

Episode 95a - I hate you

Speaker: [00:00:00] Welcome to the Peaceful Parenting Podcast. I'm your host, Sarah Rosenzweig, 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.

Speaker: 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.

Speaker: Let's dive into this week's conversation.

Hey there. Welcome back to another episode of the peaceful parenting podcast for the month of August, where we're releasing some of our favorite episodes from the past over three years of recording this podcast. And today is the last of. Our rereleases and it is an [00:01:00] episode. About what to do when your child says, I hate you. This is actually my daughter's idea.

My daughter Maxine, when we recorded this, she was 15 and now she's 17. And she said, Hey mom, you should tell parents what to do when their kid says, I hate you. So I asked her if she could come on the podcast and she said, yeah. So let's dive into a rerelease of, one of our favorite episodes about what to do when your kid says, I hate you. Please share this with somebody who you think needs to hear it today. And don't forget to go to apple and Spotify, leave us a five star rating and a review on apple would be amazing.

It helps us reach more people.

Sarah: today's episode is about. What do you do when your child says, I hate you? And I actually thought of this because my daughter, my teenage daughter, said to me the other day, Hey mom, you should tell parents when their kid says, I hate you, blah, blah, blah.

Sarah: And so I asked her actually, if she'd be willing to come on the podcast and talk about it, [00:02:00] she said, yes. So she's going to come on in the

second part of this podcast and give us her teenager slash kid perspective about when kids say, I hate you. Before Maxine comes on, I thought I would just share with you, why kids say this and what we should do when they do.

Sarah: I think you would be an unusual parent if you make it through your whole kid's childhood without hearing I hate you at least once. Okay, so first thing we want to do if we hear I hate you is just try and calm ourselves, right? Stop, drop, and breathe. Responding with, more aggression or, getting upset ourselves is just going to escalate the situation.

Sarah: One person, at least, needs to stay calm in a situation where somebody is very upset. And obviously your child is very upset if they're going to say, I hate you. If staying calm is hard for you, I'm not going to go into a ton about that in this video. Little shorty episode, but you can check out my free how to stop yelling at your kids course.

Sarah: It's all about staying calm when kids are pushing our buttons and lots of strategies there and it's a free course. So just go to sarahrosensweet.com slash yelling. We will link to it in the [00:03:00] show notes for you. So if staying calm, step one, when your kid says, I hate you. If staying calm is hard for you, get some more support around that.

Sarah: It's really the first thing that we want to do in any difficult parenting situation. It's our first big idea of peaceful parenting is that focus on self regulation using our pause button, that stop, drop, and breathe so that we can calm ourselves so that we can be the calm in the situation, help our child co regulate and also be able to use the strategies that I'm going to share with you.

Sarah: So the second thing you want to do, When you hear, I hate you is remind yourself that your child is hijacked and that what you're seeing is the fight of the fight, flight or freeze response, right? That fight, I hate you is when we've gotten hijacked by our own big feelings and our own big feelings have registered in our body as an emergency, the nervous system and amygdala and limbic system take over and put out that emergency response without us even realizing what's happened and that emergency response system takes over.

Sarah: You see the fight. I hate you. Maybe it'll even [00:04:00] be combined with the flight of running away and slamming the door. But just remember when we are hijacked by fight, flight, or freeze, the person in front of us looks like the enemy. And that's when we say things that we regret and that we don't mean. So your child really doesn't hate you.

Sarah: It's just a response. From being hijacked, and it's a way that your child is showing you how big their feelings are, right? When we're really upset, we say the worst things that occur to us to show the other person how upset we are. I love what my mentor, Dr. Laura Markham, taught me about hate, which she taught me that hate is not an emotion.

Sarah: Hate is a position that we take when we're afraid that we're never going to work it out. So if one of your kids says to their sibling, I hate you or I hate them, it's this feeling that they're never going to work it out. They're never going to have a good relationship. And same thing with your child.

Sarah: If your child says I hate you, it's coming from this place of fear that they're never going to be able to work it out with you. They can never see a point where Things will get back to good again. [00:05:00] So just remind yourself of that. They're hijacked, they're having these really big feelings, and they're afraid that we're never going to work it out again.

Sarah: And don't take it personally. I'm going to talk a little bit more about that in a second. But just remember, this is not about me, even though they're aiming it at me. Try not to take it personally. They're having a hard time not giving you a hard time. The next thing you want to think about is how do you respond to the feeling that they're having?

Sarah: That's driving the behavior, right? In peaceful parenting, we always want to think about not just what's the behavior that we see on the surface. You don't want to just respond to that. So someone who's doing more conventional parenting might say, You're not allowed to say that to me. I never want to hear those words again.

Sarah: Go to your room or I'm, you're grounded or depends on how old the child is, right? But what we want to think about is not that the symptom, but what's driving it. So we always want to look at what's driving the behavior. In this case, really big feelings are driving that behavior. And then we want to respond to what's driving the behavior.

Sarah: How can I let my child know that I understand? How they feel. [00:06:00] Acknowledge their point of view. Oh, you must be so upset to say that. So again, you've heard me talk before about empathic limits or leading with empathy. So you must be so upset to say that to me. I hear you. You're really unhappy that I blah blah blah.

Sarah: So we just want to empathize. Let our child know that we understand. And if you're at this point thinking Sarah, how can I, I can't let my child get away with speaking to me like that. If your child is really little, they're just learning, I would just let it go, really honestly. If your four year old says, I hate you, and it probably would be followed up with, You're not coming to my birthday party, which I always found hilarious, because who did they think was throwing them the birthday party?

Sarah: But if your child says, I hate you, and they're little, don't even worry about it. Stop, drop, and breathe. Don't take it personally. Respond to the feeling and just let it go. You just want to focus on empathizing and de escalating the situation. Maybe your child wants, you're really unhappy about this.

Sarah: Do you want a hug? Is there anything I can do to help you feel better? Just like you would any other meltdown. or any other upset or tantrum. If your [00:07:00] child is older, and I'm going to let you decide where the, between 4 and 14 at some point, an older child, I'd say 14 is an older child, and depending on the maturity and development of your child, I'd say anywhere from older elementary school, you might want to start using this approach and, Not necessarily just letting it go like you would with a little kid.

Sarah: If they're really escalated, I would say that stay the same. Is like really just focus on the feeling. And you might say something like, You know what? Let's talk about this later when we're both calm. So you can ask for a break if they're older. You're gonna say, Let's talk. I want to hear about what you have to say.

Sarah: And let's talk about this later when we're both calm. Let's take a break. And notice how I'm saying when we're both calm, even if it's only your child who's upset. Nobody would like it if you say let's talk about this later when you're calm. When we're both calm, let's talk about this later. I want to hear what you have to say.

Sarah: Let's take a little break and we'll meet up again later. And, later, you want to hear what your child has to say. And you can also say to them something like, I always want to hear about your feelings and you can tell me in a [00:08:00] way that's not attacking me. You know how you said I hate you earlier?

Sarah: I understand you were really upset. and you can tell me how you feel without attacking me. So that's the only limit that we really need to set here. You can't actually set a limit on language. It's an unenforceable limit. You can't

tell your child not to say something. So you can say, remember if they're little, you let it go.

Sarah: If they're getting older elementary school age, you let it go for the moment and say, let's talk about this later when we're both calm. And then when you do talk about it later. After you've heard what they have to say, you can say something like, You can tell me how you feel next time without attacking me.

Sarah: And, what are some other things you can say to let me know how upset you are. If this is a big trigger for you, if this is something that's really upsetting for you to have your child say I hate you, and remember triggers have everything to do with the stories we tell ourselves based on our past experiences in childhood or in parenting or whatever.

Sarah: It always has to do with us. It's not, the trigger isn't what our child does or says. The trigger is how we respond [00:09:00] to it. For me, it's not a particularly big trigger, and not that I love to hear it, and I actually have not heard it very often, not that I love to hear it, but I really can take this with a grain of salt and know it's the words of someone who's really upset, and not take it personally, but for some of you and some of the parents that I've worked with, really hard for you to hear this because it makes you feel like, you've done something wrong as a parent, or maybe you have a trigger of people being unhappy with you.

Sarah: So if this is a trigger for you, maybe do some soul searching. In the Stop Yelling course that I mentioned, there's actually a lot of work around figuring out what your triggers are and working on them. But, do a little, Thought process with yourself. Why is that so upsetting to me? What am I afraid of?

Sarah: And give yourself some compassion. Nobody likes to hear, I hate you. And even, if you know your child doesn't mean it, but it's upsetting to you, give yourself some compassion, because this is really hard. And I know some of you out there might be thinking, how can Sarah be suggesting that we just let our children speak to us this way?

Sarah: Isn't not giving them a consequence or, Letting them know how unhappy [00:10:00] we are with them. Isn't that just giving them, free reign to just treat us poorly? You know what? Think about the last time you were rude to someone that you love or snappish with someone that you love. Think about, if you were, came home from work and you had a really hard day and you're slamming around the kitchen and feeling resentful about everything that you

had to do and, work stress was still on your mind and your partner walks in and you say something really snappish to your partner.

Sarah: How would you want your partner to respond? Would you want your partner to say, all right that's it. I'm not speaking to you for the rest of the night because I don't want you to think you can talk to me that way. Or would you want your partner to say something like, Hey, you must have had a really hard day.

Sarah: I'm here. How can I help? Would you like a hug? Because this is the thing. We don't want to talk to people that way. We don't want to treat the people that we love badly. And if we do, or if our children are, treating us poorly and saying mean things to us, it's because there's something going on.

Sarah: They're hijacked, they're low on resources, and they're just, They can't picture that we'll ever be able to work it out. [00:11:00] Anytime we or our children are acting out of alignment with connection. I'm sure you've heard me say this before on the podcast, we're wired for connection. We're wired to be loving with the people that love us and who we love.

Sarah: And if we're acting out of alignment with that, there's something else going on. That's not our true nature. We want to be good. Our children want to be good. So if you respond with compassion, it doesn't mean that your child's just going to think, oh, great. I can just be good. be a jerk to my mom or dad whenever I want to, they'll think, ah, they really get me.

Sarah: They really understand me. Just like you would think if your partner responded to you with compassion, when you were having a hard time and you said something that was less than kind and not very loving to your partner, you wouldn't come away from that thinking, Oh great. I can just treat my partner like dirt.

Sarah: You would come away from that thinking, ah, I feel so seen and heard and understood. So don't worry that If you don't crack down on kids saying, I hate you, they're just going to think they can say it whenever. They want to be in good, harmonious connection with you. And finally, I just want to say that You're not alone.

Sarah: This has happened to most of [00:12:00] us and the best of us. And it also doesn't mean, if your child says I hate you, it doesn't mean that your child and you are never going to have a good relationship or that your child is going

to be someone who runs around shouting insults at people. Just stay in the moment.

Sarah: Take this as a moment in time. Your child is showing you. How upset they are, and you can look at this as a way to support them with compassion and to, be a problem solver and help them with the big feelings that they're having that are driving these words that can be so triggering to so many of us as parents.

Sarah: Alright, I'm gonna get Maxine, and just so you know, she doesn't know what I've said, I'm not sure what she's gonna say, so let's get a growing up kid's perspective on when a kid says, I hate you. Alright. Hi, Maxine. Welcome to the podcast. Hi. Oh, I recorded part of this earlier and I said that the reason why I thought we would do a podcast on when your kids say I hate you is because it was your idea.

Sarah: I don't know. Hey, mom, you should tell [00:13:00] parents. That they should just say this when their kids say I hate you and I said oh will you come out on the podcast and You said

Maxine: I said sure

Sarah: what do you think parents should know about when their kid says I hate you

Maxine: I think for me when I've told you that I hated you It was not because I was actually saying I hate you.

Maxine: It was just when kids think about a word that's how to express they're like angry then that's like the first thing that they think of because like hate is like I hate this and I hate that but instead of kids don't know how to say I'm angry at you they just say I hate you but they don't actually hate you.

Sarah: It's they don't actually hate you it's just a simple way for them to. Show you how they feel.

Maxine: Yeah. 'cause they don't know how to use more words. . .

Sarah: Yeah. That makes sense. How do you think parents should respond when kids say, I hate you, or what should they do?

Speaker 2: I [00:14:00] don't know if this makes sense, but I don't even think that they need to say anything.

Speaker 2: They just continue with whatever's going on, because I feel like it would annoy me, or any kid, if the parent said, Oh, I know that you're don't actually hate me and you're just saying that because at that moment the kid probably does feel like they hate you because they just feel angry and so if the parent said that they would just be like no i do hate you and i don't and i don't want you to talk to me and blah blah so i don't know what the parent should say but i feel like you shouldn't say that

Sarah: okay that's good because i didn't cover this so definitely don't say you don't mean that

Speaker 2: Yeah, because they probably won't mean that after they're not mad anymore, but they probably do feel like they mean that because that's just how they're saying that they feel when they just feel angry.

Sarah: That makes so much sense. Nobody likes to be told that what they're [00:15:00] feeling isn't real, right?

Speaker 2: Yeah, if someone said, I'm really sad, and the parent said, no you're not sad, you're happy, then the kid would just be like, what the heck?

Sarah: Yeah. Totally. And so what I said, tell me if you agree with this, because what I said to the parents is that they should empathize and say, you must be really angry at me to say that.

Sarah: I hear you. You're really not happy about. Whatever the thing is.

Speaker 2: Yeah, I don't know. You're the expert. Oh, you're the kid. I feel like that might be a good thing to say. But I noticed I don't really say I hate you anymore to you. No, I know that's weird. I used to say that a lot, but now I figured out other ways how to express my anger to you.

Sarah: Yeah. A couple times when you were little, you said, I hate you. And then you wrote me a note that said, I'm sorry. I don't hate you.

Speaker 2: I did do that a lot.

Sarah: One thing I want to go back to something you just said, which is you said, parents shouldn't do anything when a kid says, I hate you. So do you also

partly mean that they should just not really respond that they should [00:16:00] just not just not have a big reaction.

Speaker 2: Yeah don't be like, Why did you say that? Saying I hate you is not nice and you shouldn't tell people that you hate them. I feel like that would make a kid more upset in a different way. Yeah.

Sarah: Yeah, that makes sense. So do you think there's any difference between a little kid saying I hate you and a bigger kid saying I hate you?

Speaker 2: I think little kids, as I said, when they say, I hate you, they don't actually mean it. But I feel like, how big of a kid do you mean? Because a grown up person saying a grown up kid saying Like 25? That'd be pretty unusual. Maybe they actually do mean it because they know how to say what they're feeling.

Speaker 2: But I feel like anywhere to a little kid to my age they usually don't mean that they actually hate you. I don't know.

Sarah: Yeah, for sure. Cause

Speaker 2: I've said that I hate you to you and dad before, but I've never actually meant it. I was just like angry or upset.

Sarah: Is there anything parents could do that would make their kid not say I hate you?[00:17:00]

Speaker 2: I don't think that the kids say it because of something that the parents say. It's just a way of them expressing their feelings. How they're feeling, as I said before, and they don't know how to say how they're feeling in any other way.

Sarah: Makes sense.

Speaker 2: I feel like I'm, like, saying the same thing over and over again.

Sarah: Sometimes people need to hear things more than once so that they understand. Thank you. Was there anything that You wish I'd asked you or that you want to add about when kids say I hate you?

Speaker 2: I would say, to wrap things up, don't take offense to it, because most of 98 percent of the time, kids don't actually mean it, and they're just upset, because kids have very few ways of Showing that they're upset, number one, saying I hate you if they're angry number two, crying if they're sad, and then [00:18:00] there's one that's just like totally crazy where they're just like screaming, and those are like the top three.

Speaker 2: And don't take offense to it, and if you have a stronger action, then I feel like, It would make the kid even more mad, so don't scold them for saying I hate you and just sympathize with them and don't tell them that they said something wrong because then after they're done being mad it will make them feel even more bad that they said that they hated you if you make it a big deal.

Sarah: Oh, that is so wise, girl. Listen, I almost could have not said any of the things I said in the beginning of the podcast and we could have just had you because you've said such great things. Okay, here's another question for you. If a child, so I guess we aren't wrapping things up quite yet, but if a child doesn't say I'm sorry to a parent like you always did, do you think the parent should say anything?

Sarah: You Or do you, do you think the child feels bad and doesn't want to say something, or what do you think?

Speaker 2: I think [00:19:00] sometimes kids are sad, but maybe they don't realize that something that they said was sad and they just think that something else is making them upset. So maybe if your kid says that they hate you and then they don't apologize or something after, you could just say something like, I just wanted to tell you that I don't feel sad that you said I hate you.

Speaker 2: I know that you were just really upset, and I'm not upset at you for saying that.

Sarah: Oh my gosh. And you didn't

Speaker 2: hurt my feelings or anything, so please don't feel sad about it.

Sarah: Oh my gosh, you are gonna be such a good parent if you ever have kids. That is such a beautiful thing to say, girl. Aw. And it's true, right?

Sarah: Maybe they're not saying anything because they just feel really bad and they don't want to bring it up again. But, so I think that's so gracious. Your

suggestion is so gracious to just tell your child, I forgive you. I'm not upset with you. I know that you didn't mean it when they're [00:20:00] feeling calm again.

Sarah: Thanks Maxine.

Speaker 2: You're welcome.

Speaker 3: Thanks for listening to this week's episode. I hope you found this conversation insightful and 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.

Speaker 3: Sending hugs over the airwaves today. Hang in there. You've got this.