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Relationships with financial sponsors:

- **Grants/Research support:** BCMHSUS Research Challenge: Relationship Attachment Styles as a Prediction of Burnout in Forensic Psychiatric Inpatient Staff
- **Speakers Bureau/Honoraria:** presentations for BC school districts, private community groups, Divisions of Family Practice
- **Consulting Fees:** not applicable
- **Patents:** not applicable
- **Other:** BCMHSUS Trauma Informed Practice Steering Committee, Child and Youth Mental Health and Substance Use Community of Practice



Disclosure of Financial Support

- This program has received financial support from:
UBC CPD This Changed My Practice
- Potential conflict(s) of interest:
 - none

Mitigating Potential Bias

- The information presented is based on current evidence and literature is cited and available upon request



DETOUR





ATTACHMENT THEORY

Dr. John Bowlby

- A psychological model that helps us to understand how our earliest relationships leave a lasting effect on the rest of our lives
- Internal working models: relationships, trust, dependence, emotional regulation



Attachment Theory

In times of stress infants use their caregiver as a source of comfort to provide security in order to co-regulate their emotions:

- 1. Secure
- (Insecure)
- 2. Ambivalent/anxious - turning up emotions
- 3. Avoidant/dismissive - turning down emotions
- 4. Disorganized

Ainsworth, M. D., Blehar, M., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). Patterns of attachment.

Main, M., & Solomon, J. (1986). Discovery of an insecure-disorganized/disoriented attachment pattern.



Adult Patterns of Attachment

A North American Sample:

- 56% secure attachment
- 24% avoidant attachment
- 20% ambivalent attachment

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 511–524.



Attachment across the lifespan

Insecure attachment in infancy has been linked with illness in adulthood:

- Mental Health Disorders (depression, anxiety, major mental illness, personality disorders)
- Physical Health Problems (asthma, COPD, hypertension, cardiovascular disease)^{1,2,3,4,5,6}
- Relationships struggles (with peers, co-workers, children, romantic partners, physician-patient relationships)^{7,8,9}

Our Family Tree

GREAT-GRANDFATHER
Paternal

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER
Maternal Paternal

GREAT-GRANDFATHER
Maternal Paternal

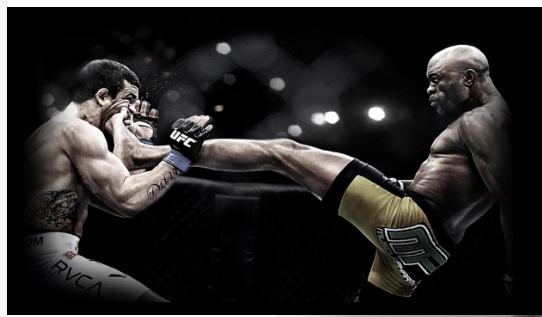
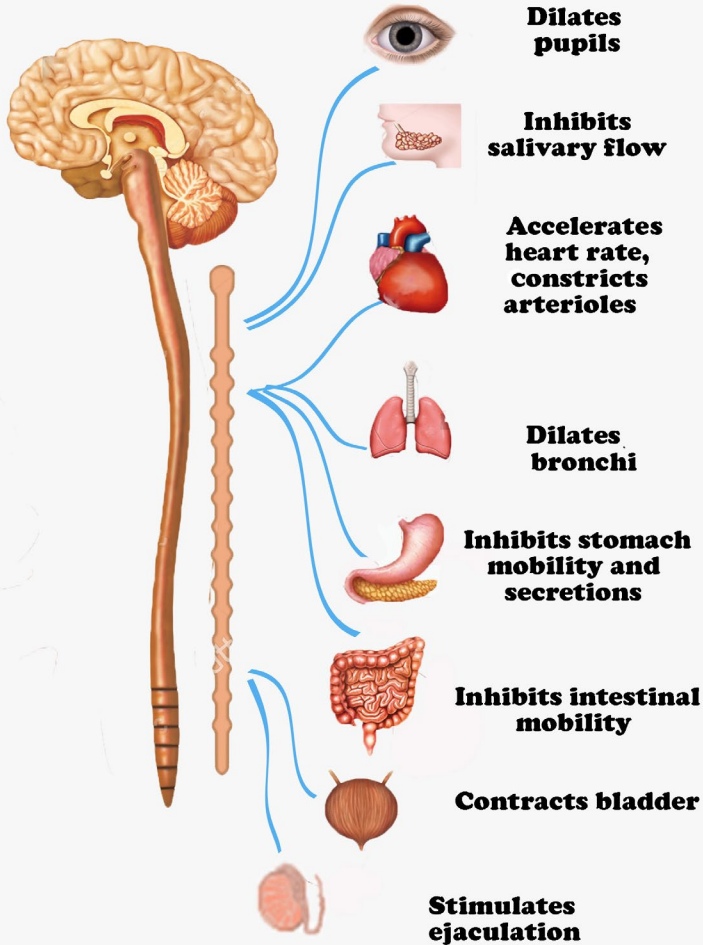
Attachment
Patterns and
Trauma (ACEs)

are intergenerational



Our stress response becomes sensitized
with early adversity

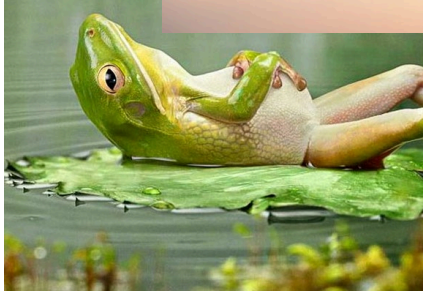
Sympathetic Nervous System



The KICKER...



Parasympathetic Nervous System



Constricts pupils



Stimulates salivary flow



Inhibits heart rate, dilates arterioles



Constricts bronchi



Stimulates stomach mobility and secretions



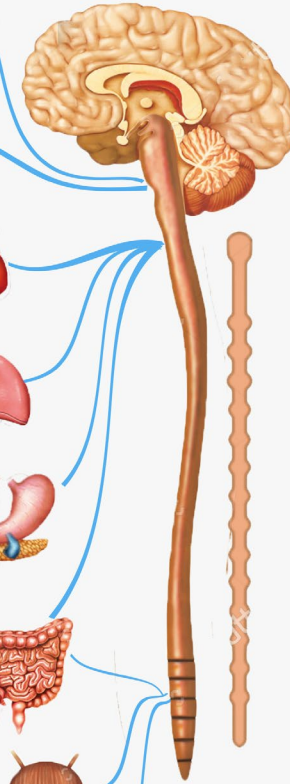
Stimulates intestinal mobility



Relaxes bladder

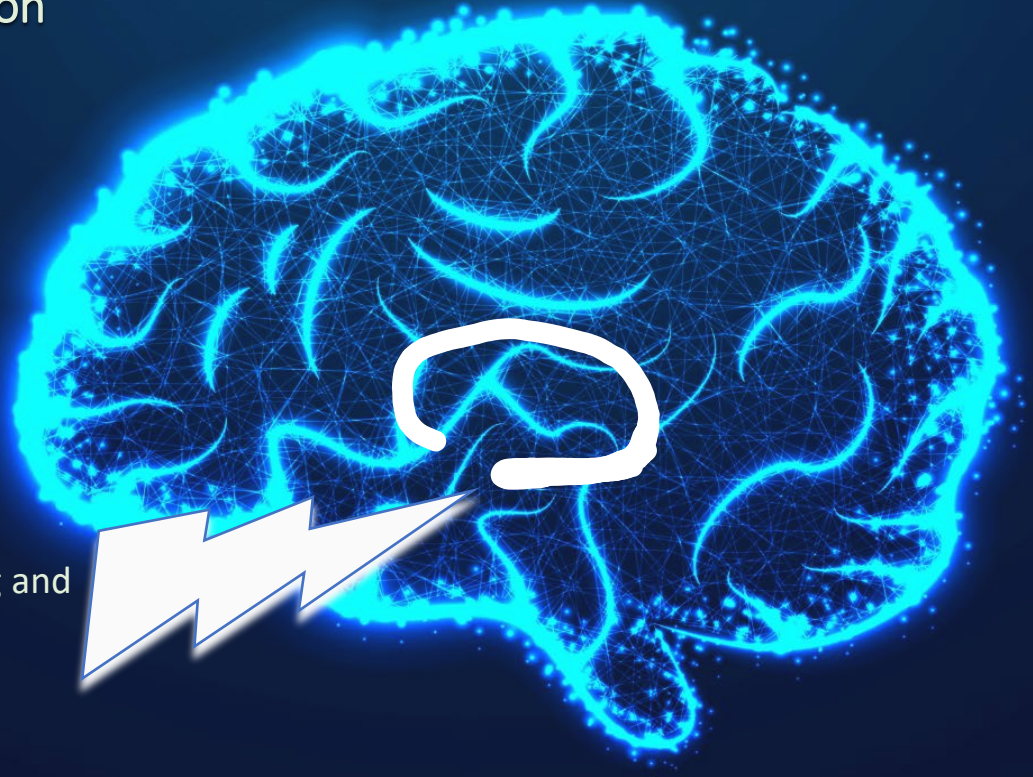


Stimulates erection



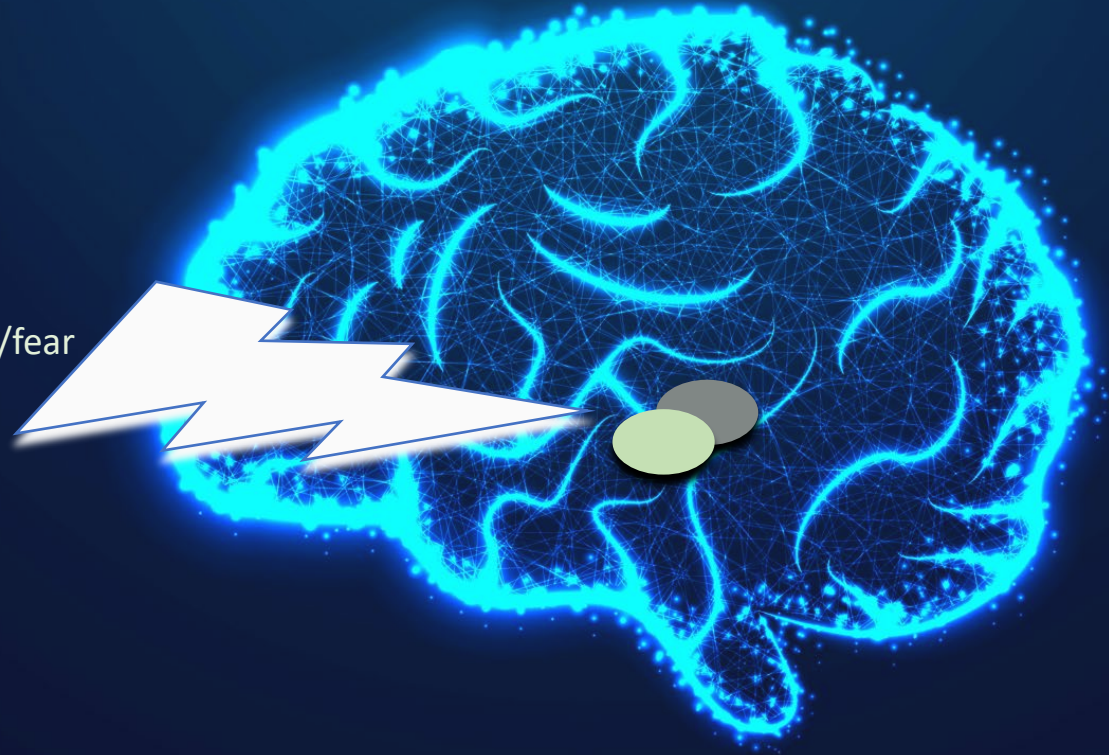
Neurobiology of Adversity and Attachment Disruption in Childhood

- Hippocampus – learning and memory; shrinks



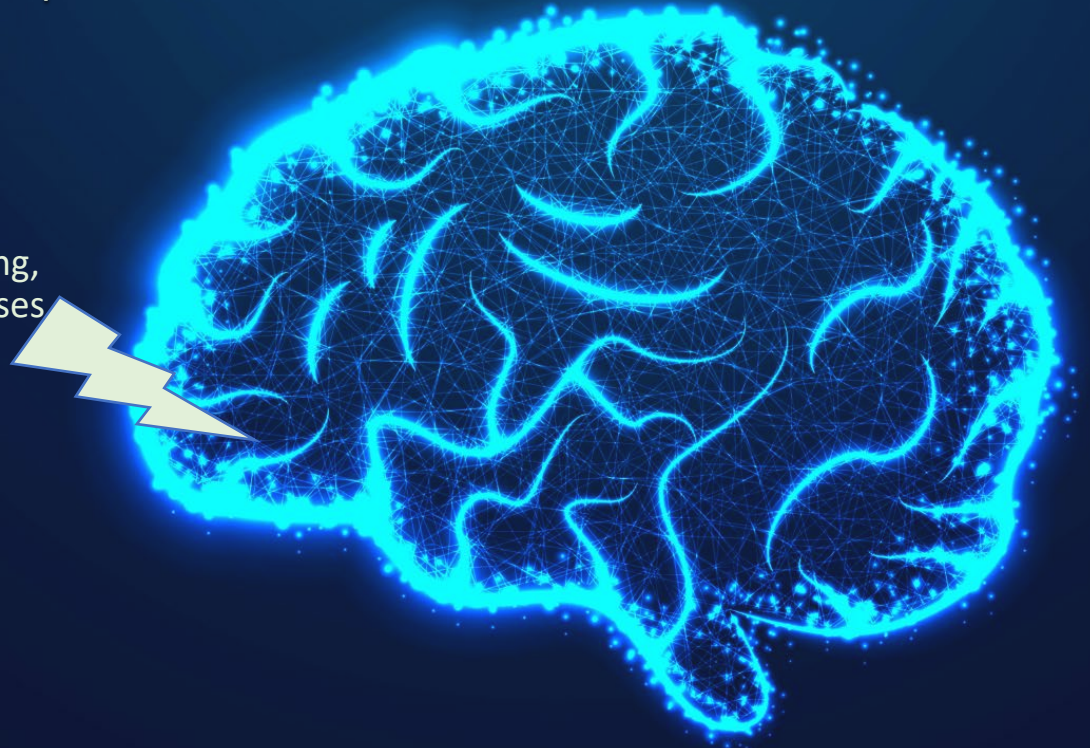
Neurobiology of Adversity and Attachment Disruption in Childhood

- Amygdala – alarm/fear centre; increases



Neurobiology of Adversity and Attachment Disruption in Childhood

- Prefrontal Cortex –
cognition, problem solving,
rational thought; decreases
ability to reason



Secure Attachment Relationships Enable a:

Safe Haven



Secure Base





Barriers to Secure Attachment

- Lengthy parent/child separations
- Parent or child illness or disability
- Parental insecurity
- Excessive, prolonged stress in caregivers
- Social determinants of health
- Racism and inequality

A bright orange life preserver with three white horizontal stripes is floating on a dark blue, rippling ocean surface. A white rope is attached to the top of the ring, and a yellow rope is attached to the bottom. The background is a deep blue sea with visible wave patterns.

“The antidote to trauma is
security.”

~Dr. Sue Johnson

Early encoding



Explicit Learning

- Times tables
- Last snack
- Colour of your car
- Tagged



Implicit Learning

- Emotional responses
- Procedural memory
- Subconscious
- Not tagged



Secure (or Earned Secure) Attachment Promotes:

- A positive view of self and others
- Flexible self-regulation
- Empathy, warmth and self-compassion
- Comfort with displays of affection and emotional closeness
- The ability to create deep, meaningful and long-lasting relationships
- A coherent life-story