

Center for Family Development

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Creating Capacity for Attachment

Edited by

Arthur Becker-Weidman, PhD
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Creating Capacity for Attachment is for professionals, parents, and anyone who works or lives with children who have trauma-attachment disorders. This comprehensive text describes the theory and practice of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy. Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy is an evidence-based approach, with demonstrated effectiveness, for treating adopted and foster children and those with trauma-attachment disorders, such as Reactive Attachment Disorder.

The Chapters were written by various contributors from around the country who practice Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy. Dr. Becker-Weidman has written the Introduction, the Chapter on Theory, and, in conjunction with the three families, the chapter on Parent's Experience with Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy.

Dr. Daniel Hughes, the founder of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy has written the forward and a chapter about the development of this therapy and about the training of therapists to practice this therapy.

Respected professionals offer practical strategies for treating and parenting children with trauma and attachment disorders that include the following:

- An Introduction to Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy/Art Becker-Weidman
- Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy: The Theory/Art Becker-Weidman
- Therapy with Attachment-Ready Parents/Phyllis Rubin & Jessica Mroz
- Therapy for Children in Alternate Placements (RTC, Group Home)/Craig Clark
- Implementing Attachment Models in a Residential Setting/Karen Buckwalter, Michelle Robison, Scott Blackwell & Joseph McGuill
- Working with Unresolved Parents/Deborah Shell
- Therapist Use of Self/Dafna Lender
- Chapter for Parents/Adoptive parents who have completed treatment
- History, Development & Training of the DDP Model/Daniel Hughes
- Closing Remarks/Jessica Mroz

Other chapters describe:

- The theory of this approach
- The logistics of providing treatment
- Three detailed descriptions of treatment written by families who experienced this therapy
- A chapter describing the parenting approach consistent with this therapy
- Chapters describing the treatment as provided by therapists with different types of families, including a chapter that has the complete dialogue of a therapy session
- An extensive chapter describing using this approach with foster families, group homes, and residential treatment centers
- A chapter written for teachers, wrap-around workers, and others
- An annotated listing of extensive resources for parents and therapists

Critical Acclaim

“The authors of this informative text have created a useful assembly of chapters by people working on the frontlines of trying to help children in need create the attachments with their new caregivers that will help them thrive. Written from the point of view of what is practical and informed by new findings in science, the book will be of use to a wide array of caregivers and professionals who are searching for a hands-on approach to how to reach out and connect with the children in our world who so desperately need nurturance. In these pages there is a wealth of hard-won wisdom that will enrich the lives of many.”

Daniel J. Siegel, M.D.

Associate Clinical Professor, UCLA School of Medicine

Author, *Mindsight*, *Parenting from the Inside Out*, and *The Developing Mind*

Sir Richard Bowlby wrote, “I believe the greatest contribution that psychotherapy has to offer is the alleviation of the pain and suffering of our most traumatized, neglected and disrupted young people. “*Creating Capacity for Attachment*,” describes a new paradigm for treating some of the most deeply troubled children in our society. The therapeutic relationship in *Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy* is based on personal integrity and empathy, combined with the skill, and resolve of the well-trained therapist. It is one of the very few therapies that offers practical help to the most difficult to reach children and their families. The authors' passion for this groundbreaking therapy, and their deep understanding of attachment theory and how to apply it, shines through the crisp and economical writing. Alleviating the distress of children's emotional dysregulation and attachment disorganization is the single most valuable role of the therapist - and one of the hardest. This book offers both hope and new therapeutic insights; it is inspirational and daunting, scientifically logical, and deeply moving, and a very good read!”

“One of the book's strengths is its conceptualization. The chapters cover the application of *Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy* in a variety of settings, which well illustrates the richness and adaptability of the theory. I think the chapters for parents and by parents provide a useful perspective for parents and therapists alike. I've never seen the nuts and bolts of operating a program spelled out as they are in Chapter 2. This information will be valuable to many professionals. Chapter 7 seems written for a therapist with minimal experience, but does provide useful insights to potential pitfalls in this line of work. To my knowledge, a theory in the treatment of children with attachment difficulties has never been covered in this kind of depth. The writers make it clear that *Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy* places the proper emphasis on sensitivity and attunement in work with children. The significance of PLACE and PACE are illustrated through abundant examples in a variety of settings, and are useful tools to remind parents and practitioners of the importance of sensitivity and attunement. *Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy* is congruent with existing research in child

development, child psychotherapy, and attachment. Congratulations to all the contributors on a wonderful contribution to the field of clinical attachment work.”

Todd Nichols, MA, MPAff

Executive Director of Family Attachment and Counseling Center of Minnesota

Co-author of *Connecting with Kids through Stories: Using narratives to facilitate attachment in adopted children*.

“An extraordinary project, *Creating Capacity for Attachment* actually imbues the reader with a felt sense of the attachment process the authors are defining. The therapeutic process defined is well grounded in attachment theory and research. The authors’ competencies are shown by their ability to describe the process, give relevant examples, and align those examples with the process. The application of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy to the range of environments in which these attachment disordered young people live provides a much needed holistic approach to intervention. The consistent application of the “playful, accepting, curious and empathetic” model parallels the consistency necessary to create a secure attachment. There is also a step-by-step description of the structure of DDP treatment. The fact that this includes normalizing the child’s “wrong” behaviors will help many therapists succeed with youth with troubling actions. DDP is itself a model of the positive prosocial behavior we all wish for these children, DDP is at its essence the creation of the secure attachment process as it occurs naturally between caretaker and infant in a loving supportive environment. Kudos to the editors, collaborators, and contributors that put their hearts and souls into this work.”

Janis F. Bremer, Ph.D. Adolescent Services Clinical Director, Project Pathfinder, Inc. St Paul, MN

“This book offers parents and treatment providers a fresh new way to look at the attachment and therapy process. I think everyone working with individuals with attachment disorder should read it. This technique makes sense in every way.”

Rena Kornblum

Adoptive parent of three children, now grown, with attachment disorder

Author of *Disarming the Playground: Violence Prevention through Movement and Pro-Social Skills*

EXCERPT

“What led us to try Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy was our desperate desire to see our daughter really and truly heal and become “real.” The superficial quality of her emotions and interactions with us was deeply frustrating and profoundly saddening. We felt fairly cynical than any further therapy could help...unless. Unless it was all that we sensed we needed: a therapist who would build us up as parents in the eyes of our child and treat us with respect, who wouldn't settle for a play-session with our daughter, who would allow us to know what happened behind closed doors, who would check things out with us to see if it were true, and who would encourage us in what we were doing right while helping us understand what we needed to change... we could not have been more satisfied with the therapy experience. We had checked our therapist out by e-mail and on-line chats, and then asked for a recommendation from an internationally-known therapist who no longer does therapy intensives, and he recommended the very therapist with whom we had been dialoguing... from the first day, we experienced the amazing difference that this therapy produced in our daughter and our whole family... if you ask her (their child) if the very hard work involved in learning how to love has been worth it, she will respond with a very firm “yes.” ... she will tell you that she would rather love and risk losing the people she loves than never love at all. And as she tells you this, you will see both the concern and the love very clearly in her now-shining and very expressive eyes.”