



PARENTING WITH HOPE

FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN
IN TRANSITION AND CRISIS

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



Universidad de Sucre



Imperial College
London



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We express our most sincere thanks to the experts in informed attention about trauma from different parts of the world, as well as the trainers in local contexts, for their invaluable contribution in the development of these sessions. We also want to recognize the collaboration of the following organizations in this Project:



World Without Orphans (WWO), alongside Europe Without Orphans (EWO), calls and equips national leaders to collaborate, to solve their own country's orphaned and vulnerable children's crisis.

Viva is an international charity dedicated to changing more children's lives to fulfill their God-given Potential. We build and support networks that unite grassroots churches and organisations to support children. Our work alleviates the adverse conditions many children face, providing them with new opportunities and bringing hope to situations of fear.

Our partner networks are able to leverage their resources and expertise to provide an effective, long-term response to the holistic needs of vulnerable children in their communities and have an impact on local government.

The sessions that follow, are an adaptation of the original Parenting with Hope programme, which has been evaluated with support from Oxford University in collaboration with WWO, Childrens' Mission, and Ukraine Without Orphans, using a pre-/post-analysis. Results from the original intervention show significant increases in positive parenting, playful parenting, abilities to cope with stress, and reductions in physical and emotional abuse. This manual has been adapted for implementation in Colombia using the same principles of the original but modifying contextual and content elements to respond to the social, cultural, and historical context of Colombia. The adaptation of this intervention was completed by faculty and professionals from the Universidad de Sucre in Sincelejo, Colombia with additional support from professionals at Oxford University and Imperial College London, United Kingdom.

Designed and illustrated by Leah de Jager.

WELCOME LETTER FOR GROUP FACILITATORS

Thank you for leading this small support session or group for people affected by transition and crisis, including kinship/foster/adoption care, armed conflict, epidemics, natural or climate disaster, and displacement. The following materials include sessions and a facilitator's guide with instructions to help you practically lead each session.

If you have questions or concerns at any point in your sessions, please contact your coordinator or supervisor. Her information is given below:

Coordinator name: Hilda Evelia Prías

Coordinator phone number: 317 576 1114

Coordinator email: hilda.prias@unisucre.edu.co

Please remember that you are not expected to provide mental health counseling. If you sense that any participant is experiencing symptoms of trauma that keep them from functioning in their daily life, please refer them to a mental health provider. If you become aware of any kind of abuse, you must contact the appropriate authorities that same day, following the Safeguarding Policy for Parenting with Hope. Your coordinator will have information as to how you can make a mental health referral or contact the authorities about abuse.

We are so thankful for your willingness to help others who have suffered and to open doors of hope to people all over the world.

Parenting with Hope Leadership Team

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FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Parenting with Hope for Families and Children in Transition and Crisis

This Facilitator's Guide will help you lead individual or small support group sessions for people impacted by transition and crisis. A family or person in transition might include those caring for children who recently experienced death of a parent or caregiver, including those providing kinship/foster/ or adoption care. These sessions are also relevant for people in many crisis situations, including conflict, displacement, migration (including forced migration), epidemics, and natural or climate disasters. These eight sessions are evidence-based and trauma informed. You can also share information from these sessions through informal outreach conversations.

The materials were originally designed to be used in a variety of settings, including for those who are in active conflict or disaster; on the move; or settled. Where activities vary, you will see these symbols:



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

The overall session materials are relevant for people in all settings. You will find some additional, optional materials for group members who are in conflict zones or on the move. Please choose the activities reflecting your participant's current setting. Also, please note that the words transition and crisis are used to describe traumatic event(s) in various settings. You, as a leader, can substitute a more specific word as appropriate (i.e. loss, trauma, conflict, displacement, migration, natural or climate disaster, epidemic, etc.).

GUIDELINES FOR LEADING

INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL SESSIONS

- Each program or study will need to decide how to deliver these sessions. We have designed and used them successfully in in-person and virtual settings.
- The content should be delivered by trained facilitators and used in sessions with individuals or for groups of up to 5 participants. We recommend one session per week, lasting one- and one-half hour or two hours each.
- You are serving as a facilitator, not a lecturer or teacher.
- Each session includes at-home practice tools that participants can use to talk with children. You should briefly explore these tools together as a group and encourage participants to use the tools with their children at home before your next meeting.
- Try to engage participants in answering questions by sometimes giving space for individual reflection, or asking participants in group settings to talk in pairs before sharing with the group. You should never force any participant to share if they do not want to – it's fine if someone chooses simply to listen.
- The main purpose of these sessions is not to focus primarily on personal stories of trauma, escape, conflict, or disaster. While this is an important step for individual healing, sharing disturbing memories in detail may cause secondary trauma for participants. If an individual wants to share their story, you as the facilitator may agree to this in one-on-one settings, if you feel equipped to listen. If you do not feel equipped to handle a detailed story, offer that you can connect the participant to a mental health care provider or faith leader.
- Ensure that your coordinator or organization has referrals in place for mental health professionals before you begin meeting with program participants or beneficiaries; you can speak with your coordinator to find out how to refer.
- If a group participant is experiencing distressing symptoms of trauma that make it difficult for them to function in daily life, tell them you want to refer them to a mental health provider or faith leader. Your coordinator will have information on how to refer. If the member is a danger to themselves or others, notify the appropriate authority that same day.
- These sessions were developed based on evidence-based programs for violence prevention and response, by academic experts and faith-based organizations serving those in crisis. Spiritual values, including compassion, meaning, and empathy, are included, and participants are also free to describe the comfort and support of a loving relationship with both God and others. Given that 86% of the Colombian population reports a Christian religious affiliation, the session guides include



inspirational quotes, Scriptures, or mentions of God for the benefit of those who find them helpful.

- Keep in mind that a participant's reaction to the material may be impacted by their grief or reaction to trauma.
- If you become aware of a situation of child abuse or sexual abuse, notify the appropriate authority the same day. Refer to the Parenting with Hope Child Safeguarding Policy for further instructions.
- Some sections of the Parenting with Hope are tools meant to support parents and caregivers in their relationships with children. If you have participants who join in the sessions who are not parents or caregivers, encourage them to consider:
- Do you regularly interact with other children in your life (maybe you are a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, a teacher, or a close family friend to someone who has children). How could you use these tools in those relationships?
- Although these tools are for relating to children, many of the ideas are relevant for adult relationships, too. For example, we encourage that communication with children should be open, honest, supportive and positive. These qualities are relevant for adult relationships, also.
- Follow the instructions for participants to complete evaluation forms before session 1 and following the end of the final session.

Leading the Sessions

Always open sessions sharing with participants the following Session Agreements:

- Anything shared with the facilitator (or group) is confidential. It's critical for participants to feel safe and develop trust.
- Each participant has the freedom to not share if they are uncomfortable doing so.
- Inform participants that the occasional use of an inspirational quote, a Bible verse or mention of God are included because these can be a source of ongoing spiritual support that build hope.
- As a facilitator, take into account the following recommendations in each session:
- These settings are not an ideal space to share personal stories of deep trauma, and they are an ideal setting for healing compassion and psychosocial support. For grieving caregivers who need more intensive counselling, the facilitator will offer to refer them to a mental health care provider.
- if you as the leader become aware of child abuse, whether physical, sexual or non-contact (such as engaging children in pornography), you will report that to the appropriate authority. (Parenting with Hope



provides a Child Safeguarding Policy, in which we define child abuse, including both physical, sexual, and non-contact sexual abuse including engagement in pornography. All Parenting with Hope staff, whether paid or volunteer, and all partnering organizations are required to read and sign this policy, indicating their commitment to follow this policy.)

- if you sense that any member is experiencing distressing symptoms of trauma that make it difficult for them to function in daily life, you will refer them to a mental health professional. If a member is a danger to themselves or others, you will notify the appropriate authority that same day.
- Start each session by asking what have been the best parts and most difficult parts of the last week.

Self Care for You, the Facilitator

Death, loss, conflict, displacement, natural and climate disasters, and other crisis situations impact us deeply, including those choosing to help others impacted by the crisis. Self-care is a vital tool to refresh and empower you, as an individual and as a Parenting with Hope facilitator. Self-care is not selfish. We need to be healthy to help others. Self-Care is not avoiding responsibilities or ignoring the people who care about us. It is not getting lost in social media, eating, taking drugs, or using alcohol to sooth your concerns. Self-Care is paying attention to activities, relationships and strategies that help you feel seen, safe, soothed and secure in what you are doing. Spirituality can be an important aspect of self-care. Science shows that spirituality has the potential to fuel healing, well-being, and resilience amid trauma, as well as in the years following.

Let's begin our journey of effective self-care with the following guidelines (FuelEd.org; 2023):

- Commit to having your own emotional needs met. Invest in your personal health, such as getting better sleep and exercising in a way that makes you feel good and relaxed.
- Model good boundaries. Take time off for personal and mental health, learn to say “no” and to prioritize when you can or cannot “serve others.”
- Be aware and accepting of your feelings, needs and perspectives. Respect others' approach to grieving and healing while also asking others to respect your process and personal space.
- Remain emotionally available. Prioritize meaningful connections with others and self-exploration. Consider keeping contact with close friends. Journaling your feelings daily keeps you invested in self-reflection, exploration, and self-care.



In each Parenting with Hope session's facilitator notes, we provide hints for you, the facilitator, to keep you on your own journey of health and well-being. With each day there is an opportunity for a hope-filled life in spite of the pressures of the world around us.

Further Learning for You, the Facilitator

We also believe that you as a Parenting with Hope facilitator can be empowered by continuing to learn more about toxic stress, psychological trauma, and how the brain and body work in response to these situations. At the end of this book, we provide an appendix for further learning on these topics. We ask you to read and reflect on this appendix. The more you know and understand about trauma and its impacts, the more power you can feel to develop healing habits that build hope in your own life and understand and encourage your Parenting with Hope participants.



FINDING STABILITY — OUR EVERYDAY TOOLS

SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

Take a Deep breath and write down 5 reasons you are important enough for self-care.

Reason 1: _____

Reason 2: _____

Reason 3: _____

Reason 4: _____

Reason 5: _____

Review these reasons each day BEFORE you facilitate a PARENTING WITH HOPE session.



Evaluation Before Session 1

Before participants begin session 1, we ask them to complete the pre-session evaluation. It is most effective if the facilitator welcomes participants to their first meeting, allows some “meet and greet” time, and then asks the participants to complete the form before the group begins with the content of their books.

Begin by saying this

Thank you for participating in this Parenting with Hope Session. In addition to the meetings, we are in the process of learning how the sessions are helping people in transition and crisis all over the world. We're asking people like you if they are willing to answer some brief questions about their experience in these sessions. These questions are 100% anonymous. This helps us learn what is working and how we can better serve more people.

Each program will need to determine whether participants who are not willing to complete the form can participate in the Parenting with Hope meetings.

Ask participants to complete the first questionnaire.

THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 1, Finding Stability – Our Everyday Tools (Facilitator notes provided before the session content).
- Parenting Tip 1 (Each session includes one or more evidence-based tips to help with parenting or caregiving during times of transition and crisis).
- Ask participants to open their materials to Session 1 – Finding Stability – Our Everyday Tools.



Introduce the Transition Cycle Illustrations

Make sure participants look at the illustrations in their book. Below you will find descriptions of these illustrations, which you should read to the group.

Illustration 1

These are some of many external changes that begin an internal process we call 'transition.' Transition includes our normal emotional responses as we deal with the losses each change creates and we move toward living in the 'new normal' that is ahead.



Illustration 2

Involvement is the stage where life is normal (point to the graphic of the people sitting together in a group). We know how life operates in this place, we know others, they know us.

Others can ask us for information, and our focus is mostly on connecting in the present time with new relationships.



Separation (or Leaving) stage

(point to the picture of the person being separated from the group) begins when we first get the news, or are in the event, that changes everything for us. We may have mixed

reactions including fear, confusion, worry over what is ahead, and sadness for what we are losing. Often we focus on the future more than the present. We begin to pull away from our friends without saying the proper goodbyes, which makes it more difficult to connect with others as we adapt to a new normal. When circumstances like death, loss, conflict, displacement, disasters, epidemics, or separations due to abuse, poverty, or divorce, keep us from saying goodbye at the time, it may be possible to do it retrospectively through letters or internet or even revisiting place that hold our memories (journey of clarification).



Transit stage (point to the picture of the person holding their head in confusion) begins when we have to let go of the past place, status, persons, or relationships we have known, but we are not yet connected

fully to the new. This is often a time of mourning for what was lost, confusion for how life works in this new context, wishing we could return to life as it was. We might even wonder about the choices that put us here if this transition is happening by our desire rather than a forced transition.



Entering stage

(point to the picture of the person who is moving back to the group) begins when we first think, "OK, maybe I CAN figure out life in this new reality." We begin to move more intentionally towards the

new and hope begins to flicker that once again life might return to some sense of at least 'new normal'. We begin to focus on the present time once more.

Illustration 3

Re-involvement is when we once more feel like life is 'normal'. We know how life works here, we know others and they know us and life feels settled in the present once more.

One thing that can complicate our move towards re-involvement is that often as we try to become involved in our new reality, the mourning and confusion of the transit stage can still sweep over us. But as we continue to exercise strategies for entering, such as inviting others over or finding a mentor, we will find the day comes when we do, in fact, feel like we fit and can function in our new life, no matter where or what it is.

Say to the participant: Most people who go through traumatic events have some difficulty adjusting and coping, but it is usually short lived with time and good self-care.

You might notice some of these experiences in your own life:

- Reliving the event(s) over and over again. You might experience nightmares or flashbacks of the event(s) when something "triggers" a reminder – could be from a smell, a sight, a sound, etc.
- Avoiding things or even people that remind you of the event. Examples are to avoid crowds, people, places, movies, or other experiences that could be a reminder.
- Having more negative thoughts and feelings than even before the traumatic event(s). You might feel numb and be unable to express loving or positive emotions. Forgetfulness becomes the norm, and the feeling that the world is completely dangerous, and you can trust no one. Regrets, guilt or shame can become the norm as well.
- Having a rapid heart rate; having trouble breathing. Other physical sensations you might experience are headaches, stomach aches, or exhaustion.
- Feeling irritable, anxious or depressed.

- You might feel confused and overwhelmed when you need to make decisions.
- Feeling on edge or keyed up all the time. This is often accompanied by having a hard time sleeping or concentrating. Feeling on edge can cause being startled with the softest of noises or surprises. It can lead to unhealthy behaviours such as taking drugs, drinking excessively or being reckless in one's life.

Discussion: Ask the participant to discuss these points and share their own experiences. The facilitator might also share briefly their experiences, which can build trust and rapport with participants.

Read the Session 1 Materials, starting at Moving from Transition to Stability

- Ask participants if they would take turns reading. Read in small segments and allow time for discussion between segments.
- After each list of tools, pause and ask the participant to share what helps them maintain or find stability. Ask if there are any tools they had previously not considered and now will decide to try.
- Note to the facilitator: you will see that throughout the Parenting for Hope sessions, we repeat some tools for stabilizing. This is intentional, as people experiencing trauma can benefit from reminders and repetition of ideas.
- At the end, allow time for discussion of the "For Reflection" questions.



FINDING STABILITY — OUR EVERYDAY TOOLS

Illustration 1

The types of change that create transition cycles:



Physical transition



Life stages



Unexpected sudden changes



Traumatic events



Other

Illustration 2

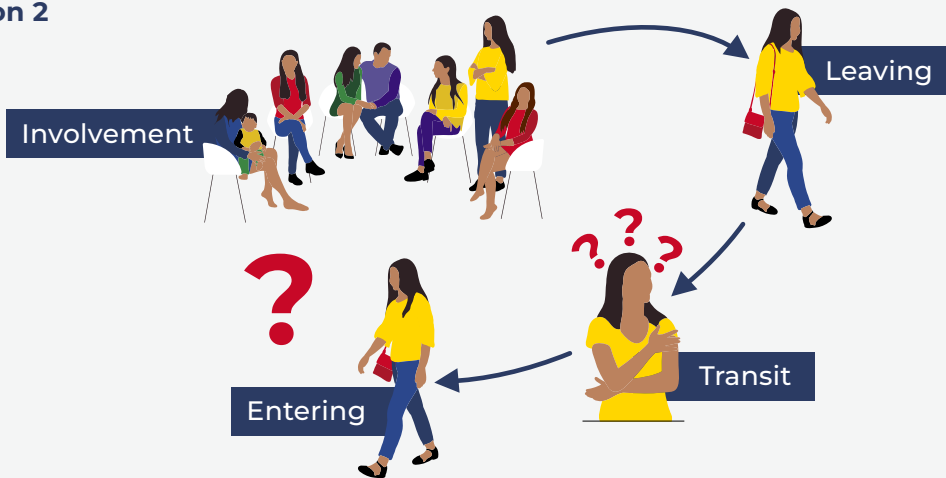
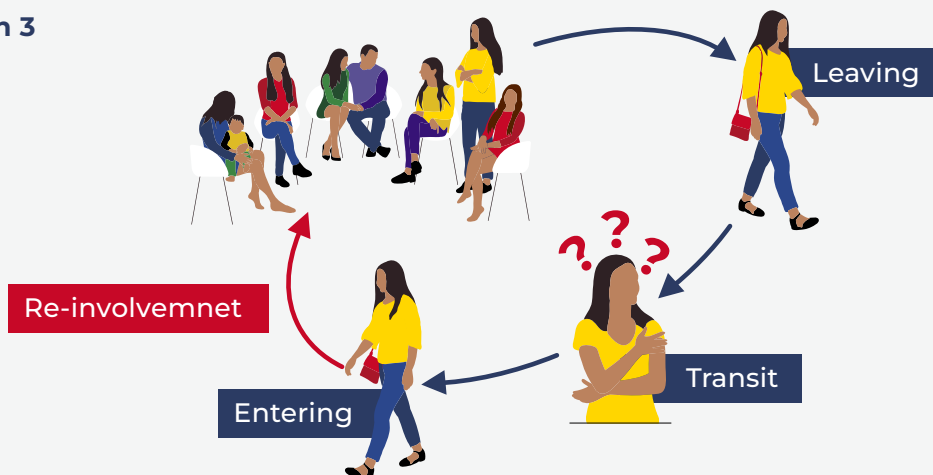


Illustration 3





TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.



Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer
– Psalms 61:1

Moving from Transition to Stability — Our Everyday Tools

Transition can feel like chaos, like the image of the person holding their head in confusion. We might feel confused, in shock, lost. Loss of loved ones, displacement and disaster mean we are continually dealing with loss and traumatic situations.

The good news is we can work through transition and move toward a sense of stability. We cannot always change our circumstances, but we can develop a set of tools to help us regain some internal stability. These tools — things like healthy eating and sleeping habits, or talking with people we trust about our feelings — can also help us grieve our losses in a healthy way.

Let's imagine that each of us has a toolbox. Throughout these meetings, we are going to fill our toolbox with two sets of tools. The first set are our everyday tools — those we use routinely to help us have a healthier mind and emotions. They are a foundation for us. The other set are our anchoring tools — tools that are like an anchor for us in a storm, the tools we use when we feel afraid, anxious, panicked, or depressed.

Every one of us has the ability to fill our toolbox.

Some of these tools will be the same for many. Others will be different from person to person. The most important part of filling your toolbox is to find out what works for you and practice using the tools so it becomes a habit for you to use them.

Let's consider some everyday tools we might put into our toolbox :

Physical tools

- Eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water.
- Try to develop healthy sleep habits.
- Get regular physical exercise, especially any that increases your heart rate. Even ten minutes a day can help!
- Watch out so you aren't overusing alcohol or medications, or turning to drugs for relief.
- Spend time outside, especially in the sunshine.

Social Tools

- Look for ways to maintain contact and re-connect with friends and loved ones.
- If you have moved to a new place, get to know new people in the place where you are settled, even temporarily. Re-engaging in a social circle is vital for healing from trauma.
- Invest in friendships that are honest and non-judgmental.
- Be willing to ask for help or receive it.
- Help someone else.

Emotional and Spiritual Tools

- Re-establish routines as much as possible. This is especially important for children.
- Read a funny book, watch a comedian or a funny movie.
- Regain a sense of control – complete small tasks, make small decisions.
- Avoid making big decisions, if possible. When you need to make decisions, find a time when you are well-rested and feel in a healthy state of mind. When you have to make decisions without the support

of those who are closest to you, consider discussing the decision with other friends or family members you trust

- Don't worry if you struggle to relate to God right now. It's normal to not want to read the Bible (or other sacred texts that have helped you in the past) or pray during these times, and it doesn't mean you have lost your faith.
- An inspirational quote or Bible verse (such as those below) can be a source of spiritual support that strengthens hope.

“Nothing can dim the light which shines from within”

Maya Angelou.

“But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint”

Isaiah 40:31.

For Reflection

- Take some time to think about what resources you have. This is more than just money. Think about people who can help you, organizations, churches, or government programs. Think about your personal experiences or strengths that have helped you through this time. What tools do you already have in life?
- After considering, each person can take some time to share what resources have helped them.
- What new tool will you try out this week?



**This ends Session 1.
Thank you for your participation.**



FINDING STABILITY — OUR ANCHORING TOOLS

SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

Breathing activity #1: Breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth, conduct the following breathing exercise three times:

1. Breathe in slowly through the nose to the count of 5.
2. Hold your breath for a count of 5.
3. Exhale through your mouth slowly to a count of 5.
4. Repeat two more times.
5. Make this a daily commitment when you feel any of the signs of stress entering your day.
6. Repeat the steps above – but this time instead of pushing out your breath to the count of 5 – increase the pushing to get ALL air out of your lungs – push to the count of 10 or more.



THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 2, Finding Stability — Our Anchoing Tools
- Parenting Tips, 1, 2, 5



For facilitators

Our last session gave a basic introduction to trauma responses and some practical everyday tools we can use to develop healthy habits. Those are the habits we should practice regularly. Today's lesson will present us with some anchoring tools, which are habits we can practice during times of significant stress.

Leading the Session

Begin your meeting by Reading together the Session Agreements.

Looking back

Ask participants to share their experience trying any new tools during the past week. How did they impact their thoughts, emotions,

and bodies? The group facilitator can share as well.

Recognizing the Signs

Ask a participant if they would read through this section and then give time for all to discuss the reflection question.

Our Anchoring Tools

- Take turns reading the different tools and giving the group time to discuss in between each section.
- Share with the participants: *In different life situations, we are strengthened by the help of different people. Sometimes they are faithful friends who will take us for a walk to relax. Sometimes they are relatives who know us the longest and best. There are times when, even with all our desire, we do not have either the opportunity or the mood to share deep, disturbing experiences with loved ones. However, such experiences sometimes accumulate, and they take away peace in our everyday life. We feel how emotions overwhelm us in situations quite familiar to us, how thoughts about negative experiences do not leave us, even in the most pleasant moments. It's okay to feel anxiety, but only as long as it doesn't start to destroy our perception of life. We are not alone, even if we feel lonely at times. There is always someone to listen to us. Actually, this is what psychologist or counsellors are for — people who will listen to you without judgment, support you, help you learn to overcome your challenges, so that you can feel confident again, without heaviness in your soul.*
- If the group is willing, practice one or all of the following tools: intentional breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and imagine a peaceful place. You can practice together (or for groups: divide into smaller groups or pairs.) You may choose to begin each of your following meetings with one of these practices.
- Consider the reflection questions together.

FINDING STABILITY — OUR ANCHORING TOOLS

PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times 1

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer
– Psalms 61:1



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times 5

COPING WITH STRESS, UPSET, AND ANGER

- Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling.
- Losing your temper? Breathe in and out slowly five times.
- Try to do something that helps you relax.
- Remember to praise yourself each time you take steps to cope.

I find hope in the darkest days
and focus in the brightest.
– Dalai Lama



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times 2

ROUTINE HELPS CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

- Even when it feels hard, try to have some daily routines for yourself and children.
- If you can, help children with daily routines like meals or schoolwork.
- Our children learn calmness and kindness from us.
- Tell yourself a calming message again and again. Try 'I can do this, I am trying my best'

A true friend is one who takes you by their hand and touches your heart.
– Gabriel García Márquez



Recognizing the Signs

Last meeting we talked about common reactions to trauma. Learning about these things can give us a sense of power and hope; we realize we are not the only ones who feel this way, and we find common ground with the people around us. Let's review and consider a few more signs that might mean you have experienced a traumatic event.

Physical Reactions

- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbances
- Changes in appetite
- Headaches
- Upset stomach
- Chronic muscle tension

Emotional Reactions

- Feeling overwhelmed/emotionally spent
- Feeling helpless
- Feeling inadequate
- Sense of vulnerability
- Increased mood swings
- Irritability
- Crying more easily or frequently
- Suicidal or violent thoughts or urges

Behavioral Reactions

- Isolation or withdrawal
- Restlessness
- Changes in consumption of drugs and alcohol
- Changes in relationships with others

Thought-Pattern Reactions

- Disbelief, sense of numbing
- Replaying events in one's mind over and over
- Decreased concentration
- Confusion or impaired memory
- Difficulty making decisions or problem-solving
- Distressing dreams or fantasies

For Reflection

Have you experienced any of these reactions since your family's loss, or difficult event or situation began? Are you commonly experiencing any of these now?

The good news is these reactions are normal and, with self-care and some intentional processing, the reactions may become less frequent and even disappear with time. We will talk today about tools we can use to find an anchor of hope during stormy times. These tools can help reduce anxiety, depression, and stress in our lives.

Remember that we are all unique! People experience different reactions to trauma, and different tools help them. You are going on a journey to find the tools that work for you.

It is also important to note that you might benefit from more than just these tools. If at any time, you feel that your trauma reactions are stopping you from living day to day life, ask your group facilitator if they can refer you to a psychologist or other mental health professional who can help you more directly.

Our Anchoring Tools

Intentional Breathing

Find a comfortable place to sit. If possible, look for a quiet spot, where you won't be interrupted. Taking just 30-60 seconds out of your day to breathe deeply can empower you to cope with stress. Here are some tips:

- Breathe from your diaphragm. Put your hand on your lower abdomen and feel that your stomach expands as you breathe in and falls as you breathe out.
- Listen to the sound of your breath.
- Count to 2 as you breathe in, then hold your breath for 2 seconds and slowly let your breath out for 2 seconds.
- Practice this every day, several times a day.
- When you feel particularly stressed, take 30 seconds to breathe in this way.

Engage in Relationship

- Spend time outside. Nature, fresh air and sunshine have strong healing powers.
- Reduce stressors in areas of your life. Learn to say no.me away. Step away from others and allow yourself some alone time, without a phone.
- Physical exercise. Even 15 minutes can help. Consider walking, running, aerobics, swimming or yoga.
- Learn about stress. When you are learning and applying what you have learned, you are feeling more competent and successful.



- Ask questions. Sometimes asking others how they are doing, how they are coping will open ideas for yourself. Even when you share an idea of what might have helped you – you are potentially helping reduce your own stress.
- Write in a journal or a journal of thanksgiving.
- Watch a funny movie or TV show, or read a funny book. Smiling and laughter help reduce stress.
- Create music, a poem, a story or a game to play with others.
- Think about a quote or verse that gives you hope (there are examples below). You may want to pray about it or talk about it with your family and friends.

“Hope is being able to see that there is light, despite all the darkness.”

Desmond Tutu

“Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it’s just too bad, because there is no one to help him. If it is cold, two can sleep together and stay warm, but how can you keep warm by yourself? Two people can resist an attack that would defeat one person alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break.”

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Do you have frequent headaches? Do you feel tension in your neck, shoulders or back? When you are stressed, your body may respond with these physical sensations. Here is one technique to help your body and mind relax.

This practice involves gradually tensing and relaxing different muscle groups in your body. When you do this, you learn to recognize the physical sensations of tension and relaxation. Becoming aware of physical tension and symptoms of stress are an important part of healing.

Start by finding a quiet place where you can be alone and comfortable. Sit in a comfortable chair, close your eyes and let your body become relaxed. Next, begin to tense and then relax the muscles in your toes, and slowly work your way up the body, all the way to the head. Inhale as you tense each muscle group for about five seconds and then relax that same group for 30 seconds. As you relax, slowly exhale. Pay close attention to the sensations in your body as you tense and relax. You can repeat this process, and be sure to spend a little time enjoying your relaxed state!

Imagine a Peaceful Place

Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. Close your eyes, start to breathe more slowly, and imagine a place that is peaceful for you. Maybe you think of a favorite vacation spot, or somewhere you have always wanted to visit. Maybe this is a place from your own life. Imagine what you can see, hear, smell, touch and maybe even taste. Spend time imagining and breathing, simply enjoying the peaceful spot in your mind.

For Reflection

- How did you feel as you practiced these tools?
- Which tool was most helpful to you?
- Which new tool do you plan to try in the coming week?



- Now let's think of your children:
 - › Which of these tools could be most helpful for your children?
 - › Which of these tools do you plan to try with them during the coming week?

**This ends Session 2.
Thank you for your participation.**



SESSION 3

Facilitator's Notes

TALK ABOUT IT

SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

Breathing activity #1:

Calm your senses using mindfulness techniques. (The Awareness Center 2023)

When the brain is anxious, it can interpret triggers as threats. Using a '5-4-3-2-1' mindfulness technique can help comfort and reassure your nervous system. Think about engaging all five senses so you can consciously focus on being grounded and calm.

- Find **five** things to look at in your surroundings.
- Listen to **four** sounds around you.
- Identify **three** things you can feel (this be an item you can stroke, like a cushion, or it may be the feel or your bag on your shoulder).
- Find **two** things you can smell.
- Discover **one** thing you can taste.



THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 3, Talk About It
- Parenting Tips, 3, 6, 10 & 15



For facilitators

This session will cover the following concepts:

- How we are doing – noticing where we are right now.
- How we can talk to children about the crisis and their worries and concerns.
- Handouts: Talking With Children About the Crisis
- Optional extra handouts for conflict/on the move settings — steps we can take with children to stay safe.

Leading the Session

Begin your meeting by reading together the Session Agreements.

Looking back

Ask members to share their experience of inviting family or friends to participate in one of the Session 2 calming exercises. Did their friends find it helpful? Any other thoughts or ideas?

Recognizing the Signs

Introduce the parenting tips: explain that today's session is based on these tips. Members will have the tips as a summary to help them in parenting during this difficult time.

Where Am I?

This section focuses on the group members and their grieving and healing process.

- Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each question box as a group.
- Read the section “things that can help us grieve”. Have participants share about some of the things that are mentioned in the section. Ask them to think about other ways that they can help people grieve.
- Talking with Children About the Crisis. This section allows the group to discuss how their children are coping and provides suggestions on how to talk with children about the crisis. Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each question box as a group.

Extra Tools for Supporting Children

Spend 5 to 10 minutes reading and discussing these tools during your session.

Talking with Children About the Crisis

Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use when talking with their child about the crisis they have experienced. It includes specific statements, questions, and ideas for talking with and helping their child deal with the death or loss, or trauma. After discussing briefly in the session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.

Extra Actions: Planning for Safety Together & Talking with Children – Simple Steps to Stay Safe

Only use this section for sessions with individuals or groups who are in live conflict/disaster zones or are on the move (leaving or returning). This section includes tips both for parents and for children. After discussing briefly in the session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.



SESSION 3

TALK ABOUT IT

Participant's Guide

PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times 

HELP CHILDREN COPE WITH CRISIS

- Children may be scared, confused and angry. They need your support.
- Listen to children when they share how they are feeling.
- Accept how they feel and give them comfort.
- Every day before you sleep, praise yourself for trying to help your children cope.

If you love someone, tell them... many hearts are broken because of words that are never heard.
– Paulo Coelho



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times 

MAKING TRAVEL PLANS WITH CHILDREN IN YOUR HOME

- Make a song with your child so they memorize your full name and phone number, and number of someone you trust. Go over it every day.
- Tell your child where you're going and why, in a way they can understand and handle.
- Make backup copies or photos of all your identity documents
- Praise yourself for doing the best you can.

Focus on the journey, not the destination. Joy is found not in finishing an activity but in doing it.
– Anonymous



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times 

SMALL THINGS HELP KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

- Talk to children about what is happening in a way that they can understand.
- Identify a meeting point and make a plan in case you get separated.
- Assure your children that you will do everything to keep them safe.
- Planning with children helps them feel safer too.

No one Will ever harm you child. I am here to protect you. This is why I was born before you and my bones hardened before yours.
– Juan Rulfo



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times 

KEEPING SAFE ON THE ROAD

- If a child has a mobile phone, save your number and those of a few trusted people.
- Explain to your child how they should behave when at checkpoints, (i.e., be quiet, do not leave the vehicle).
- Hide money or bank cards in different places, in case you lose your bags.
- Being prepared takes hard work. Be sure to look after yourself.

How precious is the value of the family.
– Papa Francisco



Where Am I?

For Reflection

1. How has life changed for you since your family's loss or crisis?
2. What has been the biggest change for you?

We've all been through a very difficult experience. We want to be able to cope and support ourselves and each other. To begin to do that, we need to be aware of where we are at, and what has happened to us. We might feel alone or think that we are the only one who feels this way — and it is true that each person's experience of a crisis is unique. But there are some common experiences people may have when difficult things happen.

These are common reactions to our losses and crises:

- You are looking for someone to blame — yourself or someone else.
- You may have regrets over things you said or did — or did not say or do
- You may feel guilty — that you have survived while others haven't, or that others have suffered more than you.
- You may feel ashamed about how you are reacting or embarrassed about accepting help.

For Reflection

Do any of these sound like where you are right now?

While we might look for someone to blame, feel guilty or ashamed, all these reactions can stop us from accepting what's happened, and accepting that it is not our fault.

Besides these feelings, we can also react to trauma in three main ways:

1. You may relive the experience — in nightmares or flashbacks during the day.
2. You may find yourself avoiding things that remind you of the event. You may avoid feeling at all, by becoming “numb,” or you may work too much or too little.
3. You may be on alert all the time, feeling tense, overreacting, having difficulty

sleeping or feeling unwell. You may find it hard to concentrate

For Reflection

Does any of that sound like how you are feeling?

These reactions are normal and it's good to notice them in ourselves, be aware of them and talk about it. By talking about our experiences, and finding ways to be calm and stay in the present moment, we can support one another to get through this time.

However, if these reactions continue for a long time or stop us being able to live our day-to-day life, we may need to speak to someone and get further support. Talk with your facilitator after the session if you feel you need more support.

Here are some other ideas on healthy habits that can strengthen you to go through this time:

- Learn to recognize stressful thinking. Paying attention to stressful thoughts may help you reduce them. Training yourself to be aware of your thoughts, your breathing, your heart rate and other signs of tension helps you recognize stress when it begins.
- Breathe. Deep breathing (take a breath in through the nose and then hold for a few seconds and then let out through the mouth) is a simple tip for stress reduction that can be used anywhere at any time.
- Take breaks from news stories, including those on social media. It's good to be informed, but constant information about the crisis around you can be upsetting. Consider limiting news to just a couple of times a day and disconnecting from social media for a while.
- Be your best self. Feelings of shame, guilt, regret, or inadequacy can lead to negative thinking. Develop the habit of gratitude and forgiveness of others.
- Time away. Step away from others and allow yourself some alone time.
- Connect with others. Get to know them better — ask questions, listen to understand them.

We have spent time sharing on where we as individuals are, and on how we are doing. This is important for our own healing, and also for us to recognize, in order to help children well, as they deal with similar issues. The next questions and tips will help us reflect on how our children are doing and how we can talk with them about their reactions to the crisis.

You may have friends, relatives or neighbours who are not a parent or caregiver. These tips we will talk about now (and others in future sessions) can be important for them as well. Think of other people who regularly interact with the children in your household or other specific children in your life (maybe a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, a teacher, or a close family friend). How could your friends also use these tools? Also, although these tools are for relating to children, many of the ideas are relevant for your adult relationships, too. For example, we encourage that communication with children should be open, honest, supportive and positive. All these recommendations are also relevant for communication in adult relationships.

For Reflection

1. How often does your child seem stressed or worried?
2. How often is your child able to talk about their problems and share their worries?
3. Have you and your children talked together about what's happened? How did it go?
4. What are some of the fears or concerns children are expressing?

Take a moment to acknowledge examples of how you have reached out and listened to the children in your care. These moments are important, because children value when we are open and honest with them and take their concerns seriously.

Here are some key tips on how to speak with your child:

- **Be open** — Allow your child to talk freely. Ask them open questions (which means questions that can't just be answered by a "yes" or "no").
- **Be honest** — Always answers their questions truthfully. Think about how old your child is and how much they can understand. It's ok to not know all the answers.
- **Be supportive** — Your child may be scared or confused. Give them space to share how they are feeling and let them know you are there for them. Praise your child every day for something they do well.
- **Be positive** — Remind your child that you care and that they can talk to you at any time.

Avoid exposing your child to graphic details of violence: in real life, on TV, on radio or on your phone. Do not direct your child to feel a specific emotion (e.g. anger) but accept the way they feel.

Every evening, praise children and yourself for something — recognize how well you are doing in the circumstances.

This ends Session 3. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!

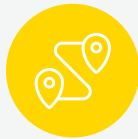


SESSION 3

EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this handout with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Talking with Children about the Crisis/Transition
- Extra Actions — Planning for Safety Together
- Talking with Children — Simple Steps to Stay Safe

Talking with Children About the Crisis/ Transition



Begin the time with your child with regular check-in questions, such as:

1. What was the best thing that happened this week?
2. What was something funny that happened this week?
3. What was hard about this week?

Game: Good and Bad

Explain that you will read some statements of things that could happen – a change – like winning a prize or starting a new school. The child should quickly decide whether the change is a good or a bad thing. There are no right or wrong answers!

e.g. You: “Winning a prize!” – Child: “Good!”
You: “Starting a new school” – Child: “Bad!”

- Winning a prize

- Moving house to a new city
- Starting a new school
- Getting a new puppy

The crisis has made a lot of changes in our lives. Explain that today we’ll be looking at what’s happened, how we feel about it, and what we can do together to stay safe.

For Reflection With Your Child

1. What are some of the changes that have happened for you and your family since your loss (of your parent or caregiver), and / or the other losses or crises?
2. How do you feel about these changes, or about what’s happening now?

You can explain this to your child, or a trusted relative or friend could explain:

“It’s normal to feel scared or upset. Adults do too! Lots of things have changed, and it can be scary when we don’t know what will happen next, like where we will go to school. It’s good to ask questions and to share how you are feeling. If there’s anything you might



be confused or worried about, don't be afraid to ask someone you trust".

Say to your child: Here are some ways you could talk to your parents about your questions or what's worrying you:

- Ask your parent(s) or caregiver to sit down with you for a few minutes and tell them how you are feeling
- If you have seen or heard things related to the loss (of your parent or caregiver) or about the crisis — from other people, or the news, or online, ask your parent(s) or caregiver to talk with you about it and ask them any questions you have.
- Draw a picture about how you are feeling about the situation and share it with your parent(s) or caregiver.
- Talk with your family about what helps you feel safe.

Encouraging Others

Say to the child: You are doing so well so far – (mention something specific to the child's situation – such as “you have kept going to school” or “you helped your family when others have felt sad or lonely” or “you have played with your siblings and that cheers them up”).

For Reflection With Your Child

1. Thinking about other children in your family or community, or about people in your family or household: Is there anyone who is having a hard time, or seems like they might be sad or worried?
2. Do you think there's anything you could do to encourage someone else this week?

Encourage the child for all their ideas and the ways they already care for others and encourage them. Suggest to the child that here are some things they could do:

- Play games with a younger brother or sister, or read them a story.
- Tell your parent(s) something you love about them or want to say thank you for.
- Draw a picture and put it in your window with an encouraging message for people who pass by.

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

We might feel overwhelmed by the situation but actually, as we've talked about today, there are so many things we can do ourselves that can help us and our families to support each other and stay safe.

Some ways children can help are:

- Talking with your parents about what you are feeling worried about.
- Helping others in your family who might be having a hard time at the moment.
- Being kind – put a picture in your window with an encouraging message.
- Making a family plan together for staying safe and healthy.

This ends the tool “Talking With Children About the Crisis/Transition”. We look forward to hearing how it went!

Extra Actions — Planning for Safety Together



Planning for safety together with children helps them to feel safer, too. Children will be aware that things are uncertain, and being able to talk about it and have practical actions they can be part of helps them to feel calmer and safer.

You could take some time with your children and ask them for their ideas of what you could do to stay safe. Here are some practical ways you can plan for safety together with your children:

- Make a plan together for what to do if you are separated and every day, agree on a clear place to meet if you are separated.
- Make a song or chant with your child so they memorize your full name and phone number, and the number of someone you trust. Go over it every day.
- Tell your child they should not spend time

outside alone after dark or accepting things from someone alone.

- Make sure you know who your children are spending time with online and in person.

For Parent/Caregiver Reflection

1. What have you done that has helped to keep children safe, and what are you doing now?
2. Is there something we've talked about that you are going to put into practice or do differently this week?
3. What kind of plan could you make with your family to help stay safe?

Here are some tips for staying safe with children in active conflict situations:

- If there is no shelter available, it is better to stand in the staircase of a building and stay away from windows.
- Remind your child to avoid touching unknown items or remains, if there has been a shooting. Practice with your child: What do we do when there is a shooting? What do we do after?
- If there is a shelter available, practice running to the shelter. Making a routine out of the shooting can significantly reduce stress and provide your child with some sense of control.

Putting it into practice this week

Talk with your child about what they have heard about the armed conflict and any questions they have. What can you do together as a family to stay safe?

Talking with Children — Simple Steps to Stay Safe



Say to your child: You are doing so well so far – (mention something specific to the child's situation – such as “you have stayed safe on your journey here” or “you are helping your family when you have to shelter at home”).

For Reflection with the Child

What are some things you have been doing with your parents or brothers and sisters to stay safe?

Encourage the child for all the ways they have been staying safe and the actions they are taking, even if it is difficult and means for example that they are not in school, not seeing their friends or loved ones. Share with them that there is a lot that children can do to help stay safe – we can work with our family to make plans to help us to stay safe and stay together when things are difficult.

Say: Here are some things you could do together with your parent(s):

- Take some time together as a family to agree on your family safety plan.
- Remember to avoid touching unknown items or walking in ruined buildings after a shooting, unless you are sure it is safe.
- Make a plan of what to do in case anyone gets separated from the others and agree on this plan every day.
- Make up a song or chant together to memorize your parent's full name and phone number, and make sure you know your own full name and address, too.
- In a conflict/disaster setting: Talk with your family about a plan for what to do when there is danger (e.g. running to the shelter, taking supplies with us).

For Reflection With a Child

Is there something we've talked about that you are going to try to do this week?

this ends the extra tools “Talking with Children about the Crisis/Transition”, “Extra Actions - Planning for Safety Together”, “Talking with Children - Simple Steps to Stay Safe”. We look forward to hearing how it went!

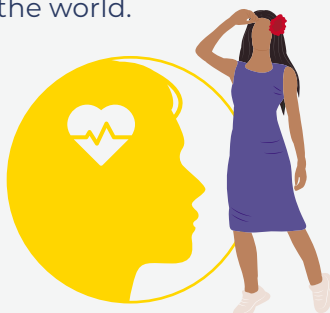
SESSION 4

Facilitator's Notes

STRONG FAMILIES AND POSITIVE PARENTING

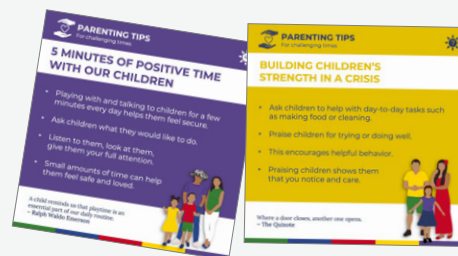
SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

1. **Stay in the present** — We tend to worry about what might happen, but so often, we are sacrificing our present moments, one by one, to the “what if.”
2. **Be gentle and patient with yourself.** Recognize that many of your thinking patterns have been there for years and may take some time to change.
3. **Notice patterns** in the ways you think that lead to anxiety and depression, especially those that are overly critical, discouraging and fear-inducing.
4. **Develop daily affirmations.** With regular practice, encouraging self-talk can be a part of your ongoing growth.
5. **Make friends with your mind.** Realize that whatever your thoughts are, they represent how you have tried to take care of yourself. Remember, when you feel safe and strong enough, there is nothing in your mind that can't stretch and change.
6. **Practice an attitude of gratitude and appreciation.** This tends to soften you to the greater connectedness we have with others in the world.



THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 4, Strong Families
- Parenting Tips, 4 & 7



For facilitators

This session will cover the following concepts:

- Building strong relationships within families
- Positive communication within your family
- How to spend quality time with children

Leading the Session

Begin your meeting by Reading the Session Agreements.

Looking back

- Ask members to share any healthy habits they practiced to strengthen themselves this past week.
- Ask if anyone was able to talk with their children about how they are doing and how the conversation went.

Parenting Tips

Introduce the parenting tips: explain that today's session is based on these tips. Participants will have the tips as a summary to help them in parenting during this difficult time.

Positive Communication at Home

- This section talks about relationships within our families or people we are currently living with. Be sensitive to the fact that participants are now living in a different family circumstance or unit than before the loss or trauma. Many have been separated from those they love, and have lost loved ones. When we talk about family today, members can apply this term to their natural family, both present and absent, or to the people they are currently living with.
- Ask if the participant wants to help read the various sections. Discuss each question box together as you go through the material.
 - › Use the exercise to model one-on-one time with children.
 - › Invite the participant to act like a child of a certain age. (You can choose the age of one of the participant's children). Explain that the two of you will act out one of possible 5-min positive times with a child.
 - › As an example, take the Game "Which person in the house..." and the corresponding questions from today's handout. Explain to the group that the game is in their handout.
 - › After the exercise, thank the participant who acted the child and ask him or her:
 - "How did the child feel?"
 - "How Will this time spent with a child influence their relationship?"

Underline the value even of 5 minutes (like in your demonstration!).

Extra Tools for Supporting Children

Spend 5 to 10 minutes reading and discussing these tools during your session.

Talking with Children About the Crisis

Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use when talking with their child about their family relationships. It includes specific statements, questions, and ideas for talking with their child. After discussing briefly in the session, encourage members to use this tool this week, in communicating with their children.



SESSION 4

Participant's Guide

STRONG FAMILIES AND POSITIVE PARENTING

 **PARENTING TIPS**
For challenging times 

5 MINUTES OF POSITIVE TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

- Playing with and talking to children for a few minutes every day helps them feel secure.
- Ask children what they would like to do.
- Listen to them, look at them, give them your full attention.
- Small amounts of time can help them feel safe and loved.

A child reminds us that playtime is an essential part of our daily routine.
– Ralph Waldo Emerson



 **PARENTING TIPS**
For challenging times 

BUILDING CHILDREN'S STRENGTH IN A CRISIS

- Ask children to help with day-to-day tasks such as making food or cleaning.
- Praise children for trying or doing well.
- This encourages helpful behavior.
- Praising children shows them that you notice and care.

Where a door closes, another one opens.
– The Quixote



Today's session talks about relationships within families and will help us think through how we can relate positively with our family members. Many of these principles are relevant for communication in relationships with children and other adults.

Many of us are now living in different family circumstances than before the crisis or loss. You may have been separated from some family members, and you may be living with other relatives, friends, or even new acquaintances. As we discuss "family" in today's session, please consider both your family members and the people you are currently living with. Also, when we discuss parents and children, the ideas are relevant for both parents and other caregivers, like grandparents or trusted friends of the family.

Let's be sensitive to each family member's situation. Where parents are separated, or where loved ones have been lost, we can

admit at the start that the missing person or separated family members are not there, and that this is difficult.

Positive Communication At Home

For Reflection

- Can you think of a time this week where you had a good conversation with the children you are caring for, or other family members?
- What was positive about it?

When we're under pressure at a time of crisis and change, it can be hard to keep our communication positive – but when we do, it has a big impact for children and adolescents. How we talk and behave in front of and with our children and adolescents influences how they

behave, too. Positive communication also involves positive discipline, such as speaking calmly and removing privileges, rather than hitting a child with our hand or another object. Poor communication between adults in the household can have a negative impact on children. Practicing peaceful, loving relationships helps children feel secure and loved.

For Reflection

What do you think positive communication looks like in practice?

Positive communication could include:

- Trying to talk kindly to everyone in the family – both adults and children. When you are upset, make an intentional effort to speak kindly to your child and not shout or scream at them.
- Telling others what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do. Instead of "Stop shouting", try "Please speak more quietly".
- Being a good listener – be open and show others that you hear what they are saying.
- Saying thank you, even for small or routine things, can make a big difference.
- Praising your child every day for something they do well.

One on One Time with Children

For Reflection

- Can you think of an activity you have enjoyed doing with your child(ren) in the last 3 days?
- Is it easy or hard to spend time individually with each of your children? What helps or hinders you in this?
- How could spending quality time with your children help you or them?

Especially in times of loss or crisis, it can be difficult to find time to spend with our children. But, one-on-one time is one of the key ways

we can help children feel loved and secure, and it shows them that they are important. Playing with and talking to children every day helps them feel secure.

Even in difficult and uncertain times, you could do this by:

- Setting aside time to spend with each child. It can be for just 5 minutes or longer, and it could be at the same time each day so children can look forward to it.
- Asking your child what they would like to do. Choosing builds their self-confidence. If they want to do something that isn't possible in the current situation, then this is a chance to talk with them about it.
- Even if you aren't able to do an activity together, just listening to them, looking at them, and giving them your full attention, can make all the difference.

Exercise — Model Possible Time with a Child

Your facilitator will now lead you in an exercise about spending time with a child. You will be using the game called "Which Person in the House," and you can find that game in your Extra Tools for Supporting Children, at the end of this session.

If your family has many children, you can make one on one time practical by suggesting group activities as a family, and one-on-one time less frequently.

If your family is in a more stable situation or you would like more suggestions for activities, consider the ideas below. Remember that where parents are under intense stress and in ongoing conflict/crisis/disaster settings, simply spending 5 minutes a day with your child is enough and will really help.

Ideas for different age groups of children

Baby/Toddler:

- Copy their facial expression and sounds.

- Sing songs, make music with pots and spoons or other available items.
- Stack cups or blocks.
- Tell a story, read a book, or share pictures.

Young Child:

- Read a book, tell stories, or look at pictures, play games.
- Go for a walk if possible.
- Dance to music or sing.
- Do a chore together – make cleaning and cooking a game!
- Help with schoolwork if the child is in school.

Teenager:

- Talk about something they like: sports, music, movies.
- Go for a walk if possible.
- Play a game together.

You can do anything together! Good one on one time means that you listen to your child,

look at them, give them your full attention, and have fun, even if it's for a short time.

Putting it into Practice

Can you plan to have quality one-on-one time with your child this week? What might you do together? Could you find out what they would enjoy? It's fine if this can only be for 5 minutes a day right now.

**This ends Session 4.
Thank you for your participation.**

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session, and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children.



SESSION 4

EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN



Settled

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent going through this handout with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Talking with Children About the Crisis
- Who Am I?
- My Family

Talking with Children About the Crisis



(for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children who are settled, either at home or as displaced persons. You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the handout. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead)

Begin the time with your child with regular check-in questions, such as:

1. What was the best thing that happened this week?
2. What was something funny that happened this week?
3. What was hard about this week?

Note for the parent or caregiver: you should be sensitive to the child’s living situation and family context.

Where children are separated from a parent, or living in a different household away from some of the people they love, they may want to look back and talk about their family, or they may want to talk about who they live with now. Let the discussion be led by the child and don’t press them to talk about something they are not happy to discuss.

Topic: Me and My Family For Reflection With Your Child

Who lives in your home (or the place where you are staying) with you now?

Game: Which Person in the House

Explain that you will play a game together now. You will say something and the child should say the name of the person in the household who is the most like what you’ve said.

E.g. “Which person in the house makes the most noise” – “My dad!”

The child should answer as quickly as they can! And the answer can be “me”.

Be flexible here about which household the child is talking about. They may want to look

back at their family home setting, or they may be thinking about where they currently are – which may be someone else’s home, a transit centre, or many other living situations.

Which person in the house...

- Is the tallest?
- Makes the most noise?
- Is the youngest?
- Is the best cook?
- Is kind to others?
- Makes you laugh?
- Add your ideas on something special about your family members

Explain that now we’ll be looking at how you can be yourself and be the part of your family (or household) that only you can be.

Who Am I?

For Reflection With Your Child

Have you ever wished you could be more like your brother or sister, or your friend at school? (Note to parent: Be ready to share your own answer first if the child finds it difficult to answer).

Sometimes it can be good to try to be like someone else – like wanting to learn to play football like your sister, or to be a good listener like your brother. But it’s really important that we realize that we are also special just for who we already are!

There’s no one quite like you and there are things that only you can do! It might be things like:

- Being kind
- Making people laugh
- Helping your younger sibling or your parent(s)

For Reflection With Your Child

What is one thing that you think is really about

you? It might be something you are good at or something about who you are. (Note to parent: again, share your own answer if you need to).

What do you think is special about being you?

My Family

For Reflection With Your Child

What is your favourite thing to do with your parent(s)? (or the adults the child is currently living with) (Share your own experience of your own childhood if you can!)

Say to your child: That does sound fun! Are you still managing to spend time together doing things like this at the moment? What has changed in your family and is it easier or harder to have fun together?

When things change, our parents or other adults around us might have a lot on their mind or have many responsibilities. Sometimes we may be separated from someone in our family, or not be able to see everyone. But, our parents still love us and want to spend time with us.

For Reflection With Your Child

What might be some ways that you could spend time with your parent(s)? (or other caregiver)

Here are some ideas (if you need them):

- Ask your parent (or caregiver) if you can read a book or sing songs together.
- Do some exercise together to your favourite music.
- Ask if you can help with cooking or preparing a meal, or another household task.

If the child is currently separated from a parent or important caregiver, you may think together about how they could keep in touch, or remember this person together with those they are living with now. For example, through phone calls, writing a letter to express your feelings and tell them about the place you are living now, doing an activity you enjoyed doing together to remember them.

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

What is one thing you will ask your parent(s) if you can do together this week? Remember what you said is special about you – what can you do this week to share this with your family? e.g.

- “I am kind” – tell each person in your family something you love about them, or help.
- Someone
- “I’m good at making people laugh” – gather your family together and tell them some jokes!
- “I’m good at cooking” – ask your parents if you can help to prepare one of the meals this week.
- “I’m good at writing” – write a story or a poem and share it with your family/ household one evening.

This ends the tool “Talking With Children About their Family”. We look forward to hearing how it went!

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

Start a a “gratitude journal” in which you regularly record the things for which you’re grateful. Gratitude has two components:

- First, it’s an affirmation of goodness. We affirm that there are good things in the world, gifts and benefits we’ve received. This doesn’t mean that life is perfect; it doesn’t ignore complaints, burdens, and struggles. But when we look at life as a whole, gratitude encourages us to identify some amount of goodness in our life.
- The second part of gratitude is figuring out where that goodness comes from. We recognize the source of this goodness as being outside of ourselves. It didn’t stem from anything we necessarily did, in which we might take pride. We can appreciate positive traits in ourselves, but true gratitude involves a humble dependence on others. We acknowledge that other people — or even higher powers, if you’re of a spiritual mindset — gave us many gifts, big and small, to help us achieve the goodness in our lives.

Hint for today: Start your Gratitude Journal – and make a commitment to writing gratitude statements every day.

THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 5, Staying Safe Together
- Parenting Tips 8, 9, 11, 12 & 15

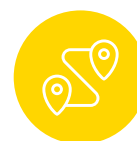


For facilitators

These materials are designed to be used in various crisis/transition contexts your participants may be in – whether in a live crisis/transition zone, on the move, or settled in a new location as a refugee, internally displaced person, or returning to home. Where activities vary, you will see these symbols – please choose the content reflecting where your member or group are at.



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

This session raises the issue of staying safe from the risk of recruitment by illegal groups. You should avoid asking for specific details from the family, as the goal is to raise awareness, rather than identify protection concerns. However, if any protection concerns are raised, do report these to your local police, to your Parenting with Hope Coordinator, and to a site coordinator, if the people concerned are living in temporary housing with a coordinator on site. Before starting the session, ensure you are aware of reporting procedures for sexual exploitation cases, recruitment by illegal groups or concerns so that you can share accurate information.

This session will cover the following concepts:

- Staying Together
- Children's Changing Roles
- Avoiding recruitment by illegal groups

Leading the Session

Begin your meeting by reading together the Session Agreements.

Looking back

Ask members if they would like to share how they have been using the practices they have learned so far from the Parenting with Hope.

Parenting Tips

Introduce the parenting tips 11-8 / 12-9: explain that today's session is based on this tip. Members will have the tips as a summary to help them in parenting during this difficult time.

Staying Together

- This section gives participants a chance to consider how they have kept their families safe during this time and offers practical suggestions on continuing to keep them safe.
- Ask participants to read the various sections.
- Discuss each reflection question with participant(s).

Children's Changing Roles

- This section is relevant for parents, grandparents, teachers, Sunday school teachers, and others who regularly interact with children. It provides information on how to help children navigate the changes in their lives during this time.
- Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.

Avoiding Recruitment from Illegal Groups

- This section discusses the risks of illegal groups and some practical suggestions on how to recognize and stay safe from potential recruitment schemes.
- Ask participants to read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.

Extra Tools for Supporting Children

Spend 5 to 10 minutes reading and discussing these tools during your session.

Staying Safe Together and Who Can I Trust?

Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use when talking with their child about safety and recruitment schemes by illegal groups. It includes specific statements, questions, and ideas for talking with and helping their child consider how to stay safe during these times. After discussing this briefly in your session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.

SESSION 5

Participant's Guide

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times

KEEPING OUR FAMILIES TOGETHER

- Keep children with you or someone you trust all the time.
- Encourage them to share anything that worries them with you.
- Talk to them about things that are not safe.
- Be proud of your efforts and try to take care of yourself too.

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.
- Mark Twain




PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times

MAKING AN IDENTITY TAG FOR A CHILD

- Write the full name & phone number of you and three people you trust.
- Write any medication your child needs, any special needs or disability.
- An identity tag should be covered in plastic or kept in a waterproof bag.
- Hide the tag in something your child always wears (e.g., a pocket, shoe, necklace).

You can cut the flowers, but you cannot keep spring from coming.
- Pablo Neruda



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN FROM ILLEGAL ACTORS

- Illegal actors can be men, women, couples, and could be from your own community.
- Teach your children that people sometimes lie and trick children into coming with them.
- Tell children to talk to a trusted adult if they feel confused or worried.
- Teach children to trust their instincts and get away if something feels strange.

Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.
- Psalms 120:2



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times

TRAVELING WITH OUR CHILDREN

- Tell someone you trust your travel plans, where you are and who you are with.
- Travel in a group of people you know where possible
- If you need to show your passport or ID, try to keep it in your hands.
- When it's hard, remember you're trying your best in a difficult situation.

The darker the night, the brighter the stars.
The deeper the grief, the closer is God!
- Fyodor Dostoyevsky



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times

KEEPING SAFE ON THE ROAD

- If a child has a mobile phone, save your number and those of a few trusted people.
- Explain to your child how they should behave when at checkpoints, (i.e., be quiet, do not leave the vehicle).
- Hide money or bank cards in different places, in case you lose your bags.
- Being prepared takes hard work. Be sure to look after yourself.

How precious is the value of the family.
- Papa Francisco



Today's topics are designed to be used in various contexts – whether settled at home, in a conflict zone, moving to a different home, displaced, or returning to home. Where activities vary, you will see these symbols – please choose the content reflecting your context. We believe the topics we will talk about today are important for every parent and child to understand, regardless of where they live.



Live Conflict/Disaster



On the Move



Settled

Staying Together



For Reflection

Have there been times so far where you have felt worried about the safety of children in your care?

In times of loss, conflict, displacement, and crisis, there is so much that we can worry about – it can be overwhelming, and we can feel that we cannot do enough to keep our children safe. However, as a parent or caregiver, you've already been doing so much – helping to find a safe place to live for your children, keeping them safe, finding food for them to eat, reassuring them.

One of the simplest and most powerful ways we can keep our children safe is just by staying together, and making sure children are not separated from us. That might mean keeping them with us or with someone we know and trust, so they have adult supervision. We know that sometimes parents are separated from one another by loss of life, conflict, attacks, or other crises, and sometimes we cannot avoid this. We shouldn't feel guilty about this, or that this is our fault. But we can do all we can to make sure that children are not separated from the family, or from people we trust. By doing this, we can avoid many risks that children might face.

For Reflection

What do you already do to help to stay together?

It's great that you are already doing so much to keep children in your care together with you.

Some ways you can help to keep children safe by staying together:

- Tell children that staying together will help keep them safe
- Keep children with you or someone you trust all the time
- If you are travelling, hold their hand, have them walk in front of you, and stay in the same vehicle with them
- Create a safety note for each child if you are on the move, whether away from or returning home – this should be covered in plastic or kept in a waterproof bag. Write on the note the full name and phone number of you and three people you trust, any medication your child needs, any special needs or disability. Hide a safety note on every child (e.g. in a pocket that they always wear, on a necklace or in their shoe).
- Tell your child they should not spend time outside alone after dark or accept help from someone alone.
- Make sure you know who your children are spending time with online and in person.

For reflection

Is there something new you will put into practice this week?



Children's Changing Roles



For Reflection

- Thinking about your children over this time of grief and loss, how are they spending their time?
- Have you noticed any changes in their role, or what they do every day? (For example, children may have been out of the house more, may have missed school, doing more of less of something, seeing their Friends more or less, helping more or less at home, etc.)
- Thinking of each child in the family, do you think the situation of losing their caregiver now has made children closer to, or further away from, what you think children “should” be doing as children? (For example, more time with family could be a good thing, but being out of school might not be).

There may have been both positive and negative changes to children's roles – and this may vary a lot between families and households. What do you think needs to be in place for children to be able to fulfil their roles as children?

Let's cover these key points, focusing on any areas which are especially relevant in your context or community:

- Engaging in education is really important – do your best to keep children in school, or enrol in support programmes, and take an interest in their work and studies, in their friends and hobbies.
- Children should only help with work in the house or work outside in a way that doesn't affect their wellbeing or development negatively. When thinking about sharing household chores as a family, think about an appropriate level of responsibility for children.
- Education and opportunities to learn and develop are equally important for both girls and boys, so be careful to ensure that children have the same opportunities, whatever their gender.

- Staying together as a family is very important for children's sense of safety and security; family separation (i.e. sending children away to a residential home) should be avoided).

For reflection

Is there something that stands out to you from what we've talked about, or something that might be relevant for your family?

Avoiding Trafficking



For Reflection

Can you tell me about someone who has helped you so far in the crisis? (This might be someone who has helped you with housing, to access food and clothing, or told you about a staying safe in a conflict zone).

Can you share an example of something that has helped you feel safe during your family loss or crisis?

It's wonderful to have so many people who are willing to help and show kindness to one another in this difficult time. However, at the same time, we know that in any crisis – whether due to loss, conflict, displacement, disaster, epidemic, or transition, there are also people who do not have good intentions and see this as an opportunity to take advantage of people who are vulnerable.

For Reflection

Have you noticed anything like that during this crisis – feeling concerned about whether someone you have seen or met has good intentions – in your experience so far?

One key risk in times of crisis and transition is recruitment by illegal groups – where people who may seem like they want to help are actually seeking to exploit those who need help, for their own gain. This could involve taking people to a place where they will have to work or be exploited, and will not be free to leave. This may be presented as a good opportunity for adults or children to find work, or be supported by people elsewhere. This can happen to both adults and children, and it will usually seem like a good opportunity to find a



safe place and earn money. A recruiter might offer to help a person get back home, if they have been displaced by the crisis or transition. A recruiter may also go out of their way to be helpful or give extravagant gifts, which make it difficult for people to say no to their requests.

Therefore, it's important to know the signs to look out for so that you can avoid danger and find honest people who will help, and share this information with others. It is also important to know there is a lot you can do to help yourself and your children stay safe in the crisis.

For Reflection

How do you think we can stay safe from illegal groups?

Some ways you can stay safe are:

- Be aware that recruiters will look like ordinary people, and sound like they want to help.
- Trust your instincts — if something feels strange, get out immediately.
- Ask to see a photo ID before you accept anyone's help, transport or a place to stay. If local police are there, check with them.
- Teach children that they should not say yes to anyone offering help without talking to you first.
- If you are concerned that someone may have been recruited, or that is happening, you should report this to the nearest police station or local authorities.
- If you are travelling: Travel in a group of people you know.

- Keep someone you trust updated with your travel places, where you are and who you are with.
- When travelling with someone you don't know, take a photo of the person and the vehicle and send it to someone you know and trust.
- Make a code word with people you trust, to let them know if you are in danger.
- Don't give your passport or ID documents to anyone, or your personal phone.

For Reflection

Is there someone you could share this information with?

Putting it into practice this week

What actions could you take with your child, or what could you talk to them about from our conversation today?

This ends Session 5. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!



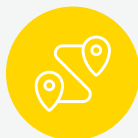
SESSION 5

EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following tools are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Staying Safe Together
- Who Can I Trust?

Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

Staying Safe Together



For Reflection with the Child

1. Imagine you could create a fun and safe place for children where you are. What would be there? What would it be like?

In an in-person setting, you might ask the child to draw this place, and in a group, children could create a huge drawing altogether, or create individual pictures and share about them.

With all the changes that have happened recently, it may be difficult to find these safe places for children to have fun and play together.

2. In the place where you live now, what are your favourite places to go? Where are the best places for children?

In a group session, you could ask children to work together to draw a map of where they live – adding in places like shops, their homes, health centres, school, churches/mosques/temples etc. They can then mark on the map with one colour the places that are safe and good for children, and use another colour to show places that are not good or safe for children.

3. Has this changed since the crisis?
(Are there new places that have been opened for children? Are there places that you used to go to, that you miss? Are there places that used to be safe, that aren't safe anymore? Is it safe for you to easily leave home and move around the neighbourhood?)

When things are changing fast, or we are in a new place, we might feel uncertain or worried.

4. What do you think can help children to stay safe where you are now?

There are some simple things that can help children to stay safe, wherever they are, even when things are changing a lot or are very different.

- Stay together with your family.
- Tell someone you trust if you feel worried about your safety.
- If you can, keep going with your schoolwork and ask for help to do that.
- If you are in an unstable place or might be moving to somewhere new: Make sure you know your full name and your parents' or caregivers' names, and your address.
- Talk with your parent(s) about what you would do if you were separated.

5. Is there anything you might do to stay safe where you are this week?

Who can I trust?



In a group setting, you could start this section with a group game – 'Secret Safe Zone'. Secretly choose one place in the room (such as a wall or rug) which is a 'safe zone' – where players cannot be 'tagged'.

Children should run around, and they can be tagged (tapped on the shoulder) whenever they are not in the safe zone. When a child is tagged, they must sit down where they are – they can be 'released' by being tagged by another child. Gradually children will be able to work out where the safe zone is. The children win when they are all in the safe zone. Play again with one or two children choosing the safe zone.

For Reflection with the Child

Apart from your parents, can you think of any

other adults or children who have helped you and your family since the war started?

(This could be people who have helped with food and clothing, a place to stay, transport, or sharing helpful information, for example)

It's great that there have been so many people who are willing to be kind and help others during this difficult time. Most people are kind and want to help us.

But, sometimes people are not kind and might say they are trying to 'help' us and our family, but really they are not helping us. For example:

- Someone might come to the community and say that they have a great opportunity for children to learn or to work, in another place. They might also offer to help older kids get back home, if you had to leave your home, city or even country – this can be dangerous as children would be separated from their family, and might not be treated well, or what the person said may not be true.
- Older children might be asked to work with illegal groups, which puts children in serious danger.
- Our parents could be given a job which is not good for them, where they work too hard or are not safe at work.
- This can sound scary, but there are some simple things we can do as children which can help us to know who to trust, and how to get help from people who really want to help us.

For Reflection with the Child

What do you think children can do to make sure they are helped by safe people?

Here are a few things children can do that will help you to stay safe:

- If at all possible, stay together with your family. Don't travel on your own.
- Don't accept help from someone you don't know without talking with your parent(s) first.
- If you feel worried about something, talk to someone you trust.



- Talk with your family about these issues, and talk together about how you can stay together and find help from people you trust.
- Share this information with other children or others in your family.
- For older children: Only share your phone number or social media details with people that you trust. Don't accept gifts which you have to keep secret.

For Reflection with the Child

Is there anything you will talk with your family about?

If there is anything you want to talk about based on what we have discussed today, please do talk to me, or someone that you trust, about any concerns you have.

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

For Reflection with the Child

From our conversation today, can you think of 3 things that might help you be safe where you are? Great!

(Remind the child of one or two things that seemed to be important for them during the conversation.)

What will you do this week to stay safe together?

(Some suggestions are: Talk to someone I trust / talk with parents about safety / talk with parents about illegal groups / share safety information with others / other).

This ends the tools "Staying Safe Together" and "Who Can I Trust?". We look forward to hearing how it went!

STAYING SAFE AT HOME

SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

Go for a vigorous walk

Walking is good generally for fitness and well-being, but going for a walk when you are anxious – especially in open, green spaces – can help soothe your anxiety. The act of putting one foot in front of the other gives you a purpose, while stomping out your stresses can help you feel more grounded and connected with yourself.

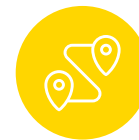


For facilitators

These materials are designed to be used in various crisis contexts your participants may be in – whether in a live conflict zone, on the move, or settled in a new location as a refugee, internally displaced person, or returning to home. Where activities vary, you will see these symbols – please choose the content reflecting where your mentee or group are at.



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

This session raises the issue of preventing violence and abuse at home. You should avoid asking for specific details from the participants, as the goal is to raise awareness, rather than identify protection concerns. However, if any protection concerns are raised, do report these to the appropriate authorities. Before starting the session, ensure you are aware of reporting procedures for domestic violence, abuse, or concerns, and follow those to report any concerns. Refer to the Parenting with Hope Child Safeguarding Policy for further instructions.

This session will cover the following concepts:

THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 6, Staying Safe at Home
- Parenting Tips 5 & 13



- When we get angry.
- How to use positive discipline with our children.

Leading the session

Begin your meeting by reading the Session Agreements.

Looking back

Ask members what they have practiced from the previous session since you met.

Parenting Tips

Introduce the parenting tips: explain that today's session is based on these tips. Participants will have the tips as a summary to help them in parenting during this difficult time.

When We Get Angry

- This section gives participants a chance to consider how stress can increase anger reactions in people. It offers suggestions on what to do during times of anger.
- Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.

How to Use Positive Discipline with our Children

- This section may be relevant for parents, grandparents, and others who are currently responsible for disciplining children. It provides information on how to discipline in positive ways.
- Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.

Extra Tools for Supporting Children

Spend 5 to 10 minutes reading and discussing these tools during your session.

Staying Safe at Home and Someone I Can Talk To

- Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use when talking with their child about staying safe at home. It includes specific statements, questions, and ideas for talking with and helping their child consider anger and how to stay safe during these times.
- After discussing this briefly in your session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.



SESSION 6

Participant's Guide

STAYING SAFE AT HOME



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times



COPING WITH STRESS, UPSET, AND ANGER

- Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling.
- Losing your temper? Breathe in and out slowly five times.
- Try to do something that helps you relax.
- Remember to praise yourself each time you take steps to cope.

I find hope in the darkest days
and focus in the brightest.
– Dalai Lama



PARENTING TIPS
For challenging times



PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- Teach your child that no one has the right to touch them or make them uncomfortable.
- Practice saying “no” loudly and strongly.
- If they tell you about abuse, trust your child. Reassure them it's not their fault and they are safe and loved. Talking about this with your child helps protect them.
- Tell them that abusers often trick children by saying it is their ‘secret’

Rescue me, Lord, from evildoers;
protect me from the violent.
– Psalms 140:1



When I Get Angry

For Reflection

- What has been a time this week that you remember feeling angry about something or with someone at home?
- What did you do when you felt angry?

(Be prepared to share your own experience)

Under stress it is normal to feel more angry than usual – whether about big things or small! We love our children and teenagers, but the stresses of our losses, grief, the conflict, disasters, or other crises, along with the extra pressures in daily life, separation from family members and the sadness we face, can all make us angry. This is normal and something that we all experience. Our anger doesn't need to be out of our control – we can do things before and during it to help us manage it.

For Reflection

- The same things usually make us get stressed and angry every time – can you see any patterns in what makes you angry, and how do you normally react?
- Do you know what helps you to respond well?

(In times of loss, conflict, or displacement, people may not be able to access rest, food, support and time out as in these examples. In this case, move straight onto the ‘Taking a Break’ tip below).



There are ways we can help ourselves prevent anger from starting — for example:

- If we usually get angry when we are tired, can we get more rest?
- If we are angry when we are hungry, can we make sure we eat? (be sensitive to families who may not have enough food)
- If we are angry when we feel alone, can we ask for support or make sure we connect with others?
- If we feel under pressure and overwhelmed, can we make sure we are doing something that we enjoy and taking some time for ourselves somehow?

Finding someone we can talk to about how we are feeling can be a simple step that can make a big difference, even if we aren't able to solve all of the issues.

For Reflection

Can you think of any ways you could prevent your anger from starting?

That sounds great! But also, however much we prepare, we will all still feel angry sometimes! We can also be prepared to react to our anger in a positive way.

Taking a break is one of the best ways to manage anger:

- When you start feeling angry, take a 10-second cool down. Breathe in and out five times before you speak or move. Then try to respond in a calmer way.
- Go somewhere else for 10 minutes to regain control of your emotions. If you have safe outdoor space, go outside.
- *(If relevant in your context:)* Drinking alcohol can influence our reaction. Cut back on drinking or don't drink, especially when children are awake.
- Do you have weapons or things that can be used to hit others? Lock them up, hide them, or take them out of the home.

For Reflection

Is there something we've talked about that you want to try to put into practice this week?

Using Positive Discipline with our Children

For Reflection

- What have you noticed about children's behaviour during this time of their own loss and grieving, and of change in the family?
- Is it the same as usual or have you noticed more difficult behaviour?

All children misbehave. It is normal when children are tired, hungry, afraid, or learning independence. And this can be extra hard to cope with during a crisis.

For Reflection

- How confident are you in using positive discipline rather than physical discipline with your children?
- What are some of the ways you help to encourage positive behaviours in your children?

Some ideas for positive discipline:

- Encourage positive behaviour by using positive words to say the behaviour you want to see (e.g. 'Please put your books away' rather than 'Don't make a mess') and praise your child when they are behaving well.
- Redirect unwanted behaviour quickly when you notice it beginning, by suggesting another activity.
- Use consequences rather than hitting or shouting – this is more effective and teaches children responsibility. Some ideas of consequences could be taking away privileges or taking some time to cool off (a time-out). Give your child a chance to follow instructions before giving them the consequence. Stay calm when giving the consequence and make sure it is something you can follow through with. Consequences should be proportionate and reasonable.

For Reflection

What will you do differently for one specific behaviour with one specific child this week?

Sometimes something happens at home

or outside that makes a child feel unsafe – abuse or violence against children is one of the things that can make them change their behaviour and seem to be behaving “badly”. If we notice changes in our child’s behaviour or see any physical signs of violence we should encourage the child to talk to us.

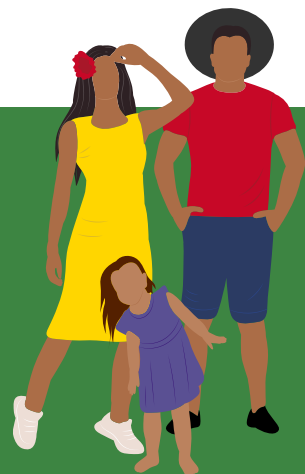
Share the appropriate procedure for reporting child abuse in your context (e.g. child helpline, social services, NGO or police.).

Putting it into practice this week

- Could you try to talk with your child together about what ideas you and they have for how you can both manage your anger effectively?
- What could you do if you notice each other getting angry?
- What do you plan to put into practice with your child this week?

This ends Session 6. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!



SESSION 6

EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following handouts are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Staying Safe at Home
- Someone I Can Talk To

Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

- Ears?
- Feet?
- Mouth?
- Hands?
- Legs?
- Eyes?

Staying Safe at Home



Activity to play with the child

Ask the child to tell you something they can do with the part of their body you name. You can take it in turns to ask one another, choosing a different part of the body each time.

E.g. “Legs” – “Running fast!” “Eyes” – “Noticing when my sister is sad”

What’s something you’re glad you can do with your...

If there are several children, the children can try to touch that part of their body as fast as they can, as well as shouting out their answers.

Explain that today we’ll be looking at how we can stay safe at home, including how we use our bodies in a positive way.

Me and My Body — For reflection with the child

It’s great that we can use our body to do so many good things, as we just talked about. But sometimes we can also use our bodies in less helpful ways — maybe to hurt others or even ourselves. Can you think of any examples of this?

Some examples might be:

- Using our hands to hit or hurt each other.
- Using our feet to kick someone.
- Using our mouth to say unkind words.

All of us get angry and upset sometimes (both children and adults!) and especially at the moment. When things are hard and confusing, sometimes we can find it difficult to stay calm and kind.

In a group setting, you could ask children to make a face that looks angry.

For Reflection with the Child

- Can you think of a time you felt angry this week?
- What happened?
- What did you do?

(Be ready to share your own example with the child, to show that all of us can find life difficult)

For Reflection with the Child

- What do you normally do when you feel angry?
- Does this help you feel better?

Some things we can do if we feel angry:

- Count to ten.
- Walk away from the situation.
- Breathe slowly and deeply.
- Talk to someone you trust.
- Do some exercise or physical activity.
- Write or draw how you are feeling.

For Reflection with the Child

Will you try something different this week when you feel angry?

Someone I Can Talk To



For Reflection with the Child

1. What would you do if something happened to make you feel unsafe tomorrow?

Do not prompt the child for answers, but some of their answers might include: (Talk to someone I trust / Tell someone to stop what they are doing / Get away from the situation / Don't know)

Look at your hand and your five fingers. It's important that we have people to talk to in case we're feeling scared, upset, angry or sad.

2. Can you think of five people you can talk to if you are having a hard time? (one for each finger) (This might include parents, siblings, friends, wider family, teachers, mentors, faith leaders or others).

In a group or 1:1 setting, children could be asked to draw around their hand, and write the name of (or draw) one person they can talk to on each finger.

3. Can you still talk to these people at the moment?

If not, is there someone else at home or nearby you can talk to?

One of the other ways we can hurt one another is by touching someone in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable or when they do not want it. If that happens to us, we should know that we can:

- Tell this person to stop.
- Get away from the situation.
- Tell someone we trust about it.

We should never keep secrets that make us sad or worried, and so it's important to think ahead about who are the people that we will talk to if we ever feel worried. We should always tell someone if we feel worried about something or feel like something is making us uncomfortable.

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

For Reflection with the Child

What is one thing you will do this week to help you if you feel angry, or to talk to someone you trust?

(Some options include: do something different if I feel angry / talk to parent about managing anger / talk to someone I trust if I am worried / other.)

This ends the tools “Staying Safe at Home” and “Someone I Can Trust”. We look forward to hearing how it went!

COPING WITH LOSS – BUILDING HOPE BY UNDERSTANDING GUILT AND TRAUMA

SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

Q#1. What does self-care mean to you? Write your your answer in your journal.

Take some time to reflect on what self-care means to you and any assumptions you may have about what self-care looks like. These questions can help you get started:

- What activities or images come to mind when you think about self-care?
- What feelings do you associate with self-care?
- Do you have any hesitations about engaging in self-care?
- Why is it important for you to engage in self-care?

Q#2. What is the thing you can do to take better care of yourself? What are you willing to do and when do you plan to start?

Q#3. Consider your own triggers: What are some triggers that cause stress in you? How do you manage this?

Q#4. What can you do in the future when you begin to feel an escalation of emotions related to a trigger?

THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 7. Coping with Loss – Building Hope by Understanding Guilt and Trauma.
- Parenting Tips 1, 2, 5, 14



For facilitators

This session may bring up difficult emotions for the child and parent, particularly if they have lost a loved one during recent times. Remember that you are not responsible for counselling or psychological support, and be ready to listen but also to refer the family for further specialised support if needed. You MUST have a psychological referral in place BEFORE this session, so that you can immediately refer someone for counselling if they need it.

This session draws on guidance produced by the Global Protection Cluster and the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Collaborative for children and families in adversity: Communicating with children about death, and helping children cope with grief. You may want to read this for further information before the session.

This session will cover the following concepts:

- How we have experienced loss as a family.
- How we can support our children to deal with loss and grief.
- How we can support to deal with guilt, fear and worry.

Leading the Session

Begin your meeting by reading together the Session Agreements.

Looking back

Ask members what they practiced to help them prevent or respond to anger in a healthy way since your last meeting.

Parenting Tips

Introduce the parenting tip: explain that today's session is based on this tip. Members will have the tips as a summary to help them in parenting during this difficult time.

Coping with Loss

- This section focuses on the participant(s), their losses during this time, and how to grieve.
- Ask participants if they wish to help read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.
- Summarise the different losses participants mention if they have given specific examples, and affirm that these are difficult situations to deal with.

Helping My Children Deal with Loss, Understanding Guilt and Overcoming Trauma

- This section is relevant for parents, grandparents, teachers, Sunday school teachers, and others who regularly interact with children. It provides information about how children respond to loss and practical tips on how to help children cope with loss.
- Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.

Extra Tools for Supporting Children

Spend 5 to 10 minutes reading and discussing these tools during your session.

Talking with Children About Coping with Loss

- Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use when talking with their child about their losses. It includes specific statements, questions, and ideas for talking with and helping their child deal with the trauma.
- After discussing this briefly in your session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.

SESSION 7

Participant's Guide

COPING WITH LOSS – BUILDING HOPE BY UNDERSTANDING GUILT AND TRAUMA



PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.



Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer
– Psalms 61:1



PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



ROUTINE HELPS CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

- Even when it feels hard, try to have some daily routines for yourself and children.
- If you can, help children with daily routines like meals or schoolwork.
- Our children learn calmness and kindness from us.
- Tell yourself a calming message again and again, Try 'I can do this, I am trying my best'



A true friend is one who takes you by their hand and touches your heart.
– Gabriel García Márquez



PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



COPING WITH STRESS, UPSET, AND ANGER

- Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling.
- Losing your temper? Breathe in and out slowly five times.
- Try to do something that helps you relax.
- Remember to praise yourself each time you take steps to cope.



I find hope in the darkest days and focus in the brightest.
– Dalai Lama



PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



HELPING OUR CHILDREN WHEN SOMEONE WE LOVE DIES

- Tell children who they will live with and who will look after them – they often worry about this.
- Listen to and accept whatever your child feels. Children may seem happy but be sad.
- Do something together to say goodbye to the person – a song or letter or prayer.
- Allow yourself to mourn your losses too.
- In simple words, tell them the person has died and will not come back.



No matter how long the storms lasts, the sun always shines behind the clouds.
– Khalil Gibran



For Reflection

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

Coping with Loss

Today's topics are coping with loss as a family and overcoming guilt or secondary trauma caused by the loss. We're all aware that this has been a difficult time for everyone, and many of us have lost friends or family members, or have struggled with other kinds of loss during this time. We know that our children have too. By the end of our session today we will have talked about:

- How we have experienced loss as a family
- How we can support our children to deal with loss and grief and to overcome secondary trauma caused by the loss.

This may be a difficult topic to talk about and, at any point, group members can feel free not to answer or to end the conversation or change the subject. Our goal is to create a safe space to begin to talk about this topic and think about some practical ideas, but if there is a need for further support, your group facilitator can help you connect to further support, such as counselling.

A fundamental aspect of trauma recovery involves learning to manage triggers. These are elements that, due to a previous traumatic experience, can evoke a stress response in you. Triggers can be both internal, such as feelings of anxiety, anger, or sadness, and external, related to the environment around you. Clearly identifying these triggers is an essential step in learning to address them. Compiling a list of things that provoke stress responses and the emotional, physical, and mental impacts resulting from those responses will provide you with valuable insights on how to effectively cope with them.

How Have We Experienced Loss?

We have all experienced loss in different ways — being separated from friends and family, losing a loved one, losing a familiar place like a home, losing our job or school.

For Reflection

Are there any ways you or your children have experienced loss during this time?

Grief is the name for the painful emotions we feel when we lose someone or something. As humans, connection to other people is very important to us, and that is why we feel bad when separated from those we love, and why losing a loved one creates the greatest pain.

We can also grieve for other losses: being separated from friends and family, or our home; losing access to a familiar place like school, the workplace, or our place of worship. And we can also grieve for things that are not so easy to see: such as losing our sense of security, or our hopes for the future.

Here are some additional hidden losses that can cause grief — loss of:

- Our world
- Status
- A sense of system identity
- A sense of cultural balance
- Cultural cohesion in the family
- Lifestyle
- Possessions
- Relationships
- Past that wasn't or past that was

Phases of Grief

Grief is our reaction to loss. When we experience a loss, we may go through a number of phases in the grieving process. We might also go back and forth between these phases, and we might experience them in

different orders. The way one person grieves may also differ from the way someone else grieves: one may need solitude in nature and the other may need companionship. Our minds and emotions are trying to make sense of our loss and adapt to the new reality that has been created in our lives.

Disbelief

We may feel numb or shocked. We might be struggling to believe that the loss has happened. We might avoid people or put off doing things. We might become forgetful and distracted, and try to stay busy.

We may find ourselves frequently telling others, “I’m fine”.

Anger

It’s normal to feel angry after a loss. We may feel frustrated, impatient or resentful. Sometimes we might even feel like we are out of control. We might become pessimistic, cynical and irritable.

Sometimes we may be aggressive and get into arguments with other people.

Yearning

After experiencing loss, it’s common to have strong emotions of wishing our loved one was still with us. We are looking for comfort, and we might relive memories of the person we lost, through pictures or items that remind us of them.

Depression

It’s normal to feel intense pain after a loss, and that pain might come and go over time. We might feel hopeless or overwhelmed. We might have trouble sleeping and eat less or more than we normally do. We might feel less energetic or less motivated, and we might try to avoid being around people. Some people use alcohol or drugs to deaden the pain..

Guilt, Fear and Worry

It is common for those who have survived a traumatic event to experience guilt, shame, regret, fear, or worry. You might experience any of the following:

- Guilt about surviving.
- Guilt over what you “should” have done.

- Guilt over what you did.
- Guilt that you left a place or situation when others did not.
- Regret over what you did or did not do.
- Fear that it was your fault.
- Sadness for not having done what was necessary, helped enough, shared appropriately, or known what was required.

It’s normal to think repeatedly about events that happened and to wonder what you could have or should have done differently.

You might also notice that your older child or children are experiencing the same feelings of guilt.

You might have feelings of regret, and you may be telling yourself you should have tried harder to help others or to do something different than what you did.

Acceptance

Over time, the pain of loss usually lessens. This does not mean we are forgetting who or what we lost. We are learning to live in our new reality. We are adapting and being honest with ourselves and others. We’re learning to be present and mindful. Practicing these coping skills can help us feel courageous.

Making Sense

Loss creates a new reality in our lives, and we can find healing in making sense of that new reality. This usually takes time, and it does not mean we have to understand why our loved one died. It means we can honor our loved one and make sense of the life we now live and the people who are still with us.

“Meaning is a reflection of the love we have for those we have lost.”

David Kessler

For Reflection

- Which, if any, of these phases of grief have you experienced after your own loss?
- What has helped or might help you adapt to your new reality and find meaning?

If you find yourself with these feelings of guilt, there are some tips that can help you:

- Remind yourself you are not responsible for this situation – you did not cause this. You can mourn over the loss of a loved one but you should not feel guilty because it causes a lot of suffering.
- Don't assume responsibility for a situation that was out of your control.
- Remember that these feelings are common. During and after a death of a mother or father or caregiver, sadness, fear, anger, anxiety, grief, and guilt are completely normal responses, and feeling guilty does not mean you are guilty of doing anything wrong.
- It's actually healthy to feel thankful for your life while at the same time mourning the death of others.
- Be kind and loving to yourself and let self-forgiveness be the foundation upon which you move forward.
- Think about how people that love you feel about your LIFE. Embrace the knowledge that many who love you are deeply grateful that you are okay. This thought can provide comfort and help alleviate the feelings of guilt and regret that you may be experiencing.

Children and Grief

For Reflection

When considering the losses that your children have faced, whether it's the loss of loved ones or opportunities and friendships, it's important to recognize that there is no "correct" way to grieve. Children's reactions will vary a lot depending on their age and personality. If someone has died, children's reactions also depend on how close they were to that person, how the person died, and how

the family are responding.

While every child is different, you might see changes in your child's:

- **Feelings:** Children who had experienced a loss may undergo a broad spectrum of emotions, including sadness, anger, fear, loneliness, guilt, or confusion. They might experience more than one feeling simultaneously or go through periods where they feel nothing at all.
- **Thinking:** they may find themselves thinking constantly about what happened, or find uncomfortable or frightening thoughts or images suddenly appear in their head without warning. They may worry about the future, and find it hard to focus and concentrate.
- **Behaviour:** Children may experience different changes in their behaviour after suffering a loss. Some children may withdraw and isolate themselves, while others may continue with the regular chores as if nothing had happened. Some children may misbehave, deliberately getting into fights, or they may revert to the behaviour of a much younger child, such as thumb sucking, bed wetting, or demanding that you stay close. They may engage in 'repetitive play', repeatedly acting out an upsetting experience.
- **Physical state:** Children who have experienced a loss may also undergo changes in their physical state. Some children may lose their appetite or have difficulty sleeping. Others may experience nightmares or suffer from unexplained aches and pains.

Children can have different reactions to the loss of a loved one, and these reactions may vary throughout the day and over an extended period. The grieving process can be more challenging in complex life situations and may resurface during anniversaries or activities they used to enjoy with the deceased person. These reactions are normal, but in some cases, they can be intense and negatively impact the child's daily life. In such situations, it's important for parents to seek additional support, such as the assistance of a community health professional, for the child.



Helping my Children Deal with Loss

This section is relevant for parents, grandparents, teachers, Sunday school teachers, and others who regularly interact with children.

It is crucial to recognize that family members going through grief over the loss of a loved one may be so immersed in their own pain that the ability to provide comfort to one another may take months to develop. In such situations, allowing oneself to receive support from a close circle of trusted friends can be a significant resource to initiate the healing process.

For Reflection

- How are your children coping now?
- What do you think is helping them to deal with their sadness or grief?

It's great that you can see some positive ways that your children are able to move forward and cope with these difficult things. While losing a loved one, or any other loss, can be deeply upsetting for a child, there are lots of things we can do to support our children and move forward together.

Here are some other ways we can support our children to cope with loss:

- Talking to children openly and honestly: While it is natural to want to protect children from getting upset, even very young children can tell when something unusual is happening, and not understanding what is happening causes more distress for children. If the truth is hidden from them, children can imagine something that is worse than reality, and they may blame themselves. All children, including those with physical and mental disabilities, need clear, honest, consistent explanations appropriate to their age and ability to understand, so that they can accept the reality of the loss. Telling your children the truth will increase their trust in you and help them cope better with the loss.
- Ensure that the child receives loving, consistent care from you. Try not to punish

the child for challenging behaviour or where they seem unable to do something they used to be able to do, as these can be reactions to the grief. Very young children feel more secure through loving physical contact, singing, cuddling and rocking.

- Try to maintain normal life routines and structure as much as is possible. Try to have a regular pattern to the day with allocated tasks and times for activities, such as cleaning the space, doing school work, getting exercise and having time to play.
- If there has been a death of a loved one, other children in the child's life, at school or in friendship circles, should be informed (through their teachers or parents) as to what has happened, so that they can support the child.
- Give children the opportunity to help you, but do not push them to take on adult roles and responsibilities beyond their capacity.
- Self-care — take care of your own physical and mental wellbeing. You have experienced loss as well. It is vital that you get enough sleep, eat properly, exercise, take time to relax, and also have someone to whom you can turn for emotional support. Try to avoid harmful practices such as increased alcohol or tobacco consumption.
- Art or drawing, drama, songs, and play can especially help children to find outlets for their grief. See creative ideas in the "Putting it into Practice" section below.

For Reflection

Is there anything you want to put into practice with your children?

Putting it into Practice this Week

An activity to do with your child this week: If the conversation has included examples of children dealing with the death of loved ones, you may want to suggest ideas for how the family could find ways to remember the person together.

Find ways for your child to show their love for the person who has died, and to show the importance of that person in the child's life. Children may like to paint a picture, read a poem, or something they have written about

that person, or sing a song, or make music. You could prepare and share a meal together which the loved one enjoyed, and talk about them during the meal. This kind of activity can also be repeated on significant anniversaries, like the birthday of the person who has died.

- Put a picture on a wall and/or objects that remind you of that person.
- Help the child to create a 'memory box' where they can place small items that remind them of the person who has died. These can be photographs if you have them, or objects such as buttons from a favourite jacket, or a pendant, or prayer beads. Or help the child create a scrap book in which they tell stories and make pictures of happy times that they remember.
- Work with children to draw a family tree. This emphasizes that there is still a connection with the lost loved one, even if they are not physically with us anymore. It also helps the child to see that they are still part of a wider family network.

Wrap Up

We have all experienced collective trauma and losses. Engaging in a social network can help bring healing. Let's talk about how we can get involved with a small group of friends, in our community, in a hobby or sport, in a service organisation, in a church or faith community or congregation, or a project as part of supporting ourselves and our families in dealing with grief and loss at this time. Discuss if this Parenting with Hope is part of a larger organisation or church or faith community or congregation that participants might take part in. Also talk about any opportunities for children to get involved.

This ends Session 7. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!



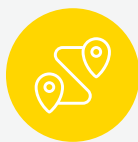
SESSION 7

EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following handouts are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. This is the included tool for this session:

- Talking with Children about Coping with Loss

Talking with Children about Coping with Loss



Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

My Game: More or Less

Explain: You will say several things to the child, and they should respond with either ‘More!’ or ‘Less!’ to let you know whether they think there has been more or less of each thing during the last few months.

E.g. You: ‘Going to school?’ Child: ‘Less’

You: ‘Playing with your family?’ Child: ‘More’

Use a selection of the following statements which will be relevant for the child you are speaking with

- Going to school
- Playing with your family
- Taking care of people at home
- Eating chocolate
- Exercising outside
- Seeing your friends
- Reading books
- Going shopping
- Helping with household chores

We all have been through a lot of change and gained and lost things, sometimes things that are really important to us. Explain that today we’ll be looking at what we’ve lost and sharing some ideas together to help us to cope with these difficult times.



What Have I Lost?

We know that this has been a hard time for all of us (adults and children) and we've all lost different things – not being able to see our friends and family, or being away from our home; not being able to go to a familiar place like school, or to our place of worship or community centre. Some of us have also lost people we love. We can also lose things we can't see – for example we could lose our sense of feeling safe, or our feeling of hope for the future.

For Reflection with the Child

Looking back over the last few months what are some things you feel like you have lost?

The child may mention losing a loved one or friend, or they may choose to talk about other types of loss. That's fine, and you can be guided by what the child wants to talk about in the conversation.

That must have been a hard time for you and your family.

For Reflection with the Child

How are you feeling about it now?

It's normal to have different reactions and feelings when we lose someone or something, and we shouldn't feel bad about that.

Here are some different ways you might be feeling when you have lost something or someone:

- You might feel sad, angry, frightened, lonely, guilty or confused, and wish things could go back to the way they were. You might feel ok for a while and then suddenly feel really sad again.
- You might find it hard to concentrate or focus on your school work, or you might find you are thinking about the situation a lot.
- You might feel like you don't want to do the things you usually enjoy doing, or you might find yourself getting into trouble more often.
- You might feel less hungry or find it hard to sleep, or feel ill.

It's normal and ok to experience any of these reactions, and it's ok to cry or share the way you are feeling with someone you trust, so you don't have to handle it on your own.

For Reflection with the Child

Do you have a parent, friend or other adult you can talk to about how you are feeling?

How Can I Move Forward?

For Reflection with the Child

What are some things you already do that help you to feel better?

You have many strengths and skills that help you cope with challenging moments. Surely, you can recall situations where you faced challenges and successfully overcome them. This is great and demonstrates that you already possess the necessary tools to move forward.

Here are some other ideas you could try, which could help you to feel better about what you have lost (if the child has mentioned losing a loved one, talk about this specifically):

- Remember that it's ok to have feelings! And that they might come and go at different times, and that's ok.
- Talk about it – find a way to talk with your parents or other trusted adults about what happened and ask any questions you still have.
- Share your feelings or find a way to express them (drawing, writing, talking to parent or a friend).
- Find ways to do the things that make you happy, like connecting with your friends, having fun with your family.

For Reflection with the Child

When you consider survivor's guilt, it's helpful to understand what trauma can do to the body, brain, and sense of well-being. Your brain and body do best when they experience satisfying activities, like the birth of a baby, a party, learning something, and feeling success.

These satisfying experiences are prompted by hormones that help regulate your moods and promote positive feelings. We need these

hormones in our life to feel regulated and experience well-being.

Traumatic experiences have the opposite impact on your emotions. Toxic stress produces unhealthy hormones that take over, and they tell you to “fight, freeze, or flee.” However, there are also healthy hormones that have a calming effect on your body when you are stressed, and they help you adjust to stress and actually grow through it.

Below are some POSITIVE STEPS that can help YOU, even starting TODAY to produce the healthy hormones and reduce harmful hormones:

- Do something meaningful for someone else.
- Allow yourself to grieve. It is hard to grieve loss during conflict because the threat is still present. In little moments, try to find ways to acknowledge and honor the people who were lost.
- Find a safe person to talk with.
- Find positive ways to express yourself; art, song, poetry, or dance are examples. Journaling can also be helpful.
- Practice self-care. You have experienced a harrowing event and taking care of yourself both physically and emotionally is essential for healing. Eat well, sleep well, move your body and find support to help make sense of it all.
- Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- Exercise earlier in the day. Exercising regularly can improve sleep quality but should be done at least 2–3 hours before bedtime.
- Limit caffeine intake. Avoid nicotine and alcohol.
- Limit exposure to bright light at night. Go to bed in a quiet room. Take naps.
- Learn to recognize stressful thinking. Paying attention to stressful thought may help you reduce them. Training yourself to be aware of your thoughts, your breathing,

your heart rate and other signs of tension helps you recognize stress when it begins.

- Get outside, turn your face to the sun and close your eyes for a few seconds.
- Laugh. Find a video on YouTube or a movie you can watch that is funny. Sit with someone and tell stories of experiences that brought you joy. Laugh or giggle.
- Sit and meditate, reflect, pray. If faith is important to you, reading an uplifting story or book, such as the Bible, may bring hope.
- Practice talking about what you are grateful for! Research shows practicing gratitude and laughter help us recover.
- Find and use different spices known for producing “happy” hormones: (Spicy foods; Yogurt, beans, eggs, meats that are low-fat; Almonds; Sauerkraut; Foods with tryptophan: oats, cheese, canned tuna, seeds, whole milk; Green Tea extract).
- Be your best self. Feelings of shame, guilt, or inadequacy can lead to negative thinking. Instead, practice the every day habits of gratitude and forgiveness of others.

Guilt can paralyze us or motivate us. Grieving your experiences is part of the healing process — but remember this is not your fault. You can decide today to build healthy simple habits that make your healthy hormones increase and actually build hope!

The POSITIVE suggestions for you on healthy hormones that we talked about can be helpful if you are experiencing secondary or vicarious trauma. Below are some additional ideas of healthy habits:

- Listen to your body. Learn to recognize and manage tension – use relaxation techniques.
- Reduce stressors in areas of your life. Learn to say no.
- Time away. Step away from others and allow yourself some alone time.
- Learn about stress. When you are learning and applying what you have learned, you are feeling more competent and successful.

- Take breaks from news stories, including those on social media. It's good to be informed, but constant information about conflict (or crisis around you) can be upsetting.
- Move more and sit less – keeping a commitment to keeping your body moving – a walk, stretches or other exercises.
- Learn to take deep breaths in through the nose and then to hold that breath – then letting it out slowly through the mouth.
- Drink plenty of water. Keep hydrated.
- Create a 'memory box' where you can keep small items that remind you of the person
- Create a scrapbook with stories and pictures of happy times you can remember with the person

An invitation to connect

If there is a programme or activity that the child could join in with as part of your organisation/project/church/community, explain this to the child now, and ask if they would like to be part of it. Ensure that you have asked permission from the parent before inviting the child to participate in any group activity.

This ends the tool "Talking With Children about Coping with Loss". We look forward to hearing how it went!

For Reflecting with the Child

- Who are some people who are glad that you are safe?
- Which of the POSITIVE suggestions above are ones that have helped or that you think would be helpful for you?
- Which of the POSITIVE suggestions above can help the children in your care?
- Who is one person you could share this information with?

Is there anything you might do this week to try out these ideas?

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

If the child has mentioned the death of a friend or loved one, you may want to talk with them about these ideas for remembering the loved one together as a family.

The child may have their own idea, or some suggestions could be:

- Paint a picture, read a poem, or something they have written about that person, or sing a song, or make music
- Ask if you can prepare a meal at home which is one that reminds you of the person you have lost
- Put a picture on the wall of the person

LEARNING TOGETHER WITH RESILIENCE

SELF-CARE HINT FOR TODAY:

Today, we offer you this self-care tip: do not underestimate the power of laughter. An old adage says Laughter is the best medicine, and indeed, many people have found it to be an invaluable resource for facing traumatic situations and overcoming physical and mental challenges. The benefits of laughter are both short-term and long-term, and you can learn more about them in our additional learning appendix. So, we invite you to identify at least two different ways to incorporate laughter into your daily life, schedule them, and make time to laugh. Your well-being will thank you!

Tools for Self-Care

Our body produces different processes called Top-down and Bottom-up processes. Bottom-up processes are triggered inside us without our conscious choice. An example is automatically taking the next step up a flight of stairs. Top-down processes involve conscious and voluntary choices, based on our experiences and expectations.

To succeed in practicing self-care, it's helpful to think about tools that are realistic for us in the moment. If you are able to sit, focus and concentrate for a few minutes, then choose a top-down strategy. If doing that feels impossible in the moment, first try a bottom-up strategy to take some of the edge off, and follow that up with a top-down strategy. Here are some bottom-up strategies:

1. Go for a walk.
2. Jump in the water and go for a swim. Especially in cold water!
3. Watch a calming video.
4. Get a massage. If you can, get a professional one, or just ask a friend or family member to do a 5-minute massage exchange,
5. Listen to music. Choose a few songs you really like that make you feel happy and turn it up a little louder than normal.

Top-down strategies

1. Meditate. When your mind wanders, make the choice to bring it back again. You can just focus on your breathing or follow a guided meditations track online.
2. State three good things that have happened to you today or 3 things you are grateful for.
3. The 5-4-3-2-1 Technique. We learned this technique in an earlier session.



THESE ARE THE MATERIALS FOR THIS SESSION:

- Session 8. Learning together with Resilience
- Parenting Tips 1, 2



For Facilitators

These materials are designed to be used in various conflict contexts your participants may be in – whether in a live conflict/disaster zone, on the move, or settled in a new location as a refugee, internally displaced person, or returning to home. Where activities vary, you will see these symbols – please choose the content reflecting where your mentee or group are at.



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

This session will cover the following concepts:

- Supporting Children to Learn.
- Creating Structure and Routine in our Day.
- How we manage our emotions and how we can take care of our own mental health.
- Understanding our children's emotions and supporting their mental health.

Leading the Session

Begin your meeting by reading together the Session Agreements.

Looking Back

Ask participants if they used any of the practices for increasing healthy hormones or responding to guilt or secondary trauma. Ask them to share how that went for them.

Parenting Tips

Explain that today's session is based on tips 1 and 2. Members will have the tips as a summary to help them in parenting during this difficult time..

Supporting Children to Learn

- This section helps participants consider how they can support children to continue learning during this time and how they can manage their emotions and care for their mental health.

- Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.

Creating Structure and Routine in Our Day

- This section is relevant for parents, grandparents, and others who are currently responsible for children. It provides information on how to re-establish routine as a family, even during times of stress.

- Ask group members to read the various sections. Discuss each reflection question as a group.

Extra Tools for Supporting Children

Spend 5 to 10 minutes reading and discussing these tools during your session.

Learning Together Every Day and Activities in my Day

- Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use to help children continue or re-establish learning habits and to create a routine for their daily life, information on how children respond to stress and practical tips on how to support children in dealing with stress.

- After discussing this briefly in your session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.



SESSION 8

LEARNING TOGETHER WITH RESILIENCE

Participant's Guide



 **PARENTING TIPS**
For challenging times 

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer
– Psalms 61:1




 **PARENTING TIPS**
For challenging times 

ROUTINE HELPS CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

- Even when it feels hard, try to have some daily routines for yourself and children.
- If you can, help children with daily routines like meals or schoolwork.
- Our children learn calmness and kindness from us.
- Tell yourself a calming message again and again, Try 'I can do this, I am trying my best'

A true friend is one who takes you by their hand and touches your heart.
– Gabriel García Márquez



Supporting Children to Learn



Be aware that in an active conflict or disaster zone, children and parents may not have capacity to concentrate on schoolwork or learning. In this case, move straight to the topic “Creating Structure and Routine in our Day”, and perhaps return to this topic when the family are in a more stable setting.

For Reflection

1. Is your child in school at the moment?
2. Whether they are or not, how has it been going trying to support your child's learning at home?

In a crisis, we may think we can't possibly think about children's learning as well as everything else we are dealing with. But, being able to keep learning is one of the things that can help children to feel normal and cope with change. And, as a parent, you already have all the qualities you need to be able to help your child learn. They have already learnt a lot from you!

We can be encouraged that even a few minutes every day sitting with your child and discussing what they have been learning makes a big difference! Supporting children to continue learning will help them feel positive about the future and ready to return to school if they are not able to attend at the moment, or help them with adjusting to school in a new place, or in a new language, or online.

Your children may have access to learning materials through books, radio, television or the internet. If you have these resources, don't

put too much pressure on yourself or your children to complete all available tasks. If you do not have these materials, you can still help children learn.

For Reflection

Can you think of ways that what you're already doing together is helping children to learn new skills or practise what they know? Some simple ways we can help children to learn include:

- Talk to children about your daily tasks and let them help you.
- Encourage your child to practise skills and knowledge they already have.
- Encourage older siblings to help explain difficult subjects to younger children.
- Give your children a task to work on together, e.g. draw a map of your community, build a tower, write and draw a story together.

For Reflection

Is there something we've talked about that you want to try this week to help your child learn?

Creating Structure and Routine in our Day

For Reflection

- How has your time together as a family changed since the conflict/transition?
- Do you spend more or less time at home together?
- Do you do the same kinds of activities?

It's likely that most of your usual routines will have been disrupted. You may be living with different people in the household or have left some people behind; or things could be changing fast all the time; you might be in a totally new place; or you may feel stuck in one place and unable to do your usual activities. The disruption to our daily routines of work, home and school can be hard to cope with. Making new routines together can help make children feel more secure and be better behaved.

Talking with Children About Feelings and Emotions

- Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use when talking with their child about loss. It includes specific statements, questions, and ideas for talking with and helping their child deal with the trauma and transition.
- After discussing this briefly in your session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.

Complete the Evaluation Forms

Your answers to a few short questions can help us understand how to best offer hope to people in difficult circumstances all over the world.

Open your material and answer the questions or activities.

For Reflection

Are there things you try to do every day, or to do at particular times when you are together at home?

Here are some other ideas of ways to plan your days together:

In an active conflict or disaster setting, or on the move, it may be hard to imagine any kind of routine. You could do something very simple, like something you and your children do at the start of the day and at bedtime (e.g. a song in the morning, a prayer or story before bedtime) or one thing you want to try to do each day.

If the family is in a more settled or safer context, some ideas could be:

Children or teenagers can help plan the routine for the day – like making a school timetable. Today's activity (below) will help you to work on this together. Children will follow the timetable better if they help to make it.

- Include time for structured activities as well as free time.
- Allow time for normal chores and play time. Play is one of the best ways for children to learn and to support their wellbeing. Art or drawing also help children express their emotions. After the child draws, ask them: "Tell me about your drawing."

- Include exercise in each day – this helps with stress and where children have lots of energy at home.
- At the end of each day, take a minute to think about the day. Tell your child about one positive or fun thing they did, and ask your child what they liked most that day. Recognize something that you did well too!

For Reflection

Is there something you might add into your day, or an adjustment you might make to your daily routine?

Your Feelings Matter

How are you feeling today?

We usually say we are “fine” – but this sometimes doesn’t really show our true feelings. This is a stressful time. We need to take care of ourselves so we can support our children.

For Reflection

- Can you think of anything that has made you feel happy during .. either recently or since the crisis began?
- And what are some of the more difficult feelings you have had during this time of family loss and crisis?
- Can you think of something that made you feel worried, stressed or sad? What do you do when you have difficult feelings like this?

We tend to think some of our feelings are ‘good’ and others ‘bad’, but all our feelings are ok! As parents we might be tempted to try to ignore or push away our feelings, but when we don’t take care of ourselves well, we get gradually worn down and it gets harder to care for our children. Stress can build up and then burst out in unhelpful ways when we don’t expect it!

For Reflection

Do you already have any strategies you have to help you when you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed?

(Some ideas include: Take a break or time-out / Breathing exercise / Talk to someone / Exercise)

When we feel overwhelmed it can be difficult to stay focused on the present – we might find ourselves thinking about what has gone wrong, or unable to focus. When you feel like this, it’s good if you can notice, and pause, and take a moment to ground yourself.

Activity: Breathing Exercise

We practiced a breathing exercise in an earlier meeting of Parenting with Hope. It can be helpful to revisit these types of practices to check in on how they are helping us and remind us to keep practicing these types of coping skills.

Here is one simple exercise you can try when you are feeling overwhelmed:

When the stress is too much, take 30 seconds for yourself. Let’s try this together now:

- Listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- You can put a hand on your stomach and feel it rise and fall with each breath.
- Then just listen to your breath for a while.
- Try this every day.

How did that feel?

For Reflection

What are some of the ways you already try to take care of your own needs? Is there a time in the day where you could take some time for yourself?

Some ideas could be:

- Spend some time outside
- Get some exercise that you enjoy
- Listen to music
- Get enough sleep
- Do something that makes you laugh
- Talk to a friend
- Pray or write in a journal
- Do something creative

We can all recognize that some of these things might not be possible or realistic in

our circumstances. Let's make special note of those which could be possible where we are at.

For Reflection

- Is there something we've talked about that you want to try to put into practice this week?
- Is there someone in your life who is willing to simply listen to you, to be present with you in your questions, sadness or suffering, as well as in your celebrations, hopes, dreams, and joys?
- Is so, would you want to make a plan this week to spend time with that person?

For Reflection

For many people, spirituality involves a close loving relationship with God that gives them hope and strength. Caring for our spirit is an important part of developing resilience. There are times, especially when we experience suffering or trauma, when we wrestle with spiritual distress, feeling empty and detached, questioning our beliefs, and feeling angry or afraid over questions about life and death.

As you consider these tips, remember that an important resource for your spiritual care is the hope we feel, from the compassionate presence of someone we can trust. Let's look for people like this and take care of ourselves so that we can grow together, more and more, to become these kinds of people!

Helping My Children to Cope

This section is relevant for parents, grandparents, teachers, Sunday school teachers, and others who regularly interact with children.

For Reflection

What have you noticed about how your children have responded during this time? If they have been finding it difficult, have they talked about it with you? or have you seen changes in their behaviour?

Children may respond to stress in different ways, such as being more clingy, anxious,

withdrawn, angry or agitated. They might seem to move backwards in their development, for example begin wetting the bed again, or be unable to do tasks they had been able to do before the crisis.

It can make a big difference to children's ability to cope if we are able to be supportive and reassuring and help our children to feel safe. They may often communicate their feelings through their behaviour, and so it's good to be alert to any changes or patterns.

For Reflection

What ways have you found already to help your child to be calm and feel safe and supported during this time?

These are great ideas! Some other tips are:

- Give children extra time and attention.
- Listen to children and speak kindly to them.
- Make opportunities for children to play and relax:
 - › Even in times of loss and grieving, conflict, or crisis settings, spending 5 minutes playing a familiar game can really help children restore hope and stability.
 - › In new family circumstances after losing a loved one, or in a new home or place, try to make time to help children do familiar activities they enjoyed before the loss or crisis (e.g. a hobby like a sport, music, or art that they really loved or spent a lot of time on before, or games they liked before.)
- Keep to regular schedules and routines as much as possible. Even just maintaining simple routines in the morning (breakfast – dress – brush teeth) and evening (clean up – pyjamas – brush teeth – story time – prayers – lights out) can help to create a sense of normality.
- Give children clear information and facts about what is going on and on your plans for the coming days or weeks, and respond to their questions honestly and sensitively.
- Praise your child every day for something they do well.



Putting it into practice this week

Think about how you can tell each other how you feel every day at home:

- Support the child in his learning.
- In more stable settings: Could you create a chart together with faces showing different feelings, and then show each other which one you feel each day? See an example below.
- In crisis/transition settings, settings or on the move: How could you give 5 minutes to listen to your child each day?

Wrap up

What do you plan to do this week to take care of yourself, and to help your children deal with their emotions?

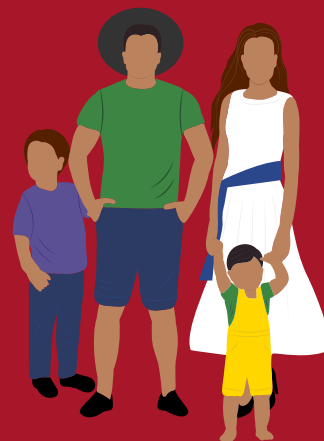
(Some ideas include: Take more time for myself / Talk about my feelings / Breathing Exercise / Talk to children about how they feel/ Create a feelings chart).

Evaluation Form

We are so glad you have participated in this Parenting with Hope! Your answers to a few short questions will help us serve many other people who are experiencing crisis all over the world. All answers are 100% anonymous. Thank you for your answers.

This ends Session 8 and this Parenting with Hope. Thank you for your participation.

We look forward to hearing how these sessions help you and your family continue to adjust and thrive. You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing.



SESSION 8

EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following tools are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/
Disaster**



On the Move



Settled

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Learning Together Every Day
- Activities in My Day
- Talking with Children about Feelings and Emotions.

Learning Together Every Day



Activity to play with the child

Ask the child to tell you about what their perfect day at home would be. What would they do when they woke up, what would they have for breakfast, what activities would they do through the day? Try to get as much detail as possible.

Also be ready to share your idea of a perfect day!

In a group setting, children could work in pairs to create their perfect day, and share this with the group. Or, for a game, you could have different daily activities on pieces of paper, which the children need to arrange in the right order as fast as they can (e.g. wake

up, breakfast, playing, reading, go to bed, etc).

Explain that today we'll be looking at how we can keep learning even when we're at home, and how we can enjoy our time together with our family.

Learning Wherever I AM

Lots of children affected by this crisis/transition have had to stop going to school during this time, or are trying to learn online, or are going to school in a new place. It can be hard when things change and are uncertain, and we shouldn't feel bad if we don't feel that we are able to focus and concentrate as well as we usually can. We don't have to stop learning just because we are not in school, or if we are in a new place.

For Reflection with the Child

- If you are not attending school,
 - › If you are not able to be in school at the



moment, How are you learning?

- › What do you miss about school?
- › If you are spending more time at home, is that a good or bad thing? Why?
- If you are attending school,
 - › who is helping you to keep learning?
 - › how is it going?
 - › Can you think of something you've learnt during the last month?
 - › How are your parent(s) or other adults at home involved in helping you learn?

It's great that you have still been learning! Even if you don't think you are, there are a lot of ways we learn apart from by doing schoolwork. When we do things with our family – helping with chores or helping a brother or sister to learn — we are learning! And when we play or have fun together, we are also learning skills like how to solve problems and how to work together.

For Reflection with the Child

Here are some ways we can ask our parents to be involved in our learning with us:

- Share your schoolwork with them and explain what you have been working on each day.
- Work together to write a story, draw a picture, sing a song or read a book together.
- Ask them to teach you something that they can do that you want to learn – cooking a favourite food, or learning to sew, paint, build or repair something.

Activities in my Day



For Reflection with the Child

What is your favourite day of the week at home? Why?

(If children are in a conflict or disaster setting or on the move, you could ask them about

their favourite day of the week before the conflict began.)

Especially when we are spending our time in a new place, or a lot of things are changing, it can be good if we plan to have different activities in our day to help us stay healthy.

For Reflection with the Child

What are some things you think it is important to do every day?

For example:

- Exercise and being active (even inside!)
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating healthy meals
- Playing and having fun
- Learning or schoolwork
- Family time
- Time outside (if we can)

In an in-person or group setting, children could mime or act out the different activities for others to guess.

For Reflection with the Child

- Which ones do you do every day?
- Which would you like to do more (or less!)?

It's important that we can talk together as a family and work together to plan our days. You could ask your parents if you can make a schedule for your days if you don't have one.

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

For Reflection with the Child

What is one thing you will do to learn together with your parents this week, or to add an activity to your days? *(Some ideas could be: Talk with a parent about schoolwork / Ask to read, write, draw, sing together / Ask parent to teach you a skill / Talk about daily schedule).*



Talking with Children About Feelings and Emotions



Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

Remind the child that you are talking together about how you are doing, giving you a chance to talk and share how you are feeling, and sharing ideas together which can help you and your family.

My feelings and emotions

Some of the activities in this tool build on activities in earlier tools from the Parenting with Hope. It can be helpful to revisit these types of practices to check in on how they are helping us and remind us to keep practicing these types of coping skills. You will also find additional suggestions on how to creatively use the activities one on one or with groups of children.

For Reflection with the Child

How are you feeling today?

Explain that you will start with a quick game about our feelings. You will say a feeling (e.g. “scared”, “happy”) and the child should quickly tell you something that makes them feel this way.

E.g. “Scared” – “Spiders!”; “Happy” – “when my sports team wins a competition”.

What is something that makes you feel:

- Happy?
- Excited?
- Surprised?
- Bored?

Let the child also ask you some of these questions and give your answers! Explain that today we’ll be looking at how we can recognise our feelings, and what to do when we have difficult feelings.

In a group setting or as other options to play this game with your child, you could write different feelings on sheets of paper and spread them out through the room. Then shout out a scenario, and the children can run to the sheet which expresses how it makes them feel.

How do I feel?

For Reflection with the Child

- Can you think of something that happened this week that made you feel good?
- What was it and what feelings did you have? (e.g. happy, excited, joyful) (Be ready to share your own example first if needed).
- Can you think of something that made you feel bad?
- What was it and what feelings did you have? (e.g. sad, angry, bored, worried, scared). (Be ready to share your own example first if needed).

It’s normal to have difficult feelings when we go through a hard or confusing time, or when lots of things are changing around us.

We might:

- Feel more worried
- Not want to be apart from our family
- Not want to talk to people or play
- Be more angry
- Not be able to stay still and focus
- Do things we did when we were younger like wet the bed, or forget things we have learned
- Feel afraid of what might happen

This is totally normal and ok – all of our feelings are ours and we shouldn’t feel bad about



having them. It's good to talk about how we feel so that others can help us and understand us better. It can sometimes be hard to say how we are feeling.

For Reflection with the Child

Can you think of some ways we can share our feelings with our family?

It can sometimes be hard to use words to say how we feel. Here are some activities that can help your child express their feelings.

Activity 1: Ask your child what sound a car would make when it is a happy car. The child should create the sound, and you repeat it and ask the child if they agree that this is a happy car sound. Next, ask the child what sound a car might make if it's starting to get upset. When the child makes the sound, repeat it and ask if this is the sound of a car that is getting upset. Repeat this process with other feelings, like anger. You can then ask your child regularly, "How is your car running today?" (*You could also use the sounds of the child's favourite animal, music sounds, or hand clapping*).

Some examples of feelings your child might express are sad, happy, scared, bored, worried, angry, surprised, or others.

Activity 2: Cut out shapes of a child and leave the faces blank. Have an envelope for each child with their name on it. The child can pick a shape and draw a face on it to show how they feel. They will then place the shape into their envelope, leaving the head facing out. This gives the parent/caregiver an opportunity to talk with their child about how they feel. The child can pick a new shape and draw a different face at any time of the day, to show when their feelings change.

If paper is not available, this activity can be done by making a game out of it. You ask the child to draw the feeling face on your back with their finger, and then you guess what it was. Now take turns and you draw the face of your feelings on the child's back and have them guess. Afterwards say, "I am so proud of you! We are learning together to talk about our feelings!!"

In a group or 1:1 session, you could create child shapes together to take home to use with your family.

What can I do with my feelings?

For Reflection with the Child

What do you usually do when you have a difficult feeling (like you talked about earlier) or when you are feeling worried or scared?

It's great if we can think ahead to have some ideas of things we can do when we feel sad, worried or upset. Then we'll be ready to take action and help ourselves to feel better.

For Reflection with the Child

What might be some things you can do that could help you when you have a difficult feeling?

Here are some ideas (if you need them):

- Talk about your worries to your parents, a friend, or someone you trust
- Write down your feelings
- Do some exercise that you enjoy
- Listen to music, dance, or sing
- Do something that makes you laugh
- Play a game together with your family
- Draw a picture of how you are feeling
- For difficult feelings you could draw or write these, then scrunch them up and throw them away.

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

For Reflection with the Child

- What can you do this week to help you and your family share your feelings?
- What is one thing you will do this week if you feel sad/scared/worried/upset? (Some ideas might be: Make a feelings chart with my family / Talk to someone about my feelings / Try something new if I feel sad or upset).

This ends the tool “Talking With Children about Feelings and Emotions”. We look forward to hearing how it went!

APPENDIX: FURTHER LEARNING FOR YOU, THE PARENTING WITH HOPE FACILITATOR

Safeguarding our Hope

Remaining Hopeful as We Support Other in their Trauma

We talk a lot about trauma in Parenting with Hope, and we want to give you, as a facilitator, tools for safeguarding your own hope, as well as greater understanding of how others' trauma can affect us, our children, partners/spouses, and others. In the section that follows, we provide information on how we can move from the discouragement of 'Compassion Fatigue' to the hope of 'Compassion Satisfaction'.

THE CHALLENGE:

Pstd and Compassion Fatigue

After a person directly experiences a traumatic event, like conflict, assault, or a threat against their life, they might develop a reaction called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Some of your Parenting with Hope participants, as well as their partners/spouses, or children, may be experiencing PTSD, or similar symptoms. The symptoms of PTSD include:

- Re-Experiencing the trauma through flashbacks, nightmares, intrusive memories and exaggerated emotional and physical reactions; triggers that remind the person of the trauma.
- Emotional Numbing: a feeling of detachment, lack of emotions (especially positive ones), loss of interest in activities
- Avoidance: avoiding activities, people, or places that remind the person of the trauma
- Increased Arousal: difficulty sleeping and concentrating, irritability, hyper-vigilance (being on guard), and startling easily.

Triggers

We have all experienced the power of an unexpected memory – a familiar smell transports you back to a childhood holiday, or a special place sends a rush of memories of your first kiss. For those living with PTSD, the sudden release of memories can bring their mind back to a traumatic event, even causing a physical or emotional response similar to the one



they experienced at that time. Learning how to manage triggers is an important part of recovering from trauma and finding hope.

A trigger is a person, place, feeling or thing that causes a stress response, either physical or emotional, based on a past trauma. Internal Triggers include anger, memories, loneliness, feeling abandoned, sadness, frustration, anxiety, tension, feeling out of control, and pain. External Triggers include break-up or end of a relationship; news, anniversaries, smells, specific places, witnessing another accident or similar event, holidays, and arguments. (See Session 7 for more on this topic).

Compassion Fatigue

But how might trauma impact you, as a Parenting with Hope facilitator? Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) is when a helper develops trauma symptoms after indirect exposure to trauma, like from talking with survivors and hearing their stories. Another name for this is Compassion Fatigue. As a Parenting with Hope facilitator, you come face to face with the traumas experienced by your participants. We want to equip you with knowledge to identify if you are experiencing compassion fatigue and know how to respond to this in your own life. Your mental health is of great importance to us! We want to make sure you are taking care of yourself and safeguarding your own hope.

Below is a partial list of symptoms of Compassion Fatigue³⁶. These are some of the same symptoms experienced by the person who has directly been a victim of trauma.

- Emotional: anger, sadness, prolonged grief, anxiousness, changes in feelings of safety
- Physical: headaches, stomachaches, backaches, exhaustion, difficulty sleeping, overeating
- Personal: self-isolation, cynicism, mood swings, irritability, questioning religion/faith
- Interpersonal: difficulty managing boundaries, anxiety over your children, disconnection from coworkers, spouse/partner, or loved ones
- Triggers: Seeing people, movies or books that remind you of the event

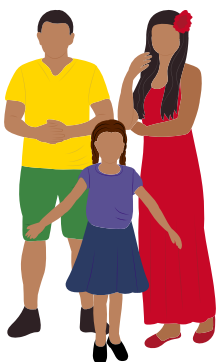
Please go back now to your self-care hint for session 7 to remind yourself how to identify and respond to your own triggers.

THE SOLUTION:

Building Hope and Compassion Satisfaction

Compassion Satisfaction is the positive feelings we receive from providing care, and it is a benefit to you as a helper to others who are suffering. It has to do with positive relationships with your coworkers, group members, and community, and the awareness that your work is meaningful and healing to others. Over time, many people who work with trauma survivors develop an increased sense of strength, self-knowledge, confidence, meaning, spirituality, connection to others, hope, and greater resilience.

In the sections that follow, we provide you with tools that can help you build hope by working through Compassion Fatigue and strengthening Compassion Satisfaction.



Building Hope Through “Soothing” Strategies

The word “somatic” means relating to the body. Somatic anxiety happens when we experience anxiety symptoms in our physical body. Somatic anxiety is common when you work with people who have experienced crisis, toxic stress and/or trauma.

Below are a few soothing exercises for our bodies. (We also provide exercises in your facilitator notes for each session, especially session 3).

- **Belly Breathing** — Belly breathing tells our bodies and our brains that everything is ok and we are not in danger. This reduces stress hormones and slows our heart rate back down, relieving our anxiety.

To practice belly breathing, sit comfortably and put one hand on your stomach and one on your chest. Breathe slowly and deeply so that the hand on your stomach rises, not the one on your chest. It takes practice, so try to find one or two minutes several times a day to belly breathe. If you wait until you are anxious, you won't have the best results. Practice when you aren't anxious so that it will work when you need it.

- **Relax your muscles** — Tense and relax muscle groups over your entire body. You may want to start with your toes, then your whole foot, then your leg etc. Working your way up your body, alternately tensing and relaxing, can work effectively and quickly on your physical symptoms.

Building Hope Through Your Daily Gratitude Journal

What good is gratitude? Multiple studies have shown that people experience great benefits from cultivating gratitude. Participants in these studies kept a “gratitude journal,” in which they regularly recorded the things for which they were grateful. Gratitude journals and other gratitude practices often seem so simple and basic, and yet the results have been overwhelming. Some of the benefits include:

Physical

- Stronger immune systems;
- Less bothered by aches and pains;
- Lower blood pressure;
- Exercise more and take better care of their health;
- Sleep longer and feel more refreshed upon waking.



Psychological

- Higher levels of positive emotions;
- More alert, alive, and awake;
- More joy and pleasure;
- More HOPEFULNESS and happiness.

Social

- More helpful, generous, and compassionate;
- More forgiving;
- More outgoing;
- Feel less lonely and isolated.

The social benefits are especially significant here because, after all, gratitude is a social emotion. It is a relationship-strengthening emotion, because it requires us to see how we've been supported and affirmed by other people. Gratitude can also be an internal emotion linked to faith in God, for those who see how they have been supported and affirmed by their faith in God or a higher being.

Gratitude can have a transformative effect on your life and the lives of others with whom you meet. Here are several important reasons:

1. Gratitude allows us to celebrate the present!
2. Gratitude blocks toxic, negative emotions!
3. Grateful people are more stress resistant!
4. Grateful people have a higher sense of self-worth.

Building Hope By Strengthening Your Nervous System

Understanding a little about how your nervous system works can help you take steps to strengthen your hope. Two important parts of your nervous system are the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. Both parts are essential for our survival. When these systems work in a healthy way, they keep you safe, healthy and calm.

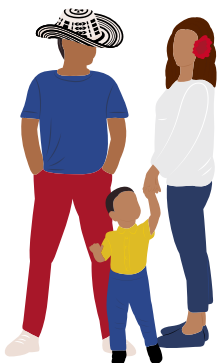
Your sympathetic system recognizes potential danger and tells your body when it is time to “fight,” “flee,” or “freeze”. In other words, this system prepares the body for strenuous physical activity, like running away or fighting off an attacker. When the brain tells your body you are in danger even after the threat has passed, which can happen after a trauma, your body will function in fight, flight, or freeze mode for too long, and this can have negative impacts on your health.



Your parasympathetic system brings your body to a state of calm and allows it to rest, relax, and repair itself. The vagus nerve is the main set of nerves of your parasympathetic nervous system, the “rest, relax and repair” system. The vagus nerve is the body’s superpower and it counteracts your fight/flight/freeze system. It’s how you develop a healthy stress response and become resilient, so that you have better emotional regulation, greater connection, stronger hope, and better physical health. You are more able to pull yourself through trauma and troubles and are more likely to be successful in life. So how do you strengthen or stimulate your vagus nerve?

The vagus nerve is activated when you are feeling compassion and empathy! Below (and in session 6) are some fun activities for stimulating the vagus nerve:

1. Breathwork— diaphragmatic, or belly, breathing
2. Connection — Community and belonging help you to feel safe and secure. When you are connected, you are calmer and more positive. Add to your journal how you stay connected to your community!
3. Diving Reflex — To stimulate the diving reflex, you need cold exposure. You can splash cold water on your face or put ice cubes in a ziploc bag against it.
4. Humming, Singing or Gargling — Simply sing to feel better or gargle if you prefer.
5. Probiotics — Healthy gut bacteria activate the vagus nerve and improves brain function.
6. Omega 3 Fatty Acids — You can get these from fish oil, or if you’re a vegan, you can find them in chia seeds, flaxseed, hemp seed oil and walnuts.
7. Mindfulness and Meditation/Visualizations — Mindfulness in general is a way to activate your vagus nerve. Being present centers you.
8. Yoga Exercises — Yoga exercises help with digestion, blood flow and more.
9. Positive Self-Talk — Review the Self-Talk section in the Hope Group materials.



Building Hope Through Laughter — The Best Medicine

Laughter actually creates physical changes in the body, which lead to both short term and long-term benefits — and most importantly for our purposes — laughter helps strengthen hopefulness. Here are some of the top benefits of laughter:

Short-term benefits:

- Stimulates organs. Laughter improves air intake, stimulates the heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the release of healthy hormones from your brain.
- Activates and relieves your stress response. When you laugh, your stress response is first activated and then relaxed, which can increase your heart rate and blood pressure.
- Soothes tension. Laughter can simulate your blood circulation and help your muscles relax, which can reduce some stress symptoms.

Long-term effects

- Improves your immune system.
- Relieves pain.
- Increases personal satisfaction.
- Helps you connect with other people.
- Improves your mood.

Whether you spend the afternoon binge-watching ridiculous animal videos on YouTube, grabbing lunch with your funniest friend, or finding humour in the daily challenges you face, remember that a belly laugh will go a long way toward improving your mood and keeping you healthy.





PARENTING WITH HOPE



Universidad de Sucre



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