Self-protection

- Keeping self safe
- Impact on professionals
Adolescence

- Period of transition from childhood to adulthood
- Physical, behavioural, cognitive, social, emotional & psychological changes
- A young person develops sexual maturity, an identity separate from parents, and a concept of the future
- It is a time of increasing emotional independence - occupation, values, relationships
Theories of Self – adolescent themes

- Conflict and renegotiation – family arguments, power struggles
- De-idealisation - Rules are the “invention of a deranged despotic parent”
- Depression and loss – “Heaven knows I’m miserable now”
- Egocentrism, grandiosity & self consciousness
  - Imaginary audience
- Significance, uniqueness & indestructibility
  - “I will never die”
- Mentoring and seeking ‘new gods’
  - Beckham, Cobain, Mandela, guidance teacher…

Harrop & Trower (2002)
Development is *dynamic*
What is complex trauma?

- Multiple traumatic events within a care giving system
- Repeated events that begin early in childhood
- All areas of child development affected
What is complex trauma?

- Can involve highly invasive traumatic events but does not have to
- Can involve exposure to repetitive childhood sexual, physical, and/or sexual abuse
- Not necessarily a consequence of sexual abuse
- Does not necessarily involve a traumatic “event”
Importantly, the trauma...

...is of an interpersonal nature
...is a process not an event
...is not likely to be seen as trauma because children who are neglected have no other reality
Traumatic dilemma

the situation in neglected or emotionally abusive families can be impossible to resolve for the child.

the child experiences a simultaneous strong urge to flee from the source of fear (the loved one) and flee to the attachment figure (same loved one).
Consequences

- Affect regulation & ability to self soothe
- Alterations in self-perception (self-blame, guilt) – incorporated into sense of self
- Alterations in relations with others (inability to trust others and lack of comfort/intimacy in relationships)
- Altered attention and consciousness (dissociative symptoms)
- Sense of helplessness resulting from the impossibility of being understood by anyone
Overall symptom picture

- Emotional lability
- Poor emotional regulation
- Relational instability
- Impulsivity
- Unstable self-structure

-post traumatic adaptation to severe childhood abuse & attachment trauma
Interactions

Abuse related memories, cognitions, affect

Absence of affect regulation capacities

Tension reduction behaviours
TRIGGER = RELATIONAL STIMULI

- Closeness
- Kindness
- Reliance
- Support
- Trust

=> all things we are trying to support in foster placements, therapy, key-working...
The 3 stage model

- Processing what's happened
- Staying safe and taking control (Past Present)
- Moving forward (Past Present Future)
Thank you for listening

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