

Trauma-Informed Care Through PACE

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Outline

1. The problem
2. A glimpse into the neuroscience of trauma
3. PACE explained and applied

Growing Up in New Zealand Study



Types of ACEs

- Emotional abuse of child
- Physical abuse of child
- Use of illegal street drugs by parent or partner
- Depression of parent or partner
- Separation or divorce of parent
- Intimate violence of parent or partner
- Parent or partner a problem drinker or alcoholic
- Incarceration of parent or partner.

ACES negatively impact school readiness

“...including letter naming fluency, focus, affective knowledge, counting to 10, the ability to write one’s name, and being able to delay gratification.”

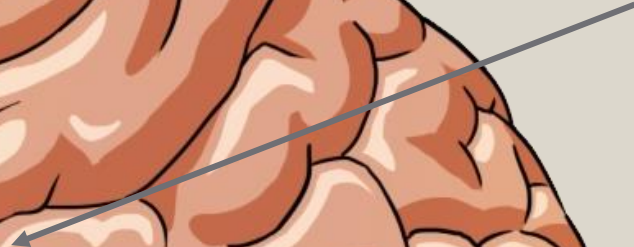
What is the brain's top priority?



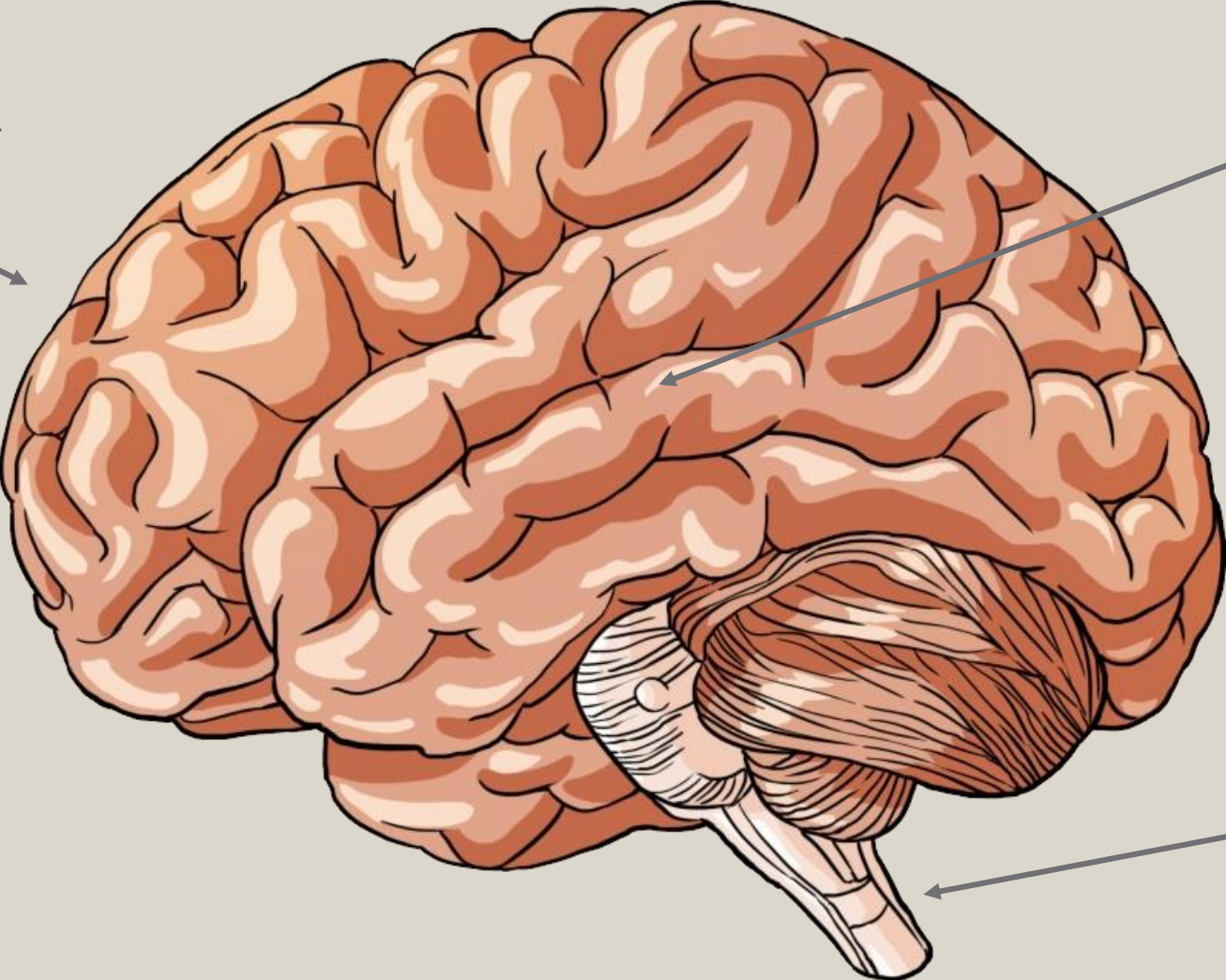
Prefrontal Cortex



Limbic System



Brain Stem

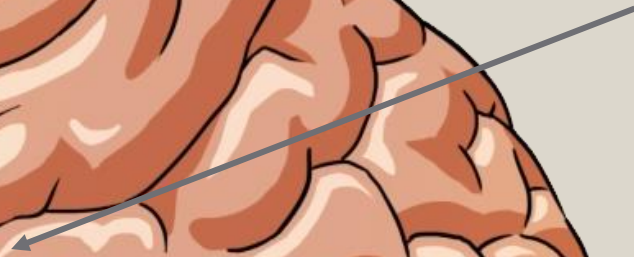


Our body is constantly scanning for threats

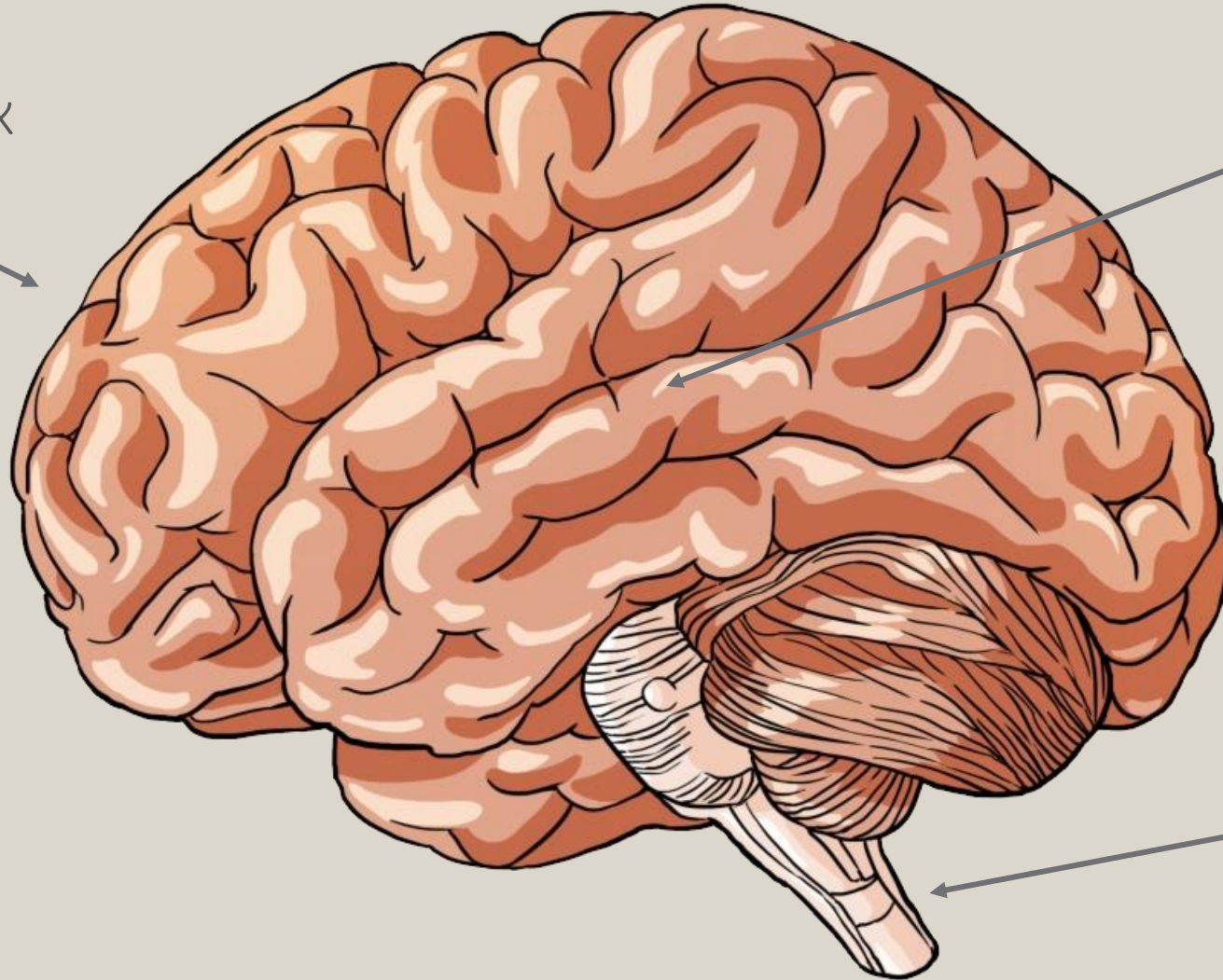
Prefrontal Cortex



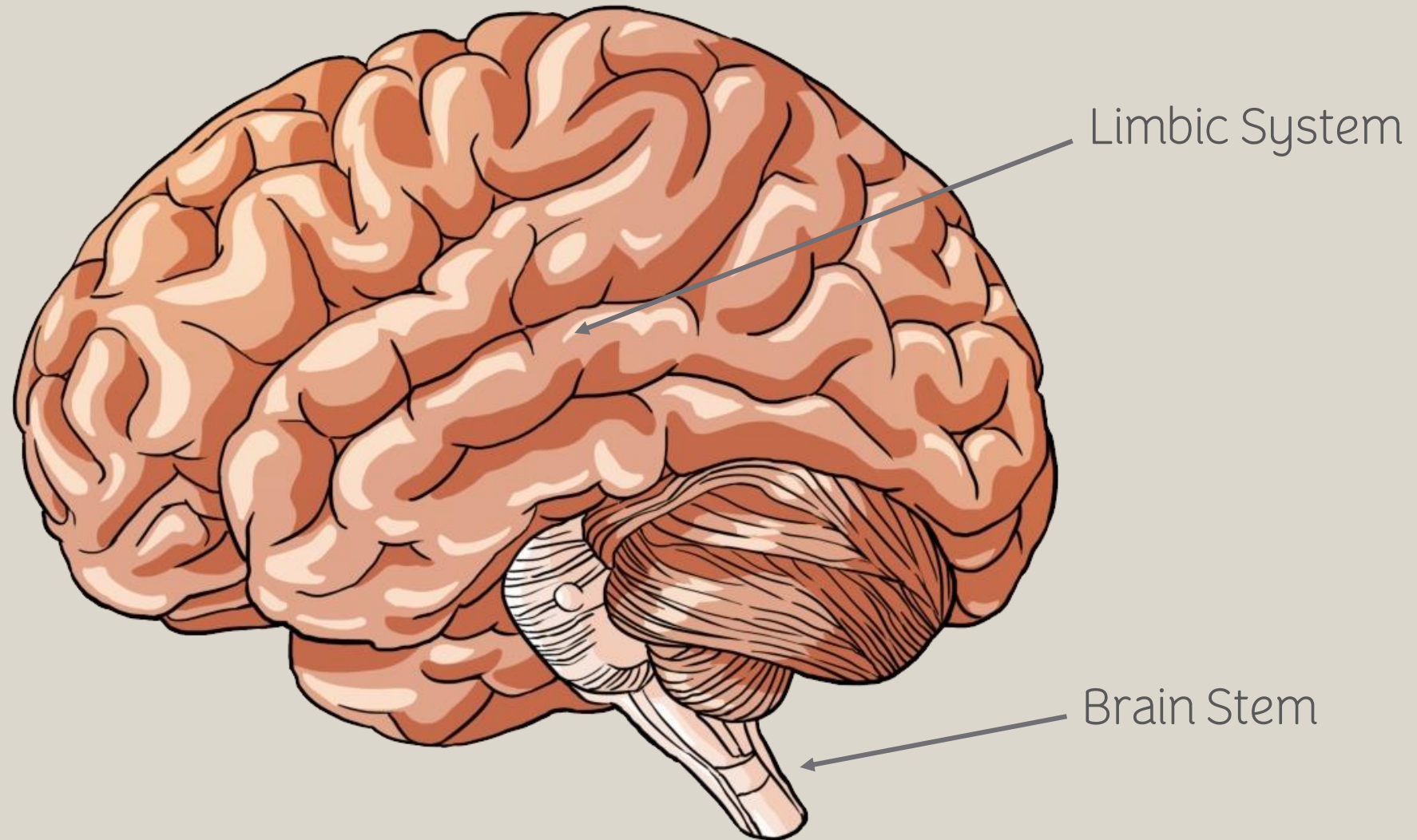
Limbic System



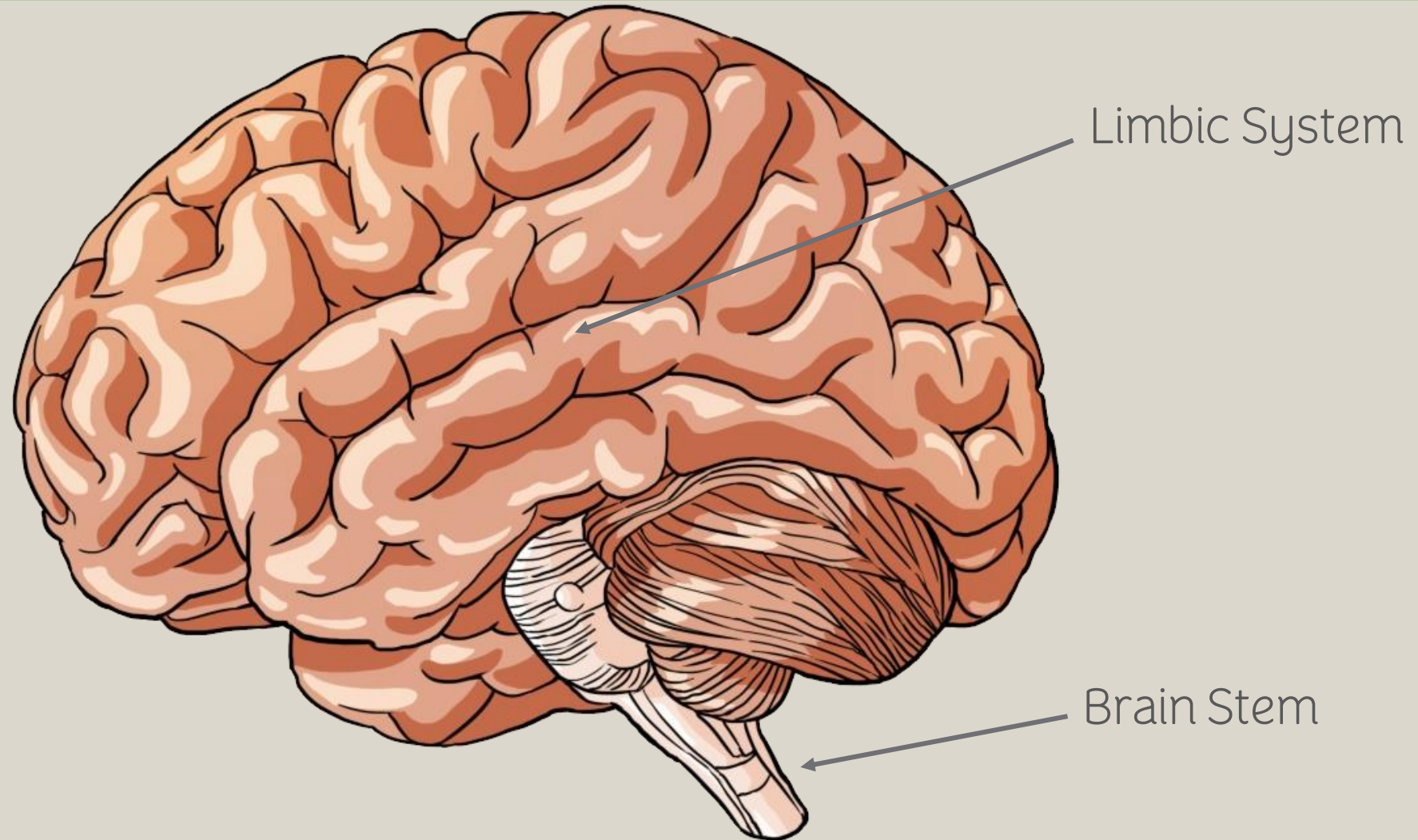
Brain Stem



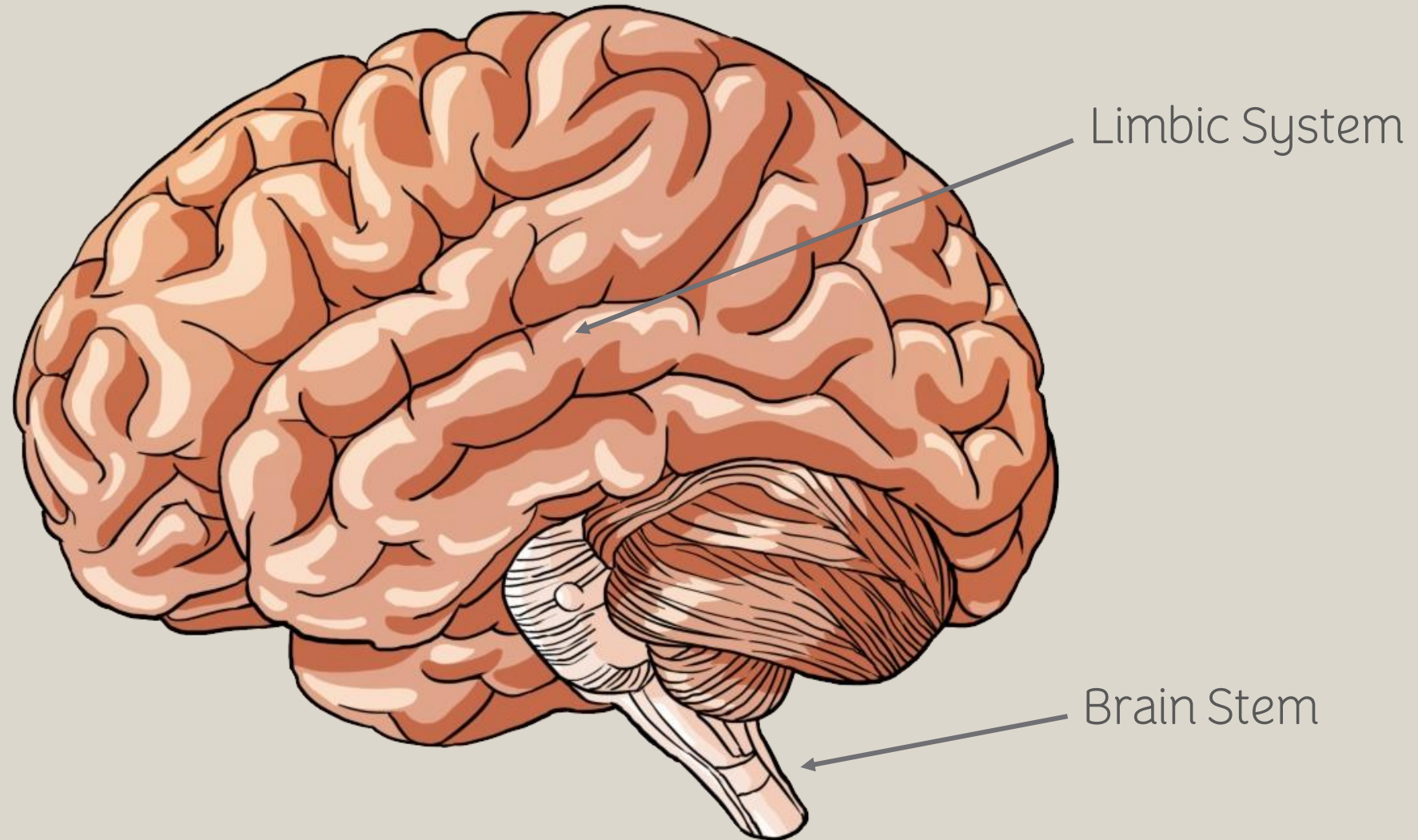
If a threat is detected, we activate into a survival response



A fight/flight/freeze response is not a conscious decision, but rather a physiological response



Threat detection is impaired for those who have experienced trauma





Blocked Trust

When a child loses trust in adult supports and uses their own survival strategies

Blocked Care

When adults communicate fear, anger, defensiveness, judgement or avoidance which can reinforce a child's distrust

PACE

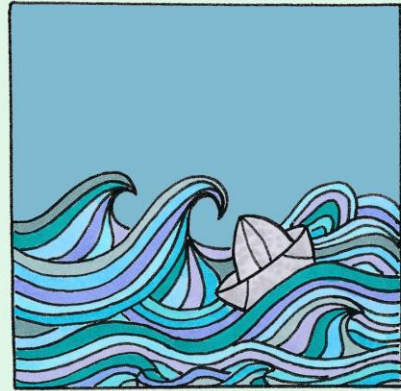
Playfulness.

Acceptance.

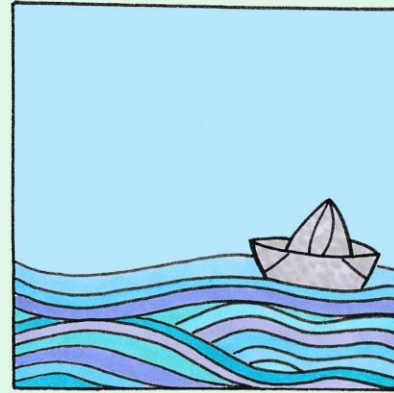
Curiosity.

Empathy.

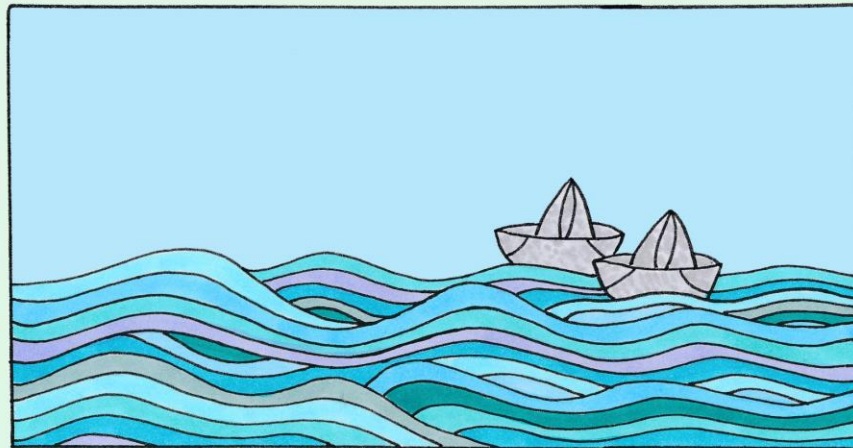
WHEN THEIR STORM



MEETS OUR CALM



CO - REGULATION OCCURS



@kwiens62

An Overview of PACE

- Developed by Dan Hughes who has extensively researched trauma
- PACE guides adults on how to stay regulated to support children during heightened emotions and behaviours.
- Connection before correction!

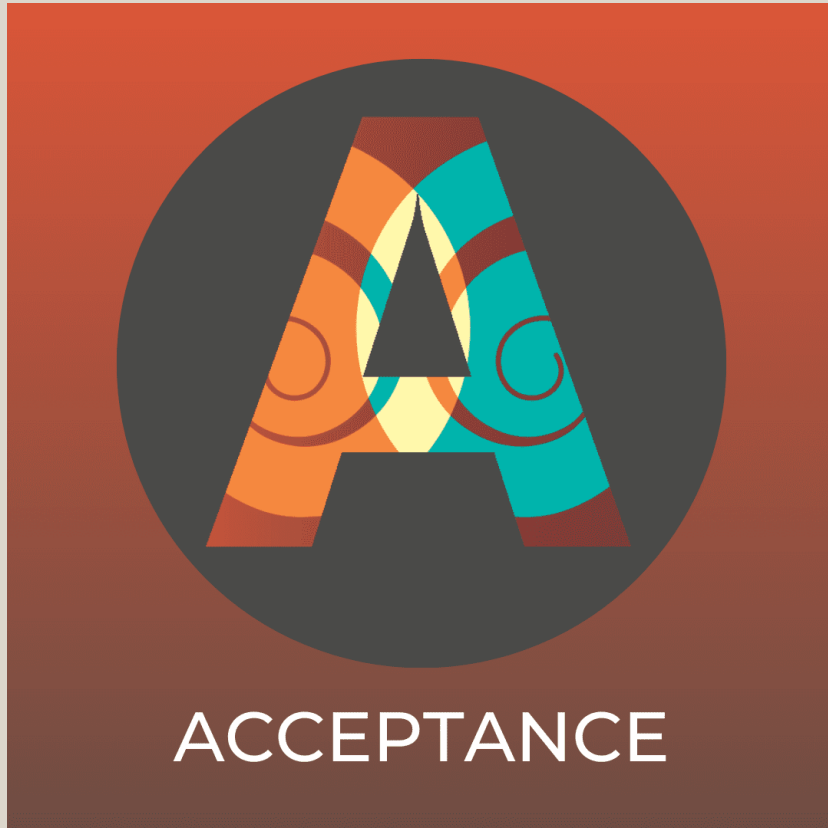


- Play is integral to learning and development.
- It focuses on light-hearted interactions which increase joy, silliness and fun.
- This does not imply that children should be ‘jollied’ out of their problems or avoid dealing with it. Rather, it encourages the adult to be gentle, soft and playful in their responses.

Examples

“Hey, I notice that you are so good at interrupting me. Is that what you are trying to do?”

“Are you saying I guessed it wrong? Wrong again? Ah, I have to work harder I guess”



- Acceptance promotes felt safety through validating the child’s inner world without judgement.
- We can show acceptance for the motives of behaviour without agreeing that the negative behaviour is appropriate.
- Acceptance is showing that you have the capacity to hold their emotions, no matter how angry or sad they are.

Examples

“I can hear you saying that you hate me and that you’re feeling really cross right now. I’ll still be here for you after you calm down.”

“I’m disappointed by what you did but I know you were really upset. It doesn’t change how much I care about you.”

“I can see how you feel this is unfair. You wanted to play longer.”



- Curiosity shows wonder about the reason for behaviour.
- Being curious helps the child make sense of their behaviour.
- A curious approach steers away from the adult interrogating or fact-finding. When adults stay curious, it can help diffuse feelings of frustration for both parties.
- Questions don't need to be answered, rhetorical can leave the child curious.

Examples

“Gosh, I wonder if you think...”

“Wow, you look really mad, I'm curious if it is because...”

“I notice that you are avoiding talking about that. I wonder what was so hard about the makes you want to avoid talking about it.”

Don't say “Why did you do that?”

Don't expect a reply



- Empathy is letting the child feel the adult's compassion.
- Acknowledge the difficult situation and feelings, perhaps share you've felt the same.
- Problems and feelings don't need to be solved, rather empathy is sitting with the feelings.

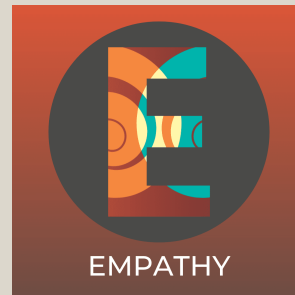
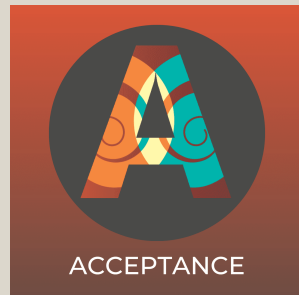
Examples

"I didn't realise that you felt like that, I'm sorry it feels that way to you."

"It hurt so much when she didn't ask you to play. You were probably thinking..."

"You wanted to have a turn so badly. You were so excited about it and it's so unfair that we ran out of time."

Putting It All Together



Big Feelings and Out-Of-Sorts

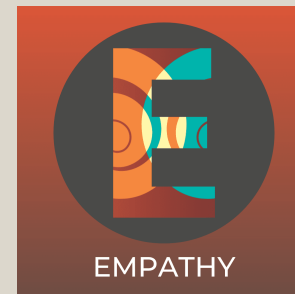
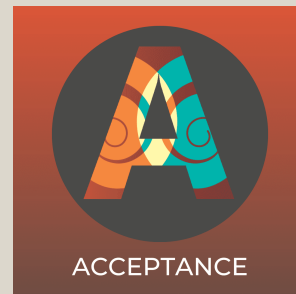
You notice Lily looks out-of-sorts at the start of the school day. She has been argumentative with peers and has started to cry.

Typical response: “What’s wrong?”

PACE response: “I can see this feels too much right now. I’m here for you.”

“I’m sorry that you are feeling this way. I’m curious if something happened this morning which is making you feel sad?”

“I get sad sometimes too. Taking three deep breathes helps me. How are those big feelings now? You get started on this work while I check on the rest of the class, then I’ll come back to see you.”

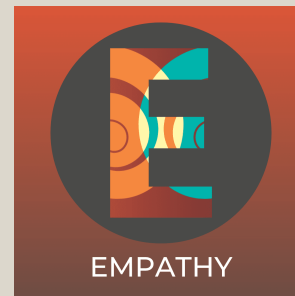
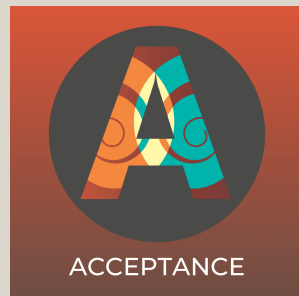


Refusal to Engage

Marcus refuses to come inside after break time and tells you to go away.

Typical response: “You need to come inside now, or you’ll be in trouble.”
“I am really disappointed in your actions.”

PACE response: “I don’t know if you are feeling sad or angry right now, but I am worried about you and I don’t want you to be alone with those feelings. I will just stay here till you’re ready.”
“I wonder if you find it hard to be in class because there’s a reliever today?”
“It makes me feel concerned when you say that and don’t come to class. I’m curious if it’s because there is something that is worrying you?”

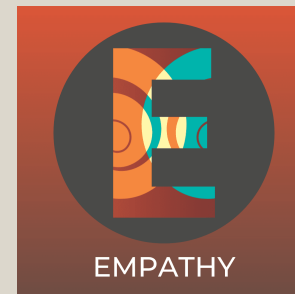
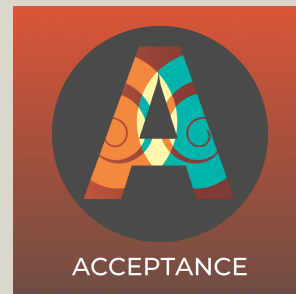


Angry and Negative Statements

At the end of an art activity, you ask the class to tidy up. When Josie continues painting, you repeat the instruction to clean. Josie yells, “You can’t tell me what to do. I hate you.”

Typical response: “Since you haven’t listened, you’re not allowed to do art tomorrow.”
“That’s an awful thing to say, you need to show respect and clean up.”

PACE response: “I can see that you’re enjoying working on your art. I wonder if you’re feeling frustrated because you weren’t ready to finish?”
“I can hear you saying that you don’t like me. I do care about you.”



Oppositional Behaviour

When playing rounders with the class, Jared gets out and begins to show frustration. He usually does not handle losing well. He snatches the ball from another child and throws it hard towards the other end of the field.

Typical response: “Get the ball right now.”

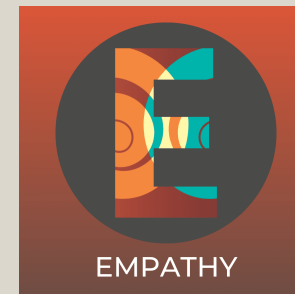
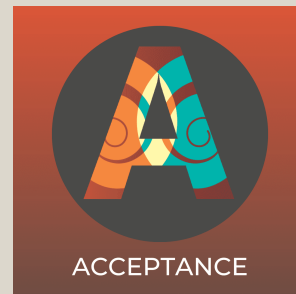
“You’re attitude and actions are ruining the game for others.”

“You are always a sore loser, you need to get better at controlling yourself.”

PACE response: “I wonder if you’re frustrated because you like to play this game. I also feel disappointed when a game doesn’t turn out the way I want.”

“That was a ginormous throw! You must be a great athlete. I wonder how quick your legs can go to bring the ball back?”

“I can tell that you tried your best and this is a game you really like. Can you help me keep score?”



Difficulty Listening

Everyone is sitting on the mat listening to the instructions. Paige starts calling out and making faces at peers.

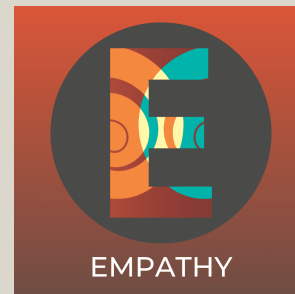
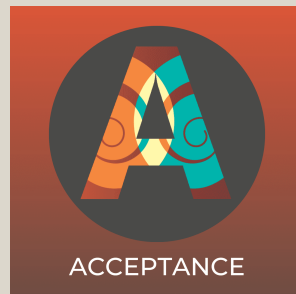
Typical response: “Stop that right now.”

“I’m disappointed that somebody has terrible mat manners.”

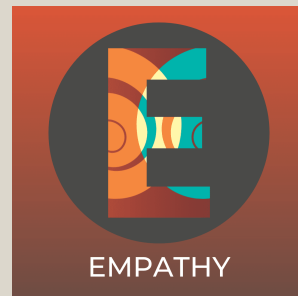
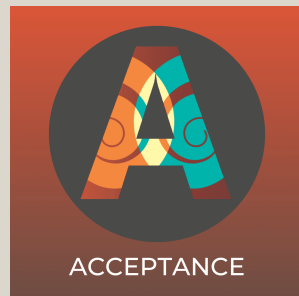
“We’re going to sit in silence until everybody can give me their full attention.”

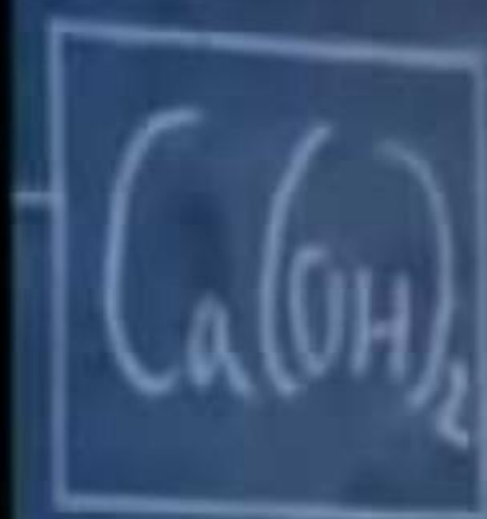
PACE response: “I can see that Paige feels jiggy and wiggly, let’s have a quick movement break everyone!”

“It can be really hard to sit still and listen when you’re ready to talk and move about. We will start the activity in one minute once I’m finished.”



Let's Practice





SLAKED
LIME

or
enough

Catherine Tate Show: Lauren Cooper Periodic Table

Further Reading

Dan Hughes

Stephen Porges

Bruce Perry

Judith Howard



Pātai?

Anna Newman: Intern Educational Psychologist