5 Steps to Peaceful Conflict Resolution

RESTORE CONNECTION - RETURN TO PEACE

FIRST, DECIDE!

WHAT KIND OF CHALLENGE IS THIS?

1 **SUPPORT:** Is your child feeling disconnected? Is this a relationship issue due to previous conflicts and harsh interactions? Do you need to repair and restore attachments before you can see growth?

2 **STRESS:** Is your child holding stored stress and tension that is causing rigid behaviors, inflexibility, or aggression? Does your child need more coping tools or creative channels to offload stuck emotions or anxiety?

3 **SKILLS:** Is this a developmentally appropriate reaction that requires more time and patience to mature into acceptable behavior? Does your child need more skills practice before s/he can master this expectation alone?

FIND THE ROOT CAUSE OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR BY UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS DRIVING IT.

THEN, ACT!

T 1. TAKE A BREATH AND NOTICE

Breathe in for 4 seconds and out for 8. Slow your breath on the exhale to activate your parasympathetic nervous system and relax your mind and body. Notice and name what you see. Invite connection with non-judgmental inquiry and observation.

E 2. ENGAGE AND EMPATHIZE

Approach the situation with curiosity to help your child's brain rest and reset. Empathize with your child's feelings and validate any stress or disconnections that have occurred. Children can't make new choices until they feel heard, calm, and connected.

A 3. ACKNOWLEDGE NEEDS

Acknowledge your child's basic needs for attention, affection, and co-regulation to strengthen the brain's empathy connections. Children can better manage their behaviors when they know their needs are important and valid - even if we can't immediately meet them.

C 4. CONNECT TO PROBLEM SOLVE

Let your child to lead the conflict resolution to develop their decision-making skills. Suggest ideas or alternatives when needed. Peaceful solutions are easier to access when you feel connected and calm. Don't move to this step until you've had your T-E-A.

H 5. HELP YOUR CHILD GROW

Help your child develop skills by holding the boundaries with loving-kindness and modeling mindfulness. Stay present and use a neutral tone whenever possible. Learning is social and emotional, and children's behavior is shaped not by what we say but by how we act.

COMMUNICATION EXAMPLES

Take a Breath & Notice

It looks like you're having trouble.
Tell me more about your idea.
It looks like you had a different plan.
I noticed you've been quiet. I'm wondering what's up.
You seem stuck.
I'm wondering if I can help.
I'm curious about what led to this.

Engage & Empathize

It's hard to wait.
You're feeling frustrated because you can't have this.
It's ok to be upset. It's sad when we leave our friends.
You don't like it when people take things from you.
It must be difficult to be excluded from your friends.

Acknowledge Needs

You wanted to play with your sister, and she said, "No."
You'd really like my full attention.
You hoped to be included and asked if you could play too.
You'd appreciate it if your privacy was respected.
You didn't feel considered.
You wanted to finish.

Connect to Problem-Solve

What could you do to help?
How can we work this out?
What do you think you could do next time?
That wasn't what you were expecting.
What do you think went wrong?
What's your idea for solving this?
I don't think that would work for me.
Would you be willing to... ?
Let's try again.

Help Your Child

Would you like to do it or do you need my help?
I'm going to help you be safe.
Let's take some deep breaths.
Let's take some time to cool off and come back to discuss this after dinner.
When you want to hit, clap your hands or stomp your feet like this (model it).