

## Preview the manuals



The coach manual is only available to those who undertake the training to use the manualised program.

Each parent will require their own copy of the manual, available on our website. The parent manual provided is for training purposes only.

## Preview the parent manual

### *Welcome to the Parent Hope Project Manualised Program*



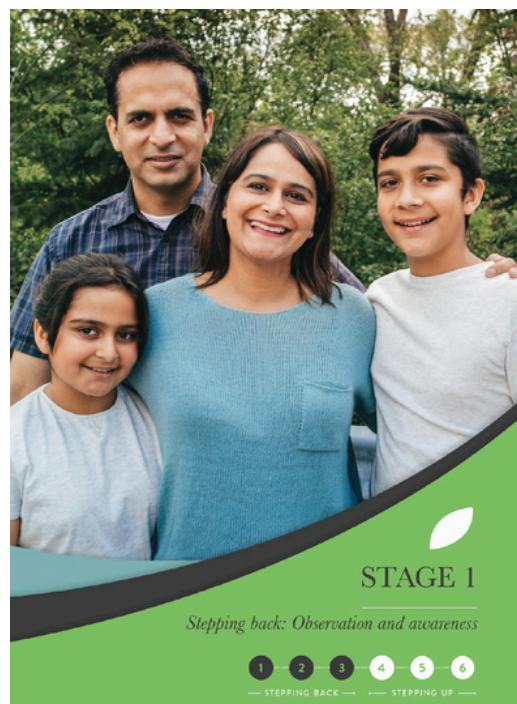
Your willingness to participate in this program speaks to your commitment as a parent to be the best resource possible for your vulnerable child/children. This program is based on research<sup>1</sup> showing that:

- when a parent can redirect their energy from trying to fix their child,
- to focusing on how they manage themselves with their child,
- they recover hope and confidence in their capacity to contribute to their child's recovery of wellbeing and responsibility.

This can be a challenging shift for a parent who is deeply concerned for their child. It's natural to want to fix and change a child/adolescent who is struggling to manage life. A repeated idea that you will encounter in this program is that when parents shift from trying to change their child and instead invest in what is in their control as parents, new hopeful pathways open up. Changing another is outside of anyone's control, whereas changing self is always achievable.

#### Differentiation Based Parenting

The parenting approach comes from Bowen family systems theory, and the goal is to gradually be a more differentiated self in relationships. Parents improve their ability to think and act for themselves while also enhancing their bond with other family members. They work to be clearer about themselves and less reactive to their children and parenting partner. This enhances the child and other family members' capacity to grow a separate, independent self while also contributing to stronger, trustful connections.



# Preview the parent manual

## 1. 'Stepping back' reflections

Your coach will ask you to describe an interaction in each meeting.

### An example of a parent-child interaction:

Where did it take place?

What started the interaction?

What were the beginning behaviours? (What was said and actioned)

What was the emotional tone?

#### For you

- anxious    angry    defensive    agitated    Thoughtful
- distressed    withdrawn    helpless    Calm    Confident

#### For your child

- anxious    angry    defensive    agitated    Thoughtful
- distressed    withdrawn    helpless    Calm    Confident

How stirred up were your emotions?

Did you experience any of these signs of high stress:

- racing heart rate    tensed up    shallow breathing    shouting
- OR  crying    unable to think    shutting off    withdrawing

Who was there? What was your main worry? What were you thinking?

Who wasn't there? Where were other family members?  
How did other family members respond?

## Healthy child & adolescent development

### Connection and autonomy in balance encourages maturation. Maturity grows as connection with caregivers gradually allows more independence.

From birth through to adulthood a key developmental task for a child is to gradually reduce their dependence on their mother, on both parents, and on other adults, and increase their capacity to manage upsets, new challenges, and ways to socialise. Early opportunities to experience the stress of short separations from caregivers, is the start of the child growing some autonomy. The key to assisting a child to develop their resilience in growing more in independence is to provide balanced connection and autonomy experiences appropriate to their age. Connection shows interest and support while always treating the child as a separate person who is learning to manage their own life tasks. Allowing even a young child opportunities to explore their world independently from the caregiver is an important way to support healthy development.

At all stages of parent-child development, an equal balance of connection and opportunity for independence is optimal.

### Milestones for managing emotions: self-regulation

## 2. Key idea

### *Investigate: Energy direction*

One of the things this program considers is where most of your energy (as a parent) gets directed:

- 1 managing the child OR
- 2 reacting to the other parent OR
- 3 managing self?

Thinking back over an example of an interaction with the child you are concerned about: Where did most of your efforts go?

#### Did your energy go into:

**CHILD FOCUS:** Worried thoughts about the child, what the child might do, what you want the child to do, how to make the child feel and act differently.

**OTHER PARENT FOCUS:** Being irritated with the other parent, telling the other parent what to do, being critical or worried about the way the other parent is going about things.

**PARENT FOCUS:** Thinking about what you think is my role as a parent, what are you in control of, what do you want to take a stand on, what do you want to convey is important to you? How do you want to contribute to your child growing their own coping capacities?

Energy to changing child (pushing, pulling, doing, feeling and thinking for child)

Energy to reacting to or changing other parent

Energy to what's in my control and responsibility-changing self in relation to child



## STAGE 2

From stepping back to stepping up



# Preview the parent manual

## Session 4



### What is in my control? What is my "I" position?

In the first three sessions you have been focusing on 'stepping back' to promote your child's development and to become aware of the patterns you are often in with your child and the other parent. The second half of this program moves to 'stepping up' experiments in adjusting parts of a parent's interactions.

Each session in Part 2 focuses on how you can adjust the way you have been interacting with your child/adolescent, based on observations so far. A goal is for you to change only what is in your control, rather than trying to change your child.

The focus is 'stepping up' as a parent leader by being: more calm; more clear about what you will and won't do; and more interested in your child, rather than reacting to your child.

#### 1. Continued 'stepping back' reflections

Continue to reflect on your parent-child interactions:

##### An example of a parent-child interaction:

Where did it take place?

#### 2. Key idea

What is in my control?  
What is my "I" position?

#### INVESTIGATE

Are your efforts directed at changing what is in your control to change or what you wish you could change?

What of my parenting efforts last week have gone into trying to change what is not really in my control? Trying to get the other's co-operation or compliance? Instead of changing what I will do if certain core principles are not met by my child (or another family member)?

How often do you observe that you back down from a reasonable position – especially in  
What am I trying to change that is not in my control?      What am I doing that's in my control?

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the face of your child's upset? When are you able to hold your position – even when under pressure? The aim is to be in the middle column, not getting caught in the reactive back-down or over-controlling.

#### 6. Extension questions

Reflect on the questions below that are most relevant for you.



##### PARENTING GOALS

What parenting goals have I been aware of today?

Are my goals for myself and how this can best facilitate maturity in my child/adolescent? Or are my goals more focussed on my child and their health, behaviour, happiness and/or success?

When I am aware of my own goal for how I want to parent what difference does it make?



##### CHANGING ME OR CHANGING OTHERS

What of my parenting efforts today have gone into trying to change what is not really in my control?

Trying to get the other's co-operation or compliance instead of changing what I will do if certain core principles are not met by my child (or another family member)?

How have I responded to these invitations today?



##### RESIST THE PULL TO TAKE OVER

What have I noticed today about ways my child/adolescent invites me to take over their responsibilities for managing them self or their tasks (often subtle and not consciously)?

When I don't take up these invitations what happens?

## Session 5 Information Page 1

*A dad regains his agency with his oppositional daughter and connects with her differently.*

#### More from the story of a father, Joe and his daughter Chloe.

This is another example from the story of one parent, Joe, as he worked to figure out how he could be a resource to his defiant 13 year old daughter Chloe. Previously Joe recognised that his pattern of rushing in to smooth things over for Chloe resulted in increased entitlement from his daughter. He began to accept that changes for Chloe would be slow but that the first step he could make was to stop trying to create peace by bribing Chloe. His stepping back from an ineffective pattern was the launch of becoming a more hopeful parent. Joe started to shift his focus from trying to change Chloe to a focus on what he could change.

## Preview the coach manual

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### The 'self' of the clinician

An effective coach works to stay patient and is mindful of:

- **Variations in parents' capacity to self-direct:** Every parent starts from a different place in terms of their emotional maturity and energy for change. Parents have been dealt different hands of cards from their families of origin as well as having experienced different degrees of adversity that drain hope and energy. Hence the coaching goes at the pace of the parent. If parents bring little reflection to a session this is an expression of their current capacity. Use the session to cultivate observations in retrospect; and some lessons may be facilitated by in-session work on reported interactions. If any ideas do not make sense to a parent, stay with what does make sense to them and what they can link to their described interactions.
- **The impact for the parent of relating to a calm objective clinician:** Observe and manage your own triggers to want to fix, take over, instruct and/or take sides.

### Parallel process for parent and clinician

**Remember:** It is a similar challenge for a parent to shift their anxious fixing focus from their child as it is for the helping professional to restrain their fixing focus on the parent. A focus on fixing another person reduces their growth in personal agency.

PARENT managing self not child	CLINICIAN managing self not parent
Shift focus on fixing child to self	Shift focus from fixing and directing parent to managing self
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe patterns</li> <li>• See own part without blame</li> <li>• Patience not quick fix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research not fix</li> <li>• See patterns not fault</li> <li>• Patience not push</li> </ul>

## Overview of Parent Manual

### STAGE 1: SESSIONS 1-3

#### Stepping back: Observation and awareness



NOTE: Commencing the program with a focus on observing takes parent pressure off the urge to fix and make changes without 1st developing insight. Learning to be a better observer of self in relationship is actually a key shift - it is a building block for differentiating self from relationship fusion.

### Overview

Each session focus is on what has been observed of parent-child/adolescent interactions. A goal is for a parent to become more of an observer than a reactor. Continued 'stepping back' reflections consolidate parent awareness. A new **KEY IDEA** (🍀) is introduced each session.

- 1 Reflect on observations:
  - What went well and what didn't go well?
  - Did interactions promote increased independence or immature dependence?
  - Where was the energy of the parent focused – on managing themselves to the best of their capacity or managing the young person?
- 2 Ask for a detailed description of either a progress example or a setback example – both are helpful to learn from.
- 3 Share your observations about the pattern of interaction and how each person might be affecting the other. Ask if this rings true or whether they see it differently.

*For parents who are sensitive to blame, the question about what helped and didn't help might be hard for them to engage with. You may find it more engaging to stay with questions of promoting independence and questions about energy focus.*

### The parent is asked to consider:

Are there ways I can step back a bit from rescuing or trying to do too much for my child?

The in-between project is to **OBSERVE, OBSERVE, OBSERVE!**

Summarise that the effort for the next week/fortnight/... is to observe as many of these kinds of interactions as possible.

- Observe self – what you are doing?
- Observe the child/adolescent – how do they respond to what you do?

### Explain the manual worksheets and information Pages

The worksheets in the manual are to back up the thinking from each session. The tracing of an example of family patterns is part of every session. They are encouraged for getting the most out of the program but not required homework to fill in. Let the parent know that this is a guide for what will be explored each session. If they are able to observe and reflect on their interactions between each session it can add to the value of the program. The worksheets are the essential part of the program, because they support your learning in the interactions that occur in your everyday life.

Information pages at the end of each session provide additional input that may be useful for parents. It is important to read all information pages from your parent manual in preparation for sessions.



Information Page 1 | Tracing an interaction: Example from one father, Joe and his 13-year-old daughter Chloe

Information Page 2 A | Adolescent healthy development

Information Page 2 B | Child healthy development

Explain to parents that the information pages for this session may be useful for parent reflection about ways they might contribute to an environment that facilitates growth in independence as well as maintaining good connection.

STAGE 2: SESSIONS 4-6

*From stepping back to stepping up*



ADJUSTING PARTS OF THE PARENT'S INTERACTIONS

Overview

Each session in Stage 2 focuses on how the parent can adjust the way they have been interacting with their child/adolescent (based on observations so far). A goal is for a parent to change what is in their control, rather than trying to change the child.

Stage 2 will add experiments in actively stepping up and handling interactions differently.

The focus is on any examples of stepping up as a parent leader by being calmer, clearer about what the parent will and won't do, and more interested in their child rather than reacting to their child.

Each session will have: Continued 'stepping back' reflections and will add: Continued 'stepping up' reflections. This repetition aims to reinforce principles of parent agency covered in previous sessions.

Continue reflections from parent's interaction observations, asking:

- What went well and what didn't go well?
- Did interactions promote increased independence or immature dependence?
- Where was the energy of the parent focused – on managing themselves to the best of their capacity, or managing the young person?

Share your observations about the pattern of interaction and how much the parent is directing energy into changing themselves or the young person. Ask the parent if this rings true or whether they see it differently.



Write the two headings in columns and add a few examples that might go in each column.

CONNECTING WITH	
Problems	Strengths

- How much of my connecting to help my child could reinforce their helplessness?
- How much of my connecting to help my child encourages their own problem solving?



Information Page 1 | A dad regains his agency with his oppositional daughter and connects with her differently. Parent example of connection

Information Page 2 | Positive connection

Information Page 3 | Thinking about boundaries in relationship

*Introduce:* Big-picture change compared to short-term change

What have they observed about their focus on a short-term fix or long-term growth in resilience?

- How much of my effort is pushing for quick change? Relieving the stress of the moment?
- How much of my effort is to remind myself that change is slow and to tolerate it? How much do I keep in view the longer-term goal of promoting more independence?

*Investigate:* Maintaining the hope building effort

Review what has changed, what has been learned, or is useful? What is the parent most interested to keep observing and working on?



Write on the white board the key ideas from the whole program (Write the summary words).

change child dependence not in my control you message connect to problems quick fix	change self independence in my control I message connect to strengths big picture
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ENERGY TO CHANGING CHILD

Promoting child/adolescent dependence/immaturity

Trying to change what's not in my control

Imposing a "YOU" message

Connecting with symptoms

Trying to get a quick fix

ENERGY TO CHANGING SELF

Promoting child/adolescent independence/maturity

Changing what's in my control

Holding my "I" position

Connecting with interests

Tolerating slow but long-term change

*Clinician Supervision Guide*

- Self-reflection forms after each session.
- Come prepared to share an example interaction with a parent
- What were the pulls for the coach?
- What challenges were expressed by the parent?
- How did I respond?
- What was constructive? What was not constructive in this interchange?

*Parallel process: restraining a fixing focus*

PARENT  
managing self not child

Shift focus on fixing child to self

- Observe patterns
- See own part without blame
- Patience not quick fix

COACH  
managing self not parent

Shift focus from fixing and directing parent to managing self

- Research not fix
- See patterns not fault
- Patience not push