

Spin Cycle - More on Consumerism

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Deana Thayer, Future Focused Parenting, Kira Dorrian

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- K** Kira Dorrian 00:03
What happens when two parent coaches, one a Christian and the other an agnostic Jew, sit down to talk about parenting?
 - D** Deana Thayer 00:09
I'm Deana Thayer,
 - K** Kira Dorrian 00:10
and I'm Kira Dorrian.
 - D** Deana Thayer 00:11
Welcome to Raising Adults, a podcast about Future Focused Parenting.
 - K** Kira Dorrian 00:16
Well, hi, everyone, and welcome to today's spin cycle. We got quite a few emails about our consumerism episode.

D

Deana Thayer 00:24

Yeah, that one seemed to spark a lot of conversation and follow up questions.

K

Kira Dorrian 00:29

Also, we hit a record breaking download number that day on that particular episode. So something was going on with that. So we got some questions that we want to just take a little time to answer and give them a spin. So Deana, do you want to share the one that you saw?

D

Deana Thayer 00:43

Sure, absolutely. So thank you to Regina, for sending this question in. It's, it's kind of a two parter. So in her family, they have an older child and a quite younger. And so she was asking, she heard my recommendation that one, just kind of generic way to handle this, is look at things that you haven't used in over a year and let that be a little bit of a guideline of what to get rid of. But when you know, you have a younger child coming along, the question was kind of how do we know what to save? What do we hang on to, that this child might grow into even though the older one is over it? And so I think that's a great question. And there's kind of a couple of ways to handle that. And then the other piece that she's unpacking and I'm sure you have thoughts around this too, Kira, is kind of what we've talked about with, how do you stay united and parent on the same page. And so in her particular situation, her and her husband have different ideas of what they're sentimental about. And so they don't always agree on what's worth purging, and what's worth keeping.

K

Kira Dorrian 01:42

Oh, such good questions. Yeah. Well, the storage question, I mean, and I think you and I are different this way. And I know that we're, we're gonna be talking about organization in our last episode. Deana is waiting with bated breath. And so what I'll say is, I think I consider myself and I think people consider me an organized person, but not to the extent that you are. So I'm sort of middle ground, and you're like, all the way over here.

D

Deana Thayer 02:09

Right. And I can admit that.

K

Kira Dorrian 02:11

Yeah, I know, you're very honest with yourself. Yeah. Um, so I would say it kind of just depends, right, on where you fall. But if you're more middle, middle ground, and so I've done a couple different things around storage. And, and I don't have that age discrepancy. But what I do have are friends that I donate to, or a friend that I know is planning to have a child that I've been wanting to save some stuff for. And, and also, then in terms of just purging in general, sometimes I'll hold on to things before I donate them to make sure the kids don't say, hey, where's that? Blah, blah, blah? So I think, I think having some kind of really good storage system is probably the answer here, because you're gonna want to save stuff, and there's going to be stuff you get wrong. Similarly, it's not dissimilar to, we get a lot of hand me downs that are maybe a year ahead of what I'm going to need. And I'm taking guesses as to well are they going to like this, are they going to wear this, so I just have a really good storage system in each kid's closet. And so I think using your best judgment, to just keep what you think you're going to need, keep it in an organized way so that it feels good to you. So it's not your stuff owning you, you really have ownership of it. And then I think there's just the forgiveness of I mean, this is how I experience it. When I save something from a hand me down, that ends up we don't need, I'm like, okay. And when I realize that I should have saved something that I didn't, I am grateful that I have the funds to go and purchase it. So I think giving yourself a little bit of grace there and a little bit of like, I don't know, I'm taking my best guess. And then having a good system that makes you feel good about what you're hanging on to, is what I would say.

D

Deana Thayer 03:48

Yeah, it's, it's kind of a combo pack, because there's probably some things that you can be feeling okay about, you know, we're not going to use that. And I actually encourage people in this situation, err on the side of letting some things go, because you don't want to become a storage unit. That's really not the point. But I do think if there's something you're pretty sure that, that little one coming up is really going to enjoy it, it's okay to hang on to it. And then you can also add the assurance, and so I'm glad you mentioned this, that if it turns out one of the things that went in the to go pile, you end up kind of wishing you had, you can even get things secondhand. There's, I don't know how many of you are familiar with buy nothing, but that's a great organization that's kind of a micro giving community, mostly done through Facebook groups. And you might even be able to get that item for free. And I think that can also help people to kind of let go of the idea of, I better hang on to it. I'll never find it again. In general, that's not going to be true. Probably someone has that board game or what have you. And you could get it maybe at a reduced cost or even for free. And so it is going to be a lot about using your best judgment, hang on to those things that you think are, you're pretty sure you're going to

use that. And let the other things go knowing there's probably a way to get it if it turns out to be a little bit of a misstep. So I actually agree, pretty much wholeheartedly.

K

Kira Dorrian 05:07

Hooray, and then with the parenting on the same page, such a good one, Dave and I have this problem all the time. I'm quite sentimental, but he puts me to shame. I mean, that man, holds on to everything, everything. Um, and so I don't think we have a perfect system for this yet. A few things that have worked for us is taking a picture of something, and putting it in the album. So if there's something that's really meaningful, but we don't feel like we need to be able to touch it, smell it, and feel it, then we will sometimes take a picture. And then sometimes I just err on the side of you know what that's meaningful to him. And it might not be meaningful to me, but this is our home. And it might not be exactly how I want it. But I would want, I would never want him to make me get rid of something that was important to me. So I tend to err on the side of okay, that's important to you. But when it really is like, okay, this isn't... like he had this box. This is a great example, I got him this little whiskey kit for Father's Day, one year, it came in a nice box. And I said, do you want to keep this box? And he said, yes, I want to keep the box. And I said, okay, you know, knowing that like, what, what are we going to do with this box? I said, where would you like to keep the box? He said, I'd like to keep it in the garage, which was the second really bad indicator that this box was never gonna get used. And so we did; we kept the box for a year in the garage. And then finally I said, I'm going to get rid of this now. And he said, okay. So sometimes I think he needs to come to it, he comes to it more slowly, I guess is what I'm trying to say. So again, back to is there an organized way that you can keep things maybe that you disagree about, that are maybe more important to your husband, in a place that maybe you check in every six months or every year? You know, what are these things now that you feel like you can let go? And, and he may find that he's more able to not in the moment, but later down the line.

D

Deana Thayer 06:57

Yeah, I love what you said about they get there on their own. Everybody has a different timetable. And some people take longer. And some people are quick and just can make fast decisions. And I don't want to leak into the organization episode. So I'm just gonna say one other thing about that. One thing that really helped me because early in our marriage, I did actually not, not of things that were super important, but I would sometimes get rid of something. And then Scott would ask about it like, oops, so I kind of was going too far. So we each have and they're not beautiful, say from the pioneer days the real sense of this word, but I'm sure people have heard of a hope chest. And they used to be of course these lovely wooden chests and you, I mean people even had their dowries

in them. It was amazing. So ours are much more rugged. Yeah, we're going with the Rubbermaid tote hope chest, very official, beautiful. But anyway, we each have one, literally every member of our family, and what's really helped both parties. I think with that, because I'm on the side of purge purge, you know, I'm like the literal, I'm like, I'm like the opposite of a hoarder, I almost could have too little and it'd be fine. I used to actually fantasize about living in a convent, not because I wanted to be a nun, but because they really couldn't have any worldly possessions. And I thought that sounded so wonderful. So this has helped me not step on toes. Everyone has their, their hope chest, it's full of the things that are essentially, they're not serving any function. They're not needed. They're not used even once a year, but they're special to that person. And I know if it's in that tote, it's a no. And it sounds really silly, but it's actually really helped me because it's made it just so literally off limits for me, and it's guarded them, and even my children, my stepchildren, from knowing okay, Deana is not gonna come randomly toss that. Because my husband does save some....I mean, he saved his kidney stone. Okay, can we just? So I would probably have let that go, just personally, but, but it's in his hope chest so I don't touch it. You see what I'm saying? This has helped us all. Kira is dissolved into laughter. I wish you could see it.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:04

Wow, he and Dave should never live together. Because this is the thing is like, if Dave had a hope chest I mean, he does. He has his dresser. And luckily everything closes.

D

Deana Thayer 09:14

Yeah, it's important. I do better if I don't see it.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:19

Yeah. But what I, what I think is key then is some kind of system around when do we look at the hope chest and clear it out? So maybe that's the yearly event, right?

D

Deana Thayer 09:27

That's what we do is we have check ins. And we also do the same with the garage because he's made it very clear that the garage is his domain. Like I don't get to go in there and just decide willy nilly. But we do touch base about once a year, kind of spring cleaning. And I actually like I said on the consumers episode, I do that with my children too. So there's a chance to touch base and see if feelings around certain things have changed. But it just was a way to kind of protect those really special things and I'm not

going to be checking in every two minutes. Well how about that and, you still want that? I mean, so that was nice.

K

Kira Dorrian 09:58

Love it, and he can keep his kidney stone.

D

Deana Thayer 09:59

He sure can.

K

Kira Dorrian 10:02

The other question we got was from Tracy. So thank you, Tracy for writing in. And she asked this interesting question, which is twofold. So she said, she has some friends who tend to have neighbors who tend to almost treat her family like a goodwill. So they'll come over and they'll donate to the kids, here's all of the stuff that we thought you might like. And then there's also some family members or friends that every time they show up, they bring a gift. And she's worried that, you know, she wants to declutter, and she wants to not have a consumerist home. But this is a message that's coming in. So my answer to this is very similar to the episode where we talked about when family members are care providers, and that is, unfortunately, sometimes we have to have those really hard conversations. And I think it's absolutely fine to just call them up or pull them aside and say, we are just so grateful that you are thinking of us. And we've made a recent decision. I mean, you can like kind of fluff it out with a little bit of like, we're changing course. So could you change course with us?

D

Deana Thayer 11:08

Yeah, come along for the ride.

K

Kira Dorrian 11:10

Yeah, we've made, we were listening to this fabulous podcast, and we were inspired. You can, you can say whatever you want. But you know, that we've made this change in our home, we're trying to reduce the amount of stuff we have. And while we're so grateful that you've always been thinking of us, we'd prefer that you no longer bring over donations, because we're really trying to minimize. And then with the gift giving; same thing, we're trying to create a non consumerism home. And whilst we're so grateful that you're always thinking about our kids, we'd appreciate if you didn't bring gifts, unless it's a birthday, or a

holiday.

D

Deana Thayer 11:15

If there's an occasion. And something I really like that, that you can add to this, because it may be that you go through a lean season, or your partner loses a job, and then you really want the stuff is, one way we handled it, is we said, could you ask us first? Hey, we've got a bag full of clothes. Or we're, we've outgrown some books. Would you like to take a look at them? And then I had the option to say, oh, actually, right now we're good on books. Or I could say, oh, we do actually need some summer clothes, could you bring those over? But it put us in the driver's seat of being able to accept that or not. And so having people ask first is a great way to handle that. And then I noticed, she also said that also created a different kind of attitude from her children where they were almost coming to expect it. So I love that you brought up talking and communication, because I do think communication is the key there too. And it is okay to tell children, you know, it's really not appropriate to go into someone's home and say, what do you have for me today? Or, do you have something for me today? Let's go in expecting nothing, then if there is something you can be grateful. But these two things can kind of, what I like is they can head this off at the pass, if you've asked them not to do it proactively, hopefully it will cease or at least really slow down. Or if you like that middle road of could you check in with us first and ask. But then also making sure you talk with the children about those expected and accepted societal norms and that we don't... we're raising adults, and we certainly don't want adults who come over to someone's house and go, do you have anything for me? So I think the communication can happen both ways to the giver and to the receiver, if that makes sense.

K

Kira Dorrian 13:14

Oh, yeah, I love that. And I think we can almost add a piece to that, which is it's also an opportunity to have a conversation with your kids about consumerism. Hey, there's this pattern that's been emerging. So we're talking to so and so. And we're talking to you to let you know, we're going to make this change because it doesn't match our family value system. I will add to that, though, that if you are someone who has trouble saying no, then you might want to think about just cutting it off completely and not having them ask, it would, you might feel pressured to say yes. And then you put yourself right back kind of where you started.

D

Deana Thayer 13:44

And that's really uncomfortable, especially for people who aren't as great at saying no, or

who are still kind of learning to flex that muscle. Because that's kind of how I view it is as a muscle that gets stronger with use. And I know I had to learn to do that. And so you have, don't set yourself up for having to make hard decision after hard decision. But if you know, hey, sometimes we might want it and sometimes not, because I have some friends who actually give to me. I call them hand me overs. Because it's not down. I'm not younger, it's an adult. But I like that they check first or tell me what kind of thing it is. And it's also helped me flex my "no" muscle. But if I need to say I'm okay on that, or whatever, I'm good. But no, I absolutely agree. I, it's not worth making a kerfluffle for yourself.



Kira Dorrian 13:46

Yeah. And I think if you're nervous about having a direct conversation, you could also like fluff it out a little bit and say, you know, we're having this conversation with everyone in our lives because we're making this change, so that maybe if you're worried they're gonna feel really singled out. Yeah, that you can just say we're just talking to everyone, because we have a lot, you know, friends like you that are just so generous and we would never want you to feel offended, but we're just letting everyone know. This is a change that we're making. Well, thanks for writing in guys. We love doing these spin cycles. So if you have questions, feel free to email us info@futurefocusedparenting.com. Raising Adults is produced by Kira Dorrian and Deana Thayer and recorded in my laundry room. Music by Seattle band Hannalee. Thanks for listening.



Future Focused Parenting 14:28

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