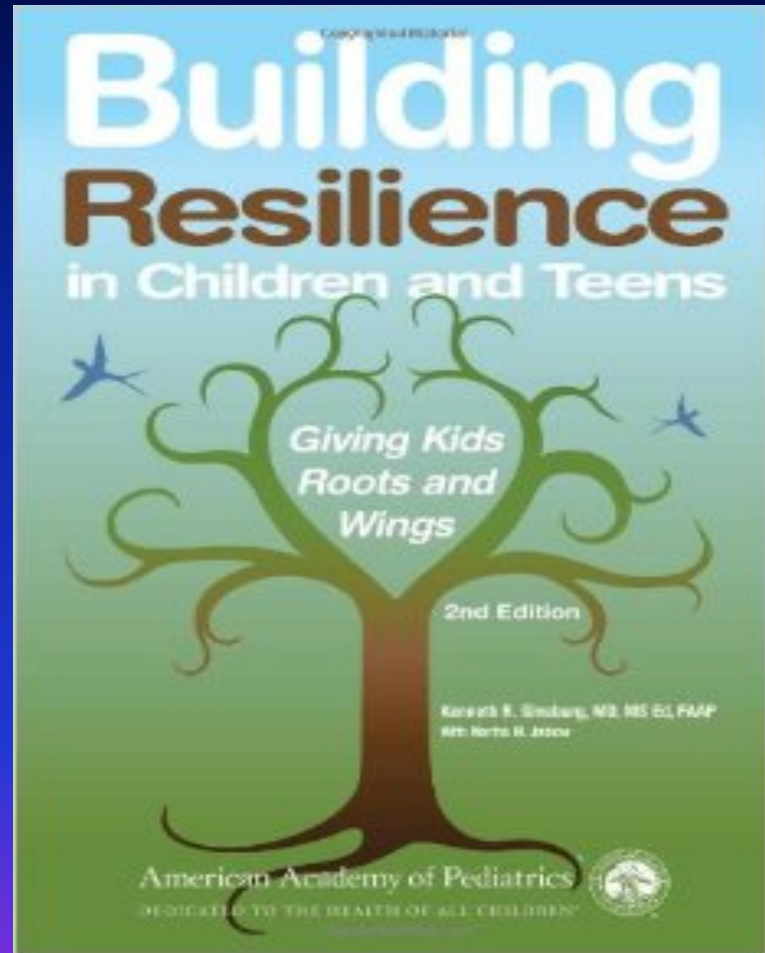
Character

Contribution

Coping

Control

Ginsburg (2011)

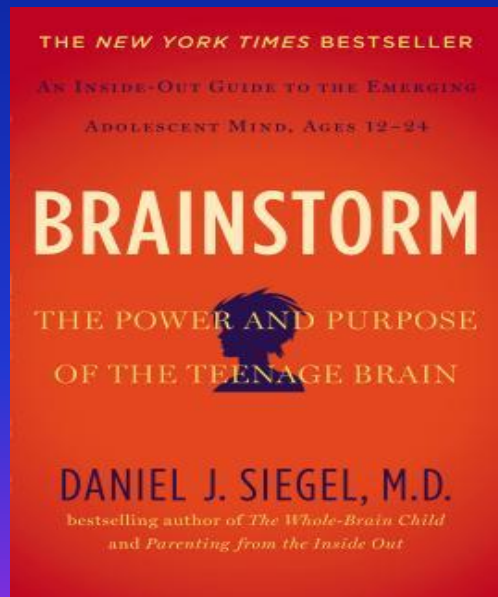


Predictors of Positive Outcomes for Teens

Positive mental health of parent, caregiver

Feeling understood/not alone

Finding positive forms of expression



Brainstorm: Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain,

Siegel (2013)

ESSENCE

Emotional

Sparks

Social

Engagement

Novelty

Creative

Exploration

Siegel (2013)



Thriving *despite context* -
surpasses resilience
post traumatic growth

(Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995)

Charles River,
Boston



July, 2009

Our journeys are carved on paths unpaved...
When we stumble during our frailest moments,
May we never, never forget
To look up and notice that our path is tightly woven with several others
by our side- This may be the struggle, but with support
We, too, survive. ~ JCL

Lament, Kathe Kollwitz



There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.

~Maya Angelou

Healing Power of Stories

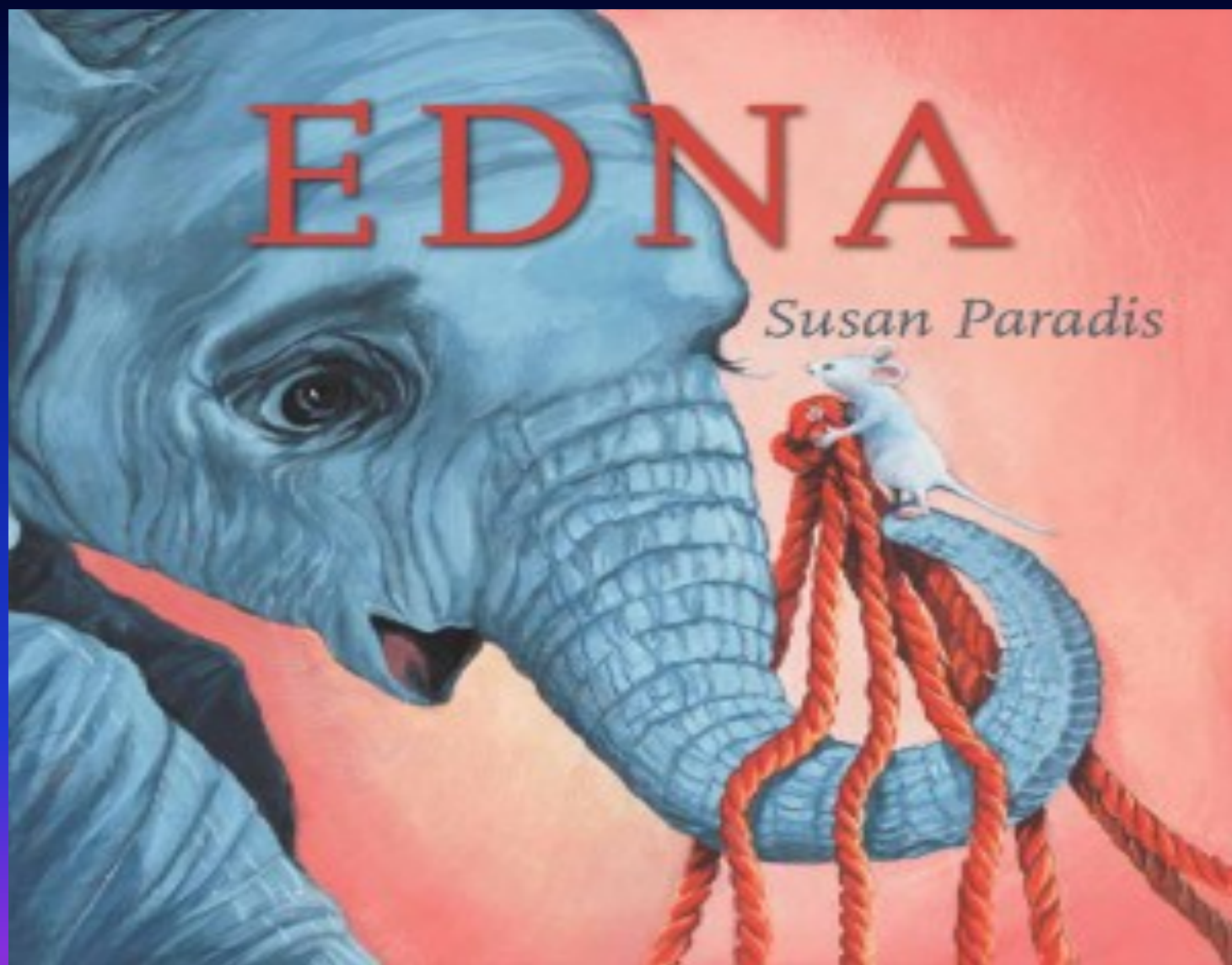


Image from
My Mommy
by Susan Paradis

*All sorrows can be born if you tell a story
about them* ~ Isak Dinesen

EDNA

Susan Paradis



Ways to use EDNA in grief support

Puppets



Creative Dramatics

- ~ **interactive storytelling**
- ~ **story enactment**
- ~ **role play**
- ~ **creative movement**



Importance of Parent/Caregiver Education/Involvement

Component of Evidence-based Practices

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy TF-CBT
(Childhood Traumatic Grief)

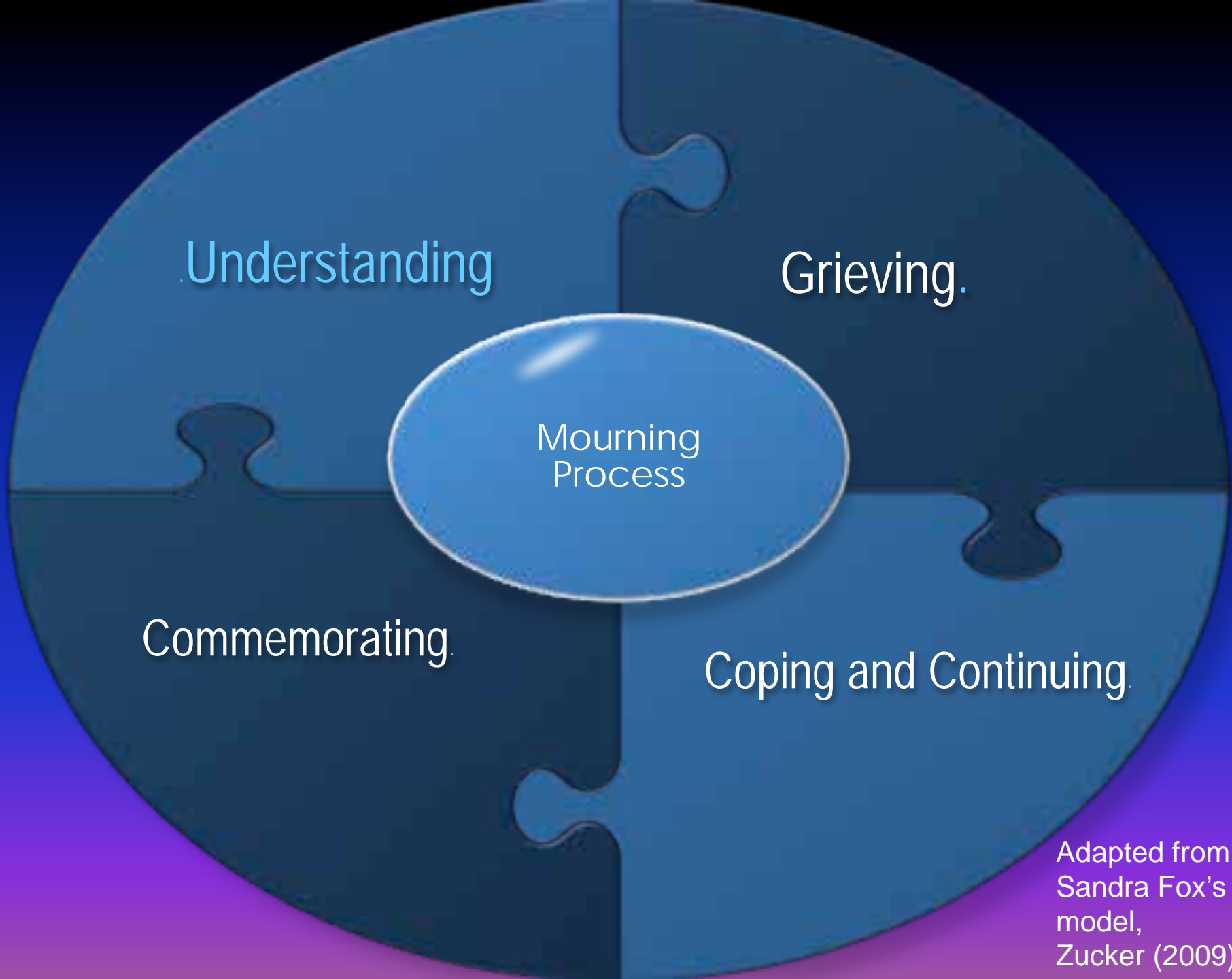
Grief and Trauma Intervention (GTI) (Violent Death)

Family Bereavement Program (parental death)

Promoting Healthy Adaptation After Traumatic Loss

Provide information about the grief process
Corr & Balk (2010)

- **Recognize** *risk factors*
- **Reinforce** *protective factors*
- **Respond** *to signs of distress*



Adapted from
Sandra Fox's
model,
Zucker (2009)

Dual Process Model

Loss Oriented

Involves the emotional
and reactive
processing of the loss



Restoration Oriented

Dealing with the many
life changes and new
roles that are brought
about by the loss

Oscillating between these stressors

(Reference: Stroebe and Schut, 1999)

Risk Factors



- Circumstances of the death
- Relationship to the deceased
- Previous traumas or deaths
- Prior physical, emotional, or learning problems
- Caregivers who have difficulty adjusting
- Limited or less support from friends, family or other adults
- Negative peer influences
- Additional stresses related to changes after loss and distressing reminders (secondary adversities)

NCTSN Core Curriculum on Childhood Trauma Task Force (2012). *The 12 core concepts: Concepts for understanding traumatic stress responses in children and families.*

Protective Factors

- Strong connections to family and community
- Social/peer support
- Sense of belonging, sense of identity and good self-esteem
- Having meaningful forms of expression
- Skills in problem solving, coping and self-regulation
- Constructive use of leisure time
- Positive outlook on life
- Identification of future goals
- Sense of control in their lives
- Easy access to support and professional help if needed.

United States Public Health Service, (1999); www.nctsn.org (2012)



Risk Factors:

Sibling loss

Sudden Death

Negative last interaction

Feelings of guilt, remorse

Protective Factors:

Strong parental support

School support

Humor

Memories

Meaningful action

Key to Resilience:

Capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses

APA (2011)

TRIGGERS

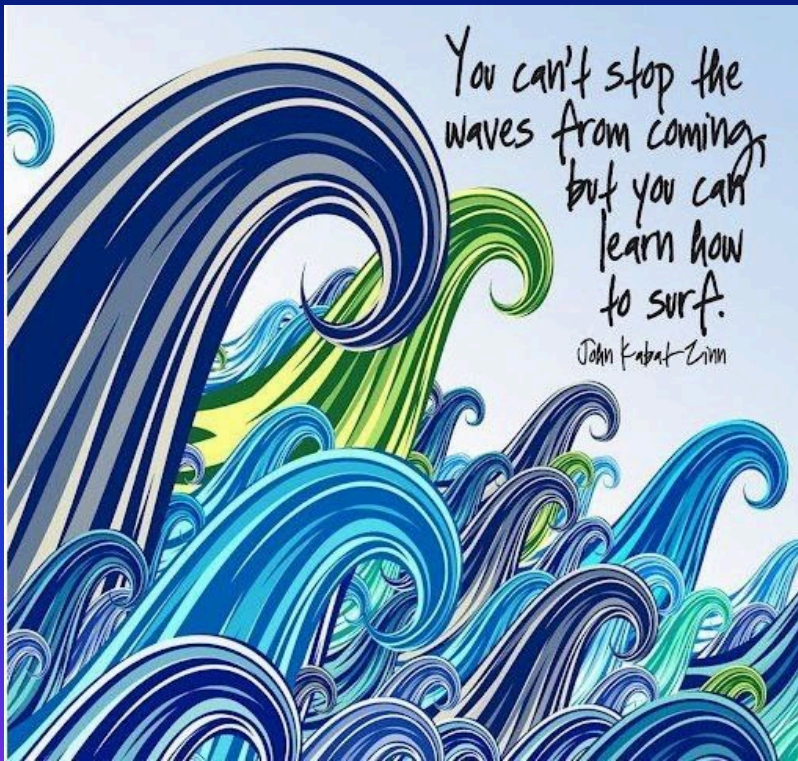
- Trauma Reminders
- Loss Reminders
- Change Reminders (Secondary Adversities)

- Predict, Prepare, Permission (Process)

www.nctsn.org

Safety First!

A strong emotion can be like a storm and when a storm is about to arrive, we should prepare so we can cope with it
(THE RESILIENCY PROJECT)



Stabilization

Emotional Regulation

Triggers can hit hard unexpectedly

Subsequent
Temporary
Upsurge of
Grief



(e.g. first regatta)

~ Rando (1993)


Trauma Symptoms that interfere with grieving process

- Intrusive thoughts about the death
- Avoidance and numbing
- Hyperarousal



5 Broad Intervention Principles

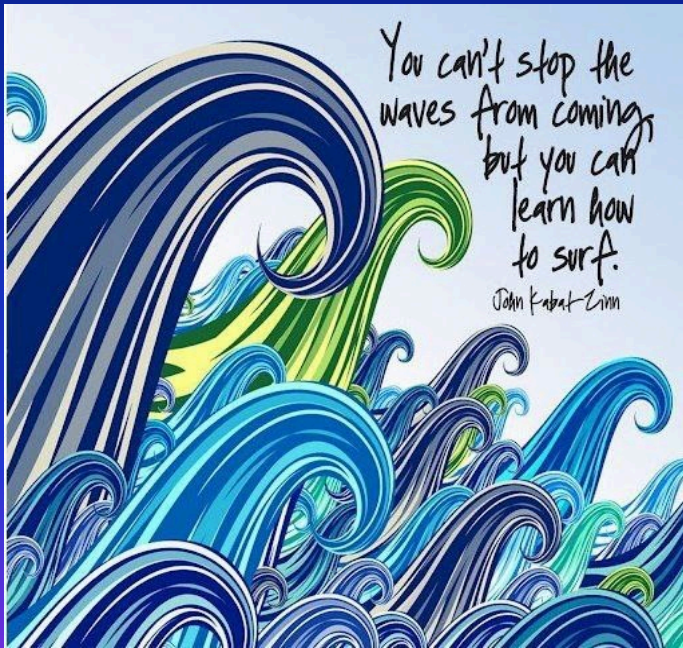
- Promote a sense of safety
- Promote calming, ability to self-regulate
- Promote a sense of self- and collective efficacy
- Promote connectedness
- Promote hope

Protecting, supporting, or restoring fundamental
adaptive systems  **resilience**

Masten (2011)

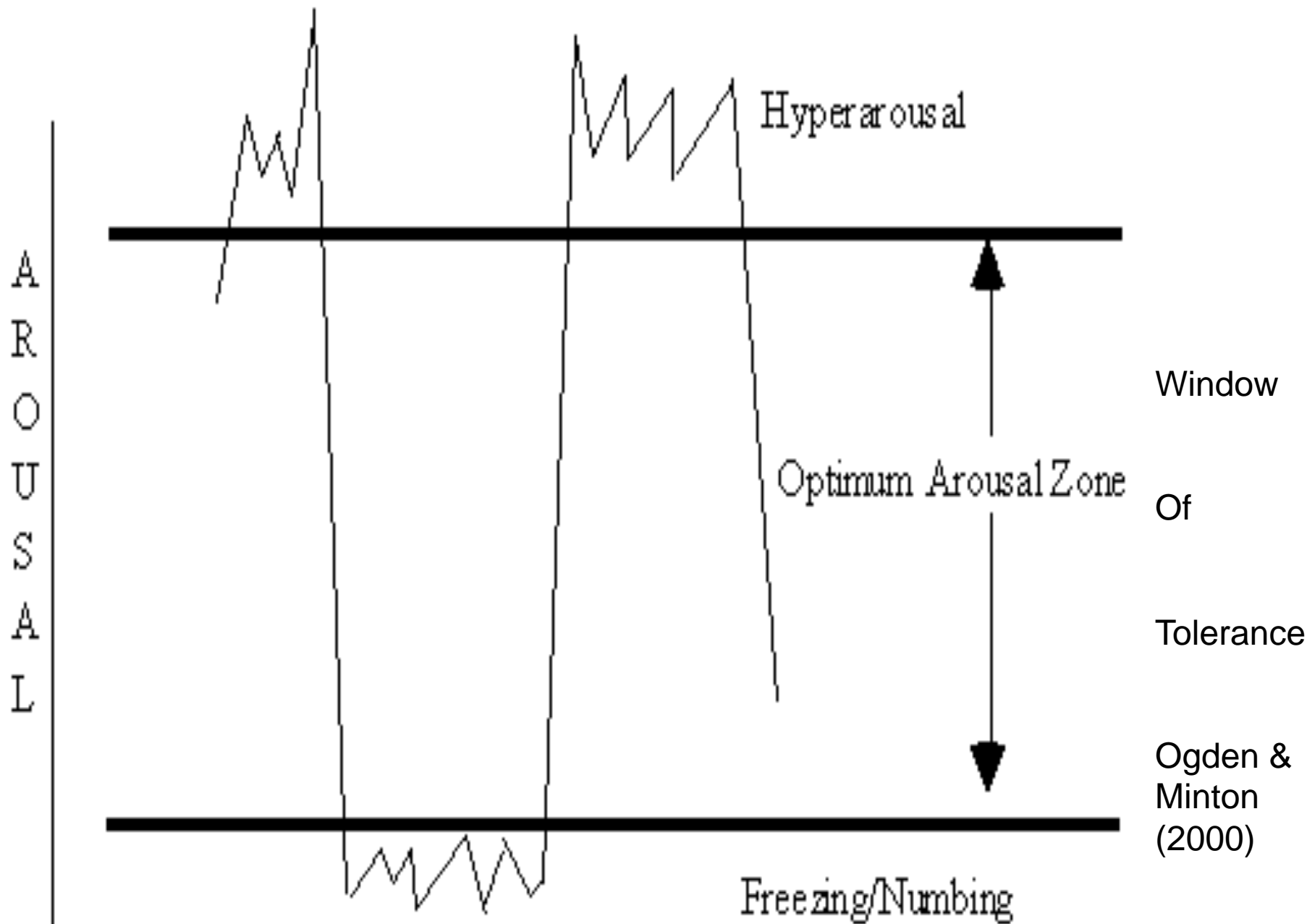
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Stabilization

Self Regulation



Structure “Flow” of Session

- Opening
- Development
- Closing

Transitioning Rituals: Openings and Closings

- Rituals and routines
- Calming, soothing, or energizing activities
- Breathing/relaxation/mindfulness
- Movement, yoga, music, writing, drawing
- Guided imagery, anchors, resources
- Stories

Use of Ritual



Calming/ Self-Regulation Practices

||

I was slammed to the ocean floor—where I was surprised to find a great calm beneath the tumult.

Now when the world becomes a tsunami, I ask how can I dive down to a quiet place where I can gather myself—from which I can surface, survive, and help others thrive.

Where are your quiet depths and how do you get there? ~ Parker Palmer

It is music and dancing that make me at peace with the world; and at peace with myself. Nelson Mandela



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGS7Spl7obY>

There was a time when movement was our language... Mary Whitehouse (pioneer of dance/movement therapy)



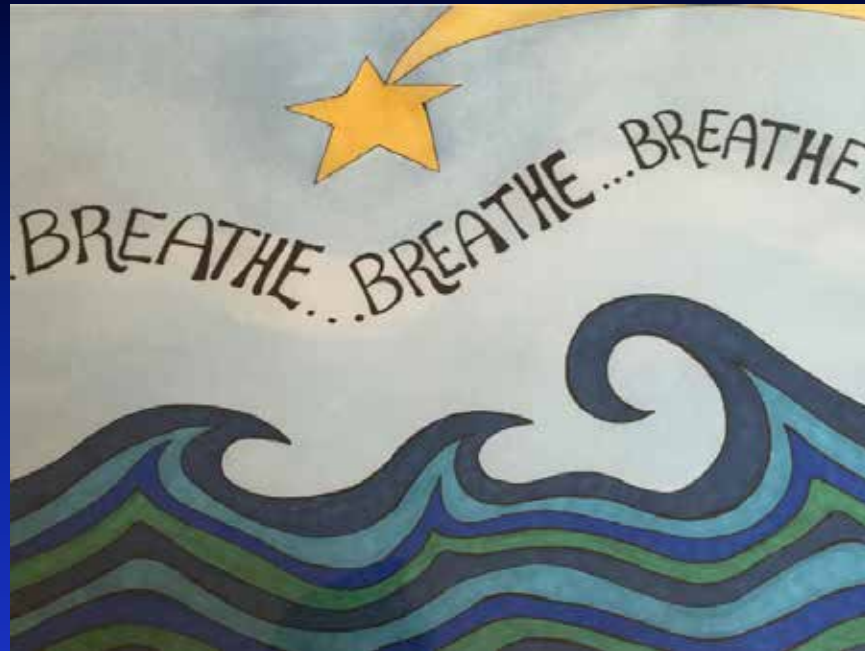
Dance/Movement Therapy (DMT)

Befriending the Body

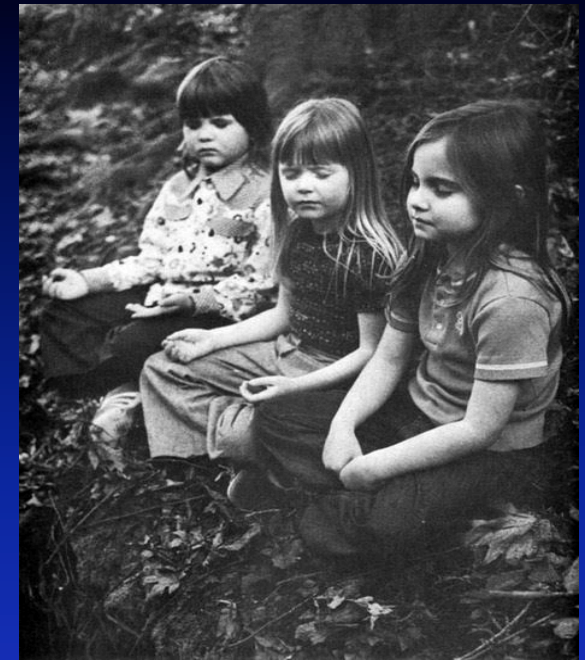
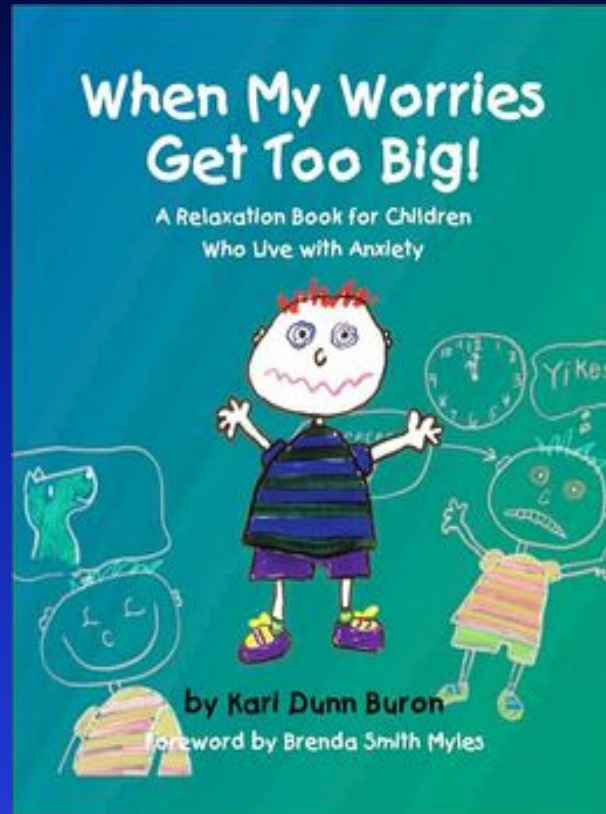
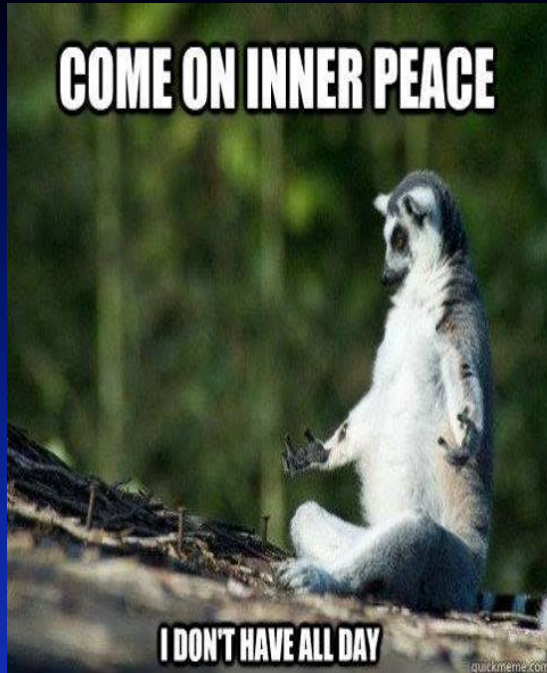
- Body as Resource
- Body as Instrument of Expression
- Body as Safe Place

I had forgotten that my body was also a sanctuary, a haven.

~DMT participant



Relaxed Body
Imagery with Breath
Movement with Breath
4 B's
Tension/Relaxation



Research consistently shows that self-regulation skill is necessary for reliable emotional well being.

Breathing Meditation

Breathing in, I know I am breathing in. Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.

Breathing in, my breath grows deep.

Breathing out, my breath goes slowly.

Aware of my body, I breathe in.

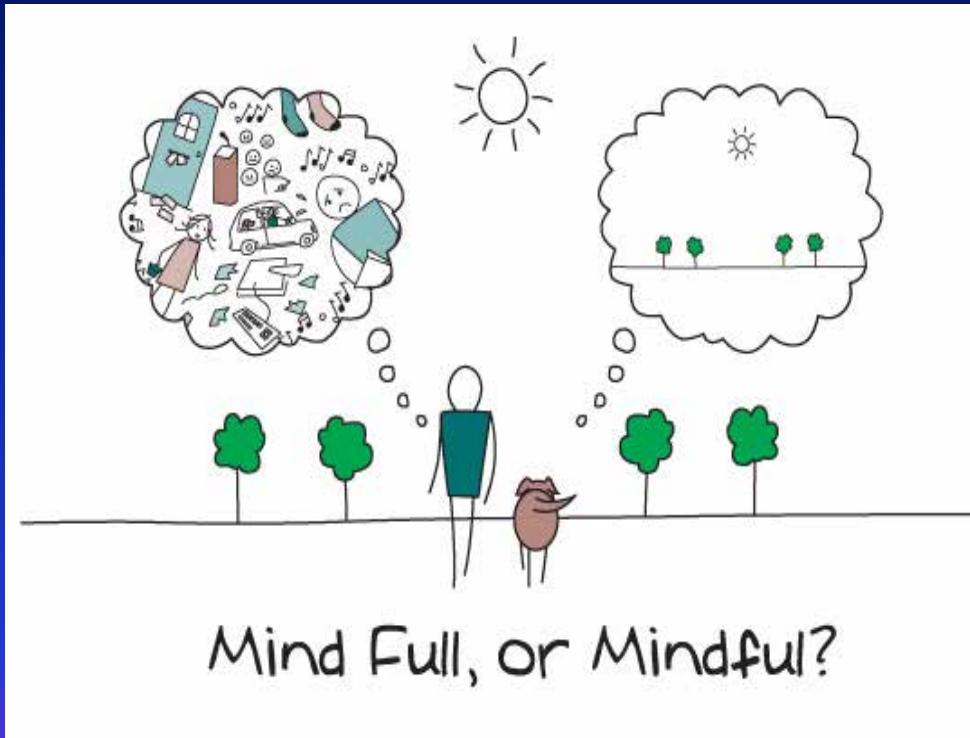
Relaxing my body, I breathe out.

Calming my body, I breathe in.

Caring for my body, I breathe out.



Mindfulness



Mindfulness Practice

With children, teens, adults

Mind Jar

Distant Focus Breathing

Sensory Focus

Mirroring

Rhythm and music

Soothing, sustained
movement



CONNECTION/SOCIAL SUPPORTS

**PROTECTIVE
FACTORS**

MASTERY



SELF-REGULATION

Healing Potential of the Arts

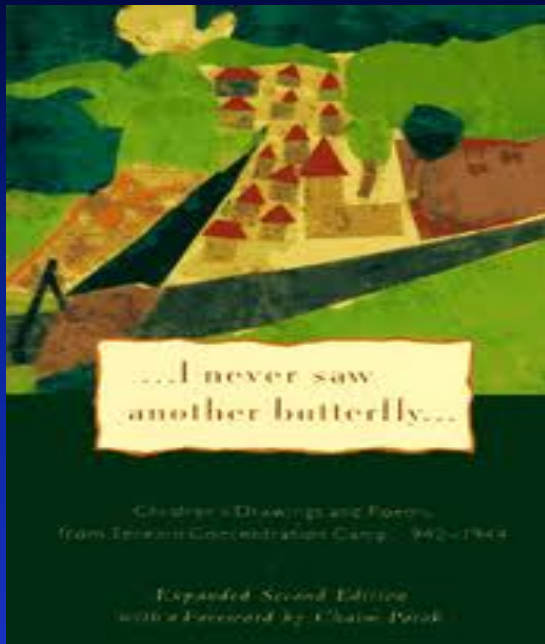
Throughout history the arts have embodied the value of controlled emotional expression. Art can fully evoke emotion while, at the same time, preventing emotion from raging free and wreaking havoc of which we know it to be capable.

*~Joan Erikson, *The Arts as Healing**

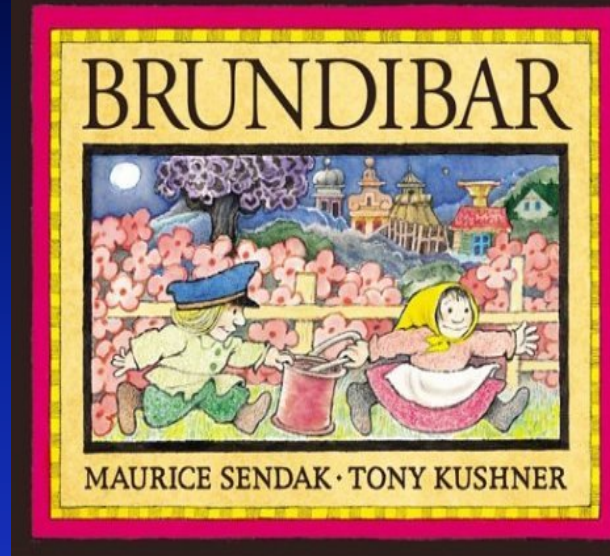
The Arts as Restorative: Role of Imagination/Creativity

- Art provides hope and respite from pain of loss (wishes-envisioning-continuing bonds)
- Art helps us cope with a range of feelings
- Art offers “aesthetic distance” – safe observer stance to externalize feelings
- Art serves as a voice when words are not enough

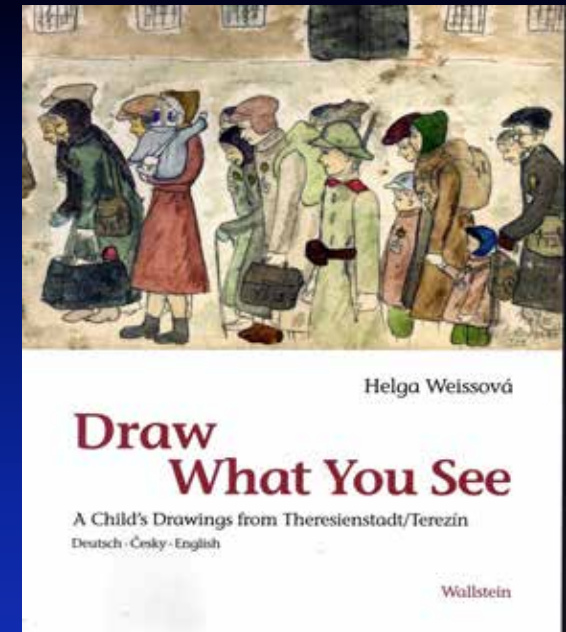
Extraordinary Resilience



Poems and Drawings from the children of Terezin, the Nazi concentration camp (1942-1945) including *Birdsong*



Maurice Sendak's picture book based on the Czech opera that was performed 55 times by the children of Terezin



Dedicated art teacher in Terezin, Friedl Dicker Brandeis (rescued 4,500 drawings before she left on train to Auschwitz)

George Horner, 90, Holocaust Survivor



"Without music, I would not be alive"

For me, it was like a medication... because when I played the music, I helped the people so I felt good. If it weren't for the music I wouldn't be alive.

To transcend the most horrible thing and to be able to be positive is a testament to the human spirit

-Yo Yo Ma

Dance of Niobe,

~Mary Wigman, Germany, 1940s

*It was if all the mothers wanted to
drop their sorrows into my lap,
urging me:*

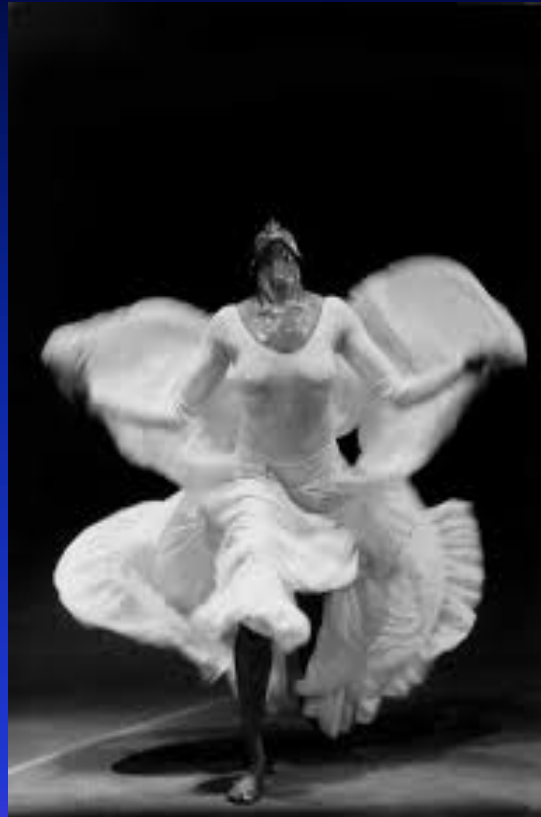
**“You say it, we have no voice and
no tears any more!”**



Lamentation ~Martha Graham



CRY ~ Alvin Alley



“Coming out of a world of pain and trouble, she has found her way-and triumphed.”

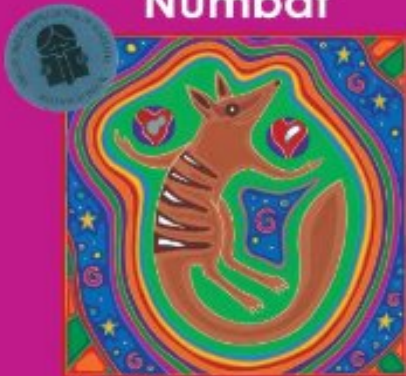
Jamison (1973)



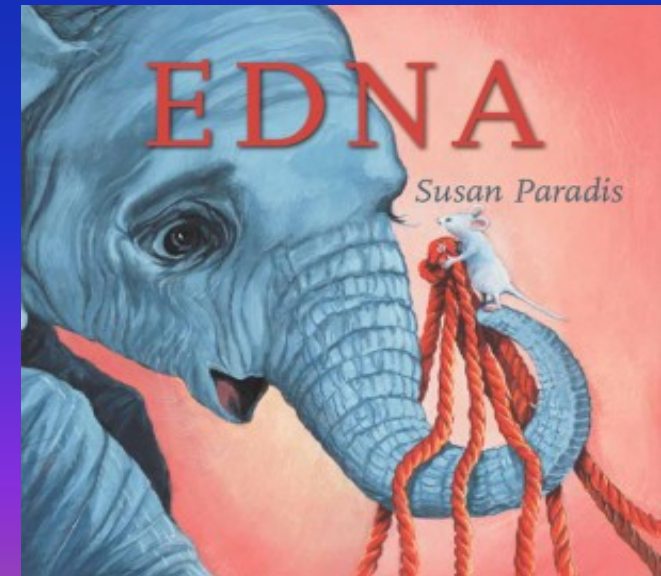
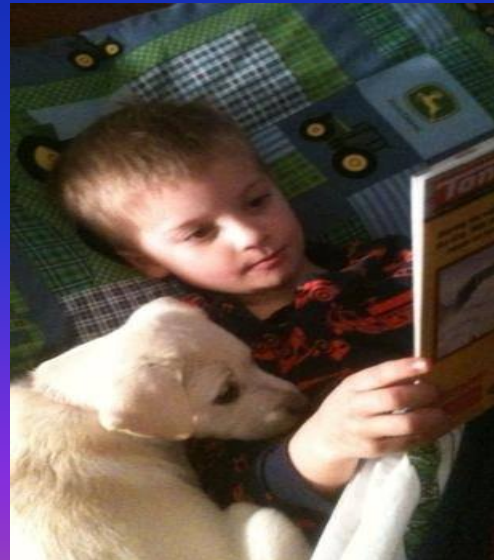
**"Books are many things:
lullabies for the weary,
ointment for the wounded,
armour for the fearful and
nests for those in need
of a home."**

- Glenda Millard.

The Two-Hearted Numbat



AMBELIN & EZEKIEL
KWAYMULLINA



Art opens the closets, airs out the cellars and attics. It brings healing.

~Julia Cameron , The Artist's Way

Examples from individual and
group sessions

Be open to the creative expression of others...



© THE NEW YORKER COLLECTION 1991 ROBERT MANKOFF FROM CARTOONBANK.COM ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

“Say what’s on your mind, Harris—the language of dance has always eluded me.”

Benefits of Aesthetic Distance

- Externalizing feelings
(use of props, images, music, movement, art, poetry, journaling, drama, stories...etc.)
- Provides distance (*Partition*) from the emotionally-laden aspects of the trauma/loss

Approaches Tailored to Individual/Group Needs

Directive



Non-

Directive

Concrete/literal

Abstract

Resources/Anchors

Senses:

See

Hear

Feel

Smell

Taste

What helps you
feel:

safe, centered,
grounded?

Qualities

- Comfort/soothing
- Strength/power
- Courage
- Protection
- Pleasure
- Peace/calmness
- Stability
- Compassion
- Wisdom

Great resource: *Book of Qualities, Ruth Gendler*

Resources: Social Atom

- Who is in your inner circle?
- Who are your safe, support persons?
- What has helped you in the past when feeling sad, angry, lonely...etc?
- What do you need to help you through this?
- What would each of these supports say you needed now?

(Effective as a role play/sculpture/drawing)

Coping Crowns



Collage: Soothing Images



Support System

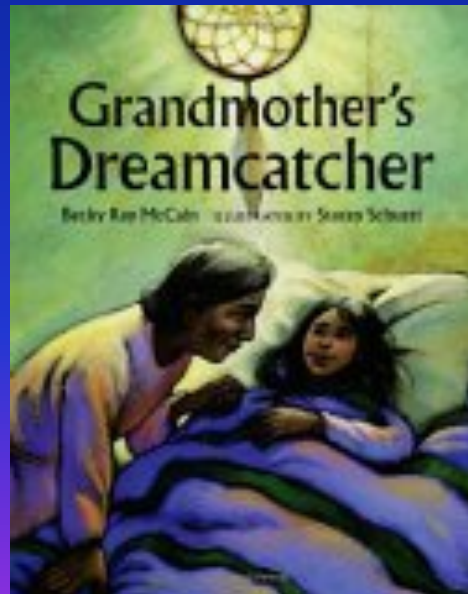
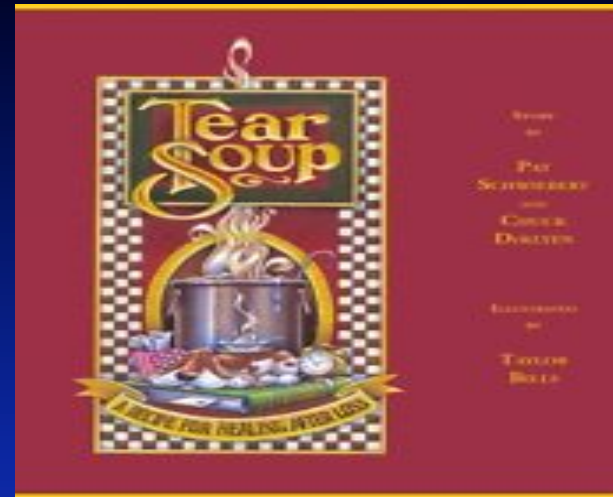


Remembrance Luminaria

Use of role models/ “wisdom figures”



Use of Story

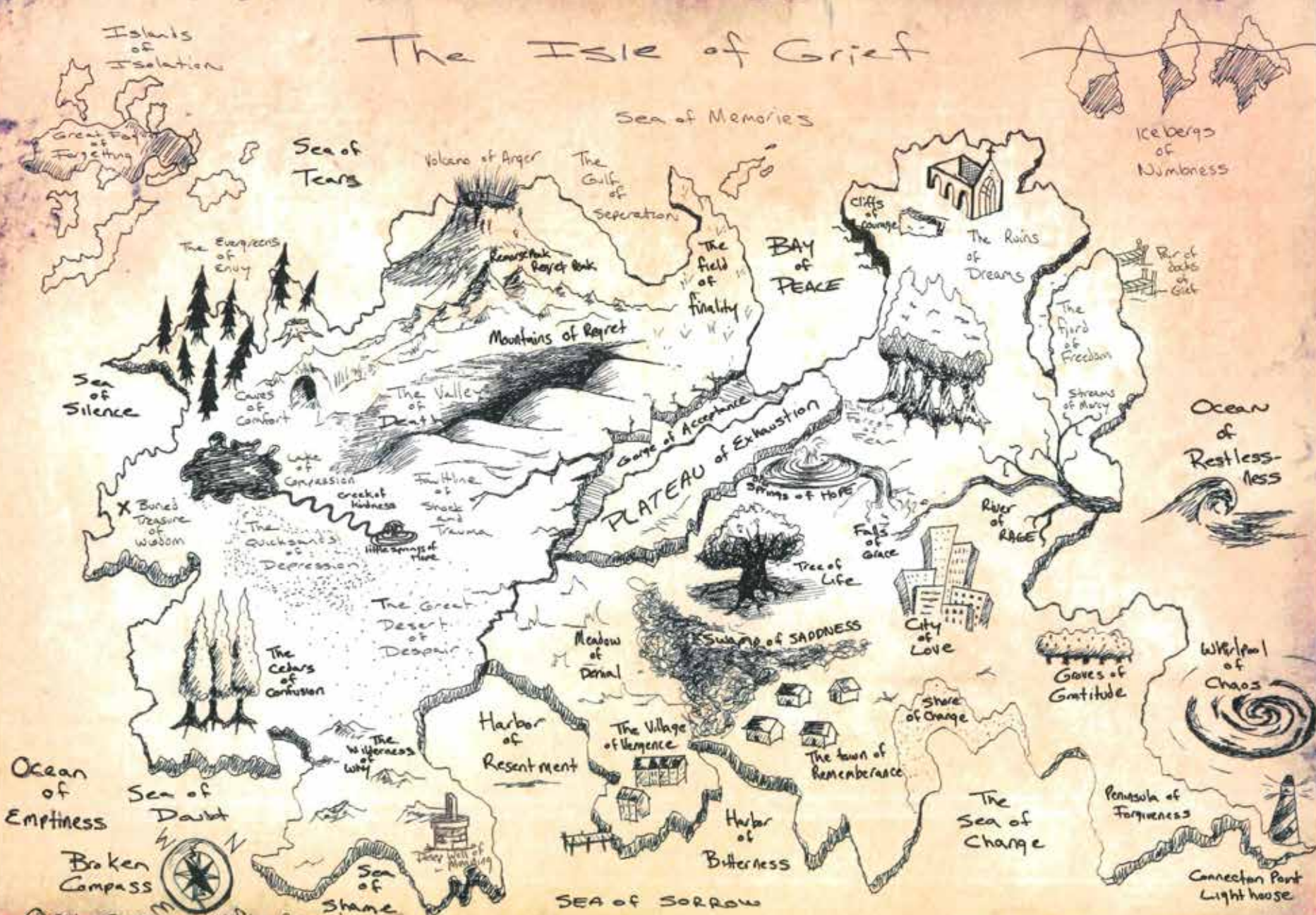


Imagination

Dream Catchers



The Isle of Grief



Icebergs of Numbness

Ocean of Restless-less

Whirlpool of Chaos

Peninsula of Forgiveness

Connection Point Lighthouse

Broken Compass



Images as Prompts

Lament, Kathe Kollwitz



Quote offered by participant to her group in response to image:
*Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also
what it takes to sit down and listen* ~ Winston Churchill

Inner Dialogues



Always behave
as if nothing had happened,
no matter what has happened.

-Arnold Bennett

Grandy's arms ached and she felt
stone cold and empty.

There were no words that could
describe the pain she was feeling.

What's more, when she looked out
the window it surprised her to see
how the rest of the world was
going on as usual while her world
had stopped.



Tear Soup, ~Pat Schwiebert

Associated song:

World Spins Madly On
~ The Weepies

Healing Mandala





I didn't think I'd feel any relief from the internal pain and turmoil but then it came. It's an indescribable feeling. This drawing is what the feeling looks like...
~ expressive therapy participant



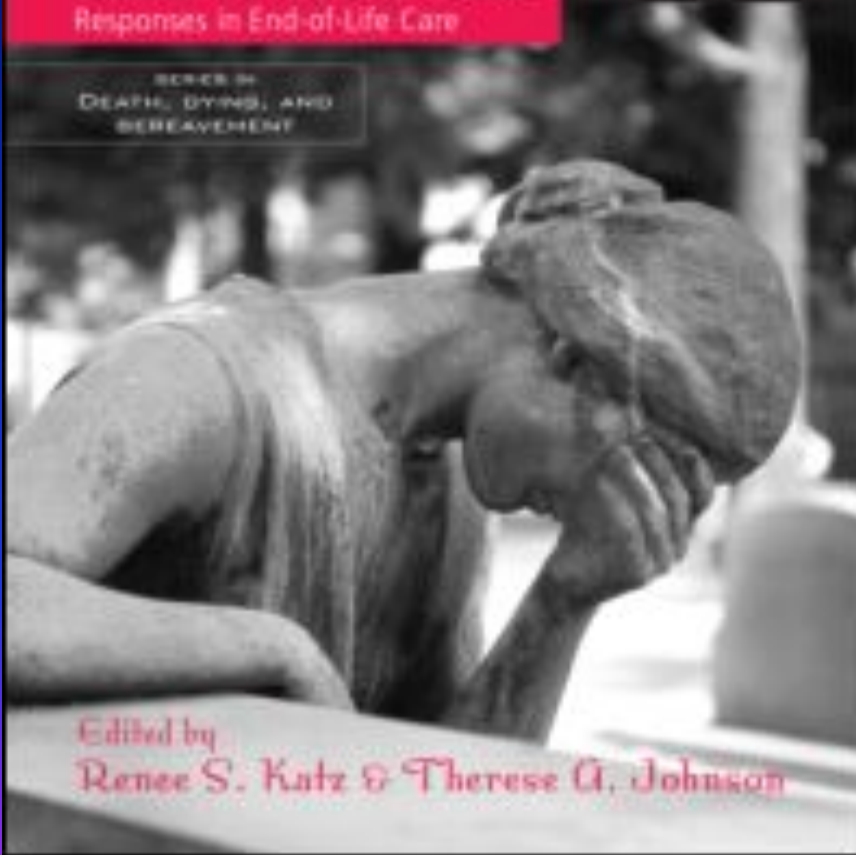
This is a representation of an actual dance. It was a dance of body and spirit; of pain, life, and connections; of surviving and prevailing...

DMT participant

When Professionals Weep

Emotional and Countertransference Responses in End-of-Life Care

SERIES IN
DEATH, DYING, AND
BEREAVEMENT



Edited by
Renee S. Katz & Therese A. Johnson

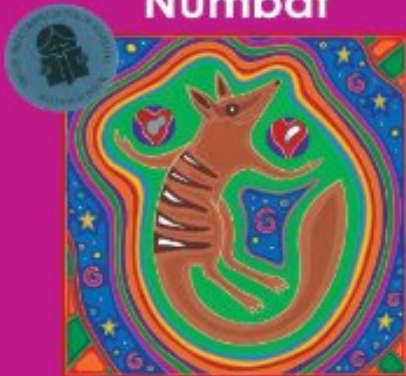
- Compassion Fatigue
- Vicarious Trauma
- Burnout



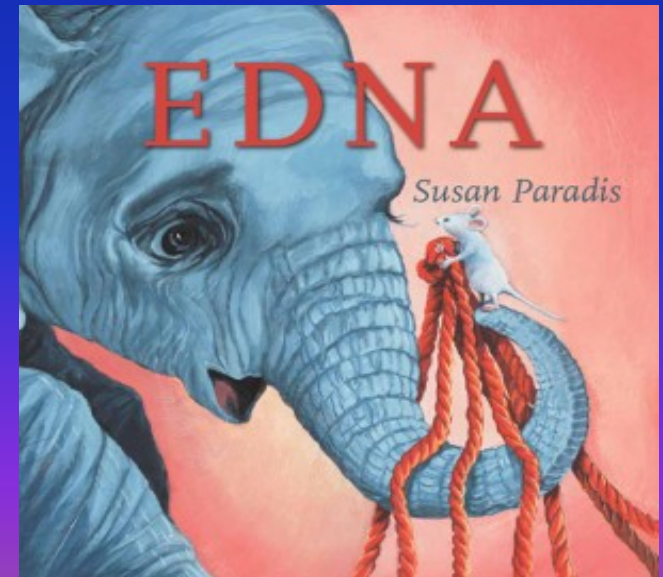
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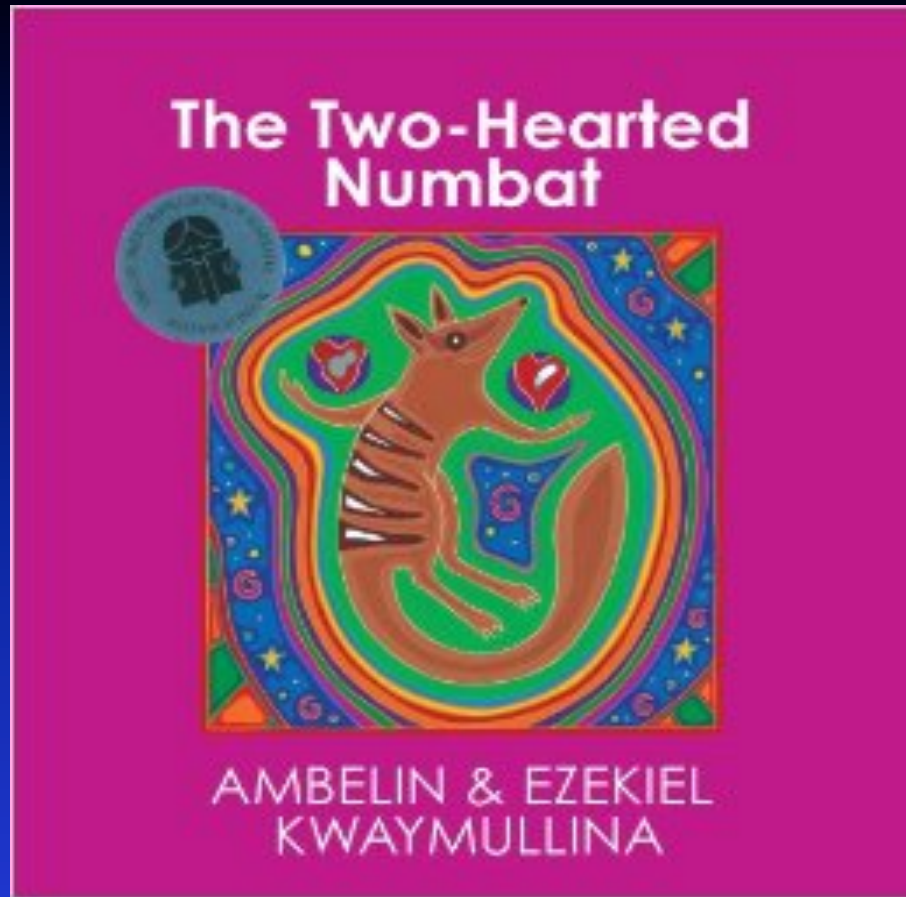
- Glenda Millard.

The Two-Hearted Numbat



AMBELIN & EZEKIEL
KWAYMULLINA





I once thought I had to choose between being as strong as a stone, or as gentle as a feather. But now I know that no one is truly strong who does not also have the softness to care for others. And no one is truly caring of others who does not also have the strength to care for themselves.

Self- Care Practice



Sunrise, Scarborough Marsh ~ “Peaceful Place”

Self-care in Community





THANK YOU!

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Riverview Counseling, Scarborough, ME
linnehan@maine.rr.com

Supplementary Resources

Resilience: Resources

Masten, (2001). Ordinary Magic. Resilience processes in development.
American Psychologist

Masten, A. (Nov., 2013) Fostering Resilience in Children
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOJopFhs64Q>

Masten, A. Inside Resilient Children. PopTech 2012. Published on May 23, 2013
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBMet8oIvXQ>

Resilience Research Centre. (2013). their perspectives on resilience.
www.resilienceresearch.org

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5QIqR6-kHo#t=31>
- Katherine Shear, Complicated Grief Program, Columbia School of Social Work.
<http://www.complicatedgrief.org/about/profile/katherine-shear-m.d/>
- *Asimbonanga : Tribute to Mandela (1999)*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGS7SpI7obY&feature=kp>

Music, art help heal families torn by Newtown school massacre BY BARBARA GOLDBERG AND ELLEN WULFHORST

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/01/usa-shooting-connecticut-arts-idUSL2N0JA0VY20131201>

Sands, Diana. *Red Chocolate Elephants: For children bereaved by suicide.* To watch a preview of the DVD:

<http://www.bereavedbysuicide.com.au/red-chocolate-elephants.html>

Violent Death Bereavement Society, <http://www.vdbs.org/> Resiliency after Violent Death: Lessons for Caregivers (2006)

<http://www.giftfromwithin.org/>

Family Bereavement Program, Irvin Sandler

www.childrengrieve.org/sites/default/files/spiritweb/Sandler%20%26%20Ayers%20NAGC%20Presentation%206-21-13%20Handout.pdf

This is your brain on yoga

<http://images.elephantjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/404a6de36afbaadb02675174adeec365.jpg>.

Octoband:

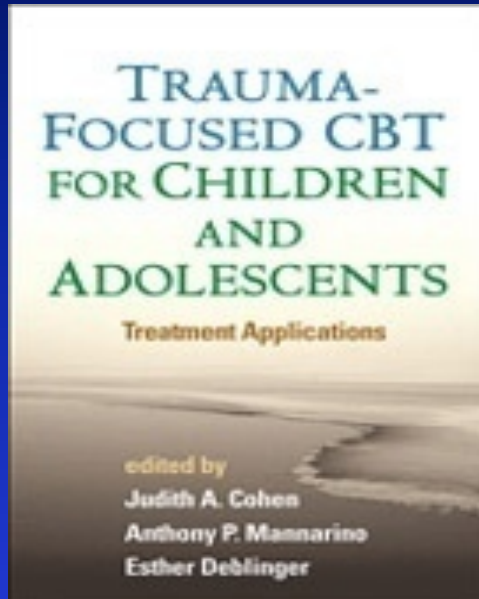
<http://www.octaband.com/>

Folkmanis Puppets:

<http://www.folkmanis.com>

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

TF-CBT: complex trauma; childhood traumatic grief (CTG)



Psychoeducation
Relaxation
Affect Expression/Regulation
Cognitive Coping
Trauma Narrative
In Vivo Exposure
Conjoint Parent/Child
Enhancing safety and future
developments

Trauma-focused phase
Grief-focused phase

<http://tfcbt.musc.edu/>,

<http://ctg.musc.edu/>

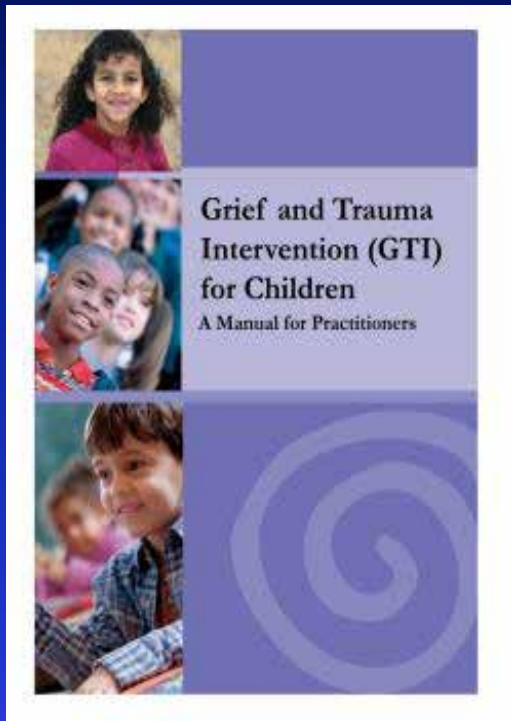
Video on CTG:

<http://www.nctsn.org/products/courage-remember-training-video-child-traumatic-grief-2005>

Trauma-focused CBT (TF-CBT) is an evidence-based practice.

<http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=259>

Grief and Trauma Intervention (GTI) for Children (Violent Death) (Salloum, 1998, 2004)



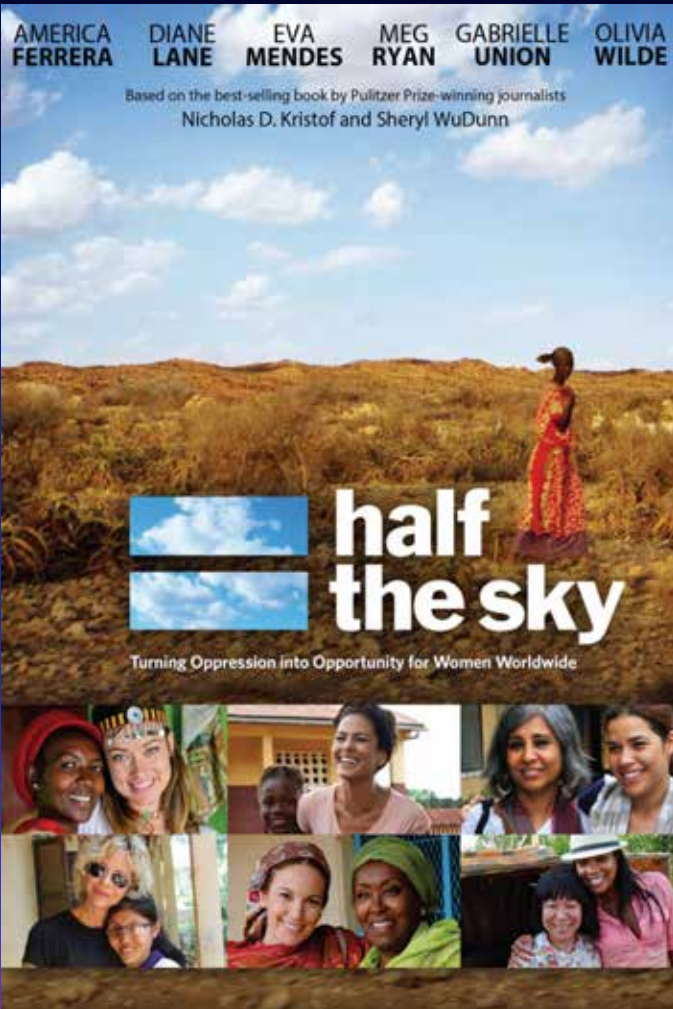
- GTI for Children asalloum@usf.edu
- CBT and Narrative approaches
- Resilience, Restorative Retelling, Reconnecting (Rynearson, 2001) <http://www.vdbs.org/>
- Focus on coping, relaxation, anger management skills prior to and during "retelling"
- Parent Education:
Reactions, Responses, & Relaxation
Teacher/Faculty/Staff Education

<http://www.childrens-bureau.com/gti;>

To purchase manual: lpaissance@childrens-bureau.com

Grief and Trauma Intervention (GTI) for Children is an evidence-based practice.

<http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=259>



Wonderful example of aesthetic distance:

In Cambodia, the Voices for Change program empowers trauma victims to speak out... when they have difficulty talking about their experiences, the leader suggests that they **“sing their stories”**

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/half-the-sky/somaly-mam/>

Healing power of music at its best



http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=sDC97j6lfyc

Clouds by Zach Sobeich (youtube video, song on itunes)

Zach Sobeich, diagnosed with a rare form of cancer at 17 and told he only had months to live, wrote this song as a way to say goodbye to his family and friends. As a youtube video created to raise awareness and funds for osteocarcinoma, his song was viewed by millions.

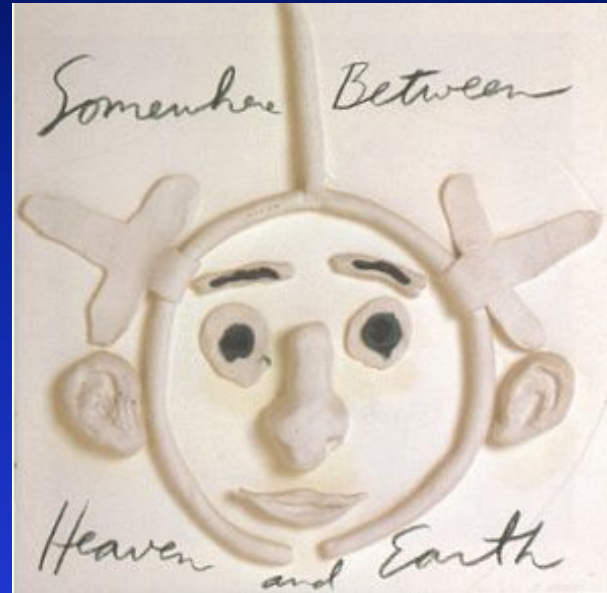
In his last days, these viewers, along with his family and friends, were invited to create a video in which they sing his song back to him.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?
feature=player_detailpage&v=7zxXAtmmLLc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=7zxXAtmmLLc)

Another example of music as a healing form of expression and continuing bonds after loss

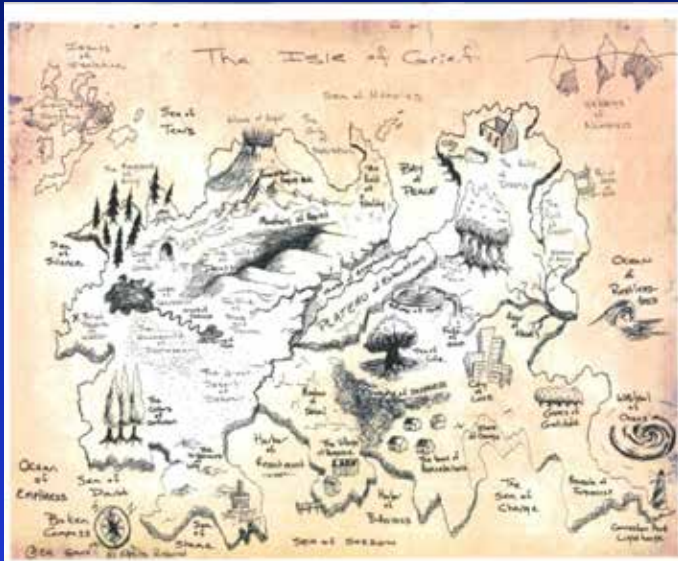
Cyndy Bullens with
Reid Bullens-Crewe
(his older daughter)

*Somewhere Between
Heaven and Earth*



Songs written after the loss of his 11 year old daughter, Jessie.

Isle of Grief Map



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