

Instinctive parenting: The nature of the mother and father's relation to the infant

New parents choose to come to numerous clinics all over the world to feel more “in-touch” with parenting, for in today’s ridiculous nuclear family there are no extended tribal roots for people to connect to. Originally in a tribe when a baby was born it was never “my baby”, immediately it had 50 mothers and 50 fathers, every man was its father, every woman its mother and so there was a birthing of the child for the community. In Christopher Ryan and Cacilda Jethá’s masterpiece of research “Sex at Dawn: the prehistoric origins of modern sexuality” they speak of a “sharing” of one another’s children and in fact of everything including food, medicine, sexual partners, absolutely everything. It was offensive in tribal societies in the ancient world and still to this day for people not to share, to “keep from others” is ultimately a sign of dis-ease and illness, hence nothing is “mine” not even the body that is so attached-to as “my body”, this too is the tribe’s, it is part of the fingers of the hand of the tribe. One cannot live without the earth and the brethren of the earth around you are the tribe. Hence the child of this is simply a child of the earth and the child of all of nature, it is not owned and it is free. The tribe shares because it is simply instinctive to do so, there is no reason for it, it appears to the scientist as “survival” but actually it's the most pleasurable expression and as such sharing is foundational, as the thumb shares its touch with the other fingers.

The point is that the mother and father’s roles were not designated to single people, this mini-tribe would be ridiculous, unsustainable and naturally dis-ordered, even inefficient, many thousands of individual mini-tribes would cause total fragmentation. which is what we now have, an individualized society. Even within these mini-tribes the pressures applied to each member of the partnership make it impossible for them to continue. The extended family doesn't exist because the old are ridiculed and seen as worthless and the young have no connection to the root of their existence in the tribal sense and are manipulated by advertising and industry, money and individualism, furthering the problem of the increasingly autistic society.

The roles of mother and child and father and child are therefore deeply warped and so parents seek out “how to do it” or try to read books and look at the internet to find out more, not that this helps much as everyone has a different opinion. However parenting is actually innate, just like childbirth it is utterly without reason, it comes from pure instinct. Often this can be led by the baby who is simply the manifestation of instinct itself, its cries and expressions are signals to the parents of how to follow it. It is not the other way around, that the parents are teaching the child. Parents today have absolutely nothing to “teach” infants, and they simply need to re-connect and re-sense and the infant offers them this in abundance because it can be nothing else.

However here the connection has to be at the “gut” level and instinctual for the parents as well as the baby who has no other possibility. Let’s look at birthing and the baby’s cry as examples: for the mother, birthing is the key point when “I” lets go in order for new life to emerge. At the moment of birth there can be no “herself”, this is the point at which she has to die, and in that moment the baby is born. For many women that moment is one of the key “spiritual” experiences of their lives as it is taking the body to its maximal

limit. This is the only way *natural* childbirth can occur. Whenever there is intervention this is the warped-yang male principle of “self” involving itself in the birthing process and essentially this causes problems. The second expression is when the baby starts breathing and often cries or wails, this is utterly spontaneous, without compromise, also it is without wanting anything. The cry doesn't mean the mother should do this or that, it is totally spontaneous and would continue until the baby had no more energy left, it is simply expression without cause or intention. The mother's instinctive response, if she has energy in the body, which also has no origin or intention, is immediate connection to the child. She goes towards the cry in order to connect to it, this is completely part of her senses, the baby is part of her, more acutely felt than anything else, and the cry is “herself” calling, so it is very simple.

The father and the cry are a totally different kettle of fish. When most fathers hear the baby cry they often recoil from the noise, which is also part and parcel of the process. It happens with most mammals that when the baby expresses this sound the father animals move away. This is because the cry is attuned to the female, it is part of her expressional make-up, and actually often deters his. The male expression is not to be as closely related to this part of a child's life. From the infant days until the age of about 2 the child is in the realm of its mother. For a female child it will want mum slightly less than a male child as she will often be more self-contained, she has more of her mother within her, so to speak. But the male child will need its mother more, and with that a lot of connection to. When the child is past the age of about 2 and starts to move outwards into the world rather than inwards towards the mother as an anchor, then the father plays an increasing part and it is easier for him to connect to the child.

While this process is utterly natural and understood in many cultures throughout human history, it is very often not respected in today's hyper-feminist idealism. The mentality is that a man “should” do half the work or be with the woman half the time, but it is obvious to mothers that there can be less involvement for the man at this early stage. His holding of the baby and his attention may be very nice but it isn't what the child fundamentally wants, it needs its mother at this stage. Of course there is male energy which is more female and female energy which is more male but the nature of the body and the kinesthetic connection needs to last until after breast-feeding age, which can be over a year or more, in order for the baby to grow up the way it wants to and move out towards the father who is a little distance away from the mother. So the mother is like the anchor at the centre of the child's world and slightly outside of this is the father who is ready and waiting for a time when he can become more involved. When the child is able to walk up to the father then it is ready to connect to the father energy. This is the way it has always been. For millennia children were brought up in early years almost exclusively by women, hardly ever seeing the men of the tribe. Then as time went on there was a slow introduction to the men, especially for the boys who were naturally moving outwards. The girls would often stay closer to the women for a longer time, in fact often until they were ready to have children themselves. In the ancient world therefore and still in some tribes today, matriarchy is essentially the base of the society. Men were on the periphery, exactly emulating sperm and an egg, they were only introduced to the mix when children were needed by the women, and then the men could return to a slightly more outer

position. They formed the outer portions of the body of the tribe not the inner ones, the hunters and gatherers or the protection and direction, not the nourishment or the healer. Sexual expression was men's primary function and this is what they could do and thereby the whole benefited from this. The female energetic expression was understood to anchor and therefore be the weight that stopped the male energy flying off the handle, she was known to be the foundation of his sexual connection and therefore vital. It is only when this instinct is broken and men try to take power at the centre of the tribe and move into positions that are unsuited to them that there is abuse of power and hierarchical control. Ryan and Jethá's book points out that the bonobo chimp, which most closely resembles the human in every behavioral and physiological way, has this kind of natural expression in their tribe and it is foundationally peaceful and based in female sexuality.

It is unsurprising that in today society there are so many immediate problems of men's dislike and rejection of the whole infant-child connection and also a rejection of roles they feel unable to play. They are often berated by society including David Cameron's ridiculous ideology of "naming and shaming" fathers who "don't take responsibility", but all this is repeated ignorance. Responsibility relates to the actual ability to respond, not a made-up fantasy that "I should do this or that", or in order that Mr. Cameron's ego be fulfilled, or indeed the whole line of moralistic Christianity from which this ideology originates. In fact the nature of nature is to follow nature, it's the path of least resistance and this is why the baby's whole expression including its cry and its breastfeeding and its nature is hard-wired for motherly interaction till a little later on when generally the boy's reverts to the father and the girl's to the mother.

This is all very general, there are no absolutes, but the overall illustrates two important points which express the difference between society and instinct in the way we behave in relation to children. Instead of thinking we are in the higher position and they are lower because they are smaller, it may be more appropriate that there be an openness of connection to the baby forging its instinctual path and that the parents follow this direction for a change, as this is what needs to happen. This is not about them compromising or changing their sense-instinct but rather that they realise the irrelevance of "how-to" books or maps and the concept of "should" or "shouldn't". Instead they deeply connect to the baby, even though this sometimes requires that the father walk the other way this simply means he is following his sense, and it definitely won't say that in the book! There are times where the more yin-male will want to be closer and would be good at doing this and also times when the more yang-female will want to get away from it all. This is also appropriate for here there is a mix of expressions, however fundamentally the child knows what it wants and goes towards it, so following the child's instinctive senses ignites your own, no matter whether this takes one towards or away from one's child.

As always when there is an expression of wild-nature within our midst such as the infant child, it is best not to apply adult ideas onto it but instead close the eyes and feel from within. It is appropriate not to get involved with how and why but more "what is sensed here?", for in the end this allows a natural way to be found even in the situation of the nuclear family crisis that is prevalent today.

Understanding the patterns of nature and charting them was something that the ancients did well. Often in the medical traditions of China and the Far East, the Greeks and in India we have massive chartings of how one can identify the nature of a person and how they fit into the whole scheme of things. While to some this is ridiculous because “I have free choice”, in actual fact when the “self” starts to let go it is realized that many of these chartings were to aid the instinctual sense to return Home to its natural order. In China to enforce order in society and direct rather than be directed in this change is called Confucianism and is essentially a misunderstanding about the nature of nature. The ancient pathways of energy were known in the person and in the whole of the structure of humanity, yet were also known to be simply an observation, a snapshot or a description of what is naturally. To enforce such a situation is to not see the wood for the trees and there is no realization that the whole ideology of “self” and society as explored above needs to unravel till its point of collapse which is when it re-aligns to its essence.

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