

Tips for Parents by Susie Kohl

Letting Go of Anger, “Resetting” Our Feelings

NEVER GO TO BED ANGRY. This old adage for married couples holds special wisdom for parents too. Resolving ill feelings before sleep provides children (and adults) with more relaxed rest. The same principle holds true for other transitions like saying goodbye before school.

When we get behind schedule, it’s easy for everyone to get frustrated and start the day on a wave of anger and resentment. Conflicts are bound to occur, especially when we’re trying to move children from one activity to another. We don’t need to feel guilty about these conflicts or pretend that anger doesn’t exist.

What matters most when parting in the morning or going to sleep at night is working first to let bad feelings go—then replacing them with something wonderful.

Children find it unsettling to come to school after an angry exchange with a parent, even if they initiated it. We can start to heal the tension by noticing, “You look like you’re still feeling bad because we had a hard time this morning. Let’s walk through the garden.”

The idea of “making up” has nice connotations—taking the time to smooth the threads that connect us by making up for what previously went wrong.

We can usually feel that moment when a child lets go of tension and the love starts flowing between you again.

When we take the time to “reset” feelings, we prevent anger from being carried to other situations. We can usually feel that moment when a child lets go of tension and the love starts flowing between you again.



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