

GET ON THEIR WAVELENGTH

If you sense your child doesn't talk to you when you know something is wrong for them, maybe it is because you are not tuning into the wavelength of how they are feeling right now. They will know you are on their wavelength when you...

...SPEAK TO THE HEART NOT TO THE HEAD

How many times have we heard kids say, "I can't talk to my parents because they don't understand me"? Loads! When we think there is a problem, most parents:

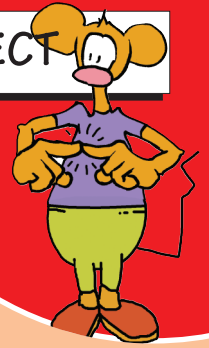
- Ask questions (interrogate)
- Try to fix it
- Make light of it
- Try to shrug it off
- Insist they have a right to know.

What the child needs is to feel understood...and the key word is 'feel'. It's in the emotions and not the head that connections are made.

THE HEART IS CONNECTED AND AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSION. CALLS COSTS 32P PER MINUTE...



CONNECT



Try.....

1. To identify the feelings, e.g.

- Are they sad?
- Are they angry?
- Are they disappointed?
- Are they afraid?

2. Send a simple message that you understand.

Say something like:

- "Sounds like you're fed up...."
- "Something's really bugging you....."
- "Seems like you're down in the dumps...."
- "You seem edgy...."

3. Wait for their response...

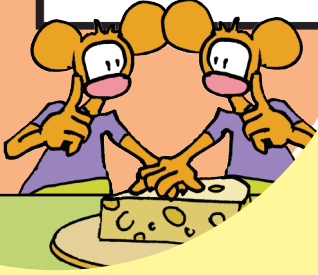
it will come, but don't always expect it right away. **They will talk, but in their own time.** You have taken the first step – you've connected with them!

LOOKS AS IF YOU HAD A BAD DAY...

DON'T RUSH ME PLEASE. I HAVE AN HOUR OR TWO OF INCOMPREHENSIBLE MOPING TO DO. THEN I WILL TALK TO YOU ABOUT IT.



NEGOTIATE!



Get into the habit...

If you develop the habit of sorting out things in this way, the chances of problems turning into full blown conflicts will be less likely. Don't be afraid of conflict; it is a normal part of life. When your child learns how to handle conflicts in the safety of their home, you will have taught them a valuable lesson for when they go out into the world on their own!

DON'T BE AFRAID OF CONFLICT, IT'S A PERFECTLY NORMAL PART OF LIFE....!

The six stages of the WIN-WIN WAY

1. **Find a time to suit you both when you can talk.**
2. **Single out what the issues are.** What exactly are our needs in this situation? Use the listening and i-Message skills we showed you earlier.
3. **Both come up with ideas** that could solve the problem, without commenting on them.
4. **Which solution works best?** Regardless of who thought it up, which would be fairest to both of you?
5. **Agree on the details to make it work.** Make sure everyone understands what you have decided. Write it down if it helps.
6. **Check back later to see how it is working.** Is it working ok, do we need to change anything, or start again?

Remember:

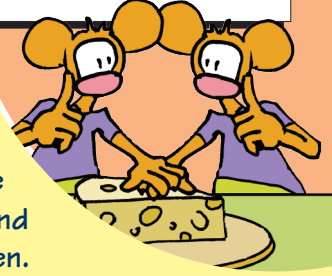
Like most habits, the more you do this, the easier it will become.



..AND UNAVOIDABLE IN THIS CASE. (SORRY!)



NEGOTIATE!



You might like to try this!

Find a blank sheet of paper and write down each other's needs and place the paper on the kitchen table. Then write each of the ideas you come up with on post-it notes and stick them onto paper. You can then look at each note to see how well it meets all the needs. Peel away the ones which don't work leaving those that do. From those that remain, decide which is best and work out together what you need to do to make it happen.

Tip: giving one point for each need that a solution meets introduces a scoring system which helps with decision making.

Child's Needs:

- My own space how I like it
- Privacy - don't like you rooting through my stuff

Parent's Needs:

- Tidy house and bedrooms
- A child who does what I tell them to

~~Chuck my dirty clothes outside the room~~

~~Spend 20 minutes each week clearing up your bedroom~~

~~Pay me and I'll do it!~~

Keep your bedroom clean even if it's not tidy

All dirty clothes in the laundry basket

~~No food in the room~~

Let's do a trade-off!

