at the top of my lungs. However, I apologized for my bad behaviour later on in the day. A few days later, I noticed my son screaming at the maid because she was "taking too long" to give him something he wanted. I was shocked; this was the first time that my son was behaving in such a manner with someone. I explained to him right there that I had lost my temper the other day but that was no excuse to be rude to someone. I apologized to my help once again in front of my child to help him understand that he can't get his way through bad behaviour," says 34-year-old Fariha Nasrin.

A number of studies over time have shown that parents who frequently and loudly express their anger in front of their kids are bound to end up with children who do not show much empathy towards others. In fact, Matthew McKay, psychologist and author of 'When Anger Hurts Your Kids,' has said that children of parents who express their anger turn out to be "more aggressive and more depressed than peers from calmer families, and they perform worse in school."

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If you want to remain calm in front of your kids, you first need to ensure your own health, says Dr Islam. You need to understand that personal problems like work-related issues or conflict with your spouse or friends may result in outbursts in front your child. If you can start prioritising your health, start working out, and take sometime out for yourself, you are sure to feel less like a martyr and more like a happier, calmer matriarch.

"When you are in a better personal place, it will show in your parenting style. You will find yourself listening to your kids rather than yelling at them," says Dr Islam.

So what do you do when your child breaks your favourite vase? You keep calm, says Dr Islam. "Ask yourself whether that vase is more important than your child. If you yell at your kid, he'll learn that a material thing is more important to you than him, resulting in a loss of self-worth while he learns to be more materialistic in the process," she adds.

Adopt alternative behaviours when dealing with a child who is not behaving in the way you want him to, suggests Dr Islam. Instead of saying "no", explain to them how their behaviour might result in a negative outcome. Instead of saying "don't touch that", say "let's do something else." These kind of positive reinforcements will surely have a more lasting positive impact on your child's psyche.

Maintain a friendly, trusting relationship with your child. You don't want them to hide things from you when they grow older, do you? Children, especially young ones, feel a need to be protected; they want to know that their parents will understand and are there for them. This does not mean that you ignore their bad behaviour. But being firm is not the same thing as being cruel. Instead of yelling, warn them when it's appropriate to do so, and follow through with the consequence if they don't listen. Keep a written list of household rules prominently displayed, so that your kids know what is expected of them. If you feel like you are about to lose your temper, just walk out from there, and take a breather. Come back with a fresh approach, find creative alternatives to yelling. Your children need to know that their behaviour was disappointing but you don't need to shout that out, because frankly, most of the time they are even listening to your rants.

It's not like your kids will be perfectly behaved if you stop yelling. They are kids. They don't know what's right or wrong, they will be learning all that from you. ■