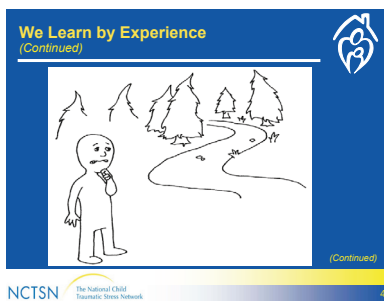


## We Learn by Experience (1/2/3)

Everything that we expect and believe—about ourselves, about other people, and about the world that we live in—is learned through experience. For example, imagine that you’re taking a walk in a park near your home. You glance down, and in front of you is a huge snake.

### How do you think you’d react?

*Allow time for responses.*

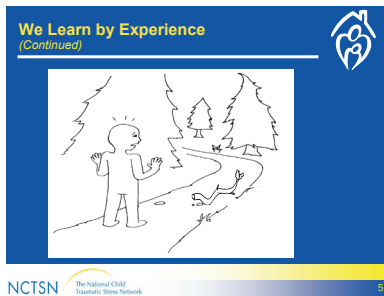


**Now imagine that you have to walk through that same park a couple of days later. How do you think you’d feel about it?**

*Allow time for responses.*



More than likely you’re going to be watching the ground a lot more closely!



And if you happen to see a stick on the path, you’re likely to startle, even before the thought “Augh! Snake!” reaches your conscious awareness.

Even if you’d been through the park many times before without seeing a snake, seeing a snake once changes your perception of the park, and makes you expect danger there.

That’s because it’s a lot more dangerous to mistake a snake for a stick than to see a snake in every stick. Our brains are wired this way—to generalize in the direction of looking out for danger so that we can protect ourselves.