

# Meetings of Understanding

Developing Healthy Relationships



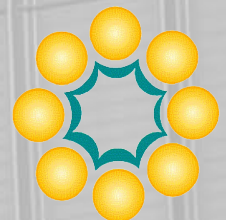
# Introduction

Jim McGrath

40 years' experience in Health, Education and Social Care

I specialise in Children and Families

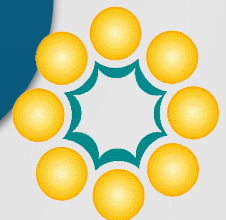
Family Group Conference, Restorative Approaches, Mediation and Conflict Resolution



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# Aim

Introduce participants to restorative mediation approaches that support the building of relationships that have been fractured or broken because parties have not been heard or understood

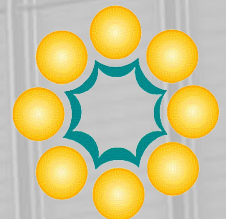


# To achieve this, I will touch on

Relationship Window

Language that can strengthen  
cooperation

Meetings of Understanding – Practical  
approaches listening and being heard



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# Relationship Window

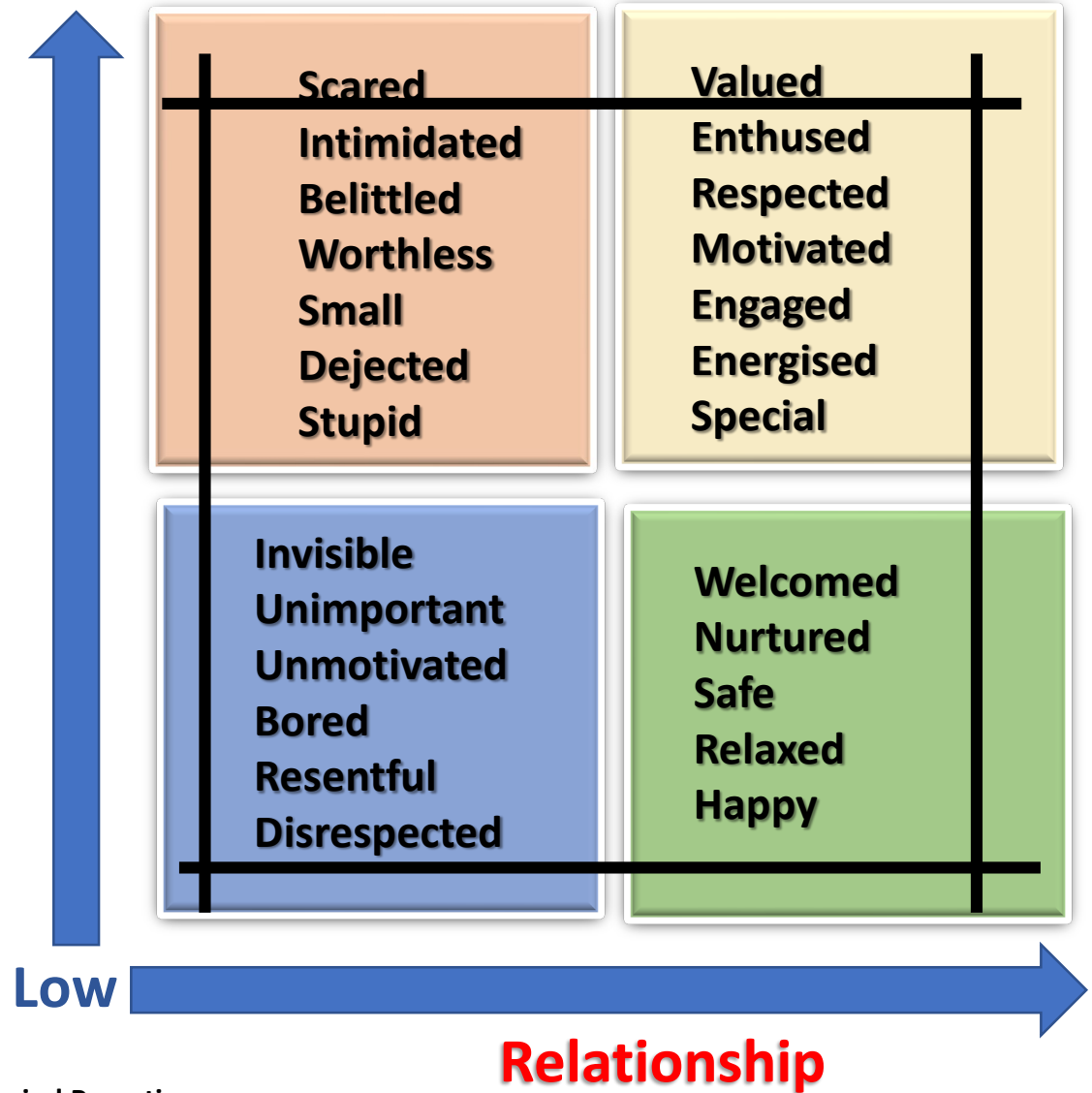


# Relationship Window

Think back to your school days and choose your favourite and least favourite teacher.

How did they make you feel?

**Control**



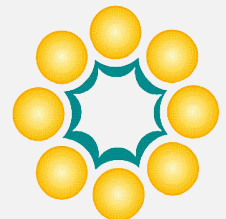
Adapted: Diane Baumrind Parenting Styles and Thomas – Kilmann Conflict Styles Model 1974

## **COERCIVE**

# **TO**

**Self-preservation from intense workload,  
lack of meaningful support and little time  
to reflect.**

**PEOPLE SHOULD BE MANAGED**



# Relationship Window

Control

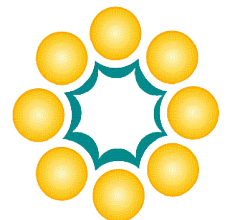
**Bully**  
**Strict**  
Picked favourites  
Sarcastic  
Intolerant  
Lacked Patience  
Didn't Care  
Unsupportive

**Listened**  
**Believed**  
Individual attention  
Wanted to help  
Spent Time  
Humourous  
Supportive  
Creative

**Disinterested**  
Appear lazy  
Lacking motivation  
Pass on problems  
Minimal support  
Turn a blind eye

**Invisible**  
Too soft  
No boundaries  
Accepted excuses  
Nice

Relationship



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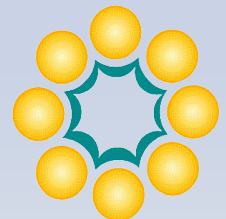


## ABSENT

# Uninvolved

*The appearance of disinterest is often a symptom of burnout caused by workload and work-related stress*

**PEOPLE ARE IGNORED**

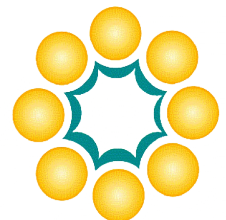


# Relationship Window

Control



Relationship



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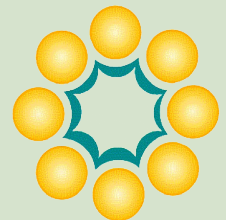
## **PASSIVE RESCUER**

# **FOR**

**Doing it for people, accepting their position  
of helplessness.**

**Not challenging poor decision making**

**PEOPLE NEED RESCUED**

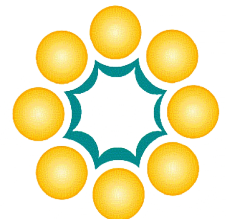


# Relationship Window

Control



Relationship



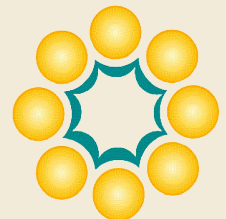
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# RESTORATIVE

## WITH

Working with people by supporting them creatively, taking the time for them to learn to do things differently

PEOPLE CAN ACHIEVE THROUGH DIRECTED SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING



# Relationship Window

Control

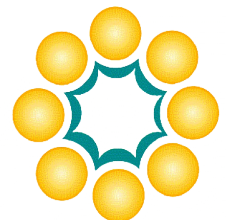
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Relationship



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# RESTORATIVE CONTINUUM



# Restorative Continuum

**Universal Engagement**

**Informal Practices**

**Formal Processes**

**Low Level**

**High Level**



**Language**

Empathy  
Compassion

**Enquiry**

**Curiosity**

Valuing  
Recognition  
Listening

**Affirmative Statements**

Non-Violent Communication  
Non Judgemental

**Restorative Questions**

**Three-way shuffle**

Appreciative Inquiry  
Informal Mediation  
Negotiation  
Questions of Understanding  
Circle Approaches  
Systemic Practices

Family Group Conference  
Restorative Conference  
**Meetings of Understanding**  
Mediation Meetings  
Restorative Circles  
Facilitated Groups  
Circle Approaches



# AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENTS

*And other useful language*

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# Language

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We have inherited negative language to question behaviour deemed as unacceptable; why, but, what, problem, want, etc

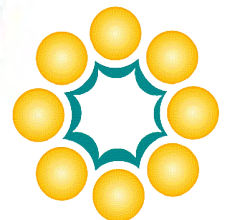
To change the response, you need to change the language.



## Language

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- **What not Why!**
- **And not But!**
- **I not You!**
- **Needs not Wants**
- **We not you!**
- ***Challenges not Problems***
- ***Different not Better***
- ***Difference not Conflict***

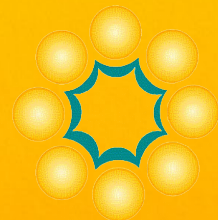


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## Working WITH

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- Listen with curiosity, respond with compassion
- Validate with the intent to build the persons' self-worth and the relationship
- Explore options with the freedom of creativity



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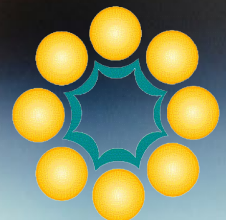


# Affirmative Statements

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Statements that affirm another's **position or thinking** without agreeing or colluding with them.

It Validates their thought and thinking process

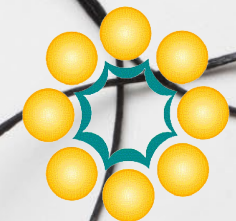




## Intent

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- **Validation:** To acknowledge and affirm someone's feelings, experiences or viewpoints, showing empathy and understanding.
- **Encouragement:** To boost morale and confidence to motivate or inspire.
- **Reinforcement:** To confirm and reinforce positive behavior, actions, or decisions.
- **Build Trust:** To establish and maintain trust in a relationship, demonstrating that you value and respect the other person.
- **Create Positivity:** To foster a positive atmosphere, reduce tension and enhance overall communication.



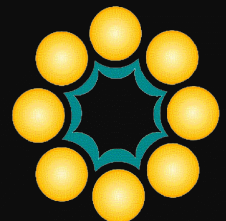
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# Statements can include:

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- ✓ I can understand why you might think that. I was thinking!!
- ✓ That's an interesting idea. Tell me what you think of mine?
- ✓ I can see where you're coming from.....
- ✓ I hadn't thought of it like that.....
- ✓ I would love to explore that more. Here's what I was thinking.....
- ✓ What a great/creative idea.....
- ✓ I wish I'd thought of that.....



# Three Way Shuffle

12/3/2024





There is a difference  
between being listened  
to and being heard

Gillian Anderson





People start to heal the moment they feel heard

Cheryl Richardson

# FILTERS TO CO-OPERATION

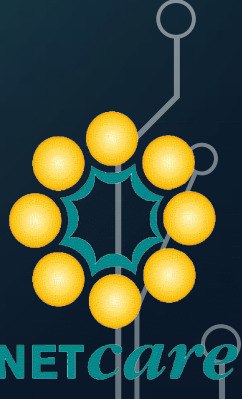
MESSAGE said.....

FILTERS

HEARD AS...



# When tensions run high



# FILTERS TO CO-OPERATION

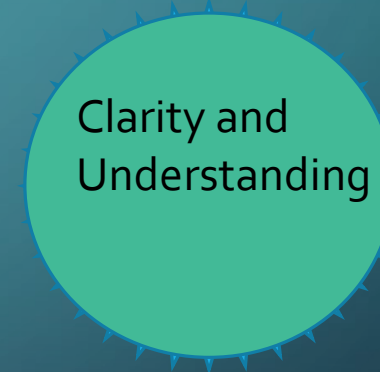
MESSAGE SAID.....

FILTERS

HEARD with...



Emotions  
History  
Agenda  
Impressions  
Hurts  
Fears  
Culture  
Gender



# Restorative Support



# THREE-WAY SHUFFLE

The three-way shuffle is a process designed to allow two people to hear, with clarity, the other person's message and its true meaning. This is achieved through the repetitive asking of one to express what it is the other **NEEDS** to hear and checking if it has been heard as it was meant to be delivered.

# THREE-WAY SHUFFLE

- A facilitator is needed to assist listening to happen
- Begin with a chosen person and ask them, *'What they need the other to hear,, with the emphasises on **NEED***
- Check out what the other 'heard' and then ask the 1<sup>st</sup> person if that is what they wanted to be heard
- Repeat this until the 2<sup>nd</sup> person has heard the 1<sup>st</sup> before moving to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and repeating the process
- After 'listening' has taken place move to solutions giving the participants the opportunity to work together



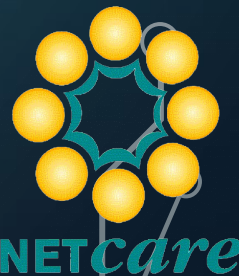
# THREE-WAY SHUFFLE

TEMPLATE

- ▶ What do you **need** ..... to hear?
- ▶ What did you **hear** ..... say?
- ▶ Is that what **you wanted** ..... to hear? (repeat if appropriate)

*When both parties have heard each other and understand the other it's time to move to the agreement stage.*

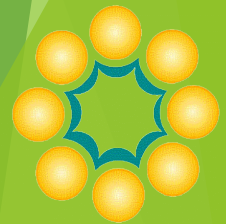
- ▶ What needs to happen to move things forward?



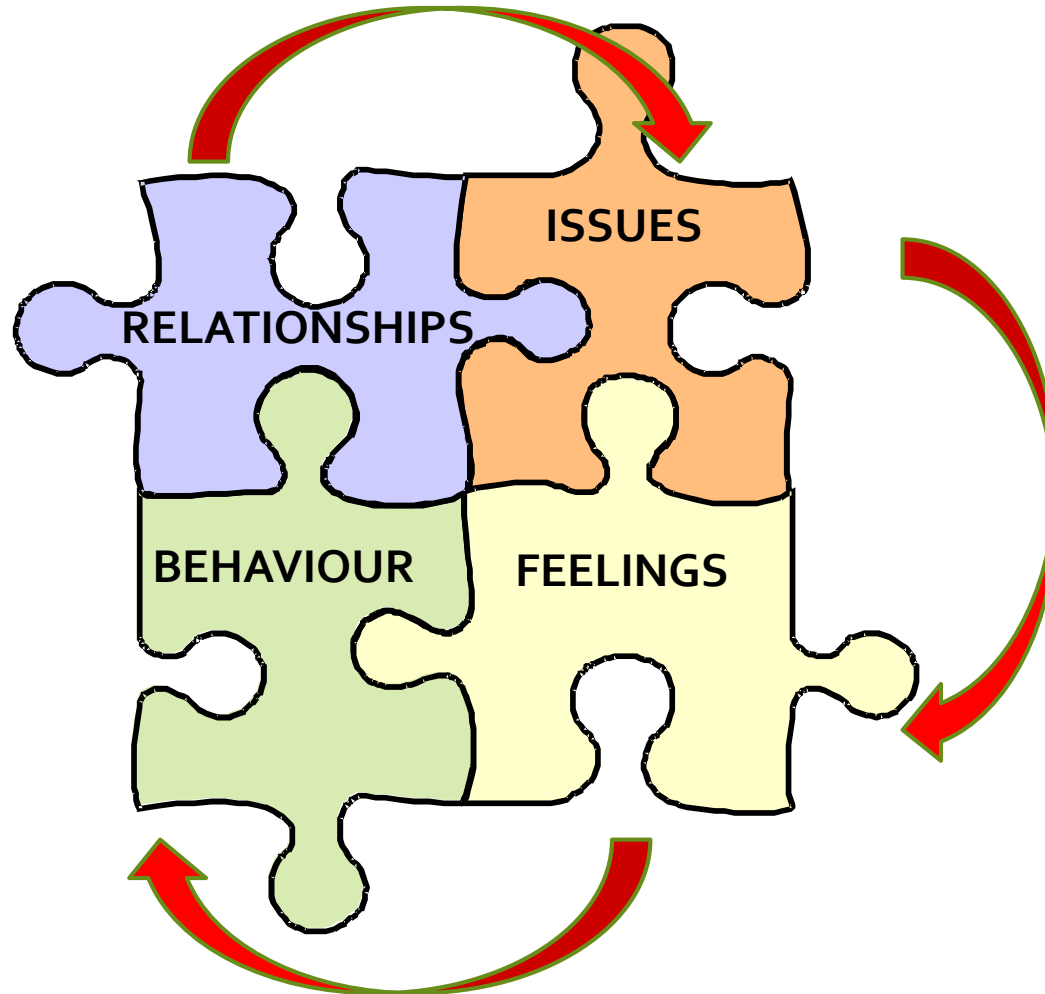
# THREE-WAY SHUFFLE

- ▶ What do you **need John** to hear?
- ▶ What did you **hear your mum** say?
- ▶ Is that what **you wanted John** to hear? (repeat if appropriate)
  
- ▶ What do you **need your mum** to hear?
- ▶ What did you hear John say?
- ▶ Is that what **you wanted your mum** to hear? (repeat if appropriate)
  
- ▶ What needs to happen to move things forward?

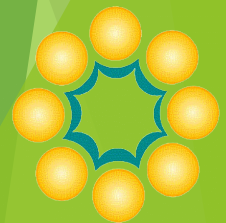
# Restorative Questions



# Transformative Model



Robert A. Baruch Bush and Joseph P. Folge 1994



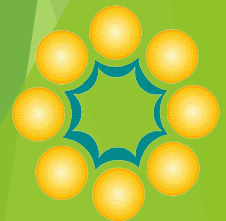
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# Restorative Questions

A formal set of questions asked when someone has caused another person harm.

It can be used in a one-to-one conversation to help a person reflect on their behaviour by focusing on the impact it had on others including self

Or used to bring two people together. The person who has caused the harm and the person harmed.



# Application

Any situation where harm has been caused!

- ▶ Family
- ▶ Residential units
- ▶ Youth and Community settings
- ▶ Youth offending
- ▶ Education

# IT PROVIDES

## The person harmed

1. **Voice** - Opportunity to talk about their experience and the impact it had on them
2. **Explanation** - What happened in context! Why them!
3. **Regaining power** - Equity. Not a victim or witness
4. **Closure** - Agreement with the other person

## The person who has caused harm

1. **Voice** - an opportunity to explain what their experience was
2. **Remorse** - Demonstrate their remorse through verbal and body language
3. **Understanding** - Hearing the other person's experience directly
4. **Reparation** - An opportunity to repair the harm

# The Compass of Shame

Adapted from D.L. Nathanson, Shame and Pride, 1992

## Withdrawal:

- isolating oneself
- running and hiding

## Attack Other:

- 'turning the tables'
- blaming the victim
- lashing out verbally or physically



## Attack Self:

- self put-down
- masochism

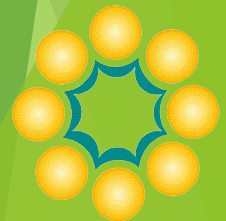
## Avoidance:

- denial
- abusing drugs and alcohol
- distraction through thrill seeking



# Questions

- ▶ What happened? (Factual)
- ▶ What were you thinking about at the time? (Internal/Heart)
- ▶ What have you thought about since? (Reflective)
- ▶ Who has been affected and in what way? (Empathetic)
- ▶ What could you do differently the next time? (Practical)
- ▶ What needs to happen to make things better? (Reparative)



## Quote

“It was like going from the head to the heart and back to the head again!”

Marion, 16 years



# Restorative Questions

## ▶ Orientating Question

*Asked about the problem, behaviour or experience*

*- "What happened? What were you thinking about at the time/since?"*

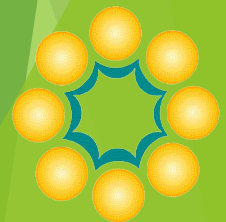
## ▶ Influencing Question

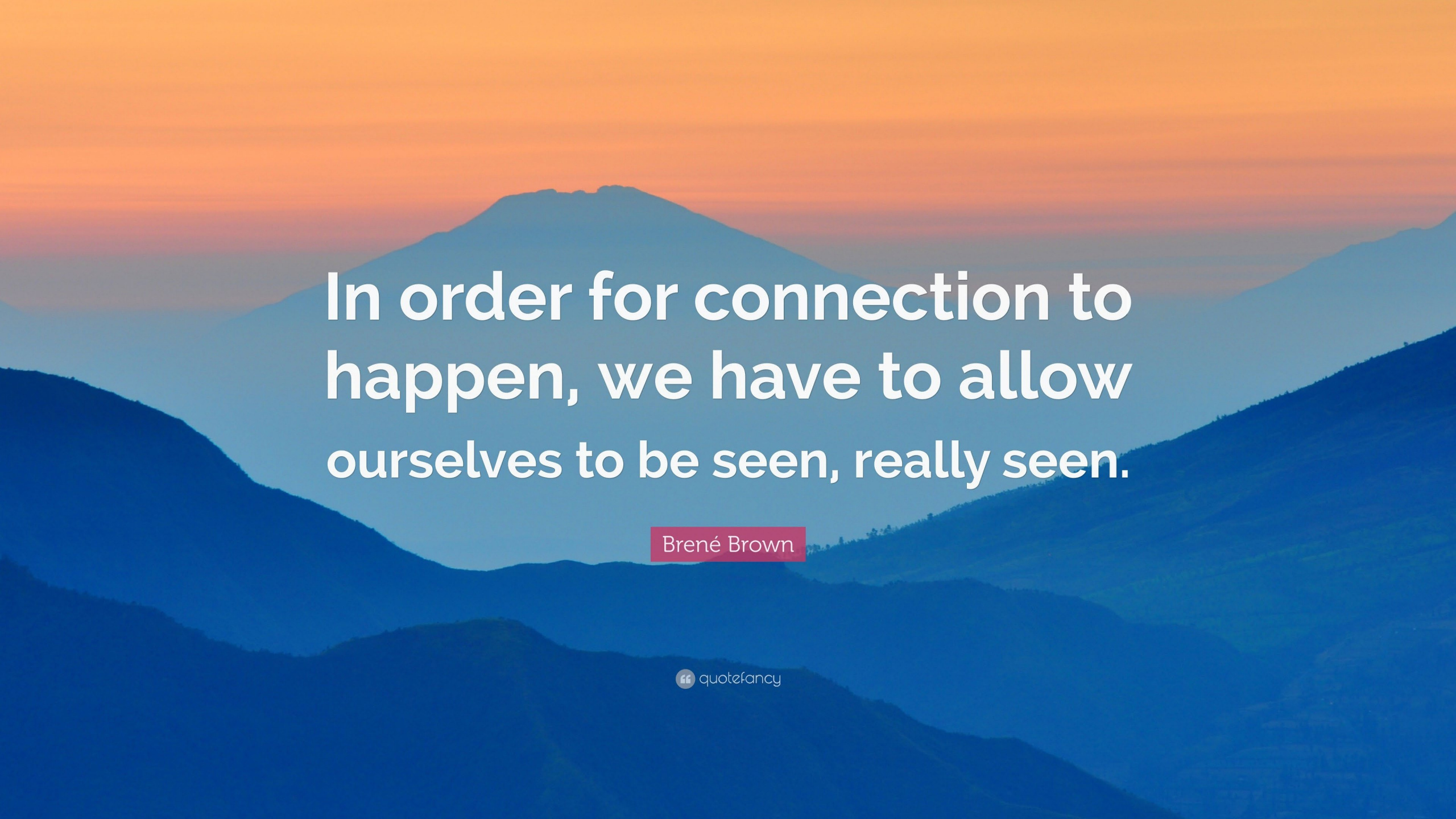
*Asked with intent to influence people to change their behaviour, feelings and thinking*

*- "Who's been affected? In what way? What could you do differently the next time? What needs to be done to makes things better/repair the harm?"*

## ▶ Correcting Questions

*Contains embedded suggestions - "Do you think it would be a good idea to walk away the next time?"*





**In order for connection to happen, we have to allow ourselves to be seen, really seen.**

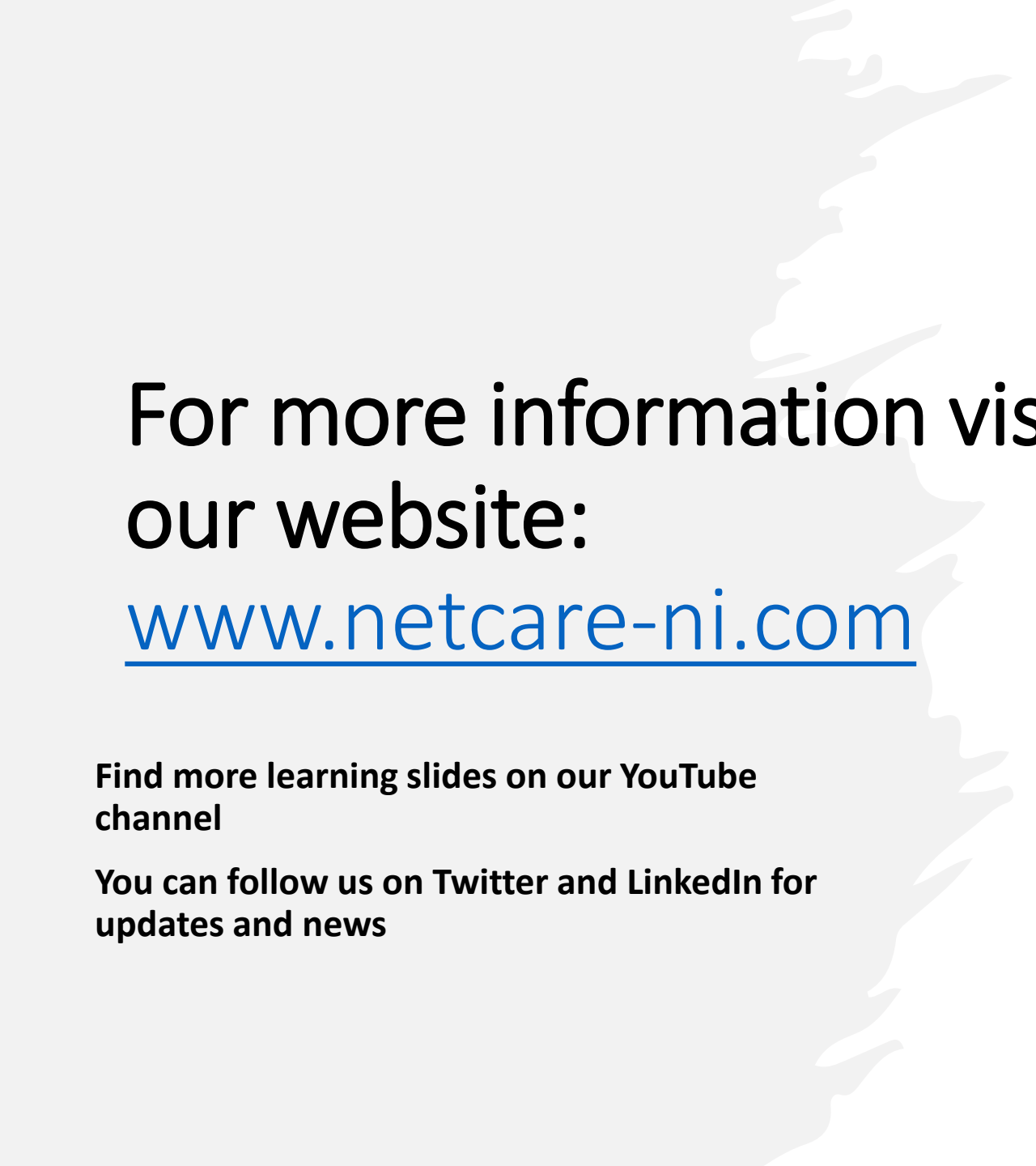
Brené Brown



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and contribution

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