

Two Thousand Kisses a Day: Gentle Parenting Through the Ages and Stages by L.R. Knost

Book Review by Cindy Larsen



L.R. KNOST

As an infant teacher for over four years, I have taken note of different ideas and approaches that many parents have as they come through our classroom and I establish relationships with their families. I have had lots of conversations with these parents and have done reading and research, especially online. In the reading I have done I kept coming across an author named L.R. Knost and was seeing references to a book that she wrote called Two-thousand Kisses a Day. I finally was so intrigued that I ordered it and read it in just a few days.

Two Thousand Kisses a Day: Gentle Parenting Through the Ages and Stages

Author: L.R. Knost

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One aspect of infant development discussed in this book that I found interesting was woven into the entire foundation of the book and would be considered under the area of social-emotional development and well-being: the whole premise of **connections** or bonding and attachment. This book is all about gentle parenting. It is about guiding instead of controlling, connecting instead of punishing, and encouraging instead of demanding. It's all about following the cues of a child and respecting those.

Two thousand kisses are not necessarily about physical kisses. The kisses represent connection points. It's about smiling, eye contact, conversations, expressing affection, giving undivided attention, listening, inferring what the child may be trying to communicate, allowing the expressions of emotions and validating them, inviting and including our children into our everyday lives, guiding them to understanding of their emotions and feeling and helping them to process them by listening and reflecting back what we hear. These connection points can also

include sharing our own thoughts and processing out loud with our children when appropriate, honoring their wishes, sharing their interests, offering them choices, and relating to them in a respectful, gentle, and kind way. Creating and consistently seeking and maintaining these connection points builds the foundation of trust, the bonding, and the attachment that the children need in order to create their own sense of identity, self awareness, self regulation, and more.

In the few chapters of the book that were specifically speaking to parenting an infant, the author encourages relationships. She encourages the new parents to reach out to their own parents or trusted friends for help or advice. Yet, she also encourages them to trust their own intuition and be confident enough to make final decisions about parenting through their relationship with their baby and following cues and instincts. She encourages following the baby's lead for sleeping and eating, listening to their own ways of communicating and honoring all needs. I especially applauded that the author clearly encourages the parents to consider the baby and what they are communicating in all areas . . . to be mindful of their safe haven for nine months and how they can accommodate for those same safe and secure and warm needs when they are first born, and to be listening and observing the crying because that is the baby's main means of communication.

The information in this book will not only support my work as an IAIM Infant Massage Instructor, but supports the vision and goals of IAIM. Gentle parenting is all about observing and responding quickly and consistently to your children's needs. It is about building a trust relationship that will be the solid foundation of connection, communication, and self-understanding. The vision of IAIM includes enhancing the parent-baby bond and helping to create more family centered values in our own communities in order to build generations to come that will express more connection and compassion with those around them as they live out their lives. The increased understanding that I have from reading this small but powerful book already has made an impact on me as an infant educator and as a parent educator through my infant massage classes.