

# Filtering Angry Statements Activity

Young people on the autism spectrum often struggle with controlling angry verbal outbursts. The Filtering Angry Statements Activity is designed to:

1. Raise awareness of okay vs. not-okay things to say when you are mad
2. Introduce and reinforce the idea that thoughts can be “filtered” before they are turned into words.

Sample introduction to this activity:

***“When we are upset, we can have many, many upsetting thoughts going through their mind, very quickly. The thoughts can be so many, and so powerful, that they can “escape” out of your mouth if you are not careful.***

***Your mind has a filter in it, to help us to say the right things, instead of every one of our thoughts to rush out of our mouths.***

(Now describe a filter; depends on knowledge level of participants)

***There are different kinds of filters.*** (have them name some: coffee filter, water filter, oil filter, etc. If you have a prop to demonstrate a filter now, that is good—try a colander, a coffee filter, etc)

***You can’t see the filter in your brain, but the way it works is kind of the same. It is especially important to use your brain’s filter when you are upset or angry, so that you say things that are good, and get you help, and so you avoid saying things that frighten, confuse or anger other people.”***

**How to create the materials for this activity:** Print out all of the pages in this file and cut out the statements into strips. Print out on cardstock or on paper that you then laminate. Sort through the upset statements and remove any that you think might be too strong for your particular participants. Add your own upset word statements as you see fit. Have the participant(s) sort the statements into things that are okay to say, sometimes okay to say, and almost never okay to say. The format for laying out the cards is shown on the next page.

Variations: You, the adult, can try acting out the role of an upset person who is not succeeding in filtering his words. Ask the young participants to help you to filter what you say. Ask them to offer you alternative ways to express your upset feelings.

Here is the link to the blog post with more links, and the online download files: <http://bit.ly/zW2Ajs>

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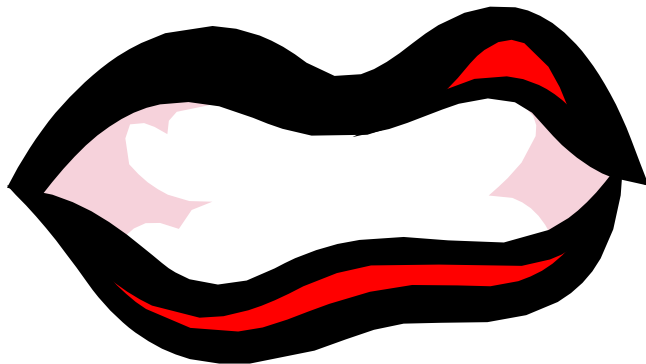
Joel Shaul provides workshops nationwide on the topics of social skills, communication and emotional regulation for children on the autism spectrum. To learn more: <http://bit.ly/zGDQCi>



**The upset brain thinks...**



**Filter these out!**



**You can say these**

**I need to talk!**

**I need a break!**

**need to be alone a while**

**I feel scared!**

**I feel hopeless!**

**I feel like I'm no good!**

**I feel sad!**

**I feel rejected!**

**I'm frustrated!**

**I'm angry!**

**I'm disappointed!**

**I'm worried!**

**No! *Me* first!  
People won't  
listen to me!  
They hurt me  
on purpose!  
I don't like change!  
No! Do it my way!  
I don't want to stop  
what I am doing now!  
This is hard!  
I'm angry!  
I'm disappointed!**

**I want to hurt the  
bad kids!**

**I am going to kill them!**

**They should die!**

**I want to hit them!**

**I am going to kick  
them!**

**I want to shoot you!**

**I am going to  
get back at them!**

**No fair! / want to win!**

**No! *Me* first!**

**I hate you!**  
**You are a \*&%#!!!**  
**I'm useless!**  
**I hate my life!**  
**I wish I was**  
**never born!**  
**I want to hurt you!**