

Back To School Scripts For Moms



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Welcome to Mom On Purpose, where it's all about helping moms overcome challenges and live their best lives. My hope is by being here, you are more inspired to become the mom you are made to be. I'm Natalie, your host, a wife, mom, dog mama, Chicagoan, and former lawyer turned professionally certified coach. If you're here to grow, I can help. Let's go.

Hello my beautiful friends. Welcome to the podcast. How's back to school going? I hope it's going well and if it's not, not to worry. I got you. I am going to share with you 10 back to school scripts that I think could be very powerful as you navigate your back to school transition, regardless of if it's with a very little one, like in my case, I'm sending my oldest to school this year for the first time. Or it could be the same for someone who is in middle school or a teenager or even, you know, some of these would apply off to college because foundationally these scripts are rooted in connection.

They're not rooted in control or fear. And I think because of that, so much of what I'm going to share with you applies across all ages. I have been coaching many of you on the back to school transition and one thing that I want to say at the start of this is make sure you clean up your why for why you are implementing tools and strategies to help with back to school. Said differently. If you are doing it to try to make sure your kids are happy, then you are doing it for not a very helpful reason because in a sense you're saying, okay, if I do all of these things, if I get the scripts right, if I do all of the kind of attachment rooted, you know, goodbyes, if I come up with these routines, if I do all the X, Y and Zs that they recommend out there and then my child is happy, then that means I'm doing a good job and it worked right?

"It worked" because what does that really mean? If you base it off of your child's emotions, I don't think that's healthy, nor is it helpful. And that's where it gets tricky because I want to offer you so many tools and I'm going to, but just make sure you do it because that's the kinda mom you want to be. Not because you think it's going to guarantee a certain outcome for your child. Remember, focus on what you can control. You are in charge of focusing on being the mom who you want to be. That's where all of your

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power lies. Some of your kids are going to have challenges regardless of how much you do or implement and that doesn't mean that you did a bad job. Your actions do not equate to their results. If you have more than one child, you know that each of your kids has a different type of temperament and they have very different challenges.

I had three boys, obviously it's with my husband, same husband, and myself within three years. And all of my boys are so different. I am astounded and just amazed by genetics and environment and how different three boys of the same sex can be and have the same parents and be in the same environment. And I think it's so cool and I think it's supposed to be that way. So applied to back to school, just remember that you're going to use these scripts because that's kind of mom you want to be, not because it's going to control and equate to a happy kid. So base your success whether you showed up and said the script and did X, Y, Z, not basing your success on whether your child was happy about it. Some kids are just going to have a harder transition and that's okay. I remember doing all of the things when we transitioned from one child to two, like the books, the classes, the dolls, the, gifts, the, you know, just all like above and beyond to do that transition.

And I was actually really shocked at how rough it was. And looking back I see oh a little bit at least I was doing all those things thinking that it meant that my oldest son was going to therefore have a much easier transition than if I didn't do those things. And who knows, maybe he would've had an even worse or bigger transition or a harder time if I hadn't done any of those things. Like we'll never know. But the key is to kind of detach from your child's experience so that they feel comfortable being authentically themselves. They don't feel like they have to have a good time, they have to make school fun, they have to have a smile on their face when they're pulling back tears just to make mom happy and feel good about herself. So you want to really separate out your success as a mom from your kids' experience.

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And this is going to benefit you and not make you so like controlling and weird with them, but it's also going to benefit them and their experience because they're going to feel an even stronger bond and just feel like they're able to be more open and authentic with what's really going on, for them, which of course is what you want. So okay, with that in mind, I do have scripts that again are rooted in attachment and I'm using these and I love them and I think that they focus on what you can control. The kind of mom who you want to be validating feelings, separating out, wanting from getting and just reinforcing that separation is a normal part of growing up and that you know, mommy always comes back. So with that in mind, let's dive into 10 scripts that can help you with transitioning back to school.

Number one, it's okay to feel sad. Let your child know that sadness is a normal healthy feeling. It's not something to be fixed or avoided. By naming the feeling you're going to help them feel understood. You're going to help them feel accepted and it also builds emotional intelligence in them and shows them that they don't have to hide their emotions from you. I love saying it's okay to feel however you're feeling. It's okay to feel sad. Mommy feels sad too sometimes if it's not sadness for them or if you notice that it's another emotion, maybe they're unsure or they're scared, just add in those words. So it might be something like fear and uncertainty are so common during new experiences and that's okay just telling them that out loud gives your child permission to acknowledge the feeling instead of bottling it up and thinking that because they're feeling the negative emotion, that must mean that going to school is bad.

It's like, oh no, no, no, no, this is totally normal. Feeling sad, feeling scared, feeling unsure. All of those emotions. Normal part of transitions, part of the human experience. Number two, if this new school year feels tricky, that's normal. I love this script. I love identifying a challenge as something that's a little bit different or a little bit tricky and then normalizing it. So telling your child if this school year feels tricky, that's normal. And if you want, depending on the age of the child, you can elaborate. Change can be uncomfortable even when it's exciting and letting your child know that it's normal again to you know, kind of be unsure to have something new in the

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future. Feel tricky, helps them not feel wrong for having mixed feelings. I can't stress this enough, it's so important. And then you're also setting the tone, which I love to encourage anyways for welcoming all feelings.

Of course not all actions are welcome, but all feelings are welcome. Number three is to tell them that two feelings can be true at once. For example, you might say you might feel excited and feel nervous and you can feel both of those feelings at the same time. I was just actually having this conversation with my son ahead of him starting school just to talk about feelings and totally detaching from how that actually goes on drop off day. But knowing that I'm doing my part and just normalizing these conversations and normalizing that two things can be true at one time. Like you might feel really excited and you might feel nervous and I think saying that out loud again gives your child permission to express how they're feeling even if they don't have the vocabulary for it. Like obviously my kids are really little and so I'm just introducing that vocabulary for you know, their sake, but also just how I want to set the tone in our home that all feelings are welcome.

I'm validating your feelings, taking the shame away, right? Oftentimes we make such a big deal of back to school and we have the pictures and the new clothes and the new school supplies and we're talking about teachers and classrooms and friends and you know, taking a tour. All of the things which is awesome. But you know, not making it a bad thing if there's negative emotion also wrapped up in there, it's like complicated. It doesn't have to be so all or nothing like either this is going to be a really happy, wonderful experience or it's going to be awful. It's like, oh no, no, no. This is a different new experience. And with that two things can be true. You can be feeling excited and you can be feeling nervous and all of it is okay. The number four script is, it's okay to cry. I love just talking about crying and normalizing, crying.

I do this with my clients all the time. We are in the habit of just apologizing for crying. Why? Can we just stop that? Tears are a healthy way to release and express emotions and reassuring your child that crying is okay,

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teaches them not to suppress their feelings. So you're showing them that emotions are safe to feel and express and I always love to add in some stories there as well. It's totally okay to cry, mommy cries too sometimes. Crying is just a way for your body to express and release emotions. Number five, you can miss me and I will miss you too. This statement builds connection. Even in separation, you're acknowledging their experience and you're also sharing yours, which reinforces that sort of sense of mutual love. I think it makes the goodbye feel more like a see you later, see you soon versus a forever, which again, depending on the age of your kids is really important.

Like really little kids don't understand that you're going to come back and when you're going to come back, like time is is challenging for them, right? If you remember or have little kids, the way that they talk about days and time is you know, funny but also doesn't make any sense. And so they don't really understand that. And so when you start to reference seeing them again and coming back, it's going to be really, really helpful. Number six, you don't have to want to go to school, but you do have to go, this might be my favorite one because it combines validating their experience, their desire, and it separates out what they're actually going to do. It separates out wanting from getting this is the mistake I see probably made the most. It's because you know your child's going to go to school, you inadvertently negate their wants.

And what that does is then the child doesn't feel seen and they make it bigger. So for example, if your child's saying I really don't want to go to school, and you say something like, it's okay, you're going to make friends, it's going to be great. Like you know, get ready, we gotta go. That is trying to negate their want. You're saying you should want to go to school. And it's such a subtle difference but it's actually very powerful. I use this all the time with my kids, not just with school. It's like you don't have to want to do X, Y, Z, but you're going to do X, Y, z. It says, I see you and I hear you and I know you don't want to. And that's what we're doing. Separating out, wanting and validating that desire of theirs from getting, you don't have to want to go to school, but you do have to go.

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I would use this with my son during his season of swimming when he like really didn't want to go. It's like, I hear you, I get it. You don't want to go to your swim lessons and you're going. So keep that in mind. You don't have to want to go but you do have to go. Number seven, mommy always comes back. This one I use and have been using for a very long time. Anytime I separate because again my kids are so little, mommy always comes back and this is a great one for school, especially if separation for that length of time. Like in my case, this is the first time that my son will really be going somewhere without either of his parents by himself. And so reinforcing that I always come back is so helpful to really emphasize the secure attachment. It's a simple consistent message and it really does build trust and it can be especially helpful with separation anxiety.

I think it also creates this mental picture or this story that helps them understand the rhythm of the day, the cadence of the day. And so I talk a lot with my son about how we're going to go and we're going to drop you off and then you're going to stay with your classmates and the teacher and all the other kids your age in the classroom and mommy's going to go home and then in a couple hours I'm going to come back and pick you up. Mommy always comes back. It's just been a really, really helpful one. Number eight, my love is with you all day. I love this one. Do any of you read those books where it talks about my love is with you wherever you go? My gosh, I like get tears in my eyes but I love this because it gives them I think an invisible love anchor almost carry with them, which I think is comforting when they're not with you when they want to think of you.

And I think it can feel more connecting emotionally even when you know there's the separation when you're physically apart. So something like, my love goes with you all day, my love is with you wherever you go, I'll love you even when we're not together. Something that's emphasizing your love is there even when you're apart. So important. Number nine, you are capable of doing hard things. I love this one but I want to be clear that I don't think this is a great one to start with. Especially if you haven't done the work of validating what they want. If they want to stay home, if they don't want to go, if they're feeling really sad, what you don't want to do is just kinda

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ignore their experience and just go in with some positive thoughts like, you're capable of this, you're going to have a great time, it's going to be so amazing, right?

It's sort of like toxic positivity and again it just makes them feel unseen so they'll probably make their emotions bigger to try to get you to see them. And so I like to think of this one as something that you can add in there after you've done the validating, after you've said it's okay to cry, it's okay to feel sad and and talked about that separation if appropriate and you know your child. So that's where the art to this comes in. You might say you are capable of doing hard things, you're reminding your child that their capability builds resilience. It tells them that hard doesn't mean impossible. That just because they have these negative emotions doesn't mean that they're incapable. It doesn't mean something bad, it doesn't mean something's gone wrong. You are helping them really notice and pay attention to and identify with their own capacity and their own strength in the face of something that feels challenging for them.

So I love this one again, I just want to emphasize that you know, it's probably not going to be one that you use right away. Number 10, the last one, I can't wait to hear about your day when I see you. I love this one particularly because of how it's open-ended and it gives space to your child to tell you what the day was like versus I hope you have a fun day. I hope you have a great day. I think those types of lines are better suited after the kids are well transitioned into the school year. So throughout the school year, if you're saying, Hey, I hope you have a great day, I hope you have fun today. You know, I don't see any harm in that. Just notice though it's not as open-ended. So you know, another one that I try not to say to my kids is like, did you have fun?

Like almost as if I need them to have fun, for me to feel happy and that sense of relief when they say yes. And so I try to make my questions more open-ended. Like how was today or how was it when you were playing with your cousins and just allowing space for them to share whether it was positive or negative and not hanging my emotions on that. It's not hard to

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do, it's just sneaky. 'cause I think we naturally want our kids to have a positive experience and have a good time and have fun. And the problem with that is that when, that's the expectation, 100% of the time they're not going to feel comfortable telling you when they're not okay, when they are sad, when it was hard when you know the friends weren't nice or whatever it is. And so saying something like, I can't wait to hear about your day when I see you.

Just gives them something to look forward to and builds sort of this anticipation of connection, but it's also open-ended IE without agenda. I think back to being an attorney and like leading questions and how with my kids, I'm trying not to offer leading questions. I'm trying not to suggest that I need them to have a specific experience in order for mom to feel happy. Instead I'm asking questions just genuinely as open-ended as I can to let them lead in terms of what that experience was like. Because if you just zoom way out and think about your kids, you know, 20 years in school or more, they're going to have some challenges and they're going to have some hard times and they're definitely going to have some negative emotions and frustrations and challenges with friends or grades or whatever it is. And for me, and I'm sure for you, we want to be able to be a space for our kids to come and express that.

And the only way they're going to do that is if they feel safe and secure expressing those negative experiences. Which means that you as mom, and I'm talking to myself as well, can't take it personally or make it mean something's gone wrong or now you have to fix it or that it reflects poorly on you as a mom. It just creates a barrier for that connection and that authenticity. So I'm always trying to be mindful of that. I'm definitely not perfect at it, but I get better at it as I apply these tools and, and I want to offer these scripts to you. I think that can be extraordinarily powerful and helpful when you use them just to be the mom who you want to be inside the Mom On Purpose Membership, there's this Intentional Parenting class where I teach the mom like it's your job process and it's so life-changing because it explains how to define success standards on things you can control so that when your kids are unhappy, when they are struggling, when

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they're having a meltdown or the transition to school doesn't go well or they're fighting with their siblings or you know, fill in the blank of whatever the challenge of the day is.

You are not making that mean that you are a bad mom or that you did something wrong or that this is a problem for you to fix. Instead you are basing your success as a mom based on factors within your control. And then the beautiful thing is that you can support them. You're just not doing it from this weird controlling place where you need to solve this in order to feel good about yourself. It's sneaky, it's pervasive. And one of my clients recently was like, why? Why do we do this? And I think it's because of the way that we validate other moms and each other as a society. So for example, if you have a neighbor and that neighbor's kids do really well and excel in school, how often do we just compliment the mom? Oh my gosh, you're such an amazing mom. I can't believe your kids are excelling in school like that.

Right? And as soon as we start to do that, we equate a child's outcomes with the mom's parenting. And the problem with that is that what about when a kid is struggling and when a kid is having challenges? Because if mom gets credit when kids are excelling, that also means that mom has to take the blame when kids are having challenges. And so I'm not suggesting that parents don't have an influence on the outcomes of their kids. Yes, but you can't control your kids' challenges nor their outcomes. And you know this, if you have more than one kid, they'll have different challenges and it'll be like the same parenting, the same household, the same parents, the same environment. And it's just differences for each child. I like to think, and this is my personal philosophy, that each human being has a soul, a God-given soul, that it is here to navigate certain challenges and they are in the exact family they're supposed to be to navigate those challenges.

And every single person's soul will have different challenges to navigate. And that's the way it's supposed to be. This really helps me make sense of challenges that I don't understand challenges that seem so easy. If it was me and yet I just remind myself, oh yeah, that's not my challenge, that's not

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supposed to be my challenge. Okay, getting a little bit off topic, but it does apply here because you may have a child who adjusts very well and quickly to the transition of school and then you may have another child that doesn't and that's okay. They may have very different hardwired attachment systems. Like I can already tell one of my sons has a more anxious attachment system and that's okay. And so I just pay attention to that and I do a little bit more work on that because that's kinda mom I want to be.

And so it's not you that is responsible for all of the outcomes and you want to untie your success from your kids' happiness and from their grades and how they do and IE their performance, right? And when you untie your success from that and you base your success on things you can control, then you can use scripts like today's scripts in this podcast just because it's the mom who you want to be. And that my friend is so powerful and empowering because then you can help your child without kinda having the mom guilt and the worry and instead it's just from this really clean, loving, supported, connected leadership place of oh yeah, this is the mom who I want to be. Alright, my beautiful friends. Good luck sending your little ones and your big ones off to school. I have already grown so much this school year, even though we're just getting started in it from the work I've done in the last two-ish months on sending my first to school.

And it's been really fun to just feel differently about it. I went from feeling kind of dread like, oh, I don't want to send him to school. I'm not ready to feeling like this is the right time. To feeling confident, feeling so much more secure and entering this different new chapter and really looking forward to it. And I'm sure there will be ups and downs along the way, which is why I use these tools. I think coaching affords me the opportunity to just be able to be present and connected and you know, go with the flow, ride the waves of the ups and downs as they come because I know that all of my kids are going to have different challenges and my job is to show up as the mom I want to be. So I'm doing this work right alongside you. Come inside the Membership or get some private coaching if you would like support on this. Private coaching's over at momonpurpose.com/support and the membership. You can learn all about it over at

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momonpurpose.com/coaching. Until then, I'll talk with you next week. Take care.

Thank you for being here and listening now. Head on over to momonpurpose.com/coaching to learn more about the Mom On Purpose Membership, where we take all of this work to the next level.