

**YELL LESS**



**LOVE MORE**



**MORE  
COOPERATIVE  
KIDS**

Has parenting caused you to yell way more often than you'd like? Author Sheila McCraith, a former yeller herself, has three mindset shifts that will help you become a *former* yeller too!

1) **Yelling is a bad habit.** It is NOT a character flaw! By staying committed and intentional, we *can* break out of this habit! Of course, it won't be easy, but it CAN be done.

2) **Not All Yelling is Bad.** Sometimes we have to yell in a moment of danger, or to get our child's attention immediately. This type of yelling is more effective if we're not yelling all the time. To recognize this type of yelling, remember this is when we yell TO our kids, not AT them.

3) **Yelling is About Us, Not the Kids.** We can't stop yelling until we understand why we're yelling; self-reflection is crucial to identifying the cause of our yelling and then finding ways to mitigate those triggers. Meditation, self-control, pep talks and emotional regulation are all helpful ways to address our inner yeller.

Sheila also notes that the triggers that cause us to yell can be put into these 3 categories:

1) **Fixable** - These are the simple everyday frustrations that can easily be fixed with some forethought. Do I need a baby gate? Do I need baskets for organization?

2) **Manageable** - These can be managed with time and practice. E.g., kids are early risers, but I'm not, and that makes me short-tempered and testy. Can I manage this by going to bed earlier? Can I teach them to play by themselves and not wake me up until a reasonable time? And so on.

3) **Unchangeable** - They are what they are and we all have them. Accept them and learn to think about them differently. How am I going to respond? How can I handle this so it isn't a source of constant yelling?

**NOTE: Need more help to stop yelling? Print out the next two pages with the tools to stop yelling and post them where you'll see them often so they can guide you out of the yelling habit!**

## **Remember**

Be easy on yourself. Try not to hold on to or rehash the yelling moments -- this just makes you feel worse, which in turn makes you yell even more. Forgive yourself! We all mess up and we can strive to do better the next time. **Self-compassion is key!**



For more ideas on how to stop yelling - both funny, playful ideas and the deep, perspective-altering ones - please take a look at Sheila McCraith's Yell Less, Love More Masterclass available in The AFineParent Academy at: <https://afineparent.com/academy>

### **Break it Down into Small Goals**

Not yelling is hard. Try to set a reasonable goal. "I will not yell today before 9:00am, until I have dropped the kids off for school." This makes the goal reasonable and more importantly, attainable. It's all in the 'baby steps' and working towards a daily goal of not yelling, then a weekly goal and so on!

### **Yell Without Words**

If you're about to yell at your kids, instead of yelling the words you're bursting to shout, yell out a wordless shout instead (Eg. "Aaaaaaargh!"). Try to do it toward a wall, door, plant or something other than your kids. You still get the yell out, but you're not yelling hurtful, damaging words at your kids. This is a good first step in the path to becoming yell-free.

### **Visual Motivators**

Design and place some visual reminders around the house -- or give them to the kids -- to help you get back into your rational brain when you feel yourself starting to yell. Little colored sticky notes or images with motivational phrases (like "You've got this!" or "Choose love") plastered in the places where you tend to yell can help stop the trigger and give you enough time to regulate yourself.



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## The Yell Game

Turn yelling into a game so you can get out the yelling in a more fun way with your kids. Go into the backyard and scream at the trees together, or find an alternative outlet for your yelling. Have them create a game so you can get out the frustration in a playful way that brings in some laughter.

## AAARGAAAFAAARGAAAYAAARGAAA!

Keeping with the playfulness theme, pick out a random, silly phrase to scream when you want to yell. Sheila's go-to was "Ooga-shmooga-booga!" Another fun one is "Bibbidy-bobbidy-boo!" Pretty much anything silly you come up with will work! The idea is to spin the angry yell into a ridiculous one so it defuses the moment while giving you the quick adrenaline release of getting the yell out!

## "Mommy's Going to Machu Picchu"

Use a silly declarative statement like this and check out for a moment. Go on a mental vacation. Sit down if you need to. Grab a cool glass of water and drink it without paying attention to anything around you. Over time, kids will learn that this is your way of saying you really need a break and they will learn to back down.



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### **Put Things in Perspective**

Got cheerios all over the floor? One option is to yell at your child for not being careful in spite of multiple reminders. An alternate option is to think "Wow! He was getting breakfast for himself. That is progress!" Yet another perspective is "Phew! Thank goodness it was just the cheerios and not the milk or eggs!" Switch perspectives to keep from working yourself into a yell.

### **Take care of yourself**

You can't parent at your best when you're at your worst; ensure you're mitigating your own stress and anxiety before you try to be a calm force for your children. At the very least, commit to eating well, sleeping enough, and spending a little time doing something you love each day.

### **Accept that you WILL make mistakes**

It's just as important to forgive yourself and let go of the mistakes; spend a moment to figure out what went wrong, why you yelled and how you might respond differently next time, and then carry on without dwelling on it. Yelling at yourself internally for slipping up will only get in the way of breaking the habit!

### **Repair and Remind You Still Love Them**

When you do snap or yell, use I-statements to apologize and express your thoughts. "I'm really sorry I was short and snappy. I was feeling very frustrated. Next time I will try to go to Machu Picchu before I get so frustrated that I start yelling. I still love you!" This is a great opportunity to both teach and model managing setbacks and repairing relationships!



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# Great Parents are Made, Not Born

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Here is a quick preview clip of this masterclass:

If you cannot play this clip, please copy-paste this link in your browser:

<https://afineparent.com/sm-preview>



Here's what a mom in our AFineParent Academy community had to say:

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Being a member in the Academy has been life changing for me. Especially during the Covid upheaval. I have boys 7 & 9 years old and I chose to school them virtually. It was so difficult! So I decided to invest in the Academy. It has been the best purchase I have made as a parent this year. My whole family is benefiting from the investment! Thank you!

- Laura P.



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