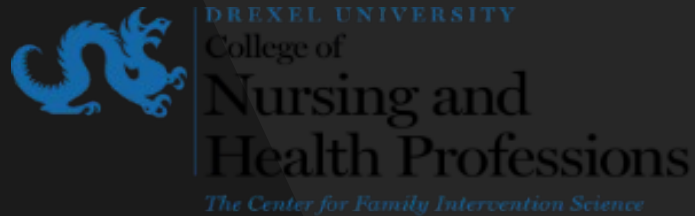


Attachment-Based Family Therapy: Repairing the Secure Base



Conflicts of Interest Disclosure



- Dr. Guy Diamond has received funding from the National Institute of Mental Health, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, royalties from *Attachment-Based Family Therapy* (ABFT; 2014) book sales and honoraria for ABFT trainings and supervision. He derives some salary from the revenue from the training center.

Center for Family Intervention Science ABFT Training Program

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 - www.ABFTtraining.com
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 - Gary Diamond's Research: <http://www.bgupsychotherapyresearch.org/>
 - Follow us on Twitter @ABFTtraining and Youtube
 - ABFT Belgium Training Center: <https://ppw.kuleuven.be/ogop/abft>

Why Include Parents

Nature and nurture interact to shape the development of children and adolescents.

Children and adolescent still highly dependent on and impacted by their family environment: no child is an island!

Family's can provide support when youth are in distress:

- A secure base for comfort, support and protection

Family discord can be a driver of suicide risk

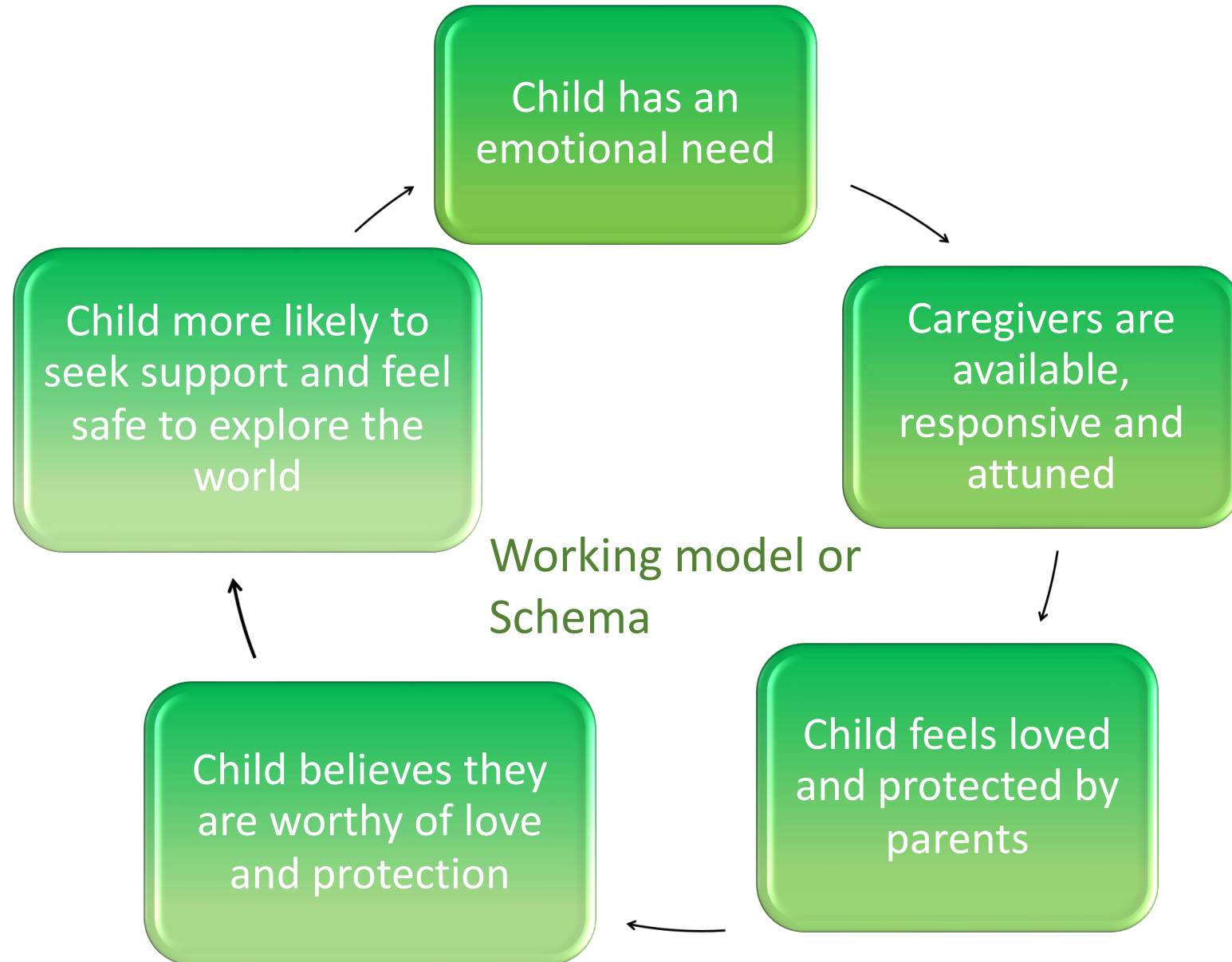
- Divorce, marital distress, parental psychopathology, negative parenting, etc.

Family as Essential Safety Net



Families are not the cause: They are the medicine

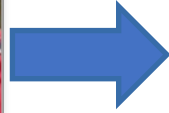
Secure Attachment



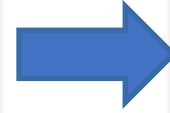
Development of Emotion Regulation



Attachment Need Activated



Turn to parent for protection



Child's fears are calmed

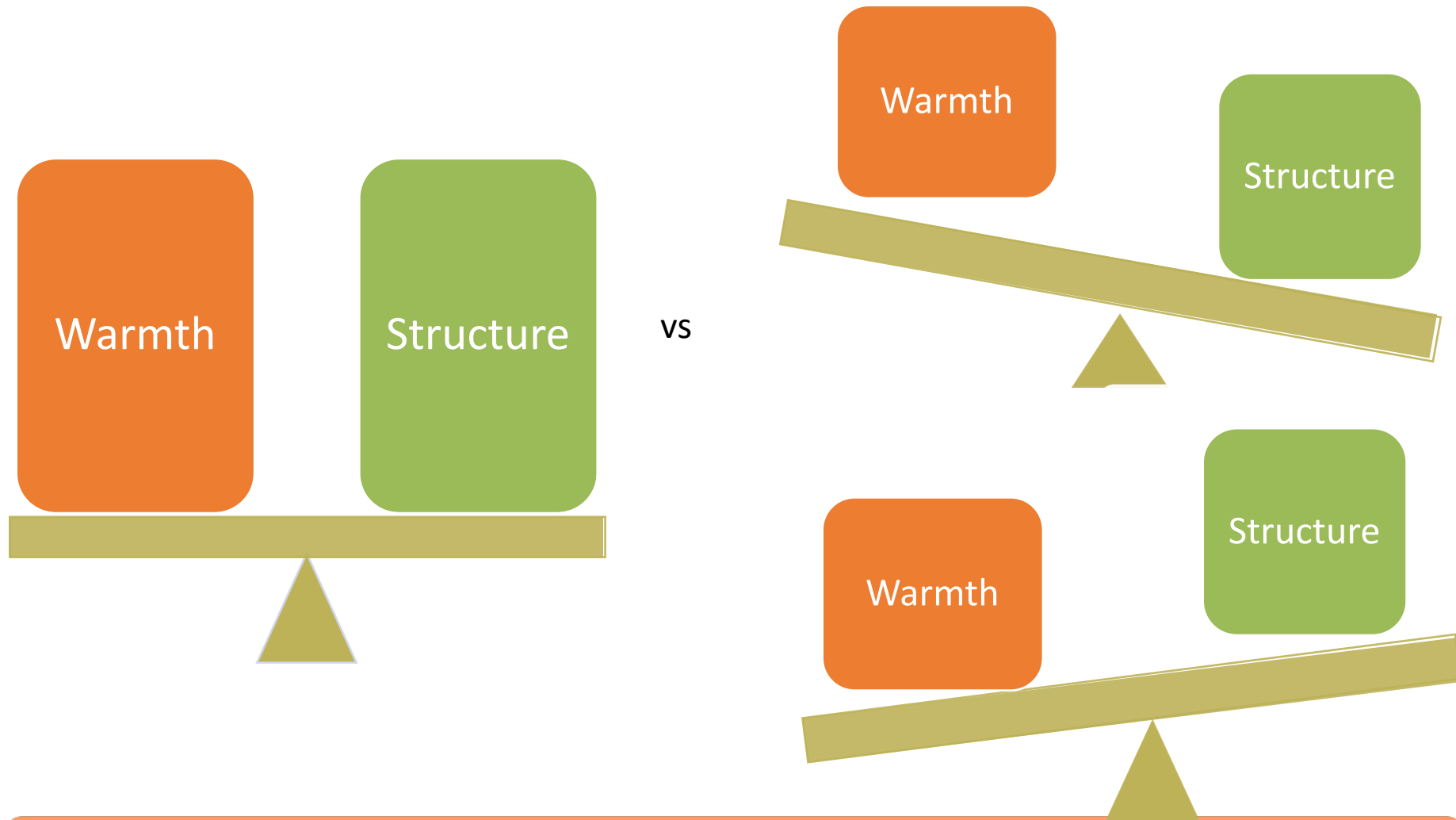
Over time



Self-soothing internalized

Authoritative Parenting

(Baumrind, 1989)



Cross cultural support: contextual modifications (e.g., urban, low SES)

Empirical Support

ABFT has shown to be effective with depressed and/or suicidal adolescents in 6 studies



Promising Practices Network:
Proven practice

NREPP: Effective for depression and
suicidal ideation

ABFT 5 Tasks



Task I: Relational Reframe



Task II: Adolescent Alliance

Task III: Parent Alliance



Five Tasks of ABFT

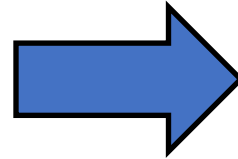
Task IV: Repairing Attachment Ruptures



Task V: Promoting Autonomy

Task 1: Relational Reframe

Goal



Shift from patient as the problem to family relationships as the solution

Task 1: Relational Reframe



GOAL

Defining question of ABFT

- *“When you are feeling so sad or afraid, why don’t you go to your parents support?”*

Focuses therapy on relational trust instead of behavior management | fabric instead of

Task 1: Relational Reframe

Task



**Establish a treatment contract:
Relationship repair**

Family Safety Planning

- Help parents with means restriction in the home
- Help parents think about when, how and for how long to monitor the patient
 - Swaddling for more severe cases
- Psycho education about how best to handle suicide concerns
 - Seek to help parents' manage their reactivity
- Help adolescent create a safety plan
 - How can the parents help with making and carrying out the plan.
 - Use the safety planning as a family intervention.
- Therapist
 - 24 hour hot line
 - Two sessions a week

Task 2: Alliance with Adolescent

Bond

Meet alone with the adolescent

Alliance with adolescent



Exploring the Suicide Narrative

01

Telling Details of the worst events

- Identifying triggers
- Leaning into the deepest dread

02

Sorting out diffused emotional distress

- Developing an emotional vocabulary
- Identifying reasons for suicide

03

Exploring thwarted belongingness and interpersonal burden

04

Linking suicidal despair to family conflicts

- Identifying attachment ruptures and disappointments

Convince adolescent to talk with parents



Increase entitlement to have a voice
Teach interpersonal problem solving
emotional regulation

Task 3: Alliance with Caregiver

Bond

Meet alone with the caregiver(s)

**Current stressor
Intergenerational
legacy**



Task 3: Improving reflective functioning



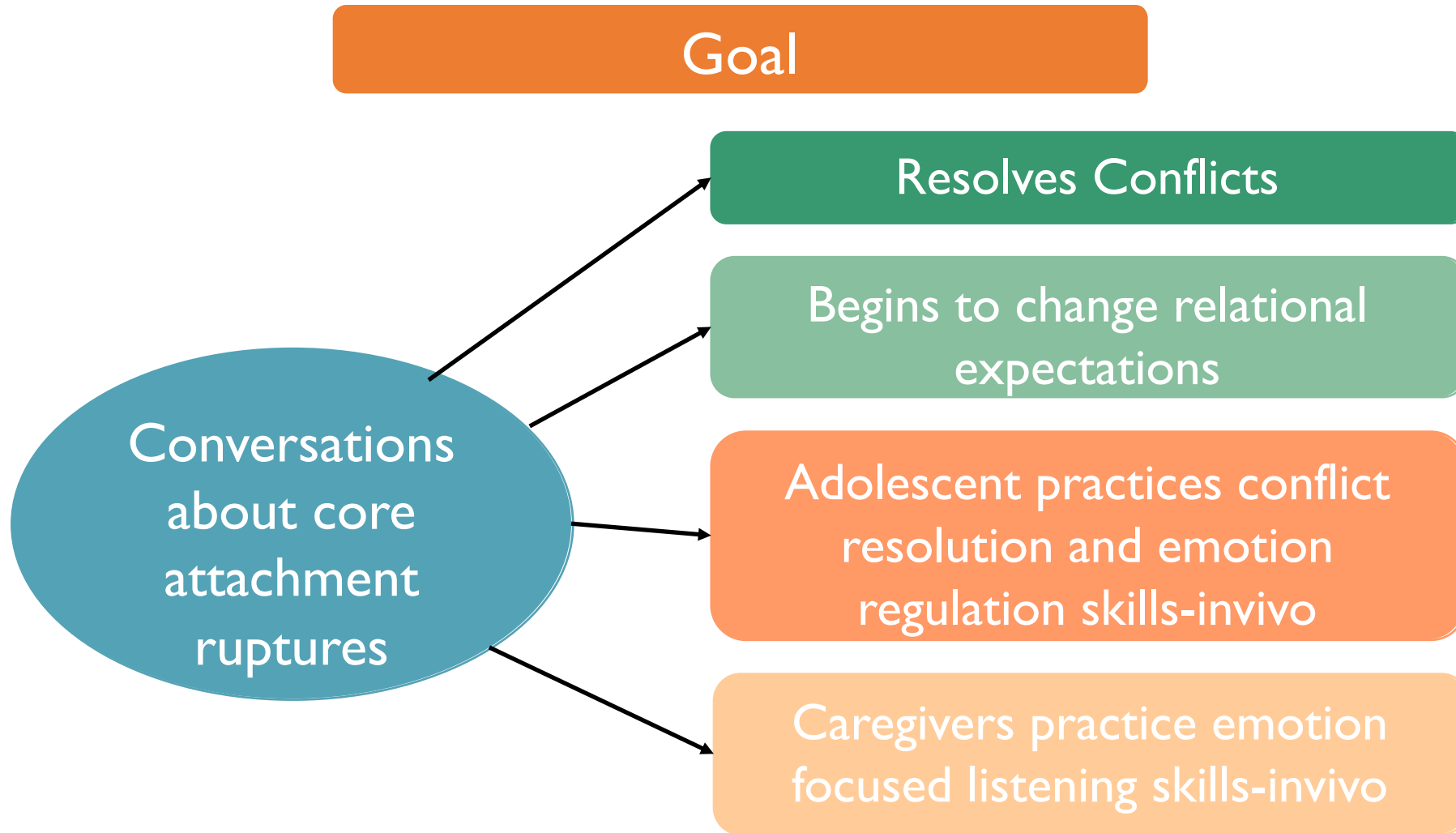
Emotion coaching skills

Task 4: Attachment Task

Process



Task 4: Attachment Task



Task 5: Family's Suicide Safety Net

Goal

Share with caregivers the
suicide narrative

Caregivers
assist *with*
suicide
monitoring

Caregivers
check in daily
on suicide
distress



Expanding the ABFT footprint

Adolescent and young adults LGBTQ patients struggling with suicide

- Gary Diamond, Jody Russon

Younger children with anxiety

- Guy Bosmans

Adolescent with Bulimia

- Stephanie Manasse

Adolescents exposed to domestic violence

- Allie King

Healthy LGBTQ young adults looking to repair relationships with parents

Gary Diamond

ABFT on inpatient and residential settings

- Barbara Nosal, [Ilse Devacht](#)

ABFT
Training
Program
(www.drexel.edu/abft)

- Level I
 - Two-Part Introductory Workshop
(March 16 -31, 2023)
- Level II
 - 22 Supervision sessions
 - Advanced Workshop
- Level III
 - 10 tape review and adherence ratings
- Supervisor and Trainer Training for organizations

Closing Statements



ABFT is about relationship building not behavior management!

When everyone is responsible for change, adolescent feels less pathologized

Using family conversation as the in vivo practice of new emotional and interpersonal skills