

# Putting on the Oxygen Mask



## Triangulating Safeguarding, Resilience and Self-Care

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# Welcome

We want people to participate but please use the 'raise hand' facility to ask questions and contribute when others are talking.

Please be considerate to others - together we want to create a safe, open and reflective space to learn.

You can turn on live captions on by clicking on the 3 dots at the top of your screen if you need this.

The link to the feedback form will be put in the chat.

Please do take the time to complete it after the session.

Thank you!



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# Contents

Acknowledging operational pressure and processes  
Emotional landscape  
Research & national publications  
Resources

...but first, we are going to tell you a story...



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# Resilience and Vulnerability

Definition of resilience:

- The capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.
- The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity.



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# Using our Brains



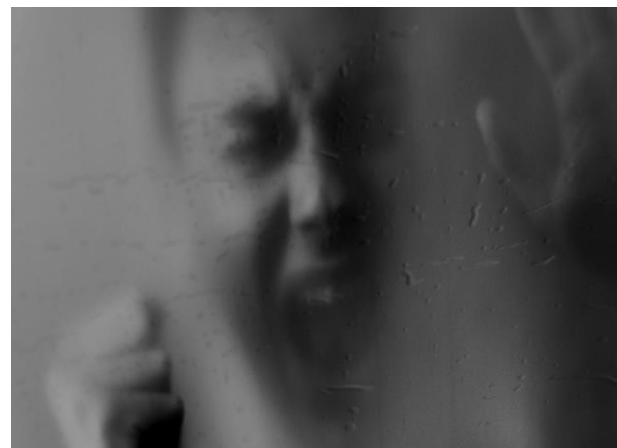
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# A Story of Connecting the Brains...



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# Describing the Case



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# Gaining Intellectual Control

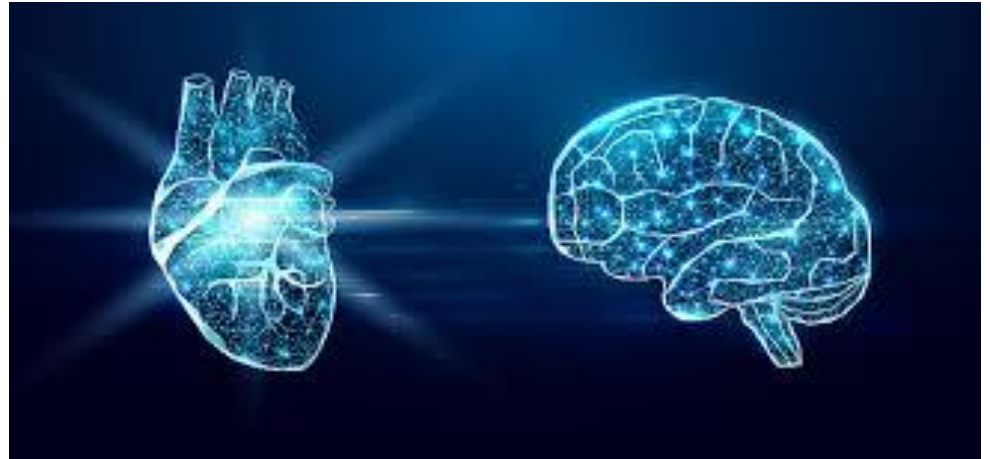


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# Lessons in Resilience

*"I believe we learn what we are meant to learn, and some of us are simply meant to learn things the hard way. There's no way I could have known then what I know now, because if I had, I would have truly opened my heart first. The head is powerful, but it can only get us what we really want if we open our heart first."*



James R Doty –  
Into the Magic Shop



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"YOU CAN'T STOP THE WAVES,  
BUT YOU CAN LEARN TO SURF."  
- JON KABAT-ZINN



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# The Frame

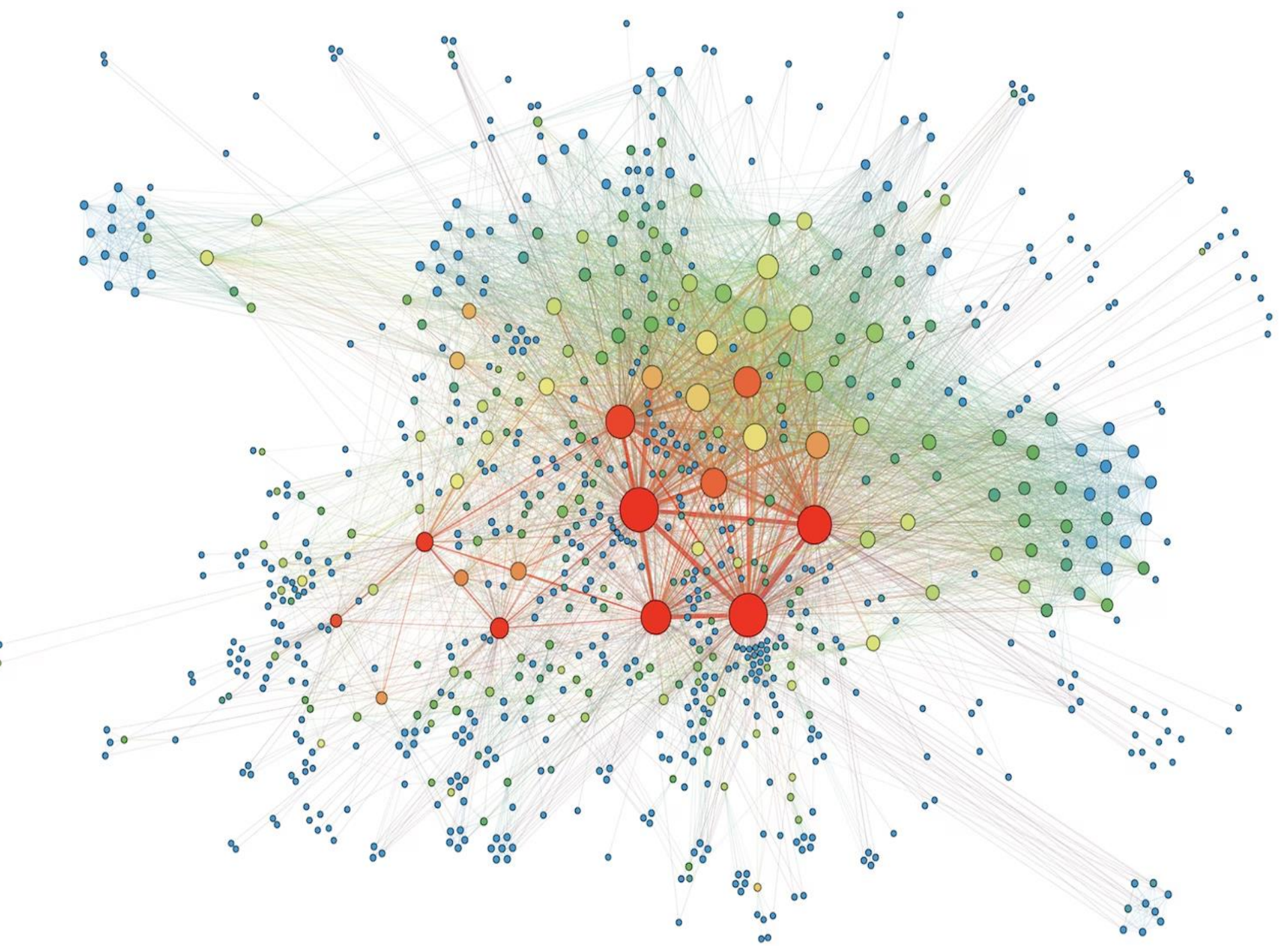
Legislation & statutory guidance  
Strategies, Policies and Procedures  
Practice frameworks guidance and tools  
Research  
Inspections  
Targets

Agenda's & minutes – tasks and more tasks, referrals .....



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# Our Landscape

*Social Workers Failed to Heed Warnings*

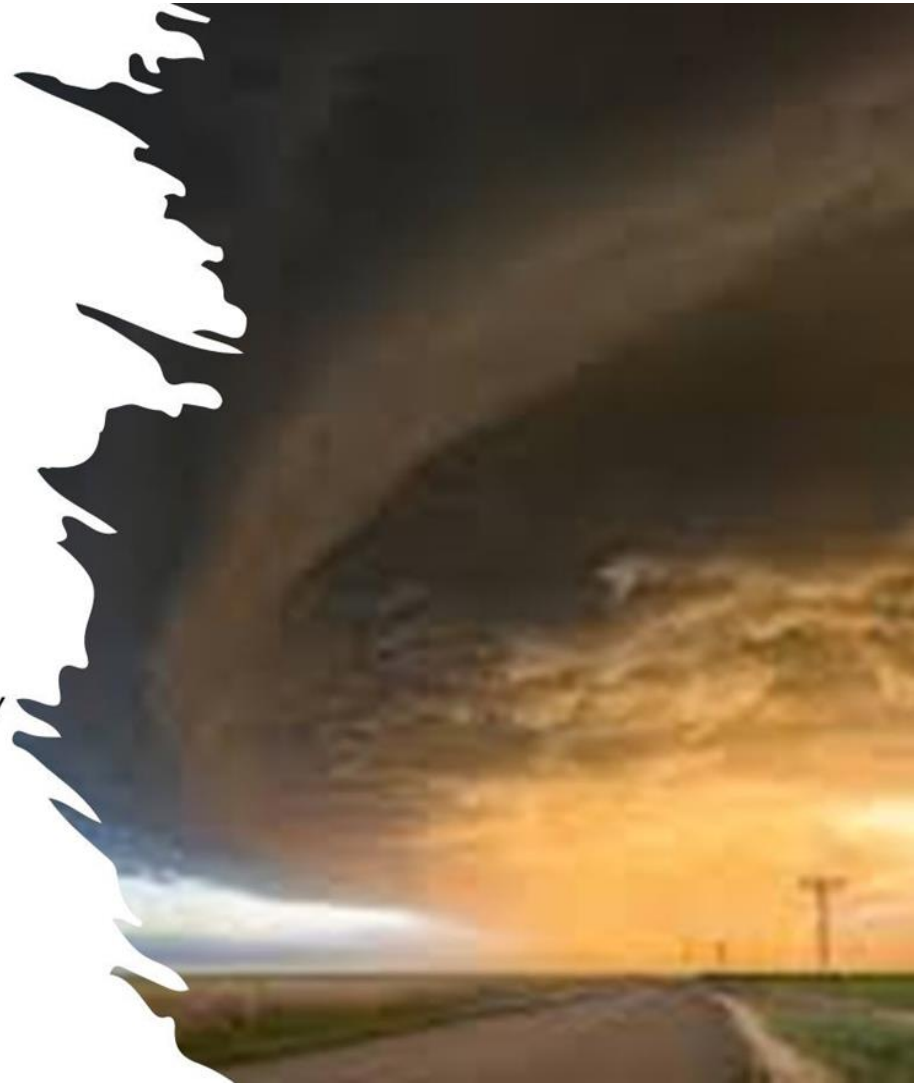
*Nurses fail to identify and respond to deteriorating patients*

*Shocking hospital mistakes led to our daughter's death*

*School suspends five staff over asthma death of boy*

*Teachers are to blame for my child's behaviour*

*Police are failing to protect children from harm*



# Our Emotional Worlds

Though the mechanics of safeguarding often dwell in policies, procedures and training modules, the true heart of this work beats in the emotional experiences of those who undertake it.

The emotional impact of safeguarding work is profound, complex and multi-faceted, shaping not only the professional life of the safeguarding practitioner but also their sense of self and humanity.



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# What the research tells us

**Tavistock:** The Unconscious at Work (systems – psychodynamics)

**Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel** Learning Support & Capability Project

**Research in Practice & Karen Treisman** – trauma informed organisations

**Sydney Decker** – Behind Human Error

**Jonathan Dickens** – The multiple & competing functions of local reviews of serious child abuse cases in England



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## Our Landscape

*There are mental pains to be borne in working at any task, and these have to be dealt with by us as individuals, each with a personal history of having developed ways of managing or evading situations of anxiety, pain, fear and depression. Collectively in our institutions, we have also learnt to do this, installing defences against the painful realities of the work into our ways of arranging our tasks rules and procedures. It is incumbent on us to try in whatever way we can to explore these aspects of our working practices, in order that our ways of coping do not grossly interfere, subvert or even pervert our efforts.*



# Perennial thorny issues

Lack of joint working

No child centred practice –i.e. not standing in a child's shoes

Adultification

No challenge or escalation

Lack of professional curiosity

Professional fatigue

Hopelessness and helplessness



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# Equipping You to Safeguard Your Heart – Filling your Oxygen Tank

- Opening the emotional narrative
- Self Care
- JAGS: Joint Agency Group Supervision
- **Filling your tank**



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*Engaging in a difficult conversation without talking about feelings is like staging an opera without the music*

Havard Negotiation Project



# Self Care – knowing ourselves

## Judgment of Self

I'm wrong / , they're right

Blaming/criticising Self

Submissive/ Passive behaviours

Victim behaviours

They are more powerful (bigger)

Feeling Helpless

Lose/Win (get small to stay safe)

Collapse of boundaries



-10

Reaction



+10

Reaction



# Self Care – knowing ourselves



# Exercise

Visualise yourself at your strongest

What resources tap into your best, strongest version of self?

Think about a challenging situation – what are your triggers?

How have you/can you use your heart oxygen mask to protect you?



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# JAGS



*Understanding/appreciating that we are all working together with the same aim - wanting the best for the child and family – seeing the strengths that we have as a whole*

*Having challenging conversations in a safe space – having space to discuss openly – a space to reflect – an honest space*

*Sharing worries openly*

*Learning about a child – strengthening understanding about a child*

*A chance to hear each other - hearing multiple perspectives*

*Validating & sharing feelings*



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# Filling the Oxygen Tank



Let go of perfect – good enough for now – safe enough to try



Safe spaces are brave spaces



Boundaries



Stay curious



When triggered – calm your nervous system first



Lean in – trust yourself



Recognise the difference between impact and intent ( our intent is positive, but our impact may not be ( worth and self – esteem – systems perspective - Dekker)



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# Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: Learning Support & Capability Project

- Normalise emotional conversations – encourage open dialogue about emotions in team meetings and learning sessions
- Embed emotional support in policy
- Provide access to support services
- Promote peer to peer emotional support
- Evaluate and monitor impact



research  
in practice

"It's ok you know..."  
said the  
horse



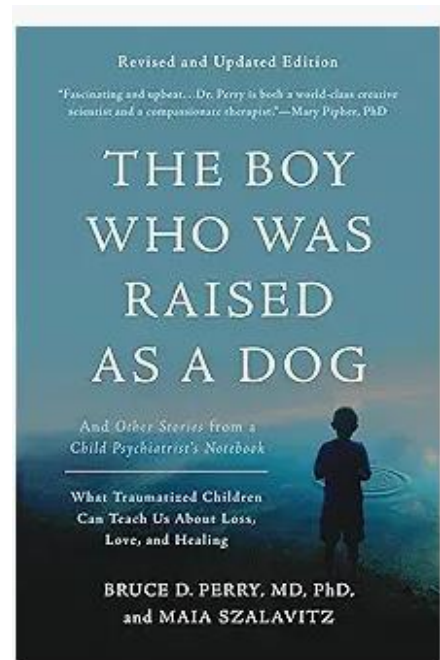
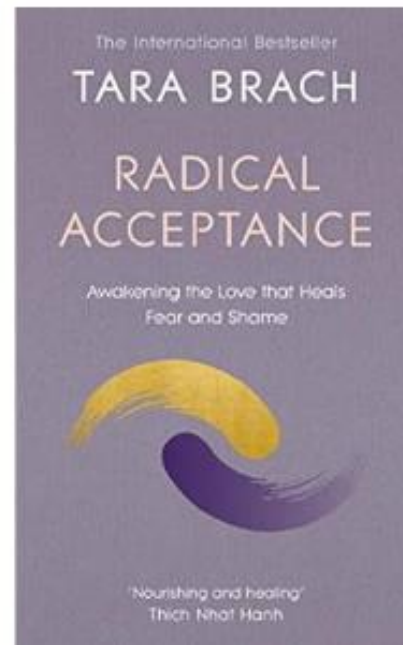
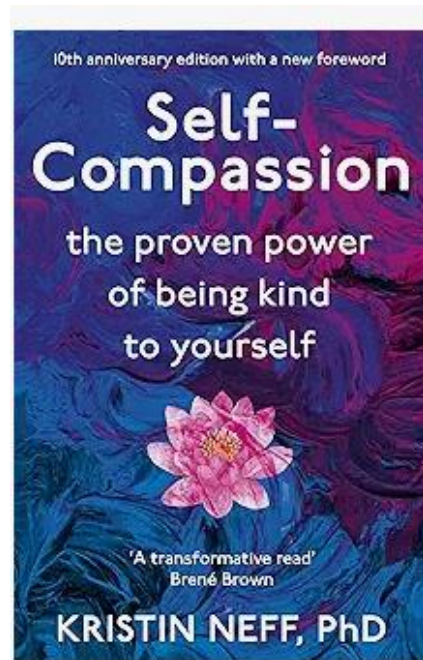
"...not to feel ok."

"What is the bravest thing  
you've ever said?" asked  
the boy.



"Help," said the horse.

# Some Good Reads



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# The Alphabet of the Heart

(James Doty)



Compassion  
Dignity  
Equanimity  
Forgiveness  
Gratitude  
Humility  
Integrity  
Justice  
Kindness  
Love



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**Please  
provide  
some  
feedback**

