



'Tis the season to be jolly... fa la la la la. 'Tis the season to be anxious, lonely, sad, joyful, thoughtful, stressed and very, very busy. Lets look after each other throughout the season.

How one little word gives you permission to feel your feelings

There's an important concept about how to feel emotions again safely – especially after trauma.

When you use the word **“but”** between two statements, it negates everything you say before it, while **“and”** allows you to be saying (and holding) both. **“And”** is a powerful word. As a concept for healing, it's life-changing. Once you start to employ this concept in your life, the possibilities are pretty incredible. When so many are feeling numb and overwhelmed, **“and”** is more relevant and necessary than ever.

Compare these two statements and imagine being the recipient. Ask yourself: *Which one feels more loving? More expansive? More comforting?*

I love you **but**...

I love you **and**...

The first phrase probably makes you brace for very scary news – especially if you have a history of trauma. The second one probably feels much less worrisome. It may even feel comforting and reassuring. You're far more likely to be open to receive the rest of the statement. There is a gigantic difference between those two statements because of one simple three-letter word.

Notice how these statements feel to you:

I love you **and** I need some alone time.

I'm sad **and** relieved.

I don't want to talk about this anymore right now **and** I love you.

I'd love to join you **and** I need us both to wear masks.

I'm grateful you cooked for me **and** I don't like mushrooms.



“And” allows you to hold both feelings instead of just one:



Happy and sad

Excited and scared

Disappointment and acceptance

Calm and anxious

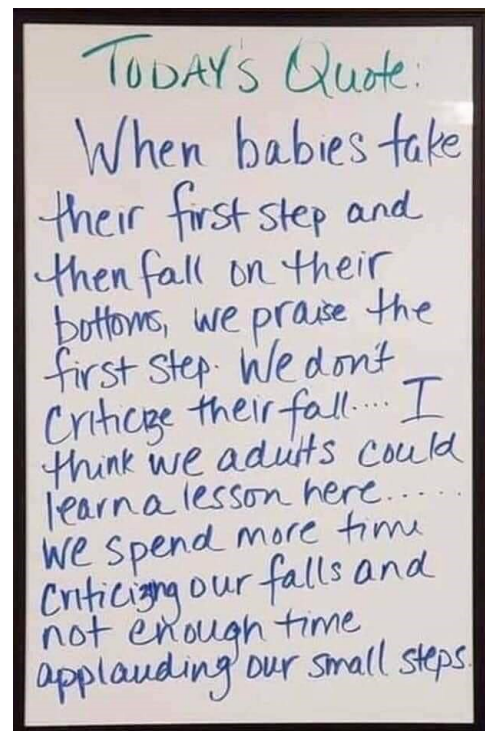
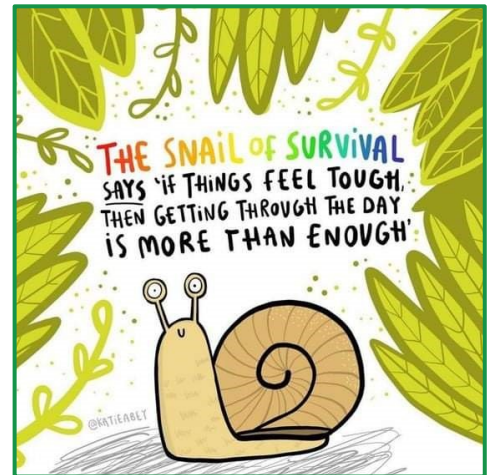
“And” makes space for you to hold both truths at once. How to feel several emotions safely and simultaneously isn't automatic: it's something we need to learn. **“And”** gives us room to hold and notice all of our emotions.

Most of the time, we experience many thoughts and feelings at once. For trauma survivors especially, mixed emotions and messages can be hard to deal with. For example, it can be hard to understand that someone can need time alone and still love you. Because it allows emotions that may otherwise overwhelm us, **“and”** is tremendously important in healing from trauma.

Instead of believing you **“should”** feel a certain way, you can accept that you can feel angry, upset, or hurt and still be healing. It's possible to hold negative feelings and still be healing at the same time. It can make feelings less scary. It means you can be uncomfortable and accept a compliment. You can express your feelings and still be loved. It means you can feel like running away and instead choose to sit with your uncomfortable feelings.

“And” allows you to be a trauma survivor who has survived. It allows you to be healthy and successful today. It allows you to have a past and live fully in the present. It allows you to own the title of trauma survivor, and perhaps even be proud of it.

*Where in your life can you replace **“but”** with **“and”**?*





"ALMOST EVERYTHING WILL WORK AGAIN IF YOU unplug IT FOR A FEW MINUTES, INCLUDING YOU."

— ANNE LAMOTT

The Counseling Teacher Brandy © 2019

Note to self:

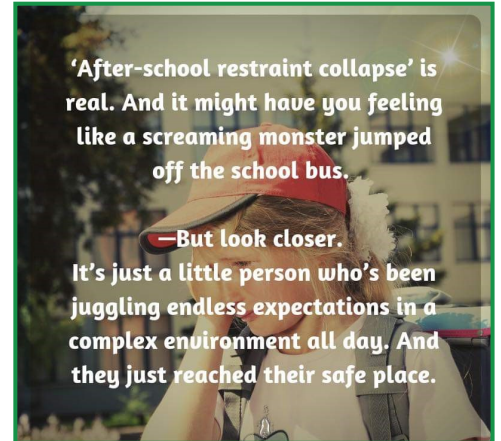
When things feel overwhelming, remember:

- One thought at a time
- One task at a time
- One day at a time

'After-school restraint collapse' is real. And it might have you feeling like a screaming monster jumped off the school bus.

—But look closer.

It's just a little person who's been juggling endless expectations in a complex environment all day. And they just reached their safe place.



The importance of a pause



Pausing for a moment—whether it be to give yourself a few minutes of self-care or to take a couple of breaths before you respond in a heated conversation—is a potent tool for preventing a stressful situation from escalating into something bigger. Pausing allows you to reset and then continue with a clearer mind and intention. Pausing can take many forms.

Here are some ideas:

- Silence your phone
- Take a 5-minute break
- Make tea
- Take a moment to reflect before responding
- Stretch your shoulders, neck, or legs
- Do a mindfulness activity (find an app or video to help)

STOP

Before your thoughts escalate into the worst possible scenarios. Simply the act of saying "Stop!" to yourself can help break your pattern of automatic response and interrupt the negative stress cycle at the onset.

BREATHE

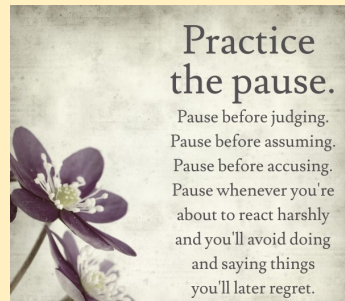
After you Stop, breathe deeply and release physical tension. This is useful in breaking the negative stress cycle. Physically taking a breath can be important because at times of stress, most people hold their breath.

REFLECT

Now you can focus your energy on the problem at hand and reflect on the cause of the stress.

CHOOSE

After you have stopped the process of responding automatically, taken a breath to divert your attention from the stress, and reflected on the stress and its cause, it is time to choose how to deal with the stress.



Practice the pause.

Pause before judging.
Pause before assuming.
Pause before accusing.
Pause whenever you're about to react harshly and you'll avoid doing and saying things you'll later regret.

Making Moments of Mindfulness

Below are a few practices to bring a bit more mindfulness into your day.



Check in With Your 5 Senses

Bring yourself to stillness and scan through your five senses. Notice five things you can see, four things you can feel, three things you can hear, two things you smell, and one thing you taste.

Label Your Thoughts

Sit for a moment and watch your thoughts like clouds. Each cloud comes into your field of vision for a moment, only to be blown out of view or for the cloud to dissipate. Label each thought as a different cloud, always acknowledging its presence and allowing it to float away before you notice the next.

Watch Your Breath

Spend the next few moments noticing your natural breath. There is nothing to fix or change here, just notice the length and depth of your breath and how it feels.

Brain Dump

Grab a journal and a pen and start writing! With this practice all you need is to do is write down everything and anything on your mind. Keep going until you feel content.

Enjoy A Hot Beverage

Grab your favorite cup of tea, coffee or hot cocoa and find a cozy spot. Enjoy your drink with no phone and no distractions! **Extra Tip!** You can take this exercise of presence with any simple day-to-day activity, like taking a shower, washing the dishes or using the toilet. Choose one and make it your mindful moment everyday!

Created by: Elements Yoga Therapy
www.elementsy.com
www.facebook.com/groups/cultivatingselfconnection/



Elf donuts--actually cheerios, to leave with Santa's cookies. This is the cutest thing ever! Gotta remember this for christmas



Displaying Christmas cards & snowy wrapping ideas!



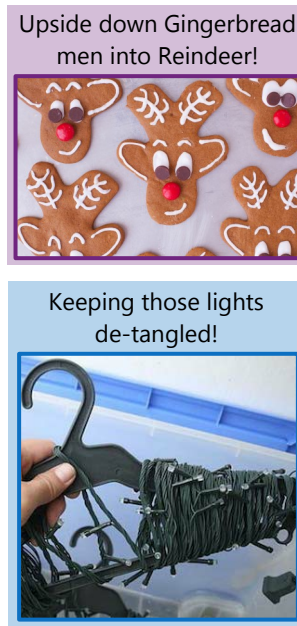
Banana snowmen & celery reindeer



Snowman Painted Rocks



Home made placecard prints and pressies



Upside down Gingerbread men into Reindeer!

Keeping those lights de-tangled!

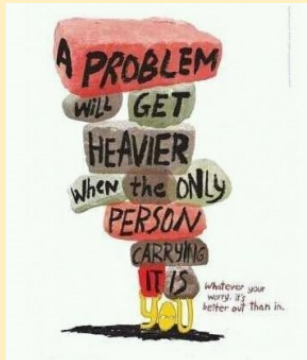
Christmas Parenting Bingo			
New Christmas list provided soon after shopping is complete	Sibling argument over Christmas cracker joke telling etiquette	Bored child complains about missing school	After multiple viewings, Elf ceases to be a family favourite
Small parts of new toys go missing never to be seen again	Widespread opposition to Boxing Day walk	Tantrum due to forgotten batteries	Child or pet knocks over Christmas tree
Most-wished-for present played with once	"Because it's Christmas" used to justify anything	Sprout-induced "smelt it, dealt it" debate	Child asks if there are any more presents to open
Attempt to free toy from packaging enters second hour	All Christmas stocking chocolate consumed before breakfast	Cardboard box proves more popular than toy	During Monopoly, someone says it would be good if money were real



Communicate openly and often



There will most likely be times when your teen is reluctant to discuss a particular emotional challenge. Even so, the knowledge that parents are available to listen and provide support can be an invaluable source of comfort. Teen mental wellness implies the creation of comfort within the family system once challenges are resolved.



Make it clear to your teen that you are available to talk whenever they need you, and make an effort to check in with them on a regular basis. Moreover, when your teen comes to you with a problem, resist the urge to judge, argue, or offer an abundance of advice. Instead, strive to understand what your teen is going through. Therefore, you will learn how you can best support them through this challenge, promoting teen mental wellness today and in the long run.

What Kids Worry About at Different Ages



Kids have worries that can appear at random or may be triggered by everyday events. Their increasing awareness of the world and ability to anticipate bad things happening can create feelings of alarm. As a child ages, their fears can change in expression, with the following list containing the most common worries at different ages. Many of these fears are related to developmental changes and are existential in nature, indicative of the child's increasing independence as a separate self.

0 to 6 months Babies can be afraid of loud noises and objects that loom over them. The loss of physical, visual, and auditory contact with adults is alarming as their brains are not capable of object permanence yet.	7 to 12 months Shyness at this age is common and they may exhibit stranger protest to people they have been comfortable with before. This means the child's brain has locked onto a primary attachment and has object permanence.	1 year Separation from parents is a common source of alarm at this age and continues until age 6. They can be scared when they get hurt, as well as of loud sounds such as toilets flushing.
2 years Young children often exhibit some fear of animals as well as of large objects. They may state they are afraid of dark rooms with separation at night becoming increasingly challenging.	3 to 4 years A young child's increasing imagination gives them the capacity to anticipate bad things happening. Their dreams may include monsters and they can fear animals, masks, and lead them to seek comfort.	5 to 6 years They can fear being physically hurt and of 'bad people out to get them'. Their play can contain these themes and they may fear ghosts, supernatural beings, along with thunder and lightning.
7 to 8 years Common fears include being left alone or left out. They may worry about things that can harm them like car accidents to plane crashes, and may be afraid of the dark.	9 to 12 years The tween may express worries about school performance and be concerned with their physical appearance and being injured or dying. Some may be upset that they have to grow up.	13 to 18 years For the teen personal relationships can be a source of confusion and worry. They may have fears over their future, growing up, politics, along with natural disasters.

For young people, technology is central to everything they do. From connecting with friends on social media, to playing with other gamers from around the world on different multiplayer gaming platforms. For parents and carers, understanding this engagement with digital technology can be overwhelming and it can be difficult to establish boundaries. The 'In the Know' project has been designed and created especially with parents and carers in mind, to equip them with the key information that they need to help young people embark on their digital journeys safely. The collection of guides covers what all parents and carers should know about the most popular social media and gaming apps children are using today. [In the know project >>>](#)



More Anxiety Free Content?

Our new app is just what you're looking for! **WHOLE** is filled with good news, gratitude and positive habits!

Get it for free!

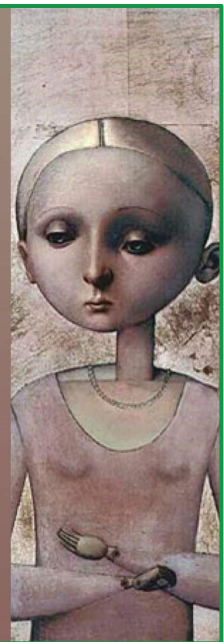
Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play

Don't blame the kids

"When children press your buttons they are not responsible for the buttons that are there."

Quote: Dr Louise Porter • Artist: Klavis Zuters

Inflamed or Informed?
 We are **inflamed** when we blame the kids: "You make me so angry, how many times have I told you?" The safe way to deal with our buttons being pressed is to breathe; find the gap; then deal with your upset respectfully and without blame. We are **informed** when we realise the 'button' has done us a favour. It has alerted us to stuff that we are holding, stuff we haven't dealt with - and that's why we went off in anger. Our buttons are our reliable guide to what we need to deal with in our own journey to wholeness.



MentalUP aims to change behaviours such as stress, lack of focus etc. using mindfulness activities for teenagers.

It features more than 100+ activities like mindful puzzles, mind exercises which helps to improve to focus and attention skills.

MentalUP is available on smartphone, tablet and PC.

MENTALUP



Before you go buy a bunch of "stuff" for family and friends this holiday season, ask them what they really need.

Maybe they need help with a utility bill, car payment, or the rent. Maybe they need a kid-free night and could use a free babysitter.

Maybe they could use a home-cooked meal. Maybe they need someone to listen to them over a cup of coffee. Maybe they don't know what to ask for and are too embarrassed to ask. Maybe you could be the one to give them exactly what they need this season, rather than some "stuff" they'll never use.

BERKSHIRE SOURCES OF SUPPORT

READING AREA

No5 youth counselling – no5.org.uk

WOKINGHAM AREA

ARC youth counselling – arcweb.org.uk

WEST BERKSHIRE AREA

Time to Talk youth counselling – t2twb.org

BRACKNELL FOREST AREA

Youthline youth counselling – youthlineuk.com

WINDSOR, MAIDENHEAD AND SLOUGH AREAS

Number 22 youth counselling – number22.org

BERKSHIRE-WIDE SERVICES

Kooth online counselling – kooth.com

Talking Therapies (over 17s) – talkingtherapies.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk

Berkshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) – tinyurl.com/berkshirecamhs

In a crisis or emergency

If you have urgent concerns about a mental health problem, use the NHS 111 online service at 111.nhs.uk or call 111. If you've injured yourself, taken an overdose or are in an emergency and believe that your life is at risk, please dial 999 or go to the nearest emergency department.

Goodbye November, hello December.
This time of the year I like to remember.
Remembering the days I laughed and I cried.
Feeling proud because I tried.
Happy because I got to see
the changes in season from tree to tree.
Enjoying the warmth from the sun,
time with friends, having fun.
Feeling grateful, standing here.
I made it through another year.

@kellythepoet

December



© Kelly Robinson-Key @kellythepoet

Enjoy this moment
because
it holds the power of
forever.



Happy New Year!

PandaAndPolarBear.com



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Bounce Back 4 Kids is part of



Parents And Children Together

See all our BB4K newsletters
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To get in touch email
bb4k@pactcharity.org