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Episode #22: Mastering ADHD behavior skills

In this episode, we are going to talk about why it's so important for parents to master the skills that they are teaching their children. This is episode 22. Let's get started.

Smarter Parenting welcomes you to our podcast series, the Parenting Coach for ADHD. Here to heal and elevate lives is your parenting coach Siope Kinikini.

How is everybody? I hope everybody's doing really well. I am super excited to be here. It is actually spring here, and spring is probably my favorite season of the year. Living here in the Rocky Mountains, there are four seasons as opposed to an island, which is where I'm from, where there's only pretty much two seasons. It's usually wet and less wet.

What I wanted to talk to you about today has to do with why it's important for parents to learn the skills that they're teaching their children, and really, really master them. I want to play a clip of music from an artist. His name is [Keith Jarrett](#). He's a pianist, right?

And I actually wanted to share a little bit about his story, but first let's listen to this [album](#). It was recorded in 1974/75, so just let's take a listen.

The music is actually beautiful, right? It's just gorgeous. What you don't know is that there is a story behind that whole incident of that concert that he was playing. So back in the '70s, Keith Jarrett was traveling around Europe, and while he was traveling around Europe he was just playing one place and then moving onto the next place.

And [he arrived at this theater to perform that night](#), and he realized that the piano that they had set up was not a professional piano that had been tuned well, or that had been prepared for the concert. Some records indicate that that was a practice piano, so the piano that they used just to practice things, but it wasn't like a showcase piano for him to perform on.

And in order to bring a professional piano, one that you play for concerts, they wouldn't be able to do it in time, so the legend or the story goes that he actually refused. He said, "I absolutely will not play that piano, because it is run down, the keys are sticky. There's problems with the sustain pedal at the bottom." It was out of tune.

You had keys that didn't work at all, and in fact in the lower half, you know, it wouldn't sustain, and some of the padding had worn off, hitting the metal strings in order to produce the sound, and it just didn't have a great sound. Right? So, here he is, this professional musician. He's like, "I'm not going to play that."

And the person who was putting on the concert just was profusely sorrowful about what had happened, and so she begged him and pleaded for him to just please play the concert, because

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they were expecting people to come in the audience. And so he said "Okay." He said he would do it. He said he would never do that normally, but he said okay.

And he and just manager agreed to tape it, record it, because what they wanted to do was use that recording to tell other people who they were working with what happens if you don't have a great piano to work with. Right? The concert comes, you know, he goes in there, and actually the story's super fascinating, so you really should check it out, because a lot of other things happen.

Like, there's a story that he didn't really get a good dinner before this concert, and so he was grumpy, and he had been on the road, and he was tired. And anyways, so he shows up there, and the people come in, and there's this piano that is just not ideal, and what happened is he played it during the concert, and people loved it. In fact, he got a standing ovation, and they didn't know the story behind it at all.

Right? But he ended up playing a [very beautiful concert that's recorded](#), and in fact that recording of his ended up being one of the most successful albums of all time, at least during that time for that genre of music. So fascinating, fascinating story. And you're probably wondering: why am I telling you this story? Right?

The reason I am telling you this story about Keith Jarrett, this amazing pianist, right? Improviser. Is that if you go back and listen to that whole album, you can hear, there are moments in there where he is groaning because of the sound that is being produced. He's just struggling to get through it. You also hear him doing some things with his left hand in order to sustain the bass sound in there where normally he wouldn't do that on a different piano.

He adjusted, right? He adjusted his presentation based on what he had to work with. And I know you can figure out exactly where I'm going with this. The reason that he was successful in doing that is because he had all the basics down. He knew them backwards and forwards. He knew his skill level and his ability in producing something, right?

He knew exactly what he could do and then he evaluated what the piano could do, and there was a marriage between the two of what would work best in that situation. You really should go back and listen to it, because it's super calming. In fact, it's very calming, you know. For me. I loved listening to it, so you should go back and listen to it. But the idea that a person can be so skilled that they can adjust to anything is exactly why it's important for a parent to learn the skills backward and forward, memorize, and know exactly how it works.

Because children are much like the piano. They're not in tune yet because they have other issues going on, they have other things that they're doing, and the one thing that the parent has control over, really, is themselves. Right? You don't really have control over your child, because your child has a brain and they're going to do their own thing. And yet, if you are able to adapt,

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and adjust, and be able to work around whatever comes your way, you will be so effective in helping to shape your child's behavior.

Right? Now, this goes across the board, really. If we think about other professionals in their fields. Let's step out of music, for example, and let's go to a surgeon. Right? Really successful surgeons have prepared themselves so well in advance the regardless of what pops up during an operation, they can adjust. Right? They can't be in control of everything that's happening, but they can be so well prepared that they can adjust to anything that happens.

Now, they're not the only ones. Let's take actors for example. Rehearsal, there's so much time spent in rehearsal, and there is so much going on during rehearsals for a Broadway show, for example. I've never been on Broadway, but I have been to some amazing shows where I've noticed things didn't go as planned.

You knew there was a glitch that was happening, and yet these professionals are so in tune with what it is they are doing, and they know the material so well that they can adjust, adjust to whatever comes their way, and make it work. Right?

It's a common theme, really. When you are able to master something, then you are able to adjust it to whatever you need to adjust it to. And that's the idea behind using skills, parenting skills. Now, we have [Effective Communication](#), on the website. We have [Preventive Teaching](#). We have [Correcting Behaviors](#).

We have all these skills in there, and the steps look really easy. My recommendation is for parents to take the time to memorize the steps. Really memorize. Just take one, every week, memorize the steps to the skill.

Let's take Preventive Teaching, for example. Memorize each of those steps, really, and then practice them. Practice them over and over. Think about how much Keith Jarrett had to do in order to master the piano.

Right? We're talking hours and hours. Now, you're not going to need hours and hours, because the steps are fairly simple, and they're easy for you to follow, so get it down so you can memorize it and then begin practicing it. Practicing it at different times of the day. And as your child grows and develops, you'll be able to adjust the skill to whatever you need.

There is a saying among the practitioners of the [Teaching-Family Model](#), which is what we use, that there is the technical side of it, and then there's the artistic side of it. Right? There's a whole artistic side of using the Teaching-Family Model, and that is the ability to take the basics of what you know, and then make it fit the situation and the child where they're at.

A child throwing a tantrum, for example; you can still use Preventive Teaching with a child who is acting out. Right? You would just find ways to make it work in that situation, and you would be

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able to move in between the skills. Now, all the skills that you find on Smarter Parenting are like different tools, and you use different tools at different times.

You know, for Preventive Teaching, for example, could be a hammer, and then you could have a saw, which is Correcting Behaviors. I'm just using these as examples, but you can have these and you can use them for different jobs, right? When you are skilled at knowing what tool to use when, you can actually make some adjustments, as well, to making moving in between the tools to complete a project a lot faster.

Right? Take some time to fill your tool belt with as many skills as you can. Memorize them, learn them, practice them back and forth. It's not going to take you forever to master this. It will take some time, though, but once you get it in your tool belt, whenever you run into a situation that you need to address something, you can just pull out the tool you feel would best serve that purpose.

Back to the example of Keith Jarrett. Amazing, amazing artist, right? He was able to take what he had, adjust it, and still create something beautiful, and that's the idea behind the reason all parents should master the skillset they find on Smarter Parenting. Right?

Now, you're probably wondering how much time it's going to take, because we all have limited amount of time, and we have a lot of things that we're doing, and jobs, and schedules, and running kids around, and blah, blah, blah. The ideal would be for you to just spend time every day.

It's consistency over time. It's not done in one big shebang, and then you leave it aside, right? Tools that are not used consistently rust, and sometimes they get lost, and the idea behind using the skills on Smarter Parenting is take 15 minutes here, 15 minutes there.

I've known parents who've actually practiced skills while they're driving to school with the kids. I've had parents actually practice the skills in front of the mirror as they are getting ready for the day. They will tape the steps on the mirror, and so they can review them over and over.

Whenever they come into the bathroom, and they see those, then they review them, and that way it's consistently there, and they start to really use the tools so they know what they can do with the tools. Right? Raising children is an investment. It really is, and spending the time to invest in that is so important for parents.

Being a parent is the hardest job. It really is. It's a hard job, because you're there all the time, you're monitoring them all the time. It takes a ton of time. You love this child to death, and yet this child is growing, and trying to be independent from you, and so they're doing everything to push you away.

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And yet they need you, so they always tell you to come in and they need you, so it's this rollercoaster that keeps happening, but what would it be like if you had all the tools you needed and you could adjust to whatever the rollercoaster did? Right? You could adjust, and you could make it work. Right?

I just wanted to share that story at the beginning about Keith Jarrett because the story itself is just so great in explaining this concept of being able to master something so well on your own that, regardless of what is in front of you, you can create something that's beautiful, and that's meaningful, and that endures.

This album is still an album that people listen to today, and now that they know the story about it, it's even more remarkable, and even more beautiful. Now, had he performed on a concert piano during that evening, who knows if that album would've even been successful, right?

The idea that we recognize his mastery and his ability is what makes it beautiful, so yeah. You know? Take some time. Take some time to master the skills, and what I mean by master, what I mean is memorize, practice it, and know that you can use it in multiple situations, and in fact do that. Practice it, you know?

It's a tool that you can pull out whenever you need it. The more tools you have as a parent, the more ability you are going to have in helping your child be successful. It's just there. The other part is once you start teaching these to your children, you're going to notice that your children will pick it up, and they'll begin to behave that way too.

They will always mimic what they see over time, and so you continually use this and you have mastery over it, you're going to notice you're building more resilience in your children because they begin to behave that way. I'll just share this last thing, because one of the big things for me was [Role-playing](#).

And I loved to Role-play with my daughter when she was really young in order to help her overcome some of her fears. She had fears of doing specific things in front of people, and when she was super, super young, so we would Role-play them. Like, "Okay, well, let's just run through what you're going to say."

You know, because we go to church, and in church she was going to get up and do this kid's program, and she was going to speak, and what I found is later on, I think she was six at the time, we were getting ready for something and she actually came to me and she said, "Dad, dad, can we practice?"

You know, for this event, and I'm like, "Holy cow, she ... okay." So, we sat down and she went through it. She practiced it. She was asking me to practice it with her, because it was something that I had done with her previously and it helped her, and she felt like it was useful, so it's something that we continually do.

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Even now, she's a teenager, but if there's something that comes up that may be anxiety-causing, or may be a problem, practicing it is something that will help calm her, and it's a tool. It's a tool that I had, and I used it enough that she now has it, and she can use it, so you can see the power behind it.

I just want to say create something beautiful with your children. Your children deserve it, you deserve it, and you can do this. You can absolutely do this. Just take some time to master the skills and you will see that, regardless of the behavior, the tantruming, the whatever, you're going to have enough tools to figure out, "Okay, this is what I need to do in order to make things work."

And it will help. It will absolutely help. Decrease your anxiety, and your concern, and your uncertainty, and put on that tool belt and you can pull out whatever you need for whatever job will come your way. Right?

So, that's it from me this week. I'm so grateful, really, so grateful for the opportunity to share some of this stuff with you. Please, share this podcast and leave us a comment or a question. We'd love to hear from you.

You can go ahead and subscribe to this podcast. If this has been helpful for you, please leave a rating, and I will see you next week. All right, bye-bye.

Resources mentioned in this episode

[The Koln Concert Album](#)

[The Koln Concert](#)

[How Keith Jarrett defied the odds to record his solo masterpiece, 'The Koln concert'](#)

[Episode 11: What is the Teaching-Family Model](#)

[Behavior skill: Effective Communication](#)

[Behavior skill: Preventive Teaching](#)

[Behavior skill: Correcting Behaviors](#)

[Behavior skill: Role-play](#)

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