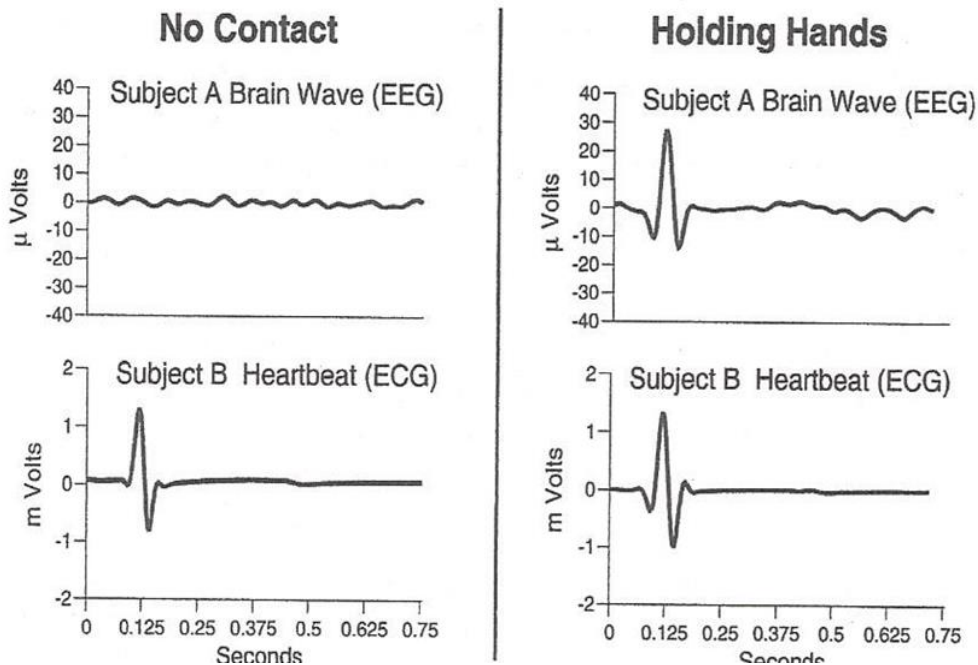# Calm Begets Calm

Reference Institute of HeartMath Research Center

According to this chart from HeartMath Institute, calming heart rhythms can be achieved through emotional contagion when holding another's hands.

3. Communication Skills to Prevent Power Struggles

Effective and Ethical Speech: feelings to feelings, reasons to reasons

One of the most fundamental tools of effective communication to remain calm and help others to remain calm is simply to mindfully speak feelings in response to feelings and reasons in response to reasons.
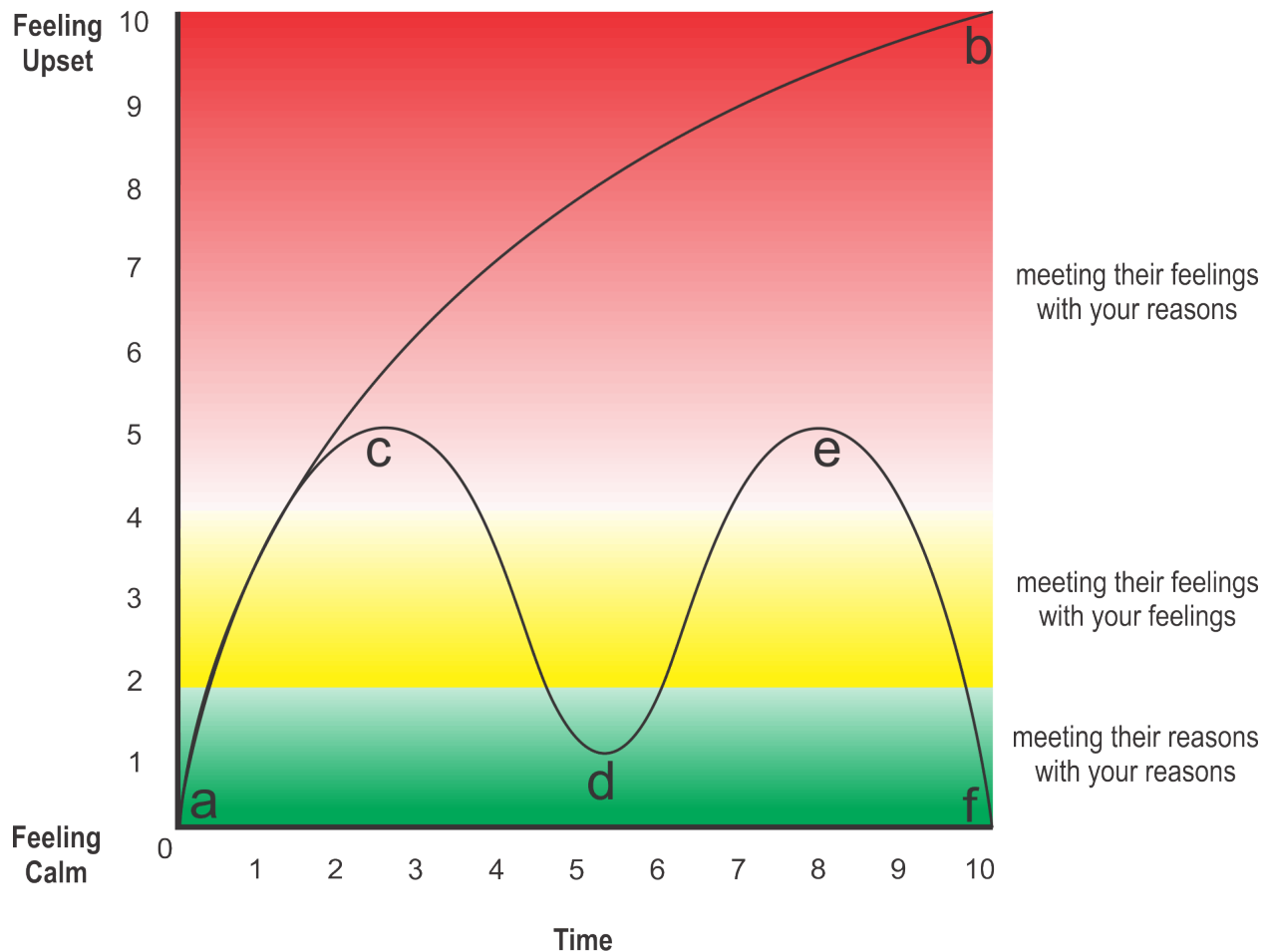
When someone is upset, anxious or angry, empathetic responses such as "please tell me more" or "I can see how upsetting this is for you" or "yes, and what else?" are the best ways to understand and respond to the person's needs at the time. This response also optimally facilitates a process whereby logic and reason can eventually, and in a timely way, be effectively introduced.

Not until the person de-escalates to feeling relatively calm should you ever offer problem-solving statements or, worse yet, try to use logic or reason to justify your position or attempt to

calm them down. When someone is upset, statements like "But that is not what I said (not what I meant, not what happened") or "Don't you remember that . . ." or "Can't we discuss this reasonably" or even "Okay, what do you think?" will all only escalate to upset the other person. Giving "reasons" to "feelings" is also the worst way for either of you to understand and objectively consider alternate solutions or perspectives. Have you noticed how when you are angry, your IQ drops to single digits?

Remember the four components of ethical speech: it must be useful, truthful, timely and kindly. NEVER miss a good opportunity to stay silent.

The following illustration demonstrates the outcomes of these different responses.

Let's walk through a positive calming sequence, using the letters in the above illustration:

At **(a)** the conversation starts with speaking **reasons to reasons**.

> Before they become **emotionally hijacked (b),**
> mindfully **meet their feelings with your feelings (c).**

> When they become calm, return to the topic (a) with **reasons to reasons (d).**

When they escalate again, mindfully **meet their feelings with your feelings (e).**

When they return to calm, return to topic (d) with **reasons to reasons (f).**

Helpful Phrases to Clarify and Gain Consensus:
      At **reasons to reasons** stage – how to introduce a concern
          "I have noticed that it often seems that when you _____state behaviour_____ that ___person's___ ___name___ and ___describe their reactions___ .
          "How would feel about ___suggest a change___ "
          If they calmly disagree with your suggestion work for a commitment to change.
          How to gain commitment
          "What I heard you say was …"
          "Is this your main concern?" ('yes')
          "If we can find a way to take care of this, then would you feel okay with
           Making this change?"
               (if yes)
          Then problem solve to consensus.

               (if no)
          "Okay, can I ask what else is concerning you?"
          "If we can take care of … then would you feel okay with proceeding?"

      At **feelings to feelings** stage – if an emotional response happens
          "Please tell me more."
          "I want to help you."
          "I have not understood enough of your difficulties."
          "I can see how upsetting this is for you and I am sorry if anything I have said or done is contributing to your difficulties."
          "It is not my intention to upset you further."
          "I want to better understand you, please tell me more"
     At this stage, never say:
          "But that is not what I meant, not what happened."
          "Can't we discuss this reasonably?"

4.   Integrating CCS with Behavioural Interventions

Fundamental Purposes and Payoffs of Maladaptive Behaviours

For some PwDD from the start of CCS supporting and eventually for all PwDD when the 7 unmet needs on the hierarchy have been effectively assessed and addressed, there can still remain maladaptive behaviours that are driven in great part by unmet physiological needs.

Formal functional assessments and ABA/IBI Behaviour Support Plans are often necessary and useful at this stage. ABA Functional Assessments typically evaluate the purpose of behaviour relative to the following needs areas: