

**An Attachment-Based Model  
of Parental Alienation:  
Diagnosis & Treatment**

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**The High Road Protocol**  
Catalytic Psychoeducational Intervention

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**Catalytic Psychoeducational Intervention**

The High Road workshop is a catalytic psycho-educational intervention involving a sequence of structured activities that restores the normal-range functioning of the child's attachment system.

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The High Road workshop uses a series of catalytic activities:

- Psychoeducational content videos and narrative-story videos;
- Structured problem solving and communication skill-building activities;

that gently and systematically restores the normal-range functioning of the child's attachment system.

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**Child Psychological Abuse**

**The Protective Separation & Traditional Treatment**

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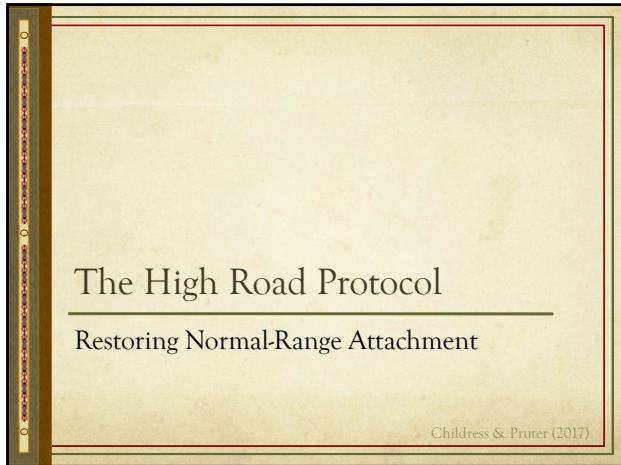
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**Child Psychological Abuse**

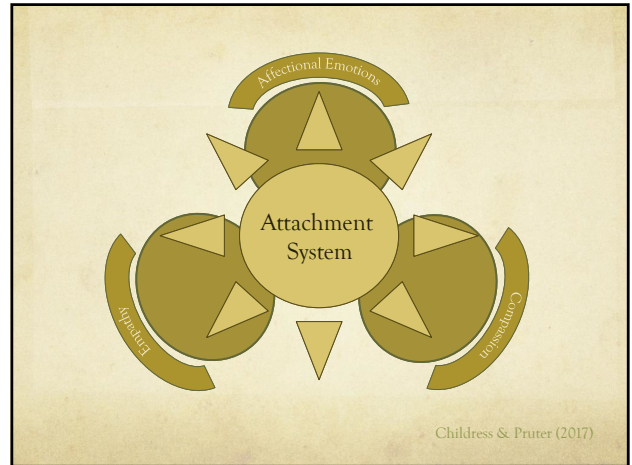
**High Road Augmented Recovery**

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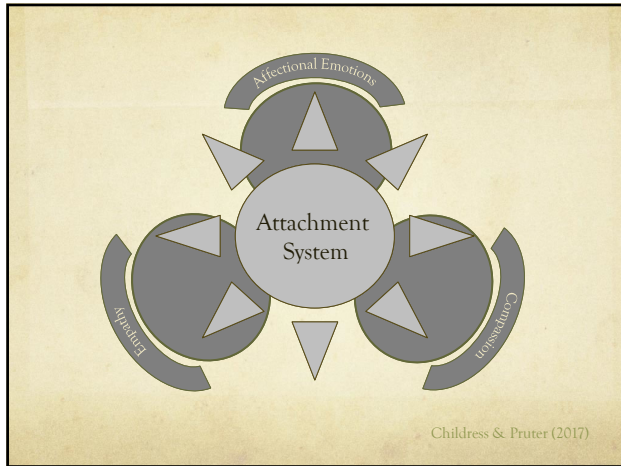
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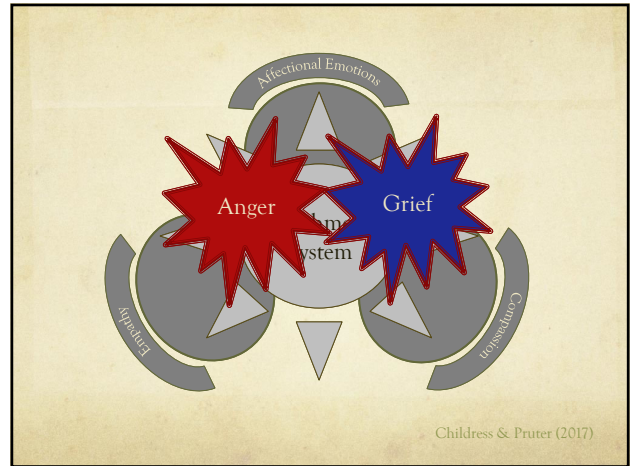
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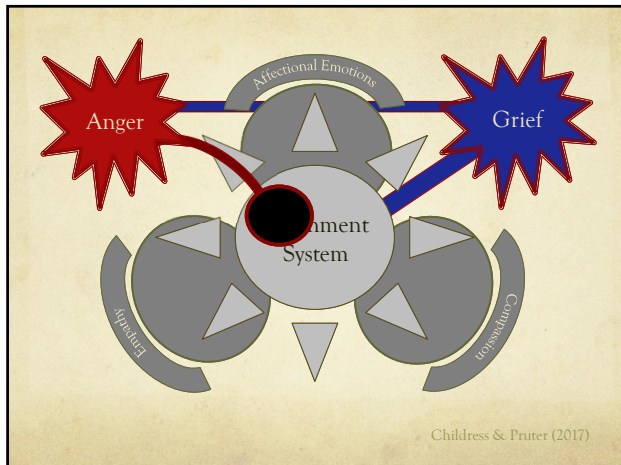
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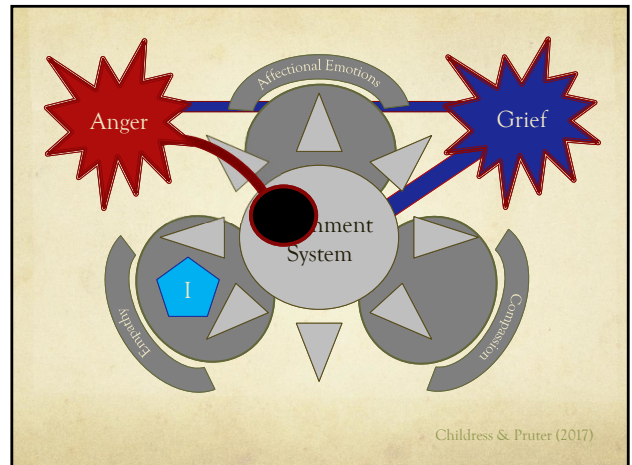
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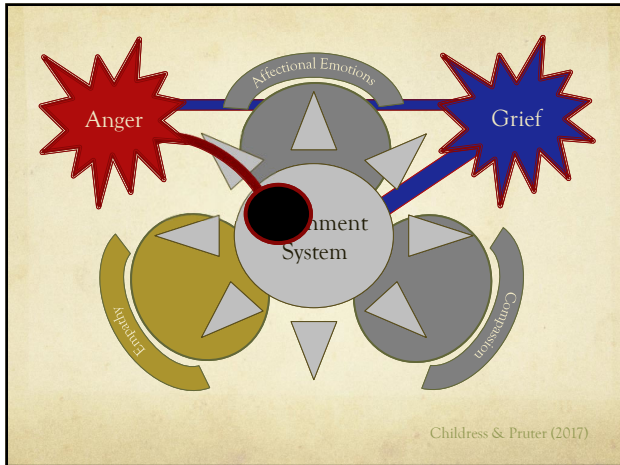
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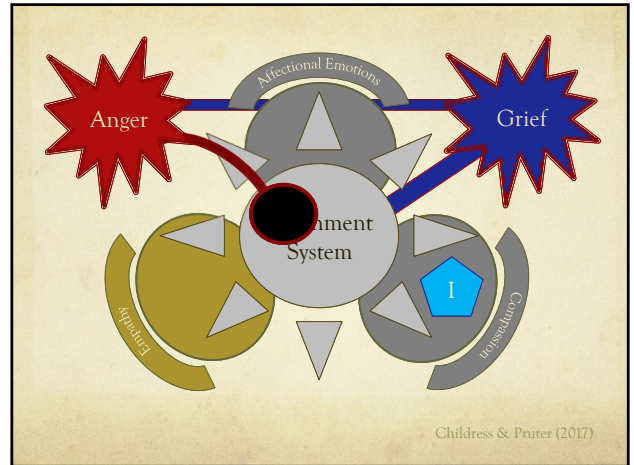
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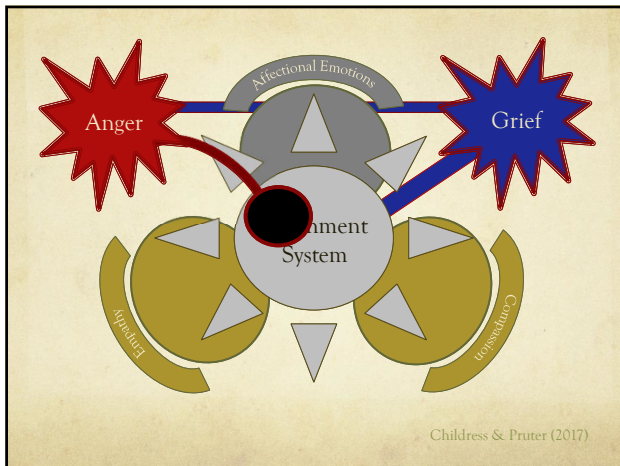
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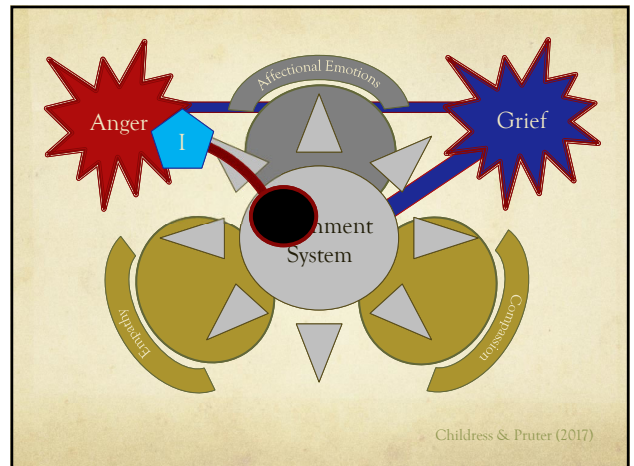
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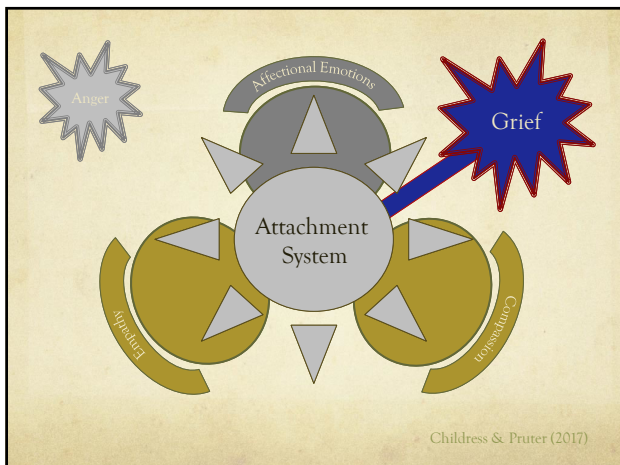
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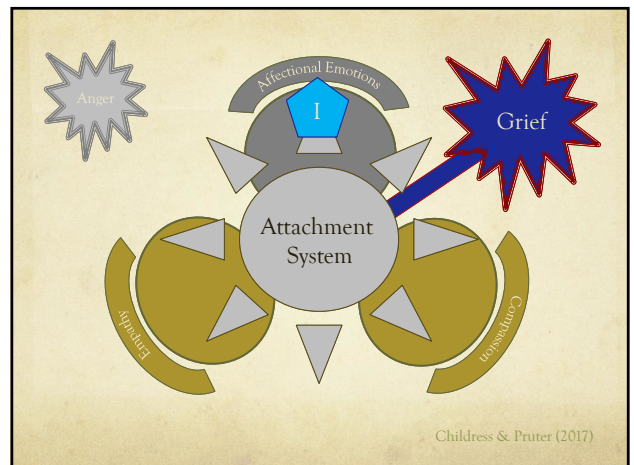
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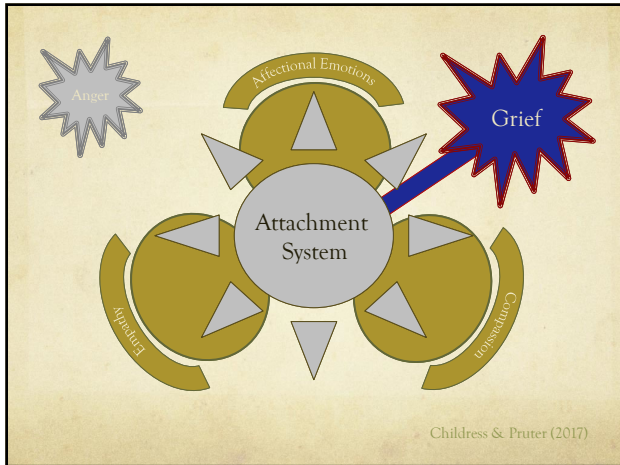
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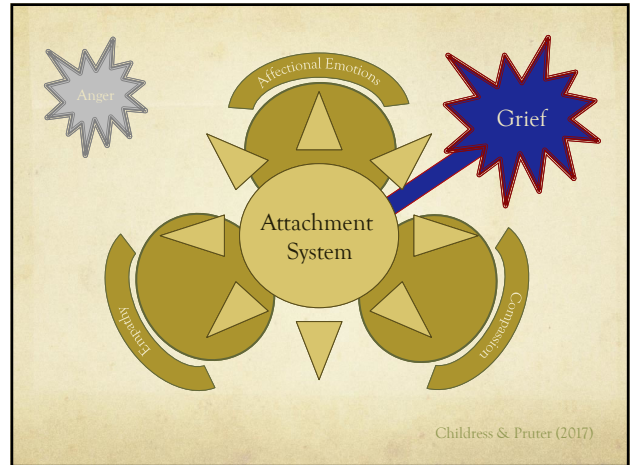
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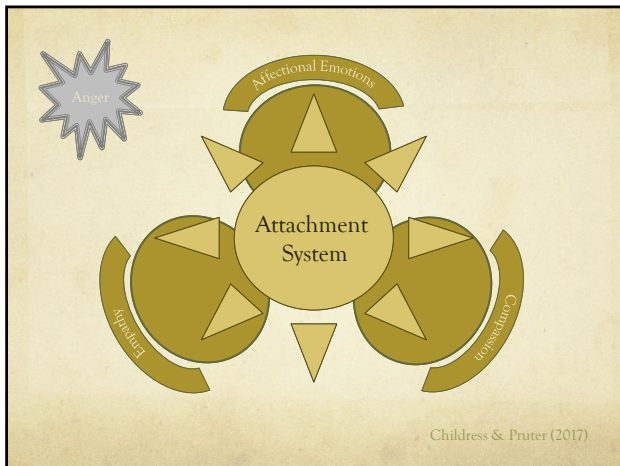
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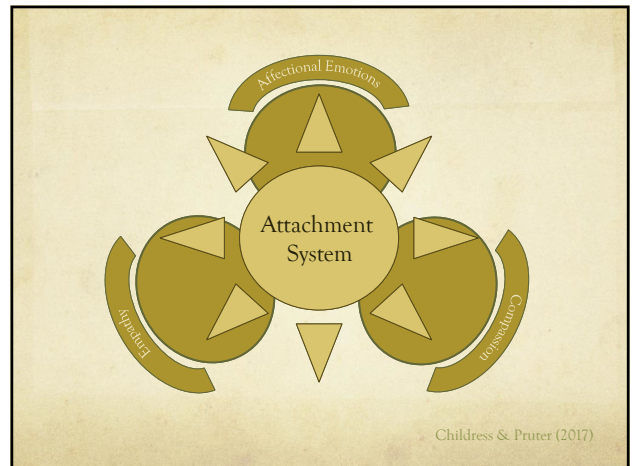
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**The High Road Protocol**

Empathy Interventions

- 1 Narrative Story Video Em-1
- 1 Narrative Story Video Em-2
- 1 Workshop Activity Em-3

Critical Thinking Interventions

- 1 Informational Video CT-1
- 1 Workshop Activity CT-2
- 1 Informational Video CT-3

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The High Road protocol represents the specific component videos and structured workshop activities used, and the **sequence** in which these catalytic interventions are applied.

Both the component content AND the **sequence** in which the supporting underlying brain systems are restored are **critical** to the successful application of catalytic interventions.

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### Catalytic Intervention Innovation

The High Road workshop is an entirely different type of change-agent approach than is used in any form of traditional psychotherapy.

- If the variants of traditional psychotherapy are considered to be different types of carbon-based life forms;
- Then the catalytic approach of the High Road protocol could be considered a silicon-based life form - an entirely different change-agent approach.

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### Catalytic Intervention Implications

The implications of the catalytic intervention approach employed by the High Road protocol for broader professional psychology extend to interventions with other forms of pathology, such as:

- Substance abuse recovery approaches;
- Prison incarceration and recidivism.
- Recovery from complex trauma experiences.

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### Catalytic Intervention Approach

The catalytic approach of the High Road protocol restores normal-range attachment bonding motivations but doesn't focus directly on the attachment system or the parent-child bond.

The catalytic approach of the High Road protocol restores positive and healthy family relationships, but doesn't directly focus on the relationship itself or its problems.

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The catalytic approach of the High Road protocol is simply a sequence of steps (using videos and workshop activities) that restores the normal-range functioning of component brain systems for compassion, empathy, affection, and critical thinking.

The restoration of the normal-range functioning of these component brain systems allows for the resumption of the normal-range functioning of the attachment system, and normal-range attachment bonding motivations resume.

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## The High Road Protocol

### Opening Interventions

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### Read the Court Order

The court order is read to the family.

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Dr. Childress Commentary:

- Reestablishes an appropriate hierarchy.
- By reestablishing an appropriate hierarchy (disempowering the over-empowered child), the child is released from being in the middle of the spousal conflict and from loyalty alliances.
- Provides communication of safety and stress relief.

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Emotional Stress Discharge

The child typically engages in 30 to 45 minutes of protest behavior and challenges to authority.

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Dr. Childress Commentary:

- Testing of authority (Are you capable and competent? Can I trust you? Will you respect me?).
- The child's protest behavior represents an emotional discharge in response to stress relief from being taken out of the middle of the spousal conflict.
- By responding respectfully and with calm and confident authority, the facilitator communicates respect for the child's experience.
- By responding respectfully and with calm and confident authority, beginning trust develops.

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Question & Answer

Once the child calms, all of child's questions are answered honestly and forthrightly.

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Dr. Childress Commentary:

- Following emotional discharge of stress relief from being released from the middle of the spousal conflict, answering all of the child's questions honestly and without evasion builds trust and safety.
- The world of the narcissistic/(borderline) personality is one of ever-changing reality defined by the moment-to-moment needs of the narcissistic parent.
- Calmly and patiently answering all questions honestly and forthrightly builds trust and safety.

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Opening Activity

Narrative story video fostering the vicarious activation of empathy and compassion, and the story examines the issues of prejudice and judgement.

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Dr. Childress Commentary:

- A wonderful and captivating opening video.
- Allows the child to recover emotionally.
- Begins vicarious activation of empathy and compassion systems.
- No demand to interact with the targeted parent.
- Addresses the child's anxiety about the workshop by demonstrating respect for the child's emotional exhaustion and triangulation.
- Builds trust by demonstrating complex authentic empathy for the child.

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Second Activity

Narrative story video fostering the vicarious activation of empathy and compassion, and the story examines the issues of prejudice and judgement.

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Dr. Childress Commentary:

- Following up with a second narrative story video allows the child more time for emotional recovery (authentic empathy and care for the child's well-being).
- Continues vicarious activation of empathy and compassion systems.
- No demand to interact with the targeted parent.
- Addresses the child's anxiety about the workshop by demonstrating respect for the child's emotional exhaustion and no pressure on the child to interact or change.
- Builds trust by demonstrating complex authentic empathy for the child.

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Third Activity

Cognitive processing activity: Group discussion of concepts evidenced in the prior two videos:

"Michael, can you read the definition of "prejudice" that's up on the screen?"

"Okay, we're going to go around and I want each person to tell us one example of "prejudice" they noticed from either of the stories we just saw."

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Dr. Childress Commentary:

- Deepening the cognitive processing of the material by activating and applying cognitive critical thinking.
- Activating cognitive systems brings cognitive mediation to affective experience, turning off anger ("cool" thinking vs. "hot" emotions).
- Engaging in a group activity normalizes interactions with the targeted parent that don't involve anger, judgement, or criticism.
- Places the child in proximity to the targeted parent without the suppressing effects of anger on attachment bonding motivations.

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