



Adoption from the Inside Out

Irving Bible Church

2011

The Whole Equation

The right equation:

$$\text{Connection} = \text{ME} + \text{My Child}$$

The wrong equation:

$$\text{Connection} = \text{My Child}$$

Adoption from the Inside Out

By *making sense of your past* and *being realistic about the future*, you can be freed to *be fully present* in each and every moment to help your children heal and become all that God has created them to be.

The Artist is Present



Marina Abramović at the MoMA in New York (2010)

Making Sense of the Past

- You must be willing to look back in order to be able to move forward . . .
 - Big “T” Traumas
 - Trauma, abuse and harm
 - Loss and grief
 - Little “T” Traumas
 - How you were parented
 - Family dynamics growing up
 - Mental Models
 - Memories
- Why is making sense of your past important?

Making Sense of the Past

“You cannot lead a child to a place of healing if you do not know the way yourself.”

-- Dr. Karyn Purvis

Making Sense of the Past

- How does your past fit into attachment?
 - Adult attachment
- What is most important is not what happened to you in the past, but how you have made sense of what happened to you
 - The focus is not on what happened “back then,” but rather what are you willing to do NOW about what happened “back then”

Being Realistic About the Future

Motivations

&

Expectations

Motivations

- Not focused on **WHAT** you are doing, but on **WHY** you are doing it
 - You can do the right thing for the wrong reason
 - Healthy motivations help to ensure that you do the right thing for the right reason
- Why do motivations matter?
 - Your motivations inform your expectations; in other words, unhealthy motivations make it more likely you will be unrealistic about the future and what to expect

Motivations

- Examples of unhealthy motivations
- Your primary motivation – *the reason WHY you are doing what you are doing* – must be a desire to give your unconditional love away
- Examining your motivations is an ongoing process

Model of the Myth*

The Model of the Myth explains how unrealistic expectations are developed. It is a process consisting of the following five steps:

- Something is learned
- Information is filtered and something is believed
- Expectations develop based on the filtered information and the resulting belief
- Expectations fail
- Conflict, disappointment, discouragement and despair set in

* Adapted from Chapter 2 of *Wounded Children, Healing Homes* (2009), by Jayne E. Schooler, et al.

Keys to Helping Parents Manage Their Expectations

- Carefully and prayerfully examine your motivations and expectations
- Talk with other experienced families about what they expected and how those expectations compared to the realities they encountered
- Be willing to adjust your expectations
- Recognize that some of your expectations will be unmet
- Keep lines of communication open and honest
- Embrace the “different kind of normal” that is part of the journey for adoptive and foster families

The Parent is Present



The Parent is Present



The Parent is Present



The Parent is Present



The Parent is Present



Being Fully Present

**There is no healing without
“Being With”**

So Where Do I Go From Here?

The process of change:

- **Stop**
- **Reflect**
 - Talk
 - Journal
 - Forgive
- **Pray**
- **Be Open and Willing to Change**

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

-- 2 Corinthians 1:4 (NIV)