The Cycle of Rage
from *Asperger Syndrome and Difficult Moments: Practical Solutions for Tantrums, Rage, and Meltdowns*

- For children with AS, meltdowns at home, especially those that occur immediately upon arrival from school, usually mean there is a problem at school!
- Prevention is the best intervention. Provide social skills support, provide academics at the appropriate level, address sensory and stress issues, TEACH AND MODEL!!

**Sample Behavior Functions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To gain attention</td>
<td>Physiological factors (sickness/allergies; medicine side effects; fatigue;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Escape/avoid</td>
<td>Hunger/thirst; increased arousal due to fight, missed bus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>To meet sensory needs</td>
<td>Classroom environment (high noise level; uncomfortable temperature;</td>
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<td>Does not understand</td>
<td>Over/under-stimulation, poor seating arrangements; frequent disruptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confused</td>
<td>Curriculum and instruction (few opportunities to clarify instructions, lack of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-esteem issues</td>
<td>Predictability, inadequate level of assistance, unclear directions, few</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger/stress</td>
<td>Opportunities to communication, too difficult or too, easy work, activities that</td>
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<td>Irrational thought protection</td>
<td>Take a long time to complete, activities student dislikes, unclear activities</td>
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<td>Not enough time</td>
<td>Criterion, activities perceived as not relevant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Doing multiple things at once</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need for control</td>
<td>Be told TO DO or NOT TO DO something</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interruptions</td>
<td>Feeling rushed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>Doing multiple things at once</td>
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</table>

**Stages of the Rage Cycles**

**Stage 1: Rumbling**
Most important stage, building up to rage, some thinking ability still intact.

*Sample Rumbling Behaviors*

- Fidgeting
- Swearing
- Making noises
- Grimacing

*Rumbling Interventions*

- Antiseptic bouncing
- Proximity control
- Signal control
- Touch control

**Stage 2: The Rage Stage**
This is the lightening stage when the neurotransmitters are not working correctly. The child or youth may shout, swear, kick, or hit. He or she is clearly out of control.

*Rage Stage Behaviors*

- Disinhibited
- Acts impulsively
- Emotional
- Explosive

*Rage Stage Interventions*

- Protect the student
- Protect the environment
- Protect others
- Discipline doesn’t work

**Stage 3: The Recovery Stage**
The child or youth may sleep. He/she may apologize or be contrite. Withdrawal may occur; a fantasy world may be the target. The student may deny meltdown. Some do not remember what happened during the Rage Stage.

*Recovery Stage Interventions*

- Redirect to successful activity
- Present spaces
- Use few words

**Stage 4: After the Recovery**
Teach new ways to handle problem situations