

Mirror Neurons, Empathy, and Relationships

Debra Brownlee, PhD

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Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
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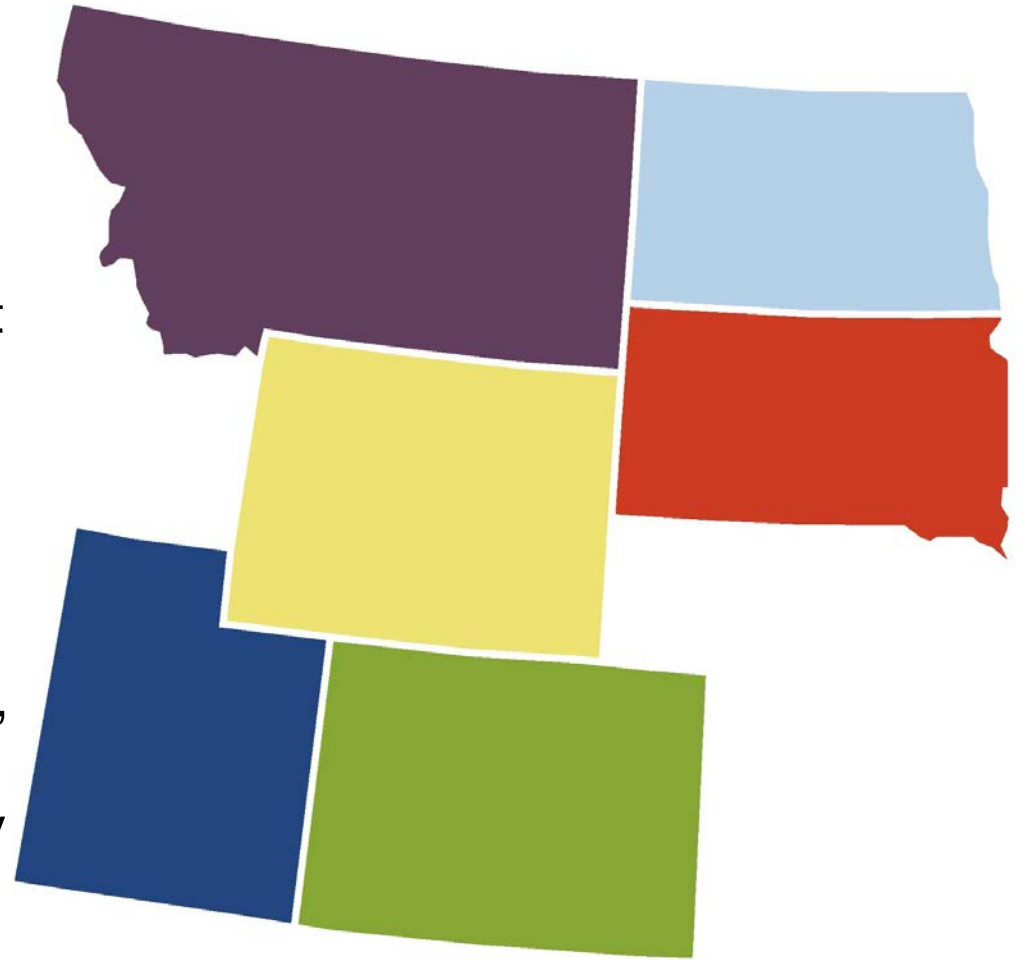
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The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

**STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL**

**INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES**

**HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE**

**INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS**

**PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS**

**NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS**

**RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE**

**CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS**

The background features a dark blue gradient with a subtle pattern of white dots. Overlaid on this are several circular and semi-circular elements. A prominent feature is a large circular scale on the left side, with numerical markings from 140 to 260 in increments of 10. Other elements include various concentric circles, some with arrows indicating direction, and dashed lines forming paths or orbits. The overall aesthetic is technical and scientific.

MIRROR NEURONS, EMPATHY & RELATIONSHIPS

(INTERACTIONAL & DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIPS)

TRAINER: DEBRA BROWNLEE, PHD

OPENING ACTIVITY

Think of That Person Who...

- The relationship is a bit fractious or competitive
- They are not a particularly mean person (e.g. not abusive)
- You can see that they are nice to other people but your relationship with them is antagonistic
- They know how to step on your last nerve (e.g. every little thing they say is slightly irritating and every thing you say to them is taken wrong)

PARMA, ITALY EARLY 1990S

- Giacomo Rizzolatti M.D (Journal of Neurophysiology; June 01, 1995; Volume 73, Issue 6)
- Study of the Premotor Cortex of Macaque Monkeys
- Found that the Premotor Cortex of the monkeys was activated not only when the monkey picked up a peanut, but also when the researchers picked up a peanut.

RUBBER HAND EXPERIMENT

➤ National Geographic: “Is that my real hand?”

3 CORE TYPES OF EMPATHY

- Cognitive Empathy (Identifying others' feelings; Mentalizing)
- Emotional Empathy (Sharing others' emotions; Experience Sharing; Personal Distress)
- Empathic Concern (Wanting to improve the experience of others; Motivational Empathy; Compassion)

Thinking
About

Sharing

➤ Daniel Goleman – Emotional
Intelligence

Caring
About

HOW EACH TYPE OF EMPATHY IS USED

➤ **Cognitive Empathy (Identifying others' feelings; Mentalizing)**

Good when working in emotionally intense environments

Only a starting point in deeper, more personal relationships

➤ **Emotional Empathy (Sharing others' emotions; Experience Sharing; Personal Distress)**

Can be overwhelming (e.g. Compassion Fatigue/Burnout)

❖ the pros/cons of emotion contagion (Rockin' Robin example vs. suicide clusters)

Bonds us more tightly to those we're closest to/A jumping point to Motivational Empathy

➤ **Empathic Concern (Wanting to improve the experience of others; Motivational Empathy; Compassion)**

The most direct path to kind actions

EMPATHIC COMBINATIONS

- Cognitive Empathy (Identifying others' feelings; Mentalizing;)
- Emotional Empathy (Sharing others' emotions (Experience Sharing; Personal Distress))
- Empathic Concern (Wanting to improve the experience of others; Motivational Empathy; Compassion)

Which Type/Combo of Empathy is used?

1. Professional Poker Player
2. Therapist/Social Worker
3. Mild Autism Spectrum
4. Ted Bundy
5. Paramedic

ADVANCED LEVEL EMPATHY

Daniel Siegel 5 Types of Empathy

- EMPATHIC RESONANCE (FEELING THE FEELINGS)
- PERSPECTIVE TAKING (SEEING THE WORLD FROM ANOTHER'S POINT OF VIEW)
- COGNITIVE EMPATHY (WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ANOTHER)
- EMPATHIC CONCERN (COMPASSION – WANTING TO RELIEVE THE SUFFERING OF ANOTHER)
- EMPATHIC JOY (BEING HAPPY FOR THE SUCCESS OF OTHERS)

BACK TO OUR
FRACTIOUS
RELATIONSHIP

How did the relationship become this way?

PERFORMANCE ART MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

- Marina Abramovic in the MoMa and Ulay
- Who's mirroring who?

FLIPPING THE SCRIPT

- Think about that relationship of yours...
- How do we move forward in the relationship?

FLIPPING THE SCRIPT

- Pencil Study (Strack, Martin, and Stepper (1988); Tara Kraft & Sarah Pressman of University of Kansas in the context of mood in relation to stress and pain)
- Avoiding Approaching Fight with Fight
- If you know that an action can change your mood, which can lead to changes in another's mood through empathy, how can you change the dynamic of your contentious relationship?

RESOURCES

- The War for Kindness: Building Empathy in a Fractured World – Jamil Zaki – Professor of Psychology at Stanford University and the director of the Stanford Social Neuroscience Laboratory.
- Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman (Writes in further detail about the three core types of Empathy)
- Giacomo Rizzolatti M.D (Journal of Neurophysiology; June 01, 1995; Volume 73, Issue 6)
- Ehrsson, Spence, and Passingham (2004): Studies on the “rubber hand illusion”
- Strack, Martin, and Stepper (1988): Pencil Study. Tara Kraft and Sarah Pressman have done a follow-up study in relation to mood in the context of stress and pain.
- Daniel Siegel 5 Types of Empathy – Professor of Psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine and Executive Director of the Mindsight Institute.

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Thank you for joining us today!

??? Contact Genevieve Berry at: gberry@wiche.edu



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