

Finding Balance between the baby and the adult

It would not be untrue to say that one of the bigger problems of AB DL life for many is in trying to find a degree of BALANCE in how the needs and desires of babying and diapering fit into the real world.

Finding balance is the primary goal of the Parent/Child relationship.

Rather than seeking a cure for the regression, we should by now realise that a far better option is to seek a way to live comfortably and happily with our infantile behaviour. I hope you also now understand that you hold the power to bring peace and stability to your Little One, by virtue of your acceptance and interaction with his *entire being*, including the inner child. The unfortunate truth is, that just as all children need a parent to thrive, so do adult babies.

Finding a stability and balance in the Parent/Child relationship takes some work, but once established, can make the relationship wonderful, enriching and safe.

What is stability?

Typically, a regressive adult baby without some form of parenting, lives on an emotional roller coaster. The ups and downs might take place over hours, days or even months. This wild ride leads to anger, resentment and binge/purge cycles. The wilder the ride, the more risk of damage to the relationship, and for destructive behaviours to occur.

Stability isn't the end of the ups and downs. That is a worthy goal, but is probably unachievable, as we all have ups and downs in our functional emotional lives. Stability is more about taking the edge off the extremes and bringing them back within normal boundaries. Within these boundaries, your Little One can cope and handle his drives and feelings, just like normal emotions and needs. Stability is essentially about restoring behavioural and emotional control to the child.

Uncontrolled Regression:

One of the worst aspects of an unstable or over-stressed AB, is where the regression becomes either *uncontrolled* or *uncontrollable*. For some ABs, this is the destination to which they are inevitably headed, if there isn't some kind of intervention. If there is no effective outlet, the regressive/infantile need gets bigger, stronger and harder to control, as time goes on. Eventually, it can reach a place where it spills out uncontrollably into the adult world and that's where trouble occurs.

When it is *uncontrolled*, the AB *permits or initiates* regression, regardless of the circumstances or the appropriateness. This can be exceptionally dangerous, as well as potentially embarrassing. A baby in this state, may exhibit bedwetting, pants wetting and even crawling and other infantile behaviours, when it is highly inappropriate. This is because the internal pressure has reached a breaking point and some release is demanded, appropriate or not. This is the state that we need to ensure never happens. Even a minimal Parent/Child relationship or ability to regress safely can achieve a degree of stability.

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Uncontrollable regression is even worse. This is where the regression occurs spontaneously or for very long periods, and appears to be beyond the adult's control. If this is true, then professional mental health intervention may be required, but in the vast majority of cases, it isn't really ever needed. It is more about the *deep-seated unwillingness* of the adult to exert control. It only *appears* uncontrollable, because the adult has given up on trying anymore.

Some regression can be hard to control, but for the majority of Abs, it remains nothing more than a conscious choice - not necessarily an *easy* choice, but a choice nonetheless.

Defining the need: How much baby time is required?

The key to finding balance is in discovering how much regression is actually needed to meet your Baby's inner needs and then achieving it. The regression to childhood or infancy meets a very deep and very powerful emotional, and sometimes physical, need. Finding out how much is needed takes time and usually lots of it. If asked how much baby-time you need, most will either say I don't know or present a figure that is excessive and often wildly so. The question however, is a complicated one because 'how much' has different responses, depending on your *goal*.

Basically, there are three goals available for you to pursue.

1. Just enough regression to ease the pain and to avoid a breakdown. This is the minimal goal and seeks just enough regression time to ensure that you won't explode, or even end the relationship. It isn't really an exceptional goal, because its parsimonious attitude reflects what you truly feel about yourself and it certainly doesn't come across as total acceptance. It is a perfunctory action, designed to minimise damage. In essence, it is emotional damage control. Be warned however, that at this goal level, you are highly unlikely to get any significant long-term positives yourself out of it. If you want to get something positive for yourself, then look to the next level.
2. **The right amount of regression so that the inner Baby is relaxed.** This goal level is an excellent one to aim for. This goal has you seeking to allow your inner baby significant expression of his inner self and needs, but not driven purely by need alone. You will have recognised that he enjoys being Little, so you will give him Little Time, *just for fun*. You may also find some enjoyment out of his Littleness as well. You will find that changing his diaper sometimes or feeding him, is less of a chore and more of an intimate experience that you can both enjoy. You are probably also enjoying a better sex life, either as adult/adult, Parent/Child or both, as the drive-destroying pressure of being a Little, lessens.

This is a good goal level for you both to live at, as it is highly functional and deep needs are also being met. You, the parent, are also getting some satisfaction out of the experience, beyond the satisfaction of simply meeting your partner's needs. A simple test to see if you are giving him the right amount of regression is this rather rough measurement. If he asks for Little Time and you say 'not now' and he is quite happy with it, or if you offer Little Time and he declines, because he has something else to do, then you have now reached the goal level you are after! Congratulations!

3. **More regression than he needs, but not so much that it overwhelms the adult experience.** Here is something you may not expect. You may not only find the Little

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experience satisfying, you may really, really enjoy it. You may even seek out extended opportunities to indulge in the practical expression of his regression. You may deeply enjoy parenting or you may realise that your Little One truly loves being Little, and you decide that your goal level is to give him *substantial time* as a Little. This is not simply to meet a need or to give him a bit of fun, but rather to allow him a large amount of time in the Little world, simply to enjoy himself. The only caveat in this level is to ensure that the Little doesn't take up too much of the essential adult time and responsibilities. We all have real world obligations to fulfil.

At this level of balance, needs are obviously being met on both sides and there is now room for a significant degree of enjoyment of the Parent/Child relationship. It is an exciting level to be at, but it only works properly and long term, if both partners are getting a significant emotional return from it. If only the Little One is really enjoying it, then it is unsustainable for the long term and you are better to drop back to goal level two, which is still extraordinarily exciting and fulfilling for you both.

Preventative techniques:

No matter what level of balance you attain in the Little experience, there will always be times and places when the Little One exerts pressure to come out or the amount of regression wanted, exceeds the opportunities that are available. No matter what our best intentions are, sometimes you just can't get or do what you want. For regressive Little Ones, we sometimes need a few techniques to keep things more easily under control.

Here are some ideas and activities that can be done that help minimise or prevent excessive regression, when it isn't appropriate or possible. These ideas will become apparent to you, if you look closely enough over time. These techniques and suggestions may also be things *external* to the behaviour like:

- Better sleep patterns.
- Traditional stress reduction techniques (massage, yoga etcetera).
- Better health and fitness.
- Improved relational communications - essentially talking more with your partner and spending more quality time with them.
- Increased and varied social life - get out more!
- Better and more frequent sexual intimacy.

Pre-emptive Regression:

There are a lot of regression-like behaviours that can ironically be used to help prevent regression.

The risk of wildfires is reduced by controlled burn-offs. The same concept can apply to regression. A period of controlled, predictable regression, can reduce or eliminate the risk of uncontrolled Little Times. It can give back some of the balance that regression typically takes away.

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One good example of the concept at work is this one:

“My baby inner was getting out of control and since I lived alone I decided to try living as a baby all the time. That was a fiasco. It was way too much and it just made it worse. Then I tried something a bit different.

Now when I get home from work every day I put on a nappy and a baby dress and have a bottle I had prepared in the morning. I empty my bladder into the nappy and spend the next two hours as a baby. Nothing really special except I do this every day no matter what. Half the time I don’t really want to. I’m tired or just not in the mood. But I still do it. Some days as soon as the two hours is over I’m out of baby mode like a shot! Other days I stay that way for a lot longer.

But the real difference for me is that now I can go out on weekends with friends and not feel anxious about the baby need coming up out of nowhere and distracting me and stopping me from having fun. I used to be with people and just feel like I disappeared when my inner baby wanted to be out.

I went away with some friends for a weekend and not once did my baby bug me. Mind you as soon as I got home I was into a nappy and dress double-quick! It works for me.”

[internet blog]

Non-regressive diaper use:

Let’s talk about diapers again. They are the central prop or Attachment Object for the Little One and as such, may be part of the key to finding balance. An integral part of regression involves wearing and using diapers. Outside of regression, diapers are only really used for bedwetting and/or incontinence. Or are they? Do they have other uses that we can consider?

In their most basic form, a diaper handles the wearer’s elimination needs and compensates for their lack of bladder and/or bowel control. In a regression situation however, they are almost always worn as a part of the child’s outfit and as an integral part of the scenario. But another truth, is that a lot of regressive Little Ones actually *need* their diapers during regression (situational incontinence). As they regress, they lose bladder and sometimes bowel control and they are literally

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unable - and possibly unwilling - to have control. For many, they are continent during the day and mainly continent at night, but from the moment they put on a diaper, they instantly lose that control.

Using the *burn-off* metaphor, it was suggested to one couple that the regressive partner trial wearing diapers fulltime for a few weeks, to see what the results were. This is what the wife had to say (edited):

“At first I thought the idea that Jim wear diapers all the time was idiotic! Here we are struggling with his baby behaviour and his bedwetting and you suggested I give in to it? But we were in such a bad place I thought I had to give it a try before throwing away everything, including Jim!

I wasn't ready for the results and they dumbfounded me. Jim was calmer, happier and I felt there was hope again. I still felt ridiculous when I saw him in diapers but it got easier after a while.

It's now six months to the day and he hasn't been out of diapers since. I expected one of us to crack and dump the whole idea but no one did. He was happier and his baby moods were still there but seemed easier in a way. None of us wanted to change something that seemed to be working.

Jim is afraid of becoming incontinent but he is afraid of the uncontrollable baby that lives inside him much more.

We are still working on balancing everything. It's hard but next week Jim is having a two year old 'birthday party'. I hope it is as effective as the diaper idea.”

[personal email]

One of the more effective preventative ideas, is to revert to significant or fulltime diaper use or even just night diapers. The point is that by *burning-off* some of the desires and needs in a regular and controlled way, the worst of the excesses may be curbed, at least in part. You may need to experiment with your Little One wearing diapers regularly, regardless of regression or not. It might work and it might not, but experience indicates that it might very well help. Of all the preventative ideas, this one should be trialled first. One possible problem, is that it might initially trigger stronger regression. However, give it a few weeks before you dump the idea. Often with major changes like

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this, the initial experience is an uncontrolled release of pent-up feelings and behaviours. After a while, it all settles down, and it is then that you can tell if it is going to work or not. The true value appears once diapers become *functional* (normalised and desensitised) items to your Little One, rather than purely infantile objects.

Other preventative ideas:

Other props and activities that can be used regularly, regression or not, are:

- If he is a baby girl, then wearing panties more often or all the time.
- Using a pacifier at night on a regular basis.
- Using a baby bottle a few times a week or whatever works best.
- The Little One reading a child's book or you reading to him.
- Wearing children's/toddler clothes at fixed pre-defined intervals, such as to bed or in the evenings.
- Other regressive behaviours that you find are easy to do, yet bring a reduction in internal pressure.

As the parent, your role is to help find some of the burn-off activities that help your Little One find balance. It may mean you have to *demand* he do some of these things, even when he doesn't want to. I mean it! Little Ones are very much driven by their need at the moment, rather than looking to the future. If you have established some regular burn-off activities, such as wearing diapers in the evening, then you need to insist that he follows through, even when he doesn't want to. Taking the Little One beyond simply responding to inner needs is crucial. It is in these times where so much of the balance is learned.

Special Events:

If you truly understand that your Little One is a child, then you can draw on your wealth of experience as either a biological parent or as a child yourself. Remember how the promise of something special helped your biological child behave? Remember also how after that exciting time or gift, the child felt special and was less demanding for a period of time? Your Little One is no different.

There are some special events you can plan for your Little One that he will look forward to and enjoy. The amazing thing about it, is that a few of these events can sate or satisfy the Little One's deep needs for quite some time. You could plan a half day Little Time with all the trimmings. This is not primarily about finding balance. It is about nothing more than your Little One having a deep and enjoyable time as a child. The irony is that balance can sometimes be the result!

You could bathe him, change him into his prettiest outfits, do his nails, do his hair or wig and make a fuss over him. For a boy toddler, get out his baby overalls and all his toy cars and trucks. You could also feed him by hand or use a bottle. Read him stories, play games, change his diaper and

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give him a nap - the whole nine yards. Then sit back and watch him feel happy and satisfied. Sometimes that satisfaction can take the edge of his ongoing needs for days or even weeks.

You can try other things too:

- Birthday Party.
- Themed day.
- 'Baby's Day Out' into Unsafe Zones.
- Meeting with another Little or Parent/Child.
- Joining him as a Little One yourself.

Find some event or activity that is special and rare, but something that can be repeated, if needs be. These can be used as rewards, or just something to help your Little feel the satisfaction that so often eludes him. There is nothing wrong with offering rewards to your Little One for good behaviour. While it would be wrong to do this with your adult partner, the promise and reward cycle is quite appropriate and productive for a biological child and also for a Little Child.

Balance comes to happy and satisfied Little Ones, not angry and upset ones.

Summary of Finding Balance:

In essence, balance is the midpoint between fantasy and harsh reality. You need to be clever, inventive and observant. Some things will work, while others won't. For some, being put back into diapers will have no effect, or even make it worse, while for others, it will take the edge off the pressure and make regression much easier to live with. You have to experiment to find out which is true for you. Look to your own childhood for things you loved doing and consider emulating some of that. Feel free to experiment and don't feel intimidated by failure or mistakes. The mere act of attempting to help, is far better than most Little Ones ever get to experience. Your successes will always outweigh your mistakes and your Little One will always appreciate your efforts, including the failures.

A clue to finding balance is this:

Fantasy thrives when it is not allowed to be expressed in the real world. There is nothing more devastating to a fantasy than reality. Believing in the fantasy that you are a baby girl loses a lot of its power when you are required to actually live as one.

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Fantasy is your enemy.

Reality is your friend.

Balance sits somewhere between them.

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