

NEED A QUICK OVERVIEW TO GET STARTED?

Here are some examples to help you work out which sections to work through first

Self care is essential to feel calm and deal with whatever happens during the day (Module 1: Solid Foundations)

- Make time for yourself to relax alone for at least 10 minutes a day (without checking your phone/emails). You deserve to take this time to nurture yourself. Please don't feel guilty or hurried. Treat yourself with compassion and allow time for joy and relaxation in your daily life.
- Ask others for help - this includes family and friends: "*I really need an hour or two to myself. This week has been exhausting. Can you help me out sometime today so I can have a rest? I can return the favour tomorrow or any other time, thank you!*"
- Or ask your child: "*I'm not feeling very well today. Let's think of some restful activities to do this morning and we can go out this afternoon instead. What shall we start with – looking at a sticker book or a building a train track?*"

Collaborate as much as possible: washing, dressing, meal preparation, tidying up, choices, homework (Module 2: Positive Activities)

- Include your child in all aspects of your daily life to help them develop self-worth, co-ordination and important life skills.
- Stay relaxed about mess and spills; the cleaning up can be just as fun as the main activity for children!
- Prepare your home to invite activity without pressure. Subtly set up a few options around the area your child usually plays. When children notice something new they always want to give it a go!

Be honest with yourself and your family. Talk about your feelings using "I" statements. Utilise body language and assertiveness skills (Module 3: Empowering Limits)

- "*I'm feeling... I need... I want... I'm worried about... I think...*"
- Encourage your child to create sentences like this while you listen. Help them get what they need too.
- Before children have verbal language, all they have to work with is vibes. We all know the saying, '*Actions speak louder than words.*' Children need a *COMBINATION* of words and matching actions to help them develop trust and feel safe. We must make sure our words and actions match. This shows we mean what we say.
- Go over to your child when you're asking them something. Show them it's important enough for you to leave your chair and face them directly. Get down to their level and speak face to face with a kind, firm tone.
- If you want them to tidy up, do it together as a *COLLABORATIVE* effort. Show them that tidying is a nice thing to do together and it takes half the time!

Make a gentle routine for your day including everything you consider important (Module 4: Solutions for Common Challenges).

- Include fun things: "*Let's make a plan. Tell me something you love doing. I'll add something I love doing. And we can choose 2 more things to help you grow and learn. That's all we will plan for today.*"
- Include what's necessary for all-round positive development: "*This week we'll need to do some... reading, writing, art, songs, running and climbing, maths, science, nature etc. What 2 things shall we choose for today?*"
- Take the pressure off yourself to be 'teacher'. Life is a journey and children will do fine, as long as they can make choices every day and feel they have some control over their lives.
- Create a gentle daily schedule together on times for TV, iPad and/or console. Just like you have a basic time for lunch, bath, using the toilet before you go out, and bedtime: "*We need to agree when is an appropriate time for you to use anything with a screen. One idea for a choice could be watching 30-60 minutes of TV before/after lunch, or before/after breakfast, or before/after snack. When do you think is a good time?*"

Set clear, consistent limits (Module 5: Compassionate Communication)

- Be compassionate when setting a limit. Be kind yet firm. Your child learns by imitating your behaviour.
- Offer limited choices: this or that / now or later / before or after lunch? This invites a positive answer from your child instead of a 'no'.

Remember that tantrums are your child's only way of expressing their emotions (Module 6: What are tantrums for?)

- It's helpful to remember there are 3 stages of a tantrum cycle: escalation, peak, fading away.
- Your role during this time is: stay calm, listen, offer help, comfort and calm down, talk and help your child find an alternative, show unconditional acceptance.
- There's always a reason when your child's behaviour becomes negative - and it's not because they enjoy winding you up! It's either due to something changing in their life or their body needs something (changes, hungry, angry, lonely, sick, or tired?)
- What do they need from you (comfort and consistency, healthy food, acknowledgement and acceptance, listening and love, support and soothing, or time to rest?)

Use Dr Montessori's discoveries to help you understand your child's natural path of development (Module 7: Montessori Principles)

- Maria Montessori observed universal timelines of human development. She called them a 'series of rebirths' because psychological and physical changes in people are so massive each time (0-6, 6-12, 12-18, 18-24 years).
- Nature is controlling your child's development. Your role is to provide love, opportunities and safe limits.
- From 0-6 years children literally absorb *EVERYTHING* they experience. They have no filters for good or bad, right or wrong yet. These form the foundational brain that includes attitudes, beliefs, vocabulary, movement patterns, love etc. - all unconscious.
- What characteristics do you want your child to develop? Be aware of your behaviours - they are absorbing and imitating them all!

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