

Bringing Up Great Kids Parenting Adolescents

Chapter 4 Handouts

Adolescence vs Adulthood



What were my needs as an adolescent?	What did I expect from those around me?	What was their actual behaviour with me?

Crossing the Red Line

Possible questions to consider at the time of conflict

1. How are you feeling? How will you share your feelings with your adolescent safely?
2. How do you think your adolescent is feeling? How can you check in with them?
3. Are you open to deeply listen to their side of the story?
4. How do you assess the situation?
5. What values of your family have been damaged now?
6. Was the red line clear to them?
7. How can you help them understand the value that the adolescent has violated?
8. Who is involved in this issue?
9. What can we do to minimise the damage to the relationship?
10. How do you think raising the issue with the adolescent makes him feel?
11. Who may be available to you for consultation/support in this situation?
12. Have you communicated the situation with the other parent? Are you in agreement?
13. Who is the best person to deal with this issue?
14. Are you ready to have an objective, open minded and safe conversation with them?
15. How can you both find repair and move forward?



PACE for Parents of Adolescents



Playfulness

We engage with our adolescents in a way that encourages spontaneity, curiosity, and exploration. A playful attitude indicates that the strength of the relationship between us is bigger than any minor frustrations. Family members with a playful attitude don't take themselves too seriously and are able to laugh at their mistakes. The main aim of a playful attitude is to invite the other into one's experience - to simply enjoy being together.



Acceptance

Playfulness is nurtured by an attitude of unconditional acceptance. The adolescent's safety is encouraged when their inner self is never at risk of rejection, ridicule, or disappointment. The adolescent's behaviour and attitudes are completely accepted. The adolescent who feels accepted knows that they are separate to their behaviour. Acceptance, when felt completely and taken for granted, becomes a secure base upon which the adolescent is much more likely to learn from his/her mistakes and to always know that she/he is loved.



Curiosity

Ideally, parents are very curious to know who their children are from the time they are conceived. From birth, parents are continuously involved in acts of discovery with their child. Curiosity is important for understanding what is going on for the adolescent. An attitude of curiosity is a "not-knowing" position that enables the parent to be interested in their adolescents' inner life and what is going on for them, why they are feeling as they are, behaving as they are etc. When a parent holds this kind of attitude towards their adolescent, he/she is much more likely to feel accepted by the parent even though holding different views and attitudes.



Empathy

Empathy is a natural response to being with another person. Our brains are wired to experience empathy for others. If we have experienced empathy from our parents or carers as a child it is easier for us to access empathy for our adolescents. Likewise, it is hard for us to experience empathy for others if we have not experienced empathy from parents/carers when we were young. Parents often think empathy will not be that helpful, so they try to fix the problem, give advice, or eliminate the problem by dealing with it themselves. It is important that the parent be comfortable with the emotions the adolescent is experiencing.



PACE Starters



Playfulness (Setting the scene)

- Meet them where they are at...
- Converse in a way the adolescent is comfortable e.g. text, video message, handwritten notes etc.
- Join them on the play station
- Practice their sport with them
- Go for a drive together
- Walk the dog together



Acceptance (Sentence starters to meet the adolescents where they are at, no judgement)

- Thanks for telling me...
- I'm glad you told me....
- I'm sorry you felt/think that I....
- ... this can happen to anyone ...



Curiosity (Sentence starters to show openness – not making assumptions about the adolescents behaviour or intentions)

- I'm wondering...
- I'm thinking you might be.... Have I got that right?
- Why do you think....
- What was that like.....?
- I'm wondering if you might be feeling.....?



Empathy (Sentence starters on being there for the adolescent ...)

- It must be so hard...
- You seem to really want to...
- I know it's really disappointing that you can't go/do...
- It's so difficult when you try really hard and....
- I'm worried you feel...
- I feel sad that you...
- I'm so sorry that you've been feeling....



Remembering when ... *I was an adolescent*....



My favourite person was



My favourite music/band



One thing I didn't like about my body was



One thing I liked about myself



One thing I didn't want my parents to know

My adolescent.....



Things my adolescent loves



My adolescents favourite person is



My adolescents favourite music/band is



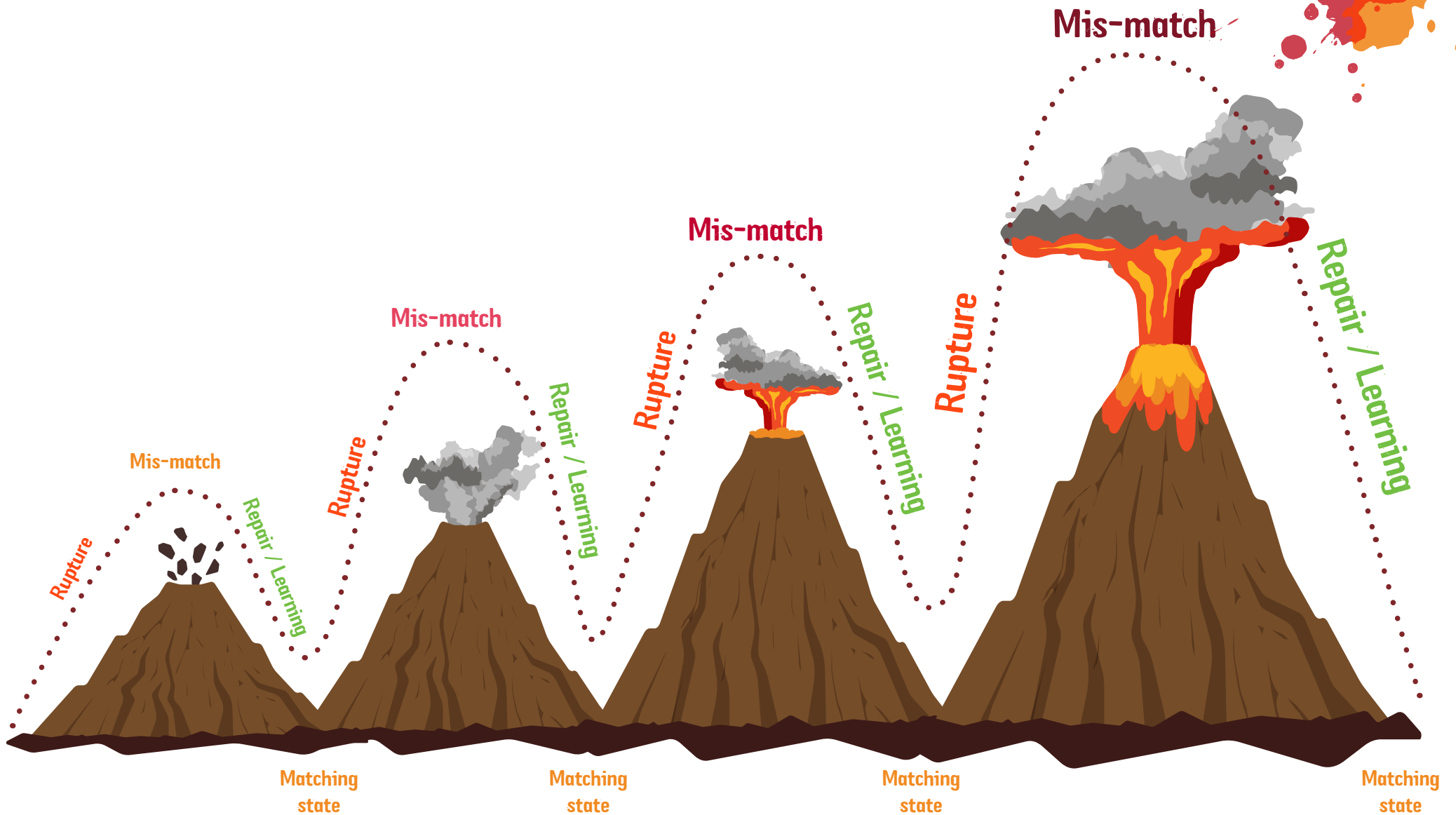
One thing he/she doesn't like about his/her body is



One thing he/she likes about her/himself



Rupture and Repair in Relationships



Self-Compassion Meditation for Parents



To begin this meditation, start by sitting comfortably. Allow your attention to focus within. Checking in with how you are feeling in your body and in your mind. Bringing a sense of acceptance to whatever your experience is right now. Take a few moments to direct your awareness to your breath. Observe your breath from the beginning of the inbreath to the end of the outbreath, saying to yourself – “breathing in” on the inbreath and “breathing out” on the outbreath. When you become distracted, gently guide your attention back to the breath. Now that you have taken some time to settle into the meditation, see if you can bring an image of your child or your children into your mind. As you hold this image, become aware of the feelings of loving kindness you have towards your children. Repeat the phrases.

May you be happy; May you be healthy; May you live in peace.

And now see if you can direct those same feelings of loving kindness towards yourself as a parent. Reflect on how much your children benefit from having you as a parent: qualities such as your commitment, your compassion, your caring, your ability to really listen. And reflect on how at times we may feel uncertain or judged, particularly from ourselves when faced with difficult situations. Knowing that as parents we are doing our best. We accept that we will make some mistakes and perfection is impossible. So as you offer yourself loving kindness, repeat the phrases:

**May I be happy; May I be healthy; May I be at peace;
May I do the best I can as I care for my children.**

And now bring your entire family into your mind. As you hold this image, again bring up feelings of loving kindness, repeat the phrases:

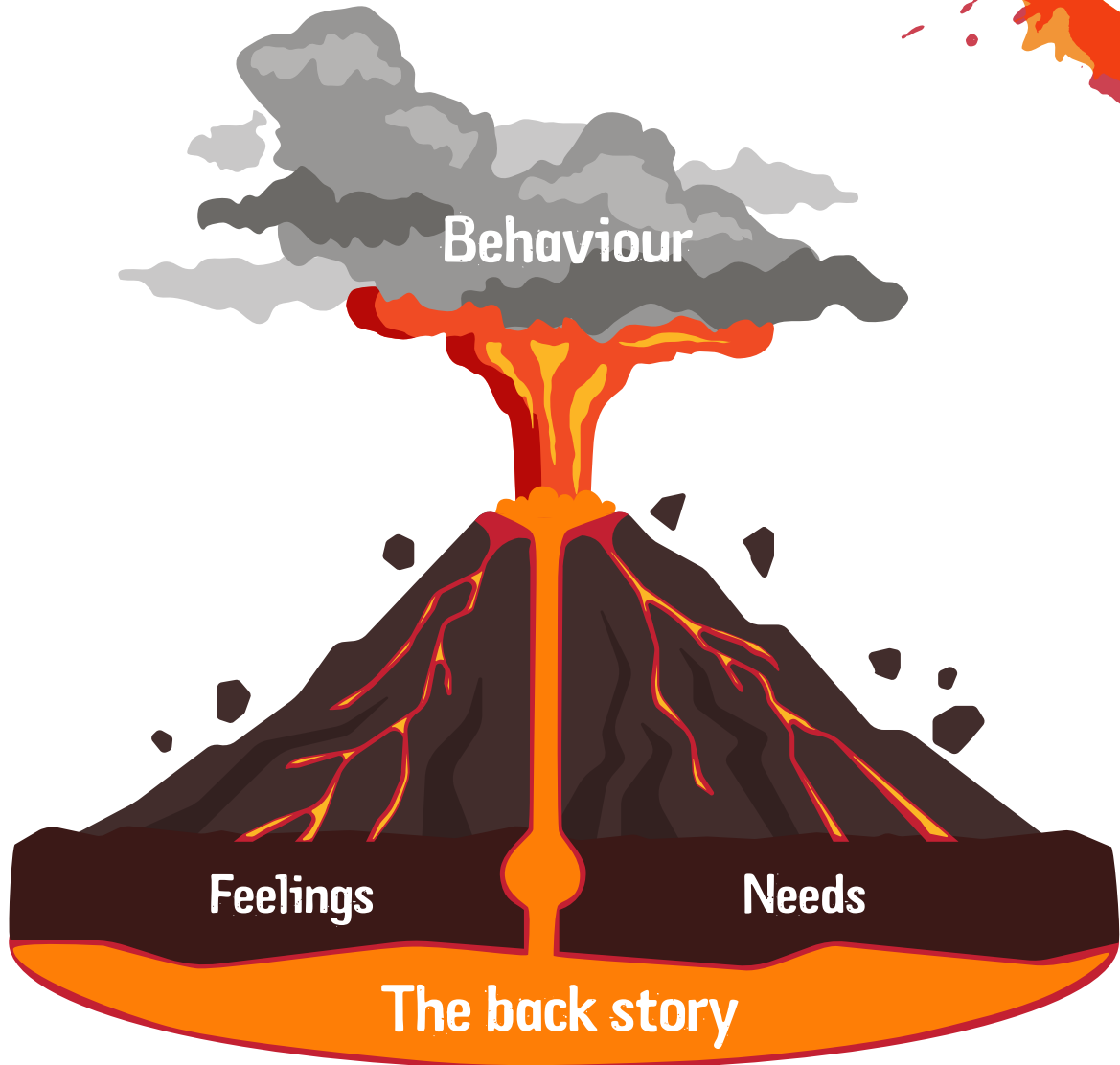
**May we all be happy; May we all be healthy; May we all be at peace;
May we live in ease and enjoy our lives together**

Finally bring to mind all families everywhere, in every part of the country, in every part of the world. And bring feelings of loving kindness and compassion to all families, knowing that **all** parents and their children face difficulties sometimes as they seek to live peaceful, harmonious lives, repeating the phrases:

**May all families be happy;
May all families be healthy;
May all families live harmonious
and joyous lives together.**



The Cross Section Volcano



Little Prince



Soot

What prevents adolescents from expressing themselves?



Cleaning soot

Things parents can do to enhance adolescent expression



Volcanoes of our Relationship

