**Parenting With Compassion – Emergency First Aid Self Empathy**

Empathy is a respectful understanding of, and presence and attention to, what someone is experiencing, their feelings and needs. Self empathy is listening with the same quality of presence and attention to our own feelings and needs.

When you know your needs as a parent, you can actively seek to meet them in ways aligned with your values.

Children learn from what their parents do and how they live their lives. It is important that parents model what it takes to care for oneself.

Weariness, frustration, distress and resentment can grow when we put other’s needs ahead of our own or we see others caring for their needs and we are not caring for ours.

It is helpful to learn to recognise your own indicators and warning signs that you are **being “emotionally hijacked.”**– Daniel Goleman .

**Practice catching yourself and using “Emergency First Aid Self Empathy”:**

1. Learn to recognise the warning signs that you are not taking care of yourself, that you are “running on empty” or about to say something you’ll regret.

For example, do you notice tension in your body, your voice rising in pitch or volume? Do you notice a lack of compassion or judging & blaming thoughts ?

2. If so, stop talking; walk away to distance yourself if that is helpful.

3. Take time in: connect to your breath to bring awareness to the body,

4. Notice your body sensations, feelings, and where you feel them. Be with the feelings, accepting and allowing what is.

1. Connect to your needs. Ask yourself: “What is the need I am longing to have met in this situation?” Be with your longing.

1. Notice the shift in feelings that often comes when you’ve identified your feelings and needs. Your mind may naturally begin to ponder strategies to meet the need.

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**Sowing the seeds of compassion, one connection at a time**

***Cultivating Compassion Paulette Bray-Narai***