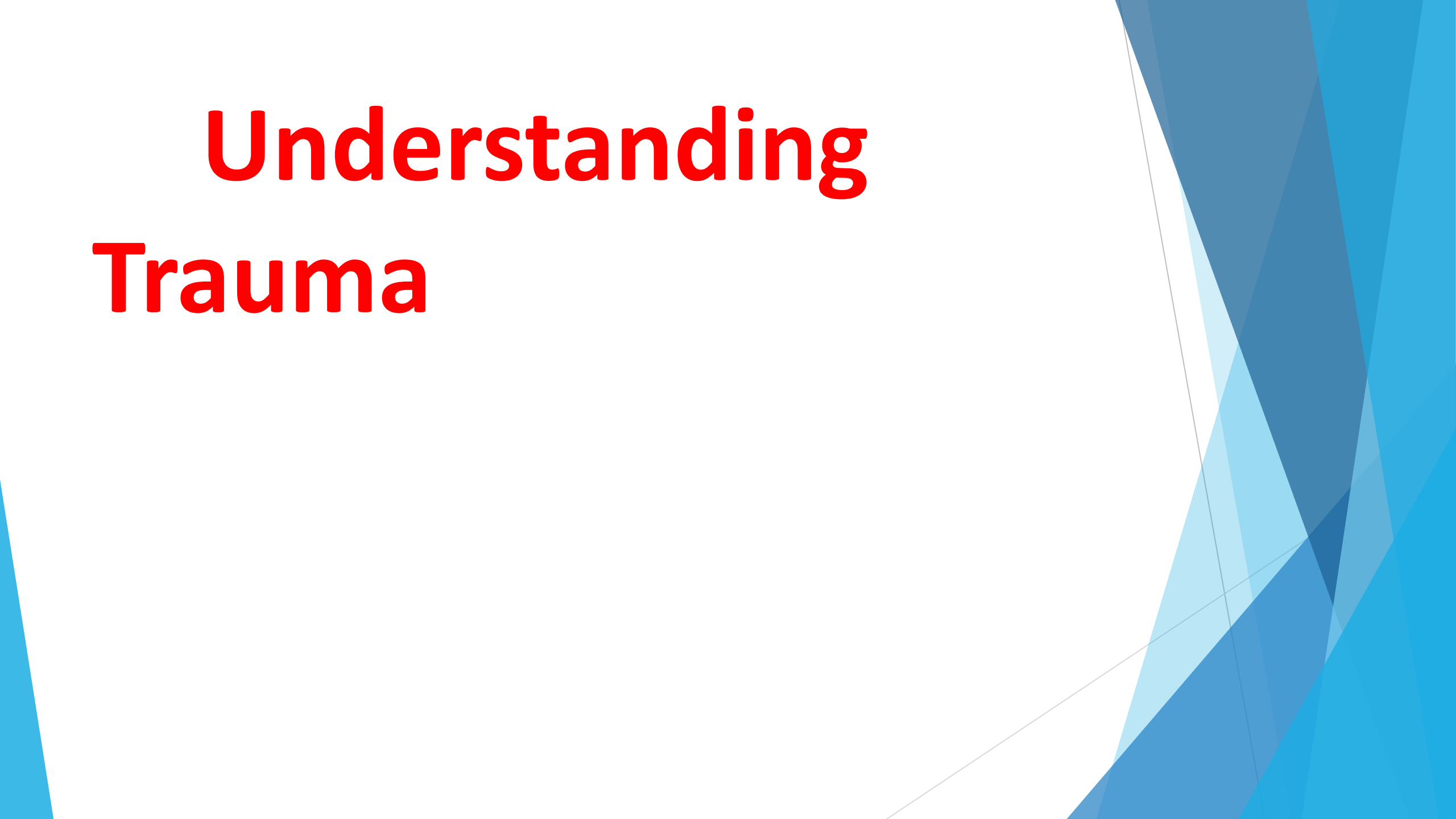


Understanding Trauma



Normal Threat Responses

1. **Fight** - to confront threat aggressively
2. **Flight** - run from danger
3. **Freeze** - unable to move/act against the threat
4. **Fawn** - to comply to save yourself

Normal Use Of Threat Reactions

▶ Most of us appropriately use our threat responses:

1. **Fight response** insures good boundaries, healthy assertiveness and aggressive self-protectiveness if necessary.

2. **Flight instinct** allows disengagement and retreat when confrontation would exacerbate danger.

Normal Use Of Threat Reactions ctd

3. **Freeze** - allows **giving up** and **struggling** when further activity or resistance is futile or counterproductive ‘Cut your losses’.

4. **Fawn**- enables *listening, helping, and compromising* in potential conflict.

What is Trauma?

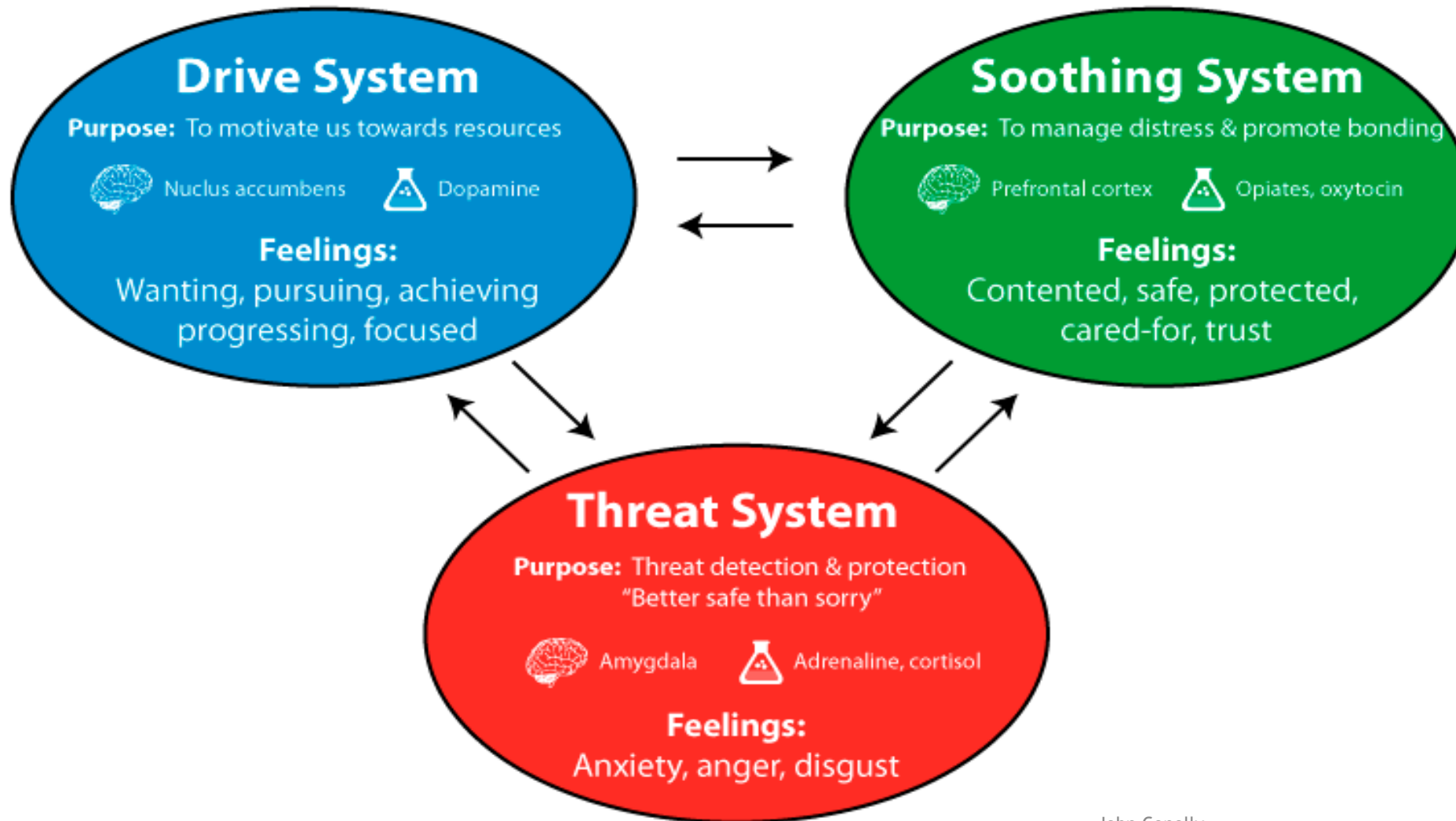
- ▶ An Acute **disruption** of someone's **psychological balance**
- ▶ When usual **Threat Responses fail**
- ▶ Evidence of **Distress + Impairment**

Overdeveloped Threat Reactions

- ▶ Those **traumatized** in childhood learn to survive by over-relying on one or two of the 4 Threat Responses.
- ▶ Fixation in any one response stops accessing the others.
- ▶ Also severely **impairs ability to relax** into an undefended state - **'HYPERVIGILANCE'**

Emotional Regulation Systems

Paul Gilbert's evolutionary model proposes that human beings switch between three systems to manage their emotions. Each system is associated with different brain regions and different brain chemistry. Distress is caused by imbalance between the systems, often associated with under-development of the soothing system.



Threat Response

The body's defence reaction when faced by a threat to **physical safety** or **emotional** wellbeing -e.g. **being ignored !!!**



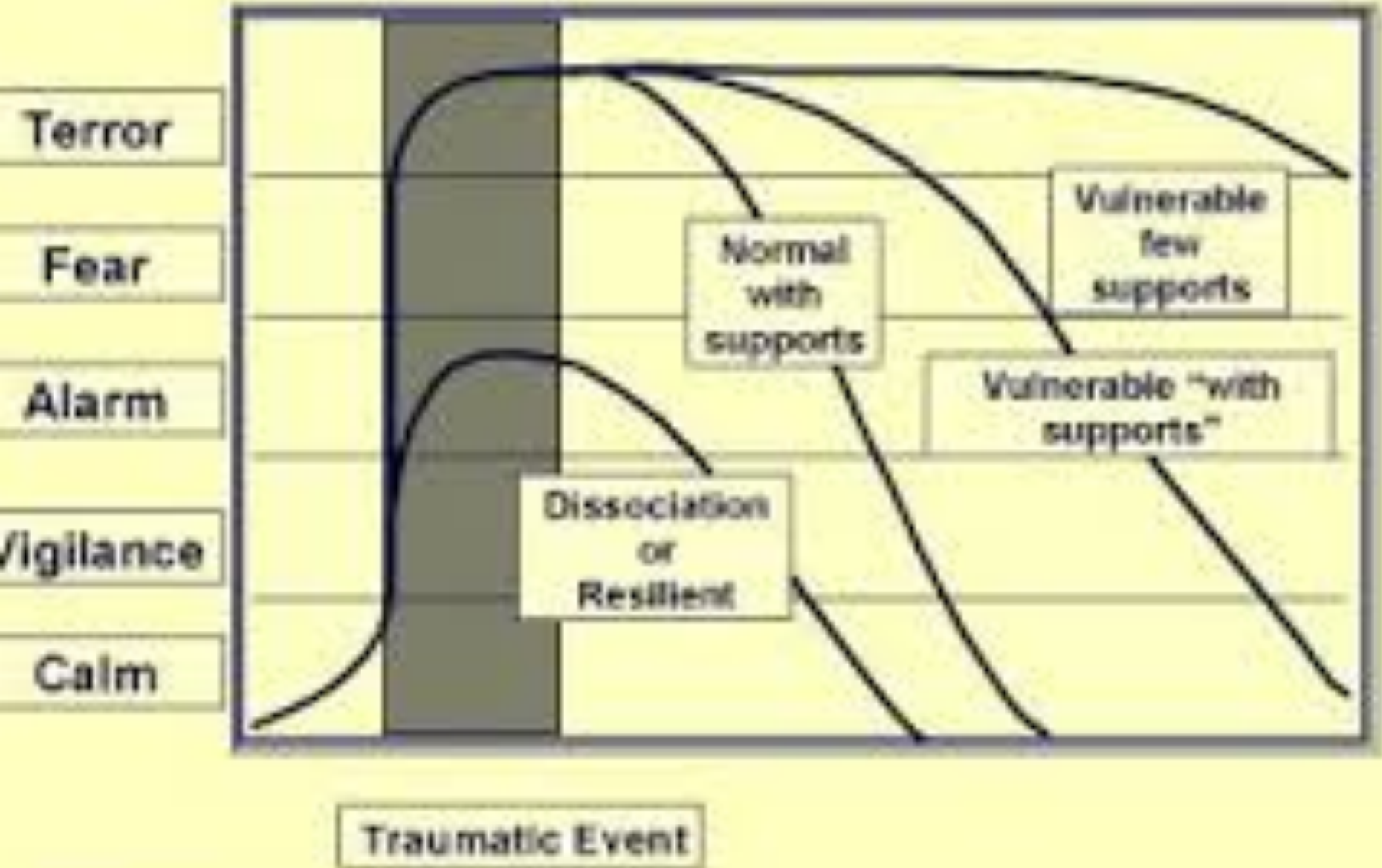
Brain
unresponsive
to new
information
Every sense
is in a
heightened
state of
'Hyper-
vigilance'

8

Consequences of Threat Response

- ▶ **Normal survival response** but if activated too strongly or often or when **Personality still developing*** has consequences:
 1. **General Adaptive Disorder**
 2. **Acute Stress Reaction**
 3. **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**
 4. ***Personality Disorder**

ACUTE RESPONSE TO TRAUMA



General Adaptive Disorder

- ▶ Reaction to **cumulative stress**
 - ▶ Three stages to Body's reaction to **chronic stress**
1. **Threat Response activated**
 2. **Body suffers** - arteries harden, stress hormones remain in bloodstream, etc.
 3. **Exhaustion stage** - psychosomatic illnesses

Different Trauma Consequences

2. Acute Stress Reaction

- ▶ Incoherent
- ▶ Disorganized
- ▶ Agitated/Volatile
- ▶ Calm/Dissociated
- ▶ Subdued
- ▶ Withdrawn
- ▶ Apathetic

Up to One Month

3. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Same as ASR +

- ▶ Flashbacks
- ▶ Sleep disturbances
- ▶ Hypervigilance
- ▶ Intrusive Thoughts

Longer than One Month

4. Personality Disorder

‘ (A) relatively **stable, enduring,** and **pervasively maladaptive patterns of coping, thinking, feeling, regulating impulses,** and **relating to others.**’

(Bleiberg, Rossouw and Fonagy, 2012).

Complex Causes

Biological,
Psychological
Cultural

(Livesely, 2003).

Childhood abuse
Deprivation
Neglect

(Alwin, 2006).

- ▶ Reaction to an ongoing and sustained traumatic experience

(Keats et al, 2012)

- ▶ ‘Traumatised Personality’

(Conolly, 2018a, b)

	DSM V	ICD-10
Cluster A	Paranoid Distrust and suspiciousness	Paranoid Distrust and sensitivity
	Schizoid Socially and emotionally detached	Schizoid Emotionally cold and detached
	Schizotypal	No equivalent
Cluster B	Antisocial Violation of the rights of others	Dissocial Callous disregard of others, irresponsibility and irritability
	Borderline Instability of relationship, self-image and mood	Emotionally Unstable A) Borderline type: unclear self-image and intense unstable relationships B) Impulsive type: inability to control anger, quarrelsome and unpredictable
	Histrionic Excessive emotionality and attention-seeking	Histrionic Dramatic, egocentric and manipulative
	Narcissistic	No equivalent

	DSM V	ICD-10
Cluster C	<p>Avoidant Socially inhibited, feelings of inadequacy, hypersensitivity</p>	<p>Avoidant Tense, self-conscious and hypersensitive</p>
	<p>Dependent Clinging and submissive</p>	<p>Dependent Subordinates, personal need, seeking constant reassurance</p>
	<p>Obsessive compulsive Perfectionist and inflexible</p>	<p>Anankastic Indecisive, pedantic and rigid</p>

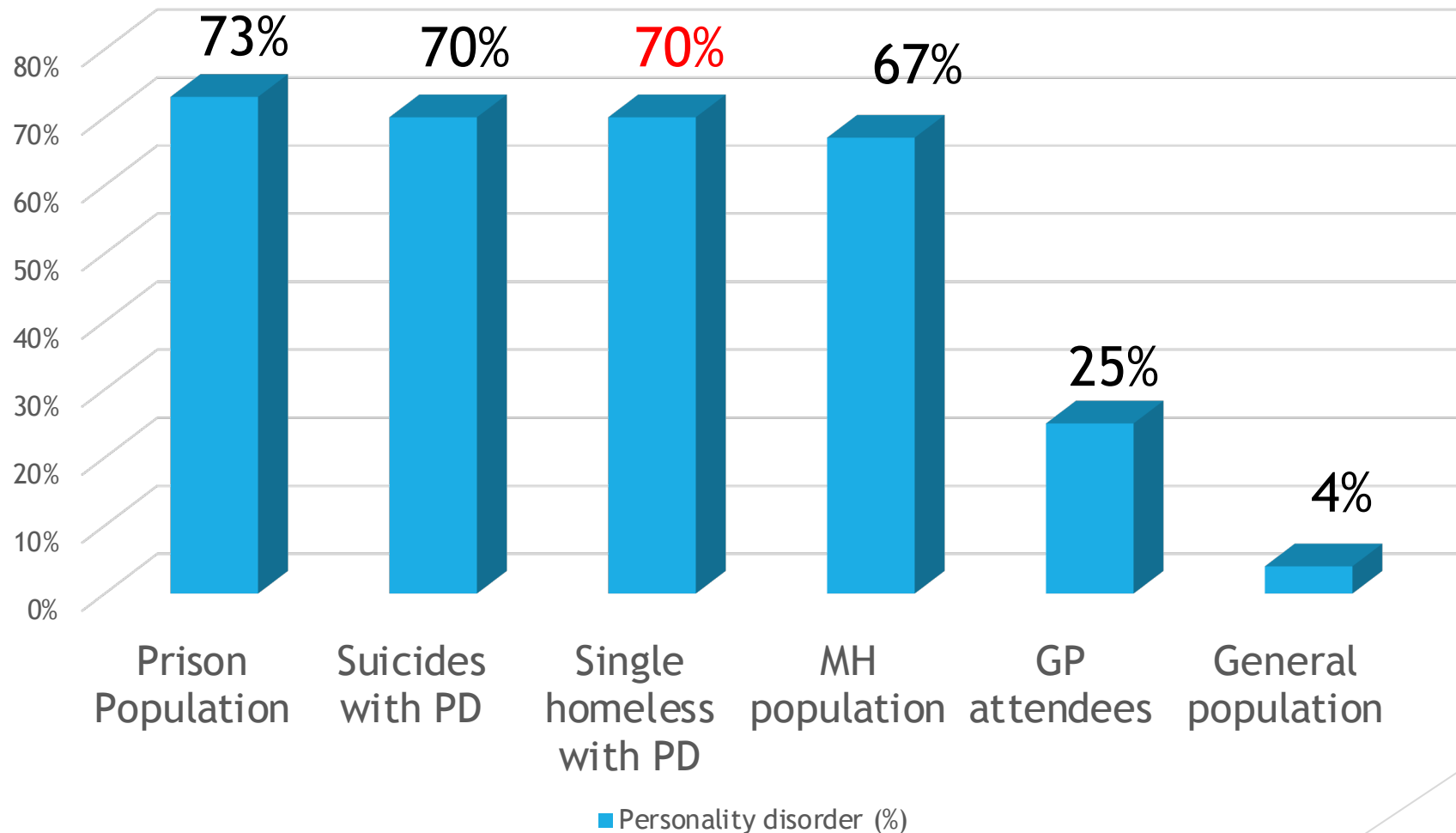
Additional Problems

- ▶ Anxiety,
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Substance misuse disorders
- ▶ Recurrent deliberate self harm,

- ▶ Suicide
- ▶ Brief Psychotic episodes
- ▶ Eating disorders.
- ▶ Gambling

PD Shocking figures

Personality disorder (%)



Vicarious Traumatism

- ▶ The **emotional residue** of exposure that workers have from working with people with **trauma**.
- ▶ Hear trauma stories, become witnesses to the pain, fear, and terror that trauma survivors have endured.
- ▶ Experience **similar trauma symptoms** (see PTSD) and have a **change in world view**.

Trauma Informed Communication and Setting boundaries

Devil is in the Detail - **Body Language** :

- ▶ Triggers **Threat Response** OR **Calms someone**
- ▶ **Compassionate Self-assertion** - Boundary setting
 - C** onnect - **E**mpathy **A**ttention **R**espect
 - A**nalysis of Options
 - R**esponse to Misinformation
 - S**etting limits