



FAMILY!

A Publication of the NASAP Family Education Section

Fall 2016

Adlerians Promote Healing Election Ugliness

by Bryna Gamson, editor

No one thought the topics being covered in this issue of *FAMILY!* would have to include how to address childrens' exposure to the civic underbelly of hatred boldly pronounced during the American election campaign, or the very real fears raised by those election results. And yet, who better to step forward with good counsel than our Adlerian practitioners on how to reassure our children (and ourselves) as we move towards changing that dialog from hate and suspicion to understanding and cooperation?

Within this issue you will find some responses and some resources. Let's continue the conversation, and resolve to act positively in the wake of the news of the day. ■

Over the top

Dear Addy...

Guest author is Tina Feigal

Dear Addy,

Our kids totally over-react to events or behavior correction. Do you have any tips for us?

—Pushed Buttons

Dear Buttons,

Here are 5 tips for helping them when that happens:

1. Realize that kids, especially small children and teens, are undergoing brain changes that feature the *emotions over logic*. When you realize that the strong reaction is a normal physiological response, it will be easier to accept it from your child.

2. Don't overreact back. "Mirror neurons" in your child's brain will

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Trouble- & Mischief-Makers

Understanding Ourselves to Begin the Path Toward Healthier Parenting

by Catherine Gruener, LCPC

Imagine two people in an argument. Both are pointing their finger at the other, not listening, blaming each other. Then they break apart and walk in opposite directions.

Ever see this happen? It's easy to blame others. 'It's their fault, they did it!' Point the finger and walk away. Take no responsibility. The self remains intact. Keep moving forward.

Don't worry: I'm not pointing a finger at you. We all do or have done this. Let's just embrace that this sometimes happens, to us all.

When we are afraid of something or really stressed, not thinking rationally—'flipping our lids' (Siegel and Hartzell 2004)—we act in ways to protect ourselves from that which we fear the most: stress and pain, rejection and abandonment, criticism and humiliation, or meaninglessness and unimportance. (Nelsen 2006)

We do this by playing our "top card:" go for comfort, try to please, take control or find some way of being superior. (Lott and Nelsen 2012) These 'go to' behaviors that appear, seemingly out of nowhere, that either catch us off guard or are so seemingly ingrained in our behaviors that we take them for granted, are what Lynn Lott (2012) calls mischief makers. They are trouble- and mischief-makers because these behaviors "often create the opposite of what the individual intends." (Nelsen, 2006, p. 240)

We do these behaviors to

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Important questions for YOU

FE Section Co-Chairs Report...



Beverley Cathcart-Ross Rob Guttenberg

Dear Family Education Members,

We have some catching up to do after our wonderful Twin Cities Conference—and we are already deep into the planning for the next one! In the meantime, here are some highlights of the NASAP governing body, COR (Council of Representatives), meeting in

Fort Wayne, Indiana in October. Co-Chair Rob Guttenberg and Secretary-Treasurer Inna Rosenfeld represented our Section.

Long Range Planning Committee Report

The NASAP Long Range Planning Committee has been working over the last year to examine fresh approaches for NASAP as an organization. Co-Chairs are Marion Balla and Kathy Walton; Committee Members are Dan Haugen, Mary Maguire, Alyson Schafer, Sterling Travis, and Jamie Stone O'Brien. The late Steve Stein was also a member. This long range planning process is in the first five years of a fifteen year-three stage process.

An overall emphasis of the Committee was to recommend a transition of the NASAP leadership model to shift from operating top-down to more of a bottom-up model. In practice, the Affiliate Groups, rather than looking up to NASAP to establish direction, are being asked to take a greater role in developing the direction for NASAP, based upon their member interests.

Funds Available for Affiliate Growth

An Affiliate Growth Fund is available for any Affiliate to facilitate increasing interest and participation in their Group. Affiliate Groups can apply for up to \$750, and can apply to this fund every 3 years. Some examples of the ways in which these funds can be used include covering speaker fees, or workshop fees, or to help cover the costs of travel expenses for sending representatives to COR meetings.

A Modest Proposal?

There was some mention about the NASAP Family Education Section starting a National Family Education Hotline. For this idea to go further, we would need to hear from Section members about their interest in this, and the feasibility of managing such a service (considering costs, legal, professional, ethical, and other logistical concerns).

Costs and Conferences

Some happy news announced after the COR met: NASAP's website at last will be able to accept Canadian funds at par for membership renewal and the next Conference in Vancouver! The lower Canadian dollar also means great savings for Americans at the conference for hotel and restaurant costs.

Membership

Don't forget to renew your Family Ed Section membership along with your NASAP annual dues, and perhaps an additional contribution!

Warm Greetings of the Holiday Season! Your Co-Chairs,
Rob Guttenberg along with Beverley Cathcart-Ross ■

Adlerian Wisdom

RESPECT, based upon the assumption of equality, is the inalienable right of all human beings. No one should take advantage of another; neither adult nor child should be a slave or tyrant....When parents show respect for the child, they consider his opinions, his judgment. Parents who show respect for the child—while winning his respect for them—teach the child to respect himself and others....

-- excerpted from **ABCs of Guiding the Child** by Rudolf Dreikurs, MD and Margaret Goldman

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Dear Addy...continued from page 1

simply cause him or her to reflect your expressions, so stay calm to avoid causing a huge blow-up. Yes, that's easier said than done, but stay focused on the outcome you want to support your efforts. You want a calm child sooner, so don't create an explosion with your response.

3. Stay with the child emotionally, presenting a calm body and emitting support. Don't send her away, as she is showing she's feeling vulnerable. Stay in her presence.

4. Use silence and sympathetic eyes. This explosion is more like a seizure than bad behavior, more involuntary than you think. So you can kindly wait out the storm.

5. When the storm passes, ask for your child's true feelings. "If I guess, will you tell me if I'm right or wrong? I'm thinking you're frustrated that I didn't get the stuff you needed for your project yet. Let's figure out what to do about it now."

When we use our wise-parent minds, we get much better results, and we strengthen the relationships with our kids. What's not to love?

—Addy ■

Guest author is Tina Feigal, Minnesota-based parent coach and author, who sends out a periodic email with tips like these. Tina is the Director of Family Engagement at Anu Family Services, Inc., and founder of the Center for the Challenging Child, in St. Paul, MN, where she shares highly successful techniques to transform challenging behavior in children of all ages. You can reach her at <tina@parentingmojo.com> or <<http://parentingmojo.com/>>.

Family Education Section Meeting Twin Cities 2016

FES Meeting Keynote: Failure

by Alyson Schafer

Alyson Schafer was to address Helping Your Child Master Failure – The New Formula for Success at the Family Ed Section annual meeting last May in the Twin Cities, but unfortunately, was unable to attend due to illness. Instead, she has generously shared some of those ideas in this article.

Too often children conclude that their worth is based on their actions and achievements. It's an easy enough misunderstanding. After all, if your parents clap and cheer when you stack three blocks successfully or they take a million photos of you when you make your maiden journey down a slide, doesn't it make sense that their smiles and accolades must be about what you did?

If certain behaviors earn you parental approval, it's a quick step to make an assumption that 'if I just keep doing good, then I am assured of my worth and lovability to my parents.'

But then there is the flip side. Kids equally believe if they are bad at something, or make mistakes and fail, they must be a bad person. Failures are threats to their worth. A lousy test result, or being the worst player on the hockey team is interpreted as sliding down the measuring rod of our value.

How many of us carry the old childhood yoke that 'if I am anything less than the best or perfect, I will forfeit my worth and parental acceptance'?

OUCH! I am here to remind you that it is NOT true!!!

Instead we have to challenge that erroneous thinking and prove to ourselves and our children that our worth as human beings was bestowed on us at birth and it will neither grow nor diminish. YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH. That you are worthy and loveable is unconditional, not behavior or performance contingent.

In fact, we can instead show children that mistakes can actually be a celebrated part of the learning process!

Think about it for a moment. Besides a few reflexes, everything must be learned: how to walk, talk, do up laces, and right on to algebra and quadratic equations.

Some things can be learned easily by some. For others it may take more effort. I often make this point to children by offering the question "Do you criticize a polar bear for being bad at flying?" All critters have their place in the order of life.

Since exerting effort and making mistakes is inherent to the learning process, the better you can tolerate making mistakes the more you learn! Malcom Gladwell claims in his book, **Outliers**, that any form of mastery, from cigar rolling to symphony violin playing, takes about 10,000 hours of practice. That also means 10,000 hours of making mistakes! *You have to mistake your way to success.* Kids who can't manage being imperfect, who can't reveal their inadequacies, will stop the learning process to protect themselves and their egos. Such a shame! What a loss.

Carol Dweck's work with children revealed that kids have one of two mindsets: either FIXED mindset or GROWTH mindset. If your kids have a fixed mindset, they believe you are born smart and it has nothing to do with their efforts. In fact, they believe if you have to try hard and exert effort, then for sure you must be stupid. Of course nothing could be further from the truth! Dweck teaches children how to adopt a growth mindset instead—and parents can, too!

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How to Raise a Caring Kid

Highlights Editors

Caring matters. It matters on the playground, in the classroom, and at home. Caring helps children and the adults in their lives to be happy, safe, and cared for. It allows children to know and understand that they can push boundaries, try harder, and become their best selves.

A primary—if not the primary—concern of children is to find care, attention, and meaning in relationships. The connection between two people who care for each other is incredibly powerful. Supporting the bond between parent and child and the bond between child and child is integral.

Research—and firsthand experiences—tell us that children are inherently caring. Babies and toddlers may cry when someone is sad and share their stuffed animals as consolation. Preschoolers show caring through kind words and thoughtful gestures. Elementary school children readily understand and show caring, and they also realize the power of words, tone of voice, and kind—or unkind—actions.

What kids need is to see bright possibilities and people treating one another with care and acting with integrity, the basis for emotional wholeness. And children need to see parents model this caring behavior.

You're probably already demonstrating to your child how you care. How many times have we, as parents, asked our child, "Are you OK?" after a skinned knee, making sure we say this while looking at our child, and gently touching her knee to comfort her. These actions that we consider second nature are what our children see and what they learn from. The caring question, the soft tone, the compassionate touch. We show kindness and concern in these moments, and our children are watching.

Children can also learn from stories what it means to be caring. Characters can exemplify caring behavior by making the right choices. They can do what a child thinks he should do or would want to do, without putting him in the situation itself. Similarly, kids can also learn how it feels to act unkindly or be made to feel bad, without taking personal emotional risks. When children read books or are read to, they can explore ideas in safe spaces.

Caring isn't always about responding to pain or sadness. Caring can also mean strengthening what we excel at. Relationships grow strong when kids can interact and work together. A shared game or activity encourages bonding and connections. When you need two to succeed or accomplish a task, caring for each other becomes integral.

What parents need to help kids discover is that relationships are a source of joy worth caring for. Conflict can be resolved and connections maintained through kindness and careful thinking, and by showing respect for both self and others. It's often the kind word or caring act that people remember. We often recall more strongly how someone made us feel, rather than what they did.

The kindness that children learn at home carries over to their school lives and how they care for others the rest of their lives. When children feel cared for, know they treat others well, and can trust themselves and those around them, they can become their best selves.

Reprinted by permission from an April 2016 entry on Highlights for Children publisher website.

<https://www.highlights.com/parents/articles/how-raise-caring-kid>

Solving Behavior Problems

Enlisting Kids' Help

from Parenting Network

Messing up is normal in any family. Kids draw on the wall, they break a vase, or they might even sneak money to buy candy at the store.

Valuable Resource

When things go wrong, we can depend on an incredibly valuable resource—our own child's ability to solve problems, when given the chance. Kids are our greatest resource. Figure them out, and they can move from resistance to cooperation.

One of the most effective lines we can use when our child has messed up is this one: "What do you think you could do about this?" When we ask our child for their ideas to solve a problem, it can transform a potentially ugly confrontation into a creative problem-solving exercise. A win-win.

Other Valuable Resources!

Whether your child is messing up, or you want to be proactive, our courses will show you how to incorporate discipline in a positive and encouraging way into family life. ■

Reprinted with permission of Parenting Network Toronto-based authors and associates Beverley Cathcart-Ross and Doone Estey provide periodic tips for parents such as this one by email. Their family education services are detailed at <http://parenting-network.ca/>, where you can also sign up for the list. Contact Beverley@parenting-network.ca or Doone@parenting-network.ca

Membership Matters

Updates from the COR meeting

- Our Section has 61 paying members and 39 student members.
- At last report, we had a balance of \$797 in our treasury account.
- The NASAP Section travel account has a balance of \$1,675 which is established for the purpose of helping all of the NASAP Section representatives with travel and lodging expenses to attend COR meetings. Our Section receives approximately \$400 of this.
- Free 1-year memberships in NASAP are being offered to grad students.

Member Feedback Solicited!

A discussion was held at the COR regarding content of Section Meetings at the conference and we'd very much like your thoughts:

Do you want to continue with the format of a brief Section Meeting followed by a chosen presenter, or would you rather return to the idea of using the Section Meeting time to network and share new resources and/or techniques? While the featured speakers have been terrific, many members have felt there was not enough time to engage with Section business or have the opportunity to share in a less structured way.

Please send your thoughts via email to Section leaders (see page 2), or respond to this question over memberclicks/listserv. ■

We're On LinkedIn and Facebook!

Are you?

Spread the great Adlerian news by "liking" us on Facebook and "following" us on LinkedIn! Add NASAP/FES membership to your LinkedIn profile page. Contribute announcements and content.

Contact Jon Sperry for Facebook at <jsperry@lynn.edu>

and editor Bryna Gamson for LinkedIn <ParentEd@com-cast.net>

Direct links: [NASAP FB page](#)

[NASAP LinkedIn page](#)

Schafer on Failure...continued from page 2

Children can be taught the same ideas I have written in this article. As Adlerian parent educators, we can teach the parents to provide experiences and conversations that encourage children to embrace mistakes and have the courage to be imperfect. ■



Contributor Alyson Schafer is an international presenter on parenting, TV commentator and author of three books (so far). Learn more at <alysonschafer.com>.

Schafer on "Failure": Help your parents in your classes to:

- be non-judgmental and love unconditionally
- honour and celebrate a variety of strengths in their children
- see the nuanced difference between praise and encouragement
- eliminate punishment
- don't compare or stimulate competition between siblings
- make mistakes ourselves and model how we can laugh and roll with it
- model enjoying doing something whether we are good at it or not
- do things "averagely"
- don't make critical and disparaging remarks about yourself and your performances
- encourage kids to be on their "growing edge" by challenging them to make a few good mistakes a day. Have them report back on them with pride and enthusiasm.
- give your smiles and recognition to your child's "stick-to-itiveness" and persistence, not only for final, completed, perfect work
- ask "what did you learn?" not "how did you do?"
- celebrate improvement and movement in the right direction, over arriving at a goal
- play the children's game *Perfection* which is a shape identifying skills game to demonstrate how practice over time helps you get more pieces in
- reflect back on other skills they have had to learn that took time to master
- remind them not to compare themselves to others
- show them that you trust them and have confidence in them
- focus on others and the needs of the situation, rather than on personal status and superiority

Trouble- and Mischief-Makers....continued from page 1

avoid the thing we fear the most, but in doing these behaviors, we invite the opposite of what we need from others. In parenting, this means that we can invite mischief from our own children.

When we want to avoid *stress and pain* at all cost and go for *comfort*, (e.g., doing for our children when they can do for themselves, rescuing children from learning through natural consequences) we can invite feelings of fear and uncertainty, resulting in more stress, feelings of inadequacy and/or feelings of entitlement.

When we want to avoid *rejection and abandonment* at all cost and try to *please* others (e.g., giving in to children's demands to avoid arguments or because of guilt, replacing gifts for love), we can invite feelings of resentment and/or encourage worry about reciprocating, resulting in more feelings of tension, dependency, arguing, and again, feelings of entitlement.

When we want to avoid *criticism and humiliation* at all cost and try to *control* things and/or others (e.g., children must do as they are told; discipline means to punish—focusing on what children do wrong), we can invite others to feel angry, resentful, and restricted, resulting in rebellion or resistance, and then everyone feels and can act out of control.

Lastly, when we want to avoid *meaninglessness and unimportance* at all cost by beating it back with *superiority* (e.g., children do not know what to do unless they are told how to do something; there is a right and wrong way; blaming or lecturing children when mistakes happen because they didn't do it "the right way"), we can invite feelings of inadequacy, resulting in others feeling lesser and like failures.

Nelsen (2006) states that these behaviors are often at the root of power struggles between adults

and children. I believe that these behavior patterns, unconsciously driven by reactions to the things we fear the most, invite the opposite of what we want, and in parenting that means that we invite misbehavior from our children. These interactions lend themselves to the four reasons children misbehave and the mistaken goals of childhood. (Dreikurs and Soltz 1987, Nelsen 2006)

If you happen to have one of these trouble- and mischief-maker top cards, don't fret—we all have a top card and play it from time to time. Each approach towards others can offer rewards when it is used out of choice and with a rational mind: healthy control supports predictability, balanced pleasing teaches how to be considerate of others, appropriate control teaches children boundaries and respect for others, and even superiority can help motivate children towards accomplishments and success.

Understanding my own top card, the motivation for use and desired outcome, helped me understand myself a little better, and encouraged me to continue down the path toward healthier interactions with my own children, and others. When interacting with parents through counseling and parent education consultations, I often incorporate these tools, in hopes of encouraging others to uncover their own strengths and motivations, so that they may choose to continue learning on their parenting path. ■

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Calmer Shopping Trips With Kids

Do your kids drive you crazy asking you to buy them things while you're at the store with them? They start by asking for something they see, but as soon as you say "no" they begin to escalate the situation with pleading, demanding, and sometimes an all out temper tantrum. You try not to over react, but it seems like the only way to get them to stop is to give in and buy them what they wanted, yell at them to stop bugging you, or threaten them with punishment when you get to the car or home.

By the time you leave the store, you are not a happy camper. On top of that, none of those solutions works very well. The problem with using threats is that what worked today may not work tomorrow. Giving in to your children's demands is even worse because it teaches them that making demands works, and then demanding becomes their go-to solution for getting what they want.

Try this tip the next time you head to the store with the kids. Before you get out of the car in the store's parking lot, gather the kids together and announce that you need their help:

- Ask them what they think the rules should be while they're in the store.
- Thank them for their help, and acknowledge whatever ideas they offer

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Calmer Shopping...cont. from page 6

- Add to the list of rules that you're NOT WILLING to buy any toys or sweets today.
- Avoid using emotion in your voice and remain calm and friendly.
- Ask each of them to agree to the rules before entering the store.

This is the same strategy I started using when my kids were younger, so I know from experience that it can feel a little awkward the first time you use it. On the other hand, how much worse can it be than the alternative?

Here's to Happier Parenting! ■

This tip comes from FES member author Bill Corbett of CooperativeKids.com. Check out the resources he provides. Contact Bill at bill@cooperativekids.com.

Addressing Ugliness

by various contributors

Schools are reporting increased anxiety in children since the election season in the United States unleashed hateful spewing as never before. Organizations have stepped forward to address these issues. For example, Southern Poverty Law Center (which tracks hate groups and works to expose and challenge them), also publishes a terrific resource, "Teaching Tolerance."

Since the election, a whole spectrum of minorities like "Dreamers" and other undocumented residents, members of religious minorities, the LGBTQ community, disabled and the poor, have been increasingly voicing well-grounded fears. Environmentalists are another group gearing up for fights to just stay even with progress made to date. And our children either are experiencing the tension personally or are being exposed to it in the media, at school, hanging out with friends.

As Adlerians, we have much to contribute to the conversation.

Join Us in Vancouver May 18-21, 2017

We're bursting with pride that one of our Section members, a frequent contributor to this publication and former Section Co-Chair – and so much more – has been selected to give the conference Ansbacher Lecture!

Join us in applauding Alyson Schafer who has received this huge honor! And be sure to join us in Vancouver for the address and full conference. ■

And so, for this issue, ideas were solicited from the FE member-clicks listserv. We look at ways to address these human fears on the local level – parenting, teaching, ministering.

Accept views of others

Fred Parsons

"[I'm] not a doctor, yet. [I'm] a grad student. The single most disturbing thing [I've] seen in this election is that people are unwilling to accept that others have different views. It seems to be: either agree with me or we can't be friends. So I would say encouraging people that just because someone doesn't agree with them, it doesn't mean they are against you."

Connection is key

Linda J. Page

"I've heard many people say they are scared, and with good reason—history shows that xenophobia can too easily be turned into war and genocide. Alfred Adler must have seen that in WWI. More and more, I realize that our only protection is our connection. We connect in ways that erase differences when we accomplish something together that we both see as important—that is, we co-labor. So, however differently we see the world, if we seek out that task that we both want to achieve and work toward it together, perhaps we will find at least a sliver of commonality, a foothold for social interest. I can't think of a better lesson or model for our children and grandchildren."

Trust only movement.... your own

Alyson Schafer

My daughter Zoe who is in her last year of university and living at home with me has been taking courses such as feminist issues. She was devastated by the election, as was I. We both cried for a full day. I took the day off to grieve and provide support to her, and care for myself. Her entire world view was thrown upside down. Her feeling of connection with fellow women was torn apart as she studied polling results showing how wealthy white women supported Trump. She wondered why we didn't just go back to owning slaves? Why stop at Roe v Wade etc.... ? It was a tough day. However we did manage that first 24 hours and here is what helped:

- Listening to the speeches from both Obama and Clinton.
- Reminding ourselves of the fact that the popular vote was democratic.
- Community: it was comforting having each other to cry with, and in fact, my church had a special service so I could cry with even more like-minded and shocked people.
- Testing my own acceptance of the democratic process EVEN when it doesn't go my way and knowing it means we just have more work to do and now we are fired up to do it!
- Remembering he has not taken office yet and many politicians don't complete their campaign promises.
- Knowing that the American political process was designed specifically to limit the power of the president.
- Discussing with my daughter

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that politics happens every day in our lives, not just with a single vote, and we can make a considered effort to live out the values we hold dear, values that didn't get upheld in this last voting decision. What can WE do? ACTION.

Trust only movement...your own.

Let's talk...and connect, bridge, solve
Catherine Gruener

"As a therapist, my job is to listen and understand. I've heard things from both Democrats and Republicans, not directed towards me personally, that deeply hurt and have challenged me on both a personal and professional level. The most challenging is the "against others" talk. In my work with families, I can promise you, nothing gets solved when someone directs their anger and points the finger at the other. If your intent

is to be against others, shaming, blaming, and oppressing—then you are really angry about something. Let's talk. That's not the way you are going to get something fixed. Tell your story, share your beliefs, ask from others what you want, share how your experiences are affecting you...against other talk only divides. We need to connect, bridge, and solve problems. Please let's turn our narrative towards connecting. God Bless America"

Adler University: counsel on rights
Leigh Johnson-Migalski

Related to your request, our students here have many parents and children that are worried that their family members are going to be deported so I wanted to share this info as well.

Adler University felt it necessary to support their students and clients by sharing several PDFs on

how to safeguard their rights as immigrants, such as: Department of Justice information and legal clinic contact information; a publication on *How To Protect You and Your Family During Immigration Raids; DACA - Post-Election Talking Points and Resources* pages from ILRC (Immigration Legal Resource Center); ACLU's *Know Your Rights When Encountering Law Enforcement*.

Some Resources

Contact your local Adlerian resource such as DC-area's PEP <<http://pepparent.org/>>.

SPLC's **Teaching Tolerance:** <<http://www.tolerance.org/blog/what-say-kids-november-10-and-days-after>>

Huffington Post

What Do We Tell The Children <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/what-should-we-tell-the-children-us_5822aa90e4b0334571e0a30b> ■

The mission of the **North American Society of Adlerian Psychology** is to promote growth and understanding of Adlerian (Individual) Psychology, the work of Alfred Adler, and effective approaches to living based on his philosophy. NASAP membership includes educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, parents, business people, community organizations and other interested people. The **Family Education Section** applies Adlerian principles to the home. Members are professionals and nonprofessionals dedicated to understanding and improving family relationships between children and adults, with couples, and among individuals.

Annual Conference in Vancouver, BC May 18-21, 2017

Great location:

Marriott Pinnacle Downtown Hotel



~ Canadian at par! ~

link here to some of the many
attractions in Vancouver:

<http://www.alfredadler.org/assets/images/vancouver-attractions-individual-pages.pdf>

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