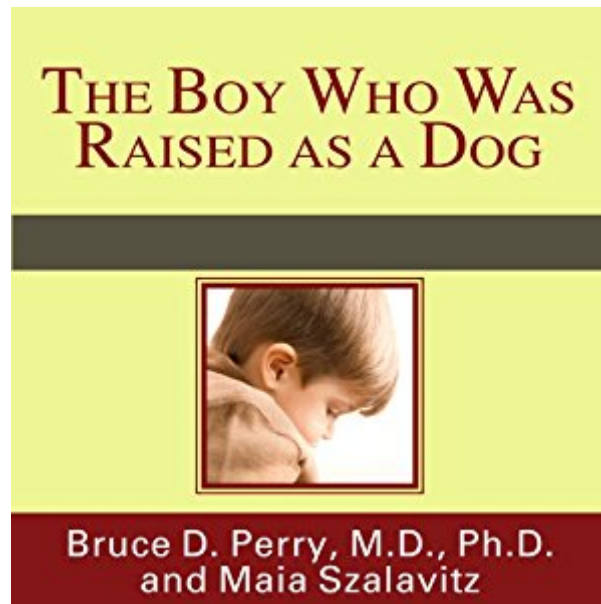


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# The Boy Who Was Raised As A Dog: And Other Stories From A Child Psychiatrist's Notebook



## Synopsis

What traumatized children can teach us about loss, love, and healing. What happens when a young child is traumatized? How does terror affect a child's mind---and how can that mind recover? Child psychiatrist Bruce Perry has treated children faced with unimaginable horror: genocide survivors, witnesses to their own parents' murders, children raised in closets and cages, the Branch Davidian children, and victims of family violence. In *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog*, he tells their stories of trauma and transformation. Dr. Perry clearly explains what happens to the brain when children are exposed to extreme stress. He reveals his innovative methods for helping to ease their pain, allowing them to become healthy adults. This deeply informed and moving book dramatically demonstrates that only when we understand the science of the mind can we hope to heal the spirit of even the most wounded child.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Assisted by a talented science writer, child psychiatrist Bruce Perry presents a series of heartbreaking stories of children severely damaged by trauma. But that's only one side of this remarkable book. The other side is how many of these profoundly damaged children were assisted to heal. Perry explains his "neurosequential" approach that sequentially targets brain regions left undeveloped by abuse or neglect. He presents compelling cases to illustrate how the child's age at the time of the abuse or neglect will determine the gaps in neurological development and how his interventions sequentially target those developmental gaps. For children whose brains were stalled

out in infancy, for example, therapy may start with healing touch or rhythm before moving on to higher brain activities. The focus, always, is on the child's humanity. Perry explains the importance of listening and letting the child set the pace. He warns of the damage caused by well-intentioned but poorly trained therapists who push children to open up, or who administer punitive interventions in the guise of treatment. Healing is not about a specific technique administered in cookbook fashion but, rather, about love, and restoring shattered human connections. This is an enlightening and heartening book and a real page-turner to boot. The neurological underpinnings of the trauma theory are presented in clear English accessible to anyone who can read. If you're a mental health professional, psychologist, or psychiatrist, you'll love this book. If you're a parent or a teacher, it's also for you. Whoever you are, it's for you. I guarantee you will be engaged and inspired.

Thank you, Dr. Perry! Finally, what foster and adoptive parents knew all along...Love does heal these traumatized children! As a former foster parent, an adoptive and birth parent, and a child and family therapist, I am overjoyed to see these stories in print. It is a difficult task to find help and have professionals actually understand that this child sees the world differently for a neurodevelopmental reason, and not just because they are oppositional. Dr. Perry has shared this information in a way that anyone who reads it will think differently, with his incredible storytelling. It is so important for children with prenatal and postnatal trauma to be understood and to matter. Neurodevelopmental principles are not that difficult to put into place at home, school, or in the community. Children must experience success on a daily basis, at their individual neurodevelopmental pace. I have seen it work in many children. Dr. Perry puts it very simple when he stated in this book: "For years mental health professionals taught people that they could be psychologically healthy without social support, that 'unless you love yourself, no one else will love you.' Women were told that they didn't need men, and vice versa. People without any relationships were believed to be as healthy as those who had many. These ideas contradict the fundamental biology of human species: we are social mammals and could never have survived without deeply interconnected and interdependent human contact. The truth is, you cannot love yourself unless you have been loved and are loved. The capacity to love cannot be built in isolation." This book is a must read for anyone working with traumatized children, raising healthy children, or just raising each other! Connie Sirnio, MSW, LCSW Child and Family Therapist PsyD Learner in Clinical Psychology Coos Bay, Oregon

There are plenty of books out there that tell the horror stories of traumatized children, and it is for this reason that I have avoided reading them for years. A lot of books like this border on

sensationalizing these stories. This is not one of those books. I cannot tell you how impactful reading this book was for me. The heart of this book lies as much in the broken hearts of the children in the stories as it is in the passion of the author, Dr. Perry, to help them. His approach to treating traumatized children should be how all people approach children in general. I have often thought that Attachment theory could answer a lot of the problems our society faces. This book offers a very unique and creative approach to fixing that problem. That isn't to say that this book is about attachment theory, but it is about the importance of relationships within the context of community. Each story in this book lays out an underpinning of how a relationship can fail a child with disastrous consequences, and how a nurturing relationship can impact more than just the individual child. Just based on this book and my own work in therapy and with preschool children I can tell you that Dr. Perry's unique neurosequential approach to therapy makes sense, and I wouldn't doubt that it works. I loved how he laid out the book approaching different areas of the brain with each case. While I personally would've loved more in-depth descriptions of how the trauma affected certain areas of the brain and more specific underlying neuroscience behind the treatments...I can appreciate how this book is written. It is not muddled down in science or technical terminology. It has enough science to be intriguing but it is written so anyone can read and understand how trauma effects a child's brain, and despite my own scientific interests, making this information accessible to everyone is extremely important. I loved that aspect about this book. (but perhaps one day he'll put out a supplemental book for us neuroscience geeks!) The format of this book is also very well laid out. The beginning stories are a bit more harsh to read, and some don't have the happiest of endings, but through each story Dr. Perry expresses what he learned from each case and relates it back to previous chapters or other similar stories and how it has continually shaped his approach. The second half of the book makes you feel very hopeful and optimistic as the stories just as harsh in nature turn out very differently in the end. It's a wonderful approach to writing a book like this. It left me feeling very disheartened, but hopeful every time I put it down (which was hard to do). Another thing that I really, really appreciated about this book is that Dr. Perry is a very well known child trauma specialist, and he has a website with all kinds of training programs and different things he could have potentially pushed in this book. I cannot tell you how much it annoys me to read a book with a topic like this and the book is full of the author pushing a product or an agenda. I had to actually research Dr. Perry to find out that he even offered training programs because none of it is mentioned in this book. The agenda of this book is children and trauma, and he sticks to that topic with more compassionate resolve than any book I've ever read. This is a fantastic book that should not be missed and I join with the rest of the reviewers on here in insisting

that this be read by every parent, educator, social worker, therapist, psychologist, coach, television producer, and human alive. Great book. One of the best I've ever read.

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