

EMOTIONS EXERCISE

Teaching our children about emotions is important.

Often, we find it very difficult ourselves to do this as sometimes we can shut off our emotions.

An easy way to teach our children about emotions at any age is to **describe** or **state** the emotion to them.

When children are learning to manage emotions it is important to understand that it is unhelpful to tell them that what they are feeling is wrong or to tell them what they "should" feel instead.

Children can often get very upset about things that seem trivial to us; for example they may get very upset about the colour of a cup they are given.

Even when we don't understand why they appear to be overreacting, just telling them to stop making a fuss does not help them learn how to stop, calm down, think and come up with a solution - in fact it can often make them angrier.

If we see someone crying, asking if you can help, giving them a hug or sitting beside them shows love and acceptance. Saying "What are you crying for now?" or "Stop that noise" etc. makes them think that what they feel is wrong and they don't feel cared about.

If we do not acknowledge their feelings and help them to learn how to express them, the danger is that they could suppress their emotions, turn those emotions against themselves, become secretive and not know how to manage their emotions which can have a negative impact on them and on your relationship.

Write down a strong emotion that your child or children experiences.

How could you handle the situation whilst they are currently experiencing that strong emotion?

Is there anything you could say or do once the situation is calm?