

**Ep #174: Become the Parent
Your Child Wants to Turn To**



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 where we're going to dive into the transformative power of compassion in parenting. Now, before I dig into today's topic, let me ask you. Do you often feel frustrated and overwhelmed in your parenting? Yeah? Well, you're not alone. I want to help.

In my free upcoming class, I'm going to address the challenges of modern parenting head on and offer you solutions to create more peace in your home. So if you're tired of yelling and tired of conflicts and ready to end the arguing and frustration in your parenting before summer break, I want to invite you to join my free Yell Less workshop, where we'll explore three simple steps to get your kids to cooperate without you yelling, threatening, or punishing them. Together, I'll teach you how to pause the yelling cycle, address misbehavior with calmness and clarity, and parent with ease.

This workshop, which is going to be held on May 9, is for all parents, caregivers and families seeking a more peaceful parenting approach. Whether you're a mom, dad, single parent, or blended family, these strategies are applicable to everyone and can be applied to kids of all ages. Imagine enjoying more cooperation from your kids, fewer conflicts, and a deeper connection with your family all without yelling. I know I want that for you too.

So don't miss the opportunity to transform your parenting. Sign up right now at thepeacefulparent.com/masterclass. That's thepeacefulparent.com/masterclass, and take the first step towards a brighter future for your family. Again, this class is happening on Thursday, May 9, starting at 9:00 a.m.

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Pacific, 10:00 a.m. Mountain, 11:00 a.m. Central, and noon Eastern time. If you can't make the live event, RSVP anyway, and we'll happily send you the recording. Okay, now on to today's topic.

Today we're tackling a fundamental aspect of nurturing healthy relationships with our children. Drumroll please. It's, yes, building trust. Trust isn't a buzzword. It's not a fad. It's not something you do. It's not something that naturally happens. Trust is the cornerstone of a strong parent-child bond that withstand life's challenges. So let's explore how cultivating compassion can lay the groundwork for lifelong trust between parents and children.

As we begin today, I want to pose a question that might resonate with many of us. When life throws you a curveball, who do you turn to? When you were growing up and life threw you a curveball, maybe you made a mistake, or something big happened, or you had a fracture in a friendship, or you felt down about something, who did you turn to?

Reflecting on our own experiences, we may find that our instinctual response reveals a lot about the trust and connection we shared with our parents or caregivers. It's this introspection that sets the stage for today's exploration into compassionate parenting, and the pivotal role it plays in nurturing trust filled relationships with our children. There is no right or wrong answer here. I'm just asking you to take stock and check in.

If you can and do turn towards your parents, that is wonderful. I'm so happy for you that you have that relationship. If you don't or couldn't ever imagine turning to them for help and support, you're not alone. Believe me, I'm part of that camp as well. I know many, many, many of us are bonded here together over not being able to turn to our caregiver in times of trouble, stress, mistakes, or when we need help and support.

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Here's what I know, having an almost 20 year old. He'll be 20 this summer, and I can't believe it. But here's what I know. If you want your kids to turn to you in times of mistakes, stress, crisis, turmoil, disappointment, and failure, you have to begin now, right now, at any age, right now, to lay down roots for this to happen.

Hear me loud and clear on this. It doesn't just happen. It doesn't happen because they're your kids. You aren't due it. It doesn't just spring up out of the blue or through osmosis. So how do you do this? Well, I'm glad you asked. You build a foundation of trust now by being a safe place for your kids big, uncomfortable emotions. Say what, Lisa? I know, I know. I know for some of you I just scrambled your brain.

Okay, let me explain and lay out this argument so your brain can see how this works. What I need for you to do is stay open minded. Picture this scenario, your child comes to you in tears admitting they made a mistake while clearly overwhelmed by their big emotions. How do you respond? Do you offer a safe place for them to express themselves freely? Or do you react to the mistake with criticism yelling, punishment, and shame?

It's critical to recognize that a child who is afraid of their parent's reactions may feel too scared to come to them when they need help the most. Let me say that again. It is critical for us parents to recognize that when a child is afraid consistently over and over and over again of their parent's reactions, over time, they may come to feel scared to come to their parents when they need the most help.

So instead of fostering fear, we should strive to create an environment of trust and understanding, even if we need to hold the limit during or after the conversation. When a child is acting out, storming, having big emotions, what they truly need is coregulation. They need compassion. They need curiosity about what's underneath the meltdown. Yeah?

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Okay. Now picture this scenario. Your child comes to you, shoulders slumped and eyes downcast admitting they've made a mistake, again. Maybe it's a poor grade on a test, or forgetting something in their backpack, or forgetting to do their chores, or forgetting to study for a test, or forgetting to tell you an important piece of information. Instead of reacting with disappointment or anger, you take a deep breath and respond with compassion and curiosity. You reassure them that everyone makes mistakes, and its opportunity to learn and grow instead of using guilt and shame.

Together you brainstorm solutions and discuss ways to prevent similar situations in the future. By approaching their mistake with understanding and support rather than blame or punishment, you're not only fostering a sense of trust, but also teaching your child resilience and accountability. This moment becomes a valuable lesson in building trust through unconditional love and acceptance, even in the face of imperfection.

Yes, sometimes our kid's biggest mistakes can become the most valuable lessons in building trust through unconditional love and acceptance. Ah, I love that so much. Here this now. Punishment, shame, and criticism may temporarily stop the undesirable behavior, I get that. But it does not address the root cause of the child's emotions and can often foster fear.

We don't want to foster fear in our kids. We do not want to foster the fear. In times of stress and mistakes and setbacks, we want to be the people they turn to, not the people they turn away from, or do everything they can to avoid us finding out.

When a child is acting out, when they're having big emotions, especially in the face of a giant mistake, whether it's spilled milk, or a bad grade, or a missed assignment, or a fight with somebody, what they need most from us is to not fear our response, our reaction. They need us to regulate so they can borrow our regulation. They need compassion and curiosity.

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Punishing them, shaming them, yelling at them, criticizing them, telling them they're a horrible person, they're never going to make it, calling them names may temporarily stop the undesirable behavior. But it may also create fear. Fear of coming to you, fear of telling you, fear of seeking your help. We must be mindful of not instilling so much fear in our kids that they hesitate to ask for help when they made a mistake. Building trust comes from not instilling fear. It comes from being the safe place for your kids.

If you hear nothing else today, please hear that building trust takes time and consistency. You can't just tell your kids that they can tell you anything. You have to show them through your actions, through gaining control of yourself, through responding rather than reacting, to being a safe place where in the moment they can come and confide in us and not be afraid of the reaction they're going to get from us.

Now that doesn't mean we're not going to hold limits. We're not going to discuss it. We're not going to correct it. We're not going to repair. But what we don't want our children to do is be fearful of our reaction to our reporting of the mistake.

As parents, we naturally want to protect our children from risky behavior. But we must also recognize that they will inevitably, at some point in their lives, make their own decisions. These decisions may come with varying levels of risk and mistakes and wrongdoings and setbacks. But our role is to provide support and guidance rather than resorting to punitive measures. It is the attitude of support and guidance that builds trust over time. It is the reaction of punitive measures that breaks down the trust and creates fear.

It's also important to understand, since we're on this topic, that a child's overwhelming feelings and storming cannot be dismissed or eradicated through punishment or criticism. You can't lose control to gain control. These emotions will resurface over and over and over again until they are processed and felt alongside an emotionally attuned caregiver.

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This is what I really want you to hear today. If you are responding in a punitive way, you are signaling to your child, to your teen, to your young adult that you want them to hide their feelings from you. That you want them to suppress and tuck away their big emotions and their storming, which contributes to fear and feeling unsafe. This erodes the trust that's been built up. This could also potentially result in developing fear or resentment towards the parent over time.

On the other hand, using discipline as a source of communication, discipline, not punishing but discipline, as a source of communication involves teaching and guiding children through positive reinforcement, through setting clear boundaries and expectations, and providing opportunities for children to learn and grow.

By practicing peaceful parenting, we not only strengthen our bond with our children, but we equip them with the tools to navigate life's challenges with resiliency and empathy. We teach them to trust us. They learn unequivocally that we are their safe place. I want that for me and my son, and I want that for you and your kids.

Can you imagine just for a second, a world where trust is built over time by the parents, and every kid feels safe with their parents and caregivers, even when they make a mistake? That unequivocally you are my safe place, I can come and tell you anything. You may not like it, there may be a consequence, but it's a safe place. I don't fear punitive consequences and attacking of my character because I've made a mistake. So good, right?

Ah, I want that for all of us. I want that for the world. Thank you for tuning in today. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. This is important. I think we all need to be reminded that trust is built over time by being our kid's safe place.

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Remember, every interaction with your kid or kids is an opportunity to build trust and connection. If you need some help doing that, I'll meet you over on zoom on Thursday, May 9 at 9:00 a.m. Pacific, and we'll work on that together. So make sure you get signed up at thepeacefulparent.com/masterclass. Okay, until next time, 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.