

The girl who has been living under the shadow of domestic violence

Attachment issues –Phase 1:

Disorganized attachment. Although the mother has been an adequate attachment figure however, the child internalized a chronic sense of helplessness through the father's behavior. The fear disrupted her ability to trust mother and internalize a sense of safety.

Seeks connection and proximity which easily can turn into anger.

Beginning to develop dissociative defenses and autistic defenses: detachment, "lack of understanding". Shutting down, disconnection repetitive behaviors. All of these cause extreme anxiety and helplessness in the mother.

Neuropsychological –Over flooded with anxiety, easily activated Narrow window of tolerance.

Difficulties regulating affect.

Traumas: Relational, preverbal, early and chronic. Over activation of fight –flight response.

Development of higher cortical functions was blocked. (Processing should be employing bottom up processes: stimulating what was inhibited by trauma.) First goal: establishing safety in relationship!!!

Widening window of tolerance

AIP -Safety in relationship will allow flow.

Establishing the connection to traumatic material and memories through connecting to child's fragmented recollections.

Approaching trauma in a developmentally appropriate manner: constructing the narrative of the trauma, utilizing dual attention-then (past) and now (present).

The EMDR Protocol and Dyadic Treatment Planning

Phase 2 preparation: Safety: Enabling child's sense of safety through pacing in accordance to her natural expressive manner (drawing and storytelling).

Mediating for the caregiver the meaning of repetitive behaviors.

Working on preparation for trauma processing through scribbling, Installing safety, installing a PC all through the session "It is "all right now" .

Mother in the room, participating in building the connection and support. Putting the unspoken into a meaningful experience for mother and child .Containing child's painful memories

Phase 3-4 Building the Narrative through fragments of child's memories and emotional and behavioral expression.

Phase 5-6-7 Installing safety through connecting to relational resources.

Developmental milestones

Living under chronic stress and traumas has led to a beginning of fragmentation and regression. – phasing out, temper tantrums, developmental speech delay.

Stage 8 – evaluation – we'll check to see if she has regained the ability to function according to her developmental stage.