A New Perspective on Children Who Struggle:

Flow and the Three Core Questions of Childhood

GOAL: To look at the story around children who struggle

- Stories are a way we organize our thinking and structure our awareness to make life understandable and *predictable* (people, events, meaning, etc.)

- Each child has his own story

  -The story is more than a child's reputation (other people's opinions) and is more than child's identity (opinion of self)

  -The story is an integration of the all stories that the child hears from others and all the stories the child carries within himself

Our Agenda

- To define, conceptualize and identify those things that effect "flow"
- To define the three core questions of childhood (the foundation upon which a child's "story" is based)
- To explain how "flow" affects how the questions are answered

Flow

- The ability to perceive and process information
- The ability to adapt one's behaviors based on available information
- The ability to maintain a sense of self and continue to interact with the environment constructively, and if not able to…
- The ability to access coping mechanisms

Information

- A type of input into the child
  - Sensory Input
  - Message
 - Influence which leads to transformation

Processing

- Processing is the perception, condensation, structuring, and assimilating of information in such a way that a response can be generated

- Processing forms the base that allows us to develop the story around what is happening so that we can respond

Components of Processing

- Perception
  - Exteroceptors
  - Interoceptors
  - Proprioceptors
- Discrimination/condensation
- Structuring (reasoning/judgment)
- Assimilating (incorporation of the experience of the input into an existing schema or development of new schemas)

The child with a processing problem may have difficulty structuring his world because he has difficulty accurately perceiving information, sorting between salient and unimportant stimuli, and/or associating stimuli with particular people, objects or experiences.
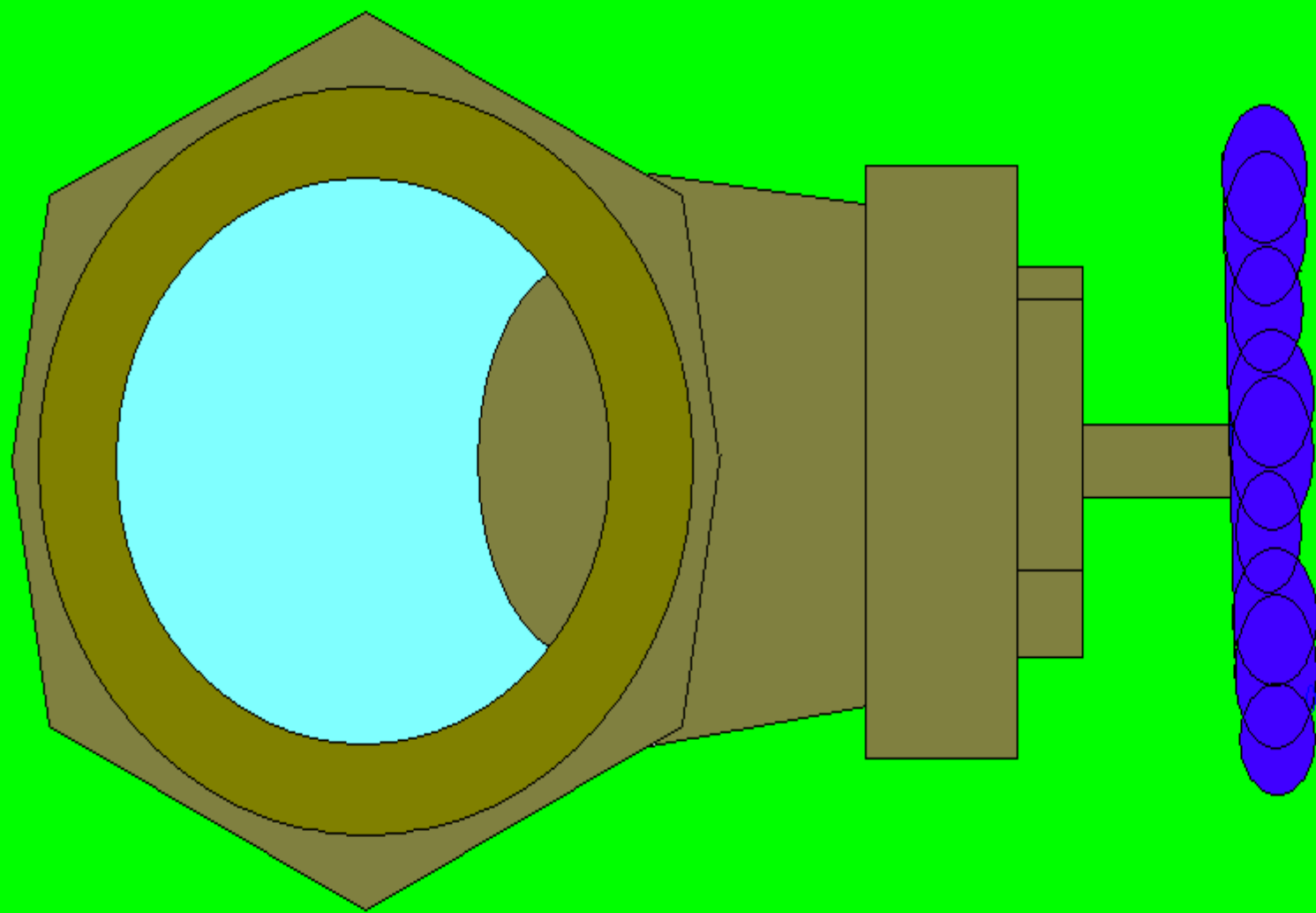
Flow and the Core Questions of Childhood

- Each child carries within them three core questions of childhood

- The flow of information effects how the questions are answered

- How these questions are answered greatly influences his/her behavior

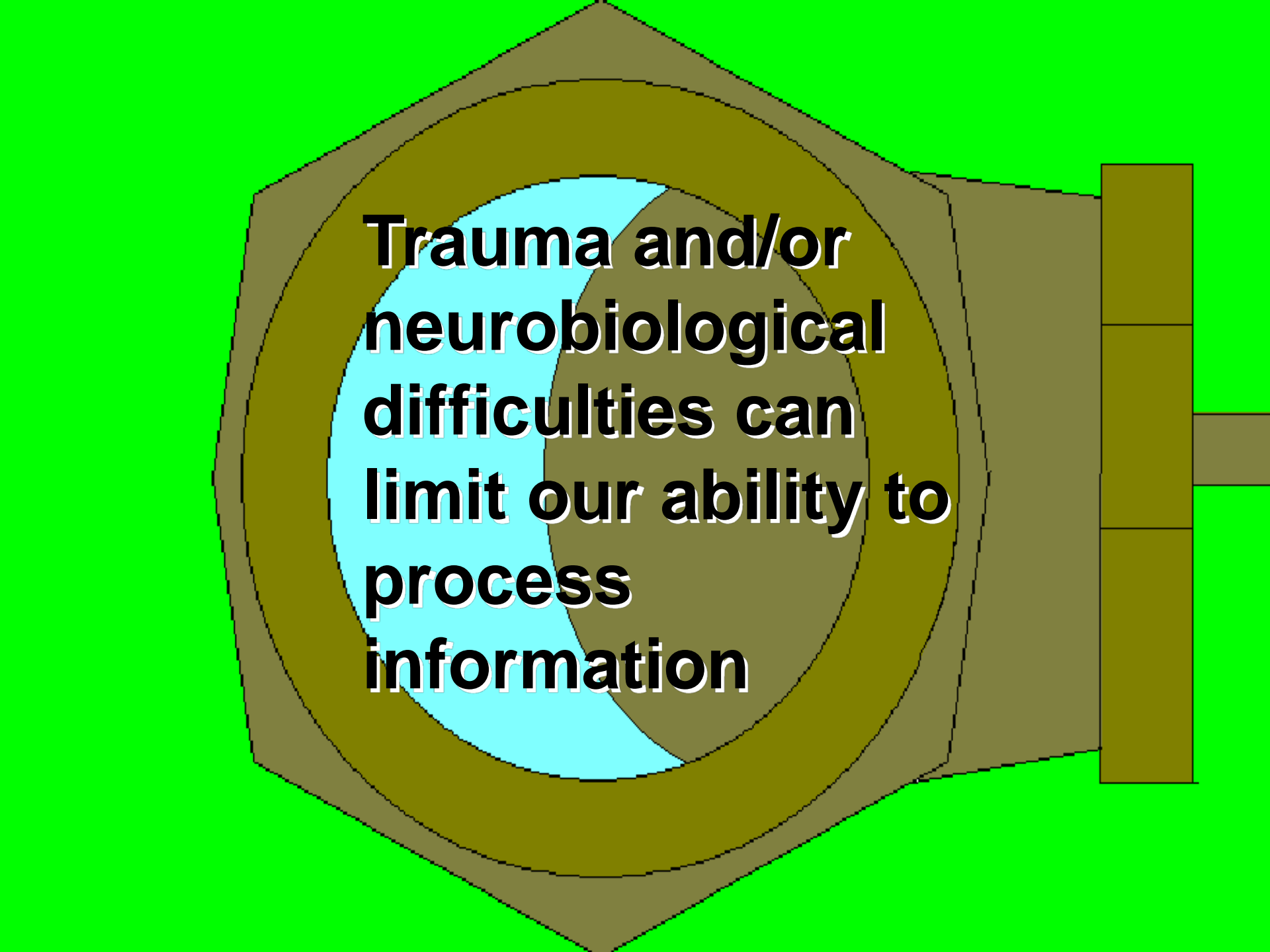- How these questions are answered influences the flow of information

When we have minimal trauma or few neurobiological difficulties, our ability to process is relatively efficient
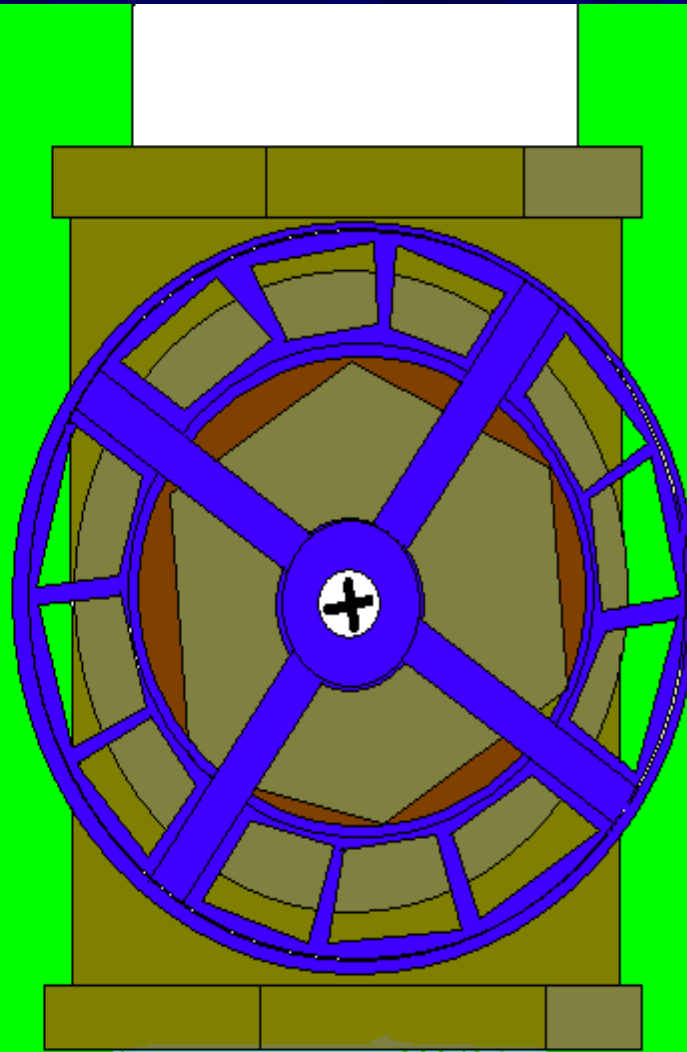
The individual is able to take in a lot of information and process it in such a way as to constructively respond and adapt to a situation.
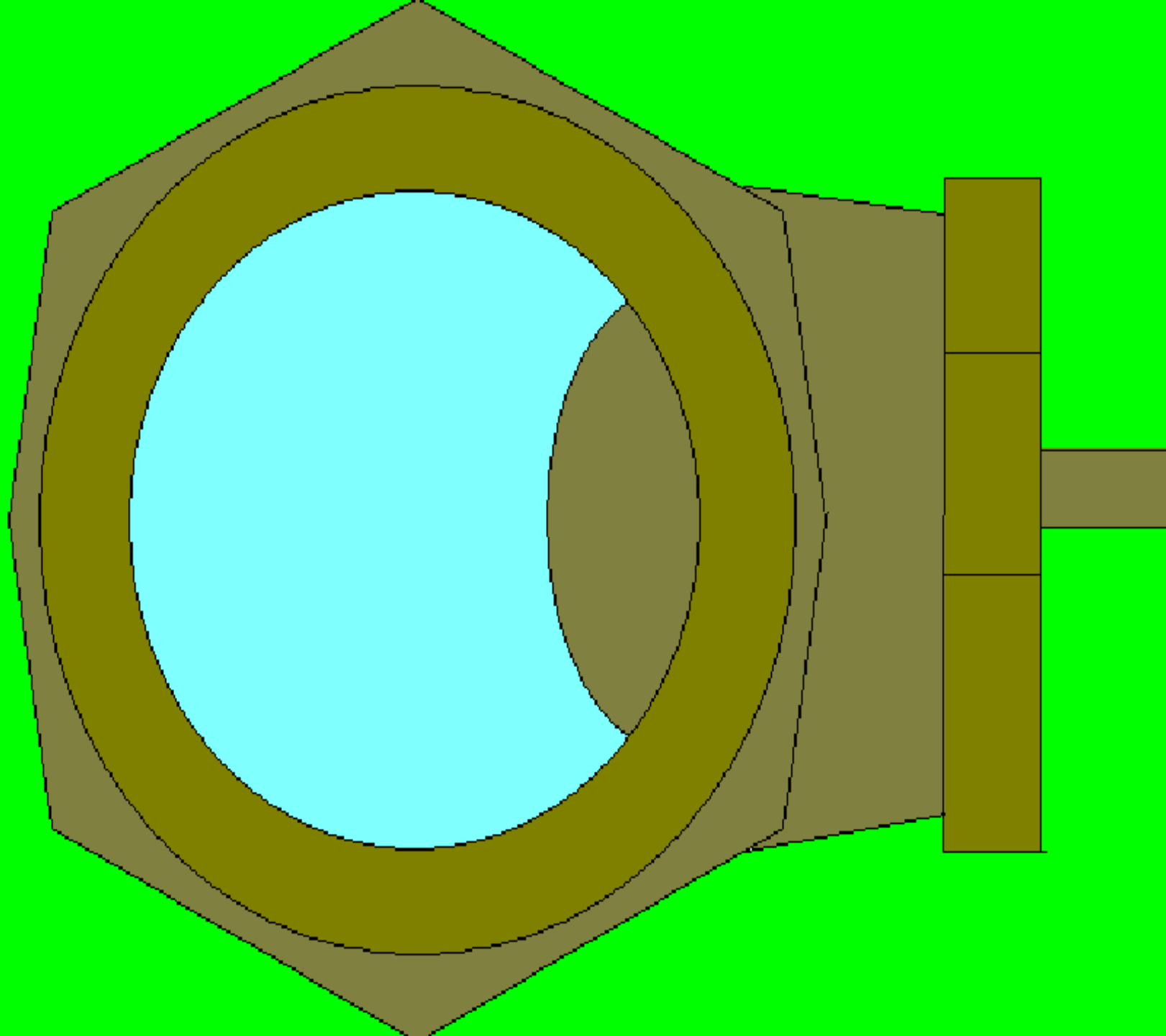
Trauma and/or neurobiological difficulties can limit our ability to process information

What is Trauma?
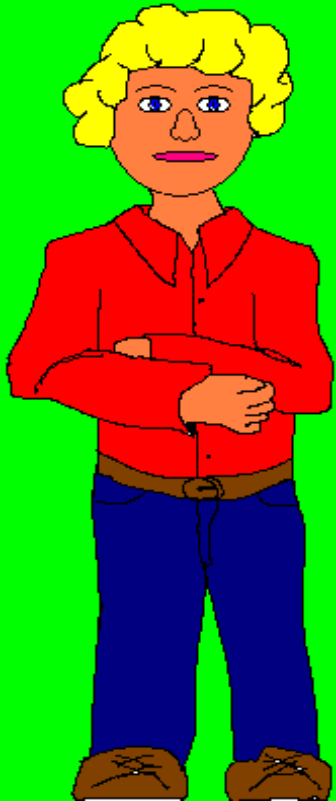
A response to a stressful experience, or set of stressful experiences, in which a person becomes overwhelmed and unable to cope.

What is a Neurobiological Issue?

Neurologically-based issue which prevents a child from developing typically

Types of Trauma

- Physical, sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
  - Exposure to violence
  - Exposure to drugs and alcohol abuse
  - Criticism
- Passive, active neglect
  - Failure to have appropriate expectations
  - Failure to meet basic needs
- Rejection by peers
- Rejection by adults

Types of Neurobiological Issues

- Autism and other Pervasive Developmental Disorders
- Tourette's Syndrome
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effect
- Dyslexia
- Nonverbal Learning Disorders
- Developmental Cognitive Delay

More Neurobiological Issues

- Specific Learning Disability with Auditory, Visual, or Kinesthetic Processing Problems

- Central Auditory Processing Disorders

- Sensory Integration Disorder

- Self-Regulatory Disorder

More Neurobiological Issues

- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar Disorder
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Panic Disorders

Neurobiological Expression

- *Oppositional Defiant Disorder*

  -The diagnosis of Oppositional Defiant Disorder should not be viewed as an answer, but rather as a point of departure for more questions

Oppositional Behaviors

- Oppositional behavior may be an attempt by the individual to keep his or her ego, or sense of self, intact.

- If the individual is not able to "keep it together", this will increase the likelihood of a meltdown.

Looking Underneath Oppositional Behaviors

- Perceptual issues
- Sensory integrative issues
- A tendency to get overwhelmed in stimulating environments
- Expressive/receptive language issues
- Facial recognition problems
- Processing speed issues
- Executive function issues
- Difficulty changing cognitive sets (shifting from one set of thoughts to another-inflexibility)
- Difficulty or failure to accurately perceive social cues/information (misinterpreting)

Neurobiological Expression

- <u>Arousal</u>

 -Mild arousal provides motivation and strengthens focus

 -High arousal (anxiety) worsens the expression of neurobiological and trauma symptoms (individuals with these disorders are much more sensitive to anxiety)

Stress

- A psychological and physical response of the body that occurs whenever we must adapt to changing conditions, whether those conditions be real or perceived, positive or negative

  (alleydog.com).

- Alternatively, an unpleasant state of arousal in which people perceive that the demands of the situation threaten their ability to cope effectively (Blair).

Stressors
(Blair)

- Any demand made on the mind-body to adapt.
- Types:
  - Physical
  - Biological
  - Social
  - Internal

Trauma and Stress
(van der Kolk, McFarlane, Weisaeth; 1996)

- Stressors leading to trauma:
  - Time-limited events which are characterized by the unpreparedness of the victim and the high intensity of the stressor
  - Sequential stressors can have a cumulative effect
  - Stressors characterized by long-lasting exposure to danger, which can evoke uncertainty and hopelessness (i.e., repeated intrafamilial abuse affecting attachment bonds and disrupting a basic inner sense of security)

Possible Reasons for Increased Stress Response in Children who Struggle

(adapted from National Child Traumatic Stress Network; 2004)

- Cognitive and processing delays that interfere with understanding of what is happening
- Feelings of isolation and withdrawal
- Increased emotional vulnerability
- Predisposition toward emotional problems and impaired resiliency
- Predisposition toward being viewed negatively by others

# Possible Reasons for Increased Stress Response in Children who Struggle

(adapted from National Child Traumatic Stress Network; 2004)

- More difficulty coping with normal life stressors given limited resources available
- Poor judgment and lack of self-protective skills
- Reduced protective and coping mechanisms
- Difficulty adapting to change
- Difficulty expressing grief/mourning
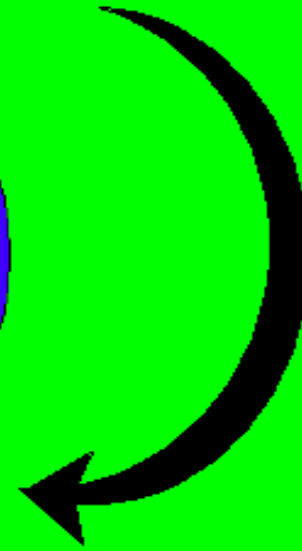- Awareness of differences in functioning
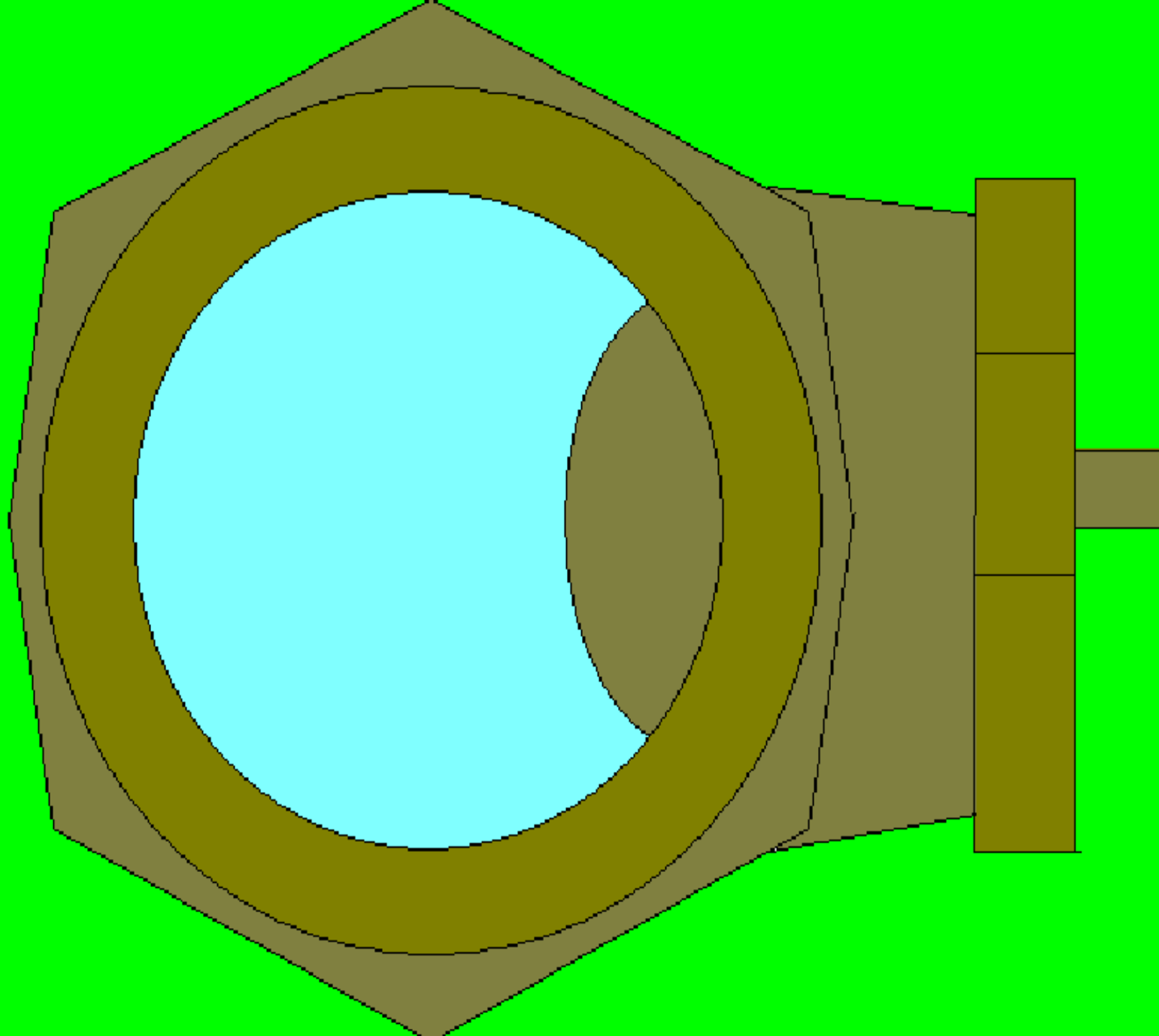
What is Anxiety?

- A state of apprehension, uncertainty, and fear resulting from the anticipation of a realistic or fantasized threatening event or situation, often impairing physical and psychological functioning.
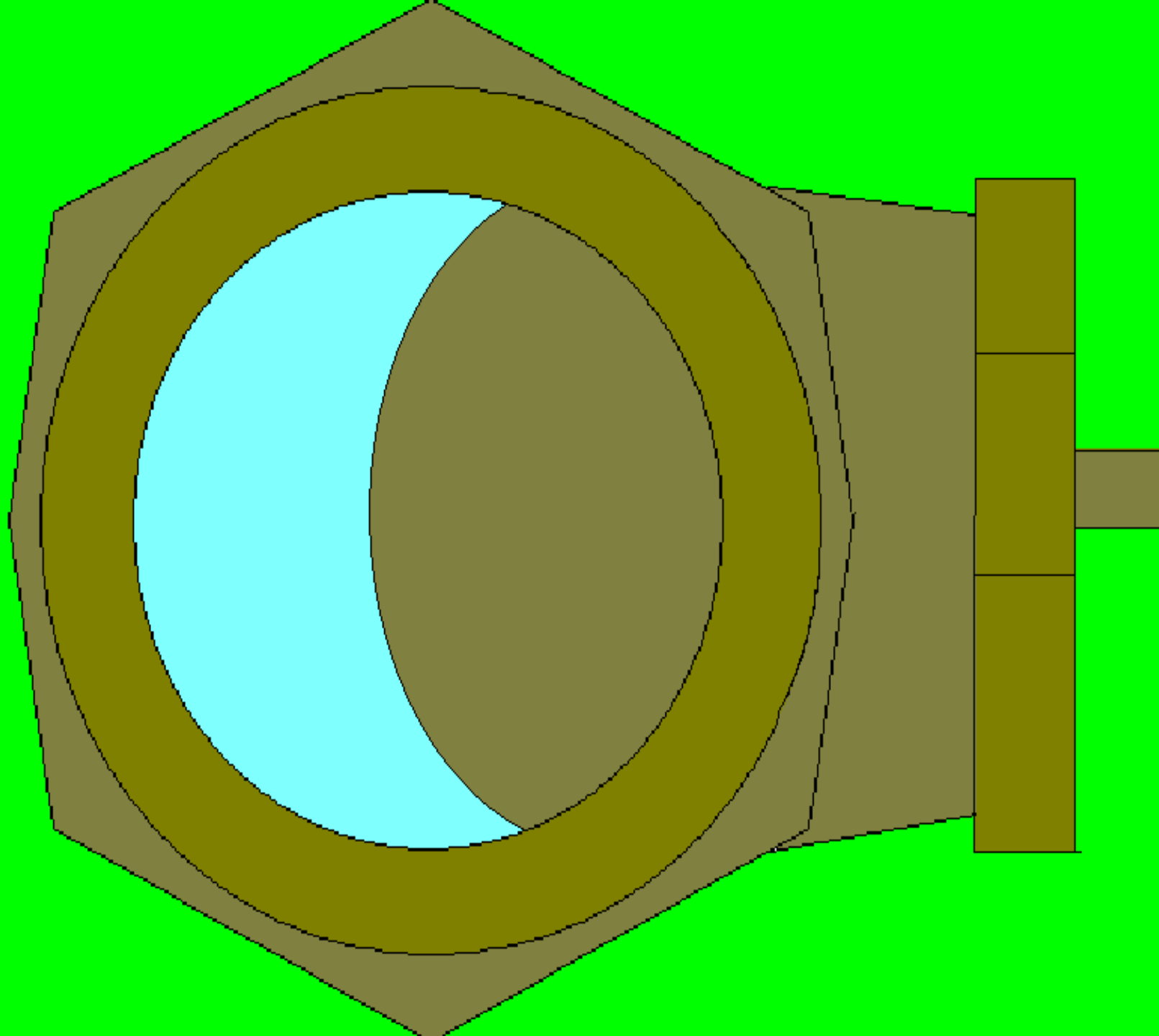
Anxiety's effect on Processing
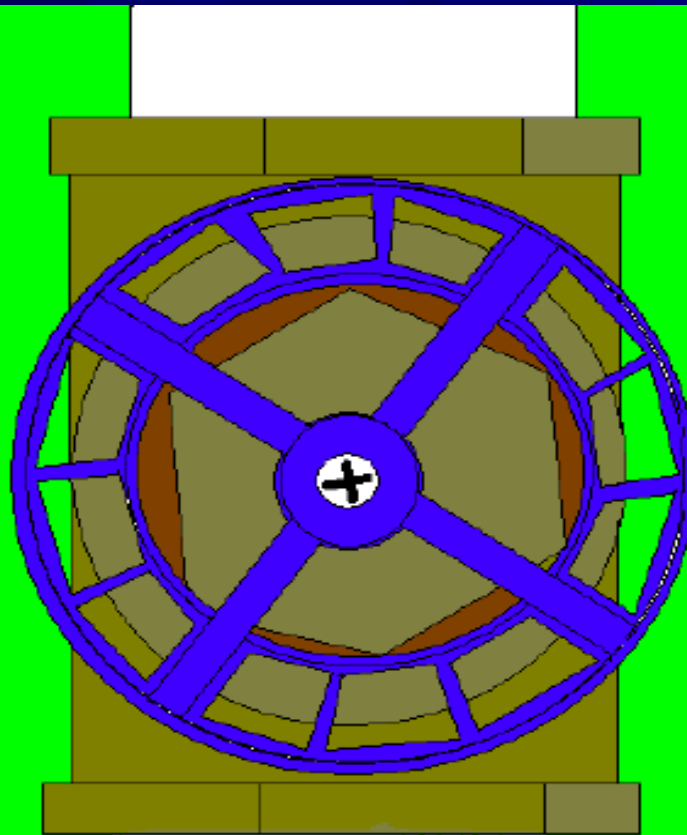
Anxiety tends to close the valve
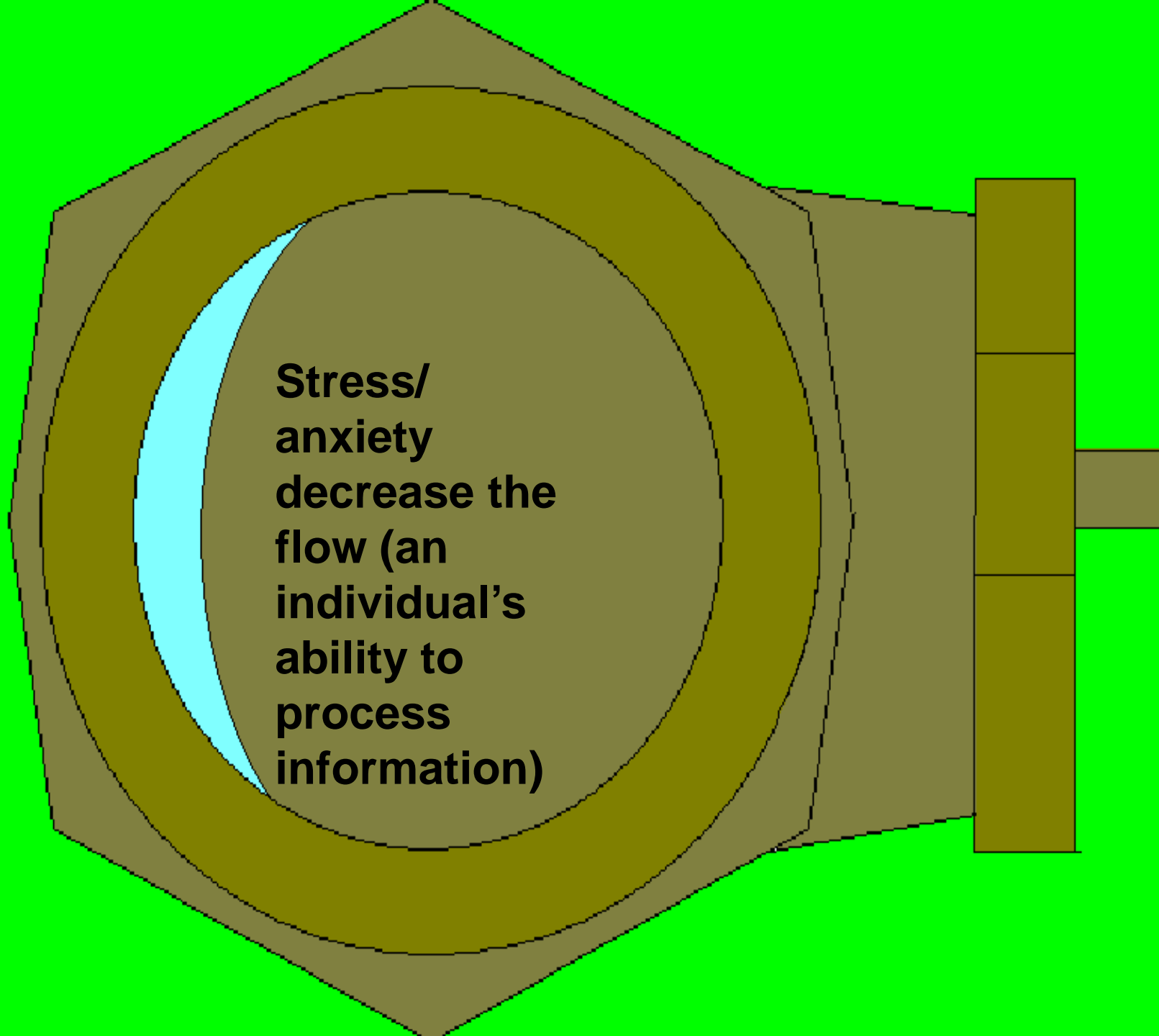
Stress/ anxiety decrease the flow (an individual's ability to process information)
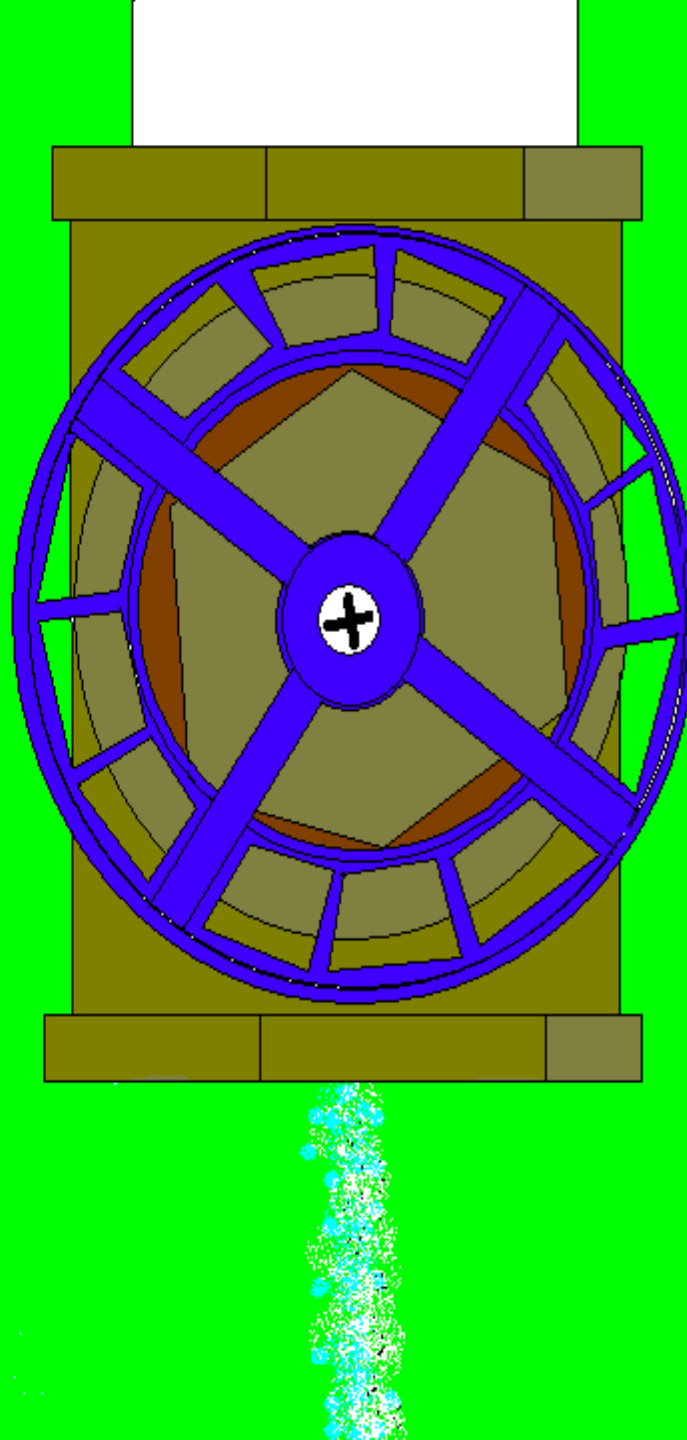
The ability to process information and to respond flexibly to one's environment becomes severely limited.

Symptoms of Anxiety

- Trembling
- Diminished control of bowel/bladder
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Difficulty staying asleep
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss

- Restlessness
- Non-compliant behavior
- Avoidance
- Shyness
- Somatic ailments
- Dizziness
- Demanding attention
- Insecurity

Symptoms of Anxiety

- Reacts poorly to criticism
- Unrealistic fears
- Reluctance to attempt new activities
- Complaints of losing control
- Sweating
- Sensation of difficulty breathing

- Complaints of fatigue
- Complaints of headaches
- Redness of face
- Cold/moist skin
- Complaints of dry mouth
- Complaints of diarrhea
- Outbursts

As the ability to process information becomes severely impaired, an individual's anxiety increases further.
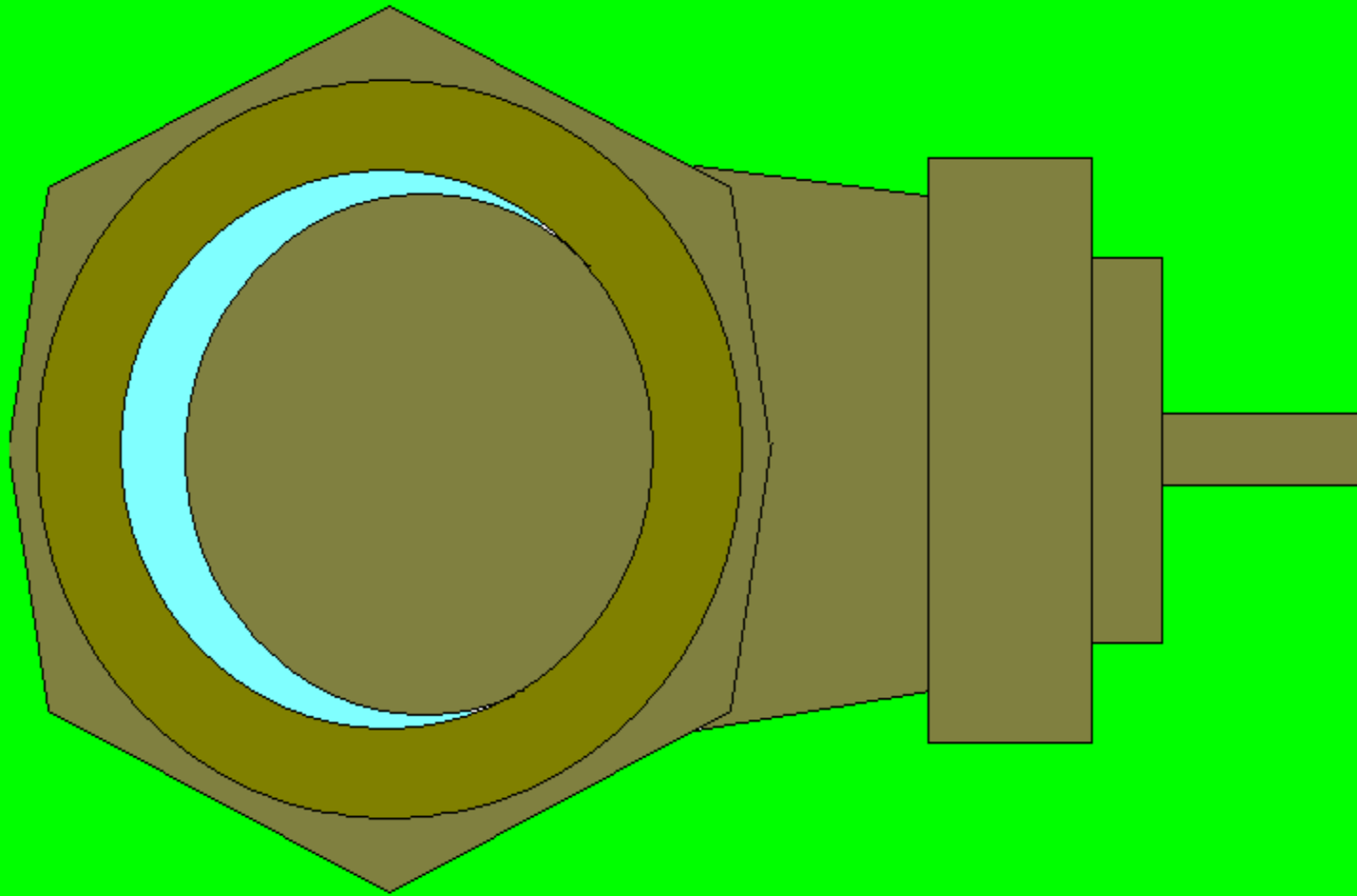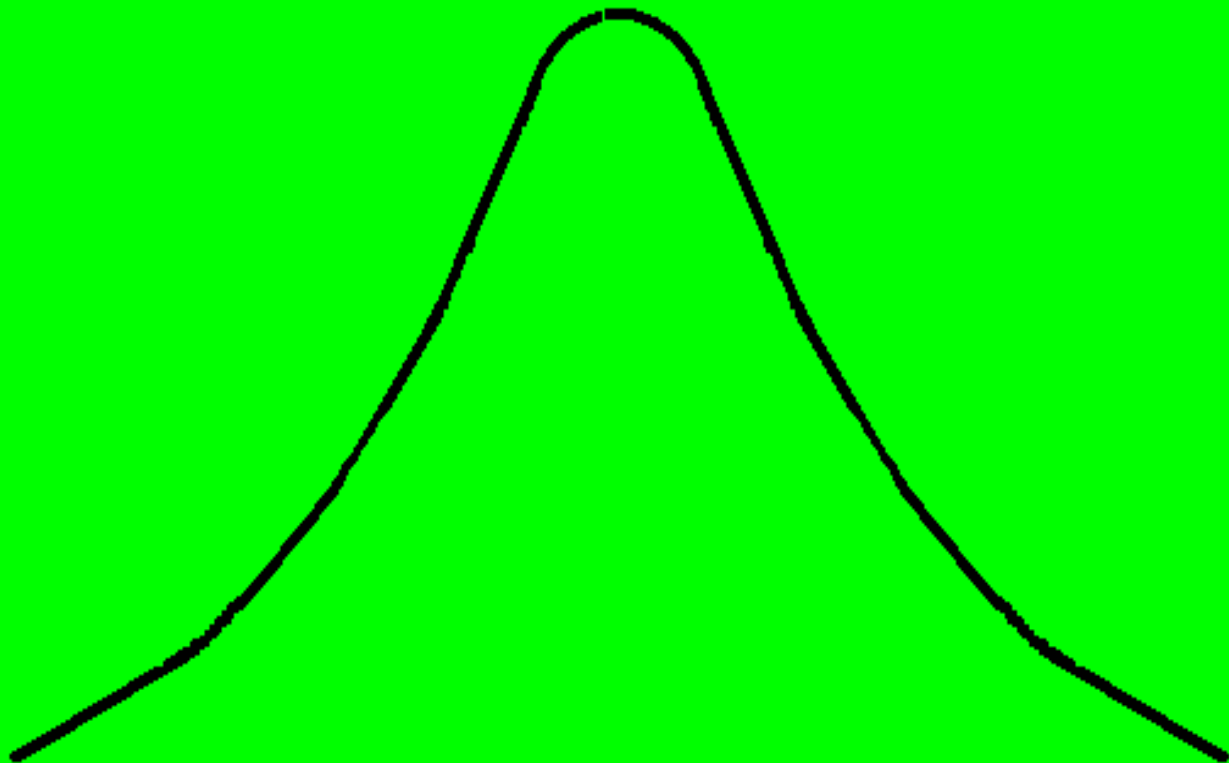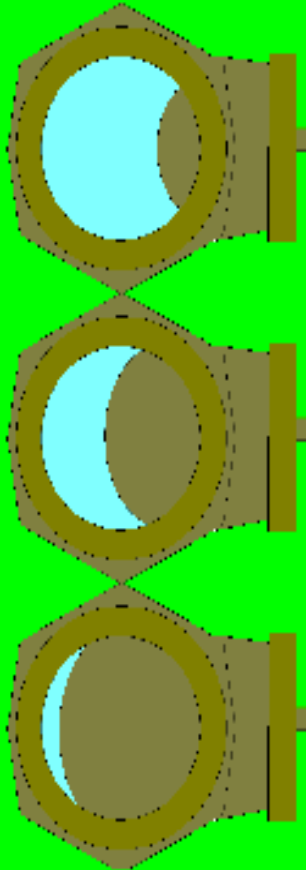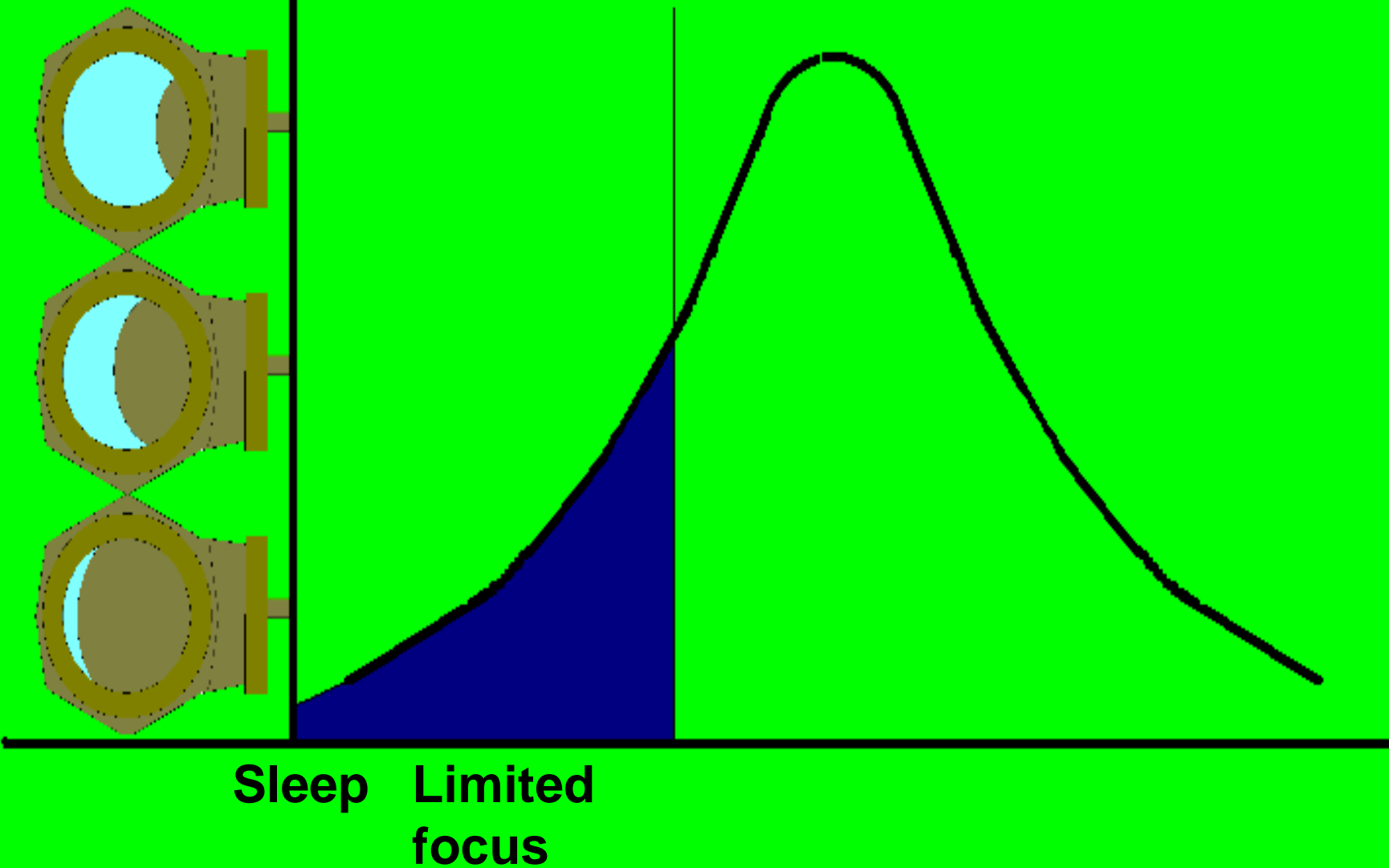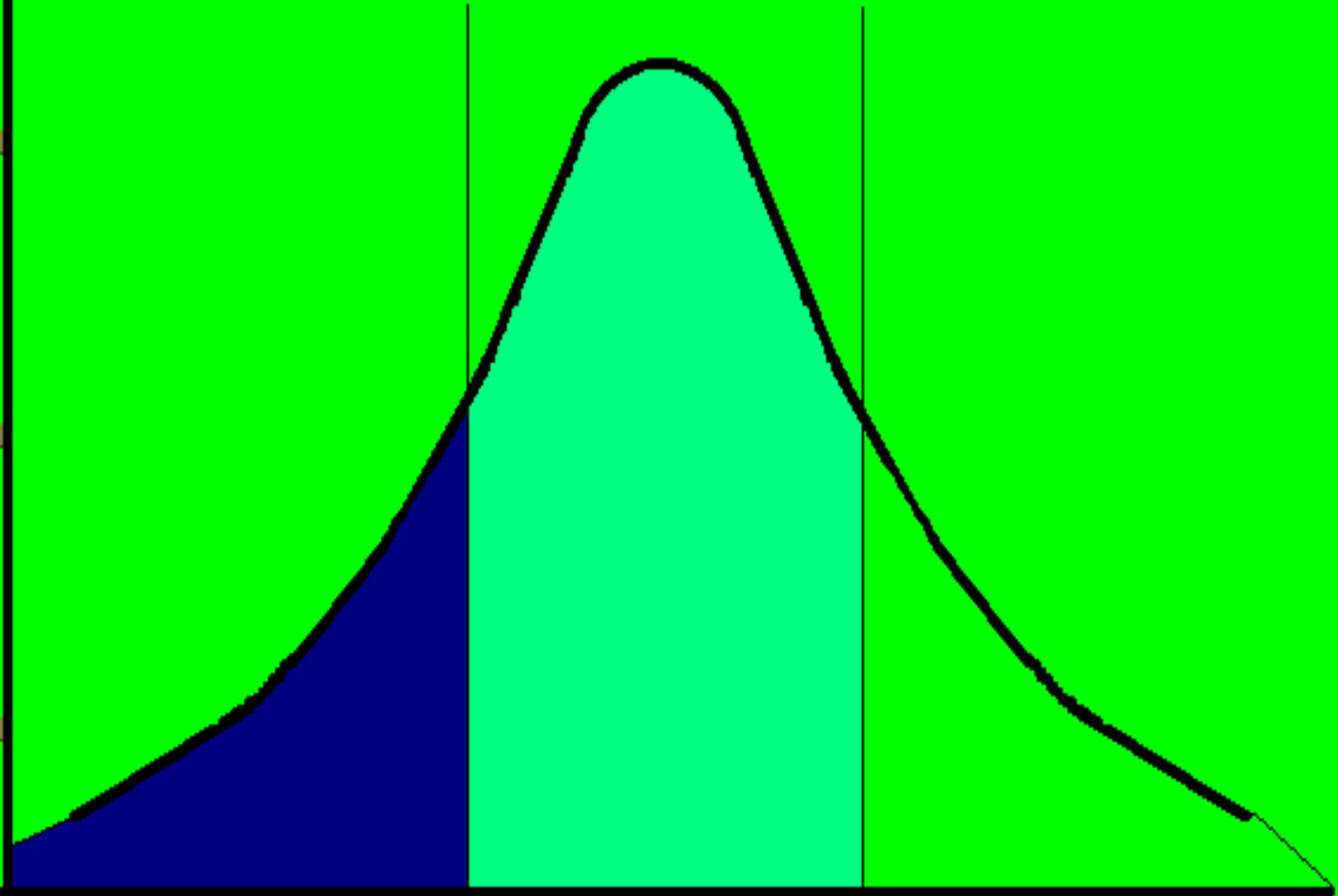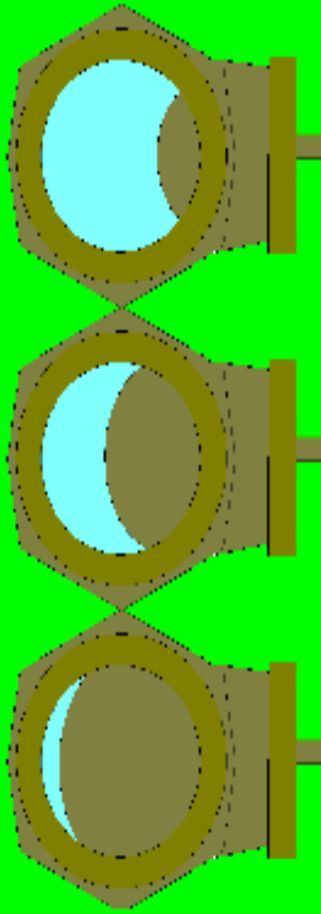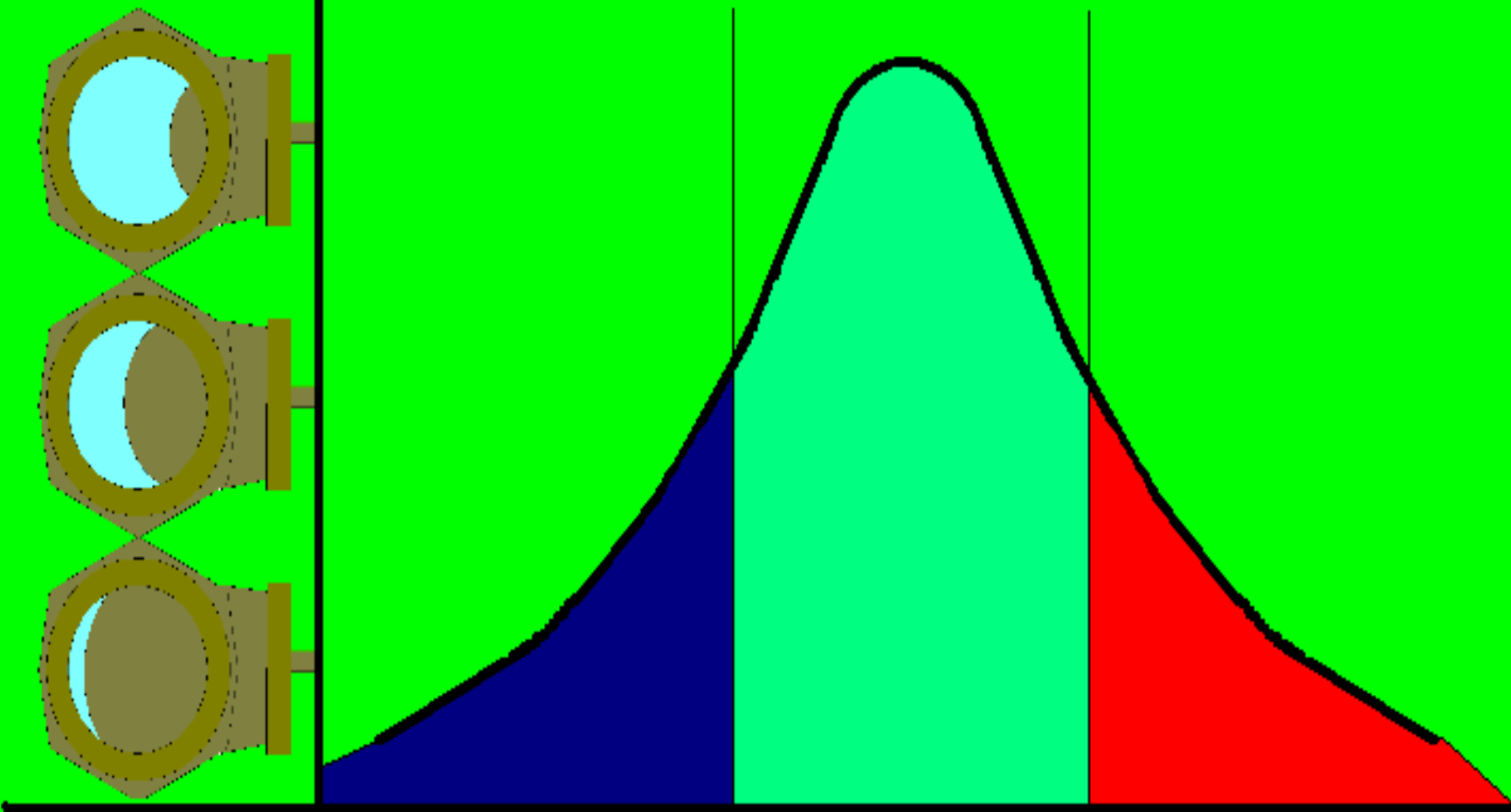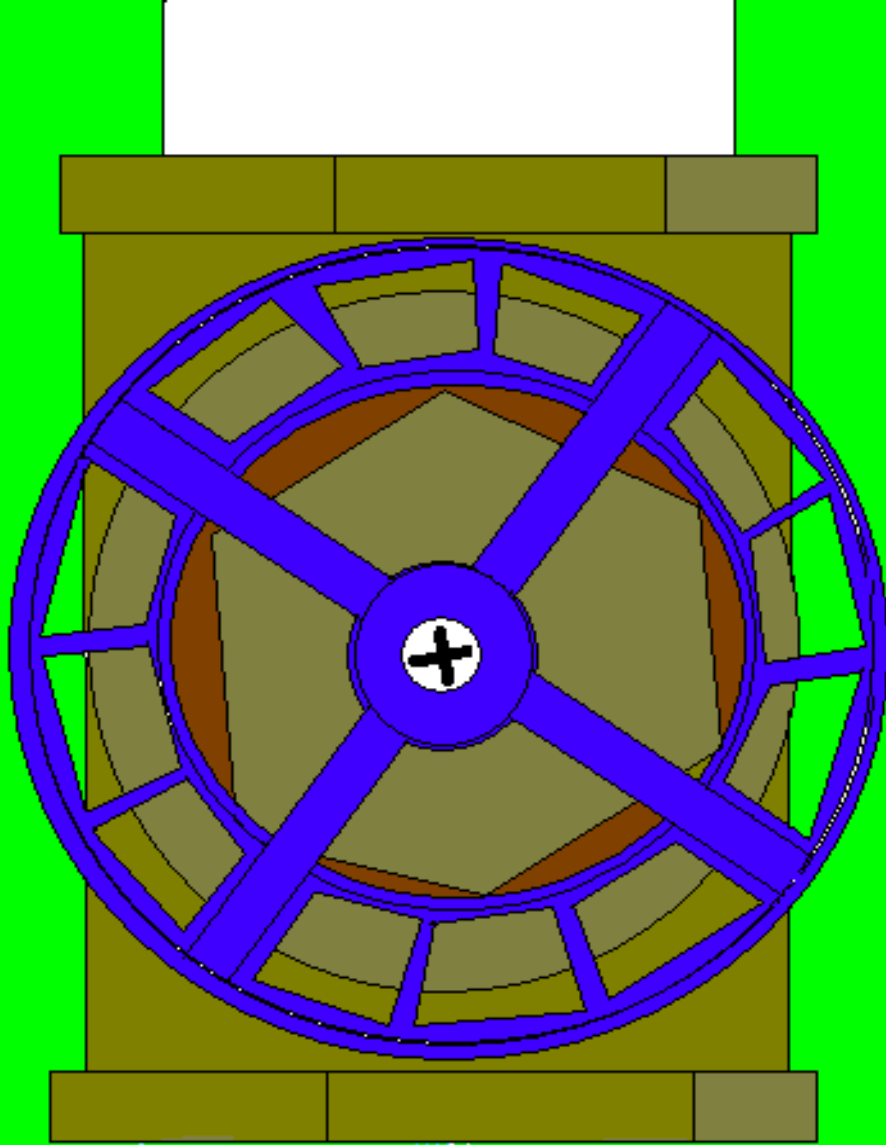
With the constriction of the ability to process, one of two things may happen…

An individual's loss of control that results from a limit or expectation being set, a transition, a conflict, or other "normal" life events may lead to… **(Mark; 2003)**
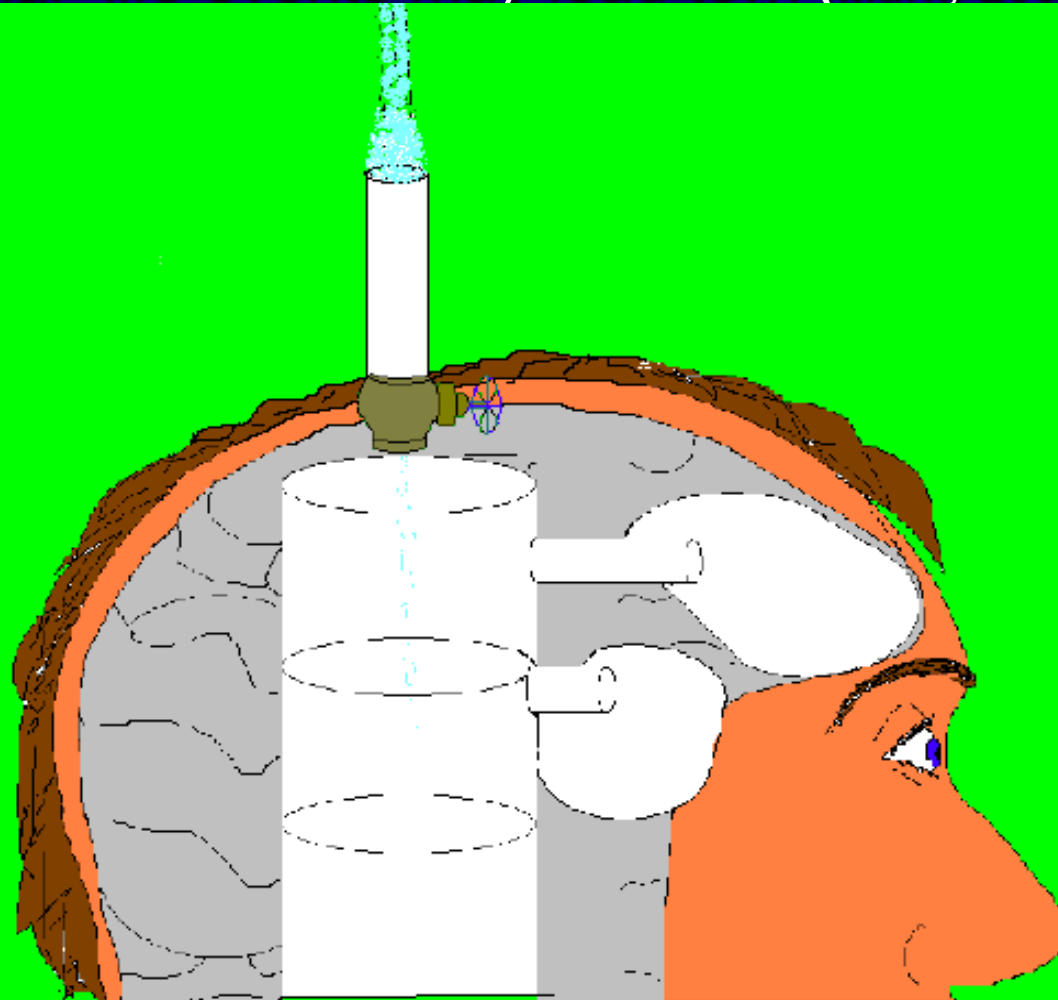
Meltdown
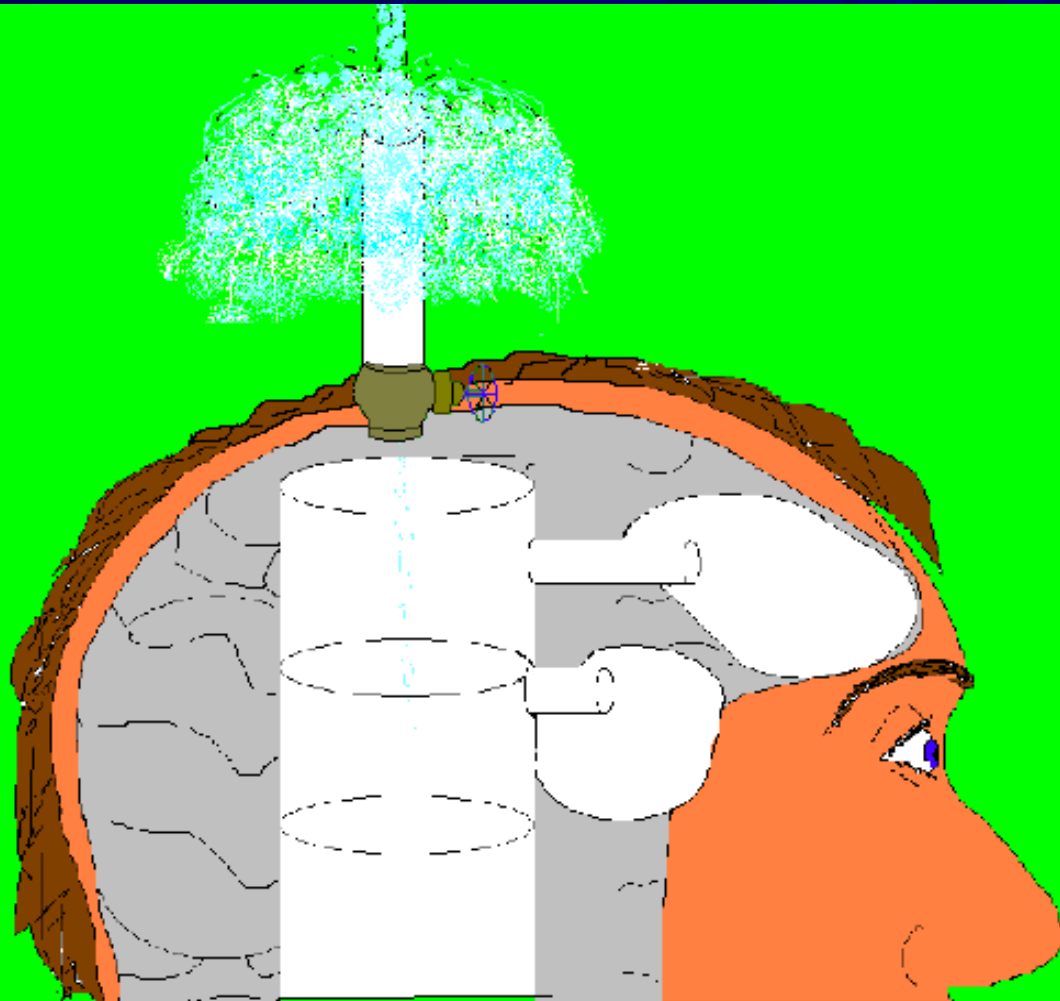
Withdrawal/Shutdown

- A particular sequence of behaviors (stress response) culminating in a state of avoidance, unresponsiveness, immobility, sleepiness, etc…

Flow and the Core Questions of Childhood

- **How the flow of information is processed determines how the child, at a very deep level, answers these questions**

- **How these core questions are answered strongly influences the child's response or reaction**

The Three Core Questions of Childhood
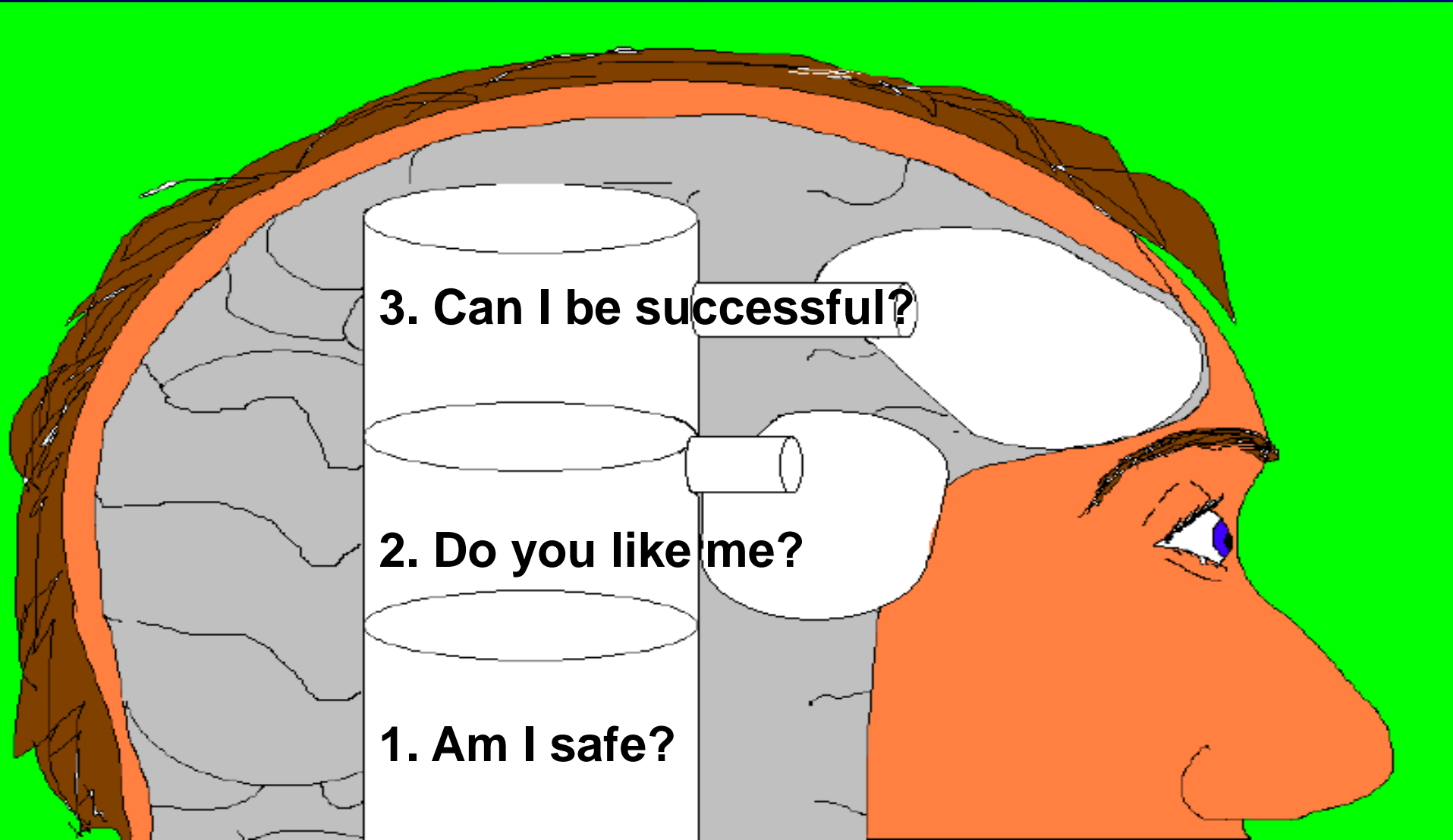
Am I Safe?

- The answer involves the more primitive parts of the brain
- May involve "*fight or flight*" response
- If this question is not satisfactorily answered, the higher levels of the brain have a much more difficult time functioning

When I'm not feeling safe…

- Power and control become critical issues
- Individual may feel too vulnerable to relinquish control to an adult (especially if he/she doesn't trust that the adult is strong enough to provide safety and recognize individuality of child at same time *recognition/empathy)
- Boredom allows internal anxiety to surface, which causes more anxiety (lowering sense of safety further)

Factors that effect perception of safety

- Predictability
  - Structure
  - Needs are met
- Centers of Power
  - Strength of Authority figure
  - Development of autonomy
- Individual's ability to comprehend "I am safe"

*Recognition/Empathy

- A genuine recognition of the child's experience

- When someone does not feel heard, acknowledged, affirmed, it often elicits rage or hopelessness

- The genuine effort to appreciate what a child may be experiencing goes a long way in helping them process information (they feel more safe/liked-valve tends to open)

Predictability

- Predictability refers to the individual's ability to predict the actions, intentions, expectations, etc…, of the individuals in his/her environment

- It is more than just "consistency"
  - Consistency implies a sense of constancy
  - Doing the same thing over and over again with minimal variations

Predictability

- Predictability goes a step beyond consistency
  - In predictability, we act in such a way that the individual is able to perceive our constancy
  - We empathetically recognize the experience, and capabilities, of the child
  - We seek to take the child's perspective, and seek to understand how he/she perceives our interactions

Predictability

– We utilize our relatively intact nervous systems and egos to serve as both references and templates for the more fragile, or less intact, nervous system and/or ego of the child who struggles

– We seek a synchronicity between our actions and words

Do you like me?

- The answer involves the primitive and social parts of the brain

- May involve perception and response to the social cues of others

- If this question is not satisfactorily answered, the response to others becomes less important than the preservation of one's own self/ego (*safety*)

You may be thinking, "He doesn't want to be liked, he works hard at being a jerk."

- Defense against disappointment (reaction formation)

- Many of our students have lost hope of truly being liked. Its not safe (goes back to first question) to risk trying to be liked. Its more predictable to get self repeatedly rejected.

When I'm not feeling likeable…

- Protection of ego/self may become the umbrella for these behaviors
  - Defensive
  - Uncooperative
  - Argumentative
- Prone to make negative assumptions about others
- May attempt to get others to treat "me" (child) in the "expected way" (get others to play roles in child's own story about self)

"Mattering"

- "Mattering": how we confirm our existence in relation to others
  - Do I matter to you because you like me (Am I motivated to please adults?), or
  - Do I "matter" by being in crisis because otherwise I feel I don't have value, or,
  - Do I "matter" by being bad because it is better than not mattering at all?

Factors that effect likeability…

- Relationship between Authority figure and child
  - How the Authority figure interprets the behavior of the child (the story around the child)
  - Capacity of Authority figure to find things that are likeable about the child
  - Ability of the Authority figure to have own needs for likeability met through other relationships (not child)

Factors that effect likeability…(cont.)

- How the child perceives the relationship with the Authority figure
  - Experiences with previous relationships with Authority figures
  - Exposure to authority figures with different relationship styles
  - Ability to perceive and understand relationship and factors that effect relationships

When Likeability is called into question…

It elicits fear and loss of safety

When Likeability is called into question…

It elicits fear and loss of safety

May regress to "fight or flight" response

Strongest story

- Child gravitates to person/group with strongest story

- The child who's needs are strongly rooted in safety will gravitate towards the strongest story around safety (Power). This is not necessarily the story that keeps them safe

- May want to be liked by "cool kids" because then they won't target me (safety) or others will think "I'm cool" (likeability)

If child feels safe and likeable…

Can I be successful?

- The answer involves the primitive, social and executive parts of the brain
- May involve perception and response to capabilities/competence of self
- If this question is not satisfactorily answered, individual is at risk for developing a "failure identity"

Factors effecting success…

- Underlying capabilities
- Authority figure sets ***appropriate*** expectations (expectations are adapted as individuals capabilities change)
- Individual is exposed to success experiences (both of self and others)
- Successes are _celebrated_ by authority figures, individual and peer group (Culture designed to maximize success)
- Moves from external to internal goal setting

Power of Attention/Recognition

- Recognition/attention are huge motivators
- Recognition/attention affirm our existence, which diminishes our sense of isolation
- Recognition/attention allows us to feel like we "matter"
- Recognition/attention are means by which we can measure our value

"Success" vs. "Failure" Identity

- Has ability to establish and meet goals
- Handles obstacles that occur as they work toward goals
- Tolerates frustration as one works toward goal (demonstrates flexibility)

- Difficulty establishing goals (lacks confidence in meeting goals)
- Becomes off-task when difficulties arise
- Easily frustrated (demonstrates rigidity of thinking)

"Success" vs. "Failure" Identity

- Identifies with peer group utilizing positive aspects of self
- Ego resiliency (balanced between personal values and peer group)
- Individual's success identity develops out of experiences of success

- Develops belief that they lack positive aspects of self
- Ego depletion (easily influenced by negative peer group)
- Individual's failure identity develops out of the individual's inability to identify success experiences

Success is critical to feeling safe and likeable

- Possibility for success provides motivation for the child to go through the hard work to learn new skills

- Learning new skills improves chances of others treating the child as likeable, which in turn increases feelings of likeability

- Success helps provide motivation to generalize these skills beyond just us

Both linear and interdependent
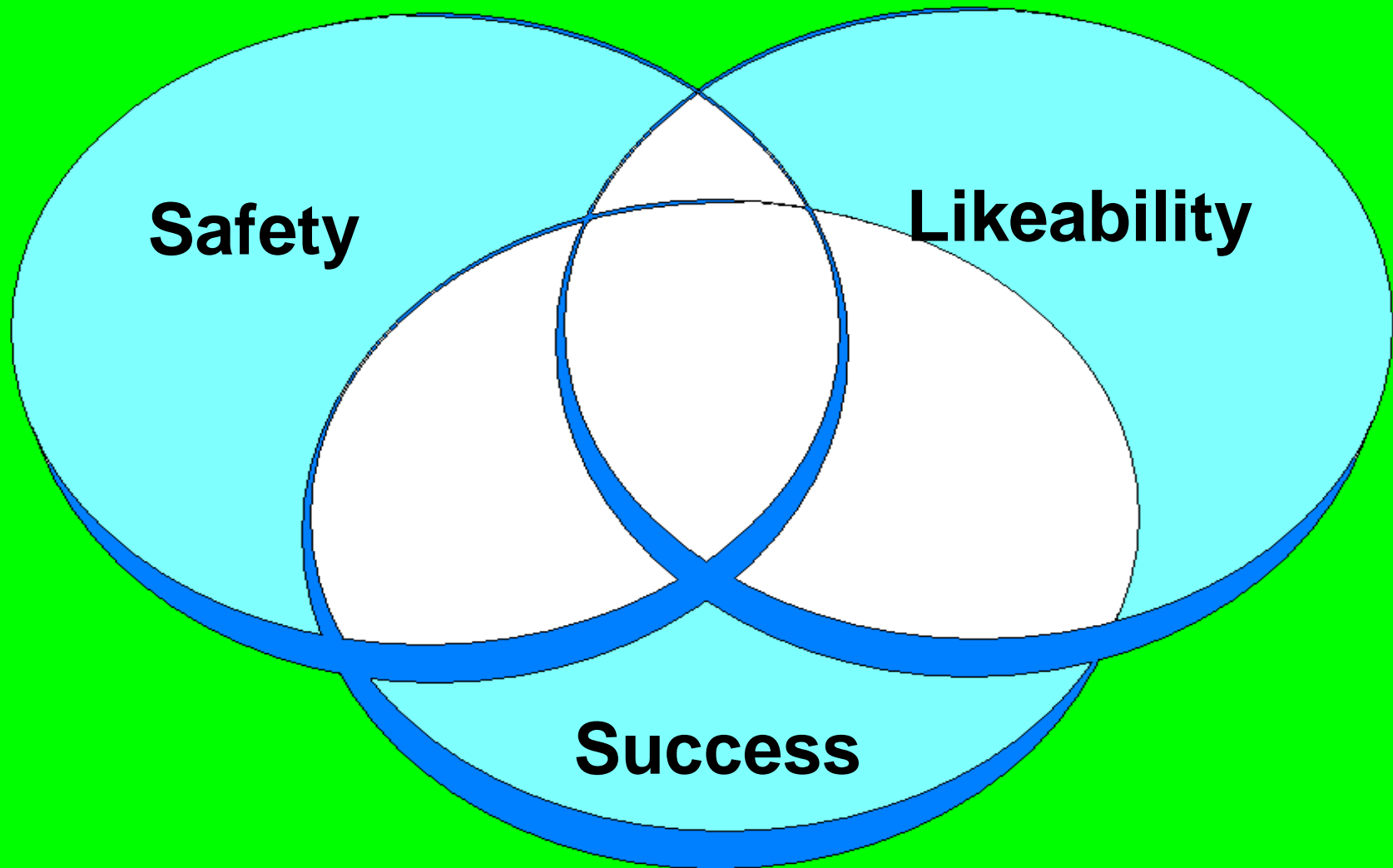
The impact of our interactions…

Our interactions with students give us the opportunity to help rewrite their stories about themselves

Student's existing "story" about self

Student's new "story" about self

"Adults are not safe or dependable"

"I'm not likeable"

"I'm a failure"

"I can be safe, likeable and successful."

Resistance to change…

- All of us, including our students, tend to stay with our existing "story" because it is familiar and predictable (we don't feel as vulnerable because we know the rules, and thus, life is less confusing-even if miserable)

- If we provide an environment where we are strong and highly predictable, and where the student feels liked, he/she may be more willing to *risk* trying to be liked and trying to be successful

We think about the world in the way that we experience it to be.
(Bogdashina; 2003)

The Adult System

- We have talked to this point about the importance of recognizing, and being empathetic with, the experience of the child

- It is also important to recognize, and be empathetic with, the experiences of the adults who surround the child

- This "adult system" provides the framework around which the child's story will be defined

Agenda for looking at Adult System

- Identify who belongs to adult system
- What is the story around the system- "open system" vs. "closed system"
- The role of the "Vision"
- Personal responsibilities/Self-awareness
- Self-care strategies
- Parent and school relationships
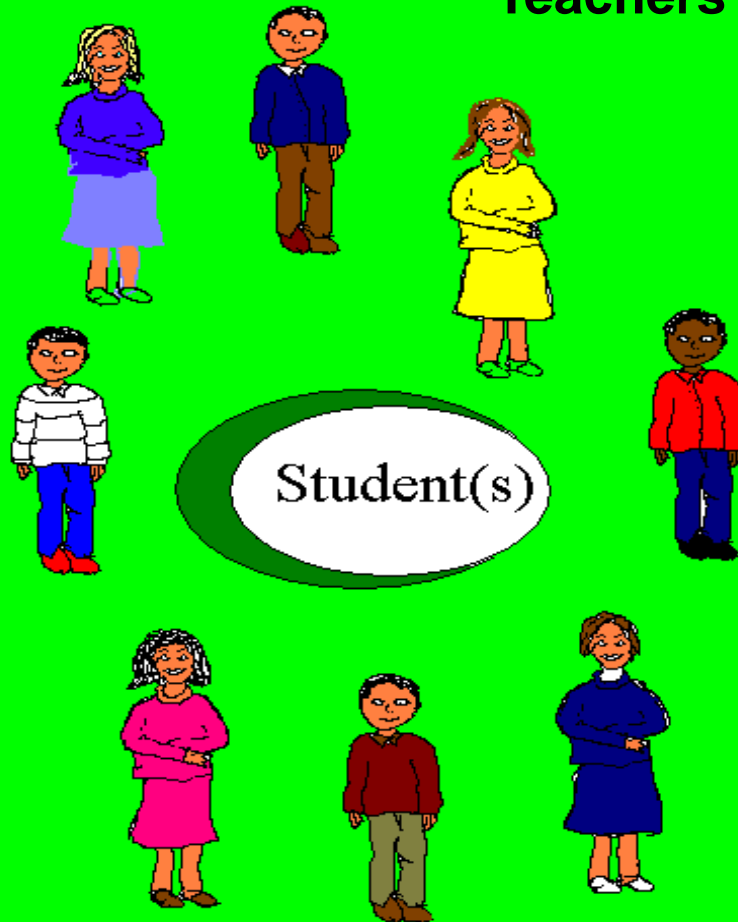
Can the system take in new information?

- This is a means to assess how a system functions

- Does the system approach a child with an "Open Valve" or "Closed Valve"?

- What are the assumptions (story) around the child?

- How does the system treat the adults within the system?

What happens if system is divided?
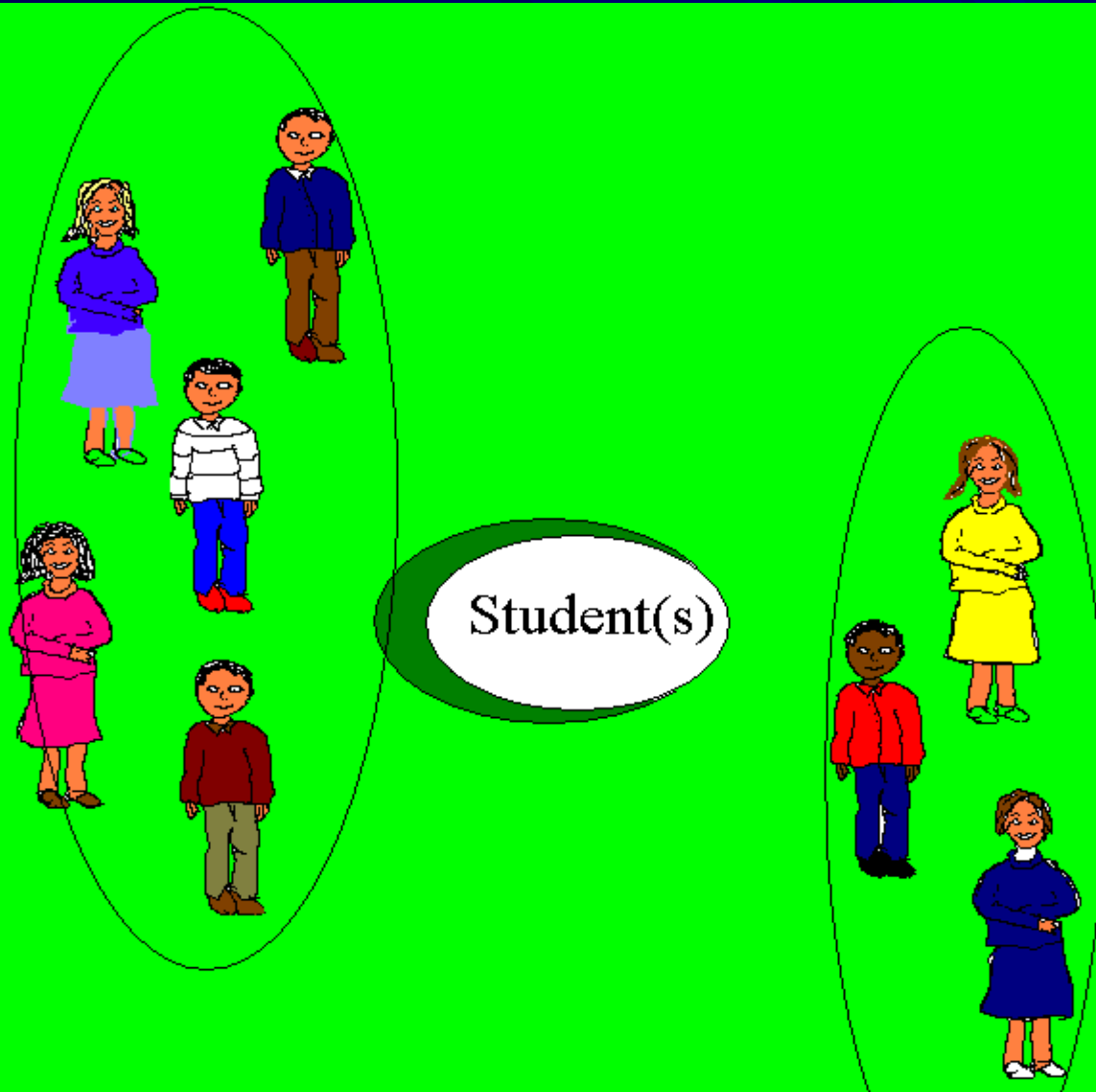
This goes back to "Centers of Power" (safety)

- If adults in system are divided or at odds with one another, it raises the anxiety of the child

- Child will try to take "power" (for self-protection) or play one faction off the other (to get what they want because they perceive that relationships are not dependable)

- "Old story" of child is reinforced as adult system's struggles keep child's anxiety high

Negative feelings are natural…

- Part of human nature to have "scapegoats"

- Its better to consciously choose opponents/rivals (outside of system) than to let them happen (someone within system becomes scapegoat)

- "Gallows" humor natural part of managing stress (done in right time and place)

What about a unified system?
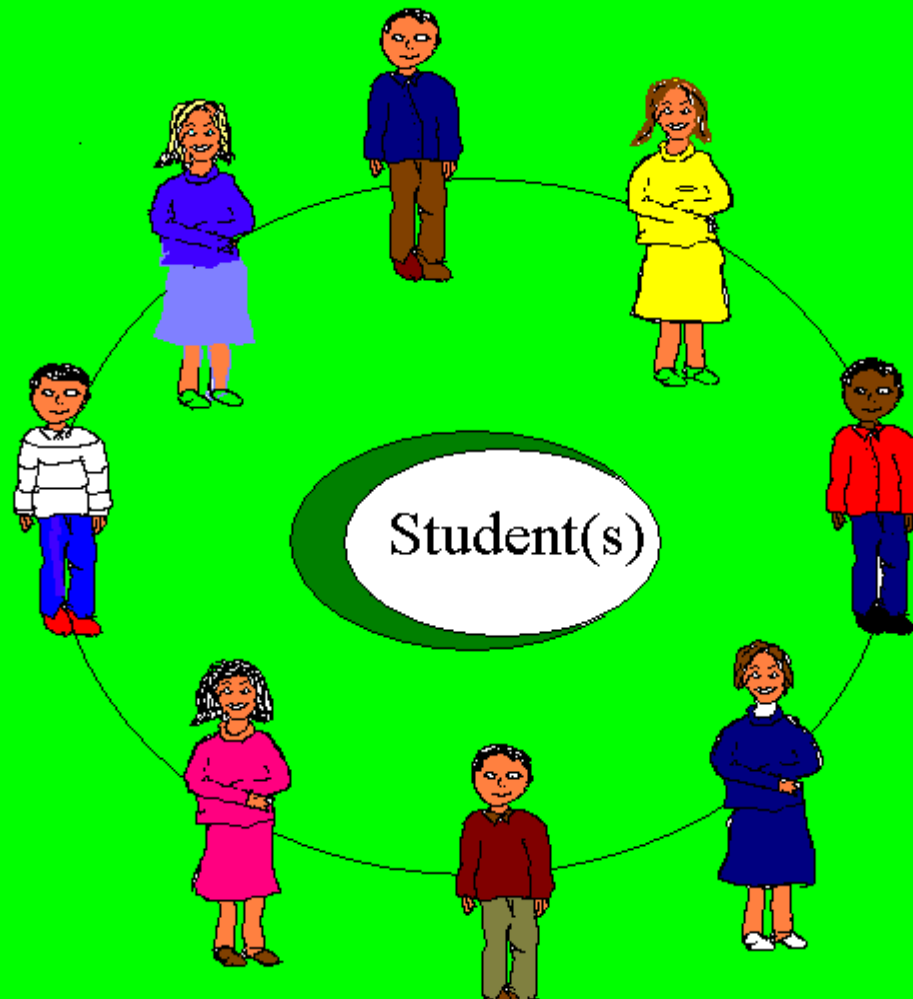
In a "Unified System"…

- Adults who are unified help lower the anxiety of children

- Children will test power to determine who is fully in charge ("old story" makes it hard for them to trust that adults will remain strong, keep them safe and understand/interpret their world)

- Adults communicate with each other often, sharing positive news and understanding of child so that new information begins to impact "story"

Who has the stronger story?

- The existing story a child carries within them is very strong

- The adult system challenges that story
  (this requires a thorough understanding of child's strengths and weaknesses to adjust accordingly)

- If adult system is struggling, child likely to maintain "old story" about self

- If adult system is strong, greater chance of positively impacting child's story

Stress on "adult system"

- In the normal course of human relationships, there are stresses that bring conflict/judgments

- We each have our own story we bring to the adult system ["Without self-awareness, we make happen what we fear most"]

- Strong human tendency to think in terms of "good guys" and "bad guys"

Elements to help "unify system"

Vision:

Equality

Example: Martin Luther King, Jr.

Opponent:

Oppression

Our mission is to…

Create an environment to help students believe they are safe, likeable and can be successful

-Persist against the "old story" of child

-Persist against our actions that reinforce "no" answers

-Friendly competition

Managing feelings in system

- Common vision gets the focus away from personalities and toward goal/mission
- Needs met through common goals accomplished
- *Empathy-genuine recognition of other person's experience (our listening can "open" system)
- Find other group to compete with as a way to manage our own need to push against something (a way to manage our own needs for scapegoats/our own ODD tendencies)
- Get comfortable with our own shortcomings
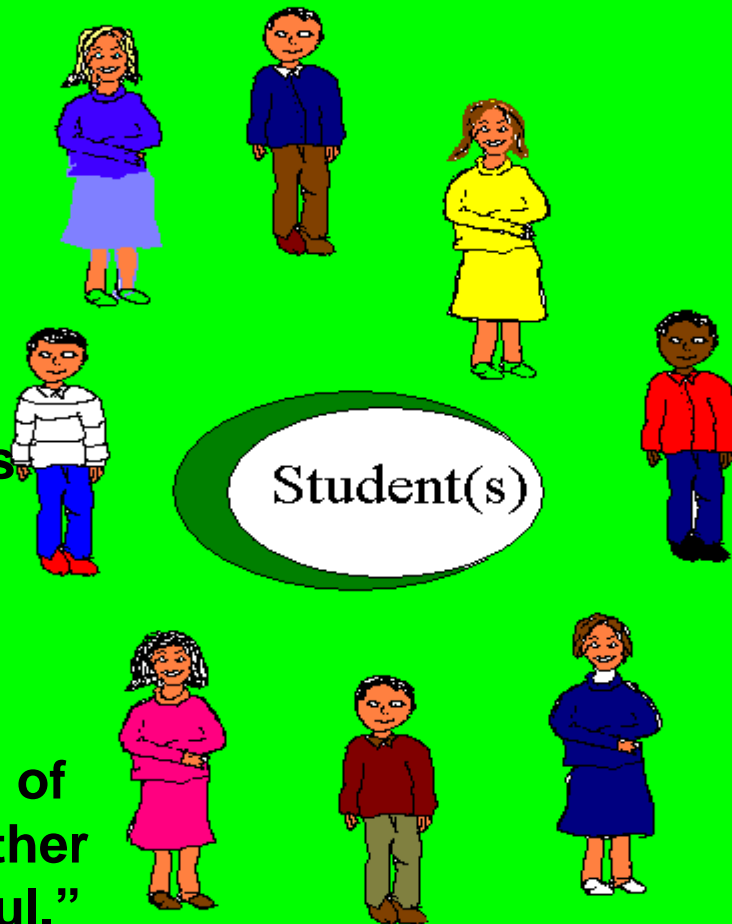
Being whole and attractive…

- Have confidence in strengths and vision
- Celebrate small gains for child, self and group
- Have fun while working hard
- The problem of "niceness"
- Know limitations- acknowledge own weaknesses to other adults (honesty shows strength of character) but take responsibility to improve
- Try to keep personal struggles removed from adult system for child

Our chosen focus…

- What do we want people to focus on with us?
- We can choose what we focus on for others

Intervening with the Student Who Struggles

A Reminder to Look Underneath Behaviors

- Perceptual issues
- Sensory integrative issues
- Expressive/receptive language issues
- Facial recognition problems
- Processing speed issues
- Executive function issues
- Difficulty changing cognitive sets
- Difficulty or failure to accurately perceive social cues/information (misinterpreting)

Agenda for Intervention

- Rules
- What to do during meltdown
- Structure
- Developing the story
- Priming
- Executive functions
- Language of culture

Our need for Rules

- Rules provide us the boundaries that we use to "define" who we are, both in:
  - Rules we choose to follow
  - Rules we choose to ignore
- Rules provide us the "structure" that we need to help define our stories
- Rules allow us to define our roles in life, and help us determine the roles of others in our lives

What do I do when things melt down?

- Place yourself beside rather than in front of person
- Avoid direct eye contact
- Identify with, rather than fight, the person
- Don't rationalize
- Postpone processing of the "issue"
- "Listen" for what the student actually comprehended- what was said and done may be misinterpreted by the student with processing challenges

What do I do when things melt down? (cont.)

- Make nonverbals clear- match your nonverbals with the intent of your message
- Watch for competing signals which may be confusing, or irritating, the student
- Shorten sentences when speaking to the student
- Use less descriptive, straight-forward sentence structure
- When stating limits, present short, single-focused limits

What do I do when things melt down? (cont.)

- Allow for silence
- Wait for a response, sometimes beyond what might be considered a normal response time
- Give students alternative ways to process when they have had a challenging behavior

Structure (Nathan Ory)

- Predictability
- Concrete
- Positive Expectations
- Trust
- Flexibility within Structured Choices

Structure: Predictability

- The ability to predict
  - Person's actions
  - Activity
  - Rules/roles in activity
  - Transitions between activities
- It includes both:
  - The Authority Figure's ability to act in a predictable way
  - The individual's ability to perceive that predictability

Structure: Concrete

- Tangible aspects
  - Arrangement of room
  - Schedule
  - Expectations
  - Boundaries

Structure: Positive Expectations

- Reframes the student's behavior
- Changes the focus from the absence of negative behaviors to the presence of positive ones
- Introduces a narrative (story) of success to the student

Structure: Trust

- Relatedness
- Relationships
- One matches one's words with one's actions
- Genuineness of purpose

Structure: Flexibility

- Empathetic response to needs of the student
- Demonstrates understanding of the experience of the student
- Focuses on looking underneath the behavior to the individual (self)
- It involves the setting aside of our own stories to focus on the needs of the individual
- It occurs through the provision of structured choices, recognition, and empathy

Developing the Story

- Develop the story from the shared vision
- Develop a common story that is shared by "all" of the adults in the child's system
  - If cannot be all, then want to make this the strongest/most attractive story
- Develop it in a fashion that the child can understand (processing/capabilities)

Developing the Story (cont.)

- Be cognizant/aware of the story that is being developed
  - A story will be developed around the child whether it is done consciously or unconsciously
- Develop the story in positive terms
  - Be aware when you are scapegoating
  - Be aware when past stories and relationships are effecting the ability to develop it in this fashion

Developing the Story (cont.)

- Utilize peers positively to help develop the story
  - A sense of community with peers can have a powerful effect on the development of the story
- Identify factors that may interfere with the child's ability to "believe" the story
  - Make sure that these are acknowledged in some fashion

Developing the Story (cont.)

- Remember that for the child to "believe" the story, our actions and words must match

- Remember that the way we communicate nonverbally also communicates around the story
  - Tone of voice
  - Volume
  - Stress and intonation

Priming

- The act of making something ready.
- It means to set the brain up for learning.

Priming Benefits

- Optimize arousal
- Decrease anxiety
- Increase attention/concentration
- Activate memory
- Focus perceptual strengths
- Reduce perceptual confusion
- Familiarizes student with material

Priming Activities

■ Pre-teaching
- – Explore the material
- – Read the story
- – Show the visual schedule
- – Practice with art supplies
- – Talk about and show the finished product
- – Review the rules
- – Social stories
- – Power cards

Perceptual Priming Activities

- Auditory
  - Music (Fried, 1990)
    - Music has a profound effect on us
    - There is an essential rhythm to our bodies
    - Music, because of its abstract nature, may bypass intellectual control and contact lower centers of the brain directly.
    - Auditory nerve impulses trigger a thalamic reflex that influences metabolism, sleep/ wake cycles, hormone release, pulse rate, blood pressure, rate of breathing, ect…

Perceptual Priming Activities (Music: Fried, 1990)

- For calming and reducing tension
  - Pulse of the music should be at or below heart rate (72/min)
  - Rhythm should be smooth and flowing at all times to integrate internal body rhythms
  - Deep, sustained monotones have a meditational and calming effect
  - Pauses at slow rates harmonize and integrate internal body rhythms, breath, and heart rate
  - Slow, sustained melodies
  - Classical, new age, folk

Perceptual Priming Activities (Music: Fried, 1990)

- For exciting and increasing tension
  - Pulse of music should be above heart rate 72-92/min
  - Pauses at fast rates are excitatory
  - Pitch sequences at pulse rate or faster
  - Some classical, rock

Perceptual Priming Activities (Music)

- Programs which Use Music/Sound to Effect Behavior
  - Tomatis
  - Listening with the Whole Body
  - The Listening Program
  - Auditory Integration Training
  - Hemisphere-Specific Auditory Stimulation
  - Hemisync
  - Brainsuite

Priming: Visual

- Puzzles
- Mazes
- Dot-to-dot
- Tic-Tac-Toe
- Visualization/imagery
- Connect 4

Priming: Olfactory

- Aromatherapy
  - Relaxing: basil, lime, marjoram, cedar, myrrh, chamomile, rose, sandalwood
  - Stimulating: bergamot, orange, clove, peppermint, cypress, rosemary, spearmint
- Stay Alert Scent Inhaler (Earth Solutions)
  - Stay Alert
  - Study buddy

Priming: Oral

- Chewing gum, fruit leather, licorice, gummy bears
- Chewing on rubber tubing
- Using straws for thick drinks
- Sucking on popsicles
- Eating frozen grapes or frozen fruit
- Sucking on hard candy
- Eating a crunchy snack such as pretzels or carrots

Perceptual Priming Activities (Earobics)

- A computer-based auditory-processing, phonemic-awareness, and phonological-processing program.
- It uses sophisticated computer training techniques, including adaptive training, acoustic enhancement of the speech signal, and systematic control of key learning variables
- The software carefully guides students through learning, giving them more help when they need it and fading cues as their skills develop.

Priming: Kinesthetic/Proprioceptive

- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Isometrics
  - Pushing
  - Chair lifts
- Brain Gym
- Breathwork

Brain Gym

- A series of simple and enjoyable movements that are used to enhance the students experience of whole-brain learning.
- Examples
  - Neck rolls
  - Calf pump
  - Thinking cap

Breathwork

- Alternate nostril breathing
- Costophrenic/diaphragmatic breathing

Executive functions

- The brain system believed to be responsible for managing processes needed in order to solve problems and attain future goals (usually associated with but not limited to the prefrontal lobes of the brain).

Executive Functions (components)

- Working memory
- Organizational skills
- Time management
- Planning
- Future-oriented behavior/goal-directed
- Self-regulation: affect

Executive Functions (components)

- Selective attention
- Maintenance of attention or vigilance
- Behavioral/response inhibition
- Task initiation
- Flexibility
- Goal-directed persistence
- Metacognition
- Abstraction/creativity

Interventions to Promote Executive Function Skills

(Dawson, Guare; 2004)

- Strategy 1: Intervene at the level of the environment
  - Making changes to the physical environment
  - Changing the nature of the task
  - Changing the ways cues are provided
  - Changing the way adults interact with students

Interventions to Promote Executive Function Skills

(Dawson, Guare; 2004)

- **Strategy 2: Intervene at the level of the person**
  - Teach the child executive skills
  - Motivate the child to use executive skills already within their repertoire
  - Coaching/modelling

The Language of the Culture

■ Language of Safety, Relationship and Success

1. State things in the positive

   - "Walk down the hallway."

   - "Work quietly."

   - "Here is what I need from you for you to earn all your points this hour."

■ Language of Threats, Judgment and Failure

1. State things in the negative

   - "Don't run."

   - "Don't talk."

   - "You're going to lose a point if you talk again."

Language of Culture

2. Success focused

- "Here's a plus point for working quietly for …"

- "Who wants to be the 'problem-solver'?"

(recognize child who takes positive step)

- "Tell me of a time where you and your mother worked well together."

2. Problem focused

- "You just lost a point for talking."

- "You guys better knock it off or you'll both be in trouble."

- "You're terrible to disrespect your mother that way."

Language of Culture

3. Avoids negative assumptions

- "Jon, remember that the rule in this building is…"

(this is stated with firmness and authority, while tone of voice still says, "I like and respect you and expect the best from you")

3. Makes negative assumptions

- "Take off your hat now."

(stated with challenging tone that implies the child intends to be "bad" and deserves punishment- the child then needs to defend against not feeling likeable)

Language of Culture

4. Language of relationship
  - "I appreciate your effort."
  - "I was disappointed when…"

5. Work toward "goal"-which provides flexibility

6. "Right now you're working really hard to make me not like you. What do you need so we get back to enjoy the Jon we usually do?"

4. Language of judgment
  - "Good boy."
  - "You're in trouble now"

5. Work toward "reward" which limits

Be personal, don't take it personally

- Expressing feelings in a personal way to students enhances the relationship

  - Be excited (emotionally responsive) for positive acts, matter-of-fact in response to negative acts

- Never take it personally when students act negatively toward us

  - They *need* us stronger than their fears (safety)

Sources of Power

- Power of Fear
  -Fear of consequence
     transforms to
  -Fear of disappointment
- Power of Predictability
- Power of Relationship
  -Empowers unified system
  -Power of Parents
- Power of Attractiveness
- Power of Inspiration

Levels of Communicating Feeling

Example

Result

"It seems like you _____, and I'm feeling crummy. Am I right or wrong?"

Win-Win (This approach takes in two points of view and attempts to integrate)

"You wronged me and I'm angry at you!"

Win-Lose (Attempts to control/defeat other for self-protection)

"You *%$#, I hate you."

(Often communicated through actions)

Lose-Lose (Wants to make other feel as miserable as does self through words or actions, "hopelessness and fear")
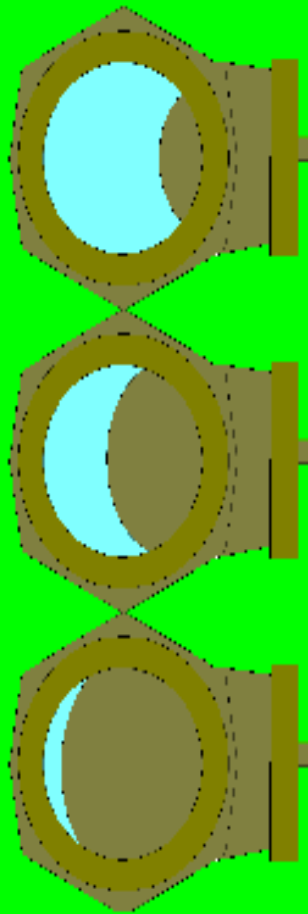
Dependence vs. Independence

- Increasing independence depends upon mutual trust between adult(s) and child
- The need to depend is based in safety
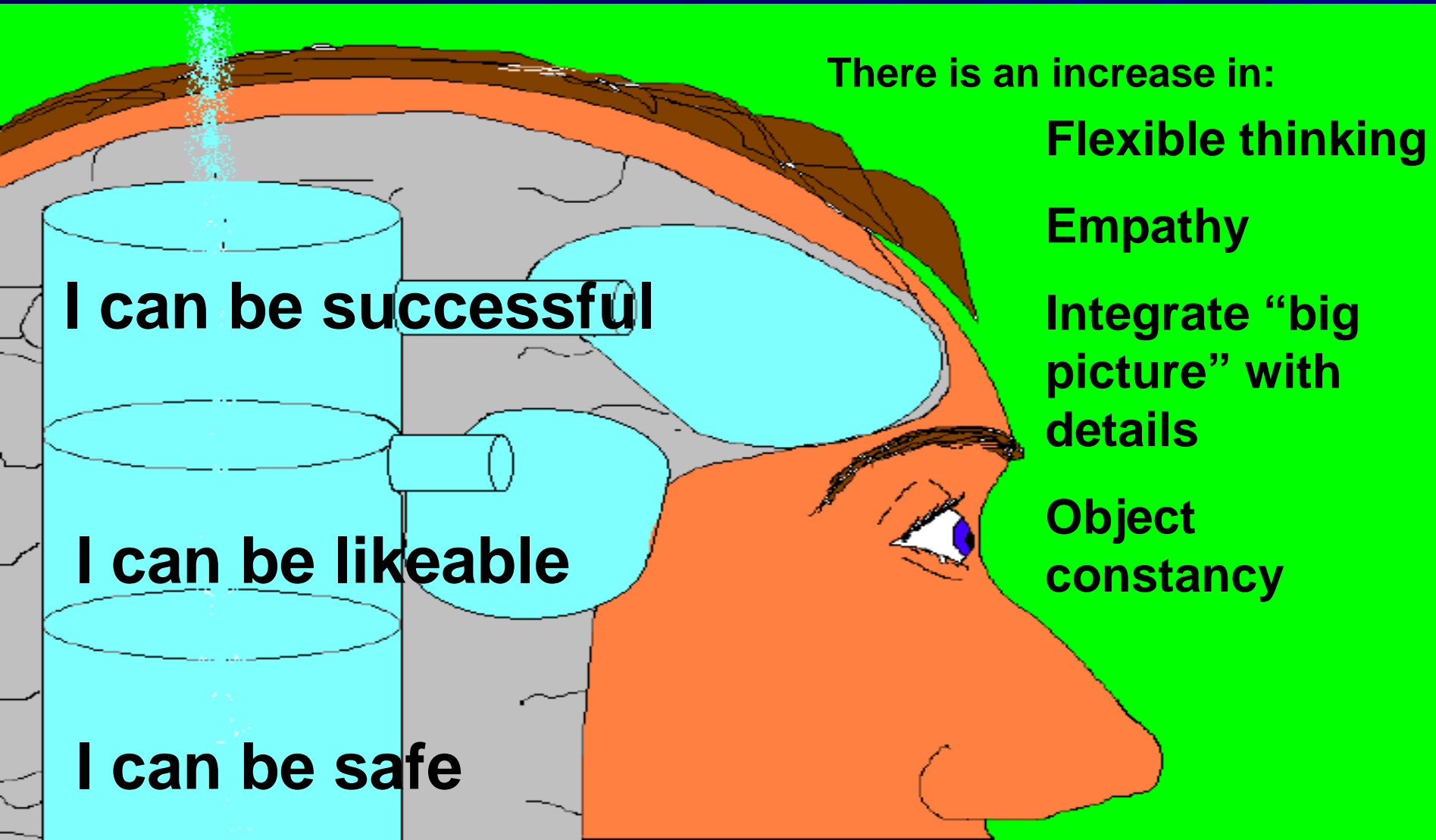- The need to be independent is based in success

Rules vs. Choice

- Rules structure thinking, which leaves more of the brain available to process new information coming in from outside of world (in contrast, without rules much more difficult to sort out and organize information coming in which in turn increases anxiety)

Set of Rules for Adults

- Talk outside of earshot of other children about a child (otherwise, the message is "We talk about you in front of other children (loss of safety)
- Genuine intentions
- Weighted blanket (pushes against body to orient body- same is true with scapegoat, push against to orient ego [how to define self])
- Use simple sentences so that each statement can stand on its own
  - It ensures that the statement can't be taken out of context
  - It fits for the child with difficulties processing

Self-awareness…(red flag)

When it feels too good…

It feels really good to the point we start to favor a child. The problem is that we are getting our needs to be "liked/loved" through the child
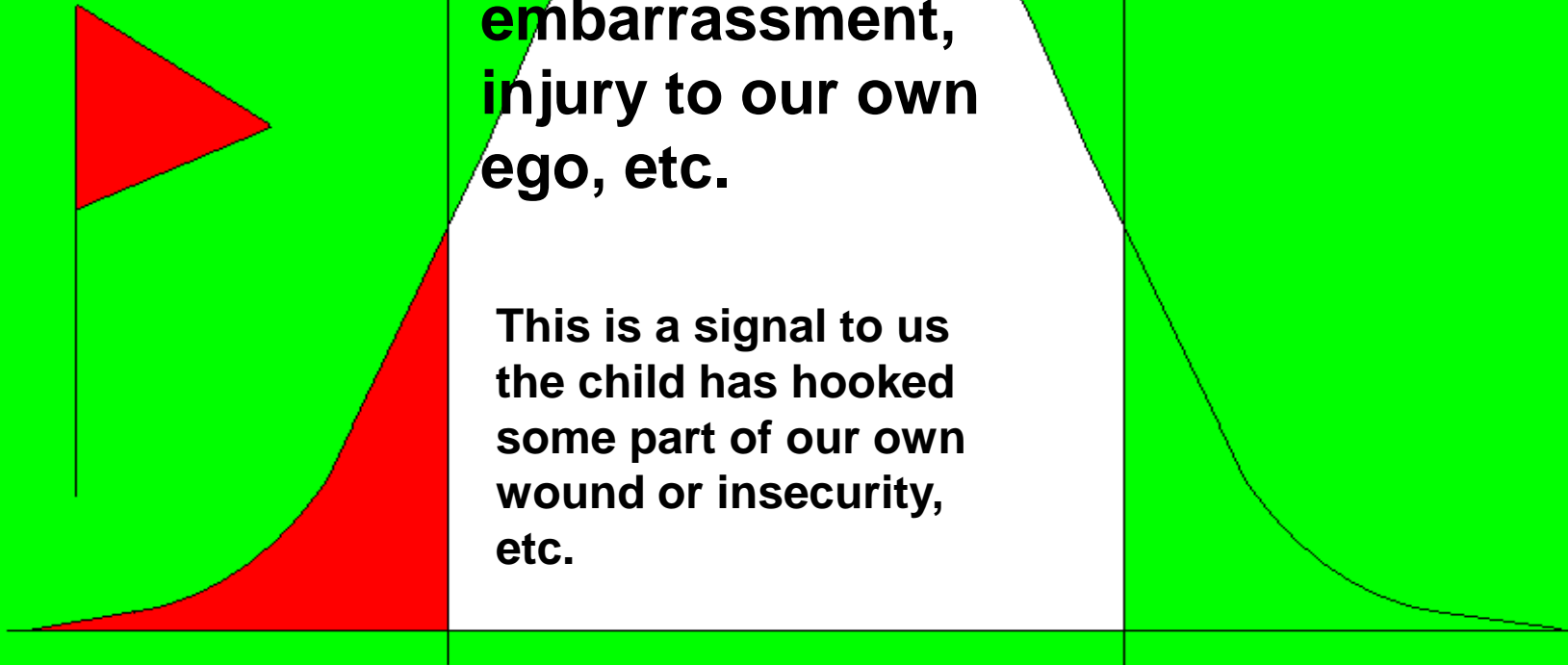
Self-awareness…(red flag)

When it feels too bad…

We want to punish, retaliate or shame child because of embarrassment, injury to our own ego, etc.

This is a signal to us the child has hooked some part of our own wound or insecurity, etc.

Education vs. Mental Health

- Goal of education with children who struggle is to make accommodations so the child can most effectively access their educational opportunity

- The story the child carries within them as well as the story adults have about the child greatly effects how the child accesses their learning opportunity