December…How can you help me?

When we are trying to make change it is important to have support.

-First line of support is you!

 - The second line of support includes family and friends.

 Greatest cheerleaders and harshest critics

 Sometimes it is difficult for them to understand your desire for change.

 Start by identifying the family and friends that truly support your journey

 We then need to some realistic expectations…some may be able to get it and some not.

 (some take offense or feel shameful that they didn’t stand up for their kids or

 fight for their kids the way you are. You think something wrong with them)

 We should keep loving the family and friends that can’t support us, but it is most beneficial to surround ourselves with the ones that do.

Put our time and energy in to helping them understand what we need fromthem.

-Third line of support- includes pastors, teachers, other professionals

 Do the same as above

**No matter who you choose to support you there are a few basic things you can do to help them help you.**

1. Rally them…tell them your goals and how you plan to achieve them.

2. Spell out ways that the CAN help you.

3. Be transparent about your struggle.

4. Let them know that you know you aren’t perfect and that your stuff may get in the way but that you will be open and honest about that.

5. Allow them to help you through setbacks and disappointments.

Surrounding yourself with a positive support group increases your odds for success. Not only that, it brings a sense belonging and understanding you need to keep on keepin on!

Now let’s get down to it!

**1. Identify your goal(s) when it comes to your relationship with your child. Really think about this and be specific.**

Whether you choose to write a letter or have a conversation (or many conversations) to educate and request support, you need to be clear about your goal!

What do you want for your child? Write down 5-8 things you want for him/her and then try to combine them in to a state of being or a belief system that he will have when you accomplish your goal.

Are these things in your mantra? Do you say/think them daily? Does your child hear them?

**2. Do your homework…really understand your own viewpoint.**

-What is it going to take to reach your goals?

Be able to speak to your child’s history.

He has been traumatized…he has experienced one or more of the following within his caregiving system:

1. abandonment – lost his primary attachment figure (bio mom)

2. neglect/abuse

3. multiple moves

4. drug/alcohol usage by parent

5. pain/illness

How trauma has impacted him.

Handout-implications of trauma put together by Vandervolk

Know the basics of the attachment process that all human beings go through and what the implications are.

1. begins in utero

2. brain wired to know that primary attachment figure will keep them alive

3. Loss of primary attachment figure = survival in danger

4. without consistent care of a discerning adult child takes care of themselves and loses trust for adults

5. Living “in survival” creates brain wiring and an integrated belief system that they are not worthy of goodness from others and must take care of themselves no matter how it affects anyone else.

Know the basic hurdles you and your child are dealing with.

-**missed developmental milestones**-behind in everything from relationships to learning

-**Survivor behaviors**- lying, stealing, hoarding, aggressiveness, lack of empathy, lack of trust, mommy shopping, etc. Don’t fit in a family setting.

-**Need to help child rewire if possible**. Need consistency, need to be the source of basic needs. Need to mimic or reinvent that primary relationship to give the child the Parent child relationship.

**-A brain wired to manage chaos and fear not goodness and family**. Our children feel safe when they feel in control.

-**A limbic system that has a hair-trigger** which leaves both of you dealing with behaviors and emotions that come out of left field and often leave a path of destruction in its wake.

3. Speak to the validity of the issue.

It is an issue of a child’s heart and future. All of his future relationships from friends to marriages and jobs rely on him having trust for others, and confidence in his value.

4. Develop your reasoning.

Speak to your specific goal for your specific family like your Thesis. General Statement. Main point.

Use what you know as your supporting reasoning and evidence-the science that backs it up! The more evidence you have the stronger your point will be.

5. Now back up your reasoning with vivid examples and evidence.

I see johnny struggle in this way…in relationships, in his self esteem, in school. I know these specific things about his past or his culture. Or he has shared these beliefs, doubts an concerns with me. Use detail…directly relate it to the facts. Use the correct verbage. Use detail. Use stories of people you both know and make the connection that way.

6. Be open to their angle. If you are able to agree or accept a lesser point you really have the stronger position.

It will actually open up the other person to your side of things.

One argument we often hear is…all kids do that, etc

One way to give a little is to say “yes, that is a behavior all kids use. I agree. The root of the reason they are using it is different.

Part 2

This is a BIG one!

Be confident!

Human beings are typically drawn to confidence. There is nothing more powerful then when you present your point of view with confidence and back it up with proof. If you believe it others will too.

-doesn’t mean you are unwavering or aggressive…be open to sharing yourself in a confident manner

-you are the expert on your child—so use good examples and solid reasoning…makes it easier for the other person to believe you.

Make it Personal!

-let your true feelings show…move aside the mad.

-share a personal story – it can be quite convincing It doesn’t necessarily prove what you are saying but it might be enough to be convincing.

-appeal to their sense of protection of a child

Stay Calm!

**Okay this is big…raving like a lunatic won’t convince anyone that you are right!**

You have to get past Mad. It can’t be poor me either.

Being confident in in the facts, in the evidence you are using to teach others about your child’s struggles and in the perspective you are bringing ot the table make it easier for others to be convinced you are heading in the right direction.

Part 3 Understanding the other person

**Listen**

-taking the time to learn someone else's points will allow you to convince them of alternatives. Learn to recognize their goals, beliefs, and motivations that guide their point of view.

As human beings we all have pre-conceived expectations, holes we look to fill, and our own shortcomings. It is hard for us to see/know that children are hurting so we want to fix it.

Learn about others to help you know:

How much they can really get.

How to set up opportunities of success

How they can help you

**Engage Your Family or Friend Politely**

Maintain eye contact, use an even tone of voice, and remain calm throughout the discussion.

 Never interrupt them in the middle of a sentence and always be courteous.

 You will never convince anybody of anything if they believe you do not respect them, so show the person you respect them and you will gain their respect.

**Identify the other person's objections and motivations.**

If you know what another person wants, you are more likely to be able to give it to them. When you've identified the motivations behind their point of view, you will be able to rephrase your beliefs in a way that the other person is better able to understand.

For example - An argument about being able to give your child candy and gifts may be about their expectations of a good Grandmother. Maybe one they didn’t feel they had or one they did have –one that gave them candy perhaps.

Discuss those issues instead of the particular incident (giving candy). Ie. You are such a wonderful Grandma and so important to us….

**Gain their trust.**

Empathize and relate to their point of view. Give in or relate now and then.

For example, I get it, I know this is not what you expected. It’s not the way we have done it before. I understand that this really hard.

**OFFER them specific ways they can help you help your child heal and link it to the why’s.**

For example:

High fives instead of laps or hugs in some cases

All decisions through Mom/direct back to Mom

Give them room to have the boundaries we set for them; both physically and emotionally.

Food only through Mom as often as possible,

Talk about Mom when she can’t be there,

Prepare meals, help with cleaning or laundry so Mom can spend time meeting child’s emotional needs.

Create a quiet zone in your home

Ask questions about situation, but not when child is NOT present

Give equal attention to all children-not just focusing on the one

Give sanctioned gifts – emotional age appropriate etc

Don’t talk about their history in front of them without exploring that with us first.

**BE PREPARED to have this conversation over and over.**

-a lot to take in in one sitting or letter

-going to be watching and trying to understand…hear it again now with examples

-going to see you struggle and try to make sense of it

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Finally, whether you decide to write a letter or have a conversation these are all crucial elements of teaching others how they can help.

We know that this is a hard situation and I think……. we have to be able to give people room to figure it out and give them grace to mess it up.

There is so much to helping others get this…hard to cover all today.

Doctors other healthcare professionals..etc

School is the same premise

Let’s talk specifics in the next weeks!