



Being ACE aware and trauma informed

EMMA PRICE AND ROSE FIELD

VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT

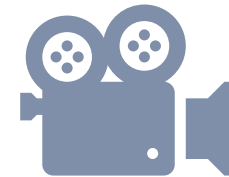
Housekeeping



Please turn your mic off



Please submit any questions
via the chat function

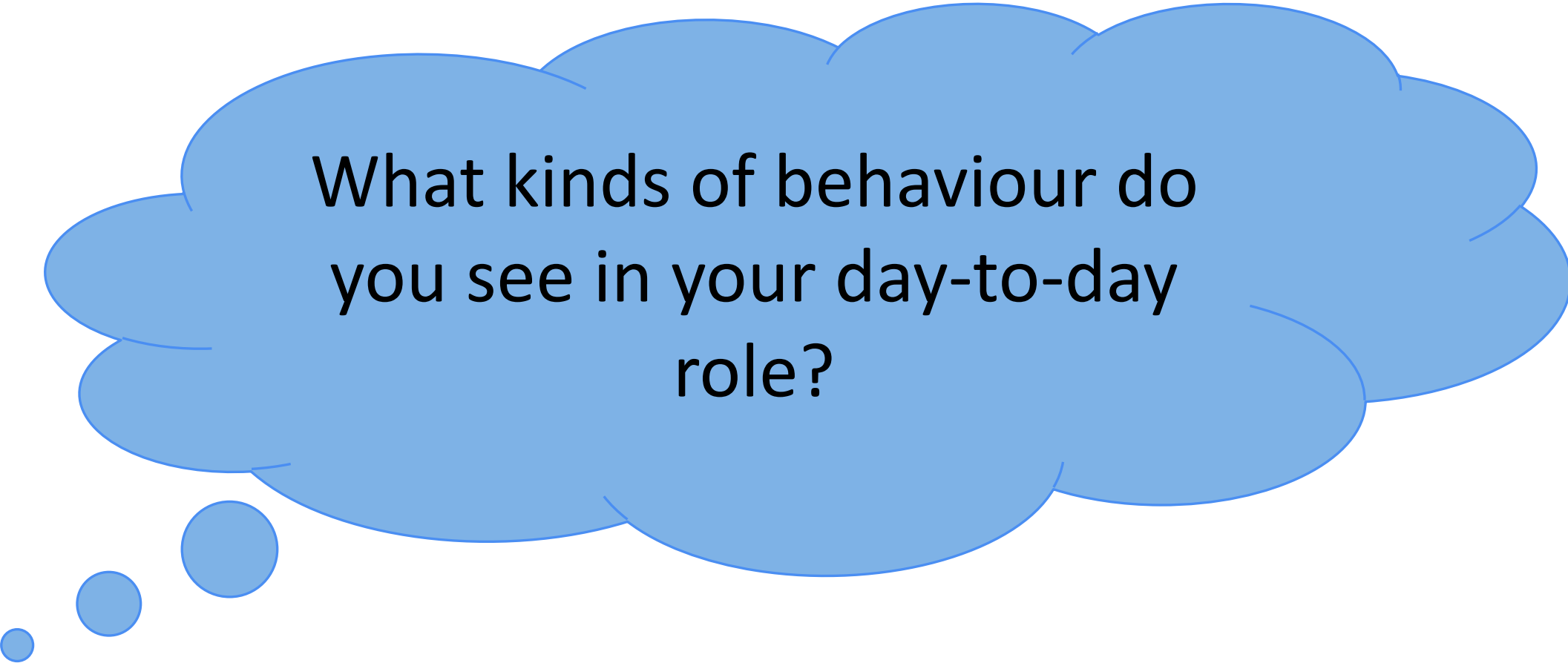


This webinar is being
recorded

The aim of this training

- To understand what ACES are
- To understand how ACES impact behaviour
- Consider what we as professionals can do to support young people affected by ACES and make them feel safer
- Health warning

What kinds of behaviour do
you see in your day-to-day
role?

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What is an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)?

The term Adverse Childhood Experience refers to a number of negative stressful circumstances and situations a child may encounter or witness whilst growing up.

Research found 60% of people had experienced at least one ACE whilst 20% had experienced 3 or more ACEs.

ACEs are therefore common.



Verbal abuse



Sexual abuse



Physical abuse



Emotional neglect



Physical neglect



Mental illness



Domestic violence



Problem drug and alcohol use



Parental incarceration



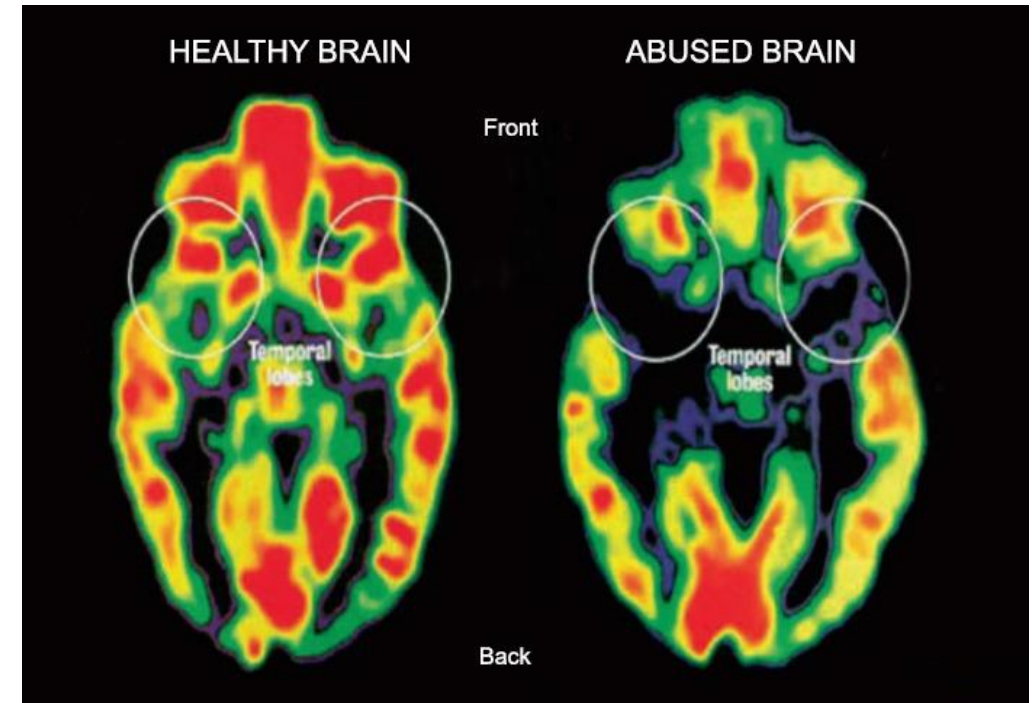
Parental separation

The link between ACE and trauma

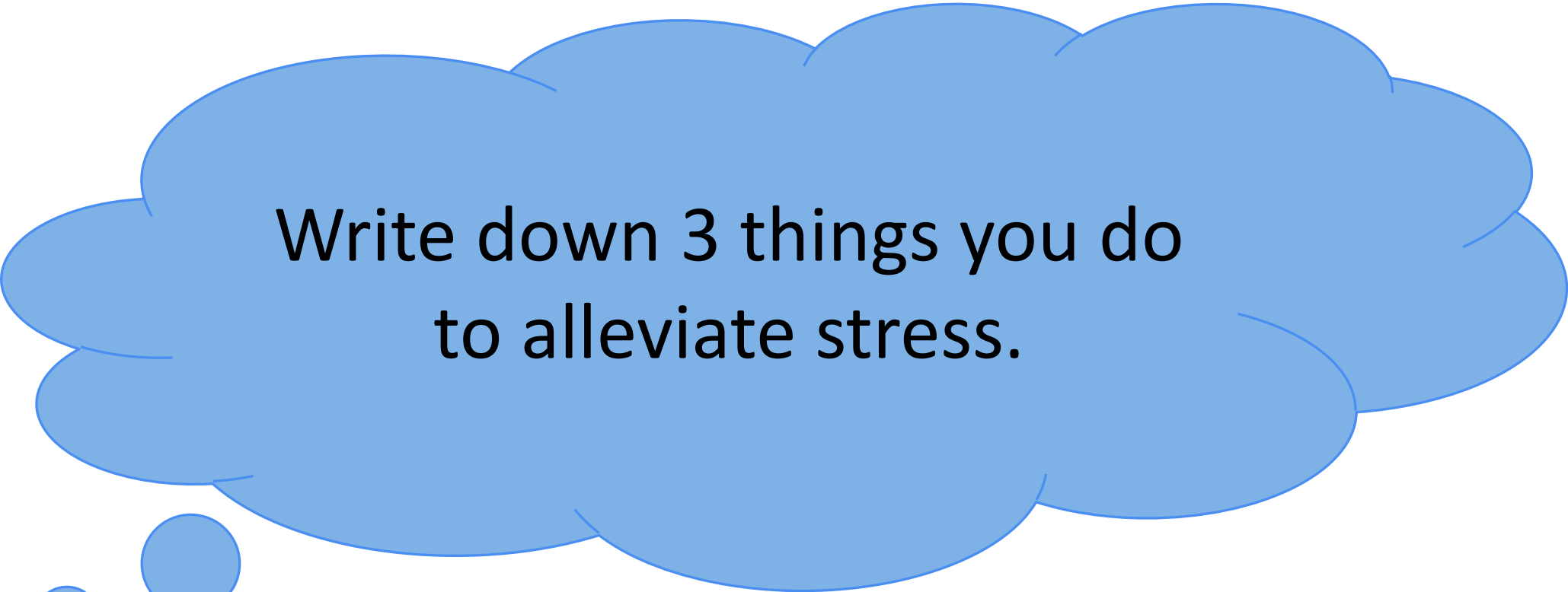

The experience of ACEs can lead to people suffering from overwhelming stress and eventually leads to complex trauma. Trauma in sum means injury. Research on brain function has highlighted that trauma is an acquired brain injury as a result of unregulated stress.

Research published in *The Lancet Psychiatry* (2019) showed in a representative sample of 18-year-olds

- 1 in 3 had experienced trauma in childhood – toxic stress leading to injury
- 1 in 12 met the diagnostic criteria for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – a clinically significant level of distress affecting everyday life.



Write down 3 things you do
to alleviate stress.

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3 levels of stress

Some stress is good for us, it enables us to function at our best. However when stress becomes overwhelming and we are not able to regulate it, the overdose of stress hormones becomes toxic to the brain.

An individual's resilience will impact on how they regulate stress.

Adults can only support others if their own stress levels are regulated.

Three levels of stress

Healthy stress – everyday challenges

Stress response regulated

Tolerable stress – prolonged and/or excessive

Effortful management of stress response, depletes resources

Toxic stress – overwhelming experiences

Stress response unregulated, survival but at a cost



Supporting vulnerable people can be stressful yet extremely rewarding

I want to acknowledge that working with vulnerable people can be stressful so let's take time to think about what it is like for you on the frontline.

Possibilities:

- a clients behaviour can be triggering
- some days people will 'push our buttons' more than other days
- vicarious stress – absorb the stress of others leaving us overwhelmed

In order to be able to provide your best support, you need to look after yourself.



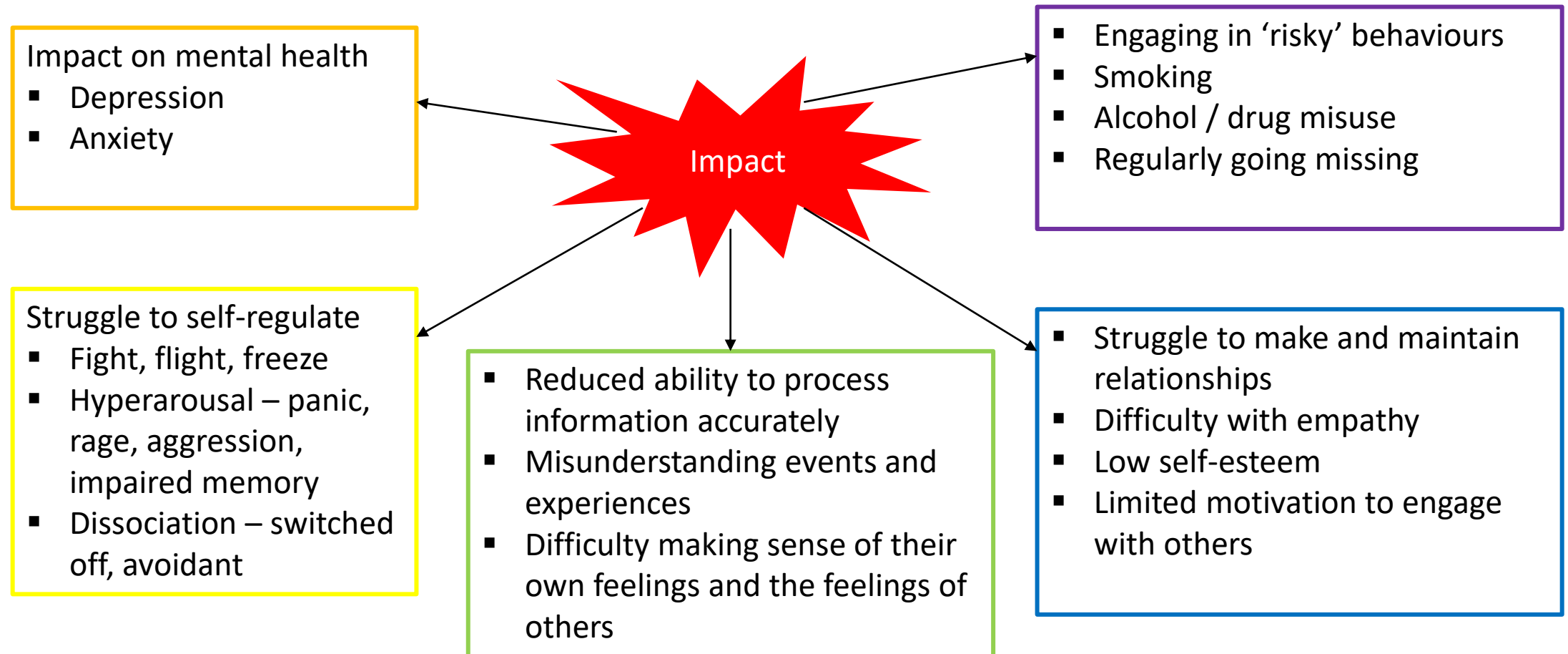
Police involvement can be particularly stressful for young people

By the time a young person reaches Police attention, they are likely to have experienced ACEs, trauma and stress. You therefore inherit them at maximum level of stress.

Example 1 – Young person who has been arrested for adolescent violence towards parent in the family home, placed in custody for a number of hours, parent doesn't want them home and a temporary placement has to be sought.

Example 2 – young person arrested for PWITS following being found with £400 worth of drugs on them.

How does ACE, Trauma and stress impact the lives of young/vulnerable people?

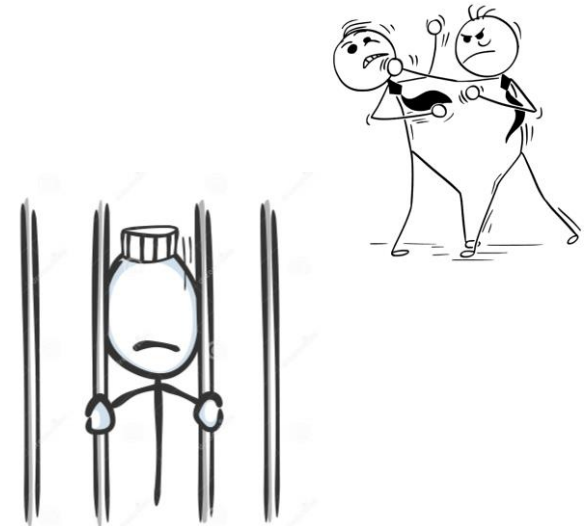






Continued...

- Learnt behaviour – image shows the cycle of a child receiving violence and then perpetrating violence.
- It is often the case that young people will flick between being a victim and perpetrator.
- Compared with people with no ACEs, those with 4+ ACEs are
 - 14 x more likely to be a victim of violence
 - 15 x more likely to have committed a violent offence
 - 20 x more likely to have been in custody





Reducing impact of Aces' with 'PACES'

Protective and Compensatory Experiences (PACEs) are experiences which buffer trauma and stress.

- Unconditional love
- Connectedness
- Community engagement
- Security : Order and predictability
- Mastery / self-efficacy

These can change the brain and can increase resilience, the most important protective factor to adverse experience.

Reframing thoughts and language

By being ACE aware and Trauma Informed we will move away from asking

“What’s wrong with you?”

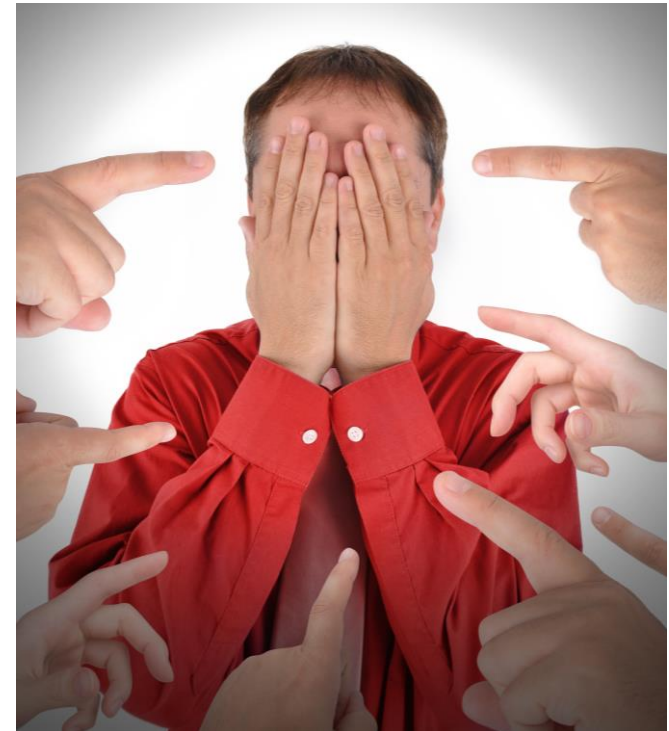
This assumes a medical condition or a character weakness.

It blames and shames the individual

... to...

“What happened to you?”

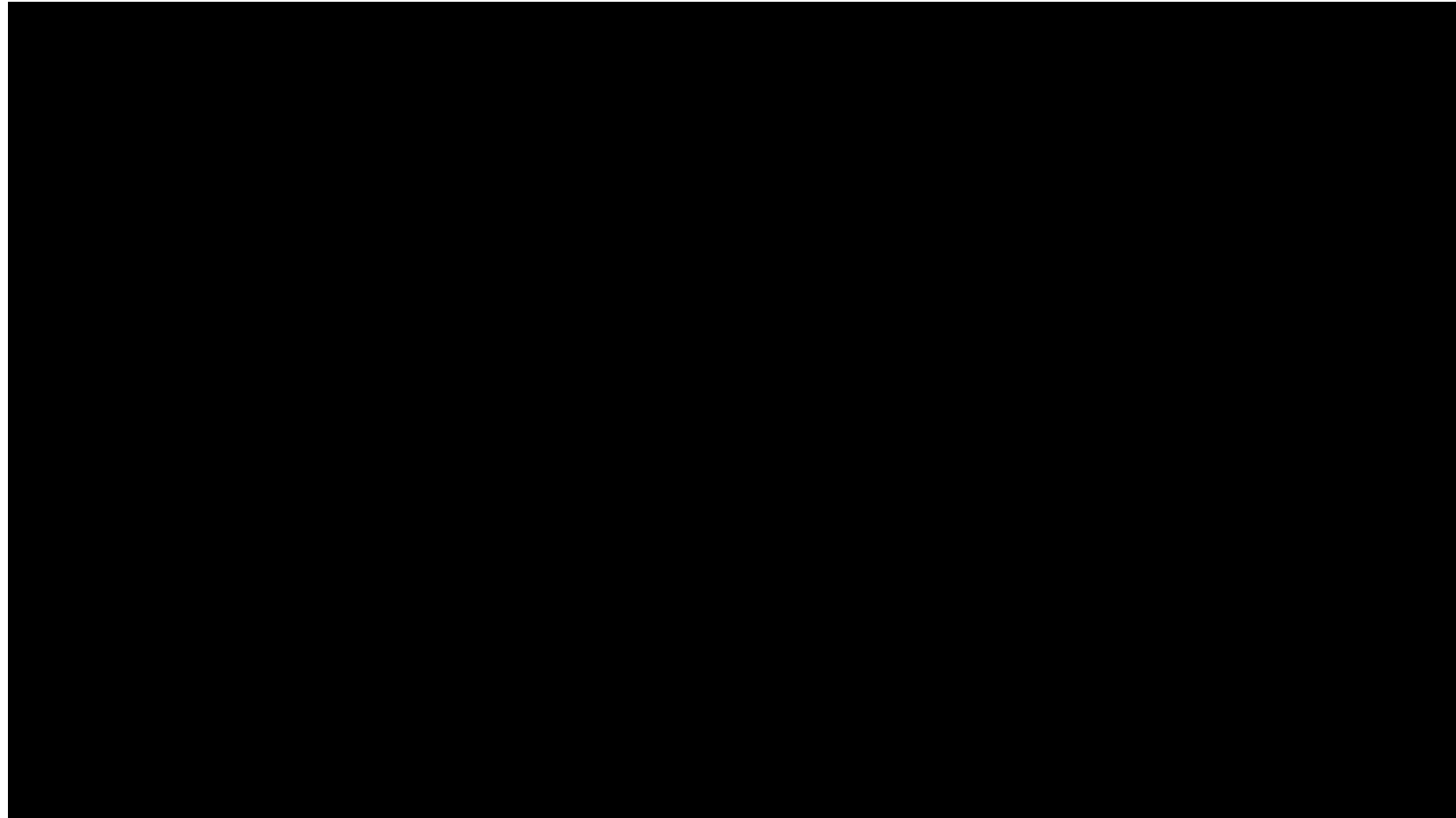
This shift in language presents us to be understanding, nurturing and healing harm.

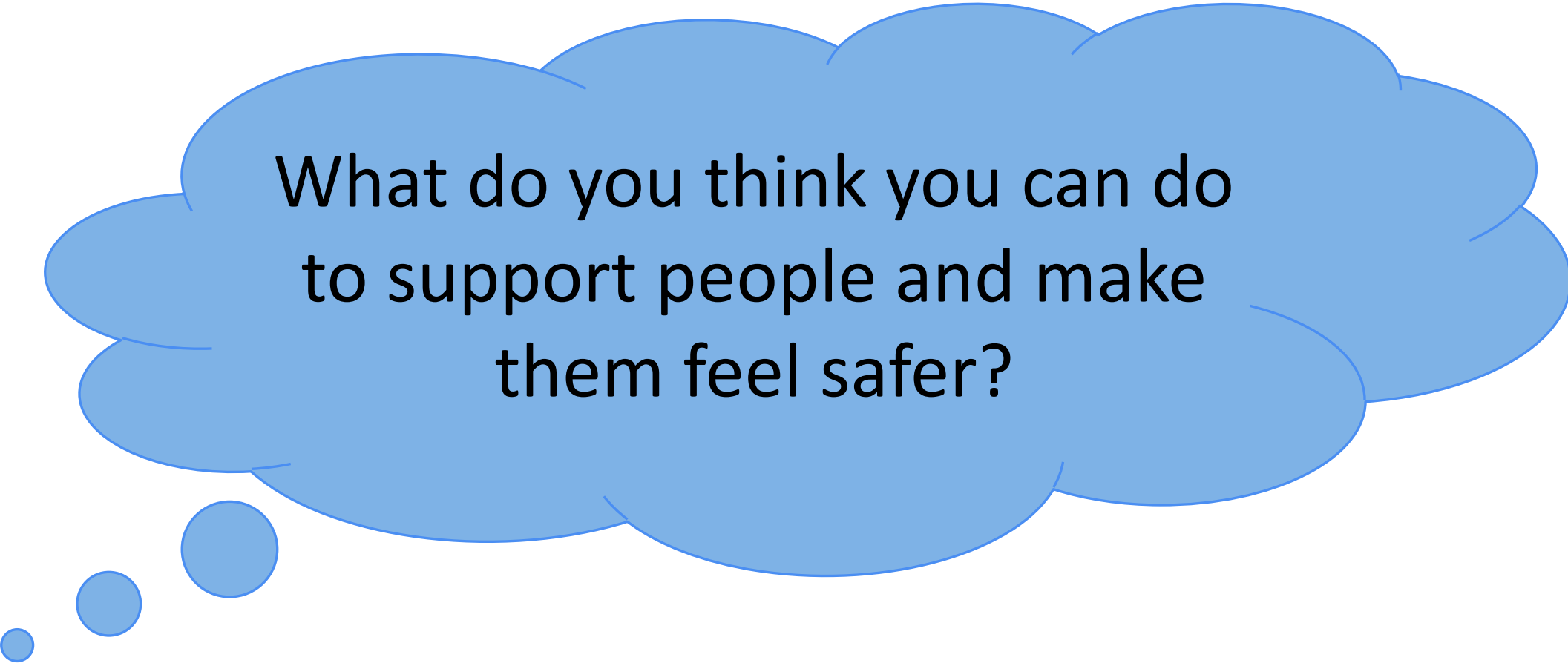


Shifting language

BEFORE	AFTER
Acting like a child .....	..... Is a child
Won't .....	..... Can't
Lazy and does not try .....	..... Exhausted with trying
Does not care .....	..... Does not understand feelings
Refuses to sit still .....	..... Overstimulated / needs contact
Forgets everything .....	..... Can't remember
Fussy, demanding .....	..... Hypersensitive
Steals .....	..... Does not understand ownership
Does not get the obvious .....	..... Does not learn from experience
Calculating and sly .....	..... Does not understand

Video -



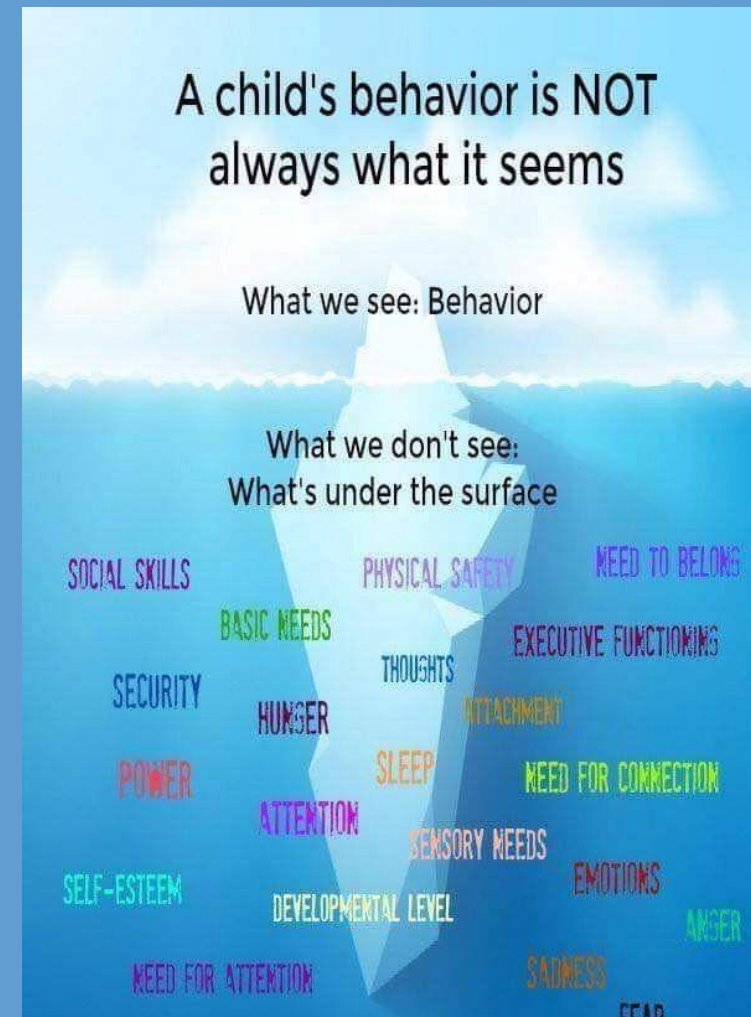


What do you think you can do
to support people and make
them feel safer?

What can you do to help?

‘Every interaction is an intervention’

- Demonstrate the behaviour you would like to see (Co-regulate with the young/vulnerable person)
- Help the young person to process the information given to them, check their understanding
- Remember to consider the language you are using
- Do not judge the behaviour displayed but instead try to understand the needs behind it
- Behind the child there may be a struggle you cannot see, build on time to be kind





“Put the knowledge of ACEs into the hands of the public and they will make wise decisions”

Sources and references

- KCA training – <https://kca.training/?service=training>
- Young Minds Public Health Education England - <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- Wales Violence Reduction Unit Webinar <https://www.violencepreventionwales.co.uk/>
- Video link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baWidE9IplM&feature=youtu.be>
- ACEs connection <https://www.acesconnection.com/>
- YouTube video explaining ACEs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiMjTzCnbNQ>