Physiological Development

1. Brain Stem (basic life functions)
2. Olfactory Lobe (sense of smell)
3. Limbic System & Amygdala Structure (learning and memory)
4. Neocortex (rational thought)
Danger

Trigger
An immediately dangerous event can bring us to the heightened emotional state that sets off fight-or-flight signal

Physiological Response
Thalamus records it and sends messages through two routes at the same time:

1. *The long path* – through neocortex to amygdala; and
2. *The short path* – directly to amygdala, generating a quick reaction before thinking sets in.

If amygdala interprets event as dangerous, it quickly mobilizes body for survival, shutting down rational thought.
Triggers & Responses

Triggering Stimuli
- Memories of Past Trauma
- Early Childhood Traumatic (Hidden) Memories
- Escalating Conflict Spirals
- Emotionally Charged Moods
- Ruminating

Physiological Responses
- *The Long Path* – through the neocortex to the amygdala; and
- *The Short Path* – directly to the amygdala generating a quick reaction
## Responses to Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aggression (Fight)</th>
<th>Avoidance (Flight)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>Escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout</td>
<td>Dwell on unfairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrupt</td>
<td>Withdraw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to prove point</td>
<td>Get sick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set other person straight</td>
<td>Believe you are not fair if vocal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurl insults</td>
<td>Tell yourself it doesn’t matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Ultimatums</td>
<td>Take it out on someone else</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Third Way (Assertiveness)

- Use open-ended statements/questions
- Practice active listening
- Identify other person’s needs/feelings
- Express one’s own needs/feelings
- Use “I” messages
- Create a “we” culture
- Reduce defensiveness
- Reframe the situation (positions to joint interests)
- Brainstorm
- Join with the other as a partner in solving problem(s)
- Look for all-gain solutions
- Agree to disagree
Pausing to Think

Whenever triggered into fight or flight
1. Notice that you have been set off
2. Take advantage of the eight-second delay
3. Recognize your habitual response
4. Withhold judgment while taking time to cool down – pause
5. Begin restoring balance and choose the most effective response to the conflict.
The Drowning Person
Letting Go of Blame

- Blame is never productive
- Blame fails to solve the problem
- Blame generates more hard feelings
- Empathy allows one to see yourself in another
- When resonance is achieved, a conflict-solving relationship starts
- Self-awareness involves looking at oneself with a degree of honesty
Two Types of Conflict Resolution

Problem-Solving
- Slower, takes time to analyze problems
- Flexible thinking – many solutions to every problem
- Managed
- Moderate behavior (so can maintain relationships)

Defensive
- Fast, shuts down higher thinking & problem solving to focus on quick action
- All or nothing thinking (eliminate or escape the enemy)
- Intense emotions drive flight or flight behavior
- Extreme behavior to defend
Characteristics of High Conflict Personalities

- All or nothing thinking
- Unmanaged emotions
- Extreme behavior
- Preoccupation with blaming others
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Disorder &amp; Common Conflict Traits</th>
<th>% of U.S. Population</th>
<th>65+ Yrs.</th>
<th>64-45 Yrs.</th>
<th>44-30 Yrs.</th>
<th>19-18 Yrs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narcissistic arrogance, superiority, lack of empathy, insulting, self-centered</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline sudden intense anger, wide mood swings, revenge and vindication</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid fearfulness, mistrusts everyone, fears conspiracies and betrayals</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Antisocial</strong> lying, fearless, enjoys bulling/hurting others, likes to dominate</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>74% Male</td>
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<td></td>
<td>26% Female</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Histrionic</strong> excessive drama, highly emotional, exaggerates, demands attention, may lie</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51% Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49% Female</td>
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Dancing with Resistance (The Two-Step)

1. Stay connected with them throughout the process (EAR – Empathy, Attention, and Respect) – stay with them, not fix them
2. Educate on the choices and the consequences of those choices
3. Keep responsibility for decision-making on the parties – “It’s up to you.”
BIFF Responses

B: Brief
I: Informative
F: Friendly
F: Firm
The Three A’s

1. Advice
2. Admonishment(s)
3. Apology(ies)

It is very important that BIFF responses NOT contain any of the three A’s.
Hi, Jim.
I just wanted to follow up on Phil’s e-mail from yesterday. Regarding the statistical analysis, it’s almost all done. I have followed the schedule completely, even getting some parts of it done early. Now that this is the top priority of our department, I expect you will have the finished results by this Friday. Let me know if you have any questions about the statistical information.
Yours,
Rochelle
Helping People Get Along

- Identify the symptoms
- Define and reframe the problem
- Generate alternative solutions
- Pros and Cons of viable options
- Experiment by trying solution for a time
- Define criteria used to evaluate effectiveness
- Fine tune solutions for improvement
New Rule

Play the ball

where the monkey drops it.
Thank You!