



Supporting Our Children's Mental Health

Durham Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Presentation

**Dr. Patrick Carney
February 8, 2020**

(February is Psychology Month!)

Supporting Our Children's Mental Health

And the 3 R's

RELATIONSHIPS / RESPONSIBILITY / RESILIENCY

Plus

Our Predominant Mental Health Concerns

ANXIETY / MOOD / BEHAVIOUR / SUBSTANCES

RELATIONSHIPS

Can there be any doubt?

Importance of Healthy Attachments

Caring Adult at Home and at School

Mindful Parenting & Mindful Teaching

Mindful Parenting and Teaching

- Listening with full attention
- Nonjudgmental acceptance of self and child
- Emotional awareness of self and child
- Self-regulation in our relationships
- Compassion for self and child

Emotion “Validation”

Duncan, Coatsworth & Greenberg (2009)

RESPONSIBILITY

Home and school need to be aware of the connection between Mental Health and...

Fitness

Sleep

Nutrition

Spirituality

ACTIVE

A student who is:

- Physically active – importance of exercise
- Well nourished
- Getting adequate sleep
- Spiritually Active - Positive opportunities for active participation in family, faith-based, cultural, community and personally enriching experiences)



Physically Active:

Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children & Youth

GUIDELINES

For optimal health benefits, children and youth (aged 5–17 years) should achieve high levels of physical activity, low levels of sedentary behaviour, and sufficient sleep each day.

A healthy 24 hours includes:



Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Sweat – 60 minutes of heart pumping physical activity

Step – several hours of light physical activity

Sleep – 9-11 hrs ages (5-13)
8-10 hrs ages (14-17)

Sit – no more than 2 hrs of recreational screen time
and limited sitting for extended periods

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology CSEP

Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children & Youth

Following these guidelines is associated with:

- better body composition
- cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness
- academic achievement and cognition
- emotional regulation
- pro-social behaviours
- cardiovascular and metabolic health
- overall quality of life

Area of Maximum Opportunity for my Family
Rate Each 1 – 10 and discuss

Fitness

Sleep

Nutrition

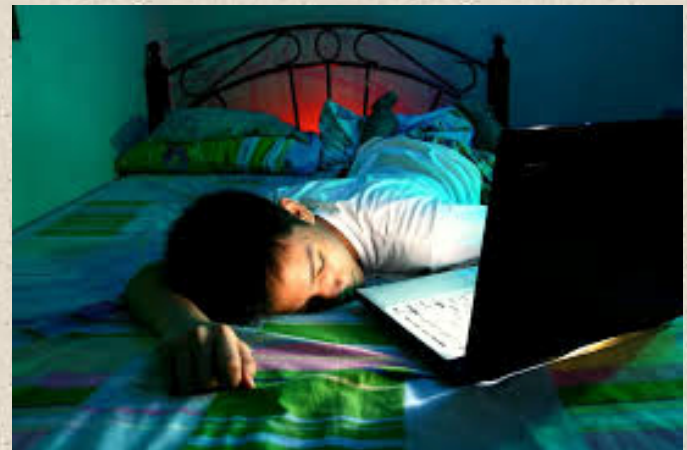
Spirituality

The Competition.



“Addictive” Qualities

- Prefer online interaction to face-to-face
- Use Internet to regulate mood or stress
- Compulsive uncontrolled thoughts about getting online and can't control usage
- Report problems of life because Internet use, like missing out on socializing and other activities



RESILIENCY

Self Aware

Self Regulating

Empathic

Emotional Regulation

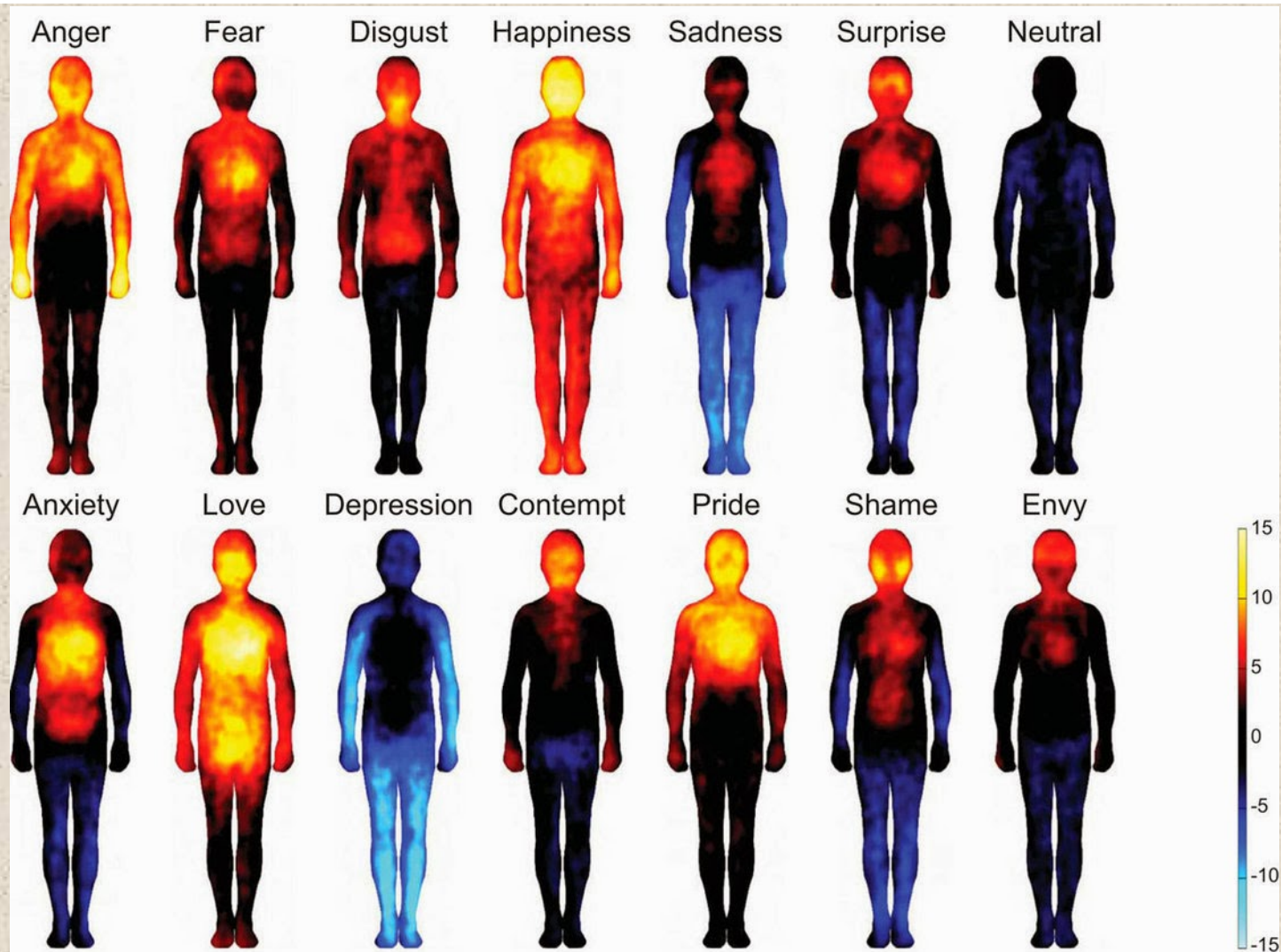


Our children's lives and even classrooms are filled with positive and sometimes negative emotions. At any given moment children and parents may be experiencing large amounts of satisfaction, hurt, anger, joy, disgust, shame, surprise or enjoyment.

Emotions are actually pretty complex. Emotions represents a complex psychological state

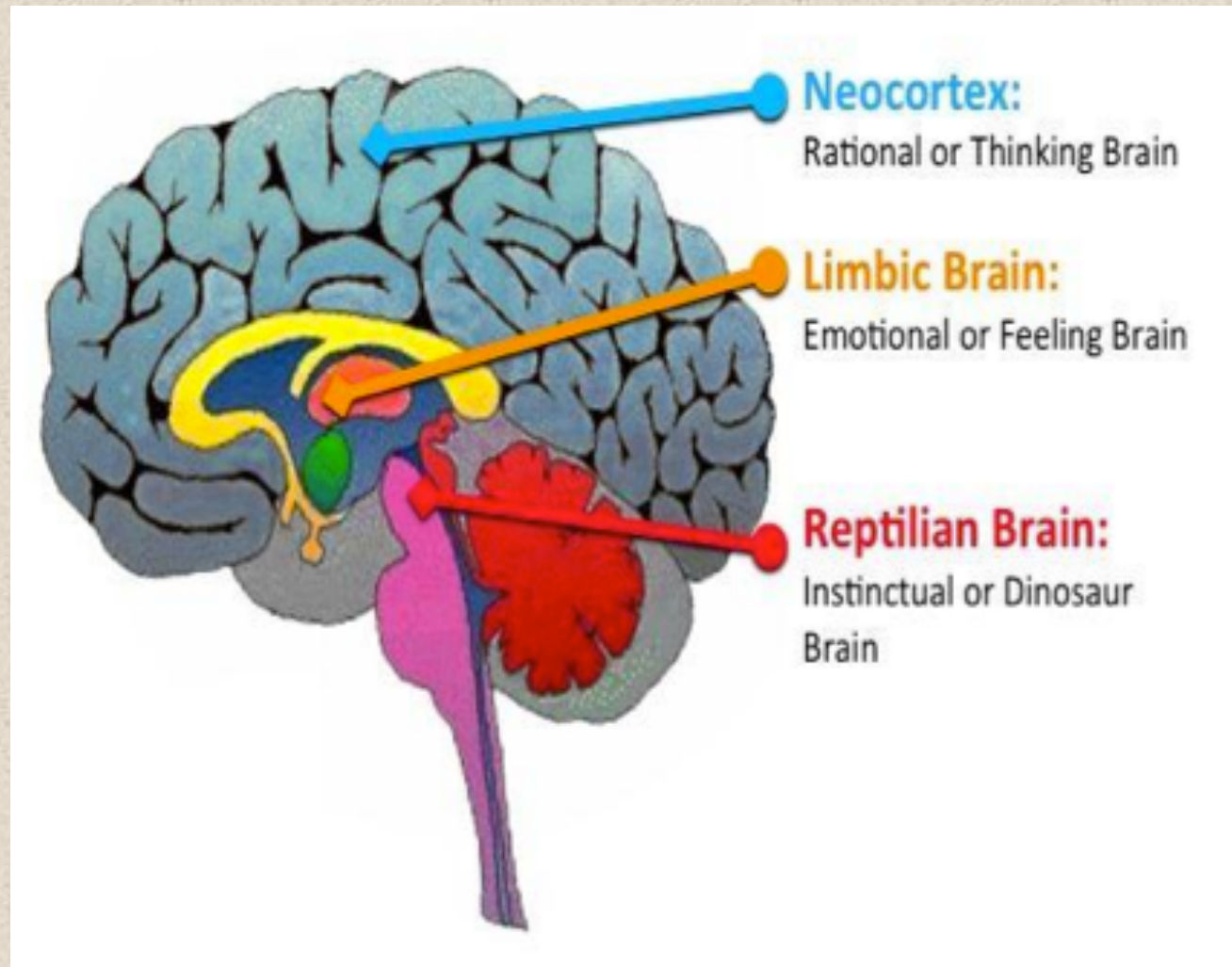
Awareness

The complex psychological state we call emotions, may be brought to our mental awareness (reflection) from the physiological and muscular sensations in our body.

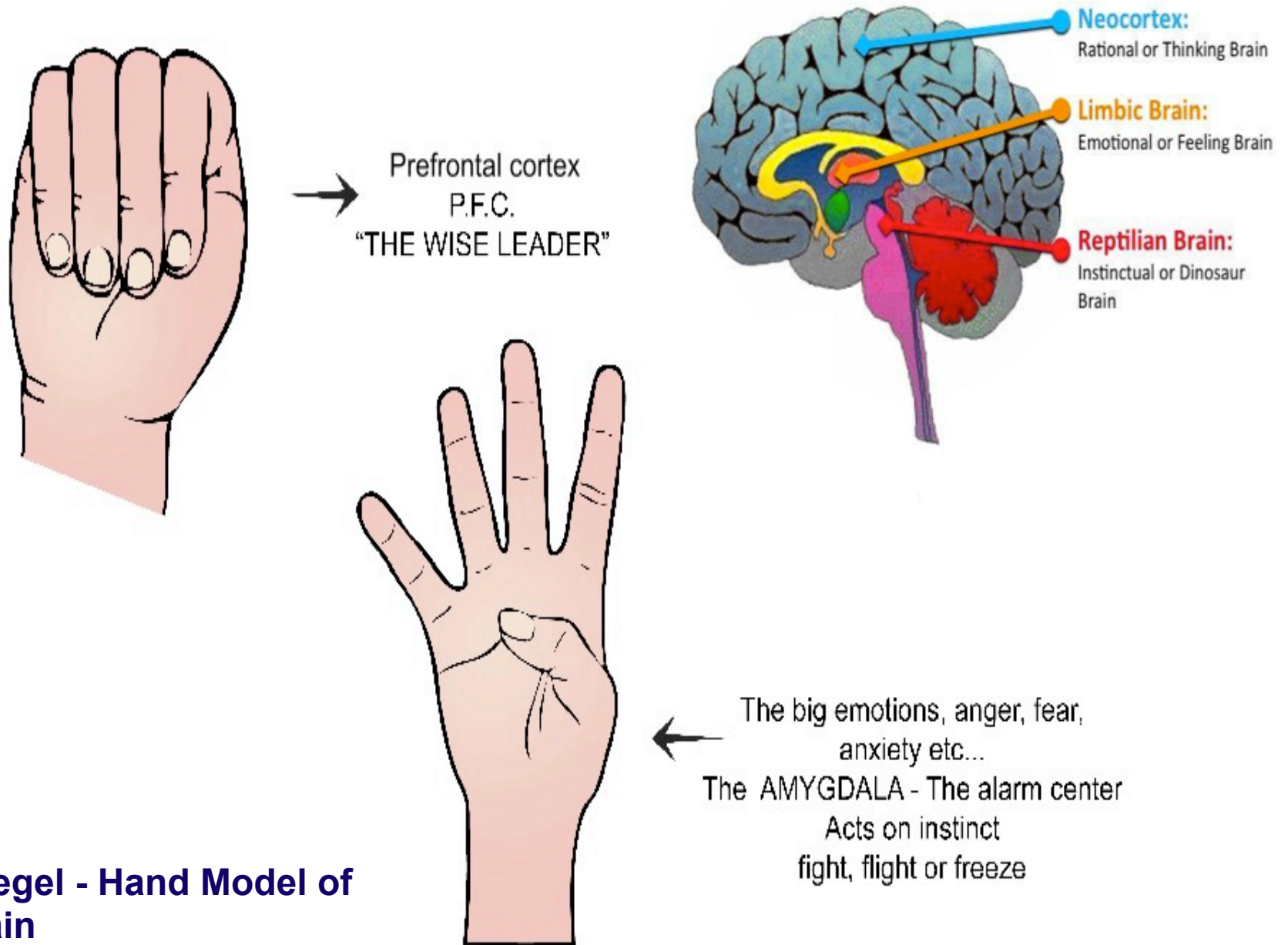


Nummenmaa, Glerean, Hari, & Hietanen, 2013
In Well Aware, Carney, P. (Pearson, Canada) 2015

Self Regulation and The Evolutionary Brain: What's going on?



“Flipping One’s Lid”



Dan Siegel - Hand Model of the Brain

Emotion Focused Interactions

1. *Attend (notice the feeling)*
2. *Label the emotion*
3. ***Validate*** the emotion (even when it does not seem to 'make sense' or reflect the reality)
4. *Meet the need (Sad=provide comforting tone and gestures; Angry=validate in an assertive voice, help the child express frustration and set boundaries so that the child will feel safe.*

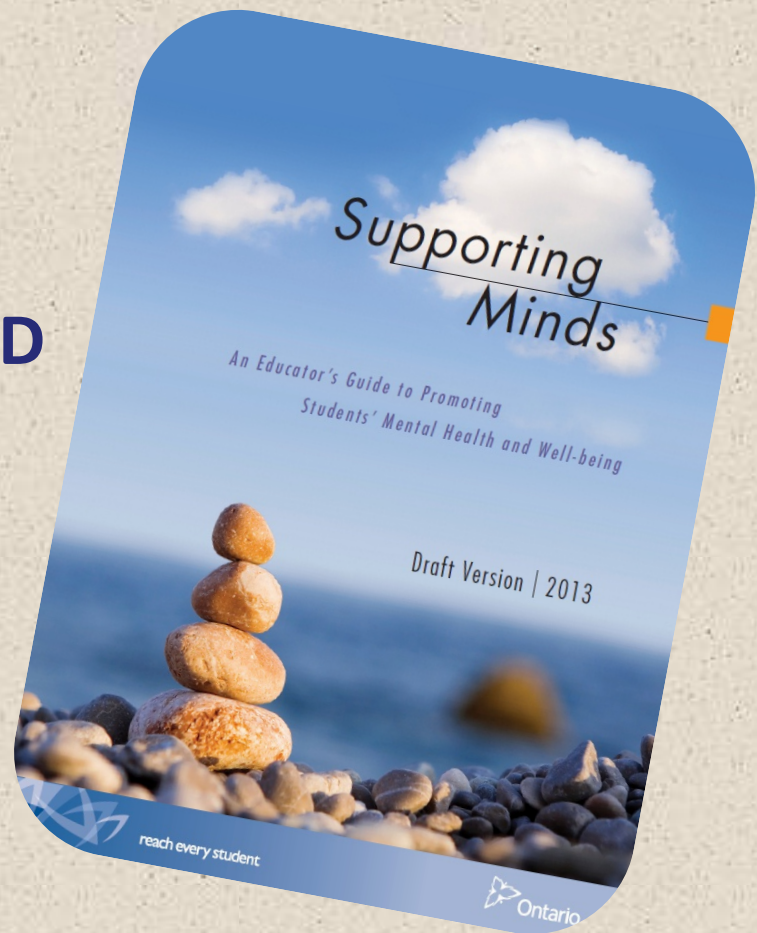
Beth McCague, EFST

Predominant Mental Health Concerns

Did You Know?

The most common problems are:

- Anxiety
- Mood
- Behaviour (including ADHD & ODD)
- Substance Use



Ways Parents Can Support Students With Mental Health Difficulties

Learn about the problem

Be positive

Self regulation strategies

Ensure a safe place at home

Listen and build trust

Validate emotions

Share your insights

Respect confidentiality

Focus on goals

Be flexible

Seek help



Mental Health Exists on a Continuum

Mental Health - Mental Illness **Continuum**

Health		Mental health problems		Illness
Well-being		Emotional problems or concerns	Mental Illness	
Occasional stress to mild distress		Mild to moderate distress	Marked distress	
No impairment		Mild or temporary impairment	Moderate to disabling or chronic impairment	

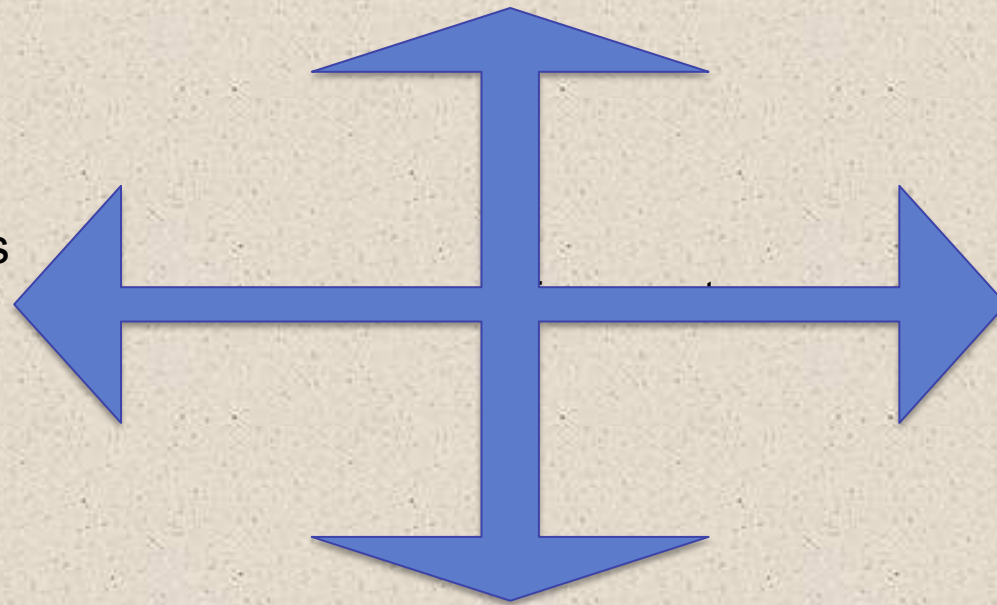
OPTIMAL MENTAL HEALTH

Flourishing

resilient / active / connected / engaged
emotional and spiritual well-being

Mental Illness
no symptoms

No Illness



Languishing
failing to make progress

(Corey Keys)

FLOURISHING as Authentic Happiness

Experiences of:

Positive emotion (fun and enjoyment)

Engagement (passionately absorbed; “in the **flow**”)

Relationships (positive and empathetic)

Meaning and purpose (culture/spirituality)

Accomplishment and competence

These are the 5 elements for **authentic happiness** from the field of **Positive Psychology** - Dr. Martin Seligman **P-E-R-M-A- (V)**

Let's look at each more closely.....

Model for Well-Being



Carney, 2015 “Well Aware”

*Aware Teachers
Aware Students
Aware Parents*

