

Understanding Your Child's Negative Self-Talk

The Transformation Practice

When words aren't enough

Sometimes words aren't enough.
The thought is too big, too heavy, too sticky.
That's when we use the body.

This practice gives children agency — they're not stuck with the feeling.
They can do something with it.

Step 1: Name what feels heavy

"Is there a thought or feeling that feels too heavy to carry right now?"

Let the child identify it.
If they can't name it, that's okay — they can simply point to where it lives in their body.

Step 2: Bring it from the body into the hand

"Can you feel where that heavy thought lives?
Your chest? Your stomach? Your throat?"

Now take it — gently — from that place and put it into your hand."

This externalizes what felt internal and overwhelming.
It becomes something they can see and hold.

Step 3: Bless it

"This thought came because part of you was trying to protect you.
Can you thank it for trying to help — and let it know you don't need it anymore?"

We don't fight the thought.
We don't shame it.
We acknowledge that it tried to serve them, and now we're letting it go.

Step 4: Send it away to transform

“Now we’re going to send this thought away — not to nowhere, but somewhere beautiful where it can become something gentle.

Imagine it leaving your hand and floating away...
and as it floats, it transforms.
Maybe into a butterfly.
Maybe a sunbeam.
Maybe a blade of grass.

It’s going somewhere peaceful.
And you don’t have to carry it anymore.”

Step 5: Notice the space

“How does your body feel now?
Is there more space where the heavy thought used to be?”

This teaches them:
feelings can move.
thoughts can leave.
they have some control over what they carry.

When to use this practice:

- ❖ When your child is stuck in a repeating negative thought
- ❖ When they feel physically heavy or tight
- ❖ When words and reasoning aren't helping
- ❖ When they need to release something before bed
- ❖ Anytime the feeling is too big for talk alone

What this practice teaches:

Your child learns they're not powerless. They can move energy. They can transform what feels heavy into something gentle. They can practice kindness even toward the painful parts.

This is embodied self-compassion — not just understood, but felt.