

Why do Emotion Coaching?

Emotion Coaching is an Evidence-based Strategy based upon the work of John Gottman and colleagues


Children are better able to:

- control their impulses
- delay gratification
- self soothe when upset
- pay attention

Emotion Coached Children:

- ✓ Achieve more academically in school
- ✓ Are more popular
- ✓ Have fewer behavioural problems
- ✓ Have fewer infectious illnesses
- ✓ Are more emotionally stable
- ✓ Are more resilient

(Gottman et al., 1996)



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What is Emotion Coaching ?

EC helps children to **understand** the different **emotions** they experience, **why** they occur and **how** to handle them (Gottman and Declaire, 1997)

- Step 1
Recognising the child's feelings and empathising with them
- Step 2
Validating the feelings and labelling them
- Step 3
Setting limits on behaviour (if needed)
- Step 4
Problem-solving with the child

External Frameworks


- External regulation



Sanctions and Rewards

Internal Frameworks

- Internal regulation



Emotion Coaching

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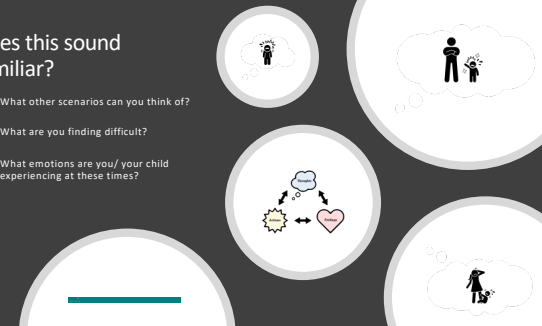
When could you use emotion coaching?

- Freya (2-years) wants to put her coat on herself but her mother puts it on for her and now she is screaming in the car because she didn't do it herself.
- Ahmed (5-years) doesn't want to go home from the playground. He sits on the floor and won't move when he is asked.
- Jayden (11-years) has stormed to his room and has thrown his book because he is finding his maths homework too hard.
- Precious (14-years) is crying at the front door and says she doesn't want to go to school. She says she has had an argument with a friend.

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Does this sound familiar?

- What other scenarios can you think of?
- What are you finding difficult?
- What emotions are you/ your child experiencing at these times?



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Adult's Different Styles in dealing with emotions

- Dismissive
- Disapproving
- Laissez-faire or
- Emotion Coaching




ROYAL GREENWICH

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Dismissive style

Thoughts and feelings
 "I want to make this better as quickly as I can"
 "I feel overwhelmed by this emotion"

Response to child
 "It's nothing to worry about, it's no big deal"
 "Calm down. I'll get you a new one"
 "You'll be fine. It's all going to be OK"



ROYAL GREENWICH

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Disapproving style

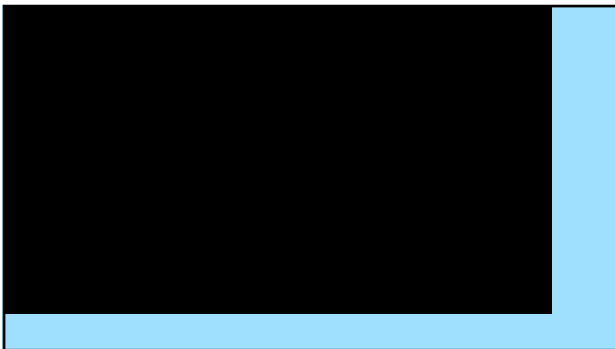


Thoughts and feelings
 "I want you to be tough and resilient"
 "You are doing this to get what you want"

Response to child
 "Big [boys/girls] don't cry"
 "If you keep screaming, I'll take your teddy/phone away"
 "We're going home because you obviously can't behave yourself"





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Laissez-faire or Permissive style

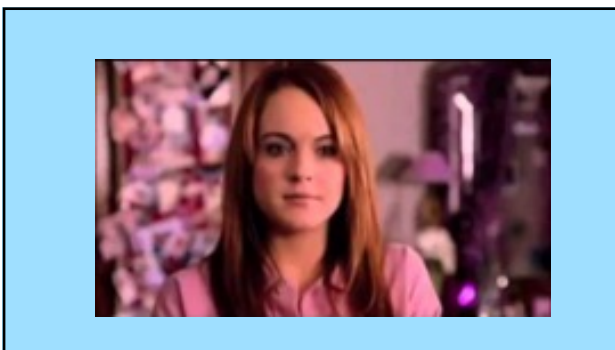


Thoughts and feelings
 "There's nothing I can do so I'll let you do what you need to do"
 "I can cope with your emotions but I can't do anything about it."

Response to child
 "You'll feel better when you get it out of your system"
 "Cry as much as you need to"

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<p>Emotion Coaching High empathy High guidance</p>	<p>Disapproving Low empathy High guidance</p>
<p>Laissez Faire High empathy Low guidance</p>	<p>Dismissive Low empathy Low guidance</p>

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Impact of different styles



Child learns – what I am feeling is not right / my assessment of the problem is wrong / I must not feel this way

In the future this could:

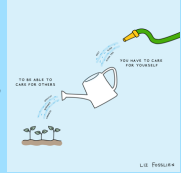

- lead to difficulties with noticing, understanding and trusting their feelings
- cause the child to **suppress or distract themselves** from their emotions
- lead to more painful feelings - resentment, guilt, shame, anger
- lead to difficulties with **decision-making** and **problem-solving skills**



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How are we managing our own emotions?


- Taking a deep breath, grounding
- Positive and reassuring self-talk – **"I'm a good mum/dad."**
- Self-reflection – why is this anger triggering me?
Why am I in such a rush?
- What is the worst case scenario? ("so what?")
- 'Me' time


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Emotion Coaching

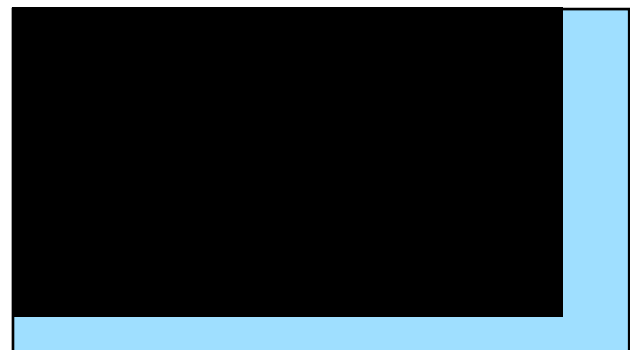
- 1 Recognising and empathising
- 2 Labelling and validating
- 3 Limit setting
- 4 Problem-solving



All emotions are valid but not all behaviours are acceptable




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STEP I. Recognising



- Notice that there is a strong emotion
- See this as an opportunity for **connection** and coaching
- Try to think what the child could be feeling (best guess)


I wonder if you are feeling...

I've noticed you are...

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'Bad' Behaviour Iceberg



What we see (above water): ANGER, SHOUTING, BEING DISRESPECTED, BELLING, COMMUNICATING DISTRESS, STRESS AT HOME, STRESS IN SCHOOL, TIRED, SHAME, DISCOMFORT, DISEMPOWERED, BORED, ANXIETY, TENSE, FEAR, WORRY, SADNESS, GUILT, REGRET, DISAPPOINTMENT, CONFUSION, UNAVAILABLE SUPPORT, PAST TRAUMA, PROLONGED, FAMILY DYNAMICS, JEALOUSY, REPROACH, SARCASM.

What might be underneath (below water): ANGER, SHOUTING, BEING DISRESPECTED, BELLING, COMMUNICATING DISTRESS, STRESS AT HOME, STRESS IN SCHOOL, TIRED, SHAME, DISCOMFORT, DISEMPOWERED, BORED, ANXIETY, TENSE, FEAR, WORRY, SADNESS, GUILT, REGRET, DISAPPOINTMENT, CONFUSION, UNAVAILABLE SUPPORT, PAST TRAUMA, PROLONGED, FAMILY DYNAMICS, JEALOUSY, REPROACH, SARCASM.


Context: FAMILY DYNAMICS, JEALOUSY, REPROACH, SARCASM.



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Empathising (internal)

- We need to be calm to imagine things from the child's perspective.
- Think about how you might feel in a similar scenario.



Sensory Stress Bucket
@candiceclinicalpsychologist

Sensory stressors
e.g. Multiple noises
• Touch from others
• No escape
• People eating
• Uncomfortable clothes

Overload tap
e.g. Trauma reminders
• Multiple sensory information all at once

Coping outlet
• Quiet space
• Stimming
• Safe person
• Fidget toy

Meltdown
e.g. Shouting
Self harm
Hiding
• Quiet time

Bucket contents:
• Digestion issue
• Headache
• Pain
• Tension
• Anxiety

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Brene Brown Empathy video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnVhVUCVd10>



RSA

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STEP 2. Labelling and validating

Labelling

"You seem sad to me"

"I can see you're feeling angry because ...e.g. you have tensed up, you are frowning"

"I can tell you are upset..."

"You're disappointed about..."

"You look frustrated..."

"I can see that you get angry when that happens/when I do this"

Validating

"I would feel sad if that happened to me"

"I would feel upset too"


"That would also make me mad"

"I understand why you are angry"

"It's normal to feel angry about that"

"It's OK to feel cross about that"

it's okay to feel your feelings



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Seeing empathising and labelling in action

Sadness comforts Bing Bong



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What if words aren't helping?

What if the child runs into another room?

What if my child won't let me soothe them?

What if my child is screaming and can't hear me?

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Showing empathy and understanding

- Calming ourselves
- Staying close by
- Making eye contact
- Using facial expressions
- Adapting our tone of voice
- Gesture





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Step 3. Setting Limits – it's not personal, it's not punishment

"In this family, we... "

"Only grown-ups are allowed to..."



"I love you, and I won't let you..."

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Limit setting

Your limits **will** upset your children.
Hold your boundaries with love.






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STEP 4. Problem solving

When the child is in a calm, relaxed, rational state:

- Explore the feelings that gave rise to the behaviour/incident/event.
- Try to think together about a way that the child could do things differently next time.
- Notice and reflect on positives too.

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Emotion Coaching – 4 steps (C.A.L.M)

Connect
Tune in to the child's feelings and your own.

Acknowledge
Label the feeling and validate it - "I can see you're feeling angry because Jack has snatched your toy. It's okay to feel angry".

Limits (if necessary)
Remind the child of acceptable/unacceptable behaviours – "it's not okay to hit".

Make a Plan
Problem solving and finding solutions in a collaborative way – "why don't we have a run around outside".




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A word about Adult Emotional Regulation (Meta Emotion Philosophy)

- The beliefs we hold about emotions and their expression (our reasoning)
- Meta Emotion Philosophy (MEP) is influenced by our genes, early experiences with emotions in our family of origin as well as further experiences and interactions throughout life.
- MEP influences how we *react, reason and respond* to emotions in ourselves and others
- Adults need to be aware of their own emotional response **before** trying to help others with theirs. Just like the safety advice given when flying on planes: '*put on your oxygen mask before trying to help others*'.




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
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Modelling and Co-regulation
Put on your own oxygen mask first:
Chilli's 20 minutes

Just REMEMBER: You are not a bad parent if you do not have the emotion capacity to use emotion coaching all of the time!! You are simply a HUMAN!!



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Reflections

◦What is one thing you will take away from this workshop?



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Take home task



- Looking for 'glimmers' – try to notice over the next week a time where you feel positive about your response to your child
- What did you do? What was the impact?



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Thank you!

• Any questions?



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