

SEPARATENESS AND CONNECTION INSTEAD OF FUSION OR CUT OFF

Fusion

- Taking everything the other says personally. Reacting with attack, defence or hurt withdrawal
- Needing the other to agree with us all the time
- Expecting the other to solve our problems or make us feel good
- Wanting the other to take our side against people we have a conflict with
- Mind reading the other. Completing their sentences. Interrupting. Assuming we know what they think
- Thinking more about the relationship than our own responsibilities

Cut off

- Withdrawing contact when togetherness feels broken
- Staying silent on our view because of fear of conflict
- Believing that we can only be safe and happy by stopping all contact
- Distancing without expressing our reasons

Connection

- Enjoying that we share some things in common
- Friendship: sharing things that are happening in our lives, having fun together
- Providing a sounding board: listening to each other's problems, allowing each to work their own way through them. *Parents should not involve children in issues of adult concern or problems that involve someone the child shares a relationship with*
- Being interested in our different viewpoints
- Co-operating with each other with warmth and respect
- Acts of kindness and affection
- Being able to have disagreements

Separateness

- Having separate interests and friendships
- Having different perspectives and points of view
- Taking responsibility for own needs and growth
- Taking responsibility for our own problem solving
- Taking responsibility for calming our anxieties
- Being able to ask for the space, privacy and respect we need