



WELCOME TO OUR

Monthly Newsletter

we're so glad you're here!

MONTHLY MENTAL HEALTH INSIGHT

Cancel Culture Isn't Trauma-Informed: A Trauma Therapist's Perspective on Accountability, Healing, and Human Connection

I've noticed a growing theme among many clients: people are afraid. They're afraid of saying the wrong thing. Afraid of making a mistake. Afraid of putting themselves out there. Afraid of being misunderstood. Afraid that one bad moment could define them forever.

While accountability is an important part of healthy communities, it's important to consider whether our current societal approach of addressing mistakes and harm is actually helping us or becoming even more harmful?

Let's start with an important distinction. This article is not an argument against accountability. It is not an excuse for racism, sexism, homophobia, bullying, abuse, harassment, discrimination, or other harmful behavior. People should be held accountable for the impact of their actions.

Communities need standards; boundaries and consequences matter because accountability is essential for healthy relationships and healthy societies. The question isn't whether people should be accountable. The question is whether public shaming, social exile, and permanent condemnation are the most effective ways to create change.



Humans Are Wired for Connection

One of the most fundamental truths in psychology is that human beings need connection. Our nervous systems, sense of identity, and sense of the world develop through relationships (or lack thereof). Many of our deepest wounds occur in relationships. And many of our deepest healing experiences occur in relationships as well.

When people are publicly rejected, ostracized, or socially exiled, something scary happens inside the nervous system. The brain often interprets social rejection as a physical threat to survival. Many people assume that if someone feels bad enough, they'll become a better person. But research suggests that shame often has the opposite effect. When people become overwhelmed with shame, they are more likely to become defensive, shut down, double down on harmful beliefs, and avoid responsibility. Trauma-informed communication focuses on behavior while preserving dignity and our shared humanness. It means *we should understand the psychological impact of how accountability is delivered.*

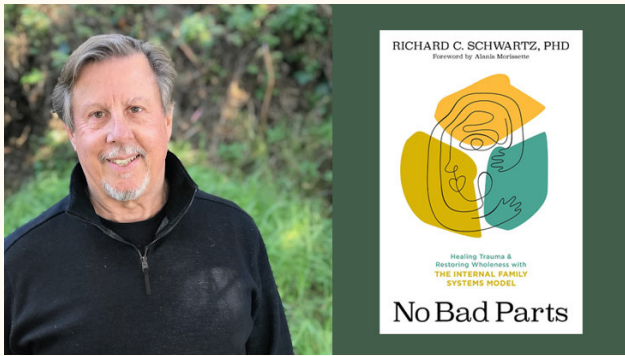
THE NECESSARY PIECE: repair

One of the biggest problems with cancel culture is that it often skips over repair. Repair is the process of acknowledging harm, taking responsibility, listening to impact, making changes, and rebuilding trust over time. Repair is not easy. It requires humility, discomfort, and accountability. But repair is also one of the most important skills human beings can learn. Parents hurt their children's feelings, partners disappoint one another, friends make mistakes, coworkers miss the mark, and even therapists occasionally misunderstand clients and must engage in repair. Healthy relationships are not relationships without conflict. They are relationships where people learn how to navigate conflict. When we eliminate opportunities for repair, we eliminate opportunities for growth and create further division and disconnect.

Alternatives to Canceling People

- *Direct Conversations* – Address concerns privately and specifically when possible.
- *Setting Clear Boundaries* – Boundaries communicate what behavior is and isn't acceptable without attacking a person's worth.
- *Calling People In* – Rather than immediately calling people out, invite them into a conversation about impact, education, and growth. Invite them to explore their perspective and be curious about other perspectives.
- *Encouraging Repair* – Allow space for sincere apologies, accountability, changed behavior, and rebuilding trust.
- *Focusing on Behavior Rather Than Identity* – Criticize harmful actions without reducing an entire person to their worst moment.
- *Leaving Room for Growth* – Recognize that people can learn, evolve, and do better.
- *Let Yourself Have Hope* – We can get stuck in a cycle of thinking everyone has bad motives. Remember that most people are good and are trying their best even when they screw up.

The goal should never be to tolerate harmful behavior but to create communities that are both accountable and compassionate. We need to focus on safety, responsibility, connection and repair to have healthier relationships, healthier communities, and better individual mental health. The healing that comes from gently challenging one another, opening yourself up to feedback, being open to growth, and self-reflecting is key to accountability.



BOOK OF THE MONTH

NO BAD PARTS BY RICHARD SCHWARTZ

A book about exploring and accepting all the parts of ourselves, even the ones we experience great shame about.

[READ HERE](#)



FREE RESOURCE

CHECKLIST OF SIGNS YOU MAY HAVE A TENSE MOTHER-DAUGHTER REALTIONSHIP

a list of items that indicate to a mother-daughter family therapist that there may be some tension in the relationship

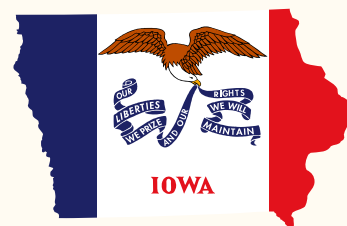
[CLICK HERE](#)

EXCITING PRACTICE UPDATES

GRACE IS LICENSED TO PRACTICE IN MD AND IA!

Grace is seeing clients in-person in Timonium, MD, and virtually across Maryland AND Iowa!

Feel free to send prospective clients to the website for scheduling, rates, and any additional info. We appreciate all collaboration with our interdisciplinary colleagues!



Why Daughters Need Their Moms to Acknowledge Mistakes

BETWEEN LIFE AND THERAPY NEWSLETTER FEATURE

Many mothers and daughters love each other deeply and still find themselves stuck in painful cycles of misunderstanding and conflict. One of the most common patterns that brings mothers and daughters into conflict is the struggle around accountability. A daughter may be asking for something that seems simple but a mother may hear something very different.

Many mothers and daughters love each other deeply and still find themselves stuck in painful cycles of misunderstanding and conflict. One of the most common patterns that brings mothers and daughters into conflict is the struggle around accountability. A daughter may be asking for something that seems simple but a mother may hear something very different.



From a developmental perspective, children do not need perfect parents. They need parents who are emotionally available, willing to listen, and capable of repair. Every parent makes mistakes. Every parent has moments where they respond from stress, fear, exhaustion, their own childhood experiences, or limited emotional tools. Parenting is one of the most complex roles a person can take on, and no one moves through it without causing some hurt along the way.

The difference between a relationship that heals and one that becomes distant is often not whether harm happened, it is whether repair happened afterward.

When a daughter says “That hurt me.” or “I wish you would have listened to me.” She is often not asking her mother to erase the past or implying that she had a wholly bad childhood. She is asking her mother to recognize her experience. This is a seemingly minute but incredibly important detail that I often have to clarify when working with mother-daughter duos: *Validating each other’s emotions does not require agreement with every detail of how things happened. It requires curiosity and compassion.*

For many mothers, hearing that they hurt their child activates deep feelings of shame, guilt, or fear. A mother may think “If I admit I was wrong, it means I was a bad mom.” or “I sacrificed so much, and now she only sees what I did wrong.” These feelings are understandable. Many parents carry their own histories of being raised in environments where emotions were dismissed, mistakes were ignored, or apologies were uncommon. However, avoiding accountability does not protect the relationship. Often, it creates more distance.

A major part of healing mother-daughter conflict is understanding the difference between shame and accountability.

Shame says, “I made a mistake, therefore I am a bad mother.”

Accountability says, “I made a mistake, and I can take responsibility while still recognizing that I am a loving parent.”

Healthy accountability actually strengthens a parent’s relationship with their child because it communicates implicitly that your relationship matters more than the need to be right. A mother who acknowledges mistakes is not losing authority; she is demonstrating emotional maturity.

Repair Takes Love & Teaches Integrity

One of the most powerful lessons parents can teach their children is not how to avoid mistakes; it is how to repair them. Children learn integrity by watching adults take responsibility.

When a parent acknowledges mistakes, they are teaching their child:

- Mistakes do not define who you are.
- Relationships can survive difficult conversations.
- Love and accountability can exist together.
- Being wrong does not mean you are unworthy.

This lesson extends far beyond the mother-daughter relationship. It influences how children approach friendships, romantic relationships, parenting, and their own ability to apologize throughout life.

A strong mother-daughter relationship does not require pretending the painful moments never happened. It requires creating enough safety that both people can be honest about their experiences. For mothers, this may mean learning that acknowledging a daughter's pain does not erase all the love, sacrifice, and effort that existed alongside it. For daughters, this may mean learning how to communicate hurt while still recognizing their mother's humanity. Healing is not about picking a villain and getting stuck in that dynamic; it's about creating a relationship where both people feel seen.



Work with me today

HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

Reach out for an consulting inquiries or interest in therapy today!

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