

# “I love you, I hate you!”:

## How social neuroscience can help adoptive parents understand rejection and promote the development of trust



### With Dr Jon Baylin and Dr Ben Gurney-Smith

One of the biggest challenges for adoptive parents is to help unlock their child's trust in them. A child who learnt at an early age to rely on themselves and move away from people needs encouragement to begin to rely on parents as a source of security and love. This change is a complex process and yet very familiar to adoptive parents.

This course helps understand the reasons why trust is difficult for some children at a deep, neurobiological level and how this can be a deeply painful experience for their parents.

Jon Baylin will review the social neuroscience of these experiences, helping participants to deepen their understanding of this process. Ben Gurney-Smith will outline research on parenting stress in adoption and how mindfulness and other interventions for parents and children can and has been used to help keep the channel open - necessary for children to move into trust and security.

This course will have a practical focus in helping parents and professionals understand how they can overcome some of these difficulties. There will be the opportunity for dialogue and questions with Ben and Jon in person.

**Monday 13 November 2017**

**Adoptionplus, Moulsoe Business Centre, Cranfield Road, Newport Pagnell, MK16 0FJ**

**9.30am – 4.30pm**

**Cost £160 + VAT (£192 inc VAT)**

**Lunch and refreshments included**

For further information or to book please call Alice Hollingdale on 01908 218251 or email [alice.hollingdale@adoptionplus.co.uk](mailto:alice.hollingdale@adoptionplus.co.uk) or visit our website [www.adoptionplus.co.uk](http://www.adoptionplus.co.uk)

## About the Trainers

**Dr Jonathan Baylin, PhD**, is Co-author of *Brain Based Parenting* with Daniel Hughes.

As a clinical psychologist interested in parent-child relationships, I am continually working to deepen my understanding of how children learn to trust and mistrust adults and how parents can help these children learn to feel safe and secure in their care. About fourteen years ago, I began to explore the neuroscience literature dealing with issues of trust and attachment in animals and people. This became a daily practice and led me to develop a brain-based model of parent-child relationships that focuses both on the parent's challenge of sustaining loving feelings and the child's challenge of making the shift from deep mistrust to trust.

I became particularly interested in the parent side of the equation from working with so many stressed out parents who were struggling to stay loving and open to defensive children who so often resisted their efforts to get close and show their love. Several years ago, I began to collaborate with Daniel Hughes, an expert in working with children with serious attachment problems. Our collaboration, which is on-going, led to the book, *Brain Based Parenting*, published in the spring of 2012 that is part of the Norton Press series on Interpersonal Neurobiology edited by Daniel Siegel, the psychiatrist who has led the development of a brain-based approach to therapy.

In my workshops, I use a combination of power point illustrations of the brain, lecture, and "brain stories" to teach what I'm learning from my study of neuroscience and my clinical work. This is an on-going process that grows and changes as I learn more. I love the challenge of keeping my brain open to new information and being ready to change the model based on new information. Most recently, I am working more and more with parents to help them recover from or prevent "blocked care" and to help them understand their complicated children. I believe that the more deeply we understand the neurodynamics of attachment and parenting, the more effective we can be at helping families build strong bonds.

**Dr Ben Gurney-Smith** - BSc (Hons) D.Clin.Psych. Graduate Member of BPS, Chartered and Registered with HPC, Directory of Expert Witnesses BPS, Level 1 and 2 DDP

Ben is a Consultant Chartered Clinical Psychologist with over thirteen years of experience working with children and families; eleven of which have been with children who have experienced maltreatment in their birth families and who are now fostered or adopted. He has been involved in the establishment of a nationally regarded, dedicated and specialist local authority service in Oxford.

Ben has a long standing research interest in how children and their families recover from traumatic beginnings and help them build successful and stronger lives as a result of their experiences. He is particularly interested in what it is about the child and their adoptive parents which might help this recovery; this includes an appreciation of the process of attachment at both the psychological and neurobiological level.

Ben has an ongoing and strong commitment to training and supervision. He has been a Visiting Tutor at the Oxford Institute of Clinical Psychology Training course in the area of safeguarding, attachment and work with adoptive families. His work in private practice as an expert witness in child care cases, compliments his work with adoptive families whose children have inevitably been through the legal process.

Ben is the Clinical Lead for the therapy team at Adoptionplus where he is motivated to deliver high quality services that reflect the needs of adoptive families, at the right time and in the right way.

