Father Hunger and Father Wounds: Clinical Interventions With Clients Impacted by Fatherlessness Across the Lifespan

Presenter

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Definition of Key Terms

Father Hunger

A lack of sufficient fathering due to death, emotional unavailability or desertion and the child’s yearning for this fathering, often throughout their life span.
Father Wounds

The injury of a child verbally, emotionally, physically or sexually by his or her father and the life long effects of the wounds.
Celebrities raised by single parents
George Washington
Andrew Jackson
Alexander Hamilton
Barack Obama
Christina Aquilera
Angelina Jolie
Kelly Rowland
Barbara Streisand
Demi Moore
Alicia Keys
Halle Berry
Jodie Foster
Al Pacino
Eminem
Lebron James
J. K. Rowling
Mariah Carey
Celebrities raised by grandparents
Carol Burnett
Dylan McDermott
Jack Nicholson
Oprah Winfrey
Pierce Brosnan
What Involved, Responsible, and Committed Fathers Provide For their Daughters

- Positive impact in utero
- Greater birth weight
Involved Fathers Continued

- Decreased risk of premature death
- Nurturing
- Affirmation
- Protection
Involved Fathers Continued

- Security
- Confidence
- Increased probability of healthy relationships
- Help with individuation
Involved Fathers Continued

- Attention
- Decrease in financial insecurities
- The male perspective
- Decreased risk of sexual abuse
- Increased probability of academic success
The Impact of Fatherlessness on Girls
“How he leaves matters”
3 Ways Fathers Leave Their Daughters

- Death
- Desertion
- Divorce
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.  Malcolm X
Other Ways Fathers Leave Their Daughters

- Workaholism
- Depression
- Emotional unavailability
- Addiction
Drew Barrymore
Her father was an alcoholic who threw her against the wall at age 3 and left the family when she went to the alcohol rehab at age 13.
Nicki Minaj
Her father was addicted to alcohol and other drugs.
Adele

Her father was an alcoholic. He left the family when Adele was 3.
Rihanna’s father is addicted to crack cocaine and alcohol.
Fatherless Daughters Continued

Father Hunger

- Constant search
- Dating older males
- Promiscuity
- Desperately seeking love
- “A national day of mourning”
Fatherless Daughters Continued

- Toxic shame and abandonment issues
- Heavy drug use
- An addictive relationship style
Iceberg Model

Addiction

Co-dependence

Toxic Shame

Abandonment/Trauma

John Freil
Guilt vs. Shame

**Guilt**
- Behavior
  - “I’ve done wrong”
  - “I’ve done bad”
  - “I made a mistake”

**Shame**
- Your being
  - “There is something wrong with me”
  - “I am bad”
  - “I am a mistake”
Shame

The belief that I am unlovable and unworthy of belonging.

Brene Brown, Ph. D.
Iceberg Model

Addiction

Co-dependence

Toxic Shame

Abandonment/Trauma

John Freil
Co-dependence

An over involvement with things outside of us and an underinvolvement with things inside of us. Left untreated codependence can lead to addiction.

John Friel
Marilyn Monroe
Iceberg Model

Addiction

Co-dependence

Toxic Shame

Abandonment/Trauma

John Freil
Fatherless Daughters Continued

- Depression
- Increase in violence
- Gang affiliation
Fatherless Daughters Continued

- Decreased emotional intelligence
- Angry demeanor and attitude
- Unresolved grief
Fatherless Daughters Continued

- Feeling ugly
- Rift with her mother
- Difficulty trusting men
Fatherless Daughters Continued

- Self-abuse
- Increased desire to have a baby as a teen
- Spiritual distress
Increased Risk of Domestic Violence
The Fatherless Woman Syndrome
The Fatherless Woman Syndrome

The “un” factor

- *Unworthy of success*
- *Unworthy of love*
The Fatherless Woman Syndrome
Continued

The triple fear factor

- Fear of commitment
- Fear of relationships
- Fear of being alone
The Fatherless Woman Syndrome
Continued

Sexual factor

- Promiscuity
- Sexual anorexia
The Fatherless Woman Syndrome

Continued

- The mask factor
- The perfection factor
- The projection factor
- The get even factor
The Fatherless Woman Syndrome Continued

- Addictive relationship factor
- Depression factor

Source: Whatever Happened to Daddy’s Little Girl? By Jonetta Rose Barras
Intervention Strategies with Girls and Women

• Talk therapy - to address issues of abandonment

• Grief work

• Reading
Intervention Strategies Continued

- Gestalt Therapy
- Treat the cover-ups
- Involve grandfathers and uncles
- Rally the extended family
Intervention Strategies Continued

- Encouraging journaling
- Involve in activities that increase confidence
- Recommend sports
- Help with affirmations...
Intervention Strategies Continued

• Help with the search - “National Daddy-Daughter Reunion Tour”
Help with the question, “Who was my father?”

- Mother
- Maternal grandparents
- Paternal grandparents
- Aunts and uncles
- High school yearbook
- Your father’s friends
- Facebook
Intervention Strategies Continued

- Network mentorship

- Provide support for single mothers of teenage girls
Help her leave addictive and abusive relationships.
Characteristics of Addictive Relationships

- Lots of drama
- Obsession
- Smothering
$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = \frac{2}{4} = \frac{1}{2}$
Characteristics of Addictive Relationships Continued

• Extreme jealousy
• Abuse
• Decrease in emotional intelligence
• You tend to stay in spite of adverse consequences
• Withdrawal symptoms when alone
• When you leave one unhealthy relationship you enter another
Characteristics of Healthy Relationships

- Both partners are whole
- Each is growing and encouraging the other to grow
- Each has a separate life outside of the relationship
- Each is able to spend time alone
- Minimal jealousy
- No abuse
Relationship Detox

Making a decision to not be in a relationship for awhile in order to cleanse yourself of the toxic effects of previous relationships.
What to do During Relationship Detox

- Have a love affair with yourself
- Go for your goals
- Strengthen your spirituality
- Utilize therapy to understand your pattern
- Change the definition of “my type”
# Cycle of Domestic Violence

*Lenora Walker, Ph.D.*

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Coach fathers on how to be dads:

- Examine the impact of how your father parented you
- You’re important
- It’s okay not to be perfect
- Stay involved with the school
Coach fathers on how to be dads:

- Attend her events
- Go to dinner together
- Respect your daughter’s mother
- Become the on-call parent
- Listen to your daughter
Interventions Strategies Continued

Coach fathers on how to be dads:

- Side-by-side time
- Keep lines of communication open
- Take your daughter to school and work
Interventions Strategies Continued

Provide resources- National Fatherhood Initiative www.fatherhood.org

- 24/7 Dad’s curriculum
- Inside out program for incarcerated dads
- Dad email-weekly tips
- Dad’s Club
Interventions Strategies Continued

Helping dads with reconciliation

- Assess insights into pain caused
- Prepare amends
- Make amends
- Expect rejection
Helping dads with reconciliation

- Move at your daughter’s pace
- Be consistent
- Important not to let your relationship with your daughter’s mother impact co-parenting
- Receive support from other fathers
Father Hunger/Father Wounds for Male Clients with Substance Use Disorders
Core Issues for Males Wounded by Their Fathers

Father/ Son Pain

- The absence of a caring father
- The presence of an abusive father
Core Issues for Males Wounded by Their Fathers Continued

Male Depression

- Lack of capacity to feel
- Externalization of their pain
- Feelings of inadequacy without hope
Core Issues for Males Wounded by Their Fathers Continued

What Fathers Do

- Hold their sons less than they hold their daughters
- Smile at their sons less
- Talk to their sons in rougher voice tones
- Discourage their sons from crying
Core Issues for Males Wounded by Their Fathers Continued

- Comfort their sons less when they do cry
- Give sons harsher discipline
- Give sons shorter explanations for tragic events
- Fathers are often rigid in steering their sons along traditional lines
Core Issues for Males Wounded by Their Fathers Continued

- Fathers roughhouse more with their sons with less physical attention, criticize more, correct them more, and play with them more competitively.
- Talk less about feelings with their sons.
Core Issues for Males Wounded by Their Fathers Continued

• Often laugh and smile if sons express ordinary levels of anger or aggression; if they express feelings of fear, anxiety or sadness, they are often steered away from these emotions.
The Many Masks of Male Depression

- Anger
- Rage
- Violence
The Many Masks of Male Depression Continued

- Substance Use
- Isolation
- Midlife Crises
- Affairs
- Thrill-seeking behavior
The Many Masks of Male Depression Continued

- Alcohol and drug use
- Suicide that looks like homicide
- The father as a limited role model
4 Male Archetypes

King, Warrior, Lover, Magician

by Robert Moore
King

Noble, leader, the man who blesses others. He sacrifices his needs for the good of the group.

Winston Churchill  Ghandi  Nelson Mandela
Warrior

Protector, demonstrates courage

“Courage is not the absence of fear...”

Mark Twain

Norman Schwarzkoph, Jr.  Muhammad Ali
Lover

Emotionally open, vulnerable, intimate, Relationship builder,
The man who pulls a rabbit out of a hat, negotiator, creative problem solver
Roberto Clemente
All four of these roles are present within one man. Each has a shadow. A less mature version of the archetype.

Robert Moore
Shadow King

Corrupt leader, dictator
Shadow Warrior

Bully, gang member, rage-a-holic
Shadow Lover

Womanizer
Shadow Magician

- Con artist
- Manipulator
Bryan Cranston
Core Issues for Males Wounded by Their Fathers Continued

- Feelings of Failure/ Not being affirmed by the father
- Toxic masculinity - doing dangerous things in the name of being a man
- Performance anxiety
- Difficulty acknowledging fear (anger and rage are often okay to express)
- The father as a poor role model for intimacy
Impact of Fatherlessness

- Increased rate of depression and Anxiety Disorder
- 5 times the average suicide rate
- Increased risk of complex trauma
- 32 times the average incarceration rate
- Lower average income
Impact of Fatherlessness Continued

- Lower job security
- Higher unemployment rate
- Receive government entitlements for longer periods of time
- Increased rates of Substance Use Disorders
Impact of Fatherlessness Continued

- Increased rates of homelessness
- Difficulty with intimacy
- Emotional unavailability
- Desertion of the next generation
- Increased risk of chronic pain, asthma and life expectancy

Source: Fatherhood Initiative
Intervention Strategies

- One good relationship
- 7 adults
- Provide mentorship and activities that build “heart” endurance and confidence
- Counseling for attachment and complex trauma
- Provide early help for Substance Use Disorders
Intervention Strategies Continued

- Use group interventions
- Help with disengagement from gangs and other destructive peer groups
- Help with rage
- Provide Rites of Passages
Gang Prevention Socratic Questions

• Do gang members make money selling drugs?

• When a gang member goes to jail, who usually visits?
• Who accepts collect phone calls?

• Who pays for the lawyer?

• Does the gang have a retirement plan?
Gang Prevention Socratic Questions Continued

- When do gang members want to leave the gang?

- What is the history of gangs in your area?

- Who do gang members fight with more, each other or rival gangs?
Rites of Passage

Definitions

• Events that mark a person's progress from one status to another
• Culturally prescribed rituals for transitioning adolescents into adults
• Arnold Van Gennap (1873-1957), an ethnographer, coined the phrase “LesRita de Passage” (1909)
“The purpose of a rite of passage is to separate the person from their former group preparing them for the new phase of life and the increased pro-social responsibility that comes with that new life, followed by their celebratory reentry into society at a new level.”
3 Phases of a Rite of Passage

- Separation
- Transition
- Reincorporation/celebration
Examples

Coming-of-age rites

• Barmitzvah

• Batmitzvah

• Debutante Ball
Examples Continued

- Graduation
- Quinceanera
- Sweet Sixteen
Examples Continued

Religious rites of passage

• Baptism

• First Confession

• Confirmation
Examples Continued

- Barmitzvah
- Batmitzvah
- Quinceanera
- Missionary work
Examples Continued

- Promise Keepers
- New Warriors
Examples Continued

Cultural Rites of Passage

• Cattle herding - East Africa

• Hunting - Native Americans, Africans

• Celebration of first menstrual cycles - Native American, Africans