

Decoding Misbehavior

Practical Application Worksheet

Use these reflection questions to practice becoming a 'behavior detective.' The goal is to look beneath the surface and respond to the need, not just the behavior.

Reflection Questions

1. Choose a recurring behavior challenge with your child. Describe it in detail — what happens, when, how often.

2. Apply the iceberg model: What might be below the waterline? List at least three possible drivers (unmet needs, feelings, developmental factors, skill gaps, or environmental factors).

3. What emotion do YOU feel when this behavior happens? Use that as a clue to identify which of the four mistaken goals might be operating.

4. Based on your analysis, what is one change you could make to address the root cause rather than just the surface behavior?

5. Track this behavior for one week. Note when it happens, what preceded it, and how you responded. Look for patterns.

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