

Blocked Care in Education

Adapted from Dan Hughes & Dr Jonathan Baylin (2012)

Five systems of Caregiving

Approach: Seeking connection and staying open & engaged.

Reward: Experiencing mutual interactions as pleasurable.

Reading: Making sense of the child's actions & responses.

Meaning: Creating narratives about ourselves & others.

Executive: Regulating, planning, reflecting, & adapting.

When these systems are compromised by stress, we...

- Become defensive & avoidant.
- Derive little joy from interactions.
- View ourselves & others negatively.
- Have less curiosity & empathy.
- Engage in polarised thinking.
- Respond inflexibly.
- Rely more on control & coercion.

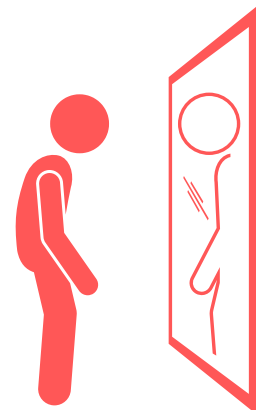
Signs that educators are experiencing Blocked Care

Confused
Nervous
Frustrated
Exhausted
Rigid
Critical
Sarcastic
Minimising
Blaming
Punishing
Isolating



What might these signs reflect?

Fear of failure
Low confidence
Need for control
Wary of vulnerability
Lack of understanding
Assuming the worst
Inability to reflect
Too many demands
Limited support
Difficult memories



Supporting Blocked Care

Make pausing a habit: Beware of snap judgements. Don't rush to correcting before connecting. Be humble enough to recognise when you get things wrong and need to repair the relationship.

Schedule time for reflection: What buttons are being pushed? What are you remembering from the past? What are the exceptions? What is the world like for the child and their family?

Maintain self-care: Down time. Exercise. Sleep. Diet. Support from people who listen without judgement.

Stay open to learning: Stress. Trauma. Demand avoidance. Sensory regulation. Communication differences.

Just as children need playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy (PACE), so do educators. *"This is really hard for you"; "You must think that you've tried everything"; "I wonder if you're worried that this is becoming personal?"*