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# TIDES: Merging Trauma Informed Care and Desistance in Probation Supervision

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# TIDES

Trauma Informed **DES**istance  
Supervision Model

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A holistic approach in supporting marginalized individuals on their pathways to change.





# MICHAEL: A CASE STUDY

- 30 years old. Father of a young boy. Currently separated from his partner due to long-standing No Contact Order
- Numerous convictions for interpersonal violence against his partner
- Incarcerated after violating his probation for failing to complete IPV programming multiple times
- Extensive history of substance misuse
- Maintained employment prior to incarceration.



# AN RNR LENS

## **Adherence to The Risk Principle:**

- Although Michael is being supervised for an Interpersonal Violence Offense (IPV) offense, he does have some pro-social family support and a history of stable employment. He scores moderate/high in the domains of Criminal Thinking and Substance Misuse but is not deemed to be a "High Risk" client via traditional RNR risk/need scales.

## **Adherence to The Needs Principle:**

- His case plan consist of targeting the domains of anti-social cognitions and substance misuse. He is ordered to attend a cognitive based IPV program, and his sobriety is measured via random drug test.

## **Adherence to The Responsivity Principle:**

- General Responsivity is being addressed by means of his cognitive based IPV programming.
- Specific Responsivity is being addressed by collaborating with Michael as to his individual traits and his trauma background.



The background of the slide is decorated with several interlocking puzzle pieces of various shades of gray, scattered across the frame. The title is centered in the upper half of the slide.

# MICHAEL'S EXPERIENCE WITH RNR

- Despite the best efforts of his Probation Officer, Michael struggles on supervision. He continues to use drugs and makes repeated attempts to see his son, violating the no contact order.
- He failed multiple times to complete his court ordered IPV programming requirements.
- What is missing from this well established RNR approach to helping Michael succeed on supervision and desist from a life of crime?



# What's Missing from RNR?



Neuroscience Awareness



Trauma Informed Care



Desistance

**The TIDES Theoretical Perspectives**





Neuroscience:

Deals with the  
*structure or function*  
of the nervous  
system  
and the brain





# Our Brains are Experience Dependent

The experiences of the individual  
are the moderator for brain  
development.



# Infrastructure and Connection

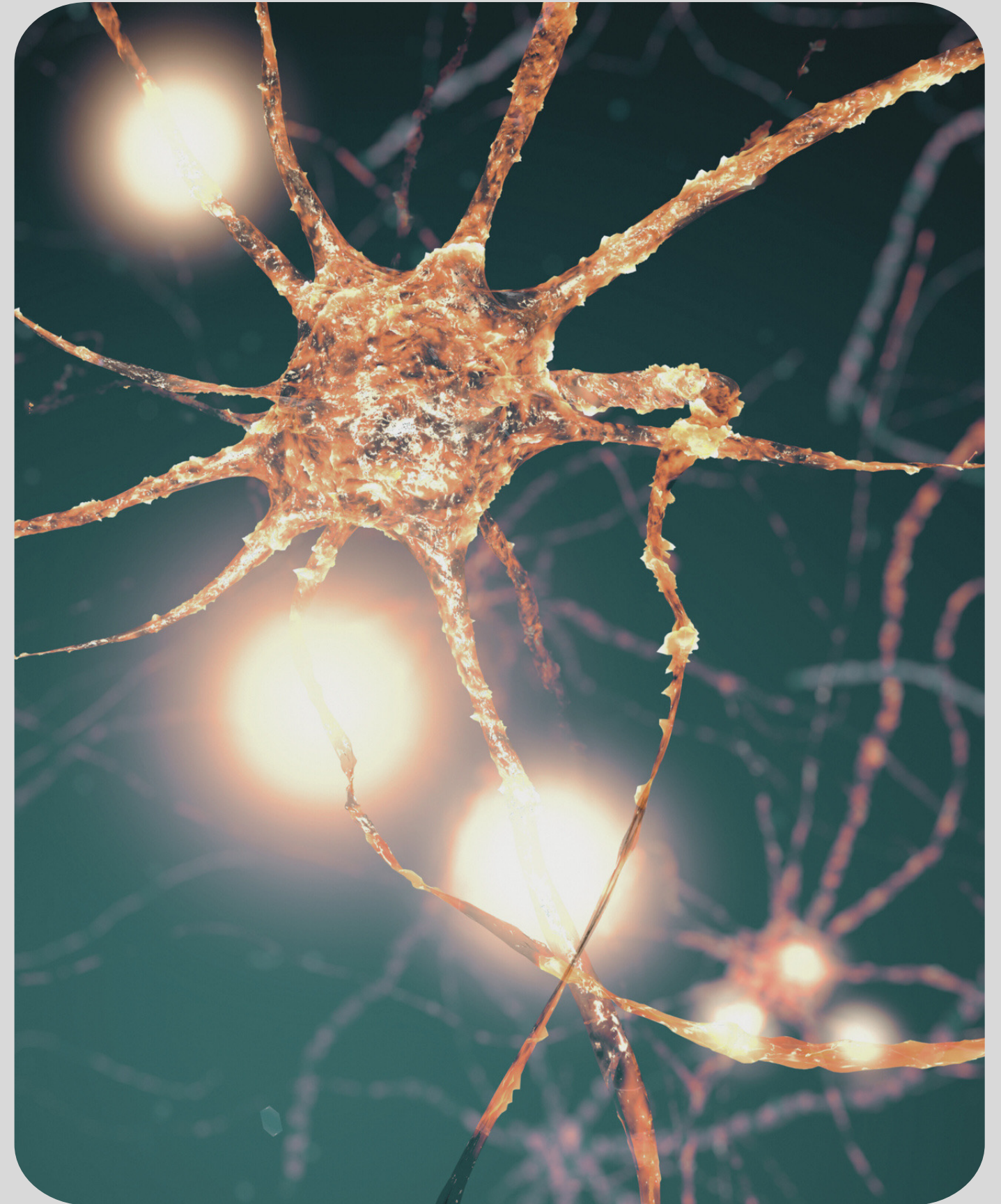
- Our brain's primary job is to ensure our survival
- If you grow up in a threatening space, majority of connections are in the brain stem--survival responses
- The limbic system learns to be on high alert
- Less accessibility to the pre-frontal cortex
- **Neural Connections:** super highways versus country roads



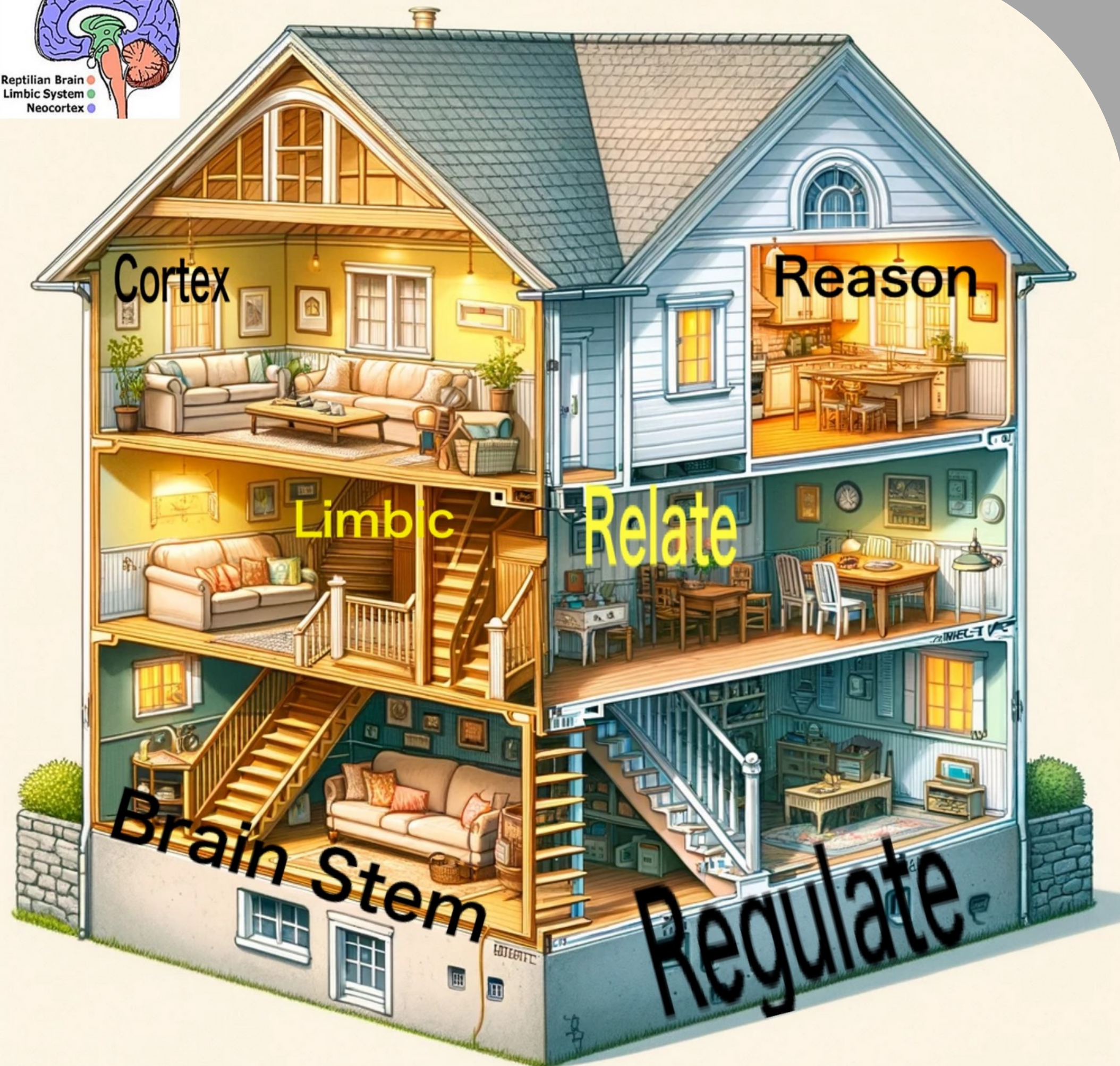
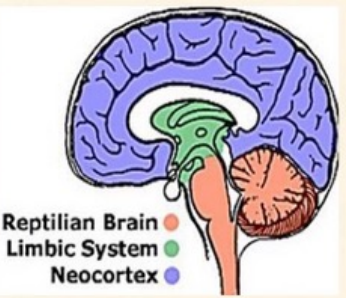


# We can Create new Pathways

Neuro-Plasticity: The capacity of  
the brain to learn from  
experience.







# Brain Mapping:

From the basement, to  
the first floor, to the  
penthouse

Source: Dr. Bruce Perry, Neurosequential Network



# The TIDES Theoretical Perspectives



Neuroscience Awareness



Trauma Informed Care



Desistance





Trauma refers to both the event AND the experience of an event that overwhelms individuals and communities with lasting effects.

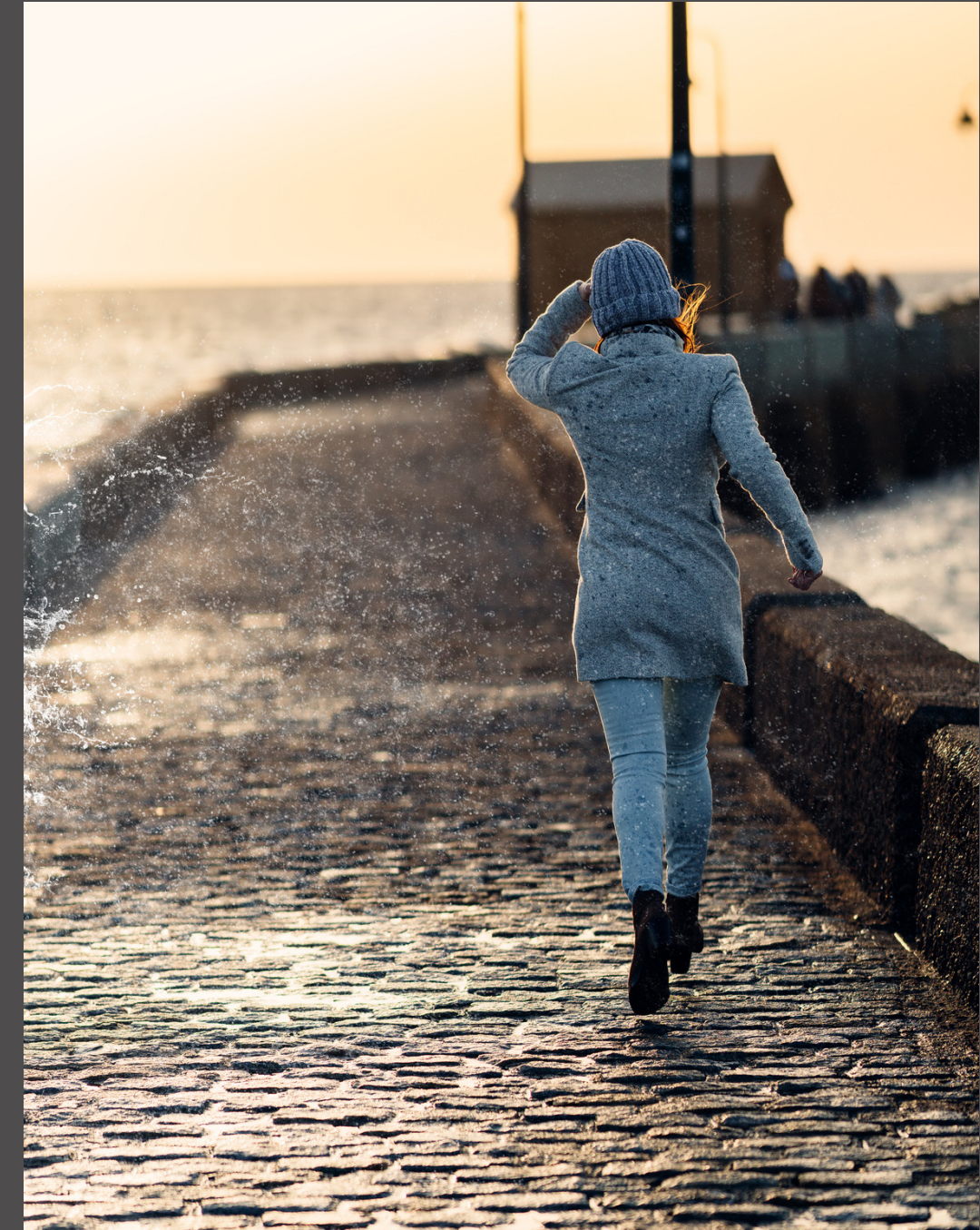
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A Definition of Trauma



Fight.  
Flight.  
Freeze.  
Fawn.

**Threat  
perceptions**  
trigger normal,  
adaptive trauma  
reactions intended  
to help us survive







# When our Adaptive Reactions are Unsuccessful....

These adaptive states become maladaptive traits.

We experience feelings of fear, helplessness, and powerlessness.

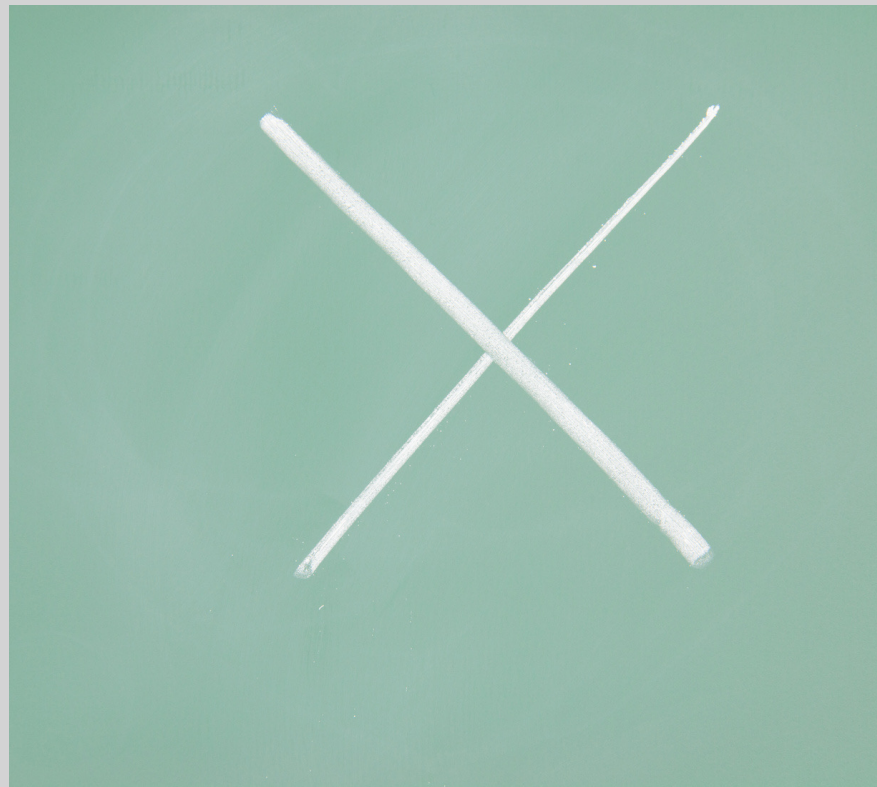
This results in a lasting inability to cope impacting our health, relationships, and behavior.

We continue to react as if we are still in danger.



# A Shift in Perspective

HM Inspectorate of Probation 2022



What is wrong with you?



What happened to you?



How do we do this differently for you?





# SHIFTING OUR PERSPECTIVES: THE TIDES APPROACH

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Anti-Social Thinking OR  
Reactive Thinking





# WHAT DO WE TELL OUR CLIENTS?

You have learned behaviors and patterns of anti-social thinking.

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Your thinking controls your behavior.

---

Changing your thinking will result in new behavior.

---



# WHAT DO THEY HEAR?

There is something wrong with my family, neighborhood, and upbringing.

---

There is something wrong with me.

---

There is something wrong with the way I think.

---







# NOW WHAT DO WE TELL OUR CLIENTS?

Your brain learned strategies that have helped you survive.

---

You can recognize and regulate your present reactions.

---

You can choose to respond in ways that align with who you want to be.

---



# WHAT DO THEY HEAR?

There is no judgment or shame in survival.

---

I can learn to live in the present rather than react to the past.

---

The future can be different because I have the ability to change.

---





# The TIDES Theoretical Perspectives



Neuroscience Awareness



Trauma Informed Care



Desistance





# DESISTANCE DEFINED

## **The Process**

A gradual process in which individuals shift their perceptions of themselves and their criminal behavior resulting in a cessation of criminal acts and moving away from a criminal lifestyle and peers.



"Supporting desistance requires an expanded conception of evidence based practice. Yes 'what works' matters but so does HOW and WHY people change and sustain change."

Fergus McNeill







## **Primary Desistance:**

Behavioral (Act focused)



## **Secondary Desistance:**

Identity Transformation



## **Tertiary Desistance:**

Relational (Community  
Acceptance)





# SHIFTING OUR PERSPECTIVES: THE TIDES APPROACH

Changing Behavior OR

Changing Identity



# CHANGING BEHAVIOR

- Survival behaviors are reinforced by condemnation scripts
- Focus on **condemnation scripts** is a dysregulating experience (in the Basement)
- Clients become overwhelmed and REACT
- Short term compliance





- Focusing on **redemption scripts** builds a sense of hope and agency
- Clients are regulated (in the Penthouse)
- Motivation to change behavior based on a new sense of self
- Identity transformation leads to long-term, sustainable behavior change



# CHANGING IDENTITY



# The Four Pillars of Change in TIDES

## Self-Regulation

- Emotional Recognition and Regulation
- Restructuring Reactive Thinking

## Resilience

- Building internal characteristics and strengths
- Restoring relationships

## Identity

- Becoming the author of our stories
- Developing agency and self-efficacy

## Social Support

- Engaging with external resources
- Fostering engagement and acceptance





## Michael's Challenges with Self-Regulation (What we see):

- Impulsive
- Resistant (refused IPV programming)
- Used verbal and physical aggression to keep others away
- Easily overwhelmed in intimate relationships. Someone getting too close was perceived as threatening





# What they Experience

- A Dysregulated Nervous System
- Elevated arousal levels causing them to be hypervigilant to perceived threats
- Autonomic nervous system reactions of fight, flight, freeze and fawn are easily triggered (in the Basement!)
- The need to calm these internal, chaotic states



# 1. Self-Regulation

## A Definition

- An experience of being present and in control
- **Calming the survival reaction**
- Improving our ability to respond to adversity
- Managing our thoughts and feelings so we act in ways that help us meet our goals







## A Dysregulated Response

- Emotional and Reactive (the Basement)
- Filtered by past experiences of threat
- An unsafe experience
- Enlist survival behaviors



## A Regulated Response

- Access to the frontal cortex (the Penthouse)
- Focused on the present
- Reflect a sense of agency and self-efficacy



# The Four Pillars of Change in TIDES

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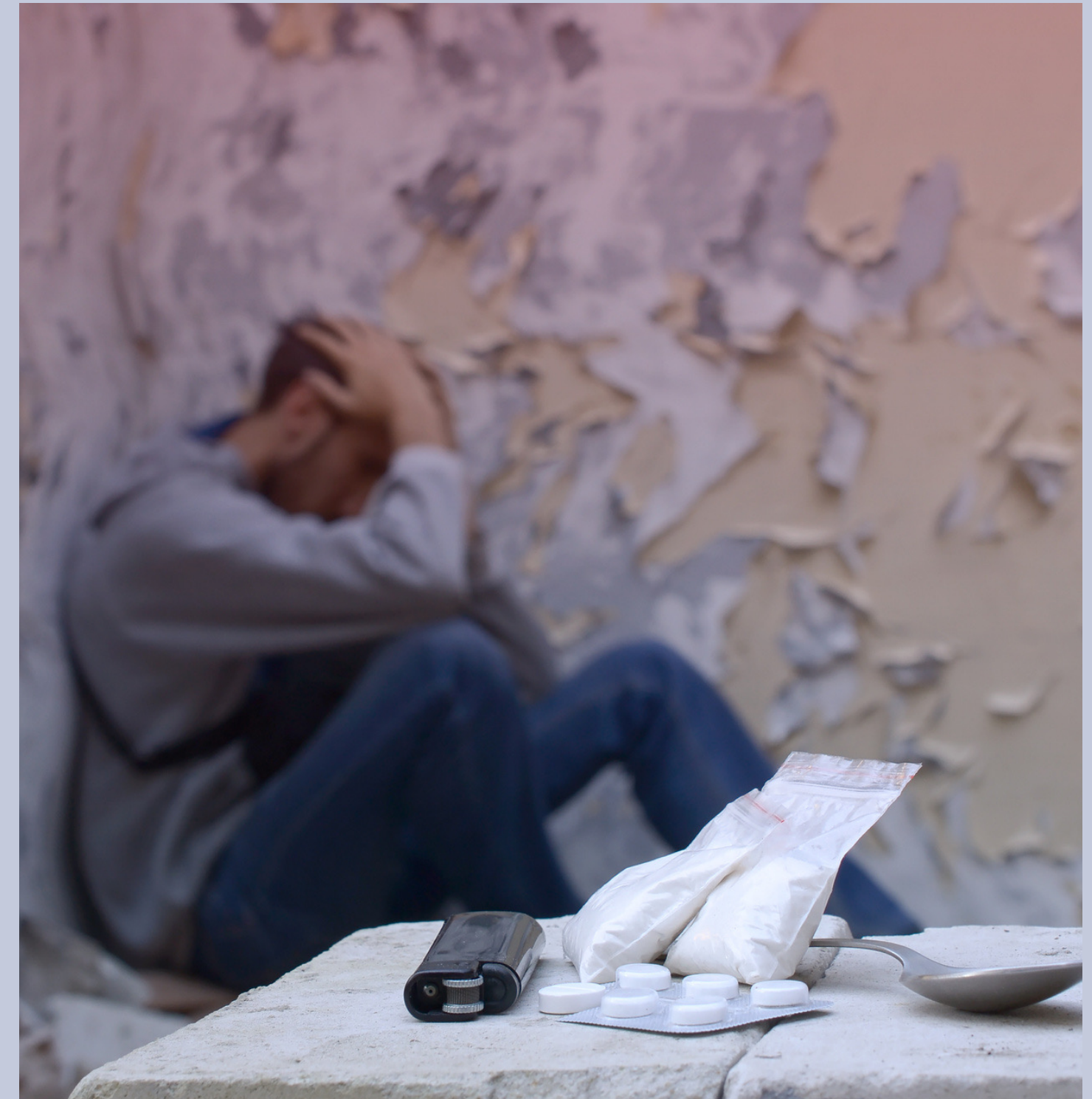
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# MICHAEL'S IDENTITY: DOOMED TO DEVIANCE

- Witnessed IPV and experienced abuse as a child
- Now sees himself as the violent, abusive, addicted father he grew up with. The man he never wanted to be.
- With the issuance of the No Contact Order and subsequent convictions his condemnation scripts were reinforced, aggravating his substance abuse.





A Definition

## 2. Identity



How you see  
yourself



How others  
label you



How you label  
yourself



# The Need for Identity Transformation

- Trauma overwhelms individuals and disconnects us from our very identity
- We feel unsafe in our own bodies
- We are unable to recognize our emotions and are disconnected from our thoughts
- We are defined by what we have done or experienced rather than who we are

Renewing a Sense of Self





# The Role of Identity in Desistance

- The importance of identity in desistance lies in the process of "re-storying" or **narrative transformation**.
- Shadd Maruna's work on the "redemption script" highlights the transformative power of reconstructing one's life story from that of a "fallen" criminal to a "redeemed" individual.
- This process involves challenging and reframing the dominant narrative of being a "criminal" and developing a new identity that aligns with pro-social values and roles.





# The Four Pillars of Change in TIDES

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# MICHAEL'S INABILITY TO "BOUNCE BACK"

- Michael identified his son as the most important person in his life.
- When he was no longer allowed contact Michael "spiraled" and his substance misuse increased dramatically.
- Michael identified substance use as his only way of "coping" when life got tough.
- Michael struggled to recognize and manage his emotions and became more and more reactive and violent in response to stressful or overwhelming situations.





# 3. Resilience

## The Harvard Center for the Developing Child: A Definition

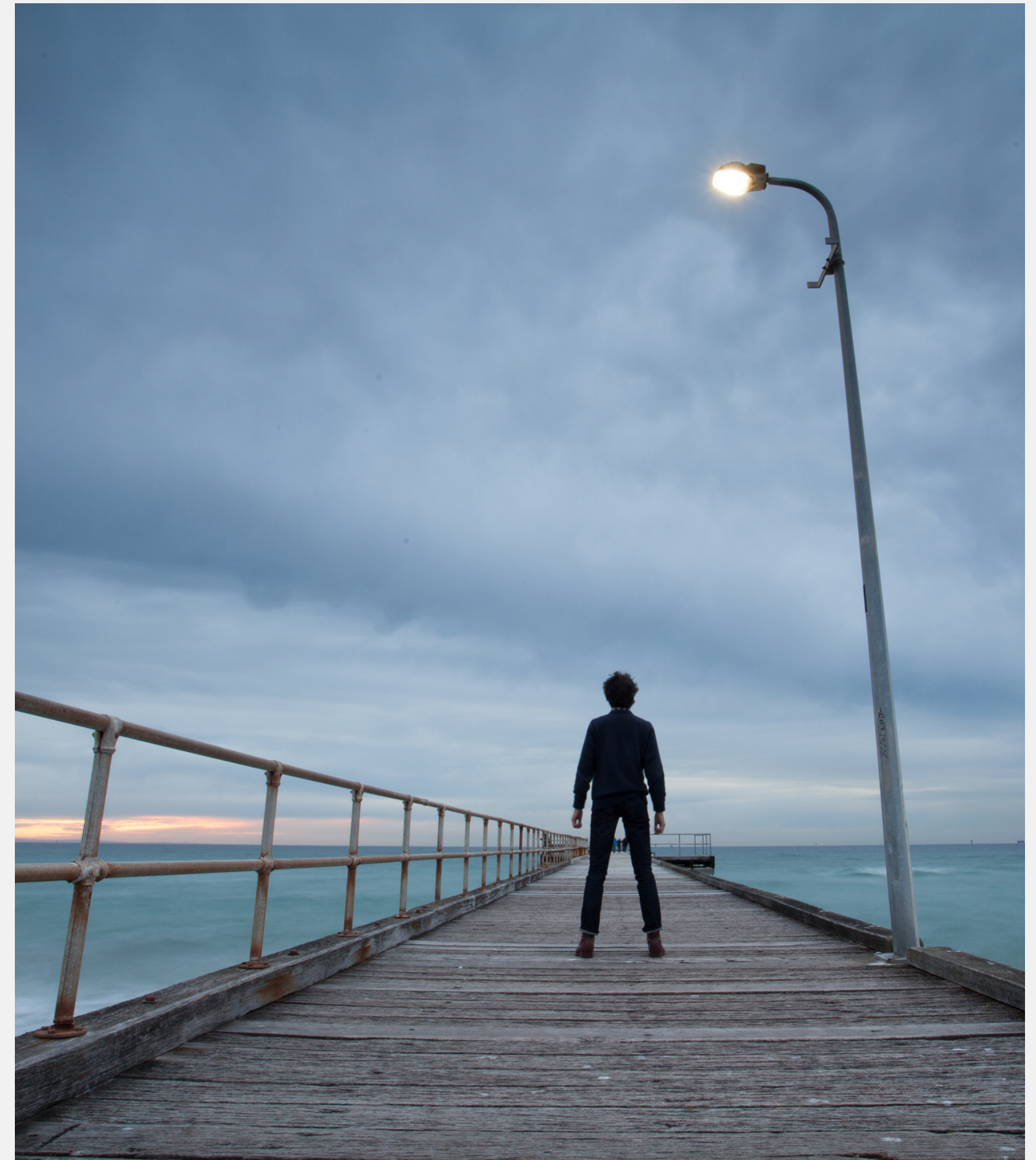
- A positive, adaptive response in the face of extreme adversity or trauma
- It is the interaction of biology and experience that builds our ability to cope with and overcome adversity



# BARRIERS TO RESILIENCE

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- Experiences of trauma and extreme adversity negatively impact the structure of our brain and access to our pre-frontal cortex (The Penthouse!)
- This inhibits our ability to develop adaptive coping skills
- We struggle to form secure attachments to others when we are simply trying to survive





A photograph of a small, young tree with green leaves growing out of a large, dark, jagged rock formation. The tree's roots are visible, spreading out over the rock. The background is a cloudy sky.

# Building Resilience

- Facilitate consistent experiences of safety and regulation
- Reinforce internal strengths and develop adaptive coping skills including cognitive flexibility, self-compassion, and perspective taking
- Provide opportunities to build secure relationships



# The Four Pillars of Change in TIDES

## Self-Regulation

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# MICHAEL'S SOCIAL SUPPORT

- Michael lost his primary social support (his partner and child) when the No Contact order was issued.
- Michael was shunned by most of his family due to his violent behavior.
- Michael lost his job and the connections with his coworkers following his incarceration.



# 4.Social Support

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- Opportunities for change
- Community recognition of individual change and renewed sense of self
- Finding Acceptance





# The Ties that Bind:

The connections that bind us into relations with other people are both mutually supportive and mutually constraining.

"If I am committed to my family, committed to my children, I have a greater stake in avoiding issues with the legal system, that may threaten my relationship with my partner, or my children."

--Fergus McNeill





# Trauma Interferes With Our Ability To Connect to Others:

- Experiences of Shame
- Labeling and Dehumanization
- Isolation and a lack of belonging

## Living Among Aliens







Brad Bogue, The Criminologist Podcast, 8/28/21.

"It's the biggest moderator in all psycho-social treatment. It doesn't matter whether people are there for phobias, their there for depression, it doesn't matter what. The biggest factor that moderates the outcome, irrespective of the intervention, is **SOCIAL SUPPORT**.

People that have good social support do better...and people that don't, don't."



# THE DOMINO EFFECT OF THE TIDES APPROACH

- A Greater Return on your Investment
- Super-charge your Interventions
- A Culmulative Impact






# THE TIDES COMPASS:

Meaningful, trauma informed interactions facilitating desistance from crime

- **Regulate and Relate:** Essential to a successful outcome for any intervention is access to the Penthouse. Our goal is to ensure a regulated response and authentic connections with clients.
- **Reason:** When a client is regulated, we can collaboratively work to identify areas of change and set goals within the context of one of the TIDES pillars: Self-Regulation, Identity, Resiliency, and Social Support.
- **Intervene:** Cognitive behavioral interventions delivered from a trauma informed perspective will be more effective in increasing desistance from a criminal lifestyle.
- **Empower:** An intentional conversation reflecting next steps and hopes for the future.





# Navigating the TIDES Compass

## Regulate and Relate Compass Point:

- Identify possible signs of dysregulation
- What are some strategies that may help this client?






*Take a  
deep  
breath*

## Michael's Experience: Regulate and Relate

- We introduced Michael to several deep breathing exercises.
  - As he developed skills to manage his emotions, he was more engaged in programming and supervision meetings and began to recognize his trauma reminders.
-





# Navigating the TIDES Compass

## Reason Compass Point:

- Collaboratively identify an area of change
- Set a goal using approach language in the context of one of the pillars



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# Michael's Experience: Reason

- With his probation officer, Michael identified his substance use as one area of change he wanted to address.
- His primary motivation was his **identity** as an involved father.








*I want to be the dad  
who shows up at all my  
kid's baseball games.*

Quote from Michael





# Navigating the TIDES Compass

## Intervene Compass Point

- Select an intervention to move your client closer to their goal
- Model and practice the new skill




# Michael's Experience: Intervene

- Michael participated in a trauma informed IPV program that included psycho-educational components that helped him understand the impact of his past experiences of trauma on his current behavior
- We engaged Michael with cognitive behavioral interventions that focused on recognizing and managing his emotions and gave him skills to address overwhelming situations without turning to drug use.







# Navigating the TIDES Compass

## Empower Compass Point

- Agree on next steps
- Identify intrinsic motivation
- Explore hope and agency





# Michael's Experience: Empowerment

- Michael committed to and successfully completed the IPV program and began chemical dependency treatment.
- When this progress was reported to the court the No Contact order was amended to allow supervised visitation with his son.
- Michael was optimistic that he would be allowed to attend his son's baseball games when he finished treatment.



# A TIDES LENS

## **A Complement to RNR**

- The TIDES Supervision Model was created to augment current EBP practices with the belief that incorporating the theories of Neuroscience Awareness, Trauma Informed Care, and Desistance provide essential knowledge that, when applied, will result in better outcomes and lasting change for marginalized and justice impacted individuals.

## **Understand the Pathways In:**

- We encourage professionals to take into consideration the past context and current impacts of trauma and adversity when identifying and addressing dynamic risk factors.

## **Discover the Pathways Out:**

- TIDES takes a strength-based, trauma informed approach in setting goals within the context of the TIDES pillars of change: Self-Regulation, Identity, Resilience, and Social Support. We focus on individual transformation as the means to sustainable change.



Questions or Reflections? AND....



**TIDES**

Trauma Informed **DES**istance  
Supervision Model



Understand the  
Pathways In...  
Discover the  
Pathways Out!



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To find out more: Schedule a free, virtual  
Discovery Session on the TIDES Website at  
<https://thetidesllc.com/> or email us at  
thetidesllc@gmail.com



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Podcast -> "The Criminologist"  
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