

Parents Are Essential Workers

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SUMMARY

The discussion emphasizes the vital role of caregivers, particularly parents, as essential workers in society, especially during the pandemic. The speakers advocate for recognizing and valuing the contributions of caregivers, highlighting the potential for societal change that begins with this acknowledgment.

- *Caregivers, especially stay-at-home parents, are essential workers crucial to family and societal functioning.*
- *The pandemic highlighted the overlooked contributions of parents in caregiving roles.*
- *Recognizing oneself as an essential worker can empower caregivers and foster a sense of value.*
- *Historical revolutions have often been driven by mothers and children, underscoring the power of caregiving.*
- *The speakers encourage caregivers to assert their importance and engage in conversations about their roles.*
- *There is a desire for societal change, including bodily autonomy and dismantling systemic issues like white supremacy.*
- *Parenting is viewed as legacy work, aiming to leave the world better for future generations.*
- *The act of parenting is framed as a hopeful and revolutionary endeavor, contributing to long-term social change.*

-You know, I wonder for everyone listening and especially if you are someone who really identifies in that like care taking role, maybe you are a work inside the home parent, you're a work inside the home mom. I'm really curious if you've ever said to yourself like, I'm an essential worker. I am an essential worker to my family's functioning, but also Angela, right, you bring out to, to, No, no, no, no, no. Like to the world's functioning, right?

-Yeah -Like I am an essential worker.

I mean, you know, it's so obvious, but your title, Essential Labor, parents who were inside the home during the pandemic, I don't remember them being included in that list and-

-Yeah -It's interesting with essential workers, I remember when the essential workers were able to get vaccines first, right? -Yeah. -And I remember a lot of people saying, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa." Now like my babysitter is actually eligible, but like me as like a parent staying at home, like, what about me?

And it's just really empowering, you know? I feel like you and I actually are like doing the same work. Like I feel like this more and more.

-Mm -This idea that caregiving and having this role of a caregiver as a mother, like there is such power. In our ability to like create a revolution. -I

mean, first of all, there's never, historically, there's never been a revolution without mothers and babies, right? Like and children, right? And I agree.

I mean, I think part of writing this book was, I wrote it for myself, because I have stood in front of the mirror and said like I'm an essential worker. And I encourage people to do that as well. 'Cause it really starts with us with parents, caregivers, insisting on that because society isn't going to tell us that even though we know it to be true. It is true and I think, you know, the revolution we need change on all fronts, but I think the revolution we're actually a powerful place for it to begin, is for us to think of ourselves that way.

It changes a lot. You know, I tell people like to talk to your, like peers, your parents, right? The people in the trenches, right? With you every day, like to talk about yourselves that way. We need to value ourselves in that sense. Um, and that was a journey for me. And now I'm on this place where I'm like, never gonna shut up about it. And I'm gonna tell people they need to do that. There are so many things that I want for our country, you know, top of mind right now.

I'm like I want people to have bodily autonomy, uh, we don't have that. That's not guaranteed. And it's, uh, it it's, I'm really upset about that right now. I'm really angry. I'm I have a lot of feelings about that. And sometimes I think like, I don't know. I believe that we can get there and, and have that. I don't know if I'm gonna be around, you know, like social change is very slow. It's meaningful work. I can't think of better work to be doing, but there's no guarantee that I'm gonna like live to see like the end of white supremacy in America.

Right? But my kids? It could happen when my daughters, while my daughters are alive and my daughters could be part of that. And I think a lot about parenting as like legacy work. You know, to me it's really important to leave the world better like than I showed up, even if just a little bit, even for just a few people. And to me, parenting is a very hopeful and revolutionary act because I am believing that we can make the world better even if I'm not actually physically there when it happens.

Yeah, you're changing the blueprint.