

Case Example: Anthony and Natalia

Natalia and Anthony have been resource parents for about two years. Their most recent foster child is Henry who is seven years old. In addition, they have a 10-year-old biological daughter, Marie. Henry was removed due to physical abuse and violence in the home. Henry has been verbally aggressive toward both Marie and Natalia on a few recent occasions. Most recently stating when he was upset that Natalia is mean and stating that he hates her. He also told Marie that she is stupid and that he is going to destroy her favorite toy.



- Does this scenario seem familiar to you?
- What do you think is going on with the child?
- What specific challenges does this type of situation pose for a caregiver?
- How might the adults be emotional containers?

Photo: Unsplash Shea Rouda (Natalia and Anthony) Ckturistando (Miss B.)

❖ *Facilitator Note: The specific slides for this case example are not in the Participant's Manual. Rather, the case example handouts are in a separate document to facilitate easily changing them out to use a different case example. All of the case examples are available on the Facilitator's web page you used to access the training material at <https://ctac.uky.edu/rpc>. It is suggested that you pass out these case examples at this point in the training, or, if doing virtually, be sure to send them along with the Participant Manual link.*

❖ *This should be done as a large group discussion.*

- We will be using this case example throughout today's session as we discuss the different concepts related to stress and well-being today. You can find the information from this slide on the case example handout.

Discussion- Case Example (5 minutes)

- Does this scenario seem familiar to you? What do you think is going on with the child? What specific challenges does this type of situation pose for a caregiver? How might the adult(s) be emotional containers?
- ❖ *Facilitator Note: Answers to look for and highlight in "What is going on for the child":*
- Feeling rejection
 - Trauma reactions from his past experience are impacting behavior
 - May not have learned how to communicate safely



- ❖ *Facilitator Note: Answers to look for and highlight in challenges for the caregiver:*
 - Hard to not personalize it
 - Feeling that they must choose between the two children
 - Feeling that the child needs to be given a pass based on history
 - Feeling powerless or helpless to support the child
 - Feeling scared that he might hurt someone in the family
 - Hard to empathize or be compassionate

- ❖ *Facilitator Note: Answers to look for and highlight in “How Might the Adult(s) be Emotional Containers”?*
 - Being able to listen when the child shares his feelings and allow them to talk about feelings.
 - Help the child express feelings in safe ways (safe ways to be angry and frustrated)
 - Provide support to the other child about feelings when anger is directed toward her so that she can express her feelings.
 - Don't allow the situation to escalate by reacting with strong emotions. It is okay to have feelings, but in the moment keeping these in check models how we don't have to respond with anger even if we are feeling hurt. This allows us to model self-regulation and keep the event from escalating.



Natalia and Anthony: Discussion on Secondary Traumatic Stress and Coping

Henry has been having nightmares and recently told Natalia that he dreams about his parents fighting and his mom getting hurt. Natalia and Anthony have both seen him playing out fights with his action figures on several occasions and noticed that his play with them is getting increasingly violent. Natalia asked him more about his play, and Henry shared several details about the violence that he witnessed between his parents.

Anthony witnessed his step-dad hitting his mom when he was a child and he has had several nightmares of his own in the past few weeks.

- How might hearing these details impact Natalia and Anthony?
- How might this impact their parenting?
- What are some ways that they might cope with the trauma exposure?

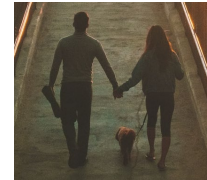


Photo: Unsplash Shea Rouda (Natalia and Anthony)

Case Example Part 2

❖ *This should be done as a large group discussion.*

Discussion – Case Example Secondary Traumatic Stress and Coping (5 minutes)

- How might hearing these details impact Natalia and Anthony?
- ❖ *Facilitator Note: Answers to look for and highlight in “How might hearing these details impact Anthony and Natalia”*
 - *Trauma reminders for the caregiver and ways that they can identify if it is bringing up reactions from them.*
 - *Perspective changes in world view after seeing the impacts of trauma on the child.*
 - *Feeling sad that the child was exposed to the violence and/or angry at his parents for traumatizing him.*
 - *Feelings that they have been infected by the trauma and can’t unsee/unhear what the child shared with them.*
- ❖ *Facilitator Note: Answers to look for and highlight in “Impact on Parenting”*
 - *It may make them have difficulty setting boundaries for fear of retraumatizing the child.*
 - *It may make them more sensitive to how they react to behaviors as they can now link them to the trauma history.*
- ❖ *Facilitator Note: Answers to look for and highlight in “Coping Strategies”*



- *Trauma reminders for caregivers and how to respond to these (e.g., engaging in ways to get back inside his window of tolerance- taking deep breaths, grounding etc.).*
- *The child needs to see that they can handle hearing about these details and be supportive of the child and show appropriate reactions towards the parents. How they react is important. This is a good lead into the next slide that focuses on coping strategies.*