Helping Children

GROW & THRIVE

Created and Presented by Georgianna Lee

Coach & Counsellor and Podcast Co-host
of Wholehearted Loving: Simple Tools to be Kinder to Yourself
and More Connected with the Ones You Love

Learn tools to...

- Help the Body Feel Safe
  - *use quick practices that help adults and kids relax, release tension and feel more steady*
- Help the Mind Make Sense of Feelings
  - *use simple questions to explore what might be going on inside during big life changes*
- Help Relationships Grow
  - *learn small, everyday ways to help children feel seen, safe, and connected, even when things around them are changing*

Why Tending to the Body Matters

- Transitions, stress or new experiences can make the body feel full: fear, excitement, grief, confusion, overwhelm.

- For both adults and children, settling the body comes first. Before we talk or teach, we settle.

Let's Practice Connecting with Ourselves

Find Something Pleasant to Look At

- feel the chair under your hips or your feet on the ground or your back on the surface you're laying on
- look around your space and find something that feels pleasant to look at
- notice how it feels as you look at this object (or person or pet)
- repeat two more times (finding a new pleasant thing to look at each time)

Let's Practice Connecting with Ourselves

Shoulder Rolls

- feel the chair under your hips or your feet on the ground
- as you inhale through your nose, bring your shoulders up to your ears
- as you exhale through your mouth, roll your shoulds back first and then down (allow your exhale to be long, making any sounds that feel good to make)
- repeat two more times, noticing the difference between tension as you raise your shoulders to your ears and letting go as you allow your shoulders to release

Let's Practice Connecting with Ourselves

Open the Chest, Let it Go

- stand and allow the body to move or shake in a way that feels good
- plant feet firmly on the ground, hip width apart
- with your hands, create two "Ls" with your thumb and pointer finger
- swing your arms open to the side, opening up the chest
- bring the arms in to cross over each other, (notice which arm is on top)
- bring a gentle bounce to the knees
- keep the arm motion going (alternating which arm is on top) and make a fun sound effect each time you open up your arms
- allow yourself to imagine releasing any stresses, tensions, thoughts that you don't need to carry right now

HELPING CHILDREN GROW & THRIVE

Why Relationship Matters Most

INSPIRED BY DR. GORDON NEUFELD

We cannot protect children from every wound in life.
What we can do, if we want to truly offer children protection, is help parents create a relationship of deep trust, so their child always knows they can return for comfort, no matter what happens.

From there, we can support children in growing safe and trusting relationships with other caring adults, creating a network of safety and support to carry them through life's ups and downs.

SECURE ATTACHMENT

TWO EVERYDAY NEEDS

Secure Base

“I can explore the world because you’re here if I need you.”

- the child tries new things
- the adult stays available, steady and encouraging

What the child learns is:

- You support me in trying something new
- You delight in what I’m doing
- You delight in me

SECURE ATTACHMENT

TWO EVERYDAY NEEDS

Safe Haven

“When I’m upset, overwhelmed, tired or need help, I can come back to you and you help me feel better.”

- The child can return whenever they need to
- The adult welcomes, comforts and helps them settle

What the child learns is:

- You always welcome me back warmly
- All my feelings and needs are allowed
- You won’t make me feel bad for being me

Why Reflecting on Your Feelings Matters

- When we slow down, we begin to notice what's actually inside: our fears, hopes, and longings.
- These feelings shape how we respond to children.
- Reflecting helps us respond instead of react.

HELPING CHILDREN GROW & THRIVE

UNDERSTANDING ME

PROMPTS FOR EXPLORING MY INNER WORLD

When My Child Explores

- I’m excited because...
- I’m afraid because...
- This impacts my child by...
- What I really want is...
- What I want to practice is...

HELPING CHILDREN GROW & THRIVE

UNDERSTANDING ME

PROMPTS FOR EXPLORING MY INNER WORLD

When My Child Comes to Me

- It’s easy for me when...
- It’s hard for me when...
- This impacts my child by...
- What I really want is...
- What I want to practice is...

Making Space for My Emotional Experience

- Exploring these prompts gives parents a place to feel, release, and be witnessed in their own experience so they can soften, open, and have more capacity to hear and be with their child's experience.

UNDERSTANDING ME

PROMPTS FOR EXPLORING MY INNER WORLD

Feelings About Being Here

- I feel excited to be here because...
- I feel scared to be here because...
- I feel angry about...
- I feel grateful for...

UNDERSTANDING ME

PROMPTS FOR EXPLORING MY INNER WORLD

Strength + Resilience

- A hard thing I made it through is...
- What helped me make it through was...
- Someone who has been kind or caring to me during this time is...

HELPING CHILDREN GROW & THRIVE

UNDERSTANDING ME

PROMPTS FOR EXPLORING MY INNER WORLD

Questions + Confusion

- I’m curious about...
- I don’t understand...
- It frustrates me that...

UNDERSTANDING ME

PROMPTS FOR EXPLORING MY INNER WORLD

Longing + Missing

- What I really miss is...
- Who I really miss is...

HELPING CHILDREN GROW & THRIVE

UNDERSTANDING ME

PROMPTS FOR EXPLORING MY INNER WORLD

Needs + Support + Hopes

- What I really want is...
- What I really need is...
- Someone who helps me feel better is...
- My hope is...

Why Understanding Your Child's Feelings & Needs Matters

- When we tune into what a child feels and needs, we can meet them with warmth instead of frustration.
- This helps them settle, come to us when they need support, and try new things knowing we're here for them.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD

THIS EXERCISE HELPS US IMAGINE THE WORLD THROUGH OUR CHILD'S EYES

Exercise for parents:

Imagine you are your child and speak as if you were them.

- Lately, I've been feeling...
- In my body, I notice...
- I wish you would understand that...
- Something that could help me feel a bit better is...

Questions & Inspirations

- What is one thing from today that you can bring into your work with families?
- What is something you feel proud of in the way you support families?

to learn more...

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