

Ep #53: New Year, New Words



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With Your Host
Lisa Smith

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Ep #53: New Year, New Words

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. Welcome to today's episode. Thank you so much for joining me today, for listening, for showing up here. I want to begin today's episode by giving a Real World Peaceful Parenting to shinks09 for leaving a review on Apple podcast.

This parent wrote, "Your podcasts are so helpful to me. They're easy to listen to as well as easy to follow the advice. Parenting is hard work, and I love having another tool in my toolbox to help. I have two strong willed sons, and one has terrible storms. Lisa's techniques give good and sound advice. I highly recommend her."

Thank you so much shinks09 and every single one of you that have rated and reviewed the podcast. I so appreciate the feedback, but more importantly I want to thank you. Because when you rate or review the podcast, what you're really doing is you're paying it forward to other families. You see when you leave a review, that service is more likely to recommend the podcast when people are looking for a parenting resource or a parenting podcast to listen to.

So when you take the time to leave a review or give a rating, you're paying it forward to other families. Especially to the kids who really need their parents to hear this information. So from the bottom of my heart, thank you for helping to change the world one family at a time.

As I mentioned, I am really excited to be with you here today as we turn the page to a new year. Ah the possibilities. I have to tell you, I really, really,

[Real World Peaceful Parenting](#) with Lisa Smith

Ep #53: New Year, New Words

really love the beginning part of January every year. Just the hope, the optimism, the clean slate, the new year, the new possibilities, goal setting, reviewing the previous year, looking ahead, determining what I want to accomplish. I just ugh. For a planner and for someone who loves calendars and planners and scheduling and setting goals, the new year is just really a dream come true for someone like me.

So I thought what we'd talk about today is a new year and new words. Yes, words. Why, you ask. "Why Lisa? Why do we need to talk about words? I thought we were going to talk about goals or planners or kids." Well, I want to talk about words because words matter a lot, especially with our kids.

Peggy O'Mara who is one of the pioneers in peaceful parenting says the way that we speak to our children today becomes their inner voice. When I heard this, it was like Peggy O'Mara smacked me across the head with a can of V8 juice. I was like oh my goodness. That makes so much sense to me. How we speak to our child today, what we say today becomes their inner voice of tomorrow. I want to give you an example of this.

Have you ever been called words when you were little like bossy, demanding, stubborn, difficult? Have you ever been called those words? How did it feel? My guess is probably not good. Have you ever thought or said these words to your kids?

When I was little, I was often called bossy by the kids who raised me, by teachers, but mostly my family of origin. "You're such a bossy little girl. You're so bossy." I didn't like it. It didn't feel good. I often ignored any of the words that came after that. What I remember the most is often feeling hurt by it because it was said with such conviction. I'm not even really sure that I understood what it meant when I was seven or nine or 12. But what I knew is that the people saying it certainly didn't mean it as a compliment.

Ep #53: New Year, New Words

It took me until I was in about my 40s to be able to reframe bossy and loud into leadership. It wasn't until about my 40s that I was able to feel comfortable in my skin and let go of all of the negative emotion that I carried all these years around bossy and loud. You know what? I am loud. I have a big voice. It is loud in volume. It echoes. It carries. It's booming. I can project it. I am loud, and I often have ideas about how to get things done.

What I remember about when I was little is that when people used to call me bossy, it didn't feel good. When I got older and people started talking about leadership qualities, that felt good. That I had a lot of ideas. That I was comfortable sharing them. That I was a natural leader. Yeah, that felt really good.

So what were you called as a kid by your parents, your siblings, your teachers, your coaches, your extended family? What adjectives were used? What adverbs were used about you? How did it feel? Maybe for some of you your parents were very empowering and encouraging, very supportive and it felt amazing. Maybe some of you fall into my camp where you felt like you were called "names" and they didn't feel very good.

So recently I saw on a teacher's Facebook page a list of words and reframing the words. I have to tell you, it took my breath away. It deepened my understanding of Peggy O'Mara's quote, "The way we speak to our children becomes their inner voice."

It's funny because what I remember is being called names as a little kid really did some damage on me. Really did some damage. It took me a long time to shed the negativity of being called bossy. It felt like a sentence. It felt like I was out of control. It felt like this is what I was being called and I had no way of turning it into something positive or turning it around or

Ep #53: New Year, New Words

escaping it. It was a label that was stamped on me and I was forever doomed to be bossy.

I don't want this for our kids. I don't want them to feel name called or labeled. What I want them to feel and what I'm sure you want your own kids to feel is encouraged and supported. If there is something that is a weakness for them, let's language with our kids how to turn it around into a strength or at a minimum how to neutralize it.

So what I want to encourage you to do this year is listen to yourself while you're parenting. If you hear yourself using labels or name calling or what some teachers call problem focused words, consider switching them to solution focused words. Why?

Because if your voice becomes your kid's inner voice, why don't we direct it where we want it to go? Why don't we give them labels that feel good and supportive and encouraging and optimistic? Let them know what's possible. Why don't we use words that help them grow and age and develop and know that there's nothing they can't accomplish?

Why don't we use words that let them know that we believe in them and that they can believe in themselves? Why don't we use words that let them know that they can develop their natural tendencies into strengths, and that they're not automatically a weakness or a problem or a diagnosis or something they're doomed to be labeled with and then carry out their entire lives.

Ah, so good, right? Reframing words help our kids see themselves in a better light, which just might inspire them to do better. As real world peaceful parents, our job is to reframe as much as we can. To be aware that what we say today is how our kids will see themselves tomorrow.

Ep #53: New Year, New Words

I want you to remember that your words matter as a parent. Whether you're speaking about their problems or their solutions. Whether you're labeling or encouraging, your words matter to your kids. It doesn't matter whether you have strong willed kids who are appearing as though they're ignoring you. It doesn't matter whether you have kids that you think are not listening. You're yelling at them and they're not listening. They're hearing you, and their words matter.

Now a word of caution. If you've used name calling and labeling in the past, that's okay. Don't give up. Don't think you're doomed. Just begin again. Maybe ask for forgiveness. Maybe tell them that you want to start talking. You want to reframe your words and start talking in a way that is solution focused instead of problem focused. Sit down with them and explain to them that instead of bossy, they have vision. They have ideas. They're a leader and they like to share them. That can be a good thing when it's channeled in the right way.

Yeah? Okay. So I want to give you a list of words you can reframe. We'll put this list in the show notes as well in case you are driving right now and can't take notes or you're listening while walking. I want to make sure that you have access to reframing these words.

So instead of calling your child bossy, let's use words like you seem like a natural leader. You have a lot of ideas and you like sharing them. Right? I mean that would have been such a better way for my family to have talked to me. "Wow Lisa you have a lot of ideas." Because believe me, I do folks. I am an idea girl. Maybe the conversation could have been around I feel very comfortable sharing my ideas, and maybe there's a right time and a wrong time or a right way and a wrong way to present my ideas rather than labeling me as bossy.

Ep #53: New Year, New Words

Okay the next one. Oh I love this one. The next one is defiant. You're very defiant. How about we reframe that to you have strong beliefs and you're determined. Ah that's so much better, right? I just love that. Strong beliefs and determined. Instead of labeling a child as demanding, why don't we use words like they know what they want and they're outspoken? I think it would be so much better to be labeled or called or talked with about outspokenness or demanding.

Here's another great one. Dramatic. She's so dramatic. She's expressive and she's really passionate. She's really passionate and expressive. Ah that just drips with possibility, doesn't it? He's very fearful. He's very fearful. How about instead he's cautious and careful. He's careful. He thinks things through. He's careful.

They're very fussy. I have a very fussy child. How about instead they have strong preferences? Very strong preferences. Very strong preferences around food, around clothes. Sounds so much better. She's very impulsive. She's very spontaneous and goes with her instincts. She's very instinctive. He's very oppositional. He knows what he wants and he advocates for himself.

She's very stubborn. She's persistent, determined, and steadfast. He talks all the time. He never shuts up. He enjoys communicating and has a lot to say. She's a tattletale. She likes to be fair. She seeks justice, and she respects rules. He's unfocused. He pays attention to many things and things easily catch his eye. My most favorite she wants attention all the time. She's constantly seeking attention. Instead she seeks connection.

Sometimes just a small shift, just a small tweak, a reframe, a different choice of words can be the game changer in your parenting, in the connection you feel with your kids. Most importantly it can change long

Ep #53: New Year, New Words

term their inner voice. How they speak to themselves, how they feel about themselves.

So as we turn the page to a new year, I really want to encourage you to listen to yourself while you're parenting. Listen to the words that you use. Ask yourself do I need to reframe? Do I need to reframe in the words that I use to my kids and about my kids? How are the words that I'm using today going to be their inner voice? Is it going to build them up? Is it going to give them confidence? Is it going to create connection? Can I do better? Can I reframe some of the words I use to my kids and about my kids?

That's the homework this week. Observe yourself. Pay attention, listen to yourself. Become the watcher. Words matter. I want us all to consider new year, new words. Yeah? Awesome. Okay. 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.