



The Past Informs the Present:

Integrating Historical Trauma into a Multicultural Infant/Toddler Health Framework

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What is Trauma?


Shared Definition



An exceptional experience in which powerful and dangerous stimuli


- Overwhelm the child's developmental and regulatory capacity (including the capacity to regulate emotions)
- Insufficient resources to cope with the event

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How do these experiences affect young children?

What types of experiences may affect them?
Do they remember?
How does it affect them?
What might help them?



9th Annual Early Childhood Mental Health Conference - We Can't Wait!

Once I Was Very Very Scared

by Chandra Ghosh Ippen

This story was written to help children and grown-ups (parents, teachers, and other important adults) understand how stress can affect children and ways to help them.

Through story we learn about

- Events children may find stressful
- Potential reactions children may have
- Ways of supporting them and helping them recover

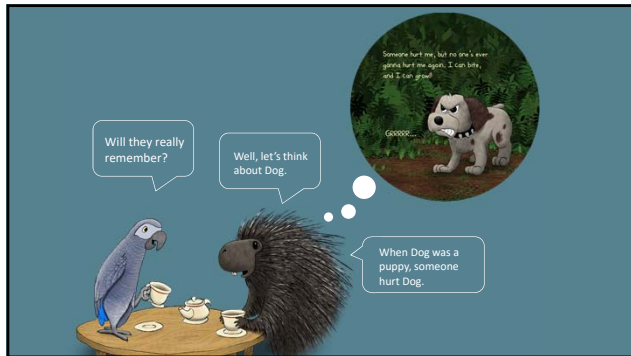
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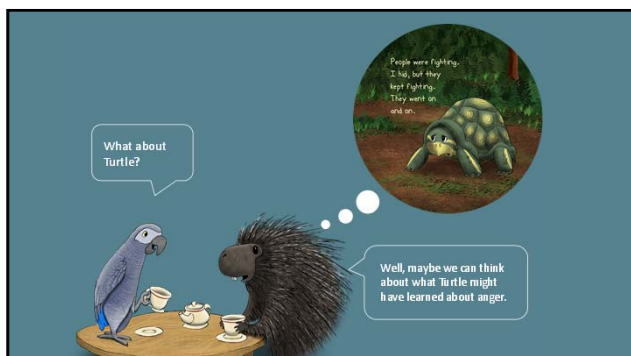
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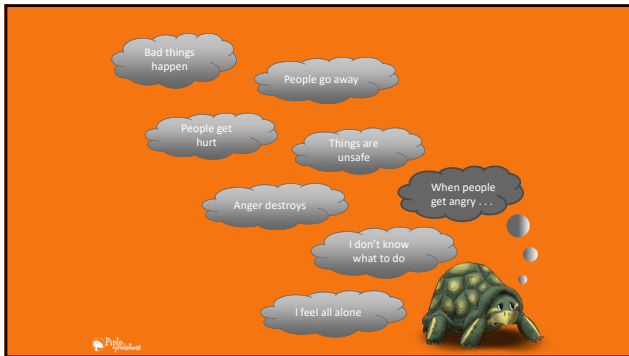
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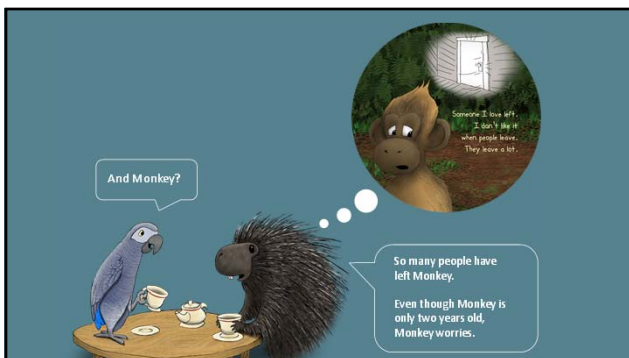


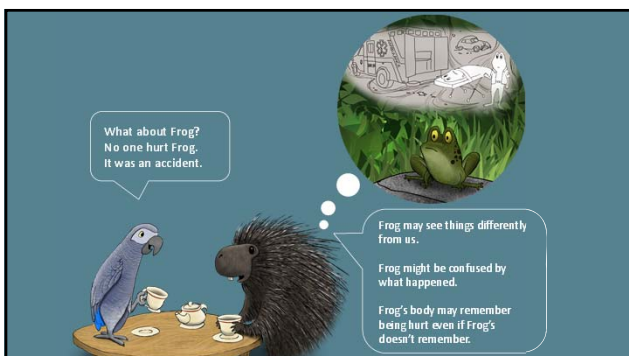




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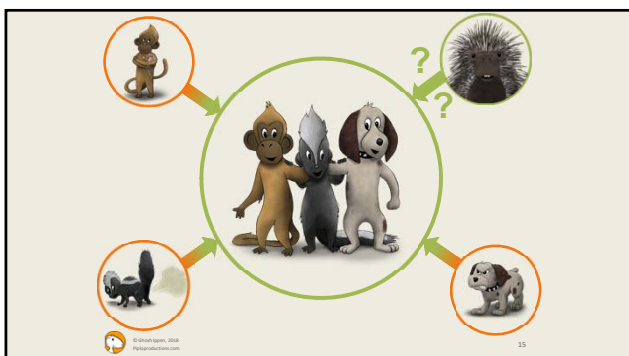


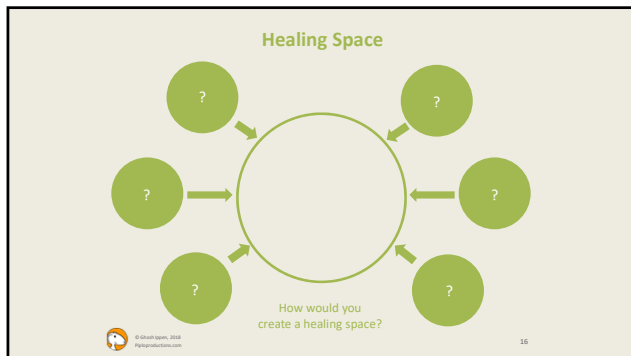




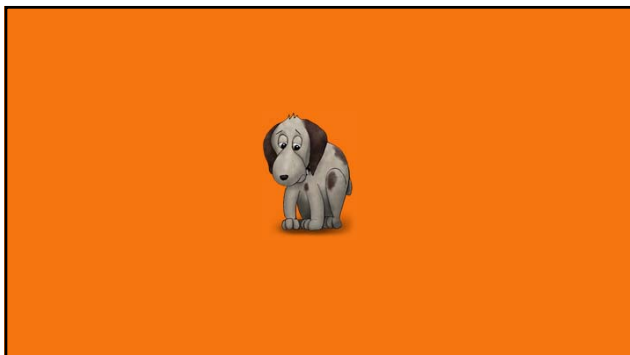


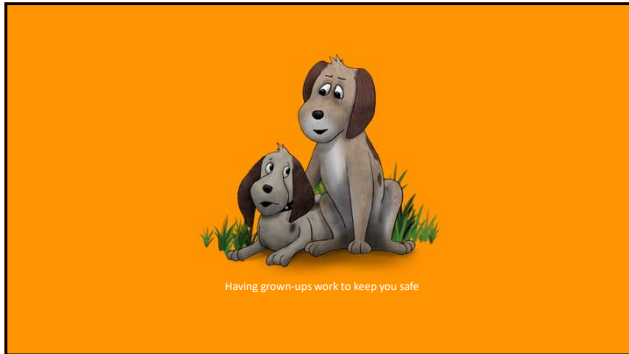




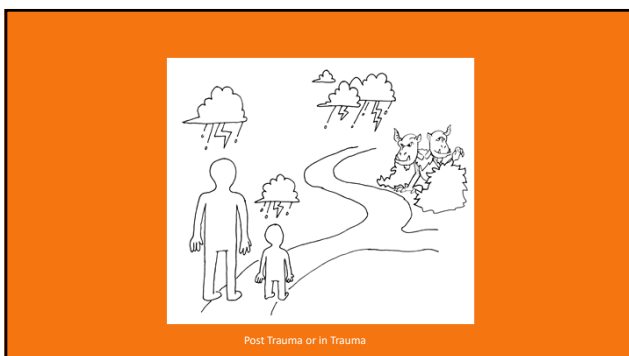


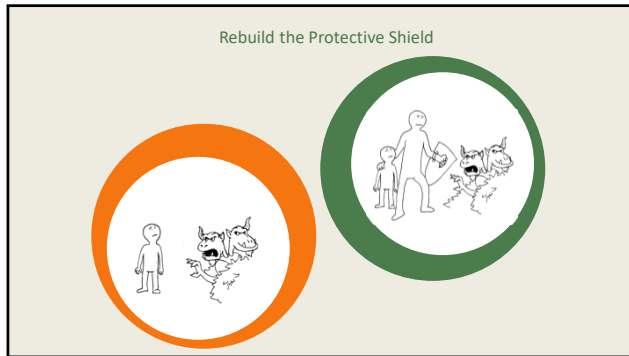


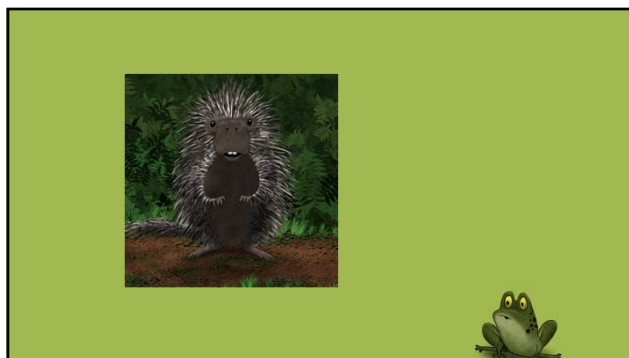


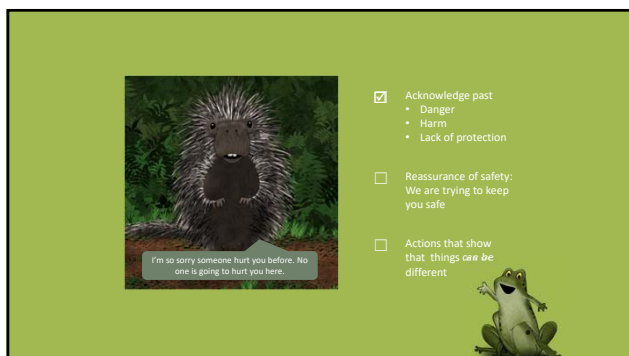












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- ☒ Acknowledge past
 - Danger
 - Harm
 - Lack of protection
- ☒ Reassurance of safety: We are trying to keep you safe
- ☐ Actions that show that things can be different

- ☒ Acknowledge past
 - Danger
 - Harm
 - Lack of protection
- ☒ Reassurance of safety: We are trying to keep you safe
- ☒ Actions that show that things can be different

Perspective
Our Theory Shapes
Our Interventions


Why is Dog
Having Difficulties?

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Perspective
Our Theory Shapes
Our Interventions


Why is the Child
Having Difficulties?
Ghosh Ippen, 2012



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Perspective: Why is the Child Having Difficulties?

What is your theory? Why is this happening?	What is your plan? What would you suggest?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	



Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Perspective: Why is the Child Having Difficulties?

ADHD

Prenatally drug exposed


Just like dad

Language difficulties, can't express self

Depressed caregiver

Too much sugar

Autistic



Overwhelmed, sensory motor integration difficulties

Tired

Hungry


3 yrs. old

Saw parents fight

Parenting problems

Lead exposure

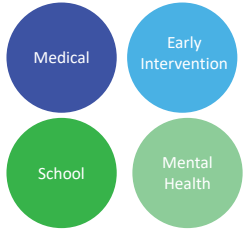
Bipolar



Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Providers Involved?



- Do they share the same perspective?
 - Is there a problem?
 - Why is there a problem?
 - What should be done?
- Are they talking to each other about their beliefs and their interventions?

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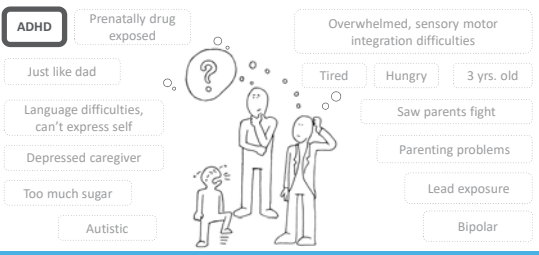
Shared Versus Different Perspectives



- What is the overlap in our beliefs?
- What happens when we do not agree?
- What happens to the family?

The People Project Ghosh Ippen, 2012 32

The Power of First Theory



ADHD

Prenatally drug exposed

Overwhelmed, sensory motor integration difficulties

Just like dad

Tired

Hungry

3 yrs. old

Language difficulties, can't express self

Saw parents fight

Parenting problems

Lead exposure

Bipolar

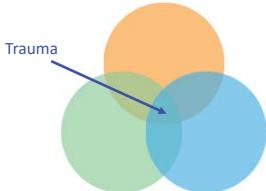
Depressed caregiver

Too much sugar

Autistic

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Integrating a Trauma-Informed Perspective




- Do traumatic experiences (lifetime, intergenerational, historical) play a role in what we are seeing?
- If so, how does this affect . . .
 - Our understanding of what we are seeing?
 - The way we might respond to a family?
 - The way we work together?
 - System-level policies?

The Ripple Project | Ghosh Ippen, 2011 | 34

Malik, Kiara, and Duane

- 25 months old
- Parents are worried about him
 - Nightmares
 - Separation anxiety
 - Started hitting others
 - Tantrums



The Ripple Project | 35

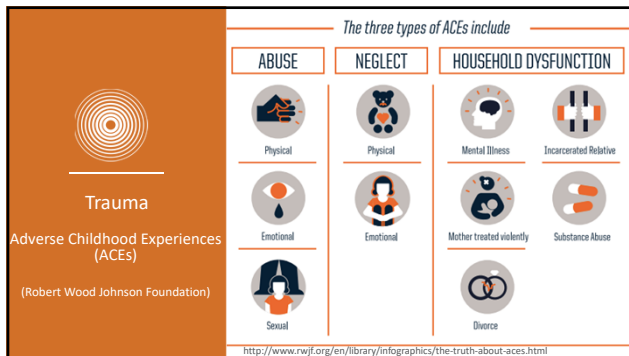
Connect the Dots (Experience and Functioning)

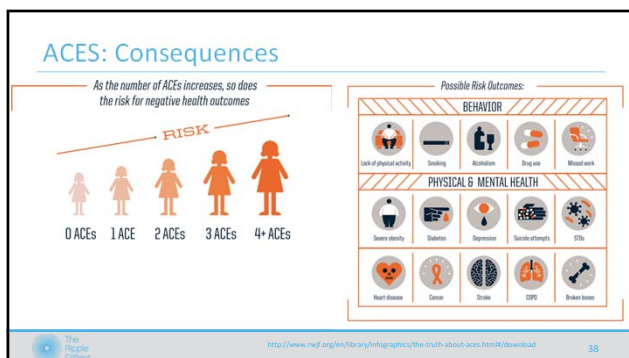
<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-2: Extended separations from dad 0-8 months: Mom postpartum depression Age 0-2 years, Parents argue 18 months, One time - mom slapped and punched dad during a verbal fight 22 months saw dad arrested and has seen negative police interactions Community violence (gunshots, fights), community grief (killings, murders) Paternal grandmother's early dementia 	<p>Functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-2: Difficulty connecting with mom 2: Speech and motor delays, temper tantrums 4: Hits other children
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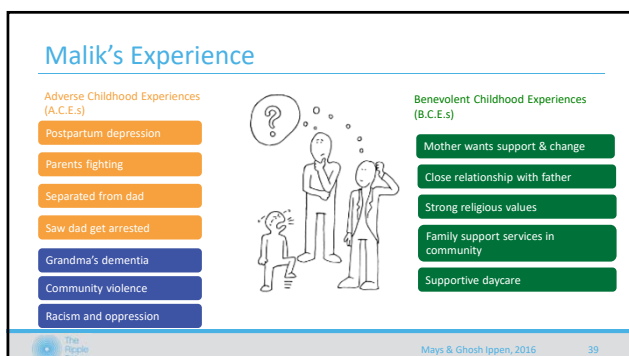
"It's not what's wrong with you. It's what happened to you."
- SAMHSA

The Ripple Project | Mays & Ghosh Ippen, 2016 | 36

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Trauma Damages the Protective Shield

The diagram illustrates the concept of a protective shield. On the left, a person stands with a shield. A monster attacks, and the shield is broken. On the right, a caregiver stands with the person, and the shield is restored.

Damage to the protective shield

Restore the protective shield

The Purple Pavilion

Ghosh Ippen, Van Horn, & Lieberman, 2016

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How come he's gotta be so aggressive?

Kiara Jackson, age 21, sits in the park with Vivian Davis, her infant mental health clinician. They watch as Malik dumps handfuls of sand into a water wheel. Kiara smiles as she watches Malik, and for a moment, the veil of her depression seems to lift, but then, as Malik gets frustrated and starts banging on the toy, a cloud comes over her face. Vivian watches her and feels her stomach tighten. She had hoped they could have a nice time out and help Kiara and Malik connect, but now she anxiously awaits for Kiara to repeat her unwelcome rant. "How come Malik's gotta be so aggressive. He's just like his daddy. He's just like my brothers. What's the point? Ain't nothin I can do."

The Purple Pavilion

Ghosh Ippen, 2018

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Kiara and Malik

The flowchart illustrates the cycle of aggression. It starts with 'Caregiver's past experience' (Left by father, step-father was aggressive, brothers would get into fights), leading to 'Caregiver's working model of relationships' (Men hurt & leave you. Men are aggressive.), then to 'Expectations about the child' (Malik is like his daddy, his grandpa, his uncles. He may grow up to be aggressive & bad things may happen to him.), then to 'Caregiver selectively attunes to child's behavior' (Watches for and responds harshly to behavior she perceives as aggressive), then to 'Child internalizes caregiver's belief' (I am aggressive. I am not loveable. I am dangerous.), and finally to 'Child behaves accordingly'.

Caregiver's past experience

Caregiver's working model of relationships

Expectations about the child

Caregiver selectively attunes to child's behavior

Child internalizes caregiver's belief

Child behaves accordingly

Left by father, step-father was aggressive, brothers would get into fights

Men hurt & leave you. Men are aggressive.

Malik is like his daddy, his grandpa, his uncles. He may grow up to be aggressive & bad things may happen to him.

Watches for and responds harshly to behavior she perceives as aggressive

I am aggressive. I am not loveable. I am dangerous.

The Purple Pavilion

Ghosh Ippen, 2018

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Ghosts in the Nursery: Breaking the Cycle

What predicts whether the parent's past will be repeated with the child?

- Repression and isolation of the affects associated with childhood fear and suffering
- Remembering emotional states saves the parent from repeating the past
- Remembering allows the parent to identify with the child rather than the aggressor
- Those who connect emotions to experience are less likely to repeat

(Fraiberg, 1980)

Ghosh Ippen, Van Horn, & Lieberman, 2016

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Power
Atrocious Cultural
Experiences
"ACEs" in Context
Ghosh Ippen & Mays, 2016

Original "ACEs" Historical Trauma	Current Systemic Oppression	"ACEs"
Genocide	Systemic Bias	Abuse
Slavery	Police Violence	
Colonization	Mass Incarceration	
Denial of Basic Human Rights	Inequities in Child Welfare	Neglect
Removal of Property	Inequities in Preschool Suspension	
Forced Family Separations	Inequities in Access to Job, Housing	
Parents could not protect children from "society" -- Different ways of protecting	Inequities in Pay	Household Dysfunction
	Segregation	

Ghosh Ippen, 2017

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Power of the Past: Ghosts in Our Societies

Genocide
Slavery
Colonization
Forced family separations
Sanctioned attacks on individuals' bodies

Establishment of group hierarchies
Cultural norm sanctions oppression of some groups

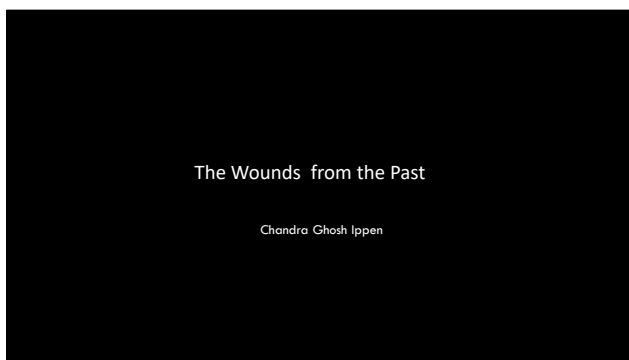
They are not (intelligent, valuable, safe, loveable). . .
I am not . . .

Microaggressions
Racism

Ghosh Ippen, 2016

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The wounds from the past last
Think caste, slaves, mass graves
We hurt each other in so many ways

Too many to count
How many generations to surmount
The trail of tears

Broken bones
Broken homes
Wounded souls
Different goals

Thrive?
Survive?
Stay alive.

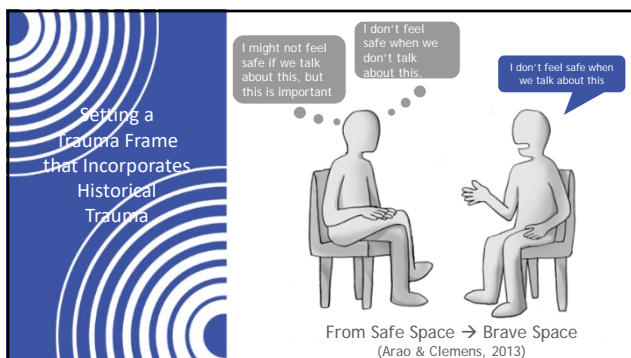
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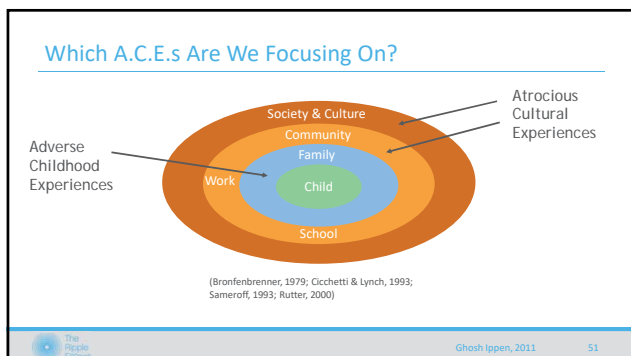
Who carries the blame?
Who wears the shame?
Who feels the pain?

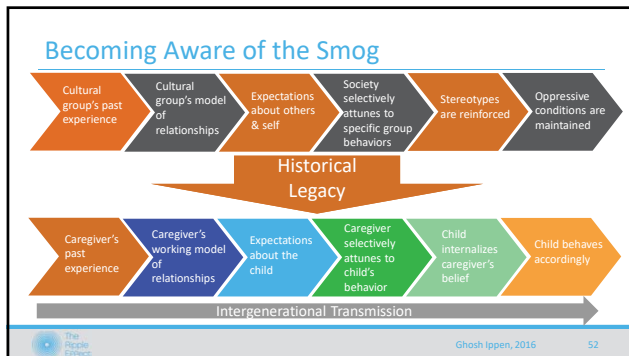
For those of us who seek to heal
Wounds caused by a past that
Society would bury and conceal

Saying it was long ago
Forget all that your souls and bodies know

A question inside us does arise
How does healing happen in the face of lies?







"We are all smog breathers"

"Cultural racism—the cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed superiority of Whites and the assumed inferiority of people of color—is like smog in the air" If we live in a smoggy place, how can we avoid breathing the air? If we live in an environment in which we are bombarded with stereotypical images in the media, are frequently exposed to the put-down jokes of friends and family members, and are rarely informed of the accomplishments of oppressed groups, we will develop prejudicial categorizations of those groups that form the basis of racism (p. 6-7)

Tatum, 1997

Expectations About Misbehavior: Implicit Biases

"We are interested in learning about how teachers detect challenging behavior in the classroom. Sometimes this involves seeing behavior *before* it becomes problematic. The video segments you are about to view are of preschoolers engaging in various activities. Some clips may or may not contain challenging behaviors. Your job is to press the *enter* key on the external keypad every time you see a behavior that could become a potential challenge" (p. 6).

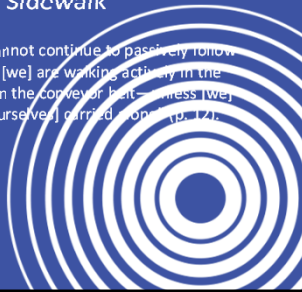
Gilliam et al., 2016

The People Project | 54

Metaphor of the Moving Sidewalk

To combat these historical forces, we cannot continue to passively follow the movement of the walkway. “Unless [we] are walking actively in the opposite direction at a speed faster than the conveyor belt—unless [we] are actively antiracist—[we] will find [ourselves] carried along.” (p. 174)

Tatum, 1997





Understanding How
Historical Trauma
May Affect
Response to
Providers



Engagement Challenges




- Client drop-out rates from outpatient clinics range from 30-60% (Staudt, 2007)
- Urban mental health setting: 36% of families who requested services never came (McKay, Pennington, Lynn, & McCadam, 2001)



Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Engagement Challenges



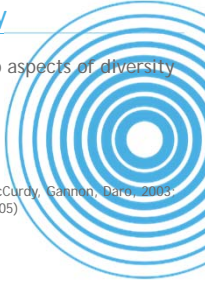
- Home Visiting
 - Gomby, Cross, & Behrman, 1999
 - 10-25% of families invited choose not to participate
 - 20-67% of those enrolled fail to complete
 - Dugan et al., 2000
 - 18% did not engage post screening
 - Most refusals occurred within 3 months of referral (58% of those who refused had less than 3 visits)

The People Project | Ghosh Ippen, 2012 | 58

Engagement Challenges: Diversity

- Poor uptake and low retention related to aspects of diversity
 - Ethnicity
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Environmental context

(Kazdin et al., 1995; Kummerer & Lopez-Reyna 2006; McCurdy, Gannon, Dero, 2003; McGuigan, Katev, & Pratt, 2003; Snowden & Yamada, 2005)



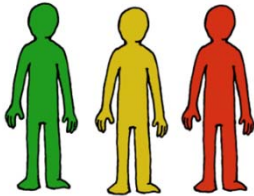
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What Role Does Diversity Play in Engagement?



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Engagement Challenges: Initial Reactions



SAFE UNSURE DANGEROUS

The Reggio Emilia Approach Ghosh Ippen, 2012 61

Diversity-Informed Practice: Concept 1

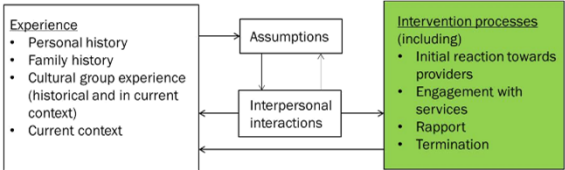
Past Experiences → Assumptions → Interactions

- Our past experience, including our personal history, family history, and cultural group history shapes our assumptions about others
 - Can I trust you?
 - Will you help me?
 - Could you harm me?
 - Do you “see” me?
 - Will you understand me?
- These assumptions in turn affect the way we interact with others

(Ghosh Ippen, 2012)

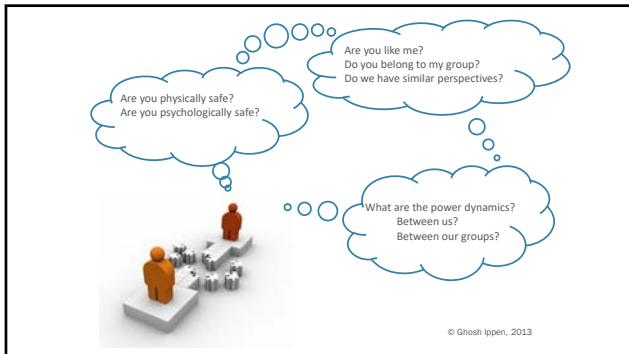
The Reggio Emilia Approach 62

Past Experience, Assumptions, & Interactions



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graph LR; Experience[Experience: Personal history, Family history, Cultural group experience, Current context] --> Assumptions[Assumptions]; Assumptions --> Interpersonal[Interpersonal interactions]; Interpersonal --> Experience; Interpersonal --> Intervention[Intervention processes: Initial reaction, Engagement, Rapport, Termination]; Intervention --> Interpersonal
```

The Reggio Emilia Approach Ghosh Ippen, 2012 63



Quotes from Caregivers

"The first day [the provider] came to the house she changed everything! ... She came in wrong. So, there's nothing for her to say to me because I don't trust her." (Buckingham et al., 2016, p. 370)

"A lot of times education and degrees tries to speak down to people. Automatically you're looked at as a project. ... I think that's what's changed—their perception of who is walking in.... They put us in a box." (Buckingham et al., 2016, p. 370)

Quotes from Caregivers

"It shows you who really cares, because some people come in here and just do the child development and then they can leave, because they did what they had to do. . I'm just saying some people come with their agenda, just getting the job done and leaving. . Let me tell you, some folks act like they just never been down before and I can't help you. Like they've always been—you know, you're not helping them today either." (Woolfolk & Unger, 2009, p. 194)

How Do We See Each Other?

SAFE

UNSURE

DANGEROUS

- How do we see ourselves?
- How might the family we are working with see us?
- How does this make us feel?
- How do we respond?

FOR REFLECTION
Odds of remaining in the program for at least one year increased significantly with every hour of supervision the home visitor received (Dugan et al., 2000)

The People Project

Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Emotions and Perspective Taking

Working with Families Who Have Experienced Trauma

- Traumatic content → Potential to dysregulate
- When emotions are charged, executive functioning is disengaged
- Regulation is critical for thoughtful therapeutic intervention
- It is best not to intervene without your frontal lobes

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Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Emotions and Perspective Taking

When we are angry, we are . . .

- More likely to see people rather than situations as responsible for a problem (Keltner, Ellsworth, & Edwards, 1993)
- Less likely to trust others (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005)
- More likely to make judgments based on stereotypes (Bodenhausen, Sheppard, & Kramer, 1994; DeSteno, Dasgupta, Bartlett, & Caldrie, 2004; Tiedens & Linton, 2001)
- Positive affect is associated with increased flexibility in thinking and action (Fredrickson, 2001)

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Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Diversity-Informed Practice: Concept 2
Emotions and Perspective Taking

Calm

- Can go to the edge of your beliefs
- See other perspectives

Emotionally Triggered

- Retreat to your center (core beliefs)
- May turn away from other perspectives

Adapted from Anne Fadiman, 2008 Grand Rounds San Francisco General Hospital

Ghosh Ippen, 2012
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Diversity-Informed Practice: Concept 2
Emotions and Perspective Taking: Different Dyads

Large overlap

- Still see each other's perspective when triggered

Small overlap

- Lose the perspective of the other when triggered
- Charged emotions amplify difference

Adapted from Anne Fadiman, 2008 Grand Rounds San Francisco General Hospital

Ghosh Ippen, 2012
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Diversity-Informed Practice: Concept 3

Reflective Supervisor

- Create a space for dialogue
- Explore and support emotional reactions
- Identify diversity-related ports of entry
- Think about how diversity, differences in history and perspective, and historical power dynamics may be affecting the interaction

(Ghosh Ippen, 2012)

Ghosh Ippen, 2012
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Diversity Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children, and Families

Tenet 1: "Self-Awareness Leads to Better Services for Families: Professionals in the field of infant mental health must reflect on their own culture, personal values and beliefs, and on the impact racism, classism, sexism, able-ism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other systems of oppression have had on their lives in order to provide diversity-informed, culturally attuned services on behalf of infants, toddlers, and their families" (St. John et al., 2012, p. 15).
<https://imhdivtenets.org/about/>





The People Project

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Diversity Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children, and Families


"Tenet 3: Work to Acknowledge Privilege and Combat Discrimination: Discriminatory policies and practices that harm adults harm the infants in their care. Privilege constitutes injustice. Diversity-informed infant mental health professionals work to acknowledge privilege and to combat racism, classism, sexism, able-ism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other systems of oppression within themselves, their practices, and their fields" (St. John et al., 2012, p. 15).
<https://imhdivtenets.org/about/>




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Diversity-Related Ports of Entry



- Moments when we could
- Identify a diversity-related difference in perspective
- Make space for discussions related to historical trauma
- Talk about possible microaggressions
- Assess for and address social inequalities and injustices related to race, culture, & other aspects of diversity
- Think about power, privilege, and race

The People Project

Ghosh Ippen, 2016

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Identifying Diversity-Related Conflicts

- Diversity-related conflicts can arise when differences in our experiences lead us to hold different assumptions, values and perspectives.
- In a diversity-related conflict, we tend to view the other person as part of the problem and use stereotypes rather than consider the other person's perspective or the broader context.



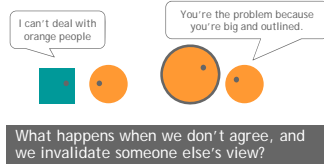
Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Diversity-Informed Practice: Concept 3

Diversity-related conflicts

- Arise when differences in our experiences lead us to hold different assumptions, values and perspectives.
- We tend to view the other person as part of the problem and use stereotypes rather than consider the other person's perspective or the broader context.



(Ghosh Ippen, 2012)



Ghosh Ippen, 2012

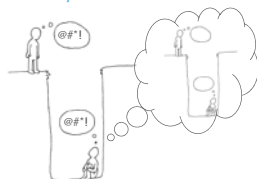
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Diversity-Informed Practice: Concept 4

Echoes of Historical Conflicts & Historical Power Dynamics

When the way conflicts are resolved and decisions are made replicates historical conflicts and power dynamics, conflicts, which may be expressed in different ways (e.g. overtly, passively, internally), are likely to intensify.

(Ghosh Ippen, 2012)



Ghosh Ippen, 2012

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Co-Construct the Triangle of Explanations

Protective Steps
Highlight when caregiver tried to help or created safety

- You parents are . . .
- Making changes
- Trying to keep you safe
- Bringing you to treatment

Experience

- You saw . . .
- You heard . . .
- You once lived . . .

Hope
Things can change for the better

Behavior, Feelings
And now you . . .

Treatment
This is a place where . . .

Lieberman & Ghosh Ippen 2014

Holding an Intergenerational Framework



- Experience: What has the caregiver been through?
- Behavior & Feelings: How does this affect the way the caregiver responds to the child & navigates the world?
- Treatment: How will treatment support the caregiver?
- Understand the historical context: Many caregivers provide their children with something better than what they received
- Support the caregiver, so the caregiver can support the child

Holding a Historical Trauma Framework

- Experience: What has the family's cultural group been through?
- Behavior & Feelings: How does this affect . . .
- Response to systems and service providers?
- Child socialization practices ?
- Responses to certain behaviors and emotions?
- Treatment: How will treatment address historical trauma and any ongoing impact on relationships and functioning?

Addressing Historical Trauma

- Discuss ways that contextual risks (e.g. poverty, community violence, immigration-related risks, inadequate or unsafe housing, and inadequate access to services) affect child and family functioning.
- Consider the impact of racism and historical trauma on child and family functioning.
- Understand difficult behavior given past history & current context.
- Understand caregivers' mistrust of providers and reluctance to engage in treatment in light of their past history and current experiences with potentially punitive systems.





The People's Project

Ghosh Ippen, Van Horn, & Lieberman, 2012

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Addressing Historical Trauma

- Acknowledge past history of risks to safety.
- Foster caregiver's ability to socialize child in ways that are consistent both with the caregiver's cultural values and beliefs and the family's context.
- Acknowledge effects of child's and caregivers' experience of trauma and historical trauma.

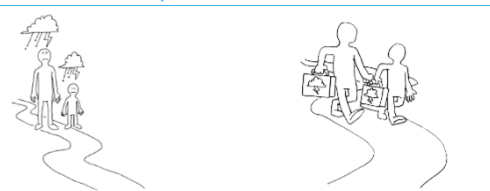


The People's Project

Ghosh Ippen, Van Horn, & Lieberman, 2012


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Treatment Pathways



Beginning → End

Treatment Pathways: Specific Objectives for Each Family



The People's Project

Ghosh Ippen, Van Horn, & Lieberman, 2016

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Diversity Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children, and Families

Tenet 2. Champion Children’s Rights Globally: Infants are citizens of the world. It is the responsibility of the global community to support parents, families, and local communities in welcoming, protecting, and nurturing them.

Tenet 10. Advance Policy That Supports All Families: Diversity-informed infant mental health practitioners, regardless of professional affiliation, seek to understand the impact of social policies and programs on diverse infants and toddlers and to advance a just policy agenda for and with families.

St. John et al., 2012, p. 15: <https://imhdivtenets.org/about/>



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WRAPPING UP



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Staying in Touch


- Child-Parent Psychotherapy website: <https://ChildParentPsychotherapy.com>
- Facebook: <https://Facebook.com/ChildParentPsychotherapy>
- <https://PiploProductions.com>
For the story “Once I Was Very Very Scared” and other resources




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Use of Slides and Materials

- This slide deck and materials within the slide may not be posted on the web or otherwise published.
- If you have feedback on the slides, please feel free to contact Chandra Ghosh Ippen (chandra.ghosh@ucsf.edu).



The Ripple Project

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