Lecture 3

The Individual Processing Capacities
and
The Relationships
Parts of the DIR®/Floortime™ Model

Review of
Functional Emotional Developmental Capacities

- The functional emotional developmental capacities allow the child to engage in:
  - Emotional transformations
  - Logical bridges
  - Higher levels of reflective and creative thinking
- This model is different from most other developmental models since it looks at capacities that orchestrate the entire mental team rather than single behaviors.
- The emotional stages transform emotions from one stage to the next
  - The emotions become the leader of the team and the way a child learns about the world
  - Emotion and cognition interact – it is not a dichotomy

Biological Basis

It is not genetic or biological tendencies that lead to specific disorders like ADHD, ASD, etc. – but rather the biological and genetic pathways *strongly influence* the disorders indirectly through the central nervous system.
**I = Individual Processing Capacities**

Individual Processing Capacities, or differences, look at different biologically-based processing systems:
- Some children are under-reactive to sound while others are over-reactive.
- Even children with the same diagnosis will have different patterns of sensory reactivity... due to biology.
- Different biological pathways interact with the affective experienced based learning.

**I = Individual Processing Capacities**

The role biology plays in individual processing differences...
- Biology can be limiting, regardless of the plasticity of the human nervous system.
- Neurotransmitters and enzyme systems are heavily dependent on experienced-based learning and biological factors.
- New evidence is favoring experienced-based learning and experienced-based brain development.
- Biology expresses itself through the central nervous system, not the disorder.

**I = Individual Processing Capacities**

Intervening Organizations...
- Look at the biological basis how biology expresses itself through these individual processing differences in the following systems:
  - Auditory language
  - Visual spatial
  - Tactile
  - Motor planning and sequencing
- Look at the way the child is mastering or not mastering the functional emotional milestones.
- These intervening organizations are critical in the developmental process.
- Allow us to figure out the developmental signature to help identify the risk patterns early, and intervene early.
**R = Relationships**

Learning Relationships …

♦ Should be tailored to the child’s individual processing differences that meets the child at their functional emotional developmental level
♦ Work up the scale of levels
  ✓ Can work at multiple levels at the same time, but need to always include the basic level
  ✓ Ignoring the basic level and only working at the higher levels hinders progress of the child

---

**Mastery of the Functional Emotional Developmental Capacities**

♦ Can fully master each stage:
  ✓ a broad range of emotional themes that characterize each stage
  ✓ child is using all their processing capacities at the stage of functional emotional development
♦ Constrictions or partial mastery:
  ✓ Emotional themes are not as broad as we would like
  ✓ Constrictions in the processing capacities utilized (ex. Playing at level 5, but with limited motor planning and sequencing)
  ✓ Still have basic core, but not using all of their processing capacities and emotional themes
♦ Deficit: Have not reached the stage, unable to achieve the emotional themes and processing capacities

---

**Bringing Together Biology and Experience**

♦ Look at the way the child organizes their life in terms of how they master the functional emotional developmental capacities
♦ Look at biological contributions to these individual processing differences
♦ Look at range of emotional experiences
♦ Ask the question: What are the missing pieces of each stage if not fully mastered?