Share this:

Jennifer Michalke, MSN, APRN, CLC, LCSW

Being There: Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters

Erica Komisar, Tarcher Perigee © 2017, 288 pages, hardcover, \$26.00

Available from: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01IOHQ8MY/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1

Being There: Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters is well written, and easy to follow and understand. It is geared toward mothers and fathers who are planning on becoming parents and for parents of young children and encompasses a wide range of today's families. Adoptive parents, same-sex parents, stay-at-home fathers, and foster parents would all benefit by reading this book.

She writes with equal measure of clinical expertise and documented research to legitimize the information. She has perfect timing when adding anecdotes. As I was reading thinking, "There is no way I could do this," her common sense comments were there at that precise moment to reassure me that, actually, yes, I could do this, and here's how. Throughout the book, she uses examples from her clinical experience to show the reader how to apply the concept of presence into real life.

The book is divided into three sections. The focus of the first section is explaining what it means to be present in a baby and young child's life. This takes the form of physical presence and emotional presence, with a stronger emphasis on the emotional. A part of the emotional presence is a mother's self-awareness and sensitivity to the baby's cues, especially when she has been away for too long and will acknowledge the disconnect between her and her baby.

The second section is focused on the effects on the mother-child relationship and the impacts on the child

when a mother isn't present. She goes into detail how anxiety, depression, aggression in children and later as adults can be relayed back to that formative time from newborn to age 3 years.

I found this section of the book most informative for me. As I was reading I found myself thinking of friends and the relationships with their children. I found myself thinking, "Aha, I see why they are like that." I was able to understand better why this person has so much anxiety or shows such detachment as well as why that family is so close and their relationship is so solid.

The third section is focused on how and why motherhood is not a priority. She writes about how in the fight for female equality, mothering became to be looked down upon. She writes about the quest for financial success and equality changing caregiving to a second-class occupation. Women in the workforce work long hours away from their children for a better salary to provide for their families while asking other women to work as caregivers away from their own children for minimum wage.

The final chapter looks toward the future and how to begin to change societal views on motherhood. The need for not only policy change in corporate America but for the women in high-powered positions to also change not to be afraid to lose their position if they take a full maternity leave and by doing so sending a positive message to their female employees.

Jennifer Michalke, MSN, APRN, CLC, works as a nurse practitioner in a small OB/GYN practice in Vermont. She received her BSN from Molloy College in Rockville Centre, NY, and her MSN through Seton Hall University.

Fact Sheet on BFHI and WHO Code, From IBFAN-ICDC

The International Baby Food Action Network, International Code Documentation Centre has released "IBFAN-ICDC Fact Sheet: BFHI and the Code": <https://www.ibfan-icdc.org/wp-content/uploads/BFHI-Fact-Sheet-and-The-Code-1.pdf>. The easy-to-view fact sheet summarizes the recently updated Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative Implementation Guidance: <http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/bfhi-implementation-2018.pdf>. The fact sheet also includes information on the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and World Health Assembly resolutions related to BFHI.

Source: USBC

Fact Sheets on Paid Leave Access, Summarized From NPWF

The National Partnership for Women and Families has updated several fact sheets to reflect recent paid leave access numbers and newly passed state leave laws.

- The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act: <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/family-act-fact-sheet.pdf>
- The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act: Frequently Asked Questions: <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/coalition/family-act-faq.pdf>
- Paid Leave Works in California, New Jersey and Rhode Island: <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/paid-leave-works-in-california-new-jersey-and-rhode-island.pdf>
- Paid Family and Medical Leave: Good for Business: <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/paid-leave/paid-leave-good-for-business.pdf>

Source: USBC