HOW AN ADOPTIVE MOM BECOMES A “NURTURING ENEMY”

(THED UNFORTUNATE EFFECTS OF REACTIVE ATTACHMENT DISORDER)

By Forrest Lien, Executive Director of the Institute for Attachment and Child Development and Therapist for Reactive Attachment Disorder

Sometimes the behaviors are overt. Other times, subtle. One thing is consistent, however—kids with attachment disorder display maddening behaviors that often affect their mothers—hour after hour, day after day. Hours turn to days. Days turn to years. Years later, the mom feels exhausted, hopeless, and angry.

I’m referring to the effects of the concept of the “nurturing enemy”—an idea I’ve witnessed firsthand throughout my professional career of nearly 40 years.

THE PRIMAL WOUND—LOSS OF A BIOLOGICAL MOTHER

I read Nancy Verrier’s book The Primal Wound several years ago. Her book made a lot of sense in relation to my work with adopted and foster children. Simply put, kids feel the effects of abandonment by their birth mothers for a lifetime. Mothers carry babies in their womb when attachment begins, can breastfeed, and are in positions for early bonding through these nurturing connections. If a mother neglects, abuses, and eventually abandons her baby, that baby is a person with a “primal wound.” If a mother figure (i.e., adoptive or foster mom) connects with a baby early enough—perhaps right from the hospital—the wound/loss isn’t usually as profound.

ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH A CHILD WHO HAS DIFFICULTY ATTACHING DUE TO TRAUMA IN THEIR LIVES?

If you answered yes, then you should consider taking one of IFAPA’s training classes:

UTILIZING THE NURTURED HEART APPROACH IN HELPING CHILDREN WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS
Sat., Jan. 28 (9am-4:30pm) DAVENPORT
Sat., Feb. 11 (9am-4:30pm) SIOUX CITY

THE MAGIC OF HEALING THE BRAIN AND FOSTERING A SECURE ATTACHMENT
Sat., Feb. 4 (9am-12:15pm) MARSHALLTOWN

CALMING THE TRAUMA STORM - PART 1
Sat., Feb. 11 (9am-12:15pm) CEDAR RAPIDS

CALMING THE TRAUMA STORM - PART 2
Sat., Feb. 11 (1:15pm-4:30pm) CEDAR RAPIDS

COUNTERACTING THE EFFECTS OF DISRUPTED ATTACHMENT WITH LOVE, ATTUNEMENT & PLAY
Sat., Feb. 18 (9am-4:30pm) ANKENY

TRAUMA IN CHILDREN AND TEENS: WHAT IT REALLY IS AND WHAT REALLY WORKS
Sat., Mar. 4 (9am-12:15pm) DAVENPORT

VIEW WINTER TRAINING CLASSES TO REGISTER FOR A CLASS CALL 800-277-8145 OR REGISTER HERE

IFAPA | 6864 NE 14th St., Suite 5 - Ankeny, IA 50023 | 800.277.8145 | 515.289.4567 | www.ifapa.org | OFFICE HOURS 8AM - 4:30PM
# PTSD in Parents of Kids with RAD:

Brought to you by the Institute for Attachment and Child Development

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## Causes

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<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relentless, unending control battles - need for incredible self-control at all times</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes within yourself &amp; your family that seem out of your control &amp; are not apparent choices</td>
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## Primary Symptoms

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Primary Symptoms</th>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological/physical distress at exposure to trigger events that symbolize the trauma</td>
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<td>Decreased affect and display of feelings, sense of being detached or estranged from others</td>
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## Secondary Effects

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<td>Increase arousal sleep problems, irritable, angry, hyper vigilance, higher startle response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling that you are unlike others, damanged sense of self-worth, feeling out of control emotionally</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selectivity in perceptions, victim identity, fatigue &amp; depression, loss of security</td>
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**Fireworks in the Home**

### 4 Things to Know As Your Child With Reactive Attachment Disorder Triggers You

*Source: Institute for Attachment and Child Development*

You’re worn out. It feels as though the more you tell yourself to calm down and let go, the more it builds. Triggers. Your child has them and, unfortunately, you do too. For your child struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from early abuse and neglect, he has many triggers. And you are in a particularly sensitive position as the human you are and the experiences you’ve had raising your child—from which you might also have PTSD. Together, these combinations can cause all sorts of fireworks in the home.

It’s easy to get frustrated when your child is consistently oppositional day in and out. Children with reactive attachment disorder often lie, steal, deliberately defy authority figures, and treat adults with disrespect. As a therapeutic parent, however, you can’t let your own triggers take over.

Here are four things to remember as your child triggers you:

- You’re not perfect and that’s normal. Many people just like you get secondary post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of raising children with reactive attachment disorder. It’s important to realize that, as a human being, you have feelings, triggers, and stresses. Recognize them, forgive yourself for your human mistakes as a parent, and seek assistance. [CONTINUE READING]