



When Love Is Not Enough: A Guide to Parenting With RAD-Reactive Attachment Disorder

Nancy L. Thomas

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When Love is Not Enough: A Guide to Parenting Children with RAD-Reactive Attachment Disorder brings hope and healing tools to parents and professionals working to help challenging children. Effective interventions, a full step by step plan, clearer insight and understanding make a powerful difference in helping children heal. If you want to make a difference in the life of a hurting child, this book will do it! This plan was honed on some of the most difficult children in the US and has been used successfully to help thousands of children around the world. Children can learn to be respectful, responsible and fun to be with. This book tells the reader how to do it and then zaps them with a boost of encouragement to get started!

When Love Is Not Enough: A Guide to Parenting With RAD-Reactive Attachment Disorder Details

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Audra says

While I am not always a fan of everything in Nancy Thomas' work, I do think there are lots of gems in here. And it is clear that she has worked with these children for a very, very long time. I think the power of this book lies in that it is a very quick read, with lots of very specific, detailed suggestions. You can choose what works for the personality of your family and the therapeutic approach that you are using. For example, we do not limit some of the privileges that Nancy suggests (e.g., limiting family outings, restaurant trips) but I know so much other stuff in there that would work. I do think this work is sometimes misunderstood. People seem to think Nancy's work is about parents on a power trip, but she emphasizes being playful and affectionate over and over. The Connected Child seems to really branch off this work and be similar as well. I also recommend reading Beyond Consequences so that you can find the right balance for yourself, and because it seems that understanding the child as one of fear makes a lot more sense these days than understanding them as a child of rage.

Aspidistra says

This book has many fans, and perhaps some of the techniques in here would be helpful for a RAD child who is resistant to other approaches. But I find the approach demeaning to the child and parent.

There is some value, though, in the parts of the book that deal with maintaining structure and safety within a household.

Eva Napier says

This book was instrumental in saving my daughter's life and our family's sanity. As the mother of 6 children, including 2 adopted from Ukraine-- one who has Reactive Attachment Disorder-- Nancy's book provided real life, hands on methods for parenting in the most difficult situations. I bought multiple copies to share with teachers, grandparents, and respite care providers. I referred to it regularly over several years. My kids know it as "the purple book."

My daughter is now in her 20s and doing well. I cannot recommend this book highly enough for anyone working with or parenting a child with RAD. It is referenced in the upcoming second edition of my book, Small, (by Eva Napier).

Hugs to all parents who find themselves in need of this book. You can do it.

Jenny says

Author demonstrates how parenting techniques can be used with children who may have diagnoses other than RAD. The author writes in a style that is "by a parent, to a parent."

Leanne says

I had no idea what the term "Reactive Attachment Disorder" was when I stumbled upon this book in a public library. I was only a few months into parenting a two year old with trauma issues (that I wasn't even aware of yet), and I had no idea why my 16 years as a parent were of no help with my (at the time) foster son.

Discovering this slim purple book resulted in a major epiphany for me. Nancy's insight saved my sanity at the time, as well as introduced me to RAD which continues to affect my 14 year old son even now.

Nancy's "tough love" approach doesn't have all the answers, but this book is still full of great insight. She offers the best explanation I have ever come across of a child's perspective of attachment disorder (chapter 3) and most of her parenting tips are solid.

Carla says

Life is too short to be this irritated by a professional book on a serious, life-altering topic. It presents as a self-published book in the worst possible way: the cover looks unprofessional, and the chapter and section headings are outlined font. Many sentences have at least two exclamation points. Plus, I am offended as a professional, and for the parents who are seeking help for this difficult, difficult children; in order to lighten the mood (!), she sarcastically and repeatedly refers to the RAD child as "Sweetums". As in "If Sweetums wants to tear up the house, then you..." Not appropriate, at all.

Becky Roman says

Juvenile publishing/editing/writing. Thomas's snarky attitude can come off as cold, and offensive. However, dealing with RAD kids does require dark humor to get through it. Tactics should be used with professional guidance of an attachment specialist as it would be easy to become cold and authoritarian. Some tools we have implemented with great success for our RAD. Some we would never attempt, as they would like cause more trauma.

Chris McKenzie says

I have three children, all adopted. This book saved my sanity, as all three have reactive attachment disorder to some degree. My oldest, now 15, was the most severe. Implementing Nancy Thomas's techniques actually WORKED. I won't say that all of our problems have gone away, but my children are well on the road to living stable, normal lives. The book outlines a plan that can be difficult and sometimes sounds crazy, but it worked for us. Once we realized the extent of our son's problems, we began seeking help, and came to realize how relatively little is known about RAD and how little help is actually available. Misdiagnosed with ADD, depression, and possible OCD, our child was on a cocktail of medications that masked symptoms and didn't help. Now he takes no medication, is a good student, plays the piano, recently starred in a school play, and is able to interact with his family, teachers, and peers in acceptable and positive ways. This book helped show us the way. It lists causes and symptoms and then takes you step by step through the techniques for changing the behavior. It is not about behavior modification, but true change that enables broken children to love and trust again. Nancy Thomas is my hero.

Sarah says

This was some tough reading. Tough to process the reality it described. I like the author's strength and organized suggestions, but I really really hope I don't have to deal with the challenges she describes. I think I would like this book A LOT better if it was updated. The references feel just a bit dated and I can't help but wonder if there is newer better research out there. I certainly would do more research if faced with what she tries to prepare her readers for.

Lindie says

This is a must-have book for any adoptive or foster parent who has a child with RAD! In fact, I think it should be given to you as soon as the child is dropped off with you (or even in one of the training classes beforehand). Not only does it tell you all about RAD, but it gives you specific things to do in your own home. For example, if the child steals try option A, option B or option C. So refreshing to read about someone who knows what they're talking about. And it really has helped!!!

Duane says

This is a great book, a must read for anyone with a RAD kid in your home. It is nice to know that you are not alone in dealing with RAD issues, and as a parent you are not crazy. I can't tell you how many times well intended people told me they just need more love. It is obviously written by someone who has personal experience, and is not a professional writer, but the content is so good it's easy to look past the writing style.

Lisa says

I bought this book after hearing the author speak at a Love and Logic conference in Breckenridge. I really liked what she had to say at the conference, and a woman I met there highly recommended her book. I don't think my children have attachment disorder (at least not to the degree that the author mentions). Perhaps we all have some degree of attachment issues. Her main audience is for parents who are adopting or fostering children who have experienced deep trauma in their first three years of life.

Anyway, a lot of the book does not apply to my parenting, but I found it very interesting to learn about what it is like to raise a child with severe attachment issues, as I have seen these children in action at my school. I did appreciate her perspective of being a strong and loving parent, but a parent who is definitely in charge and doesn't let her kids rule the roost, so to speak. It's nice to have a role model of what a very strong, yet loving parent looks like. And she gives a lot of practical tips for how to creatively deal with the annoyances of parenting from nose-picking to not wanting to do chores to being generally not fun to be around.

Jennifer Albright says

There is some valuable information but also many contradictions.

Juliana says

Nancy is a cogent Author who knows how to write with oppositional personality traits in mind. Nancy is sensitive to the needs of children with adoptive parents and their own placement as peers of others who are possibly a part of a program that addresses understanding and love of another of a different age, and of a different social role, of their given: living environment, community.

Some of the writing ought not to be read in a polarized way as it can raise some unpleasant emotions such as anger and if that emotion is not manageable familialy, then the child's popularity may be put into question, which then has the potential to result in dry speculation on the part of others, and may delay them from speaking to an aide for professional help, to see if they may be seen as recovering, manageably from living with RAD.

Though the book is composed with a different set of fonts, it doesn't hurt one group of the human race, to read this alone. It may be better suited to be read an discussed outloud as part of a group, else an online forum, with linearly thinking folx, if not read and discussed promptly.

Jenn says

The author of this book has a great deal of experience, but clearly, no clinical training. The language is sometimes coarse, judgmental and demeaning despite the fact that the focus of the book is children with significant trauma histories. While there is value in the experiences and insights in the book, I think that some of these methods, applied without the supervision of a trained therapist could be at best, ineffective and at worst harmful. I wouldn't give this book to a parent I work with, though I might suggest one or two of the

interventions as part of a broader, more trauma-informed treatment plan.
