

stories about her son Jason, lots of good mom and bad mom stories, and descriptions of her many experiences in Mexico, where she worked with two shamans and participated in the Gurdjieff Work. Her travelogues take us to some countries where she has given talks and had magical experiences.

Of course, her life was not without disappointments and trauma. The two most painful incidents involve her divorce from her second husband, Robert Floyd, who was occasionally abusive, and the death of her daughter, Peyton, in a car accident at age 20. She tells us about her cocaine addiction and how she managed to stop using it, the fire that destroyed her cherished home of 30 years, reconciling her own internal biases, and her experiences in rehab at the famed Sierra Tucson, where she was diagnosed with and successfully treated for trauma, anxiety, and depression.

This book balances the pain and the joy that has characterized her life, yet mostly focuses on the magic that Robbie feels has permeated that life. Her writing is vivid, accessible, and clear. It is personal. While reading, you sense that she is right beside you, talking to you about her many adventures. The last chapter's title is self-explanatory, "On My Life as It Is Now, on Being Exiled from My Family, and on Healing from Breast Cancer."

This brilliantly illuminating, multilayered book presents a colorful cornucopia of personal reminiscences combined with keen intellectual observations. Undeniably compelling.

To order this book, please email Robbie at davis-floyd@outlook.com

Review of *Lullaby Wisdom: The Stories, The Songs, and the Science of Soothing*

By Licia Claire Seaman

Review by Stephanie Cloutman, RN, BSN, CPN, CLC

Licia Claire Seaman's *Lullaby Wisdom: The Stories, The Songs, and the Science of Soothing* describes how lullabies can optimize brain development. Seaman applies her certification in interpersonal neurobiology and background as a musician to assess how the lullaby can help the health and well-being of babies. She writes that human brains are wired to defend and protect themselves for survival. By creating enough feelings of safety for the baby—e.g., through the lullaby—the caregiver can help the baby's brain move beyond defending against danger when activated to learning and wiring other capacities, such as those for more complex social and cognitive functioning. Seaman argues,

Babies default nervous system is hunting for danger. We all have this automatic danger- detecting system for a lifetime. So the big challenge is to reduce threat, and/or feelings of danger. Being safe is more than someone telling us that we are safe, it is the feeling of safety from inside. (Seaman, 2022, p.7)

The book includes many examples of soothing and clear and accessible explanations of the neuroscience at play as a result and the impact on the developing brain. In one example, the author shares how caregivers can support the prefrontal cortex development in their baby because it is quite unfinished at birth. The degree to which this part of the brain develops depends on interaction with the outside world and other humans. Seaman writes,

We know internally how to frame the structures (of the prefrontal cortex) in three to five years. How? Well, our needs are fairly simple, and yet not always available. We need safety. Nerve pathways are laid in with safe, warm human interactions. Imbued with love's nourishment, the prefrontal cortex grows rapidly...When Baby feels safe, they grow phenomenally quickly, setting capabilities for a whole lifetime.

(Seaman, 2022, p. 6-7)

Warm, loving, and supportive interaction through singing is one way caregivers can bring the feeling of safety and support to both themselves and their baby. Seaman has compiled lullabies from around the world in this song-filled book. The author begins by introducing information regarding the science of soothing babies, including the impact of playing, touching, talking with, listening to, and sensitively responding to the needs of babies. The bulk of the book contains lullabies and is easily digestible because of how it is compiled.

Seaman introduces each song by sharing a short story about where it originates, followed by what is happening in the brain for the baby and caregiver, including the impact on development and capacities later in life. There is artwork in the form of watercolor illustrations by Peggy Dressel alongside each lullaby, complete with chords and a link to listen online.

This book explains to caregivers why developing and honing their capacity to support a baby lovingly is valuable. It does this by highlighting not only what is happening in the moments of soothing but also by explaining the powerful long-term benefits that loving and attentive connections have on the developing brain and the future capabilities that those neuronal connections will afford the human later in life.

The value of sharing the science and practical tools in an accessible way could be especially valuable in cultures where many do not have access to the wisdom of their ancestors and in cultures that do not overtly value intuition as a source of information. The clear and accessible education presented in this work could support humanity's maturation and contribute to developing compassionate societies.

Lullaby Wisdom is a valuable companion for anyone who loves or cares for a baby as they endeavor to support their optimal development and for those who want to receive or offer soothing through song, despite age. This book's

practical application is one of its great strengths. It offers valuable information about how and why time spent connecting, playing, singing, and being soothed by a loving caregiver is important for a baby's brain development and future. The value of lullabies, with and without lyrics, some just with sounds or humming, is abundant and can be used immediately. This information can educate those outside of the scientific community and offer inspiration and motivation to support babies in effective and lasting ways.

Lullaby Wisdom: The Stories, The Songs, and the Science of Soothing (2022), by Licia Claire Seaman. Peaceful Pear Publishing. 100 pages. ISBN-978-0-578-31613-0; ISBN-13: 978-0-578-31614-7