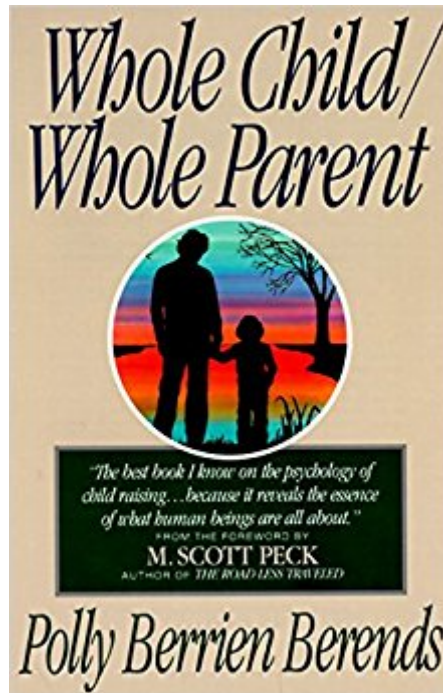




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# Whole Child/ Whole Parent



## Synopsis

For more than two decades, *Whole Child/Whole Parent*, the first spiritually oriented book on parenthood and the first to address the value of parenthood for the parent as well as for the child, has provided a sound, practical, psychological and spiritual footing for parenthood and family life. This fourth edition includes new material for contemporary parents on anger, children's dreams, maintaining individual and family life, marital as well as parental life, and many new personal anecdotes. It is the perfect guide "not merely for parents who want to raise their children in the best manner possible, it is for all people, including adults who want to raise themselves." (M. Scott Peck, from the foreword). Whether exploring love and discipline or bedtime and storybook reading, Berends shows the practical relevance of spiritual insights to the most ordinary parental tasks.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Wholeness as Completeness  
If you'll be m-i-n-e mine I'll be t-h-i-n-e thine, And I'll l-o-v-e love you  
All the t-i-m-e time . . . --"Zulu King," traditional camp song  
We tend to think of ourselves as separate beings (I, the parent--you, the child) existing in relation to each other and trying to perfect ourselves as complete, "whole" persons. Parent and child alike are believed to be completeable, each in quest of wholeness, each to some extent deriving its wholeness from the other. Unconsciously, when we think of loving each other we tend to mean getting wholeness from each other. But whether we call it love or not, there is a certain built-in contrariness to the idea of many would-be whole selves

seeking to get personal completeness from each other. In breast-feeding, for example, the apparent situation is that the mother has got what the child has not. So the mother gives of her self, and the child gets. And what is the mother getting? A sense of personal completeness and a sense of self-sacrifice. On the one hand, she is fulfilling herself and being loving; on the other hand, she may feel secretly robbed and resentful. It takes so much time--much more than she thought. It's so tiring. Must she give up her whole life for her child? When the child becomes more "self-sufficient," it is time for weaning. Now the mother is relieved and freed, and so is the child. Yet they may both feel cheated. The mother feels less whole, less of a mother if the child is weaned; she is less of a mother if he isn't! And while the child may seem reluctant to give up nursing, underneath it may be the mother's secret clinging that prolongs the nursing and inhibits the child's growing freedom and wholeness. Fathers also experience such conflicts. A man wants a child to complete his marriage and his picture of himself as a whole father/husband; yet he seems to lose his wife (thereby diminishing his husband self) in the process. He wants his son to be a little man; but at the same time he wants to be in charge, to be looked up to and obeyed. If we--parent and child--are indeed separate personal entities, each in quest of personal wholeness, such conflicts of self-interest are inevitable. As a doctor's healing work depends on somebody else being sick, so our ambition to be whole parents and raise independent whole children seems to depend on their being dependent on us. Our sufficiency seems dependent on their unsufficiency. Each of us in making our claim to personal wholeness is inclined to rob the other of his claim to wholeness. But where is the love in that? Where indeed? And where is the wholeness? If there is wholeness in any of us, what is this need to go around getting it from somebody else? If you don't think the title of this book is Whole Parent/Whole Child, then you are the exception. Most people do. Implied is that if the parent is whole, then the child will be whole. If the parent knows how to do it, then the child will turn out okay. But then--oh, horrible thought and worse experience!--if the child seems not to be whole, then the parent must not be whole either. The nine-month-old next door is already walking, while our eleven-month-old hasn't taken a step. The manager of the supermarket says our seven-year-old has stolen a package of gum. From silly to serious, every difficulty suggests to us that the child is not whole, which in turn suggests that we are to blame, which in turn suggests that we are not whole. God forbid! So we seek diagnoses, explanations for what's wrong with the child. If we can't take credit for our children, then at least please excuse us from the blame! Thank goodness it's dyslexia! I thought it was my fault. I thought he was stupid, lazy. Indeed, recognition of our children's special differences, limitations, styles of learning, and so forth can be very helpful. But there is another side as well. Secretly we are almost grateful to think that there is something really the

matter with him, something only mechanical, something wrong with him rather than with us. So in a strange way, the very thing we started out in favor of (rearing a whole child) turns out to be something we are somehow also against. There are all these hidden clauses--the fine print we don't see when we make this contract to have children and become parents. We act on assumptions and motives we aren't aware of and reap consequences we don't expect. One mother has a wonderful governess who raised her as a child and now helps with her children. The children love the governess; the governess loves and cares beautifully for the children. Any busy mother would be delighted to have such assistance and such loving care for her children. But this mother feels rejected and jealous! In her picture of her "whole" self she is the complete, perfect mother. She wants her children to love, depend on, and look up to her alone, for everything. But does she really want them to be afraid to leave her side? to find no love anywhere except from her? She sees how ridiculous this is. Yet the desire is very strong. Her desire to be the complete mother conflicts with her being a truly good mother. Are we using our children? You bet we are. But while we are not as good as we thought, we are not as bad either--only mistaken.

This was a gift for my son and his wife who are expecting their first child. It is a beautiful book, filled to the brim with info that is helpful and pertinent. A must read for all new parents! Thank you.

Too bad this is out of print. I love this book. It was shared with me, and I have in turn bought it for others. A wonderful, practical, spiritual approach to thinking about parenting and children.

I had the fortune to begin to read this book 10 years before our twins were born. Whether you are a parent or not Berend's statement of the perennial spiritual wisdom is to be savored and dipped into over and over again. The book is so rich, so moving, so poetic that frequently you will find that you need to stop and reflect on her words after a page or two. This book, along with Berend's unfortunately out-of-print "Coming To Life", is a true spiritual classic.

An all time favorite parenting book chock full of deep deep thoughts!

Polly Berrien Berends has written some of the most helpful books ever for parenting. I cannot recommend this book strongly enough; I read it during my first pregnancy and it was life-changing. You should read it too. In fact, if you read only ONE book about parenting, this should probably be the one. So, why the one-star rating?? I bought this new copy because I was away from my own

library (which already contained the book) and knew that I wanted to quote from it for a presentation that I was working on; I also knew an extra copy would be nice to lend out, since I frequently recommend the book to others. Be aware the PRINTING QUALITY is pretty HORRIBLE. The letters of the text are so pixelated it looks as if somebody had a "bright scheme" to save 50% of ink costs. Find a used copy in person from a reputable used-bookstore, or search out a copy of the 2nd or 3rd edition online. The printing in here is a travesty. So sad.

received quickly, as described

so good

I highly recommend this book BUT just bought a copy of the 1997 edition (used) which is tightly bound and in excellent condition. All appears normal but upon reading the book I discovered that the book is missing pages 309 to 340!!!! The page numbers are simply missing as is quite a bit of subject matter. Pages have not been ripped out. Must be a printing error...The book is definitely worth reading. But I cannot give this edition 5 stars since part of the book is missing! I do not know if this is an isolated incident (I didn't dare buy another 1997 edition and have since bought a copy of the 1987 edition, which is complete) but do want to warn others and find out if other copies of the 1997 edition are missing pages. Thanks to anyone who wants to take a look at their copy and post a response!

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