

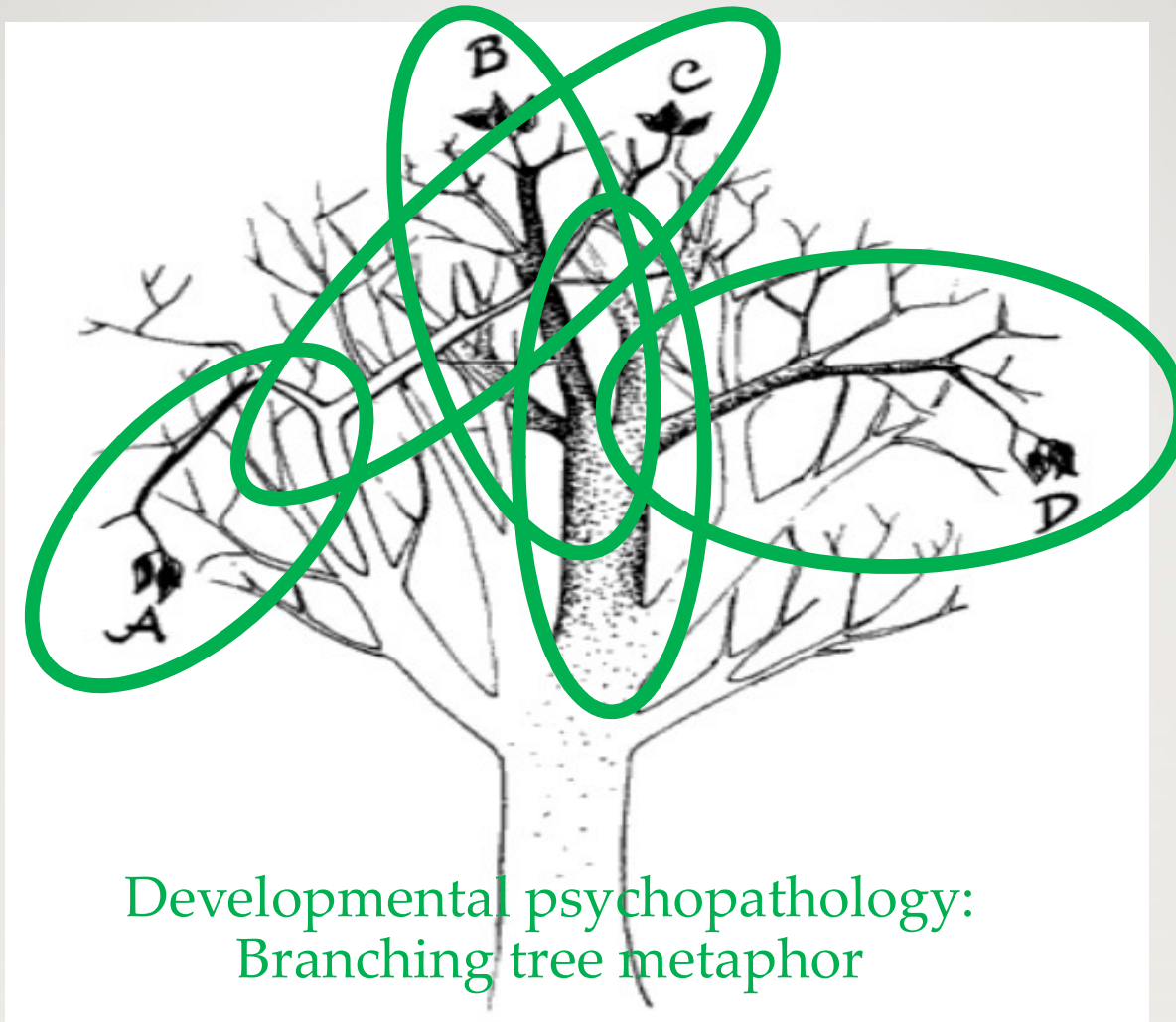
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# Socioemotional development among children in early years: Implications on psychological and behavioral adjustment

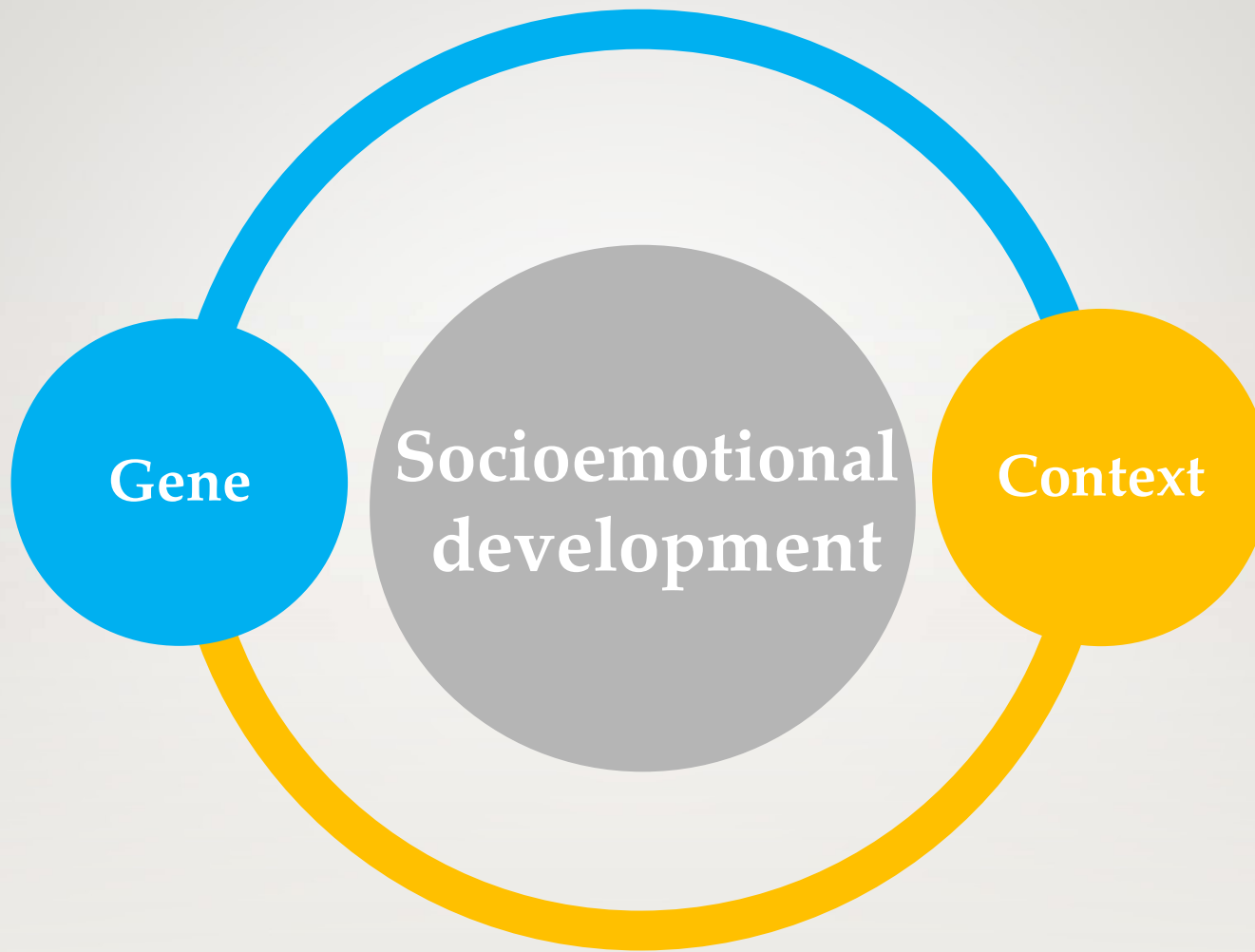
REBECCA Y. M. CHEUNG, PH.D.

THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

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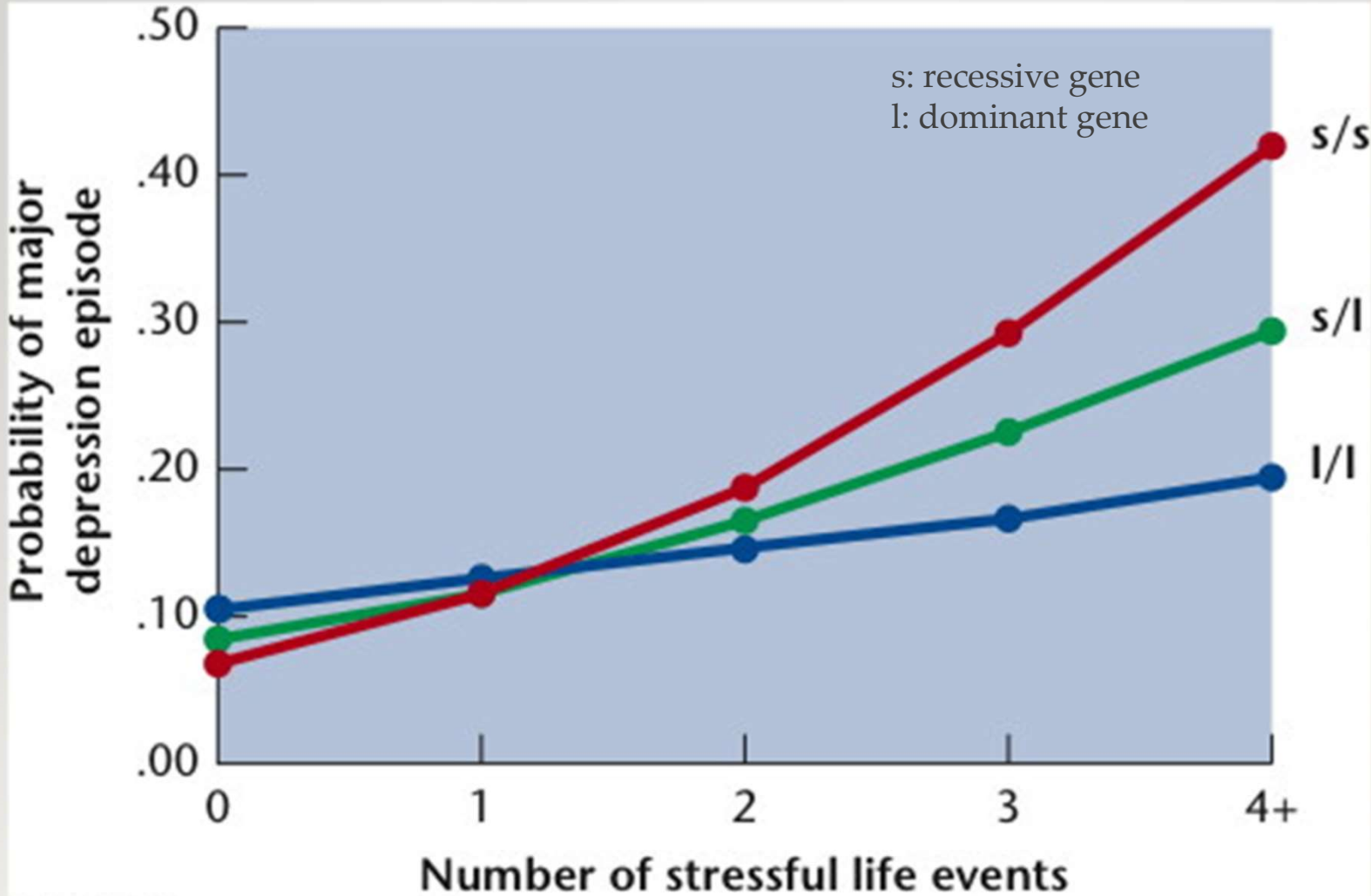
Sroufe (1997)



Gene

Socioemotional  
development

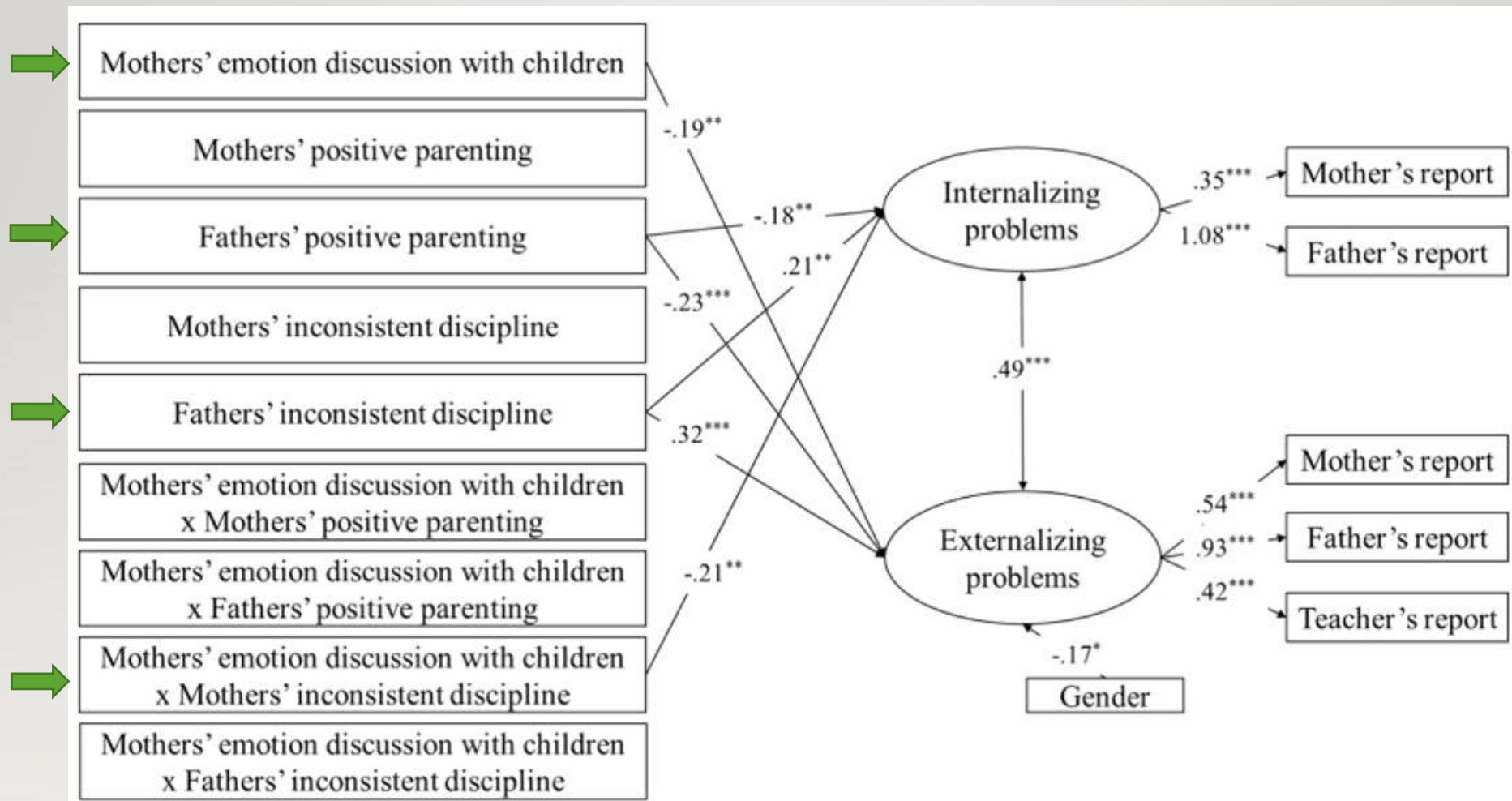
Context



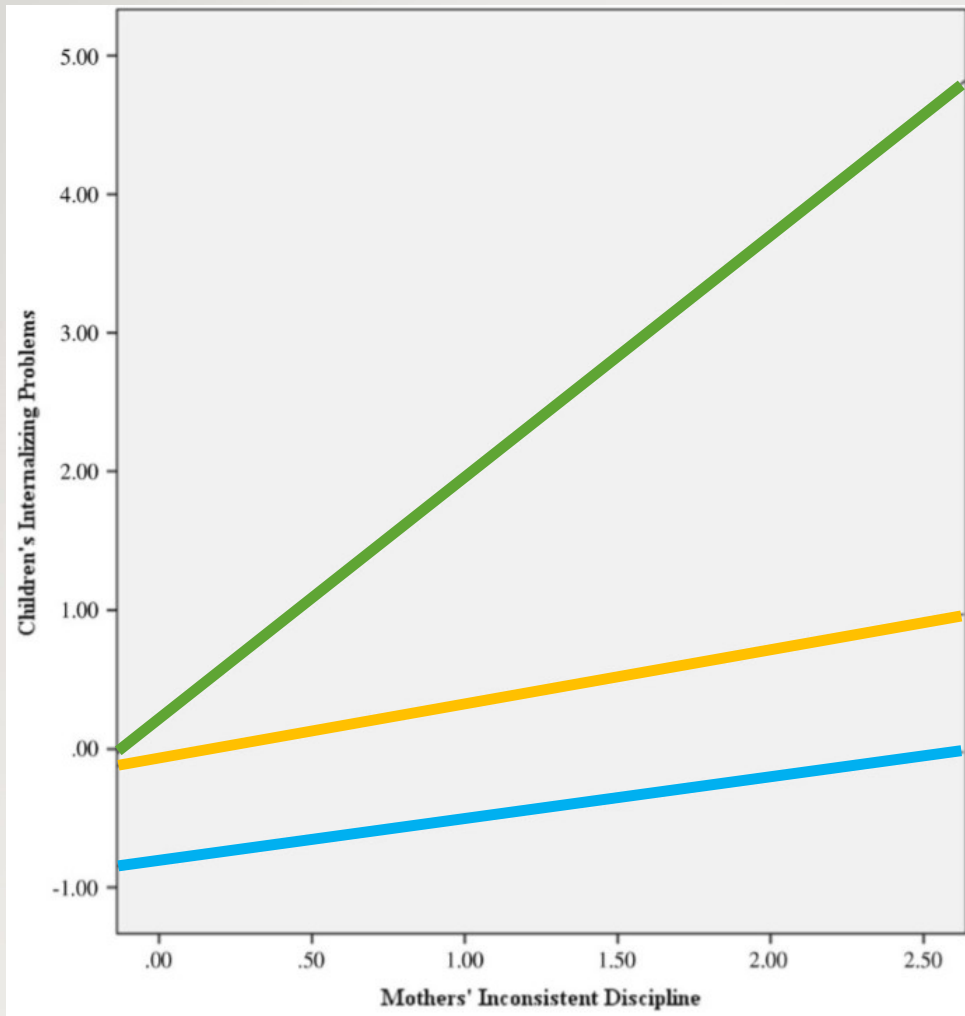
- For example, genetic vulnerabilities (or strengths) may not be manifested except in the presence of increasing # of stressors
- Short alleles in 5-HTT gene: More depressive sx in response to stressful life events

## Zooming into contextual factors...

- Family Systems Theory
  - Both mothers, fathers, and other family members contribute to child development
    - Grandparents
    - Siblings
    - Non-traditional family structure
  - Parent effects vs. child effects
  - Inclusion of fathers in the picture



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Level of emotion discussion:

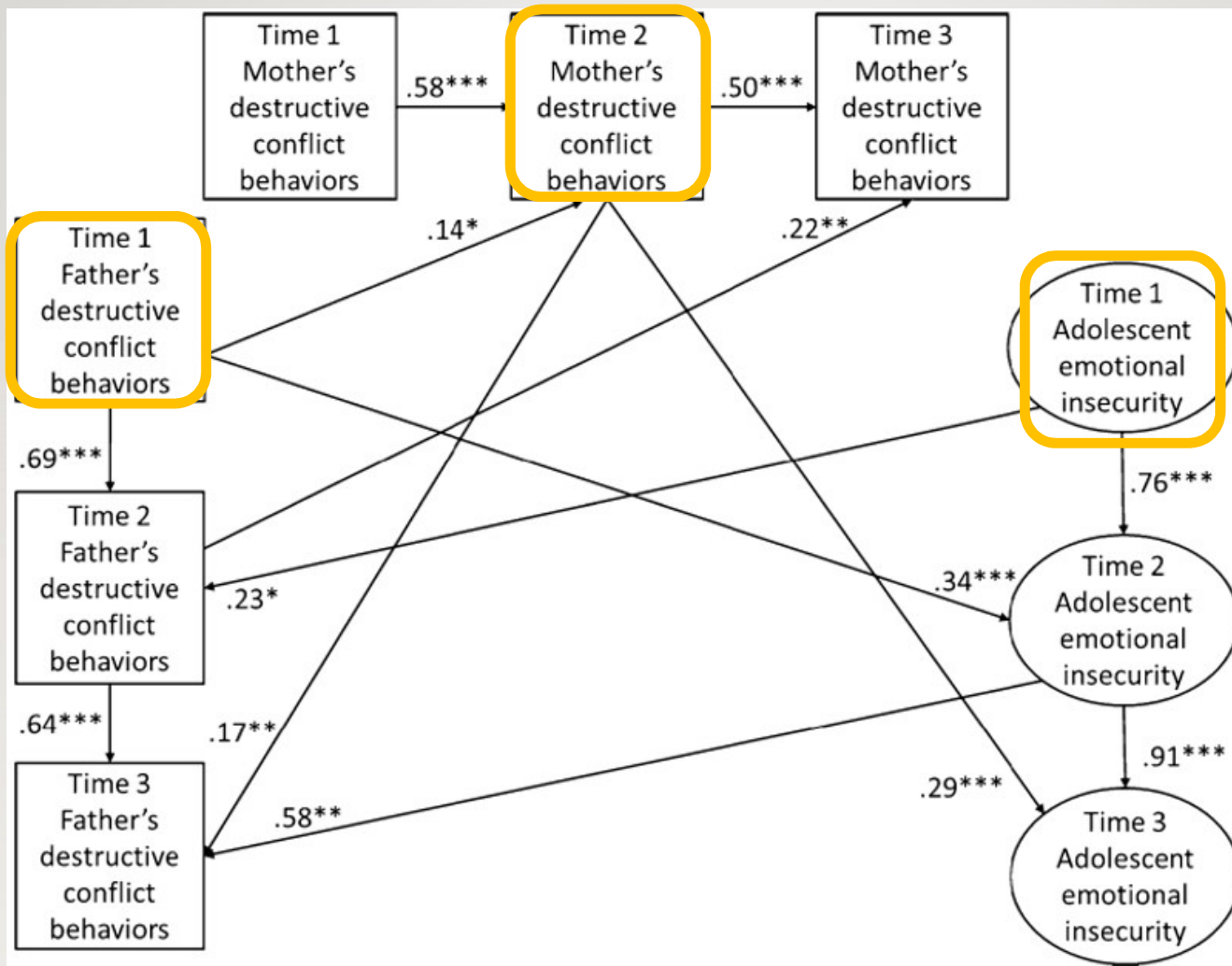
Low

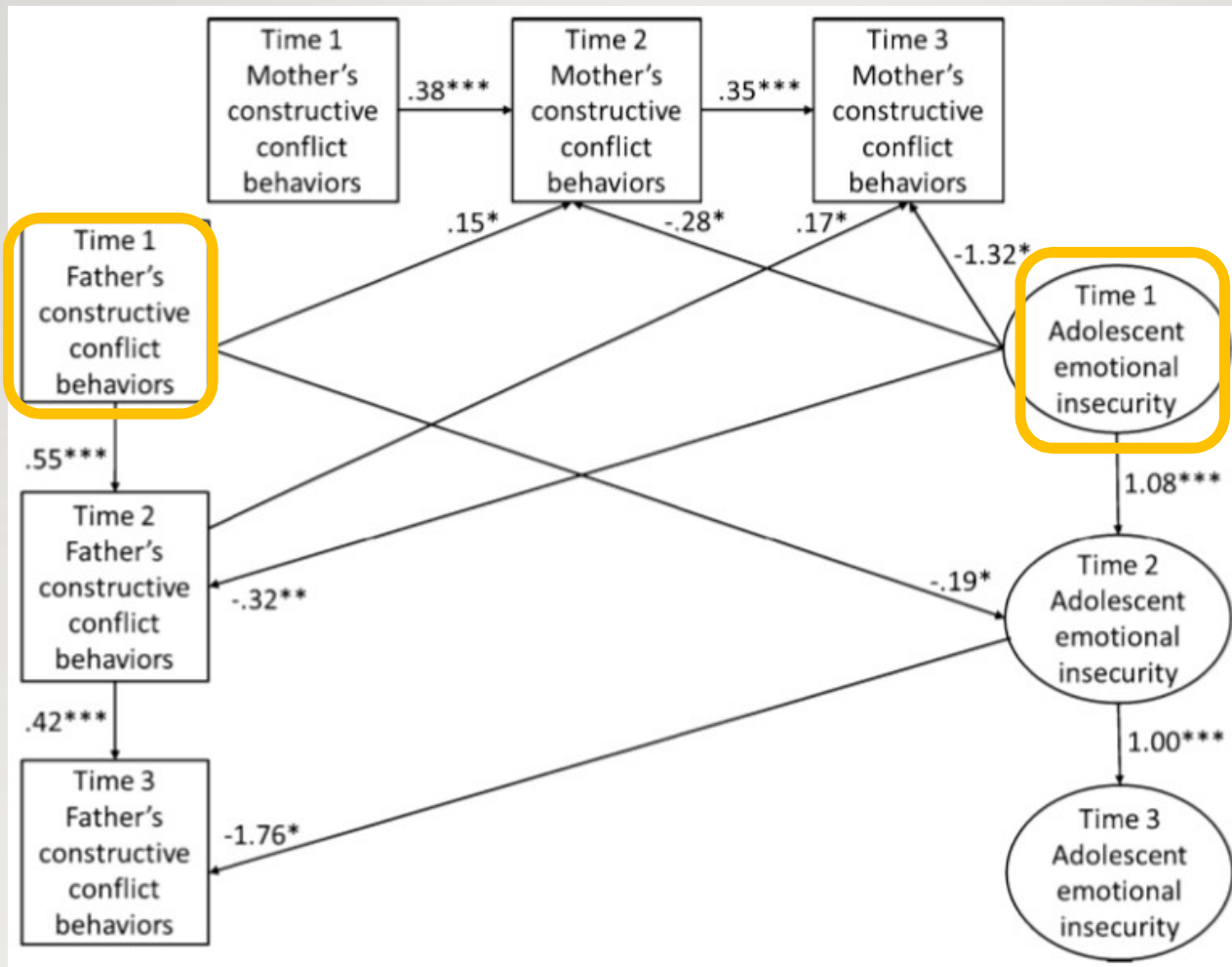
Moderate

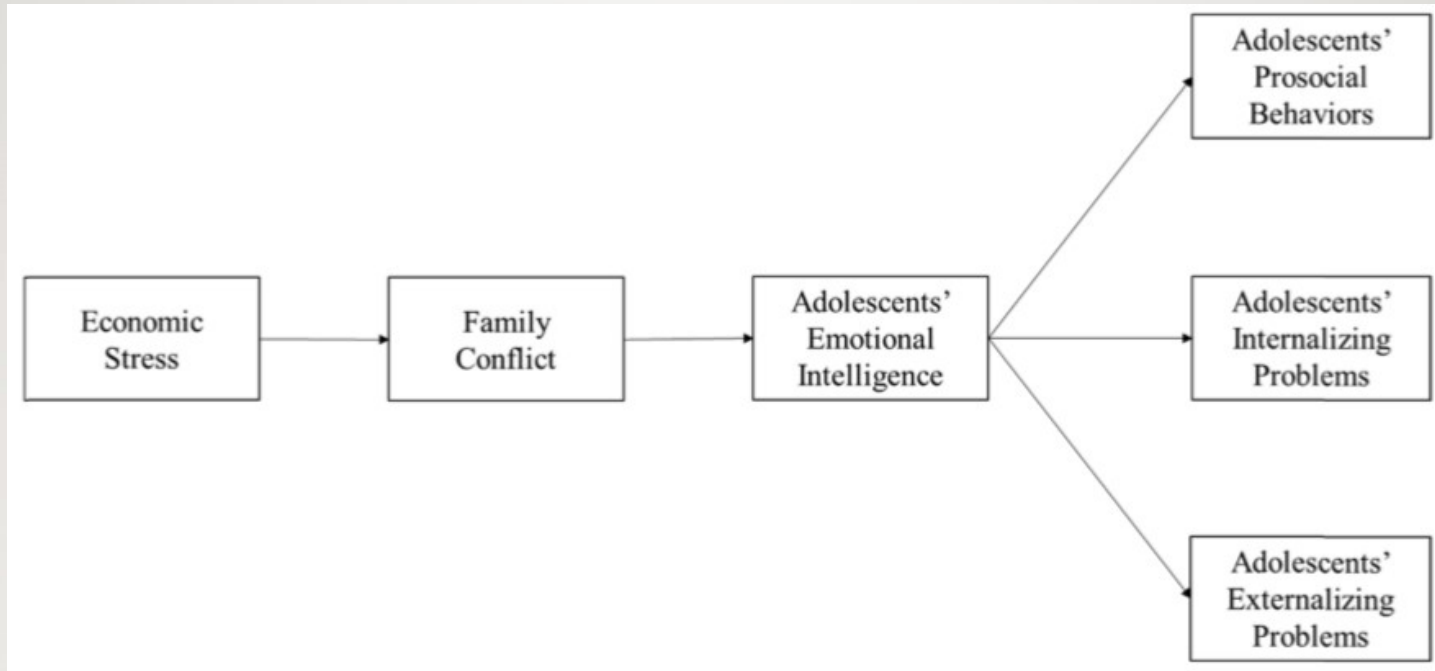
High

FEWER internalizing problems

Cheung, Boise, Cummings, & Davies, 2018







## Therefore...

- Early intervention necessary to
  - Handle life stress
  - Build emotional intelligence
    - Learn emotion regulation strategies
  - Cultivate positive emotions, empathy, compassion, and kindness

## Research-informed practice



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## Dilemma

- As parents and educators, are we taking good care of ourselves?
- Are we squeezing too many activities into our kids' schedule?
- Are we focusing too much on academic readiness?
- Are we using the “right kind” of parenting practice?

## As parents and educators, what can we do?

- Tips and examples...
  - Self-care
  - Keep a journal
  - Mindfulness, kindness, and compassion
  - How to praise?
  - Parenting practice

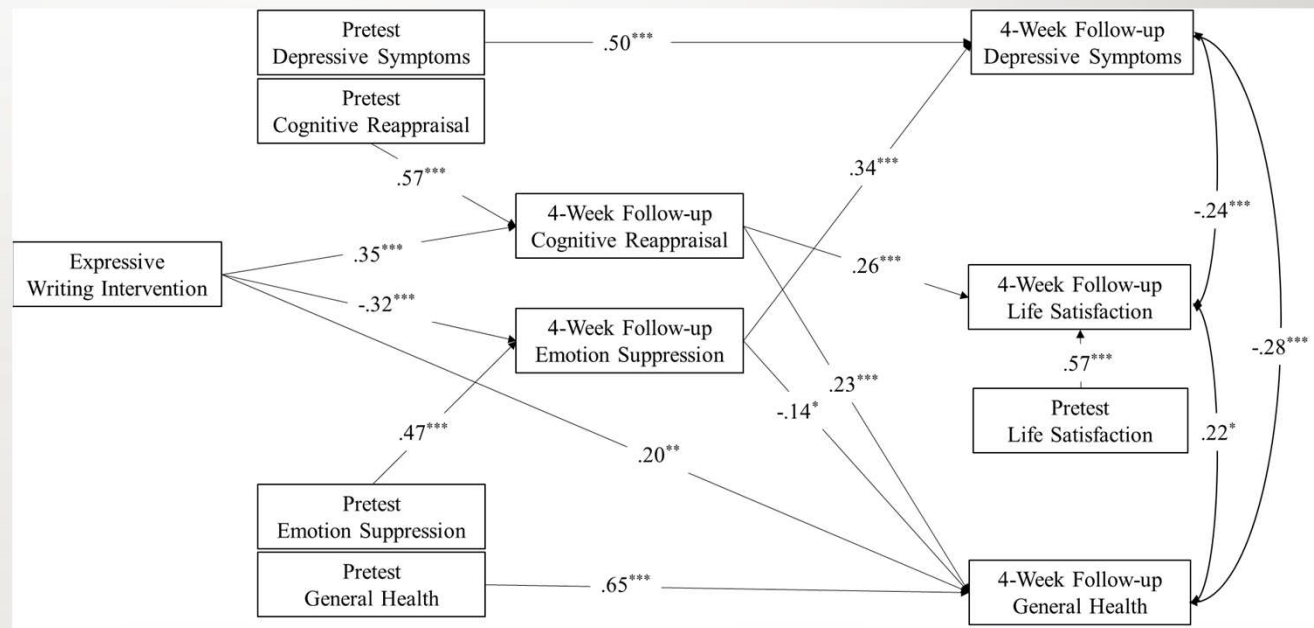
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## Prioritize self-care

- Enough sleep?
- Eating well?
- Attentive to the present moment?
- Restful enough?

## Keep a journal

- Gratitude
  - Write 3 things you feel grateful every day
- Process emotions
  - Expressive writing is related to improved mental health



## Cultivate compassion: G.R.A.C.E.

- Step 1: G for “Gather your attention”
- Step 2: R. for “Recall your intention”
- Step 3: A. for “Attune to yourself... before you attune to those around you”
- Step 4: C. for “Consider what will serve your student or colleagues”
- Step 5: E. for “Enacting and ending”

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## Cultivating socioemotional and attentional skills in children

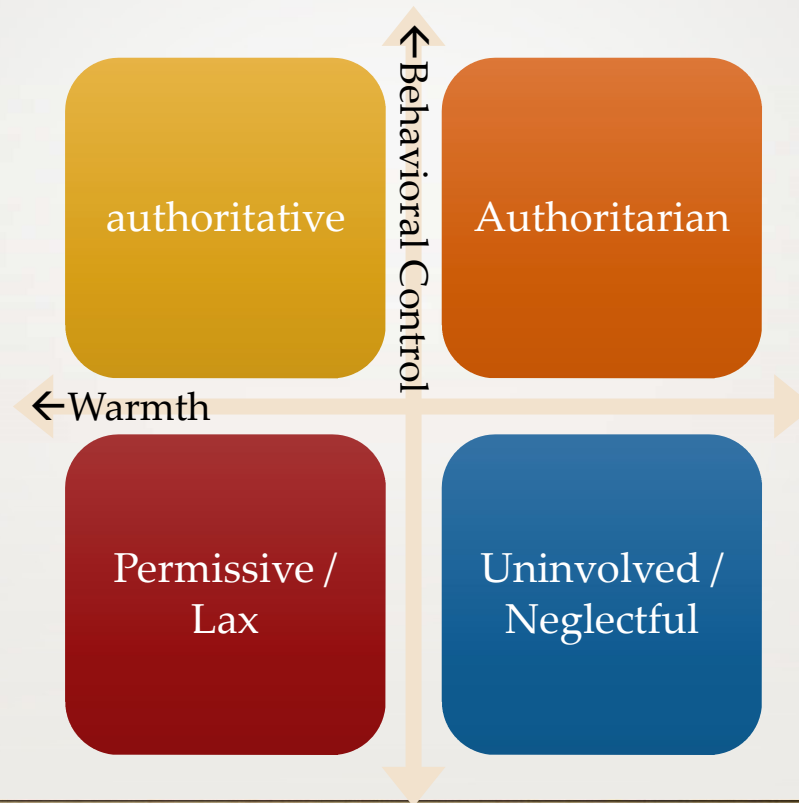


## How to praise?

- Growth mindset
  - “Wow, you solved the problem! It’s a difficult problem. I know that you worked hard to finish it.”
- Fixed mindset
  - “Wow, you’re a smart kid!”
  - “You have a natural talent in this!”

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# Parenting practice + Mindful parenting + Empathic listening



Baumrind, 1966; Maccoby & Martin, 1983

## Returning to the dilemma

- As parents and educators, are we taking good care of ourselves?
- Are we squeezing too many activities into our kids' schedule?
- Are we focusing too much on academic readiness?
- Are we using the “right kind” of parenting practice?

## Points to note for educators and parents

- Self-care
- Keep a journal
- Mindfulness, kindness, and compassion
- How to praise?
- Parenting practice

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Thank you!

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