



Episode 08: Social Emotional Development: Go Slow to Go Fast

Hosts: Tracy Stackhouse · Cory Dundon · Michelle Maunder



LISTENER NAME

DATE LISTENED

TOTAL LISTENING + REFLECTION TIME (MINS)

CPD HOURS CLAIMED



Episode Summary

Coming back after a long hiatus, we turn to the social realm and the question OTs are uniquely placed to ask: how does the capacity to regulate let us be social at all? It is an episode about co-regulation as the doorway to connection, about reciprocity that does not have to be equal or sparkly to be real, and about the patience of going slow to go fast. We are back after an unexpected hiatus, a long lockdown and Cory's wedding, with a baby on the way in February, and COVID has made the topic feel personal: all of us have felt the tax on our social systems. From there we get into why regulation and social connection are so deeply intertwined. Tracy walks the neuroscience, that the vast majority of the brain is engaged in regulation, from blood pressure and posture up through arousal, attention and behaviour, and that all of it expects to be organised through relationship. Co-regulation is the envelope, and relationship is the bookend of regulation. Then we get clinical. Cory revisits last episode's breakthrough, where finding a child's rhythm opened the door to the social, and Michelle shares a child she is still in the fragile early stages with, who uses her as a tool for regulation but is not yet a partner. That leads to the heart of it: reciprocity is not one fully baked thing. It does not have to be equal, or juicy, or even social yet. It is what is available, met at that level, and deepened from there. Go slow to go fast, hold the high expectation lightly, and trust that the science is the compass while the child holds the map.



Resources & Mentions

- The Spirit tool (Tracy Stackhouse), the clinical reasoning tool Spirited Conversations is derived from.
- Mattingly and Fleming, Clinical Reasoning: Forms of Inquiry in a Therapeutic Practice, on making tacit knowledge explicit.
- Therapeutic Listening, the sound-based intervention referenced in one of the clinical stories.
- Check out DFX's Learning Journeys to build your clinical <https://dfxlearningjourneys.thinkific.com/> reasoning skills:



Reflection Prompts

Take a few quiet minutes to consider each prompt and write freely. Add or remove a prompt block to suit the episode.

- 1** We argue most of the brain is engaged in regulation, and all of it expects to be organised through relationship. How does framing co-regulation as the doorway to the social, not a nicety, change how you prioritise it?

- 2** Naming the tacit makes it sayable. Think of something you do intuitively in session that you have never put into words: what would change if you could name it and reason aloud about it?

- 3** Michelle's child uses her as a tool for regulation but is not yet a partner. For a child in those fragile early stages with you, what does the reciprocity that is actually available look like right now?

- 4** Reciprocity does not have to be equal, juicy or even social yet, you meet it at the level available and deepen from there. Where might you be holding out for a fuller connection and missing the one the child can already offer?

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“Go slow to go fast”, hold the high expectation lightly and trust the process. Where in your practice does the pressure to progress quickly get in the way of the patient, relational pace a child actually needs?
