

TBRI Tip March 2022

Trauma and the Unborn Child

"Younger isn't better, it is longer"

Dr. Gregory Keck

The backstory for this TBRI tip.

I am part of a TBRI parenting facebook group. One of the parents in the group posted a video that intrigued me. Her adopted 18 month old daughter was inconsolable at night and would not sleep despite her having done everything she could think of to soothe her. For whatever reason, she figured out that the only thing that worked was to move at the same cadence that the baby would have experienced in utero. So she put the baby snugly in an Ergo type carrier and began to dance and do cardio while wearing the baby. It was only at this state of increased heart rate and rhythm, that soothed the baby to sleep! She shared a video of her "dancing" her baby into a peaceful slumber. The child's prenatal experience directly impacted her current behavior. This phenomenon has been researched and documented for decades.



Remember the TBRI Early Risk Factors?

- **Difficult Birth**
- **Difficult Pregnancy**
- **Abuse**
- **Neglect**
- **"911" Type of Event**
- **Prenatal Exposure**

The Amazing Life of the Unborn Baby- Thomas Verny M.D.

Did you know:

- A newborn will be comforted by rhythm of walking at the same cadence as their birthmom? It is called entrainment
- Mama and unborn baby can react to one another's thoughts and feelings
- An unborn baby will become emotionally agitated at the mama's thought of having a cigarette
- The baby can hear clearly at 6 months gestation and will move his body to the rhythm to his mother's speech
- Babies can be soothed in utero by soft classical music and will kick and wiggle to the sound of more upbeat classical music.
- The baby's palate can be impacted by the foods birth mom eats, i.e. garlic, chili, curry etc.
- A professional cellist musician learned that the music he could play sight unseen, was the same pieces his birth mom played while pregnant with him.
- A newborn 's neurochemistry will mirror that of his birth mom for up to six months after birth.

Lifting the Veil

Bryan Post



There is an assumption that babies adopted at birth are preferable because well, to put it bluntly, they have been spared from abuse, neglect and other trauma that their older counterparts have experienced.

Back in the day, we (I) was taught the theory that babies are born a "tabula rasa" or a blank slate, ready for the story of their life to be written on them. While no one would deny the profound impact of life experiences during a child's critical years, we also cannot deny the impact the prenatal experience has on unborn child. Infants come to us with nine months of attachment and prebirth experiences that can dramatically impact their beliefs and behavior.

Dr. Bryan Post used the following analogy to explain the experience of a newborn baby separated at birth from their mother.

Imagine a couple who met and fell in love over a years' time. Through time spent together, they became close emotionally. They recognized the scent and voice of their beloved and react emotionally to hearing it. They picked up on each other's cues and could anticipate one another's mood and needs. Through their time together, they established a bond, so much so that they wanted to formalize their relationship through marriage.

The big day arrives. The groom beams with love and anticipation upon seeing his bride walk down the aisle. She stops before him. With great anticipation, he lifts the veil. He recoils in shock and disbelief. Who is this? This is a stranger. It is not the one he has come to know and love over past months. He is confused, not sure of what is happening.

"An unborn child is a feeling, remembering, aware child and because he is what happens to him, what happens to all of us, in the nine months between conception and birth molds, shapes our personality, drives and ambitions in very important ways.
Quote from "The Secret Life of the Unborn Child".

"CHRONIC ANXIETY
AND WRENCHING AMBIVALENCE OR
ANGER TOWARDS MOTHERHOOD CAN
LEAVE A DEEP SCAR ON THE UNBORN
CHILD'S PERSONALITY"

We have shown the positive outcomes for born babies bathed in a prenatal environment of love, acceptance, anticipation and joy. Now let's turn to the harder side of prenatal experiences.

In preparation for our next TBRI tip, consider the following:

What might a child believe about themselves and how might they behave if they were formed in a prenatal environment where...

- Birth mom was stressed and scared throughout the entire pregnancy
- Where birth mom lacked medical care and nutrition
- Where baby was immersed in fluid filled with toxic teratogenic drugs.
- Where the baby's developing brain was flooded with cortisol for nine months
- Where the emotions of hate, violence and depression were high?
- Where birth mom constantly thought of ending the pregnancy.



Next Month: How parents can help their child overcome prenatal trauma.