The 4 Calming Phrases Parents Say to Regulate Kids That Changed Everything Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Why Words Matter in a Meltdown

Words can fuel chaos or bring instant calm. Here's the ones that work. Words matter. We know this. But when your kid is in a meltdown, your words or lack of words matter even more.

When you're in fight, flight or freeze, that prefrontal cortex that's your logical part of your brain literally goes offline. And that means your kid can't hear you.

You're trying to reason with them. Maybe you've got a lecture. maybe you're yelling at them thinking somehow that's going to get through. It's not. And they just bounce off.

Your words bounce of a stressed brain. it's not gonna get absorbed. And what cuts through that chaos and dysregulation are safety cues, calm, simple, rhythmic phrases that if your kid is regulated enough to even hear that, but when we use these, they become a cue to shift down into a nice parasympathetic state.

When we really are consistent, it just is dramatic how these things work.

Phrase 1: I'm With You

Consistency is the key. And I would say your tone and energy is 90% of the work, and that's the secret most parents are missing. They're thinking there's something magical.

But not here, because we know it's skills, not pills. Your words can be gasoline or water, and these are the four phrases that are water. Number one, I'm with you.

Don't say anything else, just say I am with. This phrase is powerful because it signals not just safety, but connection. It tells your child you're not alone in this.

You don't have to start getting into all their anxiety and worries, but you can say I'm with you. One day, this dad was telling me how his daughter always had these homework meltdowns, which I know is such a trigger for so many.

He found himself yelling a lot. startled by that response because it wasn't what she was used to. She started crying, she finally felt like, oh, he gets me.

And this isn't giving in. There's no punishment that's going to stop this. This girl was like in a shame spiral over the homework. But it took her down from threat mode and it really kind of shifted everything.

Phrase 2: Let's Slow Down

It just became a thing. I'm with you. Doesn't have to be exactly that. Can be, I got you, but I am with means you're doing it. and I'm here to help you.

And I think that has a really different meaning. Number two, let's slow down. So the nervous system regulates the rhythm. When you speak slower, you breathe a little slower.

You move a lot slower your child's brain without saying anything. is actually going to sink to your pace, and this isn't about control, it's about co-regulation.

So instead of saying, stop it, try whispering, let's slow down. You can even say, Let's Slow Down Together. And it is an invitation back to safety. It's not a command, you will do this.

I expect you to do it. But even walking slowly across the room when they're having a hard time with something, It just signals calm. It's very powerful.

Number three, we'll get through this. I always love, I will always get to this because when people are dysregulated, they're just not seeing the solutions.

And I don't even know how to not think in solutions as soon as something starts going south. Usually I've got plan B and C anyway, but I just, that's how I stay cool.

Phrase 3: We'll Get Through This

But when you say we will get this, it's creating stability. It builds trust even when things feel very heightened or chaotic. When kids are dysregulated, they often feel like it's the end of the world, especially when you have a catastrophizer.

You know, that, oh, it is always the glass half empty. But this phrase gives them something to hold on to for older kids. and teenagers who reject comfort.

This isn't babying, it's grounding. And I think that's really powerful. It communicates, you can fall apart, I'm still going to be here. and this is how we build emotional resilience by feeling safe.

You can be guiding without rescuing or being permissive. this Is not what this. Number four, It's okay to feel upset. I mean, very powerful statement.

And we are people, people always cry in front of me because, you know, hello, I'm a therapist and they apologize. And I am like, oh, there is no apologizing here.

You're supposed to cry here and don't ever apologize. And I would struggle with that because I'm an Aquarian with a cancer rising and those two don t like each other.

True story. When we say it's okay to be upset, you're going to validate emotions without rewarding behavior because it is okay. For them, it s very real and they're allowed to have them.

Phrase 4: It's Okay to Feel Upset

And when we validate people, it helps lower cortisol, our stress hormones fuel these meltdowns, and when you meet emotion with empathy, and not logic, you can help regulate the nervous system.

And the more you do these things, so there's these statements that cause them to shift, but then you help pair it with actual tools that reset. I know people often feel like nothing works with their kids who dysregulate, and I'm here to challenge that.

Are you regulating enough? Are you doing less talking and more calming? Because it's not about saying the perfect thing. It's about seeing something safe for the nervous system to cue it.

Here's what your action step is this week. Really simple. You're going to pick one of these that feels right to you and you're gonna try it out. When you are regulated so that when you go to use it, it's going to feel natural in that chaotic state.

It won't feel false. And then during your child's next beginnings of a meltdown or full melt down, but we got to wait until they get out of red and start moving to yellow based on your co-regulation.

You're going to watch how this shifts them because not rescuing your teaching here.

Using the Phrases and Next Steps

And this is so important. When your kids spiraling, you don't need the perfect words. You need steady ones. These four phrases are anchors for a calmer kid and a calm home.

And for more ComFIRST parenting regulation tools that really help you in all the right ways that you can fit into everyday parenting, join me at the Dysregulation Insider Newsletter, drrosanne.com or slash newsletter.

And this is where you're going to get the inside scoop on the book. coming out in 2026. It's really going to redefine parenting by putting the nervous system first.

And you want to be in and in the know, I should say. Anyway, you got this. I can't wait to hear how these phrases are changing your home and bringing more calm.

Want more insights and solutions? Well, subscribe to our Disregulation Insider and it will show up in your inbox every week.