Positive
Discipline In
Everyday Life

Co-Regulation

Most of us are feeling a lot of stress due to COVID-19 and the many changes it has brought to our lives. So are our children. When two stressed people must live together all the time, there can be conflict. Often, this conflict arises over things that really don't matter very much. But every time we argue, we damage our relationship a little bit. Over time, this can take a toll on all of us.

As adults, one of the most important things we can do is learn how to self-regulate when we feel ourselves getting frustrated or angry. When we can calm ourselves, we can think our way through and find a solution to the conflict without getting caught up in power struggles.

When we can regulate our own emotions and body responses, our calm, regulated nervous system will influence our child's emotional state and can help them regulate their own body and emotions. We do this by:

- providing **Warmth** - being with our child in a calm, kind, empathic, manner; listening to and understanding their feelings, not judging them, not 'telling' them to calm down, being kind so our child can self-regulate,

and

- providing **Structure** – giving them information to help them understand and learn.

This is called **'co-regulation.'** This process is what helps our children – gradually over time – to learn how to regulate themselves, even when we're not there. Remember, the keys to co-regulation are to: 1) regulate ourselves, and 2) respond to our child with Warmth and Structure.

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