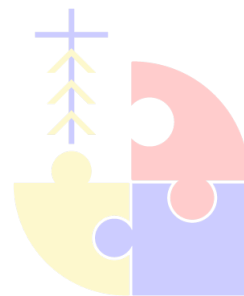




Strength for the Journey: Helping couples with a child with special needs

Rev. Brad Lee, LMFT

Director, The Special Needs Family Institute



Isaiah 61:1

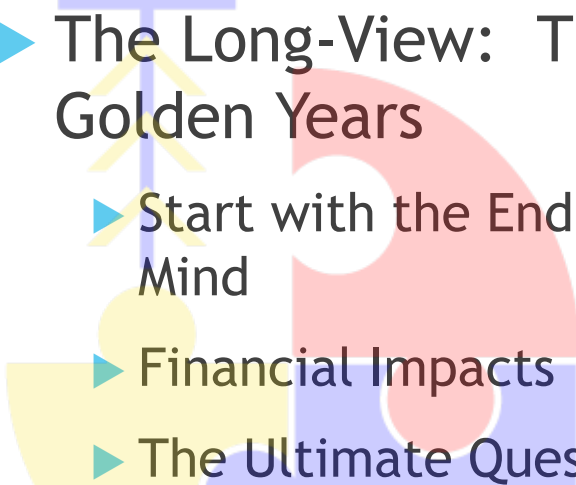
The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me to
proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent
me to bind up the brokenhearted, to
proclaim freedom for the captives and
release from darkness for the prisoners

The Special Needs Marriage Defined

- ▶ The special needs marriage is one in which one or more children are born with (or adopted) or later receive a diagnosis, be it physical, developmental, or behavioral, that affects the normal or typical flow of married life and connection.

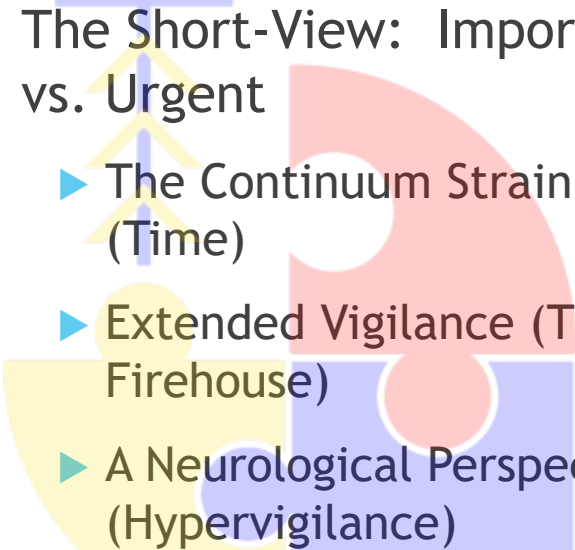


The Special Needs Marriage: Three Views

- 
- ▶ The Long-View: The Golden Years
 - ▶ Start with the End in Mind
 - ▶ Financial Impacts
 - ▶ The Ultimate Question

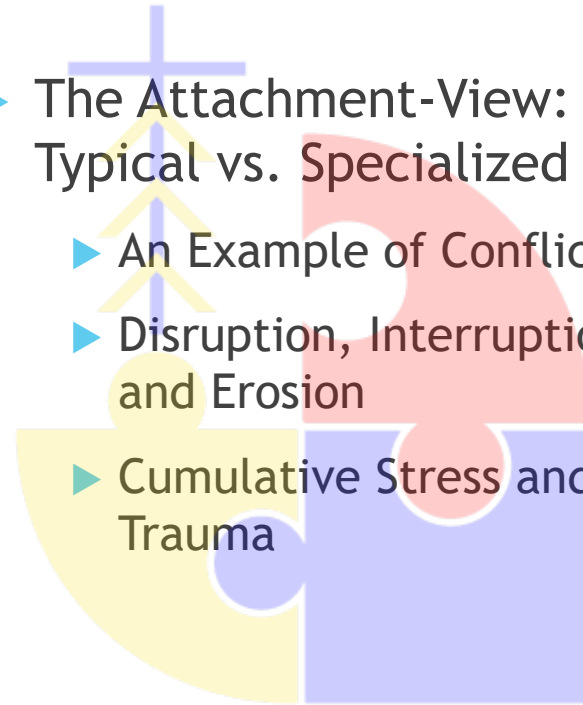


The Special Needs Marriage: Three Views

- 
- ▶ The Short-View: Important vs. Urgent
 - ▶ The Continuum Strain (Time)
 - ▶ Extended Vigilance (The Firehouse)
 - ▶ A Neurological Perspective (Hypervigilance)

The Special Needs Marriage: Three Views

- ▶ The Attachment-View:
Typical vs. **Specialized**
 - ▶ An Example of Conflict
 - ▶ Disruption, Interruption
and Erosion
 - ▶ Cumulative Stress and
Trauma



A Pragmatic Approach: Conduits of Strength on the Journey

- ▶ The power of Story
(Narrative)
- ▶ Little wins; Big gains
(Reframing)
- ▶ Connection and Intimacy
(Creative Attachment)
- ▶ Diagnosis as Sanctification
(Spiritual/Liminal)



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Questions...Feedback...Connection

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