

Episode 70. Tips for Tightening Up Your Evening Routine

Fri, 10/9 8:56PM 39:20

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

bed, kids, child, parenting, sleep, important, deana, kira, evening, parent, people, bedtime, routine, feel, bedtime routine, read, night, family, disrupted, weeks

SPEAKERS

Deana Thayer, Future Focused Parenting, Kira Dorrian

D Deana Thayer 00:00

Hey everyone, before we dive in to this episode of Raising Adults, we just wanted to share something with you. And we're, we're really glad to be able to offer it, particularly right now. And we were just still working out the details when we recorded and now we want to share with you this exciting thing that we're getting underway with. And it's, it's group parent coaching. And what's so great about this is you're going to have access to Kira and I, and I'm gonna let her share the details in just a moment. But you'll have access to us in a really unique way. But you'll also have a community, you'll have other parents, who, for all you know, may have some of your very same questions. And so you'll be able to interact with them while getting some advice and tips and strategies from us. And the great thing is, especially right now, so essential, this is all able to be done remotely. So Kira break it down for us.

K Kira Dorrian 00:52

Yeah, so this really stemmed from that seven day detox that we did back in February. And we got such an incredible response to that and so many amazing people, that what we ended up doing was doing March Madness, where we did a month of group coaching. And it's been amazing. Like, it feels like Deana, you and I get so much out of it, even though we're the ones running it, it's been totally epic. And so what we decided to do was offer 12

weeks of group coaching and put it out to all of our FFPs. Because especially right now everyone's like really in it, and everyone could use a little parenting support right now. So here's how it's gonna work. It starts on Tuesday, April 7, and we will meet for 12 weeks. So we'll meet till June 23. And it's going to be done via zoom. So if you didn't know about zoom already, you probably do now. It's a live zoom call. So you can come and chat with us and ask questions and just kind of throw out whatever's going on that week. And we're going to help you and offer just tangible tips and tools and thoughts and ways to look at it to help work through whatever you're dealing with that week in your parenting. And if you can't make the call, don't worry, it's totally fine. Because we will be able to offer a replay. And you can actually send in your questions before the call if you know that you're not going to make it and we'll still be able to answer your question. And that's been working great on Facebook, we go live, we answer all these questions. And then some people watch it live and some people watch the replay. But all the questions are still getting answered. So it also, you're going to get access to the private Facebook group, which is awesome, because you get a chance to really build that community. All these people are future focused parents like, they think like you. So it's just been great to watch them come together. So you get access to the private Facebook group, you get those 12 weeks of calls, you also get 20% off private coaching, if you do feel like there's something you want to work on with Deana or I privately and you get 50% off our online courses. Because we're all stuck at home right now, what better time is there to watch an online course that could maybe completely transform the way you think about your parenting? So you get all of that for 12 weeks, and it is \$25 a month. Or if you pay for all 12 weeks up front, it's \$60. So you save \$15 by doing that, which is pretty cool. And it works out to like less than a cup of coffee per phone call with us. And you have parent coaches at your fingertips. So it's pretty great. You can register by going to futurefocusedparenting.com there's going to be a button right there that says join our group coaching. You'll click on it, fill out a little form, the form will come to us. We have a little bit of an antiquated system, so bear with us, the form will come to us, you'll then get an invoice from Deana. Once you have paid your invoice, you'll receive all the information that you need, you'll be invited into the Facebook group, and you can join us for the next 12 weeks. So it starts on April 7 runs till June 23. But here's the kicker, registration closes this Friday. So you have to register by midnight on Friday, April 3, so that we can get you started. So be sure to go to the website now and get yourself registered, futurefocusedparenting.com. I hope you'll join us.

D

Deana Thayer 03:56

I do too. I, I have to just say a word about the amazingness of the group dynamic and Kira, you hinted at this and it's so true. But Kira and I have so enjoyed watching the interactions with the parents too, because it's such a great platform to share struggles or successes or just to check on each other. And I think right now, as I've said that, in some

ways more than ever that's so critical that there's still some way to connect and have community in parenting in general is like, wow, right now, right? I mean, you were parenting before but now you're PARENTING. So definitely consider joining in on that, we really look forward to being able to share with you guys and hopefully help you out.

 Kira Dorrian 04:39
Alright, let's get to the episode.

 Future Focused Parenting 04:44
What happens when two parent coaches, one a Christian and the other an agnostic Jew, sit down to talk about parenting? They take their listeners from surviving to thriving. I'm Deana Thayer and I'm Kira Dorrian. Welcome to Raising Adults, a podcast brought to you by Future Focused Parenting.

 Kira Dorrian 05:05
Well, hi everyone, and welcome to Raising Adults podcast. Kira And Deana here, we are still not back together again. So we are coming to you from my laundry room and Deana's bonus room. Hey, hi, Deana.

 Deana Thayer 05:20
Hello.

 Kira Dorrian 05:22
But like Deana said a couple weeks ago, we are really committed to continuing to bring you content, especially right now when people are just a little bit more cooped up. It's nice to have something to listen to. We want to make sure we're still providing that. So. So here we are, how are you doing over there?

 Deana Thayer 05:37
You know, I'm hanging in there. It's a, it's really interesting over here, I have to say, I miss being in close proximity to you. Which is I mean, you, it is hot in the laundry room, but I miss it nonetheless. And it's just strange not having, having that interaction in the same way, because we do so much as business partners. So I miss you. But I'm glad we found a

way to still do this.

K

Kira Dorrian 06:04

Yeah, me too. I miss you. I was saying before we hit record, I feel like it's much stuffier and lonelier in here. I think it's like you're, you're more aware, because you're stuffed up all by yourself instead of like with a friend. So yeah, it's, it's, it's been a lonely time. So it's nice to hear your voice.

D

Deana Thayer 06:24

Yeah, same here.

K

Kira Dorrian 06:27

So today, we're going to talk about the evening routine. A few weeks ago, we brought you an episode all about how to sort of tighten up your morning routine and make it feel like you're in charge of that. And you can get out of the house in a way that feels good to you and your family without too much yelling and too much stress. And I think a lot of families struggle with that top of the day and the bottom of the day, right getting the kids to bed in a reasonable hour, so they get some grownup time. And then waking up the next morning and trying to get out the house is the other major struggle. So we tackled one of those, we're going to tackle the other one today.

D

Deana Thayer 06:59

Yeah, it is such an issue. I think it's, it's because there's kind of this interesting thing, both of them have what we hope would be a deadline of some sort, where it's either we're leaving the home with the morning routine or getting ready to start our day, whatever that looks like. And then at night, it's that bedtime, right? And where we hope there is a point where the children are in bed, and we maybe don't see them again until morning. And it's really hard. And I think for some families, the bedtime routine actually gets kind of prolonged and becomes really harrowing for everyone involved, but particularly the adults. So I'm actually excited to present some hopefully helpful strategies for bringing some cohesiveness to that time of the day. Because the other element you have is you're not fresh, you've already been doing your day. And so I think we're all sometimes a little bit short on energy and short on patience by the evening. And so I think it has sort of this propensity to be a powder keg if we're not careful.

K

Kira Dorrian 07:59

I agree. And you know, I, I want to hand over mostly to you because this is so your area of expertise with your sleep consulting, I think no matter the age of the kids, bedtime is a thing that you specialize in. And so I want to make sure that you get to say all of your amazing strategies and tips and tricks. But I think you have hit the nail on the head with the idea that we're all done by the end of the day. And so I think even if you have a really great cohesive bedtime routine, it's still really challenging. And so I just kind of want to say before we get started that, these two thoughts kind of go together. But my first thought is that, you know, bedtime is really, really short lived. And it doesn't feel that way. But I already have one of my kids who doesn't do the bedtime story who likes to just read on their own. Sometimes they want to snuggle, sometimes they just put themselves to bed, and my kids are eight. So eventually this goes completely by. And so it's really tricky, because it's that, it's like I hate that whole, enjoy every minute. You know.

D

Deana Thayer 09:01

Yes, we've talked about that.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:02

Right? You cannot enjoy every minute. And so I just want to say that these two things collide for me because I, we have a very clean and easy evening routine. And there are still some nights where I'm like, oh my goodness, if I have to read a story tonight, I might just fall asleep reading it, right? Like I'm so tired of reading these stories, and when is the bedtime routine gonna go away? And then in the exact same moment, my heart breaks thinking that one night I won't be putting either of them to bed. So it's really hard to hold both of those things. And so I just want to say from the get go that if you're a parent who's feeling that way, you're so normal, it's normal to have nights where you're like, I don't really even want to do this. And it's not that you don't love your kid. And it's not that you don't want to do something that's meaningful for them. It's that you're really tired and that parenting is really hard. And so you're allowed to hold both of those things at the same time that some nights you're just like, I don't want to do this. I just want to peace out. And that at the same time you're aware that this isn't forever and you wish that you could feel differently about it. So just wanted to say all that before we kind of leap in.

D

Deana Thayer 10:05

No, that is a really great foundation to lay, and I like it so much. And maybe you can also tell us your why around this because I think mine is going to be a bit boring, right? I'm a

sleep consultant. And of course, I see the value in sleep. And I have maybe a little bit of a personal why too, but I'm not going to be entertaining. I want to hear what your what your why is.

K

Kira Dorrian 10:26

I mean, my main why is that I wanted my kids to go to sleep. And I knew that routine helped them do that. And also, you know, with twins, it's like, we just had to have some kind of routine for me from the get go, or else it was madness. So we've always kind of had a pretty strong evening routine. But yeah, and also I want time with my partner. At the end of the day, I need some me time, you know, that those evenings are really precious to me. So the, for my kids to go to bed cleanly and easily, you know, off in to dreamland, happily, is super important for my sanity. So that's, that's the main, the main why for me.

D

Deana Thayer 11:01

Oh, thank you for saying that. The, the piece about the grown up time, I think that gets missed and not, not maybe talked about as much as it should. But there is, there is value, and we've said this this piece before, but just not about bedtime, there's value to taking good care of yourself as a parent. And for some people that, that evening time after bedtime is really their only connection point with their parenting partner or spouse or what have you. Because maybe they're running around to activities or work or any number of things. And so preserving that and kind of guarding it, I think is, I'm actually really pleased you said that as part of your why. I know that was a big motivator for me once I was in a blended family in particular. Because on, on those weekends where we had all five, it, it was just nutty. And really, the nighttime once they were all settled was our really, our only chance to connect. We talked a lot about feeling like we were ships passing in the night. One was going here, one was going there to take kids to different things. So thank you, thank you for saying that. And now to my boring why. So, first, yes, I'm a sleep consultant. So I feel that healthy sleep patterns, healthy circadian rhythms, sufficient sleep in a 24 hour period are also important to just how we function as people not only physiologically but mentally and emotionally. So, of course, that's a big deal for me. But all the boring stuff aside, also, personally, this is a big deal to me. Because I personally am very unpleasant when I don't get enough sleep. And I don't even like to be around myself, is the joke that we have in our house. Nobody wants to be around me, including me. And...

K

Kira Dorrian 12:45

Me too, I'm the same way.

D

Deana Thayer 12:47

So I had this like extra motivation that okay, if my kids go to bed, and we have a smooth evening routine, it also means I will get to bed at a somewhat decent hour because I, I just turn into a pumpkin after a certain point. And then I'm not a style. So that was the selfish part for me was the wiring, another selfish piece was time with my husband. But the unselfish piece was around just the, the value I place on sleep. And one other thing that I think is noble, although it might sound selfish, is especially during my single mom years, these evening times to just pour into my kids were so special, because while I had them quote to myself when they were with me, it didn't mean we weren't at school slash work or running to activities. And so the night was just focused time, just the three of us and I came to just really love it and value it. And I did everything to preserve it, it was like bedtime routine was so special for us. And I don't know if that comes across sounding like it was just for me. But I also really mean it was for them, I wanted them to see my investment in them. And this carving out of this little time of day where I just, I just want to hear about your day. And I just want to love on you. And I want to spend a little time with you and, and just do some of these important things like talking together or praying together. And we read little books together about, you know, Bible stories, or we would often read books, that before we would go see the show of that book, because it was really important to me. I wanted my kids to know the story before they went. So it was just such a special time. So all that to say, there it is.

K

Kira Dorrian 14:26

I'm so glad that you said that because that was sort of my secondary why is you know, it was purely selfish, my primary why. But the secondary one was totally around our family time. Because you know, Dave gets home from work, we have dinner and our kids are kind of early to bed early to rise. They've always been that way. So we don't actually get a ton of family time after dinner. And so that is our family time is you know, the time that we spend at bedtime and so many, we've talked about this all the time, but so many of the big things come up at bedtime. And so I always wanted them to feel like we had time and space for a conversation. And you know, that they had that special time with each of us. And we can talk a little bit about what each of our routines look like. But that, that idea of this is part of our connecting time was really important to me. And then also, I think that links to when children feel like they've really had that connection, it's a lot easier for them to go to bed, right? Because they've had that closeness with you. And they've wound down with you. And they've shared their feelings with you. And so now, they're in a much more peaceful state and able to kind of nod off more easily.

D

Deana Thayer 15:30

Yes, oh, I couldn't agree more. So let's go practical and talk about how this might look, the things you might include. And of course, I want to say up front, obviously, what you'll include in your evening routine is going to look different family to family. But one thing we talked about in the morning routine that I think is equally applicable here is until you have this really dialed in, consider building in a buffer. And that is because if you really have a firm idea in your mind, I really want my kids in bed by this time, it can so easily leak over if you think that your bedtime routine is going to be a quick 15 minutes, because it just might not be. And so I'll be honest, when, when my people were really little we actually started essentially after dinner. It was like once dinner happened, we were easing into this bedtime routine because for me, it was a very hard stop in terms of knowing how much sleep I wanted them to have at night. And because we were commuting. So in the morning, they had to get up pretty early for little kids in my estimation, and so I just wanted them to have enough sleep, which meant that we started earlier to make sure we could still hit that hard stop on the bedtime. So I think the element of buffer is still a big deal here. Would you agree?

K

Kira Dorrian 16:45

Oh my goodness. Absolutely. Absolutely. Because there's nothing worse than watching the minutes tick by and knowing oh my gosh, it's getting later and later. And, and if you just are willing to admit like actually, this just needs to start sooner mentally, I need to be starting this sooner, you take so much of the angst away for you as the parent.

D

Deana Thayer 17:04

I completely agree. So let's start before bed. And then I want to talk about what happens after bedtime if they don't stay there. Because I know that, I know that's a question people are having. So maybe tell us a little bit about what you included, what was a big deal to you, and how that looked because people might want actual ideas of what they might put in their evening routine.

K

Kira Dorrian 17:26

Yeah. So I mean, I can tell you what we do right now, because we still have kids that are, you know, young enough to have a proper evening routine. And much like with our morning routine, I think I mentioned on that episode that I go, morning routine, and they know what that means. Same thing, evening routine and, and they know what that means. So ours definitely starts after dinner. And a lot depends on whether they have a bath or not, because our kids don't take a bath every day. They're getting close to the age

where they probably need to, but I'm going to stretch that out as long as I possibly can. So they pretty much take a bath like every other day. And so on the days that they have a bath, after dinner, it's straight up into the bath, and they have a little like splash around in the bath. And then they get out and I say, evening routine. And that means put on your jams and brush your teeth and pick out a story. And those are like their three things that they have to do. And of course, stories are currency for one of my kids, it's not any more for the other one. But reading is for the other one. So that's the, kind of like I talked about in the morning routine, they don't get a story, they don't get to read until they've done their evening routine. So that's the currency, right? So evening routine, so they go brush their teeth, they floss, they get in the jim jams, they pick out whatever they're going to read either with us or on their own. And then we climb into bed. And oftentimes we'll get into bed as a family. So the one that reads we'll just read off to the side in the bed snuggled. And then the three of us with the one that still likes stories will kind of read the story with them. And so and then yeah, we do a switcheroo, my husband and I. So they each get like 10, 10 minutes or so with us. So we read story. And then my husband will go in with one and I'll be with the other and we have a little snuggle, a little chat about the day and blah, blah, blah. And then we switch. And then they get a little snuggle and we chat about the day with the other one. And then we say good night, and we go downstairs. And so our kids go to bed at 7:30. And our evening routine starts like, if they don't have to have a bath, we start at seven. So that's about a 30 minute window that we allow, but that's pretty smooth sailing. When, when they were littler, it was more like a 45 to an hour that we kind of gave ourselves to get it all done.

D

Deana Thayer 19:37

Yeah. And I think that's, that's so key. It's that buffer. Again, things are a little bit slower with smaller people or there might be a different need for reminders while all these things are still getting set in place. Baths are not as straightforward with kids who can't dry themselves or do, I mean there's just so many things there, right? So I think that's, that's perfect and I love that you said what you do and kind of how it looks and that you even take turns. I love that they both get some time with you. I think that is really important that there's that one on one piece because it's hard. And I didn't have to struggle with that as a single parent. I guess there's one that was, it was like, well, it's just, you definitely get, you definitely get Mom.

K

Kira Dorrian 19:44

Mom or mom, who would you like tonight?

D

Deana Thayer 20:20

Yeah. What are your choices? Yeah. So I think that's really fabulous. And I, and you've given me the perfect segue to say something that is important to me as a sleep consultant. And I know we have some of my clients who listen. So they'll be like, oh, yeah, Deana told me to do that. So I tell even parents of infants to have an evening routine, because it sends the signal to baby that this is, we're getting ready to go to sleep, and tells your body what's happening. And so I'm really big on that. And the other thing I'm big on that some people don't think about is not just the what but the when. So especially with youngers obviously, like Kira said, this is going to peter out entirely, but also what I'm about to say will peter out and become less important. But especially with littles up until you see it naturally being fine to switch things up, I suggest actually having the items in your bedroom routine happen in the same order every evening. Because there is sort of this idea even in our bodies with our biological clocks and our, and our circadian rhythms that's like after this, this happens. After this, this happens. And then I go to sleep. And so setting that up well and not disrupting it can really be helpful, especially if you have a toddler say, who gets easily disrupted by even one thing looking different. And how many of us haven't dealt with the threenager who's like, what, there's a pea touching my macaroni, you know, like, what, just one little thing can completely throw them off. So absolutely, the, the derailment is epic. And so I really encourage not only hey, pick three to five things that are always going to happen before bedtime. I don't really recommend more than that, it gets laborious, but three to five things that are always going to happen, and do them in the same order. It's really helpful. And again, as they get older, you might not see as much need for that but when they're small oh, so wonderful. So we always did the same, the same three to five things with your exact caveat which was on certain nights the bath wasn't part of it. So then we just had the four, the other four things which were jammies, teeth brushing, reading a story or doing our little devotion, and then I would pray with each of them before going in and just saying a quick good night. So, but it was always in the same order. And then of course, I get to tell you the even sadder part is that eventually then you're like, you have a big person who looks like a small man child, come and just say good night, Mom. It's just, and then you have one who leaves and I'm not even there at good night time. So it really is worth hanging in there. I know we say this and you probably are like oh Kira and Deana, you're a broken record. How many times can you say like, hang in there? But it really is worth it because it's a blip on the radar essentially. It feels like eternity when you're in it. And then all of a sudden you're like, I don't tuck them in, what happened?

K

Kira Dorrian 23:11

I know. I have one that I think is gonna go the long haul, like, the one who still likes stories. Like they, they want all of it. They want the snuggle, they want the song, they want the

whole shebang. So I think this one might go, might go till eighteen like, will you come snuggle me?

D

Deana Thayer 23:26

It might be really nice for you, Kira. That's okay, if you have one like that, you know.

K

Kira Dorrian 23:30

But I was gonna say I'm so glad you said about infants because we've been doing this since they were born. When they were babies, we had a song that we always sang to like kick off bedtime. And then same in the morning, whenever they woke up, we sing the same song. When Dave would leave for work, we'd sing the same song. It was like ways of cueing them to here's what's happening, what's happening next. So I think that's so smart just to, just to like give, give your baby, your little toddler, your kids, it's like a heads up, like oh, now, now I know what to do. This is the rhythm of my evening. This is the rhythm of my day, you know.

D

Deana Thayer 24:03

Then they know what that transition looks like. Because it comes with this little cue, essentially a visual cue or an audio cue. We often played this game, pretty much only in the evening as we were headed toward this time of the day, that was called monster mommy. And I would just pretend like, monster mommy's coming for you. And they would like run up the stairs. And then once I caught them, they would get all kinds of zerbets and love, very sloppy love. But it was, that was how we got upstairs. It was how we transition to the area of the house even that was like, this is where we get ready for bed. And it was, it was a game. But they also I know internalize that as this little clue. And so I think there's a lot of ways you can do this that can still be totally fun, you guys, so have fun with it, make it your own. But definitely pick those things starting early. But if you haven't started this, there's nothing wrong with starting now. Like we always say you can make course corrections at any time. That actually is evidence of being a great future focused parent, the ability to say, this isn't serving me well, I need to sort it out. And then you just have a chat with your family, let them know how it's gonna look different and start doing it. So we've talked about the front end. But what happens, what happens when you put your kids to bed and they reappear, or they call for you, or they need another kiss or another glass of water, or all of this? We've got to talk about this, because I know it's a huge issue, almost, I would say, I mean, there's probably some anomaly person out there who's like, oh, that just never happened to me, but a lot of people secretly. No, really, I think, for most people, that that has been a thing. And so it's, it's really not about whether

or not, it's about how do you handle it when it happens. It's not that if, right, and so tell me, tell me, did this ever happen to you? Or did you just have dreamboat children immediately?

K

Kira Dorrian 25:54

I have, I have two very different children. I have one who basically puts their head on the pillow and is out for 11 hours and has been like that since they were a baby. Like, we used to joke that if we just had this one baby, like people would hate us. But luckily, we had the other one. More like a normal baby.

D

Deana Thayer 26:17

To even it out.

K

Kira Dorrian 26:18

Yeah. You know, like I called the doctor at one point when they were an infant and was like, is, is 19 hours a day too much? So. So you know, like, the, we were those people except we have the twin. So you know, you can, you can stop hating us because we did have this other one. And so that pattern has continued. The one that sleeps so well through the night, sometimes comes downstairs, but is pretty receptive to okay, one last kiss, bye, you know, and will just go back. The other one, however, has just always been a rough sleeper, they just don't like to be alone. And they just don't sleep as deeply or as well as the other one. And so we get a lot of, we get a lot of visits and a lot of not so much I need a glass of water, but more the, I need you, you know, so yeah, that happens. It still happens. Even at eight.

D

Deana Thayer 27:11

Yeah. What do you, what do you do? Or what are your, do you have some scaffolding around that? Or is that like, it's fine? I'm okay with it. But only, I only want to see you this many times. What, what do you do around that?

K

Kira Dorrian 27:23

Well, I'm going to answer that question. But feel free to tell, tell all our listeners not to do this.

D

Deana Thayer 27:30

Okay, you're awesome. I don't think that will happen. Because there are so many ways to handle this.

K

Kira Dorrian 27:35

Well, we have in our room a little twin mattress that we call the help yourself bed. And it got to a point where it was like, we just discovered that the sleep was so disrupted. And, and I, as strict as I was about sleep when they were little, now that they're older and can really articulate themselves, especially my, you know, when this child is telling me like I feel unsafe, or I'm lonely or you know, some of these hot button words that as a, as a mental health person, I'm like, you know, I don't want you to feel that way. I ultimately became uncomfortable just sending them back to bed. So we said, look, we've got a help yourself bed. If you wake up in the night, and you want to feel close to us, help yourself. Please don't wake me, I don't want to know you're there. I don't need to know you're there. Like I want nothing to do with it. But if it's gonna make you feel cozier and comfier to just be in the same room, then help yourself. And so this child helps themselves a lot. And it sort of works for us. Because it's like, it doesn't really get in the way of our lives. And it makes this child feel that we are available to them, but in a way that still protects our sleep. Because that was the thing for me was like, I don't want to be up til midnight with you. I don't want to be up at two o'clock in the morning trying to get you to go back to bed. Just help yourself.

D

Deana Thayer 28:53

Oh, okay, I'm so glad. I'm actually so thrilled that you said these exact things. Because here is the key you guys. I mean, really, if you're an FFP, and you want to think long range, you have to decide what is behavior that's even worth changing. And so which parts of it are worth a change and which parts of it are not a big deal. And so I'm going to steal Kira, Kira and Dave's example. It is super important to them that their sleep isn't totally disrupted. It is equally important -and these aren't mutually exclusive- that this child can feel supported, and that they have the option for being close to mom and dad if that's what is needed. And they found a way to do both. So what I often say, to even my sleep consultant clients is really work to not think either/or. Is there a both/and?

K

Kira Dorrian 29:46

I love that.

D

Deana Thayer 29:48

Because there often is and so there I mean, I have, so that can look a number of different ways for you. For your family, it might not be a child who wants to come into the room or needs that extra snuggle. It might be asking for things repeatedly. And then you have to decide, okay, is there a both/and? How do I determine a need versus a want? I mean, there's a lot of questions you can ask yourself here, right? How do I, how do I help? Okay? If water is their thing, is this a situation where maybe they should get to have a glass of water on their nightstand, so that they have access to the water, but I'm not getting interrupted 13 times, after bedtime? You know, there's, there's usually a way to solve it that is a both/and. What I will say though, is children, our own children in particular, know us best and often know our own buttons. And so it's hard because they'll sometimes try to manipulate or milk the situation a little bit. So you may have to eventually decide what your, what your actual boundary is. But that's what I love about what you shared, Kira, is your boundary was, I don't need to be interrupted for this.

K

Kira Dorrian 30:53

Right. Well, and, and this is the thing is, we still have very strong boundaries. You're not in our bed. That was an important boundary to us. Like, no, no, no one sleeps in our bed but us unless you're sick. In which case, of course, but like, you know, there's still boundaries about the bed, there's boundaries about being woken. Right, and those kinds of things. But yeah, I love what you said, that makes me feel better. I thought you might fire me.

D

Deana Thayer 31:15

Oh, no, not at all.

K

Kira Dorrian 31:17

No, that just makes me feel better. Because I think what you said is really true. And it links back to our values. For me, there's a value here around this child feeling that their needs are getting met emotionally, because that's so important to me. And so you're right, we did sort of find a way to still have boundaries that work for us and protect our needs, but also are meeting our child's needs as well.

D

Deana Thayer 31:39

Yes, and that's exactly it. And I have, I also have one of each. A really strong superduper sleeper, and one that was more challenging, and some of which wasn't even this child's

fault, like this child dealt with night terrors and things like that. So for me, it was really, I had to figure out what are my non-negotiables. And then there's freedom within that, which we talk about all the time. And, for me, one of mine was, I really was working to cultivate an environment where I didn't have children who came out of their room multiple times. So there, and now again, this is like, different for every family. But you've got to pick your things. And this is what I would encourage you listeners, pick your thing. So for me, that was one. I would rather come to you than have you coming out over and over and interrupting me trying to be an adult. So they were always welcome to call for me, and I will come to you. But you're, once you're in your room, you're in your room unless 3 things. And I did, and I'm going to be honest, I didn't tell them these three things until they were old enough to not really manipulate them. And that was if something is truly happening, like an emergency, like an earthquake, a fire, etc. Or you're truly scared, which for for my children happened a lot with thunderstorms, they did not love that. Or if you're sick, then all bets are off, you can come get me. Otherwise, I wanted to still let them know I'm available to you, but I'd like you to call for me and not get out of your bed. So I was okay having, being disrupted to go to them, rather than cultivating this environment of you get out, you get out, you get out, over and over and over. And so it was really interesting, because I didn't have people who left, who left. I think, I think here's what it is. I mean, and this is it. Like that was important to me. To other people, it's not, it's gonna be. Like, I want you to have the freedom to get out, but I need you to not do this, right. So it's gonna look different. But here's, here's what it kind of comes down to for me, and I'm totally stealing this and I'm going to give credit to, I actually learned it at my kid's school. It's a little saying, I don't even think I can give them credit for it. But I'm not sure where it came from. But here's, here's a saying that is true. What we permit, we promote. So if your child notices, well, they allowed that, then we're actually encouraging it to keep happening. And so if there are some things that are important to you around bedtime, that are hey, you know what? I'm actually okay with that extra snuggle, totally ask me for that. What I'm not loving is the coming down 47 times for more story time or whatever. So all this to say is pick what's important to you. And I would keep those things very small, make sure they're really important enough that you're going to stand firm on them. Let there be latitude within that. Look for the both/and and be aware of what you permit, you promote. If you're allowing it to slide of course they're going to keep doing it. So if there is something you're trying to add, I'm saying this gently and I mean it kindly and not punitive. But if there is a behavior you're trying to shut down, you probably need to look at, are you allowing it? Are they getting a sense that like, well, but I get to do this?



Kira Dorrian 34:42

Oh, absolutely.

D

Deana Thayer 34:43

So it's a really worthwhile question to ask. So I'm gonna shut up now.

K

Kira Dorrian 34:46

No, I love all of that. I think that's so smart. Because this is one of those times where you really do have to kind of narrow it down to what really matters to me? How do I make sure I get those things met? And then what signals am I sending that are meaning I'm in this position in the first place? And that's not a criticism. We all do that. I've had to do that in my own parenting like, how did I get here? Oh, that's how I got here. Yeah, I think that's, I think that's brilliant. And it's one of the reasons I love you and I know that clients love working with you is that you're not prescriptive, you know, this is this is make it work in your family. How do we figure out a way that is both/and? I love that. That's so, so fabulous.

D

Deana Thayer 35:28

See, you're not fired.

K

Kira Dorrian 35:29

I'm not fired, hooray. But it is, it's proof that like, you know, I, I have a friend, I have a friend who the joke is that, um, that my quote is, you know, be meaner. Like, she's so loving, and so kind with their kids. And one time we were talking, she was like, what do you think I should do? I was like, I think you should be meaner, like, I think you need some more boundaries is what I was trying to say. Right? You know, I think it is almost like, like, when this friend of mine found out that we have a help yourself bed, she was like you do? :like, of all the people on the planet, she was like, you're the last person I thought would have a help yourself bed. But the thing is, it's like, you got to figure out what works for your family. And, and, and matches your values. And really, truly the help yourself bed is a place where my values are being matched and, and that is going to look different even from what you might guess I would do. This is one of those, my like, dirty little secret that when it comes to this, this actually is more important to me than having my bedroom to myself. And also, I'm aware that this child is not going to be in the help yourself bed forever.

D

Deana Thayer 36:32

Again, it's that fleeting thing, and it's a passing season. And, and I didn't say this, I hope it goes without saying just because you all know me so well. But all of these things also

should come with a verbal explanation, even for little ones, they need to know what they can expect from you. So if you're working to undo a culture of a child coming out of the room, it's really important to let them know, you know what? We're gonna, we're gonna work on not doing that anymore. So when you come out, I'm actually going to be walking you back to your bed. So they're not surprised by that. I think, again, considering them. They are people, not robots that we can just program to do exactly what we want. So they need to know what they can expect from you. And again, making them aware of the safety and the availability. But if there is something you're trying to correct, making sure they know, here's what that's gonna look like now, so it's not a shock.

K

Kira Dorrian 37:20

Yeah, I think that's so smart.

D

Deana Thayer 37:21

I just forgot to say that earlier. Sorry.

K

Kira Dorrian 37:23

No. Okay. So Deana, in lieu of a quote today, can you just give us that amazing one that you dropped a little bit earlier? Because I love that.

D

Deana Thayer 37:31

Oh, yes. So a great little nugget to think about: what we permit, we promote.

K

Kira Dorrian 37:37

I love it. Because we say all the time that kids learn something from everything we do, even in the absence of doing, right? Even our choice to not do something is still teaching them something or telling them, sending them a message. If we permit it, then even just by allowing it to happen, we're saying it's okay. Well, listener, I hope that it was a useful conversation today talking about that evening routine, and that between the episode on the morning routine, and today's episode, hopefully we can start to get your top and tail of your day just feeling that, that little bit better and a little bit more within your own control. Because I think that's how we want to feel. I mean, even your example, Deana with the, you know, going to the kids instead of having the kids come to you, it's a way in which you still feel empowered as a parent, right? I get to come to you, I get to decide when I get up and come to you, instead of the child kind of being the one in charge. So

whatever that means to you. And that's going to be different for everyone. We want you to feel like you are empowered throughout your day, but especially that top and tail of the day as well. All right, well, thank you again for being with us. And we look forward to bringing you more next week. Don't forget, please, please follow us on Facebook and Instagram @futurefocusedparenting. If you haven't subscribed to the show yet, just hit that subscribe button. You'll be glad you did. And don't forget you can always find our online courses and our books and all of our good stuff at futurefocusedparenting.com. Raising Adults is produced by Kira Dorrian and Deana Thayer and recorded partly in my laundry room, partly in Deana's bonus room today. Music by Seattle band Hannalee. Thanks for listening.



Future Focused Parenting 39:12

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