



# Conscious Discipline

Enabling children to succeed

**Safety, Connection & Problem-Solving**



Teaching our  
children to  
**respond** not **react**

# Become Brain Smart

Composure

Encouragement

Assertiveness

Making Choices

Empathy

Seeing the Best

Consequences

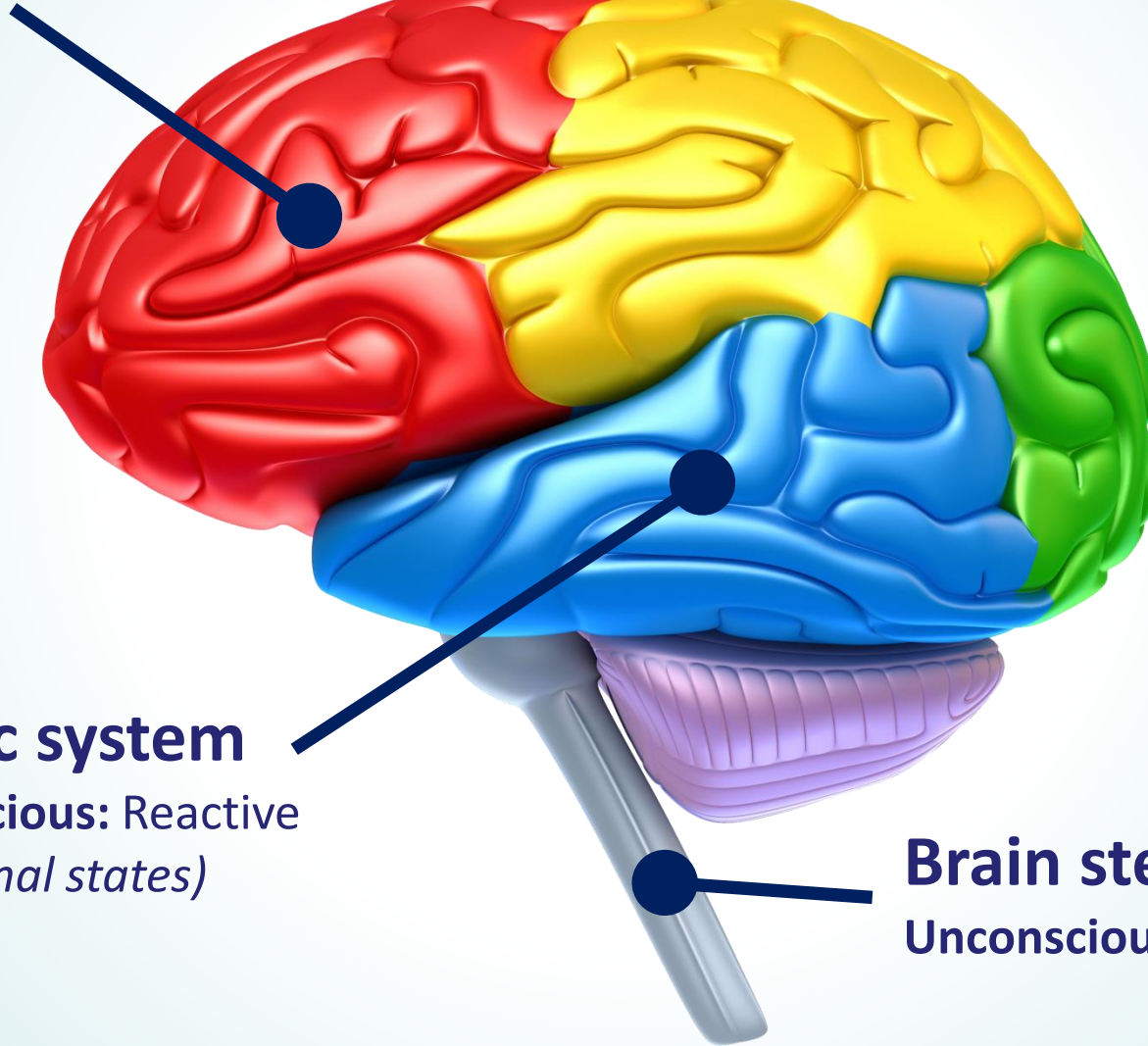
# Become **BRAIN SMART**



# Know your brain!

## Prefrontal lobe

Conscious: Problem solving



## Limbic system

Unconscious: Reactive  
(emotional states)

## Brain stem

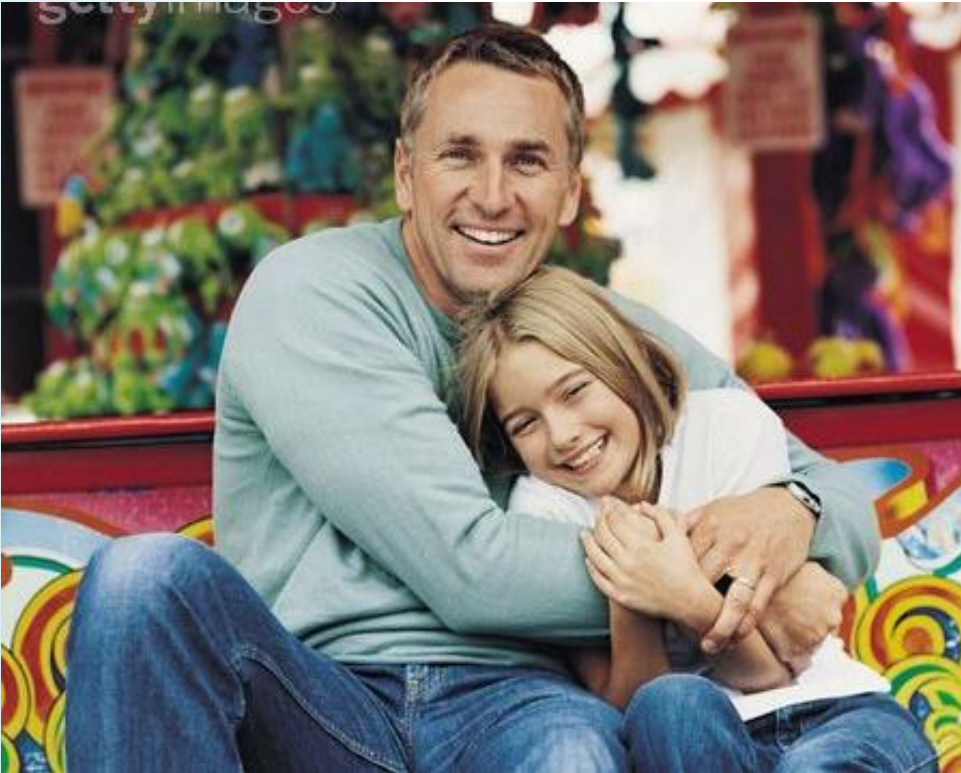
Unconscious: fight or flight



**Being present with a child and connecting with them helps to build neural connections in their brain.**



The brain functions optimally when a child feels **safe**.



Most traditional approaches to discipline rely on **FEAR!**



Fear of punishment...

Fear of loss of love...

Fear of failure...

Fear of abandonment...

So why not rely on fear to  
discipline our children?



Fear puts children in a state of stress.

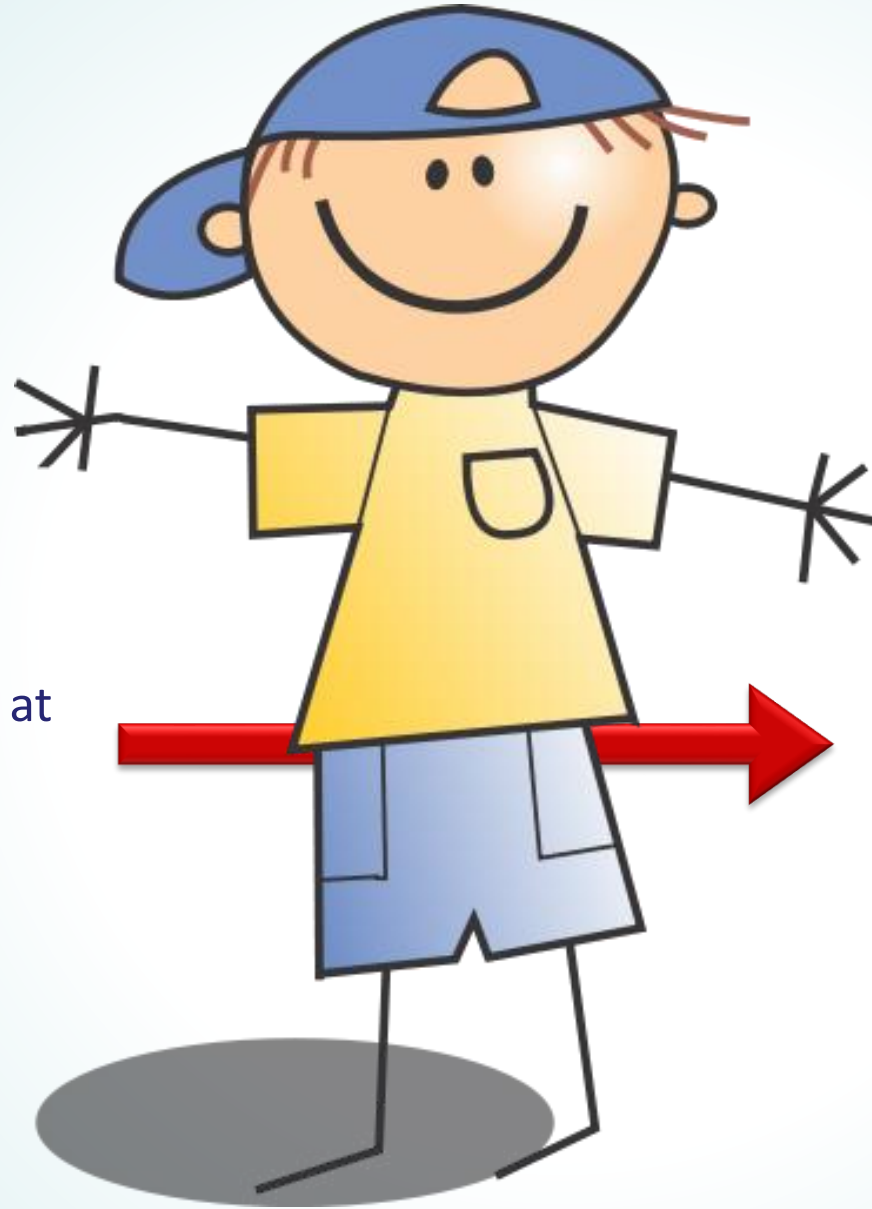


Fear tends  
to focus on  
what you  
don't want.



So what do we  
use instead?





## ***Recognise:***

- Where the child is at
- Where you are at

## ***Respond:***

Help them to reason, to  
problem solve

**OR**

Help them to calm until they  
reach a state where they  
can reason/ problem solve

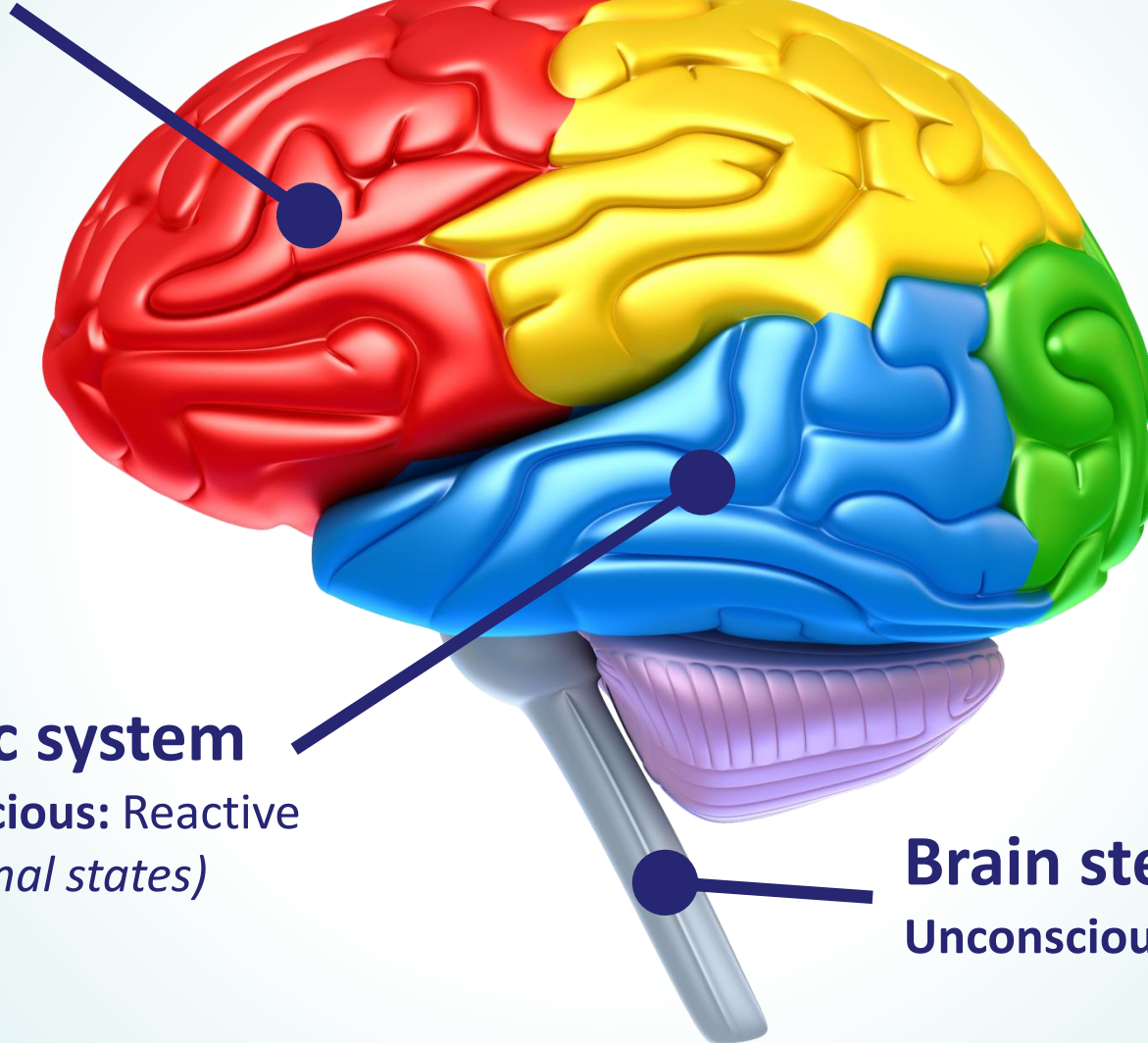
Power of Perception

# COMPOSURE



## Prefrontal lobe

Conscious: Problem solving



## Limbic system

Unconscious: Reactive  
(*emotional states*)

## Brain stem

Unconscious: fight or flight

Can a child solve a problem  
while they are in survival  
mode in their brain stem?



# The children are taught self calming techniques:



## **Be a**

**S** - stop

**T** - take a deep breath

**A** - and

**R** - relax



## **The Tap**

Tense yourself up and then put your hands out in front of you like taps and let the tension gush out as you release your hands



## **The Pretzel**

Twist hands and legs.

Tongue to roof of mouth.

Tense and then relax.



## **The Balloon**

Inhale and pretend to blow yourself up like a balloon. Hold for a few seconds and then let the air out like a balloon deflating.



# Self-control in action!

**Remain calm and teach** children how to behave



**My job is to keep you safe,  
yours is to help keep it that  
way.**

**Anger management is essential for social competence.**

# Safe Place



# Encouragement



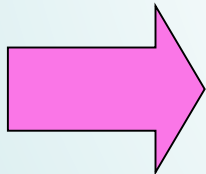


We're all in this  
together

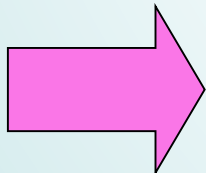




# Noticing is helpful



It lets children know when they are getting it right.



When you see appropriate/ helpful behaviours from children, let them know!



**You did it! Good for you!**

**You \_\_\_\_\_ so \_\_\_\_\_.**

**That was helpful.**



**Describe what you  
notice**

**Be specific**

The behaviours we give  
the most attention to  
are the ones we are  
attaching the most  
value to.



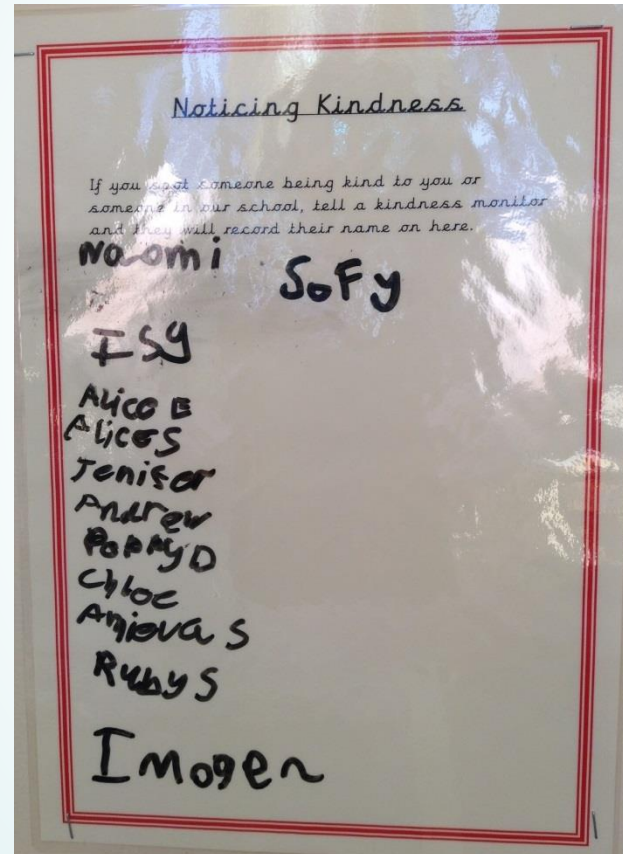
**Remember effective praise relies  
on describing, not judging.**



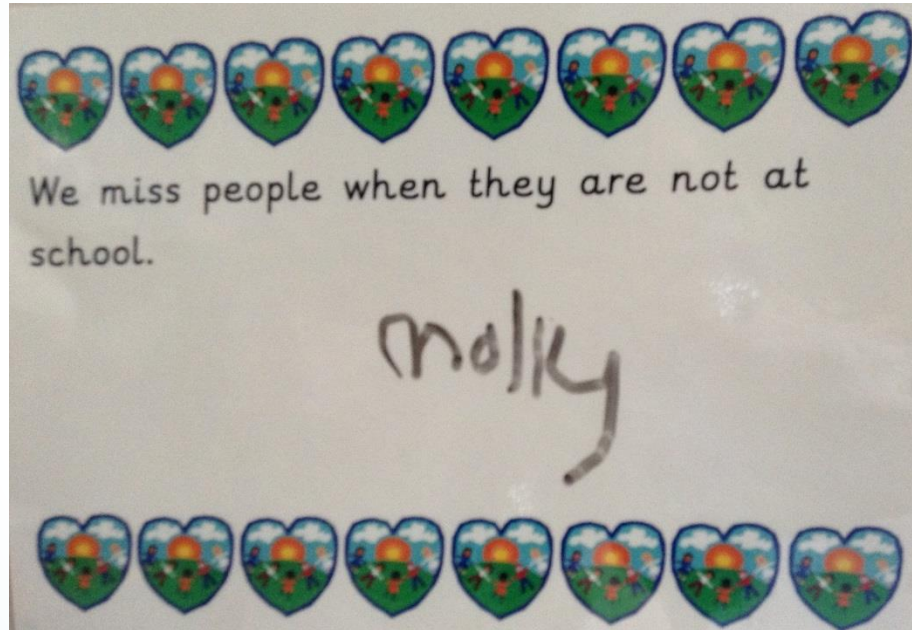
# How do children know that they belong?



# Kindness Board



# We Care Board



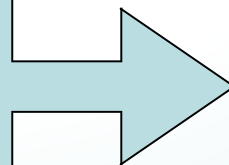


# Assertiveness





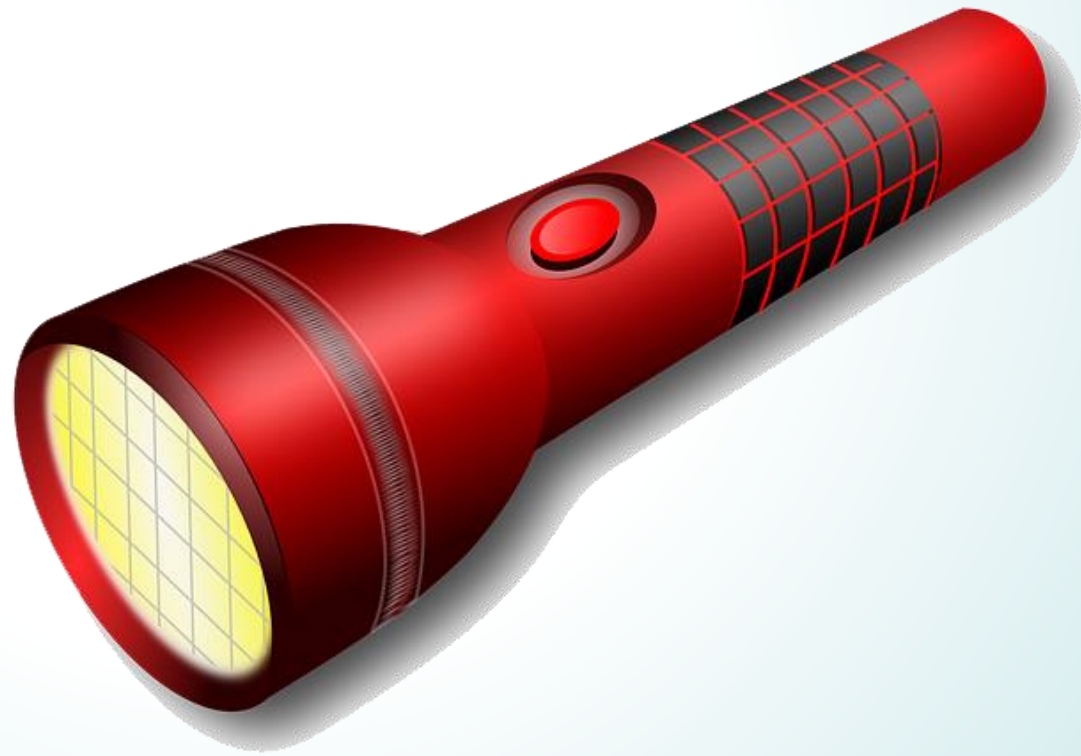
Healthy boundaries are essential for all relationships.



**Purpose:**  
Set limits and expectations



What you focus on,  
you get more of...



Tell children what **TO**  
do rather than what  
**NOT** to do.

# Assertiveness does three things:

- Tells children what to do
- Gives clear and direct instructions
- Is said in a tone of voice that says 'just do it'.



**Use an assertive voice.**

# Command

Please

V

Thank you

# Request



Once we are  
assertive, we can  
teach our children to  
be assertive.

Passivity invites  
aggression.

Aggression begets  
aggression.

Assertiveness  
dissipates aggression.



Assertiveness is the  
medium through  
which we teach

**RESPECT**



When a child doesn't do what we ask, we feel powerless and head towards our limbic system.

# Making choices



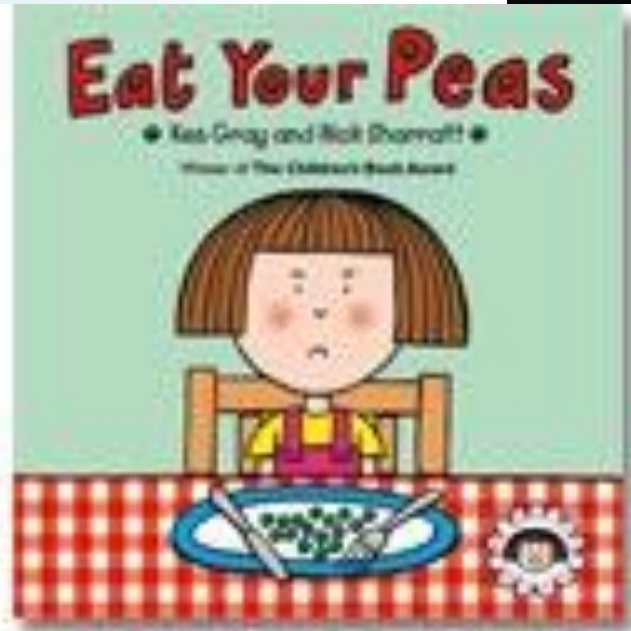


**Can you MAKE a person change?**

**Can you MAKE a child change?**

**The only person you can MAKE  
change is yourself.....**

# The power of FREE WILL...



If I try to change YOU and it doesn't work  
I feel frustrated and powerless....



You can't change  
behaviour by focussing  
on what you don't  
want.

If I try to change YOU and it doesn't work I feel frustrated by you which puts you in charge of me and makes me feel powerless and start to blame and lash out....

Which part of my brain am I likely to be functioning in then?

I will **BLAME** and **ATTACK**....





**Guilt makes us cave in on our boundaries –  
this trains children to be obnoxious...**

How can I get my child to get ready for school on time?

How can I get my child to do their homework?

How can I get my child to eat their carrots?

How can I get my child to do what I say?

How can I get my child to do their chores?

How can I get my child to tidy their room?

## How do I get my child to...?

**By offering two positive choices, we help children to:**

Focus their attention on the task we deem important

Comply with our wishes

Learn decision-making skills

Feel empowered, thereby reducing power struggles

Redirect their behaviour and learn impulse control

Establish and maintain self-control



# CHOICES

Usually we give a positive and a negative.

Eat your tea or starve!

Do what I say or you'll go to bed!



Give 2 positive choices.



You may \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.  
What's best for you?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
*(woodpecker technique)*





# Empathy



Empathy – seeing things from  
someone else's point of view.

– I understand why...



Help  
children  
accept and  
process  
feelings

Help  
children  
accept and  
process  
feelings





Help  
children  
accept and  
process  
feelings



**Mirror  
what  
you see**

You seem \_\_\_\_\_.

Something must  
have happened.



- **It's not about 'happying up' children.**
- We need to leave the upset with the child.
- Angst is the call to action.
- Children need to feel a range of emotions
- Children need to learn how to handle a range of emotions

# Seeing the best



Sometimes adults read a  
child's behaviour  
incorrectly...

We often assume the worst...

There is always another way  
to look at things...





**Tell yourself a different story**

**What might have  
happened?**



# **See beyond the behaviour**

**Avoid the temptation to look at the motive**

**Why did you...?**



**Instead, attribute positive intent**

**You wanted to...**

**You thought that...**

**You \_\_\_\_\_ because you wanted \_\_\_\_\_.**  
**You didn't know the words to say.**  
**You may not \_\_\_\_\_.**  
**When you want \_\_\_\_\_, say \_\_\_\_\_.**



**Tell yourself a different story**

**What might have  
happened?**



With Empathy and Seeing the Best  
We are **not** letting children off  
the hook.



# Consequences



**Mistakes are opportunities  
to learn.**





**Intent to rescue**



**Intent to fix**



**Intent to lecture**



**Intent to punish**

**Natural consequences are  
most effective.**

**Imposed consequences are also useful.**

**Imposed consequences must be linked to the behaviour choice the child has made for maximum effect.**





**Intention determines effectiveness.**

Deliver consequences with empathy.



**Intent  
to  
teach**

**Consequence = the discomfort  
resulting from their choice**



**Consequence**

**+**

**Empathy**

**=**

**Responsibility and  
change**



With acknowledgement to Dr Becky Bailey  
[www.ConsciousDiscipline.com](http://www.ConsciousDiscipline.com)