

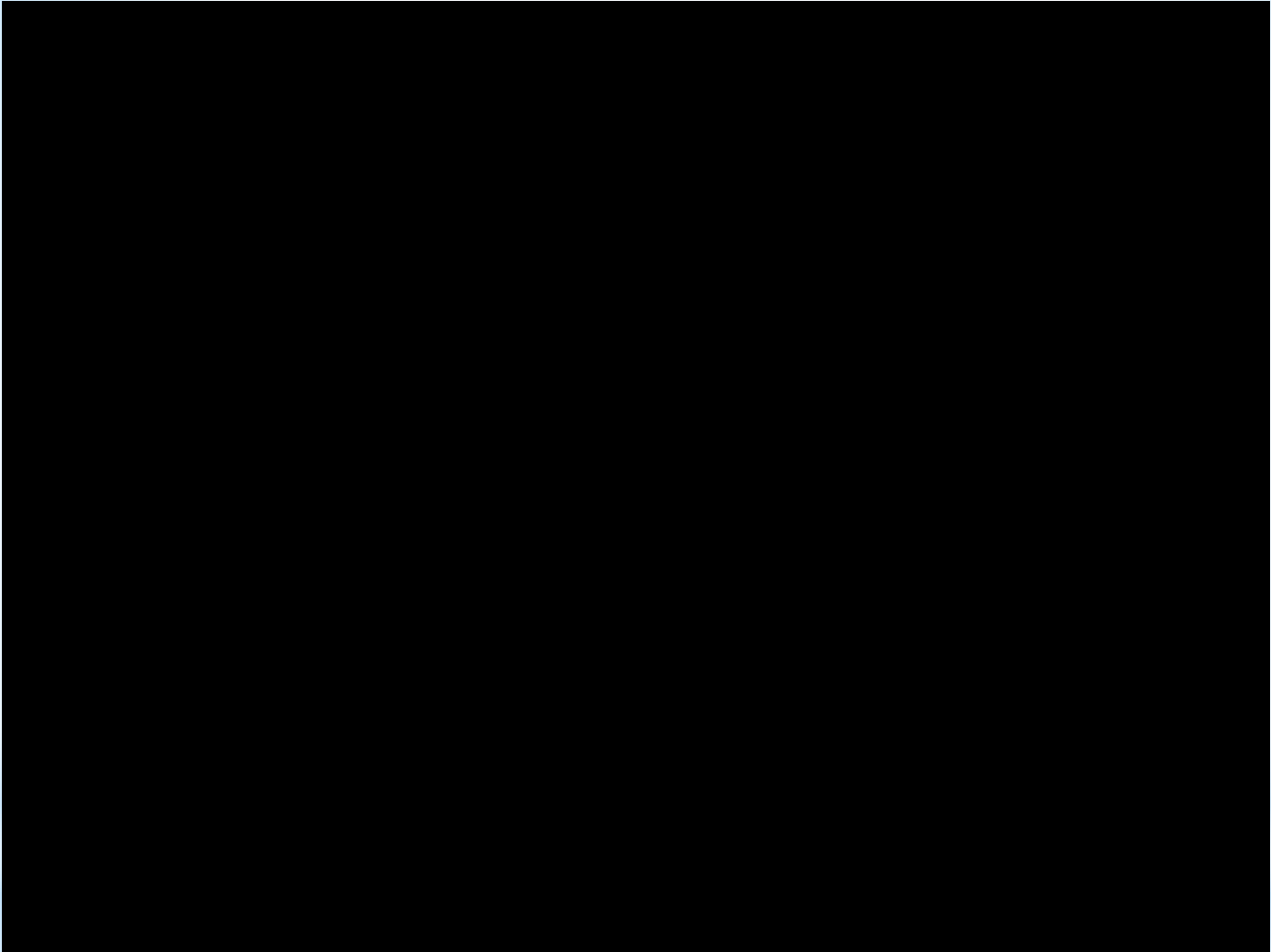


Navigating the World of Friendships

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It is a journey...



Aristotle described 3 types of *Friendship*

1. Utility
2. Pleasure
3. True Friendship



The Development of Friendships



At what *Age* do children have the cognitive and emotional abilities required to have a friendship?

Children's perceptions of friendships change over time and through each phase the child passes through.

- *Preschool ages: 3 to 5 - preferred playmates and preferred activities
- *Early school years: 5 to 7 - the art of sustaining play
- *Late grade to early middle school: 8 to 12 - social identity



**Lunch with Grace (and
dignity)**

The *teenage* years

- * Identity issues
- * Increase in intimacy
- * Loss of friendships
- * Mistrust and misjudgment
- * Lessons are learned
- * Resiliency through conflict resolution



Characteristic	Positive Aspect	Negative Aspect
Verbal proficiency	Articulates well	Dominates the conversation
Accelerated pace	Moves through material quickly	Gets frustrated with the pace of others
Ability to concentrate and persist	Focuses on a task in depth	Resists interruption
Seeks order	Plans ahead	Difficulty with spontaneity
Sense of humor	Entertaining	Uses humor in inappropriate ways to distract
Heightened self awareness; feels different	Realizes potential of being unique	Feels isolated and self consciousness
High expectations	Sets high standards	Criticizes self and others high expectations are not met

Characteristic	Positive Aspect	Negative Aspect
Self-confident leader	Influences others	Perceived as bossy
Huge store of facts and long memory	Learns quickly	Becomes bored and impatient with others
Creative	Thinks innovatively	Disrupts with his innovation
Many interests	Has many possibilities in life	Has difficulty choosing between interests
Goal oriented	Gets tasks done	Viewed as stubborn and inflexible
Deep thinker	Conceptualizes on a greater level	Hates deadlines
Perfectionist	Does everything well	Avoids tasks for fear of not doing them perfectly

Which would they rather be?

- * 53% said “most intelligent”
- * 37% said “most athletic”
- * 10% said “best looking”

- * In an explanatory essay, 22% mentioned anti-intellectual stigma

Popularity Ranking

(1990, Lufting & Nichols)

1. Gifted Boys
2. General Education Boys and Girls equally
3. Gifted Girls

1993 study of high ability learners reported 80% of the extremely gifted students had experienced intense social isolation (and an attempt to conform)

The *Brainy* Group

Brown and Steinberg (1990) found that of 8,000 high school students in their study, only 10% of high achievers identified themselves as Brainy

A study of over 1,000 successful women found a theme of “social price” to pay to excel in school and 15% of successful women identified social isolation as greatest problem in school

A study in 1995 found that over half of the high ability African American students in her study were teased for being smart and one-third had been accused of “acting white.”

What Do We Do as Parents?

- * Maintain positive family environment
- * Minimize bickering with our kids
- * Value and support open communication
- * Arrange for time shared with similar students
- * Help establish a high ability cohort group
- * School counselors should be trained to understand the isolations of the high ability students
- * Or we could construct an a Friendship Algorithm



HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER
NEXT

When to Seek Help

- * Stops participating in activities they once enjoyed
- * Increases time spent alone in room
- * Avoids family social activities
- * Posts distressing comments on social media
- * Increase in somatic complaints
- * Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- * Keeps it “together” at school but behaviors are drastic at home

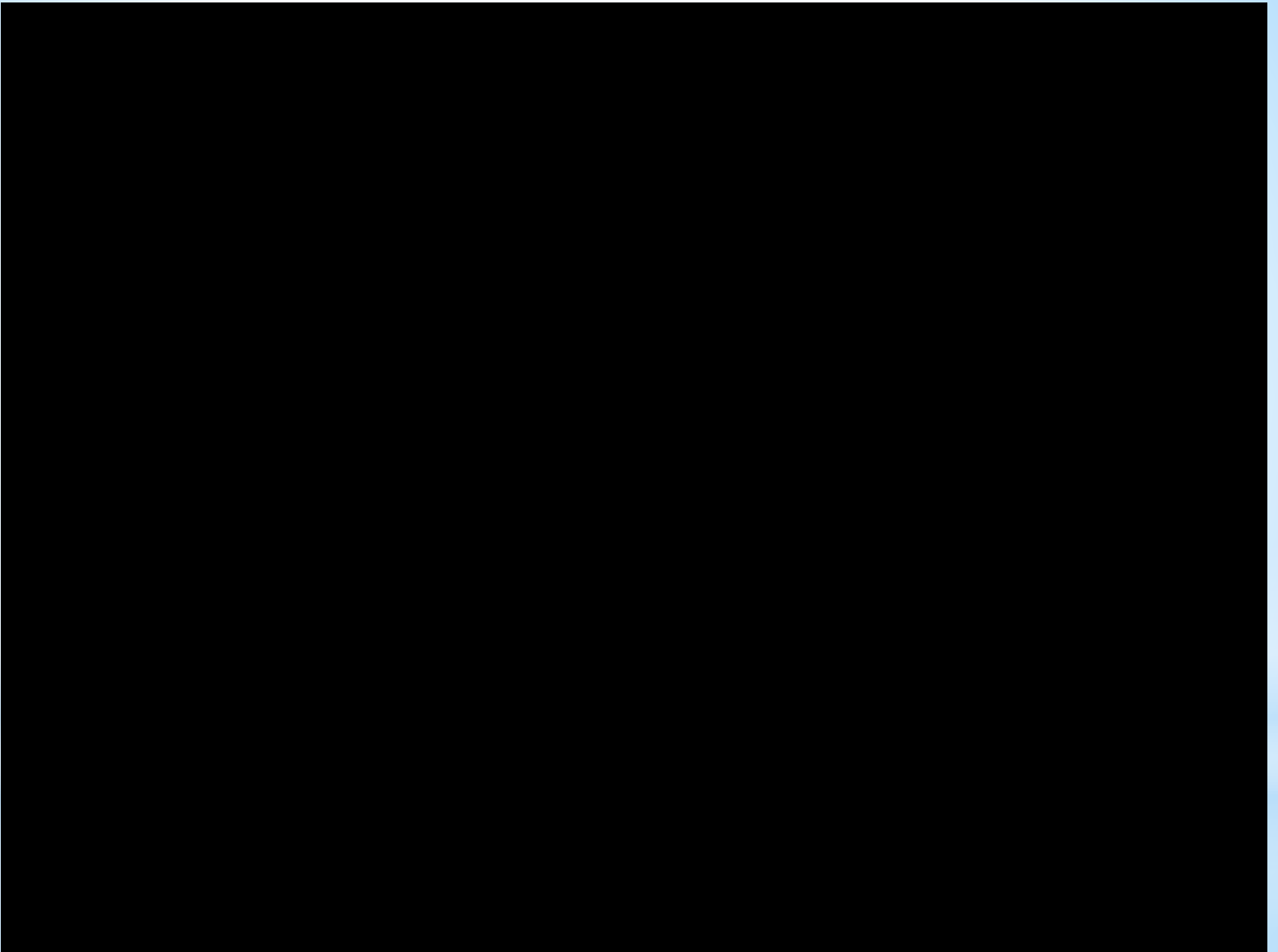
Scenario

Katy: 4th grade high ability student

1. Well, I picked you up this time, but next time you are going to stay
2. Well, I picked you up this time, but next time you just won't go
3. This was a good group of girls, why can't you just join in?
4. Sometimes our stomach hurts when we are worried or upset. Do you think this could have been your nerves at all?



Friendships in the Age of Electronics



I can't believe
you just did that!

- * I didn't say you cheated on the test
- * I didn't say you cheated on the test
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Monitoring Media Use

- * Our kids will spend more time on electronic media than any other activity aside from sleep
- * Facebook Depression
- * 22% of teens are on social media more than 10 times a day
- * 50% log on more than once a day
- * 75% teens own cell phones
- * 60% of teens text



- * Access to information
- * Enhanced learning opportunities
- * Limited capacity for self regulation
- * Susceptibility to peer pressure
- * Online emotions expressed as offline behaviors
- * Cyber bullying
- * Online harassment
- * Sexting
- * Digital Footprint (future college placement and job choice)

What Parents Think When Our Kids Don't Answer Their Phone



Now What?

- * Create social situations for younger kids
- * Direct involvement decreases and monitoring is the new focal point in middle school
- * Don't push

MONITOR MONITOR MONITOR

MONITOR: Texting!

- * Phones should be charged in a central location each night, sounds go off when lights go off
- * Let them know you WILL be reading their texts sporadically. This is NOT an invasion of privacy. This is NOT the same as reading their diary. Their diary is safe at home in their room.
- * Teach appropriate texting skills
- * Do not text for them or pretend to be them

MONITOR MONITOR MONITOR

MONITOR: Social Networking Sites

- * If they are not willing to “friend” you then they can not have an account.
- * Do not comment on their friend’s posts/pictures/tags
- * Do not use this as a chance to embarrass your kid
- * Prepare your child for hurt feelings. There will be pictures of events in which she was not invited
- * Teach them that people edit/enhance/touch-up

Parenting with Intention and Focus on Friendships

- * Be an emotional coach
- * Practice *authoritative* parenting
- * Teach kids how to be polite
- * Foster empathy and concern for others
- * Help kids read body language and facial expression
- * Coach on how to cope with tricky social situations
- * Monitor - but don't hover
- * When possible, let them figure it out
- * Watch for bullying
- * Be aware of value differences
- * Encourage diversity

The Sensitive Child

Does your child...

- * Cry easily
- * Misunderstand teasing
- * Have feelings hurt easily
- * Perceive criticism when none was intended
- * Interpret other's mistakes as meanness
- * Hold on to grudges

Do you...

- * Protect vs toughen up
- * Waning sympathy as child rehashes "wrongs"
- * Worry that your child will never make it through life's tough terrain

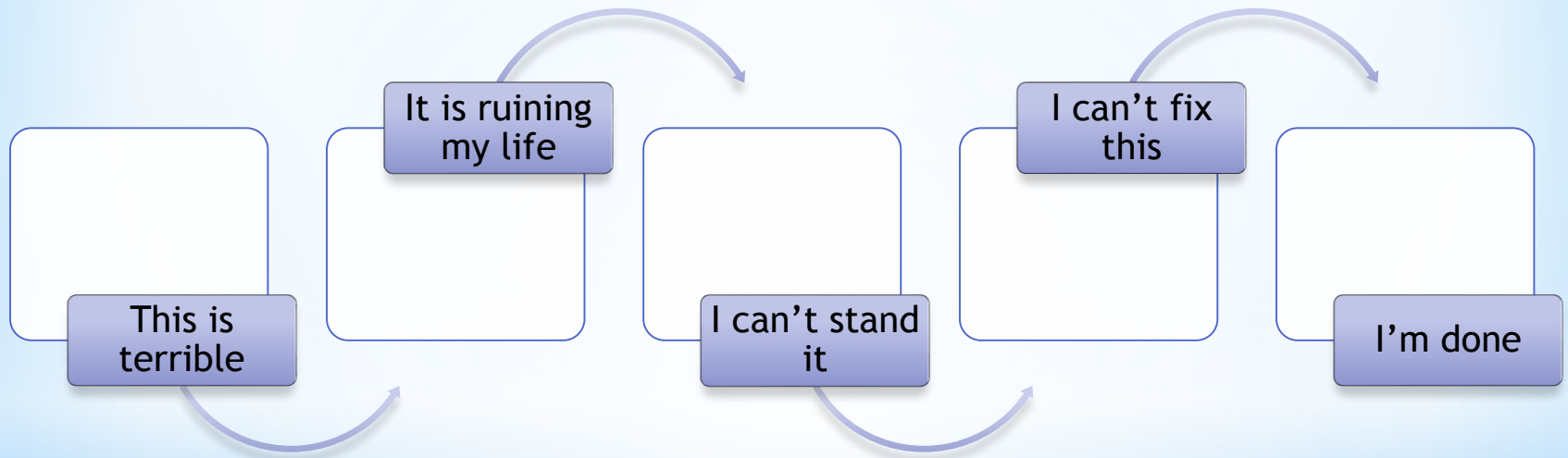
Sensitive Child

- * Emotionally bruised easily
- * Preoccupied with unfairness
- * Take things too personally
- * Dwell in their grievances
- * Dramatic
- * BUT... able to pick up on social cues
- * Tend to care about others with great empathy

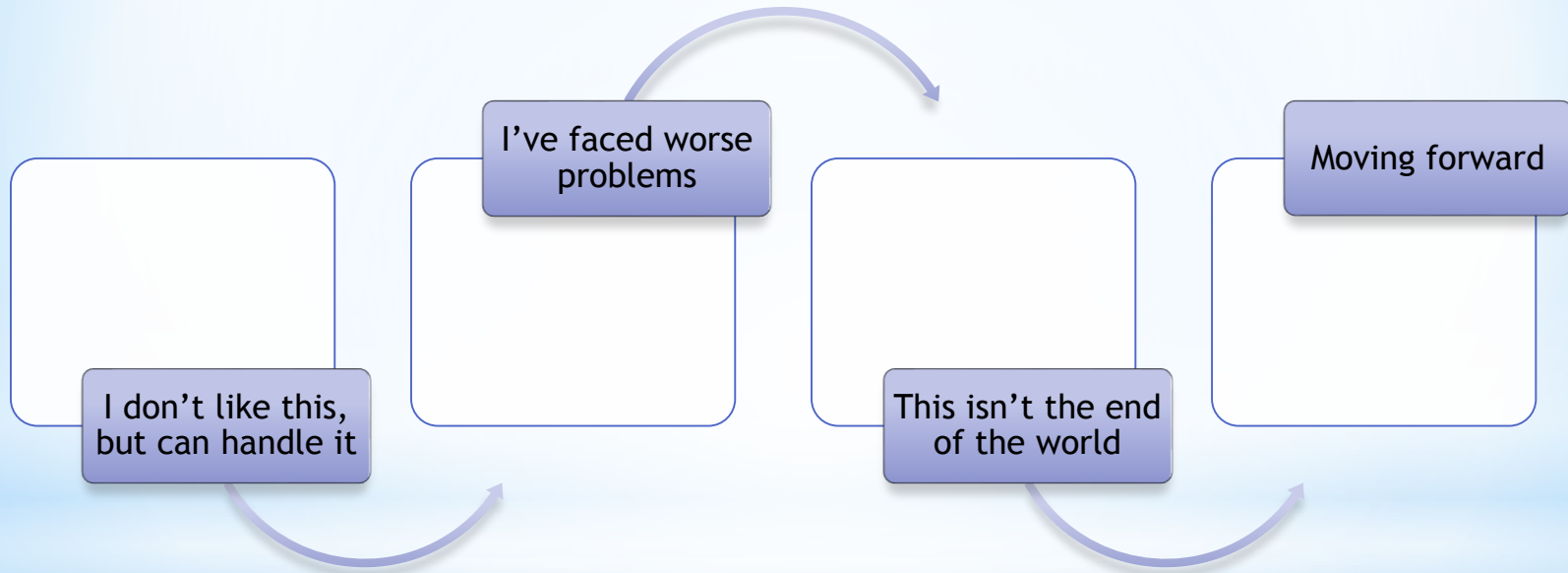
Jonathan

- * Teach the difference between friendly teasing and unfriendly teasing
- * Teach nonverbal communication
- * Teach how to ignore teasing
- * Teach some retorts
- * Explain vulnerability
 - * Count slowly while breathing deeply
 - * Walk away
- * There is always more than one perspective

The Inflammatory Spiral



The Calming Spiral



- * Acknowledge the social power and pain
- * Don't over-react
- * Share your perspective
- * Stay steady



Own what is yours to own

