

Helping Hurting Teens

Petitfils

Pedophiles

Petitfils



Petitfils

(pet-ta-feece)

Fr., n.

grandson

Or...

one who eats the
whole cake...

Right

Wrong



Purgatory

Perfect

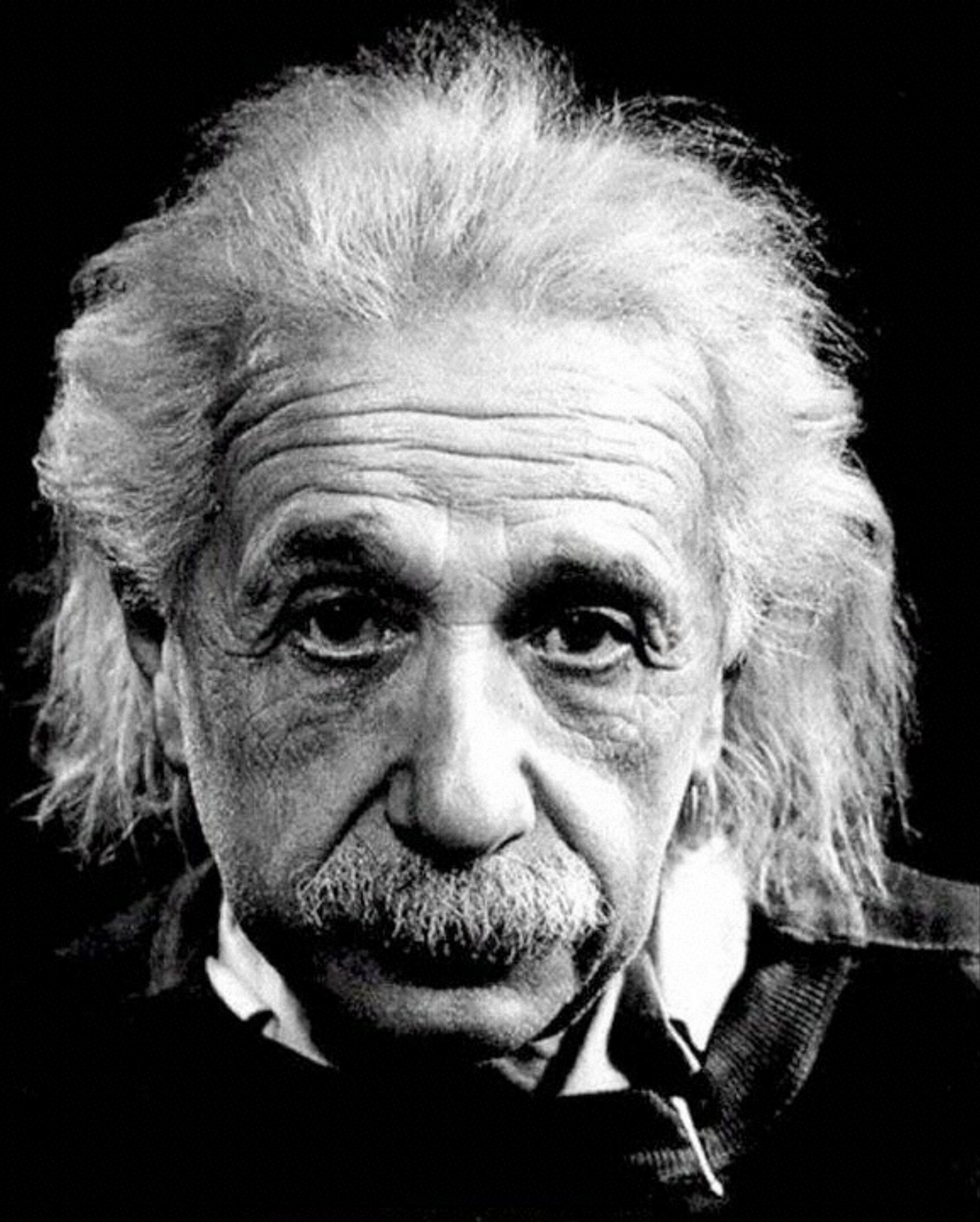




What's

tough?





**The
answers
have
changed**



Four Needs

1. Safe

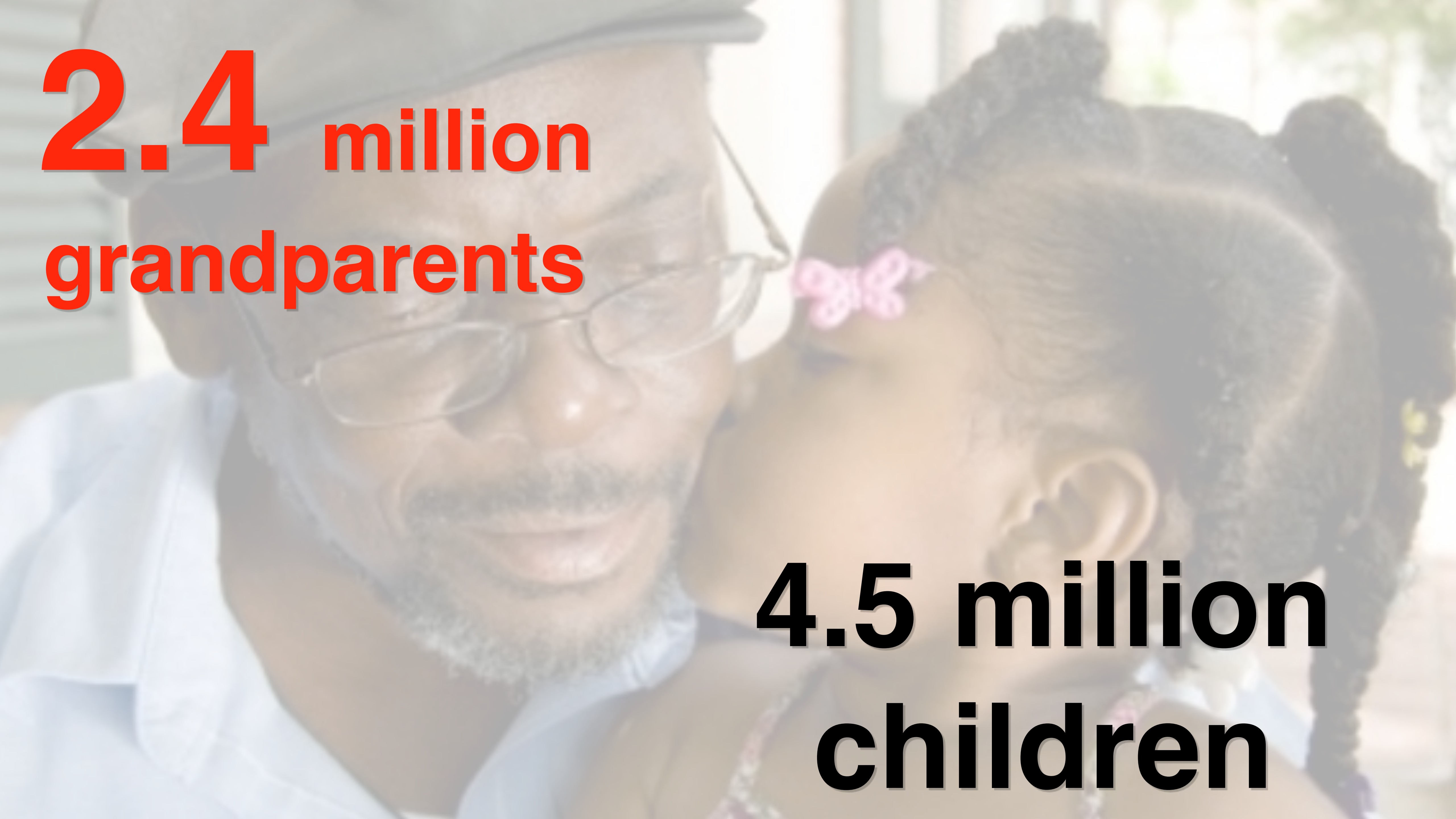
2. Seen

3. Soothed

4. Secure

34 %
Single
Parents





**2.4 million
grandparents**

**4.5 million
children**



< 2 hrs/day

Face Time



> 9 hrs/day
Screen Time



< 10 min



< 7 min



Together

Alone



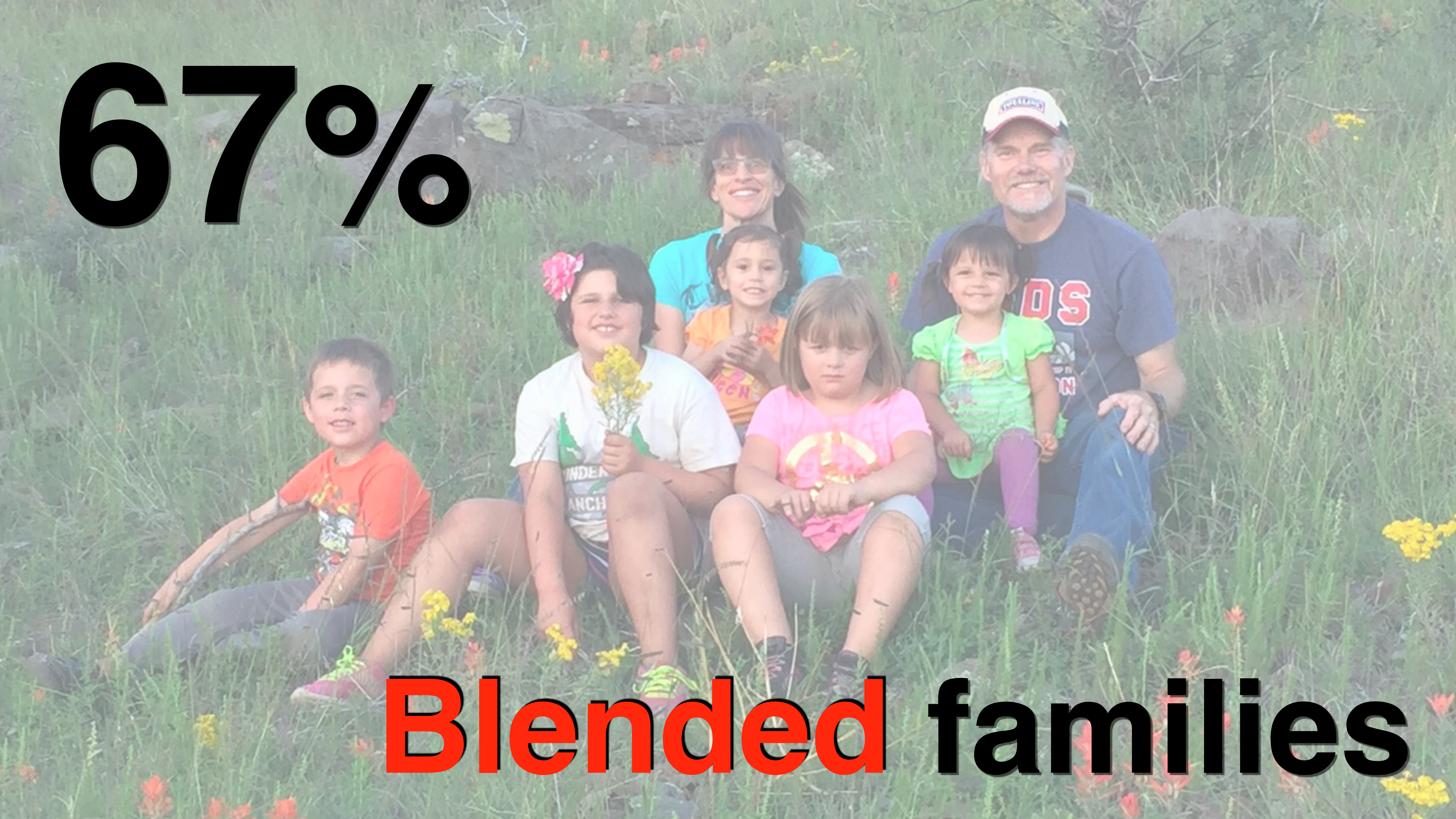
The background of the image features faint, light gray silhouettes of a man and a woman. The man's silhouette is on the left, and the woman's is on the right. They are facing each other, with their heads tilted slightly towards the center. The overall tone is soft and somewhat somber, reflecting the subject matter of the text.

45%

Divorce

67%

Blended families



Foster Care

397,122





2.5 million

Adopted

59%





125,000

TRUE

FALSE

**Many teens who self
harm are
“pre-suicidal”**

False

1 in 4

Self Injure



**1 out of 10 Teen Girls has a
diagnosable Eating Disorder**

False

Eating Disorders

1 in 4 teen girls



**Nearly 5% of teens
have a Major
Depressive Episode in
High School**

False

Depression

1 in 8 teens



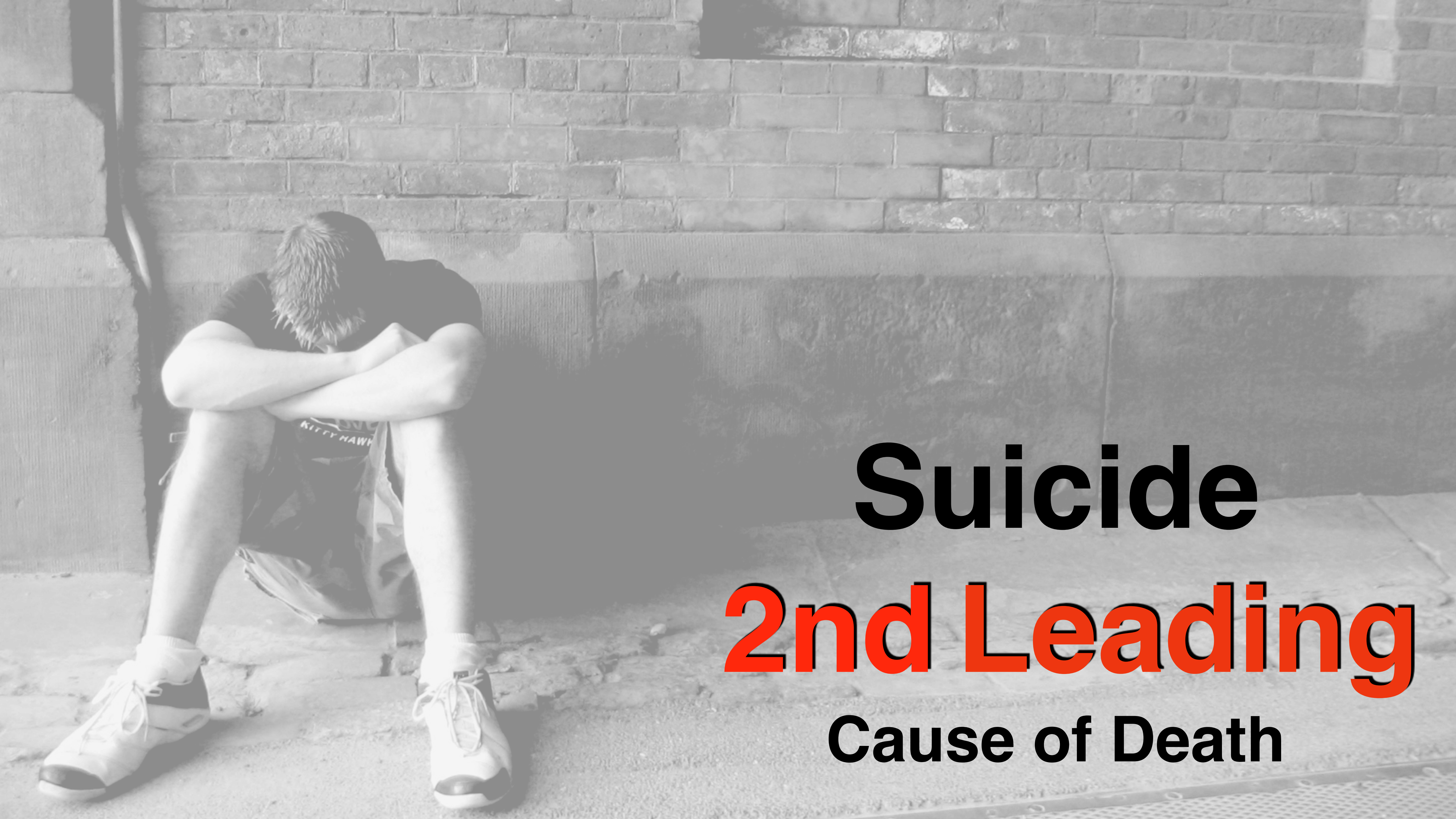
Depression

1 in 5 get help



**Suicide is the 4th
leading cause of
death in adolescents
today.**

False



Suicide

2nd Leading

Cause of Death

**Whites and Hispanics
have the highest rates
of suicide.**

False

**More than half of young
people with a mobile device
have sent or received a sext
message**

True



50% Sext

> 50%

**Unhealthy
Relationships**



**Anxiety can cause
depression**

True

Anxiety

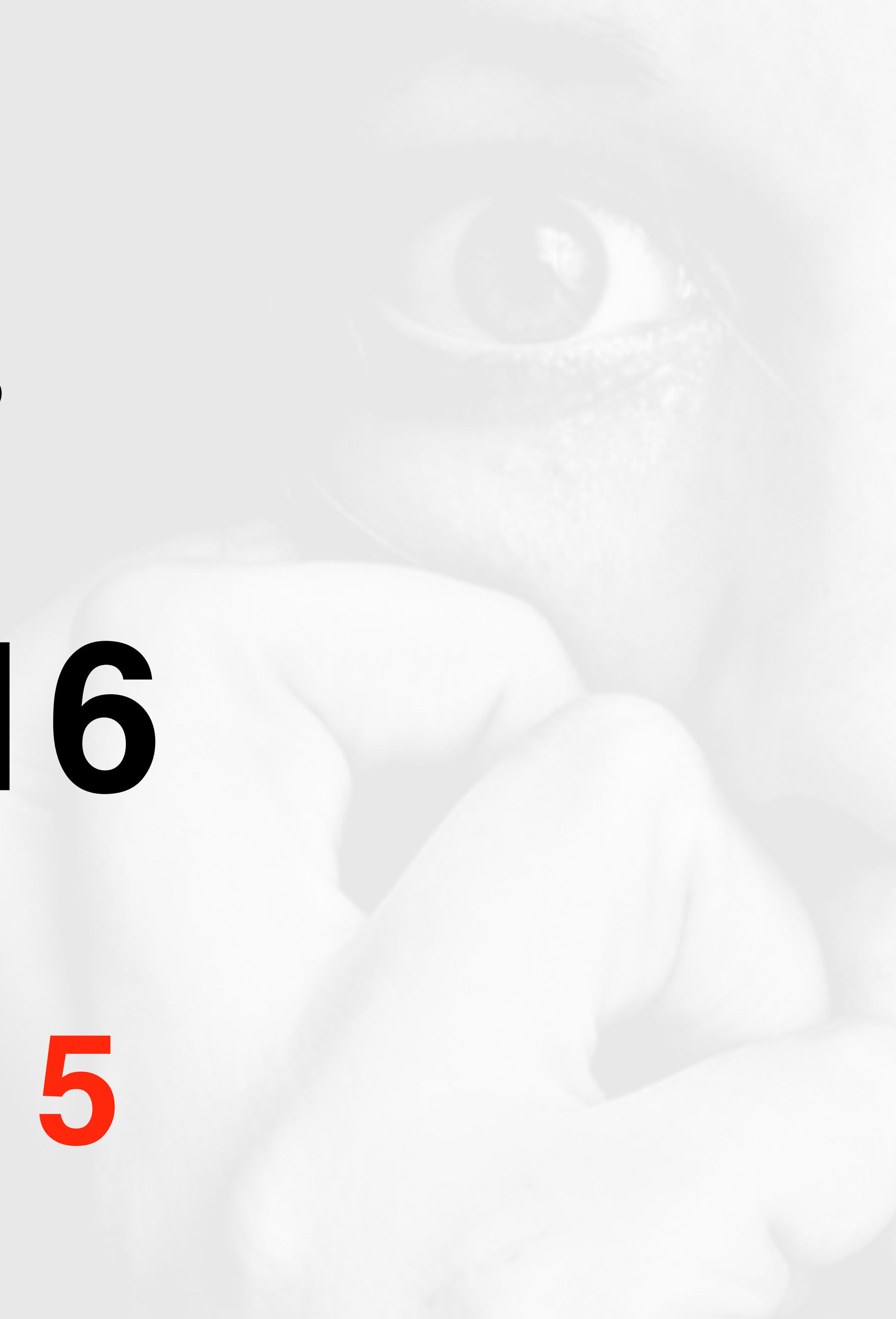
Ages 12-17 years

2006

1 in 10

2016

1 in 5



**Why are kids
hurting
more today?**





Political Climate

LINE
COM



POLICE LINE - DO NOT CROSS - CRIME STOPPERS (702) 385-5555 / WWW.CRIMESTOPPERS.COM



Terror and Violence



Pressures



Uncertain Future



Parental Issues



Attachment



Less Play



Less Resilient

Insufficient Resources





160,000

Bullying



Lack of Failure

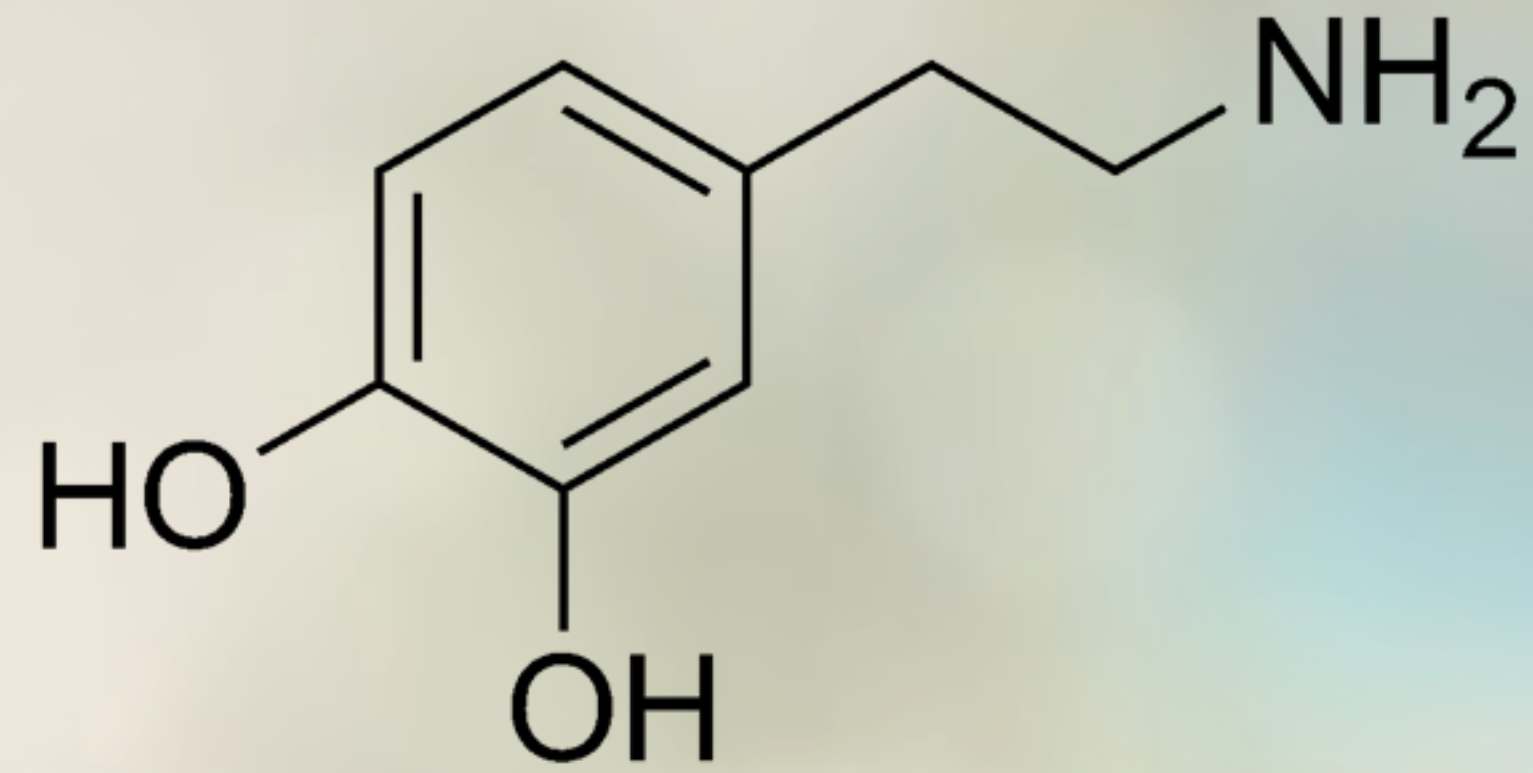


Social Media

“I don’t think we realize how much it’s affecting our moods and personalities,” he said. “Social media is a tool, but it’s become this thing that we can’t live without but that’s making us crazy.”

~ 18 yr old male

Dopamine





The Young Brain

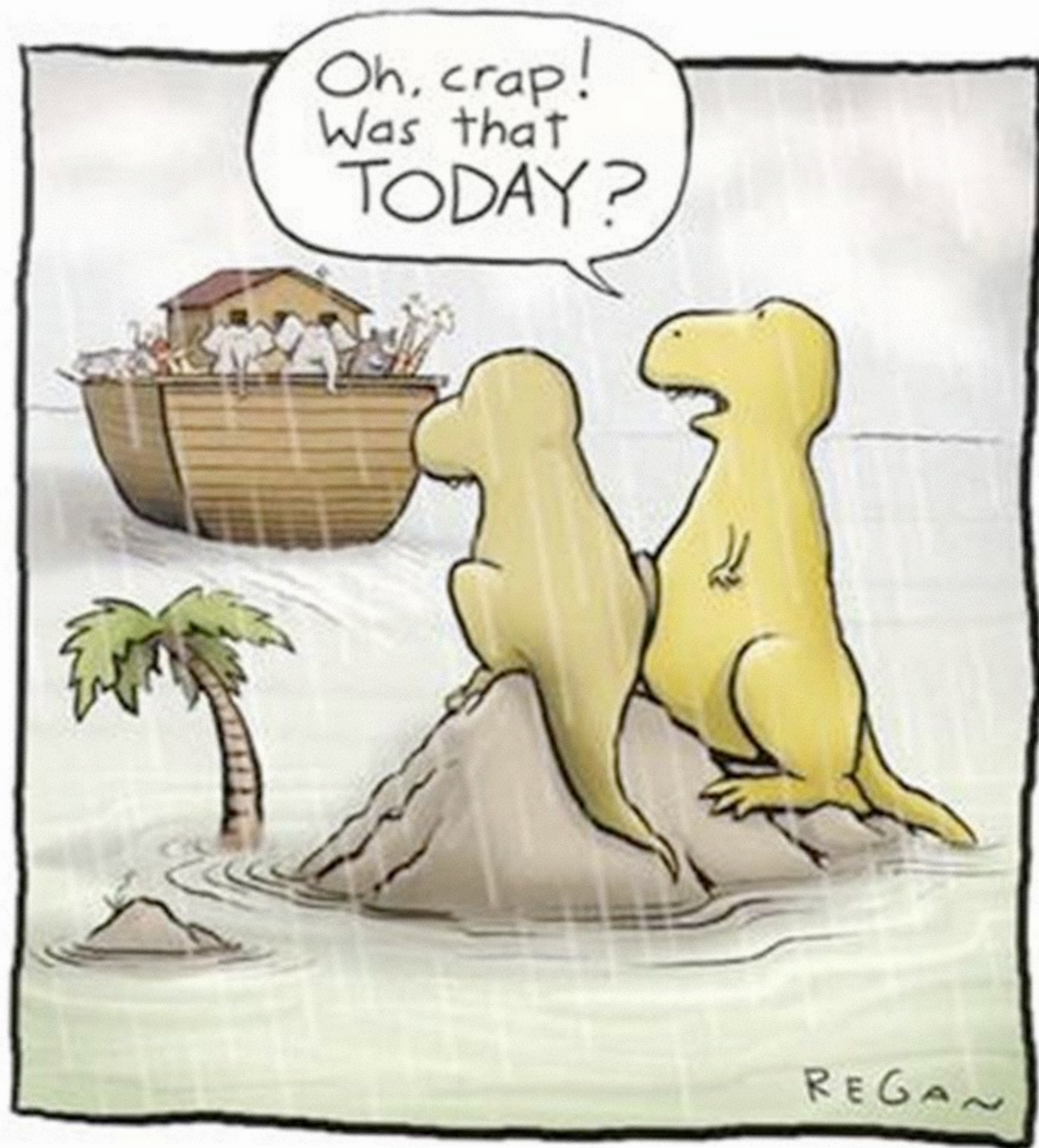


***Neurons that
fire together,
wire together***

Teen Brain

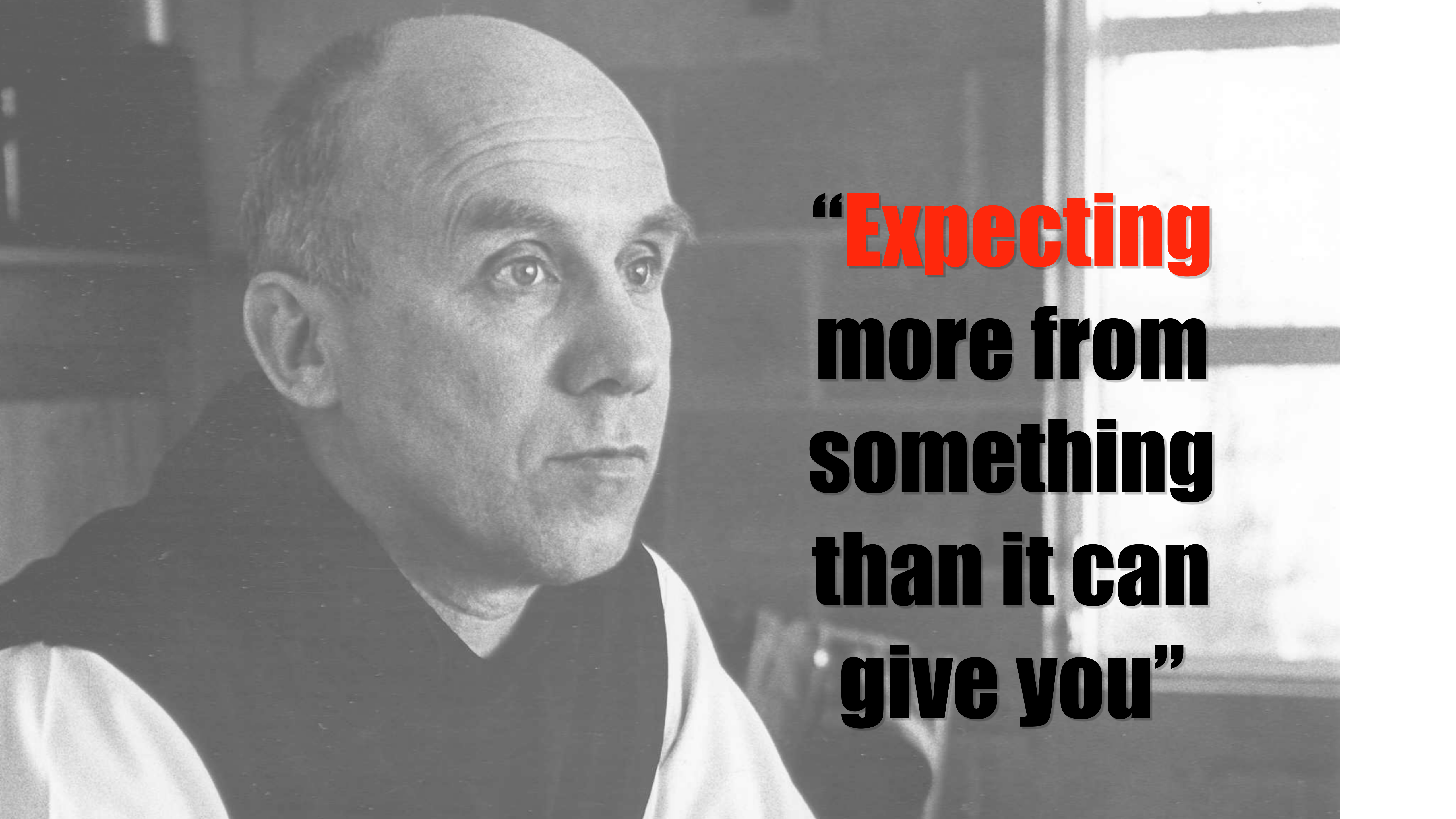


- **Thrill seeking vs. Rational**
- **Explosive new growth**
- **Produces more dopamine**
- **More sensitive to dopamine**
- **More prone to addiction**
- **Weaker “stop” signals**



Oh, crap!
Was that
TODAY?

REGAN



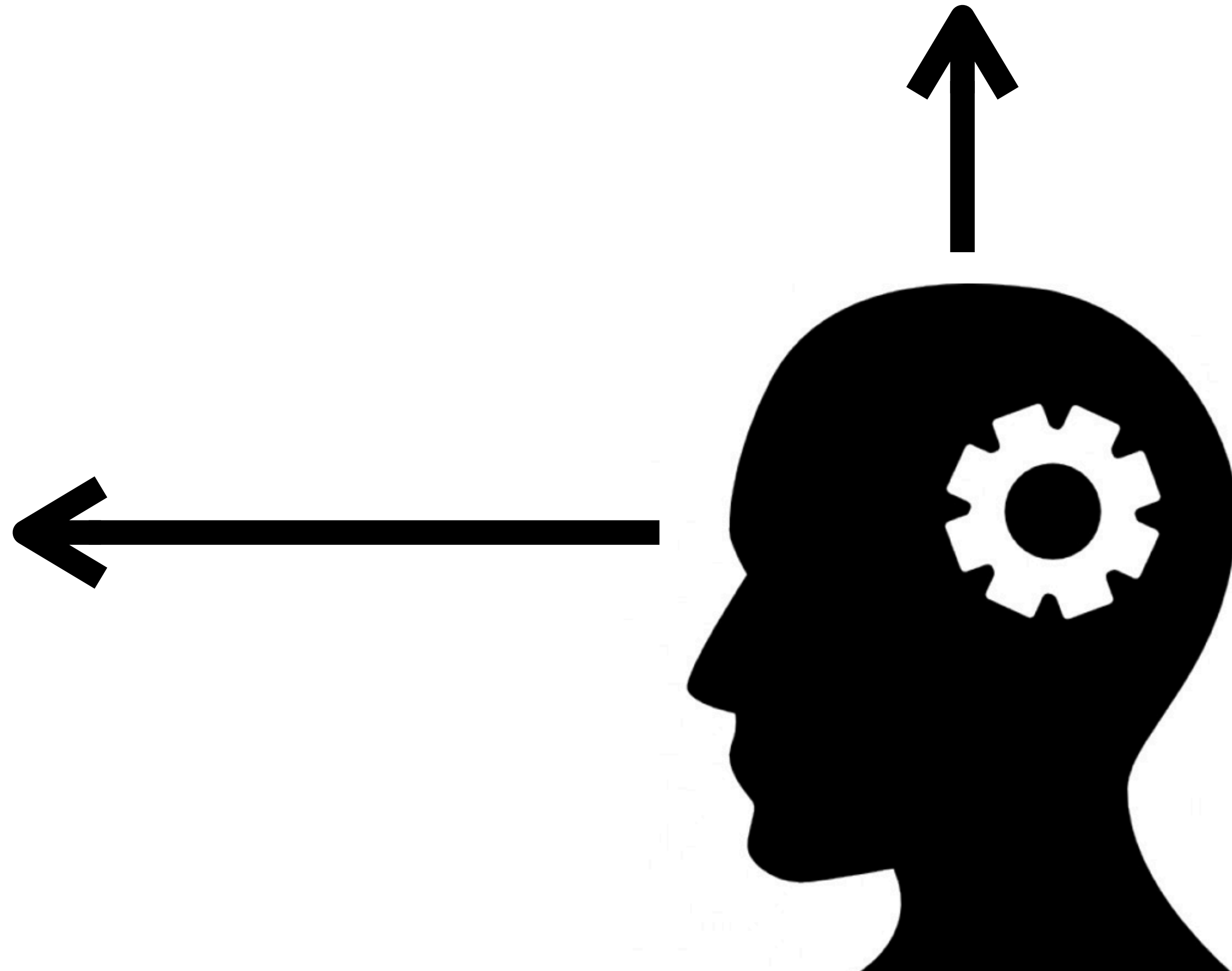
**“Expecting
more from
something
than it can
give you”**

What is **Anxiety?**



Worst Conclusions

Ambiguous
Data



**What does
anxiety
sound like?**



Anxiety Synonyms

- Stress
- Worry
- Nervous
- Fear
- **Apprehensive
- **Overwhelmed



“I just can’t take the pressure anymore. I can’t be perfect. Would people just understand that?”

~10th grade boy with GAD, stomach ulcers, premature hair graying

**“My stomach turns every time
I think about going into the
cafeteria...all those people?”**

~6th grade girl with Social Anxiety D/O

**“I just keep hearing the
sound of the bullets. What if
someone like that comes
here?”**

~3rd grade boy with secondary stress/trauma from
incessant media viewing of Mandalay Bay Massacre

“I just keep picturing my mom and dad (who I love and know love me) killing me and **roasting me over a spit”**

~6th grade boy with intrusive thoughts - beginning signs of OCD

“I hate getting out of the car in the morning. My stomach is always flipping and flopping”

~4th grade girl with symptoms of Separation Anxiety D/O

“If you only knew how much pressure is on me to get into a good college. I know it means *everything to my future...but at this rate I may not be around in the future...*”

~11th grade girl (17yrs) - suicidal thoughts after discovering she only made a 30 on the ACT

**“I only made a 35 on the ACT.
My whole life I’ve dreamed of
going to MIT. And now I don’t
know. I feel hopeless.”**

~Senior Boy (17yrs)

“I’ll get really hot, and my chest tightens. I know if I could just get to the bathroom and cut **i’ll calm down and feel better.”**

~5th grade girl with GAD

**“I’m scared that if I do stop
worrying something really
bad is going to happen.”**

~8th grade boy GAD

**What does the
Parent's brain
sound like?**

“I know I should ask for help... I really don't know why I don't reach out. I guess I'm afraid I'll look like a bad parent. Crazy huh?”

~Parent of Junior boy

“I just feel like it’s my **obligation to give my son the experiences I wish I’d had when I was his age. It doesn’t seem like he wants ‘em though...”**

~Dad of Sophomore boy - complaining that his son was spoiled and entitled

“I’m scared that if I push him to act in spite of his anxiety he’ll hurt himself and **if I let up, he’ll never face his fears...I’ll just enable him to be a victim of his anxiety.”**

~Parent of Junior boy

“If I don’t make her participate in these activities, she won’t have a shot at getting into a good college....which means everything for her future.”

~Parent (47yrs) of teen who had a suicide plan

“But she asks me to do all these things. I’m not forcing them on her. I’d be delighted if she brought home a B...”

~Parent of Sophomore girl who began having panic attacks in
Geometry

**“I see everyone else’s teens have
it together. Sometimes
I feel like we’re the only
dysfunctional family in town.”**

~Parent of Junior boy using Marijuana to medicate his stress and
anxiety

**“It seems like my kid is doing OK.
Am I missing something?”**

~Parent of a Junior Girl

Anxiety **Types**

- Generalized (GAD)
- Social (SAD)
- Separation
- Trauma (PTSD)
- Agoraphobia/ Spec Phobias
- Panic



Anxiety: **Signs and Symptoms**

- Stress (**Chronic**)
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Self Injury
- Depression / Suicidal Thoughts
- Apathy
- Dishonesty

Anxiety: **Signs and Symptoms**

- Fidgeting
- Picking (skin)
- Nail biting
- Stomach ache
- Hair pulling
- Panic (attacks)



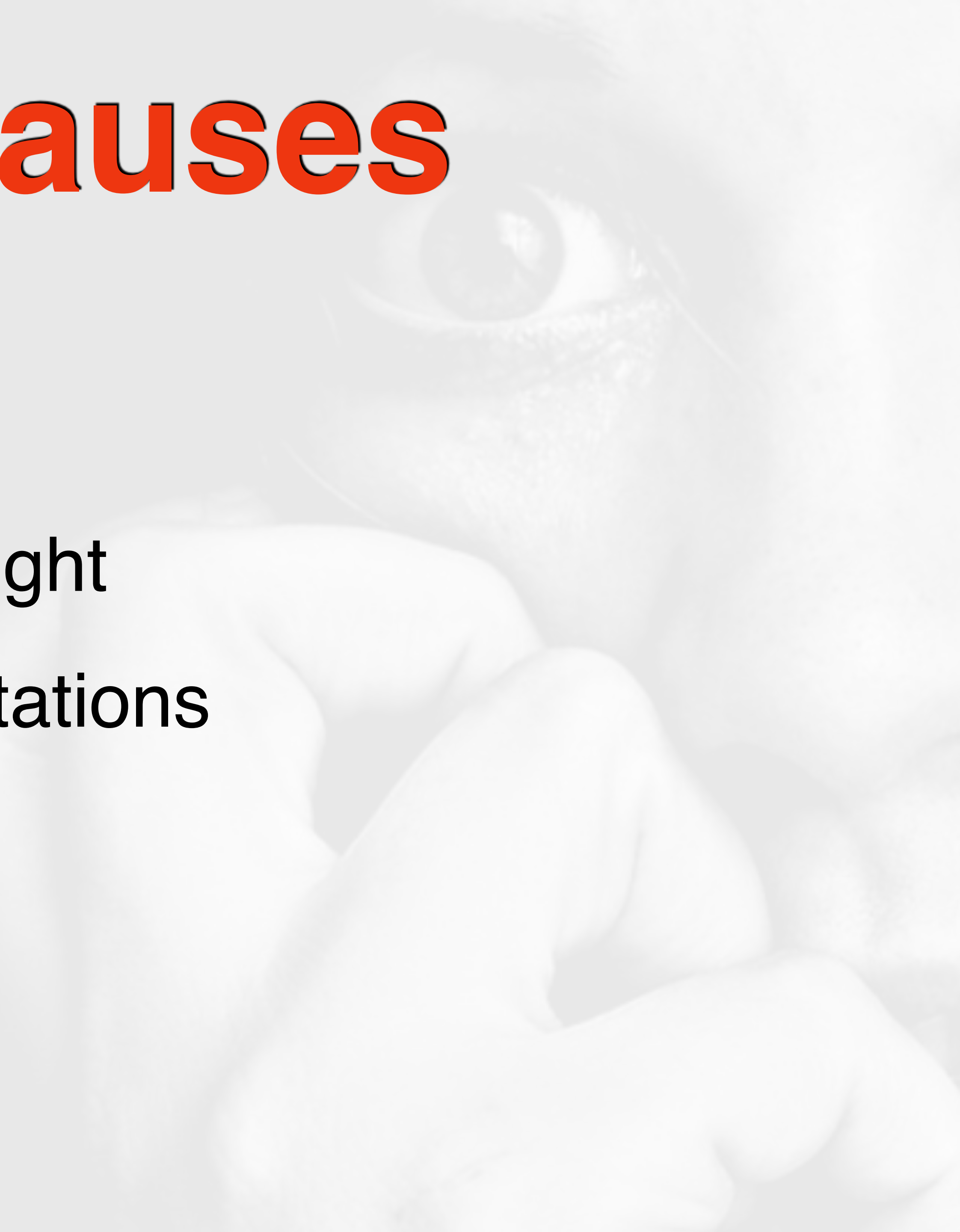
Anxiety: **Signs and Symptoms**

- Obsessions
- Counting
- Hand washing
- Lock checking
- Constant reassurance
- Perfectionism



Anxiety Causes

- Genetic
- **Over involvement**
- **Chronic Stress** —> Fight Flight
- Unrealistic/ Unshared Expectations
- Media
- Future/career
- Decreased Self Efficacy

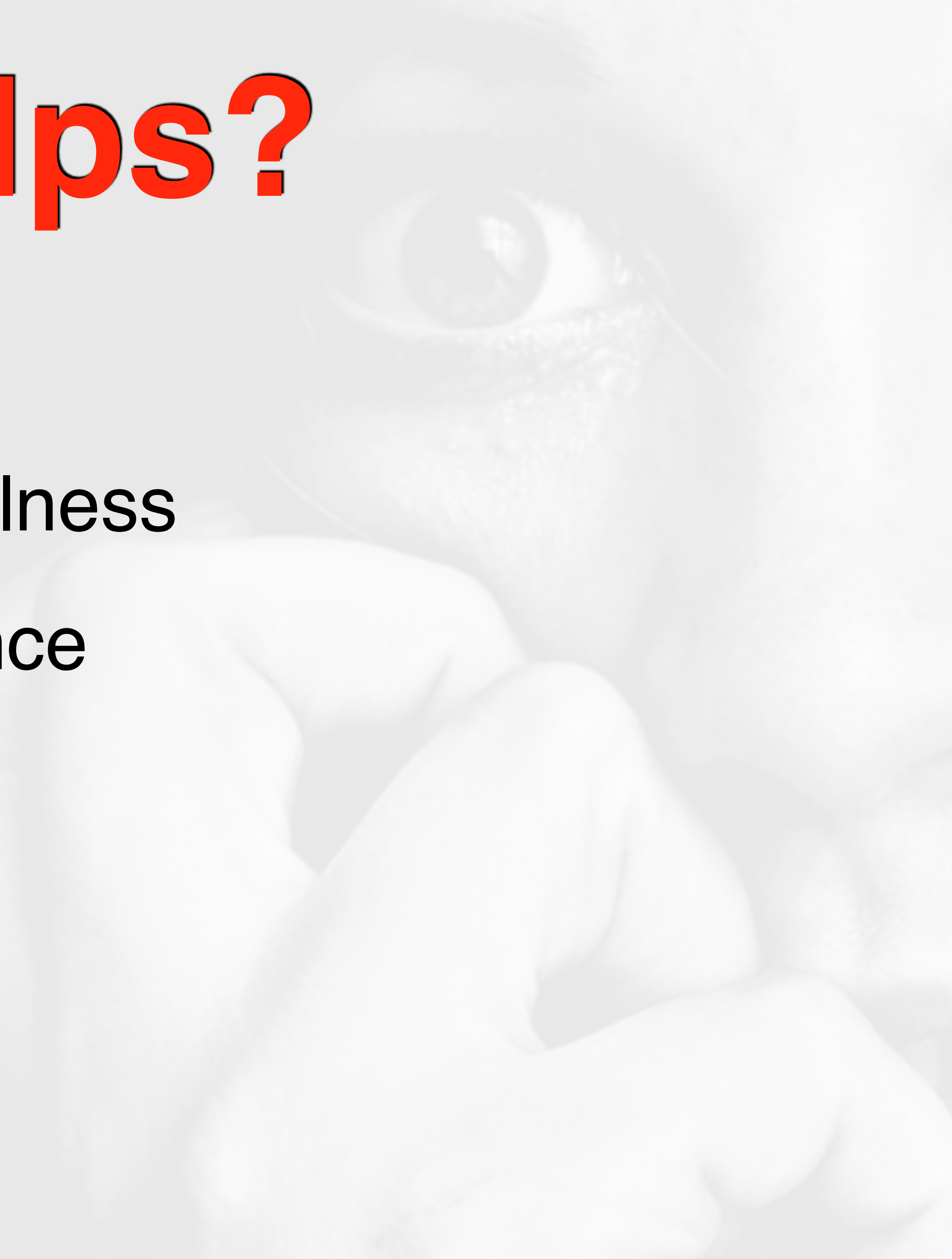


What **Helps?**

- Noticing
- **Listening**
- Reflecting observations
- **Validating** their experience
- Structured and Unstructured “No-Tech” **Play**
- Opportunity for Reflection

What **Helps?**

- Relationship
- Ritual, Faith, Prayer, Mindfulness
- Encourage Being and Balance
- Expose the Broader Pattern
- Modeling
- Physical Exercise



What **Helps?**

- Teaching **Self Soothing**
- Prioritizing
- Help youth say “no”
- **Unplug** (electronically/geographically)
- Consistency, predictability, routine
- Exposure

What Can We Do?

- Modeling
- Supportive-Challenging relationships
- Communication/Empowering Parents
- EQ Activities —> Self Awareness, Empathy
- “Normalize” Failure
- Teach/Model Self Soothing

What Can We Do?

- Explain your dilemma to child/parent
- Suggest/mandate counseling
- Ask for release to speak with counselor
- Visual Mapping
- Mindfulness practices (breathing, focus)
- Encourage more physical play

A grayscale photograph of a person sitting at a desk, leaning forward with their head buried in their hands. The person is wearing a dark hoodie. The background is a bright, overexposed window with a view of a city skyline. The overall mood is one of despair and exhaustion.

Depression

“I know that my life is made up of moments. Right now, **there’s just too many moments...and none of them are any good. If I could only make it to where there were no moments...”**

~Senior Boy (17 yrs) with passive suicidal ideation

**“I don’t know if I’ve ever
been happy. So I guess I
don’t really know what it
means to be happy.”**

~2nd Grade Girl

“Mr. P—can you honestly tell me that as you look out at this world today, that it doesn’t scare the f&^% out of you. Why would I want to hang around for that?”

~Freshman Boy (14yrs) told parents he wish he were dead

Depression Types

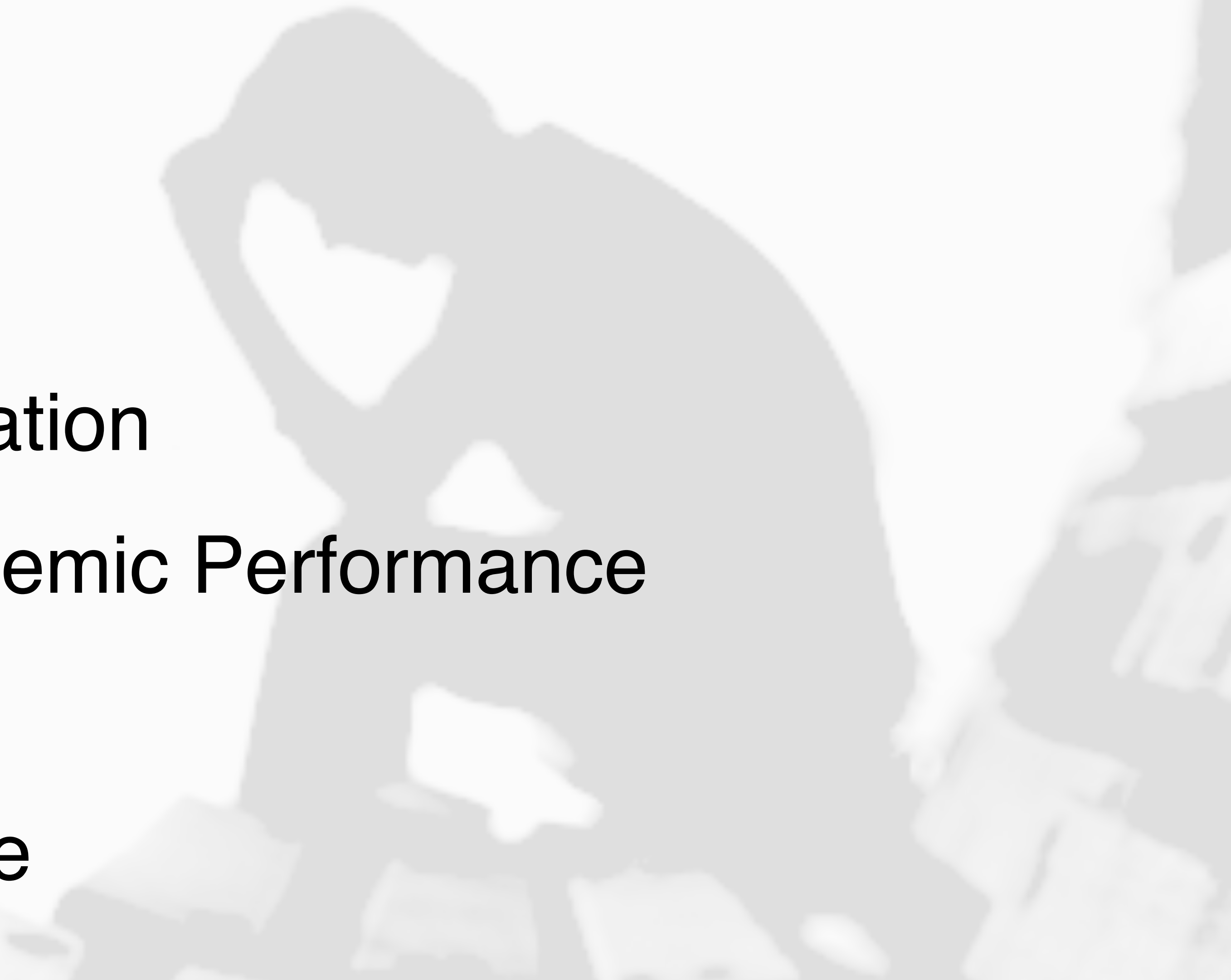
- Unipolar/ Major Depressive D/O
- BiPolar I/II
- Dysthymia

Is it **Depression** or **Sadness**?

- Severity
- Suddenness
- Frequency



Depression Symptoms

- Sadness
 - Irritability
 - Withdrawal/ Isolation
 - Decreased Academic Performance
 - Loss of Interest
 - Substance abuse
- 

Depression Symptoms

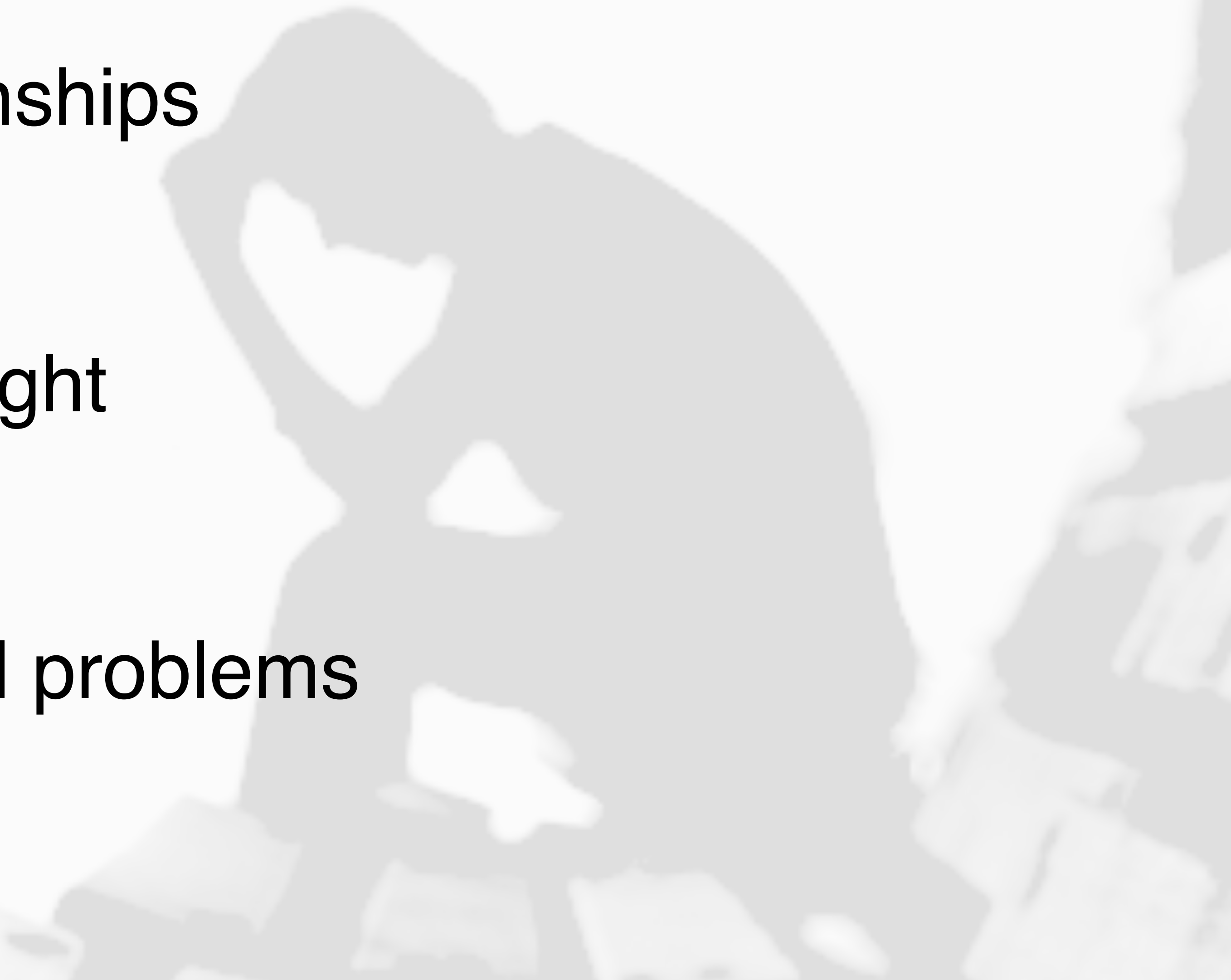
- Sleep (hyper/hypo)
- Appetite (increase/loss)
- Aggression/ Recklessness
- Illegal activity
- Suicidal thoughts (active/passive)
- Concerned Friends or parents

Depression Causes


- Genetic
- Immobility
- Lack of adequate sunlight
- bullying
- Anxiety
- Prolonged stress




Depression Causes

- Abusive Relationships
 - Trauma
 - inadequate sunlight
 - Family problems
 - Social/Relational problems
 - Grief/ loss
- 

What **helps?**

- Asking and Talking
 - Physical Exercise
 - Sunlight & Nature
 - Vitamins (E/D3/B-Complex)
 - Therapy
 - Medication
- 

What **helps**?

- Socializing
 - Comedy
 - Journaling
 - Boundaries & Accountability
 - Ritual, Prayer
 - Routine/Variety
- 

**“It just feels like a heavy,
hot, wet blanket on top of
me”**

~6th grade Boy describing the mood he was
in when he had obsessive suicidal thoughts



Resilience

Resiliency

**Normal
Emotional
Spectrum**



Fostering Resilience

- Allow “safe” failures
- Intervene after consideration
- Emotional de-escalation
- Teach self soothing
- Set and break down realistic goals
- Define and Re-define “success”



Teen

Relationships

Unhealthy Relationships

- > 50% adolescents
- Manipulation, control, invasive —> Uncomfortable
- Asking for passwords, tracking, threatening suicide
- Had technology used against them (rumors, sending images w/o permission)
- Pressured to “hook up” / have sex

Unhealthy Relationships

- Over-disclose too early
- Around the clock affairs
- Feels “close” (transparency, loyalty) but coercive, intrusive and manipulative
- Enmeshed - “No Boundaries”

Healthy Relationships

- Trust
- Emotional and Physical Safety
- Honest, frequent face to face communication
- Appropriate commitment and disclosure
- Emotional before consensual physical intimacy
- Close friends outside relationship

Healthy Relationships

- Honors need for alone time
- Mutual respect
- Appropriate Spiritual Intimacy
- Healthy Transparency

What to Refer?

- Check parish/ diocesan policy
- Suicide (ideation)
- Self Harm
- *Gender Dysphoria
- Serious Substance Abuse
- Addiction/Dependency
- Abuse
- Eating Disorders
- Abusive Relationships
- Rape/ Sexual Assault
- Trauma

Don't be afraid to Consult

When to Refer?

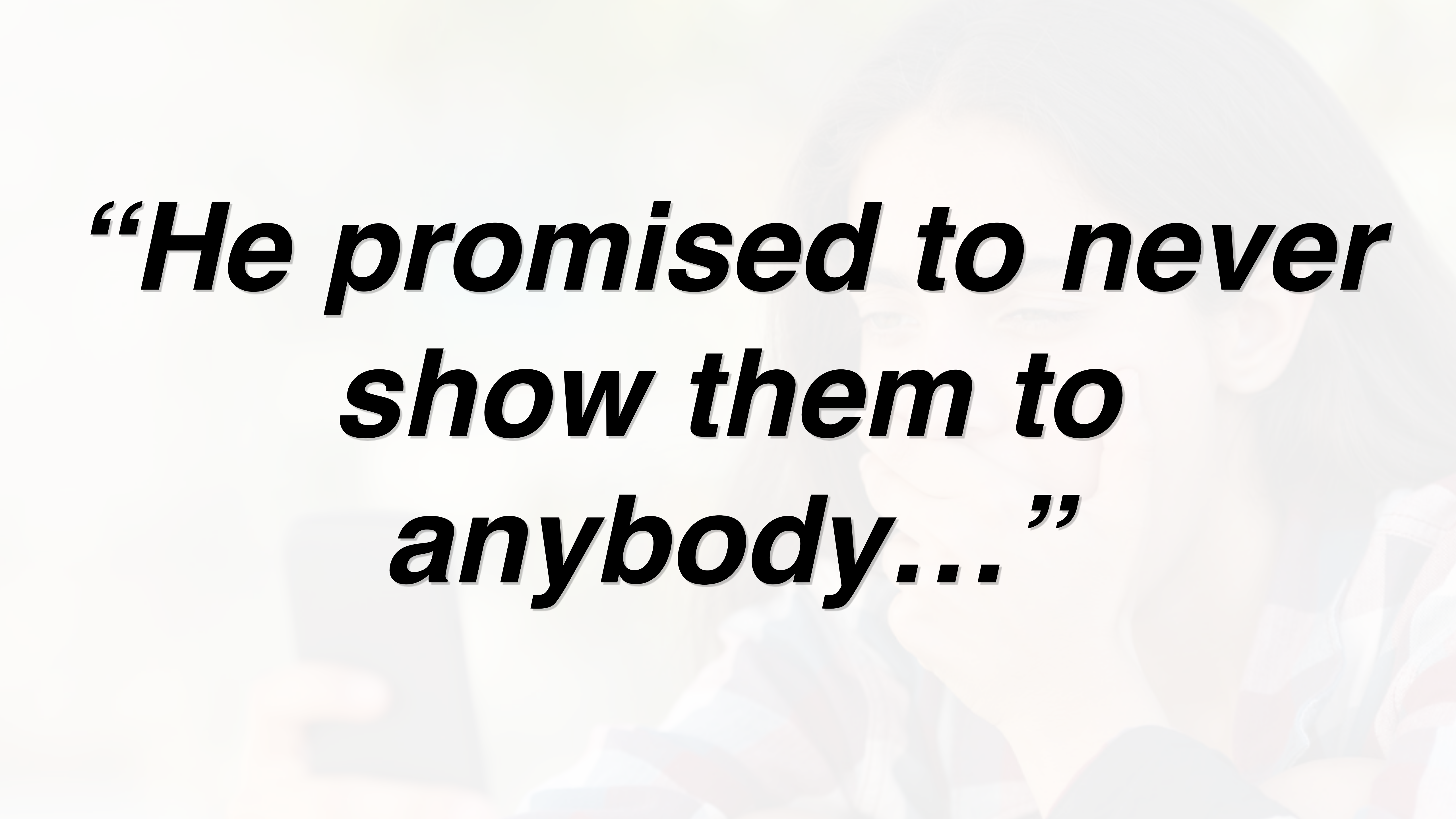
- In over your head
- Gut Sense
- Lack confidence in parents
- Chronic
- Symptoms worsening
- Potential for severity
- Asks /hints for help

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a woman's face as she looks down at a smartphone held in her hand. The lighting is soft and natural, highlighting her features. The background is out of focus, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with a window or light source.

Sexting

Sexting Effects

- Suicide
- Depression
- Self worth
- Anxiety
- Self Harm
- Eating D/O
- Future
- _____?



***“He promised to never
show them to
anybody...”***

***“How could I have known
my friend would take my
phone and send out
those pics?”***

“When I promised her that, I meant it. But when she cheated on me I was so mad. It felt right to send her nudes...”

~Sr. Boy explaining his decision after finding out his ex was in critical condition after attempting nearly completing suicide

“Yeah, I kept them, but didn’t ask her to send me those pics, she just did it. It’s not my fault.”

~17 year old High School Junior talking to his parents after being arrested for possession of Child Pornography

“My parents finding those pics on my phone was the worst day of my life. I’ve never seen my mom so...disappointed.”

~Freshman Girl

Me: “Why did you ask her for nudes?”

Teen: “Because my friends kept after me about it. When they asked to see mine and I told ‘em I didn’t have any, they said ‘What are you? A Faggot?’”

~Sophomore Boy

Pressures

- Seen as “girls throw themselves at me”
- Don't know how to say no and save face
- “I've already seen you nude in person”
- Double standard girls and guys

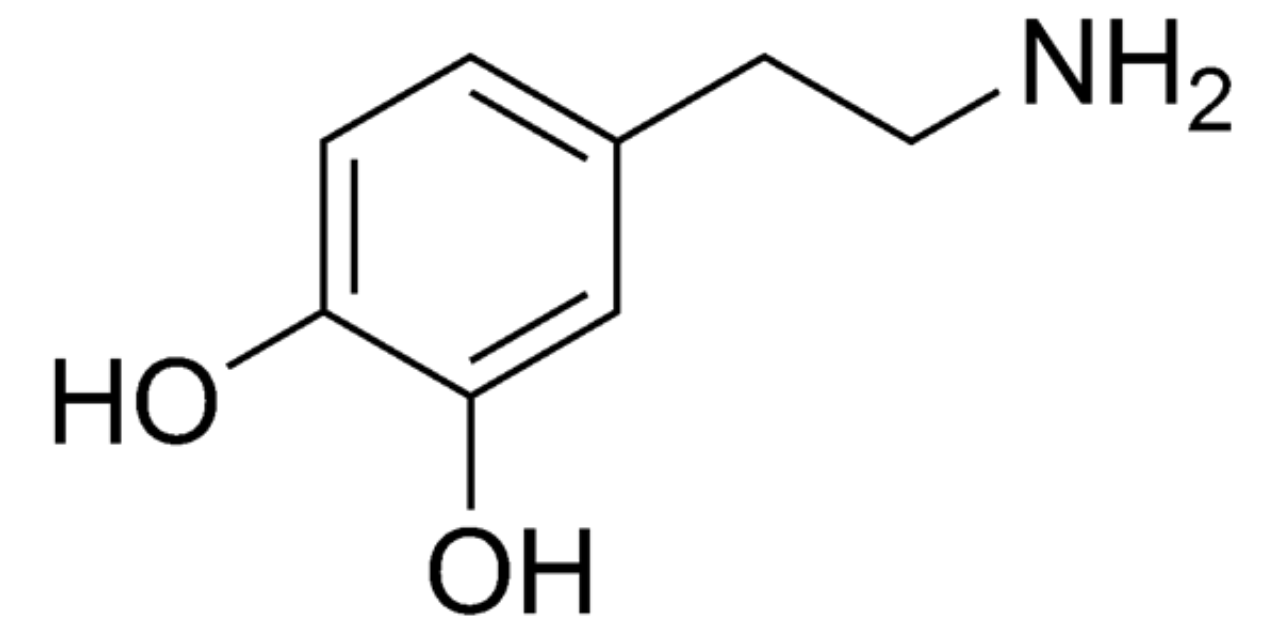
Pressures

- Need to be liked/accepted
- To fit in
- Not be seen as a prude

Pornography



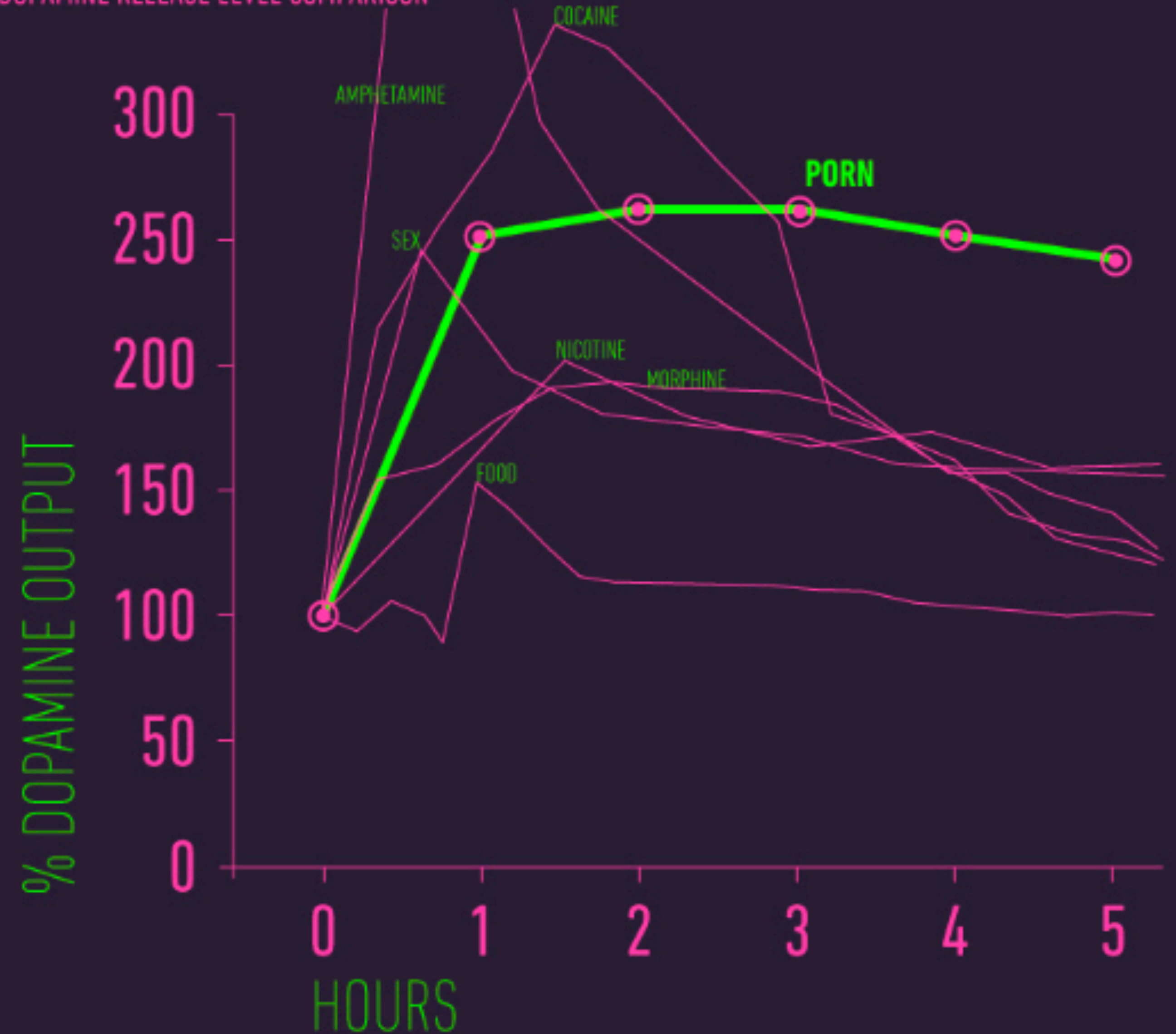
Dopamine



Dopamine Levels

PORN

DOPAMINE RELEASE LEVEL COMPARISON



“Women don’t turn me on unless they’re 2-D and behind my computer screen.”

~25 yr old Male recovering from porn addiction

***“‘Alien’ is how I’d describe
how it felt to have sex with a
real woman. It felt artificial...
foreign to me.”***

~23 yr old Male discussing relationship problems and porn use

“After years of porn, trying to have sex with a real person was like trying to shoot free throws with a football.”

~21 yr old Male discussing effects of porn use



Teen Brain On Porn



***Neurons that
fire together,
wire together***

Porn Sexuality...

- Alone
- Voyeuristic
- Shock and Surprise
- Multiple people, images, tabs
- Fetishes
- Continued seeking and searching

Effects

1. Dopamine dependent
2. Skewed sense/experience intimacy
3. Neural confusion—Oxytocin and Vasopressin
4. Depression
5. Shame —> Isolation

Do's and Don'ts

- **Don't** nag your teen
- **Do** communicate/reinforce clear expectations and consequences
- **Don't** assume they're making good decisions
- **Do** consult other parents w/ shared values

Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** check your kids phone/online habits
- **Do** listen to what your kid's friends are doing
- **Don't** parent by "Everyone else is doing it."
- **Do** LISTEN three times as much as you speak.
- **Do say 50% less than you want to**

Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** set up monitoring software
- **Do** google “work arounds”
- **Don't** assume your child has the “will power” to make the right decision w/ Technology.
- **Do** get counseling/ help if you're not sure what to do.

A blurred background image showing a woman looking at a smartphone while a child looks on. The text is overlaid on this image.

Approaching Parents



Parental Resistance

A blurred background image showing a woman and a child looking at a smartphone together. The woman is on the left, looking down at the phone, and the child is on the right, looking towards the camera. The overall tone is soft and intimate.

“I want to feel like the expert on my kid.”

Under the **Surface**

- Busy
- Scared
- Own unresolved issues
- Asking for help = failure
- Permissive swing
- Dizzy with Change
- Confused
- Isolated
- Want “success” for kids
- Want the “best” for kids

What **Helps?**

- Validation
- Affirmation
- Education
- Empathy
- Listening
- Challenge

What Hurts?

- Patronizing
- Condescending
- Insulting (in/direct)
- Judgmental

Practice Empathy

- **Shock** - “I can’t believe this! How could this be happening to *my* child???”
- **Denial** - “This didn’t happen, did it?”, “Please tell me I’m dreaming and I’ll wake up soon.”
- **Shame** - “I’m such a bad parent. I’m the *only* parent whose child is suicidal”



In light of recent
events, **NO OREOS**
will be allowed in
the library.

Practice **Empathy**

- **Partial Acceptance** —> To child —> “How could you feel this way...After all we’ve given you?”
- **Anger** - “Now I’ve got to deal with this on top of everything else.”
- **Confusion** - “How could this have happened on my watch? Why didn’t I see it?”
- **Ambushed** - “This came out of nowhere...I thought I knew my kid.”



What Teens
Want You
to Know

(but won't tell you)

Roy Petitfils

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Understand | Reach | Influence



Today's
Teenager

PODCAST

with Roy Petitfils



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Fostering Resilience

- Allow “safe” failures
- Intervene after consideration
- Emotional de-escalation
- Teach self soothing
- Set and break down realistic goals
- Define “success”

Sources- Teens, Families and Technology

- [https://www.common sense media.org/
plugged-in-parents-of-tweens-and-
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Sources- Teen Mental Health

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- <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html>
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Sources- Teen Mental Health

- <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers>
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Sources- Sexting and Porn

- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272015427_Youth_Sexting_Prevalence_Rates_Driving_Motivations_and_the_Deterrent_Effect_of_Legal_Consequences
- <http://www.guardchild.com/teenage-sexting-statistics/>
- <https://www.yourbrainonporn.com/adolescent-brain-meets-highspeed-internet-porn>

LGBTQ Youth



Terminology

L=Lesbian

G= Gay

B = Bi Sexual

T = Transgender

Q = Queer/Questioning



Issues for Teens

- 1. Period of identity development** learn to understand who we are amidst often drastic changes in our physiology and personality and social interactions
- 2. Part of our identity development is our sexual identity** - who we are as sexual beings - which is not simply relegated to our appetites, or drive for sexual (intercourse) fulfillment, but our sexual expression (which overlaps and includes gender),
- 3. Dressing Room** —more options in the dressing room because of increased societal comfort around different sexual orientations and gender identities.
- 4. Heightened rate of mental illness for adolescents** in LGBTQ spectrums for various reasons--feeling trapped, misunderstood, unable to “come out”, keeping a secret, lack of acceptance, shaming and the stress that comes with reconciling within one’s self and feelings of orientation and identity that are in discord with one’s body and the cultural expectations for them.
- 5. Razors edge need to stand out and fit in**

Issues for Teens

1. Adolescence is a time when we learn that we are “good” where we learn that who we are is acceptable, good, enough, worthy.
2. It should be a time where teens can “try on” or experiment with different identities-and while not all will need to experiment with sexual orientation or gender, teens will experiment with dress, social groupings, behaviors, personality profiles.
3. Some of these they will keep because they resonate with who they are, some they will keep because they enable them to meet deeper needs such as belonging and acceptance

Issues for Teens

4. I've worked with many teens for whom LGBTQ was not a "choice" and for whom their identity as a gay, bisexual or transgender person was incredibly painful, not what they wanted for their lives, but who felt they could no longer remain sane if they continued to repress who they were.
5. I've worked with many teens for whom this was a phase. I don't say that in a demeaning way, but as a way of describing the transitory nature of their identity formation, of which, being LGBTQ was phasal, or impermanent.
6. Despite a growing body of medical and psychological research in these areas, we are still desperately lacking any conclusive direction from the hard sciences if this is something more medically driven or psychologically driven. At best today, we recognize that for many LGBTQ teens it is a question of not either/or but both.





Coherent



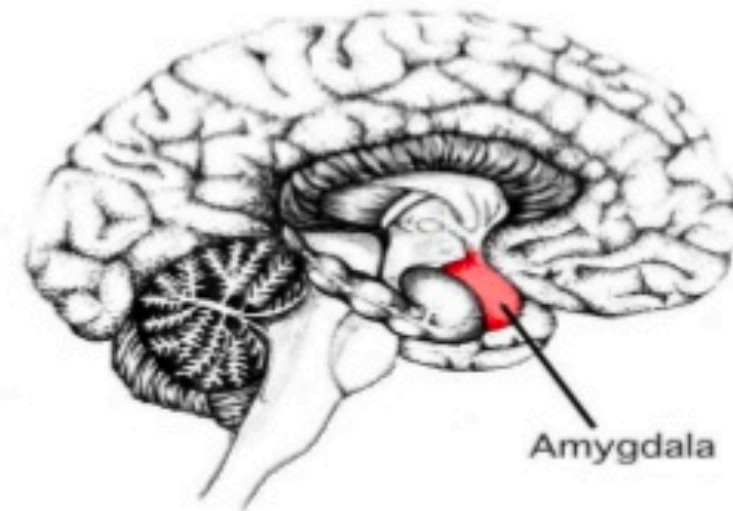
Adherent

Amygdala

of raw emotion

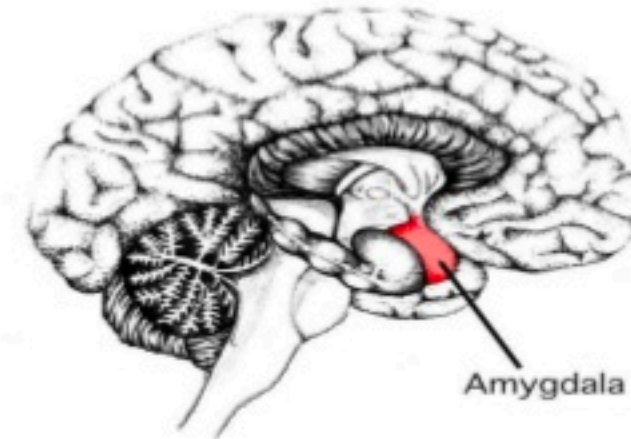
Its frontal lobe gathers information from amygdala and other parts of the brain in order to make decisions.

In adolescents the amygdala is accessed directly (instead of by pre-frontal cortex) when making decisions. Therefore many decisions are based upon "gut" feelings.



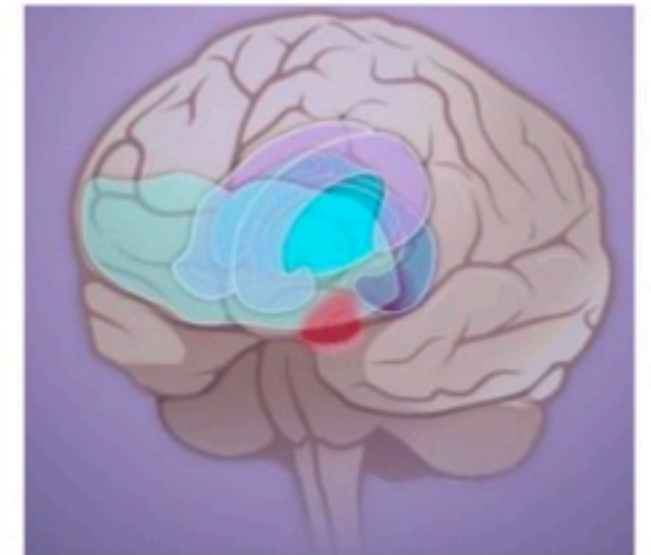
Amygdala

- In adolescents the amygdala is accessed directly (instead of by pre-frontal cortex) when making decisions. Therefore many decisions are based upon "gut" feelings.



Nucleus Accumbens

- While the control centers linked to the prefrontal cortex take their time to mature, the pleasure-seeking systems of other regions get a kick start in puberty and go into overdrive⁴.

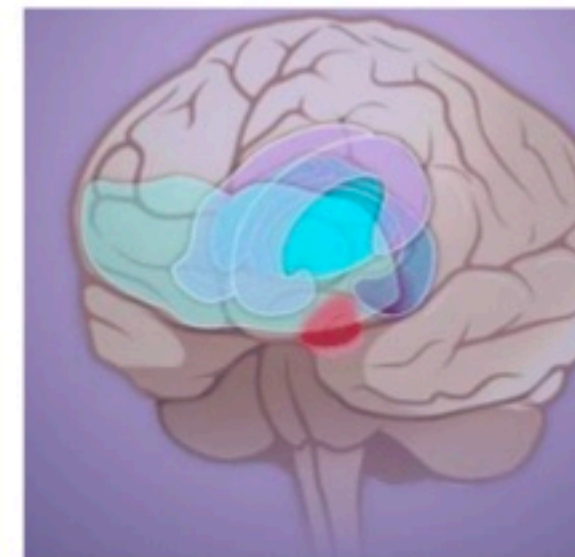


Nucleus Accumbens



The combination of the underdeveloped frontal lobe, weaker connections between the pre-frontal cortex and the rest of the brain, and the early development of the "reward centers" of the brain makes teens more likely to engage in

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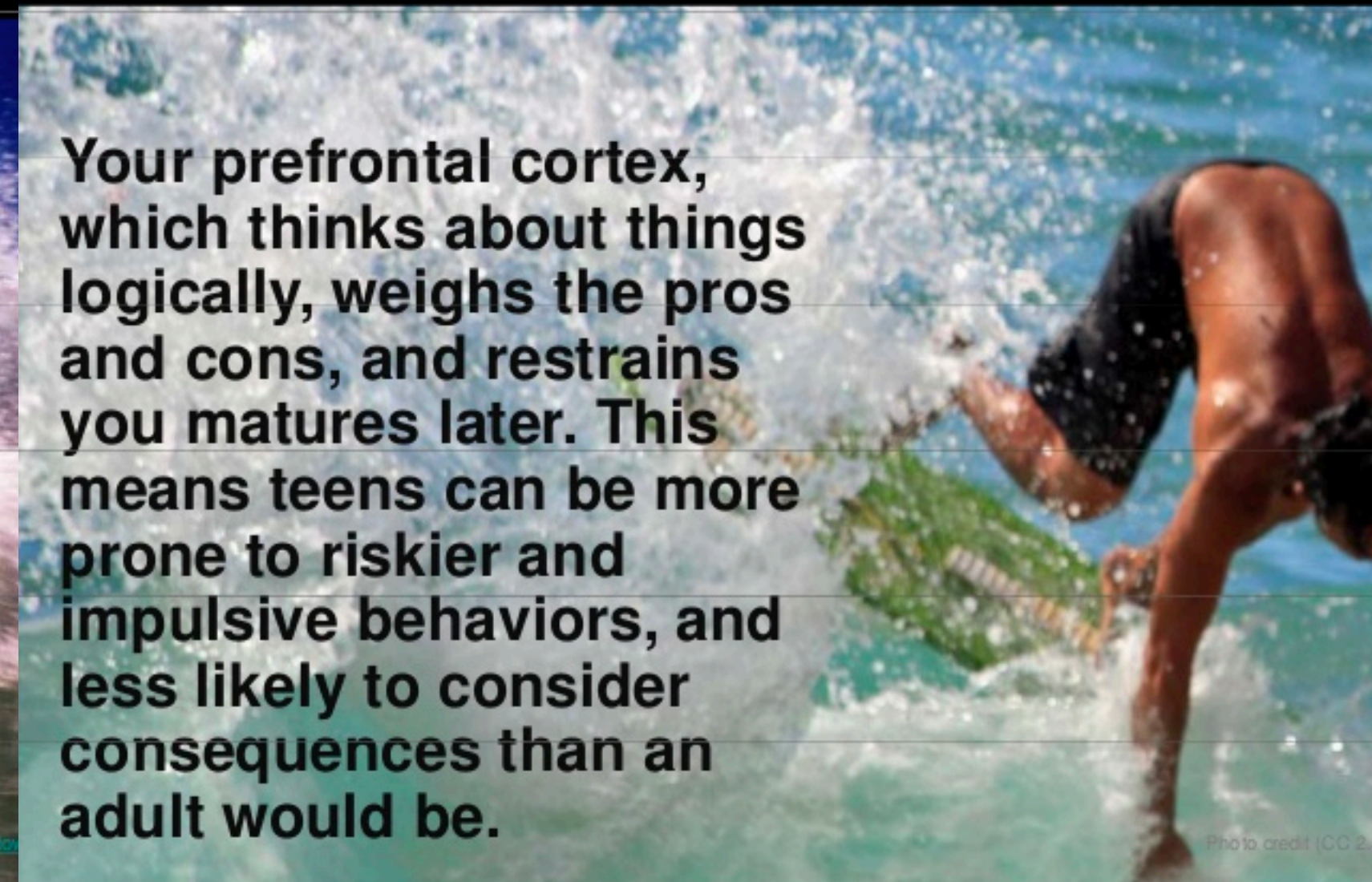
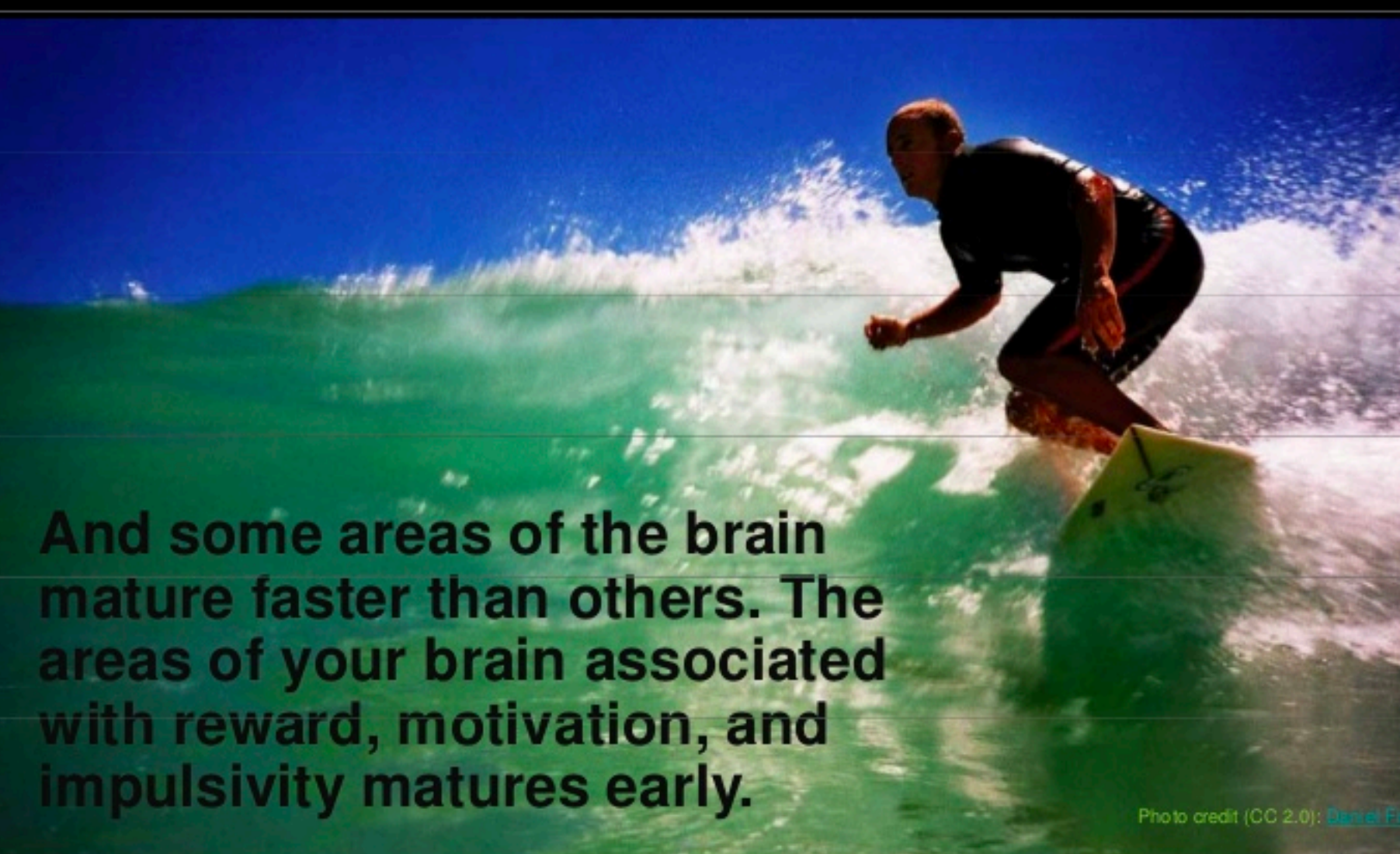
- Teens are much more prone to risk-taking/thrill seeking behavior.
- Teens are more sensitive to dopamine, although this process but it isn't completely understood yet.

2. Social Factors



- Gender Differences -- The portion of the brain that processes information matures about two years earlier in girls than boys.
- Interaction -- Teens are more likely to say hurtful things due to lack of inhibition (amygdala active instead of pre-frontal cortex). i.e. lack of 'censor.'

The Teen Brain is in a Constant State of Development



Risk and Reward

Important to take a step and realize that though not every risky choice will result in some will. It's not to know there's risk, you also understand the consequences. It could impact the way of your life in a *really* way.



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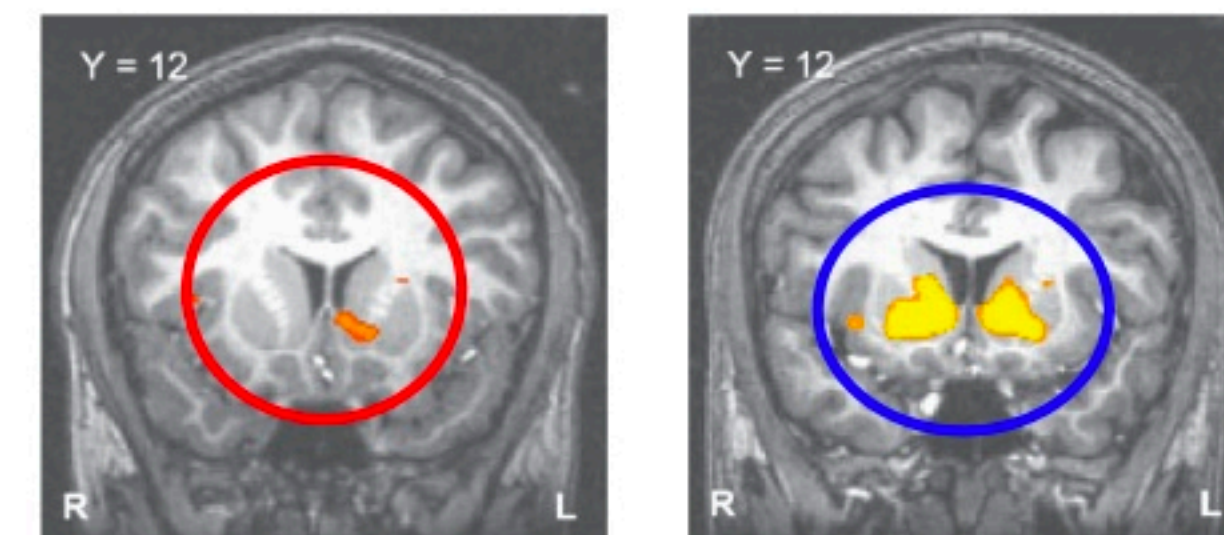
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MOTIVATION: Adults vs. Teens

One study looked at the differences in motivation between adults and teenagers. The researchers compared the brain activation of adults and teenagers while they were performing the same task for a...



Compared to **adults**, **teenagers** under-use the brain circuits that are involved in motivation!

MOTIVATION: "Get Movin' Kid!"

This under-use of the motivational system might be the reason why teenagers need extreme rewards to achieve the same level of brain activity as adults.

AND... the difference in brain activity between teenagers and adults can be even **LARGER** when the reward is not instant.

What does this mean for me??



Most teenagers are more likely to do their homework for a \$5 reward **TONIGHT** than for a \$50 reward next week!

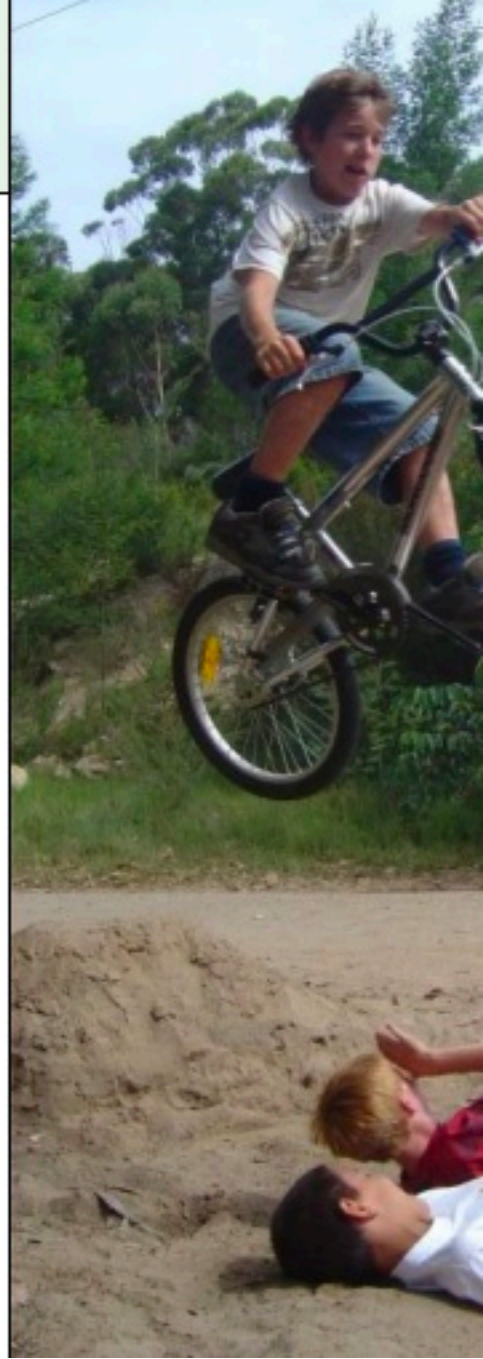
RISK-TAKING

Risk-taking might allow teens to:

- Explore adult behaviour and privileges
- Accomplish normal developmental tasks
- Learn from their mistakes

BUT, risk-taking carries potential for negative outcome!!

(Spear, 2000)



RISK-TAKING: Impulsivity

The teenage brain is less able to inhibit impulsive behaviours than the adult brain is. This means that in situations where an adult might stop themselves from acting out impulsively, a teenager might not.

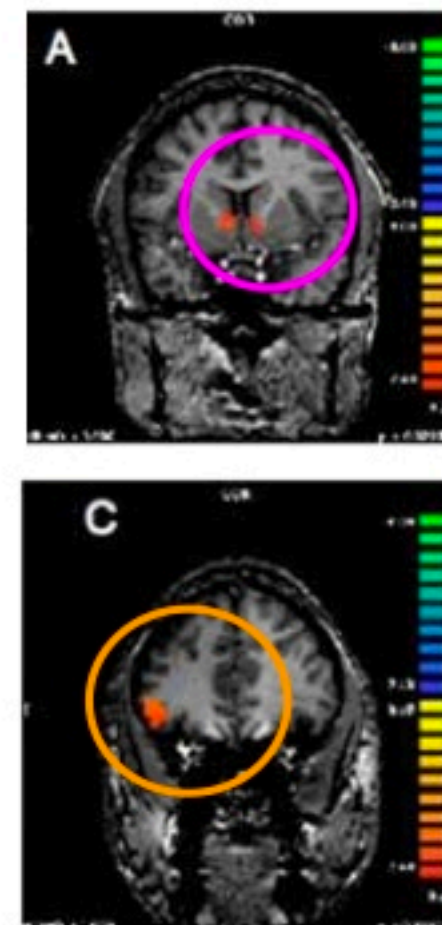
Luckily, as the brain matures, adolescents are more able to control their behaviour and are more able to voluntarily suppress impulsive behaviours.

This is because as the brain matures, **more brain circuits are recruited** to help suppress impulsivity!

The adult-like ability to inhibit behaviours matures gradually during childhood and adolescence, and efficient control of impulsive acts is not fully developed until adulthood!



RISK-TAKING: The neural basis for "What the heck were you thinking?!"



- When teenagers and adults are faced with potential rewards, their brains respond **VERY** differently.
- In teenagers, the maturing **"reward"** systems (photo A) are disproportionately active relative to later maturing **"control"** systems (photo C).
- This biases their actions toward immediate gain rather than long-term gain. This just might underlie some of the risk-taking behaviours that occur during adolescence!

Galvan et al. (2006)

When the brain is **not working properly**, one or more of its **6 functions** will be affected.

