

The Parents as 'Prima Authors' Structures and Mechanisms of Parenting and its Effects on Child and Family Development

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ABSTRACT

According to Karraker and Coleman in recent years research has been invested in expanding an understanding of the many individual and environmental factors impacting parenting and the influences of the differences in parenting styles on child developmental consequences.

When I began my psychotherapeutic practice, I worked with children in their natural environment, utilizing the Reaching Out approach, including work with parents as part of the therapeutic process. Early in my practice, I identified that when parents undergo a transformation as part of the process, their children quickly respond to the transformation. As a result, the change in children's behavior and well-being was quicker and more efficient than when I worked only with children. Thus, I concluded that the parent's involvement in the process was the most significant factor influencing change in children.

It is our basic assumption that if we wish to supply the compatible conditions to the specific needs of the child, we should shift the focus from our parenting aspirations which construct our attitudes and behaviors toward the child's specific individual needs. This shift will force the parent to engage in constant internal awareness with regard to the notion that he is always driven by his psychic needs and fantasies which although unconscious may nevertheless be crucial in guiding his decision-making process. We are therefore suggested to shift towards 'conscious parenting' in terms of actions and reactions towards the children, based on a decision-making process of choosing the action and reaction which promotes in the best possible way the development of the child with his specific characteristics.

Keywords: Parenting, Family dynamics, Parent-child relationship, Parental counselling

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