



Handout to accompany Webinar

Stage 3: Reorientation

*****Please note that all the three recorded webinars and accompanying handouts can now be purchased for use within the whole of a local authority for £500 each. Contact OliverWBardentouchbase@gmail.com for more info. *****

As Nelson Mandela stated, *'There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children.'*

Now is the time when we can practically apply all we know from the latest in child development, attachment, and neuroscience.

The job of our nervous systems as human beings is to protect us, which usually means either gearing up for battle, running away, or shutting down if we sense threat. Rather than being accessible to connection, our bodies and minds get prepared to fight, flee, freeze, or faint.

We considered the importance of six areas in order to stabilise both ourselves and the pupils in our care, to bring felt safety and the security we need, together with one another:

- ❖ Predictability
- ❖ Mobilisation
- ❖ Attachment security
- ❖ Co-regulation
- ❖ Narratives
- ❖ Differentiation

We thought about the importance of staying **steady**, of having our own key adult as staff to nudge us if we needed to self regulate. We are the lead stress regulators for our pupils. The importance of structure, routine, and ritual was also highlighted for our pupils.

We now know that staying seated for prolonged periods of time can increase helplessness in our bodies, which therefore needs to be countered with regular movement breaks.

When we considered attachment security we explored our accessibility and availability to our pupils. We explored how important it was for us to be physically and emotionally present, attentive, attuned, and responsive. We also explored the importance of and how to increase trust. We can support our pupils to be **seen** by perceiving, making sense of, and responding to them (Daniel Siegel)

We explored how important it is to be regulated ourselves before relating to our pupils, and that we shouldn't assume all our pupils know how to self regulate. Co-regulation leads to self-regulation, so we need to be **actively** involved, giving them an experience together with us breathing or engaging in other **sensory breaks**. We considered the importance of having pets in school, especially now, as they provide co-regulation to humans and don't have to respect social distancing measures!

Our pupils need lots of **EXPERIENCE first** before we move into teaching regulation. Always start with bodies before minds, the bottom-up approach. Remember the order for our ways of being and all our interventions - **Regulate, Relate, Reason, Repair ...** (Bruce Perry)

A **coherent narrative** supports our identity and our well-being so let's create narratives about this time individually and collectively.

Both our staff and our pupils will have very different lived experiences before and during COVID-19. Let's differentiate emotional and social tasks and expectations, including discipline for our pupils.

It will be wise for us all to go slowly, tentatively, and to embody **PACE**, especially **curiosity** at this time. We considered how the heightened collective anxiety around might mean that some may increase control, rather than use regulatory and relational approaches. Let's be kind and compassionate to all, starting from a place of always wanting to understand.

'At their best, schools can function as islands of safety in a chaotic world. They can teach children how their bodies and brains work, and how they understand and deal with emotions. Schools can play a significant role in instilling the resilience necessary to deal with the traumas of neighbourhoods or families.' (Kolk, Van, 2015)

Recommended Reading :

Bombèr, L.M (2011) *What About Me? Inclusive Strategies to support pupils with attachment difficulties through the school day.* Worth Publishing: London

Aspden.K.L (2016) *Help! I've got an Alarm Bell Going Off In My Head!* Jessica Kingsley: London

Bombèr, L.M. & Hughes. D. (2013) *Settling to Learn: Why relationships matter in school* Worth Publishing: London

Bombèr, L.M (2020) *Know Me to Teach Me.* Worth Publishing : London

Bhreathnach.E (2006) *The Scared Gang.* Alder Press: Northern Ireland

Siegel.D & Byrson.T (2020) *The Power of Showing Up.* Scribe: UK

Do check out the work of : Dan Hughes, Gabor Mate, Bruce Perry, Stephen Porges & Daniel Siegel.

Do also watch : Resilience – The Science of Hope to begin a much needed conversation with our communities, not just our schools.

Helpful websites : www.traumainformededucation.org.uk; www.touchbase.org.uk;

You are warmly invited to the book launch 'Know Me to Teach Me' by Louise Michelle Bomber, Thursday 28th May at 4pm. See social media for the link - @theyellowkite, @touchbase_uk & TIE_GB or TouchBase Brighton on Facebook! FREE !