

Two Babies. Two Worlds.

*How Childhood Environments Shape
the Lives We Learn to Expect.*

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AWARD
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AUTHOR



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Introduction

Before We Could Choose

Imagine two babies entering the world at exactly the same time.

Baby A is born into a home where life is predominantly experienced as a struggle. Money is scarce, bills create anxiety, and unexpected expenses produce fear. The adults frequently speak about what they cannot afford, what will probably go wrong, and how difficult it is to get ahead. They may be loving people who are doing everything they can, but they are tired, worried, and overwhelmed by circumstances.

Baby B is born into a home where life is predominantly experienced through prosperity, security, and possibility. There is enough money to meet the family's needs. Unexpected expenses may be inconvenient, but they do not threaten the family's survival. The adults talk about plans, opportunities, solutions, investments, education, travel, and what might be possible in the future.

Neither baby understands money.

Neither baby knows what a bill is, what employment means, or why one family lives differently from another. Neither child can examine the circumstances and decide which beliefs should be accepted and which should be rejected.

But both babies can feel.

Baby A feels the tension in a caregiver's body. The baby hears the change in tone when money is mentioned. The baby senses the fear surrounding an unexpected telephone call, an overdue bill, a broken appliance, or an empty refrigerator. The child may not understand the circumstances, but the nervous system receives the emotional message:

Life is uncertain.

There may not be enough.

Something could go wrong at any moment.

Baby B also receives emotional messages. This child feels the confidence of caregivers who generally expect problems to be solved. Baby B observes adults making plans, discussing possibilities, and recovering from setbacks without becoming overwhelmed. Once again, the child does not understand the financial circumstances, but the nervous system receives a very different message:

Life is supportive.

There is enough.

Problems can be solved.

These messages are not taught as formal lessons. They are absorbed through repeated emotional experiences.

Before children develop mature reasoning, they depend on the people around them to interpret the world. Their nervous systems constantly observe their environments and ask fundamental questions:

Am I safe?

Will my needs be met?

Can I trust the people around me?

Is the world filled with danger or possibility?

What must I do to receive love?

What happens when I make a mistake?

Do I deserve to have needs, wants, and dreams?

The answers are not initially formed through conscious thought. They are formed through feeling.

This is how the emotional environment of childhood begins becoming the internal environment of the child.

Baby A may absorb fear, powerlessness, guilt, uncertainty, and limitation. Baby B may absorb security, confidence, possibility, and

expectation. As these feelings are repeated, they become increasingly familiar. By approximately the age of five, an important emotional foundation has been established.

This foundation is not necessarily permanent, but it can become deeply influential.

The child does not awaken on their fifth birthday and consciously choose a philosophy of life. There is no meeting during which Baby A decides to believe in scarcity or Baby B decides to believe in abundance. Each child simply begins expressing what has already become familiar within them.

What was absorbed as feeling begins appearing as behaviour.

As Baby A grows older, the child may hesitate when opportunities appear. Trying something new may feel dangerous because failure could confirm an already familiar sense of insecurity. Asking for help may feel shameful. Wanting more may produce guilt. Spending money may create anxiety, while receiving money may create discomfort.

Baby A might become excessively cautious, or the child might move in the opposite direction and become impulsive. One person conditioned by scarcity may save every dollar out of fear. Another may spend every dollar immediately because having money feels temporary and unfamiliar. The behaviours look different, but they may grow from the same emotional root.

Baby B may respond differently to similar situations. Because security and possibility feel familiar, the child may be more willing to try, ask, explore, and recover from disappointment. A mistake may be interpreted as a lesson rather than a personal failure. A closed door may be viewed as a temporary setback rather than evidence that opportunity does not exist.

Baby B does not necessarily possess greater intelligence or ability. The difference may be that one child is acting from an expectation of possibility while the other is reacting to an expectation of limitation.

**Feelings become expectations.
Expectations influence decisions.
Decisions produce actions.
Actions create results.**

Results then appear to prove that the original feelings were correct.

Baby A expects limitation, acts cautiously or defensively, misses opportunities, and experiences more limitation. The resulting hardship reinforces the feeling that life is difficult.

Baby B expects possibility, takes reasonable action, discovers opportunities, and experiences greater possibility. The resulting progress reinforces the feeling that life is supportive.

Each person may believe they are simply responding to reality. Neither may realize how much of that reality is being interpreted through an emotional setting established before they were capable of choosing it.

This does not mean that every child raised in financial hardship will remain trapped in scarcity. A family with limited money can still create an emotionally abundant home filled with love, stability, encouragement, creativity, and hope. Nor does it mean that every child raised in wealth will feel secure. A prosperous home can still contain criticism, neglect, conflict, pressure, and fear.

The nervous system does not absorb a bank balance. It absorbs an atmosphere.

This distinction matters because the purpose of understanding childhood conditioning is not to judge or blame parents. Most parents raise their children from the emotional programming they absorbed from their own parents. Fear is passed down because fear is familiar. Limitation is repeated because limitation is known. Adults frequently teach children what they learned before they were old enough to question it.

The pattern can continue through generations without anyone consciously choosing it.

Awareness interrupts that pattern.

When we recognize that some of our present reactions originated in an earlier environment, we gain the ability to question them. We can ask whether the feeling beneath a behaviour belongs to the present moment or to a much younger version of ourselves.

Why does this opportunity make me uncomfortable?

Why do I feel guilty when something good happens?

Why do I expect everything I gain to be taken away?

Why do I repeatedly return to situations that make me unhappy?

Why does struggle feel more natural than peace?

Why does receiving feel more frightening than going without?

These questions are not evidence that something is wrong with us. They are invitations to understand ourselves.

The behaviours we criticize may have once been intelligent adaptations. Hypervigilance may have helped us anticipate danger. People-pleasing may have protected an important relationship. Perfectionism may have reduced criticism. Avoiding opportunity may have protected us from disappointment.

The behaviour may no longer serve us, but at one time it may have helped us feel safe.

We cannot heal ourselves by hating the strategies that once protected us. We heal by understanding why those strategies developed and teaching the nervous system that the present is no longer the past.

Baby A is not condemned to a lifetime of limitation.

The adult that Baby A becomes can develop awareness, experience safety, create new beliefs, and practise new behaviours. With repetition, prosperity can become less threatening. Receiving can become more comfortable. Possibility can become more familiar. The nervous system can learn that growth does not automatically lead to danger and that success does not have to be followed by loss.

We may not have chosen the feelings we absorbed during childhood, but we can become conscious of the behaviours through which those feelings continue to express themselves.

That is the purpose of this book.

Together, we will examine how early emotional environments shape beliefs, how beliefs direct behaviour, and how behaviour creates the circumstances we mistakenly call destiny. Most importantly, we will explore how awareness allows us to stop automatically repeating the past.

We begin life by absorbing the emotional world around us. We then spend years expressing what we absorbed.

But the story does not have to end there.

***Once we understand what happened before we
could choose, we can begin choosing what
happens next.***

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