

Helping Kids Become Pro Conflict-Resolvers

Daddy Ga-Ga

A Story by The Catbears

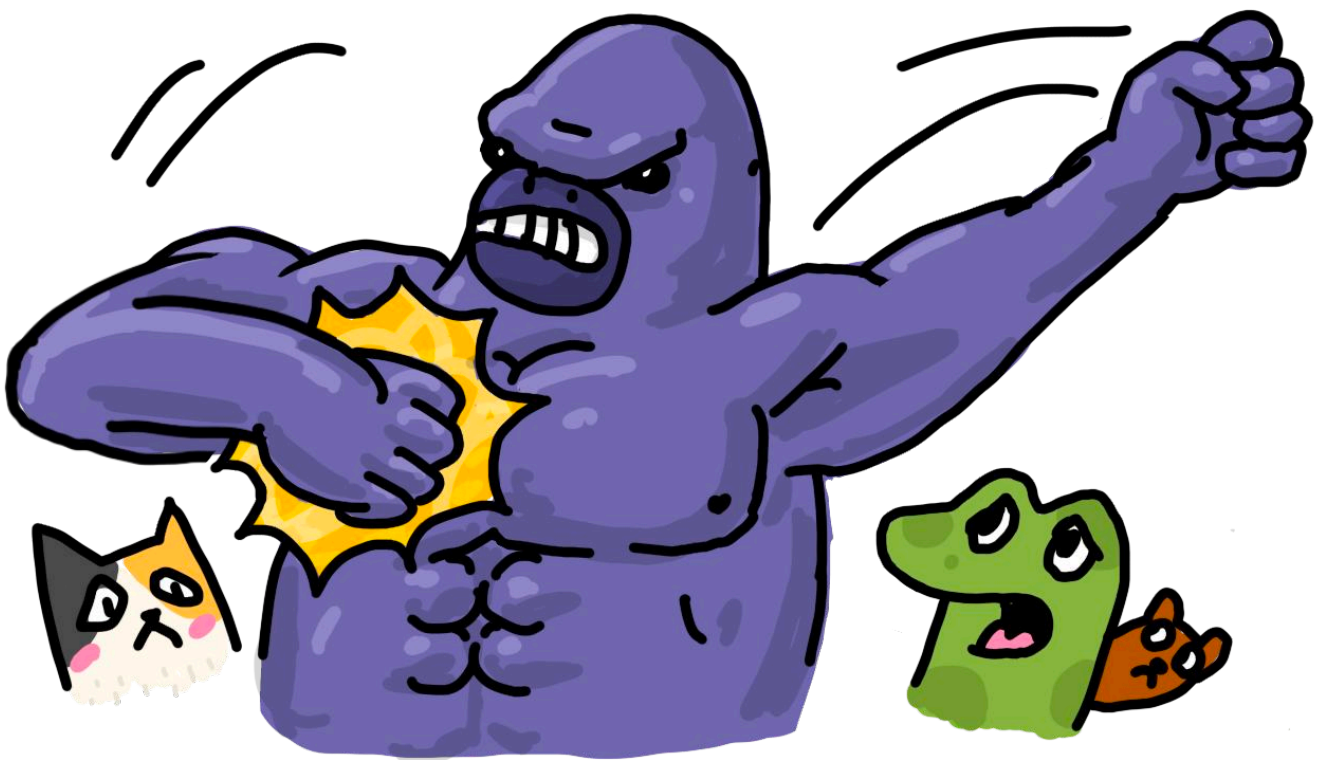


When children are rude and speak with disrespect, Dad wants to feel respected.

Dad believes that even at a young age, children should honor and respect their father. So, what does he do? Dad bangs on the table and shouts:

'You do not talk to your father that way!'

And the children cry, feeling scared.



Dad feels better.

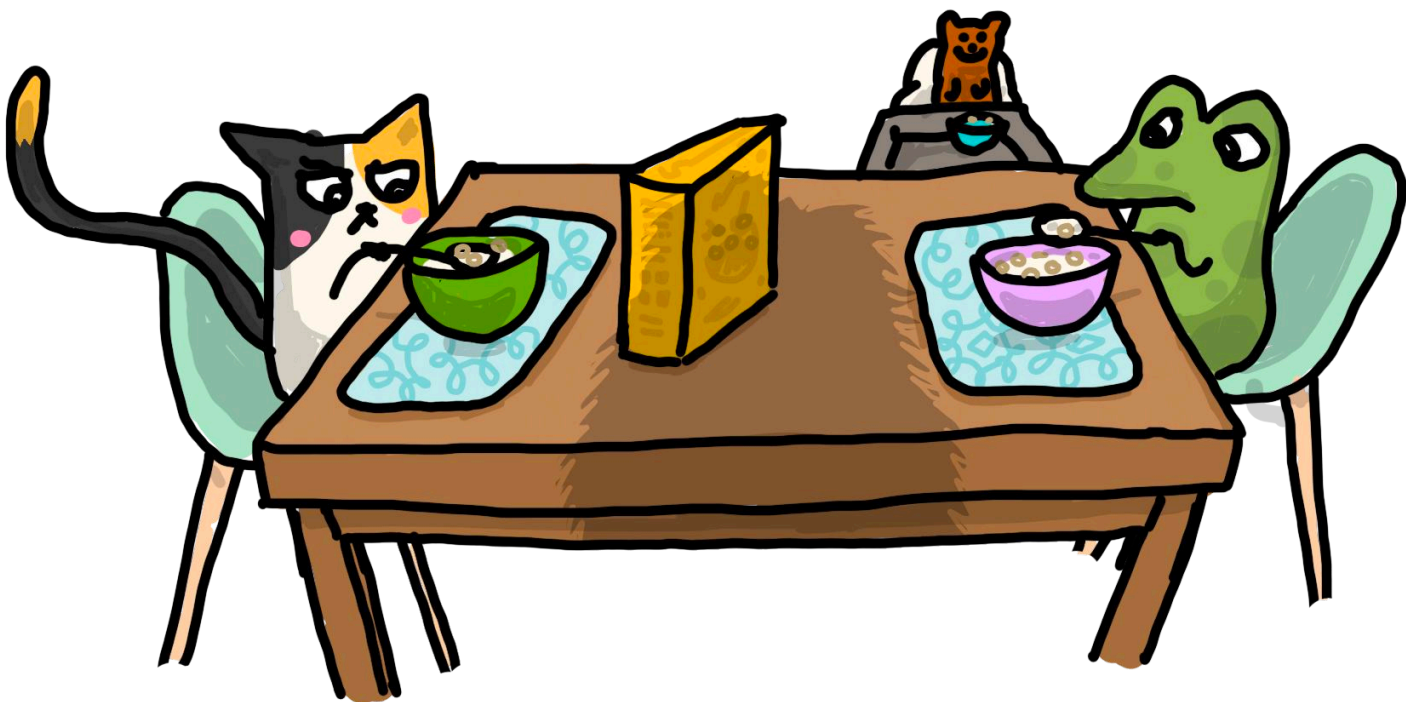
"Now they have learned their lesson. To respect and not be rude."

And it actually works, Or does it?

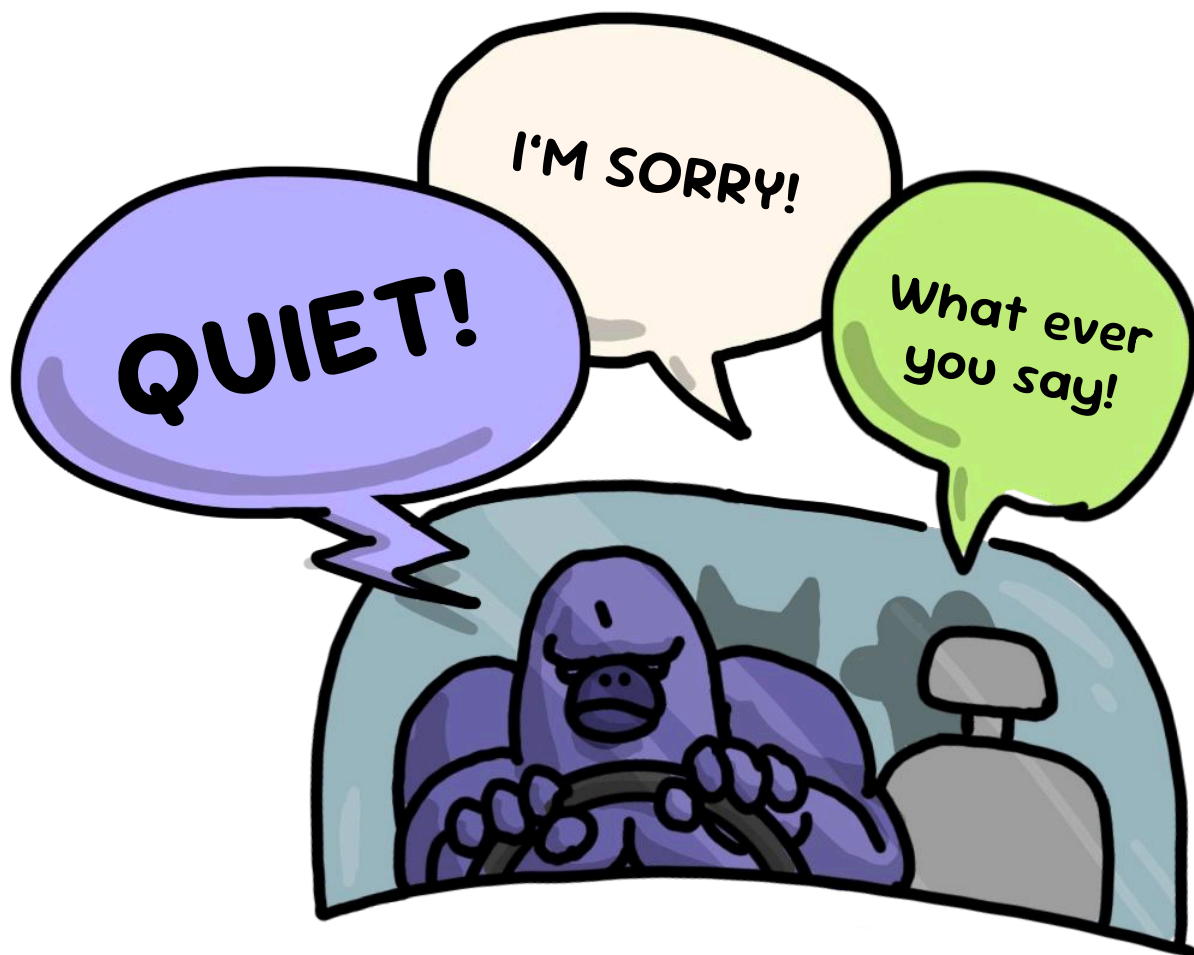
They aren't being rude anymore, That much is true. But it isn't because they feel respect.

No. They stop being rude because now they are **afraid**. And as we know,

Fear and respect Are two very different things.

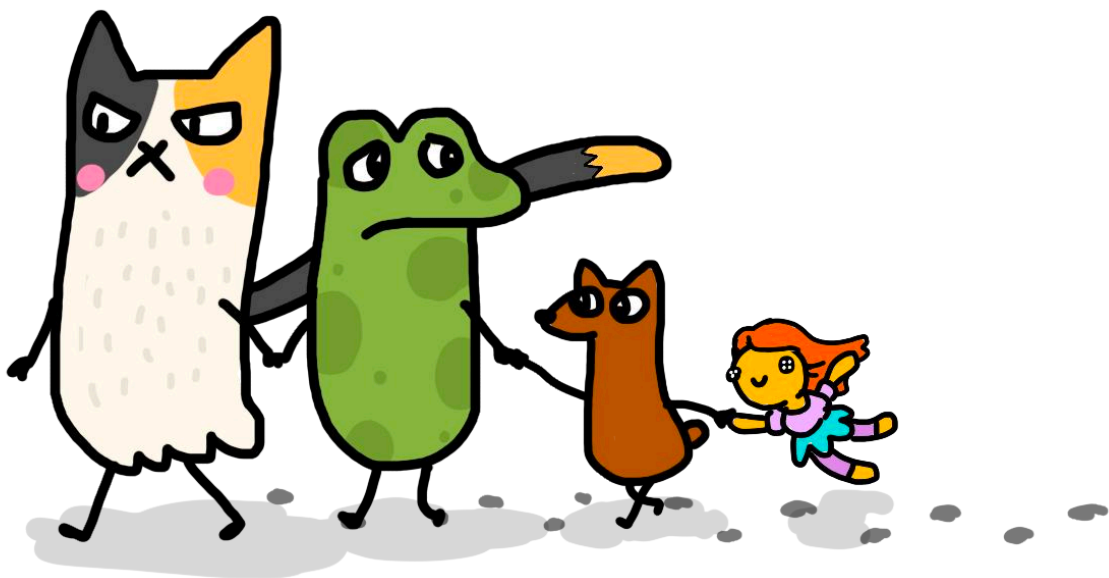
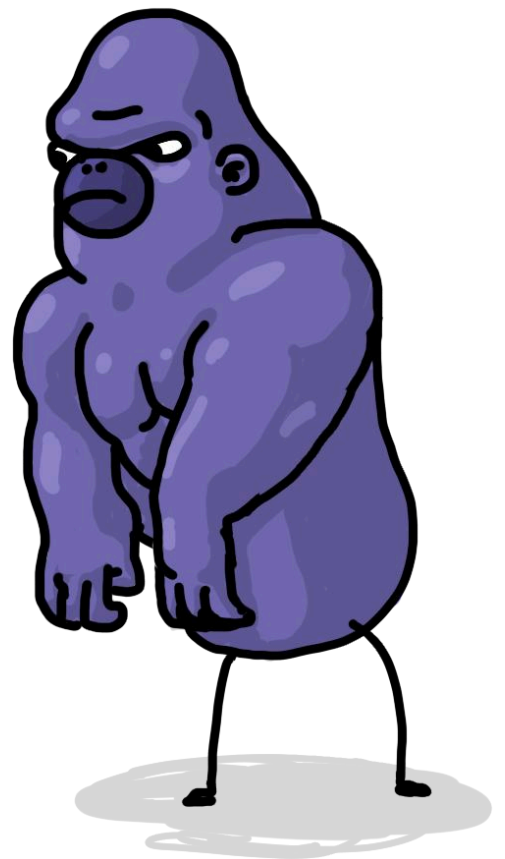


As the children grow, their fear grows with them. The fear of upsetting or annoying Dad, because he could snap at any second.



And over the years, that fear turns into **distance**. It can turn into **resentment**, and in difficult cases, even **hatred**.

The father who once intimidated them when they were small is now weak, and their fear of him gradually fades. Finally, they are able to acknowledge what they truly feel.



"You yelled at me all the time," "You insulted me,"
"This is a pain I've carried with me my whole life."

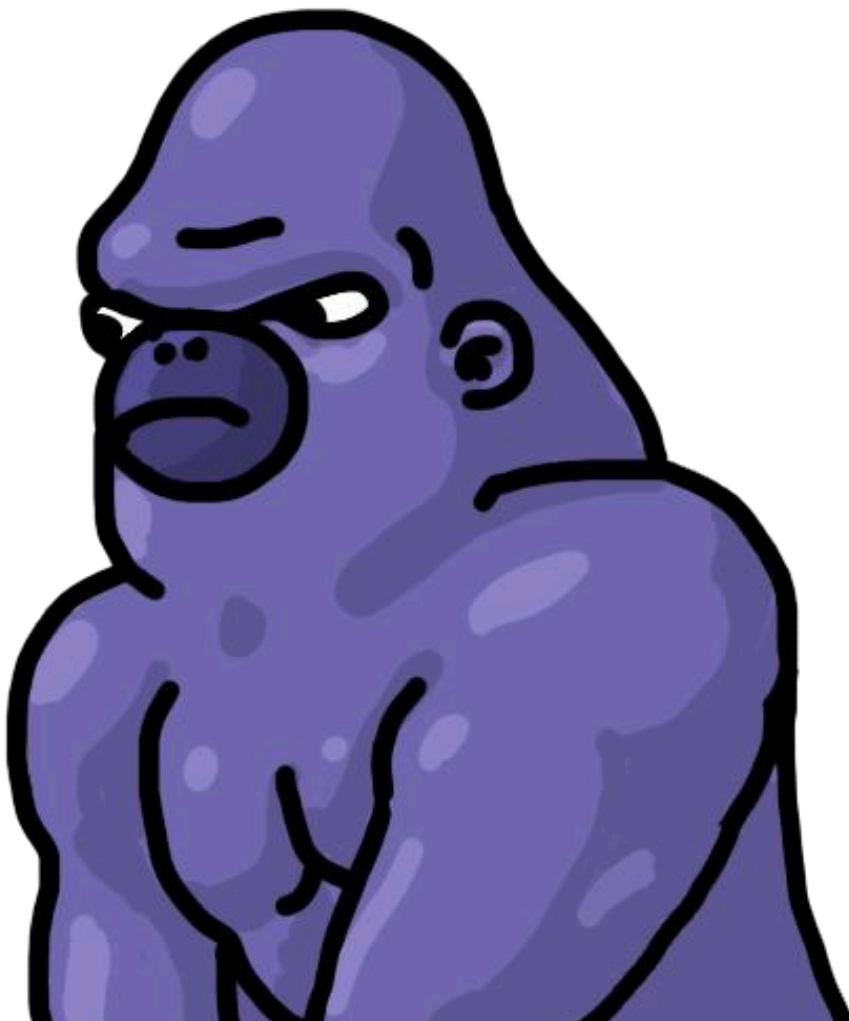
You are teaching them to be good people.

To respect, to love, to help one another, and to be brave and strong.

But your **actions** are teaching them -

Intimidation, power, and control. All the things you don't believe in. The opposite of what you intended. The things you hated when you were a child.

Have you forgotten?



Dear Dad, please know that we understand.
It is not your fault.

Your father also yelled and intimidated you.
And his father before him, and the one before
him. In every country, every nation, and every
community, everyone has been caught in this
loop since the beginning of time.

And it's the same in our family.
When Dad gets angry, he
turns into a gorilla,
or a baboon, or a lion.
He yells and roars,
and everyone
does what
they're
told.



Dad, please, take a deep breath. It isn't too late, and it is still possible to change.

The next time the children are rude or disrespectful, instead of Dad the Gorilla, you could be...

Dad the Horse? No. A horse is big and can give a kick. Dad the Koala Bear? No. He is small, but he can give a bite.



Maybe a Duck?

When a duck is angry, he goes "quack quack quack," and it's actually pretty funny.

Yes, Daddy Duck is always cute. He is never scary, and he isn't able to shout.

Daddy Ga-Ga.



Daddy Ga Ga Agreement

Kids, I want to say I'm sorry. Daddy was wrong. I'm sorry for yelling at you, and I'm sorry for scaring you.

From now on, whenever Dad starts to raise his voice, I want you to say these words:

'Daddy Ga-Ga.'

And I will immediately remember that I'm not a gorilla anymore, or a baboon, or a lion.

I am a duck. And I will never yell at you, and I will never scare you again.

At most, Dad will just go 'ga-ga'.

Dad's Signature

Date

THE
Catbears



Print and hang

And from today on, even when they are disrespectful or act out, when I reach my limit, the most I will do is 'ga-ga,' and nothing more. I remind myself that I am capable of making this change, so that they can grow up with a different kind of Dad.



Dear Grownups,

This story is not asking you to ignore your anger and pretend everything is fine. It's OKAY to be angry. Anger itself is not the problem. Yelling is where things start to go wrong.

When anger turns into yelling, children stop listening and start protecting themselves. On the outside it can look like yelling "works," but on the inside your child is learning something else entirely:

- ① They may mix love with feeling unsafe.
- ① They may start seeing themselves as "bad," instead of their behavior.
- ① They might think power comes from being louder or scarier.

We don't need to stop being angry. We need to change the way it comes out, and **separate anger from fear**.

Change is possible. It may feel impossible, and it is very hard to do alone. That's why we invite the children to help. When our voice starts to rise, they say, "Daddy Ga Ga." That's what makes it possible: They feel safe, and we get a "Stop" sign at exactly the right moment.

When that moment happens, make sure to keep them safe by stopping and staying calm. Tell them you don't want to yell, and say calmly what you are angry about. From there - build a new relationship that is based on listening and understanding, and not about fear and control.

Remember: when we yell at our children, it is never their fault. Children can be difficult. Staying in control is always our responsibility.

Love,

THE
Catbears

P.s - If you'd like to learn more about anger, read our story: [The Biology of Conflict](#)
