

Ep #155: Negativity



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

Welcome to The Life Coach School Podcast, where it's all about real clients, real problems, and real coaching. Now, your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

Well, hello there, my friends. What are you guys doing? What are you wearing? What do you got going on? Are you a mess? Do you look a mess right now? Come on. Tell me the truth. Got to clean that up. Go in there, clean that closet, get some clothes on. Let's do this.

I'm a little feisty. I've been feisty all week. My clients have been laughing at me. On the Self Coaching Scholars coaching call, I got like 10 emails afterwards people telling me I was on fire. I feel on fire right now. I have certain months that I just go through where I am just like on my game. Right now, my friends, I am on my game. I think one of the biggest parts of that is that I am loving my new format. I am loving Self Coaching Scholars. I'm loving talking to all the people in that group. I'm loving hearing about everybody's success stories and the accomplishments they are having in there. I do want to say the amount of weight loss that is happening in that group is off the hook. Seriously, props to all of you in Self Coaching Scholars losing weight.

Losing weight is no joke. Those of you who have committed to doing it and are like all in and like really getting those results for yourself, I just want you to take a minute and congratulate yourself. I am stoked for you.

Today what we're going to talk about is negativity and there's kind of a little caveat to that. I want to talk about innocent negativity in addition to just negativity because I think a lot of the time when we're being negative, it's innocent. We're not like going out trying to be a jerk. We're not going out and trying to be mean to ourselves. We're not waking up and going, "Hey, I want to think some negative thoughts today." No one does that. So many of us are negative kind of behind our own back. We don't even realize the negative things we say to ourselves and the negative things we say out loud and just the subtle negativity that runs through most people's thought stream and conversations. I want to bring a lot of awareness to you and I want you to notice this in other people.

Now, I'm not talking about looking for someone who's like, "I hate everything." That's obviously a negative person, someone that's constantly complaining, constantly negative. That's too obvious. I don't need to teach you guys about that. What I'm asking you to consider is that there is negativity that is below that obvious awareness that other people are bringing into your life and that you're bringing into their lives. I want you to be aware of it because it has a huge impact, probably one much more significant than you realize. It could be costing you relationships. It could be costing you time. It could be costing you money. I want to make sure that you are paying attention. That's always what I'm talking about, being aware and paying attention.

Nobody really thinks of themselves as a negative person. I've never had someone say, "You know, I'm pretty negative. Yeah, that's how I'd describe myself." Most of us. You guys, everybody knows a person that's constantly negative and they probably wouldn't even describe themselves as negative. It's not something that we would do on purpose.

Many of us are seeping with subtle negativity and blaming it on something outside of ourselves. I say to my clients all the time they say things they don't even realize they are saying. I'm going to give you some examples. "That won't work." "I don't like that." "I don't like that," you guys, is one of the most common. If you don't like something, first of all, recognize that that's a choice. That's not just a default. You're choosing not to like something. Own that decision. Think about if saying that you don't like something serves you.

Here's two things that I want you to consider. Think about something that if you hear yourself say, "I don't like that," I want you to ask yourself, "Is not liking that serving me? Should I make an effort to like it?" The second thing is, "Is there a reason for me to share that out loud? Is there an upside?"

"It's too hard." "I'm too busy." "That's impossible." "I've never made it happen before." "No, not yet." "I don't have enough time." "I'm exhausted. I'm tired." "It's a shit show." That one, I hear a lot too often. "I hate it." "She's so annoying." "I should. She should. He should." "He hurt my feelings." "She's dumb." These subtle

comments and thoughts create unnecessary negativity in our emotional lives. "I don't feel like it. I don't want to. I don't like that." Right? We don't even recognize it. "She's this. She's that. He's this. He's that." Thinking that you're just making an observation. Really, what you're doing is you are bringing up negativity.

Now, let's say that your negative statement is true. People always like to say that. "Well, it's true." Okay, just because something is true doesn't mean we have to think it or say it out loud. It doesn't mean we have to focus on it. Here's the other thing. What's true is what you believe. The best example of this right now is in politics. People have very differing opinions. Who's right? What is the truth? Well, it depends on who you ask. Everybody believes that they are the one that is speaking and telling and thinking the truth because they believe that their ideas are the truth. What makes something true is whether or not you believe it or not.

That's a really hard thing for a lot of my clients to wrap their minds around. How can two people believe something completely opposite and have both of those things be the truth?

Let's say, for example, you have a mutual friend and one of the friends thinks she's beautiful and wonderful and awesome and the other friend thinks she's okay, she's kind of attractive, she's kind of fun. Who's right? What is the truth? Whatever you believe is your truth, right?

Choosing your thoughts and choosing what you say out loud and also choosing what you want to focus on, whether it's true for you or not, and deciding what you want to be true.

When you think about the model, there's that C line. Those are the facts. Now, those are true in the sense that they exist. It is true that they exist in our minds and that we can agree on what they are. But our opinion about them is also true if we believe it. People say, "That's not true." Well, it feels true. "Well, that doesn't make it true." What makes something true is if you choose to believe it. If you choose to believe it, it will feel true because something true doesn't make it true. Then you have to ask yourself, "Okay, what do I want to

believe? Do I want to believe in negativity or do I want to believe in positivity?"

The world is a very negative place. Is that true? Yes. The world is a very positive place. Is that true? Yes. Which one are you going to choose to believe to focus on and make true and find evidence for? Whatever one you seek, you shall find.

Remember negative thoughts and negative sentences said out loud create negative emotion. Even if you're saying something that is "true" about someone else, if it's negative, you're going to feel negative. If you say, "I don't think he's a very good person. I think he's a terrible person," you could probably justify it. You could probably prove to me that that is true for you, but why would you do that? Why are you going around talking about what a negative, awful person someone is? That doesn't serve you in any way. "Did you see what he said? It was so negative." "Did you see what she said? It was so terrible." Really notice where that takes you in your mind.

We don't see ourselves doing this. We make a judgment or a criticism and we think we're just making an observation. We think the thing or true or the thing is negative and we're just stating the obvious, but we aren't. Nothing is negative until we state it as so. What? Nothing is negative until we state it as so. The C line is never ever, ever, ever negative. Facts are never negative. The only way something becomes negative is when someone has a thought about it. Only thoughts make things negative. Only sentences make things negative. Only our language, only our thoughts make things negative, never the C line, never the facts of the world. It's how we interpret and experience those facts in our brain that make them negative. Even things we want to see as negative, we can still state and focus on their opposite without changing our stance on something.

Let's say you want to think someone is very negative. You want to think something very negative about them. Let's say you have an acquaintance that cheated on their spouse. You want to think of them in a negative way. You make that a deliberate choice. You can either decide to talk about cheating and how horrible it is and how nobody should do it and how all people that do that are terrible or you can focus on fidelity and how you value that and how it's a beautiful thing

and you want to talk more about that. You don't have to give up your stance that cheating is negative, but you're still focused on the opposite positive part of that. That is something your brain will not want to do. Your brain will want to create negativity to keep you safe. Your brain is in survival. It wants to find the negativity. It's amazing how easy it is to think negative things.

Instead of talking about how much we don't like something, we can talk about how much we like its opposite. We can focus on not liking chocolate or we can focus on liking vanilla. We can focus on what we don't want or what we do want. When you find out something that you don't want or you don't like, don't focus on it. There is no upside. Focus on what you do want and what you do like.

Notice the things that you say. Pay attention. Have people tell you, "Hey, that was pretty negative. You're being pretty negative." As a coach, I'm able to point this out to my clients all of the time. When they post me a question, ask Brooke section, or when they ask me a question on a coaching call, I'm able to point out to them how they're being negative and they so surprised. It's such a habit that they don't even realize it.

Resisting something is not the same as being for something. One includes negativity and one includes positivity. You can focus on the job you have and don't like or you can spend your time thinking about the job qualities you do like. Subtle change changes everything. Any time you complain, you're indulging in negativity. Research shows that most people complain once a minute during a conversation. I found that on the Googles. I was like, "What? Can that be true?" I listened to people talk. Just go to the store and listen to people talk. They are smiling, they are upbeat, and they are saying a negative complaint once a minute. It's crazy.

If there's someone you're choosing not to like, you will mostly likely be complaining about them. This does not reflect on the person you are complaining about but reflects on you as a complainer. I'm going to read that again, that note to you again, and I want you to hear this. If there is someone you are choosing not to like, you will most likely be complaining about them. This does not reflect on the person you are complaining about but it reflects on you as a complainer. I do not

care how justified you are in not liking that person. I don't really care what that person did or said or how they showed up in the world. As your coach, what I care about is how you show up in the world. If you are showing up complaining about another person, that is what you need to be focusing on, you complaining, not about what they did.

In my family, we have meetings where we can only talk about the problem once. It seems that in most meetings, most of the time is spent talking about the problem. It seems easy for our brains to do this. We complain and judge and express opinions about why things don't work. In my family, we can only present the problem and then the rest of the time we can only focus on the solution. That's when I'm meeting with teenagers. I highly recommend that you implement this in all of your working relationships as well. How many meetings have you gone to ... I used to work in corporate America. I used to work at Hewlett-Packard and we would sit in meetings and complain about what wasn't working for the entire meeting. It was completely unproductive.

Now, this is much harder than it sounds. We're all tempted to justify the problem and explain the problem, which is actually quite useless. When we focus on talking about the solution, we engage another part of the brain that is creative and wise and release the primitive, danger-seeking part of our brain. It's important to remember that the brain is always scanning for evidence of what it believes. It's always scanning and filtering based on what it believes. If it believes that the world is bad, it will see the bad. If it believes it's good, it will find the good. What does this mean? Negativity begets negativity. If you have someone come into your space and say, "Oh my gosh. I can't believe this terrible weather. Did you notice how much traffic there was?" Now, that seems pretty innocent. It seems like just making an observation about the day, just pointing out the traffic. They could have easily said, "Blessed day today. Love that we're getting the water we need in California. Made it to work on time." What do you choose to say out loud? What do you choose to focus on?

When you go out in your life looking for the good, you will find the good. This is true in people, days, jobs, and even entire lives. You can look at your entire life and prove to me that it's terrible. You can also look at your entire life and prove to me that it's wonderful. You

have clean drinking water. You have electricity. You have earphones. Come on. You have an amazing life.

First, you must be super aware of what you're currently scanning for. If you can't find an area where you tend to be negative, find areas where you think you might be indifferent, where you don't really seem to care too much. You might be surprised at how much subtle negativity you can find in your thinking.

The final way to discover any hidden negativity is to look at the results in your life. All negative results come from negative thinking and maybe just a hint of negativity creating a small negative result, but they are all worth looking into and changing.

If you're in my Self Coaching Scholars program, you need to open up your podcast workbook and you need to turn to page 9 in your workbook and answer those questions on negativity. I set these up to reveal to you without you noticing the negativity that you're in in your life. Nobody wants to see themselves as negative so you're going to want to edit your own negativity out of your thought download. You're going to want to edit your own negative mindset as you answer these questions. Please don't do that because you will miss the opportunity for self-discovery and awareness. Once you do that, once you become aware of the little ways you might be being negative, from there you can change. You can't change before you're aware of it.

The other thing I want you to do is notice it in other people. Notice what they don't even notice about themselves, the negative things they say. "This line sucks." "This is terrible. I had a hard day today. I had a terrible day today." "I'm really tired right now." "I'm really stressed." "Nothing's going well." "This is really hard. You know what I mean?" It's like not even like enough to be negative in our minds, we got to bring other people in. "People suck." "My car is dirty. My house is dirty." "Not enough time." All those things. Just notice how many times people bring them up and how many times people say them. The more you notice them in other people, you start noticing them in yourself. Catch yourself doing them because they do affect you and they do affect people around you.

There are so many wonderful things in the world that you can be looking for and finding and thinking about, but you have to be deliberate. You have to tell your brain to look for the positive. This is not some pretend like everything's great positive thinking. This is genuinely looking for positive things in the world and see if you can find them.

What is your favorite thing to find in a day? Like little kids, when they run into me when I'm walking my puppies. They like lose their minds when they see my puppies. They lose it. My dogs lose their minds when they see other people. Here's one thing I notice when I'm on a walk. People are like, "Oh my gosh. Hi. Your dogs are so gorgeous. They're so great. I love your dogs. They're so cute. Can I pet them?" If I'm walking alone, nothing, like a polite smile. That's my favorite. Watching people meet my dogs is like one of my favorite things do to.

What is yours? Look for favorite things. I love it when my husband laughs. He's got the best laugh. I laugh loudly all the time and Chris laughs loudly every once in a while and when he does, it's just such a freaking treat so I look for it. When I do, I notice it. I pay attention. What else do you love? Crown molding. I look for it. I find it in my house. Every day I wake up, boom, crown molding. What is it that you're looking for? Are you looking for the positive or are you looking for the negative?

That is what you're going to do this week, my friends. Now, I want to introduce you to one of my Master Certified coaches, Torie Henderson. She is going to talk to you today after the outro, if you're interested, about how to handle it when your kids are driving you crazy. Some of you have those little kids and some of you have those big kids. I've got me some big kids and the truth is no one can drive us crazy but in our minds, we always think our kids are the exception. I know for me, I do. I'm like, "That model is great but I have teenagers and nothing applies." Anyway, I think this is a fantastic segment she created for you and please, please enjoy and check out her stuff. She's awesome! Talk to you guys next week. Bye bye.

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Podcast Feature: Torie Henderson

Hi, I'm Torie Henderson. I'm a Master Certified Life Coach and owner of lifecoachingforparents.com. I specialize in coaching overwhelmed super moms who are really good at taking care of everyone and everything else. They are very responsible and reliable, but they get exhausted, resentful, or lost through the process of caring for a family.

Today I want to talk to these super moms about what to do when your kids are driving you crazy. You know, it's really easy for super moms to find themselves in the land of crazy because we're so devoted to doing everything right and doing a good job as a mom and we have these kids who are not so devoted to do everything right. In fact, their job is to push boundaries and make mistakes and assert their independence as separate from ours. There's lots of things that can drive parents crazy. It could be something like my daughter won't wear pants or my son won't eat the food I cook for him or so many different things.

Let's use the example of my son plays too many video games. What I want you to think of in your life: Where are your kids really driving you bonkers right now? Maybe my daughter doesn't take school seriously. My son keeps getting in trouble at school. Something like that, wherever you find yourself really banging your head against the wall. We're going to take that and use it as an example today, figuring out what to do.

What I've found is when I'm coaching clients is I'll ask them, "Why is it bugging you that your son is playing so many video games? What are you making that mean about you that he's playing so many video games?" They might say things like, "He's rotting his brain," or, "He's not being social." But then they couldn't argue it because, well, he is being social. He's playing with his friends online or we watch TV and that doesn't rot my brain. Really what it boils down to, when we start

questioning our thoughts, is that what bugs us when our kids are doing a behavior we don't like is it makes us feel like we're not a good mom. Because he's playing so many video games, we start to doubt and question if we're doing enough as a parent. That's what really triggers us.

What I think is a great thing to do first is to write down what is your definition of a good mom and put it all out on paper because you're going to notice there's a lot of perfectionistic thinking in there. There's going to be things in there like a good mom wouldn't yell at her kids, but it doesn't say once a week is okay. It's going to say a good mom would never yell at her kids. It's very black and white thinking. If you can flesh it out, it's going to be really fascinating. Take out a piece of paper: how do you know when you're being a good mom?

There's going to be things that you have control over like whether you yell or hit your kids or patient and kind you are or whether you provide a peaceful, warm, comforting home and you provide them with clothes and food. There's going to be things in there that you have control, but my hunch is there's going to be things in your definition of what a good mom does that are about your kids. A good mom would have children who obey and respect the rules. A good mom would have kids who bathe regularly and wash their hands after using the bathroom and brush their teeth and brush their hair. A good mom would have kids who take school seriously and do their homework and try hard to pay attention in class. A good mom would have kids who are well-liked by their peers and make friends easily.

There's going to be so many things in there that you don't have control over, that your kid has control over. This is what happens. We put our identity and our ego and our ability to believe that we're a good mom in the hands of our kids. You want to look at where do you get triggered? Chances are, it's going to be in there. Now, a good mom would provide healthy food for her family and then your kid wants to eat junk food, it doesn't just feel like a small deal. It feels like a really big deal.

Flesh it out on paper. Look at where you're triggered. Also look at where you're judgmental of other moms. You can even think back to when you were pregnant or had little kids and you saw these crazy

hooligans at the park and you thought, "I'm never going to let my kids act like that in public," or, "I will never let my child dress that way." Things like that, those are juicy little tidbits and you want to write them down.

Think about where you find yourself judging others negatively, but also positively, other moms that you admire and go, "Oh, wow. Look what she does. I really admire the way she handled that situation or I like the way she talks to her kids. Look at how her house is always so clean and she always packs these cute little snacks for her children for school." Whatever it is, notice what you admire. Notice where you're judgmental.

Then take a look backwards, in your rear view mirror, to what your mom was like when you were a kid. Think about the things she did that you enjoyed. Our moms tend to form our shoulds. If your mom always kept a clean house and had dinner on the table every night for the family, you might have a should in there that says a good mom should also do that. There also might be things that you enjoyed like your mom always made a big deal about Halloween costumes and handmade them and sewed them and so you had this idea that that's what a good mom would do or a good mom would prepare a lovely Thanksgiving feast or something like that.

You also want to take a look at what your mom did that you didn't like. Maybe you made a declaration and said, "When I'm a parent, I'm never going to act like this. I'm not going to do what my mom did. I'm going to do it differently." I have one client who her mom prioritized chores and hard work and they had to do a lot of chores around the house. She said, "When I have kids, I'm not going to make them do their chores. I'm going to prioritize play and fun." Now, of course, she's exhausted wondering why she's the one doing all the work and everybody else is playing and having fun.

Those are really good things to take a look at to see what has helped you form this definition of a good mom. Certainly a lot comes through the media and just through peers today. To get it out all on paper, just like Brooke talks about when you have a manual for somebody else and that you can be happy or sad depending on whether they're obeying your manual, writing it down is so helpful so you can see

what's kind of controlling your emotions. In this case, writing down your definition of what a good mom does, what she looks like, is going to be really helpful.

Then I want you to take this definition and you're going to take a neutral circumstance. Think about something that's bugging you right now and let's use example of my daughter's always on her cell phone. We want to make that into a neutral circumstance. You could say, "My daughter is 14. She has a cell phone." You could say it's very factual that she's on it five hours a day and you could take that to a court of law and prove that approximately that is her cell phone usage, but saying, "My daughter's on her cell phone five hours a day," that might be a little bit heavy. It might not have that neutral feeling. You want to make sure it's really neutral emotionally and move it to something like, "My daughter's 14. She has a cell phone and she uses it to communicate with her friends." Can you feel how that one's a little more neutral?

Find a very neutral circumstance and then you're going to ask yourself, "How do I want to feel about the fact that my daughter has a cell phone and uses it to communicate with her friends?" This is where you get your power. This is what you have control over. How do I want to feel about this fact? You might say, "Well, I want to feel accepting." If you listen to Brooke's podcast on giving up versus accepting, this is so important to pay attention to because it's so subtle. You might think, "Well, I want to feel accepting. Kids today, this is just how they communicate and there's nothing I can do about it. If she didn't have a cell phone, she wouldn't be able to socialize at all. I just have to surrender and let her do it." You want to pay attention to how that feels because if there isn't a feeling of freedom and liberation, then it's probably giving up and not accepting. Acceptance is always going to have this taste of freedom to it. Really let your emotions be your guide here.

Let's say accepting isn't working and your daughter's on her cell phone all the time and you say, "I want to feel capable. I want to feel empowered. I want to feel calm." You get to choose how you want to feel about this fact. When we can find an emotion that helps us find our calm confident energy, we will always parent from a better place.

For example, let's say you are frustrated. Your daughter's always on her phone. It's driving you crazy. You're yelling at her. You're taking it away. We tend to either go overly permissive or overly authoritative or sometimes bounce back and forth between both, which is why we feel so crazy all the time and why our kids don't trust us as a stable leader.

We'll either say, "Fine, use your cell phone. Whatever you want. I don't care. Rot your brain," but we really do care, we really have an opinion, but we were just so tired of the fight that we kind of give up and go overly permissive. Or we tend to go into overly authoritative, which we start making lots of rules and lots of boundaries and, "No cell phones after 9 pm and no cell phones at the dinner table and I'm just going to take the cell phone away. I'm going to cancel it and I'm going to reduce your minutes and I'm going to change the wifi code." We kind of start coming up with all these different rules, which aren't in themselves bad, except there's just so many and maybe they're so extreme, that it's hard for us to keep up with them. When we make them, we're rooted in insecurity. We're believing we're not being a good parent and so our kid senses that and doesn't trust us as a strong leader. They might obey us for a day or a week but they know eventually we will settle back in to our old ways and they don't necessarily trust us and want to follow us.

When you can find your calm confident energy, you can always take actions that are more likely to have a good response from your children. If you think to yourself, "I want to feel calm about the fact that my daughter is on her cell phone and uses it to communicate with her friends," then you might be able to set a boundary. "Hey, no cell phones after 9 pm. When we come to the dinner table, we're all going to put our cell phones in a basket and nobody's going to look at them for 30 minutes." It's something that's very easy for you to follow through on and you feel confident in it and so you follow through with it. Your daughter, she might push back in the beginning and test you and see if you really mean it, but eventually she'll settle in because she can sense the energy of what you're coming from.

I'll give you the example of when my daughter was four years old. She was driving me crazy because I have this rule in my definition of a good mom is that a good mom would have children who are kind

and polite to others. At four years old, as amusing as my daughter was, she had no interest in being polite and kind. That just wasn't anything that was her value or priority. It was driving me bonkers because it really is one of mine. I thought, "What's the neutral circumstance here? Because I can't say my daughter is mean. That does not feel very neutral." I said, "My daughter is four years old. She has opinions that are different than mine. She has a different personality than I have." That was my neutral circumstance. I said, "How do I want to feel about the fact that my four-year-old has a different personality than I do?" I thought, "I want to feel capable. I want to feel motivated."

I came up with the thought, "I can model kindness for her. I can show her through my example how to be kind." Then all the focus came back on me. I was completely in my own business, minding my own business and taking control of something I actually had control over because I wasn't being very nice. I was like yelling at her like, "You need to be nice." That didn't work very well. This felt much more doable. I was just, no matter how rude she was, I modeled kindness towards her and towards others. She's 12 now and I have to say a very kind courteous girl. Even if she wasn't, at least I would have felt like I had done what I could, I had done my best job as a mom. Whoever she turns out to be, she turns out to be. At least I get to feel like I'm doing what I can.

When your kids are driving you crazy, you want to write down a definition of a good mom. Then you're going to create a neutral circumstance, think about how you want to feel about that circumstance and then find a thought that helps you feel that way. If you're not sure what kind of a thought you can find, look at other areas of your life where you are feeling confident and competent as a parent. We all have some area where we handle things really easily and well. Maybe you are really good at following the rules of the road and a good safe driver and your kids are always in their car seats and they know to buckle up and they don't argue it because that one time they did unbuckle, you're like, "Oh, we're going to unbuckle? I'll pull over and I'll wait for you to buckle up." There's just no energy there because you're just very confident and calm in that area and they know it and they know not to push it. Does that make sense?

There's going to be an area in your life where you have some confidence and competence in and you can borrow your thought there. My children always brush their teeth. They visit the dentist twice a year. It's just a no-brainer. What is your thought you have around the teeth brushing that makes that such an easy thing for you? Think about what you use there and then bring it in to the other areas of your life where your kids are pushing back on you.

When we can stay in our own emotional adulthood and take responsibility for how we feel, our kids will learn to do the same. It's the greatest thing to get to watch because the number one way kids learn is by imitation. When we start taking responsibility for this is how I want to feel and this is the circumstances and I can decide how I want to handle it and staying in our own business, it's just so empowering. I highly encourage you to do this.

If you want to take it deeper, you can go to my website, lifecoachingforparents.com/work-with-me. That is my online schedule and you can schedule a free discovery call and we'll get you finding that calm confident energy from which kids are just wired to obey.

Thank you so much for listening to this call. I think this time in our lives is so special and so precious, when we're parenting, that we should kind of enjoy it and get the most out of it that we can. Everyone says that kids are our greatest teachers, but nobody says how. I really think this is how. They're showing us those parts of our lives where we still feel unworthy, insecure. We still believe that we're not worthy of being obeyed. When kids are reflecting that back to us, that's just showing us this is where we have our work to do, where we get to believe I'm a good mom because I want to believe that. I'm going to take responsibility for that.

When I put my identity and my belief that I'm a good mom into the hands of a hormonal teenager, I'm never going to get a good result. Or I put my belief in my own worthiness in the hands of a preschooler whose mission in life is to be independent from me and have her own will, then I'm going to lose. When we take charge and we say, "I'm going to believe I'm a good parent and this is how I'm going to do it," then we win and our kids win because they learn how to do it from our example.

You know, when our kids are babies, everything they do is our business, whether they cry, they poop, what they eat, 100% our business. Then every year, it's less and less. By the time they're four, what they eat might be we get to decide whether we give them healthy foods and what foods we provide for them, but they decide whether they eat it or not. Learning where to let go and where to keep pressing, those are really challenging things for parents. When kids go into school and they start kindergarten, I would say schoolwork is maybe 80% a parent's business. By the time they get up to high school, it's like 10%. The teenagers are responsible for probably 90% of whether they study, how they learn, where they do their schoolwork. It's a very gray area. There isn't a fine line for us to see when should we let go and let them figure it out and solve their own problems and make their own mistakes and when should we step in and help them.

There's a lot of challenges just inherent in parenting but it's such a wonderful time that I think making the most of it and finding the most joy we possibly can while we are doing it is really worthwhile.

Thank you so much for listening. This is Torie Henderson with lifecoachingforparents.com.