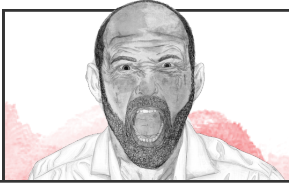


WHAT DOES SURVIVAL MODE LOOK LIKE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS?

The school gate, on the phone, nursery drop-off, parents' evening, meetings, therapy... what if the parent or carer in front of you is communicating through their behaviour that they are struggling?

Instead of labelling them a 'difficult parent' or a 'hostile carer', could we step into our curious and compassionate parts and explore if there is anything else that is going on?



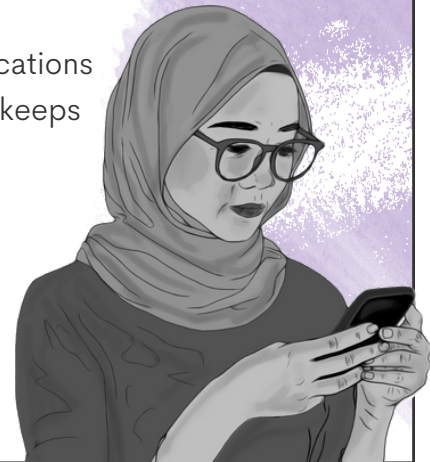
FIGHT



- Disproportionately angry
- Loses temper easily
- Reactive
- Defensive
- Consistently late for drop off/pick up
- Encourages to 'give as good as you get'
- Confrontational
- Controlling
- Tearful
- Dominates professionals' time



FLIGHT



- Consistently late for drop off/pick up
- Quick to leave/avoids other parents
- Avoids participation/never available
- Always on the phone
- Excessive exercise
- Child doesn't socialise with other children
- Ignores all communications
- Avoids eye contact/keeps head down
- Criticising
- Chaotic
- Panicked
- Tearful
- Blaming
- Anxious



FREEZE



- Disinterested
- Forgetful
- Ignores all communications
- Pre-occupied
- Collecting in pyjamas
- Consistently late for drop off/pick up
- Avoids parents' evening
- Victim stance
- Tolerates issues; doesn't seem to want resolutions
- Doesn't participate in meetings
- Backs down quickly if issues are raised
- Compliant
- Avoids eye contact/keeps head down



COLLAPSE



- Disengaged
- Hopeless
- Overwhelmed
- Forgetful
- Collecting in pyjamas
- Consistently late for drop off/pick up
- Avoiding parents' evening and all communication
- Oblivious to appearance of self and child

It is important to remember that like children, these behaviours need to be thought about in the context of a person's whole story and not as stand-alone evidence that a person is in survival mode.