

Episode 7: Conscious Parenting from the Heart with Caitlin Escobar

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 beyond our professional lives, because they are all a part of us. And we were never meant to do this alone.

Christy Keating 00:41

Hello, hello friends, I have a treat in store for you today, I am really pleased to introduce you to my friend and colleague, Caitlin Escobar. Caitlin is a certified Conscious Parent Coach, a Positive Discipline Educator, and the founder of Raising Parents Coaching. She's dedicated to partnering with parents to find more joy and purpose in their parenting role through teaching research based parenting workshops and coaching in ways that empower and support parents in today's complex world. She's a former corporate program manager, like me, she's in act two of her professional career. And she took her professional experience in leadership development, and her personal education and parent coaching to begin a private practice. He or she developed strategies and solutions that work with the unique needs of every family by integrating a blend of traditional evidence based and holistic family system approaches.

She's the mother of two daughters, and she also understands the massive pressure on parents and kids today, largely because of her own experience as a mom. It's her mission to help restore confidence and clarity within parenting so that all children can be raised, empowered and liberated themselves. This conversation that you're about to listen to with Caitlin and I, I think is really gets at the core of so much of what we focused on so far in the podcast, and so much of the work that I do with my private coaching clients. And it really is talking about the intersection between Conscious Parenting where we are aware of our own triggers, and the things that get us worked up about, you know, with our kids, and how we manage those.

And then Positive Discipline, which is the tools that we can use to help our children feel better so that they can do better. As Caitlin describes it, it really is the why and the how, for parenting in this more positive, conscious way. And I love that we you know, as we dig into it, we talk a lot about the philosophy. But at the end, Caitlin offers you a five step strategy for managing your own triggers when your kid does something that just gets you worked up. This conversation is both philosophy, ideas and concrete strategies. And that I think is valuable. So I hope you'll enjoy this conversation with Caitlin. Without further ado, my friend Caitlin Escobar.

Oh, welcome, Caitlin. I'm so excited to have you here on The Heartful Parent Podcast.



Caitlin Escobar 03:34

Thank you, Christy and I am super excited to be here.

Christy Keating 03:38

So obviously, the listeners just heard a little bit about your background. So we want to jump right in and start with talking about or having you define really what is Conscious Parenting? And what is Positive Discipline. You know, some of the listeners will have heard me talk about Positive Discipline. But I'd love to hear you share from your perspective, what do those two parenting philosophies mean?

Caitlin Escobar 04:05

Absolutely. So maybe I'll start with Positive Discipline, since your audience is probably very familiar with that philosophy. So essentially, I like to describe it as it's a model of parenting where we believe in the idea that when we feel better, we do better, and that all people are worthy of respect, including our kiddos, which I think all of us parents believe in our hearts, but sometimes it's easy to forget when they're just doing that thing. Or we may be unaware of how you know a certain punishment or approach affects our kids. So Positive Discipline really takes us into the world of our kids, so that we can better understand what they're thinking, feeling and deciding. And when we do this, we see why Positive Discipline doesn't believe in punishments or permissiveness, and instead offers us tools to help our kids build self discipline and responsibility and problem solving.

Conscious Parenting, (now that's that's kind of my definition of Positive Discipline) Parenting also does not prescribe to punishments or permissiveness. But it's really more focused on creating strong relationships through getting to know our core self as the parent and our child's unique spirit along the way. So it's very grounding, relationship oriented and a parent focused approach. So there's less about the tools we use with our kids, which is really why I love the combination of Positive Discipline with Conscious Parenting, and more about allowing our children to also help raise our consciousness as parents so that we can become more confident leaders within our family system.

Christy Keating 05:57

Love those definitions. And you I mean, you know, I'm a big proponent of Positive Discipline. But I also am a believer that Positive Discipline is only effective if we can also manage ourselves, which is where that Conscious Parenting piece comes in. If you could talk just a little bit more, I mean, we've we've started to dig into this. I love that you said that the Conscious Parenting is really a parent-directed or parent-focused, I guess, focused approach and Positive Discipline provides us with tools. What else? For those listeners who are new to one or both of these concepts? What else do they need to know in terms of how these two play together or maybe how you use them together in your coaching practice? Sure,

Caitlin Escobar 06:45

Since I use both so much, I've thought a lot about this. And I, I would say that Conscious Parenting is the why we parent the way we do and Positive Discipline is the how we do it. So again, I truly feel we



need both to make lasting change in our parenting. But we have to understand first before we can intervene or make change. And that goes for ourselves and our kids. And Conscious Parenting really helps us understand why we show up the way we do. And allows us to continue to grow and sometimes heal if we have aspects of us that need healing, while we're also helping grow and develop our children at the same time.

So I think that's kind of the fundamental intersection between the two. But in so many ways, that the approaches are very complementary, and they work together to really create a very nurturing and supportive environment for our kids. And a lot of the principles are the same, like belief behind the behavior and connection overcorrection like all those things are so aligned. And both approaches are really focused on building a strong connection with our kids and helping them to develop self awareness. And that internal confidence.

Christy Keating 07:59

Shaping is such an important piece that that relationship at the core of all of this and that connection piece which having, you know, obviously studied and practiced and taught Positive Discipline, and having you know, I'm not a certified Conscious Parenting coach like you are, but have read the books by the founder, Shefali Sabari. And that intersection, I think, is just such a fascinating place to kind of play a little bit. You know, we've we've talked in the last few minutes about it from a kind of big picture view. Describe for us how that looks in practice. How do we blend these two things in practice, if I'm a parent, and you know, going about my day with my kids, experiencing the ups and downs that parenting always brings, right? How do we bring how do we sort of use both of these philosophies or approaches together in real life? Because that's what parents often think, right? Well, that's nice. How do I do it in real life?

Caitlin Escobar 09:03

Totally. No, I love this question. Because I'm the same way. Like I need concrete examples of how this actually works, because it sounds nice on paper, but like, let me hear how this is really going to work. So let's just use I think a typical example that many of us have, as parents or caregivers experienced. So let's say your your child is just having a major meltdown. And this is like the third meltdown of the morning because you're trying to get out the door and your kid just wants to stay playing. And so you lose it like most of us would. But the way we lose it is different. Right? So some of us may scream at our kids, that's me some mornings. Some of us will, you know, just put all the toys away ourselves because we don't want to deal with it. Some of us may just walk away and kind of stonewall.

So Conscious Parenting is going to help us understand our unique reaction to this and how it triggered us and why we reacted the way we did. So I always say that in these trigger moments where we are just, you know, we've lost it, this is our past, coming to life in our present. So what is this bringing up for me? What is going on? For me when my child is having this tantrum was I taught that I could not have big feelings, or these were these emotional displays? Okay. So this investigation piece, this self reflection, that's the the key to feeling really more at home with ourselves so that we can start to show



up as the parent we want to in these moments. Because only when we do this work, are we able to access the part of us that we can, so that we can really recognize what's going on for our child in that moment, see their emotional experience and be there for them without being taken over by our own stuff. And this is what our kids really need from us, especially as they're learning how to self regulate their learning through co regulation with us. So it's hugely important. And such a big focus of Conscious Parenting in that piece is the regulation of our own, understanding our triggers, so that we can be that co-regulator with our kids.

And then the intersection of both Conscious Parenting and Positive Discipline is the next step in validating our kids' feelings at that moment. So as long as we didn't get taken over by their feelings, the first step would be to validating what's going on for them. So you know, you might say something like, I can see you're really upset, you were really having fun with your toys. I know you want to play or you wish you could play longer, I understand you're allowed to feel upset.

So here is first part, right, not the last part, but we're validating our kids' emotions, which helps them feel understood, and they're learning language for their feelings. So I think that's both Positive Discipline and Conscious Parenting. And then when we cross over more to the Positive Discipline side, is when we start to help our kids find solutions to a problem. So you might say something like, why see we're having a problem with stopping playing with our toys in the morning. I mean, depends on what how old your kids are.

But maybe we put this on the family agenda to talk about how we do mornings, which is a Positive Discipline tool, or do we want to come up with a one word reminder next time, five minutes before or, you know, there's just probably a several Positive Discipline tools you could use in this moment. This is where we're really going to try to cross over and help our kids develop problem solving skills and teaching them how to take responsibility for their action. But we as parents need to be able to get to that point to use them. And that's where I believe the Conscious Parenting really helps us do.

Christy Keating 12:47

I love that example that you use, because first of all, what have to imagine there's not a single parent listening to this, that cannot relate to the stress of getting out the door in the morning and a child right? Doesn't want to go or is dragging their feet or whatever they're doing playing or, you know,

Caitlin Escobar 13:06

That example because it's my house.

Christy Keating 13:10

Yes, and it is my house as well. And it may be different reasons why they're not getting out the door, but constant problem. And so many of the families that I work with, as well say the same thing. So this is like your right, it's the perfect example. But I think what's so great about the way that you just you know, what I really love about the way that you described that is that so many parents want to jump right? The



tools, tell me what to do. Tell me how to do it, right? Tell me how to make this not happen. Tell me how to fix my kid. Right? Tell me how to make them not be so difficult. And what you kind of illustrated is that we have to first start with us.

Caitlin Escobar 13:53

And you know what that reminds me of to is because when we think about parenting, it is so child focused, right? It just like you said, it's so natural for us to only want to look at the child's behavior and how to control that. So what I also like to say about conscious parenting is it reminds us that it's called parenting and not child doing. And so to take a moment to really turn our gaze inwards to ourselves. And when I say that to not for the purpose of of self blame or anything like that, but just kind of understanding, because that allows us to start to learn so much more about our own circuitry and our triggers that might be getting in the way of us intervening with the right tools and approaches that our kids need in that moment.

Christy Keating 14:37

You know that that raises for me. I'm really intentional about saying that I'm a parent coach, not a parenting coach. Oh, and there's a difference, right? I think there's a difference because and it's what you're tapping into right now. Which is this idea that yeah, we are we are parenting not child thing and that The act of focusing on us is sort of where this all starts, you know, not to say that there aren't children who would, you know, genuinely need support and help? Yeah, whatever their own challenges are, I don't want to diminish that in any way for parents. But you know, it's even in those circumstances, we still have to start with us. Right?

Caitlin Escobar 15:19

Yeah. Because we also need help and support, right. And so until we look inward, to see that we can't get that for ourselves where we are just as important.

Christy Keating 15:29

So I know that Conscious Parenting really, you know, it pulls on other parenting approaches, or it pulls things sort of Intuit. And it's unique. From those right, it draws on all these other pieces, I certainly think that it draws on some Positive Discipline, there are also some really unique aspects to it. How is it different from what our listeners might have heard before in talking about parenting in general?

Caitlin Escobar 15:59

Yes, so there are some key things that I definitely believe that it makes kind of separates it from some other or makes it a very good compliment, I'll say two, like Positive Discipline approaches. One of the aspects that I've been thinking about a lot about lately is it's very strong focus around connection, and what that looks like, and kind of the role connection plays and conscious parenting. I've been thinking about that, given actually some of your last podcasts that I had the opportunity to hear around the very serious concern of the state of our children's mental health. So really highlighted in my world lately with that kind of conversation.



So thank you, Christy, for bringing this to us to talk about and have this very important conversation around it. Because it is a difficult and scary. I mean, I get scared sometimes thinking about it subject. But what I really have been thinking about is just Okay, so my role is a parent of two daughters as well. What can I do to help? How can I help my kids? And how can I help empower other parents, given our limitations to write with a serious concern around all this and how overwhelming it feels, what gives me hope is that I do think there are things as parents that we can do, if we're willing, and willing sometimes means getting help, right, like we touched on that is so courageous, to recognize and do that. But I also think really investing in our connection, and our relationship with our kids, the earlier the better, of course, the house, because I mean, when your kids are older, all we have left right in the tools really kind of is connection in that connection capital.

You know, if I may be so bold to say that I think the CDC report is a wake up call for us parents. And I do not say that to blame parents. In fact, if I had to blame anyone, of course, I'd want to blame social media and how those companies knowingly addict, our kids to to it with their algorithms, they manipulate them, you know, with for negative stimulation and all of that. But, in fact, you may have actually seen that the Seattle Public School System has filed a lawsuit against big tech because of how those platforms are intentionally contributing to youth mental health crisis.

So this is a big thing that parents are left dealing with, is adding to our stress and our ability to truly connect and build authentic connection, and being able to really see our kids and whatever really challenging feelings that they're going through, and ensuring to right that we can take care of ourselves because and share about this because we react kind of to our kids emotions, and what they're going through based on how we react to our own emotions. So I'm reminded that the quote that I just loved, she said, and it's so fitting to Conscious Parenting, our little people are only doing as good as our big people. Yes, true. And it is so so true.

Christy Keating 19:13

And just for those listeners who didn't hear that episode, so it's episode four of the Heartful Parent Podcast was Sherra Grasser who is a Youth Empowerment Coach and she was talking about the CDC report released in on February 13 2023. That really details the state of our kids, especially the those high school years. But that's indicative of how all of our children are doing right and Sherra and you just touched on this Caitlin, Sherra really talked about connection as being or lack of connection as being the root cause. So I love that you're talking about it again today. And how these two philosophies of parenting, build that connection.

Caitlin Escobar 19:54

Absolutely. And connection holistically. So not only with your child, but also ourselves, because we're not able to connect with our kids if we're not connected with ourselves, and that, I think is sort of the piece with Conscious Parenting. So, you know, I think we as parents, let's just take a moment to ask ourselves, How are we doing? How well are we connected to ourselves, you know, when we are well connected to ourselves, we can be the calm, loving presence our kids need, so that we can show them



this overwhelming state, you're in this really difficult time. It doesn't overwhelm me, I can handle this, whatever it is, you're going through, I'm not afraid of it. And I'm here for you. Because no matter how old your kid is, they need to hear that. I think I still want to hear that from my parents sometimes.

Christy Keating 20:48

Don't we all? Yes, yes. But I also think, I think a lot of parents right now might be saying, and so maybe you can explain a bit like, how do we get connected with ourselves? Right? How does that work happen? Because, again, I bet there's not a parent listening, that wouldn't like to be able to handle those triggering moments, with the calmness that you just described, right, the support and the love and the connection at the core of it. And those same parents, and I put myself in this bucket to where the same ones that also find ourselves losing our proverbial know what, as art, we're trying to get our kids out the door in the morning. So how do we connect with ourselves in that moment?

Caitlin Escobar 21:37

No, that's such a good question. So where it's kind of like the term re-parenting I use for that for reconnecting to ourselves, and kind of really giving ourselves maybe what we didn't receive when we were kids. And that's what we're reacting to. And so that kind of leads me to this whole idea of triggers. And that's also another piece that's very core to Conscious Parenting. So let me talk a little let me kind of dive into that triggers can be explained in a lot of different ways. But in Conscious Parenting, there's really a focus on our internal child being activated or triggered in those moments, when our kid does something that really causes us to react.

It's usually because we see things, we see something in them that we had to learn to shut down in ourselves as a kid. So when you get triggered, start by asking, you know, what am I seeing in my child that I had to learn to maybe shut down in my earlier life. And so you can really kind of look at these triggers as our teachers, they're kind of like clues to our early life story we may have no working memories of, but they're providing our body always remembers, and they're providing pieces of this past story in the present. So we, we under understanding this story really is the first step in helping you become less triggered and understanding and reconnecting to yourself.

Christy Keating 23:02

That is such a big piece. I hear a lot of times, and I've said this myself, there are things about the way I was raised that I don't want to do, right that I want to do differently than my kids. And then we also find ourselves doing those same things. I know I don't want to do it, and I'm doing

Caitlin Escobar 23:23

Yes, it can be true. It's like the subconscious kind of comes out, like because it has learned.

Christy Keating 23:29

So what you're saying is that then in those moments, we need to sort of think about what messages were we given in our childhood in our youth? Yes, what messages were we given that when we wished



we had received a different message or a different form of care are different, that we were parented differently?

Caitlin Escobar

Yeah

Christy Keating

Then what do we do when we know that, like, I, you know, we can say, for example, something like, I know that when in my childhood, I wasn't given space for my big feelings. And so when my child has big feelings, that's set me off, right? Because I just want them to do what I want them to do. What do we do with that?

Caitlin Escobar 24:11

That kind of gets us into maybe a strategy, a strategy for when we're set off, or we get triggered? Let's give people a strategy that they can work with. I'll use the one that again, kind of goes into it's like, it's a combination, and I find that it really helps people become triggered less often for like, what you just said, you know, my, my kid did something, and that makes me upset. And so like, they're yelling, and they're yelling, I just, I can't handle it. Right. So that's something that's being activated. I also just want to preface that sometimes when we're triggered, it can also be a sign of just being depleted. And so there are strategies around that for self care. But so what we're talking about here is when our body is reacting to something right and that's a reaction that maybe, you know, my partner doesn't have or my best friend doesn't have but it's something core to me. So that means it's something inside your body.

Christy Keating 25:03

But it sounds like step one is really to recognize there's something that's triggering us connected to our childhood, whether we know exactly what that connection is yet or not. And that's step one. And then step two is employing a strategy.

Caitlin Escobar 25:18

Yes, step one. So that's really kind of look at that. So maybe, for you, Christy, if we can kind of use an example here. So what's an example? That's something that's kind of generally triggering for you like whining? tantrums, defiance? Like, something around there? Oh,

Christy Keating 25:38

All of the above? The, I would say, a big one for me is probably disrespectful defiance, you know, when the defiance is coming with snarkiness?

Caitlin Escobar 25:56

Okay. Yeah. So can you say more about why the snarkiness is triggering for you?



Christy Keating 26:05

It's a great question.

Caitlin Escobar 26:06

I think it really comes down to respect for me, right? And, and I work really hard to cultivate respect, my husband and I work really hard to cultivate mutual respect in our home. And so when that is not reciprocated, that is triggering to me. Really? Yeah, absolutely. And I share that trigger. wholeheartedly. Yes. And so that disrespect, right. So it's almost like your child, when they when they display that snarkiness they're kind of asserting themselves against you, or whatever, it kind of caused that. So maybe when you were younger, you really were trying to assert yourself, and it was kind of when you express that shut down. And your your parents took that as disrespectful because they were looking at it through the lens that how it impacted them, and not a sign of the process that was going inside that you needed help with, yeah, 100%.

So that that is perfect, so that now we're kind of like a little bit understanding the part of you, there's a part of you and like dis disrespect, so there's a behavior, and then it represents disrespect, just keep in mind that you probably had to shut down that same kind of behavior that you're now getting triggered by when you were a child, and your inner child remembers this, and therefore wants to shut down that same behavior in your own child to keep you all safe. And when I say safe, what I mean by that is, you know, maybe there was no physical harm, but safe, even attachment right closest to our parents, and when our parents yell at us, or send us to a room or whatever, that's aloneness. And that, that makes us feel unsafe as a child alone is very, very scary as a kid.

Christy Keating 27:56

And that makes total sense. You know, I often talk about brain safe parenting strategies. And I think the reason that parenting from a brain safe place makes sense to me is because of what you're describing right now, which is that, yeah, there are those places that we all can remember. And even when we were parented by the most perfect, wonderful parents, right? We'd say they still screwed up. Yeah, he's still screw up, right? Because we're still those moments that we all remember where we didn't feel emotionally safe or emotionally connected or safely connected. Yes. You know, physical abuse being something completely different.

Caitlin Escobar 28:38

Completely different. Yes. That's a whole nother meeting form of I think therapy and strong work and connection there. Right, right. But so many of us, I think, experience this because it's only recently that we're really learning this understanding of how this all works. So sometimes when I get upset, like fashion, getting my kids so much, why couldn't my parents give this to me? Well, they didn't know, right? They were doing the best they could, with the information resources that they have. I always say we're all doing that.



Christy Keating 29:05

So in that moment, you just sort of walked me through that right? I'm getting triggered by the disrespect. And that's sort of connected to something from my childhood, then we start to employ some strategies. Yes. What are those?

Caitlin Escobar 29:21

Perfect, so now that you have this awareness around kind of what is and there's a lot of things that can trigger us. But you know, we want to work one thing at a time. So you've got this one that you want to start with. It's a regular trigger. And now we can kind of say like, we're going to start our practice now. And so to do that, you're just going to call back to mind that behavior that really triggers you. And keep that in your mind because we're now going to develop a new response to practice so that we can kind of develop new circuitry in our body.

So that's going to become our new default reaction when our kid is snarky. Because it's not gonna just happen without practice, right? This is, this is practice for your mind and our, our subconscious and our body to react differently. And every time you practice, it's like another rep to strengthen that new default reaction to whatever trigger the snarkiness, the backtalk, whatever.

Christy Keating

Gotcha.

Caitlin Escobar

Okay, so step one, we're going to create that new response to that trigger. So start by just kind of so right now, when you're in that calm, you're relaxed, you're in your rational mind, kind of think about how you want to respond the next time your daughter is snarky to you. And I always say, don't pick a 180. Like, pick something realistic. Don't be like, Oh, honey, you must be having a bad day, come here and give me a hug. Because like, that's not realistic. If this is truly something that triggers you. It's going to be to that is way too hard to access in that moment. So just something that you don't go over the edge into reactivity like so what would that be?

Christy Keating 31:02

So it's interesting that you asked that Caitlin, because this is something that I've actually done some thinking about and work on myself, because I don't like that feeling of being triggered with my kiddo. So one of the ways that I often respond, and you know, when this comes up is Ouch, that hurt? Yeah. Right. Like I just kind of call it out for the impact that it had on me. I don't ignore it. I, you know, I don't accept it in the sense that I don't. You know, we talked earlier about Positive Discipline is not about permissiveness.

So I don't suddenly say, oh, okay, sweetheart, you can say to me, whatever you want to write, yeah. But I'll, you know, I'll sort of say ouch, that really hurt. You know, and sometimes I'll say, in fact, I'm thinking of an example where this happened just about a week ago. So I'll tell you a little story about it. And then



you can use that to tell us what parents could do. So my daughter and I were skiing together. And she fell, and was getting very, very frustrated trying to get back up and get her ski back on. And I was a little ways down the hill. And I was trying to be helpful, and it was calling up to her and saying, you know, you've got snow stuck on your boot that you need to knock off, you're not gonna she couldn't see it from where she was, you won't be able to get your ski on. And she's getting increasingly increasingly frustrated with this situation. And so then I finally said, Do you need me to walk up to you, you know, do I need to take off my skis and walk up to you? And she snapped at me? And, you know, it's just sort of like, and I think she was embarrassed. And I mean, I could tell you all the things, I think that were going on for her on the slope, but she she snapped, and quite rudely, you know, leave me alone? Kind of, yeah, I got it, Mom, you know, I felt my own sort of temperature rise, if you will, because I was trying to be supportive and help her. Yes. And so yeah, in that moment, I said, as when she finally got down to me, I finally said, that didn't feel great. And I was trying to be supportive and being really helpful and respectful to you. And I need you to do the same.

Caitlin Escobar 33:17

You know, that's a beautiful response to that. I had that exact, almost exact same scenario with one of my daughter's skiing last year, and I couldn't be that calm. Like, I wanted to yell back or say, Fine, do it yourself. Because that's kind of like when we're in that stage. That's kind of where I would say, use these steps to kind of help us have a different response. Because the response you gave is very, I mean, that's great. You're able to just kind of, you're not escalating, right? You're not letting her emotions in the worst she was, you know, embarrassed or whatever. And you're not letting that overtake, you did not let that overtake you. And you were able to stay calm, so that, that kind of it didn't get worse than it needed to.

Christy Keating 34:06

Yeah, and just so that we're being totally fair, and so that listeners are, you know, not thinking I somehow pulled that out of nowhere. They obviously I've done this work, but also there was a real it was really good that she was a ways up the slope. And I did Yes, right. Through the steps that you're about to describe, so that by the time she got to me, yeah, I could handle it better than I might have. Had she been standing right next to me.

Caitlin Escobar 34:35

Yes. Use any resources, like the time proximity that you have to help with the cooldown. So that's great. That's really good.

Christy Keating 34:44

So with that, you know, imagine that we were standing right next to each other and I did go to that. Fine. Do it yourself. Yeah. Meet you at the bottom. You're on your own. Yeah, right. Yeah. What are the steps then that we might that a parent might walk through? Try to instead get to the Hey, not okay, kiddo, not okay.



Caitlin Escobar 35:04

Perfect. Okay, so say like we did react the way I did last year with this button, then the step one is okay, let's think about the new response. And that's where I just, again, highlight, what is the what is a realistic response that we'd say, if it's that we're just going to, we're going to need 10 seconds and tell them hey, I, you know, I, those are really big words you're using right there. I know, you can think of another way to say that, or we're what you said, Christy. That's beautiful. So just kind of think about what that is. Realistically, that's step one.

Step two now, because this is something we're doing, again, when we're away from our kids, and we have five minutes to ourselves, visualize that triggering event again. So kind of put really use your descriptive skills here and picture when that happens. So put yourself back on the mountain. Do you feel that you know, snowing? Do you feel the snowflakes and the cold and the wetness, trying to like how it felt getting back up that hill to her? Do you hear other kids in the background? Can you hear her voice and the words that she's saying just really get into all the details, get into the snow get into the cold, because what we're trying to do here is trick our body. So the more details, the better. We're trying to trick our body into believing we're in that same space.

Step three. Now notice your trigger response. So for doing a really good job, bring yourself back there, you're going to see you're going to feel the trigger building. And this is important because we want to feel that we want to try to kind of feel it start to take over, we actually want that step four, this is the key piece, this is where the change happens. Acknowledge and validate that part you're in, you're acknowledging the trigger, is likely your inner child, trying to protect you from something in that moment, it's trying to protect you from something it remembers as unsafe when you were a kid. So to do this, it's really helpful to kind of talk to it. And I know this can feel weird at first. But it's important to, I think it's really important to acknowledge and talk to it. Because when you do that, you're acknowledging that it's just a part of you. And when something's a part of you, it can't take over, you can't make decisions for you, it's just a part.

So I like to just kind of make connection to my body in some way. And you can say something to yourself, like, you know, it's, it's normal for her to be upset when she falling down and can't do something, there's no danger here. And if you have time, or we are kind of newer, and trying to get deeper into this, I would really get into the validation and just think that part of you, that feels so disrespected by her, you know, so disrespected. And so you react so harshly, not that you did, but whatever. And I can tell myself, you know, I know you have positive intentions, you're just I'm trying to reenact a process that I learned in my childhood to keep me safe, and meaning to keep everyone safe, especially those I love.

And I appreciate all that it's done for me. But I'm going to ask it to step back now. Because the way it helped me in the past no longer helps me today. So whatever words you use, in this step, what matters most is that we're building space, from our old process as a kid and our reactivity, and grounding ourselves in safety in that moment to build regulation.



Christy Keating

Gotcha.

Caitlin Escobar

That's the key step, step four. And then the last step now is to practice your new response. So now that you've told your body, there's no danger, you can practice how you would like to show up. So whatever that realistic response might be, now you say it. So it's just a five step strategy to just practice this response. Because we want our body to start. Feeling that response, it's similar to why athletes visualize you know, they're literally practicing their routine, feeling adrenaline, and then we can do that start, we can do that same thing to start to build new circuitry in our bodies as well.

Christy Keating 39:28

You know what I love about this? And first of all, we will make sure to put those five steps in the show notes so that anyone who's like wait, remind me what they were they can find them there. You know, I when I talk with clients a lot about kids who are getting emotionally dysregulated. I often say you need to practice the calm down strategies when they're not stressed, right? Because accessing those kinds of strategies, when we're under stress is really, really difficult to do. And you're suggesting that we as parents need to do this Same thing, practice our responsiveness instead of that react reactivity. Yeah, we're not in the moment.

Caitlin Escobar 40:08

Yes. Just like our kids need to be calm to practice new skills. This strategy has us practicing new responses when we're grounded and calm.

Christy Keating 40:18

I love it. I love it. Caitlin, you and I have spoken obviously, a number of times before you were so kind to speak inside the Heartful Parent Academy. And I know we could go on for hours about this. But in the interest of time, unfortunately, we can't do that. So I want to wrap up with one final question for you. Actually, two final questions. The first one is, would you mind sharing with the listeners? What does the phrase Heartful Parenting mean to you?

Caitlin Escobar 40:50

I believe Heartful Parenting is when we are connected to our own heart, so that we can also connect to the heart of our children. And it's so important to not forget to keep investing in our own growth and development as as parents as well.

Christy Keating 41:12

Yeah, I love that. I was always an interesting question. When I asked people that what is you know, what is Heartful Parenting mean? Because we all interpret it just ever so differently.



Caitlin Escobar 41:25

But it always, it's always a lovely way to think about it just made me think of one more thing when you said that, like Heartfelt like even what we were just talking about. So being Heartfelt to yourself as a parent, a Heartfelt Parent is not getting mad at yourself when or beating yourself up when you're triggered, right? So really showing yourself grace and reminding yourself that there's something important here for you to learn, and that your needs matter. I think that's all kind of incorporated in that heartfelt parent.

Christy Keating 41:53

I love it. I love that. Final question is, where can our listeners find you?

Caitlin Escobar 42:00

At? Yes. So my website at raisingparentskoaching.com would love for people to come say hi, I do a monthly newsletter. And so if anyone would like to sign up for the monthly newsletter, they can also receive a free re parenting workbook that I have as well, that really kind of goes into depth about a lot of what we talked about today.

Christy Keating 42:21

Perfect, perfect. We will make sure that that link is also in the show notes so everyone can find it there. Caitlin, thank you for sharing with us today the connection between these two really beautiful parenting approaches and how they can sort of sit side by side and serving us. Yeah, I'm really grateful to you. I'm grateful for the work that you're doing in the world. And I hope we can talk again.

Caitlin Escobar 42:46

Absolutely, thank you. And I appreciate you, Christy and everyone listening and I look forward to the next time we speak.

Christy Keating 42:55

Thank you so much, everyone for joining me on this episode of The Heartful Parent Podcast. I hope that you got so much out of my conversation with Caitlin Escobar and have some new ideas and strategies to walk away with today. All the places you can find Caitlin are in the show notes.

And in the meantime, do me a solid, like or follow the podcast on your favorite podcast platform. And if you feel like you're getting good value out of this, drop me a review or rating. We'd love those five star ratings and share it with a friend. I'd love to get this into the hands of more parents who need it.

Thanks. Take care and I'll see you next week.

