

YOUR
PRESENTATION
WILL BEGIN
SHORTLY

PLEASE USE THE Q & A AND CHAT TO
COMMUNICATE WITH THE PRESENTERS
AND WITH ONE ANOTHER!



WE ARE TOGETHER, **THE VOICE**
THE **VOICE** FOR BEST PRACTICE
THE **VOICE** FOR QUALITY
THE **VOICE** FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

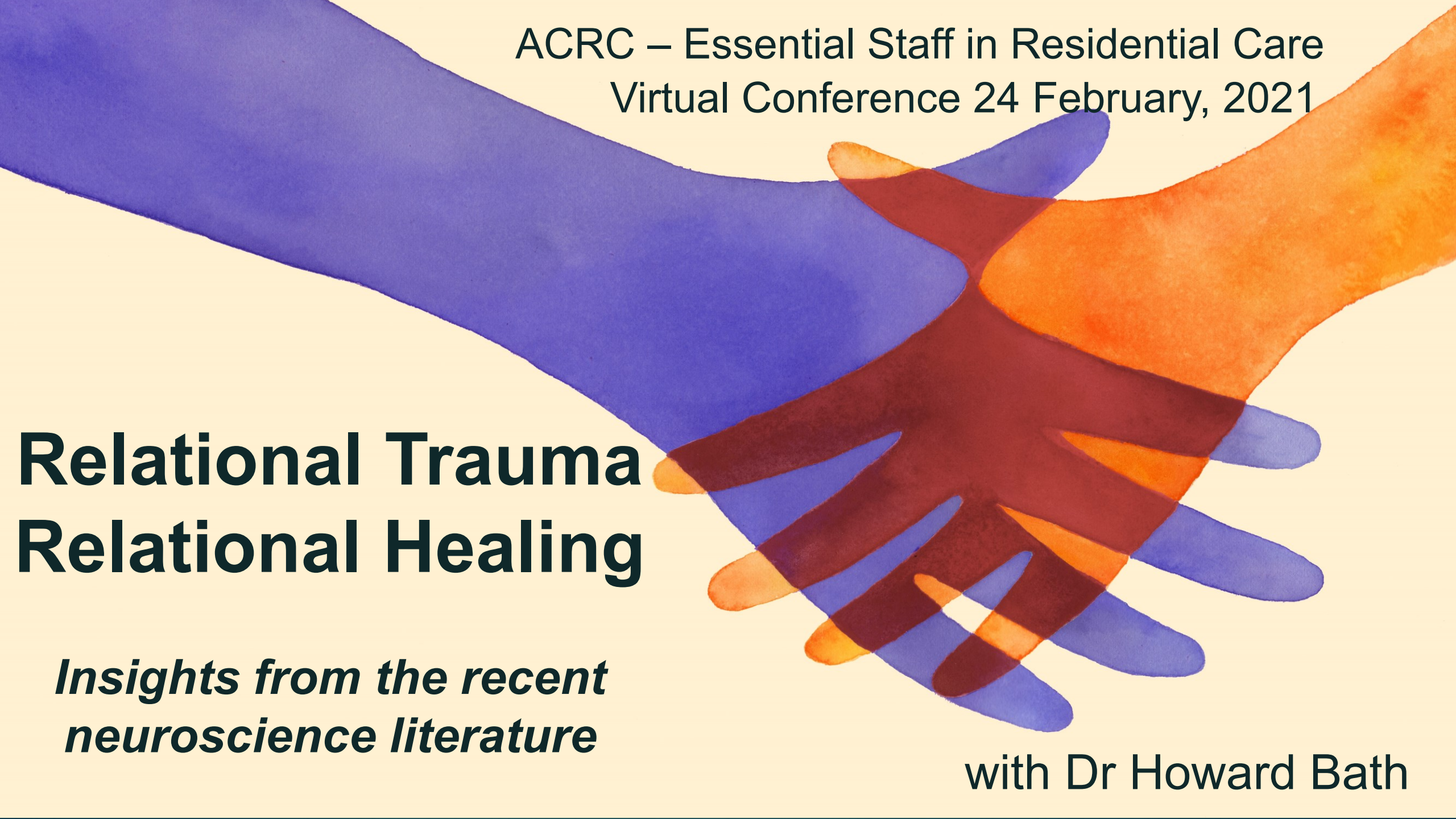
www.togetherthevoice.org

ACRC – Essential Staff in Residential Care
Virtual Conference 24 February, 2021

Relational Trauma Relational Healing

*Insights from the recent
neuroscience literature*

with Dr Howard Bath





*Never does nature
teach us what
wisdom doesn't*

Jacob Bronowski

*Connectedness evolved as the primary
biological imperative in mammals in their quest
for survival*

Stephen Porges

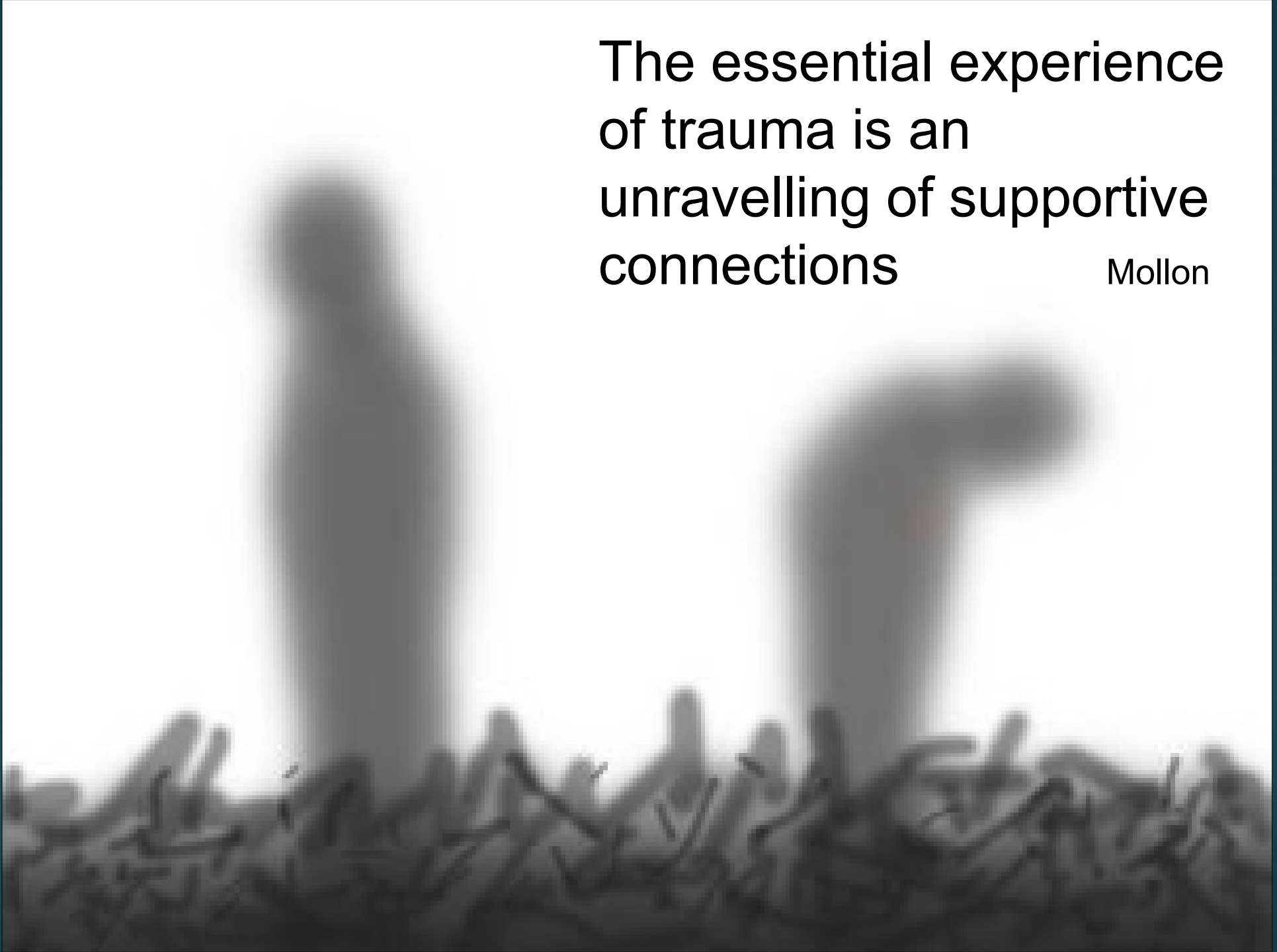


The essence of trauma
is feeling godforsaken,
cut-off from the human
race

van der Kolk

The essential experience
of trauma is an
unravelling of supportive
connections

Mollon



An adverse event becomes traumatic when it is accompanied by a sense that one is not accompanied - that one's... mind is alone

Peter Fonagy

being alone *may be central to potential trauma becoming embedded trauma*

*Trauma is...a relational experience in that embedding of trauma may arise not primarily from the nature of events, but from **who is with us** before, during, and after overwhelming happening (or non-happening in the case of neglect).*

Bonnie Badenoch

Normally an accessible other mind provides the social referencing that enables us to frame frightening or otherwise overwhelming experiences.

Peter Fonagy



A young child who receives inconsistent, neglectful, or rejecting care-giving is forced to manage overwhelming experiences by relying on primitive coping skills such as aggression, dissociation, and avoidance.

Kinniburgh et al.

I learned never to trust anybody but myself. You know I purposefully detached from any caretaker that I ever had cause that was my survival technique

If I could find someone to talk with or trust, I think my life would be easier, but history teaches me not to trust

Young adults formerly in care

The ability to offer the safe sanctuary of presence is central to treating trauma...If we felt alone, we needed accompaniment. If we were frightened we needed protection. If we were shamed, we needed acceptance. If we were hurt we needed comfort...

Lack of support in the midst of wounding seems central to the movement from potential trauma to embedded trauma, and the provision of support that is responsive to the particular wounds is equally central to healing

Bonnie Badenoch

The more healthy relationships a person has, the more likely he/she will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agent of change.

Perry & Szalavitz.

Our sense of safety modulates everything from our ability to attend, concentrate, and learn, to our core beliefs about the world, the future and ourselves.

Louis Cozolino

*Being able to feel safe
with other people is
the single most
important aspect of
mental health*

Bessel van der Kolk

THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE



*Mind, Brain
and Body in the
Transformation
of Trauma*

BESSEL VAN DER KOLK

Traumatised
children reset
their normal
level of arousal
...where no
external threat
exists they are
in a persistent
state of alarm

Bruce Perry



*Humans are on a quest to calm neural defence systems **by detecting features of safety**...*

Stephen Porges

Autonomic Balance – SNS Arousal and the ‘Vagal Brake’

Social and physical Environment



Perception, Interoception, Neuroception,

**Resting
state**

**High threat
freeze/ faint**

**Normal arousal
& engagement
Responsive to
social cues**

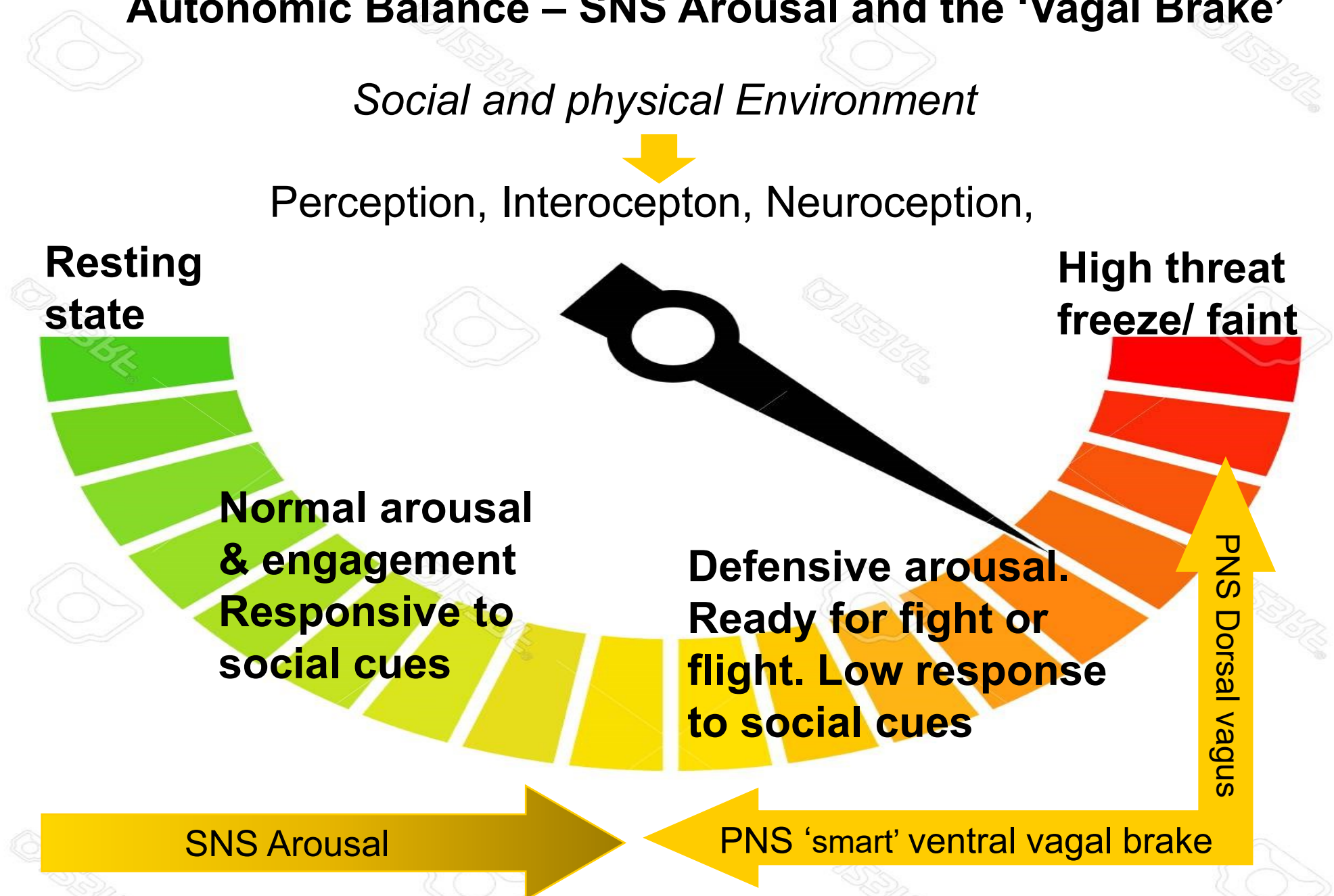
**Defensive arousal.
Ready for fight or
flight. Low response
to social cues**

PNS Dorsal vagus

SNS Arousal

PNS ‘smart’ ventral vagal brake

Adapted from Stephen Porges, 2013/15/17





Our nervous system 'anticipates a reciprocal response to a social engagement behaviour'. This promotes 'social interactions, bonding, and trust.' When the expectation is violated, the expectancy 'may trigger physiological states of defence'

Porges, 2017

Safety

Myelinated Vagus

- optimal arousal
- rest and digest
- social engagement (tend and befriend)
- executive functioning



Danger

Sympathetic Nervous System

- hyperarousal
- fight or flight and active avoidance
- activation of SAM and HPA axis
- vagal withdrawal



Threat

Unmyelinated Vagus

- hypoarousal
- passive avoidance
- Immobilization, feigning death, fainting, and shutdown
- PTSD



Some children who experience trauma and abuse, experience a mismatch; the nervous system appraises the environment as dangerous even when it is safe. This mismatch results in physiological states that support defensive strategies

Stephen Porges

*The removal of threat is not the same as the
creation of safety*

Stephen Porges

*Humans are on a quest to calm neural defence systems **by detecting features of safety**...*

This quest is initiated at birth and continues throughout the lifespan, with needs for trusting friendships and loving partnerships

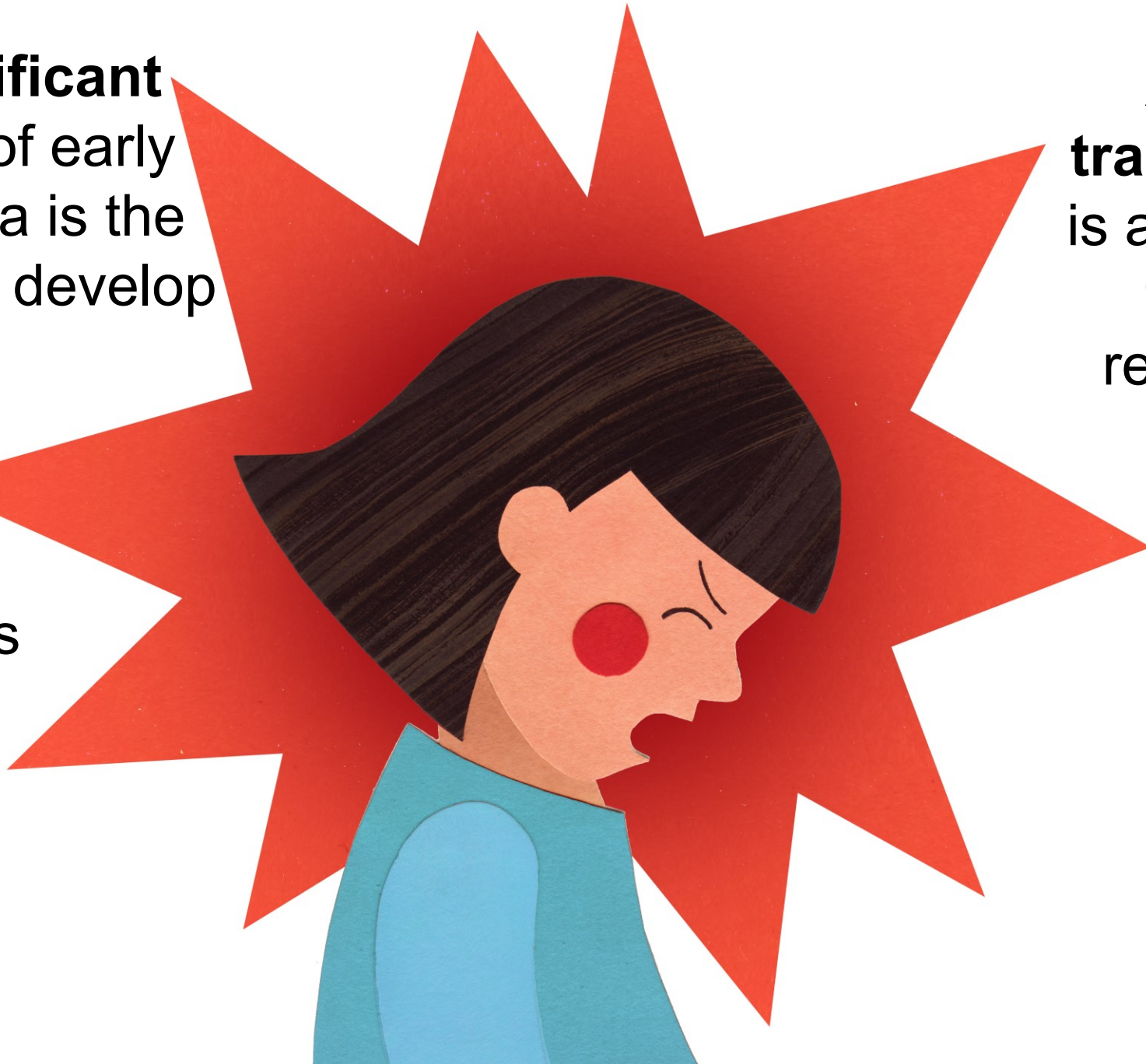
Stephen Porges

The most significant consequence of early relational trauma is the child's failure to develop the capacity to self-regulate the intensity and duration of emotional states

Allan Schore

At the core of traumatic stress is a breakdown in the capacity to regulate internal states.

Bessel van der Kolk



The traumatised young person is 'drowning in a sea of fragmented and overwhelming emotions, sensations, and frightening thoughts'

Louis Cozolino



*The primary function
of parents can be
thought of as
teaching their
children skills that
will help them
manage their
emotional arousal*

Bessel van der Kolk

*...dyadic regulation shapes self-regulation...
the child learns to regulate her own states of
arousal and inner processing through
interactions with another*

Daniel Siegel

At its root, the ability to learn self-regulation is dependent on there being available, trustworthy, empathic and committed caregivers

Allan Schore

Self-regulation is not a learned skill...through processes of co-regulation an individual develops a capacity to self-regulate

Stephen Porges

Self-regulation is a product of... 'the mutual, synchronous, and reciprocal interactions between individuals...'

Stephen Porges



Kids in stress create in adults their feelings and, if not trained, the adults will mirror their behavior

Long & Fecser

Rather than advocating teaching self-regulation, we might speak about entering into relational environments that support internalization of nourishing others for ongoing regulation

Bonnie Badenoch



*Connection is the
energy that exists
between people
when they feel
seen, heard, and
valued...*

Brené Brown