

Conversations worth having...



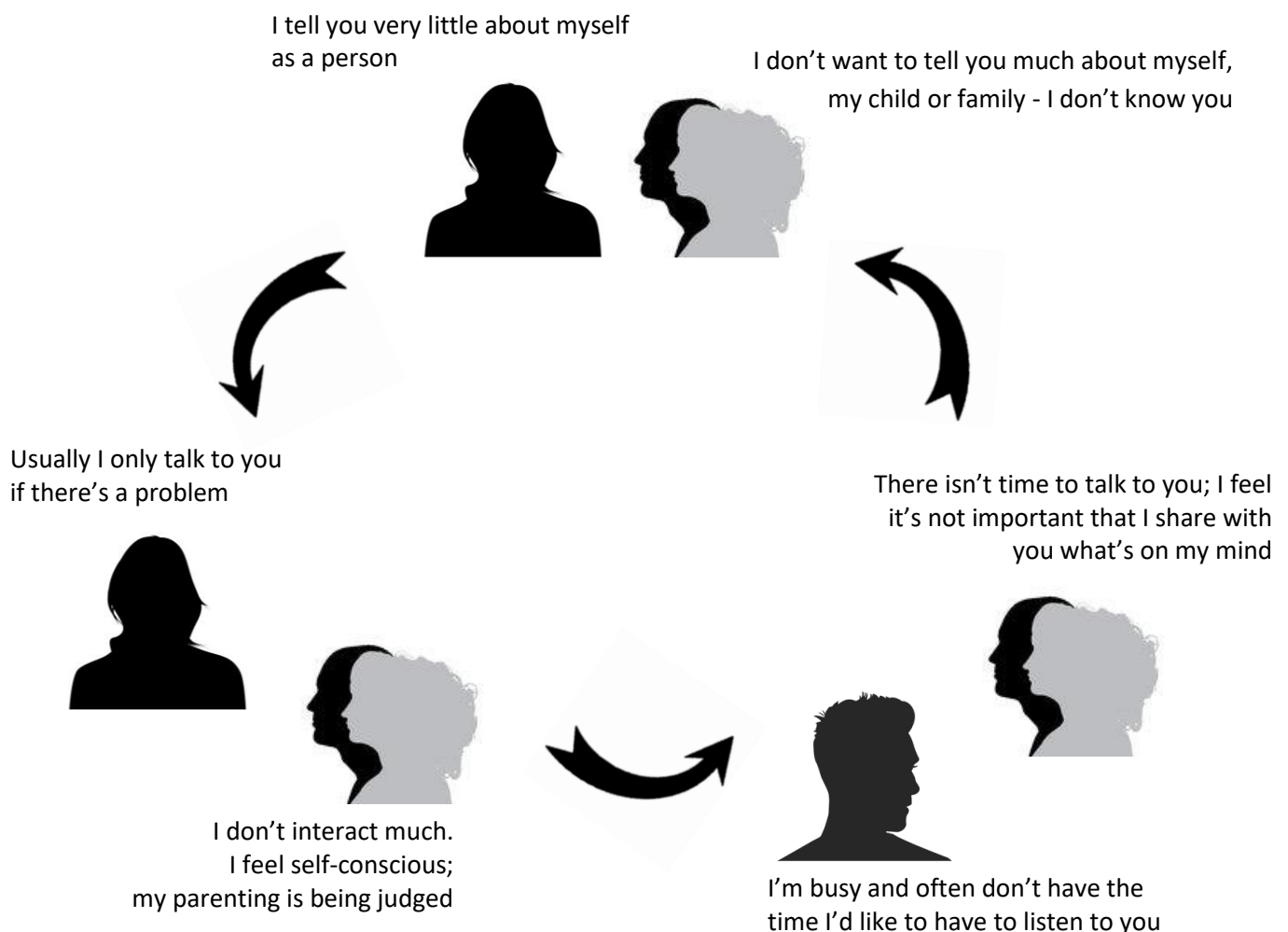
... between practitioners and parents/carers

How well do you and your practitioners relate to all parents/carers?

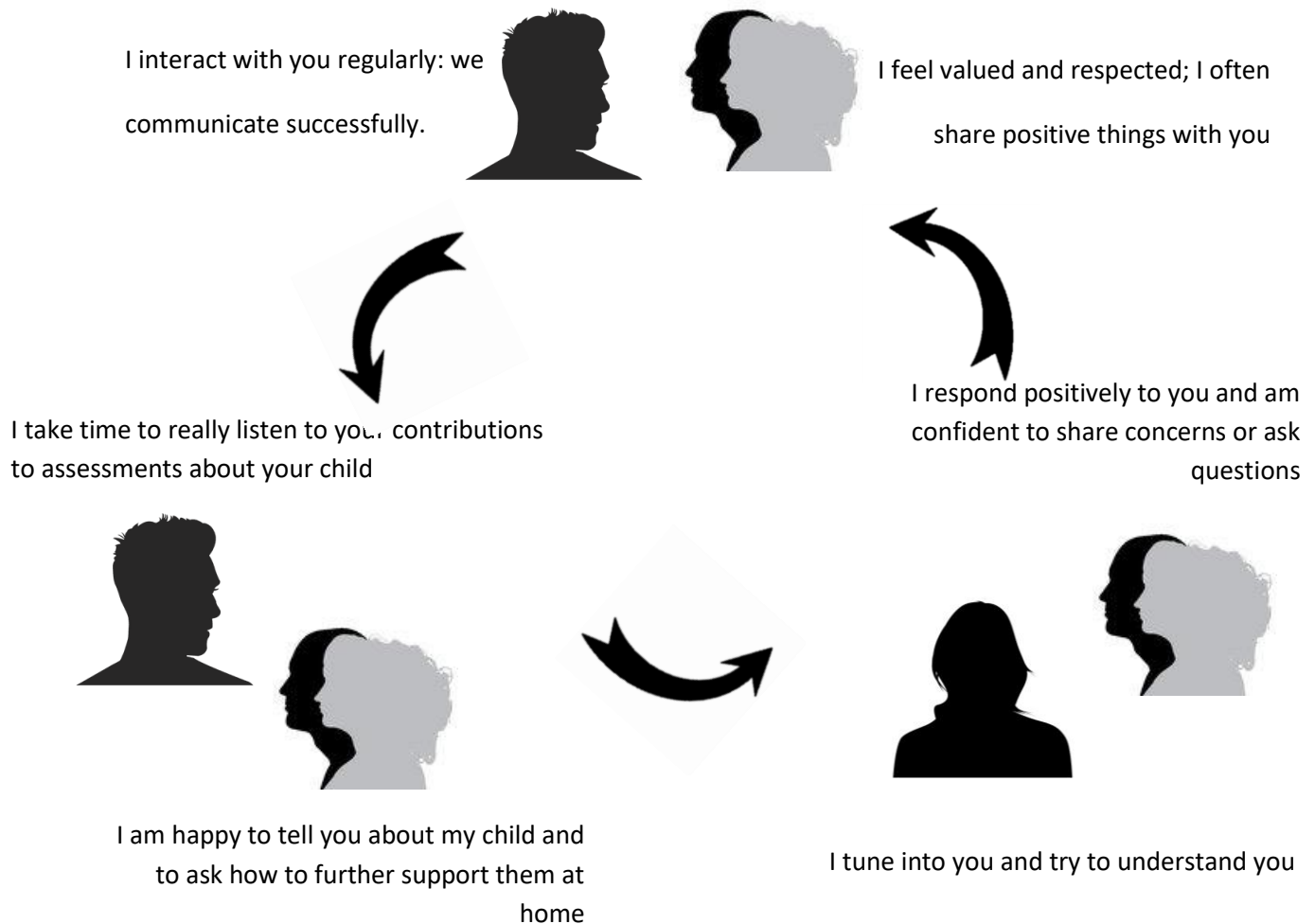
Early years practitioners are often highly skilled at interacting with children, but when it comes to effectively engaging **all** parents, they may be lacking in experience, knowledge and confidence. Newly qualified practitioners coming into the profession, for example, often say this element is lacking in their training. Providing support for all EYFS practitioners is crucial in engaging effectively with all parents and carers.

Practitioners report that some parents are easier to engage with and communicate with than others. This can actually become a perpetuating cycle. As early years practitioners, we need to be aware of positive and negative communication cycles and try to turn negative cycles to positive ones for all our families.

Negative communication cycles



Positive communication cycles



“Developing a partnership with parents involves a multi-faceted approach, but continual nourishment of relationships with parents will reap great rewards. At the end of the day, children prosper when all the important adults in their lives line up on the same sideline, encouraging them on and keeping them from crossing the boundaries. The trick is in getting all the players to agree on the direction of the goal and to work together to get there.” Patrick F. Bassett, 2010

- Start as you mean to go on and begin positive communications from the very beginning – this will help to ease parents’ and children’s anxieties.
- Remember that relationships need nurturing.
- Find out who are the key adults in each child’s life. It might be that a grandparent, older sibling or childminder/out of school provider plays a major part in a child’s day, supporting parents at drop off and collection times. It’s vital that our communication extends to include all key adults around each child.
- Think how will you remove barriers (these could be physical) at key points of the day to ensure that you are available to all parents. Consider the organisation of drop off and home time routines.