

Understanding Your Child

A Practical Self-Help Parenting Guide by
@beyond_brains__



Dear Parent,

If this guide has found its way to you, there's a good chance parenting has been feeling a little heavier than usual. Maybe your child has changed.

Maybe they're not listening.

Maybe they're talking less.

Or maybe you've been quietly wondering if you're doing enough.

Whatever brought you here, I want you to know one thing...

You're not alone.

Parenting doesn't come with a manual, and every child is different. Most of us are simply trying to do the best we can with the knowledge we have.

That's exactly why I created this guide.

Inside, you'll find simple therapist-backed insights and practical steps that you can start using today. They're not quick fixes or perfect solutions, but small changes that can strengthen your connection with your child over time.

Take your time with it.

You don't have to read it all at once.

Even one small shift can make a meaningful difference.

Let's begin.

– Neha Jaswal

Child Counsellor & Human Development Specialist

“I Feel Like I’m Failing as a Parent.”

Is This You?

- You often wonder if you’re doing enough for your child.
- You replay conversations in your head after reacting emotionally.
- You compare yourself to other parents and feel like you’re falling short.
- No matter how much you try, it never feels enough.

If this feels familiar... You’re noticing something many parents notice before anyone else.

What’s Actually Happening?

One of the biggest myths about parenting is that good parents don’t make mistakes. The truth is...

Every parent loses patience, Every parent gets things wrong.

The difference isn’t in making mistakes. It’s in being willing to understand them, repair them, keep showing up. Children don’t need parents who are perfect. They need parents who are emotionally available and willing to grow with them.

What You Can Do

• For Yourself | *Therapeutic Shift*

Stop asking, “Am I a good parent?” Instead ask, “What can I understand better today?” That small shift moves you from guilt to growth.

• For Your Child | *Connection over Correction*

Spend 10 minutes each day with your child without correcting, teaching, or giving instructions. Just be present. Children often feel loved most during ordinary moments, not perfect ones.

✓ Do This

After a difficult moment, ask yourself: “What happened before I reacted?” Understanding your own emotions is the first step to responding differently.



✗ Avoid This

Don’t expect yourself to never lose your patience again. That isn’t realistic. Instead, focus on repairing after difficult moments. Children learn just as much from healthy repair as they do from healthy parenting.



1 One Thing to Try Today

Tonight, before your child goes to bed...

Tell them one thing you genuinely appreciated about them today. Not something they achieved. Something about who they are. For example: “I loved how kind you were to your little sister today.”

Therapist’s Reminder

Small moments of appreciation strengthen connection far more than we often realise.



“My Child Has Changed... and I Don’t Know Why.”

Is This You?

- They get irritated more easily than before.
- They seem quieter, angrier, or emotionally distant.
- You keep wondering, “What happened to my child?”

If this feels familiar... You’re noticing something many parents notice before anyone else.

What’s Actually Happening?

Children rarely change overnight. What changes first are usually their emotions.  Behaviour changes later.

A child who suddenly becomes angry, withdrawn, or unusually sensitive is  often trying to **communicates something** they don’t yet have the words to explain. Instead of asking, “What’s wrong with my child?” Try asking, “**What might my child be going through?**” That one question changes everything.

What You Can Do

• For Yourself | *Therapist Insight*

Before reacting to a behaviour. Pause and ask yourself, “Is my child giving me a hard time... or having a hard time?” You won’t always know the answer. But asking the question changes how you respond.

• For your Child | *Daily Practice*

Start noticing patterns instead of isolated incidents. Ask yourself: When does this behaviour usually happen? Who are they with? What happened just before it? Patterns often reveal what behaviour alone cannot.

✓ Do This

When your child seems upset...

Replace advice with curiosity.

Instead of: “What happened now?”

Try: “I’ve noticed you haven’t seemed like yourself lately.”

Then let the silence do its work.



✗ Avoid This

Don’t assume every behaviour needs immediate correction. Sometimes children need understanding before they need solutions.



1 One Thing to Try Today

For the next three days... Don’t focus on changing your child’s behaviour. Instead, write down one thing you’ve noticed about their emotions each day. You may discover patterns you never noticed before.

Therapist’s Reminder

Not every behaviour is a problem to solve. Sometimes... It’s a message waiting to be understood.



“My Child Doesn’t Talk to Me Like They Used To.”

Is This You?

- Your child gives one-word answers.
- They no longer tell you about their day.
- You often find out things from someone else instead of your child.
- You miss the little conversations you used to have together.



If you’ve been feeling this... You’re not imagining it. Many parents quietly grieve this change.

What’s Actually Happening?

Children don’t usually stop opening up because they don’t love their parents. More often, they stop because they don’t know how to express what they’re feeling. Sometimes they’re afraid of disappointing you. Sometimes they expect advice before they’ve even finished talking. Sometimes they simply don’t have the words yet. When children don’t feel emotionally safe to share everything, silence slowly replaces conversation.

What You Can Do

• **For Yourself** | *Building Emotional Safety*

Resist the urge to solve every problem immediately. Your child often needs to feel heard before they need your advice. Listening is one of the greatest forms of emotional support.

• **For Your Child** | *Small, Natural Moments*

Create small opportunities to talk instead of waiting for big conversations. Many children open up more naturally while walking, driving, cooking, or playing together than they do during serious sit-down conversations.

✓ **Do This**

When your child shares something... Pause for a moment before responding. Instead of offering a solution immediately, try saying, “Thank you for telling me.” Sometimes those five words encourage the next conversation.



✗ **Avoid This**

Avoid turning every conversation into a lesson. If every story ends with advice, children may begin sharing less—not because they don’t trust you, but because they don’t feel heard.



1 One Thing to Try Today

Spend 15 minutes doing something your child enjoys. Don’t ask questions. Don’t teach. Don’t correct. Simply be present and let the conversation happen naturally.

Therapist’s Reminder

Children don’t always remember every piece of advice you gave them. But they almost always remember how safe they felt talking to you.



"I Keep Losing My Patience... And Then I Feel Guilty."

Is This You?

- You promise yourself you'll stay calm... but end up shouting.
- You regret your reaction almost immediately.
- You replay the moment in your head long after it's over.
- You worry your child will only remember your anger.



If you've ever felt this way... You're not a bad parent. You're a parent who's overwhelmed.

What's Actually Happening?

Parents often believe they shout because their child misbehaved. But that's rarely the full picture. Shouting usually happens when our own emotional bucket is already full.

Stress.
Fatigue.



Mental load.



Work.

Household responsibilities.



Parenting is often the final drop, not the first one. Understanding your own emotions is just as important as understanding your child's.

What You Can Do



• For Yourself | *Understanding Your Emotions*

When you feel yourself getting overwhelmed... Don't ask, "How do I stop shouting?" Ask, "What am I feeling right now?" Sometimes naming your emotion is enough to stop it from taking over.

• For Your Child | *Repair and Responsibility*

If you lose your patience... Repair the moment. A simple, "I'm sorry I shouted. I was frustrated, but I shouldn't have spoken to you that way." teaches emotional responsibility far more than pretending nothing happened.

✓ Do This

Create a "Pause Ritual." Before reacting... Take one slow breath. Relax your shoulders. Then speak. That five-second pause often changes the entire conversation.



✗ Avoid This

Don't pretend difficult moments never happened. Children don't need parents who never make mistakes. They need parents who show them how to repair relationships after mistakes.



1 One Thing to Try Today

The next time you feel your frustration rising... Don't respond immediately. Take one deep breath before saying your first sentence. Not to become a perfect parent. Just to give yourself.

Therapist's Reminder

Your Child Will Not Remember You as a Perfect Parent. They Will Remember You as a Parent Who Kept Showing Up, Kept Learning, and Kept Loving Them.



Before You Close This Guide...

If you've read this far...I hope you've realised something.
Parenting isn't about getting everything right.
It's about showing up, learning, and growing alongside your child.
There will still be difficult days. There will still be arguments.
There will still be moments when you lose your patience. That doesn't mean you're failing.
It means you're human.

Five Things I Hope You Remember

- ✓ Your Child's Behaviour Is Often Communication Before It's Defiance.
- ✓ Connection Creates More Change Than Correction.
- ✓ Repair Matters More Than Perfection.
- ✓ Small, Consistent Changes Matter More Than Big, Occasional Ones.
- ✓ A Parent Who Keeps Learning Is Already Giving Their Child Something Beautiful.

One Last Thought...

Don't try to apply everything you read today.
Choose just one idea.
Practise it for the next week.
Small changes, repeated consistently, create stronger relationships than dramatic changes that only last a few days.
Your child doesn't need a perfect parent.
They need you.

"Don't try to become a perfect parent. Try to become a curious parent".

Need a Little More Support?

Every family is different.

Every child is different.

If you're finding parenting overwhelming, you don't have to figure it out alone.

Reaching out for support isn't a sign that you've failed.

It's a sign that your relationship with your child matters enough to invest in.

If you'd like to understand your child more deeply or work through your family's unique challenges, I'd be happy to support you. Reach me out on my instagram - @beyond_brain__

Warmly,

-Neha Jaswal

Child Counsellor & Human Development Specialist