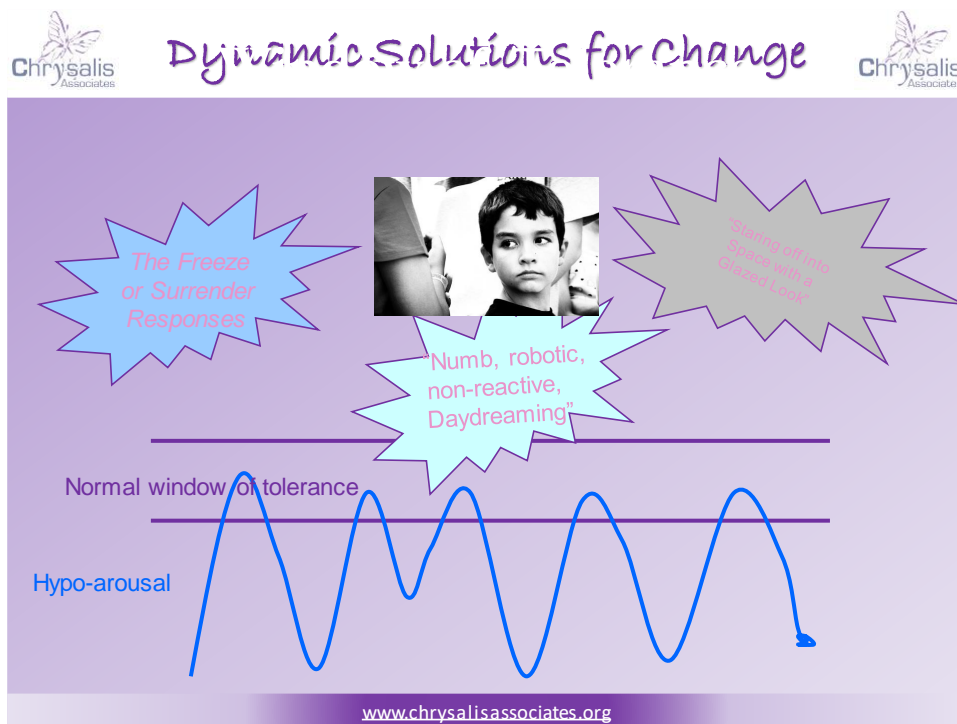


Theraplay Engagement

In structure, we talked about the hyper aroused child, but there is a child who is the opposite and is hypo aroused. This means that when they are put under stress they emotionally withdraw, maybe even disassociate. They are quiet and can be compliant, and often make poor eye contact, and are difficult to engage in any way



Children often avoid eye contact, a key element in attachment, when they are afraid to look at an adult for fear of what they will see.



For a child pre-placement, they may have looked at their birth parents and seen anger, depression, mental ill health, alcoholism or nothing. So, to protect themselves the child avoids eye contact, and stays safe. However, because they are not getting social feedback from you now, they do not know they are loved and the part of the brain that learns how to socially interact with you or peers does not develop.