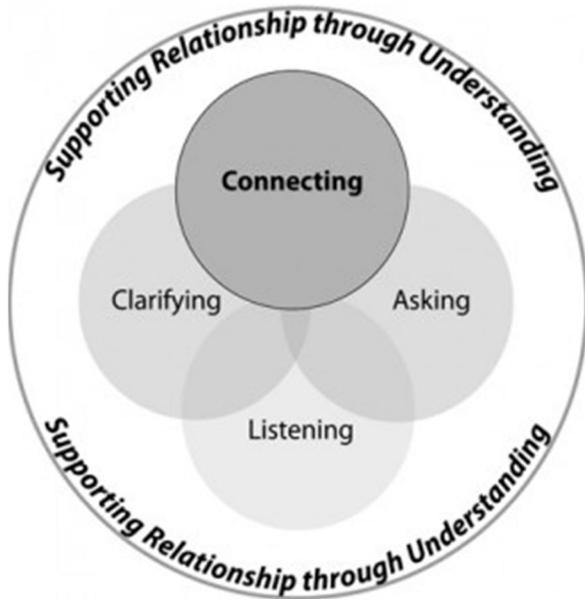


Four Principles for Connecting with Your Child by Gregory Bland

A relational connection with our child is essential to a healthy and productive parent coaching relationship. Without it, our conversations will be shallow, lack significance, and meaning. With it, our coaching conversations are more heart-felt, have depth, and greater significance. Connecting with our child may not be as complicated as one might initially think. Simply meeting them at their greatest point of interest is an incredible way to foster a healthy connection with our child.

The following are four simple principles for fostering an environment of connection with our children.



The **C.A.R.T.** principles of Connecting.

Consistency. Even if our children seem to be spontaneous and prefer to do things by the “seat of their pants”, they have an internal *need* for consistency from us as parents. Intentionally scheduling time together, establishing family traditions, giving them seasons of undivided attention, communicate their value to us and our commitment to them. In a world of uncertainty, consistency brings a sense of stability within the hearts of our children, and this is something they desperately need.

What are the regular rhythms within our family life that I could most naturally use to connect relationally with my child?

Availability. Just a few moments ago over the top of my laptop I heard a young voice whisper, “Dad, when would you have a moment to come and help me build the roller coaster. I am having trouble with one part and I think you could help me get this sorted out.” Today, I was able to immediately set aside time and help this young roller coaster builder. This was a wonderful moment of connection that served to let my son know I was available to him and truly required very little time or investment from me. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. There are moments when one of my children will ask for my time and availability but I must complete what I am currently focused upon prior to giving them my undivided attention. It is here we need to be creative, but also help our children discern the difference between when they absolutely need us now, and when they can wait until we are finished what we are doing to give them our undivided attention.

In what ways can I as a parent assure my child that I will be there when they need me?

Relevancy. It’s not just a matter of spending time together on a consistent basis; it’s how we spend time together that makes the difference. Being relevant is a way to communicate that we value and honor our child for who they are. We are willing to set aside our own agendas, preferences, desires, and meet them at their

greatest point of interest. Relevancy speaks of our willingness to engage in activities or conversation that is of interest to our child.

How can I ensure that the time we are spending together is relevant to my child?

Transparency, builds trust, and fosters openness in relationship, whereas secrecy builds suspicion and a relationship that is closed. It is a common belief among parents that we must have it 'all together' if our children are going to respect us, although the opposite is true. Our vulnerability in sharing our lives, the good, the bad, and the ugly, actually fosters health and strength within the relationship and our children grow in their respect for us.

In what ways can I risk being transparent with my child this week?

Creating an environment of connection with our child is relatively simple, although it requires intentionality on our part. Remember, if we want a healthy and productive parent coaching relationship with our child, the first place to begin is cultivating an environment in which connecting will be a natural part of our daily rhythms of life.

Until next time enjoy your journey into Pro-Active Parent Coaching,

Your friend and Pro-Active Parent Coach
Gregory Bland

Author of the 'newly released' [Pro-Active Parent Coaching: Capturing the Heart of Your Child](#)

**Gregory and Lynn Bland currently reside in beautiful Nova Scotia, Canada. They have recently completed writing a parenting book Pro-Active Parent Coaching: Capturing the Heart of Your Child, A Parent's Guide to Coaching. Additionally they are providing pastoral care, and participate in various speaking engagements. For more information visit [Pro-Active Parent Coaching](#) or write to greg@pro-activeparentcoaching.com.*

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