

What to Avoid Doing to your kids and why

Martin Zikmund

Do you have an anonymous question? Submit it via the form at zikmund.cz/query



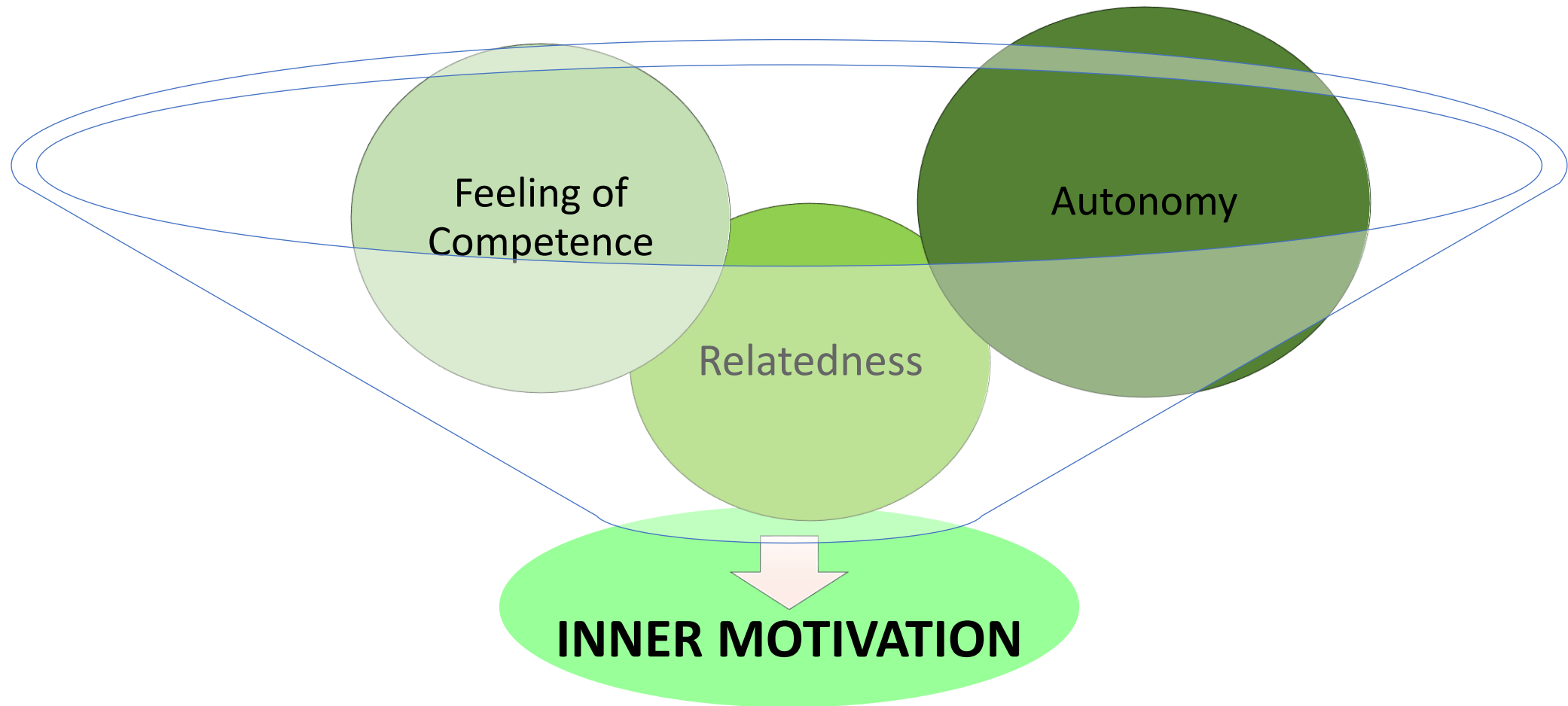
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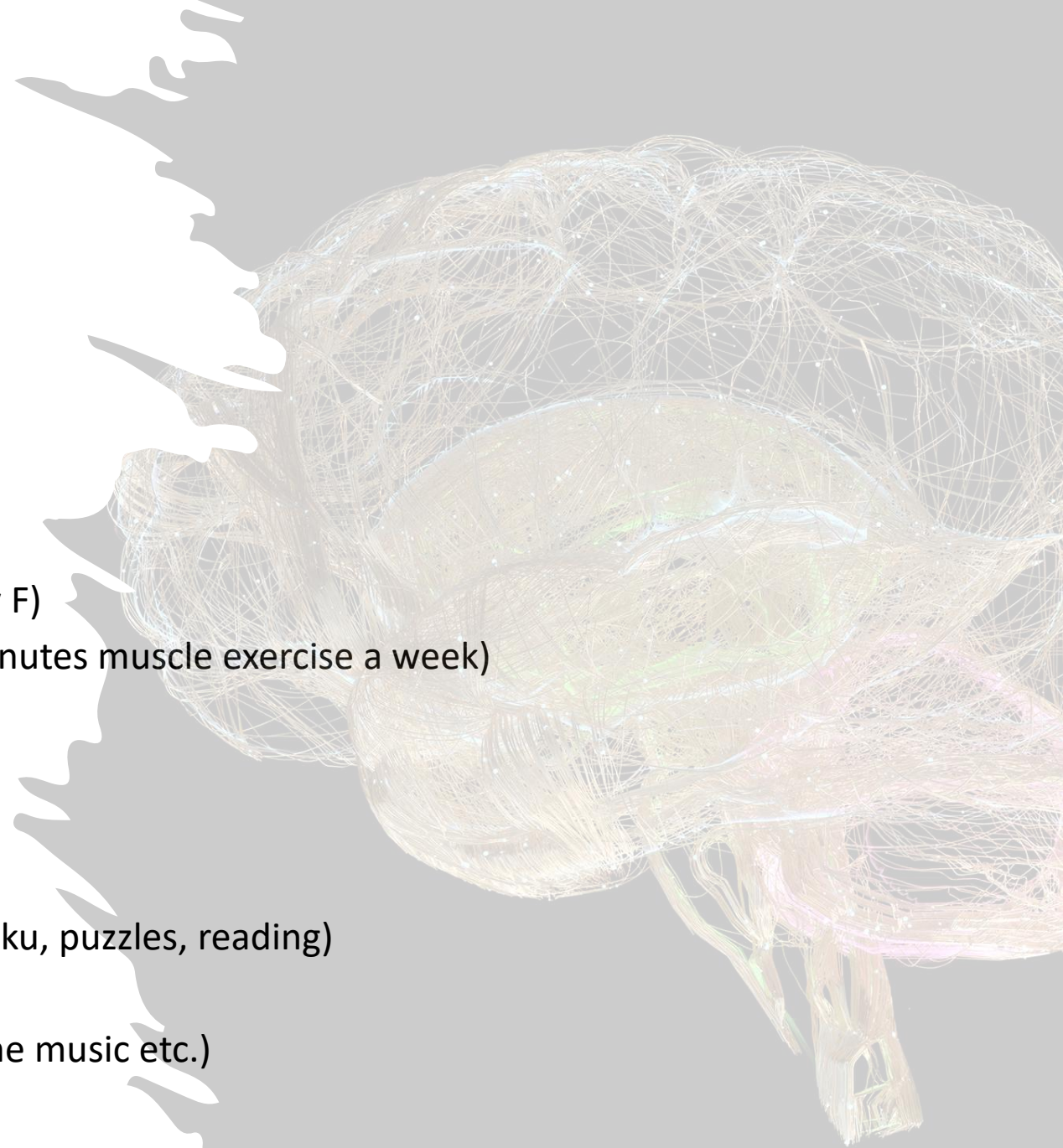
What kind of parent
do you
want to be?

Key factors for self-development (both for parent and child)



Self-care 101

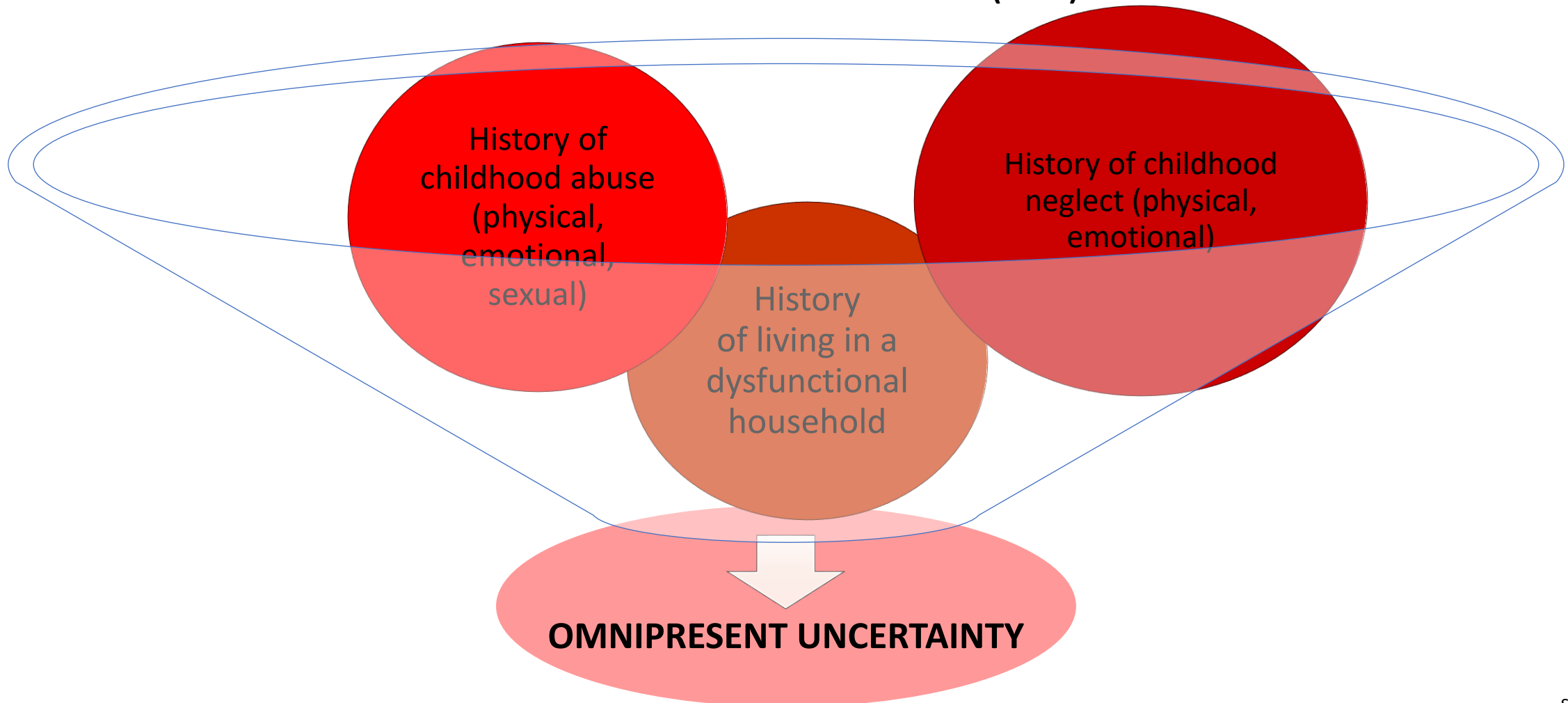
- Sleep enough (7 to 9 hours a day)
- Avoid alcohol, nicotine and other substances
- Eat regularly, sufficiently and healthy
- Drink sufficient amount of liquids (3 l/day M/2.2 l/day F)
- Have enough physical activity (150+ minutes + 60+ minutes muscle exercise a week)
- Employ daily Mindfulness/meditation
- Exercise Yoga/Tai-chi/Qigong
- Spend time in nature
- Spend time with friends
- Do cognitively stimulating activities (crosswords, sudoku, puzzles, reading)
- Acquire new skills
- Admire or create art (including dancing, listening to the music etc.)



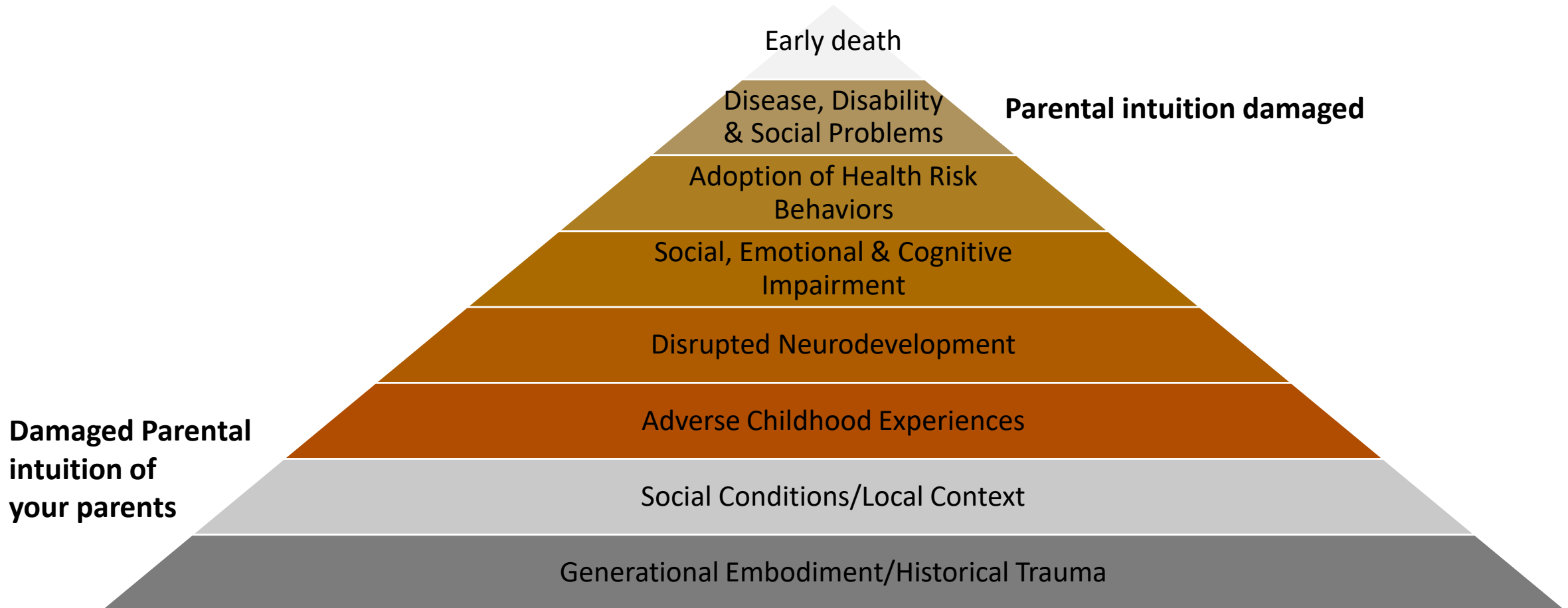
What kind of parent
must you
never be?

Key factors killing your self-esteem (both for parent and child)

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) - abuse

- **Sexual abuse** (20.7 % – 24.7 F/16.0 M) - *An adult, relative, family friend, or stranger who was at least 5 years older than you ever touched or fondled your body in a sexual way, made you touch his/her body in a sexual way, attempted to have any type of sexual intercourse with you.*
- **Physical abuse** (28.3 %) - *A parent, stepparent, or adult living in your home pushed, grabbed, slapped, threw something at you, or hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured.*
- **Emotional abuse** (10,6 %) - *A parent, stepparent, or adult living in your home swore at you, insulted you, put you down, or acted in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt.*

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) - neglect

- **Physical neglect** (9.9 %) – *There was never or rarely someone to take care of you, protect you, or take you to the doctor if you needed it, you didn't have enough to eat, your parents were too drunk or too high to take care of you, or you had to wear dirty clothes.*
- **Emotional neglect** (14.8 %) - *Someone in your family never or rarely helped you feel important or special, you never or rarely felt loved, people in your family never or rarely looked out for each other and felt close to each other, or your family was never or rarely a source of strength and support.*

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – household dysfunction

- **Mental illness in the household** (19.4 %) - *A household member was depressed or mentally ill or a household member attempted suicide.*
- **Substance abuse in the household** (26.9 %) - *A household member was a problem drinker or alcoholic or a household member used street drugs.*
- **Mother treated violent** (12.7 %) - *Your mother or stepmother was pushed, grabbed, slapped, had something thrown at her, kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, hit with something hard, repeatedly hit for over at least a few minutes, or ever threatened or hurt by a knife or gun by your father (or stepfather) or mother's boyfriend.*

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – household dysfunction

- **Parental separation or divorce (23.3 %)** - *Your parents were ever separated or divorced.*
- **Incarcerated household member (4.7 %)** - *A household member went to prison.*

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

ACEs increase the likelihood of certain psychiatric and somatic diseases and social problems

- 0 ACEs – low risk
- 1 to 3 ACEs – moderate risk
- 4+ ACEs – high risk

ACE-Associated Health Conditions: Adults

Symptom or Health Condition	Odds Ratio (excluding outliers)
Cardiovascular disease ²¹ (CAD, MI, ischemic heart disease)	2.1
Tachycardia ³⁷	≥ 1 ACE: 1.4
Stroke ²⁰	2.0
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (emphysema, bronchitis) ²¹	3.1
Asthma ⁴³	2.2
Diabetes ²¹	1.4
Obesity ²⁰	2.1
Hepatitis or jaundice ¹	2.4
Cancer, any ²¹	2.3
Arthritis ^{32, 7} (self-reported)	3 ACEs, HR: 1.5 ≥ 1 ACE: 1.3
Memory impairment ²⁰ (all causes, including dementias)	4.9
Kidney disease ⁴³	1.7
Headaches ¹¹	≥ 5 ACEs: 2.1
Chronic pain, any ³⁸ (using trauma z-score)	1.2
Chronic back pain ³⁸ (using trauma z-score)	1.3
Fibromyalgia ³⁷	≥ 1 ACE: 1.8
Unexplained somatic symptoms, including somatic pain, headaches ^{20, 2}	2.0 - 2.7
Skeletal fracture ¹	1.6 - 2.6 ²⁰
Physical disability requiring assistive equipment ²³	1.8
Depression ²¹	4.7
Suicide attempts ²¹	37.5
Suicidal ideation ²⁰	10.5
Sleep disturbance ²⁰	1.6
Anxiety ²¹	3.7
Panic and anxiety ²⁰	
Post-traumatic stress disorder ³⁷	4.5
Illicit drug use ²¹ (any)	5.2
Injected drug, crack cocaine, or heroin use ²¹	10.2
Alcohol use ²¹	6.9
Cigarettes or e-cigarettes use ³⁵	6.1
Cannabis use ³⁵	11.0
Teen pregnancy ²¹	4.2
Sexually transmitted infections, lifetime ²¹	5.9
Violence victimization ²¹ (intimate partner violence, sexual assault)	7.5
Violence perpetration ²¹	8.1

Odds ratios compare outcomes in individuals with > 4 ACEs to those with 0 ACEs, except where specified

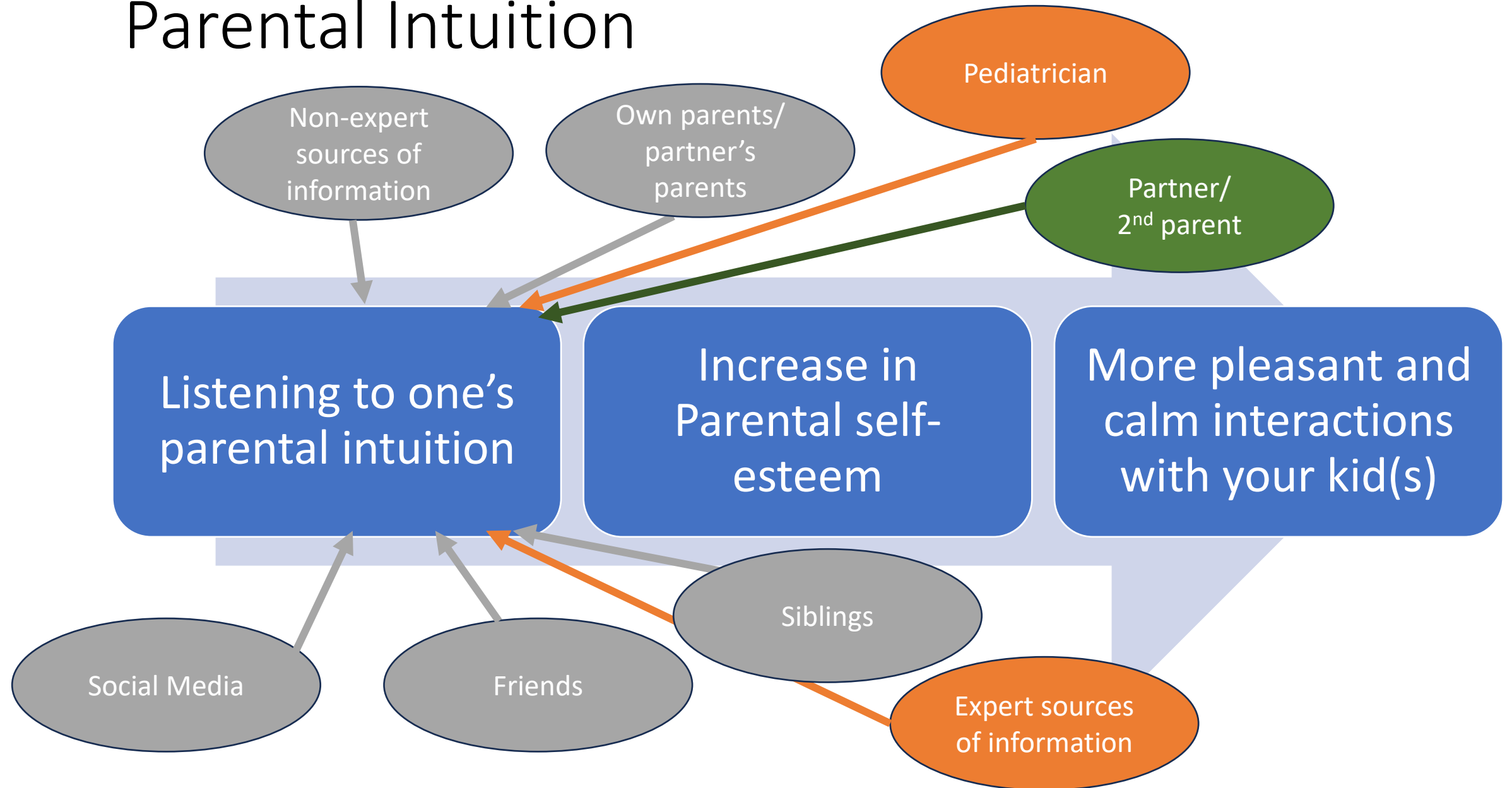
Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

- Ability to talk to family about my own feelings
- Feeling that family stands by me during difficult times
- Feeling safe and protected by an adult in kid's home
- Having at least 2 nonparent adults who take genuine interest
- Feeling supported by friends
- Feeling a sense of belonging at high school
- Enjoying participating in community traditions

6 to 7 PCEs – 72 % decrease in ACEs influence
on mental health

3 to 5 PCEs – 50 % decrease in ACEs influence
on mental health

Parental Intuition



Healthy vs Toxic Family Patterns

Preserving the roles of children and parents

- In a healthy family the job of the parents is to take care of the children.
- In an unhealthy family the job of the children is to take care of the parents.

Understandable and clear communication (from child's perspective)

- In a healthy family the messages are clear and understood. If they are not, they can be questioned.
- In an unhealthy family there are double messages, leading to confusion and guessing.

Unconditional Love and Acceptance

- In a healthy family the child is always loved even if the child's behavior is unacceptable.
- In an unhealthy family the child is shamed and the person is confused with the behavior.

Healthy vs Toxic Family Patterns

Understanding the boundaries

- In a healthy family personal boundaries are respected.
- In an unhealthy family personal boundaries are unclear and often violated.

Tolerating feelings and conflicts

- In a healthy family all feelings are tolerated.
- In an unhealthy family feelings are often violated and therefore repressed.

Support in the parent

- In a healthy family the parent is a teacher and guide.
- In an unhealthy family the children bring themselves up the best they can.

Healthy vs Toxic Family Patterns

Setting meaningful limits

- In a healthy family there are reasonable limits and structure.
- In an unhealthy family there is chaos or extreme rigidity.

Adequacy of requirements

- In a healthy family demands made on children are age- and developmentally appropriate.
- In an unhealthy family the child is asked to demonstrate pseudomaturity or infantilized.

Healthy vs Toxic Family Patterns

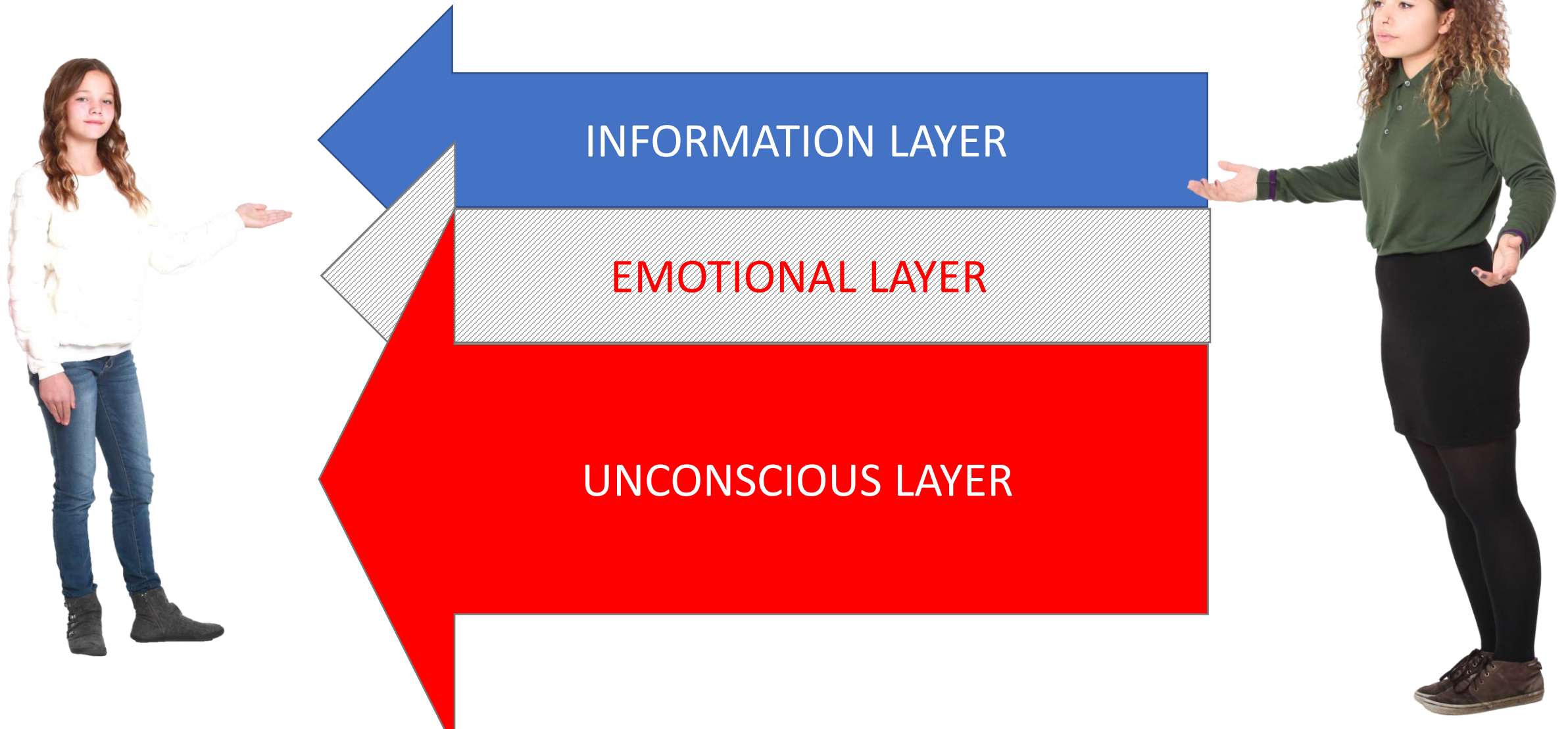
Life in love

- In a healthy family children are affirmed regularly and automatically.
- In an unhealthy family children are made to feel unworthy and unloveable.

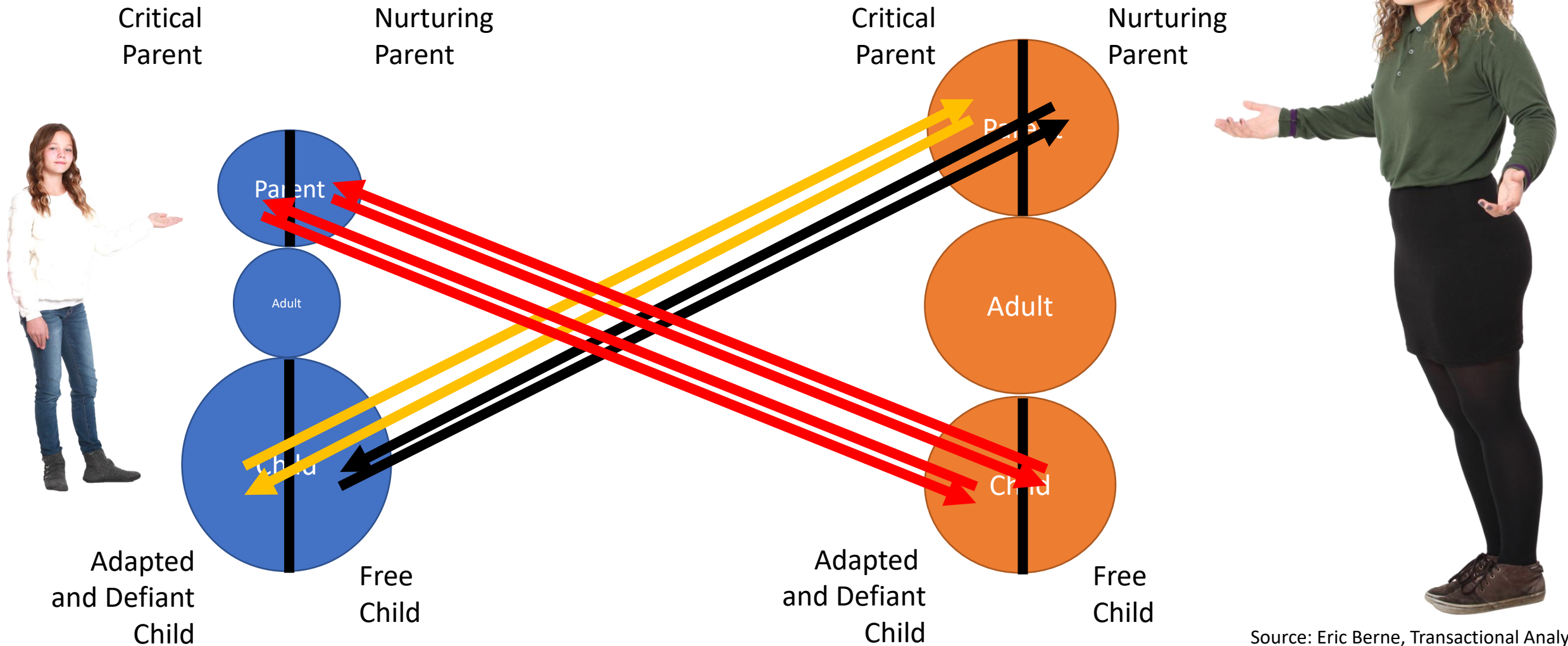
Life in order

- In a healthy family there is organization and planning as well as the ability to respond to a crisis.
- In an unhealthy family the members respond from one crisis to the next, and when crisis don't exist, create them.

Layers of Communication



Communication With a Child





Being caught by a complex reaction

- ***Again?!***
- ***Just another example** of the fact that...*
- ***You never** listen to me about **anything**...*
- ***It always** ends up the same **anyway***
- ***Nobody** likes me here*
- ***I'll never** talk to **anyone** about...*
- ***Nobody** can be trusted*
- ***Nobody** can help me with this.*

Intuition vs Complex Reaction

- Inner silence
- Calm and slow voice
- Functional empathy, the ability to perceive how the other is feeling
- Space to think calmly about reacting to what is happening or what the other is saying

- Feeling under pressure
- Strong emotions are felt
- The need to resolve the situation as quickly as possible
- Sometimes cold palms or feet
- Sometimes also remorse inside
- Inability to see the situation through the other person's eyes

When intuition fails

- Lack of sleep
- Under an intensive emotion (both positive or negative)
- Under stress
 - Too much pressure
 - Uncertainty about what is right
 - Anxiety
 - Anger
 - Feeling of loneliness



What kind of parent
you are?

Good luck! ☺

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