

FUSIONTM
Skills and Strategies for the FamilySM

Workbook



Written by

Katy Phillips & Karen Todd

**better
parents** 

innovation



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The Fusion Programme™ Workbook is for each participant on The Fusion Programme™

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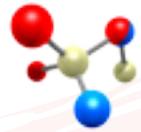
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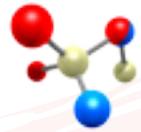
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Introduction to Fusion

Welcome

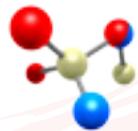
We hope you will enjoy this 6-session course and find it beneficial for your own unique family, as you develop skills and strategies and learn new ones.

The Fusion Programme™ is an inclusive course, valuing each participant for his or her input based on knowledge, experience and background.

We recognise that each member already brings his or her own unique qualities and strengths to the family. Throughout The Fusion Programme™, you will be encouraged to practise new approaches in current situations, whilst not losing your own individuality. For this reason, our objective is to enhance positive communication within the family unit, and so empower you in your role therein.

The Fusion Programme™ contains a number of key features (some are listed opposite) that make it both easy to follow and easy to lead. The result is often a positive development of skills and strategies, that helps families to work together for the better.

In addition, by popular request, we have put in place further support for participants before, during and after the course has finished. This includes Fusion Drop-Ins™, ongoing website advice, forums, contact with course colleagues and further course opportunities. These will be covered during the course, but additional information is also available on the Better Parents website.



Features of Fusion

1. We recognise that you have busy lives and so have deliberately designed the course so that there is no set reading or written homework in between sessions. This maximises your time to implement and practise all you have learnt each session with your families.
2. Family members, who have previously attended a course, share their real life stories in each session, describing their challenges, strategies and successes.
3. We have included realistic scenarios that deal with common, everyday, relevant family issues.
4. To help you review the whole session, Graphical Mind Maps offer a concise summary of the material for each session. They also provide better accessibility for those who find visual learning more engaging.
5. To ensure you get the most from each session, we encourage you to consider how you might implement what you have learnt, in your own family. Strategies for doing this include 1:1 Diary Dates, Family Time, child-led play and the always popular My Time.

Enjoy your families!

Katy Phillips Karen Todd

Participant's agreement

1. The fact that I am here on The Fusion Programme™ demonstrates that I am committed to my role in developing skills and strategies for my family.
2. The Fusion Programme™ values the individuality of each participant. As a group member, I will show respect to others, regarding different backgrounds, opinions and approaches.
3. I will commit to attending all six sessions of The Fusion Programme™ in order to benefit from all the skills and strategies introduced.
4. I will encourage all group members to participate, considering others at all times and giving opportunities to those who may find it harder to contribute. If I am someone who is inclined to dominate conversations, then I will try to hold back and allow others a chance to speak.
5. I will embrace the skills and strategies introduced each session and have a willingness to try a new approach.
6. The Fusion Programme™ contains lots of different skills and strategies that I might use. I realise that I do not have to learn everything, the main aim being that I should choose one or two ideas each session that are relevant to my family.

Session 1

Staying calm



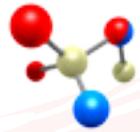
This session gives us the opportunity to look at the things that most frustrate us within our family unit.

This may be other family members and possibly how they behave. Initially, we will be looking at our current

methods and how effective they are, as well as looking at the things that trigger this irritation.

After that, we will take time to discuss some different approaches in order to facilitate staying calm. Often, we react to things in a certain way without ever having given it a second thought. This may have been influenced by our own upbringing or subsequent events. It is important for us to think about why we do things in order to decide if we should try a different approach.

One way to illustrate this is to consider how we fold our arms. We automatically fold our arms in a certain way. If we stop and try folding them the other way, this can feel uncomfortable and unnatural. It can be the same when



we learn new skills and strategies. At first, they can seem awkward but, as we persevere, these skills should become second nature.

Another area for us to reduce frustration, and thus our own stress levels, is by learning whether or not our responses are valid and if the problem that is frustrating us is really ours to get irritated by. In order to achieve this, we need to think about who owns the problem.

Also, for us to be able to stay calm more often, we need to recognise the importance of our own well being. At the end of this session, we will be introducing the section called My Time.

Real life story

“ ***My name is Katy.
I have four children.***

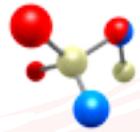
I have been particularly struggling with my eldest son of 16, as he manages to wind me up!



For example, I would ask him to come home at 10:30 pm on a school night and, when he was late, I found myself feeling very cross and my heart was racing. When he walked in the door, I launched into an argument!

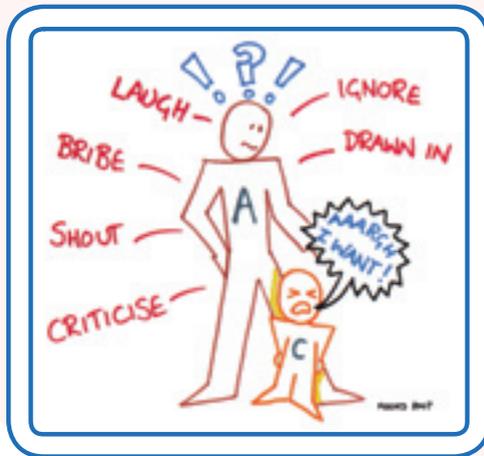
Through developing this course, I learnt to use the technique of ‘standing back’, so when he came in I would either say, “I will talk to you in the morning, when I feel a little calmer” or I would give him a chance to explain himself before I said anything, thus defusing the situation and avoiding the likelihood of getting caught in a power struggle.

”



Scenario

A mum is in the supermarket with 6-year-old George.



George is kicking and screaming, saying he wants sweets!

What are our usual 'instant fix-it' approaches?

Correcting

Pleading

Criticising

Arguing

Punishing

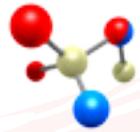
Threatening

Bribing

Ignoring

Something else?



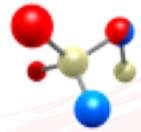


Honestly, which of these methods am I most likely to use?



How effective do I think my current methods are?





Why do we do it?

Is there an underlying reason for my child's behaviour?

Hunger

Tiredness

Illness

Lack of attention

School issues

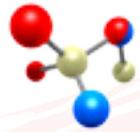
Friendship issues

Family issues

Relationship issues

Something else?





Trying something new

What situations in my family draw me into a power struggle?



What different approach might work in my family?



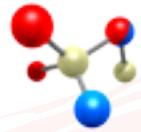
Taking it home

What new approach will I try this week?



What will I do for My Time?



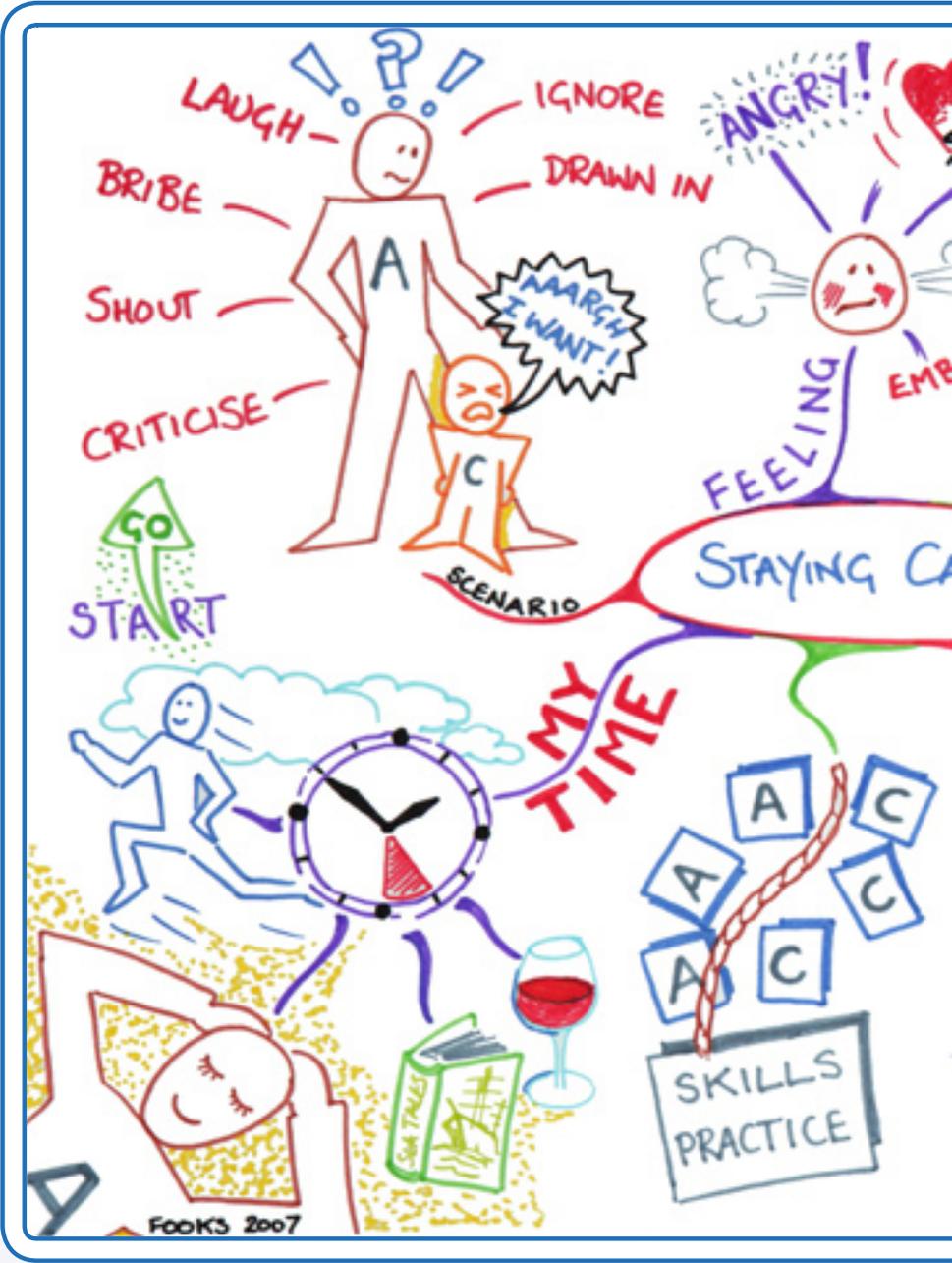


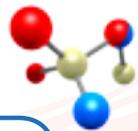
My Time

One of the unique factors of The Fusion Programme™ is recognising the importance of each family member feeling valued. In order for this to be fully achieved we have introduced the section titled My Time. We believe that the family dynamics will function more successfully if each member is encouraged to take time out for him or her self in order to relax or pursue an interest or hobby.

The idea of My Time was initially devised with adults in mind. People who are caring for others often give little time to their own personal needs. It has been suggested that if adults are able to give themselves regular My Time, they could potentially function better within their given family situation.

We appreciate that it is not always easy to achieve this. However, the significance is not so much in the length of My Time, but rather in having some sort of regular My Time experience.





Session 2

Learning to listen



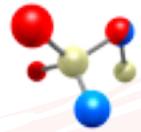
This session gives us the opportunity to look at the importance of learning to listen.

Initially, we will be looking at our usual response to our family members and the effect it may have on them.

After that, we will be taking time to introduce some new approaches in order to develop our communication skills with our family members and teach us the importance of different listening styles.

One of the skills we will be introducing is active listening. This offers us a chance to have more in-depth conversations, possibly about matters concerning family members.

Another skill we will be looking at is introducing an emotional vocabulary into the family unit, giving all family members the chance to express their feelings more accurately.



Real life story

“ ***My name is Claire.
I have three children.*** ”

I would have always said that I was a good listener to my friends, but I realised whilst on this course that I didn't always listen properly to my children. I was often preoccupied with jobs around the home and therefore not listening to what they might be trying to tell me.



On one occasion, I was in the kitchen preparing dinner, when my son (6 years old) told me something. I hardly acknowledged what he had said. Afterwards, when he had gone out into the garden, I realised that I had not given him my time or even looked at him.

I called my son in from the garden and asked him to tell me again what he had said. We talked about it together, and I felt so much better for giving him that time, and I'm sure he did too.

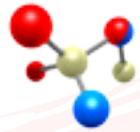
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Recently, a situation occurred with my daughter (8 years old). She had expressed that sometimes she felt sad when she stayed at her friend's house.

We sat down together and I let her talk through how this made her feel and then I repeated back her feelings to show I had understood. We worked out what might help her to feel better next time she stayed away. We came up with lots of ideas, and chose these four:

- Phone us if she needed to;
- Tell the friend's parent how she felt;
- Take a photo of Mum and Dad with her;
- Say a little prayer.

She wrote these all down, and felt happier about the situation. Shortly after this, she stayed with her friend again. She took her list with her and felt happy the whole time she was away. I think now she has started to learn how to work through her feelings. ”



Scenario

A child comes home from football, excited to share news about the game.

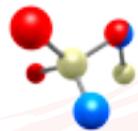


His mum is tired and is trying to prepare tea ...

Currently, how well do I communicate with, and listen to, my family members?

(Write down the names of all family members below and answer the question for each one)

Name _____



In what positive or negative way do I think this affects them?

(Write down the names of all family members below and answer the question for each one)

Name _____

A new approach



Skills & strategies introduced:

Body language

Importance of in-depth conversation

Helping my child use emotional vocabulary

Active listening

The 5 stages of Active listening:

1 *Give good attention when listening*

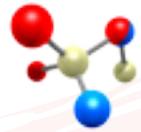
2 *Offer simple encouraging dialogue*

3 *Reflect back (mirror)*

4 *Suggest the feeling*

5 *Offer empathy and problem solving*





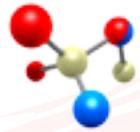
Trying something new

Which member of my family would benefit the most from being actively listened to?



What changes might I make to improve my own listening skills?





Taking it home

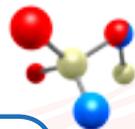
What new approach will I try this week?



What will I do for My Time?







Session 3

Encouraging each other

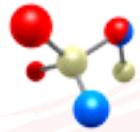


This session gives us the opportunity to look at the importance of encouraging all family members in their individual strengths, as well as developing responsibility.

Initially, we will be looking at what we are currently doing for our child/children, that they could be doing for themselves and introducing the idea of reward charts where appropriate.

After that, we will be taking time to introduce some new approaches, allowing us to develop each family member's contribution to the smooth running of the home. Next, we will be looking at how we might encourage the individuality of each family member.

In order to achieve this, we will be considering the difference between encouragement and praise, and how we can use constructive criticism within the family unit.



Real life story

“ ***Our names are Andrew and Michelle. We have two children.*** ”

School mornings for us were extremely stressful. Our children are 7 and 10 years old, and would sit watching television or playing with



their guinea pigs. We had to constantly nag, remind and coax them to even do the most basic of tasks, such as getting washed, dressed and cleaning their teeth, etc.

We learnt about giving our children responsibilities on this course. We were encouraged to think about what we were doing for our children that they could do for themselves.

We introduced star charts so that the children would know what was expected of them every day. We said that there was to be no television or playing with the guinea pigs until everything was done and they were completely ready for school.

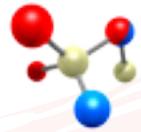
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At the end of the week, we rewarded them for every star on their charts with pocket money (2 pence per star).

Doing this has made our children more responsible and we can see that they have grown in confidence. We are also allowing them to make some of their own decisions, and live with the consequences of their own actions, i.e. being late for school, forgetting their lunch, coat, etc.

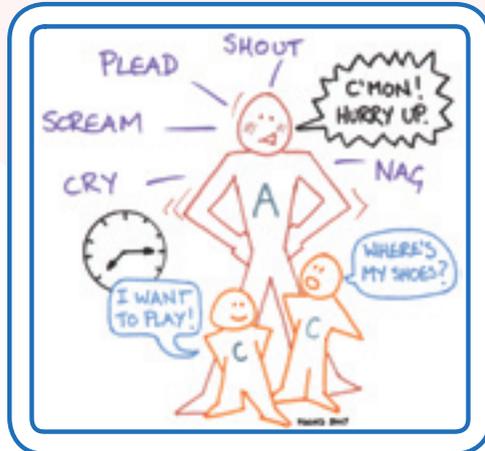
Before attending this course, we were being 'good parents', but not necessarily responsible ones. Mornings for us are now a lot calmer, less stressful, considerably quieter and so much more enjoyable too!

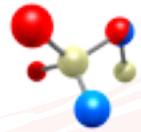
”



Scenario

Every day in the Smith household, an argument erupts at 8:15 am, when the children are not ready for school ...





How might I feel in this situation?

Fed up

Stressed

Tearful

Distraught

Inadequate

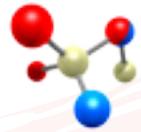
Overwhelmed

Worried

Angry

Something else?





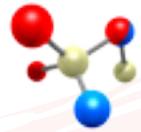
Trying something new

What am I doing for my child that he or she could be doing for his or her self?



In what way might I use rewards/charts?





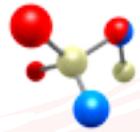
Trying something else

How might I encourage individuality in my family?



How might I show genuine, honest encouragement?





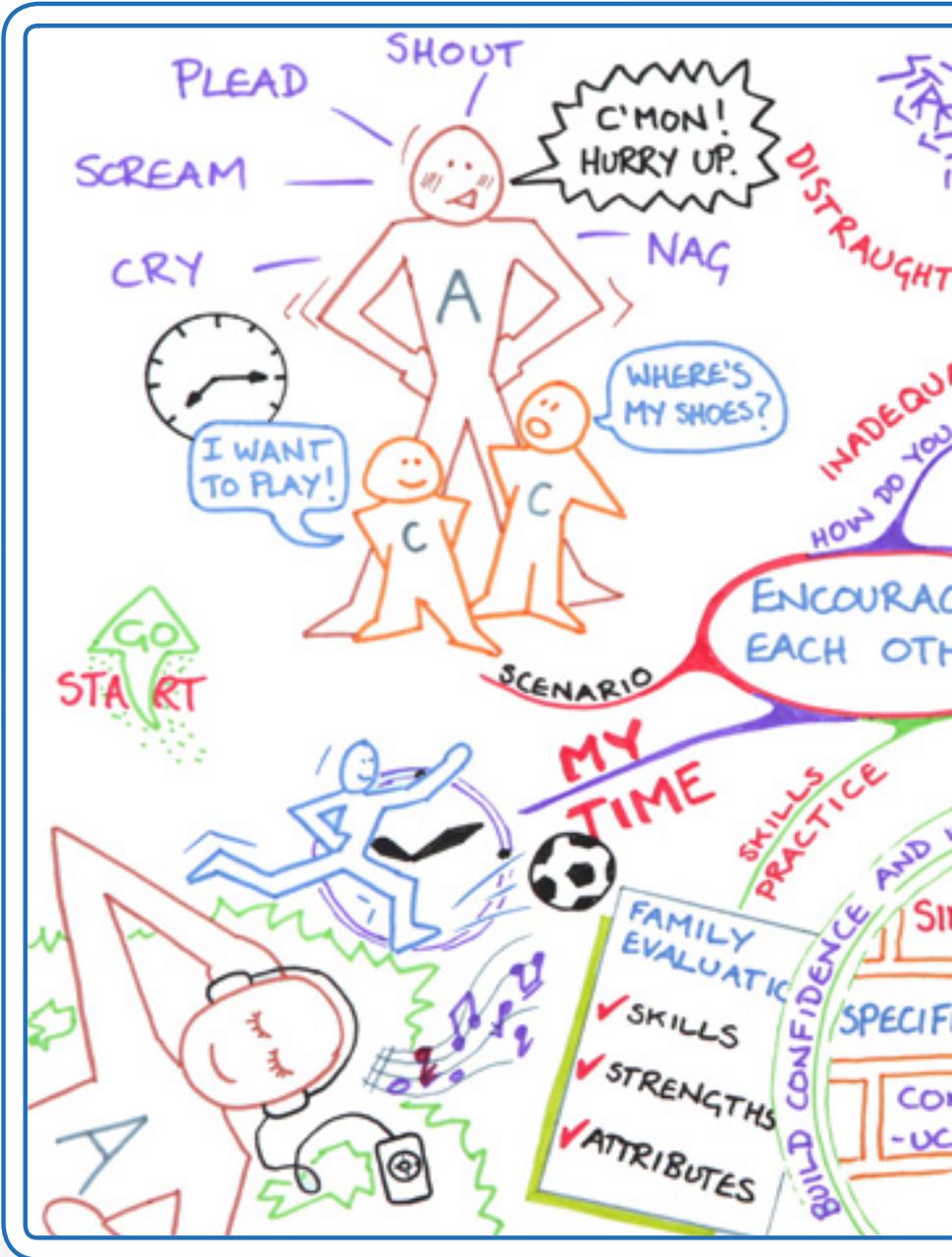
Taking it home

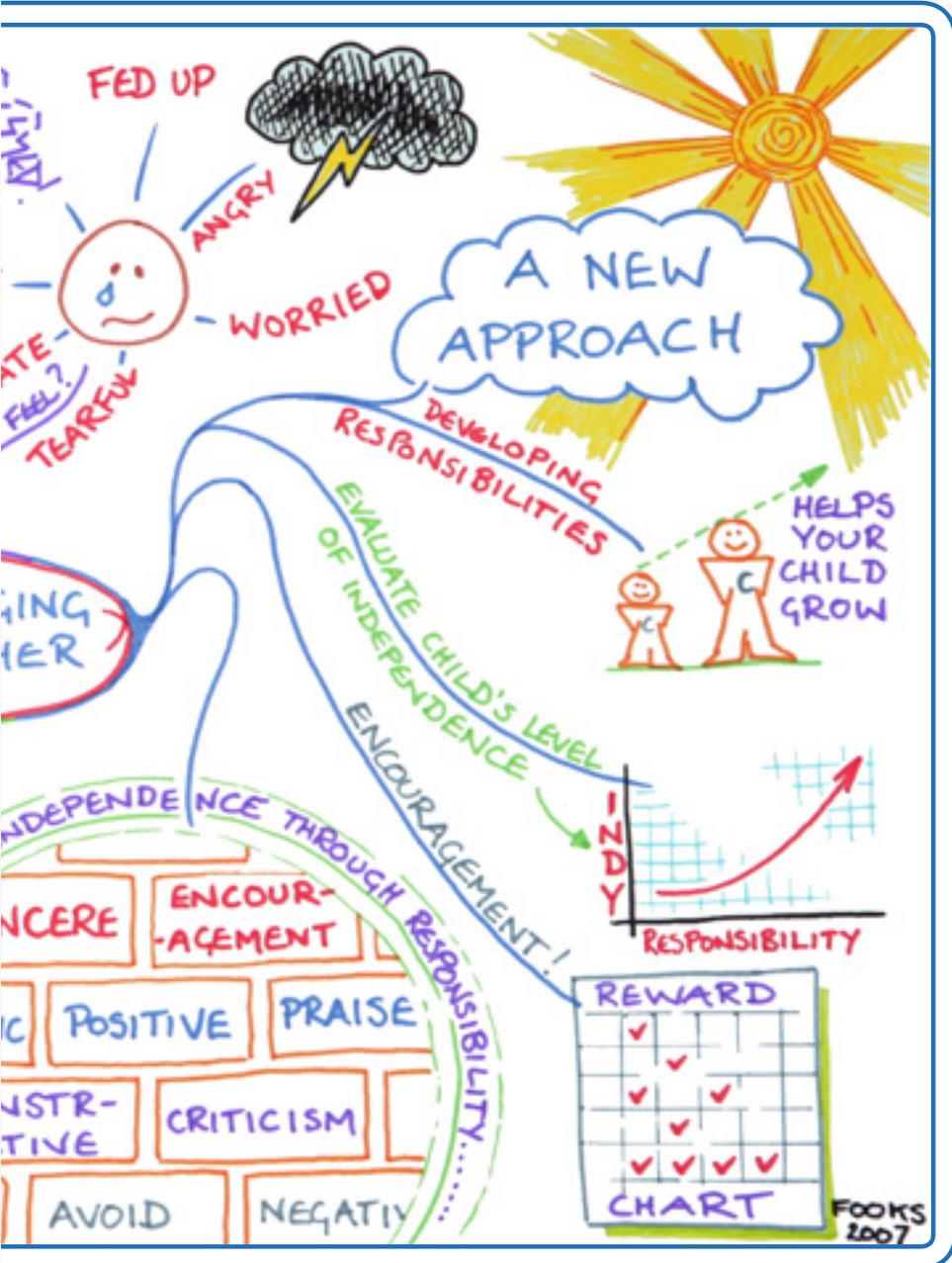
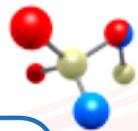
What new approaches will I try this week (responsibilities & encouragement)?



What will I do for My Time?







Session 4

Planning Family Time



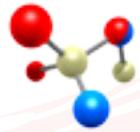
This session gives us the opportunity to look at the importance of introducing planned Family Time.

Initially, we will be looking at how our family currently functions, and how much time we spend with one another. We will be considering each individual relationship within our family, as well as the complete family unit.

After that, we will take time to discuss new approaches in order to best facilitate having Family Time, involving children in appropriate decisions and encouraging healthy relationships within the structure of the family unit.

One of the skills we will be introducing is family meetings. We consider these to be a valuable opportunity for each family member to be heard and to have a platform to contribute their own opinions.

It can be very rewarding creating a safe environment within our families, nurturing deeper relationships and



encouraging each other to grow as individuals. One way that this can be achieved is to use a strategy called Diary Dates. This puts emphasis on the importance of developing 1:1 time between each adult and child relationship within the family unit.

Real life story

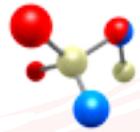
“ ***My name is Su.
I have four children, a
daughter and triplet sons.***

As you can imagine, life was a little hectic when the boys were born. My daughter was five at the time and took it all in her stride. I felt we had a good family relationship and that we did all we could to support them all.



Life became predictable and very busy, all of them participating in some activity and the logistics of getting them to places at times was hard. It was not until I took this course that I realised that, although we were a happy family, we had somehow drifted apart and that not very often would we all get together to chat.

I was determined that we should renew that part of our family life. The boys now being in their late teens, I tried various times, but somehow Sunday mornings appeared to be the time when all of us gathered in the kitchen together. I'm not sure if it was the smell of coffee and



bacon rolls, but it started slowly and now we all sit and have breakfast together and chat. It's so nice to see them all giving their opinions (not always well received by some) but just chatting, laughing, joking and at times reminiscing. I find myself at times standing to one side and watching, appreciating this is what my family life is about.

If I had not attended the course, perhaps these moments would not have become one of our favourite Family Times, and a time that has strengthened bonding within the family would have been missed forever.

”

Scenario

A teenage girl has made plans for the morning. As she is leaving, her mother gives her



a list of jobs, expecting them to be done immediately.

Honestly, how much time do I spend with each family member on a weekly basis?



Honestly, how much time do we spend together as a family on a weekly basis?



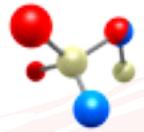
Trying something new

When might I introduce Family Time?



How might I introduce regular child-led play?





What decisions might I involve my children in?



How might Diary Dates work in my family?



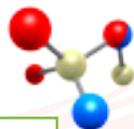
Taking it home

What new approach will I try this week?



What will I do for My Time?





Looking for further support?

One of the best things about **The Fusion Programme™** is the genuine support that people receive from the other group members, sharing similar situations, encouraging one another and celebrating success.

After the course is over, members have commented they missed that support ... but no longer. **BetterParents.co.uk** hosts forums for anyone who wants to continue building a better family. For Fusion news, support, and much more ...



... be part of our
community

**better
parents** 

Want to be a Fusion leader?

Have you benefited from **The Fusion Programme™** already? Would you like to help other families? This course has been designed to make it easy to run and easy to follow - all you need is some relevant training.

The Fusion Leaders' Guide has step-by-step instructions on every element of every session, including Ice Breaker suggestions, Skills Practice suggestions, weekly checklists and a large Resource Section. If you're still not convinced that you could run **The Fusion Programme™** with a friend or colleague, rest assured we've provided everything you need to help make it a success. As a start, why not ask a leader how they started?

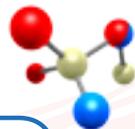
Help us make a real
difference

Visit **BetterParents.co.uk** for more information, as well as the latest Fusion news, advice, support, forums, competitions, courses and much more.

**better
parents** 







Session 5

Problem solving

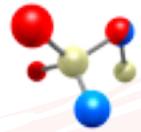


This session gives us the opportunity to look at the importance of developing our problem solving techniques.

Initially, we will be looking at our current methods of problem solving and how we react to the issues that arise within our family.

After that, we will be taking time to introduce some new approaches. We will consider appropriate consequences and the idea of giving choices in certain situations. Next, we will be looking at how we can check that our own emotions and reactions are valid, as well as recognising when we get it wrong and the need to say sorry.

Another skill we will be looking at, is using the 'I' word. In some situations, this skill can defuse a potential argument or power struggle developing.



Real life story

“ ***My name is Emma.
I have one son.*** ”

My son is 8 years old. My partner also has 2 children, but they do not live with us. Life in our home has really changed since I went on The Fusion Programme™, it is a much happier household.



I used to get into real power struggles with my son, I don't any more. I've learnt to give him a choice for his behaviour and other things as well. It is the most effective thing I have learnt, but I have to stick to the consequences we have set. I think I'm more polite to him now, I try to say please and thank you when I ask him to do things.

We never used to communicate, other than to shout at each other. We have really good chats now, we talk all the time about everything, it is so nice. I think I listen more as well.

continued over ...

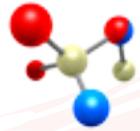
When I'm feeling angry, I won't discuss things any more. Instead I tell him I will talk to him later when I have calmed down. This definitely helps.

Because I've changed, we now bake cakes and decorate them together. I would never have done that before, as I would have lost my patience.

One of the most important things I have learnt is to take time out for myself. This allows my son and my partner to spend some time together to grow their relationship.

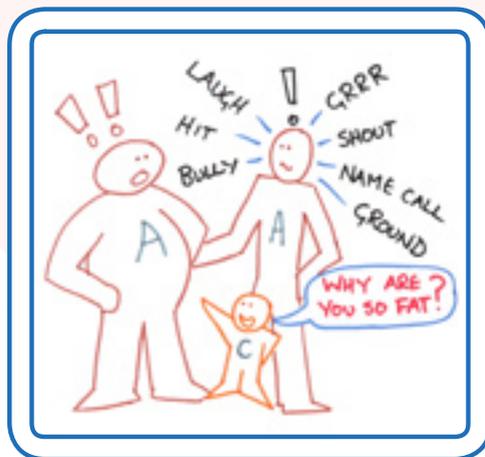
I think we are all much happier.

”



Scenario

A father is talking to his neighbour, when the father's son shouts, "Why are you so fat?!" to the neighbour.



A new approach



Skills & strategies introduced:

Staying calm

Checking our emotions and reactions are valid

Disobedience is different to mistakes

Choices and consequences

Label the behaviour, not the child

Appropriate consequences for the behaviour

Being prepared to follow through with consequences

Allowing the child to evaluate

Using the 'I' word

Being able to say sorry

Helping our children learn to problem solve:

C *alm down*

E *valuate the situation*

D *ecide on ways forward*

A *ction (choose one way forward and act on it)*

R *e-evaluate after time to assess if it's working*

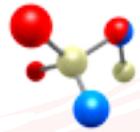
Trying something new

How might I introduce choices and consequences?



In what problem area might I try a new approach?





In what way might I stay calm and delay my reaction?



How might I introduce the 'I' word?

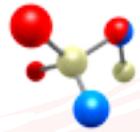


How might I encourage my child to practise problem solving?



When might I introduce the C.E.D.A.R. strategy with my child?





Taking it home

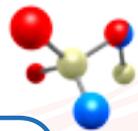
What new approach will I try this week?



What will I do for My Time?







Session 6

Living it out

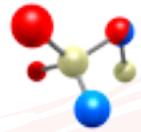


This session gives us the opportunity to bring together all of our skills and strategies and evaluate the ways in which we can continue to grow as a family unit. It may be that this course has allowed us to look at how our family functions currently.

Having done so, we have begun to introduce some fresh skills and strategies to complement and work together with our existing techniques.

As with any new skill, it takes practice, and it is inevitable that old habits may creep in. For this reason, the workbook was designed to enable you to refer back to the graphical mind maps of each session, giving you an easy visual reminder of the skills and strategies introduced.

We have found that one of the most successful strategies for maintaining these new skills is to ensure that you have continuing support within your community and likewise, are able to offer support to others. This may be in the form of Fusion Drop-Ins™. Please ask your leaders for details.



Real life story

“ ***My name is Gillian.
I have nine children,
8 boys and 1 girl.*** ”

They have gradually flown the nest but I have got 5 boys still living at home, so there is a lot of sibling rivalry as you can imagine.



This course has helped me feel more in control of my responses to situations between the boys. One of the skills I have learnt is to listen first, before jumping in and blaming someone.

Using the 'I' word instead of 'you' for example: when one of my teenagers keeps drinking all the milk and then there is not enough for breakfast. I would have said, "You have drunk all the milk again!" causing him to argue and go off to school slamming the door. I know it would have a knock-on effect and I would probably get a call from his school later that day.

continued over ...

Now instead, I use the 'I' word, saying, "I am disappointed all the milk has gone and now there isn't enough for breakfast". He would get the message but it wouldn't cause a row.

I particularly liked the idea of Diary Dates, spending time with or taking the children out individually so they feel special. It does not have to cost a lot of money, a game of football, a coffee or an ice cream. This has built a connection/bond between my children and I, and the relationships seem much stronger.

Through learning to connect with my children, I have discovered their likes and dislikes; I didn't even know something as simple as their favourite colour!

This course talks about giving children choices and consequences, giving children a warning and telling them what is going to happen if the behaviour continues.

Using skills and strategies I have developed from this course, I feel I am the parent again!

”

Learning to listen

Body language

Importance of in-depth conversation

Helping my child use emotional vocabulary

Active listening

The 5 stages of Active listening:

1 *Give good attention when listening*

2 *Offer simple encouraging dialogue*

3 *Reflect back (mirror)*

4 *Suggest the feeling*

5 *Offer empathy and problem solving*



Problem solving

Staying calm

Checking our emotions and reactions are valid

Disobedience is different to mistakes

Choices and consequences

Label the behaviour, not the child

Appropriate consequences for the behaviour

Being prepared to follow through with consequences

Allowing the child to evaluate

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C *alm down*

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A *ction (choose one way forward and act on it)*

R *e-evaluate after time to assess if it's working*

So what's next?

Further support

Website

The Better Parents website, www.betterparents.co.uk provides the latest Fusion news, advice and support. We urge you to join up as a member of the site, so that we can keep you up-to-date with what's happening and continue to offer you, and your family, the support that you deserve. Make the most of our services, forums (see below), competitions, etc. and be encouraged in your own unique families and situations.

Website forums

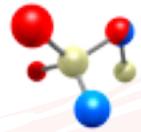
We are committed to supporting and encouraging the Fusion community already established by participants in their own groups. In order to do this, we have set up a number of forums on www.BetterParents.co.uk. It's FREE to read and FREE to join in (it's quick and easy to register for free with the site). Share your experiences, receive encouragement, seek advice and celebrate successes. Be part of our community.

Fusion Drop-Ins™

These are post-Fusion, informal meetings, organised by either the leaders or participants (peer-led). They offer an opportunity for participants and prospective participants to meet and eat, share, discuss challenges, celebrate successes and continue to receive support and develop community.

If you have been on The Fusion Programme™ and wish to attend a Fusion Drop-In™, talk to your leader to find out if they are running them. If there isn't a Fusion Drop-In™ available locally, why not consider starting one of your own? They can be great fun and very rewarding! Check out the Community Section of our website, BetterParents.co.uk, for a Fusion Drop-In™ Starter Pack.

If you are thinking of attending The Fusion Programme™ and want to hear what it's all about from people who have already done it, why not join an existing Fusion Drop-In™ in your area. For more information regarding Fusion Drop-Ins™ in your area, check out the Community Section of our website, www.betterparents.co.uk.



Repeating The Fusion Programme™

Many participants have found real value in attending The Fusion Programme™ a second time, possibly with a partner, friend or colleague.

Advanced courses

The Fusion Programme™ has been developed as a universal resource, making it inclusive, accessible, simple and effective. We recognise that some participants may benefit from a more specific parenting course after Fusion. We would recommend the Webster Stratton 'Incredible Years' course as an appropriate, more in-depth follow-on, for those wishing to explore more advanced techniques. Visit www.incredibleyears.com for more information.

Running The Fusion Programme™

The Fusion Programme™ has been specifically designed, not only to make it easy to follow, but also easy to lead with relevant training (and dependent on local education authority requirements). If you are interested in running this programme, keep reading for more information about training.

Further training

Better Parents™ offers further training for people who are interested in running The Fusion Programme™. Two options are currently available:

1. Fusion leaders' course (½-day) - For people who have already attended Fusion. This course covers best practice, invaluable techniques and expert support to ensure you and your participants get the most out of running the programme.
2. Fusion intense leaders' course (1 day) - For people who have not already attended Fusion but want to get up to speed as quickly as possible. This covers all the Fusion content and a leaders' course in a condensed format.

Option 1 is the preferred route, as it gives the leader a better empathy for what it is like to attend Fusion, benefit from it and be actively supported in it.

Living it out

How will I maintain my new skills?



Which support will I use to help maintain them?



Appendix

My Time suggestions

We're sure you can come up with lots of your own ideas, but here's just a few to get you started ...

Bubble bath *(perhaps with wine, candles, etc.)*

Time out *(with a friend, partner or relative)*

Exercise *(swimming, jogging, walking, the gym, etc.)*

Reading a book or magazine

Watching a movie or TV programme

Evening classes *(pottery, dancing, languages, etc.)*

Crafts *(knitting, crochet, genealogy, cards, etc.)*

D.I.Y. project

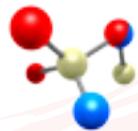
Cinema trip

Playing a computer game

Eating out / Takeaway meal

Bottle of wine *(with a friend, partner or relative)*

Something else?



Family Time suggestions

Here are some ideas for Family Time. Most of them can be applied to 1:1 Diary Dates as well as whole families ...

Board games

Movie with treats

Trip to the seaside

Walk

Treasure hunt *(at home / in the garden)*

Camping *(away or in the garden / house)*

Cooking a meal together

Baking *(cakes / biscuits / cookies)*

Going out for milkshake / ice cream

Trip to place of interest

Fishing

Swimming

Play a game *(rounders / football / bowling)*

Picnic

Cinema trip

Crazy golf

Ice skating

Something else?

Glossary

1:1 Diary Dates

One adult and one child going out to do something specific together. This can also be 'low cost' or 'no cost'.

Active Listening

A five-stage process of listening, whereby one person gives good attention to another, offering encouragement, mirroring, naming of feelings, showing empathy and problem solving, in order to demonstrate an understanding.

Body Language

Sometimes referred to as 'non-verbal communication', in other words, what you can tell about someone's mood or frame of mind by the expression on their face, the way they are standing or sitting, use of hand gestures, eye contact, etc.

Child-led play

At least 10 minutes per day, when the child leads play with the adult.

Constructive criticism

When a negative area is addressed in an encouraging manner, allowing the recipient to take advice onboard and make a choice to change.

Emotional Vocabulary

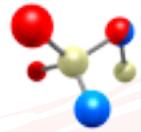
Common 'emotional' words that will help all family members to better express themselves and their feelings, e.g. sad, happy, excited, concerned, etc.

Family Meetings

A time when family members sit down together to discuss different issues or events within the family, value each other's opinions, build self esteem, make family decisions and work as a team.

Family Time

Ideally the whole family unit, or at least one adult and one child, spending quality time together.



Family Unit

All adults and children that live in a home for the majority of the time.

Fusion Drop-Ins™

A post-Fusion meeting organised by either the leaders or participants (peer-led), offering an opportunity for participants and prospective participants to meet, share, discuss challenges, celebrate successes and continue to receive support and develop community. These often work well on a monthly basis.

Graphical Mind Maps

These are found at the end of each session, giving a visual summary of the session's content. They also provide better accessibility for those participants who find visual stimuli more engaging.

My Time

Adults giving themselves regular time as an individual to enjoy relaxing or pursuing an interest or hobby. One of the benefits of My Time is to help the parent potentially function better within their given family situation.

Reward Charts

Usually in the form of sticker or star charts, encouraging children to grow in responsibility. These charts, when completed, are often linked to a reward.

Skills and strategies

These are the ideas and suggestions given throughout The Fusion Programme™, to promote ways in which one can improve family communication and relationships.

The 'I' word

Restructuring our responses to explain how we feel when things happen, using phrases such as, "When this happens, 'I' feel like this ...", rather than, "'You' make me feel ...".

Special thanks

Claire, Andrew and Michelle, Su, Emma and ***Gillian*** for their generous contribution of 'Real life stories'.

Josh Clarke, Phil Derham and ***Jimmy Farina*** from the ***Weymouth College Media Department*** for their enthusiasm, sense of fun and commitment in the production of the Fusion DVD.

Gary Fooks without whom, none of this would have happened! Thank you for believing in us and, of course, for the wonderful Graphical Mind Maps.

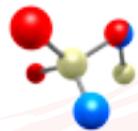
Deryn Harvey for seeing our potential and giving us this platform to produce The Fusion Programme™.

Rachel Hiscock for your constant support and encouragement, allowing us all the time and resources we have needed to fulfil this dream.

Helena Renfrew-Knight our lovely consultant, who has worked so hard on our behalf, a constant source of support to bring this project together.

Andi Surcouf at ***Epic Print***, for the professional advice and fantastic printing of the course material.

Gary Todd for the breadth of knowledge, eye for detail and innovative solutions, for the Fusion branding, music, book designs and development of our www.betterparent.co.uk website.



Our amazing actors and contributors, that have given their time, allowed us to invade their homes and kindly given us permission to appear in the DVD. A full list of names is provided in the DVD credits. You know who you are!

Finally a huge thank you to our dear husbands, **Andrew** and **Gary**, and children, **Hannah, Tom, Daniel** (thanks for the Latté!) and **Eleanor, Cameron, Abbie** and **Darcy**, for your constant support and willingness to release us for so many hours. Thanks also for allowing us to practise all the new skills and strategies on you, over the years we have been developing this programme!

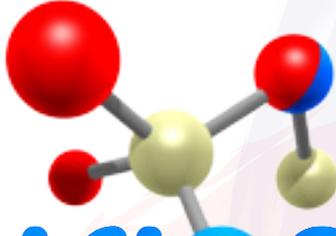
Your feedback

We hope you have enjoyed The Fusion Programme™. We regularly review Fusion to ensure it is a useful, flexible and accessible resource that helps as many unique families and individuals as possible.

We value your feedback as an input to this process. If you have any suggestions for ways we might improve The Fusion Programme™ in the future, we would love to hear from you.



Contact us by e-mail: fusion@betterparents.co.uk
or visit our website: www.betterparents.co.uk for more information.



FUSION™

Skills and Strategies for the Family™

"[Fusion] has had a positive impact for children and the whole family. Children and their parents have had their self esteem raised, they have a more positive view of themselves and ... start the day with an improved attitude, ready to learn."

Rachel Hiscock
(Primary School Head Teacher)

"[Since the course,] I can deal with situations confidently, without feeling guilty. Both [my] children seem more willing to help and I am a lot closer to them now. We talk more and we make time for each other."

Andy Bugler
(Parent)



THE FUSION PROGRAMME™

Skills and Strategies for the Family™

Fusion is a 6-session course (comprising Workbooks, Leaders' Guide and DVD), aimed at equipping families, and family professionals, with skills and strategies to improve positive communication within the family unit. The Fusion Programme™ is both easy to follow and easy to lead, featuring:

- No set reading or written homework
- Real life stories in each session
- Realistic scenarios
- Graphical Mind Maps
- Post-course support community
- And much more ...

KATY PHILLIPS has four children and works in Behavioural Support in a Primary School in Dorset. She is a founder of Better Parents and, in this capacity, teaches family skills to both parents and teaching professionals.

KAREN TODD has three children and has worked with young people in the voluntary sector for over 10 years. Also a founder of Better Parents, she regularly works alongside families and teaching staff, developing family skills and communication.



**better
parents**

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