

# How To Stop Yelling At Your Kids

*21 Days of Tools and Support*



**by Sarah Rosensweet**

---

# Before You Get Started

“Stop Yelling At Your Kids: 21 Days of Tools and Support” is specifically designed to be completed over 21 days because it takes a long time to change a habit. But it can also be hard to keep up with a lesson every day.

If you need to take a break to absorb what you are learning, or if you want to spend more than a day on a particular step, go ahead! Go at your own pace with this program but stay with it. You are embarking on one of the most difficult things you’ve ever done.

All the resources, links and worksheets are at the end of this book. If you’d like to work from a printed out copy you can go to [this page](#) on my website to view the links.

I work with so many parents who want to stop yelling at their kids but don’t know how. The bad news is that it is very hard. The good news is that it is possible and you can do it!

Be patient.

Be compassionate with yourself.

Show up and do the work.

You can do this!

---

# I'm Here To Support You

Welcome! I'm so glad you are here. I'm Sarah Rosensweet. I'm a [Peaceful Parenting Coach](#) and mama to 3 big kids (two boys, ages 17 and 14, and a girl, age 11.)

This is a self-study program but there are lots of ways for you to get support. You can join [my Facebook group](#) for support from other parents on this same journey and you can always reach out to me if you are struggling. At several points in the course you are prompted to do so but feel free at any point.

Let's get started!





---

# day 1

## Welcome

Welcome to Day 1 of Stop Yelling At Your Kids!

Thank you for joining me. You are working to create a new habit: **self-regulation: remaining calm when things get heated.**

Self-regulation is a foundation of peaceful parenting. **Without self-regulation, connecting with your child and setting kind, firm limits with lots of empathy are very hard to manage successfully.**

And honestly it's hard to feel happy (or good about yourself) if you're yelling all the time.

Maybe you are a full-out shouty mom/dad, maybe you only lose it occasionally, maybe you just want to be

---

more patient with your children. Wherever you are, this course can help you become the parent you want to be. I'll show you how and support you along the way.

We're going to be making changes one day at a time. You'll have small wins and measurable change. One day you'll be amazed by how different you feel and how much more peaceful family life is.

**Fair warning: stopping yelling is not a magic wand that will get your kids to cooperate.**

Even the calmest parents still have to work really hard at this. But when you can manage to regulate yourself and you don't yell at your kids, they are more likely to want to cooperate. They feel closer to you and are more invested in your relationship.

**Before you can stop yelling you have to figure out what makes you start.**

Something happens to make you start yelling. We call that the trigger.

**What's a trigger? Whatever makes you yell or lose your patience with your children.** Some common ones include: being late, being ignored, siblings fighting, kids won't stay in bed, and rude talking. The list is potentially endless and is different for each of us.



---

# Today's Action Steps:

**1- Start tracking your triggers.** Get out a notebook or journal you can use for the duration of this course. Let's find out what your triggers are. Record all the details so we can begin to pay attention to them. You can use your notebook or the tracking sheet in the last section of this book.

- date/time
- at whom I yelled
- "why" I yelled
- contributing factors
- what was going on?
- warning signs- physical, emotional
- what could I have done differently?
- what's the feeling under my anger? (More on that later)

**2- Join our peaceful parenting [Facebook group](#).** Hop on over and introduce yourself to the other parents who are on this same journey. It's a great place for support. You are not alone.

I'm so glad you're here!



---

# day2

## Why Do We Yell?

First of all, a huge hug and congratulations to you that you are here.

Yesterday we started tracking our triggers. Today we're going to reflect a bit on the yelling in our lives, past and present.

**A desire to change is the first and hardest step toward changing your life.**

*You're here because you want to be more patient with your kids.*

*You're here because you want to know how to calm down instead of losing it.*

---

*You're here because you realize that yelling doesn't make anything better. It only makes things worse.*

*You're here because you've seen how scared and hurt your kids look when you yell and you know how bad it makes you feel about yourself.*

Many of us were yelled at as children. Often when things heat up we revert to what is familiar to us from our childhood. There is evidence that this patterned response actually gets wired into your brain. So if your parents yelled at you to try to change your behaviour, you will likely instinctively do the same, even if you remember how bad it made you feel when you were a child.

Or maybe you weren't yelled at but you have just gotten into the habit of yelling to get your kids to do what you want because you are Just So Tired.

Maybe you've gotten into the habit of yelling at your child to get them to cooperate. The problem with this is it hardens your child's heart and erodes the most powerful thing we have to influence our child: our warm connection.

If you made a mistake at work and your boss yelled at you and shamed you, would that make you do your job better? Or would it just erode your relationship and make you hate your job? Yelling at your kids breaks your connection with them and makes it harder to influence them in a loving, positive way.

**Here's the fundamental idea behind our challenge:**

**No one deserves to be yelled at.**

Even if you're really angry.

Even if they're being really bad.

**We all deserve to be treated with loving kindness.**



---

How does that idea sit with you? Do you feel any resistance? If you don't, great. You're already partway there. Your unconscious brain is keeping up with your conscious brain.

If you do feel resistance, where is it coming from?

When you were small, did someone yell at you (or hit you) and make you feel you "deserved it?" You didn't.

That adult was having a temper tantrum and tried to make you feel as if it was your fault. It wasn't.

*It is our job as parents to choose how to respond in a challenging situation and to manage ourselves so that we do NOT "lose it" on our children.*

Over the course of this program, you might find that there is still a small part of yourself carrying some hurt from when you were a child.

Consciously love that child and tell them that they did nothing to deserve being hurt and scared by the adult they loved more than anything. If this is still really hard, you might want to find someone you trust who can help you do some healing.

**But wait! How do you stop yelling? We're going to go over lots of strategies in the "how" of this stop yelling challenge. To get you started, here's a quick stop yelling strategy:**

If you find yourself yelling today: just stop! **In the middle of a yell, just close your mouth.** Forget about the whatever you were yelling about for just a second. Drop your agenda. Don't take any action or make any decisions when you are angry. Turn away, take a breath. And another breath.

**Stop.... Drop.... Breathe.** This is your first mantra! (What's a mantra? It's a word or phrase you can repeat to yourself to keep yourself focussed and on track. More to come on mantras....)

---

## Today's Action Steps:

**1- Write in your notebook.** Take a few minutes to reflect on the topics I raised in this chapter.

--Were you yelled at as a child? How did it make you feel? Why is it hard to break the cycle?

--"No one deserves to be yelled at." What comes to mind when you read this statement? Where do those thoughts come from?

--Why do you want to stop yelling at your children?

**2- STOP. DROP. BREATHE.** Find yourself in the middle of a yell? Shut your mouth, drop your agenda and take a deep breath. Just bite your tongue and walk away.

*You can do this!*



# day3

## Make Your Commitment

Yay Day 3! Yesterday we reflected on yelling. Today is your commitment day. **Today you will commit to yourself and your family that you want to stop yelling.** Big breath! It's so great that you're doing this.

We have lots of fun stuff to do today.

First: **Make a pledge to yourself and then make it public.**

Get everyone on board! Ask your partner for support. Ask your best friends if you can call them to vent. Ask your kids to help you.

*Public accountability (i.e. telling your family) is a powerful motivator.*

---

Tell your kids. "Hey kiddos. I know I have yelled at you/lost my patience/been a grouchy mama/papa a lot. I don't want to do that anymore. I'm going to try my hardest and though I might not always be able to do it, I want you to know I'm trying."

### **Ask your kids for help.**

Your children are the main reason that you are here and they will be your biggest helpers. They will love to be part of this. How can they help you?

**1- They are going to make you a sticker chart!** My mentor Dr. Laura calls this a "Respectful Voice" chart. You're still guiding and making requests of your children, only now you're just doing it in a respectful voice and not by yelling. (Psst... don't let the task of making a chart stop you. Use mine from the resources at the end if you like. But it is fun to make one with your children!)

Here's the deal: At the end of every day, ask your children to give you a sticker if you didn't yell. They will love it! (If you feel that it will be too hard to get through even one day without yelling, divide the day into 2 parts. If you make it to lunch without shouting, you get a sticker. You need measurable wins! Baby steps!)

**2- Ask your kids to tell you whether there are signs that you're going to yell.** Trust me, they know. Write these down in your notebook so you become more aware of when you need to Stop, Drop and Breathe.

**3- Put up reminders.** Make signs with your children to hang around the house. We're going to give you lots more sign material soon, but keep it simple for now. "No yelling mama/papa!" will suffice.

*Celebrate your new commitment!! Don't worry. You don't have to be perfect!*

---

## Today's Action Steps:

- 1- Pledge your commitment to friends and family.
- 2- Ask for help and support.
- 3- **Make your Respectful Voice Chart.** (Or use the one at the end of this book.)
- 4- Put up reminders.
- 5- Ask your kids for your “warning signs” and write them down.
- 6- Come over to [the Facebook group](#) and share your respectful voice chart!

Thank you for being here and making this commitment. You can do this.





# day4

## Fight-Flight-or-Freeze

Welcome to Day 4. Yesterday was pledge day. Did you reach out for support? Are you using your Respectful Voice Chart?

**Today we are talking about getting hijacked by our emotions and the physical warning signs that it is about to happen.**

A major part of stopping yelling is getting to the point where you notice and stop yourself BEFORE you yell.

There are warning signs but you might not recognize them yet. The warning signs are the physical sensations associated with Fight-Flight-or-Freeze.

Don't worry if you can't do this yet. It takes practice and a lot of self-observation.

---

When you experience stress (potential danger) your body gets ready to take action to keep you safe. **This is called the Fight-Flight-or-Freeze response and it is the body's physical responses to stress.** When we get upset, or triggered, by something our child is doing (or not doing) our body goes into a state of emergency. Our brains shift from our "rest and digest" mode (parasympathetic nervous system) to our "lizard brain" mode (automatic response sympathetic nervous system.) **Our logical thinking brains literally go off-line.**

**Fight-or flight is your brain and body's response to a perceived threat to keep you safe.** This is evolutionarily helpful for escaping from a wolf that is trying to eat you- you can fight the wolf, run away from it, or freeze and play dead.

But it's not so helpful when you're trying to make dinner. In fight-or-flight, the perceived threat (siblings fighting during the witching hour when you're trying to get a meal on the table) causes your brain to send a message to your body "this is dangerous!" to get you all riled up.

**Your logical thinking brain gets hijacked and convinces your body it's an emergency.** Your heart is racing, it's hard to breathe, and you just want to act! Energy builds up.

**We're not thinking clearly and our child looks like the enemy.** THIS- THIS MOMENT- is when we do and say things we later regret.

"Stop it you two right now! Can't you see I'm trying to make dinner? What is the matter with you?" Boom. Sad, scared faces.

*The thing is you probably feel better in that moment because you've just discharged the angry feelings. But your children feel worse. And then you feel terrible for hurting them.*

We can learn a lot from our fight-or-flight response. We can learn to recognize the warning signs and we can learn to get ourselves out of it and back into our logical brain. Breathing forces our bodies into a more calm state, a mantra activates our logical thinking brain.

---

## Today's Action Steps:

**1- Start to try to notice notice the physical signs of fight-flight-or-freeze.** Answer these questions in your notebook: What does it feel like in your body? What changes do you notice? How are you breathing? Does it feel like an emergency?

**2- Notice your feelings and use your mantra "Stop... Drop... Breathe"**

**3- You're tracking your triggers, yes? Record on your chart or in your notebook some warning signs you notice.** Being aware of your warning signs is the first step in stopping the shout.

**4- Share** them in [the Facebook group](#)!



# day5

## Shift That Angry Energy

Welcome to Day 5. This is hard work!

Yesterday we talked about recognizing when you're angry (triggered) and looking for the physical signs that you're about to get hijacked by fight-or-flight. Have you been able to notice some?

**Your next step in the challenge is to recognize your anger and choose not to act on it.**

Everyone gets angry. We can't avoid it. *The choice we have is what we are going to do with that anger.* Do we let it fly and off load it onto our children?

You're here because you don't want to do that.

---

**So when you notice those signs, and you feel the anger rising, CHOOSE NOT TO ACT ON IT.**

Of course this is not easy. But you can do it. You need something to do instead.

*Remember how I said that you feel better after a yell? This is because you've discharged all that Fight-or-Flight yucky energy.*

**We need some alternative strategies to accomplish the same thing without yelling.**

Today we are developing strategies to physically dispel the fight-or-flight angry energy.

What can you do instead of yelling? Any or all of these things until you feel your energy shifting.

- Stop drop breathe
- Walk away
- Drink a glass of water
- Splash water on your face
- Do push ups
- Do jumping jacks
- Shake your hands
- Jump up and down
- Shout out the front door
- Laugh or be silly
- Pretend to throw a fit and laugh instead of yell

What else can you add?

**This is the key: Recognize you're getting hijacked and choose not to act on it.**

Or if it's too late, stop! Mid-yell. Stop. Shut your mouth. Turn away. Do something from the list to disperse the angry fight-or-flight energy.

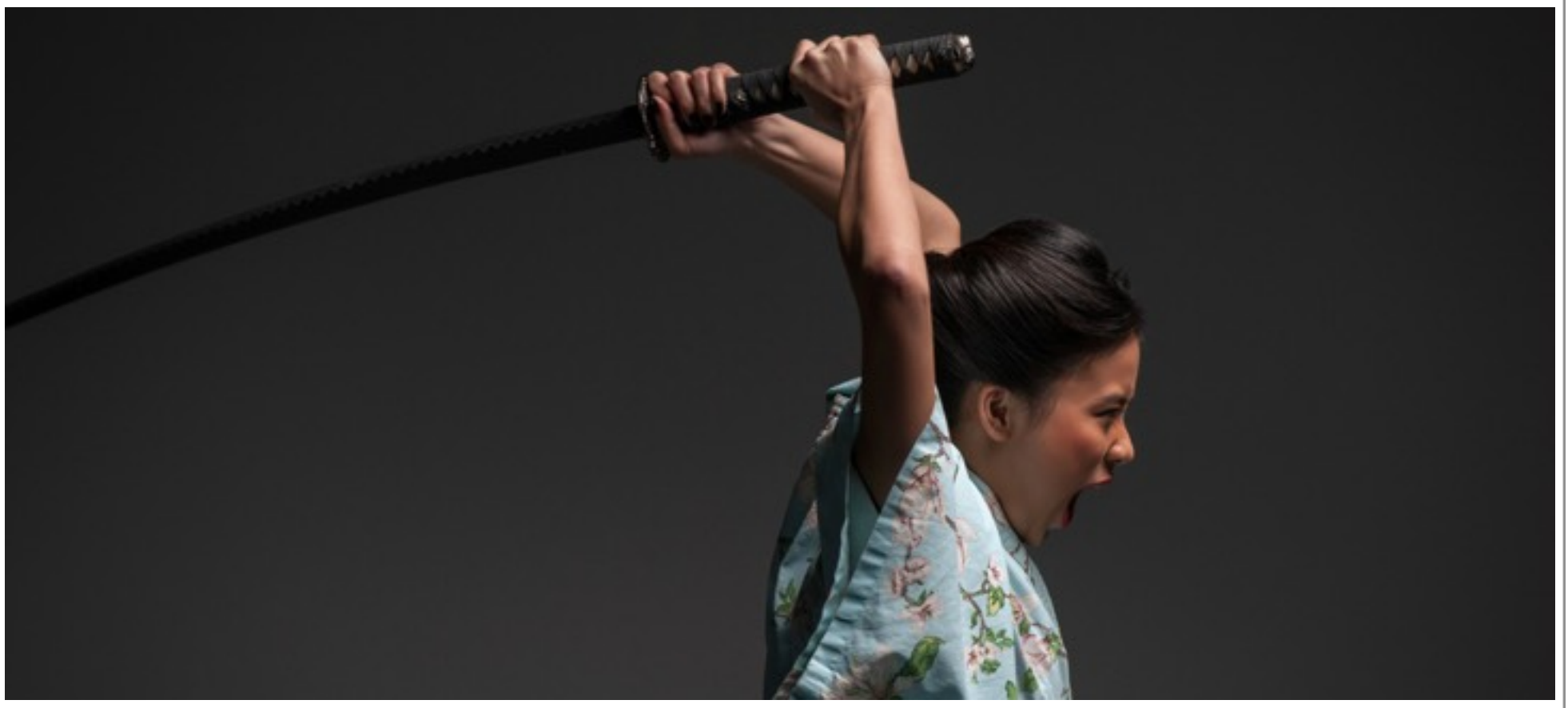
**Every time you don't yell, your brain is creating new pathways and building a new habit.**



---

## Today's Action Steps:

- 1- Next time you get triggered: Use your alternatives to yelling to shift your angry energy.
- 2- Make a sign of your alternatives to yelling and post it up somewhere visible. (Or print out the one in the resources at the end of the book.)



# day6

## Anger -and Emotion

Yesterday we talked about how you can recognize your anger and do something to physically dispel the energy. Let's take this even deeper today.

**Anger is a protective emotion. What is underneath anger is a more tender and vulnerable emotion that is scarier to feel.**

Anger is projected outward. It's the other person's fault. What's under the anger often causes us distress. It's easier and less painful to get angry.

When someone says something mean to you you are more likely to say, "What a jerk! The nerve of that person" rather than "Wow, that really hurt my feelings."

---

If your coworker criticizes some work you did, do you recognize that you feel small and insecure and not good enough? Or do you silently seethe, and think horrible thoughts about them?

**Your more vulnerable emotions are hiding under your anger. It's the same with our relationships with our children.**

If your kids aren't listening to you, you might feel angry but underneath you feel not seen and disrespected. If your son won't do his homework, you might feel angry but underneath you might feel anxious about his future. If your child talks back to you, you get angry, but really your feelings are hurt.

**It's hard to be emotionally vulnerable like this. In our culture we often see vulnerability as weakness. It's not.**

According to researcher Brene Brown, being vulnerable is the key to what she calls 'whole-hearted living': "Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path."

**When you feel angry- what's underneath the anger? What's the feeling that is scary to feel? By getting in touch with that feeling, and letting yourself feel it, you can move through it. Breathe into the feeling. Take a minute. Cry if you need to. Tears heal. This is hard stuff.**

What is the message the anger is giving you? What changes do you need to make? What work do you need to do on yourself? What message do you need to tell yourself?

If your child is talking back, and it hurts your feelings, maybe you need to give yourself some more love. Maybe you need to ask why you are taking it personally? She is only 5!

If you are worried about your son’s homework and therefore his future, maybe you need to look at your own anxiety level. Maybe you need to tell yourself “his grades when he’s 8 won’t mean he doesn’t go to college. He’s just a kid. This doesn’t mean he won’t be able to succeed in school.”

**The key is to address the feeling under the anger. Give yourself so much compassion for those tender feelings.**

Here’s a great graphic from The Gottman Institute:



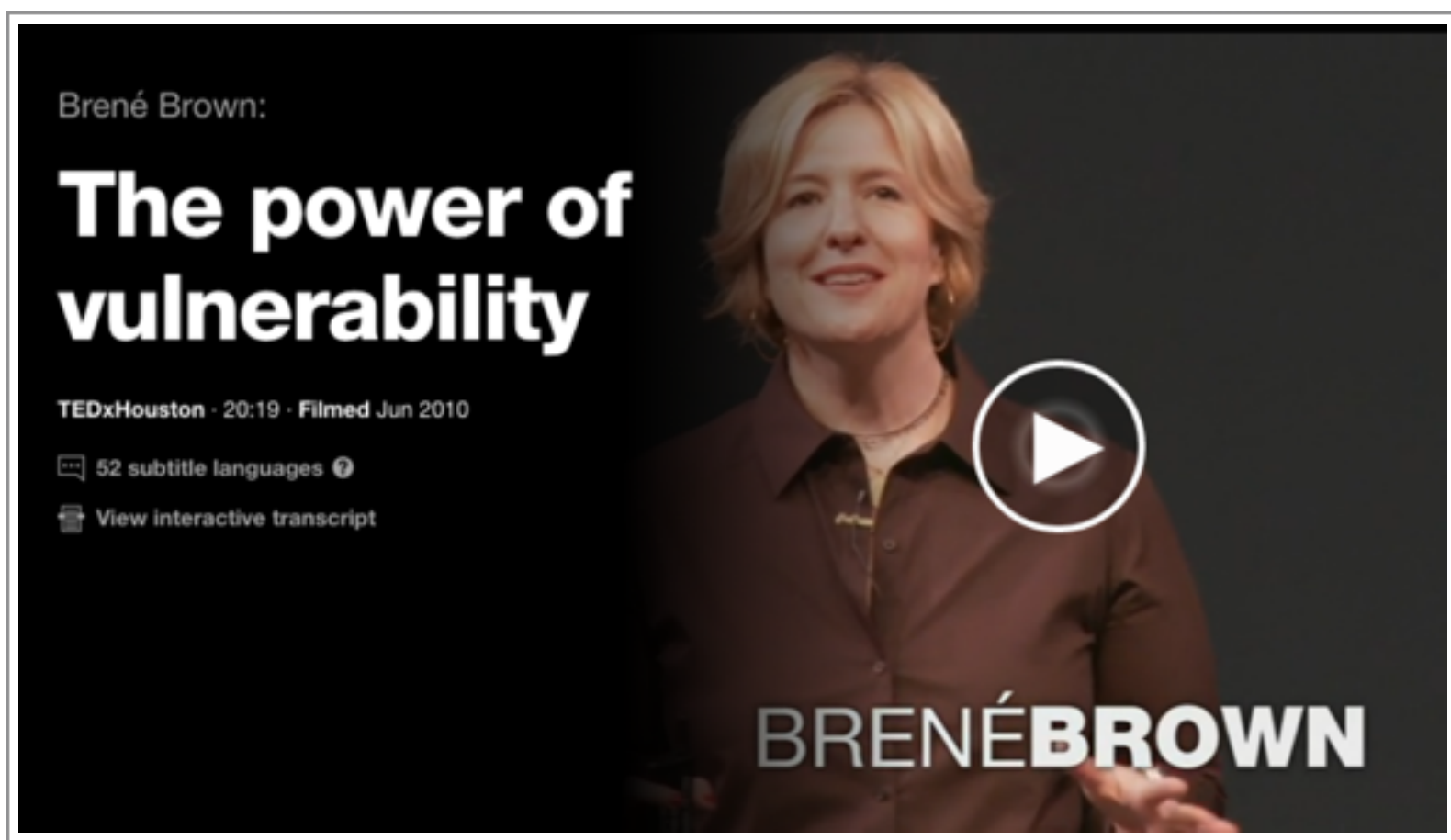
---

## Today's Action Steps:

**1- Start using the last column on the trigger chart.**

**2- Write in your journal before bed tonight.** What did you feel today? Where was it in your body? Can you get to that space again and give yourself a chance to go into it? (If you can do this in the moment- so great. But if you can't manage until later that's okay too.)

**3- Watch this great bonus video** about the power of vulnerability and wholehearted living.







---

# day 7 Mantras

Today is all about mantras. (Before I go any further, this sounds all 'woo-woo' but I promise it's not. A mantra is just a fancy word for talking to yourself.)

**A mantra is a phrase you can repeat to yourself to renew your focus, settle yourself, and remind yourself of what's important.**

A mantra can cut through all the chatter and old stories your brain is playing and help to get you out of Fight-or-Flight and back to your logical brain. A mantra reminds you of what's important.

**A mantra is your best self talking to your upset self.**

---

Here is a list of mantras a parent in my Facebook group put together. Use some of them or make up your own. The point is to make it meaningful to you.

- Respond. Don't react.
- I am more than enough.
- She's acting like a kid because she is a kid.
- This is not an emergency. No one's dying. This will be ok.
- I'm the role model for my kids.
- I'm the grown-up.
- Whatever happens, I can handle it.
- My kids will be ok. They need me, not a perfect parent.
- He's acting like this because he needs my love and guidance.
- If I remember this in a year, I'll be laughing about it.
- Kids need love. Especially when they least deserve it.
- I breathe in love. I breathe out love.
- Each of us is a person with problems doing the best we can.
- My child is alive.
- This too, shall pass.
- He's not giving me a hard time, he is HAVING a hard time.
- I'm a great parent and my kid is a great kid. Everyone has their moments.
- Pause. Take a breath. Walk away.
- I'm not responsible for the emotional regulation of the people in my family.
- You are safe, I love you, we can make it better.
- I am a great teacher for my kids.
- I am patient and loving with my kids, even when they're crabby and I'm frustrated.
- I am an excellent partner and parent.
- I have created a healthy and productive daily routine for myself and the kids.
- I express my anger in healthy ways.
- I am kind and loving to people around me, ESPECIALLY my family.
- I model proper emotional responses for my kids every day.
- Today I will act like the mom I want my kids to remember.
- Give a piece of your heart, not a piece of your mind.
- I'm doing the best I can/They're doing the best they can.



## Today's Action Step:

**1- Pick a few mantras that resonate and put them up around the house.** You can make them plain or fancy. There are some fun coloring pages on the web. My daughter made me this one that I've got hanging in my office.

**2- Use your mantras when things feel tough.**

Take a moment to breathe.





---

# day8

## You Are Your Child's Role Model

Yesterday we talked about using mantras to talk yourself back into your logical brain. Today I want to talk some more about a big "why" of emotional self-regulation.

**We are our children's role model. Everything our children learn about managing emotions and self-regulation they learn from us.**

They will treat others how they are treated. They will manage their own emotions the same way that we manage ours.

---

If I don't want to see my son screaming at his sister when he's angry, I have to model how to calm myself down and use a respectful voice when I'm angry.

If I want my daughter to be able to feel sad, cry, process her emotions and make it through the feeling, I have to not only welcome her emotions but to feel my own and not stuff them down.

Vancouver psychologist Gordon Neufeld says that to live our lives to our fullest potential we need to do 3 things: rest, play and **feel our feelings**.

**Our children need to be able to experience setbacks, sadness, disappointments, rejections, failures- and be able to get up and go on knowing that they will be okay.**

**This is emotional resilience.** Difficulties are part of the human condition and are part of a whole-hearted life.

**When we work on developing our own emotional resilience (I can feel difficult feelings and they will pass) and practice self-regulation (I can choose not to act on those feelings) we leave our children a lasting and wonderful legacy.**

They have the chance to live their lives to the fullest potential through emotional resilience, and the ability to express emotion in a way that doesn't hurt people they love.

Isn't that great?

**And if we blow it, we apologize. Nobody's perfect. We all mess up. Even if you try your hardest at this you will still have your moments where you lose it.**

Apologize. Show your children that when we hurt people we love we do our best to make amends.

Keep it up! You're doing great! Keep trying! You don't have to be perfect!



---

## Today's Action Steps:

1- Read [this blog post](#) about emotion coaching.

**2- Welcome a difficult feeling in your child.** This is hard! We often go to great lengths to prevent our children from experiencing unhappiness. It's okay if your child feels bad. Be calm, be empathetic, know that it will pass.

**3- Welcome a difficult feeling in yourself.** Be your own loving empathetic parent-surround yourself with love, tell yourself it will pass.

**4- Reflect in your journal** on how you were parented with respect to emotion. How does that affect how you are with your children? How can you do it differently?

---

# day9

## Analyze Your Triggers

Today we are going straight to action steps.

**Let's look closely at our triggers. The information you are discovering about yourself gives you the tools you need to make big changes in your responses.**

### Today's Action Steps:

Get out your notebook and reflect on the following questions. Your answers to these will help to be vigilant and recognize the warning signs. Your answers will show you when you have to be extra attentive to how you react in the moment.

**1- Look back and see if the times you have yelled have anything in common. Use your notebook to write down what you notice.**

- What time of day or in what situation do I commonly yell? Maybe getting out the door on time, or getting the kids to bed is the time of day when you're most likely to yell.

- 
- What are some warning signs that I am about to yell? Can you start to recognize those feelings before you yell?
  - What could I have done to prevent this from happening? What else was going on?

## **2- Let's look at what's under the anger.**

- What are some common circumstances (triggers) that bring up an emotional reaction from you? Maybe you yell the most when the children are fighting with each other. Maybe it's when your child calls you mean.
- What are the feelings under the anger that make me yell? Maybe you're worried your older child is bullying your younger and it brings up old fearful memories of when you were little. Maybe you worry you're not a good dad and when your child says you're mean it cuts straight to your heart.

## **3- What is the real "WHY?"**

These are messages for you to investigate further. In Day 6 we talked about anger as a sign that there is a more vulnerable emotion underneath that needs attention.

- What is it about these situations that are hard for you?
- How can you address THAT feeling instead of the anger? Can you take a minute and breathe into the feeling until it passes?

**4- Some triggers are avoidable and you can change the situation to prevent yourself from being triggered. Sometimes you can do nothing to change the situation.**

**Maya Angelou said:  
If you don't like something, change it.  
If you can't change it, change your attitude.**

- Look at your triggers and sort them into those you can prevent and those you can't.

---

Preventable: If you can prevent it, what change can you make to stop getting triggered?

For example: If you yell a lot in the morning, you might be able to start getting ready earlier, or get things together the night before, helping you to not get triggered in the morning.

Unpreventable: Maybe your child is just not a morning person and nothing you do can make them more agreeable in the morning. Can you accept this about your child and move on? Give them extra leeway for their grumpiness or slowness. Stretch your own tolerance for the morning not going how you want. Can you change your attitude?

**6- Choose ONE trigger that you can do something to prevent and take the needed action.** If it doesn't feel like too much- also choose a trigger that you need to change your attitude about. (If this is too much right now- you can add another in later.)

**7- Decide which triggers will be next. When you feel confident, add another to take action on.** Put them in your calendar and set a reminder to add another trigger.

When you have decided on your one trigger to tackle, come over to [the Facebook page](#) and share it with us!



# day 10

## Setting Limits

When we started I warned you that not yelling isn't the magic wand that will get your kids to behave. But hopefully by now you have seen that kids who aren't yelled at are more responsive and cooperative.

If your kids are worse? That's also normal. PLEASE email me and let's have a conversation about what's going on. Sometimes kids who are yelled at a lot will really "test" you to see if you mean it when you say you want to stop.

The scope of this course is parental self-regulation- but I want to share a bit with you about setting limits. We are less likely to yell when we are skilled at setting limits.

---

Here are a few tips about setting limits:

- **Get your child's attention before you set a limit.** Don't call across the park that it's time to go while your child is immersed in swinging. Go over and tap them on the shoulder. Wait until you have their attention and can look into their eyes. Anything else is an invitation to be ignored.
- **Give choices whenever possible.** "Do you want to leave the park now or in 5 minutes?" Get your child to 'buy in' to the answer: "Okay 5 minutes! Do we have a deal? Pinky shake?"
- **See it from your child's point of view.** Your child is having so much fun swinging. Even if you know you are coming back tomorrow, and you have been at the park for an hour already, it is hard to stop something that they enjoy so much.
- **Set limits with empathy.** Often your child will be much more agreeable if they feel you understand. "I know you want to keep swinging sweetie. It is so much fun! I love swinging too. I bet you wish you could do it forever!" You are on the same side as your child. You really wish it were possible to stay at the park all night. Feeling understood makes children more cooperative.
- **Give an invitation to play.** "Let's pretend you're a baby dinosaur and I'm the mommy dinosaur and we'll race to the car!" It's a rare child that can resist an invitation to play.
- **Don't wait to set a limit.** Sometimes we give our children so many chances to comply with our limits that we end up getting angry and blowing up when they don't listen. Follow the suggestions above and don't be afraid to be firm (but still kind!) It's time to go. Don't ask 5 times and then blow up when you ask the 6th time. Do what you need to do to follow through.
- **Allow for and welcome all feelings.** It's okay if your child feels bad about a limit you have set. Remember how we've been talking so much about how you have to feel your feelings to get over them? It's the same thing with your child. They have

---

to be allowed to feel the disappointment of a limit you have set. They are allowed to cry because it's time to leave the park. In fact, when they can cry and be disappointed, and you know they will be okay, and then they are okay, they are developing emotional resilience.

- **Don't be punitive.** Your child doesn't need to be punished to learn to meet your expectations. In fact, punishment will make your child LESS likely to cooperate in the long run. If you want your child to see you as an ally, to care about others, to make the right choice when no one is looking, and to develop self-discipline, don't punish them. Punishment is anything you do on purpose to make your child feel bad- including time-outs and 'consequences.' ([read more about this idea from my mentor Dr. Laura Markham](#))

## Today's Action Steps:

- Practice these tips for setting limits!





# day 11

## Prescription For Calm

Let's look at your triggers again. Today we are going to figure out what you need to be calm.

**When you look at the circumstances under which you yelled (or almost yelled!) are there some commonalities?**

Do you yell more when you're tired? When you're hungry? When you haven't gotten any exercise? When you haven't gotten outside? When you haven't had any time alone? When you've had a fight with your partner? Do you need adult time with friends? Do you crave time to work on creative pursuits?

---

**Doing what you need for yourself (aka self-care) keeps you out of the breakdown lane.**

My personal needs are exercise, enough sleep and time alone. All of those things were hard to get when my kids were little and if I didn't get them I found myself in the breakdown lane.

**What's your prescription for calm? How can you make it happen?**

Don't tell me there is nothing you can do! Where there's a will there's a way...

**Get creative.** Can you trade an hour a few times a week with another parent? Get your partner to take over one night a week? Go to bed once a week (or more) with the kids? I still do this!

What do you need to be successful in your goal of stopping yelling? If you are really stuck, please post the problem you need help solving in the Facebook group. We can help you figure out a solution.

## Today's Action Steps:

- **Choose one thing you need to change and figure out some possibilities to make it happen.** Write it down in your notebook. And do it!
- **Set a timer on your phone to go off every hour.** Ask yourself, "What do I need right now?" Notice how you feel. We often neglect simple things like going to the bathroom, drinking, eating, breathing!



# day 12

## Mindfulness

How are you doing? Are you making some progress and getting some stickers on your Respectful Voice chart? Are you yelling less than you did before or at least stopping mid-yell?

I hope so! If you are feeling frustrated PLEASE send me an email and tell me what you are having trouble with. I want you to be successful!

**We've been talking a lot about noticing our emotions, feeling them, breathing through them and letting them go.**

**There is a tool that can help you with this: RAIN.**



---

**RAIN is an acronym for what to do when you have big emotions.**

- **R****ecognize** what is happening and what you are feeling.
- **A****ccept** that feeling. Your feelings are your feelings and they are unavoidable.
- **I****nvestigate** the sensations in your body. What are you feeling and where? What do you notice about the sensations?
- **N****ot Identifying** with the feeling. This feeling is a passing feeling- it is not WHO you are.

**Guess what this is? Mindfulness.**

I used to think mindfulness was sitting in a quiet room, cross-legged, focussing on your breath and trying not to think. I know now there is more to it than that

**Mindfulness is a way to rewire your brain so you don't get hijacked by your emotions without realizing it.** This is what happens when you 'lose' it!! With mindfulness, you can notice your emotions and choose not to act on them- you don't get hijacked as easily when you are paying attention to the feelings.

This is really hard at first. But it gets a lot easier with practice. You can do this!

## Today's Action Steps:

- **Mindfulness:** I encourage you to set aside a few minutes a day for a dedicated mindfulness practice. This will strengthen your mindfulness muscles for when you really need them. [Here's some info to get you started.](#)
- **RAIN:** I encourage you to use the RAIN process to notice your emotions, feel them and let them go.



---

# day 13

## Mindset

We now have most of the tools you need to stop yelling in place. You:

- have **made your commitment** to stop yelling
- are using your **Respectful Voice Chart**
- have strategies to use to **shift your angry energy**
- you have **mantras** to help you get back into your logical thinking brain
- you are **tracking your triggers**
- you are **making changes in your trigger situations** or your attitude

- 
- **you are trying to take care of yourself** so you don't get triggered
  - you are using **mindfulness tool** (RAIN) to help you with emotion so you can work toward not getting hijacked
  - you know to **"Stop...Drop...Breathe"**

Stop for a moment and congratulate yourself on being here. **As my mentor Dr. Laura says: "It's so simple. But it's the hardest thing you'll ever do."**

Today let's talk some mindset changes you are going to need to make to be successful in your goal. Can you let go of the SHOULDs?

**When we think our child SHOULD behave in a certain way or we SHOULD be able to accomplish XYZ, life is a lot harder because our realities are not in line with our expectations.**

Can we open our minds to the possibility that we are enough and take a little pressure off of ourselves? Can we recognize that our children are doing the best they can?

**The conflict between reality and our expectations (our SHOULDs) can be enough on its own to send us into Fight-or-Flight.**

I read a beautiful blog post about this recently. A mama realized she was completely unhappy because she was being ruled by her SHOULDs and losing sight of what was really important to her.

"Because my happiness was based on external measures—on tasks being completed, plans running accordingly, goals being met, hairs being in place—I was continually disappointed ... upset ... impatient ... and stressed. In the process of making my own life miserable, I'd funneled my unhappiness straight into my daughter's once joyful heart and spirit. Her pain was a direct reflection of the expression I wore on my face."

---

Wow. That really goes straight to my heart. Yes, we need to get certain things accomplished in our lives, but with children often life gets in the way and being caught up in the SHOULDs puts us in a place of darkness.

**What if just for today you could look at not what you SHOULD get done or SHOULD be, but have a moment of gratitude for what you are already doing (keeping the children alive and loving them!) and how much you already are?**

Your child is also doing the best they can. As a small person with very little impulse control and an ineffective method of trying to get their needs met, there will be many, many times that they don't do what they SHOULD.

**What if just for today you could try to let go of the SHOULD that your child is falling down on?**

Whatever they did that was super-annoying or made you mad, can you look a little deeper and see why they did that? Your child can't tell you that they had a hard day at preschool but they can protest loudly when you cut their sandwich the wrong way. They can hit their sibling on the head with a truck but they can't tell you "I'm afraid you've gone and replaced me and you don't love me anymore." They can't stop themselves from jumping on the couch because it is SO MUCH FUN and they are only 4 years old.

**Your child isn't giving you a hard time, they're having a hard time.** It's really hard to be a child! Or maybe your child is just acting that way because that's how 5 year olds act! Sometimes we expect way too much of our children. Letting go of the SHOULD can help you be way more patient. If you can change your attitude, you will be able to be way more patient. Your child isn't giving you a hard time, they're having a hard time.

**Remember: We are all doing the best we can. Try not to let your (often too high) expectations of yourself and your children shift you into Fight-or-Flight or chronic dissatisfaction.**



---

## Today's Action Steps:

- **Try to catch yourself thinking negative thoughts.** Replace them with a positive loving thought. I am enough. I am doing the best I can. My child is doing the best they can.
- Read [this blog post](#) about a mama who let go of the SHOULDs
- Read [this age-by-age guide](#) and also [this one](#) to help you have realistic expectations for your child.



# day 14

## Accentuate The Positive

Are you having a hard time? If you aren't, I'm really surprised (and good for you!!)

It takes a long time to make a new habit. Some research suggests it takes an average of 66 days to make a new habit.

**Your old habit of yelling has been in place for a long time. Keep going.**

Let's make things a little sweeter. The sweetness and connection is what makes all this work worth it and it can start with you! The next few days are challenges that will help set you up for sweetness.

---

## Sweetness and Connection Tip #1:

### Go for more positive.

Think 5:1

John Gottman, a leading expert on relationships, says it takes 5 positive interactions to balance out every negative interaction. This is for all of our relationships.

If you are cranky with your child (even if you have managed not to shout) try to up the number of positive interactions.

### Today's Action Steps:

- **Find or create more sweetness.** Some ideas: Go over and give your child an unexpected squeeze. *Tell them a joke (or better yet ask for theirs!).* Give a compliment "you know what I really like about you?..." *Spend 5 minutes immersing yourself with them in whatever their favourite thing is.* Put on a pop song and dance with your child.



---

# day 15

## Delight In Your Child

Day 15! I hope you are still using your Respectful Voice Chart, tracking your triggers and trying to make the changes you need to not yell, and trying to notice your feelings with RAIN.

We have the tools. We just have to use them. If you are having trouble I urge you to email me and we will figure out what you need.

Stay vigilant and keep checking in every day. Don't read ahead and think "I've got this!" You need time and consistency to make a new habit.

---

## Sweetness and Connection tip #2:

### Delight in your child.

**When your child walks into the room, smile.** With your face and your body language, let them know you are happy to see them and happy to be their parent.

Even if your day has been hard, even if you have to next tell them that they forgot to empty the dishwasher before they left for school. **Take a breath and put it aside for 30 seconds and delight in the person that is standing in front of you.**

Before you correct them, before you look to see if they have gotten dressed, let the love that you have in your heart show on your face.

**So often we get caught up in the day-to-day and the-moving-through-the-schedule we forget to reflect back to our children how much they mean to us and how glad we are that they are in our lives.**

Dr. Gordon Neufeld says, "Eyes, smile, nod." You catch your child's eyes, smile, and nod. You "invite them to exist in your presence" just because they ARE.

**It's not important how we feel about our child, it's important how they think we feel.**

(A bonus: A child who FEELS loved will be more open to your guidance and more cooperative.)

### Today's Action Steps:

Every time you see your child again after a separation (school or daycare, or in the morning) greet them with a smile that shows them you are so happy to be their parent. They are worthy and deserving of love just because they exist.

Try this on your partner, too!



day  
16

## What You Focus On Grows

We as humans are evolutionarily predisposed to seeing the negative more than the positive. It kept us cautious and alive. We have to work hard to override this biological tendency.

**If you want to enjoy your child more, feel happier as a parent, and be more patient, look for the positive.**

You will find your goodwill and good feelings growing every day. And that makes it a lot easier to not yell!

---

# Sweetness and Connection Tip #3:

## What you focus on grows.

What do you love about your child? What are their strengths? Watch them for every opportunity to notice all that is beautiful and good.

- **Give yourself an attitude adjustment.** Try to see your child in the best possible light. Whatever they did that was super-annoying or made you mad, can you look a little deeper and see why they did that? Small people are not very good at getting their needs met in appropriate ways. Your child can't tell you they had a hard day at preschool but they can protest loudly when you cut their sandwich the wrong way. They can hit their sibling on the head with a truck but they can't tell you "I'm afraid you've gone and replaced me and you don't love me anymore."
- **Look for positive intent.** Your child grabs a toy from his brother. Instead of "No grabbing! Give it back!" try "You wanted the toy. No grabbing. You can ask him for the toy or you can trade a toy or you can ask me for help." You are still setting the limit of no grabbing, but you are recognizing the (inappropriately executed) desire that drove the action and showing your child better options.



---

## Today's Action Step:

**1- Consciously focus on the positive about your child.** Write down everything you notice and all the positive sunshine-and-roses things you can think of about your child.



---

day  
17

## Children Want To Be Good

This is really hard. You might even wonder if all this effort is worth it. I hope you have seen enough shifts in yourself and your family life to make all the hard work worthwhile.

Here are some thoughts to help you shift your thinking. If you can do it, it will make not yelling easier.

Consider this:

**Children want to be good.**

---

**We are their world. When we are connected to our children it matters to them what we think and they want to cooperate.** They are evolutionarily wired to stay close to us and be connected to us for their survival. Staying in our good graces, being “good,” ensures that. Being “good” is their natural state.

So if that is true, why DO kids drive us crazy with their not-listening and rule-breaking?

**Let’s look at “bad” behaviour.**

Sometimes misbehaviour is caused by immaturity and poor impulse control. It is so fun to jump on the couch even though they know the rule against it.

Sometimes it is caused by parental expectations that are too high. Your 4 year old might seem capable of tidying up on their own, but it’s a task that requires more executive function than they might be capable of at their age.

So we have to teach, repeat ourselves, and redirect. We have to take a breath, adjust our expectations and provide the support they need.

If your child is misbehaving and is being defiant, it is because your child wants what they want more than what you want. Your child no longer wants to be good. Sadly, this is often when we yell, but it just creates a cycle of misbehaviour, disconnection and more yelling.

If you often find that your child is defiant and doesn’t WANT to be good, know that this is not their natural state.

**The answer: Connection. Do whatever you can to increase your warm connection with your child. Your relationship with your child has a bigger affect on their behaviour than anything else.**

No, you are not encouraging bad behaviour. Your child needs connection as much as they need sleep and nutritious food to be their best self. In fact, they need our love and connection most when they seem to least deserve it.

---

## Today's Action Steps:

- **Make a sign and hang it up: My child wants to be good.**
- **Increase your connection with your child.** One really effective way to do this is Special Time. Set your intention for every day. Special Time is 15 minutes a day of delighting in your child and joining them in their world of play. (Must read: [this article about Special Time](#).)



---

# day 18

## Self Compassion

I know how hard you are working on this. It's not easy. If you have been managing to not yell, fantastic! Keep it up!

**If you've been having a hard time with your self-regulation? Start with compassion for yourself.** Look at the times you have managed NOT to yell. This is a hard habit to change. It takes an incredible amount of focus, motivation, and persistence.

**If you have yelled, make amends to your children, renew your commitment and forgive yourself.**

As my mentor Dr. Laura Markham says:

**"You can't do better by feeling worse."**

---

Please give yourself some compassion. You don't have to be perfect. You just have to keep trying. If you get lost in shame and self-blame, you can not do this work.

**Feel the regret, feel the sadness, but then move on with that knowledge of your past strengthening you in your resolve to change.**

We've been at this for more than 2 weeks now. If you are struggling- please reach out and let me know what is going on.

*Don't give up!!*



---

## Today's Action Steps:

- **Try some self-compassion meditations.** I really like the [guided meditations at self-compassion.org](https://self-compassion.org). They are 15 minutes or so long and I have found them very helpful.
- **Take some time to write about your process.** Even if you haven't managed to stop yelling yet, look back and measure your progress. Can you see some improvement? Even in baby steps... How are you feeling? How are your kids feeling? Has anything shifted?



# day 19

## Your Emotional Backpack

You might find you are feeling sensitive, raw, and fragile. If you are feeling this way, you may be emptying your emotional backpack.

**What's an emotional backpack? It's where all our unprocessed feelings go until they can come out to be healed.** The feelings can be feelings from the day or a hard week, from our childhoods, or a difficult period in our lives.

It's why after a hard day at work you come home and stub your toe and burst into tears. You've held all your

---

feelings inside until it's safe to let them out. Unless you process those feelings after you get home (talk to your partner, go for a run, cry) they will come bursting out of your backpack when you least expect it.

It's why when you have a new baby your older child seems to tantrum all the time about things that seem inconsequential to you. **Your melting down child's difficult emotions are bubbling up to be healed.** Or why your sensitive child cries every day after preschool. They are emptying their backpack.

**It's also why people (and children) who regularly stuff their feelings become explosive.** The backpack becomes so full of old feelings that can no longer be contained. As we learned earlier, anger and aggression are protective emotions. They are the top layer of the backpack, on top of the more tender emotions. When we get triggered (someone cuts you off in traffic or cuts your toast wrong) the old feelings explode out with anger on the top.

If you've been more aware of your feelings since starting this course and have been being more compassionate with yourself and your children, you might be finding **that your old feelings are coming up to be healed.**

**The good news is that if you can stay with the feelings and feel them, they go away.** (You can try using the RAIN tool or another mindfulness tool if it's helpful.) **If we can stay with the feelings past the anger and aggression and get to soft tears (our own or our children's) we can heal.**

Be kind and gentle to yourself. Cry if you need to. Get some support from a friend. **Backpack emptying is uncomfortable. That's why we stuff emotions.** But the more you process your feelings in the moment, the emptier your backpack remains.

This backpack emptying may be happening to you or to your children (or both!) As we stop yelling, our children feel safer to show us their old hurts. And as we get in touch with our feelings more, our old hurts come up.

**Welcome the feelings, stay with them, cry, laugh. The feelings will pass.**

---

## Today's Action Steps:

- Be brave, be strong, be soft.
- Be proud of yourself for doing this.
- Take some time to write in your notebook about any backpack emptying you are witnessing or experiencing.
- One time today- take a minute to feel your feelings and let them go using the RAIN tool. ([RAIN: Day 12](#))



---

# day 20

## Shark Music

### What's your legacy?

You are in this course because managing your emotions has been a challenge for you. It is no surprise and really not your fault.

**We are a culture that has a very hard time with emotion.** We tell our children not to cry. We tell them not to be upset. We try so hard to make our children feel better. (Remember my post ["Don't Try To Make Your Child Feel Better?"](#))

This is understandable! We want our children to be happy. It's very hard to be with someone else who is having difficult emotions.

---

And as you are likely learning, it is hard to be with our own difficult emotions. It's why we stuff them in the first place.

But as we have seen it is necessary to experience an emotion to have it go away. And then you're okay again.

**Emotional resilience is experiencing suffering and coming out fine or stronger on the other side.** Hardship, difficulty, and struggle (and the feelings that go with them) are part of the human condition.

**Our children learn emotional resilience from us.**

Do we welcome all their feelings, confident that they can handle them with our support? Or do we tell them to stop feeling them and send the message that their feelings are dangerous and should be stuffed?

**When we don't avoid the hard stuff, when we don't try to fix it, when we love them through it, we teach them that we aren't afraid of big feelings.**

Every experience of hardship and frustration for a child (a broken toy, no more cookies, finding out there is no Santa, the death of a pet) can be an opportunity for developing emotional resilience and deepening our emotional intimacy with them.

**Your legacy: teach your child emotional resilience. Model feeling your feelings and emotional self-regulation and welcome your child's big feelings.**

You can do this! What a gift you are giving your child.



# Today's Action Steps:

Watch [this lovely video](#) and share your insights on the Facebook page!

Turn down your shark music.





---

day  
21

## Celebrate Yourself

**You are amazing!!** You made it through this Stop Yelling course. I know it wasn't easy. I hope you have seen some great results and that you will take some time to celebrate yourself.

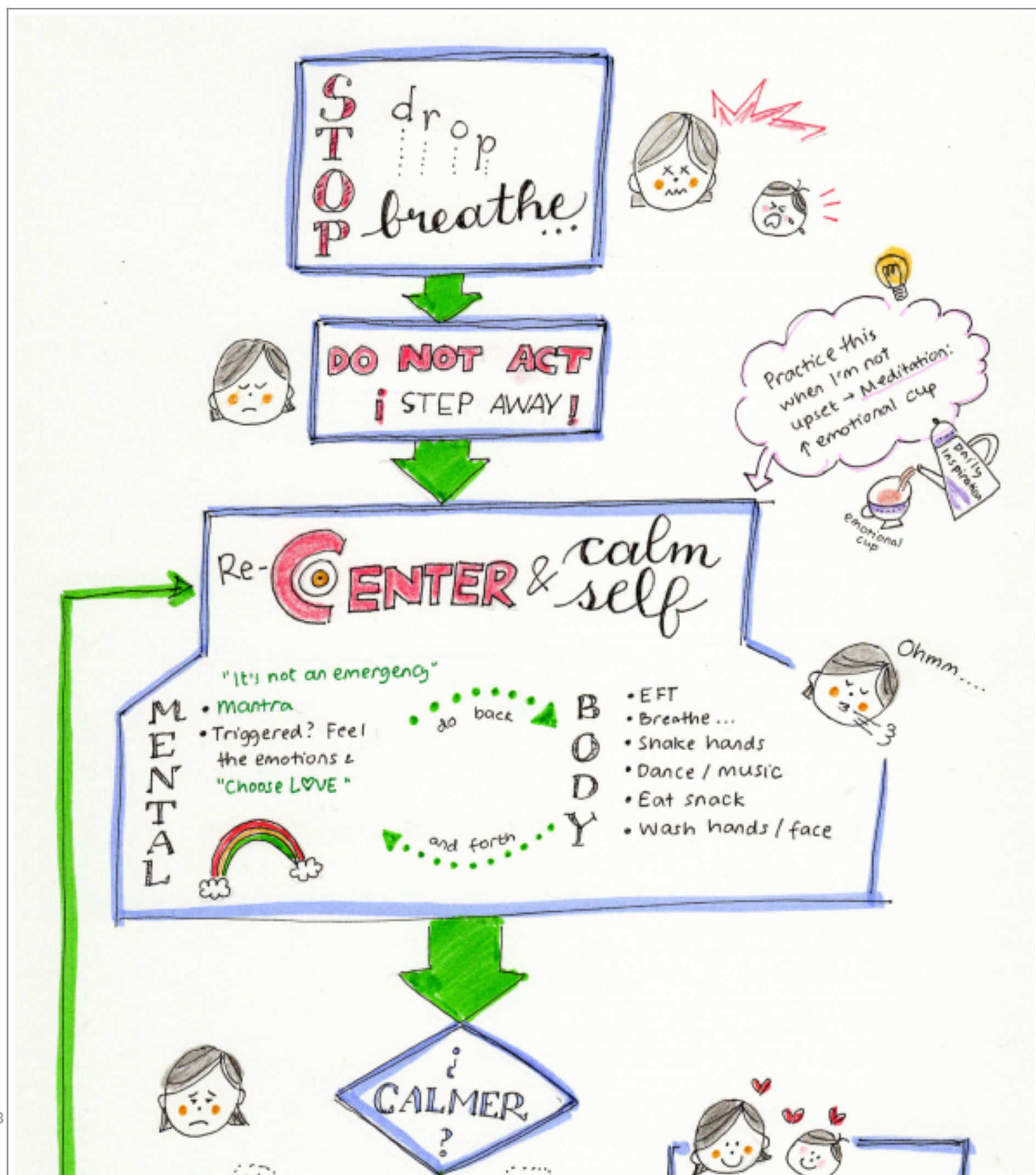
**Don't let your guard down.** Your challenge now is to stay committed and keep using the tools. You will fall down- it's inevitable as none of us are perfect- but get back up. You can do this!

Thank you so much for spending a little time with me every day and thank you for showing up and doing this for yourself and your children. I feel privileged to be on this journey with you.



Here is a bonus 'stop yelling flow chart' for you to use. A parent just like you made it to help when she felt like yelling. She generously gave me permission to share it with you.

Good luck on the rest of your journey! You've got this! xx Sarah



---

# 22

## Links and Resources

For more support:

Email me: [sarah@sarahrosensweet.com](mailto:sarah@sarahrosensweet.com)

Join and post on [our Facebook group](#)

Day 6:

[The Power of Vulnerability TED Talk](#)

Day 8:

[Emotion coaching blog post](#)

Day 10:

[Why punishment doesn't work](#)

Day 12:

[Mindfulness](#)

[RAIN article](#)

Day 13:

[blog post about the SHOULDs](#)

[age-by-age guide](#)

[Hey Sigmund age-by-age what to expect](#)

Day 17:

---

## Special Time

Day 18:

## Self-compassion meditations

Day 20:

## Shark music video

# Track Your Triggers

date & time	at whom I yelled	“Why” I Yelled	Contributing Factors- What was going on?	Warning Signs- physical, emotional	What could I have done differently?	What's the feeling under my anger?
-------------------	------------------------	-------------------	---	---------------------------------------	--	---------------------------------------



# Respectful Voice Chart

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Use this chart to track your progress. Every day ask your child if you yelled- and get a sticker if you didn't.

Tip: Divide the day into AM and PM if this is really difficult for you. Watch your progress! You can do this!!

# Alternatives to Yelling to Shift Your Energy

**What can you do instead of yelling? Any or all of these things until you feel your energy shifting.**

First: Stop... drop... breathe.

and then...

--Walk away

--Drink a glass of water

--Splash water on your face

--Do push ups

--Do jumping jacks

--Shake your hands

--Jump up and down

--Shout out the front door

--Laugh or be silly

--Pretend to throw a fit and laugh instead of yell

What else can you add?

# Mantras

- Respond. Don't react.
- I am more than enough.
- She's acting like a kid because she is a kid.
- This is not an emergency. No one's dying. This will be ok.
- I'm the role model for my kids.
- I'm the grown-up.
- Whatever happens, I can handle it.
- My kids will be ok. They need me, not a perfect parent.
- He's acting like this because he needs my love and guidance.
- If I remember this in a year, I'll be laughing about it.
- Kids need love. Especially when they least deserve it.
- I breathe in love. I breathe out love.
- Each of us is a person with problems doing the best we can.
- My child is alive.
- This too, shall pass.
- He's not giving me a hard time, he is HAVING a hard time.
- I'm a great parent and my kid is a great kid. Everyone has their moments.
- Pause. Take a breath. Walk away.
- I'm not responsible for the emotional regulation of the people in my family.
- You are safe, I love you, we can make it better.
- I am a great teacher for my kids.
- I am patient and loving with my kids, even when they're crabby and I'm frustrated.
- I am an excellent partner and parent.
- I have created a healthy and productive daily routine for myself and the kids.
- I express my anger in healthy ways.
- I am kind and loving to people around me, ESPECIALLY my family.
- I model proper emotional responses for my kids every day.
- Today I will act like the mom I want my kids to remember.
- Give a piece of your heart, not a piece of your mind.
- I'm doing the best I can/They're doing the best they can.