

CONNECTIONS

A bi-weekly newsletter brought to you by

Kids Path

a service of AuthoraCare Collective

FEELINGS & EMPATHY

At Kids Path, counseling often focuses on assisting children and teens identify their feelings and learn healthy ways of coping with difficult emotions. Today's issue of Connections centers on feelings and the importance of expressing them. We hope you enjoy the information and activities and share them with your families.

Empathy is an important social skill that is connected to feelings. Empathy is the ability to put oneself in another's shoes and express true concern for their feelings. "Empathy helps people connect to one another across race, culture and the diversity that is ever present and so important to our world."

As many in our country are expressing their anger and frustration over decades of inequality, children and teens may have many questions, thoughts and feelings about what is happening. This presents us all with an opportunity to learn more about our country's history and have important discussions with our children and teens. Some of these conversations may be difficult, but we have learned the importance of encouraging children to understand the feelings of others and responding in a caring way. Please remember, the most important lessons children and teens learn are when observing the adults in their lives.

Below are a number of resources for encouraging and strengthening empathy:

- <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/key-strategies-teach-children-empathy>
- <https://rootsofempathy.org/>
- https://www.huffpost.com/entry/childrens-books-empathy-kindness_1_5d52e7b1e4b0c63bcbee2699

Sesame Street produced an excellent program on racism this past weekend that can be viewed online:

- <http://www.mcall.com/entertainment/mc-ent-sesame-street-racism-town-hall-20200608-6cj5purwxfgwtbywnodmtlq2ka-story.html>

Resources for helping children understand racism and injustice, including children's books:

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/03/parenting/kids-books-racism.html>
- <https://www.today.com/parents/5-ways-kids-families-peacefully-protest-home-t183022>
- <https://nymag.com/strategist/article/anti-racist-childrens-books.html>
- <https://www.charisbooksandmore.com/books-teach-white-children-and-teens-how-undo-racism-and-white-supremacy>

Additional:

- <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2020/06/06/871023438/this-list-of-books-films-and-podcasts-about-racism-is-a-start-not-a-panacea>

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Kids Path for additional information.

Patti Gasparello

Patti Gasparello, MSW, LCSW
Director of Kids Path

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."

- NELSON MANDELA,
LONG WALK TO FREEDOM

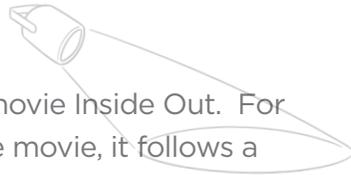


CONNECTIONS

Children

ISSUE 8 | 6/12/2020

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



This week's media spotlight is the movie Inside Out. For those of you who have not seen the movie, it follows a young girl, Riley, as she moves across the country leaving her friends and life behind. Her emotions; Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, and Disgust try to guide her through this difficult time. This movie helps children learn about these emotions and how important it is to experience all of them. The movie is available on Disney + with a subscription (\$6.99/month) or for rent on many digital platforms (\$2.99-3.99).



LEARNING RESOURCE

After watching the movie, we hope it will open the dialogue between you and your child. This learning resource is a guide for discussing feelings as well as how to make a plan to help. As Dr. Bubrick (child psychologist from the Child Mind Institute) states in the article "If you can name it, you can tame it". Below is a "feelings chart" with feelings faces many of your kids will know from Kids Path that will be useful for this discussion. Good luck!

<https://childmind.org/article/how-to-ask-what-kids-are-feeling-during-stressful-times/>

Kimochis
toys with feelings inside



FAMILY ACTIVITY

Feeling Charades

Acting out emotions can help kids understand the ways that we experience feelings in our bodies. At Kids Path, we oftentimes tell kids that our bodies give us “clues” that help us to know what we are feeling. You can approach this game differently depending on your child’s interests, developmental level, and reading ability. Here are a few ideas to get you started!

Animal Feelings Charades: For this game, the actor selects both an animal and a feeling and then acts them out together for the other player to guess (for example, an angry bear or an excited fish). Younger children may need you to select the feeling together and then secretly choose an animal to act out, whereas older children may be able to write out cards ahead of time and select them during the game.

Body Parts Charades: In this version, create a list of visible body parts (hands, feet, mouth...) and a list of feelings. The actor then pairs one body part with a feeling word and acts them out together for the other player to guess (i.e. silly elbows, sad shoulders...).

As you play, emphasize having fun and being silly. When playing the actor role, you may find it



helpful to exaggerate your movements so that your child clearly picks up on the emotion. When you have natural opportunities, point out the physical clues that helped you to guess the emotion and encourage your child to do the same. For example, you might say, “I could tell you were angry because your body became really tense and your muscles looked tight,” or “Wow, you knew I was happy right away! How could you tell?”.


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CONNECTIONS

Tweens & Teens

ISSUE 8 | 6/12/2020

LEARNING RESOURCE

Let's Get Curious About Feelings

With so many different feelings and emotions, it can be difficult to understand them all. And feelings can be confusing, especially during hard times. Learning more about your feelings and identifying them is a worthwhile journey that can help you deal with emotional ups and downs. To grow your language of emotions and strengthen your awareness of how these emotions can impact your behaviors or body sensations, [this chart](#) may be handy.

Throughout your journey of learning more about feelings, try to think about these reminders:

1. Feelings are not something to judge as “good or bad,” “positive or negative.” All feelings are equally as important, and it is okay to feel however you feel. You may experience multiple feelings at the same time.
2. Feelings can come and go like waves. The way you feel right now, may not be how you feel later today or tomorrow.
3. Feelings can teach us what we need next. If you know, “when I feel sad, I need to call my best friend”—that is great self-awareness! All feelings deserve special attention.
4. It takes courage to experience and express feelings. You can be brave in how you respond and let out various feelings.
5. What special things matter to you most can guide you to ways of expressing feelings without it being scary (things that matter most may be making art, writing, playing sports, listening or playing music, reading, spending time with friends or family, etc.).

[List adapted from here.](#) This article may be helpful to share with a caregiver or parent.



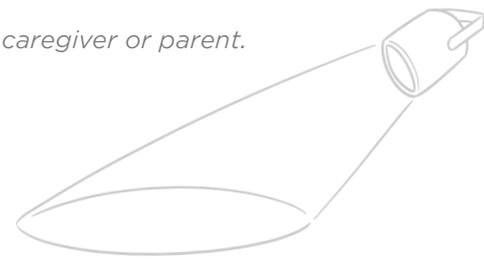
MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

[This YouTube video](#) explains common feelings like anger, sadness, and worry. In this video, there is a psychologist who meets with a group of tweens and shares some strategies to deal with uncomfortable feelings.

If you're wondering about your feelings being “normal teenage stuff,” then [this video](#) might be useful. Yes, it is normal for tweens and teens to experience intense mood swings, and this video will explain why. You can ride those waves of feelings and know this is a normal phase of life.

Both YouTube videos point out that communication is important and talking to someone you trust can help you let out or express your feelings! If you notice feelings of depression, do talk with a trusted adult, counselor, and your doctor. Depression is a very normal experience to talk about and explore with a counselor, who can support you dealing with those symptoms.

[The My Life App](#) is a great phone app to help you check in with your body and emotions. (Note, this app was previously called Stop.Breathe.Think which we highlighted in Issue 1.)



FAMILY ACTIVITY

Ready, Set, Action! Feelings Game

This activity involves drama, music, and acting out feelings without using words. The goal of the game is to gain an understanding of your own feelings and connect with family members. For this activity, each person will need paper and a pen or pencil. Here are the instructions:

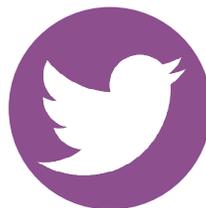
- Each person writes down three feelings or emotions, on separate small pieces of paper (you can pre-cut these before the start of the game, so each person gets three pieces). These may reflect what you are feeling at this time, or feelings you may be curious about. If you need a list of feelings, look back at the learning resource for ideas.
- Next, take 5 to 10 minutes to think about these three feelings. Try not to judge any thoughts that come to mind. You may be thinking about what's going on in your world, what may be going on in your family, or if anyone else in the room chose the same feeling.
- Each person can fold up their pieces of paper and place it into a container (you can use a bowl, empty trash can, or box).
- Without telling anyone who wrote what, ask each person to take turns acting out a feeling from the container without using any words. You can get creative with how you act it out nonverbally, using facial expressions, dance, movement, and/or music. If your family loves music, try this game using a song to represent each feeling. You can play the song that you pick for each feeling while also acting it out. Whoever is not acting, can try to name that feeling. Remember to have some fun!
- At the end of the game, your family may want to share things like: which feelings were difficult to name, did it become easier to guess as more feelings were acted out, were there any feelings that were not acted out that are still important to explore, and are there other ways to act out the same feeling? Each person can decide whether they would like to share more about their experience playing the game.



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CONNECTIONS

Parents & Caregivers

ISSUE 8 | 6/12/2020

LEARNING RESOURCE

You may have heard the term “Emotional Intelligence” before and like many others wondered what exactly does that mean? Is it even important? And if so, how can I help my children develop more of their own emotional intelligence?

Emotional Intelligence (or EQ) has been defined as the “ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others, and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships.” Sounds pretty important, right?

According to Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves, authors of the book *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, high EQ is even more important than high IQ when it comes to happiness and long-term success. And people who have strong emotional intelligence skills reportedly have more harmonious relationships at home and at work and they report more overall contentment in their lives. But what if these skills don’t come naturally to you?

The good news is Emotional Intelligence is a skill that can be developed and strengthened over time. Like any skill, it takes practice and the more you practice the more skillful you can become.

Here are the five key elements needed for growing your Emotional Intelligence:

1. **Self-awareness:** A deep awareness of our changing emotional states and our acceptance of them.
2. **Self-regulation:** The ability to consciously respond to our emotions and those of others rather than react to them.
3. **Self-motivation:** The inspiration and the commitment to complete a task, or accomplish a goal and persevere in the face of adversity.
4. **Empathy:** The ability to understand and accept the feelings and motivations of others, even when they differ from your own.
5. **Social skills:** These include abilities such as effective communication, active listening and conflict resolution and management.

If you are interested in growing your own Emotional Intelligence, [here’s an article from Psychology Today that can help you do just that.](#)

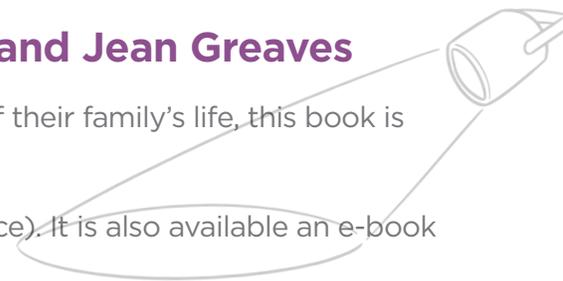


MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

Emotional Intelligence 2.0, by Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves

For anyone interested in making emotional intelligence a central part of their family’s life, this book is comprehensive how to.

Check your local library for copy (most are now offering curbside service). It is also available an e-book through the free Libby app. [Or click here for a free PDF copy online.](#)



FAMILY ACTIVITY

The Emotional Granularity Challenge

If asked, we could all probably name five basic emotions: Happy, Sad, Angry, Afraid and Ashamed. But what if you were asked to name as many emotions as you possibly could? How many could you come up with?

Here's your Emotional Granularity Challenge!

This first version is suitable for families with older children.

- To begin, sit down with your family and challenge each person to come up with as many emotions they can possibly think of and together create one list. To inspire your kids, you can inform everyone that researchers have identified over 100 different feelings.
- Next, ask everyone to sort the feelings they've named into one of the five basic emotions (Happy, Sad, Angry, Afraid or Ashamed). EXAMPLE: the emotion "Irritated" "would fall into the Angry category.
- As you proceed, create space to share times each of you each might have experienced some of various emotions.
- Now its time to rank each of the emotions into Low, Medium, or High category. Example: If you came up with "Enraged" and "Irritated" as two feelings that fall under the Angry category, "Enraged" might rank as High and "Irritated" might rank as Low.
- Lastly, if you like, check the link below for a completed chart that identifies 20 different feelings for each of the five basic emotions and compare it with what your family came up with!



For families with younger children, you can [click this link](#) to find a completed chart of the five basic emotions, and the 20 different emotions that fall under each category, already ranked from Low to High.

- Now begin by writing the five basic emotions down on sticky notes or note cards
- Next, copy down all or some of the emotions under each category. Then cut those words into individual strips of paper.
- With your kids, talk about each emotion. You might share a time you felt that emotion or ask them to do the same.
- Lastly, ask where this feeling might fit under one of the 5 basic emotions categories, and place each emotion under the appropriate category.
- Be sure to emphasize that no feelings are inherently "good" or "bad". Some are just more challenging than others.


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*CAP-C Families &
Children with Special Medical Needs*

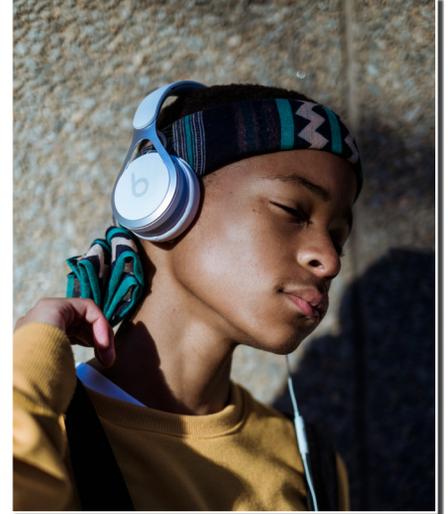
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Expressing Feelings Through Music

Below is a link to a website that offers a learning resource that allows you and your child to find a different way to learn about and express their feelings, through music. The article offers suggestions for children with many different abilities. But even if your child is non-verbal, music can be a resource for managing difficult episodes. As caregivers, you often are so in tune with your child's responses. Try playing different types of music to see how your child is affected; heart rate, facial expressions, breathing, etc. This activity will allow you and your child, regardless of ability, to connect to one another in a whole new way and to process these challenging times.

"Music is the shorthand of emotion" - Leo Tolstoy

Using Music to Help Children with Special Needs



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Kids Path Connections Resources

How to Explain COVID-19 to Children

- **Talking to Children about COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)**
<https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid19>
- **Talking to Kids about the Coronavirus**
<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>
- **How to Talk To Your Kids about COVID-19**
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/kids-covid-19/art-20482508>
- **Helping Children Cope With Changes Resulting From COVID-19**
[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)

Resources for Food and Other Assistance

- **Phone Call regarding resources/food:** Dial 211
- **United Way:** resources including regarding food, housing
Burlington, Greensboro, Orange Co.
- **Texting tool for students who are on free/reduced lunch for info:** Text FOODNC to 877-877

Emotional Health Resources

- **The Kellin Foundation – A Variety of Resources**
Builds resilient children, families, and adults through behavioral health services, victim advocacy, and community outreach.
<http://www.kellinfoundation.org/covid-19-resources.html>
- **Now's a Good Time to Teach Your Kids to Play on Their Own**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/parenting/kids-independent-play-coronavirus-quarantine.html>
- **If Your Kid Keeps Asking 'Why,' Give Them an Answer**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/27/parenting/kids-asking-questions-development.html>



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Formerly Hospice & Palliative Care Center of Alamance-Caswell & Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro

- **4 Ways to Help Your Anxious Kid**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/parenting/coronavirus-help-anxious-kid.html>
- **You and your Kids Can't Stand Each Other – Now What? – The New York Times**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/09/well/family/coronavirus-quarantine-conflict-family-meeting.html>
- **The Heartbreaking Reality of Parenting in the Coronavirus Pandemic**
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/parenting-social-distancing-coronavirus_n_5e6fb52ac5b6eab7793a0c4d
- **Guide to Living with Worry and Anxiety Amidst Global Uncertainty**
https://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide_to_living_with_worry_and_anxiety_amidst_global_uncertainty_en-us.pdf
- **Teaching Our Kids (and Ourselves) Mindfulness to Get Us Through the Coronavirus Anxiety – The Washington Post**
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/03/20/teaching-our-kids-ourselves-mindfulness-get-us-through-conronavirus-anxiety/>

Educational Resources

- **Teachers Share Their Favorite Free Learning Websites and Apps for Kids**
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/free-online-learning-activities-for-kids_l_5e73848dc5b63c3b648bc968
- **Veteran Home-Schoolers Share Tips for Parents during Coronavirus Closures**
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/03/18/veteran-homeschoolers-share-tips-parents-during-coronavirus-school-closures/>
- **Khan Academy**
A nonprofit with the mission to provide a free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere.
<https://www.khanacademy.org>
- **Scholastic Learn from Home**
Day-by-day projects to keep kids reading, thinking and growing
<https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html>
- **TED-Ed**
Free daily lessons, activities and challenges to support student, parents and teachers
<https://ed.ted.com/>
- **Duolingo**
The world's best way to learn a language
<https://www.duolingo.com/>

Fun Activities

- **18 At-Home Ideas to Keep Kids Busy and Entertained During the Coronavirus Outbreak**
<https://apple.news/A5MpYtgBZTfajPmUofqJ9Dg>
- **Video Games to Play with Your Kids That Won't Drive You Crazy**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/arts/video-games-kids-parents-covid-virus-coronavirus.html>

Activities to Remember Your Loved One

- **The Dougy Center**
The national center for grieving children and families
<https://www.dougy.org>

Behavioral Health

Mental Health, Bereavement Care, Substance Abuse, Suicide Intervention, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- **The Kellin Foundation – A Variety of Resources**
Builds resilient children, families, and adults through behavioral health services, victim advocacy, and community outreach
<http://www.kellinfoundation.org/covid-19-resources.html>
- **Alamance County Crisis Care: RHA Walk-In Crisis Center** (behavioral health and/or substance abuse)
 - Walk-in between 8 am and 3 pm M-W-F
 - “Crisis Hour” between 8am and 8pm Monday - Friday
 - Payment based on a sliding scale to those living in Alamance Co., no charge if unemployed
 - 2732 Anne Elizabeth Dr.
 - Burlington NC 27215
 - **336-229-5905**
 - 336-229-5906 - FAX #
- **Cardinal Innovations**
 - Includes 24 hr/7 day a week crisis and mobile crisis team
 - Only serves the following counties – Alamance, Caswell, Person, Orange and Chatham
 - **1-800-939-5911**
- **Open Door Clinic**
 - For those not eligible for Medicaid or stat funding
 - **336-570-9800**
- **AuthoraCare Collective and Kids Path**
 - Adult/Child Bereavement/Grief Counseling
 - **336-532-0100**
- **Children’s Developmental Services Agency (CDSA)**
 - Children under 3 years
 - 336-334-5601

- **Residential Treatment Services of Alamance**
 - Detoxification & Crisis Stabilization
 - Offers recovery programs that are invaluable to those struggling to overcome alcoholism, addiction and/or mental illness.
 - **336-227-7417**
- **Crisis Intervention Team**
 - If **911** is called, Alamance Co. does have law enforcement members trained to handle calls related to mental health or substance abuse.
 - Prefer that the above is used instead of CIT
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Also Veterans Crisis Line)**
 - **1-800-273-8255**
 - Call will begin with a recording, follow prompts
- **Suicide Prevention Lifeline Web chat**
 - <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat>
 - Texting option: text HOME to **741741** (Not a part of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, but you are connected to qualified professionals who can help)
- **Mobile Crisis Team** (by phone or home visit)
 - Provided by Psychotherapeutic Services
 - 24-7, 365 days a year
 - **336-538-6990**
 - 336-538-6991 - FAX #
- **Mobile Crisis Services—other Counties**
 - **Caswell Co.**
 - Provided by Psychotherapeutic Services
 - 24-7, 365 days a year
 - **336-538-6990**
 - 336-538-6991 - FAX #
 - **Orange and Person Co.**
 - Freedom House
 - Offers residential recovery services for adults who are alcohol or drug addicted and those who are dually diagnosed with a mental illness
 - **1-877-967-8844**
 - **Durham Co.**
 - Alliance Behavioral Healthcare
 - Serves people in Durham, Wake, Cumberland and Johnston counties
 - Offers treatment and support for mental illness, substance use disorders, and intellectual/developmental disabilities
 - **1-800-510-9132**
 - Call will begin with a recording, follow prompts

Activity Links from Past Kids Path Connections Newsletters

Children

- Ninja Focus: To help engage your kids with healthy content while they're home from school (Free from 4/1/2020 – 7/1/2020). Download the app on Google Play or the App Store.
- Getting Children Outside While Social Distancing for COVID-19
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/Getting-Children-Outside.aspx>
- Hand In Hand: How to make the most of special time with your child
<https://www.handinhandparenting.org/2014/11/make-special-time-child-checklist/>
- Breathe, Think, Do! In challenging situations, taking slow deep breaths can help children calm down and solve problems.
<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/activities/breathe-think-do/>

Tweens and Teens

- What is Mindfulness? The benefit of mindfulness and examples of how to practice it.
- <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/what-is-mindfulness.pdf>
- Relaxation Techniques to help you cope with emotions
- <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/relaxation-techniques.pdf>
- Resources for Connecting with Nature
- NATGEO@HOME - https://www.nationalgeographic.com/family/at-home-education-resources?cmpid=int_org=ngp::int_mc=website::int_src=ngp::int_cmp=natgeoathomeglobal::int__add=natgeoathomeglobal
- National Aquarium- <https://www.aqua.org/>
- Houston Zoo - <https://www.houstonzoo.org/explore/webcams/>
- North Carolina Zoo - <https://www.nczoo.org/virtual-visit>
- Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park - <https://www.meijergardens.org/virtual-visits/>
- Common Sense Media: Reviews for what your kids want to watch (before they watch it)
<https://www.common Sense Media.org/>
- Find Peace Anywhere: Check in with how you're feeling, and try short activities tuned to your emotions
- <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/>

Adults

- Being Well: Being on Your Own Side – focuses on the importance of self-compassion
- <https://www.rickhanson.net/well-podcast-side/>
- Visit Dr. Hansen's website for more podcasts
- <https://www.rickhanson.net/>
- Live Nature Cams: Hundreds of live nature cams:
<https://explore.org/livecams>
- Podcast: Authentic Parenting; Parenting from the Heart
 - Parenting through Quarantine <https://authenticparenting.com/podcast>
- Download the UCLA MindfulApp for IOS (App Store) and Android (Google Play)
- With this easy-to-use app, you can practice mindfulness meditation anywhere, anytime with the guidance of the [UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center](https://www.ucla.edu/centers-and-programs/mindful-awareness-research-center/).