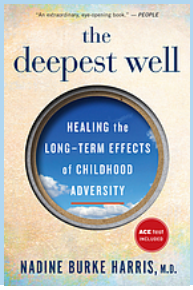
Discussion Guide



The Deepest Well
Nadine Burke Harris MD

Harper Collins
2021 reprint
272 pages
ISBN: 978-132850266

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Summary

Dr. Nadine Burke Harris was known as a crusading physician delivering targeted care to vulnerable children. But it was Diego – a boy who had stopped growing after a sexual assault – who galvanized her journey to uncover the connections between toxic stress and lifelong illnesses.

Questions

1. The title of this book is *The Deepest Well*. To what well is the author referring? How does she use this analogy to relate to the problems she encountered as a medical doctor?
2. In Chapter 6, Dr. Harris doesn't blame Charlene for her daughter's failing health; instead, she tries to help them both. What do you think drives Dr. Harris's compassion for Charlene?
3. In Chapter 11, what does the author mean by "stepping on the gas" and "releasing the brake" as we support learning for children?
4. In Chapter 12, Diego took on the role of caregiver in multiple situations. Given what you know about toxic stress, what are the dangers of a child fulfilling that role?
5. The author believes that trauma becomes embedded in a community. Do you agree or disagree? What are some of the stressors you know about in the environment where you serve? It takes time for communities to learn and understand new research. How do you see people in your community growing in their understanding of the negative effects of toxic stress?
6. How can a person's understanding of their own ACE score be a tool for self-empowerment and advocacy?

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