

BLOOM

50 Things to Say, Think and Do with Anxious, Angry, and Over-the-Top Kids



CHAPTER 5

Daunting Disrespect

WHAT TO SAY

SAY

I can hear that you want something but your tone is in the way of my understanding exactly what it is.

SAY

Do you want to try to tell me again what you want?

SAY

I can hear by your words that you are feeling stressed!

SAY

It looks like you're feeling _____
(angry, frustrated, irritated, upset, hurt).

SAY

It's okay to be mad, but it's not okay to be sarcastic.

SAY

Drawing out your feelings or telling a story about how you want things to be different helps solve problems.

SAY

If your body feels so angry, let's figure out why.

SAY

People listen to you better when you talk in a calm voice and use kind words. Here, let's practice how that might sound.

SAY

When you use mean, fighting words, it tells me you have some big feelings that are bothering you. Let's talk about those feelings.

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SAY

Is there part of you that thinks other people in our family are sassy, rude or impolite, as well?

SAY

Do you need help figuring out how to say it differently?

SAY

Having those feelings is okay, but in our house, we talk with each other respectfully.

SAY

Help me understand what you see or hear in our family that tells you that you can be rude or impolite.

SAY

I'm confused. Who is using a mean, rude or sarcastic tone with you? Let's talk about that.

SAY

It's okay to have many different feelings. It's what we choose to do with our feelings that matters.

SAY

When you talk like that, it tells me you're not very happy inside.

SAY

When you speak with your teacher today, remember to use a kind tone, a quiet voice and a soft body. Do your best! I know you can do it!

SAY

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WHAT TO THINK

THINK

My child seems in control, but she feels small and insecure.

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THINK

I'm going to consider my role in all this, what's my part?

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THINK

Think feelings first when talking with sassy kids, because *the sass is like the sauce, hiding all the feelings.*

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THINK

I'm going to make sure I am being respectful with my words, tone and body.

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THINK

I am going to put in the emotional effort to really connect with my child and better understand what's going on inside their mind.

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THINK

Being in a relationship means that you do not need to assert power and control.

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THINK

I'm going to set limits with love not anger.

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THINK

I'm going to focus my words and actions on the goal of raising a child who respects herself more. Sassing says she doesn't like herself very much.

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THINK

The way my child holds her body tells me she may be more angry than she knows. My child is crying out for help.

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WHAT TO THINK

THINK

Remember, "You can be right or you can be in a relationship."

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THINK

Calm = effective. It's useful to ask yourself, "Is my goal to control my child or to teach her how to control herself?"

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THINK

When my child sasses, it's a sign she isn't able to process her overwhelming feelings.

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WHAT TO DO

DO

Ask your child if she has another way to make the request. If not, offer her a new sentence using a polite tone, so that she can model after you.

DO

Sometimes under the sass is a child who needs to cry. When you redirect the sass, you may get a lot of tears. Just be there to listen.

DO

Lower your voice, whisper or move more slowly. This tells the defensive brain, I am not in fight mode, so you have the space to calm down and be heard. The calmer you are, the more effective you will be.

DO

If your child continues sassing, stay neutral. Simply say, "I'll be able to hear what you need when you're speaking in a calm, respectful voice, like I am."

DO

Be calm even when your child is talking to you in an infuriating tone. If you meet anger with anger, you both lose. This is difficult, but you'll get better at it the more you practice.

DO

Collaboratively role-play conversing in a variety of voices with your child, so that she can hear the difference. Sad, mad, sarcastic, disappointed, angry, critical.

DO

Breathe, resist sarcasm, contempt and devaluation yourself. These are relationship breakers.

DO

Make a list of five family calming strategies and put them on the fridge for easy access.

DO

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WHAT TO DO

DO

In a moment of stress we can: Close our eyes and imagine a beautiful beach. Sit on the floor and breathe deeply ten times. Walk outside and experience the fresh air. Sit in a comfy chair and read a book. Put our heads down on a pillow and listen to enjoyable music.

DO

As parents, we cannot always control our child's tone, words or behavior, but we can always control our responses.

DO

You need to give your child new words, verbal tone and body language that say, "I want to learn with you," not "I want to dominate you."

DO

When your child is at their peak of sassiness, it's okay to disengage. This does not mean emotionally or physically abandoning your child. Tell her, "I'm going to give you some space to calm down."

DO

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