**Examples: Emotion Coaching Reflective Log**

Examples 1-7 when the practitioner deemed Emotion Coaching was viewed to have been a success; examples 8-9 when the practitioner felt Emotion Coaching did not go as planned

| **Situation** | **Emotions I experienced** | **Emotions I thought the child was feeling** | **What I did** | **What aspects of EC were used in that moment** | **What did the child do** | **ReflectionsWhat did I learn about EC practice from this example?** |
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| 1. Megan: 2 year old child very upset and throwing Lego bricks, not wanting adults to approach her. | Anxious about how to help. Scared I might not know what to do.Embarrassed that she was reacting in this way.  | Frustrated. Confused. Scared. Angry. | I had a desire to connect with her. I did not want her to try and solve these big feelings on her own.Recalled that she felt soothed most when being rocked.Used my knowledge of mirror neurons and the child to provide comfort from a distance in a way she could access and that would be comforting for her. I did this by swaying from side to side, in silence, showing a calm soft facial expression with a furrowed brow to show worry and concern for her.  | Used knowledge of flipped lid (i.e. downstairs brain ‘survival’ mode and co-regulation to consider how I could connect with her and help her to cope with her big feelings Mirror neurons. Sympathetic nervous system activated (i.e. like the accelerator – the emotional reaction) and the parasympathetic nervous system helping to slow things down and putting the lid on (i.e. the break – the adult) helping the child to feel calm.  | Once a few minutes had elapsed she walked over to me, swaying from side to side, with her arms extended, ready for a cuddle. The mirror neurons had activated her swaying and ability to self-regulate after I, non-verbally co-regulated with her. | I was surprised that something like this could work and I was pleased that I had found a way to connect with her despite her resistance to do so. I reflected that my emotional stillness helped, but also felt that this gave me time to consider my options. I noticed that I could have left the room and let her attempt to self-soothe.I did not think that this would have resulted in such a calm and connected resolution.  |
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| 2. Joey: boy in Year 2, query over PDA or ODD. Did not do things if he didn’t want to. I was asked to complete a cognitive assessment with him. Part way through he left the room to stand in the hallway looking at the wall.  | Worried I had upset him by asking him to do the work. I had to ensure that I did not seek to have my own worries soothed by trying to get the child to show me that they were happy with this work. I had to avoid trying to ‘jolly him along.’ | Scared of the work/questions. Confused-might have felt that he could not do the work or did not understand what I was asking of him. Worried about getting things wrong.Feeling shameful about him abilities.Angry he was being asked to do the work.  | Used knowledge of fight, flight, freeze to conclude he was in flight mode. Used the relational aspect of EC to maintain safe physical proximity for him (and me). Stood next to him. When he was unable to respond to me verbally I viewed him as having flipped his lid and as being too emotionally dysregulated to particulate in the EC steps or even to use language. Decided to engage him in a game that would spark his curiosity and was physical so that he had opportunities to experiencing “grounding” sensations. “Did you know there was an invisible seat here?” I sat on an imaginary chair with my back pressed against the wall. When Joey turned around I was able to teach him how to do it. We then used our bodies to make shapes, but I added high levels of structure by saying if anyone came past we had to pull our legs in. He made shapes and I tried to copy him to give him a sense of feeling seen and felt.Then went through the EC steps (after 10 mins) and asked him if we could carry on with the work (I told him that if he needed a break then that wasn't a problem).  | Understood he had flipped his lid. Used ‘bottom up’ processing approach to consider sensory needs initially.Demonstrated care and compassion.Co-regulation and grounding.Focus on engagement with me opposed to the assessment. Limit setting to the game to ensure safety and structure. EC steps-providing my own problem solving solutions to help him feel safe. | Joey did not require a break. He completed the cognitive assessment and brought me some flowers he had picked to make into a perfume for me afterwards.  | The school staff were shocked that I had been able to get Joey to complete the assessment. They were more interested in EC as a result and this example was used in the school to help adults there appreciate the importance of connection before correction. In this instance connection and time in through games resulted in no need for the correction aspect. It made me reflect on why adults tend to lean towards correction and I reflected on whether correction was often more about punishment opposed to teaching different ways of coping. It made me think about the what, why and how of misbehaviour questions.  |
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| 3. Simon: Boy in a Year 4 class. I was observing him and sat next to him to say hello, with the intention of speaking to him about his work.After I said hello Simon moved as far away from me as possible, while remaining seated. His head almost touched the floor. | Panicked.Felt like I wanted to move away. | Scared.Anxious.Worried about speaking to a stranger. Possibly embarrassed about the difficulties he experienced in class.  | I used the steps of EC. I paused and considered why the child was doing this. I reflected that they were not being silly or obstructive but that they did not want to speak to a stranger since they appeared to feel worried or even scared. I said to the child “I can see you’re pulling your body as far away from me as possible and I’m wondering if you are worried about speaking to someone you don’t know? (Label) I know I would feel like that too if I was asked to speak to someone new (validation). I know when I meet new people I sometimes feel a funny feeling in my tummy (normalise). I don’t want to make you feel upset or worried so I’ll tell you what, I will sit here for one more minute. Then after that minute I will get up and go to the back of the room. If you don’t want me to go then just let me know by saying “wait” or grabbing my hand.”  | Considering my emotions and how the child might be feeling before I spoke. Then I used the EC steps, alongside providing attunement and connection by expressing a desire not to make the child uncomfortable, while also maintaining concern for how the child was feeling. Expressing that I could see the child’s behaviours and I did not discount these forms of communication, but responded to them.   | After one minute and I went to stand he grabbed my hand.  | I reflected on my need to manage my own emotions and avoid ‘selling’ myself and the work to children to try and convince them to work with me, but instead meet the child where they are and support them from that emotional place. Using silence and time to think about what the child was really feeling before acting. This gave me time to collect my thoughts and remember what aspects of EC I could use in that moment.  |
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| 4. Observation in a Year 2 class where the pupils were answering questions in carpet time and kept calling out. The adult became frustrated with this.  | Apprehensive about suggesting the teacher use EC in case it did not work, especially with a whole class.  | Children: excited to share their viewsAdult: irritated that the children were now following the rules of the classroom. | I took the teacher (who had received EC training) to one side and suggested she try labelling the children’s emotions as excited and that she then use the steps of EC to support the children to remember the rules. I modelled what I might say and the teacher said to the children “I know you are excited (label), I get excited to share my stories with people too. Sometimes it makes me feel all wiggly and like I just need to shout it out (validation/normalisation). But in this class we cannot shout out (limit setting) because the rule in our class is to put our hands up. So I want you to put your hands up if you have something to say and I will come to you.” | Labelling ValidationNormalisationLimit setting | The children put their hands up to answer questions.  | I was pleased to see it work so effectively.I noted that the teacher did not keep using this approach however, and I reflected that in order to use EC one needs to understand why it is different from direct instruction, while also understanding that it is likely to need repeating over time, in order for children to begin to think in this way for themselves eventually.I also wondered if the teacher did not want to view this as a successful interaction because it might have made her feel inadequate or uncomfortable in some way or perhaps she was at the point of such overwhelm with her class that their ability to sit still for 30 seconds was “too little too late” in her view.  |
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| 5. Observation of a Year 2 boy. Children walking to assembly – child stops in the corridor and turns to face the wall. Left standing alone and no other adults were around. | I felt really sad for this little boy as he looked so unhappy.I also felt unsure about why this may be difficult for him.  | Perhaps he was feeling anxious about going to assembly and frustrated that he was being asked to do something he didn’t want to do.Lonely. He might have felt scared. Probably felt sad that he was left to stand on his own for a short time.  | I kneeled down close to the child and said to him “you look a little bit sad standing in the corridor here, I wonder if you don’t want to go to assembly today?” (labelling) he stood and shook his head and said “*no! I hate assembly”* in a sad tone.I then said “*I am sorry to hear that. I know it can be difficult to do things that you don’t want to do sometimes. I know I find that difficult”* (validating)*.* He turned to look at me and look surprised that I was speaking in this way. I said “*I am wondering if I could come to assembly with you and you could maybe sit next to me?”* (problem solving?)He smiled and took my hand and walked into assembly.  | EC steps – initially helping to attune and connect with the child. Labelling the emotion, trying to help to soothe the nervous system.  | Recovered quickly – was able to go to assembly. Was able to cope for the whole time during assembly and sat close in proximity to me.  | The child seemed to feel safe within the connection we had made. He seemed able to trust me and to know that I understood how he was feeling and that sometimes school could be difficult with all the demands. I think he considered me to be on his side, rather than trying to jolly him along. It only took around 3-4 minutes and I was an unfamiliar adult. Following this interaction, I completed direct work with the child who made a disclosure about a traumatic house fire he had experienced and he told me about the nightmares. He had never told anyone about this in school before. After a whole day in the school we were able to unpick and make sense of some of the child’s behaviours which the staff found very helpful. I observed the teacher using a very different approach with the child when I left the school in comparison to when I saw her interactions with him at the beginning of the day which was interesting.  |
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| 6. Working with a 14 year old YP as part of the EHCP assessment process. I had met the YP before. She told me she was feeling angry about an incident where someone she knew had been stabbed in the local area. She initially seemed reluctant to talk to me. | Shocked. Worried for this YP as this was the reality in her local area.  | She said she felt angry. I also felt she was feeling worried/ anxious/ fearful about this situation and what this could mean for her, as well as concern for the person she knew who had been stabbed.  | I said “*Oh my goodness this must have been such a shock for you to hear this news?”* (empathising and labelling). She went on to say *“Miss I am so p\*\*ed off I can’t tell you! I mean how could they do that to him! They’re gonna get what they deserves you wait!”* I said “I understand that this must make you feel so angry as it feels so unfair doesn’t it?” She said “*yes Miss like proper angry!”*  I asked the YP where she could feel her anger as it was evident by her body language just how angry she felt. She was able to talk about this and tell me where she felt angry and how fast her heart was beating. I told her that I was pleased she was able to notice this and I asked her to put her hand on her chest and count how quickly her heart was beating. I then asked her to take a deep breath in and a really slow deep breath out and as she did she began to cry.  | EC steps – validation and empathy leading to increase in connection. Helping her to accept and acknowledge verbally various feelings. Not just anger – many other feelings beneath the surface.  | The child was able to have opportunities for safe emotional experiences and she could open up and talk to me. She was also able to consider different emotions other than anger. I hoped that she felt this helped to normalise her emotions. | I continued to empathise and help her to label the various feelings that were coming up including anxiety and fear. It was evident that this was an emotion she struggled to experience and manage as it made her feel ‘out of control’ and she didn’t like to appear in this way. She seemed to wear a ‘mask’ to protect herself in the community and when surrounded with her peers, but deep down she was incredibly fearful of what could happen to her and her loved ones. I was able to say things like “I’m not surprised you are feeling like X, I would be too … of course you feel X!” I was able to spend some time following the session speaking to the adults around her too. |
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| 7. Working with a parent as part of an anxiety group. Discussing that she felt her child was being silly for not wanting to go to school. | Frustrated that the parent was dismissing of her child’s feelings and as though there was judgement being placed upon these. Worried about how to approach this with the parent.  | The parent perhaps was feeling helpless or unsure about what to do to help the child get ready for school in the morning. I wondered about their meta-emotional philosophy and the style of parenting that they experienced.  | The parent shared the example as part of a group and said *“so what do I do when X is being silly and says she doesn’t want to go to school?”* I said “ok, so let’s have a think about this. What might X be feeling do you think?” the parent said “*well … I dunno she’s probably feeling worried*”. I was then able to say “ok so she is feeling worried about going to school, why might this be do you think?” the parent said *“well she’s just being silly … she’s fine when she’s here … (pause – parent reflected) but last week some child was picking on her!”* I said “Ah ok so she might be worried about going to school because she is worried about what this other child may say to her, right? I know I would feel worried about going to work if I thought someone may be unkind to me” She quickly said “oh gosh … that makes sense doesn’t it”. I said to the parent that I didn’t want her to feel upset about her reaction (I sensed some embarrassment) but perhaps it would be helpful to reserve judgement and consider the feeling the child was experiencing that was underpinning the behaviour and to think about how that would feel to be her in that moment.  | Empathy NormalisingBeing non-judgemental with regards to emotional experiences.  | After this, the parent was very good at sharing examples of using emotion coaching at home with other group members. Having the opportunity to scaffold and unpick this with other parents was helpful too as they could relate to their own examples.  |  |
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| 8. Discussion in the car with my 3 year old daughter after I had made attempts to soothe her flipped lid. I had used the EC steps and she had calmed down well after her frustrations. We were in the car and I was driving, she was in the back. I thought we were ready to chat about this situation to help her understand herself and her emotions more, as well as discuss problem solving strategies that I could support her with. As I was speaking my daughter put up her hand and said “mummy, stop talking.”  | Initially I felt in control and calm and proud that the situation had been resolved so well.Eager to “get through the steps”Shame and sadness when I realised I had misattuned to her needs in the moment. | Calmer and more contained, but not fully.Frustrated that I wasn’t allowing her time to reflect and sit with her big feelings.  | I stopped talking and apologised that I hadn’t been quiet when she needed that.I sat and reflected on the situation and allowed her to have some time to relax as we drove. When I was able to I put my hand on hers and gave it a little squeeze to show I was still there and thinking about her and her needs, without using language. | Reflection on why she asked me to stop talking.Attunement and re-reading and reattuning.The watching and waiting aspect of EC was very important here. I had to stop and really be in the moment with my daughter, instead of flipping my lid as a result of my efforts being rejected.  | She remained calm and we were able to discuss the problem solving aspect of the situation together at a later date.  | I think that it was important for me to remember that the steps for EC do not need to be completed in one go. I was able to reflect on the fact that even when you think a situation is being managed there is potential for the child (or you) to become dysregulated quickly, especially if there is a remaining residual impact from the situation in the child or adult (e.g. perhaps she still had an excess of adrenaline in her body, perhaps her flipped lid hadn’t been fully soothed). I also reflected on the fact that some children appreciate eye contact and others do not. In this situation I thought that the conversation with my daughter might have been more successful if it had been done while we were having a cuddle and felt happy, close and calm together. Noticing and managing my feelings of rejection and not making that a problem that my daughter had to resolve was very important. It can be easy to get upset when we feel our best efforts have not been met with a reaction we might have hoped for.  |
| 9. During a classroom observation with a little boy in Reception who had ‘flipped his lid’ – refusing to complete his work, an adult describing him as feeling angry – I thought perhaps he was feeling anxious and overwhelmed by the task. He was asked to go to sit in his ‘egg chair’ in his ‘safe space’ in the classroom. I went over to sit next to him and tried to use the EC steps – I tried to label his feelings and say ‘I wonder if you are feeling a little worried about this work today’. The little boy pulled the shutter down on his chair and said ‘go away!’ he started to rock in his chair.  | Initially I felt a great deal of empathy for this child and felt as though I was disappointed that the child had been sent to his egg chair to manage his feelings on his own. After using EC – I felt frustrated that I was unable to follow the steps successfully and I think this was because I had missed step 1 and also because I did not have the relationship with the child. I also feel I may have mis-labelled his feeling. Maybe he was feeling angry? Perhaps he was feeling both? | Anxiety. Fear. Also worried because an unfamiliar adult was present.  | I apologised and moved away behind the book case nearby so I was no longer visible to him. I started to think about why I was unable to connect with him and reflect on what else I could have done or may be able to do next.  | Thinking about the hand brain model and attuning to the child to try to offer support.Adrenaline curve – timing.Bottom up brain processing – considering sensory needs | The child pulled the shutter down on his chair to hide in the moment. Approx. 5 mins later as I waited behind the book case nearby, he popped his head around the corner to see if I was still nearby. He then got out of his chair and went to play with another child.  | I think it helped me to reflect on the amount of language I often use when using EC. In this particular moment the child perhaps needed me to use less language and perhaps it would have been more helpful if I had encouraged the adult who the child had a relationship with to go to sit close to him and not necessarily speak to him, but to let him know she would be close to him when he was ready. I think this also highlights how crucial timing is when using EC (thinking of the adrenaline curve) this child was perhaps within the ‘crisis’ phase and as I didn’t know the child well perhaps I wasn’t able to spot this as easily. Perhaps I could have maybe labelled what I saw him doing e.g. ‘I can see that you are in your egg chair … I can see that you are all curled up in a ball…’ It felt like a challenging situation as there was not an adult nearby and I felt that the child was being left alone so I thought perhaps attempting EC would have been better than not saying anything. Perhaps I could have started to draw or play nearby him so he knew that I was near and not say anything? I wonder if he would have still asked me to go away or whether he would have been curious about what I was doing.  |