



# FELT SENSE

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## PSYCHOTHERAPY

## **Attachment & Emotion Regulation Parenting Workbook**

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### **1. Understanding Attachment**

Attachment is the emotional bond between a child and caregiver. Secure attachment develops when children feel safe, seen, and soothed. This foundation supports emotional regulation, confidence, and relationships throughout life.

#### **Reflection**

- How did your caregivers respond to your emotions growing up?
- What do you want your child to feel when they come to you upset?

#### **Exercise**

Notice one moment this week when your child seeks connection. How do you respond? Write about it below:

### **2. Co-Regulation Before Self-Regulation**

Children cannot regulate emotions on their own at first. They rely on caregivers to co-regulate through tone, presence, and safety. Your calm nervous system helps shape theirs.

#### **Reflection**

- What happens in your body when your child is upset?
- Do you tend to move toward, away from, or against your child's emotions?

#### **Exercise**

Next time your child is dysregulated, try:

1. Soft tone
2. Slow breathing
3. Getting physically close

Write what you noticed:



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### **3. Emotion Coaching**

Emotion coaching means acknowledging and validating your child's feelings while guiding behaviour. All feelings are allowed; not all behaviours are.

#### **Steps**

1. Notice the emotion
2. Name it
3. Validate it
4. Set a boundary if needed
5. Problem-solve together

#### **Reflection**

- Which step feels hardest for you?
- What fears come up when validating emotions?

#### **Exercise**

Write a validating response to this scenario:

Your child is yelling because they can't have more screen time.

### **4. Boundaries with Connection**

Boundaries help children feel safe. The goal is to be both firm and kind—clear limits with emotional connection.

#### **Reflection**

- Do you lean more toward being strict or permissive?
- What makes it hard to hold limits?

#### **Exercise**

Practice this phrase:

'I won't let you \_\_\_\_\_. I'm here to help you through this.'

Write your own examples:



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### **5. Repairing Ruptures**

All parents make mistakes. What matters most is repair—coming back, taking responsibility, and reconnecting.

#### **Reflection**

- How did your caregivers handle mistakes?
- What makes it hard to apologize to your child?

#### **Exercise**

Write a repair statement you could use after a hard moment:

### **6. Helpful Parenting Phrases (Attachment & Regulation)**

#### **Validation (Seeing & Naming Feelings)**

- That was really disappointing, hey.
- You're feeling really frustrated right now.
- I can see how upset you are.
- That didn't go the way you wanted.
- It makes sense you'd feel that way.
- You really wish things were different.
- That felt unfair to you.
- You're having a hard time.

For younger kids:

- Big feelings.
- That was hard.
- You didn't like that.

#### **Validation + Boundaries**

- I won't let you hit, but I can see you're really angry.
- You're so mad right now. I'm not going to let you throw things.
- It's okay to be upset. It's not okay to hurt your brother.
- You really want more screen time. The answer is still no.
- I hear how much you want that. We're not buying it today.



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**Co-Regulation (Calming Together)**

- I'm right here with you.
- You don't have to go through this alone.
- Let's take a breath together.
- Come sit with me.
- I've got you.
- We'll figure this out together.