

# 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Natalie Bacon**

[Design Your Dream Life](#) with Natalie Bacon

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

Hi there. Welcome to the *Design Your Dream Life* podcast. My name is Natalie Bacon, and I'm an advanced certified mindfulness life coach as well as a wife and mom. If you're here to do the inner work and grow, I can help. Let's get started.

What's happening my friend? Welcome to the podcast. Today, I want to talk with you about 10 mindset tips for meltdowns and tantrums. Fun topic that I have been thinking about in my own life, applying all of these practices, and as well, doing the coaching inside Grow You.

So few quick announcements before we dive in the topic of the month inside Grow You for February is edit your life. We are decluttering and organizing and elevating our space so that it reflects the vision of our future in a way that is really practical and allows for messes when our kids are playing and for the other people in our lives. So it's combining kind of what we want for our space with the natural tendency to collect and accumulate. Coming up with processes that allow for editing and purging and letting go to make space for the new.

I have created a class, a system, a process that will allow you to really make better decisions with your stuff in a way that feels good and authentic to you, and also practical with the demands of your life and with the people in your life as well. So come on in to Grow You, [nataliebacon.com/coaching](https://nataliebacon.com/coaching), and you will get this class. You will get the journal prompts, the mindfulness practices, as well as the coaching call.

I don't think I've mentioned it here yet, but I completely redid the library inside Grow You. I think this was in January at the beginning of the year. We made so much more content accessible right when you join. So if you want to work on goal setting, if you want to work on your marriage, if you want to work on parenting, or anxiety and overwhelm, we have different categories of content inside the library that you can immediately access when you join.

So if you've never been in Grow You or you are kind of curious about coaching, and you want to give it a try, this would be an excellent time

[Design Your Dream Life](https://nataliebacon.com) with Natalie Bacon

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

because I don't think it's ever been better. Our members are using these tools and getting results at such a high rate. There is nothing I am more proud of. So I would love to coach you and see you inside.

Another fun announcement is that I am pregnant. This is our second child, and we are just absolutely thrilled. I am sharing more over on Instagram, but I also wanted to mention it here if you're not following, it's @nataliebaconcoaching. I'm sharing a lot of how I'm applying these tools in my life with my family. If you want those daily bite sized nuggets of wisdom with the mindfulness practices, you can follow along and get all of the pregnancy and family updates.

So growing my family, I'm obsessed with it. I just find it to be such a privilege and an honor. I truly love it more than anything. I think of the work in my family as a mom as such a gift. I really do. As hard as it is and as nauseous as I feel. I get extremely nauseous, particularly like the first half of my pregnancy. I'm on medicine. It's something that I can manage, but I would say in terms of the bell curve of nausea, I am at an extreme one end.

So it's not that it's easy, but I do think of it in a way that feels still really empowering. There's space for me to feel that nausea and also see that I'm so appreciative of this opportunity. I've never taken it for granted. I know that it really is a privilege, and I'm so lucky. Honestly there is just nothing I would rather spend my life doing and then creating and contributing to my family.

I was actually thinking about how I naturally shifted I would say effortlessly into becoming a mom and why that was. As a caveat, there are so many transitions that have been really hard for me. For example, becoming a lawyer. It was a total identity shift crisis. I don't know what you call it, but it took a lot of development, and it wasn't effortless. Let's just put it that way.

Yet for motherhood, it was the opposite. It sort of felt like I was coming home. Like it just felt right. I was very fortunate to have a smooth transition. I was thinking about why. Right? I think that, if anything, I'm a very rare

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

example of this. I think it is a big identity shift. So for most women, it can be a hard shift.

I don't think there's a right or wrong. Any shift in your identity, any transition, for some of us, certain transitions are going to be easier than others. So I was just reflecting on why I think that it has been easier for me. Of course, please do not use this against yourself if you've had a different experience at all. I just thought it would be fun to kind of share some insights with you.

I was thinking that as the oldest of three, so I have a younger brother and a younger sister. In my family of origin, my dad was an alcoholic. My parents eventually divorced when I was in middle school. There was a lot of instability throughout my childhood. I think that for my entire life I've really felt motherly. I really felt like a caretaker. I've always wanted to be a mom and create a family of my own.

I think that I took on the identity of caretaker and mom in a much broader perspective before I ever had kids. So I think for me actually becoming a mom and having my own kids has just kind of made me more of who I already was and have wanted to become. I don't know if that's true or not, of course. It's a story that serves me, but it's also something that I can definitely see in my past and in my future.

So serving moms with these mindfulness practices and tools has been such an honor. I really think it's my life's work. This work has impacted my life and continues to change my life and my family's life. I think that's why I'm so passionate about combining these two passions of mine, motherhood and living intentionally.

So now you know a little bit more about me. With that, let's dive in to navigating meltdowns and tantrums using some of these mindset mindfulness practices. I have used so many of my tools to help with tantrums.

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

So my firstborn RJ is passionate. He knows what he wants, when he wants it, how he wants it. We have really been experiencing what I would call meltdowns or tantrums since he was about nine or 10 months old. He's always kind of had an opinion, even from the first months that I could see his personality come out. It's truly been amazing, and it's been so helpful for me to use these tools so that I don't blame him, so that I don't label him as difficult, so that I don't see it as him against me. But instead, we're on the same team.

So let's get started with tip number one when it comes to tantrums. That is don't center yourself. It's not about you. Your child is not doing something to you. They're not disrespecting you. They don't "know better". They're just having a hard moment. They want something, and their bodies are completely dysregulated.

So with this tip, I don't know about you. I can totally relate to this where your child's having a meltdown, and you think it's like happening at you. Like they're doing this to you. When we think that way, we're centering ourselves. Like this child is being difficult to me, for me, at me. It's just simply not true. It actually has nothing to do with us, even though we may be the one who held the boundary or said no or whatever it is.

Their emotional expression, their dysregulation is coming from what's happening in their mind and in their body. Particularly with really young kids, they don't yet have that capacity to stay regulated. I mean we see this all the way up through adulthood, right? It's the same reason why adults yell, right? We're dysregulated, and we want to express that frustration or that anger. With kids it just comes out in different ways. It might be hitting, kicking, screaming, slamming doors, whatever it is, right? So it's that dysregulation.

It's not at you. It's not about you at all. They're not doing this to you. So instead of viewing it as disrespectful or at you, which can really make it so personal, make it about them. Like really wonder what's going on for them.

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

Okay, tip number two. Don't use dismissive language that invalidates your child's experience. For example, this isn't a big deal, or you should know better, or that's what you get, or you're being ridiculous. To your child, the feelings are a real experience. It doesn't matter if they're trying to eat a candle or touch the stove, do things that will actually harm them. It still feels very real that they want something that they can't have, or they want to do something that they can't do.

So when we dismiss their feelings, it invalidates their experience. So just notice if you're using this language and kind of catch yourself in that, and notice that that isn't seeing them in their feelings. We want to see them in their feelings.

Tip number three, hold firm boundaries. So just because they're upset doesn't mean you change your mind. So for example, if they're upset that it's bedtime, you don't move bedtime because they're upset. Instead, you allow them to be upset and validate that they're really upset. Even, let's say, if it's the same exact bedtime every single night.

It can be so tempting to think oh my gosh, this is ridiculous. They should know better. We go to bed at 8:00 every single night. There's nothing wrong with you for thinking that. It's just that their brain hasn't developed to see it in that way, not yet, at least. So you can validate their feelings while still holding the boundary.

So you might say, "Gosh, I can see that you are really wanting to stay up. You're really not wanting to go to bed." That's it. That's all you say. You don't have to solve the problem. You just have to see them in their problem. There's such a key distinction here.

We often go into fix it mode, I'm totally guilty of this, thinking we need to like fix their feelings. But that actually teaches them that how they're feeling is bad, and they shouldn't feel that feeling in the future. Instead, think of it like a pool, and you're getting in the pool with them. Feeling their feelings, kind of holding them, allowing space for them, and you're still holding the boundary.

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

Tip number four. In the moment when the tantrum is happening, the meltdown's happening, when they're feeling dysregulated, go inward and allow yourself to feel however you're feeling. Try to widen the gap between how you feel and your actions.

For example, if your child is really upset, and then you find that you are really upset, put your hand on your heart and validate yourself. Say it's okay I'm feeling upset. I can do upset. Feel the feeling and breathe through it. This is the skill of emotional regulation. You are regulating your nervous system, helping yourself see your feelings as real and legitimate. You're not blaming your child for how you feel. You're taking emotional responsibility.

You're allowing yourself to feel upset, and you're comforting yourself with true compassion. You're not beating yourself up thinking you shouldn't be upset. You're also not kind of blaming your child for your upsetness. You're just allowing this to be a hard moment. I'm telling you this is so powerful to do, particularly in the moment. I like to put my hand on my heart when I do this as well.

Tip number five, use the mantra, in your mind, your big feelings don't scare me. I can't tell you how many times I use this one because my go to is oh no, my child's upset. I need to fix their feelings. They shouldn't be upset. Again, what that shows them is that their feelings are invalid. So we end up invalidating their experience, of course, from this place of love and good intentions, but we actually end up doing a little bit of harm there.

So instead, what I practice thinking to myself is your big feelings don't scare me. This just allows me to be present with them to help them get regulated. Most often we want our kids to calm down. We want them to always be calm and understandably so, right. The brain is just wired to look for danger, and danger includes dysregulation. So if we see people really upset, it can cause our nervous systems to get upset as well.

So when your child is upset, one thing that you can do to stay calm is repeat to yourself your big feelings don't scare me. In doing this and

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

thinking this way, you're sending the message that feeling bad is okay. You're comforting them and allowing them space to fill a wide range of feelings.

Just imagine your five year old turning 25, turning 35, turning 45. There is no point in time when they graduate from feeling frustrated, when they graduate from feeling angry, when they graduate from feeling upset. If you can teach them when they are kids that it's okay to feel these feelings, then they won't be scared of them. They won't act out on them. It takes learning. It's like a skill, right? We're not born with the skill of emotional regulation.

What happens is we're born with the full wide range of emotions, and we have to learn this skill of processing the emotions. So if you can do this work on yourself and process your emotions, that's why the work that I do primarily is around being a mom and the mom, not necessarily around parenting. Because when you do this work for yourself, it takes care of so much of the rest.

So by learning how to regulate yourself, by learning how to feel your feelings then you will be comfortable around other people when they are feeling big feelings too. You'll say oh, that's sadness. I know how to do sadness, and you will help your child do sadness because you're so familiar with it. I'm telling you. There is a how to teach your kids about thoughts and feelings course inside Grow You. Game changer.

Okay, tip number six. Out of the moment, so this would be when you're doing your journaling, when you are doing your own kind of self-coaching, when you are outside of the moment of the tantrum so there's not a tantrum happening, decide what you want to think and feel during the next tantrum.

So your default thoughts during a tantrum are what create how you feel. Sometimes those default thoughts can be really empowering, but oftentimes, particularly when our kids are having hard moments, they're very disempowering. They are thoughts like this shouldn't be happening. I thought we were over this. They should know better. Can't they just calm down. Even if you're not saying it out loud, if those are the thoughts that



## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

you're having, that will come through in your emotions, and you will try to control how they're feeling.

So out of the moment you can decide on purpose, what you want to think in the future. It's creating a plan for how you want to think and feel. So, for example, you might write down that you want to practice thinking during the next tantrum I am a good mom, and my child is a good kid. They're having a hard time, and that's okay. I can cope with this. Nothing has gone wrong.

Now on default, that might feel so foreign to you that you put it on your phone, you have a sticky note around the house. The more and more you practice this, I'm telling you, the more you will show up how you want to show up during a tantrum.

Now, all of this sort of presupposes that kind of one of the foundational tools that I teach, which is that the tantrum isn't causing you to feel upset. The tantrum never causes you to yell. You don't yell because your kids are melting down. What happens during a tantrum is that you have thoughts, those default thoughts, the automatic thoughts that your brain has that create feelings. Those thoughts create your feelings, and then you take action from there.

So if you're thinking this shouldn't be happening or why does he always get like this then you'll feel frustrated and upset and then take action from that place. I also want to point out it's very normal to mirror your child's tantrum. So you might not be kicking and screaming, but you're frustrated about their frustration. But that mirroring is just the default. It's not the only way. You can sort of reprogram your brain by deciding out of the moment what you want to think.

So this kind of leads into tip number seven, which is to lower your expectations. I can't tell you how many times I've coached moms who said I thought we were past this. I thought this wouldn't happen again. What I always suggest is to think oh no, we're not past this. This is going to take a lot longer than I thought. I thought we were going to potty train in a couple months. Instead it's going to take all year. Whatever it is, right?

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

Just change your expectations so that you're willing to be in it, and you're not rushing your child out of it. Expect that it will happen again. Expect it and focus on what you can control, which is who you are. You can hold firm boundaries. You can decide what actions are permissible in your home, and you can validate your child's feelings.

You can have thoughts like your big feelings don't scare me. I know you're a good kid. We can work through this. You can kind of be on the same team as your child. I think this is so much easier when you lower your expectations, and you decide on purpose what you want to think in the future when this happens again.

Tip number eight, practice. So practice allowing your feelings in the moment, and practice your new thoughts so that they create different feelings. A lot of times when I work with new clients, there is this epiphany. It's amazing to see when you first learn that thoughts create feelings, you can thought swap, as I call it. But over time, the more you do this work, the more you realize like there's so much more to it. It takes real practice that isn't instant.

The easiest way that I can kind of explain it is with a workout analogy. So if I showed you how to do a push up for the first time, you would say okay, great. You might try it, and it would be fine. That's sort of like creating a thought and saying it for the first time. That is very different than being able to do 50 pushups or 100 pushups. You have to train and condition your body to build up that strength.

That's what you're doing when you are practicing new thoughts. Those new thoughts can become the default way that your body reacts, but it only happens through practicing it. Just creating the thought one time isn't enough. That's why I just like to think of this work as ongoing forever because as long as you have a healthy human brain, you're going to have those default thoughts that don't always serve you, which is totally fine, right?

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

Doing this or not doing it doesn't make you better. Like you're not a bad mom if you yell or get angry or tantrums and meltdowns are just so hard for you. You're not bad at all. Instead, I want you to just see yourself as a human mom. I'm a human mom, not a robot mom. That means sometimes it's really messy during tantrums. Also, I'm going to use some of these steps.

That's how I approach it anyways. By no means, by no stretch of the imagination am I perfect at this at all. I really do have to practice these, and I'm telling you it works. It really has made a huge difference in how I navigate those really hard moments.

Tip number nine, don't make their meltdowns and tantrums means something negative about you as a parent or a mom. Your child isn't an extension of you nor is their behavior reflective of whether you are good or bad.

So let's say that your child has a meltdown in the middle of the grocery store. They are a human being having a really hard time. Their emotions are completely dysregulated. This isn't about what you've taught them. This isn't about disrespect. This isn't about whether you're a good mom or not. It's not about the other people in the store. It's just you are a mother of a child who is dysregulated in a grocery store. That's it.

So I know that it's just so natural for us to care about our image and our reputation. We want to be seen as good. I just want to tell you right now you are a good mom. You really are. Motherhood is hard. Sometimes it's messy, and you're not perfect. I'm not perfect. No mom is perfect. So keep that in mind. Whenever your child is feeling really dysregulated, it doesn't mean anything about you as a mom or as a parent. It just means something's going on with them.

Final tip, tip number 10. When you get it wrong, when you make a mistake, use repair. So I just remind myself, I'm a human mom, not a robot mom. I will make mistakes. So when I make a mistake or when I yell or when I don't handle the tantrum how I want to handle it, I apologize for my actions.

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

I say I'm sorry mom yelled. That was all about what was going on inside for me. I didn't process my anger. I didn't allow it. Instead I reacted to it.

In our home. We like to apologize for actions not feelings. Welcome all feelings. It's okay to feel really, really mad, really, really angry, but it's not okay to yell, slam doors, take whatever actions. This is sort of a caveat that might be helpful here as well. It can be really powerful to teach your kids what actions are okay. If they really struggle with how to express feelings, can you help them come up with how to express them when they're feeling really mad or upset in a way that is permissible in your home.

So for example, you might say we don't allow trashing your room. We don't allow slamming doors, but we do allow stomping on the ground and yelling into a pillow. Whatever, that's kind of the parenting side that you can decide what is permissible. The part that I can help with is separating out actions from feelings. All feelings are welcome, but all actions are not.

So in some, there are so many practices out there that focus on changing the child so that the parent can sort of feel better. Making the child better behaved or "easier". I think that just focuses on the wrong thing. It focuses on the child being relative to the parents experience. Like easier for who, right?

So my practices do the opposite. They focus on empowering you to really show up how you want to show up to the best that you can, and having compassion for yourself, for your child in a way that is connecting, validating, and allows for boundaries. You get to show up how you want to show up while your child is also showing up how they want to show up. That includes learning how to feel their feelings, which is so messy, and depending on your child can take years.

So use these tips. I use them. I absolutely find them to be so helpful. If any tip doesn't resonate with you, don't use it. I love to think of my teachers as providing me with tips and tools that I want to try on. Meaning I'm going to give that a try and see if it works. If it works for me and my family, I'm gonna keep it. If it doesn't, I'll try a different one. I don't like to think as

## 10 Mindset Tips For Meltdowns And Tantrums

something being the one right and only way. So try these on, see if they work for you, and allow you to show up in a way that you get to be the mom who you want to be.

If you loved this podcast I invite you to check out Grow You my mindfulness community for moms where we do the inner work together. Head on over to [nataliebacon.com/coaching](https://nataliebacon.com/coaching) to learn more.