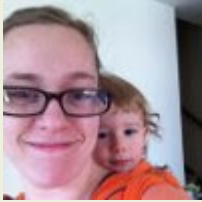


# I've Come A Long Way



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*"Balancing on My Toes" is an original column appearing every other Friday at Everything-Voluntary.com, by Angel M. Ethell. Angel lives in the Chicagoland area with her family: sons Teen (13) and Lil G (2) along with their little sister Cassie Pie (dog), and her partner Daddy G. She loves learning new things along with learning that she might not always be right... 100% of the time. Archived columns can be found [here](#). BMT-only RSS feed available [here](#).*

I had a bad day today. Yesterday too. This was caused by a disagreement I had with my significant other and although an action plan for resolution was developed I was still feeling pretty cranky about it. I have to admit I was unpleasant and some things that would not normally upset me as much really made me mad. My older son stayed up all night playing video games but left all the lights on in the house all night. There was an issue where I became short and upset and I was kinda yelly. I don't mean to be but sometimes I forget myself. Many people would tell me that this is fine. My cup needed filling and my unmet needs were manifesting in yelling at people I care about; that once in a while is forgivable and I should not feel too bad as long as I apologize. There are others that may say I was not setting a good example and I should not be showing my children such an undesirable way to behave; that I should have never let it get to that point in the first place.

## **The Truth is, They are Both Right**

There was a time in my life where this foul mood would have set me off for days and I would yell and scream and not be able to control myself. I wasn't really in control. As a child I was not given the tools to control my emotions nor was I given an example of how things are supposed to be. My parents were yellers. The rage yelling is all me though. So many years of suppression of emotions damaged my ability to control that part of my anger without some recognition and desire to be different. This desire to be different came recently. I wanted to stop yelling and try to learn a little patience. And learning some self-control has been rocky, but it is coming.

## **So Where Did It Come From?**

One concept helped me more than anything else with understanding how to control myself. That concept is *Self-Ownership*. I am in control. My Step Father used to say, "You are in

control of your own destiny,” mostly when he wanted to sound wise, but this ultimate truth is what led me to realize that it is no longer some one else’s fault. Everything I do is all me. I am an adult and it was time I started acting like the adult I wanted to be. I am in control. I do something great, I own it. I am proud and try to build on that, but if I do something not so great, I own that, too. How else are we going to grow and change if we do not take ownership of our faults too?

### **We Cannot, That’s How**

There was once a time where I was so unpleasant for a long periods that my partner challenged me to 30 days without yelling at him. I almost wish I could go back to my younger self and tell her that there is a more peaceful future at my own fingertips if I only let it happen. Disappointment in life and almost every situation led me to be so cantankerous, but the problem is not disappointment, it was expectation and bad communication. I had to learn not to have expectations of others that I did not specifically outline and to communicate my intentions and expectations better. And I’m improving at that. It is happening for me but now because of so many years of bad control and blaming others for my lack of happiness I am starting to see how it affected my older son growing up. He has little self-control and visibly suppresses anger when he is mad for one reason or another.

### **He’s a Teen so These Emotions are Exacerbated, But...**

Because of my lack of control he not only learned that that behavior is acceptable, he also suffered like I did through the episodes of verbal abuse and fury of his parent. And that is sad because it is not a cycle I would have wanted to pass on if I knew I was going to. Its sad only now I’m realizing this. I am just beginning to be the person I want to be and its not too late for my older son. Which is great. My younger son however will benefit greatly for having a Mother that realized she really was in control of her own destiny.

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