

# How to Raise an Emotionally Healthy Child



A Webinar  
with  
Lisa Firestone,  
Ph.D.



THE GLENDON  
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Lisa Firestone, Ph.D.

Director of Research and Education – The Glendon Association

Senior Editor – PsychAlive.org

[www.glendon.org](http://www.glendon.org)

[www.psychalive.org](http://www.psychalive.org)

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# Three Parts to the Webinar:

Part 1: How We Influence Our Kids

Part 2: Identifying Patterns in Ourselves

Part 3: Changing to Become Better Parents

# Part I: How We Influence Our Kids

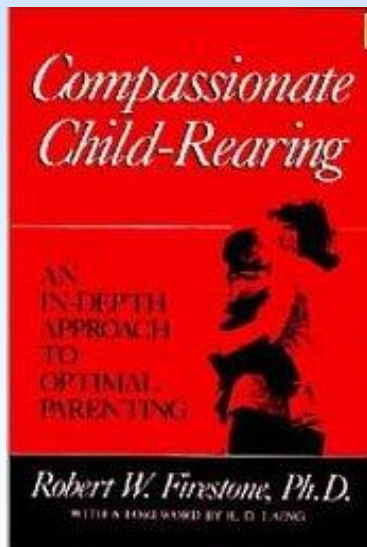
Does our past influence  
our parenting?



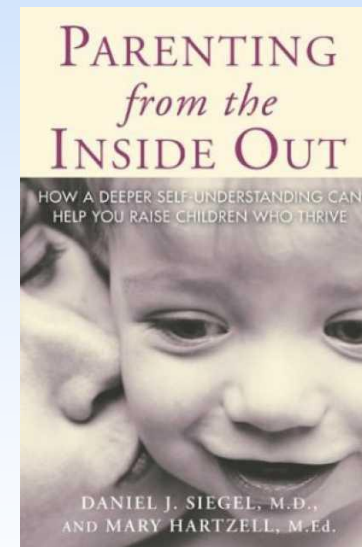
# How We Influence Our Kids

## Two Programs:

Compassionate Child Rearing  
Robert W. Firestone, Ph.D.



Parenting from the Inside Out  
Daniel Siegel, M.D.







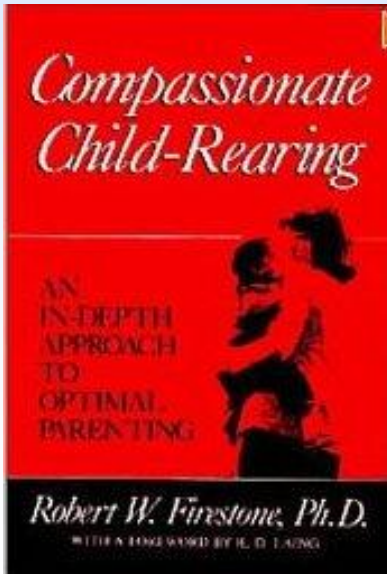
# Compassionate Child Rearing

by Robert W. Firestone, Ph.D.



## Focus on:

- Interaction between you and your child
- Becoming aware of how you were parented
- Making a coherent life narrative about your past
- Regaining feeling for yourself; then you can extend feeling to your children
- Changing attitudes and behaviors toward your children





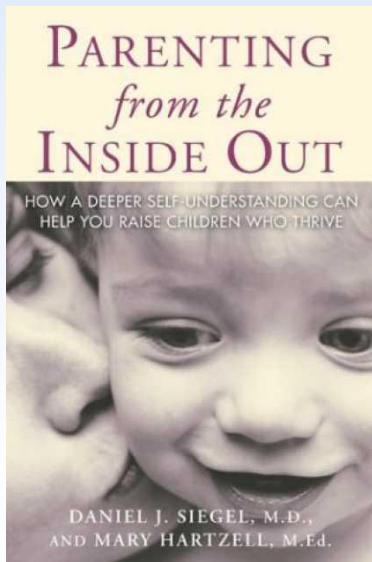
# Parenting from the Inside Out

Daniel Siegel, M.D.



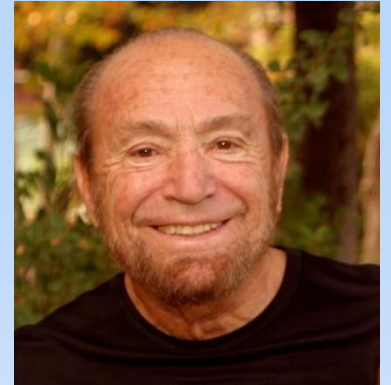
## Focus on:

- Interaction between you and your child
- Learning about yourself: feelings, thoughts and attachment patterns
- Understanding the brain and attachment theory
- Being mindful in your interactions with your children



# Separation Theory

Robert W. Firestone, Ph.D.



- ❖ The concept of the **Fantasy Bond**
- ❖ The concept of the **Critical Inner Voice**







# The Fantasy Bond

- You Extend the Fantasy Bond to Your Children
- You treat your children the way you were treated
- The voice is like the coach telling you what to do as a parent



# Definition of the Voice

The critical inner voice refers to a well-integrated pattern of destructive thoughts toward our selves and others. The “voices” that make up this internalized dialogue are at the root of much of our maladaptive behavior. This internal enemy fosters inwardness, distrust, self-criticism, self-denial, addictions and a retreat from goal-directed activities. The critical inner voice effects every aspect of our lives: our self-esteem and confidence, our personal and intimate relationships, our performance and accomplishments at school and work and **especially our parenting.**



# Common “Voices” in Parenting

- ❖ You don't know what you're doing.
- ❖ You're a horrible father.
- ❖ You're just like your mother.
- ❖ Everyone sees what a bad parent you are.
- ❖ Your kids are out of control.
- ❖ They're no good, because you're no good.
- ❖ They are so mean and demanding.
- ❖ You never get a moment's peace.
- ❖ Don't you wish they'd just leave you alone?
- ❖ Having kids means giving up your life.
- ❖ Only a horrible person feels critical of their kids.





# The “Should” Voices in Parents (The Negative Coaching)

- ❖ You should make them listen to you.
- ❖ You should be nice to them.
- ❖ Be different from your mother.
- ❖ Let them do what they want.
- ❖ You should point out everything they do wrong.
- ❖ You shouldn't let them get away with that.
- ❖ You should make them eat healthy.
- ❖ You should make them behave.





## Poll #1

How many of you have had any of these thoughts?



# How Voices Pass From Generation to Generation





# Where do voices come from?

## Patterns of Attachment in Children

### Category of Attachment

- ❖ Secure
- ❖ Insecure – avoidant
- ❖ Insecure- anxious/ambivalent
- ❖ Insecure - disorganized

### Parental Interactive Pattern

- ❖ Emotionally available, perceptive, responsive
- ❖ Emotionally unavailable, imperceptive, unresponsive and rejecting
- ❖ Inconsistently available, perceptive and responsive and intrusive
- ❖ Frightening, frightened, disorienting, alarming





# From Parenting from the Inside Out

## Attachment Categories as Children and as Adults

### **CHILD**

Securely attached

Avoidantly attached

Ambivalently attached

Disorganized attached

### **ADULT**

Secure (free or autonomous)

Dismissing

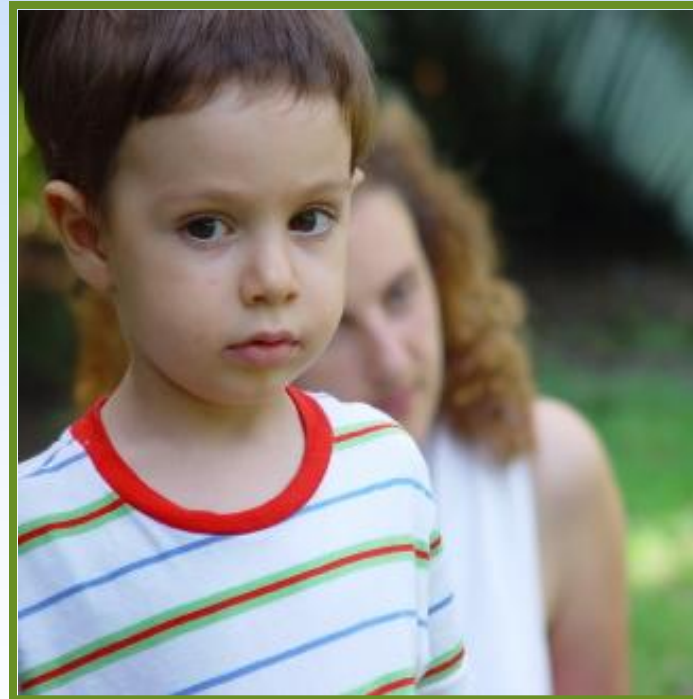
Preoccupied or entangled

Unresolved trauma or loss/disorganized

# What causes insecure attachment?

❖ Unresolved trauma/loss in the life of the parents statistically predict attachment style far more than:

- Maternal Sensitivity
- Child Temperament
- Social Status
- Culture



# Implicit Versus Explicit Memory

## ❖ Implicit Memory



## ❖ Explicit Memory

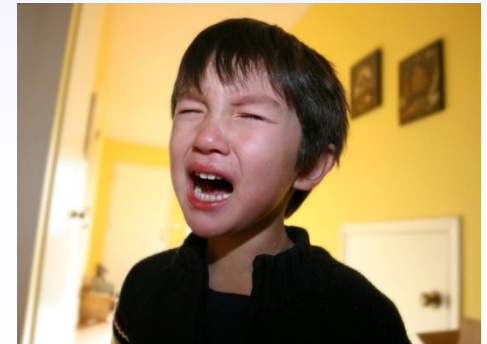
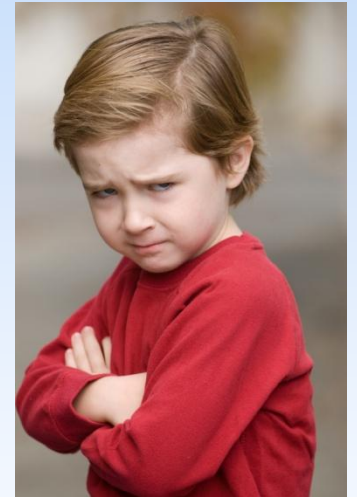




# How does disorganized attachment pass from generation to generation?

❖ Implicit memory of terrifying experiences may create:

- Impulsive behaviors
- Distorted perceptions
- Rigid thoughts and impaired decision making patterns
- Difficulty tolerating a range of emotions

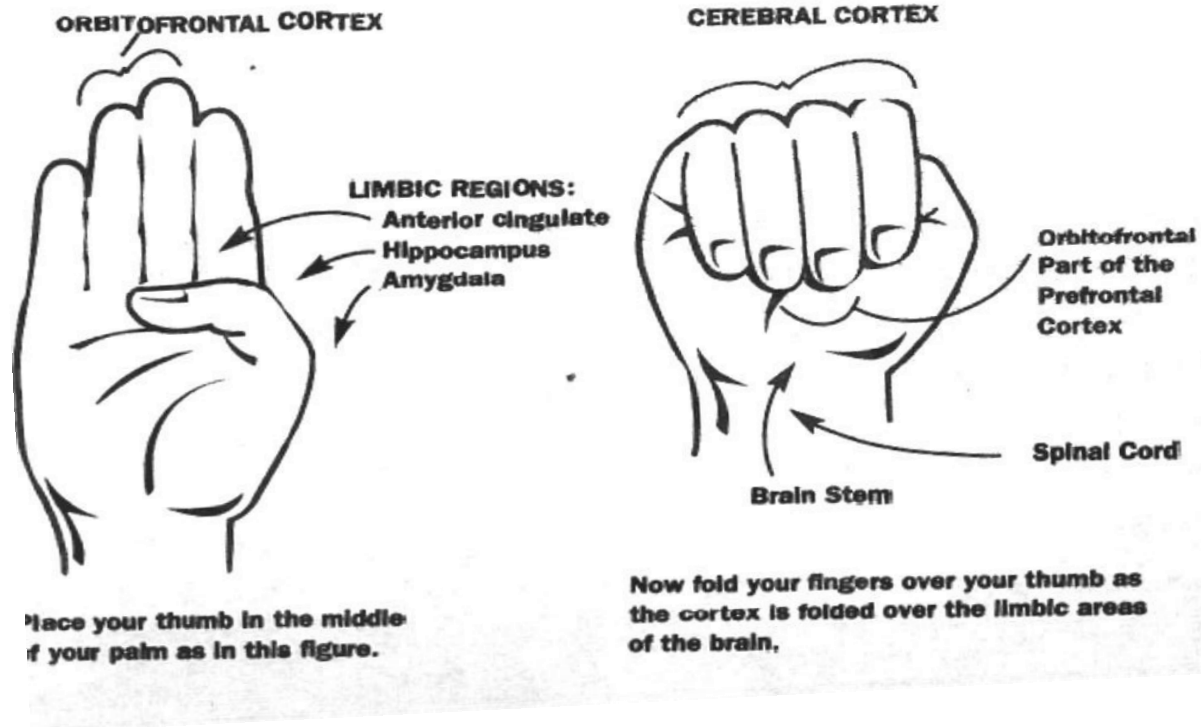




# The Brain in the Palm of Your Hand



Daniel Siegel, M.D. – Interpersonal Neurobiology





## Poll #2

Can you recall a time when your parents  
“flipped their lid” with you?

# 9 Important Functions of the Pre-Frontal Cortex

1. Body Regulation
2. Attunement
3. Emotional Balance
4. Response Flexibility
5. Empathy
6. Self-Knowing Awareness (Insight)
7. Fear Modulation
8. Intuition
9. Morality



# Division of the Mind

## Parental Ambivalence

Parents both love and hate themselves and extend both reactions to their productions, i.e., their children.

### Parental Nurturance



### Parental Rejection, Neglect Hostility







# Prenatal Influences

Disease/Trauma



Substance Abuse/ Domestic Violence





Birth →  
Trauma →



Baby →  
Genetic  
Structure  
Temperament  
Physicality  
Sex





# Parental Nurturance



## Self-System

Unique make-up of the individual; harmonious identification and incorporation of parent's positive attitudes and traits; and the effect of experience and education on the maturing self-system.

# Personal Goals

## Needs



Food

Thirst

Sex

Safety

## Wants



Affiliation

Achievement

Activity

## Meaning



Love

Compassion  
for Others

Generosity



# Personal Conscience

❖ Moral Principles

❖ Ethical Behavior

❖ Integrity





# Parental Rejection, Neglect, Hostility

Other Factors: accidents, illnesses, death anxiety

## Anti-Self System

The Fantasy Bond (core defense) is a self-parenting process made up of two elements: the helpless, needy child, and the self-punishing, self-nurturing parent. Either aspect may be extended to relationships. The degree of defense is proportional to the amount of damage sustained while growing up.



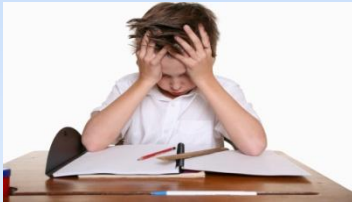


# Anti-Self System

## Self-Punishing Voice Process

### Voice Process

1. Critical thoughts toward self



2. Micro-suicidal injunctions



3. Suicidal injunctions – suicidal ideation



### Behaviors

Verbal self-attacks – a generally negative attitude toward self and others predisposing alienation.

Addictive patterns. Self-punitive thoughts after indulging.

Actions that jeopardize, such as carelessness with one's body, physical attacks on the self, and actual suicide

### Source

Critical parental attitudes, projections, and unreasonable expectations.

Identification with parents defenses


Parents' covert and overt aggression (identification with the aggressor).




# Anti-Self System

## Self- Soothing Voice Process


### Voice Process



1a) Aggrandizing thoughts toward self.



1b) Suspicious paranoid thoughts towards others.



2. Micro-suicidal Injunctions



3. Overtly Violent thoughts

### Behaviors

Verbal build up toward self.

Alienation from others, destructive behavior towards others.

Addictive patterns.  
Thoughts luring the person into indulging.

Aggressive actions, actual violence.

### Source

Parental build up

Parental attitudes, child abuse, experienced victimization.

Imitation of parents' defenses.

Parental neglect, parents' overt aggression (identification with the aggressor).

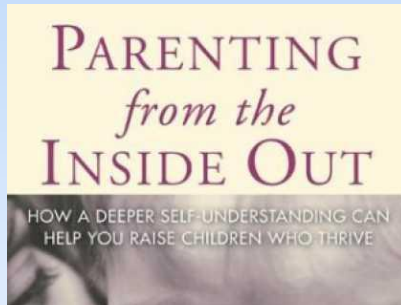


# Part 2:

## Identifying Patterns in Ourselves



# Identifying the Moments When You “Lose It” With Your Kids



## What triggers you?

### ■ Examples:

- Running late
- Inappropriate public displays
- Tantrums
- Our own stress





# Identifying the Moments When You “Lose It” With Your Kids





## Poll #3

Does it sometimes feel like your child is  
dictating to you?



Can you recall a time when you “flipped your lid” with your children?





# From Parenting from the Inside Out

- Reflect on times when you have entered low-road states with your children. **Knowing your triggers and being able to recognize when you are entering the low road are the first steps toward changing.**
- Are there particular interactions with your child that frequently bring you into a low-road state? **What themes act as a trigger and brings you to the edge?**





## Poll #4

What situations cause difficulty between you and your child?

- Bedtime
- Homework
- Getting dressed
- Public displays
- Mealtimes





# Exercises from The Compassionate Child Rearing Parent Education Program

- Some parents mistreat their children *emotionally*, with little or no awareness of how this hurts a child's feelings. Do you recall your parents harshly criticizing you or unjustly accusing you of something you didn't do? How did you feel at these times?
- In your original family, did you experience a lack of respect for your personal boundaries? How?
- Did your parents ever threaten to abandon you or send you away to boarding school or military school?





# Exercises from The Compassionate Child Rearing Parent Education Program

- Do you feel that your parents or teachers stifled your curiosity or excitement about learning?
- Did you have a teacher, parent or relative who made a practice of ridiculing or teasing you, or who made sarcastic remarks, then told you that you were “too sensitive” if you showed that your feelings were hurt?
- Have you noticed yourself reacting to your children in ways you feel might hurt their feelings? How have you begun to change those reactions?





## Poll #5

Do you recall a time when your parents:

- harshly criticized you?
- showed a lack of respect for your personal boundaries?
- threatened to abandon you or send you away?
- stifled your curiosity or excitement?
- ridiculed or teased you?



# From Parenting from the Inside Out

## Questions for Parental Self-Reflection Adapted from the Adult Attachment Interview

- What was it like growing up? Who was in your family?
- How did you get along with your parents early in your childhood? How did the relationship evolve throughout your youth up until the present time?
- How did your relationship with your mother and father differ and how were they similar? Are there ways in which you try to be like, or try not to be like, each of your parents?
- Did you ever feel rejected or threatened by your parents? Were there other experiences you had that felt overwhelming or traumatizing in your life, during childhood or beyond? Do any of these experiences still feel very much **alive**?





# From Parenting from the Inside Out

## Questions for Parental Self-Reflection

- How did your parents communicate with you when you were happy and excited? Did they join with you in your enthusiasm? When you were distressed or unhappy as a child, what would happen?
- Was there anyone else besides your parents in your childhood who took care of you? What is it like for you when you let others take care of your child now?
- If you had difficult times during your childhood, were there positive relationships in or outside of your home that you could depend on during those times?







# From Parenting from the Inside Out

## Questions for Parental Self-Reflection

- How did your parents discipline you as a child?
- Do you recall your earliest separations from your parents?
- Did anyone significant in your life die during your childhood, or later in your life?





# From Parenting from the Inside Out

Think of three words that describe your relationship with your child. Do these words resemble those that you would use to describe memories of your childhood experiences with your own parents?





## Poll #6

How many of you are familiar with the term “helicopter parent?”



# Exercises from The Compassionate Child Rearing Parent Education Program

## Emotional Hunger

- Can you recall your parents being overprotective or intrusive?
- Did your parents try to get comfort from you when you were a child?
- Did your parent or parents insist that you perform for friends and relatives?
- Did your parent or parents brag excessively to their friends and relatives about your accomplishments (as though your achievements or talent were theirs)?





## Poll #7

Did your parents ever:

- act overprotective or intrusive?
- try to get comfort from you when you were a child?
- insist that you perform for friends and relatives?
- brag excessively about your accomplishments?





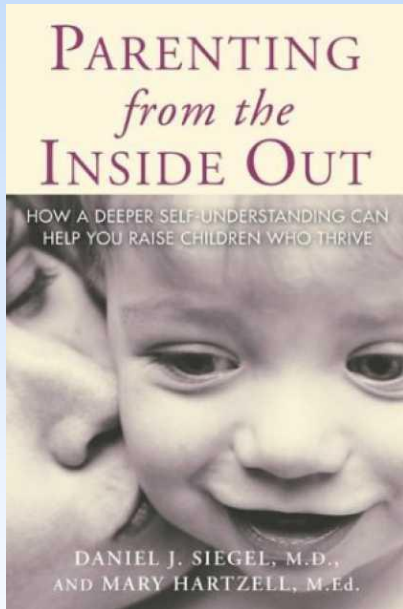
## Part 3:

# Changing to Become Better Parents





# Exercises from Parenting From the Inside Out



- Write in your journal when your emotions are reactive and heating up. For now, just notice them-don't try to change your response yet, just observe.
- Think of an issue in your life that is impairing your ability to connect flexibility with your child. Focus on the past, present, and future aspects of this issue.



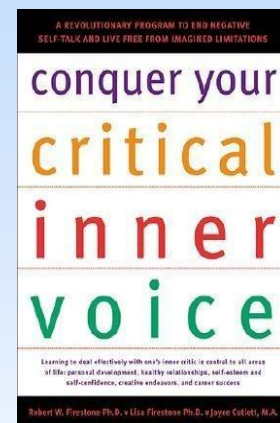
## Exercise 9.1

# The Firestone Voice Scale for Parents

Circle the frequency with which you experience the following critical inner voices:

0 = Never    1 = Rarely    2 = Once in a While    3 = Frequently    4 = Most of the Time

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 0   1   2   3   4 | You don't know how to comfort your baby. You can't make him(her) feel better. |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | You don't know the first thing about being a parent.                          |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | You're so impatient with kids.  |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | Your child is so demanding, so needy, so clingy.                              |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | Your child is supposed to fit into your life, not disrupt it.                 |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | Your child is always crying. You must be doing something wrong.               |



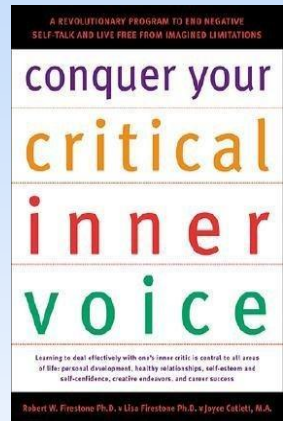


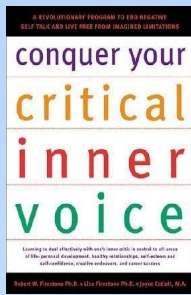
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- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 0   1   2   3   4 | Your children are misbehaving in public again. See how bad they're making you look!                       |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | See how unhappy your child looks. It's all your fault.  |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | You're such an angry parent. You lose your temper all the time.   |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | He(she) is too old for you to hug or hold him(her) all the time.  |
| 0   1   2   3   4 | Children are born aggressive, greedy and selfish and have to be taught how to be civilized and unselfish. |





# Exercise 9.2 What Do You Think When You are Angry at Your Child?

Angry thoughts toward  
my child

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---

Critical inner voices similar to  
the angry thoughts I have  
toward my child

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Similar angry statements  
that were said to me  
as a child

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## Example:

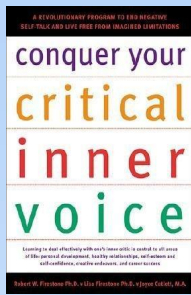
*She is so spoiled.  
She asks for everything.*

*You're so self-centered.  
Don't ask for too much.*

*You can't always get  
what you want. The  
whole world doesn't  
revolve around you,  
you know?*







# Exercise 9.3 You as a parent: Your Critical Inner Voice/The Real You

My critical inner voice's point of view  
about me as a parent

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**Example:**

*You're so mean. You always lose your temper, and your kids will never respect you.*

My realistic point of view of me as a parent

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*I may not be perfect, but I can control my temper and enjoy my kids. They care about me and admire me when I am at my best.*



# From Parenting from the Inside Out

If you have already entered the low road, self-reflection may be very difficult. If possible, remove yourself from interaction with your children. **Move your body, stretch, walk.** watch your breathing. As soon as you begin to calm, observe your internal sensations.





# From Parenting from the Inside Out

Consider the possibilities if changing the patterns of the past. When you are about to transition to the low road, be aware that an alternative pathway is possible. Take a breath. Count to ten. Stop and get a glass of water. **Remove yourself from the situation** by taking a time-out or “emotional break.” Now that you have created some distance, reflect on what was happening.





# From Parenting from the Inside Out Initiating Repair

The goal is to make a coherent story:

- Dual focus of repair in the parent: on what you experience and what your child experiences from his/her point of view
- Getting on the same physical level as your child
- Make a non-intrusive, empathetic attempt at the repair process
- Respect your child's style
- Be neutral, not blaming or judging
- Do not interrogate
- Be open to the child's point of view and encourage him/her to express it
- Do not be defensive/ Do not invalidate your child's experience
- Listen to your child's experience before you share your own
- Reflect back the child's experience
- Explain melt downs to your child - people do temporarily "lose their minds"





## Poll #8

Do you feel you can now implement these repair techniques with your children?





# From Parenting from the Inside Out

## Practices of Integrative Communication

- Awareness. Be mindful of your own feelings and bodily responses and others' nonverbal signals.
- Attunement. Allow your own state of mind to align with that of another.
- Empathy. Open your mind to sense another's experience and point of view.
- Expression. Communicate your internal responses with respect; make the internal external.
- Joining. Share openly in the give-and-take of communication, both verbally and nonverbally.
- Clarification. Help make sense of the experience of another.
- Sovereignty. Respect the dignity and separateness of each individual's mind.





# From Parenting from the Inside Out Knowing Minds

**Compassion:** The ability to feel with another; to be sympathetic, tenderhearted.

Compassion is a caring stance toward the distressful emotional experience of another person. Compassion may depend on mirror neuron systems, which evoke an emotional state in us that mirrors that of another person, enabling us to feel another person's pain.

**Empathy:** Understanding the internal experience of another person; the imaginative projection of one's consciousness into the feelings of another person or object; sympathetic understanding. This is a cognitively complex process that involves mental capacities to imagine the mind of another. Empathy may depend on the capacity for mind sight, mediated by the integrated right hemisphere and prefrontal regions of the brain.





# From Parenting from the Inside Out Knowing Minds

**Mindsight:** The capacity to “see,” or imagine, the mind of oneself or another, enabling an understanding of behavior in terms of mental processes. Other synonyms for this process are “mentalizing,” “theory of the mind,” “mind reading,” and “reflective function.”



## Monitor to Modify

# The Healthy Mind Platter

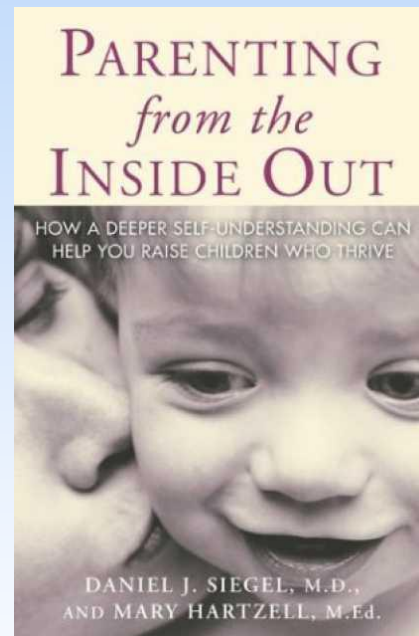
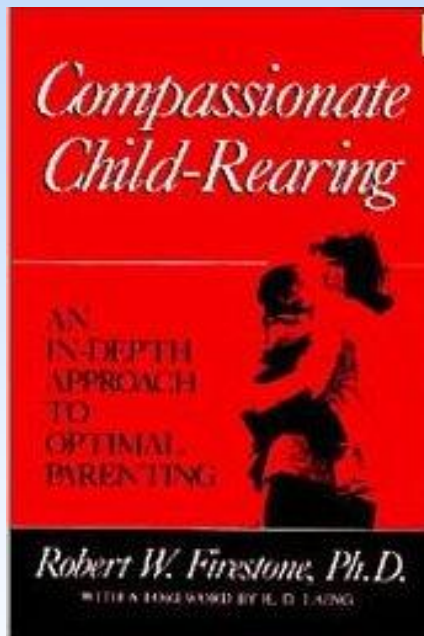
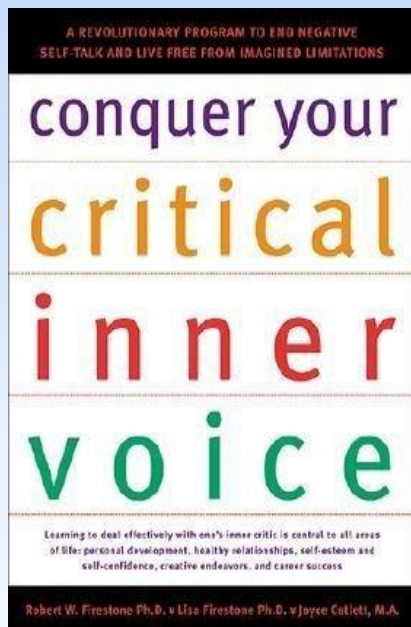


*The Healthy Mind Platter, for Optimal Brain Matter*

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**Source: [http://drdansiegel.com/resources/healthy\\_mind\\_platter/](http://drdansiegel.com/resources/healthy_mind_platter/)**

# Resources: Books



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# Upcoming Free and CE Webinars



## **Working with High-Conflict Couples**

Presenter: Dr. Lisa Firestone

CE Webinar- 3 Ces

Jan. 24 - 4pm – 5:30pm PST



## **How to Improve Your Relationship**

Presenter: Dr. Lisa Firestone

Free Webinar

Feb. 7 - 11am – 12pm PST

To register or to see a list of free and CE Webinars with Dr. Firestone & other mental health experts, visit

**WWW.PSYCHALIVE.ORG**

<http://www.psychalive.org/2012/11/upcoming-webinars-2/>



# Conquer Your Critical Inner Voice Workshop at Esalen Institute, Big Sur, California



Weekend of January 18-20, 2012, Earn 10 CE's  
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## Contact:

[glendon@glendon.org](mailto:glendon@glendon.org)

800-663-5281



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