



Helping Children Cope With Anxiety

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Introduction



Mom of 2

Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology, certification in Positive Discipline
Experience as ADHD Coach, Academic Coach, in-home mentor, psychotherapist

Clinical Interest: Resilience and self-esteem

Practice focus: Supporting children with "big emotions" (anxiety, big reactions, sensitivity)

Support parents via:

- Trainings, podcast
- Programs for raising children with big emotions



What causes anxiety in your children?



What Causes Anxiety

It is NOT what we're facing that causes stress.
It's how we **think about** and **interpret** what we're facing,
usually including a belief that **bad things will happen**
(and that **we can't handle it**)...

"I'm not going to pass that test and my parents will be on my case and I **don't want to deal with that...**"

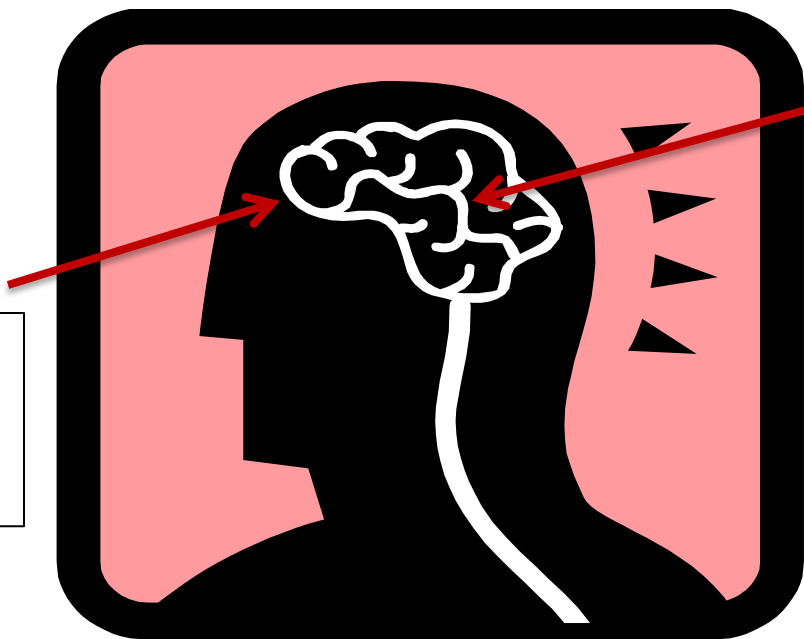
"My friends will all be playing that video game and I'll fall behind and I **can't handle that...**"

"I won't know who to sit with at lunch. It'll be awkward and I **won't know how to handle that...**"



What's Going On in the Brain

Rational thought & ability to:
~solve problems
~think things through
~see the big picture



•Thoughts → "Threat"



•Fight or flight response:
~not rational
~not open to new perspectives (looks for all of the evidence we are right)
~prevents us from meeting our potential (self-fulfilling prophecy)

What You SEE

(Anxiety / lack of resilience doesn't always look like "worry")

FIGHT: Anger, aggression, disrespect

FLIGHT: Avoidance, Low motivation



What Doesn't Work?



What DOESN'T Work To Reduce Anxiety / Foster Resilience

Reassurance

because...

Humans need evidence for ourselves

Logic

because...

"danger" is programmed to override logic

Parent's anxiety

because...

our emotions only make their emotions bigger



WHAT'S IN YOUR CONTROL: A SIMPLE PROACTIVE TOOL



Teach Them to Solve Problems

Help them stop seeing problems as problems

This can help to reduce the “threat” to an anxious brain

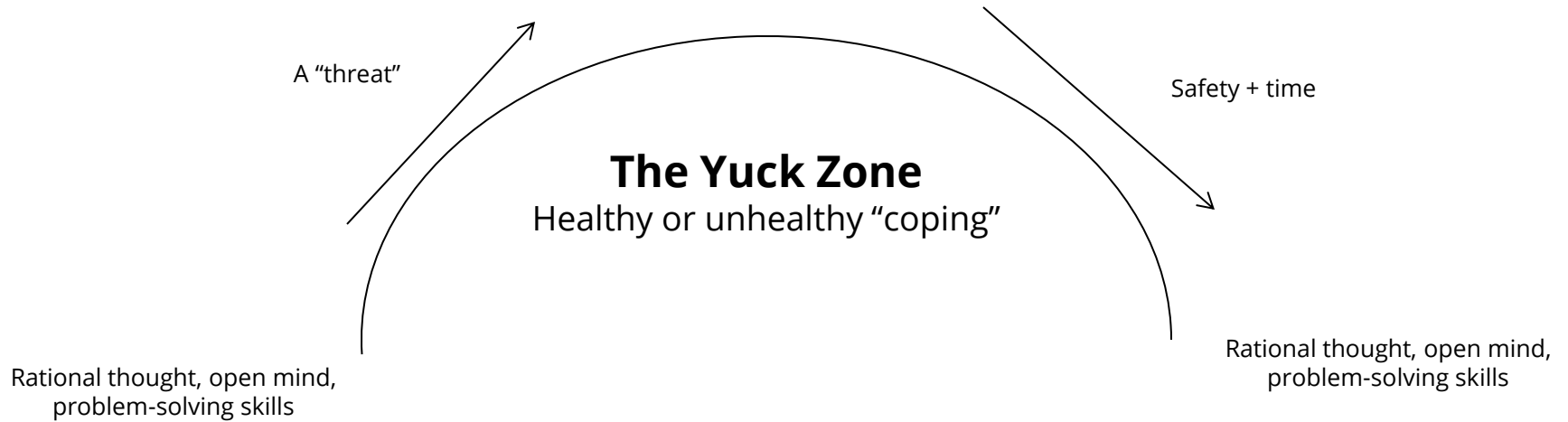
“What do you need?” / “What’s the solution?”
“Solutions start with ‘Can I please...’ or ‘Can you please...’”
Have them solve your problems
Recognize problem solving



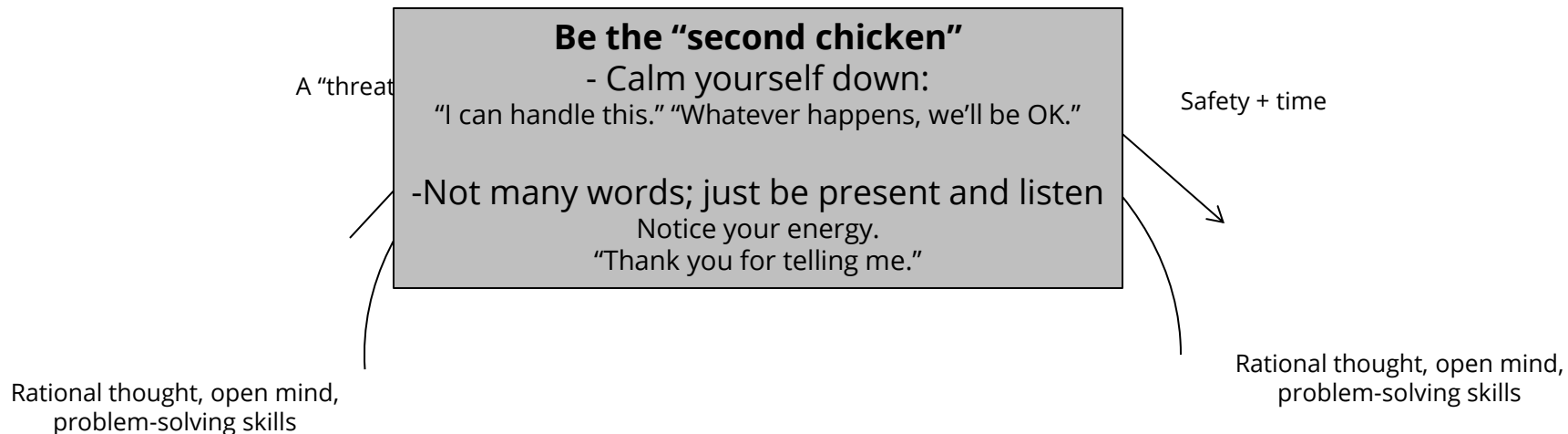
WHAT'S IN YOUR CONTROL A 2-STEP IN-THE-MOMENT TOOL



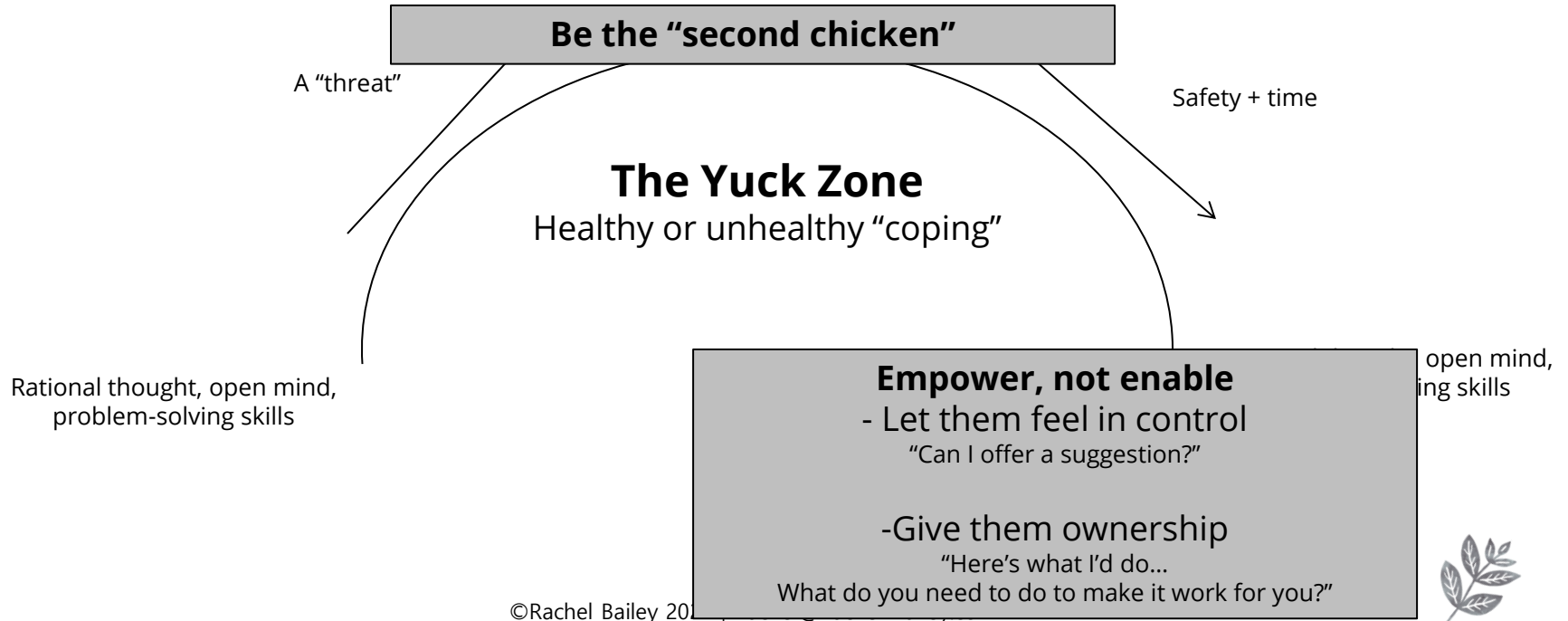
The Yuck Curve



Step 1: Help them Travel the Curve



Step 2: Empower Them to Find Solutions



How This Helps

Instead of...

"It's going to be bad and I can't handle it..."

They think...

"I can handle this because **I can handle discomfort.
I've experienced it before. I will be OK.**"



REMEMBER...

To support an anxious child:

Instead of reassuring, **show them you can handle it.**
Instead of fixing, **empower them.**

Proactively:

Teach problem-solving skills

In the moment (2 steps):

You are the second chicken. Stay calm.
Empower instead of solving





Questions?

If you are raising a child with big emotions:

www.Rachel-Bailey.com/Aldrin

Other resources:

Free tips: Email info@Rachel-Bailey.com, Subject: Tips

Podcast: "Your Parenting Long Game"

Facebook: "Your Parenting Long Game Podcast Community"

