

# Episode 21: An Ode to Imperfection

**Christy Keating** 00:08

Hi, friends, and welcome to The Heartful Parent Podcast. I'm your host, Christy Keating. In this podcast, we talk about it all, our parenting, our partnering and our professional lives, because they are all a part of us. And we were never meant to do this alone.

**Christy Keating** 00:40

Hey, friends, and welcome back to The Heartful Parent Podcast, I am so grateful that you are here. And today we're going to do something a little bit different. I don't have a guest today. So we are just going to spend some time together. And I like this to be an Ode to Imperfection, if you will. And the reason for that is because I am coming off a difficult week of parenting in my own right, right in my own family. And I know that I'm probably not the only one. And I know I'm not the only one that is thinking that or saying that right now. You know, wherever you are in the country, wherever you are in the world. Maybe it was a rough week for you to. And if not this week, it's been a different week, right? When you had a difficult time with the job and the work that is parenting? Because yes, it is joyful. But it is also sometimes hard and scary. And we don't get it right. And you know, there's a lot of pressure on us as parents to get it right all the time. And I think about that in the context of the work that I do, because I don't ever want to send parents the message that you have to be perfect, you have to do everything, quote unquote, right? Nor do I ever want to give the impression that I get it right all the time. I don't, you know, over the years of doing this work I have done what guest Caitlin Escobar described as re-parenting myself, I have, you know, built my toolbox through trainings and education and practice, real world practice. But I don't always get it right. Even with that deeper toolbox, and and you know, all of the sort of information available to me, I still get it wrong. And that's what we're going to talk about today, we're going to talk about a moment, in the not so distant past, that I got it wrong, I got it really wrong. And yet, we're going to talk about sort of why that didn't destroy my relationship with my child and how to kind of fix it when you get it wrong.

**Christy Keating** 03:18

So I'm not going to give a ton of backstory into this, withholding details to protect the guilty, on my child's side, not on my side. And but also what I'll say is we're at the end of the school year, I have a kiddo who deals with ADHD, school is not always super easy. The end of the school year or the end of any semester can bring about quite a bit of stress, quite a bit of anxiety. And, you know, it's not always my favorite time of the year until it's actually over. So that's just sort of the context for, for where we are this week. So in that moment, and in that context, I got pretty upset with my teenager this week. And we talked about it we had numerous conversations about what was going on. And I didn't feel like I was getting the answers from her that I wanted. And really, that's more about me than it is about her. But I was looking for a particular response, particular attitude. reassurances if you will, and I wasn't getting them. And she was sort of shut down in the conversation a little bit eventually. And so we were actually



driving at one point. You know, I was I was using all the tools in my toolbox, using every reserve of calmness and patience that I had and We, they weren't working, we pulled into the garage, park the car, I got out, she said, I'm gonna sit in the car for a few minutes. And I was, at this point internally, feeling pretty upset.

And so I went into my office and I sat down in my chair, and I sort of looked around me, you know, in this place where I do the work that I do, where I help parents, and I, my internal dialogue was saying, like, calm down, take a break, take a pause. And yet, I was also having an argument with myself, because I didn't want to take a break, and they didn't want to take a pause. And I wanted to let my child know, kind of what I was thinking and what I was feeling. And the, you know, it was almost like an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other shoulder. And, you know, the angel was like, my, the better knowing that was my parent coach, right, I had my own parent coach sitting on one shoulder. And then I had my big emotions and sort of big feelings sitting on the other shoulder.

And in this particular instance, those big feelings one out and I sort of huffed my way out to the garage, and said, Get out of the car. And I, you know, I made my daughter get out of the car, and we went into the family room. And you guys, as I was doing this, I knew what I was doing. And I recognize that this was not the best approach. And yet, I couldn't stop myself. And I'm wondering if any of you have ever been in that moment where you're like, I know I shouldn't be doing this. I know, I shouldn't be saying this. But I'm doing it anyway, saying it anyway. And again, that inner dialogue, that inner argument was happening, as I sat her down on the couch. And I said to her, I am a believer in positive parenting. And that is not what's about to happen.

And y'all, I have to own it. I then lit into her. I was so mad. And that anger was coming from a place of fear and frustration, and disbelief. And how could you see this differently than I see this? And I lost it. And I'm going to own that on this podcast in this ode to imperfection. I lost it. And I saw her slumped down, and I saw her head droop. And before too long, she was in tears. And then I was in tears. And then the parent coach on my shoulder, one out and I went holy shit. What did I just do? I asked her to sort of come closer to me, which she did. And we sort of fell into one another's arms, and I held her. And we, you know, and I said, I'm so sorry. And and we kind of began the process of repair. Within 10 minutes, that repair was complete. We were in a good place. Again, I was calm, she was calm. We had sort of reached an agreement on next steps.

#### **Christy Keating 08:40**

And we and then I went upstairs and said to my husband, you're never gonna believe what just happened. I completely lit into our kid. I was like, how did you not hear it? And he's he said he didn't. So the door was closed. I didn't maybe he maybe it wasn't as loud as I thought it was or he just couldn't hear it because of the door and whatever. But I fully confessed to him and said, Not my best parenting moment. And he kind of appropriately like, called me out and kind of laughed with me and said, you know, is everything okay, now, which it was? So why am I telling you this story? Well, one because I think it's important for you to know that we all screw up sometimes. Yes, even the parent coach with the



inner dialogue who knew what I was supposed to be doing? Didn't do it in the moment. I did not practice. What many of you have heard me refer to as brain safe parenting. for about eight minutes. I was I went rogue. I was you know, unleashing my own stress in a way that was you know, was not helpful.

So later when I had a moment to reflect and kind of think about this and think about why did the repair work as well as it did, and my daughter and I have talked about this since that day, why is it that we are okay? So quickly? Why did that? Why was that? How were we able to get back to that good space as quickly as we were. And so here's what I want to share with you, I want to share the three reasons that I think we were able to get back to that place, and why I was able to move forward with my tools and my strategies and my skills, and the positive parenting that I hold near and dear to my heart. And here's what I arrived at.

Okay, so number one, the reason that that blow up, did not destroy, or seriously damage our relationship is because my primary focus in parenting is always connection. It's on building connection, it's on spending time, it's on sort of meeting my kids where they are at. It's, it's and building that relationship in a really healthy, loving way. And I believe that that focus on connection, that deep investment that I have made in connection with both of my kids, is what made this sort of outburst of mine, this anomaly not result in significant and lasting destruction. We were able to bounce back from that because of the underlying foundation of connection. And so this is an invitation to you to sort of evaluate, what is the investment that you put into connection? You know, do you spend one on one time with your kids? If they're little? Are you spending it with them every day? You know, if they're tweens, like for maybe eight up to 12? Are you spending it with them? Multiple times a week? And if they are teens? Are you spending it with them? Multiple times a month? What kind of time are you investing? And when you spend that time? Is it with a phone in front of you? Are you watching screens, because even if you're doing that one on one together, right? It's not really what we call special time. In the world of positive discipline, that is time that you are having fun and that you're spending together. But it's not connection time, it's not special time. Now, if maybe after the show is over, you're spending 10 or 15 minutes like talking about it. And digging into it. That can be special time. As I said, this is my invitation to you to really get real and evaluate your investment in connection, and how well that's paying off. You know, are you letting them decide what you do? Sometimes? Are you listening to them? Hearing them? Seeing them for who they are? What is your foundation of connection? Is it a strong foundation? Or is it a house of cards. And so that's that's number one.

Number two, in all of this and why I believe we were able to get back to good as quickly as we were is because of the four R's of recovery that I know in practice. And this is actually something there's a video on this inside the Heartful Parent Academy, all about how we recover from mistakes, and how we can teach our children recover from mistakes. But we have to teach it by modeling first. So in this moment, after I had calmed down after I had like, detonated the charge, if you will, I recognized that I had made a mistake. And let's be honest, I knew I was making a mistake as I was making it. But I recognized that I had made a mistake. And I got really specific and taking full responsibility for that



mistake. And so I said to my child, listen, I just lost it. He said I let my fear and my frustration get the best of me. And I went against Everything that I know and everything that I teach, and I just lit into you, I yelled at you, I shamed you. I told you all the things that were on my brain. But I did that, like I told you my feelings but not in a productive way. Because about step number two. So step number one was to recognize the mistake, which I did. Step number two was to take full and specific responsibility. Now, I want to be really clear that when you take full and specific responsibility, that doesn't mean saying. So I did this, but let's be honest, like you deserved it, I was very careful about the way that I took that responsibility. And I didn't put the ownership for that on my child. Step number three is I apologized, I said, I am so so sorry that I did that. I knew better. I let my emotions get the better of me. And then I looked at step number four, which is to resolve it right to focus on solutions. And in this case, the solutions needed to come from me. And I said, first of all, I'm going to take some time to go calm down further. And I will not speak to you like that, again. I recognize that I need to listen to my own sort of inner wisdom. And I'm really sorry that it didn't. And I'm going to work very hard to do that moving forward. Now, does that mean, you know, once I've made that repair, that I will never screw up again? No, inevitably, I'm going to be making another repair for some other mistake at some point in probably the not too distant future. But I made this repair, and I owned what I did, I apologized for it, unequivocally. And I, you know, made an effort to resolve it.

**Christy Keating 17:07**

Okay, so that's the second reason why I think that we were able to get back to good as quickly as we did. And so I'm going to invite you to, you know, take notes, go back and listen to this episode. Again, write down with those steps of a good repair are the four R's of recovery, and practice them, model them, teach them, when you mess up, own it. Some of us as adults, let's be really honest about this. We are terrible. At good apologies, we make all sorts of apologies, that are not really apologies, we have to knock it off. Right, we have to knock it off and make good repairs.

The third reason that I think that we are, we're able to get back to good. From a relationship standpoint, we were pretty much back to good, like I said, within about 10 minutes. But from a parenting standpoint. And from sort of the how bad I felt about it, we weren't fully back to good until probably the next day. And that is because it took me some time to kind of process what I had done. Because I did feel really bad about it. And here's how I got myself back to good. And so I want to invite you to do this frequently. And that is I offered myself, forgiveness and grace. And we don't do that often enough. We let the negative messaging the negative voice in our head. The critic, tell us all the reasons why we you know, why were bad parents or you know that we screwed it up? How could you have screwed it up so badly? Like we let that voice run rampant until it just kind of, I guess dies down or we do something else that like gets it angry again.

But what we don't do is talk to ourselves intentionally about the need to give ourselves forgiveness, just as much as we need to forgive our kids for whatever the transgression was. Right? We do need to offer that to them too. But then we need to offer it to ourselves. And so I did that with sort of recognizing a couple of things. One is that in parenting, not only will we never get it perfect, but we shouldn't try to be



perfect. It is actually important for our children to see us screw up and then to hear us recover, right to go through those first four hours of recovery. It is important for them to see that happen. Now, does that mean you should go yell at your kids just so that you can like make the repair? Of course not. Of course not. Life and parenting will present plenty of its own opportunities for making recoveries without us manufacturing them. But it is important for our kids to see those mistakes happen. And then to see us recognize the opportunity for growth from those mistakes, the more that we can model those imperfect moments, again, not manufactured ones, they're gonna happen anyway. But the more we can model those, and then model handling them, well, the better off we'll be.

And the second reason, or the second sort of takeaway for me, from this idea of giving ourselves forgiveness, and grace, was just the recognition that good enough is okay. There's a book I read a number of years ago called good enough as the new perfect. And I love that phrase, I cannot take credit for it, but I love it. Because it really is the idea that we've got to stop seeking perfection, because it doesn't exist and be when we feel fall short of it, which we will inevitably do. It makes us feel bad about ourselves. And as I've already mentioned, we're not good at giving ourselves forgiveness, forgiveness, and grace. Good enough, is okay. If you can show up and be a good enough parent, you're winning the day, right? If you can show up as a Heartful Parent who tries you do your best, you make repairs when you need to. That's good enough. And that is okay.

So that those were really my big takeaways from why this big blow up of mine resolved pretty quickly, both in terms of my relationship with my kid. And in terms of my own view of my parenting, right? To recap, it worked, okay, because connection was the precursor, it was the foundation upon which my relationship with my daughter is built. And so I was able to recover more quickly. And rely on the strength of that connection. Second, I made a good repair, I follow the four R's of recovery. And third, I gave myself and my kid forgiveness and grace. That's how we got back to good.

So I hope this is helpful to you, I hope this, you know, maybe opens up some space for you to give yourself grace, and to recognize that you're doing okay. And good enough, is just fine. Good enough. It's hurtful. And that's all we've got to be.

On that note, I will sign off. If this was interesting to you. And the Rs of Recovery was interesting to you. Please check out the Heartful Parent Academy. You can find a link to it. And more information about it on my website. It has 13 modules of information about self care, meaningful self care, partnering in a healthy way if you're parenting with a partner, parenting with heart and positivity and positive discipline and safety, child sexual abuse prevention. It's a really phenomenal the reviews of members who are in there love it, and we'd love to have you join us.

On that note, I look forward to seeing you next week.

Take care and happy parenting. Let me know if I can support you.

