

Session 35: Supporting your coachee to connect with their child

CHARLIE MITCHELL



Today we are exploring

- ✓ Why we have waited until now to talk about supporting parents to develop their connection with their child
- ✓Child's love language
- ✓Dual listening
- ✓Child's learning styles and preferences
- ✓Child's values and beliefs
- ✓What children need – make sense and matter
- ✓Creative ways to connect
- ✓ Links to 3 steps home coaching

How do you like to connect with your child?

- ✓ Finish these sentences: I feel really connected with my child when… My child feels really connected with me when…
- ✓ How do you feel when you are connected with your child?
- ✓ How does it feel in your body when you are connected with your child?
- ✓ What helps you to maintain your connection?
- ✓ How does your connection with your child impact what you want to do, be or have?
- ✓ How do you know when you have lost connection with your child? What does that feel like?
- ✓ What helps you to explore connection with someone else and their child?
- ✓ What else do you notice?
- ✓ What do you want in place to work with maintaining connection in your coaching practice?
- ✓ Explore the different resources relating to behaviour in the course materials for ideas

Why has it taken until session 35 to focus fully on the parent's connection with their child?

- ✓ At a biological level parent and child connection is natural, normal and intuitive when things are in place to support the family – we are all built to connect
- ✓ At a deep level we know what we need and what our children need in any given moment
- ✓ A lot of things get in the way of that connection:
  - ✓ Trauma, stress, exhaustion, illness, disability, financial pressure, lack of a village / support
- ✓ If we can support the parent to rebuild themselves, they will naturally reconnect with their child in completely unexpected and intuitive ways
- ✓ When we support the parent to listen to themselves, they will automatically be able to listen more deeply to their child
- ✓ We help lay the foundations for the relationship to flourish

Deep connection: 5 ways in 5 minutes for 5 days

- ✓ Day 1: **Just sit** and watch your child for 5 minutes from a distance – what are they doing? How are they doing it? Body language, sounds, movements. What does this tell you about their world? Write down anything you notice in your journal
- ✓ Day 2: **Sit alongside your child** and go with their lead. Don't take charge or instigate play. If they don't hand you anything then just sit – write down what you notice
- ✓ Day 3: **What can you mirror back to them?** Maybe it is words or movements that you can copy. Write down what you notice
- ✓ Day 4: **Ask how you can be involved**. What part would they like you to play? What would they enjoy? Follow their lead
- ✓ Day 5: **Reflect on what you have learned**. What has gone well? What have you struggled with? What can you do differently? Do that!

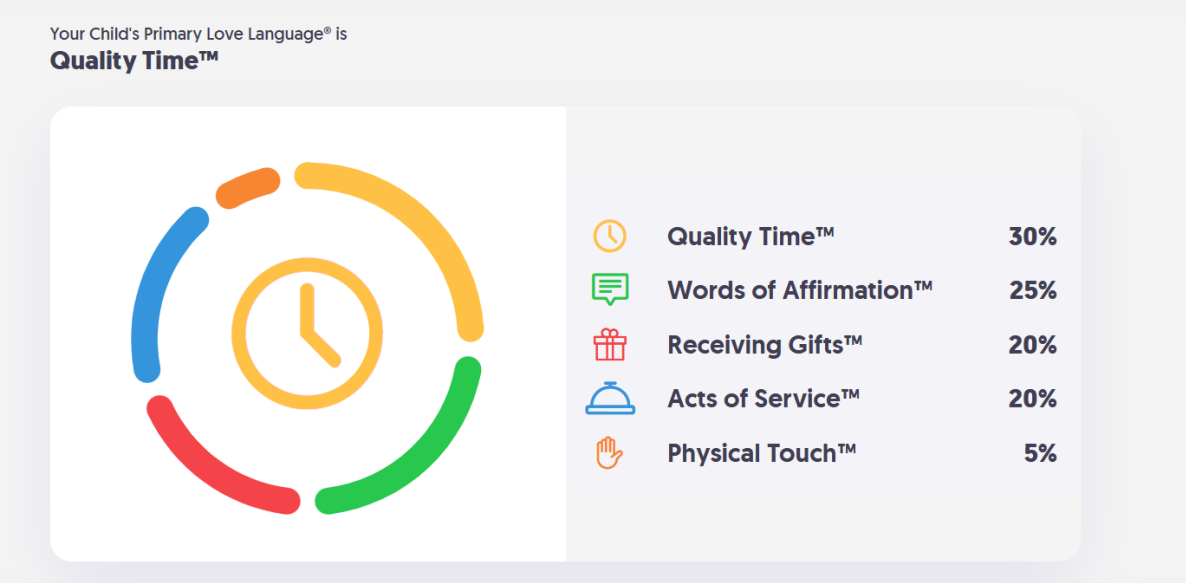
Let’s explore what can help: Child’s love languages

How does your child know when they are loved? Ask the child to draw it

5 Love Languages:

✓ Acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, words of affirmation, physical touch

https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language



Dual listening

- ✓ When we are listening to our child, we can also notice what is going on inside of us
- ✓ If we can take a moment to pay attention to our inner dialogue, we may get clarity on what might be blocking the connection between us and our child
- ✓ What is our inner voice saying?
- ✓ Is it angry, upset, grieving, sad, disappointed, confused, scared, lost, uncertain, critical?
- ✓ Our inner emotional experience can take our focus away from our child in that moment
- ✓ Say to your child: 'I really want to listen to you and hear what you have to say. I have a little voice going round in my own head right now. I'm going to take a moment to write down what that voice is saying so that it will then be quiet and I can hear you properly.'
- ✓ Child then knows what they are saying is important, they matter, and also learn how to regulate themselves by seeing self-regulation being modelled in real time
- ✓ Keep a notebook handy!
- ✓ Once you have reconnected with your child, give time to what you wrote down! Your own inner voice needs time to be heard too.

Child's learning styles and preferences

- ✓ Notice how your child interacts with the world and what words they use.
- ✓ Which styles and preferences are most important to them?

VISUAL (Spatial)



- Process information best when it can be seen.
- Use graphs, maps, photographs, drawings, infographics etc
- Make instructions visual

AUDITORY (Musical)



- Processes information best when it is heard
- Prefers lecture-style teaching, reading aloud, audiobooks, and recordings
- Can become easily distracted by sounds

LOGICAL (Mathematical)



- Thrives on logic and reason
- Likes steps or systems, learning facts, ordering, organising, and methodical processes
- Thinks and plans before taking action

SOCIAL (Interpersonal)



- Learns best around other people
- Enjoys communication and feedback
- Learns through group projects, discussion, and group planning
- Social butterfly

KINESTHETIC (Physical)



- Prefers hands-on opportunities
- Likes to be doing and moving, obstacle courses, models, experiments, crafts
- Finds it harder to sit still

VERBAL (Linguistic)



- All about spoken and written words
- Likes reading notes and instructions, research
- Group discussion and presentations
- Enjoys word games like Scrabble

SOLITARY (Intrapersonal)



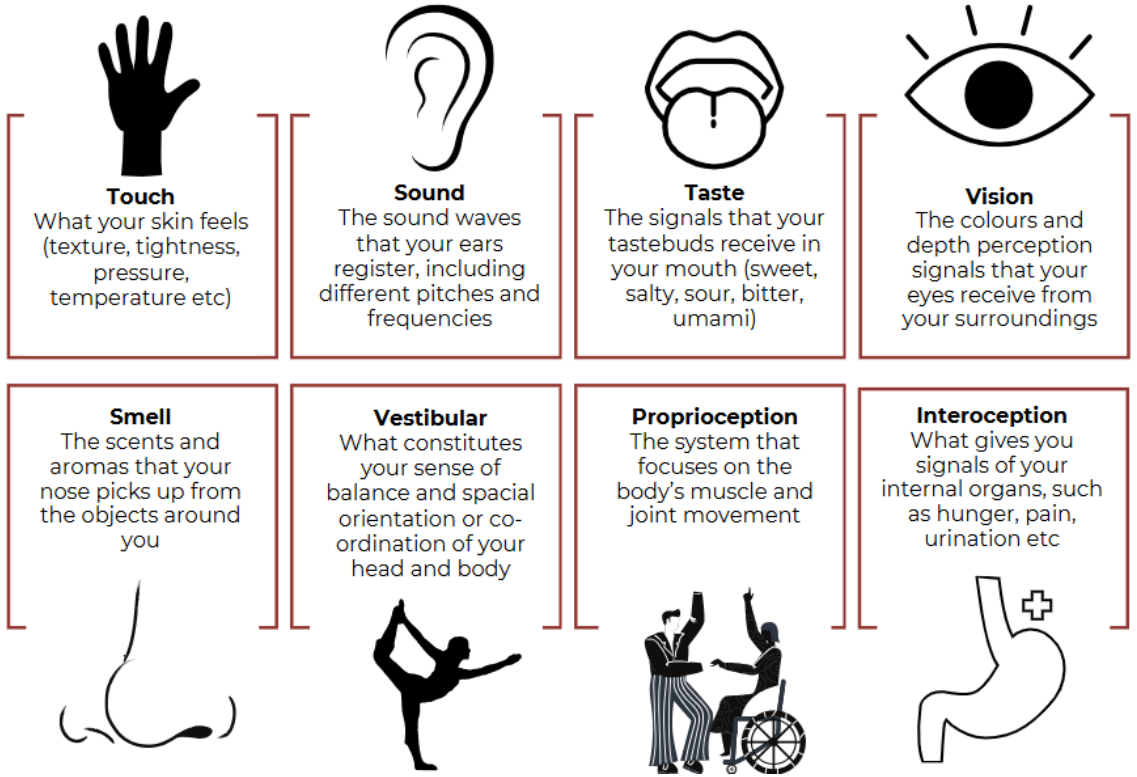
- **Prefers independence and self-reflection**
- **Self-motivated, self-regulating, aware of own feelings, task-independent and good time-management**

Each person has a preferred learning style. This is how we best retain, and recall information.

Understanding your own learning style, and the learning styles of others can help to explain how we learn, or act.

Child's sensory preferences

- ✓ Notice how your child interacts with the world and what words they use.
- ✓ Use the sensory checklist to identify the child's preferences



Child's values and beliefs

Values:

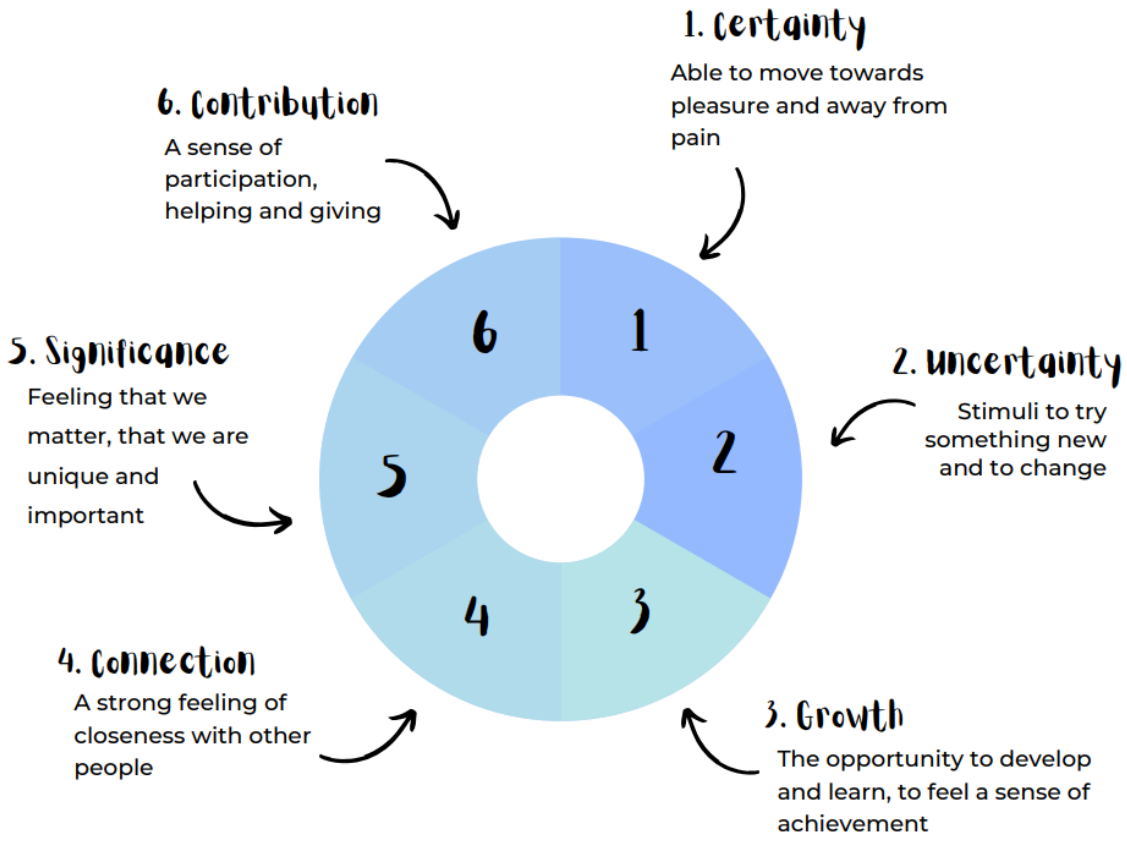
- ✓ You and your child can draw 5 things that are important to you
- ✓ Explore what makes these things important
- ✓ Notice similarities in the reasons
- ✓ Notice differences in the reasons
- ✓ Ask which of those things they have identified are most important
- ✓ Explore how you can honour these values more regularly in the child's life
- ✓ Use the children's values worksheet

Beliefs:

- ✓ Ask the child to draw a self-portrait, or create one out of play doh
- ✓ Explore 'I am…', 'I can…' 'I love…' statements
- ✓ Use the universal beliefs worksheet as a prompt to help you talk about beliefs with your child
- ✓ Explain beliefs are thoughts we keep thinking, and can be changed if we want
- ✓ Celebrate the positives and create positive affirmations from what you find

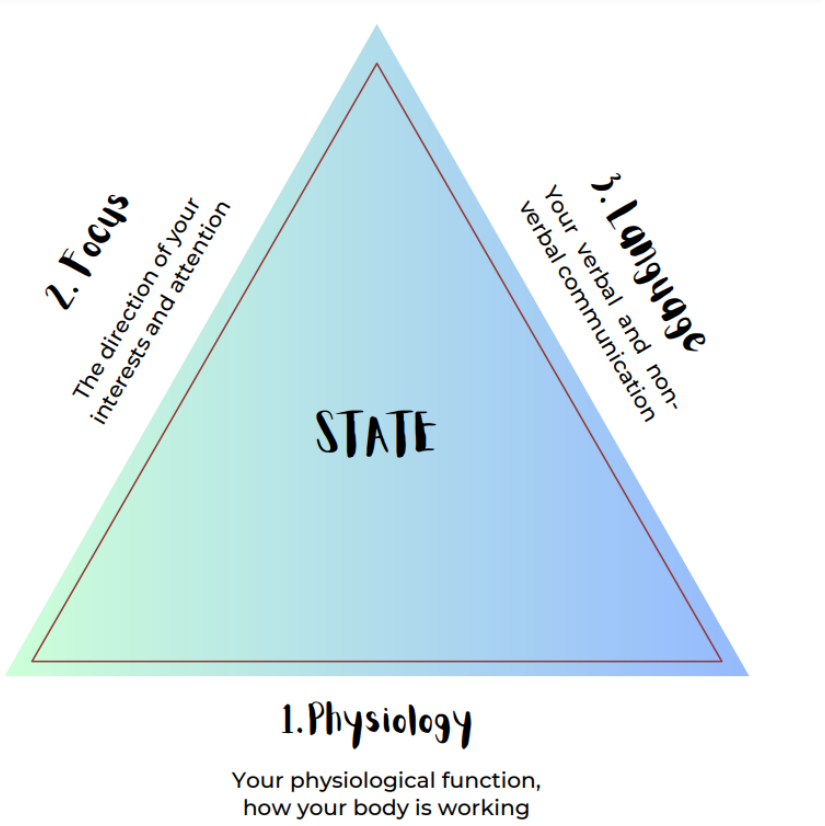
6 Human Needs

- ✓ Neuroscience: We all need to know we make sense and we matter
- ✓ Children will have different need preferences and we can find these out by discussing them with them, or watching their behaviour and exploring which ones they are prioritising
- ✓ We can then intentionally honour these needs once we understand what they are



Notice the child's emotional state

- ✓ If the child is in fight or flight, or are dysregulated, they may not have capacity to question their state and may simply need support through co-regulation / keeping them and others safe first
- ✓ What are they willing to engage with based on their current level of regulation?
- ✓ What is the child focusing on?
- ✓ What language are they using?
- ✓ What are they doing with their body?
- ✓ What could change?



Creative ways to connect

Create a fun box of creative resources – what does the child love especially from a sensory perspective	**Create a book of the child's life together with photos they can cut out and their drawings**	**Invite the child to help with cooking their favourite meal, even if it is stiring a bowl with water and bubbles in**	**Invite the child to 'help' with household chores even if it takes more time, folding clothes, cleaning**	**Listen to a story together (on Youtube etc) and draw a picture together of one of the characters or a scene**
Play a board game and use food for characters	**Dress up in siblings' or parents' clothes**	**Make your own play doh in a giant batch and create big models**	**Bake home made play doh in the oven to keep figures**	**Use bedding to create a den and soft toys to be characters**
Make ice lollies together using fruit juice	**Make jelly with toy dinosaurs in the bottom and play hunt the dinosaur**	**Use kitchen trays to make mud pies in the garden**	**Go on a bug hunt and see how many bugs you can find**	**Collect leaves and do leaf rubbings using the leaf under paper and rubbing a crayon on top**
Create your own special rituals together	**Tell stories of your own childhood and your parents' childhoods**	**Roast marshmallows on an open fire**	**Draw pictures, frame them and give them as gifts**	**Ask your child what they would love to do with you**

Connection to 3 Steps Home

- ✓ By starting with ourselves we create capacity to be more present when we are connecting with our child
- ✓ The words in the second part of the book can be used directly with our children – which resonate with you and them?
- ✓ You could do some of the prompts with your child and explore how that feels for you both



What this means for you personally

- ✓ Reflect on your connection with your child – what do you notice?
- ✓ Play with it a little – what if this was different?
- ✓ Use the questions at the start of this session to help you reflect
- ✓ Identify 3 ways you want to explore your connection with your child our over the next month – with awareness that you can explore other aspects another time
- ✓ Plan what you will do over the next month to connect more intentionally
- ✓ Consider how understanding connection can help other parents

The importance in a parenting context

- ✓ Your awareness of your own connection with your child will naturally bring more intentionality to your parenting
- ✓ You can share this awareness with coachees, both formally by showing and explaining, and informally by modelling the approaches in your sessions
- ✓ You can pick the knowledge, skill or behaviour that feels relevant in the context:
  - ✓ Introducing the coachee parent to the concept of intentional connection with their child may help the coachee to explore connection in their family
  - ✓ How could the coachee explore their own connection with their child and start to notice when that connection is intentional?
  - ✓ How does the child feel in their body when they have that intentional connection with their parent?
  - ✓ How can the coachee check in with their child to explore how different kinds of connection feel?
  - ✓ How can the coachee negotiate with others to ensure the child's connection preferences are prioritised?