

Session 4: The emotional journey for parents

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Today we are exploring

- The emotional journey of parents with children who experience the world differently
- Different emotions at different stages
- Transformational listening
- How and when to use your own experience

The standard emotional parenting journey

- Parenting is an emotional journey when things are straightforward
- Standard key milestones prompt different emotional responses:
  - Finding out you are going to have a baby
  - The birth
  - First walk, talk
  - First day at school

Emotions

- Joy
- Appreciation
- Empowerment
- Freedom
- Love
- Passion
- Enthusiasm
- Eagerness
- Happiness
- Positive Expectation
- Belief
- Optimism
- Hopefulness
- Contentment
- Boredom
- Pessimism
- Frustration
- Irritation
- Impatience
- Overwhelm
- Disappointment
- Doubt
- Worry
- Blame
- Discouragement
- Anger
- Revenge
- Hatred
- Rage
- Jealousy
- Insecurity
- Guilt
- Unworthiness
- Fear
- Grief
- Desperation
- Powerlessness
- Shame
- Others...

The emotional parenting journey when a child experiences the world differently

- Milestones may be very different and not recognised by others
- Milestones may be at very different times
- Medical needs or interventions
- Assessment / diagnosis processes
- Receiving news about the child
- May be unwanted certainty – your child will always / will never
- May be unwanted uncertainty – we don't know if your child will / will never
- Can result in isolation from other parents, own family, other friends, workers intended to support the family
- Can highlight lack of knowledge in a way that standard parenting doesn't

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The power of listening

‘Listening is more than a communications skill, it is a **capacity that arises from receptive presence** and **awakens our awareness**.

As we learn to listen inwardly, we **begin to understand and care for** the life that is here.

And **as we listen to others**, that **same intimacy emerges**.’

Tara Brach



Listening is healing

‘We don't have to advise, or coach, or sound wise.

We just have to **be willing to sit there** and listen.

If we can do that, **we create moments in which real healing is available**.

Whatever life we have experienced, **if we can tell our story to someone who listens, we find it easier to deal with our circumstances.’**

Margaret Wheatley



How to use your own experience

Do's:

- Check in with yourself first – what is your motivation?
- Is it really relevant?
- How might it support the coachee?
- What other options are there?
- Ask permission: 'I have some experience that may be helpful. Would you like me to share it or ask you a different question?'



How to use your own experience

Don’t:

- Leap in without checking in with yourself
- Think that this will be their solution just because it was your solution
- Trauma dump – find other space for your stuff
- Go into lots of detail – stick to the short point

