

Sent: Saturday, April 12, 2003 10:06 AM

Subject: New connection

Dear Kimberly:

I hope your wrestling with what to do about your situation is going as well as possible. I am interrupting with some thinking that may interest you and give you some ideas.

Recently I have been re-thinking about the significance of the new brain stuff, child rearing, and discount revenge. On my wall I have had a sign:

Defensiveness—the hidden disability

I think I have now figured out what I was thinking when I made the sign. The brain stuff tells us that infants and children unconsciously form defensive maneuvers to comfort themselves when neglected or abused. These defensive behaviors resurface unconsciously in adulthood whenever the person senses the slightest threat to meaningfulness.

Putting that together with the Law of Discount Revenge, we can see that out of awareness most of us are "getting revenge" a lot of the time when we are employed by others—any kind of "others".

It also suggests to me that in child-rearing we need to use some sort of Itemized Response when disciplining kids. And it further suggests that in our dealings with spouses we not only avoid Gottman's criticism, contempt, stonewalling, and leaving, we recognize that each of us is unconsciously in need of reassurance. Therefore, excessive nurturing is appropriate, whatever the age!

Attached is a beginning idea about applying to workplace.

Warmly,
George