

ATC Family Hour

September 24, 2014

Minimizing Anger

(Our parenting heart today & Helping our kids next week)

I just did it again. I would never act like that with anyone else on the face of this earth. How could I do it to my babies? How do I lose it so fast? Why can I not stop before the ugly and shaming words come out? Lord, please help me!

After trying for some time to make changes on my own, I fell to my knees and pleaded with God to intervene.

I started praying about it a lot.

I began to ask God to help me grow in my understanding of true love, I started journaling and met with a mentor to look at my own childhood experiences related to my father's anger, and one day I had a moment I will never forget.

I opened my Bible in a moment of complete fatigue and feelings of hopelessness... believing that I would never make the necessary changes regarding my anger with my children.

And there... clearly for me... I read James 1:19 and 20

(My Mama brain read the words differently than they are actually written. Here is what my heart and eyes saw...)

“My dear one, take note. Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. A Mama's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires for your daughters.”

Relief. A sense of relief flooded my being.

I had just heard from God and it came with much strength and indescribable warmth and love. These words changed my heart. I knew from my head to my toes that I was loved and that this pursuit of a NO Anger Home mattered.

I also knew that practical how's were hugely needed. Here are 10 practical ideas from my Mama heart and counselor brain.

1. **Pray!** Invite God into the hard moments. He cares deeply!
2. **Post** an encouraging, inspiring, freeing, or even challenging verse or quote in your work space to see each day. Change them when you stop noticing them.
3. **Relaxation.** Taking deep breaths or visualizing your “safe place” can help you gain composure and move from reacting to responding.
4. **Cognitive Restructuring.** It's not quick or easy... but it's changing the way you think. Change those negative thoughts like “I'm a failure.” “I'll never be a good mom!” “What is wrong with me?” to positive statements like “This is hard and I'll get through it.” “Being a good mom is important to me and it's worth lots of effort.”
5. **Positive Self Talk Statements.** Create positive “go to” statements that quickly offer perspective and remind you what is important and who you really are in a matter of seconds.
6. **Set goals** for yourself. Decide how you will handle your anger before the moment hits.
7. **Self-Care.** Are you taking breaks and getting out of the house? Schedule a date night. When is the last time you did something for yourself? Other than going to the grocery store alone!
8. **Find an accountability friend.** Ask a good friend to send a text randomly asking how things are going. Set goals together and even reward each other.
9. **There's more...** keep an anger log, journal your thoughts and experiences to identify a pattern and grow in self-awareness, consider patterns from your family of origin, use i-messages to help you own how you feel and why, etc. Let's meet and talk about any these if you are interested.
10. **Believe** in the HOPE that others hold for you. You can do it too! Ask for help! ~ Written by Sarah Tenney. Call or email anytime!