

## Armidale Seminar with Psychologist, Psychotherapist and Author Robin Grille

Last Thursday Patricia and I (Janine) went to Armidale to attend a seminar with Psychologist, psychotherapist and Author, Robin Grille, who lives and works in Sydney. He is the Author of 2 books, **Parenting for a Peaceful World** and **Heart to Heart Parenting**, which are a *“bold and innovative contribution to the changes needed to build the cultural foundations for peace, human rights and environmental sustainability.”*

Robin is an inspiring and passionate man dedicated to exploring and creating a more peaceful and harmonious world through more gentle and compassionate child rearing. He equates that violence in the world has got so much to do with how we have been bringing up children. Robin has done extensive research into child-rearing practices as far back as early AD, and right through the ages.

It is a shocking account of brutality, with Robin commenting that *“We come from a long line of child torturers.”* However violent we see the world today though, we have actually come a long way. Right throughout history children have been, neglected, abandoned, used for slaves, mutilated, beaten and even killed in shocking proportions. He also showed how throughout the ages practices did gradually improve up to the present day, with the growth of social justice, human rights, gentle birth and the return to breastfeeding,

Basically we are violent humans as a result of childhood. He contrasted profiles of cultures where child rearing was more humane and the effects this had on society and political and social policy. For example, one study showed that in Germany the only difference between those who accepted Fascism and those who didn't was that those who didn't were not beaten as children.

He went on to talk about how early childhood experiences changes genes. Robin spoke of the hormone *Cortisol*, the flight fight response hormone that becomes toxic with continued raised levels and kills brain cells, especially in the part of the brain connected to empathy and relationship.

On the other hand the hormone *Oxytocin* is produced in abundance when the child is loved and held, where the child's needs are fully met. *Oxytocin* actually builds neurons and leads to emotionally balanced and autonomous adults. Babies needs have to be fully met, however he does stipulate that after about the age of one they also need to hear *“no”* and have some firm but respectful guidelines.

We are actually in a moment of change right now, which he calls the calls *“The Children's Liberation Movement”* where all over the world fragmented movements are coming together leading to more sensitive and wholesome practices in the workforce, schools and homes. He argues that all of us are parents to society's children, and that, *“a human brain and heart met primarily with empathy in the critical early years will not choose a violent or selfish life.”* The results could be a revolution of peace, humanity, and a world beyond our imagining. Much of this we already know and his information on the brain and hormones is science again proving what we already know.

For more information on Robin, his work or his books go to [www.our-emotional-health.com](http://www.our-emotional-health.com)

Robin is also co-author of a petition called *Children's Wellbeing Manifesto*. To give support to this, go to [www.kindredmedia.com.au](http://www.kindredmedia.com.au)