

Your Child Struggles to Transition. Here's What to Do. | Episode 50

31 MIN · YOUTUBE · [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=UF4WE5R3M30](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF4WE5R3M30)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF4wE5R3M30>

SUMMARY

In this episode of the Connected Families podcast, hosts Stacy Belward, Jim, and Lynn Jackson engage in a Q&A format, addressing common parenting questions related to their foundational course, "Discipline That Connects with Your Child's Heart." They discuss the importance of self-awareness in parenting, the need for children to feel safe and loved, and practical strategies for managing challenging behaviors.

- The framework consists of four levels: "You are safe with me," "You are loved no matter what," "You are called," and "You are responsible."*
- Parents must assess their own emotions to communicate effectively with their children, ensuring they feel safe and supported.*
- Calming techniques for parents include grounding exercises and breathing strategies to maintain composure during stressful moments.*
- It's crucial for parents to validate their children's feelings and engage with them empathetically, especially during misbehavior.*
- Establishing routines and clear communication about expectations helps children feel secure and understood.*
- Playful interactions can strengthen the parent-child bond and alleviate fears, especially during bedtime.*
- Connecting during chores and daily tasks can teach children about balance and responsibility while maintaining a sense of togetherness.*
- The next episode will cover the remaining two levels of the framework, focusing on children's capabilities and responsibilities.*

[Music] hey friends welcome to the connected families podcast I am so glad you joined us I'm Stacy belward today's episode is the first of a two-part question and answer series with Jim and ly Jackson the founders of connected families the questions that I'm going to ask them come from an online course that we run two times a year called discipline that connects with your child's heart okay if you've been around connec families very

long you've heard about it because this is the foundational material that we teach so the course is starting up again in a week and every time we run it we do three private live Q&A sessions for all the students of the course they ask Jim and Lynn a question and we go through those in a live format it's a huge bonus and a lot of fun so we thought hey let's bring this Q&A format to the podcast so

that you our listen listeners can hear the answers also the questions are going to make you feel great because I know that you've had them and I know that you are going to want to hear the answer so let me bring Jim and Lynn in hi you guys hey private and live private and live for those people in the online course it's fun isn't it

don't it really is fun we have so much fun yeah we get to kind

of meet everybody that's in the little chat and this is our best chance in these days where so much is done virtually to bring that fresh liveness to it cuz Stacy's going to be a parent and Lyn and I are going to answer the questions that people often ask and the way we go that's right so for today this episode and next week's episode I grabbed some of the most asked questions from our previous live q&as from that DTC course

so we get all sorts of questions every time but there's usually a few really similar ones that show up every time we run the course is there yeah all right so here's how today is going to work there's four levels of the connected families framework that we teach in the course and really everything that we do runs around that framework so Jim and Lynn are going to review in a quick minute or so one of those levels and

then we're going to go to the questions that I pulled out for that level are you guys ready for that we're ready to go you got it okay so I'm the parent I'm all of you guys listening and ly I might even push back a little bit sometimes just just on Jim's answers not mine I really have in mind everybody you sitting in your living room driving in your car you know kids are maybe in the

back seat and I'm really trying to get into you know what's going on around you as I asked Jim and ly's questions are you ready to start we're ready to roll okay so let's start with the very first level of the framework which is you are safe with me can one of you just give a quick recap yeah of what that means yeah Goen all right that's the level where we step back and we take a look at what's

going on inside of us so that we truly can communicate a message to our child if you're safe with me I'm being self-aware I'm calming myself down I'm taking inventory of some crazy thoughts that might be making my responses off track and I'm taking those thoughts captive to the Lord and coming in full of love for me and for you and just a sense of God's presence in the craziness of a disciplined situation yeah a quick

way that I think about that Stacy is that it positions us as parents when we do the work Lynn is describing to feel to our children like we're for them not against them doesn't mean they get what they want it doesn't mean that we're necessarily always soft we can be firm but we remain kind and we remain postured in a way that our kids know we are for them we're on their side even though we may be disciplining them so

there has to be this level of calming for the parent that's taking place isn't there maybe a first St absolutely yeah yeah it's about assessing our calmness it's about assessing what's going on inside of me so so much of the parenting that I have done and that we know lots of other parents do comes from a place of inner angst that parents are often unaware about and they haven't taken as Lynn said they haven't taken that inner

angst captive to Christ obedience we haven't dwelt on those things enough to to even sometimes recognize that they're there especially dads we dads tend to just want to get stuff done and we're not aware we've got feelings that are compelling us to do what we do sometimes it's just my good logic darn it and sometimes we've got a

motivation to just regain control of a crazy situation and our kids sense that it's like you're just trying to get as much control as I

am Mom it just looks more sophisticated y yeah so we condescend if we're not thoughtful and we lecture and we kind of have that posture whether it's physical or not it often is but it feels to our children like they're on the floor sort of sitting there looking up we're standing over them with our hands on our hips and emotionally the kids just feel small and they look at us and they think that you know we're just just

intimidating scary person and you know sometimes there may be room for us to be authoritative with our kids in certain ways but not always just when it's necessary it's not necessary very often if at all as kids grow so what I hear you saying is that to become a A Ware of that was the question that you asked which was what's going on inside of me and understand why am i showing up this way and that takes some deep work I know

from doing it myself sometimes it takes a couple seconds like what's going on oh I'm just really stressed out because I want to be at church on time or you know I need to get out the door to work right but sometimes it's deeper isn't it yeah well but I want to I want to focus even on that thing that you said cuz I've heard parents reflect on this well I did what I did because we need to get a

church on to time uhhuh is that your child's felt need and are you aware of how that might feel and so what it might feel to your child is not we need to be to this important place of worship where where we can meet God and God's people we need to do what mom thinks we should because that's what she likes or what dad thinks because that's what he likes and this is all about them if we're not

thoughtful about our pace and the way that we move toward helping kids value going to church on time mhm do they feel like we're joining them oh gosh I know it's hard for you hard for me too sometimes here let me get down with you and help you with your shoes so that we can get in the car quick so there's a different approach as opposed to you get the get your shoes on and get in the car

right now we got to be on time yeah well let me just say I've been around the framework for a long time and I I needed to remember this on last Sunday going to church we never get too up close and personal we get way too personal yeah okay let me ask this question this came from Hannah in the course and it's about calming and I think that some times calming can be difficult when you have

small little kids here's our question what is a good way to give yourself space to calm down when you have young kids who want to follow you as you leave or seem to even get more upset when you try to step away that is such a good question and such a common thing with kids with little ones because they Panic cuz the relationship already feels stressed and then if Mom goes I just need to take a break you know and then

heads off go to the bathroom yes feels don't follow me the ultimate rejection what does the child do lay on the floor and kick against the bathroom door right so this is where the messages are really helpful because the

parent if you can set a goal to I want to really reassure my child that this is for them this break is for them and it's like oh honey you what mommy's just feeling really kind of upset now and I want him I'm

afraid I won't be very kind to you so I want to be really kind to you so we can solve this I'm just gonna go to the bathroom quick and then I'll be right back so here you can draw on this paper and draw me a picture of what you're mad about and I'll be back in a couple minutes and we'll figure this out you see how the message is so different now that may or may not be enough to help an

insecure child but it's your best shot at being able to take that that step aside and that's the question I heard immediately on the heels of that is so what if I go to the bathroom and my child is out of control and it's worse for them that I'm gone and what you just talked about is important there are things you can do even without leaving right right yeah that was what I was getting to is just that that's your best

shot at being able to take a break but there's lots of ways that you can seek God's peace when you're in that situation if you just know your child is going to be so upset and insecure if you step away from them there was a a great story that we got from a mom I think she had gone through the course and she was applying this and I'll just read her story cuz it's really it's

excellent she says last last year I learned a grounding technique that helped me calm down I find five things I can see four things I can hear three things I can touch two things I can smell and one thing I can taste one time last month my four-year-old daughter was very angry she had to wait in the car with me and the baby while Daddy and the older two kids went shopping her loud angry desperate crying triggered very

unhappy memories from my childhood and I felt like I was going to panic instead I sat and did grounding occasionally I said something empathetic to my daughter like I hear you I know it's so hard you can get a hug whenever you're ready and you can tell me what you feel anytime after several minutes she finally was able to talk about it and get a hug I felt relieved that I was able to accomplish calming myself in the moment

just such a great story of a mom just doing what she needed to do to stay grounded to stay peaceful so that she could be sincerely empathetic for her daughter I love that story because she had a plan before she went in she had already practiced those five grounding techniques didn't she so in the moment when she felt herself getting overwhelmed she then started doing those techniques yep another mom had a pre-planned method of just she would

Breathe In God's love and breathe out God's peace and so she thought about that as she was doing that she would be in the moment with her kids but she would take a deep breath in I breathe in God's love I breathe out God's peace beautiful I know and swapping it up sometimes she breathed in God's peace and breathed out God's love I've done that numerous times and it's super helpful I love all of that I'm just going to add something that

just came into my mind too is that well my kids are teenagers now I think that something I've realized is that

whatever caused this heated moment doesn't necessarily need to be solved right now like I can just table it for a bit like I could go to the stereo and put on fun music and say grab an instrument we just need to like take a pause a moment right now and we'll come back to this in a

moment mhm I remember fun music times with my kids in the middle of heated times sure and it's a good question for reflection later which is what is it about me that needs to get it done right now all the time not what is it about these kids that they don't obey me right away but what is it about me that needs to get stuff done on time all the time what is that and and to reflect on that

to be to well I know but that I mean I reflect back on so many circumstances where I would get quickly frustrated or angry about something and I would immediately justify it in the name of doing the right thing of course I'm that way because you remember Lynn I I used to even justify slamming my hand on the table sometimes these kids just need to know well that wasn't about their need to know that was about my need to

express and until I took some time away to let God's spirit speak to me about that I couldn't let go of that way of thinking about about it and it kept scaring my kids more away from me than building a relationship so that they would feel endeared to me and feel like I was for them not against them that's such a good example of asking yourself the question what's going on in me and you know what am I thinking and then I'm

behaving out of that why and letting God inform that okay let me get to the second question around you are safe with me Whitney sent in this question about you are safe with me she says today my three and a half-year-old through a tum because she wanted to watch the iPad and I said no I was slow low and listened something that we teach in the online course I sat down on the floor next to her and was explaining we don't do iPads

in the morning and she slapped me right in the face I know oops I stayed low and slow and quiet with her but I told her she can't hit mommy mhm but I didn't know where to go from there what is a good consequence to reinforce you can't hit when I try to talk to her she moves on it's like I'm trying to force her to have a conversation with me and she's only three and a half years old Jim and

Lynn I felt this question right away you can't do that but I'm a little child and I just did right and so there's a little bit of a way of thinking about this that could have helped Whitney in that moment that might be a little bit different which is not you can't do that but because that's about me and what just happened to me and what you can't do to me safety starts with an understanding of who the child is and

what it's like to be them right now so wow you are so upset you just hurt Mommy and that hurt me that's not okay is it so you elicit interaction instead of just standing in pronouncement of a judgment of of a behavior engage the child even the little cuz I'm sure the little one is like oh my gosh I just hit my mother and now Mom is going to do something and react and respond in some

sort of way which you can't help but do but for little one to be responded to way that says I get what it's like to be you right now MH on the way to the teaching about what isn't isn't okay around here is just such an important piece yeah in the busyness of a morning a typical thing is you know that the child gets the iPad or or asks for it or whatever and and the mom is busy around

the kitchen and just trying to get breakfast on and do all the things and it's just sort of a quick no you can't have the iPad we don't do that in the morning you know and it's it's just seems like a normal thing for an adult to say but if that's how the child receives it then it's like Mom doesn't care about me she just wants to say no and so even when you know it's a trigger

issue for a child like a lot of times those screens can be what kids go to to regulate even though it's not it's counterproductive they're a little off-kilter and they just think if I can just get an iPad I can feel better and so there can be a lot of emotion behind that for the kiddo so to even just put a focus on hey sweetie good morning how are you and making sure you get that connection first and then when she ask

for the iPad it's like oh you love that thing don't you it's really fun but you know what it's not good for your little brain your little thinker to have it in the morning so what else could we do do you want to help me with breakfast and so there's that message I'm for you really comes through and that so often can just be enough to derail that kind of a quick angry response you know the

child feels understood which is usually and cared about which is usually more important than getting the actual thing that they wanted yeah we talk a lot in the course about this idea of going slow and low and listen and we unpack a little more than we have time to right now about how do you use that yeah opportunity it's not just I'm going to go slow and get down next to the child who's playing this game they ought not

be playing and I'm going to go low and I'm going to listen to them talk about it so I'm going to Go Slow and Low and listen on the way to winning some influence about the decision about to be made here and anticipating what's going to happen and setting a child up to make choices that they can understand and as we go slow and low and listen at times like that it's it's not just for the

benefit of the child but it's for our benefit so that our brains can recall some of the strategies we've thought about ahead of time to address this in a new way and anticipate what might go wrong and how we can ask a question and set a child up to make a better choice right now and an honoring choice and it still could be hard it still might not work if working means my child always does what I want them to do but if

working means it helps me to stay calm no matter how my child acts that's the goal of slow L and listen and that sets us up to then go on and figure out okay this is a recurring problem so how could I solve it and you can make a little picture schedule with kids and so that then you can ask them oh you love that iPad when is iPad time yeah and they begin to know oh it's after lunch yeah

nice work I love it so slow low and listen helps me keep asking the question what's going on in me from getting big what's going on so that I want to bring it back down to slow low and listen and then be some be proactive about connecting with my child early in the morning and instead of just the no right like hey I know that would be fun to do that but I what I caught of all the

things that you said Lynn was let's let talk about other ways that I can engage with my child in the morning so I'm not kind of leaving her hanging with just a no y would you say that yeah CU mornings can be tough for sensitive little kids yep come let's let's make breakfast together yeah before we move on let me just talk a little bit about the discipline that connects with your child's heart online course you know

registration is open right now the cohort is starting in the next week or so we only run the course two times a year you guys I'm the course moderator and I would love to have you join me and hundreds of other parents for this round of the course this has not been an easy season of parenting and we would love to support you in making the tweaks that will bring lasting change I'll put the link in the show notes so that you can

find out all the information that you need I hope you join me well let's move on to the second level of the framework you are loved no matter what Jim and Lynn are you ready to move on MH we're ready who wants to give us a little summary of what you are I no matter what means all right I'll run with it this is just the level where we really represent the grace of the gospel because we are I

no matter what that God demonstrates his love to us and that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us and so it's really a holy work to communicate a message to a struggling child I love you I understand you I know how hard this is again that message I'm for you and there's so many little practical ways that we can do that of just getting down and smiling Opening Our arms up for a hug empathy statements and we'll talk

about that more and probably do a little role play as we answer some questions but just think of the ways that you would want to be dealt with when a a friend or or a spouse comes to the house after a frustrating day and you're just like this is crazy I'm you know you're just letting loose how would you want to be dealt with or responded to when you are on the edge of an adult Outburst or

meltdown uh and then think of that in terms of our kids honey settle down right now you know better than that you're overreacting I know you're frustrated but you're the adult so get a grip yeah yeah so it does help to get into the again to get into the lens of the child um almost every parent we talk to in fact I can't think an exception will say well I love my child unconditionally yeah the question is not

uh do you love your child unconditionally the question is do your children experience unconditional love from you and if you also decide you want to communicate love for no apparent reason that's also good but remember that your greatest opportunity to communicate Unconditional Love is in the context of kids misbehavior when they're feeling unlovable is the most important time for them to feel Lov so you know making that practical is always a challenge so you talked about

misbehavior the question that I want to ask you right now it's not necessarily about misbehavior but just like weak hard moments so a mom sent in this question about her 8-year-old son now this could be an 8-year-old or a three-year-old but she says my 8-year-old son is still afraid of being alone in the dark right at bedtime we've tried sympathizing with him and have given him ideas like praying saying Bible verses using a night lying playing

relaxing music or thinking about good thoughts from the day to help him soothe himself and go to sleep but none of these seem to be helping do you have any ideas I know that this can get frustrating right for parents and at all ages right it's like enough the day is over I just need you in your bed now and so what does it mean to show love we talked about misbehavior but this is not misbehavior necessarily but just a hard

moment of the day for sure well and it often turns to misbehavior and that the child doesn't stay in bed they keep coming out they want a glass of water they want to watch the TV show they want to read one more book you know it depends on how old they are and that's a little bit different than this right he's afraid of being well I know but sometimes when kids are afraid of being in the dark they don't want me to know

it because I've told them so many times they don't need to be afraid of the dark that it feels invalidating to them it feels like I don't love them for who they are but who I want them to be and so they can't talk about it that way anymore so now they want to do other things that's possible but I hear you asking the question specifically about the one who stays scared keeps verbalizing it and I keep trying to help

them not be scared but it doesn't work yeah mhm so really what's going on is the child is having to get used to not being with the reassuring presence of the parent and when we're in fight or flight our brains give off oxytocin which is an odd thing CU that's like the the cuddle hormone but it it drives us to go seek help so there's a natural response for kids when they're scared to want to be with you so it helps to just

think in terms of okay how can I do this gently with my child and keep coming back in you know at intervals honey I know you're a little worried I'll be back in just a minute and check on you and I'm give you a thumbs up and smile if I see you resting well and they just kind of keep coming back in so they don't have it's like no they're gone forever cuz that's what's really scary

to them but if they know you're going to be back to check on them that helps a lot so also helps a lot to just get the child's brain into just sort of a light-hearted connected State before going to bed so that might mean play wrestling early in the evening or just some silliness or a game where they feel really powerful there's a type of play with your child where you put them in the power role they're the superhero

you're the the bumbling villain and fall over on the couch when they approach and and it's just laughter and fun and they feel powerful and just a simple way of connecting in that way before a child goes to bed says I love you I believe in you you're strong you know and it can just be just what that child needs to not like end up in bed going I'm powerless and I'm afraid so just simple things like that can be helpful as well

I can see that really working with smaller kids I'm guessing an 8-year-old might be a little bit too old an eight-year-old boy would probably love to wrestle with his dad yeah okay and so then two girls so yeah so the dad doesn't have to exaggerate it to where it it's silly but just like being goofy and falling over and yeah I could totally and I'm sure it depends on their personality cuz maybe they just want to

sit together really you know right next to each other on the couch and and you each read your own book yeah for 20 minutes or something like that yeah I mean there is this thing too and I don't want to understate the attentiveness needed if our children have got a fashion of Night Terrors that may be indicator that there's something going on that we don't know about and so with an 8-year-old you know it's possible there's some stuff going on at school

there it's possible something happened traumatic that we don't know about I don't want to instill a bunch of fear in parents about this right now but I think for us to just wonder with our kids in a in a very not an anxious kind of way like oh what happened to my child but more like wow you just seem you still seem really upset after bed and I just wonder if there's some things that happen before bed some days that just

make make it feel hard for you yeah and to explore whether there might be something more as well as some of the things Lynn is talking about we just making sure there's good doses of connective stuff you know as bedtime approaches cuz so often these days kids feel alone in their own homes while all the craziness is going on and right up to bedtime even though there's people going on and there's stuff happening mom's got this dad's got this other

siblings got this we're online we're watching things we're we're not connected and there's chaos and we end up going to bed with this angst that we don't understand or or even know how to deal with any of it and that's what's real for us yeah so let's be attentive to the anxiety level of our kids throughout the day that they might be bringing with them to bed and figure out ways before bed to start to explore that

and be connective and empathetic and curious and understanding and all of the things that communicate this message you're loved no matter what you feel when you go to bed and all of that boils down to the question that we teach in the course too what's going on in my child yeah so for you are safe with me we ask what's going on in me the parents so for you are loved is what's going on in my child child so instead of

immediate reactions I just want him in bed it's what's going on yeah that's it you know does he need more connection with me did something happened at school like let's just get really curious about what's happening y that's good that's really good here's the last question under the message you are loved no matter what to end our podcast today the question is my little kids always want to play with me and spend time with me I

want to give them what they need but I can't can't sometimes won't give them as much as they ask for sometimes they even get demanding what are some guidelines for knowing if my kids need more special time with me so the picture I get as you're asking that question Stacy is the the parent who spent some time giving their child a good dose of connection but has stuff to do and it's a normal thing to have stuff

to do and so I've connected with you and now I'm going to go do what I'm going to do the laundry or the dishes or vacuum or attend the work or whatever it might be and child follows me into the room and still badgers for attention yeah right is that kind of it that is the question okay so yeah we hear that question a lot and even with that specificity it's a tough one because if the child wants more attention then that

means something is still off problem is if we give them attention at a time like that when they're acting inappropriately to get it you know it may communicate a message to them that they're the most important thing around here and that's not a message we want our kids to pick up from us so the question really is is how do we put into the balance we're going to connect with you now and communicate clearly about that and then

I'm going to do some stuff and and if you want to help me do the stuff you can be with me and if you don't you know what are you going to do to occupy yourself for a while and if that continues to be problematic then we got to keep looking at it well there's I think there's some similarities in the Bedtime question because kids live in the moment sure they don't you know Savor the wonderful memories of playing

with Mommy and they don't look ahead to the next time they live in the moment and it's I've just got one emotion it's with the moment so how we disengage when we're playing with them makes a real difference because if we sort of pull away then that's like it's it's a double whammy of you're gone and I feel like you were irritated with me when you left and that makes me feel really insecure and want more more more you know to help

them sort of bridge the gap between the past and the future just just to get them started on that little skill can help as well so you're playing with your kiddo and you go oh just a couple minutes left and then I got to go fix us lunch so we got some good lunch to eat and then when the time is done you can go I loved playing with you that was such a fun time and I'm excited to play

tomorrow too will you remind me to play together tomorrow cuz I love that you just see it's such a different tone as you disengage that the child is much more likely to just feel to have their love bucket filled instead of like gone and this is all there is to life and I'll never play with her again yeah yeah yeah so it's clarity about ending and moving on and what's going to happen next which is great it's about clear

connected communication about what I'm doing and what I'm about to do and help and invite you to wonder the same question about what you're going to do without me now yeah yeah I really like that and I it also makes me think that I'm teaching my children kind of the balance of the day MH right now it's play time now we got to do the dishes now we got to do laundry you there's all the things that have to happen in one

day yeah I can remember inviting my kids to do some of those chores with me too so we get to play now but if you want to be together let's go do laundry yay yay yeah yeah well a good transition and it is a great opportunity so we don't have to equate in our brains that connection is always just for you child you know what we can connect in the chores in the preparation in the shop shoing and the

working in the garage and mowing of the yard and you know and make those times connective and enjoyable that's an excellent way to just build a lot of skills While You're Building connection y well Jim and I thank you so much for answering all my hour questions today you know we want to be so practical here at Connected families don't we and I really feel like today's episode was practical and useful for our listeners um we covered the first two levels of

the connected families framework you are safe with me and you are love no matter what so next time next week in our next episode we are going to cover the last two levels of the framework you are called incapable and you are responsible so I'll see you to then yeah and I I see some role plays coming on yes yes we're going to get some role plays in there are you enjoying our podcasts please rate and review so others can find us

more easily and don't forget to subscribe so you don't miss a single episode all of the information about the discipline that connects with your child's heart online course is found through a link in our show notes and at [Connected families.org](http://Connectedfamilies.org) the course runs two times a year and is starting in the next few weeks registration is open I hope you sign up today we look forward to next time when Jim Lynn and I will come back to the microphone for part two

of parenting questions and answers I'll see you then for more information go to [connected families.org](http://connectedfamilies.org) [Music]