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# Destructive Behavior of Children and Methods of Correction

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**Abstract**: From the very birth of a person, many different factors, both biological and social, influence his development. The main social factor influencing the formation of personality is the family. Families are completely different. Depending on the composition of the family, on the relationship in the family to family members and to the people around them in general, a person looks at the world positively or negatively, forms his views, builds his relationships with others.

**Keywords:** Destructive behavior, attracting attention, behavior correction, struggle for power, violation of trust between a child and an adult.

For the first time, the goals of the destructive behavior of children began to be studied by Alfred Adler, and later by his student and follower Rudolf Dreikurs. At present, there are a number of well-known experts - practitioners who are seriously developing this topic as the basis for raising modern children - O. Christiansen, W. Nicholl, L. Albert, D. Dinkmayer Jr., M. Popkin and others. Researchers in their pure form identified four leading goals of destructive behavior, manifested in preschool and primary school age:

- > to attract attention;
- struggle for power;
- revenge;

In adolescence, three more goals appear:

- > the need to belong to a group;
- > the need to achieve superiority over others;
- The need to achieve psycho-physiological arousal.

However, these goals are poorly studied and are always combined with the goals of destructive behavior, which manifest themselves in preschool and primary school age.

From the point of view of Adlerian psychology, these goals are at the subconscious level, and we can identify and correct them using certain technologies described below.

## **1. Attracting attention.** Attention-getting child behavior:

- > constantly pulls his parents "mom, play with me", whines, complains that something is not working out for him and he needs help;
- At school he constantly pulls the teacher raises his hand, asks to leave, again asks for help, etc.

Children may also commit more serious acts, such as stealing or skipping school.

All this the child does in order to pay attention to him. How can an adult determine if the purpose of destructive behavior is to get attention? At this point, you should ask yourself the

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question: "How do I feel about this?" If you understand that this behavior annoys you or the child requires you to devote a lot of time to it, this is an indicator that the child's goal is to attract attention. You can also test yourself by asking the child: "Sunny, maybe it's important for you now that I pay attention to you?" At the same time, it is necessary to observe the child and see the "recognition reaction", if any. On a verbal (verbal) level, the child may simply agree by saying "yes". When a child answers "no", it is important to observe his mimic reaction. At the non-verbal level, options are possible: a nod of the head, frequent blinking, and cessation of motor reactions, stop or dilation of the pupils.

Why do children demand attention in an inadequate way? They lack attention both at home and at school. Adults have taught children to receive negative attention, such as, "I will pay attention to you and reprimand you when you misbehave; and if you behave well, then there is no need to pay attention to you. This situation often occurs at school when the teacher constantly draws attention to the bad behavior of the student. The child concludes: "They will pay attention to me if I misbehave." Children sometimes don't know how to get positive attention, but they do know how to get negative attention.

**Recommendations for behavior correction.** It must be taken into account that they will work effectively only if they are used in combination. If a child requires attention in an inadequate way, then at this point it is not worth giving him attention. Instead, you should say, for example: "In 10-15 minutes I will be free, and you and I will do what you want." It is important to indicate a short time, because the child does not perceive a long time, for him it is eternity.

Take the initiative to pay attention to the child. Teach kids to be positive. It is necessary to show children their significance and value when they meet the expectations of adults. It is advisable to observe your speech, whether you are likened to a stepmother from the fairy tale "Cinderella", who criticized the behavior of her stepdaughter. Your child has many strengths, but there are also disadvantages.

**2. Struggle for power.** The struggle for power is active and passive. The passive one is that the child silently listens to everything that the adult tells him ("Do your homework", "Stop talking on the phone", etc.), but does not do anything that he is told. An active struggle for power is expressed in the fact that the child resists not only non-verbally, but also in words: "I won't, I don't want to," etc. How to determine whether the goal of destructive behavior is the struggle for power? An adult needs to ask himself how he feels when a similar situation arises. If he feels angry, then this is a clear indicator of a struggle for power. You can test this hypothesis by asking the child: "Maybe it is very important for you to show me (the teacher) what you decided yourself?" or "Maybe it's important for you to show me that I can't force you to do what I think is right?" After the question is asked, the adult must track the recognition reaction. In fact, the child's intentions are quite understandable: growing up, he is looking for his "place in the sun", trying to try and demonstrate his strength and significance. Adults need to take into account that from a very early age the child tries to determine his capabilities and he does this by trial and error: "Will the parents give in or not? Yep, it worked! Now we have to try to conquer even more space..." and so on. How to correct the behavior of a child who is fighting for power?

Never engage in a power struggle with a child at that particular moment when he imposes it on us. Be sure to inform the child about the rules adopted in the family, starting with the words "We have accepted ..." For example, "It is customary for us to clean the apartment on Saturdays" or "It is customary for us to talk quietly when someone is working at the table." At the same time, a rather large burden falls on the adults themselves, who should not adhere to the so-called "double standards" when following the same rules. It is not clear to the child why he should stop talking on the phone at the moment when dad demands it, and at the same time mom can talk on the phone with her friends for hours. Or why he has to clean up after

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himself a plate from the table if dad does not. And so on. The next step is to give the child a choice - to act in accordance with the accepted rules or break them. Thus, responsibility for one's actions is brought up - not an adult, but the child himself decides what to do, he learns to make choices and make decisions. Next, the adult reports on the possible logical consequences of the child's choice. For example, "You have a choice - you can participate in cleaning, or you can not participate. If you manage to clean your room before (some time), we will have time to go to the cinema, you can invite someone to visit, play on the computer, etc. (Here an adult offers one of the options for pastime). "If the room is left uncleaned, well, that's a pity, but no one will be able to come to you" or "You will have to clean the room at another time, for example, when we planned to go to the movies. You know, it is customary for us to maintain order in the apartment. So the choice is yours."

If a child breaks family rules, the parent must explain the logical consequences. Followers of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs emphasize the fundamental difference between logical consequences and punishments.

As mentioned above, one way or another, it is important for a child to fight for power, to demonstrate his strength and significance. There are three areas in which an adult can help a child express himself. These are information management, people management, financial management. Using these zones, we can help the child feel and test his own strength. "When we punish a child, we deliberately try to hurt him. Moreover, we may want to make the child suffer. The purpose of applying logical consequences is not to make you suffer, but to teach you to take responsibility for your actions. - When we punish a child, we scream, we demonstrate our negative emotions in relation to the child's personality. If an adult explains the logical consequences, the child does not feel negative attitude towards himself, since it is not the child's personality that is disapproved, but his actions. Thus, we teach the child constructive actions. We can calmly talk about the problem of choice, find out what logical consequences are possible, offer the child to choose and be sure to fulfill the option we have chosen, otherwise all systematic and consistent educational efforts will come to naught. "Punishment is sometimes completely unrelated to the offense. For example, if a child gets a bad grade at school on Friday, then they are not allowed to go to the movies on Sunday. There is no logical connection between events. The logical consequence must be directly related to the wrongdoing. - For a child there should be no word "never". For example, "you will never go ...". Such threats are generally not carried out. The child gets used to this and eventually does not perceive the words as a ban. Moreover, if we, using logical consequences, limit him to playing on the computer or watching his favorite shows on TV, then such a restriction should be short-term - an evening or a maximum of one day. Otherwise, children get used to the duration of the punishment and, in the end, stop responding to it. "When we punish, we use our power. What is the child's conclusion? "Who is stronger is right". In the case of the implementation of logical consequences, we teach the child to make choices, make reasonable decisions and be responsible for them.

## 3. Revenge (violation of trust between a child and an adult).

Revengeful behavior in a child occurs if the struggle for power between him and an adult is protracted, and both sides of this struggle become painful. Again subconsciously we make the child suffer. As a rule, in order to change the vengeful behavior in a child and in an adult, the intervention of an intermediary, such as a family psychologist, is necessary. Actions of the child: calls names, spoils property, deceives, steals, tries to hurt an adult in words and deeds. Such negative behavior can be directed not only at one particular person, but also transferred to all adults. The child learns to hurt by following the example of adults. How to determine whether revenge is the goal of a child's destructive behavior? An adult can ask himself the question of what he feels at this moment, and if he answers that he is hurt and offended, then, most likely, revengeful relations lie at the heart of the relationship between the child and the

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adult. You can also try to ask the child: "Maybe it is very important for you to show me how it hurts and hurts when you are offended or not trusted?" Do not use the word "revenge" itself. Next, observe the recognition reaction. How to correct the behavior of the child in this case?

First you need to ask the child a question: "Who offended you and how?" If the relationship is based on revenge, then resentment "sits on the tip of the tongue", and, as a rule, the child will immediately voice it. An adult asks for forgiveness, while it is strictly forbidden to use the word "but". It's better to just say: "I'm sorry, I'm sorry that I offended you," without adding, for example, "but you yourself are to blame for this." Definition of the conflict zone. It is necessary to discuss with the child what mutual actions cause resentment. Definition of expectations: what we expect from each other. Unfortunately, in the family we rarely tell each other our expectations, assuming that a loved one should already know this. Such a delusion leads to a conflict of expectations, starting from the first days of a young family's life. Negotiation - how to meet each other's expectations. It must be remembered that the restoration of relations does not occur immediately, sometimes it takes at least 1 year; The younger the child, the faster trust can be restored.

**4. Demonstrating failure or avoiding failure.** The basis is the loss of courage by the child: he does not believe in his own success, considers himself worse than others. Behavioral reactions: absenteeism, lies, refusal to do homework, does not go to the blackboard, hides behind the backs of others, does not complete assignments, demonstrates with all appearance: "I am worse than others, I can't do anything." Such children are usually conflict-free, but they actively show their own helplessness. How to determine this goal of destructive behavior? An adult can ask himself the question: "What do I feel at this moment?". If the answer is: "I am in despair, my hands give up," most likely the child is demonstrating failure. You can ask a child a question: "Maybe you don't believe in your own strength, that you can be successful?" At the same time, we observe the manifestation of the recognition reaction. Most likely, there are serious reasons for demonstrating failure: constant criticism of the child; family authority; frequent comparisons with the best; neglect from others; psychological trauma, physical or sexual.

There are some recommendations which must be followed:

- Completely stop criticizing the child. If you can't avoid criticism, then for one critical remark, praise the child at least 10 times within 8 hours (data from NLP specialists).
- For such children, it is very important to break up tasks into small parts so that they can complete them successfully. A child needs experience to feel successful.
- Recognize, celebrate, celebrate not the end result, but the process itself. For example, "My joy, yesterday you had 18 mistakes in the text, and today only 11. What words did you write correctly today?" "I'm proud of you" this phrase makes the child dependent on the assessment of an adult. A better question is: "Are you proud of yourself?" this allows the child to gradually feel his inner strength.

It is important to work with such a child step by step: first show him how to complete the task, then do it with him, and at the end offer to complete the task on his own. Do not forget that tasks for self-fulfillment, especially at the beginning, should be small. Constantly and endlessly support, encourage and encourage the child. This requires a lot of self-control from an adult.

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