

How to get on the same page as your co-parent

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SUMMARY

Sarah and Declan share their journey of navigating parenting challenges and communication issues in their marriage. Initially seeking help for parenting, they discovered that addressing their marital dynamics and understanding their childhood experiences significantly improved their relationship and parenting approach.

- Sarah and Declan faced communication challenges, particularly during stressful parenting moments, often leading to conflict.*
- Both parents recognized how their childhood experiences influenced their current behaviors and responses in their relationship.*
- They found that their values aligned, but their daily actions did not reflect those values, causing internal and external conflicts.*
- The couple learned to communicate more effectively by acknowledging their feelings and working together as a team.*
- They emphasized the importance of curiosity in understanding each other's perspectives and needs.*
- Engaging in a parenting membership provided structure, accountability, and community support, enhancing their parenting skills and relationship.*
- Sarah reported feeling less triggered and more relaxed as a parent, leading to improved interactions with their children.*
- The couple's journey highlights the significance of aligning parenting practices with shared values to foster a healthier family dynamic.*

[Music] foreign [Music] hello and welcome to the your parenting Mojo podcast today I'm here with two special parents Sarah and Declan who were having some communication challenges when I met them you'll hear in the conversation that they found conflict really difficult even when the cause was seemingly very simple Declan might get home and start preparing a meal that began with

defrosting meat instead of getting Leftovers on the table quickly and Sarah would say why on Earth would you do that accompanied by the facial expression that I'm sure you've never used when your spouse did something that didn't make sense to you and then as soon as she realized there was a rupture she would do everything she could to repair wanting to talk about it immediately and fix the situation when Declan wasn't ready to do that yet he realized that she was really

trying to fix the hurts that she was still carrying from her childhood rather than make amends with him about this situation they thought they wanted to work with me to get support with their parenting but their marriage ended up being the biggest beneficiary of all so do listen for how Sarah and Declan made that shift and then at

the end I share some more ideas as well for when you wish your partner was on the same page as you from

a parenting perspective and there's a wide Gulf between you at the moment Sarah and Declan welcome it's great to have you here I wonder if you wouldn't mind letting us know who you are where you are in the world yeah uh uh yeah we live in Western Australia um in the southwest of wa on Canadian country there's five of us so there's Sarah myself we have three kids um Arlo who's five the debt who's three and I'll be who's

one or 18 months um yeah I'm a pediatric speech therapist and declan's a psychologist um you're renovating yeah our life is quite chaotic at the moment because we're renovating Declan just started a small business so we're running a private practice as well I've returned to work part-time and we're also homeschooling this is our first year sort of normalized homeschooling so yeah there's a bit going on but a little bit yes

[Laughter] um okay so so there's there's a lot going on in your lives and I'm also curious about kind of how you got to this point right what was what was growing up like for you yeah um so we're both so from like white middle class families so we've we do have a lot of privilege we sort of both had quite I'd say we describe them as sort of happy childhoods but then I think um going through like we've been out

with and sort of unpack a bit about the things that have shown up and definitely for me it's really been a process of sort of understanding how intergenerational trauma I think has shown up in my family specifically and that's probably what we spend a lot of time discussing um I remember I always had a very close relationship with my mum so yeah we were very close but there were sort of ways that her childhood showed

up liking now in our family and definitely in my relationship with her she was very like nurturing mum and she sort of experienced a kind of an emotional neglect as she was growing up and that made her really focused on like Words of Love and affirmation and praise and she definitely said all of the right things um but she was quite anxious mum and and there were other things as well she's had undiagnosed postpartum impression depression she had me and my brother

very close so we were 14 months apart she didn't have a lot of Family Support as well so yeah and I think it sort of changed like as I was growing up I threw some early work that I've done through taming a tree because that's probably the first time that I really have talked to my mum about certain different things and you know talking about my early childhood because there was really sort of no stories about

me having a hard time like as a toddler or having Tantrums or you know when I was talking about the big feelings thing and and I was sort of like oh okay but Declan had sort of said that's pretty unusual for a dollar um and obviously we're at the moment at that time we were going through some things with my little girl it was true and so fiery and having all of these big feelings which was quite

confronting for me because I think I thought of having a little girl I just I think I assumed unconsciously that she would be like me as a child and as a child I was very shy and quiet which my parents did comment on a lot in

introductions or to explain like how I was and how I showed up in the world so yeah talked around it a bit now but um that's sort of the first time that we

sort of were talking about those things and I think that's when I was able to sort of piece together that even from that really young age like two three but it's already already learned that was my job to not give mum a hard time because she was having such a hard time and my brother definitely he did Express his big feelings and he did take more time and energy to parent and to regulate they needed to like spend time

putting him to bed every night you know until he was five and that was a big like the story in our family so I think that was my job and that definitely carried through probably until the teenage years where more conflict started showing up and again that's where some of the interplay between my mum's upbringing and mine came to to a head was obviously as a teenager I wanted to start searching more going to parties back

sleepovers and that sort of when a lot of things came up for my parents and they were quite strict in controlling um during that kind of time because of all the things from like my mum's childhood and I think that led to quite a some sort of repeated like ruptures in our relationship which we always were able to repair but now that I know more about repairing it wasn't necessarily functional repair in

those situations where I would get quite upset we would have really long discussions and talk it through um until the point where we were able to like emotionally reconnect um but I think it was sort of basically how it came to was any decision that was made I sort of just had to accept that and I kind of learned that I just wasn't allowed to have negative feelings around that and it was also my job I think probably to make my mum feel

okay yeah it's almost like you were parenting yourself right it is yeah once once you stop being the shy little girl and started to have your own ideas your parents didn't know what to do with that um and Until you realize okay it's better better not to just say anything better better to keep the peace yeah that's that's hard um even though it's you know you describe you started out by describing as you know a pretty happy

childhood there's there's still a lot of hard stuff there um so definitely I wonder can you tell us a little bit about what your life was like growing up uh so yeah it was I think it was a pretty good childhood overall um we were kind of opposite we didn't talk about our feelings very much so if there's conflict everyone would kind of go away and disappear for a while and come back a few hours later

and turn like nothing happened um so that was kind of how Lira sold conflict mum and dad were just they were right you know there wasn't much in the way of discussions around our experiences and our needs it was just what they thought about something was was right um so so most of the time it doesn't a problem like because we're all kind of just fine and we had a pretty easy life so there wasn't kind of much in the way

of um difficulties so there are a few key moments that I think that really um like I have a few key memories of times where like that approach was just like not practically good like it obviously left the Mark um yeah we

weren't like we spent a lot of time together but I don't think we were particularly close because we didn't share like our emotional experiences so we would we talked like heaps like all the time about and family dinners and we

talk about like politics and like what events and like history and all this kind of stuff so we always had this like really robust discussions but um yeah we were actually we didn't know anything about each other's lives really yeah um I think as as I got older as we all got older that kind of got more noticeable because um you know you're not spending so much time together you know you spend a hard time with friends and then when can we

all started to move out that's you know obviously when those kind of things become obvious so yeah that's kind of that was like the main feature of of my upbringing is that we were we just didn't share a lot emotionally so um you know I had to do like a lot of the regulating myself which is I think is fine because I'm naturally a fairly like even person um so that wasn't kind of too difficult um but yeah like certainly I think had

some effects that I have no like have come out in our relationship within parenting really [Laughter] so yeah my my like my mum was like the caring one my dad was like the authoritarian so he would kind of you know stomp down if like if something wasn't happening and like what are you doing he'd yell or be the stone one and he would often have the rules like I remember he had a car that had like when

you locked it and made a beep and we weren't like watched TV during at during the week but I watched TV during the week because he he would always come home really late from work and I'd hear that beep and I'd like turn off the TV and you know start running around trying to like pretend like you know make it seem like I hadn't been watching the TV and it's you know those kind of things about like I knew that he would respond

with that you know with that kind of like a bit more aggression and and anger so whereas mum wouldn't kind of would generally do that she was like the softer one and that was kind of the role that she was able to take on but she did then use guilt sometimes as a means to kind of like yeah ensure compliance yes but yeah my my family my upbringing yeah yeah and so um so so you two came together I know

you've been together for a really long time you know each other pretty well by this time I'm guessing you sort of thought that things were kind of on an even keel and we keep going and you become parents and it'll be good and so what was what was that like um yeah we we have known each other for a really long time like we've been friends since we were 10 years old um and been together for 15 years this

year um I think I think we feel as though we had a much more smooth transition to Parenthood than perhaps other people that we know um because of a lot of the things we've been living together well you know since the first year of our relationship so in terms of a lot of those amalgamation of household things and the roles that you play Within that and all that kind of stuff we'd talked a lot about and we've

got we'd already done like like our values stuff like even before we had kids like when we were like mid-20s we

were talking about what our values are and what they might look like you know in our in our life so yeah we've done some of that work before we had kids yeah what was important to you at that point what were some of those values that really stood out I think the cool thing that we've found

[Music] we did our values like separately and we put them together the top three were the same um which was time Family yeah and health yeah we sort of our top ones and then the other ones were different kind of like more like I think it was like Adventure or like learning or because you know those sort of different things and I think that's where we were sort of able to identify oh this is where like

conflict you know does come up for us and that's interesting so we did have that in our minds how important having values like aligning was like in my partnership and and when we had Arlo it wasn't like just having one kid we didn't find too challenging um I think that like he was he didn't sleep very well for the first kind of six months it didn't realize it at all for the first six months but like

we got through okay because we just kind of like came up with a plan and worked together you know so we found a A system that worked for us uh and then we just did that until things got better so so you were able to get through this transition with the younger kids probably partly because declan's not as triggered by their behavior when they're so young and because you have developed this kind of teamwork strategy that

you've sort of perfected going through three kids now and and then they get older and they start doing different stuff right so what was the the getting transition to having older kids like I think so it's I don't it was more the introduction of the other kids like and expanding of the needs that were yeah we met that was probably the thing we found difficult rather than the particular ages so I like even with the second baby

I found that I was like it's not probably until the third round so I've started to have you know more difficulty um whereas you found like Arlo And like we know Dad came along that was a bit hard I think that's when it started to get a bit harder for you okay yeah I think um I sort of that yeah like we said one we do have quite like content babies so that's been really like wonderful for for us from

the sleeping thing but they've always been happy you know if they're being held we haven't had to deal with those situations that I know when parents have dysregulated infants and even if you're holding them they're screaming so it's more been yeah as I said that like toddler transition phase so I don't really have remember having those hard parenting moments until he was sort of two and a half which was when Odette was starting to sort of crawl for the first

time um and that was confronting but you know and I think that's when I doubled down on parenting research um which had been the theme from for us from the start that I was sort of like launched straight in to parenting research and doing it right from the start um so it wasn't until yeah our third little one and I think it's with us learning about the window tolerances where it all makes a lot of

sense now because we can see that it wasn't just an additional baby but it was like as well the renovations because when we say Renovations we don't just mean like paintings it's black we haven't had a kitchen for two years you know we haven't had a kitchen sink the bathrooms that we didn't have like really finished bathrooms um so that's sort of been happening this whole time over this transition to us becoming a family of five and we've just

been having babies during this time whilst also they Declan has been the one doing most of the work on our house and as I said yeah and I said we've just also started we were sort of thinking about starting a business and so it's all sort of all of those things were like culminating to I think reduce increase the chaos and as Declan said the needs because again they're all under five and a half still so

everybody has a lot of needs and often at the same moment um how is that coming up for you Sarah were there were there certain types of interactions that were particularly challenging or do you remember a specific thing that really kind of set you off yeah I think it was it's been especially my little girl so when she so when Alby our baby was born she just turned two and yeah and from a Child Development point of view you know we really

understood like this is that time when they're like developing their independence and they're like realizing that they're a separate person from you um and all of the conversations that I have with parents you know every day um but that was sort of showing up you know really for the first time quite intensely um and that was the most difficult thing I think I've come across in terms of feelings because I just during those moments where she was having a hard time

it was so difficult for me to connect with her and to comfort her and that was so confronting because obviously like the comfort and the connection had been something that we were really easily and naturally able to do at when they were babies and as infants and then this was sort of happening and I think especially as well things started happening where I was having a really difficult time in that moment and it was just showing up really weirdly like the

chaos will be happening you know debt would be melting down a hard time and then I just be like we're gonna have power like cleaning and like organizing you know to try and like because in my mind I'm thinking right she's hungry and those kids are hungry um and so I just need to get through all of these tasks and then I can sit down and be with her well that was one of your like anxiety strategies that like

you know when you're like in your early 20s and stuff like you if you've got really anxious you would clean the house and if the house yeah there would be ordering you would you'd be able to think a bit more clearly so I think you would you're just kind of falling back into that yeah trying to bring order to the chaos but what we sort of saw in that time was then Odette was she really just seek out Declan straight away

so it should be like melting down and she would just like turn around and she would just like run to him and what I noticed was because he would just stop whatever he was doing and he would be late for work um quite a lot during the Early Times um because and when I noticed about what he did is he would disconnect with her physically so as he was getting ready he'd be like carrying her around

you know from room to room and that would be really calming for her um so I think I started to sort of tune in to the difficulties that I was having and then also watching like how she was responding in different situations um and that's when I was like one my anxiety came up a lot because I was like I need to do things differently like I can see and I do that fast forward thing and I'm

like I know like this couldn't potentially really impact on our relationship if she'd learned so early that she can't come to me with hard feelings yeah so that was I think that was the point where you started to do a lot of more yeah and that's how I'm Sarah found your podcast that are around that time okay yeah and and Declan I guess I'm also curious because I can see that you're a real stabilizing force in the

family um and also you have this kind of compliance oriented background from your dad right and I'm wondering does that create conflicts that are difficult for you to navigate difficult to see like how do I respond in this moment when I grew up with this model and yet I have this very different personality how does that show up for you um so I think I have a pool When Sarah's upset to like I you know naturally just start

feeling a little bit like anxious and guilty um so then it's it's kind of like I'm trying to like work on at my focused interns towards like making you know maybe the kids okay to give Sarah space or try and make things better for her um so that's probably what comes up I mean at that time in particular as well that's what came up a lot then so um I mean that would

yeah it depends on what the situation was of what I would do sometimes I would help with the cleaning other times I would just try and take on kind of all the all like the the child care role during that time um yeah so that was I think that's how my cardboard came up in in those times I would um kind of just focus on trying to make Sarah feel better and kind of yeah just be really like worried about that I

think there were times when uh like if Sarah was having a hard time and you know like then I I would feel like that I'm not yeah doing things right because she wasn't okay um and and I think we probably had a bit at different times like through how we've transitioned from more from different children we have had different times where the person who's taking on the majority of the caring which has been me you know

that person gets really good at figuring out like how to do the things and do the routines and we definitely moved through periods of navigating that like I recognized that I couldn't just be like this is how we do it now like this is the routine it's a sleeping bag at this time um yeah that would definitely show up like I like if when I would take on those parenting things I would do things slower or differently like pack in the

bags a great example yeah like I I intended to watch just like either not packing enough or packing too much depending on whether or not I was you know so I'm just like shopping stuff into the bag like oh I'll just take lots of stuff and I'm sure it'll be fine or just not picking up and being like oh whatever it'll be fine but either way I'm like for sure it's a notepad yeah so um but yeah then Sarah would be like you

know that's not how you pack the bag or you know that's not how you make the snacks or um all that kind of stuff and so I would feel like that's when my current parenting competence I would be challenged in that um but I think like in between those times you know like they're like like I was always aware that it was it wasn't actually what like has seraphim or how I felt it was just how I

was feeling like but I didn't I never found it like really difficult I guess because and I think as as little things have come up we always have sort of discussed those like during those moments like then Declan has always been able or been able to show me that he's that's he's received that as criticism and that doesn't feel good to him in those situations so then we're always sort of like editing how we're approaching those situations

um and learning together like that that's not a good way of um empowering someone or increasing their confidence in certain situations yeah so yeah I think like when Sarah was first started researching like parenting um I definitely took on more of like the negative not not negative but like it's more like having veto powers like I

would come with my research in my Spiel and like this is what I've learned and this is how I say it's showing up and this is how I think we can handle it yeah and um and I think we identified that in those situations sometimes it could end up as a bit of a like a debate and interrogation like I would need to like make the case like okay so this is what I found and then

and definitely sort of maybe during that time maybe asking questions or um challenging things yeah so I would yes like I when Sarah came you know she'd done like hours of research and I'd be like I'm not too sure about that one psychologist hat on for a moment yeah that was a part of it like being a I I you know I I only only kind of got fully registered in 2017 when Arlo was born so

I don't be a psychologist for kind of two years when we started having these hard times and so I you know obviously I was way too overconfident in my level of knowledge um at that time and so yeah I kind of thought that I I knew a lot of stuff so when Sarah would come you know come with an idea I'd be like Oh I'm not I'm not too sure about that or I don't I disagree about this thing or that thing

and probably the details because as we say like our values were always sort of aligning underneath this sort of thing um yeah but again I think that's when we were able to stop sort of having those conversations and I think part of those conversations we were able to sort of identify some you know how patriarchy was sort of like showing up in situations like that yeah I took on a little more kind of the masculine kind

of role of you know like we'll be fine like there's nothing wrong like it's all right like we just need to just you know like yeah we don't have to kind of make a big deal out of that kind of thing so what was that like for you to receive sir I see you smiling at him yeah I think as I sort of said Declan is very easy going and and he's sort of just happy to sort of

accept things and take things as they are and obviously I am not recovering perfectionist personality you know and wanting to do things right and always like be better and do better um but I think with in our relationship we've always just been able to say like I was able to say how I was receiving that feedback I just was able to say like this feels like an interrogation um you know I've done this because I want this for our family and this is how

it aligns with what we want and what we've decided as like are our values and and then we sort of just able to zoom out and deafness is very good at that I think naturally because of the work especially that you do he does hear a lot from people from parents and the person who's in that nurturing role so a lot of mums and he gets a bit of that insight into those traditional Dynamics so you're sort of able to very easily be

like oh yeah I can see how this isn't like an ideal place that we don't want to be this and that teamwork is like the value of ours and yeah so that was my initial response was with those things but I think we tended to better work through it fairly quickly on Sarah kind of explains like how that made her feel that like I wasn't valuing her you know doesn't matter if you're really like um

yeah like that I was just dismissing you know her kind of like ideas and like the the effort like the labor that she'd put into this thing um yeah so I kind of able to move through that fairly quickly yeah so it seems like having having these shared values has been really important to you for a really long time now and um and it almost seems like joining the membership was an extension of those values it's like how are we putting

those values into effect um but I'm guessing that there were some Hang-Ups like there was some moments where you're like ah I don't know if you really want to do this are we going to spend the money what was that process like so certain timing your triggers um and found that like pretty like that was a pretty like big step forward um but then it's just you know it's only a short kind of time and then you can't

you know on your own again and so and I think through the process of doing that like I know you talk a lot Jen about non-cognitive shifts and I think the sort of joking that I didn't receive one of those when I signed up with blaming your trigger um and I think again the Perfection I think it was really hard for me to feel like I wasn't doing as well as other people and my beautiful um accountabodies during that time

were perhaps older and able to get some of that and assimilate the things so I knew that I just needed to keep going and then and I needed more support the main domain words were like again like that it it flashes back up you know from time to time the whole I'm sure we don't need that I'm sure like you know we've got you know we've got your podcast which is like hit by all the information

you know we've got you know you're detaming your triggers like you know we've got enough to kind of go on with um and then the money aspect of it as well um I tend to be a bit stingy sometimes with with money so you know anytime there's just money to be spent I'm like oh no like I don't know if we should do that um so they were the problem of the two main concerns but again like once Sarah was

able to kind of explain you know her like why it was important to her yeah and ultimately like it's not hard you know it wasn't hard to kind of be like yep all right let's do this um but they were probably the two big asparagus from from my perspective and also we were concerned about time obviously yeah because we don't really have any [Laughter] have it yeah so how is that broken then yeah I think

we've been we've been surprised because we definitely don't like ideally I see us you know working through every single part of the module and having really long discussions about all the department and how we're going to practically incorporate it but it's been like a really learn like more learning for me definitely getting on board with Declan um we how sort of have I guess have made it a part of our routine is we meet with our Action Group once a week

at the same time and that's provided so much structure for us and it's just like it's like a reset point every week that we talk about parenting so even if we things are shambles and we don't get all the way we don't have time to work through like the content we're still we still have one little tiny goal that we've talked about or that we've said and and it's just being able to show up in a

community because we don't we don't have a lot of like-minded community in terms of the way that we want a parent so being able to do that and come and we do the call together every week I think that's that was the beauty of the membership is that you can kind of how much or how little you engage with the content client is really flexible so there there have been times where we've done them done the modules we've always

sat down and watched them and um had a good conversation yeah good conversations about it at other times where we haven't touched a module in two or three months um but you know with the coaching the action groups are still there and so that you're always like doing work you know even on times where there's you don't have the time to kind of put towards it and then you know then we'll have more time and we'll kind of

you know we'll kind of catch back up on some of the modules and you know engage more fully with it and so yeah that's what's been really nice about it I think the other difference in particular about the parenting membership compared to like taming your triggers is that we're doing it together whereas telling you trigger Sarah did it and so she would kind of come and share ideas with me but we weren't you know as like a team and I

think the parenting is a team module in the American in the membership is like obviously a really good yeah Summary of why that's important because we weren't a team it was like Sarah was doing work on her stuff and I was just like okay listen about the interesting stuff that she's learning about and so it um whereas when yeah we've kind of made it so that the membership is something that we're doing together so we're we're both working on it so it's

not serious struggles and my struggles it's like our struggles and I think that that kind of small kind of shift has made a big difference in how we're supporting each other and how we kind of feel about the whole whole you know uh situation and all that kind of stuff so yeah and so I'm thinking about you know how is it different is just

listening to the podcast and so the things I'm hearing from you are

um it's sort of having the modules to guide you through it's having the the community like the action groups every week if you want to join which you don't have to join but if you want to join to provide that structure kind of a gentle accountability to keep showing up um and then the way that you approach it you know you can send a podcast episode to your partner and say Hey listen to this and then you get into the

discussions that you used to have and but but it seems as though you fundamentally shifted how you show up in parenting uh because you've made this decision to do this as a team so is that kind of the main differences between just kind of listening to the podcast and getting what you get out of that and being in the membership do you think yeah definitely like as I said we we listen to the podcast from really early

on I think from when I was born 2017 and we were always having those discussions around like isn't this interesting and oh yeah I haven't thought about that and that made me realize this or that came up so we were having those like intellectual conversations I think and um and identifying the things that fit into our parenting philosophy but it was sort of like up at that level and not necessarily changing what we were doing day to day

yeah and I think that's the difference as well is that the podcast you know like we were having to do all the work to try and apply it to see how it fit into our lives and I think ad jobs probably made that easier for us because but it was still really hard it's still hard to try and um to try and piece everything together I think one of the things you know like when you're kind of thinking about your

your parenting philosophy you're hearing from all these different sources and trying to see how they'll and they're all going to talk about things slightly differently but you connect with all of them and so it's about how do you how do you piece them all together whereas I think we just found the membership like because you just kind of you're in it more and um yeah like there's just more opportunity to like kind of talk about it and see how other people are maybe

using like through circle like seeing how other people are using um you know different ideas and just talking things through with the action group like at all just and they're like really personalizes it a lot more and I think that was the big thing is that yeah it made it kind of yeah easier to yet actually action that kind of stuff yeah it provided like this I think as I said like it's like it's been really the

routine has given us like a framework around coming together but now it's it's so much more practical I think than we've ever done before and there was this transition Point realizing that we have these values as a family and as a parenting team but a lot of the time especially when we're going through that really hard time initially that our daily actions weren't aligning with that and we were seeing some confronting things come up where I was like

intellectually I have understood everything that I've heard on the podcast that I've read in all these parenting

books and I wasn't able to it I was still having such a difficult time like and I wasn't showing up with the kids how I wanted to and I think it was just it's been hearing other parents talk about that especially in their membership in the action group that they're saying we're still here we're still showing up and and we've had

other girls or other members of our group who've been in there for like you know two years and it's something I still find this hard and that's been that's where I've been able to access self-compassion which I've never been able to really before when they say to me yeah that's that's still really hard and this last week was still really hard and I need to go back and look at this um that's probably since that's been such a

healing thing for me to hear them say that um yeah the community aspect is so important um and and the other thing I'm thinking about is you know it's I think it's a much more common Dynamic among parents for the female oriented partner to be the one who's doing all this research and for the male oriented partner to be the one who's sort of putting the combustion and everything um and and Declan you're you're kind of

showing up a little bit differently here right there there are many parents who are like yeah I wish my partner would get a on a call and and we would talk about parenting together um and that's never going to happen and so I'm wondering if either of you have any thoughts on what to say to particularly a female oriented parent but really any parent whose spouse is just like you know what I just don't think it's worth the money I don't think

it's worth the time I don't think this is worth doing what would you say to that parent uh it's it's really hard um we were thinking about this actually and I think we were talking about how it's like it does often like you say the female oriented partner is often the one who's trying to like sell these ideas and you're trying to come and I've had experiences of that yeah like you're trying to come with your

Spiel and your research and your evidence and do the absolute best job you kind of like selling something and convincing the other person um I think I think ultimately that's like it's there's a there's an unfairness to that I think that's just it's important to kind of acknowledge that like it's it's sad that you know you have to try and like get evidence often ready to go and you know try and convince the other person and I think Declan said you sort of said

that it's it isn't like kind of about mum's doing more it is about like the yeah it's really about the the partner the person who's like reluctant or resistant is actually them doing some doing some work it's not about oh it's finding the right combination of things to say or you know like the female oriented partner doing things differently because you know that it has that I guess is like the patriarchy kind of thing you know in

action so it's hard like I don't like there's things that they could do but I don't know whether it's that yeah to say I like to tell them and I guess when I asked if I'm like oh kind of like what would you say the one the one thing that you sort of said if it was you in that position you sort of said you would ask questions yeah so if I was like talking to like

another another dad let's say um and I had the concerns yeah I I would be curious and like why are you so worried about this um you know in that role that I have a different Dynamic with that person so like what would you know come up would be different and what they feel comfortable kind of yeah like they wouldn't obviously be as comfortable to disagree in some cases I think so I think like the way that I I always think

about this is in terms of like the parenting is a team thing as like the core and um and I think one of the one of the I think the things is is that idea that like both parents performance is like separate and I think that's probably like a really maybe a useful kind of Avenue for people to talk to their partner about right is that like it's not I'm apparently here and you're a parent over there and if

you know you're having a hard time well that's your business and you need to sort it out so because that's not how it is like you're parenting together and I think that's probably like the Avenue that I would suggest people could go down and I think you know like a sports analogy here is like pretty pretty perfect you know like if if you're if you're on a team you know and one of your like one of your teammates isn't

forming well if they get injured you don't just be like well that's your problem like I'm not helping you out anymore you know like why do you let them score a goal and it's definitely multiple Sports analogies yeah so like you you wouldn't do that like that's not like a natural sport if your teammate come up and said why don't you help me team man so well it's their injury it's like their problem like they should just like they should just try

harder and do better you know and just sort it out for themselves like oh you know as a team you support each other you might go over and like you know like cover that person's position while they're injured or you know if you see they're struggle with something you're like give them ideas about what they could do or like um if they're you know in their head about something even if you notice they're like psychologically like you

know they're in their head during a game or something you would go over and be like come on it's right you can do this like let's work through this together you know you'd be very like team teamwork and so I think that kind of approach in parenting like may help yeah that kind of framework might help some people have those discussions because I think that's probably the key thing is you can't separate people's issues out I think that's been the

difference for us is when we kind of we've chunked all our issues in together and we're going to work on them together that's kind of when things really start to turn around for us yeah yeah and also seeing this in the framework of your values has been so important to you right that you think that can help a lot of parents to say okay well if we have these values and these things are really important to us

why are we doing these things yeah yeah because if they're not aligned so so maybe bringing it back to a framework of values as well could be helpful and and I definitely think your idea about getting curious like if we haven't had that conversation about what are our values to really understand what are our partners values and then okay well if that's so important to us why why are we doing this so really and I think in

those conversations around anything that's important in a couple in a partnership when we're having those conversations about parenting about money like whatever it is making those really difficult decisions your relationship patterns show up however they are going to show up so whatever patterns you bring to that will show up in those conversations so if you are in that Dynamic where that other other parent feels criticized because they have had those micro hurts

or feelings of non-competence when like you're missing them about how they've packed the nappy bag um you know that shows up later and I think creates a dynamic where which we've been in before where the other person feels like they have to defend or feels like that you're saying we're not doing good like we're not doing well and you know the mindset obviously of me and perhaps people identify like how I do in these situations is like I just want us to do

better and you know and I want to figure it out because I need help um but if you're that other parent who is more easy going then you can sort of show up just like I think we're fine like you know let's just calm down yeah which wasn't necessarily working so well so what's different now right I mean Sarah you mentioned a little self-compassion that wasn't there before what else is different now

um I think the biggest thing that we've noticed because it's not that things aren't less chaotic obviously yeah they're in my kitchen sink um the kids still have really big feelings um middle child they they'll play great sometimes but they'll still fight a lot I think it's our how we communicate and how we work through those um difficult moments is what's changed

and what's got a lot smoother and we've noticed over the last year since more showing up together and doing this work we've just it's been the shift in our relationship and how we navigate our conflict that has been the we've seen the biggest changes like things that we haven't able been able to figure out over 15 years like we were stuck in some certain patterns um and I'm just sort of thinking of a specific coaching call

happy high with you Jen that was really the turning point you said something so simple into and speaking into a pattern that we were just playing out like repetitively um you remember what that was yeah so the pattern our pattern pattern for us is that I guess so Sarah wants to climb over talk about like when we have difficult moments and I and

I um I guess intend towards that like just going away having space coming back together when we're feeling a bit calmer as well as kind of often in those moments if Sarah's feeling really upset like I don't feel um like held emotionally um and so I think the thing UC said to do is just to like rather than getting into it just acknowledge that having a really hard time you know and then maybe we need to

either talk about now or we can go away and talk about later but we're just having a really hard time and just really acknowledge what's kind of happening in the situation and I think it was the example like in the coaching call it was a bit of a funny one and it was sort of like an example of just like a dynamic throws up for us that again those little micro hurts or things that can be

perceived as criticism which I never mean but when I'm in that efficient like go parenting mode trying to get order like in the chaos that you know I can slip into like that's not how you pack a nappy bag and I think that specific situation that we were talking about with you Declan had chosen to make really elaborate dinner like this cottage pie that you know required a lot of like passing and chopping and there were these parts I prefer leftover

dinner that could have been made really easy in the chaos and I'd sort of just snapped you know and being like why are you doing that um leading to the rupture and micro herd and in those situations when I can see but that's what I've done that I've been critical and hurt has sort of shown up yeah I launched straight into that Dynamic of us of being like let's get into it let's talk about all of the

feelings I want to know um really talking about it and Declan had always said during those times like you're not holding space for me I don't feel like that my feelings are important and I just could not understand because during those moments I was so I was beside myself like so just dysregulated and really and obviously now I can see things like

straight back to my childhood of those moments where I was feeling disconnected from my mom and that how that anxious attachment style really shows up that I would do say whatever I could to re-establish connection with him so he's been had that feeling of being hurt and and shut down which again a bit of family origin stuff showing up for us um and him needing some time and space to just feel his feelings and I want

things to be better straight away I want to re-establish connection with him and know that he's there with me and I haven't like you know lost him and like again any of that negative feeling is so hard for me to hold so I was straight into that and wanting it to be better straight away and I think what you just said was yeah like so but have you just not talked about it have you just sort of said oh

we're having a really hard time like let's come back to this but that is something that we have never done and like the only one thing that we had never done you know we had done every other possible thing um but it's when you sort of said that in that moment I was showing up as that little girl who was hurt and desperate for connection then what I was able to understand what

Declan was actually saying that yeah a little hurt little girl someone who's feeling that can't hold space can't truly um reflect how that must have felt to have your just to be criticized and have your feelings hurt and that's the first time that I was able to say what he was saying because I think previously I'd just been um hearing that as like you don't care and I was like how can you possibly think that that's the case I I care so

much about how you feel and wanting to re-establish connection with you but that's something that I just missed and I think this is like the other thing about the membership is that we've had this conversation a lot but because we're always emotional while we're having it we never really be able to kind of move through it yeah because when you're in like all the stuff in the membership we've been like you're usually karma when you're in

those days and so it's easier to see where your patterns might be playing out um and talk through you know what Solutions there are or how the other person felt without kind of yeah holding any kind of hurts or you know having a position that you're trying to argue from so yeah that's the other thing that's that's helped is that we've been able to talk through our stuff every Tuesday night every Tuesday or like outside of that but we tend to

uh we have more times now where we're doing that like calmly rather than when we're in the middle of it yeah and that that absolutely does make a huge difference doesn't it so um so so what's life like now I mean obviously you're still renovating you're still working you still have three young kids [Laughter] um but what's different now versus what you think the path you might have been on if you hadn't taken a step a year ago

oh well yeah as I said I think the patterns like we we I just wouldn't have been able to break that pattern because I just didn't see how it was all interlinked from that my mum's trauma to how I was parented to our relationship dynamics of both of our childhoods of of that family or origin things happening where definitely didn't talk about things my family over to

talked about things and it was just like putting all those pieces together within this structure so yeah so the main thing obviously the values that that was the turning point for us because we've always been value oriented but it was the parenting membership like that's the first modules is is values and it was that realization that the daily the way that we were living our daily lives and how we're showing up with the kids didn't align

for that like this is how we wanted to parent and intellectually that was very easy for us to understand there was no issues there with what we thought about all of these different things but then we were still showing up in a way that didn't fit that and that that definitely would still probably be happening yes internal conflict and external conflict about like our value is not aligning with our actions I think we would Sarah Niagara would be

arguing more and like less productively um and I know like for me personally I know I would probably still be like playing out a lot of not like family of origin things around you know trying to like move around quietly and like you know making sure things are pretty cleaned or like smoothed out a little bit um so yeah I think that kind of thing would definitely be you know I don't I think like we're noticing like I've noticed a lot a lot

of the work we've put in around the membership like have focus on the kids like their specific stuff that we're working through there's been huge jumps for that so they are like our oldest he uh would often when he was starting something new he'd like to stay back he would feel a bit unsure about you know jumping into stuff and through like the stuff in the podcast and the membership we've learned a lot about um how you know like we've have a plan

for how to we've been approaching that yeah he's like much more confident now he just kind of can come into things and just participate fairly fairly like you know pretty much straight away now in a lot of cases and so like it's also little things like that right where if I think about what if you hadn't done it you know we wouldn't have had those productive conversations each week about how how are we going to handle soccer

training yeah like this week within our action step because like this is what's happening for me in those situations and this is how I've seen you handle it and we're just more we make plans every week that uh like the actual practical things of how we show up with the kids and when doing that within this chaotic time and that's that's been hard because I think previously I would have been like

wait until there's the perfect time and we can get our matching notebooks and really study this so but just being in community you have that accountability that you know you're going to talk about it so you have to so that just is so grounding for us and for me yeah so I think there's so many lit there's probably there's the big thing which is us but there's also lots of little things that I think would be really different

as well in terms of like what the kids are struggling with yeah and how they're like connecting with it each other about I I know it would be different not sure entirely how but I know that it probably wouldn't be like where it is today so yeah and the other thing I noticed in Sarah and I'd love to hear your thought on the Sarah is I see you as you know not a person who was never triggered or

flooded anymore but you're on generally a bit more of an even Keel right it seems as though you're less uh sort of really flustered by things that you used to really fluster you is that right yeah I think when we're thinking about having this conversation with you and thinking about okay like what's a specific example of when you know things have been different and I was like oh things different no I'm still doing things you know I still get this wrong

and this wrong and this wrong but then I was thinking about that morning that morning that that just literally just happened and definitely had had a really late night and was feeling tired coming into the morning chaos and you know the babies crying because he's angry from as soon as he wakes up and aloe's just scooting inside and launching himself from the scooter onto the couch and Odette starts to have really big

feelings because Declan had put the tomato sauce on top of her eggs rather than and or someone gotten on the plate and it was just sources just supposed to be on the eggs melting down and I just I just picked her up and I was carrying her around as I was getting ready for work making my coffee and was making jokes with her saying like I really just wanted like just little silly things like saying I'm

gonna just put you up in my bag and I'll be able to take you to work and she was starting to laugh and we had that connection and then it wasn't until there was a moments that we reflected on something I'd realized that I wouldn't have been able to do that like as I was getting ready for work and in that zone with my mental to-do list and if everybody at the chaos had been happening and she'd started melting down

I've just been like okay well I'm running I'm around 10 minutes late for work um and it was fine and it just had a completely different feel I felt really different like in that situation and I was able to show up differently and it's not that every time but I was sort of like is this the start of a non-cognitive shift maybe maybe I was expecting like the sunlight to

like shine yeah and I would the Halo um but you gotta pay extra for that yeah that's an added benefit but uh yeah it comes extra [Laughter] thank you so much much for being here both of you it's been such an honor to walk this journey with you and and see the the ways that you've worked together to really embody the things that have always been important to you all along right and to really bring that alignment

with your values uh and and the ways you're actually showing up with your kids every day um as imperfectly as we all do because we're all human we're gonna mess things up um but but to see you to make that transformation has really been a real privilege for me so thank you so much for being here and sharing your story yeah and we would just love to thank you so much because I think that as I said we wouldn't have been able to

turn some of these corners without some of that guidance specifically from you and that and definitely that I think that coaching call was such an impactful moment for us really um so yeah we just want to thank you for like all of the work that you do and how you show up in all these different spaces thank you so much so our work together has helped Sarah to relax as a parent of three which is no small feat

the things that used to destabilize her really don't do that as much anymore things are a little easier with their children and things are a lot easier in Sarah and declan's marriage of course it's easier to do this work when you're both involved and you both commit to spending the time on your relationship and on your children but we live in a patriarchal society where caring for the children and learning about child development and bettering yourself so you can be a better parent

is women's work which means that it's inherently less valuable than the things that men spend their time doing like paid work and watching sports and working in the garden if you're female identifying it isn't your responsibility to fix a marriage where you're having communication challenges because really that's just an extension of a patriarchal relationship where the woman's job in a heterosexual relationship is to make everyone feel better as much as you might like to do something to get your partner to see

things your way that's not really going to work in the long run they may well be looking for someone to get you to see things from their perspective but that doesn't mean that there's nothing you can do far from it in fact the parents I've worked with have found that curiosity is an incredibly important tool just as when our children are doing things that drive us up the wall curiosity helps us to understand why are they doing this thing what need are they

trying to meet our partners are trying to meet their needs too and when we can approach our partners with curiosity we can make a lot more progress so we might try asking them what was growing up like for you what things from the way you were raised do you want to carry through with our children what do you not want to replicate did you ever feel scared of your parents did you ever hide anything from your

parents what's important to you what values do you want to express through the way we're living our lives together it's highly likely that you're going to find discrepancies here and if you pounce on those as a gotcha

then things may not go well but if you can gently point out I hear you saying that this is an important value of yours but I've noticed we often do that when we're interacting with our child I wonder if

we should think about doing things differently if we want to be more aligned with your values in the parenting membership we spend the entire second month on parenting as a team and figuring out where we really want to be aligned and where it's okay to have different perspectives and the third month understanding what values we have and bringing our interactions with our children into better alignment with those values because when you're on the same team and

you're both rowing in the same direction towards some shared values parenting gets a whole lot easier if you need some help making that happen I would love to see you in the parenting membership enrollment is open right now and you can sign up with no commitment we have sliding scale pricing and a money back guarantee join before doors close for the year on Wednesday May 17th just go to yourparentingmojo.com forward slash parenting membership to learn more

and sign up thank you