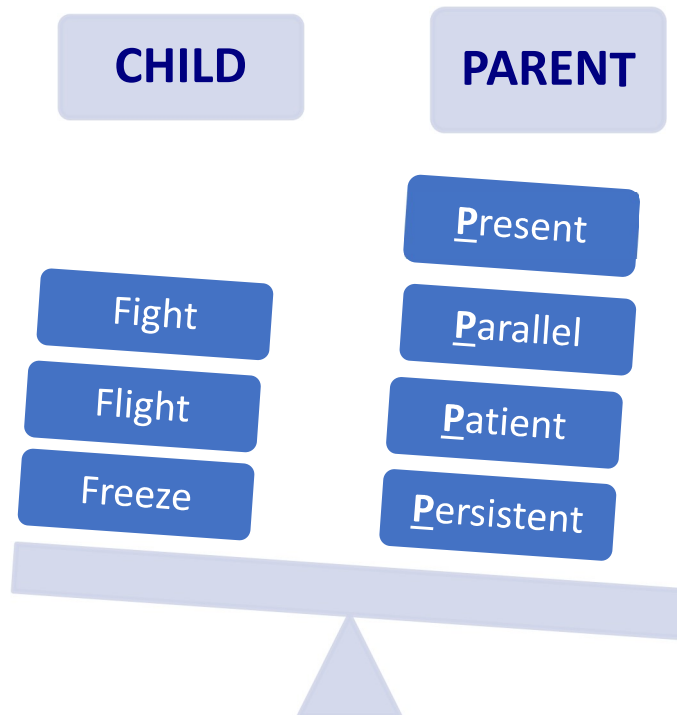


HANDOUT #1: THE 4 P_s (PRESENT, PARALLEL, PATIENT AND PERSISTENT)

Parenting a child who has a history of trauma, separation or loss can be challenging. In the moment it can be hard to remember that difficult behaviors may have helped the child to survive in previous threatening situations. Knowing how best to respond to a child's behaviors and big feelings will help everyone return to calm.

Bruce Perry, MD



- Being **present** allows parents to model healthy behaviors and coping mechanisms. The more a child sees that, the safer they will feel with you.
- A child with trauma history often sees relationships as unsafe and unpredictable. Start your communication by being physically **parallel** to the child. Face-to-face can be threatening. Being parallel gives a child control of the process.
- Wait for the child to come to you. As the child experiences you as present and in parallel proximity, their sense of safety increases and they will come to you. Be **patient** while trust grows. It doesn't happen all at once or consistently.
- **Persistent** and patient go together. When a child's progress isn't as good or as fast as the parent fostering or adopting hopes, they get tired. But that makes them inconsistent, as they continue to change their parenting approach to find a "better" way to help. Be persistent, present and parallel. Your patience will pay off with increased safety and trust with the child.