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Trauma is defined as "a: an injury (such as a wound) to living tissue caused by an extrinsic agent. b: a disordered psychic or behavioral state resulting from severe mental or emotional stress or physical injury. c: an emotional upset. The personal trauma of an executive who is not living up to his own expectations".

When people think of traumatic events, they often think of veterans, first responders and/or victims of sexual or physical assault. While these people certainly can and do experience trauma, it is not limited to these individuals. Those who have suffered the death of a relative or close friend, been divorced, or lost employment can also experience the emotional stress that lead to "a disordered psychic or behavioral state". Compounded with a societal mandate that says "just get over it", the personal perception of these events, and the feeling that one is not strong enough to put it past them and get on with life, can deepen the trauma even further.

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The Tao of Poop

Keeping Your Sanity (and Your Soul) While Raising a Baby

by Vivian E. Glyck

Book review by Jamie Leslie

Around this time last year, I found myself returning to work from my maternity leave. It was a time of mixed emotions that included: excitement for getting back to work and consistency, guilt for leaving my baby with daycare, fatigue due to maybe 2 hours of sleep every night, and uncertainty with my abilities to adjust to the new schedule. That first week back to work invoked a great deal of high anxiety as I thrust myself into needing to prove that I could balance being a working mom. I perceived an expectation that I needed to prove to others and myself that I could do all of my job duties right away and also the expectation that I could still manage being a nurturing caregiver to my baby girl.

The universe gave me a message that was much needed at that time in the shape of a book. My sister had sent a most welcome care package that included a book titled "The Tao of Poop: Keeping Your Sanity (and Your Soul) While Raising a Baby". During my various late night rituals of caring for my daughter, I would often read a passage or two and start to apply the principles of the book to reframing the unrealistic expectations that I placed upon myself. The book was such a therapeutic benefit to me that I felt a strong need to purchase it for our Three Trails EFAP lending library.

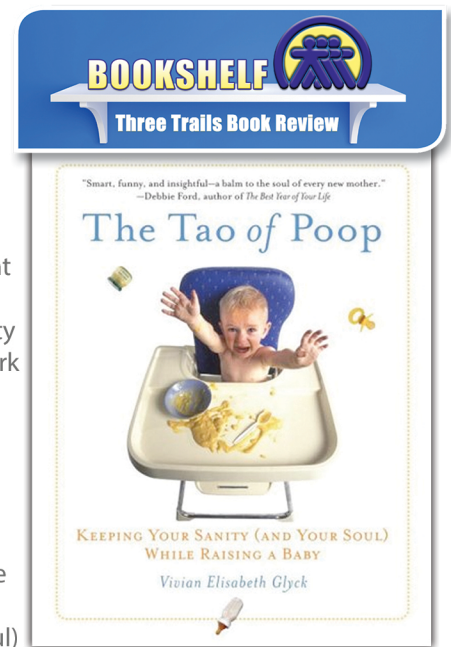
The first chapter of the book looks at how expectations can be the killer of happiness. It discusses how new parents will often plan out a perfect labor experience. At times there are some societal expectations that may include a drug free labor or in-home birth. The more we plan the more it leaves us to experiencing a feeling of failure when the labor does not proceed the way we expected it to. This may lead to an increase in post-partum depression in new moms. Some expectations that new moms may have may include having a "natural" birth vs. a C-Section. One thing that still sticks with me in regards to my own experience was that after 22 hours of labor, I delivered my baby via C-section and had a nurse comment to me with "Well at least you experienced natural labor before you had the C-Section". This left me feeling failure within myself that my body was not able to follow through with "natural labor". There may be expectations of how to feed the baby. If the new mom experiences issues with milk production or issues with the baby latching then she may once again feel failure or shame that her body is not doing what she perceives it should naturally do. The book provides "Sanity Savers" that could be used to examine expectations and how to let go of unrealistic expectations.

The second chapter explores the need for support. Often times there may be a belief that other moms didn't ask for help therefore we shouldn't ask for help either. This chapter explores how the perception of the "supermom" has been normalized as okay. It also examines the need for self-care and breaks down the age old societal belief that moms who utilize self-care are selfish and not spending enough time with their kids. In the therapeutic world, counselors are ethically required to manage their self-care in order to provide the most therapeutic services to their clients. In fact it could be seen as a danger to the client, if the counselor is experiencing impairment. I often utilize the analogy of the cup with clients, who are caregivers in some fashion of their own life. They are a cup, who often fills up lots of other cups. If they are not taking the time to fill up their own cup they will not have any water to fill up the other cups to which they provide care.

The various chapters of the book continue to examine different themes that new mom's may experience. I find the sanity savers to be extremely helpful as they give ways for the reader to develop changes with their own mindset or behaviors in order to experience lessened anxiety/depression. The sanity savers serve as homework for the reader to implement something different, while still validating the reader's feelings and experiences.

Even though the book is written for new moms as is primary audience, there are suggestions and tips that anyone can take from it. The biggest one that I see that would apply to others is examining expectations and letting go of unrealistic expectations. Often times it is not so much an event that creates a feeling of depression or anxiety but it is our interpretation of the event and the expectations we might have within ourselves to handle adversity or uncertainty. We tend to expect more from ourselves than what is realistic. These high expectations can also get in the way of relationships. What often creates conflict with couples tends to be wants, needs, or expectations that do not get met. This may lead to feelings of resentment towards our significant other. So, even if you are not a new mom, consider checking this book out. This book is available in our lending library under the parent section of our library. We welcome the opportunity to pass it onto you and yours, so feel free to stop by and check it out.

Three Trails wishes many blessings to the new moms on this journey. "You just need to be present, observe, be yourself, and, most important, take care of yourself. All that you need to do is already done. Let it unfold."



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Meet Shelly McAlpin!

Please welcome Counselor-In-Training Shelly McAlpin to Three Trails EFAP. Shelly McAlpin is a second year graduate student in the University of Wyoming's Master's of Counseling Mental Health Program. She holds a Master's in Political Science and Foreign Policy and a Bachelor's of Psychology and Administration of Justice also from the University of Wyoming. Shelly is a counselor-in-training under the supervision of Jamie Leslie, LPC.

Outside of the center, Shelly is the Executive Director for ServeWyoming and has been with them for 12 years. Her resume includes over 15 years of experience in nonprofit management; grant administration; and advocacy for social justice. She believes in service and advocacy, particularly to those who are marginalized and seeks to have their voices heard.

Shelly spends her recreational time with her husband and daughter fishing the wonderful waters of Wyoming and traveling to new places.



SHELLY MCALPIN



One of the greatest joys and challenges of conscious, intimate relationships is that when we answer the call to love, we are invited to expand upon who we think we are, who we have been and what we feel and think we are capable of. We are invited by forces larger than ourselves to become a more complete, fuller, more loving human being. We are asked to participate in a process that is at once mysterious, exhilarating and terrifying.

When we work with couples & encourage them to make a solid commitment to the

truth, they often say things like, "Well I'm afraid to tell her what I really feel... she might leave me" or "If he knew that I had done that, he'll hate me forever, so I can't tell him" or "If she knew that I wanted to do X, Y and Z sexually, she'd think I was sick." At the core, it's always a fear that the truth will not set you free but will unleash a torrent of anger or rejection.

But if your relationship cannot handle the truth, then what do you have anyway?

If you and your partner are merely colluding with each other to stay in safe territory and avoid difficult issues, then you are settling for much less than what your call to love has invited you to experience.

Commitment to the truth can be uncomfortable and scary at times, but it is also the surest path to ongoing growth and deepening connection available to conscious relationship partners. We encourage everyone to make that commitment and pass it on through words and deeds to your children. If you have struggled with this in the past, be honest about that. And take steps to understand why you might have been less than honest. What healing needs to take place within you so that you no longer need to hide or appear different than who you really are? And remember, the commitment to the truth is not a commitment to always talking about something negative! The truth can be how grateful you feel to be in this relationship or how wonderful it feels to be with someone who shares your vision of an intimate relationship.

We are all capable of greater acts of love and truth than we may believe. We are all capable of being more honest, more clear, more loving, more unselfish. By honoring the original vision that called us to love at this time, we can commit to the truth of what we are experiencing and commit to communicating it to our partners on a regular basis. That is the process that truly will set you and your partner free – to experience the deepest and highest connection possible.

If you or your partner are having difficulty manifesting truth and honesty in your relationship, or there has been a betrayal of trust in the past or present, call us at (307) 237-5750 and let us show you how you can heal the hurts and resentments from the past and create a healthy, loving relationship that will last a lifetime.



(continued from page 1)

As much as the counselors at Three Trails believe in preventative care, when it comes to trauma we are working with clients who have already experienced something stressful and/or catastrophic and are trying to learn ways to cope in the aftermath. Oftentimes we meet with clients who have been struggling with the memory of a traumatic event for months or even years. They have been unsuccessful in working through the event and are still being repeatedly traumatized when they think about the event.

At Three Trails we are fortunate to have therapists trained in several different modalities to work with trauma victims. Along with traditional Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), we have a counselor trained in hypnotherapy and another trained in EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). By June 2018, another counselor will be trained in EMDR providing us with the opportunity to service more clients, and clients the option to work with either a man or a woman.

You have only one life to live. If trauma is having a negative impact on yours, give us the opportunity to work with you to improve its overall quality. Call 307-237-5750 and schedule an appointment.



Benefits to Retirees

Did you know that when you retire from your workplace, you can still receive free counseling services at Three Trails EFAP?

All retirees of member workplaces can continue to utilize the counseling services as well as their spouses, domestic partners, and dependent children (ages 4 -21).

This benefit comes at no extra cost to the business/organization!



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