



# A Year of Connected Parenting

## 52 WEEK CONNECTION GUIDE

Written by  
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# 52 weeks of connected parenting

"A Year of Connected Parenting" is designed to help you and your family intentionally connect with each other every day.

This guide will lead you through 52 weeks of connected parenting tips.

Each week, you'll be asked tough questions and provided step-by-step guidance on how to make each a moment with your child a moment of connection.

These tips will also support connection and healing within yourself from any trauma in your own childhood.

Use the reflections at the end of each week to bring intention and connection into your family.





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# Note from the Author

Thank you for coming on this journey with me! This is a life's dream of mine to help parents heal themselves so that their children don't take on the same messages about themselves that we may have.

As a child abuse survivor myself, I know the lifelong struggles that come with being a child of parents who didn't understand that what they did and how they made me feel really changed the way I related to the world and how I truly felt about myself. Over the course of my life, I have spent countless years in therapy and healing myself so that I could make sure my own children have a different experience than I did.

Additionally, what ended up happening for me is this: the more I connected to my child and did things differently for them, the more I healed.

I utilized my professional practice and decades of schooling and training to really hone in on what we can do as parents who didn't have these experiences in our own childhood.

I invite you on this journey with me. It's one of true self-exploration and one of great growth and connection.

Thank you for trusting me during this time with you.

Maurissa

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# Welcome to the Guide

"A Year of Connected Parenting" is designed to help you and your family intentionally connect with each other every day.

This guide will lead you through 52 weeks of connected parenting tips.

Each week, you'll be asked tough questions and provided step-by-step guidance on how to make each a moment with your child a moment of connection.

These tips will also support connection and healing within yourself from any trauma in your own childhood.

At the end of each week, you'll find reflection prompts to conclude the week.

Note: While this guide uses the terms "mom" and "dad", this guide is for all parenting partners regardless of gender or title.



# Monthly Themes

JANUARY	A FRESH START
FEBRUARY	ITS ALL ABOUT LOVE (LANGUAGES)
MARCH	DONT LEAVE IT TO LUCK
APRIL	PARENTING THROUGH THE STORM
MAY	ITS ALL ABOUT MOM
JUNE	DADS HAVE FEELINGS TOO
JULY	BALANCING PARENTHOOD & ADULTHOOD
AUGUST	GETTING BACK TO ROUTINE
SEPTEMBER	TACKLING TRANSITIONS
OCTOBER	PARENTING DOESNT HAVE TO BE SCARY
NOVEMBER	BRINGING GRATITUDE INTO EACH DAY
DECEMBER	HOLIDAY MADNESS





# Week 1

# January

## OVERVIEW

Starting fresh can seem overwhelming! Do you feel that you have to keep it going every day for the entire year for it to make a difference?

What if we thought of a New Year's resolution or starting fresh in terms of being curious about new things that we can try at the moment with our children?

Maybe this week your child has a big explosion of feelings. Instead of doing what you normally would, especially if it hasn't worked in the past, let's try to sit with the explosion and explore what else may be happening for your child during this time.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT DO YOU FIND DIFFICULT ABOUT SITTING WITH YOUR CHILD THROUGH THEIR INTENSE EMOTIONS?

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT HELPING YOUR CHILD THROUGH THEIR INTENSE EMOTIONS?







Week 2

January

## OVERVIEW

When I think of the month of January, I think of wanting to be a “better me”. The truth is that we can do this and want this for ourselves each and every day.

What I encourage today is this: instead of thinking about being a “better you” or how you can heal yourself, think about a moment in your life that changed the way you viewed yourself or the way you related to others in the world.

Let’s begin to get creative as to how these moments have possibly impacted your world now.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT MOMENT CHANGED HOW YOU SAW YOURSELF?

WHAT MOMENT CHANGED HOW YOU SAW OTHERS IN THE WORLD?







# Week 3



# January

## OVERVIEW

It's 3 weeks into the new year! If you have felt like you failed more than once, please know this is normal. To be honest, no one is going to be perfect any day of the year.

So, if in this week you feel like you already ruined some form of perfection for yourself, please give yourself a hug and a chance to just be healed for the day.

Use this opportunity to connect with your child. As big feelings (yours and your child's) come up, find ways to relate these emotions to each other.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

DESCRIBE MOMENTS WHERE YOU AND YOUR CHILD STRUGGLED THIS WEEK. HOW CAN YOU CHANGE THESE SITUATIONS INTO MOMENTS OF CONNECTION?







# Week 4

# January

## OVERVIEW

This week is an awesome opportunity to find a moment where you can have your child lead an activity or conversation.

No matter what the topic or activity, see it from your child's eyes and be curious as to why it makes them happy or excited.

Notice if anything changes for you in how you view other moments in your life.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT ACTIVITY OR CONVERSATION DID YOUR CHILD PICK?  
WHAT GOT THEM EXCITED? HOW DID YOU FEEL DURING  
THE ACTIVITY?





# Week 5

# January

## OVERVIEW

This month will feel long, especially with all the hope and anticipation we often feel pressured to put into it.

For this week, I want you to write down the moments from this month that you have felt successful in and that you truly enjoyed the feeling of being connected.

Instead of focusing on the failures or moments that felt like a failure this month, let's focus on the moments we felt connected to ourselves and our children. Write them down and save them.

When you feel like it's been tough these written moments will be so helpful in encouraging you to continue forward.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WRITE DOWN MOMENTS OF SUCCESS & CONNECTION!  
THE MOMENTS YOU FELT CONNECTED. WHAT DID IT FEEL LIKE TO YOU? HOW DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE CONNECTED? WHAT DID IT LOOK LIKE FROM YOUR CHILD'S POINT OF VIEW?





# Week 1

# February

## OVERVIEW

Have you ever heard of love languages? They are, in essence, the way we are shown and made to feel loved by others.

My core values as a therapist are that everyone in the family feels Seen, Heard, and Valued. There are many ways to instill these values within the family, however, it is important to understand how each member is made to feel loved.

Let's start by being curious about the love languages of our children and parenting partners! More to come in the next few weeks!

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LOVE LANGUAGES?

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT LOVE LANGUAGES RELATED TO YOUR CHILDREN?



# Week 2

# February

## OVERVIEW

Here's a sample of the 5 basic love languages and how others would want them to feel to them.

This week, figure out yours and your parenting partners love language. I would encourage a conversation on what it looks like for the both of you!

words of affirmation	compliment them   give a card   send a text tell them you love them   tell them you're proud actively listen   give them notes acknowledge their effort in front of others
acts of service	help clean their room   make them meals help with homework   bring them a drink organize their closet   tuck them in
physical touch	comb their hair   scratch their back cuddle & read   sit near them welcome hugs & kisses   high fives hold hands   pat their back
gifts	make their favorite treat   do a treasure hunt give a thoughtful gift on an ordinary day give a special bracelet   appreciate their gifts
quality time	do chores together   ask about their day make eye contact   play with them   do a craft eat together   bedtime stories undivided attention

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT IS YOUR LOVE LANGUAGE?

WHAT IS YOUR PARENTING PARTNERS LOVE LANGUAGE?



# Week 3

February

## OVERVIEW

This week is all about exploring the love languages of your children! What makes them feel loved?

Test them out with your children to see which one helps them feel connected to you.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT LOVE LANGUAGE DO YOU FEEL MOST MATCHES YOUR CHILDS?

HOW DO THEY WANT TO FEEL LOVED? WHAT MAKES THEM FEEL CONNECTED TO YOU?





# Week 4

# February

## OVERVIEW

This week I want you to write down everyone's love language and how they feel Seen, Heard, and Valued in your home.

Place this paper somewhere easily seen so that you can look at it in times of conflict.

This is a great reminder of how to share things with everyone in order to connect through correction and fighting. Conflicts blow up when instead of using the opportunity to connect on the issue, we insist on being "right". More things to come as the weeks go on!

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WRITE DOWN EVERYONES LOVE LANGUAGE AND WAYS THEY NEED TO FEEL CONNECTED WITHIN YOUR FAMILY!





# Week 1

# March

## OVERVIEW

March's theme is all about being intentional with how we're relating to our children.

Being intentional can be a challenge at first, but does get easier over time! Remember that it takes 30 days to create a habit.

Start this week and month off by being conscious of how we're talking and interacting with our children. Work toward making it a habit.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WRITE DOWN THE MOMENTS YOU WERE INTENTIONAL!

DESCRIBE HOW YOU FELT AND HOW YOUR CHILD REACTED.







# Week 2

# March

## OVERVIEW

What intentions from last week went well? What parts didn't go as expected?

Being intentional is also about being reflective on what takes place with you and your children. I often apologize for something many days after it occurred because of being reflective.

*It is never too late to repair and show connection in a time of disconnection.*

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT INTENTIONS WENT WELL? WHAT DIDNT GO AS EXPECTED?







Week 3



March

#### OVERVIEW

This week, let's reflect on our intentional connections with others..

What changes have occurred in your home? Is the atmosphere calm? Are there more moments of happiness? Do you feel like you're not yelling as much?

These are just a few things that could be changed in your home.

#### REFLECTION PROMPT

HAVE YOU NOTICED CHANGES IN YOUR HOME AS A RESULT OF BEING MORE INTENTIONAL?







# Week 4

# March

## OVERVIEW

Being intentional doesn't mean every day will go perfectly. It's more of a goal that you will set, looking for ways each day to be more intentional with how you connect with those in your home.

If those moments don't go well, it's about remembering that we can always go back to repair and reconnect with our family about those instances.

Reconnecting could be a family movie night or game night. Or it could be as simple as a hug, acknowledging that things didn't go well and a promise to get better over time.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHEN YOU TRY TO RECONNECT, HOW DO YOU FEEL?

# Week 1

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## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHEN YOU TRY TO RECONNECT, HOW DO YOU FEEL?







# Week 1

# April

## OVERVIEW

By this point in the year things may be getting bumpy. Our children have been in school for a bit and *MAN*, can the battle of homework and going to school get tough!

This month is all about parenting during the rough times.

What else is happening lately or coming up that may add stress or conflict in your home? Take this week to write out upcoming things that may be stressful so we can work through them together.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT IS CAUSING STRESS OR CONFLICT IN YOUR HOME?







# Week 2

# April

## OVERVIEW

By this week that list you have written may feel overwhelming. Don't panic.

Being mindful of expected storms is a part of being intentional and how we go from being a correcting parent to a connecting parent. Looking ahead and being prepared for these storms can be very empowering.

Remember we are working towards understanding how things happen in our home and in our connections with our family. This takes some deep understanding of the common situations that lead to disconnection.

So, take a look at your list and break down the things that may be affected by it so we can work through them together.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

FROM YOUR LIST LAST WEEK, WHAT IS LEADING TO THOSE MOMENTS OF STRESS AND CONFLICT?







# Week 3



# April

## OVERVIEW

Depending on where you live, this month can bring stormy weather. That often means more time spent inside! With that, we can feel overwhelmed and experience more stress, often resulting in increased conflict. Since we are planning for this, we can manage it more effectively. What sort of activities can you create for yourself and your family?

We often do a popsicle bath where my child eats a popsicle while in the bathtub. It's a win-win situation! He gets to play and have a treat while I get to relax and supervise. This breaks up the day and provides time to decompress.

Older children can have contests using board games or video games. Family movie nights offer great opportunities to discuss and connect with your children.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT SORT OF ACTIVITIES CAN YOU CREATE FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY TO DO WHEN YOU'RE STUCK TOGETHER INSIDE?







Week 4

April

#### OVERVIEW

Reflecting back on this month, what storms occurred? How did you handle them? What areas did you succeed, what did you struggle with?

Keep these notes handy and know that you can reach out to me anytime for direct tips on your current needs.

#### REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT STORMS OR STRESSFUL MOMENTS HAVE OCCURRED?  
HOW DID YOU HANDLE THEM?

WHAT DID YOU SUCCEED IN? WHAT DID YOU STRUGGLE  
WITH?





# Week 1

# May

## OVERVIEW

This month we often forget how many expectations we have for Mother's Day. I mean, the day is supposed to be about us but how often does it go how you really want it to go?

This week, think about the expectations you have for Mother's Day. Start discussing them with those who will be included in that day and figuring out what may be possible.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT THINGS OR ACTIVITIES WOULD MOM WANT THIS MOTHERS DAY?





# Week 2

# May

## OVERVIEW

You might have completed week 1 and thought, “Well, now what?”.

Look at the expectations and think about what would happen if they didn't occur? Be mindful about how you would feel.

How would it make you feel towards your family? If they don't succeed in what you're expecting, would it change how you perceive their feelings about you?

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

HOW WOULD YOU REACT IF THINGS GO WELL?

HOW WOULD YOU REACT IF THINGS DONT GO AS EXPECTED?





# Week 3

May

## OVERVIEW

Did Mother's Day happen? How did it go? Did you get disappointed? If so, how did you respond? If you made others feel bad for their choices did it affect the day?

This week, if things didn't go well, I want to encourage reconnection. Use this time to lean in and repair.

If your expectations were met or exceeded, take this time to say thank you and praise those around you. Let them know how good it felt.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

HOW DID MOTHERS DAY GO?





Week 4

May

#### OVERVIEW

This month you took time to really think about how you're viewed as a mom!

How did it feel? Did you have moments of feeling selfish? Was it uncomfortable to put yourself first?

If we don't fill our own cups, we will be too empty to fill our family's cups.

#### REFLECTION PROMPTS

DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING THAT MAY HELP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY MAKE NEXT MOTHERS DAY MORE SUCCESSFUL?

WHAT ARE WAYS WE CAN CELEBRATE MOM EVERY DAY?



# Week 1

June

## OVERVIEW

One thing that often gets overlooked in parenting is the dad's feelings and parenting goals. We often think of dads as the main provider of the family.

Whether that is true or not, dads still have feelings that matter.

Whether you're with your father parenting figure or no longer together, this week, I want us to ask them to look at the things that bother or trigger them in their roles as a parent.

What do they enjoy? Where do they struggle? Have an open conversation about this.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT ARE ASPECTS OF PARENTING THAT DAD ENJOYS?

WHAT ARE DADS STRUGGLES & TRIGGERS?





# Week 2

# June

## OVERVIEW

How was last week's conversation? Did he show curiosity?  
Was he defensive?

However he felt, did we listen to learn or listen to defend? I think many parenting relationships struggle in this space. Both can have different backgrounds that affect our wants and wishes as to how to relate to our child.

Be curious about their relationship as father and child. Continue to work on communication and model to your child that the family as a whole is working on this goal.

We can't just do this for one person; everyone needs to feel connected to each other.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

HOW DID YOU FEEL DURING THAT CONVERSATION? (BOTH MOM AND DAD CAN RESPOND HERE)







# Week 3



# June

## OVERVIEW

Do you have family plans for Father's day? How are they coming along? Are you feeling like everything is in order? Did your partner say he didn't need or want to do anything?

Even still, words of appreciation, a favorite meal, or cards and art from the kids still go a long way!

If your parenting partner isn't in a good space with you that's okay. Today, appreciate them in any way you can. After all, they gave you your children.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT ARE THE PLANS FOR FATHERS DAY?

WHAT ARE WAYS WE CAN CELEBRATE DAD EVERY DAY?







Week 4

June

#### OVERVIEW

For this week, spend some time checking in with your parent partner about their goals for parenting.

How has becoming a parent changed them? How has it changed your relationship? Are there things you want to remember to do that haven't been done yet?

Let's get those ideas on paper and keep them around as goals to strive towards together. If this is an area of struggle, there are many avenues available to help work through it. I'm here to help.

#### REFLECTION PROMPTS

HOW HAS BECOMING A PARENT CHANGED YOU AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP? ANSWER THIS TOGETHER.

WHAT ARE SOME GOALS YOU HAVE AS PARENTS?

WHAT ARE AREAS OF STRUGGLE?





Week 5

June

#### OVERVIEW

This month we took focus off of you solely.

How did that feel? Did you miss something about our work together? How can we bring your needs, interests, and triggers together with your parenting partners?

Let's keep these amazing conversations going together.

#### REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT POSITIVES DID YOU LEARN THIS MONTH?





# Week 1

# July

## OVERVIEW

This week I want you to list out the roles you have to fulfill and the things you need to complete as a parent, spouse, employee, or just as an adult.

This may look messy and things may be in several areas. However, this is a great way to get a visual of what these look like.

Sometimes writing things down helps it feel less daunting and less intense.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

LIST YOUR ROLES THAT YOU HANDLE.





# Week 2

# July

## OVERVIEW


For some of us, we go straight from work to home and don't take a moment to separate these roles.

What would it look like for you to say something like "I'm taking off my work hat and entering my home as a happy parent, wanting to connect with the family."?

For me, I sometimes find that a certain song will get me in the mood to come home and leave the work stress behind. Try it! See what helps you separate your many roles.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT WORKED FOR YOU TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OR WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON TRYING?







# Week 3



# July

## OVERVIEW

Sometimes thinking about caring for yourself first seems impossible with children and the demands of your home.

I know this can be a hard choice. However, sometimes you need to make yourself happy before doing the dishes or cooking dinner.

Try remembering to do one thing for yourself before you do one thing for the house. See if it helps you feel less stressed or experience more calm later in the evening.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF TO CREATE A MORE POSITIVE MINDSET?







# Week 4

# July

## OVERVIEW

Tried to take these moments for yourself, but felt guilty? Mom or dad guilt is a thing! It's real and causes us to rush through the things we enjoy for ourselves. It may lead us to cancel the plans we made in order to be home.

I've struggled with this and at times, still do. However, the more time I take for myself, the easier my family and I are able to connect.

The reward is all in the ability to take care of yourself so that you can take care of others.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

IF YOU'VE TRIED THESE MOMENTS OF SELF CARE, HOW DID YOU FEEL? DO THEY HELP MAKE PARENTING (AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES) MORE MANAGEABLE?



# Week 5

# July

## OVERVIEW

Life just gets so busy. What would it look like for you and your family to use a monthly calendar to write out dates that each person in the house gets to have their needs met?

These dates could be planned as a day for mom, a day for dad, a day for each child, a day for the whole family.

I promise that doing this for a few months will decrease the frustration and resentment around people not getting their other needs met.

This is how we fill our cups. This is how we make sure we balance out the many hats and roles we have in this life.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WRITE DOWN THE FOLLOWING DAYS INTO A MONTHLY CALENDAR! WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO ON THESE DAYS?

- MOM DAY, DAD DAY, KID DAY (ONE FOR EACH), FAMILY DAY



# Week 1

# August

## OVERVIEW

For many, August signifies the time when school aged kids may go back to school or restart their home-based program.

This month we may need to plan ahead for all that's expected of them with school.

It will be important for this week to write out important dates, supplies needed, and any paperwork or forms to be filled out. Let's get organized.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WRITE DOWN WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS!





# Week 2

# August

## OVERVIEW

Let's take that list, utilize our calendar, and figure out when we need to do what. Once it's on the calendar you can start discussing it out loud with your children.

It's important to normalize for them what to expect and to prepare them for all these transitions this month. This will set expectations and decrease the tantrums and arguments later on.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

PLAN YOUR NEW BACK TO SCHOOL ROUTINE (GET THE KIDS INVOLVED HERE!)





# Week 3

# August

## OVERVIEW

Get excited about school starting and prompt conversations to hear what their hopes, dreams, fears, and concerns are.

Listen without trying to fix it all. Listen to understand, not to fix. Be curious.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

### ASK YOUR KID:

- WHAT ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT FOR SCHOOL?
- WHAT MAKES YOU SCARED ABOUT SCHOOL?





# Week 4

# August

## OVERVIEW

This week is the week they may be returning to school. The wake up routine may feel stressful, there may be resistance, and you may be tired.

Just hold onto this goal... *If you keep calm, they will keep calm.*

We are the example: it's up to us to model the tone. We can put this into practice by using calm techniques, such as deep breathing or counting out loud.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO TO HELP YOURSELF REMAIN CALM IN FRUSTRATING SITUATIONS?

WHAT TECHNIQUES CAN YOU USE TO KEEP YOURSELF CALM?



# Week 5

# August

## OVERVIEW

How's it going? Check in. Write out all the positive moments that have happened and jot down any negative moments that tested your patience or sense of calm.

Circle the positive, praise yourself for those moments. Look at the negative and ask yourself: "what was happening for me and for my child in those moments?" Get curious about those instances.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT ARE THE POSITIVE MOMENTS FOR ME & MY CHILD?

WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVE MOMENTS FOR ME & MY CHILD?



# Week 1

# September

## OVERVIEW

Transitions are something that everyone can have difficulty with. No one enjoys change, especially if it is something new or distressing.

My first tip this month is: focus on validating your child during transitions, focus on letting them know it's okay if they're upset.

Try to do this rather than trying to correct or "fix" their emotions. This will decrease the need to have longer outbursts as they are heard at that moment.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF VALIDATING INSTEAD OF CORRECTING?



# Week 2

# September

## OVERVIEW

Are transitions and changes easy for you? Adults can have a hard time too.

This week, notice any moments where you struggled to be happy and calm, especially during something new. How did others respond to you? How did their responses affect your ability to calm down and feel heard?

If people aren't responding to your need for validation or connection during something new, take note of that here so you can use it as a way to connect with your child when they are needing a response.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT SITUATIONS AND TRANSITIONS DID YOU OR YOUR CHILD STRUGGLE WITH?

WHAT WERE THE RESPONSES OF YOUR CHILD AND OTHERS DURING THESE MOMENTS?



# Week 3

# September

## OVERVIEW

Planning ahead for life changes and new things that you and your family will be experiencing can help make the transitions less bumpy and less upsetting for everyone involved.

I find that putting these things on a calendar and doing a countdown each day helps prepare us all for what is to come. You can use stickers or markers to mark or cross off each day on your countdown. Planning and asking for everyone's input about how they feel about this new thing is helpful too.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WHAT CHANGES AND ACTIVITIES ARE YOU ADDING TO YOUR CALENDAR?

IF YOUVE ALREADY TRIED THIS, DO YOU FEEL LIKE IT HELPED YOUR FAMILY PREPARE FOR THESE CHANGES?





# Week 4

# September

## OVERVIEW

Transitions are normal. One day, we're responding one way, while the very next day we're responding quite differently.

If your child is more upset one day when responding to a transition, be curious. Have they eaten, slept well, or experienced anything different or out of their norm?

I always recommend checking in with the situation during our child's transitions, especially knowing that our responses can be different when our needs are not being met. Do you get angry or upset when hungry? If so, let's get curious about whether that is happening for our child.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT SITUATION RECENTLY DO YOU NOTICE YOUR CHILD RESPONDING DIFFERENTLY DUE TO AN UNMET NEED?  
WHAT HELPED THEM THROUGH IT?



# Week 5

# September

## OVERVIEW

Changes can be tough! Talking about the fact that they can be hard is important.

Having conversation about upcoming changes before they happen, while everyone is calm, is a useful tool to eliminate the bumps ahead.

Keep being intentional about connecting during transitions versus correcting their behavior during them. You're doing great!

## REFLECTION PROMPT

DO A CHECK IN WITH EACH FAMILY MEMBER (INCLUDING YOURSELF) AND CALMLY DISCUSS ANY CHANGES COMING UP AND HOW THEIR NEEDS CAN BE MET. YOU CAN WRITE THIS DOWN AND COME BACK TO IT AT THE NEXT CHECK IN.



# Week 1

# October

## OVERVIEW

Parenting can feel scary and be rough at times, especially if you've had a bad experience with your own parents.

When we have moments with our kids that trigger memories of what was done to us or what was lacking in our lives we can lose sight of our goals to connect. It's hard to see what's happening for your child when you're flooded with memories of feelings from your own experiences.

This week, write down any hard moments that you have recently experienced.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT HAVE YOU STRUGGLED WITH RECENTLY?

DO YOU SEE ANY CORRELATIONS TO THINGS YOU MAY HAVE STRUGGLED WITH DURING YOUR CHILDHOOD?





# Week 2

# October

## OVERVIEW

I recognize that it's hard when faced with the realization that what happened to you during your childhood affects what you want to do as a parent.

During this week, use moments that would normally be triggering for you and say out loud, in front of your kids: "What are my goals right now?" and "How do I want my kid to feel at this moment?".

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT WERE YOUR FEELINGS WHILE PUTTING THIS INTO PRACTICE?

HOW DID YOUR CHILDREN REACT?





# Week 3

# October

## OVERVIEW

How did last week feel? I'm assuming that some of you were uncomfortable.

The most important take-away: how did your kids respond to you? Were they surprised? Did they ask questions? Notice that when you changed your response they changed theirs too.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

HOW DID YOU FEEL LAST WEEK?

WHAT QUESTIONS DID YOUR KIDS ASK?





# Week 4

# October

## OVERVIEW

Part of being intentional is recognizing the moments that did not go well.

One key step in healing and repair during rough times is humbling yourself enough to apologize when needed. It's hard to do as an adult. However, practice apologizing and recognizing when connection doesn't go well.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WRITE OUT AN APOLOGY THAT YOU USED OR PLAN ON USING THIS WEEK. HOW DID IT MAKE YOU FEEL? HOW DID YOUR CHILD REACT?



# Week 5

# October

## OVERVIEW

I hope this month you feel more prepared to work through your own struggles and find ways to connect through personal challenges. Our kids need us to model for them how to label things we feel that aren't necessarily the fault of them or others.

The more we recognize, the more we can control how we respond to life's moments. To help with this, create a list of coping strategies and reminders to get through moments of disconnection.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

USE THE LIST FROM WEEK 1 OF THIS MONTH AND ADD TO IT. IDENTIFY YOUR TRIGGERS AND WRITE OUT WAYS TO COPE IN MOMENTS THAT THEY COME UP.





# Week 1

# November

## OVERVIEW

One of the things I notice a lot in my work is that many families get stuck in the habit of only commenting on the negatives they see and feel. Many times the positive moments get ignored.

This week, try to focus more on positive praise for everyone. A tip: for every critical comment or negative call of attention do two positives to correct it.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WRITE DOWN 5 THINGS RELATED TO YOUR FAMILY THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR! (EACH FAMILY MEMBER CAN DO THIS!)





# Week 7

# November

## OVERVIEW

In just a week you can notice the simple changes in your home environment.

Has there been less fighting? Have people followed directions without as many warnings and arguing? Have you felt like you yelled less?

If not, I would ask everyone in the home that can communicate how they wish to hear praise. It may need to be adjusted. Maybe it's a tone or a certain phrase they would appreciate more.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

HOW DOES EACH PERSON IN YOUR FAMILY WISH TO HEAR PRAISE? HOW DO THEY WANT TO BE APPRECIATED?





# Week 3



# November

## OVERVIEW

Pick a time of day that works for everyone to gather around and create appreciative statements for one another. Even the littlest of kids would love to hear something nice and positive about themselves. It can be so cool to see what they say about everyone else in their family.

My family started doing appreciation and affirmations every night before bed in February of 2021. The amount of positivity and calmness we have seen is amazing. Plus, it's nice going to bed with something nice in your head.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WRITE DOWN A FEW THINGS THAT ARE SHARED!







# Week 4

# November

## OVERVIEW

When they least expect it, leave random love messages for your family members.

It's amazing to see the surprise and joy on everyone's face when this happens. Perhaps they will return the favor. Wouldn't that be nice?

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WRITE A LOVE NOTE TO EACH FAMILY MEMBER!

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY?





# Week 5

# November

## OVERVIEW

In reflecting back on this month, did anything change when you tried these options?

Ask yourself what worked and what didn't. Did you commit to any of the options listed throughout the month? If not, where is the resistance coming from?

Sometimes our biggest hurdle to work through is our own self-doubt. Take a moment to realize that you have a lot to offer and even more to gain by being positive about yourself.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT METHOD/ACTIVITY DID YOU USE AND LIKE MOST?





# Week 1

# December

## OVERVIEW

December brings with it the rush of the holidays. This rush is not only felt by the adults but the kids too. There are a lot of experiences happening. Sweets, magic, and wonder abound!

Make sure to join in all the fun! However, validate that all this excitement is a lot on our bodies. Love your kids when they're happy with it all and when they're mad.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

HOW IS YOUR CHILD BEHAVING AND FEELING THIS WEEK?  
HOW ARE YOU FEELING AS THIS MONTH BEGINS?







# Week 2

# December

## OVERVIEW

What a rush! How are you feeling? Have you wrapped your holiday requirements? What's left on your list? Write it down and put in them in order. What you can accomplish and when?

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

WRITE DOWN YOUR HOLIDAY TO-DOS!

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW?







# Week 3



# December

## OVERVIEW

Is there anything you need to see happen for you personally? Have you voiced it out loud? Have you made it clear?

If not, this is your week! Try to share your needs as clearly and concise as possible. Let's make sure your needs are met too.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

WHAT DO YOU NEED THIS MONTH? WHAT DOES YOUR PARTNER NEED?







# Week 4

# December

## OVERVIEW

This week Christmas explosions are all around us! Make sure you're aware of all transitions and new things happening for your kids.

Be gentle during meltdowns and discuss how excitement can affect them. Also, be mindful of how you feel during this week.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS

HOW WAS CHRISTMAS? HOW DID YOUR CHILD FEEL? HOW DID YOU FEEL?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT CHRISTMAS FOR YOU OR YOUR FAMILY?



# Closing the Year

Thank you so much for spending a year with me! I hope these tips and moments to reflect helped grow your ability to connect with yourself and others. As always, reach out for more support on an individual basis.

## REFLECTION PROMPT

HOW HAS THIS YEAR OF CONNECTION CHANGED YOUR FAMILY?

REVISIT THIS GUIDE NEXT YEAR AND REFLECT ON HOW YOUR FAMILY HAS GROWN!

