



# Meet Mark

- Struggles with transitions - Big Time!
- Knocks over large classroom items
- Regularly crying
- Refuses to share
- Needs to be the center of attention
- When in a tantrum will kick anyone around him
- Unable to self-regulate

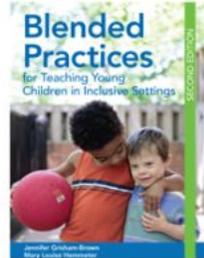
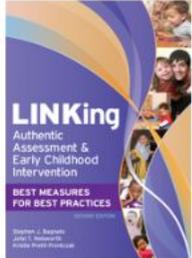
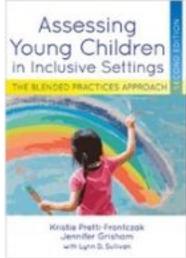
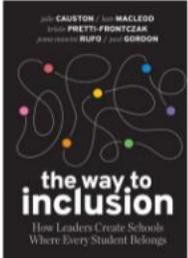


# DR. KRISTIE PRETTI-FRONTCZAK

**Inclusive**  
schooling

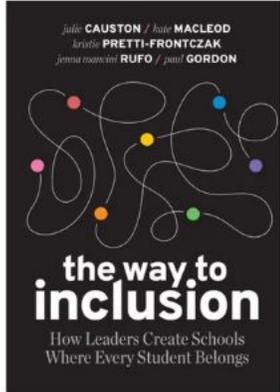


Early Interventionist  
PreK Co-Teacher  
Full Professor  
Early Childhood Intervention

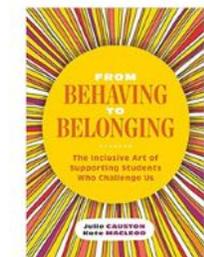
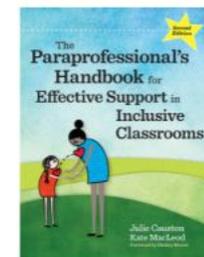
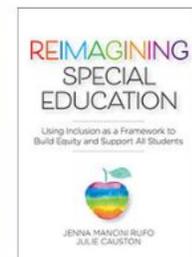
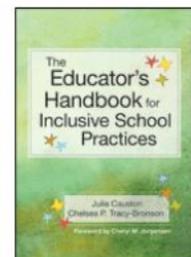
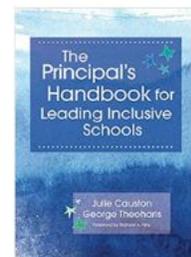




# DR. JULIE CAUSTON



Elementary School Teacher  
Middle School Teacher  
High School Teacher  
Full Professor  
Inclusive Elementary Program



# Session Agenda

## From the Start: The Magic of Early Childhood Inclusion



### Welcome and Opening Activities

- Starting with the End in Mind
- Dashboard full of resources
- Creating Circles from the Start – Grounding our work in Inclusive Education

### Magical Solution #1: Shift Mindsets - Transition to an Equity Lens

### Magical Solution #2: Shift Heartsets – Partner with Families

### Magical Solution #3: Shift Skillsets – 5 Powerful Instructional Practices

### Closing Activities and Reflection

# Circle Maker Resources



<https://inclusiveschooling.com/cfs-illum>



# Grounding Our Work Around **Inclusive** Education



# Magical Solution

## #1: Shift

# Mindsets



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**Trusting, Easy Going, Optimistic**



**Generous, Kind, Sensitive**



**Energetic, Confident, Fun-Loving**



**Wise, Articulate, Mentor-Like**



**Organized, Responsible, Leader-Like**



**Loyal, Lovable, Obstacle finder**



**Naive, Unfocused, Unrealistic**



**Attention Seeking, Reckless, Neurotic**



**Unfocused, Over Confident, Impulsive**



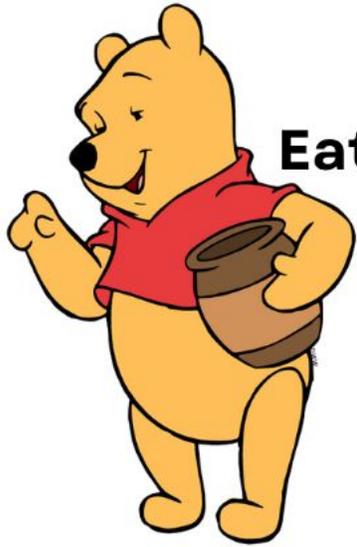
**Know-it-all, Long winded, Overbearing**



**Controlling, Rigid, Bossy**



**Needy, Brooding, Energy Drain**



**Eating disorder**



**Anxiety disorder**



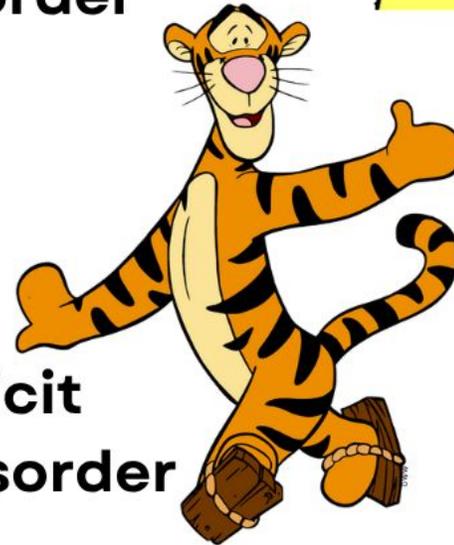
**Narcissistic  
Personality Disorder**



**Obsessive  
Compulsive  
disorder**



**Major Depressive  
disorder**



**Attention Deficit  
Hyperactivity Disorder**



**Schizophrenia**

# TRANSITION TO AN EQUITY LENS OF DISABILITY



**MEDICAL LENS**



**EQUITY LENS**

- Disability resides within the individual
- Focus on individual pathology or impairment
- Aim is to fix or remediate
- Disability labels are seen as deficits
- Focus on the label as a problem, not the systems
- Ignore systemic inequities

- Disability is a socially constructed identity
- Focus on societal barriers that disable people
- Aim is to provide “just right” supports
- Disability is a natural difference
- Focus on the systems as a problem, not disability
- Name and address systemic inequities

# Magical Solution

## #2: Shift

# Heartsets



# To Achieve Inclusion we MUST:

1

## REDESIGN SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

that center and value our human diversity, foster strong relationships and create a true sense of belonging between and among us

2

## PRIORITIZE HIRING

diverse and inclusive-minded leaders, creative and compassionate educators, and skillful paraprofessionals

3

## ELIMINATE BARRIERS

to students' access, participation, and learning by abandoning inequitable practices, policies, and procedures

4

## CREATE WELCOMING SPACES

where students' multiple identities are seen and celebrated

5

## CO-TEACH AND COLLABORATE EFFECTIVELY

by sharing instructional roles, designing authentic lessons, and generating joy-filled learning experiences

6

## PARTNER WITH FAMILIES

to incorporate their dreams for their children



7

## DIFFERENTIATE TO CREATE ACCESS POINTS

that allow students to engage in meaningful experiences, share their thoughts and ideas, and demonstrate their competence

8

## PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

and enrichment for ALL - continuously and seamlessly - when and where students need it

9

## UTILIZE CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

as an opportunity to create warm and safe relationships, reduce stressors, soothe systems, and nurture students' well-being

# Learn What's Possible

*Know what inclusion is and is not*

“Inclusion isn’t about reducing support—it’s about ensuring your child has access to the best possible educational experience with the right services tailored to their needs.”

# Support Isn't Always Needed or Wanted (from any adult)



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AFTER ONLY TWO MONTHS AS A TEACHER ASSISTANT, GLADYS FINDS HER SPELLING HAS IMPROVED, MATH SKILLS ARE HONED, AND SHE HAS DISCOVERED SHE HAS ARTISTIC ABILITY.

- Watch assumptions about when support is needed
- Avoid jumping in to solve or speed things up
- Respect the student's space and preferences
- Allow for processing time and down time
- Teach students strategies to help them make choices and advocate for themselves

# Unintended Challenges From Human Supporting Students

Becoming dependent on adults

Interference with friendships

Provocation of behavior problems

Separation from classmates

Paraprofessional relationship replaces the peer connection

Stigmatization- impact on belonging

# Hide in Plain Sight



*"We are willing and ready to connect with other kids, and adults must quietly step into the background, camouflaging their help as a tiger who may hide in full view.*

*It's the needed disguise of the adult who smoothes the way for friendship, then stands back in the shadows, observing the complicated dance of steps taking you to the feeling of confidence."*

~Jamie Burke



**Support  
is a Verb:**

What It Really  
Means and  
How to Do It

A Practical Companion to The Inclusion Podcast Episodes 49 & 55  
with Actions You Can Use Today

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# The Prompting Ladder



# Magical Solution

## #3: Shift Skillsets



# Five Powerful Inclusive Instructional Practices

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1. Co-Teaching and Collaboration

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2. Differentiation

---

3. Natural Supports

---

4. Adaptations

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5. Behavioral Supports

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INCLUSIVE  
schooling

**Achieving  
Inclusion:**  
Strategies for  
Creating Inclusive  
Classrooms for  
ALL Students

**Julie Causton, Ph.D.**  
**Kate MacLeod, Ph.D.**  
**Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, Ph.D.**



# Yes or NO?

Have YOU behaved in a way  
that you were not proud of...  
as an adult?



What did you **need**  
at that time?

# Inclusive Education & Behaviors That Are Challenging

1

Treats behavior as communication and stress behavior, not misbehavior

2

Builds emotionally safe classrooms grounded in neuroscience

3

Students don't earn their place—they already belong



# See Behavior

## As a...

# Message



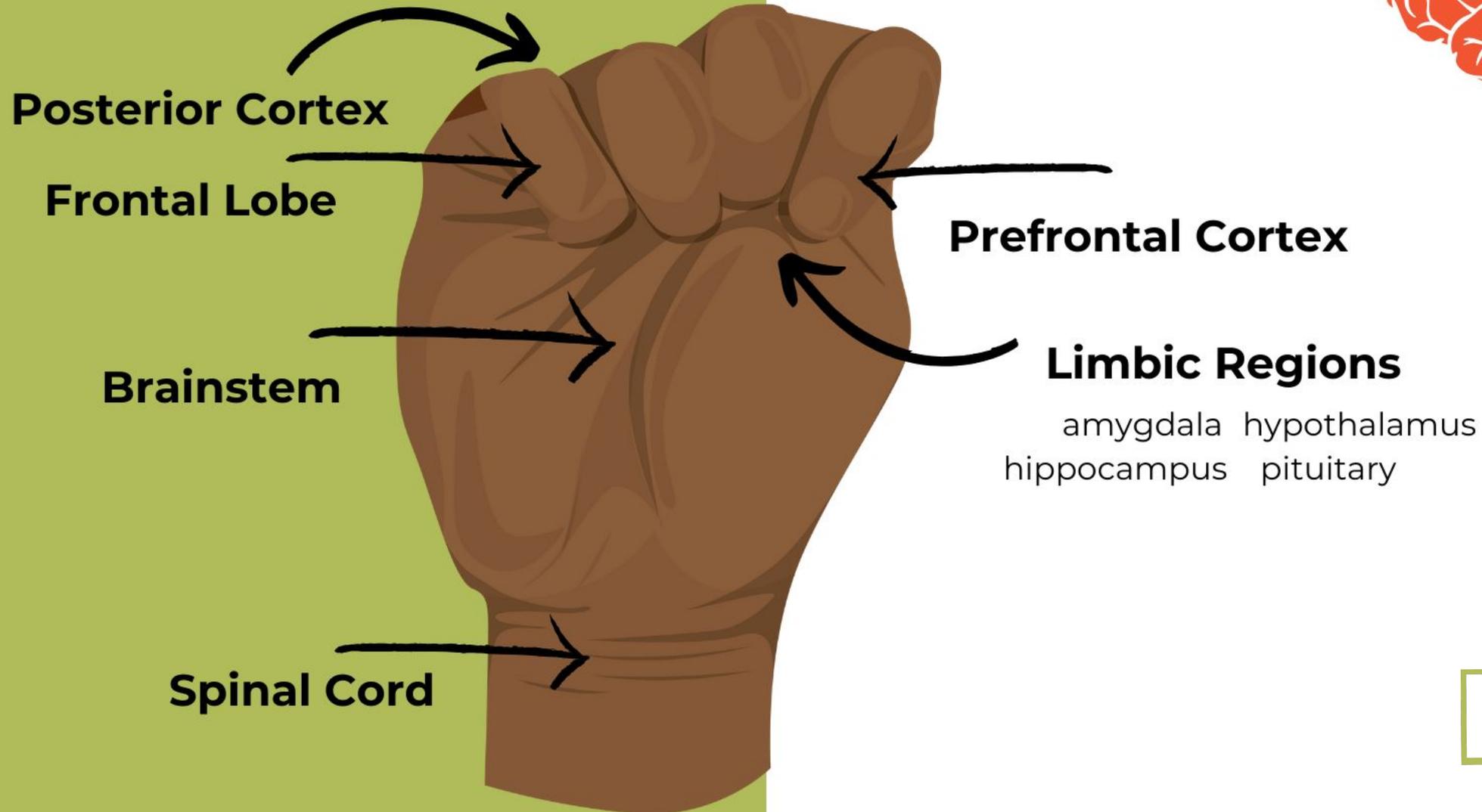
*"This feels unsafe."*

**I NEED  
HELP!**

*"I don't know how to start."*

*"I'm overwhelmed."*

# THE HAND MODEL OF THE BRAIN



# Functions Of The Prefrontal Cortex

Mathematics

Analyzing

Comprehension

Literacy

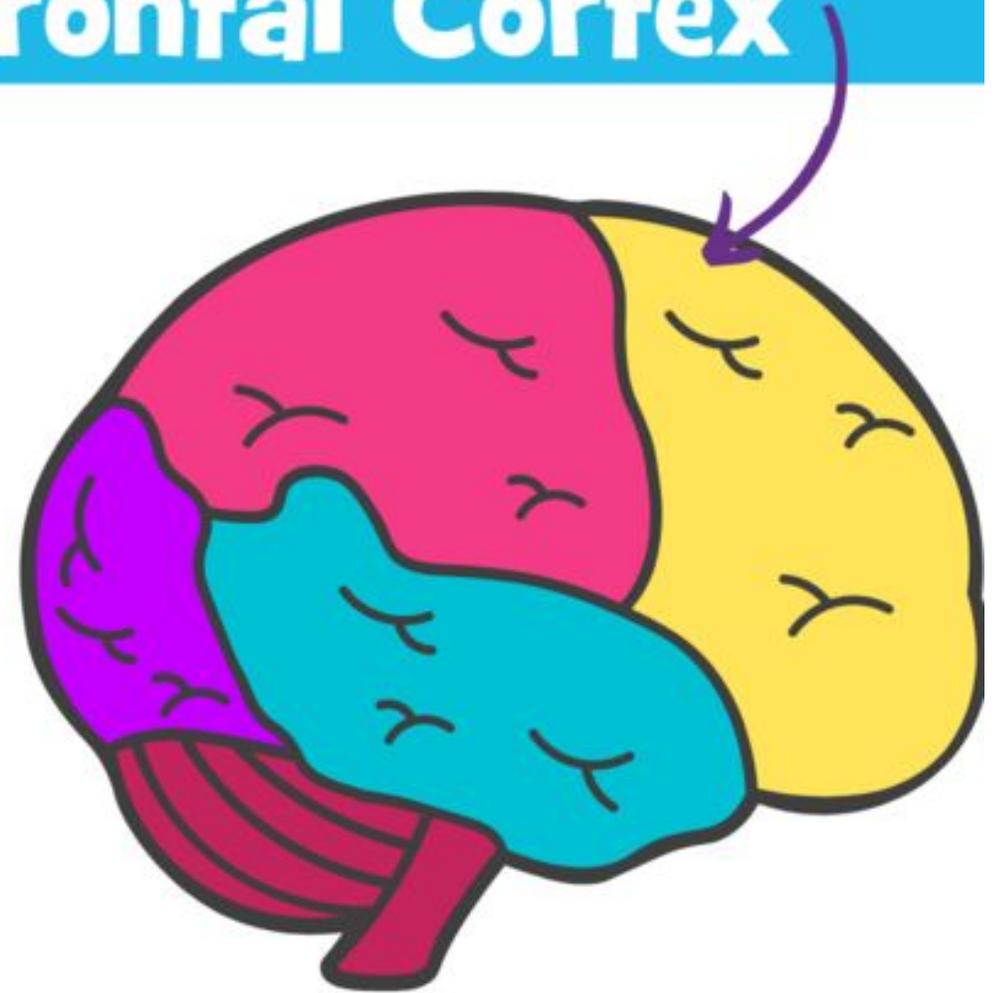
Compassion

Perspective Taking

Labeling

Focus

Self-Regulation



# FLIPPED LIDS

- Prefrontal cortex is no longer the driver
- Reactive vs. Ready state
- Stress Behavior vs. Misbehavior
- Hyperaroused - Hypoaroused
- What we see:
  - Fight
  - Flight
  - Freeze
  - Faint
- What we need:
  - Safe
  - Seen
  - Soothed
  - Secure



## Middle Prefrontal Region

- Connects critical areas of the triune brain
- Connects us to the social world of other brains
- Allows us to stop, think, and act

## Limbic Regions

- Big Emotions - Is this something that is good or bad? Something I want or fear?
- Area that “controls emotions”

## Brainstem

- Downstairs brain
- Aims to satisfy basic needs
- When activated, pushes us to act (F’s)
- Sensory input come through brainstem first

# HUMAN WAYS OF BEING

## FIGHT OR FLIGHT STATE (REACTIVE STATE)



Aggression  
Anger  
Anxiety  
Chaos  
Compulsive

Concern  
Fear  
Frustration  
Highly restricted  
Hyper vigilant

Impulsive  
Irritation  
Obsessive  
Out of control  
Over the top

Overwhelmed  
Panic  
Rigid  
Worry

## READY STATE



Assertiveness  
Body awareness  
Calm  
Collected  
Comfortable  
Compassionate

Connected  
Cool  
Creative  
Curious  
Empathetic  
Engaged

Excited  
Flexible  
thinking  
Happy  
In the present  
Joy of learning

Open  
Peaceful  
Regulated  
Safe  
Willing

## THE FREEZE OR FAINT STATE (REACTIVE STATE)



Confusion  
Depression  
Despair  
Disconnected  
Dissociation

Flat emotions  
Helpless  
Hopeless  
Memory loss  
Not preset

Numb  
Trapped  
Shameful  
Shut down

Spacey  
Stuck  
Withdrawn  
Zoned out

# CHECKLIST OF COMMON STRESSORS



**BIOLOGICAL DOMAIN** -- Stress on physiological systems (e.g., cardiovascular, digestive, nervous); It's where stress starts and is always a central factor



**EMOTIONAL DOMAIN** -- Stress caused by strong emotions (positive and negative)



**COGNITIVE DOMAIN** -- Stress caused from processing info; Mental processes involved in knowledge acquisition



**SOCIAL DOMAIN** -- Stress from social interactions with others

# 10 Ways to Reduce Stressors

Go  
Quiet



Get  
Creative



Reduce  
Inputs



ASK  
OPEN-ENDED  
QUESTIONS



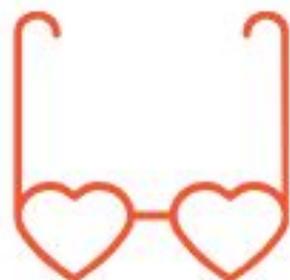
Show  
Compassion



Reduce  
Demands



Give Visual  
Support



Reduce the  
Size of the  
Group



Slow Down &  
Give Time for  
Processing



Offer  
Breaks



# Reflection & Next Steps

1: Something I will share

2: Something I will try

3. Something I'm still wondering

4. Something that was validated



***Everything*** we shared  
**today—*yours*** to keep,  
***forever.***

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