

One-Page Summaries:

Discipline & Behavior Management

Empowered Parents Summit 2024



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How to Shed Your Emotional Baggage for a Deeper Connection With Your Kid

Dr. Shefali Tsabary



"If we're looking for kids to love us all the time, we'll struggle to set healthy boundaries because we'll be afraid of upsetting them."

Letting go

We're constantly trying to control and micromanage every aspect of our kids' lives, from their emotions to their friends and future plans.

Why? Because we're terrified of all the potential risks we imagine they could face. We're trying to cram in every life lesson and experience we've ever had, hoping to mould them into awesome adults. But in reality, we're doing this because **we lack trust**—trust in our children's innate potential and trust in the lessons life itself has to offer.

The best teachers

When something goes wrong (like forgetting a passport or getting a bad grade), it's a lesson in itself. But instead of letting it sink in naturally, we tend to go overboard, lecturing and warning. The truth is—dwelling on it doesn't change anything.

Life itself is the best teacher, even when it takes a few tries for the lesson to stick. We forget that kids learn best through their own experiences, not just by being told what to do. Our own anxieties drive us to hover and preach, thinking we're being loving and helpful, but really, we're just trying to ease our own worries.

It's all because we're carrying **emotional baggage** with us. It's unavoidable, really, because it's part of living and interacting with others. The challenge for an awakened parent isn't to get rid of that baggage entirely. We just want to become aware of it instead of letting it hinder our ability to bond deeply with our kids.

Building confidence

Teaching kids to listen to their inner voice is crucial. Even simple decisions like choosing between carrots on the side or on top can build their confidence in their own judgment.

This small practice at age 4 can have a big impact on their ability to make decisions as adults. It's about nurturing their ability to **think for themselves**, even though it can be a challenging process for parents.

How My Golden Formula Ended Yelling for Thousands



Tia Slightham

"Parenting isn't intuitive; it's a skill that's learned over time, just like anything else in life."

The yelling trap

When your kid does something you're not happy with, you might get frustrated and yell. You might think that this will then stop them from doing the same thing again. But that's not how things work.

Yelling doesn't teach them how to do better next time, and it also weakens the bond between you two. When we yell at our kids, we're taking away two very important things from them—**their control and our connection**.

The golden formula

Most parents react to behaviour issues waiting for the fire to happen before putting it out. But with the **golden time formula**, you're being proactive. It's all about spending one-on-one time with your kid and giving them your undivided attention.

When you do this, you're filling up their emotional cups, meeting their needs before they even have to ask for your attention. So, **carve out a small chunk of time each day to do something your kid loves**. Show interest in what they're passionate about, open up those lines of communication, and put away your phone. You want to give your kid a clear signal that says, *"Hey, it's our time together."*

Setting the stage for success

One thing I always suggest to parents is to **identify their top challenge area**, whether it's morning routines, bedtime or homework. Take a moment to reflect: Do you give reminders inconsistently? Do you lose your cool quickly when tired? Or perhaps you sometimes give in because you're just too exhausted to deal with it?

If you find yourself in the "sometimes" zone, it means your boundaries aren't clear, consistent, or concrete. **When boundaries are unclear, kids naturally push them until they find the limits**. This leads to ongoing power struggles and conflicts.

To maintain a sense of calm, think about your boundary-setting approach. Ask yourself: *"Are my boundaries clear and consistent? If not, how can I make the shift from grey areas to clarity? And if I need help, who's there to guide me?"*

Answering Parents' Most Asked Questions About Raising Difficult Children

Tania Johnson



"It's not about perfect parenting. It's about reflective parenting, that ability to go, 'Hold on. This is not the type of relationship that I want with my kid. What needs to be different?"

Creating a safe space

For strong-willed kids to become their best selves and share their talents with the world, they need a solid foundation, like a safe container. As parents, we're the ones who create that container. **We set boundaries** and teach our family values to keep them safe and on track.

When kids have this structure, that's when they really start to blossom. **But if those limits aren't there, things can get tough.** Kids might feel insecure, and their behaviour could start to raise some eyebrows.

It starts with you

As parents, it's crucial to **take care of ourselves first.** Because if we're running on empty, it's tough to deal with our kids. So, take a step back to figure out what needs to change to make sure you're in a better place to handle things.

When those tough moments do come up, don't worry too much about teaching a lesson right then and there. Trust me, they're not going to hear it anyway. Instead, focus on your own body – **breathe deeply, keep your face soft, and get down to their eye level.**

Saying sorry

We adults aren't great at apologising to our kids. We have this habit of throwing in excuses or blaming them in some way. But when we mess up, we have to own it. It's about coming back and saying, *"I'm sorry I yelled. That wasn't okay, and I'm working on doing better."*

Sometimes, we try to make things right, but our kids don't exactly respond the way we hope. They might say something hurtful or push us away. But **our apology isn't about their reaction.** We should apologise because it's the right thing to do.

So, **even if they're upset, we stick to our apology.** We give them space to process without reacting in a way that goes against what we're teaching them. It's all about modelling the behaviour we want to see in them.



Reading Between the Lines: What Your Kid With ADHD Is Really Trying to Tell You

Brooke Schnittman



"In the realm of ADHD, it's not about fixing what's broken; it's about unlocking the potential within."

Your role as a parent

Parents often worry that their children with ADHD won't be able to handle things on their own as they get older (even if they're pretty smart).

It's something I've seen a lot, both with my own stepkids and the kids I've worked with in special education. But really, what these kids need more than anything is just to be understood. They need **our support and guidance** to develop those skills so they can thrive on their own terms.

Starting with the basics

When it comes to managing ADHD, it's all about the basics. Things like mindfulness, therapy, and **healthy habits** such as sleep, eating, and staying hydrated play a huge role.

But alongside these foundational elements, they need to feel understood by people around them. Remember, instead of jumping to conclusions, **ask your child what's up and how you can help**. Understanding where they're coming from can make a world of difference in your relationship.

Collaborate, don't dictate

If their room looks like a tornado just passed through, it might be tempting to barge in and demand they clean it up. But think about it from their perspective - that room is their personal space where they feel safe. Instead of invading it with demands, it's better to shut the door and let them deal with it.

Now, onto a more important point - how to handle those moments when your child seems to be bouncing between feeling overwhelmed and underwhelmed. **Involve them in finding solutions**. Instead of just telling them what's wrong, collaborate with them. When they have a say in things, they feel empowered, valued and respected.

Lastly, **positive reinforcement** goes a long way. Everyone loves to hear they're doing a good job. Well, kids with ADHD are no exception. When you notice them doing something well, make sure to acknowledge it.

Lessons on Loving Life With Little Ones, Straight From a Mom of 5

Marielle Melling



"Peace happens not because of what is going on outside of us, but because of what is going on inside of us."

Easing the chaos

Do you ever feel like keeping your home calm and happy is **an uphill battle**? Trust me, you're not alone. With the endless to-do lists and the constant stress we face, it's no wonder our home life can sometimes feel chaotic.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Despite the challenges, it's possible to **create a peaceful and harmonious home environment**, even in the midst of chaos.

Being grateful

When we, as parents, embrace our own gratitude practices, our kids will quickly pick up on it. They're always watching and learning from us, whether we realise it or not. Start by brainstorming as a family different ways to practice gratitude. **The key isn't how we do it but that it's sincere.**

For example, around the dinner table, **try the three T's**: 1) discussing something you're thankful for, 2) a thoughtful gesture, and 3) something that was tough. Also, simple things like appreciating a sunny day or telling your kids just how much they mean to you can make a big impact when done consistently.

Cultivating calm in family life

How we handle it when our kids mess up really sets the tone for our relationship with them down the road. Just diving into punishment mode can make them feel like we're against them, not on their side. And that might lead them to pull away and look for comfort elsewhere.

Plus, punishing them puts their brains in survival mode, not learning mode. So instead of understanding why lying is wrong, they just figure out how to do it better next time.

But **empathy goes a long way**. Showing them, we understand and care can make all the difference. Everyone slips up, after all. **It's about helping them grow from those slip-ups, not just punishing them for it.**

How Setting and Sticking to Firm Boundaries Can Revolutionise Your Daily Life With Children

Kathy Bowers



"One of the best ways to set healthy boundaries is starting with yourself."

Mixed signals

Consistency is crucial when it comes to setting boundaries with children, but it's a struggle for many parents to maintain it. Imagine if you tell your child to do something one day but let it slide the next - they get mixed signals. They start to think, "Well, if Mom or Dad isn't serious about this rule, why should I follow it?"

That's where **consequences** come in. You need to involve your children in these discussions so they truly grasp that rules aren't just made up—they actually have real-life implications.

Happy home

If you want a happier home, start by talking to your kids. First, talk to them about the yelling and lack of listening. Tell them it's time to change because nobody's happy, and you want everyone to be happy at home.

Then, start with one important rule to fix the problem. It won't happen all at once; it's a slow process. Be ready for them to test you. It's like when you try to make a routine with a new baby. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. But **look for the good things** your kids do every day and praise them.

Sticking to your word

You need to take care of yourself and set some boundaries in your own life. That means speaking up at work if the boss keeps piling on tasks or taking time to relax and unwind each day. Because let's face it, if you're constantly stressed, you're going to snap at the kids sooner or later.

But it's not just about the parents; it's about getting the whole family involved in setting boundaries. That means sitting down with the kids and explaining why boundaries are important and getting their input too.

And when it comes to consequences for breaking those boundaries, **consistency is key**. If you say there's going to be a consequence for coming home late, you have to stick to it. Even if it means taking away privileges or setting a curfew until they learn to respect the rules.

One Key Ingredient to Manage Your Child's Aggression

Tosha Schore



“The language of aggression speaks volumes of unmet needs for understanding.”

Managing anger

The number one problem that often escapes our notice is understanding that aggression typically stems from a deeper source—fear or insecurity.

Instead of recognising the **scared child hiding behind the aggression**, we often jump to conclusions, thinking there's something inherently wrong with the child or our parenting. This misunderstanding leads us to react impulsively rather than **respond with empathy**.

However, when we fail to see the root cause of aggression or unmet emotional needs, we miss a golden opportunity to provide the support and guidance our children truly need.

Empathy over anger

It's really crucial for us to shift our perspective when it comes to dealing with aggression in our children. Instead of just seeing it as a flaw or a problem, we should understand that it often arises from deeper fears or insecurities they might be experiencing.

By **uncovering the root causes behind their behaviour**, we can respond with empathy and provide them with the support they need to express their emotions in a safe way. It's also important for us to work on managing **our own triggers** and reactions so that we can approach these situations calmly and thoughtfully.

Transforming aggression

It's crucial to **connect with our kids** instead of just reacting with punishment or control. When things get tough, we want to get down to their level and really figure out what's bothering them.

Remember, your child isn't just being "bad" – they're struggling, and they need your support. So next time they're misbehaving, instead of getting angry, **try injecting a bit of humour and playfulness into the situation**. For example, if your child is using the F word, you can get silly with the words and say, *“What, are you calling me a funky duck?”* This will definitely help diffuse the tension from both sides.

Creating Unbreakable Parent-Child Connections

Marko Juhant



“Yelling tells kids that parents are out of ideas, which oddly makes them feel superior. But deep down, they still don’t feel valued or respected. Just the opposite; it leaves them feeling unappreciated.”

Communication breakdown

The problem we're facing is that many parents are resorting to outdated and harmful methods of discipline. They're yelling at their kids, thinking it will teach them something, but all it does is breed resentment and shut down communication.

And then there's this fear among parents that getting too close to their children will weaken their authority. But let me tell you, children won't do better or behave better if we're distant or strict. It's about giving them **unconditional love and support**. That's how kids can thrive in life.

What really matters

If we want to create an **unbreakable bond** with our children, we've got to listen, validate their feelings, and find that sweet spot between being a parent and a confidant.

We need to involve them in decisions, show them they matter, and make sure they know we're here to guide and support them. It's not always easy, but we're all just learning as we go.

Finding balance

The thing is, we can't just go around threatening our kids and expecting them to magically learn from it. Take, for instance, saying, *"You'll learn English by the middle of the week!"* Well, that's just setting everyone up for disappointment. We need a plan, not pressure.

And when it comes to mothers and daughters, especially if there's no father around, it's about **finding that balance**. I've had mothers call me in tears because of their daughter's boyfriend's trouble. But I always ask, *"Were you in love with her boyfriend too?"* It's not the mother's place to cry; it's about offering comfort and support.

Give her some chocolate, share a memory, and then ask, *"What are you going to do about it?"* It's about guiding them through, not taking over.