

Case Example – Part One Agnes



Agnes is the maternal grandmother for Desmond, a four year old American Indian male. Desmond was placed with her about three months ago right after his 4th birthday. He was removed from his biological mom and stepdad due to a history of homelessness and alcohol and prescription medication abuse by his mom and stepdad. Desmond has emotional outbursts on a daily basis, which include throwing himself on the ground and inconsolable crying. He often reacts to his grandmother in anger, which includes hitting and biting. He is in preschool and when given individual attention by the teacher he can be funny and engaging.

Does this scenario seem familiar to you?

What do you think is going on with Desmond?

What specific challenges does this type of situation pose for a caregiver?

How might Agnes be an emotional container? Is there a cultural value about supporting others that could be infused?

Case Example – Part Two – Agnes Secondary Traumatic Stress and Coping



Desmond has been having nightmares and recently told Agnes that he dreams about his parents fighting and his mom getting hurt. His preschool is reporting that he has been hitting and yelling at other kids. Recently Desmond has shared several details about the violence that he witnessed between his parents with Agnes.

How might hearing these details impact Agnes?

How might this impact her parenting?

What are some ways Agnes might cope with the trauma exposure? What cultural values or supports can be utilized to support Agnes?