

Tiffany Gladdis, PsyD

Dr. Tiffany Gladdis is an Associate Professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and serves as the Perinatal/Neonatal Psychologist at Children's Mercy Hospital Kansas City, supporting families in the Fetal Health Center, the NICU, and the Neonatal follow-up clinic. She is also the Medical Director for the Office of Equity and Diversity at Children's Mercy. Her clinical interests include attachment and bonding, trauma, infant and perinatal mental health, and empowering families who identify as Black, Indigenous, or Persons of Color (BIPOC). Research interests include the impact of psychosocial support for parents on the well-being of their baby and the power of attachment on the developing infant brain. Dr. Gladdis is on the board of directors and a founding member of the Missouri Association for Infant Mental Health and Early Childhood, on the executive committee for the National Network of NICU Psychologists (NNNP) and an executive board member for Hand to Hold.



Is it you or me?: Trauma Informed Guidance for Healthcare Professionals Engaging with “Difficult” Parents

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Disclosures

I have nothing to disclose.



Objectives

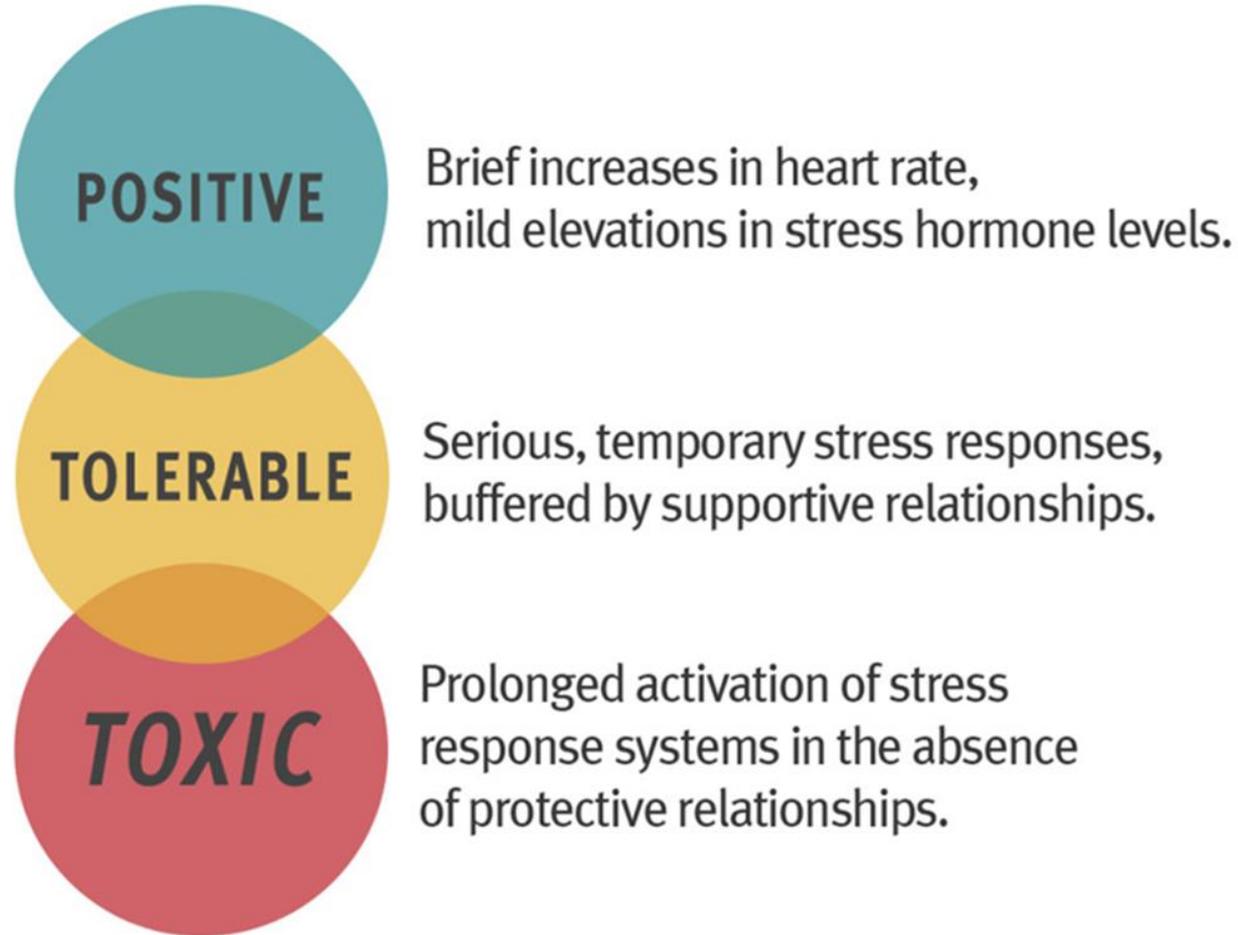
1. Understand the impact of trauma on the brain and body
2. Understand the experience of parents undergoing chronic stress in the NICU
3. Understand how trauma informed and responsive care and compassion can decrease undesired interactions with parents



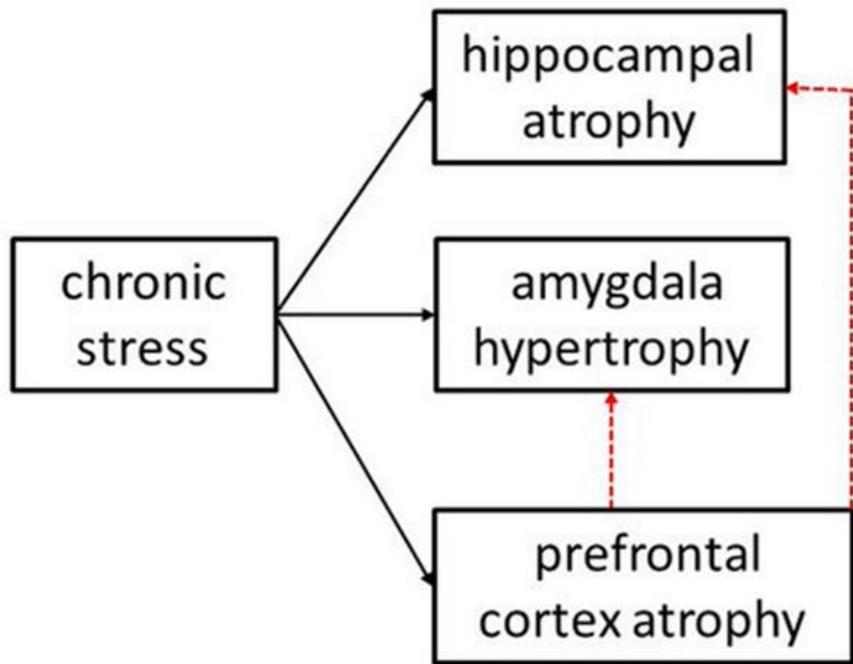
*Behavioral Health Issues
Surrounding Challenging
Parental Behaviors*



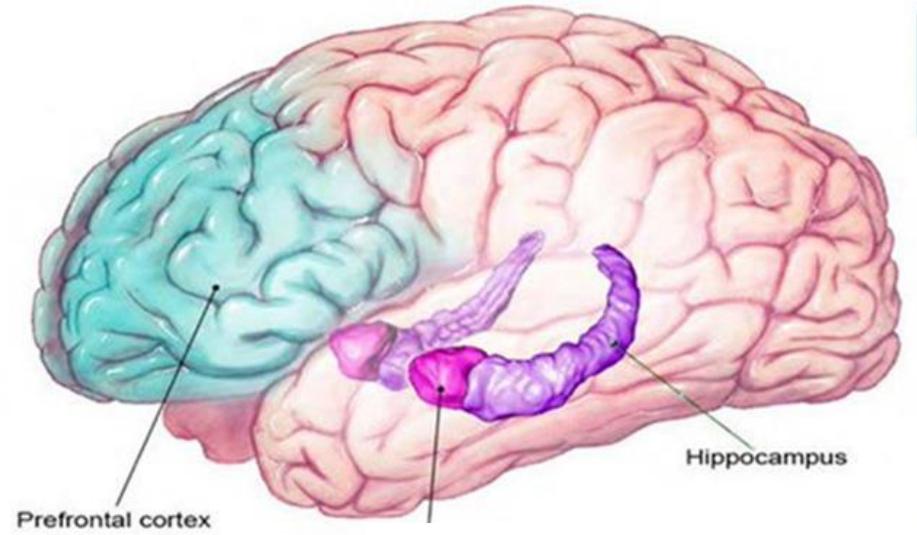
Stress and Trauma



Chronic stress affects the brain



↑ inhibition



The NICU is a trigger...

No control

Invasive

Breast/Chestfeeding and Kangaroo Care

Alarms and loud noises

Responding to authority

Prior loss in the hospital



When a parent is triggered, their sympathetic nervous system is activated.



Fight

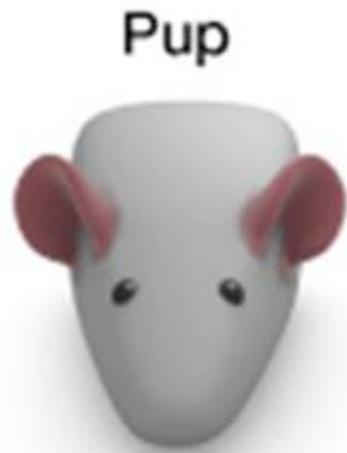
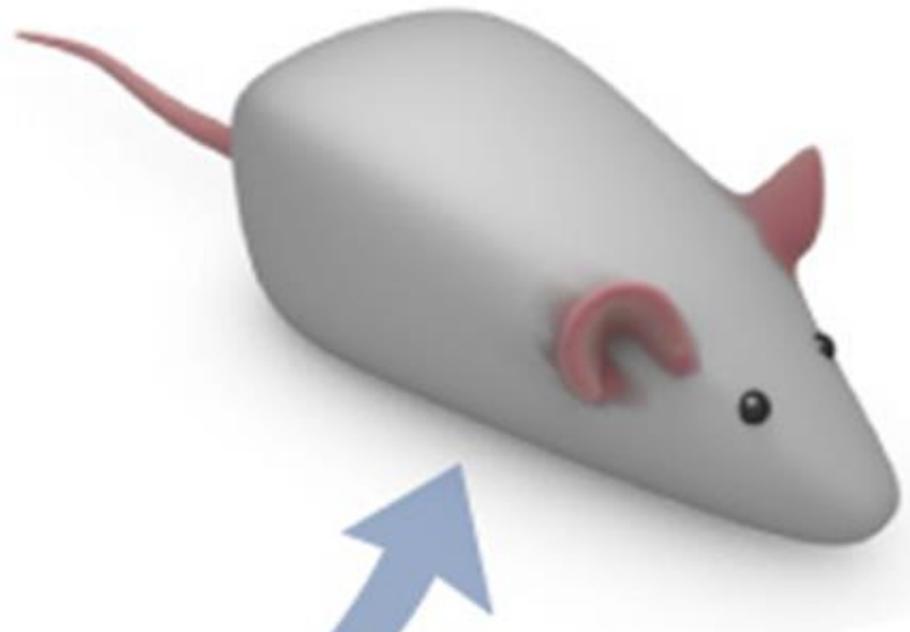
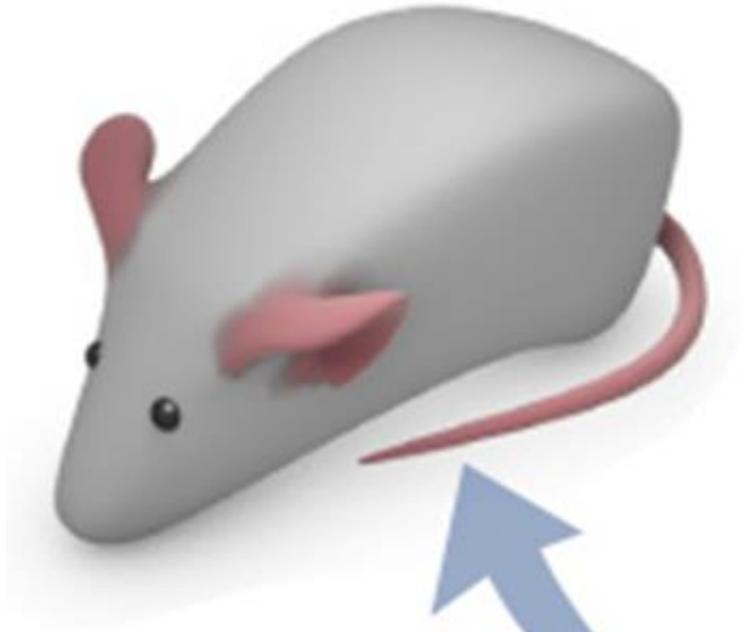


Flight



**Freeze
(Tonic
Immobility)**





**Significantly
Elevated Cortisol**

**Mildly
Elevated Cortisol**





A photograph of two lizards on a concrete surface. One lizard is green and positioned in the upper left, while the other is brown and positioned in the lower right. The text "The NICU is everyone's worst nightmare." is overlaid in the center in a white font with an orange outline. There are some leaves and a red flower petal scattered on the concrete.

**The NICU is everyone's worst
nightmare.**

Families at greater risk:

- Historically marginalized families
- Black families
- Families from low Socioeconomic backgrounds
- Non-English speaking/LEP families
- Families from rural communities
- Single parent families
- Families who have experienced past traumas
- Families with a prior NICU experience or infant/pregnancy loss
- Families who have other children with special needs



Cultural Humility



Cultural Humility

1. This is a is a **lifelong process** that starts with self-awareness.
2. Recognize and mitigate **power imbalances** in provider patient/family relationship
3. Institutional **accountability**



Institutional Accountability

- Be an “upstander” not a “bystander” – “See something, Say something.”
- Alter power hierarchies
- Increase representation
- Amplify voices of minoritized individuals
- Develop mutually beneficial, non-paternalistic partnerships with communities



Cultural Considerations...

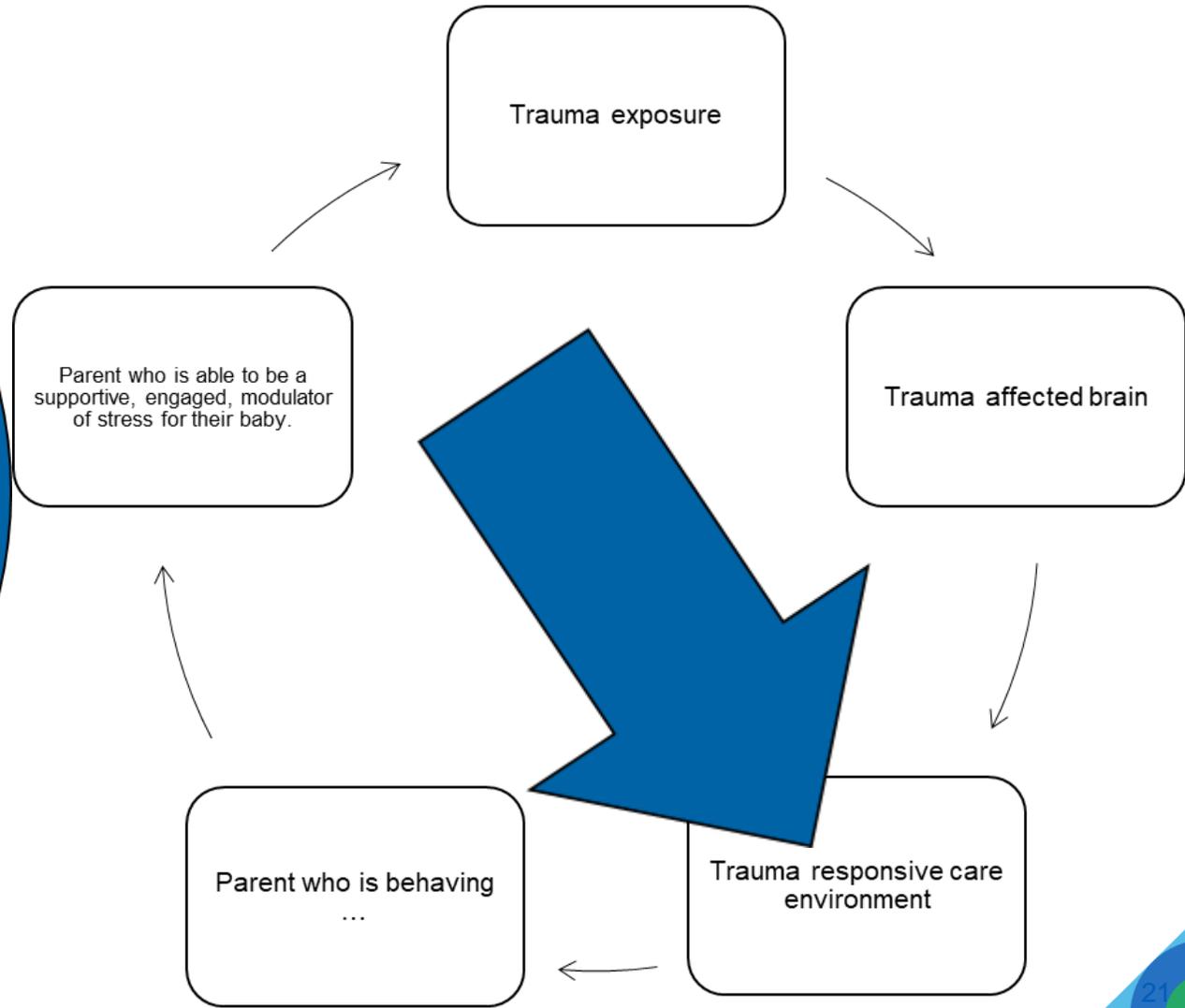
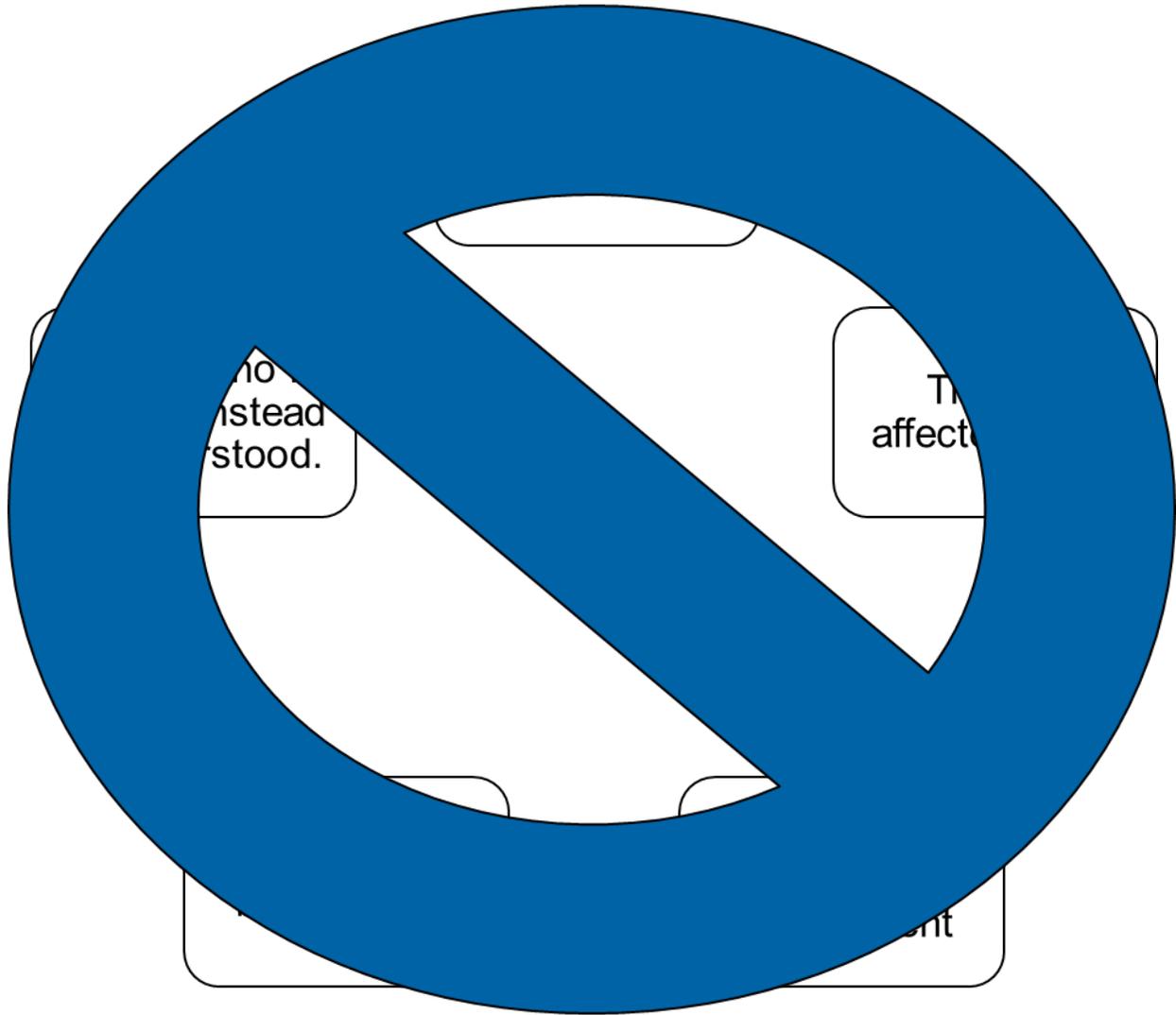
- Are interpreters available 24/7 for all languages?
- Do you provide written handouts, including consent forms, in languages which are commonly spoken by your patient population? And are they written at an appropriate level of understanding?
- Do you have a culturally diverse staff representing the different populations you serve?
- Do staff adapt their teaching methods to match parents' health literacy status?
- Is care provided without bias to families from different cultures and backgrounds?
- Is an attempt made to understand and honor families' cultural traditions as they impact the delivery of care?
- Is the family's cultural integrated in the medical team's understanding of the family's behavior or treatment of the child?



Trauma Informed vs. Trauma Responsive

- Goal: Avoid re-traumatization





Compassionate Care

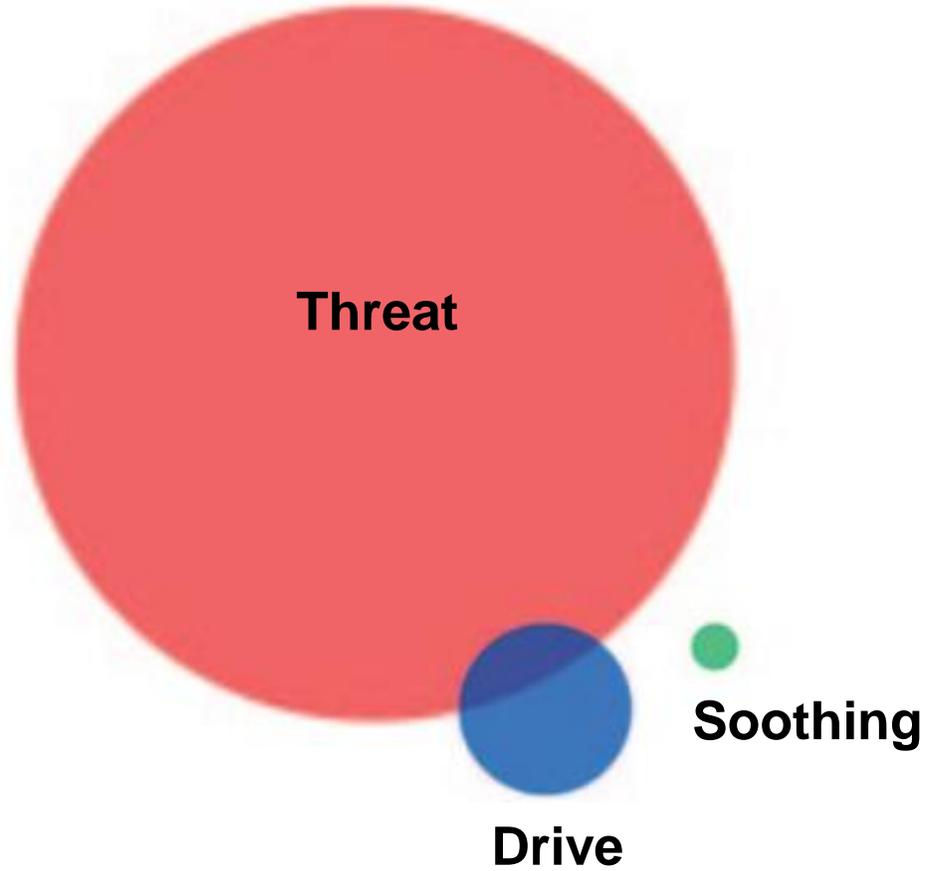
- A sensitivity to suffering of self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it.
- The Three Year Delivery Plan for Maternity and Neonatal



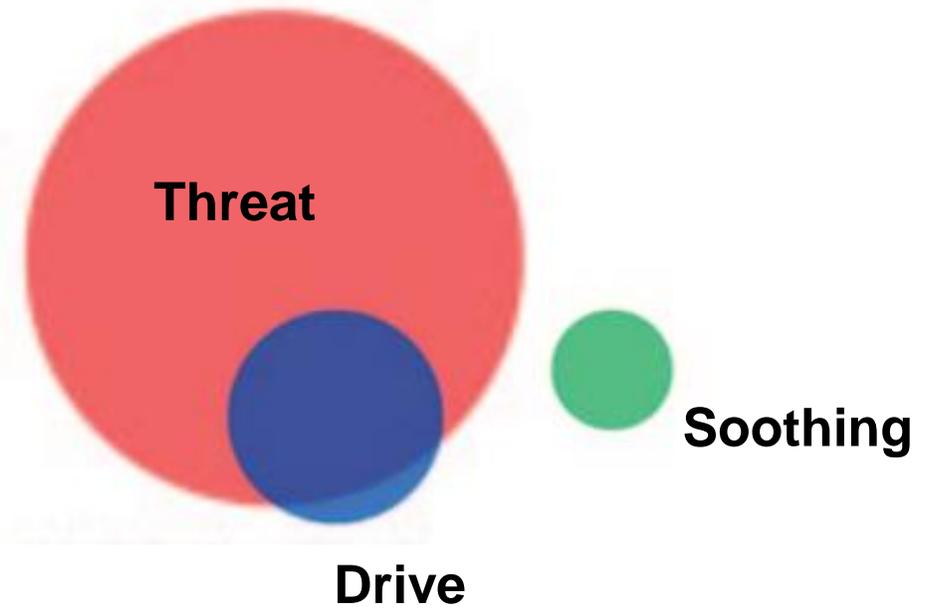
Three systems of motivation



Family



NICU Professional





Ravi Shankar, Class Engineer

The Compassionate Mind



A vibrant rainbow arches across a bright blue sky filled with fluffy white clouds. The rainbow's colors are vivid and saturated, transitioning from red on the left to violet on the right. The clouds are scattered, with some larger, more prominent ones in the lower-left and lower-right areas.

Compassionomics

"Compassionomics provides the evidence that one simple tool, compassion, can affect not only the outcomes for our patients, but also the financial health of our organizations and the well-being of our providers."

- Don Berwick, MD, President Emeritus of the Institute of Healthcare Improvement

“One doesn’t have to operate with great malice to do great harm.

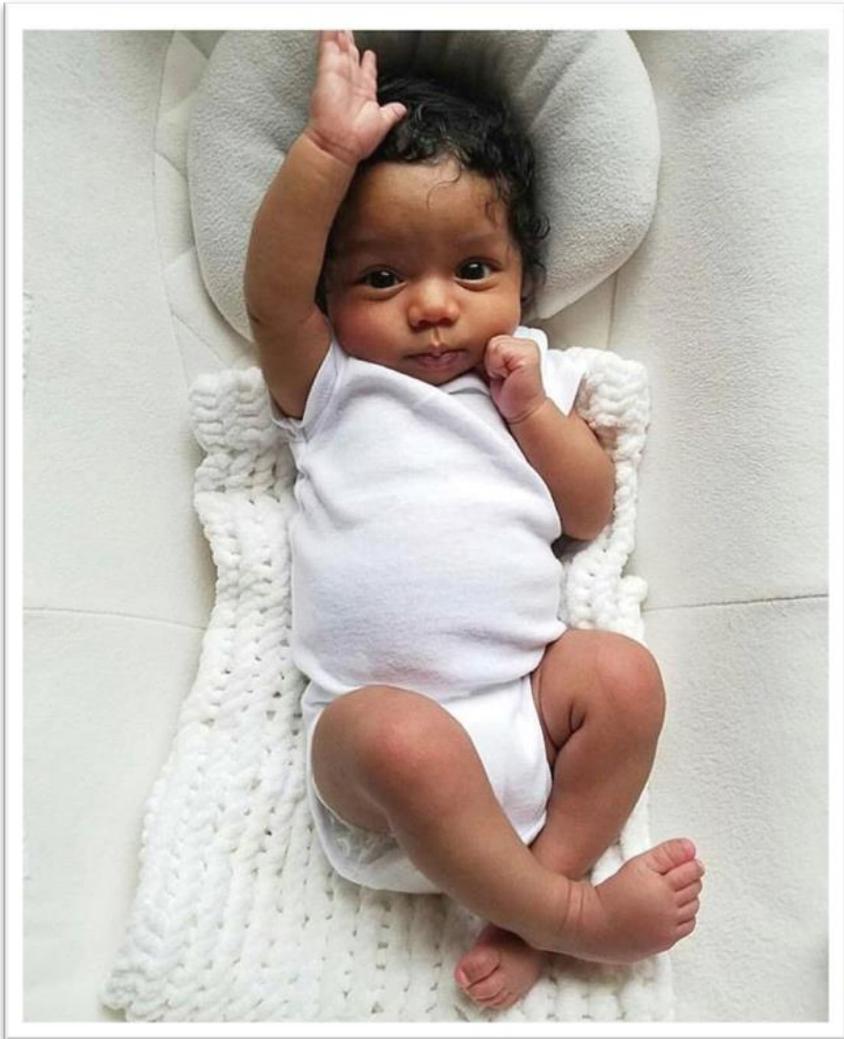
The absence of empathy and understanding are sufficient.”

–Charles Blow

Be a rainbow in someone's cloud



Questions?



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