

Prioritise this in 2024 (It'll make parenting easier & more fun)

Helena [00:00:00]:

Welcome back to the Parenting With Play podcast with me, Helena Mooney. I am so pleased to have you here because it's been a while, hasn't it? Welcome to 2024. I haven't done a podcast in a little while because we have made the big move from Australia to England, and it's taken off quite a lot of my time organizing things, getting our family settled, and, and really sort of Embedding ourselves back in England. And it's been wonderful, but been quite forgotten. Anyway, I'm really, really thrilled to be back here Bringing this podcast to you to help you enjoy being a mom more. That's really the essence of this podcast, Is so that you can enjoy being a mum more knowing that you're really supporting your children at a deep level. And that's really what I wanna focus on in today's podcast? Because, you know, it's 2024, isn't it? And so at the beginning of the year I'm halfway through January. But there's always those things about new year, new you, you know, learn how to do this, become this, lose weight, And more money.

Helena [00:01:03]:

You know, all of those things that we've all been told that we need to do, and it can be like, oh my god. You know? Or we can set start off the year with Amazing intentions. Really wanting to just live our best year ever, to be the best versions of ourselves, to do everything right and perfect. I can feel quite a lot of pressure, can't it? And it can feel quite exhausting, and then you might be able to maintain it for a couple of days, a week, maybe even a month. And then afterwards, it all falls by the wayside. So what I would love to offer, just to add to all of that noise, but to really let a lot of that go. That there's always an emphasis, isn't there, on us changing ourselves, that we're not Adequate or enough as we are. And I really want to offer that you really are amazing as you are.

Helena [00:01:57]:

Now, yes, of course, there's always things that we can do better that makes our lives easier, more enjoyable, yada yada yada. But at the heart of it is you. And I really want you to feel I am enough. I am enough. I'm enough as I am. And particularly in relation to mothering, to being a parent, We can feel like we're constantly chasing our tails. There's something wrong with our children. They're being a nightmare.

Helena [00:02:30]:

Oh my god. I've done something wrong. I'm not a good mom. I'm screwing all of this up. Oh, I need to change. And when my daughter was little, I used to think, Well, if only I could just hand her over to somebody else, they can fix her, they can do all the things that I'm clearly failing at, they can fix her, and then they can hand her back to me. I so wanted that so many times. But what I really learned was that my daughter was not gonna be fixed by somebody else.

Helena [00:03:00]:

She needed me. She needed our relationship to be really strong so that she can then flourish within it. So what I would love to invite you to do in 2024 is to focus not on losing weight or changing who you are as a person, but to really focus on enjoying your relationship with your child, Enjoying your child. Enjoying you. Making being you and having more fun The priority of this year. Because there's always so much going on in the world that we can all get really scared and overwhelmed with, And that doesn't actually help our children. What helps our children the most is how you create your family and your home. And really, that comes down to how you are in relation to them, your relationship with your child.

Helena [00:03:57]:

And once you focus on that, then you everything else actually does start to improve. The quality of your relationships is the single biggest determining factor of the quality of your life. Because you could have You could be the skinniest you've ever been. You could be earning the most amount of money that you've ever dreamed of. And yet if you don't have a good relationship, Particularly with your children, it feels empty. And you're going, well, what's it all for? And there's so many people, isn't there? Particularly businessmen who've created in phenomenal companies. Sometimes they then get divorced. 2nd time around, they then focus More on their children because the 1st time around, they've been so focused on building that business.

Helena [00:04:41]:

And, yes, it's been really satisfying for them, but a significant chunk has been missing. So if they have a second family, a lot of them then go and focus on their kids and actually really being there for their children. All that can be a real Regret later on that I didn't spend time with my children. I don't know my children. I don't really have a relationship with my children. That's such a deep regret. And the beauty is is that you can have the most amazing relationship with your child. Even when times are tough, You can still keep focusing on that relationship with your child, and that's what's going to get you both through those challenging times.

Helena [00:05:22]:

Whether it's challenging times externally, something's going on that you can't control, it's out in the world. Perhaps your child is having a hard time at school. Perhaps they're having confidence issues, social media stuff is going on, friendship problems, Or maybe you're having a trouble. Like, they're just not listening to you. They're being really ungrateful for all the things that you're doing. They've got real attitude, and it's driving you up the wall? The way to turn all of that around is by focusing on being with your child, knowing that I'm enough, that you're enough, and that your child is enough. They might be having a hard time. You might be having a hard time.

Helena [00:06:07]:

The best way to get through having a hard time is by working together. So loving your child as they are, which I know can be really hard. Alfie Cohen wrote this brilliant book, Unconditional Parenting, and it's a really, really, really good book. But that's really hard, isn't it, to love somebody unconditionally. Because what does that mean? It means that no matter what your child does, you will still love them. That's not how most other all other relationships work, is it? Everything else is conditional. You know, if a friend continually annoys you, Lets you down, talks badly about you to you. Then after a while, you just leave the friendship.

Helena [00:06:51]:

You just walk away. Same with relationships, with marriages. They break down, don't they? Because It's it's hard being in a relationship with somebody. And if it's continually draining and not satisfying and not nourishing and and abusive, Well, then you walk away. But with our children, it's different, isn't it? They are our children for life. You are their mom for life. And it's brilliant, and it's also exhausting and draining and a huge responsibility. But there's no other relationship where really you can feel unconditional love.

Helena [00:07:29]:

Now, hopefully, you have felt that to some extent from your own parents. It is hard to give when when, you know, children are behaving terribly. But to To offer that unconditional love so that your child knows that no matter what they do, you are there for them. That is what's going to give them the greatest sense of confidence and peace within themselves. And The launchpad for them to go out into the world and and live life to the fullest. So whatever the challenge is, Know that you can get through it. Now there's courses, loads of strategies and there's loads of tips which you I share with you and you, you know, See you on blogs and podcasts and everything like that. But if you can if you get all worried about, oh god, what should I be doing now? I don't know.

Helena [00:08:23]:

Should I be saying this? Should I be doing that? You know, we can get really panicked, can't we, about what exactly I should be doing in the exact moment rightnow. And then you can be second guessing yourself and thinking, I'm doing this wrong. I'm screwing this up. Oh, I don't know what the right thing to say is. I bet so and so over there, she knows what to do, and I don't know what to do. We can really beat ourselves up with so much self doubt. But if you can strip all that away And let go of all of those expectations and pressures that you're putting on yourself and that confusion that sort of swirls around in your brain, And you bring it back to, how can I connect with my child right now? So what does that look like? If they're having, You know, an almighty tantrum on the floor. How can I connect with them? So this is what I go into great detail with inside my programs And one to ones, but essentially, you're wanting to offer empathy and helping them whilst they're feeling like that.

Helena [00:09:23]:

Not distracting them, not shaming them, not ignoring them, helping them whilst they are in those big feelings. And when because they are gonna move through those feelings. They're gonna move through them whether you ignore them, shame them, or whether you stay with them. But the quality of that experience is vastly improved, was transformed when you are with them. Because when you are supporting your child, when they're having the biggest meltdown over seemingly ridiculous things, but there's always a good reason why a child's having a meltdown. If you can stay with them and connect with them through it. They're gonna come through that transformed. They're gonna release the upset feelings that were causing them to have that tantrum in the 1st place, and they're gonna feel a deeper sense of connection with you, and they're gonna feel a deeper sense of peace within themselves because they know that they are still lovable even though they've been behaving off the wall.

Helena [00:10:24]:

Sustaining with your child in when they're having an absolute PADI fit hissy fit. That's that's transformative. And, likewise, connecting with them when they're sort of being slightly whiny or slightly annoying and being connecting with them playfully or connecting with them just by being with them in a really present way, that's also transformative. That's gonna those micro moments of I'm gonna focus on connection rather than teaching, I'm gonna focus on connection rather than consequences. All of those things, that's what shifts things. And it's those micro moments that just shifts it really seemingly innocuously. Like, you wouldn't even know it's happened. But you know those times when you walk in and you get really annoyed and you're thinking, okay.

Helena [00:11:10]:

Well, I've gotta teach them. Got to learn. They that's not bringing connection, is it? And that's when those moments then it all just turns into this shouting spiral and everything just goes totally pear shaped. So when you can move in with a desire to connect, that's what subtly shifts things. Your energy is different. Your behavior is different. Your facial expressions are different. So it doesn't actually, a lot of the time, matter what you say, you know, I give scripts.

Helena [00:11:42]:

You know, I I'll advise you what to say, but that's just because to give you some help? But the very essence of it is how you are feeling and what's your motivation behind whatever you're saying and you're doing. And if you have that motivation to connect, transforms everything. You could say ridiculous things, but you've got that desire to connect. It's what makes play so wonderful, isn't it? Because you're being silly. You're being goofy. But at the heart of it is a real connection. There's a to and fro between you and your child, and that's deep connection. And that's what makes life fun and enjoyable.

Helena [00:12:20]:

And isn't that really the essence of life? You know, you could do

everything right. You could lose the weight. You could earn more money. You could run your marathon. You could bake food from scratch. Whatever it is It's on your New Year's resolution. But if you're not having fun doing it, then what's the point? There's no enjoyment, is it? So how about it being that this year this year is a year of fun and connection? And with everything that's going on in the world, I mean, how radically wonderful could that be? That within your home, within your family, regardless of what's going on outside, you can bring that fun, that love, and that enjoyment, And that deep connection with your children, that's what's gonna help them navigate the challenges of the outside world. That's what's gonna help you navigate the challenges of the outside world.

Helena [00:13:15]:

And that's what's gonna give you the greatest fulfillment and sense of purpose and satisfaction Because you know that you've got a great relationship with your child. Now is it always gonna look great? No. There's times when it's gonna look Hideous. It's gonna be really hard and really awful. And you're still gonna lose you're gonna lose it at your kids, and you're gonna shout, and you're gonna do things that you sort of look back and go, oh god. I wish I hadn't done that. So it's not about perfection. None of this is about perfection.

Helena [00:13:46]:

And that's about that's connection. That's relationships. None of it's perfect because perfect doesn't exist because perfect we can put so much pressure on being perfect. I've talked about this in other times. It's not about being perfect, it's about connection. And connection is messy and it can be rocky and it Can not always be nice and it can not always be kind, but it's that connection to her. Whatever happens, You reconnect. So when you lose it at your child, you have that opportunity to repair.

Helena [00:14:18]:

And not only does that strengthen your relationship, but it models to your child How to stay in a relationship with somebody even when 1 or both of you stuff up. And that is what brings confidence, that inner confidence to your child, and it'll bring it to you too. If you're sort of feeling, oh, You know, things are tricky at work or I'm not sure what's going on here or when you've got that solidity because, you know, I've got a really good relationship with my child. It brings a greater sense of pride. So if you want help with strategies on how to have navigate those difficult times so that you do have that strong relationship with your child, that's what I'm here for. I'm here to help you with those in the moment strategies, but also looking at what's going on underneath for you. Because if you had a difficult relationship with your parents, it's really hard to then create this new type of relationship with your child. But it's absolutely possible.

Helena [00:15:17]:

I've I've worked with people who've had really, really tough experiences with their moms and their dads, and and they work really

hard. And the relationships that they end up having with their children are just so beautiful. So how about this year? You don't have to change who you are. Know that I am enough. If you could start feeling I am enough, That will transform everything around you. And then if you can go, how can I connect with my child? I my desire this year is to have The best relationship with my child. And to have that we have fun together, that we're deeply connected, that It's what's gonna make an awesome year for you. Alright.

Helena [00:16:03]:

I'd love to hear how that resonates, and I have a new website. I've changed away from parenting with play. I am now at [helena mooney .com](http://helena.mooney.com), and there you'll see all past podcasts, all information, all my courses, and how you can work with me directly. So, and I would love to connect with you more deeply there. Alright. I'm re really wishing you the best year.

Helena [00:16:31]:

And knowing that it doesn't have to be perfect and it doesn't have to look a certain way, it's how it is for you Having fun and really connecting with your child. So have a really, really lovely week. And I look forward to chatting with you again Next week because this podcast is back. Alright. I'll see you next time.