



Partial Lecture notes for Free Download



DEFENSIVE DETACHMENT or Premature individuation.

“Children cope with rejection by rejecting in turn, those who rejected them.”

- When love gets blocked by a child with a grudge. It is not wanting, yet still needing, parental supervision.
- When the door of trust is locked from the inside of the child’s mind, and the lock is stuck.

Analogy; when a new battery disengages itself from the charger before it’s fully charged. This early event results in a dangerous *premature individuation*, with a hostile or defensive attitude involved on the part of the child. The child withdraws from closeness to a parent, either to “get their own back” (express revenge) or protect themselves from a sense of rejection, (whether real or imagined) or betrayal. Many teenagers are in partial detachment as part of a vendetta, which permanently damages the natural process of differentiation.

Phase One: *Parental ‘betrayal’ of trust, whereby parent rejects, ignores, abuses, repeatedly misjudges or is separated from the child* e.g. early hospitalization, adoption, neglect, divorce, post-natal depression, favouritism, parental anger problem, alcoholism, or because the child is too demanding or reminds the parent of someone else

Phase Two: *Revenge phase.* A survival kit is adopted. The parent’s betrayal or misjudgement is to be punished by being kept a distance, and walls begin to go up against trust. Where there once was a compliant child, now passive or active aggression ensues. The psycho-dynamic reasoning may be described as “They never listen to me, so why should I listen or be loyal to them.” “I’m too vulnerable if I don’t back away”. “They embarrass me or are a real threat to my social acceptance.” “I’ve been betrayed.” After one or two tests, disengagement now quickly escalates.

Phase Three: *Hardening.* Parent doesn’t have either the desire or the skill or the time or the humility to help tear down the wall now built. Perhaps they are simply too engrossed in their own lives to even notice the loss of intimacy.....

Phase Four. *Teenage child looks to substitute* person to meet the resultant emotional need. This will result in getting in with the wrong crowd.....

The Way Forward

1. It is always the *parents* responsibility to initiate reconciliation by asking “what have I done through your life that has most offended / hurt you?” or “why do you keep me at a distance, I really want to understand that” or “why don’t you trust my judgement now?” Parent then keeps quiet and listens to the pain fully. (At this point, feeling heard for the adolescent is far more important than your attempts at ‘putting the record straight’.)
2. Parent to then explain about what was happening for yourself during that time (trying to make a living, trying to survive abuse etc) and help to clarify probable childhood misinterpretations by them at the time.....

DID YOU YOURSELF DETACH?

If you yourself were the disengage, first you need to properly understand the deeper psychodynamics of what you did and why, then make this survival kit of walling people out redundant by learning how to give yourself what they failed to give you. (Release yourself from victim-hood.) Then approach your parent and ask them to express their regret for their hurtful actions, and purpose to let them in again, with a genuine hug, sharing something of yourself, asking their advice

How they respond to your attempts at greater honesty is their responsibility, not yours. This is also the time to try to understand with an adult's perspective, what it was like for them at that time, so the child within you can stop taking it all so personally. They were simply offloading their own pain.

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