

THE NURTURED **HEART** APPROACH: LEARNING TO TRANSFORM THE DIFFICULT CHILD

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Reprinted from: <http://www.educarer.com/nha-intro.htm>

This book and further info about the Nurtured Heart Approach info is available at Howard's website: www.DifficultChild.com

Many parents with "difficult" children are desperate for help, yet prefer to avoid resorting to harsh measures or medication. The **Nurtured Heart Approach**, developed by Tucson, Arizona family therapist Howard Glasser, offers an alternative approach that reaches the child's heart and leads to remarkable behavior changes.

Ordinary methods of parenting and teaching typically backfire with intense children. Despite the best of intentions, the harder adults attempt normal responses, the worse the situation can inadvertently become (Glasser).

Research on the Nurtured Heart Approach has shown that ninety-seven percent (97%) of children who were candidates for medication were able to avoid starting them with the use of the Nurtured Heart Approach. I believe we owe it to these children to use alternatives to medication that breed success.

Intense children are seeking an 'energy match' with our energy.

The Nurtured Heart Approach is based on the premise that intense children are subconsciously seeking the emotional energy of the adults in their lives. We often think of this energy as the "attention" we give to them. Instead, if we think of the children we care about as **needing** this energy in order to recharge their own internal batteries, it becomes clear what is really happening when they act with such intensity.

Their energy comes from our energy. But when do we typically choose to give children our emotional energy? When things are going poorly.

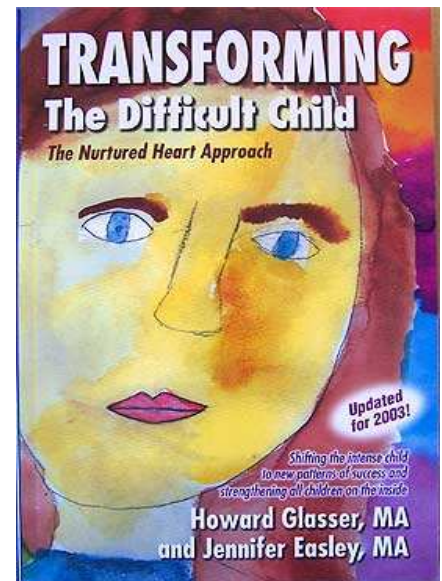
A child's intensity is a gift that needs to be nurtured. Unfortunately, many people today find themselves struggling with the intensity of a challenging child and wind up being advised to moderate the intensity by using medications as a **first** intervention rather than as a **very last resort**. I've developed an approach that puts parents, teachers and professionals into the driver's seat and gives them the perspective and strategies to shift children into using their intensity in beautiful ways (Glasser).

Many children wind up on medications simply because there has not been an approach that consistently helps them to use their intensity successfully. Seventy-five percent of all children evaluated for conditions such as ADHD and Oppositional-Defiance Disorder receive medication on the very first visit. The unfortunate underlying message is: your teacher can't control you, your parent can't control you, and you can't control yourself -- you need a substance to control whatever is going on inside you (Glasser).

Parents and teachers can end up feeling inadequate and blamed. Treatment professionals can sometimes be at a loss as to how best to help. The result for the child is being at risk for both his medication's side effects, that can rarely be adequately explained in the course of an evaluation, and for his greater loss of self than can ever be fully anticipated.

The techniques most people have at their disposal are the culprits ... not the parents, teacher, or child. Approaches designed for average children are not powerful or encompassing enough to have a transformative effect on children whose behaviors involve opposition, defiance or an inability to manage strong impulses or emotions (Glasser).

The excellent news is that The Nurtured Heart Approach has proven itself to create the transformation very quickly and in an enduring way. Instead of a child believing that s/he gets a great deal more from adults through negativity, and that positive choices are a less certain bet, the child is moved to believing that s/he can fully invest his or her energies and intelligence in successes (Glasser).



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