Complex Trauma

The Basics of Trauma-Informed Care

Project ECHO Billings Clinic

March 27, 2019

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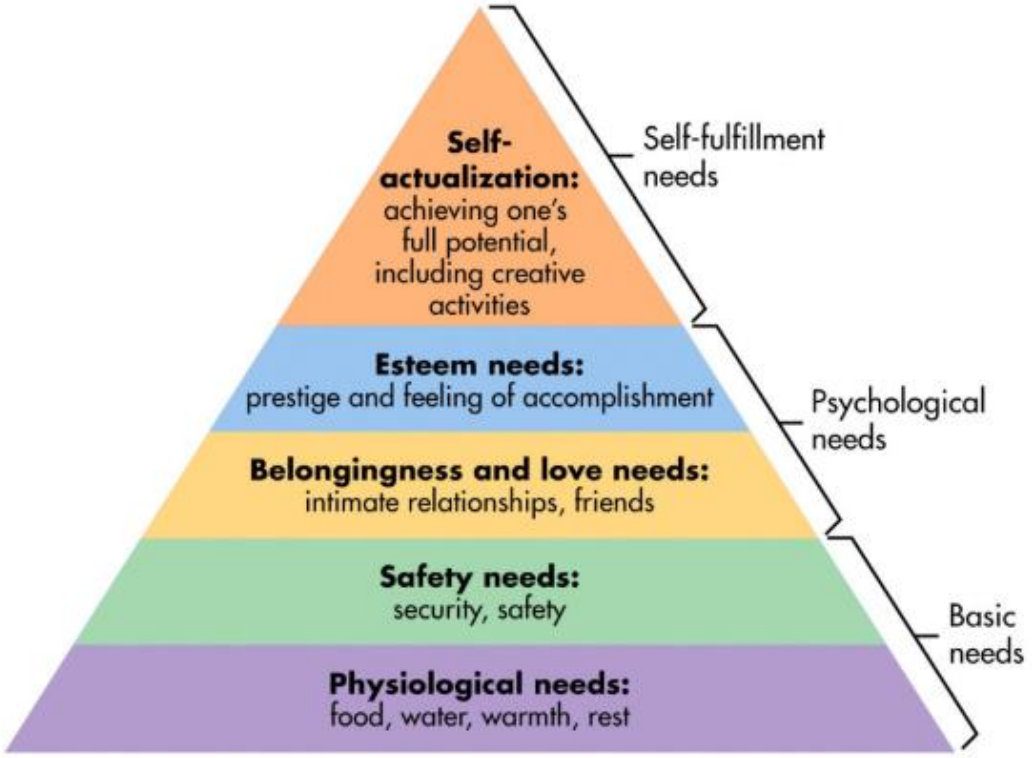

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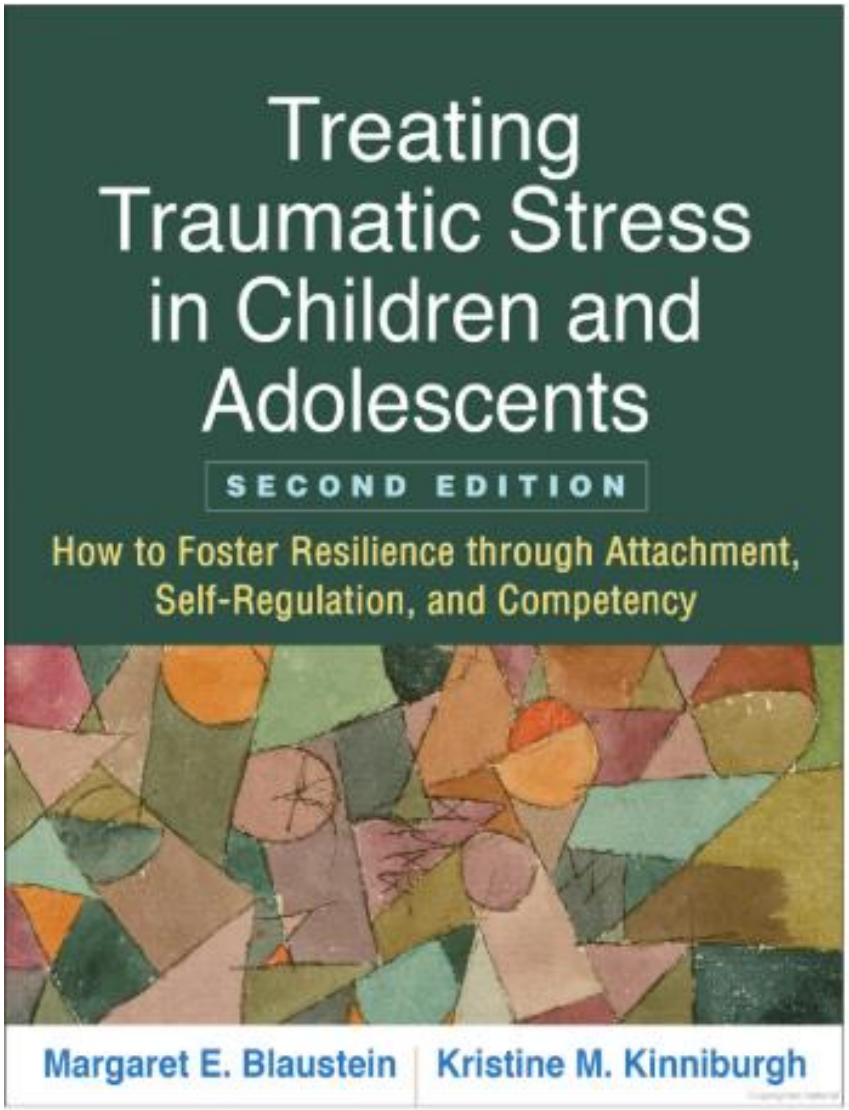

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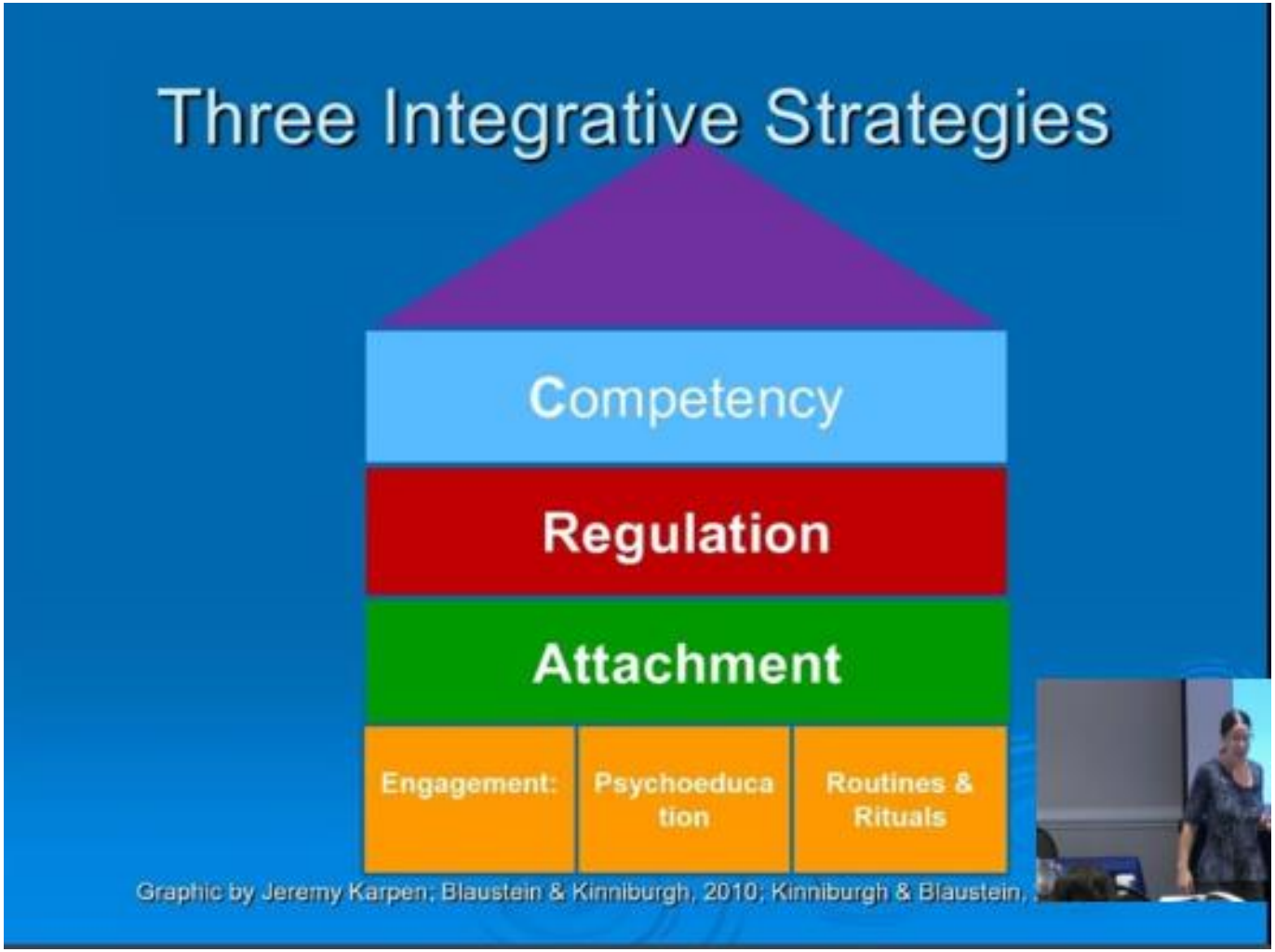
Three Integrative Strategies



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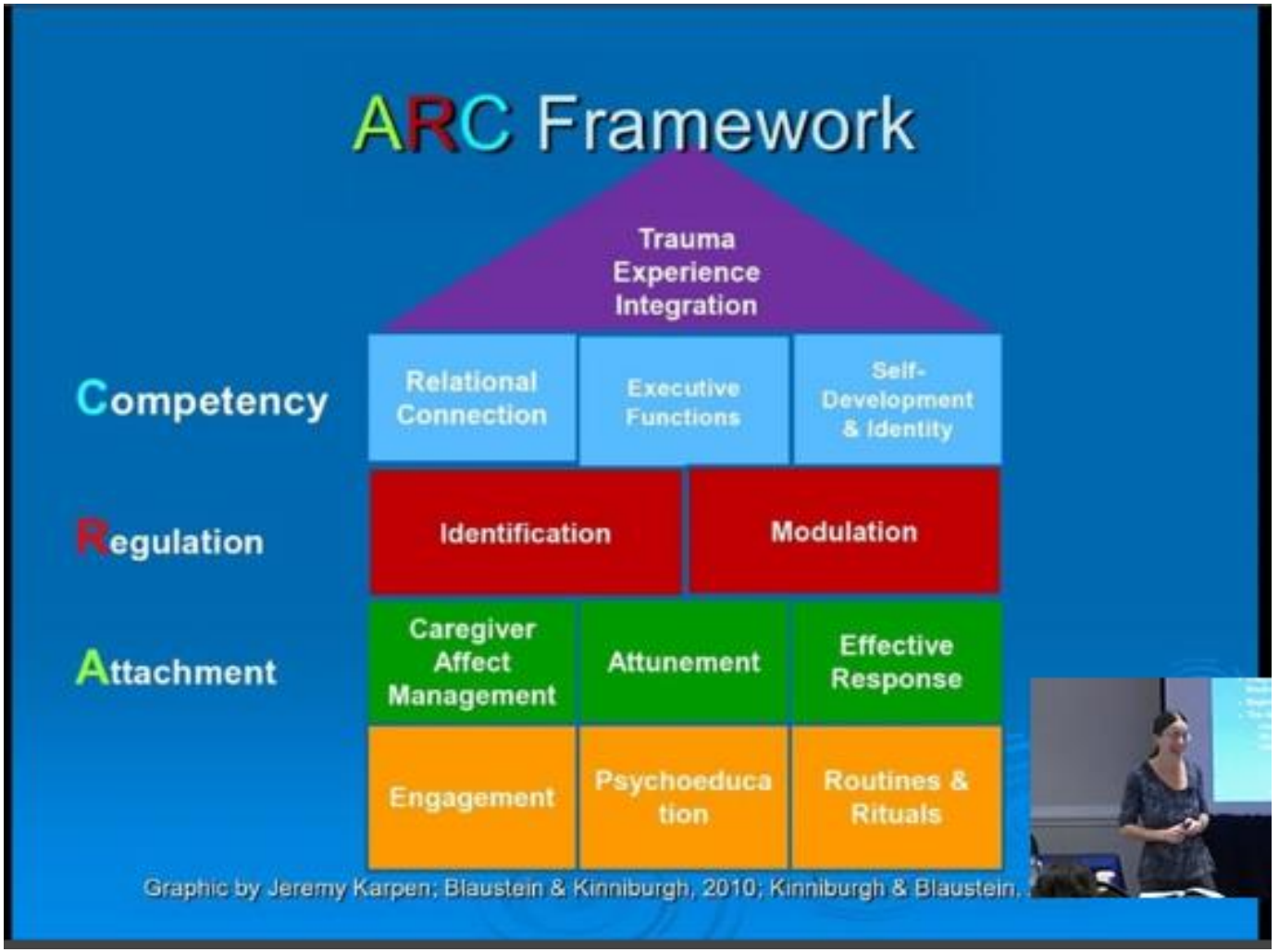
ARC Framework



Dynamic Evaluation and Formulation

- What has the child/family experienced?
  - Positive and stressful experiences.
  - Include obvious stressors and the often overlooked stressors (ie. Historical trauma, social-category-related bias, discrimination).
- What other factors have influenced the child and family?
  - Child and family culture (multidimensional).
  - Caregiver functioning (current and past),

Dynamic Evaluation and Formulation

- How have the experiences and contextual factors impacted the family?
  - Developmental impact: attachment style, self-regulation capacity and organization, relationships, motor skills.
  - Beliefs about self, others, and the world.
- What do the patterns suggest about the child's (or family's) learned adaptations to these experiences? In what way do

Dynamic Evaluation and Formulation

- Do patterns of current behavior give us clues about key triggers or cues of potential danger? If not, based on historical experiences, what might we expect to trigger the danger response in this child?
- In the face of triggers, what kind of behaviors is the child engaging in? Which current behaviors are we most concerned

Foundational Work

- Engagement
  - What is the ‘why’ for the patient and caregiver? What’s at stake?
- Education
  - Educate about the rationale and treatment goals to keep engagement.
- Routines and Rhythms
  - Routines and structures support key goals and help during tough times.

Attachment

- Caregiver Affect Management
  - Psychoeducation around trauma, normalization, validation.
  - Identify challenging situations.
  - Build self-monitoring skills.
  - Enhance self-care and support resources.

Attachment

- Attunement
  - Give parallel attunement to caregivers.
  - Support caregiver active curiosity.
  - Use reflection to mirror child's experience.
  - Integrate attunement skills into support for youth self-regulation.
  - Support fluidity and pleasure in dyadic engagement.

Attachment

- Effective Response
  - Proactively ID behaviors to target (increase/decrease).
  - Use attunement skills to ID patterns of behavior.
  - Use “go-to” strategies (meet needs, support regulation) to reduce and address identified behaviors.
  - Identify, experiment with, and enhance other

Regulation

- Identification
  - In self: language for emotions and arousal.
  - In self: connection of emotions, body sensations, behavior, and cognition.
  - In self: contextualization of emotions and arousal to internal and external experience.
  - In others: accurately reading others' emotional expression.

Regulation

- Modulation
  - Build understanding of degrees of energy and feeling.
  - Build understanding of comfortable and effective states.
  - Explore arousal states and develop agency over tools.
  - Support and facilitate strategies that successfully lead to state change.

Competency

- Relational Connection
  - Explore goals of connection; build comfort and safety in relationship.
  - ID and establish resources for safe connection.
  - Build skills to support effective use of resources.

Competency

- Executive Functions
  - Support active recognition of capacity to make choices.
  - Build age-appropriate active evaluation of situations.
  - Build child capacity to inhibit response.
  - Build and support ability to generate and evaluate potential solutions.

Competency

- Self and Identity
  - Help children identify personal attributes of the unique self.
  - Build internal resources and identification of positive aspects of self (positive self).
  - Build a sense of self which integrates past and present experiences, incorporating multiple aspects of the self (cohesive self).
  - Support capacity to imagine and work toward future goals/outcomes (future self).

A Thread Throughout

- Trauma experience integration.

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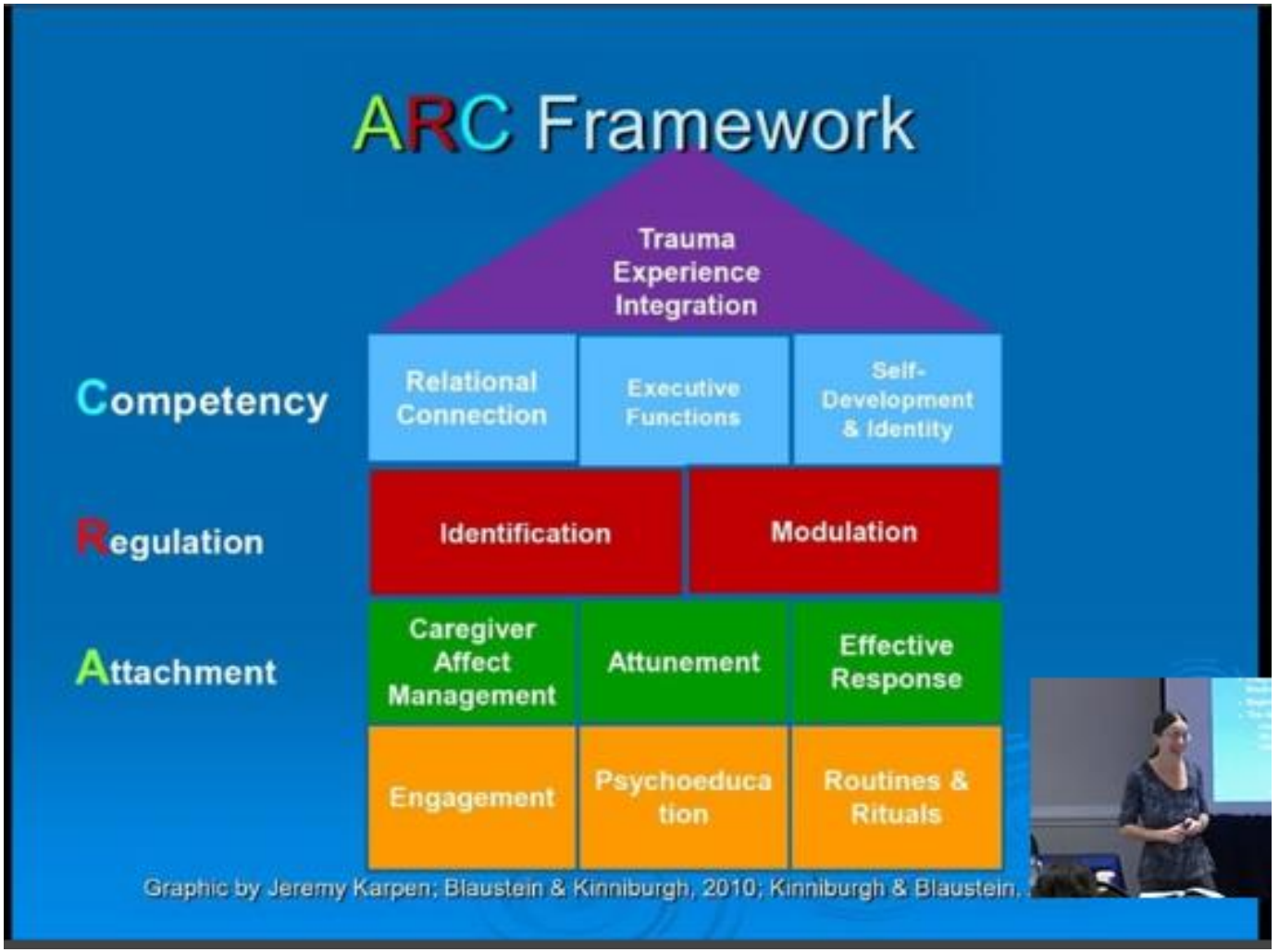
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