



R. A. V. E. N. Respite

Newsletter

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Anger – A Powerful Tool for Keeping Others Away

There are three situations when we see anger in most individuals: when an individual is reacting to limit setting, if the individual has lost control of an event or situation and/or if they are feeling rejected. This includes for all of us, events when we are explosive or what many of us refer to as being annoyed, irritated, frustrated or any of the other multiple terms we use for anger. Many persons who have experienced trauma use explosive anger as a means to express that they feel unsafe or are experiencing shame. The anger can happen so quickly that without knowledge about trauma the 1-2 seconds of "soft" feelings can be lost in the powerful "big" reaction of anger. The "soft" emotions are the ones that parents must look for before the outburst. Without the well-trained eye of the parent, anger can be a powerful way for the child to keep from healing.

When an individual avoids thoughts, feelings or conversations about the trauma they are attempting to control their internal state. They are attempting to avoid the "soft" feelings that no one seemed to care about in the past and which made them feel or be vulnerable. We see the individual becoming angry or fade away from us if we push them about the, "soft" feelings.

When a mother says NO to a child does it raise the issue of deprivation? I will be deprived of something! Deprivation is sometimes "flamed" when parents attempt to set limits for the child. Does that mean that the person that is saying "NO" to me doesn't love or like me? Remember that children of trauma have probably survived much deprivation in their young lives. Over a long period of time of deprivation comes shame. The individual believes that they were somehow responsible for being "bad". They had bad enough behavior that no one cared.

There are children who try to control everything, sometimes even their sleep. They believe if I don't sleep, I won't lose track of things. There are some children who will become angry if they don't wake up before everyone in the household.....they feel something has happened that they don't know about, that they are not in control any longer.

Anger gives many explosive individuals our attention immediately and it makes many of us uncomfortable for a time. For some care givers, who may be triggered by past experiences with others, it makes them feel unsafe. The individual's anger can make some feel uncomfortable or unsafe from their own past traumas. Perhaps, it even makes them "walk on egg shells" with that person, so as not to upset them. These unsafe or uncomfortable feelings are not helpful to the hurt child's healing.

Anger can be a powerful means to express that we want others to get away from us. New parents of these children must be strong to confront and resolve their fears and face the child's "state of consciousness". The parent must learn what is under the anger. If we can distinguish what the individual is feeling, that they have lost control, are not feeling safe or are feeling a sense of shame we may be able to respond in a more empathetic manner which, will support a healthier relearning response from the individual. We can help the individual build skills which will allow for safe awareness on their part while, keeping ourselves safe from their aggressive actions.

Submitted by: Bernadine Janzen

Ten Ways to Support a RAD Mom

Reactive Attachment Disorder, RAD is one of those things other people don't really notice. The reactive part is usually seen and felt the most by the primary caregiver--or the mom in most cases. What a RAD Mom needs the most is support from others in ways you may have never thought of.

- A RAD Mom needs help teaching her child with Reactive Attachment Disorder that mom's are in charge of taking good care of their children. And that their mom is a good mom who takes care of her children.
- A RAD Mom needs friends who don't hug her RAD Child. The best way to help a family dealing with a child who has reactive attachment disorder is to help the child learn to get his or her hugs from mom and dad. The same is true for other intimate things the child might want to do, like sit on laps or give you a neck rub.
- A RAD Mom needs friends who can support how we respond to our child. No matter what the situation looks like, the parents need to be considered the ones in charge especially when it comes to discipline.
- A RAD Mom needs people who have suggestions, ideas or criticism to talk to us privately when our child is not around. Triangulation is a natural behavior for children with Reactive Attachment Disorder and questioning the parents in front of the child empowers the child.
- A RAD Mom needs friends who don't fall into the trap of hearing the child say, "I wish you were my mom, you are much better then the one I got." Children with Reactive Attachment Disorder often shop for new, improved and better parents.

- A RAD Mom needs an occasional hour to take a shower or paint her toe nails. A great way to be supportive to someone who is parenting a child with Reactive Attachment Disorder is to offer her a break once in awhile. Even if it's just to come over and supervise the child while mom gets a break.
- A RAD Mom needs time alone with a RAD Dad. Often one of the most important things parents of children with emotional or mental health disorders are told they need is respite. Families who adopt children from the foster care system often receive adoption subsidy funds for respite care. RAD parents need a regular break, but they also need a respite provider who can deal with the issues of a special needs child.
- A RAD Mom needs friends who can remind her about why and how it came about that she is the mother of a child with Reactive Attachment Disorder. We need to be reminded that our child came to us this way and that the best we can do is love the child and provide them with the best we can.
- A RAD Mom needs to be reminded that many children with Reactive Attachment Disorder heal and become healthy adults. We need to remember what the goals are with our children and like other parents we need to hope for the best.
- Most of all a RAD Mom needs friends. Parenting a child with Reactive Attachment Disorder can be isolating and defeating. RAD mom's often withdraw and feel alone. The number one thing we need is a friend willing to listen and maybe have coffee now and then.

Comment

The R.A.V.E.N respite Project is underdevelopment to give a break to Mom, and Dad's too, the much needed respite they need and deserve. I have been involved in this project since it's inception, from this MOM's sentence, "I need a break", to today. I know how hard it is for these families to wait for the kind of respite that will benefit them and their family. I urge you to become involved in this project for their sakes and also for yours. By your understanding and involvement, you not only bring about hope in another family but in yours as well. Take a few minutes to learn how you can make a difference in a MOM's life. Thank you,
RAVEN Newsletter Editor

Announcements:



Melissa Jessup, AmeirCorps VISTA Project Developer, will be leaving her position effective August 15, 2008. Please Contact Eleanor Oakley, AABA's CEO at 907-376-0366 or eleanor@akattachment.org for any questions you may have regarding the

project. Melissa has been a dedicated VISTA volunteer on this project, helping other parents to find hope and relief in their daily parenting tasks of raising children coming from trauma. Thank you Melissa for all your hard work!! We will miss you!!

AABA Workshop:

August 16th and 17th Attachment Disorder, Parts I, II, III, IV will be held at the Agate Inn at 4725 Begich Circle, Wasilla, AK 99654 (a map can be viewed [here](#) or directions and a map to their location can be viewed [on their website here](#)). Fee for Professionals is \$150.00. Natural Supports and Care Givers providing immediate care will be eligible for a scholarship. Call 907-376-0366 or to register online [here](#)

Links and Resources

Akaska Family Services

www.acrf.org

Alaska Parent Line:

1-800-643-5437

North American Council on Adoptable Children: www.nacac.org

Alaska Family & Youth Network:
www.ayfn.org

Alaska Center for Resource Families:
www.acrf.org

Cheri Stone: www.stonesoupgroup.org

Parent Support Phone Line: 907-373-6937

Online parent support group.
visit: http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/RAVEN_RESPITE

Mom2Mom

Share and support another mom while making crafts!
For the next meeting time,
Call: 376-0506

Bernie Janzen, M.S. LPC, Podcasts at :
www.tattac.com Here are a few of the topics available:

Building Resiliency

Therapeutic Respite Care for Attachment Disordered Kids

Development of a Therapeutic Community Program

Email: bsj@laguna.com.mx

Sponsored in part by:



The R.A.V.E.N. Respite project is a project of:
Alaska Attachment and Bonding Associates