

# **Restorative Parenting: parenting for a peaceful home**

**with**

**Margaret Thorsborne**

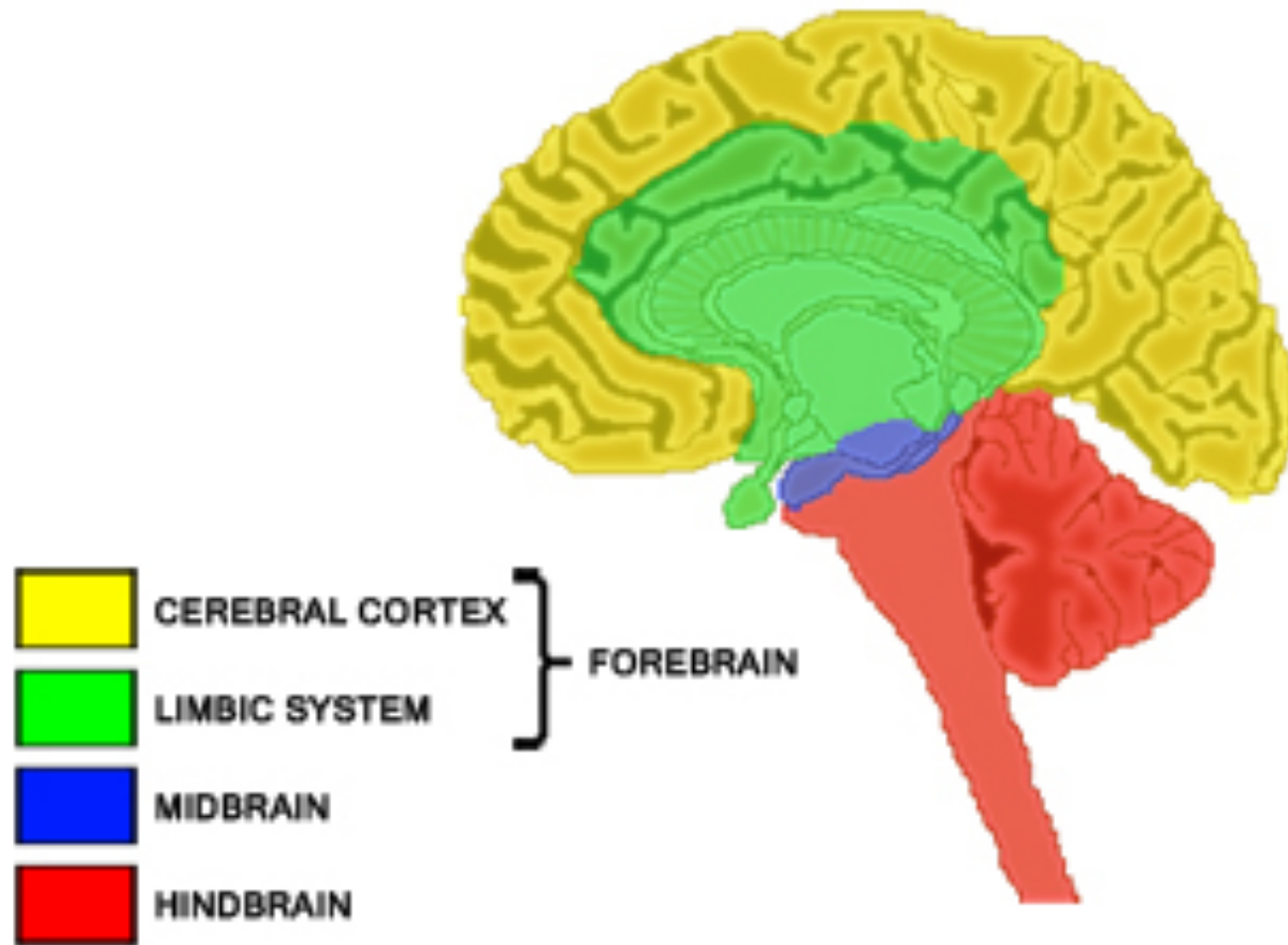
# Parenting Autopilot

- Our own lifetime experiences (how we were raised)
- Expectations and fantasies about what makes a good parent
- Expectations and fantasies about what makes a good child
- Our own temperament and personality

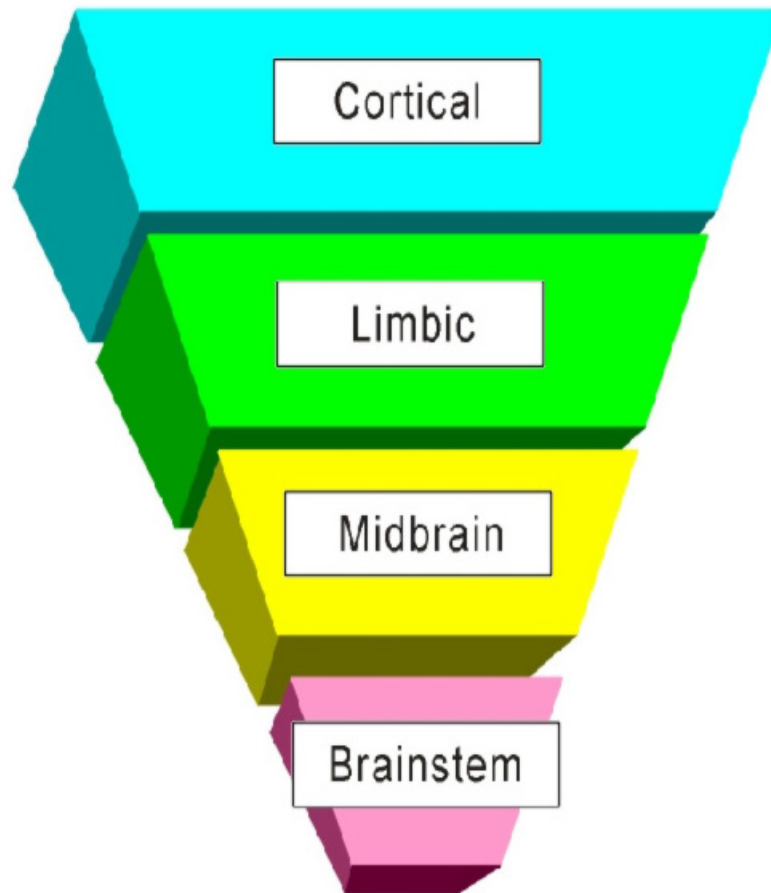
These all blend together to shape how you act toward your child and how you react to them

Holinger, 2003 “What babies say before they can talk”

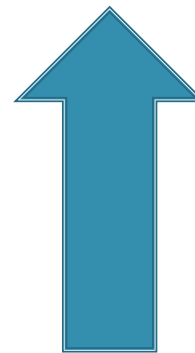
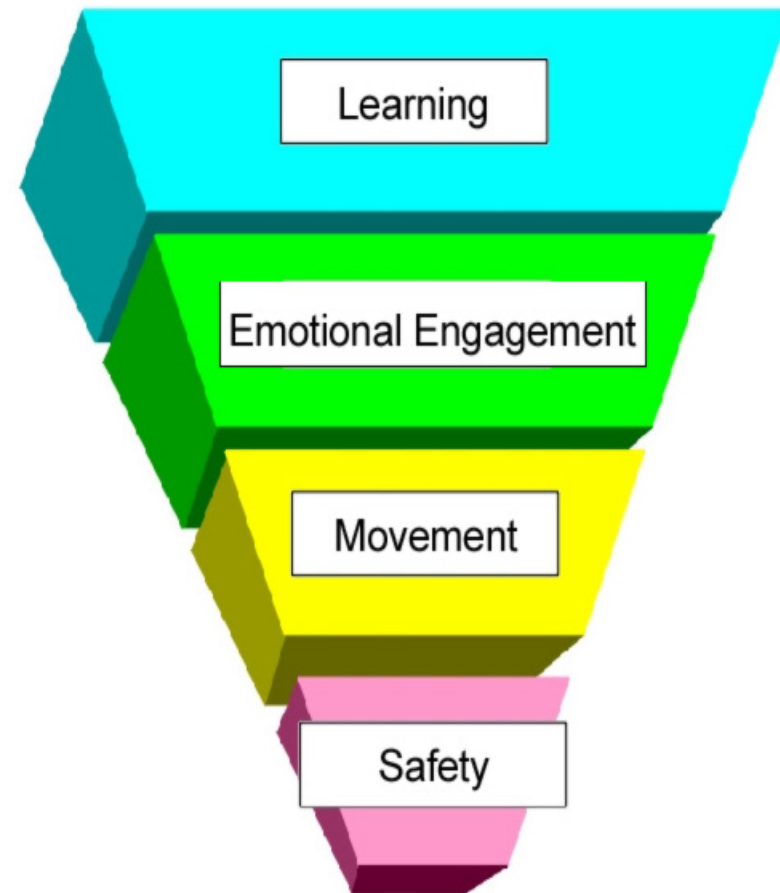
# Neuroscience and punishment



## BRAIN

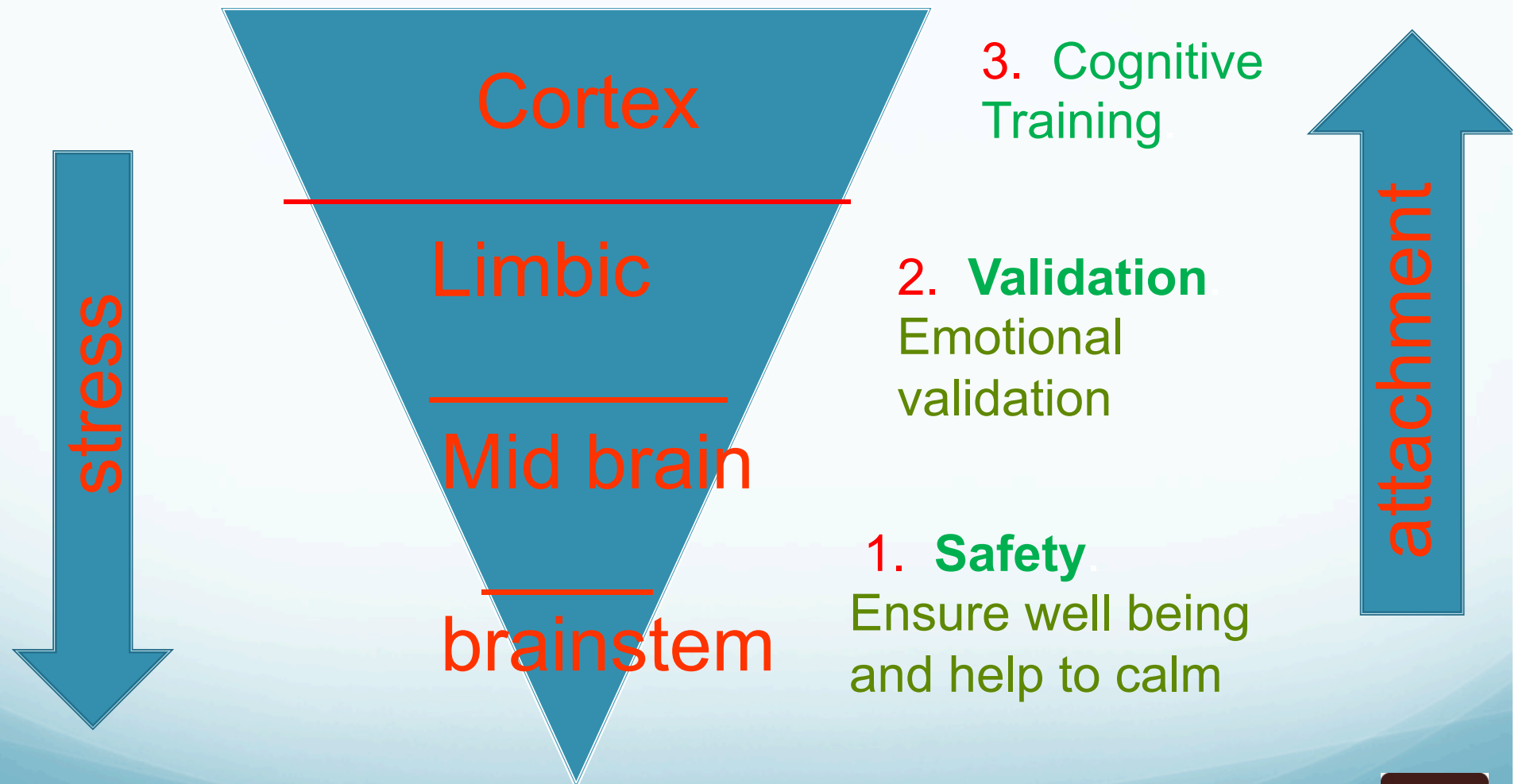


## CHILD NEEDS



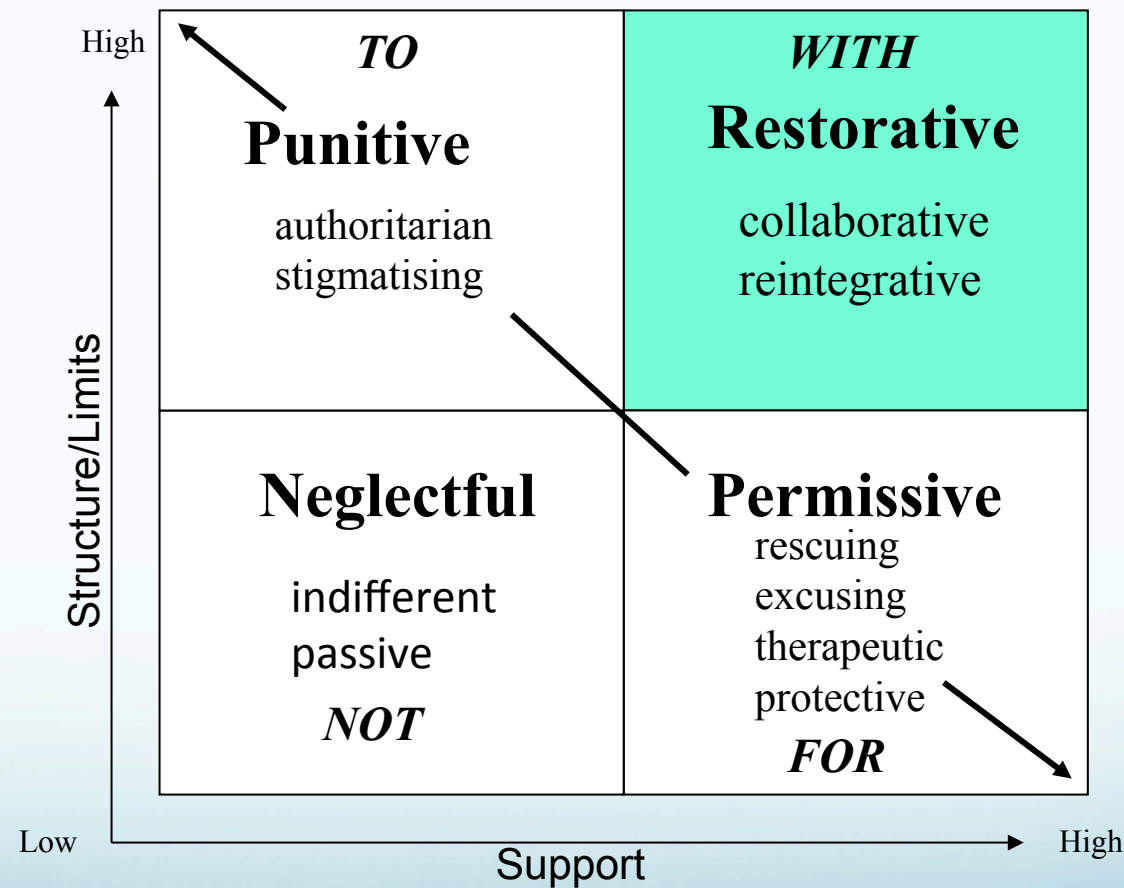
# Responding to Challenging Behaviour

## Pro social behaviours



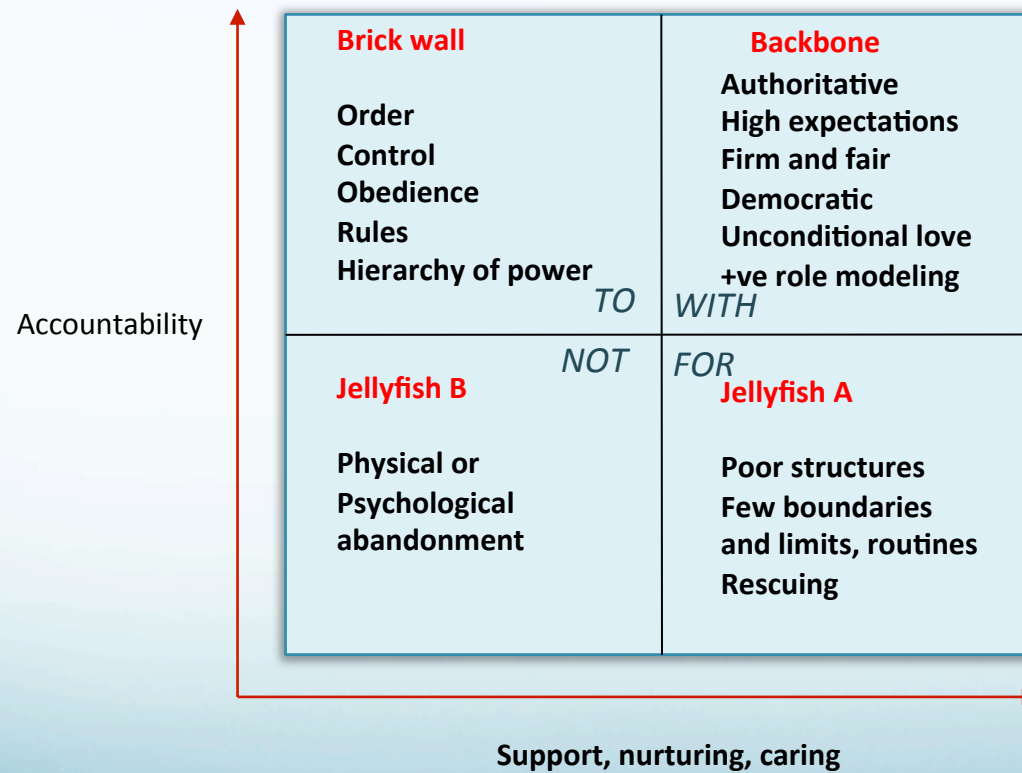
## Survival/reptilian behaviours

# Building Social Capital



Blood, 2004 Adapted from  
Wachtel, T 1999.

# Childrearing styles



Adapted from Wachtel, 1999,  
and Coloroso, 2003

Margaret Thorsborne and  
Associates, 2013

# Brain state and social environments

<p><b>AUTHORITARIAN</b></p> <p>Vigilance for threat Memory and executive functions hampered</p> <p><b>Brain state: fluctuating anxiety, distracted, reactive, defensive</b></p>	<p><b>AUTHORITATIVE</b></p> <p>Builds attunement, connections, cause and effect thinking, accountability, reflective, pro-social, trusting</p> <p><b>Brain state: relaxed alertness, attuned</b></p>
<p><b>NEGLECTFUL</b></p> <p>Negative impact on attention, memory, emotions and behaviour</p> <p><b>Brain state: distress, hyper-vigilance</b></p>	<p><b>PERMISSIVE</b></p> <p>Connects negative behaviours with positive feelings, reinforcing negative behaviours</p> <p><b>Brain state: passive, enabled</b></p>



# Retributive discipline

- **What rule was broken?**
- **Who's to blame?**
- **What punishment is deserved?**

# Restorative Discipline

- Misconduct is a violation of people and relationships
- Violations create obligations and liabilities
- Restorative practice seeks to heal and put things right

Adapted from Zehr and Mika, 1997

# Punishment

## (school version!)

- *To make someone suffer in order to teach a lesson* (detention = incarceration, suspension/stand down = exile, time out = isolation, humiliation, ominous notes to parents, withdrawal of privileges, using schoolwork as a weapon)
- Works in the short term, *but loses effectiveness over time*, with focus by student/child on avoiding punishment

Kohn, 2006

# Price of compliance

- Not really effective
- Doesn't solve problems, makes them worse
- Teaches use of power over; retribution
- Warps the relationship between punisher and the punished
- Punishment impedes the process of ethical development
- Punishment only focuses on the consequences for the wrongdoer, not others

Kohn, 2006

Margaret Thorsborne and  
Associates, 2013

# Why do we punish?

- Quick fix, easy
- We' ve always done it this way
- Expectations from others?
- Makes us feel powerful
- Satisfies the need for a primitive form of justice (revenge, shame)
- Chaos will reign if we don' t
- Belief that getting to the bottom of a problem is just a fancy way of “doing nothing”

Kohn, 2006

Margaret Thorsborne and  
Associates, 2013

# Backbone childrearing

- Strong, positive messages about the worth of the child - optimism, perseverance, generosity
- Democratic approaches to problem-solving and decision-making: being listened to
- Pro-social behaviours are modeled and taught; rules are simply and clearly stated
- Consequences are reasonable, simple, valuable and purposeful

# Backbone childrearing - 2

- Authoritative approach to wrongdoing; children are given a second chance, but are held accountable for fixing their mistakes
- High expectations for conduct – belief in their decency, respectfulness, responsibility and caring
- Love is unconditional – kids feel loved, wanted and respected
- Adult is empathic and emotionally available, teaching the child to honour their own feelings

# Backbone childrearing - 3

- Competency and co-operation are modeled and encouraged
- *How to think* is taught, including how to think when facing a moral dilemma
- Adult is willing to acknowledge when there is a problem and seek help

Coloroso, 2003

Margaret Thorsborne and  
Associates, 2013



# Useful reading



# Contact Details

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