



DIFFERENTLY WIRED PARENT GROUP STARTER KIT

A Note from Debbie Reber

Hello!

I'm so excited that you're looking to start a TiLT Together Differently Wired Parent Group. I know from the many parents I hear from that there is a strong desire to build local, in-person communities for parents raising exceptional kids, and I'm all for it! I recognize there's tremendous value in gathering with parents who truly "get" what we're experiencing for the sharing of resources and support, mentorships, friendships, and more.

Though as the organizer of your local group you are free to run it as you choose, I created this TiLT Together Kit to give you some ideas, resources, and suggestions for getting started. I hope you find it useful.

Lastly, please know this is a work in progress—I'd love to hear from YOU about your ideas for making these parent groups as beneficial as possible. Feel free to email me at debbie@tiltparenting.com at anytime with your suggestions and feedback.

Thanks again for bringing the differently wired revolution to your community!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie".

TiLT Together: Differently Wired Parent Group—Tips and Suggestions

Host Get-Togethers in a Private and Comfortable Space.

Because some parents may not be “out of the closet” with their differently wired kids, finding a location where they will feel “safe” to share is important. For example, a member’s living room, a cozy coffee shop, a meeting room in a library, a classroom in a school, etc.

Help People Feel Welcome.

As I’m sure you are aware, parents of differently wired kids often feel like outsiders in many parenting communities, so establishing a warm, welcoming atmosphere will be important, especially for members who may be publicly acknowledging their family’s reality for the first time. Simple things like being sure to be the first to arrive, greeting people when they show up, and introducing them to another person right away can help people feel like they’re in the right place.

Have a Plan for the Flow of the Meeting.

Consider having a rough agenda for the meeting, including the suggested length (such as 2 hours), and share it with attendees at the beginning so they have a sense of the flow.

Include Time for Personal Introductions. There is value in sharing and being heard by people who truly get it. I suggest allowing time at the beginning of each gathering for brief introductions. To ensure that the entire meeting time doesn’t get swallowed by introductions, consider creating a set of guidelines for the introductions. For example, having each attendee take no more than 2 minutes to share: their child(ren)’s name, age(s), grade(s), neurodifference(s), school(s), and what they’re hoping to get out of the TiLT Together group.

Decide, as a Group, on the “Guidelines.” Especially when you’re first launching a group, it’s important to get others’ input so that the group meets people’s needs and expectations as well as they can. Things to consider when determine the guidelines could include the purpose of the group, membership criteria if any, maximum size if applicable, rules that you can agree upon (such as respecting others’ choices and viewpoints), overall “tone” and “vibe” you want for your group, and more.

Frequently Asked Questions

How Frequently Should We Meet?

I suggest meeting every 4-6 weeks during the school year for parents who need that ongoing touchpoint and check-in, and knowing that different seasons often bring with them unique challenges for differently wired kids. However, if parents are organically drawn together because of kid-focused events (for example, Scouts or a social skills group, etc.), you might consider a more informal weekly check-in for the duration of the event.

How Should We Find Members?

Perhaps you already have a small group of parents you know that you're planning to reach out to, which is great. If you're looking to include more members of the community who would benefit from the group, you can reach out in a few ways: word-of-mouth, ask your child's school to include an announcement in a letter home or email update, ask your child's therapist(s) if they know of families who would benefit. Lastly, I will include a listing for the group on TiLT Parenting, including meeting times, location, and contact information.

Do We Have to Follow Any Specific Guidelines To Be a TiLT Together Group?

My request is that formal groups are in alignment with the mission and philosophy of TiLT Parenting. TiLT believes in full inclusion, respect, and equality on every level (race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political, economic, etc.), and values optimism, honesty, and possibility. For a deep dive into the philosophy behind TiLT, [read or listen to the Manifesto here](#).

What Should We Do During Meetings?

This is completely up to you, but ideas include: read relevant books together and discuss them, bring in local speakers on topics that would resonate with your community, share successes, challenges, and goals, tackle a different issue each meeting, screen films like *Angst* or *2e: Twice-Exceptional*, break into small discussion groups for strategizing and support, and more.

Ideas for Meeting Topics

INTENTION SETTING FOR SELF & FAMILY



This meeting can be about how people can more consciously create the kind of family culture that you want in your home. Questions to explore include: What kind of intentions do you want to set for yourself as a parent and for how you'd like to see your family thrive? How can you build in a regular practice of intention setting?

SELF-CARE



Self-care isn't optional for parents raising differently wired kids, but many of us act like it is. This meeting is about supporting parents in reflecting on the state of their self-care practice and explore ways to prioritize it. Questions to explore include: What beliefs are holding you back from prioritizing self-care in your life? What obstacles are in the way of your regularly practicing self-care? What does self-care mean for you? What can you commit to doing?

ALIGNING WITH YOUR PARTNER



Many couples struggle with having a parenting partner who isn't on the same page regarding who a child is or what that child needs to thrive. This meeting can be focused on exploring

where couples might be at an impasse and considering respectful ways to create more alignment.

SCHOOL CHALLENGES, IEPs, AND MORE



School will likely be the topic of many (if not all) get togethers. Specific things to explore could be navigating the IEP process, advocating in school, brainstorming around specific teacher and administrator-related challenges, bullying, pull-out support for gifted kids, how to change school culture, and more.

THERAPISTS, COACHES, & OTHER RESOURCES



Finding the right resources for our kids can be tricky. Using the meetings as a way to share referrals for providers who really *get* our kids is invaluable. Meetings on this theme could also look at things like how to navigate the "system" and insurance claims, what kinds of supports are covered, therapists and coaches who don't have waiting lists, and more.

TEEN-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES



Parenting differently wired teens can be uniquely challenging because of the hormones, the high levels of anxiety, the pressures faced by students as high school and beyond looms nearer, and complications regarding friendships and romantic relationships. Exploring teen issues will also benefit everyone, as it will give parents of younger kids a glimpse of what's to come.

Adapting the Differently Wired 7-Day Challenge for Your Group

The Differently Wired 7-Day Challenge, offered on TiLT Parenting, offers 7 short videos, each highlighting one practical, actionable thing parents can do to make a real change in the way they think, feel, and act in relation to their child, as well as a downloadable PDF mini-workbook. To adapt this for your TiLT Together group, you could tackle one action item during each meeting as a way to build that new habit while having the accountability of the group. In each meeting, you could check in on the previous month's successes and challenges, and commit to tackling the next action item for the coming month. The 7 action items are:

1: Become an Expert at Breathing

Your challenge: Commit to taking a breath, counting to five, and slowly exhale when you're in a tough situation with your child at least one time each day. Unless of course you have a day with no difficult situation, in which case, awesome! But, assuming you are taking these breaths, notice how they changed what was happening, both for you and your child.

2: Set a Daily Parenting Intention

Your Challenge: Set a daily intention for how you want to show up in your relationship with your child today and for every day throughout the rest of the challenge. Then, before you go to bed, reflect on your intention and see how you did. That nightly check-in will help you become even more intentional with the coming day.

3: Proactively Practice Self-Care

Your Challenge: Commit to doing at least one intentional self-care act today, and every day. And that's it. One thing per day, as big or small as you want it to be. As long as it's intentional and it's just for you.

4: Look for One Bright Spot Every Day

Your Challenge: Recognize one bright spot every day and then capture it in some way, whether you make note of it in your Differently Wired 7 Day Challenge workbook or take a picture that represents it or maybe you just tell someone about.

5: Memorize This Phrase: My Child Would Do Better if S/he Could

Challenge: Commit this phrase -- he would do better if he could OR she would do better if she could -- to memory. Perhaps write it down somewhere. And when you find yourself feeling annoyed with your child for something he or she child has done, recall this phrase, take it to heart, and notice how quickly your thinking can shift.

6: Explore the Question: What Am I Making This Mean?

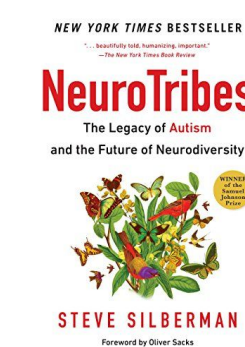
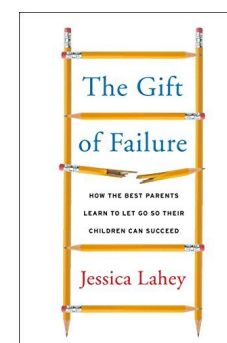
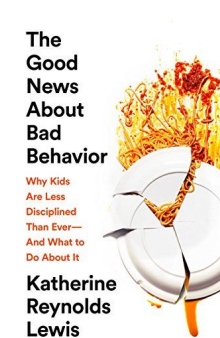
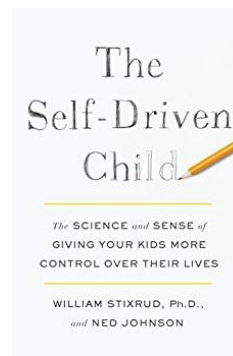
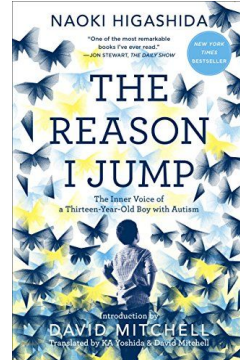
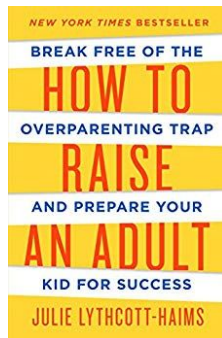
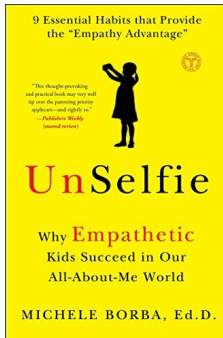
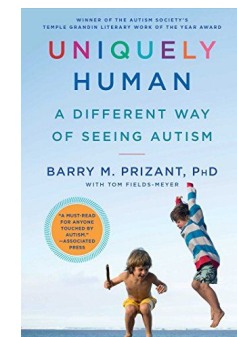
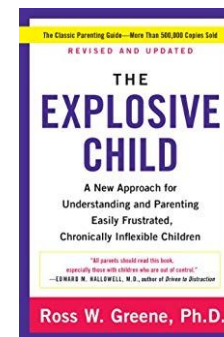
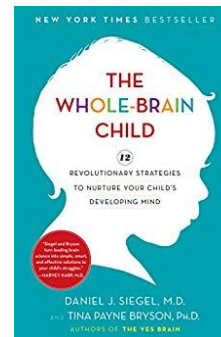
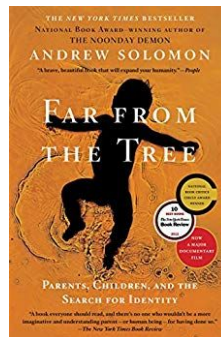
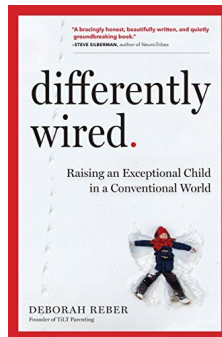
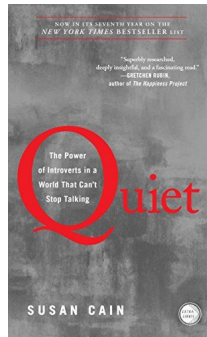
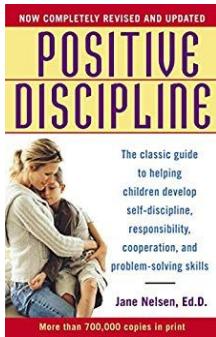
Challenge: Notice when you're emotionally triggered by something your child does and then explore exactly WHY you're triggered -- in other words, answer the question: What am I making this mean? Once you figure that out, see if you can dispute what you've come up with and remind yourself that this is about your child's abilities and skills, not you.

7: Give Yourself a Break and Push the Reset Button Every Night

Your Challenge: Consciously give yourself a break when you have a less than brilliant parenting moment, take responsibility for what happened however you need to, and push your own virtual reset button, whatever that looks like for you.

** Members of your group can download the workbook when they [sign up for the challenge here](#).*

Suggested Books for Reading & Discussion



Interested in “Differently Wired” Bulk Orders?

If your group has 10 or more people and you'd like to order copies of my book *Differently Wired*, you can get these at a substantial discount.

Workman Publishing offers 40% off the original retail price for 10-24 copies and 50% off for 25 copies or more. Shipping (in the US) is 7% of the total order.

If you'd like to bulk order *Differently Wired*, please email me at info@tiltparenting.com and I will connect you with the sales department at Workman.