



DON'T DISCIPLINE A REACTIVE BRAIN GUIDE

T U R N I N G T A N T R U M S I N T O
C O M M U N I C A T I O N

THE CORE PRINCIPLE

Don't discipline reactive brains.

Check if they're reactive → Help them
become receptive → THEN guide behavior.

HONEST ABOUT PARENTING





THE BRAIN SCIENCE

Downstairs Brain (Reactive State)

- Survival mode: fight, flight, freeze
- Cannot learn or process information
- Signs: crying, yelling, hitting, frozen, defensive

Upstairs Brain (Receptive State)

- Logic, thinking, problem-solving active
- Can learn and make healthy decisions
- Signs: calm body, eye contact, responds to voice

KEY INSIGHT: You cannot be reactive and receptive at the same time - it's neurologically impossible.

MIRROR NEURONS: YOUR SECRET WEAPON

Think of them like emotional Wi-Fi between brains.

- Your child's brain "catches" your emotional state
- Your calm becomes their calm
- Your reactive state makes their meltdown worse
- You're not just waiting - you're actively helping their brain shift states



THE 3-QUESTION CONNECTION CHECK

Question 1: "Is my child reactive right now?"

🚨 RED LIGHT SIGNALS:

- Crying, yelling, screaming
- Hitting, throwing, aggressive behavior
- Frozen/shut down
- Defensive body language
- Cannot make eye contact

IF YES → DO NOT DISCIPLINE YET

HONEST ABOUT PARENTING



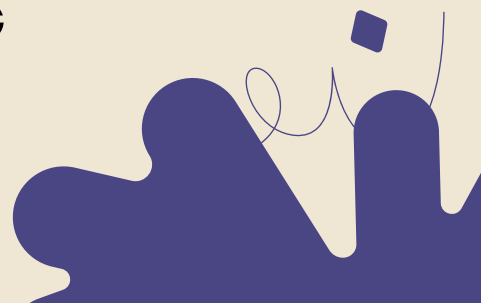
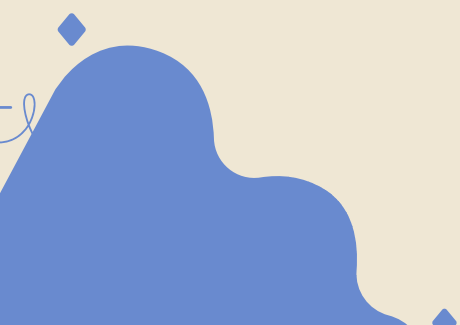
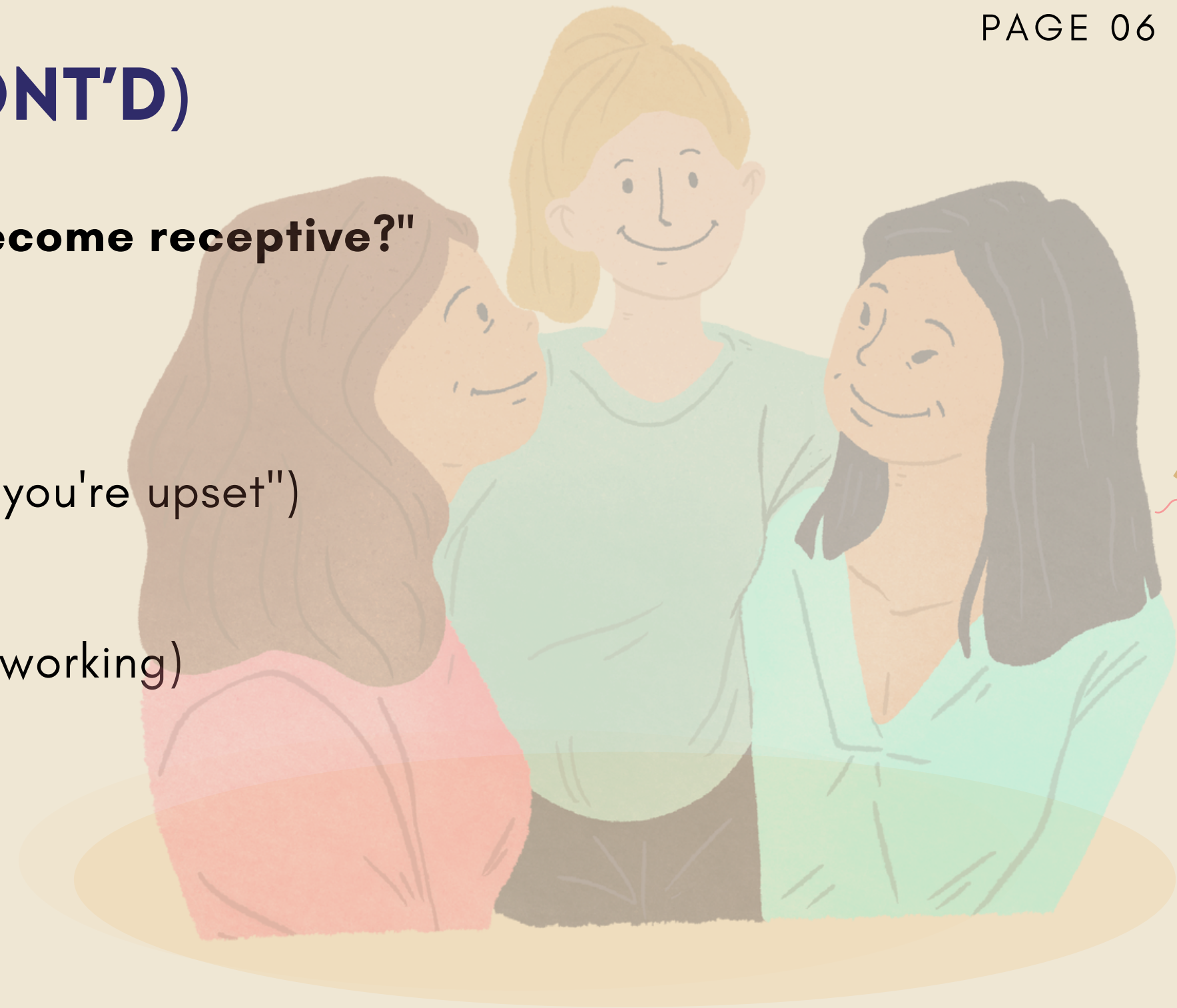


THE 3-QUESTION CONNECTION CHECK (CONT'D)

Question 2: "How can I help them become receptive?"

● REGULATION STRATEGIES:

- Get down to their physical level
- Acknowledge their feelings ("I see you're upset")
- Offer comfort (if they'll accept it)
- Stay calm yourself (mirror neurons working)
- Wait patiently for state shift



THE 3-QUESTION CONNECTION CHECK (CONT'D)

Question 3: "Now are they ready to learn?"

✓ GREEN LIGHT SIGNALS:

- Calm breathing
- Can make eye contact
- Responds when you speak
- Body is relaxed
- Shows they can hear/process

NOW you can guide behavior and problem-solve together

HONEST ABOUT PARENTING





REMEMBER

1. 5 minutes of connection prevents hours of conflict
2. You can't force discipline - you have to tune in first
3. Safety always comes first - remove from danger immediately
4. Some days nothing works perfectly - this creates the foundation

HONEST ABOUT PARENTING

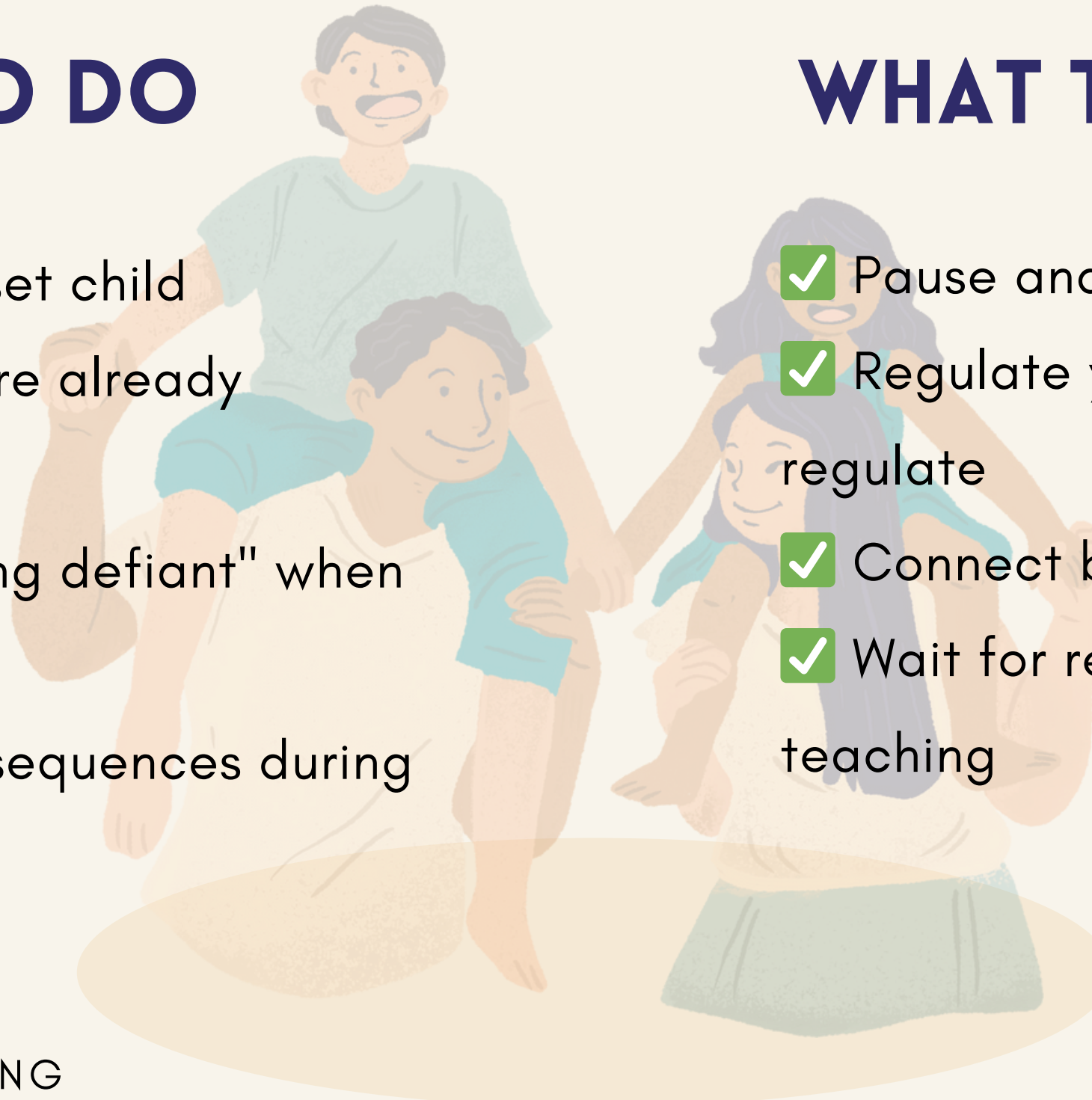
WHAT NOT TO DO

- ✗ Try to lecture an upset child
- ✗ Escalate when they're already escalated
- ✗ Assume they're "being defiant" when they're dysregulated
- ✗ Skip straight to consequences during meltdowns

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

- ✓ Pause and assess their brain state first
- ✓ Regulate yourself to help them regulate
- ✓ Connect before you correct
- ✓ Wait for receptive state before teaching

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ANY QUESTION? FEEL FREE TO ASK!



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