

**Ep #162: Navigating Parenthood:
Using Family Values as Your Compass**



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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. Today I'm coming to you from a particularly special location, my son's college campus town. As a basketball playing college freshman, Malcolm has been navigating his first year away from home facing challenges undergoing significant personal development. It has been an absolute privilege to witness firsthand how he's tackled obstacles head on, learned valuable lessons, and emerged with greater strength and resilience.

I got to tell you one aspect of his journey that's especially fascinating to observe is the development of his executive function. From managing his schedule and responsibilities to making decisions independently I've seen his cognitive abilities and executive function grow. Let me tell you, there's nothing quite like witnessing the evolution of a young adult's mind in real time.

In future episodes, I'm going to dig deeper into the topic of executive function and share insights and how we, as parents, can support our child's developing brains. But for now, let's dig into today's discussion on family values and their profound impact on peaceful parenting. So grab your favorite beverage, get cozy, and let's embark on this journey together.

Now I've got to let you know this is one episode you might want to take notes. So you might want to grab a pen and paper because today I want to talk to you about family values. We all have them. Most of us kind of know what they are, right? 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. Am I right?

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Now here's the thing. Family values are defined as what you stand for, what you believe in, qualities you like about yourself, and the qualities that you strive for. It's those values you consciously or unconsciously parent around, even if you've never put them on paper or verbalized them formally.

In today's episode, I want to share three reasons I believe, as your real world peaceful parenting coach, every family would benefit from taking the time to map out their family values, introduce them to your children, tape them on the fridge, and talk about them often. You with me? All right, let's dig in.

The first reason is when we know our family values, we can hold ourselves and our children accountable. We can guide the family. When we communicate the values to our kids and model them, they can understand the why. The why is really important. It gives us purpose. It helps us understand that no or the yes or please do that or please don't do that.

On top of that, when our kids understand our family values, they feel connected. They feel included. They have pieces to the puzzle. When we embrace the values, we are walking our talk and modeling those values for them.

Let's look at some examples of family values. Now for my particular family, our values are few, but we hold them near and dear. They are our body is our temple. We show up and do our best. We treat everyone with a basic level of kindness. We aim to always do the right thing, even when it's not easy. Our people bring out the best in us or they're not our people.

Examples of other family values that I've collected over the years are we are critical thinkers and challenge what we don't like, understand, or agree with. We value sleep, downtime, and family time, and therefore put our cell phones away at 8:00 p.m. in a bowl downstairs. We value family and family time together. Another version of that is family comes first.

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Another example is we keep our hands to ourselves always. Another one might be we respect each other. Another value might be we show our immediate family love through respect. We nourish our body with healthy foods. We give back to an organization, to a group of people, to our community. We do for others. We value each family members thoughts, feelings, and boundaries. We strive for honesty, accountability, and doing the right thing, even when it's difficult.

We treat others with compassion, empathy, and generosity. We take ownership of our actions and commitments, contributing to the family and community. We appreciate the blessings in life expressing thanks and acknowledging other's efforts. We try to understand and care for others feelings and perspectives. I love that one by the way.

We prioritize learning, curiosity, and personal growth, also a favorite of mine. We embrace diversity, accepting others regardless of differences, and fostering an inclusive environment. Very important to me. We prioritize physical and mental wellbeing, making choices that promote a healthy lifestyle for oneself and others in the family. This was just meant to get you started and give you a list or give you some perspective or some ideas to jump off of.

So what are your family values? This would be a great time of the year to think about this, map this out, get it down on paper, discuss it with your coparent, your family. Get some buy in from everybody if your kids are older, but definitely pick at least three or four and get started. Try them on, see how they feel. Do they resonate with you? Can you model them? Do you believe in them?

I can tell you right now, I definitely believe in prioritizing learning, curiosity, and personal growth, as well as embracing diversity, accepting others, and fostering an inclusive environment, and trying to understand and care for other's feelings and perspectives.

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I mean, those, to me, feel so important and really about everything I stand for it. So I really want to invite you to come up with at least three family values. They need to make sense to you and be important to you based on who you are, where you live, what you believe, your culture, your background, your family of origin. Pick your family values.

But here's what I know for sure. By declaring your family values, you, as the peaceful leader, you set the tone in your household for what is expected and how each family member should operate.

Reason number two, to come up with your family values, write them down, and share them with the entire family is that when it comes to parenting with ease and consistency, which I know we're all about. That's why you're here each week listening to this podcast. So let me say this again.

When it comes to parenting with ease and consistency, it starts right here with family values. Think of family values as proactively communicating your wisdom. Let's be honest, wisdom is best if it is shared. Your values are a big piece of the wisdom puzzle because they guide you as a person and a parent.

This is why many companies lay out their values of the company through their values and mission statement so that you understand the culture of the company. So your values guide you as a person and as a parent. Your family values serve as a compass in decision making, or they should. Family values can help you know when to say yes and when to say no without guilt. They're like your belt and suspenders. They back you up.

If you're not sure what to do, you can check in with your family values. That helps you often in parenting know what to say yes to and know what to say no to. On top of it, no with no guilt. I mean, come on. Who doesn't want that?

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Family values can also aid in things like helping resolve sibling conflicts, determining limits, providing insights into questions of why? Why not? How come? When? Let me share a few examples of this for you.

So in example number one centering around honesty and trust. Imagine if your child asked you for your opinion on a delicate matter. I mean, who hasn't been faced with that? Your family values are you prioritize honesty and trust. Trust is really important to you.

So in this situation, you choose to speak truthfully, even if it might be uncomfortable, because you believe it builds a foundation of trust between you and your child. See that?

Okay, example number two centers around respect and empathy. Let's say you witnessed your child teasing a classmate at school or a teammate on the soccer field, and your family values emphasize respect and empathy for others. Instead of dismissing the behavior, you take the opportunity, when you're regulated, to discuss the importance of treating others kindly, helping your child understand the impact of their actions on other people.

Example number three looks at responsibility and accountability. Let's say you're child forgets to complete their homework multiple times. This comes up a lot inside The Hive. Your family values highlight responsibility and accountability, like this is really uber important to you. That your children and that you are responsible and accountable for your actions.

So rather than simply punishing your child, or your teen, or your young adult, you sit down with your kid and discuss the importance of fulfilling commitments and the consequences of their actions, fostering a sense of accountability within them, rather than punishing.

The next example centers around compassion and forgiveness. Let's say your child accidentally breaks a valuable item in the house. Remember the

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episode where the vase got broken in the Brady Bunch? I sure do. All right, so your child accidentally breaks a valuable item in the house. Your family values include compassion and forgiveness. Like that is really what you're all about.

Then instead of reacting angrily, you take a moment to gather yourself, to get regulated. Then you empathize with your child's feelings of guilt, and reassure them that mistakes happen. Emphasizing the importance of learning from them. You model forgiveness for them while they're taking accountability for their actions. I love these, don't you?

The next example centers around perseverance and resilience. Let's say your nine year old son faces a challenge while learning a new skill or participating in a competitive activity. Let's say soccer. He's never played before. He's playing for the first time. It's not going well. Your family values senators around perseverance and resilience. He is begging you to quit. "Please, please, please, please, please, mom. I don't want to do it. I don't want to go. I don't like it. The coach is mean."

Well, instead of allowing him to give up easily, you encourage him not to be great at soccer, but to persist through the difficulties, emphasizing the importance of resilience in achieving goals and overcoming obstacles. It's not about the soccer. It's that you as a family value resiliency and persistence. So he has to finish.

You encourage him. You work with him. You help him persist and finish the six week season in soccer. If he never wants to play again, that's fine. But he's gotten the value of persisting through something difficult and achieving and overcoming the obstacle that was in front of him. I love that example so much.

Finally, an example around generosity and kindness. Your child receives an invitation to a birthday party, but another child in the class wasn't invited.

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Your family values prioritize generosity and kindness. Rather than boasting and focusing on being invited to the party, you encourage your kid to consider the feelings of others. Suggesting they extend an invitation or finding another way to include their classmate in activities, fostering a sense of empathy and community and inclusion.

Now these are just some examples of how when we're faced with what to do in a challenging situation, the family value serves as a compass in decision making. It helps guide you in decisions around parenting. In figuring out whether your kid should or can quit the soccer team two weeks in, in resolving conflict.

In whether to be honest about a delicate matter, how to handle teasing a classmate at school, what to do about unfinished homework that isn't turned in, how to handle when something valuable gets broken, or how to include others, fostering a sense of community and empathy. I know over the years in parenting my son, I often turn to my family values when decisions became tough or I wasn't sure what to do.

Now, the third reason that I want you to work on your family values is because family values turn on the internal compass within our kids. It allows them to take over parenting themselves with your family values in the background over time.

This topic is probably really close to my heart right now because I am in the middle of visiting my son in college. One of the things that we were talking about last night is prioritizing not getting overwhelmed. He has a lot on his plate right now. He's considering and adding some other things on. We were having a conversation about limited time, priorities, focus, burnout, and making some tough decisions and saying no to a couple things that he really wants to participate in but he knows that he should say no.

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We really talked about prioritization, and your body being your temple, and showing up and doing our best. One thing he said to me is, “Mom, if I say yes to a couple of these things, I know I won’t be able to show up and do my best.” I said well, that’s certainly important to us as a family. He said, “Yeah, I know. So I guess the answer is no.”

I really got to see firsthand how really focusing on family values turns on the internal compass within our kids. It creates consistent behavior. By calling out three or four of your most important family values, it creates consistent behavior no matter the challenge or the situation. When your kids see the bigger picture and know their family values as they move through their childhood, they begin to take over and guide themselves.

Decisions of what to do and deciphering right from wrong for your family will be easier for them because they understand the bigger picture. For example, one of your family values might be we nourish our bodies with healthy food. You and your teenager have been talking about this since he was little. He goes out to a friend's birthday party where there is a ton 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 other kids may continue to pick out an unlimited junk food. But deep inside he knows that we nourish our bodies with healthy food. This isn't healthy, and I've had enough.

Another example. You talk with your daughter a lot about the value of resting the brain and uninterrupted sleep. She goes away this summer between seventh and eighth grade for sleepaway camp for eight weeks. Most of her cabin mates sleep at their phones under their pillow, and are woken up constantly and often with notifications, leaving them tired, cranky, and fatigued.

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Your daughter automatically puts her phone away each night and enjoys her restful sleep because she knows the value of sleep at her age and the value of taking good care of her brain. These are good examples, yeah?

Now let's be honest, defining your family values does require some dedication and effort, but the rewards are measurable. By taking the time to articulate and communicate your values, you're laying the groundwork for a harmonious and thriving family dynamic.

Now, family values aren't just words on paper. They're the guiding principles that shape how we interact with one another and navigate life's challenges together. Whether it's integrity, kindness, or respect. Each value serves as a compass guiding your family toward a shared vision of love and understanding.

As you reflect on today's discussion, I really, really, really want to invite you to consider what are your own family values? What qualities and beliefs do you hold dear? Again, I strongly recommend you pick three. Three is always a great number. That way it doesn't feel overwhelming if you're just getting started.

So that's homework assignment number one, figure out your top three. I've given you a lot of suggestions and a lot of ideas in this podcast episode. Use these to get started. Try them on, see how they feel. Modify them as needed. If you don't agree with one of them, don't pick it. Pick the ones that feel true to you. Who you are now and who you want your future self to be. What you dream of for your children.

Learning, questioning, integrity, follow through, persistence, compassion, forgiveness, inclusion, accountability, gratitude, caring for others feelings, personal growth, diversity, physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, nourishing our bodies. Use today's episode as a chance to ask yourself what did Lisa say that lights me up? What were the examples that I thought yes, yes,

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yes, I relate to that one. I so get that. Those are probably your family values.

So reflect on today's discussion. What are the qualities and beliefs you hold dear? Write down at least three. Then think of ways that you can incorporate these values into your daily interactions, conversations with your children, and a check in with yourself when you're faced with a parenting decision. That's homework assignment number two.

By embracing and embodying your family values, you're not only fostering a deeper connection with your family, but also instilling valuable lessons that will guide your kids for years to come, that will turn on the internal compass. I'm getting a chance to see this real time. I've got to tell you I'm so pleased we did this years ago and then visited the values regularly, and often, more often than not, parented from that place.

So in closing, I want to invite and encourage you to take the first step today. Don't wait. Sit down with your family. Discuss your values, and watch as they guide you towards real world peaceful parenting. Lots to ponder and discuss. Yes? Well, you are welcome. My work here today is done. Let me tell you, it's work worth doing. I promise you, and I know you've got this. If you need any help at all, I am 100% here for you. Just reach out to me. 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.

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