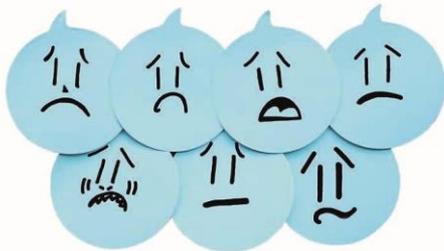


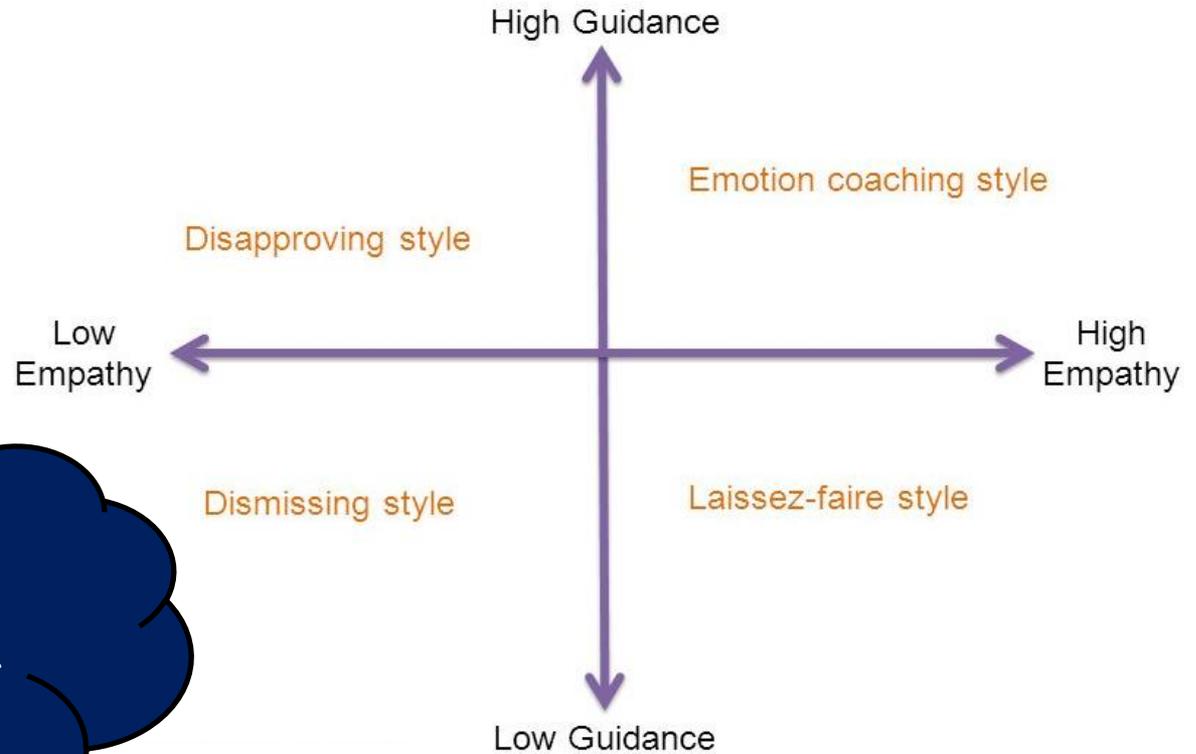
A Way of Communicating: Emotion Coaching

- ❑ The Emotion Coaching strategy is based on research into what parents of **happy, resilient** and **well-adjusted** children and young people actually do
- ❑ Developed in the US by psychologist John Gottman (1997)



What do you think the key components of effective communication with children are?

Do you recognise these response types?



If you were upset and you were speaking to someone about it, what might these different approaches look like?

What happens when children become upset?



→ Prefrontal cortex
P.F.C.
"THE WISE LEADER"



← "Flipped Your Lid"

← The big emotions, anger, fear,
anxiety etc...
The AMYGDALA - The alarm center
Acts on instinct
fight, flight or freeze



What did Ian Wright's teacher do to support him?

Disapproving style

Low empathy, high guidance

- Disapproves of negative emotions - viewed as a sign of weakness or lack of control
- Lacks empathy - noticeably critical and intolerant
- Tries to get rid of negative emotions via discipline, reprimand, punishment
- Focuses on the behaviour rather than the emotions driving the behaviour
- Often motivated by need to control and regain power, or to 'toughen up' the child



Dismissing style

Low empathy, low guidance

- Wants to make the child feel better but is uncomfortable with negative emotions
- Thinks paying attention to such emotions makes them worse
- Tries to stop emotions by reducing or minimising ('It's no big deal', 'Don't worry', 'That's life', 'You'll be fine')
- Often motivated by need to rescue and make things better
- Focuses on getting rid of the emotion with logic or distraction rather than understanding the feelings



Disapproving style

Low empathy, high guidance



Dismissing style

Low empathy, low guidance



What you are feeling is not right, your assessment of the situation is wrong, you must not feel this way

- The child does not learn to trust their own feelings, which affects their capacity to make any decisions
- They are not given opportunities to experience emotions and deal with them effectively, so grow up unprepared for life's challenges
- They do not have opportunities to self-regulate and problem-solve
- Generates more negative feelings – resentment, guilt, shame, anger

Laissez-faire style

High empathy, low guidance



- Occurs when the adult is overwhelmed by the emotions driving the child
- The adult feels helpless, afraid or distressed
- Despite the empathy of the adult, the child experiences no safe containment of their emotions
- The child receives no guidance on how to manage the feelings
- Once the adult is in laissez faire style, the behaviour will escalate

What elements of these approaches do you recognise?

What might the long term impact of these approaches be on a young person?

Emotion coaching style

High empathy, high guidance

3 steps to success:

Step 1

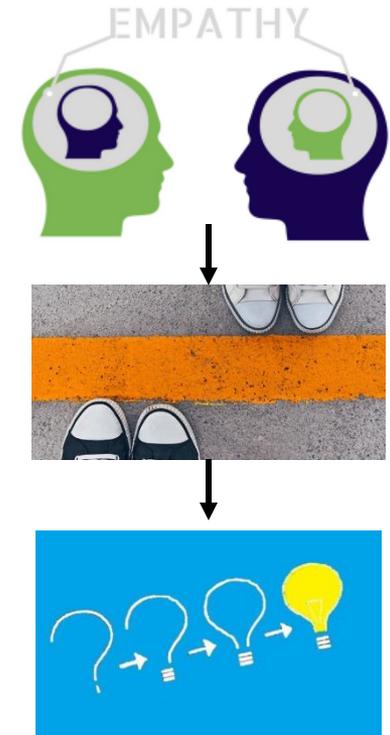
- Recognising, empathising, validating the feelings and labelling them
- Communicating that feelings are ok and that you understand how they feel

Step 2

- Setting limits on the behaviour

Step 3

- Problem solving with the child or young person about how they can move forwards (when the child is calm)



Step 1: Label and Validate Feelings

- Recognise all emotions as being natural and normal, and not a matter of choice
- Take on the child's perspective (attunement, mentalising). Reflect calm and empathic feelings back to the child.
- Use words to reflect back the emotion and help them to label the emotion. You might need to identify the emotion for them!

Example: A child does not want to start their homework, pushes it away and shouts 'No!' when you try to help them.

What feeling might be underpinning this behaviour?

Step 2: Set Limits

An opportunity for teaching and co-learning

- State the boundary limits of acceptable behaviour
- Make it clear that some behaviours cannot be accepted

Example: A child does not want to start their homework, pushes it away and shouts 'No!' when you try to help them.

What are the limits that you may want to communicate here?

Step 3: Problem Solving

When the child is calm, explore the feelings that gave rise to the problem:

- ✓ We manage our feelings by making choices about how we respond
- ✓ Scaffold alternative ideas and actions that could lead to more appropriate and productive outcomes
- ✓ Empower the child or young person to believe that can overcome difficulties and manage their own feelings and behaviour

Example: A child does not want to start their homework, pushes it away and shouts 'No!' when you try to help them.

You want to empower the child and involve them in problem solving. How could you do that?

Task: think about the 3 stages of emotion coaching and decide what phrases you could use

- Your child is very anxious because they have been told by their teacher that they will have a surprise spelling test tomorrow
- Your child is very upset because a child in their class took something that they were playing with

1. It's ok to feel anxious and nervous about a test because I know that you want to do it well and you're worried that you won't have enough time to prepare for it.

2. But it is just a spelling test and the important thing is to give it your best go.

3. How shall we prepare for tomorrow?

Emotion coaching style

High empathy, high guidance

3 steps to success:

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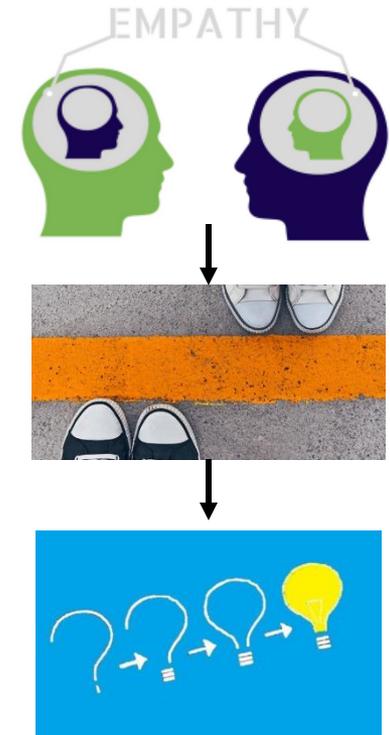
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Open Forum

Are there any concerns that you would like to problem solve or think about for the rest of the session?

