

# API of Stark Co.

August 2007  
Volume 3, Issue 7

Attachment  
Parenting  
International



## Parenting for Peace

by Inbal Kashtan

This article appeared in *Paths of Learning* (Spring 2003) and *California Homeschooler* (October 2002). It is republished with permission. Portions of this article appear in “*Parenting from the Heart: Sharing the Gifts of Compassion, Connection, and Choice*,” a booklet about parenting with NVC (August 2003).

As the United States stands again on the brink of war, I seek ways to contribute to our collective ability to resolve conflicts nonviolently. What resources and skills do we need, as a society, to sustain peace? How can parents contribute to society’s transition to nonviolence? What can we teach our children that will really make the world different for their generation?

Several months ago my son, now four years old, asked me to read a book about castles that he had picked up at the library. He picked the book because he loves the Eyewitness series and was methodically going through as many of those books as we could find, irrespective of their subject matter. I didn’t like this one. It depicted not only castles but also knights, armor and weapons of all kinds used in battles in centuries past.

I am not ready for weapons. One of the things I enjoy about my son not going to preschool and not watching TV is that his exposure to violence has been extremely limited. He has never said the word “gun” or played pretend violent games—yet.

He doesn’t know about war and people purposely hurting one another—yet. But here was the castle book, and he wanted to read it.

I am not trying to shield my son from the reality of violence and suffering in the world—but I am in a (privileged) position to choose, often, how and when these realities enter our lives. I read him some of the book, with numerous editorials. But when he asked to read the book again a few days later, I found myself saying that I’d rather not. When he asked why, I told him that I feel a lot of sadness about people being violent with one another because I believe human beings can find peaceful ways to solve their conflicts.

Questions, of course, ensued. In response to one of my son’s questions, I shared with him that my sadness was related not only to the past, when there were knights and castles, but to the present as well: people in the area where I grew up, Israelis and Palestinians, are also fighting. “Why are they fighting?” my son asked. “Because they both want the same piece of land and they haven’t figured out how to talk about it,” I replied. “I’ll teach them!” he volunteered. “What will you teach them?” I asked. “I’ll teach them that they can each have some of the land, they can share,” he replied easily. “The only problem,” he continued, “is that I don’t know how to find them.”

I felt a mixture of joy and grief at his words. How wondrous to hear from my son—and from so

### Inside:

Events	
Calendar	4
News from HQ	5
Our Mission	6
Membership	6

## Parenting for Peace Con't.

---

*"As Parents, we have a remarkable opportunity to empower our children with life skills for connecting with others, resolving conflicts, and contributing to peace."*

many children—a desire to contribute to the world and a trust in the possibility of solving conflicts peacefully. Yet how apt his words were—"I don't know where to find them." How do we find the hearts of "enemies" so we can reach them with a message of peace? How do we find our own hearts and open them to those whose actions we object to profoundly?

This search for our own and others' hearts is at the core of my hope for peace has been the greatest influence on my parenting, including the decision to practice attachment parenting when my son was a baby. It has also led me to teach a process called Nonviolent Communication (developed by Dr. Marshall Rosenberg and taught around the world). I lead workshops for parents, couples, teachers, social change activists, and others who want to connect more deeply with themselves and with others and who want to contribute more effectively to mutual understanding, safety and peace in families, schools, organizations, and in the wider world.

My experience convinces me that what happens in our families both mirrors and contributes to what happens in our societies. Just as "enemies" fail to see each other's humanity, so we, too, at times fail to relate with others, even loved ones, with compassion. Probably the primary challenge most parents tell me about is that though they yearn for peace and harmony in their families, they find themselves getting angry with their children more often and more quickly than they would like. Because the problem-solving model we follow so often relies on threat of consequences or promise of reward, it's almost guaranteed that anger

will crop up regularly. For what children learn from this model is not cooperation, harmony and mutual respect; it's more often the hard lesson of domination: that whoever has more power gets to have his or her way, and that those who have less power can only submit or rebel. And so we continue the cycle of domination that is leading human beings close to self-destruction.

What alternative do we have? As parents, we have a remarkable opportunity to empower our children with life skills for connecting with others, resolving conflicts, and contributing to peace. Key to learning these skills is our conception of what human beings are like. Nonviolent Communication teaches that all human beings have the same deep needs, and that people can connect with one another when they understand and empathize with each other's needs. Our conflicts arise not because we have different needs but because we have different strategies for how to meet our needs. It is on the strategy level that we argue, fight, or go to war, especially when we deem someone else's strategy a block to our own ability to meet our needs. Yet Nonviolent Communication suggests that behind every strategy, however ineffective, tragic, violent or abhorrent to us, is an attempt to meet a need. This notion turns on its head the dichotomy of "good guys" and "bad guys" and focuses our attention on the human being behind every action. When we understand the needs that motivate our own and others' behavior, we have no enemies. With our tremendous resources and creativity, we can and—I hope—we will find new strategies for meeting all our needs.

## Parenting for Peace Con't

We can teach our children about making peace by understanding, reflecting, and nurturing their ability to meet their needs while we also understand, express and attend to our own. One of the needs human beings have is for autonomy, for the ability to make decisions about things that affect us. This leads us on a path of self-interest and a search for confidence and power. Yet if we nurture this need in our children to the exclusion of others, it can be difficult for us to get our own needs met. Thankfully, our need for autonomy is balanced by another shared human need, for contribution to others. This need leads us on a path of consideration, care and generosity to others. Nonviolent Communication enables us to look at both needs (and many others) and find a way to balance them with each other so that we recognize our need to give, to consider others and contribute to them, as an autonomous choice. When giving is done freely, out of mutual care and respect, it does not conflict with autonomy and choice but rather complements them.

From this perspective, parents may find that we don't need punishments or rewards in parenting our children—we can instead invite our children to contribute to meeting our needs just as we invite ourselves to contribute to meeting theirs: with joy and willingness instead of guilt, shame, fear of punishment or desire for reward. This is not permissive parenting—it is parenting deeply committed to meeting the needs of both parents and children through a focus on connection and mutual respect.

Transforming parenting is hugely challenging in the context of

the daily, overwhelming reality of parenting. Yet this transformation enables a profound depth of connection and trust among family members. Perhaps more poignantly for me, choosing to parent this way gives me hope for peace for our world—perhaps for our children's generation, perhaps for future generations, when human beings have learned to speak the language of compassion.

As the world enters our home and my son's exposure to life's realities grows, I hope he will sustain these lessons and carry them into his own life. I hope he will know that the path to peace is most effectively followed not by rewarding the "good" guys and punishing the "bad" ones, but by striving to find strategies that will meet people's needs—not just our own, but everyone's. I hope he will have the confidence and trust in his own peaceful resources and in human beings' capacity for peace. I hope he remembers that we can find other people's hearts by seeing their humanity.

© 2002 by Inbal Kashtan

Inbal Kashtan is the Parenting Project coordinator for the Center for Nonviolent Communication and the co-founder of BayNVC. Inbal facilitates public workshops and retreats as well as trainings in organizations, co-leads an NVC leadership development program, and creates curricula for learning NVC. She is the author of *Parenting from the Heart: Sharing the Gifts of Compassion, Connection, and Choice*, a booklet about parenting with NVC. Inbal's greatest teacher for the past several years has been her son, who is mentoring her on what it means to live nonviolently.

---

*"This is not permissive parenting—it is parenting deeply committed to meeting the needs of both parents and children through a focus on connection and mutual respect."*

## Events Calendar

August 25th - API of Stark Co. Meeting  
The Breastfeeding Center  
Saturday 2:00 p.m

August 29th - Mom's Night Out  
TBA  
6:00 - 10:00 p.m.

September 11<sup>th</sup> - API of Stark Co. Meeting  
The Breastfeeding Center  
10:00 a.m.

September 21<sup>st</sup> - API at the Akron Zoo  
10:00 a.m.  
RAINDATE: Sept. 28th

September 26<sup>th</sup> - Mom's Night Out  
TBA  
6:00 - 10:00 p.m.

September 29th. - API of Stark Co. Meeting  
The Breastfeeding Center  
Saturday 2:00 p.m

October 9<sup>th</sup> - API of Stark Co. Meeting  
The Breastfeeding Center  
10:00 a.m.

October 17<sup>th</sup> - Playdate  
First Christian Playland\*\* (API is not affiliated w/First  
9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Christian Church)

October 20<sup>th</sup> - API of Stark Co. Meeting  
The Breastfeeding Center  
Saturday 2:00 p.m

October 24<sup>th</sup> - Mom's Nite Out  
TBA  
6:00 - 10:00p.m.

Please email Dedra for Events questions.

## News from Headquarters

### Membership Drive Report

The final numbers for the API "Project: Staying Power" Membership Drive are in!

AP Friendly Professional Memberships: 1  
Professional Memberships: 8  
New Memberships: 83  
Renewing Memberships: 10

We greatly appreciate all of you that helped to promote API memberships during this campaign! Now there are 93 families that will either begin or will continue to receive support through API and the *Journal of API*! Think of how many children this can positively affect in your community and our world! Way to go everyone!

We thank you very much for all that you do to strengthen the parent-child connection and to further promote peaceful parenting!

### On-line Auction Report

What a wonderful turnout we've had for our first ever API Online Auction! We ended up with more than 266 items up for bid by very generous donors! We raised over \$12,000 to help support our organization while we further our mission and carry out the remainder of this year's strategic plan.

It has been very humbling thinking of all of the community support we have received while word has passed from person to person. I have received word

through phone and email from people saying that they had never heard of Attachment Parenting before and how they wished they had known about it while they had their children at home, how they are very excited that they just saw the auction email from a friend and that they are pregnant and want to look into AP now, or how they would be happy to put an API banner on their site to as a way to inform families about our organization.

This campaign was far more than a way for API to raise money. It was a way to reach out to the community, to spread the word and educate communities about a gentle, empathetic way to parent, to spread the word about an organization of dedicated leaders ready to support those families wishing to make that connection with their children.

It ended up being about additional connections as well. Connection to friends, connection to families, connection to our communities—all for the greater good and for a greater society of individuals and families alike.

It ended up being Attachment Parenting International. Just like our day to day operations or our Support Groups across America, we couldn't have made this auction work without you, our dedicated Leaders. We appreciate you and your efforts tremendously—thank you for all of your support.

## Contacts:

API-Stark Co. Leaders:  
Traci Singree  
-harmonydesoleil@roadrunner.com

Dedra Keoshian (also  
Newsletter Editor)  
dedrakeo@yahoo.com

Book Librarian:  
position available

Secretary:  
Lisa Boyce -  
mammalisa@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer:  
Sherry Garrett-  
Cgarrett86@sbcglobal.net

Web Site Contributor:  
Sheryl Rexrode-  
srexrode1@yahoo.com

## API Headquarters:

[www.attachmentparenting.org](http://www.attachmentparenting.org)

## We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.orgsites.com/oh/apicantoncircle/index.html](http://www.orgsites.com/oh/apicantoncircle/index.html)

Discussion Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/APIofStarkCounty>

## Our Mission

API's mission is to promote parenting methods that create strong, healthy emotional bonds between children and their parents. These methods nurture and fulfill a child's need for trust, empathy, and affection, providing a lifelong foundation for healthy, enduring relationships. Through education,

support, advocacy, and research, API seeks to strengthen families and increase awareness of the importance of secure attachment, ultimately helping to reduce or prevent child abuse, behavioral disorders, criminal acts, and other serious social problems.

## Support API Through Membership

By becoming a member of API, you help reach other parents and professionals through education, support, advocacy, and research. Our efforts touch the lives of parents worldwide through local support groups, our quarterly publication, *Attachment Parenting: The Journal of API*, the newsletter, and national advocacy efforts. In addition, your membership donation contributes to innovative projects such as the creation of a comprehensive Attachment Parenting curriculum, the formation of strategic alliances with like-minded organizations, the expansion of our network of AP-Friendly Professionals, and the upgrade of

online community.

Benefits of Individual / Family Membership, which is \$35 per year, include:

- Four issues of *Attachment Parenting: The Journal of API*
- Membership in local parent support (mention your local group when you join and \$15 of your membership is retained for use in your local community)
- Discounts and early registration for API conferences and select other events
- Share your passion; opportunity to become an API Leader, start a new support group, or donate your skills to the API Headquarters Team upcoming events or a special offer that promotes a new product.



[www.attachmentparenting.org](http://www.attachmentparenting.org)



Peaceful Parenting for  
a Peaceful World!