

Cultivating Trust

Now that you have focused on getting your body to a calm and present state, and breaking down any wounds or barriers getting in the way of closeness, let's start to cultivate some trust in your relationship with your child.

After each activity take some time to answer the reflection questions on the lines provided or in a separate journal.



Activity

1

Sitting Close

When your child or teen is doing something they enjoy, go near them and ask them if you can sit next to them while they read, play with today, play on their tablet, etc. I want you to practice being close without any pressure. While you do this work on keeping your body calm and simply absorbing the proximity to your child.

Do not correct, remind, teach, or direct anything. Simply BE there. As many times as you can do this during this week, DO IT!

Reflection:

What did you notice during this activity? What happened to your body? To their body? What words did they say to you? Did they reject this offer? What can you learn about your relationship with your child from this interaction?

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I want you to identify something your child or teen does (or does NOT do) that tends to trigger a harsh, anxious, or shut-down reaction from you.

Write it below:



Now I want you to reflect on the following questions

What feelings come up when my child does this thing?

- Did I ever do this as a child? How did my parents react if I did? Or if I didn't, then what would I have expected my parents to do if I had?
- Is this behavior connected to a fear or shame I have about myself?
- When I have reacted with harshness or anxiety in the past has it helped the situation?
- If I was doing that same thing, how would I want a parent to help me learn to do better?
- What generous interpretation can I make out of WHY my child is doing this thing?

Now after that reflection and getting a better handle on what is going on for YOU in that trigger, let's brainstorm a way to regain your child's trust in that particular scenario.

- ① Form an apology for the previous ways you have handled the trigger and share it with your child.
- ② Form a plan for how YOU want to react in the future in that moment regardless of your child's growth or progress in changing their behavior

Communicating Care

**3****Just
Because****Activity**

Do something sweet that they will appreciate JUST BECAUSE. It could be a gift, a note, an act of service, or something really random, like picking them up early for school to spend an extra hour with them, or letting them stay up late to have a special board game time with you.

Reflection:

What did you notice about this “just because” activity? How did it make you feel? How do you think it made them feel?

Can you think of a “just because” that you could find a way to integrate into your lives with some regularity?
