



TAPESTRY

Adoption & Foster Care Ministry

Connecting While Correcting

Irving Bible Church

2011

The Reality for Our Families

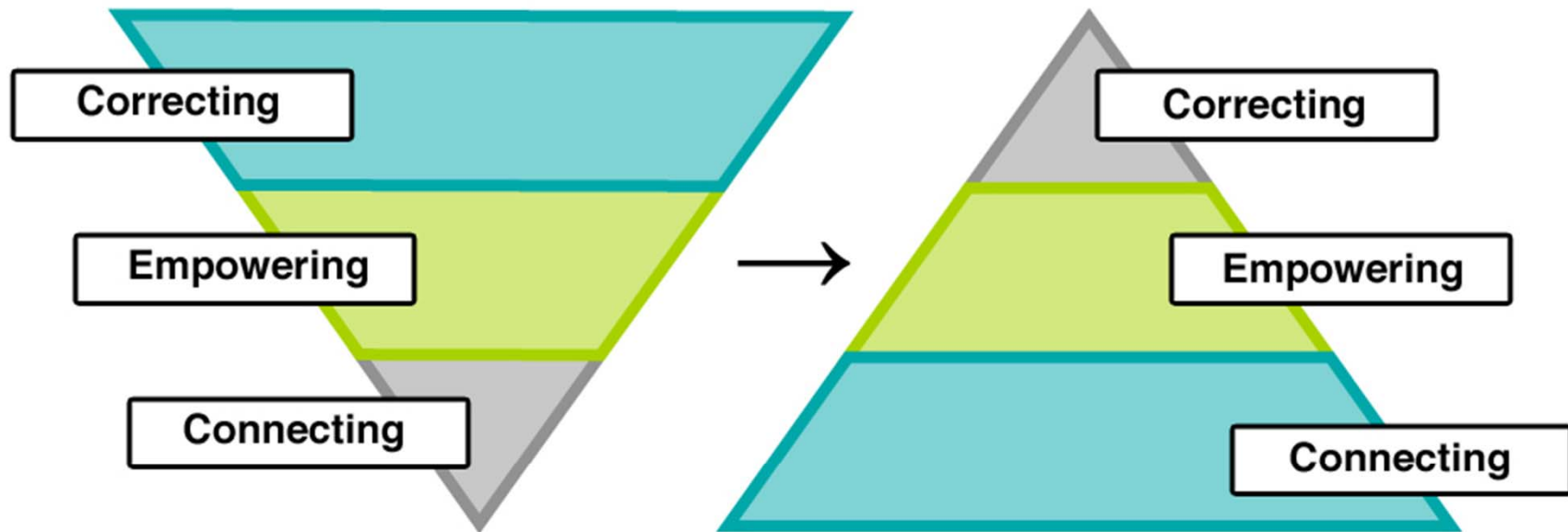
- The reality for most of our families looks something like this:
 - Most children who come into our families through adoption or foster care come from “hard places”
 - Many, if not most, of the common approaches to parenting were not developed with our children in mind
 - We want to help our children heal, but we still must deal effectively with misbehavior so that our children can learn and grow
 - As a result, we often struggle to find the right balance and approach to help our children both heal and grow

How We Arrive at Our Approach to Parenting

Most of us tend to parent based on:

- How we were parented growing up
- Advice from friends and family
- What comes “naturally” to us
- What we have been taught is biblical
- What worked with our other (i.e., bio) children

Connecting as the Foundation



We Were Created to Connect

- From the beginning, we were made for relationships – with God and with others
- Our approach to parenting must always focus first and foremost on people, not parenting methods, techniques, systems or processes

Changing our Focus to Connecting

“When we shift our perspective from the outward to the inward, from rules to relationships, our parenting will change.”

-- *Leslie Fields, “Parenting Is Your Highest Calling” and Eight Other Myths That Trap Us in Worry and Guilt*

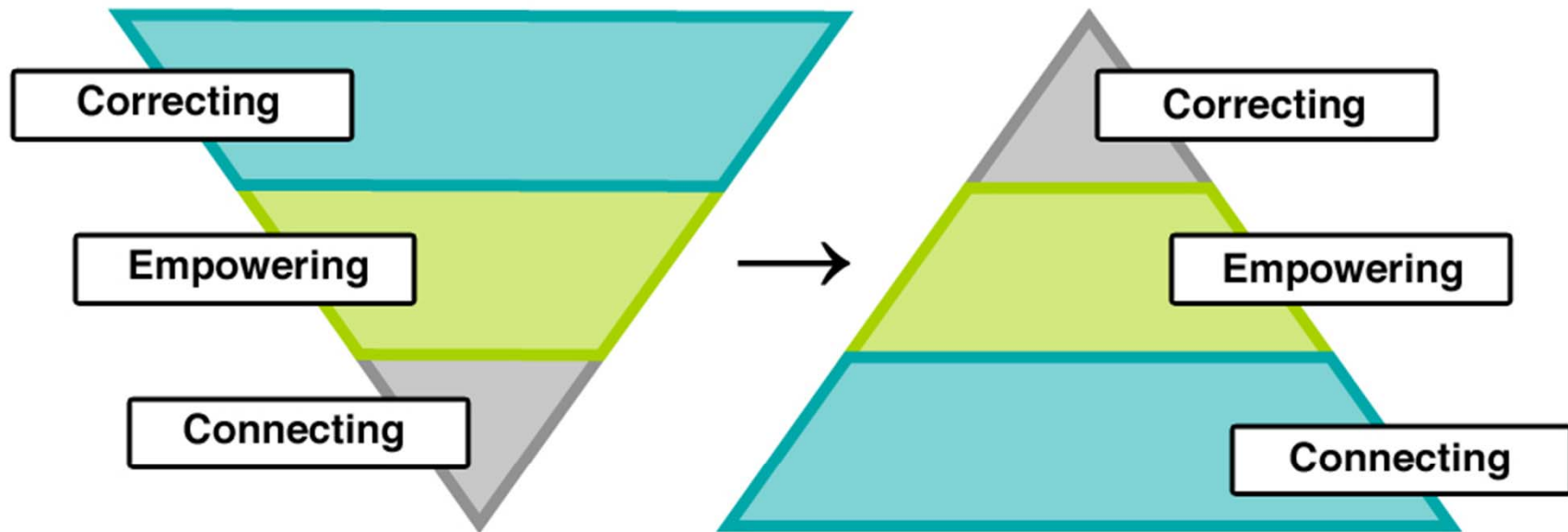
Train Up a Child

- “Train up *a child* in the way *he* should go...”
Proverbs 22:6
- The focus of discipline in Scripture is training, not punishment
- Discipline cannot be separated from love and relationship (*Hebrews 12 and 1 Cor. 13*)
- Discipline is more effective (and often easier) in the context of connection

Loving Our Children the Way God Loves Us

- God loves his children with a balance of nurture and structure
 - *God is kind, but he's not soft. In kindness he takes us by the hand and leads us into radical life-change. Romans 2:4 (The Message)*
- And we are called to do the same
 - *...bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4 (KJV)*
 - *...take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master. Ephesians 6:4 (The Message)*

Connecting as the Foundation



Strategies That Help Us Connect While Correcting

- Giving Voice
- Playful Engagement
- Choices
- Compromises
- Re-Do's
- Time-Ins

Levels of Response

- **Level 1:** mild behaviors → attempt to re-direct through playful engagement
- **Level 2:** moderate behaviors → attempt to re-direct through choice giving
- **Level 3:** verbally aggressive → attempt to re-direct with “time-in” or “think it over”
- **Level 4:** physically aggressive → attempt to redirect through interruption of physical aggression

The IDEAL Response

ImmEDIATE

DIRECT

EFFICIENT

ACTION-BASED

Leveled at the behavior

And When It's Over...

- **Distancing Strategies Outcomes (3 D's)**
 - Deferred behavior, waiting to emerge again later
 - Discontentment in parent and child
 - Disconnection between parent and child is deepened
- **Connecting Strategies Outcomes (3 C's)**
 - Corrected behavior
 - Contentment in parent and child
 - Connection between parent and child is deepened

Remember, It's a Journey!

- Practice, Practice & More Practice!
- Focus on what you bring to each and every interaction with your child
- Decide how you will measure success as a parent
- Pray, seek wisdom and understanding in Scripture and recognize our dependence on God