



Using Brainspotting in Schools: An Innovative Focused-Mindfulness Approach to Student Self-Regulation

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OBJECTIVES

- Attachment relationships where regulation comes from.
- Understand the 3 Legs of Brainspotting: “Inside window”, “Outside window”, “Gazespotting”
- Trauma and the nervous system
- How to use creativity and Brainspotting in Schools



Who Among Us?

- Have students who “push our buttons”?
- Have students who are regularly dysregulated?
- Have staff members who say “fix this kid!”?
- Have students with mental health concerns (mild to moderate)?
- Have students whose parents cannot afford to have their child see a clinical mental health counselor?
- Wants to help students be more successful in school?



Where it all begins

Attachment Cycle

Regulates the Brain





Brainspotting

“Where you look affects how you feel”

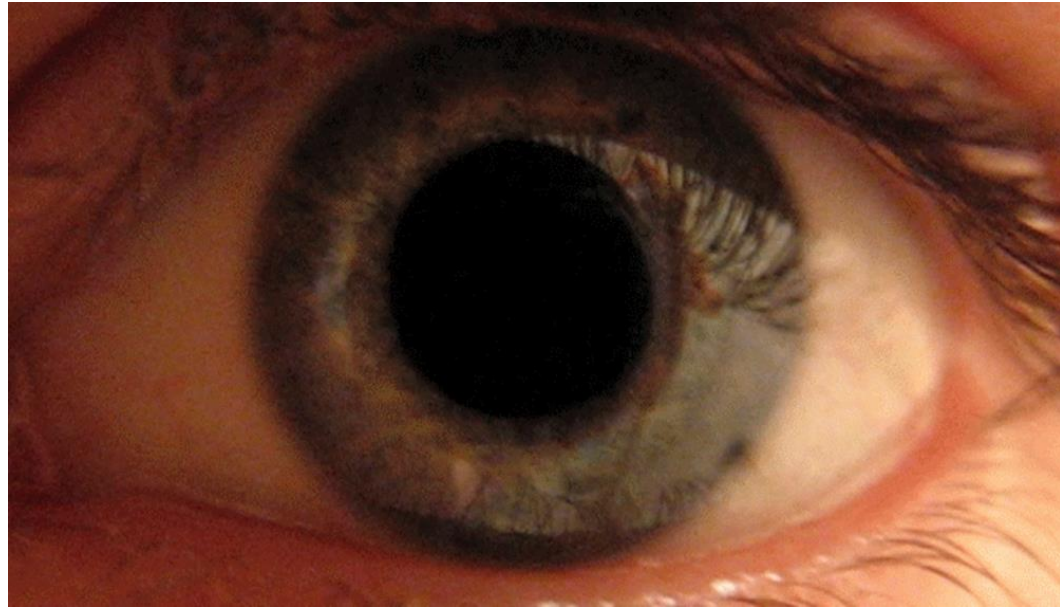
The discovery of Brainspotting occurred in 2003 with a 16 year old figure skater who couldn't master the triple toe loop. David Grand targeted the moment her jump went awry.



While she tracked David's finger crossing her visual field, her eye wobbled and froze. David instinctively held her gaze at that point. What happened next....



David began to look for these eye anomalies with other clients and held their gaze at the point of the eye freeze or wobble.



**When he saw any eye reflex
he held his finger in place
directly in front so the client
could maintain their gaze
right at that spot.**



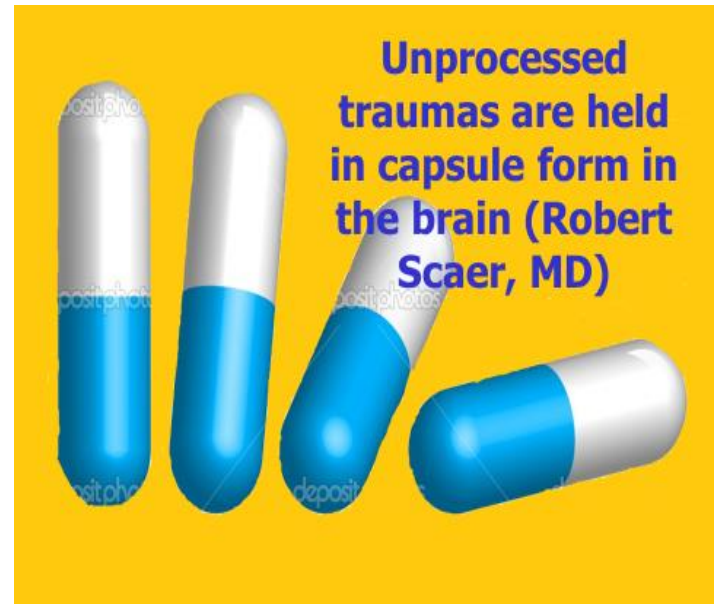
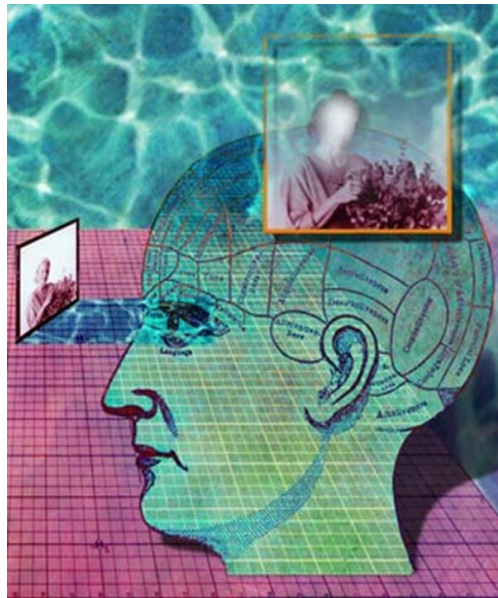
**MANY OF DAVID'S CLIENTS
WERE THERAPISTS SO THEY
TRIED IT OUT WITH THEIR
CLIENTS AND REPORTED
SIMILAR POWERFUL
EXPERIENCES.**



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Trauma overwhelms the brain's processing leaving pieces of unprocessed experiences frozen in time and space



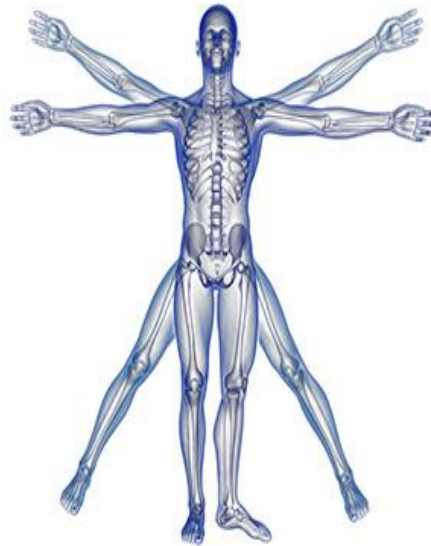
WHAT IS A BRAINSPOT?



A Brainspot is seen as a physiological capsule holding dissociated emotional experience in memory form. That can get triggered over and over again causing dysregulation.



When using our field of vision to find a Brainspot it appears to bypass the neocortex to access the subcortical limbic system and the brainstem



Brainspotting is accordingly seen as a physiological approach with psychological consequences.



HOW WE FIND BRAINSPOTS

Using the field of vision

Three Legs of Brainspotting

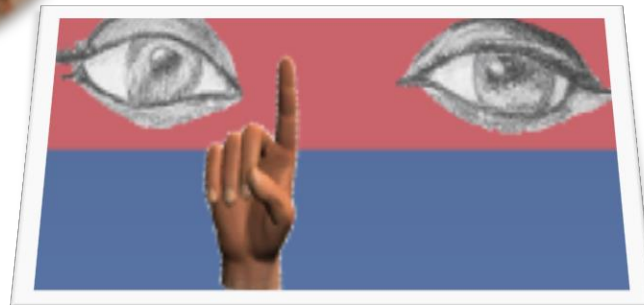
Outside Window
Inside Window
Gazespotting



In “outside window” Brainspotting the therapist observes the client’s eyes while tracking micro-slowly, searching for reflexive responses, without the clients awareness or active participation (subcortical).



IN “INSIDE WINDOW” BRAINSPOTTING THE THERAPIST AND CLIENT TOGETHER LOCATE BRAINSPOTS THROUGH ACCESSING THE CLIENT’S FELT SENSE OF THE HIGHEST SOMATIC ACTIVATION



GAZESPOTTING

**INTUITIVE GAZING WHILE
THINKING OR SPEAKING IS
OBSERVED AND UTILIZED**



In Brainspotting we attune to our clients relationally and to their neurobiology (looking at reflexes). This fits the model of Interpersonal Neurobiology (Dan Siegel)



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It is the attuned, empathic, witnessing presence of the counselor that promotes client/student healing. We do not assume, we stay in a state of uncertainty with them.



Being focused mindfully on this enhances healing.





The client/student is like the head of a comet and the attuned counselor is like the tail of the comet that follows the head.

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Brainspotting attempts to access the self-regulating capacities of the brain.





Brainspotting appears to promote coherence between the sympathetic (flight, fight, freeze) and parasympathetic (rest & digest) nervous system

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Brainspotting in Schools



“TYPICAL” STUDENT

- Dysregulated, overwhelmed with their emotions.
- Trauma history, gets triggered often or easily
- Struggles to talk about what’s wrong

“TYPICAL” BEHAVIORS

- Head on the desk
- Walking out of class
- Acting out
- Frequent nurse visits
- “Drama”
- Highly reactive, escalates easily
- Appears frozen or spacey
- “Discipline problem”
- Confrontational



Using Creativity and Brainspotting in the Schools

- Gazespotting
 - 90% of what I use with students in the school setting
 - Easy to set up
 - Kids don't think it's "weird"
- Music, Pictures, Drawings



What Gear do I Need?

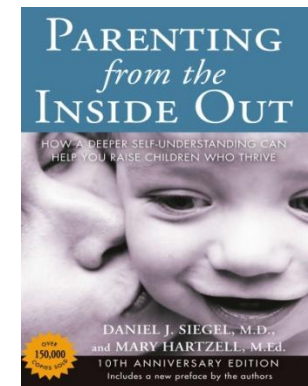
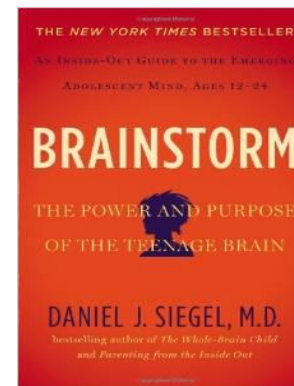
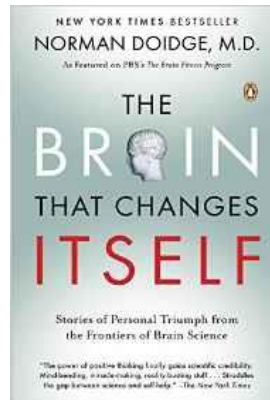
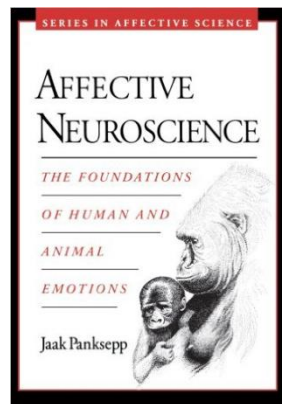
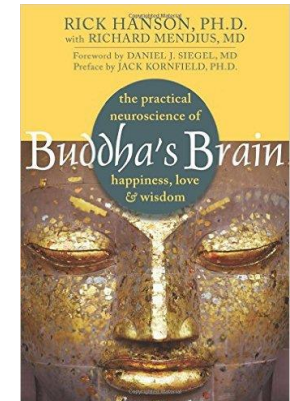
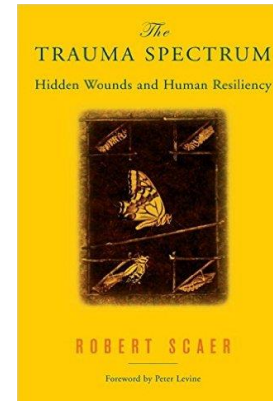
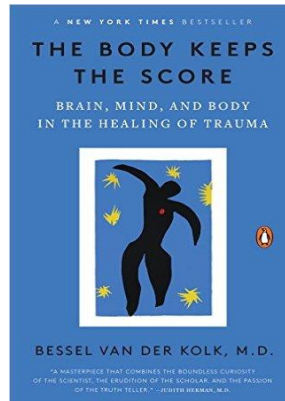
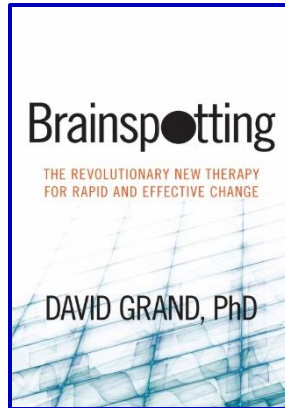


VIDEO



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RESOURCES USED WITHIN THIS PRESENTATION



For additional information:

www.brainspotting.com

www.midwestbrainspottinginstitute.org

www.getconnected.works

