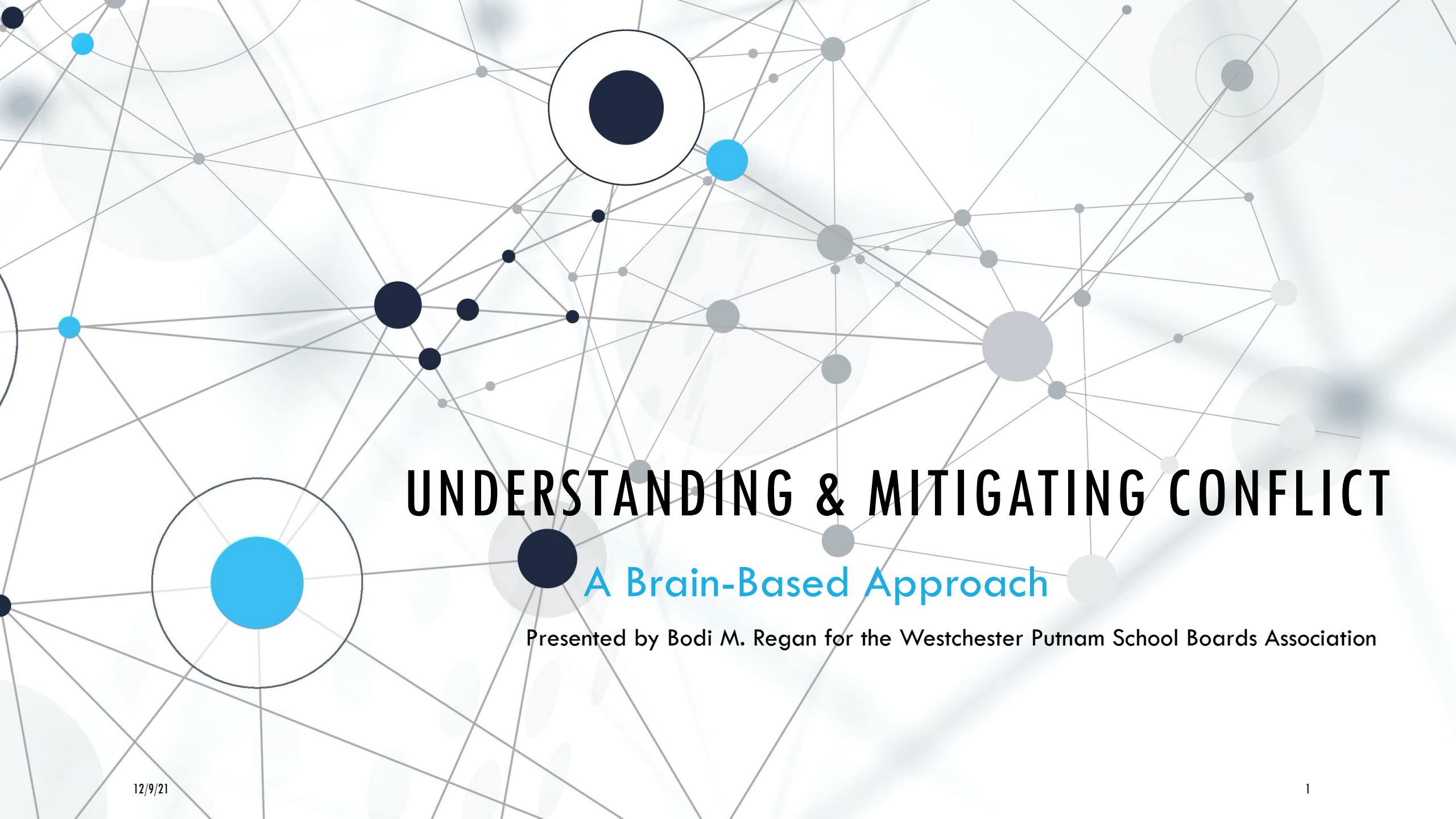




UNDERSTANDING & MITIGATING CONFLICT

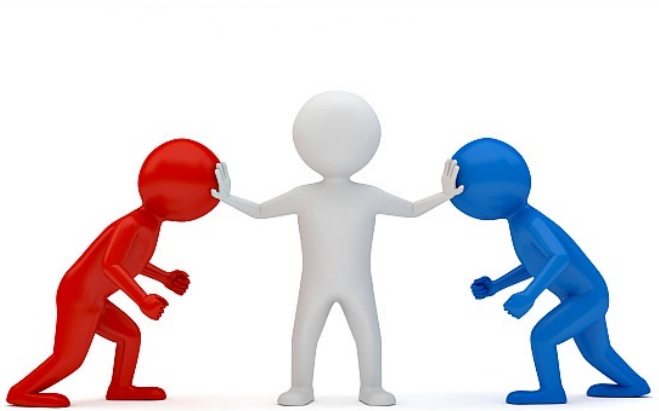
A Brain-Based Approach

Presented by Bodi M. Regan for the Westchester Putnam School Boards Association

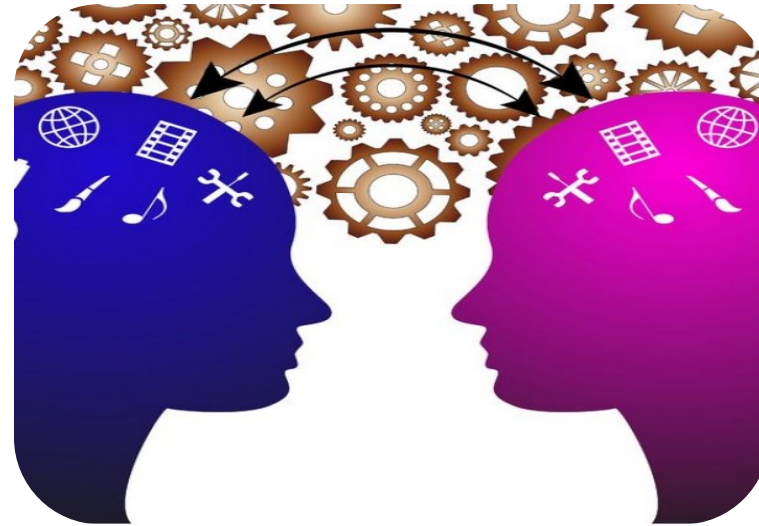
PLEASE JOIN ME

- Please use the CHAT function to share your experience and to ask questions
- Conflict is Stressful
- Empathy for Self & Others
- Consider New Information
- Growth Mindset

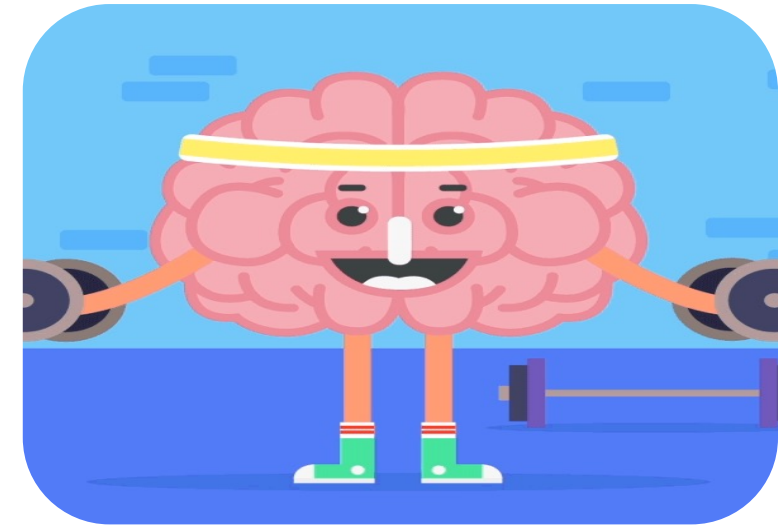
TODAY'S FOCUS



Conflict Styles



Insights from Social
Neuroscience



The Scarf Model

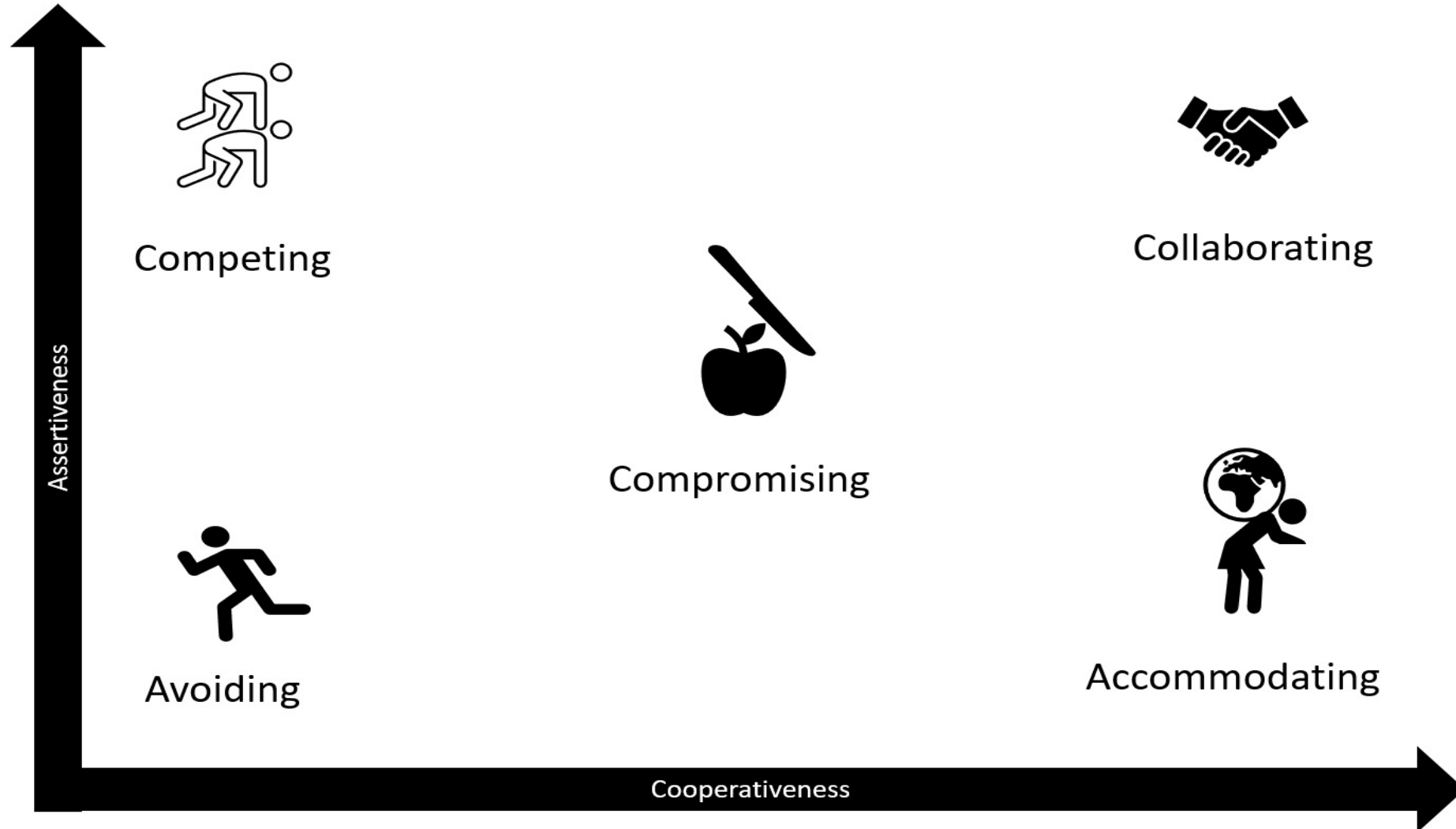
MASTER OR NIGHTMARE?

Recall someone you have worked with who was either a MASTER or a NIGHTMARE at managing conflict.

What made them a MASTER?

What made them a NIGHTMARE?

CONFLICT STYLES



EMOTIONAL RESERVOIRS OF CONFLICT

The mathematics of emotion and conflict have much to say about the long-term consequences of how we resolve conflict:

- In Marriages – 5/1 Ratio
- In Work Teams - 3/1 Ratio

EMOTIONAL RESERVOIRS OF CONFLICT

Positivity and negativity “pool” over time – creating emotional reservoirs that can either provide a buffer in difficult times, or a landmine.

Emotions profoundly influence how we appraise new situations.

YET...

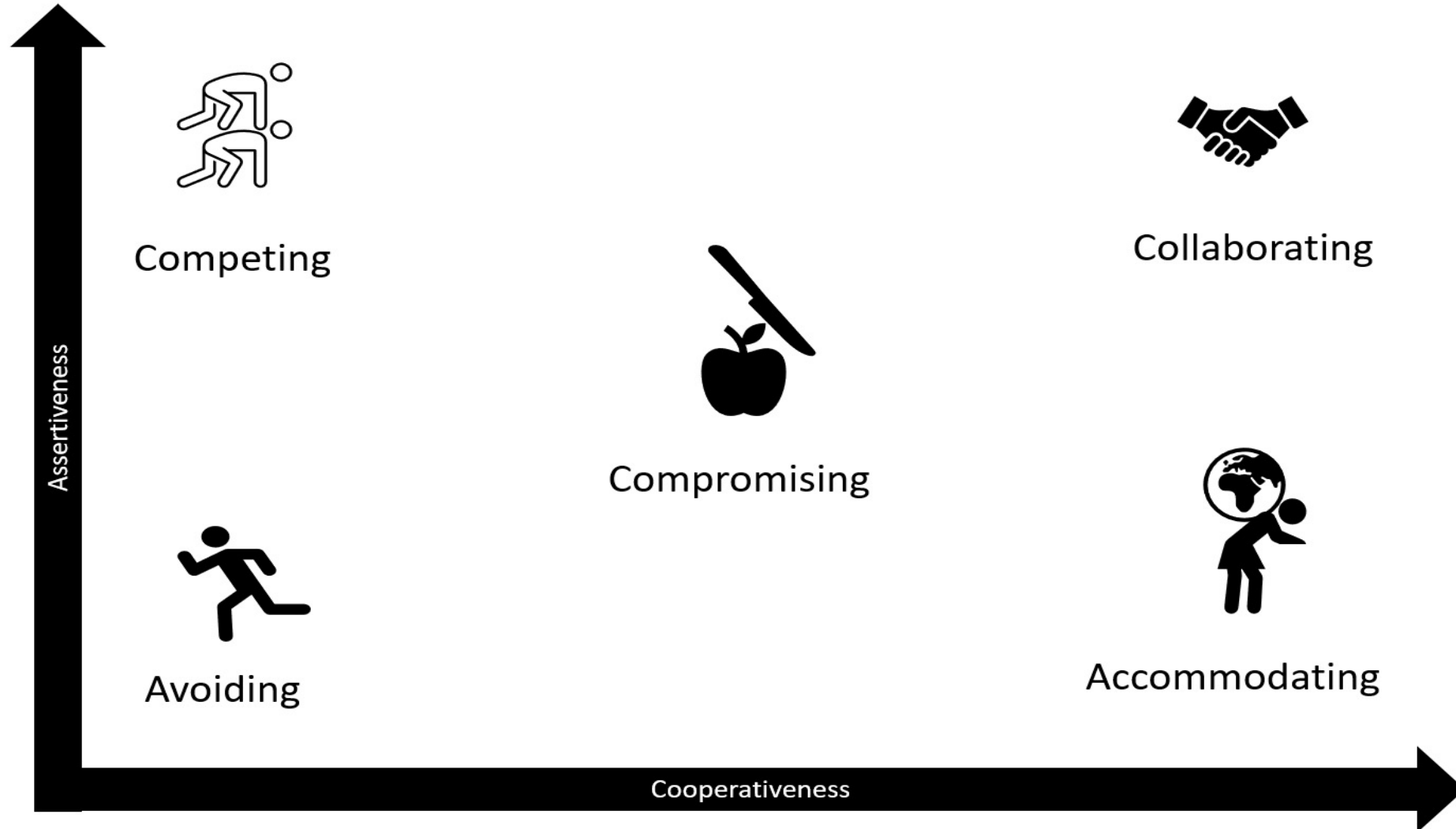
Conflict is **necessary, critical** and **can be transformational...**

REFLECT

What Style is your “default” or “habitual way” of responding to conflict?

- With family? Friends? Colleagues? Parents? Strangers?
- Is your habitual approach working for you?
- What would you like to change?

CONFLICT STYLES



INSIGHTS FROM NEUROSCIENCE





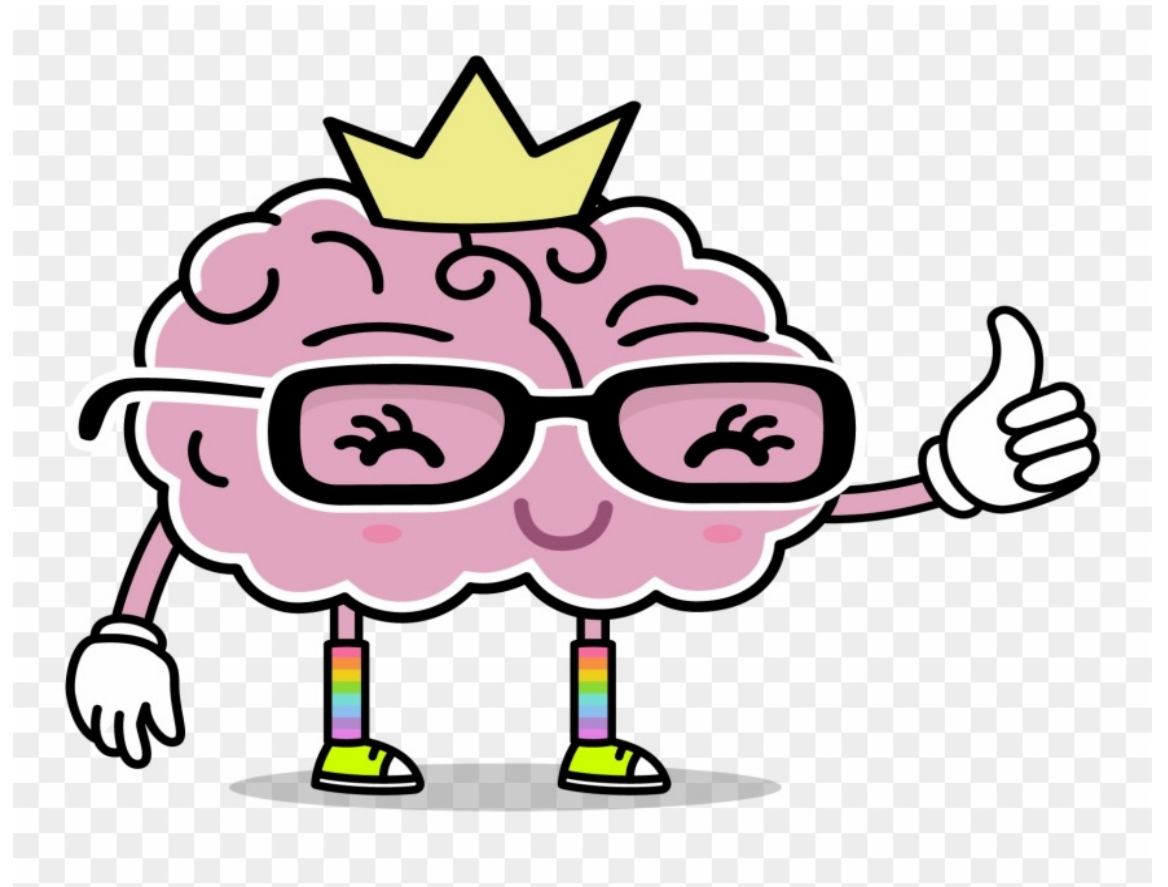
NeuroLeadership INSTITUTE

Rock, D., Cox, C. (2012). SCARF in 2012: updating the social neuroscience of collaborating with others. The NeuroLeadership Journal: Issue 4.

THE FUNDAMENTAL ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE OF THE BRAIN



THREAT & REWARD



THE FUNDAMENTAL ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE OF THE BRAIN

- The main job of the brain is to keep us alive.
- Our brains are wired to be sensitive and pay more attention to things in the environment that are potentially negative or could pose a threat. This contributes to biases of safety—the fact that people perceive bad to be stronger than good.
- The **THREAT** response last longer and is more powerful than the **REWARD** response by about 2-to-1.
- Unfamiliarity—anything that challenges our up-to-now experience of the world and beliefs about how things work—is likely to trigger safety biases.
- Things we don't have experience with are unknowns, and “unknown” equals “potentially dangerous.”
- Something “different” is something unknown, and our safety biases make it highly likely that something unknown will be perceived as negative and potentially threatening.
- People spend the majority of their time in a neutral state – somewhere between threat and reward. However, this changes once an individual is triggered.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE BRAIN PERCEIVES A **THREAT** IN THE ENVIRONMENT?

Oxygen and glucose are rerouted from the Pre-frontal cortex to the Amygdala. Cortisol floods the brain, adrenaline production increases, the body prepares flight or fight response.

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF THREATS IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT?

The brain and body go into survival mode. This impacts productivity, creativity, ability to recall information, the capacity for problem-solving, perspective taking, collaboration, and much more.

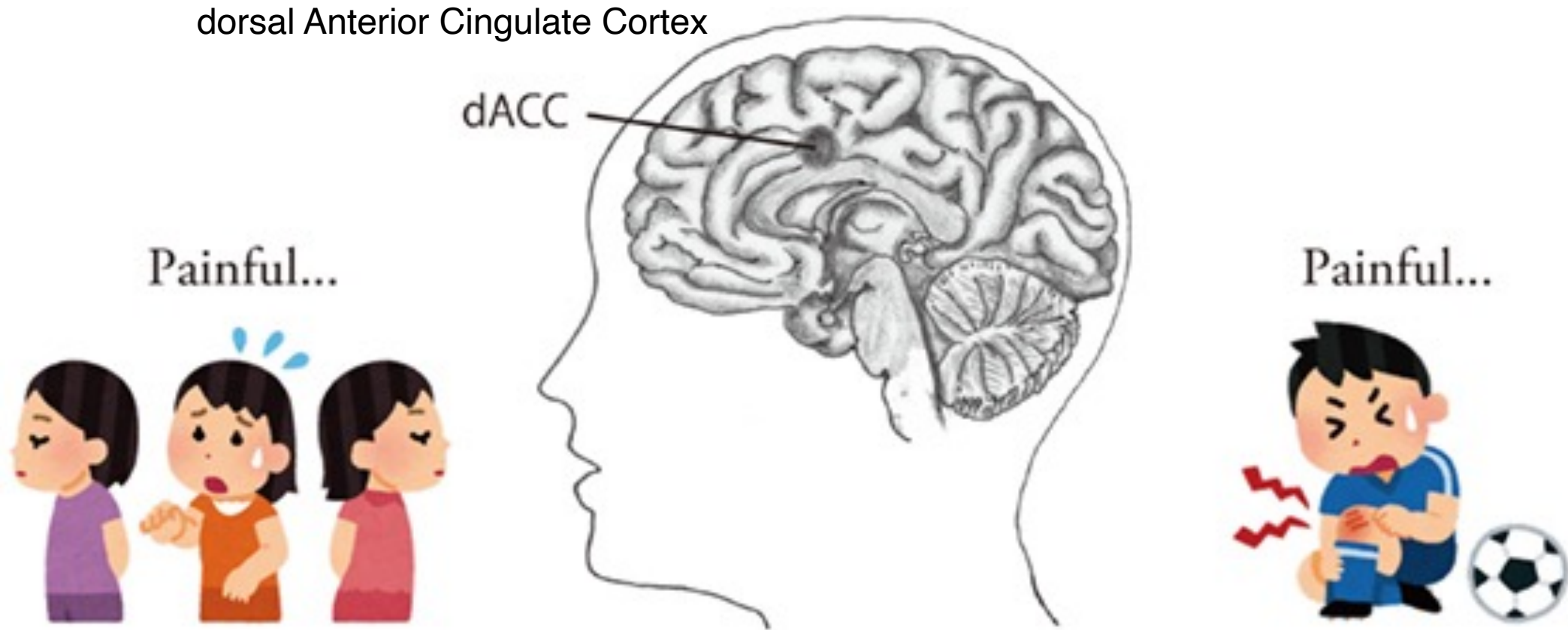
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE BRAIN PERCEIVES A REWARD IN THE ENVIRONMENT?

Oxygen and glucose are re-routed from the Amygdala to the Pre-Frontal Cortex, which allows this part of the brain to operate at full capacity.

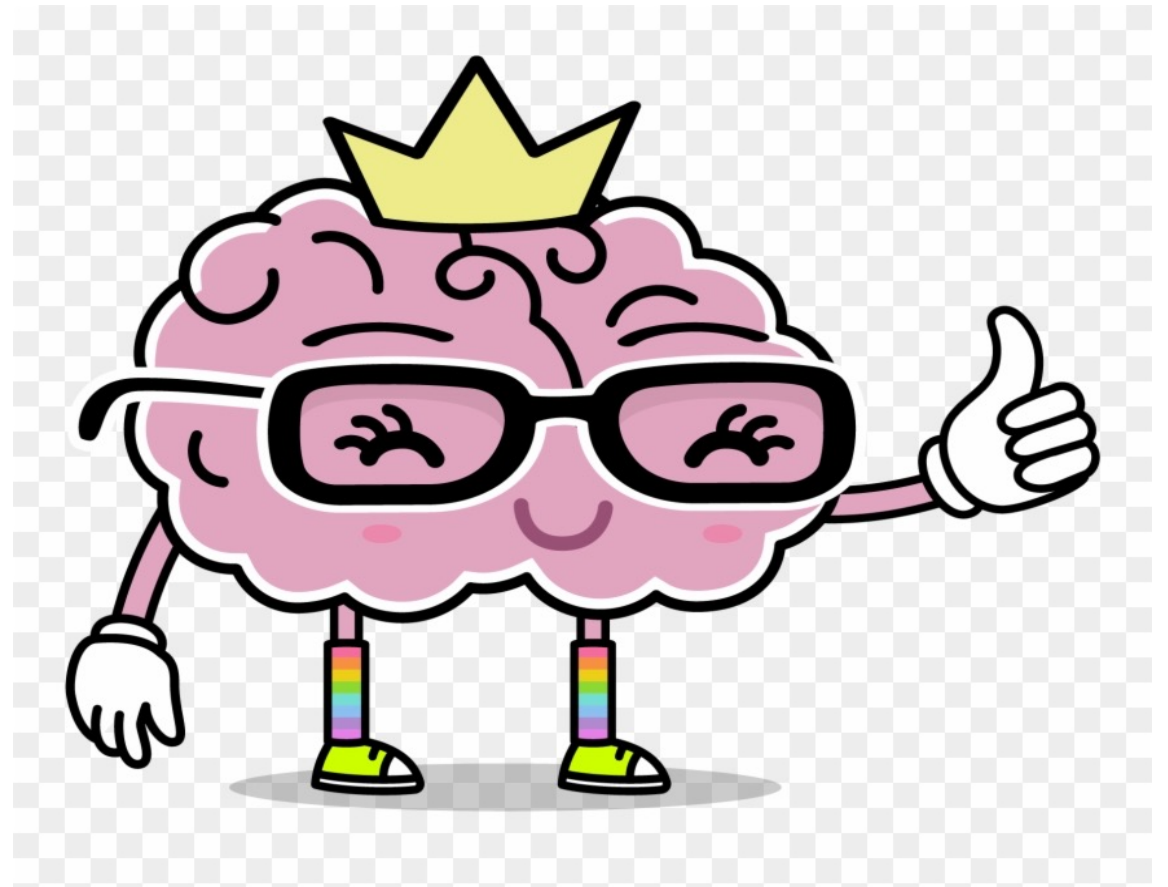
WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF REWARDS IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT?

When the Pre-Frontal Cortex is able to operate at full capacity, this stimulates clearer thinking, better access to long-term memory, complex problem-solving, greater insights, enhance perspective taking, and better decision making.

SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL PAIN IN THE BRAIN



THREAT & REWARD



THE SCARF MODEL (ROCK, 2008)

S

Our importance relative to others we are in relationship with.

I am valued & respected.

C

Our ability to predict the future.

I know what to expect.

A

Our ability to exert control over events.

I have choices.

R

Our sense of connection with others and being part of the group.

I belong.

F

Our sense of equity & fair exchanges between people.

I'm treated fairly & so are others.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE **THREATS** YOU ARE EXPERIENCING AS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS?



THE SCARF MODEL (ROCK, 2008)

S

What are some ways in which you do NOT feel valued & respected?

What about colleagues/parents?

C

What are some UNKNOWNNS you are facing?

What about colleagues/ parents?

A

What ways do you feel you LACK choices or decision-making power?

What about colleagues/parents?

R

In what situations to you feel EXCLUDED or not part of the group?

What about colleagues/ parents?

F

In what ways do you feel UNJUSTLY treated or negatively judged?

What about colleagues/parents?

REFLECT & SHARE



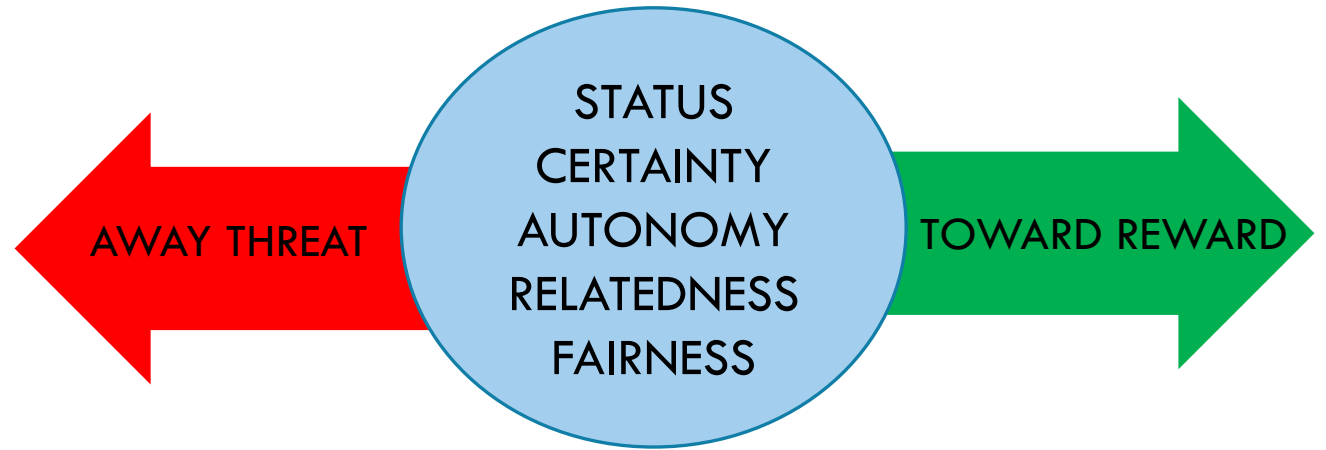
Let's hear some ideas about how to increase each one of the 5 domains as you prepare for meetings.

REFLECT & SHARE



What are some ideas for how to use the model during a meeting that is going off track or getting too emotionally intense?

REFLECT & SHARE



STATUS	CERTAINTY	AUTONOMY	RELATEDNESS	FAIRNESS
How can I ensure that colleagues, parents, staff & students feel valued & respected?	How can I provide more information about what to expect?	How can I get input and increase decision-making power and choices?	How can I make people feel connected rather than isolated?	How can I mitigate bias and ensure all are treated fairly?

TIME FOR



SCARF SELF-ASSESSMENT

We invite you to take the online SCARF Self-Assessment

<https://neuroleadership.com/research/tools/nli-scarf-assessment/>



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