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Co-creating effective emotional communication in high risk families with preschoolers: An essential for adult mental health

This presentation outlines a somatic emotional based approach to therapeutic clinical work with high risk families with preschoolers. The neuroscience and attachment based research of the past two decades has shown us that early developmental trauma impacts physical and mental health lifelong. The relationship with self, others, stress coping abilities are all affected, as well as immune system, cardiovascular, respiratory, metabolic health and our capacity to learn. Effective trauma informed treatment is essential and possible for preschoolers who developed insecure or disorganized attachment. The cost of chronic illness in both developed and developing countries is skyrocketing, making the pressure on prevention, and early healing an economic and social issue as well as an individual family issue. Utilizing video clips of one family, as an example, repatterning approaches will be demonstrated. This aboriginal mother was adopted, ran away at age 14, lived on the streets during four subsequent pregnancies. Two children born were adopted into other families, and an eight month old and a four year old child are with her. The referral agency was a Transition House. These clips include a prenatal repatterning of fear, protection games, and a spontaneous regression to infancy repatterning process and sand play photos. Community

based supports include subsidized housing, home support, transportation, and attendance at free community family based play programs. The four year old girl gains a sense of safety and lovability with her mother, with a corresponding change in behaviors, in both child and mother. Greenspan's Functional Emotional Assessment Scale (FEAS) were used pre and post treatment, with 25 families. A summary of outcomes will be presented, as well as qualitative outcomes reported by the families. Improved social emotional communication resulted in all but one family. This family did not complete treatment as the mother was alcoholic, abusive, and was admitted to a lengthy rehabilitation residential program. 18 of these children were classified "disorganized attachment" and 7 were 'insecure'. Referrals came from the Transition House, Child/Youth Mental Health, Infant Development Services, Child Welfare, Early Childhood Educators. Trauma informed early intervention and treatment, in a safe setting, that focuses on the relationship between parents and child, that is a somatic and emotional based approach, is effective. Healing adverse childhood experiences and supporting the ongoing health and secure attachment in high risk families is possible, worthwhile, and cost effective.

Biography

Myrna Martin is a Family Therapist, Teacher of Pre and Perinatal Psychology, and an approved teacher of Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy. She teaches across the USA and Canada, United Kingdom, Taiwan, New Zealand and Europe. The fields she focuses on includes pre and perinatal therapy with focus on the early developmental trauma resolution model. She has taught a two and a half year training in Pre and Perinatal Psychology (PPN) 7 times. Her next training will be in Santa Cruz, CA. beginning in Nov. 2018. Myrna has produced an 80 hour video series "Healing Early Developmental Trauma" which include hundreds of pages of notes, articles and references as well as group support calls. In July 2014 Myrna began three levels of two week intensives in PPN that includes theoretical knowledge, as well as in depth personal exploration of participant's own early history, in a residential format at her Retreat Center in Nelson, BC.

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