

Session 2: Who are the parents?

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Today we are exploring

- Parents with ‘children who experience the world differently’ – what that means
- What different child’s needs mean for families
- How that feels for different family members
- What parents need
- Importance of listening

Children who experience the world differently

- Every child experiences the world differently!
- Some have an easier time fitting in with our society than others
- Some have more challenges with difference:
  - Physical differences
  - Emotional differences
  - Sensory differences
  - Self-regulation differences
  - Learning differences
  - Awareness differences
  - Relationship differences



What different needs mean for families

- Influencing factors:
  - Resources – outer influences:
    - Money
    - Supportive friends
    - Supportive family
    - Community / society understanding
    - Health
    - Mental health
    - Stable housing
    - Flexible work
    - How they have been parented
    - Listened to / witnessed
    - Sleep
    - Nutrition
- Resourcefulness – inner influences
  - Creativity
  - Problem solving
  - Ability to advocate
  - Prior knowledge and understanding
  - Ability to access new knowledge
  - Openness
  - Able to identify prior successes
  - Sleep
  - Nutrition
  - Ability to self-regulate

What different needs mean for families

- Differences can be:
  - Absorbed within the family unit
  - Different behaviours can be tolerated and even celebrated – gifted and talented programmes
  - Not really noticed
  - Small adaptations can make a big difference

- Differences can also be:
  - Complicated
  - Layered
  - Difficult to understand
  - Difficult to support
  - Involve a high level of knowledge and understanding

How that feels for different family members

- Very different depending who you are in the family: parent, (main earner? main carer? Both?) step parent, sibling, grandparent, friend of the family
- Can feel a very wide range of emotions just in one day: love, joy, anger, sadness, uncertainty, fear

What parents need

- To know that they make sense
- That they are important, valuable
- To be listened to



CERTAINTY

Humans need to feel certain.

Certainty is the assurance you can avoid pain and gain pleasure



UNCERTAINTY

Humans need new stimuli and a change of environment.

Uncertainty is going into the unknown and looking for change.



SIGNIFICANCE

Humans need new stimuli to feel special, unique, important and need to feel significant.



CONNECTION & LOVE

Humans need a strong feeling of closeness with other human beings.

This is why we value relationships and friendships so much.



GROWTH

As Tony Robbins said, “Progress equals happiness.”

Humans need to grow and make progress or they will become bored and tired of not making progress.



CONTRIBUTE

Humans show grow so they can give. “The secret to living is giving.”

The more you contribute and help others the better you will feel.

The importance of listening

- Sometimes there isn't a big solution / a magic answer / something that is going to make it all better
- Sometimes it is just one little step forward that is going to make the difference today
- By really listening, we have an opportunity to:
  - witness what is going on for them right now
  - Give them time and space to process a bit of emotion – 90 seconds to feel something fully before it mores through
  - Give them time and space to explore what one action might support them in felling a little better today
  - Listening is magic
  - Lamp post story