

EMPATHIC PARENTING

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

Volume 9

Issue 1

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If the mother cannot maintain her inner tie
with her toddler, she may lose her capacity
to progress in her maternal development...
see page 25



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Until we become sensitized to the small child's suffering...

...Contempt is the weapon of the weak and a defense against one's own despised and unwanted feelings. And the fountainhead of all contempt, all discrimination, is the more or less conscious, uncontrolled, and secret exercise of power over the child by the adult, which is tolerated by society (except in the case of murder or serious bodily harm). What adults do to their child's spirit is entirely their own affair. For the child is regarded as the parents' property, in the same way as the citizens of a totalitarian state are the property of its government. Until we become sensitized to the small child's suffering, this wielding of power by adults will continue to be a normal aspect of the human condition, for no one pays attention to or takes seriously what is regarded as trivial, since the victims are "only children". But in twenty years' time these children will be adults who will have to pay it all back to their own children. They may then fight vigorously against cruelty "in the world" — and yet they will carry within themselves an experience of cruelty to which they have no access and which remains hidden behind their idealized picture of a happy childhood.

Alice Miller
See page 21

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EMPATHIC PARENTING/Winter 1986



EMPATHIC PARENTING

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Letters

THE SECRET FOR PRODUCING HEALTHY CHILDREN

Dear Dr. Barker:

Re: Quote from 'Cycle World' magazine, page 41 — "Motorcycles," he said, "are like children, yah? You gif zem all ze best, und still sometimes zey go bad!"

I read the above line in a motorcycle magazine and thought of you and your work. Perhaps the fastidious mechanic described treated his children as he did motorcycles — giving them the best (food, care, and educational opportunities) but was surprised to find that the pride and joy of his life, his children, turned out badly.

Most motorcycles usually run very well, and if they break down, the fault does not lie with the mechanic or the engineer but with some part or process that was faulty. Similarly with children, some end in disaster despite the best intentions of their parents because of faults incurred in early childhood due to improper love or misguided priorities.

Anyway I thought this paragraph illustrated how some people try hard with their children but still their efforts are misguided and end up producing lemons which require much in the way of repair work and may never run properly. The secret for producing healthy children, as with that of producing reliable motorcycles is hard to define, but putting some thought and care into the early design and manufacturing seems to get things off to a good start.

Sincerely,
Dave Johnson
Odessa, Ontario

IN DEFENSE OF THE BIBLE

Dear Dr. Barker:

I have been a member of the CSPCC for five years. Enclosed is a cheque for renewal.

In the past couple of years I have on occasion been bothered by comments made in several articles. They refer specifically to fundamentalist Christians and their interpretation of what the bible teaches. Writers frequently pick up on **one** scripture only, "Spare the rod and spoil the child". These same writers fail to mention the recurring message of the gospels (as most Christians interpret it) "to love one another as I have loved you". Jesus was not referring only to adult/adult relationships. Over and over again he speaks of gentleness, patience, fairness and unconditional love in relating to all living things.

I have been a Christian for two years. Since experiencing God's unconditional love I have been better able to respond to my children in love, being more closely able to live the philosophy of the CSPCC. I am far from the perfect parent **but** with God's help I know I will continue to improve.

Yours truly,
Cheryl Crawford
Heffley Creek, B.C.

Good News for Modern Man

⁴Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous, or conceited, or proud; ⁵love is not ill-mannered, or selfish, or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; ⁶love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. ⁷Love never gives up: its faith, hope, and patience never fail.

1 Corinthians 13, 4-7

Overcoming the feeling of being abandoned

...Take, for an example, the feeling of being abandoned — not that of the adult, who feels lonely and therefore takes tablets or drugs, goes to the movies, visits friends, or telephones “unnecessarily”, in order to bridge the gap somehow. No, I mean the original feeling in the small infant, who had none of these chances of distraction and whose communication, verbal or preverbal, did not reach the mother. This was not the case because his mother was bad, but because she herself was narcissistically deprived, dependent on a specific echo from the child that was so essential to her, for she herself was a child in search of an object that could be available to her. However paradoxical this may seem, a child is at the mother’s disposal. A child cannot run away from her as her own mother once did. A child can be so brought up that it becomes what she wants it to be. A child can be made to show respect, she can impose her own feelings on him, see herself mirrored in his love and admiration, and feel strong in his presence, but when he becomes too much she can abandon that child to a stranger. The mother can feel herself the centre of attention, for her child’s eyes follow her everywhere. When a woman had to suppress and repress all these needs in relation to her own mother, they rise from the depth of her unconscious and seek gratification through her own child, however well-educated and well-intentioned she may be, and however much she is aware of what a child needs. The child feels this clearly and very soon forgoes the expression of his own distress. Later, when these feelings of being deserted begin to emerge in the analysis of the adult, they are accompanied by such intensity of pain and despair that it is quite clear that these people could not have survived so much pain. That would only have been possible in an empathic, attentive environment, and this they lacked... □

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Giving our children Time to grow

Thomas C. Hudnut

Every year thousands of thoroughbred horses are foaled in this country. Many are almost instantly discarded or forgotten for their imperfections. Others sell for fabulous prices and have the finest in training, medical care, and lodging lavished on them. Even some of these never make it to the races.

Of those that do, most never win a race. Posted by owners and trainers eager to make a buck or earn a place in the record book, a lot of horses simply break down, their fragile, well-bred bones and cartilages shattered or their temperaments heated white with fury and frustration. Of all these horses born in a given year, only one will go on to win the Kentucky Derby, and fewer than half a dozen will be remembered five years later by any but the most devoted railbird.

For too many of us, our children are our horses, and their academic success is the Kentucky Derby of our parenthood. We have tended to buy into a system that overvalues academic attainment and loses sight of human decency in the process.

It is a rare person indeed who excels in studies, human qualities, extracurricular activities, athletics, and whatever else we stress in our schools. This doesn't mean that we parents shouldn't hope our children will be wonders, but it does mean we are wrong to expect it. Where we are most unreasonable is in emphasizing excellence in studies as most important and desirable.

How many of us were terrific students? To hear parents talk about their children's academic progress, you'd think they had all been straight-A students. Unlikely. Think about the people you like and admire. Why? For their intellectual ability and academic feats? I doubt it. You like them for their humour, energy, compassion, empathy, enthusiasm, flexibility, tolerance, self-

confidence, commitment to something greater than themselves.

Guess what? Those are precisely the qualities college professors overwhelmingly say they hope their graduates will possess. There's not an academic or intellectual quality among them. At least to those intellectuals, the mind comes after the soul. When the primacy of the spirit is lost or even obscured, watch out — but it happens all too often in the schools to which most of us would like to send our children.

Listen to these students, writing in the newspapers of two of our leading schools. At one, a senior writes, "In my years here, it has been impressed upon me that the most important things in life are memorizing and following rules. God and humanity are superficially covered so that neither are brought into the student's life."

Two older students at another school write that "the tremendous creative power available here is focused almost solely on achieving high grades, developing one's self-image, and being accepted to the college of one's choice. Many of us have lost our sense of fun and humour in our meaningless struggle to succeed. We have lost all perspective on our school and ourselves."

Even allowing for some adolescent hyperbole, those are potent indictments of the system I'm talking about. Schools must be dispensers of knowledge, but what they must also dispense, in even greater abundance, is wisdom. That's much harder. Wisdom involves thinking and listening and sifting and using one's experience. Not just reading a book or taking a course or going to school. Wisdom comes from all these things.

Before becoming the head of a school, I taught European history. Few topics have

Thomas Hudnut is in his first year as headmaster of The Katharine Branson-Mount Tamalpais School, Ross, California. This article is taken from remarks made at the last meeting of the parents' association he attended as headmaster of the Norwood School, Bethesda, Maryland, in May.

A school whose first aim is academic excellence is a school for knowledge, not wisdom, a potential breeding ground for intellectual psychopaths.

ever interested me more than World War I, chiefly because of the conflict between knowledge and wisdom it represents.

Knowledge was ludicrously in front. Why? Technology had come up with airplanes and submarines and machine guns and trucks and barbed wire and poison gas since the last general war, and wisdom was still mired in the nineteenth century, a more civilized age, perhaps, in which hundreds of thousands of people were not susceptible to sudden annihilation. Much of that war and most of its carnage resulted from the lag between knowledge and wisdom.

Thus perhaps it must ever be, because if necessity is the mother of invention, then invention must be the progenitor of our ability to cope, which none of us can do without. A school whose first aim is academic excellence is a school for knowledge, not wisdom, a potential breeding ground for intellectual psychopaths.

According to one admission director, "The kids in the 99th percentile are the ones I know are going to have problems." Douglas Heath, the Haverford psychologist so well known for his expertise in the psychology and ethos of independent schools, says that one thing you can predict from College Board tests is that the higher the verbal score, the greater the potential for problems adjusting as adults: failed marriages, unhappiness, faulty perceptions of self, and on and on.

What does this all mean? Clearly it's not bad or wrong to be smart or to be a high academic achiever, nor is it a good idea not to try to do well or make the best of one's potential. These will happen, however, only if they spring from within a child and are allowed to flower according to the child's own developmental timetable — which is something parents tend to forget. We get caught up in a competitive web with our friends and neighbours and couple it with our almost innate sense of upward mobility and our wish to give our children an even better life and education than we had.

Thus, while we can be philosophical about our five-year-old's not being ready to ride a two-wheeler, we cannot accept it

when our six-year-old can't read as well as the kid up the street, who may even go to a public school, for heaven's sake. We don't expect our cute fifth grade chorister to sing perfectly on pitch and in strict tempo with fine diction, but we sure have a hard time seeing why that same child isn't in the top math group or writing in well-crafted, properly punctuated paragraphs.

If we can understand that most people can't hit a golf ball 250 yards, paint a portrait, or play a sonata until they have attained certain stages of development, why do we expect twelve-year-olds to be able to do quadratics or discuss the economy of Burma? They're just not ready for it. Yet our overwhelming reaction when we hear of some kid who can do these things isn't "Good for Chris!" It's "What's wrong with mine?"

Because we are unwilling to wait on our children's timetables, we are prone to want them in schools that are the equivalent of a major league spring training camp before they've learned to hit or field. We hope against hope that our child will be one who isn't chewed up by the system, one who can stand the kind of environment described thus in another school newspaper: "To begin with, class participation is often limited to input, which is primarily intended to improve one's own intellectual status relative to other students, and not to help others to understand. In many cases one student will achieve success in one class only by correcting or belittling another. The fear of 'making a fool of oneself' by being proved wrong stifles creativity and inhibits guessing, which is essential to the learning process. In addition, this competitive spirit results in a great deal of resentment and jealousy concerning grades and other measures of status."

Some people thrive in such an atmosphere; the more overt and vicious the competition, the better. But most don't not even in a school like that one. They are the ones who drift through, never quite making it, sometimes getting into trouble. In most instances, such children are in such schools because their parents are willing to buck the odds, hoping that child will be the one who turns out to win the academic Ken-

*No room was made for children long
before feminists got into the act...*

Can Yuppies Bear Children?

By Paul Sullivan

As the baby boom generation trudges along its inexorable path to the grave, everything it does is good copy. The reason is simple: baby boomers are the largest single demographic phenomenon in the world today, and they're endlessly fascinated by themselves.

So they reach adolescence, and society gets a bad case of acne: the Youth Culture of the '60s. They reach adulthood, find out they have to work for a living, and Yippie turns to Yuppie.

Now they've all discovered breeding, and the shock waves are being felt from the maternity wards to the psychiatrist's couch. The psychiatrists' couches are busy, because modern baby boomers are having a tough time throwing themselves into a successful career and family with equal measures of customary gusto.

When baby boomers have babies themselves, they discover that children, unlike jogging, racquetball, and other trivial pursuits, aren't as easily abandoned as a pair of \$60 running shoes.

In fact, children require a lifetime of commitment, and, unlike most other baby-boom pursuits, return few immediate tangible rewards. Now and then, children stimulate in their jaded parents the recognition that life itself is gratifying enough. But we're all so busy running ahead that we rarely have time for such vague, existential stuff.

As a card-carrying baby boomer, it turns out I'm dealing with my two kids the way I've dealt with everything else in my life — Me First, justifications and rationalizations to follow. And so they will.

The Busy-Dad Syndrome

First, let me say there is nothing new about the conflict between career and kids.

I suspect that every guy reading this remembers a dad who wasn't around as often as he should have been. We heard he was pulling down late duty at the office, or he had to go to a meeting, or to some exotic, faraway place like Toronto. Dad was a busy guy. He worked all the time.

It wasn't until we got old enough to be dads ourselves, after our mothers got a snootful of screwdrivers at some family function, that we learned Dad's absences often had as much to do with his propensity for sport as for work. But when we were six, it was enough to know that dads were rare and precious, and to be coveted.

Of course, when he was around, Dad was not always worth the wait. How many of us had dads who would drop the 5:15 martini for a session of catch or electric train? How many had dads who would give us a swell new game for Christmas: Parcheesi or Steeplechase, and then offer to play it with us "someday", even though we would stand there, clutching our wonderful new thing, all tousled hair and young boy smell, eyes beseeching a boon from the whimsical god of paternity?

Mom, of course, was around all the time. That was before the era of female emancipation. But Mom was in the same boat as us. She had to haggle for time. And when

**"...The broken promises
grew like piles of oily
rags in the basements
of our minds..."**

It turns out I'm dealing with my two kids the way I've dealt with everything else in my life — Me First, justifications and rationalizations to follow.

the old boy got home, he would just as soon go golfing with the boys, and he was no more likely to take her along than us.

He was slippery, the old man. And the broken promises grew like piles of oily rags in the basements of our minds. "Next weekend" became his two favourite words. But no matter how tortured or dejected we became, we were never disillusioned. We kept coming back for more. Because we knew that those 11 minutes a week when we were actually, gloriously, the sole thing on his mind (not counting the times we were in trouble, which came to more than 11 minutes) were the best 11 minutes in the whole universe.

So I made a vow. When I got to be a dad, I'd have a lot more than 11 minutes a week for my very best boy. And now that I am a dad, I've kept it. My kids get as many as 13 minutes. Each.

The six-year-old boy with the tousled hair and the boy small, standing there with the Parcheesi game, looks enough like me to remind me of that poignant ache. He's bad enough. But complicating the situation is a four-year-old girl who has the habit of wrapping her skinny little arms around her dad and pleading for him to stay home from work for the morning.

There's something terribly wrong about the way we live that we even have to make the choice. But we make it every day, and willingly, sometimes eagerly, abandon our children to the nursery school, the day care, the babysitter, and finally, to themselves.

Do We Dislike Kids?

As Germaine Greer says in her newest polemic, *Sex and Destiny*, we in the West simply do not like kids. The birthrate is falling, and the kids we do have are born into a world hostile to the idea that children are an asset, a blessing, fun to have around. We men have always known what to do when asked to choose between children and ourselves; now women, as they stride purposefully into the marketplace, power-dressed to the nines, are beginning to find that self-realization, North American style, doesn't mix with nurturing a family.

"The individuals whom we have painstakingly inducted into child-free society and

established there, with a lifestyle centred entirely upon achievement and self-gratification, have now to disrupt the pattern," says Germaine about the mere decision to have a child. "The sacrifice is enormous, and they are to expect no reward or recompense. If the management of childbearing in our society had actually been intended to maximize stress, it could have hardly succeeded better. The child bearers embark upon their struggle alone; the rest of us wash our hands of them."

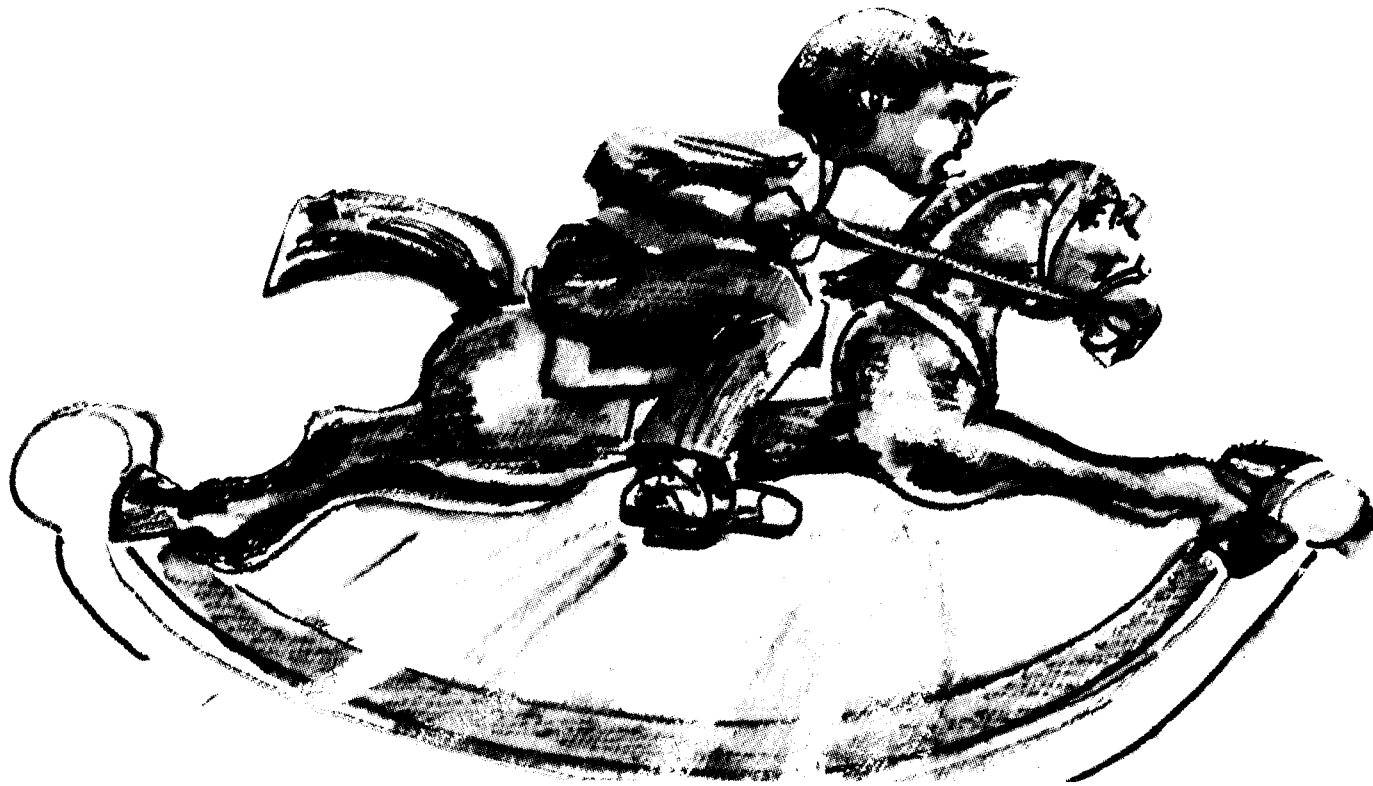
Greer, for all her stridency, is not telling us anything we haven't seen with our own eyes, but *Sex and Destiny* puts the whole dirty secret out for public view. She contrasts our child-hostile world to many places on earth where kids are still thought of as the strength of the family, not bloody inconveniences.

Today in Canada, children are confined to McDonald's, Saturday-afternoon matinees, amusement parks, and schools. Before we had our children, I hadn't had a conversation with a kid since I was one. Occasionally, I'd run into one in the supermarket or on the street, but wherever I went, the environment had been carefully scrubbed of kids. That's okay until you have children; but when you have time, you descend into the subculture and become lost along with them.

I don't want this to read as nothing but a lament. Because one of the things you discover is that the subculture is as much fun as it was when you were a kid. Now that I'm in charge of a couple of kids, I get to go to summer fairs and skating rinks, see all the Walt Disney movies over again, and watch Sesame Street, which they didn't have when I was a kid. Sesame Street alone makes being a kid worth it.

Now and then I get a sneaky feeling that

"...No room was made for children long before the feminists got into the act..."



tucky Derby and go on to take the Triple Crown.

It rarely works that way.

How can it work? Know your child. Take the time and make the effort to get to know that child in his or her own context, not in comparison to the accomplishments of others.

Talk to teachers and school administrators about your child's total development — spiritual, aesthetic, social, and physical as well as intellectual — and listen to what they really say, not just what you want to hear.

Consider your child's development in terms of his or her own timetable, not yours, and certainly not those of your friends' children. Above all, don't think that some particular school or college is where your child must end up. In cooking, as we know, the pressure cooker has gone out of vogue; when will that be true in education?

I guess I'm fed up with what strikes me as the most unremitting pressure we parents tend to put on our children. It bothers me when I see children, whether six or eigh-

teen, driven to be what they cannot reasonably be. I've seen and known and taught too many who have gone sour, tuned out, turned off, attempted suicide, ended up hating their parents, dropped out, or quit. Most people, like most racehorses, can't stand constant competition and stress. They break down.

I hope our schools will never be places that heap stress on their students or break them down, dispensing knowledge at the expense of wisdom. Rather than training a person knowledgeable enough to invent the bomb that ends us all, I would rather claim as a graduate the person who was wise enough to choose not to use it.

It takes both wisdom and knowledge to know that children are shaped more by home than by school, that intellectual genius, artistic brilliance, and athletic giftedness are remarkably rare — rarer than we would like to admit — that children need our love most when they deserve it least, and that nearly every child will flourish in an atmosphere of encouragement and support. □

“Children need our love most when they deserve it the least.”



“...The psychiatrists’ couches are busy because modern baby boomers are having a tough time throwing themselves into a successful career and family, with equal measures of customary gusto...”

The poor sap taught to achieve since he was a little kid is faced with the prospect of turning his back on everything he loves to attain the respect of his peers, job satisfaction, and a big enough salary to keep his family in the manner to which he thinks they are accustomed.

He looks at the inside postal workers of the world with disdain and a little pity. He has vice-presidents to conquer, and nothing, nobody, is going to stand in the way. Now and then, he feels a little guilty, but that’s a guilt that can be easily assuaged by the occasional ball game or bedtime story.

So far, this could be Gary Cooper’s dilemma in *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*. But there are a few twists and turns that bring this story into the 1980s. For instance, the emancipation of women.

At least, that’s what it’s called. Although virtually any man can testify that working your ass off for 50 years is hardly emancipation. But we hardly have a right to speak on the matter. Women have to cross the road to get to the other side, so they’re abandoning the nest in unprecedented numbers in pursuit of the same kinds of objectives I referred to above.

Female emancipation sets off a chain of events. Men can no longer depend on free

home care for their children, and as we’re not about to pick up the slack, we grumble, dig a little deeper, and pay professionals to look after our children, although many of them are professional only in that they take money. No one, at this point, is really sure what a childcare professional is. They’re busy finding out, and they’re finding out on our kids.

Mashed Food and Duckies

Equally catastrophic is what it does to the relationship. For one thing, more and more wives are inclined to put off child rearing until their careers are well underway. Which means that you’re likely to be too old to be a young father, and she’s even less capable of coping with the lost sleep, the stretch marks, and the descent into the sub-culture. She and her sisters have fought the good fight for more than 100 years, only to be stuck back in a world littered with baby feces, mashed food and duckies.

If the 20-year-old male is disinclined to cope with this stuff, the 30- and 35-year-old males are even less inclined. We’re right in the middle of the race for vice-president, and while we’ll go to the Lamaze classes and attend the blessed event, there’s no way we’re going to take on the added burden of looking after the fruit of our loins.

This can lead to disenchantment on the part of the wife.

And, although you hate to say it, wives lose some of their allure when they get pregnant. Not necessarily because they walk and look like plastic inflatable penguins, but because they’ve become somebody’s mother, somebody *e/se’s* mother.

It’s a phenomenon that psychologists have already well documented. Men are more likely to fool around after their first child is born than at any time other than their mid-life crisis. Your partner and lover turns into a baby maintenance specialist, and all that stuff she used to tolerate — working late at the office, getting up early to run, golfing on the weekends — that’s over now, as you’re expected to at least

“We men have always known what to do when asked to choose between children and ourselves; now women...are beginning to find that self-realization, North American style, doesn’t mix with nurturing a family.”

“...children cannot be solved like other consumer dilemmas...children, unlike contentment, cannot be bought...”

dabble in the arts of diaper changing, feeding, and koochie-kooing.

It's the kind of behaviour that can turn a guy right off, and more than one formerly faithful husband goes looking for that pre-infant allure someplace else, leaving Mom at home with the apple of their eye.

But who do they think we are anyway? It's us or them.

I thought I might be able to get through this mentioning the word “Yuppie” once. But I find that here is a perfect place for it.

The Yuppie couple believes the secret to life is buying quality. Not ordinary quality, but exotic quality. Yuppies have children the same way they have cars, the smart way.

In this respect, Yuppie is just a new word for fool. Because the Yuppie will find out that children cannot be solved like other consumer dilemmas. It doesn't matter how many books you read, or how much money you have, or what kind of baby car seat you buy, or what Montessori school you send them to, children are not like all the other commodities they encounter. Children, unlike contentment, cannot be bought. Children are the Yuppie Achilles heel. They disturb the unruffled calm. They shatter the illusion of competency. Children are the worm of guilt in the apple of complacency.

Not that they get any thanks for it. Yuppie children are certainly better dressed than the offspring of ordinary schmos. They look healthier. They know how to read when they're four. They play with creative, non-sexist, attention-grabbing toys. But they're not any more loved or respected.

Abandoned by both Mommy and Daddy, the average Canadian kid is becoming more and more a creature of TV, of the toys he plays with, his little pals, and society at large. They're not Our kids any more, they're Theirs. When we have them, which is rare in itself, we let them slip away.

I can see the signs, day after day. My boy will sit with the only adult friend he has who will talk to him for hours — his Speak and Spell — learning to spell frantically so the machine will tell him nice things such as: You are Correct. Perfect Score.

My daughter would like to know just about everything, and is not above asking all the questions, all day long. How are teddy bears made? How do you make windows? Who is the Sandman? I don't have

time for these questions, so I buy her another Barbie Doll, even though I swore I'd never get her one of those things. After I buy her off, it's the feeling of complacency that wells up inside like flatulence that disturbs me the most.

Who do I blame? Myself? Poor vessel that I am, I'm not capable of making such bold choices in isolation from my peers. The fundamentalists blame feminism for the breakdown of the family, but as Germaine acidly points out, no room was made for children long before the feminists got into the act. Feminism, like Yuppiedom, is just another inappropriate response to the puzzle of misery in the midst of plenty.

I suppose I could blame Rene Descartes, who's been held responsible for the illusion that we are rational beings the moment he uttered the phrase, “I think, therefore I am.” Poor Rene.

I usually end up blaming my kids. For being too noisy, for getting up and going to bed at the wrong times. For wanting me to be with them. For wanting me to love them at least as much as I love myself. For being alive.

At least I count myself more fortunate than those sad mortals who are still trying to decide if children fit into their lifestyle. The answer is, of course not, dummy. But have them anyway. They're our last link, to Mother Earth. If you don't have them, the state will have to go into the business of having kids. As the state does most everything for us now, child-bearing is a natural extension. People spawned in stainless-steel wombs are not likely to get involved in hand-wringing about anything.

O Brave New World, indeed. □

PAUL SULLIVAN is a Winnipeg-based television producer. Reprinted with permission from Influence magazine.

“...I usually end up blaming my kids for wanting me to love them at least as much as I love myself...”



at this level, life is a lot more meaningful and fun than it is at the level of busy executive and concerned citizen. But it's a feeling that strikes only in the depths of the weekend, while I'm lounging on the river bank with my best boy after a bike ride and a soda. By Sunday afternoon, the adrenalin begins to pump in anticipation of tomorrow and the titanic struggle to get ahead, and the poor little things are reduced to tiny shadows of annoyance, inconsequential things that must be put to bed.

Management vs. Kids

There is no place more incompatible with children than one's place of work, especially if you see advancement as Something You'd Like to Go For. Those dewy-eyed, cowed devotees to their families must rush home every day at precisely 5 p.m., leaving the store to those of us who are prepared to toll on into the night for the greater glory of the firm and ourselves. It doesn't matter what the business, the cardinal rule is invariably the same. You must be prepared to put your job before God, Queen, Country, and above all, family.

"...a lifestyle centered entirely upon achievement and self-gratification..."

Family is viewed by management, no matter how enlightened, as a personality flaw. Management is only reflecting the Germaine Greer contention that the whole of society views breeding as something faintly Third-World and unhygienic; and unless you're willing to go along, you're dogmeat career-wise.

Look at Dustin Hoffman in *Kramer Vs. Kramer*. To hang on to one snotty-nosed five-year-old, he had to abandon his job as a big-time art director at a major New York agency, and go "back to the board" at another, smaller concern, where it was tacitly understood he would remain until he could get over this obsession with his kid.

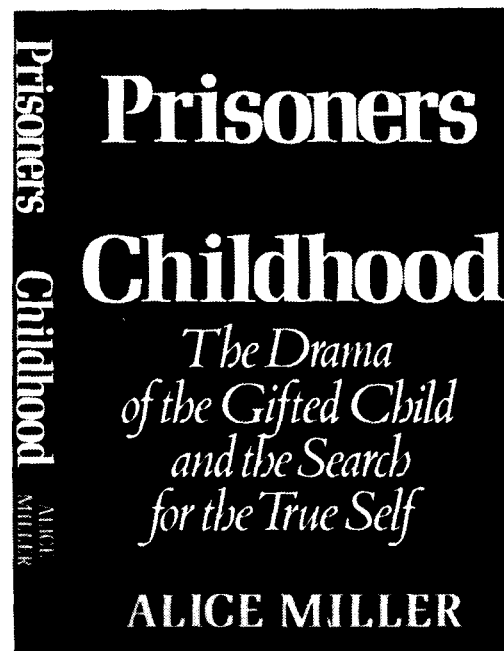
Giving and Sharing in a Dutiful way

...Our contempt for "egoists" begins very early in life. Children who fulfill their parents' conscious or unconscious wishes are "good", but if they ever refuse to do so or express wishes of their own that go against those of their parents, they are called egoistic and inconsiderate. It usually does not occur to the parents that they might need and use the child to fulfill their own egoistic wishes. They often are convinced that they must teach their child how to behave because it is their duty to help him along on the road to socialization. If a child brought up this way does not wish to lose his parents' love (And what child can risk that?), he must learn very early to share, to give, to make sacrifices, and to be willing to "do without" and forego gratification — long before he is capable of true sharing or of the real willingness to "do without".

A child who has been breast-fed for nine months and no longer wants to drink from the breast does not have to be taught to give it up. And a child who has been allowed to be egoistic, greedy, and asocial long enough will develop spontaneous pleasure in sharing and giving. But a child trained in accordance with his parents' needs may never experience this pleasure, even while he gives and shares in a dutiful and exemplary way, and suffers because others are not as "good" as he is. Adults who were so brought up will try to teach their children this same altruism as early as possible. With gifted children this is an easy task; but at what cost!

Taking a closer look, we no longer find the meaning of the word "egoism" so clear-cut and unequivocal. It will be much the same when we examine "respect for others", which is often said to be missing in self-centered people. If a mother respects both herself and her child from his very first

day onward, she will never need to teach him respect for others. He will, of course, take both himself and others seriously — he couldn't do otherwise. But a mother who, as a child, was herself not taken seriously by her mother as the person she really was will crave this respect from her child as a substitute; and she will try to get it by training him to give it to her. The tragic fate that is the result of such training and such "respect" is described in this book... □



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Critical acclaim for

Prisoners

O F

Childhood

“Rare and compelling in its compassion and its unassuming eloquence. . . . The virtue of Dr. Miller’s book is that her examples are so vivid and so ordinary that they touch the hurt child in us all.”

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We both need a dose of reality...

Violence has become routine in my kid's world

By Jim Spencer

Every time I turn around, my six-year-old accosts me, wearing a ski mask, brandishing a plastic replica of a Saturday Night Special and demanding money. Some kids have a passing fancy with cowboys and Indians. My kid seems to have a thing for armed robbers.

When he's not carrying weapons, he's illustrating war of one kind or another. He sits in the kitchen, sketching furiously. Hundreds of his drawings spill from the shelves by the table. Most of them deal with spacemen shooting laser cannons or soldiers firing M-16s and machine-guns. He draws with incredible imagination, right down to the muzzle flash. He is not only prolific, he is detailed.

Violence has become routine in his world. But it is meaningless. He understands it no better than he understands the inner workings of the video games that enthrall him. He takes it for granted. On television, in movies and comic books, people get stabbed, shot, beaten, burned up and vaporized. Sometimes they bleed, sometimes they don't but he never feels anything except that vague rush of excitement when good triumphs over evil, when Luke Skywalker blows up the Imperial Death Star and the thousands of men who inhabit it, when Mr. T crashes a huge right hand into the face of yet another surly thug.

Might is right

If violence is synonymous with anything for him, it is power, and he embraces it. His toy soldiers fight fiercely. His fantasy games always have a paramilitary bent. Everything is resolved the same way. Might is right. He would like the ability to explode space stations or intimidate bad guys. The pistol he jams in my ribs is as much a symbol as a toy.

I have no idea how to turn him around, and, worse, don't know if I can. My wife and I direct him toward "good" television, shows such as Sesame Street and National Geographic specials. But he wants to watch the A Team and even if we say he can't, that isn't going to make the desire vanish. For years, we refused to buy him toy guns, so he made them, first from Tinker Toys, then from Legos. Now, he draws knives and swords on old scraps of cardboard and cuts them out.

Of course, this doesn't mean he'll end up a criminal or even a bully. He is still a loving little boy who doesn't realize what he's saying. But he is also a member of the Star Wars generation, a generation that cheered through three episodes of mass killings designed to be antiseptic, if not humorous, and didn't receive much in the way of contradictory role models.

Tell the truth. How many of you cracked a smile when the cute little Ewoks started crushing the craniums of the evil biker scouts in *Revenge of the Jedi*?

"I stood still as shaken and confused by my own vehemence as his glib and harmless threat. Violence, it turns out, has become routine in my world, too."

“If violence is synonymous with anything, it is power, and he embraces it...”

All of us have grown to accept the benign violence society serves up. I whoop like a wild man when I see a hard hit during a football game and never hesitate to call my wife to watch the replay.

Not long ago, I asked my son to get ready for bed. He was busy and ignored me. I lost my temper. “Get back to your room and put your pyjamas on, right now,” I shouted.

He looked at me evenly. “All right,” he said, “I’m going, but if you yell at me again, I’m gonna stick a knife in your head.”

I did a double-take, then screamed at him, “What are you saying? Don’t you ever say that to anyone again. Stabbing someone in the head is awful. It could kill them. Do you hear me?”

He nodded. Tears welled up in his eyes, and he ran away. I stood still, as shaken and confused by my own vehemence as his glib and harmless threat. Violence, it turns out, has become routine in my world, too. I rant and rave and implicitly threaten, throwing a scowl here, grabbing an arm there. “You’re so bossy,” my son often tries to explain.

Dose of reality

What we both need, I suppose, is a dose of reality. Last summer, I stood in my backyard and watched a neighbour slap his wife around in front of their four-year-old son. It made me sick. But God only knows what it taught the child. I don’t think he will be any kinder for his lesson. In fact, if he sees enough, I expect he’ll beat his own wife. Either that or shoot his old man.

These days, I often talk to my son about how it hurts to be shot or stabbed or punched. I tell him people bleed and cry and die. I explain that parents are left without children, sisters without brothers, that the whole thing is terribly painful and sad. He

listens to me, then goes back to his television shows and toy wars, draws more space battles and stages another mock robbery.

Meanwhile, I resolve to be patient and positive, but remain frustrated. Gentle solutions apparently don’t exist for harsh problems. There is no good way to explain violence to kids, no way to make them feel the suffering without leaving scars. I don’t want my son to watch marines digging their dead out of the rubble in Beirut or see the police collecting body parts near a demolished car in Belfast.

The other night, when we were discussing what we would read for his bedtime story, my son wagged his fist under my nose. “I’ll give you five good reasons why you should read me this book,” he snarled.

We sat down on the sofa and read. I couldn’t give him one good reason why he shouldn’t act that way. □

Reprinted by courtesy of The Chicago Tribune.



I have no idea how to turn him around, and worse, don’t know if I can.

A Sense of Emptiness

...Accommodation to parental needs often (but not always) leads to the "as-if personality" (Winnicott has described it as the "false self"). This person develops in such a way that he reveals only what is expected of him, and fuses so completely with what he reveals that — until he comes to analysis — one could scarcely have guessed how much more there is to him, behind this "masked view of himself" (Habermas, 1970). He cannot develop and differentiate his "true self", because he is unable to live it. It remains in a "state of noncommunication", as Winnicott has expressed it. Understandably, these patients complain of a sense of emptiness, futility, or homelessness, for the emptiness is real. A process of emptying, impoverishment, and partial killing of his potential actually took place when all that was alive and spontaneous in him was cut off. In childhood these people have often had dreams in which they experienced themselves as partly dead. I should like to give three examples:

My younger siblings are standing on a bridge and throw a box into the river. I know that I am lying in it, dead, and yet I hear my heart beating; at this moment I always wake. [A recurrent dream.]

This dream combines her unconscious aggression (envy and jealousy) against the younger siblings, for whom the patient was always a caring "mother", with "killing" her own feelings, wishes, and demands, by means of reaction formation. Another patient dreamed:

"...A process of emptying, impoverishment, and partial killing of his potential actually took place when all that was alive and spontaneous in him was cut off..."

I see a green meadow, on which there is a white coffin. I am afraid that my mother is in it, but I open the lid and, luckily, it is not my mother but me.

If this patient had been able as a child to express his disappointment with his mother — to experience his rage and anger — he could have stayed alive. But that would have led to the loss of his mother's love, and that, for a child, is the same as object loss and death. So he "killed" his anger and with it a part of himself in order to preserve his self-object, the mother. A young girl used to dream:

I am lying on my bed. I am dead. My parents are talking and looking at me but they don't realize that I am dead...□

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WJ

Humiliation for the Child, Contempt for the Weak, and where It goes from there

Would not God find a way out, some superior deception such as the grownups and the powerful always contrived, producing one more trump card at the last moment, shaming me after all, not taking me seriously, humiliating me under the damnable mask of kindness?

*Herman Hesse
"A child's Heart"*

EVERYDAY EXAMPLES

While away on a vacation, I was sorting out my thoughts on the subject of "contempt" and reading various notes on this theme that I had made about individual analytic sessions. Probably sensitized by this preoccupation, I was more than usually affected by an ordinary scene, in no way spectacular or rare. I shall describe it to introduce my observations, for it illustrates some of the insights I have gained in the course of my analytic work, without any danger of indiscretion.

I was out for a walk and noticed a young couple a few steps ahead, both tall; they had a little boy with them, about two years old, who was running alongside and whining. (We are accustomed to seeing such situations from the adult point of view, but here I want to describe it as it was experienced by the child.) The two had just bought themselves ice-cream bars on sticks from the kiosk and were licking them with enjoyment. The little boy wanted one, too. His mother said affectionately, "Look,

you can have a bite of mine, a whole one is too cold for you." The child did not want just one bite but held out his hand for the whole ice, which his mother took out of his reach again. He cried in despair, and soon exactly the same thing was repeated with his father: "There you are, my pet," said his father affectionately, "you can have a bite of mine." "No, no," cried the child and ran ahead again, trying to distract himself. Soon he came back again and gazed enviously and sadly up at the two grown-ups, who were enjoying their ice creams contentedly and at one. Time and again he held out his little hand for the whole ice-cream bar, but the adult hand with its treasure was withdrawn again.

The more the child cried, the more it amused his parents. It made them laugh a lot and they hoped to humour him along with their laughter, too: "Look, it isn't so important, what a fuss you are making." Once the child sat down on the ground and began to throw little stones over his shoulder in his mother's direction, but then he suddenly

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...Contempt for those who are smaller and weaker thus is the best defense against a breakthrough of one's own feelings of helplessness...

got up again and looked around anxiously, making sure that his parents were still there. When his father had completely finished his ice cream, he gave the stick to the child and walked on. The little boy licked the bit of wood expectantly, looked at it, threw it away, wanted to pick it up again but did not do so, and a deep sob of loneliness and disappointment shook his small body. Then he trotted obediently after his parents.

It seemed clear to me that this little boy was not being frustrated in his "oral drives", for he was given ample opportunity to take a bite; it was his narcissistic needs that were constantly being wounded and frustrated. His wish to hold the ice-cream stick in his hand like the others was not understood, worse still, it was laughed at: they made fun of his needs. He was faced with two giants who were proud of being consistent and also supported each other, while he, quite alone in his distress, obviously could say nothing beyond "no", nor could he make himself clear to his parents with his gestures (which were very expressive). He had no advocate.*

Why, indeed, did these parents behave with so little empathy? Why didn't one of them think of eating a little quicker or even of throwing away half his ice cream and giving the child his stick with a bit of edible substance? Why did they both stand there laughing, eating so slowly and showing so little concern about the child's obvious distress? They were not unkind or cold parents, the father spoke to his child very tenderly. Nevertheless, at least at this moment, they displayed a lack of empathy. We can only solve this riddle if we manage to see the parents, too, as insecure children — children who have at last found a weaker creature, and in comparison with him they now can feel very strong. What child has never been laughed at for his fears and been told, "You don't need to be afraid of a thing like that." And what child will then not

*What an unfair situation it is, by the way, when a child is opposed by two big, strong adults, as by a wall; we call it "consistency in upbringing" when we refuse to let the child complain about one parent to the other.

feel shamed and despised because he could not assess the danger correctly, and will that little person not take the next opportunity to pass on these feelings to a still smaller child. Such experiences come in all shades and varieties. Common to them all is the sense of strength that it gives the adult to face the weak and helpless child's fear and to have the possibility of controlling fear in another person, while he cannot control his own.

No doubt, in twenty years' time, or perhaps earlier, if he has younger siblings, our little boy will replay this scene with the ice cream, but then he will be in possession and the other one will be the helpless, envious, weak little creature, whom he then no longer has to carry within himself, but now can split off and project outside himself.

Contempt for those who are smaller and weaker thus is the best defense against a breakthrough of one's own feelings of helplessness: it is an expression of this split-off weakness. The strong person who knows that he, too, carries this weakness within himself, because he has experienced it, does not need to demonstrate his strength through such contempt...

Contempt is the weapon of the weak and a defense against one's own despised and unwanted feelings. And the fountainhead of all contempt, all discrimination, is the more or less conscious, uncontrolled, and secret exercise of power over the child by the adult, which is tolerated by society (except in the case of murder or serious bodily harm). What adults do to their child's spirit is entirely their own affair. For the child is regarded as the parents' property, in the same way as the citizens of a totalitarian state are the property of its government. Until we become sensitized to the small child's suffering, this wielding of power by adults will continue to be a normal aspect of the human condition, for no one pays attention to or takes seriously what is regarded as trivial, since the victims are "only children". But in twenty years' time these children will be adults who will have to pay it all back to their own children. They may then fight vigorously against cruelty "in the world" — and yet they will carry within themselves an experience of cruelty

to which they have no access and which remains hidden behind their idealized picture of a happy childhood.

Let us hope that the degree to which this discrimination is persistently transmitted from one generation to the next might be reduced by education and increasing awareness — especially in its more subtle



manifestations. Someone who slaps or hits another or knowingly insults him is aware of hurting him. He has some sense of what he is doing. But how often were our parents, and we ourselves toward our own children, unconscious of how painfully, deeply, and lastingly we injured a child's tender, budding self. It is very fortunate when our children are aware of this situation and are able to tell us about it, for this may enable them to throw off the chains of power, discrimination, and scorn that have been handed on for generations. When our children can consciously experience their early helplessness and narcissistic rage they will no longer need to ward off their helplessness, in turn, with exercise of power over others. In most cases, however, one's own childhood suffering remains affectively inaccessible and thus forms the hidden source of new and sometimes very subtle humiliation for the next generation. Various defense mechanisms will help to justify this: denial of one's own suffering, rationalization (I owe it to my child to bring him up properly), displacement (it is not my father but my son who is hurting me), idealization (my father's beatings were good for me), and more. And, above all, there is the mechanism of turning passive suffering into active behaviour. The following examples may illustrate how astonishingly similar the ways are in which people protect themselves against their childhood experiences, despite great differences in personality structure and in education.

A thirty-year-old Greek, the son of a peasant and owner of a small restaurant in Western Europe, proudly described how he drinks no alcohol and has his father to thank for this abstinence. Once, at the age of fifteen, he came home drunk and was so severely beaten by his father that he could not move for a week. From that time on he was so averse to alcohol that he could not taste so much as a drop, although his work brought him into constant contact with it. When I heard that he was soon to be married, I asked whether he, too, would beat his children. "Of course," he answered, "beatings are necessary in bringing up a

“...This wielding of power by adults will continue to be a normal aspect of the human condition, for no one pays attention to or takes seriously what is regarded as trivial...”

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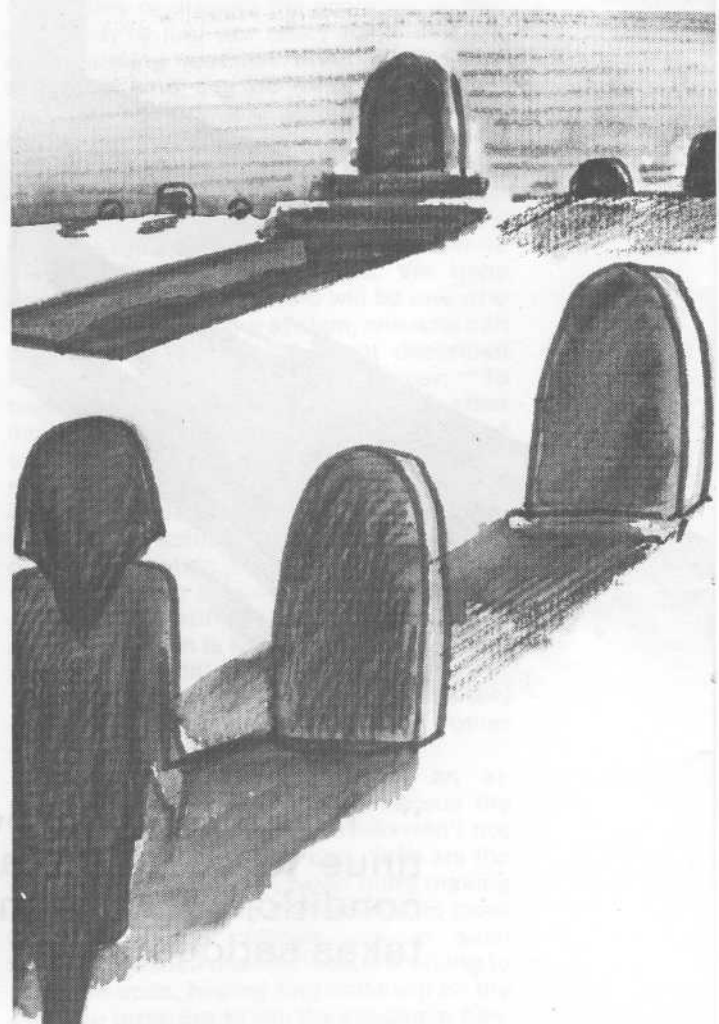
child properly: they are the best way to make him respect you. I would never smoke in my father's presence, for example — and that is a sign of my respect for him." This man was neither stupid nor uncongenial, but he had little schooling. We might therefore nurse the illusion that education could counteract this process of destroying the spirit.

But how does this illusion stand up to the next example, which concerns an educated man?

A talented Czech author is reading from his own works in a town in Western Germany. After the reading there follows a discussion with the audience, during which he is asked questions about his life, which he answers ingenuously. He reports that despite his former support of the Prague Spring he now has plenty of freedom and can frequently travel in the West. He goes on to describe his country's development in recent years. When he is asked about his childhood, his eyes shine with enthusiasm as he talks about his gifted and many-sided father who encouraged his spiritual development and was a true friend. It was only to his father that he could show his first stories. His father was very proud of him, and even when he beat him as punishment for some misdemeanor reported by the mother, he was proud that his son did not cry. Since tears brought extra blows, the child learned to suppress them and was himself proud that he could make his admired father such a great present with his bravery. This man spoke of these regular beatings as though they were the most normal things in the world (as for him, of course, they were), and then he said: "It did me no harm, it prepared me for life, made me hard, taught me to grit my teeth. And that's why I could get on so well in my profession."

Contrasting with this Czech author, the film director Ingmar Bergman spoke on a

television program with great awareness and far more understanding of the implications about his own childhood, which he described as one long story of humiliation. He related, for example, that if he wet his trousers he had to wear a red dress all day so that everybody would know what he had done and he would have to be ashamed of himself. Ingmar Bergman was the younger son of a Protestant pastor. In this television interview he described a scene that often occurred during his childhood. His older brother has just been beaten by the father. Now their mother is dabbing his brother's bleeding back with cotton wool. He himself sits watching. Bergman described this scene without apparent agitation, almost coldly. One can see him as a child, quietly sitting and watching. He surely did not run away, nor close his eyes, nor cry. One has the impression that this scene did take place in reality, but at the same time is a covering memory for what he himself went through. It is unlikely that only his brother was beaten by their father...□



What Does the Toddler's Personality Development Depend On?

Erna Furman

Obviously it depends on many factors, such as good health, an adequate bodily and intellectual endowment, reasonable stability in his physical environment, space and safety to be active in it, and a large measure of good luck. Above all, however, his development depends on a continuous enough and good enough relationship with the mothering person who has helped him to become a toddler in the first place.* This relationship is the crucial facilitating factor. It does not mean that the mother needs to be perfect or that she should actually be with her toddler every minute. It means that she thinks of herself as his mother always and feels responsible for his well-being at all times, even when she is not with him. It means that she has invested herself in him as a part of herself and as her loved person. This special ongoing inner bond with her toddler usually enables her to gauge whether and when he is ready to be without her, with whom and for how long, how he feels and copes when he is away from her, how to reunite with him, and how to bridge the gap of separation by sharing their mutual feelings and individual experiences, what they did and what all happened. If, during a separation, the child cannot keep

*The "mother" in the context of this presentation is the mothering person or primary caretaker, not necessarily the biological parent.

"...his development depends on a continuous enough and good enough relationship with the mothering person who has helped him to become a toddler in the first place."

his inner tie with the mother, he cannot continue to make developmental gains and may lose what he had already acquired. If the mother cannot maintain her inner tie with her toddler, she may lose her capacity to progress in her maternal development, may get stuck at relating to him at the current level and fail to appreciate his changing needs. For example, we often see that a mother who is with her toddler only at night, continues to care for him as if he were an infant. She may even regress in her mothering ability and lose touch with her child and, in extreme cases, may cease to function as a mother with him. Even their physical reunion may not serve him or her to re-

*This is the first of three excerpts (the other two will appear in the Spring issue) from a paper written by Erna Furman, entitled *Mothers, Toddlers and Care*. Dr. Furman is director of the Cleveland Center for Research in Child Development. This paper will be appearing in another form in *THE COURSE OF LIFE*, edited by Stanley I. Greenspan and George H. Pollock (New York: International Universities Press). Reprinted with kind permission of the author and editors.*



LSP

“...If, during a separation, the child cannot keep his inner tie with the mother, he cannot continue to make developmental gains and may lose what he had already acquired...”

establish the vital link. For example, one day at her daycare centre another child suddenly bit Mary's arm. She made no response. Even when her careworker, who happened to see the incident, rushed over to comfort her. Mary remained completely impassive. At pick-up time, when the careworker told Mary's parent, showed her the toothmarks and apologized, Mary remained expressionless, while the parent remarked, "Well, she used to bite so I guess it serves her right." The parent had lost her feelings for and with the child, just as Mary had lost her own.

Mothering is not a given. The ability to enter the developmental phase of parenthood and to progress adequately as a parent depends in no small measure on the ongoing mutual interactions with the growing child. The child's response to the mother and their physical togetherness is almost as important to the mother's development as it is to the child's. Klaus and Kennell's work has highlighted the value of post-natal contact with the baby for the mother's "bonding". But this holds true not only for the first few days. All mothers need to be with their infants and care for them actively to get their mothering under way and to achieve that special stable investment in the child which enables them to help their child grow and to grow with him, and to maintain their mothering ability during separations. Mothers vary in how much togetherness, caring and interaction they require to facilitate their maternal development, they

“...If the mother cannot maintain her inner tie with her toddler, she may lose her capacity to progress in her maternal development...”

vary in how long it takes them and in the extent to which separations from the child endanger it. For most mothers, however, the child's toddler phase is still a vulnerable period during which insufficient opportunity for ongoing active mothering may interfere in the nature and consistency of their ability to parent effectively and cause lasting damage to its further development. We tend to be more aware of the child's need of his mother than of the almost equally important mother's need of her child to assure harmonious growth. I am not implying that being with the child is the only factor in maternal development or that other factors cannot seriously impede it, but wish to stress that it is a very crucial, often neglected factor and one we need to keep in mind especially in considering the role and effects of substitute-mothering for young children.

I also wish to stress that the concept of a mother's stable investment in her child, the hallmark of mothering, has nothing to do with the currently fashionable term "quality care vs. quantity care". Being "all there" for the child at certain times, at times especially set aside for that purpose, is a most desirable attitude in those who maintain additional relationships with a young child, such as fathers, grandmothers, babysitters, or at a later time, teachers. They fulfill their function by being fully invested in their role with the child at specified times but can essentially go about their own business at other times. Not so with mothering. Its quality depends on the uninterrupted mental investment which is always there and enables the mothering person to feel with her child regardless of whether she is with him or away from him. It enables her to wake up and attend to him, though not necessarily cheerfully, at night when he is sick, to drop everything in the kitchen and charge after him into the living room, though not necessarily with a smile, because she sensed an ominous silence which told her he was in trouble, or to feel a twinge of regret and pain when she watches him march off happily on a drugstore expedition with Dad while she stays behind to go about her business on her own... □

THE COVETOUS SOCIETY

"The Ten Commandments tell us that we are not to covet our neighbour's wife, or his goods. If we took this seriously, modern business would collapse in a day. The very foundation of contemporary society is covetousness. We are trained to covet practically from the day of birth.

"If we get into the situations where there is nothing around to covet, we get nervous — like first-time campers, or tourists in East European countries who wonder why there aren't more downtown shop windows. We are, in fact, conditioned exactly like trained rats in a maze. Galvanized into action by a paycheck, we nose around, hunting for the ultimate purchase which will satisfy our hunger. Since most of us never have enough money for more than a few of the available toys, we are spared the dreadful realization that comes to the rich: there really isn't that much worth coveting. We go on busily and endlessly sniffing after the bait, and finally we drop dead in the maze, without ever stopping to consider whose game we have been playing.

"In order to stop coveting, it may be necessary to be able to enjoy a lot of goods for a while. At any rate, this seems to be why the majority of hippies are from middle-class backgrounds: they've seen all their parent's toys and had a lot of their own, and they know by experience (which is how we learn almost everything we ever learn) that coveting is a bum trip. To people who all their lives have been deprived of the goodies enjoyed by the middle classes and the rich, the suggestions of doing without sound like the old recommendation from rich people that the poor should enjoy being poor and honest.

"But if coveting is your trip, you should at least try to get through it as quickly as possible. Work your ass off, put your money into all the goodies you can manage, spend your time in stores, read Consumer Reports, talk to experts; really sink yourself into it for a while.

"Then kick it, and get back to figuring out what you really want to do with your life."

Ernest Callenbach

PARENTS SENSIBLES

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pour la Prévention de la Cruauté envers les Enfants

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JUSQU'À CE QUE NOUS DEVIENDRONS SENSIBLES AUX SOUFFRANCES DU PETIT ENFANT

Le mépris est l'arme de la faiblesse, une défense contre ses propres sentiments détestés. Et la source de tout mépris, de toute distinction, c'est le pouvoir plus ou moins conscient que l'adulte exerce secrètement sur l'enfant, et que tolère la société, sauf dans les cas de meurtre ou d'autre mal physique. Ce que l'adulte peut infliger sur l'âme de son enfant est entièrement son affaire. Car on considère l'enfant comme la propriété du parent, tout à fait comme le citoyen sous un régime totalitaire est regardé comme la propriété de l'état. Jusqu'à ce que nous deviendrons sensibles aux souffrances du petit enfant, cet exercice de pouvoir de la part de l'adulte restera un côté normal de la condition humaine, car puisque les victimes ne sont qu'enfants, personne ne fait attention et ne prend au sérieux une chose considérée sans importance. Mais vingt ans plus tard ces enfants seront des adultes qui se vengeront sur leurs propres enfants. Il se peut qu'ils lutteront contre la cruauté "dans le monde" — cependant ils porteront en eux une épreuve de cruauté dont ils ne seront pas conscients et qui restera cachée derrière le portrait idéalisé d'une enfance heureuse.

Alice Miller
Voyez la page 21

*(French courtesy M.B. May,
Erikson Institute, Advanced Study
in Child Development, Chicago)*

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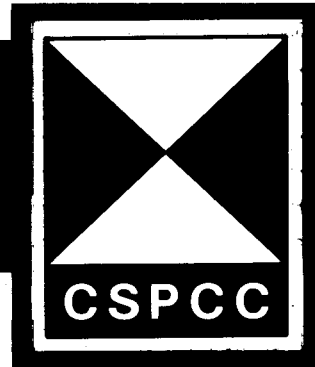


Recognizing that the capacity to give and receive trust, affection and empathy is fundamental to being human.

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.