

Approachable

What is this?

Life is full of hassles, and if a baby is crying, fussing, refusing to eat or pulling your hair it's even more stressful. And baby cries are designed by nature to be on the "alarm" pitch that makes us react!

Being approachable is all about staying calm and gentle on the outside even if we are stressed inside. We talk calmly and act as gently as we can.

Why does it matter?

If a baby is upset, then it'll only get worse if they pick up more stress from us! So if we can stay quiet and calm they are going to soothe all the sooner.

Going a level deeper, babies are small and helpless. They get their feelings of safety from us, so the more approachable we can be, the more easily they can build their own abilities to cope and manage by themselves.

What does it look like?

- Whatever is going on, stay as calm as you can
- Take some slow breaths
- Think about your face and body language – make these gentle and soft
- When you are calm, go face to face with baby and soothe them
- Keep your voice calm and movements slow
- Try some of the ideas in co-regulating
- Wonder out loud what the matter is – "OK, are you tired?" "Was that a big noise?"
- Be mind-minded. Say what baby might be feeling. "That feels cold?"
- Make life as simple for yourself as you can so you can stay calm
- If things go wrong don't worry, just try to get calm and then reconnect