

PARENTING TIPS

Five Causes of Anger

Some parents have a hard time analyzing their anger to get anything positive out of it. A helpful way to uncover what's behind your anger is to recognize anger's five basic causes. These five causes overlap at points and you may find that the situation you're experiencing fits more than one, but this list is often helpful to bring some rationale to feelings. Use these causes to guide your self-reflection when you start to feel angry and then move into a more healthy response.

1. Physical Pain – When a child hits you or you step on a sharp toy, your anger may, in part, be fueled by the physical pain you experience.
2. Blocked Goals – Trying to leave the house by 7:35 a.m. and turning to see that your three-year-old took her shoes off again can lead to anger.
3. Violated Rights – When her five-year-old is knocking on the bathroom door, a mom may feel angry and think, “I have the right to go to the bathroom in peace.” A dad may believe that he has a right to come home and have a few minutes to relax in quiet before taking on family problems.
4. Unfairness – When a mom sees a big brother picking on his sister, or a younger child harassing an older one, she may get angry because of the obvious unfairness of the situation. A dad may feel it's unfair that he has to help bathe the kids after putting in a hard day's work.
5. Unmet Expectations – A mom might say, “I expected to arrive home from work to cook dinner, but instead I come home t this mess!” Unmet expectations seem to go along with the job of parenting but often result in angry feelings.

Discovering what is causing your angry feelings will often help you see where your child needs to grow or change, giving you more insight into how to discipline most effectively. Understanding the five causes of anger can help you as you relate to your family.

Each time you feel angry, stop for a minute, and try to identify which of these is the cause. Putting a label on your feelings may help you redirect some of that energy to a more productive response. You may begin to see patterns in yourself and identify one particular cause that is more common for you. This observation can help you know how to adjust your reaction.

This tip was taken from the book, Good and Angry, Exchanging Frustration for Character in You and Your Kids, by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN