How to Reduce the Reactivity and PTSD Symptoms of Childhood Trauma

(With A Special Focus On Traumatic Attachment)

John E. Bradshaw, MA, Th.D., MSP
John Bradshaw Media Group
PO Box 667147
Houston, Texas 77266-7147
(713) 771-1300
johnbradshaw.com
youcanheal@aol.com

Understanding the Grief Process

1. NEED FOR SUPPORT
   You cannot grieve alone. You need a mirroring non-shaming face, a “benevolent witness.”

2. LEGITIMATION
   You often need help (caring confrontation.) You cannot know what you do not know. The mirroring faces of others help you connect with your feelings by validating your hurt and pain.

3. WRITING OUT YOUR EMOTIONAL SCENES
   Write out emotional scenes and read them to the group...Re-experiencing the pain...talking and expressing feelings and connecting with trauma. This enables you to begin to grieve.

4. GRIEF AS A PROCESS
   Grief is a process...states fluctuate:

5. ADEQUATE TIME
   The intensity varies with each individual. This the length one grieves varies with each person.
**Impact of Attachment Trauma on the Right Hemisphere**

- Loss of ability to cope with stress
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) reflects a severe dysfunction of the right hemispheric system
- Since early trauma is usually cumulative & chronic – there is evidence the long-term autonomic reactivity can lead to “neuronal” structural changes involving atrophy, shrinkage & permanent damage.

**Attachment**

Attachment can be defined as the regulation of biological synchronicity between organism.

Attachment is the dyadic interactive regulation of emotion between the mothering source and the infant and takes place during the first two years of life. Interaction occurs within a context of “facial expression, posture, tone of voice, tempo of movement & incipient action.”

**Secure Attachment**

Secure attachment is developed if you had a source figure who was there for you more times than not, and was attuned to your needs – for closeness (touching & stroking), distance & separation, stimulation, food, talking & listening – a rhythmic mutuality was created.
If you were abused, abandoned, neglected or used to take care of your own attachment source’s unresolved needs, you built defenses against the connecting behaviors, like begin taken care of, helping and gifting behavior that constitute love.

Early trauma of an interpersonal origin can override genetic, constitutional, social and/or psychological resilience factors in any human. Abuse and traumatic attachment damages the right (non-dominant) hemisphere of the brain that regulates our felt sense or self and the ability to regulate the intensity of our feelings.

The treatment of attachment pathologies is currently conceptualized to be directed toward the mobilization of fundamental modes of development and the completion or interrupted developmental processes.

- Allan N. Schore

Each affect has been triggered time and time again over the lifespan of every individual, and on every occasion this has happened in the context of some situation, interaction, or scene. As the growing child accumulates experience, affect becomes intertwined with memory. Emotion is the complex combination of an affect with these memories, and with the affects they also trigger. Whereas affect is biology and feeling is psychology, emotion is biography. Emotion is an affect placed within a script or a story. Emotions are imbued with intelligence. Emotions are a way we engage with the world.

An affect lasts but a few seconds, a feeling only long enough for us to make the flash of recognition and an emotion lasts as long as we keep finding memories they continue to trigger that affect. Often the emotion lasts quite a while.

Mood – A mood is a persistent state of emotion, which we can remain stuck in for hours or days. For example, a familiar scene can trigger emotions hovering around a relationship we never managed to resolve.

Affect – Affects are biological mechanisms which unfold according to precisely written programs. Each of the affects lasts a strictly determined period of time.

Feelings – We use the word feeling to indicate that the organism has become aware of an affect.

Emotion – The move from affect to feeling involves a leap from biology to psychology. The concept of emotion requires still another level of complexity.
The Language of Shame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISCRETION</th>
<th>DISGRACE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shamed/Humble</td>
<td>Shamed/Humiliation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling little and diminished in the presence of mystery.</td>
<td>Feeling exposed, little, flawed, defective, out of control, damaged.</td>
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</table>
| Feeling desirous - the experience is inseparable from the experience of estrangement - lost and alone. | Feeling a lack of identity and a sense of being.

PolarityScript: Split
Shameless: Perfection
Shameful: Sinfulness

Realms of Privacy Protected by Natural Shame - Natural Behavior of Concealment

A. The Sacred
1. Prayer
2. Birth
3. Death

B. Issues Pertaining to Self
1. Face
2. Body
3. Eating
4. Sexuality
5. Good Name

John Bradshaw, MA  www.johnbradshaw.com  How To Reduce The Reactivity and PTSD Symptoms of Childhood Trauma 24
INDEX OF SUSPICION
Answer yes or no to the following questions. After you read each question, wait and get in touch with what you feel. If you fell a strong energy for yes, answer yes. If not, answer no. If you answer any question yes, you can suspect that your wonderful infant inner child has been wounded. There are degrees of woundedness. You are somewhere on a scale from 1 to 100. The more questions you feel you should answer "yes" the more your infant self was wounded.

1. Do you have a great fear of abandonment? ___Y ___N
2. If you have a great fear of abandonment, do you frequent write others or think about yourself? ___Y ___N
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DEVELOPMENTAL AFFIRMATIONS
INFANTS
Welcome to the world...I have been waiting for you.
I am so glad you are here.
I've prepared a special place for you to live.
I like you just the way you are.
I will not leave you, no matter what.
Your needs are OK with me.
I'll give you all the time you need to get your needs met.
I am so glad you are.
I want to take care of you and I am prepared to do that.
I like spending time with you.
In all the world, there has never been another like you.
God smiled when you were born.
**DEVELOPMENTAL AFFIRMATIONS**

**TODDLER**
Little _______________________(insert your name)...
It's OK to be curious, to look, to touch, taste and explore things.
I love the way you are.
I will take care of your needs. You don't have to take care of mine.
It's OK for you to be taken care of.
It's OK to say "NO." It's OK to be you.
It's OK for both of us to be mad. We will work out our problems.
It's OK to feel scared when you do new things or things your way.
It's OK to feel sad when things don't work out.
I will not leave you no matter what.
I will love you no matter what.
I love watching you learn to walk, talk, separate and grow up.

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**DEVELOPMENTAL AFFIRMATIONS**

**PRE-SCHOOLER**
I will be here for you to test your boundaries and find out your limits.
It's OK to think for yourself. You can think about your feelings & have feelings about what you are thinking.
It's OK to find out the differences between the boys and girls.
I'll set limits for you to help me find out who you are.
It's OK to be different, to have your own views of things.
It's OK for you to imagine things with out them coming true – I will help you separate fantasy from reality.
You are not responsible for your mother, father, their marriage or divorce.
I like that you are a boy/girl. I It's OK to cry.
You can ask for what you want. I You can ask questions.
I love you just the way you are. I I love watching you grow.

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**DEVELOPMENTAL AFFIRMATIONS**

**SCHOOL AGE**
Little _______________________(insert your name.)
You can be who you are at school.
You can stand up for yourself and I will support you.
It's OK to learn to do things your own way.
It's OK to think about things & try them out before you make them your own.
You can trust your own judgment – you need to own the consequences of your actions.
You can do things your own way and its OK to disagree.
You can trust your feelings...if you are afraid, we can talk about it.
You can choose your own friends I You can dress your own way.
I love you. I I love you just the way you are.
I am willing to be with you no matter what.

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[Contact Information]

**John Bradshaw, M.A.**
John Bradshaw Media Group
Post Office Box 667147
Houston, Texas 77266 USA
713.771.1300 (P)
713.771.1352 (F)
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