


# Trauma-Informed Behavioral Interventions



With Karyn Harvey

- The webinar is being recorded and all participants are in listen-only mode.
- Participants can send in questions through the chat box on the webinar console throughout the webinar and we will moderate a Q&A session at the end of the presentation.
- All information presented today will be available on the AAIDD website for download along with a recording of the webinar under the “Conferences and Events” Tab.



# Trauma - Informed Interventions with Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

Presented by Karyn Harvey, Ph.D.

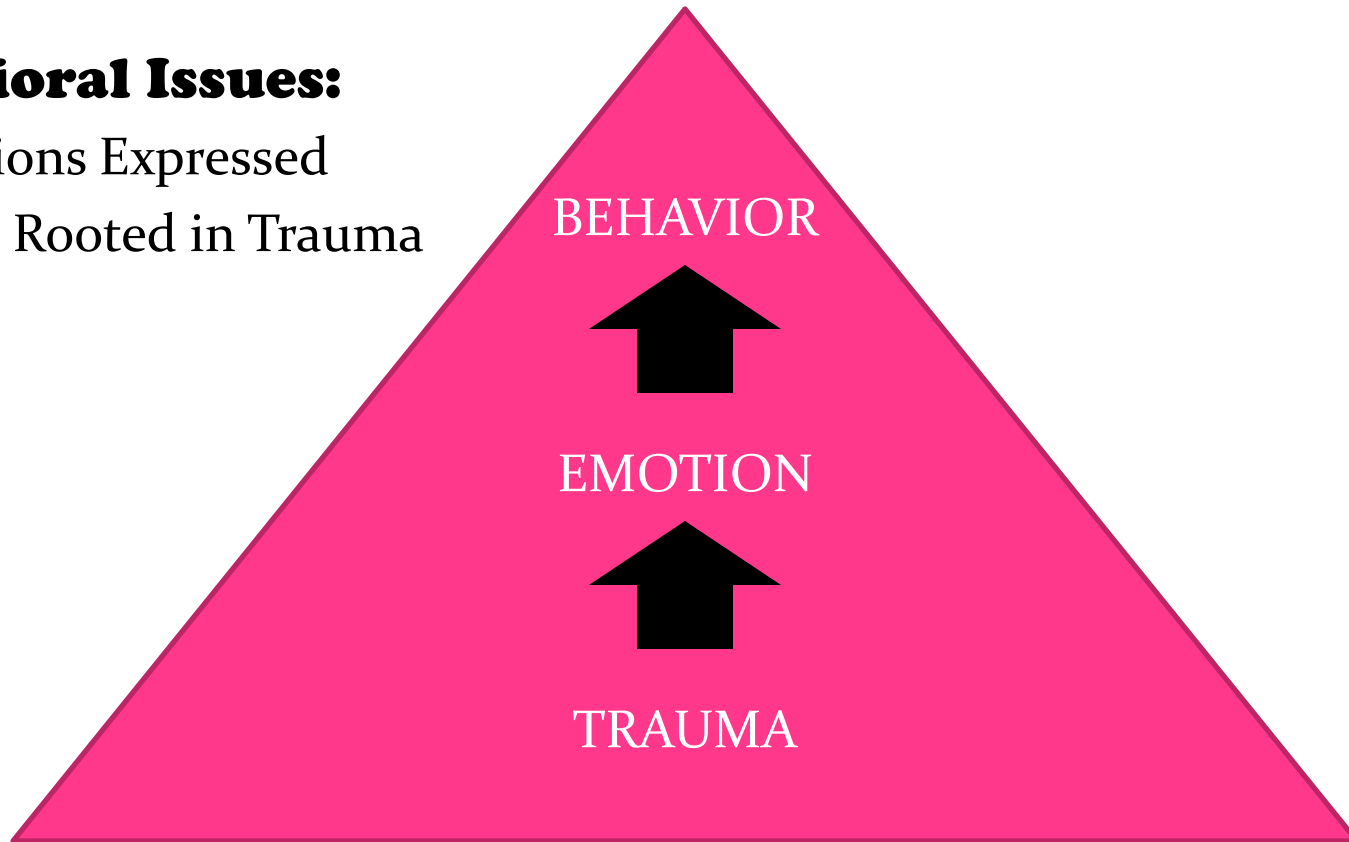
# Sources of Trauma for Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities

- Sexual Abuse – Hingsberger – 8 out of 10 females sexually abused more than once with developmental disabilities  
Males – 6 out of 10
- Social Trauma – Bullying, Name-calling, Verbal Abuse
- Trauma of Institutionalization, Foster-care Placements
- Trauma of Physical Abuse and Neglect

# The Behavioral Pyramid

## **Behavioral Issues:**

- Emotions Expressed
- Often Rooted in Trauma



When we only address the behavior,  
we miss the true cause and root of difficulties



“If you try to treat someone’s illness without knowing its cause, you will only make the person sicker than before.” Nichiren Daishonin

A hand is shown reaching out from the left side of the frame, palm facing forward. The background is dark and blurry, with a faint, out-of-focus figure of a person in the upper right corner. The text is overlaid on the hand and background.

# Trauma of Attachment Disorders:

- Insecure Attachments
- Avoidant Attachments
- Template for life-long interactions

# MIRROR NEURONS



# The Effects of Cocaine and/or Alcohol Exposure During Gestation

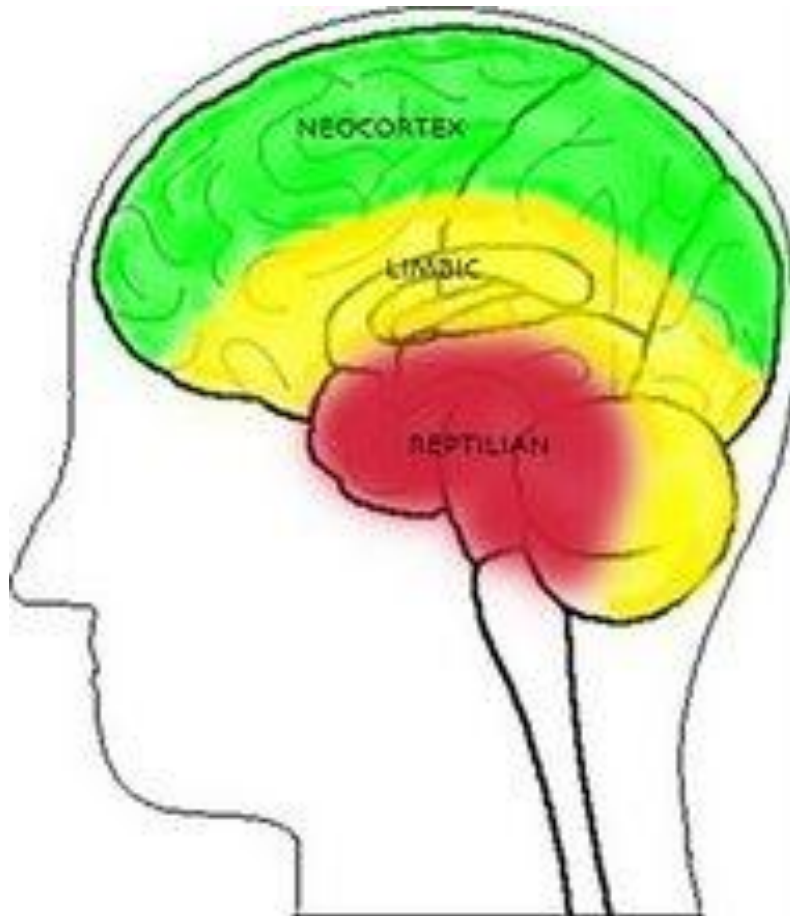
A pregnant woman wearing a purple sweater is shown from the side. She is holding a lit cigarette in her right hand and a glass of red wine in her left hand. The background is slightly blurred, showing a red and white star pattern on a blue surface.

- Crack Cocaine
- Alcohol
- Combinations



# Psychological Trauma – past is present

How did the brain react?



The Triune Brain

## Neocortex

The rational brain: Intellectual tasks

## Limbic

The intermediate brain: Emotions

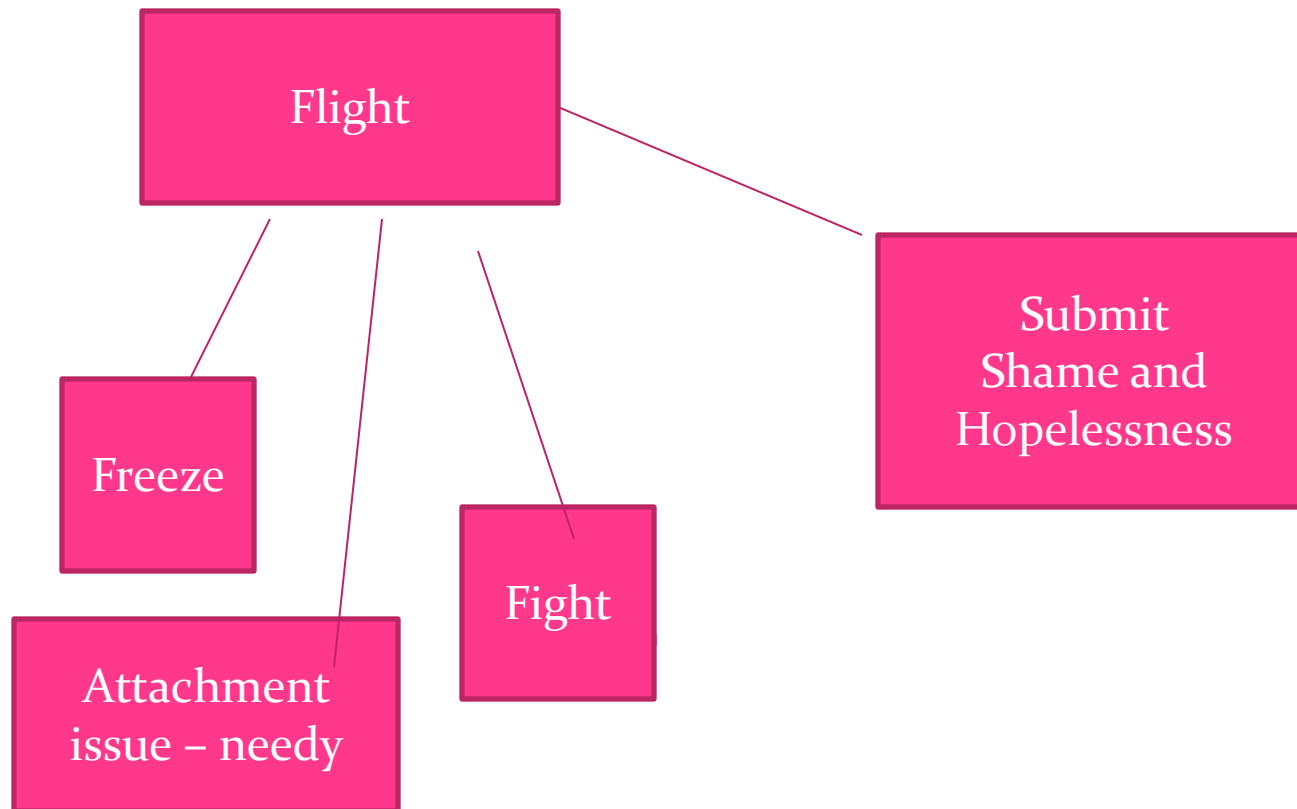
## Reptilian

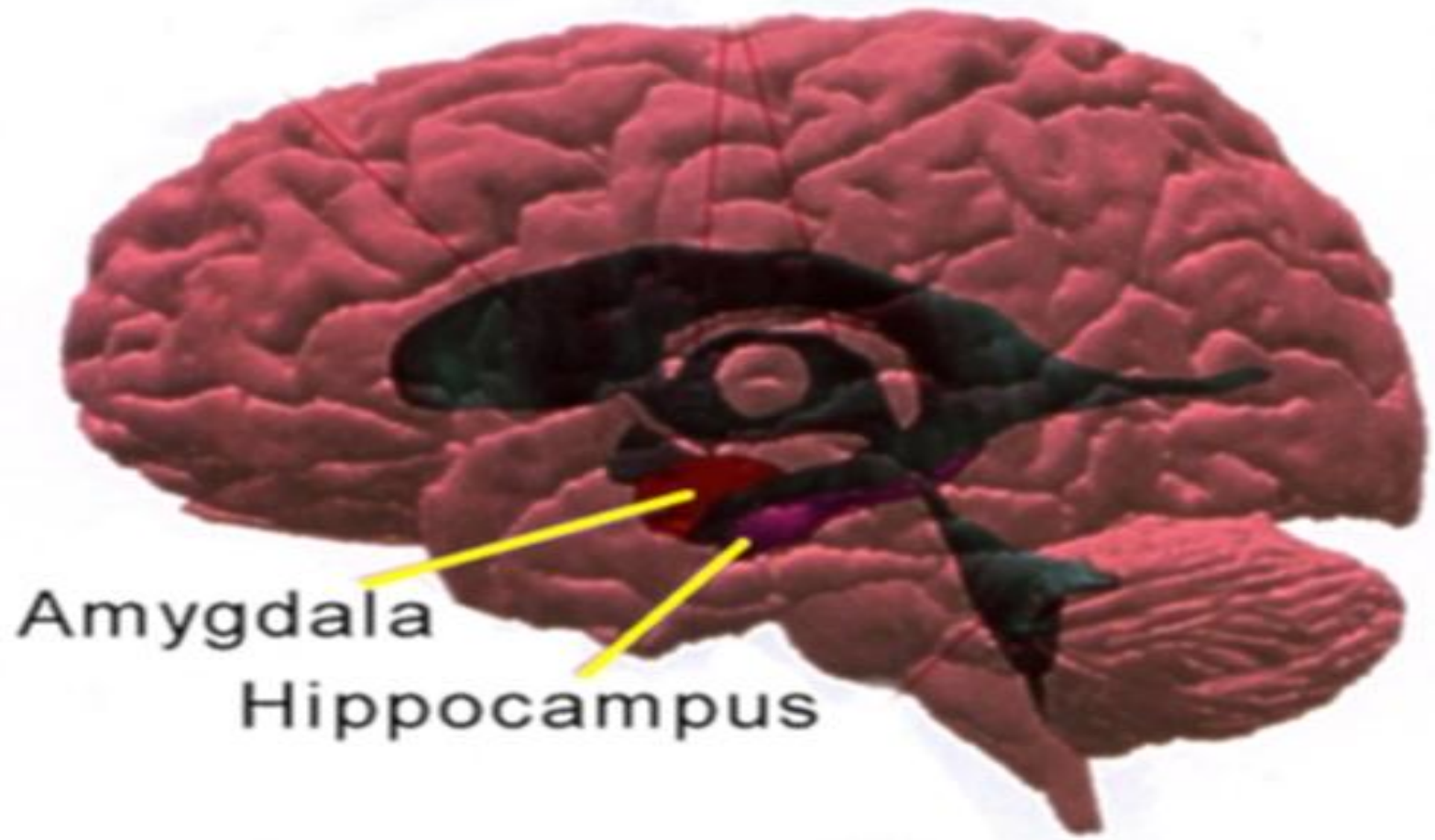
The primitive brain: Self preservation, aggression

# Trauma-Mind/ Trauma Response

- Activation of Limbic System during trauma response
- Dan Siegel - People will revert to the age that trauma first occurred when in trauma response mode!–
- Sympathetic nervous system can only be calmed by the parasympathetic nervous system – or the “calming system” – not by the rational mind
- Rational Mind Shuts Down
- Soothing calming reassurance is needed

# TRAUMA RESPONSE:





Amygdala

Hippocampus

# Triggers that Activate Trauma Responses

## Past Abuse

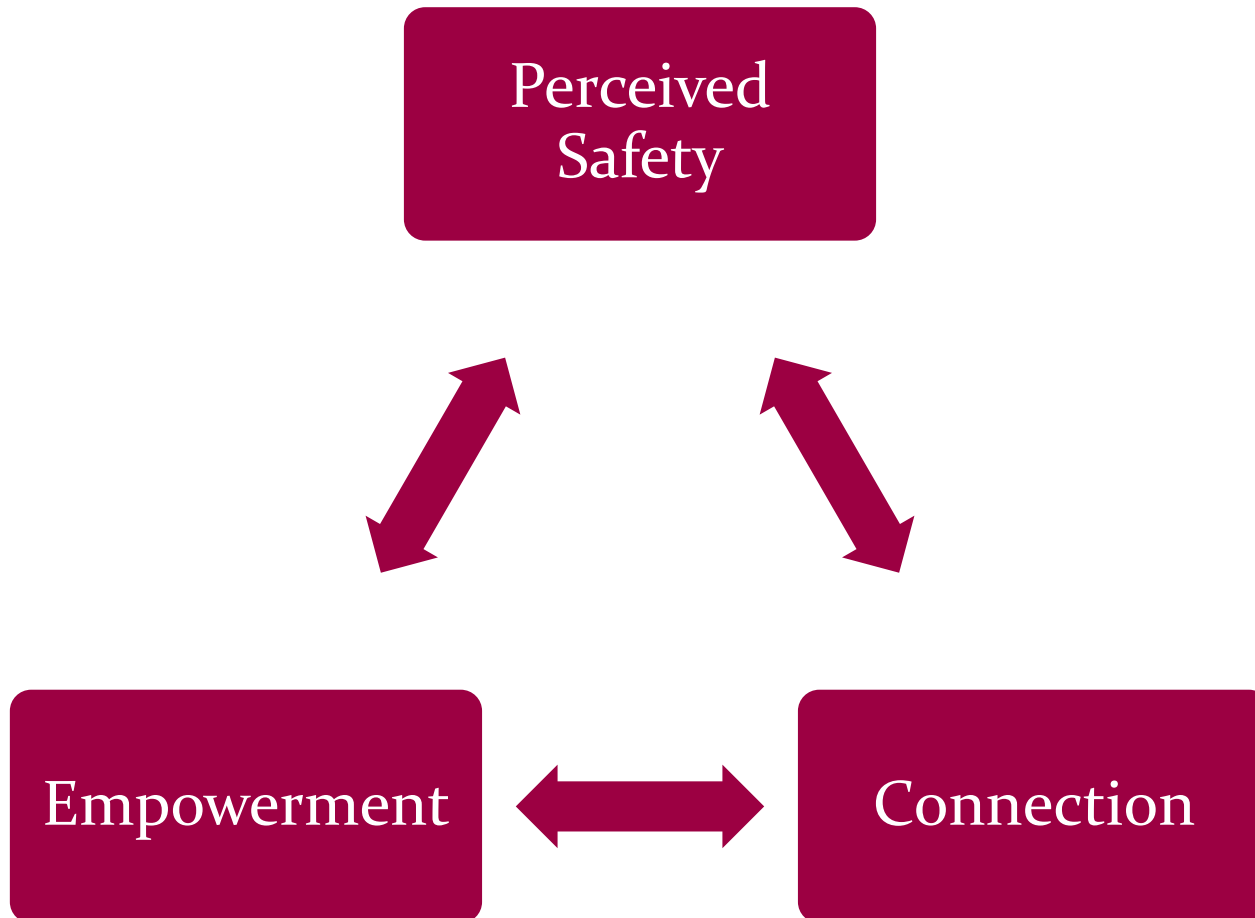
1. Physical Abuse
2. Verbal Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect
5. Abandonment



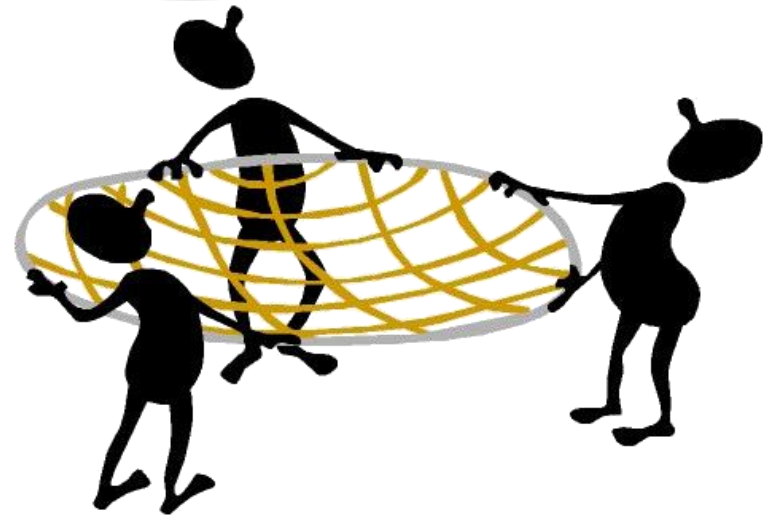
## Present Triggers

1. Restraints
2. Teasing Demands, Parental tones, Judgments, labels, sarcasm
3. Rejection, Lack of relationships, Inappropriate touching
4. Lack of Attention
5. Loss, death, staff turnover

# Ingredients Necessary for Recovery



# Key to Safety



- Sense of Safety - Subjective
- Understanding and Responsive Staff
- Providing comfort ( food, shelter and emotional support)
- Physical Safety ( from others and self)
- Dialogue
- “Safe Person”
- Ability to get emotional, social and physical needs met

# Key to Empowerment

- Real choices, not fake ones
- Real input into daily life
- Being listened to – being asked questions such as:
  - What is really bothering you?
  - How are you feeling
  - Tell me what's going on
  - What do you think you should do?
  - Exercises





# Key to Connection

- Fostering Peer Relationships
- Listening Skills:
  - Consistent time each day
  - Body language
  - Eye Contact
  - Reflecting: Say back what you are hearing – last several words
  - Paraphrasing: Sum up what you are hearing
  - Asking the right questions: How, what etc. Not yes or no
  - Being responsive and listening even to non-verbal input!



# Positive Identity Development

## Negative Identity

- NOT the person who gets the job
- NOT the person who gets married
- NOT the person who drives
- NOT the person who plays on a high school sport team
- NOT the person who is popular or liked
- Not the cool one

## Positive Identity

- Who I am
- What I do well
- Who my friends are
- What my preferences are
- Where I make a difference
- What I am proud of





**What  
matters  
most  
is how  
YOU  
see  
yourself !**

# From Recovery to Happiness

## Seligman – Authentic Happiness

☺ *Five levels of Happiness:*

1. Pleasure
2. Engagement
3. Positive Relationships
4. Achievement
5. Meaning

Happiness Assessment!

My Book about Myself

My Goodbye Book

My Book about my Recovery

A green rectangular sign with rounded corners and a white border, mounted on two wooden posts. The sign features the text "Here & Now" in a large, white, sans-serif font. The background is a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds.

**Here & Now**

# Thank You for Your Time and Attention!



I know how busy you are!

I can be contacted at :

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# Thank you for coming!

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