Chapter 8 Let's get practical

Answer the following questions to determine which areas of your child's care you may need to pay more attention to.

1. When last did you play with your palm tree?

2. How often do you laugh together?

3. Are there photos, certificates, artwork or other proof of your palm tree's "achievements" on your walls or fridge?

4. Have you complimented or praised your palm tree in front of other people during the past week?

5. Have you recently given your palm tree an opportunity to experience a new adventure?

6. Is your reaction critical, sceptical or accusing when your palm tree tells a colourful story?

7. Do you shoot down your palm tree's plans or ideas when they sound impractical or unrealistic to you?

8. Do you create opportunities for your palm tree to socialise in a healthy environment?

9. Is your palm tree spending more time at home or away from home?

10. Can you ignore your palm tree's appearance and focus on the inside?

Write down a plan for addressing one of these needs once a week for eight weeks.

For example:

Monday 1: Put a photo of my palm tree on my night stand and tell him that it is wonderful to wake up each morning seeing his face.

Monday 2: Play swing ball with him as soon as his homework is finished.

Monday 3: Ask him which friend he wants to invite over on Friday and arrange it.

Monday 4: Take him out for a milkshake and chat about his dreams without being judgmental, without any advice, criticism, or trick questions.

Monday 5: Say something nice about him at the dinner table in front of the whole family.

Monday 6: Take him outside and let him show you how far he can jump, how fast he can run and how high he can throw the ball. Praise him and applaud. Also show him how far *you* can jump!

Monday 7: Put something he has made on the fridge or write down something cute he said and put that up.

Monday 8: Ask him what his favourite game is and try your best to play it with him.

I will …

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:

Week 6:

Week 7:

Week 8: