

This american life on npr

Psychology



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I listened to the whole hour segment on the podcast. The program talked about two instances in which parents professed unconditional love for their children. These children in both stories were really challenging. This radio program shows that parents can love their children unconditionally no matter the circumstances. One story was about a couple that adopted a Romanian orphan. The other was about parents that had an autistic child. When the first couple adopted the Romanian orphan, everything was perfect as they knew that is the child they always wanted to have. There was a brief honeymoon period where the adopted child was perfect and they lived happily together. The parents did not have to fight to get his love and attention. They provided basic needs for the child who had never had an opportunity to sleep in his own room or even wear shoes. But soon the sense of belonging, hurt and loss surfaced. The concept of not knowing his biological parents disturbed him.

If I were the adoptive parents of the Romanian orphan, I would try and help the adopted child gain confidence and trust that I will not abandon him.

Adopted children may have developmental problems, physical problems or emotional problems, and it is essential to assist them develop psychological identification which will distinguish them as individuals (Wuestefeld 115).

This identification process is necessary as it will help a child be confident and successful later in life.

I will understand that these tantrums arise because the child is trying to find his place in his new world. Adopted children have feelings regarding their adoption. I would, therefore, assist the child by letting him understand that he is not on his own in this feelings, and I will try getting explanations for questions that continue to puzzle him.

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The second story on the radio program is about parents' unconditional love for their autistic child. These parents undergo difficult experiences that put a strain on their relationship and family ties. The parents loved their autistic boy but, at one time, they considered putting him under residential care. This challenge set the parents on a path where autism dominated their world. The parents struggled to cope while their child was in the system. Autistic children need parents that care to understand them as this will help them feel loved. If I were the parents of the autistic child, I would create a safe environment and provide structure for the boy. It is essential to find ways of communicating with an autistic child because he may always try to say something, even when he is not speaking. I will learn the language of the child as well as find non-verbal ways that will help build a connection between us.

Caring for an autistic child can be really demanding. Such a child requires constant and extra care to ensure he is safe and that all his needs are met. Finding a person or support group to help will be essential. It is also wise to seek counseling as this will help manage stress. Becoming an expert on the child by learning more about what calms him and what he finds enjoyable will also help embrace the child's uniqueness.

These 2 stories in the program are powerful and provide great learning opportunities to other parents in similar situations. They show parents journey towards accepting, valuing and loving their children for who they are.

Work Cited

Wuestefeld, Mar. *A Gift for My Son: Understanding, Loving and Guiding the Difficult Child*. iUniverse, 2000. Print.

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