

Alarms of Toxic Parenting

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ABSTRACT

Parenting does influence children. Culturally Becoming parents have mostly been an unplanned reward received to certain cultural factors, ranging from hope of expectations being fulfilled to lust of transferring the wealth, from drive of compassion because of the fact that a baby is cute to obedience of the social custom of reproduction. This generation and previous two-three generations have witness somewhat a need for the definition of accurate parenting and lists of alarms of toxic parenting. This chapter argues that just becoming parents is difficult from learning the art of parenting. And that many behaviors and control strategies that parents exercise out of love of desire to mould their child in certain way can actually prove toxic and can harm the whole persona of child.

Keywords : Reproduction, Custom, Strategies, glorified, arrogance, Alarms

Introduction:

In Indian culture where parents are glorified as gods, Toxic parenting is a term hard to digest and even harder to speak; So before any further discussion on the topic, I want to make it easy for my readers to accept that parenthood isn't equivalent to godhood; That parents too are humans with all the human emotions inside them, whether it be love or selfishness, care or propensity for violence.

Consider a few questions:

- If parent's love is selfless and pure, then why do people commit female infanticide or wish for boy's birth?
- If a child is the most valuable asset parents care for, then why do we hear news of honour killings?
- If parents can understand their child best, then why do so many children suffer from loneliness, depression and suicidal tendencies?

My intent of asking these questions isn't to portray parent as devil but to establish my argument, that parents too are humans, with all the good and bad qualities humans have. They do have their own set of flaws which can damage their child. And these flaws need to be recognized and corrected. No one is perfect; Sometimes parents can do harm to their children unintentionally and ignorance can be an excuse. Parents need to become aware of how their behavior affects children.

Read this article and ask yourself:

- Do you as children struggle with any of these abuses?
- Are you the parent who unconsciously did these things to your child?

In this paper, we will take a quick look at different types of abuses that are common, and later

in the next blogs (on parenting), we will discuss each of these types in detail.

This article will only focus on the recognition of abusive parenting. If you are a parent reading this you can rethink your style of parenting. If you are a child who is going through any of these styles of abuse, you can call out your parents for their behavior.

Some common Toxic Parenting practices **Display of parental arrogance:**

In most of the cases, it all starts from here. Parents often come up with statements like “I am the father/mother”, or “I gave birth”, “You are dependent on me”; Although these statements are true; But when they are used as a tool of practice authority over a child in case of any disagreement or if the child tries to be vocal then these statements should be considered as an abuse.

Invalidating a child’s emotions and his objective reality:

This involves either denying or belittling the child’s feelings or by jumping to conclusions without listening to him/her properly and giving them directions how to feel.

E.g.: A father and son are sitting near television watching a report on students’ suicide. The father makes a remark “Those who commit suicide don’t deserve to live as they were nothing but a burden on earth”. The child tries to counter by saying that this is not always the case. He tries to explain “Incompetency, guilt, fear of failure can lead to depression which leads to the development of suicidal tendencies in a child.” Chances are that the child here is actually trying to communicate about his/her own depression or sadness; But the father interrupts and says, “What struggles do these

19/20 year kids have? They get prepared food, clothes and good educational facilities. The only thing they have to do is study, they don’t do it. They run after romantic relationships and ignore their studies; therefore they fail and then they complain of depression. We in our time faced so much struggle yet we never lost courage.”

These types of parenting is abusive as this makes children feel unheard and internally conflicted.

Playing victim card:

This kind of behaviour is emotionally abusive because the don’t take ownership of wrongdoing. It can create problems in adulthood if the child mimics the parent and use this as coping mechanism, or develop feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred.

Threatening violence (even if there is no intent to actually use violence):

Children start feeling unsafe around their parents, and also they learn that violence is an effective means to achieve objectives.

Not giving child privacy:

Not allowing a child to age-appropriate privacy may impact their ability to trust others, maintain their own boundaries and respect the boundaries of others.

Neglect:

The effects of attention deprivation have immense negative impacts. Neglect can make a child feel as if his existence doesn’t matter. The child can develop signs of self doubt and low self-esteem.

Imposing expectations:

This can be done in several ways:

● **Manipulation:** Manipulating a child into thinking that the only good thing they can do for themselves is what their parents choose for them. (Whether it be a choice of career or life partner)

● **The ‘earn love’ trade:** Parents love for their child (especially during early childhood) should be unconditional. But sometimes parents choose to trade love in exchange for achievements. Overdoing this develops an array of negative qualities in children like jealousy, and lying tendencies. And if the child fails to live up to his/her parents’ expectations it can develop self doubt in him/her leading to low self-esteem.

● **Misuse of authority:** A parent can either use force, e.g.: Threatening a girl to marry someone of parent’s choice or by use means like cutting of finance if the son tries to pursue a career which doesn’t math the suggestion of parents.

● **Threats of self-harm:** This is one of the most common ways in which parents impose expectations on their kids. In this case parents don’t use punishment against the child; But punish themselves with intention to trigger the feeling of guilt in child, e.g.: Choosing to not eat food, or not take medicines. Selfish violence in any form whether it’s direct towards others or to self is condemnable.

There are other things too which can be included under toxic parenting; Some of which are excessive love, pampering and protectiveness which hinders a child’s growth.



Conclusion :

Humans as species tend to live with a sharp dichotomy in terms of prioritizing novelty and comfort. Search for Novelty is a need which is generally born out of the frustration from monotony, but is an act of revolution requiring efforts. And this is the reason as to why observation of one activity to bring the necessary change becomes difficult and we tend to create a chain a pattern of behavior in every relationship, and same is true for parenting. But what needs to be understood is that the changes which are necessary when a particular way of dealing with a relation becomes toxic .Intelligent observation and rational thinking can help one become better with parenting.

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