

# WHAT DO WE FEEL, KNOW AND BELIEVE ABOUT FATHERS?

An intimate conversation with  
**Corey Best**



# FATHERHOOD. WHAT IS THAT MEAN?



# Who is the Father?

7 Father Figure

5 Foster/Adoptive

3 Putative/Alleged

1 Biological



8 Kin/Fictive Kin

6 Social

4 Legal

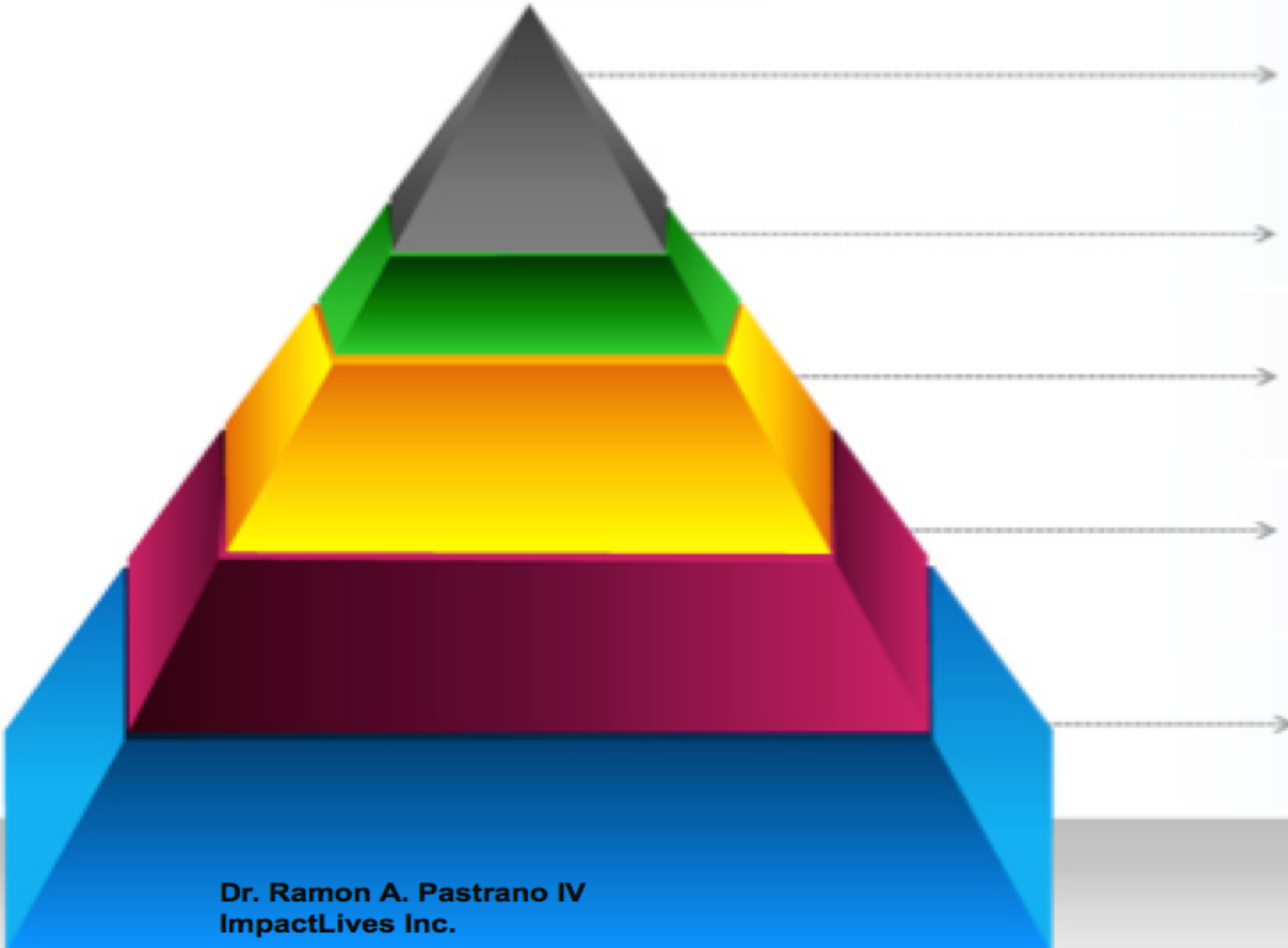
2 Fictive

BROTHERMAN.  
LEGACY.  
SPIRIT.  
ANCESTRY.  
VOICES.  
ROOTS.  
RITES OF  
PASSAGE.

The Griot's Voice



# The Unconscious Bias Pyramid (90%)



## **Discrimination**

Behavior that treats people Unequally.

## **Prejudice**

An opinion, prejudgment or attitude

## **Stereotype**

Exaggerated belief or distorted truth

## **Hidden Bias**

Automatic categorization of People/things in order to create order and structure

## **Mental Models**


Beliefs, Ideas, Images  
Draw from experiences to Guide our actions

# AN UNBIASED LOOK AT BIASES


- Affinity bias, which occurs when we view people, we have something in common with more positively than those who are more different than us
- Attribution bias, which refers to the way that we try to find reasons for what happens to ourselves and others; when bad things happen to us, we attribute it to our circumstances, but when bad things happen to others, we attribute it to their character
- Confirmation bias, which is the tendency to put more emphasis on information that confirms our preexisting beliefs or hypotheses
- Stereotype bias, which refers to when we rely on stereotypes to understand and make decisions about people from various communities, backgrounds, and identities

# GROUP THINK INQUIRY


 Are you aware of the biases you have toward men and male parents?

 How do you contribute effectively to solving problems of discriminatory behaviors toward men?

 What prevents you from doing this or taking these actions all the time?

 Do you know anybody who is able to frequently deactivate bias or overcome barriers? What behaviors or practices made their success possible?

 Do you have any ideas that we need to consider?

 What needs to be done to help us value fathers equitably? Any volunteers?

 Who else needs to be involved in the solution?

- *“When we speak we are afraid our words will not be heard or welcomed. But when we are silent, we are still afraid. So it is better to speak.”*

*--Audre Lorde*



# ACTIVE BYSTANDER

- Identify the emergence of bias.
- Decide to address the situation.
- Take action.
- Continue the conversation.

# STRATEGIES FOR SPEAKING UP

## Ask questions that invite discussion:

“What do you mean when you say that?”

“Do you know what that phrase actually means and where it came from?” Most people have no idea that it actually has an offensive meaning.

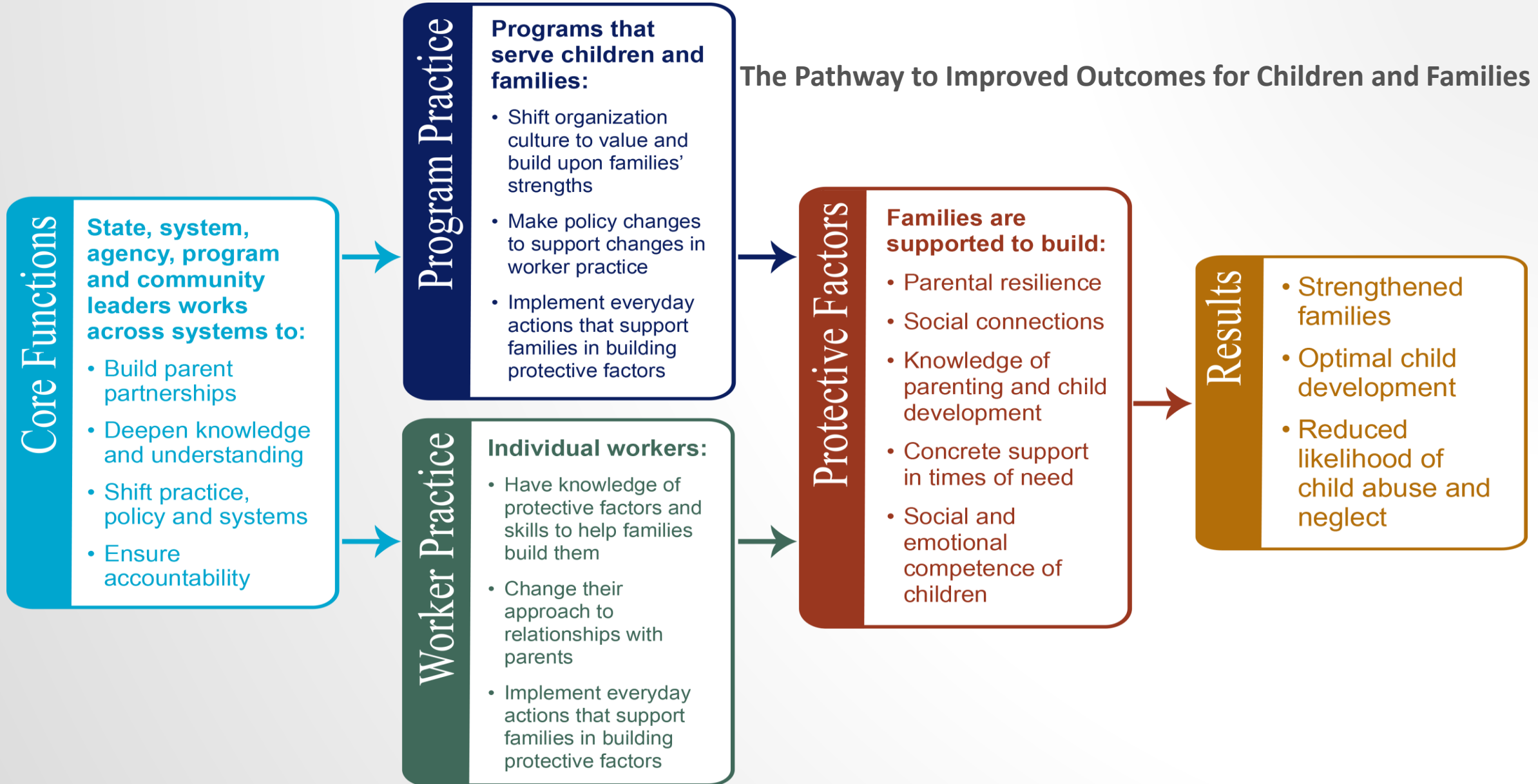
# STRATEGIES.....

## Use direct communication.

Speak honestly and from the heart, using “I” statements to communicate how you are feeling, why, and what could be done.

“I know that you aren’t intending to stereotype anyone, but as your colleague I wanted to let you know that what you said could easily be interpreted that way. Since I know you’re a good person who cares about others, I would hate for you to accidentally say it again without realizing how it can come across.”

# The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families





## Point of entry

- Intentionally honor the role
- Establish trust; understand your biases, culture and racial differences;
- Create an environment rooted in humility.



## Service engagement

- Ask what works;
- Assess strengths and build from there;
- Ask yourself why are you referring to....;
- Invite to ALL meetings and appointments.



## Peer linkage/support

- Become willing to share power;
- Demonstrate compassion and concern;
- Connection with like minded father;
- The most effective service engagement tool.



## Systems Partnership

- Cultivate leaders;
- Shift organization culture;
- Learn from lived experience;
- Co-create policy/practice changes.

# VALUES-BASED PRACTICE

Altruism

Caring and  
compassion

Self-awareness

Diversity

Cultural humility

Effective  
communication

Humility

Inclusion

Transparency

# Advancing Transformational Change



**1**

**Align your thinking**



**2**

**Chart your course**



**3**

**Keep fathers at the center**



**4**

**Move from philosophy to practice**



**5**

**Draft at least one aspiration to  
get closer to hacking your system**

