

BLF: EPISODE 27 —

Kristin [00:00:04] Big little bestie, I am so glad you are here. Welcome back to After Bedtime. Today's episode is for you if you are feeling at your wit's end, if everything with your kid is a struggle and a fight. This episode is just for you. Today, we are going to end power struggles for good. I mean that, I'm not joking. We are going to end power struggles. We're going to give you three concrete hacks to stop power struggles in their tracks. These are simple. These are not complex. You can do them in under 30s and they're going to avoid power struggles in the first place. Plus you're going to want to stick around because the fourth hack, it's this bonus hack that we're going to give you. It's the bonus hack that you never knew you needed. That applies to adults, too. You're not going to want to miss that one. It will change your life, your relationship with your kid, and even your relationships with others. I'm so glad you're here, bestie. Let's end power struggles.

Tyler [00:01:20] Easy, done!

Kristin [00:01:23] Deena. I'm worried about you. And I'm scared to be sitting in a room with you.

Deena [00:01:28] I didn't even tell you. Oh my God. I know, I don't think this is contagious. I think it's just like, you know, just something weird my body's going through.

Tyler [00:01:38] You and me both, girl.

Kristin [00:01:40] Do you feel sick, Tyler? Do you feel physically sick?

Tyler [00:01:42] I mean, we're all struggling in our own way.

Deena [00:01:45] It is winter, after all.

Kristin [00:01:47] Besties. I'm looking at Deena, and she's--she looks beautiful. You look beautiful. And you look a little sick.

Deena [00:01:54] Well, is it the tears in my eyes from coughing nonstop? Is that what gave it away?

Kristin [00:01:59] It might be the constant stream of tears coming out right now. Not me. You know what I mean?

Tyler [00:02:05] Again, I feel you, girl.

Kristin [00:02:06] Wow. Okay, I guess we should introduce our guest, VP Hype Squad, who's also sitting in this room.

Deena [00:02:11] In the building!

Tyler [00:02:12] Guys, I'm usually in the building because it is my house, but, yeah, I'm here.

Kristin [00:02:19] Welcome back. You're here because the reviews, the people, they love you.

Tyler [00:02:24] Well, that's kind. I love the besties. I'm just here for the moms. I'm here for the moms.

Deena [00:02:30] You're fun. You have a soothing voice. You've got great ideas.

Tyler [00:02:34] Perfect.

Deena [00:02:35] Should I keep going?

Tyler [00:02:37] Yes.

Kristin [00:02:40] Deena, how are you doing? Are you sick?

Deena [00:02:41] Yeah. I'm sick. I'm ready to admit it. I'm sick.

Kristin [00:02:43] Yeah, okay.

Deena [00:02:44] I didn't sleep at all last night. I just coughed all night long.

Kristin [00:02:48] Why are we in this room right now?

Deena [00:02:50] I think we're six feet apart.

Kristin [00:02:51] Okay. Yeah. I'm going to let it go. I'll let it go. Anybody have anything? What's going on?

Tyler [00:02:56] You know I need to see an orthopedist.

Kristin [00:02:58] Oh my God.

Tyler [00:02:59] I feel like you hit a certain age as an adult, and then you just got to do it all at once. You know, you start seeing specialty doctors, not just like a normal doctor. I'm at that age. I'm at specialty doctor age.

Deena [00:03:12] He's being referred out left and right.

Tyler [00:03:14] Yeah, I'm getting referrals. I'm at. I'm at the age for referrals.

Kristin [00:03:20] This is what the besties want, like the besties want--.

Tyler [00:03:22] You guys let me know if you guys are getting other doctor referrals. Because I know you are.

Deena [00:03:28] This is pretty relatable because I'm getting a few referrals. You know what I mean?

Kristin [00:03:30] Really? Do moms have time for referrals? And I when I say that you want a caveat that we should all be making time for our health. If you don't make time for your health, it will find you, blah blah blah blah.

Tyler [00:03:40] Health is wealth.

Kristin [00:03:40] People have time for the doctor.

Deena [00:03:42] I said I got a referral. I didn't say I went to the appointment, okay?

Tyler [00:03:46] Didn't say how long ago...

Kristin [00:03:47] I feel like the referral thing is a man thing because, like, you guys can go to the doctor and we just keep putting off our health, which is not a good thing, by the way. No, I just don't think the moms are going to relate to, like, yeah, I'm going to the orthopedist, like, oh, I have so many more things I have to do before I get to the orthopedist, yeah.

Deena [00:04:05] My pelvic floor therapist is literally emailing me. She's like, hey, so like gentle

nudge, got to make that next appointment. And I'm like, oh, God.

Kristin [00:04:13] Where did you find the time?

Deena [00:04:15] Oh yeah. But I'm going to do it.

Kristin [00:04:17] Good for you.

Tyler [00:04:17] Got to start out. You got to put your own mask on first. You know what I mean?

Kristin [00:04:20] I do that, I think with mental health. So, I'm at capacity. How many therapy appointments can I have a week? You know what I mean? And so then I can't add another, like, physical health appointment on top of that.

Deena [00:04:31] I did do a self-care. I did it. I carved out time. I was like, 'Mike, I'm feeling run down.' I mean, clearly this was before I like I totally got run down, now I have this cough, but I was like: 'Take the children. I'm not coming home after work today.'

Deena [00:04:45] Like it's all you, you're doing bed time. You just figure it out and I'm going to the spa. I went to the spa by myself, you guys, for hours. I got a massage, I mildly cried in the sauna. It was a great release.

Tyler [00:05:00] You're like, it's just the steam. Yes.

Kristin [00:05:04] I know you were naked, by the way. You are not the person who brings a bathing suit, because you're just naked.

Deena [00:05:10] Didn't even cross my mind until I saw someone else in the bathing suit getting into the hot tub. I was like, oh, right. What people do.

Kristin [00:05:18] No...I think it's both, I think you're allowed to do both. Whatever floats your boat. Yeah. I think the crying while naked is the imagery that stands out to me.

Deena [00:05:27] Felt nice. Crying is a great a release.

Tyler [00:05:30] Cortisol. Cortisol in your tears. Get it out.

Deena [00:05:32] Yeah. No you're right. And that's what we are all here, us and the besties, to do today. We're growing. I'm so proud of us. Let's just dive in.

Kristin [00:05:49] Before we get into solving power struggles and we're going to we're going to stop power struggles. I want to take a minute to applaud you. This podcast, this group of people, all of the besties who are listening. We are changemakers. The besties are a group of people so wildly committed to doing things differently, and we're so committed to not only strengthening our bond with our kids, but changing the world for our kids. Like, I was thinking about this the other day and we, collectively, are truly changing a whole generation. If you think about it, this community is full of 3 million people, okay? Everybody has at least one child. That's at least 3 million kids who are going to feel seen and heard and deal with their emotions in healthy ways. That's crazy! Like, I just want to take a second to thank you for being here. You should be proud of you. I am.

Deena [00:06:57] I am, too! The besties are doing the work. That's not easy.

Tyler [00:07:01] That's wild, you have to, like, zoom out sometimes and just look at it for what it is. It's like this huge group of people out here trying to do better. I'm trying to do better than the parents. That's not saying their parents did a bad job. They just want to do a better job. It's like in nature. Leave it better than you found it. You know what I mean?

Kristin [00:07:19] And this work is not easy. So if you're here, you might be struggling, right? We're all struggling. And I think one of the biggest struggles with having kids. Power struggles. Defiance. Pushback. That's one of the hardest parts.

Deena [00:07:35] Sure is.

Tyler [00:07:36] Honestly, that's like why I'm really glad I'm here for this episode. It's something I struggled with. So hard. So hard. And it's still a work in progress. But the amount of progress that I have made on it. Wow. And it's by doing these things, it's truly by doing the things we're going to talk about. And it's such a significant change if you put it into practice because, woo, I used to struggle.

Kristin [00:07:59] You were the, the kind of mode of like two--if I, if I may--two four year olds kind of going back and forth like, I feel like it's so easy to fall into a trap of being on the exact same level and just going, like watching, literally watching two four year olds going back and forth, you know? And at midway I'm like, hey babe, hey, you know, she's four. It's like, well, she yelled at me first.

Tyler [00:08:22] I mean she did.

Kristin [00:08:23] I'm like, you're 34. You know what I mean?

Tyler [00:08:25] You know, I don't want to lose an argument. Number one.

Kristin [00:08:29] It's so true.

Tyler [00:08:31] You can attest to that.

Kristin [00:08:32] Oh. It's true.

Tyler [00:08:33] So, like, obviously, I'm not going to lose an argument to a four year old.

Deena [00:08:37] Literally, he's going to keep going.

Tyler [00:08:38] I'm going to keep going.

Kristin [00:08:39] Reasoning.

Tyler [00:08:40] Oh yeah.

Tyler [00:08:40] Negotiating... out-arguing a four year old to try to win the fight.

Tyler [00:08:46] It's an ego death when you realize you'll never win an argument with a four year old with logic.

Kristin [00:08:51] Which brings me to the biggest point of power struggles. The definition of a power struggle is that two people are engaged in the power struggle. If you take away one of those people, one of the people drops the sword. In this case, it's probably going to be the grown up.

Tyler [00:09:10] It's gonna have to be, unfortunately.

Kristin [00:09:11] It doesn't have to be. You could be two grown ups. Okay? If you take one person away, that's no longer a power struggle. Now, what you have is one upset person. You have a four year old who's upset or who's having big feelings, or is melting down or is pushing

back, but that's actually no longer a power struggle.

Deena [00:09:27] Exactly. Think of it as like a tug of war, right? You've got this rope. People are going back and forth and back and forth. If one person, just like you're saying, drops that rope, the struggle stops, straight-up, and what you're left with is upset feelings and that we can deal with, we can handle upset feelings.

Tyler [00:09:44] We can manage that. That's manageable.

Deena [00:09:46] Now the thing is to kind of reshape this pattern, you're going to have to retrain your nervous system. Because we are so used to as people, we naturally do whatever was done to us in our childhoods. Right? So whatever is most comfortable and if you when you were little, your parents engaged in power struggles or negotiated and went back and forth like a ping pong match, that's going to be your most natural urge is to engage in a power struggle. So it makes sense. And now to retrain ourselves to have a different reaction. We're also going to have to retrain our nervous system. Your nervous system is your stress response, right? It kicks in to fight, flight, freeze. We're going to have to teach it to stay steady in a stressful situation and expand our distress tolerance, which we can totally do.

Kristin [00:10:36] How do we do it?

Deena [00:10:37] Well, it's going to take a lot of practice, but it's about breathing. It's about noticing that you're getting heightened, right? And being like, okay, that's part of being human. I'm feeling stressed. I'm going to breathe. I'm going to take a second. I'm going to remember about power struggles and that these hacks can help me drop this rope. We're going to use all of our new tools, and it's going to take practice, and we're going to mess it up, and then we're going to get back on track and try again.

Kristin [00:11:00] So in the moment, you want to stop and pause and try to acknowledge that your nervous system is going to go into default mode. That's right. Right. And you're going to want to engage in this power struggle.

Tyler [00:11:15] That's the hard part is you're fighting against what's been modeled to you your whole life, whether that's your parents, whether that's external, it's an external source that's teaching you. You're going to pick it up somewhere. The hard part is the retraining and stopping, because that half of a second that you give yourself, you can go, oh, I see this pattern. I see exactly where I learned this before. I'm not going to do that. I can't do that because this will just be repeated forever and ever and ever. So doing that retraining even though it's very hard and it goes against what's been modeled, which is essentially what's familiar and safe to you because you know, it, going against the grain of that is really hard. But that's why we're going to make those bigger changes in these power struggle situations.

Deena [00:11:56] Exactly. And what was modeled to you and what was done to you and how you coped, by the way, in those situations that has now created these really strong neural pathways, these are the urges that you're talking about, Kristen. There is a strong neural pathway to do things a certain way that will automatically kind of trigger in your brain unless you intentionally try to do something different, and that's hard. Think of it like hiking paths, right? There's like the well worn path that's easy to just walk down. And now we have to literally, like, hack down weeds and trees and vines to make a new path. That's hard work.

Kristin [00:12:31] But isn't it so mind blowing that it's actually the harder path? Yeah. Isn't that mind blowing that because it's our default mode? And this applies not just to power struggles, but everything relational conflict, avoidant attachment, whatever your sort of mode is, even if it's actually harder, it's easier on your body to get into a power struggle and to scream at your kid. It's

easier. Even though it feels like shit, it's physically easier than not engaging in the power struggle.

Deena [00:13:02] Exactly. It's easier to do what's familiar, even if it doesn't work out well.

Kristin [00:13:06] Wild. When I learned that information, I was like, wow.

Deena [00:13:10] Being human, man, it's crazy.

Kristin [00:13:12] It feels better to my nervous system to have chaos or to have whatever those less than stellar urges are. The reason that I'm doing it is not because I'm a monster. The reason I'm doing it is because it's just default mode for my nervous system.

Deena [00:13:29] It's what's familiar. Yeah, 100%.

Kristin [00:13:32] Okay, so step one, before you can do any hack is pausing and acknowledging. And that's going to be hard. Let's try to all do this like 50% of the time. okay? We're going to just let it go the other 2% of the time, pausing in the moment and being like, my urge is going to be to yell or to engage in this power struggle. Next, we're going to try out one of these three hacks that we're about to give you that stop power struggles in their tracks. Some of them even avoid them before the start. So one pause, two, try a hack, but stick around because the bonus hack, the one at the end. This fourth just wild card hack. This is the one that's going to reprogram your nervous system to instantly drop the act, to drop the act of engaging. Whether it's with your kid or with your partner, or with your mom or your mother in law. This hack is going to change your life. Deena, take us to hack one.

Deena [00:14:30] Let's do it. So, hack one. This is a sneaky one, okay? A lot of us accidentally do it, myself included. But we will ask our kids a question. So, are you ready to go nap now?

Tyler [00:14:43] Game over before you even start.

Deena [00:14:44] Do you have to go potty? Are you ready to get your shoes on?

Tyler [00:14:48] Oh, boy. No.

Deena [00:14:49] Are you ready to leave?

Tyler [00:14:50] If you're asking a question, you've already lost. It's true. If you're asking a question, you've lost.

Deena [00:14:56] Now here's why. Okay, because toddler brains. Little kid brains have not fully developed. These are rhetorical questions. Our adult brains. We can handle this. We do this all day long like we're out to lunch and I'm like, oh, are you ready to go? And you're like, yeah, let's go. Yeah. Their brains. We ask them real questions all day, by the way.

Tyler [00:15:16] Like a real answer.

Deena [00:15:17] And you're going to get a real answer. What kind of ice cream do you want while you're at the ice cream shop? They say strawberry. They get strawberry. Their brains cannot differentiate between a real question and a rhetorical question. So when you ask, are you ready to go potty? Do you want to go to school? They're like, Hi, hello, thanks for asking. No, I don't. Thank you so much.

Kristin [00:15:37] No, it means a lot that you would ask. And the answer is no. I would not like to go potty right now, you know. And then they move on. And then what happens is they're like, well, too bad it's time to go potty. We're going right now. And they're like, what? You just you know, I

know that this is the power struggle.

Deena [00:15:50] They 10 out of 10, lose it.

Kristin [00:15:52] They go back and forth. Back and forth, back and forth. No. It's time. No, I don't want to. We're going right now, blah blah blah.

Tyler [00:15:57] Yeah.

Deena [00:15:59] So life changing hack that can totally sidestep a power struggle in the first place a lot of the time. Make it a statement. Don't ask a question. It's time to go potty. Now. It's time to leave. Let's put your shoes on.

Tyler [00:16:13] Make it a statement. Good lord, was that life changing for me when I learned that? Holy cow, that changed it. That was like, one of the biggest things is like, we're doing this. We're doing this. I appreciate your opinion. And we're doing it.

Deena [00:16:27] Yeah. It sounds simple, but it really does make a huge difference.

Kristin [00:16:31] And when you're making a statement, when you're doing hack number one, I want you to add in hack number two. Hack number two is give a choice okay. So make it a statement. It's time to get your shoes on. Then try hack to give a choice. Which shoes would you like to wear? Would you like to wear the red shoes or the blue shoes? You choose. This gives your toddler, your kid, your teenager, your partner some authority. The feeling like you're not just sitting there barking orders at them, you're actually kind of collaborating with them. Their opinion matters. This becomes their idea. Oh, I'm putting shoes on and I choose the cowboy boots today.

Deena [00:17:10] Exactly. They feel in charge. It almost feels like it's their decision. And that little shift can totally change how their brains working, shifting them from kind of this pushback mode of like, no, no, no, no, no to collaboration mode where it's like, yeah, okay, like I'm in charge, I'm choosing.

Kristin [00:17:27] Because kids in general...think about it. They are being told what to do all day long, all day long. It's time for bed. It's time to go to school. It's time to do reading. It's time to do this. It's time to do that. They have no agency over their own lives. What a game changer. When we are the parent and we're going to show up sturdy and say, it's time to leave now it's time for bed. It's time to eat lunch and then get them on your team. Don't engage in the power struggle. Make this collaborative so that they don't have to push back because now they're like, oh, okay, we're on the same team. Yeah, I'll pick the red plate. Thank you for asking. This is my choice.

Deena [00:18:09] Props to Mike because, you know, we talk a lot about I'm like, Mike, are you listening? But he nailed this the other day. It was time to transition from dinner time up to bath time. And he was just like, hey boys, it's bath time. Do you want to be carried or do you want to race me up the stairs? And they literally just got up, ran up the stairs and I was like, all right, peace...like moment for myself bye....

Kristin [00:18:31] Yes.

Tyler [00:18:32] Kris, are you doing this to me?

Tyler [00:18:38] We're going to have to talk about this later?

Deena [00:18:41] She gives you a choice?

Tyler [00:18:42] We can talk about this later.

Kristin [00:18:44] He's just realizing this.

Deena [00:18:46] You choose, you choose.

Tyler [00:18:47] You choose if we talk about this now or later.

Kristin [00:18:49] Yeah, I use big little feelings strategies on you all the time.

Tyler [00:18:52] Yeah that makes sense.

Kristin [00:18:53] But, like, not in the way of, like oh, let me get him to cooperate. It's more like, hey, I know that he wants to feel seen and heard and validated, and my nervous system doesn't do that. You know what I'm like, that's not a default mode for my nervous system. My nervous system wants to shut you down. Stop. Stop talking, stop talking, stop crying. Stop! My way or the highway. Get out of my--you know. So it's not that bad. Stop. Don't cry. You shouldn't be that upset. So, yeah, I have to actively use big little feelings strategies.

Deena [00:19:28] But jokes aside, all these hacks actually do help relationships.

Kristin [00:19:32] All relationships, a coworker... We see people in our DMs all the time that are using it at their job, with their mother in laws. Any time that you were telling someone, hey, I hear that you're feeling kind of upset that I wanted to go get sushi---look at your face right now---and I hear that. And tonight we're getting sushi. I have a really good example, but, you know, anytime you lead with--let me use the mother in law example, that's an easier one. Hey, Beth, I hear I hear that you want us to stay till after dinner at Christmas time. I get that that's really important to you. In our house, we get them home for bedtime. We are so excited to come back on Saturday. We can't wait to see you then. Easy. Boom. It works.

Deena [00:20:16] No more struggle, bye.

Kristin [00:20:18] Bye, no power struggle. She can be upset. She can have her upset feeling. So yeah, I do it to you, too.

Tyler [00:20:22] Fair.

Kristin [00:20:23] All right. So we are seeing a power struggle happen.

Deena [00:20:28] Yes, girl.

Kristin [00:20:28] Okay, I want us to stop and walk through it before we get to part three. We are seeing it about to happen. We say, Timmy, it's time to turn the iPad off. We're all done now. We see Timmy's face. He's pissed.

Tyler [00:20:43] It's on.

Kristin [00:20:44] Okay. Yeah.

Tyler [00:20:45] He's ready.

Deena [00:20:46] He's like, make me.

Kristin [00:20:49] This is a test. Step one. We're taking a deep breath and we're going. Everything in me was going to want to engage right now. We're going to pause.

Deena [00:20:57] Oh, reset that nervousness.

Kristin [00:20:59] Timmy can be upset while we reset okay. Step one make it a statement, not a question. It's time to put the iPad away. Time to go get our shoes on. Whatever it may be, step two, give a choice, I do this even with turning off the TV. Would you like to use the remote and turn the TV off, or do you want me to do it? Sometimes that works, sometimes it doesn't. Because hack number three is boundaries. And this is perfect with the little Timmy example, because if Timmy says no and he's not turning it off, or I'm not turn and he's not choosing for me to turn it off, I'm going to quite quickly within 10, 15 seconds. Maybe I'll repeat it one time. Would you like to turn it off? Would you like me to turn it off? Would you like to put the iPad up, or would you like me to close the iPad and put it up within 10s? It sounds like you're having a really hard time. I'm going to put the iPad up now it's time to put it up. I'm going to turn the TV off now. I hear you. We're swooping in with that boundary.

Deena [00:21:54] Because let me tell you what we're avoiding completely. We're just not going to engage in the back and forth of okay, but I said, you're not listening to me, mom. I'm saying put it away. No, no, no, no. And back and forth and back and forth. We're just not doing it.

Kristin [00:22:11] We don't need to plead. We don't need to negotiate. We don't need to give them 30 minutes to do the give a choice. Well, do you want the red shoe, the blue shoes? You want the red shoes or the blue shoes? I don't know, we see it all the time in our DMs of being like, give a choice is not working. This is not working. feelings are not working. It's because the most important part is missing... The boundary. So if give a choice works and it does a lot of the time, by the way, great. If it does not work, we're really quickly swooping in. No pleading, no negotiating, no power struggle, no back and forth. You don't even need to yell for it to be a power struggle. With you, it was so much reasoning like, well, what do you mean? You've been watching this for three hours, I let you watch two extra episodes like, you know, you're exasperating. You're trying to talk it through. We said this. We talked about this. We have to go. And the thing is, there is no negotiating or reasoning with a kid who is dysregulated, or a kid who wants to be in charge, but actually feels safer knowing that we, the parent, is in charge.

Tyler [00:23:15] Yeah, and I love the word swoop. Yeah, and you use swoop a lot. Every time you talk about boundaries, you say swoop in, swoop in and hold the boundary. And I think that's such an apt word because it it's this smooth transition that's done quickly, that's done confidently, because it's done quickly and confidently. There's no lag. There's no reasoning. And I love boundaries. I love holding boundaries. Like, that's weird to be like, I love holding boundaries, but I love it because it has a short term effect. You're moving on to what you need to move on to. And it lays this like brick in this house of parenting, because the boundaries is so much bigger than just like doing one transition from one thing to the next. When you're setting boundaries, you're slowly building this trust with your kids. Of that, they know you're going to do what you say you're going to do. You're going to keep them safe. You're in charge, and there's that safety in that foundation of, all right, I'm the kid in this. I can trust my parents. I'm going to start listening to them because I know it's safe, and I know they have my best interest at heart.

Tyler [00:24:19] Love boundaries.

Kristin [00:24:20] That dynamic is what will end power struggles for good, long term. Now, I think if your child is hungry or thirsty or having a bad day, we've all been there. I melt down. Okay. But for the most part, when we can get that dynamic of I know my parent means what they say and my voice is heard, I am valued, I am allowed to have my upset feelings about this, but I know what's coming, now the next time it's time to turn the screen off, or it's time to get the shoes on, or it's time to do their homework and they're ten and they're 15 years old. We've laid that healthy foundation where the power struggles are really missing because we, the parent, are not engaging in the power struggle. Period.

Deena [00:25:07] For me personally, having boundaries has helped break generational cycles because it stopped what I experienced growing up. There was just kind of the threats, the yelling. It's kind of like, no, I can hold a boundary and I can still be kind and loving while I do it, which has been such a game changer for me to show up as this confident, strong mom who also can hold them on the way to the car because we're leaving the park and they're crying and say, yeah, no, it's so hard to leave the park. I totally understand why you're upset while I carry them. I'm not sitting. I'm not pleading. I'm loving them in their hard time while holding a boundary.

Kristin [00:25:48] I feel like there was a lot of expectations of our generation that were unrealistic expectations. And so we all got a whole lot of what's wrong with you type of mentality does that. Oh yeah. Check out oh yeah. Right. And now in hindsight, I'm like, why would I be five and want to turn the TV off? Of course I didn't want to turn the TV off.

Tyler [00:26:10] I still don't want to turn the TV off.

Deena [00:26:12] That's what I told my son. I'm like, listen, sometimes I don't want to either. Like, I totally get it.

Kristin [00:26:17] Right? Yeah.

Deena [00:26:18] And by the way, we don't. We just stay up watching TV way too late, and then we're really tired in the morning. So.

Tyler [00:26:22] And then we feel bad about it because we didn't feel safe. And, Dina, this goes back to what you were saying about, like, setting those neural pathways. We're doing it early on. We're doing it in childhood. So they see their safety and boundaries. Yeah. And they can be held respectfully.

Deena [00:26:37] Yeah. Gosh, that is true.

Kristin [00:26:47] I really want to get into the bonus hack, because this is the one that I'm fired up about, that I'm surprising you both with.

Deena [00:26:54] I'm dying to. I'm on the edge of my seat, do it.

Kristin [00:26:56] I know. It's going to change your life.

Tyler [00:26:57] I hope so.

Kristin [00:26:58] This has changed my life. Okay. This is a hack that is from my friend that I don't know in real life that I follow on Instagram. Mel Robbins. Okay. Mel Robbins has 5 million followers. She's a motivational speaker. She has a podcast, and this is her thing. Let them. It's the let them principle. Now, before I go into how we're going to apply this to our toddler, let me just explain quickly what let them is. Okay. If your friends do not invite you to brunch and you see them on Instagram and they're all at brunch and your feelings are kind of hurt, let them. If your partner is not listening to you and they're not doing the dishes and you're so angry and you're so resentful, let them. If your child is melting down and they're screaming at you because they want a toy in the toy aisle and you're at target, let them. This is directly from Mel. So much energy is wasted on forcing other people to match your expectations. Stop trying to change how someone is or how someone feels. Just let them. And then once you've let them, you get to choose what you do next. This has been a game changer. Your mother in law, your your coworker, Cindy from accounting, these little things that we just obsess over and that bother us and that irritate us and we're like, how could they? How could she? Why doesn't she care as much as I care? Why is she doing this? Let them. Let them. So with our kids, when it comes to power struggles, this isn't like let them do whatever they want. Let them watch all the TV that they want. Let them walk all over

you. Let them stay at the park. Leave the park and then let them feel whatever they want to feel about leaving the park. We don't have to fix that. We don't have to engage in a power struggle. We don't have to make it make sense. We don't have to negotiate with them. We don't have to reason with them. We don't have to be upset. We don't need to have expectations about how they should feel. They should be fine leaving the park. They should be fine turning this TV off. Let them. Let them have that feeling.

Tyler [00:29:01] That's a big one to be, like, intentional around because yeah, I definitely resonate with, controlling others expectations and controlling other people's responses. That's a hard one because like--

Kristin [00:29:13] Based on your expectations.

Tyler [00:29:14] Based on my expectations, because to me, leaving the park is not hard.

Kristin [00:29:18] Not a big deal.

Tyler [00:29:19] So why is it hard to you as a toddler? Why are you feeling that way? You shouldn't feel that way. But that's what it comes down to is like, let them. Let them feel that way.

Kristin [00:29:27] You've had two episodes. You are so lucky. You should be grateful. That's what we got all the time, right? How could you be upset by this?

Tyler [00:29:33] You should be so grateful.

Kristin [00:29:34] You should be so grateful. How can I? This is not a big deal. Let them. It's not on us to decide how they should feel. It could be completely irrational. We say this example all the time. The crayon is too purpley..Things that make no logical sense. Stop trying to make sense of it. Stop trying to be like, well, they shouldn't even be upset about this. This is ruining my day. This is really blah blah blah. Let them. Keep making a sandwich. Keep making whatever. Keep doing whatever you're doing and be like, hey, I hear you.

Tyler [00:30:01] Like, that's applicable to adults, let alone kids that often don't make any sense at all. Not very logical very often.

Deena [00:30:09] But really, it's about taking your power back because we're consciously choosing how we're going to use our energy. We're letting go of what we can't control, what's not ours. Your kids feelings. That's not yours. They're entitled to feel however they feel. And now we're using our energy intentionally to focus on how we're going to respond.

Tyler [00:30:32] Exactly.

Deena [00:30:33] Which really then takes us to another level. Now we can start to respond instead of just reacting.

Tyler [00:30:39] Exactly. You can focus on the statements, focus on the boundaries where you should be focusing, and then that will make it easier and letting it go, just allowing those feelings.

Deena [00:30:48] Let them. Yeah. Wow.

Kristin [00:30:50] How are you engaging in the power struggle? Oh, wait. If you let them, there is no more power struggle. This is how you solve and end power struggles in every single relationship in your entire life is let them. Power struggles are only coming because you're trying to convince someone else what they should be doing, how they should be feeling, how you think they should be doing a certain thing, or not doing a certain thing, or living their life, or having their schedule, or not doing it in all aspects, in all aspects. And so when we drop it and we just let

them, and then we choose how we're going to show up, where it's like maybe your coworker is not doing something that you really want to be doing, but you really want to do it. Let them. You can still show up. Are there ways you can show up? Right? How are you going to show up to this power struggle? I'm going to let them. I'm going to drop it. I'm going to let them. I'm going to pick this flopping fish of a child up off the bathroom tile floor. And then I'm going to let them scream their head off. And I can either validate their feelings or I can just quietly, quietly hold them and get them into their diaper. I'm speaking about my experience last night. Get them into their diaper and I'm going to let him. Yeah.

Tyler [00:32:09] That that boy is a floppy fish.

Kristin [00:32:11] He's so sweet.

Tyler [00:32:12] He's so sweet. But he's a floppy fish.

Kristin [00:32:14] Yeah, he's he's one of those. Do you have one of those, Deena? where like not every kid has the same reaction to a tantrum. And he's one that just goes, like, arched back, just like, oh, like back and forth. Like an actual fish.

Deena [00:32:27] I've got one of those.

Kristin [00:32:27] It's so sweet. It's so sweet. Oh.

Kristin [00:32:31] All right, bestie, I am excited for you. You have these hacks. It's going to be game changing. And you know what, you're already doing such a good job. And you know what, bestie? You've got these hacks now for power struggles. But toddler years, preschool years. It doesn't stop at power struggles. There is so much tricky behavior that comes with this stage. From bedtime struggles, picky eating, sharing. I mean the hitting phase. It goes on and on. You deserve help. Parenting does not come with a manual. I wish it did, but that is why we have winning the toddler stage. Literally, this is one course that has tools for every single thing you could ever encounter in ages one through six. It is all in there, which is on our website at [Big Little feelings.com/courses](http://BigLittleFeelings.com/courses). Now you're taking it to the next level. Let's do this thing. And guys? Let's go to bed, okay.

Deena [00:33:23] It's been a day.

Kristin [00:33:23] You need to go to bed.

Deena [00:33:24] I am unwell. I cannot stop coughing. I need to rest my body. **Kristin**

[00:33:29] I need to go take a shower. I'm afraid of the germs that are on my body. **Tyler**

[00:33:33] I'm going to be honest, guys. I'm going to be up for several more hours.

Kristin [00:33:36] Such a bad idea.

Tyler [00:33:37] So bad, so bad. Besties, I love you. Thank you, Deena and Kristin, for letting me come on. This is a really good one for me. I really enjoy this topic.

Deena [00:33:45] This is fun. Thanks for being here everyone.

Kristin [00:33:48] Besties. We love you. We love you. We love you. We'll see you next week.

Deena [00:33:51] See you.

Kristin [00:33:52] Bye.

Deena [00:35:00] Thank you so much for being here with us. This has been an Audacy Production. Executive produced by Lauren LoGrasso, produced by Daniela Silva, edited by Bob Tabaddor and theme music composed by Liz Fohl, and studio lighting designed by Shane Sackett and designed by Jackie Sherman. Special thanks to Audacy Executive Vice President and Head of podcasts, Jenna Weiss-Berman. And thank you for being here with us. We can't wait till next week.