

Just Looking for Attention:



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Knowledge is Power

Consulting & Wellness Services



A lost generation....

**I AM PART OF A LOST GENERATION
AND I REFUSE TO BELIEVE
THAT I CAN CHANGE THE WORLD
I REALIZE THIS MAY BE A SHOCK BUT,
“TRUE HAPPINESS COMES FROM WITHIN”
IS A LIE, AND**

“MONEY WILL MAKE ME HAPPY”

**SO IN 30 YEARS I WILL TELL MY CHILDREN
THEY ARE NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN MY LIFE
MY EMPLOYER WILL KNOW THAT
I HAVE MY PRIORITIES STRAIGHT BECAUSE**

WORK

**IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN
FAMILY**

**I TELL YOU THIS
ONCE UPON A TIME
FAMILIES STAYED TOGETHER**





**BUT THIS WILL NOT BE TRUE IN MY ERA
THIS IS A QUICK FIX SOCIETY
EXPERTS TELL ME
30 YEARS FROM NOW I WILL BE CELEBRATING THE 10TH
ANNIVERSARY OF MY DIVORCE**

**I DO NOT CONCEDE THAT
I WILL LIVE IN A COUNTRY OF MY OWN MAKING
IN THE FUTURE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION WILL BE THE NORM
NO LONGER CAN IT BE SAID THAT**

MY PEERS AND I CARE ABOUT THIS EARTH

IT WILL BE EVIDENT THAT

MY GENERATION IS APATHETIC AND LETHARGIC

IT IS FOOLISH TO PRESUME THAT

THERE IS HOPE

**AND ALL OF THIS WILL COME TRUE UNLESS WE CHOOSE TO
REVERSE IT.....**



What do kids NEED?

-
-
-
-
-
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-
-



MASLOW'S Hierarchy of NEEDS





What kids tell us they need:



As superficial and disconnected as these tools are...they are still used for the purpose of CONNECTION

But, you can never get enough of what doesn't quite work...

Connection...



“Infant attachment behaviors are controlled by a distinct, goal-corrected behavioral system, which has a "set goal" of maintaining proximity to a **nurturing adult** and a **biological** function of *promoting the child's security and survival*” (John Bowlby, 1969)





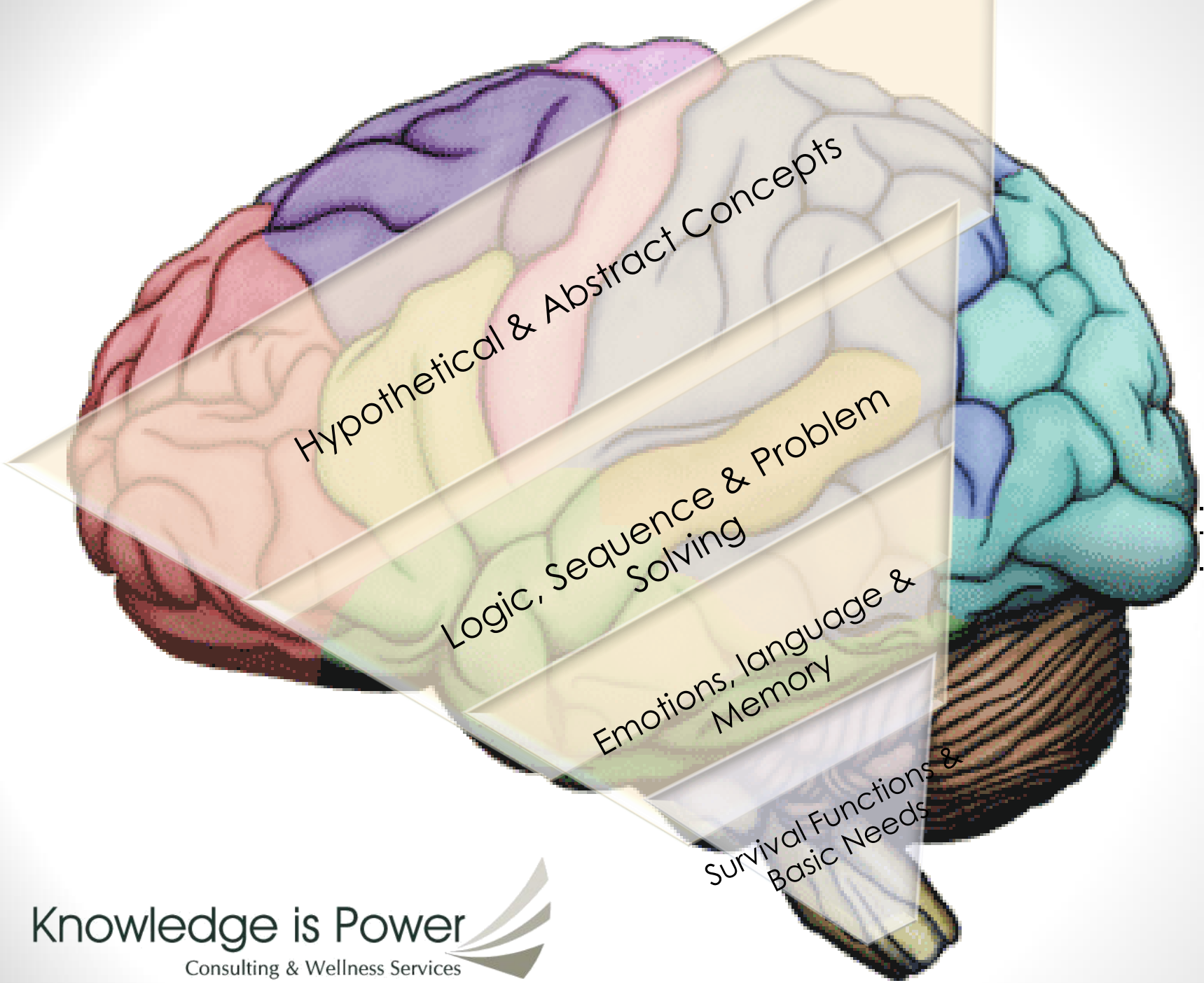
"The still-face experiment"



Through attachment children learn:

- Basic trust (the concept of safety....which allows the brain to develop further)
- Regulation of impulses and emotions
- Balance between autonomy and dependence
- Empathy





Hypothetical & Abstract Concepts

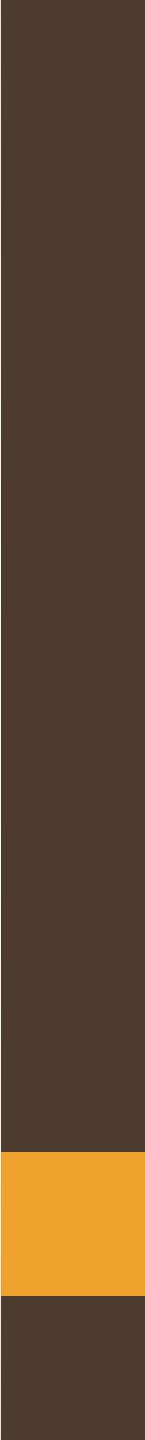
Logic, Sequence & Problem Solving

Emotions, language & Memory

Survival Functions & Basic Needs

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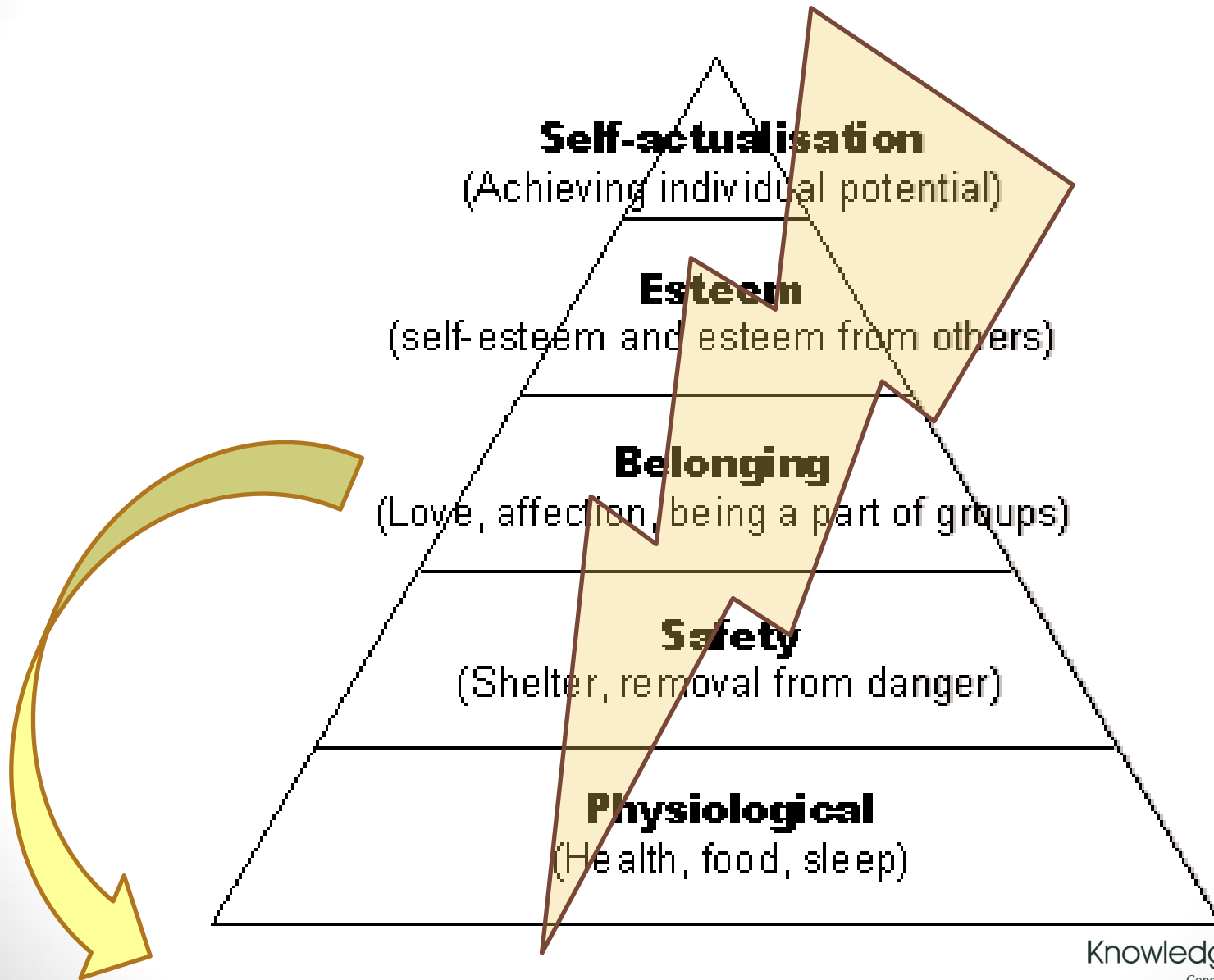
Fight or Flight...



**What does FIGHT actually look like?
FLIGHT?**



What puts us (and kids) into F/F ?



How can we protect from F/F?

Vitamin C



- 1. Connection**
- 2. Consistency**
- 3. Competence**
- 4. Control**

Connection



Connection

"Children have a different spelling for the word 'love.' We spell it l-o-v-e, they spell it t-i-m-e."

2 seconds, 2 minutes, 2 hours

2 Seconds



Greeting students or clients

- Saying Hello, High Fives, Fist Bump, Wave, Smile, Nod, Use their name, **touch**- i.e. Hand on shoulder, hand-shakes
- Acknowledges their presence and importance
 - Some students lead very lonely lives, some may even go through the day at school without speaking to anyone...
- Affects their **biology**... What's in a smile???



Mirror Neurons

- Are neurons that fire in your brain not only when you do something but when you see someone else do it
- These have been linked to empathy and emotions
 - Getting angry or excited during a sports event
 - Crying at a heart-wrenching movie
- Our brains are acting as if we are the one playing the sport and or taking part in the movie
- Why is this important?
 - If seeing something done fires the same neuron in our brains as if we had done this, others reactions and actions are (biologically) linked to how we feel and act
 - Smiling at a student makes a huge impact as the students neurons will fire as if they had smiled themselves or had that emotion

2 Minutes

- Having a quick conversation
 - Asking how they are doing, how their weekend was, what their plans are for Christmas break
 - Congratulate them on an accomplishment (genuinely)
- Pay attention to their conversations with others, and use this to start your own conversation and show interest
- Use humor (get some good jokes!)
- Show interest by playing music they like in your classroom or office



2 Hours



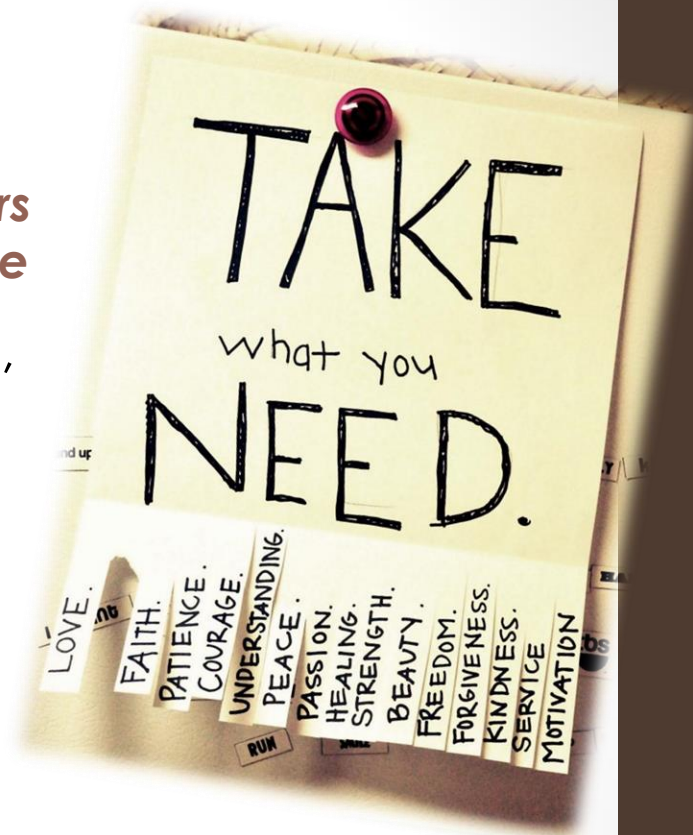
- Have an actual conversation with them... About regular everyday stuff. Get to know who they are, their favourite activities, their friends, etc. (These conversations shouldn't always be “goal-oriented...”)
- Volunteer for extra-curricular and community activities. Being a coach or advisor allows you to get to know youth on a personal “real-life” level.
- Go to local events where youth are participating (watch a hockey game, go to the recitals).
- Be on “Supervision” (interaction). Being present & available is huge: open doors...

Things “2” remember when connecting with kids:

- **Connect before Direct!** Children will take guidance, but only from those they trust and respect
- Be patient. You are asking for **psychological intimacy**
- We often think kids (especially teens) are just little adults....remember **they are NOT!** They do not find the same things interesting, funny or valuable. AND, **they don't understand the big picture, perspective or experience**...don't remind them of that – it's not THEIR fault!
- Ask about their friends, their weekend, their hair: AND DO NOT JUDGE! Even if you *really* want to! They are expecting this, and will be relieved to finally be able to **trust and talk** with someone who isn't jumping all over them about their choices!



- Avoid the terms “work” or “homework.” Use child friendly terms like “activity” or “game” or “challenge”
- Be consistent: *what you do every day matters more than what you do every once in a while*
- Use technology (websites, blogs, YouTube, social networking....ask them!)
- “DO” something while you talk
- Allow them to bring a friend if they want (sensitive to the nature of confidentiality)
- Integrate “play language” into sessions (**M**usic / **A**rt / **G**ames / **S**taories / **D**rama / **D**ance / **S**ports)
- They take their cues from the adults in their lives
- Ask them what they need



Consistency

WHAT YOU DO
EVERY DAY
MATTERS
MORE THAN
WHAT YOU DO
ONCE IN A WHILE.

- Try as much as possible to find a routine (even if it's a new routine). The brain loves predictability, boundaries and familiarity
- Create rules and clear expectations. Kids thrive (they rebel, but their brains thrive) on this...
- Whenever possible, prepare for any changes that may arise (new bus driver, new bell schedule, new teacher etc.)
- Have rewards and consequences followed through on. And make them matter (they should be meaningful)
- Some people appreciate “transition” or comfort items when their world is a bit chaotic or major change is happening...a tangible consistent
- **What you do every day, matters more than what you do every once in a while...**
- **Cognitive Dissonance** plays a role in anxiety and processing information...send the message that there is consistency somewhere so the brain can relax

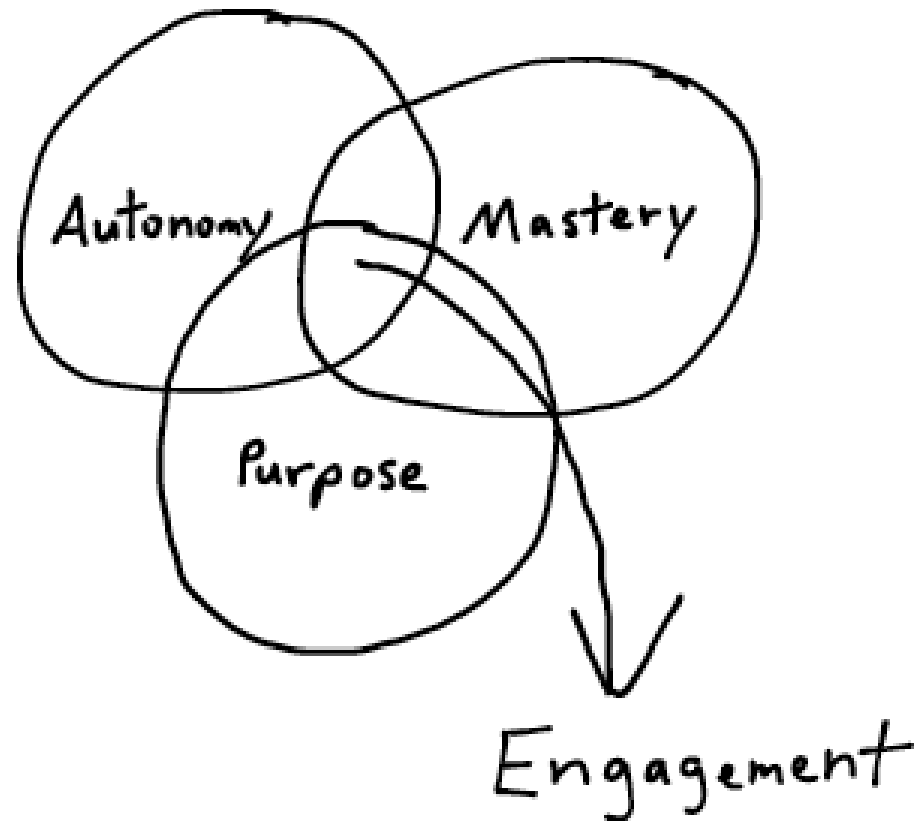
Competence



- Find *SUCCESS* wherever you can
- Have students teach you something
- Recognize and celebrate all types of achievement & ability
 - Diversify your “awards”
 - Step outside the batter’s box (try extracurricular that isn’t athletic)
 - Set a good example of TRYNG/ learning something new
 - Screw up
 - Try again
 - Create a safe environment for all of this trying and screwing up to happen
 - Learn together
 - Help kids explore new talents, opportunities, etc
 - Encourage their other supports in this
- Realize the very real anxieties of the fear of failure and negative judgement from adults AND peers



Control



- Provide whenever and wherever possible

“Voice & Choice”

- Give them a choice without giving them a choice
- Hear their concerns/ provide opportunity for open discussion (*check your own need for control.....*)
- Work through the problem solving process/ hypothetical solutions or directions and let them try a few...
- *Recognize and celebrate* autonomy!
- Consider the number of **Non-Negotiables**
- Remember that they are at a difficult time in terms of what they have any control over & the expectations are of them (*not a child/ not an adult....*)



What about that reeeeaaaaallllyyy difficult kid...?



Some things to consider with these kids...

- Know this: you will pay for the actions of those who go before you
- They are perpetually in 'fight or flight' for survival
- They will test you to see if you'll bail
- Less. Is. More.
- There are some things that have been destroyed. Do not try to fix them; instead create something new
- They may not actually "know" that you care...



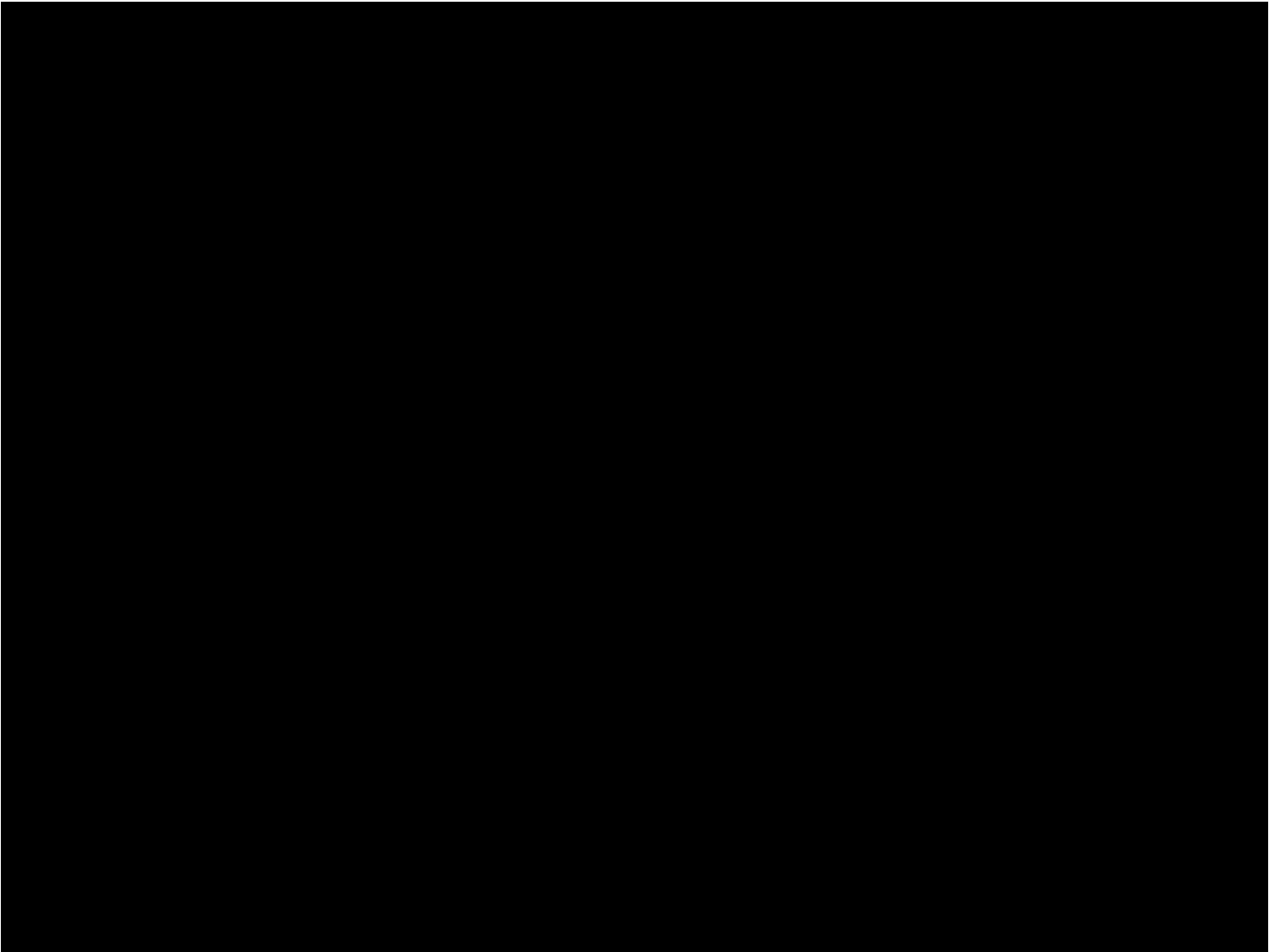
Facing The Giants



Building trust and relationship with kids is the best way we can help to turn it all around and find the lost generation...



A Lost Generation





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Thank You