

K + I

PARR

Practice PARR and learn how to be less reactive

I often hear parents say:

I can't get my kids to listen
I'm so overwhelmed
All we do is argue
I feel like I'm in a constant state of chaos
All I'm doing is reacting all day long
Is it bedtime yet?

Does this sound familiar?

Parenting mindfully is a practice. My 4-step method, PARR (pause, acknowledge, respond, reflect) will help you identify the challenges you're facing, and what it's here to teach you.

With PARR we'll explore two key points: How can you as the parent continue to grow through the parenting process and create self-awareness around your decisions? How can you better attune to your children, and respond more mindfully?

Once you create self-awareness around your decisions, we will build you a toolbox packed with simple strategies you can implement that will have a positive impact. Instead of just reacting — or worse, overreacting, you'll have a roadmap so you know how to respond with confidence.

In order to start practicing PARR, you need to first reflect and specifically name the challenges you're experiencing.

The only way you can fix a problem is if you name it. You have to understand the root cause. Below you'll find a quick exercise to help you with this. In a coaching session or coaching program, we dive deeper and work on developing a customized plan that speaks to you and your child/children's needs.

STEP · #1

Describe a significant challenge you experience daily and answer the following questions:

(Note: The word *event* refers to moments when you experience challenges, such as tantrums, lack of cooperation, arguments, etc.)

What happens before, during, and after an event?

Does it always happen at a specific time of day? i.e. bedtime, naptime, transitions, mealtimes, homework, etc.

What are you experiencing during the event?

Are you quick to react?

Do you find yourself immediately yelling?

Do you give in, to stop the tantrum/behavior?

What is your response after the event?

- Do you overindulge because you feel bad about losing your cool? (i.e. you lose your cool and after a few minutes in an effort to make everything better, you become overly affectionate or give your child material items to help you feel less guilty)
- Do you look for external validation or justification? (i.e. "I was yelled at and I'm fine." "He should've listened." or "He was asking for it.")

It's really important that you're completely honest in this step. Remove any feelings of shame or guilt. If we can't take an honest look at the problem we will keep missing the right ways to solve it. When we unpack our reactions we often find patterns of behavior that we're doing automatically. We want to discover these patterns and undo them if they're not serving us in a positive way.

STEP · #2

Go back and consider the same event and see how P A R R can be applied

Pause: I needed to pause when _____ by _____

- *For example, I needed to pause when I felt myself getting ready to yell, by taking two deep breaths.*

Acknowledge: I felt reactive when _____

- *In this step just name it: I felt reactive when the kids ignored my directions.*

Respond: My response was _____

- *Get really specific here and include details of what you felt like, how your child responded, what was the outcome, etc.*

Reflect: I felt triggered because _____. When _____ happens I feel _____

- *Example: I felt reactive because he wasn't listening. When he doesn't listen I feel invisible, like I don't matter, or that I'm doing a bad job as a mom and raising bad kids.*

STEP · #3

What do you need in order to achieve a different outcome?

Examples: Behavior management tools, better ways to respond, physical prompts that will allow you to pause more easily, a journaling practice while you work your way through this, etc.

Do this same practice after multiple events to see if you can pinpoint patterns. You may see there is something that needs to change in your daily routine. For example, fatigue may be contributing to your responses or theirs. Once you do this practice a few times, you should be able to see some patterns.

Here are 3 articles where I illustrate how PARR is used including more examples:

The PARR Method: Pause, Acknowledge, Respond, Reflect

Subscribing to the idea of being a “good mom”

Remedy Sarcasm with Pausing