

# ICCAP 2018

13th International Conference on  
Child and Adolescent Psychopathology

Enhancing Resilience in Children, Young People and  
Families through Innovative Research, Prevention and  
Service Development

6 August – 8 August 2018. Kuching, Sarawak (on Borneo Island),  
Malaysia



**“Mom, there’s a  
monster in the closet”**

**How do attachment, trauma and anxiety disorders interact ?**



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**Trauma?**

**“ Invisible” Trauma**

**Early Attachment Trauma**

**Consequences**

**Anxiety**

**Link between EAT and anxiety disorders**

**Therapeutic tools**

# “Invisible” Attachment Trauma



# “Invisible” Attachment Trauma

The form of traumatization



Child's experience of threat



Totally dependable on his caregiver



limited behavioral and cognitive coping capacities

# “Invisible” Attachment Trauma

Experiences of threat



include the threat of



separation  
from the caregiver



having little  
response to  
the signals of distress.



# “Invisible” Attachment Trauma

In the interaction between child and caregiver



**Not an obvious event**



Caregiver's  
unavailability



Caregiver's  
inability to  
modulate  
the  
affective  
dysregulation

# “Invisible Attachment trauma”

Attachment trauma



Abuse

Neglect

**“ Invisible Attachment Trauma”**



Quality of the attachment relationship





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[www.traumacentrum.be](http://www.traumacentrum.be) - Doris D'Hooghe

# THE ABC OF ATTACHMENT

## (Siegel & Hartzell, 2004)

### Attunement

- parents use of their own internal state to help regulate the infant

### Balance

- a child's achievement of balance between its body, emotions and state of mind

### Coherence

- sense of internal integration and interpersonal connectedness to others acquired by the child through its relationship with its parents

# Attunement



# Sensitive responsiveness

Ainsworth and others (1974)

- The infant's point of view



– Four essential components:

- Her awareness of the signals
- An accurate interpretation of them
- An appropriate response to them
- A prompt response to them



# Mentalization

Peter Fonagy

- A theory of mind  
(internal world)
- Oneself and others as psychological
- Mirroring
- Sense of self



# Reflective functioning

- Reflect upon their own history (trauma, attachment)

- Influence

- Trigger



- “Ghosts in the nursery” (Selma Fraiberg)

# Containment

– (Bion, 1959)

- Receive and understand
- Without being overwhelmed by it
- Communicates back



# Shared pleasure/ play

Confidence, trust, security

Communicate and connect

Reduce stress

Strengthens attachment





# Balance



# Balance

## Mother as external regulator

Contingent responsiveness



she appraises the nonverbal expressions of



infant's internal arousal

affective states



regulates them



communicates them to the infant

# Coherence

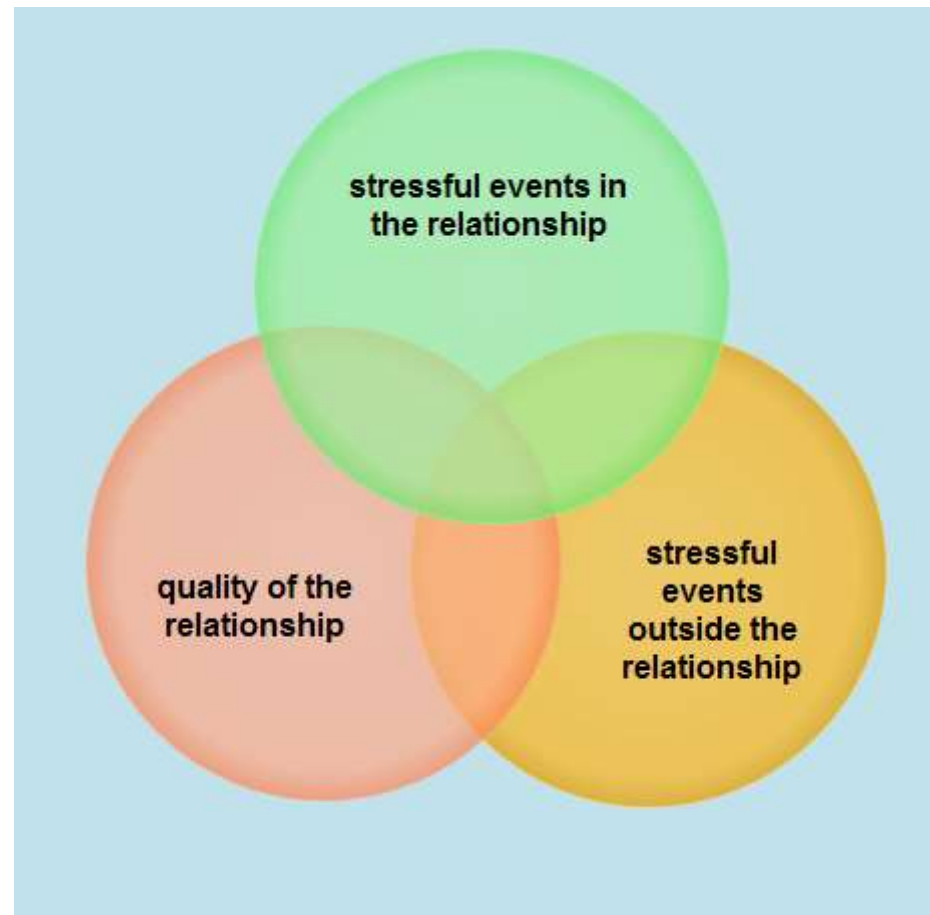


# Early attachment trauma





# Early attachment trauma



# Stressful events in the relationship: Pre- natal trauma



# Stressful events in the relationship: Birth trauma



- C-section/ long or short labor/life threatening experiences/ vacuum extraction etc.

# Disruptions in the attachment bond

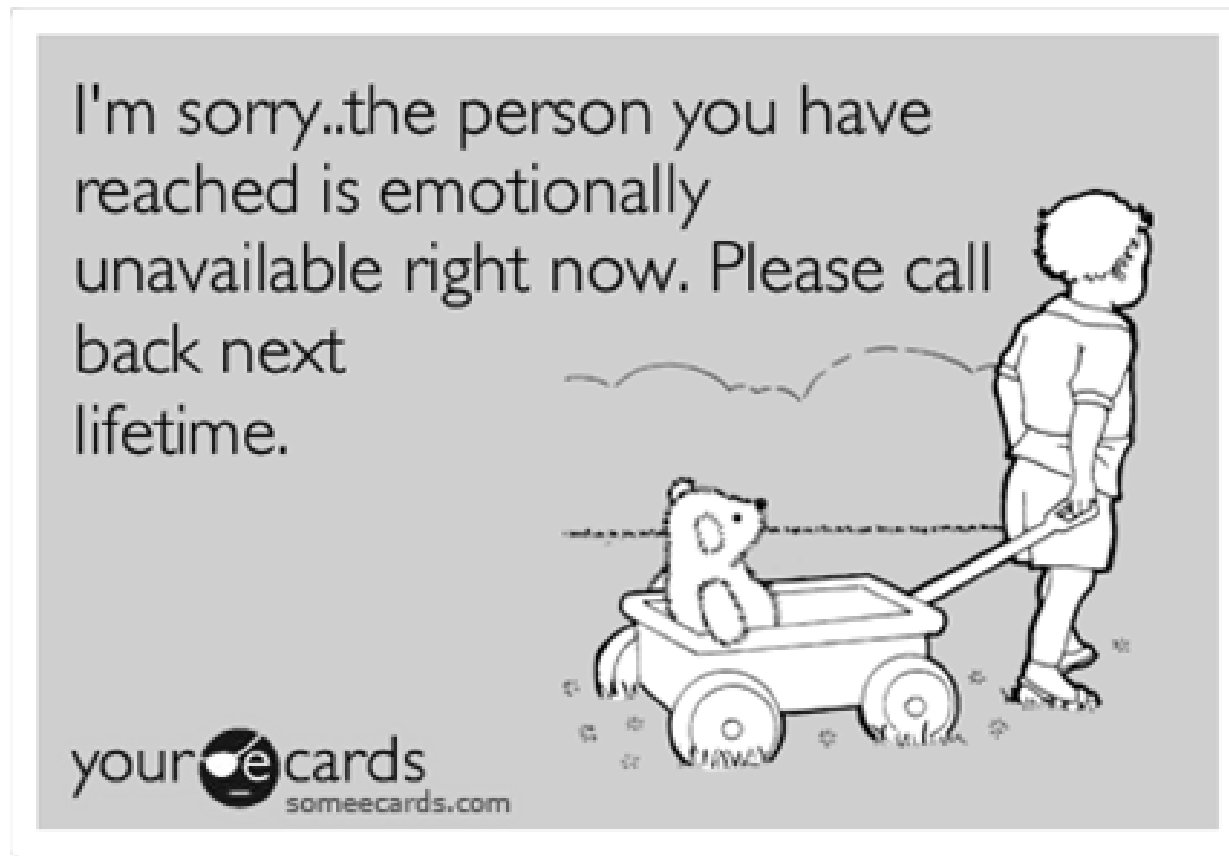
## Physical inaccessibility





# Disruptions in the attachment bond

## Emotional inaccessible/ unavailable



# EAT and stressful events outside the relationship

- Frequent moves or placement.
- Undiagnosed or painful illness.
- Early medical interventions.
- Absence of the father.
- Bereavement.
- Parental stress.
- Fearful or chaotic environment.
- Traumatic childbirth.

# Quality of the attachment relationship



# EAT and affectregulation





# EAT and Internal Working Model

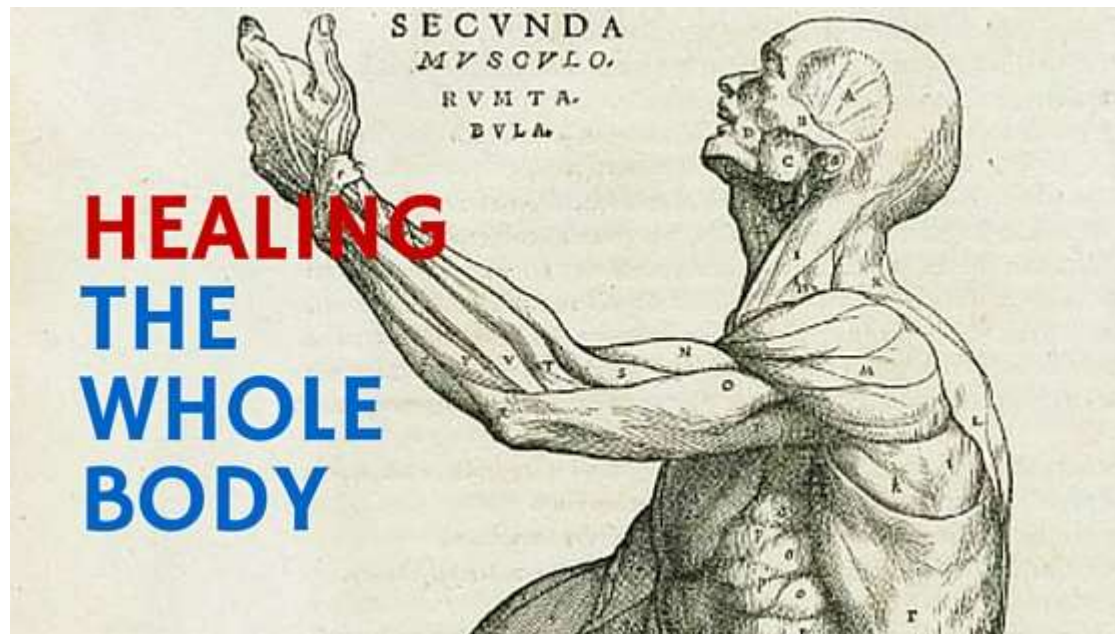




# EAT and cognition



# EAT and the body



# EAT and dissociation



# Anxiety : the mother of all psychopathology



# Subtypes of anxiety

- Panic disorders with or without agoraphobia
- Phobias, including specific phobias and social phobia
- Social anxiety disorder
- OCD: unwanted, intrusive, persistent thoughts or repetitive behaviors.
- Stress disorders: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and acute stress disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD).
- Anxiety disorder not otherwise specified



EAT → Affectdysregulation →  
Affectphobia



# EAT → Affectdysregulation → Affectphobia

- Triangle of conflict



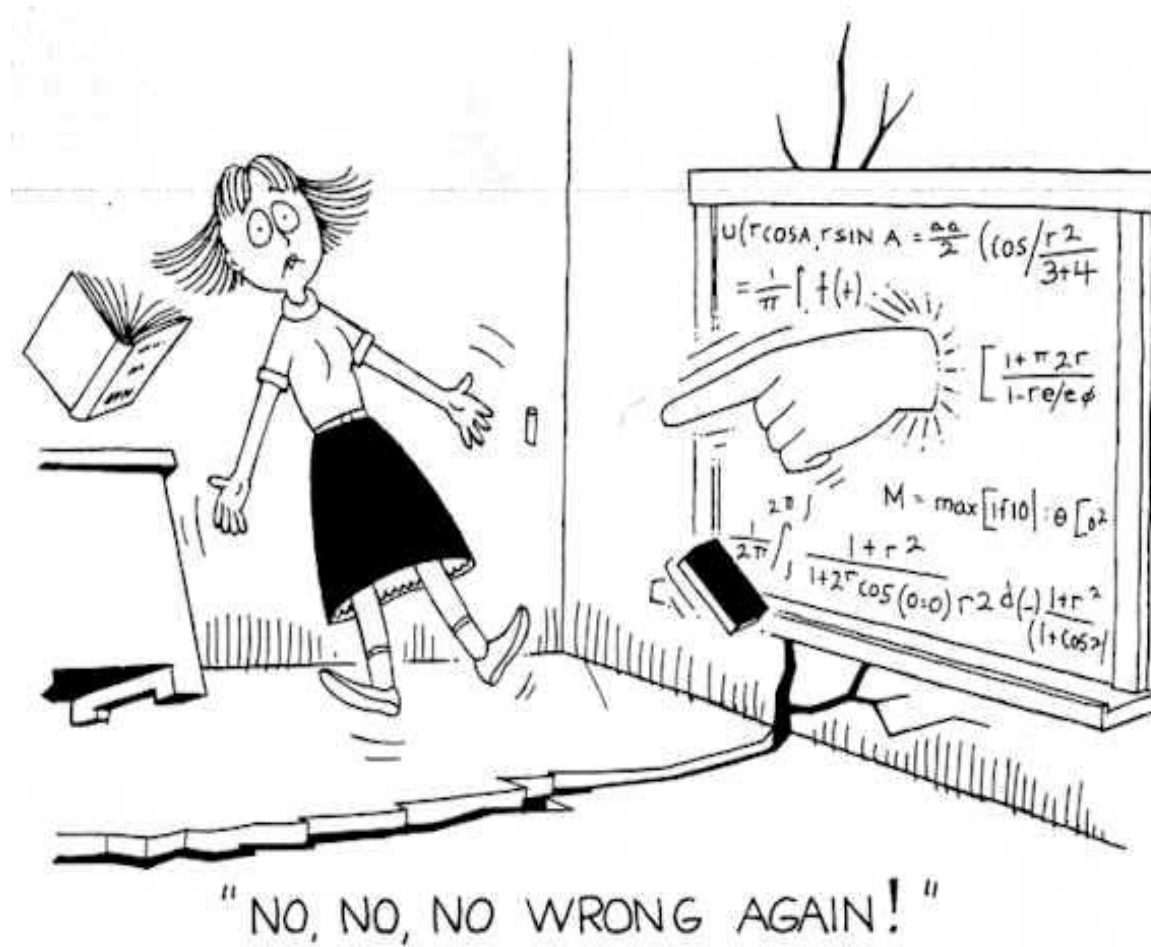
# EAT → IWM → Anxiety

- Dismissive style and anxiety=
  - dealing but not feeling → **fear of closeness**
- Preoccupied style and anxiety =
  - “feeling but not dealing” → **Separation anxiety**
- Fearful style and anxiety=
  - “not feeling not dealing” → **Intense anxiety**

# EAT → Social Phobia

- World = threatening and unsafe
  - Self = incompetent in different life domains
  - Give rise to perfectionism
    - Perfect social performance
    - Withdrawal and avoidance

# EAT → Insecure attachment → Fear of failure





# EAT → Parent-child role- confusion



# EAT and health anxiety





# Anxiety treatment = Trauma treatment

- Phase-oriented:
  - Stabilization phase:
    - FAFA
    - Improving daily life
    - Emotion focused therapy
    - Affectregulation
    - Mentalization
    - Restructuring IWM
    - The therapeutic alliance
    - CBT
    - Presence
  - Confrontation phase
  - Integration phase

# Stabilization





# Therapy: calming the physiology

- Grounding:



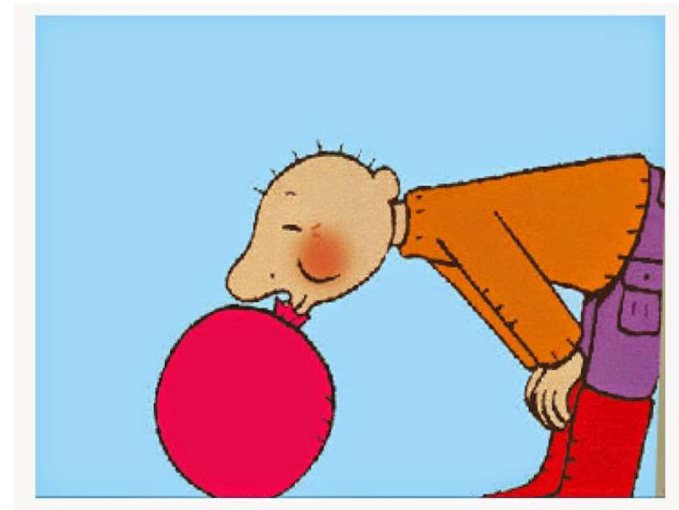
# Therapy: calming the physiology

- Diafragmatic breathing



# Therapy: calming the physiology

- Diafragmatic breathing



# Therapy: calming the physiology

**Feeling anxiety?  
Do a "grounding" tool.**



**Look around you. Find 5 things  
you can see, 4 things you can touch,  
3 things you can hear, 2 things you  
can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.  
This is called "grounding." It's helpful  
to do whenever you feel anxious.**

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# Safe place





# Therapy: calming the physiology

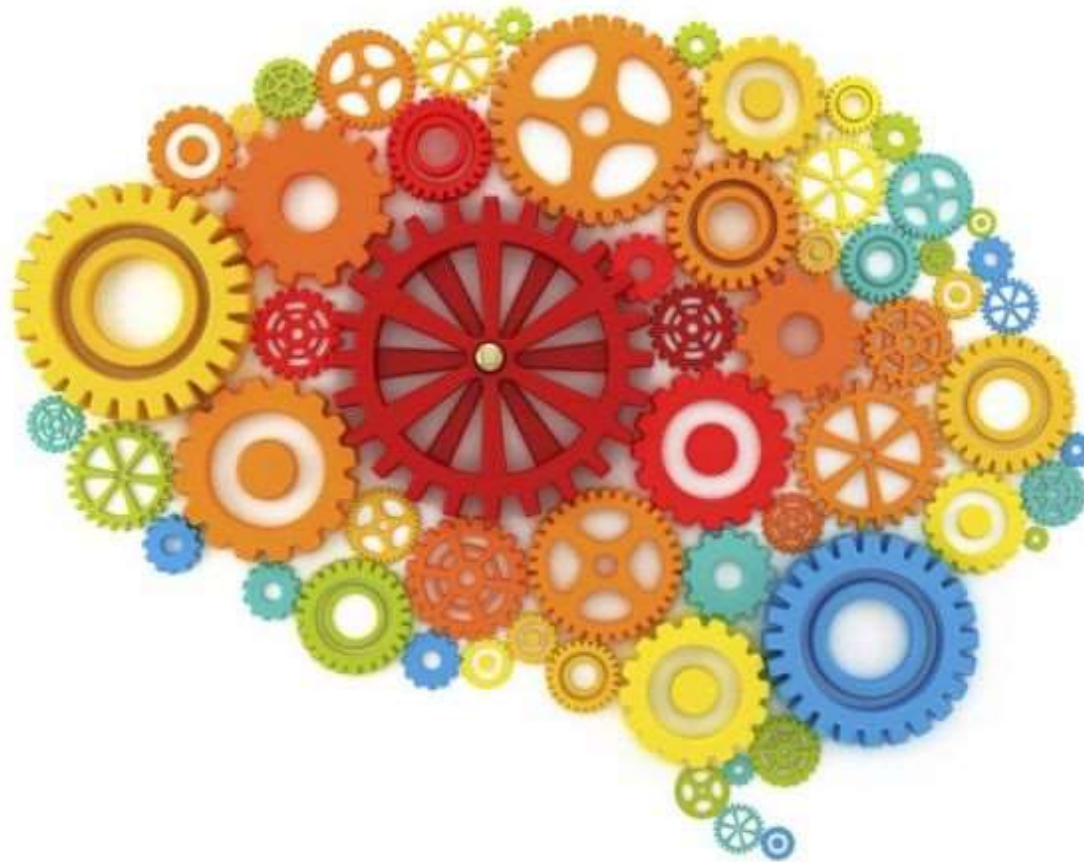
## Long term

- Meditation
- Relaxation
- Yoga
- Safe touch
- Sports/ movement

# Therapy: Affectregulation



# Therapy: Cognition



# Therapy: Cognition

- Stop!



- Container exercise



# Therapy: Cognition

- Distraction (do something!)



7	8		4			1	2	
6				7	5			9
			6		1		7	8
		7		4		2	6	
		1		5		9	3	
9		4		6				5
	7		3				1	2
1	2				7	4		
	4	9	2		6			7

- Another thought



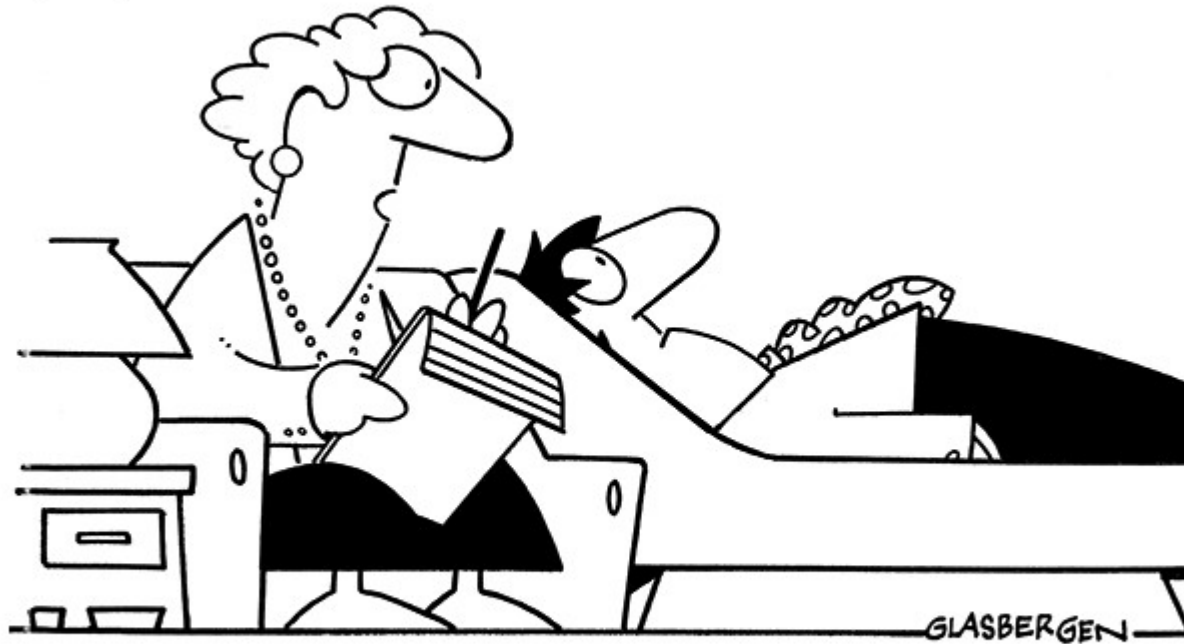


# Resource development



# Inner child work

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glasbergen.com



**"I can help you find your inner child, but I can't help you claim him as a dependent at tax time."**

# Reconnecting with the body



# EMDR



**E**ye  
**M**ovement  
**D**esensitization &  
**R**eprocessing





It's been  
a rough  
week, but  
I made  
it...How  
about you?

via LoveThisPic.com



