

A LIFE MODEL RESOURCE

Five to Thrive

*The five crucial elements we need in order
to thrive*

1

A place to
belong

2

To receive and
give life

3

Recovery from
traumas-
synchronize

4

Maturity

5

Learn to know
our hearts

A NOTE ON THIS EDITION

Dr. E. James Wilder wrote Five to Thrive in 2004. We have kept his words exactly as he wrote them, in a fresh layout that is easier to read and share.

Some of the language about diagnosis, mental illness, and spiritual struggle reflects how these topics were talked about at that time. Our understanding keeps growing. If you are walking with someone who is hurting, lean on your community and on trusted, qualified care.

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01

The Five Elements

The FIVE crucial elements we need in order to thrive:

- 1 A place to belong
- 2 To receive and give life
- 3 Recovery from traumas-synchronize
- 4 Maturity
- 5 Learn to know our hearts

Diagnosing Failure to Thrive

	LIFE		DEATH	
▲	Learn to know our hearts	5	Living from the sark (sarx)	DIAGNOSIS: START AT 5 ▼
DEVELOPMENT: START AT 1	Mature	4	Immaturity	
	Recover from trauma	3	Loss of synchronization	
	Receive and give life	2	Pervasive fear	
	A Place to belong	1	Painful existence	

Diagnosis versus Development

To correct a failure to thrive we start with 5 and go to 1 (the heart to belonging) going one step at a time. If the problems won't resolve at level 5 we try level 4 and so on. To develop a strong individual, family, church or community we start at 1 and build up to 5.

1. Belonging – Having a family and community to belong to is essential for a person to have a foundation, a place for growth, an identity, and to reach one's God-given potential. Family and community allow people to be mirrors for us and show us who we are. Through their faces and voices we learn who we can become. Becoming part of the family of God enables us to become all we were meant to be - receivers and givers of life. As the Life Model says, "the family of God is made up of the people God brings into your life who give you what your heart needs."¹ We all need other people and need to belong.

2. Receiving and Giving – Unless we receive and give life in our place of belonging, there will be no benefit at all from belonging. We receive by becoming part of God's family, which enables us to give freely. Jesus showed us through His disciples to first receive then give to others. (Matthew 28:18+) We all need nurturing relationships that enable us to be authentic, build joy strength, and help us act like ourselves. Community and family set the tone for us to live life fully - receiving and giving life. What we receive and give in our relationships must build joy and peace if we are to develop healthy, joyful identities.

3. Recovery – How we receive and give life on earth is subject to the ravages of trauma. Most of us have been affected by trauma, resulting in de-synchronization of our minds and relationships. We no longer receive when it is time to receive or give when it is time to give. Whether it was something bad that happened (Type B), or an absence of a necessary good thing, (Type A) we all need recovery. Recovery is to exceed one's current capacity and reach one's God-intended destiny.² The devastating results of trauma can lead to de-synchronization with other people, and within our own brain. We cannot live to our potential when our brain is not synchronized with itself, or with others. The devastating results of trauma create a need to face and embrace past wounds, achieve resolution from trauma, and restore synchronization within ourselves and with others. This restoration is the work of God. We can confidently say with the Apostle Paul, "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19

¹ The Life Model page 58.

² The Life Model, page 36.

4. Maturity – When we belong, receive and give life, recover from things that go wrong the result is a growing level of maturity. The goal of maturity is to act like ourselves – remaining ourselves in all circumstances and situations.³ Maturity is about reaching one's God given potential, maximizing skills and talents, using them effectively, while growing into the full capability of our individual designs.⁴ Our identities change along with our capacities as we transition through each stage of maturity. Belonging, receiving and giving life, and synchronizing improve as we mature.

5. Hearts – Learning to know our hearts is the last and final step in order to fully thrive. We can have one of two things – a healthy heart, or an unhealthy heart. A healthy heart is alive and full of the presence of Jesus. Through this gift we become the person that we were designed to be. An unhealthy heart is one that serves the sark (or sarx.) The sark is the Greek word for the organ of deceptive knowing--the fallen human nature. Through a healthy heart we see and hear in the spirit. When we love God with all our heart we stay synchronized with Him.

When we love God with all our heart we stay synchronized with Him.

“The family of God is made up of the people God brings into your life who give you what your heart needs.”

THE LIFE MODEL

“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

³ The Life Model, page 38.

⁴ The Life Model, page 15.

02

Stages of Maturity

(taken from Bringing the Life Model to Life)

Infant

Ideal Age:
Birth > Age 4

Child

Ideal Age:
Ages 4 > 13

Adult

Ideal Age:
Age 13 > first child

Parent

Ideal Age:
From first child until
youngest child
becomes an adult at
age 13

Elder

Ideal Age:
Youngest child is an
adult

STAGES OF MATURITY (TAKEN FROM BRINGING THE LIFE MODEL TO LIFE⁵)

The Infant Stage

Ideal Age: Birth > Age 4

The infant stage is the first level of maturity. It is built through joy bonds with both parents. Infants need quiet-together time, help regulating distress and emotions, and to see themselves reflected through the “eyes of heaven” by parents. Infancy is a time to receive and give life as important needs are met without asking. Infants need others to synchronize with them first to build “joy strength”.

The task of the infant stage is to receive with joy, learn to synchronize and organize self into a person by imitating the example of caregivers. The infant learns to regulate emotions, return to joy from all emotions, and learns to be the same person over time. Learning self-care skills and rest are very important for infants before going to the next maturity level.

The Child Stage

Ideal Age: Ages 4 > 13

The child stage is a time of learning to take care of one’s self. Children need to learn how to do what they do not feel like doing. They must sort out feelings from imagination and reality. Children will need feedback on guesses, attempts, and failures as they learn. They must be taught their family history, the history of God’s family and the “big picture” of life.

The child stage teaches taking care of oneself (one is enough at this stage.) Children learn to ask for what they need and to express themselves. Developing personal resources and talents is very important for children, as is the ability to make themselves understandable to others. Children should learn what satisfies them, and see themselves through the “eyes of heaven”.

⁵ For more details read The Life Model by Friesen et al., Shepherd’s House, Bringing the Life Model to Life by Koepcke et al., Shepherd’s House, or The Stages of a Man’s Life, E. James Wilder, Quiet Water Publishing.

The Adult Stage

Ideal Age: Age 13 > first child

The adult stage starts with a rite of passage, needed to pass from child to adult. Adults bond with peers and form a group identity. The opportunity to observe the same sex using power fairly is needed. Young adults must be given important tasks by their community. Each young adult needs guidance with their personal imprint on history and opportunities to share life in partnership.

An adult will have the task of discovering the main characteristics of his/her heart, proclaiming and defending their personal (and community) group identity, and bringing self and others back to joy simultaneously. Developing a personal style that reflects his/her heart is a task for adults as is learning to protect others from himself/herself. Learning life-giving sexuality is needed for adult maturity. Mutual satisfaction in relationships characterizes this stage.

The Parent Stage

Ideal Age: From first child until youngest child becomes an adult at age 13

A parent needs to give life, have an encouraging partner, receive guidance from elders, and peer review from other fathers or mothers. A parent helps establish a secure and orderly environment. Giving without needing to receive in return will be a task for the parent, as is building a home. A parent will protect, serve, and enjoy his/her family. The parent's pleasure is helping his/her children reach maturity while synchronizing the developing needs of children, spouse, family, work and church.

The Elder Stage

Ideal Age: Youngest child is an adult

Elders are parents to their communities. They raise communities much like parents raise families. Each elder needs a community to call his/her own. Recognition by his/her community is needed for an elder to find a proper place in the community structure. By the time elder maturity is reached, elders know how to build trust as well as earn it.

Elders practice hospitality, give life to those without families, and they parent and mature their communities. An elder will build and maintain a community identity and act like him/herself in the midst of difficulty and trial. Elders enjoy what God puts in each person they meet, and see them through the 'eyes of heaven'. Trust is built through the elder's own transparency and spontaneity.

Understanding Maturity

- Maturity stages go through growth, repair and transformation phases.
- Maturity is the human task while redemption is the Divine task.
- Maturing does not give us more value. (Romans 14)
- Maturing is valuable. (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- Failing to mature is perilous. (Hebrews 5:12-14, Proverbs 30:21-23)
- Restoring missing maturity is part of the human work of Christian fellowship.
 - Maturity needs are different for those stuck at infant, child or adult levels.
 - Maturity is not a spiritual gift but comes from our work.
 - Maturity develops in a wise community.
- Defective growth must be corrected at a cost to strong Christians. (Romans 15:1-3)

03

Trauma

*Living in a broken world produces broken hearts,
lives, families, and communities.*

Trauma

Living in a broken world produces broken hearts, lives, families, and communities. Trauma shows its devastating effects in many shapes, sizes and forms. Studies show that a third of us have been traumatized as children in the form of physical abuse or sexual abuse, many more suffer from the absences of good things that are necessary for emotional maturation. Help is not usually available.⁶ According to The Life Model, there are two types of trauma that can damage and scar – type A and B trauma. Type A trauma is the absence of necessary good things, like not being cherished, not having the experience of being a delight, or not receiving large amounts of non-sexual physical nurturing.⁷ Type B trauma is when something bad happens, for example – physical abuse (face slapping), sexual abuse (inappropriate touching), verbal abuse (name calling), or abandonment, among others.⁸

The Brain Under Trauma

Back and Front

Fear based living from the back of the brain develops out of trauma. Mature suffering is from the front of the brain. When trauma is resolved brain activity shifts from the back to the front.

Left and Right

Naming (explaining) on the left side of the brain is normally synchronized with knowing (experiencing) on the right side. During overwhelming circumstances the brain shuts down the left side (too slow) and uses the four level control center on the right side. If the overwhelming circumstances produce trauma the two sides stay desynchronized to some extent until the trauma is resolved and the explanation can match the experience.

We must learn to deal with the right hemisphere and its characteristics if we want to prevent or recover from trauma.

⁶ The Life Model, page 10.

⁷ The Life Model, page 44.

⁸ The Life Model, page 46.

TAKEN FROM BRINGING THE LIFE MODEL TO LIFE

An Eight Step Process for Resolving Traumas

A common way to resolve old wounds can be described in eight steps. Trauma means our identity has been diminished because we could not get back our peace. Under traumatic circumstances we lose the ability to act like ourselves. When we seek to resolve traumas, we will be able to heal any traumatic events for which we have developed sufficient joy strength. Note: This process is similar to the Theophostic® ministry method taught by Dr. Ed Smith. We recommend careful study of his method.

1 Find and experience the upset feeling again

What the right hemisphere knows

2 Find the belief that goes with the upset

How the left hemisphere explains it

3 Ask the Holy Spirit to find the best evidence for that lie.

4 Invite Jesus into that event or evidence.

5 Test the truth of your evidence and conclusion by asking God to reveal truth to you.⁹

This synchronizes the two hemispheres

6 Check for peace and rest internally after God reveals a truth to you.

This tests for synchronized activity of the whole brain

7 Repeat if necessary, asking if there is other evidence God wants you to see.

8 When your thoughts about the old wound are peaceful, give thanks.

(Life Model Study Guide, page 25)

You will be able to do this for any traumatic events you can keep in your awareness.

⁹ Note: Do not try to argue with yourself and try to tell yourself the truth. You may be mistaken but God never is mistaken. Let God reveal the truth to you while you try to believe the lie as long as you possibly can.

Trauma and Suffering

THOMAS GERLACH

Trauma

Trauma is any experience that reduces who we are, or who we understand ourselves to be. The unregulated emotional intensity of the traumatic event reduces us to less than we were before it.

Suffering

Those who suffer are at peace with themselves and the world. Sufferers may find their capacities drastically reduced even to the point of death but they continue to be themselves with the capacities and dominion that they have left.

Maturity and Trauma

- We are traumatized when the emotional intensity of an event far exceeds our maturity and our capacity.
- When we are unable to regulate our emotions we no longer act like ourselves.
- When we are badly out of control emotionally we simply “want it to stop.”

Acting Like Ourselves in Pain and Distress

- The first and most essential part of “acting like ourselves” is that we remain relational.
- The second is that we remain small creatures in the hands of a large God.
- The third is that we continue to have personal preferences and creativity.
- The fourth is that we have hope.
- We regulate our own feelings
- We help others regulate their feelings too
- We act like ourselves by staying in desire not fear
- We show others what Jesus sees right then
- During times of emotional suffering we rely on non-verbal memories from similar conditions stored in the Control Center.

The Four Plus Levels of Brain Synchronization

4+ Knowing and Naming

4 My attention in the world

3 Peace, Joy and Distress

2 Approach and Avoidance

1 Who is personal to me

Always start work at level four plus. If the problem resolves there you are done. If it does not resolve you must move to helping the control center in the right hemisphere.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

EPHESIANS 2:10

Training the Control Center

- The better trained and equipped the control center is to stay synchronized the longer and better it will be at handling distress.
- Rather than becoming desynchronized (or traumatized) the person will suffer well and still remain him or herself.
- The emotional control center is trained to suffer well through: relationship, visual example, emotional story and song—but not through propositional truth and didactic teaching.

HOW IT LEARNS

- It learns in relationship
- It learns from example – models
- It learns through emotional picture stories
- It is non-verbal except for:
 - Music and poetry
 - It can only be taught with rhythm and tone
- These are all synchronization functions

SUFFERING WELL

- There is no propositional answer to suffering well.
- The brain is not configured in a way that makes obedience through logical, language based propositions possible during distress and suffering.

- The only way we can avoid sin while using a human brain is to learn to synchronize with God while we are suffering. **Joy makes this possible.**
- Sin is "not acting like ourselves" Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

04

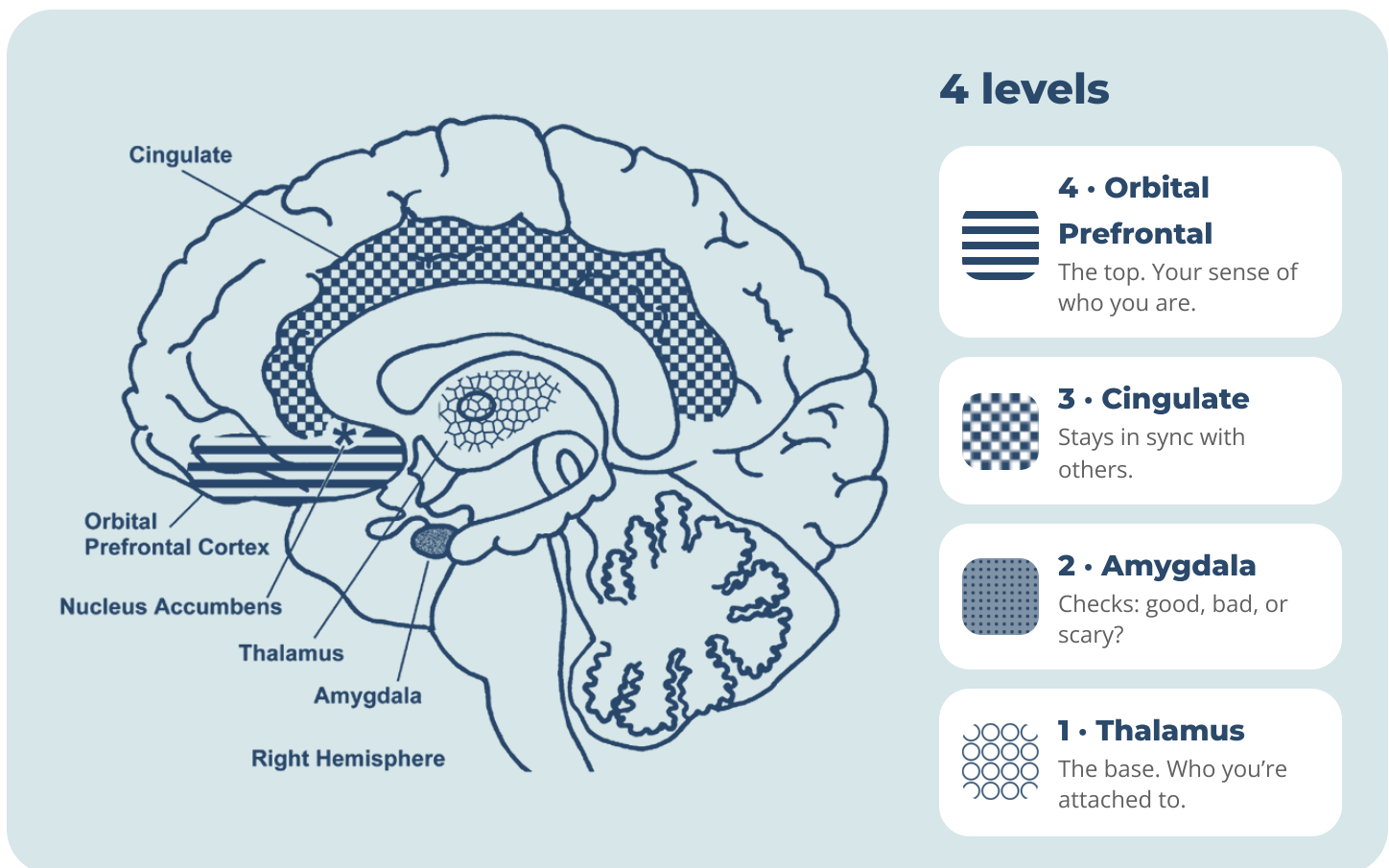
The Control Center

The control center is our brain's emotional regulation mechanism.

Meet your brain's control center

24
MONTHS TO
DEVELOP

The part of you that stays in charge, even on the hard days.



- Always in charge of the brain
- It is a **four level command center**.
- At the **top of the command hierarchy**
- **Shuts down the rest of the brain** under high levels of stress and runs the brain until the distress is past
- It is located in the **right hemisphere**

How the Control Center Works

The control center is our brain's emotional regulation mechanism. It is located in the right hemisphere of the brain. Our control center's capacity decides whether we are traumatized or "suffer well" when distressing emotions occur.

The control center is hierarchically arranged. Each higher level depends upon each previous level's development, maturation, and training. For synchronization to occur individually and with others this area of our brain will need to be properly developed and trained. These structures are important in determining whether we will "suffer well", and stay relational during times of distress or not. When underdeveloped or untrained, we can be overwhelmed and these structures will hierarchically shut down from top to bottom. Maintaining brain synchronization requires that each level be well developed. For example, to build a four-story house, we must start with a foundation, building one level at a time. We cannot build the top level until the previous levels are stable and strong. The brain's emotional center is the same.

The first two levels of the control center, the amygdala and thalamus/deep limbic structures are below the cortex, and are not in our conscious awareness. The top layers, cingulate cortex and prefrontal cortex are cortex, meaning they are involved in our conscious awareness.

The first level, thalamus and deep limbic structures, is our bonding and attachment center. This layer is where our bonds form with mom and others around us. It decides when it is time to attach, and when it isn't. This layer focuses on, "Who is important to me?" We call it the attachment circuit.

The second level, the amygdala, is our basic evaluation center. The amygdala has three states or opinions about everything – good, bad, or scary. These opinions never change, except with a well developed level four to override it. These opinions are entirely subjective and not open to any outside opinions of any kind. It is the emotional brain for one and is operational before birth. Levels one and two are the only parts of the control center operating before two months of age.

The cingulate cortex, or level three is called the “mother core.” The mother core synchronizes with one other person at a time, unlike level two which only listens to itself. This center downloads from interaction with mom and others. At age 2 to 9 months, level three synchronizes with mom for its development and training. Ultimately it must synchronize the higher and lower levels of the brain (cortex with subcortex.) Through consistent interaction, the mother’s brain will have duplicated itself within the baby’s brain establishing similar energy levels, function, and structure. This duplication is accomplished through right-hemisphere-to-right-hemisphere communication. This rapid, non-verbal transaction is:

6

**complete cycles of
communication
every second**

- Six complete cycles of communication every second
- Synchronized brain chemistry
- Matched brain structure growth
- Authentic, truthful, rapid communication
- Emotions are AMPLIFIED each cycle
- Subjectively experienced as produced by the “other”

Functions Synchronized Through the Cingulate Cortex

POSTERIOR CINGULATE

Members of own species

Nesting instinct

Personal space

Tracks eye movements

“Dance” movement

ANTERIOR CINGULATE

- Synchronizes higher and lower brain functions
- Energy levels
- Joy smiles
- Joint emotions
- Joint activities (actions)
- Source of motivation for internal and external action

Mind sight (5 months)

- Baby knows there is a mind behind the face she sees
- A “theory of mind” center in the baby’s brain
- A “virtual other” to simulate what the mind behind the face she sees is feeling
- The interpretive part of intuition
- A “what others are up to” simulator

Level four, the most complex part of the brain is called the orbital prefrontal cortex, in which exists our conscious identity - me. This center is the highest of the four levels, dependent upon the three previous levels to function properly.

Level Four: The Orbital Prefrontal Cortex

ITS CHARACTERISTICS INCLUDE:

- 35% of adult brain developed after birth by stimulation
- Center of personal identity
- Joint focused attention
- Three-way bonds
- Creativity
- Goal directed behavior
- Correcting our interpretations of others
- Calming/controlling the amygdala (emotional brain for one)
- Thinks in images (pictures) and feelings
- Center of emotional regulation (individual and mutual)
- Switching focus of attention
- Personal preferences
- Satisfaction
- Moral and social behavior
- Time travel / age regression

PEAK GROWTH RATE FOR THE PFC IS AT 9 MONTHS, 4 YEARS, 8.5 YEARS AND 15 YEARS.

9 months

4 years

8.5 years

15 years

Critical Development Ages for the Control Center

AGE	CRITICAL DEVELOPMENT	RESULTS OF TRAUMATIC STRESS DURING CRITICAL TIMES OF DEVELOPMENT
2-9 months	Mother core	Mother core 2-9 months = unregulated emotions
5-6 months	"Theory of self" / "mind sight"	
6-12 months	Joyful identity growth	Joyful identity growth 6-12 months = low coping capacity
12-18 months	Return to joy	Return to joy 12-16 months = loss of control during feelings
15 months	Limbic system myelinated	
18 months	Integration of joyful identity	Integration of joyful identity 16-18 months = mood dependent personality changes
2-3 years	Library (hippocampus) myelinated No times and places connected to memories before this time	Library (hippocampus) myelinated 2-3 years = amnesia
3 years	Corpus callosum (left/right connected) No left hemisphere stories connected to right hemisphere memories prior to this time (corpus callosum myelinization)	Corpus callosum 3 years (left/right connected) = poor integration between words and emotions (knowing and naming)

The Four Plus Levels of Brain Synchronization

4+**Knowing and Naming**

Right and Left Hemispheres

4**My attention in the world**

Prefrontal cortex (level 4 of control center)

3**Peace, Joy and Distress**

Cingulate cortex (level 3 of control center)

2**Approach and Avoidance**

Amygdala (subcortex level 2 of control center)

1**Who is personal to me**

Attachment circuit (level 1 of control center)

Always start work at level four plus. If the problem resolves there you are done.

05

Synchronization

Joy and Quiet Together · Returning to Joy

The joy of the Lord is your strength.

NEHEMIAH 8:10B, KJV

JOY AND QUIET TOGETHER

Synchronization

Learning to synchronize our minds internally and our interactions externally are essential to thriving. Blessedly, internal and external synchronization are learned together during the first two years of life. We all need predictable interactions with caregivers to give us the safety and security that synchronization requires. Synchronization within the brain comes as each level of our emotional center matures and develops--based on the previous level's development. Since our control center is hierarchically arranged, it develops and grows a level at a time through healthy interaction with mom and caregivers. As our joy strength is growing, our capacity to handle distress also increases. This enables us to stay relational under duress, and stay synchronized within our brain and with others.

Synchronizing with others involves matching energy levels, temperature regulation, right-brain-to-right-brain communication, joy building/quiet together and healthy attachment bonding. There is a time to work and a time to play for the infant mind and mom's sensitivity will determine whether or not she and the child are synchronized. When the child needs to bond (attachment light on), mom needs to be aware and connect. When the child's brain is full to capacity and needs rest (attachment light off), mom needs to respect that with quiet together time. This synchronization process will develop the needed security, predictability and capacity that is needed for the child's regulation of emotions.

ATTACHMENT LIGHT ON

mom needs to be aware and connect.

ATTACHMENT LIGHT OFF

mom needs to respect that with quiet together time.

Joy, the feeling that someone is “glad to be with me,” is the motivational life force for the infant the first two years of life. The child will depend on the ability to return to joy from every upsetting emotion he or she will experience throughout life. Through bonding and interaction with mom, the baby learns to build joy and learns to rest. The analogy we use is “climbing Joy Mountain.” The infant learns to climb Joy Mountain, and build joy strength through each joyful interaction with mom. The joy strength is increased each time, enabling the infant to have more capacity, or a larger “joy bucket.” This is a large determinant for whether or not the baby will develop a healthy sense of self. It also governs the ability to return to joy from distressing emotions. As the joy is being amplified, mom will give the infant a time to rest when the child’s joy level reaches maximum. This is called quiet together time. Through repeated practice, the baby learns how to regulate his/her own emotions. Learning this enables the child to have a healthy sense of self and an awareness of the emotional states of others through just looking at their faces. Not learning to rest will be the major predictor for life of the developing infant’s risk of mental illness. Joy and quiet-together complement each other. Together they produce mental and emotional well-being.



Joy, the feeling that someone is “glad to be with me.”

Life will be filled with many opportunities to practice building joy and quiet together thus developing capacity. It is a lifelong process with the first years defining how well we will run the race of thriving and prospering. Our brain capacity will determine whether we are traumatized or whether we suffer well whenever we encounter pain.

At three months the visual cortex is ready for joy amplification.

(Right Hemisphere)

Right-brain-to-right-brain communication is how synchronization is accomplished. It:

- Matches mental states
- Matches energy levels
- Alternates between arousal and rest
- Is synchronized to baby by good mothers
- Matches mother's need for bad mothers

Returning to Joy Means:

- Re-synchronizing with someone who is "out of tune" with me
- Recovering from someone who was not glad to be with me
- Finding someone who is glad to be with me in my distress:
 - Even if they were the cause of it
 - Who will share my distress and help me regulate it

Right-brain-to-right-brain communication returns us to joy through mutual regulation of shared emotional states:

- Synchronize negative emotional states
- Stay in relationship while learning to calm the distress
- Match the child's brain chemistry and wiring to the adult's
- Six complete cycles of communication every second
- Subjectively experienced as produced by the "other"

RETURNING TO JOY ACHIEVES:

- Remaining a relational person under distress
- Acting like myself
- Staying the same “self” during different emotions
- Being the same person over time

WHERE THERE IS NO PATH BACK TO JOY WE SEE:

- Avoidance of specific negative emotions
- Sidetracks to other feelings (fear might go to sad, rage, or sex)
- Extended periods of disturbance (depression)

Direct neurological paths back to joy from distress allow quick resolution of distress without avoidance of negative feelings.

Returning to Joy

- 1 Meeting people in their unhappy feelings
- 2 Sharing the feeling
- 3 Letting them know you are still glad to know them
- 4 Acting like yourself while you let them keep the attention on themselves

These things together return people to joy.

The six biggest negative feelings are:

1**Sadness****2****Anger****3****Terror****4****Shame****5****Disgust****6****Hopeless
despair****SCRIPTURES:****ORGE (Greek)**

Mark 3:5 see also Colossians 3:8

Return to joy

Psalms 30:5, 51:8, 126:5

Jeremiah 31:13

John 16:20-22

2 Timothy 1:4

06

Failure to Thrive – Level Three

Desynchronization • Capacity and Trauma

CAPACITY AND TRAUMA

Desynchronization

Failing to thrive can happen when our brain becomes desynchronized through lack of training, underdevelopment, and/or trauma. The brain is delicate machinery and it needs practice and protection for healthy development and functioning. As we have learned thus far, synchronizing is essential for growth and development in our emotional center. When we desynchronize, we are no longer functioning properly and fail to thrive. One of the reasons that people desynchronize is because of something bad that happens during childhood (type B trauma), or because of having an absence of a necessary ingredient for proper growth and development (type A trauma). We will look at what happens when we are overwhelmed by circumstances, become traumatized and desynchronize.

One need only think of Jesus suffering on the cross yet staying relational. He was able to pray for and forgive those who beat, mocked and tormented Him. Jesus remained relational and could “suffer well”. His capacity was not exceeded by the trauma He was enduring. He is our Perfect Example.

When we are no longer able to remain ourselves we become overwhelmed and are no longer relational. Our circumstances have become greater than our capacity and we are traumatized--therefore becoming desynchronized. Jesus was not traumatized on the cross because He was still remaining Himself. He was synchronized within Himself, and with His Father. Jesus had a “joy bucket” that was large enough to handle the trauma that He was enduring at the hands of others. We will look more in depth at the brain’s ability to stay synchronized, and how capacity plays a role in thriving.

What would have happened if Jesus had little capacity when on the cross, and was no longer able to act like Himself? One can only wonder whether the Roman centurion would have put his faith in the living God, or remained lost. Through the synchronization of Jesus Christ, He was able to accomplish what His goal was - His Father's will. When Peter panicked at the Garden of Gethsemane and cut off the ear of the priest's servant, one could say that Peter was desynchronized with Jesus. (Luke 22:50) When the brain is overwhelmed with trauma past capacity, we become desynchronized. High levels of stress, distress, and anxiety can produce devastating effects on our brain and cause us to do things that we wouldn't normally do. That is the inability to stay synchronized, and do things that we later may regret.

Thriving involves the resolution of the bad things in our lives, having unmet needs get met, and healthy relationships that foster synchronization. We will look in detail at the failure to thrive, and how it relates to our lives and well-being.

Top Three Layers of the Control Center

Top layer – Identity layer – who I am

(Level 4)

Top layer – The identity layer stays on as long as the middle layer can handle the amplitude of the distress and stay synchronized.

Middle layer – Synchronization layer

(Level 3)

Middle layer – The synchronization layer shuts off the top (identity) layer when distress reaches new highs where there is no previous experience. Now it only looks for ONE mind greater than itself to show it the way.

Lower layer – Basic evaluation layer

(Level 2)

Lower layer – If synchronization fails, the basic evaluation layer goes to terror and just tries to make it all stop.

These three layers always work together except during and after trauma. Under trauma they become desynchronized.

Disruption of “quiet together time” is the strongest predictor of developing a mental illness.

Synchronization Problems (Level 3 – Mother Core)

Species	autism, Asperger's
Personal space	boundary problems
Emotions	sociopath or low empathy
Energy levels	Too high – hyperactive Too low – depressed Uncontrolled – bipolar
Joint activities	Too high – oppositional defiant Too low – passive/unmotivated
Mind sight	inappropriate, misjudges others' intent
Higher & lower brain	emotionally disorganized

Capacity

CAPACITY DEPENDS UPON:

Bandwidth

Experience

Practice

Maturity

Development

Skill

Age

Our “Joy Bucket” will only handle the same intensity of distress as it has learned to sustain through joy. This limit we can call our:

Emotional bandwidth

Joy strength

Pain capacity

Trauma limit

The maximum pain we can face

Where we “block” or “lose it.”

Dissociation and the Desynchronization of the Control Center (Schoore)

- Synchronization requires both stimulation and rest
- Extreme pain
- Death-like state
- The amygdala cannot be shut off (bad and scary)
- Dissociation replaces rest and is seen as death (bad) by amygdala
- Not learning to rest is the main predictor of mental illness during the remainder of life
- Overdriving the cingulate (blocking rest) produces a crisis
- Energy conservation withdrawal
- Parasympathetic shutdown
- This state is known as dissociation
- Child avoids rest states in future

Dissociation is an energy-conservation withdrawal state (parasympathetic) in which all possible brain circuits are shut down after a massive de-synchronization. Only the amygdala, (brain for one) which can't be shut down, is on along with the associative regions. This is experienced as "death" at the moment there should have been rest.

“Dead” Mother Core

When the mother dissociates or rejects the baby, the infant experiences her mother core (Cingulate cortex) as DEAD.

- Baby is not able to distinguish “quiet together” from “dead”
- Won’t self-soothe or self-comfort
- Stays in an unregulated state (borderline)
- Adrenalin “junkie”
- Baby becomes highly anxious during quiet
 - May prefer mutual regulation to self regulation
- Clingy
 - May prefer to stay in hyperarousal
- Hyperactive

Borderline Personality Disorder

Borderline problems are produced by an immature and disrupted identity based on multiple generations of trauma with:

1. A diminished joy bucket (capacity to synchronize)
2. Insecure and disorganized attachment
3. Severely impaired emotional regulation
4. An incoherent interpreter (virtual other)
5. An inability to repair relationships
6. A desynchronized control center

The ability of an individual to experience and integrate the right hemispheric memories related to a trauma is limited by two factors:

FACTOR 1

The strength of his joyful identity in the right prefrontal cortex, and

FACTOR 2

His learned capacity to regulate the negative emotions and return to joy.

I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

JOHN 16:12 (RSV)

When we exceed our joy capacity severely:

We become desynchronized internally

We become disorganized externally

We become distressed relationally

We stop acting like ourselves

Mutual Regulation Develops Self Regulation

MUTUAL REGULATION REQUIRES:

- Synchronization of the “mother cores” (3)
- Prefrontal cortex supervision (4)
- Right-hemisphere-to-right-hemisphere communication

Mutual regulation is entirely non-verbal.

TEACH MUTUAL REGULATION SKILLS IF NECESSARY.

- These are the 2-12 month old skills
- All of these are non-verbal skills
- Disengage to self-regulate when overwhelmed
- Re-engage quickly
- Don't overwhelm the other

Develop Return to Joy Circuits. Grow the "return to joy" circuits for each emotion

- This is the 12-18 month old task
- Grow self-regulating circuits by mutual regulation practice
- Return to joy from each emotion starting with the least difficult
- Stop and grow a stronger joy strength if needed before starting on the most intense and painful emotions
- Mutual regulation of hopeless/despair will take the longest
- Unregulated feelings are intensely felt and destabilizing

The mature mind is modeling how to feel intense feelings and still be yourself. This is done through:

- Right hemisphere to right hemisphere communication
- Synchronization of energy states in the mother core
- Mutual regulation of emotions
- Sharing "Joy Strength"
- Keeping the flashlight of awareness on the younger mind while they learn who they are while they feel.

Wholeness and Holiness

If we are creatures of synchronization

If sin is not acting like ourselves

If we can only synchronize with one other mind

If we were meant to synchronize with God

THEN . . .

We are whole and holy when we stay synchronized with God through Jesus, who only did what He saw His Father doing. We sin when we are out of synchronization (or if we synchronize with something that is not of God.) We are not acting like ourselves.

07

Failure to Thrive Goes Subcortical

Pervasive Fear • Painful Reality

PERVASIVE FEAR

Failure to Thrive Goes Subcortical

For levels two and one of the control center we pass a very significant but invisible line. We leave the cortex with its conscious thought, will and choice behind. Levels two and one are subcortical which means we no longer have a choice about what they will do and they are not subject to our wills. We cannot change their responses by choosing or wanting to do so--at best we may only have an indirect influence on their activities. Although we do not use such concepts as the "subconscious mind" there is some similarity between that idea and the subcortical levels of the brain.

We have reached levels two and one in our search for healing because the problem would not resolve completely in the higher areas of synchronization. It did not yield completely to:

Sark v. heart**Naming v. knowing (brain level 4+)****Identity and attention (brain level 4)****Return to joy (brain level 3)**

So here we are at levels two and one. It is rare (perhaps impossible) to have a level two problem without a level one problem so we will consider them together. Unfortunately, correcting the attachments at level one does not solve everything else. You will still need to rebuild 2, 3, 4 and then teach the two hemispheres to work together. At that point you will have a person who must fight the sark from their heart like anyone else.

Because levels two and one are subcortical, we are now working at a level where the individual no longer has will or choice. It is extremely easy to violate, abuse, exploit, injure or further destroy people when working here. **This work is only for the very mature (elder or sometimes parent maturity) or professionals.** The very mature can achieve far better results than professionals (unless the professionals are also at elder maturity) because the bond elders build is real and eternal while professionals must keep their bonds artificial and temporary.

Because this work is with the subcortical mind, the person being helped does not have voluntary control over their reactions. Their reactions can be intense, destructive, HIGHLY sexually charged, very personal and based on illusions rather than reality. Working with them is always fear producing and they are always demonized so their reactions (while involuntary) are incredibly intelligent in their destructive potential. All relationships will rupture and need to be repaired when working at this level. During the rupture counselors are HIGHLY vulnerable to lawsuits and accusations.¹⁰ Elders will need community support. Professionals will need everything at their disposal. You should not attempt this at home—unless you are an elder.

When repairs to levels two and one are going well, the intensity of the relationship bond, its exclusivity, the shared nature of the identity between the older and younger mind will alarm most uninformed viewers. Elders are particularly likely to come under attack from an alarmed and unsupportive community when progress is being made. Professionals use their “confidentiality” rule to cover this intensity from public view but are frequently still attacked if the patient has family members close enough to view the proceedings and their resulting feelings. These attacks are also almost always demonically fueled as the demonic is greatly threatened by healing to level two and one.

¹⁰ Wilder, Keeping Your Ministry Out of Court.

Level Two Failure

The pervasive fear at level two is very subjective. When level two is disrupted everything emotional becomes personal—about me. We call them “thin skinned,” say “don’t take things so personally.” “Self centered” and “self-absorbed” also apply even though the person themselves wants to be generous and kind. Everything around them seems to involve them or affect them. Their internal feelings and perceptions determine how they will read a situation and react to it. They are not open to much input from others that actually changes how they feel or see things. (Subcortical problems are not subject to their own will and choices.) They persist in this “self referenced,” and often intense, emotional activity even when it is clear that it is not helping them at all. They approach, avoid, attack and run way too intensely for what the occasion demands most of the time. Often they exhibit an intense “startle response” and chronic underlying fearfulness. They are very subjective about what is “good, bad and scary” in their reactions and often their thoughts.

PAINFUL REALITY

Level One

The foundation of our emotional health and relationship building throughout life will be determined largely by our attachments. The bond with mom will set the tone for all other bonding the child will experience. According to Daniel Siegel, the attachment system motivates an infant to seek proximity to parents (and other primary caregivers) and to establish communication with them.¹¹ Attachment causes us to seek others out and connect with them. The baby will bond with mother early on through touch, taste, temperature and smell. Without healthy bonding, the child will never learn to find the security and safety to be independent and stable.

¹¹ Daniel Siegel, THE DEVELOPING MIND, page 67.

Attachment relationships serve a vital function in providing the infant with protection from danger and are crucial in organizing ongoing experiences and neuronal growth of the developing brain.¹² The infant will need strong attachments to build on throughout life for a strong sense of self and organized emotional states. When level one and two are in place and working well, the joy that comes through securely attached relationships allows the infant to stay relational when distressed.

Level One Failure

Attachment pain is often experienced as cravings or urges which will “kill us” if we do not fulfill them. Attachment pain is behind compulsive masturbation, sex, drugs, relationships, food cravings and many similar problems. Attachment pain is behind some depression. Attachment pain drives the three unhealthy patterns:

Dismissive

Distracted

Disorganized

Note: Many traveling ministers show dismissive attachment problems while it is not uncommon to find missionary couples where one is dismissive and the other disorganized in their attachment styles.

¹² Daniel Siegel, THE DEVELOPING MIND, page 68.

Attachment, Joy and the Senses -- Myelinization of the Sensory Regions

0-6 weeks

Taste
Temperature
regulation
Smell

6-12 weeks

touch

3-12 months

visual

12-24 months

voice tone

9

Nine Months

- Bonding reaches its peak at 9 months.
- Nine months is the peak of joy practice for infants.
- Nine month olds will spend up to 8 hours a day on joy so mothers who build good brains don't get much else done.
- Peak growth for the right prefrontal cortex is 9 months.

Healthy Bonds:

- 1 Grow stronger by synchronized movement closer and farther apart
- 2 Grow stronger by sharing positive and negative emotions
- 3 Help all parties feel stable and act like themselves
- 4 Provide freedom and connection
- 5 Stretch limits and capacities slightly to promote growth

Sexual Addictions

Sexual addiction to Internet Pornography is one of the top FIVE problems for Missionaries.

SEXUAL ADDICTION DEVELOPS FROM:

- 1 Unrecognized attachment pain.
- 2 An untamed nucleus accumbens
- 3 Inability to Return to Joy – usually from shame and some other “big six” feelings.

WHERE SHOULD I LOOK FOR WEAK ATTACHMENTS?

- 1 In the wounded person
- 2 In the prayer counselor
- 3 In the wounded person’s family
- 4 In the spiritual family (church community)

New joy-bonded relationships are needed to “install” a new Mother Core in the brain of people with childhood A and B trauma. This means lots of repairs when synchronization or emotional regulation breaks down in these relationships.

When Are Remedial Bonds Needed?

When right hemispheric memories and emotions aren't processed due to:

1. Lack of self (Joyful identity) - this requires climbing Joy Mountain
2. They can't hold on to a complete traumatic memory
3. They do not return to joy by the end of the day
4. They are consistently overwhelmed by feelings
5. They forget who they are when upset
6. They simply can't get into their emotions at all
7. When there is little joy strength
8. When someone doesn't know the way back to joy
9. When an identity is built on fear and weakness
10. Fear bonds (see chart from Life Model page 17)
11. Weak bonds (Motivation comes from bonds)

New joy-bonded relationships are needed to stimulate the growth of replacement brain connections and circuits for people with childhood trauma.

Necessary Skills for Personal Relationships:

- Secure attachment
- Mutual regulation
- Sufficient joy strength (joy bucket) to resolve loss
- Four level control system synchronization
- Ability to repair ruptures in relationships
- Emotional regulation
- Self regulation
- Return to Joy "circuits" from all emotional states
- A working internal interpreter of others (virtual other)

Sexual Feelings and Bonding

- Maturity is crucial in attachment formation
- Sexual feelings will happen even in same gender relationships
- Don't be alone (one-on-one) unless you are elder maturity and sexually pure
- Get healing for everything that is brought to light

God's Part and Our Part in Restoration

Healing is up to God

Redemption is up to God

Direction of the restoration process and timing is up to God

Creating a spiritual family is up to God

Growing maturity is up to us as a community of faith



*Transformation happens in relationships,
not through more information alone.*