Breaking the Intergenerational Cycle of Substance Abuse

21st Annual National TASC Conference

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A Historical Perspective of the Problem
The Study of “Epigenetics”

How the environment actually turns certain genes…

On or Off
Healthy Family Expansion

- Communication
- Roles
- Emotional Involvement
- Behavior Management
World of Abnormal Rearing

- Deprivation
- Survival
- Dependency Needs
“Dependent”

**Dependent (adj):** relying on someone or something else for aid, support, etc.

**Dependent (n):** a person who depends on or needs someone or something for aid, support, favor, etc.

*Controlled by a variable*

Causes of Dependency

An inability to fulfill one’s needs independently
Core Healthy Family Themes

Nurturance & Trust
Core Healthy Family Themes

Nurturance & Trust

Expectations & Control
Core Healthy Family Themes

- Nurturance & Trust
- Expectations & Control
- Relationships & Self Esteem
Core Healthy Family Themes

Nurturance & Trust
Expectations & Control
Support
Relationships & Self Esteem
Understanding The W.A.R. Cycle
“World of Abnormal Rearing”
Reasons for Having Children

Planned/Unplanned
Stages of the WAR Cycle

Conception
Parental Attachment and Attunement
ATTACHMENT

is the drive
to be Close
and
Cared About
Attachment Relationships give us our concept of the world:

Hostile
Friendly
Nurturing
ATTUNEMENT is about being in tune emotionally with the child.
PARENTING

is more about the

Relationship than Techniques
SAFETY

is a learned behavior
Stages of the WAR Cycle

Conception

Pregnancy

Wanted/Unwanted
Stages of the WAR Cycle

Conception

Pregnancy

Wanted/Unwanted

Unrealistic Expectations
Stages of the WAR Cycle

- Conception
- Pregnancy
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Role Reversal

Wanted/Unwanted
Children learn to be stress absorbers –

“Soaking up the worries of their parents.”
Living in a constant environment of stress means that high-stress becomes my "Baseline"
I will seek out **Stress and Crisis** as my “**Comfort Zone**”
Stages of the WAR Cycle

- Conception
- Pregnancy
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Role Reversal
- Compliance

Wanted/Unwanted
Must be taught

Healthy Survival Skills
COMPETENCY BASED APPROACH TO LEARNING

Competency Mastery Requires:

- Information knowledge
- Implementation knowledge
Both are **Internalization Processes** needed to achieve Recovery

- Internalization is checking for Understanding
- Taking ownership of new Knowledge
**Internalization** is about making learning Relevant

Making associations between characters and situations that can shape their decisions
Stages of the WAR Cycle

- Conception
- Pregnancy
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Role Reversal
- Compliance
- Isolation

Wanted/Unwanted
Adults who had **predictable, nurturing** parents are comfortable:

- Being close and alone
- Have a secure attachment style
Adults who had **inconsistent, emotionally unavailable parents**: 

- Often have an anxious attachment style
- Crave closeness and fear abandonment
- Want and need less space and are more smothering
Adults who had parents who were rejecting often have an:

- Avoidance attachment style
- Resisting closeness
- Seeking space
- Fear of being hurt
“Adults are unpredictable People”

“People turn on you”

“Trust only myself”
Stages of the WAR Cycle

- Conception
- Pregnancy
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Role Reversal
- Compliance
- Isolation
- Trust Not Learned

Wanted/Unwanted
Stages of the WAR Cycle

Conception

Pregnancy

Unrealistic Expectations

Role Reversal

Compliance

Isolation

Trust Not Learned

I’m No Good

Wanted/Unwanted
Stages of the WAR Cycle

Conception

Pregnancy

Unrealistic Expectations

Role Reversal

Compliance

Isolation

Trust Not Learned

I’m No Good

Selection of Friends

Wanted/Unwanted
Social Support Deficit

Choosing relationships with people who have “like” problems
Stages of the WAR Cycle

Conception

Pregnancy

Unrealistic Expectations

Role Reversal

Compliance

Isolation

I’m No Good

Trust Not Learned

Selection of Friends

Select Partner

Wanted/Unwanted

I'm No Good
Relationships Damaged

Relationships are about Dependency & using each other
Stages of the WAR Cycle

- Conception
- Pregnancy
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Role Reversal
- Compliance
- Isolation
- Trust Not Learned
- I’m No Good
- Selection of Friends
- Select Partner
- Relationship Fails

Wanted/Unwanted
Themes & Stages of the WAR Cycle

- Conception
- Pregnancy
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Role Reversal
- Compliance
- Isolation
- Expectations & Control
- Support
- Relationship Fails
- Select Partner
- Selection of Friends
- I’m No Good
- Relationships & Self Esteem

Nurturance & Trust
Trust Not Learned
Learned
Selection of Friends
Isolation
Compliance
Role Reversal
Unrealistic Expectations
Pregnancy
Conception
Interventions to Break the Cycle
WAR Cycle – Adults look back at what helped them:

- One-on-one time with a loving adult
- Informal support from a neighbor, teacher, coach, minister
- Early insight – “It’s not about me” – “These people are sad and angry.”
- A passion for reading, music
- A sense of humor
- Love for the Arts
- Physical activity – release from pain
Assess/Deprivation Needs

- Abuse History
- Resiliency Factors
Understand Role Reversal

- Facilitate Predictability
- Address childhood play through safe, social activities
Facilitate movement from compliance to internalization through gradual reduction of structure and insight work.
Create a treatment culture that promotes

“Mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn.”
Establish a therapeutic alliance and facilitate transfer of trust
Victims of Emotional Manipulation

Disclose “way too fast”
No small talk which is “testing talk”

Each conversation goes a little deeper
(gradual)
Clients Are Skillful at ADAPTING

- Face Readers
- Can be Manipulative
We teach them by observing us being genuine & authentic

= Role Modeling
Relational Friction – *Beats them up*

Relational Work in Therapy – *Restores them*
Hearing their narrative (story) as a survivor –

“Empowerment is Therapeutic”
Teach social network mapping and assist clients with building a social support network
Teach everything you can about relationships including patterns, boundaries, roles, etc.
Establish Conversations

- Parenting
- Contact Comfort
- Family Expansion
Competency Based Continuum

Numbness Apathy  ---  Self Help
Learned Helplessness  ---  Mutual Help
Indifference  ---  Industrious
Arrested Development  ---  Social Learning
“No Learning”  ---  Learning from Experience
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unpredictable Adults</th>
<th>Role Models</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>Connected to Self/ Higher Power/ Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Deprivation</td>
<td>Contact Comfort Emotional Literacy Self Soothe</td>
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<td>Displacement</td>
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Thank You for Your Time and Attention!

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