



Healthy Sense of Self

Awareness Exercise

for Parents



The 3 Questions

*That Will Help You Make Sure You're Fully
There for Your Children*

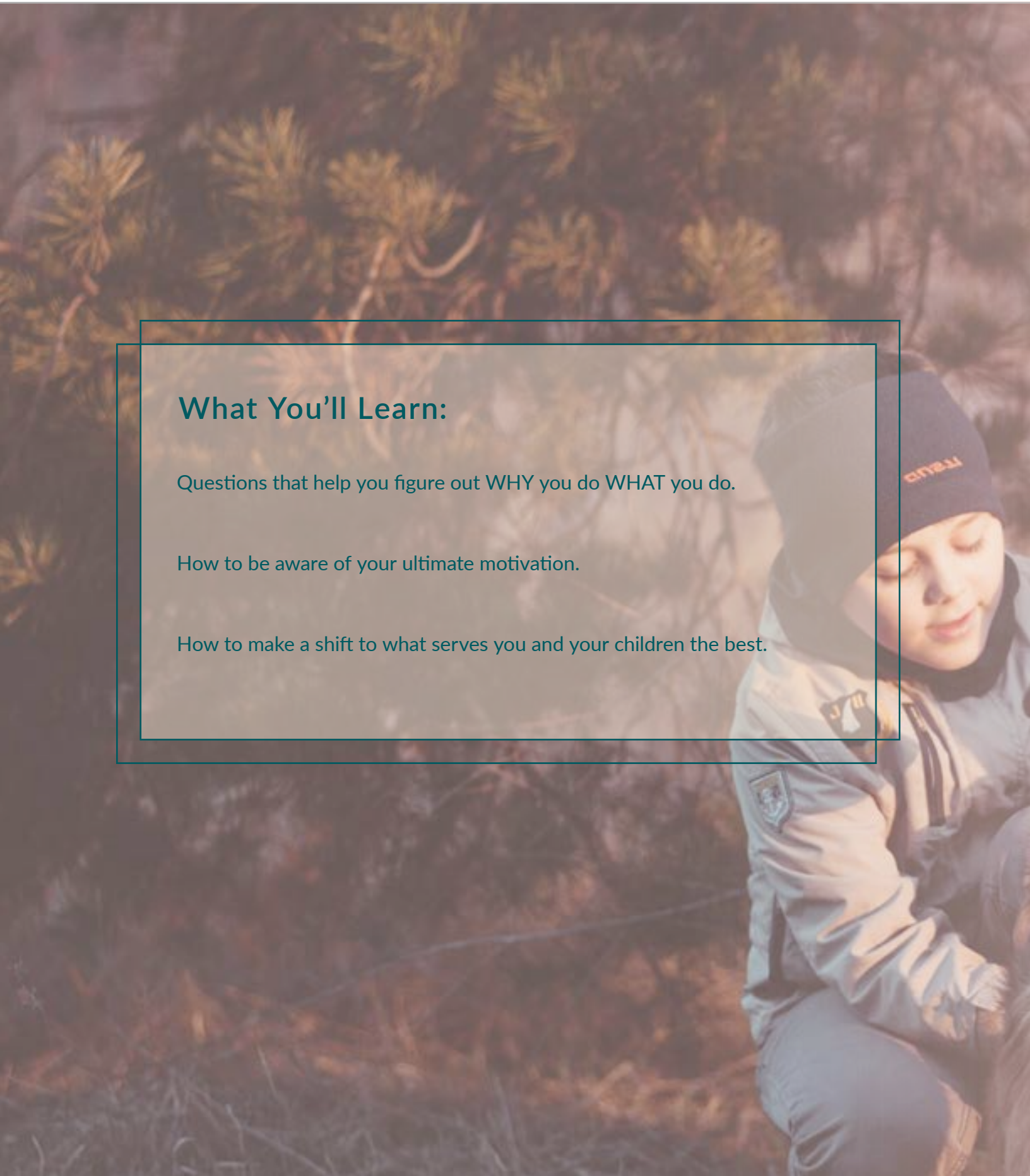


What You'll Learn:

Questions that help you figure out WHY you do WHAT you do.

How to be aware of your ultimate motivation.

How to make a shift to what serves you and your children the best.





WHAT *am I doing?*

WHY *do I do that?*

WHAT'S *really at stake for me if I don't succeed?*

When should you do this exercise?

- when you feel disempowered to make a decision,
- when being a parent (or a child) brings you to your wits end, or
- when you would simply love to know how to be a better parent.

Take a few minutes to sit down with yourself and consciously experience your *Self* through your physical and emotional body.

Truly sensing your Self makes a lot of difference when it comes to the art of decision-making. The point is to cultivate the skills and techniques needed to tap into the full awareness of being your own person.

You ARE a creative and unique individual.

You don't have to prove yourself to anyone!

Your decisions can and should be based on what *you* want for your life.

You create your own reality.





Would you agree with the statement: “my life and my body are mine?”

It sounds pretty straightforward, right? But do you think it’s actually true for most people? Is it true for you? If you say these words to yourself, how does it make you feel?

If it were true, how come that, at times, we act as if we’re possessed by powers that lie beyond our control? For example, we become angry when we don’t want to, or we act weak when we should be strong and standing up for ourselves.

As children we need guidance, and we need to obey our parents. But the question is, should we obey our parents even if they’re not being reasonable? Or should we stand up to them? And at what age are we, as children, able to begin determining what’s unreasonable?

As we contemplate these complex questions, it seems justifiable for us, as children, to expect that our caregiver has their act together. And when parents have a healthy Sense of Self, chances are they pass it on to their kids.

But if we [lack a Sense of Self](#), we become dependent on the outcome of our achievements and on what others think of us. Other people’s approval often makes us feel-good about ourselves. That feeling is the closest we can get to feeling that we’re *appreciated* and *accepted*. If that is our default

experience, it becomes an almost physical need to “earn” that approval over and over again, especially from specific persons in our lives and, per extension, from others. We do not experience ourselves as “real” people other than in the fleeting moments we have performed a task to perfection or behaved as the perfect son or daughter.

Then we grow up, and some of us become parents or caregivers ourselves. We do our very best to be reasonable, just like most of our parents tried to be. But because of our dependency on the outcome of our achievements (or our behavior), we oftentimes miss out (again!) on the opportunity of really “seeing” our child. Again, we don’t really know our child miss on relating to them as another human being. We are in fact still needy as parents and busy trying to fill that hole within ourselves where our Sense of Self should be. We do this by living up to rules and conditions set by our



parents or by ourselves that are geared to get the approval we crave.

There's clearly something else that can keep a parent's mind occupied or even drive them to want to be the best parent—something other than the well-being of their children. Why do parents, at times, overlook what's actually going on with their children? How come too few parents really wonder what their behavior looks like from their children's point of view? What messages are their children actually picking up on?

It's not for lack of willingness that we repeat the story of not truly being there for our children. It is purely a [perceived survival strategy](#), a matter of life and death, giving priority to all the things that keep us super busy with no quality time to spare the kids.

“ If we have no Sense of Self, we become dependent on the outcome of our achievements and on what others think of us. ”

If, as children, we are exposed to this type of parental behavior, we are affected by it in the development of our own Sense of Self. And as parents, lacking a Sense of Self drives us to give priority to gaining the approval of others



over truly being in touch with the needs and wants of our own children and attending to them. In spite of the best intentions to do things differently, we're bound to repeat this devastating cycle of narcissistic behavior from one generation to the next.

Wouldn't the world become a better place if we could break free from the compulsive need to gain acknowledgment through our actions or behavior? Isn't it time to stop this hopeless drama in our lives that is caused by a lack of being in touch with ourselves and that results in the inability to be truly there for our children?

When parenting serves this other goal (our own [Hidden Goal](#)), we're not present to our own actions and behaviors. When we teach others with an intention *other than* transferring knowledge and information, chances are we are not present in the process.

“ Isn’t it time to stop this hopeless drama in our lives that is caused by a lack of being in touch with ourselves and that results in the inability to be truly there for our children? ”

We might tend to exert constant control over the behavior of our children—but is it really with their benefit in mind, or is something else driving us? This doesn’t mean that we are bad parents—just that sometimes we don’t know WHY we do WHAT we do. What could be even worse—and more significant for our purposes here—we may find ourselves unable to stop doing something even if we wanted to.

However, the opposite can also be the result of wanting to live up to certain conditions.

It can happen that, as parents, we behave as though our children have control over us as we always acquiesce to their demands when they’re upset, throwing temper tantrums, or acting rebellious. We choose to not really see what they’re doing; we cover up or deny their behavior for reasons or motivations that we’re not even aware of.

We can be so concerned about living up to certain conditions that aren’t even relevant in the present but stem from our past. The need to [*Feel-good-about-self*](#) demands that we are successful in living up to those conditions and this need prevails over taking the time





THE THREE QUESTIONS

Apply these to the issues you would like to get a grip on.

I. WHAT am I doing?

(Fill in the issue here. For example: *I'm putting a lot of pressure on my child by making her practice her violin.*)

II. WHY do I do this?

(Fill in the motivation that first comes to mind. For example: *If she studies everyday, she'll be a good musician.*
Note that you may be hiding behind this motivation.)

III. What's really at stake for me if I don't succeed?

(Investigate further and be totally honest with yourself to reveal your own "hidden agenda" by giving the most truthful answer you can. In this case: *I am so determinant to have her practice that I don't ask myself whether maybe something is bothering her, or maybe she doesn't like to play the violin. Honestly, I want her to become a great musician. I want her to do what I couldn't do so my mother will be pleased with me.*

When parents don't have a healthy Sense of Self, they depend on the approval of significant people in their lives. And the decision, in this case, to not be angry has nothing to do with what's better for the child.

The real WHY from the example is: *I am not even busy with my child but with my own past*

What are the results of this behavior?

Result 1: On a subconscious level the child senses it but does not understand. Depending on her temperament she will react on the situation by either be rebellious or give in in a submissive way. Both motivations are not geared at being of service to herself, developing her talents or interest but at disentangling the relationship between the two.

Result 2: I accuse my child of negative characteristics, which undoubtedly settles in her mind and influences her psychological self-image. The child does not have a parent who really sees him or her and is truly there for her but is in need to figure out what the parent wants him to do or to be so he can get to "Feel-good-about-self" as a compensation for the impossibility to build a Sense of him or her own Self, thus creating a dependency on certain conditions, just like the parent has.

Result 3: The quality of the parent-child relationship greatly suffers.

Result 4: Decrease of quality in the parent-child relationship.

If we could only really ensure that our children would be given the right input at the right time so they can effectively build a healthy Sense of Self. Wouldn't that make the world a better place?

We can accomplish this by solving our own issue with our Sense of Self.

Visit our website
HealthySenseOfSelf.com
and learn more about the
Sense of Self Method™

