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## CALIFORNIA CENTER

for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health  
at WestEd Center for Prevention & Early Intervention

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*Foundations of Infant-Family and  
Early Childhood Mental Health  
Training*

**Course: Complex Dimensions of  
Caregiving and Negative Emotions  
in Infants and Young Children**

**Date:** November 18, 2017

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PRESENTER Mary Claire Heffron Ph.D.

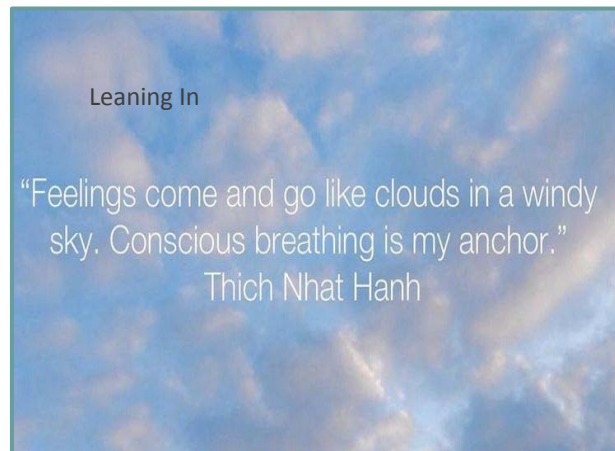
MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS (IFECMH) SERIES



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# Mindful Moments-Preparing for the Hard Stuff

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In this process complex feelings can occur because of *our own experiences of being a child* in a family, our beliefs and hopes about what feels just or right, based on our knowledge and values.



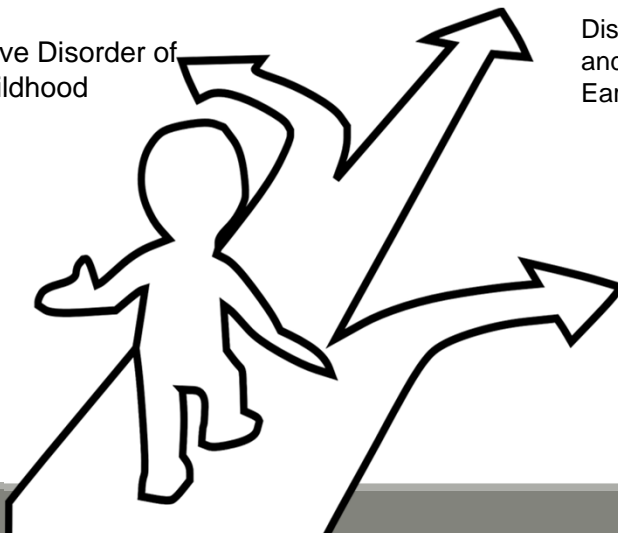
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## Axis II Observation and Assessment Builds Understanding and Helps Make Distinctions USEFUL for Treatment Plans

Depressive Disorder of  
Early Childhood

Disorder of Dysregulated Anger  
and Aggression of  
Early Childhood

Relationship Specific Disorder  
of Infancy/Early Childhood



## Looking at the Complex Dimensions of Caregiving-Axis II DC: 0-5 Tools

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- Form into a group of 3 or 4, mixing levels of experience in your group.
- Look at TABLE I.
- Take a few minutes to think about a child interacting with an adult or adults.
- This can be a child in a child care setting, during home visit, at the grocery store. Get familiar with the dimensions by recollecting this child. Share one thing that stood out in this observation with your colleagues.

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## Video Exercise

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1. Look at the short video together.
2. Take a few minutes and fill in your Table I Dimensions of Caregiving on your own. You won't observe all items on this.
3. Discuss with your group what you saw.
4. We will watch the video again and note what was alike or different.
5. What else did you see on time 2?

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## Contributions of the Child

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1. Look at Table 2 carefully. In a dyad, talk about 2-3 examples of these dimensions that you have experienced in your work or life.
2. Consider any examples where the contributions of the child were “a concern”. What helped or might have helped the caregiver of that child whose contributions made him/her harder to be with or more difficult to care for?

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## Video Example- Contributions of the Child

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1. After the video, work with a partner and note any contributions of the child that the two of you observed.
2. How might you find out more about your observation from the parent or teacher?

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## Caregiving Environment

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- Around the room there are 6 large charts.
- We are going to number off into 6 teams and respond only to the circle column on the assigned chart.

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## Relationship Specific Disorder of Infancy/Early Childhood

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- Main criteria, child's symptoms only occur within context of 1 relationship.

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## Relationship Specific Disorder of Infancy or Early Childhood

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1. Persistent emotional or behavioral disturbance in the context of one particular caregiver. E.g. oppositional behavior, aggression, fearfulness, self endangerment, food or sleep refusal, role inappropriate behavior or over-solicitous or controlling behavior.
2. Symptoms cause distress, interfere with relationships, limit participation in expected activities or routines, limit ability to learn or make developmental progress.

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## Holding the Tension

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Holding the tension is the ability to hold and tolerate worries and presses while remaining open to gathering more information

Finding an Authentic Voice, Mary Claire Heffron, PhD.; Barbara Ivins, Ph.D.; Donna R. Weston, Ph.D. 2005

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With a partner, describe a time when you felt a relationship specific disorder might be present.

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In your small group, read the two vignettes and highlight the features of each diagnosis.



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Disorder of Dysregulated Anger and Aggression of  
Early Childhood

Depressive Disorder