

Psalm 33

The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man;
from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth,

he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds.

The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.

The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue.

Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love,

that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

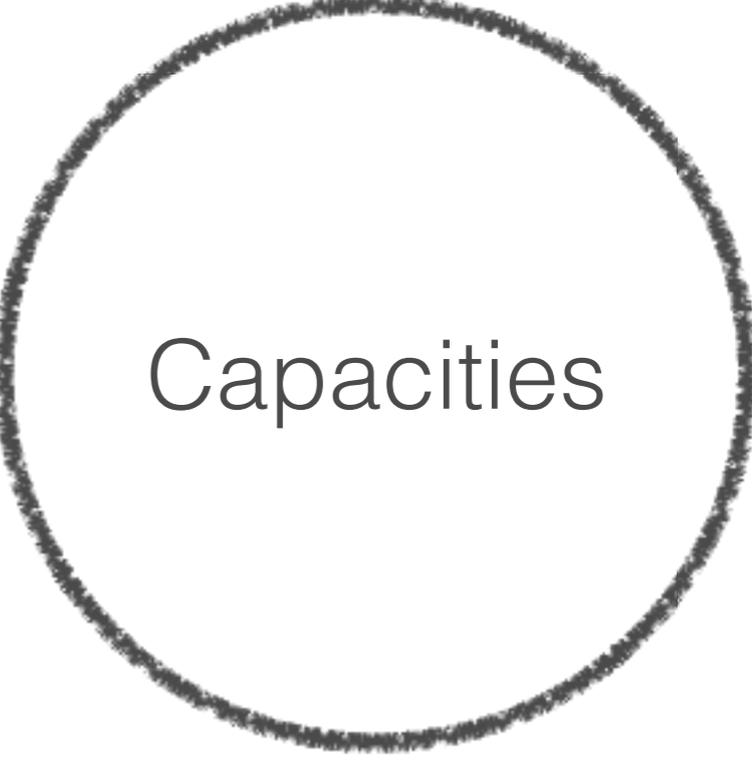
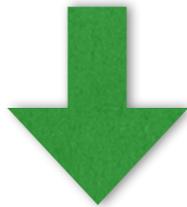
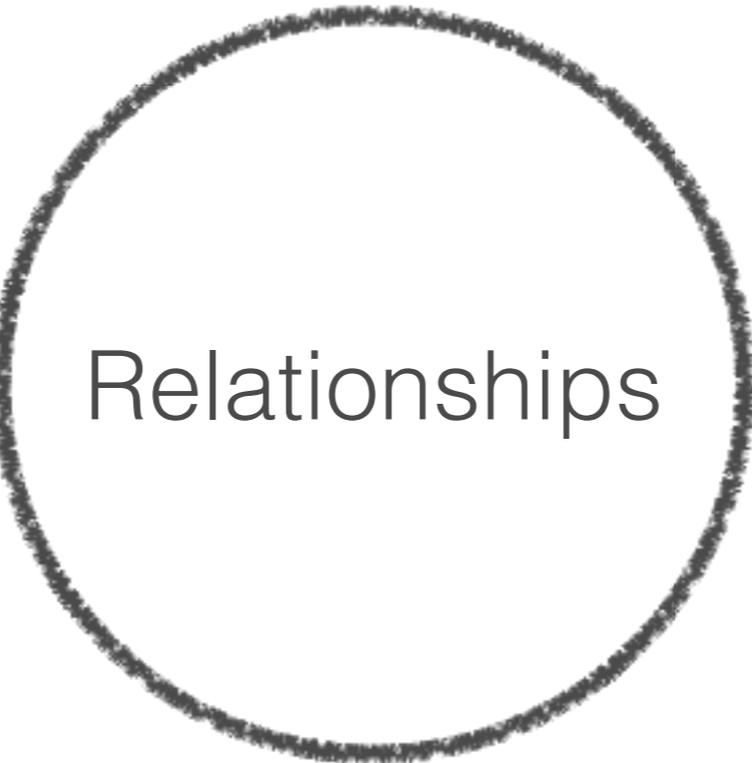
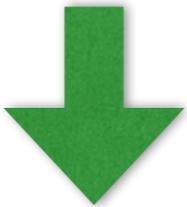
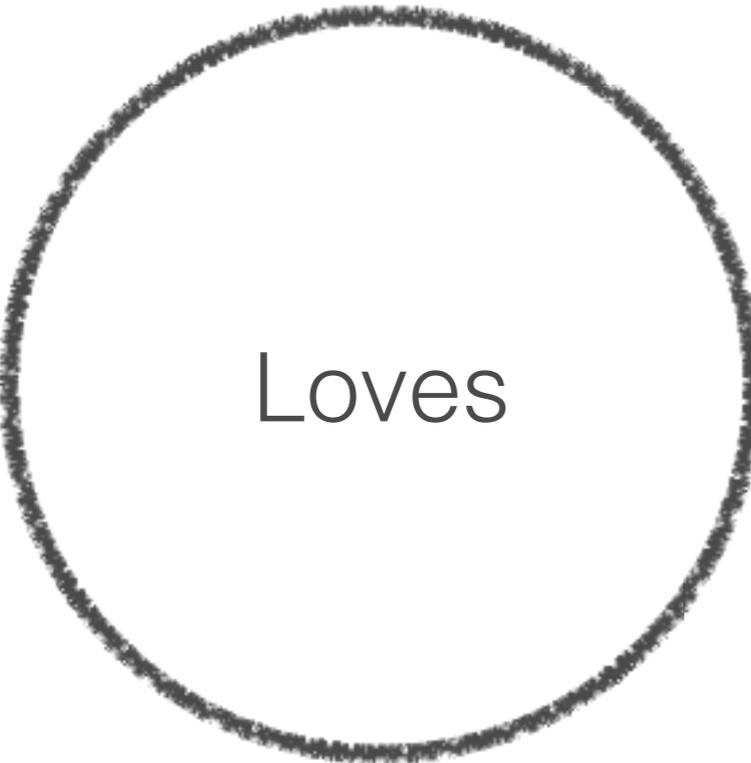
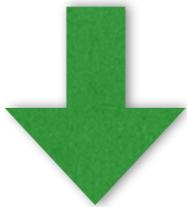
For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name.

Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.



Let the little children [and their parents]
come to me . . .

Breaking cycles of poverty where they start



Who shapes a child
more than anyone else?

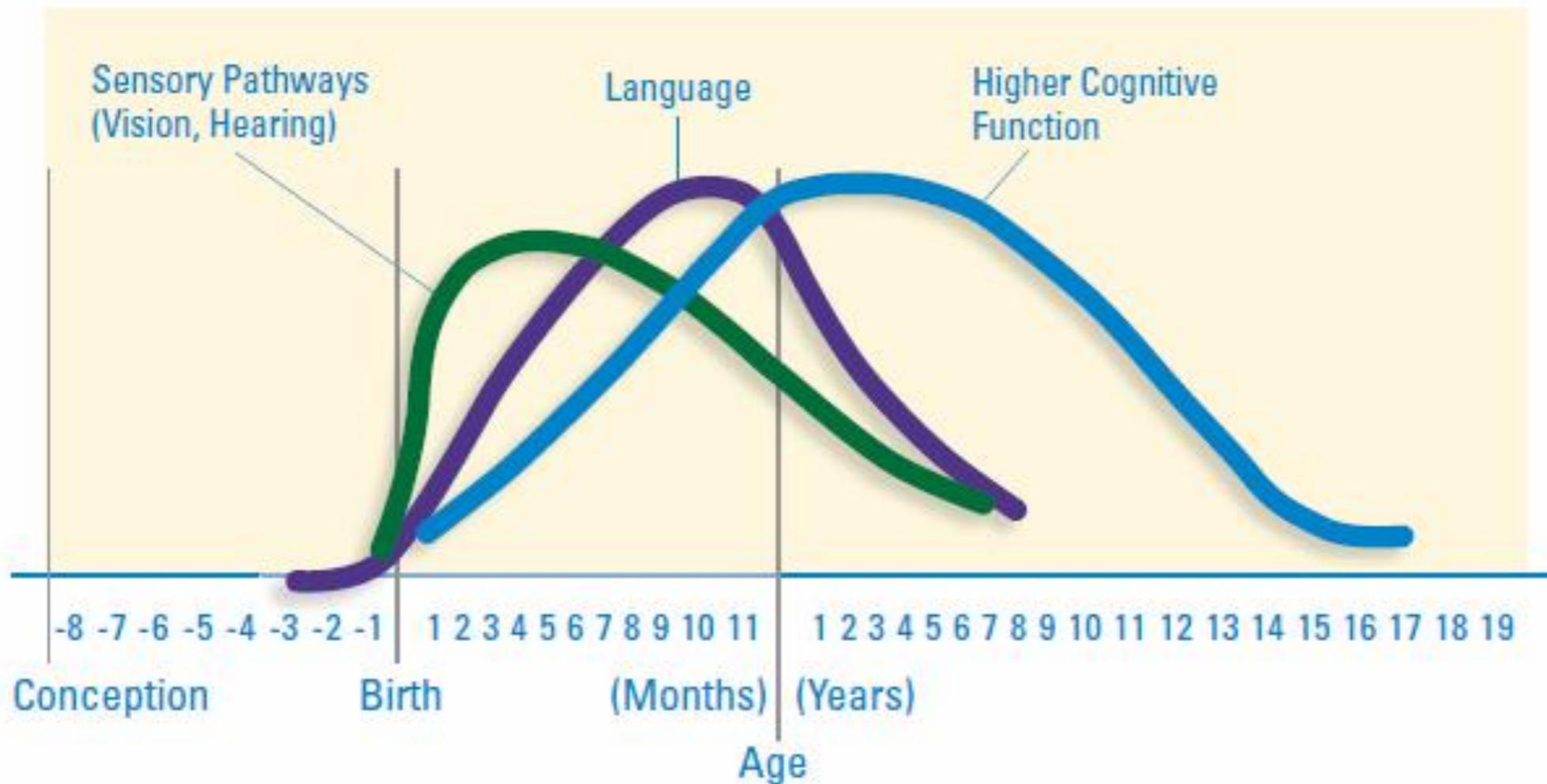
Parents

When do parents wield their greatest influence?

Birth to 5

Inside the Brain

Human Brain Development
Synapse Formation Dependent on Early Experiences



Synaptic
Proliferation

Inside the Brain

36 weeks gestation

Newborn

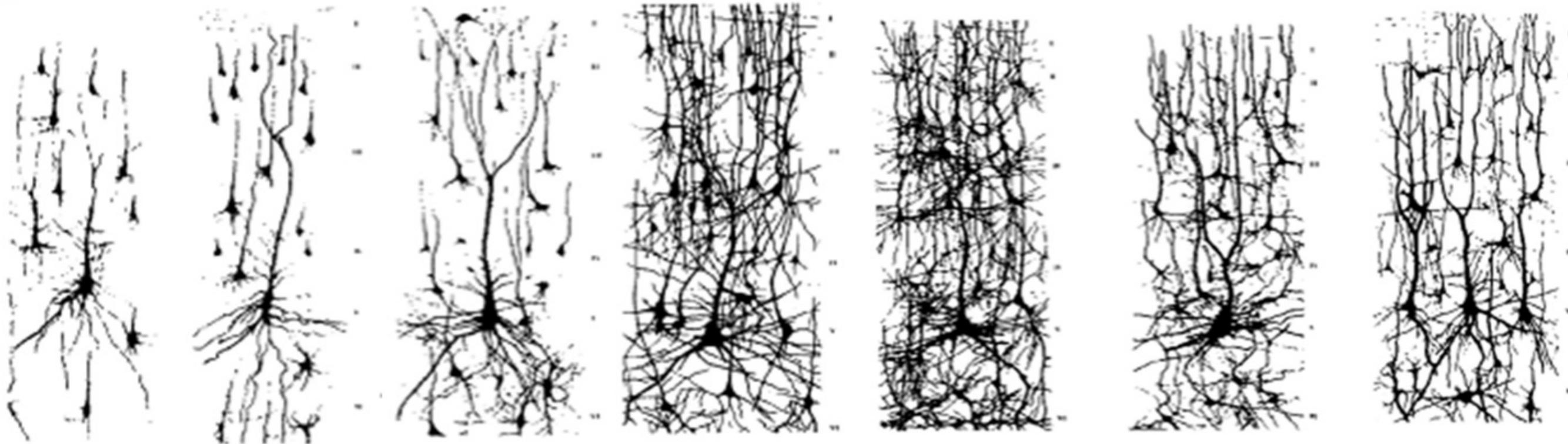
3 months

6 months

2 years

4 years

6 years



Synaptic Pruning

Do habits matter?

"It makes no small difference, then whether we form habits of one kind or of another from our very youth; it makes a very great difference, or rather all the difference."

Aristotle, Ethics Book II

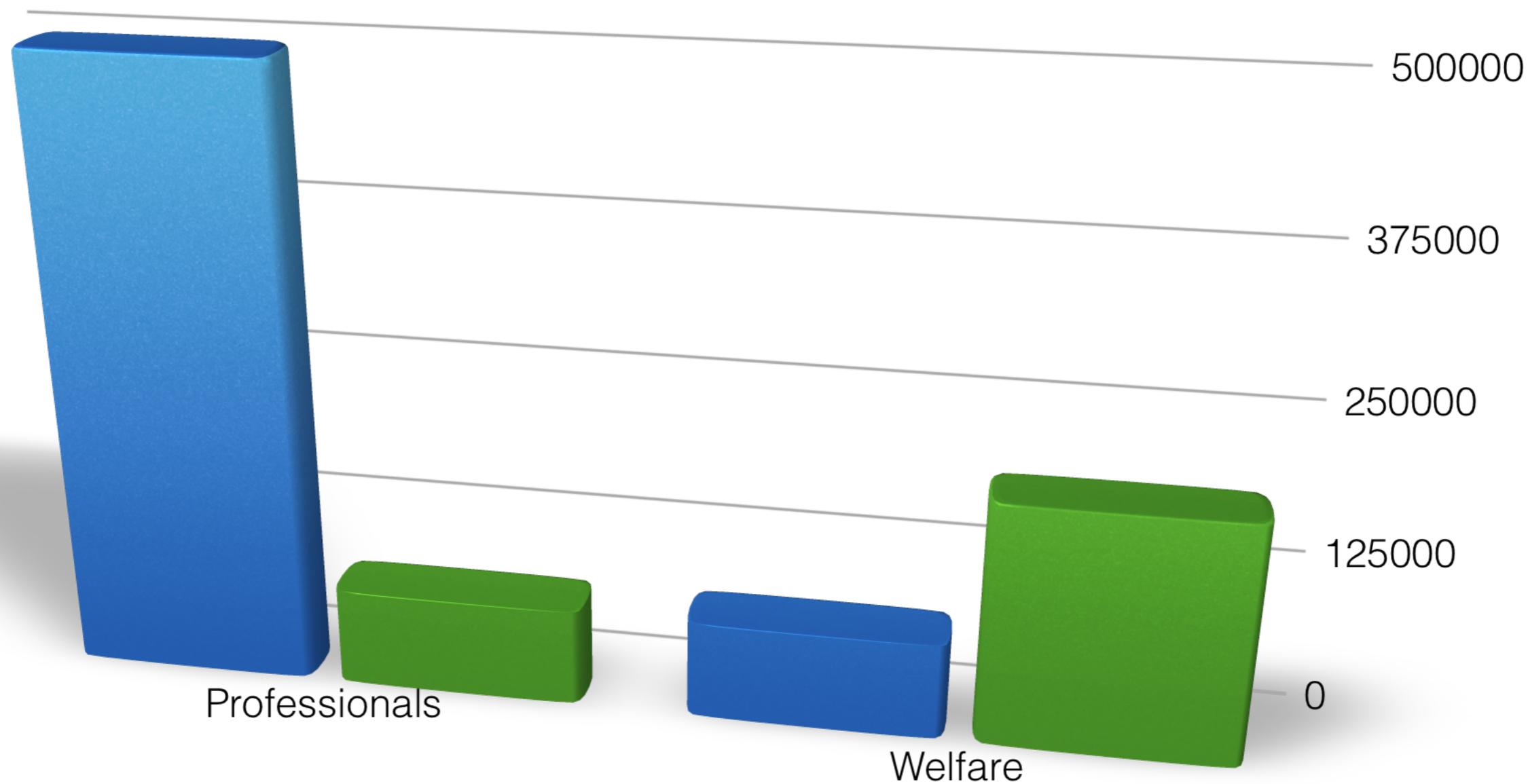
Developmental Building Blocks

Love

Language

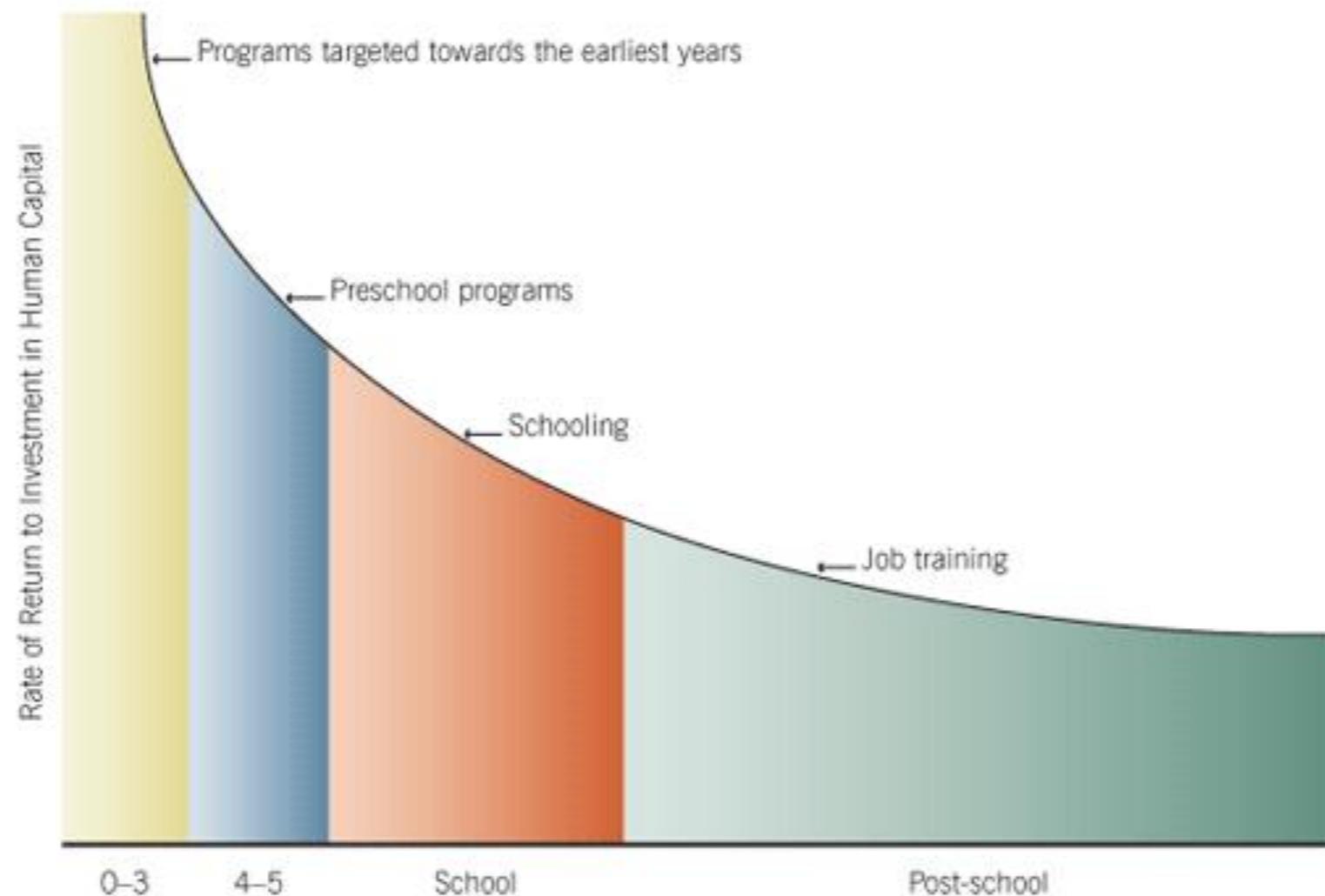
Literature

Encouragement/Discouragement



The Cost Curve

Figure 1: Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment at Different Ages: Return to an Extra Dollar at Various Ages



Source: Heckman (2008).

God



Others

Self



What was John the Baptist's mission?

"And [John the Baptist] will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah, **to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,** and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

Luke 1:17

Worship: Enacting the Story

"It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified."

Galatians 3:1

Community: Embody the Story

"If you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? . . . You therefore must be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect."

Matthew 5:46,48

Mercy: Honor the Poor

God has chosen them

"Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?"

James 2:5

Their gifts matter more

"Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box."

Mark 12:43

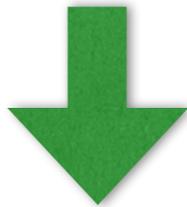
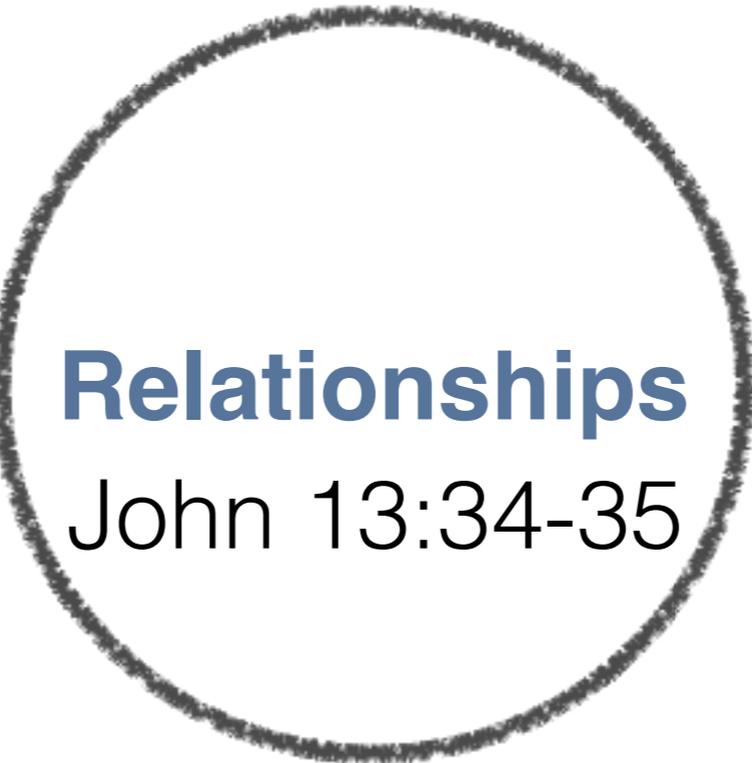
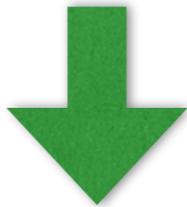
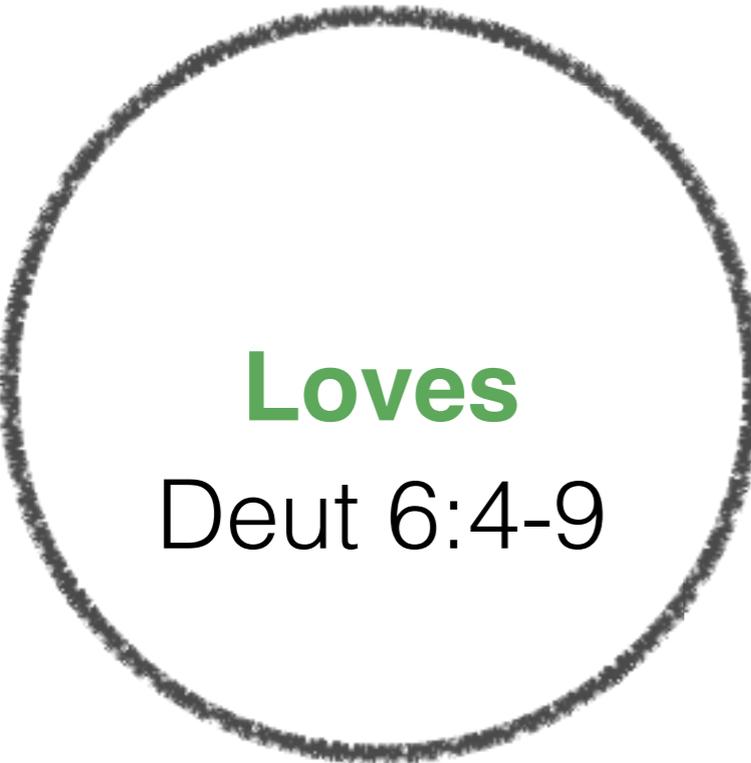
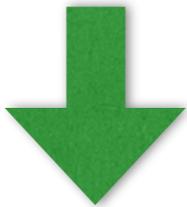
God



Others

Self





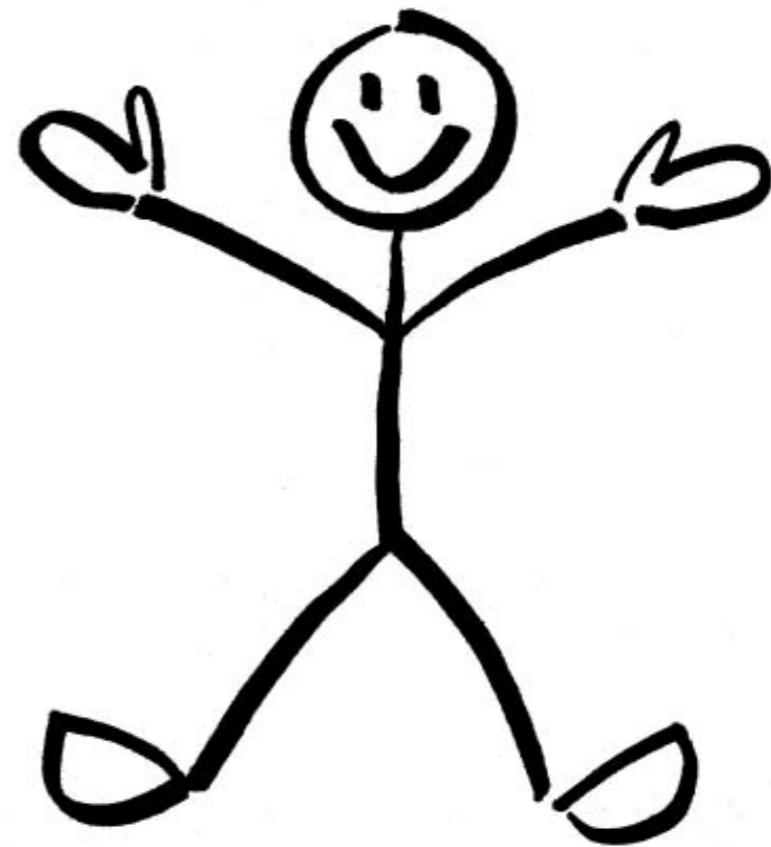
Your turn

Turn to your neighbors and discuss, *in your places* your experiences of:

- Worship - as public and participatory
- Community - across wealth disparities
- Mercy - as building capacity

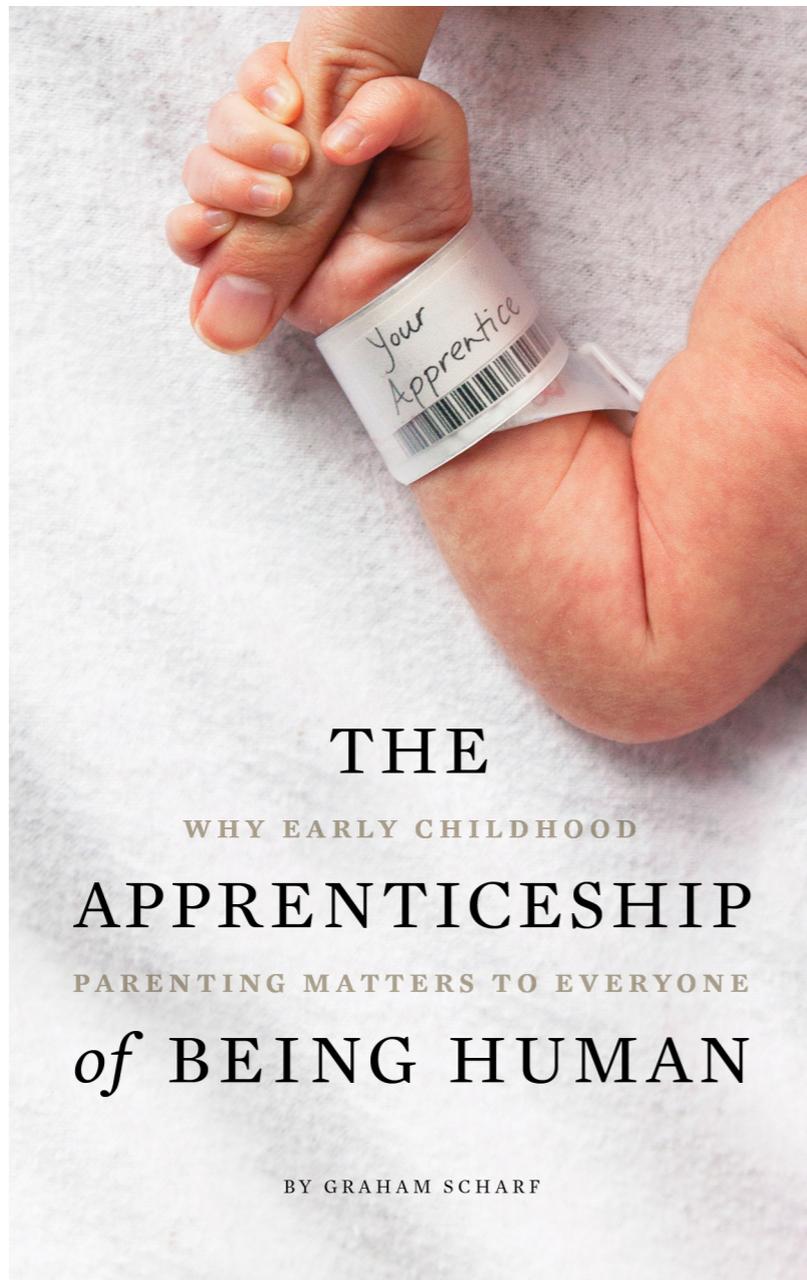
The Golden Opportunity

- Honor the poor
- Form your children
- Love your neighbors
- Break cycles of poverty





Thank you!



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