



How will these DVDs benefit my therapeutic work with children?

These films are designed to empower and inspire therapists who work with children, with a fabulous menu of practical ideas for ways of connecting with their clients, aged 0-12. Using the latest neuroscience research, and illustrated throughout with delightful footage of adult-child interactions, the films will equip therapists with creative resources to strengthen their relationship with their child clients, enhancing the healing process.

How will the ideas on the DVDs help me to establish a good working alliance with my child clients?

The DVDs endorse Dr Dan Hughes's 2011 PACE method (Play, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy), for effective therapeutic intervention. PACE acknowledges the fact that if children are to address painful life experiences, they need to feel psychologically safe with the child practitioner. Attachment play at the beginning of the session, for example, will trigger well-being and anti-anxiety chemical systems in the brain, putting the child at their ease in your presence.

What is attachment play?

Attachment play is any play where connection between you and your child client is the absolute focus. It optimises the chances of real moments of meeting between you. It is also play that brings together key ways in which human beings feel connected: shared laughter, imagination, music, rhythm, creative pursuits. Attachment play might include toys, but only if these are used to facilitate better connection between you and the children you are working with.

How will the ideas on the DVDs benefit my child clients who have attachment issues?



Attachment play is key for children referred for therapy who don't know how to be in relationship. Some come to school unable to make friends. Others have only known relationship as being primarily about power and control, submission or dominance, with the added stress of multiple misattunements and attachment ruptures. All this leaves these children with chronic mistrust, many preferring to relate to devices rather than people. For children with attachment issues, attachment play can be central to them experiencing - often for the first time - the joy, and warmth of human interaction. They then go on to develop trust and enjoy the ability to form fulfilling relationships. Attachment play is also key for developing social skills as it involves taking turns, attuning, listening, reading body language and there are

lots of giving and receiving games. Furthermore, many children with attachment issues feel awful about themselves. Self-worth can only be attained relationally and the games on the DVDs communicate key psychological messages vital for self-esteem.

Can I use the attachment play ideas on the DVDs with older children or teenagers?

Absolutely! Watch the DVD called **Best Relationship with your Child age 5- 12**. Then for teenagers just make the same games more challenging motorically, cognitively or rhythmically. Also, there are lots of attachment play ideas on the DVDs using music which are a particular hit with older children. Children, up to the age of 12 and beyond, usually love the attachment play games, particularly those who have known a real deficit of adult accompanied play as a child. Their voracious enthusiasm to play these games with the therapist seems as if they are making up for lost time!

How will the DVD benefit my work with traumatised children?

As the neuroscientist, Jaak Panksepp says, for a therapy to be effective, "We need to keep in mind every brain system and the interplay between them." When working with traumatised children, some therapists focus too exclusively on distress triggered by overactive RAGE, FEAR and GRIEF brain systems but fail to hold in mind the pro-social brain systems namely, PLAY SEEKING and CARE (attachment). These systems trigger calming pro-social chemicals, which over time transform from in-the-moment emotional states to actual personality traits (Perry et al 1995). The DVDs are full of ideas of how you can support these pro-social brain systems in the child. Similarly, world-leading child trauma expert Bessel Van der Kolk explains how vital it is for a child suffering from developmental trauma not only to address their painful past but also to have time experiencing pleasurable relational experiences that don't remind him of the trauma. Relational play can even bring about new brain growth in the hippocampus, and other parts of the brain, often damaged through trauma.

How will the DVDs benefit my work with children with a mental health diagnosis e.g. Conduct Disorders, ADHD, Asperger's?



When children suffer from mental health problems, in one way or another, these all involve problems in frontal lobe executive functions including poor attention, concentration and emotional regulation, inability to inhibit primitive aggressive impulses, lack of empathy. Brain science has found that attachment play can bring about brain growth and maturation in the frontal lobes, the very part of the brain involved in cognitive functioning and social intelligence. In addition, many children are given pills to change their biochemistry yet brain science research shows that physical relational play can be as effective as medication commonly used for ADHD (Panksepp, Burgdorf et al 2013)

Where can I find more information about these DVD's or Dr Margot Sunderland's work?

On the websites www.ironmill.co.uk or www.margotsunderland.org or through the work of The Centre for Child Mental Health, London www.childmentalhealthcentre.org