



# **BEYOND CONSEQUENCES, LOGIC, AND CONTROL**

**A Love-Based Approach to Helping  
Attachment-Challenged Children With  
Severe Behaviors**



by

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and

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[www.BeyondConsequences.com](http://www.BeyondConsequences.com)





## BEYOND CONSEQUENCES, LOGIC, AND CONTROL

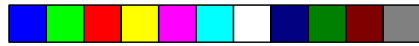
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This book is dedicated to my husband, Matthew. Thank for your unconditional love and unwavering support of all my endeavors. And, Joanna and Ben, the life lessons you taught me far outweigh any that I could ever teach you as a mother, and thank you, also, for putting me on my healing journey.

*Heather T. Forbes*



This work is dedicated to my wife, Kristi, and our two beautiful daughters, Mikalah and Marley. Thank you for teaching me that love always exists. And to two of the most significant men that touched and gave my life meaning: My father, Billie R. Post 1941-2004, and my friend and mentor, Lawrence G. Anderson 1937-2004.

*B. Bryan Post*







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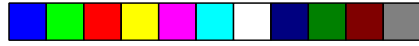
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Additionally, Lee and Debra would like to acknowledge their own children:

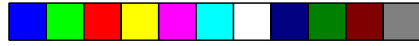


To Joey and Victoria Nefsky,

Thank you for teaching us the difference between being good parents and how to be great parents.

*Lee and Debra Nefsky*





## FOREWORD

Heather T. Forbes and B. Bryan Post address some of the most pressing and challenging issues faced by parents of children with histories of disrupted attachments.

The authors have the ability to strip away the fog surrounding these troubled relationships, exposing the reality of children's reactions and dysregulated responses to the past traumatic experiences that so often underlie their difficulty in making close, affectional bonds.

This clarity illuminates their therapeutic intervention in a manner that allows parent and child to hold on to the strategy, as they are caught up in the whirlwind of challenging behaviour during the painful process of change.

The authors address in detail the child's trauma (often associated with the adoption process), and they also address the painful struggle of the parents when a challenging child exposes the parents' own vulnerabilities to memories that they may have suppressed of their own past experiences.

The immense value of this book is the clarity and simplicity of the authors' working model; the price of this clarity is that the hard truth is exposed with such intensity that some may shy away from facing reality and not benefit from their undoubted insights.

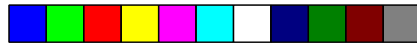
The psychotherapeutic intervention described by the authors involves clinicians tapping into their own empathic capacities to help children feel supported to such a degree that a direct connection can be forged between the reality of children's traumatic experiences and the parents and/or clinicians being able to tolerate their pain, and so regulate the child's distress down to a manageable level. The recognition that another person can truly understand and tolerate their pain can be a major contribution to the client's therapeutic outcome.

This book is an absolute necessity for every parent working through attachment issues, and for every professional (therapist, caseworker, teacher, policy maker, etc.) working with children who exhibit severe acting-out behaviors.

*Sir Richard Bowlby, Attachment Advocate*







## A NOTE TO THE READER

by Heather T. Forbes, LCSW

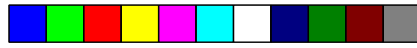
*“The longest journey is the journey inward.”*

*Dag Hammarskjold, Swedish Diplomat*

There is a stream of sorrow that continues to flow through my heart. It is flowing from the past pain of parenting my own children out of a place of control and fear instead of a place of love and compassion. I started my parenting journey nine years ago on a plane to Russia with my husband and then one year later on another plane to Russia to adopt our daughter. After adopting our children, we realized that we were in desperate need of help. Seeking help from specialist after specialist led us to become parents who were forcing attachment and working to make our children change. Our home was constantly filled with an undercurrent of anger, resentment, and fear. I hated being a parent. I hated always trying to stay one step ahead of the defiance. I hated always having to control behavior in order to assure safety for our future. Sorrow, pain, and perpetual fear continued to pervade our every interaction. Today, this river of sorrow runs in a dark place within my heart.

After making a paradigm shift from fear to love, not only did change become a reality, but also healing began. Healing for all family members became possible. Now looking back, it amazes me, and it is painfully difficult to ponder how we as people born of love easily lose our way to fear. How did I begin from a place of love to only find myself literally trembling in fear and sorrow?

Fear has the ability to constrict us in seeing only the negative, and it distorts our ability to think clearly and rationally. In this state of fear, I diligently read and read and read every book I could find. I read every journal article, joined every Internet list serve, and hunted down professionals in the field of attachment in order to find answers. I easily bought into the methods presented to me by the professionals. I found myself high-



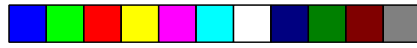
lighting in bright yellow and circling in thick red ink every explanation that my children were intentionally manipulating me, that my children were devising plans to successfully triangulate me and my husband, and that my children were unable to receive or give love. My frantic search only confirmed my fears of my children growing up to be criminals or adults diagnosed with mental disorders such as anti-social personality disorder or borderline personality disorder. My fears soon became my reality for parenting.

As I look back now and as I sit down to write my part of this book, I feel my entire body ignite. Every time I begin a new chapter, every time I re-read a chapter for editing, every time I look through the books on my desk written to explain what creates attachment, my arms literally become weak, my stomach twists into a series of knots, and a 1,000 pins prickle in my back. Beyond that, I feel my soul weeping because it is not about parenting from a place of control. It is not about parenting “disturbed” or “hurt” or “unattached” children. It is not about stopping at every moment to “make” attachment happen.

Parenting a child with a traumatic history is about learning to interpret the child’s reactions to past experiences from a place of compassion, understanding, and love. Love really is enough, when it is given in the absence of fear. It takes seeing your child for who he is and meeting your child in his pain. It is not just meeting your child in his behavior or even at the surface of his feelings, but truly meeting your child in the depths of his fear—in the depths of his soul. It is about meeting your child in a place of complete and utter darkness where pain beyond human tolerance resides.

It takes courage and it takes being willing to feel your own pain first and then to take on the pain of your child. Fear is ever present in our lives, especially in every interaction with our children with severe behaviors. Fear has to be acknowledged and fear has to be brought to a conscious level. We have to stop being fearful of the fear, and we need to find the courage to move through the fear in order to bring the light of love into the darkness of our children’s wounds. We have to stop feeding more fear into our families through the traditional approaches and we have to be willing to trust that our children still are creatures of love, despite their past experiences of fear.

We invite you to read the following chapters with an open heart and an open mind. We invite you to see the fear in the traditional model of working with children and to see that parents do not have to give up their need to give love to their children. We offer you a more loving, compassionate, and truthful explanation of behaviors.



Thank you for joining us in this book and we pray it restores hope and gives you reassurance for what you have probably known all along...love never fails (*1 Corinthians 13:8*).

## A SECOND NOTE TO THE READER

*by B. Bryan Post, PhD, LCSW*

This book will be controversial because it dispels old beliefs and seeks to replace them with new ideas. In our (the authors') humble opinions, the attachment therapy literature is fraught full of harsh, threatening, and fear-laden approaches in dealing with children. These approaches over time lead to increasingly resentful parents feeling hopeless, helpless, and hapless to deal with their children's increasingly challenging behaviors. Many of the techniques provided to parents by well-meaning professionals have led to countless disrupted placements, medication increases, residential placements, and ultimately broken hearts. It is difficult to be non-judgmental when it comes to the pain of children and parents, yet we have done our best to offer a clear presentation for the reader to compare and contrast the common beliefs and approaches about these children and their behaviors.

After years of working with families who have struggled time and again with common severe behaviors such as lying, stealing, hoarding, and the list goes on and on, we (the authors) want to offer our insights to help both parents and professionals deal with such behaviors more effectively and successfully.

As is well known, the behaviors that we will be discussing are commonly linked to the psychiatric diagnosis reactive attachment disorder (RAD). Though we are theoretically opposed to the labeling of children for a myriad of reasons, reactive attachment disorder is the buzz diagnosis for the moment with which most are familiar. In this regard, we have taken some of the most severe behaviors associated with children in this category and have to offer both parents and professionals insights into these behaviors that are contrary to popular opinion. It is typically espoused in the field of attachment therapy that traditional therapy approaches are not effective in treating children with reactive attachment disorder. We would like to take that a step further by stating that, "Traditional attachment therapy approaches are not effective in treating children with reactive attachment dis-



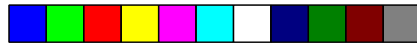
order.” Specifically, we are referring to the behaviors that are addressed in each chapter, but also to the treatment of “reactive attachment disorder” itself.

When one hears about treatment, then it naturally implies applying a methodical approach geared towards eliminating a presenting condition. However, there is more to treatment than merely the elimination of symptoms. Offering cough syrup to a child with a cold is sufficient to eliminating symptoms, but if measures are not taken to also support and enhance the child’s immune system through encouraging rest, extra vitamin C, and nurturing (which assist in supporting the stress response system), then the cold may eventually turn into pneumonia. Rather than just addressing symptoms for behavioral change, efforts must be directed towards the healing of the underlying causes, henceforth, also bringing about behavioral change.

The following pages will challenge what you have traditionally heard or read about children and severe behaviors in the past. By utilizing a sound and prudent theoretical approach along with a common sense understanding, both rooted in solid research and empirically tested techniques, we will provide a new perspective on understanding severe behaviors and will be offering you step-by-step analysis on how to deal with these behaviors with your own children.

We have taken this a step further by conducting an intensive meta-analysis of the most common approaches and views of these severe behaviors from a traditional perspective, taking the time and effort to document carefully each view, and then providing both a “traditional” and a “new” perspective to each behavior. We have done this in a manner to ensure that we are not being biased on the basis of preferring our approach to another, but would rather give you, the reader, a clear understanding for why we look at things the way we do and make the corresponding recommendations.





### **We Want To Reward Your Effort!**

**Our hearts and souls have been poured into the following pages. They are comprised of a number of years of research, experience, hurt, and joy. In that manner, we know how hard you have already worked to find answers for your child, and we do not want any more of your time or money to be wasted. This time we want to reward you for the time you take to study this book thoroughly and put the ideas into place. We would like to offer you two free coupons to attend any one of our upcoming Beyond Logic, Control, and Consequences seminars. If you've enjoyed the book, you'll love the live seminar. All you need do to redeem the discount is bring your copy of the book to the seminar or mention #RAC13BLCC when registering. *This is good for the attendance of one single parent and support person, or one couple. Valid only after the purchase of the book. Book must be shown at the seminar. This offer will expire 12-15-2006.***

***Finally, here's our Iron-Clad, 100% Guarantee to You:***

**If after putting into place any of the ideas in this book for a consistent period of two weeks, you do not see at least a 50% reduction in your child's negative behavior, return the book to us and we will refund every penny of your money, no questions asked!**

**However, if what you try works, then send us an E-mail and let us know what you tried, how it worked, and how long it took for you to see results. Just E-mail us at [info@beyondconsequences.com](mailto:info@beyondconsequences.com) Attn. Heather and Bryan, and one of us will respond to you directly. We are serious about you, your child, and your family, but, most of all, we are serious about our work.**



Part I

**T**HE **P**RINCIPLES OF A **N**EW **U**NDERSTANDING

