



Healing the *Caregiver,* Supporting the Child

The Trauma-Informed Toolkit

for Parents, Caregivers &
Early Childhood Educators

HEAL TOGETHER. GROW TOGETHER. THRIVE TOGETHER.



TRAUMA-
INFORMED



RELATIONSHIP-
CENTERED



CULTURALLY
AFFIRMING



RESILIENCE
& JOY



HEALING TODAY,
HOPE FOR
GENERATIONS

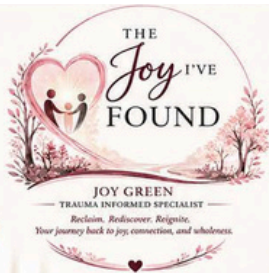
HEAL YOUR HEART. STRENGTHEN YOUR CONNECTION, BUILD THEIR FUTURE.

Together. ♥

JOYROOTS™

The Trauma-Informed Framework:
6 Principles That Become Daily Classroom Habits

By The Joy I've Found



1 SAFETY

Children feel physically, emotionally, and relationally safe.

Looks like:
Predictable routines •
Calm transitions •
Cozy safe spaces

2 TRUST

Adults are consistent, transparent, and dependable.

Looks like:
Visual schedules •
Follow-through •
Clear expectations

3 CHOICE

Children have a voice and choice, developmentally appropriate ways.

Looks like:
Two choices •
Flexible participation •
Child voice

4 COLLABORATION

Teachers, children, and families solve problems together.

Looks like:
Family partnerships •
Shared problem-solving •
Team language

5 EMPOWERMENT

Strengths are noticed, practiced, and celebrated daily.

Looks like:
Encouragement •
Skill-building •
Leadership moments

6 CULTURE & EQUITY

Identity, language, and lived experience are affirmed and honored.

Looks like:
Home language •
Inclusive books & materials •
Belonging

A. HOW IT SHOWS UP IN EARLY CHILDHOOD



Predictable Routines
Children know what comes next



Warm Relationships
Connection before correction



Co-Regulation
Calm adult, calm child



Respectful Family Partnerships
Families are experts on their children



Culturally Affirming Practice
Every child sees themselves reflected

B. DAILY RHYTHM BUILDS SAFETY



Arrival



Circle Time



Play



Snack



Rest



Goodbye

Consistency lowers stress and helps children learn.

C. CO-REGULATION IN ACTION



1. Notice the cue



2. Get calm



3. Name the feeling



4. Offer support + choice

Regulation grows through relationships.

D. FAMILY PARTNERSHIP HABITS



- ✓ Listen without judgment
- ✓ Honor family culture and routines
- ✓ Share observations both ways
- ✓ Problem-solve together

E. CULTURE & EQUITY IN PRACTICE



- ✓ Correct name pronunciation
- ✓ Home-language supports
- ✓ Family photos and stories
- ✓ Bias-aware, inclusive materials

Healing happens in everyday moments.
Trauma-informed classrooms turn care into daily habits.



SAFE



CONNECTED



EMPOWERED



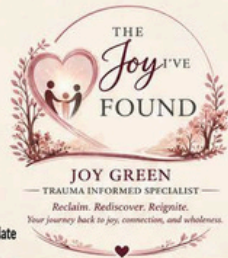
AFFIRMED



TOGETHER



UNDERSTANDING BIG FEELING



JOY GREEN

TRAUMA INFORMED SPECIALIST

Reclaim. Rediscover. Reignite.
Your journey back to joy, connection, and wholeness.

Ages 0-5 • Big emotions are normal • Young children need co-regulation before they can self-regulate

WHAT BIG FEELINGS CAN LOOK LIKE



Crying, screaming,
or dropping to
the floor



Hitting, kicking,
throwing, or
pushing



Clinginess, hiding,
freezing, or
running away



Whining, refusing,
or saying "NO!"



Tears

Tense
body

Fast
breathing

Clenched
hands

WHAT YOUR CHILD IS REALLY COMMUNICATING



"I'm
overwhelmed."



"I need help
calming down."



"I don't have
the words yet."



"I need connection,
safety, or a break."

WHAT NOT TO ASSUME



Not manipulation



Not "being bad"



Not disrespect



Not proof of
bad parenting



A meltdown is a skill-building
moment, not a character flaw.

3 SUPPORTIVE RESPONSES



1 Stay close
+ stay calm

Get low, soften
your voice,
breathe slowly.



2 Name
the feeling

"You're
mad/sad/
frustrated. I'm here."



3 Hold the limit
+ offer help

"I won't let you hit,
Let's squeeze, stomp,
or take a breath."

THE SUPPORT LOOP



Trigger



Overwhelm



Big
behavior



Adult
support



Calm +
learning

With consistent support,
children build skills and
bigger feelings become
more manageable.

AGES 0-5

0-1



0-1: Crying,
arching, startle
responses

1-3



1-3: Tantrums,
throwing, biting,
"no!"

3-5



3-5: Yelling,
running off,
power struggles

Connection first. Limits second. Skills grow over time.

5-Steps for Brain Building: Serve and Return

Based on the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.



HARVARD
UNIVERSITY

Center on the Developing Child

When children serve, caring adults return.



These back-and-forth moments help build brain architecture, language, social skills, and emotional well-being.

Bababa!

Look!

1



Notice the serve

Pay attention to the child's focus, sounds, gestures, facial expressions, words, or behavior.

2



Return the serve

Respond warmly with eye contact, words, comfort, imitation, or action.

3



Give it a name

Name what the child is seeing, doing, or feeling to build language.

4



Take turns

Go back and forth; wait, listen, and give the child time to respond.

5



Practice endings and beginnings

Help children with transitions using predictable greetings, routines, and goodbyes.

EXAMPLES OF CHILD SERVES



ADULT RETURNS



THE POWER OF BACK-AND-FORTH



Every interaction is a building block for a healthy brain and a strong, lifelong relationship.

WHY IT MATTERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD



Builds brain connections

Responsive interactions strengthen neural pathways that support learning and development.



Supports language

Naming and talking together build vocabulary, communication, and literacy skills.



Strengthens relationships

Warm, consistent responses build trust, attachment, and positive relationships.



Grows self-regulation

Back-and-forth interactions help children manage emotions and develop self-control.



Helps children feel safe and seen

Feeling understood and valued helps children thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

IT HAPPENS EVERY DAY!

Serve and return can happen during all kinds of moments:

- ✓ Playtime
- ✓ Meals & snacks
- ✓ Diapering & caregiving
- ✓ Reading & stories
- ✓ Transitions & routines
- ✓ Everyday classroom moments



Remember:

Small moments. Big impact. You don't need to be perfect—just present. Your warm, responsive interactions help build a strong foundation for life.

You matter.
They matter.



Honoring Culture, Protecting Children

1



Physical Punishment

Passed Down: "This is how I was raised."

Research shows: Linked to anxiety, aggression, low self-esteem, and poor mental health.

Trauma-informed shift: Use calm limits, redirection, repair, and connection.

~1.2 billion children experience corporal punishment at home yearly (WHO).

2



Harsh Shaming

Passed Down: "Stop crying." "That will toughen them up."

Research shows: Shaming and verbal abuse can increase stress and harm emotional wellbeing.

Trauma-informed shift: Guide behavior without attacking identity.

Try: "I won't let you hit. I'm here to help."

3



Silencing Emotions

Passed Down: "Don't talk about family problems."

Research shows: Shame and silence can block disclosure and emotional growth.

Trauma-informed shift: Teach: "You can tell me hard things."

Research-based examples of inherited practices that may cause fear, shame, silence, disconnection, or emotional harm — and trauma-informed shifts.



4



Obedience Without Warmth

Passed Down: "Children should never question adults."

Research shows: Highly controlling care can reduce voice, safety, and problem-solving.

Trauma-informed shift: Keep boundaries, but add warmth, explanation, and choice.

5



Parentification

Passed Down: "You are the man/woman of the house now."

Research shows: Adult-sized responsibilities can create long-term emotional strain.

Trauma-informed shift: Protect childhood; give age-appropriate responsibilities only.

6



Mental Health Stigma

Passed Down: "We don't need therapy." "Pray it away."

Research shows: Stigma can delay support and increase shame.

Trauma-informed shift: Normalize support: therapy, prayer, community, and care can work together.

7



Body Autonomy & Harmful Traditions

Passed Down: "Hug them; don't be rude."

Research shows: Ignoring consent or harmful gender-based traditions can harm safety and mental health.

Trauma-informed shift: Offer choices, respect consent, and reject practices that harm children's bodies or dignity.



More than 230 million girls and women have undergone FGM (UNICEF).

What Protects Children?



Safe, stable relationships



Warmth + clear boundaries



Voice, consent, and emotional safety



Culture honored without harm

Key Takeaway

Healing does not mean rejecting culture. It means carrying forward the parts that protect love, identity, belonging, and peace.

- Lead with humility.
- Listen with curiosity.
- Co-create with families.
- Build resilience together.



Selected sources: WHO, AAP, UNICEF, APA, Harvard Center on the Developing Child, CDC.

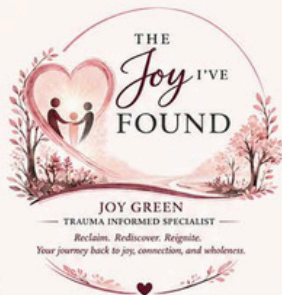




For Parents & Caregivers

The Trauma-Informed Discipline Formula

A simple 4-step process for responding with connection, regulation, teaching, and repair



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TRAUMA INFORMED SPECIALIST

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Your journey back to joy, connection, and wholeness.

1. Connect

Help the child feel safe.

"I see you're upset."



- Eye contact
- Calm body language
- Get to their level

2. Regulate

Support the child's nervous system.

"Let's take some breaths together."



- Breathe together
- Name feelings
- Offer calming support

3. Teach

Once calm returns, discuss what happened.

"Hitting hurts people."

"Toys are for sharing."



- Keep it simple
- Be clear & kind
- Teach the skill

4. Repair

Help the child make things right.

"What can we do to help?"

"Would you like to check on your friend?"



- Make amends
- Practice empathy
- Rebuild connection



Connect



Regulate



Teach



Repair

Connection comes before correction.

Why this works



Builds safety

Children feel secure and supported.



Supports regulation

Calmer bodies lead to calmer behaviors.



Teaches skills

Children learn what to do next time.



Strengthens relationships

Connection today creates trust for tomorrow.

Discipline is not about punishment.

It is about helping children feel safe, learn skills, and repair relationships.

Three Trauma-Informed Ways to Strengthen Physical Safety

Mindful classroom habits that help children feel safe, regulated, and ready to learn

1. Make the classroom predictable

Predictable routines and rituals help children know what is coming next. This lowers anxiety and supports emotional regulation.

Try these everyday:



Visual schedules



Transition warnings



Consistent greetings



Cleanup songs



Repeated classroom rituals

Our Class
We are kind.
We listen.
We include.
We try again.
We keep each other safe.

Calm Corner

2. Reduce unnecessary overwhelm

Some children are sensitive to noise, clutter, lighting, crowding, or fast transitions. A mindful classroom considers sensory load.

This does not mean the room has to be silent. It means educators notice what may be overstimulating and adjust when possible.

Look, listen, and adjust:



Notice noise



Reduce clutter



Soften lighting



Create space



Slow transitions

OVERWHELM

- ✗ Loud & constant noise
- ✗ Cluttered & crowded
- ✗ Bright & harsh lights
- ✗ Back-to-back transitions



CALM

- ✓ Manage noise levels
- ✓ Clear & organized
- ✓ Soft & natural light
- ✓ Gentle pace & pauses

3. Use the adult body as part of the environment

Where you stand, how quickly you move, how loudly you speak, and how close you get can either escalate or calm a child.

A trauma-informed educator uses safe proximity, a calm tone, open body language, and slow movements to communicate:

"You are safe. I am here to help."

Soft facial expression

Calm tone & volume

Open body language

Hands open & visible

Kneel or sit at child level



Safe proximity



Calm tone



Open body language



Slow movements

Physical safety is not only about the room. It is also about rhythm, sensory awareness, and the adult presence children experience every day.



RHYTHM
Predictable flow & routines



SENSORY
Aware, responsive environments



ADULT PRESENCE
Calm, consistent, and connected

When children feel physically safe, they are more able to connect, regulate, and learn.

Trauma-Informed De-Escalation Steps



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A simple 4-step process for helping children feel safe, regulated, and ready to learn again.



1 CONNECT

Start with safety and connection.

Example phrases:

- "I'm here with you."
- "You're safe. I can help."

- ♥ Get low and calm
- ♥ Use a soft voice
- ♥ Stay nearby

Soft facial expression

Calm tone

Child-level support



2 REGULATE

Help the child's body calm before problem-solving.

Example phrases:

- "Let's breathe together."
- "Let's take a moment."

- ♥ Breathe together
- ♥ Reduce stimulation
- ♥ Offer calming support



3 TEACH

Once calm returns, teach the skill or limit.

Example phrases:

- "Hands are for helping."
- "You can say, 'Can I have a turn?'"

- ♥ Keep it brief
- ♥ Be clear and kind
- ♥ Teach what to do instead



4 REPAIR

Support reconnection and making things right.

Example phrases:

- "What can we do to help?"
- "Would you like to check on your friend?"

- ♥ Practice empathy
- ♥ Make amends
- ♥ Rebuild connection

THE 4-STEP PROCESS



CONNECT



REGULATE



TEACH



REPAIR



Connection comes before correction.



WHAT THIS HELPS BUILD



SAFETY
Children feel secure.



REGULATION
Calmer bodies, calmer behavior.



SKILLS
Children learn what to do next time.



RELATIONSHIPS
Connection strengthens trust.

Trauma-informed de-escalation is not about punishment. It is about helping children feel safe, regain regulation, learn the skill, and reconnect.



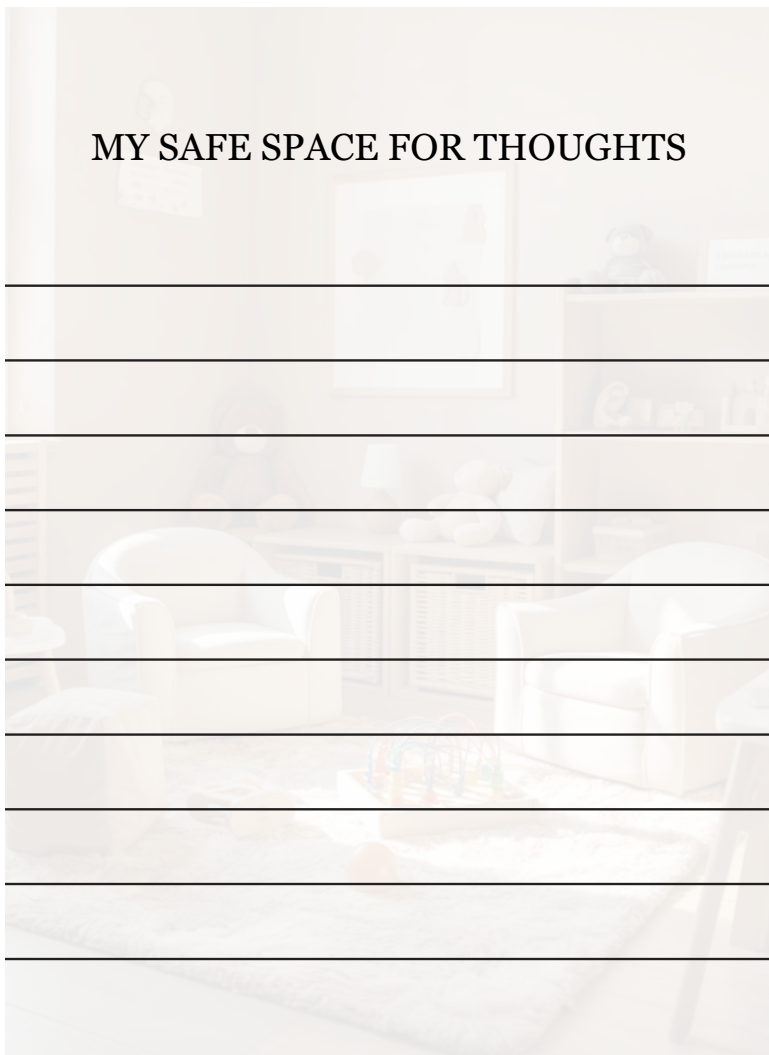
You don't have to fix the moment.
You just have to stay with it.



CALM. CONNECTION. COMPASSION.
Every child. Every time.



MY SAFE SPACE FOR THOUGHTS



Let's Connect!

Thank you for being part of the Trauma-Informed Educator and Parent Resilience Cohort.

My hope is that this workbook continues to support you long after our time together — in your home, classroom, caregiving spaces, and personal healing journey.

For more resources, guided meditations, books, workshops, and personal support, I would love to stay connected with you.

CONNECT WITH ME

Joy Green
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FOLLOW THE JOY I'VE FOUND

Instagram: @thejoyivefound
Facebook: The Joy I've Found
TikTok: @thejoyivefound
YouTube Meditation Channel: @TheJoyIveFound

Visit my YouTube channel for guided meditations, mindfulness practices, breathwork support, and reflections created to help you return to calm, clarity, and joy.

PURCHASE MY BOOKS

Continue your healing and self-discovery journey with my books and reflection resources.

Journey to Joyfulness

A reflective guide to help you reconnect with self-love, inner peace, and the joy already within you.

Stuck Is NOT Your Story

An empowering reminder that where you are today does not define where you are going.

Available on Amazon and my website.

Search: Joy Green The Joy I've Found



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Let's Connect!

WORK WITH ME PERSONALLY

I offer personal support for individuals, caregivers, educators, and women who are ready to reconnect with themselves, reduce stress, and move forward with more clarity, confidence, and joy.

You can work with me through:

1:1 Transformational Coaching

Personalized support to help you get unstuck, reconnect with your purpose, and create a life that feels more aligned.

Trauma-Informed Resilience Support

Gentle tools and strategies for parents, caregivers, and educators who want to build more calm, connection, and emotional safety in their daily lives.

Custom Guided Meditation Recordings

Personalized meditation recordings created around your specific needs, intentions, affirmations, season of life, or healing focus.

Workshops & Speaking

Book me for parent workshops, educator trainings, wellness sessions, trauma-informed resilience workshops, mindfulness experiences, and community events.

READY TO CONNECT?

To book a session, request a custom guided meditation, purchase books, or learn more about upcoming workshops and resources, visit:

www.thejoyvivefound.com

Or send me a message directly:

info@thejoyvivefound.com
562-704-6671

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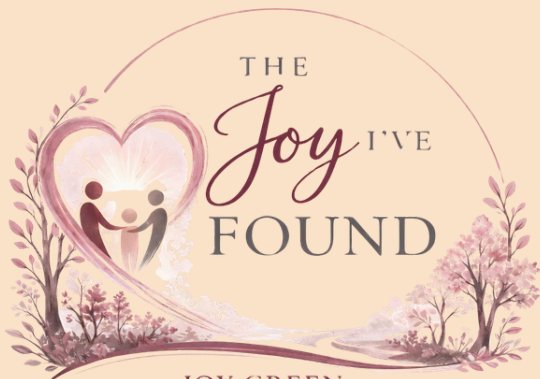


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