

Connection Over Correction With Your Kids



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With Your Host

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Hi there. Welcome to the Design Your Dream Life podcast. My name is Natalie Bacon and I'm an Advanced Certified Mindfulness Life Coach as well as a wife and mom, if you're here to do the inner work and grow, I can help. Let's get started.

Hello, my friend. Welcome to the podcast. I am so happy to be here with you today. We are gonna talk about connection over correction with your kids. Before we dive in, I just wanna say thank you so much. I have been getting so much positive feedback lately. I feel so grateful and so much appreciation whether you're sending me a dm, whether you've written a review on this podcast, whether you are sending me emails and you're a Grow You member sharing your wins in the community, I feel like it just validates how much I love serving you and so I really appreciate it.

I know it takes extra time. If you've ever written a review for anyone, you know that it um, does take a little bit of effort. So I'm so grateful and if you haven't left a review on this podcast and you are feeling generous with a little bit of your time, I would so very much appreciate it. This is how more of this work can reach more women and have a greater impact. iTunes really favors podcasts with reviews, so I know it takes a little bit of time and energy and I know it's not the simplest process, but it does make a really big impact for the work that we're doing here. And I read all of those and really appreciate them. With that, let's dive into today's topic.

So I read the book Parenting, Getting It Right by Andy and Sandra Stanley. It's an excellent book. I love Andy Stanley. I've been following his work for a while. This is one concept that I learned from them and I've sort of put my own spin on it and it's been very impactful for me personally and my family as well as I think in my client's lives because I've been sharing it there. So I thought I would talk about it here. So let's dive in. Correction is a huge part of motherhood insofar as we are correcting our kids' behavior to hold boundaries, keep them safe and teach them. For example, if they try to run into the street or eat a battery, you are going to stop that and correct the behavior to keep them safe. If they try to grab something from their sibling in a not so nice way, you probably correct the behavior to hold the

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boundary. If they start taking their shoes off at a restaurant or putting their feet on the table when you're out, you correct them to teach them.

So I just think noticing that there is so much, much correction in parenting and in motherhood is helpful to see and really bring attention to. And this isn't a bad thing. We want to keep our kids safe, we want to hold boundaries, we want to teach them. And yet noticing that this can become so dominant in the relationship, that it can actually decrease connection. I think that correction can be disconnecting because there's an inherent you are doing this wrong or sense of control with correction. So if you just think about as an adult when you're corrected, it often doesn't feel that great. Even if we know that the correction is helpful and useful, it doesn't feel connecting. We're typically not thinking, oh my gosh, I'm so glad you corrected me. If you've ever had a boss who only focused on correction and wasn't interested in you personally and didn't take time to connect with you, you know what this feels like.

And I just think noticing that as adults can be really helpful to have compassion and understanding of what it's like to be a kid because of course we all were kids, but we forget this part of it, particularly when we're in our role as as teacher, as mom who's holding the boundary and keeping our kids safe. We're thinking about our perspective, not necessarily theirs. So I think just taking a second and noticing how we feel to be corrected as adults doesn't always feel so good. So of course teaching, holding boundaries, keeping kids safe is important, but maintaining the connection I think is even more important for a long-term relationship to be more than just a parent-child relationship that doesn't necessarily carry on beyond the, you know, zero to 18 years. A relationship that stands the test of time into adulthood has a foundation of connection in that relationship.

So I wanted to do this episode because my brain naturally tends to processes and rules and order, which means I am very good at correction. There is also that natural default tendency of the brain towards wanting to be right, which I would say I have to the 10th degree. This is why I became a lawyer. Um, you know, they teach you how to think, how to argue, how to

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be really critical and that can be really helpful and make you an a plus lawyer. And yet when you apply that to your relationships, not always helpful. And particularly I think when you think about it from the perspective of being a parent, which yes, inherently there is part of your role that is designed to be correcting, right? We want want to keep our kids safe, hold those boundaries and teach them not to put their feet on the table at the restaurant .

And yet if it's focused solely on correction, it becomes disconnecting. So for me, just noticing and naming it as connection over correction as a value of mine has been really helpful for me to think about it in this way. So I'm just reminded of what's most important with me and my kids is the relationship, not the correcting. And I think of connection differently than most. So the way that I was trained on connection in my professional coach training was that connection is a feeling. A feeling created from your thoughts. I love this way of thinking about it because you can create connection whenever you want without needing anything from the other person. You can decide to increase your connection with your kids by thinking the most connecting thoughts. Did you know that ? So just ask yourself, what are you focused on with your kids? Is it the day-to-day logistics?

Is it the correcting and teaching and holding boundaries? Or is it how good they are? How absolutely wonderful and perfect they are. How you just adore them? I think because the default brain also looks for what's wrong, like that default brain and verse is always gonna be scanning for danger. And this was useful for survival and it's still useful if you're walking out into the street, your brain needs to scan for a car coming. The problem is that we take that part of the brain into the home where it's not life or death where our survival isn't dependent on it and yet we are still looking and scanning for what's wrong.

So I don't think that looking for what's right about your kids comes naturally. So if you're noticing right now that you don't focus on the positives and what's good about your kids and, and you don't naturally feel this connection in the day-to-day, I think that's just common and and normal. So

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don't beat yourself up. Instead just take it as an opportunity to see that that's just your brain on default, sort of mismanaged brain. Like if you hadn't taken a shower in a few days, you'd kind of smell it would, it would be time. That's how it is with your brain. There's nothing wrong with your brain, it's just a human brain. So it needs to be cleaned out just like the human body needs to take a shower. So what you can do is you can clean out your brain and you can use your higher brain to intentionally create new thoughts about your kids and practice those thoughts.

By doing this, you will feel more connected because your thoughts create your feelings. I think a really simple way to illustrate this is to do this activity. So write down 10 challenging things about your kids and then write down 10 amazing things about your kids. Notice how bad you feel with the first list and how good you feel with the second list. That's the power of this work. What you tell your brain to focus on is what feelings you'll create and how you'll show up. So if you are thinking about all of their behavior that you had to correct, it is likely going to feel very disconnecting to focus on what's wrong and that will feel bad. If you are directing your brain on purpose to focus on what's right and just thoughts that you choose on purpose, regardless of any facts that create love and connection, that is going to create those feelings for you and you'll show up in a completely different way, meaning you'll take completely different action with your kids because you'll be thinking and feeling in a completely different way.

It really is that simple. It really does work. So I think that simply telling your brain what to think about your kids is enough. Of course, it is something you do daily just like you shower daily. But I do think there are other ways that you can connect, particularly through studying your kids, like becoming a student of them, getting really curious about them. What are their likes and interests? Get interested in what they're interested in, even if it's things that you normally wouldn't be interested in, like video games or certain activities or sports. Take it as an opportunity to really get interested in them individually so that you can feel more connected to them. I like to think about when we first start dating someone. Can you go back to that? Or maybe you're dating someone now anyways, most of us can remember

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that time and you're really interested in the person you wanna get to know them.

You're thinking lots of questions, you're either asking them or you're just thinking about them and it's really about connecting with them. You want to get to know them. That's the kind of energy that you can have with your kids insofar as you are genuinely curious about them. And I, I think that it's so tempting to think we know our kids better than anyone else, so this isn't really necessary. And on the one hand, I do think we know our kids better than anyone else, and yet I still think it's really useful to be interested in them and study them because as much as we know them, what we know about them is their past. We don't know their future, we really don't. Even if we think that we do, even if they've told us what their future's going to be like, of course no one can actually predict the future.

We just have thoughts about the future. So if you can notice this and decide on purpose that it's useful for you and for your sake and for the relationship to get really curious and interested about them and who they are and who they're becoming in their future, which is a completely blank slate, I think that can provide an opportunity for a lot of connection. And of course, you know, to the extent that they want to spend time with you, depending on their ages, having that special time, that one-to-one time is one of the most top recommended ways to increase connection. And of course that's the action that you'll take from feeling connected already. And this is doing things on their terms, getting into their world. It's not, Hey, do you wanna come to the grocery store with me and be in my world? It's let's play in your world something that I think again, maybe isn't the most natural, and yet it has such a great impact for connecting in the relationship.

For me, having the value of connection over correction has been so helpful to keep me grounded and to remember to let go of some of the things that could be corrected but that aren't a safety issue in the name of focusing on the more important part of the relationship, which is connection. I think that this is something that you could even apply and notice in your adult

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relationships. So if you are in a marriage and you notice that you focus on correcting more than connecting, that's a sign to just keep this in mind and notice that tendency and then decide on purpose if that's how you want to show up in your marriage. What I think that makes the parent-child relationship so unique and absolutely amazing is that the relationship shifts over time, unlike any other relationship. So correction is only part of the dynamic during the younger years and over time decreases year after year, eventually kids become adults and then you enter into the pure friendship period.

Then even after that, the rules switch and the child then begins to take care of the parent later in life. For those of you with aging parents who you care for, you know exactly what I'm talking about. And I think that the parent-child relationship is the only relationship that does this. If you think about working for a company as the employee, you're always the employee of the employer over time, it doesn't naturally switch. So I just think noticing that and noticing the complexities that lie in this parent-child relationship due to that dynamic can be helpful to see that you're not doing it wrong. I think that there are so many more growth opportunities because of that, but I also think that means that there are more challenges present. So if you're finding it challenging, that's okay. It is hard sometimes and it's okay to let it be hard and to keep going, to keep working on yourself.

There's so much work that you can do on yourself as the mom, and you don't have to do it with your child at all. When you clean up what's going on for you, this is why I focus on the mom. When you do this for yourself, it has that ripple effect of impacting everyone in your life, which of course includes your kids and your spouse and your family and and everyone else in your life as well. So for purposes of this topic specifically, I think there's a huge benefit to asking yourself, what do I think about my kids? And are those the thoughts that I want to continue to think about my kids? And the way that you answer those questions is based on how those thoughts make you feel. It's not whether they're true or not. So if your child takes his shoes off every time you go to the restaurants and your brain says, I'm focusing on that because it's true.

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While it is true, it feels disconnecting and doesn't help you increase your connection with your child. So it's not the most useful thought. It's not that you wanna ignore that behavior and not help come up with solutions for it, but just notice if that's the thought that you're continuing to focus on and really getting to the bottom of this and really trying to solve this challenge instead, are you also balancing those thoughts with thoughts about how amazing and confident and daring and wonderful and whatever other characteristics that your specific child has? Are you thinking those thoughts? Are you practicing those thoughts so that you feel love and connection towards your kids? So just notice it. Notice your brain on default, and then choose better feeling thoughts about your kids because that will increase your connection. Another way to kind of check in with yourself and see how you're doing in this specific area is to ask yourself if you are interested in your kids, and also to ask yourself how often, maybe like on a weekly basis, I don't know if it's useful to ask on a daily basis since every day is a little different.

And there could just be, you know, as you all know, some off days, but asking yourself on a weekly basis, how often do you feel love or connection about your kids for your kids? And this isn't something that you'll know the answer to by looking at their behavior. This is just about you. Remember your thoughts, create your feelings so you create the feeling of connection regardless of what your kids are doing or what they're going through or any limitations they have or any challenges they have, you can still feel connected to them when you do this work. So just check in with yourself to see what the top emotions are for you on a weekly basis. And again, don't go into judgment or beating yourself up. Just get curious and allow yourself to see that if you are more focused on correction, now is the perfect time to start focusing on more connection.

I actually created a brand new free training to help you get started with this. It's called The Empowered Mom Kit. You can head on over to nataliebacon.com/kit, that's k i t and opt into that free training. You will get four videos, four worksheet downloads, and you'll learn the tool for how to do this work and apply it in your own life as you do The Empowered Mom

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Kit. I would love to hear how it goes for you. You can send me a DM over @NatalieBaconCoaching on Instagram. Alright my friends, I will talk with you next week. Take care.

If you loved this podcast, I invite you to check out Grow You my mindfulness community for moms where we do the inner work together. Head on over to nataliebacon.com/coaching to learn more.