Spoil Your Baby Episode 25 - Sleep Training: Strength or Disconnection? w/ Dr. Rocio Zunini Transcript

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Opening and the sleep training myth

everything should feel like a yes, a giant yes in your parenting. And this will never feel that. Welcome to the Spoil Your Baby podcast. I'm Greer Kirshenbaum, neuroscientist, doula and mother, and I am here with my brilliant co-host.

Hello, everybody. Just, you know, working with Greer, absolutely loving it and being here in one more episode with her. So today we're diving into a big…

I don't even know if it's a myth. I feel like it is just this harmful, terrible, insidious, evil situation. Yeah, that we saw on on social media recently.

So, Rocio, do you want to read it to get us started? Yeah. We see a lot of stuff on Social Media, and so we figure we might as well create some awareness about this in our episodes.

I want you to know where we're going with this. It says, OK, I really don't mean this disrespectfully, but if you really, truly, deeply look inside you, Isn't the real reason you are against sleep training, the fact that you can't be bothered to consistently and patiently do several weeks of the hard work sleep-training requires?

Why the quote feels harmful and disconnected

This is from a mom to another mom. Yeah, I hope I see you're shaking your head here. Tell me what are you thinking? I mean, the word that comes up in my mind is like, like passing trauma on.

I don't know if vicarious trauma is the right phrase or not. But it's like the mom who wrote it has been bombarded with lies that babies have to have sleep training for their own good and you have be strong and disconnect from your instincts so much and that's the success of a good mother is to be so strong enough to abandon your own intuition to abandon your screaming child.

And if you're that strong, then you are good. If you can't do that, you will be weak and you'll be taking the easy way. Is that kind of it? So that one mom has been really, really sold on this idea.

Again, not judging that person. This is happening to well over 90% of mothers in many parts of the world. That's why it's so important to talk about. Because either someone's going to say this to you, or you're going be impacted by it in some way.

And you are going even though you following your nurturing path, you might feel weak when you hear something like this. Yes. Right? And yes, and I also want to bring to awareness like, just like you were trying to say vicarious trauma, I think it's like a projection, like, because it says, if you really truly deeply look inside of you, okay, who is not looking inside here?

Wait a minute, right? This is how twisted our society is. It's actually the moms that choose not to sleep train.

Tracing the message back to doctors and social pressure

Those are the mom's. And again, it is no to judge, but these are moms who have looked deeply inside. despite all the noise. And it's because they have looked deeply inside and decided not to.

Yeah, like we know this from talking to hundreds of months. They're getting the real signal from inside it. they're

Getting their authentic signal. Of course, you go to your baby when they cry, of course they need you the same during the day and the night.

All of everything's communication, everything is important. That's there, they are getting that. This other person saying that somehow, if you look deep inside you, you're going to want to ignore your baby.

Yeah, it's so disconnected and it is very troubling because, this is the society we're in. It's very, very troublesome to see this as the norm. Yep. And it''s everywhere, right?

It'''s on social media. Like, I mean, I posted about this recently. I try to block this stuff out as much as I can, but… and just kind of hope that it's going away, but it is not going way.

This stuff is just ever-present in the world for moms. It's on social media, it in their friend groups, in baby groups. The pediatrician is going to probably say things like this at some point.

In parenting books, everywhere. And what it it, we trace it back. I always say, whose voice is this? Because no way, if a mom is looking deep inside of her, is ever a voice saying, ignore the baby.

Never. It's never saying hmm. I think if I let my baby scream and cry to the point where they're like vomiting and hurting themselves and hitting their head, that that is going to be a good thing for their development, right?

Like, absolutely not. But It is so pervasive. So where is this coming from? Whose voice is it? And so basically we trace it back. It's not coming form a mother's voice.

Is not from any maternal line at all. At least in North America we traced back to doctors. know, Emmett Holt, John Watson, Spock, Ferber, Dr. Weissbluth, these are all doctors who never took care of babies, who put these ideas out and told mothers, be strong, ignore the baby, that's a good mother.

And we got to look at that those voices of these the people we want to get this information from?

The science of the parental brain and responsive caregiving

Or perhaps do we want to look to the people who have been nurturing and taking care of babies and spending day in and out with babies? keeping our species going for thousands and thousands of years by keeping babies close and being responsive and helping them.

That's where we want our mothers to be looking. I mean, yes, certainly at those models, but primarily inside. And everything should feel like a yes. A giant yes in your parenting.

This will never feel that. No. And I just want to add that actually science, we are now in a place where we have the science. We do. The science of the parental brain has shown many, many times with many studies that the brain goes through an enormous transformation and the major networks that come rewired and online are the empathy network.

And why do you think that is? the emotion regulation network and your intuition is also all those networks are rewiring and those are the seed of the voice that is saying, yes, nurture your baby.

Absolutely. When you said that, I'm almost thinking like, that's like extra torture for a mother whose empathy networks with a heightened empathy network, we're really feeling what our baby is feeling.

And having that, I always just think of this as like this block, like almost like a severing accord, right? Like mom and baby are so interconnected, brain state connected, physiology connected mind to mind connected.

and what the baby feels, the mother feels. And so we're so wired to feel it and to respond that when we have people saying things like this or pressuring us like, it's like cutting this cord, cutting, this connection, which is the

most sacred connection in all of existence.

It's such a egregious harm to be interfering with this connection and calling mothers weak for just expressing their incredible biology. For expressing actually the most beautiful thing that can heal the earth.

Yes. Is a twisted world. Yes, and we do have the science. And, you know, whenever you and I communicate this stuff, people are always like, why do we need the signs?

Like, we know this, right? We know that. But the sign is really just underlines it for a lot of people. Right. It really gives us, often we mean that proof.

Yeah. So when you're responding to a baby, it is strength. Is really hard work. It's really, I'm sure, absolutely convinced it's hard work to ignore a baby's cries when you're totally wired to be responsive and empathetic for your baby.

But it is also really hard to work responsive. It is not weak. Very strong.

Raising Resilience event and closing invitation

Leaning into your biology. attuning being, you know, attuned to your baby and being sensitive to baby, which is exactly what your Baby needs to thrive.

And it's literally building your babies brain and stress system that they will need for every moment of their life. It's like the most sacred important work that any human could do in this world.

Um, and so I just want to help moms feel confident. And that would be if I have a magic wand, I would wave my magic wad and say, do not feel weak for one second.

Do not fell bad about your nurturing care for 1 second, it is profound. It's just the most magical, sacred, how many words do we have for it? It is almost beyond words how powerful and important it.

Absolutely. Completely. So we feel so passionate about this that we do have something for you, for mothers, Anthony. Absolutely. So, you know, we've been working with mothers for so long and I think that now we are very refined in what we know helps mothers.

To help mothers have so much confidence, so to be able to hear something like this, and obviously have feelings about it, it's gonna make us have feeling, but to really quickly be about to rebound from something that and just be very able stand in your power as a nurturing mom and do the good work, right?

Do this amazing, amazing gift to your baby and your family and the entire world. It really is this amazing medicine that we all need. And so we've created a free five-day event.

It's called Raising Resilience. it's for mothers and we're going to explore exactly what our babies need, what it was, you know, we are going really look at our baby's brain development.

We're gonna look their sleep. we gonna to look really important practices that mothers can do to grow that confidence, grow their mothering skills and be able to just uncover that empathy and that intuition and just be to kind of dance with it and celebrate it.

And just, be really, you know, happy about it, that's what I wish every mother could do. It's hard work, but it can also be the best. I mean, I think it is the work.

in my opinion, right? So we have a free five day event, it's coming up in July. Please join us, It's going to be a party, a celebration. To join you can comment the word bloom on any of my Instagram posts and you'll get a DM with an invite or you check the link in the bio to get invited as well.

We really hope you join and we can eventually just squash all of these myths and, you know, hopefully we dream of a world where they're gone. But at least in a word where we have the ability to just have them, bounce off of us and not have an impact on ourselves or our mothering.

So yeah, absolutely. Please join us for our event and have a wonderful day.