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Making Our Homes a Place of Healing

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Making Our Homes a Place of Healing

Late last fall, a colleague and I were trained as practitioners through the Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development on Trust-Based Relational Intervention, thanks to a grant from local community partners.



▲ Ingrid Weiss Slikkers

It had been a dream of ours for years as we witnessed how this model helped children, especially those from “hard places” as Dr. Purvis herself calls it. One of the initial requirements for the training was to participate in the Adult Attachment Interview. This interview helps further understand how one was parented and subsequently how one will parent. Additionally, it gives insight into how one interacts with intimate relationships, especially in understanding, preventing and safeguarding oneself from perceived dangers within relationships.

My interview concluded by verbally processing it with a highly trained research scientist. She gave me insight into understanding the difference between *instrumental* and *nurturing* care. She described instrumental care as involving material things such as attending a child’s event, assuring music lessons, purchasing a new toy, or taking children on a trip. Then she said, “Nurturing care means connecting heart to heart, such as sharing and laughing at a private joke, snuggling after a long day, and looking someone in the eyes and telling them something you love about them.” She concluded by saying, “Although both instrumental and nurturing care are necessary for children’s development, nurturing care is the type that helps children heal and teaches them how to connect with others in their lives and in the future with friends, teachers, co-workers, and even romantic partners.”

Further training weeks later helped me to apply this interview clinically in supporting students and others as to how vital it is to understand how our parents (or

caregivers) did or did not show attached care. Knowing that if we received it, we could give that type of care to others. But even more importantly, comprehending that if we didn’t get it, we can progressively work on it as a purposeful skill.

As I thought about parenting today that is intentional in many ways, especially within Christian circles, I wondered whether the focus tended to be on the instrumental care areas instead of the nurturing areas. I paused to contemplate that if the true value lies in the *nurturing* care, what intentional and focused things are we doing to grow and strengthen this?

With this learning also came a deep pause spiritually. God’s desire is deep healing relationships amongst His people, and He models what He desires to have with us as well. My professional field is affirming the value of engaged nurturing care that could only originate from the One Healing Source. He wants to not only provide instrumental care, but also nurturing care.

As we approach spring, how can we intentionally pause to notice God’s *nurturing* care of us, *not just* instrumental and, in turn, pause long enough to give that to those around us, especially children? ■

Sources: <https://child.tcu.edu/about-us/tbri/#sthash.OJhgPONfdpbs>
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