

JOURNAL PROMPTS

Use these questions to enhance your learning and set your intention. Research shows that thinking and writing about our emotions helps with healing, growth and emotional integration. Use as much space as you need and be as honest as you can. This is just for you.

1. What would you say is your current level of “well-being” on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being lowest and 10 being highest? (We’ll be monitoring this as we go through the next twelve weeks together, watching it change!)

2. What mantras or “antidotes” might be helpful to you when you get upset? (List a few so you can try out different ones.)

3. If your child had to pick three words to describe you, what would he or she say?

4. If your child had to pick three words to describe his or her relationship with you (which is a bit different than the last question), what would he or she say?

5. What would you like your child to feel about him or herself, coming out of growing up with you?

6. Who would you like your child to become as a result of growing up with you?

7. What are your strengths as a parent?

8. What do you want more of in your relationship with your child or children?

9. What might you be willing to do to make that relationship happen?

10. Set your intention for this course. Describe your highest and best vision for yourself as a parent. Begin with three words that describe the parent you're striving to be.

PRACTICE WITH YOUR CHILD (print and refer)

Sometime in the next week, your child will make you mad. (More accurately, you will get angry as a reaction to your child's behavior. The anger is yours. No one else "makes" you angry.)

As soon as you notice that you're angry, **Stop, Drop and Breathe**. Here are the steps. Print them out and post them on your refrigerator so you have them handy.

STOP. Just stop. Close your mouth.

DROP your agenda.

BREATHE. Take a few deep breaths. If you need more, take ten. Research shows that noticing our breathing makes us more conscious, so it keeps us from getting emotionally hijacked.

Now, keep calming your mind and body.

Use a mantra to "change your mind." (Thoughts and beliefs trigger emotions.)

Move your body to move through the emotions and let them go – shake out your hands, splash water on your face.

AND **Choose Love.** The hardest part of calming down is choosing to. When we're in the grip of anger, we want to lash out, not to calm down. So it takes a conscious choice to let the anger go.

Once you're calm, go back to your child. Set whatever limit is necessary or talk about what happened.

REFLECTION AFTER PRACTICE

When you tried Stop, Drop and Breathe, how did it work? Were you able to calm yourself?

What helped and what didn't help?

How did your child react?

What could you do next time to make this work better for you?