Spoil Your Baby Ep 33 - Conscious Connections: Holistic Baby Care & Family Bonds, with Tracy Gillett Transcript

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Intro and summit announcement

and so for me I think if you can have one person in real life who's parenting the same way as you it can just give you the confidence to be like yeah I got this like we can keep doing it this way but it's hard in Real Life now too and we have lost the village and We can recreate it in ways like this Hello, everyone.

Welcome to Spoil Your Baby podcast. I'm very excited to have my friend Tracy Gillett here again. Tracy and I are always chatting behind the scenes, having lots of fun together, and so it's always so nice to be together.

So welcome, Tracy. Oh, thank you so much, Korea. And yeah, I'm so grateful for your friendship. Yeah, you're right. We're always in the background going, what do you think about this?

Help me with that. So yeah. How do we get all this good stuff out to parents, right? That's always a struggle. Yeah, absolutely. But you have something coming up, which is why we're here today to talk.

Yes. That I call the parenting event of the year. I think it's… just so far above and beyond what parents need, especially parents who are parenting the way that we parent, right?

Always hard to define. We're natural parents, nurturing parents responsive parents all under that umbrella. But we are not the norm. What'd you say? Yeah, absolutely.

Not the norm. Yeah. But we also have so many experts, so much expertise, and so research to back up what we teach people. and how we practice with our own children as well.

So yeah, I just think your summit's, you know, such a gift. It's also free, which is incredible.

Why the Raise Good Summit matters

And will you tell us a little bit more about it? Because I know this year you also changed it around a bit. Yeah, for sure. Thank you, Gria. And you are in it.

I think this is number three that you're in. This is the sixth annual Raise Good Online Summit, which I can't believe every year I say, I'm like, this was the last one.

It's a bit like birth. You're like, oh my gosh, it's this mountain, is this marathon. But I absolutely love it. And I love the feedback that comes from parents who tune in, and the confidence that it builds, the inspiration, education that comes out of it.

It's a real week where we get to celebrate parenting this way. I think that was one of the biggest things for me as a new mom, I was like, am I the only one doing this?

Am I only the one breastfeeding my two-year-old or my three- year- old? You know, and am i the Only one bed sharing? And that's really where Raise Good started.

And I get so many emails and DMs and comments from people who when they find what I share, they're suddenly like, I can breathe. Like, it's not just me.

So it is a real week to come together and just celebrate. Yeah, there are mothers and fathers all over the world parenting like this, and we are not the only ones.

And I think, like you mentioned, all of the research that's there, are all the experts that are there that can really brings some solid grounding into why we're parenting this way.

I think when science meets instinct, it's this magic that happens. And suddenly mothers can start to trust their intuition, even when they don't fully know why something feels right.

When that science is there to back them up, I can make the world of difference, especially in the word that we live in right now. So yeah, I'm thrilled that we get to do it again.

And it's just a couple of weeks away. So, yeah. Super fun. That's so much fun! Will you tell us how this one's a little bit different than the previous years too?

Yes. The first five have been interview style. conversations on natural parenting. And this year I was feeling like I needed a shift. I wanted to mix things up.

Like we can experiment in our parenting, you know, bring something new. And I've been talking to my audience about what they really wanted. A lot of parents were interested in deep dives, real practical sessions on exactly how to do things on sort of not narrower topics, but on topics that they could really tune into the masterclass and then take it and run with it.

So they're workshop style master classes this year. I was just And I was nervous going into it. I said, the incredible people that I'm asking to come and do this, will they be up for it?

And, I just was amazed and grateful and honoured one after another. the people that are on the summit are just so generous with their time, have turned up, given their best stuff.

This is stuff that's normally in premium courses, behind the scenes, and they're sharing it with parents.

Workshop-style format and speaker lineup

It's a workshop style and then there's also a conversation at the end between me and the expert asking all the questions that I know parents will be thinking as they are listening to the workshop.

So wonderful. I mean, I think that the generosity of the speakers really kind of tells us about how, you know, wonderful this summit is. Right? Everyone's like so excited.

Because you have a lot of people who have come back over the years. Yeah. And it's such a joy to contribute to. Yeah, I'm all about relationship. Like, you know, that's what we talk about in our parenting that parenting is through connection.

It's about relationships. That's how we be with our children, how are with them rather than the things that we're doing. And so I bring that into the work that I do.

I love building deep relationships with others like you. Um, and yeah, When you can feel that chemistry between people as well, I think it makes a big difference.

So yeah, some of like Vanessa LaPointe is back, Dr. Gordon Neufeld is Back, Shefali is, back Dr Deborah McNamara. And I would just, any chance that I get to listen to the wisdom of people like that, take it.

Like you will come away changed and it will change your parenting. Like it's just to be in the presence of people like that who have spent their lives.

researching their particular area of expertise and then sharing it so generously is just amazing. Yeah, I was in a live speaking event with all of those speakers, except Dr.

Neufeld, but he's speaking at that event this year, which is really cool. And I in the front row, it was just like my jaw has dropped the whole time. Incredible, incredible knowledge.

We can learn something from these people at all stages of our parenting journey. And I think what you talked about earlier of like creating both a celebration and a community for parents who are, you know, have a natural parenting style is so important because I hear this from moms all the time.

You know? I'm the only one who's doing it this way. You know, and it's you can lose so much confidence, you could lose, so you just question everything so if you really feel like you're the only one.

And I think coming, to the summit every year and just connecting with, there's thousands of people who are coming to learn and connect with each other.

It's so important to strengthen natural parenting. Yeah. Yeah, it's that confidence piece. And if people have heard me before, they often hear me talking about James Clear and his book, Atomic Habits, because in that he shares an experiment that started in the 1950s with a man named Solomon Ash, and he did this experiment with students where he would show them different length lines and ask them which two are the same.

And so they would pick the two that were the Same, but they had planted actors in the experiment who would intentionally choose the wrong answer. And he would watch the students looking around at each other like, oh, shoot, have I chosen the wrong one?

And a large proportion of them would change their answer to the right answer just to be with the crowd. And then when they were asked about it afterwards, they said things like, well, I saw everybody else doing this.

So I thought, They must know something I don't know, or they must be smarter than me. And they repeated the experiment, putting people in who were choosing the correct answer and just having one or two other people there.

who were in alignment with how they were feeling, gave them the confidence to keep going with their answer. And so for me, I think even if you can have one person in real life who's parenting the same way as you, it can just give you the confident to be like, yeah, got this.

We can keep doing it this way. But it's hard in real life now too. And we have lost the village and we can recreate it in ways like this. I wish I could just be in a room and have a coffee with every single person at the summit.

Community, confidence, and parenting against the norm

But this is like amazing to just give parents confidence to be like, yeah, if I want to breastfeed my 18 month old or my four year old, I'm going to go in there and do it, because I've seen all these other people doing it.

Or if I want to bed share, I am going do do. If I don't want use the timeout because it feels like I will break connection with my kid, then I won't do that.

If I'm interested in homeschooling, I've seen other people doing it. It's not crazy. So, yeah, it's just giving people the confidence to… I don't want parents to parent how I parent.

I want to give them the confident and lighter path to say there is another way, and I them to parents consciously how they want a parent, And when we do that, real magic can happen.

Completely. A couple of things. One is when you were talking about that experiment, I was thinking about in relation to parenting, and that just broke my heart to imagine a parent who is in touch with their intuition, taking a natural parenting style, then seeing everyone else sleep training, using punishments, the whole thing, which is mainstream parenting.

and just ditching their intuition to go for that, right? That's so heartbreaking. You know, I think more than anything,

we wanna strengthen that confidence and intuition in those parents.

And we also wanna get some of those other parents to just check it out. I always say that. Like, once you know… you can't unknow the benefits, Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

That happened to me so many times as a new parent. Like, I remember even learning about Peter Gray was in the summit last year, but I and learning the term unschooling, and I was like, oh gosh, this has gone too far.

Like, no, what is going on here? But then your curiosity is, you're like huh, tell me more about that. And suddenly life can feel more interesting. I think if you know how a movie ends, like it's not as fun to watch it, but you, And I it think it like that with parenting.

It's this, our mutual friend, Pinky McKay, she talks about surrender not being a dirty word. And I think if you can strengthen your intuition and your confidence, then you say like, yeah, I don't know how this is going to look in a year or in five years, but I have a confidence in myself that I'm going figure it out.

Because I'm the parent that my kid needs, and I am the answer that they need. And then that can give you the freedom to be in the moment instead of making decisions for down the line.

You don't even know who your kid is. Like, my child now, he is so different to who he was 18 months ago, And we're making decision now that I never would have imagined making 18 month ago.

But by being responsive and being in relationships, then you're like, oh, I can see what you need now. And it's different. So yeah, that confidence piece is huge.

of it just being more fun and life being fun, there being so many more options, so may new things to learn about and ways to grow for, you know, yourself and your family.

Um, and we have to, I always say, like, have an open mind whenever I'm doing like a workshop. I like bring a pen, bring journal and bring an opened mind.

And whatever feels good, feels and whenever you leave, but we plant seeds sometimes that take months, years, decades, to grow, and it's so important to be open to that, to having seeds planted, right?

And your stomach spans, like, many years, so we'll talk today a little bit about the day that's most applicable to babies, but you're talking about parenting for lifetime.

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And so many of these skills that we learn with our children when they're young, a lot of them are just relationship skills, that haven't been taught otherwise.

So it ripples out to my relationship with my husband. This is just how humans are meant to be right. But yes, the summit does span through, typically follows the age of my son, he's 12 now, so we're definitely into the tween and teen stuff.

So yeah, but the day that you're on, we always have a day dedicated to new parenthood. I think it's just such an amazing time that if you can get in flow with your baby, then the rest of it is going to come.

You're not even going think about putting your kid in a timeout if avoided sleep training, I think, you know, stuff like that. So many parents say that, right?

Like, once you start on the path, then, using your own mind to decide. Yeah. Right. Strengthening that intuition. I remember the first time we were around at a friend's house and my son, he must have been between two and three.

and him and the other little boy were playing, and I don't know what they were doing, but it was annoying the, the

mother. And so she was like, if you don' stop doing it, I'm going to count to, you know, three or whatever.

If you stop, then you're going in a timeout. My ears freaked out. I was, like gosh, are we at the time out age? Like I had no idea. Oh man, watching to see what's going happen.

Of course he didn't, he stopped doing the thing straight away with the threat of the But yeah, I remember being like, gosh, it's never crossed my mind to do that.

And that's not a judgment on my friend or on another mom. Like, this is what society is telling us how we should parent our kids. They're telling to sleep train, they're tell us to put them in timeouts, use punishments, threats, consequences.

Nervous system awareness and natural parenting choices

squash the behavior, and it's very hard to get off that path. And so that's why things like this summit are amazing because it helps to be off the path and say, look, there's another way to do it.

Yeah, that like just leads me right into giving a bit of a teaser of my talk because all of the things that you just said are using a child's nervous system against them.

basically, in a lot of ways, right? You're looking at behavior, you're not looking their state of their nervous system, your not understanding their stress, their safety states, how they learn, eventually do know what behaviors are, you know, pro-social and which ones are destructive in some ways, right?

And, our little ones, are gonna take many years to learn all of this. But we do have to start with that understanding of their nervous system. That's like my biggest message.

And so I'm so happy to contribute that to the summit this year for parents, for new parents and also parents of even 12 year olds, like it's never too late to understand the stress system and how that develops in your baby and child.

So that's my talk. And I'm very excited because my goal is for every parent on earth to at least have some knowledge of this. Because I think, like I said before, once you know, you can't unknow.

Then you will see your child with brand new eyes after you understand this, Yeah, yeah, 100%. I loved yours as well. And yeah that unknowing thing. I remember one of the other unknowing things that once I realized I was like, oh gosh, I'm on this path now.

Which brings me into Andrea Olson as a speaker on the same day. And so she's talking about elimination communication, which is like this really long winded way of saying early potty training.

I remember learning about that when I pregnant. babies peeing on the potty, like seriously? And again, my curiosity was sparked. And so I went down that path and Andrea is the queen of EC, which is what we call it for short.

And so my son was paying on the potty at nine weeks. And I still remember it was a Monday morning. I remember saying to my husband, I'm going to try it.

We've been using an open diaper. Then I put him on this tiny little pot and he peed. Oh my gosh, this is incredible. And so Andrea is coming and giving a masterclass on how to get started with EC.

I'm like, even if you're not, it doesn't have to be full-time. You can just do it for P's. Learn about it. It's amazing. Yeah. And it's one other option for parents of babies.

Exactly. If you like it, helps develop your presence, your communication with your baby, and your attunement. with your baby in really beautiful ways.

Big time. Fantastic. Yeah. So Andrew is coming. We have a new friend, Lane Rubello. She is incredible with baby sign language. Amazing. Uh, she's written, I don't know, seven, eight books on baby language, like amazing.

She's also giving a master class on how to get started with baby sign language. You'd be able to leave that masterclass and go, she's giving you signs to go and get it started.

Talking about why to do it, and I remember again doing that with my son, it's like a bit of fun and it helps to bridge the gap of connection before they can verbally express.

That's a super fun, practical one. Yeah. And then we have Danielle Facey coming to talk about breastfeeding. But we're talking about, we talk, about Breastfeeding Beyond Babyhood.

The main thing that she's really focusing in on this year is how breastfeeding affects our relationships. And I think that's super important because that can be one of the biggest obstacles to mothers continuing beyond whatever is acceptable by society.

So relationships like with partners. with partners, with in-laws, and all that kind of stuff. Interesting. Yeah, yeah. I was gonna say, breastfeeding relationship is, like, such a hot topic in my family.

Like, between mother and baby. My… I breastfed my son until he was three. We still talk about it. You know, he had a word for it, you know.

Elimination communication and baby sign language

Some babies… You, know… you're not continuing past six months, 12 months which is the norm, right? If people do, they're able to like have the memories and have word for it and all these beautiful things, not to mention all the other benefits.

But now I've got my nieces. I just spent two weeks with my niece's and the younger one is breastfeeding. She's coming up on three as well. And she gets so excited to be like, I got to have boobies and a nap.

Like the best part of her day. Um, yeah, we just, it's, Yeah. It's just such an important part Of that relationship. Yeah, that was, I don't know. I often say, this was my biggest surprise.

This is my bigger surprise, like bed sharing and EC, but breastfeeding, That was huge. And I've shared before, going to my naturopath when my son was three months old.

And she was like, how long are you going to breastfeed for? And I said, oh, maybe 12 months. And he was, like go to two years if you can. But he won't be a baby anymore.

She was he'll always be your baby. So we breastfed well beyond two, three, four years. At that point, I was I'm like David Attenborough here. What does it look like in the wild?

Milk teeth are called milk teeth for a reason. I've got a blog post on natural weaning age, like when can it go to? And again, it's like to celebrate all lengths of breastfeeding.

If you consciously choose to not breastfeed at all, or if you breast feed for day or for months or a year or five years, It should all be celebrated and supported.

And I think, you know, it blindsided me because I hadn't seen that many people in real life breastfeeding. And so it was new to me and I was thinking about it before we got on the podcast.

It was really new my husband, like he wasn't expecting us to breastfeed that long. Um, but like, and so being able to. you know, listen to Danielle and figure out like, how can we talk about this in relationship with others?

So that the obstacles that come up in those relationships don't prematurely end your breastfeeding journey, so that you're not ending it for somebody else.

it should be between mother and baby, right? However old that baby is. And yeah, I'm the same with you. I mean, man, my son as well, you know, we can still talk about it.

Like it's a part of motherhood that I think is really, in the 1950s, they say breastfeeding was nearly extinct in most Western cultures. It's such a loss.

it's about so much more than nutrition. It's like the last thing on the list. Well, I mean, it was, yeah, It was also important because you never had to pack any snacks.

Oh yeah. Absolutely. Yeah. I don't know how I got through. Really? Yeah, um, getting through meltdowns without it. No idea. That's why I think it is so important to plant again, plant that seed that in young moms and parents, that it could go.

You know, to be open to it, being a full term experience. Yeah, definitely. And I know for me, you know when my naturopath said that I was like, whoa, seriously?

For me if somebody had told me how long my breastfeeding journey would be on day one, I would have been completely overwhelmed and like no way, that's crazy.

Breastfeeding beyond babyhood

But when you're in it it's one day at a time. It's like a decision. One day a day. Yeah. Right. The frequency changes, where it happens changes. It's a dynamic relationship.

Yeah, it's not always going to look like how it looks in those first six months, for sure. No, no. Becomes twice a day, not like breastfeeding. I do like that Danielle's talking about that in other relationships as well.

Like, my mom breastfed me and my brother for a long time. And so that was normalized for me. So I was just like, you guys can think it's weird, but I'm fine.

We're fine, yeah. But it is important. It's really important in the place where it was not seen and it wasn't modeled at all. When I breastfeeding him, I…

I would do it in public all the time. And I always feel like I was doing a public service for any young woman around me. I'm like, this is how we feed babies.

You're never going to see it, really, anywhere. Yeah. Um, so take a look. Yes. Yeah, me too. I was the same, but you and I are a bit funny. Like we just do these crazy things.

No, they're not crazy. That's why we're here where we are in the world. My neck on the line for other moms, like, and it's important. Now whenever I see a mom breastfeeding in public, I'm like I don't want to be weird, like give a thumbs up or like, give or not.

I'm like that's awesome, like keep going. We live in Canada but we're from Australia and New Zealand and so On a plane? Oh my gosh. Breastfeeding was just a savior.

Yeah. On the way up, on the down, sleeping through the flight. Sleeping through flight, the first flight we took with our little guy, he was nine months and we flew to New Zealand.

It was a 13 hour flight and he slept for three, three hour chunks. Like he's slept nine hours and there were all these other babies around him. I didn't have to like wait for, you know, hot water or walk up and down the aisles.

Yeah. And I was like, wow, this is amazing. So it's not to say it is for everyone, but it like if you want to give it a shot, then we want, if, you know, however long you wanna breastfeed, it should be respected and honored.

I did a post a while ago of like just we're so warned of the like hardships of everything, of breastfeeding so hard. It is. But it also is so good for your baby, like, look it up, there's a million benefits, but so much easier for us.

Like, I am a lazy person. I don't like jumping up around and bouncing and doing things. My baby was upset, so I got to sit down and feed him. He wanted to go to sleep, fed to asleep every single time, right?

It just makes everything. And I would think that in those moments. I was like, thank goodness for this, because I'm too tired to move. Exactly. But that's what nature intended, right?

Like nature wouldn't, that they're the tools that nature gave us to parent these babies. They also gave as a village that was meant to be like passing the baby around and helping us and all that stuff.

So we don't have that anymore. Yes. Then to throw out these other tools we have is just insane to me, like throwing out breastfeeding or throwing our co-sleeping and just making our lives harder.

Mother nature would, wouldn't design it so that new motherhood was so depressing and debilitating, we would be extinct. Like it's… Yeah. So it was thrown off the rails by people who weren't mothers.

Yes. Right? So, it just bringing it back to us, which is important. Yeah, so important, yeah. I love Danielle, I'm so happy that she's in the thought.

Can't wait to hear her speak because I actually haven't heard her do a talk. Yeah. Well, she's here. And then of course, Helen Ball, like living legend.

Yeah, her and James McKenna, you and I owe so much to them, as do all mothers. Every single family. Anybody who bedshares, You would have no guidance and no information without James and Helen.

100%. So she's just like the queen of, and she so, I love her because she is English and so straightforward and dry and to the point. And she doesn't sugar coat.

Uh, and bringing it back to your point of what you, this ties into bed sharing as well as breastfeeding. This idea of like breast feeding so hard, like, yeah, it can be hard and sometimes can have a really hard time.

And then we need to get support from a lactation consultant, um, get the help in there. Um, but we can do hard things. Like this idea that we should just give up and like, no, any other part of our lives, running a business like this, it's not easy.

I don't want to be working at, you know, all hours of the night. Like you push through and you do it because you can do hard things. And we teach our kids that, we can have things, right?

Hiking up a mountain, that's, not, easy watching TV would be way easier.

Bedsharing, comfort, and Helen Ball's research

So I think it, like really, I, think we've got into this culture of, Yeah, just choosing the most convenient and easy way out, but that's not the more rewarding.

And we want to have grit, you know, and we wanna learn all throughout our lives. I think it's so important. This has been coming up a lot lately, this topic, the education director at my son's school read a book about like you have to be uncomfortable, like that you had to teach us that we have be comfortable, which really coincided to a lot of chats I've been having with my son about the exact same thing of like, if you stay comfortable you don't get to see anything.

You don' get any surprises. you Don't Get Any Adventures, You Don' Get any rewards, right? You just stay stuck somewhere. And so you do have stretch yourself, you Do have To be Uncomfortable.

out of your comfort zone in some ways to accomplish and get rewards. And I would say like breastfeeding, bed sharing, the rewards are just, you know, everything.

Like you ask people on their deathbed what memories are their favorite and it's the baby years. They're so magnified, right? And so I do love that because it is a challenge to get both of those things going, but.

Yeah, totally. And. And it's also, yeah, it doesn't have, I think it so much easier than the other option, but yeah. I look back on those memories and I'm sure you'd be the same.

Like what I wouldn't give to go back and have one day with my son is like a three month old or like at 12 months old. You would just give the world for that.

100%. To be awake with him at 3 a.m. And that doesn't make it easy when it's night after night, but yeah, we can do hard things. You can be so proud of yourself.

Yeah, and we need to cheer each other on through it and not give up and go, oh, breastfeeding's hard, just switch. You know, this co-sleeping is hard, just sleep train.

Like we wouldn't say, oh, you want to run a marathon, but it's too hard. Just don't do it. To stay home, watch TV. It's uncomfortable asking someone out on a first date, going for an interview and getting knocked back.

All these things in life. There's a book called The Comfort Crisis. I haven't read it yet. That's it, that's the one that you mentioned, yeah. Oh really?

Yeah. Yeah. I haven't read it, but I want to read because it's like, you know, You go outside in the snow and it is cold, like you're uncomfortable. Like go and yeah, face these hard things.

Anyway, Helen Ball, amazing. like I asked Helen to come and talk for half an hour on, give us like workshop on this. She went beyond that. she was just so generous and Just the wisdom that she shared, the research, her take on it, what she's seen over her entire career.

I think if mothers come and watch that, that would be enough to just get you through the baby years of SIS. Just to really reset the narrative and question what we're being told.

and normalize what you're seeing. And then also to know like you and I, you know, do this work. If we can normalise what's normal, then we also recognise when there's a problem.

So yeah, I think Helen's masterclass is just you know, coming along just for that as well is well worth it. Oh, my gosh. Well, I'm very excited. Yeah, me too.

I can't wait. Um, i will share a link to, uh, for everyone to sign up for free, um, in the show notes of this episode and on my social media, and if you're on the newsletter, you get a linked to.

You know I will be saying, as I said here, the parenting event of the year, if your gonna, signup for one, go for this one. And people also have a chance to have the library if they choose to keep, you know, reference as a reference for their parenting journey, which is wonderful.

Yeah, absolutely. And when they sign up, we send out a summit schedule straight away as well. So you can see day one, I'm sure that the new parenthood day is on day two.

But yeah, will send up the schedule so that you see when everyone is and no matter where you are in the world, it's 24 hours for all of them. Amazing.

Well, We have great previews of the baby speakers and you mentioned some of you know, big, influential, incredible people who are going to be there. Anything else you want to add before we say goodbye?

No, just a whole lot of gratitude to you for being part of the summit, for coming and sharing your wisdom for everything that you do for me. And yeah, being here today and cheering it with your audience who are my people as well.

So yeah. Thank you so much. I love it. This turned out to be such a great talk. Got to talk about breastfeeding and bed sharing and all the good things.

Made my day too. Yeah. Oh, it's always lovely chatting with you, my friend. All right. Well, we'll have you back on the podcast soon. Sounds good.