



Connected Parenting

The Importance of Connection and How to Build a
Meaningful Relationship with Your Child

*Special Bonus Feature:
How to Help Your Child Deal With Feelings of Anxiety*



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.



Your Facilitator – Ulrica Jobe

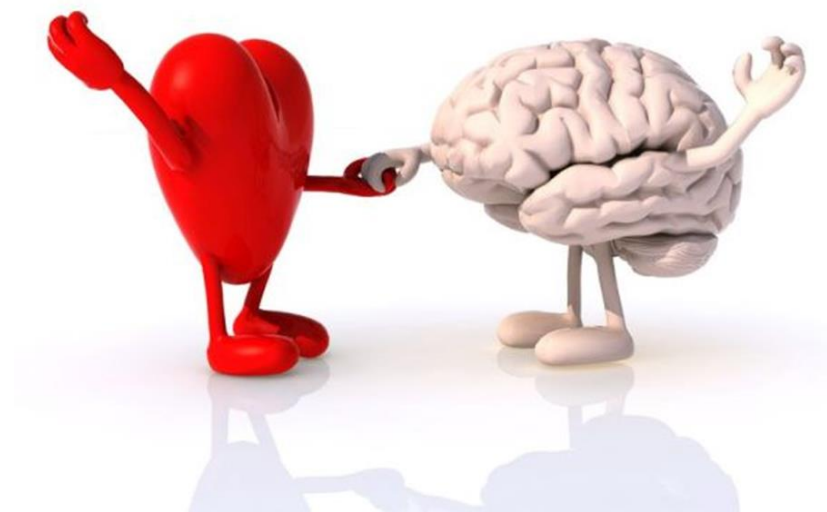
Parent Coach, Child & Family Counsellor, Connected Parenting
Therapist, Educator, Speaker, Workshop Facilitator,
Founder of True Compass



Honours BA, Psychology and Family Science
MEd, Developmental Psychology and Education



ENJOY THE
moment



BE IN THE
now



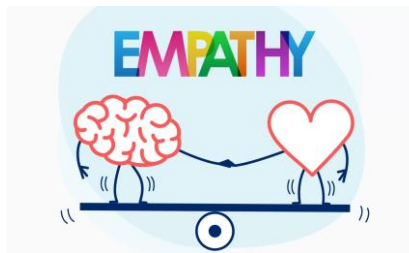
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1. What is Positive Parenting?
 2. Connected Parenting
 3. Core Principle #1 – CALM Technique
 4. Big Brain Science
 5. What does it mean to act as your child's frontal lobe?
 6. Core Principle #2 – Setting Loving Limits
 7. Core Principle #3 – Apologize and Repair
 8. Knowing Your Triggers
 9. Anxiety: What is it and how can we help our children manage?
 10. Final Takeaways
 11. Q and A



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1. How do I best support my child's symptoms of anxiety (e.g. defiance, fear, etc) acutely vs long term?
 2. How can I work with my child to ensure that she feels safe and in control while also setting clear limits and guidelines around various activities (bedtime, dinner time etc.)?
 3. What are practical tools I can use to help my child in their moments of anxiety, rather than getting stuck in my own angst/panic (in those same moments)?
 4. What is the most effective way of calming down a worried or overwhelmed child when we are all under pressure to get somewhere or to produce a result or to finish a deadline? How can you manage the last minute anxiety? Even with planning ahead, the moment when change is about to occur, anxiety can be really high.
 5. What type of support can extended family members (ie grandparents) provide?

YOU WILL LEARN ...

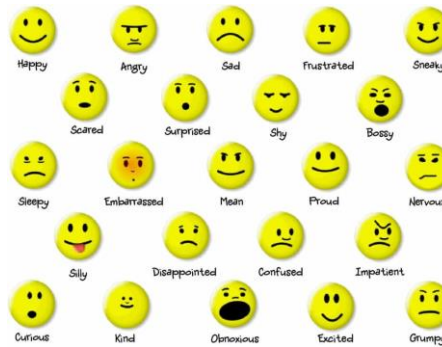
- The important role connection, love and empathy play in our relationships and the brain-heart connection, based on the Connected Parenting philosophy.
- How to effectively connect with a child, and the beauty of what can come after.
- How to best support your child's mental health (ie. anxiety) and build emotional resilience in ourselves and our children.



Let's Start With Some Audience Participation!



1. “How are you doing – really?”



2. “What's something you've been struggling with, with regards to your parenting?”



3. Please share one thing you are currently doing to boost your own mental health and wellness.



CONNECTION





@PSYCHOTHERAPY.CENTRAL

**“The parent-child
connection is the
most powerful
mental health
intervention known
to mankind.”**

Bessel van der Kolk

@PSYCHOTHERAPY.CENTRAL

The sign of great parenting is not the child's behavior. The sign of truly great parenting is the parent's behavior.

- Andy Smithson

SYMPATHY

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines sympathy as “the feeling that you care about and are sorry about someone else’s trouble, grief, misfortune.” A person seeks to make sense of a situation and looks at it from their own perspective. When a person is sympathetic, they may give helpful advice or look upon someone with pity. They often feel relieved that they are not in the same struggle, and they ignore triggers or difficult feelings that arise from the situation.



EMPATHY

Empathy is defined as “the feeling that you understand and share another person’s experiences and emotions” or “the ability to share someone else’s feelings.” It is looking at things from another person’s perspective, staying out of judgement, attempting to understand emotion in others and why they feel the way they do, and communicating that back. **Empathy is not about how to fix another person, cheerleading or providing the silver lining. It is about listening to another person’s pain and sharing their difficult thoughts and feelings.**



COMPASSION

“Compassion is an empathic understanding of a person's feelings, accompanied by altruism, or a desire to act on that person's behalf.” Compassion is when you relate to someone's situation, and you want to help them. You see someone in trouble, and you feel like pitching in. You do your best to alleviate the person's suffering from that situation.



WHAT IS POSITIVE PARENTING?

“Positive parenting is the continual relationship of a parent(s) and a child or children that includes caring, teaching, leading, communicating, and providing for the needs of a child consistently and unconditionally.” (Seay et al., 2014, p. 207).

What Positive Parenting Looks Like

Spending one-on-one time and **delighting in moments of connection** with the child

Praising specific actions through words, instead of using rewards or bribes

Recognizing that parenting can be stressful, and **focusing on what you can control**

Providing **consistent, age-appropriate consequences and guidelines** for child behavior

Using **positive interactions to correct problematic behavior**, instead of yelling, time-outs or nagging

Working towards a balance of meeting parental needs and child needs

WHAT IS CONNECTED PARENTING?

- A parenting methodology, a philosophy, created by Jennifer Kolari
- An example of a Positive Parenting model (similar models: Positive Discipline, Peaceful Parenting, Hand in Hand Parenting, Adlerian Parenting)
- CALM Methodology (Connect, Affect, Listen, Mirror)
- Empathy, compassion & connection FIRST, followed by problem solving and setting loving limits
- Use of empathy to strengthen and deepen relationships with children, and to develop effective strategies to manage negative behavior, deescalate tantrums and avoid power struggles
- High success rate with repairing frayed bonds, containing and correcting difficult behaviours
- Neuroscience – oxytocin, endorphins, serotonin, adrenaline, cortisol



REALITY?

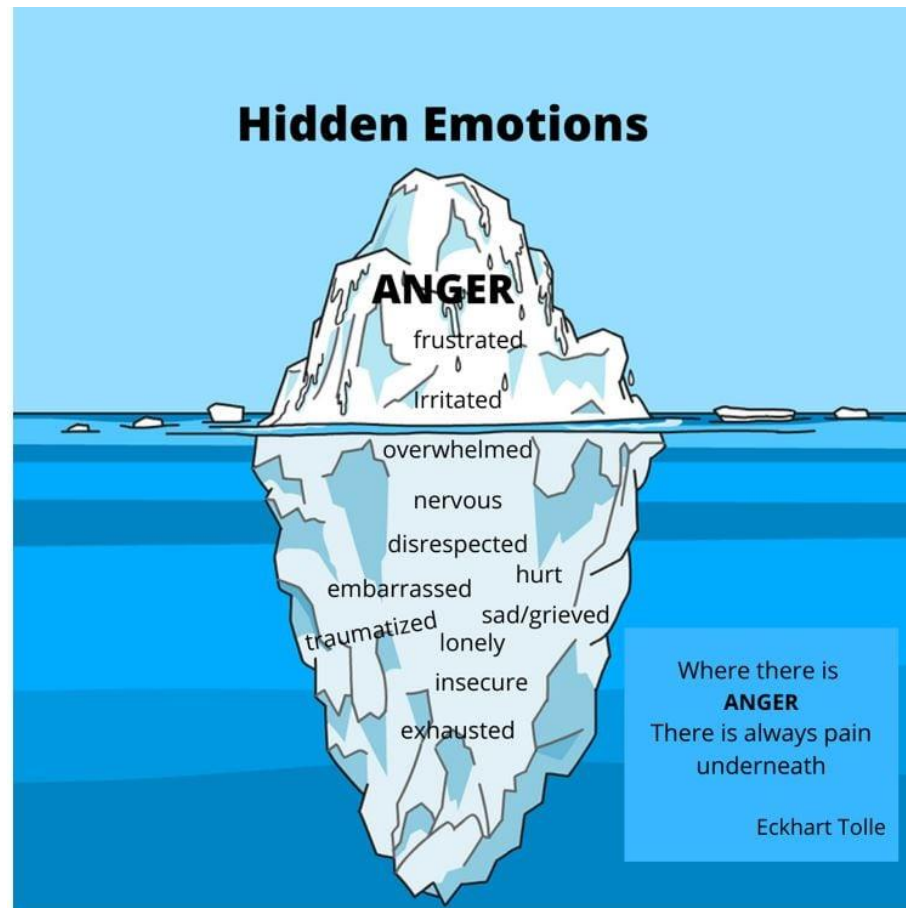
“Mom, I had three upsetting things happen to me today. I want to have a cry with you about them and then discuss solutions.”

Our children are more likely to...

- Do things we ask them not to do.
- Ask for something and then don't want it.
- Speak in a rude and agitated tone.
- Not answer when we talk to them.
- Not listen.
- Do things that are hurtful to others.
- Throw a temper tantrum.



*“Behaviour is the never the problem.
It’s a symptom of the problem.”*
Jennifer Kolari, Founder, Connected Parenting



“We need to model calmness. We have to be regulating our own internal states first before we expect our children to learn to regulate theirs.”

— **Michaeleen Doucleff, Hunt, Gather, Parent**



“With little kids, you often think they’re pushing your buttons, but that’s not what’s going on. They’re upset about something, and you have to figure out what it is.”

— **Michaeleen Doucleff, Hunt, Gather, Parent**

CALM TECHNIQUE AND THE ART OF STAYING NEUTRAL

C – CONNECT (put aside agenda, eye contact)

A – AFFECT & AGENDA (tone, authenticity, expression, body language)

L – LISTEN (summarize, clarify, paraphrase, wonder out loud)

M – MIRROR (it's not about fixing, it's about understanding and it's not about agreeing, it's about empathizing)



MIRRORING VS. ACTIVE LISTENING

- Mirroring does not use observatory statements like: It sounds like... I'm hearing that... I understand... I see that....I noticed that...
- Mirroring is more about HOW you are responding, rather than WHAT you are saying (authenticity is key!)
- It doesn't feel like a technique.
- It's not about agreeing. It's about 'getting' (really understanding).
- Mirroring is the best friend response rather than the customer service response.



BIG BRAIN!

The Three Areas of the Brain



BIG BRAIN!

THE PREFRONTAL CORTEX & THE LIMBIC BRAIN

"Thinking about Thinking"

Higher Reasoning
Executive Function

Prefrontal Cortex

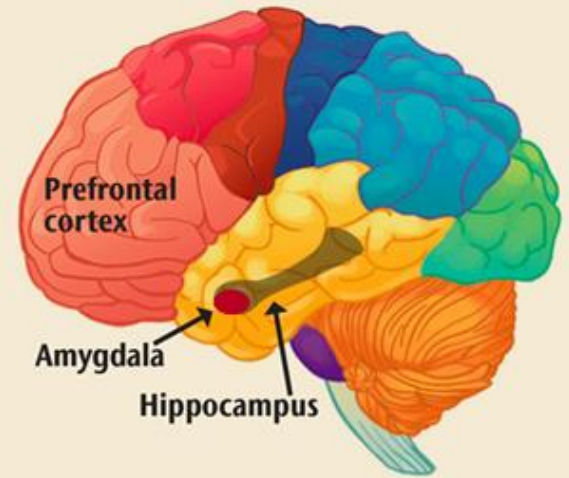
9 Functions of the Prefrontal Cortex

1. Empathy
2. Insight
3. Response Flexibility
4. Emotion Regulation
5. Body Regulation
6. Morality
7. Intuition
8. Attuned Communication
9. Fear Modulation



Limbic Brain

1. Fight, flight, freeze stress response
2. Thinks, "Am I safe? Do people want me?"
3. Emotions live here



Prefrontal cortex: Highly developed part of the frontal lobe that plays a role in the regulation of complex cognitive, emotional, and behavioral functioning

Amygdala: The emotional center of the brain

Hippocampus: Involved in forming, storing, and processing memory

The **decision-making** frontal lobe of the brain is not fully formed until age 25!

The science is clear:

*CHILDREN ARE
NOT MINI ADULTS.*



@BigLifeJournal



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ACT AS YOUR CHILD'S FRONTAL LOBE?

- It takes 25 - 28 years for the Prefrontal Cortex to fully develop
- **Responsibilities:** Attention, organization, prioritization, risk-taking, emotional control & regulation, inhibition, decision making, planning, strategizing (executive functions), analytical thinking, short term memory, reasoning, problem solving
- **Examples:** Sharing, impulse control, reasoning, switching between tasks, temper tantrums and emotional outbursts
- **Parent Role:** Infant (Nurturer), Toddler (Guide), Childhood (Interpreter), Adolescence (Coach), Early Adulthood (Consultant)



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ACT AS YOUR CHILD'S FRONTAL LOBE?

Typically as parents we....

- Try to rationalize, talk them out of their emotions, and work to get them to understand actions and consequences when they are in the midst of a full blown emotional crisis
- Say “They should know better!” “I have told them a million times!” “Why won’t they listen?” “Why are they so upset over such a little thing?”

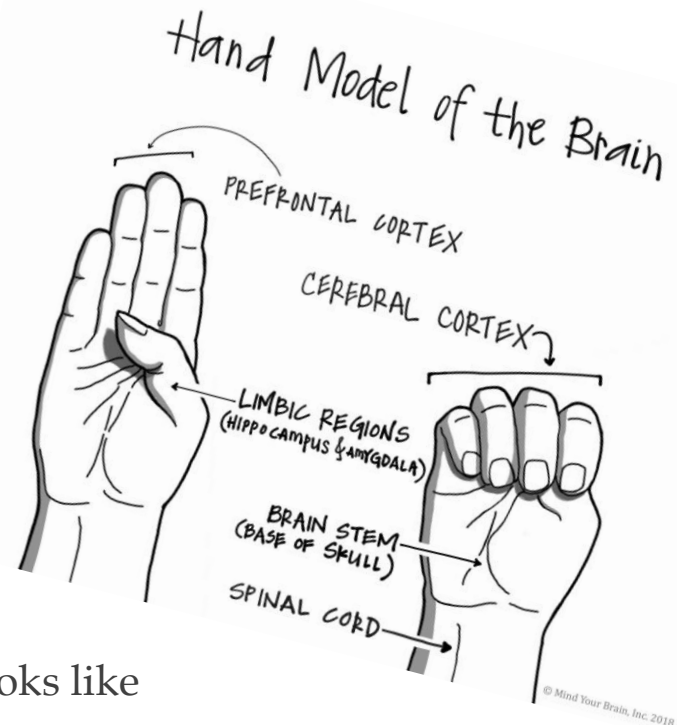
Instead try to....

- Stay neutral, show empathy, accept their emotions, teach them to lean into their emotions, be patient, be curious and be a good role model.



WHAT CAN YOU DO INSTEAD OF FLIPPING YOUR LID?

- CALM Technique
- Put on your empathy goggles
- Walk away, take a breath
- Be aware of your triggers
- Avoid engaging in the power struggle
- Avoid fuelling the fire
- Be loving, yet firm
- Role model what responding vs reacting looks like
- Allow the tantrum, big feelings to come out



STUART SHANKER'S

FIVE STEPS of SELF-REG

Visuals by @kwiens62

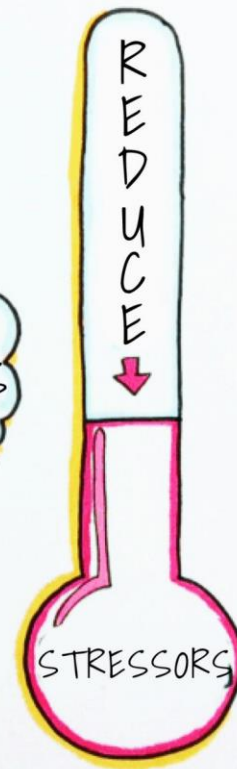


REFLECT:
ENHANCE STRESS
AWARENESS



- DEVELOP PERSONALIZED STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE RESILIENCE + RESTORATION

Kwiens 2016

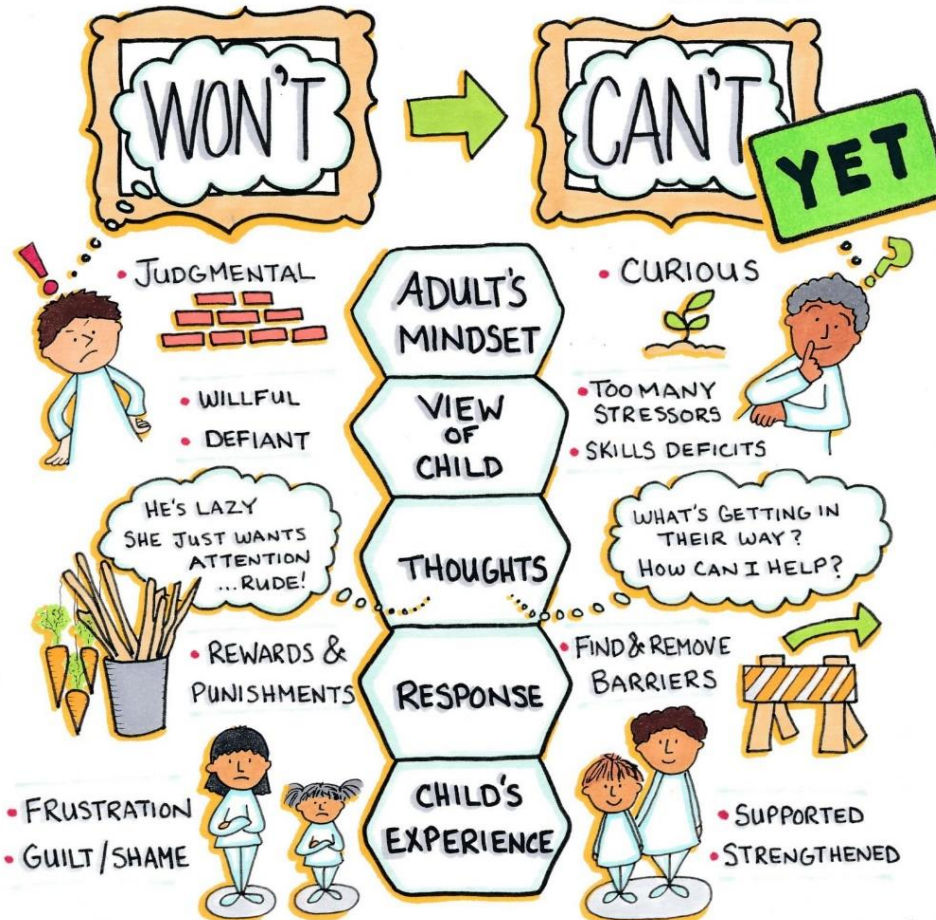


FOR MORE INFORMATION
VISIT: www.self-reg.ca

REFRAME THE BEHAVIOUR

"KIDS DO WELL IF THEY CAN"

~ROSS GREENE



"SEE A CHILD DIFFERENTLY, YOU SEE A DIFFERENT CHILD"

~Dr. Stuart Shanker

When kids exhibit challenging behaviour we can be "STRESS DETECTIVES"...finding and removing barriers.

- FIND STRESSORS → REDUCE THEM
- FIND UNMET NEEDS → MEET THEM
- FIND SKILLS DEFICITS → TEACH THEM

@kwiens62

Parenting Truth:

**Sometimes loving
your child means
setting limits, giving
consequences and
saying “no.”**

EmpoweringParents.com

PUNISHMENT VS. CONSEQUENCE

“Punishment is a behavior that inflicts emotional or physical pain on a child. It is used as a means of coercion to get your child to behave well or to do what you want. On the other hand, consequences are a result of a behavior, whether positive or negative.” (Smarter Parenting)

- Consequences are the direct result of an action.
- Consequences can be natural or imposed.
- Goal is to teach a child to learn from mistakes and to take responsibility for their actions.
- When parents are giving consequences, they are calm and understanding.
- Giving consequences help parents to maintain a healthy relationship with their children.
- When consequences are given to a child, they learn not to repeat the mistake because they understand what they did wrong and why it was wrong.

- Punishment is the infliction of pain or loss upon a child for an offense or wrongdoing.
- Punishments can be corporal, verbal or emotional.
- Goal is to make a child suffer: to shame, guilt or impose the parent's authority.
- When parents are punishing their child, most of the time they are angry and out of control.
- Punishing a child may be counterproductive as the child grows to resent the parent instead of learning from their mistakes.
- If you punish a child, they may not repeat the mistake for fear of punishment itself, not because they understand what they did wrong.

HOW DO YOU SET A LOVING LIMIT?

"I love you enough to be mad at me."



1. Did you set the limit or consequence in calm or anger?
2. Is there clarity? Was it clearly communicated?
3. Is there love in your limit or is it an anger based punishment?
4. Is there a reason for the limit?
5. Is the limit age and ability appropriate?
6. Can you work with your child to set the limit?
7. Can you hold the limit?
8. Does the limit make sense?

HOW DO YOU REPAIR AND APOLOGIZE?

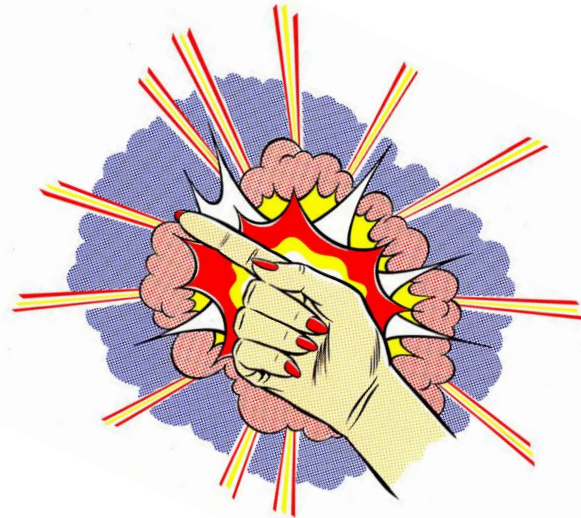
Acknowledge
Explain
Apologize
Make amends



KNOWING YOUR TRIGGERS!

TOP 10 ARE ON THE BOARD

1. Crying
2. Whining
3. Tantrums
4. Disobedience
5. Disrespect
6. "I hate you"
7. Hitting, biting, kicking
8. Siblings fighting
9. Spills and accidents
10. Lack of effort or perceived effort



PARENTING FROM LOVE VS. FEAR

UNDERLYING REASONS WHY WE GET TRIGGERED AND THE POWER TO LISTEN TO A DIFFERENT INNER VOICE

- Tantrums scare me. VS You are trying to tell me something.
- I don't know how to help you. VS How can I help you?
- I feel out of control too! VS I need some space.
- I cannot protect you. VS It's okay to experience upset.
- You might fail. VS You need to fail.
- I'm overwhelmed, tired, stressed, overworked, under-appreciated...VS. I need a break.
- Your needs are inconvenient for me. VS. I need to set aside my agenda.
- You're making life hard for me. VS. You are doing your best.
- I expect perfection. VS. Nobody's perfect.
- I expect you to act like a mature adult. VS. Are my expectations realistic?
- Am I turning into my father/mother? VS. I can choose my own path.
- You remind me of my ex-husband/ex-wife. VS. You are your own unique person.
- I'm a horrible parent. VS. You are doing a great job, this is not a great moment.



WHAT IS ANXIETY?



At its core, anxiety is a reaction, an arousal to a stimulus that we perceive as dangerous or threatening. Anxiety is a feeling of worry, nervousness, fear or something with an uncertain outcome that is internal and not dependent on an external trigger.

Stress is pressure or tension that puts us into “fight or flight” mode from an external trigger.

During a fight-or-flight response, cortisol and adrenaline surge leaving little room for learning, because it often bypasses the higher regions of the brain.

Anxiety, by contrast, engages one more critical region of the brain--the prefrontal cortex, where we collect our thoughts by planning, organizing and reasoning.

The key isn't not to feel anxious; it's to learn ways to manage that experience.

Anxiety itself is neither helpful nor hurtful. It's your response to your anxiety that is helpful or hurtful.

ANXIETY

A normal reaction to stress or difficult times..

Triggered by a specific stressor.

Has a start and ending point.

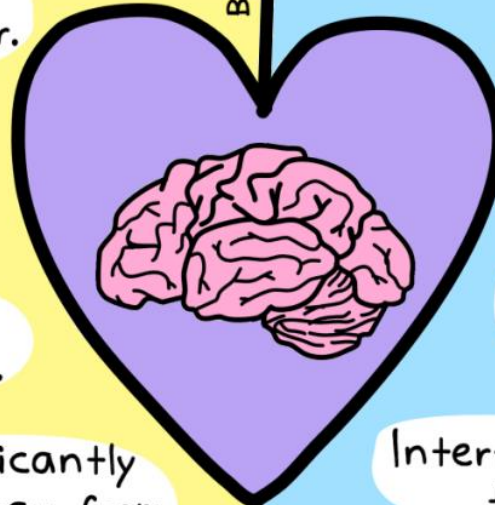
Can be helpful or motivational.

Lessens significantly or disappears away from stressful situations.

Relaxing often helps you feel better.

A response to toxic situations.

BlessingManifesting



ANXIETY DISORDERS

Often comes out of nowhere.

Intense or disproportionate emotional response.

Ongoing and lasts weeks or months.

Interferes with day-to-day life.

Physical symptoms like sweating, trembling, lightheadedness, racing heart.

Feels impossible to control or manage.

Anxiety presents itself in many different ways...

www.thepathway2success.com

The desire to control people and events



Difficulty getting to sleep



Feeling agitated or angry



Defiance and other challenging behaviors



Having high expectations for self, including school work & sports



Avoiding activities or events (including school)

Pain like stomachaches and headaches



Struggling to pay attention and focus



Intolerance of uncertainty



Crying and difficulty managing emotions



Over-planning for situations and events



Feeling worried about situations or events

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Clipart by Kate Hadfield & Sarah Pecorino

ANXIETY – WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- The goal isn't to eliminate anxiety, but to help a child manage it.
- “Don’t worry.” “Calm down.” “There’s nothing to worry about.” – stop trying to rationalize the worry away and use the CALM technique.
- Name it to help reframe it. Give Anxiety a name. (ie Annie Anxiety, Wyatt the Worrier)
- Be curious about your thoughts. (Catch-Collect-Challenge)
- Help your child go from What If to What Is.
- Why is worrying a good thing? – protect, shows we care
- Don't avoid things just because they make a child anxious.
- Express positive – but realistic – expectations.
- Respect their feelings, but don't empower them.



ANXIETY – WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Avoid asking leading questions.
- Avoid reinforcing the child's fears.
- Encourage the child to tolerate their anxiety. Allow them to worry. (journalling, drawing, writing, sharing)
- Think things through with the child.
- Model healthy ways of handling anxiety and sadness.
- Be mindful of your language. (ie my child is anxious vs my child has feelings of anxiety)
- Help them prepare a mental checklist (STOP).
- Encourage Mindfulness practices.
- Embrace and recognize emotions, rather than avoid them.



REMEMBER...

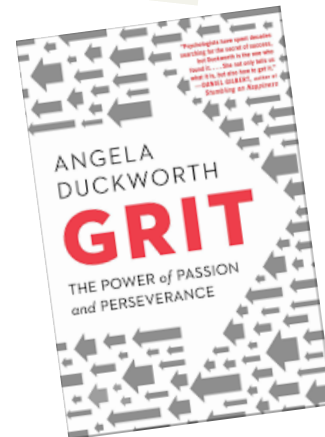
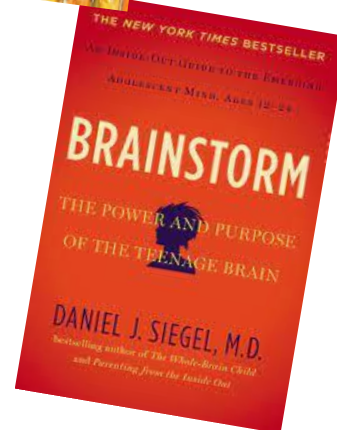
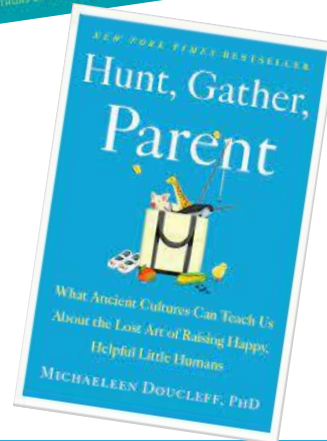
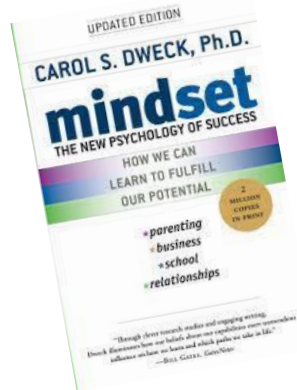
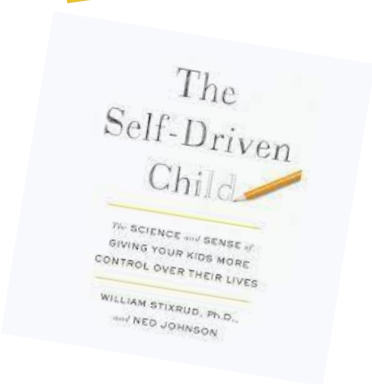
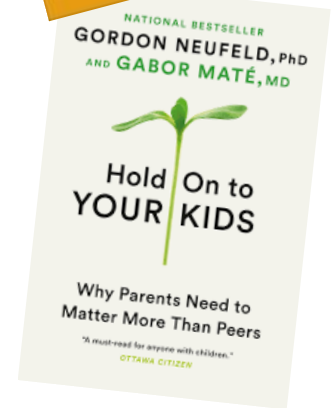
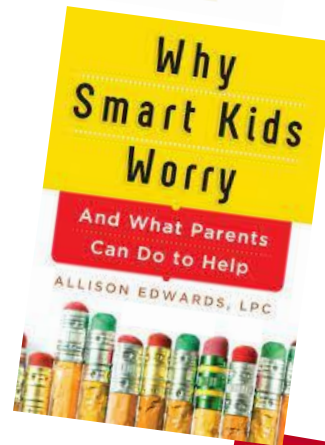
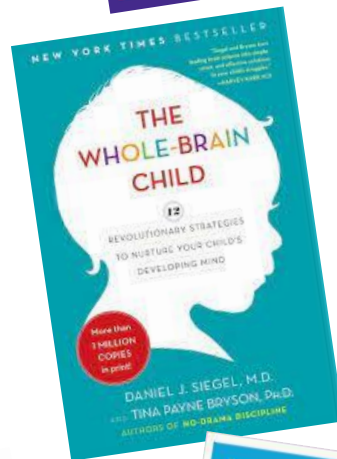
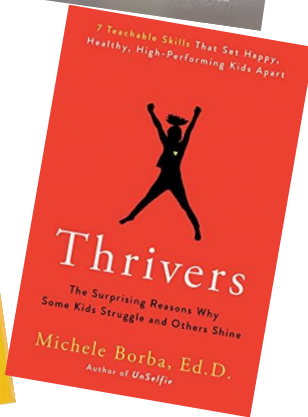
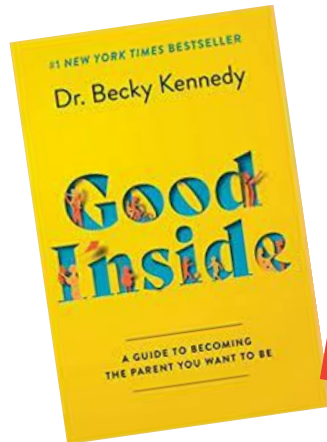
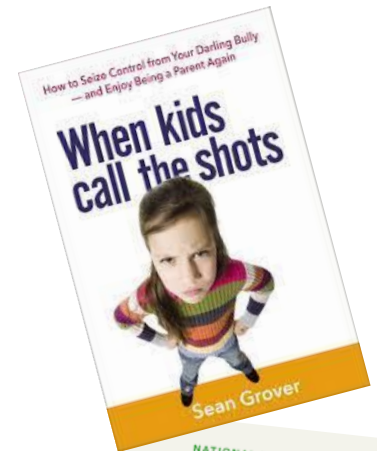
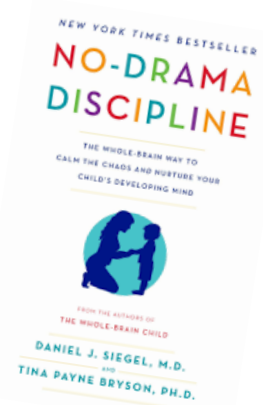
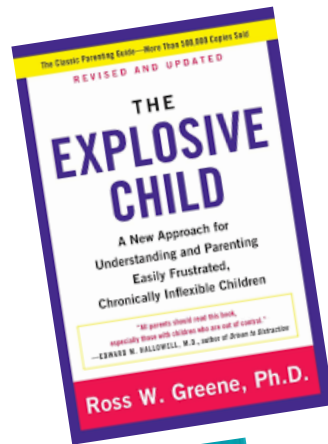
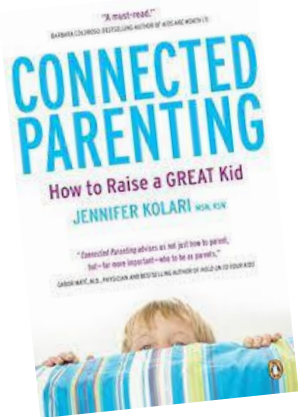
- Behaviour is never the problem, it is a symptom or communication of the problem.
- The child you least feel like connecting with is the one that needs love and connection most.
- It's not about agreeing, it's about getting.
- Don't add fuel to the fire, stay calm and neutral.
- You act as your child's frontal lobe until the age of 25.
- We can't control conditions, but we can control how we respond vs. react to them.
- You don't have the time, not to invest.
- Build up your emotional bank account.
- Front loading works!
- Repair is always an option.
- Fly the plane.
- Parent from a place of love, not fear.



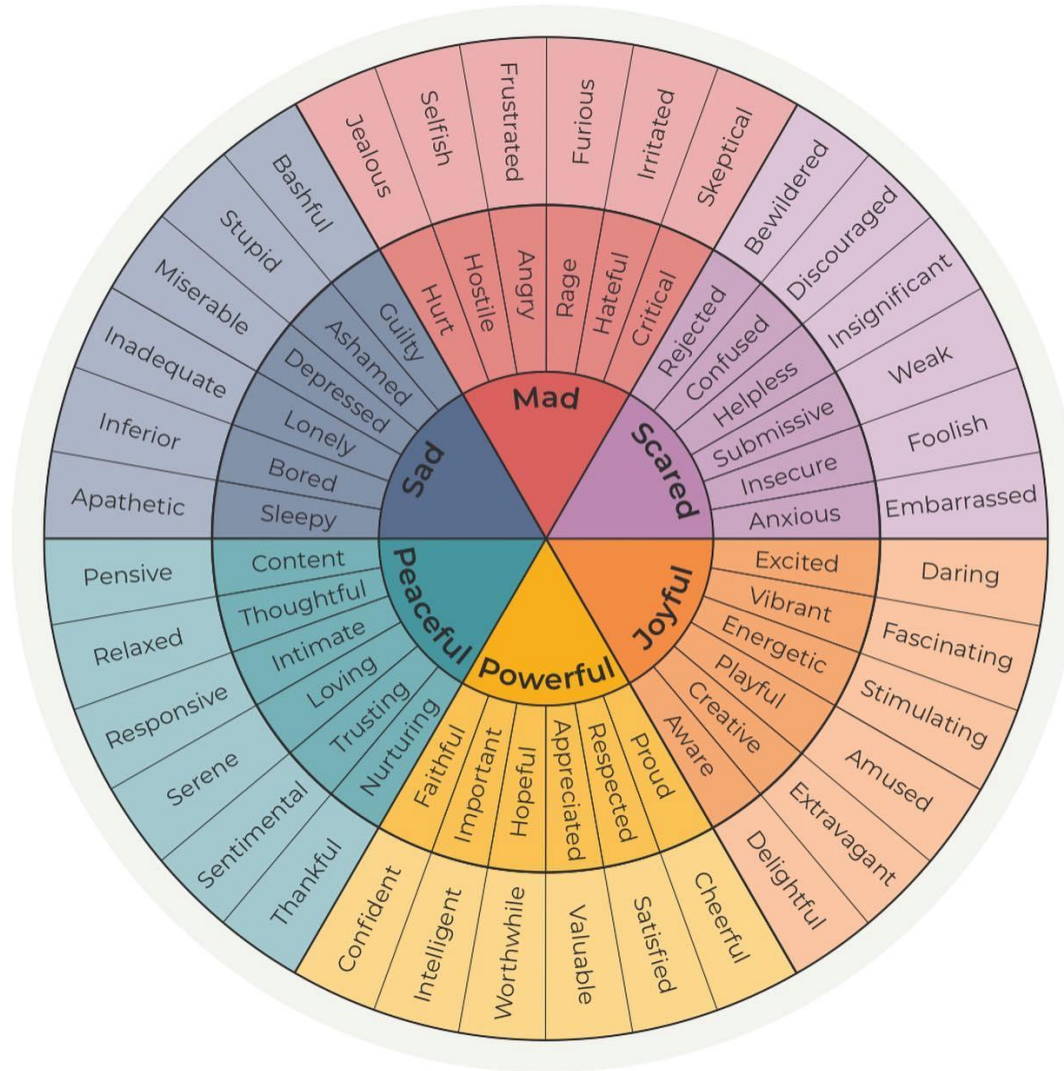
FINAL TAKEAWAYS.. WHAT CAN YOU START DOING TODAY?

- Role Model – they are always watching!
- Always connect first, then correct/redirect/converse.
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Be your child's safe place.
- Help your child reframe.
- Be kind, yet firm.
- You will mess up, you can always repair.
- You can always rewrite your child's story.
- Reflect on your own childhood and be aware of your triggers.
- Self-care is important and should always be a priority.
- Talk and educate your child about their brain.
- Teach your child how to manage rather than avoid emotions.





The Feeling Wheel



The Gottman Institute
Developed by Dr. Gloria Willcox

Q&A





For More Information:

www.connectedparenting.com

www.ulricajobe.com

Email:

ulrica@connectedparenting.com

truecompassuj@gmail.com