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Human Behavior II

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Reflection #5 Early Childhood

ACB is an acronym for Adverse Childhood Experiences. ACB considers mental, physical and emotional abuse. It also takes into account children growing up with parents with substance abuse, and other traumas. This study was conducted by Vince Kolliti at Kaiser and Dr Bob Anda at the CDC. Nadine Burke Harris does a TED Talk that explains this study in clear terms to help us understand the why's and how's to create a better future.

According to this study, the more ACE's or Adverse Childhood Experiences, the more likely you are for health complications in the future. Four ACE's or more, the individual is at a higher risk of health issues. For example they are two times and a half more likely than those with a zero ACE score to develop Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. They are also a two and a half more likely to develop Hepatitis. Depression was four and a half more times more likely than those with a zero ACE score and shockingly, suicidality was twelve times more likely.

A person, or persons with a seven ACE score had triple the risk of lung cancer, and 3 and a half times the risk for ischemic heart disease (AKA the number one killer of America), which

includes symptoms such as neck or jaw pain, shoulder or arm pain, a fast heartbeat, Shortness of breath when you are physically active, nausea and vomiting, sweating and fatigue.

Science has helped us understand how exposure to ACE's or Adverse Childhood Experiences affects has shifted our perspective. We now understand how exposure to early adversity affects the developing brains and bodies of children. ACD's affect parts of the brain like the nucleus accumbens (the pleasure and reward center of the brain that is implicated in substance dependence) which inhibits or is involved in the pre frontal cortex (part of the brain that is responsible for reasoning, problem solving, comprehension, impulse-control, creativity and perseverance). ACD's literally inhibit the development of the brain.

Considering all this, there are some preventatives we can take according to Nadine Burke Harris. These preventatives include prevention, care coordination, home visits, mental health care, nutrition, and holistic interventions. Also, education for parents of ACE's and toxic stress.

I think this study is a huge turning point for us. In the past we sought to cure the symptoms. However, we now can understand what the source is and what we can do to prevent such pre-determined destinies for our youth.