



EMPATHIC PARENTING

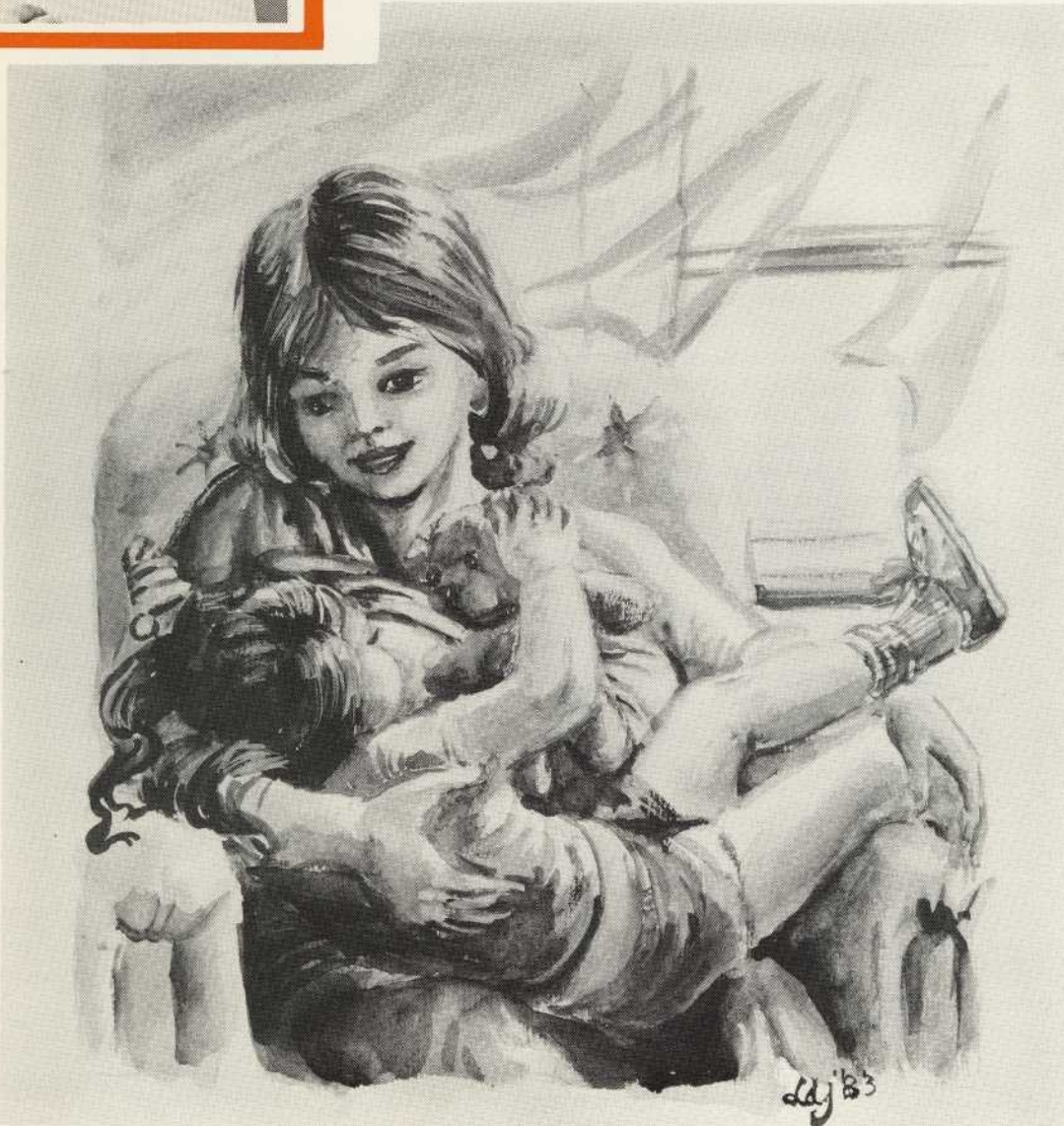
Journal of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Volume 10

Issue 4

Autumn 1987

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***Love begins when we stay with someone for
what we can give to them...
Love is a decision, not a feeling.***

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Working Women

...We are in a bar, in a small town in rural Kenya. A few men are drinking standing up, while others are sitting at the green-painted chairs and tables. There are just two women in there - myself and the barmaid.

'In my village, the women fetch water and firewood, look after the small animals and take care of the house and children', says a schoolteacher as he takes another sip of warm beer. 'The women dig the shamba and they plant. Except that now we have drought... so there is no planting and they have to go very far for water'.

'What are the men doing?', I enquire.

'The men? Well, we work'.

'Isn't that what the women are doing?'

'Oh, no, women don't work.'

'But you've just told me all about the work that women do!'

'No, I'm talking about going out to work, earning money. In our culture, you see, women don't work.'...

Osei Kofi

The New Internationalist

EMPATHIC PARENTING:

Being willing and able to 'put yourself in your child's shoes' in order to correctly identify his/her feelings, and

Being willing and able to behave toward your child in ways which take those feelings into account.

Empathic parenting takes an enormous amount of time and energy and fully involves both parents in a co-operative, sharing way.

EMPATHIC PARENTING

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EMPATHIC PARENTING/Autumn 1987



EMPATHIC PARENTING

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Letters

The Professional Mother

Dear Editor:

This letter is meant to introduce your readers to the concept of the "professional mother", and how it relates to the current demands on governments for a national system of daycare.

What is a professional mother?

A professional mother is the one who recognizes her child or children's needs for:

- love and affection
- stability and consistency
- appropriate stimulation
- rest and nutritious meals
- avoiding stresses caused by travelling and rushed early morning departure from home
- a mother as a model

and decides that the person who can give the best care is herself. She refuses to be called a housekeeper, because she is taking care of super-precious human beings.

Therefore the professional mother is the one who chooses to stay home to raise her own children.

1. We professional mothers are apprehensive of a free national day-care system. We think this system would be unfair and degrading in that it lowers the esteem of all mothers devoting their time to the upbringing of their children.

2. We want equal benefits for professional mothers.

3. We think that a free national day-care system would encourage a lot of mothers presently at home to utilize the system designed to benefit working mothers.

A. Our children would suffer from this.

B. The cost to our government and our citizens would rise exponentially.

4. All volunteer work would also suffer from it as fewer women would be at home.

We think that a professional mother would be severely disadvantaged compared to a working mother. Not only would our taxes rise significantly, we would experience a further economic disadvantage by staying home when our neighbours would benefit from free day-care along with two salaries.

Therefore, we would like to see a policy promoting the mother staying home. We

want to avoid an unfair degradation of the value of the "professional mother". We also want equal benefits from government grants for tax credits, instead of losing rewarding benefits. We want to see tax credits, tax concessions, and tax deductions increased considerably. We would like to see our government adopt similar family allowances to the French, Hungarian and German societies. We support the philosophy of continued privatization rather than nationalization of services already existing. Private day-cares could continue to operate, but under government regulation to ensure quality care and standardization.

Why not foster the value of volunteer (or non-remunerated) work in order to help Canadian mothers who wish to stay home and to raise their own children?

Sincerely,
Lyse Carignan
Cochrane, Alberta

P.S. If you fit this portrait, and/or share these opinions, please:

1. cut out this article
2. attach a piece of paper with your name, plus names of other supporters, and your place of residence
3. send it to the Rt. Honorable Jake Epp, Minister of Health and Welfare, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
4. do it as soon as possible.

The work of mothers

Dear Dr. Barker

Thank you so much for all the work that you do for the CSPCC. I really enjoy Empathic Parenting and read it cover to cover.

I was once a battered child and I am now the proud and healthy mother of four wonderful children (ages 5 - 14). It was not easy to break the cycle in my family but with the help of various support groups (Church and LLL and CSPCC) I have found great joy in being a full-time wife and mother.

I am truly concerned at the low value that society places upon our children and particularly the low value placed on the work of mothers who stay home full-time.

Letters

A good friend whose husband earns a low wage (only enough to pay the rent) has struggled to stay home the past five years (her children are 5, 3 and 1) by doing day care in her home. Finally this past September she found full-time employment (she was emotionally and physically drained from trying to meet the needs of 6 young children). It was distressing for her to find out that the government was willing to pay \$296 per week for her children to be cared for in the local daycare centre. Why couldn't the government have paid her instead to stay home and offer her children all the joys that the daycare centre could never give them?

For women to go out into the work force and compete with men, to prove that they can do things better and to use the same foolish methods as men have used is folly. Our industrialized consumer society bent on materialism cannot give us the joy that is our right. "Men are that they might have joy and enjoy life in rich abundance". Your Society gives us hope that my children will not be caught up in the whirlwind but that they will be able to stop and smell the roses.

Yours sincerely,
Ruth M. Bacon
Thornhill, Ontario



Keeping in touch

Like so many others I am a parent who doesn't follow the mainstream methods, who turns to Dr. Mendolsohn, not Dr. Spock and reads **Mothering***, not **Parents**. And, like many, I believe in alternative parenting like prolonged breastfeeding, family beds, and home births. So, like many, I have often felt lonely and isolated from the rest of the parenting

community.

As a mom at home, I have spent years wishing I knew SOMEONE who mothered like I did, who couldn't imagine their baby in someone else's care, or putting her in a crib down the hall at night. I searched and searched and found some wonderful organizations dedicated to moms like me, but never one that put me in touch with other parents.

Therein is the reason for Priority Parenting - to lessen that feeling of aloneness. Here you will find editorials on topics you are not likely to find elsewhere, opinions and facts on topics like immunizations, mandatory car seats and home schooling. Hopefully these editorials, even if you do not agree with everything they say, will present some new ideas and help you to see you are not alone in your beliefs.

To increase your contacts with others, Priority Parenting provides introductions to other newsletters, magazines and organizations relevant to good parenting. And there is a section for penpals so that you can go on to meet and make friends with others who might share your values.

There is a book review in each issue and tidbits of interesting information gleaned from other publications. Lastly, there is a section for the letters you send to me. Your comments, praise, criticism and suggestions are all welcomed. I will look forward to hearing from you.

I hope that you enjoy Priority Parenting. And I hope that you feel less alone for reading it. I encourage you to contact the mothers listed and to send in your name also. Support is essential to good parenting and that is what Priority Parenting is here for!

Tami Orr
Winona Lake, Indiana

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*Mothering Magazine, P.O. Box 1690, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504 (505) 984-8116.



Something I never dreamed or anticipated...

Being a Mother

Would any of us agree to take care of somebody, pay their living expenses, for approximately 20 years, if we had never met them before?

By Allison Hanks

Being a mother is something I never dreamed nor anticipated it would be. Nobody could have described motherhood to me no matter how hard they had tried. It is so total, so energy-consuming, so heart-warming, so horrific at times and yet so desperately wonderful that in many instances it is beyond words.

Parenthood usually starts with a choice. (Maybe I should change that "usually" to "sometimes" as I don't know how many children are really planned.) What proceeds from there is the beginning of something which we at one time had control over to something which, if we play our cards magnificently correctly, we will be able to influence ever so slightly in later years.

There are so many paradoxes in parenthood:

We want our children to grow up to be themselves, yet our ego is constantly telling us we want them to be like us.

We want so badly to have children, yet there are days when we would gladly pay anyone to take them off our hands - for good.

We resist urges to attack them for certain of their behaviours, yet we find ourselves defending that same behaviour to some non-family member later.

Motherhood has taught me about my childhood - the efforts (supreme!) that my parents went to when raising me.

I feel I have learned more from being a mother than from anything else, or will learn from anything else. It's like taking a step forward in the circle of life.

I have learned about the great controversy of the child; the choice, and the child: the resource. Whose children are they, anyway? Yours? Mine? God's? Society's? The government's? (God can take our children away in death and the government can also take our children away). There is a fine line today between children being seen as a luxury for parents rather than a resource for society.

The business of losing control over something you once had some control over (conception) - what a gamble we take when we have children. Would any of us agree to take care of somebody, pay their living expenses, for approximately 20 years, if we had never met them before?

Everybody always seems to feel that the great mystery of a babe in the womb is - is it a boy or is it a girl? I was always most curious about the personality of the child. They can now change the sex of a human being, but personality - it's there for keeps, whether Mom or Dad likes it or not. How did I ever swallow that one three times? I never once thought about it, that's how. The same way I never thought about how the second childbirth was going to hurt like the first one until I was in labour. But the thought of that wonderful, beautiful smell-

Alison and her husband of ten years are the parents of three young daughters. For the past six years Alison has been developing her skills as nutritionist, cleaner, social secretary, games co-ordinator, cook, driver, arbitrator, child care supervisor, story-teller, children's councillor, nurse, communications officer, dresser, spiritual guide, companion, teacher, shopper, hugger, nurturer and volunteer, sometimes under conditions of extreme sleep deprivation and/or illness, and always without supervision or a pay cheque.

When I was expecting my first child, I think mostly I was having a child for my own pleasure.

ing baby at the end was so positively powerful. I adore the smell of a baby fresh from the world of the womb.

So back to this losing control. That, for me, is the greatest challenge in parenthood, or at least right up there in the top ten greatest challenges. Every day, as parents, we make choices, whether conscious or subconscious, as to whether or not we should intervene in our children's day to day activities. Is it time she learned how to dress herself? She's slurping that spaghetti like a pig. I wish she would stop hitting her sister. She drew that house very nicely. She's remembering her pleases and thank yous. We're sometimes so concerned about our child's behaviour that we forget about our own. My behaviour can be abominable at times.

When do we just let them be?

Life usually goes by even more quickly once we have children. There is great truth to the saying: we must let our children go free if we want them to come back again. One thing is nearly for certain. It doesn't matter how much we love our children, how much effort we expend in their path, how much money we spend on them, how many heartaches they cause us, how many sleepless nights they give us, how many marital disputes they are fuel for. They will run away like fugitives if they are raised in an atmosphere of total domination and control. They may be with us in body when they are adults, but their hearts are not there with us. CHILDREN DO NOT ASK TO BE BORN. Isn't that really awful at times? They owe us nothing. They have the Right to be loved, nurtured, fed and educated. What we do get from them in the end we have only won. I think this is the great lesson we learn in this loss of control.

When I was expecting my first child, I think mostly I was having a child for my (our) own pleasure. And it's true. I do get a tremendous amount of pleasure out of my children. But this other part - the hard part - I didn't really anticipate. It's like God's

joke on us. I had never been driven nuts by children I couldn't get ride of, so how was I to know? I had never been challenged to survive on a few hours of sleep each night, night after night, and carry on as usual, so how was I to know? I never had to make formal arrangements to have a little time to myself once in a while, so how was I to know? Someone may have tried to tell me, but it would have gone in one ear and out the other.

Children don't know we're exhausted and finding it difficult to cope. They expect a happy mother. And so does everyone else. They used to torture prisoners of war by depriving them of sleep. I remember looking at my husband when my eldest (my eldest: I didn't have any others to look after) was a baby and saying, with desperation, "All I want is six hours of undisturbed sleep". I don't think I was to get it, at least not that night. I also remember one of the "congratulations on the new baby" cards I received that said, "And may your nights never be the same." I laughed then, but that card was to be my nightmare at times.

This lack of sleep is serious business. I feel so helpless when I am exhausted. I forget where I put things. I forget social obligations. I feel just plain old stupid - like there's a cloud over my head. And don't expect anyone to understand why you're behaving like a lunatic, because they probably won't. I sometimes think this is where that whole "dumb wife" concept began. Give the husband a few preschoolers to take care of day after day, and get him up a few times in the night, and see how he starts behaving. (The husbands - some - are doing this now, thank goodness. Home is a much nicer place to be when everyone understands each other a little bit better.)

Motherhood means learning to cope with a state of passionate love for another human being. I remember feeling quite "apart" from our first child when she was

It's like God's
joke on us.

We can be cranky; why can't they? We can feel sad and cry; why can't they? We can argue and fight, why can't they? We don't have to eat parsnips if we don't want to; why do they have to?

born. I had had a precipitate delivery and was quite shocked at the intensity of pain. A very short time later, however, I was "stuck" to her. The relationship of a mother to her child is generally very intense. Coming to the realization that one will love and protect another human being, even at great cost to oneself is no small realization. My baby was different from every other baby because she was "mine". This was something I vowed I would never say because I was really overcome by the miracle of childbirth. She was most definitely created by God. I think of that quote in the book, *The Family of Children*: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (Psalms 139:14).

That's the quote I think of when I try to remember how I felt at the time. And I find it okay now to say that she really is "mine" even though a gift from God for a short time. So many things I now do were things I was never going to do as a mother. Like yell and spank. Like say, "I'm the boss, that's why." Like watch my child behave abominably to a friend or relative and not do anything about it. I think we adults have unrealistic expectations of children sometimes. We can be cranky; why can't they? We can feel sad and cry; why can't they? We can argue and fight; why can't they? We don't have to eat parsnips if we don't want to; why do they have to?

(Continued on page 28)





Not even romance can stay on a high...

Love and Marriage

Love is a decision, not a feeling

Today I want to talk about what real love is and what makes marriage work.

The effort to describe love is as old as humanity. Usually romantic love is described as "It knocks you off your feet, turns you upside down, makes the world go round." We think of the high of good feelings, like many addictions in our society - drugs, alcohol, nicotine, and so on. In love we get addicted to what feels good.

Yet, we all know that just as no drug can keep us high, so too not even romance can stay on a high. We come down to earth, and thus many marriages struggle because couples think when the feeling is gone, so too the love is gone. When we misunderstand love, we misunderstand marriage.

Real love is what goes on when the feelings are gone. In other words, love begins when we stay with someone for what we can give to them, not just for what we can get from them. Love is a decision, not a feeling. Love is a choice to befriend someone for life, not to manipulate, or control, or use them.

This doesn't mean that marriage is meant to be drudgery - all work and no play. When I think of that, I think of the story of the man telling his friend: "Well, I've been working on a play for four years, but I finally threw the script in the trash can." His friend replied: "That's tough. All work and no play." Marriage is meant to be fun too, but it won't be fun all the time.

Let's think about what love is and what makes marriages work. Perhaps the answer to the question: "Why don't you care for me anymore?" is because you're boring. Unfortunately, life is filled with changes. What initially attracted someone

to us will not necessarily keep someone fascinated with us.

We need to grow and change together to make marriage work. That doesn't mean we have to do everything together, but it does mean that if one person is learning new things, meeting new people, and experiencing new life, we better realize that we should grow as well. Being the same old person is just not enough.

I recall advice a columnist gave to an elderly couple about sex in old age. The columnist wrote: "It depends on both partners staying interested and interesting." That's not bad advice, for marriage working at any time. We need to stay interested in each other and in our family, and we need to stay interesting in ourselves. If we do that, we don't just fall in love once. We keep falling in love for years.

As we think about what makes marriages work and what real love is, we come to a number of conclusions. The best working definition of married love is wanting the same good things for your partner that you would want for yourself. This definition not only takes love out of the level of feelings, but it also introduces unselfishness. To recognize that our partner has needs and wants and dreams that may be different, but are still worthy of respect, helps us to work toward fulfilling them just as we would work toward looking out for ourselves.

Love then is more than emotion, and marriages that work have qualities that marriages that fail do not have. First, marriages that work have good preparation. Many religions insist that couples go through some marriage preparation classes to help them understand themselves.

Edited transcript of a radio broadcast by Fr. Joe Breighner, courtesy Paulist Communications.

Real love is what goes on when the feelings are gone... Love begins when we stay with someone for what we can give to them, not just for what we can get from them.

Personality inventories are offered so couples can tell differences in themselves, how they view similar things so differently. In preparation, couples learn that most fights are not about sex but about money. The songs are romantic but our society runs on cash.

In addition to preparation, successful marriages have commitment. Couples are committed to a life together, including bad times. They are determined to work together to find solutions, not to find ways to escape from each other.

Successful marriages have a higher level of belief in God and Church attendance. Years ago I came across a statistic that said people who believe in God enjoy sex more than those who don't. If word of that gets around, somebody better warn the ushers at Church. They're liable to get trampled in the stampede.

Successful marriages also involve people who are more involved in the community. In other words, love songs are about two people alone, but successful marriages involve people who think of the needs of other people. It is not enough to build our own castles. We must share our care and concern for other hurting members of the community.

There's a realism to successful marriages as well. Mature couples realize that while they are married to one person they may still be attracted to other persons. Moving in with our spouse does not mean that our feelings won't sometimes move us in other directions.

Life is filled with moving experiences. However, the movements of the heart do not mean that we let our feelings run our lives. Mature couples realize that the decision to be faithful is more significant than the feelings that draw us elsewhere.

There's no doubt that fidelity in marriage has never been tougher. With the new morality, with both husband and wife often working, we simply meet more people and have a greater sense of independence than ever before. With all the strains that life and work put on marriages, the wonder is not that marriages fail, the wonder is that so many still succeed.

A sexual relationship with a third party is lethal to a marriage. It doesn't mean that a sexual affair leads to a divorce. In fact, the opposite sometimes happens. An affair can tend to stabilize a shaky marriage in that one person is getting his or her needs met outside the relationship. There is less pressure to leave. It seems the best of both worlds.

Unfortunately, the lethal part is that one person gives up on the other spouse. Therefore, there's no chance for the marriage to improve since one person has invested his or her energies elsewhere.

While affairs are lethal, friendships are vital. Because one person cannot be eternally fascinating, we do need other people in our lives, people of both sexes who can befriend us. It really is possible to have healthy adult relationships, with people of both sexes, that do not become genital. In fact, when friendship becomes sexual it almost always destroys the friendship. Guilt and anxiety are not good ingredients to a relationship.

If we are involved with someone other than our spouse sexually, the honest thing to do is to end the affair. It may leave us lonely, but it will leave us with integrity.

As we think about real love and what
(Continued on page 27)



Role Reversal

To the present parent, the child appears as the original parent...

By M.G. Morris and R.W. Gould

Role reversal is defined as a reversal of the dependency role, in which parents turn to their infants and small children for nurturing and protection. These parents seem to have perceived and experienced their own parents as unloving, cruel, and brutal. Therefore, their egos have not matured, and, consequently, social and parental role development has been retarded. When natural infant-child dependency is experienced by these parents as a series of assaultive acts upon themselves, they retaliate with actual assaultive behavior. This retaliation may be phrased passively, in neglect, or actively, by battering...

The concept of role reversal involves reversal of many roles. To the present parent, the child appears as the original parent with all of the parent's malign, primitive meanings and blighted hopes. Because the abusive parent's character development has been fixed at the level of ego incompleteness, role reversal is applicable to either one of their parents, regardless of the sex of the present parent or of the parent of orientation - the reason frequently being that personal and sexual identity are not yet achieved. The number of children procreated has no bearing on this, for the no-self can only create other no-selves.

The concept of role reversal is necessary in understanding the reasons underlying

parents' primitive, brutal behavior. From birth, babies are perceived by these parents as having adult powers for deliberately displeasing or judging, and they appear to be as unsatisfying and unsatisfiable to the current parent as were their original parents. The natural dependency of babies reinforces the projected image of the original parents who demanded, who could not be satisfied, and who did not satisfy the current parent.

At this point, the brutality of their parents is seen by these parents as a "good" trait of their parents, although they had hated it; it is now considered as their own natural prerogative in dealing with the dependency of their infants, who seem so aggressive and assaultive in their role-reversed positions. Once primary distortions begin to interact, parents act out depressive, anxious feelings from other life situations against the child - an easy target...□

These parents perceive babies as having adult powers for deliberately displeasing or judging.

Brief edited excerpt from a presentation entitled "Role Reversal: A Concept in Dealing with the Neglected/Battered-Child Syndrome", by M.G. Morris and R.W. Gould at an Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association.



Kids need a full-time parent...

State-funded daycare plan needs scrutiny

By Lorraine Young

Publicly, daycare evangelists have written off proposals by the parliamentary task force as woefully inadequate. But despite their apparent disappointment, in private they must be jumping for joy.

There's no denying it. The advocates of a heavily subsidized national daycare system have gained a huge amount of ground.

With the help of consistently sympathetic media, their point of view has gained immense exposure. Indeed, the criticism by daycare activists has been given as much or more press coverage as the proposals themselves.

More significant, daycare lobbyists have enjoyed immense success in steering public debate away from some tough questions.

An overseas visitor could be forgiven for concluding that all Canadians agree on three points: that the country is facing a daycare crisis of gigantic proportions; that the Government holds the solution in its bottomless treasury; and that how to implement the system is the only issue.

As far as the visitor can see, no one is questioning whether we have a genuine crisis, whether government can or should solve it and whether the issues are broader than the mechanics of funding.

Yet 48 per cent of Canadians say two-income families should not receive any government subsidy for daycare. This astounding Gallup Poll statistic was reported by Maclean's magazine in November.

Obviously, millions of Canadians disagree with the course Canada is being pushed toward.

So what is going on here?

For starters, opponents of daycare are not organized. Many are probably reluctant to speak up for fear of being labelled right-wing fanatics. Perhaps the front-line troops - the 40-plus per cent of Canadian parents of pre-schoolers who work at home taking care of their kids - are simply too busy to organize. Or maybe they are politically naive.

I'm convinced that huge numbers of Canadians believe as I do: young children need a parent at home full time, or nearly full time. I cannot believe it is in the interests of young children to be farmed out for 10 hours a day.

Do parents who work for wages really believe they can catch up if they see their kids from 7 to 7:45 in the morning and 5:30 to 7:30 in the evening? The idea is preposterous to most stay-at-home parents.

Kids need the cuddling, the commitment and the sense of security that only a parent can provide. How can daycare staff respond adequately to a young child's mood if they don't know how he slept or what words were exchanged at the breakfast table? How can they know what's behind a 3-year-old's question out of the blue: "What happens to your clothes when you die?"

Dr. Burton White, widely regarded as the

Lorraine Young is a stay-at-home mother of children aged 1, 4 and 7, and a freelance writer. This article first appeared in THE GLOBE AND MAIL. Lorraine Young and Gregory Bryce are co-founders of "Canadians for Full-time Parenting". The purpose of this organization is "to influence Canadians to adopt parenting as a career in the interest of children's emotional development and consequently the welfare of society." CFP as the organization is known, has taken out newspaper ads pointing out that "Daycare serves the interests of adults not kids... If the Daycare movement worries you, add your voice to ours. Your donation of \$5.00 or more will help buy more ads like this." Their address is 16 Firth Road, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 4R6.

foremost U.S. expert on early childhood learning and author of *The First Three Years of Life*, says: "I firmly believe that most children get a better start in life when, during the majority of the waking hours of their first three years, they are cared for by their parents or other nuclear family members, not by any form of substitute care."

It's debatable whether government must have a policy on the care of children. But if it's going to, surely that policy should be based on children's need for full-time parenting. Maybe if we dared put the needs of children first, we would start to question the wisdom of measures such as taxpayer-funded daycare or Unemployment Insurance maternity benefits. Is it possible they exacerbate the very problems they are designed to solve?

Again and again we're told that families simply cannot get by on one income. Has the economic position of the average Canadian family declined dramatically in a generation? Or have the material expectations of the vast middle class skyrocketed?

It seems that everyone expects to own a video cassette recorder, a microwave, color cable television or two cars. Surely, time nurturing little ones is more important than chasing after possessions. And if couples still feel they cannot get by on one income, what's to stop them building up a nest egg before they start a family?

Another thing that alarms me about the daycare movement is the readiness to institutionalize infants and small children. Little kids don't play in 15-minute chunks.

I'm fascinated watching kids play creatively. With just a little help, my 4-year-old stuffs his baby sister into a big box, jumps in beside her with a few props and plays fire truck for half the morning. The next day, it's a boat travelling up the Yukon

River. After that, a Toronto subway train. The mud in the driveway becomes tar that entraps dinosaurs.

Is daycare somehow going to avoid the emphasis on structure and uniformity that characterizes the school system?

Why are we so eager to transfer responsibility for our children to the state? Is the womb-to-tomb welfare state what the majority of Canadians want?

Questions of political philosophy need to be addressed in any debate about the care of children. The cause of "equality" is offered as self-evident proof of the need for massive expansion of government-funded daycare. Are we really prepared to sacrifice the needs of young children to achieve equality between men and women?

And what about "choice," the other political buzz word of the eighties?

In a letter to *The Globe and Mail*, federal Health Minister Jake Epp talked of "the need to expand choices for parents, the need to enable women with children to choose to participate in the paid labor force." Where did Mr. Epp get the notion that government has responsibility to create endless choices?

When two adults decide to have kids, they have made a choice and assumed big responsibilities.

If couples choose to have three full-time jobs and to subcontract one of them, they're perfectly free to do so. Unfortunately, the idea that government should pay the subcontractor has gained considerable acceptance.

Mr. Epp and his provincial counterparts have promised to come up with a national child-care policy. Will the 48 per cent who oppose the brave new world of state-funded daycare speak up before it's too late? □

The first duty to children is to make them happy.

Sir Thomas Buxton

The bottom line...

Does it pay to be divorced?

By Teresa Del Frari

Our story begins in the kitchen of a little house in Wicketsville, Alberta. Joe and Mary Smith (the names have been changed to protect the innocent) are busy balancing their budgets while two children, Matthew (5) and Sarah (3) are glued to Sesame Street. Joe earns \$35,000 a year and Mary is a full-time mother. With the new tax in-

crease they just cannot seem to make ends meet. Suddenly, the perfect solution comes to mind - a divorce. Mary runs down to file a \$125 no fault divorce. Joe pays her alimony of \$15,000 per year; they each take custody of one child and split the \$1,000 rent they are paying fifty-fifty. The results are obvious:

	Before Divorce	After Divorce	
	Joe	Joe	Mary
Employment Income	\$35,000	\$35,000	
Employment Expenditure Deduction	(500)	(500)	
Taxable Family Allowance	605	605	
Alimony Income			\$15,000
Canada Pension Plan	(419)	(419)	
Unemployment Insurance	(604)	(604)	
Alimony Paid		(15,000)	
Net Income	\$34,082	\$19,082	\$15,000
Basic Personal Exemption	(4,180)	(4,180)	(4,180)
Married Exemption	(3,660)		
Exemption for Dependent Children (\$710 x 2)	(1,420)		
Equivalent to Married Exemption		(3,660)	(3,660)
Taxable Income	\$24,822	\$11,242	\$7,160
Tax Payable	\$6,917	\$2,682	\$1,462
Alberta Tax Credits (Rental Payments)	(252)	(388)	(428)
Child Tax Credit	(379)	(454)	(454)
Federal Sales Tax Credit			(100)
Tax Payable After Credits	\$6,286	\$1,840	\$480

(1,840 + 480 = **\$2,323**)

Decrease in Taxes for the Smith Family = \$3,966

With the \$3,966 decrease in taxes, a trip to Hawaii is in the offing. The moral of the story is "united you pay, divided you don't!!!"

This brief accounting of the way in which the Canadian tax system appears to favour separation and divorce is reprinted, with permission, from the Volume 1, No. 2, Sept. 1987 issue of the KIDS FIRST Newsletter. This dynamic non-profit organization "believes that child care in the home with a willing and caring adult, optimally a parent, is the preferable method of child care". Their objective is to encourage "financial policies which are non-discriminatory for child care e.g. tax credits to parents (and social policies which give parents support and recognition, e.g. funding for parent support groups)". Annual Membership fee is \$5.00. The address of KIDS FIRST is 6604-34 Street South West, Calgary, Alberta T3E 5M2 (403) 246-6180.

It's not what it used to be...

Parenting should be done by parents

By Pete McMartin

*'M' is for the Money that she's making,
'O' is for the Others that care for me,
'T' is for the Time she can't be taking,
'H' is for the Home I rarely see,
'E' is for her Earning a good living,
'R' is for her Rising salary.
Put them all together and they spell
MOTHER,
A word that isn't what it used to be.*

The enlightened among you will have decided that that poetic liberty is unfairly sexist.

I would be the first to admit that. I could have similarly spelt out F-A-T-H-E-R or, better yet, P-A-R-E-N-T. After all, we no longer *mother* our children: we *parent* them, a verb that in its present use is earnest and progressive. "Mother" rhymes with "smother" - the suffocation of a young human's potential within the soft breast of an over-protective female. They can't breathe! They can't *develop*!

But "parenting"! The word has the sound of happy work to it, two equal partners marching their little creation ever so gently toward smiling productive adulthood, and the quicker the better. Parenting regards the world as a competitive place, and thus sees children in the same light. Train them! Get them ready! Enrol them in violin, daycare. Acclimatize them to regimentation.

Parenting is the conscious act of child development, as if progeny were Five-Year Plans and childhood a time to be steered through, rather than lingered over. Life is a job and it is never too early to cultivate a resume. I am, in this, as guilty as any among my generation.

And not to be too doctrinaire about this, and to be fair to all parents, there are elements to child-rearing that are timeless. Parents will always scream at their kids. Parents will always find them a mystery. Parents will always fear for their safety. Love among child and parent is unchanging.

But there is in modern parenting a partial abdication of responsibility, an erosion of parental authority (which used to be Law) by outside influences. It is as if in some matters parents no longer trust their own instincts and behavior as the best guide for their own children. The question of who knows best how to raise your children is now the subject of community debate.

The amazing thing about this reconsideration of traditional family self-governance is the degree of acceptance it enjoys. Federal Health and Welfare minister Jake Epp believed he was uttering a motherhood statement when he said he believed parents - not daycare workers - are usually the best people to raise their children. He also said it was "poppycock" to say youngsters are better stimulated in

Reprinted from the Vancouver Sun. Pete McMartin is a regular columnist for that newspaper. Special thanks to Gael Storey of Vancouver for drawing this article to the attention of the editor.

daycare centres than at home.

Poor Jake Epp! He utters a truism (I happen to agree with Epp, if you hadn't guessed) and the Opposition calls for his resignation.

Liberal MP Doug Frith saw Epp as some kind of monster. "I hope Canadians react in a manner," Frith frothed, "which makes it very clear to Mr. Epp... that families are not pleased with the direction he is suggesting."

What about the direction families are taking? Those who would argue that children receive more "stimulation" in daycare centres than at home miss the point. Home is not meant for "stimulation," it is meant for love. And besides, what kind of stimulation are we talking about? Why do pre-schoolers need it? What end does this stimulation serve?

The answer is that it serves the parents. It assuages guilt. It avoids the inability to make hard decisions. It sidesteps the real issue that the motive forces behind daycare and competitive parenting are selfishness, materialism, and an inability to understand

Why do pre-schoolers need the "stimulation" they get at daycare centres? What end does it serve? It serves the parents. It assuages guilt.

the responsibility parents assume when they decide to have children.

Some parents must send their children to daycare, but for most it is a matter of paying too-high mortgages, or maintaining a comfortable style of life, or just getting out of the house. So, otherwise engaged, we allot time to our children as we would to any of our avocations. The more conscious we become of the act of parenting, the more of an act it becomes. □





Let Me Tell You About ICEA

By Marianne Brorup-Weston

Marianne is a Director-at-Large for the ICEA and a member of the ICEA Publications and Cesarean Options Committee. She writes about ICEA services in her province, British Columbia.

ICEA stands for International Childbirth Education Association. We are a group of over 11,000 parents and professionals worldwide, committed to ICEA's motto, "Freedom of Choice Based on Knowledge of Alternatives" and to the promotion of family centred maternity care (FCMC). In 1985 we celebrated our silver anniversary - a quarter century of dedication by volunteers to humanizing maternity care and teaching about informed consent.

What does ICEA do? If it concerns childbirth, ICEA probably does something related to it.

My own first contact with ICEA was with the Province Co-ordinator for B.C., Louise Managan in 1979. This co-ordinator is responsible to a regional director who in turn serves on the Board of Directors. There are many other Board positions related to conventions, publications, teacher services, etc. This is the channel that voices the concerns of parents worldwide. The Province Co-ordinator is a resource and referral person. If you have a question about pregnancy or birth, take it to her. If she can't answer it, she will know someone who can.

If you are a childbirth educator, she might refer you to ICEA's Teacher Certification Program (TCP). This Program is open to anyone with a serious interest in teaching childbearing families. A background in nursing is NOT a prerequisite. But some experience with teaching pregnant couples is. The TCP provides upper level certification; it is not a beginner's course. It is, however, well received worldwide and one of its main strengths is that one is not restricted to teaching any one specific "method" of prenatal education such as Lamaze or Bradley. The basic premise is to learn how to teach according to ICEA's motto, "Freedom of Choice Based on Knowledge Alternatives". That is why, in fact, it can be difficult for someone with a real traditional nursing background to complete the program. But it can also be an incredible eye opener to become aware that so many of the options that parents have been demanding are in fact safe options that support the growth and well-being of the entire family unit.

For those just starting out in teaching, ICEA offers Basic Teacher Education Workshops. Sometimes these are held in conjunction with a large convention or a conference. These programs give aspiring or new teachers an opportunity to round out their knowledge and skills.

The thing that most excited me when I took up childbirth education was to attend

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a conference. Wow, what a shot of inspiration to meet with hundreds of birth-crazy people and to browse through a bookstore where the word vagina was found on almost every page! To listen to real, live experts and to hear them say exactly what my heart had told me all along. It was heaven, all right.

ICEA sponsors conventions, conferences and workshops around the world. A very successful Australian tour with Charles Mahan, renowned obstetrician and lecturer, has opened the eyes of all those in attendance as well as those reached by the media. This year conventions will be held in Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., along with three conferences in Montreal, Saskatoon, and Vancouver. In some areas, Sharing Days are held to bring together ICEA members to discuss topics of interest and to broaden and strengthen networking among prenatal educators.

After I got over the shock of seeing so many birthy books in one location, I became aware of the ICEA Bookcentre. Now, if you are at all addicted to either birth or to books, perhaps you shouldn't read any further. This is a service to ICEA members that can do real damage to your pocketbook. A catalogue of hundreds of titles, class handouts, journal reprints, teaching materials and tote bags (to carry all your wonderful books) is issued once every three months. Book reviews are in-



cluded and a discount is applied to bulk purchases. The Bookcenter sets up at all Conventions and many other ICEA events as well. For a catalogue, "Bookmarks", write to ICEA, P.O. Box 20048, Minneapolis, MN 55420, U.S.A. As an ICEA member, you automatically receive a copy of each "Bookmarks".

Other benefits of ICEA membership are the International Journal of Childbirth Education (we call it "Journal"), and the ICEA "Review". The Journal is issued quarterly, and each issue is devoted to one area of education. Recent examples are cesarean birth and smoke/alcohol. A variety of articles, editorials and teaching tips appear in each issue. The "Review" is usually an insert and deals with current and/or controversial topics in childbirth (such as VBAC*, eye treatment in the neonate, jaundice, and siblings at birth) using a review of literature format. Anyone working as changemaker will find the "Review" extremely useful.

Within ICEA there are many different resource persons, ranging from a list of renowned experts serving as consultants, to directors dealing with various aspects of the organization to committee chairs in breastfeeding, community outreach and cesarean options. All these resources are listed in the ICEA membership directory, which is updated yearly and sent to each member.

Since I am presently chair of the Cesarean Options Committee (COPC), I'll tell you about it. The COPC operates via the mail and addresses areas related to cesarean birth. This includes humanizing the cesarean experience, teaching alternatives in cesareans, promoting VBAC and keeping abreast of current literature dealing with cesarean sections. Because of the ever-spiraling section rate, we are particularly atuned to cesarean prevention at all levels of care. The mandate of the COPC includes the following, but is not limited to it:

- Evaluating literature related to cesarean birth or cesarean alternatives.
- Encouraging and aiding groups or individual members who are providing services, conducting research and implementing family-centred maternity care for

* Vaginal Birth after Cesarean.

cesarean birth.

- Responding to consumer inquiries for information and materials. The COPC will aid in the development of educational programs and supply correspondents with appropriate resources and references.
- Communicating with the Director of Conferences and Conventions regarding cesarean related information, topics and speakers who might be included in future ICEA programs.

What all this really means is that as members of the COPC, we work hard to keep abreast of current cesarean issues and to develop imaginative ways of addressing the cesarean crisis. If you have any information about family-centred cesarean birth or VBAC resources - anything at all related to C-sections, drop me a line. I am convinced one of the best ways of raising awareness is to develop strong networks among likeminded groups. With a 23% cesarean section rate, we have our work cut out for us. You just never

know; perhaps the one little note you send us about a supportive physician or innovative VBAC group will help someone else avoid an unnecessary cesarean!

Since my contact with Louise Mangan in 1979, ICEA has been a daily part of my life (and that of my family too). I know that what I have written here is dry reading compared to hands-on-information about childbirth. Until you have become as intimately acquainted with a consumer organization as I am with ICEA, you cannot appreciate how many resources are at your fingertips. Through my eight years of childbirth activism and education, I have witnessed incredible progress in my own town of 10,000. I would not have been able to continue to work for reform and to keep searching for common ground had ICEA not been there for me. So tuck this article away somewhere for safe keeping and haul it out when the going gets rough. Contact your local ICEA representative and find out what consumer clout is all about. □

The next generation of mothers may prefer to stay home

from The Chicago Tribune

Although labor statistics show record numbers of working mothers, home is where the next generation of moms may prefer to stay, at least until their children are of school age.

A national U.S. survey of high school seniors, reported in Family Life Educator magazine, revealed that 34 per cent of those questioned found it unacceptable for women with preschool-age children to work at all, while 62 per cent said it was unacceptable for both parents of young children to work full time.

In a related study, 81 per cent of the teen-age girls responding to a survey in Indianapolis said they would not take a job outside their home if they were mothers.



The high cost of Attachment Failures

By Dr. Justin Call

Presented here, with the author's kind permission, is an edited transcript of a portion of a presentation made by Dr. Call at the 14th Annual Seminar for Physicians on Breastfeeding sponsored by La Leche League International. Rushed for time during his presentation and covering ground with which his audience had some familiarity, this article really skips lightly over a wide field which Dr. Call has presented in much more detail elsewhere. I would urge the interested reader to review, for example, Chapter 27 - Psychiatric Syndromes of Infancy, pages 242 - 262, Volume 5 of the Basic handbook of Child Psychiatry, edited by Joseph D. Noshitz and published by Basic Books, New York. Dr. Call has also written a superb chapter on Attachment Disorders of Infancy in the Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry/III, pages 2586 - 2597, edited by Kaplan, Freedman, and Sadock and published by Williams and Wilkins.

One of the syndromes for us to talk about is attachment failure of early infancy - failure to thrive without organic cause. I don't think that term is a very good one. It tells you only what is already so obvious, namely the baby is failing to thrive and you can't find the cause of it. However, attachment failure of early infancy is the syndrome behind the vast majority of these cases.

There are several aspects of attachment failure. There is a primary attachment failure. There can also be a chronic form of this that isn't recognized until the second year of life where all the symptoms of the primary disorder are present but in less dramatic forms.

Then there is anaclitic depression. The syndrome attachment failure of early infancy, called Reactive Attachment Disorder of Infancy, involves a number of symptoms: failure in sensory-motor development, lack of stranger and separation anxiety, psychosocial delay, and a lack of maternal preoccupation with the infant.

Preoccupation, but what does it mean? It means that even when the baby's in another room and out of her sight, the mother's preoccupation about the infant continues. You'll talk to mothers and fathers who go out for an evening dinner and they're thinking about the baby through all the course of the meal. That's maternal preoccupation. It's an interesting idea if you speculate whether the baby knows the mother's preoccupied. How does the baby know that? We can't prove it, but we know it's important.

When you talk to mothers about their babies their feelings and their affects surround and influence the words and phrases that they use. Thus we can see evidence of preoccupation: the continuity of the rela-

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tionship is preserved by the mother's story of herself and her child. We know that to tell such a story she must be preoccupied with the baby. She has it coded in her mind and demonstrates her preoccupation as she speaks to you. And a lack of this one finds in babies who have attachment failure without organic cause.

Inadequate care and protection is another indication of this failure. If the parent is not so preoccupied, the baby's needs and care may not be responded to and protection is sometimes lacking.

An interesting problem involved here is that failure to thrive is associated with lack of caloric intake. Parents who are not sufficiently attached and preoccupied with their infants rarely feed them adequately. This happens even when babies are bottle fed and when parents could have

If the parent is not preoccupied with the baby, the infant's needs and care may not be responded to.

measured the feeding very easily. We've brought babies into the hospital, and had the mother feed the baby and said "well how did he do?" The mother said "he took the whole bottle". We've gone back and seen that two ounces are taken, not the whole bottle. So we know that the preoccupation and the awareness of the true state of affairs with the infant is impaired without preoccupation. There are of course no organic symptoms. This attachment failure will have important consequences later on. If it goes on it leads to psychosocial retardation, a very common cause of mild to moderate mental retardation.

Another problem is Attachment Disorder, Anaclitic Type. This is a situation where the mother and baby have developed a close attachment with one another over the first few months of life, but for various reasons it is broken. One reason for the break can be a loss of the mother. For example, Rene Spitz studied a group of babies six months or older whose mothers had left them to go to jail. Spitz then observed the anaclitic depression in the infants.

What are the symptoms of the anaclitic type? The baby has been doing well: he or

Some women constantly search for control, and use the infant to meet their own needs.

she has normal sensory motor development, normal responsiveness, normal affective engagement with others, as well as a continuous and interestingly complex social and affective engagement with the mother. When the mother is removed, the baby regresses. He or she no longer walks (if he had been walking) or uses his hands to hold onto things, or to reach out. There is a withdrawal: the face is blank, there is loss of eye contact. Some appetite is lost. Sleep is disturbed. There is a much greater susceptibility to ordinary skin rashes, and there is a much higher susceptibility to infection. The last symptom is probably based on immunosuppression caused by the trauma of loss. Of course infection can be a very serious problem. Ear infections are common, although that doesn't mean all ear infections are caused by loss of mother. Apart from infection, the baby fails to gain weight and drops down in his percentile. This is a pathetic thing to observe.

In San Francisco I observed such a case recently while testifying in court. The biological mother wanted to reclaim her child, and the judge (unwisely in my opinion) said "okay, we'll let you have the child for a week." The child regressed enormously in a week and did not recover for a full month afterwards. Now we're going back to court armed with the symptoms observed during that week. At least the unwise judge has performed an experiment that may convince the next judge that the baby should instead be left with the foster parents who want to adopt the child. They in essence have become the real parents.

There are reasons for the loss of attachment other than the mother's absence. It can be a psychological absence because the mother is depressed, psychotic, or has a debilitating physical illness. It can occur when the family moves, or with other disruptions of the entire family where the mother's preoccupation is broken. It can occur after a loss, not of the biological mother, but of the babysitter who has had

the primary involvement with the child. That is not often recognized or even asked about, but it can occur. Of course, with divorce and with unresolved marital problems, the baby may be what I call deaffected - disinvested along with the spouse. The opposite also happens.

The baby gets enormously invested in a symbiotic union as a substitute for the spouse. So there are various things that can bring about anaclitic depression. Thus, attachment is important not only for the baby's formation but for its maintenance.

Another interesting syndrome deserves a brief mention. It comes from the transition (late in the second year and on into the third) when babies begin to pick up their own food and eat it. The problem usually occurs around eating, but may occur a little later around toileting. It isn't just an ordinary case of a finicky baby who wants special things in its mouth. Instead, the baby is starving itself. Since the baby can actually starve itself to death, they are brought into the hospital and the mother-child relationship is observed. These serious attachment disorders are really the failure of the infant to move beyond dependency into self-sufficiency. At that time, very immature mothers, and those with serious character disorders cannot allow the baby to be separate and independent from them. Such women constantly search for control, and use the infant to meet their own needs. The infant's natural independent, self caring activity frustrates this control and a terrible struggle occurs. The mothers want to reinvest the symbiotic union with the child.



Other kinds of attachment disorders are those of the symbiotic variety. In the primary case the baby's symbiotic attachment simply continues and does not progress for various reasons either in the infant or in the mother. It can also be related to secondary causes. For example, if the baby is ill and has to go to the hospital. In some cases of two year olds bitten by dogs, we see the mother and infant very closely bonded to one another as a result of the terrible trauma of the bite on the child's face. The symbiotic union was re-established. That's normal during a traumatic situation. However, in some cases the symbiotic relationship continues: baby and mother do not go through a convalescent phase, where they re-establish separateness.

Or the problem may be focal. It's a distortion in the mother-child relationship where symbiosis is established around a particular bodily function or organ system. For example the feeding and toileting situations may lead to the syndrome known as psychogenic megacolon. The baby holds its bowel movements to the extent that the abdomen becomes large and one sees a huge fecal mass inside. The baby will not let it out. The problem is generally related to an enormous anal focus on the baby, while the other non-anal needs of the infant are not attended to.

So, you say, we have all of these words and ideas about the building up and loss of relationships between the infant and the mother, as well as between the baby and the rest of the family. So what!

I've seen a lot of adult cases as a psychoanalyst reconstructing the past, as a psychiatrist doing evaluations of people, and as a teacher and a scholar. I've wondered how we could organize our thinking about the kinds of disturbances we might find in adult life that result from attachment disorders in infancy. They are particularly serious because adults rarely respond to medication. Problems such as multiple attachments and losses, trauma around those attachments and losses, and multiple attachments without meaning come to mind. Here's what I've come up with. Psychopathology of partnerships and marital relationships would be the first classification. Psychopathology in parenting is a function itself. Serious problems in the sense of self that we see in our psychiatric practise challenge us all.

The first category is **psychopathology in partnerships and marital relationships**. The reason I say partnerships is that I've seen business partners where there is enormous misunderstanding. They enter into the relationship with the same degree of heightened expectancy that people would if they were romantically in love. They expect it all to be full of productivity and mutual support. Pretty soon they discover that their own feelings (possessiveness, jealousy, dependency ties and defence against dependency) are getting in the way. They want to use the talents of the other person but they confuse their own self with that of the other. Love turns to hate and projection, and even to sadomasochism. One wants to make the other person suffer, wants retribution. That desire to get even then becomes the guiding influence of the relationship.

The same thing happens in marital relationships, but it also happens in other kinds of partnerships as well. These are the leftover problems of mediating attachments, of losing oneself from attachments and of feeling a full sense of self and autonomy in separateness as well as in co-operative endeavours between people. And I think those lessons are learned in infancy in the



forming of attachments, in the loosening of them, and in finding autonomy.

The next category is **psychopathology of parenting functions**. The most obvious comes from observations of families having problems in parenting functions. For example, if there is a feeding disorder or bowel difficulty, there is usually a history of these occurrences in the parental background.

A recent case comes to mind. A mother had great difficulty with her little girl, even though she was a wonderful mother to the younger brother. She does well with her boys, but does poorly with her girls. It was a repetition of the mother's past, where boys were very rewarding and competitive sisters were not. This led to a regression of separation distress in the infant. When babies show separation distress, that sometimes leads to regressive behaviour on the part of the parent, who can either deny the baby's separation distress or over-respond to it. Problems occur in allowing attachment symbiosis independency, making the transition between these phases, letting go, facilitating individuation.

The more serious parts of psychopathology are **problems in the sense of self**, incomplete sense of self, confusion about one's self and that of the infant. There are situations where the parent says terrible things about the baby. For example, the mother might say the baby is greedy, selfish, "angry at me", even "going to eat you up". In fact, it is a projection of everything that is inside the parent that he or she has not been able to manage. It is also a confusion of the parent's self with the infant. When parents have an incomplete sense of self and can't manage the small insults of everyday life, the small setbacks mount up, create chaos, and turn people into somersaults. The individual who displays borderline personality characteristics may have problems coping and may be so brittle that it's hard for others to maintain relationships with them. The borderline individual often functions quite well, but may suddenly relapse into regressive episodes that no one understands.

In summary, I have presented a catalogue of psychological disorders in infancy, from failure to thrive, primary attachment failure, anaclitic depression to symbiotic attachment failure, and indicated how these may carry on into adult life. □



Love and Marriage

(continued)

makes marriages work, we realize that self discipline goes into love and marriage. We need to say no to a lot of selfishness in our everyday activities, and also be willing to say no to temptations to be unfaithful. Adults can help kids say no to drugs and alcohol by saying no to self destructive things in their marriages and personal lives.

In terms of understanding love and making marriages work, we do need a lot of forgiveness and self-forgiveness. We need to forgive ourselves what we are not, and to forgive our spouses what they are not. In life, we all strive for ideals because ideals stretch us to be our best selves. Yet, none of us is ideal, so we need a lot of understanding and forgiveness.

The way to keep love and marriage alive is to live each day as a new day - to lay aside past resentments and expectations and to accept ourselves and our lives as we are... □

Love is a choice to befriend someone for life, not to manipulate, or control, or use them.

I like somehow being forced to place my own needs behind the needs of others... Isn't this what makes life most gratifying?

Being a mother *(continued)*

I believe the mother knows her child best. Generally that relationship, at least while the child is a baby, is best left untouched. First-time mothers would perhaps cope much better if they were made to believe by everyone around them that they are the best caretaker of their own child.

I have learned that being at home with young children and doing a reasonably good job is a learned process. One learns coping skills, I would hope, and taps on the resources in the community like drop-ins, parent and child swimming classes, and library storytime, to mention a few that I have found useful. I would be insane without them.

I remember once when asked (at a party full of single, childless people) what I did. I said I wiped, bums, noses, faces, walls and highchairs (but not too well because they only look real when they're dirty). I felt like I wandered around all day with a wet rag in my hand. I had two children then, both under two years old, so I probably did.

I have learned that I have more patience with those I know and love. If my child is

having a complete tantrum in the store and I know we had her out late last night and she's also hungry for supper, I generally have more patience for the undesirable behaviour. What I'm trying to say here is that I feel we have an extra measure of love for our own children.

So motherhood is fulfilling, or just hell on earth. Well, I like having the opportunity to learn more about life than I have ever learned before. I get some weird sense of accomplishment from managing a family of five, sometimes under conditions of extreme sleep deprivation. I like being somehow forced to place my own needs behind the needs of others. Isn't this what makes life most gratifying?

And children do give back - so much - even though they owe us nothing. You had to be in my car today; my five year old was teaching my four year old "God Save the Queen". After several rounds, the younger one looked at the older one and said, "Why does God have to save the Queen? Is she caught in a fire or something?" Our children give us their love unconditionally; something we find very difficult at times. They put joy into our lives by reminding us of the wonder of the universe. They give us the opportunity to play with toys again, to see a circus for the first time in twenty years, to sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

I am very thankful for the opportunity of motherhood. My heart goes out to those who, for one reason or another, cannot have children. My heart goes out further to those who, by choice, will not have children. For "children's children are the crown of old men," (Also from The Family of Children and Proverbs 17:6). And I will not know the life of a grandmother until I am one myself. That I have learned from being a mother. □



Special thanks to Anne Barr of Winnipeg for drawing this article to the attention of the editor.

PARENTS SENSIBLES

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Le travail des femmes

...Dans un bar, dans une petite ville de Kenya, quelques hommes boivent, debout, tandis que d'autres sont assis aux tables peintes en vert comme les chaises. Il y n'y a que deux femmes là; moi-même et la serveuse.

'Dans mon village, les femmes vont chercher l'eau et le bois, s'occupent des petits animaux ainsi que de la maison et des enfants', disait un professeur en prenant une autre gorgée de bière tiède. 'Les femmes creusent pour le shamba et elles plantent les jardins. Sauf maintenant, c'est la sécheresse et il n'y a pas de jardins. Elles doivent aller loin pour chercher l'eau.'

'Que font les hommes?' je demande.

'Les hommes? Bien, nous travaillons.'

'N'est-ce pas ça que font les femmes?'

'Oh, non. Les femmes ne travaillent pas.'

'Mais, vous venez de me décrire tout le travail que font les femmes.'

'Non, je parle d'aller au travail. Gagner de l'argent. Dans notre culture, voyez-vous, le femmes ne travaillent pas.'

Osei Kofi

The new Internationalist

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Recognizing that the capacity to give and receive trust, affection and empathy is fundamental to being human.

Knowing that all of us suffer the consequences when children are raised in a way that makes them affectionless and violent, and;

Realizing that for the first time in History we have definite knowledge that these qualities are determined by the way a child is cared for in the very early years.

CREDO



WE BELIEVE THAT:

- The necessity that every new human being develop the capacity for trust, affection and empathy dictates that potential parents re-order their priorities with this in mind.
- Most parents are willing and able to provide their children with the necessary loving empathic care, given support from others, appropriate understanding of the task and the conviction of its absolute importance.
- It is unutterably cruel to permanently maim a human being by failing to provide this quality of care during the first three years of life.

THERE IS AN URGENCY THEREFORE TO:

- Re-evaluate all our institutions, traditions and beliefs from this perspective.
- Oppose and weaken all forces which undermine the desire or ability of parents to successfully carry out a task which ultimately affects us all.
- Support and strengthen all aspects of family and community life which assist parents to meet their obligation to each new member of the human race.