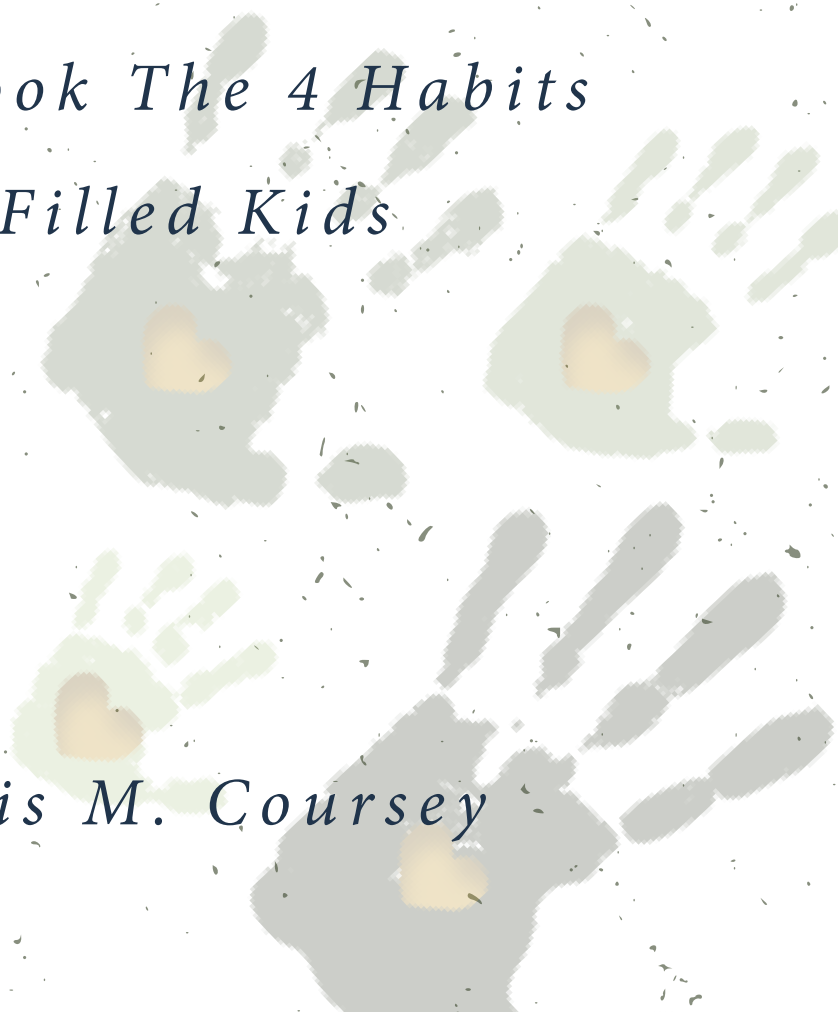


4 Steps to Meet your Kids in a Meltdown

*Based on the book The 4 Habits
Of Raising Joy-Filled Kids*

Written by Chris M. Coursey



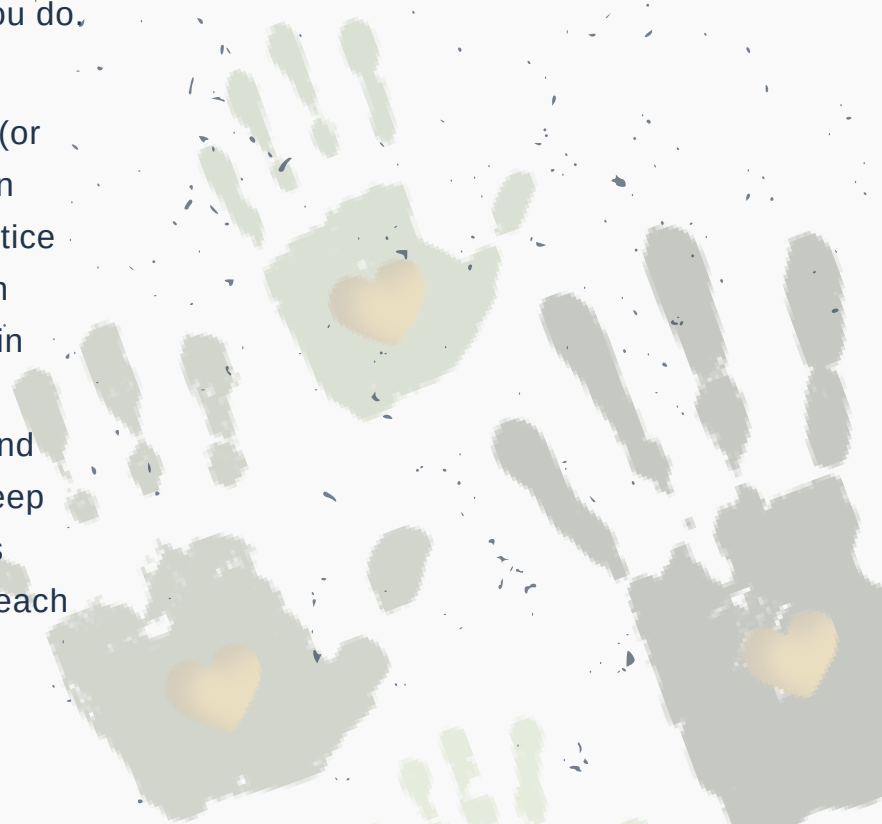
Every loving, well-intentioned parent wants what is best for their child. No matter how great our love, we all have moments where we lose it. We can only carry so much weight until something breaks and we say or do the things we wish we could take back. We may have been keeping it together until something happens, then we snap. Maybe it's a tone. A reaction. An unfinished chore. An attitude. Whatever it is, we have moments where we cannot keep it together anymore and we can practically feel the steam coming out our ears.

STEP 1 BREATHE

Taking deep breaths to help calm down big feelings and gives us a window of time to activate our brain's relational circuits. A little quieting goes a long way! Here is what you do.

- Set a timer for 3-5 minutes. Put a book (or your hand) on your belly as you lie down and breathe. Take deep breaths and notice the book (or your hand) go up and down with each breath. Notice how this feels in your body.
- Where do you feel the tension? If you find you have tension in a particular spot, keep taking deep breaths and focus on God's peace washing away your tension with each breath.

In my book, [The Joy Switch](#), I talk about practical ways to keep our brain's relational circuit online when the going gets tough. While there are a number of useful steps to take when we feel maxed, here are 4 things you can do to keep yourself from acting out in regrettable ways.

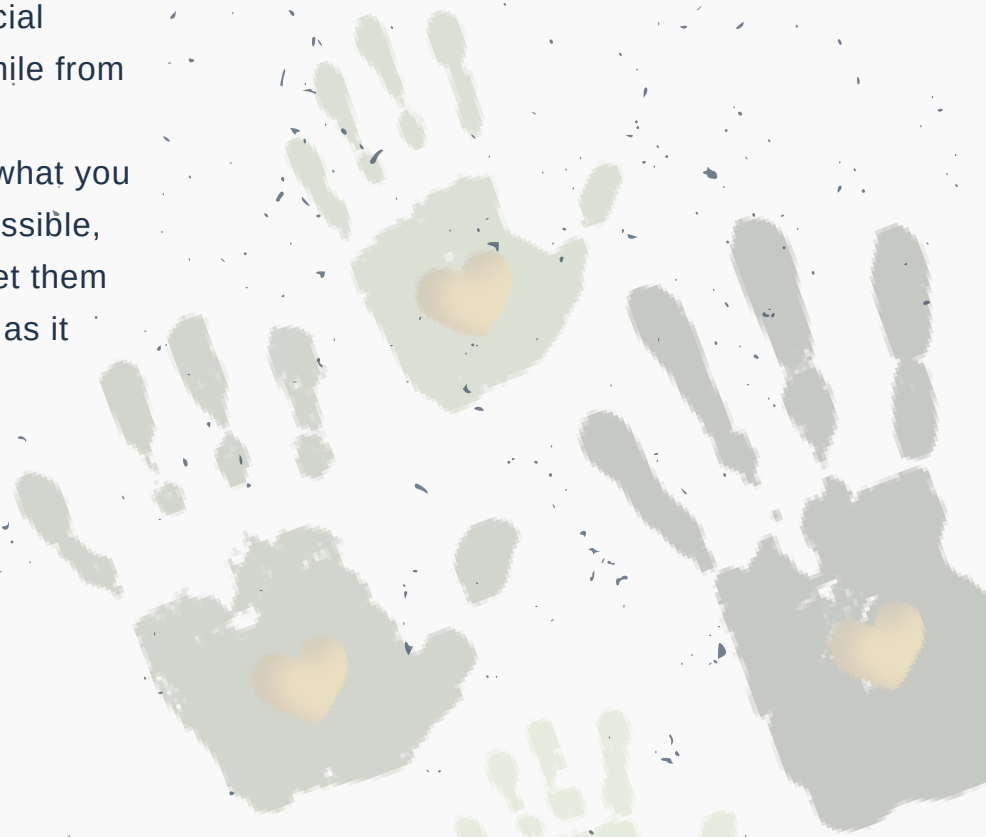


Think good thoughts. No, this is not wishful thinking but focused, intentional reflection on appreciation and gratitude that activates our relational circuit as well as produces calm feelings which anchor us during the storms of big emotions.



STEP 2 FIND GRATITUDE

1. Look at pictures on your phone that bring a smile. Think about the fun aspects of each picture that bring you joy.
2. Consider (or write out) the special moments that brought you a smile from the past 24 hours.
3. Consider (or write out) who or what you feel thankful for right now. If possible, send a text to the person and let them know what you are thankful for as it relates to them.



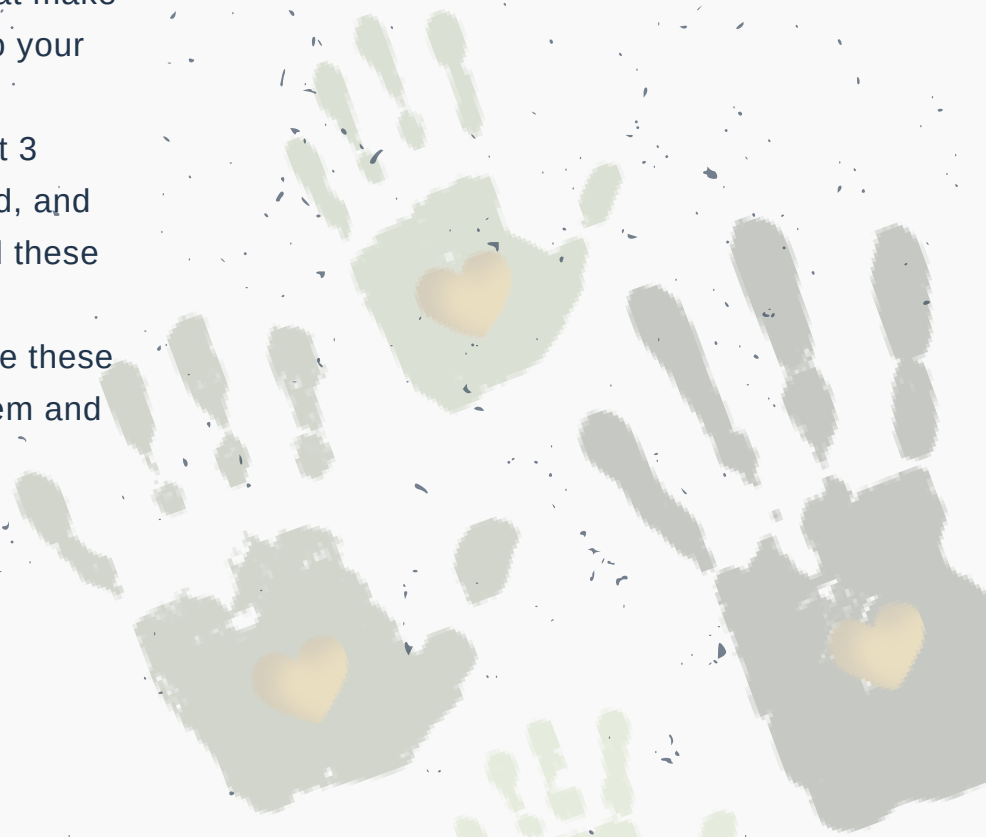
My friend Dr. Marcus Warner and I wrote a new book called The 4 Habits Of Raising Joy-Filled Kids which focuses on using joy to help our children reach their God-given potential. In this book, Marcus and I encourage parents to practice a variety of activities to be a better parent with joy. Today we focus on these 2 steps to help you find your joy when you lose it.



STEP 3 GROW JOY

Think about qualities you enjoy in your kids. Take a few moments to pause and think about the qualities in each child that make you smile. How do they bring joy to your family?

1. Reflect on (or write out) at least 3 qualities you enjoy in each child, and think of the times you observed these qualities in action.
2. When you have a chance, share these qualities and examples with them and watch what happens.



STEP 4 REMEMBER EXCITEMENT

Think about what you were excited about when you knew you were going to be a parent. What did you look forward to? What did you anticipate would be meaningful? What lessons did you hope to pass on? The focus here should be on life-giving, joyful thoughts.

1. Write out some of what comes to mind and include what has been satisfying about raising your child.
2. Share your thoughts with them when the time is right.



to learn more visit joyfilledkids.com

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