

Praise Hong

MFT 603: Individual & Family Development

Week 6 Reading Points

The most effective parenting strategy in managing children's anxiety is by empowering them to believe in themselves and their ability to face their fears and manage their anxiety, not by helping them avoid triggers. This is a critical point because parents in a protector mindset can be tempted to let the child avoid fears and challenges or even dealing with problems for the child. However, this is likely not a helpful tactic long-term in helping the child develop into a well-functioning adult.

Gender is a variable to consider in how people mourn. Males favor physical or cognitive grieving, while females favor intuitive or affective grieving. I believe a large part of this comes from how males and females are socialized from childhood. For example, boys are taught to "man up" and discouraged from emotional expressions and processing, whereas girls are expected to be emotional rather than being encouraged to see themselves as strong problem-solvers. However, it's interesting that interventions that are opposite gender styles are shown to be effective. This shows that cognitive and affective grieving are equally important and must be balanced for men and women to mourn in a healthy manner.

Insecure attachment styles such as anxious/ambivalent and avoidant/fearful both consist of the individual's attempt to avoid the depths of their anger in response to a significant loss. Both styles are about protecting themselves from excessive emotions, which may seem helpful in the short-term to the person in pain, but ultimately is not a healthy solution. To get through more of the tasks of mourning, people with these insecure attachment styles need help in confronting their own emotions and thoughts.