

**Ep #107: The Peaceful Parenting Revolution
with Kiva Schuler from the Jai Institute for Parenting**



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.

Lisa: Welcome, welcome, welcome. Welcome to today's episode. I know I say it every week, but I am so excited to be with you here today. I'm super excited for you and me because today, I wish I had a drumroll. Today we have an extra super-duper triple sundae with hot fudge guest on the episode today. So please join me in welcoming Kiva Schuler to the podcast.

Now, let me just start out by telling y'all, I am bringing you today's episode in collaboration with our 2023 theme, which is, remember we talked about this last week, in 2023 we are up leveling our parenting. Up leveling, that's our theme this year. So in that spirit, Kiva has graciously agreed to join us today and talk about how we can uplevel our parenting.

Before we get into that, let me tell you all the things about Kiva. She is a really special person in my life. She's a friend and a mentor and a sister and a colleague in this revolution of changing the world one family at a time. It makes me emotional to even say that out loud because you have these people in your life you meet and you feel an instant connection to them.

For me, that was Kiva. This mission we're on together with all the Jai parent coaching graduates, all the people working hard to break generational cycle, and uplevel their parenting. We see you. We feel you and at the forefront of that really is Kiva, the Jai Institute for parent coaching, and the mission that she's on. Welcome Kiva.

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Kiva: Thank you so much. I was listening to you and just really letting myself let that in. That touches me deeply, Lisa. Thank you. I'm so grateful to get to do this work with you.

Lisa: I feel the same way. I feel the same way. So let's start, give us, give the listener, a taste of what the Jai Institute for parent coaching is, and then we'll jump into talking about why you're here today.

Kiva: Fundamentally, there are so many parents who want to parent peacefully, who dream of parenting differently than the way that they were parented, who dream of parenting differently than the way that they're parenting, and they don't know how. The how is really centered in behavior change in adults. For children to have a different experience of the journey through childhood through their teenage years to adulthood, the best possible hope for that is for their parents to do this work.

So Jai exists because we know that the best way to support adults to actually create behavior change, not just talk about it, dream about it, beat themselves up when they don't do it, is having a coach. Coaches provide the support, the knowledge, the accountability, the compassion, and empathy that adults need to change entrenched reactive behavior, to change communication styles, to live through their values instead of fear and control.

So that's why I founded Jai in 2011. Because we all tell ourselves this story, that we're not good enough, smart enough, worthy enough. We're failing. But what we haven't had is the right kind of support to actually go from where we are that's making us suffer and uncomfortable and lose confidence ourselves to where we want to be which is effective, fulfilled, confident, proud, and empowered in the role that we play as parents.

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Lisa: Amen. Amen. So Jai is the place, the world wide leading place to go if you desire to be a parent coach, to get that training that hold space, shows blind spots, and creates the change with tools the parents are looking for.

I've had the pleasure of being a parent coach for the last 10 years. I am a very loud proud Jai graduate. Exactly what you're talking about Kiva was my experience. I wanted to do it differently. I had a four year old little boy, and I was so ashamed of the way I was parenting him, right. I needed help breaking the generational cycle.

I like to say that if yelling were an Olympic sport, I would come from a dynasty of gold medalist. I'm only sort of kidding about that. This sweet little boy was just doing his best, showing up, being strong willed, having big emotions, didn't want to leave the birthday party, didn't want to get out of the pool, didn't want to put his shoes on. I was just yelling at him all the time. The crazy thing is I wasn't yelling at other people in the rest of my life. Right?

So I'll never forget it. I mean I say this all the time. I can tell you exactly where I was standing in my laundry room when I heard the voice of Kiva Schuler talking to my friend Amy about parent coaching and what it was, and I could not get to my computer fast enough to sign up for the revolution that you lead. It was transformative. It changed every aspect of my life, every aspect of my life.

The thing I really experienced through the process was the raising of my own personal emotional intelligence. That allowed me to break the generational cycle that I was entrenched in and show up in a completely different way. Not perfect, right. Not perfect. Progress, not perfection. But it allowed me to sort of have a chrysalis. Break out of the shell that I was doomed to and be the parent I always wanted to be.

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My son is about to, in a few months, graduate high school. When he walks across that stage, I will have no regrets. I have been the parent for him, with him, to him, to myself that I've always dreamed of being. I don't think there's any greater gift we give ourselves or our children.

Kiva: There isn't. It's a lot – So our kids are the same age. We talk all the time about where our boys are gonna end up going to school.

Lisa: We dream about them going to the same school.

Kiva: We do.

Lisa: There was this moment in time where it might have happened. Oh. Maybe it will. I mean, Kiva, can you imagine parent's weekend together? I mean seriously.

Kiva: I mean, maybe we'll just have our own parents weekend somewhere else.

Lisa: There we go.

Kiva: Construct our own. So I have these two teenagers at home. I have these profound moments where I'm like wait a second. There's no drama in this household. There's not really power struggles. My experience of having teenagers is delicious. It's a delight. I adore them.

I was thinking about this the other day. It's like the foundation for that has been built over this entire experience of similarly to you saying this isn't working for me, for my child, for the future that I want for them, and for the future that I want us to have together. So we're going to have to do something different. It's humbling.

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It's humbling to think that I give Myles, my son, a lot of credit for Jai because of how he was a handful. Same as Malcolm, right? Big feelings, stubborn, would not tolerate being treated with any sort of power over strategies. Thank goodness for Myles. None of us would be here having this – If he had been kind of like his sister, basically raised herself, none of us would be here having this conversation. It's wild and profound and fills me with gratitude.

Then the fact that just because I had this impulse, and somehow I was born with this, or my mother gave me this sense that I could do anything. If I saw a problem, I should figure out a solution to fix it. That's really what Jai was the fruition of, that impulse. That that has now impacted your life and the way that you share it has, and all of our coaches all over the world. It's mind blowing.

Lisa: So great. So thanks Myles. Shoutout to Myles. I love Myles. He's really a great kid and a superhuman. So, way to go. Way to go. So let's talk about your book.

Kiva: Yeah.

Lisa: Kiva has a new book out. Tell us the things about the book.

Kiva: The thing that occurred to me is that our community, I don't need to convince anyone here, most likely, that they shouldn't be yelling at their kids, or that they shouldn't be using timeouts, or that they shouldn't be using enforced consequences, meaning things that aren't directly connected to the mistake that was made or the rule that was broken, right? We all kind of are on that same page.

But we don't have, or we haven't until now, had an effective framework for what to do instead. So in this book, I worked with six of our coaches from

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all over the world, different backgrounds, different cultures, different ethnicities to really hear how using the foundations and the principles, the skills, the practice of coaching with their children has impacted their lives. So that's what this book, *The Peaceful Parenting Revolution*, is about.

I believe that the revolution starts in our own four walls, and that there is no greater way to change the future, to change the world than to raise the leaders who are going to go out into this fracas that we're living in and be solution oriented, problem solvers. This is what peaceful parenting gives them.

Because we're not telling them you're not worthy, you're less than, you're not good enough, implicitly or explicitly, but becoming their coaches, their mentors, their guides, and instilling in them through conscious communication and effective leadership the values and morals and integrity that will guide them positively through life.

Lisa: Yes, 1,000%. Yes, yes, yes. I believe that we can change the world one family at a time. It's exactly what you say. It starts with also making sure that our kids know that if they make a mistake, they're not bad, or wrong or worth less. Mistakes are normal. We all make them. Childhood is a dress rehearsal for adulthood.

Kiva: I mean, I want my kids making mistakes here.

Lisa: Yes.

Kiva: Where they have my support in cleaning them up. The old way, the traditional way, was really full of hypocrisy if you think about it, right? Grownups could make all the mistakes that they wanted. Never really had to apologize for them, and certainly didn't demonstrate conscientious repair or forgiveness. Their children, us in many cases, were allowed no

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mistakes. There was no room for error. When we did error, the consequences were harsh and swift and painful.

Lisa: And often a surprise.

Kiva: Yeah. I noticed, I have a half-brother who's eight years younger than me. So he has a different mom. So I had this perspective of age watching him being raised. When he was six or eight years old, I was already a teenager. What I saw happening to him was just this inconsistency that felt so unfair. Something that was cute on Tuesday would get him locked in the bathroom for an hour on Friday. At 16 years old, I could see like how is this kid supposed to know which end is up? How is he supposed to know right from wrong? How is he supposed to know acceptable or unacceptable?

So when we get honest with ourselves, we all make mistakes. Like they happen. We mess up. That's not the measure of our integrity. It's how we clean them up and make things right and take responsibility that defines, for me, my sense of I know I'm a good person, right? I make mistakes all the time. I don't even apologize for them anymore. I just fix them. Right? Because when we say I'm sorry, we're essentially reinforcing that message. I'm less than. I'm unworthy. I'm sorry. I'm small. Right?

So I make a mistake. I made a mistake. Here's what I'm going to do to resolve it. Here's what's going to happen next time. As we begin to model that in our leadership, and I talk about exactly how to do this. I give you a conscious communication framework in the book so that you can learn this. It's a learnable skill. Then our children learn to do the same, not because we're yelling at them or demanding that they do it this way, but because we're modeling it.

Lisa: So great Kiva. The timing, I don't believe there's any accidents, but the timing of today's conversation could not be better because today's

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conversation is going to be episode 107. Episode 106 was all about mistakes and worth. How, as children, our mistakes do not define our worthiness. We're worthy because we're here, because we breathe. Many of us grew up in that paradigm where our mistakes were proportionate to our sense of worth or value or placement in the family.

I really, in Episode 106, I challenged the listener to bust that myth, to separate worthiness from A's and B's or D's and C's, from the effort the child gives, from the result. Our kids are worthy. Humans are worthy because we're here and we breathe, right? That's one side of the coin. The other side is learning to recover from mistakes, learning to forge ahead in the world, but A has nothing to do with B. When you separate that you can parent in a more neutral, non-triggered way. Because as the parent, the mistakes don't mean I'm doing it wrong or bad myself, right?

Kiva: The challenge is I mean from for you and I who've been in this work for well over a decade to say that makes total sense. I'm also keenly sensitive to how challenging it is. When you've been conditioned from their earliest of ages that your value is tied to your output, right? How productive are you? Or your value is tied to how you make other people feel, right?

All of these beliefs that we get from our parents, from the culture, from our educators about what defines us. We create defense mechanisms around those things. I think the first step maybe if you're hearing this, and you're like oh no, no, no but you don't know me. Right? Because that's what I used to say. Like, if you really knew me, you wouldn't think that I was worthy.

Lisa: If you knew what was going on in my home, or you knew what happened in my brain, or how I treated my kids.

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Kiva: Yeah. So I want to just surround that with like this big love bubble because it's a normal first step. So what we need to do is create a payoff that's bigger than the payoff we get from the defense mechanism. So let me give you an example of that. So let's imagine that you were the peacekeeper in your childhood, right? That the way that you got love, affection, acknowledgement, and validation was by keeping the peace, which probably leads you to becoming an adult who is a people pleaser. Been there, done that, right? Say yes to everything.

Lisa: Recovering one right here.

Kiva: Can't say no. If you do, you feel like you might die. Right? So the payoff to peacekeeper is I am safe. Right? That's the payoff. I get to be safe if I say yes to everything and everybody and put my needs way back in the back seat, like maybe in the trunk. We need to create a new higher payoff, right?

So children, our children, this is why children are such an amazing reason for personal transformation. They're the bigger payoff, right? Because most parents if you said we're talking about your child's future sense of self and confidence and self-worth, would you be willing to put this less than useful strategy that you created to keep yourself safe? Put that one in the trunk, and let's put the needs of our children in the front seat, which is to do this work and become the parent who can guide them toward their own wholeness and fulfillment.

Lisa: Totally. We're raising ourselves right alongside our children.

Kiva: I mean, I honestly, I've started to almost think like if we just raise ourselves, and we learn these things, right. We learn effective communication. We learn emotional intelligence. We learn nervous system regulation. We do the work of actually defining our values, right? What's the

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destination? Where are we going? What's the intention of this relationship that I have with other human beings?

The kids kind of don't need a whole lot else from us. I'm not saying we're not raising them. That's obviously overly simplistic, but I'm coming to think that 95% of the work is on ourselves. The kids are going to be all right.

Lisa: I couldn't agree more. I love when a client has an aha-moment where he or she says, "I came to you thinking we were going to work on my kids. I now realize that the first step or the work is to work on myself and how I show up, and then we can talk about my kids." That's always just a delightful moment for me of connecting with yes. Yes, yes, and yeah.

Kiva: Yeah because it's like it can go the other way too, right? Like the kids can be our greatest motivation to grow as human beings, but they can also provide a sneaky place to hide where we say but my child, but you don't understand, but the kid, but the kid. I love those wake up calls. Like oh, wait a second. When my behavior changes, my child behavior changes? What?

Lisa: Yes.

Kiva: It's so good. It's so good.

Lisa: All right, Kiva, tell us how you intend or how you want us to digest and move through the book.

Kiva: I'm here today because we have a really incredible opportunity coming up. It's starting February 1st so you're gonna have to act fast. But a book like this, a book like *The Peaceful Parenting Revolution* is full of information, strategies, inspiring stories. What I don't want it to be is shelf help. Meaning you buy the book, maybe you read a little bit of it, and then it

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goes and sits on the bookshelf and doesn't actually impact or change your life.

So we are conducting over the whole month of February a live parenting experience of the book *The Peaceful Parenting Revolution*. So the way that it works is we're gathering an incredible community, our coaches, their clients, people that are just in our world to come together, read the book together over a four week period, have weekly coaching and Q&A calls with me so that this isn't just about information. It's about transformation.

I think reading a book is good. I think reading it in a book club where you get to talk about it is even better. But I think getting to read the book with the author, the people who contributed to the book, and get your questions answered and feel enlivened and inspired by other people doing the same is what's going to allow this information to actually be integrated and put into practice so that you can have a different experience in the day to day dynamics and fun and parenting, right, that comes with having kids.

Lisa: Well, and I have to tell you, you all listening, Kiva has a lot of fun. So, jump on this.

Kiva: It's actually my number one value.

Lisa: I know that about you. That's one of the reasons I love to be in your orbit because I'm always looking for more ways to have fun, and you just naturally bring it out in people. So I think the live book club is a great idea. It's a real opportunity for people to immerse themselves in the transformation, what's possible, and do it in a really interactive, fun way.

You're offering an experience that most people don't get a chance to take advantage of. So I think it's a beautiful opportunity. I can't wait to be a part

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of it. I'm really excited about it. I think it's just going to be absolutely amazing.

Kiva: Thank you. Yeah, I mean I think one of the other things that that happens for parents like us who are determined to do it differently is it can feel really isolating. It can feel like all eyes are on our parenting. There may be people in our family or in our community who love to share their helpful information about how we should be taking our kid's iPhone away or whatever it is. What I found in hosting experiences like this before, and I wasn't expecting it, was the relief that comes with really knowing you're not alone. I think that that's just as important, the community piece.

Lisa: Yes. I couldn't agree more. It is important to know that you're not alone. It is important to feel that level of support as you're changing the generational patterns. It can feel isolating and alone. You can feel unsure at times when you're getting the look or when things are not working out or when you're doing it differently than what's done to you, and you're not getting the desired outcome from that strong willed kid. So, again, another great reason to join the book club. So tell us how we join.

Kiva: Yeah, so I'll share the URL with you. What I will say because Lisa, we just love you so much at Jai, as you know, I wanted to give your community a free ticket to join us for the book club. So you won't have to pay. I'll give you the code in just a moment. You will need to buy the book. So because the timeline is short, it is available as a Kindle eBook. It is now available on Audible. So that you can access the book in the way that works best for you.

Then before the first meeting on February 1st, we're only reading the first three chapters. So this should be very doable. So you go to jaiinstituteforparenting.com/bookclub. Then when you click the link to register, it's going to take you to an order form. You'll put in the promo code

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box bookclub. Very clever. That will take your price to zero, and you'll be able to register with no charge.

Lisa: Okay, so you buy the book, and then go to the jaiinstituteforparenting.com/bookclub, and you put in the code –

Kiva: Bookclub, all one word.

Lisa: Book club. B-O-O-K-C-L-U-B, and you will get complimentary registration into the book club. Because you're a listener of Real World Peaceful Parenting.

Kiva: Yes.

Lisa: You read the first three chapters and get ready to rock and roll on February 1st.

Kiva: Easy as that.

Lisa: Beautiful. All right. Join, buy, read, participate. It's worth it. You're gonna love it. Kiva is an amazing facilitator. It is your opportunity to learn from the best, to be in community of other likeminded parents, to learn tools and be inspired. I can't wait. I'm going to be there. I can't wait to see you there. Kiva, thank you so much for all you do in the world with running the Jai Institute with training parent coaches, with being such a beautiful model, writing the book. I mean your contribution is amazing. Just from the bottom of my heart. Thank you.

Kiva: From the bottom of my heart. You're welcome.

Amazing, right? I just love that woman. I just love her so much. I hope she knows it and feels it. I hope today inspired you. There's lots of ways to

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uplevel your parenting. Grab one, try it, do it. Join the community of the Hive. Immerse yourself in likeminded parents. Up level your parenting in 2023. You've got this. I know you do. 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.