


Slide 1

Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma

Class 3 (of 5)
Solutions to Challenging Behaviors

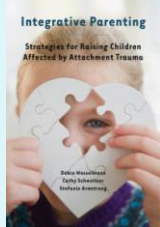


© 2014 Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, & Stefanie Armstrong
www.atcnebraska.com
Do not reprint without permission of the authors.

Slide 2

This powerpoint is based on the following parent guide:

“Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma”
by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, & Stefanie Armstrong
(W.W. Norton, New York, 2014)



Slide 3

Accompanying Treatment Manual for Therapists:

Integrative Team Treatment for Attachment Trauma in Children: Family Therapy and EMDR”
by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, & Stefanie Armstrong (W.W. Norton, New York, 2014)



Slide 4

At the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Identify situations that trigger your child.
- Identify situations that increase your child's vulnerability.
- Identify negative thoughts and feelings associated with your child's behaviors.
- Find attuned responses to your child's concerning behaviors.

Slide 5

Have You Found Yourself Saying...?

- She keeps doing the same things over and over.
- He'll never learn.
- I should know how to handle this.
- I don't like my child anymore.
- I feel guilty.
- I've told him 1000 times.


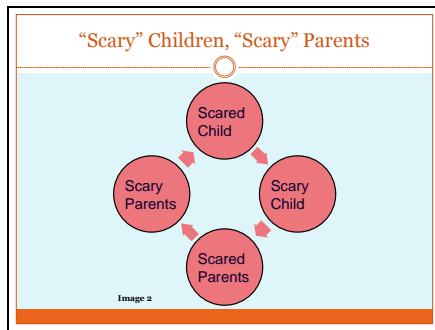
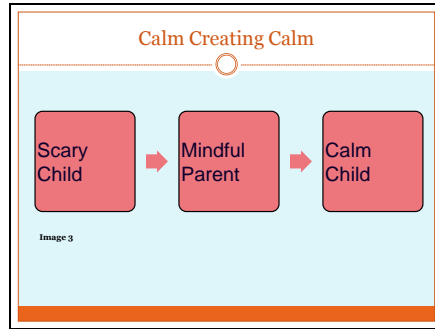


Image 1

Slide 6



Slide 7



Slide 8

- ### Helpful Thoughts for Parents
- “Trauma changed my child’s brain.”
 - “My child has a hole inside he needs to fill some way.”
 - “Wants are needs to my child.”
 - “My child developed these behaviors as a way to self-comfort and feel good.”
 - “My child is scared to be vulnerable.”
 - “My child is not evil or bad, he’s scared.”
 - “My child needs to feel in control in order to feel safe.”

Slide 9

- ### Two Types of Meltdowns (Reference: Daniel Siegel)
1. Upstairs Meltdown: “My wants are the same as my needs. I’m going to get what I need.” Child is in control of her meltdown.
 2. Downstairs Meltdown: The child has lost all control.
-
- Image 4

Slide 10

How to Help Upstairs Meltdowns

- 1. Constantly pre-teach.
- 2. Have a plan for specific challenging situations (e.g., be ready to leave.)
- 3. Empower the child with choices whenever you can – before the child gets into a meltdown.
- 4. Make sure you do not reward the meltdown.

Slide 11

Anatomy of a Downstairs Meltdown

Reference: Ann Potter, Ph.D.

There are three specific phases in a child's downstairs meltdown:

- Phase 1: Acting Out (Panic)
- Phase 2: Acting In (Shame)
- Phase 3: Repair and Reconnection (Emotional Pain)




Image 5

Slide 12

Phase 1: Acting Out (Panic)

- Child's brain is stuck.
- Can't tell difference between past and present
- Survival brain is activated
- Verbally and physically out of control-or completely shut down
- Can't tolerate touch




Image 6

Slide 13

Managing Phase 1

Calm and attune to your child.

- Create a wider boundary (give the child some space).
- Tag team with partner for calm, consistent presence.
- Stay nearby and continually check in.
- Use calm tone e.g. "I am here, I love you."
- Remind yourself that his out-of-control emotions are a reaction to his past.
- Focus on one moment at a time.
- Prevent injuries & property destruction.

Slide 14

Phase 2: Acting In (Shame)

- Child's brain is still stuck.
- Negative beliefs
- Overwhelming emotions are still present
- Pushing away or reaching toward parent
- Coming back to present
- Fear of rejection or abandonment
- May or may not tolerate touch




Image 7

Slide 15

Managing Phase 2

Attuned containment and grounding


- Move closer. The child may/may not allow physical touch.
- Give reassuring messages of love and safety.
- Verbal grounding to help child return to present moment e.g. "Can you feel your feet on the floor?"
- One parent is primary unless overwhelmed.

Slide 16

Phase 3: Emotional Pain (Repair and Reconnection)

- Child's brain is unstuck.
- Child is back in present time
- Feelings of shame and anxiety about meltdown
- Can tolerate physical touch
- Needs to connect both physically and emotionally

Image 8

A black and white photograph of a child sitting on the floor, leaning against a wall. The child is looking down and appears to be in a state of distress or withdrawal.

Slide 17

Managing Phase 3

Attuned Restoration of Relationship Bond


- Increase physical touch, e.g. rubbing back or arm, holding hand, etc...
- Continued reassuring messages and affectionate touch

Slide 18

The Domino Effect

Have you ever stood dominoes end-to-end and watched how quickly one domino knocks over the next?

Image 9

A black and white photograph of a single domino standing upright. The domino is black with white dots on its top surface.

Slide 19

The Domino Effect

- Situations, events, emotions, thoughts, and body sensations are dominoes for your child.
- There may be just a few or a great many dominoes.
- Each can knock over the next very quickly, leading to the final domino—the meltdown or other acting out behavior.

Slide 20

Falling Dominoes Lead to Meltdowns or Other Behaviors



Image 10

Slide 21

Vulnerability Dominoes

Think of situations in your child's recent past that increase her likelihood of being triggered.

- Sleep issues
- Physical illness
- Parental mood and behaviors
- Recent misbehavior and consequences
- School related stress




Image 11

Encourage class identification of their own vulnerability

Slide 22

Triggering Events Become Dominoes

Think about immediate situations/events that trigger your child.

- Teacher yelling at child at school
- Child caught in misbehavior
- Asked to do a chore
- Homework
- Parent's angry face





Image 12

Slide 23

Your Child's Negative Thought Dominoes



- "My parent/teacher is mean."
- "I am not safe."
- "I am a bad kid."
- "I am not good enough."
- "I don't do anything right."
- "I don't belong."
- "I am stupid."

Image 13

Slide 24

Emotions Become Dominoes

- Shame and guilt
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Frustration
- Powerlessness
- Hurt
- Grief
- Embarrassed




Image 14

Slide 25

Body Sensations Become Dominoes

- Heavy chest
- Headache
- Tension in neck and back
- Sick feeling in stomach
- Trembling




Image 15

Slide 26

Stay Attuned to Your Child's Triggers

- Address the vulnerability factors – hunger, loneliness, fatigue, illness, stress
- Connecting with your child when he gets dysregulated will help prevent a meltdown (affection, affirmations of love).
- Your calm voice and calm body will help de-escalate your child.

Slide 27

Understanding and Responding to Other Common "Scary" Behaviors

Slide 28

Children Who Miss the Window of Opportunity for Regulation (Birth to Age 2)

- Poor sleep
- Food issues
- Bathroom issues
- Poor emotion regulation



Image 16

Slide 29

Survival Mode

Basic mistrust leads to a need for self comfort through:

- Stealing
- Sexualized behaviors
- Lying
- Food issues




Image 17

Slide 30

The Littler Hurt Child Inside Your Child's Heart

- There is a "smaller hurt child within" who may have had to cope by developing anger, mistrust, and defiance.
- It is important to appreciate what the younger child had to do to emotionally survive.



Image 18

Slide 31

Unresolved Grief Leads to Big Feelings and Behaviors

Grief issues may include:

- Loss of birth parent, even in infancy
- Loss of siblings
- Loss of grandparents
- Loss of belongings
- Loss of pets
- Loss of schoolmates, house, bedroom, etc.




Image 19

Slide 32

Triggers for Grief

- Observing intact families
- Visits with biological parent
- Siblings
- Holidays
- Birthdays
- Random thoughts or reminders




Image 20

Slide 33

Attune to Your Child's Feelings of Grief

- Touch, hold, stay "present."
- Verbalize: "I'm so sorry..."
- Attune to the grief beneath the behavior.
- Remember the stages of grief:
 - Denial and bargaining
 - Anger
 - Despair




Image 21

Slide 34

Lying

Child's NCs: "I have to protect myself." "I can't trust. I am not good enough as I am."

Calming Thought:
"The child is in survival brain instinctually lies."
"My child gets truth and fiction mixed up in his brain."

Attuned Response:
"I know this is hard for you, but we need to work on being accurate with your words."

Slide 35

Defiance

Child's NCs:
"I can't trust my parent. I have to be in control to be safe."

Calming Thought:
"My child thinks I am against him. I need to help him know that I am on his side."

Attuned Response:
"I love you. It's my job to keep you safe. It's my job to guide you. I am on your side."

Slide 36

Stealing

Child's NCs: "I can't trust you to take care of me. I have to take what I need."

Calming Thought:
"My child believes he has to be in charge of getting what he needs for himself."

Attuned Response:
"I know it feels to you like this thing will make you happy. And it's hard for you to trust that I will give you what you need."



Image 22

Slide 37

Bathroom Issues

Child's NCs: "I can't do it. I'm bad."

Calming Thought:
"My child missed this window of opportunity to learn these skills."
"My child is dysregulated."

Attuned Response:
"Let's figure out how to solve this problem. Let's clean this up together."
"Let me show you how to use the bathroom."




Image 23

Slide 38

Aggression

Child's NCs: "I have to get this anger out."
"It's not OK to be sad, scared, or hurt."

Calming thoughts:
"My child is afraid of his more vulnerable feelings."
"My child feels he must be in control to be safe."
"My child doesn't know what to do with the mad feelings."

Attuned responses: "I want to help you, not fight. I'm on your side. It's safe to just feel your feelings. Let's make a plan to help you calm down."

Slide 39

Food Issues

Child NCs: "I won't get enough. I can't trust others to take care of me. I have to be in charge of getting what I need to survive."

Calming Thought:
"My child has a hole he needs to fill in some way."
"Food equals love for my child."

Attuned Response:
"I know you feel like you want to eat."
"It's hard for you to trust me. You can come to me."




Image 24

Slide 40

Sexualized Behaviors

Child's NCs: "I have to act on this urge."

Calming Thought:
"This may have been the only kind of touch he knew."
"My child's brain has been wired this way."
"This is comfort for my child."

Attuned Response:
"We will work with the therapist on this. We love you no matter what."

Slide 41

Concerning Words

This is what they say:	This is what they mean:
"I hate you!"	"I hate the way I'm feeling."
"I wish I was dead!"	"I want to escape from these feelings."
"I wish you were dead!" "I will kill you."	"I'm hurt and I blame you."

Slide 42

(Continued)

This is what they say:	This is what they mean:
"I wish you had never adopted me!"	"I feel I don't belong."
"I would be happier with my first parent."	"I am grieving the loss of my first parent..."
"You're stupid!"	"I'm upset and I don't know how to talk about it."

Slide 43

Understanding the Feelings and Beliefs Driving the Behaviors Can Help You Become...

- Mindful
- Aware
- Insightful
- Pro-active
- Flexible
- Empathic
- Connected



Image 25

Slide 44

Integrative Parenting

- Over time, your mindful, attuned approach will help your child develop integration between the emotional and logical regions of his brain. (Reference: Siegel & Bryson, 2011).
- With assistance from you, your child can learn to think about his thinking, and to think about his feelings.
- Self-reflection = sensible decisions.

Slide 45

It's Your Turn...

- List situations that you think make your child more vulnerable to her emotions.
- Think about how you have been responding to each of your child's behaviors. Write down some attuned responses you would like to implement to help calm your child's brain.

Slide 46

Feel Free to Share This Presentation...

and visit us at
www.atcnebraska.com

Slide 47

Works Cited

47

- Potter, A. E. (2011a). *The anatomy of a meltdown*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Potter, A. E. (2011b). *The domino effect*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Siegel, D. J. & Bryson, T. P., (2011). *The whole-brain child: 12 revolutionary strategies to nurture your child's developing mind*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.

Slide 48

Works Cited

48

- Image 1 Source: by authors
 - Rights: authors
- Image 2 Source: by authors
 - Rights: authors
- Image 3 Source: by authors
 - Rights: authors
- Image 4 Source: Public Domain
 - Rights: Public Domain
- Image 5 Source: Lily Throws a Tantrum by id Thompson, October 10, 2011
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dev123/624829531/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

Slide 49

Works Cited

49

- Image 6 Source: [Scream by es westfall](#) October 17, 2010
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/limaschewestfall/2529310979/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>
- Image 7 Source: [Crying child by binu kumar](#) June 12, 2001
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/limasurina/9889528327/in/gallery-investinggold-7215762844938694/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>
- Image 8 Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Depression-boat_of_bored_100.jpg](#)
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>
- Image 9 Source: <http://openclipart.org/detail/189521/domino-by-casino-189521>
 - Rights: Public Domain
- Image 10 Source: [Domino by drili Artiste Santacru](#) April 6, 2008
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/manicmi/239188247/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

Slide 50

Works Cited

50

- Image 11 Source: [Sleeping when studying - Nakhon Sawan, Thailand](#) by [Low Krittaya](#)
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sleeping_students.jpg
 - Rights: Public Domain
- Image 12 Source: [Sylvain Labeste](#) Dec. 6, 2009
 - <http://www.fotopedia.com/items/flickr-4163412859>
 - Rights: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/>
- Image 13 Source: [Scared child](#) by [D Sharon Pruitt](#) 4/16/14
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Scared_Child_at_Nighttime.jpg
 - Rights: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en>
- Image 14 Source: [playing by ear](#) by [Josh Burger](#) October 28, 2011
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sofcaething/628885049/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/>
- Image 15 Source: [Day 45: The patient](#) by [Laura Blankenship](#) February 14, 2008
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/loria/226660220/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>

Slide 51

Works Cited

51

- Image 16 Source: [Feliz Cumpleaños by Juan Pablo Colasso](#) September 9, 2006
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jpcolasso/445514368/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>
- Image 17 Source: [Dollar photo club purchase](#)
 - Rights: Dollar photo club purchase
- Image 18 Source: [Matryoshka Dolls by Fanghong](#), 2005.
 - http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Russtan-Matryoshka_no_bg.jpg
 - Rights: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:GNU_Free_Documentation_License-1.2
- Image 19 Source: [by ArmyAmber](#) http://pixabay.com/n-60654/7no_redirect
 - Rights: http://pixabay.com/n-60654/7no_redirect
- Image 20 Source: [Birthdays party with party horns](#) by [kiketails](#) 16 November 2009
 - <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parties-birthday.jpg>
 - Rights: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/dsod.en>

Slide 52

Works Cited

52

- Image 21 Source: reflected sadness by [Victor Bourikov](#) 3 May 2008, 12:03
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Reflected_sadness.jpg
- Image 22 Source: by authors
 - Rights: authors
- Image 23 Source: [Wonderlane](#), February 6, 2008
 - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wonderlane/5094673779/>
 - Rights: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>
- Image 24 Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Black_sesame_soft_ice_cream.jpg
 - Rights: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:GNU_Free_Documentation_License_1.0
- Image 25 Source: Dollar Photo Club Purchase
 - Rights: Dollar Photo Club Purchase