



RESOURCE FAMILY LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES

Essentials for New and Experienced Resource Families

Welcome to the Resource Family Lunch and Learn Series, a collection of short, practical videos designed to support both new and experienced resource families. Each video provides essential education and tools to help you navigate the unique challenges and rewards of fostering and caregiving.

Videos are no more than one hour in length and can be viewed in any order, allowing you to

- (1) choose topics that meet your current needs or
- (2) follow the series sequentially for a comprehensive learning experience.

Our goal is to equip you with the knowledge, strategies, and confidence to provide a nurturing, trauma-informed environment for the children in your care.



Understanding Trauma with Denise Marler, MFT

Video 1 of 3 | Workbook



Tuolumne County Child Welfare Online Training Library
Course: Resource Family Lunch and Learn Series
Video 1 of 3 Featuring Denise Marler, MFT



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Expressed Views

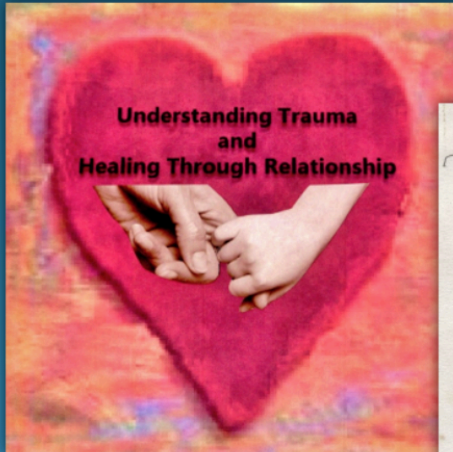
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Sensitive Content

This course contains educational material of a highly sensitive nature, including material that may be triggering for some individuals. Content includes topics on child abuse and neglect, the impact of trauma, sexual abuse, trauma responses, and Dependency Court. This content may be triggering or emotionally challenging. Be aware of your personal responses, take breaks as needed, and consult with your supervisor (if you are a professional) or other qualified professional as needed.



Key Takeaways



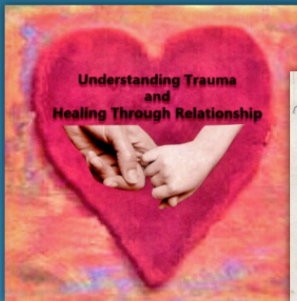
Denise Marler, MFT



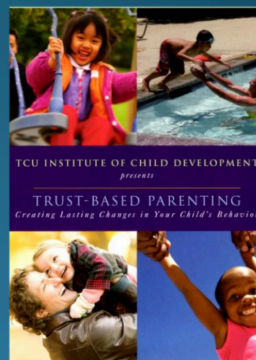
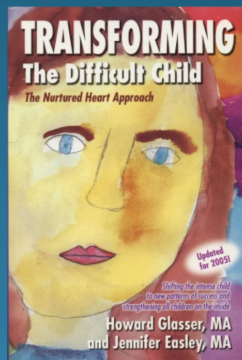
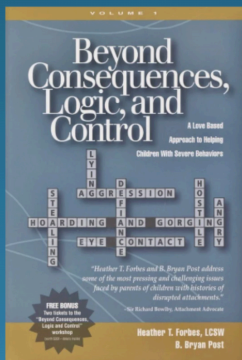
Image credit: Denise Marler, MFT -
healingbrainshealinghearts.com

Understanding Trauma

Denise Marler, MFT
healingbrainshealinghearts.com



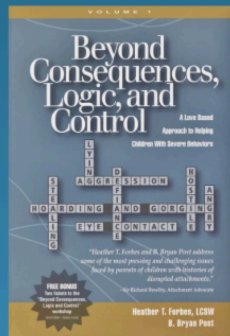
The 1-2-3 PUNCH !



Approaches that promote positive relationships/connection/felt safety

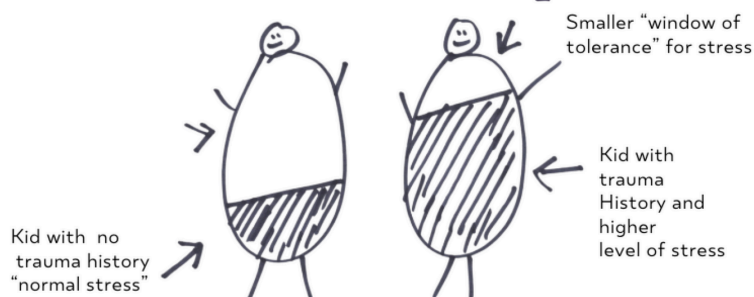
Key Takeaways

Conceptualization “The Stress Model”



Bryan Post and
Heather Forbes

The “Tick People”



*The “Tick People” are based on the
Stress Model developed by B. Bryan Post
(Forbes, H. T., & Post, B. B., 2006)

Denise Marler, MFT healingbrainshealinghearts.com, 2025

See Handout #1 at end of Workbook
“Our Brains and Nervous Systems on Stress; The TICK People”

Fight, Flight, Fear or Freeze

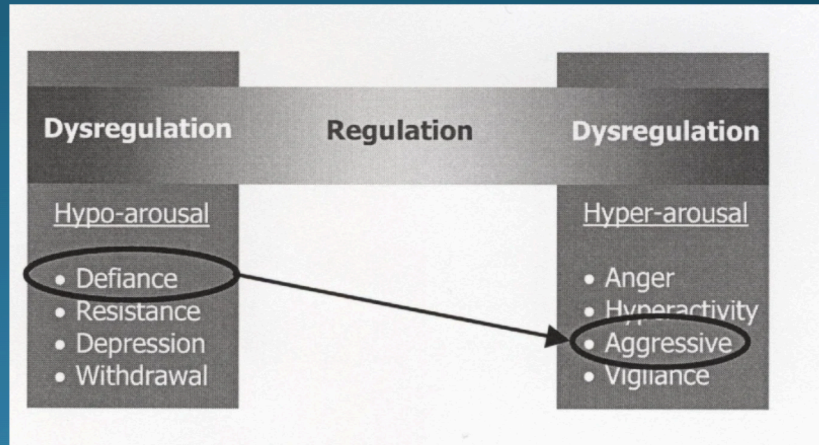
Dysregulation

Key Takeaways



My child is not giving me a hard time, my child is *having* a hard time.

Instead of, "He's being difficult," try thinking, "He's having a difficult time. He needs my help."



Source: Bruce Perry Ph.D.

Video Resource



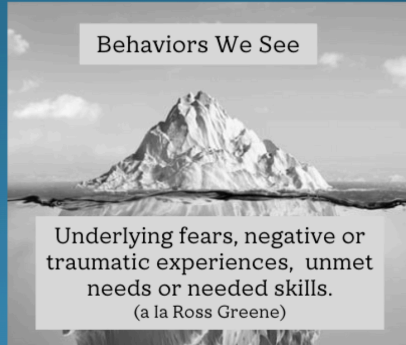
"Boston 24/7 with Principal McAfee"

video length: 8:23

- What does the principal do that calms the student?
- What does the teacher do that escalates the student?
- What are some clues as to past trauma/triggers?

Key Takeaways

Viewing Lens The Iceberg Reminder



Dan Siegel said our children need to be:

- **Seen** — this is not just seeing with the eyes. It means perceiving them deeply and empathically — sensing the mind behind their behavior, with what Dr. Siegel calls "mindsight" (recognizing and naming feelings).
- **Safe** — we avoid actions and responses that frighten or hurt them, by first calming ourselves and being aware of our own feelings/responses.
- **Soothed** — we help them deal with difficult emotions and situations. We act as a "coach not a warden".
- **Secure** — we help them develop an internalized sense of well-being. We guide them to practice better ways of handling situations and emotions.

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2020). The power of showing up: How parental presence shapes who our kids become and how their brains get wired.

The 4 "Ss" in action... Seen

1) Acknowledge what you think the child might be experiencing. If you "guess wrong" they will correct you! "That must be very frustrating" or "I would be pretty upset" or "I can see you are struggling". This is "connect before you correct".

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2020). The power of showing up: How parental presence shapes who our kids become and how their brains get wired.



Key Takeaways

The 4 “Ss” in action... Safe

2) Take a deep breath and calm yourself, acknowledging to yourself your own feelings. Be conscious of your tone and facial expression - strive to show softness and support.

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2020). The power of showing up: How parental presence shapes who our kids become and how their brains get wired.

The 4 “Ss” in action... Soothed

3) Offer support: "We'll get this figured out". "Let's try another way."

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2020). The power of showing up: How parental presence shapes who our kids become and how their brains get wired.

The 4 “Ss” in action... Secure

4) Add a positive that you see. "I see you handling your feelings (by walking away, not hitting or yelling etc.) and trying so hard to show self-control!"

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2020). The power of showing up: How parental presence shapes who our kids become and how their brains get wired.





Key Takeaways

Thinking of your child as
behaving badly
disposes you to think
of punishment.

Thinking of your child as
*struggling to handle
something difficult*
encourages you to help
them through their
distress

How Trauma Impacts a Child's Belief about Themselves and the World

- There is no one to help.
- It's not safe to trust my parents.
- I'm not important.
- I can't get what I need.
- I'm not safe.
- I can't get the closeness and love I need.
- It's not safe to have needs or feelings.
- I'm not good enough.
- I'm a mistake.
- It's not safe to love.
- I'm all alone.
- There is no one to whom I can go for comfort.
- Bad things will happen.
- I will always be rejected and abandoned.
- Parents are mean.
- Parents leave.
- I don't belong anywhere.
- It's not safe to trust or get close.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

I must take care of getting my own needs met by myself, in any way I can. I must take what I need/want whenever I have a chance (a child, of course, cannot distinguish between what he or she wants and what he or she truly needs).

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)





Key Takeaways

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

I must cry and demand so that you will see me and hear me,

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

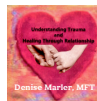
I must keep a wall up and not care about others, so I will not get hurt.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

I must be vigilant to danger and mistrust others at all times.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)





Beliefs Behind Behaviors

I must stay in control of my environment in order to stay safe.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Key Takeaways

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

I must not allow myself to be open or vulnerable in any way.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

I must fight to defend myself at all costs.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from "Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma" by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)





Beliefs Behind Behaviors

Key Takeaways

I must be ready to run to survive.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

I must be ready to freeze, hide, or close up to survive.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Parent’s Negative Beliefs

My child dislikes me.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)





Parent's Negative Beliefs

Key Takeaways

“
My child wants to hurt me.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Parent's Negative Beliefs

“
My child wants is evil/bad/shameful.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Parent's Negative Beliefs

“
My child is an embarrassment to me.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)





Key Takeaways

Parent's Negative Beliefs

“ ——— ”

I'm a bad parent.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Parent's Negative Beliefs

“ ——— ”

I'm not in control.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)

Parent's Negative Beliefs

“ ——— ”

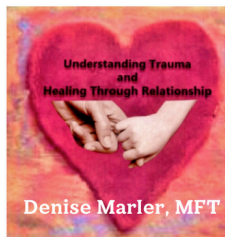
This is hopeless.

Denise Marler, Oct. 2023 (adapted from “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong, 2014)



Key Takeaways

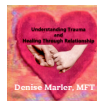
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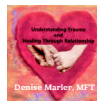


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Video 1

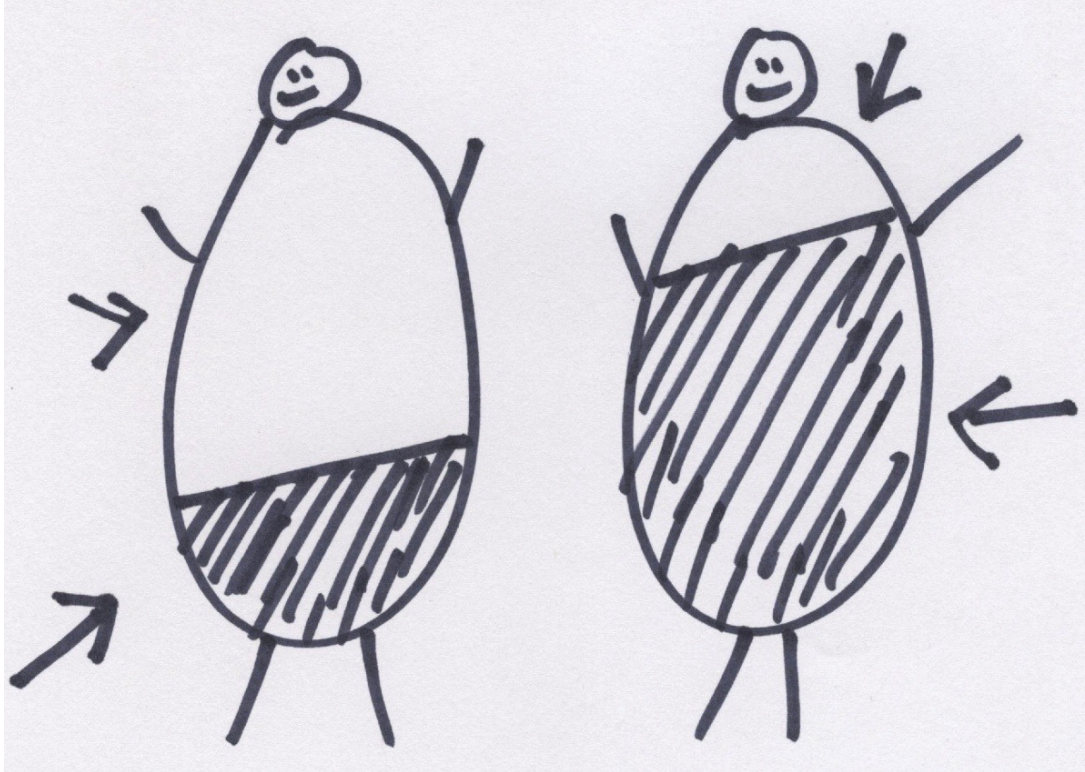
HANDOUTS



“Our Brains and Nervous Systems on Stress”

Larger window to handle stress

Smaller window to handle stress



Child with "Normal Stress"

Child with Trauma History

The "TICK" People

(so-called because they look like “fat ticks”)

This diagram represents the level of **stress** that MANY children with a history of trauma carry with them at all times.

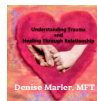
Because trauma causes their brains to be “wired” for fear (fight, flight or freeze/hyper vigilant), the smallest of things can overload/overwhelm their nervous system and create very challenging and reactive behaviors geared for survival. At these times when a child’s nervous system is on overload, the child **CANNOT** think clearly and is not deliberately misbehaving. They need help from an observant/calm adult to calm their own nervous system and then help the child calm their nervous system before the child can learn or demonstrate better behaviors.

*The Tick People is based on the Stress Model developed by B. Bryan Post (Forbes, H. T., & Post, B. B. 2006. Beyond consequences, logic, and control: A love-based approach to helping children with severe behaviors. Beyond Consequences Institute.)

Denise Marler, MFT “Understanding Trauma and Healing Through Relationship”



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Resources for Caregivers

Denise Marler, MFT

Recommended Websites

Dan Siegel

mindsightinstitute.com

Trust Based Relational Intervention

child.tcu.edu

The Nurtured Heart Approach

nurturedheartinstitute.com

Heather Forbes

beyondconsequences.com

Bryan Post

postinstitute.com

Bryan Post YouTube Channel Fear to Love, search

[“Mr. T Parenting with Love: Time-in not Time-out”](#)

Self-regulation/mindful breathing, search
[“Just Breathe by Julie”](#)

Search TBRI on YouTube

Bruce Perry's website

childtrauma.org

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

www.nctsn.org

Denise Marler, MFT Website

healingbrainshealinghearts.com

Recommended Books

[Beyond Behaviors: Using Brain Science and Compassion to Understand and Solve Children's Behavioral Challenges](#)

Paperback by [Mona Delahooke](#)

[Transforming the Difficult Child: The Nurtured Heart Approach](#) Paperback by [Howard Glasser](#) and [Jennifer Easley](#)

[The Connected Child: Bring Hope and Healing to Your Adoptive Family](#) Paperback by [Karyn B. Purvis](#), [David R. Cross](#), [Wendy Lyons Sunshine](#)

[Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control: A Love-Based Approach to Helping Attachment-Challenged Children with Severe Behaviors](#) Paperback by [Heather T. Forbes](#) , [B. Bryan Post](#)

[The Great Behavior Breakdown](#) Paperback by [B. Bryan Post](#)

[Help for Billy: A Beyond Consequences Approach to Helping Challenging Children in the Classroom](#) Paperback by [Heather T. Forbes](#)

[From Fear to Love](#) Paperback by [Bryan Post](#)



Reference List

“The Tick People”

Based on the Stress Model

From “Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control” By Heather T. Forbes, LCSW and B. Bryan Post

“The Iceberg Reminder”

Based on Ross Greene’s Collaborative Problem Solving: “Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems”.

From “The Explosive Child” by Ross W. Greene, PhD

“Negative Beliefs and Strategies”

Adapted from: “Integrative Parenting: Strategies for Raising Children Affected by Attachment Trauma” by Debra Wesselmann, Cathy Schweitzer, Stefanie Armstrong

“Connect Before You Correct”, Play Practice”, “Gentle Reminders”, and “Re-dos”

Based on TBRI (Trust-Based Relational Intervention)

From “The Connected Child” By Karyn B. Purvis, PhD and David R. Cross, PhD, with Wendy Lyons Sunshine

“The 4 S’s of Dan Siegel”

From “The Power of Showing Up: How Parental Presence Shapes Who Our Kids Become and How Their Brains Get Wired” By Daniel J. Siegel M.D., Tina Payne Bryson

“Positive Recognitions” and “Resets” from “The Nurtured Heart Approach”

From “Transforming the Difficult Child” By Howard Glasser, MA and Jennifer Easley, MA

Works Cited

Forbes, H. T., & Post, B. B. (2006). Beyond consequences, logic, and control: A love-based approach to helping children with severe behaviors. Beyond Consequences Institute.

Glasser, H., & Easley, J. (1999). Transforming the difficult child: The nurtured heart approach. Nurtured Heart Publications.

Greene, R. W. (2021). The explosive child: A new approach for understanding and parenting easily frustrated, chronically inflexible children (6th ed.).

Purvis, K. B., & Cross, D. R. (2011). Trust-based parenting: Creating lasting changes in your child's behavior [DVD]. TCU Institute of Child Development.

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