



Reframe & Reconsider: Seeming Easily Triggered

People may seem easily triggered because they are not expressing the escalation process through body language or tone of voice until it becomes explosive. They might not even be aware of their escalating emotions.

"I can only use an angry voice if I am actually pissed off."

- Youth with FASD

[Instead of using a stern tone of voice to resolve the situation before it becomes extreme.]

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Could be misinterpreted as...

- The result of "poor parenting"
- Having an aggressive nature
- Being short-tempered
- Being overly emotional/sensitive

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Should be interpreted as possibly...

- Responding to a reminder of trauma
- Difficulties recognizing escalating emotion in themselves (e.g., stomach hurts, sweating)
- Struggles showing own emotions through body language and tone of voice
- Being exhausted from the stress of trying to keep up
- Feeling overwhelmed, fighting for basic necessities
- Being extremely over-stimulated by the environment
- A build up of stress over time (the person may not recognize the stress until it becomes overwhelming)

STRATEGIES

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- **Self-Regulation:** teach how to *identify* emotions in self and others; *recognize* what activities calm/excite, depress/enrage; *choose* activities to take control of your own body; focus on breathing; teach importance of identifying emotions early before they become overwhelming; reach out to a safe person for support.
- **Nonverbal:** teach use of body language, facial expression, tone of voice to show current and approaching emotions

