

The Criticism Compass

FRIDGE CARD FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

3 steps to receive criticism without shutting down

For children aged 6+ - and honestly, for all of us.

When someone criticises us, many people react with defensiveness, excuses, or silence. The Criticism Compass helps you pause and truly hear what's being said.

1

BREATHE

Take three breaths before you respond.

When you hear criticism, count slowly to three in your head. Breathe in and out calmly – this gives your mind time before your mouth reacts.

Parent tip: Practise this together - even in harmless everyday moments.

2

LISTEN

Listen without interrupting or arguing.

Let the other person finish. Ask a question if you don't understand: "What exactly do you mean?" This shows respect – even if you disagree.

Parent tip: Praise active listening - "You listened so well just then!"

3

DECIDE

Decide: is there something true here?

Not all criticism is fair. Ask yourself: "Is there something in this that could help me?" If yes: thank them. If no: let it go.

Parent tip: Show how you receive criticism - children learn by watching.

✂ Cut out & laminate

Cut out this card and stick it on the fridge or in your child's room. Laminated, it will last for years.

The Criticism Compass - Quick version

- 1 • BREATHE → count to three
- 2 • LISTEN → let them finish
- 3 • DECIDE → what do I take away?