



Achieving More Together / Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd

The NAS Post Adoption Training and Development Framework



- These materials have been developed for the National Adoption Service for adoptive families
- Their purpose is to provide a learning and development resource for adopters post placement
- These tools can be used by groups or by individuals.
- There is lots of information in the notes below each slide so it is important to read these too as they provide much more information, and some useful ideas for more reading.

Living with Challenging Behaviour



Learning Outcomes



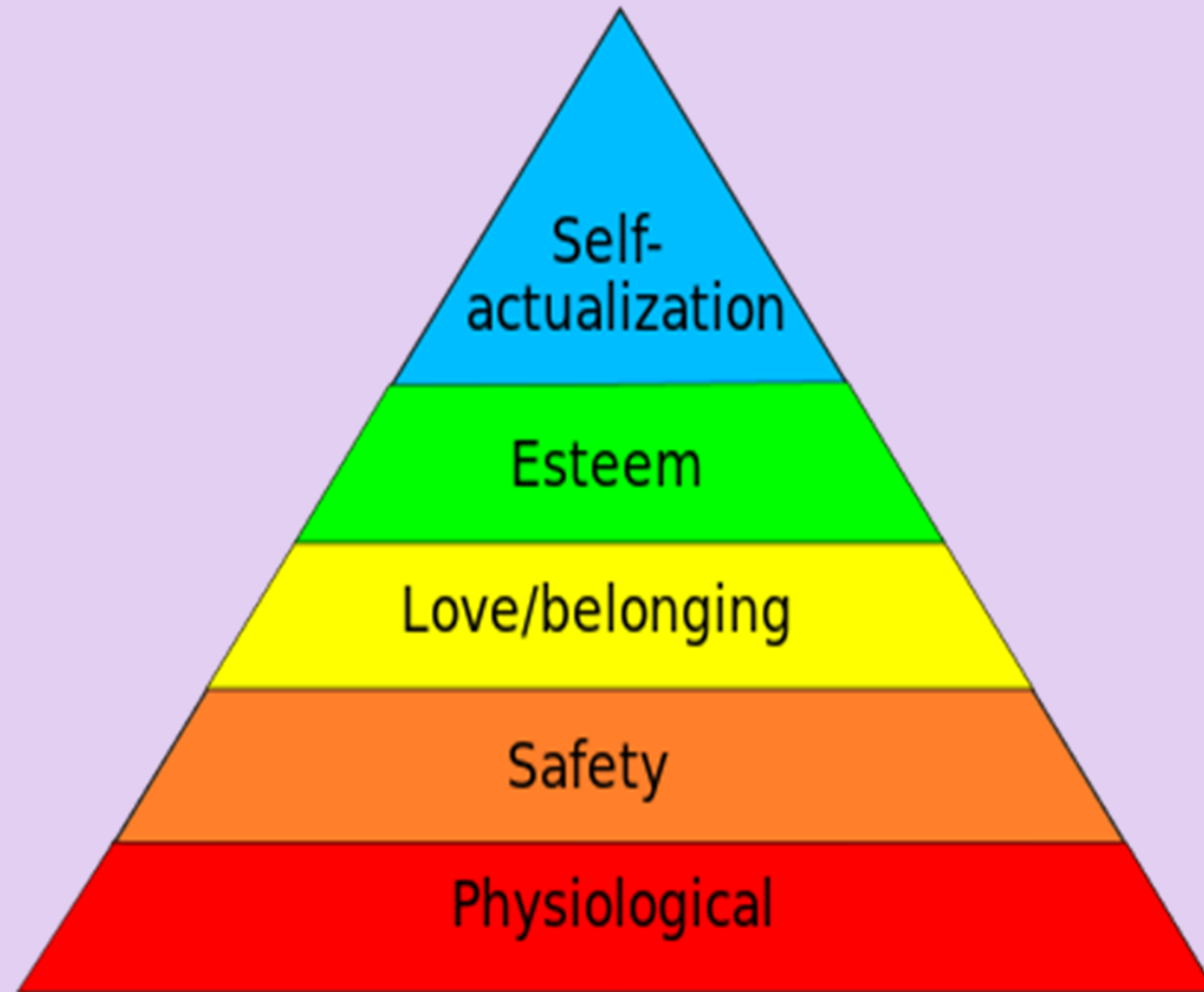
By the end of this course, participants will have:-

- Considered how they define challenging behaviour
- Reflected on the unmet needs beneath challenging behaviours
- Identified a range of strategies to address challenging behaviour

What lies beneath?

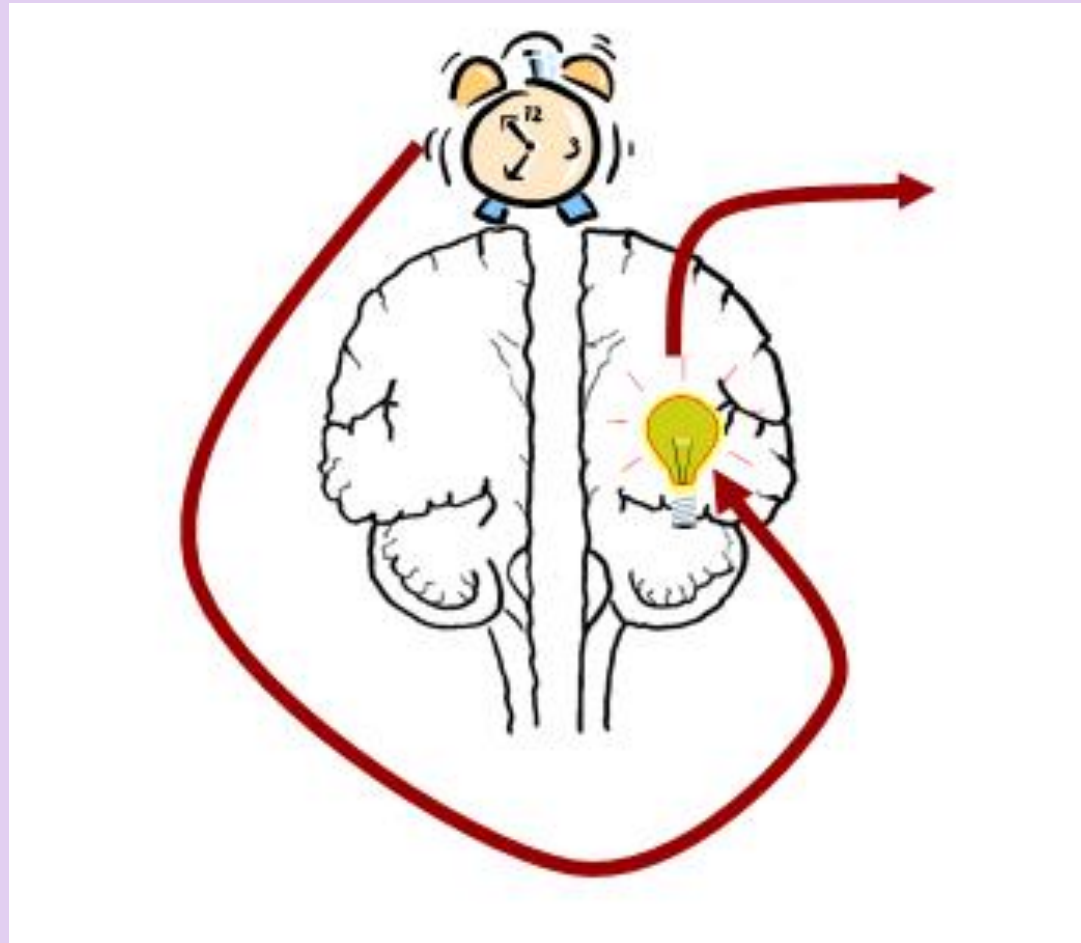


Maslow: Hierarchy of Needs



The trauma response

**By-passes the
left side**



Disconnected Response
Fight
Flight
Freeze

terror
shame
fear

Responses – Approach and avoidance



- The responses to unexpected or inappropriate behaviour are present in both PARENT and CHILD
- The defensive facial ‘look’ and words of the child can be met with the parent’s left brain “I wonder why...” to prevent emotional defensiveness in the parent and to encourage engagement in the child.

Trauma and the fear barrier



- Trauma will cause the child to revert to an age when they experienced early trauma
- A trigger may take the child back to the past trauma
- Bryan Post calls this the 'fear barrier'
- Adolescents may behave like toddlers
- Adults can behave like adolescents
- They will act their emotional age, not their cognitive age or chronological age
- (based on Bryan Post's "The Great Behaviour Breakdown")

Causes of 'anger'

- Bryan Post tells us that what we see as *anger is really fear* which causes dysregulation
- If we don't recognise this children can become frustrated, angry with themselves and then others
- **Fear** arises under stress
- We see it in situations like:
 - Lying
 - Transitions
 - Stealing

Anger is a defence against low self-worth and fear of rejection



Children may:

- Blame others (parents/siblings) but not themselves and become angry with the people they blame
- Reject parent before being rejected
- Be saying by their behaviour “This is how bad I am – will you still love me?”
- Be expressing frustration if things are out of control
- Be using anger to manage difficult feelings – anger blocks sadness

Aggression



Many adopters have first hand experience of their children's *fear* which causes hyper-arousal

We see ...

- parents threatened with knives
- cruel and offensive language
- fights with siblings
- trouble at school
- destruction

Re-parenting strategies

Listen, acknowledge, reflect...then relate and regulate

- Stop and think
- Lower your voice, slow your speech
- Make a physical contact if possible
- Reflect facts and feelings - *match affect*
- Share comfort
- Encourage self soothing
- Make more time later
- Use praise, especially verbal

Re-parenting to avoid confrontation

Provide consistent parenting

Control routines within the household

Use natural and logical consequences

Be positive with instructions

Consider rewards

Build self-esteem

Build trust - allow control within boundaries

Provide comfort to repair relationship

Provide fun, cuddles, and nurture

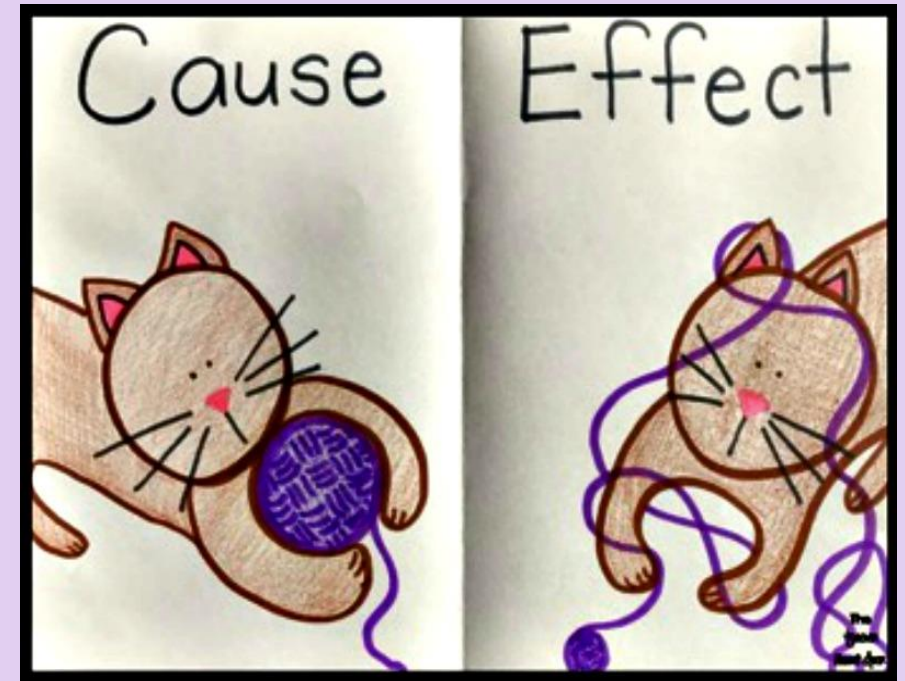
Consequences

- Consequences... not punishment
- Enforceable, reasonable, proportionate
- Natural and logical consequences
- Be aware that a hurt or angry child might see consequences as punitive

Natural and Logical Consequences

Build Cause and Effect Thinking

- Choose your battle
- Offer limited choices
- When Then
(but not if!)
- Give praise with care



Use shock and surprise

- Surprise by over-reacting
- Use the unexpected
- Use humour and unconditional fun
- But don't be false
- Deliver with unconditional love



Bruce Perry's top tips



- Nurture your children
- Try to understand the behaviours before consequences
- Parent your children based on their emotional age
- Be consistent, predictable and repetitive
- Model and teach appropriate social behaviours
- Listen to and talk with your children
- Have realistic expectations of your children
- Be patient with your child's progress and with yourself
- Take care of yourself

- This course is part of a series developed by the National Adoption Service to support adopters after approval.
- These can be accessed at the National Adoption Service website.
- Please talk to your adoption support team for further information