



VIDEO THREE

How to Stop Yelling

**AND START CONNECTING
WITH YOUR CHILDREN**

How to Stop Yelling & Start Connecting With Your Children

w/ Lori Petro, Founder of TEACH through Love

PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS
FOR PARENTS & KIDS



VIDEO THREE

Hi there, I'm Lori Petro, founder of TEACH through Love. Welcome to Video Three of our Peaceful Solutions for Parents & Kids Series. I am so glad you stuck with it through to the end. And, if this is your first video, and you just happened up my site today, [follow the links at the end to sign up for the full series](#).

Today, we're going to wrap up our journey with a three-step plan to [Stop Yelling and Start Connecting With Your Children](#). The goal of this session is to show you how to break down the barriers to family peace. The barriers that keep you stuck in disabling patterns of fear and anger.

Many parents struggle with knowing how to reduce the frequent anger or aggression that pops up in their homes. You might not even know how it got to this point, but you know that you are in a never-ending cycle of yelling that isn't getting better.

Maybe shouting is a pattern you have carried with you for as long as you can remember. You might have picked it up in childhood as a means to be heard, noticed or stay safe. Or, maybe yelling is a new and unsettling reaction to emotions that have only just started to surface since you've had children.

For some of us, yelling is how we maintain control and how we keep others from interrupting the regularly scheduled programming running in our heads. If this sounds like you – believe me, I know how you feel.

I myself, come from a long line of yellers.

Yelling, in my family, was how we showed a range of emotions from anger to frustration to love. In my home, speaking in a tone just a few decibels above ear-splitting meant that you really cared.

But unfortunately, that kind of care comes with significant repercussions. Yelling creates a cycle of negative interactions which interrupt a child's capacity for self-regulation, self-reflection, and self-respect.

In our [last video](#), we spoke about the impact of words like, "You're making me so angry." Or, "I cannot handle you one more minute." Children believe every word you say and can misunderstand – thinking that they are responsible for your emotions – whether it is your happiness or your anger.

This makes them anxious to please, but not learning the skills they need to become thoughtful, responsible adults.

Kids don't know that when you yell, it is your choice to do so and that you alone are responsible for controlling your behaviors and managing your feelings. So, it's important that you let your anger serve you, serve to help you make the changes you need to create peace in your home.

Today, I'll show you how I began the process of restoring my inner calm so I could feel empowered as a parent and break the cycle of yelling in my family. Being honest about your anger and why you yell can be unsettling and you may find yourself initially resisting the ideas I present or even feeling guilty.

Breathe through the discomfort and *know that there is a plan*.

Our children challenge us to evolve out of old habits of fear and anger. They demand, through their immaturity, that we become emotionally responsive to their needs.

So then, who is better suited to propel our own development to the next level than our children?

You may be feeling frustrated, out of patience and annoyed by the never-ending negotiations or fighting or overwhelmed by the emotional demands of your children. If that is where you are now, I want you to know that you not only deserve more peace, but you are completely and utterly capable of creating more joy and ease in your life.

You are in the driver's seat of change.

You might not be able to completely alter your circumstances or eliminate all stress, but you can change your perception and experience of those circumstances if you're willing to put in the work.

I say this because I have experienced it directly. Most of my biggest personal development gains were accomplished in just the last ten years with my daughter by my side, challenging me with her demands for authenticity and connection.

No one is more inclined to pick up on your habits, insecurities, and fears and mirror them back to you through their behavior than your kids.

And when they do, suddenly, you are faced with the child that you once were. Possibly needing what you never received and finding yourself unable to provide for your children – the responsiveness they depend on.

I want you to know that your anger reflects something deep inside you that is calling out to be healed. Managing your anger is caring for yourself. You set the example for how to care for oneself and for others by how you regulate your own emotions.

When kids feel responsible for your reactivity, especially arousing your anger, it makes them feel terrible and it stresses their system. When you yell, it reinforces negative self-perceptions of being unlovable, the cause of trouble or responsible for your unhappiness.

Better behavior never emerges from a place of feeling bad about ourselves.

When our anger is used to express our needs and feelings or make demands, kids tend to internalize these negative memories.

They may come to associate certain actions, a tone of voice or even your appearance with an angry emotional state, and unconsciously react based on the memories and meaning that they've created around past interactions with you.

Now, this is not to imply that occasional yelling or eruptions of anger are going to impair your child's development or destroy their self-esteem.

We're human and this is not about perfection. It's only about being conscious of our words and actions because when anger is the rule rather than the exception, kids aren't able to grow their self-regulatory skills or elicit compassion for others.

They don't develop the awareness to consider others because they're busy protecting their autonomy and dignity.

Most parents tell me that one of the most difficult challenges they face, aside from getting their kids to listen, is finding ways to control their anger. Nobody wants to yell, but it seems that so many of us never learned any other way to handle hardship.

Some of my clients are in such deep despair when they begin their conscious parenting journey that they can hardly remember a time when life felt peaceful and communication was easy. It may seem to you that yelling is the only tool that works and that your anger is justified.

But, I want you to take a more mindful and reflective walk with your anger and begin to change your relationship with it.

Today, we'll explore observing our anger without judgment, empathize and reflect on it without shame or guilt, and then from a place of detachment, make conscious choices on how to respond in high-conflict moments.

Through a process of discovery, you will learn what your anger means for you and how it represents your inner experience, and manifests in your behaviors – *and how to replace yelling with new tools for building your tolerance.*

In order to feel in control of those powerful emotions, you have to take an honest look at why you yell, and then with that clarity and understanding, take steps to conquer your unhealthy habits.

Transforming your anger and breaking the cycle can be a slow process that evolves over time. Just when you think you've run a bunch of those triggers out of town, new ones, that you never imagined existed, pop up. But each and every interaction that arouses your fear or fury provides you with an opportunity to strengthen your skills and re-train your brain for peace.

By the end of this session, you will have re-defined your understanding of anger to propel you to make positive changes to your situation rather than relying on your children to display behavior that makes you feel calm or good.

You will walk away with a plan-of-action that includes coping tools that work for your unique temperament. Some of you will seek out physical exercise to off-load stress, others may find more inward mindful routines work best, while still others simply benefit from adding more outdoor time to their day.

It's up to you to discover what works best using the [exercises](#) that I have provided.

The toolkit that you create will provide you with coping strategies for reducing stress, as well as model for your kids how to use anger constructively and how to communicate from a place of inner strength, rather than using outer force.

It's not an easy path.

To be emotionally responsive to your children can make some people uncomfortable. Friends and family members may judge or invalidate your attempts to stay consciously in control.

Blame, shame, judgment, and guilt are so ingrained and habitual that we've normalized them as acceptable strategies to make people conform. From the traditional parenting perspective, it's hard to accept that acknowledging emotions is not only reasonable but necessary for growth.

But even if you question the validity of this right-brained relational focus, you will soon find that by controlling your anger rather than trying to control your kids with your anger, you can develop the kind of influence that far exceeds anything yelling and punishment could ever accomplish.

This video is not meant to vilify or eliminate a normal and healthy emotion like anger. It is true that anger can be destructive, but it's also a catalyst for change when used constructively. So, this learning session is about teaching you the steps to the healthy management of your anger.

1. The first step in our plan is to find out what your anger is telling you.

Anger can be one of the most challenging aspects of our inner world. The biggest mistake we make is trying to make our anger go away. We stomp it out, we stuff it down, stifle it – ignore it.

The reality is that it's not what you're seeing that is making you so angry as much as how you feel about what you're seeing. I know that I've let my anger get the better of me while at the same time demanding my daughter handle hers. When we threaten, we're not showing that we are in control - we're showing how out of control we really are.

When we say things like –

"I'm so sick of this just do what I ask."

"Stop crying."

"You're really asking for it. I've had it with this behavior!"

"You better listen or else I'm going to be very upset."

Our intention might be to show our disapproval of the behavior, and motivate our kids to change, but we end up sending the message that we can't handle their problems and that we don't want to deal with their emotions.

This is how we might unconsciously use anger to change the situation. But, it's time that we recognize that anger brings us a message that change is needed, it is not a tool for changing our children's behavior. We'll talk about the tools for change in a little bit.

But first, let's talk a little bit more about your anger. *The good, the bad, and the ugly.*

Anger is an emotion that is a necessary part of our regulatory system and a crucial mechanism for survival.

At its most basic evolutionary purpose, anger is a reaction to any perceived threat. When we feel threatened, our stress response is activated and our bodies release a cocktail of hormones to physically prepare us to engage in – what is essentially – a *recovery mission*.

Our bodies send us signals - all kinds of signals.

- Our blood pressure rises.
- We may crinkle up our foreheads.
- Or clench our jaws.
- You may notice a fluttery feeling in your stomach.
- Or your face may get red and hot.

It is crucial that we learn to notice the cues that our bodies send because that is what will help us stop and take restorative actions such as breathing, engaging our senses, and using mindful techniques. Then we can take that message of anger which is telling us “*I am hurting and I don't want to feel this way*” and do something constructive with it.

So, while anger can also have a frightening effect on your kids when used as a disciplinary tool, it also helps us identify what needs to change.

If you're like most parents, you're probably too busy to even notice your level of stress until it significantly impacts your life. It's important to become aware of how much tolerance for stress you have.

Think about how you typically respond to conflict? Do you react with instant fear and aggressiveness or are you able to stay regulated and thoughtfully aware of the present moment?

Kids have less ability to manage their feelings on their own, so they rely on us to keep it together – especially when they can't.

Self-regulation, tolerance, and resilience are experience-dependent skills. They don't magically appear with age. They develop after multiple instances of being heard, validated, and provided with concrete tools for change.

The way to understand what your anger means for you and how it affects your life – and your kids – is to start looking your anger in the face.

Be really honest with yourself and do some personal investigation. Record yourself in an angry moment, if you need, and then watch it later. You may be surprised at how you look and sound. You may not even remember behaving in this way because stress affects our memory and overrides our

conscious cognitive thoughts. You can't build your tolerance for stress unless you know where you stand and what's stressing you out most.

Ask yourself –

Where is your breaking point?

How often do you stay regulated and connected to your thinking brain?

Do you wake up stressed out and jumpy - barking orders and snapping at the kids?

Who has more control, responsive you or reactive you?

So, keep a journal of your emotions or a calendar to track when these angry eruptions occur. Write down each time you become angry. If you feel you're constantly on edge break it down even further notice instances of mild frustration, straight-up anger or blind fury. I've included an [activity worksheet to help guide you through this process](#).

You may have noticed, if you are in the habit of yelling and screaming, that your kids may have difficulty regulating their behaviors or they may withdraw and shut down emotionally. If conflict is constant, this leads to them living in a constant state of stress – hyper-vigilant and super-sensitive to any perceived threat – *real or imagined*.

This is what escalates the negative behaviors.

And this kind of chronic stress... it makes us stupid. We can't think or modify our behaviors in that state. Kids may regress, be unable to calm down or follow directions. Stress makes it hard for them to pay attention, to complete tasks or to listen to others and this can cause substantial problems with their peers, and at home and at school.

Even when we're not yelling, we often ask kids to perform executive level functions like empathy, tolerance, consideration, and remembering tasks while stimulating the lower centers of their brain with the blame, shame, judgment, guilt, and fear

Now, before you panic thinking, *"I'll never be able to change"* or *"I've yelled a lot at my kids will they ever change?"*

The wonderful news is – YES!

You and your kids have the potential to alter your brain function and change your behaviors – no matter what your history.

As someone with a differently-wired brain who experienced a troubled childhood, I am intimately familiar with things like stress, sensory overload, and emotional meltdowns. The amazing thing about the brain is its neuroplasticity. That means that the brain is capable of creating new neural patterns with some attention to our thoughts and behaviors.

New neural patterns lead to new automatic behaviors.

When you incorporate new strategies, you start shaping new responses.

2. So the next step in our plan is to decide what tools you will use to de-escalate your inner monster and strengthen the empathy and self-regulation centers in your brain.

Mindfulness is one tool that can be used as a restorative time to reclaim inner peace. Mindfulness can be a daily practice or you can use specific tools in the moment of conflict to short-circuit the stress response.

We need to shut off the alarm system to retain control of our conscious thoughts.

It may take you some focused attention and a lot of faith in the process before your tolerance has expanded enough for you to remain calm and composed on a regular basis.

So, try not to judge yourself. If you're willing to put forth the effort, you can learn to quiet your mind and re-train your brain for responsiveness by using mindfulness in your daily life. I've included a [handout with a few easy mindful activities](#) that you can start incorporating today such as **Mindful Breathing**, **Sensory Awareness**, and **Physical Play**.

But you have to know yourself and know your kids. Know what sets you off and what calms you down. My kid needs a lot of physical activity or she gets easily irritated and anxious. So, having regular opportunities for creative channels such as dancing and singing are what get her out of that dark emotional place.

That's her reset and relax button. *Find your kid's button and find yours.*

If you routinely practice relaxation techniques, it will increase the activity of the cells that calm your stress reactions, making you more resilient. Gradually, you will gain mastery over your emotions allowing them to serve as your guide rather than letting them rule your behavior.

For a while, in my own life, it seemed that no matter how many layers of guilt and inadequacy were peeled away, I was still finding it tough to break free from the fixed patterns of the past.

Reactivity was a well-worn path.

I knew cognitively that I wanted change and that I deserved change and that my past did not have to influence my present without my conscious choice, but it still took so much effort for me to stay calm.

Why wasn't it coming more easily?

Without a doubt, the biggest catalyst to me healing my reactivity – which is a constant work in progress, by the way – has been forgiveness.

3. The final step is practicing daily forgiveness.

For me, it was only when I learned to forgive myself and others that I was truly set free from my fury-inducing meltdowns and my control-freak moments.

Forgiveness changed my perception from victim to visionary, from someone who feels slighted to someone who recognizes the gift and creates change out of it.

Forgiveness for me was not a simply cognitive decision because logically, I had already forgiven everyone, but it was an emotional, heart-based process of releasing my mind from destructive thoughts and emotions which had become my dominant pattern.

I made forgiveness part of my daily routine. Forgiveness, for me, became a breathing exercise. Every day, I would visualize myself sending compassion to those people in my life who had been part of those painful events. In my mind's eye, I envisioned them in a giant heart filled with the colors that I chose to represent peace and love.

Now, there was no forcing my feelings or trying to feel forgiveness or imagining that the past didn't happen or that it didn't hurt. It was just a visual intention set in motion by me bringing the feeling of love into my mind and body and then sending it out towards other.

In these mind movies, I also included my own image. I had to forgive myself. I didn't even consciously blame myself, but in uncovering my story, as I asked you to do in the exercises in our [first video](#), I realized that I was holding self-concepts that were at odds with who I believed I was.

I was living with the unconscious belief that I was not worthy, that I was ungrateful, and had nothing valuable to offer. My self-image went against everything that I wanted to be and raise my daughter to be. This led to me feeling frustrated too quickly and inadequate too often.

So, I had to let go of those limiting stories – those conscious and unconscious stories – *if I wanted to move on.*

Now, how you choose to practice forgiveness is up to you. You can visualize forgiveness as a movie in your mind. I think creative visualization is one of the most powerful tools for changing our thoughts and behaviors, but you can also use creative writing or storytelling or drawing.

What I want you to focus on – is involving the right-hemisphere of the brain the emotional, creative part. **No left brained logic in this exercise.**

You might hear the word mindfulness and immediately think *“Nope, can't do it. It's boring, feels too spiritual, I feel silly doing it.”*

Or you might insist that you have no time, can't stay focused, or remember to do it. Noticing your body cues may seem unimportant and time-consuming.

Here's the thing. *You always have a choice and a chance at peace.*

Eventually, you come to a place where you want more for yourself. Mindfulness and body intelligence are not tools to create an empty non-reactive mind void of emotions. These are tools to help you become fully engaged and aware of what you are doing and how you are responding to life.

Every time you practice present-moment awareness, you strengthen the connections that allow you to be emotionally responsive to your children.

The benefits of building your tolerance, embracing mindfulness, and practicing forgiveness are so huge for your whole family. They reduce negative patterns in the brain and improve your health, mood, immune function, attention, sleep – all of the same things that stress destroys.

So, this week, get in touch with the signals your body is sending you to let you know you're about to go off-course. Set the intention to become aware of your triggers and make these mindful practices a priority by carving out time in your daily schedule.

Don't just say you are going to commit - write it into your schedule!

Decide how and when you will incorporate mindfulness into your day-to-day. Where can you set aside 10-20 min to slow down your pace and re-set your system?

When we respond from a place of self-awareness and self-love you create the space necessary for mutual understanding and cooperation to flourish. So, familiarize yourself with your anger, your triggers, your unconscious memories, and fears. Once you manage your emotional reactivity, it becomes much easier to consciously respond to your children and especially to negative behavior.

You can't manage what you don't acknowledge. Some of us start out really unaware of our own behaviors. Start getting in touch with what sets you off. Be willing to look at your behaviors with a nonjudgmental but discerning eye and get really honest with how well you are taking care of yourself. Then, you can slowly implement the strategies and techniques we talked about until they become second nature.

Explore as a family some specific and acceptable strategies for blowing off steam. What's appropriate in your house? *Pounding a pillow? Going for a run?*

Young kids have to be taught how to effectively relieve themselves of the overwhelming tension they feel when they get angry. You strengthen your child's neural pathways to self-regulation when you model appropriate responses to stress and fear.

And finally, forgiveness is not amnesty for the other person. This is not to forget what happened, but to free yourself from its power over your perceptions. My early experiences have shaped who I have become, but they no longer define me because I have rewritten the script.

And, I am confident that you, too, can stop yelling and start connecting with your kids by breaking the cycle of anger and yelling and letting go of the unconscious and limiting beliefs that have been passed down through your family history.

Now, it can be difficult to release these patterns without support. So, make sure that you find someone to share this journey with and then, join us in our online community to share your story. You really do help other parents when you share your challenges because we're all going through similar things, and it helps to know that others are out there.

So, if you found this series helpful, please share it with someone that you think might benefit.

And of course, as much as I wish it were possible, I cannot – in these short classes – share with you all the ways in which you can connect more deeply with yourself and your children or all the tools available to you to create more cooperation in your home.

But I promise if you take the steps outlined in this series, you will amaze yourself with how much more capable, confident, and peaceful you feel parenting your children.

And, if you want to continue the journey of becoming a more conscious, and peaceful parent, reducing your anxiety and anger and learning how to speak in ways that encourage your children to listen rather than resist, then [follow the links at the end of this video to learn more about my 40-day path to peace, *Peaceful Solutions for Parents and Kids*.](#)

This is my most comprehensive parenting plan designed to walk you through a 40-day transformation and give you a community of conscious parents to rely on - *because parenting with more peace and less frustration is not something you should do alone.*

Thank you so much for joining me for this video series. I hope you walk away feeling inspired and motivated to make the necessary changes in your home, and I look forward to connecting with you again soon.

Until next time, please remember it's about consciousness – not perfection.