

# The Step by Step Guide to Peaceful Parenting

*THE WAY OF THE PEACEFUL PARENT eCOURSE*



By

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# Week 1 – Getting Started

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*Remembering to centre yourself, connect from the heart and communicate respectfully can provide an anchor for times when you are feeling lost at sea.*

## Getting Started

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- Finding your way around the website and forum
- Introduction to the Way of the Peaceful Parent & discipline without punishment philosophy
- Why children 'mis'behave (make mistakes in behaviour)
- What we can do about it
- The Centre, Connect & Communicate model

## Course Road Map

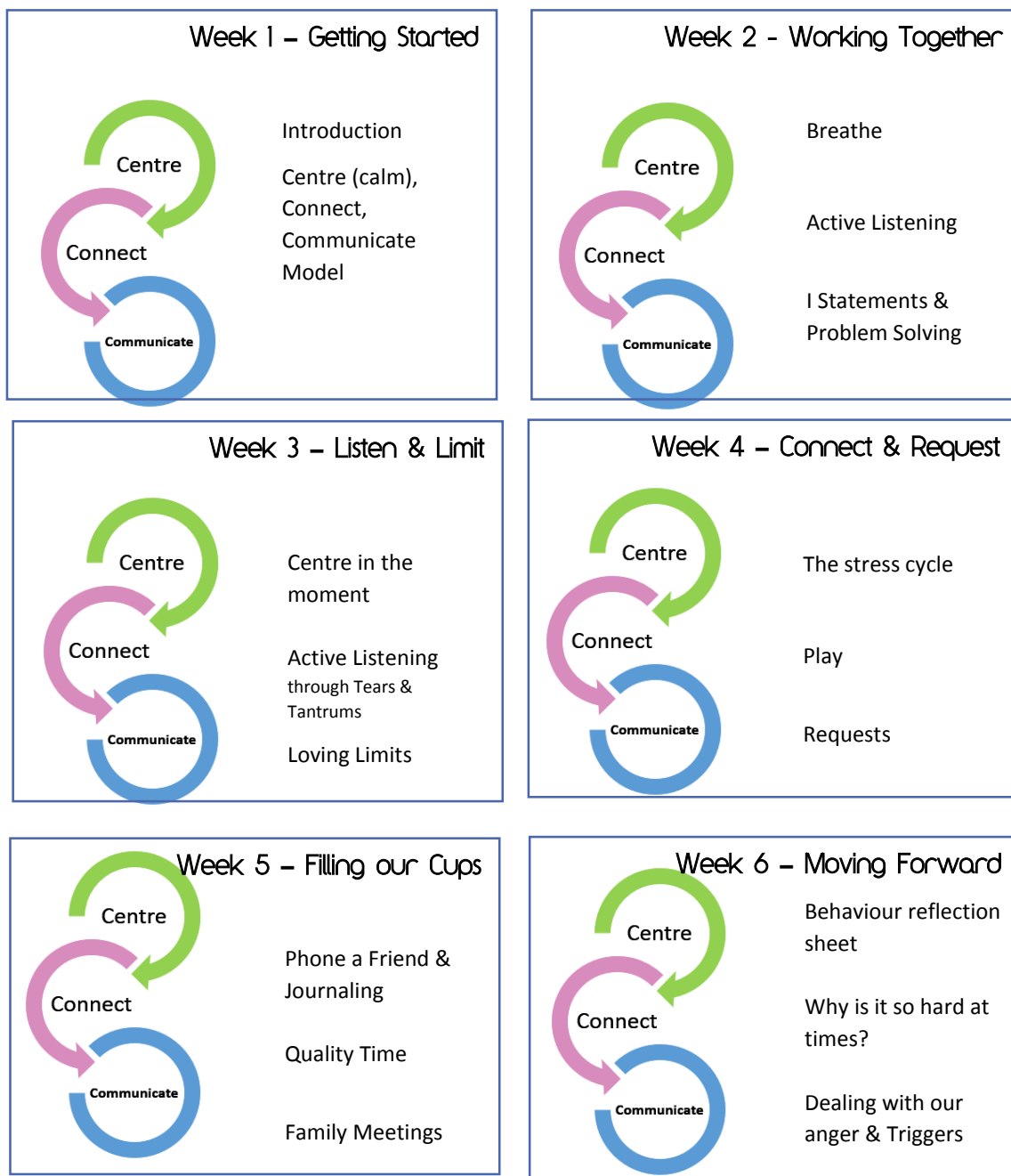
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Each of your journeys will be unique to you. They will not be a straight line but an amazing road with lots of stops, big mountains and valleys, but like all journeys, it is more enjoyable to settle in and enjoy the ride.

Some of you will want to implement the practical strategies straight away, some of you may be drawn to reflect on your triggers or hone your active listening skills. We aim to meet you where you're at.

Each week we will look at a strategy from each step of the model - Centre (calm), Connect, Communicate. By the end of the course you will have covered all the strategies and as you become more comfortable you will be able to mix and match, using what feels right in the moment.

## Course Outline





## Finding your way around

This course has several components to support you.

### Information, videos & audios for each week.

Work through the material for each week. You may like to take notes, draw and note down your reflections as you go. There are a couple of simple 'to do's' at the end of each week to help you take action.

### Printable resources

Throughout the weeks, there is a range of printable documents. Fridge Summary Sheets to pop on the fridge as reminders, worksheets to fill out and so on. If you hover over the picture of the document, you are given the option to save or print. You may like to create an actual folder to store all your notes and sheets or create a digital file on your computer.

### A private forum to connect with fellow course members and gain support from your mentors

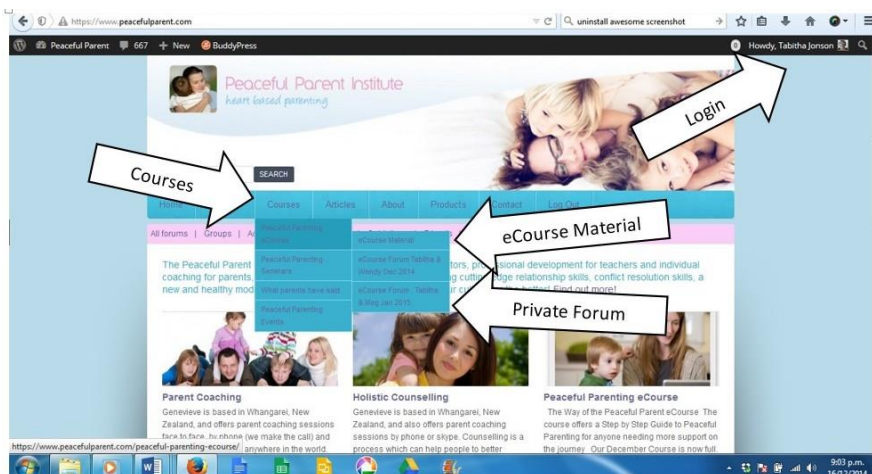
We really encourage you to access the forum. Even if you haven't had a chance to work through the material for the week, pop on the forum, ask questions and we will give you ideas you can move forward with. For instance, if you are finding leaving a playdates a challenge, post a question. If you are finding it tricky others will be too. Your mentors (and other participants) can give suggestions that may help. The QuickStart Guide below shows you how to get around the forum and gives some suggestions to get you started.

### Daily emails with snippets of inspiration, application & reflection.

These emails arrive daily to give you a little support in short snippets.

We want to help you with your journey. This is your course so please do it in any order or any way that works for you. There are no 'musts'. Come to us at any time whether you are having technical issues, would like some practical tips about an issue you are having or just need a listening ear.

Contacts: [tabitha@peacefulparent.com](mailto:tabitha@peacefulparent.com) or via the main website. You can also contact your mentors by private message on the forum.



### Quick Tip

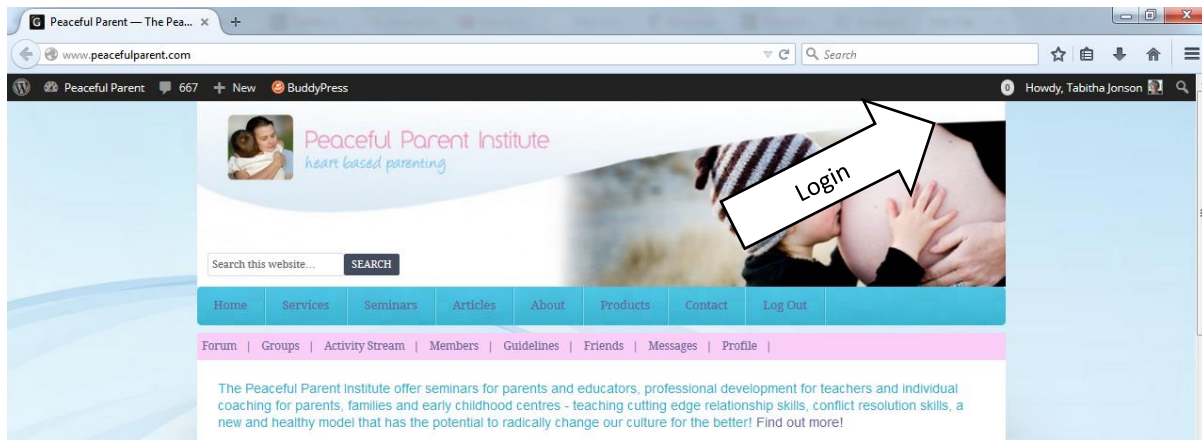
The quickest way to find the weekly resources or the forum is to go to the main website - [www.peacefulparent.com](http://www.peacefulparent.com) - click on courses on the blue bar at the top, and use the drop down menu's to go to your course forum or eCourse Materials.

# Private Forum Quick Start

Go to: [www.peacefulparent.com](http://www.peacefulparent.com) and login

Your password should have been emailed to you. If for any reason you get stuck please email [tabitha@peacefulparent.com](mailto:tabitha@peacefulparent.com)

Some tasks to your around



little help find way

1. Go to the forum and 'request membership'. If that is not an option you are already a member. ☺

From the drop down menu in the blue bar at the top under courses you can find the course materials and the private forum for your course.



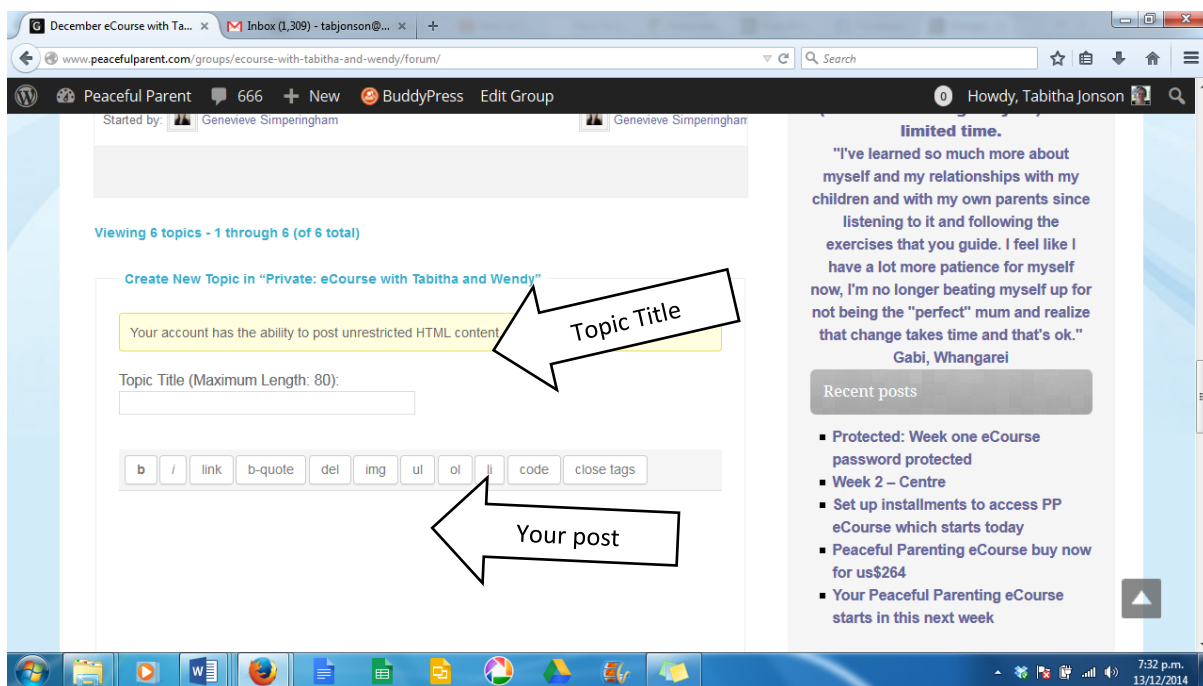


2. Go to the forum (not the activity) and create a new thread. Tell us about you, your kids and what brought you to Peaceful Parenting.

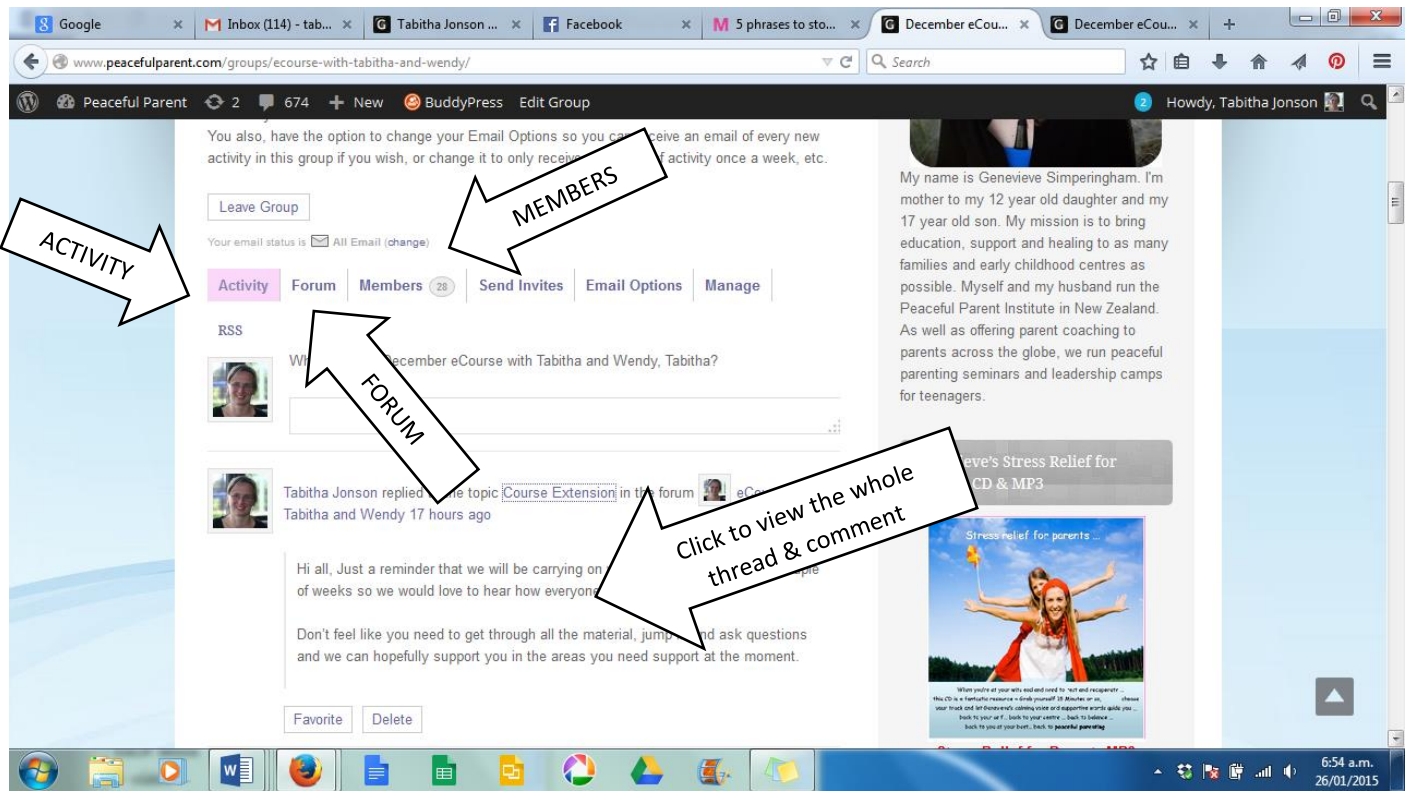


Go to the  
where it says Create New Topic.

bottom



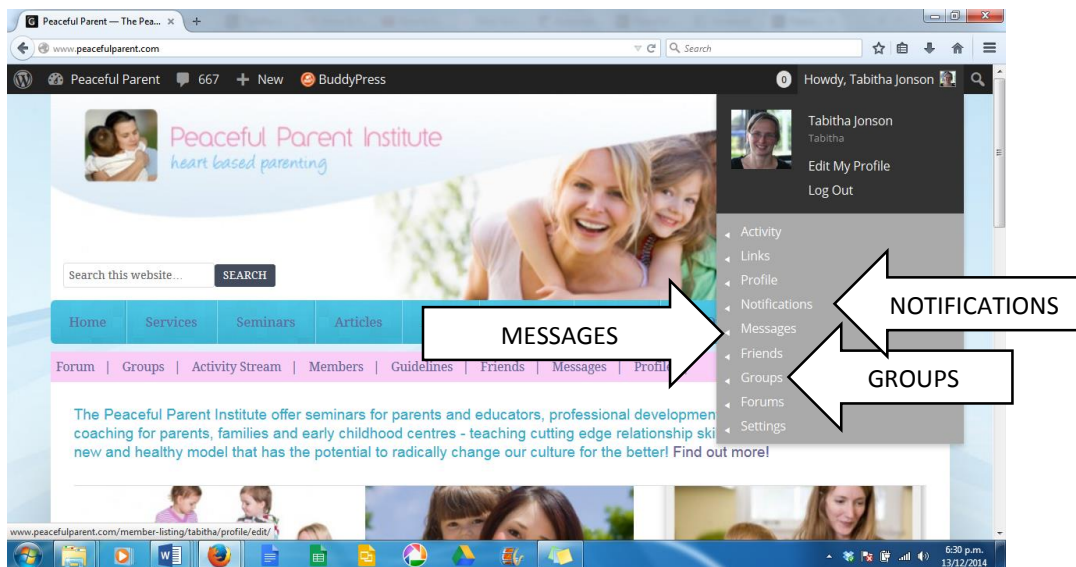
3. Make another new thread. Tell us one niggly issue you are stuck with at the moment.
4. Go to the forum, then members and request friendships with your mentors and the other participants if you wish. You will then be able to private message them.



Activity is bit like a newsfeed, it shows all the posts and comments made on the forum. To reply to a post click on it and it will take you into forums to reply.

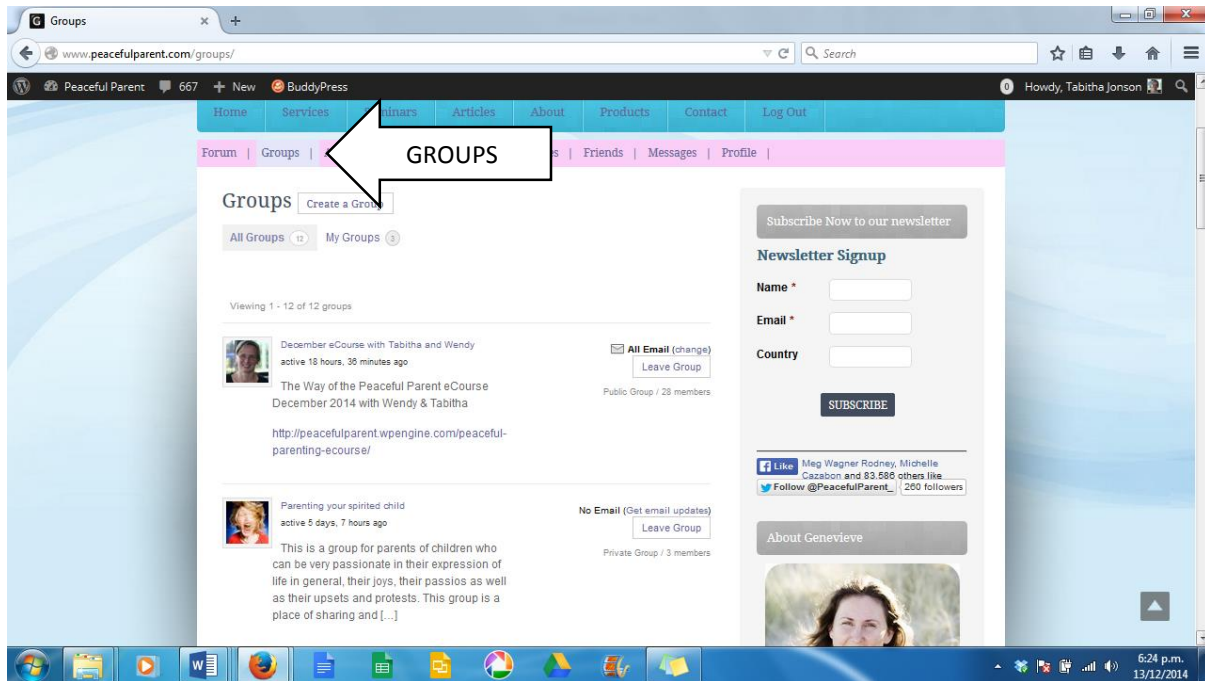
Forum is the group forum with various threads. Make yourself at home, start your own threads with questions, comments, little success stories and / or comment on current threads

You can also access various areas from the grey menu that drops down from your login.



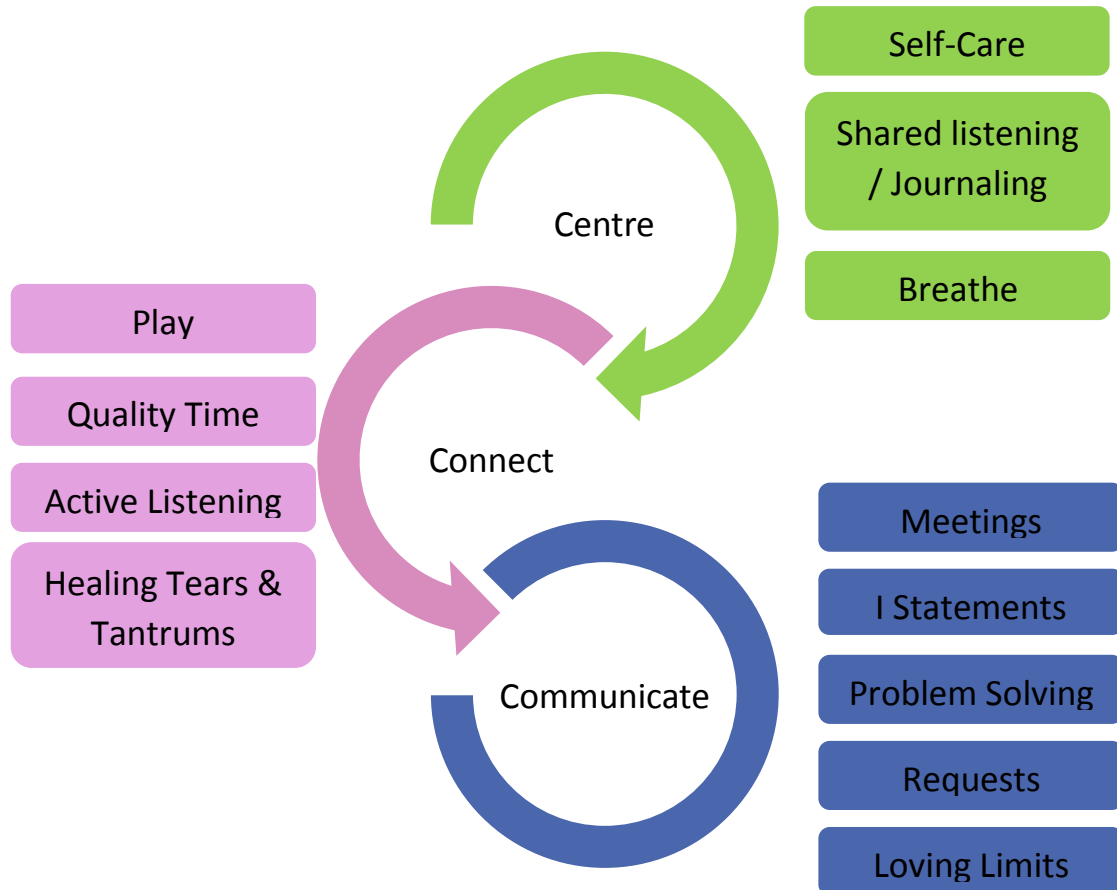
Once you have found your way around try –

- Sending a private message to your mentors. Just a quick hi is fine or anything else you would like to share more privately.
- Going into email options and choose which option you prefer.
- Have a look at the other groups on the page. Join some groups that appeal to you. Your course forum is part of a membership site so there are other groups you can also be a part of. This is just in the initial stages so we are excited for you to be among the first to utilise this space.





## Overview of Strategies



Choosing to, and more importantly, learning how to Centre, Connect and Communicate clearly and respectfully in our interactions with our child are essential elements of The Way of the Peaceful Parent.

This course focuses not just on suggestions of what to do or say when you face challenges with your child, but focuses equally on how to do it in a way that;

- helps you slow down and become steady and centred rather than speaking or acting from a knee jerk reaction, especially when you feel stressed or stirred up. This modelling helps your child to learn to do the same, to emotionally self-regulate,
- helps you maintain or repair the warm emotional connection with your child, and
- helps you communicate in a more respectful and compassionate way that invites a more open, trusting and cooperative response from your child.

To centre, simply means **taking a moment to pause and become very present**. When a parent can remember to centre themselves, make a connection with their child, perhaps by coming down to their level, making eye contact, being affectionate or using a calm sincere tone and communicating clearly, children find it easier to hear, understand and digest what we say and hence tend to be much less defensive and reactive.

A parent can ask “ok how can I help?” in a way that the child sees, hears and feels their parent’s annoyance, impatience and exasperation. Or a parent can speak the exact same words in a way that the child sees, hears and feels their parent’s care, interest, support and patience. How we say what we say is at least as important as what we say.

**List 3 areas you would like to have changed by the end of this course.**

(e.g. Not yell at my kids, The kids brush their teeth without an argument, Feel confident during tantrums, Have fun with my kids...anything that comes to mind for you)

1.

2.

3.

In this video Genevieve provides insight into Peaceful Parenting. Video – Discipline without Punishment.

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Video Reflection Questions

Notes, reflections, insights

What does discipline mean to you?

If you were to describe Peaceful Parenting in one sentence what would you say?

Complete the table below

Something you want your child to do	Thinking ‘How do I make them?’ how do you feel?	Thinking ‘How do I help them?, how do you feel?

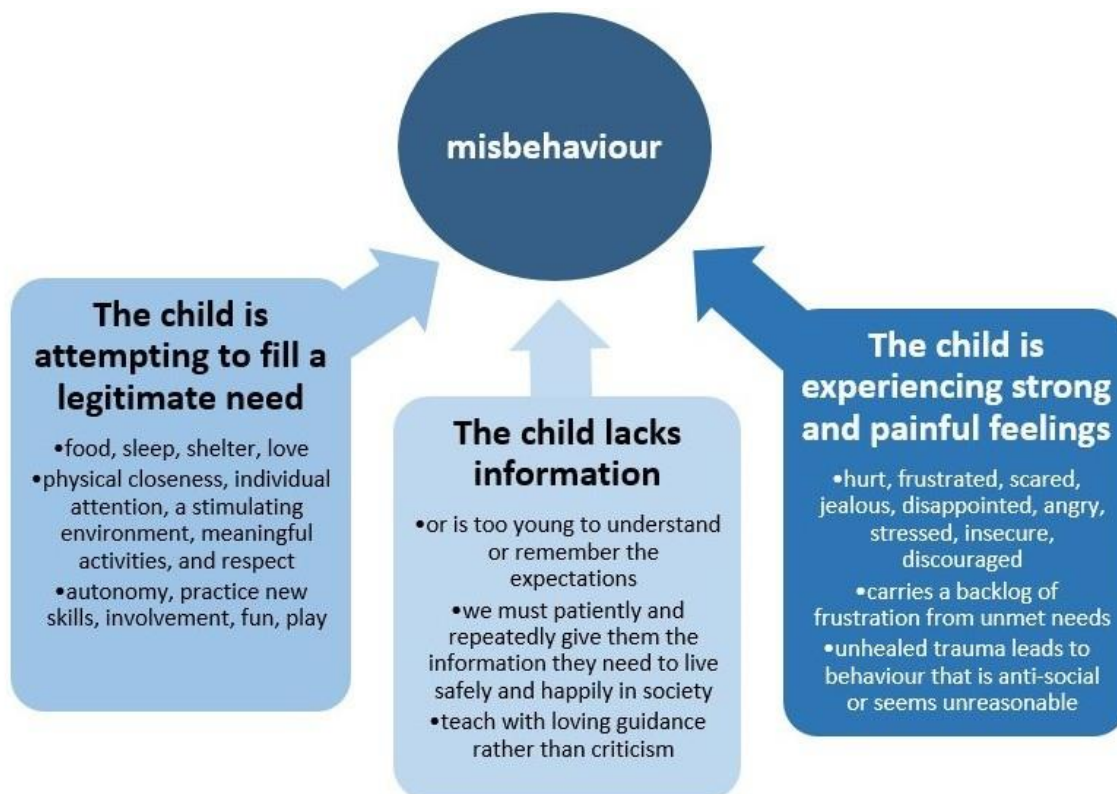
## Why do children 'mis'behave?

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With The Way of the Peaceful Parent approach, children are not judged to misbehave in the traditional sense of being “naughty”, “bad” or “manipulative”. Instead we use the lens of, **“How can I help my child in this situation, what do they need, which skills can I help them learn?”**. From the peaceful parenting perspective, it’s viewed that children generally need our guidance and emotional support when they behave in a way that’s disruptive, resistant, reactive, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate to the particular situation. Unfortunately, these are the times when it’s hardest for parents to not be reactive themselves, which is why parents need to have a lot of clarity about the more peaceful, constructive approaches that they do want to take.

Our reflection to our child of what’s not appropriate is generally better received when delivered with support rather than criticism. It’s our role to patiently help our children develop the emotional, social and practical skills they need in their ongoing journey of learning and life.

**So why do children behave in ways that are unhelpful or unhealthy?** Below is a helpful model that author and clinical psychologist Aletha Solter shares that offers some clues.



## Needs

- Have their immediate needs been met?
- Are they hungry, overstimulated or tired?
- Are they feeling connected and included? Do they need to be close to their parent and receive more responsive attention and, or affection?
- Are they unwell or otherwise out of sorts?
- Is there a connection between what they eat and their behaviour?
- Are they getting enough physical activity, play and time in nature?
- Is their environment stimulating: Do they have opportunities to investigate, explore and learn?

## Information

- Do they have the information they need to understand what's happening around them, or to understand requests or limits?
- Is the information expressed with the message that you see them to be a generally capable person? Keeping your tone as level, calm, confident and encouraging as much of the time as possible is the key to healthy two-way communication!

## Feelings

Sometimes there are unmet needs that cannot be identified like your child fighting an illness but the physical symptoms haven't yet appeared. Sometimes the child is unable to communicate their need for reassurance, for instance when a younger sibling is born. Yet most needs will be met through the warmth, connection, affection and responsiveness in the parent child relationship. Creating quality time with your child and increasing closeness, including fun and laughter, generally meets a lot of the unseen unidentified unmet needs.

Yet, when your child is generally unwilling to cooperate and is being resistant and reactive quite often when the above needs have been met, it's generally safe to assume they have some big feelings, which are making them feel out of balance and unable to co-operate or problem solve. A child can display a lot of out of balance behaviour when there carry a build up of frustrations from their day, their week or perhaps relating to fears, insecurities, frustrations, resentments or sadness going back into the past which haven't yet been resolved and released.

It's understandable that children can feel sad, disappointed, frustrated or angry when they're not allowed to do what they want to do or have what they want to have. Children are often judged harshly for having these feelings. But in reality, managing feelings involves skills that can take years to develop.



## Centre

- **Centre yourself.** Slow down and become present. Aim to access a feeling of empathy for yourself and your child. What do you need to reset and come back to balance? If not urgent, let your child know that you need to sit and breath for a minute before tackling the problem.

## Connect

- **Make a loving connection with your child.** Calm confident voice, affection, messages of care and support
  - If your child is upset, empathy. *"I'm here, I care, I'm listening"*.
  - If you are upset, non-blaming "I" statements, *"Because you grabbed my hot cup, I got scared"*.
  - If it is a shared problem *"We can work this out. What's needed?"*
  - If problem amongst kids *"Let me help you kids work it out"*.
- **Relate to their feelings and needs.** *"Hmm what might he be feeling? What might she need?"*
- **Express empathy** and show your child that you're aiming to relate to their feelings and needs. *"I want to understand."*
- **Support Emotional Release.** If child is grumpy, aggressive, resistant, defiant, uncooperative; they likely have difficult feelings that they are showing through behaviour and need help expressing in a healthy way.

## Communicate

- **Communicate & Problem Solve** When your child's frustration is no longer weighing them down, they can again cope, think clearly and be reasonable. At this point you can problem solve or explore what might have worked better or might work better next time.
- **Loving Limits**  
If child's behaviour is dangerous, aggressive or otherwise problematic, connect before you correct or at least connect AS you correct. *"I can't let you..., but I care."*

**Centre, Connect, Communicate in the moment.** The importance of stopping to Centre & Connect in the moment. It's our ability to slow down, become centred and present in ourselves that allows us to be present enough to truly connect with our child - which enables the communication to be heard and received from them. Our stress inhibits our child to take in our message much of the time, but centring in ourselves, connecting with our child leads to a much more effective flow of communication.

## Video Reflection Questions – 2: Centre, Connect, Communicate

Notes, reflections, insights

How could you use Centre, Connect, Communicate in these situations? What could you say?

*Your child doesn't want to stop drawing to hop in the bath.*

Centre:

Connect:

Communicate:

*Your child wants to go to their friends house to play and you want them to stay home as their grandparents are visiting.*

Centre:

Connect:

Communicate:

# Centre, Connect, Communicate



## Centre

Three slooow breaths

This is tricky and it's ok?



## Connect

How are you? How are you feeling?

Do you need a hug?



## Communicate

Problem solve or share your message in a supportive way

*Your teen walks in and complains there's no food.*

**Centre:** Breathe. How can I help? Perhaps they've had a long day? I wonder what's wrong?

**Connect:** How was your day? You sound a bit stressed?

*Your toddler draws on the walls. (gently stop them if needed)*

**Centre:** Breathe. This is tricky, not tragic. What do they need?

A) More information? B) More connection?

**Connect:**

- a) 'Honey, you have created lovely patterns on the wall.'
- b) 'Sweetheart, you must have been feeling very angry to draw in the walls? Let me help you.'

**Communicate:**

- a) It's really tricky to get pen off the walls. Paper is for drawing on. Let's clean this up and find you some paper.
- b) (Much later) 'You can scribble your angry on paper or come to me for help.'

*Your partner grumbles as they get in from work*

**Centre:** Breathe – a lot! We've both had a hard day.

**Connect:** Hun, sounds like you've had a crazy day? Want to tell me about it?

**The most effective  
parenting happens in the  
coming back again & again  
& again to relaxing &  
connecting**

**How can I help my  
child?**

Take time for you. It takes a lot of  
energy to support your child in this way. 15

## To do

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Find your way around the forum.

Begin to wonder about some times you could Centre, Connect & Communicate in your home.

Issue	Centre	Connect	Communicate

## Weekly Reflection

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*Share these with your tutor either on the forum or by a private message in the forum.*

What really resonated this week? What information / ideas have been most valuable? Any **lightbulb moments**?

What are you **wondering about** this week. Any ideas or strategies you are struggling with? Anything confusing or still unclear? What is tricky?

What is your **small success** this week? Something you felt really proud of this week, a tiny step forward.

Any other thoughts, feelings, insights?