



You don't need the megaphone...

When people feel angry they often shout and act impulsively, out of proportion to the event. The impact on the others, loss of respect and 'guilts' are a big price to pay for what is often said or done in just seconds. How can you deal with frustration more effectively, keep your self-esteem intact and model resilience in the family?

Let anger help you identify the real issue

Angry outbursts bypass the rational mind and are usually triggered by feelings of frustration or fear about things that truly matter to you. These emotionally driven reactions come straight from the part of the brain that 'speaks without thinking' or 'leaps without looking'. Ouch! The damage is done before you even realise what is really going on.

Try watching for warning signals and 'checking in' early. You may discover the issue has come up because of blurred personal boundaries, a previous misunderstanding or simply because you're overtired. Try saying, "*I realise I may not have made it clear in the past that this is not okay, but from now on...*" or "*I'm feeling really frustrated at the moment and it's because I'm overtired. I'll need to get back to you when I can think more clearly.*" Both of these responses **acknowledge how you're feeling and build respect**, keeping the situation in perspective.

Put down the megaphone and count to 10

The age-old wisdom to count to 10 before you speak (or 100 if necessary!) is still applicable today, maybe even more so when instant messaging and hastily written emails can be sent off literally without even thinking (before rational thought kicks in).

If you feel yourself reaching for the megaphone, simply ask, "*What is going on for me right now?*" By getting curious you will avoid the fall out that so often follows an outburst, whether it be written or spoken.

Buffering, giving yourself a moment to engage your logical mind, is a truly reliable strategy to keep things on a more even keel.

Bare Hands is run by allied health professionals committed to helping women embrace positive change by providing access to practical education. To find out more give us a call, email us or visit www.barehands.com.au.

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- ✓ If it makes you feel angry it's something you care about. Look for the underlying cause and choose a more effective way forward.
- ✓ Respect begets respect.
- ✓ If you give yourself a buffer, you won't need the megaphone.

"When angry count to ten before you speak. If very angry, count to one hundred."

Thomas Jefferson

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