

Ep #41: Is the Lego War Over? Real World Coaching Follow Up with Lyra



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host
Lisa Smith

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Welcome to *Real World Peaceful Parenting*, a podcast for parents that are tired of yelling, threatening, and punishing their kids. Join mom and master certified parent coach Lisa Smith as she gives you actionable step-by-step strategies that'll help you transform your household from chaos to cooperation. Let's dive in.

Welcome, welcome, welcome to today's episode. I am so excited to be with you here today. As I sit here and record today's episode, our temperatures in Arizona are slowly moving their way down the thermostat. It is truly glorious. Ugh goodness, I love October. I just love the month of October.

Now, a fun fact about me that you might not know is that I love, love, love, love reading. Truth be told, romance novels are some of my favorite books to read. I really enjoy when at the end of a great book, the author provides an epilogue, yeah. An epilogue is a section at the end of the book that serves as a comment or a conclusion to what has happened, right.

So oftentimes we get to the end of the romance novel and there's a happy ever after. Then the author fast-forwards five, ten, 20 years and you get to find out sort of a summary of what happened to the couple that fell in love. Ugh, yum. I love it when I finish a great book and then bam, you get an epilogue. You get a peek into where it goes, and that just feels like the cherry on top of the sundae if you will.

So today, with that in mind, I thought I would share with you a follow up episode. An epilogue, if you will. If you listened to episode 39 two weeks ago, the Lego War, you had a front row seat to the coaching session that I had with Lyra, who is a mom of three boys six, three, and 11 months old.

During episode 39, we talked about the importance of having a routine. We talked about some tools you can use to regulate yourself when your child is

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storming. We talked about how to bring limits into your families and the benefits of doing so. We talked about some tips for harnessing more cooperation from your child. Finally we talked about how to stop the power struggle with your child. Of course, we'll link in the show notes here to episode 39.

Now if you've been listening to me for a while, you know that I do my very best to bring you tips, ideas, and support that help you create deep connection and cooperation with your kids right now. As I've said before, while reading and listening is information, coaching is transformation. Coaching is where the magic really happens.

So today is an amazing opportunity. An amazing chance to bring you the epilogue of episode 39. I have to admit to you this happened organically, if you will, on the fly. With today's episode, I invite you to listen to a follow up coaching call and conversation with Lyra and I that we had this week in our weekly membership called The Hive. Today Lyra was telling us about her ah-ha moments. What worked, what didn't work, and we brainstormed on how to create connection and cooperation with her six year old strong willed son as a follow up to episode 39.

So it's really an epilogue, if you will, of episode 39. I thought wow, how great would this be for you to have a chance to listen to a coaching call that is a second coaching opportunity or a follow up to the original coaching call. Remember, the tools that we discussed today are universal across all ages. So listen in.

As you're listening, think about how to bring these tools into your own home with your own kids to overcome your own resistance and defiance that you might be receiving from your kids. How to strengthen or create the connection and cooperation that you're looking for. So enjoy listening.

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Lyra: I haven't circled back with you since the podcast episode. So it's great to come back.

Lisa: Yeah. I got a lot of incredible feedback on that podcast. People loved it.

Lyra: Thank you. I feel you where it's hard to take that in a little bit when you asked the question like is it okay? I feel the same way about the podcast. So thank you for saying that. So I have a success story to share on that, update of where we've gone, and then questions.

So the success story on the cleaning up the playroom, the Lego wars. We've had a real shift in how we interact on this, Charles and I. So I took the feedback on making it more fun, on the freeze game, making it into a game, making it into a way we could bond. We've had several days since then where he has been really cooperative in cleaning up with me. We've done the freeze game.

Lisa: Imagine that.

Lyra: We were both just cracking up. I'll help him. So we'll be in the middle of cleaning, and then I'll say freeze. Then we'll freeze in a really weird posture. Sometimes he'll fall over laughing, you know. He'll do it. He'll pick up all the Legos and the pieces. We'll make it a race. Who can do it faster? I'm going to beat you. He gets real competitive about it. He's like, "No, I'm going to win."

So that's been huge for us. So thank you for that. I don't even know how to express it verbally, but just such a huge shift in my approach too. I'm trying to be more fun and realize that I can sometimes be a little bit like a train conductor like you said in the podcast. Where I just want to get it done and

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I get into manager mode, and I'm tired. I can have all of my rationalizations, but those don't really work for a six year old or a three year or a baby and why they're not going to tear the room apart and not going to help me clean up.

So I've been doing a lot of self-work on that. So the success. It's just Charles and I having a lot more connection time when we're cleaning up and more fun with it. For example, last night—again, I'm tired at the end of the night. I tend to want to be like just get it done and go to bed. I will pause more if we're heading into the power struggle. If he wants to do power struggle mode with me.

Like with brushing teeth last night, he was cooperating really well. He had the cleanup, and it was fun. No, we hadn't done that yet. We were going to go brush teeth. He was like, "No, I don't want to do the brushing the teeth." He's laying on the floor. I'm like, "Okay. Let's pause. How about we go instead and race to the playroom. Let's do some jumps on the trampoline."

So I redirected. We did something else and then we came back to it, and he was ready to brush his teeth. He was fine with it. There was no struggle. Instead of being like no, we're going to do it right now. I was like okay. You're not ready for it. We'll come back to it. Then he was ready.

I have observed the times where he does not cooperate with me on cleaning up the playroom. There's been sometimes where we have hit heads with it this past weekend and we had a really hard day. We had a couple of really good days. I was like, "Oh, this is great. Our world has changed. It's all better now."

Then we had a step back and we had a really bad day. That's a judgement on it, but we had a challenging day where he didn't want to do anything. It

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was a constant no. Fighting with me. Didn't want to clean up. We spent the whole day trying to clean up the playroom. I'm like god, I'm back in the Lego war. I thought I was done.

Upon reflecting on what was different that day versus the other days, I realized one, it was the weekend. I was off work and had been working. I was really busy working the days before. My husband went to work. So it was the changing of the guard. It was a transition for him. He hadn't seen me for most of the days before for a couple of days. I hadn't really spent any time connecting with him. Like we were together, but we weren't doing any quality one on one time all day. That really surprised me.

I was like oh, so he's trying to get attention and connection with me through negative attention because we hadn't connected together, I think. So the next morning I spent more time connecting with him one on one. Even just a few minutes. It's hard sometimes with all three of them, as you know, but just giving him more attention. It changed the tone again and he was back to being cooperative.

Lisa: Imagine that.

Lyra: Imagine that.

Lisa: Cooperation follows connection.

Lyra: Yeah. I thought I had been connecting because we were doing fun things. We were on the go all day. But they were family on the go. Go to the baseball game to see your cousin's baseball game, go run an errand, do all these things, but it wasn't connection. It was activity.

Lisa: Yeah.

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Lyra: Which I think is an important distinction.

Lisa: Sometimes if we're intentional, they can be the same thing. If we're not intentional about the connection, we're keeping our kids busy and moving from thing to thing and tiring them out, but we're not connecting.

Lyra: Right. Then that can lead to more storming because they're tired out.

Lisa: Yeah, exactly. 100%, yes.

Lyra: It's like we had such a fun day. Why aren't you cooperating?

Lisa: Right. Then we get mad, right, because I'm doing all of this for you. You're not cooperating, but there's no connection or little connection.

Lyra: I think it's I'm learning what connection means for him. It evolves as he gets older, but I'm realizing, again, that he still needs very tactile physical connection. I was reading to him and he's just laying on me. Then he'll do something weird like nibble on my arm or something. It's like what are you doing? I'm like okay, he just wants your attention and just to get you even though you think it's weird he's nibbling on your arm like a cat or something. It's just that learning his language.

One question I have on this. So this has been amazing. When we do get into the storm and when he is storming and he goes into the mode of his anger and he's hitting or screaming or, again, thrashing on the floor. This was that weekend night I explained where he was not cooperating and not wanting to clean up the playroom. By the end of the night, he's laying there not even dressed. He refuses to get his jammies on. So he's just on the floor naked rolling around and screaming and hitting.

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I was like okay, you need to go. So what I usually do is take a break in your room because that's the only thing that seems to interrupt the cycle. I don't want to get hit and I don't want the brother to get hit, or William especially. Then I get really mad if he starts throwing something at William, the baby. I'm like he's a baby. You can really hurt him.

That's usually a battle to get him into his room. He'll scream and say no, or he'll tell me he wants something. Like, "I want my audio book." We usually say no at that point because we think that if we say yes, we're reinforcing that it's okay for him to behave that way and then get what he wants.

Lisa: Okay.

Lyra: He's saying, "I want the audio book because that's what's going—" He literally will say this. "That's the only thing that's going to calm me down. I'm not going to calm down without my audio book. You're just making it worse if you won't give me my audio book." So do I give him the audio book in his room? Am I just reinforcing in his brain that if he acts like this, he gets his audiobook to calm down?

Lisa: Well, how about a whole other idea. How about you say, "Charles, how about we go get dressed. While we're getting dressed, you can tell me what you love about the audio book."

Lyra: That's while he's screaming and flailing.

Lisa: Well he says he wants the audio book. So he's communicating to you.

Lyra: Yes. He is verbally communicating. He's also often hitting at this point. So I'm a little bit hands off.

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Lisa: Or you could be like, “Hey come on. Let’s go in your room and get dressed while you tell me.” Motion changes emotion. So we want to get him moving in the direction with something that is F-U-N and excited about and redirect him from angering over this point and move on to the next point. You know?

Lyra: Okay.

Lisa: I do this with my kid all the time. He calls me yesterday on his way to practice. I bought him a pair of sunglasses a few weeks ago. They were on sale. His first nice pair of sunglasses. It’s hard to drive here in Arizona. The sun is so bright you really do need to drive around with sunglasses. So I bought him a pair, and someone stole them out of his car. He left his car unlocked. We have a lot of stupid petty theft here. I told him to lock his car. He just left it unlocked. Someone must have gone in and gotten his sunglasses because they’re gone.

So he calls me. “Mom, I want to earn money to get a new pair of sunglasses.” “Hey, tell me what you loved about those sunglasses.” “They fit so well. They looked good. They were super. They protected me from the sun.” I go, “Okay. Are you almost at practice?” “Yeah, I’m almost there.” I go, “Okay. Why don’t you practice? Then when you get home tonight, we can talk about how you can earn the sunglasses.”

It’s just redirecting them. I didn’t go, “What? No.” I was in the middle of doing something. I didn’t want to talk about it right then. I didn’t have jobs in mind. It’s just redirecting them. Because you don’t want to give in because then you’re going to feel like he’s manipulating you. If you say no, you might as well just hand him another storm on a platter.

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So let's sort of find the middle where you're hearing him. He really loves his audiobook. "Tell me about it, buddy. While we're getting our jammies on, why don't you tell me what you love about the book or what books you love. What's your favorite audiobook? Who are the character's names?" Right? That's going to help regulate him.

Lyra: Right. It will help him kind of work through.

Lisa: And he's going to be getting attention from you in a way that works for you rather than in a way that doesn't work for you.

Lyra: Right. That's what I'm hearing in this too and what you're saying is that it's still looking for a point of connection. I think underneath the flailing, that's what he really wants is that connection.

Lisa: Yeah, I bet.

Lyra: I did try. Like I was like do you need a hug? Let's sit down and come into my lap. Then, of course, William, the baby, started screaming and trying to push Charles off of my lap. So I'm like this is not lost on me that you don't really get full... Like I'm holding this long gangly six year old like a baby is basically how he curled into my lap with limbs sticking out everywhere. So yeah. That is a way to connect and then still move us towards the room.

As far as redirecting with the hitting. I know you've said this. You don't really address it at the time. Is there something I can say or do in the moment when he hits his brother or is hitting me? I just say we don't hit Charles. We don't do that. I try to stop it that way. I don't know what else to do. He'll get in this mode where he'll just keep going, he'll keep doing it.

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Then I feel like I'm being attacked by my own six year old. I start to get really dysregulated. I'm like no, stop. Seriously, you need to stop.

Lisa: I mean if you're feeling attacked, you can always gently but firmly grab his arms and hold him so that he can't hit you. Later I think you just keep reinforcing, "Hey, I know you're working on it. I know you are. We're going to continue to work on this. We don't hit people." That's how I would say it. So I don't know how you're saying it now, but you never want to say you don't hit your brother. Because then I feel like it's about the brother. In truth, we just don't hit people.

Lyra: Yeah. I say we don't hit each other, or that's not how we handle our anger in this family or something.

Lisa: Okay. So let's be more clear because that's confusing to a six year old. That's not how we handle anger. We don't hit people. We don't put our hands on people. You want one sentence, and you want to say it the same way every single time. We're trying to create a ski track in the brain. A neural pathway. We don't hit people. We don't hit people. We don't hit people. It's like you want to be as crystal clear as you can be. We don't hit people.

Lyra: Okay.

Ugh that was good, wasn't it? Ugh, I just loved it. Thank you again, Lyra, for following up and sharing more with us of how it's going for you and Charles. As a listener, I really hope you enjoyed the follow up conversation. I hope that it deepened your understanding of the tools, and it will lead to

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connection and cooperation with your strong willed kids. So until we meet again, I'm wishing you peaceful parenting.

Thank you so much for listening today. I want to personally invite you to head over to thepeacefulparent.com/welcome and sign up for my free peaceful parenting minicourse. You'll find everything you need to get started on the path to peaceful parenting just waiting for you over there at www.thepeacefulparent.com/welcome. I can't wait for you to get started.

Thanks for listening to *Real World Peaceful Parenting*. If you want more info on how you can transform your parenting, visit thepeacefulparent.com. See you soon.