Adverse Childhood Experiences and Chaplaincy

• 2016 NACC National Conference
CentraCare Health

- Six Hospitals
- Seventeen Clinics
- Six Long-term Care Facilities

- 9600 employees CentraCare
- 6200 employees of which are SCH
Benedictine Heritage

- Beginning in 1886

Along with her Benedictine Sisters Valentine Relling, Thomas Ryan and Genevieve Byrne, Sister Anselma Billing, OSB, (1854-1907), pioneered hospital care in St. Cloud. Sister Anselma served as St. Benedict's Hospital's first administrator and anesthetist from January until summer 1886.
Happy 130th Birthday
St. Cloud Hospital

February 1886

St. Benedict’s Hospital
(1880 - 1890)

February 2016

St. Cloud Hospital
How our journey began

- Introduced to ACE Study by Amie
- Beginning our journey within Spiritual Care Department
- Education, reflection, action and programmatic response
- What does it mean to be trauma-informed?
- We are impacted personally and professionally
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me…to proclaim release to the captives…recovery of sight to the blind…to let the oppressed go free…”

- Luke 4:18

- Break the Silence
- Break the Shame
- Break the Cycle

Artwork by Fr. Ronald Raab, CSC: “Broken But Not Divided”
Early Adversity Increases Physical, Mental, Behavioral Problems, Scientists Report

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Kaiser Permanente Study

Over 17,000 study participants

The ACE Study confirms, with scientific evidence, that adversity early in life increases physical, mental and behavioral problems later in life.

Dr. Robert Anda & Dr. Vincent Felitti
Investigators
### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

#### Household Dysfunction
- Substance Abuse: 27%
- Parental Sep/Divorce: 23%
- Mental Illness: 17%
- Battered Mothers: 13%
- Criminal Behavior: 6%

#### Neglect
- Emotional: 15%
- Physical: 10%

#### Abuse
- Emotional: 11%
- Physical: 28%
- Sexual: 21%

**Total ACEs:** 10
ACEs are Highly Interrelated:
Where One ACE Occurs, There are Usually Others

87% of ACEs occur together.
ACE Score and Health Problems

% with Health Problems

Dose-Response Relationship

- 0 ACE
- 1 ACE
- 2 ACEs
- 3 ACEs
- 4 ACEs
- <5 ACEs

© 2014 ACE Interface
ACEs, Smoking and Lung Disease

ACE Score
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

% with Health Problems

Early Smoking Initiation

Current Smoking

COPD
ACEs & Alcoholism & Marrying an Alcoholic

% Alcohol Related Problems

Alcoholic

Married to an Alcoholic

ACE Score
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more
# Examples of ACE-attributable problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcoholism &amp; Alcohol Abuse</th>
<th>Liver Disease</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Obstructive</td>
<td>Mental Health Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lung Disease</td>
<td>Obesity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coronary Heart Disease</td>
<td>Sexual Behavior Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Smoking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug Abuse &amp; Illicit Drug Use</td>
<td>Unintended Pregnancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fetal Death</td>
<td>Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intimate Partner Violence</td>
<td>Workplace Problems</td>
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</table>
EXPERIENCE & ADAPTATION
sensitive periods
Cause-Effect
THE HIPPOCAMPUS AND AMYGDALA

Amygdala  Hippocampus

VITAL for RELATIONSHIPS

Panic & Fear | Attention | Memory | Social Cues
MALTREATMENT
0-3

SEXUAL ABUSE
Age 0-5

Amygdala
Hippocampus
Cerebellar Vermis

BIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS
between trauma-induced adaptations in the Vermis and serious and persistent MENTAL ILLNESS
CHANGING THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION

It’s not “What’s wrong with you?”

It’s “What happened to you?”
Epigenetics

Events in the environment can turn genes on or off.

This may mean that environmental events may impact subsequent generations through epigenetic markers.
ACE’s Are Not Destiny...

Healing can happen...Resilience can be developed
Trauma impacts...

- **Capacity to attach**, trust, love, and form healthy relationships: God, self, others
  - Relationships are key!
- **Identity**: Chameleon; learned through relationships
- **Inner freedom**: Core beliefs
- **Discipleship/vocational awareness**: meaning/mission
  - Ripple-effects throughout life
What Keeps Us Bound?

➢ Shame...
  • Self-blame; “victim” label; “too sensitive…get over it”
  • Enormous pressure to forgive…
  • What one did to survive

➢ Core Beliefs about Self...
  • “I am bad”; inherently defective; deserved it
  • Well-ingrained over time…often outside awareness
  • Behaviors reinforce
Core Beliefs about God...

- Anger toward God is sinful...blasphemy
- God as tester...punisher...“Santa Claus”
- God can’t love me because of what I’ve done
- God and the survivor on opposite sides

Spiritual platitudes: Spiritual bypass?

- “God doesn’t give you more than you can handle”
- “God has a plan”
- Wrestling with God: relational; empowering
“Rules” and Church

• Can’t talk about “that” in church – *(Where then? Why not?)*

• Minimize suffering + emphasize redemptive lessons
  
  ➢ “There are some ACEs in which there is nothing to rejoice, and we as people of faith who turn to God as companion need to be ok with that.”

• Anger viewed as sin – *(Normal reaction to pain)*

• Where’s Holy Saturday? *(Liturgical “rush” from death to new life)*

• “Honor your father and mother” teachings never had the provision: “…unless they are beating the hell out of you.”
What Sets Us Free?

Healthy, Caring Relationships

- Telling our story…being heard: *Hearing the story* can change the brain…and heal the soul
  
  ❖ *Bouncing Back: Rewiring your Brain for Maximum Resilience and Well-Being*
  
  - Linda Graham, MFT

- Meaning: Finding one’s story in the Sacred Story

- Discerning identity…mission…vocation

- Healing rituals & liturgies – communal validation/support

  ➢ *Reality…Grief…Hope*
Ezekiel and the Chaplain

• “Ezekiel’s provocative rhetoric aimed to move his hearers to a new standing place from which to use their [reasoning and affective] capacities.” (Dale Launderville, OSB, “Spirit and Reason”, p. 348)

• Radical reorientation of thinking and perceiving: Sense of self…and of YHWH

• “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you.” (Ezekiel 36:26)
Setting captives free...
Where do we go from here?

• Spiritual Care Department
  – I see things differently
  – I listen differently
  – I ask different questions
  – Resources to generate healing and build resilience

• CentraCare

• Community Collaborative
  – Law enforcement (CRI program)
  – Judicial System (CAC program)
  – Schools (early education programs)
  – Public Health (now taking the lead)
  – Healthcare organizations
Questions?