

FAITH STEPPING STONE 1: SESSION 2

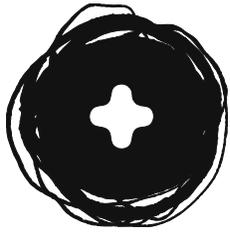


“Nativity” by Dr. He Qi (www.heqigallery.com)

RAISING A HEALTHY BABY

Emotional Development

LEADER’S GUIDE



Emotional Development

RAISING A HEALTHY BABY II

“I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth.” – III John 1:4

I. OPENING

A. Gathering Music

Five minutes before the listed starting time, play the theme song “No Greater Joy” quietly in the background to set the mood as guests arrive.

B. Welcome & Introductions

At the stroke of the hour, thank guests in advance for their attention, make key announcements, and welcome special visitors. Affirm parents for taking the time to develop their parenting skills. (“You are already great parents because you are here!”) Consider playing a group mixing game or the “Ice Breaker” below to get people loosened up. *PowerPoint Note: Two title slides and one announcement slide will advance on their own unless you disable the slide transition.*

Whopper (A Big Lie)

An Ice Breaker by Nora Tahtinen

Sit in a circle as small groups. Ask group members to think of three things they like to eat and one thing they do not like to eat. One person will begin by saying the four foods in random order, for example, “I like peas, pizza, cabbage, and ham.” The other group members then take turns trying to guess which one is the “whopper,” with the spouse guessing last, until someone guesses correctly. Play continues until everyone’s whopper has been guessed. In the next round, group members randomly list two things they like to do in their spare time and one thing they do not like to do. Play the game as in round one. If time permits, invite group members to randomly list two things they might do when angry and one thing they would not do.

C. Quiz Bowl

Invite small groups to preview the main teaching points of the theme using the PowerPoint slides or the questions on page 7. Prepare two gag gifts and one quality gift in three boxes for the winning team. Ideas: SPAM, pacifiers, a baby monitor, a case of infant diapers, ear plugs, certificates for dinner and a baby-sitter.

D. Theme Introduction

Introduce the theme “Raising a Healthy Baby: Emotional Development” with the PowerPoint slides. *Note: The first four slides will advance themselves. You click from there at your own pace.*

E. Opening Prayer

Ask guests to stand and form a circle around their table so they can touch the shoulders of the person to the right. Give neck rubs and back rubs for a few minutes then reverse. Have guests drop their hands and take deep, long, slow breaths. Again. Again. Have the guests focus in their minds on their child’s face. Pray for that child whose life is unfolding. Thank God for these parents who are investing time and energy in learning how to be the best parents they can be. Focus back on breathing

Objective:

To create a theme event that leads guests to understand and experience the emotional needs of their infants and to encourage them in their parenting.



*You are
constructing the
foundation for your
child's emotional
home right now,
brick by brick, smile
by smile, touch by
touch, kiss by kiss.
No matter where
she wanders, she
will never leave this
home. It will be with
her for the rest of
her life.*

— Rich Melheim



long, slow breaths—slowly in, slowly out. Then pray the litany from the PowerPoint slides, instructing guests that the leader will pray some words, and they are to respond with a whispered “When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.”

F. Theme Song

Unveil the theme song “No Greater Joy” embedded in the PowerPoint slide. Practice this song in Huddle with all members of your leadership team so you can sing with energy. Create dance, actions or a modified American Sign Language to use with the song. Following the song, have nursery attendants ready to take the infants away from now until after Small Group Time. Tell parents who wish to keep their babies with them that they are welcomed to do so.

II. THEME PRESENTATION

A. Life Line

Talk about a time in your life while your baby was very small that you felt overwhelmed by all the demands of family, friends, job, and life in general. What emotional support did you receive? How did you make it through? On whom did you rely? As an alternative, invite a guest who has a story to tell about being emotionally uplifted during those early months of living with baby. As a third option, invite a child psychologist from your area to come and speak on the emotional needs of infants and their parents.

B. Skit of the Week

Follow this section by inviting your Theme Team, senior high, a Crazy Parents’ Committee (CPC), or a small group of actors to introduce the theme with the skit “Just Breathe,” provided on page 8.

C. Images & Analogies

Spend the next block of unveiling time using some or all of the Images & Analogies below. Teach this with a team for good variety, pace, and flavor.

I. Translate That

Display the image of a screaming child. Invite participants to verbalize for the child what may be wrong. What may the child be trying to say through the tears that she doesn’t have the words for? List the responses. Reinforce to parents that their child is never trying to frustrate or manipulate them at this age. Constructing language for the child may help the parents separate the situation from their parenting. Children just get upset. It need not say anything about the parents. Pose the question “How does a parent’s perception of their child’s behavior (“No thanks right now” as opposed to “stop it, stupid parent”) direct the parent’s self view and their ability to parent? What parents say to themselves about the effectiveness of their parenting is very important. Infants of happy parents have considerable neural activity in the area of the brain specialized for joy. Brains of children with depressed parents appear different. It’s important for parents to care for themselves so they can better care for their child. Share what services/support your congregation or community can offer.

ACTIVITY: Distribute paper to small groups and ask parents to list in two columns behaviors their child uses to say, “Yes, I like this,” and, “No thanks, that’s enough for now.” Yes—turning toward you, rhythmic grasping movements of hands and feet, relaxed posture, visual attention, cooing, listening carefully, looking toward sound; No thanks—stiff posture, arching back, gaze avoidance, worried look. Invite the groups to share their answers with the entire group and make a master list.

2. Baby’s First Emotions

Pair up and invite guests to express the following emotions with their partner using only facial features—no words: Rage, fear, surprise, delight, frustration, contentment, love. It is important to note that newborns do not distinguish between rage and love. They are both simply part of vague, uninterrupted primal feelings the baby experiences. If a little one's needs are consistently met, they will begin to distinguish the two emotions and all other feelings that come along as well. It is through the experience of loving interaction that babies learn love, compassion, generosity, and creativity. These are learned both by watching others' emotions and by eventually participating in the emotions themselves.

Babies are born thinking that they are the center of the universe. The rest of the world exists as an extension of themselves. As a baby develops mobility, a sense of their separateness begins to develop, as well as a sense of spatial relationships and, rightly so, fear. As babies come to recognize that they are separate from others, they begin to form attachments to caregivers and anxiety to strangers. They begin to socialize by smiling and responding to people around them. They come to realize that they have an effect on the world. (They can make you smile in delight!) And they begin to feel anxiety when those they trust are not in their sight. Your consistent care, touch, love, and calming presence will build in the child the confidence that the world is a good place, that they will be protected, and that they can launch out to explore because they are safe and loved.

3. Cry Baby?

Should you pick up a baby every time it cries? What might happen long-term if you do? If you don't? Ask guests to pair up for two minutes and discuss these two questions. Then return and record their answers on newsprint for all to see. A newborn baby does not have the capacity to manipulate a parent. Infants can't verbalize their problems, so the only method they have of telling you something is wrong is to cry. Much debate has gone on over the centuries over whether picking up a crying child will spoil them or not. Today, most infant psychologists will tell you plainly, not picking them up will do more damage than picking them up. Ask the two questions to the whole group, recording their answers on newsprint, then read the following quotation from Fred Rogers and get group reactions:

"I believe that infants and babies whose mothers and fathers give them loving comfort whenever and however they can are truly the fortunate ones. I think they're more likely to find life's times of trouble manageable, and I think they may also turn out to be the adults most able to pass loving concern along to the generations that follow after them." – Fred Rogers

4. Getting Enough O²

When you board an airplane, the first thing they'll say after "buckle your seat belts" goes something like this: "In the event of a decompression in the chamber, an oxygen mask will fall from the ceiling. Please affix the mask to your own face before helping the child near you." Why do they say that? Don't they like babies? No, they know something most new parents don't know. Unless you're taking good care of yourself—unless you're getting enough of your own oxygen—you'll not be any good to anyone.

Parents who want to raise a healthy baby will go out of their way to see to it that their own needs—the needs of the individual as well as the couple—are being met.

For all parents, the birth of a child marks a dramatic and irreversible shift in family dynamics. Their lives will never be the same. Each new child becomes a catalyst for change—reordering and re-prioritizing all existing prior relationships. Your pleasures, pains, and priorities are now bound up in another person's life. The child's needs, experiences, feelings, triumphs, and misfortunes are all part of you now as well. You can't escape it. The future is here, and new rules and patterns will have to be set around the new reality. For mothers, the change is most pronounced. Pressures are

Please place the oxygen mask on your own face before helping the children near you.

– Airline Instructions



*Cleaning the house
while the children
are growing is like
shoveling the snow
while it is still
snowing.*

– Erma Bombeck

coming from many directions. Mothers often feel like they are falling short in one area—if not several areas—of their lives. Somewhere they’ve been fed the line that “you can have it all.” Mother. Lover. House maintenance engineer. Bread winner. It’s an insidious lie that causes untold shame and harm. There is a piece of commonsense advice that provides an answer to this dilemma. “Yes, you can have it all...” she says, “...but not all at the same time.” Erma Bombeck wrote, “Cleaning the house while the children are growing is like shoveling the snow while it is still snowing.

For fathers, the care and attention of the mother is now focused clearly on the baby. They often feel left out. Even in the glow and joy of the new arrival, resentment, guilt, anxiety and anger can set in. Any of these, left unattended, can undermine the family and destroy the primary relationship that must be strong if you are to raise a healthy baby. Somewhere along the line, a mother and father must come face to face with expectations and reality, and decide what the essentials will be in their relationship and what can slide for a few years. Otherwise, they’ll be set up for failure. Unless intentional time, energy and care is given to keep the couple relationship strong, the stress on the marriage will have a negative effect on the baby. You don’t want that. You want to raise a healthy baby. So it is time to set healthy practices in place that will give you the oxygen you need—both personally and as a couple—so you can best care for the little one now in your world.

5. Socialization of Your Baby

Infants are helpless to defend themselves. When they begin to favor Mom and Dad’s presence and show anxiety in the presence of unfamiliar adults, this is a good sign they are learning who they can trust and that they are emotionally attaching to their parents. Attachment Theory says attachment is a complex bonding between an infant and a significant adult. For attachment to happen, there must be in place mutual affection and a desire to be near each other. You can see this happening especially when your baby begins to creep or crawl and walk. Wherever you go, they will follow! A baby who is not mobile will often begin to cry as their significant adult leaves their sight. This is called Separation Anxiety. Stranger Anxiety is a healthy indication that your baby recognizes familiar adults and is insecure around those who are unfamiliar. This happens naturally and to varying degrees from baby to baby. Separation Anxiety and Stranger Anxiety are necessary stages of development for children. Parents help their children by being reassuring and comforting. Briefly discuss (1) the dangers of failing to know who can be trusted and (2) successful methods parents use when leaving their children. [Protecting the Gift, Gavin DeBecker]

6. Adler’s Gift

Alfred Adler, a family theorist who studied the impact a child’s family has on the child’s development, is quoted as saying, “If there is one gift I could offer each child, it would be courage.” Turn to a neighbor for a minute and discuss what this quote means to you. Then invite pairs to divide a piece of paper in half and list behaviors/attitudes that support the development of courage in one column, and behaviors/attitudes that may limit a child’s development of courage in another column. How can parents set the stage for courage to grow in their home while eliminating the conditions that stifle the development of courage?

7. Pointless Play?

Invite parents to share the games they play with their infants. Search for games like the four below that stimulate brain activity and teach subtle lessons to the child. Game 1: Peek-a-boo develops the part of an infant’s brain that will later help them understand object permanence, that people and things exist even when I can’t see them—trust. (Developing the ability to hold on to an image in the mind even when it can’t be seen is also a significant precursor to language development.) Discuss the importance of this aspect of development: Mom and Dad will return when they step out of sight, etc. Game 2: Sooooo Big is an excellent way to teach that words help me interact with my world—cause and effect. How big is the baby? (Stretch your



arms) Soooooooo Big! How big is the Cheerio? (Squeeze your hands together with a small opening) Soooooo big. How big is daddy's ego? (You get the picture). Game 3: Here Comes the Spider is another cause and effect game that teaches anticipation and patience. Open your hand like a crawling spider and place it on the bed, table or wall. Start crawling and say, "Here comes the spider, gonna..." pausing for various lengths of time. Then pounce, tickle and say, "... getcha!" Game 4: The Little Hare also teaches cause and effect, plus imagination, cadence, and anticipation. Hold your baby's hand, palm up, and trace a circle with your fingers as you begin: "Round and round the garden, goes the little hare..." Now hop with your fingers up baby's arm as you move in for the tickle: "One hop, two hops..." Pause for varying lengths of time before you tickle their chin or belly with: "Tickle under there!" Invite parents to share other games they play with their baby (or use those previously listed) and discuss what their child is truly learning through such play.

8. Inventing the Future

The habits you set in place at this moment of parenting will go with you to either bless you or haunt you for the rest of your life.

Habits are like grooves in the road. The more you do them, the harder it is to get out of them. They can be ruts that keep you in the mud, or ruts that keep you on track to your chosen destination.

Most people spend more time planning the road map for a two-week vacation than planning the emotional map for their children's future. It's time to start. First, invite individuals to write a paragraph on the kind of future they want for their child, and for their family. After they have written, invite three or four people to read their desired futures. Affirm them for setting a good goal in place, now challenge them to take the first steps toward reaching that goal. What will they do this week to start building that future? Return to the "Top 10 Ways of Getting Your Own Oxygen" list from Image 1. Circle three points on the list that are most important to you right now. Take out your calendars, and mark the exact time that you'll be taking those steps toward health. Tell them that you'll be checking up on them next week to see if they followed through on their health plan.

9. Touch Review

Ask, "What does positive touch teach your baby? What does it do for you?" Now stand in a circle and give back massages for a couple minutes. Start by scratching the back in front of you lightly. Next do karate chops up and down the spine. Next, circular motions. (Wax on, wax off!) Repeat, digging deeper with fingernails. Did that feel good? If it was pleasurable and important to you, imagine how it feels to your baby. You were just told that you were important, needed, and valued by another human being without a single word. This is a message you want to give to your child through positive touch every day. (It wouldn't be a bad message to give your partner, either!) There is no such thing as meaningless touch. We all crave touch. We learned last session that infants need it in order to grow their brains, their lung capacity, and their proper weight. Babies also need to know that they are wanted and needed—a necessary part of the family. You convey this message every time you smile at them, call them by name, sing to them, and include them in family activities. You are your child's first mirror image of themselves. Babies also need to have their demands met consistently. They are totally dependent on their caregivers for everything and aren't concerned about others' needs. (You were that way, too, once.)

10. If Time Permits

Walk through the four-slide "Infant Timeline" from last session, reviewing infant development from "T minus 9 months" to the end of the first year.

*You can have it
all... but not all at
the same time.*

— Bumper Sticker





D. The Weakest FINK (Terms of the Week)

Explore the theme's key terms found on the PowerPoint slides provided or the Guest Handout 4. The terms are Attachment, Courage, Fear, Separation Anxiety, Stranger Anxiety.

III. FAITH 5 SMALL GROUP TIME

Create small groups of six to eight people to go through the FAITH 5 and discuss the Guest Handout. 1. SHARE highs and lows of the week, 2. READ the theme verse together, 3. TALK about how their highs and lows relates to the verse, 4. PRAY for one another's highs and lows, and 5. BLESS one another. After this, discuss the Thought Time questions. Assign a person to give a final report from their group and bring a prayer back to the Wrap-up Reflection time.

IV. CLOSING

A. Theme Song Review

Gather groups back with a quiet version of the theme song. Dim all lights and add candles to set a contemplative mood. The babies may be brought back to their parents for this quiet closing time. Encourage parents to hold their babies, rock them, or dance with them to the music and on through the Wrap-up Reflection.

B. Wrap-up Reflection

Thank guests for their attention once again, then reflect on the Bible verse and theme one final time before prayers and blessings. Let them read the PowerPoint silently as the instrumental version of the theme song plays on the CD or is sung live. Move from there into prayer.

C. PTA Prayers

Invite each small group to bring at least one PTA (Praise, Thank, Ask) Prayer to this closing time. Invite other guests with special concerns to pray aloud at this time or write their concerns on slips of paper and hand them to you for public reading. Continue with the soft version of the theme song to maintain the mood.

D. Blessing & Final Word

Invite parents to mark a cross on their baby's forehead and use the following blessing: "May the Lord bless and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

After this, invite them to bless six other babies or parents in the same way. Finally, bless them on their way with: "May God give you everything you need to be the parent you've always wanted to be."

NOTE: Encourage guests to invite other new parents to join you next week.

E. Credits

Do everything in your power to make this event seem like an event, not a class! If they see credits rolling as they exit, they'll leave with a slightly different feeling about what they just experienced. It was experiential theater, not just another class.

HEALTHY BABY

2



QUESTION 1: Cause and effect games played with babies: A. Teach them they can interact with their environment, B. Are a waste of time—they're babies, remember!, C. Stimulate the eyes, but not much of the brain, D. Are best played during television commercials

QUESTION 2: In infant development, the term “object permanence” refers to: A. Making chew toys that last, B. The opposite of technological obsolescence, C. An infant learning that objects exist even when they aren't visible, D. An infant learning that they can object to everything you say when they become a teenager

QUESTION 3: Stranger Anxiety: A. Is common and normal among infants, B. Is a rare condition—see your doctor, C. Shows that babies are learning to identify their primary caregivers, D. Both A & C

QUESTION 4: Courage: A. Leads infants to attempt new tasks, B. Is necessary for both infants and parents, C. Was the one thing the Lion sought from the all-powerful Oz, D. All of the above

QUESTION 5: No Fear...: A. Was a common slogan on shirts and caps in the 1990's, B. Is a common attitude many infants display, C. Indicates a child is eager to learn about her world, D. All of the above and then some

QUESTION 6: Parents who take care of themselves physically and emotionally: A. Are incredibly selfish, B. Must not be taking very good care of their babies, C. Will transfer that sense of well-being to their infant's brain and affect the baby positively, D. Have way too much time on their hands and should consider having another baby right away

QUESTION 7: Separating your emotions from your child's emotions: A. Is incredibly cold-hearted, B. Is an impossible task, C. Can help parents think more clearly under stress, D. Will win you the Pulitzer Prize for Parents

QUESTION 8: Manipulating parents is: A. Common among newborns, B. Impossible for newborns, C. Impossible for teenagers, D. Something that will never happen in a good parent's house

QUESTION 9: Reading to your infant: A. Stimulates language development through rhymes and patterns, B. Creates a bond between parent and child that will pay off for the rest of your life, C. Is pointless until the child expresses an interest in books beyond chewing on them, D. Both A & B

QUIZBOWL FINAL QUESTION:

If parents don't make an intentional effort to block time out to care for themselves and their other relationships: A. It probably won't happen, B. It probably won't happen, C. It probably won't happen, D. It probably won't happen and both they and their babies will suffer the consequences



ANSWER KEY

Quiz Answers: 1-A, 2-C, 3-D, 4-D, 5-D, 6-C, 7-C, 8-B, 9-D, 10-D



FAITH STEPPING STONE QUIZ BOWL

Just BREATHE

FSS I: Theme II Skit by Rich Melheim

CHARACTERS: Mom, Dad, Flight Attendant, People, Pilot (voice)

PROPS: Gum, suitcases, baby doll

SETTING: An airplane at boarding time

DAD: This is it. 26A, 26B and 26C.

MOM: I'm so glad we were able to sit together. It looks like a rather full flight.

MOM: (To Baby) Oh, sweetie, I'm so excited! Your first flight!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Ladies and gentlemen, please be seated as quickly as possible so we can make an on-time departure.

DAD: (To Baby) Grandma is going to be so happy to see you!

MOM: Here, honey. (Handing gum to husband)

DAD: What's this?

MOM: It will keep your ears from popping.

PILOT (VOICE): Ladies and gentlemen, welcome aboard Fly By Night Airlines flight number 86 from (name your town) to Orlando.

MOM: Here we go!

DAD: I can't wait.

PILOT: We'll be cruising at an altitude of 30,000 feet to get above the turbulence over the Midwest, and at a speed of 500 miles an hour, which should put us into Orlando just in time for rush hour. Our in flight movie today stars Chuck Barry, Halle Berry, Mohammed Ali, Bill Cosby, Lady Gaga, James Earl Jones, and Arnold Schwarzenegger in, "I Was the Strange Child of the Family." Now, before we take off, please give your complete attention to the Flight Attendant

so we can get out of the gate.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Ladies and gentlemen, please buckle your seat belts at this time. Please take a moment now to locate the exit nearest you. Also, in the unlikely event of a water landing, your seat does turn into a flotation device.

DAD: Water landing? We're flying over Topeka.

MOM: Shhhhh...

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: In the unlikely event of a decompression in the chamber, an oxygen mask will fall in front of you. Although it will not expand, oxygen will be flowing through it. Please affix the mask to your own face before helping the child near you.

DAD: Wait a minute. Did you hear that?

MOM: Yes! Miss! Miss!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: If you are traveling with more than one child, please decide which of the children you like best and help them first.

DAD: Excuse me! Excuse me! Miss!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: I'm sorry, sir, I've got to get through this so we can get out of the gate.

MOM: What did you just say about helping yourself before helping the child?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: I said, "In the unlikely event of a decompression in the chamber, an oxygen mask will fall in front of you. Although it will not expand, oxygen will be flowing."

DAD: We heard that part. What did you say after that?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Please affix the mask to your own face before helping the child near you?

MOM: Yes! We can't do that!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: That's standard procedure. That's what you're supposed to do.

DAD: That's unthinkable!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: What are you talking about?

MOM: We can't do that! Of course we should help the child first! What kind of parents do you think we are?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: But if you don't get enough oxygen, yourself, you'll not be able to help anybody. You'll pass out!

DAD: I'm going to call the authorities. You're promoting child neglect!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: I'm promoting common sense. If you don't take care of yourself first, you'll be no good to anyone!

MOM: I'm a mother! I'm supposed to help my child first!

DAD: It's un-American! Communist! What you're saying is unthinkable!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: (Frustrated) It's... it's... it only makes sense. A parent has to be able to breathe, or the child will never get any help! You'll pass out and you'll both suffer.

MOM: (Yelling and rising) I'm a mother! I am supposed to suffer!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Please, sit down. (Looking around) Security!

DAD: (Rising) That's it! We're leaving!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Security!

MOM: I'm a mother! I'm not flying on any plane that demands I take care of myself first and my baby second! Come now! We'll take the bus to Orlando.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Suit yourself. The doors are closing, so get off now if you're going to go.

MOM: I'm a mother! I'm supposed to suffer for my children! Oh, now I'm getting nervous! I'm having another panic attack!

DAD: Just breathe! Come on! Like they taught us. Ha ha hooo. Ha ha hooo.

MOM: Ha ha hooo. Ha ha hooo.

DAD: Let's go, honey. We don't need any of their stupid oxygen. We're parents. We're just fine without it.

FAITH STEPPING STONES
RAISING A HEALTHY BABY II

Emotional Development



A Faith Incubators System Theme Set www.faithink.com Cover art by Dr. He Qi www.heqigallery.com

“I have no greater joy than this,
to hear that my children are
walking in the truth.”

– III JOHN 1:4



Emotional Development

FAITH 5 Time



1. SHARE *Highs & Lows* from the past week with a partner. After a few minutes, return and share your partner's highs and lows with your small group.



2. READ the theme verse aloud together.

3. TALK about how the verse relates to your *Highs & Lows*, and about the session:

1. What is one thing you learned today about your baby's emotional needs that you want to remember?



2. What is one thing you already knew that you believe is worth repeating?

3. What is one thing you'd like to know more about?



4. PRAY for one another's specific *Highs & Lows*. Hold hands in a circle or lock arms in a huddle for this.

5. BLESS one another using the blessing on the back of this handout.



Action Plan

One thing I will do to take better care of my child's emotional health this week is:

One thing I will do to take better care of my own emotional health this week is:

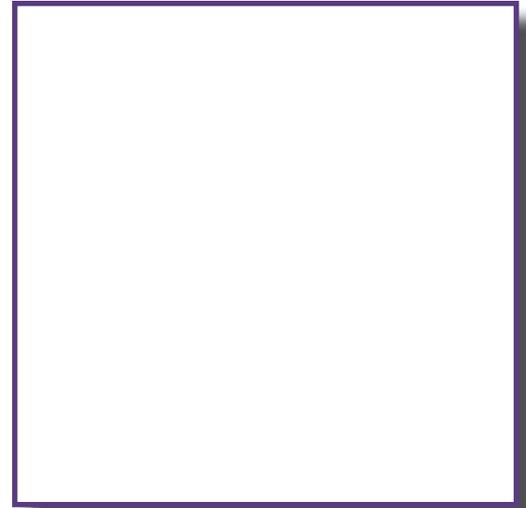
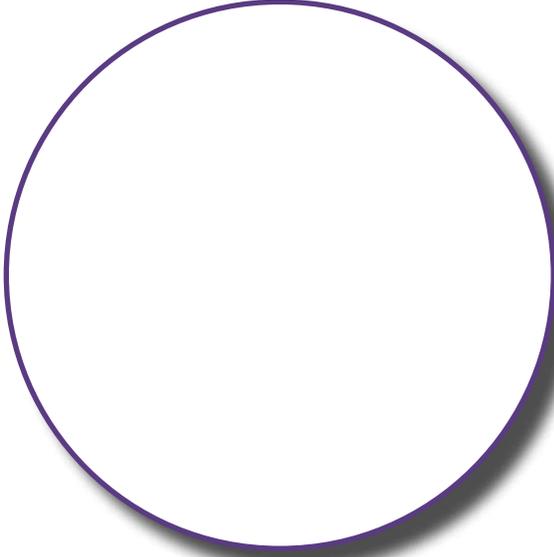
One thing I will do to take better care of my spouse's/family's emotional health this week is:

*If you don't get enough
of your own oxygen,
you're no good
to anyone.*

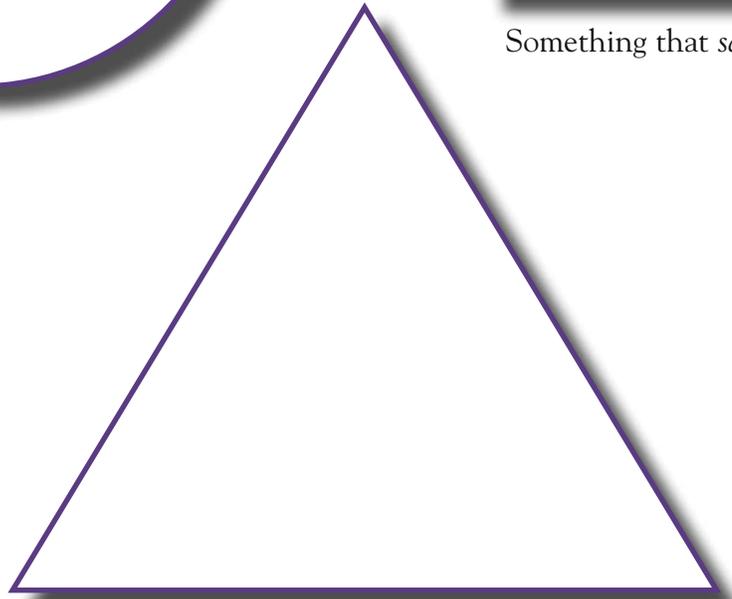
– Rich Melheim

Shape Up Review

A question *circling* around in my head:



Something that *squared* with my beliefs:



Three important *points* to remember:

Thoughts To Ponder

“If there is one gift I could offer each child, it would be courage.” – Alfred Adler

“Cleaning the house while the children are growing is like shoveling the snow while it is still snowing.” – Erma Bombeck

“You are constructing the foundation for your child’s emotional home right now, brick by brick, smile by smile, touch by touch, kiss by kiss. No matter where she wanders, she will never leave this home. It will be with her for the rest of her life.”

– Rich Melheim

Discuss the following terms and write a group definition here and in your glossary.

Attachment

Courage

Fear

Separation Anxiety

Stranger Anxiety

Closing Blessing

Gather at the altar, baptismal font, or in a circle for a blessing. Kiss your fingertip, then mark your child with the sign of the cross and recite the blessing below. Then bless each member of your group. Consider using this blessing each night this week as you put your child to bed:

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.”

