

In the Moment Guide

seed & sew



In the Moment Guide

- The Future is Emotionally Intelligent -

Hey there,

It's so easy to feel overwhelmed on this journey, ya know? It didn't come with a handbook. Instead, there are a billion books, a Google search bar with conflicting info, and a whole bunch of opinions.

We put together this In the Moment Guide to give you the tools to know how to respond. We aren't here to give you a perfect script or to stop your child from having feelings. We are here to transform how you react to their emotions so you can respond with intention.

We are all in this together. It will be messy. It won't be perfect. Parts will be hard. We will be challenged in ways we haven't been. We can do hard things. Friend, we've got this. It takes a village and I'm jazzed to have you in ours.

Xo,

Alyssa Blask Campbell
Founder of Seed & Sew



Phases of Emotion Processing

When we were creating the Collaborative Emotion Processing (CEP) Method, Lauren Stauble and I developed the 5 Phases of Emotion Processing. These will guide you through emotion processing. We generally move through the phases sequentially, but not always at the same speed. Lauren and I discuss these in detail in episode 63 of Voices of Your Village Podcast.

Collaborative Emotion Processing Method



1

Allow

Allowing them to feel & express, while stopping them from hurting themselves or others

2

Recognition

"Ugh, you want to play with that truck and she's using it. That's so frustrating."

3

Security

Knowing feelings are temporary. "How can I help you feel calm?"

4

Coping Strategies

"Would you like a hug or to do big jumps to feel calm?"

5

Problem Solving

"You want to play with that truck and she's using it. Hmm, what should we do?"

Responding to an Emotion

"NO CALM, MAMA!"

When a child is not accepting coping strategies offered, it typically means they need more time to feel the emotion. It can be tempting to rush the process to make the expression stop, but the greatest gift we can give a kiddo is the space to feel their emotions, even if they make us uncomfortable.

1. Allow them to feel

- + Hold space for their emotion
- + Move their body if they aren't being safe
- + Hold their hands if they're hitting
- + Don't rush to make it stop

2. Connect with them

- + Empathize with their feeling "You worked so hard on that buddy and it got knocked down. Ugh, that's really disappointing."
 - + Validate their emotion

3. Offer Coping

- + Offer two coping strategies
"Would you like a hug or to stomp your feet to feel calm?"
- + If they aren't ready for coping go back to step 1.



4. Problem Solve

- + DO NOT enter this phase until they've coped and are CALM.
- + Invite them in to solve with you.
"You want to play with it and Eduardo's using it. What could we do?"



Coping Tools for Kids

Coping is a game changer! When we tap into coping strategies we can process the emotion, literally processing the cortisol (adrenaline running through our body). When we tap into a mechanism, we can numb the feeling, but it pushes it below the surface, often resulting in another tantrum or emotional expression soon. Coping strategies are key. More on moving from mechanisms to strategies in episode 38 of Voices of Your Village podcast.

COPING MECHANISMS

to numb feelings, push them beneath the surface, and feel temporarily better faster.

- +distraction with a toy
- +giggling/smiling at socially inappropriate times
- +hurting someone else to feel powerful or in control
- +using a pacifier to stop expressing
- +a snack/feeding in response to a hard feeling
- +trying to solve the problem
- +lovey/security item

COPING STRATEGIES

to process emotions, leave the reactive brain, and enter the rational thinking brain.

- +drawing/coloring/ painting
- +breathing
- +movement/exercise
- +playing calmly with a toy that involves fine motor
- +free writing/gratitude practice
- +playing music
- +reading a book
- +hugging
- +looking at the sky



Coping Tools for Adults

This work always starts with us. When we model coping strategies, when we pause to breathe or take space to feel calm, kiddos observe that. When we turn to mechanisms, they observe that, too. Give yourself grace. This isn't about perfection. Start by noticing your feelings and habits. Awareness comes before change. Intention over perfection, always.

COPING MECHANISMS

to numb feelings, push them beneath the surface, and feel temporarily better faster.

-
- +scrolling on your phone
 - +using a substance
 - +trying to solve the problem
 - +creating a list to feel in control
 - +projecting your fears/ insecurities onto others to feel in control
 - +obsessively cleaning
 - +drinking alcohol or eating in response to feelings

COPING STRATEGIES

to process emotions, leave the reactive brain, and enter the rational thinking brain.

-
- +drawing/coloring/ painting
 - +movement/exercise
 - +journal/gratitude practice
 - +breathing
 - +talking to a support person
 - +reading a book
 - +playing music
 - +hugging
 - +looking at the sky



Unconditional Love

At the end of the day we all want to know that we are loved, regardless of our behavior. Do you love me unconditionally? Your kiddo will ask all day long to see if there's anything they can do that will result in you not loving them anymore. It's so hard, but maybe keeping this in a place you can reference can remind you that the behavior is often kiddos looking for connection. Empathy drives connection. Meet them where they are. Let them know you love them and always will, even when they have hard feelings they don't know what to do with.

Do you love me unconditionally?



- + "I know you're so kind."
- + "I will always love you."
- + "You're not in trouble. I want to help you make a different choice next time."



Responding with Empathy

When we minimize their feelings, when we use phrases like, "I understand, but..." or "At least we can come back tomorrow" we invalidate their feelings. Imagine you feel disappointed, it's not someone's job to decide whether or not you SHOULD feel it. It's their job to empathize with WHAT you feel.

"You're okay. It's just blocks. You can build your castle again."



"Ugh, you were working really hard on that it and knocked down. That's so disappointing. Would you like help feeling calm before you can try again?"



Coping Strategies for Anxiety

It's instinctual to try and prevent them from feeling the fear, especially if you struggle with anxiety. You know how it feels and want to keep them from experiencing it. The thing is, the key to anxiety is welcoming the fear. When a child learns to acknowledge it and tap into coping strategies rather than fighting it and trying to avoid it, they can process fear and live without anxiety. I struggled with anxiety for years and this toolbox drastically changed my life.

When a child is experiencing anxiety, our job isn't to convince them not to have fear. Our job is to hold space for their fear and support them with coping strategies when they're ready.

Rather than...

Don't be scared. You'll be safe at school with your mask on.

School is different, but it'll still be fun.

You don't have to feel sad, you'll get to see your friends.



You can try...

It's confusing that the sickness is still here and we are going back to school. What helps you feel safe when you're feeling scared?

Some things are different at school. Would you like to talk about what to expect?

It was nice to be together at home. It's different to go back to school. It's okay to feel sad.



It Starts With You

Children will mirror your feelings.

It's not their job to calm down for you, it's your job to calm down for them. This is often the hardest part. Take space, breathe, tap into coping, model for them how important it is to find your calm before problem solving.



It's not your child's job to calm down for you, it's your job to calm down for your child.

About Seed & Sew

Seed & Sew is a village of people across the globe raising emotionally intelligent humans. We are parents, educators, ECE experts, and lifelong learners with a passion for doing this work so we can foster healthy development in our tiny humans.

YOU'VE GOT THIS! You are never alone.

More Useful Resources:

- + [Emotion Coaching Courses](#)
- + [Instagram](#)
- + [Voices of Your Village Podcast](#)

