



Workshop for parents: supporting children with anxiety
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H O P E

Harin**g**e**y**

Rooted in Tottenham

Aims for the session

- Understand process of Containment and Attachment, and how we can use these ideas to support children
- Understand what's going on in the brain when children panic
- Consider that we can accept and work with anxiety rather than pushing it away
- Learn to be aware of and work with our own emotional response when children are anxious
- Have some immediate strategies for helping children who are feeling panic
- Have some long-term strategies for helping children to manage their own emotional regulation

Working agreement

- Please join in and share
- Active listening
- Respect others opinions
- Confidentiality
- Slides and notes will be shared



What are the issues?

- One or two examples of things that your child is worrying about?
- How does this impact them?
- How does it make you feel?



Containment

Wilfred Bion, British
Psychoanalyst 1960s

Making feelings manageable



Attachment

John Bowlby 1950s

Building the confidence to
explore





Co-Regulation

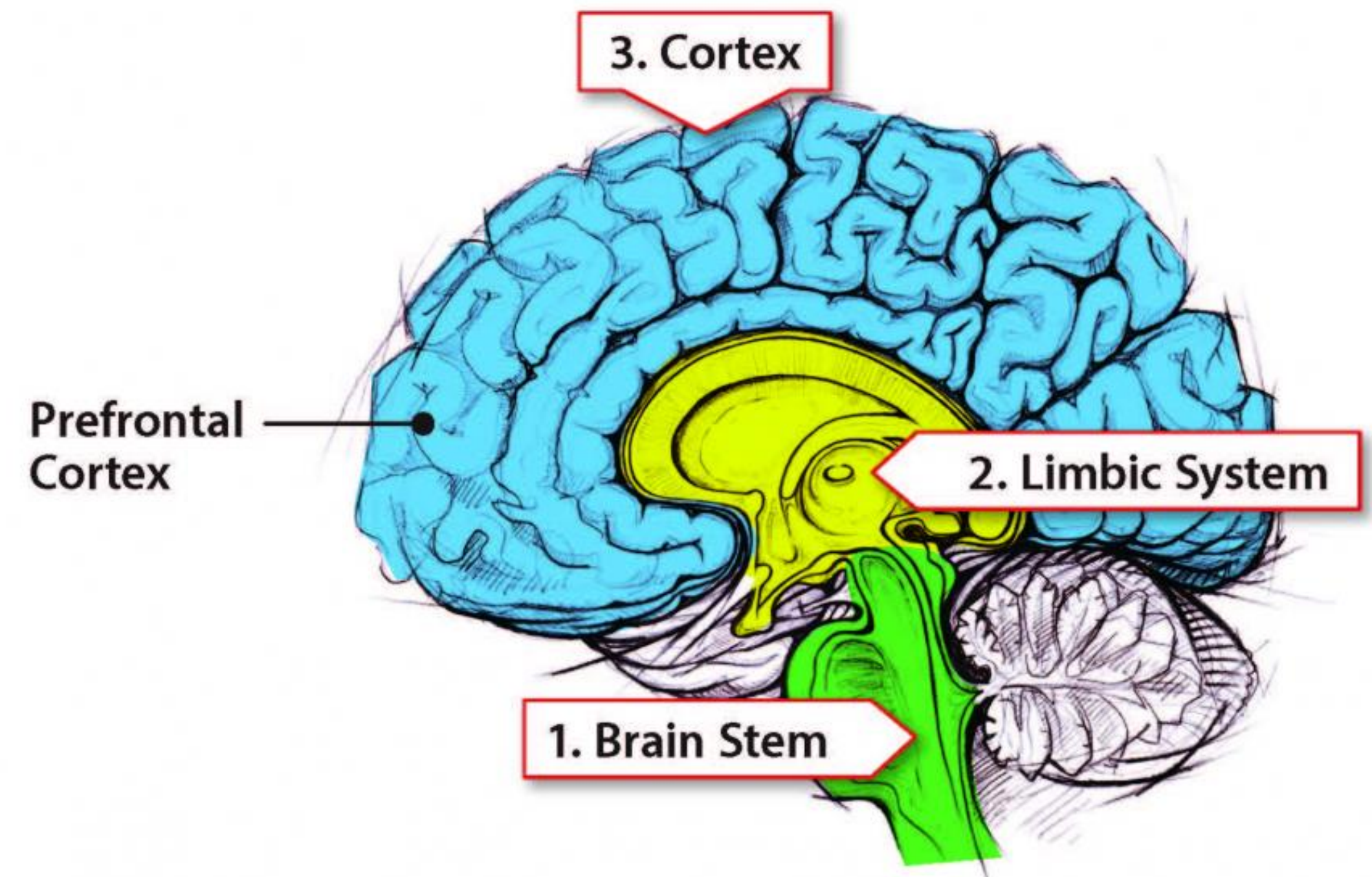
Dyadic regulation of emotion, Alan Sroufe 1995



Calming the brain

Dr Bruce Perry Neurodevelopmental Model

1. Brain stem REGULATE: Help to feel safe, physical, avoid discussing trigger
2. Limbic system RELATE: Shared activity for sense of connection, reassuring, enjoyable interaction, not discussing trigger
3. Cortex REFLECT: What happened and what could help, shared thinking for a new perspective





Sensory Resources & Fidget Toys

Staying with the feeling

- Living with climate change, war, pandemic and social pressures
- Living with rather than trying to escape anxiety
- R.A.I.N. approach, Tara Brach and Michele McDonald
- **R**ecognise
- **A**llow
- **I**nvestigate
- **N**urture/**N**on-identification





Worry Box or Worry Monster

A worry that I
can do
something about

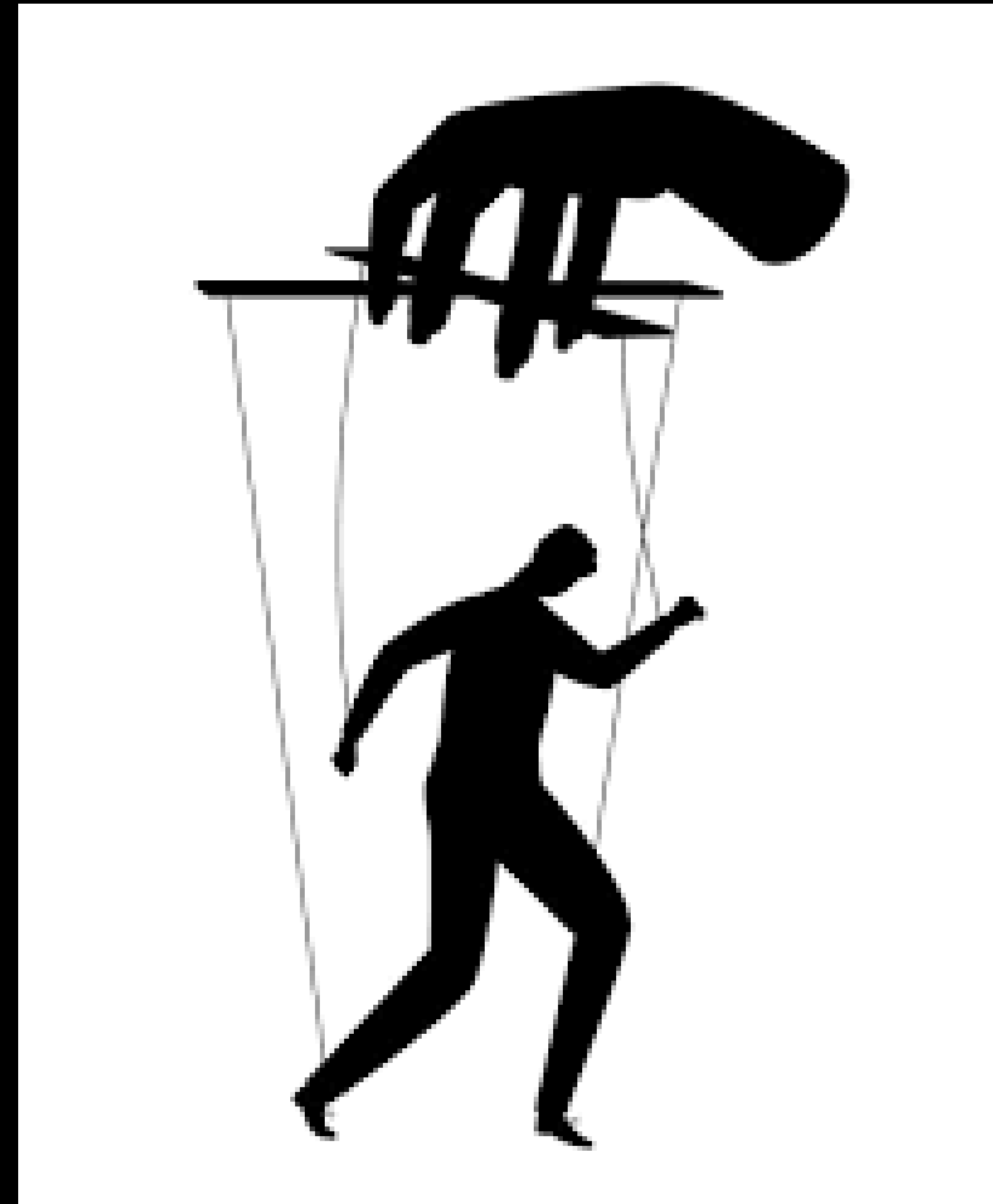
A worry that
adults can help
me with

A worry about
something that
can't be
changed

A worry about
something that
is very unlikely
to happen

Controlling Behaviour

- Acknowledge how it makes you feel, is this how your child feels?
- Often comes from a feeling of anxiety
- 'Why Can't My Child Behave' Dr Amber Elliot
- **'Allowing Control'**: a task which they can manage
- **'Contained Control'**: a visual which affirms what parts of the situation child has control over
- Build choice into things which need to happen



Confidence and Resilience

- Learning to problem solve
- Embracing Change
- See the bigger picture
- Safe Space



Night Fears

- Address feeling, not object of fear
- Don't try to explain fears away
- Story/video about night fear
- Ask child what could help
- Praise child for their effort



Friendship Issues




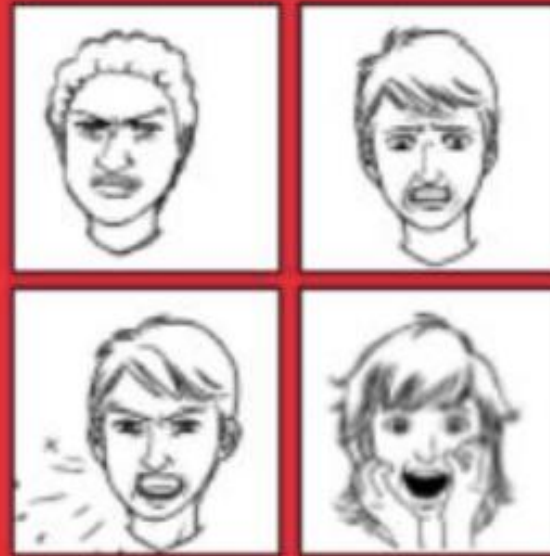
- Listen before stepping in
- Reassure about fluctuations
- Process the feelings
- Child suggestions
- Help confidence in friendship skills
- Don't assume your child is victim
- Don't ignore hurtful comments or bullying



Zones of Regulation

Teaches children to:

- Use a common vocabulary of emotional terms in a non-judgemental way
- Recognise their own emotions
- Detect emotions in others and read facial expressions
- Identify what may trigger certain emotions
- Think about how others may interpret behaviour
- Problem solve in healthy ways

			
BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

- **BLUE ZONE:** Low state of alertness – brain and / or body is moving slowly or sluggishly
- **GREEN ZONE:** In control and ready to learn – a regulated state of alertness
- **YELLOW ZONE:** More intense emotions and states but able to maintain control (a heightened state of alertness but you still have some control)
- **RED ZONE:** A heightened state of alertness and out of control

