

Light in the Dark

Bringing your feelings into the light so you can learn to heal

This resource is for birth parents whose children have been adopted

Emotional pain is like carrying a heavy weight. You may want the weight to be lifted or fear it will be with you forever. Feeling like this for a long time stresses the body. Understanding the early warning signs of stress allows you to take charge of your life.

Small things can trigger big reactions

- You get stressed over lost keys or running late
- You have trouble sleeping

You are in the emotional 'early warning' zone

- You may say and do things you regret
- You may have conflict with other people



Things related to your child will trigger big reactions

- A Staying in Touch* meet up/call is cancelled at short notice or goes badly
- You need to write or read a letter through the Letterbox* arrangements
- You feel grief and pain rising to the surface

You are entering the emotional 'amber' zone

- You may feel distress, panic or numbing
- People may think you are being unreasonable



Things that reignite your pain can be overwhelming

- It might be Mother's/Father's Day or your child's birthday
- You feel the weight of anger, shame and fear return

You have entered the emotional 'red zone'

- Your reactions become unpredictable
- Your actions may frighten you and other people

You are feeling calm and positive

- You can cope with everyday upsets

You are in the emotional 'green' zone

- You enjoy today and feel optimistic about tomorrow



Calm state

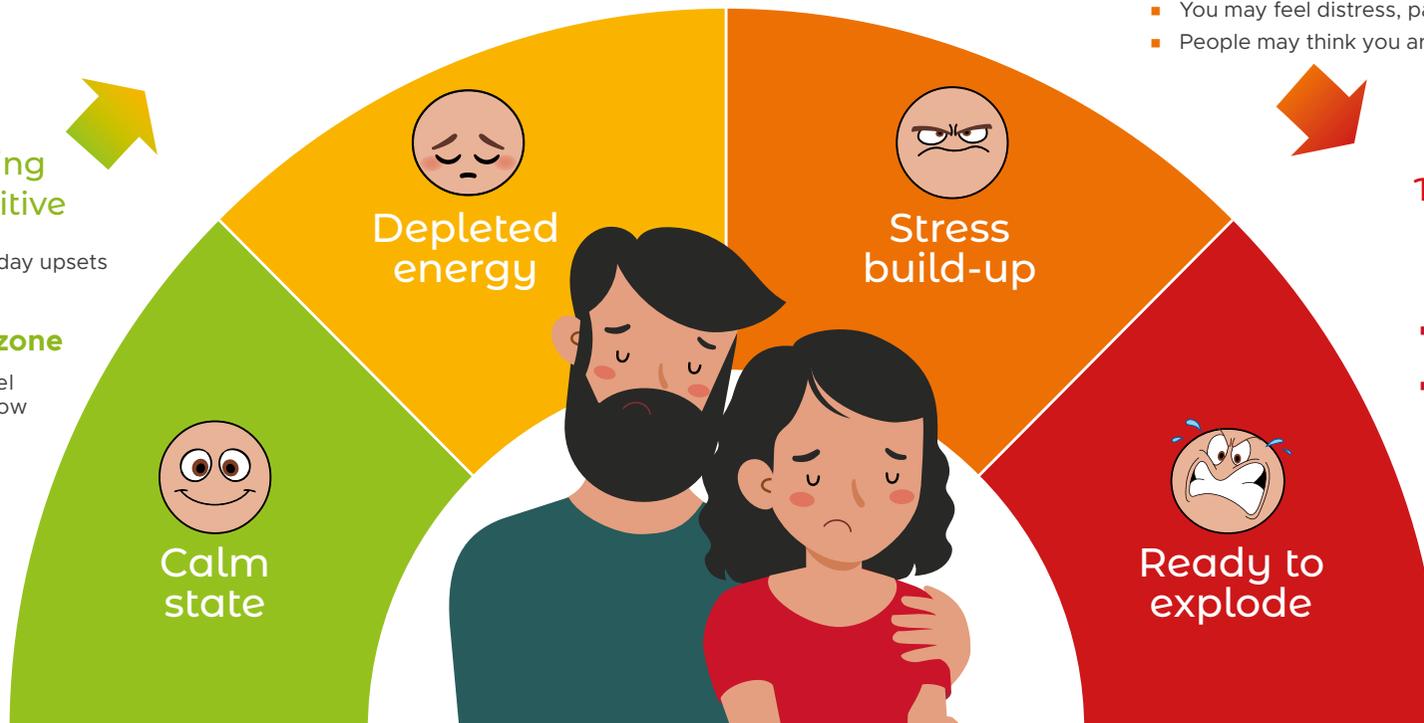
Depleted energy



Stress build-up



Ready to explode



* Staying in Touch* meet-ups or Letterbox arrangements are just some ways parents may be able to maintain a connection with an adopted child

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Powering the healing journey

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Healing
is a journey
not a
destination.

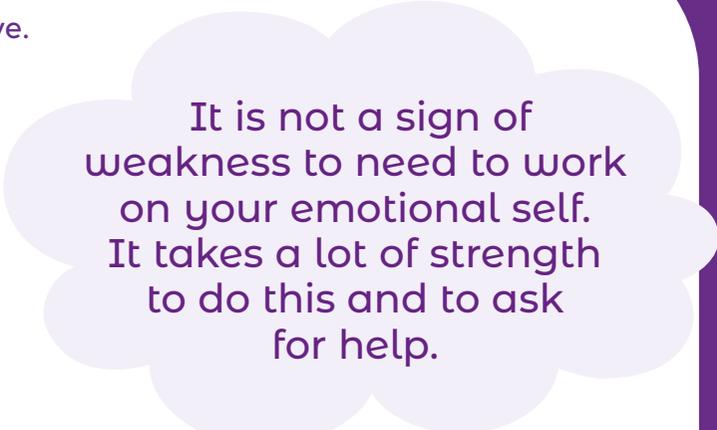
What you can do for yourself today:

- ☀ Spend time with people who understand your pain
- ☀ Spend time in nature to feel calm and connected
- ☀ Do small, good things for yourself (eat a nourishing meal, listen to your favourite song)
- ☀ Notice even the small moments when you feel strong and resilient

Wherever you are today, you can take steps today to start your journey and get the support you deserve.

Parents can feel like they are always waiting for something:

- ☀ for support services
- ☀ to hear from or see their child in whatever way
- ☀ staying in touch has been agreed



It is not a sign of
weakness to need to work
on your emotional self.
It takes a lot of strength
to do this and to ask
for help.

What you can learn about yourself today:

- ☀ What do you notice about yourself when you feel calm and connected?
- ☀ What do others notice about you when you seem calm and connected?
- ☀ What piece of advice have you been given that really meant something?
- ☀ What small step can you take now that would change your situation?

