

The I'mPerfect Fathers Group

A gathering of fathers of children with disabilities

By

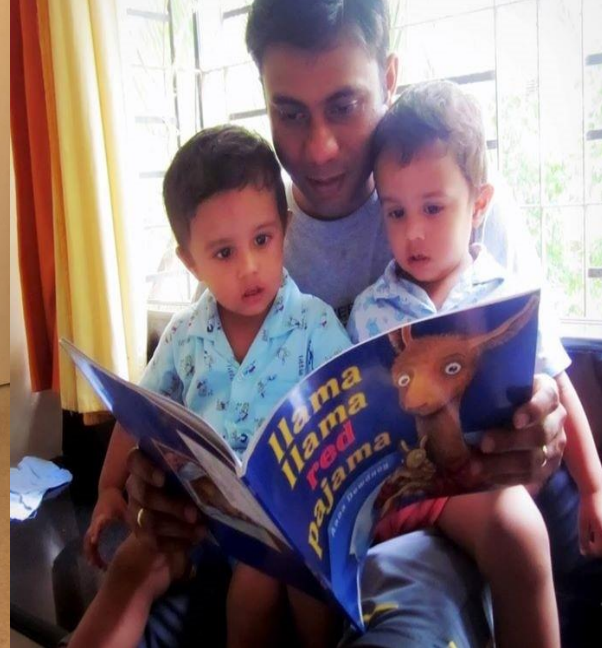
The Fathers, Raviraj, Jehanzeb and Tanya

Ummeed Child Development Center

India



- Fathers are the final discipline makers.
- Fathers are the only breadwinners.
- Fathers need to be tough, they are not emotional and sensitive.
- Fathers need not be involved into day to day care of their children.
- Fathers are responsible for teaching their boys to become MEN.
- Fathers are the HEROs for their children especially for their sons.
- Fathers never have time for their children.
- Fathers have to secure their child's future.
- Fathers should use physical methods of disciplining.



Alternate ways of fathering



A systematic review of studies which controlled for maternal involvement and gathered data from different independent scores, found 'positive' father involvement associated with a range of desirable outcomes for children and young people.

When programmes actively involve the fathers of children with disability with their children, this fosters father-child involvement at home, enhancing father-child attachment and contributing to the child's cognitive and social development as well as providing mothers with support in child care.

Substantial research however shows these fathers being ignored or dismissed by services and variously described as ‘hard to reach’, ‘the invisible parent’, or ‘the peripheral parent’.

Social Care Institute for Excellence. Being a father to a child with disabilities: issues and what helps. <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing18/index.asp> (accessed 2015).

12. Lamb, M.E., & Laumann-Billings, L.A. Fathers of children with special needs. In: M.E. Lamb, editors. The role of the father in child development. 3rd Ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2007

historical focus on **mothers**,

the understanding that father's role is **secondary** by many care-providers

research focus on **stress and coping** rather than **diversity** in parenting styles of fathers and paternal creativity

Patriarchy and Hegemonic Masculinity

So we began.....

In particular research has shown the importance of support groups when **cultural norms** and **gender stereotypes** make it difficult for individuals to reach out for help

Solomon. M, Pistrang.N & Baker C, The benefits of mutual support groups for parents of children with disabilities. Am J Community Psychol. 2001 Feb;29(1):113-32.

A Narrative Practices Framework

Developed by Michael White and David Epston

Our lives are shaped by **stories**

“**alternate** states of identity” vs “**dominant** states of identity”

Socio-cultural--historical-politics

people are **experts** of their own lives

Therapist's stance is **decentred yet influential**

Consulting the Consultants (fathers)

Collaboration



Methodology

Planning for The First Gathering



The First Gathering

How would you describe your child, the way you want him to be known by people around you?

What are some of the hopes you have as we go along the six sessions?

The Second Gathering

What are the things you do together that gets your child to engage with you and makes both of you happy?

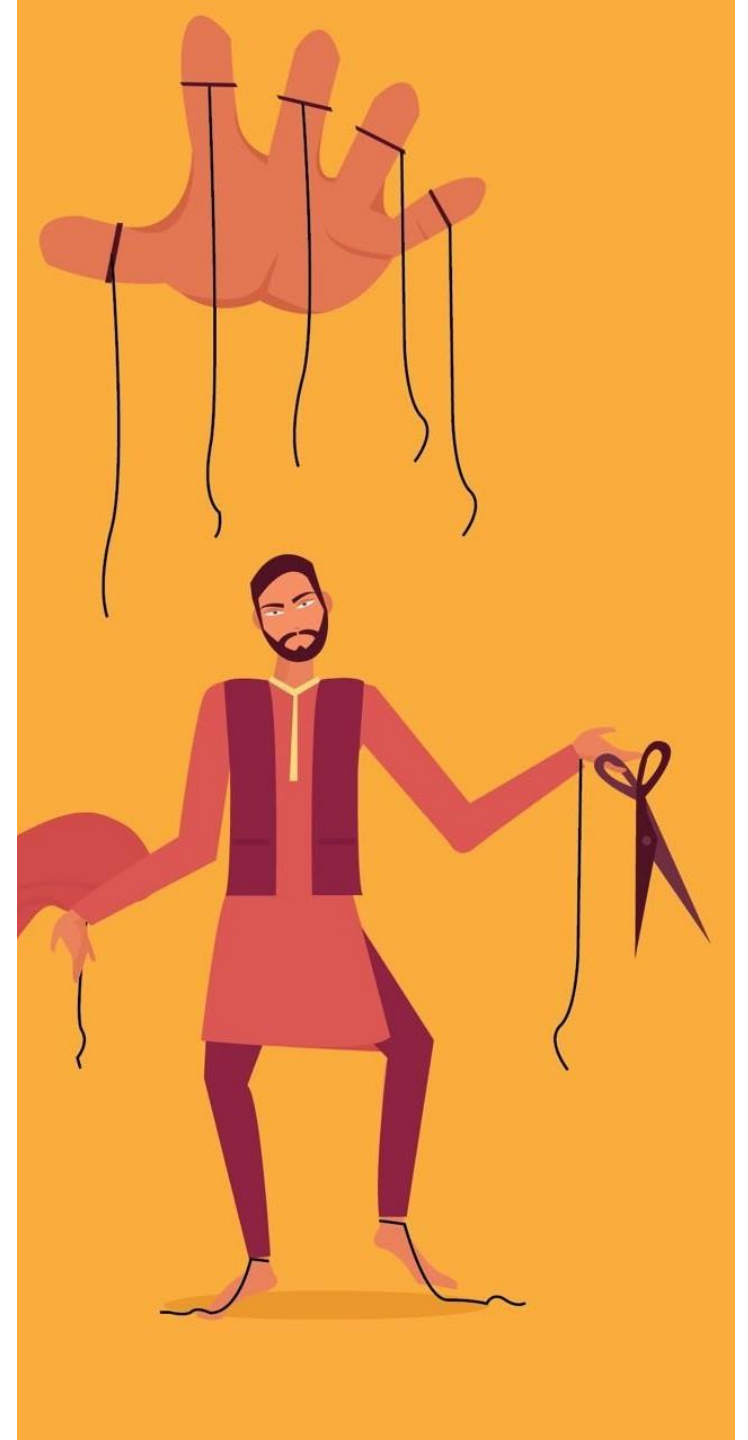
The Third Gathering

What are some of the ideas you have around disciplining?

The Fourth Gathering

What is a perfect father all about?

Let's call out "The Father Blame"



The Fifth Gathering

“Is it my child or is it the disability.”

The Sixth Gathering

What are some of the learning's from this group sessions? How do you see yourself using them in the future?

Exploring The Impact....

Five major themes

First theme

Learning from each other's experience

Second Theme

Redefining Discipline

Third Theme

Navigating through fatherhood.

Fourth theme

Benefits of a nonjudgmental space

D

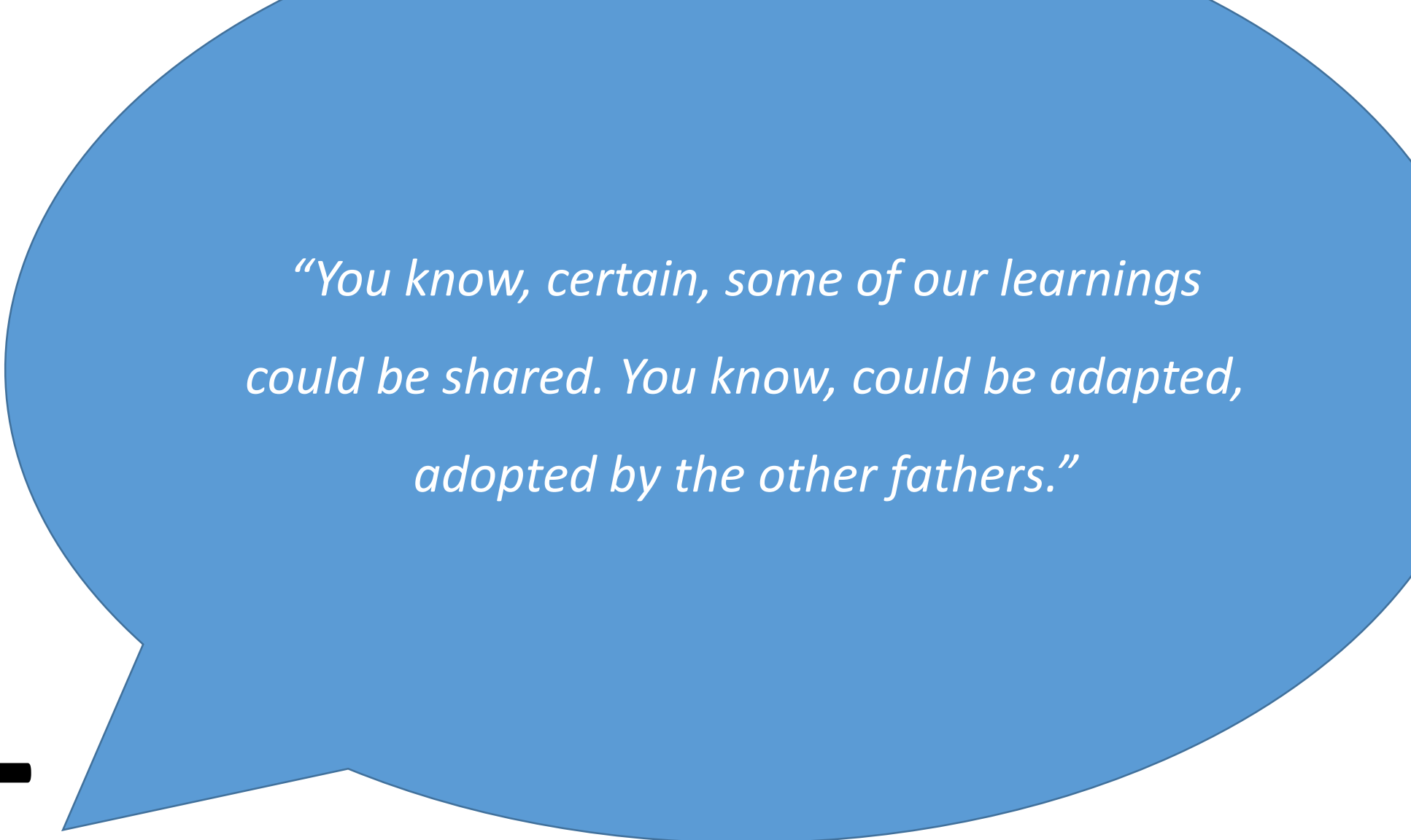
Speak about our, about the mess that we are in.

“We don’t talk. (I) don’t know how to do it (fathering). Here is a space where we spoke to each other. Means here I spoke more than whatever I speak at home also.”

P

Fifth theme

Advocacy



*“You know, certain, some of our learnings
could be shared. You know, could be adapted,
adopted by the other fathers.”*

T





*“every father should be given an **opportunity** to think about what the disability means for his child and to clarify what he understands. A **chance** to understand what his contribution to the child’s journey can mean and the importance of this for the child’s development would be a significant start for most families.”*





Thankyou