



5 WAYS TO GET YOUR ANGRY TEENAGER TO CALM DOWN

Rhonda Parry

THE
MINDFUL
MUM



HEY, AMAZING MUM!

I'm sitting here in New Zealand, and so pleased to connect with you! I'm a working mum of five, who struggled with an angry, feisty, and hurt teenager for years. As I focused on her and tried to change her, I became more and more resentful and stressed myself.

I'm Rhonda Parry and ever since I started working on *myself* and stopped trying to change my kids, I've been able to completely transform the atmosphere of our home. The doors are open, kids want to talk and the atmosphere is one of calm, consideration, and compassion! When hugs are initiated by my kids – I know we're ok!

What I discovered during my transformation journey prompted me to ditch my corporate career altogether, so that I can help other mums just like me.

Now I help stressed and frustrated working mums create an environment for their angry children to calm down and become more tolerant and compassionate, so they have the confidence to thrive.

I'm absolutely totally completely passionate about making a difference in the lives of us mums, and the kids whom we love so much it hurts – because the teenage 'rage' which is hanging heavy over the household is hurting us every day, every way.

Over the years I've worked with hundreds of mums who were struggling with kids who refused to participate in the family, only ever yelled, wouldn't listen, and didn't even want to be at home.





Their habitual 'mood of madness' created an atmosphere that required everyone else to walk on eggshells! These were mums who were stressed out, burnt out, and shut out!

Now, I just love hearing stories from my lovely ladies who have had life-changing conversations with their kids, gone on a weekend roadie with their teenager, or simply been able to sit down and have a meal together with their kids without a full-blown argument ensuing. Sometimes a transformation in the atmosphere can be measured by seeing your once-raging teenager be kind to their sibling – it makes my heart leap with joy!

I don't want you to be left wondering what you could have, should have, would have done to create calm and connection with your kids "if only...." Or wishing your child had more pleasant memories of their childhood "if only...." Or dreaming about 'someday' when you and your child could have a conversation without yelling.

So right here I'm sharing a few simple tools that WORK. They're so simple and yet so powerful. It's never too late to start transforming the relationships and atmosphere in your home!

Please don't wait for 'someday'! Don't wait any longer – enjoy these tools, and like everything in life, make them practice not perfect!

Blessings, love, and light to you

Rhonda x

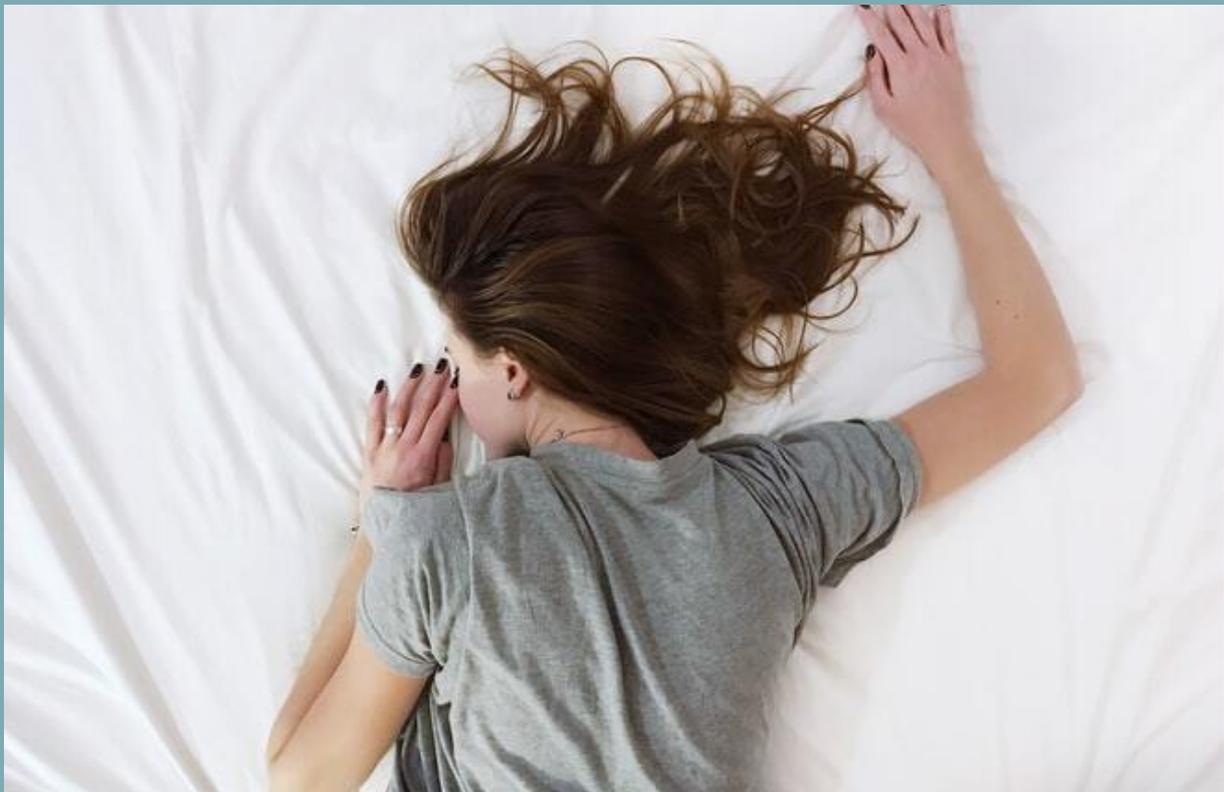


Introduction

When a house is full of raging hormones, teenage brains 'under development' and stressed parents, the likelihood of some 'calm' anytime soon feels pretty remote right? There are as many knee-jerk reactions, regrettable moments, tantrums, and slamming doors as there are hours in the day. And I'm not just talking about the kids!

But it can be different.

This resource is going to help ensure your kids feel the sense of calm and confidence that comes from a stable, loving connection with you. Which role models to them how 'to be' calm too.





First two little tidbits about the teenage brain, which you may find helpful. I know I did!

1. The teenage 'rational' brain goes offline when they're stressed – they literally can't listen to you, can't learn, and can't calm down. Your teenager's access to anything resembling logic has gone offline and they revert to their survival brain, to protect themselves. Their brain is just doing its job, to keep your teenager safe when they feel threatened. Whether threatened by a 'saber-tooth tiger' or a maths exam or you saying 'no' to them. Logic? Gone!

2. The teenage 'rational' brain undergoes major development for a three-year period during their teenage years, making it unreliable for a good 90% of the time in that three-year window. They revert to the emotional brain. So when you cry, exasperated "what you were thinking?!" now you know they weren't thinking. Your teenager was feeling!

You love your kids and want the best for them. You're doing your best right? If only their unreliable brain, anger, and moods wouldn't get in the way of your good intentions!

Here's the thing: On top of love and good intentions to create calm and connect with your child, you need **mindfulness**.

By mindfulness I mean:

Awareness of how you're showing up and the link between your emotional state and theirs! Because children become a reflection of you. Your children need you to be role modeling calm, so they can be calm too.

Mindful communication skills which you can access when your child is communicating with you. Because your children don't want your advice, your lectures, your criticisms. They just want to feel heard and understood.



Acceptance, Compassion, and Non-Judgement for your child. Not wishing for them to be any different from who they are. Because your children just want to know 'they're ok' as they are. If they're angry they're feeling hurt for some reason. To help with that hurt they need to feel accepted, not judged, or criticized.

If you're role modeling a calm emotional state, showing compassion and acceptance, AND if you're going about communication with your child using the tips I'm about to share, you'll be creating an environment perfectly suited to bringing the calm version of your child to the table, to the conversation, into the relationship!

Here are 5 ways to use mindfulness to get your angry child to calm down - which don't require you to change your child!

Because we can't control or change our children. Not ever. But mindfulness and these tips go to show that we do have the power to change our own views, thoughts, and feelings about our parenting challenges.

You *can* do this!

1. Prioritize Your State
2. Listen Generously and be Present
3. It Makes Sense to Validate!
4. Skip the Lecture and just PAUSE
5. Breathe Your Way to Calm!





1. Prioritize Your State

What I mean by your state is how you are showing up in your relationship with your kids.

Are you stressed, angry, frustrated, resentful, overwhelmed with everything that needs doing?

Or are you able to turn to your compassionate side, to connect, feel stable and calm? When things are going according to your plan, our love for them shapes how you react. It's pretty easy, right?

But when you're stressed and overwhelmed, angry or disconnected, it really doesn't matter how much love or good intention you have. If there is resistance, kickback or tantrums, it is nigh impossible to show up with love and follow through with our 'good intentions'. Sometimes your behavior and your words towards your kids are not very calm or compassionate, at all! They make you cringe! They make your child angry.

But it's worth prioritizing your state because ... your children become a reflection of you.

The very first community your child belongs to is your family. They learn everything from your family tribe. Your language determines the language your child speaks. Your attitude towards self-care impacts your child's ability and attitude towards looking after themselves. And your state impacts the state your child is in.

That's because we're literally hard-wired to detect and absorb the emotion of those around us. Your emotional state triggers similar emotions in others – including your kids!

This means role modeling is a much more powerful learning mechanism than anything your kids hear or read.

So it really DOES matter how you show up to your kids. Every. Single. Day.



Here's the thing: 'calm' is not innate. You have to decide if it's important to you and practice it, like any skill. And you keep practicing it, until one day, you realize, calm has become part of you, it is part of the fabric of you.

When you practice calm, it improves everything in your life. Relationships. Productivity. Resilience. Sleep. Happiness. Longevity.

But even if none of these wonderful benefits happen, it's still well worth being calm, to help your kids. Most importantly your calm benefits your kids, simply because it's easier, safer, to be around you. This is exactly what they need from you – a stable, loving connection with you.

Your calm creates calm in your kids. The opposite is of course true too.

Now it may be a terrifying thought – that your stresses and anger are naturally going to cause stress and anger in your child. And that when either of you is stressed or raging, it's impossible to be calm or have a loving conversation - even just a casual conversation about your child's day is impossible without it becoming an argument! BUT, the idea of 'calm' can become more of a reality than an 'unachievable aspiration' when you practice being a Mindful Mum.

When you practice the research and science-backed practices of mindfulness, you learn to pause before you respond, you gift yourself the space to be able to ensure your response is not going to shut up or close off your child even more!

Plus you become more accepting, compassionate, and less judgemental.

You are the parent after all: and it is precisely when your child has lost control that they need you the most. They need you to be calm and in control – even if they're being provocative, challenging, or refusing to talk!



In summary:

- Children need you to be calm more than they need you to be 'there' with them.
- Children mimic your state. So you need to operate from a calm state rather than a stressed state!
- Children can connect with you when you're both in a calm, compassionate state.

TOOL

Live and breathe – a role model - the CALM STATE you want your child to be in because their state reflects your state. Wait for yourself to be calm and allow time for your child to get themselves together too.





2. Listen Generously and Be Present

Let's be honest, when our child is talking to us, often it's to have a rant about an issue, something they're unhappy with.

Something has gone wrong, they've procrastinated on some study, they've got wound up in a web of lies, or they forgot to do something they promised to do. Add to this, hormones, their brains under development, and social pressure and it's not surprising sometimes that they're unhappy right!?

Yet life happens – and just like us – your teenager is not perfect! They make mistakes! When they do, they don't want our advice or our criticism, they just want to feel heard and understood. Supported.

So how do we do listen generously? It starts with being present - and attentive listening. Being curious. Not distracted.

Yes, it takes practice!

Practice generous listening whenever you sense a heightened emotional reaction in your teenager. Could be any minute now right!?

Research has shown that tweens and teens are more likely to open up and feel better about themselves when they've been listened to attentively.

If we don't listen generously, we 'listen distracted'. Regardless of the outcome of the conversation, what your child will normally remember is the sense of not being heard and understood. 😞

TOOL

Be curious, pay attention, ask questions, be present with them.



3. It Makes Sense to Validate!

As human beings, regardless of our age, we're hard-wired for connection. And this means feeling heard and understood (yup, that was the previous tip!). But if our own issues aren't validated, it feels awful, doesn't it? If you've just had a big download with your sister, you don't want to hear:

"Calm down"

Likely response from you: "I can't calm down, didn't you hear what just happened?"

"Everything's ok, don't worry about it".

Likely response from you: "Everything is NOT ok, if [this then that happens...]"

"Do [this or do that]"

Likely response from you: "But I can't do [this or that] because ..."

You just want to know that your sister – or partner – or manager - 'gets you', and it makes sense that you feel the way you do, that your emotion makes sense!

The same goes for your kids. Despite what you might think, often when your kids talk to you, **they don't want your advice**. They just want to be HEARD. And they want their views and feelings to be VALIDATED by you.

You've just learned how to ensure they feel 'heard'. So how do we validate?

Honestly, the tool's so effective, it should be taught in childbirth classes.

But it is HARD. Especially when you're exhausted and the kids are pushing your buttons!

So remember the first TOOL – ensure your calm state first!

And with practice, it will shift from feeling 'impossible' to becoming natural.



The technique of validating involves two steps:

First of all, you observe what are they **feeling**, how are they feeling. Or even just reflecting back on what has happened, that's the **event**. No opinions or judgments or problem-solving. Just reflect back to them what you are sensing or hearing from them.

When your child hears you reflect back to them there are three benefits:

1. It may help them make sense of things themselves
2. It will definitely help them feel heard and understood! Respected. Which is exactly what they want!
3. Plus, it means they're less likely to feel the need to keep telling you the same stuff (over and over and over again!) and making themselves feel worse!

Brilliant!

Now they know they've been heard, and that you see what has happened for them.

It's time for the second step: it's time to validate and let them know it makes perfect sense for them to feel that way. Whatever their emotion is, it's ok.

This is how we express our empathy for what's going on for them. Putting yourself in their shoes and doing your best to imagine what is going on for them.

By the way, how they are feeling *doesn't need to make sense to us* remember! This step is about **validating how they feel**, not questioning the logic of their feelings using our adult brain!

The part we need to practice is not to offer a lesson, not to insert a 'but' and not to criticize their choice. So keep it clean and simple and bite your tongue!

TOOL

Reflect back on what you see or hear and
let them know why this makes sense.



4. Skip the Lecture and Just PAUSE

After you've validated, it's time to ... say nothing. Simply Pause.

Without a doubt, PAUSE is the simplest but hardest part of the process.

Pause reminds us to say nothing. You got it – nothing. Simply pause and wait.

P. A. U. S. E.

Lots of pausing!

The Pause may feel awkward. You may sense that your kids expect something else from you.

Here are some ideas to use, after your Pause has been sufficiently long enough!

- What do you think?
- What have you tried in the past?
- Your ideas are awesome, what do you think about this?
- I've never
- Your ideas are better than mine, what do you think?
- It's been decades since I was your age.

When you pause you invite your children to recognize the empathy you're extending to them and sense the connection. It makes your connection with them stronger because you're letting them know you *trust* them.

And just as importantly, it stops you from giving advice, offering solutions, opinions, and judgments – and even stops you from sharing your own similar stories.

When we offer up **advice or opinions** we're coming from an "I know best" position. And yet because we are *not them*, we may not even have all the information, how *can* we know best?



When we offer a **story** that we think might be similar, we're turning the conversation back to ourselves. It's not about us and they may not care if we think we've had a similar experience "in the old days". They've started the conversation and we need to ensure they have our attention about *their* issue!

When we offer them a **lesson or lecture**, they tune out. The worst thing for them, at rock bottom, is to be 'taught a lesson'. Their 'thinking' brain won't be online so the lesson is never going to be heard or remembered anyway!

Sometimes in practice, when I've shown empathy using this method, my daughter feels safe to share something else. Maybe there's something else underneath the surface that's an emotion not yet expressed, or something else has happened at school and she's been holding onto it until now.

My middle child is very much like this – if we start talking about one matter, and I validate and pause, then whoosh, if she's in the mood, it all comes tumbling out! This is far more effective and 'safe' than to just keep asking '*what's wrong, what's going on with you, why are you in a grump!*'? They may well have no idea themselves!

When I use this technique with my eldest daughter, the daughter with whom I used to have the most heated stressful conversations, she calms down and then often comes up with her own solutions. Brilliant.

Here's a recent example:

In January 2021 my daughter had just been to a music festival: 30,000 people for 4 days. On her way home she fell asleep at the wheel and wrote off my car – incredibly she walked out of the car after being airborne and taking the roof racks off a parked car on the opposite side of the road (and for that I'm eternally grateful)! But she did incur significant debt. She was supposed to be saving money for university. I was still in the 'thank-goodness-she-is-alive-phase', yet she'd moved on to looking to buy a ticket for the next RNV, which was 11 months and thousands of dollars of car debt and university tuition away!

I couldn't believe it!



DAUGHTER: "Mum, I didn't get an RNV ticket and it's stressing me OUTTTTT"

ME: "Ohhh I hear your frustration! Makes sense as you obviously have so much fun at RNV!!!!!"

DAUGHTER: "What should I dooooo?"

ME: "What are your options and priorities? Always a balancing act!!!"

(note there is no advice, judgment, or opinions about how she really should be saving money for university anyway!!! Boy, it was tempting. I may have even typed that into the text, then deleted it before I sent it!)

DAUGHTER: "I can wait until resale at the end of the year but it's sooo risky cos I might not get one then either. Or one of my friends might not go so he said he'll sell me his"

That, thank goodness, was the end of it.

Previously I may have offered to lend her the money, then get into horrible arguments about her needing to pay me back before she buys herself new clothes. It would have been awful. I was so proud of myself this time not to offer up solutions, not to launch into a lesson about saving money, and not to rescue her by lending her the money.

Proud mum, feeling connected 😊

TOOL

After you've validated, PAUSE. Say nothing.

Unless invited.

Refrain from giving advice, offering solutions, opinions, and judgments,
or sharing your own 'similar' story



5. Breathe Your Way to Calm

The first tool was about prioritizing your state. But what if you're already in a stressed-out state and you can't see your way out of it?

How do you get calm *then*?

The first thing to understand is that fight and flight – your stress response – is a physical thing, it's designed to gear you up for a physical encounter or threat. Literally to fight or run away from a physical threat, like a sabre tooth tiger.

Your prefrontal cortex, the intelligent part of your brain, goes offline when you're stressed so there is no point trying to 'think your way out' of fight and flight.

You have to intervene using your body.

Your breath is the BEST source of calm. It's free, legal, and right under your nose. 😊

When you take deep delicious belly breaths, you're sending a physiological message to your mind and body that it doesn't need to be in a stressed state. And you're switching to 'rest and digest' – your calm state.

In your calm state, you can access your pre-frontal cortex and engage in a conversation using the tools we've just talked about (2, 3, and 4).

So now, take a deep breath, allow yourself to hold your breath at the top of the inhale with a full set of lungs, and after a few seconds let out a long slow exhale. Try to make you exhale that little bit longer than you inhale. The longer exhale helps calm your vagus nerve which connects your brain to your body.

Yawning, sighing, and singing – these are 'intervention' tools too – they interrupt the rapid shallow breathing you're doing when you're stressed.

The difference that a long slow breath makes to your ability to choose between a knee-jerk reaction and a considered response is profound.



Don't be afraid to insert an *"I'm going to take a few deep breaths before I reply"* before you reflect back and validate. You're setting yourself up for a more constructive conversation, and role modeling the behavior you desire from them!

One of my proud parenting moments is taking a breath before I responded to my 10-year-old after she dropped the 'millionth' school notice on my desk that day. Slight exaggeration but I did have 5 kids at 5 different schools at the time, so the volume of school notices was driving me crazy!

My daughter was stressed out because she was worried she'd miss out on the school camp if she didn't get her permission slip back to school. I listened to her, and rather than reacting from the stressed-out state I was already in, I took a deep breath, (literally) shifting the brain I was using, and I responded. Calmly and with compassion.

This then calmed my daughter down, immediately. I saw, with absolute clarity, the power that my state of calm had on my daughter's state.

And all it took – in this case - was some breathing!

TOOL

Take 5 – take 5 seconds, take 5 breaths, take 5 minutes to induce calm, and get access to your rational brain again! 😊





FREE 15 MIN PARENTING BREAKTHROUGH CALL ! WELL DONE, MY FRIEND!

The truth is, *IT IS HARD* being a Mum!

Especially when our kids shut us out, or their 'mad-mood' starts to infest and impact the rest of the house and family.

But it's even harder if we spend our time and energy trying to change the kids when we're in an awful space ourselves.

Getting back to why I'm sharing all this with you? Because I want YOU to become THE ONE your child has that safe, stable relationship with which empowers them to calm down, open up, connect and thrive!

Without it taking 15 years! Or filling your shelves with self-help books.... Like I did! 😊

I know, all the parenting advice we're bombarded with becomes super overwhelming. Not to mention all the advice from well-meaning relatives.

Argh!! I get it because I struggled with all of this too. I've felt the same way!

And if you currently feel like your rock bottom moment with your child is approaching at lightning speed (or you think it's happening right now!), breathe.

I can guarantee, you're not alone.





Working now as a coach and a mindfulness practitioner, I can say first-hand, your investment in becoming the calm, confident connected version of you, will be repaid over the remainder of your life... every time you engage with your child, your investment will be worthwhile.

There is no greater gift you can give to your kids, than a calmer, more mindful version of you!

Becoming a mindful mum is SO MUCH easier when you:

- Have one on one coaching support
- Have group support
- And a one-stop-shop of resources and tools - backed by science and research - to 'practice, not perfect'

It takes a village to raise a child, right?

Yes please, **FREE BREAKTHROUGH CALL**

Well in my experience of working with hundreds of other mums, it takes a village to support a mum too!

Since you've already taken action and are here reading this right now...

I'm pretty confident you're an amazing mum who needs a helping hand to become an amazing mindful mum, so your teenagers start calming down and accessing their intelligent brains.

If you'd like to have a complimentary 'Parenting Breakthrough Call' to get your withdrawn, anxious, or just plain angry teenager to open up, step up and calm down (without having to change them!) then click below to go straight to my calendar.



Yes please, **FREE BREAKTHROUGH CALL**

So here's how a FREE Parenting Breakthrough Call works...

I'm making myself available for a limited time for about 20 amazing mums who want to start their journey towards being amazing mindful mums (and having amazing mindful teenagers!).

In this complimentary Parenting Breakthrough Call we'll:

- Discuss what's going on for you now and your biggest area of concern
- Become *aware* of what's stopping your child from being calm
- With this new *awareness*, figure out 'the one tool' you can try immediately
- Discover if the MINDFUL MUM 1-on-1 coaching program will be a good fit for you.

Sounds great right?

Right!

I can't wait to meet you, so jump into my calendar and I'll see you soon!

Blessings, love, and light to you

Rhonda x

