

EMOTION COACHING GUIDE

The future is emotionally intelligent.

THE PHASES OF EMOTION PROCESSING

When we were creating the Collaborative Emotion Processing (CEP) method, Lauren Stauble and I developed the 5 Phases of Emotion Processing. These guide you through emotion processing. We generally move through the phases sequentially, but not always at the same speed. Lauren and I discuss these in detail in episode 63 of Voices of Your Village podcast. All episodes are available app free at www.voicesofyourvillage.com

Collaborative Emotion Processing Method Phases of Emotion Processing

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| <p>1 Allow</p> <hr/> <p>2 Recognition</p> <hr/> <p>3 Security</p> <hr/> <p>4 Coping Strategies</p> <hr/> <p>5 Problem solving,
Conflict Resolution,
Moving on</p> | <p>Allowing them to feel & express, while stopping them from hurting themselves or others</p> <hr/> <p>"Ugh, you want to play with that truck and she's using it. That's so frustrating."</p> <hr/> <p>Knowing feelings are temporary. "How can I help you feel calm?"</p> <hr/> <p>"Would you like a hug or to do big jumps to feel calm?"</p> <hr/> <p>"You want to play with that truck and she's using it. Hm, what should we do?"</p> |
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1. Allow them to feel

- + Hold space for their emotion
- + Move their body if they aren't being safe
- + Hold their hands if they're hitting
- + Don't rush to make it stop

2. Connect with them

- + Empathize with their feeling "You worked so hard on that buddy and it got knocked down. Ugh, that's really disappointing."
- + Validate their emotion

RESPONDING TO A BIG EMOTION

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- + Offer two coping strategies "Would you like a hug or to stomp your feet to feel calm?"
- + If they aren't ready for coping go back to step 1.

3. Offer Coping

- + DO NOT enter this phase until they're coped and are CALM.
- + Invite them in to solve with you. "You want to play with it and Sarah's using it. What could we do?"

4. Problem Solve

"NO CALM, MAMA!"

When a child is not accepting coping strategies offered, it typically means they need more time to feel the emotion. It can be tempting to rush the process to make the expression stop, but the greatest gift we can give a kiddo is the space to feel their emotions, even if they make us uncomfortable.

COPING TOOLS

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COMMON COPING TOOLS FOR KIDS

Coping is a game changer! When we tap into coping strategies we can process the emotion, literally processing the cortisol (adrenaline running through our body). When we tap into a mechanism, we can numb the feeling, but it pushes it below the surface, often resulting in another tantrum or emotional expression soon. Coping strategies are key. More on moving from mechanisms to strategies in episode 38 of Voices of Your Village podcast.

<p>Coping mechanisms to numb feelings, push them beneath the surface, and feel temporarily better faster</p> <p>Distraction with a toy</p> <p>Giggling/smiling at socially inappropriate times</p> <p>Trying to solve the problem</p> <p>Lovey/Security Item</p> <p>Hurting someone else to feel powerful or in control</p> <p>Using a pacifier to stop expressing</p> <p>A snack/feeding in response to hard feelings</p> <p>@seed.and.sew</p>	<p>Coping strategies to process emotions, leave the reactive brain, and enter the rational thinking brain</p> <p>Drawing/coloring/painting</p> <p>Movement/exercise</p> <p>Breathing</p> <p>Reading a book</p> <p>Playing music</p> <p>Free writing/Gratitude Practice</p> <p>Hugging</p> <p>Looking at the sky</p> <p>Playing calmly with a toy that involves fine motor</p>
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<p>Coping mechanisms to numb feelings, push them beneath the surface, and feel temporarily better faster</p> <p>Scrolling on your phone</p> <p>Using a substance</p> <p>Trying to solve the problem</p> <p>Obsessively cleaning</p> <p>Projecting your fears/insecurities onto others to feel in control</p> <p>Creating a list to feel in control</p> <p>Drinking alcohol or eating in response to feelings</p> <p>@seed.and.sew</p>
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<p>Coping strategies to process emotions, leave the reactive brain, and enter the rational thinking brain</p> <p>Drawing/coloring/painting</p> <p>Movement/exercise</p> <p>Breathing</p> <p>Reading a book</p> <p>Playing music</p> <p>Journaling/Gratitude practice</p> <p>Hugging</p> <p>Looking at the sky</p> <p>Talking to a support person</p>

COMMON COPING TOOLS FOR ADULTS

This work always starts with us. When we model coping strategies, when we pause to breathe or take space to feel calm, kiddos observe that. When we turn to mechanisms, they observe that, too. Give yourself grace. This isn't about perfection. Start by noticing you feelings and habits. Awareness comes before change. Intention over perfection, always.

SAMPLE WORDING

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UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

At the end of the day we all want to know that we are loved, regardless of our behavior. Do you love me unconditionally? Your kiddo will ask all day long to see if there's anything they can do that will result in you not loving them anymore. It's so hard, but maybe keeping this in a place you can reference can remind you that the behavior is often kiddos looking for connection. Empathy drives connection. Meet them where they are. Let them know you love them and always will, even when they have hard feelings they don't know what to do with.

Do you love me unconditionally?

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When I throw my toys in frustration?

When I hit my little sister?

When I yell, scream, and cry?

When I get in trouble at school?

When our family gets bigger?

"You're not in trouble. I want to help you make a different choice next time."

"I know you're so kind and don't want to hurt her."

"I will always love you."

"You're okay. It's just blocks. You can build your castle again."

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I'm so disappointed I want to scream.

I don't feel okay.

I was working so hard on that and it crashed.

Why doesn't anyone believe me?

Is it okay to feel upset? They seem annoyed.

"Ugh, you were working really hard on that and it knocked down. That's so disappointing. Would you like help feeling calm so you can try again?"

WE EMPATHIZE WITH WHAT SOMEONE FEELS NOT WHY THEY ARE FEELING IT

When we minimize their feelings, when we use phrases like, "I understand, but..." or "At least we can come back tomorrow" we invalidate their feelings. Imagine you feel disappointed, it's not someone's job to decide whether or not you SHOULD feel it. It's their job to empathize with WHAT you feel.

SAMPLE WORDING

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ANXIETY IN KIDS

It's instinctual to try and prevent them from feeling the fear, especially if you struggle with anxiety. You know how it feels and want to keep them from experiencing it. The thing is, the key to anxiety is welcoming the fear. When a child learns to acknowledge it and tap into coping strategies rather than fighting it and trying to avoid it, they can process fear and live without anxiety. I struggled with anxiety for years and this toolbox drastically changed my life.

When a child is experiencing anxiety, our job isn't to convince them not to have fear. Our job is to hold space for their fear and support them with coping strategies when they're ready.

Rather than

"There aren't any monsters in your closet."

"There's nothing to be afraid of upstairs."

"You'll be fine with the babysitter. She's really nice."

You can try

"What helps you feel calm you're feeling scared?"

"Sometimes when I'm scared I take deep breaths to help my body feel calm."

"If you feel scared or nervous when I'm gone, what could you do to feel safe?"

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It's not your
child's job
to calm down
for you,
it's your job
to calm down for
your child.

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CHILDREN WILL MIRROR YOUR FEELINGS

It's not their job to calm down for you, it's your job to calm down for them. This is often the hardest part. Take space, breathe, tap into coping, model for them how important it is to find your calm before problem solving. YOU'VE GOT THIS! You are never alone.

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