

Ep #102: Give Your Kids the Gift of Compassion This Holiday Season



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. Welcome to today's episode. I want to thank you for joining me today because I feel like this is such a timely topic, and one of the most important episodes perhaps I'm offering all year. Now, today's episode is a rerecord or replay of an episode from last year at this time, and it's really about the most beautiful gift we can give our kids this holiday season. I'm talking to myself as much as I'm talking to you all. I want to give our kids this holiday season the gift of compassion and understanding and hold space for their storms.

So I was reviewing all the episodes that we've offered up this year, and this one was too good not to replay. It's too important. It's too critical not to offer it up once again this year for you to have a chance to listen and consider. Because things get so intense for our kids around the holiday season.

I was with a girlfriend of mine today, and she was telling me that she wrapped presents all day on Sunday. Her 13 year old son walked in the door and saw all the presents under the tree and immediately got so excited that he started storming because he wants to open the presents right now. She said it was like he was six all over again and couldn't handle the idea of waiting a couple more weeks to open the presents. He just started storming over the desire for immediate gratification.

It made me think about this episode. It made me think about this topic of giving our kids the most beautiful gift we can give them, which is compassion and understanding about the anticipation, the desire for

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immediate gratification, the need to have things now coupled with the buildup over this time of the year no matter what you're celebrating.

Again, one of the most beautiful gifts that we can give our children is compassion and empathy and to hold space while they storm during this holiday season and not make it mean anything like they're ungrateful or difficult, but to just understand that every behavior communicates a need. So I invite you to listen with an open mind and an open heart, and to really listen with the intention of giving a beautiful gift to yourself, to your children, and to your family this holiday season.

As many of you know, I have a monthly membership which we call The Hive. We have a call every week inside The Hive to talk about parenting, and the members of The Hive get coaching. They ask questions. They get support, and we work through things.

At the beginning of each Hive call, I offer some inspiration, some food for thought, or a weekly lesson. What you're about to hear is this week's weekly lesson in which I'm helping parents understand why your kids are going to storm more or extra or maybe more intensely over the next couple weeks as we work through the holiday season for most of us. It was too good not to share with all of you here on the podcast.

So this is my gift to you. It's my offer to you to increase the compassion and empathy for your kids this holiday season. I give this to you with a full heart of love. I hope you'll receive it with love and really listen to the intent here and work to bring more compassion and empathy into your parenting this holiday season while your kids storm.

So here's something I want you guys to noodle as we head into the holidays. First of all, let's talk about the holidays. Your kids are going to storm. Go ahead and mark it down on your calendar. Go ahead. Write it

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down. Plan for it. You're stressed. You're busy. There's a lot going on. They're anticipating. They're nervous. They're excited. They're trepidatious. They're hopeful. They're out of school. There's a lot going on.

Sometimes we work so hard to give our kids an amazing holiday with things and parties and ice skating and hot coco and gingerbread houses and all these things that it intensifies the storming. One of the most beautiful gifts you can give your kids during a stressful time like this is empathy and compassion and understanding for their feelings.

A lot of times your children are going to show you their feelings by storming. Because they're young and they're dysregulated, and they can't come to you and say, "Mommy I'm feeling trepidatious. I asked for a present for the holidays, and now I'm not sure I really want it. Or I'm not sure you're going to give it to me. Or I saw it in the closet when I was snooping, and I don't think I can wait 10 days to get my hands on it." Right? They're not going to be able to articulate that to you. Hell, most adults can't even articulate it.

My husband and I decided this year we're not going to exchange any presents. We're going to go see the Phoenix Suns play the Golden State Warriors on Christmas day. All right? We're not exchanging any presents. He's made this clear. "Lisa, no presents. I had a birthday a couple months ago. I got a big, gigantic present that I really wanted and loved. We've spent a lot of money lately. These tickets were really expensive."

I've got to tell you guys, I can't stop thinking about it. I'm not getting anything on Christmas day. I'm a little bummed. I like presents. Gifts are my love language. So the intellectual side of me understands this, but the little girl side of me kind of wants to storm over it. So if I feel this way at my age, how does my kid feel?

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I was telling some people yesterday in our Hive call that a couple days ago I said to my kid Malcolm. I have this special thing planned for him. He doesn't see this coming at all. I said, "Malcolm, Christmas this year." He goes, "Stop right there woman. Stop right there. Do not oversell Christmas." I'm like what do you mean?

He's like, "You do this. You oversell it. You get me super excited about it, and then I'm disappointed. Because what you think is cool is not necessarily what I'm going to think is cool. Then you get me super excited, and then I'm disappointed at whatever you do. So how about this year mom you just don't oversell it." Okay fair enough. Fair enough. Good articulation of wanting to avoid a storm. For many of you, your kids aren't there yet. So there's going to be a lot, A L-O-T of storming.

So I want to give you an invitation. Please give them the gift this year of patience, of compassion, of understanding, of storming. Let that be one of the many presents under the tree or in the stocking or however you do it. Give them the gift of space. When they storm, remind yourself they're not giving me a hard time. They're having a hard time. It's a lot. Yeah, it's a special time. It's fun. It's exciting. It's also overstimulating and stressful and complicated.

If I don't have executive function, and you tell me that I'm going to get all these magical things on a certain day like the 25th, that's a long time for my little brain to hold it together and wait. I'm so excited. You know? So it's a beautiful gift to give them a little extra special compassion, understanding, patience. Get curious not furious.

Ask them what's going on for you? What are you thinking about? What's happening inside of you? What's happening right before you start storming? What are your concerns? What are your worries? I think as parents a lot of times we assume that right now everything's rainbows and

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unicorns for them because we're rushing off to ice skating and see Santa, school play, and then we're going over to grandma's. Okay it's fun, but it's also got a fair amount of stress associated with it.

So I'm speaking to myself as much as I'm speaking to you all, and I'm wanting to give my kid the gift of compassion and understanding and room for storms. Even when I say no to the behavior, I want to say yes to the feelings during this intense time. That's what makes memories during the holidays, right. It's not the PS2 gift or the game or the new clothes. It's the memories of the holidays and the patience my parents had when I lost my shiz because I didn't get what I wanted, or it was so hard to wait for Christmas morning.

The excitement, the buildup, the anticipation caused a lot of storming in my family. Man, my parents, my dad, my mom and dad, my mom, my grandparents, they just naturally understood this. There was a lot of hugging and a lot of tell me about it and a lot of tell me more and a lot of what do you need right now in our family during the holidays. That's what I really love about my family and how they showed up.

So there you have it. There you have it. That's my gift to you, and my gift to your kids. It helps you give a gift to your children this holiday season. Thank you all for being here and for listening and for taking that in. I really appreciate that, and I hope that you'll remember this and carry it forward during a beautiful time of the year that also creates a fair amount of stress.

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.

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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.