

Anger Scenarios for Group Discussions

Background Information

This is designed as an optional accompaniment to the anger topic guide. If you find your group is unwilling to share examples of when they have been angry with their baby / toddler, then it may be helpful to present scenarios of frustrating situations with slightly older children. This helps give a little emotional distance from the guilt they might feel when they get angry with a young child. As you have them think out possible ways to handle hard situations, this exercise functions as a sort of roleplaying for the future, but also gives them strategies that they can employ now with their little ones.

The group leader may want to discuss the first example with the group as a scenario that would provoke anger, and then ask the group how they would respond to the other sample scenarios.

Sample Introduction

As your children get older, you may find that more frustrating situations arise with your children, including times when they appear to be purposely provoking your anger. Let's look at some samples of situations that may be in the future for us, and talk about them. How have we seen these sorts of situations handled by others, and how do we want to handle them? Becoming an effective disciplinarian takes practice and determination.

Example I

Mom Becky, five-year old Jason, younger sister

For the last ten minutes Jason has repeatedly poked his small sister. He poked her again! Becky tells him to stop. Her jaw is getting tight. Now Becky turns her back for a moment. There's the sound of a smack! The little girl screams! Becky whirls around and sees the red imprint of a hand across the younger child's cheek. Becky's at the peak of her anger! Here she goes.

- B: Jason, I'm furious! When I see slap marks on your sister's face, I want to slap you! But I won't.
- J: She broke my car.
- B: I'm sure that her breaking your car must have made you very angry. But slapping is unacceptable. I'm very angry.
- J: Why don't you love me?
- B: I do love you, but it's really not OK that you hit your sister. Right now I'm too angry to be with you. Now go to your room, and play by yourself. Later, we will talk about this more.

Example II

Your discover your youngster un-potting a favorite plant on the living-room carpet:

- **What are the thoughts running through your mind?**
- **What outcome do you want?**

Example III

Your child loves dumping every toy in the playroom out on the floor at once, but never picks them up when finished. Today, you had just finished cleaning up before guests would arrive for a party, and now your child has dumped all the toys back out on the floor.

- **How would you respond?**

Example IV

You just picked up your child from daycare and heard all about the wonderful day she had from the teacher. At home you are faced with a belligerent child pushing all your buttons. Tantrums, name calling, fighting with sibling, you name it....

- **How does this make you feel? What do you do?**