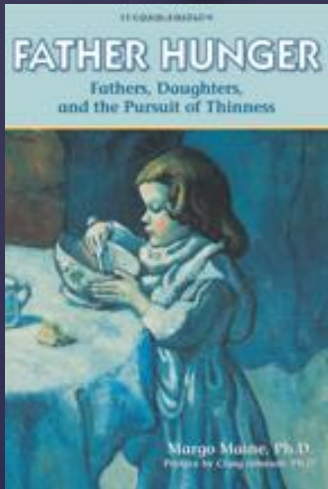


Father Hunger

Myth or Reality

Barrington H. Brennen, MA, NCP, BCCP

www.soencouragement.org

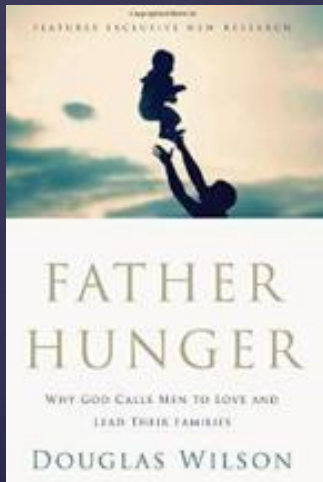


“Father Hunger is the emptiness experienced by women whose fathers were physically or emotionally absent—a void that leads to unrealistic body image, yo-yo dieting, food fears and disordered eating patterns.” 1991

Father Hunger: Fathers, Daughters, and the Pursuit of Thinness
By Margo Maine Ph.D



Fatherlessness is a “rot that is eating away at the modern soul,” writes Douglas Wilson, and the problem goes far beyond physical absence. “Most of our families are starving for fathers, even if Dad is around, and there’s a huge cost to our children and our society because of it.” 2012



Father Hunger: Why God Calls Men to Love and Lead Their Families.
By Douglas Wilson



In 1971 Bahamian, **Dr. Timothy McCartney** wrote about the absentee father in his book “Neuroses in The Sun.” He strongly suggested then that the lack of male presence in the families was hindering the normal development of our boys into real men and increased their risk to become sexual perverts.



Father Hunger
Is a reality



James L. Schaller, M.D., M.A.R., P.C.

“Father hunger is the result of receiving too little quality fathering as a child or young adult. Some argue that even grown men and women need fathers or father surrogates and that the absence of such role modeling and support is associated with less fulfillment in life. In general, father hunger results from too little intimacy between child and father.”

Emotional Signs of Father Hunger

Search for Lost Fathering

James L. Schaller, M.D., M.A.R., P.C.

- When I think about my father I become emotional-insecure, sad, or angry.
- When I'm with my father I don't act like myself; I'm either childish or grandiose.
- I consider my father wonderful, but others think I'm fooling myself.
- I feel numb toward my father.
- I have trouble with competitiveness.
- My motivation is poor because I feel beaten down.
- I have difficulty establishing relationships.
- I move too quickly into new relationships.
- I'm confused about my identity-it's not as if my father ever made me feel good about myself.
- I don't feel like a real man.
- I lack confidence in my femininity.
- I feel unattractive.
- I feel incompetent.

Emotional Signs of Father Hunger

Search for Lost Fathering

James L. Schaller, M.D., M.A.R., P.C.

- I have problems with my sexuality.
- I'm afraid to get too close to others.
- I fear being abandoned.
- Authority makes me uneasy.
- My father's criticism hurt me too much. Now I have difficulty accepting criticism.
- When my father does not provide the emotional support my mother needs, my mother unknowingly tries to get me to provide that support.
- My father and I do not talk openly and honestly about our lives.
- I keep trying to please everybody-especially father-types or mentors.
- I am rarely satisfied.
- My mother's boyfriend annoys me.
- My stepfather and I do not get along very well.
- I am a parent who worries I am repeating my father's and grandfather's mistakes.
- Sometimes I feel like an orphan.



James L. Schaller, M.D., M.A.R., P.C.

“Probably the most common source of father deficiency involves fathers who isolated themselves from intimacy with their children by excess work during the children's formative first two decades. Even as retired men these fathers may continue to be emotionally absent from their families, leaving many of their children with an emotional void.”

Barrington Brennen, 2001

“It was God’s design for a father’s love to complement a mother’s love. The original plan was that both parents would creatively weave their different ways of loving into a tapestry of knitted emotions, verbal expressions, affectionate displays, and intellectual harmony. . .

There would be no competition, nor lack of love from either side. This type of loving would create a family chemistry that would ride through the roughest storms and sail over the darkest clouds.”

My Observations

Children want their fathers in their lives.

Children are resilient and usually adjust well to not having dad living in the home as long as he is involved in their lives.

Children do not respond well to unfulfilled promises. Social and intellectual performances diminish when dad does not live up to his promises.

My Observations

Men in prison who cannot get in touch with their own feelings did not have an active, caring father in their lives while growing up.

Most angry, violent men have been shamed and blamed by their fathers and/or mother. These men have difficulty being nurturing and altruistic.



The Science of Fatherhood: Why Dads Matter
Stephanie Pappas, Live Science Contributor, 2012

“Studies show that the child’s father is affectionate, supportive and involved, he can contribute greatly to the child’s cognitive, language, and social development, as well as academic achievement, a strong inner core resource, sense of well-being, good self-esteem, and authenticity.”



The Science of Fatherhood: Why Dads Matter
Stephanie Pappas, Live Science Contributor, 2012

“ . . . In some cases dad is more important factor than mom. Behavior problems, delinquency, depression, substance abuse and overall psychological adjustment are all more closely linked to dad's rejection than mom's . . .



The Science of Fatherhood: Why Dads Matter
Stephanie Pappas, Live Science Contributor, 2012

“ . . . By the same token, dad’s love is sometimes a stronger influence for children than mom’s, the research found.”

Relationships



The Important Role of Dad

Dr. Gail Gross, 2014

“Girls will look for men who hold the patterns of good old dad, for after all, they know how "to do that." Therefore, if father was kind, loving, and gentle, they will reach for those characteristics in men. Girls will look for, in others, what they have **experienced** and become familiar with in childhood.



The Important Role of Dad

Dr. Gail Gross, 2014

“Boys on the other hand, will model themselves after their fathers. They will look for their father's approval in everything they do, and copy those behaviors that they recognize as both successful and familiar. Thus, if dad was abusive, controlling, and dominating, those will be the patterns that their sons will imitate and emulate. . .



The Important Role of Dad

Dr. Gail Gross, 2014

...However, if father is loving, kind, supportive, and protective, boys will want to be that.”



The Important Role of Dad

Dr. Gail Gross, 2014

“It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of dad. For example, girls who have good relationships with their fathers tend to do better in math, and boys who have actively involved fathers tend to have better grades and perform better on achievement tests. . .



The Important Role of Dad

Dr. Gail Gross, 2014

... And well-bonded boys develop securely with a stable and sustained sense of self. Who we are and who we are to be, we are becoming, and fathers are central to that outcome.”

Dysfunction

Children from Fatherless Homes Are:

- 5 times more likely to commit suicide
- 32 times more likely to run away
- 20 times more likely to have behavioral disorders
- 14 times more likely to commit rape
- 9 times more likely to drop out of school
- 10 times more likely to abuse chemical substances
- 9 times more likely to end up in prison.

Myths of Fatherhood

Myths of Fatherhood

- Only the expectant mother's feelings are important.
- Newborns don't really need their fathers.
- Men don't know how to care for young children.
- Men who focus on their children can't make it in the work world.
- You're destined to be just like your own father.

Hormone Changes



The Science of Fatherhood: Why Dads Matter
Stephanie Pappas, Live Science Contributor, 2012

“Hormonal studies have revealed that dads show increased levels of oxytocin during the first weeks of their babies' lives. This hormone, sometimes called the "love hormone," increases feelings of bonding among groups. Dads get oxytocin boosts by playing with their babies, according to a 2010 study published in the journal Biological Psychiatry



The Science of Fatherhood: Why Dads Matter
Stephanie Pappas, Live Science Contributor, 2012

“Fatherhood also leads to declines in testosterone, the "macho" hormone associated with aggressive behavior, according to research published last year in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. This change is stronger the more involved a dad is with his baby's care, suggesting that it may reduce a man's risk-taking drive and encourage nurturing and domesticity.”



My Father

Alfred A. A. Brennen

Age 85

My Father

- Had a terribly abusive dad.
- He witnessed his mother (my grandmother) being physically abused.
- His dad could not stick to one woman. He had sixty children for multiple women from New York to the Southern Caribbean.
- At the time of his death his youngest child was younger than his youngest great grandchild.
- My father choose not to follow in his steps.
- He was positively influenced by his adopted grandmother.
- I have become who I am because of my father.
- My father was determined to brake the cycle.

Leslie, my son-in-law



Gerard, my son



Generations of
loving fathers



Fathers Matter

www.soencouragement.org