

When they're emotional

REMEMBER

### "Connection before Correction"

(the *correction*, if necessary, can come later when they're calm)

**Tell yourself:** When they're at their worst, they need me the most. If they could do better right now without my help, they would.

**Be calm and quiet:** Listen intently to what they're saying right now. Empathize and try to "get it".

**Don't say:** "Calm down", "Don't worry about it", etc. They hear, "You're feelings don't matter", "Your feelings aren't worthy of my time". They will become *more* emotional to prove you wrong.

**Do say:** "I can see you're furious that she said that", "It can be frustrating to work so hard and not see the results you want", "It hurts when friends exclude you", "I see how nervous this makes you"

**Don't:** tell them how to solve the problem, don't try to fix it for them, don't offer any advice unless they ask (and even then, try to help them figure it out for themselves by asking questions).

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When I'm feeling emotional

REMEMBER

### "Connection is my Goal"

**Tell yourself:** Your child can only learn from you if you have a strong emotional connection - which cannot happen if you're not calm.

**Pause:** If you're angry, anxious, frustrated - before you *say anything*, count to 10 and take a deep breath in and slowly breath out.

**Tell yourself:** If you don't think you can remain calm, take a break and come back when you can.

**Ask yourself:** Are you worrying about what *might happen* or what *has happened* or are you parenting based on what's happening *right now*?

**Remind yourself:** You'll only cause disconnection between you and your child by yelling, lecturing, shaming, punishing or being sarcastic.

**Tell yourself:** You want your child to trust you, feel safe with you and come to you. That won't happen if you can't stay calm in these situations.

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When they've made a mistake

REMEMBER

### "Connection before Correction"

(keep everything in mind about their emotions and your emotions)

**Remind yourself:** They *want to do well* (and do when they're *capable*). Their brain is not helpful with self-control and making good decisions yet.

**Remind yourself:** They've not done this out of spite, they're not being manipulative, lazy, etc.

**Ask yourself:** Are there natural consequences to their action/inaction (they'll be embarrassed, etc.)? Then let them happen and don't add more on top.

**Remind yourself:** If you've already agreed on the consequences for breaking this rule, enforce them but give them a chance to explain "what happened."

**Remind yourself:** If there are no natural consequences and you've not discussed in advance, discuss it with them and decide together.

**Remind yourself:** Not all mistakes require a "consequence". Often a chat will do.

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Setting rules with them or when they ask something and there is no rule

REMEMBER

### "Connection is my Goal"

(keep everything in mind about their emotions and your emotions)

**Ask yourself:** Could it be dangerous, unhealthy, illegal, unethical, or likely to close some door better left open (like not taking a certain class)?

**Tell yourself:** If it doesn't fit into the above categories, it falls within their "personal domain" to decide themselves.

**Remind yourself:** If it falls within their personal domain, keep your opinions, advice, and input to yourself. Arguments cause disconnection.

**Remind yourself:** They're learning to be an individual and making mistakes is how they learn.

**Ask yourself:** If you're having a hard time with this, why is that? What are you afraid of? Is it loss of control? Is it embarrassment? Is it fear for their future? Is it your disappointment?

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