

Three Conversations Every Family Should Master

Wouldn't it be amazing to become a *super communicator* with your children?

Imagine fewer misunderstandings, less conflict, and deeper connection—all because we learned how to communicate in a way that really lands with our kids.

In a recent conversation on the *Happy Families Podcast*, I spoke with New York Times bestselling author and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **Charles Duhigg**, who shared a simple yet powerful framework that can help parents radically improve their conversations with their kids.

Here's what every parent needs to know—and how to use it at home.

The Conversations Kids Remember Most

Think back to your own childhood. What conversations do you *remember* with your parents?

I don't bet. But if I did, I'd put money on the fact that the ones you remember most weren't when they gave advice or solved problems. Instead, it was when they *listened*. When you felt seen, heard, and valued. When you did more of the talking and felt their steady, loving presence.

Our kids don't need us to lecture. They need us to connect.

The 3 Types of Conversations

Charles Duhigg outlines **three kinds of conversations** that occur in every relationship. When we don't realise which kind we're in, we can easily talk *past* each other, instead of *with* each other.

1. Practical Conversations

These are about solving problems. "How do I fix this?" or "What should I do next?"

2. Emotional Conversations

These are about feelings. "I'm frustrated." "This is hard." "I don't feel understood."

3. Social Conversations

These define relationships and identity. "Where do I belong?" "How do we relate to each other?"

Important: If you're having a *practical* conversation and your child wants an *emotional* one, the connection breaks down. You can't connect when you're not having the same conversation.

So, How Can Parents Get It Right?

Here are three practical, easy-to-implement strategies you can start using today:

1. Ask Before You Answer

Before jumping in with advice, ask:

- “What kind of help do you need right now?”
- “Do you want me to listen, or would you like some ideas?”
- “Do you want to be heard, helped, or hugged?”

This one step changes everything. It helps you offer what your child *actually needs*—not what you think they need.

2. Use the W.A.I.T. Principle

W.A.I.T. = **Why Am I Talking?**

When emotions are running high or your child opens up, resist the urge to fill the silence with advice, correction, or stories from your own childhood. Instead, listen. Give space. Ask gentle questions. Let *them* do the talking.

3. Focus on Connection, Not Control

Your child will remember conversations where they felt respected and empowered. Not the ones where you had all the answers.

Try:

- “Tell me more about that.”
- “How did that make you feel?”
- “What do you think you’ll do next?”

Treating our kids as thinking, feeling individuals helps them become just that—confident, thoughtful, emotionally intelligent humans.

Great communication in families isn’t about *talking more*—it’s about *talking better*.

When we slow down, tune in, and understand the kind of conversation we’re having, we build stronger, more connected relationships. And that’s something every child needs—not just to behave better, but to *feel* better.

Listen more. Ask better. Connect deeper. That’s the heart of super communication.

Try this at home tonight:

When your child tells you about their day, pause and ask: “Do you want me to just listen, do you want to hug, or would you like me to help?” You’ll be surprised by how much closer you feel—just by asking the right question..



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