

Emotionally Resilient Children

Kristin [00:00:04] Big little bestie, welcome back to After Bedtime with Big Little Feelings. Today's episode who I am fired up about. We're talking about feelings. All this feelings talk and how some corners of the internet think that feelings talk means we're creating soft kids and we kids, and it's confusing. So we got it. We're devoting this entire episode on exactly why we are labeling feelings. Spoiler alert it makes your kids stronger, and then exactly how you should be implementing this feeling stuff. Because the internet's kind of right. If you do it in a soft way, you're going to create soft kids who can't handle much. If we do the feelings thing in the right way, though, that is how we're going to raise emotionally healthy, resilient kids. We're going to walk you through it. Take all the guesswork out of it.

Deena [00:00:58] On real quick. Bestie. If you enjoy listening to this podcast, please, please do us a favor and hit the follow button wherever you enjoy your podcasts. It's such a simple, simple thing, but it helps us so much on the back end, more than you would ever know. And the more followers we have, the better guests we can get on the pod and the better show for you. So thank you so much, bestie.

Kristin [00:01:17] Let's go.

Kristin [00:01:27] Tyler! You're back.

Tyler [00:01:28] Hey, guys.

Kristin [00:01:29] Hey!

Deena [00:01:29] You made the list.

Tyler [00:01:31] I made the list. I got the invite back. How are you guys doing?

Kristin [00:01:35] Whoa whoa whoa.

Tyler [00:01:38] How dare you ask me how I was doing?

Kristin [00:01:42] Really not ready for that question, that was a weird response [laughter].

Kristin [00:01:47] [Laughter] [In Elmo Voice] Elmo wants to know, how are you?

Tyler [00:01:52] Not good. Bitch. [Group Laughter]

Kristin [00:01:55] Wow.

Kristin [00:01:56] Sorry, guys. Maybe we should ask how you are. I was really that was, like, took me back. Like I do when you like.

Tyler [00:02:03] Deena, how are you?

Kristin [00:02:04] Deena, how are you doing?

Deena [00:02:04] I'm doing well, thank you. Okay.

Kristin [00:02:06] You had a rehearsed answer based on how badly mine went.

Deena [00:02:09] Wait, do you really want to know how I'm doing?

Kristin [00:02:10] Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Definitely. Yeah. Okay.

Deena [00:02:12] Yeah. No, I'm a little tired, but I'm actually. I had a pretty good day. That's good. I had fun with my kids in the afternoon. It's really refreshing. Lovely.

Kristin [00:02:20] Yeah. How are you?

Tyler [00:02:22] You know, I'm okay. I'm. What's what's a good word? Tranquil but chaotic.

Kristin [00:02:28] Are you using your feelings wheel?

Tyler [00:02:30] You know what I am, actually, yeah. I'm using words for my feelings wheel.

Kristin [00:02:34] Yeah, proud of you.

Tyler [00:02:35] Besties. I don't know if any of you guys have feelings wheels. They're phenomenal. I got introduced to him a few months ago, and it has, like, all these emotions. Like you got your big ones angry, sad, joyful, all of those. But then it digs deeper into very specific emotions, which is phenomenal. Like open up your feelings vocab. That's what I say.

Kristin [00:02:56] Yeah.

Tyler [00:02:56] Open it up.

Kristin [00:02:57] Well, I guess that's what this podcast is about. But like, why wasn't I told about the deeper feelings that are connected to those bigger feelings until the age of 36 is what I want to know.

Tyler [00:03:08] You can thank your parents for that one.

Kristin [00:03:11] But in general. But in general, did anybody in our generation get that?

Tyler [00:03:15] I think, not even a lot of people get it right now. I think the idea of expanding vocabulary around feelings is really new outside of therapy circles. And I think it's something that, like a lot of parents should work on and I hope parents are out there. I hope you are like expanding your and your kid's vocabulary around feeling. So you're not just saying angry. You're not just saying sad. You're not just saying happy. What's the real feeling underneath those things?

Kristin [00:03:40] Give us some examples because you're like knee deep in the feelings wheel.

Tyler [00:03:44] Let me pull out my feelings wheel, lets get into it.

Deena [00:03:47] I really thought he was going to pull a wheel out of his pocket.

Deena [00:03:51] [Group laughter]

Kristin [00:03:52] That would be awesome. We need that.

Tyler [00:04:00] All right, so let's go with mad. So instead of mad, are you feeling irritated? Are you feeling frustrated? Exasperated? Detached? If you're feeling sad, are you feeling miserable? Are you feeling remorseful? Isolated? Disappointed? If you're feeling peaceful, are you feeling safe? Admired? Cherished? Inspired? If you're feeling joyful, are you feeling appreciative? Amused? Chipper? Are you feeling optimistic? If you're scared, are you feeling disheartened? Discouraged? Perplexed? Exposed? Inadequate? These are all like emotions that you wouldn't think to name in everyday life. So like expanding your vocabulary on that. Not only are you like, able to connect to your yourself better, but then you can better express yourself to others like like instead of mad or you just feeling exasperated. Are you just feeling irritated? Like there's more to it? And by expanding your and your kid's vocabulary around these feelings, you're just going to be so much more in touch with yourself. Better able to communicate with others. Like I'm stoked to be on the Feelings wheel bandwagon at this point.

Kristin [00:05:10] I'm stoked that you're on the feelings bandwagon. I mean, I feel like you're touching on, and we'll get to teaching your kids about feelings, but I just want to emphasize what you're saying, which is like your own emotional education. If you know the whole feelings wheel thing, like throw it away even for your kids like that, don't even teach your toddler like teacher self first, because I don't think even until last year I knew about feelings wheels and all the deeper feelings.

Deena [00:05:35] So many of us did not get this exposure. Like you got to be exposed to even be able to start to internalize it.

Tyler [00:05:40] Not even the exposure to just the openness to feelings in general, like my childhood was not open to a lot of heavier emotions. So being able to not even just feel that surface level, but then to go beyond that is like, wow, this is like a new understanding of myself and what my priorities are and what my core values are and like how I'm trying to get there. So truly for yourself, it's like, put your own mask on first so you can dive deeper and then share that with the people in your lives.

Kristin [00:06:08] I swear, this, this intro, this little catch up was not supposed to be about feelings, which is what the whole — the whole episode is about. This is just what you're really needing right now. You're very into your feelings right now. Like in a great way. You're like really exploring and learning and growing. Yeah.

Tyler [00:06:23] I've been. Doing a lot of like learning recently and diving a lot deeper into a lot of these methodologies around how to better understand yourself and your history and kind of why you are the way you are. And it's been really insightful.

Kristin [00:06:35] That's beautiful. Is there anything we wanna talk about that's not about feelings before we start to actually talk about feelings, like something going on in our week?

Tyler [00:06:42] I do want to talk about southern charm. What a season.

Deena [00:06:47] Okay, I have something else.

Tyler [00:06:49] You guys have something?

Deena [00:06:50] Mine is so small. I just I just want to surprise you guys, I forgot. I was like, there's something I want to tell them. I can't wait. I'm catching up on VPR. I just wanted to let you know Vanderpump Rules.

Kristin [00:06:59] Oh my gosh. Wow. Yeah, I knew you'd be proud of me.

Kristin [00:07:03] I'm jealous. I'm jealous. Where are you at?

Deena [00:07:06] Season nine. So juicy.

Kristin [00:07:08] How did you get to season nine?

Deena [00:07:09] I skipped all the rest. So back in the day? I watched the first few seasons. Then I took a break because I became a mom, and I was, like, becoming a therapist and all its things. Too busy. So I'm right back in season nine.

Kristin [00:07:23] So started season nine. Okay.

Deena [00:07:24] They've been in my heart for years so I'm just catching up on their stories.

Kristin [00:07:28] That's great. I'm really happy for you. And I'm also jealous that you get to like, live it. What were you going to say? Sorry. I'm sorry.

Tyler [00:07:35] No. You're good. It's been a wild season, a southern charm, like besties. If you are a fan like I am, it's like one of my favorite shows. Aside from both show, as I call it Below Deck. That's my favorite. Southern charm, wild season. Like roles are changing. People are losing their minds. And I just want to say shout out to Craig Conover. Oh wow.

Kristin [00:08:00] MVP of Bravo?

Tyler [00:08:02] From season one of Southern Charm to where he is now. I just love seeing his emotional growth and just seeing like him be a strong, independent person. Yeah. Wow.

Deena [00:08:11] He must have a feelings.

Tyler [00:08:13] Well he must because like phenomenal he does. He seems so stable and self-reliant and he's just like rises above everything. I love it.

Kristin [00:08:23] Do you think it's because of Paige?

Tyler [00:08:24] No, I honestly don't. I think maybe partially. He was talking about like, oh, Paige, thanks. But I think he's been doing a lot of work on his own, and that's what matters. And like everybody else, is just an absolute mess. Absolutely.

Deena [00:08:36] That's the fun of it, though.

Tyler [00:08:38] That's the fun of it. But it's like, come on guys. Yeah. Come on.

Kristin [00:08:41] I feel like. But though is this real? Is Craig going to be gone in three years like the Craig as we know him. And then is somebody else going to be stable like a ship going to be stable next season?

Tyler [00:08:50] Absolutely zero chance.

Kristin [00:08:53] Did we think that Craig was going to be stable though?

Tyler [00:08:56] No, we didn't.

Kristin [00:08:56] You know what I mean. So I feel like that storyline can go any way.

Tyler [00:08:58] Big chaotic energy. Yeah. Big chaotic.

Kristin [00:09:01] What time was Craig again I can't remember.

Deena [00:09:04] I was thinking of that too though.

Tyler [00:09:05] Look it up. Look it up real quick.

Deena [00:09:06] This is important.

Tyler [00:09:07] All that important stuff. Like I don't want to. I don't want to name names. But it's been a season of of disappointment. I feel like in a good way, a good way I can enjoyable to watch. But just like, man, come on you.

Deena [00:09:20] Guys, you can have lots of feelings on ones.

Tyler [00:09:22] You can, I do, I do, I just pull out my wheel while I'm watching Bravo.

Deena [00:09:30] Surprised? Disappointed?

Tyler [00:09:33] I am exasperated.

Kristin [00:09:37] Craig is an Aquarius. Obviously. That makes.

Kristin [00:09:44] Classic. Okay. Should we should we go back to the feelings talk? Because I feel a little more jazzed about hearing about your feelings journey. And also like why we're doing this in general, you.

Tyler [00:09:54] Let's do it.

Kristin [00:09:54] Let's do it. Okay.

Deena [00:10:05] All right, friends, let's dive in. The feelings. Because this is a very hot topic on the internet right now. And, you know, there's a way to do feelings and there's a way to not do feelings. Frankly. Let's talk about what it is. When you talk about feelings and what it's not. Okay, I think there's this misconception out there that with feelings talk, it's just fluffy. And all we're doing is talking about how they're feeling sad and mad, and we're doing it in this really angelic voice the whole time, and we're so calm.

Kristin [00:10:39] So that's not real life, because, like, we're not going to talk like robots all day. But also on the flip side, there's also a misconception that the whole feelings thing is tied in to permissive parenting. So parenting and just to be like very clear, if you are doing the whole feelings thing and we in this room are because we want to raise like resilient, emotionally healthy kids, if you're doing the whole feelings thing and the whole feelings thing feels really permissive, it feels really gentle to you. It feels like your kid is walking all over you. You're doing it wrong. You're doing your thing that's happening. You're you are being walked on that part of the internet may there may be a grain of truth that of like if they think the argument is if you do this feeling stuff, you're going to raise like a soft kid, you're going to raise a kid who's like, can't really handle real life. And that might be true. Like if there's a kid and you're raising in a really permissive way.

Deena [00:11:46] And when you say permissive, by the way, it's like your kid's feeling upset and angry and sad because they want x, y, z. And so you're like.

Kristin [00:11:54] I hear you.

Deena [00:11:55] Yes, yes, you are saying you want this. So here you go.

Kristin [00:11:58] Here you go, honey. It's like it's like what this parenting is and what this parenting is not. So what this parenting is not is what I think there's a big misconception out there, which is like, okay, honey, no, that's okay to feel. Yeah. That's okay, that's okay. Honey. No no no, that's okay. Okay. How about it? And if it sounds like that and that, then you're doing it wrong.

Deena [00:12:17] Or they're hitting. They're hitting the baby just like you're feeling. Sweetie, it's okay to feel mad. It's not okay to hit. And you're just standing there asking them not to hit ten times, you know.

Kristin [00:12:26] While they're hitting. Yeah, they're like, that's not it. That's not it. So we're going to right after this, get into exactly how you can label feelings, do the whole quote unquote feelings thing, and do it in a way where you're raising a strong kid. That's why we're doing it. But first, I really want to touch on why. Like why in the first place is the whole feelings thing important? Yes, because I feel like that gets lost in the conversation. Yeah. Why is this important?

Deena [00:12:55] And it is it is crucial. Like I'm coming in as a mom. I'm coming in as a therapist. Teaching your kids about feelings is literally crucial for the rest of their life, because what they need to be able to do is look inside, understand what they're feeling, and make sense of it. Because that's step one to being able to deal with it. When you talk about raising a resilient, strong kid, they can recognize what they're feeling and they know how to handle it. We want to raise problem solvers. And so they have to be able to say, oh, I'm feeling mad. And when I feel mad, what can I do? Right. So this is like non-negotiable. They have to know about feelings. Otherwise what happens when we don't learn about feelings? You end up just trying to shove them down, pretend they don't exist. We push them away, you explode. You become anxious because the feelings are there. You just don't know how to contain them. And we become super anxious or depressed because we push them all down, right? So that later puts us at risk and puts our kids at risk of substance use because we're distracting ourselves from feelings of anxiety, depression, trouble. In relationships, you have to be able to not only understand your feelings, understand how to express them in a safe and healthy way, but also to be able to

recognize what someone else is feeling and work together to have a stable, healthy relationship.

Kristin [00:14:25] Well I mean that's the podcast everyone. Let's open all day. That's that's it. No that deeply resonates. I mean I don't think anyone sitting in this room was taught what feelings are or how to handle them or express them. Yeah, yeah.

Deena [00:14:41] And I was not. Hands down.

Kristin [00:14:43] And so I'll speak for myself that 37 years. I mean I'm 37 years in and still trying to stop in that moment when I feel an overwhelming feeling and being like, not completely taken down by it or putting a self-destructive habit in there like I did for decades in. Is so hard and it is not counterintuitive to feel a feeling mad, sad, excited, whatever it is, and to just have that be something that's normal for me. Right? And that's what I want for my kids is like, they feel mad and it's like, oh, that's normal. It's cool to feel mad. Now what should I do? And for me, it's like so overwhelming. If I were to feel mad or sad or any of those quote unquote negative emotions, because as kids it was like, stop, don't be that. Don't be too much like, be good, be a good girl. Go along with that. Stop. God. Right. And you're just not you're not taught any of this stuff.

Deena [00:15:40] No.

Tyler [00:15:41] Yeah. I think for me, like, I've been doing a lot of education recently about, like, feelings and like how it relates to who you are as a person and like, all these like things with, like your childhood and stuff like that. But I think the, the big thing about feelings is that it creates your sense of personal agency, which I didn't realize. And I'm like learning that as an adult is like, if you're able to like, have an understanding of your feelings, it really translates to the opposite of what Deena saying. Like, you know, all the depression and shame, like, those are big, big feelings. Shame is something that can stick around for your whole life if you don't address it. So by having that personal agency over your emotions and oking them and saying, like, I'm feeling this, it's okay, you kind of do away with that shame you might place on yourself or allow others to place on you. So especially if we can put that in our kids, it it really develops that sense of self-worth and self agency to where they are in control of their mental clarity, their bodily autonomy. Like all of this stems from your education around feelings.

Kristin [00:16:45] And so when you were a kid, did you feel was it because when you said that it resonated, was it like, oh, I'm too much, right? And so then you feel the shame? Or where did the shame piece come in?

Tyler [00:16:55] Yeah. It's like around being too much or expressing it too like even to joyfully, to sadly, to angrily like all these things as far as like too much. Suppress them, bring them down a notch. You know it's not right. Don't do this around other people. That kind of a thing to where you're like, oh, anger isn't okay, sadness isn't okay. Happiness is not okay. Like all of these things. Like, even if I am feeling them, I need to suppress them, make them less, keep them internal. To which point you're like, I don't really have control over my feelings. I don't have control over my autonomy. Someone else is dictating this for me.

Kristin [00:17:30] Damn.

Kristin [00:17:30] Yeah. Damn.

Kristin [00:17:33] And so then later on in life, I mean, I think that's why you're in, what you're in and why we're in, what we're in, which is. Yeah, deep therapy, which is for a while there was, what, just like explosions out of nowhere because you bottle it up for so long that then you just explode or you take it out on the wrong person.

Tyler [00:17:49] Yeah, it's and it's two parts. You know, there's the first part of it is people pleasing number one, like straight off the bat is like, I'm not going to impose this on other people. I'm going to do what they need instead.

Kristin [00:17:59] Yeah.

Tyler [00:18:00] And I'm just gonna bottle it up. And then the bottling of course, has to come out at some point. It's probably not going to come out in the way you like. It's probably gonna be towards people that you care about. So it's like these things where you have to have that understanding of it and have those conversations with yourself, and some of them might not be pleasant.

Deena [00:18:16] You have to feel that all feelings are okay, that they're not bad, they're not scary. And that really starts at home with parents being okay with you, sharing and having it, and expressing your feelings in an age appropriate way. By the way, a three year old screaming, crying tantrum on the floor.

Kristin [00:18:34] Totally normal.

Deena [00:18:35] That's normal for the brain development. That's how it looks. And it's not always going to look that way. But in the toddler stage, that is how it's going to look. And I know for me personally, similar to you, when that would happen, I remember my dad just looking so disgusted and being like, what's wrong with you? You get something on your mind and you can't let it go. And the way I coped with it was trying to a just be perfect, not rock the boat, not cause trouble, do everything. Be a good little girl to like, not cause issues. And then later on as you get older, I just tried to separate from the feelings like almost override them. I don't have feelings. I don't have needs. I'm just going to do what they expected me and what everyone wants. That's going to make life easier and later became super depressed. You just push it all down.

Tyler [00:19:27] There's two things to consider in there. Like number one, I know that all of us and I know best is you out there are trying to a big change from the previous generation is seeing your kids as whole people, not as children that don't have any say in how they're feeling, what they want in life. That's a big thing that our generation is doing, is seeing them as whole people that are, you know, have real emotions and like treating them like that. But the second part of that, and this is the hard part, is I think a lot of people have carried shame, which is like you pass it on from your previous generation, is not accepting the age appropriate. Variances, not accepting the age appropriate. What's the word.

Kristin [00:20:09] But I think you are on to something in terms of age and the way we process things and the way it's going to come out, that's really going to vary. And it's so instinctual to be kind of ashamed of ourselves as parents, when we view our kids melting down at home or in public and being like, what's wrong with them? What's wrong with me? You can't do this. And it's like active work to understand this is actually age appropriate. How are they harming someone? Is anyone getting hurt? Should I teach them a little bit

more healthier regulation? Sure. Is this the time to do it? No. What should I be doing right now? Validating, right? It's like constant work to be doing that day in and day out.

Tyler [00:21:30] I think it's personally the hardest thing for me is validating them as whole people and then allowing them to have those age appropriate feelings. That is the hardest thing for me, because I know it was what was really suppressed for me as a kid is the this is not okay that you're doing this. Yeah. Please stop it. Settle down. What you are upset about is not important. You should not be acting this way. And in the same time, since I'm aware of that, it's so painful because I'm like, I am doing the exact same thing as my parents did, and I know how this turns out. So it's good that at least I acknowledge it. But at the same time, I'm like, oof, room for improvement.

Kristin [00:22:05] I think that's all of us, right?

Kristin [00:22:06] It's all of us, our generation.

Deena [00:22:08] Mike and I just talked about this yesterday. We're like, wait a second. We've kind of, like, accidentally dipped into trying to convince them out of their feelings. Sometimes it was looking as if it was like support at times. But we're trying to like, you know, help them manage it and and control it and fix it and did it. It's like, wait, wait a second. Yeah. No, no, no. Let your feelings out. It has been you know, we've like settled back into it. Let your feelings out.

Kristin [00:22:34] I think that's even. You sent this text the other day. I was planning on posting it even to other adults. You sent me this text, and it was after I had said something that I was upset about and it said fix or listen.

Kristin [00:22:48] Whoa.

Kristin [00:22:50] Yeah, yeah.

Deena [00:22:51] Amazing. Yeah.

Kristin [00:22:52] Do you have chills? Yeah, I can explain what that means. Okay, let's even just take this exact example. Would you remember what I was upset about?

Tyler [00:22:58] You were getting really upset about something. I don't remember what it was, but you were text me. I was driving home, and you were upset about something, and it was. It was. I think it was something big, but I don't remember what it was.

Kristin [00:23:09] I don't think it was. It doesn't even.

Tyler [00:23:11] You were upset. That was the main thing is you were upset about this problem. Yeah. And we've kind of talked about this before how sometimes you just want validation. I have this phrase or I say fix or listen, and it means do you want any advice or input on how to fix this situation, or do you just want me to listen.

Kristin [00:23:31] Which is such a game changer even for adults? Because when our kids are melting down, like what Deena was just saying, even if you're not punishing them or sending them away, we also have a tendency to just like, fix it or want to make it stop. Yeah, and maybe that doesn't feel the best to them. Also, by the way, as an adult, to get a text that says fix or listen was such a game changer because normally I have met no fans,

I have met. But with you, as I'm officially yeah, it's like, okay, well what we'll do is we'll just do this and then we'll do this. You do that, move it around. Baa baa baa baa baa. And I'm like, no, I don't, I don't want to move everything around. I just want to kind of like I just kind of want to vent and like, have you squeeze my shoulder and just kind of be like, oh, that feels really hard right now. Like, I get it, you know?

Tyler [00:24:21] That's validation on your emotions.

Kristin [00:24:22] Yeah. And so it's like applying that to our children. What game changer. You don't need to fix it. You don't need to punish it. And what we're about to get into, what we can do is we can lead towards kind of better behavior in the moment if there's some behavior tied to it, like hitting or something that we really need to. And we can also teach coping skills, which if we don't teach that part of it, then we're also not really doing the job all the way to the fullest that we that we all want to. And raising these resilient kids like step one, accept the feeling in the moment. Really mean that? Like we're saying, I'm not here to fix this. I'm not here to judge this. You can let it out. You can let it out, however that means. And then step two is actually actively teaching when I feel mad. I do this when I feel angry. I do that because, again, as an adult, I don't have that. I don't have that at all.

Deena [00:25:25] No one taught us that at all.

Tyler [00:25:27] No, it was just settle down. Settle down.

Kristin [00:25:29] Here's why this is so important, okay. Research shows that when our children label their emotions, the amygdala becomes less active. While the executive part of the brain, the right ventricle, lateral prefrontal cortex, becomes more active. That means when emotions are being processed, children are less likely to go into fight and flight mode. This isn't just kids, by the way. This is adults. So if you literally label your own emotions, your brain is less likely to go into fight or flight mode. Now here's what I'm going to say. Though I will say a lot of the times I think people on our page or in general will say like, well, it's not working like I'm labeling the feeling. And they're not just instantly shutting down or like instantly stopping, and they just want to say crying is healthy. I think we lose sight of that a lot. Like our goal isn't actually to get the crying to stop. Our goal is to have this moment be like a healthy moment for our kids. So if we're labeling that emotion, we're letting them cry. This is actually a win. This is like the best thing that you can possibly do.

Deena [00:26:36] Yeah. You're being that safe space for them to let out the feelings. And then guess what? They're not going to go self-isolate when they have big feelings later. As adults in relationships.

Kristin [00:26:45] Which I do all the time.

Deena [00:26:46] A lot of us do.

Kristin [00:26:47] That's my thing.

Deena [00:26:48] Exactly. That makes so much sense, because when we name a feeling that's happening inside, we actually can sort of contain what feels like that emotional chaos, the turbulence that's happening. When you make sense of it, we feel calmer.

Kristin [00:27:04] Adults and kids, yep.

Deena [00:27:05] All of us. Okay, we've clearly established that teaching about feelings and giving your kids that emotional competence, honestly, to be able to name their feelings, express their feelings at all, helps them in relationships and calming down. That is crucial. But how do you do this in a way that doesn't end up leaving you as the parent, as a pushover, frankly. And the answer is firm, clear boundaries where we are not shook by their feelings. We are confident and we are not wavering.

Tyler [00:27:49] I love boundaries. Oof! I love boundaries for myself, for the kids. Like I don't know how you get through life without them, especially being a parent.

Deena [00:27:57] Because I think the part that we want to embrace is that yes, the real world does have real consequences. You can't just do anything to anyone that you want to. You have to learn where the limit is, and you have to be okay with those feelings, but learn how to handle them in safe, healthy ways.

Tyler [00:28:16] Exactly. And when you're setting up boundaries for them, you're not limiting them. You're teaching them that they have boundaries. They have boundaries with you. They have boundaries with other people. They can feel whatever they want to feel. That's totally okay. It's completely valid. How they express those emotions is important.

Kristin [00:28:31] Well, if the goal is to raise an emotionally healthy, resilient adults, then yeah, and that makes sense because if there is just the feeling stuff, but there's also just like it's chaos. It's mayhem. A your child doesn't really feel safe. Like they want things to feel kind of orderly, kind of like they know what is coming more or less like they're going to feel safer that way. And then the whole piece that we're talking about, which is connecting the feeling to then, okay, what is healthy to do? What do I do when I feel angry? That's where that boundary comes in. That's where they're like, it's okay to feel angry. It's not okay to hit. I'm going to hold you now. It's okay to play with your toys. It's not okay to throw your toy at the ground. We take care of our toys. I'm putting my toy. Yeah, I'm putting the toy up here.

Tyler [00:29:23] They're learning what is and is not okay to accompany those feelings. The feelings are okay. The actions are not.

Kristin [00:29:30] And what actions are okay? Because part of it. Step one feelings. We did that okay. Step two boundaries. We just touched on that. Step three though is so crucial, and I do feel like it gets lost in the whole conversation, which is teaching coping skills or teaching a coping skills is such a buzzword. But it's true. If we're not actively teaching when you feel angry, it's okay to do angry talk, stomp your feet, and really learning. By the way, what is best for our kid? Because what one kid likes to do or feels better when they're angry is not going to be the same for the other kid. Some kids might like angry art like mine loves that, and she's going to get it out. And she does not want to talk about her feelings, by the way. Right. So very different kid. And another kid might really want to talk about their feelings and go for a walk and have some bilateral stimulation and try to explain to them, like when you move your feet, it helps your brain feel better. There's so many different coping skills that we need to actively teach in addition to those feelings, to put them together so that later on in life now we have emotional resiliency. Yeah, that's the secret recipe.

Deena [00:30:41] And can I just say, there is nothing soft or gentle about holding a boundary some time.

Kristin [00:30:49] Like it's incredibly hard.

Deena [00:30:50] You know, you're carrying a kid out of the park because it's time to go and they're screaming and they're kicking, but you are calmly, confidently holding that boundary and walking them to the car. Will you let them know? Yeah, it's okay to feel upset and it's time to go.

Tyler [00:31:03] Yeah. And then next time it might be a bit easier. There might just be crying and not the flailing. So it just is one of those things. As you hold more boundaries, the easier it gets. You just got to it's got to hold on for dear life.

Deena [00:31:15] They learn that you mean what you say.

Tyler [00:31:17] Exactly, which is huge.

Kristin [00:31:19] I think it's a real it's a real middle of the road. And I know people are not going to love that. We as people and human beings really love extremes. So I feel like the way our parents maybe, maybe the way they parented, was such an extreme of like what I almost call like tyranny, you know, in a way of like I am and I'll be all, you listen to me, you know, be seen, not heard my way or the highway. Don't make a noise and just follow everything I say. Because you're the child. You respect me, right? And then I feel. What do you have?

Tyler [00:31:55] Emotional tyranny. [Group laughter]

Kristin [00:32:02] And then I think there's a misconception where we think modern day parenting is this, like, come. Wholly opposite of that of just like, okay, don't you need you whatever you want, Johnny. Like, I don't want to upset you. So like, if you if you like kidding and if that feel and there's like that extreme and that ain't it, that ain't it either. It really is this middle approach where, yes, like we want our child to see us as that leader. Do we want them to fear us and obey us? No. That doesn't lead to the most like emotionally healthy outcome as we, the three of us sitting in this room. No, but there's a different way that's kind of in the middle where like, we are the leaders and so our child knows we are going to keep them safe. They know that we are in charge and we also respect what they need. We listen to them, we validate their feelings. And at the end of the day, though, our job is to keep them safe. Our job is to be the head of this household. It's a real middle of the road approach where we can validate feelings, let our child know what is okay and what is not okay and stick to that. I mean firmly, really stick to that firmly.

Deena [00:33:16] Yeah, 100%. And once you become super comfortable with the fact that feelings are good, they are important. It almost frees you up to just be super strong and like unwavering with the feelings.

Kristin [00:33:30] Like unwavering parenting. Is that what you call it? Stop calling it gentle Parents. Yes. If it feels gentle.

Deena [00:33:36] You're doing probably doing it wrong.

Tyler [00:33:37] I don't like gentle. Yeah, I don't like the. Yeah, yeah.

Deena [00:33:40] It's not accurate.

Tyler [00:33:42] Yeah, it's not gentle. It's not soft.

Kristin [00:33:44] Well, maybe there is a word. Maybe it's just not what we teach. We don't teach gentle parenting. There might be something out there that's a little more sure. Like what we're teaching is not learning it doesn't feel that way to me because—

Deena [00:33:54] It's not just feelings. Yeah.

Kristin [00:33:57] Yeah. So, Tyler, you're into feelings now, which is great because of a few months ago. Just really hyper fixating on it.

Tyler [00:34:04] Which I love as I do.

Kristin [00:34:05] What was it like? Because we were little girls, obviously. And I don't know about you, Deena, but for me, it was like, sit still, be a good girl. Don't be too loud. What was the messaging to you as a little boy about feelings and like how that shapes who you are today or the things you're trying to overcome?

Tyler [00:34:23] Surprisingly, I didn't get as much of like the toxic masculinity of like, you're a boy, don't cry like be a be a big boy, anything like that. Men don't cry. Men don't you know any of that? I didn't have that. I did have the sit still. Be quiet. Very similar to you guys. So I'm surprised they didn't have that male aspect of it. But I know a lot of guys out there get that. And I've seen it in real life where it's like, be a man, be a man, and they're saying it to like a three year old. It's like, come on, man.

Deena [00:34:50] Like toughen up.

Tyler [00:34:51] Yeah. Toughen up, be tougher. Why are you crying? Brush it off. All of this. And it's just it's the exact same, but it's in a different lens of what you're feeling is not real. It's not valid. You should not be feeling this. If you are feeling this, you are less than. .

Kristin [00:35:07] You're weak.

Tyler [00:35:07] Weak. You should internalize this as shame, which you will. It's not spoken, but it's this thing of if you are feeling this in, you shouldn't be surprised. That's going to lead to shame. Yeah, so I know a lot of guys face this in a different lens as far as like be a man, be tough. And it's just it's more of the same but in a different lens. That's even harder because society expects you to be a man. Society expects you to be hard, to be the one that's stable, to be the one that is resilient. So the women in your life can be less stable, more emotional. You're the one that's none. I think that's not acceptable for the men in our society.

Kristin [00:35:44] Well, I feel like the way that manifests, though, is that then categorically like men will be because they're quote unquote stronger and quote unquote less feeling. That means they're kind of like colder and more distant and tougher.

Deena [00:35:59] And I feel like society that makes it so the only acceptable feeling in quotes is anger.

Kristin [00:36:04] Anger.

Tyler [00:36:05] Yeah, exactly. That's usually where it's going to manifest too, like we talked about, you know, me having those explosions of emotions that's very typical for men. I feel like regardless of your upbringing as the stuffing of emotions and the suppressing of emotions, the vulnerability that allows you to connect better to others, and that when you're lacking that, it's it's just, yeah, you're can have those outbursts, you're going to be less likely to be able to connect. And I know a lot of people say like, oh, that's me and I'm fine. And it's like, are you are you fine? Are you able to deeply connect with your spouse and your kids as much as you think you are? Are your kids open with you about their emotions and that's what you're going for? I mean, for me, the vulnerability is for myself, but it's for my kids to know that they're safe with me, that they can share those emotions with me and know that I will accept those emotions. And we can have those talks so they feel comfortable. I'm the one that they come to when they're feeling uneasy in life.

Kristin [00:36:59] And by the way, part of this that I don't think we've even spoken about so far is modeling, because we can say we're okay with their feelings until we're blue in the face. But if they see us. And we have no emotional regulation skills, so they see us shoving all of our feelings down. But when somebody cut us off in traffic, then we're like, God, you know, when we're slamming the horn. And this is the funniest thing that I've ever seen in my entire life, was the other day when our daughter, like, couldn't open something or whatever it was, and she instantly was just like. Oh, come on, and no joke, three minutes before this in a different room. So it's not like she was just like a toddler mirroring. It's like she's literally picking this up. Three minutes earlier, I watched you try to open something. You know, it took. What's that? You're like, oh, come on. I know right? So it's like. That's why we have to show up and say all feelings are okay and have emotional blah, blah, blah. But until we actually do it ourselves and we're emotionally vulnerable with her children and we're not exploding at them because we're shoving everything down, we know it's not gonna it's just going to keep going. One constant work I do it to. By the way, we're aiming for like 50% of the time. Yeah, like, try our best to emotionally regulate, you know, for our own kids, too.

Deena [00:38:20] All right, I love this. Okay? Love this. I'm very tired. Yeah. I'm going to leave your house.

Kristin [00:38:25] Okay.

Deena [00:38:26] You guys are going to stay here. So what are you going to go do next, I hope I hope you're going to go eat some snacks. Are you going to have some dinner?

Tyler [00:38:32] I would love to.

Kristin [00:38:33] Okay. Yeah, yeah, I feel like you should have dinner.

Deena [00:38:36] Are you ordering in?

Tyler [00:38:37] No, it's going to be leftovers.

Kristin [00:38:39] Yeah. I was like, what are we doing?

Deena [00:38:41] I don't even have some leftover. It's gonna be some leftovers.

Kristin [00:38:43] Is this a problem? The green tea that you've been chugging out of the Stanley Cup this entire episode? Probably not. We didn't know it was green tea.

Tyler [00:38:52] Green tea is very good.

Kristin [00:38:53] But it's the quantity I'm concerned about. It's a stanley cup of tea..

Tyler [00:39:02] Got to keep my mind fresh.

Deena [00:39:03] Okay, okay, okay.

Kristin [00:39:07] I'm not having that kind of a night. I'm going to go eat. Go to bed. What about you?

Deena [00:39:11] I'm gonna. I think I'm gonna go talk to my husband. I haven't talked to him all day. Wow. See what's going on? What's been cracking?

Kristin [00:39:19] You know what's cracking?

Deena [00:39:20] What's cracking? How was your day? What did you do? You know, we just kind of parallel parent without talking so we're going to go chat.

Kristin [00:39:28] Okay.

Tyler [00:39:29] Chat. It's good. I like that.

Deena [00:39:31] Chat and go night night. All right. Besties.

Tyler [00:39:34] Guys. Thank you for having me on again. It's been so nice to chat with you guys and chat with all the besties out there. I love it.

Kristin [00:39:41] Love it, love you.

Tyler [00:39:44] Really love that you guys are doing a great job out there. Proud of you guys.

Kristin [00:39:48] Besties you every day. Great job.

Tyler [00:39:50] Every day. I'm proud of you guys.

Kristin [00:39:52] Okay we'll see you next week, bestie.

Kristin [00:39:54] Bye bye.

Kristin [00:39:59] If you are struggling with toddler or preschooler tantrums, push back discipline, picky eating, just all the confusing things. This podcast we can only scratch the surface if you need help. Our course Winning the Toddler Stage is here to help. It is aptly nicknamed the Toddler Manual because it truly has every single thing you could possibly struggle with under the sun between the ages of one and six within one course, we're not going to do a bunch of workshops. You have to buy the Sleep Guide and the Picky Eater guide. I know this guy. I don't know that guy. Didn't know everything you could possibly need for ages one through six is all in this one course. We were never meant to do this parenting thing alone. You deserve to have help. We are here for you. You can find that course at [Big Little feelings.com](http://BigLittleFeelings.com), and be sure to follow us on Instagram and Facebook. At

Big Little Feelings, we give free tips every single day. They might change your life with one free tip.

Deena [00:41:03] Thank you so much for being here with us. This has been an Audacy Production. Executive produced by Lauren LoGrasso, produced by Daniela Silva, edited by Bob Tabaddoor and theme music composed by Liz Fall, then studio lighting designed by Shane Sackett and designed by Jackie Sherman. Special thanks to Audacy Executive Vice President and Head of podcasts Jenna Weiss-Berman. And thank you for being here with us. We can't wait till next week.