

Interpersonal Parenting Tips

For most parents, relationships with their children (especially in their teenage years) can, at times, become strained.

The following worksheet contains a list of practical tips for the parent to strengthen the relationship and reduce conflict through a focus on:

- Finding the right time to talk
- Considering the intention, not the outcome
- Finding the right balance in how you talk and respond
- Practicing self-care

Print out the sheet and find somewhere (perhaps in the kitchen) to display it to remind you what you can do to help your relationship (modified from Dietz, Weinberg & Mufson, 2018):

Finding the right time to talk

- Avoid talking about a problem or conflict when tempers are high.
- When needed, take time away to cool down.
- Try and remember that the way you act is a model for your child.

List examples of the times and opportunities that typically would work for you both:

Consider the intention, not the outcome

- Praise the effort, not the outcome. Even if a play, game, or exam does not go as planned, recognize the effort put in.
- Sometimes, your child needs assurance. Take the opportunity to tell them you understand they are struggling, but things will get better. Avoid using this as an opportunity to point out where they are failing.

List examples of times when your child or another person may need reassurance:

Find the balance in how you talk and respond

- It takes patience and practice to *not* react to negative responses, and it is often necessary to *take the high road*.
- Use “I feel” statements when your child is saying something that upsets you.
- Avoid the use of sarcasm when responding in an emotionally charged situation. Instead, try and maintain a neutral tone.
- Create situations where your child can succeed.

List examples of *I feel* statements that may be appropriate in your relationship:

Practice Self-care

- Caring for children can be difficult and stressful, especially if they are depressed. They will need extra support, structure, and praise.
- You must remember to take care of yourself. Get help and support from a partner, friend, or family member.

List examples of how you can better look after yourself:

Reference

- Dietz, L. J., Weinberg, R., & Mufson, L. (2018). *Family-based interpersonal psychotherapy for depressed preadolescents: Clinician guide*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

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