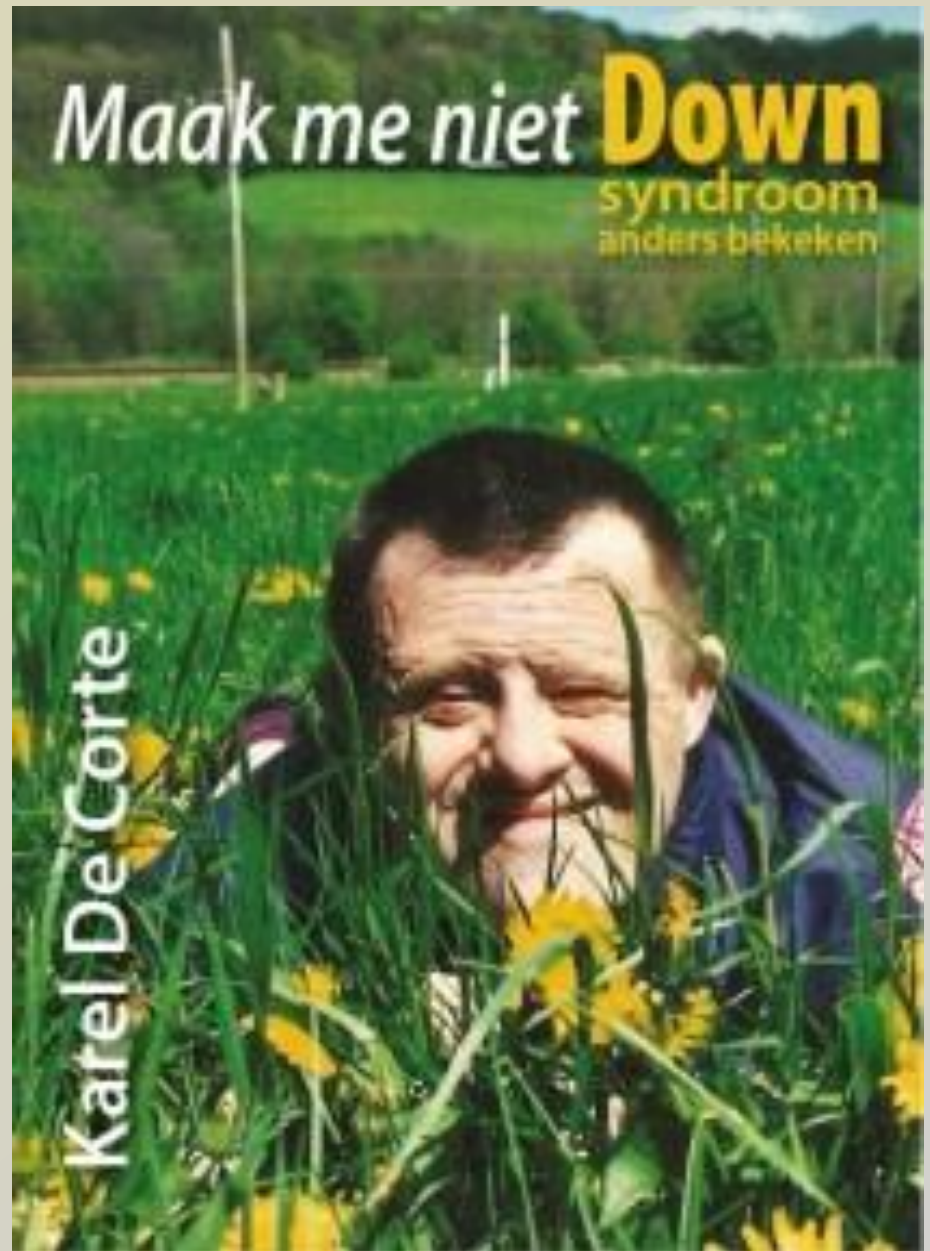


“Don’t let me Down”

*“Closing time:
how to connect with
people with Down’s
Syndrome?”*

Karel De Corte





INSIDE and OUTSIDE of the person

OUTSIDE

= what you see (behaviour, looks,...)

INSIDE

= what you are

WHO YOU ARE = *what you are + what you see*

INSIDE and OUTSIDE of the person with DS

• OUTSIDE = well-known

• INSIDE = NOT

→ My talk → singularity of DS

Gentle Teaching is about connecting...

- with **all people**

with / without Down's Syndrome

- with **Down's Syndrome:**

easy



difficult

insight

no insight

in

THE INSIDE of the person with Down's Syndrome

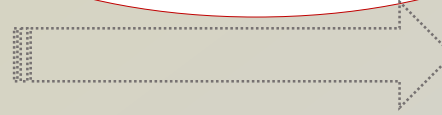
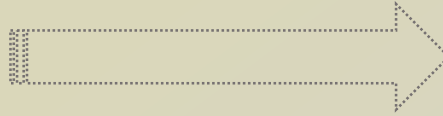
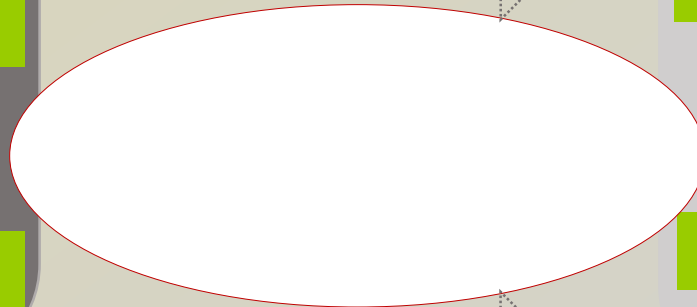
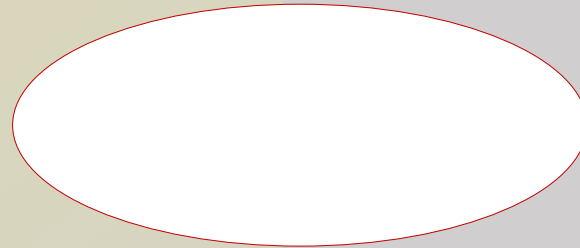
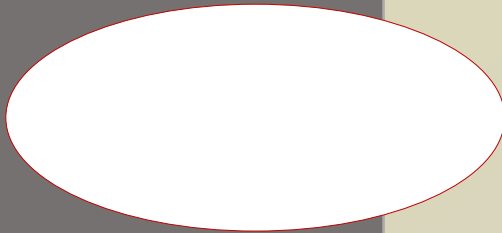
SINGULARITY

VULNERABILITY

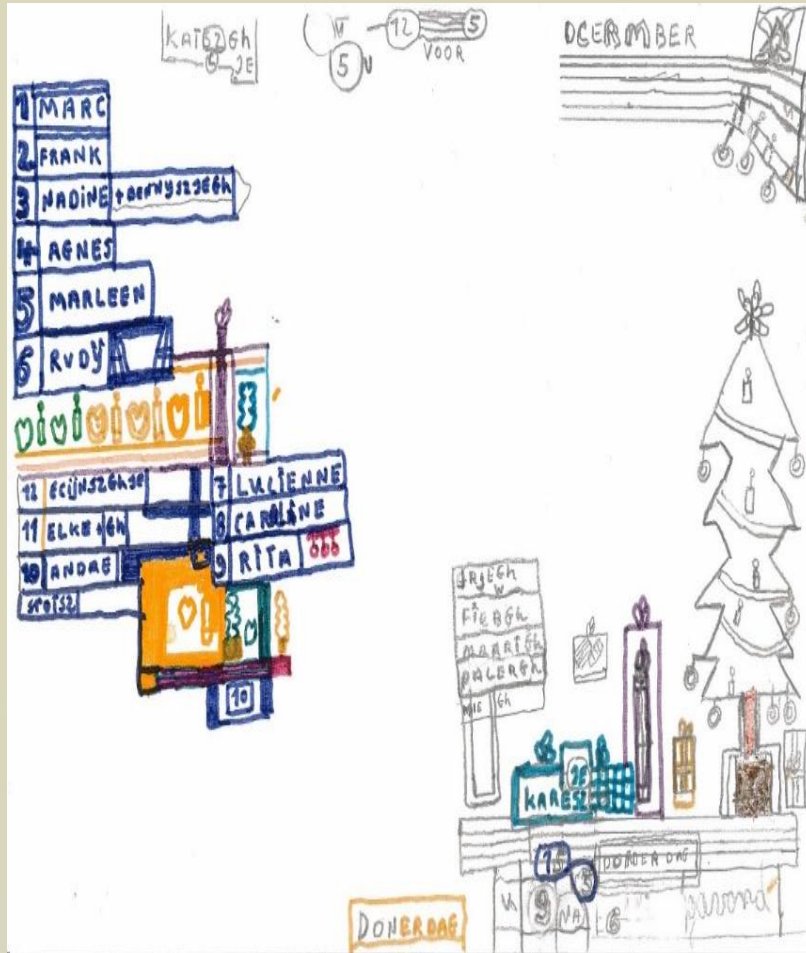
PSYCHOLOGICAL

PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED
FOR STRUCTURE

“SCRIPT”



PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED FOR STRUCTURE



Assimilating,
comprehending
and absorbing

REALITY

in PATTERNS and
STRUCTURES



PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED FOR STRUCTURE

“Once a certain pattern has emerged, it is difficult or impossible not to experience reality in that pattern.”

Evert and his morning ritual

PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED FOR STRUCTURE: not that strange...

- No exclusivity for people with Down!
- Also we....
 - *Who hasn't a usual spot at the dinner table at home?*
 - *Who changes bedside with his partner every day?*
 - *Even the world traveler who likes the unknown, likes to sleep in his own sleeping bag*
 - ...

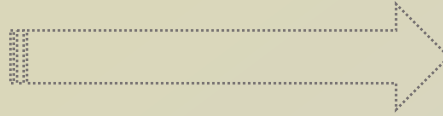
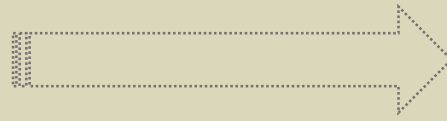
DOWN → extremely magnified (intensity & frequency)

THE (PSYCHOLOGICAL) SCRIPT

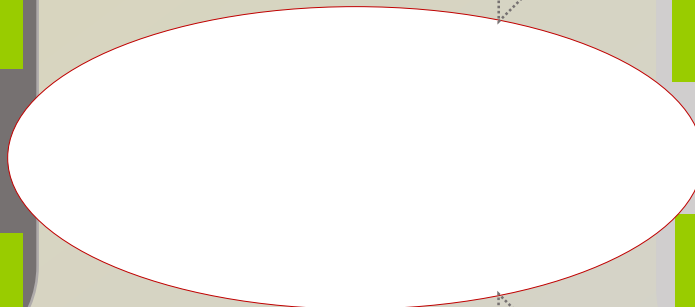
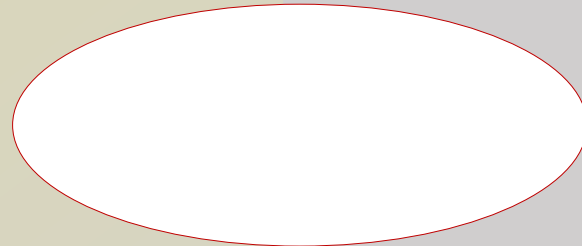
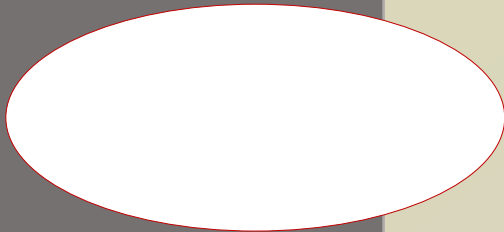
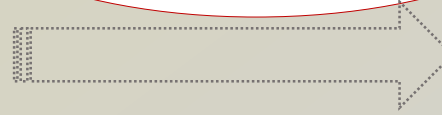
- Partly unknown
- Layered and complex (home ⇔ school/ caregiver A ⇔ B/ ...)
- Hard to influence (*GT: not power but companionship*)
- Takes energy, although it looks like spare time (*TV-soap*)
- Transition to another 'chapter' = difficult

SINGULARITY

VULNERABILITY



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL



“SOCIAL & OPEN ”



LONE RANGER

(TOO) HIGHT EXPECTATIONS

WITHDRAWING INTO THEIR OWN WORLD

DUAL SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

OPENING TIME

“SOCIAL and OPEN”

- *Open*
- *Approachable*
- *Spontaneous*
- *Good fun*
- *Charming*
- *...*

CLOSING TIME

“LONE RANGER”

- *Own living world*
- *(Too) rich fantasy world*
- *Difficult to reach*
- *Limited empathy*
- *Limited social-emotional capacities*
- *...*
- *EVERT and JEF*



Are people with Down ‘*socially high-sensitive*’?

“Yes and No”

- ➔ Yes: ➔ strong feelers to please
 - ➔ ‘read’ their environment well
 - ➔ feel sensitivities well (uncertainty, vulnerability,...)

- ➔ NO: ➔ conflict with their script
 - ➔ cognitive misunderstanding

- ➔ Loose their SKILLS (social, even cognitive) ➔ they disappoint us!

NOT ‘STUBBERN’!

DOWN & AUTISM

“Diagnostics is nothing more than a way for us to understand more about the human condition.” (John McGee)

- Psychological need for structure

- ➔ **rigidity** in thoughts and behaviour

- ➔ need for **predictability**

- Withdrawing into their own world

- Socially very open and accessible



// AUTISM

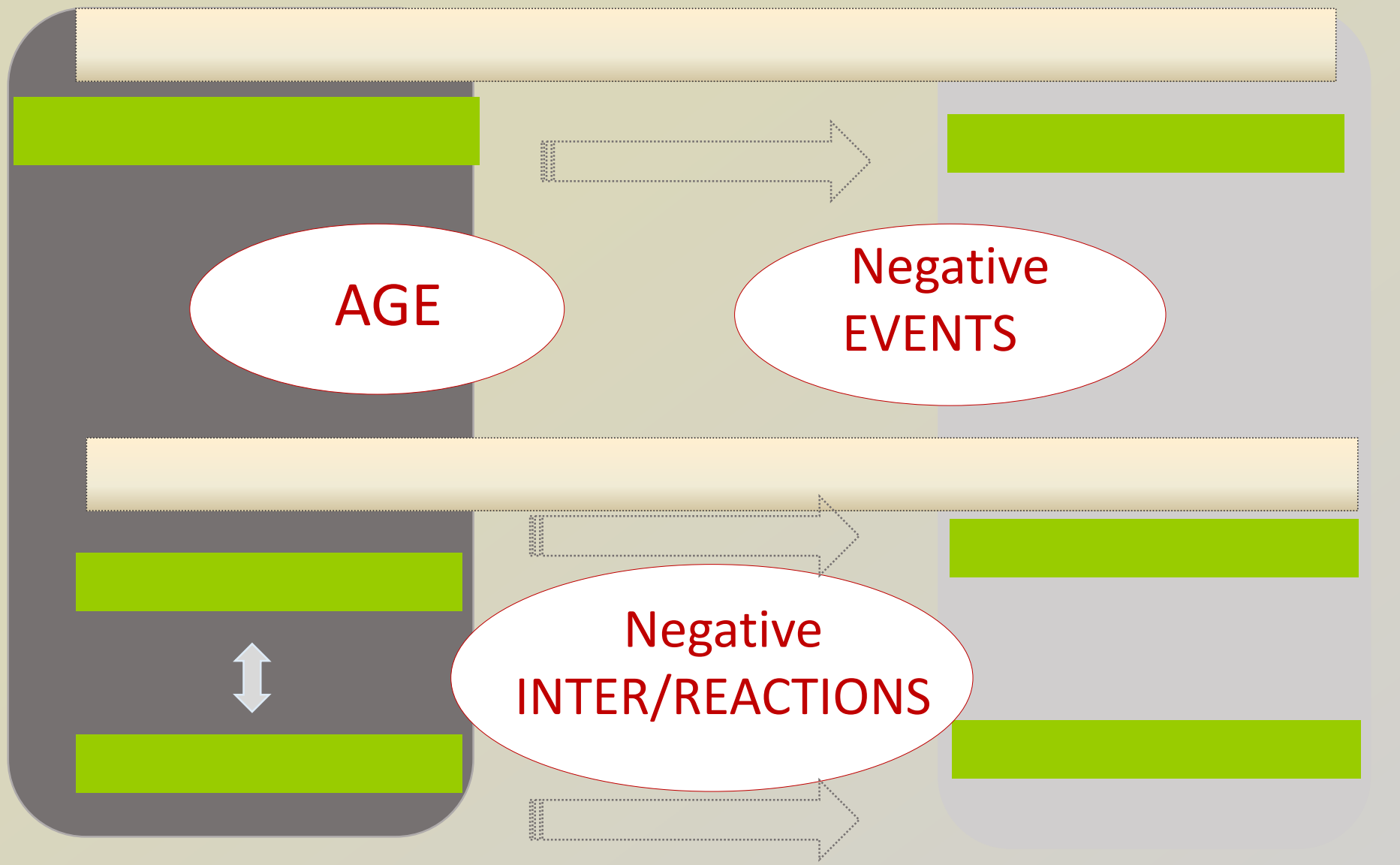
~~//~~ AUTISM

DOWN & ASS: some daring comparisons

<i>Emotions outside world</i>	DOWN	AUTISM
<i>'Reading'</i>	<i>NO subtitles</i>	subtitles
<i>'Processing'</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>:</i>
PERSONALITY TRAITS		
<i>Works as</i>	<i>Humus</i>	Ground cover

SINGULARITY

VULNERABILITY



TO DO...

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SCRIPT...

- NOT AVOIDABLE!
- We can influence
 - the complexity
 - the size
 - the risk

A THICK SCRIPT? The best diet...

1. Accept them in the core
2. Stay **connected** to the most
3. **Dosing** in stimulating and correcting
4. Respect their **different worlds** (scripts)
5. **Approach them in steps** in difficult moments

1. ACCEPT THEM IN THE CORE OF THEIR BEING

“Basic/ Total acceptance is accepting the person up to and including the unacceptable and is the first building block of an unconditional approach.”

My glasses

- ➔ *Psychological need for structure*
- ➔ *Opening and closing time*
- ➔ *Difficult to express through language...*

2. STAY CONNECTED TO THE MAXIMUM

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF INTERDEPENDENCE



"I am, because we are." (John McGee)

*"Happiness is only real
when shared."*

(Chris McCandless)



2. STAY CONNECTED TO THE MAXIMUM

→ negative interactions

create **distance** between you and the other

→ rejection, anger, ignoring,....

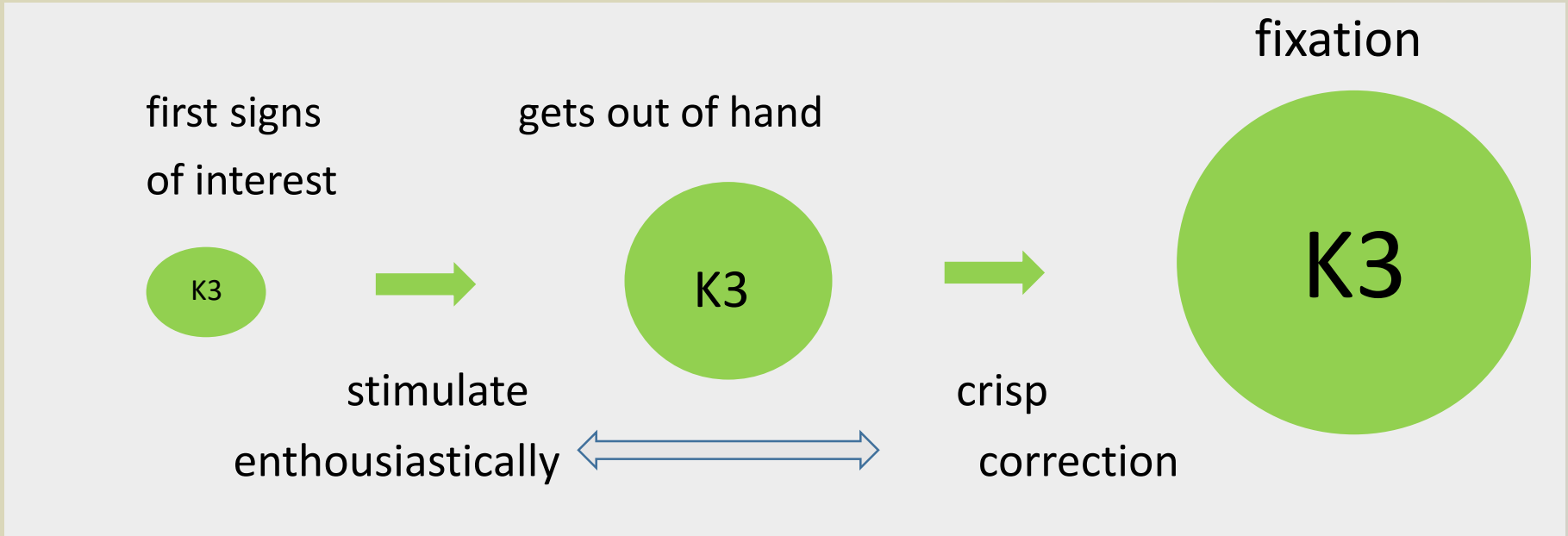
→ make people with Down vulnerable, because...

→ multiplication!

→ can crystallize into their script

→ and become **a sore spot**

3. DOSING in STIMULATING AND CORRECTING



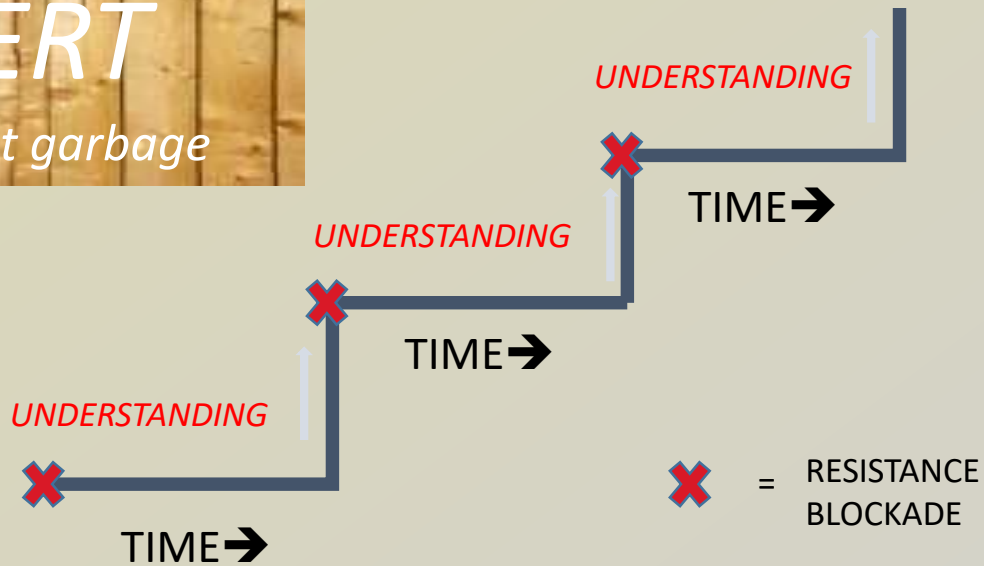
4. RESPECT THEIR DIFFERENT WORLDS

Different worlds, different scripts

“Just as many people with Down's syndrome find support by looking for recognizability in one situation, the separation between different realities also gives them a certain stability.”

- “How was your day at school?” → silence....
- Different worlds, different rules → aligning is not that important
- Criterion of **relational added value**

5. APPROACH THEM IN STEPS



CONCLUSION

OUR ATTITUDE towards people with Down syndrome,

acceptance

instead of annoyance

appreciation

instead of incomprehension

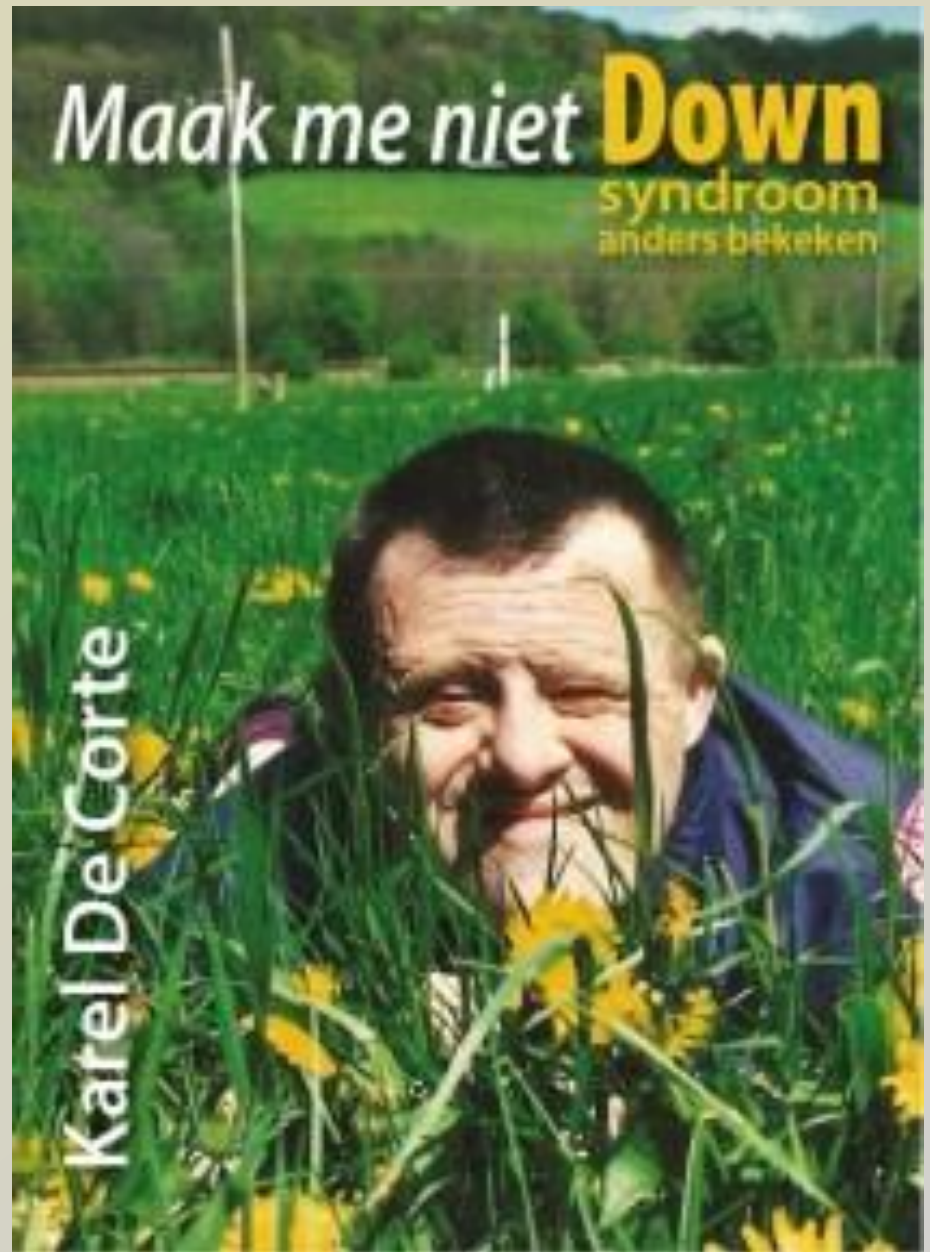
humour

instead of frustration

Coming soon....

***“Don’t let
me Down”***

English version



More info?

www.kareldecorte.be