

Seven Day F.L.Y. CHALLENGE



F.L.Y. = First Love Yourself

For the ultimate connection with our children, for so many reasons, the “green zone” (prefrontal cortex) is where we want to be! (Rewatch sessions 2 and 3 of the Gentle Parenting Intro Series for a recap on the brain part of things)



Remember:

“The more we play in the green zone, the more we stay in the green zone.”

The next six steps have the potential to literally change everything about your mindset, your happiness, and most importantly, the depth of your relationship with your child.

Follow these steps every day for Seven Days and I can promise you that you will see changes.

Morning Gratitude



Here are some awesome things about gratitude:

1. It improves relationships (all relationships- including the parent/ child one)
2. It rewires your brain (Here's the part where it helps you stay in the green zone)
3. It makes you at least 25% happier (That's a whole quarter more)
4. It decreases stress (I know this is the biggest contaminator in my relationship with many kids - so bring on the Gratitude!)
5. It shields you from negativity
6. Its been known to decrease depression, anxiety and anger
7. It boosts self-esteem

Do I need to say more? Weave gratitude into your day for just a few minutes and watch the magic happen!



Marcus Tullius Cicero said:

“Gratitude is not only the greatest of all virtues but the parent of all others.”

List three things you feel grateful for today. Be specific...

For example: The sun coming through the window, the steaming mug of coffee in my hand, the sound of the rain on the rooftop. What are you seeing, feeling, or experiencing RIGHT NOW that you are grateful for:

Daily Self-Care

An act of self-love: How are you filling your tank up today?

A cup of tea with your dog, potting in your garden, a forest run, a yoga session...

We often neglect self-care because we convince ourselves that there is a greater need more worthy of our time. Toss the guilt aside and think about what happens in the brain under stress.

We cannot regulate and be the parents our children need us to be when we are stressed.

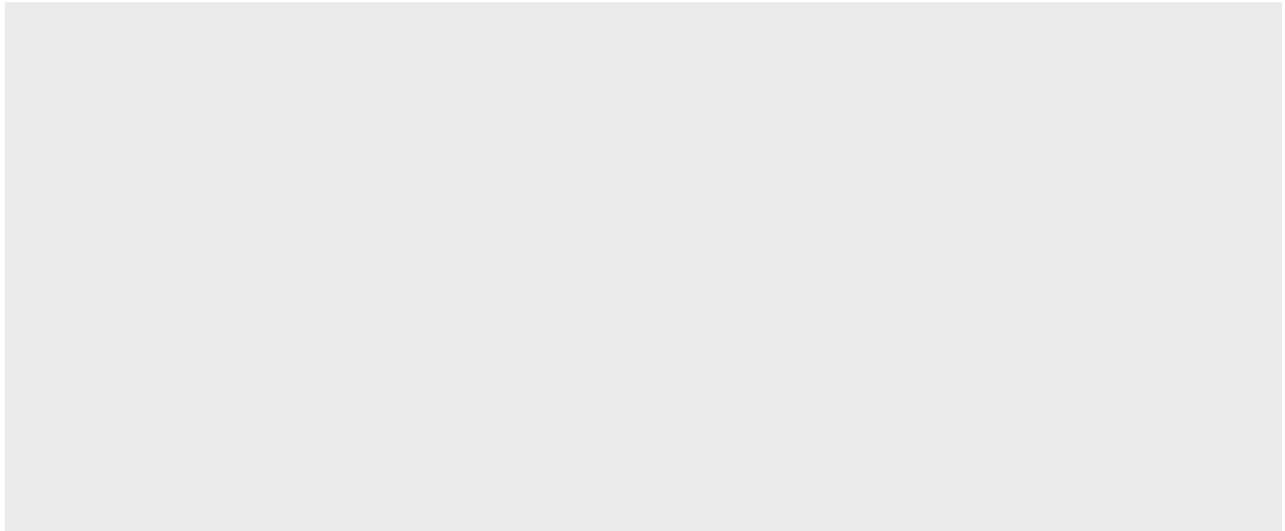
Remind yourself: The kindest thing you can do for your child is to look after yourself. So go for that run, dig in your backyard, and have a glass of bubbly with the next-door neighbour.

Do what you need to do for YOU.

First Love Yourself...



Make a note of your soul-filling today:



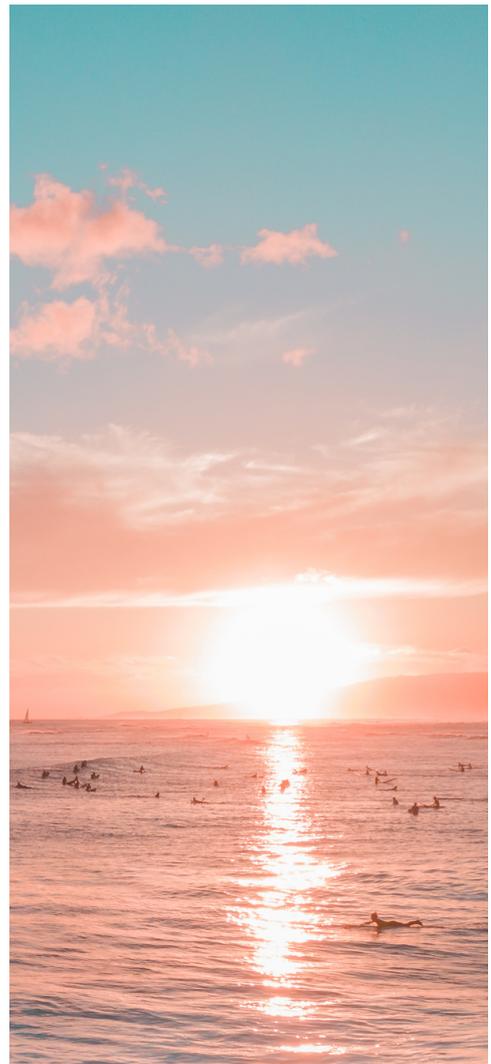
Breath Practice

Do five minutes of mindful, focused, breathing.

In practising this exercise daily, you are strengthening neural wiring and making these connections easier to access during times when you are stressed and triggered (like in the face of a child and teen's challenging behaviour).

Follow the self-regulation breathing videos - pick one a day. Sit somewhere quietly in a relaxed position for five minutes (You could choose to lie down in a comfortable position too).

This exercise is best completed with earphones to ensure minimal distractions.



As you watch the video and listen to the music, focus on doing one of the following breathing exercises:

- 1.* Two breaths in, hold for two counts, out for four counts (long, slow breaths)
- 2.* Breathe in for four counts, hold for four counts, breathe out for four counts, and hold for four counts. Don't forget the "hold" parts - these are super important.

"Sometimes you just have to stop, take a deep breath, and put things into perspective." ~ Katrina Meyer

In-the-Moment Regulation

(Rewatch sessions 3 and 4 for more about this)

In those moments you tend to be triggered, follow these steps. Remember, at first these may seem hard to remember but just like driving a car, keep practising and soon they will become second nature. It goes something like this:

Event  Red Mist Rising  Quick Reminder Steps

1. Breathe
2. Wiggle your toes and pay attention to how they feel on the ground (In doing so, you are emotionally grounding yourself too)
3. What physical sensations are you feeling in your body and where are you feeling them?
4. Name to Tame: I'm feeling... (Insert word here- frustrated, angry, overwhelmed, exhausted etc)
5. Step to the side: A change in position literally changed what is happening in the brain.
6. Visualise an Invisible Neon flashing sign above your child's head: "Dysregulated child: What is the NEED?"
7. Take another deeeeeep breath...
8. Eye-level or below (You do NOT want to come across as a threat) - If this means going down, go down!)
9. Empathise and seek to understand (Note: You do NOT have to agree or move a boundary to empathise and understand)
10. Connect through kindness (Whatever that means in that exact moment)

"A simple act of kindness has the power to change a life." (Unknown)

Daily Reflection

Take a few quiet minutes in the evening to reflect on these questions:

- Was there a time I felt frustrated/ angered/ triggered by my child or teen?
- What were the circumstances surrounding this?
- Was I feeling disempowered at this time?
- Did I ever feel this way as a child? If so, when?

Reminder: The way we often react to our child's behaviour has very little to do with them but so much to do with our inner child's reaction to disempowerment.

Our inner child is triggered, often due to childhood issues that we never processed.

"The anger you feel towards your child's behaviour has much more to do with what's happening inside you than what's happening in front of you." ~ Naomi Holdt

What issues were triggered for you today?

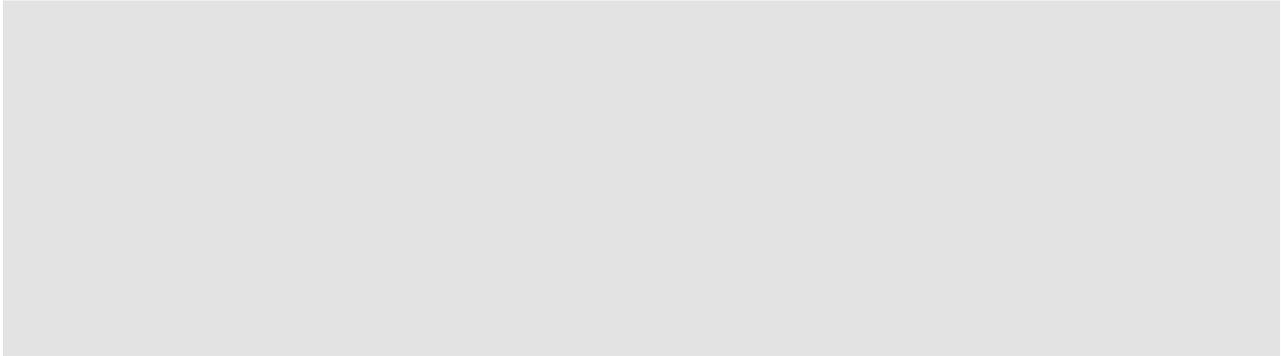
Stepping out of the box, remember that your child/ teen didn't wake up to frustrate you



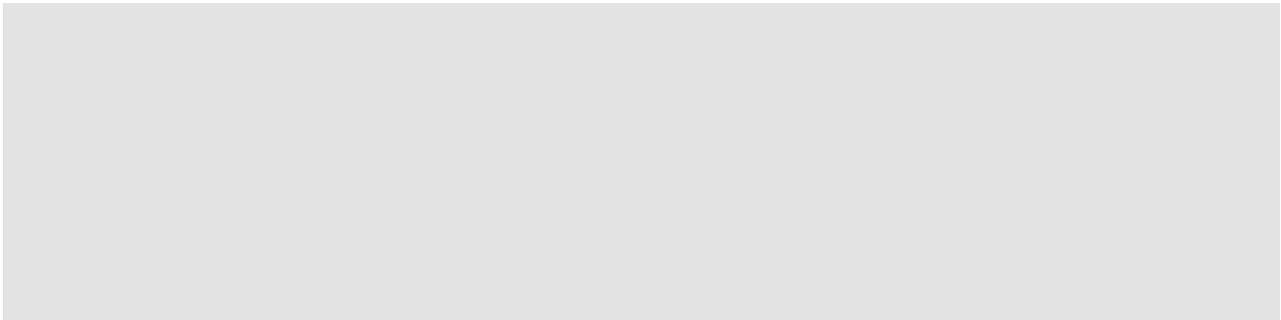
Reframe

Why did my child behave in this way? Was it:

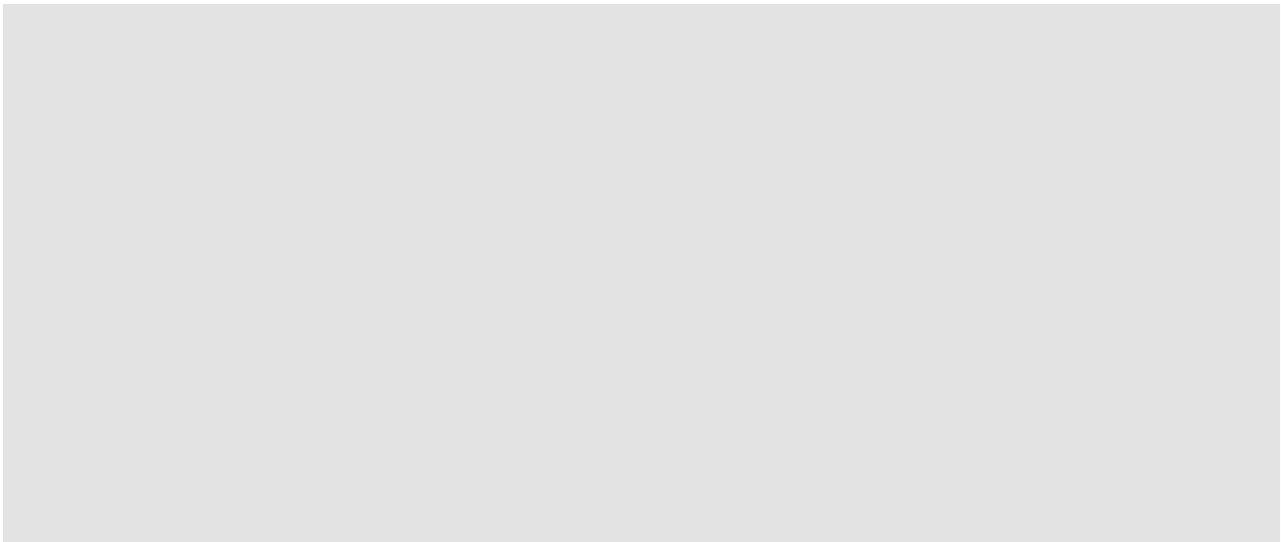
- Physical need?
- Developmental stage?
- Emotional need?



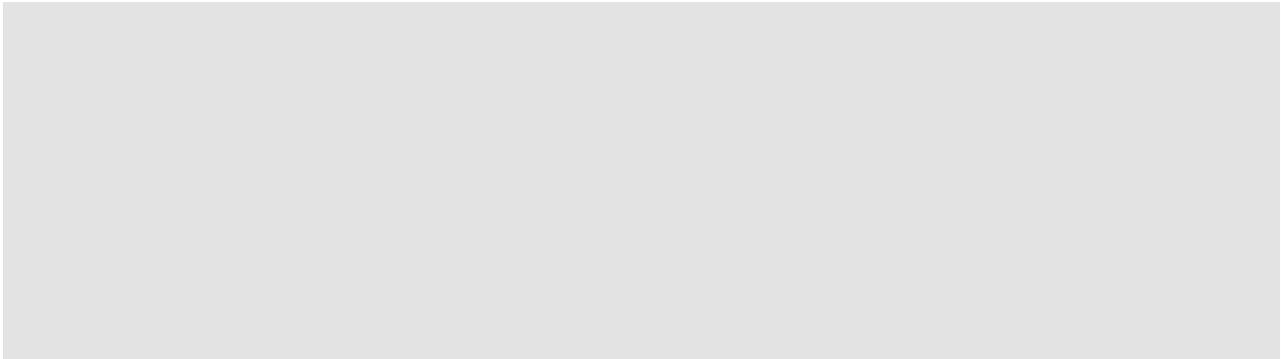
What is the one aspect I am going to try to focus on in my parenting tomorrow?



Be specific and note your observations:



What is the one aspect I am going to try to focus on in my parenting tomorrow?

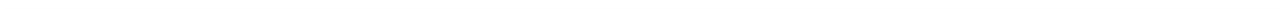
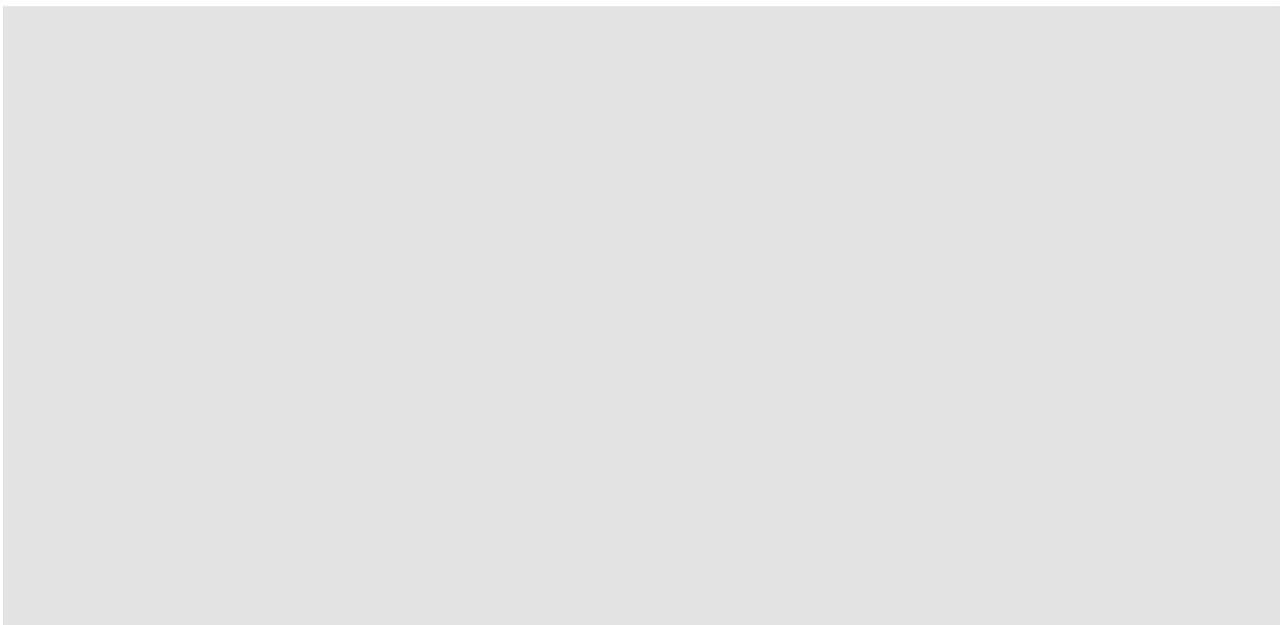


Evening Parent Gratitude

Take five minutes before you go to bed to reflect on specific attributes you noticed about your child that day in the things they did or said.

Write these down below. NB: This is not for accomplishments - it's for noticing characteristics and values like kindness, helpfulness, honesty etc. Write down the date and three gratitudes.

It's incredible how a simple task like this strengthens the connection between you and your child.



Commit to doing all these things for seven days.

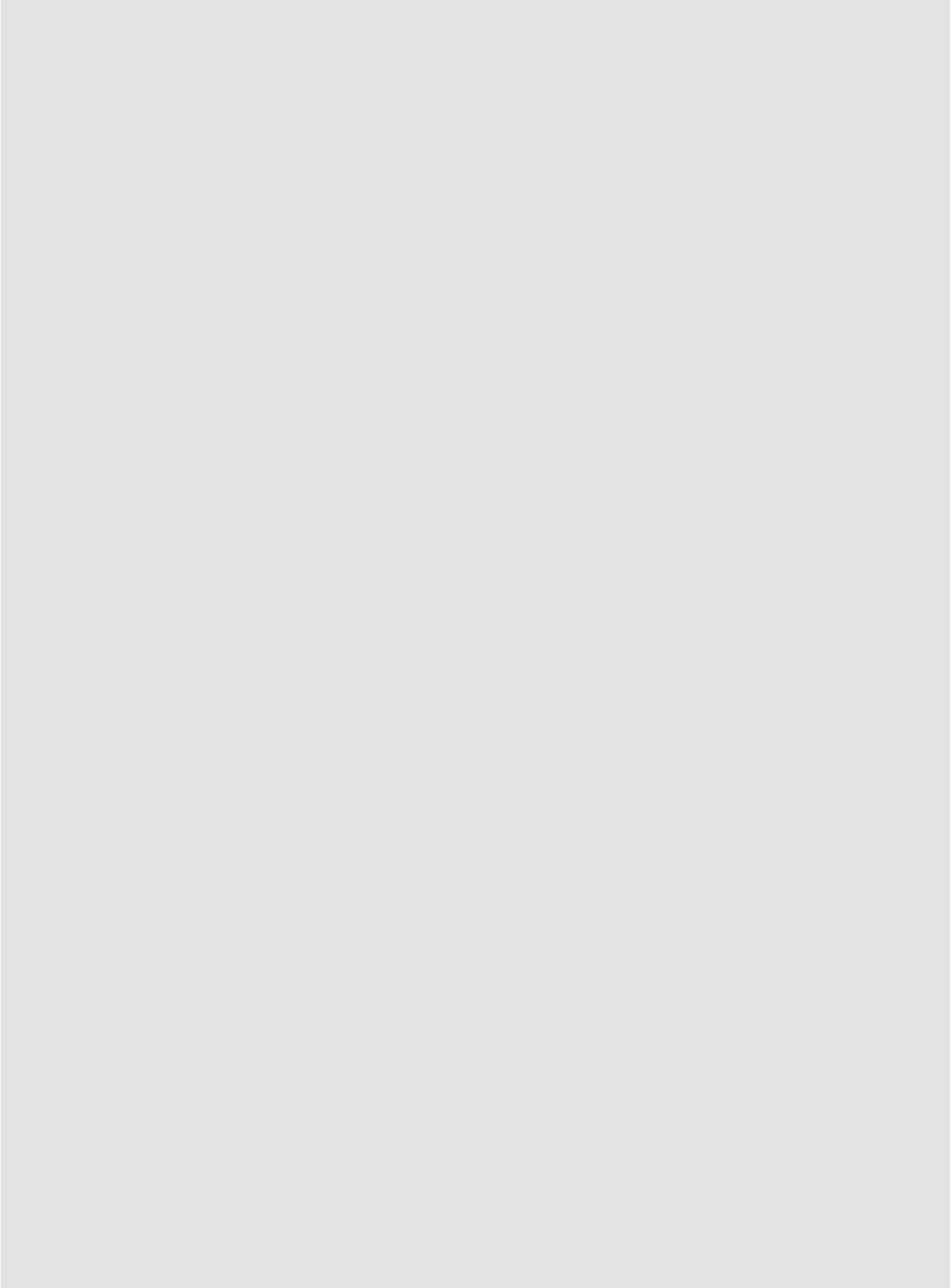
Combined, they won't take up much of your 24 hours but I can promise you that you will feel a change within yourself and a deepening in your relationship with your child.

These six aspects will help you “play in the green zone”, and in doing so, you will find it that much easier to “stay” there when your child most needs you.

Detailed videos and more self-regulation exercises are available in the Heart and Mind Hub. ♥

Remember, as parents, we are growing our children's brains - Kindness is the most powerful fertiliser.

NOTES



Hi, I'm Naomi

I'm a very human parent just like you who, makes very human parenting mistakes all the time even though I've been working in with kids and teens in various ways for over thirty years.

Before I became a psychologist, I was an educator. My heart has always had a passion for working with families in holistic ways.

I firmly believe the words of Fredrick: "It's easier to raise strong boys than repair broken men."

In an upside-down world that we cannot control, we need to be raising resilient children who are able to bounce back from whatever their journey of life may toss their way. This doesn't happen through teaching a skill set, it happens through working on ourselves as parents and in doing that, deepening the connection with our children.

This booklet is your FLY reminder - First Love Yourself.

We can't show anyone else the love and care they deserve when we can't first show ourselves that love. Just by following these steps, I know that you are going to be strengthening your relationship with yourself and your child.

So parents, don't forget to F.L.Y.

It's the greatest act of love and the most important thing you can do for your child.

