

Circle the questions to which your answer is **YES**.

Emotional Neglect Questionnaire

Do You:

1. Sometimes feel like you don't belong when with your family or friends
2. Pride yourself on not relying upon others
3. Have difficulty asking for help
4. Have friends or family who complain that you are aloof or distant
5. Feel you have not met your potential in life
6. Often just want to be left alone
7. Secretly feel that you may be a fraud
8. Tend to feel uncomfortable in social situations
9. Often feel disappointed with, or angry at, yourself
10. Judge yourself more harshly than you judge others
11. Compare yourself to others and often find yourself sadly lacking
12. Find it easier to love animals than people
13. Often feel irritable or unhappy for no apparent reason
14. Have trouble knowing what you're feeling
15. Have trouble identifying your strengths and weaknesses
16. Sometimes feel like you're on the outside looking in
17. Believe you're one of those people who could easily live as a hermit
18. Have trouble calming yourself
19. Feel there's something holding you back from being present in the moment
20. At times feel empty inside
21. Secretly feel there's something wrong with you
22. Struggle with self-discipline

Look back over your circled (YES) answers.

A score of 6 or above indicates that you have CEN.**

Your answers give you a window into the areas in which you may have experienced Emotional Neglect as a child.

**The ENQ is based on my professional experience and has not yet been researched.

Emotionally Attuned Parenting

Why it's Important

1. The way a child is treated emotionally by his parents determines how he will treat himself as an adult. This has been proven over and over again in study after study.
2. Emotion is an undeniable part of your child's biology. If you ignore your child's emotions, your child will feel ignored on some level, no matter how much attention you pay to him in other ways.
3. Emotion is the substance of the parent/child relationship. If you are not attending to your child's emotion, you are by-passing a vital source of parent/child connection and love.
4. Emotional Intelligence has been proven to be more valuable to success in life than general intelligence. It's your job to teach your child how to name, use and manage emotion, as well as how to deal with it in others.
5. People who received emotional attunement from their own parents in childhood are generally able to provide it automatically to their own children. People who didn't receive it enough themselves will likely struggle to provide it as parents. It is vital to recognize what you didn't get yourself so that you can make conscious effort to learn the missing skills, fill your own blind spots, and give your children what you didn't get yourself.

Why it's Difficult

1. Emotion hides behind behavior. A child's behavior is driven by his emotion. If behavior is the car, emotion is the engine. We easily see the car, and everything it does. But in order to see the engine, we have to lift the hood and look.
2. A parent must be emotionally aware herself to be emotionally attentive to her child. If you have emotional blind spots yourself, you'll be blind to some of your child's emotions as well.
3. Children do not naturally speak the language of emotion. Emotion can be powerful, complex and confusing. Both parents and children often find it easier to simply ignore it.
4. To teach a child emotional skills, the parent must have those skills himself.

How to Do It

1. Pay attention. Your job is to see your child's true nature. What does your child like, dislike, get angry about, feel afraid of, or struggle with? Feed these observations back to your child in a non-judgmental way so that your child can see herself through your eyes, and so that she can feel how well you know her.
2. Feel an emotional connection to your child. Strive to feel what your child is feeling, whether you agree with it or not. When you feel your child's emotion, he will feel an instant bond with you.
3. Ask your child the following questions often:
 - What's wrong?
 - Why did you do that?
 - Why do you say that?
 - How do you feel?
 - What do you want?
 - What are you afraid of?
 - What are you worried about?
 - What's making you angry?
4. Listen carefully to your child's answers: These are difficult questions for children. They may often be very hard for your child to answer. But the simple act of asking and listening gives him the powerful message that his feelings, motivations, concerns; in other words, what's going on inside of him, is important, and that he should be paying attention.
5. Be mindful that your child needs your help to manage his emotions, not to indulge them. This is perhaps the most difficult step. When you are able to discern what your child is feeling, it's vital to help her to manage, control, and appropriately express her feelings. These are skills which will stick with her for a lifetime.
6. Become aware of your own emotional blind spots so that you will not pass them down to your child.
7. Never judge your child for what he is feeling. Instead, let him know that it's his behavior that he will be judged for.

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