

Trauma Informed Practice

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Defining Trauma



“Describing it as a life-changing traumatic experience that will haunt you forever might be a little dramatic – afterall, our wifi was only down for an hour”

Defining Trauma

- Perceived by the person to be life-threatening
- Is unexpected or unpredictable
- Overpowers attempts to stop / avoid



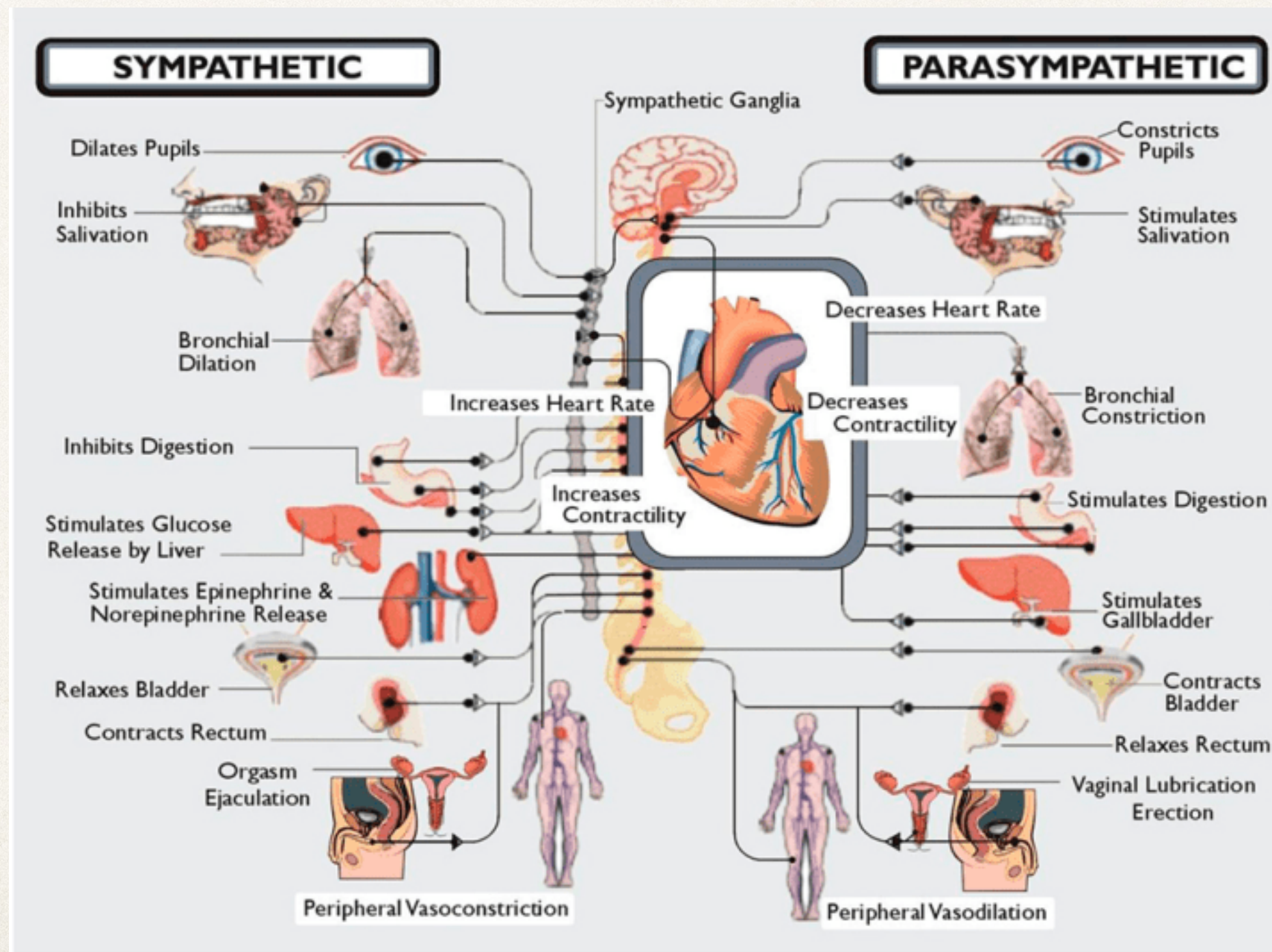
Complex Trauma

- Repeated and / or prolonged exposure to violence / trauma results in significantly compromised social, emotional, and neurological functioning
- Studies have shown that the greater the exposure to trauma, the more significant the impacts – including higher rates of illness (cancer, COPD), mental health concerns (depression, suicidality), addictions, and incarceration

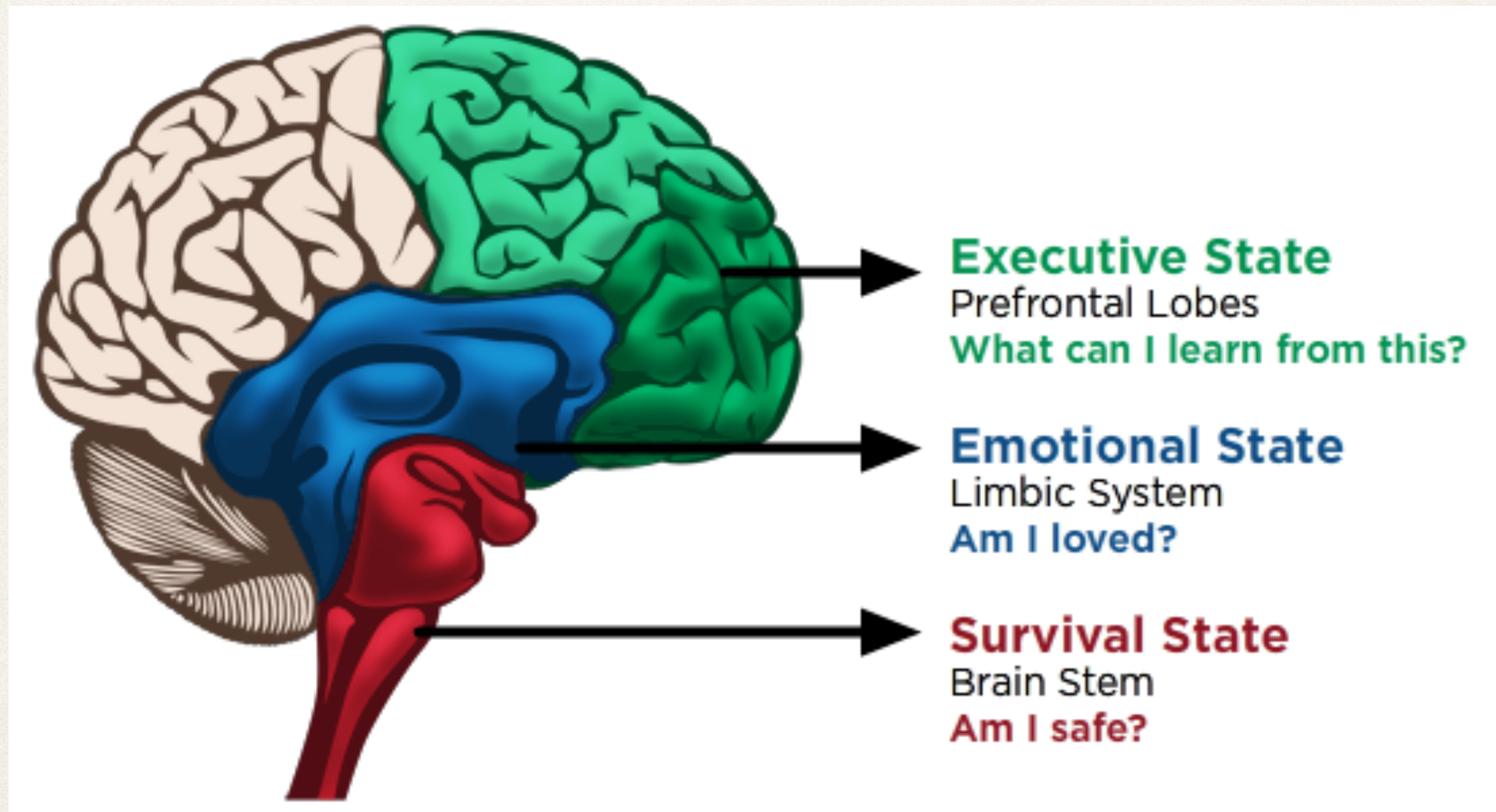
Prevalence of Trauma in CJS

- Between 75% - 93% of youth entering the juvenile justice system report having experienced at least one traumatic event . -JHA
- Abuse or neglect in childhood raised the chances of juvenile arrest by 59%. – National Institute of Justice
- Abuse or neglect in childhood increases likelihood of adult criminal behaviour by 28%; and violent crime by 30% - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

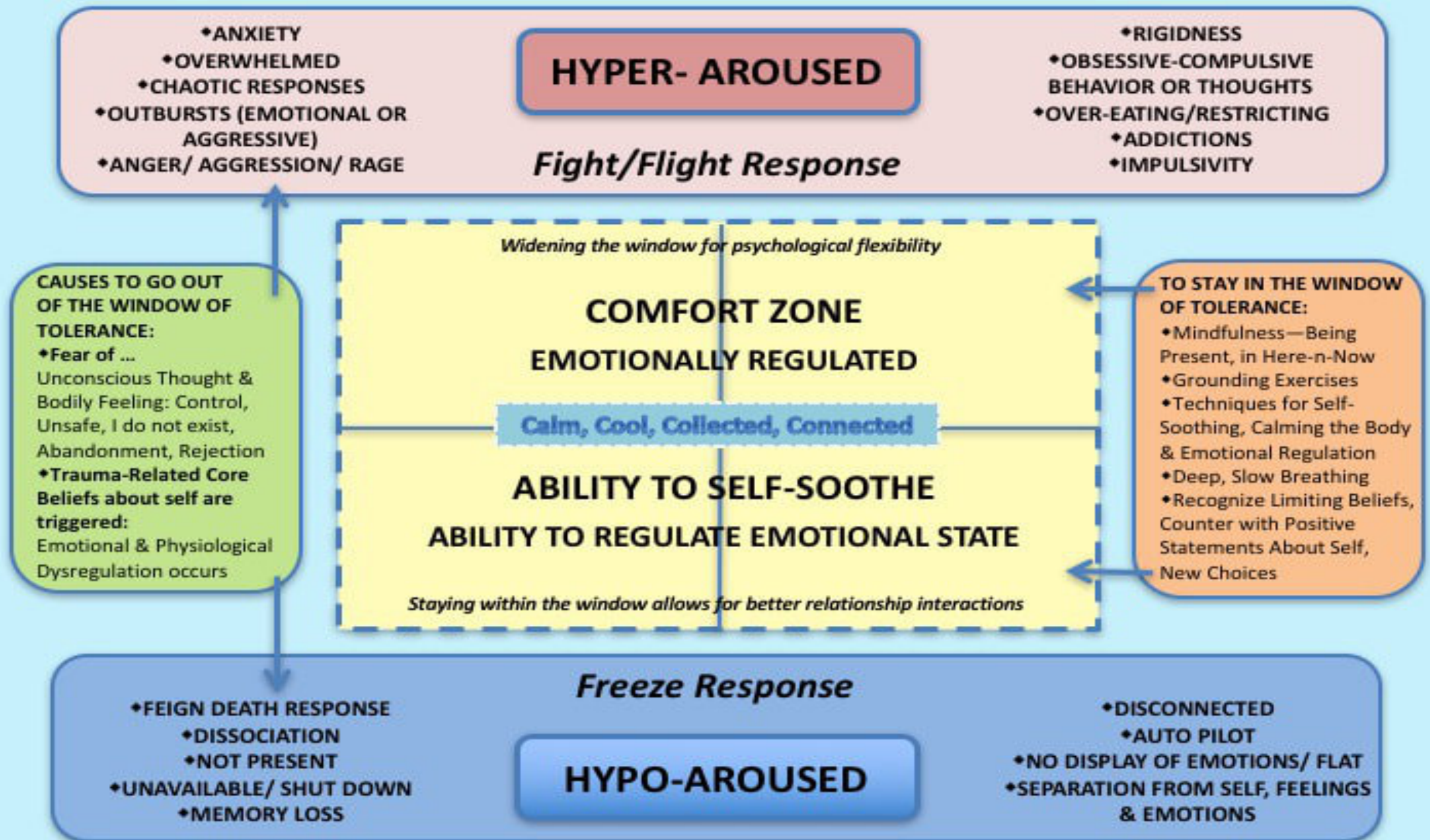
Impacts of Trauma - Body



Impacts of Trauma - Brain



Impacts of Trauma - Behaviour



“Triggers”

“A trauma-informed perspective recognizes that people who have been chronically abused or neglected may have many possible triggers. These triggers often include situations where clients experience *a lack of respect and safety and an absence of control and choice* - experiences that often mimic and resonate with past traumatic experiences” - Haskell, 2012

Trauma Informed Approaches

- Trauma Informed approaches take into account the prevalence of trauma experiences among the client population and the multi-faceted, severe impacts of trauma experiences
- Being trauma informed means we approach our work with an understanding that trauma experiences are likely contributing to the difficulties experienced by those we serve

A word cloud of trauma-related terms arranged in a circle. The words are: 'anxious' (red, vertical), 'CAN'T CONCENTRATE' (dark red, horizontal), 'Confused' (blue, horizontal), 'Stomach pains' (blue, vertical), 'Worried' (red, horizontal), 'FEAR' (magenta, horizontal), 'Disoriented' (orange, horizontal), 'OVERWHELMED' (purple, horizontal), 'scared' (blue, horizontal), 'depressed' (green, horizontal), 'LOST' (purple, horizontal), and 'disorganized' (blue, vertical).

anxious
CAN'T CONCENTRATE
Confused
Stomach pains
Worried
FEAR
Disoriented
OVERWHELMED
scared
depressed
LOST
disorganized

Trauma Informed Approaches

- Being trauma informed does not require the disclosure of trauma - it is an approach that can be applied universally, and is grounded in the principle of “do no harm”
- Being trauma informed is NOT the same as trauma therapy - trauma therapy is a specific type of therapy that should only be conducted by a trained, licensed Trauma Therapist, and with the client’s consent.

Trauma Informed Approaches

Trauma Experience

- Perceived as life-threatening
- Unexpected, unpredictable
- Beyond ability to stop

Trauma-Informed Approach

- Prioritize safety
- Be predictable, honest, trustworthy
- Foster autonomy by offering choice and control

Does it work?

Prisons that have implemented trauma-informed approaches have experienced:

- 62% decrease in inmate assaults on staff
- 54% decrease in inmate on inmate assaults
- 60% decline in the number of suicide attempts
- 33% decline in the need for one-on-one mental health watches

- Kubiak, Covington, and Hillier (2017)