

## Let the Baby Sleep with Peace

They were both born into trauma.  
Their respective parents fought.  
The parents also disparaged each other. It spilled onto the kids.  
They both survived the turmoil adopting different strategies.  
One took to fight and the other flight..  
They met when young and fell in love.  
A child was born.  
Their stresses grew. Their love waned.  
One withdraws, the other chases.  
Each blames the other.  
One is intimidating, the other intimidated.  
One lies to avoid more turmoil. Meaningless issues.  
The other snaps upon discoveries.  
I meet with them together.  
Neither knows much of each other's past.  
Neither knows much of the impacts of prior family turmoil.  
Neither can believe how divergent their survival strategies are.  
Survival strategies crucial to childhood, dysfunctional come adulthood.  
One has become like a sparrow, timid and avoidant.  
The other like a bear after hibernation. Quick to snap and on the look out.  
Both strategies to survive tumultuous beginnings,  
Now interfering with adult intimate life.  
Both must take hold of new learning.  
Learning is uncomfortable, foreign.  
No faith, no trust... Practice anyway.  
Locked in old ways.  
Blame.  
Learning is blocked.  
More meetings.  
Be aware the bear. Be aware the sparrow.  
Learn to approach so as not to provoke.  
If mad be mad for a past ill equipping the future, but come to now.  
You are here.  
Things change.  
Risk doing differently.  
Adopting new strategies.  
Life improves.  
The baby sleeps nights now.

Gary Direnfeld, MSW, RSW  
(905) 628-4847

[gary@yoursocialworker.com](mailto:gary@yoursocialworker.com)  
<http://www.yoursocialworker.com>

Gary Direnfeld is a social worker. Courts in Ontario, Canada, consider him an expert in social work, marital and family therapy, child development, parent-child relations and custody and access matters. Gary is the host of the TV reality show, Newlywed, Nearly Dead, parenting columnist for the Hamilton Spectator and author of Marriage Rescue: Overcoming the ten deadly sins in failing relationships. Gary maintains a private practice in Dundas Ontario, providing a range of services for people in distress. He speaks at conferences and workshops throughout North America and was the first social worker to sit on the Ontario Board for Collaborative Family Law.