

Ep #122: How to Course Correct Your Parenting Mindset



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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'm going to start out today by asking you a question. How often do you think thoughts like what is my kid really up to? What are they after? What is he trying to get from me?

After being so adamant for weeks not to do something that you've been asking your kid to do, he now does it. You might be thinking, "Oh, sure. Now he's only doing it because he wants something from me." Those thoughts lead to feelings of I don't trust him. Maybe you think things like she's using me or playing me to get what she wants. Sound familiar? Can you relate?

Do you struggle to celebrate the fact that your kid actually did what you've been asking them to do because all you can see is his concession as some sort of manipulation? Do you often have your guard up expecting something unpleasant to happen next? Then the unpleasant thing always seems to happen. If these questions or this scenario resonates with you, then I want you to keep listening because today's episode is for you. So let's dive in.

If you can relate or answered yes to any of the questions above, then I have another question to ask you. I really want you to consider this. How is believing there's an agenda or the worst helpful? Believing your child is being devious and has some sort of agenda does not help your relationship with your kid.

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I mean, think about this. How does your relationship with your child and their belief in themselves benefit from this level of skepticism? If you do this in your other relationships, always question what the other person's motive is, you are going to get triggered and storm when interacting with that person. You will suffer every time because of your thoughts.

Now imagine I move in next door to you. You come to welcome me to the neighborhood with cupcakes. You ring the doorbell. You're all smiles. You sound very sweet. You tell me you're really looking forward to getting to know me. You leave feeling good about our interaction and the fact that you brought cupcakes. By the way, I love cupcakes.

After you walk away, I close the door. I immediately think hm, I wonder how she's going to screw me in the future. I wonder how that family is going to let me down. I tell my brain I better be on the lookout for the moment when the tide is going to turn. Things are going to go wrong. She's going to show her true colors.

You're probably like, "Wow, Lisa, that is crazy." I know, right? Now here's what's really intense, I have just given my mind and assignment to look for evidence that the neighbor is going to screw me, let me down, or things are going to go right. Here's the kicker. My mind is going to find that evidence 100% of the time. If it can't find the evidence, it will make something up. Oh, see, she left the gate open in the backyard. See, I knew it. I knew she was going to screw me over.

Or maybe it shows up like this. Maybe I go on vacation, and I asked you to bring my mail in, and you don't do it because you were sick with the flu. Then I think I knew it. I knew it. I knew she was gonna let me down.

If you do this with your kids, your brain is doing what I call future forecasting. This is actually why positive future forecasting works. Because

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you're looking for the thing you believe. Some people call it manifestation or the power of positive thinking. I call it future forecasting. What I want to encourage you to do is always be future forecasting neutral or the positive about your kids, but never the negative.

Because what I know is when you future forecast something negative about your kid or kids, it doesn't help. It doesn't benefit you. It doesn't benefit them. It certainly doesn't benefit the relationship. It does not in any way create connection, which leads to cooperation. P.S. If your child does have an ulterior motive, you can just deal with it when the time comes. There's no need to future forecast the negative.

Now if you're in the habit of future forecasting something negative, your brain is going to look for evidence of the negative. It will find it 100% of the time. That does not help relationships. Why can't you just believe your kid at face value? What is it about him or her that makes it so difficult to believe what they're saying?

I asked this of a dad recently about his 13 year old son. His answer was, "Lisa, it's his repetitive lying. It comes back around again and again and again. He's really good at it. He makes up things that benefit him. He believes something to be true. Therefore it is true to him, even though in reality, it is not true. He digs his heels in and will not consider anything else to be true."

Now, you may have heard me say this before. Lying is our kid's path of least resistance. Some kids, especially strong willed kids, just want what they want, and they will do anything to get it. In this 13 year olds case, he wanted to use his phone. He found a way to use it in the middle of the night to talk to his friends and connect with the outside world. When his dad noticed the phone was missing and confronted him, he lied about using the phone because making up his own truth was the path of least resistance.

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Even if he got caught, it would be well worth the consequence. Because for a period of time, he was connected to the outside world. Maybe he even believed he wasn't going to get caught. Because often that's how the teen brain works.

Now, can you relate to this dad? Do you feel the utter frustration that this dad felt? Can you relate? Do you feel at her frustration when your kid does something that she knows she's not supposed to do, and then takes the path of least resistance and “lies” to your face about it? Then does that lead you down the dark hole of adding up all the evidence that your kid is deceitful, self-centered, and manipulative?

I understand. I get it. I'm here to tell you, you can do that. You can keep adding up all the ways your kid is showing up in the world with negative attributes. You can spin a dark, dark, dark story that will have your kid living under the bridge with a shopping cart one day. You can do that. I'm not here to tell you differently.

However, if you're tired of keeping score this way, and you're tired of suffering from your thoughts you create about your kid, and if you're tired of the constant lying, and if you're tired of your kids' absence and deceit and unwillingness to just do what you say. If you're tired of the endless list of consequences that you now have to follow through on and you just wish you could find a way to connect with your kid, I have the answer. Yes, I have the answer. I do.

The answer is what you want is in your thoughts. Little mind boggling, I know. You're probably going, “What Lisa? My thoughts? Are you kidding?” But just be open minded and hang with me here. What if you find some new thoughts that feel equally true? Something like these traits of his will actually serve him really well in the outside world one day.

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Now when I proposed this to this dad of the 13 year old, he said, "I can't even see that being possible right now because he doesn't think of anyone but himself." My answer was yes that is true. He's 13. Every kid is self-centered. It just stands out and triggers us more in some kids than others because some are so strong willed. They just want what they want. They will not give up until they get it. Do you agree?

The dad said yeah. I went on to share they have a focus that overwhelms us, a hyper focus. As parents, we're overwhelmed by their hyper focus because we want what we want. We cannot see any other option. Do you see this? I want what I want, and you want what you want. Now, what I want is really for the best of my child, but regardless, I want what I want.

So if every time you ask your child to do something, he responds with something like what's in it for me? It would be easy to be triggered by this, by thoughts like I just want him to help. I don't understand why he has to ask me this. Why can't he have a caring heart that's willing to serve others when help is needed? Why can he not make everything about himself and how any service he concedes to benefit him?

So instead of thinking that, I told this dad you could think thoughts like when he says to what's in it for me, you can respond, "My approval, my praise. When you show willingness to help me, it will be much easier for me to show you my willingness to help you."

I told this Dad you could stop future forecasting in a negative way and just answered the question. You scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours. Life is about give and take. I'm asking you to give right now so you can take later. It's a savings account. You invest in me, and I'll invest in you. Let me give you an example son. The next time you ask if you can stay after school to hang out with your friends and watch a game, I will have a savings account

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full of appreciation sent for the help you've given me. There would be an abundance from which you can make a withdrawal.

Imagine saying this to your kid rather than future forecasting how self-centered and selfish and resistant they are, and how they're never going to get anywhere and be living under a bridge with a shopping cart. If you stop future forecasting as a parent, you can figure out a way to use his or her strong willed skills and hyper focus to your advantage. But that is almost impossible to do when we're future forecasting the negative.

When you stop doing that, you can speak their language instead of fighting them on the way they show up in the world. What happens is if you're stunned and bewildered by the way your kid or kids show up in the world then what your kid feels is rejection, which makes them only more strong willed and resistant to cooperate. Do you see?

So the answer is to just answer his repetitive four or five questions. When he says what's in it for me, you say well when you do things for me, I'm able to free up my time to do things for you. When you want to stay after school and have me pick you up at a time that's inconvenient for me because I'm in the middle of doing all these chores, I have no help. So I have to say no to you staying after school. But if you help me with the chores then I have time to come get you. See how this works? You show them what's in it for them.

The other secret is to be prepared with your answers instead of being stunned by them. We're most often stunned because we're future forecasting in the negative. But if we're prepared with our answers because we've accepted the fact that our kid wants what he wants, which by the way we all do. That your kid is self-centered because they have an underdeveloped brain, and he will always do whatever it takes to get what he wants.

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If you just accept that, then you can stop arguing with reality, and you accept that this is the way your kid shows up in the world. You can stop future forecasting the negative.

Now if you don't want to do this, the alternative is believing your kid will always be a self-centered prick who's willing to mow over anybody and anything to get what he wants no matter the consequences because he's self-centered and thoughtless. Can you imagine that? Can you imagine spending 18 years in a house growing up with parents who think that about you?

The problem with that as the parent is that thought will only lead to you being dysregulated and your child feeling rejected and unaccepted by you. So if you feel the need to future forecast, forecast the possibility that he will grow up to be a defender of the weak. He will use his superpower of doing whatever it takes to get what he wants to bring justice to people who need his help.

In a world full of people pleasers and forces of evil, your son may actually grow up to be one who heals and serves and defends the weak because he has a passion for it. Nothing will stop him until he gets what he wants. By the way, being self-centered doesn't have to be a negative thing. It's all in your thoughts about it.

Now, this is a new language for many of us. If you're like me, you were raised to believe that self-centered people are horrible human beings. But let's name some self-centered people that maybe we all admire. I mean come on, you can't be Michael Phelps and win 27 gold medals without being self-centered. You can't be a CEO of a company, let alone a Fortune 500, without being pretty self-centered.

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Politicians, musicians who can leave their family and go on tour for a year and a half, pretty self-centered. Andrew Lloyd Wright, who wrote a bunch of plays and musicals like *Phantom of the Opera* and *Cats*, pretty self-centered. I'm pretty sure he likely locked himself in solitude for months to write those musicals. Writers, they often have to go into lockdown until they meet their deadlines, hugely self-centered people.

What I've come to realize is the word self-centered doesn't have to be a bad thing. It's really rooted in our thoughts about it. We just have to figure out how to work with it as parents, how to stay regulated. When our kids present as being self-centered. I choose to believe it's their superpower.

Think about this, what is the likelihood that your child will grow up to use his determined, take no prisoners, what he wants when he wants, won't quit till he gets it self-centeredness for evil because he never felt anything but rejection from his parents as opposed to a kid who grows up feeling seen heard and valued and accepted by his parents for showing up in the world the way he does. Can you see the likelihood of him using his superpowers for good instead of evil? Because you got behind him and helped him hone his skills over the years?

You, yes you parent, have the power in your thoughts to be the parent that can value your kids strength. You have the power to use your skills as a future forecasting to manifest amazing users for your child's strengths to serve the world in amazing ways. The way to do that is to predetermine what your answer will be to the questions they ask repeatedly to trigger you.

When you have a scripted response, the same answer to the same questions over and over and over again, you will be much more successful at staying regulated. You won't feel the pressure in the moment to say the right thing, to be triggered and frustrated, and storm alongside your kid.

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Rather, you will be able to remove your triggering thoughts and emotions every time the question comes up. Ask me how I know. Because I've been doing this for 14 years.

What I want to leave you with is this. When you future forecast how those repeated questions and tenacity are going to serve your kid and the world at large and amazing ways, your brain is going to seek and find evidence that he's on the path to greatness. Your connection with your kid will grow. Your so called manipulative self-centered kid will grow into being an amazing human who uses their strengths for good. I've seen this happen over and over and over again, in my own family and with thousands of clients I've worked with around the world.

If you are going to keep your future forecasting, for the love of God, please do it with a positive spirit rather than negative. Believe it, see it, and then your brain will seek the evidence, and the universe will manifest and show you that your thoughts were true all along. I want this for you. I want this for your strong willed self-centered kids. So good, right? I love it. I love you. 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.