

# The Responsive Process: Watch, Ask, Adapt

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## Step One: *Watch*

1. Try to see the world as the child sees it.
2. Begin by just watching, not rushing to do things for the baby.
3. Watch for both verbal and nonverbal cues.
4. Only by first learning from the child what he/she is calling for can you choose the right response.

## Step Two: *Ask*

1. Ask yourself how you can arrange the environment- physically, emotionally and socially - in ways that will assist the child the most.
2. Ask the child what he/she wants.
3. Ask yourself: What message is the child sending? What are the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical parts of the message?
4. Be aware of your own emotional state and feelings that may interfere with hearing the child's message, including your current feelings and those from past experiences.
5. Know your "hot spots" and "blind spots."

## Step Three: *Adapt*

1. Engage the child to discover the child's preferences.
2. Adapt your actions according to the child's desires.
3. Watch how the child responds to your actions.
4. Modify your actions according to the child's response.

# In Tune – Out of Tune

## **Being in Tune**

Being in tune is the heart of the science and art of caring for infants and toddlers.

It is knowing how to read and respond appropriately to infants and toddlers.

When the caregiver is in tune with the young children in her/his care, many crucial things happen:

- Love and respect are expressed to the child
- Trust is established with the child
- Confidence is instilled in the child
- Children learn that:
  - They are important
  - What they do makes a difference
  - They can express their emotions (pleasant or unpleasant) and see that someone else understands how they feel

***Infants who have someone in tune with them develop a sense of security and self-esteem.***

***There are rewards for the caregiver too. Interactions flow more smoothly and caregiving becomes easier.***

## **Out of Tune**

When the caregiver is out of tune and ignores the child's rhythm:

- The child may become frustrated
- The child may become confused
- The child may become fussy and fall apart
- The caregiver may become tense
- The caregiver may not know what will work with the child
- The caregiver and the child may become dissatisfied with the relationship

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# Ten Caregiving Gifts

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Gift One: Respond to infants in ways that encourage them to feel they can make things happen.

Gift Two: Help infants learn they have ways to take care of their own needs.

Gift Three: Help infants and toddlers develop confidence and trust in others.

Gift Four: Help babies learn about intimacy.

Gift Five: Help toddlers learn that adults cannot solve every problem.

Gift Six: Be tolerant of toddler's internal conflicts and desires.

Gift Seven: Help toddlers sort out the evaluations of adults.

Gift Eight: Match your reaction to the temperament of the baby.

Gift Nine: Exchange information with parents about their children.

Gift Ten: Remind children in care of the absent parents' continued existence.