

Pattern interrupts, ADHD, Dysregulation, Siblings, Materialism and more....

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SUMMARY

The session focuses on addressing parenting challenges, particularly around managing children's behaviors and fostering resilience. The speaker emphasizes the importance of mindset for both parents and children, encouraging a shift from viewing challenges as chaos to seeing them as opportunities for growth and connection.

- Parents should reframe their mindset from feeling overwhelmed by their children's behaviors to feeling empowered and capable of handling challenges.*
- Labels like ADHD can be useful but should not define a child's identity or a parent's experience; focus on the child's unique qualities instead.*
- It's essential to teach children about their emotions and how to manage them, rather than allowing negative behaviors to dominate.*
- Sibling conflicts are normal; parents should coach children on responsibility and teamwork rather than seeking absolute fairness.*
- Building a strong family culture and identity is crucial for children's resilience, helping them feel secure regardless of external friendships.*
- Validation of feelings is important, but parents should also guide children towards reframing negative thoughts and developing a proactive mindset.*
- The speaker advocates for creating family traditions and values that provide stability and a sense of belonging, drawing from ancient wisdom and cultural practices.*
- The session encourages parents to focus on fostering emotional strength in their children, helping them navigate challenges without feeling defeated.*

Hello everyone. Welcome to our no question goes unanswered. We are here in April and I am here to help you with a family reset. We have so many amazing questions. So I'm going to dive right in and I just want to remind you that today the studio will be opening. So I'll tell you more about that soon. But first, let's dive in with this fantastic question from Lena. And she writes, "Any advice on how to deal with ADHD kids? My six-year-old has a lot of severe food sensitivities that exacerbate his ADHD, and it's just madness in the house most of the time." Okay. So, uh, Lena, first of all, I want to send you a lot of love, a lot of support, uh, a lot of, uh, you know, commiseration and understanding, uh, that sometimes our homes can feel like madness. Sometimes it can feel like, you know, our kids specific conditions or their specific temperaments or their specific, um, you know, special needs or labels or whatever are just madness, are just too much to deal with, are just too hard for us. And I completely completely completely understand um that you know that that mind frame that we get into sometimes. But Lena rather than just give you you know technical um act activities or advice or you know decluttering or setting up your routine or managing your timetable or scripts to use which are all things that I do

offer and that I could offer you right now. I actually want to address the last thing that you wrote there, which is the madness. Okay. I want to talk to you about the mindset of the parent who feels that their home is madness. Hello to everyone joining me live. Welcome, welcome, welcome. Let me know in the comments where you are in the world and how old your children are. That really helps me to get a feel for the room. And if you're watching the replay, do the same. I just love to see uh who's here with us. Um, but I I I want to talk uh to Lena specifically now about this idea of feeling like my home is chaos, like my children are madness, like it's unmanageable. And I want to suggest that we actually reframe this type of self-t talk into something that's a little bit more empowering. Okay? Because when we think that uh you know we can't handle something when we think that our children's uh temperament or condition or uh their behaviors or their label like ADHD creates chaos in our life.

What we're telling ourselves is that we're disempowered. That we don't know how to handle it. That it's too much for me. Uh that I'm going crazy. That I can't handle this. um that it shouldn't be this way, there must be a better way, it should be easier, it shouldn't be this hard. And th those types of self-t talk lead us to be disempowered, to flail, to get triggered easily, to yell at our children, to yell at ourselves, to feel guilty, and they basically spiral us into these vicious cycles.

Okay? Uh vicious cycles are cycles where each step takes us lower and lower and lower. We spiral out of control. We spiral into the sense that you're talking about that everything's madness, that everything's out of control. And I want you to start to look at your son, at his ADHD, at his severe food sensitivities, um, at his behaviors, uh, in a whole new light, in a whole different way. Okay. So, let's start piece by piece. Uh, ADHD. Okay. Now, I am not an expert on ADHD or on neurode divergencies in general or on any special needs or on anything really. I'm just a parenting coach and a mom, okay?

But what I maybe have a tiny bit of expertise in is mindset. Okay? So, I can't tell you about the ADHD specifically, but what I can tell you about is how you're looking at the ADHD and what you might be making that mean. Labels are sometimes useful because sometimes we need to correctly diagnose something. We need to get the resources. We need to get the right therapies or maybe the right medication or understand where the behavior's coming come from.

And that little bit or lot of uh analyzing of diagnosis of uh you know detective work to figure it out what's the unmet need? What's the condition that what's the underlying needs? It's important a little bit, right? We've got to understand and you've understood that your child has what is known as ADHD. But labels can also be disabling in the sense that uh we kind of flatten a child into their diagnosis, right? We kind of just see them as, oh, that's an ADHD kid. Now the fact is that ADHD just like every other diagnostic label just like every even medical label like diseases or you know someone breaks a leg two different people who break a leg it's a two completely different situations the symptom seems to be the same it seems to be the same diagnosis but the fact is that people really are quite unique and situations and parents and households are quite unique and so I wouldn't want you to just flatten your child into an ADHD HD kid. Okay, I wouldn't want you to just look at them through that label. And I'm sure you don't, Lena, but I'm just giving you this reminder um that your child's ADHD is just a shorthand for some symptoms or some uh temperamental behaviors or some preferences or

some structure of the way his brain processes information or chooses uh particular behaviors. It's not who he is. It's not destiny. Okay, biology is a little bit destiny, but it's not our entire destiny. We're also very malleable, very changeable, very coachable, very adaptable, uh very much suggestible to our environments, to our input, to the energy of our parents, to the boundaries and parenting of our parents. Even if we qualify for a diagnostic label, even if I have ADHD, I'm still very different from the next person who has ADHD. Right? That's just shorthand for a few uh symptoms or behaviors that are similar between people who have that label. So, you mustn't attach too much to it because sometimes when we attach too much to those labels, we feel really disempowered. Like, oh, my child just has this condition and now what? I'm just disempowered to to to have a normal life, to have a simplified routine, to have a streamlined household, to have organization, to have time management, to have meaningful conversations, to have focus, to have academic achievement, to have social connections that are cohesive. Oh, I just can't have any of those things because ADHD, right?

And sometimes that gets that worms its way into our brain and it becomes a disempowering idea, right? Like we are at the mercy of this label. So that's the first thing I just want you to loosen the clutch on the label for a minute. Right? It's there. It might be useful. You might need it to get the right, you know, resources and support that you need. It might be 100% correct. I'm not questioning whether it is or isn't. I'm just questioning how much meaning you attach to it. The mindset and the power that you put behind it.

Okay. So the first thing I would say to all of you dealing with an ADHD kid or a neurodivergent kid of any kind or a kid with a special need or a kid with a diagnosis or a kid who's very intense and emotional and spirited is that labels are a little bit useful and a lot disempowering. Okay? So use them but use them wisely. Don't let them overtake your entire parenting experience. Okay? Um, just use them to get the resources and the support that you need and the understanding that you need of your child. Do not use them as an excuse why your child can or can't do things. Do not use them as a victimization story for yourself. Why it's harder for you, why it's more difficult, why it's more painful, right? That's going to disempower you and depress you and make you feel like you can't and make you feel lesser than and make you feel like chaotic parenting is more challenging than you can manage, right? Um, so as I'm saying, use it sparingly and use it carefully, the label.

Okay. The next thing she writes is that he has a lot of severe food sensitivities and they exacerbate his ADHD and it's just madness in the house most of the time. Okay. So, what I'm sensing here, Lena, is that you feel that you can't handle his idiosyncrasies, his his particular needs that are very extreme, right? his food sensitivities, his ADHD behaviors, and you feel disempowered in the in the face of them. And I want to help you get ahead of that. I want to help you feel, okay, he has this, this, and this, and we know what to do. We know how to handle it. We know how to establish our routines. We know how to maintain a organized home. I actually can do this.

I actually am wise enough, smart enough, organized enough, uh passionate enough, dedicated enough, whatever it happens to take to parent this child. Well, now that doesn't mean perfection, okay? No one is a perfect parent. No one needs a perfect home. There's chaos in every single home, whether the child has ADHD or not, food sensitivities or not. Okay? But each of our children come with their own unique package. And some of them are very intense temperamentally. And some of them are delayed developmentally. And some of them have special needs. And some of them have diagnostic labels. And some of them just are a not a good goodness of fit with the

parent. And we just don't like them very much a lot of the time. Even though we love them to bits, but they annoy us, right? There are lots of different things that come with parenting that makes it challenging in ever unique specific and particular ways. And the goal is for us as parents to feel like we can handle it, like we are leaders, like we are capable, like we have what it takes. We won't do it perfectly, but we are more in control than flailing. Okay?

more in a sense of empowerment and active leadership than just being whipped around and whiplashed in the madness that you're talking about. Right? So, I want you to reframe this madness as this is actually just what parenting is like, just what parenting is about. And I can actually handle it. Okay. So, let me go back. You may have heard me speak about the captain of the ship metaphor before, but it really just applies so well. a captain of a ship that is uh you know disempowered that feels like oh no there's something wrong with this crew there's something wrong with this ship uh there's something wrong with me right whatever reason has doubts and difficulties when they face a storm they're going to be overwhelmed they're going maybe to break down crying maybe to get paralyzed right like I can't do anything I don't know what to do right they're going to feel stuck uh or maybe angry or sad or depressed or overwhelmed or all of those things, but they're not going to take the right next action. A captain of the ship that feels equipped, that feels they have clarity, that feels they have conviction, I'm doing this, I can do this, it's important to do this, takes the helm, leads the crew, you know, bucks out the orders and gets everyone through the storm and into safety. Okay? And that's where I want to take your mind, Lena. I want you to envision yourself as like a lioness, okay? A leader, someone with a really strong backbone, with really broad shoulders, with a really thick skin, with a an inspiring vision, okay? That you know where you're leading this family. And ADHD, food sensitivities, like they've got nothing on you. Of course, you can handle them.

You can handle them every single day of the week for the next two decades. No problem. You know what you're doing. You know what the plan is. You've done your research. You've made your decisions. You've got your plan. And you're ready to go. And that's the type of mindset I want you to have. Not the mindset of someone who is whipped in the wind, right? confused, disheveled, uh you know, undermined, feeling completely disenchanted with their life. But a a mother who is focused on the gorgeousness of your child, and I bet he's gorgeous. I bet he's hilarious. I bet he's interesting. I bet he's fun, funny, and fun and curious and smart, and he's a handful. Okay, yeah, he's a handful. We know he's got his things. We all do. That's fine. But I want that to become the least interesting part of your parenting. Just something that you, yeah, you contend with, no problem.

Okay? Kind of like imagine you're minting a brand new stunning state-of-the-art kitchen, okay? And you have this incredible kitchen and you can cook up the most delicious dishes in it and it just smells so good and looks so good and it's so yummy and the gadgets are all there and everything's so perfect and yeah, you also need to wash the dishes at the end, right? Like that's just part and parcel of having and running a beautiful amazing kitchen.

But the focus should be on the delicious food, on the amazing smells, on the sensory experience, on the beauty, on the privilege of having it, not on the fact that, yeah, there's also a price to pay like, okay, I have to wash the dishes at the end. No big deal, right? So, I want the whole experience of parenting to shift for you. I want the

whole experience of parenting to move from being focused on the the challenges, on the diagnosis, on the labels, on the difficulties, on the sensitivities, on the madness, and for it to f shift the focus onto a sense of conviction and capability. And that's where what your child needs from you in order for the madness that you call it, right? The madness to end. Okay? The madness will end when you are sitting in your right in your rightful place at home right on the throne of your home.

When you're when you feel like a queen, when you feel like you're in control, when you feel like you have a vision, when you feel like you know what you're doing. Um, when you're focused on on the the vision that you have for your family. And look, Lena, you didn't have a child by mistake. It's not like just some throwaway idea, right? You you wanted something out of this. You had a purpose for this. You had a belief around this, right? that there was a type of relationship, that there was a type of future you wanted to usher in, that there were types of connections or types of leadership or types of values that you wanted to pass on to the next generation. Right? When we embark on this journey of becoming a parent, we do so because there's a a real deep yearning in our soul to to build something meaningful in this world, right? And parenting is like an incredible potential for that. And so I don't want you to get bogged down by technicalities. We can solve for that, right? We can solve for food sensitivities, right? Okay, so you don't buy these foods, you buy those foods, you you you'll cook this, you'll cook that. You'll figure that out. Don't make that the pinnacle of your parenting experience. Don't make that define you.

Okay? That is not what defines you as a parent. That is not what defines him as a child. And that's the piece I really want to leave you here with is that the the belief system that you hold about you as a parent and about him as a child is what's going to color the entire uh experience. Okay. The entire experience. Um okay. So Lena, I hope that that answers you. Um and I am going to move on to the next question.

But before I do, does anyone here have any push back, any resistance, any questions about what I just said? And if you do, I'd be very, very happy to answer uh answer your unique situation. Maybe you also have a child that feels like madness some of the time that you're not sure how to handle um or anything related. Um while you think about that, I'm just going to summarize this for you, Lena, so it's really really, you know, sharp. Okay.

The first thing is to externalize the problem, not to attach to the label. Okay? Don't think my kid is an ADHD kid. My kid uh, you know, his food sensitivities uh, he's wild, he's madness, right? The small shift uh, needs to be that, oh, okay, the food sensitivities are flaring up or ADHD is doing back flips right now, but we're not making the child the problem. We're focusing on everything we love about the child and our connection with the child, the fun about the child and just reducing that that shame, reducing that overattachment to a label, right? And reinforcing the idea that your child actually has agency over their behavior.

They are not their diagnosis. Okay? And so do you. Don't give them excuses. Don't give yourself excuses. Don't lower all your expectations. You've got to adjust them. They've got to be appropriate to what he can handle, right? But don't make everything about the label. Okay. The second thing is to actually help your child track what's happening internally with them. Okay, they can you can actually teach them these things and these are the technical things that I said we won't get into but let's just say really briefly so that you get a full answer here.

Right? there are triggers uh like loud noises or sugar or the food sensitivities that that he might have right there's something that goes on in the world something out there like I watched a TV show or I heard something right and those triggers those external stimulations uh bring about a certain thought like I can't sit still or I'm going to get into trouble or I hate this I need to get outside right now right something happens to them and they start to have a feeling like feeling anxious feeling frustrated and that then expresses itself in a behavior like throwing things, running, yelling, the madness that you're talking about, right? But that madness started back in the thought uh moment, right? So you want to help him to build that insight slowly, right? We all need to help our children to build the insight that when they are having a a a specific thought pattern, a reaction to a trigger on the outside, they can reframe those thoughts. they can think about things differently, right? Um and and and one of the important things that I shared with you here is just to challenge your own catastrophic thinking. Okay? Your brain might be screaming something like, "It's always going to be like this. Why is parenting so hard? He's never going to be okay." But I want you to reframe that. Okay? It's a hard moment. There are hard moments. There are dishes to wash up. There's yelling to contend with. There's siblings that fight. He's dysregulated. We get it. But he's not doomed. You're not doomed. This is a beautiful endeavor. This is an adventure that you're on and I don't want you to get, you know, bogged down by the label.

All right, Lena, I very much hope that helps. Let's move on to our next question. And this is a question from Oranges 364, who says, "So, what if there is an imbalance and one kid is being babyed and doesn't have to do anything around the house while the other has to do chores that were supposed to be done by the other kid? Are you going to tell that kid to change their mindset even though they're being treated unfairly? This was a question in response to my common sense YouTube series. Okay. uh which was all about the idea that we uh you know we want our children to look at themselves as generous givers, as contributors, as part of the family, as part of the community, and not as someone who uh not as someone who's always looking out for themselves and always taking.

And she's saying, "Yeah, but sometimes there's going to be one kid that's doing all the chores and the other kid is just sitting on the couch being lazy. What do we do when siblings aren't, you know, matched uh and things seem unfair? So, yeah, this is a really tough one, but the first thing I want to say here is there is a cognitive fallacy called the fallacy of unfairness. Okay, we all have an idea in our mind that everything always has to be fair and square. Um, and that means same same, right? This is this idea that, you know, all our children are, you know, going to get the same size cake, going to get the same amount of resources, going to get the same amount of attention, going to do the same amount of chores, and that everything has to be even, Steven, you know, fair and square. And I think that this is a fallacy simply because it's just not true. Like, life doesn't work that way. Nothing's ever the same between two people. There is no such thing as absolute equity. uh even between siblings, maybe especially between siblings, just the fact of your birth order makes life unfair, right?

It's unfair that at 16 he's getting to learn to drive and I'm 14 and I'm not yet learning to drive, right? We unlock different privileges and different freedoms at different times in our life. uh we garner different levels of favor and funness and friendship and mentorship and connection and resources from our community based on what we look like, our birth order, our age, our behaviors, you know, our our our development, our skills, all of that, right? So, even if you have identical twins, they're not going to have the exact same quality of friendships or quality of investment in them or life opportunities because all people are different. And it's actually really

important for siblings to understand that that no, you're not always going to get the same. Just because my 13-year-old is allowed to stay up and watch a movie with friends doesn't mean my seven-year-old will be because it's different to be 13 than to be seven. So, I actually think it's a really good idea for us to tell our children, "Yeah, life isn't fair." It's not a good way to go through the world expecting everything to be fair because you're constantly going to be slapped in the face by reality where things aren't fair and square. You're constantly going to be shocked by this rude awakening that different people do get treated differently. That, you know, people choose to be friends with one person and not with the other. That a teacher might take a shining to one student and not to another. Their parents might decide to unlock privileges for one child and not for another based on their behaviors etc etc. So that's the first thing is just to know, realize, and recognize that even though we all wish everything was fair all the time, the reality of the world is that it isn't. And it's better for us to make friends with that reality that things aren't fair. That bad things happen to good people, that people don't get treated exactly the same all the time, and that no, you and your sibling are not exactly identical, and you won't get exact identical treatment because that's impossible, right? So that's number one. The second thing is that I think every child in this scenario needs to be mindset coached. So for example, say I said, "Okay, we need to sweep the floor, okay, and we need to set the table." And I have two children. And one child sets the table, okay? And the other child does not sweep the floor, but the floor still needs to be swept.

And he's sitting there on the couch pouting, "I don't want to sweep the floor. It's not fair. It's not my job, etc., etc." And the other child says, "Oh, fine. I'll sweep the floor." And they start sweeping the floor. Okay? So child one is doing two chores and child two is doing no chores. and you think this isn't fair and it isn't fair, right? Because life isn't always fair and people do things that are, you know, unthoughtful or unkind or or or unfair. So, in this scenario, as a parent, I want to coach up both of those children's mindsets. Okay? The child that set the table, honey, well done. You know, you were asked to do a job. You went and did it with a smile. You gave me a great feeling about that. It really is nice to work on a team with you. I really feel I can rely on you. I'm proud of you. You seem really mature and really helpful and you did a good job and I really appreciate it. And then not only that, but you saw that your sibling wasn't sweeping the floor. You know it has to get done and you were like, you know what, me fine, I'll do it. You were a little bit huffy and puffy about it. You weren't so happy about it, which is fair enough because it wasn't your job, but I'm impressed that you volunteered, that you stepped in, that you stepped up.

That's the type of mature behavior that I really encourage, that I really want to see in you. That really makes our life much easier because you know how much there is to do around the house and you're helping. And that's a beautiful thing. And by the way, hun, that's going to serve you so well in your life because when you go to friend's house and you offer to help, you know, their mom in the kitchen or when you are, you know, in your first job and you volunteer to take on a bit more responsibility or when you get married and your wife's just had a baby and you decide, yeah, I'm going to be the one who uh cleans the whole house now and I'm going to get up at night and you take on more responsibility. The more responsibility you take on, the more chores you do, the more you put your hand up and volunteer and say, "Me, I can do it. I'll be the one. The more people will feel they can rely on you.

Uh they appreciate you. They're going to be grateful to you. You're going to be seen as someone really um just excellent and and well uh you know thoughtful and kind and helpful and everybody around you is going to love

that about you. So I'm going on and on a bit just to make this clear to you guys. You don't need to give them such a big lecture but that's the mindset, okay? is that you want to see them um you want to encourage uh that type of taking on of responsibility and accountability. And the child that's sitting on the couch, okay, you come to them and you say, "Hun, what's going on? You know, your brother's at the table. I asked you to sweep the floor.

We all have to pitch in around here. What's going on that you are, you know, saying no and and refusing and having this bad attitude? I don't understand. Can you explain to me? Did something happen that I missed?" Right? So, you want to give them a chance to explain themselves. No, it's not fair. I swept yesterday and I did the table yesterday. It's his turn to do it. I shouldn't have to do it today. Whatever. Or I'm just really tired or I'm not feeling well or I I just I feel like the way you asked me was really annoying. Whatever whatever reason they have. And you say, "Okay, I hear that. I understand. Just want you to know that it leaves a bad taste in everybody's mouth when you don't pull your weight. Okay. uh you know your brother stepped up and stepped in and is doing the sweeping and that's very admirable. Um but I think it you know it doesn't make people look at you with admiration. It seems selfish and immature when you're saying I won't do it. And the truth is in a family and in a relationship and in an organization and in your job in the future and in your marriage in the future and in your school and anywhere you are. It doesn't really work to be measuring who does what. We all just need to give our 100%.

Like okay so you swept the floor yesterday. Guess what, honey? I did the laundry yesterday and today and I'll do it tomorrow for everyone. Not just for me, for everyone. Because that's what families do for each other. We pitch in. We step up. We don't measure who did what, who did more because that just creates a really unpleasant environment. And frankly, there's enough work for us all to do and we need all hands on deck. So, you coach the child to see that this isn't in their best interest. This makes them look petty and immature. Um, and you can also talk about how does it make you feel about yourself when you see yourself sitting on the couch and everyone else is working. Do you feel proud of yourself? Do you feel like, "Wow, I really did it. I really stepped in. I really helped." Or do you feel like, "Oh, I behaved like a little king, you know, on my throne throwing a tantrum when everybody else was pitching in." You know, this can't make you feel good about yourself. You can't this can't be who you're trying to become.

I'm sure that this isn't the the man you want to be or the woman that you want to be, the person that you would look up to, right? And you want to coach them and really point out this is not this does not align with our values. This is not what makes you proud of yourself. This isn't what makes your sibling more generous to you. And you can even play that video forward and say, "Look, imagine tomorrow, you know, uh um you needed help with something uh and you wanted your your sibling to help you with something, but today you refused to help him." You haven't built reciprocity. You haven't created an environment where it's like, "Sure, I'll help you. You help me." And you can point out other people who do that, right? Like look at Uncle um you know Allan uh and uh Uncle Max and how whenever one of them needs help the other one is like sure I'll do it. No, don't worry. I'm doing my lawn anyway.

I'll come and do your lawn. I'm taking my kids to the zoo. Do you want me to take your kids? Isn't that the kind

of relationship you want with your sibling where you always pull your weight where you always do above and beyond where you say, "No, you go first. No, you take the last one. No, you enjoy the ice cream. I'm okay." Right? That would build a better relationship for you with your sibling, wouldn't it? Wouldn't that be more fun if everyone's just always trying to please the other person rather than take away from and argue with and do less? So, the point is not just to come down on them like a ton of bricks and say, "No, you have to do it. Get off the couch. You're a lazy bum. You know, it's not fair." The point is to say, "Yeah, things aren't always fair, but everybody has to pull their weight."

That makes you a better person. That makes it gives you better results because everybody around you is going to like you more, is going to trust you more, is going to look up to you more. It makes you feel better about yourself because no one feels good about themselves when they're just dodging work and trying to get out of things. We all feel good about ourselves when we step up, right? So, we help them understand why this isn't in their best interest. Okay, oranges 364. I really hope that this helps you. The answer is yes. You change their mindset for both of them. The one that's being treated unfairly, it you say, "Yep, sometimes we're treated unfairly and we can be proud of ourselves that we did the right thing anyway." and the one that is treating unfairly and we say, "Hey, you know what? This isn't a good move for you in your life. This isn't going to make you friends and influence people.

Get off your tush and go and do something." And by the way, last point there is to give them a path to make amends. Look, your brother already swept the floor, but there's still, you know, the dishes to clean at the end of the meal. Why don't you tell him, "I'm sorry I didn't sweep the floor. Thank you for doing it. I'll do the end of the meal. You can go and relax." Or something like that. so that you give them a pathway forward to make amends when they make mistakes, which they inevitably will.

Okay. All right. MK9430 talking about materialism and not accumulating too many toys. She says, "Now the real challenge is having a second, third, fourth kid, inheriting toys from parents' childhood. You can't simply hide these things because other children play with them. Yet you somehow want to give something new as well because you can't regive something. So even if you restrain yourself, you still end up accumulating more." or what is your advice there? My advice there is severalfold. First of all, you don't have to gift your g kids more toys if you already have that category of toys.

You already have trains, you already have magnetiles, you already have play mobilebile. You don't have to gift them stuff. You could gift them experiences, you give them books, you could give them gift them digital things like a subscription to a you know to a to music or something like that. Um so you're not accumulating more. Secondly, you can declutter. Get rid of toys that aren't earning their keep. Give them away. Um, you know, gift them, donate them, recycle them, make space. Don't just keep accumulating because clutter equals stress even for kids, even in play. And uh and also you can add things to existing collections. So, yes, it's more stuff, but it adds kind of a layer to that play, like another Lego set for your Lego or another Playmobil set for your Playmobil rather than just adding more and more categories. The truth is that younger kids like my fifth child came into a home that was fully equipped with toys. He does not need any more toys. Do we gift him a toy, you know, on his birthday or on uh, you know, Hanukkah or something like that? Yeah, sometimes we do, but that

sometimes goes along with uh decluttering toys. maybe getting rid of toys that are broken, that he no longer plays with, that we don't want in the house, etc. And sometimes we can uh gift toys that have been, you say, you can't regive something. I think you can. I think you can give something secondhand. I think you can put something away from your elder child uh and keep it for your toddler and bring it out like it's new.

My youngest children often think, "This is mine. I got this even though I've had it for 10 years." But they think that because we do regift it. We do get it out again. And I'm not pretending it's new. I'm not lying to them. I'm saying I'm giving this to you. Now, by the way, I buy a lot of my toys secondhand. All my Playmobil, for example, is secondhand anyway. So, I'm not sure why you couldn't do that. But yes, you don't have to accumulate more and more.

Okay, I'm going to read a very uh long and in-depth question from E who asked to remain anonymous and she writes, "I've been subscribed to your YouTube channel for quite some time and really appreciate your thoughtful perspective on parenting. Since you're answering questions this month, I have one I'd love your insight on. I grew up in a wonderful family environment. I got on very well with my parents and my younger brother. I'm not exaggerating when I say we never argued. I can recall only one time as a teen. I was never embarrassed by my parents. I really admired them.

They led by example. They didn't have to enforce strict rules as I naturally self-regulated. My brother and I were and are still great friends. Fast forward to today. I'm now an older parent with a six-year-old son and a 4-year-old daughter and an amazing husband of 15 years. Our children are quite different from us. My husband and I are introverts, but our children are quite extroverted. While I never dreamed of arguing or complaining to my parents, my children have no hesitation in doing so with us and with each other. They argue constantly and my daughter in particular is highly dramatic. She rolls her eyes. She stops her feet. She says, "Gh, fine." And seems to channel a teenager already. She's also quite physical with her brother and hits him fairly regularly. This behavior is completely foreign to both me and my husband, and we're doing our best to navigate it. We don't allow violence or disrespect to slide. In fact, I sometimes worry that I'm slipping into authoritarian territory instead of staying authoritative. I find myself saying to my daughter, "You cannot speak to me like that very often." I've tried ignoring minor conflicts, not the hitting, which I step in to stop, but talking things through after emotions settle, removing privileges, noticing uh and applauding good behavior when I spot it, and generally staying consistent with expectations, but nothing seems to change. The complaining and arguing feel endless from the moment they wake up until bedtime. I know I'm the adult, so I shoulder the responsibility, but I honestly don't know how to fix it. I realized my own upbringing was probably unusual in its lack of conflict. So I feel unequipped to handle this dynamic.

For context, we don't allow tablets or phones. We don't serve kid food. We're con we're consistent in enforcing our boundaries. We don't phrase instructions as questions. And our kids know my husband and I are a united front. We have high expectations. But while I wouldn't call myself a fun mom, don't I sound super fun? Um we do we do have movie nights once a week or so. We read daily. We have a lot of family support, etc. Okay, but here's what she says, and let me know in the comments if you can relate to this. But goodness gracious, I'm so exhausted by the constant conflict. I fear the tighter I squeeze, the more they'll resist. But I also can't allow bad

behavior to go unressed.

I don't like the person I become when the conflict escalates. I eventually raise my usually quiet voice. How do I stop the arguing and the hitting? Okay. Um, thank you for reading and for all the guidance you share with the high fam community. If you do end up answering this question, thank you. Okay, so e my dear, let's talk about several things that are going on here. First of all, it does sound like either you perceive to have or you really had a very low conflict childhood. You and your brother didn't fight. You and your parents didn't fight. You had a really good relationship with them. You admired them and looked up to them. Maybe you were a very, very calm, easygoing kid.

you were flexible. Uh your mindset was strong. Everything was smooth sailing in your childhood. And when that happens, it can be really confronting and confusing to suddenly be faced with children that are quote unquote normal kids, right? They fight, they argue, they complain, they hit. Um which to me seems really normal because my children do all of that too. So it can be really confronting, confusing, like wait, I never did any of this. Why are my children doing this?

So the first thing I think is just to understand that that is the norm for most parents today. Maybe it's because of our environment. Maybe it's because of something in the water or in the food. Maybe it's just how kids have been since forever. Uh maybe it's because of a more lax parenting culture. Although, as you say, you have your expectations and boundaries. We don't really know. But it's very common place for kids to complain or to fight or for sibling conflict to occur. And I want you to just kind of practice uh a radical acceptance that this isn't there's not something wrong, right? There's it's not that you're doing something wrong. It's not that you're missing something. It's not that there's something wrong with your child. You don't need to seek a diagnosis. You don't need to worry too much about it. It is normative for kids to to bicker and to have these kind of uh poor mindsets or roll their eyes or stomp their feet. It's not desirable, but it is uh normal. Okay? It is typical.

Um, but what I really want to address, there are many different things that we could address here. But it sounds like you have your systems in place. You have high expectations. They're not overloading on tablets. Um, they're eating well. You have family support. You know, you have a great marriage. You have so many amazing things going for you and so many strong, stable things in your home environment. But the one thing that you are expressing here that we could maybe address that we could tweak is the idea that I'm so exhausted by the constant conflict. Right? And that you don't like the person that you become when the conflict escalates. And I understand that. I relate to that. I feel the same in my own home. But I want I want to help you put less weight on this. Okay? Why? Because as parents we are uh trained or or we have a tendency right we're wired let's call it to seek out problems in our ch children right because we have a negativity bias as human beings because we're looking for the problems because we want to keep them safe because we want to make sure that they are you know happy and healthy and and developing well etc. So we have a kind of hyperfocus on the things that are going wrong. It may well be, and I don't know if this is true, but it may well be that in your childhood you did complain a little bit or you did have these little bickering conflicts with your sibling, but you but it wasn't uh perceived as an exhausting issue by your parents and therefore you didn't uh quite register it as a big part of your childhood. In other words, sometimes what we resist persists. what we focus on, what we put attention on,

what we think about. Um, you know, and it might come from a bit of a perfectionistic tendency that some of us have, right, that actually everything's great. You have a great marriage, you have great uh, you know, parenting skills with your kids, you have a good structure at home, your kids are great, but yeah, they they have regular sibling spats and bickering, but because we are wired to pick up on those issues, that is becoming magnified for you. That is becoming maximized for you. you are seeking evidence of these issues and doubling down on them. And I want to encourage you to reframe and to soften the hold on that issue and to see if maybe it's not as big as you think it is. Maybe it's a little bit more normal.

Maybe it's your activation around it that's making it such a big problem because you're saying, "I feel so exhausted. I feel uh disempowered. I don't like the person that I'm becoming." So maybe it's about having a plan for you as the leader. Oh, here's what I do. Okay, I'll give you an example. I've shared this inside the studio. I have a brother. I have many brothers. But I have one brother who uh rec who a few years ago I was watching him. He's an incredible dad. Sorry, I keep coughing. He's an incredible dad.

He has five children. And um his children were bickering and it would have triggered me to the nines. I would have gotten so upset and so mad and yelled at them and got annoyed. But I watched him sit back. He had his coffee in his hand. Okay. And his daughter comes up to him. It's not fair. He said she said this. He scratched me. He took my thing, right? And he sits there and he goes, "That does sound tough. I'm sure you'll figure it out."

and he turned back to me to continue our conversation. And I watched a man who was chilled, who was confident in his kids that they could figure this out, who was not going to be drawn in and activated by, you know, normal annoying siblings spats. uh he was going to convey the energy of confidence in his children, of a bit of empathy, sure, but not a whole big pity party, right? Just a moment of empathy. Like, that does sound tough.

I'm sure you'll figure it out. And he transferred the responsibility for that back onto his children. Now, this isn't the only strategy to handle sibling conflict. Sometimes we have to actually teach them listening skills, validation, reflection, you know, brainstorming, problem solving processes. Sometimes we have to teach them how to express themselves. Sometimes we have to separate between them physically like you've done when they're hitting. Okay? You can't always just be like, "Oh, I'm sure I'll figure it out hands off." But I want you to adopt a bit of that energy. Okay? So that it's not so intense for you. Like for example, your daughter rolls her eyes and you can say, you can you can you can address it.

That's fine. You can teach her, you know, rolling your eyes is rude. Let's try that again. Okay? Or, wow, that sounded very disrespectful. Would you like to rephrase that? Or, I think what you meant to say was, "Please, mommy, could I have some ice cream?" Not, "Give me ice cream now." Right. Right. Like, I'm not saying you shouldn't address it or correct it. You should, but what I don't want it to do is exhaust you. I don't want you to see it as this big issue like, "How can it be? It never happened in my childhood, but it's happening in their childhood. They're so different from me. They're so alien to me. I can't possibly handle this. Just like you have that confidence in your marriage, in your um in all of your, you know, support system, in the way that you run your home, in your career maybe, right, in other areas of your home, bring in that kind of confidence, that kind

of chill, that kind of capacity in your parenting. I've got this. It's not a big deal. They will grow out of it. I will teach them, etc. Now, inside the studio, I'm actually releasing a brand new series all about cognitive fallacies and biases and the types of mindsets that make our children say complain a lot. Okay, complaining a lot is born of a pessimistic mindset. It's born of a glass half empty type of approach, right? It's born of a child who's not focused on gratitude, but is focused on what's missing for them. And those are the types of things we can train and we should, right? You should train them in an attitude of gratitude, in a better mindset. All of that stuff is a good idea, but it has to come from a place of ease, a place of, oh, just like I'm going to teach them to read, just like I'm going to teach them to ride a bike, I'm going to teach them to think better. And it doesn't come so easily to read or to ride a bike. You fall, right? You have mistakes. There are risks incurred. Like, yeah, it's going to be a bit exhausting, there's some effort in it. But I don't want you to feel so activated and so incapable in the face of this because it's just childhood. That's just part of the package. That's just part of the rules of the game of parenting. And maybe your parents were very lucky and they never had to, you know, abide by those rules. But the rest of us aren't.

If you're not using fear and threats and spanking and punishments to, you know, put the fear of you in your children, then you're using modeling, correction, consequences, and mindset coaching. That's what you're using. And that takes a little bit of effort, a little bit of time, but don't make it mean anything about you or your children. Okay. All right. I really hope that helps. Let's keep going to Crescendo Amore who writes, "Hello, Avital team. I have an important question, but I need some background for you to understand.

I've been with you every since the beginning and love all your work. It's helped me create the family life I love today." So, thank you. That's amazing. Now, my question, how can I best support my 12-year-old daughter who's currently experiencing friendship issues at school without trying to fix the situation for her, but instead helping her build resilience and emotional strength? She is very smart, sensitive girl with intense emotions, going from a very happy to a very sad face quickly, all or nothing. She knows about automatic negative thoughts, ants, and uses calming strategies that we've worked on, but right now she's struggling a lot.

Her close group of friends suddenly stopped talking to her without any explanation. She has tried to reconnect, asking what happened and apologizing even without knowing what she did. But nothing has helped. She's feeling desperate and has said things like she wants to die because she can't take it anymore. She has even asked me to put her in a mental health hospital. At the same time, she's very happy and safe at home. She doesn't I don't feel she needs hospitalization, but I have booked an appointment with a therapist to give her more support. She can also be very persuasive and relentless when she wants something, and she tends to seek leadership roles and enjoys attention. At school, she's often praised for her behavior and kindness towards others. At home, she has a history of strong emotions. And when she was younger, she struggled with anger, especially towards her sister, which led us to teach her these strategies to calm herself. I would love some guidance on how to talk to her, validate her feelings, and empower her to navigate these challenges without talking over or solving them for her, helping her to build resilience instead of feel defeated. Okay.

All right, let's have a look. So, uh, first of all, does anyone here have a 12-year-old daughter, an 11-year-old daughter, a tween, an early teen who has faced social issues? Uh, maybe this was you when you were a kid. Uh,

maybe you um are worried about these types of social issues that are often very very disruptive to girls. Or maybe you've heard your child say something like, "I want to hurt myself. I don't want to live anymore." uh and it's triggered you know a lot of fear and a lot of pain and a lot of worry for you. So first of all I just want to extend a lot of empathy to you because this is very very uh triggering challenging difficult painful to watch your daughter go through that.

You don't know why her friend stopped talking to her. She doesn't know why her friend stopped talking to her. For a 12-year-old girl your friend circle is your whole life is your whole identity. Um and it easily can send you into a place of desperation of isolation of fear. And that's what's happened to her. And I completely uh I completely get how that's going to be really really scary for you. With that said, there is plenty that you can do. You are the parent. You are the leader. You are in her corner.

You are going to be a powerful guide uh just as you've written here. And I 100% trust and believe that you can get her through this. I'm glad that you are seeking support such as therapy. I also want to say that uh it might be great and helpful and it might not be. I've seen both. I've seen it go both ways. What is absolutely crucial is your guidance and your support, your therapeutic approach to her, okay? Your helpfulness, your guidance. Because I know as parents it's so like seductive and hopeful and you know we kind of wish that there is this expert out there that we could just find the therapist, find the speech therapist, the occupational therapist, the psychologist, the psychiatrist, the teacher that's suddenly going to fix the issue, that's suddenly going to help us, that's going to unlock the pathway, that's going to give us the amazing advice. And I have found that that's sometimes true, but it's sometimes hit and miss. Sometimes we don't have access to that kind of therapist. Sometimes the therapist can even make things worse and not better. So I'm not anti- therapy, but I am sus, you know, cautious cautiously optimistic, right, um, about it. And you really have to work hard to make sure that you find the right fit and someone who's actually going to make more of a difference in a positive rather than negative way. often unfortunately uh therapy today can be disempowering rather than empowering. So it can sometimes lean too hard onto validation and empathy and be too soft on reframing on mindset coaching on helping someone actually overcome and build resilience. And that's my fear because sometimes it kind of stirs up and agitates our victim story rather than, you know, sending us into hero story, hero mode of overcoming and and actually moving past the problem rather than staying stuck. With that said, let's say the first thing that you uh might want to do here is validate her feelings, okay? But not the story that she has about herself, okay? When she says things like, "I want to die." And I know that that really hurts and really is very scary. Um, she's expressing the intensity of her pain. Okay, it's very unlikely unless there are a lot a lot of other symptoms that go along with this and they are pervasive that it's a clinical wish, right? That this is actually a plan. And often this kind of uh shadow or cloud or threat of self harm can be used as a manipulation tool for parents. And that's something we have to be really cautious of. We don't want to empower our children to use the threat of self harm just to get what they want or just to get empathy or to somehow manipulate us. Okay? So you need to see it as uh an expression of deep hurt. Okay? Not a threat. All right? So instead of debating or dismissing the statement, you could say something like, "Wow, that sounds like such a deep hurt.

I really hear how much this matters to you. I hear how upset you are. You must really really be hurting to say something like that. Okay. But you also want not just to stay stuck in the empathy. You also want to help her reframe this narrative. This story is not a good story. Right? So like your brain is telling you that in order to

show how painful it is, you say things like I want to die, right? Because you know that that is an expression of how upsetting it is to you. But you know this might be uh the beginning of something much stronger in you. This might be a challenge that you need to rise to. You're in the middle of the story. You don't know how it's about to play out, right? Separate that feeling from uh the thoughts. Okay, the feeling is real. She really feels hurt. She really feels upset, etc. But the thoughts that she can't go on living, that this is going to destroy her, aren't uh aren't necessarily true. Those are distorted, right? And she needs a gentle reframe and help in thinking that way. I also feel that you could come down even a little bit stronger, even a little bit stronger on that. Okay, I'll just say what I would do with my own daughter is to say, you know, it's not appropriate to talk that way. It's not okay to talk about us wanting to die, wanting to end our lives over something that is hard. Your friends not talking to you is painful. You know, it's upsetting. But, you know, uh our life is a precious gift. Maybe you have a religious belief. Maybe you're saying it's a precious gift from God. Maybe you just believe that life is valuable and and meaningful and important and that we don't talk uh so desperately or so negatively about ourselves. Uh we need to talk to ourselves in a way of resilience and overcoming and talk about how we can grow stronger and how we can overcome these experiences.

Okay. Now the next thing that we need to do is to rebuild her identity kind of from the inside out. Right? Many teenage girls build their identity from the outside in. from my peer group, from my appearance, from my vibe, from my aesthetic, right? Um, but she is shattering her self-worth because it's tied to other others approvals, to her friend group, and that's too much pressure and too much value to put on a friend group, right? She uh needs help building her resilient core identity.

Okay, so the question needs to shift from why don't they like me? Why aren't they talking to me? What happened here to what kind of person do I want to be no matter what others do? What kind of gifts do I have to bring to the world? What kind of mission am I on? Who can I help? Okay. How can I grow stronger? Okay. So, this is uh all about rooting her in your family values, not in popularity at school. Okay? knowing, reflecting back to her, helping her see you're a kind person. You're a brave person. You're a strong person. You're a perseverant person. You're a sibling like this and you're a daughter like that and you're a sister like that and you're you're creative in this way and you have all the different ways that you're brave and growing and uh missions that you could be on and and things that you need to accomplish in your life. And you know what? Sometimes friendships are fickle. Sometimes they come around in the end. Sometimes they don't. But that is not the main focus of our life. It's good to have friendships. You can find more friendships. You're still very young, right? Um maybe we can repair these friendships. We don't know. But you are so much more than the sum total of your group friends, right? You are so much more than that. You are uh growing and building all these different values and all these different things that we believe in. And we really want to strengthen her sense of belonging and identity to her family, right? And this is something that we really build strongly inside of the studio. I'll give you an example. One of my uh studio members was building the campfire project inside the studio. Okay? We have different projects. We take on different projects to build new family habits.

This was all about establishing a campfire. Um, you know, once a month this family sits around, this family was doing it once a week, which is even more ideal. Sitting around a campfire, you know, really connecting to those primal uh drives, right? that hunter gatherer group tribal feeling of being part of a group, being around the campfire, telling stories and then telling family stories and roasting marshmallows and singing, you know, their

songs. And um and one evening, uh it was Friday night that they would do it. And one of these Friday nights, uh their kids, their teenagers friend invited them for a video night, a video game night sleepover. And this teen was actually torn about going because he really wanted to be home with his family for campfire night. He didn't want to miss it. Now, peer groups and teen friends are important, but they can't surpass they can't take the place of family connection. That really needs to be primary. That needs to be um the the you know, it needs to be supreme over other circles and other communities. It needs to be foundational. And so I would actually give her that foundational connection to your family culture. You said she's good at home. She does not need a mental health hospital. She needs a strong family culture. She needs the hikes. She needs the board games. She needs the family movie night. She needs cooking with you. She needs helping with chores around the household. She needs that kind of envelope, that culture that holds her in place and says, "I'm someone with a sense of belonging and identity no matter what happens with my peer group, right? with the ups and downs. I'm still me. I'm still a daughter and a sister and you know, I still have this identity as part of something that's bigger than myself. And finally, I would coach her.

I would coach her mindset. Okay? I would really frame this as emotional strength training. Okay? Now, I'll give you an example from my own life. As you know, I've uh lived through war, um several waves of terror, and most recently war. Maybe you don't know, but I do. And one of my children was developing a lot of anxiety around uh missiles and sirens and and explosions. And I think in modern day parenting, one of our tendencies is to just kind of dive into empathy and labels. Oh, it's childhood trauma, right? Uh now he has an anxiety disorder. Uh now, you know, oh no, he's been damaged. Somehow he's not going to overcome this. This is, you know, this is definitive. This is destiny. this is how his life is going to be because I've I've screwed up his childhood. He lives in a war zone and he's, you know, seen so much trauma and we've lost so many people and he's afraid for his life all the time. Um, and so somehow, you know, I've weakened him, I've ruined him, I've messed up his brain, damaged, right? And I think for me personally, I take the opposite viewpoint. Okay? I take the opposite viewpoint. And I think, and this is maybe because of my personal life experience, I also had PTSD. I had clinical PTSD. It was crippling. Okay?

And I'm not sorry for it at all. It clearly made me much stronger. It clearly made me who I am in many ways. And I would never exchange it for anything in the world. Would I wish it on someone? No. You know, no, I don't wish this on anyone. But our challenges in our lives become our biggest growth opportunities. We often wish them away. We often are sorry for ourselves. We're often depressed and upset that they're happening. We often, you know, feel desperate in the moment. But when we learn to reframe our biggest challenges as our biggest growth opportunities, it builds our resilience, right? And she can know that at 12 years old, she can understand that this is her resilience gym, right? Like you can't lift the weights for her, but you'll spot her.

You'll be there for her as she does something difficult, as she goes through something hard. Okay? So, you want to work together to map out possible responses, you know, practical social scripts. What's she going to say? How's she going to respond? How's she going to ask? You know, what's gone on, how's she going to maybe maybe uh enact repair with them hopefully and visualize staying calm in those tough moments. But we don't want to overreassure her. It's possible that these friends are never coming back.

It's possible that they were just cruel for the sake of cruelty. It's possible that she herself did something to repel them. Okay? But we can strategize on how to overcome this. So for me, let's say with my son, you know, I'm not telling him, hey, the missiles are going to stop. You're going to be fine. I don't know that, right? No, I can't give him that kind of reassurance. I can't just, you know, bubble wrap the situation and just make it all okay and pretend that it's fine to be living through, you know, missile attacks. Um, but I can give him tools to handle it. Okay, we can breathe. We can visualize our safety. We can focus on what we do control, not on what we don't control.

We can find many other areas of our life to build a sense of security or stability or joy or just enjoy the moment or appreciate life even more. Right? There are many other ways that we can look at this and you grow stronger. Yeah. You know what? Life has some tough edges. Friendships sometimes disintegrate. Diagnosis come. Financial downturn comes. People can be cruel. People can be mean. War can erupt. Volcanoes can erupt. Hurricanes can come. It can rain on your wedding day.

There are lots of things that can just happen and they're not ideal and they're not easy and you can handle them because you're strong. So, you mentioned her kind of emotional intensity and her emotional volatility. And that's a piece that I most want you to focus on is her emotional stability. Yes, she's 12. Yes, she's going through a hormonal reconstruction. Yes, it's very normal for girls to have very big and very kind of roller coastery emotions. But I actually want to encourage all of us here to build ourselves and our children towards emotional stability. Okay? Not to um you know there is a trend in the gentle parenting world to validate all emotions. All emotions are okay. You can feel whatever you want to feel. And sure it is okay. She's allowed to feel sad.

But not every emotion is an appropriate response to the stimuli. Okay? Feeling completely desperate and completely lost and completely like, "Oh, I need mental health institution is an overreaction, right, to friends who aren't talking to you right now." Okay, that that that is an unhealthy response. That's too far. And you are 100% spot on on your instincts that that is not what she needs. Okay? And so I that's why I say that I want you to actually strengthen her mindset, not allow her to weaken it. Right? It's not a doubling down on, "Oh, poor you. This is so hard.

I don't know why this happened to you. It's so unfair. They're so mean. No. It's like, listen, honey. You know, chin up, buttercup. It is tough. It is hard when friends leave us. It's hard when hard things happen in life. And you can handle it. Now, let's shift our focus onto what you have to give to this world, onto your skills, onto what you're going to develop, onto projects, onto your family culture, onto your sense of belonging and identity outside of that friendship circle, onto other friends that we can help uh have, right?

those types of things that are more in the in the vein of empowerment and less in the vein of victim mindset. I really really hope that helps. I can understand and relate to how scary and painful that might be. But you've got this and you will give her the support that she needs. All right, I think we uh might wrap up for the day. Let me just see if I can squeeze in one last question here.

And here it is. Okay. Um, Miriam asks, "Hi, Avital. I have a question. You wrote that you come from a culture

rooted in ancient wisdom. I am curious what that is and what it means in terms of your parenting programs." Thank you. Okay, that is a great question. Um, I come from um, Jewish culture and I grew up in a religious household, in a modern Orthodox household is what it would be called. Um and we certainly spent our I and my siblings and everyone in my community certainly spent our childhood immersed in ancient texts, right? So from the Torah through the Mishna and the Talmud and all of the other interpretations and and texts that go along with those stories. So, Old Testament, uh, you know, the Bible, um, and many other texts, you know, uh, that are derivative from that. And, um, how does that relate to my parenting programs? Well, here's the thing, okay?

And this is this is a little bit of of I guess I guess in a way um I've uh what's it called? reverse engineered something in my life, okay, that I didn't realize was going on when I was growing up and even in the beginning of my career. I don't know if I fully realized what was going on, but I think I do now. And what I've reverse engineer is this. When I grew up in growing up in that community, and I'm raising my children with a similar community and and and similar values, etc.

There were many many structures in place, many social norms, many traditions, many rituals, many routines that created a very strong sense of family, of belonging, of identity and many uh very rich conversations about values. Okay, many debates. Okay, it was a very it was a culture that was rich in story and in debate around value. Who are we? What do we stand for? Uh, you know, what's the right thing to do in all sorts of different moral situations?

If you find a wallet on the street, uh, what should you do with it? If you, um, are attacked by someone, should you defend yourself? All these questions were common place at my family's uh, dinner table and in the schools I went to and that kind of thing as well, right? It was a constant kind of socratic style debate or Talmudic style debate around morality around lifestyle around choices around relationships around what was a good way to live. But beyond the debate and the conversation, there were also the traditions and the practices. So I'll give you an example.

One is the Sabbath, right? Like we observe Sabbath, which means that for 25 hours on the weekend, we don't use our phones, we don't do work, we don't do housework. Uh we host, we are hosted, we involve ourselves in community experiences of being together, singing, prayer, uh conversation, games, board games, uh outdoor walks, that type of thing. And that is just one example of the ancient tradition that I come from, right? Because observing Sabbath goes back thousands of years. um that I realize today as a grown-up raising my own children was very very um protective. It was very it was a good program. Okay, let's just put it that way. Put completely to one side the um the theistic questions of whether or not you have faith in this system. Right?

For me, that's almost irrelevant to my point in my work. What is relevant to my point in my work are what are the results? What are the results when families sit around the table and have meals together? What are the results when families have deep conversations around their history, their legacy, their roots, where they come from? What are the what are the results when you discuss moral quandries with children and help them develop their moral compass and their you know their moral reasonings. Um what are the results when you have all these high expectations and high uh community support and involvement and deep friendships and deep bonds

and where family becomes paramount? What are the results when you put family above career? When you put marriage above uh career, when you know all these types of things. And what are the results by the way also of living in a very pronatal society and a society that really uh cherishes children that sees children as the future that sees children as the point of it all for us to really be there in service and in leadership of them. And so put Judaism to one side because by the way I don't know if you know this but Judaism is not an evangelistic religion. There is no uh there is no encouragement of conversion.

So I'm never on some kind of mission to encourage people to be Jewish. Absolutely not. Uh the contrary is true. I would encourage you to double down on your own culture whether that's your religion or your nationality or your family culture or your set of values or your sets of beliefs. You might have a completely different political belief than me. You might have a completely different religious belief than me. You probably don't live where I live. You probably don't have the same family structure as me. But what I take from that kind of ancient tradition is the idea of building a culture intentionally creating a household culture. And what I've seen around me and I've been very very lucky to witness this firsthand is that this culture has incredible results in terms of the type of adults it creates. Okay? You look at these types of adults and I'm very lucky and I know I'm lucky I'm privileged in this and I know a lot of my students do not have this privilege but I'm very privileged to look around me and see fantastic families, right? To be a to be able to look around me and see strong households with high parental support and high parental expectations. I'm very lucky and I know this is countercultural to look around me and be able to see men who are truly admirable. Right? when people talk about toxic masculinity etc.

You know, I don't see that in my culture almost at all. Right? I see men who are loyal, who are devoted, who are very invested fathers, who are very hard workers, who have incredible work ethic, who are protective, who are uh providers, all these great things, right? Um same thing for, you know, let's say women's rights. I see, you know, women who are empowered, who are um creative and have agency and have uh uh authority in their own lives and who are building the type of life that they want to lead and meaningful lives etc.

Right? So all all sorts of great things that I see as a result of the family culture. Now one of the things that we look around and we see in our daytoday life is that you know families are disintegrating. families are becoming uh smaller and smaller later and later, right? Less siblings, less cousins, uh weaker marriages, less marriages, later marriages. Um and uh I think that goes handinhand with several other kind of results like isolation. People feel really really lonely. People don't feel strongly supported. People don't feel like they have lifelong relationships that they can trust. uh we see it manifest itself in the battle of the sexes, right? Where men and women, you know, the way I grew up were seen as 100% complimentary and collaborative and cooperative with each other. Like we're building together. We're not in competition. We're not trying to tear each other down or, you know, say, oh, you know, one sex is better than the other or that kind of thing. No, we work in cooperation to build a strong healthy society. Um, so we see the battle of the sexes and the disenfranchisement, right?

uh of uh of each sex in their own way, right? Whether it's high suicide rates, higher anxiety rates, depression rates, uh you know, failure to launch, all sorts of things. Of course, this is also mixed up with social media, uh with uh screen addictions, with many other things beside with political polarization, etc., etc., etc. But one of the things that I think is the root u I don't know if it's the root cause probably but also the root uh um cure for many

of society's ailments is to have strong family cultures right children who grow up in a family culture where they uh have a sense of clear belonging where they have a clear identity they know who they are and where they come from where they have a linkage and a sort of sense of duty and accountability to previous generations and to the sacrifices that people have made so that they can have the life that they have. Uh children who feel that they are um both very supported and that something is expected of them in this home and in this culture right that there is a way of being a good person or being a bad person and you're expected to choose to be good to do good in the world. Um all sorts of things like that.

Um you know I think that real really has a massive healing benefit. So, I think we need to take something from ancient traditions. I don't think we need to throw the baby out with a bathwater. And I don't think that that means that you can't raise children in a secular household or in an atheist household. You absolutely can. Um, what I think you can't do very successfully is raise children with this kind of myth of neutrality, with this blank slate, with a complete disconnect from previous generations, from legacy, from heritage, from nationality, from religion, from culture, from uh value system, and just tell them, "Here, you just figure it out, okay? We're postsexual revolution.

We're in hookup culture. We're in a hyperindividualistic society. It's all very experimental and new, but good luck, you know, go for it. I don't think we've seen great results with that. I don't think that's done any favors to our children. And so when I say ancient wisdom, I mean the ancient wisdom of family values, putting family at the center of our universe, right? um of building lifelong relationships and not seeing people as transactions, not seeing people as fleeting, not leaving our, you know, our spouse or our family members just because they said something we disagree with, right? Not being flippant about that type of thing. Uh seeing those those separations as kind of a last resort rather than glamorizing them. Um, when I say ancient culture, I mean connecting back to nature, uh, disconnecting from screens and social media from time to time, uh, and creating traditions and rituals. Um, even in a secular society, traditions and rituals like celebrating holidays, celebrating birthdays, celebrating anniversaries, um, having real mile milestones for rights of passage, of growing, um, having a weekly rhythm, right? We used to have a weekly rhythm like maybe it was church on Sunday mornings uh maybe it was family meal on on Friday nights uh whatever it happened to be and now we're kind of losing that to our screens and to our overload and to our overchuling um those are the types of things that I mean when I talk about ancient traditions and I also mean um ancient conversations around morality right developing moral compasses for our children helping them to develop uh helping them to develop velop a world view, okay? Helping them to develop a worldview that today might really be seen as judgmental, but it's really just being critical, being discerning, uh having a compass, having uh an understanding of what I think of as right and wrong. And that might be different in your home than in mine, but um those are the types of things that I mean. Now, how does that relate to the studio? Well, the studio is not in any way a religious program. It works for anyone because we have people in there from all religions and from none. Um, but it is a program that is going to help you create your family culture for you to be the leader for you to decide, okay, you know what, we really need weekly time in nature. We really need to sit around the table and eat as a family. We really need to get more clear on uh what we expect from our children in terms of their behaviors, being respectful to elders, right?

That's something that's become taboo in parenting today, right? Mainstream parenting, you can't even talk

about respecting your elders without sounding like you're some archaic, outdated biblical, you know, nut job. But that is uh that is the type of thing that I think most of us actually do believe in and do want deep down inside. We think that children should uh learn to be pro-social, to be respectful, to be um even if it's just for their own individualistic self-interest, right?

So, those are the types of things that I can teach and do teach inside of the studio and I very much welcome you in. Now, let's just wrap up. April is family reset month. I'm having no question go unanswered. I have a mega Excel sheet with so many questions, but I'm going to pop in every single day and go through them until we finish because I'm going to leave no stone unturned. And this is so that you can test drive my coaching style. You can get to know me deeper than ever before. uh you can see if this is the type of thing that might be helpful for you and you can decide if you're joining the studio. The studio only opens once a year. This price will never be coming back. And inside it, I give you courses on how to stay calm, on how to follow through on your boundaries, on how to set boundaries, on how to make early decision, on how to teach your children values, on how to coach their mindset, on how to build community, on how to create routines and traditionals, traditions and rights of passage, on how to raise masculine boys and feminine girls. uh on how to organize your schedule and your home and declutter and high vibe and design and basically everything you could need in order to be the leader in your family and create a culture that is inspiring for your children. Create a home life that your children would want to recreate because it's so great. That is exactly what I teach you inside there.

go to [h highfam.com/studio](https://highfam.com/studio) and join uh because doors are doors are going to be closing by the end of this month and I really want to make sure that you get in there. And if you have any follow-up, any push back, any resistance, any confusion, any questions, make sure to hit me up with them on my latest YouTube video, just leave a comment. We'll collect those. We will address them in a future live. Much much love to you and keep on living that high fam life. I'll see you in the next one.