

Breaking the cycle of physical punishment — gently, bravely, daily

Part of the **8 Hidden Wounds Series** | *From CEN to Wholeness*

What's Inside

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 - ✓ Gentle Alternatives for Everyday Chaos
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✨ 1 Calming Pause Scripts

When your body goes tight — your jaw locks, your fists clench, your voice rises — stop, plant your feet, and say (even out loud if you can):

“Pause. Breathe. Protect, don’t punish.”

“My anger is here — but I do not have to use my hands.”

“I am bigger than this feeling.”

“My job is to protect my child — and myself — from my old story.”

Where this helps:

- When you feel the urge to grab an arm roughly at bedtime
 - When your child hits you and you want to hit back
 - When a door slams in your face and your hands shake with rage
 - When you feel like shouting *“Do you WANT a smack?!”*
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✨ 2 Gentle Alternatives for Everyday Chaos

Instead of rough force, try these practical swaps:

- 🏃 **Running into danger:**
Instead of yanking their wrist painfully, block with your body:
“My job is to keep you safe — I can’t let you run there.”
 - 👕 **Refusing clothes:**
Instead of forcing pajamas on a thrashing child, sit close:
“You don’t want these right now. Let’s take three breaths together, then we try again.”
 - 🚗 **Car seat battle:**
Instead of wrestling them in roughly, say:
“Your body doesn’t want to sit. I know it’s hard. I will help you. We’ll do it together.”
 - 😡 **Backtalk or defiance:**
Instead of grabbing a teen’s arm or pushing them to a room:
“I’m angry. I won’t use my hands. I’ll come back when I can talk calmly.”
 - 🧸 **Sibling fighting:**
Instead of yanking them apart roughly:
“I will keep your bodies safe. Hitting hurts — my hands help you stop.”
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✨ 3 Repair Scripts for Tense Moments

When it slips through — because it will sometimes — come back to repair:

- *“I used my hands in a way that hurt. That was not okay.”*
- *“You did not deserve rough hands — that was my fear, not your fault.”*
- *“I shouted and scared you. I wish I hadn’t. I’m so sorry.”*
- *“Next time, I will try to pause. If I forget, I promise I will always come back and make it right.”*
- *“You are good, even when I am angry.”*

Where this helps:

- If you grabbed too tight in the car park
 - If you threatened to smack them but didn’t
 - If you raised your hand but caught yourself
 - If you shouted right in their face
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✨ 4 Journal Prompts to Meet Your Protectors

When the day is calm (or as calm as it gets), sit with these:

- *“When I wanted to hit, what did I feel in my body?”*
- *“How old did I feel inside when I lost it?”*
- *“What did my protector part want for me — power, safety, respect?”*
- *“If I could speak to that part now, what would I say?”*
- *“What new truth does my protector need to hear?”*

🌟 5 Daily Ritual: *Safe Hands*

Every bedtime, gently place your hands on your child's shoulders or hold their hand in yours.
Say:

"These hands are for hugging, holding, helping. These hands do not punish."

Do this for yourself too:

One hand on your heart, one on your belly:

"These hands protect. I choose calm. I choose repair."

Small repeat. Big change.

💚 Keep This Close

Print this guide. Stick it on the fridge. Fold it into your planner.

A bad moment does not undo your good heart.

Every pause, every repair — that is the cycle cracking open.

You are the break. 🌱

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