

Clarke Counseling Center

Monthly Newsletter

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Greetings!

Not one of us escapes the issues of parenting. We are either involved in a process of understanding how we were parented or we are involved in parenting our own children, or both. For each of us, parenthood has a profound affect on our lives. This issue is dedicated to parenthood. I think you'll enjoy it.



And if you would like a trained professional to assist you in dealing with parenthood, I am ready to speak to you.

My experience and training are in the following areas:

- [Life Coaching](#)
- [Adult AD/HD](#)
- [Marriage and Family Therapy](#)

Please contact me to discuss how I might be able to help. Sincerely,

Sherry Clarke MA, LCMFT

The Miracle of Imperfect Parenthood



Parenthood! It's the most beautiful, horrendous, exciting, terrifying, fulfilling thing you can do with your life. And whether you are a parent or not, it is something you must come to terms with; even if just to understand

your own parents and the way you were taught to view your world. The most incredible thing about parenthood is that anyone would so willingly subject themselves to such a mixture of "hot and cold," "sweet and sour," "pleasure and pain" and so many other diametrically opposite emotions.

Six months ago, our daughter gave birth to her own little miracle - our grandson. Last week, in a moment of frustration, she admitted that prior to the birth, she ignorantly took all her freedoms for granted. But when asked if she would trade her son for all those missed freedoms, her predictable response was, "Not on your life!"

What happens when you become a parent? Something reaches into your brain and changes all the connections. Suddenly, it's ok that you walk around with goey stains on your blouse. It's acceptable to talk senseless gibberish and to pull exaggerated faces in order to get a response. And it's ok to put your own life and health at risk if it means a better life for this little new-comer. In this respect, parenthood is so much more than a change of status; it's more like an altered state of consciousness. It changes us, and the change is profound.

To add to the miracle of parenthood is the realization that not a single parent is perfect. Yet, with all those imperfections, the incidents of gross, purposeful parental neglect or abuse are rare. Yes, most of us are damaged by our parents in some way, but that damage is usually the result of ignorance and poor decisions, not of pre-meditated malice. The incidents of such depravity are still newsworthy and rare.

In the eyes of children, however, parents go through various stages of perfection (ages are approximate, and vary by individual):

1. A Perfect Part (0-2 yrs old): A parent is a small child's entire world and is a perfect part of the child.
2. Separate But Perfect (2-13 yrs old): A parent, though perfect, is separate from the child.
3. A Perfect Voice (13 - 16 yrs old): Parents represent the voice of perfection but are not human beings.
4. Pre-dominantly Imperfect (16 - independence): Parents' blaring imperfections keep them inhuman.
5. Imperfect but OK (independence - parenthood): Parents are imperfect but given credit for trying. They're human.
6. Perfect (When children become parents): "How did my mom do this? She must have been perfect!"

Often, children go into late adulthood before reaching the final stages of these perception changes. Many, in fact, get hung up on stage 4 - not allowing parents to be human. By seeing parents as human beings, we open ourselves to the possibility they are or were great human beings.

To the degree we allow ourselves to learn from our own parenting experiences, we can recognize the true miracle of imperfect parenthood.

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Counselor's Corner

Voting - An American Right and Privilege



Sherry encourages everyone to study the issues and get involved in your community and especially get out to vote on November 2. We are so blessed to live in a country where its citizens have free elections and the opportunity to be engaged in the political process - to have our voices and values heard.

Interesting Quotes About Parenthood

"You don't really understand human nature unless you know why a child on a merry-go-round will wave at his parents every time around - and why his parents will always wave back." - William D. Tammeus



"Making the decision to have a child is momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body." - Elizabeth Stone

"When you have brought up kids, there are memories you store directly in your tear ducts." - Robert Brault

"Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children, and no theories." - John Wilmot

"To bring up a child in the way he should go, travel that way yourself once in a while." - Josh Billings

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