



CHEAT SHEETS

The Mom Conference



CONNECTION BASED PARENTING

CHEAT SHEETS

How to Create a Family Culture that Connects

Interview with Rich Christiansen

<https://toesturnpurple.com/>

Take Action:

Have more connection in your family through creating doctrines, symbols, and rituals: get your family involved so that they are invested in and excited about the process and the outcome.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Rich 0:48

- He's done so many fun things that Desi wants to model
- Rich has had 49 businesses; 18 have been failures; 17 have been multi-million dollar businesses (Each one was created with \$5000)
 - o He has helped his sons create businesses
- He loves mentoring and supporting youth and has an adopted daughter from Nepal

How to deliberately create a legacy with your family 2:30

- Rich and his wife were always strongly driven to have a close family but early on, didn't have a plan in place to make that happen
- Rich learned that any enduring religion or government has 3 critical components:
 - o Deep, meaningful doctrine
 - o Symbols
 - o Rituals
- Rich wondered if this applies to families and he realized powerful families have these 3 components too

More on Rich's family logo 5:37

- They do a yearly summit where they teach how to create a logo (and more)
- In their family, they talked about who they are, what they stand for, and the words that surround their family

- They then had his 10yo work with a team in India to come up with possible logos
- Over time the logo has changed and evolved as the family has grown
- Everyone in the family identifies with the logo and it represents what they stand for
- Along with their doctrine and rituals, all of this gives the kids hope, strength, and understanding that they can sustain, thrive, and endure in difficult situations

What if your family isn't on board 9:12

- Continue to ask questions to the person to help walls come down
- The surrounding pieces, the kids get to support, but the leaders ultimately establish the core doctrine and get the buy in bit by bit

Rich's family mission statement and mantras 10:30

- This was inspired by Stephen Covey
- The mission statement is something that you and your spouse are deciding what your family stands for
 - Rich's family's mission statement is 3-4 paragraphs
- The slogans and mantras are more emotional-type phrases that support the mission statement
- Parents should form and craft the mission statement and let the kids support it with helping create the logo and the mantras/slogans

What do you do about family annoyances and things that disconnect you? 14:15

- One of the joys of families is that it helps us grow
- The reality is kids go through phases
- The tools that help:
 - Just be patient: don't emphasize the bad; emphasize the good
 - Taking an hour to talk and say "5 things I like to do." Then, "5 things I know you like to do" and "5 things I love about you" (You can go way more than 5!!) And then "If this one thing were to change, it would make my relationship with you stronger." Write all answers down privately and then go back and forth and share and discuss
 - The other person knows that you see them and they feel loved and appreciated. Then, they're open to feedback

- You're helping to show that you can be open to feedback too, you're modeling, and it's helping make your relationship better
- This helps to open up communication

How he gives voice to his children 24:42

- Example of giving his kids choices for dinner
 - For things that don't matter as much, give them a choice and give a voice
- That way they feel like they're heard and when you come down on something, they listen
- Rich believes in few rules but the ones you enforce are really important and uncompromisable

More about Rich's family and how his book came about 26:30

- When Rich's kids are 12, he takes them to another country to see how fortunate they are
- When they're 14 they go to a mountain peak to learn to do hard things
- When they turn 16 he teaches them a life skill (they build a business)
- When his 4th son got to his business stage, he wanted to write a book with Rich
 - They spent 2 years writing the book "Even if Your Toes Turn Purple"
 - For teens and early teens to help them have healthy, confident teens who stand out and make good decisions

How to get his book 28:30

- Get the [free download of his book](#) (and you can learn more about his March event)

NOTES:

The Truth About Boys and Video Games

Interview with Michael Gurian

<https://www.michaelgurian.com>

Take Action:

Video games can be a tool to help brain, moral, and character development, but be thoughtful about how and when your boys play; engage them in conversation about the video games to bring this positive development.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Michael 0:22

- He's an expert on the difference between boys' and girls' brains
- He's spoken at the UN and The White House
- Michael has written nearly 30 books including [Saving Our Sons](#) and [The Wonder of Boys](#)

What are the differences between boys' and girls' brains? 1:14

- There are structural differences, chemical differences, and functional differences: how brains acquire information, process information, and what they're interested in
- The male brain is doing language on the left and the female brain does words on both sides, so females have connectivity with words to feelings
 - o Especially as boys get to adolescence, they won't use as many words for feelings
- There are similarities and overlap but the X and Y chromosome set up the brain to be different

How can understanding these differences help moms? 5:12

- You want to become a citizen-scientist: You're studying your kids and become the scientist to figure out what works
- Walking with your son shoulder-to-shoulder can help your son open up- he's walking and not as intimidated as eye-to-eye. The movement of walking also helps him open up

- You can try these ideas that Dr. Gurian shares and begin to see what works and doesn't and your observations help you determine what's best for your child

Why are boys drawn to video games and what does that look like in their brain?
8:26

- It's complex; gray matter centers are activated during video game play and it feels so good to their brain
 - This stimulates dopamine (the reward chemical) and as that reward chemistry is stimulated, they get more into video games
- When boys are playing, the right side of the brain is concentrating and it's activated in 4 ways
- In school, the left side of the brain is working because there are lots of words, worksheets, etc.
 - They come home and the right side is activated and it feels great
 - So, it *can* be addictive, but it's also clear why they love these games
 - When gray matter areas are triggered, transitions become difficult, because you're concentrating so much
 - You can develop strategies knowing that those transitions away from the game might be hard

Talking about video games with your kids 14:22

- You can sit, verbalize, and engage with your sons around video games
- There is an opportunity for character and moral development through video games
 - Many games are very moral and are developmental and good, as long as we help them talk about it and understand
- They should explain the game to us (not all the time!), 1-2 times a week, especially if the game is new
 - Ask what it teaches, who's good and evil, etc. and let your child teach you

Video game guidelines 17:26

- Gray matter development is staged, so video games should be staged too
- The brain goes through 7 stages of development from birth to age 25
- 5-year-olds: You don't want them on screens very much, especially not video games

- 9 and 10-year olds: They're probably playing video games so set guidelines, for example only on the weekends
 - o He suggests no smart phones until age 13
- Between ages 10 and 15 is a big brain pruning time so it prunes away cells it's not using and retains cells it is using
 - o The male brain tends to prune away social-emotional development if it focuses on other areas of development
- Long-term, kids can end up depressed and anxious if we don't monitor screen time and video games

Smart phone guidelines 21:32

- Don't give smart phones until age 13 or 14 (and see if they're ready)
- Remember that every human was raised without smart phones- they're not necessary
- The issue with texting is instant gratification and it causes a flood of hormones
 - o We want kids to be involved with more long-term efforts than instant gratification to help learn social-emotional skills
 - o This is problematic for young kids (10 year-olds), but 15-16-year-olds can start to figure out the instant gratification

One of the ways that moms can help boys 27:20

- School systems have become anti-male and impede the process of brain development
 - o If you know your 12-year old son has 3-hours of homework, that's not good for his brain development
- Male brains are trying to send more activity into the body and the body is moving and sending the activity up
 - o Because the brain-body connection is so active, if we can keep males active, then the signal moves up and down
 - o As males move more, more of the brain develops; as they sit more, the brain develops less
- Remember that brain development happens when they're moving, so make sure they don't sit a lot- intercede with the school if you need to
- Aim for 2 hours of movement at least, after school

NOTES:

Mom Guilt: Is it a Bad Thing? Part 1

Interview with Jodi Hildebrant

<https://www.connexionsclassroom.com>

Take Action:

Remember that you are in control of your thoughts and feelings, but you need to become aware of the distortions that are happening: challenge those distortions and experience your feelings shift.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Desi's experience with Jodi 0:50

- She's been a mentor to Desi
- Desi has seen family members work with Jodi and make small, but very meaningful changes and shifts
- This is a perspective shifter and a game changer when you apply these ideas

Meet Jodi 1:42

- She is a therapist and started teaching in a treatment center; she learned about connection and the relationship to addiction
- She has unique perspectives that will help you deal with overwhelm

What is overwhelm and why are we so overwhelmed as moms? 2:45

- Your kids always need you, no matter what their age
- It's important that we don't walk around overwhelmed because our kids need healthy women
- Overwhelm is a state of thought rather than a state of being
 - o You can shift those thoughts by understanding what's creating them
- Understanding the term "distortion" will help you understand what creates the state of thought that says, "I'm busy, I'm overwhelmed, I'm not enough," etc.

More information on distortions 5:30

- There are thoughts that have truth: these are facts, they're everlasting, and other people agree they're true

- Distortion is the opposite of truth; it's about feelings and things that are changeable
 - o Anything that's not reality is distortion
- It's normal to believe that the distortion is true
- You need to understand the differentiation between truth and distortion: at any point in your day, you're either in truth or distortion
 - o If you don't know about distortion, it's normal to default to it
- You need to learn to decipher and decide if you want to believe the distortion or shift to truth

An example to understand this 8:40

- Jodi was writing something on a piece of paper and she heard in her head, "you shouldn't write it like that- they won't understand it- that sounds dumb."
 - o Jodi knows this is distorted thinking: it's not the truth. The truth is that she's writing words on paper
 - o Distortion comes in and says that's not the truth and gives it a story
- You can't stop distortion from talking, but you can turn the volume down once you recognize it
- Overwhelm is coming from you believing the distortions; it's not the things you do, it's what you're thinking and saying to yourself that's creating overwhelm

Types of distortion you might experience 11:14

- Self-denigration: Every time you go to do something, distortion says you're not doing it right
- Self-adulation: "Do it my way; I don't have to follow the rules; you shouldn't have done that"- it's distorted because it's not reality
- Both ways are lies and deception: that's what's dragging on you
- Pay attention to your thoughts: is it the moving around that exhausts you, or is it the thoughts? (It's probably the thoughts)
- Adulation is the cover for the fear that you're not enough, you're inadequate, or unworthy
- Once you can see it, then you can make choices to reframe it back into truth
 - o Example: "Jodi, that's not the truth. Stop. These are just words on the page- this has nothing to do with your self-worth"

- As we keep believing the distortions we have a physical sensation of “I’m not enough; I won’t make it; I can’t do this” - it’s overwhelm

Using self-care to combat overwhelm 16:35

- Jodi’s idea of self-care: She’s all for things like massages, but self-care is deeper than that
- We need to take care of and nurture our souls
- You do need to take care of the envelope you’re in, but also live a life of integrity
 - o Be impeccably honest
 - o Be rigorously personally responsible for thoughts, feelings, and behaviors
 - o You’re vulnerably humble
 - As you live these, you’re caring for your spirit and it will be vibrant and alive
- If you focus on one, you’re living in the other two
 - o Practice one of these and be rigorous about it

You are responsible for the 3 things 22:49

- You’re thinking thousands of thoughts a day and you’re responsible for all of them
- You’re responsible for what you feel
- You’re also responsible for what you then do
- Feel empowered by this!
 - o You’re free to think and feel whatever you want
- When you think something, you then have a corresponding emotion (you might not be aware of the thought because many of them are automatic)
 - o Even if you don’t notice thoughts, you probably know the feelings
 - o Feelings are the reactions to thoughts (it’s normal to feel like they’re truths and we don’t have control)- You have power over how you feel but you need to take control over your thinking
 - Example: Jodi was in her office and a felt fear based on the thoughts she had, based on how someone banged on her door. She opened the door to see someone with flowers and her feelings changed immediately
- Give this a try: Challenge those distortions and your feelings will shift

NOTES:

Mom Guilt: Is it a Bad Thing? Part 2

Interview with Jodi Hildebrant

<https://www.connexionsclassroom.com>

Take Action:

Remember that guilt can only come from something that you *do*; it is a gift that tells you you're out of alignment with who you want to be. Resist the shame/distortions that make you believe what you do also means something about you.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Looking at the 3rd area you're responsible for: Your behaviors 0:18

- You make a deliberate and contentious choice if you've taken responsibility for your thoughts and feelings
- We are responsible for thoughts-feelings-choices

The principles of connection 1:38

- Being honest, being humble, and being responsible
 - o When you live these, you can't be in distortion
 - o This is a constant practice to live these principles
- Distortion will always be there and it's not honest, not responsible, and not humble

We (along with others) pass distortion habits onto our kids 2:53

- They learn from us (both positive and negative)
- Our kids are a product of their environment- they interact with a lot of people
- Distortion gets passed on easily
 - o Jodi experienced this a lot from coaches projecting their distortions onto her in sport
 - o Kids then take this on as the truth- no one says that it's their distortion: not yours
- By teaching kids the principles of truth and distortion, you can help them understand that it's the other person's distortion, not your child's
 - o Your kids need help identifying the truth

Distortion looks at what we do and changes it to meaning about who we are 6:15

- Everything you do and your child does are only about the things that we do; distortion says that what you do is connected to who you are
 - o It says: when you do certain things, it means something about you
- Distortion attacks you and sends you to attack others
- We then feel shame
- Your experiences are only about your experiences, and you can do something to change the experience oftentimes, but it has nothing to do with your value and worth

Experiencing shame 8:42

- Shame is a part of our vernacular, and it's come from a number of places
- Distortion is shame

Shame vs. guilt 9:45

Guilt

- When I do something (anything) that I feel violates my constitution/moral code/belief system; when I behave contra to what I know to be right for me, then I feel guilt; I feel remorse and sorrow
 - o That's what you're supposed to feel: it's natural
 - o It comes from God and it's a gift that raises your consciousness to not do it again
 - o It tells you: pay attention and change (that's the gift)

Shame/distortion

- This is not "mom guilt"
- You need to look at what you've done to feel guilt around. If you didn't do anything, it's not guilt
 - o Remember that other people are responsible: You're not responsible for your kid being upset
- You only are responsible for what you've done
- Distortion says, "I am a mistake" Guilt says, "I made a mistake"
- Her class gives 24 hours of education around these principles

Being open 15:49

- It's the only way to be honest and responsible
- Humility is at the core of being honest and responsible

- She asks people “how willing are you to change?”
 - o What’s going on isn’t about other people, it’s about you
 - o As you change and feel calm, capable, free, and empowered, hopefully other people will see that and want to change too
- You may have to set boundaries for people and the relationships you have if they won’t live in truth

This is an ongoing practice 19:18

- We can’t stay 24/7 in truth
- You can stay conscious of it and catch it
- The longer you practice, you’ll get faster at it
- This is a skill and a muscle that you build

Getting support in this 20:01

- Desi calls someone to help her process through some of this
- Call people and tell them you’re in distortion and they can help you get back into truth

More about Jodi’s class 21:08

- Desi connected with people she met when taking the class
- There are several online classes
 - o [ConneXions 101](#): 6-week course online with a class on Saturday mornings or an in-person class in Utah County
 - You get \$50 off the course with the code momconference
 - o [Parenting class](#) to teach children not to go into distortion (need to take 101 first)
- Distortion is all around you: you’ll start to notice it and be able to stop it for yourself and then help others
- Check out Jodi’s worksheet on mom guilt vs. mom shame

Connecting this back to overwhelm 26:02

- This is a gift to recognize where overwhelm comes from and that we can shift that
- You don’t have to live in that state: when you feel it, you know how to get over it
- Overwhelm is a state of thought, not a state of being
- Peace is knowing increased skills, not changing circumstances

NOTES:

How to Talk so Little Kids (And Big Kids) Will Listen

Interview with Julie King and Joanna Faber

<http://howtotalksolittlekidswilllisten.com/>

Take Action:

Acknowledge feelings as much as you can, and work on establishing the connection and relationship with your child- these create a stronger foundation for children to listen.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Julie and Joanna 0:50

- Wrote the book [How to Talk so Little Kids Will Listen](#)
- Joanna Faber is the daughter of Adele Faber (who wrote [How to Talk so Kids Will Listen](#) and [How to Listen so Kids Will Talk](#)) and she is a mom of 3; she was a teacher in Harlem for 10 years
- Julie King has done workshops over 20 years and she has expertise in applying these principles to kids with Autism and Sensory Processing Disorders
- The book is hilarious, you'll relate, and the skills work
- They're going to walk us through real-life examples (from Desi's life) and how to get kids to listen

Example #1: 2:33

Desi took her son to the grocery store and her son wanted strawberry Halo Top ice cream (which is expensive). She said they could share and he wanted the whole thing to himself, and then they screamed about it all the way out to the car.

- It's tempting to respond, "If you keep this up, you're not getting any ice cream" which doesn't make for a pleasant rest of the shopping trip
- Start by accepting feelings while limiting actions
- Before you even put it into the cart, acknowledge his feelings with words "You don't just want half- you want all of it."

- You can give their wishes and fantasies, “Boy, I bet you’d be happy if we could get a whole swimming pool of ice cream.”
 - o Often, that’s enough to acknowledge the strong feelings warmly.
That can address the tension
- But, if your child is persistent, then you can give information and a choice to help move on.
 - o “Well, you’re stuck with a mom who cares about too much sugar, so I’m willing to get one tub for the family. I can pick it out or you can pick it out.”
- If he keeps screaming, you can share your feelings using an “I message” - “I don’t feel like getting ice cream when I’m being screamed at”
- 2 stories about how this approach works
 - o The chocolate milk story
 - o A child in a classroom cleaning blocks
- It’s easier for children to accept limits when we start by accepting their feelings
 - o The limits are still held; it actually makes it easier to be strict

Example #2: 12:22

Desi’s family was at her mom’s house and it was time to go. Cooper was having fun and he was not happy to leave and he bit her on the shoulder.

- The perfect reaction could be to yell “Oww!” and drop your kid (which is what Desi did)
 - o That gives them a lot of good feedback
- Again, the first rule is to talk about feelings, for example “Boy, you don’t like to leave when you’re having fun- you probably wish you could stay here all night”
- Then, find a way to give the kid some healthy control- they feel like we’re arbitrarily moving them around.
- People tend to be more cooperative when they have autonomy and control.
 - o Example: Give the kid a stopwatch or timer- “We have to leave in 10 minutes- can you set the timer and let us know when we need to go?”
 - o The [Time Timer](#) is a great tool to visually see how time is going
- Another option is to make something a game. In this case, the kid thinks they’re leaving the fun situation, so think about making the transition fun.

- For example, “Would you like to hop like a rabbit to the car? Or would you like to walk backward?”

Problem solving ahead of time 18:05

- You sit down with your kids and you start with acknowledging their feelings, for example “You have a hard time leaving the park when you’re having so much fun.” Spend a lot of time on that.
- Then you share your feelings, “I don’t like going to the park when you’re going to scream at me when we leave. We need ideas. What should we do?”
 - And you come up with ideas for how to handle the situation, for example a signal that means it’s *really* time to leave the park or a snack in the car for when you’re done
- It’s a huge thing to enlist the kids and get them on your side; it feels time-consuming, but it’s helpful to get everyone on the same page and same team
- Do this for repetitive issues
- Keep in mind these strategies work for kids of all ages

Example #3: 23:45

Desi’s mom’s house has lots of toys and her son was dumping out all the bins, and instead of helping clean up at the end, he wanted to just keep dumping bins.

- Adults get excited by a clean and orderly room and kids don’t care
- The best thing to do with little kids is to make cleaning up pleasant and fun
- Kids don’t have a work-ethic, they have a play-ethic
 - Story from a pre-school teacher who plays different paces of music and the kids have to clean up to that pace
 - You can also have the kids toss the toys
 - One mom made the toy bag “talk” and feed the bag with toys
- You ask kids how long it will take to clean and then set the timer
 - This works with other tasks like homework too: having an end point is helpful
- Sometimes your child is grumpy or out of sorts, and it will save you grief if you just do it yourself. Eventually they’ll understand why they should clean up and have a stronger work ethic
 - You can’t control them by force, so work on building the connection and listening, and finding solutions, so start that when they’re little

Final thoughts 33:35

- Remember how important the relationship and the connection are so that your kids want to listen and cooperate
- Acknowledge feelings and know that you won't manage every moment perfectly
- Desi encourages you to buy their book- it made her laugh out loud!

Where to find Julie and Joanna:

- [On Facebook](#)
- <http://howtotalksolittlekidswilllisten.com/>
- www.julieking.org

NOTES:

A Different Approach to Setting Limits

Interview with Dr. Laura Markham

www.AhaParenting.com

Take Action:

Take the time to develop the relationships you have with your children and when it's time to set limits, do so in a way that allows your child to feel understood and respected.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Dr. Laura 0:52

- Dr. Laura's books:
 - o [Peaceful Parent, Happy Kids](#)
 - o [Peaceful Parent, Happy Siblings](#)
 - o [Peaceful Parent, Happy Kids Workbook](#)
 - o [Online Course](#)

What do we mean by limits 2:20

- If something doesn't meet your expectations or the child breaks rules, you set a limit to guide their behavior
- When we set limits in a way that the child feels understood, the child begins to accept the limit
- When you set limits in a loving way, the child is willing to be guided.

Using force to guide behavior 5:46

- If you use force (yelling or consequences) that doesn't tend to work well
- Parents may think you need to be harsh, strict, or mean with limits, but you don't
- You do need clarity with limits; you validate what they're experiencing and then set the limit clearly

The importance of validating feelings 8:00

- When people feel understood, they're more likely to work through their feelings and move onto problem solving

- Feelings are a message and we need a witness to our feelings to help let them go
- If kids are being defiant, it's a relationship problem

Example of dealing with defiance 10:30

- If a kid says they're not going, we tend to fight back or maybe feel helpless
- Think about the future of using force- you can't maintain it long term
- Influence comes from relationship and a strong bond
- Force undermines the relationship and makes kids feel like you're not there for them
- When you feel like fighting back, take a breath and remind yourself your goal is connection
- Try to be on their side and validate how they're feeling

Why don't we respond from a place of connection all the time? 15:44

- We're busy, rushed, etc., but there's more:
- We feel like we should give an order and they should do it, but they don't
- If you want to have a long-term relationship with influence then you need to foster the relationship now and be on the same team

Setting a limit for an elementary child not being able to play with a friend 17:38

- Another example of explosive melt downs and name calling
- Ideally you see it coming so you intervene before you end up in that place
- Look at why something is happening, there's probably an ongoing issue
- When a child is struggling with emotions, get them laughing; they can get to a deeper level that is as releasing as a good cry
- One reason they are melting down is they probably need more safety with you and to spend more one-on-one time
- Resist attacking back; take a deep breath; set the limit; acknowledge their experience, and talk with the child to help them reregulate
- You can bring it up again later and review what the limit is and why once the child is calm

What can you do with teenagers? 31:28

- With a teen, you have a lot of history and if you've parented through connection, you have a teen who can emotionally regulate
- Look at the limit: you might have to shift your limits

- Teenagers will challenge your rules (some verbally); others will agree to your face and then go behind your back
- When a teen challenges your limits, you want to be reasonable and figure out what's important to both of you and try to find a win-win solution
 - o Explore the limit and why it's there and determine if there's a solution that works for everyone
- Teenagers do make some bad judgements because their brains aren't fully developed
 - o A question to ask if they make a mistake: Was there some part of you that knew that this was a bad idea?
 - o Then ask, what kept you from listening to that part of you?
 - They're developing an inner compass that guides them and they develop that by us asking questions, not by telling them what to do

What happens if we don't set limits? 35:58

- The child is never asked to develop self-discipline (it's when you willingly choose to give up something for something you want more)
- With everything in life, there will be hurdles, and you need self-discipline
- You need to strengthen the part of the brain that regulates self-control through practice

More information on Dr. Laura 39:43

- www.AhaParenting.com
- 2 books:
 - o [Peaceful Parent, Happy Kids](#) and [Peaceful Parent, Happy Sibling](#)
- [Online Course](#)

NOTES:

The Neuroscience Behind How to Cultivate Courage, Curiosity, and Resilience in Your Child

Interview with Dr. Dan Siegel
<http://www.drdansiegel.com/>

Take Action:

As a parent, create connection with your child and use reflective dialogue (SIFTing) to help create the “yes” brain, and a wider consciousness, in your child.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Dr. Siegel 0:28

- He is a pioneer in the positive parenting/connection-based parenting movement
- Dan’s books include [The Yes Brain](#) and [Aware](#) (coming out this year), [The Whole Brain Child](#), and No [Drama Discipline](#)
- He’s a clinical professor at UCLA
- He’s a founding co-director of mindful-awareness research
- He’s had 4 NY Times best sellers

How Dr. Siegel got started in this work 1:52

- As a person growing up, he was fascinated with people and wanted to understand how his family was functioning
- His education and profession evolved and as a therapist and a physician
- Understanding the mind and its development could help us understand what we can optimally do to help kids grow and develop
- Integration of the brain is the basis for optimal regulation, which gives a strategy of parenting that’s based on all the sciences that’s effective and fun
 - o You can build your parenting on science instead of opinion

Talking about the “yes” brain and the “no” brain 5:08

- In his workshops, he started saying “no” harshly and “yes” soothingly to allow parents to feel the difference between upset/threat and connection
- When kids have the “no” reaction (the feeling of being threatened), especially when that’s repeated over time, that’s strengthened in the brain and they’re always on guard
- The “yes” state is open and receptive where they’re open to connection and reflecting on their thoughts and modifying
 - o You want to emphasize the “yes” brain state: his 5th book helps teach how to do this
- A repeated state becomes a trait so you want to give structured discipline while maintaining an open and receptive state in your child

BRIE: Balance, Resiliency, Insight, and Empathy 10:42

- We all have the capacity to be in an optimal flow, where you’re in harmony (which is the “yes” brain of receptivity), OR we’re in the threat state (which is characterized by chaos and rigidity)
- Balance is learning to widen the child’s span to be in the “yes” brain state, even when in challenging situations, like disappointment
- Resilience is how you teach kids to get them to come back to the balanced place
- Children are still feeling their feelings but they experience it in a way that’s conducive to them and you
- You’re helping to increase their tolerance level with a bigger container of awareness
 - o Dr. Siegel’s analogy of salt in a small cup vs. a 100-gallon tank

How do we create balance in our own home to help encourage the “yes” brain state? 16:10

- Our task as parents is to be present for our children so that when something happens, you’re present for the feeling, you resonate, and you create trust
 - o You’ve created a “we” where they’re not alone
- Offer reflective dialogue: Talk about the inner life of your child and your inner life
 - o Share your thoughts and feelings about the situations that your child is going through

- Your child starts to feel that they can feel anything and that they're not alone
- See, Soothe, and Safe create Security
- Parents who talk to their kids about the nature of feelings have kids who have more access to their emotions, regulate their emotions, and understand more about how emotions influence behavior

Dr. Siegel walks us through an example of how to handle child during a meltdown 20:18

- You need to "chase the why"
 - o Ask yourself "why is my child behaving this way?"
 - SIFT: What are her Sensations? What are the Images she's created? What are the Feelings she's experiencing? What are the Thoughts?
- Use reflective dialogues
- You're basically showing your child that there is space for them to experience any emotion and that they can express it to you
- You see behavior as a communication of what's going on; your task as a parent is to go beneath the behavior and SIFT your mind; they'll eventually do this on their own
- A state of reflective thinking becomes a trait of reflection in a child and that's the basis of social and emotional intelligence: You can teach this with the "yes" brain approach
- The power is in the pause
- Our natural reaction is to look at the outside behavior
- Instead, step back, pause, and reflect and raise awareness in your child

What if your child's behavior and emotion is very elevated? 25:25

- You can't have the conversation if they're shutting down
- Give your child space, but also part of the resilience process is becoming aware of the state they're in
 - o They can put a hand on the chest and hand on the belly and focus on their breath
- Teach the skills at times they're calm; your kids can read the books with you
- He teaches 1st and 2nd graders: this teaching can start young about how to bring themselves back to balance

Using connection to bring your kids back to balance 28:35

- Connection is a fundamental thing everyone needs- our brain is built for connection
- Your connection with your child is the primary thing you have going for you to shape the structure of their brain
- When you teach them these ideas, it's the gift that keeps on giving: The connection helps build the skills that your kids will use in so many places
- The experience we have as children allow for development in our brain that lets resilience unfold

The idea of the player on the field 31:30

- When children develop an observing capacity to realize they can be the player on the field or the audience, that gives them strength
 - o A kid who has an impulse to hit also has the observing part that sees that the audience says that hitting isn't good.
 - o The observer has the ability to negotiate as the player and say, "that's not a good move"; because of that observer, we can disconnect from automatic pilot

NOTES:

The Problem with Parenting Kids All the Same Way

Interview with Carol Tuttle

<https://thechildwhisperer.com>

Take Action:

Remember the importance of listening. When your kids talk, really listen, and aim to learn without giving advice; this will help build your relationship.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Carol 0:22

- Her book, The Child Whisperer, is one of the 10 books Desi brought to Mexico
- Carol is an author, speaker, and healer

What is the ultimate goal to keep in mind as we're parenting? 1:23

- Balance, which is tricky to do in today's world
- The comparative factor is hard because you can see what so many other people are doing, and you need to keep that in perspective
 - o What we see on social media can make us feel small
- Strong relationships are key

What are the types of children and how does this help us be a better parent? 3:15

- This is called "energy profiling" and is based on a 4-type personality profile
 - o What you assess is a quality of movement your kids bring to the world and how they express that movement when they're being themselves
- In her work with adults, she found that most of the issues went back to when the person was a child so she wanted to help give parents information so that these wounds wouldn't be happening to children

More information on the 4 types 5:00

- 2 types are high-movement and two are lower-movement: It means the way children approach things is very different from each other

Type 1 and Type 3 5:15

- They move forward first without necessarily thinking about things
- Parents learn not to bring these children into certain situations, like a restaurant, or we may set unrealistic expectations for their behavior and set them up not to do well

Type 2 and Type 4 7:15

- They're the lower-movement types
- They move inward first, into their experience before moving forward

Quick overview of the 4 types 8:29

- Type 1: upward light movement; fun-loving
- Type 2: inward, soft, flowing, subtle, sensitive child
- Type 3: push forward, determined child
- Type 4: more serious child that has intellectual connection and is more analytical and thought-out and reserved
- Carol believes your children are your own handbook and you need to be able to read their clues

Did Carol always parent based on her child's types? 12:39

- Her kids were in high school and college when she wrote the book, but it helped her understand so much
- It helped her type 4 son in high school so that she could support him and help stop him from self-shaming for who he is

Carol's best tip for parents 14:36

- Parents tend to think it's our role to give feedback, advice, and to counsel
- But we need to listen out of interest to learn- it gets you miles with building trust
- Listening helps them come to their own conclusion

Examples of the different types and dealing with something like chores, and how to handle it 16:00

- Type 1: social child with a need for upward, light energy; they have the most need to feel like they're having fun with things that are feeling heavy and tedious
 - o Keep it light, make it social if you can, and make it a game (you can let them come up with the idea of how to plan)
- Type 2: they need a plan: the times that are expected, what's to be done. They operate better with details, for example a weekly plan of what to do each day
 - o "Get this done now" and "hurry up" will stress them out
- Type 3: It's all about a reward, and if a value is given or if they're working toward something (cash or points toward an experience not just stuff), they'll be more motivated
 - o They love adventure and doing things
- Type 4: If it makes sense to them, they'll understand it: they take ownership for themselves once they're about 5
 - o They can come up with their own ideas: they want to improve the system

How do you know the type of child you have? 22:37

- Look for the obvious and if you get nit-picky about the characteristics you can get lost
- Look at the movement and the most obvious expressions
- Carol's book will teach you how to type your child
- Sometimes kids will repress their true nature if you've corrected a lot behaviors
 - o It's never too late to have a conversation and help them show their true selves

Meeting each types' needs 25:12

- There are 5 stages a child passes through from birth to age 18
- At each stage, they're looking to get an emotional need met
- Carol helps to highlight, at each stage, and for each type, what their emotional needs will be and how to support that

Carol's final takeaway for any child's type 28:00

- The listening factor- really listen, especially if they come to you. Decide you won't give any advice

- Try to see what you learn when you don't give feedback

More information from Carol 29:08

- [The Child Whisperer](#)
- [Check out the podcast](#)
 - Scroll down to the bottom of the podcast page to sign up for the newsletter

NOTES:

How to Build Cooperation over Time

Interview with Patty Wipfler

<https://www.handinhandparenting.org>

Take Action:

You deserve emotional support for the emotional work of parenting- having the listening time (for you) will help you be more present for your kids. Also, when your kids are upset, if you can sit with them, listen, have eye contact, and know that the crying and emotion are sensible, then great things will come.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Patty 0:20

- She is the founder of Hand in Hand parenting
- Patty is a grandma and mom, and loves supporting parents

What is connection-based parenting and why is it important? 0:59

- Connection-based parenting is influencing our children's behavior and helping instill our values by using our presence, listening, and our attention
- We influence the development of their judgement by using who we are rather than rewards and punishments

Typical rewards/punishments for cooperation and the impact of those 2:34

- We've been raised with our parent's set of tools: physical force, bribing, yelling, and then there's lots of talking about it, or just enduring it without setting a limit
- None of it works well; behavior goes off track because the child can't think due to a flood of feelings or thoughts that turns into behavior that is uncooperative and negative
- When children are off-track and feeling unconnected, they can't think
- Punishments and rewards aren't addressing the upset or tension within the child

How can parents help when their child is emotional/uncooperative 8:23

- Parents tend to yell from across the room, expecting them to respond obediently

- You need to bring the limit, not say the limit. You need to come over and make them stop; you need to let go of the expectation that they'll do something sensible
- You need to put your hands on the child's hands, make eye contact, relax, and be centered as you bring the limit
 - o This helps them find the feeling: crying, tantrum, or laughter- they're releasing the emotion.
 - o Then you stay-listen. You stay and listen while they have the tantrum and feel the feelings
 - o They pour out the tension, you pour in your emotional caring
 - o Story of an aggressive child at one of her events and how he could let go of emotions

How to handle angry or disrespectful emotions 18:55

- Those emotions are what the kids need to get out
- She sets limits around certain behavior (like name calling), while softly putting her arm around a child
- You can also connect with play. Ex: Anyone who calls me a bad name gets hung upside down
- You're still trying to help them release tension and emotion
- It's important to shift from your initial reaction which might be to yell or try to control
- Children need to have lots of laughter to help them feel more connected and hopeful

What if your child is not in a position to play? 19:50

- If you've tried to play and the child is still angry, then there may be too much tension
 - o Instead of playing, you need to listen to the anger
- If a child is very angry, they feel very distant
 - o What helps to bridge the distance is unloading the fear and grief and you need to listen. That can take a while

Tips for moms to stay centered while all of this is happening with your child 23:10

- It's almost impossible to do if no one is listening to you on a regular basis
 - o Patty helps train parents on listening to one another through a listening partner

- We need a space to have those good cries and good laughs so we're not as triggered by our children's behaviors
- You become a better listener as well, so your relationships with everyone improve

What if you're in a place where you can't stay-listen, like in public? 29:20

- Patty feels like any place is a place to stay-listen; you need to be committed to doing this and not worry about anyone else and if they're bothered by the meltdown
- But if you're triggered by other people and their reactions, you can go to a quieter place

What if there are time constraints? 30:45

- You pick them up and say, "I'm sorry I can't listen anymore" and you continue on and use empathetic statements like "I know it's hard...I know you don't want to go to the doctor..."
 - o If you can plan ahead, and give enough time for the emotion, that's helpful
- They come out of these situations feeling validated

Patty's takeaway 34:36

- You deserve emotional support for the emotional work of parenting
 - o You need a place to unload the worries and tension of parenting
 - o Having the listening time (for you) will help you be more present for your kids
- When your kids are upset, they're using a healing process; if you can sit with them, listen, have eye contact, and know that the crying and emotion are sensible, then great things will come

Where to find more information from Patty 36:12

- <https://www.handinhandparenting.org>
 - o You can join the Parents Club
 - o There are one-on-one classes
 - o Teachers are in 15 countries: classes happen in person and online
 - o Weekly podcast

NOTES:



OVERCOMING OVERWHELM

CHEAT SHEETS

The Death of the 5:00 Scramble: Double Meal Planning for Busy Moms

Interview with Liz Edmunds

<https://thefoodnanny.com/>

Take Action:

Liz's plan will reduce your overwhelm, liberate you, and help you be stress-free. Get your family home safe at the end of the day and give them a hot meal to help them bond- it's the best thing you can do as a mom.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Liz Edmunds 0:27

- Liz is a mom to 7 kids and has implemented her meal planning system throughout her life and she's taught it thousands of families
- She has a popular series, "The Food Nanny"
- Find her on IG [@thefoodnanny](https://www.instagram.com/thefoodnanny)

Liz's system for meal planning and how it came about 1:20

- For Liz the hardest part about dinner was figuring out what to cook
- Liz came up with theme nights over 40 years ago as a young mom
 - o Her husband was gone 60% of her life
- She wanted a better system because she wanted it to be healthy, consistent, and easy
- She stumbled onto her weekend night meals: Friday: pizza; Saturday: grill; Sunday: traditional foods
 - o These themes simplified things and made meals predictable
 - o Her kids still follow her meal plan for the most part
- She researched (at the library) and traveled and figured out healthy ways to do pizza
- Saturdays, they use the grill: hotdogs, hamburgers, chicken, etc.
- Sundays are the traditional recipes from her family
 - o This was also a time to connect and reminisce about family memories
- Knowing these three days made it simple and reduced overwhelm because she had fewer decisions to make

How the other days evolved in Liz's weekly plan 7:45

- Liz met with a nutritionist and talked about what she was already doing
 - o This inspired Liz to try to be healthier and to create more theme nights
- Theme nights aren't a gimmick; they keep you organized and reduce overwhelm. They help you know what you're doing and make it stress-free
- Theme nights make it fun for the family and it helped keep Liz going
- Liz has two books that talk about all of this

The weekly theme nights 11:14

- Monday: Comfort food
- Tuesday: Italian
- Wednesday: Fish, meatless, or breakfast
 - o You need to have fish, or take meat out occasionally
- Thursday: Mexican
- Friday: Pizza
- Saturday: Grilling
- Sunday: Traditional
- Create this meal plan two weeks at a time
- Cook 5 nights a week, take two nights off
 - o Start with cooking at least 3 nights a week if 5 is overwhelming: this helps with family bonding, and has many positive benefits

Why Liz wrote her books 14:44

- She knew that the most important thing you could do with your family was sit down and serve a meal so that you can have conversation and connect
- We need to be deliberate about how we spend our time
- Turn off all screens and get everyone to the table

Sharing the workload of meals with your kids 17:38

- Liz's kids learned from example and they were excited about it, and her kids wanted to bring their friends to dinners
 - o Be careful about friends coming to dinner because the dynamics change when you bring a guest. You do want to share and connect, but also protect and take care of your own family
- Little kids can help set the table

- Kids can also help bring food to the table; Liz likes to serve family style
- 10, 11, and 12yos: they can help cook on the stove if they've been taught
- 7 and 8 year olds can make cookies
- Desi's 9yo makes pancakes
- If kids have activities and they're not around, then they can't help, but on weekends they can
- Kids can also help clean up

Liz's routines around shopping for food, and planning meals 24:00

- She meal plans on Saturday and does one main shopping for the meals that start on Monday
- She looks through the recipes for each theme night and chooses the recipe (aim for two vegetables each night)
 - o She makes the grocery list at the same time and does it in a strategic way for easy shopping
 - o She also considers if left-overs can be used for another meal
- This turns into a lifestyle and can work for anyone
 - o Her meals also include portion control

More about Liz's grocery shopping 29:24

- She does one main shopping trip for two weeks
- If she buys a large supply of meat, she may freeze some; she divides meats
- She may have to go back to the store for more vegetables
 - o She serves frozen, fresh, or canned vegetables
- This also saves you lots of money because you're staying out of the grocery store and buying what you need to create these meals

Liz's final takeaway 32:20

- Liz's plan will reduce your overwhelm, liberate you, and help you be stress-free
- Get your family home safe at the end of the day and give them a hot meal to help them bond- it's the best thing you can do

NOTES:

How to Declutter and Stay that Way

Interview with Jenny Layton

<http://www.thehappygal.com>

Take Action:

Use the CREATE system to help you tackle an area of your life that's creating overwhelm; schedule the time you need and get it done.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Jenny 0:30

- She is a professional organizer and mom to 5
- She has a website: The Happy Gal

Why is being organized important and how does it help overwhelm? 1:04

- In her mind, what causes overwhelm is too much: too much stuff, choices, etc.
- One strategy to conquer overwhelm is to be organized
- She helps women organize themselves personally, in their home, with routines, and more

Organizing your stuff is instant gratification 2:30

- When you set aside a few hours, you can see progress with her hard and fast strategy
- Jenny is going to help make organizing fun and easy for you!
- This system helps the organization stick
- When your surroundings feel non-chaotic, it's easier for the other parts of life to become more organized

Jenny teaches us her system 4:26

- CREATE: Each letter stands for something to help you go through the process
- Remember not to skip any steps and do them in order
- Jenny challenges you to think of a project you want to organize and have it in mind as you listen

- Pick something like a closet, cabinet, or confined space: this is an ideal process for these types of spaces
- Schedule a time on your calendar to get this done and give yourself twice as much time as you think you need

The “C” in CREATE 8:00

- “C” stands for Collect and sort
- Everything that should be in that space, collect it all, pull it out, and then sort (put like things together)
- You’re not thinking about getting rid of anything
- Use banker’s boxes to organize into, so it doesn’t feel like everything has exploded

The “R” in CREATE 10:37

- Not everyone loves to get rid of things; it’s normal to have concerns
- “R” stands for Release: allows you to honor it; you’re not just throwing away
- Determine if it’s giving value to you right now
- When you keep things, you’re not open to receiving
- Start when you have good energy; you can take a break after collect and sort if you need to
- Just keep moving through the piles- if there’s a hard decision, set it aside and keep momentum going

The “E” in CREATE 16:18

- “E” stands for Establish Zones
- Look at the space you’re working with and decide what will go where
- Jenny uses a mantra “Start with what you know” and find where something obvious goes, like “the cups go here”

The “A” in CREATE 18:45

- “A” stands for Assign Containers
- This is where containers come in and it gets fun to establish borders and keep things in their place
- One mistake with containers: You buy them in the beginning before you really understand what you need

- Try to be efficient: See what you have, and the space to put it in, then buy the containers you need (by taking measurements)
- She likes to leave room for 25% growth in the containers so that your items can grow/space needs can fluctuate
- Labeling is important once you use containers (She likes the Brother brand labeler)- label the container and the shelf

The “T” in CREATE 24:40

- “T” is for Transform: this is where you feel like you want to do it again

The “E” in CREATE 25:56

- “E” stands for Evaluate often
- You’ve spent time and money to get it organized
- You get a little lift every time you open the pantry/cabinet: it’s worth it to keep it up
- Recognize that you need to keep it up; use a habit hook
 - o For example, every time you go grocery shopping, you restore the pantry (it’s quick)
- You want to create routines and habits

The key to overwhelm 30:14

- A lot of the overwhelm comes from what we’re thinking and the chaos we’re in
- [Get Organized](#): 4-disc training to help moms organize themselves
 - o You can get the digital download for \$47 or digital plus hard copy for \$67
 - o [Get Jenny’s top 10 tips for an organized life for FREE!](#)

NOTES:

A Realistic Approach to Combat Overwhelm

Interview with Ashley Logsdon

<https://www.mamasaysnamaste.com>

Take Action:

When you're feeling overwhelmed and saying yes to things, go back to your why; if you can't easily say why it's worth your time, energy, or money, maybe it's not worth it.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Ashley Logsdon 00:19

- Ashley runs a business for herself, Mama Stays Namaste, runs a family coaching business and her father's business
- She's part of a full-time RV-ing family with 3 kids and their dog
- She loves to help families move from chaos to being more intentional and being a family they love to come home to

Ashley's advice for an overwhelmed mom 1:50

- Ashley does a family personality snapshot to help families see their strengths and bring those out more
- She wants to help you find out what triggers the reactive behaviors, fears, and where you feel the most frazzled, along with motivation to get out of it
- Then, once you're aware of the triggers, when parents are overwhelmed, you then need to prioritize
 - o Take a step away, take a breath and re-center
 - o Do a brain dump of everything that's overwhelming (can be a journal or a checklist). Doing that can take the weight away
 - o Then you prioritize and pick one thing to work on

Moms tend to say "yes" to a lot, and overpromise 5:04

- We want to connect with others and relate, but we may end up feeling overexerted
- If you feel obligated, ask yourself why. Give yourself an answer and ask why again; get to the deeper why 5 times to get to the root of the issue and to be intentional about how you spend your time

- If you're clear on your values, that can help you be clearer on what you say yes to

How to manage expectations to deal with overwhelm 8:32

- A family vision/mission statement is helpful
 - o The core values help you see if choices resonate with your family
- With expectations for other people, under-promise and over-deliver
- Have free space in your life so that when life gets busy, you're better able to handle it
- Make sure you give your mind time to rest, for example, a 2-minute mommy timeout in the bathroom

Some daily practices to help keep sanity 13:55

- They've been a full-time RV family since October 2016
- Time-blocking is helpful for her; multi-tasking doesn't work
- She sets clear boundaries for work time and does it guilt-free because she also sets dedicated kid-time
- Setting a timer is a task that Desi uses to help fully focus

Ashley bookends her day to help with sanity 17:38

- She has consistent morning and evening routines and designates the time allotted
- She and her husband prep coffee and check-in for the next day before they go to bed so they're on the same page. This time also allows them to connect

The marriage challenge Ashley has taken on 19:45

- 9 years ago, Ashley heard about a 7-day marriage challenge of having sex every day for week; her husband felt 2-3 times a week wasn't enough
- They took it to the extreme and went for a year
 - o Though they don't always have sex daily, they reach about 5 days a week, regularly
- You don't have to have sex daily, but it's hard to be emotionally distant when you're physically close
 - o That's part of how she bookends her day
- Connection with your partner helps with overwhelm

Ashley's morning routines 22:50

- Before she gets out of bed, she starts in child's pose, then has coffee, does quick yoga, and she takes a moment to look outside and just "be"
- She gets up early to make sure she also has time for her kids before work

Take action now to deal with overwhelm 25:23

- Go back to your why; if you can't easily say why it's worth your time, energy, or money, maybe it's not worth it
- Be intentional about what you need to do today to be in charge of your life
- It's okay to say no to things and to maintain your priorities
- [Check out the family personality snapshots](#)
- [Listen to Ashley's podcast](#)

NOTES:

Family Systems to Reduce Overwhelm

Interview with Saren Loosli
<https://powerofmoms.com/>

Take Action:

Choose one family system to create and work on it bite by bite. Remember that this may feel overwhelming in the beginning, but ultimately will lead to less overwhelm and will prepare your children for life.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Saren 0:25

- She has 5 teenagers and has used these systems with her family
- Her website is Power of Families and it's meant for purposeful families to get ideas and inspiration
- She has her Master's from Harvard and has taught parents for 20 years

More about Saren's family 1:40

- Her oldest is about to move away for college
- She had 5 kids in 5 years, so she's preparing them for adulthood
- This is where she's seeing the fruits of their labor in terms of having systems in place; she feels like her son is ready to launch
- Family systems reduce overwhelm: kids have responsibilities and are part of the solution instead of part of the problem while preparing them for the future

What are the most important things kids need to know so they're ready to launch? 4:18

- When Saren has asked parents, 3 things come up for what parents want:
 - o Kids need to know how to behave well and get along with others
 - o They need to understand how to manage money, not have issues with it, and how to earn the money and be responsible in work
 - o Parents want kids to feel a sense of belonging and love
- All of this is built little by little over the years; start young if you can

How do systems combat overwhelm? 6:40

- Know that it feels overwhelming to put systems in place, but once you've done it, then it's less overwhelming
- Kids can resolve issues and take care of things, so it's not all on us as a mom
- Take areas one at a time, and set up a system; it will take time but it will be worth it

System # 1: Your Family's Legal System 8:43

- Your laws: rules and consequences that everyone understands and lives by
- Knowing what the rules are helps to ensure that people have a chance at following the rules
- We may come up with consequences on the fly and come up with crazy consequences that won't work
- Having an established system of rules and consequences gives a sense of safety and understanding and helps you be ready in those crazy moments

How to come up with the rules 10:33

- Have a family meeting
- You say, "what rules do you think we need?" Write down all ideas
- Then, work together to group the laws so it's not a big list of don't's
 - o For example: If you have "don't leave your room a mess," "we put our dishes away," etc. you have a Family Rule of Order
- Come up with 5, simple, one-word positive things of what you do want
- Then, post those rules where people can see them
- Once you have the rules, you can come up with consequences that the kids can help to form
- Their rules: Peace, Respect, Asking, Order, and Obedience

Coming up with consequences 14:40

- Come up with specific consequences, rather than punishment
 - o Consequences go with the rule that they broke and helps teach them for next time
- Example: Law of peace: Two kids are fighting and are breaking the law
 - o A consequence is to have them sit together until they can own what they've done wrong and then apologize (At first you facilitate, which is hard and overwhelming, but then they've learned)
 - o You're not just saying "don't fight;" they're learning how to resolve conflict and own their behavior and fix it

- For each rule, come up with a consequence that helps you fix it
- Follow through, and adjust as needed

System #2: The Family Economic System 18:18

- This is basically teaching kids about work and money
- Overwhelm happens if you, as the mom, are trying to do everything
- At a family meeting, go over what needs to happen daily and weekly
 - o Showing your kids everything will help them understand how much you do and that you shouldn't have to do it all
 - o Decide who does what and divide it up
 - o Determine the responsibilities and roles based on age
 - Example of the 5 jobs her kids have after meals
 - You can make this fun with music or a timer
 - o Another area to give responsibility is areas of a house, or "zones" as they call it
 - Each child has a zone, for example, the living room
 - If they keep up with it, it's not overwhelming
- You're teaching them how to work, using the jobs that need to be done at home
 - o They're more prepared for adult responsibilities
- Later, your older kids can get a job outside of the home

The other side of the family economy is money 23:05

- Kids need to have some discretionary money to have some control to learn how money works
 - o You can do an allowance, for example, \$1/year of age
 - o Decide what they're responsible for paying for with that money
 - o You can also link the money to specific responsibilities or give allowance
- She doesn't give actual money- they use a spreadsheet (which she can access on her phone) and she can say yes to things, if they have the money
- When they go to college, they know how to earn money and spend it
 - o Show them your budget when they get older so they know what they need to plan for (Saren lets her kids help pay the bills)
- In Saren's family, each child helps to pay for college- they've known from early on, so when they earn money, 40-60% goes to their long-term savings
- They also encourage 10% to give: you're teaching different principles

- She also gives 10% interest every quarter for their family bank
- This shows that saving gives you money later, and how it grows

Family system #3: Having a Family Culture 29:28

- The idea is that you have simple things you do daily that are “I love you” rituals
 - Example: Doing a story every night, or sharing sweet, sour, and service nightly at dinner
- You can also have weekly rituals like family routines and traditions like family movie night
- You’ll also have holiday traditions to make the holidays extra special and maybe adjust/cut the ones that are overwhelming
- You build culture and relationships through these activities

The importance of these systems and where to get more information 32:15

- These might be overwhelming to set up, but if you do it bite by bite, they work and they reduce your overwhelm
- These also help you prepare your kids for life away from your house
- [Family Systems Program](#)
 - You get information, worksheets, and more

NOTES:

Reducing Overwhelm

Interview with Shonda Morales

<http://shondamoralis.net>

Take Action:

Pause and take a few breaths throughout the day; sprinkle in “mindful breaks” to help you slow down, deal with the overwhelm, and to have more pleasant moments as a mom.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Shonda 0:30

- Shonda is a mom of 6
- She is an MSW and LCSW and has a private practice working with moms
- Author of [Breathe, Mama, Breathe](#)

The connection between breath and overwhelm 1:20

- When we're overwhelmed, we're in “fight or flight” mode
- Adrenaline runs through our body
- The pre-frontal cortex shuts down so we can't think as clearly
- Taking breaths sends a message to our body that we're okay; then you can calm down and choose your response
- Moods are contagious: If we calm ourselves down, that helps everyone in the home and we model for our kids

Getting into the research on meditation 3:36

- As moms, meditation helps with overwhelm and anxiety
- Meditation and mindfulness help with immune function
- Meditation improves quality of sleep
- It helps with depression and anxiety
- A study was done with parents practicing mindfulness for a year and it had many positive benefits for kids without teaching them anything directly
- The last 15 years of research have shown that meditation changes the shape and the function of our brains over time

Mindfulness vs. Meditation 7:15

- These terms are often confused
- Mindfulness is paying attention to what's happening in the moment with an attitude of kindness and acceptance; it's the opposite of automatic pilot
 - o When we're on autopilot, we're not able to choose our responses
- Meditation is carving out time in our day to practice the skill of mindfulness
 - o You can start with 5 minutes; pick a point of focus such as your breath; your mind will wander
 - o It's *not* clearing your mind of thoughts; it's about noticing
 - o You can do seated meditation, walking meditation, or yoga, which is meditation through movement
- Make meditation a daily habit, even for 1-2 minutes
- You can use guided meditations (check out Shonda's website)

Having a habit hook 10:20

- Create something that reminds you to take the time to meditate, for example, first thing in the morning or after you brush your teeth
- Bookend meditation between two already established habits so that it just becomes what you do
- Experiment with where you'll be able to make it a habit

Taking "mindful breaks" 11:32

- "Mindful breaks" are opportunities and reminders to pause and pay attention to what we're experiencing
- In the moment, pay full attention to what's going on

"Mindful break" for mom guilt 12:28

- Moms are very hard on themselves
- We first need to recognize that we're suffering from some guilt
 - o Recognize: Is this guilt according to my values, or is this based on what society expects?
 - o Notice: Are we living in shame or guilt?
 - Guilt can be instructive
 - Shame keeps us stuck
 - o Have self-compassion: Put your hands on your heart to remind yourself it's okay and I'm doing something about it
 - Then modify your behavior and talk to yourself positively

“Mommy High 5’s”- the other side of guilt 16:42

- This is a proactive way to take care of mom guilt
- Look for opportunities to give high 5’s for successes like keeping kids alive, getting them to the doctor, etc.
- Shonda’s mindful break for her birthday
 - o She asks for what she’s looking for and plans it if she needs to

Taking a mindful break when you’re in a stressful moment 18:51

- The first step is always to breathe so you can clear your mind and make better decisions
- We can also bring attention to neutral moments like folding the laundry
 - o The mindful break is bringing your full attention to it, like noticing textures, smelling the scents, noticing how your kids have grown, etc. to create a nice moment to pause and reflect
 - o Those moments become more pleasant
- You can take a “pleasant moment” mindful break where you look for pleasant moments you might have missed
- Waiting is another time to take a mindful break (instead of taking out your phone)
- You’re creating moments of space throughout the day
- We have many moments where we’re not very present, in part because of the overwhelm

Shonda’s final takeaway 24:44

- Pause and take a few breaths throughout the day
- Sprinkle your day with mindful breaks; your pace will slow down and you’ll feel less overwhelmed

NOTES:

Budgeting for Overwhelmed Mamas

Interview with Jordan Page

<http://funcheaporfree.com/>

Take Action:

Don't live day-to-day anymore; envision the life you want 10 years from now. This will help you quiet all the noise and make choices that will make sense for your family.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Jordan 0:34

- Jordan climbed out of credit card debt with her husband and has taught hundreds of thousands of families to do the same
- She's been highlighted on many national news outlets
- Jordan is a mom of 5 and pregnant with her 6th child

Jordan's story of finances and overwhelm 1:22

- She was always frugal and looking for a good deal, and her husband was the same
- 2 years into their marriage, her husband left his job to start a business, they decided to build a house, decided to start a family, and shift to her becoming a stay-at-home-mom
- It was the perfect storm and they couldn't recover financially fast enough; they also weren't prepared.
 - o Being frugal and looking for deals wasn't enough
- Their credit card debt piled up and it was overwhelming

Jordan started to look for solutions 3:58

- She found coupons, deals, and freebies, and she found hard-core experts on getting out of debt
- She wanted to know how to afford her bills and live a life she was proud of, so she decided to figure it out her own way

3 Tips to help reduce overwhelm with your finances 5:06

Tip 1: Working off of dollar amounts never worked for Jordan. Instead, focus on percentages for your budget. 5:10

- 70% of your take-home income is what you have, to spend
- 20% take-home needs to go straight into savings
- 10% is up to you how you spend it (if you have credit card debt, put it toward that)
- It may take you time to get to these percentages
 - o Consider creating accounts to get your money out of sight so you don't spend money you think you have

Tip 2: You do not have to take the burden on yourself 11:36

- It's easy to feel like everything is our responsibility
- Dividing and conquering is important in finances: share the load but do it in a way that actually works
- Jordan and her husband started treating their finances like a business
 - o Sit down, print out the last 3 months of all statements and divide up the payments based on who it makes sense to do it, not to make it equal
 - o Jordan and her husband make joint decisions, but each person manages their responsibilities
- They have "weekly weigh-ins" to plan the week and they talk about finances
 - o Jordan and her husband got along better, stopped fighting, and things started functioning better

Tip 3: How often should you budget? 19:04

- Jordan's analogy of losing weight with calories in versus calories out
 - o You don't count calories a month at a time
 - o She looks at her budget 7 days at a time
 - You can't do this with monthly payments and that's okay

What is it that you're "budgeting"? 21:20

- Your car, insurance, gas, and bills aren't part of your budget- you have to pay those (that's part of your 70% family spending)
- You budget for things you have 100% control over and there should only be 2-3 areas you're focusing on
 - o Groceries: Instead of \$500/month, break it down to \$125/week

- A good place to start is \$100 per person/month
- Also includes toilet paper, diapers, shampoo, etc.
- Entertainment: Again, track it weekly
- Jordan has an “other” category
 - If she runs out of money, you only have to wait up to 6 more days (at the most) for your budget to reset

Jordan’s final takeaway 27:00

- Don’t live day-to-day anymore; take a week with quiet time and envision the life you want 10 years from now to help find what will work for you
 - Without that vision, you’re pulled in a lot of directions
 - With your vision, you can tune out the noise about what won’t work for you

Where to find more information from Jordan 29:15

- <http://funcheaporfrees.com/>
- <https://budgetbootcamp.com>
 - If you need support from start to finish
 - Use code MOMCONFERENCE for 15% off
- <https://productivitybootcamp.com>
 - To help you be more productive in life

NOTES:

How to Reduce Overwhelm by Increasing Emotional and Physical Intimacy in Marriage

Interview with Ramona Zabriskie

<https://ramonazabriskie.com/>

Take Action:

Prioritize intimacy with your husband; begin information-based conversations and then shift to emotion-based conversations. Make sure to take care of your physical relationship with your husband, no matter the age of your kids.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Ramona 1:14

- Ramona almost got divorced two years into her marriage; now she's been married 40 years and has learned how to create a fulfilling and connected marriage

Ramona's experience with women feeling overwhelmed 2:25

- Feeling overwhelmed is a major theme for women world-wide; we don't have enough time
 - o When you're in this mode, it erodes your marriage

How do we change that? 3:15

- Women try a lot to get more in control and that can bring relief in spurts, but what really will give the sense of security and control that you're looking for lies in your relationship, according to her analysis
- What can help you long-term, and make a difference in how you feel is the relationship with your husband
- You need to work on the partnership to create a powerful one

The first core ideas/skills to understand 5:30

- Your husband is not responsible for your happiness
- Your husband is also overwhelmed too and you need to help each other
- Look for small things that bring you joy, like hearing a bird outside your window

- Then, look for delights that last longer, for example play the piano, take a short walk: things that aren't expensive in time or money
 - o Find 3-5 delights every day; the overwhelm will start to go away when you fill your heart

You also need your husband's help: here's how to get it 7:45

- You can't hint, cajole, or nag him. Instead, speak to him in the language of respect
 - o Ex: "Honey, will you take out the garbage for me before we go to bed tonight?"
 - Use "will you" or "would you" instead of "can you" and be very specific with what you're asking
 - o You're soliciting a commitment and when he does it, be lavish in your appreciation; celebrate what you want more of. Men and boys love this
- Make sure he knows it would be helpful for you, for example, "It would make me happy if..." or "It would mean a lot to me if..."
 - o You've given your knight a mission and there's no resentment on either side because it's clear and respectful

How do we get that physical and emotional closeness? 13:08

- You can be peaceful about the interactions where you're asking for help if you feel emotionally supported, and connected physically
- The same situations feel very different when you're close to your spouse compared to when you don't feel close

How to become his intimate and his inspiration 14:58

- You're looking to become more of his beloved because it makes a difference with overwhelm
- Talking is so important to a healthy marriage and to feeling close, but he may not want to talk as much; men process physically
- Have more information-based conversations instead of emotion-based conversations
 - o Each man will be different, but at some point in time after the information-based conversation, you can switch to talking about feelings
 - o Have this conversation shoulder-to-shoulder instead of face-to-face

We need to soothe our husband's fears 18:18

- We insight their fears (of failure or neglect), but we have the power through our attitude to soothe those fears
- You're not doing more for him; it's the attitude you're bringing to the situation
- You also need to dream together and pursue both

The process of dealing with overwhelm 19:54

- Start with tiny things to take care of yourself
- You then get him more involved and get him to help
- Then we move into getting closer emotionally
- Then you're in the business of making dreams come true and can create a grand marriage (that's the goal)

Being close physically 20:43

- He needs to feel close to us and men express and release physically
- You can handle situations better when you're connected; you do that emotionally and physically and they feed into each other
- Even though you feel overwhelmed and don't want to do anything else, it's worth it to invest in your relationship
- It's easy to lose connection when you put sex on the backburner
- There are stages that every marriage with kids goes through
 - o After a baby, give yourself some time (2 months after pregnancy), but then you need to reconnect
 - o Protect the bedroom and bedtime from your toddlers
 - o Protect your femininity; dress up for date night, so that you feel good about yourself as a woman
 - o Then when you have middle-age kids and you're running them around; resist indulging all time and energy in the kids
- We need to reserve time, and space mentally, to have physical intimacy

Physical intimacy is healthy 28:30

- There are physiological benefits
- It will help reduce overwhelm; it will help improve your relationship
- You need to prioritize sex and physical intimacy

Where you can find more information 30:10

- Ramona's book: [Wife for Life: The Power to Succeed in Marriage](#)
- [Wifesaver's Membership](#): online and interactive learning program
 - o use code MOMCONF2018
- [Free eBook](#): 5 Lies we Tell Brides and 5 Truths that Save Wives

NOTES:



PARENTING IN THE
DIGITAL AGE
CHEAT SHEETS

The 30-Day Plan to Reset Your Child's Brain

Interview with Victoria Dunckley

<https://drdunckley.com/>

Take Action:

Take the time to research the implications of too much tech, and then plan how you'll do the 30-day reset for your family, including lots of activities and one-on-one time with your kids.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Victoria 1:15

- She is a Child Integrative Psychiatrist
- Her book is "[Reset Your Child's Brain in 30 Days](#)"

Why are we concerned about this topic? 1:48

- This is a huge problem: there's been a huge explosion of devices and apps and parents can't get away from it
 - o It's causing more problems than parents realize
- Victoria had seen children be rewarded for behavior with screen time, but then behavior would spiral after the fact
 - o These were kids whose systems were sensitive to stress already; when video games were removed, they'd progress in their treatment
- Intuitively, we notice these same things with our kids when we turn off TV and screens

E.S.S.: Electronic Screen Syndrome 4:45

- A condition where the nervous system becomes overstimulated from too much screen time
- It comes back to stress: screens can cause a fight or flight response, which heightens arousal
 - o This can lead to more meltdowns, less ability to focus, and more
- Symptoms include:
 - o It presents differently, but you'll often see a child who's irritable, can't cope, and can't focus; socially there might be problems with making friends; some kids will become anxious and depressed

- It looks like many psychiatric disorders and can be misdiagnosed as ADD and other mental illnesses
- Schools may bring in resources, but they're not addressing the right issue

As a parent, why is it hard to remove or minimize screens? 8:55

- Many parents notice that their child doesn't respond well to screens, but there are a lot of pressures to let kids use devices
- This can bring up guilt, concern over what you've already done and it's hard to take in this information and what they need to do about it
- Know that everything is reversible

Common misconceptions around screen-time and tech? 10:33

- That educational content is not harmful.
 - The truth: It's the amount of screen time that's the most important
- If they're doing something interactive, it's better than something passive like TV or a movie
 - The truth: Interactive screen time is causing more problems with sleep, cognition, memory, and mood, and with less exposure because it's overstimulating

How does this impact autism or ADD? 13:40

- Any child that has an underlying mental health, neurological issue, or learning disorder will be more vulnerable to the effects
- These individuals are already in a state of hyperarousal or have trouble regulating their arousal levels, which is what gets impaired with tech use

Victoria's plan to combat E.S.S. and resulting behavior of screens? 16:47

- Remove all interactive screen time for 3-4 weeks
 - No phones, gaming, social media, texting
 - That's enough time for the hormones to start changing: they need to reverse and rebalance
- The plan also includes planning family activities and one-on-one time with each parent
- The first part is educating yourself and understanding the science and how that translates to what you see in your child
- The second part is planning: think about all the screens and devices in your child's day and where they're likely to play

- Find the sources of screen time (day care and babysitters)- make sure everyone is on the same page
- She has a [free email course](#) to support you

The next step in her process 21:55

- For the first week, make sure time is filled up with playdates, activities, etc. so there's not a lot of free time
 - It's more for the parent so you don't panic about what you're going to do
- The book also includes safety plans in case your child is very upset that this is happening
- Your child can help you plan special activities you can do
- A close parent-child relationship protects against any addiction, including tech-addiction
 - You need to spend time with your kids when you go screen-free
- Parents will have to evaluate their tech use too

The role of the parent when the kids are screen-free 25:48

- Parents may not have the same rules (you might need to use it for work), but you might have a rule to get rid of all entertainment stuff (social media and games)
- The accountability tax: The parent promises something and if they don't do it, the kids can call them out and then the parent has to pay the tax

Troubleshooting this process 27:38

- She has a whole chapter on that
- You should see effects in school-age kids and younger within the first few days
- Teens will have changes in about two weeks
- If in week two or three you're not seeing changes, there might be a screen you haven't found
 - You might need to start over or extend. School could be the culprit

Other tips for moms 29:55

- Be prepared for times like car rides or doctor's appointments to have something to do
- Do homework early in the day as possible and monitor your kids

- Know that kids won't be ostracized for this- their social skills will become better and they may show new interests
- Teens will figure out how to work with the new rules
 - o They often feel relieved at the end and want to keep going

Victoria's key takeaway 33:20

- Realize that all parents feel overwhelmed by this, but the more educated you become, the easier it becomes to implement it
- Check out the testimonials on Amazon for [her book](#)
- Take the first steps to research and plan
- Check out her [email course](#)

NOTES:

5 Ways to Prepare Kids to Thrive in a Daunting Digital World

Interview with Kristen Jenson

<https://protectyoungminds.org/>

Take Action:

Your actions speak louder than words. Take the time to consider how you're using technology and model appropriate tech use for your kids, even if it's hard for you.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Kristen 0:18

- She is the author of [Good pictures Bad Pictures](#) and [Good Pictures Bad Pictures Jr.](#)
- She is the founder of ProtectYoungMinds.org and gives so much hope for parenting kids in the digital age

What are the biggest dangers kids are facing in the digital world? 0:57

- There are great things with technology, but there are some dangers
- Our job as parents is to raise kids to face and defeat the dangers that are prevalent in their world
 - o You can be a part of the Protect Young Minds Community to get a weekly newsletter

10 biggest digital dangers 2:00

- Kids become more exposed to negative marketing messages when they're exposed to screens and technology
 - o Many marketing messages objectify people and overlook character
 - o Messages say that kids and parents need to purchase things to be acceptable and successful
 - We don't want kids to get these messages
- Exposure to sexual content and pornography messes with a kid's concept of what sex should be and can lead to addiction and objectification
 - o Pornography is prevalent on the internet and in apps
 - o Kids end up sharing nudes, which is just flirting to them

- Exposure to sexual predators
 - o Even in the most innocent apps, if there's a live chat feature, then they're open to predators
- Sextortion- the FBI says this is the biggest growing problem for kids online
 - o People are extorting kids for sexual photos and images
- Increased risk for mental health problems like anxiety, depression, and suicide
- Inability to focus and concentrate
 - o Some experts believe that continued exposure to technology produces ADD-like symptoms
- Decreased ability to empathize with others
 - o You develop empathy by seeing and hearing reactions from others, but via text, empathy isn't developed
 - o Studies show empathy is decreasing among us, which leads to bullying and negatively affecting relationships
- Internet addiction
 - o Includes gaming, social media, or pornography
- Decreased ability to sustain meaningful relationships or navigate face-to-face social relationships that are required in school, life, and work

We need to be smart about technology use 10:20

- Be deliberate about preparing your kids to face digital dangers
- Don't be scared; be prepared: Kristen's books help with preparation to reject pornography
- We need to be the ones to help our kids

The 5 "M's" of Digital Parenting 12:30

- **Model** healthy use of technology for your kids
- **Make** an age appropriate plan for access to tech devices
- **Monitor** device use and your child's feelings and attitudes
- **Mentor**- make time to talk about how we use tech
- **Mastermind**- use resources to educate yourself and keep current

Modeling 14:00

- This is the biggest message: actions speak louder than words
- Model the behavior you want your kids to take

- Notice how you're using technology and devices and how notifications pop up
- The apps Realized and Moment show how much time you're on your phone
- You send a message when a text or call takes priority over your face-to-face interactions
- Think of ways to deliberately use your technology
- Excessive phone use can lead to neglect and kids develop ADD-like symptoms when they see you on devices
- Develop your own family's guidelines
 - o There's a guide in the "Protect Young Minds" bonus bundle

What is the right age for a smart phone? 20:50

- Kristen believes you loan your kids devices- they use it based upon their adherence to guidelines and goals (vs. "this is mine")
- The goal is to help them use technology so that when they leave the house, they use it in a way that improves and enhances life and that it doesn't cause problems, hurt relationships, or impact their ability to work/study
- Parents tend to give kids phones for safety, so consider a device that allows you to connect but doesn't give them access to things like the internet
 - o Verizon has the Gizmo Gadget (it's a watch) and Gizmo Pal 2
 - o Republic Wireless has Relay, which is screen-free
- There's a movement called "Wait Until 8th" which is about waiting until 8th for a smart phone, which is the youngest Kristen thinks it should be given

Graduated Access Plan to Technology 24:30

Example: (You decide based on age)

- Begin with providing a Gizo Gadget in elementary school
- As they get older, they get a flip phone (text and calling only)
- Then, a smart phone without data (call and text and use at home for games)
- During high school, you loan a smart phone with accountability software (like Covenant Eyes)
 - o At each level you're increasing access, but you're mentoring them along the way
- She has a guide to decide if kids are ready for a smart phone (In her bonus bundle)

Should we be monitoring our kids' tech use and how? 28:50

- You may want to give privacy, but Kristen doesn't think kids have the right to privacy on digital devices. When they're in your care, you need to monitor their use so you can teach them
- When you have devices, you need to tell your kids that periodically, you'll check the device: let them know you'll be monitoring
- Have them turn in their devices at night (and make sure they don't have any other devices you don't know about)
- You also want to monitor their emotions, which is as important as monitoring their device use

How do we mentor our kids? 31:44

- Have a regular day each week, "Tech Talk Tuesdays"
- An exercise: Take sticky notes and write everything that's a danger or harm that can come from tech. Then do it again with positives. Put them up on the wall and this can help start a discussion
- Let them know you're not afraid to tackle tough topics

Masterminding 33:25

- It's the process of gathering your resources (at Protect Young Minds)
- Set up a regular get together with friends to talk over these topics
- Join their [Facebook Group](#) or check out [IG Stories](#) for Tip Tuesdays

What's the key takeaway? 34:25

- Download the bundle to gain access to these tools

NOTES:

The Effects of Tech on the Developing Brain

Interview with Erica Komisar

<http://www.komisar.com>

Take Action:

The more social you make your kids' technology use, the better it is for them; you want them to develop skills related to eye contact, touch, and tone of voice so that they learn empathy and social skills, so interact with them around their technology use.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Erica 0:24

- Erica is a Clinical Social Worker and a Parent's Guidance Expert
- She is an author with a private practice in New York and has been a guest on national media outlets

Is technology bad for children? 1:02

- Yes and No: There are positive aspects and many negative aspects
 - o The answer depends on the age, type of technology, and amount of time spent using tech

How young is too young for screen time? 1:46

- Don't expose under the age of 2, based on current neuroscience research
 - o By age 3, 85% of the right side, their social-emotional brain, has developed- it develops through social interaction through the primary care-giver
- The importance of the social-emotional part of the brain 2:45
 - o It's responsible for things like resilience to stress
 - o It's responsible for emotional regulation
 - o It's responsible for empathy, how we interact with others socially, and how we read other people's social cues
- If we expose kids to technology too early, we impact parts of the brain that should be learning and growing based on social interaction

How does tech effect social development? 4:00

- Technology isn't all the same- we're also talking about media and screen time (like the TV)
- Between ages 2-5, no more than 2 hours a day of media/screen time is recommended
 - That means TV, computers, iPhone, anything to do with tech or screens
 - You can watch TV with the child: interact and snuggle
 - Not all technology is the same: Mr. Rogers, educational TV, or a show where you're interacting are not the same as leaving your child alone to just watch or play a game
- The more social you make their technology use, the better it is for them
 - You want them to develop skills related to eye contact, touch, and tone of voice so that they learn empathy and social skills
- Even educational apps and quality shows, they're still not getting social contact

Tech guidelines for older children 7:40

- Social games are better for kids: You don't want them to be alone and zoned out
 - If they can hear their friends and are socializing while you're playing, that's far better for development than zoning out on the game

How does technology effect emotional development? 8:57

- Moms are responsible in the early years for helping regulate emotions
- In the early years, when you spend too much time alone, your mother isn't doing that processing for you
- Human interaction in the first three years: every time we soothe or have social interactions, we're regulating their emotions: technology can't do that
 - Children don't necessarily learn to regulate emotions when they're using technology and they're not regulating emotions frequently enough when they're using technology
- Try to limit the amount of time, and do this from the very beginning
 - This is harder to do with sensitive children
 - It feels like the device helps these sensitive kids and it's nice to have a quiet moment, but it's going to be even harder to regulate after they get off the device

Tips for setting limits/transitioning away from technology 14:33

- Transitions are the hard part
- Give some warning and you can use a timer
 - o The visual reminder is helpful
- Have empathy that it's hard to put the device down
- Also, let them know what they're doing after to ease the transition

Negative implications of too much technology 16:08

- There becomes too much dopamine (a chemical in the brain connected to pleasure)
 - o It's good when it's produced, but technology (and the games) produce large amounts of dopamine in a short period of time
 - The way your brain processes this, is similar to addiction in that small amounts no longer satisfy the brain
- Frustration tolerance and tolerance of boring moments becoming nearly impossible for kids who play video games constantly
 - o Age 9-25 (adolescents) is the 2nd critical period of brain development: there is a lot of brain growth, pruning, and development
 - If there is too much tech, the brain develops in a way that is hard to change, and that can be problematic
- There is reduced social time, which can lead to isolation, depression, physical illness, and sleep interruption (for adults too)
 - o At school, kids are encouraged to develop the cognitive side over the social side, which is a problem, and tech further supports that development
 - o Play and interaction help with social-emotional development
- You need to develop socially-emotionally first and then layer the cognitive development after that

What are the positives of technology? 23:44

- Hand-eye coordination from video games
- Educational software can improve certain language skills
- There is a higher capacity for visual attention
- Kids who play a lot of video games have good spatial, math, and reasoning skills (but poor verbal and writing skills)
- Can encourage problem-solving
- Can increase certain parts of the brain which are related to imagination

She prefers technology/video games that are imaginary rather than real 25:50

- The more real the characters look, the less the child uses their imagination
- There's a bigger negative impact when the games look real
- Video games that are like virtual reality, like with soldiers and shooting people, that's the most damaging to the brain, because that's like being in war
 - o It's also not good for humans to have too much stress so those violent games are stressful and then stress becomes associated with pleasure in the brain
- When kids ask for a video game, just say no

Can technology help with family bonding? 28:00

- Yes, technology used to be very family-oriented, like the Wii
- Now, technology is less social, or socializing is happening on the internet
- What can you do? Sit in the room, talk to them, and ask them what you're doing (you'll bug them but it's okay)
 - o Tell them they can only keep the game if every so often they stop, look at you, and tell you what they're doing to keep the connection, and allow for regulation
- You can sit with your kids and watch TV, snuggle while you watch a movie to help them create those social cues

Where you can find more information 30:02

- <http://www.komisar.com>
- Her book: [Being There: Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters](#)

NOTES:

Screenagers

Interview with Delaney Ruston

<https://www.screenagersmovie.com/>

Take Action:

Engage in positive conversations with kids around technology and help them understand how to have a balanced relationship with technology- they can't figure it out on their own.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Delaney 0:20

- She is a film-maker and Stanford-trained physician
- Delaney is an international speaker and created the film: Screenagers

Delaney's film involves families, including her own 0:43

- She hadn't planned to include her family
 - o She learned that parenting is the most private thing we do, so finding people to share struggles and solutions was hard; she was at a loss so she filmed her own story too
- Being honest and open can be hard when we're struggling, and when we care so much about raising our kids well
- Her passion is helping parents navigate the challenges; we need each other

Why are families struggling with technology? 2:50

- One survey found that 30% of families are fighting daily about technology
- If you're not having some conflict, discussion, and tears, you're probably not parenting in an engaged way
- It's easy to feel overwhelmed by this or that your kids should figure it out themselves
 - o Delaney knew kids couldn't learn/navigate on their own, and parents can't do it on their own either

What are teens and pre-teens doing online? 5:44

- 40% the number one thing is watching shows
- 30% is social media communication

- 30% is interactive: video games and scrolling through the internet
- Only 3% was content creation
- Parents and kids need a sense of control, competency, and relationships
 - o When kids are on these devices, they're doing a lot of consuming, but not a lot of tasks where they feel competent

How screens are impacting kids 7:43

- There are positives and negatives: Screenagers includes relatable stories (not the extreme bullying cases)
- She sees all of this as a chance for a cultural and parenting revolution so the film is out in communities, and isn't something you can stream
- The impact is not this awful, scary thing: our kids aren't being destroyed, but there are things we can do to maximize the upsides
- One example from the movie of a girl who sends a picture: what was hard for her wasn't what people were saying, it was that she was scared to tell her mom because she thought her mom would take away her phone and connection with her friends

What can parents do? 10:45

- We need to see this as an opportunity to have conversations with our kids over time and to model that life is full of ups and downs.
- We're here to have conversations and not excessively punish when they make mistakes
- We're here to help them find limits and to make sure they're doing things off of screens, not just on
- Know that Delaney makes mistakes, for example she'd give extreme, scary examples to her kids about the negatives of tech

How we can be more effective with helping our children with tech 13:07

- Take a breath and focus on "what can I do?" and "what can I control" rather than focus on what they're doing
- You gain more agency as a parent and model appropriate ways of handling things

Start with a place of positivity 15:00

- She has "[Tech Talk Tuesdays](#)": short conversations once a week to help herself and kids to be more mindful of how they use screen time

- They start off with something wonderful about tech use because kids often think parents don't understand, so this lets you come to the conversation from the good place

Talk about the positive things your kids want to do in life, off of screens 17:32

- This gets to values; what do we as a family, care about?
- Ask your kids what they care about within the family, extended family, physical health, and the world
- This becomes a touchstone you can come back to

3rd way to keep positive 18:40

- If you're struggling around screen time, recognize the positive in your kids around managing screen time
 - Example: You notice they're not bringing their device to the dinner table, point that out!
- Point out their strengths and ability to be in balance and not always be on it and how that made you feel
- We want our kids to come to us, so we can't over-punish

A few other tips for tech use and teens 21:15

- You don't need a lot of rules, but make them clear
- Ensure they have time off of screens; setting those expectations can help avoid arguments
- She finally did a contract, but that doesn't always work
- As a family, you can have goals and have the kids in the discussions: they might not always be happy, but include them- this is giving them some control
- Make sure you go back to the "whys"- your values so that you can parent with integrity
- <https://www.screenagersmovie.com/> has resources, guides, and plans
- To make a long-lasting change, it takes time, and she supports you in doing that

More about Delaney's contract with her kids 26:28

- Her daughter was 13 when she was in the film and got her phone
- They decided their phone rules had to do with sleep, study, and family time

- No devices at meals, family time, or in the car because there is great opportunity for family time and good modeling
- Remember that this is where parenting comes in: they might not be happy, but that's okay
- She sets rules for homework- they can check it at designated breaks; keep the computer in the main room
- Sleep: they don't keep devices in the bedroom
 - Kids are getting interrupted by dings on phones and having the device in general interrupts sleep

Schools also play a role 33:10

- Their study showed half of middle schools are letting kids have phone on them all day
- Kids do better developmentally and academically when phones are away: awayfortheday.org to get schools to support this idea
- Her daughter's school just changed this and now their launching "Operation Appreciation" to show their thanks for making this change

For more information

- <https://www.screenagersmovie.com/>
- [Tech Talk Tuesdays](#)

NOTES:

Preparing Kids to Thrive in the Digital Age

Interview with Lisa Smith

<https://thepeacefulparent.com/>

Take Action:

Remember the 3-step process to help your kids thrive with technology: educate, model, and regulate. Doing this proactively rather than reactively, and through open conversations with your kids is the key.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Lisa 0:37

- Lisa was a huge executive in a medical device firm and she struggled with the relationship with her son
- She then changed the way she was parenting and learned the principles of peaceful parenting; because it was a game-changer, she shifted her career to become a Parenting Coach
- She's written a book, [The Angry Parent](#): How to Use Anger to Find Peace in Your Parenting

What is the goal when Lisa works with parents and technology? 1:31

- To help our kids get in the right relationship with technology
- She is pro-technology but we need to decide what's right for us, for our children, and make sure that fits in with our values
 - o We have expectations kids should know how to manage technology but they can't do it because they're not developmentally ready
 - o We have to teach kids to use tech appropriately in their lives

The new frontier of parenting with technology 2:48

- Every generation has dealt with something that the generation before didn't/that they didn't have as children
- As parents, we need to understand the world is changing; we can embrace it and help our kids understand how to use it with limits, rules, and regulations

Electronics are the digital drug 4:41

- This is true for adults and kids: when we spend too much time, and zone out, there are a lot of chemicals released in the brain, and when we get overstimulated, it's no different than heroine
- There's an over-release of dopamine; this is why you may find that your kids don't want to do things they normally would after a long period of gaming/tech. They're coming off of the hit of dopamine and the world looks more dull
 - o This is why we need to regulate the amount of time our kids spend so that there's a downregulation of dopamine in the brain
- The secret is regulating the amount of time, with regular breaks, at regular intervals
 - o This allows them to relax, stops the dopamine pump, and they can check in with themselves

Every child will be a different in how they respond to technology use 8:38

- In Desi's house, hours on tech does not help good behavior
- When Lisa's son indulges too much in X-box he becomes more aggressive and uncooperative
- Have open conversations in your family and discuss, "I want you to have what you want but I also have a need for you to not be uncooperative, enjoy real life, and not be on digital devices so much"
- When you have these conversations, you deepen the kid's understanding and you tend to get more cooperation

How we help to manage our kids tech time 10:38

- The example of "Turn it off right now" in our own lives; it doesn't work and that's how we often communicate with our own kids with entertainment
 - o That's hard for anyone when you're in the middle of entertainment
- Here's what's effective, especially with strong-willed kids:
 - o Have a conversation with your kid upfront of, "what's our strategy today?"
 - o Help your child know the game plan, expectations, time limit, and the game plan when they're done
- Proactive conversations are everything to kids; parents fear negotiation, but Lisa says, "Why not?"

- o You're helping them turn on the internal compass; don't focus on the behavior but focus on the feelings and needs

The importance of consistency 14:38

- You also need to be consistent with the rules you set
 - o Ex: In Lisa's family- no cell phones in the car; it's a time to connect- they talk about this up front and it's her job to make sure they follow it
- When you game-plan the rules with your kids, it's easier for them to comply

Talking more about discussions in the car 16:43

- There's a lot of research about speaking with males and they're less intimidated if they're looking forward, rather than looking at you
- When Lisa has something important to talk about, she saves it for car time
 - o It's less intimidating and he can't get away
- Car time is so valuable, especially with teenagers

Lisa's key take aways 18:23

- The 3-step process: educate, model, and regulate
- Educate yourself on what you want your strategy to be along the lines of your family values
- Be mindful of what you're modeling; they don't do what we say, they do what we show them
- Regulate: Give downtime, time away from the intensity of the technology what rules do you have so that they're regulating themselves?
 - o Kids won't regulate themselves (they just can't because of development)
 - o Regulate proactively up front, rather than reactively on the backend of technology use
- Example of modeling in Desi's friend's family

Where you can find more information on Lisa 21:55

- <https://thepeacefulparent.com/>
- [Free mini peaceful parent course](#): how to show up and model behavior differently that we want to see in our children

NOTES:

Tweens Plus Tech

Interview with Abigail Wald and Julia Storm

<https://www.tweensplustech.com>

<https://www.realtimeparenting.com>

<https://www.reconnect-families.com>

Take Action:

Understand that your tweens will make mistakes with tech, and have conversations proactively about what could happen and how to handle it. Be a safe harbor for them to come to as they navigate through the world.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Abigail and Julia 0:40

- Abigail's site is Real Time Parenting; she's a certified Hand-in-Hand parenting instructor, and she co-hosts the Hand-in-Hand Parenting Podcast
- Julia's website is Reconnect and is helping families feel more connected; she's also a digital media and family educator
- Together, they have a website: Tweens Plus Tech

Why are tweens so unique? What is happening with them developmentally? 1:45

- Everyone comes into this time a little differently but the basic age is 8 or 9 to 12/13
- Developmentally, they're in a place where they're in between. They're not children and they're not teens
- There are lots of changes happening in their brain and they're soaking up a lot of information during this time-frame

What's going on in a tween's brain 3:30

- The prefrontal cortex that's responsible for reasoning, judgment, and executive function will take a bit of a backseat sometimes
- Sometimes there will be maturity and you'll see super-conscientiousness, but the next moment they're self-absorbed and moody
- Their brains are craving a lot of risk, which is hard-wired; it's connected to the ability to learn a lot

- It's hard for parents because tweens are craving risk and we're typically risk-averse and want to keep them safe

How does this brain development relate to technology for tweens? 5:18

- Craving risk and stimulation interacts with tech in a potentially dangerous way for tweens
- At this age, with technology, what tends to come up is:
 - o The constant flow of tech is particularly agitating for the young brain
 - o When we constantly receive information, your brain is task-switching, it's agitating and it creates an ongoing low-level stress which is harmful for young brains
 - o Via devices, and when you're online, there's more of a playground for risk and risky behavior
- As a parent, you need to understand they're craving that risk, and stimulation to help prepare them for the risks that will come up online

More thoughts on tweens with gaming and social media 7:38

- Social media: people are catching onto the negative aspects. For a child who's at an age where they're just starting to think about their identity, to put them on social media can be a slippery slope- they don't have the strong sense of self yet
 - o They feel "less than" if they're not getting that validation
 - o Hold off with social media as long as possible
 - o FOMO: Fear of Missing Out comes up because all they want is to fit in and take part; it becomes anxiety-producing
 - Parents need to pay very close attention to, and talk to their kids about it: how you don't see the whole picture on social media
- Gaming: It promises escape, connection, belonging, and fun, but you need to be careful
 - o Your body is reacting in a stressful fight or flight way when you play and to be in that state, it's agitating, and hard to come down from
 - o Kids end up being bored after they play video games a lot
 - Abigail's story about her son realizing that video games are great and it makes regular life seem boring by comparison
- A big part of navigating this time with your kids is creating an awareness and making it conscious for them that these tools influence us

- There can be games to bond over with your family, but pick the right games that don't overstimulate (and don't have a lot of violence/physical content) and talk to them about it

Dealing with kids' mistakes online 13:40

- How do we help them navigate through the mistake?
- They will make mistakes and there's a learning curve
- These kids have the burden of a digital footprint: when they do something, they need to understand how public it is
 - o Issues become a much bigger deal when technology is involved
- Help your kids understand that once they put it out there on technology/social media, it stays there, even with something like SnapChat
 - o They need to understand the reach and how it's un-retractable
- Kids will make mistakes and we need to be an ally; teach them how to think about it and be side-by-side with them; give them space to arrive at the conclusion
 - o These are the years of character development and we need to help them understand how to navigate
- There is a natural desire for independence and you need to work with that instead of against that
 - o Be a safe harbor for your kids when they need to tell you've made a mistake
 - o Let them know beforehand that they're prepared to handle a situation; play out real situations, like what could happen at the sleepover- talk about it before the sleepover (prepare the child for what could happen: ask what they can do)
 - You can create an "out word" and a way for them to safely get out of a situation
 - o You can also share your own mistakes; it helps them to know we've all done that and it helps to teach them

Is it normal for tweens to pull away and do things we don't know about? 22:02

- This is a normal part of development to reach out to friends for approval more than family
- As a parent, what you want to make sure of is, as you let them gain independence, you may want to consider "training wheels" (example, a

parental control app on a phone. It's not spying, but providing guidance and supervision)

- Some apps give insight without sharing exactly what happened
 - Our Pact
 - Bark
- As kids get more responsible, you can pull that away (and you explicitly tell them that, and talk about it)
- Responsibility is what allows for freedom
- Other people will not want things for your child the way that you do: continue to be their safe harbor
 - They recommend Gordon Nuefeld's book: [Hold onto Your Kids](#)
- Your child needs to see the family as a reflection of them and their values
 - Abigail thinks you earn the right to lead because you are a good friend

Where to find more information 29:56

- <https://www.twensplustech.com>
- [Check out their online class for more in-depth information and actionable tools](#)
- <https://www.realtimeparenting.com>
- <https://www.reconnect-families.com>

NOTES:



PARENTING A
CHALLENGING CHILD
CHEAT SHEETS

The 5 Secrets to Calm Any Conflict

Interview with David Burns

<https://feelinggood.com/>

Take Action:

Take the time to show empathy, be assertive with your feelings, and show respect in how you communicate- this will help to calm conflicts and improve relationships.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet David Burns 0:28

- One of the founders of Cognitive Therapy
- His book [Feeling Good](#), has sold 5 million copies!
- The book we're talking about is [Feeling Good Together](#) which is a workbook that walks you through conflict resolution

1) The Disarming Technique 2:58

- This is the first and most important technique
- The first 3 techniques fall under E (Empathy) of EAR (to help you remember this process)
- This means you find truth in the other person's criticism
- It's the toughest to learn and the most powerful
- This is based on the law of opposites: If you defend yourself from a wrong criticism, you'll prove that the criticism is true (that's the paradox)
 - o The other side is that if you genuinely and immediately agree with a totally false criticism, the other person will stop believing it and see it's not true
- Example: Someone says, "you never listen." If you defend yourself you might say "I am listening" and by arguing, you've proved them right because you're not hearing them
- If you agree, they'll stop believing it, you might say "It's painful to hear what you're saying because I have to agree with you- I haven't done a good job listening and I wouldn't be surprised if you're feeling hurt or angry. Tell me more about that. It's painful to see myself screwing up because I care

about you- tell me what I've been doing that's turning you off. I want to hear what you have to say"

- This proves that you are listening
- You have to resist the urge to fight back

2) Thought and Feeling Empathy 8:23

- Notice this in the example above
- You're repeating the other person's words so that you show that you're hearing and understanding
- Share how you think the person is feeling based on what they share

3) Inquiry 9:10

- This is asking gentle, probing questions to see if you got it right to learn more about what the person is thinking and feeling and opening the door to an emotional connection
 - Am I hearing you right? Did I get that right? Etc.
- Those are the 3 listening skills in the "E" of EAR

Do you want to be right or do you want connection? 9:52

- You're opening the door to hear someone else's perspective rather than slamming the door on that
- When you look at two parties in conflict, everyone is saying I'm right and you're wrong. That compulsion to be right tears people and sides apart
- Listening is only one part of helping this
- Remember that these are skills that can be learned but you need to have a strong desire to learn them and to work on them

4) Assertiveness 12:34

- This is the "A" in EAR
- This is not demanding you're right; this is about sharing your feelings with an "I feel X" statement.
 - You then fill in with one of the feeling words, example, "I'm feeling sad right now that I hurt your feelings"
- This is tough to do because we're afraid of being vulnerable, or people don't do it skillfully (example, "I feel you're acting like a loser")
- Bringing in your feelings builds relationships

5) Stroking 16:00

- The is the “R” in EAR: Respect
- This means to say something warm or caring about the other person, even in the heat of battle
- It’s okay to be angry or have someone be angry at you, but are you going to share it in a respectful way or will you lash out?
- We have to stop blaming and look at our own role in how we connect

Example of hostile teenagers 17:33

- David’s wife gave him a dog named Salty Dog who was 14 when he got colon cancer
 - o David found a big steam cleaner to rent to help with the messes. He put it in his little car and he couldn’t see out the rear-view mirror; he heard some teenagers yell from a giant truck to move. He pulled over, they sped past, threw a beer can and gave him the finger
 - o David had to follow them because it was one lane; when it split to two lanes, he pulled up next to them and the kid looked at David like he wanted to fight
 - o He went into stroking: apologized and explained the situation. The kid’s jaw dropped and said he had a dog, offered David a beer, and offered to help clean the carpets
- It’s easy to convert hostility into warmth if you respond with warmth; this also requires humility and the death of the ego

A roleplay from Desi’s life 21:29

- Her husband was frustrated because he couldn’t get ahold of Desi when her phone died. It’s frustrating to him and she doesn’t take care of her phone
- Desi goes through what she’d think and what she’d say
- She reflects on what he might be feeling
- Then she goes through her revised response using EAR
- This allows her to accept responsibility and gives the power to change
- This approach helps to connect rather than explode

Where to find more support 28:05

- His book, [Feeling Good Together](#)
- On his website, you can [check out the podcast](#)

NOTES:

The Explosive Child: A Plan that Works

Interview with Ross Greene

<https://livesinthebalance.org/>

Take Action:

Don't be a one-trick pony; if what you're doing isn't working, try something different. Be focused on the problems that are causing the behavior, not the behavior themselves.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Ross Greene 1:00

- He's written a number of books including [The Explosive Child](#)
- Ross has been a professor at Harvard for 20 years and is an adjunct at Virginia Tech

What's the difference between challenging kids and your other kids? 1:42

- Ross thinks that most kids are challenging some of the time; some are challenging more often and in more extreme ways
- If you have difficulties, you have them, whether you want to call them challenging or not

"Kids behave well if they can" 2:30

- This is the theme of everything he does; it's the belief that if a kid could do well, he would, and if he's not, then there's something in his way
- The first thing to do is to figure out what's getting in his way
- Research says he's lacking some important skills
- His motto is "challenging kids are challenging because they're lacking the skills to not be challenging"
- You can make many judgements, but the judgments and assumptions are often wrong
- Looking at where skills are lacking is more compassionate, more accurate, and helps to change things
- No one looks bad all the time; challenging kids are challenging more often, but they're not challenging all the time

- They're challenging when they have trouble meeting certain expectations
- Figure out what expectation are they having trouble meeting- those are the ones that are precipitating the challenging moments
 - These are unsolved problems: they're waiting to be solved
- You can now look at it as lagging skills and unsolved problems and what you need to do to help the kids as well as you can to start solving problems
 - Then your child becomes predictable and you can be working on proactive problem-solving that is collaborative

3 ways of handling unsolved problems 7:25

- Plan A, Plan B, and Plan C (only use B and C in this; A is a reference point)

Plan C 7:43

- You're setting aside an expectation, at least for now
- If a kid is very challenging, they likely have a lot of unsolved challenges
- You can't work on all problems at once, so you need to put certain things aside
- Plan C reduces the number of challenging episodes because you're removing expectations that lead to challenging behavior (but the behavior is not gone forever, just for now)

Plan A and Plan B 9:23

- Plan A is solving unilaterally (this is popular)
- Plan B is used in this model and is solving problems collaboratively
 - Anything that can be solved unilaterally can also be solved collaboratively; there's value added when solving problems this way
 - With Plan B, you have a partner, you're involving them in the solution, you're not causing challenging episodes, and you're improving communication and your relationship

This starts with an Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP)

11:13

- [How to use the ALSUP podcast](#)
- [A copy of the ALSUP](#)

3 Steps for Plan B 11:48

- Step 1: The empathy step: Gathering information from the kids about his/her concern/perspective/point of view on an unsolved problem
 - Ex: I've noticed you've been having trouble brushing your teeth, what's up? You want to know what's hard and getting in the way
 - There are many jaw-dropping moments as you learn what you thought was getting in the way is not what's getting in the way
- Step 2: Define adult concern: We're sharing our concern; you can still set expectations
 - Ex: You don't want to spend a lot of money on cavities and not smell bad breath
- Step 3: Invitation: Kid and care-giver collaborate on a solution. It must meet two criteria:
 - It's realistic: both parties can do what they're agreeing to
 - Mutually-satisfying: It truly needs to address the concerns of both parties
 - This is where creativity comes in and you're thinking together with the kid (and you're giving the kid the first crack at the solution)
 - After they give a solution, you look at if it meets the criteria
 - You might need to revisit solutions after you try them

Where might you run into challenges? 18:24

- In the empathy step, the wording of the unsolved problem must be fairly precise
 - Pay attention to the 2nd section in the [Walking Tours](#) area of his site
 - Poorly worded unsolved problems can cause the process to fail before it starts
- Also in the empathy step, people aren't sure what to ask to gather information from their kid
 - Use the [Drilling Cheat Sheet](#) for strategies to get more information
 - Reflective listening: saying back what the kid just said
- Because people aren't sure how to drill, they may leave the empathy step prematurely
- In the define adult concerns step, we don't always know what our concerns are- we're trying to get to solutions too quickly
 - Your concerns probably fall under either how the unsolved problem is effecting the kid *or* how it's effecting other people

- In the invitation stage, the wording can be hard. Start with “I wonder if there’s a way...” (and don’t say “to solve this problem”), instead try to hit on the concerns of each party and finish up with “do you have any ideas?”

Skills that are learned as you go through these three steps 24:23

In the empathy step

- Kids learn how to figure out what your concerns are
- Kids learn to articulate those concerns in ways that other people can hear and understand without becoming emotionally dysregulated doing it
- Adults learn how to listen, empathy, taking another person’s perspective

In the define adult concerns step

- Kids learn listening, empathy, taking another person’s perspective, understanding how behaviors impact others
- Adults learn the exact same skills the kid learned in the empathy step

In the invitation step

- Both are learning to generate solutions that work for you and others
- Resolving disagreements without conflict
- You’re also helping your kids learn the skills they were lacking (through all three steps)

Parents worry it’s a Plan A world 26:43

- The world is filled with expectations, but those aren’t A, B, or C
- The three plans are for unmet expectations and we can often meet expectations in the world
- With plan A, what they learn is to blindly adhere to authority, which is dangerous
 - o Plan A feels convenient but power causes conflict; collaboration brings people together
- Plan A doesn’t teach the skills
- Know that you can do Plan A when the moment requires it (for example, your kid is about to walk into the street)
 - o But if your kid keeps doing this, yes, Plan A is saving him, but Plan A isn’t solving the problem

What if your child is too angry in the moment for Plan B? 30:05

- That’s why you use the assessment to help make life more predictable

- You're going to need to diffuse and deescalate, but Plan B isn't for crisis management; it's a crisis prevention tool
- Do Plan B proactively
- Usually what's happening in this situation is that your child hasn't met an expectation and you're using Plan A
- 99% of upsetting episodes are predictable
 - o We can identify, prioritize, and then start working on them

Tips for prioritizing issues 32:20

- Safety first: any unsolved problem that's setting in motion a safety issue is of high priority
- If there's no safety issues, then frequency (most often) or gravity (greatest negative impact on the kid's life or the lives of others)

To find more information 33:40

- <https://livesinthebalance.org/>
- Start with the [Walking Tours](#)
- Check out the [podcasts](#)
- There's also an [activist side](#) if you'd like to support them
- He's working on a [documentary](#) about what gets done to behaviorally challenging kids and how hard it is to be the child or someone in their world

Final take away 35:48

- Don't be a one-trick pony; if what you're doing isn't working, try something different. Be focused on the problems that are causing the behavior, not the behavior themselves

NOTES:

The Most Effective Tool for Combatting Anxiety

Interview with Janine Halloran
<https://copingskillsforkids.com/>

Take Action:

As moms, we're busy managing everything and we don't take an opportunity to play. Don't forget yourself and do things that bring you joy.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Janine 0:32

- She's a licensed therapist with experience in public schools and private practice
- She's a speaker who talks with educators and others about helping kids manage emotions
- Janine is a mom of 2 elementary-aged kids

What does anxiety look like? 1:22

- Everyone experiences anxiety and worry at some point; when it's clinically significant, it's taking over life and negatively impacting the child and what they need to do
- For kids, a lot of times anxiety looks like irritability and anger
- The "anger iceberg": anger is at the top and you want to go under the surface and find out the other emotions: sadness, worry, anxiety, etc.
- There might be psychosomatic symptoms like headaches or stomachaches that aren't related to something medical

What does anxiety look like at different ages? 4:00

- Anxiety can manifest in different ways based on a kids' age and stage
- Little kids may have extreme separation anxiety, beyond what's typical
- School-age it's more like school-phobia
- When they're teenagers it can look like irritability or trouble sleeping

One of the biggest tools for helping with anxiety 5:10

- Play is the best way we can combat anxiety: it's how kids learn, interact with the world, and how they process thoughts and emotions
- Play is a natural stress reliever but we don't do enough of it
- Therapists do their work with kids through play
- There's lots of different ways to play, and being silly together is one way to do that, or sitting and reading together can be play
 - o It's a way to connect and be downtime: play is whatever brings you joy
- She and her kids also listen to audiobooks and podcasts together (One is [Finn Caspian](#))

We know play is important, why don't we play as much as we should? 9:00

- Organized activities make it harder (There is value in that, but aim to have free time too)
- She hit a season where there were too many activities happening
- The overscheduling also feels overwhelming
- Play is a necessity that helps us recharge (everyone, not just kids)

What play can look like at different ages and how to incorporate coping strategies into play 11:45

- Deep breathing is a way to tell your body to get out of fight, flight, or freeze, and to get yourself back to rest and digest
 - o With preschoolers, you can trace on their hand while they breathe; you take the deep breaths too; everyone is calmer and then you can move into play
- Play includes:
 - o Sitting, reading, a story and drawing
 - o Hidden pictures like in Highlights magazine (you can download them for free from Highlights)
- For elementary kids, she adds visuals, so pretend like you're holding a flower and breathe in like you're smelling it and breathe out like they're blowing out birthday candles (it's fun for kids)
- Play includes:
 - o Using their imagination: create something with a box: a puppet theater, or make a car
 - o Playing board games which teach skills like give and take, taking turns, being a good winner and god loser

- Word games are great for home or in the car

Play for teenagers 18:35

- It's cool to play with your teen, it just looks different
- You're now "hanging out" with your teen
- The breathing exercise she likes to do with teens is breathe in for 4, hold for 7, and breathe out for 8: the longer breath out helps you get out of the fight, flight, or freeze
- Journaling is great and you can journal back and forth- it's a way to communicate and it's lets them write it down and tell you things and talk about hard things without it having to be face-to-face
- You can do a book club with your teen or do a Netflix show and chat

Practicing your breathing outside of the anxious moments 21:30

- When kids are escalated, that's not the time to introduce new coping skills
- You need to introduce these skills when they're calm and they can figure out what works and what doesn't
- They need to practice these skills to be as preventative as possible

What if your kids are too anxious to play? 22:40

- That's when you're in crisis mode to get them to a place where they're feeling less anxious
- She keeps her language more limited: "I'm here for you. When you're ready, I'm here." Give a space like a "calm down corner" if you can (a space with tools they can use and where they can calm down)
 - Tools include doing their breathing, fidget tools, calming jar, cozy seating, etc.
- You have to wait until your kid is calmer to have more conversations
- Having a calm down space is so important: this is a space where you can go and help yourself calm down
- You also need to manage your own anxiety around your child having these big feelings
 - You want to be the thermostat, not the thermometer: You want to set the temperature, not rise and fall with what's going on in the house
- Be there for them and show them how to react; manage your own anger and anxiety

- Try a phrase for yourself “I’m a safe space; I’m the thermostat”

Should you ever walk away? 27:15

- There are times where it makes sense to give kids space; some kids will escalate if you’re there
- You know your own kid: stay in earshot; hear what’s going on, but be close enough
- If a child is unsafe, then move things so they stay safe, but if your child needs a quiet moment, give that to them
- If you have a kid who’s really angry and you don’t understand why, you might need to dig deeper: talk to teacher, pediatrician: go through what might be happened and talk to your child to open up the dialogue

Play opens up the dialogue with your kids 29:20

- Play gives you the opportunity to connect and then you can have the conversation
- Many kids won’t respond when you go straight to talking
- As a therapist, she’s always playing or keeping them busy (like with coloring) until they feel comfortable

Where you can find more information 31:10

- <https://copingskillsforkids.com/momconference>

Janine’s key takeaway 31:35

- Play! Remember what you used to love to play and make time for it.
- As moms, we’re busy managing everything and we don’t take an opportunity to play- don’t forget you

NOTES:

Nutrition for the Brain

Interview with Jeffrey Knight

<https://truenorthchiro.com/>

Take Action:

Making even small changes with the way that you eat, to include organic foods and getting back to nature, can have a noticeable impact on brain health.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Jeffrey Knight 0:52

- Chiropractor; True North Wellness Center
- Dad of 6

How we can help our kids optimize brain health 1:26

- Optimizing brain health is important for anyone, but especially when parenting children with challenges
- The brain is such an important part of our body and we'll cover ways to optimize brain health and function

How Jeffrey got started 2:30

- Jeffrey has been called to serve and help families
- He's had family members dealing with things like autism, brain trauma, and ADD
- He read a story about a doctor, who helped a child with autism's body learn how to function better and he was blown away and was called to help

How to optimize brain health 4:25

- By removing certain foods, there can be big changes
- Organic and non-GMO is important
 - o Round-up (that is sprayed on grass) gets into our food and affects us negatively
 - o This leads to leaky gut which can create/indicate bigger issues
 - o Organic helps to avoid that and is worth the extra expense

Foods to Avoid 7:40

- Genetically modified foods (corn and soy), and bad oils like vegetable oil
- Trans-fats
- Artificial sweeteners

The “good stuff” 10:40

- Oils: coconut, avocado, olive, sesame (your brain loves good fats)
- Avocados
- Nuts, seeds
- Good animal fats
- Eggs
- Grass-fed and organic dairy
- Fatty fish

Parents model for their kids 14:47

- You can give your kids some agency/choice, but teach good principles
- Jeffrey sees his kids’ behavior and emotions change as they eat certain foods

The topic of gluten-free 16:41

- Jeffrey feels like grains and wheat are okay but it’s the quality of grain has changed and become negative for us
 - o If you do have a leaky gut, then you might want to cut out grain to clean out your gut
- If you do choose grains, ancient grains and organic are great
- When your gut is healthy, you can eat grains again

How leaky gut effects the brain 19:40

- If the gut is leaky, we assume the blood-brain barrier is too and then chemicals and toxins can get into the brain
 - o the blood-brain barrier is supposed to keep certain things from entering the brain
- Remember the fewer ingredients in your food, the better

Is diet enough to make a difference? 21:50

- Diet is a crucial key, but it’s not the only key
- For some people, it might be enough but for others it isn’t

- Genes can turn on in good or bad ways

You can detox the brain 25:40

- There's a lot that we can do to detox and remove sources of stress
- There are ways to safely and effectively detox the brain (this can take months and years)
- We want to minimize or eliminate physical, chemical, and emotional stress

Where to find these foods 27:53

- Costco has organic
- Your local grocery store
- You can buy online if you're nowhere near a store with good food (ex: [Thrive Market](#))

Stories of families Jeffrey has worked with 29:50

- Jeffrey works with kids with Autism, ADD, chronic fatigue, and more
- 10-year-old boy who now recognizes and plays with his sister and communicates with others
- A mother reported her son is now giving more hugs, and more affection with fewer meltdowns
- Another boy sat through a whole movie (He had sensory processing issues, with sound) and the whole family enjoyed a night out
- Jeffrey's message is hopeful; changes can happen for the better

More information for parents to implement ideas 34:15

- [Resource page for you](#)
- Reach out to Jeffrey if you need more support

NOTES:

Effective Treatment for Everything from Bed Wetting to Tics

Interview with Jeffrey Lazarus

<https://www.jefflazarusmd.com/>
www.keepingthebeddry.com

Take Action:

The most important thing we can do is love our children unconditionally, accept them for who they are, and meet them where they are; back off and don't pressure them or be disappointed in their behaviors.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Jeffrey 0:47

- He is a board-certified pediatrician, trained at Stanford
- He is one of only 20 who is an approved consultant by the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis

Jeffrey's story 1:35

- He practiced general pediatrics for many years in Cleveland, Ohio
- He was introduced to medical hypnosis when he had plantar warts
 - o His friend froze and did topical medication; after 15 months of treatment he was frustrated
 - o He remembered a previous client who had hundreds of warts on his hands; the child went for self-hypnosis once and he healed!
- He saw Dr. Olness who was one of the pioneers in the field: The mother of pediatric hypnosis
 - o She taught a technique about deep muscle relaxation and then told him to go to a place in his mind where he was safe and happy and when you're there, tell yourself "I will no longer feed the warts"
 - o He had to do this for 10-minutes a day, twice a day for a month
 - o He visualized the blood vessels constricting at the site of the warts and he felt tingling at those spots
 - o He wasn't as consistent as he needed to be but they went away, and he was hooked!

This was a completely new approach for him 4:58

- Most people hear hypnosis and think of a swinging watch and mind control
- He thinks of a highly-focused state of mind, like being in the zone in your sport, or driving and missing your turnoff (it's highway hypnosis); it's similar to the high level of focus when playing video games
- With medical hypnosis, patients choose a specific therapeutic goal, and he helps them to create an empowering experience in their mind that allows them to realize that they're able to do things that they previously weren't aware they could do
- This needs to be learned and practiced
- This is not mind control- that doesn't exist

Some of the uses of medical hypnosis 8:18

- Performance anxiety: musicians, actors, dancers, athletes
- Test-taking anxiety
- Chronic pain
- Irritable bowel syndrome and functional abdominal pain (like a child who has tummy aches all week but not on the weekend)
- Migraines
- Kids who are not-yet dry (as opposed to bed-wetting)
- Tics: motor tics or vocal/phonic tics
- He loves treating patients because afterward there's increased confidence, self-esteem, and
 - o It's life-changing to help someone with tics and he loves that

The course of treatment 13:00

- There's no medication with this
- No side-effects
- Generally, patients are better after 1 to 3 or 4 visits if they're practicing
- There may be anxiety the patient is experiencing and it's a bigger issue, then the anxiety needs to be addressed and that may also solve the issue
 - o Hypnosis may be helpful; cognitive-behavioral therapy is important too
- You can visualize the situations where there is anxiety: you're creating muscle memory
 - o Elite athletes are using the skill of visualization/imagery

Jeffrey's example of creating new pathways in the brain 15:10

- It's like walking through a tall field of grass; the more you do it, the easier that path becomes. When you need to create a new path (a new habit), it's harder, but you can do it.
 - o The old path is the migraine; the new path is without a headache
 - o This is neuroplasticity: Ex when a skier visualizes, the same pathways in the brain are triggered as when they're skiing; you're creating muscle memory

How long do you need to visualize for to experience change? 16:55

- Patients are often better after 1-4 visits but you need positive expectations and motivation
- The more parents push and get involved, the worse it is because it can give the message that your child isn't good enough (though you're acting out of love)

Tips for moms to motivate vs. send the wrong message 18:50

- Parents have to back off
- Meet the kids where they are: if they're not ready and not motivated, don't push
- If a kid has a bad game or a poor grade, rather than say "that's okay, you'll do it next time," kids don't need a cheerleader, they need more empathy
 - o They need someone to meet them where they are rather than just pushing ahead

If you think medical hypnosis would be helpful, what are the next steps? 21:50

- [NPHTI- National Pediatric Hypnosis Training Institute](#)
- [ASCH- American Society of Clinical Hypnosis](#)
- You can find professionals near you through these links

Meditation vs. Hypnosis 23:20

- In typical meditation people are taught to empty their minds but hypnosis a patient is choosing specific therapeutic goals and then experiencing achieving that in their mind
- Both involve a highly-focused state of mind; there are similarities

- Many people who are doing meditation may actually be doing a form of self-hypnosis

Is this something moms can practice too? 25:15

- When anyone gets upset, you can practice taking a deep breath and do that instead of reacting
- You can breathe in comfort and calm and breathe out worry and upset
- This is important especially when parenting a child with challenges
- You can also practice taking these deep breaths so that you're more prepared in tough moments
- These skills are empowering for everyone

Jeffrey's key take away for moms 28:55

- The most important thing we can do is love our children unconditionally, accept them for who they are, and meet them where they are; back off and don't pressure them or be disappointed in their behaviors
 - o There is a lot of pressure on our kids that we didn't have to deal with
- Encourage them without pushing too hard

NOTES:

Parenting a Child with ADHD Part 1

Interview with Dr. Robert Melillo

<http://drrobertmelillo.com>

Take Action:

Encourage lots of movement and socializing in your kids; try to eliminate screens in the first six years of life so that the brain can develop as it should.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Dr. Melillo 0:30

- He travels the world and just spoke at Harvard
- He's a well-respected specialist in childhood neurological disorders
- Dr. Melillo is the author of [Disconnected Kids](#) and [Reconnected Kids](#)

How he began his research on neurological disorders 1:03

- He's been a clinician for over 30 years and has been interested in neurology and rehabilitation; it's like sports medicine for the brain
- In 1995 with a young family, his wife introduced him to a woman whose son had severe ADHD and was possibly on the Autism spectrum and she was looking for answers/help
 - o He felt like he didn't have time to help and his wife said she had a feeling he was supposed to help her
- They then went to a parent-teacher conference a few days later and the teacher said she thought his son had ADHD and maybe some other issues
 - o He realized he didn't know what ADHD is and felt like a bad parent because he missed that in his child
 - o He felt like it wasn't a coincidence that those two events happened together- he vowed to figure out how to help his son and others

He wanted to answer the question of what was happening in his son's brain 5:00

- The experts he talked to didn't know, which was mind-blowing to him
- Until you know what it is, you can't try to solve it or prevent it, so that's what he wanted to do
- At that point, he was researching and knew a lot about the brain, but worked primarily with adults

What Dr. Melillo discovered 8:30

- Neurological rehab is about finding/restoring balance
- The first research said kids with ADHD and kids with learning or behavioral issues are bright/maybe even exceptional in certain areas but they struggle in other areas: that sounded like an imbalance to him
- During this time ways of looking at the brain in real time became possible
- He looked for similarities for what kids with ADHD are good at: he saw they did well with left-brain skills and struggled with right-brain skills and thought that the right might be overpowering the left
 - o The evidence continued to support this
- He then worked on balancing the hemispheres of the brain and stimulating the nervous system (because he'd been doing it with adults)
 - o The results were tremendous and miraculous
- It seemed there was an underlying problem that's common with other disorders so he looked at autism, OCD, Turrets, etc. and there's an unevenness there too- they're all the same problem: unbalance in different networks in the brain

What happened after this understanding of the imbalance 15:30

- He knew if he could develop a program to target the core problem but also the individual networks that he could correct the problems
- Once he knew the problem, he wanted to know the underlying cause
- He realized this was the beginning of an epidemic
- He started teaching anyone who would listen but they couldn't reproduce it as well so he knew he needed to create the Brain Balance Centers, which has worked with 30-40 thousand kids
- Now his goal is to create awareness and share information/research so that people become familiar with the idea of brain imbalances and lack of brain integration and a brain-based lifestyle
 - o We're going to see that physical health, mental health issues and educational issues for the most part start with issues in the brain

What is happening to cause these imbalances 18:45

- There is something that happened during development, either in the womb, the birth process, or the first six years of life primarily that started to create an imbalance

- Once the imbalance developed, the child would never outgrow it; it tends to get stronger because people play to strengths and ignore weaknesses
- By stimulating the underactive and underdeveloped areas of the brain, you turn on genes that cause that part of the brain to grow and develop
- The right and left brain develop in different ways and timeframes
 - o If something goes wrong, slows down, or doesn't develop as it should, it creates developmental imbalances and once it forms it only gets worse over time
 - o There's no damage, nothing broken, no genetic mutation and there's nothing preventing us from changing this other than the knowledge of how to do it, which he created

Why are we seeing more cases? 22:05

- People tend to agree that what's causing the epidemic are mainly environmental and lifestyle
- The same lifestyle changes that are causing epidemics in adults like obesity, heart disease, and diabetes are the same factors that affect brain development in children
- The most basic core issue is lack of movement
- He believes the key to brain development is motor activity, which drives sensory stimulation and that drives brain development
- In the last 30 years because of the development of the personal computer has made lives, jobs, and entertainment sedentary
 - o Kids used to be out playing, riding a bike, or climbing trees
- We're also afraid to let our kids out: there's a perception that the world is a dangerous place
- Diet and nutrition as well as more pesticides and things of that nature influence this too

How screens effect brain development 26:40

- The right brain develops earlier on: the social and emotional brain and connects us to our body and gives self-awareness inside and outside
- We need to feel our body and emotions first before we can feel the emotions of others
- If we're not moving and doing things, we don't develop our right brain
- The left brain is stimulated by goal-directed behavior and is stimulated by video games, social media, and tech

- The left-brain is the basis for all addictive/obsessive/compulsive behavior
- We're literally feeding the addictive networks and when you give a kid a screen before the age of 3, you're kicking in the left brain before the right brain is developed
 - Kids can't communicate, they have low muscle tone, are clumsy, etc.
- What's happening in autism
 - It's a nonverbal communication problem
- He feels kids shouldn't see screens before age 6
- If you want kids to be smarter, get your kid outside, play, and interact to develop interpersonal skills
 - Early computer use actually make people less prepared and less able to regulate emotions
- Part of his mission is to bring an explanation and science to the old-school ways of parenting and what we're seeing now

An overview of what we're seeing in kids 32:31

- It doesn't matter what you label it: ADHD, Autism, etc.
- It comes down to there are certain skills in these kids that are overactive and certain skills that are underactive
- What happens is, when the right or left brain slows down in its development because it's being interfered with in some way, the other side develops too much to compensate but that creates an imbalance

NOTES:

Parenting a Child with ADHD Part 2

Interview with Dr. Robert Melillo

<http://drrobertmelillo.com>

Take Action:

Remember that imbalances can be corrected, so seek out the resources to help support your child to create a brain balance lifestyle.

Interview Notes and Minutes

What can we do if there is a brain imbalance? 0:18

- We have to identify the imbalance; the only way to correct it is to do things in an unbalanced way
- Getting kids outside and playing and socializing won't correct it

How do you know if there is an imbalance? 0:50

- If there are any delays or anything is off in developmental milestones, like motor milestones there is an imbalance
 - o Examples: rolling one way or the other, not walking at 11-13 months
- You need to identify if there are primitive reflexes that didn't go away and then either stimulate or do exercises and stimulate the brain
 - o This can reestablish balance in the brain and body
 - o The quicker you can get to them, the faster it happens, but when he gets kids around 4, he can help them catch up quickly (6mo- 1 year)

What are primitive reflexes? 2:54

- Rooting and sucking reflex: stroke baby's cheek and he turns and opens his mouth to suck
- Palmer-grasp reflex: You put a finger in the baby's hand and they grab on
- Babinski reflex: In the foot, etc.
- Babies don't yet have a motor cortex so these reflexes help keep them alive and interacting in the world, and give feedback so the brain builds from the bottom, up
- We then regulate from the top down, so if there are brain imbalances, it will affect other systems

“Top down” systems aren’t that effective at helping 5:16

- Example: making a child read more doesn’t cure dyslexia. From the “bottom up,” you work on things that stimulate the motor, sensory system and left brain, then dyslexia is correctable
- Many doctors don’t think these things are treatable because they don’t understand what’s causing them and so they don’t treat them correctly
- Desi’s personal example of her daughter not recalling letters (which is dyslexia)
 - o Desi decided to use Dr. Melillo’s approach before going to resource
 - o In 3 months, she could recollect letters: she’s half-way through the program
 - o Her daughter’s brain hadn’t finished building from the bottom up, so a top down approach on its own wasn’t going to work

Some misconceptions people have 12:05

- People say you can’t do anything about dyslexia. It frustrates him because it’s wrong
- People say it’s genetics: that’s wrong too
 - o Hereditary means it may run in families, but that doesn’t mean it’s genetic, which implies a genetic mutation
 - o Example: if you have two right-brain dominant parents, you’re going to have a right-brain dominant child and because it’s so strong, if the left-brain comes on too early or doesn’t kick in, then she’ll struggle with letter recognition, phonics, etc.
- Epi-genetic factors like inflammation and environmental factors can interfere with gene expression which effects brain development
 - o This is covered in his book: [Autism, the Scientific Truth](#)
 - o These don’t damage genes, and these genes can be turned back on by doing the right thing environmentally
- There are no genetic mutations driving these issues

The outcome of his approach 15:00

- Desi started to see letter recall by taking care of the primitive resources
- She had to see it to believe it
- His research shows that cognition comes from movement and the research community accepts that, but the average practitioner and family doesn’t know this

Harvard is now doing a study 16:20

- On the idea of brain balancing exercises, there's a lab at McClain Hospital (a mental institution) connected with Harvard Medical School
- The lab deals primarily with ADHD, bipolar disorder, and brain-neglect type issues
- The doctors there have used his approach and saw results they've never seen before
- One of the main researchers said there is no answer and nothing works for these types of issues
 - o They agree with his theories but no one has come up with a solution or how to fix it- that's why they're researching it
- The study has been going on for a couple of years with ADHD kids, based on a 15-week home-exercise program stimulating the right brain
 - o They saw results in psychological and academic tests but then the brain imaging results were remarkable: there were physical and functional changes in the right side of the brain, which was dramatic
- They decided to triple the size of the study and make it more evidence-based because it's so revolutionary
- His approach corrects the imbalance, which is key; if you don't do that, then you won't be able to correct the issues

Where you can find more information 23:10

- His [web-series](#) where they highlight families going through their brain balance journeys and go into homes
 - o It's heart-wrenching, but it's real life and the transformation is amazing
- He has a [coaching program](#) to help you learn and utilize this information yourselves
 - o This becomes a lifestyle because, for example, if you fix the brain balance, you fix the gluten sensitivities
 - o The brain controls everything so you need to start with it
- [Disconnected Kids](#) and [Reconnected Kids](#)
- <http://drrobertmelillo.com>
- [IANFR](#) for professionals who want to be certified
- [Brain Balance Centers](#)

NOTES:

Tools for Depression and Anxiety in Tweens and Teens

Interview with Dr. Jacob Towery
<http://www.jacobtowerymd.com/>

Take Action:

Do things that bring you joy just for the sake of doing it: this makes you a better parent, gives you energy, and models to your children that you should do things simply because they bring joy.

Interview Notes and Minutes

Meet Jacob Towery 0:45

- He's an adolescent psychiatrist in private practice in Palo Alto, CA
- He's an adjunct professor at Stanford
- He wrote [The Anti-Depressant Book](#) which is written for teens to read instead of being written for parents

How do you know if teens are depressed vs. being moody? 2:05

- Moodiness is common; you would expect periodic bouts of irritability, isolation, talking back, having rocky friendships- it's all normal for teenagers
- Red flags that it might be closer to clinical depression:
 - o If it's 7 days or more in a row that a teen is feeling sad, down, having low energy, or is irritable, especially if it's most or all of the day
 - o If you see grades slipping or multiple friendships have fallen to the wayside, that's concerning
 - o Isolating for a week or longer
 - o Talking about wanting to hurt or kill themselves: that's concerning
 - o If you notice significant substance or alcohol use
- It's not one thing that's a concern, it's a constellation of factors

The difference between depression and anxiety 4:25

- Depression is often a heaviness; there's a slowness, sadness, and low energy/low motivation to it

- Anxiety tends to look a bit different: it can either be overt/obvious: they'll tell you they're stressed. Other times they tend to sleep less, can't focus as much, seem more tense, and may have OCD behaviors
- Anxiety can lead to depression, but they can happen separately

Information on treatment for both 7:17

- Treatments are similar: Jacob takes a holistic approach
- Make sure your teen is getting enough sleep and is getting exercise
- Medication: SSRIs work for both
- Cognitive-Behavioral therapy (CBT) (most evidence-based approach)
- There is an overlap in treatment

How thoughts effect depression 8:38

- He trained with Dr. David Burns who wrote [Feeling Good](#)
- The thoughts that we tell ourselves and the interpretation of the event determine how we feel
- Cognitive therapy: You teach people to identify thoughts and write them down: they can see which thoughts are distorted and that cause them to have negative emotions
- You can then teach ways to deal with those thoughts
- Behavioral therapy: Teaching people how to have healthy behaviors and routines that will get them out of anxiety/depression and ideally sustain them so they don't relapse

Teaching people to be "Thought Detectives" 10:30

- When a thought goes through our mind, it can feel very true
- Example: When he was awake at 4am, he thought "I'm going to be exhausted tomorrow and will bomb the interview with Desi"
- To be a thought detective, he'd say "this feels 80% true, but let's get logical and examine objectively the evidence that suggests it's true"
- Then you look at the evidence that suggest this thought isn't true
- If you write these down, then you weigh the two columns against each other to help the thought seem not so true
- Looking at the thought objectively also helps it feel less true and it changes how you feel overall

The idea of "should": pros and cons 15:15

- His bold claim: he argues the vast amount of our suffering is due to “should” statements because we hold ourselves to a high moral standard
 - This is unrealistic
- When we tell ourselves that we should be better than we are, we feel guilty, embarrassed and ashamed; that spirals into beating ourselves up more, low energy and low motivation and we’re less effective
- One solution is the semantic technique.
 - Instead of, “My kids should be grateful when I sign them up for class,” you say, “I would prefer if my kids were grateful. That’s okay”. It gives more ease in the world
 - This takes guilt, shame, and anger out of it

Talking about the expectations that we have 20:30

- When you have a should statement, it’s an expectation or demand on the world or yourself
 - You’re more likely to have a disappointment
- As parents, we start off wanting our kids to just be happy and healthy, and then as they grow up, we have all these “wants” for them which is a growing list of expectations and potential for disappointment
- It’s not easy to lower/adjust expectations, and is an ongoing practice
- These are skills we can practice and our kids can apply these as well

Talking about sleep 24:37

- There are more and more studies on the importance of sleep for mood, irritability, and health
- Adults can get by with 7-8; teens’ brains are growing and they need between 8 and 10 hours and very few teens are getting that
- If you’re sleep deprived, you’re more likely to feel sad and it can lead to full-blown depression
 - He’s had clients where all they do is get more sleep and their depression lifts
- Screens are one of the huge detractors from sleep: it’s hard to pull yourself away and teens have less self-control than we do
 - Set boundaries for the time when screens go off- take them away
 - Be consistent with this; they’ll get bored and will fall asleep
 - When they sleep 9-10 hours every night, they’ll wake up refreshed and less irritable; everyone will be happier

Exercise for teens to help with mood 28:38

- He's demanding of his patients: 30-90 minutes 4-6 days a week of vigorous exercise
- There is research on the role that exercise plays in anxiety and depression
- If you sit around thinking, you'll work yourself up into a frenzy; you can break that cycle with exercise by interrupting the flow of thought and discharge energy in a healthy way, which reduces anxiety
- When you have depression, you have low energy and low motivation but if you make yourself exercise you'll come out of it feeling positively.

Tips for motivating your kids 31:28

- Ask what things they're interested in or have been interested when it comes to activity and exercise
 - o Go with that and schedule it for them
- If your child is totally resistant, use incentives and consequences: "You can't have any screen time today until you've done at least 30 minutes of exercise"

One takeaway for moms 33:24

- One of the best gifts that we can give our children is to model being happy ourselves. Many moms are loving and giving, but their health and wellbeing comes second. If you're exhausted and frenzied, you're modeling that. If you can do things for your own happiness, that gives you more energy and allows you to be more present and models that it's important to do things just for the sake of joy
- If you're struggling with depression or anxiety, get help: feelinggoodinstitute.com to get treatment

NOTES:
