

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host
Lisa Smith

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

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 am so thrilled to be with you here today. Picture this at 6:30 PM on a Tuesday. You just walk through the door after a long day at work, and within 30 seconds, your 8-year-old is in complete meltdown mode because their sibling looked at them wrong.

Your first instinct to jump in and fix it, stop fighting. Just get along. But then your partner walks in behind you. Sees the chaos and immediately starts correcting your approach. That's not how we handle this. You're being too soft and just like that. Now both of you are dysregulated. Your child is so melting down, but now you and your partner are snapping at each other to sound familiar.

Well, here's what I know for sure. When one storming parent meets another storming parent. There's going to be an explosion every single time. But here's the thing I want you to know today. One calm, regulated, nervous system can transform an entire family in that moment, just one. And today I have something really, really special for you.

Today we're pulling back the curtain and inviting you, the listener, into a live coaching conversation with Hive members Neil and Carrie. They are brave, generous, and willing to come on and share something. So many parents struggle with how to work as a team when big emotions show up in their kids and themselves, because let's be honest, sometimes it's not just the kids storming uhuh, right?

Sometimes we storm and when one storming parent meets another storming parent. Well, you know what happens? There's going to be an explosion a hundred percent of the time, and if you've ever felt like you and your partner were on opposite teams when your child was melting down, not listening or struggling, today's episode is exactly for you.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

And speaking of navigating these storming moments together, I am so excited. To say welcome, Neil and Carrie. Thrilled to have you both here today. Thank you. Thank you. I'm glad to be here. I'm excited to talk about this topic, right? I mean, it's a good one. It's juicy, and Neil and Carrie reached out to me because they've been working on something so many of you face, and it's really about staying regulated when our kids are dysregulated and how to support each other instead of both getting triggered at the same time, and.

Let me just say, because I really do work to be totally transparent in my coaching and in the podcast and in my life. I can so relate to this topic because it is something that Dave and I definitely struggled with when Malcolm was little, your boys' age, and I would not give us necessarily a gold star all the time, or a hundred or an a plus because when new things come up.

We still struggle sometimes with how to co-regulate with how to stay regulated when our son is struggling with something, when he's melting down, when he is doing something we don't like or agree with. And so I just wanna validate from the outset that this is an authentic struggle in most homes around the world, regardless of what your home looks like.

Where you're from, what part of the country you live in, what you believe in. This struggle is real, and it is especially real in 2025 with our busy lives, with how involved we are with our kids, with how just complicated life is today. This struggle is real. So I wanna just say from the beginning, Neil and Carrie from the bottom of my heart, thank you for.

Coming and talking about this because I know today we're going to help so many people sort this out. Welcome. Alright, let's start with this. Can you share a specific example from this past week where both of you got triggered at the same time? Paint the picture for us. What was happening with the kids?

How did it unfold between the two of you? Let's walk through a specific example that we wanna work on. Okay. Do you have one? I do. You go ahead. Yeah. I wonder if it's the same one we're thinking of. Uh, maybe. Yeah. Surprise me. So this is one that we actually talked a little bit about in coaching. I talked with you about and coaching on a high call.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

But, uh, last Thursday night, uh, commanders playing the Packers and I don't know, I, I've been to like, do things while the game is on and somehow like still watch the kids be present, but then have my phone on. And try to watch the game. And while I was doing that kind of, there's this parallel di dialogue where I'm trying to get to bed because I have sleep issues and there's a whole number of things that I need to do to get ready for bed.

And as I was getting ready for bed, um, and trying to finish up that list of things to do, um, my son comes in. And says, dad, like, come over here. Listen to this voice that mom has. Like she's gonna do this really funny voice. And I'm like, way from completing my nighttime routine. I was so excited because it was almost like the first time in a long time that I've actually been able to finish it.

I was looking forward to laying down with my kids, which hardly, oh gosh, I'm getting a little emotional, but it, it hasn't really happened because of all the things I need to do to get to bed. And, um, I was just thinking like, okay, I'll be like, just gimme these three minutes. And then he kept telling my ear, dad, dad, come on, come on, come on.

And I was literally, uh, reading this. I, I read a small passage of the scripture and I was just trying to read like one paragraph and I thought he was watching football. Yeah. Okay. And I, and I, and he just kept saying, dad, come on, literally screaming in my ear while I'm trying to have like this meditative moment.

And I was just promising like just one minute. Just like literally one minute. And um, I didn't expect it, but I just lost it. And I just said, usually when I lose it, I say some combination of shut up and effing usually comes as an adjective somewhere in there. And I don't remember exactly how, what the structure of the sentence was, but I know I said it loud.

I said it because I couldn't take it. And later on I figured out. There was this emotion attached to it. And then I remember, so Avi kind of got the message, went back to No you didn't. I came up. I came up. Oh, I was putting, during this time I was to bed. We were being goofy. Dad was in the living room. I said, go get dad.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

'cause they wanted me to scare him with my funny voice and I was thinking he just had to run over for one second and go. And run away. And that would've been that. And they would've been in bed and it would've been done. Yeah. And yeah, and I say remember there was a trigger, actually, the trigger was, Carrie hardly ever does this, but she said, okay, everyone, I'm going to bed.

And she historically, throughout her whole relationship, pretty much, she's always waited for me, sometimes even stayed up for me so that I could, you know, just finally spend some time with her after the kids go to bed. So it really surprised me also, and I felt like, geez, like not only am, am I gonna lose the chance to sleep and have this quality of time with the kids, but also with Carrie.

Yeah. So I lost it and then I sat on the couch and I kind of knew what was coming because it's a frequent pattern where I lose it and Carrie's instant reaction, um, is to yell at me. And I don't remember exactly what she said, but I almost knew like Uhoh, like I know this is, this happened. I know what the next foot is, like, what's gonna happen now?

And there was this like fear and a little bit of fear. And I think I forgot exactly what she said. It was like, stop it or something. And then she, you remember what you said? I don't remember. I know I came out there, I yelled at you and. Then I took Avi and I turned him, turned his shoulders, and I said, let's go to bed.

And then as we were walking, I told him, Avi, it wasn't right that I yelled at dad and it wasn't right that dad yelled at you. I said, and we're gonna talk about it tomorrow, but let's go to sleep now and we don't need to be in that environment. Yeah. Yeah. That's what I said. Okay. So it sounds like there was a lot going on.

Yeah. And I can hear it, right? Yeah. Carrie thinks. Dad's just gonna participate for 30 seconds so she can move to the next phase of bedtime. Which she's probably, you're thinking Carrie, I'm already carrying the load while he's watching football. Mm-hmm. Although he's meditating and his prep. So like Carrie, you're thinking, just check the box for me here, buddy, so I can get to the next step.

Yeah. And Neil, you're thinking, hold off and let me finish this so I can come participate. So it's very clear that you're each looking through a different lens.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

Right? Mm-hmm. And making assumptions about what you're doing and what the other person is or isn't doing. And then, you know, the volcano fills up Neil and lava spews out the top where you get triggered.

And when you get triggered, you start yelling and then carry that creates some response in you where instead of then regulating you, dysregulate right alongside Neil. And it sounds like that just goes on. Rinse and repeat. Rinse and repeat. Rinse and repeat. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Yep. Mm-hmm. Alright. Now, Carrie, just tell us real quick so we can hear in your voice when you get overwhelmed.

So, Neil's yelling. Mm-hmm. And the boys need to go to bed and you're tired. Mm-hmm. What does overwhelm feel like for you and how does it show up for you in the moment? Well, I'd say for me in the moment. I had been trying to get them to lay down to go to sleep for, oh gosh, 45 minutes, like bedtime routines, get everything together.

They always say, oh, I'm hungry, right at daddy, you brush your teeth. Or right after they brush their teeth, and then, you know, then I was laying down, I was tired. I was like, I've got everything done. I am laying down. I'm not getting up. And then. We were just being silly. And so you're eight months pregnant?

Yeah, I'm mostly eight months pregnant. At nine. Actually nine, put it that way. Yes. So then Avi went to go and get dad because he wanted him to see how silly it is and I was like, oh, this is a funny time. 'cause it's really silly and you know, the kids are having a good time and he just has to come and run away and pretend that he is scared of my silly voice.

And I was just laying down. I'm like, I'm not getting up again. I'm not getting up again. And then he's going, dad, dad. And he's like, give me a minute, Avi. Dad. Dad, Avi, I'm almost done. Give me a minute. Dad. Dad and I, I don't even know if you heard me. And I was like, it'll be 30 seconds, just come over here and uh, still I'm finishing this reading.

Okay. I'm not getting up. That's it. And then. Neil gets dysregulated, then I'm like, oh, I gotta get up Yeah. Over here and yell at you because, so that's where we're getting from, from my perspective. Yeah. I mean, this is so, such a beautiful ex. I

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

mean, it's not beautiful that happened for you all, but it's such a beautiful example of.

No one here's trying to be difficult or a bad parent or, or Dysregulate the other person, you know, we've got Carrie, who's nine months pregnant and has spent 45 minutes putting two little boys to bed and wants to just be done and stumbles upon this really fun. Silly bonding moment with the kids, and Avi wants dad to join in and and enjoy it as well, which really on, I mean, is so sweet, right?

Mm-hmm. Avi wants to include his dad and have him be a part of it, but then we also have Neil over here who already confesses, he struggles with bedtime. He's working on a routine that allows him to get his rest. And B. Productive the next day. He's trying to follow step A, then step B, then step C, and step B gets interrupted and he just wants to finish that.

And so there's this just complete. Misunderstanding of what's really happening real time. Everybody has their perception of what's going on, and then we get dysregulated and you know, you're so not alone in this. I mean, what you described happens. In the mornings before school, on the way to soccer, practice at school, pickup on the weekends, trying to get out the door at bedtime, trying to sit at the dinner table and have a six and 8-year-old sit still going out to eat, visiting grandma.

I mean, this is happening multiple times a day in homes all over the world and. Before we dive into the coaching, which we're gonna get to here, I want the listener to understand what's actually happening in our brains and in our kids' brains during these storming moments. Because I think once you understand this, it's a game changer.

So here's the thing, most parents don't realize, your nervous system. Our nervous system is the parents and our kids' nervous system are constantly talking to each other, not with words. With energy and regulation and safety signals, and this is what is called co-regulation, and it's one of the most powerful tools we have as a parent.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

When your child is dysregulated, when they're melting down, when they're pushing back, when they're completely losing it, studies show that their brain actually goes offline. The prefrontal cortex, if they have any at that point, that handles logic and cooperation is completely unavailable, and they're running on pure emotional brain, which we are too sometimes as the parents.

But here's where it gets really interesting. Your child's nervous system is literally scanning yours for safety. Literally, mirror neurons in their brain are firing, asking, is my parent calm? Can they handle what's happening? Am I safe? If you're dysregulated too, if you're yelling, panicking, or spiraling, their brain gets the message danger, and then that causes them to dysregulate even further.

The parent can't, the adult can't handle this, so I need to fight harder. But when you stay regulated, you're calm and steady in their chaos, their nervous system starts to sync with ours, and your regulation becomes their roadmap back to calm. Now here's what makes co-parenting so tricky. And sometimes I think single parents get a little advantage here, but they may not agree with me as single parents.

But here's what makes co-parenting so tricky. When two parents get triggered at the exact same time, we don't just have one dysregulated nervous system, we have a dysregulated spiral. Your stress triggers your partner's stress, which triggers more stress than you, which further disregulates your child's nervous system even more.

It's like having two different fire alarms in two different rooms going off at once. Nobody can think clearly. Nobody can problem solve, and everyone just gets more activated, which, think about this, like if there's fire alarms already going off in the kitchen, you're like, oh crap, I burnt the toast. I talk about the fire alarm all the time side the, hi, I burnt the toast.

It's all smokey and foggy. But man, if the fire alarm goes off in the bedroom as well. Now we're almost panicked and frozen. Like, okay, now we really have a five alarm problem. Maybe it's not just the burnt toast, maybe the house is on fire and I don't know what to do. Right? But, and this is the beautiful part, it only takes one regulated nervous system to change the entire dynamic.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

When one parent can stay calm and grounded, they become the anchor point, they become the safety signal that helps everyone else find their way back. This isn't about being perfect. It isn't about never getting triggered. This is about recognizing when you're dysregulated and having the tools to come back to calm for both yourself and your partner as a team.

And that's exactly what we're gonna help Neil and Carrie explore today. I have to say, uh, before we even get into the coaching, Carrie, your idea when you finally got up out of the bed at nine months pregnant. And, you know, picked Avi up and apologized to him. Repaired. I'm sorry that I yelled at dad. Sorry.

Dad yelled at you. We'll work this out tomorrow, but we're not gonna stay in this environment. It was a form of anchoring for Avi. It was a form of rather than standing there, and I really wanna applaud you rather than standing there and yelling at Neil. Leaving the room with Avi to continue the bedtime is good for everybody and it may not have felt great for Neil in the moment.

I get that, but because he might've felt left alone after he yelled and feeling guilty and bad, and, well, what happened here? And, but it was great for your kid in repairing and then moving back to the bedtime routine. So I just, I wanna, I wanna really commend you there. I, I think in the moment it didn't feel very good for Neil, because when we talked about it later, he was like, you know, like, what did you say to Avi?

You know, and I told him what I said. He was like, oh. That was good. I was like, okay. Yeah. You know, like, and you know what? Sometimes that's all we're capable of in that moment. Mm-hmm. Right. I mean, sometimes when I'm dysregulated and I'm looking for Dave to help me regulate, and he actually is dysregulated himself.

Mm-hmm. Maybe over something at work or maybe over Malcolm and he steps towards me. Or, you know, comes near me with his dysregulation. Sometimes the best one either one of us can do in that moment is to just say, Hey, let's take a pause, and maybe we don't say it this peacefully, but like, let's take a pause and come back to this later.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

Mm-hmm. Sometimes the pause is success in that moment. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Right. We're not gonna resolve anything when we're dysregulated. And I do believe literally recognizing that is step one. Right. Okay. So let's dive into some questions here. So let's dig into what might be going under the surface, because this is bigger than one meltdown.

So let me ask you, Carrie. Yeah. How were big emotions handled in your family growing up? I mean, I would get yelled at and have to be quiet. That's it. Okay. I mean, so you were on the receiving end of the yelling with no voice, and you just had to take it for as long as the adult felt like they wanted to yell at you.

I grew up in that household too, and that is really triggering when you feel like you're back, like you're back to being the eight little powerless, eight or 12 or 14-year-old girl who's being yelled at with no voice. Yeah. Okay. I so get that. Neil, how were big emotions handled in your family growing up?

Uh, the double dynamic. My mom would, uh, yell at the top of her lungs when there's comfort with my dad. She'd yell at the top of her lungs. Sometimes she'd throw pots and, and my brother was always quiet, but I, um, I yelled back and loud. I matched her energy. And my dad would often just stay on the couch and not do anything.

Okay. This is really important. I'm, I'm just loving this for all of us. So you can just see the dynamic happening. Real time, right? The message, because let me say this, our early experiences become the blueprint for how we handle emotions as an adult, and when those blueprints are different. It can feel like you're speaking two languages in the middle of a storm.

You know, Carrie, I, you tell me where I'm wrong. When yelling happens in an intimate relationship, meaning husband, you probably feel like you're immediately back to being that 8-year-old little girl with no voice. Maybe so, because I don't really like, I'll yell back for a second, but I don't really engage in it like Right.

You go into freeze or fawn. Yeah. Right. How do I make this stop? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. And Neil, you as a child got the message. If someone's yelling at me, I'm allowed to yell back. Yeah. And you probably think, and this is what's interesting,

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

like my, my whole body is on fire right now and I have goosebumps on my arms and I wanna cry because this is so powerful because Carrie, here's the message I imagine Neil got.

If someone yells at me, I can yell back and it's okay. We're just yelling at each other. Right? And there's no, you know, depression or intimidation or trying to make you small. This is a healthy quote unquote right version of communicating. And so when I yell, I think it's fair game and I'm just waiting for you to yell back at me.

Mm-hmm. So he, it's like fight and fight. And you're in fight and fawn or freeze, and so it's, it's, it's you, you're, you're literally speaking different languages. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. This is the challenge that you guys face and then throw two kids into it who are, you know, kids are self-centered, they're immediate, they have needs that need to be met.

There's no time to sort of slow down and notice the dynamic going on in real time. And so this is just. Storm, storm explosion waiting to happen, because my guess is, Carrie, is that when this begins to happen, all you wanna do is hit the, what's that thing called that you, when you're flying, when you're a pilot and you the jack button.

Yeah. All you wanna do is escape. Get out of this moment, stop being yelled at. I imagine what Carrie's dysregulated brain is saying is, stop, stop yelling at me or let me run away. Neil's brain is saying, well, let, let's do this. This is healthy, let's have this out. Let's say let's, let's roar. But he doesn't see it as intimidating.

He sees it as, these are the rules of engagement and why do you wanna run away from me? Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Yeah. Right. Yeah. And then I also get into. You know, that fight or flight mode of protective mode for kids Yes. About that. Doesn't have a voice and he can't say anything back, so I have to go in there and step in, you know, protection.

Mm-hmm. I have to protect him, so he doesn't, and this is where the childhood wound comes in. Right. I have to step in and protect him so he doesn't experience what I experienced. Right, right. Right. Right. And I, I'd like to all say that with the

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

Yell, yell dynamic. I wasn't yelling because I wanted to, as a kid, I was yelling because I was hoping to be heard, and I felt like a lot of my child, I, I was never heard.

I was dismissed. And the irony is that the latter I yelled with my mom, the more she would yell back. And with Carrie when I yell, the thing that I'm seeking for the most is validation and someone to. Regulate them to say, Hey, I understand you're in pain. And when you're yelling and you're dysregulating somebody else, especially with Carrie, she freezes.

And so I look at her and say like, just say anything, like anything. And she just looks at me with a blank face, no emotion, like, and I'm just, I, I get so dysregulated by that. Yes, I get that. So let me break that down. So you said Neil, I just wanna be heard. And so I yell louder to be heard. And what I want is validation that you're hearing me.

And ironically, two things are happening. The louder you yell, the more Carrie freezes. This is her amygdala, and this is what I hope you can take away from today's conversation. It isn't that she's trying to reject you or or invalidate you, or it's that her amygdala goes into the hypo mode, a freeze, and the louder you yell, the more she freezes, which then makes that blank face.

Just activates your amygdala even more, and then you get louder and louder and louder by going into the fight. Response louder and louder and louder. And then the crescendo is, my guess is this is what happens. The crescendo is this, the final act, the crescendo of the whole thing is. You're dysregulated Neil.

So you're yelling louder and louder and louder. See me, see me, see me. Let me get bigger and bigger and bigger, and Carrie's getting more and more and more frozen. And then there's this moment where Carrie's brain flips and goes, okay, now I've gotta protect my kids so they don't experience what I experienced.

And when she goes into that final protection mode of maybe walking the kids in the other room or shielding them or saying something to you or them. Then you feel really unheard. And then the explosion probably hits an all time high because

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

not only woman are you not hearing me, but I now you're keeping my kids from me, which makes me feel even more unheard.

So now I'm going to roar the loudest possible I can. So now we're both in our fully activated, I'm in the biggest fight mode I can be in and carrie's in the biggest frozen mode fawning RO safety mode of not only walking away from you, but taking your kids away from you, which is the ultimate act of not being hurt.

And then afterwards, there's feelings of loss and loneliness and rejection, and then that spirals into a whole nother. Dysregulated storm for you? Um, either yelling back or when the loss or the hurt comes in, I wanna run away, like stay at a hotel room or even go back to my mom's house in DC like extreme.

Yeah. Because I'm so, yeah, because afterwards you're feeling very rejected by the experience you're feeling. Very, because I'm at that point. So you turn into a hurt little boy afterwards. Right. Carrie does it in the middle, and this is where your childhood wound comes up. We've just had this big event where I've spent all this energy trying to get heard and the grand net result is I still feel completely unheard and now I feel rejected on top of unheard, and I just wanna run away and isolate and lick my wounds because I'm, I'm just feeling this whole bag of emotions.

So it's really like. You know, Neil's amygdala meets carrie's amygdala. You both have this stress response where you're, where you literally, your amygdala feels unsafe, and it fires epinephrine and norepinephrine through the adrenal glands in your body. So first the amygdala speaks, and then the adrenal EPIs speak, and then the childhood wounds speak, and then we have to recover afterwards.

And this cycle just probably keeps repeating itself at different levels. You know, based on, on how triggered you are by the experience. Yeah. I, I still get this. Do you both feel heard right now? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Mm-hmm. Yeah. Yeah. I think it's a better way to understand each other. Um, yeah. Yeah. And I can see, like, I never wanna talk about it after.

Neil always wants to talk about it after, so I can see how he feels that hurt. In that moment where I'm still like processing what I want to do or what I want to say

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

about it. So yeah, and I'll also say something like, through your coaching, which really helped, is that we're able to communicate after the fact.

And even sometimes, you know, this is not the only example that even happened in the last week. That pause is so critical and I'm learning to try to be really comfortable with that because it's, it's like a, um, a steam cooker and when all these emotions bubble up, it's like, what? Like how can you not, how can you ask me to pause right now?

'cause I'm about to blow and I'm holding this lid on top of this emotion and you're just asking me to just stay right there. Like, you know, and, and I'm learning more and more that that's. Tough right now as that is, that that's what I have to do. And, and, and one thing I'll add to, I just wanna put asterisk on this, that when you said that, you know, let's talk about this later.

I've been very specific with Carrie and I said, look, I I, I don't even like it when you say that. Like, I need you to say, I, let's talk about this in 12 hours, but let's talk about this tomorrow at eight o'clock. Sure. 'cause just later is, is even dismissing to me. Well, and I think it's because. What I just heard secondary to the storm, the second wave, we'll call it happens when, okay, this is just all happened.

And again, Carrie grew up in a home where the person with the power yelled and the underling was mute and. Then it doesn't help that you also went to medical school and you were trained to listen to the attending and, right. There's a lot of conditioning going on here, but let's set that aside. So, so Carrie's blueprint is, I'm guessing the event happens.

The the power person with the power gets all their frustration out and yells, and then we just move on and we just pretend it didn't happen. And this is where the second wave comes in. So Carrie's coping mechanism is probably just move on. I've got two kids, a baby, a full-time. I just gotta, I just gotta, you know, reconcile this inside my head, let go of it and go back to everyday life.

Yeah. But Neil, this is where you think, okay, I wasn't hurt in the primary experience. I'll save it and I'll be heard in the secondary experience when we talk about this later, and then when you go to talk about it, Carrie isn't ready or doesn't

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

want to or put you off, and that feels like a secondary rejection to the primary rejection, and you basically feel like, well, when do I get to be heard?

I tried doing it loud, I'm trying to do it quiet and I'm not getting heard. So that's the pressure cooker is the feeling of not being hurt. Yeah, and I'd also add that when we come back to it later, honestly, most of the times I forget anything that even happened or what I was thinking at the time, and you hold onto it.

And so like asking me really specific questions, I'm just like, um, uh, I don't know. You know, like I, I can't. I can't put the pieces back together. Yeah. Which feels bad, right? Yeah. To you. Like, does it mean I don't care? Am I, am I losing my mind? Listen, I can relate to this. I am the same way. I cannot remember and as I couldn't tell you a single argument Dave and I have ever had.

I mean, we don't argue a lot, but, and he's more like, Neil let you know, well, you said this and then you did this. And I'm like, I'm literally like I did. Yeah. You know, like I, yes. Okay, so that's good to know. And then you want to go into avoidant again, more of like a, you're in the hypo. Mm-hmm. Uh, uh, freeze or just avoid.

Mm-hmm. So, you know what's happening here is when you get dysregulated, Neil, you go into hyper fight or flight. And Carrie, you go into hypo fawn or freeze, which really is good that that's solid for, I mean, imagine if both of your fighters, that's where things get really ugly. Right? Right. But we have to learn to understand the other person's side of the coin mm-hmm.

So that we can realize we, we, we have to not take it personally. Right. We have to realize that you literally, when you're, when you're dysregulated, you're literally speaking two different languages. Yeah. And, and really begin to appreciate this. And you know, it's like Neil can't wait to get back in there, get back in the ring and battle this out, not even in an aggressive way.

And Carrie, you're like, I don't wanna step back in the ring at all because I can't even remember what happened. Is this new information you, Neil? Yeah, no, I, I mean exactly what, what happens and, and. I wanna say one more thing is when we were dating, like part of the reason why I fell in love with with Carrie and why

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

I'm still in love with Carrie is that anytime there would be a conflict, usually I, I'd probably say most often before the night, we would always resolve it.

And now with two kids, I mean, it's amazing that she, she has such, she has a, she works, she takes care of the kids when she's not working. And I would say even when we do fight, she does stay up. Even being nine months pregnant, she does stay up and she will talk with me before we go to bed and at least come to something where we can come back.

Okay, good. Well done. This is really just about the solution here is just when you're calm, really working to appreciate. How different you are. And I have to say, you know, your kids are going to get a piece of both of this, so this is fabulous. You know, and it's, it's really understanding, Carrie, when Neil hits that threshold, what, what does Neil need?

The little boy and Neil needs to be heard. Right? You literally could say to him, I hear you, and that's it. Neil for you, it's recognizing that Carrie, her inner child, struggles with that power dynamic. When you're dysregulated, I can tell I, I feel like I know you all pretty well, and you have a very well-balanced when you're both regulated, your partners.

50 50 your equals, you do not have power roles in your marriage or gender roles or it's, it's really amazing. But Neil, your job is to recognize that when Carrie gets dysregulated, there's this shift where she perceives the louder person has all the power, and she turns into, I would say, powerless or much less power.

And her voice gets muted. And so your job is to see. That she's struggling not to reject you or defy you, but it's a frozen moment for her. Yeah. And if you guys can reach to understand even for a few seconds when that's happening, you can bring your higher brain back online. That's the goal, is you've dropped into your middle brain in those moments and fallen into those old roles, those old wounded roles.

And I don't know if this is gonna surprise you all, or the listener or not, but I'm not great at confrontation, particularly with people that I really care about. I, I, I don't do well. I grew up in a household similar to yours, Carrie, and what I've learned to

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

do is when I feel that dynamic, when I feel the person is, I, I sort of think of it as like lording over me and has all the power I.

Will say, whether it's Malcolm or Dave or a friend, and I kind of learned this in the corporate setting. I need to go to the bathroom. Mm-hmm. And I will just, whether I need to or not, I will go to the bathroom because that, that walking gives me. Motion changes, emotion. I can gather myself, I can say, okay, we're about to have a conversation that I'm not good at.

And, and it will really allow me to gather myself and kind of snap out of that blueprint that I was raised in that makes me feel like I don't have a voice. Right. And, and, and Neil. Your job in that moment when you catch yourself yelling, raising your volume might be to just say to Carrie, I just want to be heard.

My goal here is to feel, and I think you should say that word, my goal is to feel heard. Right? It isn't that I wanna be heard. It isn't that what I'm saying is amazing or important. It isn't that I'm trying to dictate to you, you know what we. Do next. It's that I'm reaching to feel heard in this moment.

And Carrie, if you can take a pause and gather yourself to say, we're partners in this. I'm not the child here. Like you both can work on yourself in that moment to get out of that middle brain emotional center because you're both incredibly intelligent people. When your higher brain is online, you're probably unstoppable as a team.

I mean, you build businesses, you travel you like you're unstoppable. When you're functioning as a team in your higher brain, the job is to recognize when we've fallen into our middle brain and I take responsibility to try to get back to my higher brain, and Neil takes responsibility. It's like. I'm not expecting you to do it.

I'm gonna do it in my own way. And your job is to learn your way, Carrie. And your job is to learn your way. Neil, so Neil, you say, Hey, I'm just trying to, I'm just trying to feel heard here. And Carrie, you say, I'm just trying to feel equal here. You know, or whatever you wanna come up with is saying, you guys are gonna be shocked at the transformation this creates.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

'cause we can only control ourselves. Right, right. I can't make you calm down. I can't make you stop yelling. I can shift the dynamic in how I show up and I can be the calming force that calm, that helps calm everybody. Tell me your thoughts on this, each of you. Let's start with Carrie. Yeah, I mean, I think that would be really helpful.

I don't know how I would get myself to say that, I guess, and maybe. You know, like me yelling back is, well, me yelling back is saying like, yeah, I don't want you to keep yelling at us or at me or him, or, yeah, I, well, what you could say to Neil is, I'm feeling frozen. Mm-hmm. Right. Because he sees the blank face.

He takes it personally, you know, he's reaching for connection. Mm-hmm. And you're reaching away from connection. Mm-hmm. And he's taking that personally. Mm-hmm. So really the most powerful thing I think you could say to Neil is I'm feeling frozen right now. Eventually, I think you'll evolve to other statements, but I think in the beginning, and I think the reason for you, another value to you saying out loud I'm frozen, is for you to also recognize what's happening, right?

And for that to be a cue to you that I'm not high higher brained partnered Carrie. Right now I'm frozen wounded Carrie, and I'm communicating that to Neil. And Neil. That can be your. A signal that this isn't about her not hearing you or rejecting you or you know, pushing you away. This is literally, she is frozen in the moment.

So if Carrie says, I'm frozen, and Neil, you say, I'm trying to feel heard, like how powerful could that be for the two of you? Mm-hmm. Yeah. Okay. And I also think each of you saying that is the pause. That is what you know, I talk about pause and respond. I borrow Viktor Frankl's skills. You know, pause and respond rather than react.

What's happening right now is the freeze, is the reaction and the yelling to get hurt is the reaction, and there's no opportunity to respond, and I get it. You're just completely flooded with cortisol and epinephrine, and the body is just taken over. The amygdala thinks you're in danger and it's trying to save your life, and that's, that's biology.

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

We're hardwired that way as humans, right. Carrie? You probably understand that well more than I do, but if Carrie says, I'm frozen, that is your attempt to pause. Mm-hmm. I'm frozen. I'm frozen. Like I would say it out loud once and then think it like 10 times. Yeah, that will give you a moment to pause and bring the higher brain back online.

And Neil, if you say out loud, I'm trying, I'm wanting to feel heard, your brain will process that and your brain eventually, if you do it enough times, both of your brains will go, oh. Now I see what's going on within me because what I understand deeply is so often when we're dysregulated, we're so focused on the other person.

He's being difficult, she's disrespecting me, they're not hearing me right, and I think saying out loud, I am frozen and I am trying to feel heard, brings your attention back inward and will allow you to pause and respond. So what I would like you guys to do is really commit to this work, this tool, and let's follow up in a couple weeks and do a second like, follow up episode.

Sure. And, and talk about how did it go, what did you notice? I, my gosh, what a beautiful gift we're giving to the world to follow up. And then let's see what progress, what came up and where we can go from here. And one thing that also makes me think of. Is how we interact with our kids during these moments.

Yeah, I was just thinking because I feel like, like I tried to adapt where like if I was starting to feel really frustrated that I tell the kids, Hey, I need a moment right now because I'm feeling really frustrated and I don't want to get angry. You know? Or if I were to say, you know, Avi, I'm just trying to take you away from over here.

Like we shouldn't. Be yelling at each other. Need time to think about this, or Neil says, Avi, I feel like you're not hearing me right now. What I'm trying to tell you is that I need three minutes and then I'm gonna go in the room because I think Avi's. He, he would get, so he gets like, why aren't you coming?

Why aren't you coming? Why aren't you coming? Why aren't you coming? You know? And so that could have, and Neil was working on, I'm gonna be calm. I'm gonna be calm. Give me a minute, give me two minutes, Avi, give me two

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

minutes. You know? And then it's like, ah, you know, instead of just, he could have said, Avi. I feel like you're not hearing me right now.

Yes. You know? Yes. Yeah. Um, once you guys develop these skills with each other, you'll take them to other areas of your life. And that's why that's the beauty of, of parenting is it's the rising tide that lifts all boats, right? Mm-hmm. And so you will find a language of, I need a minute, I'm feeling frustrated, and I need, I need to take a pause.

And you can even bring this language in. Avi, I'm, I feel like you're not hearing me. I'm trying to communicate to you that in two minutes after I finish this, I'm all yours. Mm-hmm. I mean, that will, and because then what you'll be doing is, is you'll be modeling, pause and respond for your kids rather than react.

And kids don't do what we say they do what we do, they do what we model. Right. So this will be. We'll, we'll check in on that too and see if you've noticed a change there. You're basically developing a language of communication and you'll be healing your childhood wounds, which we all have. Every, nobody escapes childhood without some wounds, so this is in no way disrespectful to the people that raised us.

They're amazing and they love us very much, but we, none of us escape without childhood wounds. But what you're doing is you're healing. The little one inside of you that had needs that didn't get met. And you're finding a new way to show up when you feel like you're thrust back into that dynamic. Yeah.

Yeah. And I, I think that's one of the beautiful things I found with the coaching process is that it hasn't only helped me with my relationship with my kids, which helped me first. It's helped a relationship between me and Carrie, and then that's what impacts the kids. Mm-hmm. I love it. I love it. Okay. So you guys have your homework that you're committed to, and we're gonna follow up in a couple weeks and hear how it went.

Anything else you wanna share with the listener before I wrap us up on this episode? And again, I just want to thank you guys. This was amazing, and I know

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

that people that are listening are gonna have light bulb moments all over the place. Well, thank you. We appreciate it. Yeah. Yeah, and, and I would say that.

I think Carrie will echo this, but joining the HI and having a format where I can talk about these things on a daily basis and even increase that coaching, you know, with the VIP experience I have with you, it's just, it's been life transformation. My friends see it, my family sees it, I feel it. And I would even say that even if you experience no difference in relationship with your child, you'll experience the a difference at least in yourself.

And that's an extreme statement like there's been. Monumental shifts in my relationship with my kids, but just that alone, like you say, being a peaceful parent is enough to, to really get into what you're sharing with us. Mm-hmm. Thank you. I love to hear that. Yeah. That's why it's called the Peaceful Parent.

Not the peaceful kid, right? Yeah, yeah. Okay. So what Neil and and Carrie are talking about, which I talk about every week here in the podcast and extended invitation to you all is, is the hive. And inside the hive I teach parents how to co-regulate as a team with personalized strategies created just for your family.

You get weekly live coaching calls. Where you can bring real situations just like Neil and Carrie did today, and get specific guidance for you, your unique challenges. And I will say we did real time coaching today. We, this was not prescribed or planned out. Um, in fact, I know Neil wanted to plan it out a little bit, and I wanted to just do a spontaneous coaching session so that you, the listener, could experience what transformation might be.

Like I say, reading, listening is information coaching is where the real transformation happens, and this is what happens inside the hive. And in addition, you get access to a safe, private community. Where parents share what's going on, celebrate wins and support each other through the hard moments. It's like having a peaceful parenting coach and a whole support system in your back pocket.

So whether you're dealing with co-parenting struggles, bedtime battles, sibling fighting, or. Anything else going on? Screen time sibling rivalries deciding

Ep. #246: When Two Storming Parents Collide: How to Break the Cycle

whether to add to a family going it alone in your parenting. Inside the hive you have all the tools and support to handle any situation with confidence.

So if you're ready to stop storming alongside your kids. And your partner. This is your invitation to run, not walk straight to the [hive coaching.com](https://hivecoaching.com) and join us. Join Neil and Carrie and all the other families that are inside the Hive because here's the thing, you do not have to figure this out alone.

Okay? We're gonna set. A follow up call so we can hear what transformed and transacted with Carrie and Neil, and for Carrie and Neil after today's episode. So stay tuned in the coming weeks of her part two. Neil and Carrie again from the bottom of my heart. I'm grateful for your bravery and being here today and sharing so openly.

I know that all the listeners are gonna gain some insight and tools from what you shared with us today, so thank you so much. Mm-hmm. You're welcome. You. Thank you, Lisa. Okay. Until next time, I'm wishing you Peaceful Parenting. Thanks for listening to Real World Peaceful Parenting. If you want more info on how you can transform your parenting, visit the [peaceful parent.com](https://peacefulparent.com).

See you soon.