

Resisting the Logic of Control

“It’s hard to have someone being so negative around you all the time when you’re trying to stay hopeful. So, respect that you can’t change their world view. But you also don’t have to let them control yours. And when you’re at your limit, take time to recharge.”

—Parent of a child who displays AFCCA

Parents who experience AFCCA on a daily basis while raising their children may undergo significant trauma themselves. Witnessing their child struggle to accept love, care, and boundaries, alongside the negative worldview of traumatized and neurodivergent children, can be challenging. Preventing this from affecting us as parents is difficult but Nonviolent Resistance (NVR) can be helpful. NVR involves resisting controlling behaviors, both from our children towards others and resisting how it impacts us. While we cannot control our child’s worldview, we can control our own by taking time for restorative time, setting boundaries, and maintaining a positive outlook on life.

Research suggests that understanding the reasons behind our children’s behaviour, such as their trauma or neurodevelopmental disorders, can help us make sense of their actions without taking it personally.

“At some point I think we need to take our lives back and not feel guilty (or let others try to make (us) feel guilty).”

—Parent of a child who displays AFCCA

Many parents express frustration at being denied the opportunity to reclaim their lives, as they no longer have enough time or energy to engage in activities they once enjoyed. This situation often leads to a negative outlook and a sense of losing their identity. Additionally, they frequently experience guilt when trying to take time for themselves, which can be reinforced by others around them. However, when these parents share their stories with those who understand or have experienced AFCCA, they realize they are not alone. They come to recognize their competence and the fact that they can only control their own behavior, reactions, and emotions. A significant aspect of parenting a child with AFCCA involves reclaiming one’s narrative and learning how to respond effectively.

Resisting the child’s controlling behaviours is very helpful for parents.

