

MELTDOWN MASTERY MASTERCLASS

The 5 Parenting Traps That Make Meltdowns Worse

(And What Actually Works)

Your companion workbook for the free training. Follow along,
fill in your answers, and walk away with a real plan you can
use tonight.

CALM THE CHAOS

with Dayna Abraham

This Isn't a Note-Taking Sheet. It's Your First Plan.

By the end of this training, you won't just understand why meltdowns happen — you'll have a concrete, personalized strategy you can use *tonight*. Fill in the exercises as we go. The last page is the one you tape to your fridge.

“

You're not failing your child. You just haven't been given the right tools yet. That changes today.

— Dayna Abraham

Start here — get honest with yourself:

What meltdowns are you
dealing with right now?

How much time are you losing to
these struggles?

What becomes possible when
you have a plan?

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Each trap includes the **why** (so you understand the science), the **tool** (so you know what to do instead), and a **fill-in exercise** (so you leave with YOUR plan). Pages 4–8 follow the training. Page 9 is your capstone — everything in one place.

The YOU-CUE Framework

Every tool in this training maps to one of these four steps. Like a recipe needs eggs, flour, butter, and sugar — every plan needs all four ingredients. Start with YOU, then move through Connect, Understand, and Empower.

You

Y

Your state of being and mindset. You can't pour from an empty cup — and you can't calm a storm while you're in one.

- Shift your thoughts about the behavior
- Ground yourself before responding
- Focus on ONE thing at a time
- Recognize your own triggers

TOOL: STAY CALM SWAP

Connect

C

Create moments of safety and belonging. Before your child can hear you, they need to feel safe with you.

- Be fully present when they speak
- Communicate with empathy
- Build a bank of positive interactions
- Celebrate who they are right now

TOOL: CONNECTED SCRIPT

Understand

U

Look under the surface. Behavior is communication — your job is to figure out what it's saying.

- Remove assumptions about why
- Find patterns in the buildup
- Get curious, not furious
- Discover triggers and sensory needs

TOOL: BEHAVIOR FUNNEL

Empower

E

Problem-solve WITH your child. Create plans that work for both of you — not punishments that work for neither.

- Create plans together as a team
- Teach skills, don't just manage behavior
- Build self-regulation and self-advocacy
- Set up systems that prevent storms

TOOL: 1:1:1 PLAN

Stop Saying "Calm Down"

It doesn't work because your child **can't** calm down on command. Their brain is in fight, flight, or freeze. Telling them to calm down is like telling someone having a panic attack to "just relax."

Why this matters

When your child's stress response is activated, the thinking brain goes offline. They literally cannot process logic, reason, or instructions. You have to change YOUR state first — because calm is contagious.



The Stay Calm Swap

Change YOUR thoughts first, so you can be the anchor they need.

1

Stop

Pause everything. Stop talking, stop moving. Plant your feet. You are not in danger.

2

Breathe

Hand on heart. In through nose, out through mouth. 3–5 breaths. Disarm your nervous system.

3

Anchor

A memory, sensation, or phrase that grounds you: "They need me here right now."

My old thought when my child melts down:

My Stay Calm Swap (new thought):

My anchor (memory, phrase, or sensory object):

ANCHOR EXAMPLES

"All behavior is communication" • "They aren't doing this TO me" • "There is no bear" • A memory of your child laughing • A smooth stone in your pocket • A favorite scent

Don't Ignore It or Rush to Fix It

Jumping in too soon escalates the storm. Ignoring it tells your child they're alone in it. Neither works — because both skip connection.

Why this matters

Your child needs to know you SEE them before they can hear you. Connection isn't a Pinterest activity — it's being fully present, communicating that you're here, and using minimal words so you don't add fuel to the fire.



Connected Scripts

Minimum words. Zero judgment. Mirror only what you see.

THE RULES

Less than 5–10 words • Void of YOUR emotions or judgments • Mirror only what you SEE (like a camera lens)
• Neutral language — no "always" or "never"

Three sentence starters you can use tonight:

"I notice you are... _____"

e.g., struggling with homework • having a hard time getting ready • upset about dinner

"I see your... _____"

e.g., face is red • hands are tight • body is moving fast

"I hear that you... _____"

e.g., want to go outside • don't want to stop playing • are feeling angry

My Connected Script for my child's most common meltdown:

PRO TIP

After saying your script, **wait**. Don't rush to the next thing. Your calm presence IS the intervention. Move closer and lower — get on their level. Soften your body.

Look Under the Surface

Meltdowns aren't random and they're not "for attention." Every behavior is communicating an unmet need. Your job isn't to stop the behavior — it's to find what's driving it.



The Behavior Funnel

Work top to bottom. Don't skip levels.

- 1 **BASIC NEEDS** *Hungry? Tired? Sick? In pain?*
- 2 **SAFETY** *Does my child feel safe right now?*
- 3 **CONNECTION** *Have we had positive interactions recently?*
- 4 **SENSORY** *Overstimulated? Understimulated? Seeking input?*
- 5 **SKILLS** *Does my child HAVE the skill for this situation?*
- 6 **DESIRES** *What do they want? What are they avoiding?*

Think of your child's most frequent meltdown. Walk it through the funnel:

The meltdown / behavior:

What layer do you think is the root cause?

What clues tell you that? (patterns, timing, triggers)

REMEMBER

"Your child isn't giving you a hard time — they're having a hard time." Behavior is communication. Get curious, not furious.

Ditch Consequences & Rewards

Time-outs don't teach skills. Sticker charts don't build self-regulation. Consequences and rewards manage the surface behavior but never address what's underneath.

Why this matters

When you punish a child for a meltdown, you're punishing them for not having a skill they haven't been taught yet. Instead, create a simple plan: one thing to say, one thing to do, one thing to provide.



The 1:1:1 Plan

Your back-pocket plan for the heat of the moment.

1 THING TO SAY

Your Script

Your Connected Script from Trap #2.
Minimum words, mirrors what you see.

1 THING TO DO

Your Action

Diffuse, don't fix. Move closer. Soften your body. Wait it out calmly.

1 THING TO PROVIDE

Your Tool

Your calm presence + one thing:
water, space, a weighted blanket, a hug.

THIS IS YOUR FRIDGE PLAN

Write this on a sticky note and put it where you'll see it during the next storm. When your brain goes blank in the heat of the moment, glance at it. **Say** your script. **Do** your action. **Provide** your tool. That's it.

What consequences or rewards have you tried that didn't work long-term?

What skill might your child be missing that caused the behavior?

TRAP #5

You Don't Need More Advice. You Need a System.

You've read the books, tried the tips, Googled at 2 a.m. The problem isn't a lack of information — it's that none of it connects into a repeatable system you can use every time.

THE AHA MOMENT

The four traps you just learned aren't random tips. They ARE the system. Each one maps to a step in the YOU-CUE Framework:

TRAP #1: Stay Calm Swap



YOU

TRAP #2: Connected Script



CONNECT

TRAP #3: Behavior Funnel



UNDERSTAND

TRAP #4: 1:1:1 Plan



EMPOWER

Reflection

Which trap have you been falling into the most?

What's one thing you'll do differently starting tonight?

What old belief about your child's behavior are you ready to let go of?

THE SHIFT

You don't need to be a perfect parent. You need **one framework, one plan, and one parent who won't give up.** That's all your child needs. And you already have everything it takes.

My Meltdown Mastery Plan

Everything you filled in, consolidated into one page. This is your plan for the next meltdown.

● YOU — My Stay Calm Swap

When the meltdown starts, I will Stop → Breathe → Anchor with:

My old thought:

My new swap:

My anchor:

● CONNECT — My Connected Script

Once I'm calm, I will say (minimum words, zero judgment):

● UNDERSTAND — What's Under the Surface

The root cause I suspect for my child's biggest meltdown trigger:

Behavior Funnel layer:

Clues that tell me this:

● EMPOWER — My 1:1:1 Plan

In the heat of the moment, I will:

1 thing to SAY

1 thing to DO

1 thing to PROVIDE

You just built your first plan. You've got this. ♥

You Just Built Your First Plan. Want Dozens More?

The Calm the Chaos Huddle

Your family's first-aid kit for meltdowns, tantrums, and outbursts. Pop in, grab what you need, and use it tonight.

Join the Huddle — \$27/month

- ✓ **Grab-and-Go Plans**
Dozens of ready-made plans for your biggest chaos causers — hitting, school refusal, back talk, picky eating, sibling fighting, and more.
- ✓ **100+ Video Vault**
Think Netflix for parenting — 8 years of curated trainings on executive functioning, sensory struggles, anxiety, routines, and more.
- ✓ **Personalized Roadmap**
Step-by-step course to create custom plans for YOUR unique family — not just in the moment, but ahead of the moment too.
- ✓ **Coaching with Dayna**
Quarterly live workshops + Q&A to create your plans, find your stay-calm swaps, and unravel your child's specific behaviors.

\$27 /month

That's less than \$1 a day. Less than a single therapy co-pay.

100% 30-day money back guarantee. Cancel anytime. Zero obligation.

calmthechaos.co/secure/huddle

One framework. One plan. One parent who won't give up. That's all your child needs.