

# Being your best self when Staying in Touch\*

Remember to care for yourself so time spent with your child can be as positive as possible

\* Staying in Touch is the preferred term for the meet-ups or other communications that adopted children have with members of their birth family / significant others.

## Ask for help

- ★ To give you space
- ★ To support your choices
- ★ To talk about what is going on for you
- ★ To understand your feelings
- ★ To process changes
- ★ To exchange photos with your child if permitted
- ★ To write letters to your child through services like the Letterbox schemes

## Self-awareness

- ★ Do a mindfulness colouring-in book to ground yourself
- ★ Sit somewhere quiet and focus on regular breaths
- ★ Start tracking your moods
- ★ Connect to your special place

## Self-care and healing

- ★ Take time out just for you
- ★ Relax with friends
- ★ Power your body with good food
- ★ Keep a journal of how you feel
- ★ Listen to music that brings you joy
- ★ Be active – you can even dance inside your home!
- ★ Take a walk in nature
- ★ Get crafty – make something to give your child at staying in touch times

## Create an action plan

- ★ Start with small steps
- ★ Draw a picture of your plan
- ★ List what you need to get good communications back on track
- ★ Seek support to make your plans a reality

## Notice and celebrate successes

- ★ Count the small things – even if it's getting out of bed!
- ★ Track each thing you have done to reach your goal
- ★ Keep records of courses, community sessions or workshops you have attended

## Make small goals

- ★ For your personal growth
- ★ For your time with children and family members
- ★ For making staying in touch times more positive
- ★ For reigniting important connections



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Check in with your feelings as Staying in Touch times approach and after them

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## Ask yourself:

What helps me feel grounded and stable?

What makes me feel out of control?

What helps me show my child they are loved?

What do others notice when I am doing well?

What can I do to make the meet up or communication good?

What if I am not feeling okay?



- ★ Know your limits and your triggers
- ★ Notice and accept the feelings that come up
- ★ Have some games and activities up your sleeve
- ★ Pack some healthy snacks

### Things to remember:

- ★ Quality is more important than quantity when it comes to time together.
- ★ Do something nice for yourself or arrange to speak to someone after a visit to prevent a downward spiral.
- ★ Have some strategies in mind for when you are finding things hard.



- ★ Ask to have a phone or video visit instead this time if a planned meeting feels too hard
- ★ Talk to people involved in the Staying in Touch services about your feelings so they don't misunderstand why you might be finding it hard to meet or communicate.

### Things to remember:

- ★ Give as much notice as possible if you need to cancel a meet-up or call and suggest an alternative so your child knows you want to keep in touch with them.
- ★ If you continue to struggle with the agreed ways to stay in touch (including Letterbox), get professional help and support to work out a way to get communication back on track.
- ★ The hard moments will pass.