

Resonant Minds

[00:00:00] Welcome to the Peaceful Parenting Podcast. I'm your host, Sarah Rosen, sweet mom of three young people, peaceful parenting coach, and your cheerleader and guide on all things parenting. Each week we'll cover the tools, strategies, and support you need to end the yelling and power struggles and encourage your kids to listen and cooperate so that you can enjoy your family time.

I'm happy to say we have a great relationship with our three kids. The teen years have been easy and joyful. Not because we're special unicorns, but because my kids were raised with peaceful parenting. I've also helped so many parents just like you, stop struggling and enjoy their kids. Again, I'm excited to be here with you today and bring you the insight and information you need to make your parenting journey a little more peaceful.

Let's dive into this week's conversation.

Hey everyone. Welcome back to another episode of the Peaceful Parenting Podcast. Today's episode is an interview with Sarah Sherman and Mort Sherman, a father and daughter duo who have written a book about music called Resonant Minds. This was a [00:01:00] really interesting conversation about the role of music in our lives and how we can become more active music listeners and how music affects us in our everyday lives and in our parenting.

Sarah is the parent of a couple of small kids and she actually at the end of the interview offered to put together a parenting playlist for us. One is about getting up and getting going and shaking off the stress, and one is about soothing the nervous system. And so. We'll put a link to that in the show notes for you.

If you wanna check that out right away, it's at the website for their new book, resonantminds.com/musical-habits. You'll have to scroll down a bit to see the Peaceful Parenting playlists. As I mentioned, one of them is called Dance It Out, shake out the Stress, and it is for use when you've got afterschool meltdowns, end of day crankiness transitions that need a boost of energy.

And the other one's called reset the mood, soothing the nervous system a, a Sarah writes, after a tantrum, before a [00:02:00] hard conversation, or during a tense transition. The mood here is calming, warm, slow, and grounding, and the mood of the other one's, energetic, playful, and totally uninhibited.

I love that, that Sarah put those together for us, and I encourage you to check them out and try them. It's a great place to start if you're not sure how to incorporate more music into your life.

It's really exciting to have a bespoke music playlist just for our peaceful parenting parents. I hope you enjoy this interview. They were both a couple of really interesting people with interesting takes and informative takes on music and our lives and how we can enrich our lives with music and enrich our kids' lives with music.

And we did get to the conversations about the. Dreaded music lesson practices and some tips for what you can do when your kids are hesitant about practicing instruments or even if you should be forcing kids to practice musical instruments. So let's meet more. And Sarah,

Sarah: hello, Sarah and hello [00:03:00] Mort. Welcome to the podcast. Thanks for having us fellow, Sarah. Yeah, that's right.

Mort: And Sarah, excited to be here. Just and I wanna start by commending you. I looked at your website and in preparation for this podcast. It is so impressive. The work that you're doing is terrific and such a connection between the work that Sarah and I are doing.

So I'm really excited about our conversation today. Good.

Sarah: Well simpatico and thanks for taking a look at my work. That's nice. You are able to do that. So tell us, why don't you each introduce yourselves? I will share that you're a father and daughter author duo. And so maybe Sarah, if you wanna go first, just briefly who you are and what you do, and then more if you wanna say who you

Sara: are and what you do.

Sure. So my name is Sarah Sherman. I am a musician, an educator, an entrepreneur for the last. Many years based in New York City. I founded a company called Mozart for Munchkins and then a nonprofit armed little Mozart foundation, which makes music accessible through interactive and engaging educational performances for children and their families.

And [00:04:00] we also go into schools, and I've done some work with United Federation of Teachers and mine up on using music as a lover for mindful action in the classroom and at home. Awesome. Thanks. Welcome, Mort.

Mort: Well, it's wonderful to be here. Obviously I'm Sarah's father. I am also I adore the work she does and a huge fan of hers and I never missed the opportunity.

I hope to thank her for teaching us. About music, and I think that relationship between children and parents is such an important one. I know that's what you do, Sarah. So I'm, that, that part of our musical relationship is, has bloomed into this book, into the work we're doing now in deeper ways. I was a superintendent of schools for 25 years in a number of different school districts, both urban.

And Suburban in a couple of different states in the United States, and now I am not retired, it's what's called repurposed.

Sarah: Cool. And now you've written a book together called Resident Minds. So tell us just a little bit, the book is just available now, and so [00:05:00] we'll include a link to that in the show notes. But and for the purpose of our conversation today, we're gonna be talking most more about families and children and music.

But just give us a little summary of your, of what your book is about.

Sara: Oh, this is something we ask each other almost every week to see if we have the same answer or how it's tweaked week to week. So Resonant Minds is a book that brings music to the front of Mindful Action. And what we mean by that is music is listened to three to four hours a day by over 70% of Americans and.

Through the book, we look into ways to use music as a tool for focus, for executive functions, for community building, for leadership, and the ways that we can purposefully and deliberately use music in our everyday lives to create a presence in ourselves and in others.

Mort: You know, and in addition to that the book adds what I believe is a scientific base to something we know so well.

Sarah writes, I think, beautifully in a book about [00:06:00] being both a passive listener, how that's important, and being an active listener, how you do use a default mode and how that in many ways helps us become better human beings. And for a long time we've listened to music in a way which is. Often they massive side.

And what I thought about in working through this with Sarah, which was so helpful for me to center my thoughts is that I didn't come, I wasn't raised in a musical family. I didn't have any musical background. In fact, most of my music teachers really put me down. It just like, how do you hold your book?

How do you raise your voice? And it just, and so how I ever ended up being so deeply in love with music and admiring what Sarah does is still a mystery to me. And we call that the musical spark or the mindful spark. What is it that we could help others through music get that mindful spark? As an integral, a deliberate way of living life.

It, as Sarah just said, [00:07:00] 76% of us or whatever the number is, listen to music. So during the day, and it's often just background noise, just background yet. And Sarah can give you all the science. I'm not even gonna pretend to know what she knows but yet we know that there are deep, visceral, cognitive ways that music impacts us and the families and all, and our communities.

And that's why I love what Sarah has put together in this book. And I think I wanted along for the ride. In many ways it helped shape the book, but she's really the core of it. She's really the one who provided that science and the music piece that tied it together so beautifully.

Sarah: So what's the difference?

I wanna come back to the musical spark, but what's the difference between active listening and passive listening with music? Oh, I

Sara: love that question. So if you think about, music that you play, whether you're working or even when you're, I'm based in New York City, so going into a taxi cab and there's music on, and [00:08:00] music is oftentimes background for us.

Even hold music. There's a whole business beside behind hold music and even companies that say this type of music's going to lower blood pressure. And so these stressful conversations with insurance bills, let's play these songs. And so music is being selected for us. All the time, whether we realize it or not, oftentimes for passive listening and music can get into our neural synapses and lower our blood pressure or release serotonin so that we're feeling happy.

And so when we talk about passive listening, it's how can we put on a piece of music and not actively listen to it? And what I mean by that is not try to pick out the melody, not necessarily sing along. With it, but have this feeling and

connection to it. So there are a lot of workshops that we do where when we put on a piece of music, we leave it very open-ended.

You know, that's draw to what you hear, that's journal about it, that's doodle stare at a blank piece of paper. Whatever [00:09:00] resonates with you. And what that does when you have a piece of music on passively, again, where you're not saying, ow, I wanna make sure I'm understanding the beat. But it gives us space and a place for our brain to essentially relax where it activates our default mode network, which is where we're our most creative, it's where we are problem solvers, and it lets our brains relax.

Now when we actively listen and we do this work also where we work on breathing with the music. And it's a great thing to do, even for parents to put on a piece of music. I always. Go to Bach, but that's what resonates with me and my musical choices, I know are not everyone's musical choices, and we're very deliberate about that, that this is what works for me.

And it's a starting place if you don't know where to begin, but it's about picking music that you can go back to time and. Time again for yourself and also recognize that may adapt. And for the breathing with music or breathing With Bach, it's about breathing in with counts and out with counts or with, if it's a cello suite, I talk [00:10:00] about long musical phrases, which are musical sentences and to try to breathe along with it.

And so it's active listening to something to purposefully feel grounded through your feet on the ground. And the more we practice active listening. It enhances our focus. And it doesn't always have to be a breathing piece. There's a piece I use called the Raindrop Prelude. Well nickname the Raindrop Prelude by Chopin.

And there's a note that keeps repeating and it's something as simple as, what is that raindrop? Can you hear that? Raindrop over and over again. So it's giving a cue on what to actively listening for. And when we work on that, it strengthens our listening and social situations, whether it's with family, whether it's friends, whether it's.

Teachers, and so the difference between the two is very, it's a big difference. And strengthening both skills of active listening and purposefully passive listening are both equally important.

Mort: Let me add to that if I can, Sarah as a non-musician, but somebody who just loves all kinds of music at this point in my life, I'm gonna tell you three [00:11:00] very quick stories.

One is one of my assistants.

Said, gosh, I wish I had Debbie. My wife's memory of all the lullabies that she sang to Sarah and to her sisters, she said, I knew two or three songs, but I didn't have that. So she said, I'd love this idea of creating playlists for moms and dads who don't have access to way your family did this active reaching out to expand your repertoire of how you interact with one another.

That's one. Two, we had the good fortune of a couple times a week talking to Rachel, another daughter of ours and her son Ethan, who really is blossoming as a musician. And I was asking about, what music do you listen to? And he said, well, I sometimes listen to classical. I know you guys love classical, but I don't.

He says, dad loves country. I don't love and he said, I know sometimes Mom [00:12:00] Rachel listens to eighties and to nineties music and I listen to it, but I don't love it. What I do love is indie music, INT, ie. And my wife and I are in our seventies. We said, what is that? So what did we do as active listeners? We looked up Indie music, we spent the morning listening to it outta respect for our grandson.

I think that's the lever, that's the tool. That's the key. When we say, I deliberately wanna expand our repertoire and I wanna respect this other person. Sarah's not in love with country, but she listens to it because there's those in our family who love country. And so we listen to that music. That's a very active, mindful way of approaching music to connect with yourself and with those that you love or care about in deeper ways.

So the third example is this idea of when I was a superintendent or a principal, I used to hand out [00:13:00] kazoes and my people thought I was really off my rock or as a superintendent, the handing out kazoes.

But I said, alright everybody, let's chat. Use the kazoo and let's do Ode to Joy. Or you or my Sunshine Banker Zoo. It built community. It was a mindful act as a leader to build community. So all those are active listening, active participation. And if I don't, the other phrase that Sarah uses is something from Mozart, which is breaking down that fourth wall to become an active listener.

So there's lots of conversations about this, Sarah, but music offers all of those opportunities for us to engage with others. So the book isn't so much about music, it's about what you do using music as.

Sarah: Yeah. I'm hearing two, two things that come up a lot in your book and that you both of you just mentioned is, well, first of all, you sound like an amazing grandfather, mark, that you and your wife sat down and listened to music that your grandson liked to to connect.

And so that was one of the things is connection, right? That [00:14:00] connection that comes through music. And have you ever heard of, this is a little bit of an aside, but have you ever heard of, um, collective effervescence. Have you heard that phrase it?

Mort: I'm picturing bubbles.

Sarah: Yeah. So it's I think a German philosopher more than a hundred years ago coined that phrase, and it's one of the ways that we can experience awe.

Is by experience, something that's called collective effervescence, and it's experiencing something with other people like going to a concert or a sporting event or, you know, something like that where you're taking in an experience together. And so I think that's sort of what you're talking about too with the kazoo, right?

Like everybody's experiences collective effervescence of making music together. Or you get that at a concert as well, but I'm hearing. Community, and I'm hearing mindfulness and I'm hearing connection is some of the things that you're getting.

Mort: Not necessarily mindfulness, and we just [00:15:00] we make a distinction between that.

By the way, that building of awe, I saw Sarah write down this idea of collective effervescence. It's

Sara: such a good word. And now time.

Mort: It's brilliant. Yeah.

Sara: Okay. Can I am curious if in the collective effervescence I am gonna go back and research this because that's. I love it. But do they talk about the

oxytocin and how, you know, through those bonds and those shared experiences and that's why it Yes,

Sarah: exactly.

Sara: Is magnified. Yeah.

Sarah: And every time I go, my husband and I go see a lot of live music. We're Jam band fans, and we, I also, I'm a big Toronto Blue Jays fan, so every time I'm at a baseball game or at a concert, I can not help but think about, oh, all the collective effervescence around me right now.

Sara: I love that.

Yeah. There's something, have you heard of Groove? No. So along that line, you know, in the other part besides the oxytocin and how that social bond connects all of us listening to music collectively. But groove is actually a term that when we listen to certain types of music together, our brainwave synchronized, [00:16:00] so when you're talking about like at a concert.

Or you know, the seventh inning stretch and at the Red Sox, you know, they all start singing Sweet Caroline together. And it's this moment that connects all of us because whether you realize it or not, our neural synapses are all. Being synchronized. And there's something really magical about that, and we talk about that a lot in the book on building community whether it's in the classroom, whether it's at a concert, or whether it's in your own home.

And what can you do to feel connected to your children and to use music as that lever. To connect each other and I think part of it is not just making music, but picking that song that you can use to all feel connected and have that now I'm gonna use it all the time. The collective effervescence in your home.

Sarah: Yeah. Yeah. So, so back to that. I love that you brought it back around to parenting. 'cause I think that we could talk all day and find lots of interesting things, but like bringing it back to parenting and families. One, I think everybody knows at this point that, you know. Music is good [00:17:00] for children. Music is good for your brain, but what that ends up looking like in practice is not.

Is sometimes just lessons like music lessons and then the parents fighting with the kids about the kids not practicing their lessons. Which by the way, I wanted

to say about the musical spark. I know, and I mentioned to you before we started recording that my son is a jazz piano jazz pianist.

And I know when he got his musical spark was when he loved the Beatles when he was little. Like he and his brother would like listen to The Beatles all the time. And he was taking piano lessons, but it was like through the. Conservatory books and whatever. And the spark came when he, we got him an Easy Beatles piano book and he realized that he could play the music that he loved.

Like that was like, from there it was like there was no stopping him in terms of his playing piano. But I think that was the, that was, that's what a lot of, and why I brought it up now is 'cause I think that's what's missing a lot with kids and music lessons is that they don't get that spark and it never [00:18:00] becomes anything other than a chore.

So how can you help? Parents to bring in more music, whether it's. Creating music or becoming a a better appreciator and listener of music what are some things that would help

Mort: Sarah, you Sarah you raised this question of your son and when he had that mindful spark that, that magical moment when he started really loving music was with the Beatles.

We have that, by the way. We have that down at the piano bench. Sarah, do you remember it? We have that same one. Yeah, we

Sara: have the same exact two. Easy be compilation. Yep. And

Mort: so lemme commend you, Sarah, because what you did as a parent is provide that sparkle. Yours was a mindful, deliberate, intentional action to move him ahead.

And so if there's anything we could provide first as a comment to parents is think, take a breath, pause. What can you do? Rather than say, sit down and practice. Or you're a terrible singer or go look at this, is like find out that [00:19:00] moment that could bring joy, whatever vehicle, whatever way you could bring it in.

So Sarah tells a story in the book, and I know she'll raise it again of like when she was very young and she was going off to a camp somewhere and I was driving her. And I wasn't gonna teach her the German for O to Joy. So we made animal songs and she fell in love with the O to Joy. I think she could do, I mean

she could probably do it today, but there's another parenting book that is not a parenting book that we learned as parents.

Amy Tan. Who wrote a book? The Joy Luck Club. There's a section in there that just rings in my head that my wife and I often talked about with each of her about for each of her children. I wonder if you did, Sarah, which is this. Amy was a really gifted chess player when she was young. I dunno if you remember this section.

And she talks about how her mother used to make her practice sit down and practice, and she became a champion until her mother pushed too hard and she pushed the chess board off the table. And didn't go back to chess. And so parents mindfully [00:20:00] must think, what is that action? How do I find that moment that, that push pull, that moment where I can bring joy to the experience?

You know, too often in school we don't do that. We don't find those mindful moments of bringing it into the curriculum, whether it's English or social studies or science. Music is so, surrounding us. So whether it's teachers. Or parents? I think it's the same question you're raising, Sarah, what can we deliberately do to bring joy so they can bring music into their lives?

Now we have to turn to Sarah to see if anything I said holds water or to just make it all up as a, from a kid's point of view.

Sara: No I think. You nailed it. And it's an interesting question as through the families that I see at Moza from Munchkin, it's like I all ask all the time, what age should I start lessons or my kid isn't practicing and I am a concert pianist.

That's how Mozart from Munchkin started. I was still performing and my parents never pushed me and they were very deliberate about that and I always loved it. But I [00:21:00] always had that musical spark from the time my sister took piano lessons and I snuck into the room and played. Mary had a little name with my nose and then my toes, and I always loved it and.

They didn't push me to figure out what that meant. Sometimes, like I, we were talking about earlier, once you get to a certain point and you know, I'm going to be a musician for the rest of my life, what does that mean? And I think what I really love about the work that I'm doing now and connecting families with music is that the benefits of lessons that we read about all the time, oh, it's great for language development, it's great for logic and for early language.

Yada yada, all those things. Great. But you know what else is, so is listening to music and especially listening to music collectively as a shared experience, as a family. And so I think it doesn't have to be lessons. I think it's putting a deliberate way in which we use music in our households with our children, that we reap those same benefits and we have a lot of actionable [00:22:00] strategies in the book.

And curate a playlist. There's QR codes in the book. And so if we're talking about, I mentioned the default mode network. Earlier, and if you wanna be like, Hey, I wanna purposely pick it on a piece of music and we're going to draw today as a family, or we're going to journal, there are the ways of connecting and working on the same benefits that you get from music lessons.

Not all of them. I wouldn't, I can't say that, but that you get from listening to music with mindful action behind it. And I think it's something that families sometimes forget or have music on in the background instead of being an active. And participate in the way in which they engage with music. So

you just mentioned like, let's put on some music and draw together, or like, are there other things that, that you think of as mindful action that, that families can do if I'm using your term correctly?

Something that we haven't touched on yet is emotions and, you know, we all. My, my daughter just turned eight, so I'm seeing what I [00:23:00] feel like is already what do you call it, tween age behavior. Right. On schedule. And I am thinking, oh my gosh, we still have a lot of years to go.

Sara: But I, I'm trying to embrace all of that and something that we do as a family a lot or when we're in schools is use a piece of music to convey how you're feeling. You know, not everyone is great. Vocalizing. I'm really sad or I'm really mad about this, but when you know music and you know by the time kids are 6, 7, 8, they definitely have music that they know and that they gravitate towards.

And if you let your children select a sound, a song, or a soundtrack for that moment, it's a way of trying to understand them where they are and how they're feeling, and vice versa. I think it's important to not have it be a one way street, but for them to also better understand us as. Parents. And so something we do a lot as a family is we all take turns selecting music, but to understand one another, it's not just to, ah, this person likes this song and this one likes this song, but to see where they are in [00:24:00] that current moment.

Love it.

Mort: I would add to that is the story about Ethan, our grandson I would love and I know Sarah does this at the end of listening as a family, a week of doing that or whatever it is, hey, why don't we all go and ask our friends what their favorite piece of music is and bring it home and let's play it and think about it as a family.

So, Sarah, one of the things that we've talked about in the book is the playback of the familiar. Too often the commercial playlists bring us closer and closer to what we already know, to the familiar. And part of what Sarah and I are pushing is how do we expand beyond that loop of the familiar to understand others and families certainly are the vehicle for doing that.

Go ask a friend what they like. Go ask an aunt, uncle, go ask the neighbor or whoever it might be, and bring it home. Let's think about it this. Family and this idea of building playlists connected to the great work you're doing, Sarah, with the parenting work, I think is a great opportunity. Whether or not it's bedtime or [00:25:00] whether or not it's the emotions that Sarah just mentioned, or whatever it may be, there's so many opportunities to think about that music for that moment and beyond.

Sara: One part that we didn't talk about with technology, we had talked about a pre-show about working with a neurodivergent community, and one of the segments that we do is on emotions.

And so if we go into classrooms a lot and some of our students then have those little computers around their necks, and so they can point to how they're feeling or emotions, or sometimes we have emotion cards and the way we do this in person is have a student point to one of the instruments that we have maybe at saxophone, and then they point to.

A sad face. And then we say, all right, let's hear what sad saxophone sounds like. And what it's doing is giving the autonomy for a student that might not be able to communicate verbally, but to say, I want to hear this, whether they're feeling that way or not, but then to feel that they are a part of creating something.

Through sound. That sounds fun. [00:26:00]

Mort: Yeah. You know, Sarah, there's when I mentioned Mozart in the fourth wall before if I could return to that into what Sarah was just saying, is this

whole question, if you go to a classic. Music concert, what do we estimate, Sarah?

3% of the world, like classical music. So maybe the lower than that. That's down

Sara: to, I think it's 1.1% in 2017. Yeah,

Mort: so, so in the book Sarah writes about what if you have a cold or a cough or you're suffering with allergies and you open a piece of candy in that paper crinkles and everybody looks at you.

Yeah. Well, Mozart that these of music at. Rather than breaking down that fourth wall, you know, the pro proceeding and the three walls up there. But we are the fourth wall. And this idea with families that you questioned, Sarah's like, how do we break down that fourth wall is we don't wanna say, Hey, sit down and listen quietly.

Let's get up and march around and sing and lose you wooden spoons as our microphones. Let's have a blast with it. Let's [00:27:00] deliberately, mindfully. Create that opportunity where music is not on the stage, it is not separate from us. You know, with our website, with your website, there are remarkable resources to talk about how to be more deliberate in your work as a parent or as a teacher.

And it's, it almost brings tears every time I read about it or think about it because again, there's a beauty about, recognize the innate ability of children. Just gotta figure out how to get that spark going. And it's not just sit down and listen quietly. It's connect with a person next to you. Open up your mind a little bit, listen to different forms, talk about it.

There's so many opportunities to get off that stage. I. I

Sarah: love that. And it did, you know, just going back a little bit to the lessons and I'm, well, I'll share something. Another part I think that helped my son with his and all, actually all three of my kids play music, but only one professionally.

But my my [00:28:00] daughter who's 17 and my son who's 20, both, all three of them play guitar. And they, it's, I have to say, it warms my heart when they all three. Play together. Like they'll jam together when my two boys come home. And everyone, there's a shortage of guitars now that they don't live at home anymore.

But but I think one thing that really helped all of them. Be musicians is we grew up next door to a man who was always hosting jams at his house and like really next door, like 10 feet away next door so you can hear everything. And he had like Tuesday night open jazz night and he would have just people coming over all through the week to play music.

And so they grew up next door to adults coming and going who were playing music for fun. Like none of them were professional musicians. They just. Did this for fun. Right? And I think that's lacking a lot in kids' lives that they don't like. They just see the piano lessons or the violin lessons as like a thing that stands alone.

So what are some ways that to some more ways to bring that spark And maybe [00:29:00] speaking to how, to, how to. Teach children that music isn't just about this drudges thing that you have to do or a fun thing that you just passively are listening to.

Sara: Yeah, I think it's creating habits, right, and creating these musical habits in our homes.

And I always like to think it's like these little digestible bites if, we start with something small like picking a piece of music that helps us feel happy or that helps create routine. These are all things that are possible. You signal it's time to put on our shoes and socks and get out the door.

Every parent knows, like that's when everything goes haywire is like the most stressful part of the day. Or when it's it time to sit down and do homework and we can use that by having music. Be something that we use to, a trigger, this Pavlovian reaction for lack of better words. And it's when we think about when you learn to ride a bike or button your shirt when you teach a kid, it's very deliberate on how you're doing that.

And eventually, you [00:30:00] don't think about how you're buttoning a shirt anymore. You don't think about pushing it through the hole. Or when you're riding a bike, one foot down, then the other foot down. It goes into, from our implicit memory to our explicit memory. And so it's this cycle and the more cycles that we can create like that in our lives.

To create an ease in routine and in structure and in patterns. Hopefully the easier our days become and we can use music as that lever for that. And my house, and granted, I'm biased and my children are because they've grown up in a very musical household, but if I'm playing. Taylor Swift, shake it off.

That's something my children know if I'm in a really bad mood, they will ask for that song and say, Hey, come on mom. Hey mom. Make yourself feel better. Yeah. Yeah. Or if I am playing loud music and my daughter loves to read and she wants to just sit down, she'll be like. Play Bach, cello, sweets. And she knows that's a piece of music that we use as quiet time.

And the music for us has always been the same of Bach, cello, sweets, because it's what I gravitate towards. [00:31:00] And they've adopted that behavior through repetition. And quite naturally that was, you know, before this book was even written. And it was more of just a thought and an idea and an exploration. But since then we've been really purposeful and deliberate about what songs that we can use.

And so I think for families to really. Just like start with one thing. What can I use as a piece of music to help get out the door when we play? Another one, just, I'm gonna keep going to my daughter's favorites, but party in the USA, it means shoe socks. Let's go have a party outside. But it's using that song and it's proven that the more that we play this type of music and it attach this behavior to it, the more it becomes a habit.

And then the habit releases dopamine. So it's something we're gonna keep doing again and again because. It's easier. It feels good. We're not yelling at our kids to get out the door and put their shoes on. It becomes a party. I love that. That's so fun.

Mort: What we found is, going back to my assistants example of not knowing a lot of lullabies, we found that there are these chronological loops, these ear worms, Sarah [00:32:00] calls them.

Like, if I bet you for your listeners, if I'll do it. I sing. So if I start singing clean. Clean up, right? Everybody knows that teachers are so smart that they do those patterns for cleaning up and the kids know how to respond. So when Sarah talks about habits, it's those patterns of life that Bena calls habits of mind.

When you talk about. The effer effervescence, before she calls it the wonderment and awe of 16 habits every day, you gotta wake up and recognize the beauty, the wonderment, the awe that's there, and for parents who don't have that access. That's why we started writing this. It's like. Well, I know teachers use you know, clean up and those little songs.

I know parents use little lullabies at nighttime or whatever it may be. But in between, there are those moments, whether it's going out the door, calming

down a child or getting homework. There are those habits, those patterns [00:33:00] that can be developed in a way which music brings to life. All the sciences, Sarah just talked about it, calms it, excites it, it does whatever kind of mood you need to be in to better focus.

Sarah: Love that. What you know, just in sort of closing here, what do you think is important that families, parents should know about I. Children and music and parenting that we haven't talked about yet. Dad, do you

Sara: wanna start? Yeah.

Mort: You know, you know, there's this wonderful video called Shining Eyes by Ben Zander and he talks about.

You know that, how do you tell when somebody's really doing something great? And he talks about shining eyes, yet he talks about also there's nobody who's tone deaf. And sometimes with music and parents we say, oh, you can't carry a tune. Or we know, we act as a negative. Rather than saying, well, let's figure out what you can do.

The asset model rather than the deficit model. And I think parents [00:34:00] need to find out what joys their children have in life and how to build on those. And so, Ben Zander, I think with the art of possibilities and the idea of shining eyes reminds us so clearly that we can in fact deliberately move ahead.

And there's one final piece for parents. And things that Sarah and I we have it in our title and we end with it one note at a time. You can't bite everything off. You know how to eat an elephant, you know, it's like one bite at a time. How do you answer your question, Sarah, about what parents could do one song, one note at a time.

Sara: Yeah. And just off of that. The other note, pun intended that I want to just play off of that is that it's a choice, right? Like everything is in our daily lives that using music in this way is a decision that we can make time and time again to come back to and at different moments, it's not always going to be the same, but it's, like I [00:35:00] said earlier, using a small digestible, bite on what you can do, exactly what we said about the elephant, and that when there's those moments in the day where it is chaotic or it just feels overwhelming or we've all been there and you need, whether it's to get your own executive functions in order so that you can do it for your kids, I. To take a moment and to take a pause and whether you can move from there or say what song can really help me in this moment to redirect where I need to be because I'm not there.

And I truly believe, we truly believe that music has endless possibilities to do that for us, and to recenter us and reground us throughout our days.

Sarah: I love that. One more question. If you do have, if you, if the parents listening and they are stuck in that battle over the piano practice or the violin practice, do you have any tips or strategies?

You know, don't make them practice. Do make them practice. I know, Sarah, you were a kid who didn't need encouragement. But what, where's your, what do you, what's your stand on that? [00:36:00]

Sara: Yeah, so, my 6-year-old and 8-year-old take have taken music lessons on and off the years, and sometimes I feel like a failure as a parent because I'm a pianist.

They should be playing the piano, but I've been struggling with all those questions you ask about because I was never forced to play and I love it, and I want to have that love. For music, and again, it doesn't have to be piano. And to let them find their own place at it. And it doesn't have to be that way.

We expect classical piano in particular. I'm just use that as an example to. It doesn't always look so linear as we think. Something like that is. My son tends to go in when it's not practice time or if he's feeling upset and at first he, I have a grand piano. He crawls under the piano and hides there for a minute.

Then all of a sudden I start to hear some sounds and he creates his own songs. But when it comes to practicing. Hates it. He kind of looks at me, are we done? I think letting them explore and [00:37:00] discover their own musical voices on an instrument is more important than making them learn the notes correctly to a certain song, and that comes over time.

Eventually, they're going to have that intrinsic motivation to want to do that if it's the right fit for them, and I don't believe in pushing. To make it the right fit for them. Could parents know if it clearly is not the right fit? Reassess and EPT together, not on your own, but talk to your child about it and see what you can do to move forward.

Sarah: Yeah, there's nothing that it's so difficult because there's nothing that kills joy and intrinsic motivation more than being forced to do something. And at the same time, it's hard, right? Like it's hard to learn an instrument and it takes some, sticktuitiveness and sometimes it's easy just to quit and wanna give up.

And so many parents say like, oh, I, you know, I quit piano when I was a kid and I wish I hadn't. So as a parent, it's really hard to find the balance between. Letting them discover it as you were talking about, but also like what if [00:38:00] they don't? And what if they give up and then they're, then, you know, I failed as a parent.

Sara: I also think it's important to recognize that it's not one teacher fits all. Yes. So to also have open and honest dialogue with your teacher, if it's not working and you're seeing your child frustrated, talk to the teacher about it. And if they're not respecting your thoughts and understanding where you're coming from, then maybe it's not the best fit.

You know, it. And there's, it doesn't mean that there is no fit. You just haven't found the right fit for you and your child yet.

Mort: I was gonna say something similar to that. So, to your question of it, maybe it's not that they don't like the piano, maybe it's that the piano teacher help them, not like the piano.

The guitar, because of the approach that was used in you know, over Sarah's lifetime, she had a couple of mentors, really deep, wonderful mentors. And those were remarkable teachers. But we worked really hard to find the right teacher for her.

Sarah: Yeah. Yeah. I couldn't agree more with that too.

And a teacher who can make it fun and connect with [00:39:00] the student too while they're learning. Yeah. Well, thank you so much. There's one more question that I'll ask each of you, and it's a question that I ask all my guests. And if you, so the question is, if you could go back in time to your your early parent self, what advice would you give yourself?

It can be about anything, not just about our topic today.

Sara: I. You want me to go first? I was gonna say you have more years to go back on

Mort: idd.

Sara: There is so much noise in our daily lives and when we're surrounded by our peers, our friends, our children's parents our children's parents, so whether you're friends with them or not, and I that there's always this. For me, I found

there's always this comparison. Am I doing enough? Is my child, if they're not doing the same things as, you know, in New York is a big thing, this Russian math or [00:40:00] dance lessons and swim lessons and having six days a week filled with tasks, is that okay?

And then worrying that we're not doing enough. And I think it's important to remember that every child is different and you're doing enough. By supporting and loving your child to the best of your ability and recognizing that changes over time as well. And to give yourself grace when things don't work out exactly as we expect to.

We all have rough parenting patches and just to figure out how to come out on the other side to learn from it and to be better for our children next time, but that it's all normal. And comparing ourselves to other people that we're surrounded by is just a disservice to what. We can be, I love that

Mort: there's a term that we.

You know, that moment or that moment when the conductor races her baton, that silence is what we could do as parents. [00:41:00] It's just a moment. It's just a moment of reflection. It's like when we put our hands on children's faces and say, look, me the eyes, mind me, mind your matters. Just calm, take a breath.

Parents need to do the same. To find that silence between the notes and just say, what can I do here? How can I manage this? And I know parents with all the noise that Sarah just talked about, it's so difficult today's world to do that. But it was anything I could do to turn back the clock, it would be to find more of those moments of silence between the notes for myself and my children.

Sarah: Beautiful. Well, your words of wisdom will help the parents who are listening to this and to find that silence between the notes and also quiet the noise you both had sim very similar similar pieces of advice. Thank you so much. Sounds like we've been

Sara: working

Sarah: together

Sara: for a while.

Sarah: Yeah.

You've known each other for a while. This is the first time I've ever had two related people on my podcast together, so this was fun.

Sara: Oh, thank you for having

Sarah: us, Sarah. Yeah. We'll link to the book in the [00:42:00] show notes, but any other place you wanna send people to find out more about you and what you do?

I.

Sara: Yeah. So, for people in New York City, although we also travel Mozart for munchkins, we would love to have you at concerts. And though our name skews young, we do programs for, we've done had a four week old in our audience and we do programs through 12th grade. And we say the programs are as much for an 80-year-old as an 8-year-old.

As an eight month old. Okay. And we. Have some live events coming up with Resonant Minds, and you can find those on the MO For Munchkins website or Resonant Minds has its own website where you can get a teaser of the forward and curate a playlist that we talked about whether it's for focus or social emotional literacy.

So resident minds.com.

Sarah: Well, thank you so much. It's been a pleasure. And I know everyone's gonna love your book, so they should go and get it and read it and take their music music and their life to the next level. Thank

Sara: you,

Sarah: Sarah.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode. I hope you found this conversation insightful and [00:43:00] exactly what you needed in this moment. Be sure to subscribe to the show on your favorite podcast platform and leave us a rating and review on Apple Podcasts. Remember that I'm rooting for you. I see you out there showing up for your kids and doing the best you can.

Sending hugs over the airwaves today. Hang in there. You've got this.