

PMS- Irritability, Yelling, And Patience



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Natalie Bacon

[Mom On Purpose](#) with Natalie Bacon

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Welcome to Mom On Purpose, where it's all about helping moms overcome challenges and live their best lives. My hope is by being here, you are more inspired to become the mom you are made to be. I'm Natalie, your host, a wife, boy, mom, dog, mama, Chicagoan, and former lawyer turned professionally certified coach. If you're here to grow, I can help. Let's go.

Hello, my beautiful friend. How are you? I want to let you know that if you would like the podcast directory with the updated Mom On Purpose foundational episodes, you can head on over to momonpurpose.com/directory. I created this beautifully designed, easy to use guide with the foundational podcast episodes to get you up to speed with all of the tools that I teach on the podcast. I think this will be great for anyone who is new to the podcast, new to this work, and really wants to get results quickly and kind of jump right in. So if you want it for yourself or you want to send it to a girlfriend, another mom, you know, who would love to grow, you can do that at momonpurpose.com/directory. Today I am going to be answering one of your questions. So if you haven't yet, call me and leave me a message on the podcast hotline.

How it works is you simply dial 1 8 3 3 3, ask Nat. That's 8 3 3 3 2 7 5 6 2 8. When you dial those numbers, you will be taken to a voicemail that you'll recognize is from me, my voice instructing you to just leave a message with whatever your question is so there's no ringing. It just goes straight to voicemail. You can leave a message that's completely anonymous. I don't even know who it is unless you tell me who it is, your name. Otherwise it's anonymous. You leave your message after the tone in under one minute and just simply describe what it is that you are going through. I get asked so many questions that I try my best to answer, all of whether it's through dms, email comments, messages that come in through the membership. There are so many in a variety of different ways, and I thought it would be so much more effective to have one space for those questions so that I can answer some of them on the podcast for everyone's benefit.

So not only does the person asking get a much more robust answer because it's, you know, 20 to 30 minutes of a topic, um, instead of just a

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little, you know, blurb response, whether that's an email or a dm, but also it benefits everyone else in this community. And so if you have a question that you would like me to answer, be bold, be brave, call me at 833, ask Nat 8 3 3 3 2 7 5 6 2 8. You can ask me anything about motherhood, mom rage, mom guilt, the comparison trap, overwhelm, anxiety, your in-laws, your marriage where you're feeling unfulfilled, any of those tougher emotions, a goal that you have that you're not making progress on All of the topics that we talk about here. If you're struggling with a child who, um, is, is giving you a hard time and showing up as your best self, anything goes, just gimme a call.

Leave me a voicemail. I would love to hear from you. That's just fun for me. But you'll also get a specific response from me on the podcast. It will benefit you, get some free coaching as well as everyone listening. So thank you so much in advance. I really think this is going to be, um, a really fun experience that is awesome for all of us here. So today that's what I have for you. I have a question that came in from a member of this community to the podcast hotline that I am going to answer and do a podcast on, specifically about PMS being irritable, yelling and snapping. So here is her message.

Hi, Natalie. I have noticed that I yell at my children more and have less patience with them when I am PMSing. I don't want to use that as an excuse and just would love some tips on how to better regulate myself during that time of the month. Thank you.

All right, thank you my friend, so much for calling in. I love this question for a variety of reasons, specifically because I can relate to it personally when I am PMSing, and also because it applies in so many areas where our physical capacity is limited. So if you are not struggling with this issue, you may find that you struggle similarly, when you are tired, when you are sick, when you are injured, when you are, hormones are off for other reasons. So there is the physical aspect of this, but then there is the psychology. That's the work that I'm going to help you with here because so much of it is the psychology, is the mental, and I am always doing work on this myself,

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and it comes up a lot with my clients. So what we're going to talk about specifically today is that psychology part of it.

What's happening when your capacity, your physical capacity is limited. It's not your normal 100%. So you're hormonal, you're tired, you're sick, you're injured. How can you better manage your mindset and your feelings so that your actions are more aligned with who you want to be, not just reactive from that default primitive brain. So let's take a step back and talk about why you yell. Yelling is an action. The reason we take any action is because of how we're thinking and feeling behind that action. So you think a thought, you feel a feeling, and then you yell and it happens so quickly. With PMS, you are yelling not because of the PMS, you're yelling because of the thought and feeling you have right before you yell. It's just that when you have that physical discomfort along with your thoughts and feelings, it's much more likely that you're going to have negative thoughts and feelings because you have a more limited capacity.

So I think about myself and I think about how my mindset is so much more negative when I am PMSing or when I am sick or when I am tired. It's just harder to manage your mind when you are limited by your physical capacity. The reason that this is important is because you're not destined to yell every time that you're PMSing or sick or have a limited capacity or tired in some way. What you can do is slow it way down and identify the thoughts and feelings that you are thinking and feeling right before you yell even with that limited capacity and work to change them. So the process of change is that you're going to notice what's going on after the fact. Then you're going to notice what's going on during it happening, and then you're going to notice it before. So noticing it after the fact is the first step.

And it might be that you continue to notice it after the fact because it's happening so quickly, but I promise you, the more you increase your capacity, the more you'll start to notice it in the moment. And that's when real change happens. It's okay if it's just after the fact right now. And there are tools that you can use if you yell, right, like repair. That's a tool that I definitely recommend having in your back pocket when you have a limited

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capacity. But you can do the work of change so that you increase your capacity to feel negative emotion and to manage your mind so that you're not taking actions out of alignment with who you want to be, simply because your capacity is limited physically. I love thinking about winning the lottery. So if you are sick, tired, hormonal, PMSing, you would still have those physical ailments that limited physical capacity.

But if you got a call and you won multi mega millions of dollars, how would you feel? This example shows you how much control you have over your emotions. You would still feel hormonal, you would still feel sick or tired, or you know, injured, and you would probably feel excited, happy, full of possibility. Things wouldn't bother you as much. And that's not because anything changed with your physical kind of limitation or ailment, it's just that your thoughts had so much momentum to override that, that there's space for both. So you could have two things being true. You could feel the physical discomfort of PMS and you could feel really happy. So when I'm doing this work on myself, and typically it's around being tired, sick, or PMSing, all three of those, I like to remind myself that if I got a call right now and I won the lottery, I would feel ecstatic.

It would be so fun. And getting into that vibration state while I am physically struggling in a different capacity with pm s or being tired or being sick, shows me that there is space for both things to be true. And it reminds me that feeling good how I want to feel, at least when I am struggling physically is available to me to the extent that I want it. So for this specific question, the work to do out of the moment is to identify the thought and feeling right before yelling. So just imagine the last time that you were PMSing and the last time that you yelled while you were PMSing. Slow it way down and get really curious. So the work that we're doing here is introspective. We're not saying the kid should be different. The kid should leave the house when I'm not feeling good, the kids need to change.

It's their fault, they're whatever. We're turning it inward on ourselves and seeing what we can learn about ourselves during these moments so that we can change. Thoughts and feelings and actions are the way to solving

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this. And so slowing it down, going inward and asking yourself, what am I thinking and feeling right before I yell? Well, if you're like most of my clients, at first, you're not really going to know, and that's okay. You want to start to pay attention out of the moment thinking back to it. And eventually the more you do this, you'll slow it way down in the moment you will notice it. And out of the moment, you'll have some guesses. So for example, I don't have the full facts here. Let's say that your kids are fighting and you're PMSing and you yell okay, now out of the moment, we're going to take a guess at what that thought was that led to you yelling.

Maybe the thought was something like, I don't feel good. I wish they would just listen to me for once. And then you feel frustrated and then you yell. Now again, we're not going to blame them and we're not going to blame yourself. You're just kind of curiously looking at the way you're thinking and feeling so that you can get some greater awareness around your actions so that you can change 'em. Okay? So that's interesting. I'm thinking, I wish they would just listen to me. Well, that thought focuses on their behavior, which isn't the most empowering because it focuses on what you can't control. So if you change that thought from noticing that it's not the most helpful thought, you will change the way you think in the moment. And when you practice the new thought, when you're PMSing, you then won't feel so frustrated even when your kids are fighting.

So your kids are fighting your PMSing. What do you want to think that's going to create the emotion that you want to create? You're still going to be PMSing, but PMSing plus frustration probably isn't helpful. PMSing plus what other emotion would be more helpful? Maybe you want to feel confident, connected, strong understanding. What emotion do you want to feel when your kids are doing what they're doing? And that will kind of lead you to coming up with some better feeling thoughts. So I'm just going to come up with some examples here that I think would be helpful. Let's say that you're PMSing, your kids are fighting, you want to feel connected to them. You might have a thought like, of course my kids are fighting. This is what my kids do. It's okay that I'm feeling uncomfortable, and it's okay that they're fighting. Now to be clear, this does not mean that you're going to be

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permissive and not hold boundaries. I'm talking about the way that you're thinking about it so that you're not resisting what is. When you have thoughts like they should listen to me, they shouldn't be fighting. Those are resisting what is. But alternatively, when you expect them to fight, that doesn't mean you're going to allow any actions. It just means you're not surprised. You're not frustrated, so you're not likely to yell.

So if they're fighting, you might think a thought like, of course they're fighting and I can step in and hold boundaries. And you can be completely calm while you do this. I'm telling you, it is life changing for parenting. I've done it with tantrums, and I don't lose my cool at all because I created so much more momentum with the thoughts and the feelings that I'm feeling. I never think my son shouldn't be melting down. I never think my son shouldn't be having a tantrum. I'm like, oh, he's having a tantrum. Let's go. Let's put my skills to work. That's literally what I think, and it's just an opportunity for me to use these tools. And so again, I don't know exactly what the facts are for your kids, but going along with the example of them fighting and you're feeling like a more limited capacity because of PMS, you still have control of your thoughts.

So plan on your kids being exactly who they are, whether it's fighting or something else, and you are going to feel limited with PMS. What do you want to think and feel? And then practice that new thought. Of course, my kids are going to fight when I'm PMSing and I can still hold boundaries without yelling. Maybe it's something like that. Come up with those 10 thoughts that you want to practice and try on. I promise you that this is the most important work because then in the moment you start repeating that thought and you don't even need to really take deep breaths or process the feeling because you're not feeling frustrated. The work to do in the moment when you're feeling frustrated is important, but only insofar as you haven't done the thought work. And that's going to happen from time to time because you have a primitive brain.

We all do. And so I don't want you to beat yourself up, but I just want you to see the difference there. So when you're feeling frustrated or irritated or

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annoyed, it's because of the thought you're thinking. And in the moment, if those feelings come up, you can process that feeling. You can take deep breaths, you can find the pause. At first, it probably happened so fast, there is no pause. But you can increase that capacity for there to be a pause. Oh, I'm noticing I'm annoyed, I'm frustrated. It's because of my thinking. Nothing has gone wrong. I'm going to take a minute, take some deep breaths, step away, whatever it is. And then I know that out of the moment, I have more work to do on my thoughts so that in the future, when they're doing whatever they're doing, fighting or something else, I don't create that feeling for myself.

It's a very important to take emotional responsibility so that you can change it, not so that you blame yourself. I never want you to blame yourself, but I also don't want you to give that power to your kids who, of course, we do not want to put in charge of your emotions. Instead, like you said, you don't want to blame them, but we're not going to blame you. Instead, you're going to just practice allowing the feeling when it comes up in the moment. Naming it is so important. Oh, this is annoyance. This is irritation. I can take some deep breaths through it. That's useful when that primitive brain takes over. But the most important work is the work you do out of the moment. You imagine your kids being exactly who they are fighting or otherwise, whatever it is that you tend to yell about. And then come up with a list of 10 next believable thoughts that you want to think.

And you don't have to think all 10, but the point is to get your brain into the space of intentional thought creation. 'cause if you're like a lot of my clients, they're stuck in their old pattern of thinking, that's creating the frustration. And so by creating 10, you're showing your brain. There are so many different options and ways to think, so what can you think? And you have the most beautiful creative brain that will come up with amazing thoughts, but you have to get those reps in. You have to start practicing new thoughts. So you come up with the thought and then you practice the thought the next time that you are PMSing. So when I'm PMSing or when I'm tired, or when I'm sick, instead of thinking for myself, instead of thinking, oh no, I'm probably going to be more short tempered or irritable, I think, oh,

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this is cool because now I have the chance to increase my capacity to use these mental and emotional wellness tools during a much harder time.

It's much easier to manage your brain and your emotions when all of your circumstances are amazing and exactly what you want. It's harder to manage your brain and your emotions when your physical capacity has changed. And that sort of brings me to another point. Give yourself a break. Validate yourself. Remind yourself that you are learning a new skill. You are increasing your capacity to feel calm, to feel loving, to feel connected, to feel strong, to hold boundaries and not feel annoyed or frustrated or short-tempered while also managing your physical symptoms of PMS. And that is no small task, my friend. It's like going to the gym and lifting weights at a much higher capacity.

And so when you realize that it sort of shifts the way that you think about it and perceive it, instead of, oh no, this time of the month I'm not going to be the best mom. It's, oh, this time of the month is where my work is to expand my capacity to apply these tools. It's harder to show up as the mom I want to be when my physical capacity is limited in some way. But harder doesn't mean impossible, and it doesn't mean bad, it just means harder. But I'm in, let's do it because it comes every month. And even if it's not PMS, it's something else, right? There's times when we're tired, there's times when we're sick. And so particularly now with my kids who are sick more often than I used to be sick pre-kids, instead of dreading it like I used to, I now think of it as the time where I can utilize these tools at a higher level where my capacity is increasing.

I like to practice thoughts and mantras, like I can be sick and happy, I can be tired, and it's not a big deal. I can be PMSing and physically uncomfortable and feel joy. So for you, what resonates in your mind, in your body? What creates feelings that you want to feel? It might be happy, it might be joy, it might be excitement. But if your kids are fighting, you probably don't want to just be excited or happy, but you might want to be connected and confident and sturdy and strong. And you know, for me, when I think of my son having a tantrum, I want to be strong, but also

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loving. I like to think of the warm words, warm and firm, and I can be warm and firm and validate his feelings and not feel frustrated or yell at all. I love thinking about this as a skill because I've seen it time and time again with myself and with my clients.

You can have a physical limitation and increase your capacity to manage your mind and your emotions. And the benefit of that is that you show up more aligned with who you want to be. You don't yell when it comes to doing this work. I like to remind myself that it's my job to increase my expectations for myself and probably lower my expectations for my kids. Now, when I say that, some of you listening might be thinking, so I'm just supposed to let my kids fight or do whatever they want. That is not what I'm saying. I'm talking about mental and emotional skills. So I want to raise my own expectations of myself to manage my mind and my emotions, and lower my expectations to be more age appropriate for my kids with respect to their mindset and their emotions. I still hold boundaries. I still have rules.

I still, you know, parent in a warm and firm way, but I'm not expecting my two and a half year old to manage his mind and his emotions. I want to raise my expectations for myself, one, just because that's who I want to be, two, because that's really what I have control over. And three, it's kind of cool that then I get to model that for my kids. So as you're doing this work and you think about how your capacity might be limited in some ways physically, PMSing, other hormones, tired, sick injury, notice the space that you can create to feel positive, more helpful emotions so that you're not taking the physical discomfort and adding frustration, irritation or annoyance. It's like I can be tired and frustrated, or I can be tired and happy. You can layer emotions. And so you just want to notice when you're starting from physical discomfort, it's more likely to on default, add some negative emotions because the physical discomfort doesn't feel so great.

But with intentionality, you can change that. It's just like picking up the phone when it rings and you won the lottery. You still feel the physical discomfort that's going on for you. You still feel tired or sick or PMSing or hormonal or injured, but now you're excited, you're happy, you're ecstatic,

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and it's because of the thoughts that you're thinking about winning the lottery. And so I love holding onto this as an example of my capacity. And when I fall short, when I layer on those negative emotions, I give myself grace and I use repair. I repair with myself, and I repair with my kids. And that can be a beautiful thing. You have so much more control over the narrative after you yell, when you don't have shame attached to it, when you're not making it mean something about your goodness, and you lean in to repair and apologizing and working on these skills.

So my friend, notice what you're thinking and feeling right before you yell. Allow yourself space to feel the physical discomfort and change the thought and the feeling and practice that new thought when you're feeling the discomfort so that you don't yell, so that you just allow the negative emotion. The only reason you ever yell is because you're reacting to the negative emotion. Instead of just feeling it, you can just feel irritated or annoyed or overwhelmed or frustrated. You can allow that feeling in your body. We have a Feeling course inside the membership where I teach you how to do this, but you really just name it, breathe through it, allow it. That will stop you from reacting to it. So there's the emotional work there. You can always process the feeling and also you can do the thought work so that you don't even feel that feeling or you feel it much less often than you otherwise would.

I pretty much never have to do feeling work with respect to my son having tantrums because I've already done so much mindset work that I'm never feeling frustrated or annoyed or impatient when he's having the tantrum. I expect him to have the tantrum. I feel connected to him. I feel confident in my skills. And I'm not as skilled at it when I am sick and when I'm PMSing, but I'm working on it, I'm much better at it when I'm tired. I just notice, oh, I'm tired today. I can do tired and happy. I can do tired and joyful. And when I'm sick and I'm PMSing, I'm working on those thoughts as well. I can feel discomfort and pms and hormonal and joy and connection. And also this means giving myself more of what I need. And the same would go for you. When you are feeling the physical discomfort, what do you need more of?

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So for me, when I'm PMSing, I benefit from a lot more sleep. Now is that always possible with a baby? No. But knowing that, I just sort of start to put my mind to work on how I might create a little bit more space for self-care when I physically need it. So lots of ways for you to increase your capacity, to think more deliberately, to feel your feelings so that you can show up as the mom you want to be and not yell when you are physically limited in some way. All right, my friend, thanks for calling in. I know this benefited so many women in this community, and I'll talk with you next week. Take care.

Thank you for being here and listening. Now, head on over to momonpurpose.com/coaching to learn more about the Mom On Purpose membership, where we take all of this work to the next level.