CHILDHOOD SCARS

The Silent Influence: How Parental Bonds Build or Break a Child

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Why I Wrote This Book

Every parent wants the best for their child.

We dream of raising children who are kind, confident, emotionally strong, independent, and capable of building healthy relationships. We want them to grow up believing in themselves, knowing their worth, and feeling safe enough to come to us when life becomes difficult.

And yet, parenting can be full of moments that leave us questioning ourselves.

Why did I shout?

Why didn't I listen?

Why am I repeating the same pattern I promised I would never repeat?

This book begins with my story.

I was raised by parents who loved me deeply. They worked hard, sacrificed for our family, and gave me values that continue to guide my life. Both my parents were teachers, and our home was built around discipline, responsibility, education, and respect.

But like many families of their generation, emotions were rarely spoken about.

We were taught to obey before we were taught to express.

We were corrected when we made mistakes, but feelings were often expected to remain hidden. If we were upset, we were encouraged to be strong. If we were hurt, we learned to move on.

And there was one sentence I almost never heard:

I'm sorry.

Not because my parents didn't love me.

They did.

But they had grown up believing that parents should be strong, parents should be right, and admitting a mistake could weaken their authority. They were parenting with the emotional tools they had inherited.

As a child, I accepted it.

As an adult, I began to understand it.

And as a mother of two, I began to feel it.

There were moments when I heard my own voice becoming impatient. Moments when stress spoke louder than love. Moments when I reacted to my child's behaviour instead of pausing to understand what was underneath it.

And I realized something uncomfortable:

Sometimes we are not only responding to our children. We are responding from the child we once were.

As a Parenting Coach, Certified Early Childhood Educator, Montessori Educator, and mother, I have witnessed this struggle in many families. Parents often focus on changing their child's behaviour while overlooking the powerful influence of their own daily actions.

This book was written to bridge that gap.

It is not another rulebook filled with unrealistic expectations. It is an invitation to look at parenting differently—to understand how children learn through observation and how our words, reactions, relationships, and emotional patterns quietly shape them.

Because children don't need perfect parents.

They need parents who are willing to notice, learn, repair, and grow.

My hope is that you finish this book feeling **empowered, not guilty**.

Because meaningful change does not begin with perfection.

It begins with awareness.

Introduction

What if your child is learning from you even when you are not teaching?

Before children understand our advice, they observe our behaviour. They watch how we speak, how we handle anger, how we respond to mistakes, how we treat our partner, and how we treat ourselves. They notice when we listen, when we withdraw, when we apologize, and when we choose connection over control.

Children don't just listen to what we say. They learn from what we repeatedly show them.

A child who watches parents communicate with respect begins to understand what healthy relationships look like. A child who sees parents repair after an argument learns that conflict does not have to mean the end of love. A child who is constantly criticized may begin to believe that mistakes make them unworthy. And a child who feels heard and accepted begins developing the confidence to express themselves.

This is the **silent influence** of parenting.

It happens in ordinary moments—the morning rush, the dinner table, homework time, sibling arguments, bedtime conversations, and even the disagreements children overhear when we think they are not listening.

Sometimes we believe that providing good education, opportunities, discipline, and security is enough. These things matter. But children also need something that cannot be bought or measured:

Emotional safety and connection.

This book is not about blaming parents for every struggle their children experience. Parenting is difficult, and every parent loses patience sometimes. We all have moments we wish we could handle differently.

The question is not:

Have I ever made a mistake as a parent?

The better question is:

What do I do after the mistake?

Because repair is powerful.

When a child's emotional needs are repeatedly ignored, dismissed, or misunderstood, these experiences can become **childhood scars** quiet wounds that may follow them into adulthood, shaping how they see themselves, how they trust others, how they love, and how they respond to conflict.

What feels like **just a moment** to a parent, can sometimes become a memory a child carries for a lifetime.

A sincere apology can teach humility. A calm conversation can rebuild trust. A hug after conflict can remind a child that disagreement does not cancel love.

You don't have to become a perfect parent.

You simply have to become more **aware, intentional, and willing to reconnect.**

Because while your child may not remember every lesson you taught, they are likely to remember **how they felt while growing up with you.**

And that feeling can become the foundation of who they believe they are.

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Chapter 1

The Emotional Blueprint: How Children Absorb What They See

Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.

Take a moment and think about that.

As parents, we spend countless hours teaching our children what is right and wrong.

We remind them to say please and thank you.

We tell them not to shout.

We ask them to be kind, honest, respectful, and patient.

But have you ever stopped to ask yourself

What are they learning when you're not teaching?

Because the truth is this:

Children learn far more from what we do than from what we say.

Your Child Is Always Watching

Even when they seem busy playing.

Even when they're looking at their toys.

Even when you think they aren't paying attention.

They are watching.

They watch how you speak to your spouse.

They watch how you greet the house help.

They watch how you treat your parents.

They notice how you react when you're stuck in traffic.

They notice how you answer a phone call when you're frustrated.

They notice how you respond when something doesn't go your way.

They are quietly collecting thousands of tiny lessons every single day.

Not from your lectures

But from your life.

A Story Every Parent Should Hear

One evening, a mother was preparing dinner when she accidentally dropped a glass bowl.

It shattered across the kitchen floor.

Before she could react, her five-year-old son looked at her.

She took a deep breath and smiled.

Oh well, she said softly. Accidents happen. Let's clean it up together.

A few weeks later, the little boy spilled his juice on the carpet.

He looked at the mess.

Then he looked at his mother. Instead of crying or hiding, he smiled and said,

It's okay, Mama accidents happen. Let's clean it up.

In that moment, the mother realized something powerful.

Her son hadn't learned from her words. He had learned from her reaction.

Children copy our responses long before they understand our advice.

Your Home Becomes Their Inner Voice

One day

Your child will grow up.

They will leave your home.

They will make new friends.

They will experience heartbreak.

They will fail.

They will succeed.

They will become parents themselves.

And during those moments

They won't remember every lecture you gave.

But they will remember how you made them feel.

Your voice will become their inner voice.

If they often heard

You're capable.

They'll learn to believe in themselves.

If they constantly heard*What's wrong with you?*

They may begin asking themselves that same question for years.

If they were encouraged

They'll encourage themselves.

If they were constantly criticized

They'll become their own harshest critic.

The conversations you have today become the thoughts they carry tomorrow.

The Mirror Effect

Imagine standing in front of a mirror.

Whatever you do

The reflection copies you.

Your child is much like that mirror.

If they seem calm

They learn to be calm.

If they see respect

They learn respect.

If they see kindness

They become kind.

If they see yelling as the solution to problems

They learn that shouting is normal.

Children don't simply hear our values.

They live them.

Researchers have found that young children learn through observation long before they fully understand explanations.

Their brains are constantly watching, copying, and practicing the behaviors they see in the people they trust most.

That is why your daily actions often teach far more than your daily instructions.

This doesn't mean you need to be perfect.

It means you need to be aware.

So as a parents what you have to do Just **Pause and Reflect**

Before correcting your child today, ask yourself:

- What am I teaching through my own behavior?
- If my child copied my reaction exactly, would I feel proud?
- Am I modeling the person I hope my child becomes?
- Do my actions match the values I'm trying to teach?

Sometimes the greatest parenting lesson isn't what we say.

It's what we choose to do.

And this is a **Gentle Reminder**

You do not need to be a perfect parent.

There is no such thing.

Children don't need parents who never make mistakes.

They need parents who are willing to admit mistakes, apologize, learn, and grow.

When your child sees you say,

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have shouted.

You are teaching accountability.

When they see you take a deep breath instead of reacting in anger

You are teaching emotional regulation.

When they see you treat others with kindness

You are teaching compassion.

Every small choice becomes a lesson.

Every calm response builds emotional safety.

Every loving interaction strengthens trust.

Your Parenting Legacy

Years from now, your child may not remember every toy you bought.

They may not remember every holiday or birthday gift.

But they will remember how your home felt.

Did it feel safe?

Did it feel loving?

Did it feel respectful?

Did it feel like a place where mistakes were accepted and emotions were understood?

Because children don't just grow **in** our homes.

They grow **from** our homes.

The atmosphere you create today becomes the foundation they stand on tomorrow.

So choose your words carefully.

Choose your reactions wisely.

Choose connection over control.

Patience over panic.

Understanding over judgment.

Because the person your child becomes tomorrow

Is being shaped by what they experience today.

Chapter 2

Conflict at Home – How Arguments Affect a Child's Sense of Safety

Have you ever had a heated argument at home — and then noticed your child silently sitting in the corner, or suddenly acting out?

You might have thought, *They're too young to understand,* or *It was just a small fight.*

But here's the truth:

Children may not understand every word but they feel *everything*.

Our home is supposed to be their safest space — their emotional nest. But when conflict becomes common, that sense of safety starts to break.

In this chapter, we'll talk openly about:

- The different types of conflict that show up at home
- How these affect your child's emotional and mental well-being
- What subconscious damage arguments can do
- And most importantly — how we can create a peaceful, emotionally safe home environment for our children

What Do We Mean by Conflict at Home?

Conflict doesn't always mean shouting. It can show up in many ways:

1. **Verbal fights between parents (husband-wife conflicts):**Disagreements about money, parenting, responsibilities, etc. Frequent yelling, blaming, or even sarcastic remarks.
2. **Conflicts with in-laws or extended family:**When a mother is constantly being criticized, judged, or disrespected. Passive-aggressive behaviors or emotional manipulation.
3. **External pressures from work, society, or finances:**Office stress, financial tension, or societal expectations. This pressure turns into frustration and gets released at home.
4. **Silent treatments or emotional coldness:**No yelling, but days of silence and avoidance. Children feel the emotional tension even if words aren't spoken.

For Example: A father comes home after a stressful day and snaps at the mother over a small issue. The mother gets angry and walks away silently. They don't speak for hours. The child watches this unfold — and even though no one said anything to them, they feel confused, scared, and anxious.

What Happens in a Child's Brain During Conflict?

When kids see or hear conflict, their brain sends a signal:

Something is not safe.

This activates the **fight, flight, or freeze** response:

- Some kids **lash out** — throwing tantrums, yelling, or becoming aggressive.
- Some **withdraw** — becoming quiet, anxious, or excessively obedient.

- Some **try to fix things** — becoming parentified, trying to take care of everyone emotionally.

But none of these are healthy. Over time, the brain learns:

Love means tension. Home means walking on eggshells.

And this belief becomes part of their **subconscious programming** — carried into adulthood.

Long-Term Effects of Conflict on Children

Even if the conflict isn't about the child — they are deeply affected by the environment.

Here's how:

Anxiety and Insecurity: They start worrying: Will mom and dad separate? Did I do something wrong?They live in constant alert mode, which affects concentration and sleep.

1. **Aggression or Rebellion:**Kids mimic what they see. If yelling is normal at home, they repeat it outside.
2. **Low Self-Esteem:**They may feel helpless, unwanted, or responsible for the fights.Internal messages like I'm not lovable, or I'm the problem start forming.
3. **Trouble in Future Relationships:**Children raised in high-conflict homes may struggle with emotional trust.They may either become too distant or too clingy in relationships.
4. **Mental Health Issues:**Studies show that children who grow up around chronic conflict have a higher risk of anxiety disorders, depression, and emotional dysregulation.

Let's Understand This with a Real-Life Example

Imagine this: A mother is under constant pressure from her in-laws — criticized for how she cooks, raises the child, or manages the home. She feels unheard and disrespected. One

day, she breaks down and shouts at her husband for not supporting her.

The child watches.,They don't just see a fight. They see:

- A helpless mother,A distant father,Emotional chaos

Now, the child learns:

- My home isn't safe.
- Love equals shouting.
- Keeping quiet is better than being honest.

Even if the fight ends and everything seems normal, the emotional wound remains.

But Kashish, Does This Mean We Should Never Argue?

No, that's not realistic.

Every family has disagreements. But it's **how we argue** and **how we repair afterward** that makes the difference.

Healthy conflict includes:

- Respectful tone
- No name-calling or blame
- Apologizing and making peace in front of the child
- Assuring the child: It's okay. We're working through it. You are not at fault.

How Can We Create a Safe Emotional Environment at Home?

Let's talk about how to shift from chaos to calm:

1. Have Private Conversations for Conflict

If there's tension between husband and wife or family members — try to resolve it away from your child's eyes and ears.

Never make your child the messenger or involve them in taking sides.

2. Acknowledge Their Emotions

If your child witnessed a conflict, say:

> I know what happened might have felt scary or confusing. It's not your fault. We love you.

This helps them release fear and confusion — instead of storing it in their heart.

3. Practice Regulated Responses

When you feel triggered, pause before reacting.

Ask yourself:

- Is this the environment I want to create?
- Is this how I want my child to see relationships?

Take a breath. Respond with awareness, not impulse.

4. Model Healthy Communication

Let your children see you:

- Expressing disagreement without disrespect
- Apologizing when wrong
- Repairing relationships after conflict

This teaches them:

It's okay to disagree. But love means coming back together.

5. Have Daily Safe Moments

Create small rituals that reassure your child:

- A hug before bed
- A daily talk time
- Reading a book together
- A family meal with no tech

These moments build emotional safety and trust.

6. Prioritize Your Mental Health Too

Let's be honest — a mother or father who's emotionally exhausted cannot pour peace into their home.

Take care of yourself. Get support if needed.

A peaceful parent creates a peaceful home.

Dear parents, Arguments happen. Conflicts are part of life.

But let's not let these moments define our child's reality.

Let's teach our children:

- That love can be kind
- That disagreement can be handled with grace
- That no matter what, *home is safe*

Because the emotional foundation we build today will shape their relationships, resilience, and confidence for a lifetime.

Children don't need perfect parents. They need present, peaceful, and emotionally safe ones.

Let's begin from where we are — and build a home where our children not only live but *feel safe to be themselves*.

Chapter 3

Attachment Patterns

Are You Raising Secure or Anxious Kids?

Before we begin,Pause for a moment and ask yourself:

- When your child is upset, do they come to you or pull away?
- Do they feel safe sharing their mistakes with you?
- When you say no, do they feel guided or rejected?
- Do they seek your presence or fear your reaction?

Your answers to these questions reveal something powerful—

your child's attachment pattern.

What Is Attachment?

Attachment is not just love. It is the **emotional bond** a child forms with you that answers one silent question:

Am I safe with you exactly as I am?

This bond becomes the foundation of their confidence, relationships, and emotional health.

A **secure child** feels: I am loved, I am safe, I can try.

An **anxious child** feels: I need to prove my worth, or I may lose love.

Old Parenting Patterns: What We Saw Growing Up

Many of us were raised in homes where:

- Because I said so was the final answer
- Emotions were dismissed: Stop crying, it's nothing
- Mistakes were punished, not understood
- Love was often conditional: Good marks = good child
- Respect meant fear, not connection

Parents were not wrong— they were parenting with the awareness they had.

That model created **obedient children**, but not always **emotionally secure adults**.

Why This Doesn't Work Today

Today's children are different. They are more aware, more expressive, and more emotionally sensitive.

When we use the same old patterns:

- Control creates **resistance**
- Dismissal creates **distance**
- Fear creates **temporary obedience, but long-term disconnection**

You may get silence but not trust.

You may get compliance but not confidence.

Let us understand How Anxious Attachment Is Created

An anxious child is not too sensitive. They are responding to inconsistency.

It happens when:

- Love feels conditional
- Reactions are unpredictable (sometimes calm, sometimes harsh)

- Emotions are ignored or judged
- The child feels they must earn approval

They start thinking:

If I don't behave perfectly, I may lose love.

So they either:

- Become people pleasers, or
- Become over-reactive and attention-seeking

Both are signs of the same fear, **fear of losing connection.**

What Does a Secure Child Feel?

A secure child is not perfect. They still make mistakes, cry, get angry.

But deep inside, they know:

No matter what happens I am safe with my parents.

That one belief changes everything.

They:

- Express emotions without fear
- Take healthy risks
- Recover faster from failure
- Build strong relationships

So How to Build Secure Attachment

Let's keep this simple. Secure attachment is not a theory, It is built in small, everyday moments.

You don't have to be a perfect parent, but you do need to be a **present parent**.

1. Be Emotionally Available

You don't always have to give solutions.

Sometimes your child just wants to feel someone is listening to me without judging.

But what do we usually do?

The moment our child starts talking, we interrupt, give advice, or say— It's not a big deal.And that's where connection breaks.

What can you do instead?

Sit with them. Put your phone aside. Look at them. Listen.Sometimes, **your presence is the solution.**

2. Respond, Don't React

Your child makes a mistake and your instant reaction is anger, shouting, or punishment.

But remember, your reaction teaches your child one thing: Is it safe for me to come to my parents?

If every mistake leads to fear, your child will learn to hide not share.

What should you do? When you feel angry,pause for a few seconds.

Then respond calmly ,Let's understand what happened

This small shift can completely change your relationship.

3. Validate Their Feelings

We often say things like It's such a small thing, why are you crying?

This is not even a problem.But for your child, it *is* a **big deal.**

You don't have to agree but you must acknowledge.

Say something like: I understand you're feeling upset. That one line makes your child feel **I matter. My feelings matter.**

4. Be Consistent

One day you are calm, the next day you react angrily to the same situation.

This confuses your child. They don't know what to expect.

Children don't need perfect parents, they need **predictable parents**.

When your responses are consistent, your child feels safe.

They know my parents will handle things this way.And that sense of safety builds strong attachment.

5. Separate Behavior from Identity

What do we often say?

You are a bad boy/girl

You always do this

But what does the child hear? I am bad.

This slowly breaks their confidence.

What should you say instead?

This behavior is not okay.

See the difference?

You are correcting the action, not rejecting the child.

Now all of you

Pause and ask yourself honestly

Does my child listen to me because they fear me or because they trust me?

Your answer will shape their future.

Your child does not need a perfect parent. They need a **safe parent**.

A place where they can talk without fear, make mistakes without feeling rejected, and still feel loved. Because when a child feels safe they don't just behave better, they become stronger, calmer, and more confident from within.

Chapter 4

The Invisible Lessons: What Children Learn When You're Not Talking to Each Other

Most parents believe that children learn when we teach them something.

When we sit them down explain correct guide.

But the truth is, some **of the most powerful lessons are learned when nothing is being said.**

When you and your partner stop talking

When there is silence in the house

When there is distance, tension, or cold behavior **your child is still learning**.

Children Feel What You Don't Say

Children may not understand your words but they understand your energy.

They notice:

- The silence at the dinner table
- The way you avoid eye contact with each other
- The change in tone
- The tension in the room

And slowly, they start asking questions inside their mind:

Is everything okay?

Did I do something wrong?

Why does the house feel different?

They may not say it but they feel it deeply.

What Is Your Child Learning in That Silence?

When parents stop communicating with each other, children begin to create their own meaning.

And that meaning shapes their behavior.

1. They Learn to Stay Quiet

When a child grows up in a home where conversations are missing, they learn:

It's better not to speak.

They stop expressing their thoughts. They hesitate before sharing.Not because they don't have anything to say but because they don't feel safe to say it.

2. They Learn to Suppress Emotions

If they never see healthy conversations, they don't learn how to handle emotions. So what do they do?

They suppress. They hide. Or sometimes they burst out suddenly.

Because no one showed them how to express emotions in a healthy way.

3. They Learn That Love Means Distance

If parents are physically present but emotionally disconnected,

the child starts believing:

This is what relationships look like.

They grow up thinking love means:

- Silence instead of communication
- Distance instead of connection

- Ignoring instead of resolving

And later in life they repeat the same pattern.

4. They May Blame Themselves

This is the most painful part.Children often think:

Maybe it's because of me.

Even when it has nothing to do with them, they carry guilt silently.

They try to behave better, stay quiet and not create any problems

Just to fix something they never broke.

5. They Learn How to Handle Conflict—Wrongly

If they see:

- Ignoring instead of talking
- Anger instead of understanding
- Silence instead of resolution

They don't learn how to solve problems.

They learn how to avoid them.

And this follows them into friendships, relationships, and even their future families.

Why Parents Need to Rethink This

You may think we are not fighting, we are just not talking.

But for a child,

Silence can be louder than arguments.

Because silence creates confusion and confusion creates insecurity.

You don't have to be perfect as a couple. Disagreements are normal. But what your child needs to see is this:

Conversations happen

Problems get resolved

Respect is maintained

Because that is how they learn emotional safety.

What Can You Do Differently?

You don't need big changes. You need small, conscious actions.

1. Show Healthy Communication

Even if you disagree, let your child see calm conversation.

I don't agree, but let's talk about it.

This teaches them that conflict is normal and it can be handled with respect.

2. Don't Use Silence as Punishment

Ignoring each other may feel easier, but it creates distance for your child.

Instead, choose:

Talking over avoiding

Understanding over ego

3. Reassure Your Child

If there is tension at home, tell your child clearly:

This is between us, not because of you.

This removes their silent guilt.

4. Create Safe Conversations at Home

Make your home a place where:

- People talk
- People listen

- People feel heard

Because that becomes your child's emotional foundation.

Now dear parents ask yourself honestly:

What is my child learning from the way we handle silence?

Would I want them to copy this in their future relationships?

Because they will.

Your child is not just listening to your words, they are learning from your relationships.

From your tone

Your silence

Your connection

Your distance

So be mindful because even when you are not talking to each other , you are still teaching your child how love, conflict, and relationships should look.

And always remember Children don't learn relationships from advice. They learn it by watching you live with them.

Chapter 5

Co-Parenting with Compassion Even When It's Hard

This is not a boy's job This is something girls should learn

We may not always say it directly, but we show it in our daily actions.

The boy is told to focus on studies. The girl is asked to help in the kitchen.

The boy is excused. He doesn't need to do this.

The girl is expected—You should know this.

And slowly, without realizing we begin to divide responsibilities based on gender.

The Conditioning Starts Early

A child is not born believing that certain tasks belong to boys and others belong to girls.

They learn it from what they see at home.

They observe:

- Who cooks
- Who cleans
- Who manages the house
- Who gets a pass

And they form a belief: **This is how life works.**

The girl learns that taking care of the home is my responsibility.

The boy learns: Someone else will take care of it.

This is not preparing children for life. This is creating an imbalance

What Happens Later in Life?

Years pass. Children grow up and start their own families.

But today's reality is different.

There are fewer joint families. Less external support. More responsibilities.

Most couples are managing everything on their own. And this is where the problem begins. Here the point comes for cooperating.

A Real-Life Scenario

She works all day comes home tired

and still handles cooking, cleaning, and everything else.

He works too

but expects things to be managed.

Not because he is wrong, but because he was never taught differently.

Now frustration builds.

She feels:

Why am I doing everything alone?

He feels:

Why is she always upset?

And what could have been a partnership turns into a struggle.

The Reality We Must Accept

Building and maintaining a family today is not easy.

Life is fast.

Stress is high.

Support is limited.

In this situation, sharing responsibilities is not a **choice**, it is a **necessity.**

Because a relationship is not about fixed roles. It is about **partnership**.

Where Does the Change Begin?

Not after **marriage.**

Not when problems start.

It begins in **childhood.**

In your home. With your parenting.

What Should We Teach Our Children?

Not boy work or girl work.

But **life skills**.

Teach Both Children Equally

A boy should know how to cook, clean, and take care of himself.

A girl should grow with confidence, independence, and decision-making ability.

Because tomorrow, they will not just be individuals, they will be partners.

The only solution is Shifting the Parenting Mindset

For a long time, parenting has been shaped by silent rules we never questioned. We didn't always say them out loud,

but we lived by them. Boys were excused from certain responsibilities. Girls were prepared for them. It wasn't always intentional, but it became a pattern that quietly shaped how children see themselves and their roles in life.

When we say, He doesn't need to do housework, what we are really teaching is that responsibility can be optional. That someone else will take care of things for him. But life does not work that way. One day, he will live alone, or with a partner, or build a family of his own. And in that moment, what he truly needs is not comfort, but capability. He needs to know how to take care of his space, his health, and his daily life without depending on someone else to step in.

When we say, She should learn everything for her future home, it may sound like preparation, but often it places a quiet burden on her shoulders. It tells her that her value is tied to how well she can serve others. But a child, especially a girl, does not need to be trained only for a future role in someone else's home. She needs to be prepared for her own life. To stand on her own feet. To make choices, to be independent, and to feel confident that she can manage life not because she has to, but because she can.

And when we tell children, Help your mother, it sounds like a good lesson. But hidden in it is the idea that responsibility belongs to one person, and others are just assistants. Over time, this creates an imbalance. One person carries the load, while others step in only when asked.

What if instead, we raise children with a different understanding?

Not helping, but owning.

Not doing tasks for someone else, but taking responsibility for their own space, their own habits, their own life.

Because the goal of parenting is not to raise children who wait to be told what to do. The goal is to raise individuals

who see what needs to be done and take responsibility without being reminded.

When both boys and girls grow up learning the same life skills, something powerful happens. They don't grow into adults who expect service. They grow into partners who understand effort. They don't enter relationships looking for someone to complete them. They enter relationships ready to share, support, and respect each other.

This shift is not about teaching chores. It is about teaching dignity in work, equality in responsibility, and confidence in independence.

This is not about helping someone.

This is about building responsibility from within.

Why This Matters More Than Ever

Let's be honest. When responsibilities are not shared, it leads to:

Frustration

Emotional distance

Constant conflict

And over time, these small issues can become bigger problems.Many relationships today struggle not because of lack of love, but because of lack of shared responsibility and understanding.

Co-parenting is not just about raising a child together.

It is about raising a child with

Shared values

Mutual respect

Emotional awareness

Even when it's hard , even when you disagree

You come back to one question: **What are we teaching our child through this?**

Small Changes That Create Big Impact

1. Involve Both Children in Daily Tasks

Make it normal, not special. Not a punishment, just part of life.

2. Model Partnership at Home

Let your child see:

- A father participating
- A mother leading
- Both supporting each other

Because children copy what they see.

3. Avoid Gender-Based Statements

Stop saying:

- Boys don't do this
- Girls should do this

Replace it with:

This is something everyone should learn.

4. Talk About Real Life

Prepare them for the future.

Tell them: Life becomes easier when we support each other.

Ask yourself honestly:

Am I preparing my child for real life

or just for traditional roles?

Because roles may change. But life always demands responsibility. If you want your child to build a strong and peaceful family in the future, start preparing them today.

Teach them:

Respect is mutual

Responsibilities are shared

Support is love in action

Because a successful relationship is not about who does more? It is about how well two people stand together. Always remember, the environment you create at home today becomes the foundation of your child's relationships tomorrow.

Chapter 6

Healing Generational Hurt – How to Stop Passing Down Trauma

This is for every parent who loves their child deeply but sometimes feels lost, unheard, or stuck in old patterns. The truth is we're all trying our best, but many of us are parenting with emotional baggage we didn't even know we carried. And without realizing it, we might be passing down hurt instead of healing.

Let's talk about how to stop this cycle.

WHY IS THERE A GAP BETWEEN US AND OUR TEENS?

Let's be honest — today's teens are growing up in a completely different world than we did.

When we were their age, we communicated through landlines, letters, and landline missed calls. Today, it's all about Snapchat, reels, and ChatGPT! That's not just a generation gap it's a *digital divide*. And it goes deeper than just tech.

Here are the **3 main reasons** this parenting gap exists:

1. The Pace of Change

The world is evolving faster than ever. Teens are exposed to mental health issues, world news, gender identity, and emotional wellbeing at an early age. They grow up with influencers, fast trends, and constant comparison — things we never had to face in our childhood.

2. Parenting Styles Have Shifted

Most of us were raised with Because I said so and Don't argue with elders. Obedience was the rule.

But today's teens want respect, not just rules. They're not being rebellious — they're asking to be heard, seen, and understood.

3. Emotional Awareness

Our teens are more emotionally aware than we were. They talk about anxiety, burnout, safe spaces, and boundaries — but we often don't have the tools or vocabulary to support them. We weren't taught how to express emotions, so we sometimes shut theirs down.

And When This Gap Isn't Addressed

- Teens feel **lonely**, even in a full house.
- They **withdraw** or **rebel**, trying to create space.
- The **trust breaks down** — and that's the most painful part.

But the good news? We can **repair** this. Not perfectly, but mindfully.

HOW TO BRIDGE THE GAP AND STOP PASSING DOWN HURT

Here are **5 powerful steps** you can take to start healing — for your child *and* for yourself.

1. Self-Reflection Before Correction

Before you react or correct your child, ask yourself:

Am I parenting from my past or from their present?

Are you triggered because of how *you* were raised? Are you projecting your fears? Pause. Take a breath. Reflect.

Respond from a calm place. Don't *react* from old pain.

2. Practice 'Active Curiosity'

Instead of judging your teen's choices or interests — get curious.

Instead of saying, Why are you always on Instagram scrolling useless reels?, try:

Hey, what do you enjoy watching? Can you show me one?

Or act like you don't know: I have no idea what this trend is can you explain it?

You shift from judgment to genuine interest. This builds connection and trust.

3. Learn Their Emotional Language

Teens use a whole new language and I'm not just talking about slang.

They talk about Boundaries, Energy drains, Safe spaces, Emotional overwhelm

Instead of brushing it off, say:

Tell me more.

Help me understand what you mean.

I may not fully get it, but I'm here for you.

You don't have to agree with everything. But **listening** is the first step to understanding.

4. Create 'Bridge Moments'

Life is busy, we get it. But connection doesn't take hours.

Even **15 minutes a day** can change your relationship.

Try simple rituals like:

- A **night talk** before bed: What was the best part of your day?

- **Tech-free dinners** — no phones, just food and conversations.
- A **monthly coffee or movie date** — just you and your teen.

These casual moments create deep bonding. They make your child feel safe — and seen.

5. Empower, Don't Just Instruct

We often fall into the loop of:

- You should study more.
- Why can't you be like XYZ?
- Do this, not that.

But today's teens don't want to be ordered. They want to collaborate.

Try this instead:

What would help you focus better this week?

Which topic are you struggling with? Can I help?

I believe in you — how can I support you?

When you **shift** from ***commanding*** to ***collaborating,*** your child opens up. And **healing** begins.

Dear parent, you are not failing. You're **healing** one step at a time.You don't need to be perfect. You just need to be ***present, curious*** and ***willing*** *to* ***grow.***

So next time you feel triggered — **Pause. Reflect. Connect.** Because every small change you make today can stop the cycle of hurt and start a cycle of love.

Chapter 7

Love, Respect, and Boundaries: What Healthy Relationships Teach Kids

Parents today are often raising a single child and giving them everything.

Every demand is fulfilled.

Every wish is met.

Every discomfort is removed.

If the child asks, it is given.

Now **pause** and ask yourself honestly:

Is this really right?

Where are we going with this?

What kind of future generation are we creating?

Yes, loving your child is important. Very important. But there is a truth we cannot ignore

Love without boundaries creates confusion, not strength.

When Love Turns Into Overgiving

Many parents believe:

If I give my child everything, they will feel loved.

But what happens in reality?

The child starts believing: I should get what I want , when I want.

There is no waiting.

No effort.

No understanding of limits.

And slowly, love turns into entitlement.

But do you know we are missing something?

What Are We Missing?

We are teaching children how to receive but not how to handle life.

We are protecting them from discomfort but not preparing them for reality. And life, outside your home, will not adjust to them.

The Three Pillars Every Child Needs

To build a strong child, three things must go together:

Love

Respect

Boundaries

If even one is missing, the balance breaks.

1. Love: The Foundation

Every child needs to feel loved. Safe. Accepted.

Love tells them: You matter. You are valued.

But love does not mean saying yes to everything.

Real love also says: I care enough to guide you.

2. Respect: The Mirror

Children learn respect not from lectures but from how they are treated.

If you listen to them, they learn to listen.

If you speak calmly, they learn to communicate calmly.

But respect is not one-sided. Respect also means teaching them to value others, time, effort, and boundaries.

3. Boundaries: The Structure

This is where most parents struggle.

They think:

If I say no, my child will feel bad.

So they avoid it.

But the truth is, boundaries **don't hurt children. They protect them.**

Without boundaries, a child feels:

- No limits
- No structure
- No understanding of right and wrong

And that creates insecurity.

Let us take an example that a child demands a toy in the store.

You say no. They cry, shout, throw a tantrum.

What do many parents do? They give in.

Because they feel embarrassed or tired

or guilty.

But what did the child learn?

If I push harder, I will get what I want.

Now imagine this pattern in the future in friendships, relationships, workplaces.

What message you have given that show tantrum you will get. This is what your child is understanding. Instead of this set some boundaries No means Complete sentence.

What Happens When Boundaries Are Missing?

The child may grow up:

- Struggling with rejection
- Expecting constant approval
- Unable to handle no
- Becoming emotionally dependent

Because they were never taught limits.

Healthy Love Looks Different

Healthy love says:

I love you, but I won't give you everything.

I care for you, but I will also guide you.

I respect you, but I expect responsibility too.

How to Balance Love and Boundaries (The Reality Parents Need to Hear)

Let's be honest for a moment.

When your child asks for something

and you say no

What do you feel inside?

Guilt.

Doubt.

A small voice that says—

Am I being too strict?

So what do we do?

We give in.

We say yes even when we don't want to.

Because we think—

This is love.

But is it really?

Or are we just trying to avoid discomfort—

the child's and our own?

The Truth We Often Ignore

Love is not just about making your child happy in the moment.

Love is about preparing them for life.

And life will not always say yes.

If your child never hears no at home

the world will teach it to them later—

in a much harder way.

So the real question is:

Do you want to protect your child from discomfort today

or prepare them for reality tomorrow?

1. Learn to Say No Without Guilt

Saying no feels uncomfortable.

Your child may cry.

They may get upset.

And you may feel like you've hurt them.

But listen carefully—

Saying no is not rejection.

It is direction.

When you say no with love,

you are teaching your child:

- Not everything is instant
- Not everything is possible
- Not everything is necessary

You are building patience.

You are building emotional strength.

So next time, instead of feeling guilty, remind yourself:

I am not hurting my child I am preparing them.

2. Be Calm, Not Harsh

Many parents think boundaries mean strictness.

So they say no with anger.

With a loud voice.

With frustration.

And then the child doesn't learn the boundary

they only feel fear.

But boundaries don't need anger.

They need clarity and calmness.

Imagine this:

Your child asks for something.

You look at them and say gently—

I understand you want this but the answer is no.

No shouting.

No explanation overload.

Just calm clarity.

What happens then?

The child may still feel upset

but they also feel safe.

Because your tone says—

I am here for you even when I say no.

3. Be Consistent (This Is Where Most Parents Struggle)

One day you say no.

The next day, you say yes to the same thing.

What does the child learn?

If I insist more I will get it.

So they push harder.

Cry louder.

Test more.

Not because they are difficult—

but because they are trying to understand the rule.

Consistency gives them clarity.

When your no remains no

they stop testing.

And more importantly—

they start trusting your words.

4. Teach Effort and Value

Today, children are getting things too easily.

And when something comes too easily

it is not valued.

Think about it—

The toy you worked hard for as a child

you still remember it.

Why?

Because effort creates connection.

So instead of giving everything instantly:

Let them wait

Let them earn

Let them appreciate

This doesn't make life hard for them, it makes them stronger for life.

They learn:

- Patience
- Gratitude
- Responsibility

And these are real life skills.

5. Model Respect in Your Own Relationships

Children don't learn from what you say.

They learn from what you live.

If they see:

- Respect between parents
- Calm conversations
- Clear boundaries

They will naturally copy it.

But if they see:

- Disrespect
- Constant giving in
- No limits

That becomes their normal.

One day, they will carry the same pattern

into their own relationships.

So ask yourself:

What kind of relationship am I modeling right now?

Because that is what your child is learning.

One day, your child will step into the real world.

And in that world:

Not everyone will say yes

Not everything will go their way

Not every situation will be easy

But if you have taught them:

How to handle no

How to wait

How to respect limits

Then they won't break.

They will stand strong.

A Question for Every Parent

Ask yourself:

Am I raising a child who can handle life

or a child who expects life to adjust to them?

Your answer matters.

Your child does not need everything.

They need:

Love to feel secure

Respect to feel valued

Boundaries to grow strong

Because a child who grows up with all threeBecomes confident, emotionally balanced and capable of building healthy relationships.

Remember

Love makes them feel safe

Boundaries make them strong

And together they prepare your child for life

Chapter 8

The Power of Repair: Why Apologizing in Front of Kids Matters

The strongest families are not the ones who never hurt each other. They are the ones who never stop finding their way back to one another. In every sincere apology and every heartfelt repair, a child learns that love is stronger than mistakes.

Kashish Sandhu

Many parents believe that being a good parent means never making mistakes. They try to appear perfect in front of their children, thinking that admitting fault will reduce their authority.

The truth is exactly the opposite.

Children don't need perfect parents.

They need parents who know how to repair.

One sincere apology can teach more about love, respect, humility, and emotional intelligence than a hundred lectures.

Every Parent Makes Mistakes

Let's be honest.

You will lose your temper.

You will shout.

You will misunderstand your child.

You will react when you wanted to respond.

You will have stressful days.

You are human.

The goal of parenting isn't perfection.

The goal is connection.

Children are surprisingly forgiving. What hurts them most isn't the mistake—it is when the mistake is ignored, denied, or repeated without acknowledgment.

What Is Emotional Repair?

Repair means coming back after conflict and rebuilding emotional safety.

It sounds like this:

I'm sorry I shouted.

I was frustrated, but yelling wasn't the right way to handle it.

You didn't deserve to be spoken to that way.

Can we start again?

Repair tells a child:

Our relationship is more important than my ego.

Why Parents Avoid Apologizing

Many adults grew up in homes where parents never apologized.

Some believe:

- Parents should never look weak.
- Children will stop respecting me.
- If I apologize, they'll think they were right.
- I'm an adult. They should apologize first.

These beliefs often come from our own childhood experiences.

But healthy parenting isn't about protecting our pride.

It's about protecting our relationship with our child.

What Children Learn When Parents Apologize

Children don't only hear the apology.

They absorb the lesson behind it.

They learn that:

- Everyone makes mistakes.
- Taking responsibility is a strength.
- Love doesn't disappear after conflict.
- Relationships can heal.
- Saying sorry doesn't make you weak.
- Respect goes both ways.

These lessons shape how they will treat their friends, teachers, future partners, and eventually their own children.

The Damage of Never Repairing

Imagine a child hears:

Stop crying.

It wasn't that bad.

I didn't yell.

You're too sensitive.

The child begins questioning their own feelings.

Over time, they may think:

Maybe my emotions don't matter.

Maybe love means accepting hurt.

Maybe powerful people never admit mistakes.

Without repair, emotional wounds quietly grow.

Children don't simply forget painful moments.

They carry the meaning they attach to them.

A Simple Story

Eight-year-old Aarav accidentally spilled juice on the carpet.

His father had a stressful day at work.

He exploded.

What is wrong with you? Can't you do anything properly?

Aarav froze.

He quietly cleaned the mess and went to his room.

Later that evening, his father reflected on what had happened.

He knocked on Aarav's door.

He sat beside him and said,

I'm sorry for shouting. I was angry because of my work, not because of you. You made a mistake, but I handled it badly. Next time I'll try to stay calm.

Aarav hugged him.

The spilled juice was forgotten.

The apology was remembered.

Years later, Aarav became known among his friends as someone who always admitted when he was wrong.

Children imitate what they experience.

Repair Doesn't Erase Boundaries

Some parents worry:

If I apologize, my child won't learn discipline.

Actually, repair and discipline work beautifully together.

You can say

Throwing toys isn't okay.

But shouting at you wasn't okay either.

Both things can be true.

Children learn accountability when everyone in the family—including parents—accepts responsibility for their actions.

What a Meaningful Apology Looks Like

A meaningful apology is not just saying the words **I'm sorry.** It is helping your child feel seen, heard, and emotionally safe again. An apology should heal the heart before it ends the conversation.

1. Acknowledge what happened.

I shouted at you.

Be specific about your actions. Don't pretend nothing happened or hope your child will simply forget. Children know when they've been hurt. Naming your mistake tells them, *I see what happened, and I'm not ignoring your feelings.*

2. Take responsibility.

That was my mistake.

Own your behavior without shifting the blame. It takes courage to admit when you've made the wrong choice. Ironically, this doesn't make you look weaker in your child's eyes—it makes you more trustworthy. A parent who takes responsibility teaches a child that accountability is a sign of strength, not failure.

3. Validate your child's feelings.

I understand that it scared and hurt you.

Your child doesn't just need to hear that you're sorry; they need to know that their emotions matter. When you acknowledge their feelings, you tell them, *Your pain is real, and I care about it.* This simple act builds emotional security and encourages your child to express their feelings instead of hiding them.

4. Commit to doing better.

I'll try to speak more calmly next time.

An apology without change is only a promise. Let your child know that you're learning too. They don't expect perfection—they simply need to see that you're making an effort. Every attempt to improve teaches them that growth is a lifelong journey for everyone, including adults.

Now, notice what's **not** part of a healthy apology.

No excuses.

I'm sorry, but I had a stressful day.

No blaming.

You made me so angry.

No but you

I'm sorry, but if you had listened

The moment we add **but,** we begin taking back the apology.

A genuine apology doesn't ask your child to carry part of the blame for your behavior. It doesn't minimize their hurt or justify your actions.

Instead, it simply says:

I hurt you.

I'm sorry.

You didn't deserve that.

I will do my best to be better.

These words may seem small, but they leave a lasting imprint on a child's heart.

Children rarely remember every toy you bought or every lesson you taught. But they will remember how safe they felt coming back to you after a difficult moment.

A real apology doesn't defend itself. It doesn't protect pride. It protects the relationship.

And that is where true healing begins.

When Parents Apologize to Each Other

Children learn even more when they see parents repairing their relationship.

Imagine this conversation:

I'm sorry I interrupted you.

I shouldn't have spoken so harshly.

Thank you for forgiving me.

Your child quietly watches.

Without realizing it, they are learning:

This is what respect looks like.

This is what healthy love looks like.

This is how conflicts end.

These lessons stay with them for life.

Repair Is More Powerful Than Perfection

Research consistently shows that secure relationships are not built by avoiding conflict but by repairing it well.

No family is free from disagreements.

The happiest families are not the ones who never argue.

They are the ones who know how to reconnect afterward.

Every repair strengthens trust.

Every apology rebuilds safety.

Every moment of humility teaches emotional maturity.

Practical Ways to Practice Repair

Try these simple habits:

- Pause before reacting when emotions are high.
- If you lose control, return and apologize as soon as possible.
- Use your child's name and maintain gentle eye contact.
- Avoid saying, I'm sorry, but
- Encourage every family member to take responsibility for mistakes.
- End difficult conversations with reassurance: I love you, and we're okay.

Small repairs made consistently create lifelong emotional security.

Reflection Questions

Take a few moments to reflect:

- Did your parents apologize to you when you were growing up?
- How did that affect your view of mistakes?
- Do you find it difficult to say sorry to your child?
- What belief is holding you back?
- What is one repair you can make today?

Healing often begins with one honest conversation.

Children don't expect perfect parents.

They hope for emotionally safe ones.

Every apology teaches courage.

Every repair builds trust.

Every moment of humility becomes a lesson your child will carry into adulthood.

Remember:

Your child may forget the argument.

But they will never forget how you made them feel afterward.

And sometimes, the most powerful words a parent can say are simply:

I was wrong. I'm sorry. Let's try again together.

Children learn that love is safe when they see that mistakes don't end relationships—they become opportunities to strengthen them.

The deepest lesson a child can learn is not that parents are perfect, but that love is strong enough to heal after mistakes.

When you say 'I'm sorry' to your child, you're not losing authority—you're teaching them empathy, accountability, and the courage to repair a relationship. **-Kashish Sandhu**

Chapter 9

Fathers, Mothers & Emotional Roles

A child doesn't need a perfect mother or a perfect father. They need parents who create a home where love is felt, emotions are respected, and every heart has a safe place to belong.

For generations, society has given parents different emotional roles.

The mother is expected to be nurturing, gentle, and endlessly patient.

The father is expected to be strong, logical, and emotionally reserved.

Many of us grew up believing these roles were normal.

But children don't see labels.

They don't think, This comfort belongs to my mother. Or, This encouragement belongs to my father.

They simply experience love—or the absence of it.

To a child, both parents become mirrors through which they learn who they are, how relationships work, and what love should feel like.

Children Need Both Emotional Safety and Emotional Strength

A healthy family isn't created because one parent is soft and the other is strict.

It is created when both parents provide two essential gifts:

Emotional Safety—the confidence that I am loved even when I make mistakes.

Emotional Strength—the belief that I am capable of facing challenges because someone believes in me.

Children flourish when they experience both.

Sometimes a mother provides these gifts.

Sometimes a father does.

Most often, they work together.

The Gentle Power of a Mother

A mother's love is often a child's first experience of emotional connection.

Her voice becomes familiar before birth.

Her touch teaches comfort.

Her smile becomes the child's first definition of acceptance.

When a mother listens without judgment, a child learns,

My feelings matter.

When she comforts after failure, the child learns,

I don't have to be perfect to be loved.

Her warmth becomes the foundation upon which confidence quietly grows.

The Quiet Strength of a Father

A father's emotional presence carries its own unique influence.

A father who listens carefully tells his child,

Your thoughts deserve my attention.

A father who hugs his child after disappointment says,

Being strong doesn't mean hiding your feelings.

A father who apologizes teaches,

Real courage begins with humility.

Children don't simply need fathers who provide financially.

They need fathers who provide emotionally.

Sometimes the strongest thing a father can say is,

I'm proud of you.

Or even,

I understand how you feel.

When Emotional Roles Become Stereotypes

Many fathers were taught,

Men don't cry.

Many mothers were taught,

A good mother sacrifices everything.

These beliefs silently shape parenting.

A father may struggle to express affection because no one expressed it to him.

A mother may carry overwhelming guilt whenever she chooses herself.

Children notice these patterns.

They learn whether emotions are welcomed or hidden.

Whether vulnerability is accepted or criticized.

Whether love is spoken or merely assumed.

Breaking these patterns is one of the greatest gifts parents can give the next generation.

Children Need Emotionally Available Parents

Children don't count how many hours you worked.

They remember how present you were when you were with them.

They remember eye contact.

They remember bedtime stories.

They remember hugs after hard days.

They remember whether home felt emotionally safe.

A child who feels emotionally connected rarely remembers expensive gifts.

But they never forget feeling truly seen.

A Story of Two Fathers

Two fathers loved their children deeply.

The first worked tirelessly, believing love meant providing everything money could buy.

The second also worked hard.

But every evening, before checking his phone, he spent fifteen minutes sitting on the floor with his daughter.

They laughed.

They talked.

Sometimes they said nothing at all.

Years later, both daughters remembered their fathers.

One remembered the gifts.

The other remembered the presence.

Guess which memory shaped her confidence more.

Children spell love differently than adults.

Adults often spell it **S-U-C-C-E-S-S.**

S – Salary

U – Upgrades

C – Career

C – Comfort

E – Excellence

S – Status

S – Security

Children spell it **T-I-M-E.**

T – Talking

I – Interest

M – Memories

E – Encouragement

What happens when children don't find TIME at home?

They begin looking for it somewhere else.

When they don't find **talking**, they start talking to strangers who are willing to listen.

When they don't receive **interest**, they seek attention through behavior, social media, or the wrong company.

When they don't create **memories** with family, they create them with whoever makes them feel accepted—even if those people don't have their best interests at heart.

When they don't receive **encouragement**, they begin searching for validation from friends, influencers, partners, or anyone who tells them, *You matter.*

Children don't stop needing connection.

They simply change where they look for it.

The greatest danger isn't that your child will become independent too soon.

The greatest danger is that they may become emotionally dependent on people who don't truly care for them.

Your child's first choice should always be home.

Not because they are forced to come back—but because home is where they feel understood, accepted, and emotionally safe.

When Parents Support Each Other Emotionally

One of the greatest gifts parents can give a child is respecting one another.

When children hear,

Thank you.

I appreciate you.

I'm sorry

How can I help?

They aren't just witnessing a conversation.

They are receiving a masterclass in healthy relationships.

Every respectful interaction becomes a silent lesson that they carry into adulthood.

Remember, children who are emotionally connected at home are far less likely to seek emotional security in unsafe places.

Because every child is asking the same silent question:

Is there someone who has time for me?

Make sure the answer is **yes**.

"The greatest gift a mother and father can give their child is not a perfect childhood—it is the confidence that they

are deeply loved, completely accepted, and never alone. Kashish Sandhu

Emotional Partnership Matters More Than Perfect Parenting

Children don't need one perfect parent.

They need two adults who are willing to learn, grow, and support each other.

If one parent is struggling, the other can offer strength.

If one makes a mistake, the other can choose compassion instead of criticism.

Parenting isn't about keeping score.

It's about working as a team.

Because when parents compete, children feel divided.

When parents cooperate, children feel secure.

Dear parents , Ask yourself:

- Does my child feel emotionally safe with both parents?
- Do we express affection openly in our home?
- What emotional messages did I learn from my own parents?
- Which unhealthy pattern ends with me?
- What is one small change I can make this week to become more emotionally available?

Remember, children don't need flawless parents.

They need emotionally present ones.

A mother's love gives a child roots.

A father's love gives a child wings.

But when both parents create a home filled with respect, kindness, and emotional safety, they give their child something even greater—

The confidence to face the world while always knowing there is a safe place to come home to.

Because in the end, children may forget many of the words their parents spoke.

But they will never forget how their parents made them feel.

And those feelings become the blueprint for every relationship they build for the rest of their lives.

"Mother gives the heart its warmth. Father gives the wings their courage. Together, they shape the emotional world a child carries for life." Kashish Sandhu

Chapter 10

Raising Emotionally Strong Kids Starts with You

The greatest gift you can give your child is not a perfect life – it is the example of a parent who is willing to grow. – ***Kashish Sandhu***

Every parent dreams of raising a child who is confident, kind, resilient, and emotionally strong.

We want our children to stand up for themselves without becoming arrogant.

To express their feelings without being controlled by them.

To recover from failures without losing hope.

To build healthy relationships and make wise decisions.

We want them to grow into adults who are secure in who they are.

But here's the question we rarely ask ourselves:

Where does emotional strength come from?

Many parents believe it comes from good schools, extracurricular activities, expensive opportunities, or motivational books.

Those things can help.

But emotional strength has a much deeper foundation.

It begins at home.

And even more importantly

It begins with you.

Children Learn More from Who We Are Than What We Say

Parents often spend years teaching children what to do.

Be kind.

Tell the truth.

Control your anger.

Respect others.

But children aren't only listening.

They are watching.

They notice how you react when life doesn't go your way.

They observe how you speak to your spouse.

How you treat the waiter at a restaurant.

How you respond when someone disappoints you.

How you handle failure.

How you manage stress.

Whether you apologize.

Whether you forgive.

Whether you speak kindly to yourself.

Your child is learning long before you begin teaching.

Because your life is their first textbook.

"Your life is your child's first textbook. Before they learn emotional strength from your words, they learn it from the way you live." — Kashish Sandhu

Before You Correct Your Child, Reflect on Yourself

When a child lies, ask yourself,

Am I creating a home where truth feels safe?

When a child shouts, ask,

How often do they hear shouting from me?

When a child struggles to regulate emotions, ask,

How do I regulate mine?

This isn't about blaming yourself.

It is about recognizing your influence.

Children don't become emotionally strong because their parents are perfect.

They become emotionally strong because their parents are self-aware.

You Cannot Pour from an Empty Cup

Many parents spend all their energy taking care of everyone else.

The children.

The home.

The job.

The family.

The responsibilities.

Somewhere along the way, they stop taking care of themselves.

An exhausted parent often becomes an impatient parent.

A stressed parent may unintentionally become a reactive parent.

A parent carrying unhealed emotional wounds may unknowingly pass those wounds to the next generation.

Taking care of yourself isn't selfish.

It is one of the most loving things you can do for your child.

Because children don't just inherit your eye color.

They often inherit your emotional habits.

Healing Yourself Is a Gift to Your Child

Perhaps you grew up in a home where:

No one apologized.

Feelings were ignored.

Affection was rare.

Mistakes were punished harshly.

Love felt conditional.

If that's your story, you may sometimes find yourself parenting from old wounds instead of present wisdom.

But your past does not have to become your child's future.

Every time you pause before reacting

Every time you choose connection over control

Every time you replace criticism with curiosity

You break a cycle.

And every broken unhealthy cycle becomes a new legacy.

Emotional Strength Is Built in Everyday Moments

It isn't created during one big conversation.

It grows in ordinary moments.

When you listen without interrupting.

When you admit you're wrong.

When you laugh together.

When you hug after an argument.

When you encourage effort instead of demanding perfection.

When your child feels safe enough to say,

I made a mistake.

These small moments become the emotional bricks that build a resilient heart.

Your Child Doesn't Need a Perfect Parent

Many parents carry a heavy burden.

I should have done better.

I shouldn't have shouted.

I've already made too many mistakes.

The truth is this:

Every parent makes mistakes.

What children remember most isn't whether you were perfect.

They remember whether you came back.

Whether you listened.

Whether you repaired it.

Whether you kept choosing love.

Perfection creates pressure.

Authenticity creates connection.

Your child doesn't need to see a flawless parent.

They need to see a growing one.

Imagine Twenty Years from Now

Close your eyes for a moment.

Imagine your child as an adult.

They face disappointment.

Will they know how to calm themselves?

Someone disagrees with them.

Will they respond with respect?

Their relationship goes through conflict.

Will they know how to repair it?

Life becomes difficult.

Will they believe they are strong enough to keep going?

The answers to those questions are being written today.

Not in grand speeches.

But in your daily interactions.

Every bedtime conversation.

Every apology.

Every hug.

Every moment of patience.

Every moment you choose love over fear.

"Your past does not have to become your child's future. Every time you choose connection over control, you break a cycle and create a new legacy." — Kashish Sandhu

Five Daily Habits That Build Emotionally Strong Children

You don't need to transform your parenting overnight.

Start with these simple habits:

1. **Listen more than you lecture.** Let your child finish speaking before offering advice.
2. **Model emotional regulation.** Show them what calming down looks like instead of only telling them to calm down.
3. **Apologize when you make mistakes.** Your humility teaches more than your authority ever could.
4. **Celebrate effort, not just achievement.** Praise persistence, kindness, honesty, and courage—not only results.
5. **Make time for connection every day.** Even ten minutes of undivided attention can strengthen your child's sense of security.

Small habits, repeated consistently, create extraordinary outcomes.

Before you finish this chapter, ask yourself:

- What emotional habits am I passing on to my child?
- What patterns from my own childhood do I want to keep?
- Which patterns end with me?
- What kind of adult do I hope my child becomes?
- What can I model today that will help shape that future?

Remember, every day is another opportunity to become the parent your child needs—not through perfection, but through presence.

"Children don't become emotionally strong because their parents are perfect. They become strong because they see their parents being self-aware, taking responsibility, and growing." — Kashish Sandhu

A Thought to Carry Forward

Children do not become emotionally strong because life is easy.

They become emotionally strong because they grow beside adults who show them how to face life with courage, kindness, humility, and hope.

Your child will learn how to love by watching you love.

They will learn how to forgive by watching you forgive.

They will learn how to recover from failure by watching you rise after your own mistakes.

One day, long after the toys are gone and the school years have passed, your child may not remember every rule you made or every lesson you taught.

But they will remember the feeling of growing up with someone who believed in them, listened to them, and loved them enough to keep growing alongside them.

That is the true legacy of parenting.

Not raising perfect children.

But raising emotionally strong human beings who know they are worthy of love, capable of resilience, and never alone.

The most powerful way to change your child's future is to become the example you hope they will one day follow. When you heal, grow, and lead with love, your child doesn't just hear your lessons—they live them. — Kashish Sandhu

Where Did This Idea Come From?

In **Chapter 9**, I said:

Children spell love differently than adults.

Adults often spell it:

S – Salary

U – Upgrades

C – Career

C – Comfort

E – Excellence

S – Status

S – Security

But children spell it:

T – Time — Talking

I – Interest — Being interested in their world

M – Memories — Creating memories together

E – Encouragement — Helping them believe in themselves

But this raises an important question:

How did we, as adults, begin measuring love through success, achievement, security, discipline, and productivity?

The answer takes us back more than a century—to a time when society itself was changing.

When Parenting Became a Science

During the Industrial Revolution, work became increasingly organized around factories, offices, shifts, schedules, productivity, and efficiency.

And gradually, those ideas began entering the home.

Parenting started becoming something that could be **measured, scheduled, controlled, and scientifically managed.**

One influential figure was **Dr. Luther Emmett Holt**, whose 1894 book *The Care and Feeding of Children* became an important childcare guide in the United States.

Holt approached infant care from the medical knowledge of his time and advocated structured approaches to feeding, sleeping, and managing crying. His work contributed to the growing belief that babies could—and should—be trained into predictable routines.

Then came **Dr. John B. Watson**, one of the leading figures of behaviourism.

In his 1928 book *Psychological Care of Infant and Child*, Watson promoted a highly controlled approach to child-caring and warned parents against excessive physical affection. He famously advocated a much more emotionally restrained relationship between parents and children.

The underlying message was powerful:

Behaviour could be shaped.

The environment could be controlled.

The child could be trained.

And the parent was expected to follow the method.

But What Happened to Connection?

This is where we need to pause.

When parenting becomes focused primarily on **behaviour, efficiency, obedience, and independence**, we can slowly forget that children are not machines.

A crying baby is not an interruption to productivity.

A child asking for attention is not necessarily being manipulative.

A teenager needing connection is not automatically being dependent.

Sometimes a child's behaviour is simply communication.

And sometimes what looks like bad behaviour is really saying:

I need you.

Over time, society became increasingly comfortable with the idea that a good parent should be able to control a child's behaviour.

But perhaps we asked the wrong question.

Instead of:

How do I make my child stop?

we could ask:

What is my child trying to tell me?

We Were Taught to Build Efficient Children

The problem was never structure itself.

Children need boundaries.

They need routines.

They need responsibility.

They need to learn independence.

But when **efficiency becomes more important than connection**, something begins to change.

The child becomes a schedule to manage.

The crying becomes a problem to solve.

The emotions become inconvenient.

The parent becomes a manager.

And the home begins to resemble a system designed for efficiency rather than a relationship designed for connection.

This is not an argument against science or structure.

It is a reminder that **science should help us understand children—not teach us to stop seeing them as human beings.**

Perhaps This Is Why Children Spell Love Differently

We work hard for our children because we love them.

We provide better schools.

We save for their future.

We worry about their careers.

We want them to be successful.

We want them to be secure.

All of this can absolutely come from love.

But children may experience love differently.

They may not remember the salary you earned.

They may remember that you sat beside them when they were scared.

They may not remember the upgrades you bought.

They may remember that you listened to their story.

They may not remember your status.

They may remember that you came to watch them perform.

They may not remember every achievement you celebrated.

They may remember that you encouraged them when they failed.

That is why I wrote:

Children spell love as T-I-M-E.

Because time says:

You matter to me.

And perhaps that is the question every parent should ask:

Am I only preparing my child for a successful life—or am I also giving them a childhood in which they feel deeply loved?

Because we were never meant to build a factory. We were meant to build a family.

We were never meant to raise children like machines—measuring their efficiency, controlling their behaviour, and scheduling their emotions. Children need connection before correction, relationship before rules, and love before performance. -Kashish Sandhu

Book Summary

What if the most important lessons your child learns are never spoken?

Children are always watching. Long before they understand our advice, they absorb our emotions, relationships, reactions, and behaviour. They notice how we speak to our spouse, handle stress, respond to mistakes, and treat ourselves. **They learn from what they live, not only from what we teach.**

Childhood Scars:The Silent Influence, How Parental Bonds Build or Break a Child explores how the emotional environment at home quietly shapes a child's confidence, self-worth, resilience, emotional security, and future relationships.

Through relatable stories, practical insights, and compassionate guidance, this book helps parents understand how everyday moments can become part of a child's emotional blueprint. It explores the impact of parental conflict, criticism, emotional distance, expectations, communication, and unresolved hurt—and shows how connection, empathy, respect, and emotional repair can transform family relationships.

Inside, you'll discover how to:

- Build a deeper emotional connection with your child.
- Create a home where children feel safe, valued, heard, and respected.
- Understand how your relationship with your partner influences your child.

- Replace fear-based parenting with connection and empathy.
- Teach emotional regulation by modelling it yourself.
- Use apologies and repair to strengthen trust.
- Help children develop self-worth beyond grades and achievements.
- Break unhealthy generational patterns.
- Raise emotionally confident and resilient children.

The book also challenges us to rethink what children truly need. Adults often spell love as **S – Salary, U – Upgrades, C – Career, C – Comfort, E – Excellence, S – Status, S – Security.** , while children often spell it **T-I-M-E—Talking, Interest, Memories, and Encouragement.**

Most importantly, this is not a book about perfect parenting. It is about **present parenting**.

Because it is never too late to reconnect, apologize, change a pattern, or begin again.

Your child may forget the things you bought or the achievements you celebrated. But they are far more likely to remember **how they felt when they were with you**.

You are not simply raising a child.

You are shaping the voice they will one day use to speak to themselves.

About the Book

What happens in childhood does not always stay in childhood.

A child's experiences at home can quietly shape the way they see themselves, understand love, build relationships, handle conflict, and respond to the world. Sometimes, what adults consider a small moment—a harsh word, being constantly compared, feeling unheard, witnessing repeated conflict, or never receiving an apology—can become a childhood scar.

These scars are not always visible. A child may grow up smiling, achieving, and appearing perfectly fine, while carrying feelings of rejection, insecurity, fear, or unworthiness deep inside.

I wrote this book because I was one of those children.

I know what it feels like to grow up carrying things you don't fully understand until you become an adult. And becoming a mother made me look at my own childhood differently. I began to understand that the patterns we experience as children can quietly influence the way we parent our own children.

But childhood scars are not inevitable.

Parents cannot avoid every mistake, conflict, or difficult moment. What matters is awareness, connection, and repair.

This book explores the silent ways parents influence their children—not only through what they say, but through what they model every day. It helps parents recognize patterns that may unintentionally hurt, understand what children emotionally need, and learn how to create a home where children feel safe, respected, heard, and loved.

My hope is not to make parents feel guilty.

It is to help them become aware before temporary moments become lifelong wounds.

Because we may not be able to change the childhood we had, but we can change the childhood we give our children.

About the Author

Kashish Sandhu is a Parenting Coach, **Certified Early Childhood Educator**, Montessori Educator, author, and devoted mother of two. She is passionate about helping parents raise emotionally secure, confident, and resilient children by strengthening one of the most powerful influences in a child's life—the **parent-child relationship**.

Raised in a loving yet disciplined family by parents who were teachers, Kashish developed a deep appreciation for education, values, responsibility, and lifelong learning. Her journey into motherhood transformed her understanding of parenting. She discovered that raising children is not simply about correcting behaviour—it is about nurturing emotional well-being, building trust, understanding feelings, and creating relationships that last a lifetime.

Driven by a desire to understand children more deeply, Kashish pursued professional training in **Early Childhood Education and Montessori philosophy**. By combining professional knowledge with real-life parenting experiences, she encourages parents to replace fear with understanding, punishment with guidance, and control with connection.

Kashish is the **Founder of Mindful Parenteen Circle**, a parenting community dedicated to empowering parents through coaching, workshops, educational programs, and practical resources. Her mission is to help families build stronger emotional bonds, healthier communication, and homes where children feel loved, respected, heard, and emotionally safe.

She is the author of:

- **Rise and Shine: The Story of a Girl Who Believed**

- **3 P Golden Tips for Easy Parenting**
- **Only for Girls: The Truth No One Told You About Growing Up**
- **Helping Your Child Handle Bullying with Confidence**
- **Childhood Scars: The Silent Influence: How Parental Bonds Build or Break a Child**

Childhood Scars is deeply personal to Kashish. Her understanding of childhood emotional experiences began not only through professional learning, but through her own childhood. She grew up in a loving yet disciplined home where emotions were not always openly discussed and children were often expected to be strong and resilient.

As an adult and mother, she began recognizing how childhood experiences can quietly influence confidence, relationships, self-worth, and parenting.

She has been that child.

Through her work, Kashish reminds parents that childhood scars do not have to become a lifelong inheritance. Parents cannot avoid every mistake, but they can **repair, apologize, listen, learn, and change**.

Because we may not be able to change the childhood we had.

But we can change the childhood we give our children.

Kashish Sandhu

Parenting Coach | Founder, Mindful Parenteen Circle | Certified Early Childhood Educator | Montessori Educator | Author