CREATING SAFE INTERACTIONS; UNDERSTANDING DYSREGULATION

(WITH CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT/SCARY AND UNPLEASANT ADULTS)

NJAAP 33rd Annual
School Health Conference
October 16, 2024

AS I REVIEWED THE CONFERENCE TOPICS, I NOTICED:

Grief needs

School Avoidance

Substance Misuse

Suicide

Cultural Competence

I also recognize the pattern of immense stress and emotional pain in the lives of some children,

and some parents.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT STRESS?

How does stress work?

And what is the effect of these stressors on parents, and on you?

1. Positive and Negative Stress

1. Positive and Negative Stress
2. Tolerable Stress

1. Positive and Negative Stress
2. Tolerable Stress
3. Toxic Stress

1. Positive and Negative Stress
2. Tolerable Stress
3. Toxic Stress

How Does It All Work?

A story about a bear

Unfortunately, not this BEAR…

But rather, this BEAR

The story goes like this…

That is…IF…you stumble upon a Bear in the woods.

That is…IF…you stumble upon a Bear in the woods.

But what if the BEAR….lives in the child's HOME?

That is…IF…you stumble upon a Bear in the woods.

But what if the BEAR….lives in the child's HOME?

OR IN THE WORKPLACE

OR IN THE CLASSROOM

AND REGULATION??

Regulation is the ability to understand and manage your own behavior and reactions.

THE ORIGINS OF DISRESPECT

Disrespectful behavior takes many forms. It can be intentional or accidental, verbal or physical, overt or secret.

It is important to understand the root causes when a person behaves disrespectfully. Only then can we begin to understand and address the behavior.

Learning Mind
a blog about psychology and self-improvement
created by Anna LeMind, B.A.

CAUSES OF DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR: SENSE OF ENTITLEMENT

Many feel entitled these days. What they want, they usually get. This leads to a selfish and sometimes disrespectful attitude. When we don't get what we want, we can become spiteful and say things we'd never normally say.

Combined with anger, this becomes very uncomfortable, disconcerting, and eventually threatening.

CAUSES OF DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR: CONTROL

Some people use disrespectful behavior as a form of control. Control freaks like to dominate a situation to have power over other people. They weaken your self-esteem by belittling, bullying, mocking, or degrading you.

CAUSES OF DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR: CHILDHOOD ABUSE

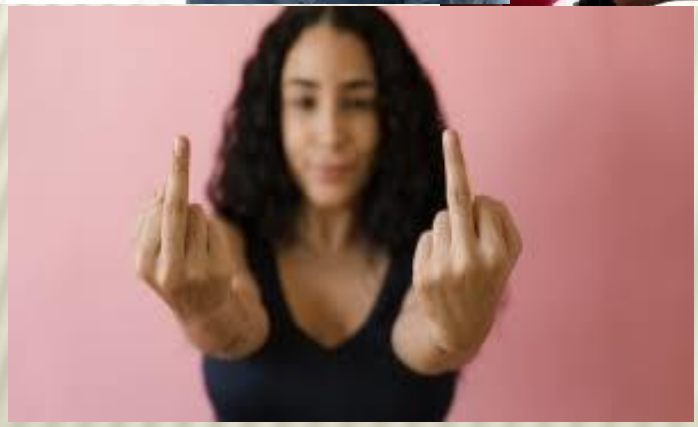
For others, a disrespectful attitude is all they know. It is a way of life that they grew up with. Perhaps they saw their mother being disrespected or abused by their father.

OR the mother was abusive because of her own experiences and passed her behavior on to the children.

CAUSES OF DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR: FEAR

When we are afraid, we feel defenseless, and often go on the attack. This can be verbally or physically. If you are in a position of power, their fear and intimidation is an effort “to be equal to you”.

DOES IT LOOK LIKE THIS?



THIS SKILL CAN HELP DE-ESCALATE

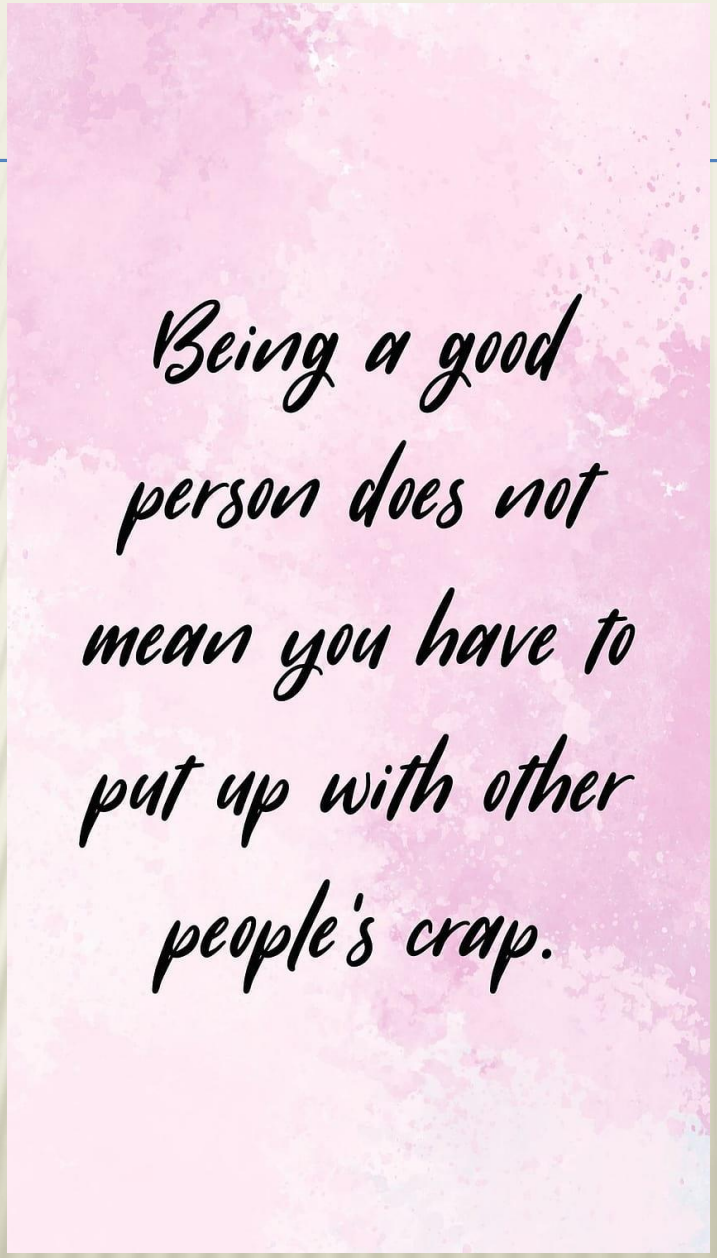
Acknowledge parents' expertise and their opinions

Acknowledge parents' purpose. “I do understand your request and what you want for your child.”

Establish boundaries. “Let’s talk in here.” “This has become uncomfortable for me.”

Offer alternative solutions or resources.

IN THE END, SOME PEOPLE JUST VOMIT WORDS ALL THE TIME


Being a good
person does not
mean you have to
put up with other
people's crap.

BUT

It's not only others' behavior that should be our focus…

we should also look at, and pay attention to, OUR REACTIONS….and the origins of our own behavior.

HOW DID YOU REACT TO THE BEAR IN THE WOODS?

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR STRESS SYSTEM IS ALWAYS ACTIVATED:

CHRONIC:

- **Headaches**
- **Your gut will tell you:**
  - Belly Pain and Bloating
  - Diarrhea/Constipation
  - Nausea
- **Shortness of Breath; Chest Pain; High Blood Pressure**

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR STRESS SYSTEM IS ALWAYS ACTIVATED:

MOOD:

- Irritability
- Isolation
- Anger,
- Hostility
- Pervasive Sadness

We are not immune to the symptoms of PTSD from exposure to trauma, nightmares, hypervigilence, avoidance, or a preoccupation with a traumatic event or a child's circumstances.

Professionals like yourself, in the helping field, must recognize the warning signs and be prepared to care for their own needs.

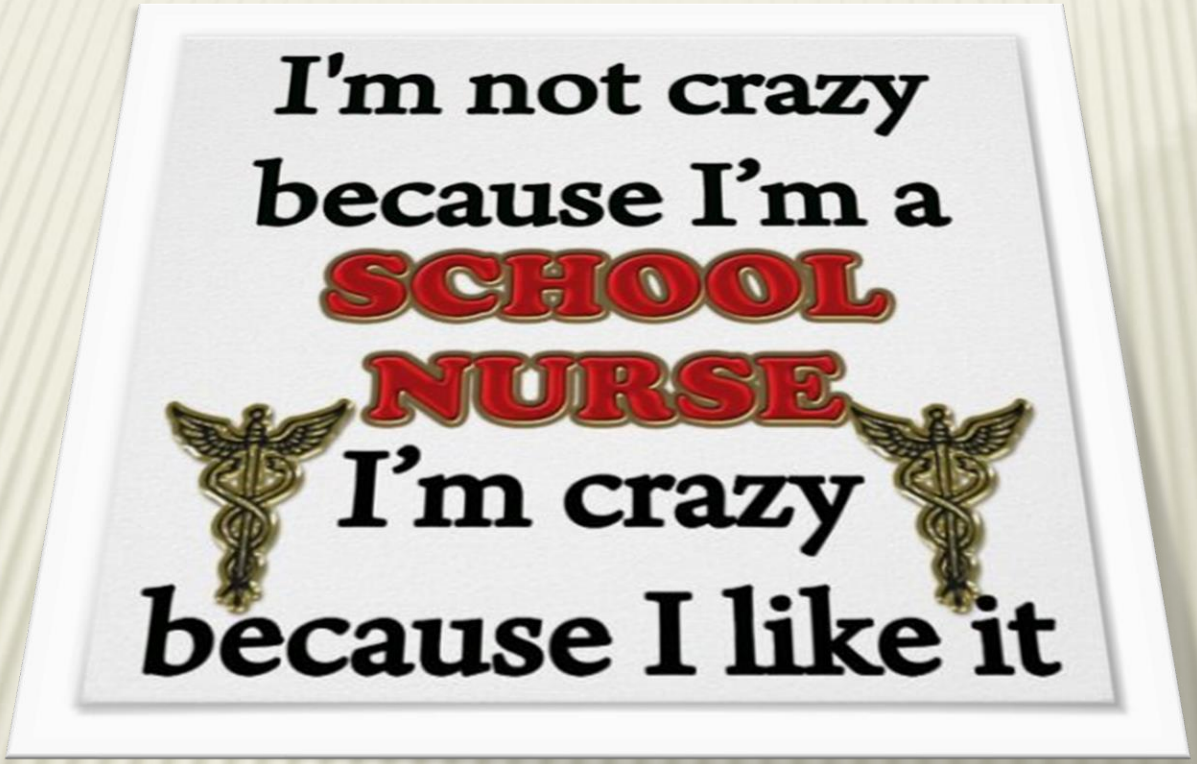
MAKE JUST ONE CHANGE:

- Get a full nights sleep most nights (7-9 hrs);
- Regular Physical Movement
- Select healthy nutrition
- Practice yoga or meditation
- Schedule some quiet time (without your cell);
- Stay hydrated;
- Play with family and friends;
- Reduce caffeine and alcohol;
- Give back to your community.

BEGIN YOUR HEALING

- Recognize the signs and symptoms in yourself (listen to your spouse, partner, children, friends)
- Recognize the signs and symptoms in a colleague or friend, and find the courage to talk with them
- Seek advice from a colleague or supervisor
- Talk with your family physician
- Seek the guidance and advice of a counselor (EAP or private)

ARE YOU SIMPLY “CRAZY”?

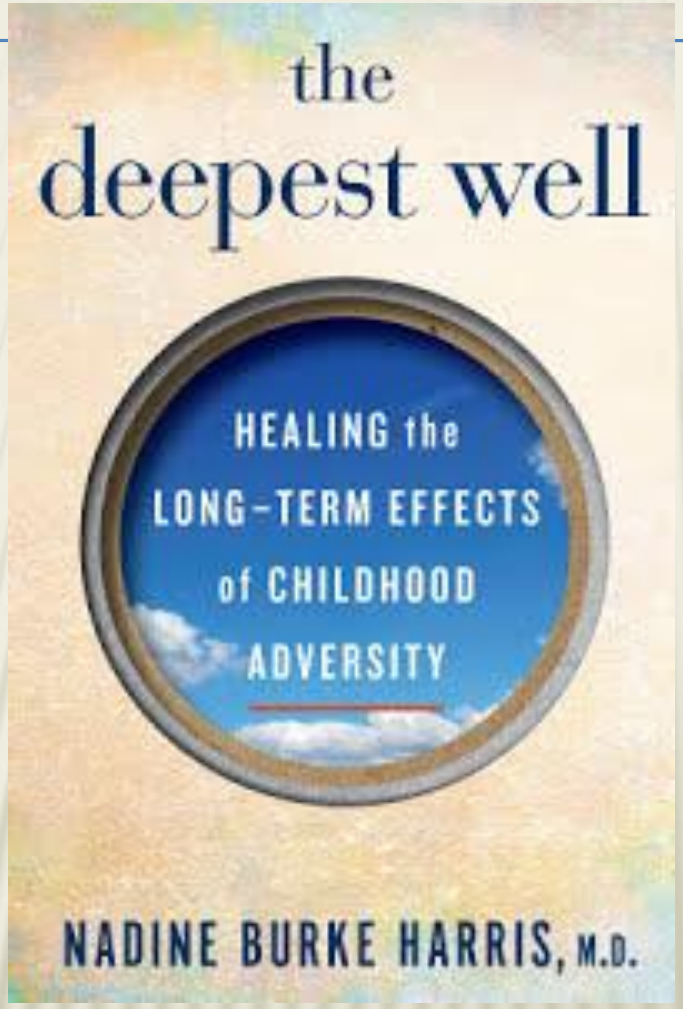


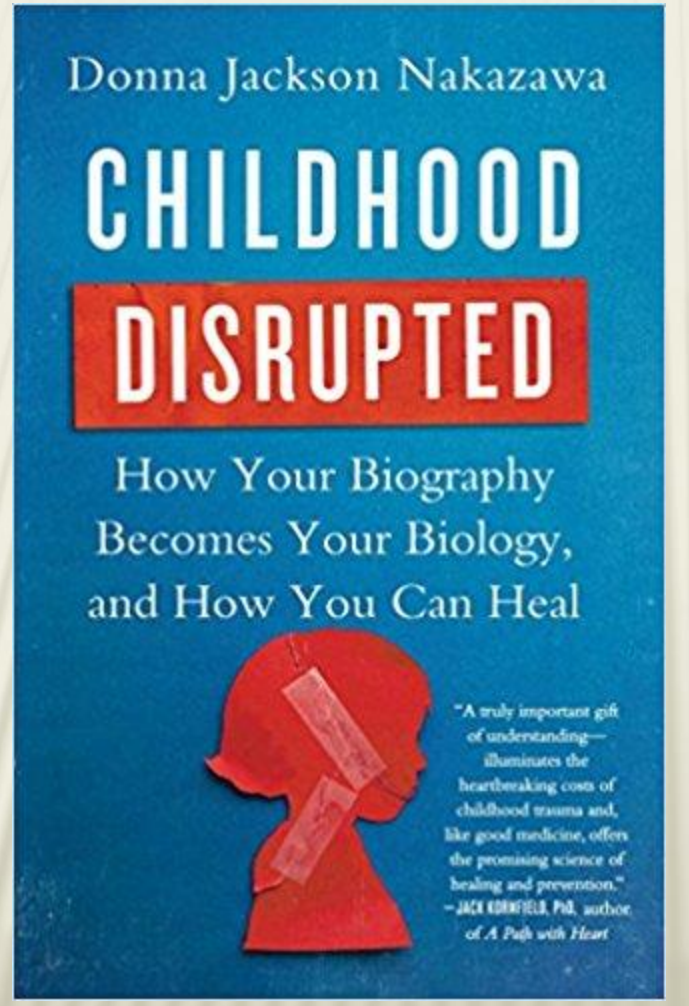
IT'S YOU…

AND THEN THERE ARE THOSE DAYS…

"Sure! I don't mind if you come to **school** with a fever and your throwing up everywhere." Said no school nurse ever!

Further resources for you to consider:


the
deepest well
HEALING the
LONG-TERM EFFECTS
of CHILDHOOD
ADVERSITY
NADINE BURKE HARRIS, M.D.


Donna Jackson Nakazawa
CHILDHOOD
DISRUPTED
How Your Biography
Becomes Your Biology,
and How You Can Heal
"A truly important gift
of understanding—
illuminates the
heartbreaking costs of
childhood trauma and,
like good medicine, offers
the promising science of
healing and prevention."
–JACK KORNFIELD, PhD, author
of A Path with Heart

AS A SCHOOL NURSE

By prioritizing your physical, mental, and emotional health, you can ensure you remain an effective caregiver and role model within your school communities.

Implementing practical self-care strategies and creating a supportive work environment can help each of you to maintain your health and wellness while providing the best possible care for the students, staff and families.

THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU DO WITH A SMILE…USUALLY.

George Scott, EdS, LMFT

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and

Minding Our Children

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