

Teaching Emotion Regulation in Children: Emotion Coach in 5 Steps

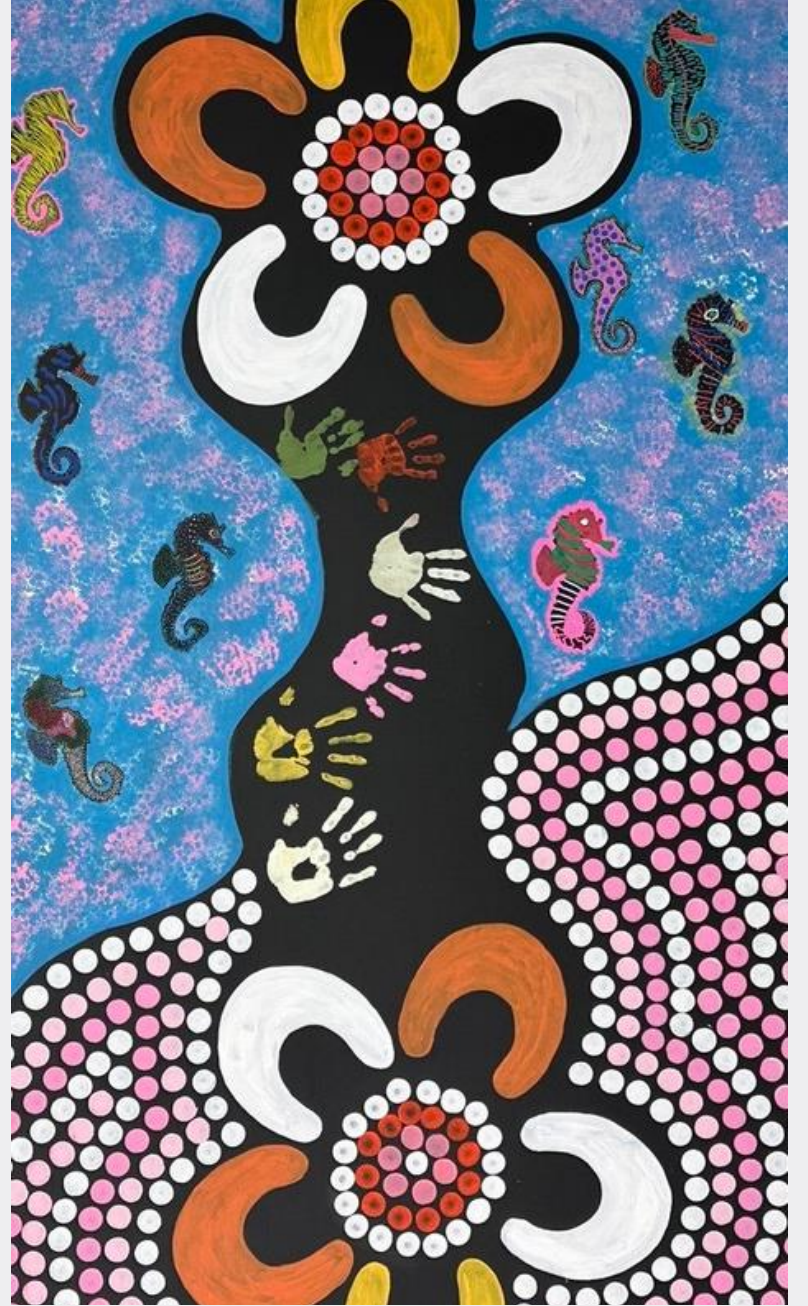
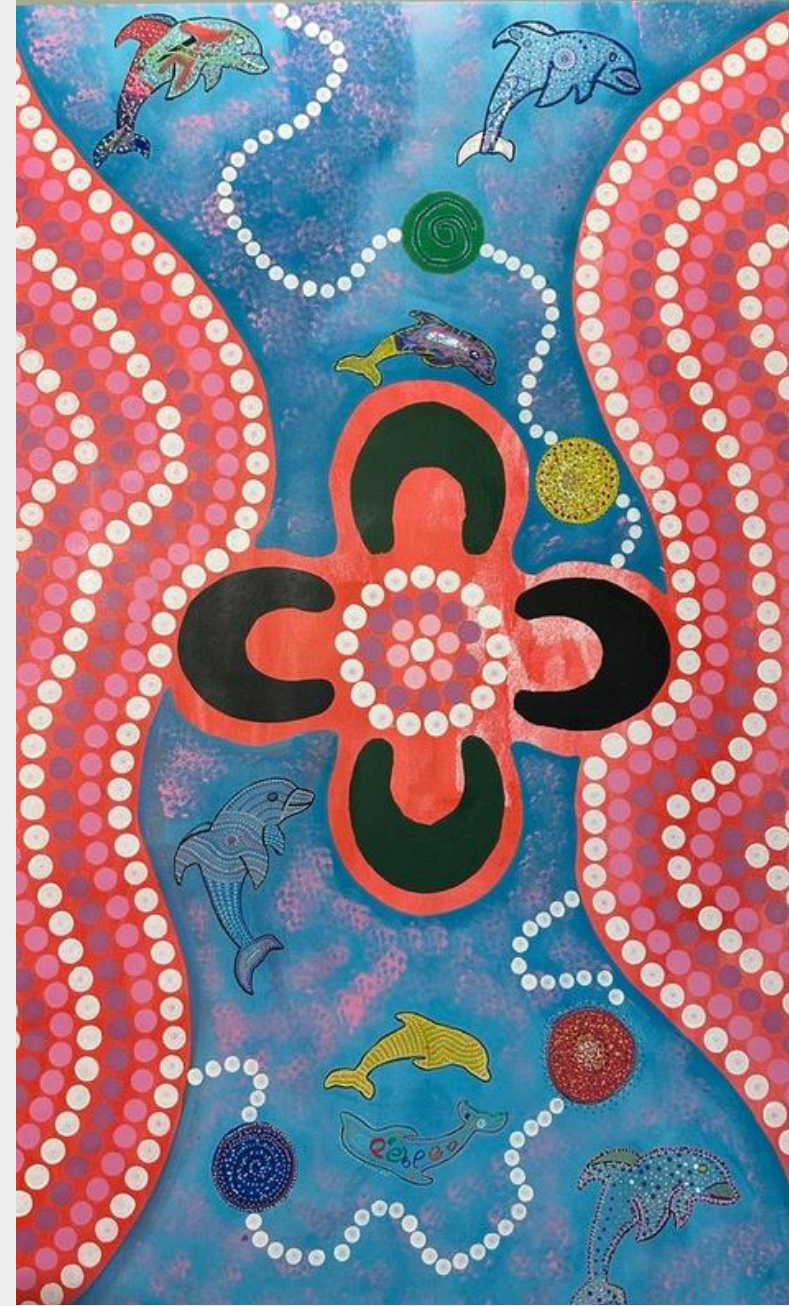
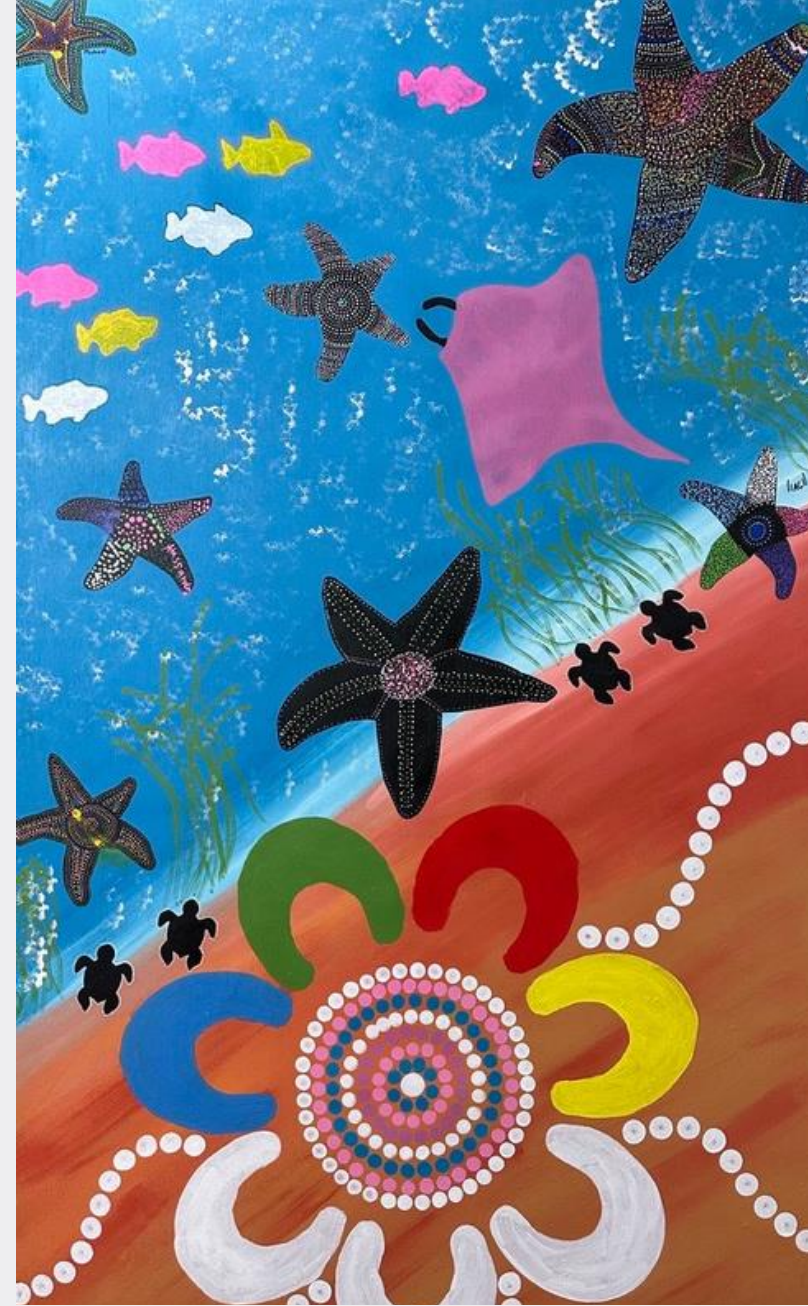


Coral Tree
Family Service



Tamar Karkour and Sally Hambleton

We acknowledge the Gadigal People, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are gathered, and we pay our respects to their Elders both past, present and emerging.

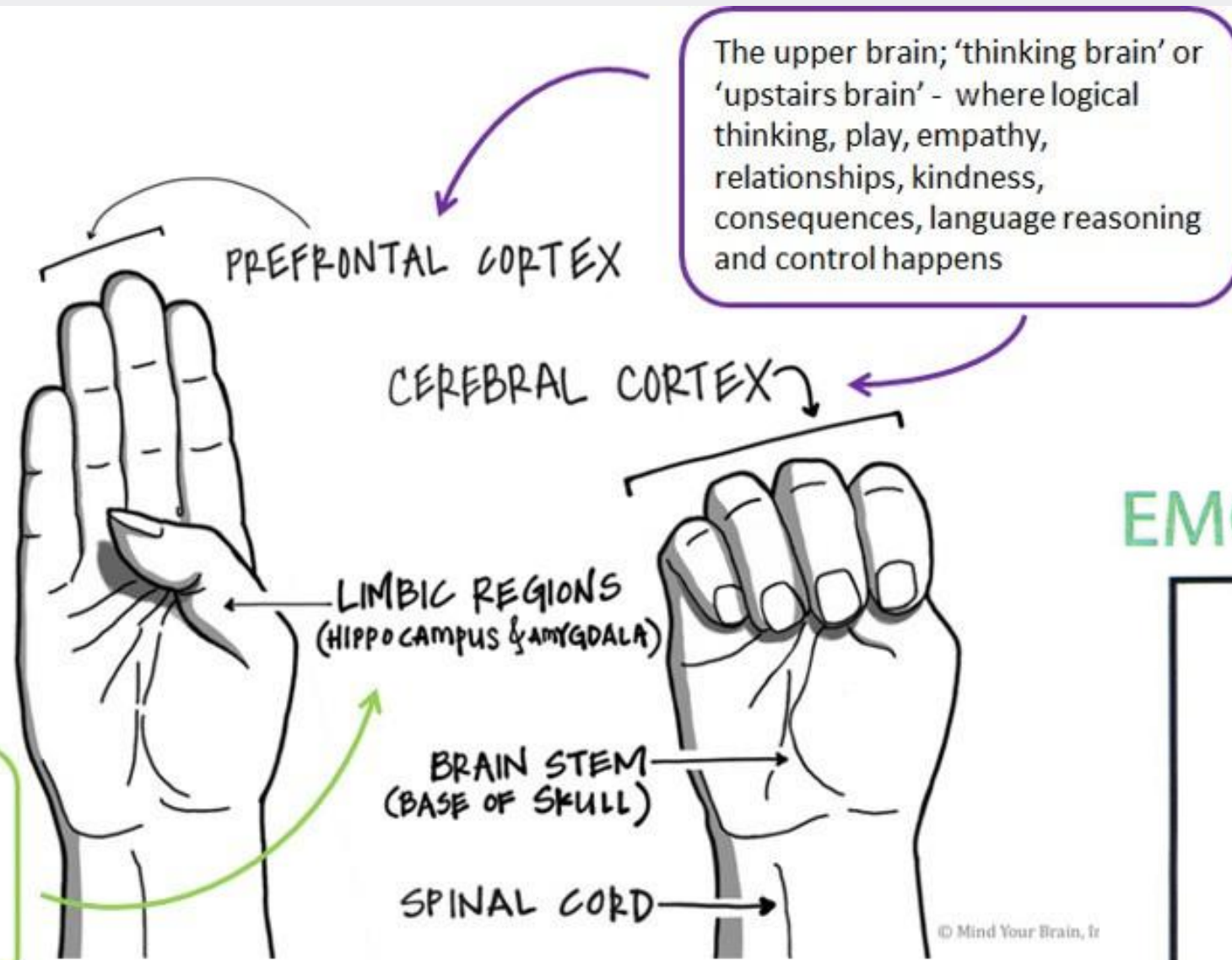


Crying
Aggression
Work avoidance
Withdrawing
Being disruptive
Not following
instructions



I need connection
Am I safe?
I am overwhelmed
Do you see me?
I feel angry/sad/confused/totally alone
I think I'm worthless
I need understanding
I can't communicate in any other way
What's wrong with me?
Can I trust you?
Can I trust myself?
My world is falling apart
This is a big struggle for me
I need help

The Hand Model of the Brain: Dan Siegel



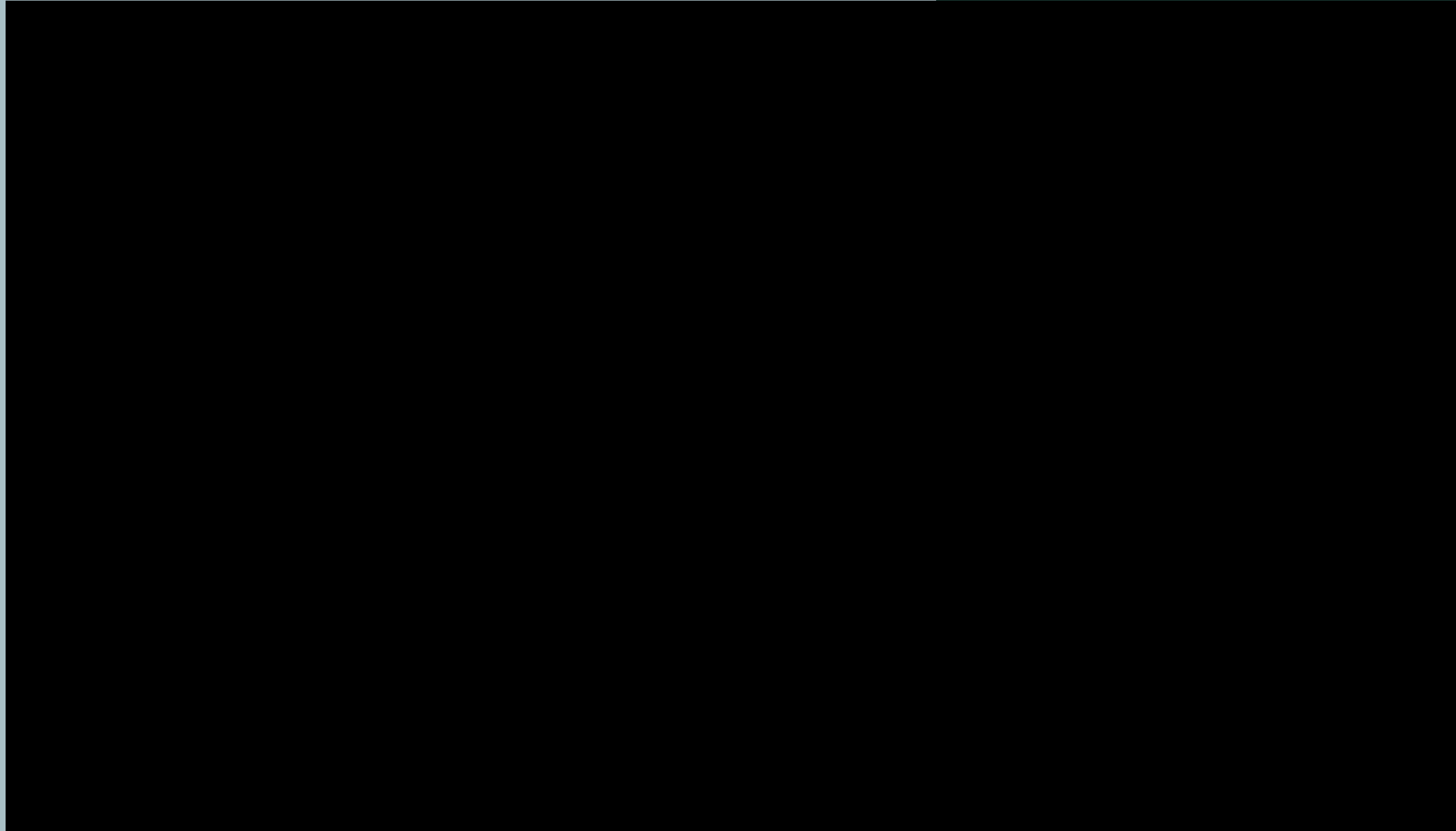
Limbic regions – mid brain – emotions, irrational thinking, fight, flight, freeze, submit, big emotions.

EMOTIONAL AROUSAL and the HAND MODEL OF THE BRAIN

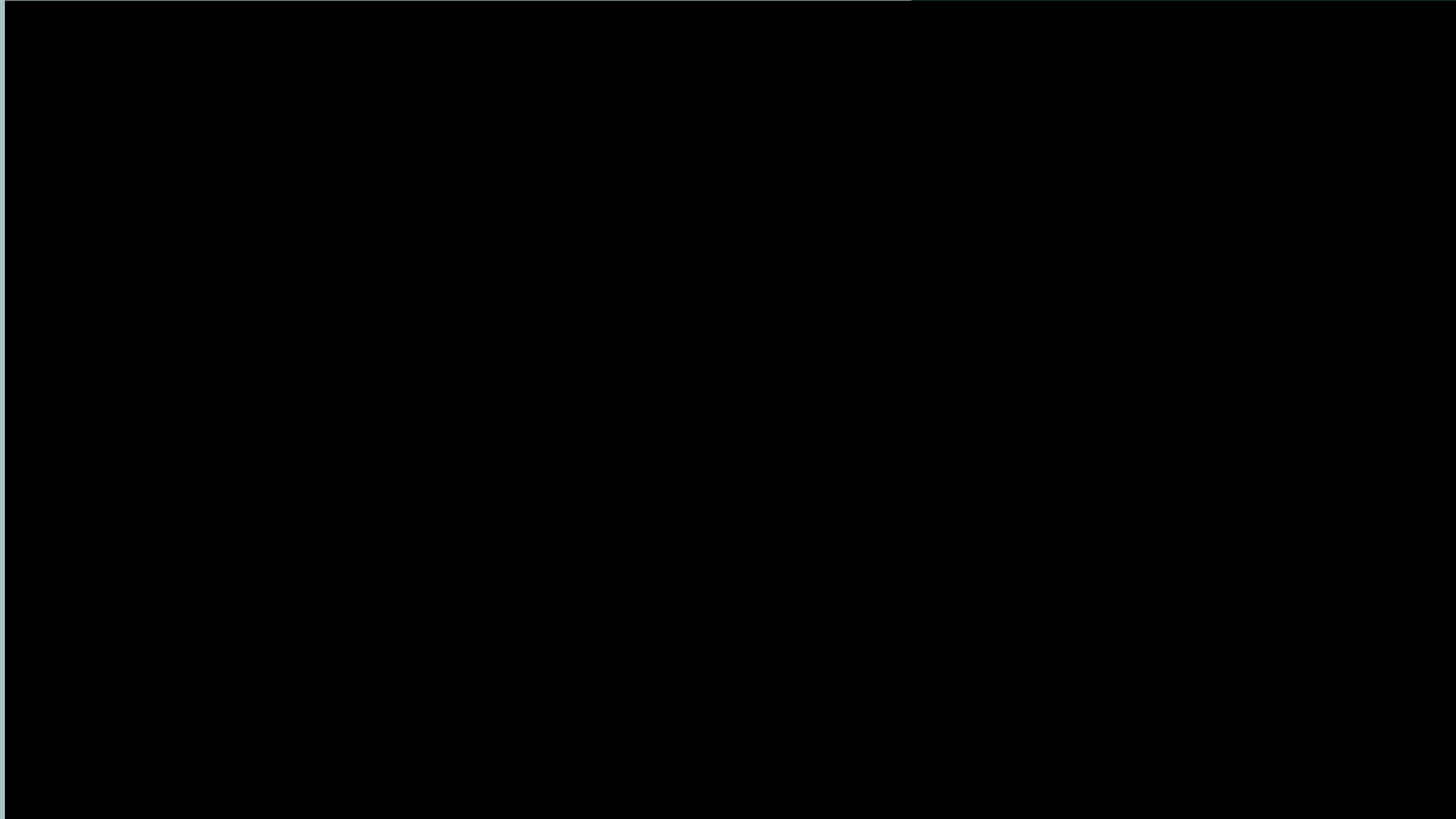


Styles of responding to children's emotions

Dismissive



Permissive



Disapproving



The Emotion Coach

Emotion Coaching

High empathy
High guidance

Dissapproving

Low empathy
High guidance

Passive

High empathy
Low guidance

Dismissive

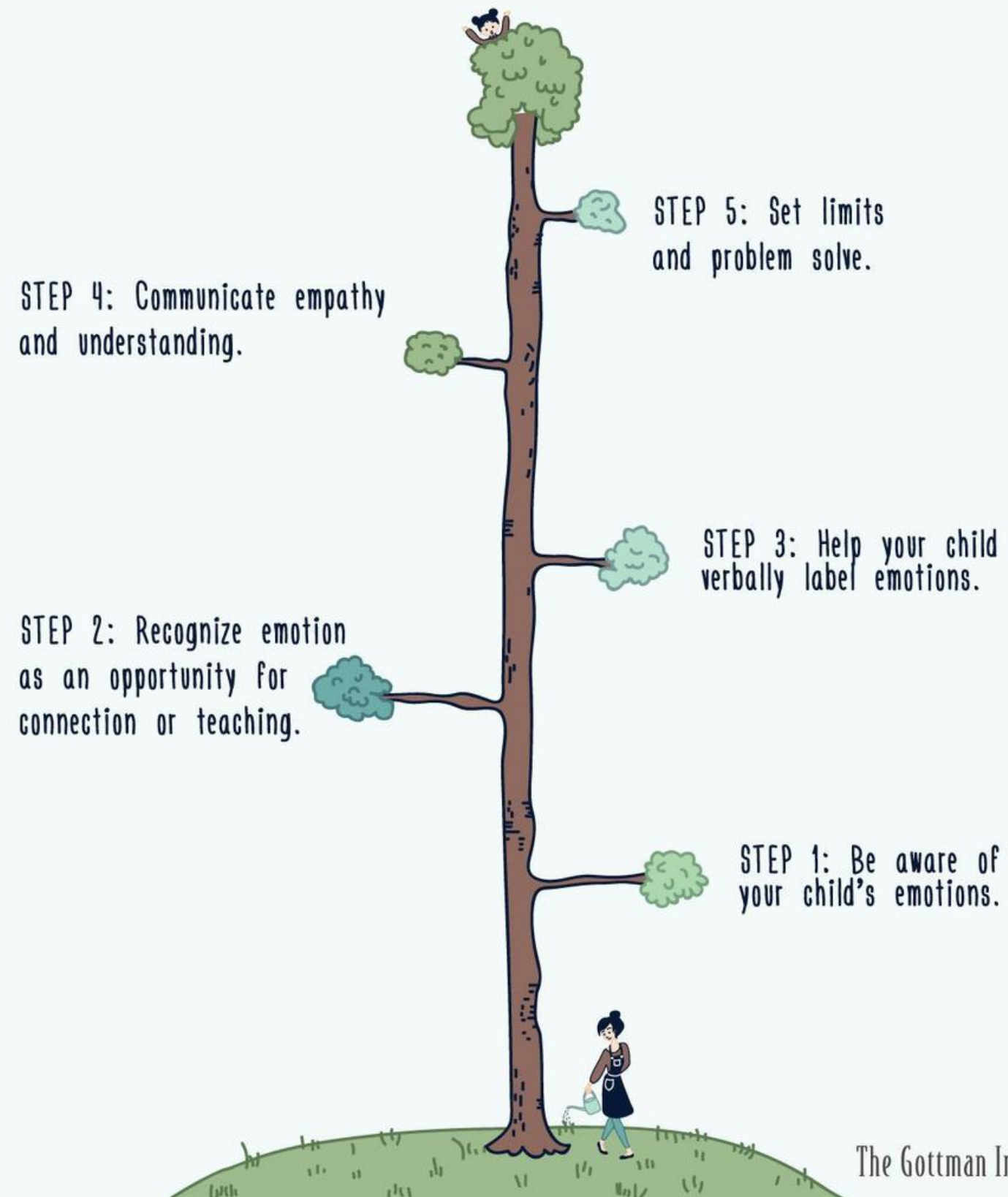
High empathy
High guidance

- * Higher levels of satisfaction at school
- * More engaged in learning
- * Have more positive relationships
- * Display fewer challenging behaviours

(Gottman, Katz & Hooven, 1996, 1997; Gus, Rose & Gilbert, 2015; Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Klein & Knitzer, 2006; Rose, Gilbert & McGuire-Snieckus, 2015; and Shortt et al., 2010)

Five Steps of Emotion Coaching

Dr. John Gottman



The Five Steps of Emotion Coaching

Use 30 - 40% of the time

Step 1: Being aware of emotions.



Tuning into the child's emotions

- Look for clues that may help you guess what the child may be feeling (verbal and non-verbal).
- All children are different in how they express emotion.
- Sometimes how children appear is not how they are really feeling inside.

Step 2: Connection and Teaching



Recognise the situation as an opportunity for connection and teaching

- Teachers are a crucial part of a child's 'support team' and are role models.
- This step shifts the mindset we have.
- Challenge of holding in mind many students' needs but means calmer, more compliant children and more space for learning, connection and fun in class.
- It's important to connect when they are experiencing both comfortable (e.g. happy, proud) and uncomfortable (e.g. disappointed, mad) feelings.

Step 3: Labelling Feelings



Help them use words to describe what they feel by verbally naming what you notice

- Children can struggle to identify how they are feeling.
- Labelling feelings expands their emotional vocabulary.
- Having a word for a feeling ‘jumpstarts’ our thinking brain and helps the child to start to calm.

Step 3: Labelling Feelings



Things to Remember:

- * Use curious language - e.g. *"You look a bit frustrated."*
- * Statements are more helpful than questions - e.g. *"I can see you're upset."*
- * Have a guess at the feeling - no attempt is a failure!
- * Describe the verbal or non-verbal clues you see/hear - e.g. *"I can see you over here by yourself."*
- * Open statements can start conversations.
- * Add in visual cues alongside verbal labels.



Step 4: Listen, show empathy & validate emotions

Listen with empathy and show understanding and acceptance by validating their emotions.

- **Listen** simply by being alongside (the 'sweet spot'), giving eye-contact, or briefly acknowledging what they are saying.
- **Empathy** helps us to understand and connect with the child's emotions.



Step 4: Listen, show empathy & validate emotions

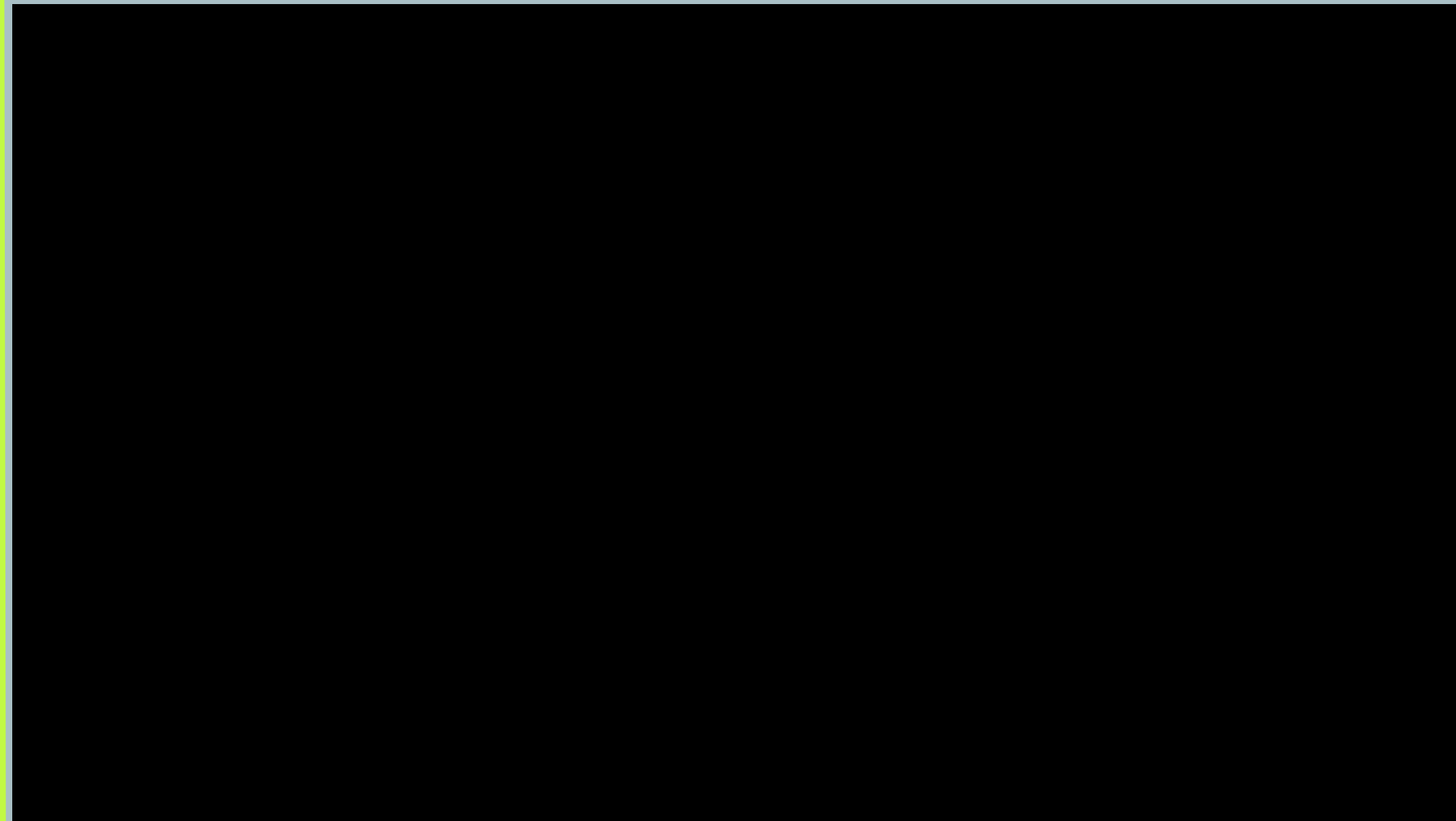
- **Validation** is acknowledging the other person's feelings and accepting their experience as valid and true for them.

Ways to offer validation:

- * Reflecting back what they have said.
- * Normalise their feelings.
- * Sharing a personal experience (if appropriate).
- * Acknowledging the situation or problem is tough for them.



It's not
about
the nail!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4EDhdAHR0g>

Step 5: Limit setting & Problem Solving

Limit Setting:

- Has there actually been misbehaviour?
- Effective limits are kind, firm and consistent.
- Use non-judgemental language.
- Let children know what is expected of them.
- ‘Connection before redirection’.
- Use choices.
- A consequence may be needed and best if related to behaviour.



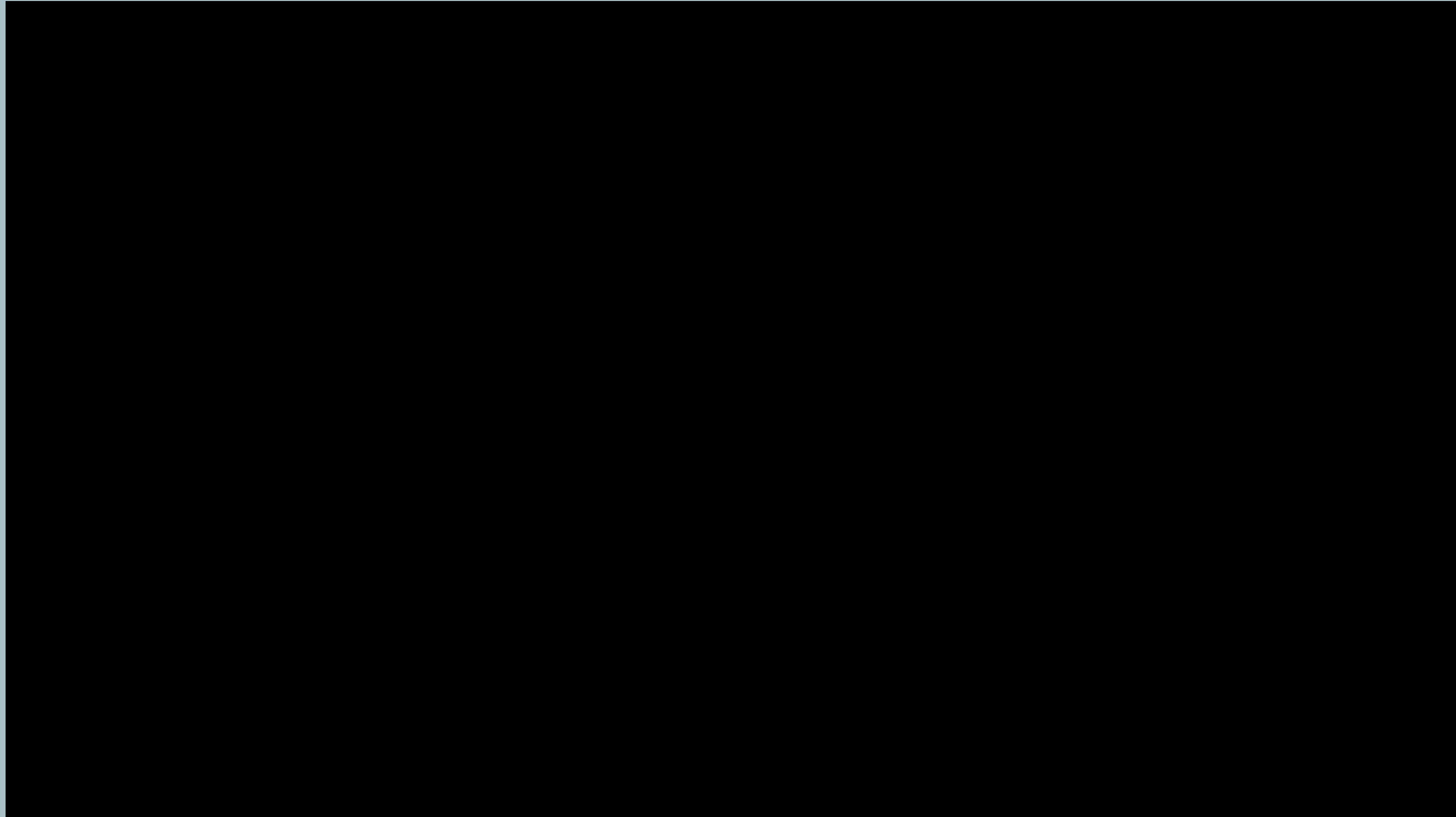


Step 5: Limit setting & Problem Solving

Problem Solving:

- Ensure you and the child are calm enough.
- Try not to rush to this step.
- Clarify the problem and invite the child to share their ideas first.
- Allow time for the child to think of ideas.
- Listen to and acknowledge all of the child's ideas.
- If the child cannot think of a solution, you can suggest one.
- Agree on a solution and make a plan.

The Emotion Coach





There are no failed attempts at Emotion Coaching.

Thank you for working towards empowering children to navigate their emotions through Emotion Coaching!

For further information or training, please get in touch:



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