

Week 5. Navigating the “IT”: INTERFACE WITH THE WORLD ~ My Roles as a Parent

HANDOUT 2: Integration Steps



- > Paying Attention
- > Connect Emotionally First
- > Help Make Sense and Integrate

- 1) **Paying attention to what is going on for our children.** Trauma is not only measured by the intensity of an experience, an event itself, but has a lot to do with *how* it is experienced by someone. For one child falling off his bike could be traumatic, for another not at all. Carefully observing your child, knowing what is going on in her life, asking questions when she comes home from school, and watching how she is responding to everyday occurrences can give you clues as to whether she has been jolted and disturbed by something.
- 2) **Connect with them emotionally first**, not jump right away to explaining logically, but simply being present with them, with what they feel, encouraging them to share and express from this place until they find some calm.
- 3) And then, when they are ready, to **help them make sense and integrate** what happened, perhaps to find new ways of responding to a similar situation in the future. This can happen through story telling, role playing, conversation... really, any and all ways that allow our children to narrate what happened, to go back over, to make sense of, and perhaps also to find new outcomes. Dan Siegel describes this process as helping our children link from the right brain, the emotional experiential brain over to the left brain, the observing narrative one, and in this way helping the brain become and be whole, and not stay stuck.

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