

5 Ways We Trigger Our Kid's Anger Without Realizing It | The Mom Psychologist

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SUMMARY

The speaker discusses how parents can unintentionally trigger their children's emotional responses and emphasizes the importance of self-reflection in parenting. By recognizing their own behaviors and making small adjustments, parents can foster healthier dynamics and better emotional regulation in their children.

- *Parenting discussions often focus on children's behavior, neglecting parental self-reflection.*
- *Inconsistency in setting boundaries can confuse and upset children, leading to emotional outbursts.*
- *The tone and energy parents bring to situations significantly impact their children's emotional responses.*
- *Clear and direct communication is essential; vague language can create confusion and frustration.*
- *Acting as a neutral mediator in sibling conflicts helps children learn problem-solving skills rather than fostering rivalry.*
- *Ignoring children's bids for attention can lead to problematic behavior; they may be seeking connection and validation.*
- *Parenting is a relationship that requires accountability and reflection to promote growth for both parents and children.*

Speaker 1: So I know that when it comes to parenting information, a lot of the focus is on our children, right? Getting them to make better choices and be more cooperative, do the things that we want them to do, handle their emotions and all of that, right? And I know that it comes out of a desire to raise healthy, respectful, resilient kids. But I think until we balance those conversations with honest looks at ourselves as the parent and the ways in which we contribute to the dynamic that is showing up in our family, we are going to miss a lot of opportunities for growth.

Speaker 1: And there are so many ways that we, as parents, accidentally, without meaning, to trigger our child's anger. And when we can take an honest look at the ways in which our behavior, our choices, the things that we say actually contribute to our child's big feelings, then we are going to inadvertently continue the cycle. And so all about breaking cycles and turning the system around. So let's talk about the ways in which we can turn the system around by adjusting our approach.

Speaker 1: Just minor tweaks can make such a huge impact. So, number one, being inconsistent, right? One day we're okay with our child jumping on the couch, and another day it completely sets us off and we're like, get down. Stop playing. Right? I want you to start to take a note of some of the ways in which you've been inconsistent with the boundaries that you place. Start to look at your routine means. Start to look at the common patterns that show up and ask yourself, is there anywhere that I'm being confusing or inconsistent?

Speaker 1: Because this is going to trigger our child, right? Because we're ultimately setting them up for failure, right? Because they're like, well, I'm confused. One day it was okay, and now it's not, like, what changed? This is very confusing, and this is very upsetting. Now, don't get me wrong. It's always okay to change your mind about things or switch things up, depending on the context. Just be honest with your child about it. Like, tell them out loud, I know that this is different, right?

Speaker 1: I know that this is a little bit different than the way we did it before. And I understand why this can be upsetting, right? As long as we're honoring that this is confusing or this may be upsetting and kind of supporting our child through it, that's going to go a long way in helping them understand the world around them and overall, you know, manage their big emotions that come from change, right? Transitions. And change is hard.

Speaker 1: It's stressful, especially for young kids who don't have the world view that we have. So we always just want to be mindful the ways in which we're changing our approach to match different situations and contexts and all kinds of things. It's easy to take for granted because we understand why we're doing certain things, but our child may not have that same understanding. So, number one being inconsistent limits again. So just remember that if we have inconsistent limits, then our child might get upset by that.

Speaker 1: All right? Common reason number two, that we might be triggering our child without realizing it, is coming into situations with a harsh energy, harsh tone, right? This is where the saying, it's not what we say, but how we say it comes into play, right? It might not really necessarily be the limits that we are implementing, but the ways in which we are doing it, right? If we are coming to the relationship, to the dynamic, to the situation, impatient, impulsive, angry, upset, it's going to rub off on our child like there's no way around it.

Speaker 1: If we want a calmer, more patient child, we have to embody that ourselves. And it doesn't mean we're always perfect. But just be mindful. If your child is having a hard time controlling their emotions and they're very upset and angry, take a step back and ask yourself, well, what is the energy that I am bringing to this situation? Am I calm, right? Am I bringing an energy of understanding and empathy and compassion? Or am I kind of frustrated?

Speaker 1: And if you find that, yes, I am frustrated, which, you know, parenting is hard, right? We're not going to be perfect at this. So the minute we realize that and we have that awareness, then it's time to take a step back and just pause and take some time to calm ourselves. Think about, you know, what would the ideal version of myself do in this moment, right? That ideal parenting self that I'm trying to cultivate, cultivate. What would she say in this moment?

Speaker 1: What would he do? Try to cultivate your ideal self into those moments. But you have to first be aware of the energy that you're bringing so that you can turn things around. Okay? Number three, this is a big one. And we often do this without even realizing it. It's just part of our language a lot of the times, because we don't want to feel mean, right? We don't want to feel like a dictator, like, do this and do that, right?

Speaker 1: But oftentimes we are being confusing in our language when we ask our child to do something, when really it's an instruction, right? So we say things like, can you put your shoes on? Or can you go grab that bag of chips for me. Can you go potty, or will you get in the bathtub? Right. We're asking them will they do something? And that in and of itself is presenting an option.

Speaker 1: Right. Where they can say yes or no. Can you go grab me the chips? No, I'm busy right now. Right. And so if it really is an option, then you can say it as an option. But if it's not, if you really need your child to do that in this moment, try to keep your language very specific and direct. Please go grab me the bag of chips. Right. Or please put your shoes on. Please put that down and come over here.

Speaker 1: Right. Whatever it is that you need your child to do in that moment, be very specific and just start with please. It's very clear from your child's perspective that is something that they need to do right now. Right? Because if we present it as an option, it's very confusing and frustrating. If they answer honestly and say, no, you know, I'm tied up right now. Right? No, thank you. And we're like, no, you need to do it right now.

Speaker 1: And then all of a sudden, there's a tantrum. So before you go to give an instruction, check in with yourself. Is it imperative that my child does this right now? Is this a right now thing, or can it wait? Okay. And if you've decided. Nope, it is right now. I need them to go put on their shoes because we're headed out the door. Then that's when you want to keep your language very clear and direct. And I talk about this in my free discipline workshop about how to essentially turn the system around, where we're getting more cooperation and less chaos.

Speaker 1: All right? And being and how to be very clear and direct with our communication because our communication matters. It's a lot of the equation when it comes to gaining more cooperation. And then I also talk about how to implement consequences in a very clear and direct way. Way. So if you want to check out that workshop, you all you have to do is go to themompsychologist.com forward slash workshop. It's 100 free, and it's about 45 minutes of training, so definitely check it out.

Speaker 1: If you're looking for more help in when it comes to positive discipline. Okay. Reason number four. You might be triggering your child without even realizing it, is choosing sides. When it comes to sibling arguments, Arguably the quickest way to spark sibling rivalry is to try to be the referee in their conflict. Right. I'm gonna decide who's right, who's wrong, who's the victim, who's the aggressor, who needs to give back that toy and blah, blah, blah, Right?

Speaker 1: I'm going to fix your problem and I'm gonna dish out the consequence and I'm gonna control this process for you. That is the easiest way to spark sibling rivalry because you know, there's no way around it. Somebody is going to lose in that situation. It's not a win win situation, especially as your child is want to serve as the moderator. You want to serve as their coach. Okay, I see your side. All right. I see your side.

Speaker 1: You want this, you also want that. Okay, let's see. How can we figure this out? Does anybody have any ideas? Right. This does take a lot of time and it does take a lot of our energy as parents. But I want you to

think of it as small investments that you're making into their ability to learn how to communicate and problem solve among each other. Right? And the more that we, we teach them this skill, the less likely they're going to run to us for every little thing.

Speaker 1: Right? Mommy, he won't give that back. She took my toy or she did this or he did that. Right? They're more likely going to be able to solve their problems within themselves because they know how to communicate, they know how to problem solve, they know how to compromise. They have practice figuring out solutions to problems. So then they learn how to apply those same solutions to the of new problems. Right? So if we are constantly being the one that's figuring it out and doing all the thinking for them and all the communicating for them, they are missing the step.

Speaker 1: Right? And then again, it's going to spark sibling rivalry. It's going to spark big feelings because now they feel like things are unfair. So do your best, right. To always try to ask yourself, how can I be neutral in this conflict? Right. How can I avoid picking sides even though my brain wants tell me, oh, she's wrong because she hit so and so, or he's wrong because he took the toy. Right. How can I understand everybody's perspective?

Speaker 1: Help my kids find a win win solution. That is where you're gold number five reason why your child might be triggered by us in our dynamics is that we have fallen into a pattern of ignoring their cries for attention and connection. Right? And, and I get it. We are all a lot of the times burnt out, especially when we have young kids. They demand a lot of our attention, a lot of our connection, and it never really feels like we're able to fill up their love cup.

Speaker 1: Right? Because just when we turn around, they're asking for our attention. They're asking for something. They need help, they want something, right? The demands always feel endless. So we're not going to get perfect at this, right? We're not going to be perfect at meeting their bids for attention and connection. And our kids don't need perfect parents. But this is just a simple reminder that if your child is displaying problematic behavior, right? If they're getting angry, getting upset, having really big feelings, it's often a cry for more attention and connection, right?

Speaker 1: A lot of the times they're asking, do you see me? Do you hear me? Are my feelings important to you? Do I matter to you? And you might be like, well, of course you matter to me. Of course I love you, right? I'm just trying to do X, Y and Z. Sometimes, you know, kids, they don't have the emotional maturity to be like, hey, mom me, will you give me attention? Or hey, I'm really feeling upset about xyz, right?

Speaker 1: They're going to show us with their behavior. Now, that doesn't mean we don't try to teach them how to say that, right? One of the most valuable things we can teach our child to say is, hey, I want attention, right? And it doesn't mean we give it to them right then and there. But if they can learn how to communicate their needs and we can hear that need and either meet it in the moment or make a plan later on and meet it, you know, and stick with the plan, that's going to go a long way.

Speaker 1: So this is just a simple reminder that oftentimes what looks like problematic behavior is really just a

cry for attention and love and connection. And we can easily miss that if we are rushing to punish them or ignore them or shut them down in any way. Here's the thing. I want to wrap up this video by saying that we all mistakenly trigger our children, right? There is a level of conflict that happens in all relationships. And this is not about never having problems in the relationship.

Speaker 1: It's just. Just about taking a step back to reflect and hold ourselves accountable for the ways in which we contribute to the parent child dynamic and, you know, tweak things as necessary because at the end of the day, parenting is all about a relationship, the relationship with our children, our individual children. And so as long as we are only focusing on them and the ways in which they don't measure up, then we are missing opportunities to hold ourselves accountable and thus we see growth.

Speaker 1: So I hope that this video was helpful for you let me know down in the comments which one resonated. And let's keep this conversation going. All right, that is it for this video. I'll see you in the next one. Bye.