- Maureen Q. Ponce, Ph. D., LCPC, Board Approved Supervisor
- Sally Goh-Lau, Ph. D., LPC, NCC, Liberty University
- Zoricelis Davila, Ph. D., LPC-S, Dallas Baptist University

AACC World Conference Saturday, October 12, 2019
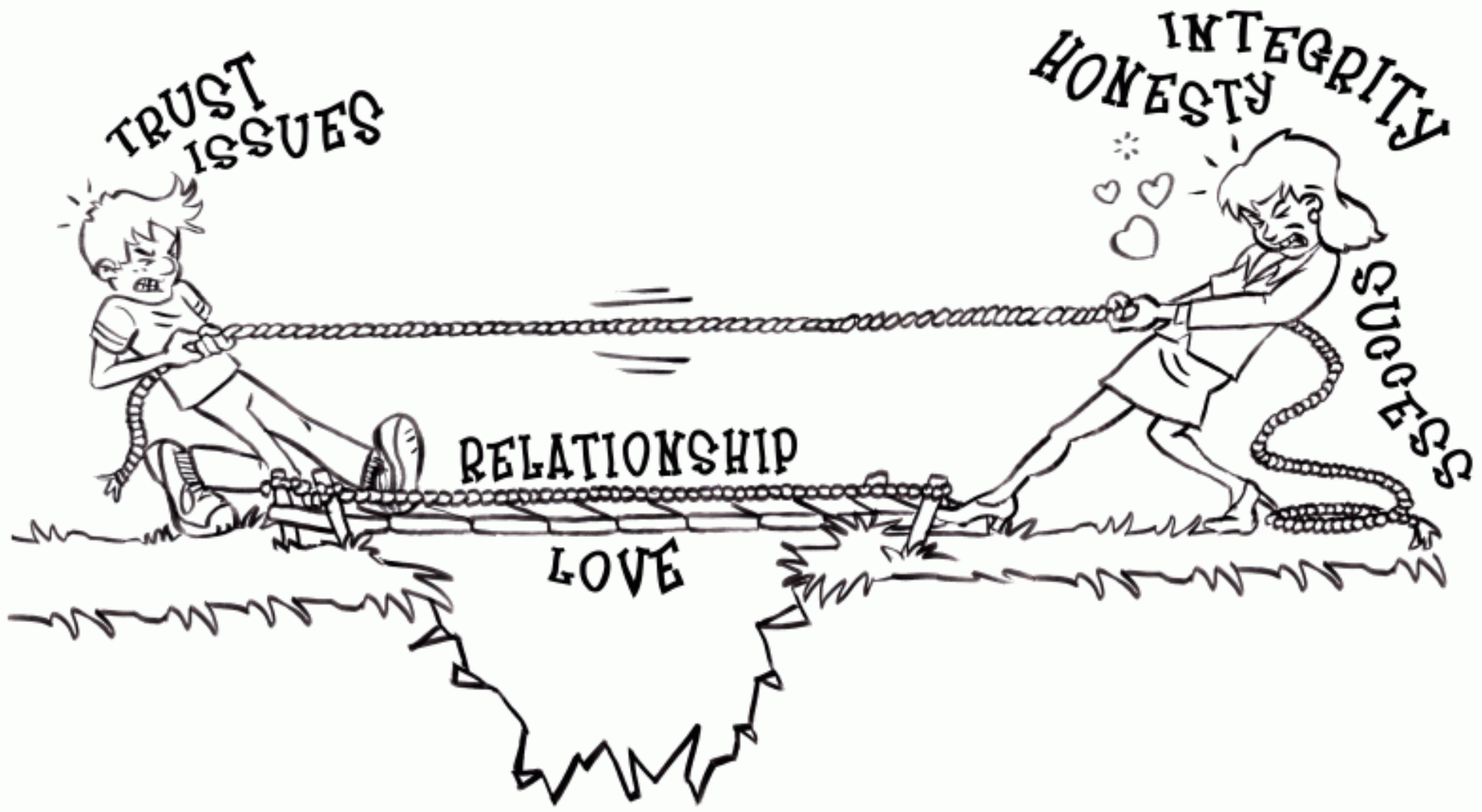
- **Slides can be found on www.bilingualcounseling.com**

Effective Communication in Family Counseling with Minorities: Psychoeducation Attachment-based Communication Model (PAC)

Learning Objectives

- **Learning Objective 1:**
Attendees will explore the relationship between the Biopsychosocial-spiritual lens, Attachment theory, and communication.

Learning Objective 2:
Attendees will discuss foundational principles of effective communication using the Psychoeducation Attachment-Based Communication (P.A.C) model.

Learning Objective 3:
Attendees will apply the principles of Psychoeducation Attachment-Based Communication (P.A.C) model to facilitate more effective family communication.

Development of the PAC Model

Psychoeducation

Attachment-Based

Communication

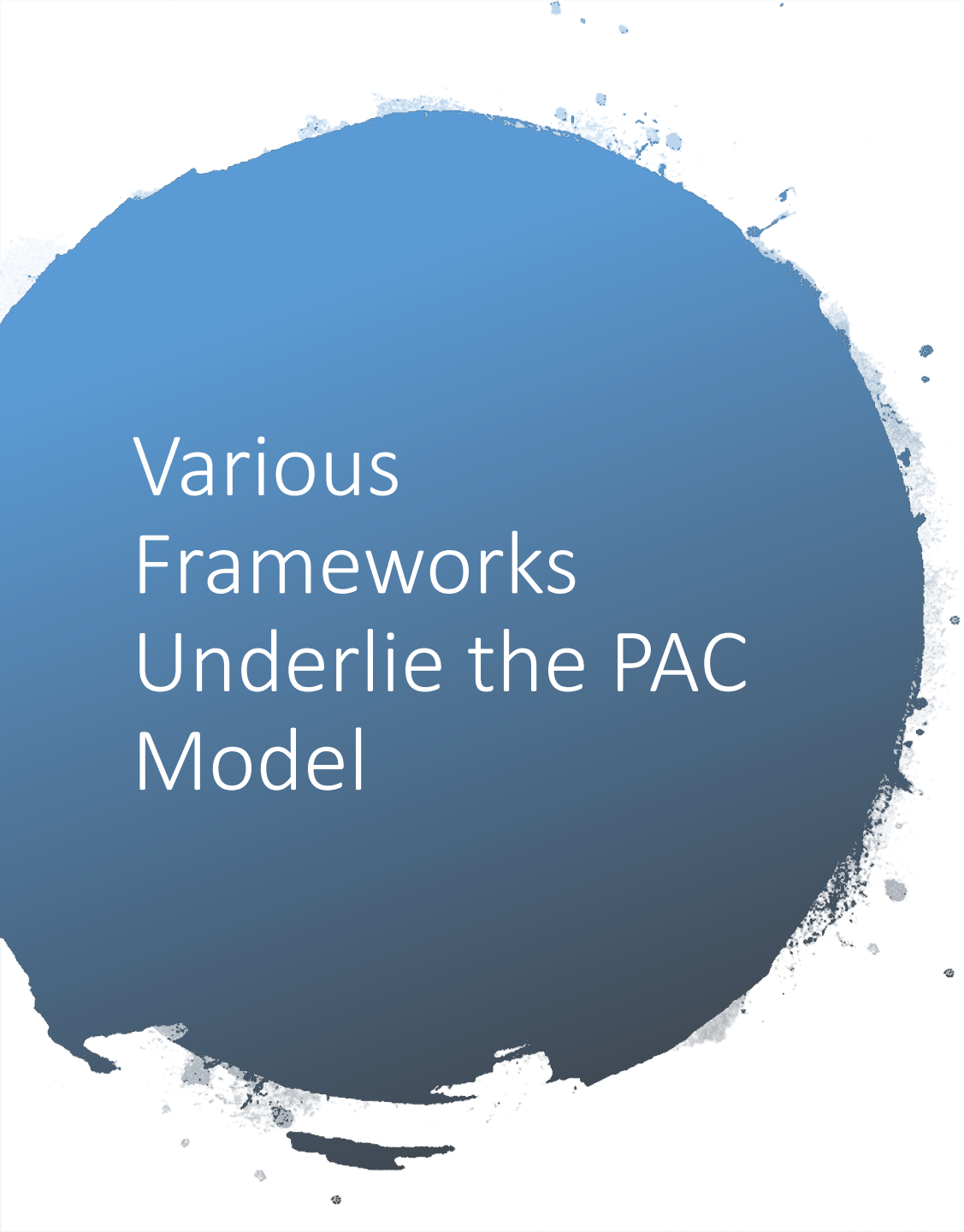# Psychoeducation Attachment-Based Communication (P.A.C) Model Development

One of the presenters was invited as a guest speaker to present on a topic related to improving family relationships.

After prayer, research, and reflection, the presenter selected family communication as a focus area (how to get more bang for your buck).

The model evolved from presentation to several Spanish-speaking Evangelical Churches (2014-2017).

Presentations in Spanish-speaking Churches in Washington DC metropolitan area = 4

Presentations in Spanish-speaking Church in Northern New Jersey metropolitan area = 1

Various Frameworks Underlie the PAC Model

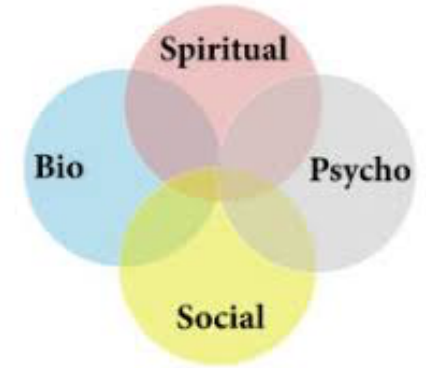**Bio-psycho-social-spiritual framework**

Attachment Theory

Emphasis on Relational Communication

Biblical Principles of Grace and Truth

Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual Framework

The Bio-psycho-social-spiritual lens provides a conceptual understanding of the whole child.

Every person has needs that are essential and necessary for their growth, development, and healthy maturation.

- **Biological:** Genetics, history of illness, medication, substances, past and present
- **Psychological:** self image, history of trauma, quality of relationships, experience of loss, psychiatric issues
- **Social:** support system, housing, vocational, legal, cultural influences, peer influences,
- **Spiritual:** Religious and spiritual association

Attachment Theory Framework

Attachment Theory provides counselors with:
- An extensively researched and well-documented theory which has application to understand relational dynamics which impact communication patterns within families.
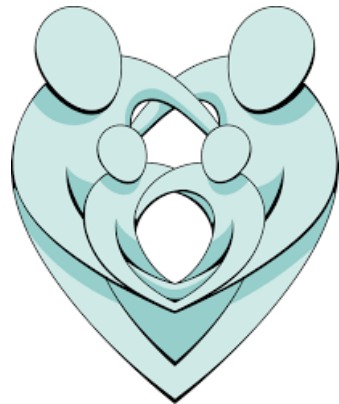
Components of Secure Attachment
- Safe haven
- Secure Base

In the absence of Secure Attachments, there will be Insecurity

What Secure Attachment May Look Like

An attached child feels:

- Confident that the Caregiver will be available to meet their needs
- Uses the Caregiver as a safe base to explore the environment
- Seeks the Caregiver in times of distress

Securely attached child:

- Easily soothed by the Caregiver when upset.

Secure attachment develops when:

- Caregiver is sensitive to their signals, and responds appropriately to their needs.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

FIRST DAY OF COLLEGE

What is Insecure Attachment?

- Such children are likely to have a Caregiver who is insensitive and rejecting of their needs
- Caregiver may withdraw from helping during difficult tasks
- Caregiver is often unavailable during times of emotional distress.

How this affects the child:

The child's behavior is impacted by the inconsistent level of response to their needs from the primary caregiver.

What Insecure Attachment May Look Like

- Child adopts an ambivalent behavioral style towards the Caregiver .
- Child will commonly exhibit clingy and dependent behavior, but will be rejecting of the Caregiver when they engage in interaction.
- The child fails to develop any feelings of security from the Caregiver.
- Difficulty moving away from the Caregiver to explore novel surroundings.

- When distressed, they are difficult to soothe
- Not comforted by interaction with the Caregiver.
- Child does not orientate to their Caregiver while investigating the environment
- Very independent of the Caregiver both physically and emotionally
- Do not seek contact with the Caregiver when distressed.

The Relational Nature of Communication

There is a relational component to communication, that is a focus here.

Expression and interpretation of messages in personal relationships surrounding everyday interactions as well as significant relational events.

How communication impacts the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of interpersonal relationships

Verbal and nonverbal aspects of how messages are conveyed

Contextual and relational factors

Relational Communication

➢ What does this look like?

➢ Nonverbal Communication

➢ Lying and Deception

➢ Family Communication

➢ Communication and Personal Relationships

We assess the role of communication in developing, maintaining, and dissolving relationships, how communication impacts partners and their relationships, and how to improve relational quality or individual well-being through communication. Recent topics examined include conflict mediation, relational standards, relational uncertainty in dating relationships, and communication environments in families.

Biblical Principle: Grace *and* Truth

- John 1:10-17
  - Healthy communication flourishes at the intersection of Grace and Truth.
  - Grace and Truth provides a biblical perspective for Relational Communication.

John 1: 10-17

10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. **11** He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **12** Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— **13** children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen **his glory**, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, **full of grace and truth.**

15 (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") **16 Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given**. **17** For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth** came through Jesus Christ.
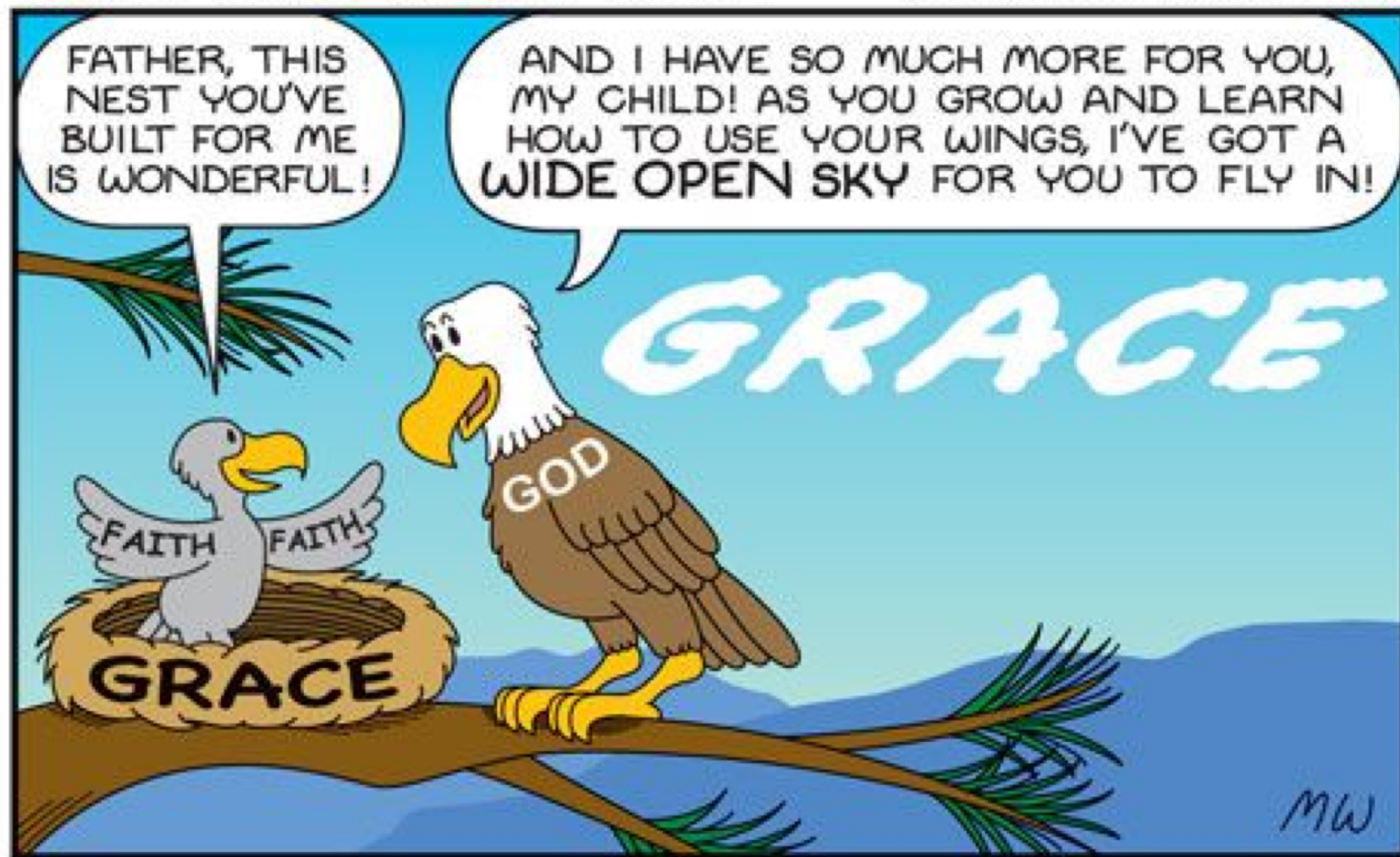
Why Grace?

- Encourages adults to provide kindness even when it is not deserved.
- Occurs from a place of love
- Christ is the source of love
- If we are in Christ, we reflect His love
- In Christ, we are a new creature

GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE — A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.
— 2 PETER 3:18 KJV

Why Truth?

- Facilitates Opportunities for…
  - Clear and direct conversation with between parents and children
  - Even when you are not in agreement with them or they with you
  - Through the practice of healthy dialogue

Why Grace and Truth?

- **Grace without truth brings…**
  - adults to be indulgent, without the ability to provide healthy limits.

- **Truth without grace brings …**
  - Legalism
  - The absence of healthy relationships

- *Healthy relationships are important for the optimal development of a person.*

Enhancing Effective Communication

Biblical Principle:
Grace & Truth

Relational Communication
Emphasis

Secure Attachment

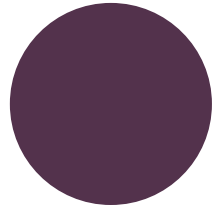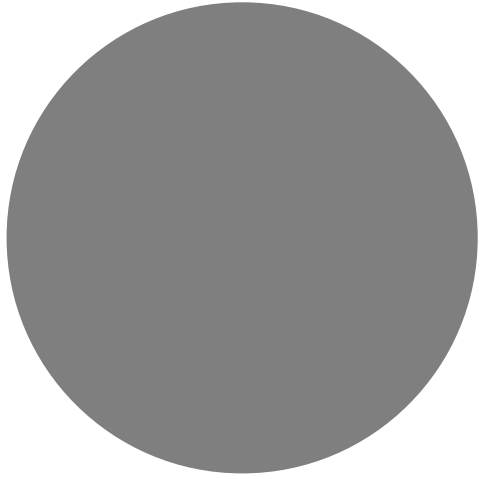Whole Child (bio-psycho-
social-spiritual)

Understanding the importance of each frameworks increases participants…

- …personal growth, reflection, and self-awareness which in turn, helps to ground the PAC strategies.

The Goal of P.A.C:

To provide simple yet effective strategies for parents to utilize in order to move them towards more positive interactions within the parent-child relationship.

Strategy #1: Monitor and address the needs of the whole child.

Practicality is key. Be mindful of everyday basics needs which in turn, impact or interferes with availability to engage in effective communication.

- Awareness of your child's developmental needs
- Respond by cultivating the whole child
- Model balance
- Provide balance

Grace **and** Truth are provided simultaneously.

Strategy #2: Create a family culture where grace and truth is normalized.
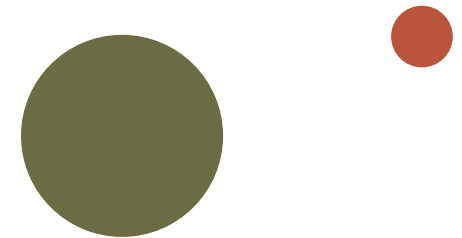
- **In actions and words,**
  - Respond to, interact with, and engage in experiences which allows the parent, you, to nourish & strength secure attachments with your child.
  - Reflect (read the signals your child gives you when interacting)
  - Make repair when needed. Its ok to say "you are sorry" but mean it, they know.
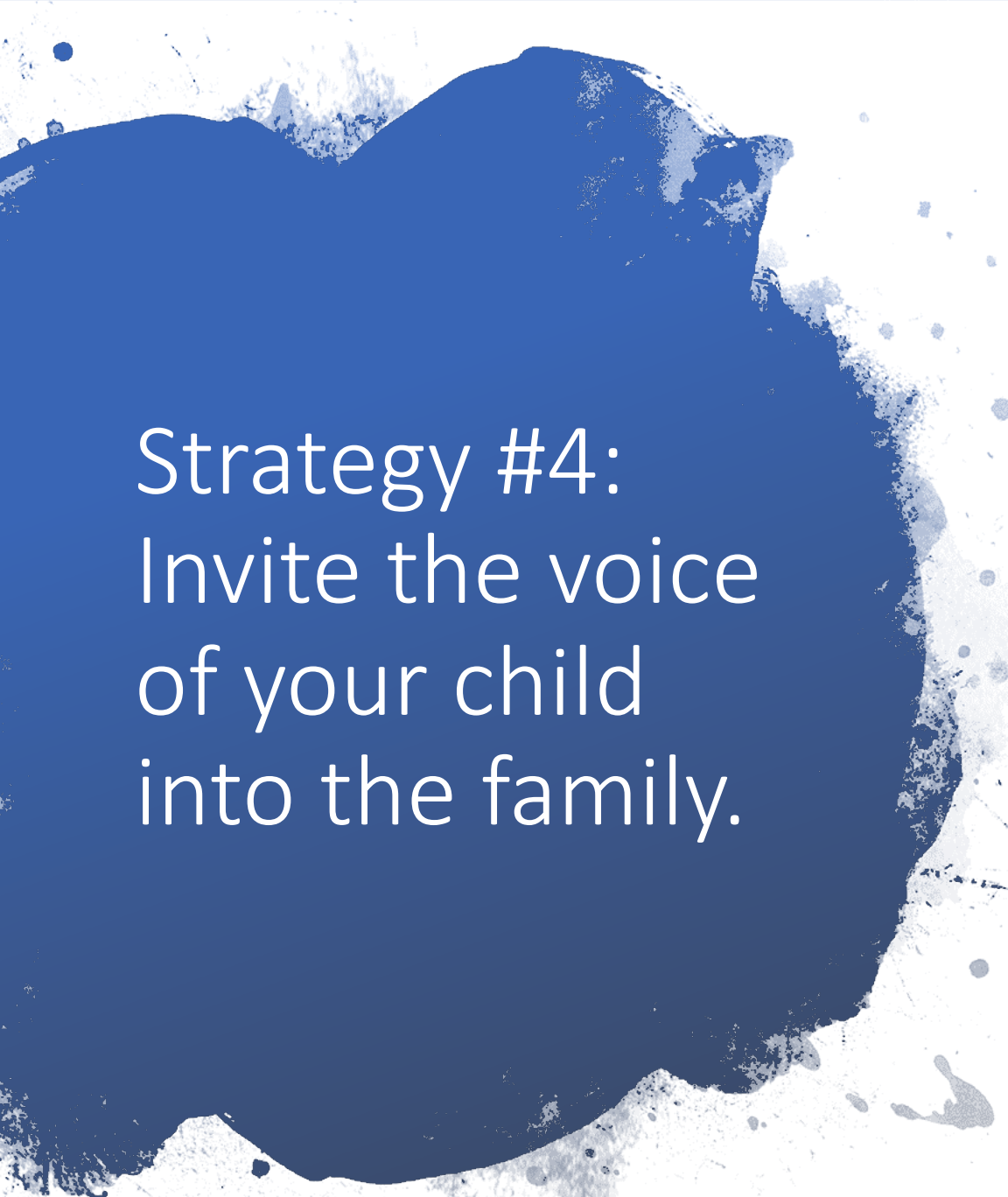
Strategy #3: Provide Secure Attachment Responses

Strategy #4: Invite the voice of your child into the family.

- **Establish family practices that allows your child to share their voice, and to be heard.**
  - Become a parent that is present and available
  - Win-over the hearts of your children.
  - This doesn't mean you have to say yes to everything ask for, say, or do.
-

PAC Model FORMAT:

2 Options

- The PAC can be presented as a 4 hour workshop.

- The PAC can be presented as a 6-week parenting psychoeducation group where the components of the model can be presented with more time to explore and discuss.

4-Hour Workshop Format

Activator Activity/Ice-breaker

Introduce the four frameworks, discuss, provide examples/visuals in your presentation.

Discuss the 4 principles, give examples of how that might look like in a family.

Closing (time of reflection and thoughts about application).

6-Week Psychoeducation Group Format

Week 1: Introduction, Ice-breaker, Discuss the foundation of the PAC model

Week 2: Monitor and address the needs of the whole child.

Week 3: Create a family culture where grace and truth is normalized

Week 4: Provide Secure Attachment Responses

Week 5: Invite the voice of your child into the family.

Week 6: Closing, Review, Culminating activity, Termination

6-week Psychoeducation Group

Initiating a Group

Logistics: Preparing and Setting-up

- Meeting Location and Time
- Recruiting Participants
- Screening
- Know your population needs and cultural specifications
- Tailor the curriculum to your participants cultural needs
- If necessary, connect with a culture-expert/guide
- Confidentiality
- Practice Multicultural Competencies:
    - Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, Sensitivity, Humility
- Refreshments

Week 1: Introduction Session

- Prepare a welcoming environment that is culturally sensitive and responsive

- Introduction

- Ice-breaker

- Discuss the foundation of the PAC model

- End session Integrating goal setting activity per family

  - For example, Exit-Card, goal-setting worksheet

Simple Goal Setting Worksheet

The basics of setting and completing your goals

Name _____   Goal Start Date _____

My Goal is: _____

_____

_____

Goal Completion Date_____   Two things that will help me reach my goal

Steps to Reaching my goal: 1. _____

1. _____   _____

_____   _____

2. _____   _____

_____   2. _____

3. _____   _____

_____   _____

4. _____   _____

_____

I will know I have reached my goal because: _____

_____

_____

Week 2: Address Developmental Needs of the Whole Child

Activity:

- Ask each family to list the age range, (infant, toddler, pre-school, elementary school, middle school,high school) genders of their children

- Provide psychoeducational information about developmental needs

- Have parents identify their child's developmental needs

- Address/apply knowledge to each child

- Practice with different examples how parents can respond by cultivating child's development

Week 3: Create a Family Environment where Grace and Truth is Normalized

- Review the concept of grace and truth, list the characteristics

- Engage parents in practice exercises where they can identify G & T environment - (Facilitator create 5-10 scenarios for participants to discuss and provide examples of Grace & Truth)

- Personal application - Have parents share their insight on the presence of G & T in their family environment

WHAT IS YOUR ATTACHMENT STYLE?

Week 4: Provide Secure Attachment Responses

1. Review the attachment categories
2. Help parents identify their attachment/child attachment style
3. Discuss strategies to strengthen parent-child relationship

- quality time - one-to-one
- shared hobbies or interests
- father-daughter/mother-son dates
- any activities that maintain a connection

Week 5: Invite the voice of your child into the family

- provide a brief explanation to the parents about what inviting the voice of their child looks like.

- Prepare role-play scenarios which reflect potential family conflict (dating, bad grades in school, technology use, etc.).
  - Promote empathy by Integrating role-play activities where parents can experience sharing their voice, and how to be heard
- after each role play, lead a discussion to process the activity

Week 6: Closing and Wrap-up Session

- Review main topics discussed in the session
- Culminating activity
  - Create a parenting vision board which incorporates the four components of the model.
  - Create a family case study and incorporate all four components of the model
- Closure and Termination (provide a booster session at an agreed time)
- Provide list of community resources for future potential needs

"Plan B: You get a job and we send your smartphone to college."

GLASBERGEN

Questions?

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