



THE TOOLBOX PROJECT

Tool Descriptions

Tools for Learning • Tools for Life



Breathing Tool

I calm myself and check-in.

Awareness of breathing brings immediate calm and time to think. It is a bridge to self-reflection that guides one toward effective choices and positive change. Cultures across the world have recognized the breath as a gateway to wisdom. Without the healthy ability to practice inner-calm and self-reflection, it is difficult to learn, relate with others, or know oneself. Attention to breathing is the key to self-control, understanding, and genuine connection with others.

Quiet/Safe Place Tool



I remember my quiet/safe place.

Quietness gives one strength. When we have a “place” of solace, safety, and quiet, then creativity, imagination, and self-expression emerge naturally. One way we feel safe is when we have a quiet, safe place *physically*. The Quiet/Safe Place Tool is a way of remembering our quiet stillness. When we listen from the quiet place within our hearts, we make space to hear our natural wisdom.

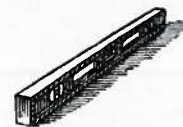


Listening Tool

I listen with my ears, eyes, and heart.

Listening with one’s heart is the key to strong relationships and conflict resolution. Listening with one’s heart brings empathy. This is most important. When we listen, the rest of the tools work easily. This ability to listen is naturally within each of us. When we breathe from a quiet place inside, listening becomes easier.

Empathy Tool



I care for others. I care for myself.

Empathy is noticing how another person is feeling and being able to understand what they must be feeling. Empathy is caring about someone else. Empathy is the root of tolerance, kindness, and forgiveness. Turned inward, this becomes care and understanding for oneself.



Personal Space

I have the right to my space and so do you.

We all have an indelible right to our personal space and the responsibility to give others the same right. Noticing the physical space around us helps us see our own needs and those of others. In addition, this Tool encompasses intelligence through awareness of our body wisdom: body language, sensations, gestures, position, posture, voice tone, quality, and volume.

Using Our Words

I ask for what I want and need.



Careful use of words encourages understanding, connection, and intimacy. Careless or offensive words harm relationships. By learning the importance of words and how they impact relationships, the Using Our Words Tool helps us with conflict resolution. This is a skill we must learn. Using the “right” words, in the “right way,” at the “right” time, for the “right” reasons creates deep connection. Using Our Words requires practice, practice and more practice.



Garbage Can

I let the little things go.

We do not have to take unkind words personally (into our personal space). We can take responsibility for what we do with other people’s words and actions, and how we feel about them. Sometimes the best choice is to throw harmful words away. Sometimes we need to listen more carefully to what is behind the words. This Tool has its origins in the martial art of Aikido, The Art of Peaceful Reconciliation. It is one of the younger children’s favorites.

Taking Time

I use time wisely.

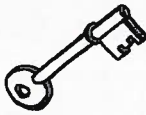


There are many useful ways to use time intelligently for one’s well-being and the well-being of others. When we choose how to use our time we can be more effective. Stepping back and taking Time-Away renews our resiliency. Taking Time-In (within oneself) to self-reflect leads to better self-understanding and more authentic connections with others.



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Tool Descriptions, cont.



Please & Thank You Tool

I treat others with kindness and appreciation.

Please and Thank You are “magic words” that make people feel good. Expressing gratitude and giving thanks are basic principles of kindness and generosity. This opens the doorway to intimacy and caring relationships. When added politely to a request, the word “please” encourages others to want to be helpful and kind. Saying “thank you” lets people know you value them. These simple words create warm connections with others.

Apology & Forgiveness Tool

I admit my mistakes and work to forgive yours.



A sincere apology opens the door to self-responsibility and forgiveness. It takes self-esteem and inner strength to admit a mistake and do the right thing. Using the Apology & Forgiveness Tool is a giant leap towards maturity. Forgiveness takes equal strength. It requires letting go of anger and judgment. It does not mean we have to forget, but there must be a willingness to forgive. If we are still holding the hot ember of anger, resentment, or hatred, we are the one still getting burned.



Patience Tool

I am strong enough to wait.

Patience is the ability to wait quietly. Patience develops our capacity for tolerating situations that are not in our control. Children learn patience when we model it. If patience is not modeled, children may learn to be impatient, demanding, and impulsive.

Courage Tool

I have the courage to do the “right” thing.



Courage is having inner strength and bravery to do the “right thing,” even when it is difficult. When we feel troubled by our own or others’ behaviors, it takes courage to use our Tools. Helping children to have courage lets them explore the unfamiliar. Courage, from Latin *cor* (“heart”), means to act with “heart.” Acting with courage is empowering.