



# STRENGTHENING CASE MANAGEMENT: *CONTAINMENT WITH CLIENTS*

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# Summary

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- This webinar is intended for case managers (CMs) who work with clients who are unable to control their emotions during stressful situations. Focusing our discussion to client eligibility screenings, participants will learn three containment strategies appropriate for CMs to use with clients that experience emotional instability.

# Objectives

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- Define the following terms: *emotional regulation, emotional dysregulation, window of optimal arousal, hypoarousal, hyperarousal, containment*
- Recognize the need for containment during client eligibility screenings
- Identify three containment strategies appropriate for use in a CM setting

**Polling Slide:** Have you ever been in a situation with an emotional client and you didn't know what to do?

# Case Example: Clavie\*



Photograph courtesy of Ariana J. Crane

\*Name has been changed

# Emotion, Stress & the Brain

# Emotional Regulation vs. Dysregulation

- ❑ **Emotional Regulation** is the process by which a person can control the flow of their emotions in order to manage how they feel and how they choose to express these feelings.
- ❑ **Emotional Dysregulation** is when a person cannot control the flow of emotions and a normal situation triggers an inappropriate response.

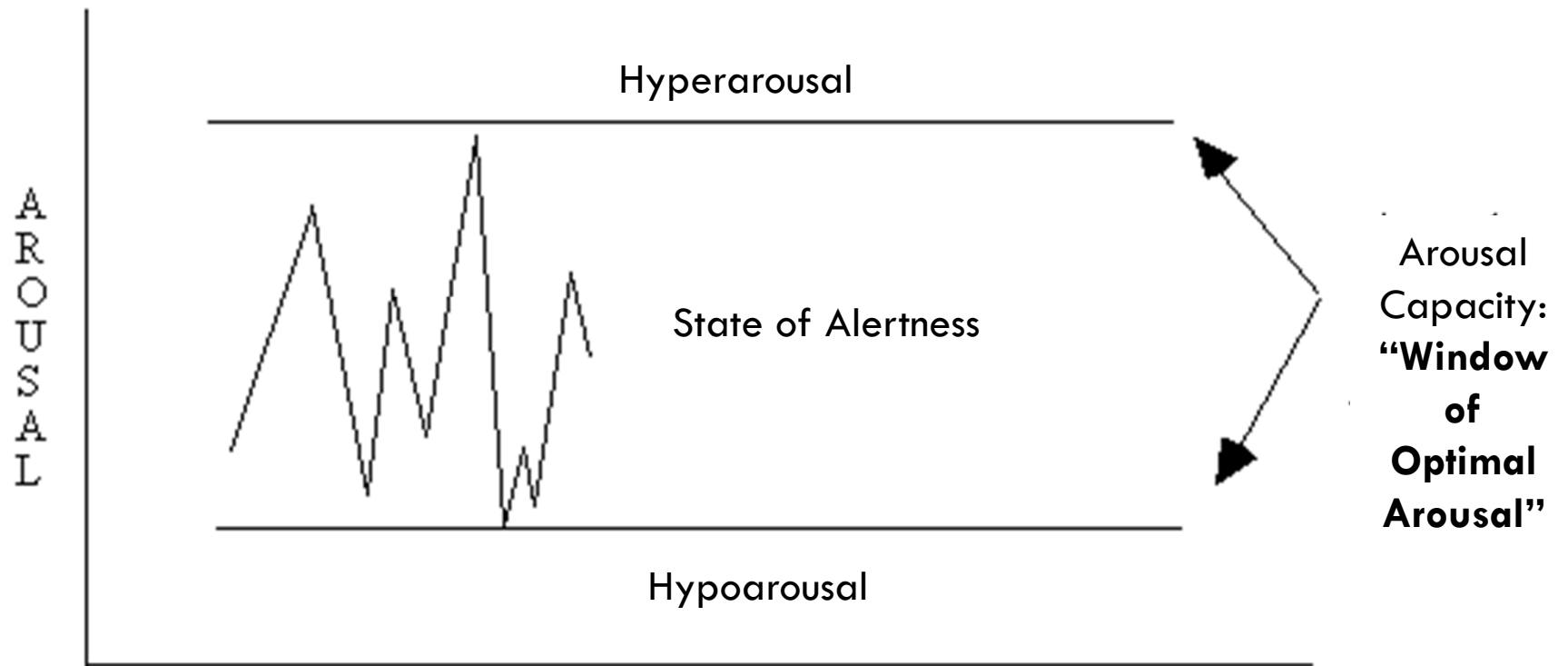




<b>Hypoarousal (Low Arousal)</b>	<b>Hyperarousal (High Arousal)</b>
Flat Affect	Easily Triggered
Numb, detached	Psychomotor agitation (pacing, chewing fingernails, wringing hands, pulling at clothing, etc.)
Passive, submissive	Hyper-vigilance
Victim identity	Separation anxiety
Avoidant, withdrawn	Rejection sensitivity
Disconnected from body	Emotionally overwhelmed

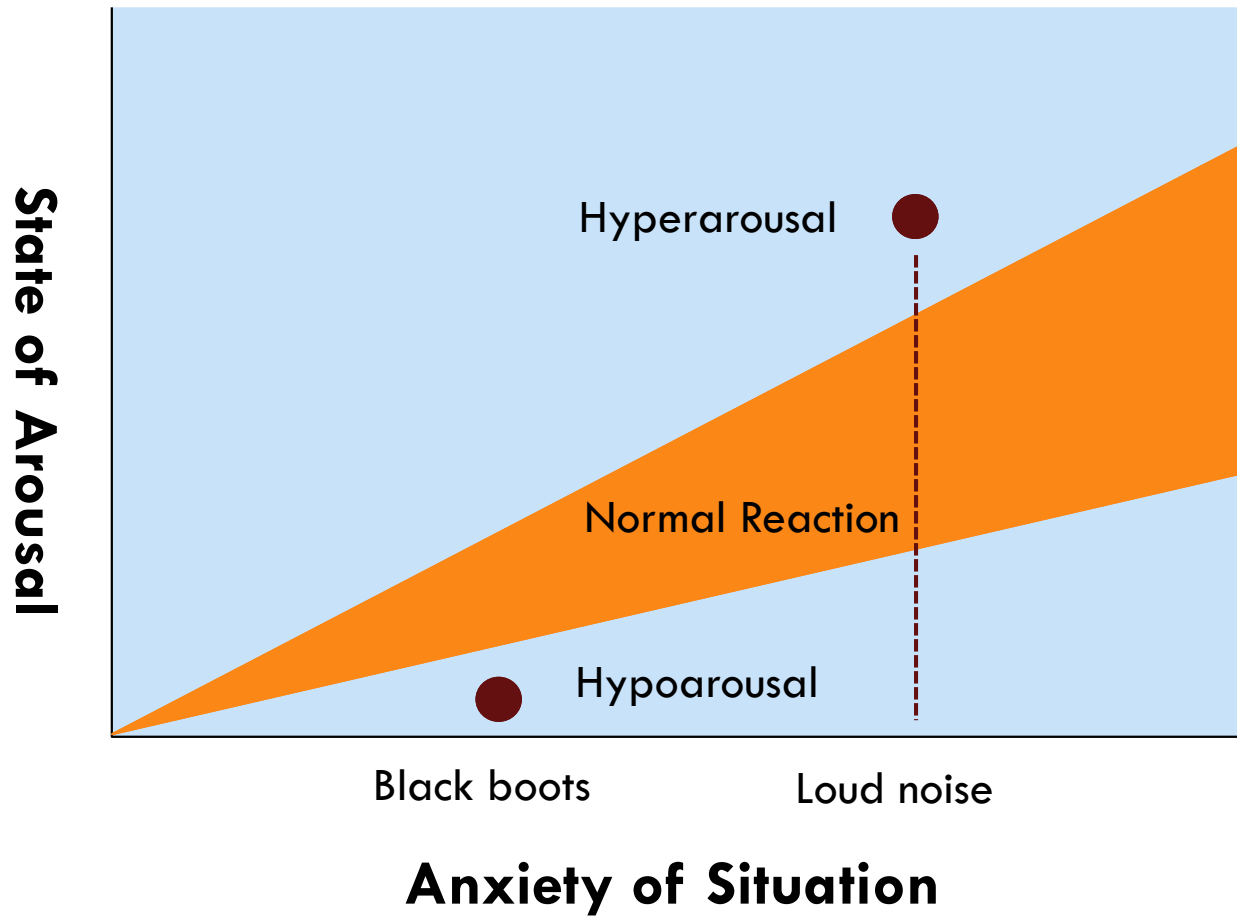


# Window of Optimal Arousal



# Window of Optimal Arousal

*Real Life Presentation*



# Containment in CM

# What is Containment?

- Containment refers to the ability to help clients temporarily contain fears, anxieties, and emotions to manage the situation at hand.



# Containment in CM

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- As CMs, the goal of containment is to:
  - Reconnect client to the “here and now”
  - Client is connected to their body
  - Client is aware of CM
  - Emphasize client’s personal control
  - Create safe context within the room
- Containment in CM is NOT meant to help clients process trauma.

# Eligibility Screenings

Unfamiliar Client

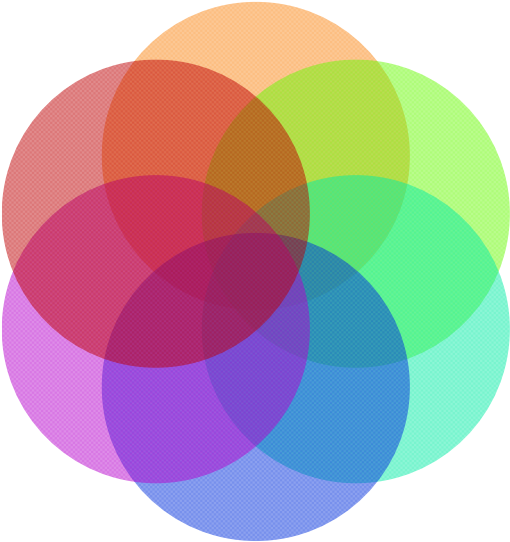
Cultural Taboos

New Environment

Interpreter may be present

Recounting Trauma Story

Stranger (You)



# Eligibility Screening Best Practices

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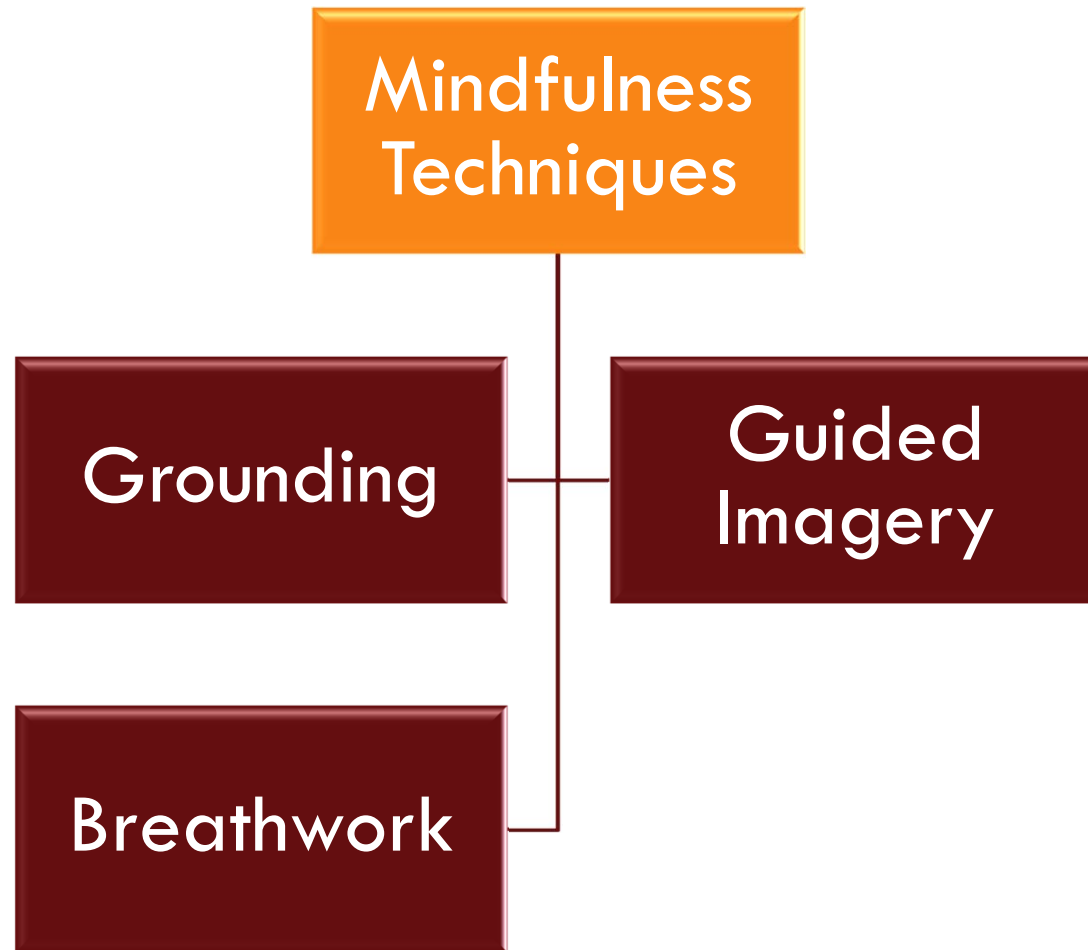
- Start session with “stress assessment” and monitor accordingly
- Emphasize client personal control throughout session (choice)
- Offer to take breaks and it’s OK to stop if they need to
- Insert physical activity when possible
- Keep sensory items on hand
- Remind clients the torture was not their fault
- Assure clients they are in the right place and they can get better

# Containment Strategies



# Therapeutic Applications

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# Grounding



- Technique designed to immediately connect client with present moment to emphasize personal control.
  - Cognitive Awareness
    - Where are you? What is your name? What color are my pants? What is the weather like today?
  - Sensory Awareness
    - “Drink a glass of water. Feel the water in your throat.”
    - “Rub your palms. Snap your fingers. Listen to the noise.”
    - “Look at this picture book. What things do you see?”



# Breathwork



- Refers to conscious variations in breathing designed to increase oxygen intake.
- Breathing Exercise #1
  - Inhale (3 counts), hold (3 counts), exhale (5 counts)
    - Inhale with fists closed, exhale with fists open
    - Add words as desired

## Breathing Exercise #2

- ▣ Place one hand on belly and one on heart
- ▣ Inhale (3 counts), hold (3 counts),  
exhale (5 counts)
- ▣ Add figure 8 rock

*Audio  
Resuming  
Now*



# Guided Imagery

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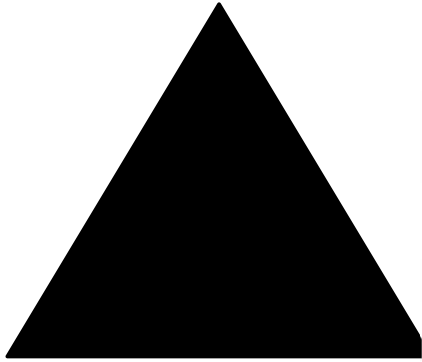
- Uses descriptive language to evoke mental imagery in the mind of the listener.
- Guided Imagery #1 (Safe Place)
  - Invite client to think of a place they associate with feelings of warmth and safety. Encourage client to describe place with all five senses. Invite client to identify object or visual to help client recall place.

# Guided Imagery

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- Guided Imagery #2 (Safety Box)
  - Turn torture narrative into color & shape. Ask client to “contain” object. Ask client to describe container using all 5 senses. Invite client to bury container. Add additional layers of containment as necessary.





# Re-visting Clavie

# Case Example: Clavie\*



# Conclusion

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- CMs need to be aware of emotional dysregulation when working with torture survivors.
- CMs need to be aware of and respect each client's window of optimal arousal.
- Containment strategies can be appropriately applied by CMs during client eligibilities.
- CMs must respect the line between CM and MH.

# Resources and References

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- Siegel, D., *The Developing Brain: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*, New York: The Guilford Press, 2001.
- Ferentz, L., *Working with Trauma Survivors: Keeping Them Present As They Heal Their Past* (Presentation), Fairfax, VA, Aug 2012.

# Thank You for Listening!



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