



Podcast 45: Daring to be Yourself with Lisa Pepper-Satkin

Episode notes: <http://prekteachandplay.com/podcast45>

Announcer: *Welcome to the Pre-K Teach & Play podcast, where solutionaries are reclaiming children's right to learn through play, reimagining inclusive classrooms, and revolutionizing early care and education. Here's your host, Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak.*

Kristie: Hey, everyone. This is Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak and this is [episode 45](#) of the [Pre-K Teach & Play podcast](#). Today, my guest is [Lisa Pepper-Satkin](#). If you want to know a little bit about Lisa, the best thing to do is think about the Maya Angelou quote where she says, "At the end of the day, people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel." I remember from the first time I met Lisa to when we recorded this podcast. I may not remember the details of our conversation, but I absolutely remember how she made me feel. When we first met, we were at a [Hivery](#) event in San Francisco and I was there with my friend, [Tererai Trent](#), and we had just finished our session. Lisa came up and started talking to me about this amazing work that she was doing around the social-emotional health and wellbeing of children, especially children that were experiencing anxiety.

Kristie: From there, which was love at first sight, I got to know her better and really started to learn about her work around how to really think about being a leader. How we show up in the world, how we really can transform the culture in which we are working, and living, and being. And so, I sat down with her right when the pandemic had started, back in 2020 in the Spring, and both of us were feeling the heaviness of it. Even at that time, we were already grieving, and missing things, and also wondering what life would look like going forward. I don't remember if we came up with any answers, but I do remember how I felt by the end of our conversation. The feeling in a word was hopeful. Sit back, listen, and feel what it might mean to have hope.

Lisa: I really believe in magic, and you meet the right people at the exact right time and you don't know why necessarily, but they're like sticks in a nest. You just gather all these little sticks in life and you give sticks. It magically ... Connections happen or relationships forge.



Kristie: Yeah. I mean, I can remember the day I met you and I can't even believe it was October of 2018. I had to look that up and re-look it up, because it feels like it was just like yesterday.

Lisa: Yeah.

Kristie: We didn't get to talk much. We were both at the Hivery Entrepreneur + Inspiration Lab. And so, do you go every year? I think you're a big part of that community, right?

Lisa: Now, I'm a founding member at the Hivery, which meant that I ... I don't know if you know about what they did, but they just opened ... You know where we met-

Kristie: Yes, yes.

Lisa: ... they're now in that space, as that is the next coworking space.

Kristie: Wow.

Lisa: I made a large investment in becoming a founding member because it made so much sense to me. These are my people. This is where I want to be. If they do the E-Lab again, then I'll go.

Kristie: Yeah, yeah. Is that the first time you had been, when I met you?

Lisa: I've been to many other events, but I think that was the first E-Lab. I've been to a lot of things that they've done and continue to go. I did [Love Notes](#) the other night in February, right before Valentine's Day. I brought all my supplies in and let people make ... Really, they were making valentines. My intention was that people would make love notes for themselves and it turned into a big Valentine's fest. It was like we all tapped into the kid in us.

Kristie: Yeah. Well, let's talk about that, because I was fortunate enough to be able to attend because I was there with Dr. Tererai Trent and we had a breakout session. Then I met you afterwards and you gave me these beautiful gifts, and then I later shared the [Pocket Full of Love](#) book. I can't remember who I gave [MyHeartyKids](#)' stuffed little thing to, but I know the book went to my really good friends in Durango, Colorado. Then there's this sticker. I should've brought it over here. I have it on my iPad, so every time I open up my iPad case, there's this sticker that says, "I am brave. I am kind." I can't remember, I should know-

Lisa: I am grateful and smart.

Kristie: Yes, those things, so those...great affirmations.

Lisa: ... right here. It never stops delighting me.

Kristie: Right?

Lisa: I love it.

Kristie: I'm not a person that likes to put stickers on things, like bumper stickers or anything like that. Even as a kid, if I had a sticker book, I never took the sticker off the thing and put it in the book. But this one, I took it off. For a long time it was floating around in my bag, and then it was ... And I was finally like, "No, I'm going to put it on something I open up and see every day."

Lisa: Wow, I am honored, because I know how that is. I'm not a big sticker person. When my kids started putting stickers all over their water bottles, because that's...

Kristie: Yeah. Now. Tell us a little bit, because we're going to talk about really fun, exciting things today. But, one of the things that I love about you is the way I met you, which is MyHeartyKid, which I know is only a small part of your life, but a big part of your heart. When we were preparing the other day, you were sharing how Ellen DeGeneres should buy something for all teachers. I was like, "Oh, I'm going to put that on my refrigerator and my manifestation list so it'll happen." Tell us a little bit about MyHeartyKid and what Ellen should do.

Lisa: Okay. Hi, Ellen.

Kristie: Hi, Ellen. We'd love for you to do this.

Lisa: I watch her to inspire all the giving. I mean, I'm a giver, but she has superpowers of giving. She can give to anyone, anything. I love that. Anyway, so how this came about was, my daughter was in kindergarten and she had this little friend named Ella. Ella was afraid to raise her hand. And you just can't be afraid to raise your hand, especially to go to the bathroom, around me and not have me do something about it. She happened to be my friend's daughter. I said, "Ella, practice being brave all week, and I'll make you a surprise." Right? I was making this up. I just wanted to help her not feel afraid. And so, every day after school she and my daughter came to me like, "I was so brave, I raised my hand." And she was marking it down on a little piece of paper I probably gave her.

Lisa: By the time the end of the week came, I had committed to making her a surprise. And so, I made her this little wonky doll with a heart head and these funny little arms and

legs and sign on it that said, "I am brave." Then, my daughter liked it. Then, I started thinking, "Oh, this might be a neat idea for kids." I tried to sew some more of them. Then, at the same time, I entered a mastermind group. And in the mastermind group, I thought, "Well, I'll develop this program to help kids grow self-esteem." And so, I did. Then, I wrote the book, and then I made the toy, and then I tried to launch it. I've never been really good at launching things, that's why I want Ellen to help me launch it. I don't know all the ins and outs. I know the thinking behind the program, I'm really good at that, so I just kept doing that.

Lisa: I'd go into the classroom and I taught kids about affirmations, and intentions, and that their words have power, and how to use their words powerfully. Then, I taught the teachers. Fast-forward to the marketing end of it, I went to one of those outdoor shows. What are they called where all the tables are set up? The vendors, like a vendor program. And I went and nobody came to my booth.

Kristie: Aww.

Lisa: I was so sad, right?

Kristie: Yeah.

Lisa: I was there with my little daughter. And on the way home, I drove home and I was crying and I said, "I should just give up." And she said, "Don't give up, mom. I see the look in kid's eyes when they have the HeartyKid." And so, I was like, "Okay. She's just being nice, my eight year old daughter." I went to the principal and I said, "I have a gift for all of the teachers," because I was done. "I am not going to make things and go to retail shows and sell them." And so, I came in and I gave all the teachers my leftover HeartyKids, and I'd produced these books, and I gave it to them.

Lisa: In August, school opened and they called me and said, "Okay, we're ready to launch the program." I was like, "Well, wait. What do you mean?" I was done. They're like, "This is fantastic." One teacher, in particular, really saw the light in it. Then, I just kept teaching it to her class, and the fourth and fifth graders really got it. And those kids are different. I still know those kids today and they're different than other kids. I know the program has power, and it needs a college to adopt it as the business program that they learned how to market.

Kristie: Right? So that you can just stay with all the goodness of the self-esteem and the bravery. I think we have a little ... I'm not Ellen, but I aspire to be her. But, we're going to give folks a download for this episode, which is your teacher's guide, right?

Lisa: Totally.



- Kristie: And so, what will they find in this download? What does that teacher's guide help them do? Because I know we've got listeners of different ages of kids, and you already mentioned kindergartners and you mentioned fourth graders, but this whole idea of helping kids be brave, and develop self-esteem, and self-love. Because I don't want people to think that we're saying, "Everybody has to be an extrovert."
- Lisa: I'm so glad you brought that up, because the tenent of the program is to help kids go inside and know themselves from the inside out. Then, how do we encourage that through love, and empathy, and compassion, right? My favorite days were the days that kids ... The little kids that couldn't raise their hand and talk about what they love and appreciate about themselves. Because then we got the other kids involved in what they see and know and that imprint will never leave kids. They'll never forget it. I watch kids stand at the front of the classroom, and they have these big whiteboards, and I would draw this big heart, and we would make a love map for the children that stood up, right?
- Lisa: Other kids would say, "I see that you're friendly," and then the child would adopt it as, "I am friendly." Then they would find an example of, "Right, I am friendly. I was kind to so-and-so on the playground." Then that, "I am," imprint, that's where I am brave, bold, and smart came about, right? It's these, "I am's," which is, "This is who I am and no one will ever be able to take that away from me. No comment from another teacher, from a parent. If I know myself that well, that stays with me. I'm getting so excited again talking about it.
- Kristie: I am too, and I'm thinking, everybody that listens to this has to send a mental wavelength to Ellen and say-
- Lisa: Or a letter, a letter.
- Kristie: A letter, right? Yes, for real. Don't just leave it up to the universe, let's make it happen. Everybody tweet it. We'll put something in the show notes of exactly what you can all say, so the same message just comes to her and says, "Look." Because it would be so much about where her heart is and what she values, but it would be a way for us to get these amazing resources, and strategies, and supports into teacher's hands. Because I know that so many of the teachers I hang out, they ... This is probably where we're going to go next, is if we would do different things with children, we wouldn't have to fix things later.
- Kristie: Because how many times do we say, "I'm not enough?" How many of us can walk around and do a positive affirmation that, "I am brave. I am bold. I am kind?" That's not easy for a lot of us to do. And so, when teachers feel like they have to cover the content,

and they have to be accountable to get kids ready for kindergarten, or for first grade, or to make sure everybody can do a certain thing on a test, none of this has room. There's no space.

Lisa: Yes. And we have to make room for it, right? Because with this, then the other pieces expand. The academics expand. If teachers have this in their own hearts, and souls, and their own thinking, and their own practices, then the kids benefit. It was interesting, because with MyHeartyKid, then finally came the book that you're talking about, "Pocket Full of Love." Which was recognizing and opening a conversation about fear and anxiety, which you and I both know is growing.

Kristie: Absolutely.

Lisa: It's exponentially-

Kristie: Yes, yes.

Lisa: ... impacting our young people. I think it's certainly social media and the access young people have to all of this external information. We've got the comparisons that come up and kids are externally motivated to please. My program helps kids get motivated internally, right? With this children's book, I realized, "Oh, that is actually my story of fear as a kid." Now ... Well, my work with adults, which I have done for over 20 years, is really the same thing. It's about reprogramming that inner bully that gets ... That seed gets planted early on and now as adults we have to do all this work to unpack it.

Kristie: Yes. I love what you were saying about if teachers, in their hearts, felt those affirmation statements about themselves, just mirror neurons alone, or just your spirit, or your approach, or you wouldn't feel so much pressure to please a school board, or a building principal, or whoever you feel a lot of pressure from. That you would have some strength of discernment to have courageous conversations. I'm not saying that you're going to give everybody the finger. Though, I'm not opposed to some of those things, like when the rules are silly. But to feel really confident that you're not by yourself, and that you are enough, and that you know that these are the right things to be supporting children. And so, talk to me a little bit about maybe what you saw in the teachers as they went through this work with you.

Lisa: Oh my gosh.

Kristie: Yeah, I can imagine.

Lisa: That's incredible, because when I would come in and volunteer, and I certainly have a big vision of training other people to be able to lead this conversation, right? But when



the kids see the teachers woven into doing their, "I am's," or doing a love map for the teacher, or working on affirmations, it concretizes it. It makes it real for the kids. Kids can help the teachers in this process too. The duality of that is impressive. I just watched teachers glow. I watched it weave into their growth mindset curriculum. I watched it weave into how they were talking to the kids.

Kristie: But even how they were talking to each other, from one colleague to another. Just that ripple effect.

Lisa: It's really good. And teachers deserve it the most. You were asking what's in the teacher's guidebook. The teacher's guidebook envelops the way that I use the toy. The toy was passed from child to child based on the children's desire, so the kids passed it. It wasn't a tool of discipline, right? It wasn't like ... You couldn't ever get it taken away and you weren't given it based on being good, right? Because good is sort of subjective. It was based on the kids, who they wanted to share it with. That was a key component of the Hardy Kid in the classroom. We used it in a lot of different ways. The child that had the toy was also the one that had a love map done. And then the love map, I encourage the kids to tape on the desk.

Lisa: The kids are getting this imprint over, and over, and over of who they know themselves to be. Not an external validation, but an internal knowing, right? The teacher's guidebook has the same thing. It's like, it has the affirmation exercise. It has this really great piece around safety, teaching kids to recognize the yes inside of themselves. Kids can really identify foods that are a yes and a no, and if we take that as a platform to help kids discover what is intuitively a yes and intuitively a no, right? Then I taught kids, "When you're saying hello or goodbye to someone, what is the best hello or goodbye for you?" Versus, "Go give your uncle a hug and a kiss." Because that might not be a true yes or no, right?

Kristie: Right.

Lisa: Then if kids start to pay attention to their intuition, which I lovingly call shoe, which is kind of a funny story. This crazy lady chased me and my daughter with a shoe. And so, I said to my daughter, "Okay. We'll always have this code word now called 'shoe'". And whenever we call 'shoe', it means, you gather. Like, we need to do something for safety. And no one knows. If we're in a grocery store and I say, "My shoe hurts," my kids know, "Come quickly, come close, and don't look around and don't ask questions." Then, when we get in the car, we can look around and ask questions, right? And so, this is a great tool for teachers to teach their kids too, to take back to their families.

Kristie: That is so amazing. And so, then, because there's so many facets of your work that I want to talk about. Because, again, this ripple effect. Trouble marketing up until ... My



friend Crystal always says, "Up until now, I've struggled with ... " We'll say, "Up until now, we've struggled getting Ellen's attention."

Lisa: Yes, I love it.

Kristie: Okay?

Lisa: That's what I need people to do. But it's so fun to be real too and go, "Oh, this has been hard."

Kristie: It is hard.

Lisa: Up until now, it's been hard.

Kristie: Up until now, it has been hard. Beautiful. And so, what else do you do, other than making these beautiful little weird looking HeartyKids and yelling, "shoe," at the grocery store? What else you got going, Lisa?

Lisa: Just one more thing for teachers.

Kristie: Okay.

Lisa: Maybe I can even superly discount this game that I made that's so great for the classroom. It's called, Love Big, and there are these questions that kids can ask each other and answer. It's also a great icebreaker game for teachers to play together, or for any of the staff to play with one another. Because they're questions like, "Who are three people that have inspired you?" Or, "What's one place you want to travel to? Who's the last person you made a phone call to? What do you love to do on your birthday?" These are ... It's called, [Love Big: A Game to Spread Love](http://prekhandplay.com). And so, I'm happy to majorly discount it to get into more classrooms.

Kristie: Well, how about we do this? How about, since I like to play Ellen, I'll get a bunch of them and we'll give them away to people in some fun way when the episode launches? And even if they're listening to this after the fact, every once in a while it just might pop up on social media, a little giveaway?

Lisa: Yeah, beautiful.

Kristie: How's that?

Lisa: Okay, so-



Kristie: Our "Love Big" giveaway.

Lisa: I love giving things away.

Kristie: I know it, I do too. If we were Ellen, it would be okay. Meaning, we had Ellen's pocketbook.

Lisa: Yeah. And Ellen's sponsors.

Kristie: And Ellen's sponsors. Let me ask you about the Love Big, because maybe there's a little bit of a collaboration or a little bit of a twist we can put on it. How low, young, do the questions go? Because so many of the revolutionaries are working with children who are toddlers or preschoolers. Would those questions still be? A little high?

Lisa: A little high.

Kristie: All right.

Lisa: It's great for the teachers, and the teacher's families, and the staff. They have really cute pictures on them that I drew, so I love the pictures. And so, the kids could also make up ... I can't remember what that age is like, though, I have to admit.

Kristie: It's okay. They can take it, because it's beautiful ... Like you said, an icebreaker for a community of practice, or staff development, or even just a staff meeting just to embed opportunities which will totally raise their emotional intelligence, which I love to think about, and set the tone. And they're smart enough to figure out, "Well, how can I ask these types of questions that would be developmentally relevant to my children?"

Lisa: Totally. It's an idea, right?

Kristie: Yes, exactly.

Lisa: Maybe I'll collaborate with kindergarten teachers and say, "How do we make a deck?"

Kristie: Yes, exactly.

Lisa: That's a good idea.

Kristie: Right?

Lisa: Right.

Kristie: After this airs, everybody's going to be emailing me, "I've got ideas."

Lisa: Totally. You know what? If anybody wants help weaving MyHeartyKid, or the program into their classroom, or they want a conversation about, "Hey, do you have ideas for this?", or, "This is a particular issue." I'm so open to emails or phone calls. I'm a giver and I can't believe how many people don't take advantage of it.

Kristie: I know. It's amazing, isn't it? Because I would love for them to have a conversation with you about children who are younger, or children who are not yet verbal, or children who are neuro-diverse, or children who are culturally different in the sense of their language, their SES, just to benefit from your wisdom of how it's played out in the real world, so that they can see that this is something that we do as humans. It doesn't have to be a certain curriculum, or it comes in a box and you have to do it a certain way. I even loved how where on the [guidebook](#) you said, "With or without the props, with or without your materials." That people can still do this. And that's what I'm thinking about the Love Big game. Once they see it, they can take the spirit and the intent of it.

Lisa: Yes, and adapt it.

Kristie: And adapt it.

Lisa: Certainly, very well-resourced too with other people in the community who are working with lots of different kinds of kids with different learning advantages, or disadvantages, or challenges. We got to come together as a community and share resources, so that's what I'm about. I have worked in more traditional classrooms. I don't feel very skilled in less traditional classrooms, but that doesn't mean I don't know people who aren't willing to help. I do...

Kristie: But I think what's beautiful about it is that you just bring this thing that it's about us as humans. It doesn't matter what our privilege or lack of privilege is, whether that's ability, or class, or gender. It's just ... I don't know. I like thinking about us just as humans.

Lisa: Yeah, beautiful.

Kristie: Speaking of people that are amazing, now you've been working with [Brené Brown](#).

Lisa: I love that you say, "With her." I got certified in her body of work, as a [facilitator](#) in-

Kristie: Well, back up. How did you even decide to go do this, or what is it?

Lisa: Well, I applied. I applied. It was kind of hard to get-

Kristie: I would think there would be a lot of people applying, Lisa.

Lisa: There were.

Kristie: There had to be thousands.

Lisa: Right. I was really lucky. I think there are four or 500 of us that got certified in 2019.

Kristie: Okay.

Lisa: Now, I am incorporating all of that teaching that I got into the work. It's funny, I was just thinking today that I should call the superintendent that I know and see if I can offer training to the teachers in this methodology, because it's around being a courageous leader and being more vulnerable. Couldn't every classroom benefit from that too?

Kristie: I meant to bring it up last time. This is my dream, so I have to hurry and tell you my Brené Brown story.

Lisa: Okay.

Kristie: Some people know it already. She does a whole [program around and for teachers](#). Before it really came out ... Oh, gosh. I don't know. This was before I started working with Tererai. This had to have been 2017. I got really brave and I wrote to her, because she's an academic and I'm an academic. I'm like, "We could be best friends, Brené, come on." I talked to my sister who was a big person at HP for many years. I'm like, "How do you approach somebody that's outside of your stratosphere?" If that's the right science term. And so, everybody helped me craft the email. It took us six months to write the email. Who on LinkedIn did I have contact with that was close to a first person in her group? One of her main people wrote back to me and I about fell over and died, and put me in contact with her sister.

Kristie: Her sister writes to me, and now I'm really going to die, because I'm like, "Holy crap, she actually wrote to me." I was like, "I'll do anything. I'll come to wherever you are. I just want to help you think about what your curriculum looks like for younger students," because it's always K-12 and I want to remind people that we're a P-12 world. And, I wanted them to remember that there are Special Ed across the lifespan who are a part of that school and inclusion is not a rite of passage. Well, I think I came on a little too strong, I guess, then she never wrote me back. But that's my dream.



© All rights reserved.
<http://prekteachandplay.com>

Lisa: It is powerful to have her name behind things.

Kristie: Let's say you gave a district some professional development. What would I learn as a teacher? What have you learned in this facilitation thing of this Dare to Lead? What are the three things or maybe even just one thing that I just really would get?

Lisa: Well, it depends on the day that I create.

Kristie: Ah.

Lisa: I would go to the superintendent, or I would go to the principal, or whomever I'm speaking to like, "What's the need?" The Dare to Lead program is that courage is teachable, observable and measurable, and that she has four major tenets that are taught in this training, this Dare to Lead training that we're out schlepping, and teaching, and pushing. But, I'm kind of creating my own thing from it. We could do one of many things, like living into your values, or learning to rise, or braving trust, or rumbling with vulnerability. Those are the four tenets. And then-

Kristie: Let's just say somebody's listening and they're like, "Holy, yes. Because I ... " They've got all of Brené's books and they're now your new best friend because of what we've been talking about in terms of supporting children and that inner work that they can do and that inner awareness. Can they reach out to you and say, "Hey, can you talk to my superintendent about bringing professional development to our district?"

Lisa: I'll give them my home phone number. No, I don't have a home phone number.

Kristie: And then, I can come with you. I can carry your bag.

Lisa: I just sent out notifications, emails about my workshop coming up and an organization that does personal development, that's what this organization does, is having me come in to teach their staff. Because personal development is all about, "How am I making myself more aware, more courageous, more vulnerable?" What I love about Brené's work is we go in and we know ourselves in order to go out and lead more effectively. I call it, leading in our parenting, leading in our partnerships, leading in our businesses, leading in our communities.

Kristie: Leading in our classrooms.

Lisa: Leading in our classrooms. I mean, that ... I was thinking about that in partnerships. We're in partnership with these teeny-tiny little souls, and hearts, and minds. We're their partners and how do we lead them with our own courage and our own

vulnerability to mirror for them that they too can be courageous, and vulnerable, and trusting, and learn how to expand? I just love it. I love it.

Kristie: I do too. I clearly do. And so, what is something that if someone's listening to this episode they could do? What would be a little exercise?

Lisa: That's a really great question. I'll tell you my number one go-to.

Kristie: Okay.

Lisa: And it is impacting companies, it's impacting my family. It's going to impact schools too, especially as I share it now. In her book, [Dare to Lead](#), and I think there's Daring Classrooms, and I'm sure she has this material in it. But what I do is I print out the values list that she has. I'm sure it's in there, and if it's not in there, I'm happy to email it. I've already typed it up cutely. If we take time to hone in on our top two values, and we do this as a culture, right? We do this ... The whole staff development, right? Then, what I did was I had people stand under their value, right? I make cute signs of all the values, then I put them all around the room and had people sign their names to them. And then they went to their top value to start out with.

Lisa: It's surprising who shows up next to you that you might not ever have known that they too share that value. It expands the conversation in a whole new way. Then, take that list, type it up, and then have the principal or the superintendent start to recognize people's values, and you'll start to interact with people differently. Let me give you a quick example. I was doing this exercise with Salesforce with 125 execs, right? It was a powerful day. As I was teaching it, I realized that my oldest daughter's ... Probably her top value is order. It calms her down and she just likes it. She just feels good and better in our home when it's orderly. Well, that is not my top value. I really like a cozy nest of art supplies, or books, or magazines, right? But I realized, it was different. A preference is different than a value.

Lisa: And because this was a value, I shifted how I was being as a family member, because I want to honor her values, right? I want those to be seen, and known, and trusted, that we can bring those to one another. And so, although I'm not perfect, our dialog about it is different. She really takes the lead on this and I learn from her. I don't see mess in the same way that she does. And so, now she has higher esteem because, as a family, we turn to her for the way the space needs to be organized and looks. That grows self-confidence, and compassion, and empathy. Imagine if we did that with fellow teachers and staff? I would love to fly anywhere and teach it and bring it in.

Kristie: Oh my gosh, that's so powerful. I love the distinction you made between a value and a preference and being able to tease those out so that you know what you want to say yes



to, what you want to stand up for, what you want to draw in the sand for. Versus, "Oh, I just would rather it be this way, but I could certainly adjust."

Lisa: Totally. Or, "You may not speak to me like that, I'm your mother." Where did that come from? I'm living with teenage girls that are smart, and sharp, and kind. I feel like, four of us and the dog are living together and there has to be mutual respect and conversation. Because we're all different. It's working, they're amazing teachers.

Kristie: Yeah, yeah. There's so much that we can learn from one another, if we just allow others to be our teacher.

Lisa: Yeah, beautiful.

Kristie: For sure. I want to keep you all day, but let's see if we can start to bring some closure to this and then I'll end with my question about hope for the future. One of the other things that you shared with me when we were talking the other day was about, kind of if we altered our work with children, it would alter our work in the future when they're adults. As a segue to us wrapping up, what do you see as some practical tools, things that we need to alter in how we go about our work with children?

Lisa: Have conversations that take everyone a little bit out of their comfort zone. I've expressed that I have teenagers, but even before they were teenagers and the kids were younger, I think we have to ask each other tough questions. For example, "What was the best part of your day and what was the hard part of your day?" When my kid's friends get in the car, they know that we're going to have a conversation. They know there's no phone in my car, because I want to talk to them. And, they love it and they are challenged by it. One mom said to me, "My daughter doesn't like all that therapy talk." And not being critical of me in the car, because she didn't know I did this, but talking about something else. And I said, "Oh, that's funny because every time your daughter gets in my car she's very talkative." Right?

Lisa: And so, it was, "Let's not assume that someone's the same way that they were yesterday." I love how you said, "Up until now, I've been challenged by marketing." That is my thinking that I teach, but we always have to be reminded to come back to it. Here's another thing, another tool that I love that I think if the world used it, the world would be in a better place. My shoe tool, that is great. That code word is awesome. But around anxiety, because as adults, so many of us are struggling with it, and kids, and adolescents, right? I know as parents and teachers, we want to reassure them that they're okay.

Kristie: Right.



- Lisa: And I think it's a big mistake. Here's what I do instead, which is, "I want to reassure you that that won't happen or that you're okay, but here's a different direction we're going to go. What will you do if indeed that does happen?" For example, we had torrential rains at one point and my daughter who has more of a propensity toward anxiety said, "Is the house going to flood?" I said, "I'm willing to answer that, but first, we got to go through our steps." And she was like, "Okay. What am I going to do? How am I going to land?" Right? And it was like, "Okay. Who would we call?" "Well, we'd call the insurance person."
- Lisa: "Okay. And then, what would we do?" "Well then, we'd have to get someone to dry up the water. And then we'd probably have to order new furniture." She had to go through all of the steps. "Okay. And if the house was really gunky, then we'd probably go stay with a friend." "Which friends do you think would let us stay at their house?" We just walked it through. And how I know this is powerful is I said to them one time, "Well, what if he's not there to pick you up?" And she turned to me and she said, "How are you going to land, mom?"
- Kristie: Oh, wow.
- Lisa: "How are you going to land? Who are you going to call? Who are you going to text?" Once your kids start using your teaching against you, you know you've scored.
- Kristie: You know you've made it.
- Lisa: Yeah.
- Kristie: Yes. As I've been closing up my podcast, because I don't ever want to, I have such amazing kind friends who join me and that I could just stay all day with them. But, I close with this idea that we live in kind of remarkable times. And I always say that sometimes they're remarkable for the wrong reason, but they're remarkable nonetheless. I feel like many of us are really wanting to rethink how we ensure children thrive, not just in school but in life. And some people would say we're really making sure that people aren't surviving, but thriving. To me, those thoughts and those conversations are signaling really an opportunity, a series of possibilities. As you think about, even just how your own life has progressed as a mom, and as an entrepreneur, as a therapist. And as we were talking today even about the progression of the MyHeartyKid, what's one shift that you see happening that just gives you hope and shows you possibility?
- Lisa: That's such a beautiful question and I have my answer ready to jump out of my mouth, because it's so clear to me. That is, the more we come into agreements with one another, versus expectations, our hearts will be set free. Can I go further into-

Kristie: Yes, please. Please do.

Lisa: When we have expectations of one another, or we have expectations of kids in our classroom, it often leads to disappointment because there's not clarity. And I've seen little kids, very young kids be able to come up with agreements. And it doesn't mean those agreements won't be broken and if they are broken, then we come back into connection and regroup around our agreements. But expectations will kick our asses in relationships. Agreement, that's co-created. There's hope if we co-create on the planet. Can you imagine that?

Kristie: Can you imagine that? I am right now.

Lisa: Me too.

Kristie: A few quick things as we wrap up this episode. First, a note of gratitude to my guest, for their wisdom, generosity and willingness to support the early care and education revolution so deeply. Second, do you know about my [ECE Solutionary membership](http://prekteachandplay.com/ece-membership) program? It's a special membership library chock full of hundreds of searchable resources and tools that you can have in hand at the click of a button. Visit prekteachandplay.com/ece-membership to learn more and become a member today.

Kristie: Lastly, if you were inspired by this episode, if something affirmed your beliefs or perhaps you discovered a practical tool you can put into practice to help all children thrive in school and in life, then I invite you to share the episode on whatever app you're using. Share with someone you feel would benefit, or someone who would be inspired by today's conversation. Someone who it will make a difference for. Then, be sure to subscribe so you can stay connected. With so much gratitude for all that you do, fellow revolutionaries. Until next time.

Announcer: Be sure to visit prekteachandplay.com for more resources, tips and tools for early educators.

