



Autonomy Counseling, PLLC

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Emotionally Abusive Parents vs. Emotionally Unavailable

EMOTIONALLY ABUSIVE

When you read the words "emotionally abusive," what comes to your mind? Often, people picture name-calling, degrading, and belittling. For some, domestic violence and the cycle of abuse may come to mind.

EMOTIONALLY UNAVAILABLE

But what about "emotionally unavailable?" The United States is a busy culture. We value money, possessions, and measure success by a person's education, job title, and salary. Parents are at work. When they are not working, they are bringing their children to activities. When they aren't bringing their children to events, they are doing laundry, cooking, shopping, and everything else it takes to maintain a living. No wonder nearly one in five adults live with a mental illness in the United States (NIMH, 2019).

Emotionally unavailable means a parent is cut off or overwhelmed from their own emotions that they are inaccessible to meet their children's emotional needs. They also may have a low emotional intelligence defined by Psychology Today (2020) as the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others. A child gets into a fight with their best friend, the parent dismisses the child saying, "It's no big deal, you'll be back friends tomorrow" or, "I'm too busy to hear about this petty nonsense." They might be so out of touch with how they feel themselves that they couldn't possibly understand how their children feel.

CONCLUSION

In the end, as you may have suspected, both can be harmful to children. Parents, remember to take care of yourself because if you choose not to take care of yourself, you decide not to take care of others effectively.



Comments?!?!?

We'd love your feedback!

Email: autonomypllc@gmail.com