

## Ep #60: The Importance of Family Values



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**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. Welcome to today's episode. As we continue our journey in 2022, the year of becoming a better parent, I thought today we would talk about family values. Family values. We all have them. Most of us kind of know what they are, at least in theory. We kind of have a sense of what we believe in and the kind of people we'd like our kids to be. Yeah? Kind of.

Family values can be defined as what you stand for, what you believe in, the qualities you like about yourself, and the qualities you strive for. It's those values you consciously or unconsciously parent around even if you've never put them on paper or formally verbalized them. They're really who you are and what you believe in.

In today's episode, I want to share three reasons that I believe as a parent coach every family would benefit from taking the time to map out their family values. Introduce them to their children, tape them to their refrigerator, and talk about them often. All right? So let's dig in.

So reason number one is when we know our family values, we can hold ourselves and our children accountable. We have used the values to guide our family. We can communicate the values to our kids, and they can understand why.

Through the family values and the communication of them, our kids can feel connected to us. They can feel seen, heard, and valued because they're gonna understand what we stand for. Why we do this and not that.

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Why we want this and not that. Why we believe in this and not that, right. And it helps the kids feel included. They have the pieces to the puzzle. When we embrace the family values, we're also walking our talk which also allows them to see the pieces of the puzzle.

So let's look at some examples of family values. My family values our family are few, but we hold them near and dear. They're pretty simple. We tell the truth and try not to take the path of least resistance, which is what I believe lying is really all about for many kids. It's taking the path of least resistance. So in our family, we really encourage all of us trying to not take the path of least resistance and tell the truth. I'm going to get into more of that in a future episode, but that's number one.

Number two, our body is our temple. We try to treat it really well, take care of it, nurture it, give it rest. Not put drugs in it. Drink a lot of water, not overfeed it junk food. We really try to treat our body as our temple. Another of our family values is that we show up and do our best. We really work all of us towards that.

We treat everyone with a basic level of kindness. That's a big one for us in our family. We don't say we treat everyone with respect because respect is not something that everybody deserves, right. If someone's abusing you or being mean to you or doing something horrible, they don't deserve respect. I don't want to raise a people pleaser. I'm willing to be uncomfortable when my kid doesn't fall in line. So instead of saying we respect everybody, we talk about treating every human being with a basic level of kindness.

Another of our family values is our circle, our friends and family bring out the best in us or they are not our circle, right. If I feel like being around you makes me not my best then I need to think about that and consider that.

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So those are our family values. Pretty short and sweet. We tell the truth. Try to stay away from the path of least resistance. Our body's our temple. We show up and do our best. We treat everyone with the basic level of kindness. Our circle brings out the best in us, or they're not our circle.

Examples of family values from other families are things like we're critical thinkers and we challenge what we don't like, agree, and understand in a respectful way. Another one might be we value sleep, downtime, and family time, right. So cellphones get put away at 8:00 in a charging station in the kitchen. Another one might be we value our family and do our best to spend regularly scheduled time together.

Another family value might be we show our immediate family love through respect and keeping our hands to ourselves, or we show our immediate family love through how we treat each including not calling each other names, right. Another family values might be we give back or we do for others. The list could go on and on and on.

What I want you to take away from today is by declaring your family values, you set the tone in your household for what is expected and exactly how family members should behave. When it comes to parenting with ease and consistency, it starts here with family values. It's your compass. Think of your family values as proactively communicating your wisdom, right. Wisdom is best when shared.

Your values are a big piece of the wisdom puzzle because they guide you as a person and a parent. If you're triggered by something, it could most likely be linked to a violation of the family values. But you have to first know what your values are. You have to be really clear about it, and you have to communicate them to the other party.

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This is like when you go to work at a new company, and they want to be clear that you understand the mission and the culture at the company, right. We've all experienced this, or many of us. This is part of the values. They're communicating to you the wisdom, right. They're telling you the pieces of the wisdom puzzle so that they can guide you, and you can guide yourself.

It's no different in a family. If you're triggered by something, it could most likely be linked to a violation of the family values. But again, you have to know what your values are, and you have to be really clear about them, and you have to be able to communicate them to your children.

You can also use your family values to guide you in your decision making, right. Can I do something? Can I go stay the night? Can I have my phone in my room? Can I do soccer and swimming? Maybe your kid already has a couple sports and they want to add another one on. You measure that up against okay we're already pretty busy and we don't get to spend any time together as a family. Spending time together as a family is really, really, really important to us. So I'm going to have to say no because our family values guide us in our decision making, and one of our top ones is actually spending time together as a family.

Family values can help you know what to say yes to and what to stand firm against or what to say no to, right. Maybe you're someone, a family that really, really, really values your sleep. The downtime, restoring the brain. Once you know this and you're really clear on, it's going to be much easier to tell your kids they have to put their phone away at night and they can't have it in the bedroom.

When they ask you, "Why mom? Why, why, why? Why can't I have it?" You're going to be able to articulate this. "Well, your body's your temple. Resting it is a critical element of it. We really value uninterrupted sleep here

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in this family. So you really, really, really need to get uninterrupted rest. The best way I know to do that is to put your phone in the kitchen at night. So I'm going to have to say no, and say that we need to stay with the current plan of putting the phone away by 8:00 at night.”

Understanding your family values can help you sort out sibling fighting and answer questions like why and when. It can help you navigate how we treat ourselves, how we treat each other. And, this is a big one, understanding family values helps you turn on the internal compass with your kids because you're talking about the guiding principles, what's important to you. It allows them to learn and make progress towards parenting themselves.

Let's say moving your body, being healthy, being active. Getting cardiovascular exercise, being active, playing a sport, or doing some kind of exercise because you want to take really, really good care of your body is important to you. That is a value of yours. You jog regularly or you go to the gym or you make an effort to work out four times a week. Communicating that, understanding what's behind the exercise. The value of taking really good care of yourself and your body helps you communicate that to your kids.

Then it helps them understand why it's important to stay involved in a sport, to be active. Then as they get older, it helps to turn on that internal compass. So suddenly your kids are away at school, and they're reporting that they're working out two or three times a week or walking to class across campus and they're measuring their steps. Low and behold, they're getting three miles in every single day walking to class. That's because that internal compass has gotten turned on because you've communicated your family values.

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Your family values are important to you. It doesn't matter what they are. Nobody should decide that for you. You'll never ever, ever see me hand out a list of what real world peaceful parenting family values should be. You get to decide that for you. That's based on you and what you believe and how you live and what's important to you and your upbringing and where you live and the lifestyle you live. Your resources you have available. So you get to decide that.

What I know for 100% sure is that once you're clear on your values, like really clear, there's few of them and you're very clear on what you are. There's not 187 and you can really boil them down to basic understanding words that you can communicate.

Once you're clear and you communicate them over and over and over again in a variety of different ways to your kids, they help turn on the internal compass. It allows your kids to learn and make progress towards parenting themselves, which is what we all want. We all want to send our kids out into the world at whatever point that is for them, and we want them to be able to have an internal compass turned on and be able to parent themselves.

When we're clear on our family values, it creates consistent behavior no matter the challenge or the situations. When your kids see the bigger picture and know their family's values as they move through their childhood, they can guide themselves. Decisions on what to do, deciphering right from wrong for your family will be easier for them because they understand the bigger picture of the family values.

Like in our family, we talk a lot about treating every human being, every human being no matter what, every human being with a basic level of kindness. I see this in my kid. I really do. I see him after all these years of practicing this and talking about this and modeling it and showing up and

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really valuing it as a family value. I see him. I see him treating humans, all humans, with a basic level of kindness.

Even on the basketball court when he's out there battling against someone and things are getting edgy and intense and competitive. At the end of the game, I see him treat the opponents, the other team whether he won by a little or lost by a lot, I see him treating him with a basic level of human kindness. It's so great to see your values at work. So great.

When we understand our family values, decisions of what to do and deciphering right from wrong will be easier for them because they understand the bigger picture. So for example, your family value might be we nourish our body with healthy food. You talk about it. You model it. You show it all the time. You're always talking about our family value of nourishing our body with healthy food. You and your teenager have been talking about this since he was little.

Let's say he goes out to a friend's birthday party, and there's tons of junk food and lots of candy. After enjoying a couple slices of pizza and a piece of cake, he calls it a night while many other kids continue to pig out on unlimited junk food. That's because he understands that in your family, you nourish your body with healthy good. There are limits. We don't just go on and on and on stuffing unhealthy junk food in our body.

Another example might be you talk to your daughter a lot about the value of resting the brain and uninterrupted sleep. She goes away to sleep away camp for the summer for eight weeks. While she's there, she notices that most of her cabin mates sleep with their phone under their pillow and are often interrupted in their sleep text messages and alerts and updates leaving them tired, cranky, and fatigue. Your daughter puts her phone away each night and enjoys restful sleep because she knows the value of sleep



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at her age, and because she understands the family value of taking really good care of her brain. Yeah?

Okay now the moment of total honesty. Defining your family values, yeah it takes a little bit of work. Sometimes it takes 47 revisions to keep refining it and making it clear. When we started with ours, we originally started out when my son was really little saying we respect everybody.

Then we forced ourselves to question that. Like really? Do we really want to teach our son to respect everybody? Maybe even someone who doesn't have his best interest in mind, is abusing him, is treating him improperly or taking advantage of him. of course we wouldn't want our son to respect that person. We would want him to move away from them as soon as possible. That lead us to a better value of ours, which is that we treat every human with a basic level of kindness.

So defining your family values may take a bit of work. You may have to question each other. You may have to go through rounds and rounds of thinking about it. It's not always easy to dig down and really determine what do I believe in and why? Sometimes we pick family values that sound good, but we really don't walk our talk or really believe them. Maybe you want to believe that you take good care of your body and move it regularly, but you haven't been to the gym in over a year. We want to pick family values that definitely reflect what we're actually doing so that we can walk our talk.

What I will tell you, what I know for sure, is that defining your family values is worth the effort. It really helps you be a better parent because it can be your roadmap. It can guide you as to where you want to go, what you stand for, how you're choosing to live your life. Family values when mapped out and communicated consistently over time can have a positive impact on you, on your parenting, and your kids.

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So let me ask you what are your family values? What are they? Do you know? Have you and your coparent talked about them? Do you have them defined? Do you have any idea? I want to really encourage you, really encourage you to map them out, to talk about them, to understand them, to question them.

I have a really good friend, and she's an awesome parent. She's written a bestselling book on critical thinking. In talking with her about parenting, she realized that she and her husband are critical thinkers, and they wanted to raise a family that challenges their kids to ask questions and challenge authority when they don't like something, understand, or agree with it. I watched her as she really unveiled this family value to herself and got comfortable with it and owned it. I watched how it completely transformed her parenting. How it really helped her guide her kids.

Now if you're someone who's encouraging your kids to challenge things you don't like, that is going to include you. So she had some work to do around this to get comfortable with it and to understand that sometimes it was going to come back her way, and it wasn't always going to feel great. At the heart of who she was, that is what she valued and stood for. Challenging authority, challenging things she doesn't like and understand. She's a worldwide expert at, let me tell y'all. She is fantastic at this.

Once she really understood this value in her life, it really brought peace to her parenting and definitely made her less triggered when her kids questioned or pushed back on something they didn't like that she was doing. As a result of it, it's created quite a lot of connection with her and her kids and her coparent. They've just really settled into this is who they are. I just love that story for them.

So what are your family values? How can you start to use them to have positive influential discussions with your children? I want that for you. I

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know the value of it. I want it for you, all of you, each and every one of you. Set some time aside this coming week. This is your homework assignment.

In the effort, along the lines of 2022 becoming our year of being a better parent, set aside a half an hour this week. If you're coparenting with someone that you live with, sit down and have a conversation. "Hey, what are our family values? What's important to us? What do we stand for?"

Because I 100% promise you that as you open our conversation and begin to map out your family values and then communicate them consistently to your kids over time, magic will happen. It will have a positive impact on you, your kids, your parenting. It will help you define why to your kids. It will help your kids turn on their internal compass. It will help in making decisions for you as a parent and down the road for your kids. It will help you understand what to say yes to and what you want to say no to.

It's going to help you sort out questions like why and when. It's going to help you parent with ease and consistency and proactively communicate your wisdom to your kids. All right. That's the value of family values. I leave you with your homework to do because I know what's possible for you. I just love being here this year with you on this journey to becoming a better parent. 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](http://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](http://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](http://thepeacefulparent.com). See you soon.

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