

Relationships Are the Key

BARBARA STROUD, PHD
ZERO TO THREE FELLOW
INAUGURAL PRESIDENT CALAIMH 2107-2019
IFECMH ENDORSEMENT MENTOR LEVEL
DrBarbaraStroud.com



DRBARBARASTROUD.COM



Relationships are the Key

In Early Development

- Relationships influence brain architecture
- Relationships build the stress recovery system
- Relationships teach family culture and emotional understanding
- Relationships fuel self-esteem and moral development
- Relationships are the tool for learning





Key to Supportive Relationships

In this Relationship I Feel – Safe, Seen, Heard, & Helped



Trust



Identity



Validation



Self Calming



Safety

Safety in relationships becomes the foundation of trust

- Can I trust you to protect and not harm me?
- Can I trust myself to connect with others who are safe?
- Can you protect me when my emotions and thoughts frighten me?

Who will love me and stay in relationship with me when I am my worst self?

Who loves me unconditionally – expecting appropriate behavioral responses to maintain safety in our relationship, with the understanding that I will, at times respond from my survival brain





Safety Stands on Theory

Erik Erikson's developmental stage – Trust vs. Mistrust

Foundational to Mary Ainsworth's concept of Secure Attachment

Steven Porges' concept of Neuroception – safety/threat assessment necessary for survival

Reliable adults bring safety

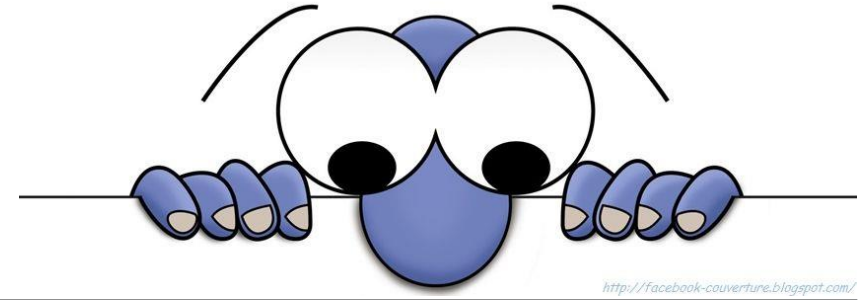
Nonjudgmental responses create acceptance

Emotionally well regulated adults facilitate trust





I See You



We come to know ourselves by the way other see us

My self-esteem is highly influenced by early nurturing relationships

- **Heart Messages** – These are ideas planted by loved ones early in development, that influence our self understanding and over time continue to define our actions and internal identity

Do I have to be less than my true self, to be in this relationship?

- Who must I be, and how must I behave, to be seen and accepted by you?

Do you see and accept my feelings, even the ones you may not like?

Do you see me through the lens of a label (disability, diagnosis, behavior problem)



Can You See Through My Eyes

Acceptance of the child's experience

- My truth can be different from your experience

Acceptance is not agreement

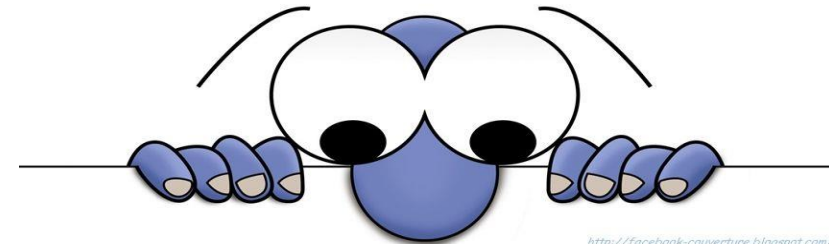
- I can accept and honor your feelings even when I have a different experience

Honoring the cultural story, experiences of microaggressions and explicit or implicit bias

- Discrimination negatively impacts our health and mental health

Do you see my untapped potential?

<https://globalnews.ca/news/5382584/unconscious-bias-shakil-choudhury/>



<http://facebook-couverture.blogspot.com/>



Do You Hear My Truth

What is said vs. what is heard

My story is not always pretty and some adults do not want me to speak of my trauma

Do you hear me when I try to show you my feelings through my behavior?

Can you make me feel heard by validating my story, repeating back what you think I said, and allowing me to correct you if needed?

We know that sharing the pain of a trauma story brings healing – I need you to be my witness





Hearing is not Solution Focused

Listening from the understanding that you cannot fix my trauma

Witnessing and supporting my emotions in the telling of my story is healing

Holding my emotions when they feel too overwhelming is healing

And making it safe for me to stop sharing or be confused about my experience is healing

Sometimes I need to be in control as my trauma was out of my control





Help is Here

Help is not fixing but supporting skill building

Facilitation of developmental mastery

What do you need to emotionally recover?

How will we respond differently next time?





Relationships are the Key

Across the Life Span

- Relationships that bring joy support health outcomes
- Relationships provide emotional resources in the face of adversity
- Relationships protect our brain
- Relationships of support increase longevity
- Relationships assist in overcoming trauma
- Relationships last beyond death





BARBARA STROUD
TRAINING AND CONSULTATION



DrBarbaraStroud.com



Barbara Stroud Training



dr.stroud



Dr. Barbara Stroud