

## Attachment and the Development of Resilience

Parenting – Chris White, MD

Pathways #41, page 26



### Talking Points

- ❖ This is, by far, my favorite article in this issue. It just spoke so directly to my challenges as a parent. I had a lot of personal response when reading this article about my relationship with my own children. Chris White walks parents through the importance of helping our children develop emotional resilience, and how to create the conditions that “optimally support this process.”
- ❖ Chris White introduces this article, “Our relationship with [our children]—described by scientists as attachment—is the single most important modifiable factor that will either support or thwart them in reaching their full potential. This article explores a key way that this attachment relationship supports maturation: the development of emotional resilience.”
- ❖ Resilience is something we, as humans, can learn and develop. It is not just something innate. But the conditions need to exist so resilience can develop. Those conditions include:
  - Secure attachments
  - Support for their emerging autonomy and desire for competence
  - Guidance through vulnerable territory by loving, confident adults who are not afraid of tears
- ❖ Finding the right balance between space and support is something Chris White both encourages us to do with our children, but also gives ideas on how to find this balance.
- ❖ “One of the most profound ways we can become resilient as human beings is by entering the vulnerable territory of the human heart, felling our “shaky tenderness” fully, and then emerging out the other side more courageous and hearty for having gone through it.” He refers to a well-known Canadian psychologist, Gordon Neufeld’s “adaptive process”—the process in which we are changed by those circumstances in life that we cannot change.

- ❖ White explains that “it is precisely these circumstances—and more importantly our acceptance of them and the strong feelings they evoke—that allow the adaptive process to cleanse our nervous systems and develop the muscle of emotional resilience.”
- ❖ “And so it is through this most important of all relationships—the intimate dance between parent and child—that the seeds of resilience are sewn.”

### Resources

Full references for each article are available at <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/references.html>

A more thorough explanation of Gordon Neufeld’s “adaptive process.”

<http://www.essentialparenting.com/2010/08/01/the-invincible-vulnerability-of-the-mature-heart/>

Gordon Neufeld, “What Makes a Child Easy to Parent?”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcaMsZrElNE>

A recent interview with Gordon Neufeld on Attachment Parenting: <http://www.imfcanada.org/dr-gordon-neufeld-on-attachment>

Many chiropractors are already familiar with NET (Neuro-Emotional Techniques). This process may help parents (and children) process and accept the strong feelings evoked by the vulnerability of growing our resilience – Jef Gazley, MS “Neuro-Emotional Techniques.”

[http://healing.about.com/od/net/a/net\\_jgazley.htm](http://healing.about.com/od/net/a/net_jgazley.htm)