

## The Stay-at-Home Vs. Working Parent Debate: What's Best for Your Kids?

**Kristin** [00:00:04] Welcome big little besties to after bedtime with big little feelings. Today's episode is a hot topic. The age old debate Is it better for your kids to be a working parent, a stay at home parent? A combo of both parent? Spoiler alert. Both are jobs, both are hard, both are rewarding, and you're doing an amazing job. Finally. Here we are. It's after bedtime. The kids are asleep, and it is time to get down. I'm Kristin.

**Deena** [00:00:37] And I'm Deena, where The duo behind the ever popular Instagram account Big Little Feelings, which helps you navigate all things parenthood.

**Kristin** [00:00:44] But this is not a boring parenting podcast. There will be inappropriate jokes. We will be getting down and dirty. So put those babies to bed and let's have fun. Deena.

**Kristin** [00:01:00] Hey, girl. Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey.

**Kristin** [00:01:03] Dude, I'm having a coffee at 8 p.m.. I feel incredible.

**Deena** [00:01:08] You're screwed. You feel incredible. Now and then you're going to have a heart attack in, like, one hour, and. And then it's the end.

**Kristin** [00:01:15] I feel like it's actually working to my advantage, though, because, you know, when you're so bone tired and then you have caffeine and you're like, Oh, I'm bone tired with anxiety now. Yeah, this is like I have anxiety and I'm not tired anymore. It's working.

**Deena** [00:01:32] Oh, okay. Two negatives make a positive. Got it. Let's go. I had too. I'm sorry. It's bad mom joke.

**Kristin** [00:01:39] And speaking of way too much caffeine and anxiety, we have a very special guest by request. Overwhelmingly in the comments in the DM'S on the reviews. Former stay at home Zaddy V.P. Hype Squad. My husband Tyler is in the room. He's back.

**Tyler** [00:01:58] How's it going?

**Deena** [00:02:00] Tyler, I just want you to know Kristin and I had a meeting after the last episode you were on. We assessed your vibe, we assessed your insights, we assessed your jokes.

**Kristin** [00:02:09] We're happy you're back, like we had a whole, you know, decision makers in the room, a whole corporate meeting.

**Tyler** [00:02:15] There was like a boardroom, there was a big wooden table.

**Kristin** [00:02:17] Deena, and I wore a power suit.

**Tyler** [00:02:24] There's like water jugs in the middle of the table.

**Kristin** [00:02:27] Stanley A lot of Stanley Cups.

**Tyler** [00:02:28] [Laughter].

**Kristin** [00:02:29] So many Stanley Cups.

**Kristin** [00:02:30] Hi. I'm happy you're here. I'm not really in a room together.

**Tyler** [00:02:34] And I have my own chair at this time, which is nice. We don't have to share it. I'm just so stoked for you guys. You guys have the number one podcast or, like, came out at number one. That's insane. Guys, Congratulations. Hype, hype.

**Kristin** [00:02:48] Hype Squad. This is the question that I have for you. How does it feel to be on the number one podcast to be like the special requested guest on the number one podcast on the Apple Trends?

**Tyler** [00:03:01] I don't feel it. What I feel is sweaty mostly.

**Kristin** [00:03:06] Yeah, a little nervous.

**Tyler** [00:03:07] A little nervous.

**Kristin** [00:03:07] Okay.

**Tyler** [00:03:08] But surprise, guys, I cut out coffee. I don't drink coffee anymore. Still loads of anxiety and caffeine, but I'm getting it through tea now, I'm a tea bitch.

**Deena** [00:03:22] Wow. Like a matcha?

**Tyler** [00:03:23] All of it. All of it. Give me some, like, Tibetan Darjeeling first flush.

**Kristin** [00:03:28] He's really leveled up because he's, like, going to shops just a Starbucks bitch. Like, we're going into a passion. We have, like, a device that we are using.

**Tyler** [00:03:37] Like a tea situation.

**Deena** [00:03:38] This is not casual.

**Tyler** [00:03:39] No, it's not. It's like very, very intense. I don't do anything like casual.

**Kristin** [00:03:42] I'm not that type of person. Like, chill casual.

**Tyler** [00:03:46] I went just jump right into the deep end.

**Kristin** [00:03:49] Yeah. I think what's called hyper fixation Deena, Is that correct?

**Deena** [00:03:52] That's correct.

**Kristin** [00:03:53] Okay. So it's like, yeah, the minute something becomes a little bit of like an interest and then we are all in on tea right now.

**Deena** [00:04:02] This is my new lifestyle.

**Tyler** [00:04:04] My new identity is tea, yeah, I am only associated, my personality is based around tea at this point.

**Kristin** [00:04:11] I mean, do you feel, first of all, better than everyone else? Like, I feel like this is true to that?

**Tyler** [00:04:16] I do though, as I like jitter out of my chair. [Laughter] No, I do though, because like it's more I don't like have that 2:00 crash.

**Deena** [00:04:23] It's like a new brand of anxiety.

**Tyler** [00:04:25] It's new. It's like nice. It's like, yeah.

**Kristin** [00:04:29] A problem with hyper fixations or just people in general, I guess is when you're like die hard on one thing. I just feel like you think you're better than everyone. No, like there's nothing wrong with being vegan or being keto or cutting out coffee or whatever. But now like the second you cut out to, you look at my coffee and just like having a coffee, huh?

**Tyler** [00:04:47] Like you were really sweet, like garbage. You got me a coffee and I was like, Oh, thank you, but I drink tea now.

**Kristin** [00:04:55] Very judgmental 10 seconds that I've ever heard you and I respect it.

**Deena** [00:05:00] That's a that's a choice.

**Tyler** [00:05:03] I don't drink coffee.

**Kristin** [00:05:03] And that's a choice.

**Tyler** [00:05:04] I haven't drank coffee for a while now.

**Kristin** [00:05:07] Deena, what are we pulling up in? What are we. What are we drinking these days?

**Deena** [00:05:10] I've got a decaf coffee. I will say, though, I tried something new. I just want to put this out there. I brace ourselves. I now wash my face twice a day.

**Kristin** [00:05:21] That's big!

**Deena** [00:05:22] And I base on I put on vitamin C in the morning and I put on a retinol thing at night. Like your face says it all.

**Kristin** [00:05:31] Yeah, I am surprised.

**Deena** [00:05:33] I'm surprised because I still don't understand it.

**Kristin** [00:05:35] Sure.

**Deena** [00:05:35] But I'm doing it.

**Kristin** [00:05:36] No, I feel like that's adulthood.

**Kristin** [00:05:39] Look at both of you just really starting routine.

**Deena** [00:05:41] You I mean, you're you're a man. Do you wash your face every day? Because I didn't.

**Tyler** [00:05:45] I wash my face in the shower. That's how I do it. So I feel shut out cetaphil not sponsored, just clean skin.

**Deena** [00:05:52] So I was the odd man out.

**Kristin** [00:05:53] Got it. Okay. All right. I Yeah, I know. I do wash my face. I enjoy a skin care routine.

**Tyler** [00:05:58] Yeah, your routine—

**Kristin** [00:06:00] I'm a skin care routine bitch.

**Deena** [00:06:00] You know, I was always jealous of people who could do this. For some reason, it just didn't come naturally to me. So I'm really trying.

**Kristin** [00:06:07] This is like your hiking thing, you know, where it's just like you see other people. And by the way, I mean, can we all acknowledge that? Like, you wake up looking like a Victoria's Secret angel model? So, like you—everyone in our team is like, Deena, what's your skincare routine? You look amazing. And it's like, not literally never even wash your face. So it's hilarious that this is like your thing that, you know—

**Deena** [00:06:31] I've broken out. That's why I had to start this and it backfired. It didn't work.

**Kristin** [00:06:36] I know neither of you were asking, but I would like to share my new thing. I would like to share that I am now officially a football bitch.

**Tyler** [00:06:50] Like, what?

**Kristin** [00:06:50] I watched 10 minutes of a football game? And it's all because of our girl, Taylor. The internet is all ablaze. We love Taylor. We hate. You know what? Like mad just respect for Taylor that literally what — NFL sales I don't even know actually. What is it? NFL What is it?

**Deena** [00:07:07] Jerseys.

**Kristin** [00:07:09] Did anybody have this. There is like NFL jerseys went through the roof. Like anything she touches, we're all blindly going to do.

**Deena** [00:07:18] Then when she was not a game, it was just like a normal football game. The views were down 400% on the football game.

**Kristin** [00:07:25] I completely believe that, like Taylor has rebranded the arguably the most boring. Not for me—

**Deena** [00:07:34] Slightly offended—love football. Go on.

**Kristin** [00:07:37] Do you love football?

**Deena** [00:07:39] I do.

**Kristin** [00:07:40] But the thing is, anybody who was a Taylor Swift fan was arguably probably not a football fan like Deena. Yeah, not a big Taylor Swift fan like you don't hate.

**Deena** [00:07:49] I don't know who she is. Sure.

**Kristin** [00:07:50] No idea who she is. It's one or the other. And now the worlds are colliding. The worlds are colliding, and I am here for it.

**Tyler** [00:07:57] This is a real peanut butter and chocolate situation. You know, like before individually peanut butter and chocolate. And then someone was like.

**Deena** [00:08:06] Somebody was like football and Taylor Swift. And we were like, okay.

**Deena** [00:08:14] That's how the Swifties feel. And then the football people, no offense, are like, annoyed with you all.

**Deena** [00:08:23] I think we're just here for joy.

**Deena** [00:08:24] I personally don't.

**Deena** [00:08:25] Yeah.

**Deena** [00:08:31] I feel like it all boils down to you do you, which actually takes us into today's episode where we're going to be talking about what is better for your kid and your family. Is it having working parents stay at home, parent? A mix of both? We're just going to unpack it all. And by the end of it, I promise you're going to leave feeling great.

**Tyler** [00:08:52] Yes, I hope so. I need that before bed.

**Deena** [00:08:55] Yeah, maybe not you with all the caffeine, but everyone else.

**Kristin** [00:09:07] Okay. So today we are talking about the age old debate that I see personally all over social media. It's really annoying, to be honest with you. The debate, is it harder? Is it better? Is it better for the kid? Is it better for the parent being a working mom or a stay at home mom? And I say mom because I feel like most of this debate online is oriented at moms.

**Kristin** [00:09:33] Fortunately, there's no word I never see—like, Oh, a working dad is just like implied on this episode. Today, we're going to dive into the research. What is better for the kids staying home or working out of the home? Then we'll unpack our own incredibly unique journeys as parents, including the very unique former stay at home daddy over here. Lastly, we are going to give you specific tools on how to release the guilt and that feeling of the grass always being greener. That way you can feel confident in your parenting situation, whether you're home, whether you're working out of the home so you can truly be at peace knowing you're exactly where you should be.

**Deena** [00:10:18] Okay, but hold up. We have to talk about a very critical factor in this whole equation, which is paid parental leave in the United States.

**Kristin** [00:10:28] 100% like this is really the underbelly of everything that we are talking about. I wonder the effects on parents when it comes to the overwhelming guilt and anxiety over this choice, if it is a choice, by the way. 100%. Because here in the United States, we do not have paid parental leave. And then if companies do offer paid parental leave or parental leave in some capacity, I mean, it could really run the gamut. It could be two weeks, it could be nothing. It could be six weeks. I think six weeks paid leave is considered generous, like that's a lot for the United States. And I just wonder the affects on us as parents with this whole like overwhelming guilt and anxiety over this choice. Because in other countries, I don't know that it's this sort of level of pressure.

**Kristin** [00:11:27] When I shared on our stories about how I was having a hard time going back to work after three months and I was seeing all of these stories about women in Sweden and they get 12 months paid leave. They have for sure job security when they come back, so they do not have to worry about their role being taken away from them or being, quote unquote, punished in any way, which I know is a big fear for all of us. So if you truly have the first year to a year and a half to be home with your child, knowing that your job is waiting for you, knowing that your finances will not change at all.

**Kristin** [00:12:10] And by the way, in some countries, then the other partner gets to take up to a year. And then by the way, level this up, they have quality government covered child care. You do not have to worry about where your child is going, how you will afford child care. I cannot even imagine what a difference this would make in this whole conversation when we're talking about the overwhelming guilt of choice. If we had better paid parental leave and support for working parents.

**Deena** [00:12:42] I watched this happen in real life with a friend who lives in Australia, both her and her husband, entire year off back into fantastic daycare after that.

**Kristin** [00:12:52] As you should!

**Kristin** [00:12:52] Yeah, like I feel I feel extreme jealousy and a little bit of rage, but really mostly just for all like our entire country and all of these parents who are just set up for extreme levels of anxiety and guilt. I just want to clarify, I don't know how all of you feel, but I feel like when we say working parents, it means and implies that the person staying home is not working. And I just need we need to pause for a second and say that both jobs are jobs and both are hard jobs. And when we say stay home, we simply mean your job is to be in the home and to be with your child and take care of the home. And that's your job.

**Deena** [00:13:37] Because if you are not doing it, literally, someone is doing that job.

**Kristin** [00:13:40] Like what is that statistic or what is that that salary where it was like you put together all of the salaries that would be for somebody who stays home full time and they earn something like \$275,000 a year? Like it's crazy. They're like the chef and the this and the housekeeper and Karen the nanny. So when we're talking and we're going to just call it stay at home and we're going to call it working outside the home, but we're talking about two different jobs that we are choosing between here.

**Tyler** [00:14:04] Yeah, and that's like something like people really need to choose their words carefully. I feel like especially talking to stay at home parents is that when

someone's like, Oh, do you work? It's like, I do, I do work, I work at home, I work in the home.

**Deena** [00:14:18] That that's valid.

**Kristin** [00:14:19] Good perspective.

**Tyler** [00:14:20] So usually I'll try to ask like I'll be like, Oh, do you work outside of the home?

**Kristin** [00:14:24] Yeah.

**Tyler** [00:14:24] Language matters. That's like my, my go to.

**Kristin** [00:14:27] That how does that feel as somebody who was a stay at home parent for what, two years, three years, two and a half years.

**Tyler** [00:14:33] Two years. So yeah, it was a stay at home parent for like two, two and a half years and I loved it. But it was kind of awkward when like people would ask because anytime someone was like, Oh, what do you do? I was like, Oh, I'm a stay at home parent. And they were like, Huh, I don't know how to process that. Like, I've never met a stay at home dad was kind of like, like, but.

**Deena** [00:14:52] Just a glitch.

**Tyler** [00:14:53] Yeah, They were like, Oh, is that a is that an option? You can be a stay at home dad. And I'm like, Yeah. So I think I've met like one or two other stay at home dads in like three years, which is wild. I think the statistic is like 10% of stay at home parents are the father, which is crazy.

**Kristin** [00:15:09] Wow. So 90% women and 10%. Yeah.

**Tyler** [00:15:12] Yeah.

**Kristin** [00:15:13] Wow.

**Tyler** [00:15:13] Yeah.

**Deena** [00:15:14] This in general, though, is just like a very polarizing topic. The debate is just off the charts and I feel like what happens is it trickles into your own kind of like psyche. And not only do you end up judging other people, but then you start judging yourself.

**Tyler** [00:15:31] Oh, yeah, Oh yeah. And it was on both sides. It's on both sides. When you're working, you're like, Oh man, I wish I was a stay at home parent. And then when you're a stay at home parent, you're like, it's like, This is great, but I should be working outside of the house, especially from like, I think a father's perspective. You're just like, I want to provide for my family. You don't realize that, like, raising your kids is providing for your family.

**Kristin** [00:15:54] I feel like social media does not help this at all, because I personally, literally, even just over the weekend, saw and I can't believe this is our world in 2023, but I saw some post and it had nothing to do with anything. And then the comment section was

just like, Why have kids if you're going to abandon them in their formative years and you're going to work like why even have those kids in the first place? And then on the other side it's just like, Oh, all you do like, what do you do all day? You just sit around and like, mooch off of your partner.

**Kristin** [00:16:24] Your partner makes all the money and just sit around all day and it's like, when are we going to first of all, stop doing that? Because that's exactly like Deena. When you say that, it does get into your head. Yeah. And speaking from experience as somebody who has been both a stay at home parent and I think almost equal amount of time now, having been a working parent, I'm going to let you all in on a little secret. If you haven't been on both sides, you feel guilty either way.

**Tyler** [00:16:54] 100%.

**Kristin** [00:16:55] You feel guilty either way.

**Tyler** [00:16:57] Yeah. Yeah. I think a nice like change though with like social media though is at least stay at home parents getting recognition now. Yeah like a lot of moms are like hold up I don't know if you guys know this. This is work. This is work. And I think that I think it's finally getting through to people that stay at home. Parents are working. They're working because it was kind of like a just an assumption, Oh, what have you done all day? What did you do all day? You just hung out with our kids all day. It's like, yeah, that'd be dope. We weren't just like watching a movie and hanging out and, like, snacking all day.

**Kristin** [00:17:30] Somebody else took care of the house and the kids sometimes, so instead I'm doing 12 people's jobs for no recognition, no pay. No thank you's.

**Deena** [00:17:42] Yeah. Okay. I actually want to hear from you both because I've only been a working mom like my partner works. I've only been a working mom. I want to hear about your experiences because you both have done things that I haven't yet.

**Deena** [00:17:54] Yeah.

**Tyler** [00:17:55] Oh, for sure.

**Kristin** [00:17:56] Yeah. So I was first the stay at home. Stay at home. Mom and Tyler, he. You worked in an office and it was a very standard office job. 9 to 5. You're leaving at 7 a.m. to beat traffic. You're beating traffic. You're sitting in traffic on the way home. Like what this meant for me as a stay at home mom at that time was you didn't see them at all in the morning. Like everything in the morning was on me all day. It didn't matter if, zlike, a kid was sick, if there was an emergency, it didn't matter if they had like a Halloween parade. It didn't matter if somebody had a nap or there was anything going on. It was all me. And then you would come home at, what, like six at best, which is great. You know, for most parents, by the way. You're downstairs by 630, kids are in bed at seven, you know.

**Tyler** [00:18:52] Seven, 730. So I'm getting like an hour and a half in the evening.

**Kristin** [00:18:55] Yeah. So that was hard for you as the working parent and as a stay at home parent. It was all on me, you know, day in, day out. And I think that this is what's also not talked about enough is that there are so many rewarding parts of being a stay at

home parent. And there's also so many rewarding parts of being a working parent. And then there's so many hard and grueling things about both.

**Kristin** [00:19:21] And we always like you were kind of saying we just like, glamorize the other side when you're in it, when in reality it's just like right now as a working parent, I think back to those stay at home buddies and I'm like, Wow, the whole day I could just go to Target or I could just go to blah, blah, blah. And then I think back to that and I'm like, That was hard. I remember just counting down the moments and God forbid you get a text or it's like, I have to stay late, honey. And I'm just like, getting mentally destroyed.

**Tyler** [00:19:54] I mean, you definitely feel it both ways, and they're completely different. Like when I was working and you were a stay at home mom. It was just the texts of like, Oh my God, look at what she's doing. Look at what she's doing. This is so cute. Like, look what you just did. And I'm like, I'm stuck, like, building houses and, like, this is not my passion. Like, I'm here to make money. Like, I'm not here to follow my dreams. I'm here to provide. And like, I get that, and it's a huge responsibility. And I'm missing, like, all these magical moments with my first kid. And that was like, really heartbreaking. It was really hard, like seeing her for like 15 minutes in the morning, an hour and a half in the evening. It's just like not enough.

**Deena** [00:20:33] That I can relate to because I remember too, when my first was like right on the verge of walking, I just remember being like, Please don't take that step without me. Please don't take that step without like, wait till I'm home.

**Tyler** [00:20:42] And it happened without me 100%. Like, I got a video of like the second time it happened because, like, I wasn't there for that either. First moments that I missed and just like general cuteness that you just want to be around your kid for.

**Deena** [00:20:53] Yeah. so as a stay at home parent this is why we have you here because A we love you and you're really funny and B why we have you here is the incredibly unique experience of being a stay at home dad. We want to hear it all. .

**Tyler** [00:21:10] I think it's like, really similar to being a stay at home mom or just being a stay at home parent in general. Like, I don't think there's like that much different with being a stay at home dad other than your own internal struggles that you get from being the dad. Like, there is a lot of gender bias when it comes to like raising your kids, especially when you're a stay at home parent and like that gets internalized.

**Tyler** [00:21:33] I don't know if there's any stay at home dads listening or if a lot of stay at home moms that were like very focused on their careers. They became stay at home parents that when you're doing that, you love it. And there's this anxiety about like, gosh, I should be doing something. I should be furthering myself outside of the home. Like I love my family, I love doing this, and I feel like I should be doing something with my life.

**Kristin** [00:21:58] I think as a dad it probably is amplified just because it's so deeply ingrained that like the man earns the income and keeps the house. And that's what was modeled to you and your home. That was modeled to me in my home. And so there's that underlying feeling. That's probably the divide in society, by the way, and all those books.

**Tyler** [00:22:18] Oh, really? Are you taking the day off? You're taking the day off to be—

**Kristin** [00:22:22] You get to you get to just stay home? Like people when you would say that, by the way, they'd be like their eyes would be gouged out of their head as if you won the lottery and as if you had 12 nannies at home and you were doing nothing, you know? And when a woman is like I stay home. People are just like, Oh, God, you're just like, you do so much all day and you're covered in boogers. You do whatever. But when a dad says that, it's like implied that you yeah, you literally when you don't do anything, you just sit around. You just sit around the house. Not the case.

**Kristin** [00:22:49] I feel like that the underlying feeling that I think you're identifying is, or at least for me was similar in this like not unworthiness or but it's just this feeling where it's so unique. Taking care of your kids all day and taking care of the home all day because there's no benchmark for doing a good job, There's no raises, there's no boss telling you a good job. In fact, it's the opposite. Most days you're being screamed at in the face for like giving your kid the cup that they asked for. And it's sort of like not relentless, but it's daunting. It's grueling. It's the most rewarding experience. But there's absolutely no external.

**Tyler** [00:23:36] Validation.

**Kristin** [00:23:38] Validation in any way, whether that's financial, whether that's a thank you, whether it is a.

**Deena** [00:23:42] A raise, a bonus.

**Kristin** [00:23:43] It is a truly thankless job. And so I think it's almost and maybe it's not maybe there are some people that are just incredibly 100% secure. But I think for so many of us, it's just this constant debate of like, am I doing the right thing? And for so long, I think we both did think we were doing the same, the right thing for us. We really were. I loved it for so long, and at a certain point there's still that underlying feeling that might be like, you know what? Maybe actually I want to do something that will reward outside of just this. And that's valid to like. Both are totally valid.

**Tyler** [00:24:17] And I think like what a lot of people don't acknowledge is that being a stay at home parent, even though you're with other human beings, is it's super isolating. Like being a stay at home parent. You kind of like start to crave like having those adult conversations, like not just talking about toys and make believe and pretend and like, no matter how amazing that is, like, in a weird way, you're like, I kind of wish I was at the WaterCooler right now just chit chatting and like, I don't know if other stay at home parents feel this, but like, you wish you had office benchmarks like you would at a normal job. Like there is no quarterly review or like year end review where it's like, these are your goals, You hit these goals and you did a great job and like we're going to promote you to manager, blah, blah, blah, blah. It's like you kept your kid alive for another year. Great job. That's it. And nobody, nobody says that. [Laughter]

**Tyler** [00:25:07] That's me in the mirror. You did it. You're like you did this quarter.

**Tyler** [00:25:17] There's nobody there to tell you that unless you have a spouse that's like, very supportive and like, even then, they're probably not going to see it. Like you might see it overall, but like day to day, you're not going that man like this Q3, you knocked out those tantrums, you just crushed. It is crushed it. Tantrums are down 25% this quarter. You absolutely nailed. Employee employee of the month, you get the you get the parking spot out front good job.

**Kristin** [00:25:43] In our case it wasn't actually so much of a choice which I know is so common. By the way, this is not always a choice of I want to stay home. I want to go to work. Of course, sometimes it is. But in our situation with our firstborn, I had to stay home with our first because my salary was not going to cover even like half of what child care would have cost. And your salary barely even covered—

**Tyler** [00:26:14] Yeah my salary just covered us.

**Kristin** [00:26:15] It was a really hard moment. I remember us crying in a Target parking lot. I was so nervous. I wasn't sure, you know, if this was the right move. I had never seen stay at home parenting. By the way, I grew up in Los Angeles where, like, it's very highly successful people, so I didn't know what to expect. And in my case, somehow I don't want to cry, but I'm definitely going to.

**Deena** [00:26:40] It's healthy crying!

**Kristin** [00:26:42] Oh, those four years that I was a stay at home mom, looking back, those are some of the best years of my life—oh.

**Kristin** [00:26:56] It was so special and so magical. And at a certain point it really was exactly what I wanted to do in that moment. There were such hard times financially. We were really strapped. You were gone all day long. I really love it. I found pride in it. I was proud of myself. This was the most important job in the world to me at the time. I loved it. And I also, by the way, was not like the traditional, if you would call it that. Like there's no one way to be a stay at home mom or a stay at home parent. That wasn't me. Like baking cookies all day and making meals. I just loved putting my whole energy into this human being. My house was a wreck.

**Kristin** [00:27:42] Like and then really uniquely at a certain point, you know, three, four years in, and I'm having this feeling that I kind of want to do something outside of this. I kind of want to have a passion. I kind of want to, like you were saying, not be isolated all day. And something changed in me. I wanted to do something different. And different wasn't more or better or worse. I think that a lot of times it's not a choice. But then things also change even in what you're wanting or what you're not wanting, what you're able to do, what you're not able to do.

**Deena** [00:28:21] When I had my first baby, I tried to do both. I tried to do both, which is I had always wanted to be a stay at home mom. And then we were doing Big Little feelings. We just started. I loved it. I absolutely loved it, and it helped me feel like me. And I wasn't ready to just kind of leave that. I wanted to keep it going. And I tried for months actually to manage both where I was working at home and I would work during nap times and I would wake up at 5 a.m. and like try to work before and work after bedtime. And after a while it just kind of ran me ragged and I could not do both.

**Kristin** [00:29:04] It was also a pandemic, by the way. Let's not even fail to mention. So by the way, first of all, you think being quote unquote, an influencer or being online means like you don't really work. This is we're talking we're like 40 hour, 45 hour workweek. Like, this is a full time job. We had employees at the time like this is a real ass job. But also it was a pandemic, by the way. And so you had your first baby thrust into it the way that a lot of parents were in the pandemic, where also it actually kind of wasn't a choice. You couldn't have childcare at the time. Literally had the first moments of your parenthood journey was

like forced to be doing both at the same time, which is all of us as pandemic parents can say, impossible.

**Deena** [00:29:50] Yeah. Not to mention that if I could have a do over, I would have consciously talked to my husband more about what was it going to look like career wise. If you love your job and I love my job and we both want to work, like how are we actually going to do that on top of no childcare. That's crazy time. We didn't do that. And so what ended up just happening non consciously is somehow I fell into both roles and took on all the childcare, but still was trying to find ways to work and feel like myself and have my passions. And at a certain point I just kind of fell apart. It was not possible for me and it was not healthy for me and both roles became stressful. So I had to really sit and make this really hard decision with a lot of feelings about what do I do? You know? So I had to navigate that.

**Tyler** [00:30:45] And you were doing that postpartum. You made a great point. And I think a lot of people like if you're out there and you haven't had a kid yet or you're planning your second or third kid, like you definitely need to be having that conversation with your spouse. Like, what is this going to look like moving forward with our jobs? Like, I don't think we thought about that.

**Kristin** [00:31:04] We did in the Target parking lot when we found out I was pregnant and we were we were crying and we had to make the conscious choice until the second we got that positive pregnancy test. Never did not dawn on us. And I think in this situation it was like not until the baby came out.

**Kristin** [00:31:23] Just didn't didn't cross any of our know, but it did the second— for me, it was a lot of pressure with the second that that pregnancy test came on because I think we all whether it is a choice— sometimes you're privileged enough to even have the choice. Sometimes you are not right. You have to work in order to provide for your family no matter what you. You would love to stay at home and you cannot. And also on the opposite. You would love to work, but maybe you your career does not cover the childcare. Like it's not always a choice. But when it is a choice, it can be so hard to be in the position, especially, I think, as a woman. When we did this four years ago, it wasn't even a question of if you would stay home like it was it.

**Kristin** [00:32:10] It was all a Kristin, what are you going to do? Are you going to continue your career or are you going to stay at home? And when we're all juggling that choice, there's so many factors, and I wish we could come on this podcast. And at first we were going to say like, Oh, maybe we'll help them. Maybe we'll help the listeners decide, like, should they stay home, should they work? And we cannot because there's the financial, obviously, that is so unique to your own situation.

**Kristin** [00:32:40] There is also, especially for women, even if it has nothing to do with finances, how putting your career on hold for a few years, how that's going to affect you in the workforce when you go back? What you are losing promotion wise, what you are leaving behind. It's such an identity shift and we all have to, no matter what side of the coin you're on, you're making a sacrifice either way and you're grieving or letting go of the part of you that you're having to let go in this choice that you're making. It's never perfect, I don't think.

**Tyler** [00:33:20] Yeah. And I don't even know what that pressure must have been like for the two of you.

**Deena** [00:33:25] Yeah, I know. Personally, too. I still grapple with guilt all the time. Guilt of just. I would love to spend all day with them. And then half the time to. I have guilt, or I'm like, Well, actually, I would love to go to work today. Like, that sounds amazing. And you know what, though? After I had my second baby, it was a shift from how I felt with my first baby actually. With my second six weeks in after being in newborn land with a crying baby all day long night, the diapers, the feeding issues that we went through, I was craving a moment to just be out of the house to feel like myself again, to dive into what I am interested in and just feel like me. And so with him, I mean, it was just different. Like I was excited to go back to work and really loved being a working mom.

**Kristin** [00:34:19] Yeah. And I feel like that's a big factor of choosing it again if you're privileged enough to make the choice. It's a big factor that isn't like talked about enough, which is usually it's just like, okay, here's the finances. What are we going to do with the finances? Okay, you stay home. There's not enough emphasis on your own personal fulfillment, because now what I would love to segway into, by the way, I would love to segway into speaking of parental fulfillment, what the research says about being a stay at home parent, being a working parent, being a part time working parent, and how you make that choice. What is it based on?

**Deena** [00:34:57] Listen, there's research out there from Harvard that suggests that kids who grow up with a working mom versus a stay at home mom, they grow up to be just as happy. There's research out there suggesting that, you know, in terms of achievement and success and even behaviors, there's not a critical difference. But Emily Oster, who wrote the book Family Firm, I think she really nails it on this point. There's a million factors that go into this that are really hard to measure everything from the finances of the family to parental happiness. It is hard to collect data to come to a firm conclusion on this. Right. You can't measure happiness or quality of relationships even. And so it comes down to this: What is best for your kid is what is best for you and your family.

**Kristin** [00:35:45] I hate when you say that, by the way. I hate that.

**Deena** [00:35:49] Just tell me what to do!

**Kristin** [00:35:52] This is like when I walk into my therapist's office and I'm like no, you don't put it back on me. Tell me what to do, dammit!

**Kristin** [00:36:01] I think it's really empowering because what we're seeing when we're scouring the research, we're scouring. What is the answer? It's so empowering to know that, okay, I can let all of this go because at the end of the day, we're all kept up at night because we don't know if we're fucking our kid up or not. Oh, they're in daycare and I'm fucking them up. Oh, I'm at home with them all day, so I'm not showing them not showing my girls a career as a career woman. I'm not socializing them enough in daycare. You're up all night just guilt ridden by your choice, and you don't know what's best for your kid. So congratulations. In this podcast episode, we have just debunked that.

**Deena** [00:36:42] You're free!

**Kristin** [00:36:42] You don't have to worry anymore.

**Tyler** [00:36:45] It's nice to know that no matter what you pick though, like you're good. But it's not like, Well, if you do one of these. Yeah. Sorry.

**Kristin** [00:36:52] Sorry, you selfish.

**Deena** [00:36:54] No, really. Like, what they found is the differences are even just so minimal. That does matter.

**Kristin** [00:36:59] And you can speak to being a child therapist. I can imagine what parent's happiness levels are or fulfillment levels are, because, by the way, we can't be happy all the time. That's never going to happen. Working as hard as we love hard, they're both fulfilling. They're both hard at the same time. But generally speaking, what we're getting to is whatever is actually best for you, what is best for you all the way across the board, and you're gonna be sacrificing something. And now we're just choosing what's the sacrifice.

**Kristin** [00:37:30] And it doesn't also have to be forever. I know a lot of people who did one thing in the early years and then a different thing. Maybe when they went to school shifted and it's kind of changed over time. Yeah, you would think you would always be like, Oh, in the early days, I have to stay home with them. In their formative years, I've seen that the other way too, where they're like, Hey, listen, in the early years, like I wanted to pursue my career. I wanted them to be, you know, out and so changed my other babies. And now they're my age. Yeah, it's not always permanent. You know, your your decision making can change your internal motivation or motivate circumstances. That's what I was going to say. Your finances could change. Your family circumstances could change. So I feel like the agony over this is at least for me.

**Deena** [00:38:12] Yeah.

**Tyler** [00:38:13] I don't know if you're listening out there. Like, I hadn't heard that research yet that Deena was just talking about. So I hope if you're listening out there and you're just like really struggling with it like I do almost every day. Now you're kind of just like, okay, I'm not making the wrong choice. I'm making a choice if I can. And it's not the wrong choice.

**Deena** [00:38:30] The kids are going to be okay. They're going to be great.

**Kristin** [00:38:41] Okay, Now we're going to do something a little fun, which is a new segment of Rapidfire Advice. And this advice is going to be specifically tailored to you feeling confident in whatever role it is that you currently have working somewhere in between. Here we go. First, we're going to hit him with the advice for the stay at home parent.

**Tyler** [00:39:03] Advice for a stay at home parent. I would say enjoy it as much as you can and be okay with your feelings of disappointment, anxiety, Anything else that you're feeling? Negative. That's okay.

**Kristin** [00:39:14] Deena's doing prayer hands right now.

**Deena** [00:39:17] All your feelings are okay. All feelings are valid.

**Kristin** [00:39:22] It can be both hard and rewarding at the same time.

**Kristin** [00:39:26] My advice for stay at home parent is Dear God. Find a time for a break if you have a partner. Do not underestimate or feel like, Oh well, I did nothing all day and

they worked all day. No, you deserve a break. I remember every day that you got home. If it was 6:00, I would take 15 minutes to lay down in my bed. Also, nap time. This is my other rapid fire advice. Nap time is your time to take a break. You're staying home all day long. In my opinion, if you're going to worry about the house and cleaning and cooking and whatnot, it's actually okay for your child to, like, watch you do those things. It might be beneficial and take the time that they are napping because that is your sanctuary. Take a nap.

**Kristin** [00:40:13] Deena, rapid fire working parent go.

**Deena** [00:40:16] Okay. My biggest advice is when you're with your kid, be fully with your kid. When you are at work, let yourself be fully with your work and try to keep those separate. It is so hard they are going to leak into each other and it's going to feel like things are building up in the background. I know that feeling all too well, but truly like try to get comfortable with it. It's something you have to practice, honestly.

**Tyler** [00:40:40] That's a really good one because I think that would lead to some guilt, but that's probably like the best that you can do. Yeah, like the best thing you can do is keep it separate and not feel bad about it.

**Kristin** [00:40:48] Is that the title of this episode? Like, that's the best you can do is the best you can do. You know [laughter]

**Kristin** [00:40:59] It's like grass is greener on either side.

**Tyler** [00:41:04] The grass is green on both sides. There's patchy spots and there's green spots on both.

**Deena** [00:41:08] My last hot tip, though, is fuck doing it all. And there's like pressure out there that if you do it just right, you'll be able to find balance and everything. And that is not realistic.

**Tyler** [00:41:23] That's only on moms too. I've never felt that pressure.

**Deena** [00:41:26] Oh wow. Boy, we're going to have time out. Come on in.

**Tyler** [00:41:31] Dad never, ever felt the pressure to do it all.

**Deena** [00:41:35] Shit.

**Tyler** [00:41:37] Not once in seven years. Eight years. I have never felt like I have to do it all. I've always felt, like—

**Deena** [00:41:44] Enraged and jealous at the same time. Our faces right now. I don't think there's been one day even debilitated with COVID in a hospital room. I could be nearly asleep and just illness and I am still thinking of—

**Tyler** [00:42:01] Do I need to buy the next size up in clothes?

**Deena** [00:42:04] Not even that not even just that, where it's like every single day now as a working parent. But by the way, I did the same thing as this day. Every single day. I'm not joking. I am doing so much and I am doing the clothing and I am doing a lot of the mental

load, but I'm still thinking like I'm not making an out at home dinner for them. Today is the day. Today's the day.

**Deena** [00:42:27] We're not hiking [laughter]

**Kristin** [00:42:30] And then I'm making them a roast chicken and I don't even know how to make roast chicken. So I'm a piece of shit because I don't know how to make a roast chicken in the first place. And then I have to bake with them. I have to bake with them before they go to bed. And I also need to read and I need to sit down and read with them because bah bah bah bah bah bah. It is never there's not one day, never have I ever. When you say never in seven years, I'm like the opposite where there's not one day that I'm not looking at the thing that I haven't done or that I don't do. Even though I'm doing so much.

**Tyler** [00:42:56] Talk about like working and working in the home, working outside of the home and working in the home. I've never felt like I have to go have a career and I have to stay home.

**Deena** [00:43:04] [Shocked laughter]

**Tyler** [00:43:10] I enjoyed this. My last visit on this podcast.

**Kristin** [00:43:15] I think that perspective is so welcome to because. Oh, my God, how do we bridge the gap like that? And I don't know if every man really does feel this way or every woman really does feel this way. But it certainly seems to be a trend of I cannot believe that you are sitting here and saying that every day you're not trying to have it all. May I also say that I've never seen a celebrity be interviewed and if it's a man, ask how they juggle it all.

**Tyler** [00:43:38] And I don't.

**Kristin** [00:43:39] No, because they're not trying to.

**Deena** [00:43:42] The flip side, by the way, whenever I'm on an airplane and someone's like two little children, So who's who's watching your family on this trip?

**Tyler** [00:43:53] But to circle back, if you're listening out there and you feel like you have to be a working parent and a stay at home parent, just let that go, because the dads don't worry about it.

**Deena** [00:44:03] Oh, well, yeah. Oh, no.

**Tyler** [00:44:06] Just let it go release it.

**Kristin** [00:44:11] We'll come back to this episode another time of like, Oh, we really, truly will. I think we'll have an episode with real concrete research back tools that we can all do together, because clearly Deena and I are still struggling in terms of how you can prioritize the balls that you have that you're juggling. The best analogy of our some are glass, some are plastic, and you're juggling the glass balls and like you're doing amazing. And maybe you can let the height go and maybe you could let the roasted chicken go.

**Deena** [00:44:42] It's going to change in every season of life. Which balls are the glass ones and which are, I'm going to say rubber because they can bounce back later. You know what I mean?

**Tyler** [00:44:49] That's good.

**Kristin** [00:44:49] I have a question for you. Do you think there's ever going to be a season in my life where I'm making a roast chicken?

**Deena** [00:44:54] No.

**Tyler** [00:44:54] Probably not.

**Deena** [00:44:55] Hands down. No.

**Kristin** [00:44:56] Why do I have that pipedream? I think hiking might. Like maybe we'll do a whole episode just to help me release personally.

**Deena** [00:45:13] But I think what it all comes down to, honestly, is we are all doing a great job and your kids are going to be great. They are going to be fine. Okay. I think what it all comes down to is this that your kids are going to be fine. They're going to be more than fine no matter what you're doing in your family situation right now, whether you are working, whether you are a stay at home parent right now, you are crushing it. This is hard work. This is rewarding work. And I am proud of you. We are proud of you.

**Kristin** [00:45:48] I'm proud of you, Bill.

**Deena** [00:45:49] For all that you're doing. And if no one else said thank you today.

**Kristin** [00:45:52] Thank you for getting the next size up in clothing, thank you for cooking a nice meal for them. Or, by the way, just getting takeout. Hey-oh!

**Deena** [00:46:00] Thank you for reading all the damn school emails that are so long.

**Kristin** [00:46:03] You got a full time job. By the way.

**Deena** [00:46:05] Thank you for making the birthday magical.

**Kristin** [00:46:07] Thank you for making the holidays special.

**Tyler** [00:46:10] Thank you for working a full time job. Thank you for working a part time job and getting out of the house.

**Kristin** [00:46:15] Thank you for pursuing your own interests. If you do, I personally don't. But if you are pursuing your own interests or hobbies. Thank you. You matter. Thank you for everything you do for your family. You're the best. Thank you for everything you do for your family. You are your hardest critic. You are up at night wondering if your kids are okay. If you're doing enough, we are here to assure you, no matter what you did today, no matter what you didn't do today, whether you got to take out, whether you ignored the school emails, whether you didn't order anything at all today, and all you did was sit on a couch and snuggle your child watching TV. That was more than enough.

**Deena** [00:46:57] Now, let's roll right into some questions from you, big little besties that you've sent in. Let's crush them together. First question from Bethany: Can I make potty accidents teachable? How best to respond.

**Kristin** [00:47:11] Ooh, I love this question. Only we would like love a potty question. Tyler, are you fired up about a potty question?

**Deena** [00:47:18] Not really.

**Kristin** [00:47:22] So this is the question is framed in the best way possible. I love how she said this. Can I make potty accidents teachable? Okay. Every single potty accident is actually literally a teaching and a learning moment.

**Deena** [00:47:39] That's right. Think about anything that we want our kids to learn, whether it's their ABCs or learning how to swing a bat. They have to make mistakes. They have to mess up to learn how to do it differently next time. And that's exactly what a potty accident is.

**Kristin** [00:47:55] I mean, until they have the true sensation and feeling of like, Oh, this feels kind of yucky, this doesn't feel very good, they're not going to understand, like why it's so important to go into the potty, because we want them to learn intrinsically right, intrinsically motivated to get to the potty. Why? Because this doesn't feel so good, if you think about it. If they just never had accidents because like, by the way, this is sometimes people think that this is their goal, like no accidents. She only had one accident and she was potty training and blah, blah, blah, blah. They're kind of learning to just go in the potty because you said so, right? It's like, go in the potty. Okay. I guess Mom and Dad want me to go sit on the potty. The only way they can truly learn. On their own to connect the feeling. And then what happens after the feeling is for them to have an accident.

**Deena** [00:48:42] That's right. And how best to respond. We're actually going to avoid saying something like, It's okay. That can be really confusing for a toddler brain. So we're going to instead remind them the pee-pee was on the floor this time and it goes in the potty. Next time you have that pee-pee feeling down here, we're going to run to the potty and get the pee-pee in the potty.

**Kristin** [00:49:02] And the biggest thing we're going to avoid is a big negative reaction. This can be really hard after a really long day and you're like rounding the corner to dinnertime or bedtime. This could be really hard during maybe even the beginning stages of potty learning, potty training, whatever you personally want to call it, because you're exhausted. And so this can be very triggering. It can be really hard to rein your own reaction in, like, oh, no, no, no, no. But unfortunately, you're going to have to. But the best thing that you can do is to have a very minimal reaction, no negative reaction, and just stick to exactly what Deena just said. Okay. Larissa has a question for V.P. Hype squad over here.

**Tyler** [00:49:45] Oh, boy.

**Deena** [00:49:46] Larissa wants to know. Tyler, do you ever resent Kristin for not doing the cooking in your home?

**Deena** [00:49:53] Ooh, spicy.

**Tyler** [00:49:55] This is a spicy one. Speaking of cooking.

**Kristin** [00:49:57] Dad joke!

**Tyler** [00:49:58] Dad joke, Look out. No, I wouldn't say I resent you for it. Like, we all have our special things that we're good at. Thankfully, one of mine is cooking. Like, we could be really out of luck if I couldn't cook either. That would be bad. That would feel I would resent both of us.

**Kristin** [00:50:14] I'd resent your parents.

**Tyler** [00:50:15] Yeah, Yeah, I'd resent all the parents. No, I don't resent her at all. Like, we all have different things we're good at and surprise, cooking's not always the mom's job. Like the dad can do it, too. I'm here for 50% of the responsibilities, too. I'm not great at ordering the next size clothes. I'm not great at planning like, Oh, it's going to be cold tomorrow. Let's wear a jacket that's like, not my specialty.

**Kristin** [00:50:36] That's my love, right.

**Tyler** [00:50:38] That's who we've decided. That's like what you'll take on. Like Kristin has her set of skills. I have my set of skills, and we've, like, worked it out. So, you know, she's taking half of the responsibility. I'm taking half the responsibility. Cooking falls into mine, and I don't want to see like our kids to see like, mom always has to cook. And I also don't want to see Dad always has to cook. So like Kristin, sometimes you're going to step up, sometimes you're going to take out.

**Kristin** [00:50:58] I'm great at like a breakfast for dinner situation.

**Tyler** [00:51:01] You really are. And that's my least favorite meal.

**Kristin** [00:51:05] It's our kids favorite meal though, so.

**Tyler** [00:51:08] I'm okay with cereal for dinner, but then they'll go like eggs and hash browns and toast and all that and like, great.

**Kristin** [00:51:13] Gourmet dinner.

**Tyler** [00:51:14] It's a gourmet breakfast dinner.

**Kristin** [00:51:16] I'll work on the roast chicken only for you.

**Tyler** [00:51:18] You really don't. In terms of don't work on the roast chicken.

**Deena** [00:51:20] Let it go.

**Tyler** [00:51:22] I can cook a roast chicken. I can, like, cook a chicken ten ways.

**Deena** [00:51:25] But I love this because I love what your kids are going to be witnessing as they grow up, that both parents are part of this. You both decide to have kids.

**Tyler** [00:51:34] Yeah, cooking is a parent's job. It doesn't matter which one.

**Kristin** [00:51:37] Yeah, right. Well, the household in general, because even when I stayed home, it was really important to us. No matter who is staying home, who is working, whatever the situation is. We decided very early on that we were going to go into the household and the parenting thing, 50-50. That was a very deliberate choice and it didn't always start that way. By the way, we had to work a lot and sometimes it just led more back this way and you have to like go back this way. But we made that intention that we wanted for each other, for ourselves and for our kids, that they saw the household. And the parenting thing is both mom and dad.

**Deena** [00:52:21] I love that for you. That did not happen in my house. We are three years into trying to figure this out. It's hard.

**Kristin** [00:52:30] I think it's more common, by the way, your this situation is more common than maybe ours. I don't know. But I don't know Deena you're not alone in that. You're not alone and definitely not. Thank you for making the meals.

**Tyler** [00:52:40] Yeah, you're welcome.

**Deena** [00:52:42] Mike. Make me a meal. Okay. And lastly, Adrian wants to know, how do I okay feelings, but get my kid to stop whining about everything.

**Kristin** [00:52:54] Whining is hard.

**Deena** [00:52:55] Whining is hard.

**Tyler** [00:52:59] It's more than crying for me.

**Deena** [00:53:02] Crying is above for me.

**Tyler** [00:53:03] Oh, yeah. Wow.

**Deena** [00:53:04] I'm actually fine with both but I have other problems.

**Deena** [00:53:12] Whining has a lot to do with just development and like, brain development. The upper part of their brain, their prefrontal cortex, has not yet fully developed, which is why they whine at this age, right? Yeah. It's like, unfortunately a developmentally appropriate way for them to express themselves.

**Kristin** [00:53:30] Okay, that's cool. But also just because it developmentally appropriate doesn't mean we can try our best with different tactics to kind of minimize some whining. Hot tip number one. You can try this. Try it. Everything doesn't work all the time. Try using the voice that you would like them to use and kind of see what that underlying request might be. This is called modeling the behavior. You might not always know what's beneath it, but let's say we're like, really wanting a cookie or really want an iPad or something, and it's the whining. So what we're going to do is calmly come in with the voice. I hear that you are wanting iPad, is that right? And kind of show them how to communicate what they do need.

**Deena** [00:54:15] You're spot on this is actually a very scientific thing, which is we all have mirror neurons that can get triggered when someone else has a certain tone of voice or someone else has a certain expression on their face or a certain feeling that you can feel.

That's because your mirror neurons get triggered. So if you do something, it can trigger their mirror neurons to maybe do the same thing back.

**Kristin** [00:54:36] Yeah. Okay. Hot tip, two: it always comes back to boundaries. It all comes back to boundaries. This is not always the cause of whining. This isn't always the root cause. But some of the time you can identify. You might have fallen into a pattern where when your child whines, you give in to whatever their request is.

**Deena** [00:54:59] Because you just want it to stop I get it.

**Kristin** [00:55:02] And you're like, Fine, one more iPad. Okay, fine. One more episode. Okay, fine. You can have a cookie. And the thing is, is that your child is still understanding cause and effect. If I do this, then this happens. This is not manipulative behavior. This is not conscious behavior. It is literally where their brain development is at to try to understand, okay, when this happens, X happens. What happens after that? That's why they're constantly doing the same thing, like with their toy truck over and over and over, because they're like, oh, like, is this going to fall down every time? And they learn like, Oh, this falls down every time. So every single time that you give into a request because of whining, you're accidentally reinforcing that whining behavior because that's how they know they can have that iPad and episode.

**Deena** [00:55:49] You can almost promise more in the future.

**Kristin** [00:55:52] And so we don't need to be harsh. We don't need to be punishing. That's not what we're saying. We can simply hold the boundary and allow them to whine, allow them to cry, allow them to be upset about it. But now we know each and every time they're not going to level up the whining to be kind of getting that extra episode or whatever they're going for.

**Deena** [00:56:12] The more consistently you hold boundaries, the less you'll see whining over time, especially as their brains continue to develop.

**Kristin** [00:56:18] Yep. And number three, for me, I think whining is a form of communication actually. And like Deena said, the prefrontal cortex is responsible for language development. So your child might be able to say like, I want Cookie. And so you would think that they have the capacity to say, I'm feeling lonely, I'm feeling scared. I want mommy. But they don't always have the ability to do that. And you might just be seeing them kind of whining or really like clingy. This isn't a bad thing. I know there's a lot of, like, unsolicited advice out there of like, you should ignore them. You shouldn't give in to that.

**Kristin** [00:56:57] It might actually be a sign of a communication. Your child needs you or needs a little bit of special attention with you. Maybe you had a new baby, maybe you had a big change and you're seeing an uptick in whining. So maybe up to special time with them, 10 minutes every day. Unrelated, not in the moment of whining. You don't have to drop everything and do it. But just maybe it's a communication need here of like. I just need a little more of your time.

**Deena** [00:57:21] A mind set shift that my husband and I have had recently around this is like this is a chapter of life. It's not always going to be this way. In a few years, their brains will be way more developed and it just won't be like this. You know, this is a chapter to get through.

**Kristin** [00:57:34] Tyler, give me any advice for whining.

**Tyler** [00:57:36] The boundaries is a good one. Holding boundaries. Like, especially if it's something that you have encountered before. If it's like iPad and they're whining, they're testing you, they're testing you. So it's like, Oh, let me just do one more. If you're like, No, I told you that was it. We're done now. You can be upset, but we're done for today. Then they're just a little bit quicker to relent. Then they're like, All right, fine.

**Kristin** [00:57:58] Were you a little bit asleep just now? Your eyes are a little bit.

**Tyler** [00:58:00] Just a little bit sleepy.

**Kristin** [00:58:07] During that question you were dozing a little bit.

**Tyler** [00:58:09] It wasn't until I'm snoring. You know.

**Kristin** [00:58:11] You're I think you're like you're you're crossing the road into you know snoring territory.

**Tyler** [00:58:19] Halfway across that bridge in Coco made out of flowers.

**Deena** [00:58:24] Niche parenting reference seriously.

**Tyler** [00:58:26] A lot of you guys are going to get that out there.

**Kristin** [00:58:28] Well, I think that's a good this might be actually, we had no choice. We have to wrap it up and our guest over here is falling asleep. I'm not at all tired like this is a problem. Like, I actually feel like I could go do something right now.

**Deena** [00:58:47] I'm the opposite, so I'm going to go to bed. But I have had a lot of fun.

**Tyler** [00:58:51] This is great you guys. You guys had so much fun.

**Kristin** [00:58:53] I loved hanging with you.

**Tyler** [00:58:55] Thank you guys so much for having me again. This is, like, always awesome. Had such a blast.

**Deena** [00:58:59] I really loved hearing your perspective. So thank you for coming, especially as a stay at home dad, because I feel like we never hear about that.

**Kristin** [00:59:11] And I also really enjoyed the part of like the dad experience in general, like having no guilt. And I think that blew my mind. We're just going to unpack that for the next 4 hours.

**Deena** [00:59:22] I'm going to take that one to therapy.

**Tyler** [00:59:26] And if you ever want to talk about roast chicken again, I'll come back.

**Kristin** [00:59:30] We're going to do a whole episode where Tyler teaches me how to make a roast chicken

**Tyler** [00:59:33] Yeah, that'll be a video podcast.

**Deena** [00:59:35] It's not all about poop like the last one.

**Tyler** [00:59:40] I definitely have definitely come back. I'm going to submit a question.

**Kristin** [00:59:46] It's time to go. Okay.

**Kristin** [00:59:48] Big little besties. Thank you so much for joining us. I hope you enjoyed this episode as much as we did. If you like the podcast, please do us a favor. Hit the follow button. It means more on the back end than you know. Takes 10 seconds of your time and it helps our show so, so much. We cannot wait to do this again next week, maybe stay at home Zaddy will be invited back. I don't know.

**Tyler** [01:00:11] I hope so.

**Deena** [01:00:12] Yeah, Maybe we'll have another boardroom meeting.

**Kristin** [01:00:21] We're going to have Mike pull up some, like, figures.

**Deena** [01:00:23] Mike, can I get an Excel sheet, please? Thank you. [Laughter]

**Tyler** [01:00:26] It's already done. It's already been done.

**Kristin** [01:00:29] We'll see you guys next week!

**Deena** [01:00:30] Bye!

**Kristin** [01:00:30] If you are struggling with toddler or preschooler tantrums, push back discipline, picky eating, just all the confusing things. This podcast, we can only scratch the surface if you need help. Our course winning the toddler stage is here to help. It is aptly nicknamed the Toddler manual because it truly has every single thing you could possibly struggle with under the sun between the ages of one and six within one. Of course, we're not going to do a bunch of workshops. You have to buy the sleep Guide and the picky eater guide and this guide into that guide. Know everything you could possibly need for ages.

**Kristin** [01:01:16] One through six is all in this one course. We were never meant to do this parenting thing alone. You deserve to have help. We are here for you. You can find that course at big little feelings dot com. And be sure to follow us on Instagram and Facebook at big little feelings. We give free tips every single day. They might change your life with one free tip.

**Deena** [01:01:40] Thank you so much for being here with us. This has been Audacy Production Executive produced by Lauren La Grasso, produced by Daniella Silva, edited by Bob Tabaddor and theme music composed by Liz Fall, then studio lighting designed by Shane Sackett and designed by Jackie Sherman. Special thanks to Audacy Executive Vice President and Head of Podcasts, Jenna Weiss-Berman And thank you for being here with us. We can't wait until next week.