

Workshop

ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences and how knowing about them can inform our (clinical) practice

Dr Sara Ketteley
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A graphic with a dark blue background featuring a grid pattern and a vertical light blue streak. The text "PUBLIC HEALTH" is in white with a black outline, and "EMERGENCY" is in red with a white outline.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

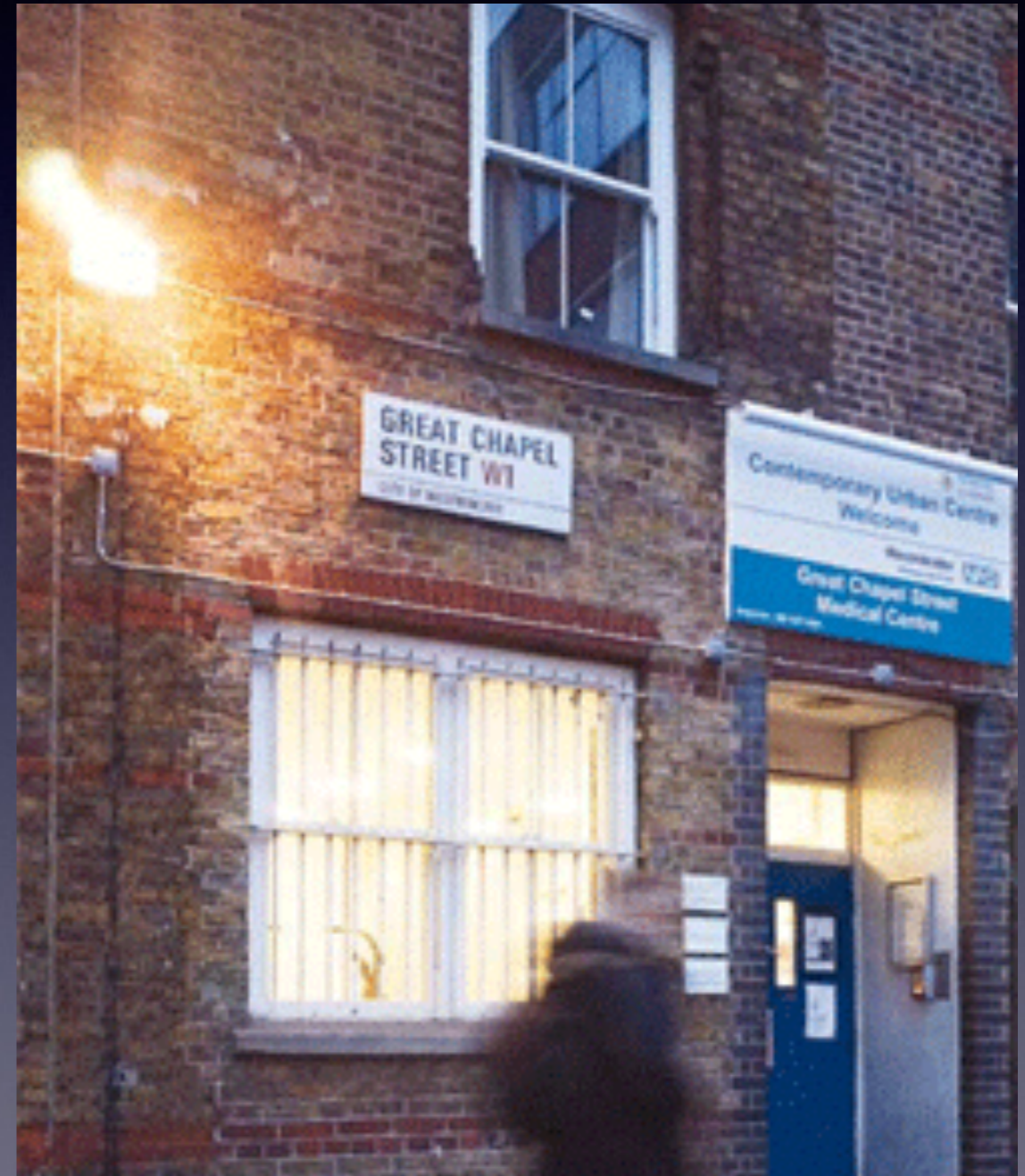
“Adverse Childhood Experiences are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat”

Dr Robert Block, former president of the American Academy of Pediatrics

- Background
- A bit of science
- Application of theories in practice
- Discussion

Integrated Primary Care and Psychological Services

- A one stop shop
- Integrated physical, mental and social care for 40 years
- Starts with a welcome and respect
- seeking to maintain a safe and stable environment
- Meet people where they are at, and begin a journey



Groundbreaking research

- CDC-Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study by Felitti and Anda 1998
- ACEs are incredibly common 67% had more than 1 ACE
- 12.6% had 4 or more ACEs

UK ACE research

- Bellis et al (2014) 4000 people aged 18-69
- 47% have 1 ACE and 9% have 4 or more
- REACH Model developed in Lancashire by Dr Warren Larkin is being adopted in West London in partnership with mental health and diabetes transformation programme

What are ACEs

- Abuse - physical, emotional or sexual
- Neglect - physical or emotional
- Household dysfunction - mental illness, incarceration, substance abuse, divorce, mother treated violently

"ACEs are the new cholesterol"

If you don't screen for it,
and you don't look for it,
you'll never find it, but
it has more health impacts
than you imagine.

Paul Espias, MD, Kaiser, Hayward, CA from ACES Connection



Talking about Trauma

- People rarely disclose voluntarily - could be 9-16 years after first contact
- Professional discomfort can be a barrier
- WE need to change this dialogue

Effects of Disclosure

- can reduce distress
- can positively impact recovery
- can promote resilience
- can improve a person's perception of themselves

Inspired by Dr Nadine Burke Harris



“The single most important thing we need today is the courage to look this problem in the face and say this is real and this is all of us.”

– Dr. Nadine Burke Harris

Photo credit: Kevork Djansizian - Talkin' on the TedMed stage

- ACEs are causally AND proportionately linked to poor physical, emotional and mental health outcomes
- ACEs cause biological embedding of adversities during sensitive developmental periods

Poor Health Outcomes for 4 or more ACEs

- 2.2 x Ischaemic Heart Disease
- 2.4x Stroke
- 1.9 x Cancer
- 1.6 x Diabetes
- 12.2 x attempted suicide
- 10.3 x IV drug use
- 7.4 x alcohol dependence

Dose-response relationship

- The higher the ACE score the worse your health outcomes
- 6 ACEs increases the risk of becoming an IV drug user by 46 times
- 6 ACEs increase the risk of suicide by 35 times
- 6 or more ACEs linked to dying 20 years younger than someone with 0 ACEs

What is your ACE score?

- www.Acestoohigh.com
- also consider resilience factors

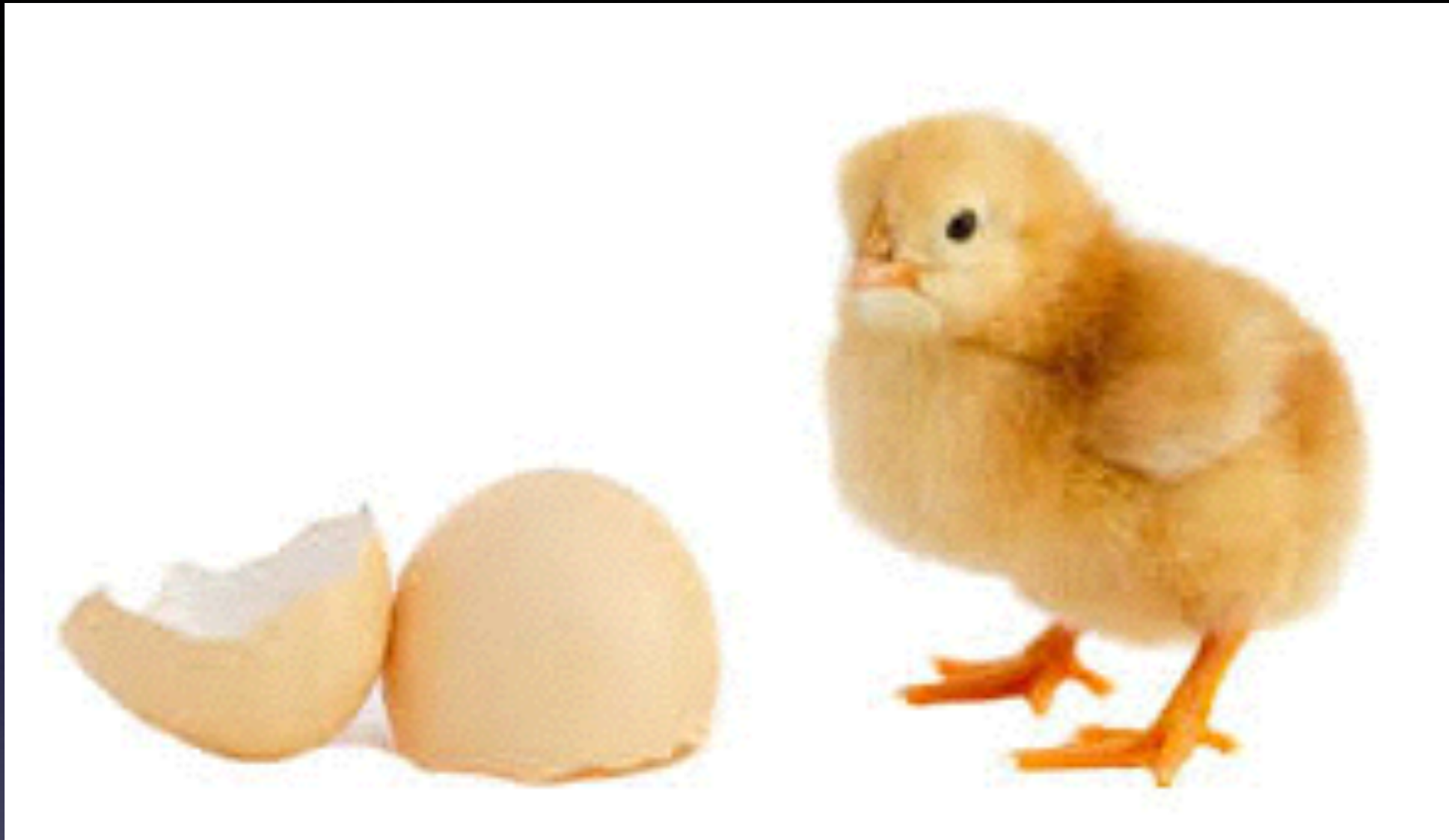
Stress response

- activation of the body's biological stress response system - the body and brain implicitly working together
- stress can be good and gives energy and focus, and can save us from bears
- BUT prolonged stress can cause brain changes and even epigenetic changes

- hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis
- controls stress and primes the body for action
- feedback and stress response subsides
- BUT if overstressed feedback becomes impaired

RAISED CORTISOL

- Amygdala - the fear centre, develops an increase in connections
- Hippocampus - learning, memories and stress control decreases
- Prefrontal Cortex can shrink - concentration, decision making, judgment and social interaction



Epigenetic Changes

change in gene expression in response to trauma can
cause multigenerational effects

Health begins with Hope

Jane Ellen Stevens, Editor Acestoohigh

Start the journey

- welcome
- a big step to come to see me, what were you hoping we would talk and think about together today
- Rather than talking about what's wrong with you, could we think about what has happened to you
- You have probably been on a long journey to get to here, could we have a think about where you started

- ACE scores for the people I see are mostly 8+
- use of genograms
- creating meaning through telling their story, making links can facilitate and increased potential for self-compassion
- adapting the psychiatric interview to be much less formal and being attentive to non-verbal cues

Strengths

- find out what someone was proud of
- find out what skills people have developed for coping
- 5 ways to wellbeing - with some neuroscience reasons why they might be helpful

Healing

- developing a narrative to make sense of experiences
- writing to heal (20 mins a day)
- mindful meditation
- Yoga - reduces activity of the amygdala, increases blood flow to the prefrontal cortex
- pre-treatment therapy

Team Care

- Working as a whole team, between people based in the surgery and those we link with
- Regular staff support
- Valuing the efforts of staff and patients
- People who have experienced high ACEs need a community response to heal

As well as experts who never judge you and deal with any problems you may have. There are your footsore fellow comrades of the street in the meeting room, all courage and jokes ready to share lives battle scars to help you live and fight another day. Both inputs are invaluable, the staff with their experience and vast knowledge of the situation we find ourselves in and those just like yourself who can share beliefs, opinions and aspirations to support each other. One thing you come out with at Great Chapel Street is that your life is moving gain to morrows on the horizon. That the world isn't just a cold and heartless place.

Chris Ward

“This is not a poverty problem. This is not a race problem. This is a function of human biology. It is the way all of our bodies are wired. And now we can use this science to improve outcomes for everyone.”

Dr Nadine Burke-Harris

I will provide a list of references
and suggested reading on the
website

