

# Listen, Reflect, Connect, An Active Listening Approach to Parenting

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# What is Active Listening?

Developed by psychologists, Carl Rogers and Richard Farson in 1957

- Active listening is a sophisticated skill that involves listening with intention.
- To understanding our children's perspective rather than jumping in and fixing things for them
- Can de-escalate strong emotions and encourage children to solve their own problems
- Promote self esteem, resilience and empathy



# Active Listening Promotes Emotional Intelligence

## Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and effectively manage one's own emotions, as well as being able to empathize with and navigate the emotions of others.



# More About Emotional Intelligence

*Children with higher emotional intelligence are better able to pay attention, are more engaged in school, have more positive relationships, and are more empathic.*

**naeyc**

National Association for the  
Education of Young Children



# Active Listening—*The single most important tool in a parent’s toolbox.* (The Center for Parenting Education)

Discipline means “to teach,” while punishment means “to deal with roughly or harshly; to inflict injury

## -Discipline

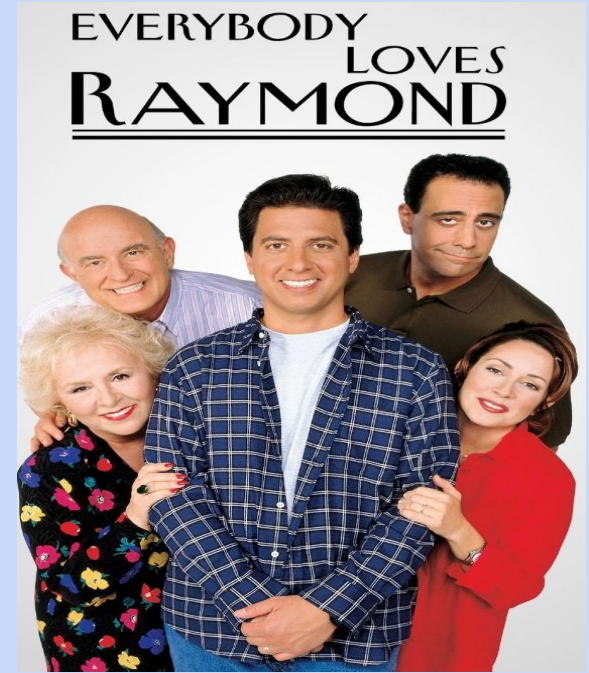
Has a long-term impact on behavior.  
Teaches through modeling, feedback and coaching.

## -Punishment

Has a short-term effect on behavior.  
Teaches through fear, threats, abandonment, and/or pain.



Instead of “Why did you do this.....”



<https://youtu.be/lqRleb7qRvg?si=uhSrQcpLix9PrFKz>

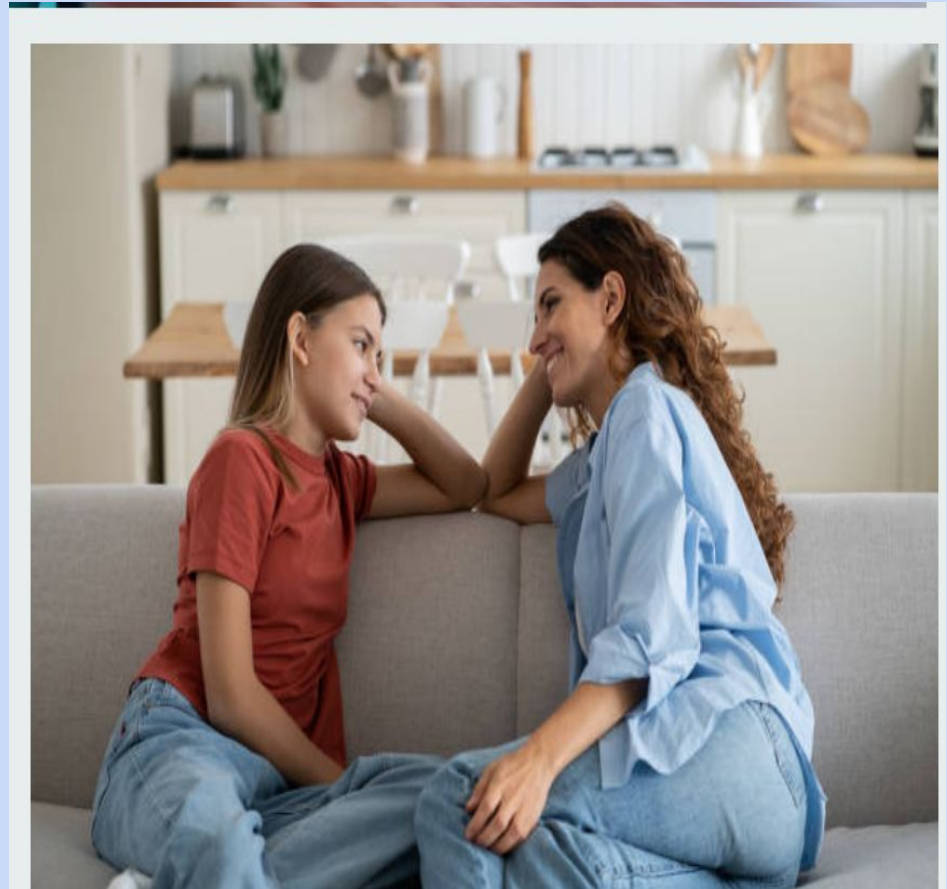
# Active Listening is a sophisticated skill.....

Because we may not have been raised in a home in which this kind of listening was practiced, it can feel like learning a second language.

**Many of us grew up hearing:**

- *There's no reason to be upset*
- *There's nothing to cry about*
- *You can't be tired, you just woke up from your nap*
- *You don't really mean that*
- *It's foolish to feel that way*

Faber and Mazlish



# *The Language of Listening.....*

- *You're disappointed that...*
- *You seem worried/concerned that...*
- *Sounds like you needed/need...*
- *Sounds like you had a rough day...*
- *It seems unfair that...*
- *You can't understand...*
- *You think the other person is feeling/ needing/ worrying about/ trying to/ expecting...*
- *That sounds frustrating....*
- *It bothers you that...*
- *You aren't sure...*
- *You didn't expect...*
- *That makes you feel...*
- *That could make a person feel...*
- *You wish...*
- *You would like to change...*
- *It hurt you that ...*
- *You were looking forward to...*
- *The hard part about this is...*



# Helping Children Manage Big feelings with Active Listening

Raj is heartbroken that his pet lizard died.

(possible feelings: grief, loss, sadness, loneliness, shock)

Instead of denying his feelings.....



Raj might hear:  
"Don't cry! We'll go to the pet store right now and buy another lizard!"

# Reflect the feelings, validate the experience and emotions.....

What Raj really wants to hear:  
"I know you're upset and your heart is sad. Lizzie was your special friend who always made you glad."



“We don’t usually give this kind of response, because we fear that by giving a name to the feeling we’ll make it worse.

***Just the opposite is true.”***

-Adele Faber

# Creative ideas.....Wishes in Fantasy

The ice cream shop didn't have Raj's favorite flavor.

Raj might hear:  
"Calm down! There are 30 other flavors to pick from."

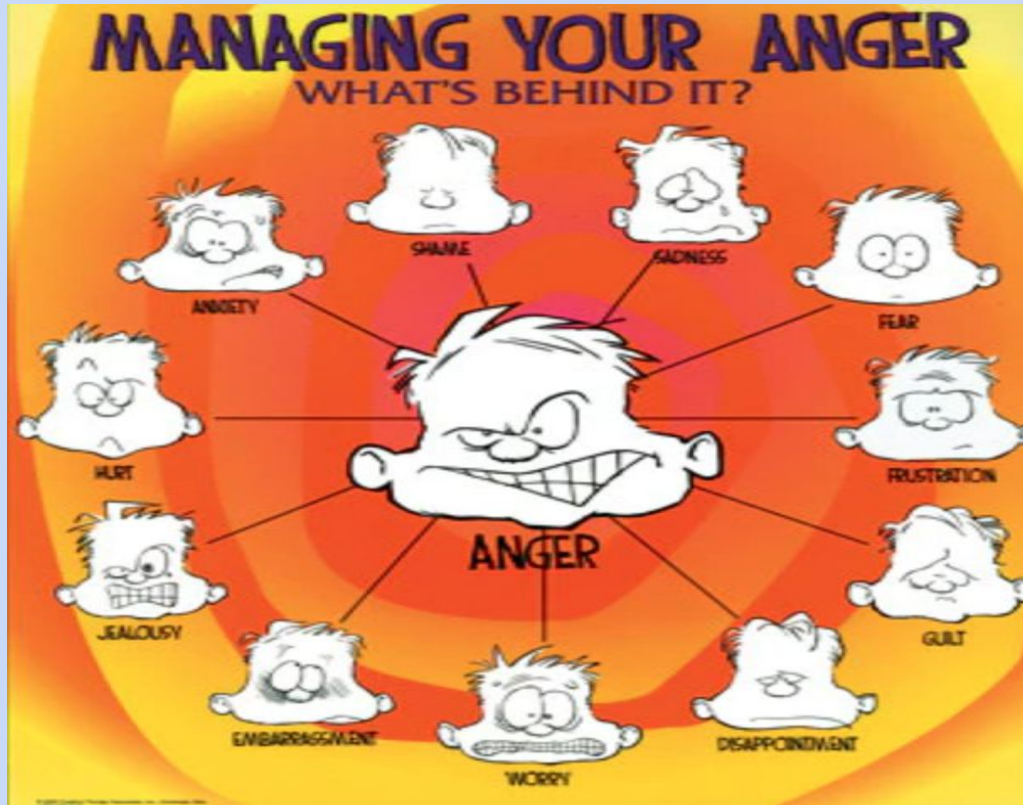


**What Raj really wants to hear:**

"Looks like you're disappointed that they don't have chocolate chip. All their other flavors don't interest you a bit!"



# Anger is often a secondary feeling...



*Anger is often a secondary feeling which can arise to protect us from more vulnerable feelings.*

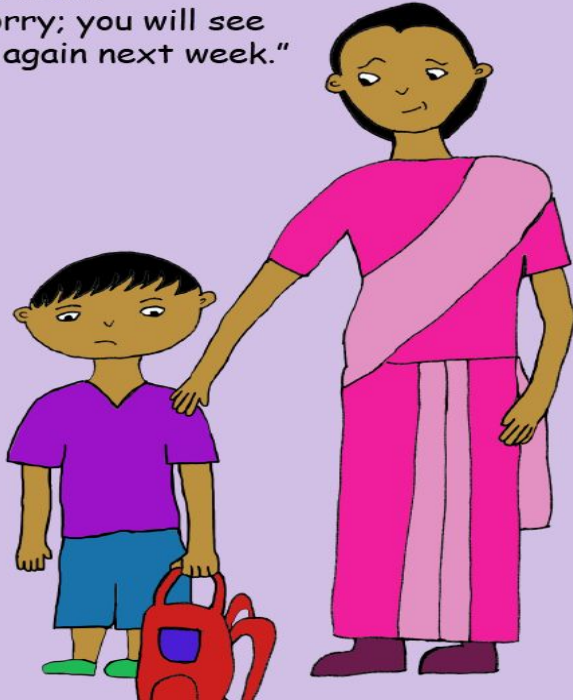
*Identifying the feelings that come first is a self regulating strategy.*

## Instead of dismissing feelings, and trying to solve the problem quickly...

Raj's parents are divorced. He feels overwhelmed and confused when his visit with dad is over.

Raj might hear:

"Don't worry; you will see your dad again next week."



## Validate children's feelings— Listen, reflect, and connect.....

**What Raj really wants to hear:**

"You love being with your father and the time goes by so fast. You wish you could stay longer; you wish the time would last."



# Connect.....Then Redirect

HAPPY BABY BRAIN TV  
HOW TO: "CONNECT &  
REDIRECT" WITH DR. DAN SIEGEL

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMBec6Dw7W8&ab\\_channel=Mel%27sCreativeStuff](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMBec6Dw7W8&ab_channel=Mel%27sCreativeStuff)

# The Value of Being Seen and Heard

## A physiological perspective



Dr. Harville Hendrix and Helen Hunt

# Active listening example: Pixar's Inside Out

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdhjztWMnVw&ab\\_channel=AlexKneier](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdhjztWMnVw&ab_channel=AlexKneier)





“Anything that’s human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. The people we trust with that important talk can help us know that we are not alone.”

— Fred Rogers

“People have said, ‘Don’t cry’ to other people for years and years, and all it has ever meant is, ‘I’m too uncomfortable when you show your feelings. Don’t cry.’ I’d rather have them say, ‘Go ahead and cry. I’m here to be with you.’”

— Fred Rogers



“At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel.”

— Maya Angelou



“When we give children advice or instant solutions, we deprive them of the experience that comes from wrestling with their own problems.” -Faber & Mazlish

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