

The Power of Tears

Laura Minnigerode, Ed. M. CIIM
Listeningforgood.com



Welcome & Introductions

- Introductions
- What ages do you work with?
- Very quick history of Hand in Hand
- About me, and tears

YOU ARE DOING A LOT



BEFORE WE START

During this session

- Ask questions, there are no bad questions!
- Bear with me, this is new stuff
- Restroom breaks are very ok!
- Please sign in, I promise not to send lots of email.

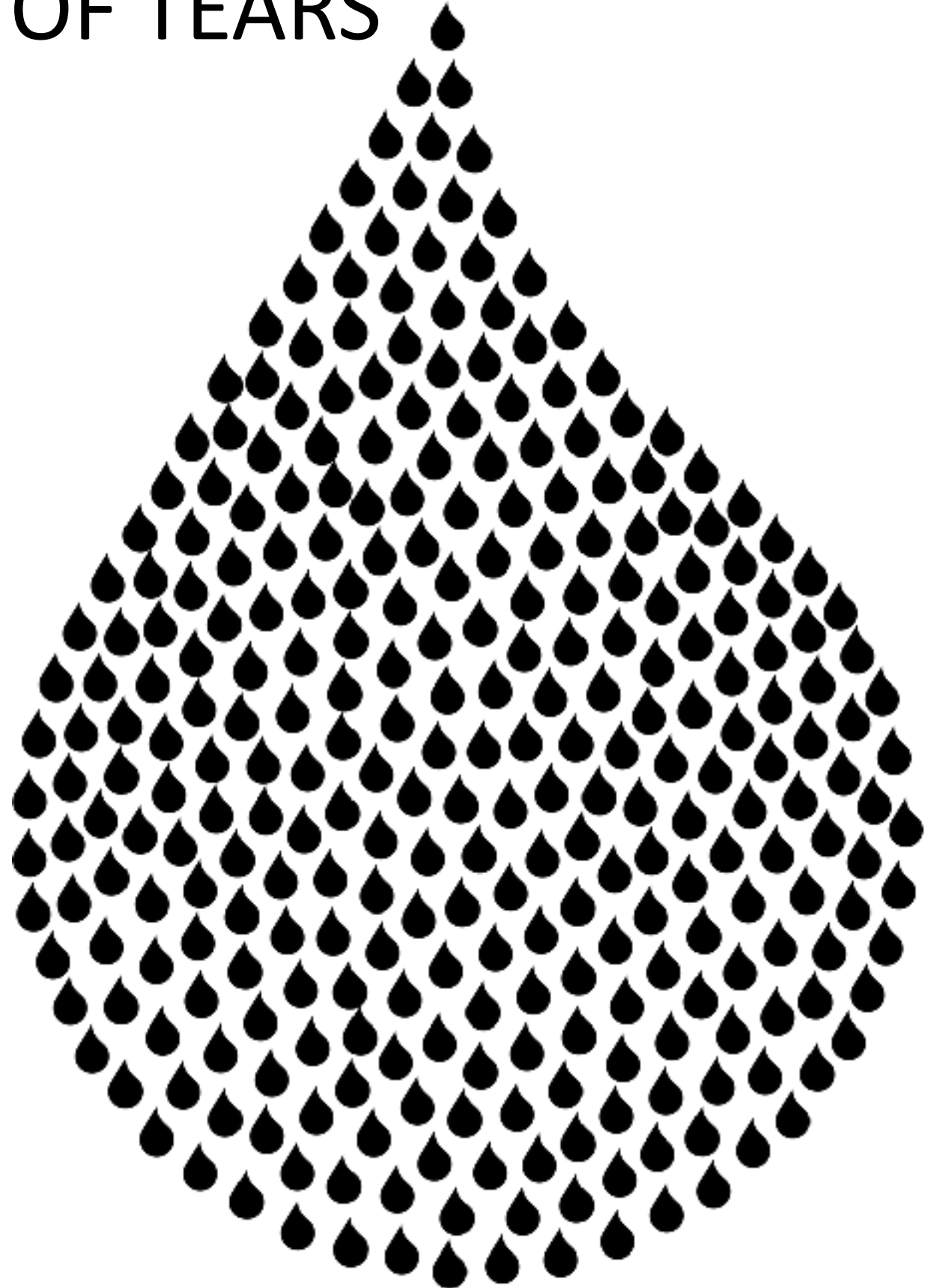
After this session

- Go to Listeningforgood.com for follow up
- I would love to provide other requested information- contact me!
- Laura: 512-350-2815 text

THE POWER OF TEARS

Topics

- Why do we cry?
- How are tears powerful?
- Steps to listen: the tool of Staylistening
- How to be ready to listen: the tool of Listening Partnership



ACTIVITY: Listening Partnership

- How did people respond when you cried?
- Offer warmth- 'glow' at each other.
- Listen without interruption.

CONNECTION is VITAL

Every child is born with a connection-detection system.

We are wired to engage in a steady stream of communication.



CONNECTED LIMBIC SYSTEM =

Trust

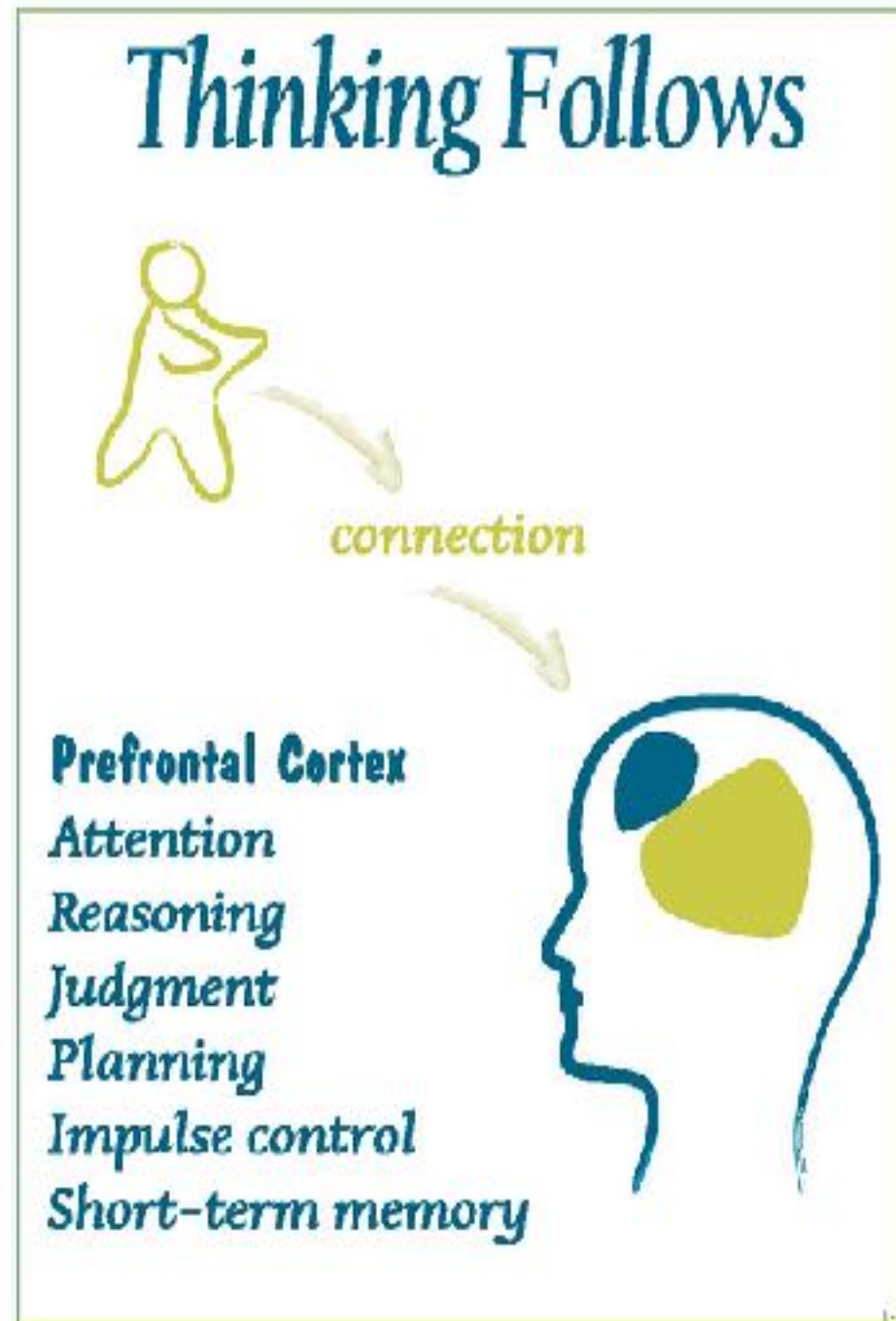
Cooperation

Respect



WITH CONNECTION

We see good behavior,
problem solving,
judgment and
LEARNING.

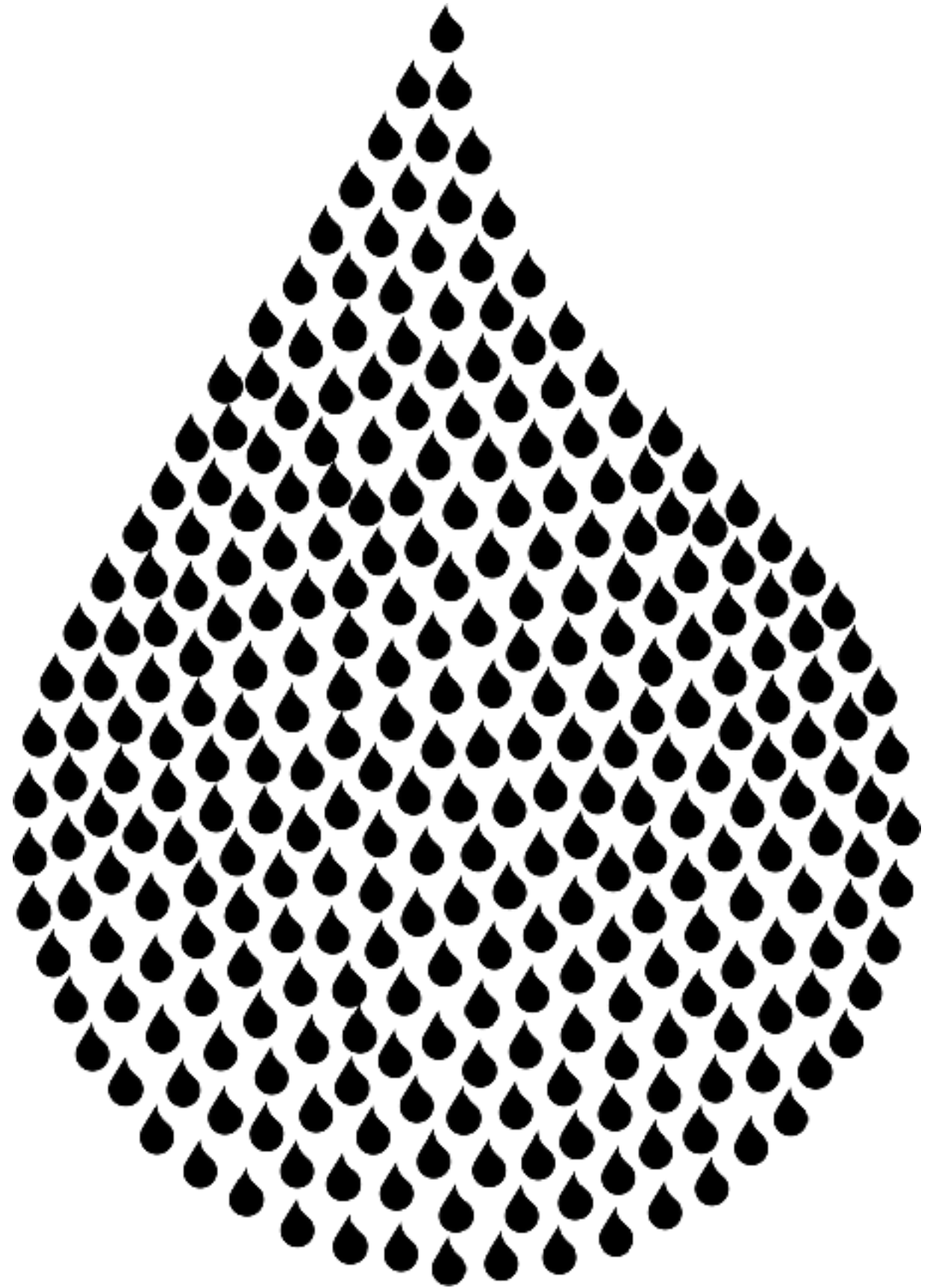


OUTBURSTS

- Emotions are complicated. We can't always tell what has led to an upset. There are times a small thing will lead to a big upset.
- What are your examples? Frustration, disconnection, sharing challenges

WHAT DO TEARS DO?

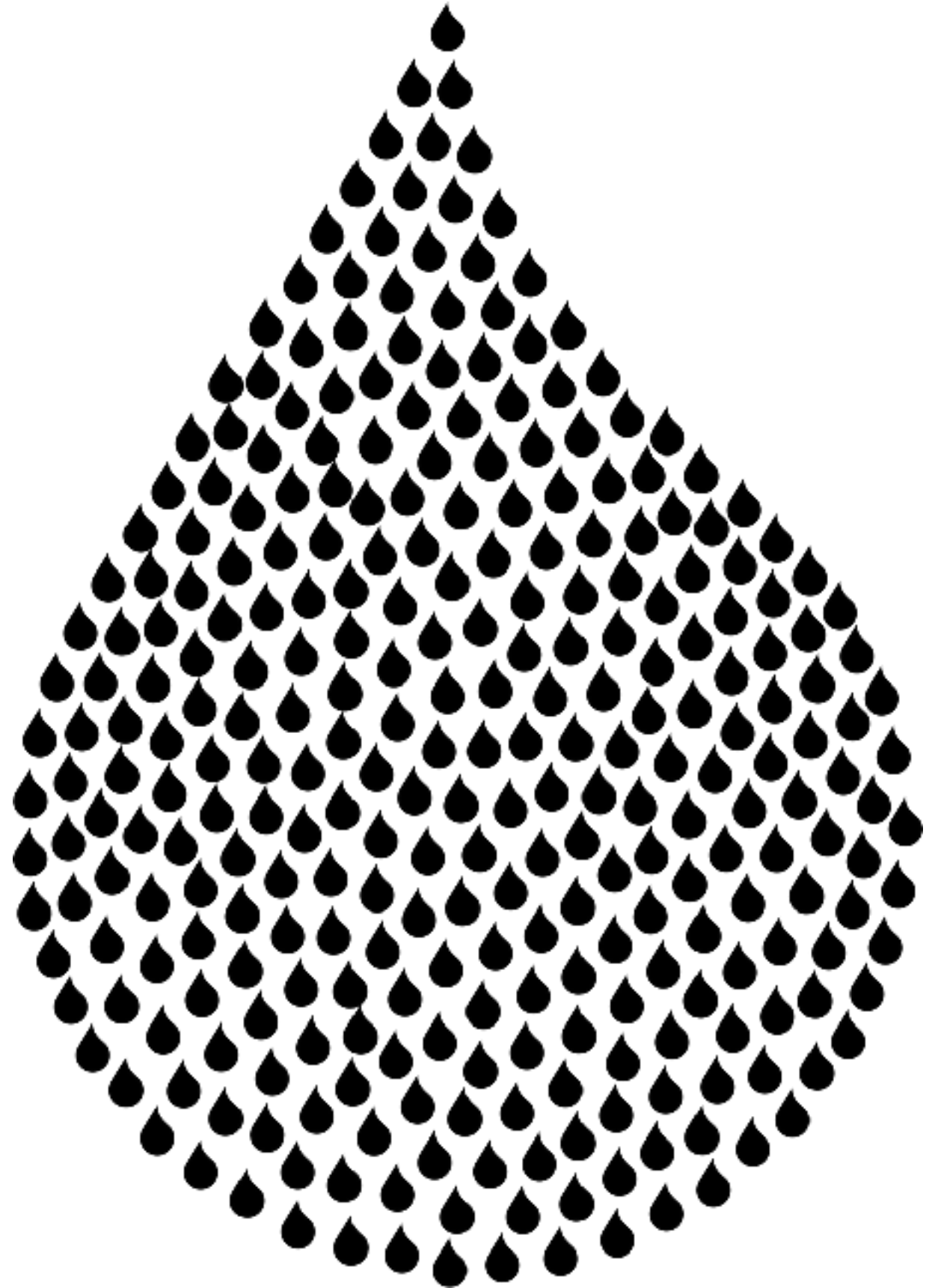
A study found that the chemical composition of tears shed for emotional reasons contained cortisol, the stress hormone, and those induced by onions contained only saline solution.



TEARS HEAL

When we stay with a child through this process, we say yes to emotion.

When they have offloaded enough feeling, they will notice that they are safe.



LISTENING FOR BABIES

- Relax yourself. Deep breath in and out. Remind yourself the baby has her own reason to cry.
- Check for immediate need or pain, and address it.
- If needs are met, hold her lovingly and allow her to cry. Babies need closeness and attention when they are crying. No baby should ever be left to cry alone.
- You are providing her with much needed emotional support.

NOT CRY IT OUT

- There is a huge difference between leaving a person to cry alone and staying with comfort and reassurance.



It's Time to Connect



Helping Process

Move close

**Stop off-track
behavior**

Listen

Offer connection

Healing process

Crying

Tantrums

Trembling

Perspiration

Laughter

THE POWER OF TEARS

Crying is part of the recovery process from trauma and stress.

Crying is not misbehavior.



WE ARE HUMANS WITH HISTORY

- Listening to tears can trigger our unconscious memories and fears about crying.
- We often try to stop children from crying, even without realizing it.
- Giving full attention is not always possible. But sometimes it is.

STAYLISTENING

Stop off track
behavior first

Say little (75%
listening)

Stay close but
don't use a hug to
stop the crying

Offer warmth and
openness



WHAT TO SAY

- Make sure the child feels seen “I saw what happened”
- Make sure the child feels safe “You are safe here”
- Make sure the child knows you have time “I am here”
- It’s ok to help ‘come back’ from upset when ready

WHAT TO NOT SAY

- Avoid feeling labels, even though this is often recommended
- Avoid saying “Yes, go ahead and get that out of your system”
- Avoid logical talking about the situation as the child can not absorb it

A GREAT ARTICLE

- A good resource online for What to Say While Listening
- <https://www.handinhandparenting.org/article/what-to-say-during-staylistening/>

Thinking Follows



connection



Prefrontal Cortex
Attention
Reasoning
Judgment
Planning
Impulse control
Short-term memory



LISTENING PARTNERSHIP

- **When you listen:** You allow your partner to release their feelings, and become more able to think more clearly and come up with their own solution.
- **When you talk:** Use your time to focus on a feeling or a trigger. You don't have to explain it, just feel it and let it go, while you have a safe space to do so.

WHY LISTENING PARTNERSHIP?

- Use Listening Partnership as an outlet for the emotions you had to tamp down in childhood.
- It is the place to say how hard it is for you, and to receive safe space and support.



WHY LISTENING PARTNERSHIP?

- We have been hurt and carry that with us.
- When someone listens to us and we can release some of our own tension and feelings, we are better able to listen to children.

- Questions and Reflection
- Almost all of us struggle with **listening to children's feelings**. But you can learn to help children with releasing tension, and then returning to a reasonable way of relating to others, more often.
- Getting support from an adult listener can help.

- I will place the notes and other links on my site, ListeningforGood.com

Books:

- Tears Heal, by Kate Orson
- Listen, by Patty Wipfler
- drdansiegel.com: No Drama Discipline: he has a note for teachers that is really good.

This is step one of a journey. Thank you for being
here.

Laura.minnigerode@gmail.com

512-350-2815

Listeningforgood.com