

Developmental Psychopathology and Developmental Trauma

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WCW 2018

Introduction

- Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
- Administrator, clinician, treatment provider
- Father
- Former Child

- Purpose of this workshop
 - Start basic neurological, psychological, and social development and end with current integrative understandings

Begin with Neurological Development

This shouldn't hurt too much...

Neurodevelopment

- In utero
- In early childhood
- In later childhood
- In adolescence

- Now

Brain Cells and Connection

- Number of brain cells
- Their connections
- Their interactions
- Their influence on each other
- Mutual regulation

Cell Death (apoptosis)

- Resorption of connections; of cells
- Experience dependent growth, if the experience is absent, so is the growth
- A wonderfully efficient system

Necessary Ingredients

- Nutrition
- Genetic information correct
- Experiences
- Protection from “insult and injury”

At the same time neurological
development is proceeding, so is
Psychological Development

Making Sense of the World

- Scaffolding
- Giving meaning
- Reflecting and mirroring experiences

- The external becomes internal

Internal Working Models

- New discoveries that become basic assumptions
 - Gravity
 - If I cry, someone I know will respond
 - People like me
 - I like my people
 - People are inconsistent, I can't count on them
 - People will hurt me if I let them

Development of Language

- A useful tool to
 - Understand things that are happening around them
 - A method of processing and thinking about experiences and feelings
 - A way to express self
 - A way to mediate and modify the world around you
- We understand this best when it isn't working well

Social Development

“No child is an island”

Earliest Relationships

- Basic trust
- Bonding and attachment
- “Serve and Return” experiences
- “Stranger” awareness
- Secure base
 - Primary and secondary attachment figures

The Impact of Neurological, Psychological, and Social Development on our Future Health

A Story...

- First started working at a group home in San Diego
- Troubles
- New understandings about “trauma”, later about “neglect”
- Then tried to understand the nature of the children I was treating
 - Why did they seem so different?

Over time, I came to understand...

- Certain functions were “broken”
 - They really struggled managing themselves when stimulated by the littlest thing
 - They didn't try hard, gave up easily
 - Didn't seem calm, happy, connected to those around them- family relationships filled with conflict, peer relationships too. Little use of others around them for support
 - Little helping, or even awareness, of others

What was “broken”?

Why did these children and youth seem so different than others I saw in different settings (schools, outpatient clinics)?

Why did the children and youth I saw in Juvenile Hall and the Child Abuse Shelter seem so similar?

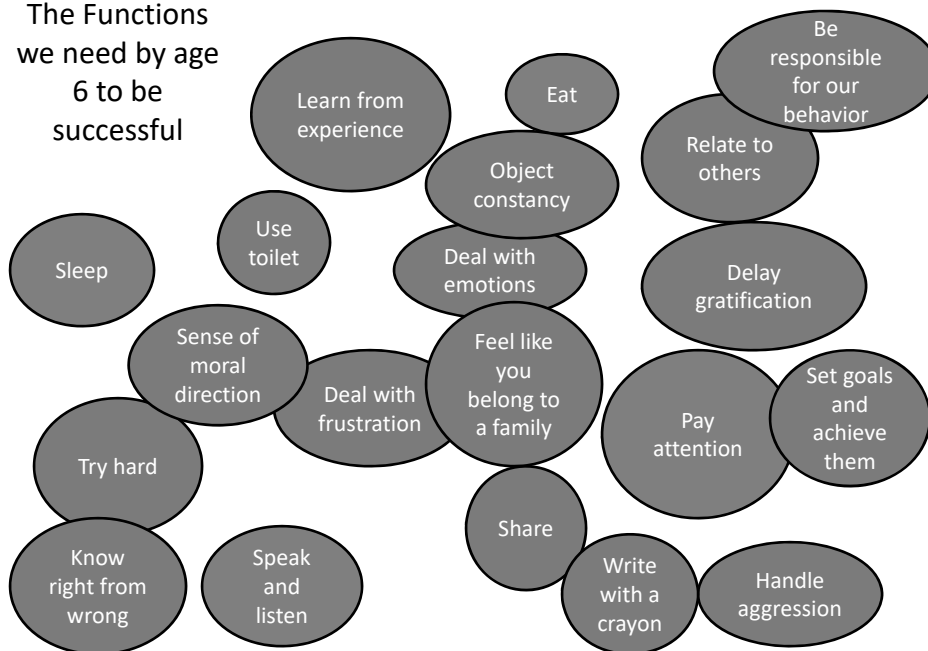
Met Bruce Perry

- Actually, I met him with about 1,000 others
- Influenced me to think about and use what I had been taught about development, and then add what we were all learning about extreme stress
- Over the next 18 years I began to try to integrate these 2 areas of biological science
 - With the help of many wise others

I came to a different point than before and now ask 3 different questions:

- At what age do we have the neurological, psychological, and social ability to be away from our primary caregivers for 6 hours?
- What functions and abilities do we need to have to be able to be away?
- What can interfere with the development of those functions?

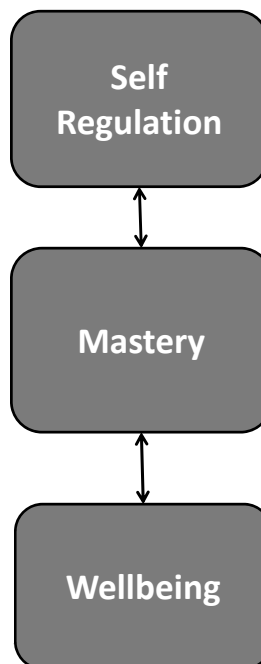
The Functions we need by age 6 to be successful



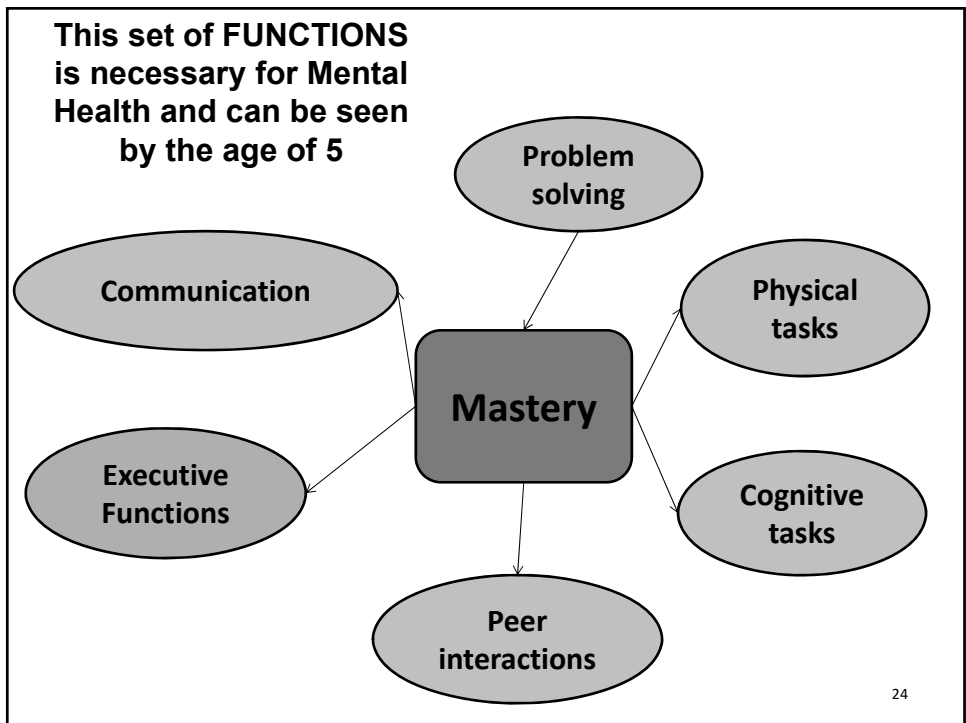
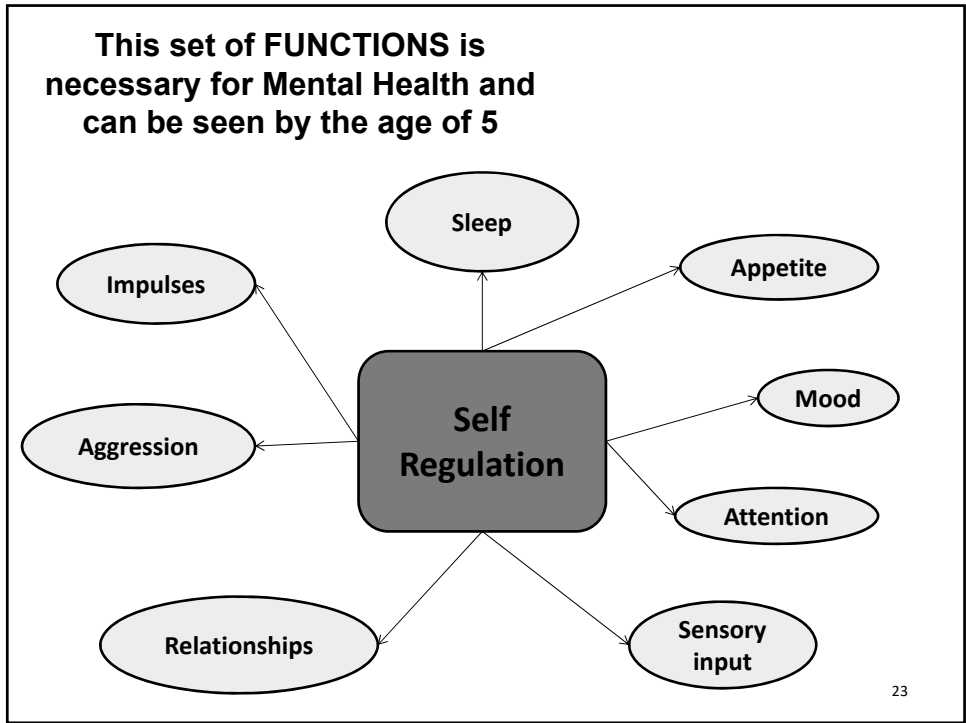
**THE FUNCTIONS WE NEED BY AGE 6 TO
DO WELL AT SCHOOL, AT HOME, AND
IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD CAN BE
“CHUNKED” INTO 3 BASIC CATEGORIES***

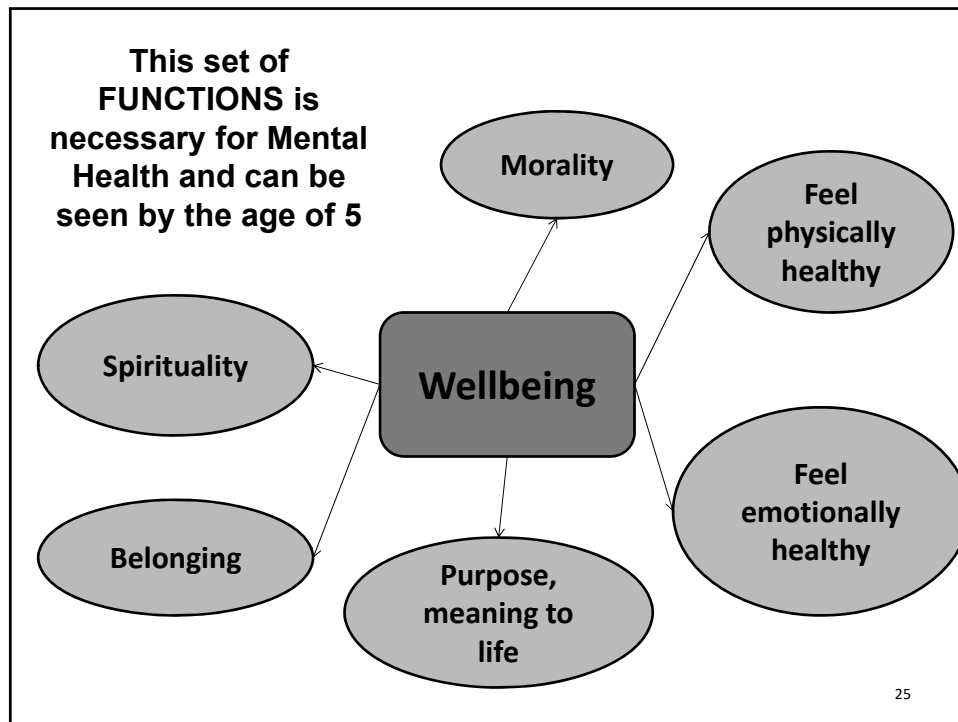
**Self-Regulation
Mastery (+Executive Function)
Wellbeing**

**These 3
FUNCTIONS are
necessary for
Mental Health
and can be seen by
the age of 5**



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Developmental Risks at different stages of life

- In utero
- In the first 3 years
- In the first 6 years

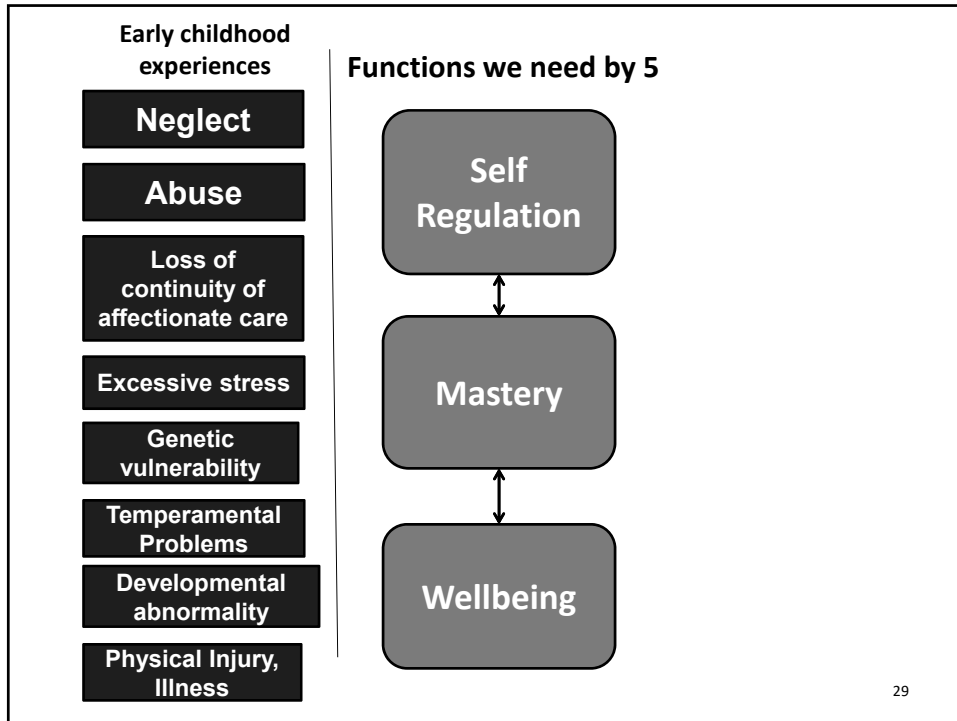
**EARLY RISKS LEAD TO
INTERRUPTION OF
DEVELOPMENT***

First 6 years of life “build the foundation” for the
functions we need to do well.

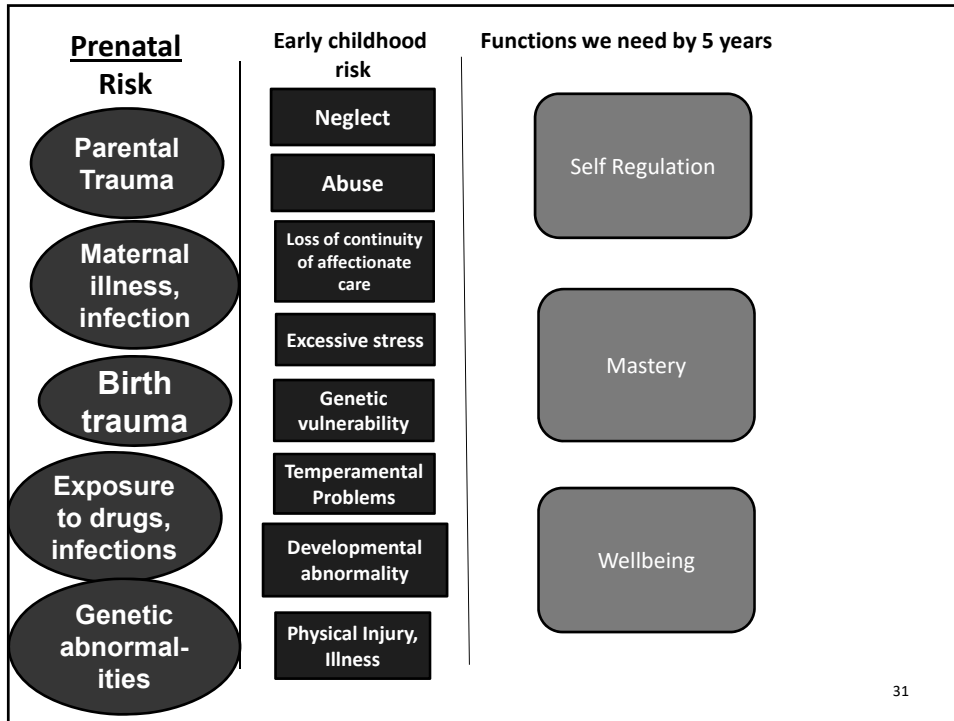
Interruptions in development impair these basic
functions and this leads to problems

Some of the functions can be restored, some cannot

**WHAT CAN HAPPEN, BEFORE AGE 5,
TO INTERFERE WITH THESE 3
FUNCTIONS?***



There are even things that can happen before we are born, that impact our MH FUNCTIONS*



Most of the troubles children have by the age of 5 have to do with difficulties related to these areas.*

What are the specific functions that get disrupted?

