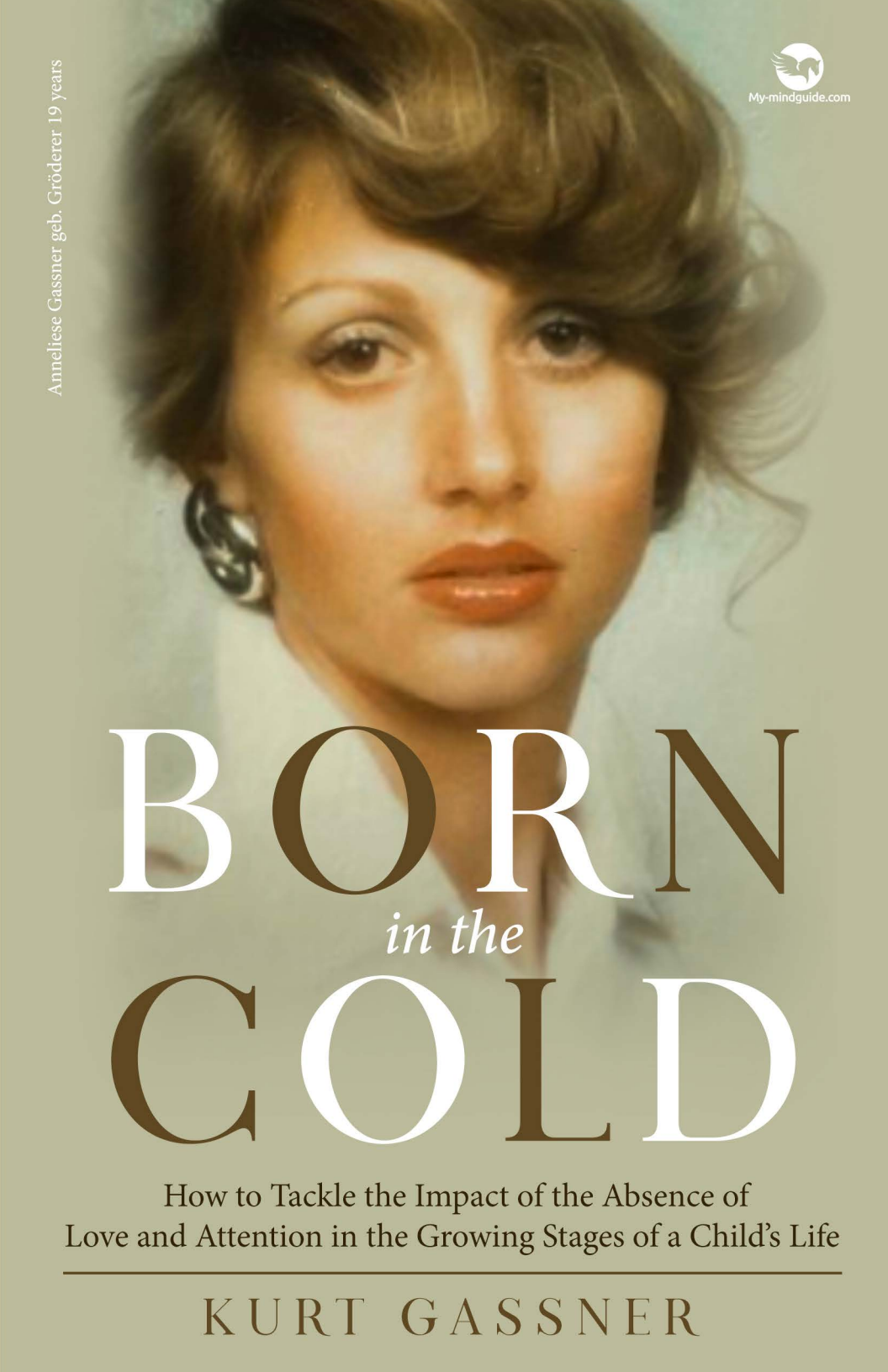


BORN *in the* COLD

How to Tackle the Impact of the Absence of Love and Attention in the Growing Stages of a Child's Life

KURT GASSNER

BORN *in the* COLD

How to Tackle the Impact of the Absence of Love and Attention in the Growing Stages of a Child's Life

BY

KURT GASSNER

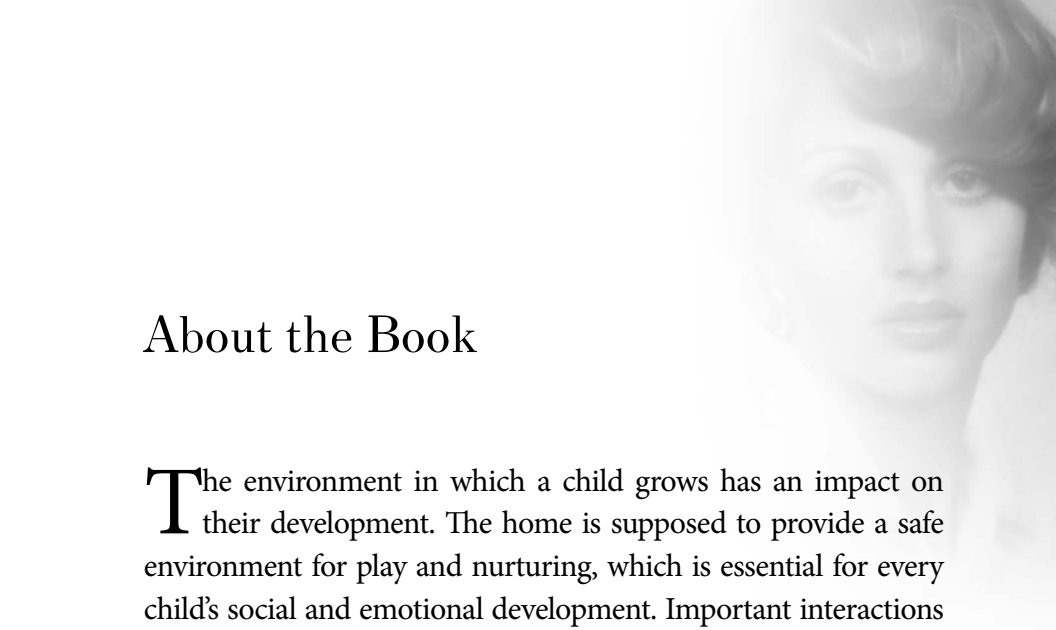
My-mindguide.com

Born in the cold
Kurt Gassner

Impressum
My-mindguide – The publishing trademarke of trendguide Capital GmbH, Klenzestr. 42a, 80469 Munich, Germany.

Reg. Nr. HRB Munich 206639, VAT 152 123 159, CEO: Kurt Friedrich Gassner
Web: www.my-mindguide.com, mail: gassner@my-mindguide.com

Paperback ISBN: 978-3-949978-66-1
Hardback ISBN: 978-3-949978-68-5



About the Book

The environment in which a child grows has an impact on their development. The home is supposed to provide a safe environment for play and nurturing, which is essential for every child's social and emotional development. Important interactions with parents, caregivers, friends, siblings, and others in the community are meant to prepare a child for the world outside the home. When this doesn't prove the case, a fractured home will produce a child overflowing with negative emotions. Doubts, fears, confusion, and utter hopelessness will be the norm.

This book is written to tell the story of an emotionally neglected baby, the impact on every aspect of her life, and how she recovered after a long journey of loss.

It recounts the effects of emotional neglect between a mother and a daughter and how the home environment and positive interactions between parents and children can help children develop healthy social and emotional skills in early childhood. It also contains details on how to heal emotionally neglected parents who subconsciously neglect their child's emotional needs and steps to take to raise an emotionally balanced child.

It is a book inspired by the story of Anneliese, all the children struggling with low self-esteem, and every teen trying to fit into society.

Table of Contents

Introduction *1*

Chapter 1: Pre-Birth O

What Science Tell Us about the Influence of Emotion in the Womb 7

Chapter 2: Age 0–2

Building Self-Confidence 25

Chapter 3: Age 2–8

Can The Energy Of Money Replace Real Love? 45

Chapter 4: Age 8–10

Who Am I? Discovering the Self 55

Chapter 5: Age 10–14

Teenage Years – False Attention 76

Chapter 6: Age 14–18

Wiring the Brain – Influence by Society/Friends 102

Chapter 7: After Effects

How to Heal As a Parent Who Suffered Emotional Neglect 123

Conclusion *139*

Introduction

Our personality and our character today are reflections of our childhood. Behavior adopted in adulthood is, in large part, due to the experiences we live in childhood.

When a child is born, they are born into their parents' arms. They see a bigger person, wiser, more understanding; all they see is the person who brought them into the world. Now they can recognize the voice they heard while they were in the belly. They can now behold the lovely faces of their parents, hear the joyous sound their laughter, and feel the warmth of the love these parents shower on them.

Pinning down exactly what a baby is feeling is difficult simply because they can't explain it to us. Still, researchers have used observation and interpretation to study infant emotions. Most agree that babies are born with the basic feelings of pleasure and distress but don't understand them. Varied emotions and understanding what they mean evolve as the child's memory and cognitive abilities develop and their experiences become more complex.

Just as in every development area, babies' emotions may not follow this timeline exactly. Emotional development may appear more intense or subdued depending on a baby's temperament

or whether his environment is nurturing or stressful. For the first six months, babies will express emotion based on their feelings without understanding why. At first, their emotions are simply pleasure and displeasure. When they are content, they may coo or wave their arms when they hear your voice. If they are wet, cold, tired, or hungry, they will cry. Their face will reflect their mood as they move their mouth, eyebrows, and forehead to correspond with how they are feeling.

Love is an excellent part of life; it makes us want to do better for ourselves and those around us. In our relationships with other people, we want to show love. Love is closely linked to happiness, family, satisfaction, and care, and we all want to show love in our relationships. Love can be painful for some people. Love can also be a source of grief, and finding love with others only leads to more pain and more despair. Unfortunately, this is a cycle that many other people may find themselves in. Indeed, it can even become normal and acceptable. It can even be a given. But this isn't how it should be. It's not clear why. Then, what can we do? It all starts when we are young.

Children depend on their parents for everything. To thrive as adults, they need to be instructed, tuned, and validated by their caregivers and meet their physical needs. If a child's caregivers are healthy and happy, they will have a strong sense of who they are.

People can comfort themselves and love themselves because they have a healthy template to fall back on. They will feel healthy, unconditional love coming from the people who care

the most about them. They will know what love looks like and how it feels. They will keep looking for this feeling all their lives.

But what if the opposite happens and the child is born in the cold? If the child's caregivers are emotionally unhealthy and unresolved, they will have a weak and unstable sense of who they are and how they feel. They won't be able to comfort themselves, trust others, or love themselves, and they'll likely experience difficulty finding fulfillment, meaning, and contentment in their adult relationships; they won't know what healthy love looks or feels like.

There is a difference between caring for your children's material and emotional needs. Love is not in material things, and I believe that you recognize as much already. That said, material things are essential—just not as crucial as the unconditional love, care, and attention. Funny enough, most parents provide the basic amenities and "good life" for their kids but fail to connect with them emotionally. Some parents want to but they don't know how to. Little wonder some kids from wealthy homes end up spoiled and referred to as brats because of their poor conduct in society. And then you wonder why that boy is an addict or why that girl relishes in annoying lifestyles of getting excessively drunk and acting rude to everyone or being a bully. But little did we know their struggles or the emotional trauma they faced.

The difficult part is that, most times, their caregivers don't understand these kids and only term them as rebellious and ungrateful for how much their parents strived to provide for them.

Most times, these caregivers themselves had emotional issues they grew up with, which denied them access to connecting with their children's emotions or understanding them. When their caregivers aren't emotionally available, kids will often let themselves be afraid, sad, hurt, or angry and even get punished for their natural emotions. These kids know that they could only get attention by acting out and being outright annoying. These children learn that love is neglect, which is the kind of love they will be looking forward to when they grow up.

If they haven't been through such experiences, no one can truly understand health, respect, love, or boundaries. A child learns about these things based on how their caregiver shows them. The child learns to link pain with love if someone beats the child and calls it "loving." That means a child learns almost every habit from their parents.

As time goes on, these children's relationship experiences will grow increasingly painful and damaging. These individuals often find themselves in relationships where they are not seen and may be drawn to emotionally unavailable people. Though love is all the child wants, they fail to see what it's meant to look and feel like.

This brings us to the story of my wife, Anneliese, a typical post-war child born into a struggling social-climbing family—born into a business home. It's not that her parents didn't love her; rather, it was cold because they only understood how to cater to her material needs and were never there for her emotionally. She had to struggle through her emotions alone. Anneliese was

the last child among three kids, and contrary to the opinion that lastborn have all the affections, the reverse played out in her case.

Many children who grew up with emotionally absent mothers did not have child-centered homes. According to jasmine Lee Cori, a licensed psychotherapist and bestseller author, these parents didn't oversee their children, they didn't talk to their children, they didn't touch their children, and they weren't there when their children needed aid.

Anneliese was born to a businesswoman in rural Austria. Her mother was an ever-busy business tycoon, who provided every material needed but was always too busy to spend quality time with her daughter. Anneliese was the last of three kids and five years younger than her older sister. Her mother was one of the very first businesswomen in rural Austria. She was ambitious; despite her humble beginnings, she bought two houses, a hunting estate, cooked for up to fifty people, and ran both a restaurant and small family hotel. By the end of the day, *Anneliese's mother was always mentally and physically exhausted and didn't have the strength or time to handle her daughter's emotional needs.*

Emotional neglect will always have a significant impact on the subsequent stages of the recipient's life, and this was the case for Anneliese, whose story we'll further explore ahead.

1.st Baby, Parents, Year 54-71
Childhood/Teenage years

Anneliese _ kid_ lonley

Anneliese 11 years old

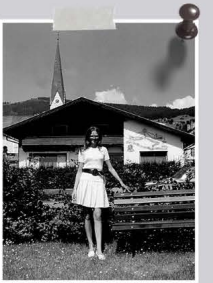
anneliese 16_ carneval

Anneliese 16 with Cadillac_girlfriend

Anneliese BABY _Kinderwagen_lonley

Anneliese 16_ terrace home

Anneliese as Teenager



Anneliese 16_ standing

Chapter 1

Pre-Birth 0

What Science Tell Us about the Influence of Emotion in the Womb

Scientists say that the first two years of a child's life are the most important for brain growth. During this time, about 80 percent of a person's brain cells will be formed.

Even after nine months in the womb, human babies are some of the most helpless beings in the world because they need their parents to stay close to them for a long time after they leave the womb.

Unlike other animals, humans don't just start walking right away. It takes a lot of time for them to become fully independent. If you believe in traditional folklore, you might regard your baby as being in a kind of "external pregnancy" for two whole years after they're born! This is backed up by many things that science shows to be true.

Even though your baby is out of the womb, they are still connected to you physically, emotionally, and cognitively. This

is called an "outside pregnancy." They were connected to you through the umbilical cord when they were born, but now breastfeeding keeps that connection alive. The breast becomes the new place where you and your baby can connect. There, your baby can get food, immunity, and emotional support from your milk.

The milk your baby is getting from you isn't the only thing they're getting! It's the same thing that happens when you're pregnant. You and your baby become one body and mind. To breastfeed, you should think positive thoughts and bring your baby into a safe, nurturing place with you. This period is supposed to be a sacred time.

During the first two years of your baby's life, they are supposed to get as much love, attention, and stimulation as they can. Their needs are the same as when you were pregnant. They need you to keep caring for them as a direct result of your pregnancy and to support them and gradually introduce them to the outside world.

Babies keep getting messages from their mothers as they grow. As a parent, you should play with them, read aloud to them, and talk to them as much as you can. This will help them learn both their cognitive and motor skills.

However, Anneliese got none of this as a baby.

After she was born, her mother spent the next two hours preparing supper for up to fifty people: no mother-daughter meeting moment, no bonding, no kisses, no emotions whatsoever.

Anneliese didn't even get to hear her mother welcome her into the world! She received no care as a newborn baby—no attention from the woman who carried her for nine months. This showed that there was also little bonding during the pregnancy; Anneliese's mother was probably focused on her jobs and all the provisions she had to make and didn't create time to bond with her daughter while in the womb. She just stayed there in the womb hearing her mother's voice as she put things in order, but that voice never reached out to her. She never gave Anneliese a gentle poke to check if she was okay.

After struggling and fighting hard to come into the world, she was left alone, wrapped in some fancy shawl in an empty room without getting to feel her mother's warmth, smell, or kisses while the woman who carried her for nine months left to cater for fifty people. It was almost like being rejected by the world itself.

Pregnancy represents a profound physiological and emotional connection between the mother and her baby from the very first moments after conception. The woman is often filled with positive emotions such as joy, surprise, and enthusiasm. But the clinical practice also tells of women who, contrary to social expectations, experience diametrically opposed emotions, ranging from sadness, rejection, anger, and anxiety to full-blown depressive experiences even before the child comes into the world. But what is the reason for so much emotional ambivalence? And what weight do the mother's emotions have on the fetus's well-being?

The expectation of a baby upsets the woman's lifestyle and makes it necessary to rearrange multiple areas of her life: work,

bodily, relational, and financial changes. The expectant mother may feel so overwhelmed by all of these change that she experiences a lowering of her mood, the appearance of anxiety symptoms, and an increase in perceived stress levels. Several forms of anxiety and prenatal stress could increase the risk of emotional difficulties or self-regulation during the first two years of a child's life. Excessive cortisol production, activated in response to stressful situations, is associated with respiratory and digestive diseases in children up to three. It is precisely the high levels of maternal cortisol produced during gestation that affect the early regulation of stress, determining, for example, a marked behavioral reactivity.

However, the fetal period, which runs from the ninth week of gestation to birth, deserves particular attention; it is one of the most critical periods for brain development. Prenatal stress could make brain development more vulnerable to additional stressors such as maternal depression, which is known to have a significant impact on child temperament and emotional regulation. In particular:

An Inclination for Sadness

Maternal depression is by no means rare; many women can immediately begin to experience a lowering of the mood and a general perception of inadequacy. It affects about 15 percent of pregnant women (in a similar percentage to women in the postnatal period) and can lead to cognitive, behavioral, and emotional difficulties in the offspring. This emerges from a study investigating the relationship between the mother's depressive symptoms (during pregnancy and in the first year after childbirth) and the percentage of internalizing behavior

disorders (emotional/anxious signs and separation anxiety symptoms). The rate of both types of disorders was higher in children whose mothers had more severe depressive symptoms, both in the prenatal period and in the year after delivery. According to the scholars, these findings make it necessary to monitor maternal mental health to reduce the risk of associated adverse outcomes on children's socio-emotional and behavioral development.

To make all this possible, it is necessary to organize a real support network that includes the intervention of various specialist figures (such as obstetricians, gynecologists, and psychologists) and that has the purpose of compelling the pregnant woman to share her feelings, thus counteracting the frequent conviction of inadequacy and the sense of guilt derived from not feeling happy as common sense would have it. Leaning on the expertise of specialists both before and after the birth can make all the difference.

The current scientific and health landscape is moving in this direction: the support and protection of the psycho-physical well-being of the mother have become an essential condition for guaranteeing the healthy and harmonious development of the child.

What Does the Baby Feel in the Womb?

Every baby develops its personality even before it is born. But what do unborn babies need to mature in peace?

Our reckoning begins with birth. Although for embryologists, gynecologists, psychologists, and expectant mothers and fathers, the time before is already considered life. For most, there is no

doubt that the tiny thing whose heart is beating on its own less than four weeks after conception is more than a collection of cells. And twelve-week-old babies in the womb have tiny hands, and each fingertip is equipped with a network of sensitive touch cells. The facial features are already developing an individual expression.

How many children are already human in the womb becomes clear when you look at tiny premature babies, babies who are around the twenty-fifth week of pregnancy. The only thing missing is protective fat pads under the skin and stable alveoli. If you look into their touchingly innocent faces, you won't hesitate for a moment: it's clear that the whole range of human emotions are already known to these little ones. They frown and whimper when, for example, blood has to be drawn from them; they relax and sometimes even try to smile when they are allowed to lie on their mother's bare chest and feel her heartbeat.

The senses are just as alert in premature babies as in children who don't leave the womb ahead of time. The uterus is a shelter, but the unborn are not outside the world. This means the child in the womb takes part in the life of its mother; it feels the environment into which it will be born. This knowledge is fascinating but sometimes a little depressing. That means before Anneliese was born, she had a mild understanding of what the outside world might hold in store.

Many pregnant women now and then ask themselves questions like: Does the baby in my stomach notice everything I'm experiencing? Does it feel my doubts, worries, needs, and hectic pace? What do I have to do to make him feel good?

Modern science tries to provide answers to such questions. Here is the most important finding:

There Is a Verifiable Material Connection Between Mother and Child

The unborn child is by no means only nourished; the maternal organism also feeds it with a lot of information. The placenta transmits the material messengers of feelings and hormones to the child. For example, the cortisol level rises if the expectant mother is stressed. When taking measurements of the umbilical cord blood, doctors were able to determine that the increased stress level also reaches the unborn child with a delay of just a few pulse beats. Babies react differently to stress in the womb; some become restless and erratic of movement. Others make themselves small, pulling their arms and legs close to their bodies. The baby shares in the positive feelings of its mother just as directly. Endorphins and other happiness hormones flow to the unborn child as soon as its mother relaxes, and the child is happy.

Embryologists found out that the receptors for the good luck messengers are well developed early on in the embryonic brain. Measurements of the brain waves of unborn babies showed that the deflections of the curves became smaller when the researchers asked the mother-to-be (from around the twentieth week of pregnancy) to imagine a particularly beautiful situation. The baby could enjoy these beautiful thoughts in his mother's womb.

The senses of the unborn child develop; the child can experience its mother more clearly from week to week. First, the sense of touch awakens: the skin reacts as early as the seventh

week. The child can feel how the amniotic fluid surrounding it; his body feels the rhythm of the mother's internal organs and resonates with her heartbeat. By the twenty-fifth week, the unborn child's hearing is mature. Every mother-to-be has already experienced it: the child flinches if the mixer is switched on or the car door is slammed.

Unborn babies can distinguish "bad" from "good" sounds early. Messages of love from the mother are always well received; whenever mothers speak to their little one, it calms them down, or they fidget happily. A woman was asked to follow suit in research conducted, lying down a little longer after the ultrasound examination and talking loudly to her child. When we look at the screen again shortly afterward, the unborn baby was swimming and very relaxed in the uterus.

Anneliese missed all of these peaceful interactions while in her mother's womb, as her mother who was so busy making money and catering to others that she had little to no time for herself, not to mention the child lying in her womb.

All researchers who deal with the soul life of unborn children assume that mother and child are connected from within even if this communication path cannot be detected biochemically or with an ultrasound. The unborn child perceives its mother's state of mind, and it senses her thoughts.

In the good, harmonious phases of pregnancy, expectant mothers enjoy an intimate connection with the baby. In the less pleasant times, however, this closeness can also worry women because they suspect they cannot keep worries that always

arise from their unborn child. The expectant mother's feelings shape her child. If a person were only subjected to rejection in the womb, they will likely have a harder time liking themselves later in life.

Love and Confidence

The baby in the womb lives very much in the moment

Every mother wants the child to mature into a happy being in her womb. Unfortunately, this isn't always the reality. Even a desired child can occasionally cause grief to the woman who carries it. And the child has to withstand these negative energies, so wouldn't it be best to suppress such feelings with all your might?

Unborn babies suffer when their mother isn't doing well. The baby in the womb lives very much in the moment. As quickly as it falls into a minor mood, so quickly does its mind light up when its mother is happier again. And even short phases of reconciliation with the unborn have a healing effect on the soul when difficult times are coming to an end; the child smells paradise in the stomach. It feels that there is happiness and that it's on the way with its mother to achieve this state. Even in the womb, this constitutes emotional strength, teaching the child not to despair when things go bad.

What Imprints Does the Child Take with Them into the World?

Almost all newborns have behavior patterns that give them a feeling of security, just as they got to know in the uterus. For example, even the very little ones in their bassinet or cot crawl with their heads close to the wickerwork (which can sometimes

look a bit cramped). This is reminiscent of the prenatal feeling when the mother's pelvic bones tightly surround the head.

Most children are born with the basic feeling of their mother's warmth, closeness, and protection; they still feel that her love carried them even if they had experienced low points in the mother's mental state in the nine months together. Newborns give their mothers wonderful proof of their trust: They react to nothing as strongly as to their mother's voice; hearing it helps little ones be happy.

A Busy or Stressed Mother Passes the Stress Anxiety to Her Unborn Child

Like father like son, they always say, but this might be better: like pregnant woman like her child, because what an expectant mother eats, how stressed and anxious she feels, is imprinted on her baby's genes and brain and influences it throughout her life.

It sounds too simple that happy pregnant women give birth to happy children. If you stay cool in the circumstances, you will have a relaxed baby, and if you lurch through the ten months over-anxiously, you will also have an unbalanced child. Can that be true?

If you ask neonatologists, obstetricians, and neuroscientists about the connections between the time in the womb and the later character of the child, the answer is astonishing. Although a lot is still the subject of basic research, it is obvious that a happy mother tends to have a happy child. During the ten months, central control circuits in the brain and the genes

are calibrated. This process of fetal programming shapes behavior for a lifetime. It's like a stamp that one presses into modeling clay.

The Stamp "Stress"

One such stamp, for example, is the stress an expectant mother feels during pregnancy. Cortisol is released in the body under stress. About ten percent of the hormone crosses the placental barrier and reaches the child's brain. The effects of cortisol on children have been very well researched because around one in ten pregnant women goes into premature labor, and doctors then inject stress hormones to make the baby's lungs mature more quickly. The pharmacological stress level can be measured and related to the child's behavior.

A little bit seems to be enough to change one's behavior permanently; if pregnant women were only given stress hormones for two days, their children were still much more sensitive to stress at the age of eight. Attention deficit disorder occurred more frequently in the children in question: those affected are less able to concentrate and are less likely to behave calmly than other peers. Even the IQ will be lower.

Genes and the Brain

In the brain, stress is primarily regulated by the hippocampus and hypothalamus. If the baby's cortisol level is permanently elevated during pregnancy, this is defined as normal. The body's stress systems are adjusted so that the child is stressed faster and more frequently, but this is also what it needs to be in top form. The stress axis (i.e., the activation chain within the stress system) becomes hyperactive. However, no one has seen such

a change in behavior in the offspring for a one-off relationship quarrel or a dispute at work. Rather, the effects are found in those people who almost always feel stressed and nervous.

Dementia from Prenatal Stress

To be calibrated for stress from birth is not bad per se. Evolutionally, this is an advantage because these people remain on guard more and don't take danger lightly.

Cortisol promotes cell death, inhibits the satisfaction hormone serotonin, and causes increased blood pressure. However, constant alertness is unfavorable for the nerve cells in the long term. Therefore, those constantly stressed get strokes more often and have a shorter life expectancy.

And that's not enough of the disadvantages, because the stress hormone drives cell death, the stress in the womb will mark the mental decline in old age. Does the dementia epidemic in industrialized nations stem from the constant stress of pregnant women? Prenatal stress leads to premature aging of the brain in mice and primates.

Stress and specific emotions such as the mother's fear during pregnancy leave their mark on the child. In the first half of pregnancy, almost all nerve cells are created in the brain, so the limbic system, the stress axis, and various neurotransmitter systems in the baby's brain are calibrated to the level of fear experienced, especially since fear is processed in the gray cells in a similar way to stress. If the mother was very worried throughout her pregnancy, the little ones later quickly produce a lot of stress hormones when met with any form of adversity.

Constant Alertness

Teachers and mothers say that, around age eight, those children who an over-anxious woman delivered are particularly difficult, unfocused, and restless. These mothers have exceptionally high scores in a standardized tests to determine anxiety because they stated, for example, that they were very often nervous, restless, worried, and were afraid of accidents. This permanent mental state has a lasting effect on her children. Even as teenagers between the ages of fourteen and fifteen, they are still more impulsive on tests. For example, they answer faster but make more mistakes than other children. Even at almost twenty, the differences seem to persist: They aren't necessarily worse in the cognitive tests. For example, they are more creative and respond much more strongly to praise. But in settings with few stimuli, such as a boring school lesson, their behavior often falls out of the ordinary. They can't concentrate because they only get along well under stress—their normal state.

The mother's fear affects the baby; overly concerned women have particularly little of a specific enzyme that ensures the stress hormone cortisol is broken down before it crosses the placenta. The brain and the unborn child's genes are therefore exposed to particularly high levels of cortisol.

This affects very specific behaviors; babies of anxious pregnant women reacted to a harmless "daddada" tone at nine months with constant alertness. Usually, after hearing the sound a few times, the infants learn that it means nothing and ignore it. A sensitive reaction is a disadvantage in a safe environment and promotes anxiety disorders and other psychological disorders.

On a standardized test, the little ones reacted more strongly to panicked female voices and paid more attention to them than cheerful chatter. So they are more fearful and filter fear-inducing information much more strongly from their environment. This is an advantage for children who are born in a crisis area. You can immediately feel when danger is imminent.

Eaten Sick

The mother's eating behavior also influences the child she carries. How strong this influence can be was noticed years ago in the case of the disease diabetes mellitus. It is passed on through the maternal line two to three times more often. Why was not clear for a long time. Today the answer is known: The oversupply of food and blood sugar during pregnancy makes for a metabolic imbalance in babies. The hormones leptin and insulin usually help cope with the flood of sugar and give the signal for being full. But the brains of diabetic babies' babies hardly respond to these substances. They need lots of calories to satisfy their hunger pangs. This has a lifelong effect on their eating behavior.

How Does the Fetus Know That Its Mother is Stressed or Depressed?

When it comes to body parts, hormones are an important part of the process. If you compare the cortisol level in a woman's plasma to the level in the amniotic fluid, which is what the fetus is exposed to, there is less correlation in less anxious women. This is because they are less stressed. More anxious women are more likely to have a lot of things on their minds, though. This suggests that something about the mother's anxiety makes the placenta work differently, which can change how much cortisol reaches the amniotic fluid.

It has been found that there is an enzyme in the placenta that helps to deactivate cortisol while passing through the placenta. This enzyme's function changes based on women's level of anxiety. In humans, when a mother is stressed, it seems to be linked to a "turning off" of the gene that controls this enzyme, which allows more cortisol to reach the developing fetus. This exposure to high levels of cortisol is linked to a decrease in nerve cell formation and changes in how neurons move and form connections, making people more likely to be anxious.

People who study hormones have found that when these placental receptors are turned off, hormones change and make kids more anxious, like when they are younger.

Are there other ways to do this?

The immune system's role in the development of the brain is still very much a secret. Stress can change how the immune system is controlled. Inflammatory proteins called cytokines may affect how a neuron grows and forms connections, furthermore dictating which neurons live and how they grow. This also affects the fetus's brain and behavior development.

Researchers have also looked into the benefits of skin-to-skin contact for babies. When a mother and child interact uniquely, it helps babies calm down and sleep better. It has also been shown to help the brain grow.

Carried for close to ten months by a stressed mother, it is safe to say that Anneliese was already a stressed and nervous child herself, affected as she was by her mother's hormones.

As a pregnant mother or a mother, your state of being, mood, and emotions greatly affect your children. And in a way, this would be a great determinant of how they would react to certain situations. Since love and attention can also be passed on to the fetus, they would have already had a subconscious love for themselves and the world they are coming into.

However, if you had passed on any of these negative energies to your fetus, there are other means of rectifying them. The pregnancy stage can be a roller coaster, and it lasts for almost a year, which means there will certainly be times when you feel down, depressed, or sad, meaning that these emotions could be passed on to your child.

Lots of research has shown that massage can help children who are stressed out. If like Anneliese's mother, you have failed to connect with your children, both physically and emotionally, massage is one of the ways to rectify this. The first time a parent massages their child is when they are very young, which can help build a strong relationship. Much research has shown that people who get massages do not get as stressed out when they have to go to school, stay in the hospital, or go through other stressful experiences.

Another way is to devote adequate time to talk and bond with them. You should hold and touch them, don't allow your baby to fall asleep in your arms; rather, spend a lot of time with your baby so that their skin can touch yours.

As previously noted, every child still has to pass through the stages of external pregnancy where they require a great deal of attention. For two years, they will need to be fed, held, loved, and cared for adequately.

This stage is another way of bonding with your child and showing them your love. Babies have a habit of staring into their mother's eyes whenever they are being given attention, and this is one of the moments you should take advantage of. Eyes contact with your child—staring into your child's eyes lovingly, smiling at them, and playing with them—is a way of sending a love message into their brain.

At the end of the second year, toddlers move more and are more aware of themselves and their surroundings. They also want to learn more about new things and people. Young children will become more independent during this time. They'll also be able to recognize themselves in pictures or a mirror, and they'll start to act like other adults and older kids. Whatever signals and messages with which you impact their lives will become a determinant of how responsive your children will be to their environment.

Tips for Positive Parenting

Other ways to connect with your child at this stage:

- Read to your child every day.
- Make her look for things or name body parts and things. To help your toddler learn how to match things up, play games like shape-sorting and simple puzzles with them.
- Tell him to look around and try new things.
- Talk to your toddler and help him/her learn new words by adding to their existing knowledge. Suppose your child says "baba." You can say, "Yes. That is a bottle."

- Let your child help dress and feed him/herself to help become more independent.

- Take field trips with your toddler to the park or on a bus ride to help them learn how to be curious and recognize common things.

Charity, they say, starts from the home, but it also starts from the womb. While you cannot be blamed for some hormonal imbalances you might experience while pregnant, it is solely your responsibility not to allow your mood, stress, or pressure to affect the connection and affection you should share with your child.

Anneliese was left all to herself immediately after birth without so much as a warming welcome from her mother. She wasn't a recipient of emotional love while in her mother's womb or when she was born. While her mother loved her in her own way by providing her with every material thing anyone could imagine, she never got the chance to enjoy validation or love from her parents. Her mother was absent in her emotional life, which set Anneliese down a path of despair.