

# A Healthy Mind: Teen Mental Health

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# Agenda

50 minutes of presentation:

- Biosocial model
- Dialectics
- Introduction to validation
- How validating communication can promote healthy behavior change

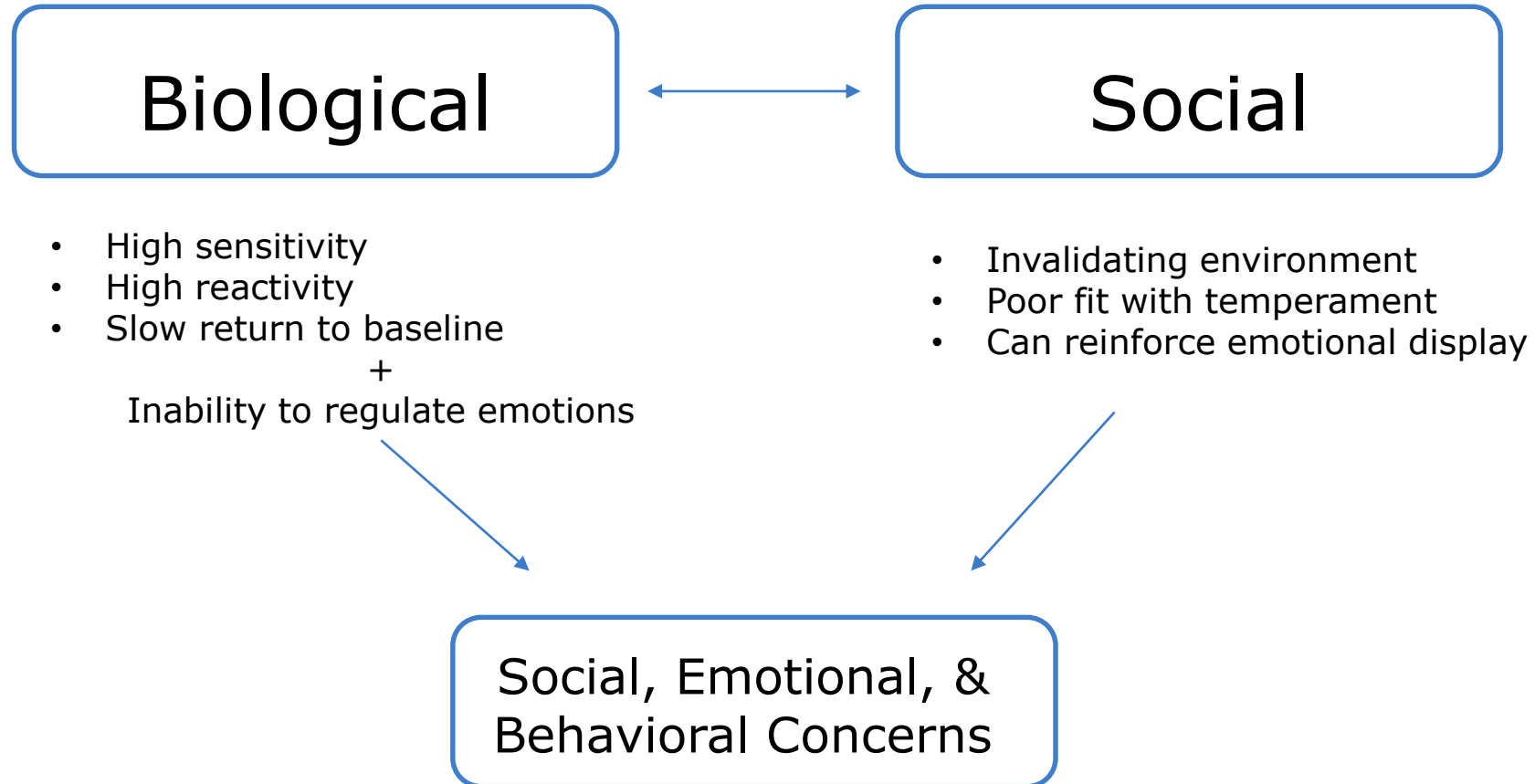
Resources and Q&A



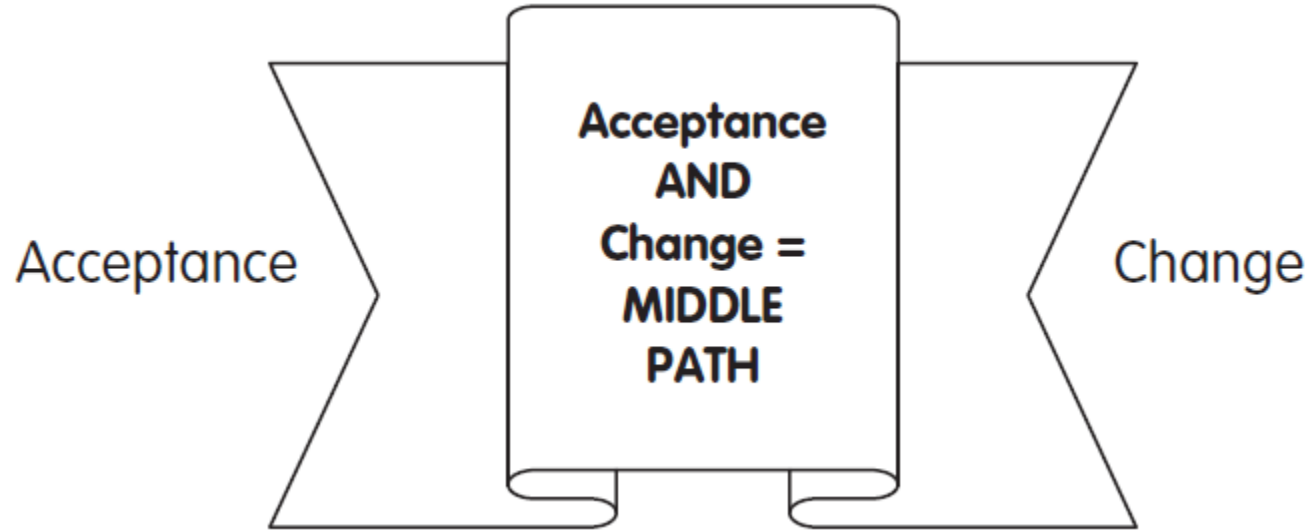
# Why Validate?



# Biosocial Theory



# Dialectics



## Examples:

I am doing the best I can **AND** I need to do better, try harder, and be more motivated to change.

I can do this **AND** it's going to be hard. My mom is really strict **AND** she really cares about me. I've got big problems **AND** I can try to solve them. You are tough **AND** you are gentle.

## Dialectics “How-to”

Move from “either/or”

“Everyone always treats me  
unfairly”

Thinking you are right

“You are” statements

Assuming you understand



To “both-and”

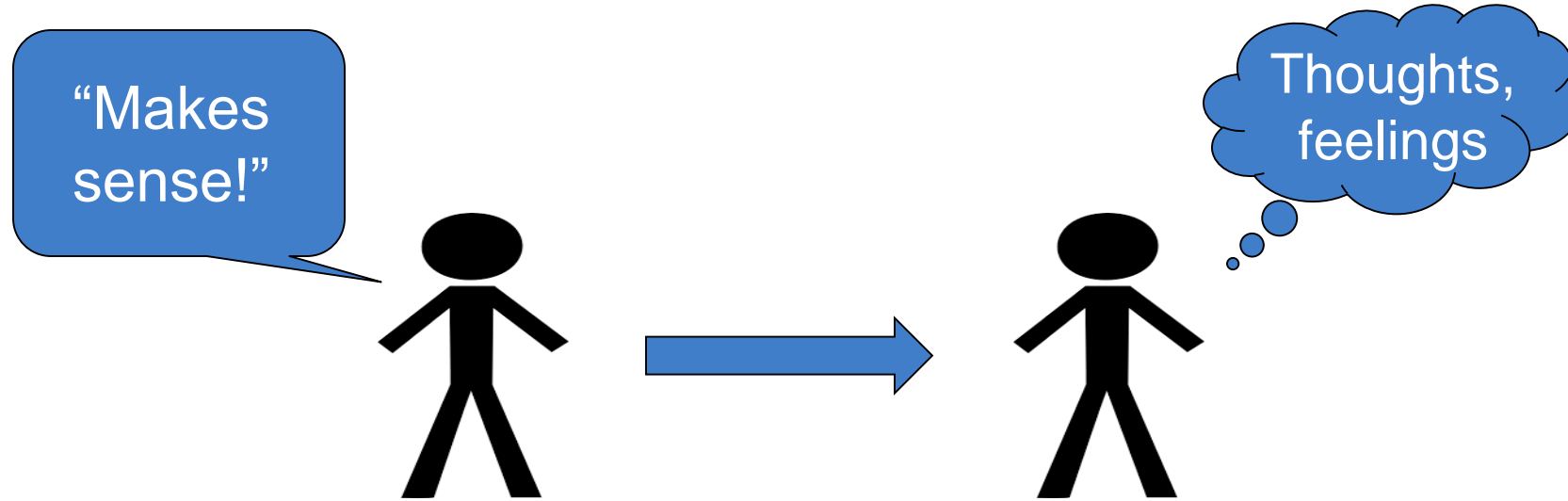
“*Sometimes* I am treated fairly  
*and* at other times, unfairly”

Be open to alternatives

“I feel” statements

Check your assumptions –  
“What did you mean when you  
said...?”

# Validation



VALIDATION  $\neq$  AGREEMENT

# Why Validate?

- Validation improves relationships
- It can deescalate conflict and intense emotions
- Validation can show that:
  - We are listening
  - We understand
  - We are being nonjudgmental
  - We care about the relationship
  - We can disagree without having a big conflict



## Who to Validate

- Self-validation: Perceiving your own feelings, thoughts, and actions as making sense, accurate, and acceptable in a particular situation.
- Validate others
  - Teens
  - Coworkers
  - Friends
  - Family

# What to Validate

- Feelings
- Thoughts
- Behaviors

... in ourselves and others

- Validate the valid, **not** the invalid
  - validate someone feeling upset about a low test grade even though you know he or she didn't study, but **don't validate** the lack of studying that led to the low grade.

## How to Validate

- Listen actively with eye contact. Stay focused.
- Observe verbal and nonverbal reactions, as well as feelings.
- Reflect the feeling back without judgment.
- Show tolerance
- Respond in a way that shows you are taking the other person seriously
- Avoid “Buts,” use “Ands”!

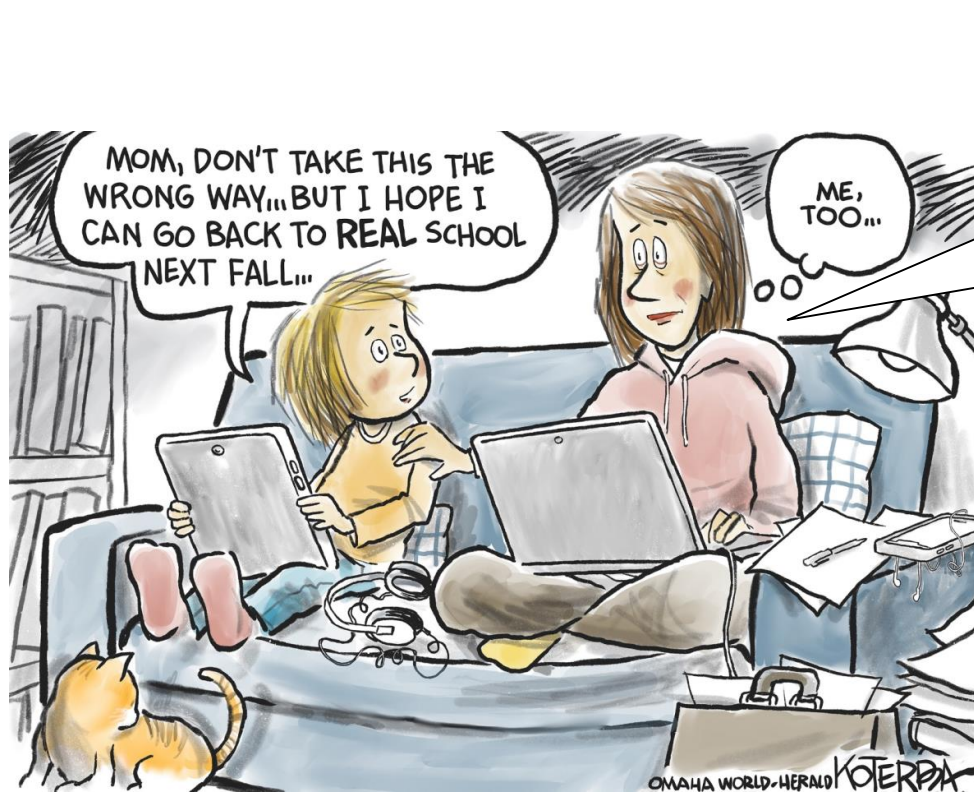
# Levels of Validation

1. Unbiased listening & Observing
2. Accurate reflection/paraphrasing
3. Articulating the un verbalized emotions, thoughts or behavior patterns  
*"In addition to feeling \_\_\_\_\_, I wonder if you are also feeling \_\_\_\_\_."*
4. Acknowledging that the other's experience makes sense in terms of past learning history
5. Communicating that the other's behavior makes sense given the current context.  
*"Anyone in the situation would feel like you."*
6. Radical Genuineness  
*Being right there with them, handing them a tissue box, nonverbal gesture, etc.*



BUT...AT LEAST YOU HAVE A LAPTOP, ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD AND FOOD. YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL.

# Shaping behavior through validation



Validation → Acceptance → Change

## Resources:

- Pediatrician/primary care doctor
- School-based therapist, school psychologist
- psychologytoday.com (“Find a therapist”)
- Phone number on private insurance card
- Care Solace referral: contact Jasmine Kroner at 408-522-2288 x4056 OR search our custom link [www.caresolace.com/FUHSD](http://www.caresolace.com/FUHSD)



# Q&A

