

Later Lasts Longer-How To Parent With Long Term In Mind



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With Your Host

Natalie Bacon

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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, boy 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. How are we doing today? I'm so happy to be here with you. It is my birthday month. At the end of this month May, I am turning 40 and as I was saying to my clients inside the membership today, I have some thoughts about it. I typically have such intentional and abundant thoughts about aging. Like I've done a lot of work on that and I feel like I'm in a pretty good abundant place with my mindset. But there is something different for me about turning 40 that I just didn't expect or anticipate.

And so I am being curious about myself, watching my brain kind of make a bigger deal about this and, resisting kind of the temptation to go into negative thinking that could easily be validated about, I don't know, just what the brain does, negative thoughts about getting older, right? Just in our culture specifically with kind of glorifying youth and just thinking about who I want to be as a woman in her forties and over 40 and being more intentional about that. So anyways, that's what's on my mind. May, 2026 has been sort of, looming, if you will. My husband Steve is six months younger than me, so, from now or at the end of this month until, December, you know, it's a running joke that he teases me about being an older woman and I feel like this year specifically, it's going to hit a lot harder because of it being 40, but we'll see.

I'm going to give him a hard time for sure about 40 and it being upcoming for him because it hasn't really sunk in, which it didn't for me, for most of 39. So that's what's on my mind. Also, of course, enjoying the gorgeous weather that we have been blessed with. It is definitely a Midwest thing to talk about the weather and I am no exception. I remember living in Charleston and it was not a thing. I just enjoyed every single beautiful day all the time. And the benefit, one of the benefits of living in the Midwest is like the gratitude and appreciation that I feel so deeply in the spring. Alright, that's really it. What's going on here? We got summer coming up and let

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me know. Send me an email at theteam@momonpurpose.com if you want me to do an episode about creating a summer routine and kind of what thoughts you have about it, where you feel resistance, where you are feeling a little bit unsure or dread or any kind of negative unhelpful mindset, feelings, perspective about the summer.

And I will address that in a podcast. I did a short mindful message on it inside the Membership, which by the way, did you know that you get three mindful messages on the private podcast every single week plus a group coaching call replay, plus the podcast. So every single day, Monday through Friday on the members only private podcast, you get something. Isn't that amazing? I'm telling you the recurring positive, helpful, skillset of thought work, having that in your ear every single day Monday through Friday is like such a game changer. So anyways, mindful message on there about, summertime and routines and transitions and structure, and I was thinking maybe I should do a podcast on it this month. Let me know if you would like to hear that. Just write in to theteam@momonpurpose.com and if you want to include anything about your specific challenge, I'd be happy to consider that and answer that as well.

Alright? Not at all what we are talking about today, we are going to talk about later lasts longer, and how to parent with the long term in mind. This is something that kind of has an undertone to my parenting philosophy of connected parenting and I found it to be really helpful for my clients, but it hasn't been something that I have specifically talked about here, so let's do it. Later last, longer. What that means is that the time that you have with your kids after they leave the home lasts longer than the time that you have with the them. And that's generally the principle, but it also even applies when they are at home, like in terms of out of the moment. So in the moment of kinda a challenge or trying to get out the door, or a moment where you could use a lot of correction or even, you know, like control or any sort of yelling like that moment is right now, but when we say later, last longer, what we mean is outside of that moment, the time we have with our kids, even if they are in our home, but definitely after that, that lasts longer.

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Childhood in general even is short, right? Adulthood is much longer. Just think of like the far majority of our lives is spent in adulthood. So remembering this can be really, really helpful because so much of parenting can feel like the next five minutes, how do I get him to stop? How do I get her to listen? How do I end this tantrum? How do I get compliance right now? How do I make sure the next tantrum in public doesn't happen this way and I get the temptation to go there in your mind. I think that that's where my brain would go on default without these tools. And also remembering that later lasts longer, keeps me out of those thinking patterns. Because if short term relief and short term sort of control and compliance, right? Getting your kids to "behave a certain way" becomes the most important thing. There's usually a cost, right? And the cost is typically disconnection, fear, secrecy. You know, a child who behaves a certain way around you but doesn't trust you with, you know, their inner world.

So let me ground this in an example. Let's say you're trying to get out the door in the morning, your child insists on having milk like in an open cup. You know, that's probably going to lead to a spill. So you really don't want to, but you let them have it anyways. And sure enough, your child, he spills the milk. Your immediate kinda goal is to stop the mess, make sure it doesn't happen again, move things along, stay on track with the routine. So you find yourself sort of tense, snapping, maybe you don't really yell, but there's this sense of wrongdoing that your son interprets and you can sort of see if you're paying attention like them hiding in a certain way or lashing out either way, it's like shame, right?

So if you use control to get compliance or call it teaching or something like that, what might happen is your child then becomes extra careful, especially like right away after, let's say for the rest of like breakfast in the morning routine and they're getting on their shoes like very quickly or whatever, which normally isn't their typical behavior, your brain can think, oh, that worked right by me, being more firm and you know, saying whatever I said and, and being more tense and even snapping a little bit and more controlling there I got my child to behave in a certain way. And on

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the surface that is true, but underneath what's actually happening is that there's kind of cracks happening in the connection with the relationship because what the child may experience is fear. They may start to think that it's not okay to make mistakes around you, and the next time that something goes wrong or they make a mistake, they may try to hide it or lie about what happened or, you know, in this example of spilled drink, right? It's like clean it up in secret. So outwardly you get more compliance with the child, but inwardly you lose honesty, safety, and connection.

And that is what I mean by later lasts longer. I also think that how we were parented plays into this. So speaking from my own experience, like I was definitely parented in the more kind of typical way for that time, which I would describe as like more strict, more controlling, sometimes a little bit inflexible, kind of like the authoritarian parenting. Like there's low warmth, high structure, and you can typically tell this type of parenting with language like it's a one-way street because I said, so there's timeouts, it's a little bit more rule-based and punitive. And the problem with this and kind of why I'm doing this podcast, right? Because I think so many of us were parented this way and what we experienced and we turned out okay, is what we will continue unless we know that there's a better way and there is a better way.

So what happens with like authoritarian parenting is that you do get more "well-behaved kids", but there, there isn't that connection and that openness in the relationship. And so fast forward to teenage years, to young adulthood, the child is going to prioritize that attachment over authenticity, which means like if they make a mistake just to ground it in an example, like let's say they make a mistake or they cheat or they lie, or just, you know, something more complicated happens, right as it happens to adults as well, like later on in life, you know, it's not the spilled milk, it's friend dynamics and all these things happening, right? And it's, it's complex. There are layers. So what will happen if the connection in the relationship isn't built on trust and safety is that they will hide what's happening. Your kid will hide what is happening.

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And so they will feel like in order to make you happy, in order for you to be proud of them, that they need to show you a certain presentation of what their life looks like and it needs to all be rainbows and daisies and you need to be following the rules. And if you, break the rules or if you make mistakes or if you get in trouble or whatever it is, if something bad happens and you know you're at fault or you're not at fault, whatever the case may be, you are more likely to hide it as the child if you were raised with that type of strict controlling parenting because it doesn't feel emotionally safe for you to share. What I mean by that is, I don't mean like abuse, I mean emotionally safe as in the attachment bond, seems like it will be fractured, right?

So, again, a practical example. If every time your kid makes a mistake or gets something wrong or gets in trouble, right, you're yelling at them, putting them in timeout, what they learn is that when I make mistakes and when I do something bad or wrong, my attachment bond with my secure base, my parent is jeopardized. And so I better not do something wrong or make mistakes. And I, if I do, I better hide it from them. Because first and foremost, as human beings, especially children, we are wired for attachment. And that is like the most important thing way more than authenticity. And so you'll hear me say sometimes that as human beings, like even adults, but definitely as kids, we're always choosing the attachment bond over authenticity. So this is why people lie, right? It's actually because they value maintaining a certain type of relationship where the other person is happy and thinking the relationship is one way over authenticity, okay?

And so when your kid lies, it is, not because they're like horrible person or they don't have values or they don't respect you, right? It's because, for whatever reason, for them telling you the truth would somehow jeopardize that relationship, that attachment, right? Maybe you get mad, maybe you yell, maybe you punish them, maybe you take away their favorite thing, whatever, it's, now this doesn't mean that, acceptance means permissiveness, right? So it doesn't mean that, because you want your kids to like be honest with you and be able to come to you that you don't have

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any rules or boundaries. So for example, if your child, I don't know, cheats or steals something, right? It's not like in order for them to feel safe telling you that you need to think that's awesome, tell them you can tell me anything and you can do anything.

And we have no rules here and it's safe to tell me whatever, right? It's not like that. Instead, I, again, I love to think of it like a really good boss or a really awesome coach who has standards and rules and structure and also the delivery is warmhearted. There's a mutual respect. And mutual respect does not always mean yes. And so you can have consequences or rules or guidelines or boundaries, definitely, and I would encourage you to do that, but however you want to parent, right? But the way that you deliver them, the way that you communicate them, the way that your child receives that is from connection. It can be like, I love you and no, let's talk about what happened. I want you to know, I know you lied and you know, it's, it's like you wouldn't test them, right? You're thinking we're on the same team and you want to have this connected relationship with them where they're sharing more with you, right?

We all want to feel seen and heard and validated. And guess what? We're messy humans who make mistakes, who get things wrong, who fumble and fail and do dumb things, especially when we're kids. Oh my goodness, right? And so of course we're balancing that with how do we teach our kids to make good decisions and you know, what do we do when they don't? And I think if you can stay in your connection and warmth and believing in your kids and hold boundaries, and if you want to have consequences or whatever from a place of love and like that emotional safety, then that is what I'm talking about here. That is what I mean by later lasts longer. It's so that you are not so strict in controlling and cold and inflexible in the early years that the connection part of that relationship is so fractured that later on kids don't feel like safe and secure coming to you with their challenges, with their problems because they know they're going to get in trouble and you're going to yell or whatever their version of it is.

It'll be action based in terms of like, you know, yelling or grounded or whatever you do. But really what's happening underneath there is the

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attachment bond. It's sort of fractured and they don't want that. Who wants that, right? No one wants that. And so I, I think the work of parenting is being able to lead from connection, regulate our own emotions, and then make decisions we want that our kids may not like, of course they don't need to like our decisions all of the time, but when you parent from this place, it is from a place of respect and validation, which is like, I see you, I know this is really hard. And that goes such a long way in terms of the connected relationship that will last so much longer. Some of the objections I think that come up with this are a misunderstanding of the implementation.

So if you think that being warm means not having boundaries, it totally makes sense that you wouldn't want to be warm. If you think if I'm warm, they're they will walk all over me. Or if I validate feelings, I'm rewarding bad behavior. If I don't punish, they won't learn right? On the surface, those thoughts kind of make sense, but they're actually a misinterpretation of the work. So if you are warm, they will not walk all over you. Okay? First of all, there's no such thing that's just a made up thought. They will walk all over me. What you actually mean by that is they're not going to follow the rules or have boundaries or listen to the boundaries or whatever, but remember, it's your job to enforce the boundaries. It's their job to push the boundaries. And so this, I think, and this is why I love like parenting, I just think it's an invitation to better leadership leading ourselves and our families.

And that's not always easy, but I, I love growth and learning and, I just love it for that reason. Again, if I validate feelings, I'm rewarding bad behavior. You're not validating the behavior, you're validating the feelings. Okay? Totally different. If I don't punish, then they won't learn. I've talked a lot about punishment before, but just as a review, punishment is like fear-based parenting. If you don't obey me, bad things happen to you. I think we just do this on default 'cause it's how we were parented and we don't know a better way, okay? It's kind of like, I just don't know what else to do. And I was grounded for things and things were taken away from me and that seems to, you know, work, so I'm going to do that, right? I don't

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think it's like ill intended or anything like that, but I do think there is a better way.

And I think the better way is having like rules and boundaries and open communication and just like more respect I think. And so when your child does something instead of being so mad or frustrated and using fear, right? A lot of times I think people mistake fear with respect, okay? Your child fearing you is very different than your child respecting you and just pausing and ask yourself, asking yourself like, how am I delivering bad news? Or how am I addressing something when my child makes a mistake or gets it wrong or, you know, breaks the rules or is mean to their sibling or, you know, take something from their sibling, right? If it's, if it's being mean and kind of having this like punishment attitude and tone and being cold, then your child most likely is afraid of you. And that's not to make you feel bad, right?

It's just to know that there is a better way you can absolutely teach your kids skills and values. That doesn't mean they're never going to make mistakes. They're supposed to make mistakes. And so I think there's just like a misunderstanding of like, what's happening here When we say if I don't punish them, then they won't learn. Like that's just not even a thing, right? It's just so interesting to me that we use punishment at all. You absolutely compare it without punishment. You can have consequences and hold boundaries like that fear-based punishment. So I just want to invite you to think about like when your child makes a mistake or when your child intentionally does something that is like out of alignment with the rules that you have in your home, like they're mean to their sibling or something like that, right? Think of those two examples, like whether it's intentional or it's genuinely a mistake.

How do you typically react? What are your thoughts about them and what are your feelings? So typically on default, our thoughts will be something like, they know better, they shouldn't do that, right? And then immediately we are into controlling and disconnecting types of feelings that are all about correction. Instead, you want to clean up that thought process so that you can get to more helpful feelings, feelings like connection and curiosity and

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warmth and firmness so that you can genuinely help your kids and so that they learn and so that they feel safe and secure coming to you with their inner world, right? I think we all want that and we can't guarantee it. And so we're not doing this work to try to control that, but we are doing this work to, show up more intentionally as the mom that we want to be, right?

And so first and foremost, you've gotta be managing your brain. You gotta be thinking about your thoughts and feelings, not when everything's going right, my friends. You gotta be thinking about your thoughts and feelings when your kids fail, when they miss the mark, when they, make a mistake when they're mean to another kid. You know, I've coached so many moms on this where it's like, my child would never, I thought my child would never do this, and like an event or something that their kid does that they find out about just totally wrecks their perception of their child. And I want you to think about why this is so that you don't fall into this trap. It's really been really helpful for me, okay? If you think that your kid is a good kid because of what they do, this is where this is coming from.

Okay? I think my kid is a good kid because he is made in the image of God, right? But whatever you believe, it's like you can just believe that every single child, and I do believe this, every single child is good, okay? Now they are also all human beings who are supposed to make mistakes and failures and miss the mark and even be mean to other kids, and they're still really good kids. And that doesn't mean we don't have rules. It doesn't mean we don't have consequences. It doesn't mean we don't teach, but believing in their internal goodness is so important. When you believe that they're good because of what they do, it conflates their identity with their actions. And this is where that, lack of authenticity comes in because kids pick up on that, right? They will see, oh, my mom just praises me when I do a good job and my mom thinks I'm a good kid because I'm well behaved.

So the inverse of that is then also true, right? Even though they'll never articulate it in this way. I want you to know that if you think your kid is good because they have good behavior, then the opposite is also true. When they don't, not if when they don't have good behavior, whether it's in front of you or not, they will not feel like they are good. And you might be thinking,

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well, what's wrong with that? Don't we want them to to self-correct? Yes, but because that's who they want to be, not because they will think they're parental love and attachment is jeopardized if they're not good. 'cause here's the truth, they're going to make mistakes, they're going to do bad things. They're going to have behavior that's, you know, subpar for your rules and they will have enough self, reflection, not even in the moment, but I just mean like we want to do good, right?

We don't need our parents to threaten their love for us in order for that to happen. I promise you my friends, and you know this from your own experience. It's not like if your parents would have been more open and connected to you through your mistakes and challenges, you would've been like, oh, great, I'm just going to be mean again, or I'm just going to make that mistake again. Of course not, right? Even from a young age, like we want to do the right thing and sometimes we don't because we're in pain or just because we're testing boundaries or we want to be a little bad or like, you know, we gotta stop looking at kids as so like black and white and like good kids, right? And it's hard because we're validated for this. Like, I'm told this all the time, like in the preschool line, it's like, your kids are so good.

And I always joke, I'm like, unless they're not, like, I don't take that as a compliment and I don't want that to be validation for me doing a good job as a mom because guess what, what about when they're fighting? What about when they're losing their minds? What about when they're completely dysregulated? Then I'm going to be making that mean something bad about me and about them. Instead, it's like managing our mind around, we are all human beings doing our best and sometimes our best looks pretty bad and sometimes we're doing our worst and that's okay. My love for my kid doesn't change based on their actions. There's nothing my kids need to do for me to love them. And also sometimes there are consequences and there are boundaries and there are rules. And this just creates such a strong relationship. It really does. My friends, I had no idea, like parenting was about relationships and about leadership, right?

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I saw it was Simon Sinek say the other day. It was like a quick social media thing a reel. But he said, "you know, everyone wants to have kids and to become a parent, but you rarely ever hear people talk about how they want to learn the skills of parenting". I was like, oh, that's so good, right? He's a leadership guy and, and I was thinking about how it's true, right? And what I love about parenting, it's, it's not a job that you put your notice in and change careers. You are, you are a mom forever. And I just think it's such a beautiful invitation to do this work for yourself, myself included. Honestly. That's why I care so much about it. I use it in my own life. And, and I love sharing this work and these tools with you. So I'm so happy you're here. Take from this that later lasts longer and that all of this is work worth doing. I'll talk with you next week, my friend. Take care.