

Medical Orgone Therapy of a Child: A Narrative

Part III*

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The following narrative describes the ongoing treatment with medical orgone therapy of a severely emotionally disturbed boy beginning when he was seven years old. This narrative comes from two sources: observations of the boy, T, by his mother (presented in regular type) through the course of her son's therapy and observations made by the child's medical orgonomist (presented in bold type). The two points of view are presented together to provide a unique perspective of the medical orgone therapy of a child. Part III commences with T having had three months, or twelve weekly sessions, of treatment.

Medical Orgonomist

T continues to progress with starts and stops: there are times when his parents see differences in him that appear miraculous and other times when he falls back into previous patterns of neurotic behavior. He may be expanded and happy one day and whining the next. I have told T's mother to expect this and have explained that with each expansion T will reactively contract down; that the aim of his therapy is to bring about a bioenergetic expansion, understanding that he will reactively contract; and that over time, I anticipate fewer and less severe contractions and an overall state of greater expansion.

T is becoming more active in the therapeutic process, taking more initiative in the play and action. He is also relating better to me. I am becoming more important in his life.

*For continuity it is recommended that the reader review Parts I and II. They appear in the *Journal of Orgonomy*, Volume 29:(1) and (2), 1995.

Mother's Journal**September 13, 1990**

T was a little nervous again this morning. Today it's about going to music class. He's not sure what to expect and it makes him uneasy. After school, we went directly to Dr. Rosin's office. T was in a very good mood on the way there. When we arrived Dr. Rosin asked me to come in and asked T to wait for a minute in the waiting room. T seemed to handle it well and asked me later on why Dr. Rosin wanted to speak to me alone.

I knew that soon I would have to separate T from his mother and that she would have to wait outside during his sessions. I asked her to come into my office alone to discuss this. This began the separation process for T—it was the first time he was in the waiting room without her by his side. Her accepting presence in the sessions had been necessary in part because the boy needed to have his mother's tacit approval of his emotions and his expression of them in the therapy. However, as he had become more comfortable with her in the sessions, I knew I could now begin seeing T alone. When there is a symbiotic enmeshment between mother and child, a point is reached in the therapy when it is necessary to separate them; when the parent must be asked to leave the therapy room. This is done for a number of reasons but especially so that each can begin to tolerate the anxiety that comes with separation. When timed correctly, the child will have a particularly strong emotional discharge in the session and also, perhaps, afterwards and will move forward with increased independence. Should the therapist attempt this break too early, for either the mother or the child, the symbiosis intensifies. In most cases of symbiosis both mother and child are characterologically schizophrenic. This was so for T and his mother. The mother's ocular blocking causes her to projectively identify with her child, putting her own feelings about herself onto the child. The mother perceives the child, his needs, weaknesses and strengths, in a distorted way. For this reason, the mother (or the parent who is most enmeshed with the child) begins to have strong emotional reactions to the child separating and becoming more independent. However, if she is to allow these developments to

occur, it is necessary for the mother to experience and tolerate the intense emotions involved.

Dr. Rosin then told T to join me in the treatment room. T resisted doing eye exercises. Eventually he did cooperate and followed the penlight for quite some time. T initiated most of the play that followed. It was like a role reversal. Dr. Rosin sat and waited for T to decide what to do. T was very aggressive and at times I thought he was going to hit Dr. Rosin instead of the cushion.

T interacted freely with Dr. Rosin and instructed him when to hold the pillow. Even when they played with the Koosh® balls Dr. Rosin waited for T to initiate all activity and T did. I noticed that during this visit T did not stop to look or stare at me. In the past he would stop frequently to look at me.

This afternoon was the first time things were not pleasant after returning home following T's session. After T watched his favorite TV show I told him to get his four pages of homework done right away. I had a meeting to go to that evening and S (T's father) also had to go out. I told him that although he could not come with me, if he hurried up and got his homework done he could go with S. He started crying and carrying on. I don't know if he was upset that I was going out or if he felt pressured because I told him to hurry up. It was awful; he was all worked up, saying that he hated when I yelled at him. (I hadn't yelled at all but he insisted that I did.) He was upset because I wasn't helping him and yet when I did try to help he refused my offer. At these times, I think I feel just as frustrated as he does. The work that should have taken no more than a half-hour took about one and a half hours because of his mood.

In previous sessions after T expressed anger—yelling, striking out at me through the pillow, showing more and more rage—he would look over at his mother, checking to see if his emotional expression was acceptable to her. That T did not do this today indicates that he is becoming better prepared for separation in therapy. This represents a new intensity and depth of emotion for T (an expansion) and his behavior at home after the session is understood as a manifestation of a reactive contraction.

September 17

This morning started out great. T got up, got dressed and ate breakfast with no prodding from me. As we were getting ready to leave for school, he fell apart. He was very upset and crying that he was nervous about being away from me for six hours and that he had a test today. I went through a lengthy explanation about tests. I told him that it was important for him to do his best but that the actual grade really didn't matter. I knew he had studied and I was sure he would do fine. He looked at me with tears in his eyes and said, "Thanks for saying that but I'm still nervous." He continued to whine and I told him very sternly that he did not have a choice. He must go to school.

When we got to the school building he told me he was no longer nervous. I was relieved but only for a second as he continued, "I'm not nervous...I'm scared!" He said he doesn't know what makes his insides so shaky. I told him he'd be fine and he went in.

After school: no problems. He was happy and told me about several things that had happened during the day. I pointed out to him how much he seems to be enjoying the day and he agreed that he had a great day.

The separation conflict is intensifying now. T is able to expand and get up without prodding from his mother. Although he occasionally retreats into whining behavior, he is nonetheless making better contact with his emotions and beginning to see that his underlying emotion is fear. He now feels this more clearly and thus perceives himself more clearly. Having increasing contact with the fear will help him to tolerate all his feelings.

September 18

This morning started out very good, as usual. At around eight o'clock I asked T to check the time for me since I was in the bathroom, putting on my make-up. He said it was eight o'clock and at this time I usually tell him to get ready to leave since we don't have much time. Today, I reversed it and said, "I'd better hurry up, I only have a few minutes to get done." We both proceeded to get ready with no problems. Just as we were leaving he began with his nervousness. No tears but lots of questions. He wanted to know, "Why do I always feel nervous? How

can I make this stop? Tell me what to do so I won't feel like this!" He wasn't really giving me an opportunity to answer him. He just kept rambling, "When is Dr. Rosin going to help me? How can he tell what is the matter if all he wants to do is play Koosh® ball? Can he see what is wrong with me when he looks into my eyes with that light? When he makes my eyes stretch, does he think it's helping me? How can it be?" Again, all these questions were in rapid succession without giving me a chance to answer. When he was done, I told him that all those questions were good ones but if he wanted the answers he should ask Dr. Rosin. T, of course, wants me to ask. He said, "You know I'm a shy kid." I walked him to the school building and he continued to complain that he was scared, nervous and afraid. I told him I was sure that he would have another great day and he went in. He did have a great day.

Tonight was T's first church confirmation class. In the past I have helped out either in his class or somewhere in the building; I had volunteered partly because I wanted to do it but also because I knew that it made T feel more secure. I did not volunteer to help this year and I was concerned that he would not want to stay by himself. He did say to me that he wanted me to stay and help out but I told him I wasn't going to. I walked him into the building and he went directly to his class with his friends. What a relief...no problems.

September 20

On our way to Dr. Rosin's, T began telling me again that he hates going to see Dr. Rosin. He said, "It kills me to go." When we arrived, T threatened that he was not going to get out of the car. I acted as though I thought he was kidding. I got out of the car and walked toward the building. (I was hoping that he would follow and he did.)

When Dr. Rosin greeted us in the waiting room, T ran past him right into the treatment room. I'm sure he didn't want me going in first without him like last week, but he also didn't watch to see if I was following him in. Dr. Rosin motioned for me to wait outside and he went into the treatment room with T. T came out immediately looking for me and then we all went in.

This represents T's first tentative, spontaneous attempt at being separate from his mother in the therapy. As he does with all new

steps, once he realizes that he's in new territory, he becomes anxious and runs back to find his mother.

Dr. Rosin began this session trying to get T to do eye exercises. T was very uncooperative and while on the couch, he kicked Dr. Rosin in the back a few times. I knew T was going to try to get Dr. Rosin in some way since last week. Dr. Rosin held his arms and feet and would not let him go. He let him know that he could not hit him or kick him. T still would not do the eye exercises. In the past, when Dr. Rosin wanted T to do something he would use "reverse psychology" since T seemed to do the opposite of whatever he said. But during this visit T was very resistant and would not cooperate regardless of what Dr. Rosin said or did. T wanted Dr. Rosin to hold the cushion while he threw the Koosh® balls at it. A few times the balls flew by me almost hitting me. Later on, T was throwing the couch cushions around and again almost hit me a few times. Although it all seemed accidental, I'm not so sure it was.

T then began running the full length of the room and taking flying leaps onto the cushions on Dr. Rosin's lap, screaming as he leaped. T did this for quite some time and at the end of the session told Dr. Rosin he was planning to do that for his next entire visit. T had really worked up a sweat and was very happy when we left saying, "Good-bye, good-bye." Then he said, "I take it back: no good-bye," as we walked out the back door. On our way home, T said he had a great time. He never before admitted having fun during sessions with Dr. Rosin, although I'm sure he has enjoyed some of them.

In this session T continued building up an emotional charge and discharged it with greater intensity. As he left the session he was very alive, sweating profusely. His comment that he was going to take flying leaps at me for the entire next session was said in a threatening way that clearly gave T pleasure. It was an aggressive expression similar to, "I'm going to get you next time!" and was said with a certain cockiness. T was showing his most aggressive behavior to date. As he left the session he forgot himself and said good-bye to me though, in character, he quickly said, "No, I take it back."

September 21

This morning wasn't as bad as the rest of the week. T was fine until we walked to the school building. He then began his routine: "I'm nervous and scared." As he was a few feet from the building, I turned and began walking back to the car. He called out to me and when I turned around he waved good-bye, so I waved and kept going. He called me again and as I turned around he blew me a kiss and went in. As I continued to walk to the car, a real sad feeling came over me. Although T has made tremendous progress since last May, I wonder if he will ever be "normal." Will he ever be able to go to school without me walking him to the door and waving one last time? I have visions of taking him to high school and having to wait until he is in the building.

Tonight we had a very upsetting time that lasted about an hour but seemed like an eternity to me. When S got home from work, he was annoyed with T and me for not being "ready and waiting" to go bowling. As T was getting ready he showed S a scrape on his arm that he had gotten about a half-hour before. He said it hurt so he was going to put a Band-Aid on it. S said to him, "You don't need a Band-Aid. Be a man!" T started crying immediately. "Be a man?" he said. S said, "Yeah, be a man, like Dad." T went into the bathroom crying and got himself a Band-Aid. I went in to help him but he did not want my help. He kept saying, "He wants me to be a man." He was very upset and the simple task of putting on a Band-Aid was almost too much for him. He was getting more frustrated because it wouldn't go on straight.

In the meantime, S was still moaning about us not being ready and "now we will really be late because T is 'acting up'." I tried to make S see that the more upset he got, the harder it was for T to function. He insisted that he was right and would not back down. The more he pressed T to get ready, the slower T was able to function. We finally got into the car and S told T he could not play any video games when we got there because he was being bad. T said, "I'm not bad!" and S said, "Well, what do you call how you've been acting?" The rest of the ride to the bowling alley was very silent. S just drove and said nothing; T sat in the back seat and sobbed the whole way there; I sat quietly, thinking of all the things I wanted to tell S about what had just happened. I kept silent because I did not want to discuss it in front of T and also because I did not want to make any more of a scene. I

know that when S gets like this I cannot get through to him; he doesn't seem rational and he cannot function as he normally does, just like T can't function. Is it the same reaction T gets only on an adult level?

As we got out of the car at the bowling alley, S put his arm around T and told him that he didn't like it when they were upset like that, that he loved him very much and wanted to be "best buddies" again. T was immediately forgiving; he loves S so much and would do anything for his approval. Now the two of them were very happy and had an enjoyable evening. I was still very upset about what had happened. I felt as though my insides were all churned up. I told S that I wanted to discuss it with him later. When we did discuss it, S insisted that the whole thing happened because we weren't ready to leave and he didn't want to be late. I told him I thought it started with his comment for T to "be a man" and that he should stop using terms like that. He corrected himself and said he should have said, "Be a boy." I told him that by saying that he was implying that because he is a boy, he shouldn't cry or feel pain. I also told him I didn't like his comment in the car that T was "being bad." S didn't want to talk about it anymore. He felt it was over and wondered why I continued to dwell on it. I just wanted him to be aware that when T is not doing well and can't function, S can't continue to act the way he does. S finally admitted that he saw my point but I'm really not sure he did. I think S thinks that I am making more of it than it actually is. At times, I think he is denying that there is any problem at all with T other than "acting badly."

September 22

Tonight S and I went to dinner with another couple. T had a real hard time letting us leave. Although he wasn't crying, he kept asking why did we have to go? When would we be back? I told him that we didn't have to go but that we wanted to go. I explained to him that although we like to spend lots of time together with him, there are times when we want to just be with adults. I asked him what was bothering him. He said he begins to worry when we leave, even though he is with grandma. When we got home, my mother said he was fine while we were gone.

September 24

"Monday morning blues"—T was complaining this morning, even before I had my eyes opened. He can't understand why he is so nervous. He says he doesn't want to be nervous and wants it to go away. He complained the entire morning, from 6:30 to about 8:15. He did get ready and ate breakfast in between his moaning. As I walked him to the building he gave me his usual speech about how he was scared, nervous, afraid and sick. He said he felt sick and was also sick of feeling this way. As I left he called to me again for one last wave and one last kiss.

T is now better able to speak up and express himself. More and more, he says what he thinks and feels. In contrast with the past when he was prone to whining, he now has more aggression at his disposal, is less immobilized, and consequently speaks out more and complains less. I had to explain to his mother that, although this was difficult to listen to, it represented progress.

S got a call from school around 1:00 p.m. T was in the nurse's office complaining of a headache and stomach ache. S told the nurse that he didn't think T was really sick and that I would be there as soon as I got home from work. When I arrived at the school, T had already gone back to class. I explained to the nurse that T would probably try again to get out of school and that she shouldn't call me unless she really felt he was sick. I told her to give him an ice pack if he complained of a headache and send him back to his class. When I picked T up at the end of the day he said he had a great day, as usual. He did mention having a headache and going to the nurse but never asked why I didn't pick him up. I didn't tell him that I was there. He had lots of homework which he did with no problem, and went right off to bed. I'm beginning to dread mornings as much as T does. I know tomorrow will be hard for him.

When children complain of headache they often do have pain. A contraction in the ocular segment—which includes the musculature of the scalp, the occiput (back of the head) and the small muscles that control eye movement—causes the pain. Armoring in the

neck is also contributory. Allowing the child to have time off from classroom activities, even for a brief visit to the school nurse, usually relieves stress, reestablishes emotional equilibrium and eliminates the headache. The child can then be returned to the class.

September 25

I was really expecting a rough morning, since T tried to get out of school yesterday by going to the nurse. Things were quite the opposite. We had a very pleasant morning. However, as we neared the school, T went through his routine of telling me he was nervous and scared and sick of feeling this way. "One last wave" and he went into school.

September 26

Today was T's first morning of no complaints at all! Even when we got to school, he seemed very confident. He said he actually liked being with his friends during school. I'm a bit confused. This week started out so horrible, I was expecting T to revert back to not wanting to go to school at all. Instead he seems to be doing better in the morning. I'm hoping this continues but he is so unpredictable I don't know what to expect.

September 27

This morning was also very good. As we got to school, T began to say he was scared but stopped himself. I didn't know what to say to him. I told him for the hundredth time that his feelings were okay to have and to know that his nervousness would go away. I told him if he felt like saying it, he should. He began to sing, "I'm nervous, scared, sick and sick of it!" with a smile.

T's emotions were now not as difficult for him to feel or express and, with a smile, he began to sing about himself. This was encouraging and indicated he was able to see his behavior with some objectivity and to change how he acts, even when afraid.

In the afternoon, on the way to Dr. Rosin's office, T complained—the usual—hating to go. He hoped out loud that this would be his last

visit. He even suggested that I tell Dr. Rosin that we were moving out of the country. He said, "He'll never even look for us."

During T's session, he again spent most of the time attacking the doctor. He is letting out some of his anger at each visit and he enjoys it very much. Although he insists that he hates to visit Dr. Rosin, he really does enjoy being there during his sessions.

September 28

Tonight while we were out we met some old friends and stopped back at their house to visit for a while. T went right to the playroom and played with their two children the entire time we were there. In the past, T would stay right by my side until he felt comfortable about going off to play. A lot of times he would not go off at all. My friend commented about how much more friendly T is now that he's "getting older." She said she used to think that he didn't like her because he would never speak to her. I've mentioned several times before that we always thought T wasn't speaking to people because he was so shy. Each time another person comments on how he never talked to them, I wonder how I could have waited so long to find out what was really wrong. I just didn't see it.

October 1

Monday mornings are rough. T complained this morning that he is afraid of his art teacher, whom he sees on Mondays. He says she is mean and he is afraid of her. He was very nervous going off to school and wanted me to call her and talk to her. I told him that he didn't have to like her but he did have to go to art class and to make the best of it. I also told him that there would be many people whom he would not like very much or at all. He went into school singing his song about being nervous and being sick of it.

October 2

This morning things were fine again. No crying or whining at all. When we got out of the car at school his regular teacher, Mr. J, was holding the door for the kids to enter. We were quite a distance from the building when Mr. J yelled out, "T, is that you?" and gave him a big wave. T gave me a quick good-bye and ran to meet Mr. J. This is the first

morning that I did not have to walk him to the door. It was great to see him run to the building without his usual speech about being afraid.

In the evening, T had his church confirmation class. I was very surprised that he was going without any trouble. He was very comfortable being there without me.

October 3

Another great morning. When we got to school, T walked the full length of the school yard by himself again—two days in a row.

I wish I could say this afternoon was as good. T had lots of homework. I let him have some free time but as soon as I suggested he get his homework done he became very frustrated. The work is not too hard for him but when he starts getting frustrated he can't seem to concentrate and nothing goes smoothly. He was crying and told me he hates when I yell at him. (Again, I had not yelled.) This is the same type of mood that he gets in when S gets angry and yells at him. I am realizing that he doesn't seem to be able to handle any type of criticism. When I try to discipline him he gets the same way. He yells and screams about how everyone hates him, saying, "I'm just a dumb, jerky kid." I don't know where that came from and it bothers me that he might really think he is a "dumb, jerky kid." For a while I felt that T's inner anger was aimed at S. However, this week I am feeling that he has a lot of anger toward me.

T's distorted perception that his mother yelled at him and that she and everyone else is angry with him results from the projection of his own feelings of frustration and anger. He would love to be able to say, "I won't do my homework! Leave me alone!" However, this is blocked and is expressed instead as complaining which, although masochistic, is an attempt to relieve his inner emotional tension. The ongoing release of anger provided for by regular weekly sessions is essential to dissolving these neurotic mechanisms and relieving T's immobilization.

October 4

For three days in a row T has had great mornings: a little slow-moving, but no mention of being frightened or nervous. He walked the length

of the school yard alone again but did call to me a few times to wave to him. After school, on our way to Dr. Rosin's office, T complained several times about having to go. When we arrived at the office, T went in with Dr. Rosin and motioned for me to follow. I stood by the door not knowing whether to enter or not. Dr. Rosin asked me to wait in the waiting room and he shut the door. Although I know he was upset, T didn't cry or get hysterical the way I expected he would. I could hear T struggling and shouting at times. I realized today that all the weeks I was in the office were preparing me, as well as T, for this separation. I have faith in Dr. Rosin and I know that he would not harm T. If I didn't feel this way, it would have been very difficult to sit through the sounds I was hearing. After about twenty minutes, Dr. Rosin asked me to come into the office. When I entered the room, T had sweat dripping from his brow. He was definitely upset and he was giving his "stare" to Dr. Rosin. In the past, he would give me this angry stare if things weren't the way he wanted them. I've never seen him give this stare to anyone but me or his father. He was also growling at Dr. Rosin, another behavior that I hadn't seen lately. T was definitely not happy about being separated. He continued to hit the pillows, etc. He did have some dialogue with Dr. Rosin about not wanting to come back. Dr. Rosin asked him to give one good reason why he shouldn't return. T never did come up with a reason. During this time T was sitting on the arm of my chair. Before I knew it he was leaning back almost on top of me. As we left, T shook hands with Dr. Rosin but did not look at him as he said good-bye.

As soon as we got in the car, T started crying. He said I don't understand how hard it is for him to be there and he doesn't want to go back. He questioned me as to why he has to go; why did I start bringing him there? He told me he does lots of things for me and now it's time for me to do one thing for him—don't make him go. By the time we got home he was feeling fine, he was relaxed and he did his homework with no problems.

When I closed the door to my office with T's mother outside, T looked angrily at me and started to walk out. I picked him up and sat him on the couch. He struggled with me briefly but he did not cry or get visibly upset—such displays were reserved for his

mother. Instead, he became angrier and angrier. Keeping his mother out of the session elicited this reaction and also brought to the surface his fears of separation. When I held a pillow in front of me, he hit at me with tremendous rage. Because he was now able to more fully direct and discharge his anger at me he was able to relieve his intense fear. Several times he tried to leave the office and each time I gently picked him up and placed him on the couch. Each time more rage was discharged against me. Finally, with T drenched in sweat and glowering, I felt he'd gone as far as he could and I had his mother join us in the office. After his mother came in, T began his "stare" and growled at me. He handed me a pillow and launched into a furious attack, raging anew, now supported by his mother's presence.

He said he did not want to come back. I asked him to tell me more about this and he said that he "hated" coming to see me. This negative expression was vital and I was relieved he was able get it out. Had he not been able to do so, he might well have refused to continue in treatment. This session proved to be a major turning point in T's therapy. After an emotional discharge of such intensity, I cautioned his mother, as I had done many times before, that he would probably contract severely and have what appeared to be a negative reaction following the treatment session. I told her that this period of seeming regression would be followed by some wonderful gains.

October 8

Another bad Monday morning. T cried from the time he got up until he got to school. He insisted that he was afraid of his art teacher because she "yells" at him. At first I told him to just make the best of it. But he continued to beg me to tell his regular teacher, Mr. J, how he felt. I told him he should talk to his teacher; after about an hour of nagging and crying, however, I finally said I would talk to Mr. J if it would make him feel better. I realize that in a way he is controlling my actions, but at that point it was easier for me to just give in. As it turned out, Mr. J wasn't in today, so I never did speak to him.

When T came out of school this afternoon he showed me a very colorful painting. He was very proud of it and said he didn't have any problems in art class today. I told him to be sure to store that information in his memory bank so that next Monday morning he wouldn't

have to worry so much about art class.

This weekend my daughter asked me if I really thought T was getting better. She said she had noticed that he was crying a lot lately. My neighbor P also told me this week that she senses that T has been very tense lately. She said that for a while he was speaking very freely to her and now, all of a sudden, he's not answering her. Dr. Rosin had warned me that T might go back to his old habits occasionally. This week proved him right again.

October 9

This morning T was very worked up because a paperback book from school got torn. It seems as though every morning there is something else for him to get upset about. He wanted me to explain what happened. I told him "NO," that he should explain what happened. He crabbed about it but went off to school anyway. Although he didn't complain about being nervous, he did want me to walk across the school yard with him. I did and he went right in.

October 10

Today I went on T's class trip to the Staten Island Zoo. Needless to say, we had no problems this morning. He even let me drop him off at the building while I went to buy film for our camera. I felt so good watching him interact with his classmates. I have been on several class trips before and T was always very quiet on the bus. He never talked much to his friends during the bus ride and seemed disinterested whenever we arrived at our destination. Today was totally different! He was so alive. He actually led the other kids in conversation and joke-telling on the bus. They also had a great time signaling for truck drivers to blow their horns or give peace signs. He enjoyed the zoo but I can see that he also enjoyed being with his classmates. Another mother who has been on class trips with me before said she saw a big difference in T since last year. "He's so much more outgoing. He's really enjoying himself. I've never seen this side of him," she said. It felt very good to see him enjoy himself so much.

October 11

T went to school without problems. He said his stomach felt a little

funny but that was his only complaint. He walked the school yard alone, waving at me the whole way. After school, when T got in the car, he told me that he exchanged phone numbers with a friend in school but told him not to call him until after 4:30 because he would be busy until then. (He had an appointment with Dr. Rosin today.)

I was expecting T to put up a real fuss at Dr. Rosin's today because last week he'd had to go in by himself. He did say he didn't want to go but did not carry on about it. When we arrived, T wanted me to go in with him, so I did. After a few minutes, Dr. Rosin asked me to leave so they could begin their session. T got up to block my exit and then sat right down and let me leave. When I re-entered the room at the end of the session both T and Dr. Rosin looked worn out. T was drenched with perspiration. His hair was soaked and so was his shirt. He did not have the angry look that he had after last week's session. He had bright eyes. Before we left, Dr. Rosin made a bet with T that he would be able to call and leave a message on Dr. Rosin's answering machine.

Our ride home was great! T giggled the whole way home. He was telling jokes, some of which made absolutely no sense but just struck him funny. His eyes sparkled with everything he said. I love to see him this way. When we got home he wanted me to call his friend from school to see if he could come over to play. I told him he knew how to use the phone and to make the call himself. He started to whine about it and I told him firmly that I would not call.

It took every ounce of courage for him to pick up the phone. His face was one big frown as he dialed the phone. No one answered. He was annoyed because he really wanted to play, but I think he was relieved that no one answered. About ten minutes later he called again and someone answered and he made plans to play. He was very proud of himself when he hung up. Right after that call he took out Dr. Rosin's card. "Should I call?" he asked. I told him to make up his own mind whether he wanted to call or not. It took him three tries before he could dial the number correctly. He left his message and as he hung up the phone he began to dance around shouting, "I did it, Mom, I did it!" I told him I was proud of him and he went off to ride his bike.

October 16

T has been speaking up for himself lately. The other night at the supper table he was arguing with my daughter, D. He shouted at her "You don't treat me like a brother, you treat me like an enemy." She argued that he is not nice to her either. They bickered for a few minutes and then I told them to settle down, before S got home, as he will not tolerate arguing at the dinner table. T told me to "butt out," he was talking to D. I realized that he did not need me interfering and I let them end the argument themselves. Although they were arguing, D said some very positive things to him. She told him that, yes, she gets angry with him and yells at him, but that doesn't mean she doesn't like him. She is just annoyed at the time and wants him to leave her alone. She also said that through it all she will always love him.

The other night we were getting into the car and T hit his head. He started crying and S told him to just get in the car. T shouted at him, "I hate when you do that. I'm telling you I got hurt and you are not even listening to me!" S again told him to get in the car. T shouted again, "You HAVE to LISTEN to me. I said I hurt my head!" When we arrived at home and he was asleep, I asked S if he had paid attention to what T said. I explained to S that, although T was shouting at him, T did have a valid point. S argued that he wasn't really hurt, which was true, but I felt as though T was really expressing how he feels when S doesn't pay attention to him.

This morning was pretty good for a Monday. T only mentioned being nervous once. His regular teacher, Mr. J, is in the hospital and T knew there would be a substitute teacher. I told him to make the best of it since he knows he will have a substitute for at least a week, maybe longer. He went off to school O.K.

For the past few weeks I've been very upset over the way I am feeling. I feel nervous all the time, my insides feel shaky and I feel nauseated. I have not been sleeping well at night; I am very tired by 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. I fall right to sleep, but at about 1:00 a.m. I wake up. I fall back to sleep and wake up almost every hour. Sometimes my mind is racing. Other times I'm not thinking of anything in particular. I just can't sleep. It is no wonder that when I actually get up in the morning I am still tired. Around 6:00 a.m. when I wake up, my stomach turns and I feel physically sick. This feeling started when T was having real

difficulty in the mornings. I thought it was just a reaction to having to put up with his early morning behavior. He has been doing much better in the mornings but I am still getting sick, only much worse than before. During the day I have feelings of depression. I have a feeling that I am sinking deep within myself. S keeps asking me why I look so sad. I don't even want to answer. I just sit and do nothing but stare into space. It's scary. I can feel myself slipping in and out of depression. I want so much to feel better but I'm not sure I can ever feel better. I had several discussions with S about how alone I feel. I've tried to make him understand that I need to know that he cares about me and that I want to spend more time with him. He insists that he does love me and says he's not doing anything differently, so why am I always upset? I guess in a way he's right. I think I had been so wrapped up in taking care of the kids and the house that I didn't have time to realize how distant our relationship has gotten. Now I am seeing it more clearly while he seems to be happy just the way things are. My teenage kids do not need much mothering and T is doing great and not needing me as much to help him. I feel very taken for granted, too. The other kids only seem to want me around if they need something: money, a ride to the mall or to a friend's house. I feel as though I just don't fit into the lives of the people I love the most.

When the symbiotic enmeshment between a mother and child is progressively dissolved in the course of the child's therapy, the mother *always* reacts. Often it is at this time that the mother begins to feel the need for her own therapy. If the mother does enter into treatment, it provides a powerful adjunct to the child's therapy.

October 17

I have decided to start seeing Dr. Rosin every other week for my own therapy. I feel so confused and so frightened all the time. I mentioned before that I feel I have a difficult time showing anger, just like T. I think this is one of my problems. I also am realizing that I have a hard time talking to people. Of course, I speak when someone speaks to me, but there are very few people with whom I have actually discussed my feelings. Lately, I have been avoiding people just so I don't have to talk to anyone.

When I left work to go to Dr. Rosin's office I felt very nervous and unsure that I was doing the right thing. Part of me wanted to call and cancel my appointment, thinking that if I just leave things alone and don't stir things up, my problems will go away and I will be able to cope again. The other part of me wants to face things. When I was in Dr. Rosin's waiting room, he went upstairs for a minute. I was hoping he wouldn't come down to begin our session because I was so scared. During my session it was very difficult for me to get started talking. I shed some tears during our talk and Dr. Rosin pointed out how much I tighten my throat muscles, my mouth and how much I swallow before I can answer.

As I left the office I felt very relieved. I was not sure why. At first I thought it was the same relief you feel after a dentist appointment. Although I was expecting my emotions to be stimulated, I was not expecting all of my senses to be so heightened. The minute I stepped outside I felt the strong warmth of the sun beating down on my face. It was just as sunny when I entered Dr. Rosin's office, but I had not even noticed it. It was quite windy and it felt so good. Also, I know it was windy when I left work to go to Dr. Rosin's office, but I don't remember feeling it. Back at my job I was able to work more efficiently than I had all week. I do not understand why but I was able to organize better and get things done.

I went out that night for dinner with two of my girlfriends. T was great when I left. No tears or nagging, just a kiss good-bye and I was off.

October 18

T had his session with Dr. Rosin today. He wanted Dr. Rosin to go in first so he could motion to me to come in also, without Dr. Rosin seeing him. He did go in alone, but came out twice for about ten seconds and then went back in. I almost felt as though he was just checking to make sure I was still there. I did not hear a lot of commotion as I had in the past two weeks. When I was in the room during T's sessions in the past, the time seemed to go so quickly. Waiting in the waiting room today seemed like an eternity. T was not sweating as he had been the past few weeks, but he did have that "sparkle" in his eyes. The ride home was very lively. He was singing the tune of "Frosty the Snowman," making up his own words. He was in a very happy mood

and giggled on and off for a long time. I cannot get over the expression in his eyes. His face is truly lit up when he is talking.

At dinner tonight T spilled his drink twice. The second time S scolded him for not being more careful. T immediately went to his room mumbling about how he wasn't going to sit at the same table with his dad. He came right back and sat down and said to S, "I don't believe you would yell at a kid for having an accident. Didn't you ever spill anything?" S said, "No, I never spill anything." T laughed and said, "Yeah, right." I think T is really getting the hang of letting people know what he thinks and his speaking out definitely eliminates the long periods of crying and whining.

Later in the evening S was helping to clean the bathroom and accidentally dropped the whole roll of paper towels into the toilet. He wasn't too happy about it. He did have to chuckle, though, when T said to him, "I thought you never drop anything, Dad."

October 21

We spent the weekend at my sister's house. T had a great time playing with all his cousins and I hardly knew he was there. My sister said she could remember when T wanted my total attention and wouldn't let me talk to anyone. She was surprised to see that he wasn't clinging to me anymore.

Talking with my sisters about how we grew up, I was reminded again how differently boys and girls are treated. My one sister has two boys. Both she and her husband made several comments about how it is okay for their three year old boy to "get dirty," to "run around and have fun" because he's a boy! My other sister has two girls. Her husband constantly told their girls "not to get dirty," "don't grab things," "act like a lady," "be polite." Before I had a chance to mention this to S he told me that while the men and the kids were outside he noticed the extreme difference in what was being told to the kids.

It was easy for me to see that S grew up learning that boys shouldn't cry and that men had to prove that they are tough. I realize how I grew up on the other side of that coin—no one ever said to me to hide my feelings of anger but like my nieces, I can remember being told to "act like a lady and behave" and "be a good girl."

October 22

This morning I woke at 5:30 a.m. and immediately started feeling sick to my stomach. I tried to pinpoint whether my nervous feelings were my own or whether I was nervous not knowing how T would be on yet another Monday morning. I think I'm nervous about T, not knowing what kind of turmoil I'll have to face getting him ready for school in addition to getting myself ready for work.

T did wake up in a very crabby mood. He cried and had a hard time getting started. It only lasted a short time, though, and then he was off to school. After school he was in a great mood. He has been doing his homework much more quickly and independently.

October 24

T was a pleasure in the morning before school for the last two days. He woke up cheerful, very talkative, and there were no comments about feeling upset. I am feeling generally much calmer this week. I don't feel great, but I do feel as though I can cope with things right now.

This afternoon, one of T's friends from school called and wanted T to come over and play. T's first reaction was, "Mom, will you go with me?" I told him I wouldn't because I had lots of things to do around the house, but that he could go play for an hour or two if he wanted to. He agreed to go right away.

This is another first for him: the first time I have driven him to a friend's house and not stayed there. I guess it's a first for me, too. I'm learning to let T be as independent as he can be. In the past I would have gone along just to avoid hearing him cry about it and also so that he would have someone to play with. Today I let him decide: it was either go alone or don't go. I know he is making progress when I see things like this happening. The boy's mother was surprised that T was staying alone, "How did you talk him into it?" she asked. I told her it was his decision to stay.

October 25

T stayed home from school today. He woke up feeling sick and threw up. By noon, he was eating and feeling much better so I decided to keep his appointment with Dr. Rosin. When I told him he was going to

Dr. Rosin's he said, "Why couldn't I be sick the rest of the day so I wouldn't have to see him?" That was his only comment and when it was time to go he didn't make any fuss at all.

In the waiting room he told me to make sure I went in with him. When Dr. Rosin called him in, T went in by himself and kind of waved for me to follow him. I just sat there and T went in alone. I sat and thought for a few minutes about how a few months ago T was not able to leave my side and how now he can spend a full session alone with the doctor. It amazes me. I don't understand how these therapy sessions help but I do see definite results. As we left, T commented to Dr. Rosin that he'd rather be in school than see him. It is apparent that T is feeling much more comfortable in Dr. Rosin's presence, speaking much more freely to him. That night, before bed, T said he could hardly wait for the next day so he could go to school. He said he was bored being home all day. I couldn't believe my ears. I never thought I'd hear him say he wanted to go to school!

October 29

This is the first Monday morning that I can remember T getting up and getting to school with no complaining and no crying about anything.

October 31

Today was my visit with Dr. Rosin. I felt a little tense about going but not anything like the last time I was there. Even though it is difficult for me to talk about my problems it is so very comforting to have someone really listen to what I am saying. Several times during my session Dr. Rosin reminded me to breathe. It was so clear during T's sessions that he wasn't breathing properly but I never realized how shallow my own breathing becomes.

I am becoming aware that, like T, I have been shutting out a big part of the world. I didn't consciously know this until now. I've noticed that every once in a while, when someone is talking to me, I don't actually catch what they are saying. I'll ask them to repeat what they said as though I didn't hear them. In reality, I heard their words but they didn't register. T is always asking me to repeat what I say. I wonder if he's experiencing the same thing.

I felt a calmness within myself when I left Dr. Rosin's office. The heaviness that I had in my chest was gone. I didn't feel great but I did feel better. Later in the day my neighbor said she noticed that I was calmer.

November 1

T's session with Dr. Rosin was today. Usually he tells me over and over that he wants me to go in with him, but today he said he was going to leave his sweat shirt in the car or I could hold it in the waiting room for him. This is the first time that he acknowledged that he was going in alone. During his session there were several times when I heard him calling out for help. I feel as though I should "run to his rescue" although I know he doesn't really need me to do so. After his session he was again very cheerful.

T now engages with me more readily and more playfully. At times I hold him down on the couch and he growls at me. He playfully yells, "Help, help!" and then when I let him up he hands me the pillow and gleefully attacks me with his fists. I encourage him to yell at me as he hits and to look at me with anger. At the end of the sessions I always try to have him follow a penlight with his eyes and he always loudly refuses to do so, shouting "No, I won't!" But his "No!" is coming out and his throat is now opening up. His eyes are clearing as well. He leaves sessions looking more and more alive.

November 8

As always, T complained about having to see Dr. Rosin today but it was not the extreme whining or carrying on about it like he used to do. He simply asks, "Do I *have* to go?" I can see it becoming easier and easier for him to actually enter Dr. Rosin's office. He isn't asking me if I'll be able to go in with him. I have realized that T has been much more relaxed in the waiting room. He used to sit like a statue waiting for his session. He has been very lively in the waiting room for the past two sessions, never actually sitting in the chair. This week T was doing his list of impressions of people as he waited for his session.

When we left the office T was very cheerful. He said to me, "We didn't do anything today. All we did was talk." He doesn't realize that

the last five months of sessions have been working towards being able to "just sit and talk." Later in the day my neighbor stopped by. She couldn't believe how friendly and outgoing T was. She said, "He's a riot. When did he turn into a comedian?"

T was so alive today that I decided to try something I'd not been able to do with him previously: simply talk. It would have been a mistake to discuss deep feelings. We discussed baseball, his family, and current events. Just making conversational contact with me was difficult. When he'd start to contract and go dull during the conversation, I asked him if he wanted to come to therapy more often, perhaps four times a week. With this his eyes opened wide and his respiration increased. Then he'd shout, "No way! No way!", his face becoming animated with feeling.

Much has been accomplished, especially in the last month. T is tolerating separation from his mother and is more independent and outgoing. These changes are not yet integrated into T's structure or his mother's but a good beginning has been made. Therapy will move forward more smoothly now that both are engaged in treatment. With both child and parent in therapy I will have a more complete picture of the dynamics between them and gain as well a better appreciation of those of the family. This will allow me to better conduct their individual therapies.

(To be continued)