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00:02

Robin, I'm so happy to have you with us today on the show. And for you to just share all of your wisdom that you have, I've had so much fun learning about what you do with your podcast, and with your different writings that you do, which are just so phenomenal. And so I'm wondering if we could just start out today with you giving a little background about just who you are, and how you kind of got into doing what you do? Yeah,



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well, thank you so much for having me, Heather, I am so honored to be here. And I just want to acknowledge the work that you're doing, I think it is so important. And I really believe that you are saving lives with the work that you're doing. So thank you for what you're doing to support. And that's so important. So yeah, so you know, I think that you and I might have come to our work for the same sort of reasons I had. So the work that I do is in peaceful parenting and helping to helping parents to really understand why their kids act the way that they do. But also why we get so angry and frustrated and overwhelmed on our side. So I've sort of looked at parenting on two hands, right? on our kids side, and what's going on with them and why they are the way they are. And then what is it about us, and oftentimes that leads back to the way we were parented or different pain. And so when I first became a mom, I had a vision of exactly what I knew. It was gonna be like, I thought it was a mother. Yeah, right. I knew I was gonna be like Mother Earth and a flowy dress and long air and like, bring all the children to me, I shall nurture them and love them and care for them. And I could not wait to get back to work. As soon as my my sweet boy who is now 16. Because I had such a hard time that very first year, and that really set the tone for my parenting. From then on, you know, My son was 11

days overdue. I had to have a C section. I never even had a I never even had an IV before. And then when I did have an epidural, he went up and set it down. So you know, that was that was just not, you know, going to happen for us. So it was no it was and so I couldn't nurse him either. I, the the surgeon came in afterwards. And she said to my husband, well, if we were anywhere else in the world that didn't have you know, advanced medicine, or we were in another time, you would have had to decide between your wife and the child, because it was just not gonna happen. Yes. Yeah. And I had heard these stories of these women not being able to reconcile the birth. And I thought that's dumb. Yeah, no, that was me. 100% me that was 100%. me. And so not being able to comfort him soothe him because he was sort of like explosive from the start. You know, I didn't bond with him right away. And I thought, well, I'm failing. And we haven't even left the hospital. So it just set me on this dark path. And I just I couldn't understand him. And, you know, we did have another son. You know, you you forget. And so



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it is kind of Yeah, you've got four. Right. So I mean, talk about amnesia.



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Yep. Yeah. Yeah. So, you know, and here's what I'll say is that my first son who is 16, he is my greatest gift. He has been the hardest work of my life. But the most, the biggest gift I could ever have asked for, you know, he does, he does struggle with ADHD, he struggles in terms of learning disabilities, but he also has high anxiety and depression. And that manifests itself in the anxiety side as as obsessive compulsive disorder. So life is hard for him. And it's been hard for us and not knowing that, you know, along with OCD comes explosive anger, right. We didn't know that stuff. And so we've been on this journey and and, and I remember trying to find help, and you're watching Dr. Phil, and, you know, trying to do all this stuff. And it just made me feel worse. I went to therapy, we had him assessed, and all that came back was no you need to parent better and differently. And I just said but how right? Nobody's telling me how to do that. I don't know how to do that. Well, here's a book. Okay. Well, here's a book that the book doesn't actually tell me what to do in my situation. Right. So I just went deeper and deeper into a dark hole of depression and self hatred. Yeah. Until I found Peaceful parenting, that was the first place where it said, I can accept that my child isn't the child that I wanted, I can accept that. He is different that, but I can also accept him for who he is. Right. And I can accept that I can accept myself. And I can accept my failures and my shortcomings. Like, I had never heard that before. And I also never understood where this anger and shame was coming from. And so I was able to unravel all of that. And look, I'm not a perfect parent. Now. You know,

there's days where I yelled, I wrote the book called The yelling here, for Pete's sake, you know, so I know, I know, you know, but Oh, man, but what I yes. And what I can tell you, and I'll sort of leave off on this note is that the most important thing, no matter what, even in good days and bad days, is we have such a deep connection. And that is everything to me. So that is what has come out of all of this hard work, is the deep connection with my voice,



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which is a hands down the most important piece, right. And I think often times, you know, in your case, in our case, in so many, you know, people that are out there, that it is going through these really, really rough moments. And, and that connection may be there to a certain degree before that, but certainly going through some rough things and working together deepens that beyond anything, any anything words can describe. But I think you were talking about we were talking a little bit before, before we started recording, and we were talking about this connection piece and how important that is. And you and I both are saying, gosh, how if we could have had that before, right? That were just something that we laid at the very foundation when, when they're tiny. And this is something you understand and you know, now so can you share with us, you know, what you've learned about really forming that connection in different ways as our kids are growing up before we hit these, you know, whatever are difficult things because most people are going to have some kind, you know, very few parents very few kids get to skate through with no struggles. Right?



07:26

Yeah. And, you know, to be honest, I kind of think my kids are lucky that they have had some struggles at a young age, because now they have coping skills, you know, so I think, you know, instead of having a mortgage and a family and you know, two dogs, you know, you've got and, and life is going down the drain you now have some coping skills to take with you when you're, you know, when life gets hard. Yep. But to your point about connection, you know, I'll say that. I can tell you, boy, it's hard to build connection with your child when he's yelling and screaming at you when he's raging at you, because he doesn't know what else to say. So the first thing that, that I will say, Well, okay, Oh, my gosh, I want to say it all at once. I can't say it all at once. But I want to is understanding that behavior is not good or bad. It's just communication. So if you can just understand that, that when my child is raging at me, it's not about me. And that's hard, right? Because a lot of parents will say, Well, how dare he disrespect me. So what I'm just gonna let him say rude things to me and just leave it at that. It's not that either. It's saying, okay, you are

in so much pain right now. Right? Because look, our kids want to get along with us, they love us that the connection that they have with us is the most important as they're growing up. When they get into teenage years, it's not as important but still it is the foundation for which they absolutely need to grow from. And so first, knowing that behavior is not meant to manipulate you or whatever, you know, you know, control you that they don't have any other way to articulate what's going on with them to understand what's going on with them, or to deal with going what what's going on with them. So it comes out as behavior we want to change. So we need to just first and foremost not take it personally. And then and then we need to listen to our children. Like we don't do a very good job listening. We think we know the answer. And so we asked the question thinking we know the answer, right? So it's like listening to understand versus listening to respond. Like that. Yeah. And from and from there. You know, you know, parents will say, Well, what if he says this or what if she says this, then you say okay, well, you You don't know what to say, than just Okay, tell me more. Right? That is the basis of how you build connection. Because at the core of who we are as human beings is we want to be heard. I was just gonna say you want to be heard, and we want to know you see me? Yes,



10:19

exactly. Yes, yes. And yes, to be seen, to be heard to be loved. That no matter what, no matter what, no matter what, you



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have no matter what. And this also, you know, leads into accepting. So what if you hear something you don't like? Again, it's not about you, right? You know, and, and when I say something you don't like, Look, if your child is saying, Well, I'm smoking cigarettes now. Or I'm vaping. You don't need to necessarily accept that. That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying, accept who they are, right? Because oftentimes, we have, like I said, I had a dream for what this was going to look like for myself. And if I keep trying to run my own agenda, like my child is going to learn a language. He's going to play two sports and have an instrument. But my child rejects all of that, like, and if I keep trying, it's going to be misery for both of us. Right. So you got to accept who they are. Don't be like, no sports are an academic or not.



11:14

I don't know. Whatever it is, right. Oh, oh, for sure. was good. Except it. Yeah. Who Who? What



11:20

are they passionate about? Okay. There. I mean, and they are all different. They're all different, right? Yes. To your point, though, about I just wanted to say something quick that sparked something for me the whole you know, if they say to you that they're smoking cigarettes, or drinking or whatever it is, that is a behavior, not a who they are not, I don't like violin, it's, I'm smoking cigarettes. Right, then that's Yeah, that's such an opportunity. Because what I see now having gone through, what we've gone through, is that, yeah, that's their way of saying, I need help. I need you to walk me through this. There are something going on with me, I am in pain in some way. I'm trying to cover something up, I'm dealing some whatever it is. But that's an invitation for a calm conversation. It's not, you know, they're not, they know you're not going to like it. Right? So the options are freak out, or turn it into a conversation, which is again, to your point of deeper connection.



12:30

Turn it into a moment of connection, turn it into a moment of understanding your teen in a deeper level way, a deeper way a deeper level. Right? And and also don't set them up. Like an ally like, oh, have you ever smoked before when you darn well know that they have cigarettes in their bag, right? Like that is that is a connection destroyer? Right? You want to you want to go in and say, hey, look, I know you're smoking. I saw cigarettes in your bag. Can we talk about it? Right? And then just listen, right? Tell me more. Hey, you know, I you know what? So what I hear you saying is when you repeat back what you heard your child say, That's powerful. Maybe you got it wrong. Maybe you got it right. But at least they know they were heard and you understood it, right? That's really powerful.



13:13

Well, it gives them a chance to say no, that's not exactly what I meant. If they meant something different. If they're trying to communicate something differently to you, then they can say, Well, we know I said that. But this is really what I'm trying to say. I mean, it is also teaching them communication skills. Yes, because I think a lot of times they just don't have the vocabulary, or they haven't quite connected. You know how to put emotions with words or know how to let you know all of that it just comes out in in, you know, teenage angst or whatever. Right? Which is so much easier for them just to be like, I want nothing to do with you right now. Right? Just leave me alone. Right? You're the worst. Whatever it is. Yeah, exactly. Teenagers, yeah. Yes, yes. And sometimes that sprinkled with words, we can't say on here. So you know,



14:16

it's true. And I'm trying not to say those words, but I've heard those words, too. I've heard a lot of not nice words I have and it's like,



14:22

Whoa, yes. Well, my 13 year old you will actually approve a totally aside story. But he did ask me the other day if he was allowed to say the bad word for poo. And I said, Well, you know, I would I would prefer if you didn't. It's an adult word. I said, but I've realized that you're 13 and that's how dudes talk to each other. Right? I hear you on the Xbox.



14:48

And ain't cool, right? Same pool. And I was only not through Yeah,



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maybe maybe not to your mom or to other adults. Let's let's just make a boundary there. How about that? He was like, all right. I like that.



15:01

Yeah, I agree. I mean, personally, I don't think we need to vilify these great letters words, you know, they have power because we've given them power. Correct. And I think it's great to have a boundary and that says, Okay, I just want to hear it from your mouse in my home. Right? You



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know, exactly the same thing. Right? Exactly. I'm like, you know, I get that's where you are. That's, it's okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. And it's natural. Everybody's gonna do it. For the most part, right? I mean, every everybody. Yes. So I just thought that, you know, as you were saying that it made me think of that it's just so. So funny, these little stages that they go through, and learn how to communicate with



15:49

with them. And I actually, frankly, I loved that. He asked me that, because, you know, how much fun is that? We I kind of like, that was awesome. Right? Yeah. Like he didn't have to ask your permission. But he did. Really?



16:08

Yeah, exactly. Yeah. So I think that too, and I'm wondering your thoughts on this, the value of showing our kids that we're human. And where you kind of see that fitting into just parenting in general, but also parenting through some of these different situations. The, you know, when faced righted when we're frustrated?



16:43

Yeah. So I, yeah, I think it's, it is really important. And I think that it's also really important. And this kind of goes back to what you were saying about your teen, sort of not having the words or the being able to label the emotion they're feeling with the right vocabulary, right. Like, they don't have a vocabulary necessarily a feelings and needs. And as parents, it's the EQ, you know, that emotional quotient that actually is more important, my opinion than your IQ, right? Because you can be the smartest person in the room, but be kind of a jerk. You know, but you can also be the kindest, most, you know, empathetic person, and that's, you know, who you want to be with and work with and know and hang out with. Right, exactly, exactly. So I think that's a gift we give our kids is we give them, we give them those, those those feeling words, and actually, from a brain perspective to when we're able to name what we're feeling. And anybody who's listening, if you've ever been like, you know, okay, I'm feeling something, and I can't quite put my finger on it. And then you say, Oh, you know what, I'm scared. And then you go, Oh, that's what it is. That's actually the left side of your brain, releasing soothing neurotransmitters to the part of your brain is activated the emotional part of the brain. So it's called name it to tame it. So we want to encourage ourselves to do it, and our kids to do it. And so when when you talk about, you know, sort of modeling our own growth and how we would move forward in these different things, different subjects, topics, crises, you know, to say, and this is how we talk in my house now. You know, I'll say, Okay, I'm feeling I'm feeling a bit overwhelmed.



18:33

I feel like I



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feel like I'm going to need to go away and think about this, because I need some more information. But I'm not feeling mad. I'm just feeling like, I need a minute to process this. You know, when I think it's important to say that sort of thing to a child, because first and foremost, as a teenager, they get your facial expression wrong 50% of the time, right? So if you can use the words and said right, like, even just cover your face, just cover your face so they can even see you look through I think 50% is generous. Right? Okay, maybe more? Yeah, no, it's just, it's just, and and I feel like even my son, my oldest son, he just assumes the worst that I'm gonna say the worst. I'm like, Dude, why would you assume that? Like, do you not know me? You know? So, so I think it's just yeah, modeling that. I don't know. And it's okay for me to not know and then I'm going to go and I'm going to get my information that I need. I also think that we need to ask each other for grace. Like, look, you know, like I call my kids babe and sweetie and whatever. So you know, if I was talking to my son, you know, I would say, you know, babe, can you give me a little space and a little grace and understanding because I'm going to get some of this wrong. And all I asked for is that you you have some patience with me. And I'll have some patience with you and give you some grace. Because I know this is new for you too. You know, like, Can I ask that right? I want to and our kids are more than willing to do that.



20:09

Right? Right. They really are. They really, really are. And I think sometimes we don't give them enough credit for wanting to have that in a back and forth, right that at a conversation, right? Which is really so very powerful. So,



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and it is so much more powerful to listen to them and to solicit their thoughts and ideas than for us to lecture. You know, we were with some family and and one of the teams that was there was was talking to me about a bunch of things and a bunch of stats, and, you know, whatever. This conversation sort of went a little bit sideways, but I was pretty sure the information wasn't spot on, necessarily. But I wasn't there to correct. I was just there to say, oh, okay, you know, I've got to think about that. You know, I don't know enough about that. Right? Whereas sometimes we feel like, Well, we've got it, we've got to prove them, we've got to share with them how much we know. And we've got to make it right for them, you know, look, they're going to learn, they're going to learn on their own, they're going to discover things, and it doesn't always have to be us. Right? It doesn't always have to be us. Right? And I'm not talking about anything where anybody's in danger or anything like

that. Correct.



21:36

Correct. And I think that's a hard thing for let go of as we move from, you know, Parenting Toddlers, and, you know, small children and to parenting adolescents and teenagers and young adults. Right. Right. As knowing and being comfortable with and, and encouraging them to get information elsewhere. And and then to share. And to really have those conversations where, you know, you it's okay to learn things from your kids, right? And it's okay to take in information and say, Well, I don't know what I think about that. And you just sit with that for a little bit. See what I think of it, you know, I need to do my own research, or I need to do my own reading or just I need time with it, whatever it is. But it's kind of a it is an interesting transition. You know, all the different steps of parenting. Right? That you do, you do come to but



22:34

yeah, it's just speaking in honesty, you know? Right. Right. really emotionally honest.



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Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Which I think is definitely a shift from perhaps other styles of parenting where the parent is always right. The parent says how it's going to be the parent is, do you know what I mean? to having a more Oh, yeah, back and forth, convert, you know, conversational, or, I just a back and forth relationship where there's there, I just feel the respect is more genuine, the connection is more genuine. And, I mean, ultimately, we're trying to raise these humans to go out into the world, to be their, whatever their beautiful self is, right. And we want them to go out in the world and still want to have relationships with us.



23:31

Yeah. This is a long game. It's a long game is



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such a long game. And it is hard. And I mean, you just set it and I will tell you also tell you all I mean, it is we may talk about this all the time, but I do not get this right all the time,

either. I mean, I had my own personal I need to have I need a moment. I need about two days worth of moments. When we get tired, we get depleted, we get, you know, whatever it is, and we have to say, guys, I love you all that I need. Just some space. Hmm. Right. And so it happens.



24:23

Yeah, you know, and I think really what we're talking about here is respecting your child too. And, you know, I, the type of parenting that I was parented with is more of this dominant style not you know, as I call it, peaceful parenting, but it's really parenting based in relationship and it's not about your child running the show. Like, let's just be clear, like, it's not that at all. There's boundaries, there's, you know, there's expectations, but all rooted in in the relationship and I just can only imagine what it would have felt like for me to have my parents Listen to me deeply. and respect what I had to say, instead of not being heard, instead of being told, well, what do you know? You know, to actually be?



25:08

Can you imagine? How good that would feel? Right? I mean, it would be there are not words, there are not words for that. And which is, you know, I think a big reason why you and I also do what we do, right? Because this is so very important. And we can already see the difference that it makes, and our relationships with our kids, right? And other people that we know, who, you know, parent similarly, or we've talked with or helped or whatever, and, but oh my goodness, just, oh, would be magical.



25:58

It would be Yeah. And here's the, here's the best part of boated is that respect begets respect, your child will then start respecting you, right? We often say, Well, I demand respect for my child. Well, it's a two way street. You know, and I think that to to to be respected and to respect your child is really sort of a basic human right, that they have like, like, respect me, my body myself, my, my spirit, you know, that should always be respected no matter who they are.



26:31

Absolutely. Absolutely. And even when we don't understand, right, yes, yes. So I want to shift just a little, a little bit. I'm trying to decide here, I'm so there's so many different

things. So that you you've done, I will actually I'm going to cut all of this out. So just hang out, hang in there with me for a minute.



26:59

Okay, that's fine. Your video is a little fuzzy, can you tell that on your end can and I'm wondering,



27:06

I'm looking at it and it's my numbers are different than yours are? So yours is super clear. Yeah, I can't figure out you were clear when we were talking before you recorded. So I am wondering if it is going to clear up then once we. Yeah, put it all together. Do you know what I mean? Yeah. Yeah. I didn't want to stop you. But then since you just said that I hear your nav, and I'm at 720. And I don't know why. But maybe it's because I'm the host, and you're the guest. That it's coming up that way. I don't know. Because I don't know you've stayed the same, the sound has been the same. So I'll just check the hopefully when I'm, you know, when I put everything together, it will, it will do well. So I'm inside here right now, this is where I was going with my thought was whether I go into talking about more general like what you smooth things you talked about on your podcast, as far as like general tips that you have for? Um, like if your child is disrespectful, if there's yelling or Yes. And don't listen to me go that way, or should we go? I'm just looking at the time too. We have about 10 minutes. So I'm just if we go that way, or if we go more towards the talking about article about that you just wrote for Newsweek. So do you have a prop?



28:42

You know what? I don't what do you think would serve your your audience more?



28:56

I'm thinking probably because most of the most of the kids that we're talking about here are like our kids age, you know, they're 13. And so we're talking teenage solid teenagers. So perhaps, because we've talked a lot about parenting, specifically, teenagers. Yeah, we've done a good job there. So maybe talking about your article. Was that okay?



29:23

Sure. Okay, yeah. And, and so maybe, yeah, how should we say it? Because it hasn't been accepted yet. Okay. But maybe, maybe we could just say you've done some research. That's a good idea.



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I like that. I won't even mention. Where Yeah. Is that okay? I mean, just kind of say, yeah,



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and then and then when it comes out, I'll tag you or whatever. And you could say, you know, hey, we talked a little bit about this. Yeah, it's something like that.



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celebration. Okay. Cool. Okay, that sounds great. Okay, yeah. Okay, good. All of that will be cut out. Okay, so shifting a little bit here, you have been doing some really interesting research on the LGBTQ community, specifically on how to support and affirm your trans child. And I was just wondering if you could share just a little bit of that with us?



30:28

Yeah, you know, one of the reasons I did this is because I think that perhaps, and I'll just say, you know, I do have some experience in my own life with, you know, some friends and some family members who, who have, who have transitioned, who identify as non binary, who, you know, who are gay and lesbian. So, you know, although my own children, at this point, haven't, you know, shown any, I don't know how I don't see this is where I get a little awkward, right? Because it's the language that you want to be really clear about, right. But so my kids, for all intents and purposes, you know, are, are are not a part of the LGBTQ community. However, what I have seen in the experience that I've had is how important the parent child bond and relationship is, in supporting teams, who are trans who are gay, bi, lesbian, and, and, and I fumbled my way through it, too. And so what I what I know now, you know, and this is everything that we've already talked about is connection and listening, and, you know, different things like that. But But I've, you know, I've identified eight different sort of areas that, that are not about, you know, when we talk about trans, I think, a lot of times people think, Okay, well surgery, these are non surgical ways to affirm your child, because surgery is a big deal, and it's irreversible. And, and actually, what, you know, what really sort of got me interested in this was, was a

report on 60 minutes, where some kids, some teens, some youth were, were saying they felt this emptiness and within them, and they, they thought that what they were feeling was that they weren't in the right body. And they were able to rush into not rush but but for the most part, it was it was a fast process, without, you know, psychological assessment and different things like that had surgery and now want to, and now are stuck. So we you know, it is a long process, it takes a lot of time. And I there are there are important ways. And in talking to somebody I know that has a child who is non binary, you know, we were talking about this, and so, so, so there's a few things that you can do. And one is to affirm their identity, right? And you've set a firm to and affirm versus accept, right? affirming means that you are stating it as a fact. Right? And you offer emotional encouragement and support, right? Whereas accepting that means that you're tolerating a difficult or unpleasant situation, right? See how different that is? Right? Well, you know, what, what am I saying? Right? You know, um, you know, and also really using their preferred pronouns, what do they prefer to go by? And you even said, you know, you know, of someone that uses multiple different ones, and I've never heard of that before. Right.



33:54

So, that's the respect piece, right? It is, and not being afraid to ask, right and not being afraid and, and not being afraid to ask, I think so many times just just a quick jump in here. Sorry, but somebody who's leaving kind of nervous to ask questions and nervous to, you know, we just wanted we want to get it right to where we want to, and I think being able to say, Oh, you know, that's really interesting. Can you tell me why? Or, you know, whatever it is, but just like a really open ended curious question. That that's how we really learn and that's how we come to understand because, I mean, let's face it for our age group, it's it's a little more difficult, right?



34:41

So it is Yeah, yeah. And as woke as I think I am, I still struggle with the language around it and the language is evolving Rhino, even semi LGBTQ that has evolved it right. And and I'm not even sure I know how to say it the right way anymore. So I am Learning to. And I try to educate myself, which is really the next point is educate yourself. There's the Trevor Project, there's the Human Rights Campaign, there's p flag, and there is the best site. We talked about it just before we hit record right now, which is it's scarlet, teen calm. And it's really just a question and answer platform where you can just ask questions, but you can ask whatever you want. It could be sexual questions. All you know, and parents can ask questions, kids can ask questions in a safe, you know, non judgmental place. Right, right. Because



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we've got questions, write questions, and like, the bigger piece to me of that is, you get a factual answer. Like there is, the answers are based on researched information. It's not some, you know, dangling out on, you know, who knows where just giving you a bunch of nonsense. So, to me, that is such a huge thing, because I think about you when Connor came out, and we had no idea what what to do, right. We were just our heads were spinning, and how do we support this kid? And where do we find information? And of course, where did he go? The Internet. Right. And the internet? Yeah. All kinds of not good information. Right. So I think thank you so much for finally having a place that is just it's Yeah, it's safe. It's anonymous. It is welcoming. It is, you know, not hidden from parents, which is a huge piece, because anything that a parent who can't find can't be good.



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Yes,



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yes, absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. So we don't want them going down a rabbit hole of pornography or, you know that that is that's a whole different issue and a dangerous one at that. It's



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fair. It really is. Yeah, are so curious. And they are so just wanting information. So sorry to get on and off on a tangent there. They are. Just I love it held that you found them too, because I literally just tripped upon them a week or two ago. So Oh, that's fantastic. Yeah, it's



37:17

important. It's important that we have information. And it's important that our kids see us seeking information so we can do the best for them. Right. And really the next place that they're sorry, the next sort of step is to be a safe place for them to come to when their heart is broken. When they're feeling confused. When maybe, you know, they love someone and it's not, you know, reciprocated, when they just are just sad that day. be there for them be the container for their anks even when they say hug me, but don't touch me, you know, or help me with all my problems, but don't speak yet. Oh my god, that stuff.

That t shirt. Yeah. Nice shirt for every teenager out there. Yeah, but don't touch me, mom. It's really hard. I sort of walk around. I'm like, Can I hug you? Can I hug you? Can I hug you? Because I'm like, such a physical touch person. So if you don't want it anymore, yeah,



38:20

yes. It's really funny with both of my girls. I have to ask permission right now. And I'm like, Oh, this is though. Yeah, that's who I am, too. So



38:32

we can hits of oxytocin from hugs, too, right. And I told my son, I said, Listen, it's scientifically proven that you need hugs, because we need to be touched. And it gives us oxytocin, which is the happiness and the love hormone. So you just need to let me hug you. So let me let me smell your hair. Let me just get right in there.



38:51

Oh, he just showered. Oh my god. Right? Even if they just had, you know, it's like that mom thing? Guess it totally also very true, isn't it?



39:03

Yeah, no. So it is, obviously place for support. And then I just really go on to say, you know, ask them for what they need, like, how can I support you? What do you need for me? Don't just go off and say, Okay, well, okay, we're gonna hang out. We're gonna hang out pride flag outside now. And mom's gonna wear like, I'm proud of my you know, blah, blah, blah, you know, which is beautiful, wonderful intention, but maybe they don't want that. Right. And maybe they don't want you telling your friends maybe they don't want anybody else to know. Ask them please, please, please ask them what they need, please. And listen. Asking is not enough. Listening is everything and then do it. And then right. This is important. This is a big deal for them. And they have been thinking of this coming out wrestling with this coming out for a very long time. A lot longer than you've known. Oh, absolutely.



39:58

Absolutely. And that is a big thing. You know, I will just add to that, do not ask them if they

are sure. And I have said this, you know, a million times on the show. But that is oftentimes a very automatic response from a parent, especially if you're blindsided by the information. Do not ask them if they are short, because to your point, they have been thinking about this for a very long time and telling you is something that they have built up so much courage to be able to do. So. And I say this with 1,000% humility, because we did it. And we did not know any better. So you know, yeah, thankfully, we're way past that. And now connard teases me about it, you know, and teases both of us about it. But, um, you know, for sure, that would have been just one thing that would have made that moment a little bit easier for him. Right. So



40:57

anyway,



40:58

yeah, yeah, I think, I think the good thing is, is that it's you can always repair your relationship to especially when you have a deep connection, right? There is there is room for that there, you know, and again, we're making mistakes. Right? We are Right, right. And we are showing our humanity. And you know, and that's the kind of the second piece of that is,



41:20

it's okay to say you're sorry, it's okay to say I boy, I really messed that one up. And yeah, I'd like to try again, or let's, can we talk about it? Yeah, your eyes, in your opinion, you know, what would have possibly worked better? It's all about just the communication and holy cow. And that's a piece of what builds that respect, too. Right. So,



41:49

absolutely. And, and, and, and really, the next thing is, is to, like you said, Put yourself in your child's shoes, and see the situation the way they do. Because empathy and validating emotions is huge, right? I mean, I mentioned the name it to tame it, you know, that is important for them. Right? So validating those emotions that they must be feeling, even if you don't agree. Right, right. And understanding the next, you know, sort of point that I have is to understand that it's an evolution, you know, things are gonna change. And know that just know that things will change. This is an evolution and, and as a teenager,

you know, our kids brains don't fully form until they're in their mid to late 20s. So more is going to happen, more is going to change. And this is where you affirm This is where you ask questions, you know, but most importantly, do not take it personally. It's not about you. It's not about you. And And can I just say one last thing really quickly, I you know, I like to talk a lot. But I want to, I just want to say the reason what all of this is important, is not just because it's a nice thing to do, not just because it'll make your child feel more connected to you and feel affirmed and more confident and feel, feel accepted, not so much accepted, but feel a sense of belonging, that the reality is is that 48% of LGBTQ youth, as per report that was done by the Trevor Project, are engaging in self harm, including over 60% of transgender and non binary youth. Yeah, so these kids are hurting themselves. And they're, they're dying. And this is what we don't want, right? Right. 40% of LGBTQ youth that were interviewed for this study, seriously considered attempting suicide in the last 12 months, and more than half of transgender and non binary youth have seriously considered suicide. So this is not just to be nice. No, no, there's



44:09

literally life saving. Yes, yes. Yes. We don't realize the power. And I mean, not power trippy, but the, the strength that the in that way that our affirmation, our listening, hearing. Loving have on our kids. So true. We are the most important relationship in these in these early years. Oh my goodness. Oh my goodness, we absolutely are. And that is not to be taken lightly, because those statistics are very real.



44:55

And I saw it in my own youth when when my best friend Katie martyrs gay. I get as my best friend, we really spent a lot of time doing gay bars and you know, different things. And so my friend, you know, had new a whole new group of friends and, and what I saw was the pain that these people were in and how much drug abuse and alcohol abuse, they were, they were in, because their parents didn't accept them. That was very clear to me, in my late teens, early 20s, that was clear to me. And that was, you know, when I said, you know, Never will I not accept a child, and not knowing that that wasn't even the right language. Right, right, that no matter what my kids were, it didn't matter to me Love is love and what ever it is, and I wouldn't have married my husband, if he had a different opinion, I would have said, No, we can't do it. Right. Do it. Because that's, it's too important to me. So that's, that's, that's what I know for sure. That's what I have seen. I love that. Well, it's, I mean,



46:07

there's no better way to learn something than to actually witness it occurring. Right. And it's a very powerful teacher. If you're willing, if you're willing to take that in, right?



46:22

Yeah. And



46:25

yes, and this friend of mine, is his trans, trans male. And I said to him the other day, I said, You have no idea how much I how much that experience changed me and shaped me, we, he lives, he was living for a while in the Dominican and then has moved to the east side of the country. So we don't see each other very often. But we see each other on Facebook and that sort of thing. And I don't think he could have ever imagined how important of an issue and how that really affected me. So yeah, I was.



46:55

Well, you know, I



46:56

feel grateful to have had that experience.



46:59

Absolutely. Absolutely. Well, and what an extraordinary, I mean, how lucky is he that he's been he has you as a friend. So you know, I think that's really important, too. Yeah. So that's really, here we are in our 40s. And, you know, so here is fast forward, right? What it can be, those are really, really important. These are important stories to share. And I believe so firmly and that just hanging on, you know, hanging on when it's really hard because it is going to get better. And it may not seem like at the moment, but it does. So that's that's why we share these things that we share. Absolutely. So anyway, oh my goodness. Robin, it has been so much fun to have you here today. And it just, I feel like we kind of scraped off the top layer of things to talk about that there are so many more things that we could discuss. And we'll have to do this again. Maybe another year down

the road and share



48:10

Oh, I would love to share Heather, you are really a gift to this world and a gift to this community. Thank you for having me and thank you for the work you're doing it means it means so much. And for those parents out there who who are struggling. They need to hear that it's going to be okay that it is okay is okay.



48:30

It is it's just this is like my warm hug to everybody. It's okay. Right. Yeah. Okay. So thank you for your time and I, we will just cut all of that out. That's what we're gonna do. That's what we're gonna do. We're gonna cut that out. Okay. For more podcasts or to another, we're just gonna I'm gonna stop this and then hang on, because it takes a second to upload everything. Okay.



49:04

Oh my