

The Environment Check

Ahead of Your Turning Point Session

Before we speak, it's genuinely useful to have a clear picture of your family's specific starting point. Taking a few minutes with this beforehand means our single session together goes straight to what actually matters, rather than spending our limited time gathering background we could have covered in advance.

One thing worth saying plainly before you begin. This only genuinely works with real honesty, not a polished or flattering version of things. There's no need for any gloss here, and nothing here to feel guilty or ashamed about, whatever you find yourself writing. An honest picture is what actually makes this useful, a smoothed-over one serves nobody, least of all your own child.

I want to genuinely appreciate you for being willing to do this at all. Openness like this takes real courage, and a genuine willingness to be coached, to look honestly rather than defensively, is worth recognising in itself. Much of the real work ahead isn't about doing more. It's about noticing clearly, often for the first time, what's actually already there.

Before you start, here's why this matters. A child isn't simply reading what's said to them, they're constantly reading the whole environment around them, whether the people in charge feel calm, certain, and capable of handling whatever happens. The caregivers, and what they're actually broadcasting emotionally, are the single biggest part of that environment, far more than any words. This check exists to help you see clearly what's actually being broadcast, most of which is genuinely invisible from the inside, since it's not something anyone naturally stops to notice unprompted.

For each question, rate what feels most true of you generally, on a scale of 1 to 10. One means rarely or barely at all. Ten means almost always or fully. There's no right answer, and no score to pass or fail, the value is entirely in the noticing. You won't be sending anyone your written numbers, this page is yours alone.

If your child is older now, a teenager or an adult, read every question as "did you" rather than "do you," and answer honestly based on the years when they were younger and living through this at home.

Regulation and Co-Regulation

Can you tell, in the moment, when your body has become tense or on edge?

Your score (1–10): _____

When you feel frustrated or overwhelmed, how often do you feel settled before you respond to your child?

Your score (1–10): _____

How much does the calm you show on the outside match how you actually feel underneath?

Your score (1–10): _____

When your child is distressed, how often do you stay settled yourself?

Your score (1–10): _____

Can you recognise the physical signs in yourself when you move into a reactive state?

Your score (1–10): _____

After a difficult moment with your child, how long does it typically take you to feel genuinely settled again?

Voice and Tone

How often does your voice carry genuine calm when you ask your child for something?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you find yourself explaining, justifying, or negotiating before your child has even pushed back?

Your score (1–10): _____

How often is your tone sharper than you actually intended it to be?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you shout more often than you'd like to admit?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you find yourself calling out to your child from another room to communicate with them?

Your score (1–10): _____

Movement and Pace

How rushed do you tend to feel moving through your own home, especially in the evenings?

Your score (1–10): _____

Would you describe yourself as flighty or hurried in how you go about ordinary tasks?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do doors, cupboards, or objects tend to get handled with real force?

Your score (1–10): _____

Eye Contact and Presence

When your child is talking to you, how often is your attention genuinely on them?

Your score (1–10): _____

How often do you find yourself only half listening?

Your score (1–10): _____

Touch and Availability

How freely do you offer physical affection to your child?

Your score (1–10): _____

When you hold or hug your child, how present does your body feel?

Your score (1–10): _____

Verbal and Bodily Communication

Do you tend to be the one who initiates conversation with your child?

Your score (1–10): _____

When your child wakes up, are you usually the one who greets them first?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you tend to ask your child a string of questions, effectively interviewing them?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you find yourself instructing your child, telling them what to do?

Your score (1–10): _____

How open is your body language while talking with your child?

Your score (1–10): _____

Communication Style

When your child calls out for your help, how often do you acknowledge them right away?

Your score (1–10): _____

How often do you find yourself saying "in a minute" more than you'd actually like to admit?

Your score (1–10): _____

How patient is your communication in difficult moments?

Your score (1–10): _____

Trust and Capability

How often do you correct your child?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you find yourself teaching or explaining things your child never actually asked to learn?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you feel a persistent internal need to teach your child, even in ordinary moments?

Your score (1–10): _____

How often do you guard against difficulty on your child's behalf?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you do things for your child that they are, in principle, capable of doing themselves?

Your score (1–10): _____

How often do you help before your child has actually asked for help?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you take over a task your child is partway through?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you find yourself taking something from your child's hands to finish it "properly"?

Your score (1–10): _____

How much do you genuinely trust your child's own input and ideas?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you give your child real responsibility, appropriate to their age?

Your score (1–10): _____

Approval and Manners

Do you say "good boy" or "good girl" as a general response to your child's behaviour?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you praise your child generically, "well done," "amazing," for most things they do?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you find yourself prompting please and thank you?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you confiscate items or take away belongings as a consequence?

Your score (1–10): _____

If your child is naturally shy, do you feel a need to encourage them to be more outgoing?

Your score (1–10): _____

Current Strategies

Tick whichever of these you currently use, even occasionally.

- ☐ Time outs
- ☐ Reward charts or star charts
- ☐ Consequences (removing a privilege or item)
- ☐ Sending to their room
- ☐ Boundary setting or firm limits
- ☐ Ignoring the behaviour until it stops
- ☐ Bargaining or negotiating
- ☐ Bribery (offering something to secure cooperation)
- ☐ Counting ("1, 2, 3...")
- ☐ The naughty step or naughty corner
- ☐ Asking them to "use their words"
- ☐ Gentle parenting scripts or rehearsed calm phrases
- ☐ Something else not listed: _____

Congruence and Role

When you're with your child, does it ever feel like you're playing a role or performing a part?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you tend to think of good parenting as something you do, a job, a role, a set of tasks to perform well?

Your score (1–10): _____

Have you felt self-conscious in public around how you're being perceived as a parent?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you find yourself managing your child's behaviour throughout the day?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you feel you are mostly watching over your child, monitoring and managing them?

Your score (1–10): _____

Are your daily decisions often organised around managing or anticipating your child's behaviour?

Your score (1–10): _____

Does your behaviour around your child ever feel like an act, slightly different from how you'd naturally be?

Your score (1–10): _____

If you had to describe, in a single word, what being a parent actually means to you, would that word be closer to a role, a job, a performance, or a responsibility?

Self-Talk and the Inner Critic

How confident do you generally feel that you know what you're doing as a parent?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you ever feel like you're simply making it up as you go, or "faking it"?

Your score (1–10): _____

Do you experience something like impostor syndrome around parenting?

Your score (1–10): _____

How often does a critical inner voice comment on your parenting, even in ordinary moments?

Your score (1–10): _____

Parents often say a child doesn't come with a manual. A manual is a text, written in words by someone else, telling you how something works. What a child actually comes with is closer to a blueprint, a biological one, its instructions written not in words but in coded, instinctive signals. Does the idea that there's no manual, only a blueprint still to be read, feel genuinely freeing to you, or more like a quiet source of anxiety?

A Final Honest Question

Think of the last genuinely difficult moment with your child. In that moment, was your voice calm or sharp. Was your body still or tense. Were you truly present, or somewhere else in your own head entirely. There's no need to write anything down here. Just notice, honestly, what comes to mind.

Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to work through this properly and honestly.

Bring this with you, on paper or however you've kept it, to your Turning Point Session. We'll use it as the natural starting point for our conversation, rather than beginning from nothing.