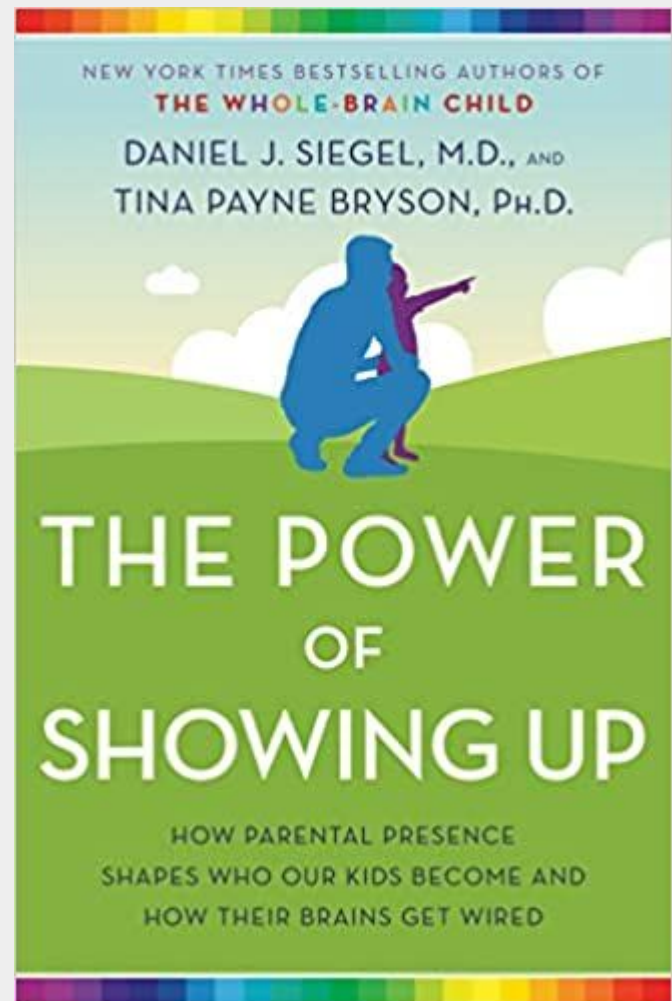


# Being a Present Parent

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LCSW

October 20-Nov 17, 2020



# Week 1: Overview & Fundamentals

# Ground Rules for Creating Safety

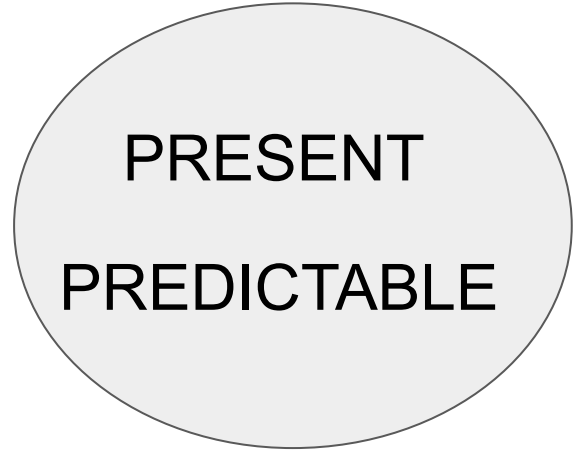
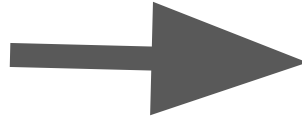
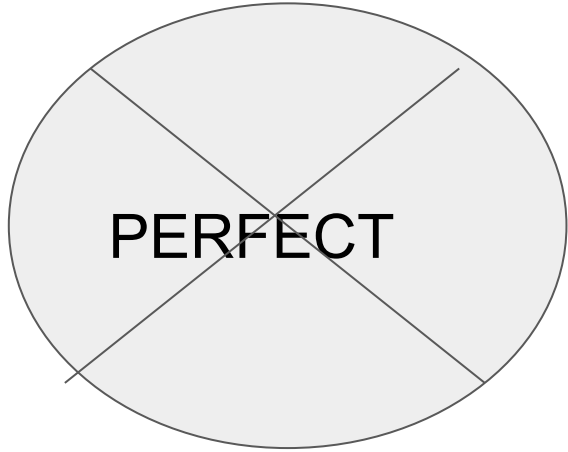
## Vegas Rules

Listen generously (do not interrupt)

Acknowledge and respect cultural differences and diverse views

Withhold judgements

Inspiration



# Shifting the Question

From: What are the most important characteristics I should emphasize in my kids?

To: What's the single most important thing I can do for my kids to help them succeed and feel at home in the world?

# Your Job as a Parent

NOT to prevent them from experiencing setbacks or failures

IS give them *tools* and *emotional resilience* they need to weather life's storms and then *walk beside* them in the storms

Result: a secure attachment

# Parenting Notes

Make repairs (apologize) following inevitable ruptures, as soon as possible (builds safety)

They need you--authentic, flawed, and fully present

Consistently showing up--->youth's mind come to expect the world is a place that can be understood and meaningfully interacted with--even in times of trouble or pain



# Trust and Marble Jars

## **SUPERSOUL SESSIONS: THE ANATOMY OF TRUST**



# Week 2: Attachment and Safety

# Ground Rules for Creating Safety

## Vegas Rules

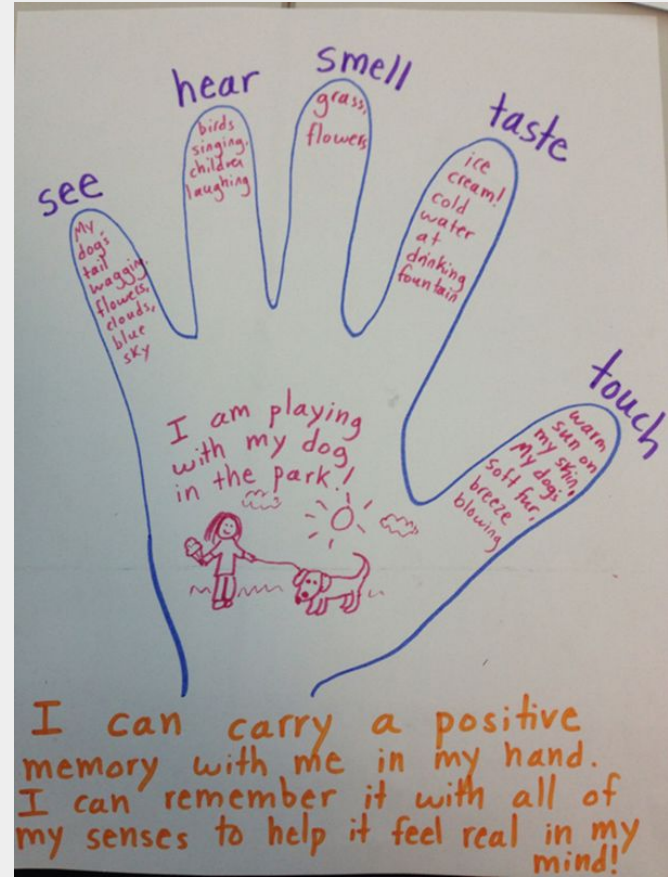
Listen generously (do not interrupt)

Acknowledge and respect cultural differences and diverse views

Withhold judgements

# Icebreaker

Share your at-home safe space with your group. If you are uncomfortable using your camera to show the safe space or are not at home, describe your space (think 5 senses).



# 4 “S”s

Safe: feel protected and sheltered from harm

Seen: know you care about them and pay attention to them (gives mindsight--knowing you have feelings and thoughts that are real and are worth being loved and paid attention to)

Soothed: know you will be there when they're hurting (life comes with pain, but won't have to go through it alone)

Secure: trust you to predictably help them feel “at home” in the world, then learn to help themselves feel safe, seen and soothed

# Secure

Parent: Knock, knock

Child: Who's there

Parent: Boo

Child: Boo who?

Parent: Aww, are you crying? Come in. Tell me about it

# Insecure: Avoidant

Parent: Knock, knock

Child: Who's there

Parent: Boo

Child: Boo who?

Parent: Quit crying

# Insecure: Ambivalent

Parent: Knock, knock

Child: Who's there

Parent: Boo

Child: Boo who?

Parent: Are you serious? You're crying? Why are you sad? Oh, that's just great.  
Now you're making me cry!



# Insecure: Disorganized

Parent: Knock, knock

Child: Who's there

Parent: Boo

Child: Boo who?

Parent: Boo who yourself! I hate you, you crybaby. Get out of my room!

# What Produces Deep and Lasting Success for Kids?

A secure attachment to a caregiver who shows up

How do you provide that secure attachment?

4 “S”s

Developing a coherent narrative that makes sense of our own early life experiences

# There's Hope...

Research shows that history is not destiny.



Our past (as parents) can be understood so that it does not dictate our present or future--where we give attention, neural firing flows, we can re-wire our brains (at any age)

“I am not a terrible person. My brain is wired this way to help me survive in my family, and I have the power to rewire my brain and change that”

# Safety

A caregiver helps the child be safe and therefore feel safe

Result: “I can rely on people who care about me. Hard times may come, but I can count on others to show up for me. I am safe, and I’ll be ok.”

Allows kids to feel connected and protected, replenishes their inner resources

Two main safety jobs: protect them from harm and avoid being the source of fear (parental conflict, becoming scary as a parent, introduction to inappropriate ideas and images)

Overprotecting is not the answer

# Non-Safe Example



# Week 3: Seen and Soothed

**Kahoot!**

# Seen

A large, white iceberg with a prominent peak is floating in the ocean. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a lighter blue with some light clouds. The iceberg is the central focus of the image, with its surface showing some texture and shadows.

Focusing less on child's specific behavior or external observable events of a situation and more on the mind beneath the behavior, what's happening inside

Ex: notice a troublesome behavior. Instead of lecturing, notice if it is out of character or what child may be experiencing--use mindsight (ability to see inside one's own mind and the mind of someone else) to understand and connect

Triad of Connection (helps kids feel seen): perceive, make sense, and respond

No triad of connection=Shame (internal self as defective). Easier to believe something wrong with you than your parents not being dependable.



# Seen

Not who we'd like them to be and not filtered through our own fears or desires

Avoid making snap judgements or labeling, rather pause and consider what might be going on beneath the surface. Ex: refusal to do homework--not lazy, doesn't care, oppositional, but rather feels pressure to excel, shamed by teachers/parent for mistakes, amount of homework overwhelming.

When we dismiss or minimize or blame or shame our kids because of their emotions, we prevent them from showing us who they are

# Shame: The Anti-Seen and Consequences

Shaming:

- discourages child from showing true self
- typically does not produce the desired behavior
- if he/she does behave desired way on outside on the inside he/she is flooded with fear and dejection.

Research shows frequent experience of shame during childhood correlates with a significantly higher likelihood of anxiety, depression and other mental health challenges.

# Shaming vs. Seeing

“Guys don’t cry when they don’t get what they want.” vs. “I know you really wanted X. It’s hard when we don’t get what we want”

“None of your friends are afraid to ride a bike.” vs. “It’s scary, isn’t it? I’ll run beside you the whole time. You can do it.”

“What’s wrong with you? Why are you acting this way?” vs. “I know you didn’t want to leave the party yet. I get it. I don’t like it too when I have to do things I don’t like.”

# Seen Strategies

Be curious; dive deeper, beyond initial assumptions and observations

Make space and time to look and learn (observe natural opportunities, but also generate opportunities that allow kids to show you who they are)

# Soothe

Message to send: If you find yourself in a situation where you are overwhelmed and out of control, I will help you, and **together** we'll get you back to calm. You *might not get what you want right now*, but it will be okay. I'm here for you.

Soothing comes from joining. And joining comes from being present.

Repeated experiences of interactive soothing leads to inner soothing

Soothing helps develop the pre-frontal cortex and promotes more sophisticated functions: sound decision making and planning, emotion regulation, flexibility and adaptability, empathy, self-understanding, morality

# Soothe

Connect, then redirect (get child back to green zone, then redirect)

Not the same as coddling. Kids need boundaries to feel they live in a safe and predictable world.

Say no to the behaviors WHILE saying yes to who your child is and what he/she is feeling

Offer your PEACE (Presence, Engagement, Affection, Calm, Empathy)

# Challenge Success: Letting Kids Make Mistakes



# Week 4: Secure



# Icebreaker

Share a song from one of your playlists (or any song) that represents your current mood.

Share a the latest photo on your phone that brings you joy.



# Imperfect Parenting



# Type 2 things you already know about Secure Attachments:

1

2



Students, write your response!

# Secure

Having security makes it less necessary that someone else provide the other “S”s. They will have the *internal resources* to keep themselves safe, to see themselves as worthy, and to soothe themselves when things go wrong.

Children without a secure base often demonstrate challenges with close relationships, difficulty reasoning under stress, or anxiety about trying new things or leaving their comfort zone.

Provide a launching pad, while remaining a haven of safety, a place to return to in a storm

Offering unconditional emotional support is NOT going to make them soft. They will explore more courageously and venture further out.

Drag your dot to indicate whether you agree or disagree:



Students, drag the icon!



# Secure

Respect comes not from yelling and severity, but from being strong and smart, knowing who you are and how you want to interact with those around you.

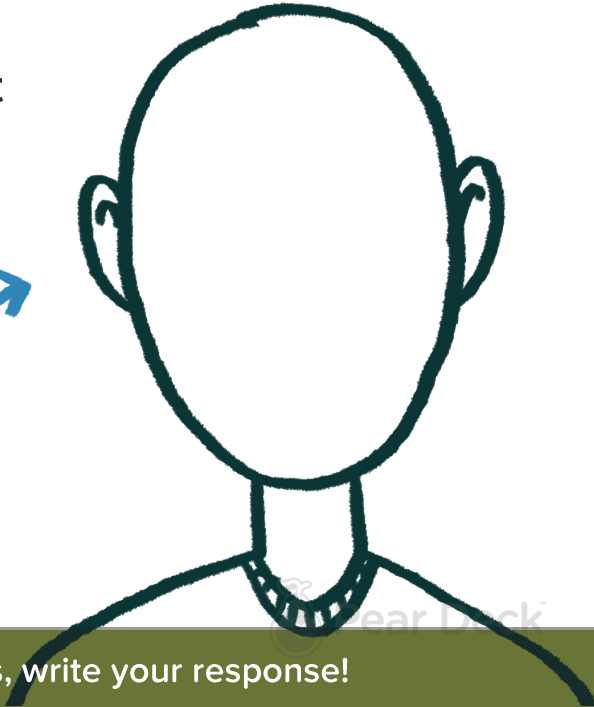
“When I tell you to slide, you better do it!” vs. “I know you were worried you’d get out, but when I say hit the dirt, I need you to slide.”

Make deposits (You’re safe, I am here, It will be ok), not withdrawals (Don’t cry. You’re fine) in the relational trust fund

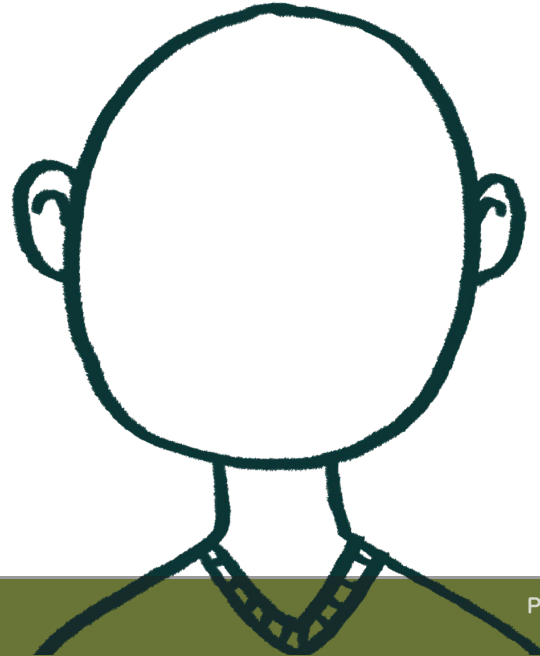
# Consider different viewpoints

Draw or type your thoughts on this topic in one head. Draw or type the point of view of a different person in the other.

My point  
of view



Another  
point of  
view



Students, write your response!

# How to Get Your Kid Talking?

Safe: keep them protected from harm. Be a safe/predictable person for them to go to.

Seen: establish mindsight (showing them their thoughts and feelings are real and worth being loved and paid attention to)

Soothed: comfort when they are in pain so they know they don't have to go alone

Secure: build trust overtime and through being predictable in experiences. Help them feel their world is safe and makes sense.

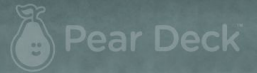


# How might we...

*Insert your question here*



Students, write your response!



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Do not remove this bar

# Mindful Moments

