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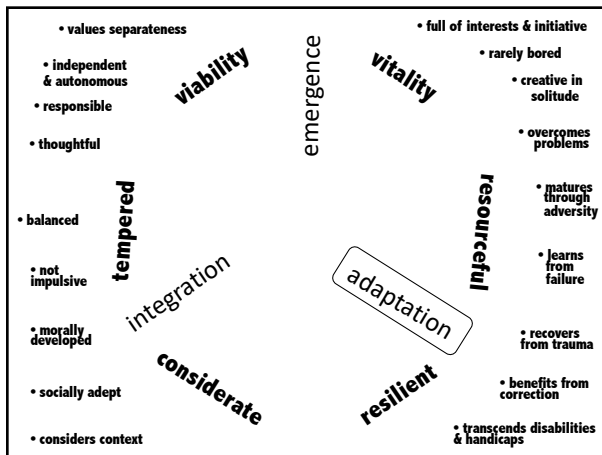
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WHAT IS PURPOSE OF THE  
EMOTION OF FRUSTRATION?

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DEFINING EMOTION

- to be stirred up
  - happens to us as opposed to under our control
  - is irrational although the brain has its reasons
- to be moved to
  - is meant to move us in ways that would serve us
  - creates an action potential that seeks expression
  - how a child is moved reveals how they are stirred up

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EMOTION NEEDS TO  
BE EXPRESSED

EXPRESSION is key to  
preserving  
healthy functioning and  
well-being



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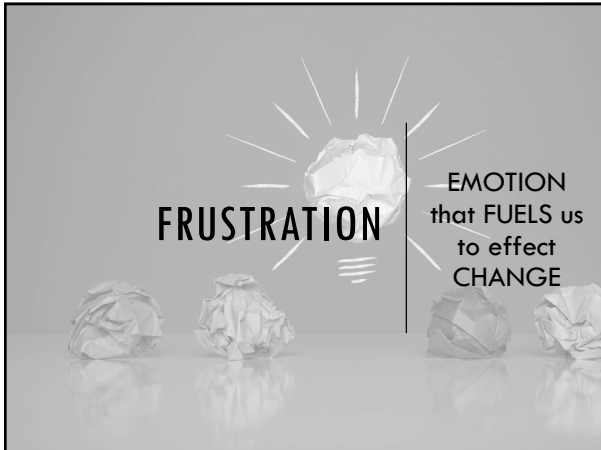
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**Problems with raw and unbridled expression**

a) is **uncivilized**  
- messy & noisy, chaotic & unacceptable, alienating & wounding (most problem behaviour is emotionally fueled)  
  
- hurried adults can easily become prematurely preoccupied with imposing order on the uncivilized behaviour

b) can **threaten** the child's working **attachments**  
- attachment brain can depress emotions that threaten proximity (emotional expression is sacrificed for the sake of attachment)

**CONCERN** - hurried adults who use separation to impose order on uncivilized behaviour are unwittingly tapping into the brain's sacrifice play

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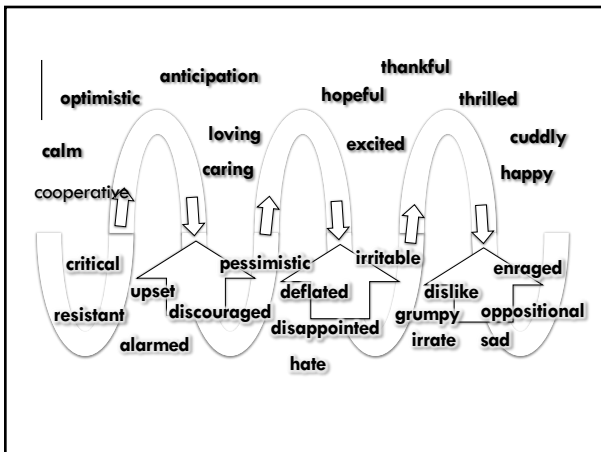
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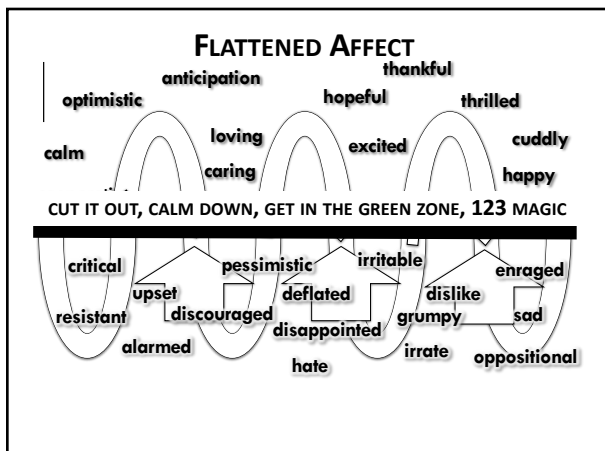
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HOW IS FRUSTRATION RESOLVED?

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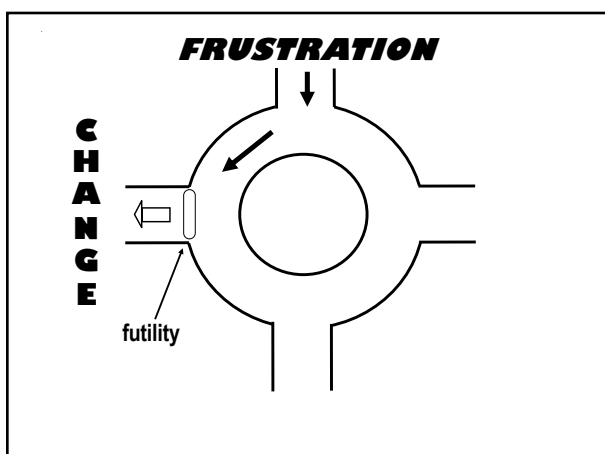
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**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF FRUSTRATION?**  
*Sometimes our **FRUSTRATION** helps us **CHANGE** what doesn't work*

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**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF FRUSTRATION?**  
*Sometimes our **FRUSTRATION** helps us **CHANGE** what doesn't work*

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*Sometimes we are up against things that **CANNOT CHANGE***

↓

*Sometimes **WE** will need to be the one to **CHANGE***

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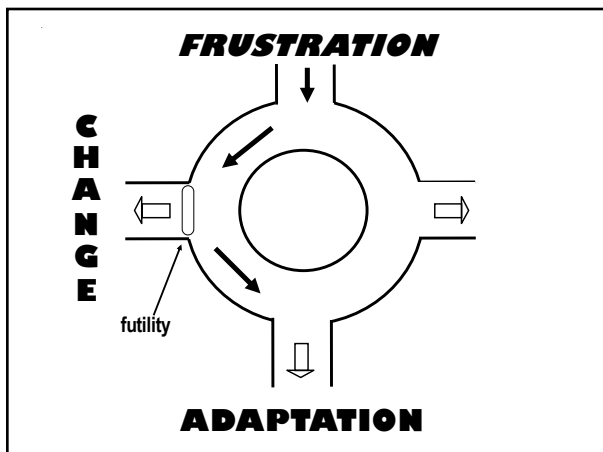
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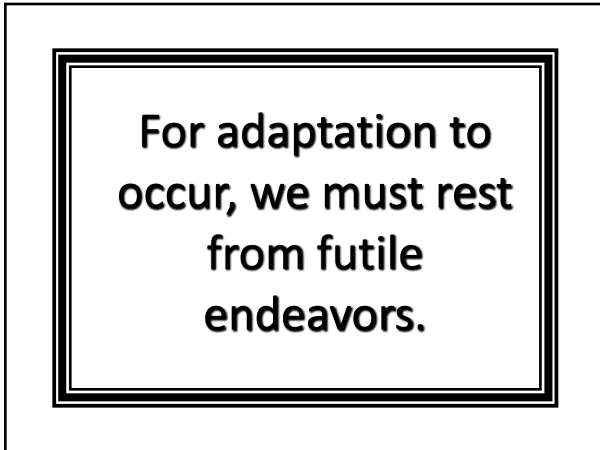
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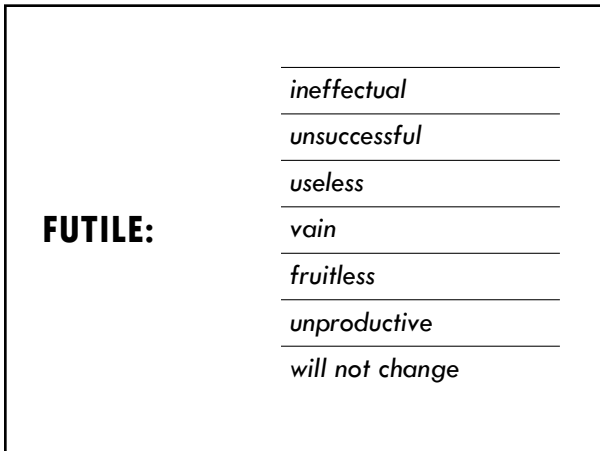
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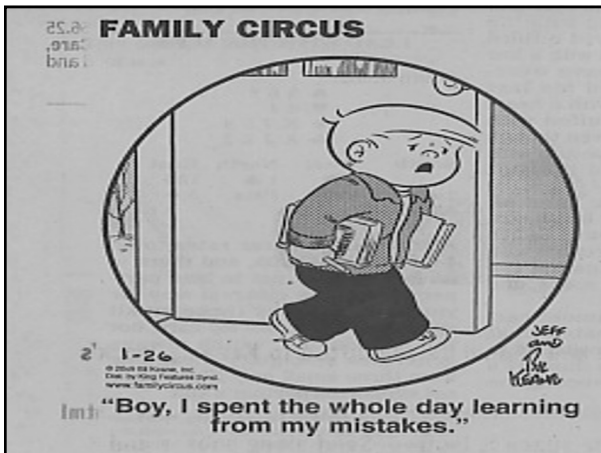
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**List of Common Childhood Futilities**

- holding on to good experiences
- making something work that doesn't
- possessing mummy (or anyone for that matter)
- sending the sibling back from whence he came
- being smarter than one is
- being perfect or avoiding failure
- controlling circumstances or knowing the future
- turning back time or undoing what's been done
- making magic work or defying the laws of nature

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**List of Common Childhood Futilities**

- winning all the time
- being bigger than one is
- being best at everything
- being wanted where one isn't
- controlling another's decisions
- doing anything one wants
- getting one's way all the time
- knowing what's going to happen
- avoiding upset

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**Four kinds of futilities that are the hardest to face**

1. Limits and restrictions
2. The futility of controlling other's actions and decisions
3. Futilities that derive from their own nature
4. The futility of fulfillment (e.g., stemming from loss or lack, or from unfulfilled wishes, wants, needs, desires, agendas, demands, etc)

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HOW DO WE **ADAPT** TO THE THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE?

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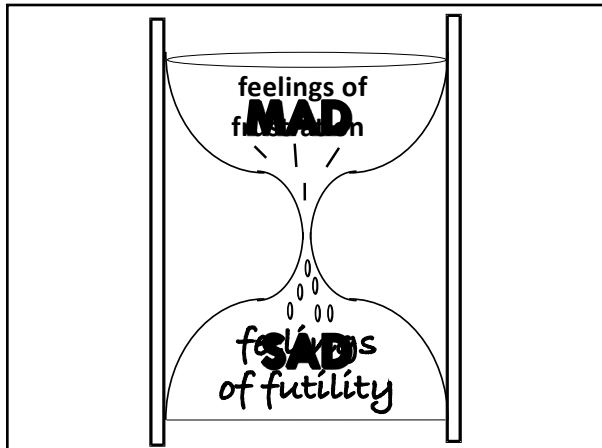
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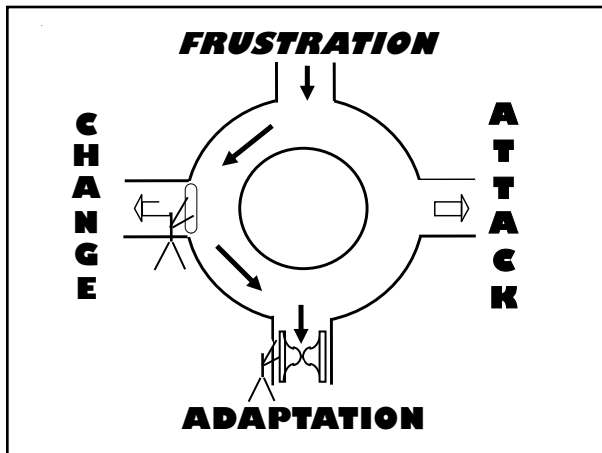
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To be an agent of  
futility and an angel  
of comfort.

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**What do children need from us to adapt to their world?**

- a) very **clear signals** about the realities they need to adapt to (ie, to act as agents of futility providing clear encounters with futility)
- b) a **safe place to cry** and the anticipation as well as experience of comfort (ie, coming alongside their sadness & disappointment)
- c) to be **'held' firmly and gently**, if necessary, in the place of futility until there is nothing left to do but cry
- d) to be **led to the place of tears**, if necessary, or to be helped in finding their tears

*What children don't need from us is to try to talk them out of their upset and tears, or to combat emotion with reason*

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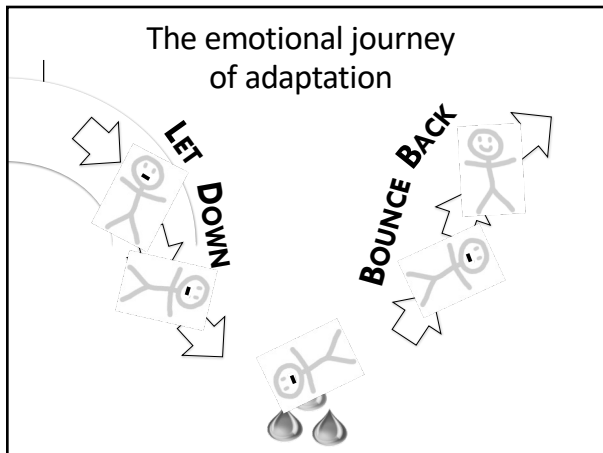
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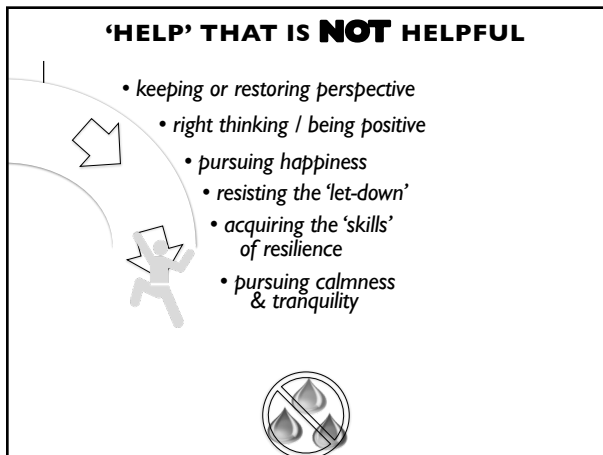
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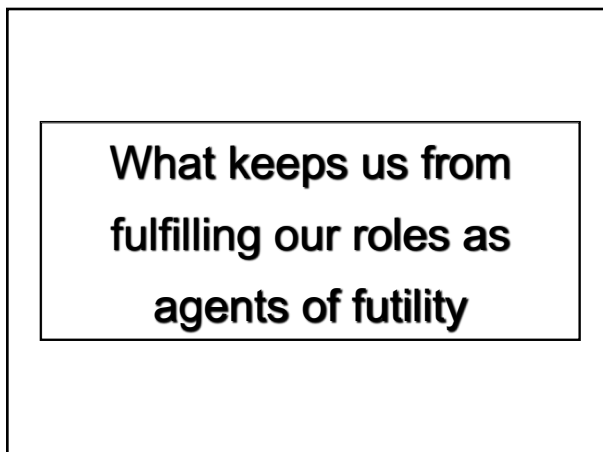
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**REASONS FOR DIFFICULTIES WITH THIS TASK**

1. Unsure of what needs to be done and how to do it
2. Lack of cultural support and wisdom
3. Fear of the child's reactions or child's interpretations.
4. Compulsive need to make things work for the child
5. Over dependence upon reason and the rational approach
6. Lack of sufficient attachment power to do the job
7. Lack of control over the child's world

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**HOW DO WE **ADAPT** TO THE THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE?**

*Through an emotional journey where the **FUTILITY** of what doesn't work is felt in a vulnerable way.*

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**WHAT DO TO WITH FRUSTRATION AND AGGRESSION THEN?**

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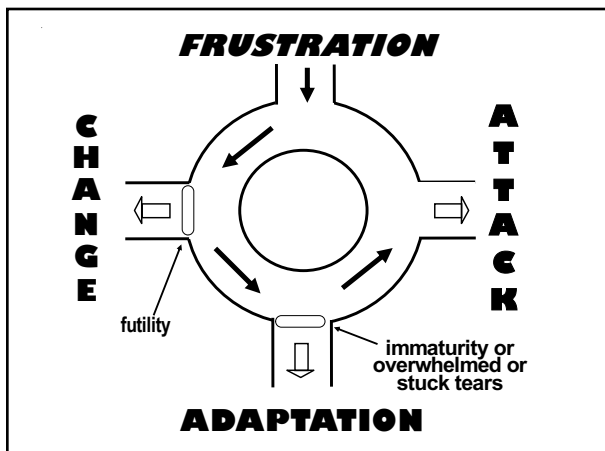
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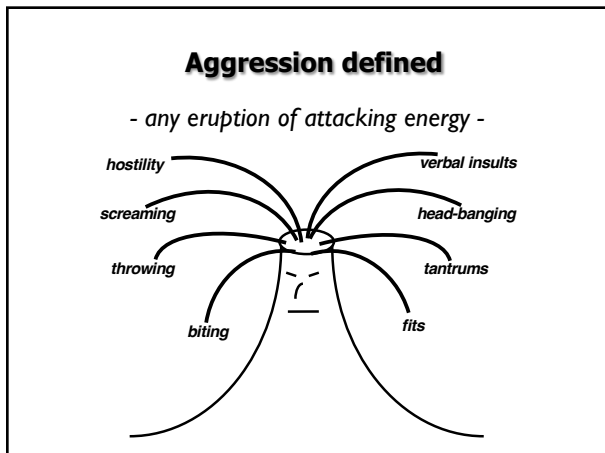
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**RESPONSES THAT BACKFIRE** 

- a) **adding more frustration** (including consequences if they do not lead to tears of futility)
- b) **battling the eruptions** of attacking energy
- c) making **separation** an outcome of aggression

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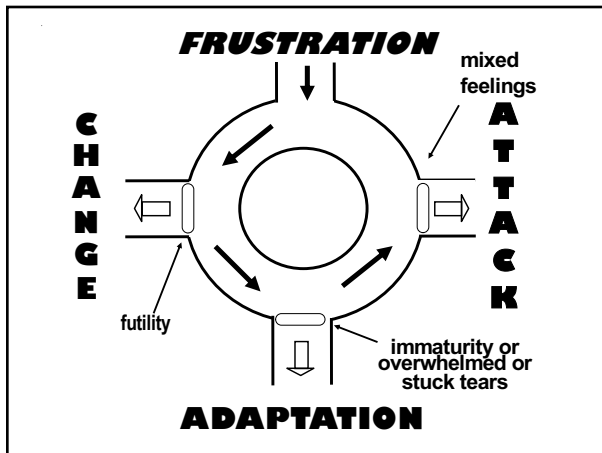
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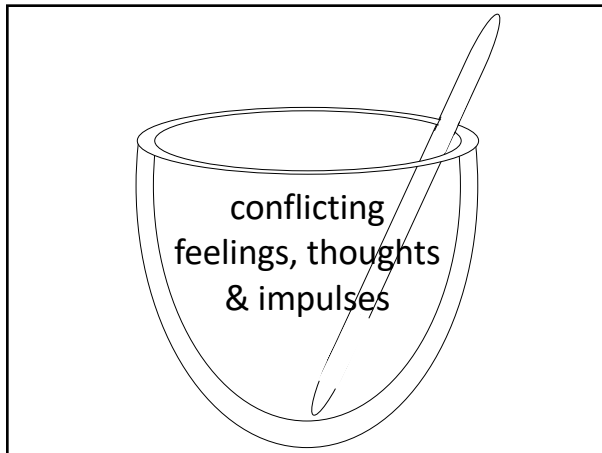
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**Preschoolers lack self control**

Preschoolers register only one feeling or impulse at a time. This makes them impulsive and often focused on the present moment.

**WHY?**  
This is Nature's way, making it as easy as possible for young kids to find their dominant feeling by removing any confusing elements or complicating signals.

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impulses to react & caring about impact = SELF-CONTROL  
frustration & caring feelings = PATIENCE  
fear of the dragon & caring about the treasure = COURAGE  
concern for self & caring for another = CONSIDERATION  
impulses to get even & caring feelings = FORGIVENESS  
limitations & caring enough to make something work = SACRIFICE

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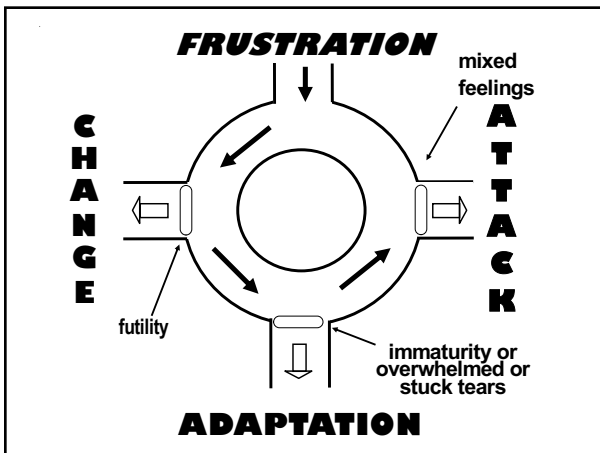
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WHY DO TEARS GET STUCK  
AND WHAT CAN WE DO  
ABOUT IT?

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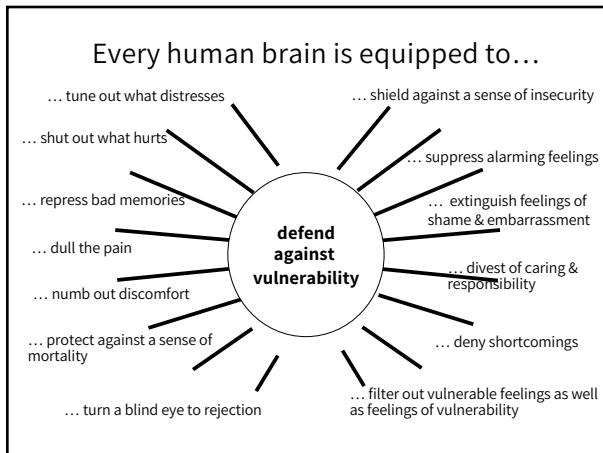
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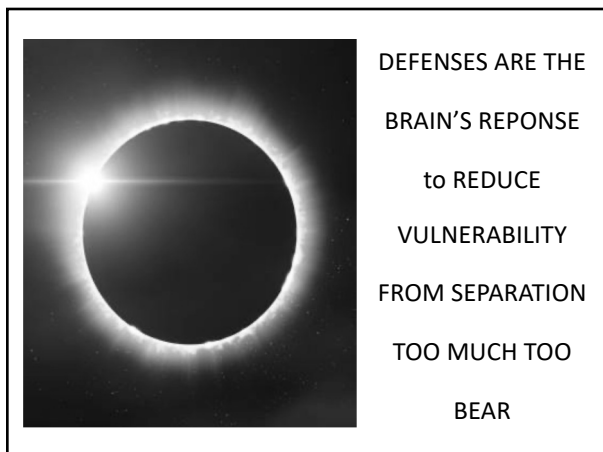
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### WHY DOES THE BRAIN NEED TO REDUCE VULNERABILITY?

- ... Emotional expression has repercussion for relationships
- ... There is work to do that emotion could get in the way of
- ... There is a wounding environment one has to survive
- ... Sensory and emotional overload due to sensitivity
- ... There is a lack of invitation for expression
- ... There are no words for what one feels
- ... There is a lack of shielding that would provide a sense of safety

SETS THE BRAIN UP FOR THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICIAL PLAY ...

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### SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF STUCK TEARS

1. Rigid and perseverating behaviour
2. Failure to learn from consequences
3. Failure to benefit from correction (e.g., mistakes and failures pointed out, feedback regarding errors)
4. Failure to learn from negative experience
5. Easily stuck in behaviour, strategies, patterns or relationships that don't work.

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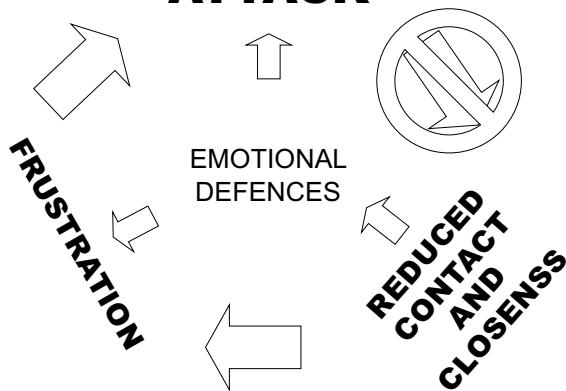
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### ATTACK



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 <b>Depersonalize</b> Depersonalize the attack.	 <b>Focus on</b> Focus on frustration to preserve dignity and come along side.	 <b>Don't identify</b> Don't identify the child with the attacking impulses or behaviour.	 <b>Convey</b> Convey that the relationship can take the weight.
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**AGGRESSION PROOF THE RELATIONSHIP**

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**PROTECT THE RELATIONSHIP**

1. Make the relationship a priority and convey that message
2. Assume responsibility to preserve a sense of connection
3. Bridge what could divide

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**SOFTEN THE EMOTIONAL DEFENSES**

- Patience, insight, and a strong lead in relationship
- Protect the child wherever possible from wounding experiences.
- Create emotional playgrounds (e.g., music, movement etc.), to soften and discharge frustration

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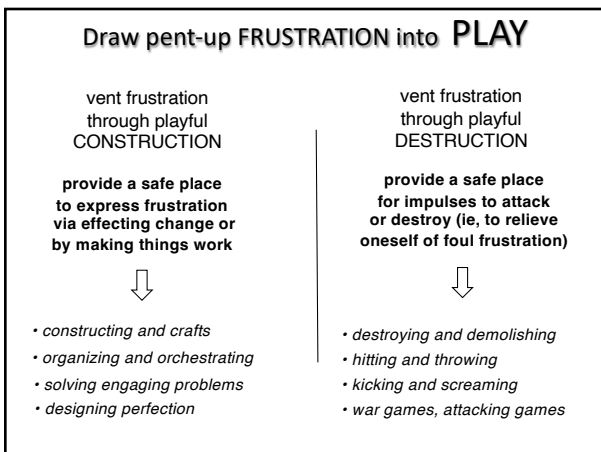
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**Play and the Displacement Principle**

Play should be  
the lightning rod for  
the thunderbolts of aggression.

eg, play fighting, mock aggression, war games, attack games, sword play, attack sports, attacking in fantasy, insult games, as well as attacking energy in art, music, wit, writing and stories

Play, if the stage is set, should naturally and automatically attract any stuck or residual attacking energy

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**WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN TEARS GET STUCK?**

*Preserve our relationship,  
ensure we are not a source of  
wounding, and melt their  
defenses with warmth.*

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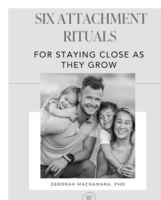
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**Deborah MacNamara, PhD**  
Clinical Counsellor, Educator, Author

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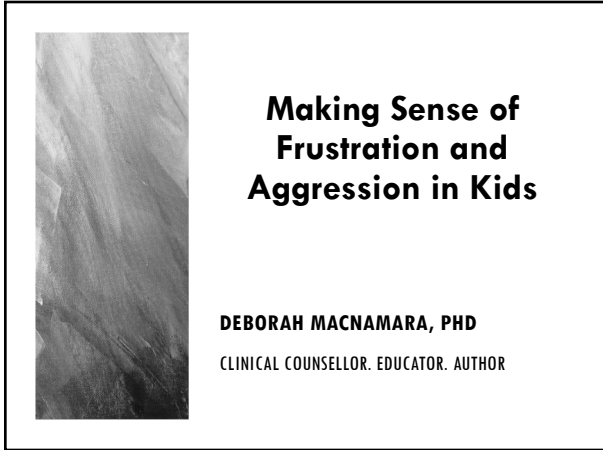
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