



# Emotion coaching

24/9/24

<p><b>Stage 1</b></p>	<p><b>Recognise</b>/become aware of the feeling/ emotion, empathise (communicate your acceptance of the emotion), sooth and calm</p>	<p>"I understand... I know it's hard"</p>
<p><b>Stage 2</b></p>	<p><b>Validate</b> feelings and <b>label</b></p>	<p>"I can see/I wonder if you feel ..." "I wonder if you feel like this because your frowning" "Have I got that right?" "I wonder if you would feel like that if that happened to me."</p>
<p><b>Stage 3</b></p>	<p><b>Set limits on behaviour</b> if needed. Communicate that all emotions and feelings are acceptable, but some behaviours are not.</p>	<p>Refer to safety and wanting to keep _____ safe, "did you...?" questions and instead ask "<b>what has caused you to feel this way?</b>"          "Even when we feel like that, our St Peter's way of dealing with it is not the kind', so ... is not an OK thing to do".</p>
<p><b>Stage 4</b></p>	<p><b>Problem solve</b> together</p>	<p>"Let's sort this out together."          Work with the _____ to consider what he can do to deal with strong emotions next time – "<b>What might help</b></p>

# What is Emotion Coaching?

- Based on research by American Psychologist John Gottman, Emotion Coaching uses moments of heightened emotion and resulting behaviour to guide and teach the child and young person about more effective responses.
- Through empathetic engagement the child's emotional state is verbally acknowledged and validated, promoting a sense of security and feeling 'felt'. This activates changes in the child's neurological system and allows the child to calm down, physiologically and psychologically.
- When the child is calmer, incidents are discussed in a more rational and productive manner. Moves are made to problem solve and engage in solution-focused strategies.



## Philosophy behind approach...

We are all born with an ability to feel and have feelings.

We are NOT born with the coping strategies to manage big feelings.

We need opportunities to experience that emotion and learn how to cope with the emotion with the support of someone we trust.


All behaviour is a form of communication- be curious about the feelings behind the behaviours.


# Emotional Styles

- Videos of different styles to manage behaviours, including our preferred Emotion Coaching method:
- <https://www.emotioncoachinguk.com/resources-for-professionals-parents-carers>
- Emotional styles we use to respond to emotions in others: emotion disapproving, emotion dismissing, laissez-faire, and emotion coaching.



## Stage 1- tune in and empathise

- Observe and tune in to what the behaviour is communicating- be curious about the feelings behind the behaviour.
  - Empathise with that emotion, think back to when we have experienced that emotion.
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## Stage 2 – Label, normalise, validate the emotion

- “I wonder”... Wonder out loud- comment on the behaviours we see and what emotions they may be feeling
- Help the child think about body sensations and cues.
- Normalise
- Non judgemental
- Validating the emotional experience
- What can we do to feel calm? (draw, hug, walk together...)





## Stage 2 – example script

- ▶ ‘I can see you’re frowning and you’re kicking the wall. You are expressing a lot of energy. I wonder if you are feeling angry?. I would feel angry if that happened to me. It’s ok to feel angry’
- ▶ ‘I noticed you looking around at the others who are working on their projects. I think you might be feeling nervous right now about your work. Have I got that right?’






# Feeling calm examples

- “Let’s take a break, take a break, sit down and pause for a minute”
- It’s ok to sit with an emotion, describing how it is feeling.
- Give examples, “ when I feel that upset, I feel like I can’t catch my breath, so I try to breathe slowly. Sometimes I feel a little embarrassed too and a little hurt. I feel like my heart is a bit bruised. After a few minutes, I feel like my heart feels better and I can go on with my day.”
- “It doesn’t seem like I am helping. You remember what to do when you are upset and how to calm down. I’ll be over here when you need me.”

## Stage 2 – Emotional Literacy


- No good or bad feelings just pleasant and unpleasant
- Feelings are like waves in the ocean- they can crash in unexpectedly or gently roll in. You can't stop these waves but notice them, be aware, so they don't knock you off your feet!





## Stage 3 – Limit setting and boundaries around behaviour

- ‘Connection before correction.’
- Communicate ‘natural consequences’ rather than ‘forced consequence’.
- Clear boundaries are needed as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.
- Be clear to separate the feeling from the behaviour.
- Be clear about why those rules need to be in place (refer St Peter’s Way)



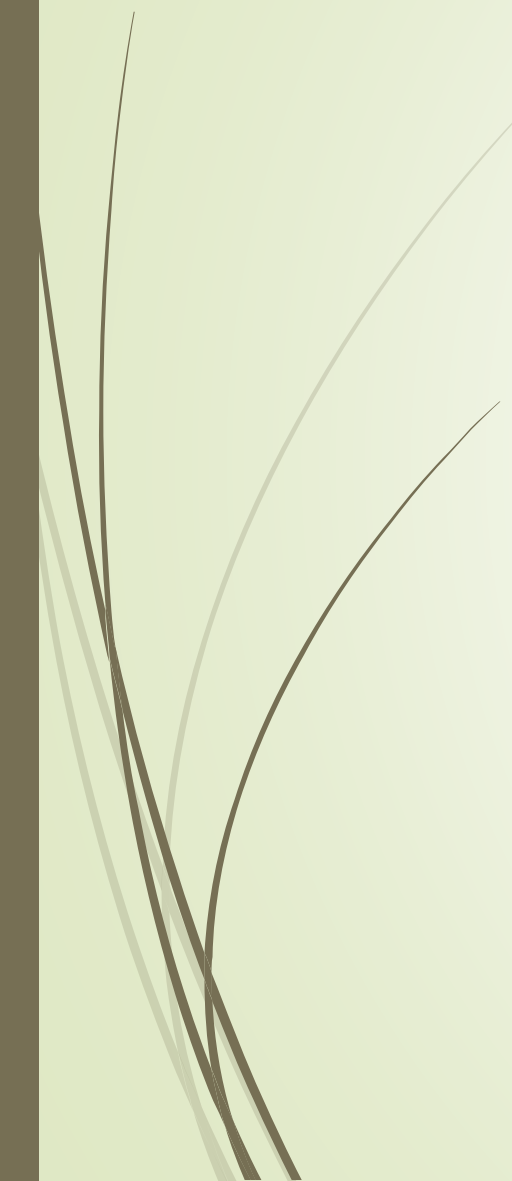
## Stage 3 - examples

Consider a seven year old who has just hit out at a friend.

- Acknowledging the emotions the child is feeling identifies you as an understanding and empathic adult and as the child begins to calm. (stages 1 and 2)
- “I understand you’re feeling really sad today, but our St Peter’s Way says ‘We are kind’, so hitting your friend isn’t an ok thing to do.”
- This is the key to step three: making clear which behaviours are and are not acceptable.



## Stage 3 -


- ▶ Think about your tone of voice – be careful not to shout and demonstrate the same behaviour back to them.
  - ▶ Apologise to children if you make a mistake- it is hard to manage our big feelings – no one is perfect. Give examples- reinforcing the philosophy that it is ok to make mistakes.
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## Stage 4 – Problem solving

- ▶ Think about timing – adult and child need to be calm. Think about if they are ready to use their ‘upstairs brain/thinking brain’. This could be a conversation for the next day.
- ▶ Have an open mind, talk through their ideas- the pros and cons. Ideally, new solutions should be driven by the child.
- ▶ Super opportunity for teaching resilience- the children realise that they have the capacity within themselves to control those big emotions.



## Stage 4 - examples

- ▶ “what will help you to remember this?”
- ▶ “I wonder whether it would be a good idea to go to the special beanbag in the corner next time you feel like this? Then I can come and help.”



# Stage 4 – Model of the brain – flipping your lid

