



WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE NEED? WHAT CAN WE GIVE?

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As we move through this time together, our children see the fear and concern, and they are looking to us to understand and make meaning of this time. Am I safe? Am I loved and important? Am I good enough? Does my life have a purpose? Is there hope? Will the world be ok?

We are making a story about our time, we are weaving a collective narrative - in our every day gestures, reactions and interactions, conscious or not, we are sending signals that our young people are integrating and encoding as new information about themselves and their world. We have the power and responsibility to be very conscious about how we nurture them through this time. It often requires that we dig deep to process through our emotions and concerns to find a fruitful way to guide them... and there are many simple things we can do each day to reinforce their sense of well-being.

What simple, compassionate response is in our power?

- Sparkly eyes: in your gaze send the message "I love you and right now, we are ok."
- Honor innate worth: Keep focusing on their core worthiness, innate qualities, unique gifts.
- Appreciation: Notice even small effort on their part, caring gestures, thoughtful acts.
- Understand: Slow down to listen and get their experience and perspective.
- Allow their waves of emotion, keeping them company, accepting all of who they are.
- Be calm and be human: share your experience and how you are understanding your emotions.
- Choose our response: While there is a storm outside, we can be deliberate in how we react.
- Recognize what's underneath: Behind a child's tantrum, resistance, lethargy, what do they need? What are they asking for without words?
- Share hope: Share your sense of possibility, vision, good that is coming of this time.
- Notice what's working: Discuss your good moments together and the goodness in our world.
- Find their purpose: Explore what their role can be to contribute to the community or society at this time.
- In our Power: Talk about what IS in our power at this time. Give young people as much responsibility as they can handle.