

# Spin Cycle: Sometimes Life Needs a Dress Rehearsal

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

practice, talk, rehearsing, kids, taught, parenting, encountering, deana, spin cycle, podcast, gift, expectations, give, love, adults, assertive, milk, treating, thayer, bought

## SPEAKERS

Deana Thayer, Future Focused Parenting, Kira Dorrian

- K** Kira Dorrian 00:04  
What happens when two parent coaches, one a Christian and the other an agnostic Jew, sit down to talk about parenting?
- D** Deana Thayer 00:10  
I'm Deana Thayer,
- K** Kira Dorrian 00:11  
and I'm Kira Dorrian.
- D** Deana Thayer 00:12  
Welcome to Raising Adults, a podcast about Future Focused Parenting. Hi, everybody, we're back with you again for a quick spin cycle. And today we are going to talk about rehearsing or practicing different scenarios with your kids that they might come up against, which can be really helpful. Actually, I know Kira, you do this a lot. And I do too. I although it's one of those great things, you get to slowly work yourself out of a job on as your kids get older because they're able to prep themselves for different scenarios. But

maybe you can even just start with a good example, or a generic description of what does this even really mean, and why would you want to do it?

K

Kira Dorrian 00:54

Yep. So I don't know if it's, maybe it's the theater background, but I have always found that rehearsing with my kids before helps me set some expectations. This is how I expect it to look and gives them the opportunity to practice so that if let's say I'm expecting them to say something. So a great example is for Halloween. Once they started trick or treating, we would rehearse trick or treating, they would knock on the door, I would open the door. And they would say trick or treat. And I'd say oh, and I give out the candy and then they had to practice saying thank you, Happy Halloween, because I didn't want my kids to be grab and go candy kids. And so when they were tiny, we would practice every Halloween. We still do this we practiced this year, we would practice, I suspect next year, I will not have to practice. So that's a great example. So that not only am I setting my expectations, this is what I'm expecting to see you do. But they are not searching for the words. They have rehearsed and prepared. And then when the time comes, they know what to do. Now they have it out there ready. We do it with birthday presents too. So we would practice opening a present they don't like we've done that one too, right? And so okay, so how are you gonna handle that? And I'll like put something in a box and have them open it. And I'll say it's a zucchini, you know? And they'll practice saying, you know, thank you so much for the gift. I'm so grateful, you know, or something that doesn't talk about the gift specifically, but still honors, as you've talked about, that someone spent their time and their resources on buying you a present. So we do a ton of rehearsing. We have rehearsed, and I, and we may or may not talk about safety at some point, but we've also rehearsed what to do if someone tries to kidnap you. Like, I've pretended to be a kidnapper. And I have said, I'm going to come and I'm going to say, mommy's sick today. And she's gonna...I'm here, going to take you for ice cream, and then I'll take you home. Right, she came, she told me to come and get you. And I have them practice saying, what's the code word? We have a code word, what's the code, you know, we go through those motions, time and time and time again, so that when it happens, they know what to do. And so the other day, we were in a drugstore, I was getting my prescription filled. And I had said the kids could go to a toy aisle. And somehow they got, they got turned around and they couldn't find me. And so all of a sudden, there are my children with someone who works at the store. And they said, Mommy, we did what we practiced. We couldn't find you. So we looked for someone in a uniform. And this gentleman was there and they said, excuse me, we can't find, we can't find our Mom, can you help us please? And then they sang him my phone number, because I have taught them my phone number in a song to help them. Again rehearsing, rehearsing. So every now and then we're in the car. Hey, let's sing the phone number song. Hey, let's sing the address song. So all of these are

examples of ways that we have kind of taught them all of these things that you and I are talking about. What are you gonna do for good manners? What does that look like? When my daughter went over for dinner to a friend's house for the first time without me? We practiced what she would do and say if she did not like the food. You know, how do you honor your host? And say thank you? Thank you. I know you worked really hard on this dinner. I'm not fond of it, but I really appreciate you making it, you know, that kind of thing. Because again, if they don't have the words, we have to give it to them. And part of that remembering those words is just having an opportunity to practice.

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Deana Thayer 04:20

Absolutely. I love that. You mentioned the gift thing because we did this too, but not only with gifts you're not a huge fan of, but what if it's a repeat? Oh, and this is where you have mentioned before that even though it comes with its own set of hardships, the twin thing bought us some good stuff. And this is where the divorce thing bought us some good stuff. I taught them to say, now I'll have one at my dad's too!

K

Kira Dorrian 04:42

Oh, I love that!

D

Deana Thayer 04:43

And it was great because they could make something positive out of, out of it. Now I'll have one at each house instead of, I already got that. I already own this. And but having the opportunity to practice that, so in the moment they're not making some bizarre face or whatever is super helpful. And the manners thing is a big one too just training in, especially the polite nos, right. The polite no thank yous and I don't care for that, but still being gracious. And that can be, I think a little bit harder unless they're given some language to use around it. Otherwise, they're encountering something and you're going to go one of two ways, especially depending on the kid and I actually have one of each, where they could go toward being maybe not super polite. And they need to be taught what are the kind words around that? Or you get a softy no spine, jellyfish, who is, that was me growing up who would just eat it and be suffering silently. And so it's so important to teach the middle ground because then there is room for being assertive and having likes and dislikes but doing it in a way that's kind because I didn't really learn the assertive piece and so I would just kind of suck it up and hate my life. Whatever that was, it was not good. But also I grew up in a little bit of this era of, you just finish it. And even the adults telling you that and so I love that we're moving away from that because, I hate milk to this day because I was made to drink milk at my cousin's house. And they just were not

tolerating it. You don't get up from the table till the milk is gone, and they bought whole milk. I was like, it was eating, it was just a thick feeling in my throat, I just can't cope. So it kind of scarred me. But it just wasn't even presented as an option to say, I don't really care for that, could I have water? It was just, you're gonna drink your milk. And so I, I do feel thankful that we're moving away from those things. And it's becoming okay to say, I don't care for that. But I love that you taught couched in there is gratitude for your host and for the time they spent preparing it. And we can still be thankful for that even if it's maybe not the meal we were hoping for.

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Kira Dorrian 06:45

Right? Absolutely. And I think that that opportunity to just, to just practice saying the new words, instead of like, hey, don't forget to say thank you, you know, as opposed to what does it actually feel like to get a gift I don't like and figure out what to say? I mean even as adults, sometimes we struggle with that. So giving them that opportunity just to like have a go at it basically before the big moment. I mean, this is, this is not big news, right? This is what actors do all the time, like you don't just step out and do a play, you rehearse, you practice, you tweak, you perfect. I think giving our kids the opportunity to do that, too, before the lights are on them, and everyone's watching them open this gift. And then they feel all those big feelings and short circuit...

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Deana Thayer 07:25

and aren't ready with a response for it. And the cool thing about this, is it something you can do in the older years, too, but you just reverse it. So now instead of giving them the words, I will ask when this happens, what do you think you'll say? So we can talk about it and maybe have time to tweak it? Oh, have you thought about this? But I really encourage really starting at about 11 or 12. I don't anymore go to my kids' teachers. They do that themselves. But we talked about that. I would say okay, you want to ask about this grade without helicopter mom swooping in and going, I'm not happy with the B plus, can you tell me what happened there? We talked about, okay, what's a way that you approach this teacher and can ask this question, but with a posture of respect for that authority figure. And so balancing those two is very similar to balancing I don't like the food with gratefulness for the host, right? So the only difference is now instead of me saying, here's how we say that, I asked them, what might you say? And then we can talk through it. Well, it's great. It's something you can keep doing. You just give them a little more ownership.

K

Kira Dorrian 08:24

Yeah. And I would say, I mean, we do some of that even now at seven for sure. What do

you think you'll say? Like, let's practice let's see, you know, Rhys had a, not a bullying situation. Rhys is just such a tender soul. And, you know, they're, they're just boys that are more rough and tumble and he's just not one of them. And so he had a situation with a rough and tumble friend, like a genuine friend at school last year and my husband was having to teach him like how to use a tough guy voice and how to stand up for himself. And there was a lot of practicing, you know. Okay, I'm gonna, I'm going to pretend to push you now. What are you going to do? Let's practice it, so that he didn't feel like he was just caught in that moment. He, his body knew what to do, his voice knew what to do, his brain knew what to do.

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Deana Thayer 09:06

Hugely helpful. And it doesn't go away because they are going to encounter things even as they grow. But here's the other great thing about this when you've set up an environment where you practice things, and you give them some context of, hey, this might happen, I want you to know what to expect, because that's also a kindness to them. When we tell them things that might happen, like you could go to someone's house for dinner and maybe not like the meal. They might not have even thought that was a possibility, right? So what's great is then you set up this amazing dynamic where they're going to want to ask you when they're about to face something different, because now what I'm getting is I'm reaping the rewards of this. I have teenagers who will say, ey, this is coming up, or it's my first time encountering this scenario with my friends. Can I ask you about some ways to handle that? Or they'll be thinking about making a decision and then ask me, hey, do you think this is a good decision? Here's how I think, thought it through. What do you think about it? So you create an environment where they want to actually invite your input, which is beautiful. Isn't that the point? Right? Yeah.

K

Kira Dorrian 10:08

Great. So the lesson here is that life sometimes is a dress rehearsal. And we should not be afraid of that. No. So parents, if some of the things that you were interested in that we've been talking about, you want to implement, but you're kind of not quite sure how to do that. We really encourage practice, rehearse, give your kids, make it fun. It's it can be a game, a playful... I mean, the trick or treating thing my kids love. They look forward to it every year, like we get to practice trick or treating, knocking on the door, right? But they're still learning. They're learning how to do it. And they're learning our expectations, because that's the other piece is sometimes we don't necessarily practice, but I will before something big say, hey, this big thing's coming up. I want to share with you what my expectations are so that they're aware, right?



Deana Thayer 10:52

Yes, absolutely. And the other nice thing we hear this old cliché practice makes perfect which I don't buy it. But I do love this slightly different take on it. Practice makes permanent. When you practice something over and over, it's available to you when you need it and you can pull that tool out throughout your life.



Kira Dorrian 11:10

Absolutely. Well thanks for joining us for today's spin cycle. As always, please follow us on Facebook and Instagram our handles are @RaisingAdultsPodcast. And if you want more information on us, you can go to FutureFocusedparenting.com and if you want to email in with a question or a thought or a episode idea, we love hearing from our listeners. You can email info@FutureFocusedparenting.com. For those of our listeners who are in the states this coming week is Thanksgiving. So Deana and I will be taking a break from podcasting. We are wishing those of you who celebrate a very, very happy Thanksgiving weekend. And I know that we are both experiencing a lot of gratitude for this incredible opportunity to podcast for you. So we will be back the Monday after Thanksgiving. Wishing you all a wonderful holiday weekend. 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 12:09

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