: Oh, good. OK. And so you obviously saw the call, the adverts for participation, and maybe we could just start by telling me what you were thinking about when you saw that and what went through your mind.

H: ummmmm. . . . . .sigh . . . . . . Well. . . . . . . mmmm . . . . Have a bit of time on my hands. Obviously

R: (Laughs)- why? You weren’t doing anything else? (both laugh)

H: no, not really ( both laugh). And I think it'll be interesting to talk about this because I'm really struggling in this area at the moment,

R: OK?

H: So, yeah, if I can use it as a bit of like a therapy session. You know, help me a little bit.

R: Okay, great. OK. So it was something that is already, sounds like has been on your mind, something you've been thinking about getting overwhelmed with your kids.

H: Yeah.

R: Tell me about your kids.

H: Yes. So I have one child. He is three and 10 months. He'll be four on the 19th of July.

R: Okay. . what is his name

H: His name is Son. And . .and.. . ya. . .we are going through a very difficult time, I’m going through a very difficult time. I feel that he's going through a very difficult time.

R: Yeah, yeah

H: I Call it lockdown blues (laughs)

R: OK. Ya,ya

H: It's it's yeah, it's been extremely stressful. I've actually I'm actually going to . . he’s actually going to start play therapy, hopefully next week.

H: Oh, here he is (child wanders into room)

H: Hello (talking to child *and* researcher)

R: Hello! I can just see you head . Hello. (animated)

H: (to child) say hello

R: (very animated) Oh, hi. Hello. How are you today

Child: hello

R: who is that on your shirt? I just saw a big rig car- right? What’s that guy’s name that I see. (car cartoon figure on shirt)

H: whose that?

Child (inaudible whining- tv?)

H: OK. No, you can't. Mommy's using the computer now. So go with Oma. Ok

(child crying/whining in background)

H: OK. Yeah. So he's, it's very difficult for him to separate. Ummmm . . . . .It's very difficult for him to let me do anything. We live with my mom. (OK). I’m a single mom. (ok) ummmmmmmmm sighs. . . . . And it's just the past, how long has it been? It feels like it's been three years, but two months. (Yeah). Has been absolutely hellish. (ok . . . Yeah) You know, (ya, ya)

R: (interrupts) was he like this before? Sorry yes

H: (sighs) I mean, the beginning of the last year, he was he was very, um very, I would say I feel like the class that he was in was not great and the teacher that he had was not great. So last year, he he struggled quite a bit in class. Yeah. But this year we started out and we started out in January. He's got a new teacher. Absolutely love to use in a new class and not with the kids from last year.

And that made him huge difference. And he was just doing so amazingly. He was adjusted. He wanted to go to school in the morning. You know, he he was happy when I left him at school. You know, (sigh) he and he was just it just seemed very happy and alive. And since lockdown, it's you know, he has become whiny, ummmmm . . . clingy, (sighs) listless, withdrawn. (R: mmmmmm). And so it's very difficult. And, you know, obviously, we don't know when schools can go back. We don't know when. Nursery school is, going to be. He is a nursery school. And so I'm very. I'm feeling, I'm very desperate at the moment, and and and I feel like, you know, this is really affecting his mental health. He hasn't had he doesn't have siblings. He has three older half sisters who are teenagers. So he's had really no contact with other children his age. We did have two, ummmmmm, two play dates with a little friend of his from school. His mom, I actually phoned her like, you know, (laughs/ scoffs) and said please. I know it's lockdown and whatever, please. He's really he's really struggling. And she told me to come and play. OK. That happened twice and it was great. And then she got back to me and she said, no, she prefer if if he doesn't come ummmmm or if he comes, he must wear a mask (R:right right ) (sighs) You know, I mean, this whole thing I think is ridiculous. But anyway, I can't see him wearing a mask for half an hour. It's you know, he's he's not even four years old. He won't tolerate that. And obviously, I sense that it was a bit of a problem for her. So, you know, we haven't, I reached out to another mom and she said, no, she is, she doesn't feel comfortable with that. I mean, thats it, he hasn't had any socialization with kids his age.

[00:05:24.460] - R

Is he quite a social kid?

[00:05:26.400] - H

He's a very social kid.

[00:05:27.880] - R

OK.

[00:05:28.560]

Because he went from being like an extroverted little boy with this one particular best friend and other friends, you know? And ummmmmm . . . now we are you know, ya, he's just got adults around him, which I feel is like very detrimental for his mental health. And he's used to.

[00:05:50.340] - R

And he's obviously struggling with that.

[00:06:01.770]

Le. (break in connection).

[00:06:32.610]

Hi, were back, sorry!

R: thats ok! I was saying he's obviously struggling with the lack of interaction.

[00:06:42.620] - H

I really feel that he is, you know, and I mean, he doesn't have a lot of stimulation. The school sends a couple of videos that the teacher sings a couple of videos of herself every day (R: ya ya) (child wanders in again inaudible whining) all he wants to do is watch TV. So now I’ve said to him, I mean, at the start of lockdown, he was watching about seven to eight hours a day because I was so overwhelmed and I just couldn't say no. And, you know, I mean, oh, you already have a problem. He hasn't actually tantrum, whenever he doesn't get his way.(ignoring child at her elbow). So just to avoid having the tantrum, I just sort of like gave in in to him and just let him watch TV to see. But (shouting out the door- child has wanderedout.is crying) Son, Ouma is putting the TV on for you. (back to me) So now I say to him that he could only watch TV after lunch.

[00:07:26.230]

Right.

[00:07:28.120]

ummmmm So now he's waited the whole day to watch TV (laughs/scoffs).ummmmmmmm So he doesn't have a lot of stimulation. I mean, I'm just not a a nursery school teacher neither is my mom mmmmu. (R: sure,sure). The teachers send a little bit of stuff and they send worksheets. He's not interested at all in doing the worksheet. even with me, sitting right next to him. He's not interested. He's not into arts and crafts. I mean, he's not like that type of, type, type of child. ummmmmmm And he's not interested in Zoom's session. (R: ya ya). He only wants to watch TV. So. So he's just like I feel like he's not getting the stimulation that he needs. He's he's, you know, just restless. He's having very restless nights, not sleeping, waking up in the middle of the night, ummmmm not eating very well. So, yeah, it's very difficult. And I just wish that they would make up their mind to send nursery school kids back in. I mean, all the research I've, you know, (sighs) read and all the people I've spoken to, I mean, even his pediatrician says, there's no reason nursery schools cant go back because ummmmmm children under the age of 10, you know, are not, are less likely to be infected and to infect others, you know? ummmmm And even though I mean, we live with my mom, who is almost 70 and is a bit of a higher risk, I'm, I'm I'm you know, I can't. I can't choose between her health and his mental health. you know, and I just prefer and anyway, she has to go to work. (R: ok) So I just really would prefer for him to go back to school. But, you know, obviously. . .

[00:09:04.460] - R

How do you understand what he is experiencing? What is troubling him about the lock down?

[00:09:13.830]

Look, I think it's very boring at home. ummmmm You know, as much toys as we have and, you know, it's just there's . You know, there's very little interaction. I mean, I, I, I need to work as well. you Know. Trying to work from home. My mom tries to work . . .I think, I mean, I think he's just bored. He's got, his, routine has completely, you know, been thrown out the window. ummmmmm He's under stimulated and confused about what the hell's going on. Why he's not going to school. Why he can't see his friends. Yeah. So that's I'm assuming what he's going through, which I understand. It's very difficult.

[00:09:58.010] - R

sure, sure (starts speaking. H interrupts)

[00:09:58.980] -H

And obviously he doesn't have an understanding, any kind of sophisticated understanding of why this is happening.

[00:10:04.650]

Yeah, absolutely. And for you, how have you been managing.

[00:10:15.810]

You know, it's I'm very upset. I'm very desperately worried about him. You know? ummmmmmm I'm worried financially for us. ummmmm I'm worried about. (sighs) Everything. I mean, thank God. You know, my mom is here. She's very helpful and Son's father is very involved and sees him every day.(R: OK.) (pause. sighs) But I don't I don't think I'm managing very well at all. I mean, I've started like grinding my teeth and getting headaches and just, you know, sometimes I just go go out and drive because I don't have anywhere to go (both chuckle). So it just, I do the shopping. I mean, before this, I absolutely hated grocery shopping it was my worst thing ever. Now I'm like, I can't wait. . (R: Yeah. Yeah. both laugh) to Like bread and milk. I mean, its sad. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:11:24.530]

And that's I mean, it sounds like it's a combination. But is that the lockdown. um, stressed with work or the stress with the Son. I mean, it sounds like it's all all over.

[00:11:34.830] - H

Yeah. It's all of it. Yeah. Definitely, All of it.

[00:11:39.480] - R

And in your response to son, how are you even managing what he's going through. How's that been for you specifically.

[00:11:50.170] - H

[ comment: thesis interesting: she gets worried and then she snaps? why is her reaction to worry snapping? ] (big sigh) Look, I'm. I'm very anxious. I can see that he is quite clingy. ummm like This morning I went out shopping, my mom he stayed with my mom. And apparently, he was, you know, he didn't want to do anything with her. He just said, where's Mommy, Wheres mommy? And he waits for me to come home. And sometimes I'm not I'm not very patient because he's exhibiting these kind of signs. You know, I just I get very worried and then maybe snap( laughs)

[00:12:23.890] - R

[ comment: even though reading back this comment makes no sense to me ] OK, ok ya (nodding in agreement and understanding)

[00:12:25.600]

[ comment: far more here about trying to relate to and identify with speaker not child in moment ] which I feel terrible. And, you know, and I mean, the other day, you know, he had this he, he, he wants a lot. And that's the worst thing for me is the whining. I can't handle it, it, it like raises the hackles. That's the one thing. And of course, and he's a big whiner (chuckles). And. And the one day what happens? ummmmm He whined and I snapped at him and I shouted at him. I don't usually raise my voice. And it kind of shocked him. And and I went away. And then I came back a little bit later and I said, you know, Son, I'm sorry, mommy. Sorry that she shouted at you. And he came up to me and he hugged me. He said, it's OK, Mom (sighs and laughs) (R: aaagh), just made me feel like a hundred times worse. (R: chuckles) Yeah. I mean I'm just, I'm kind of freaking out and he picks it up even if I'm, I'm a little bit impatient with him but I don't, I mean I don't usually lash out. I mean My mom and I, I've had some raging arguments, ummmm, in front of him, you know? And I mean, he said he said, you know, when we when we were sort of like screaming at each other, you said to see you say to me, Mommy stop shouting. So, you know, he does see that there's a lot of tension and he does see that. He obviously sees that I'm very stressed and very anxious and, you know, just not dealing very well.

[00:13:53.320] - R

Yeah, yeah. I mean, I wonder, I wonder what he sees when he sees that You're stressed. What do you think you look like to him?

[00:14:03.530] - H

Oooh. hmmm. I dont know. I suppose it makes him quite anxious, you know. You know, I'm supposed to be the one that's that's calm and present and safe, you know? So it must be must be very scary for him.

[00:14:23.600] - R

I mean, it's like you I'm inferring what you're saying. It sounds like, him, when you are anxious, you think he might feel unsafe because you're not calm or because you're not in control of that moment. He feels unsafe?

[00:14:41.130] -R

(sighs) I mean, it must be, you know, an unpleasant feeling because then he does it. . It . .it increases the the whining and the crying and the, you know.

[00:14:52.740] - R

Yeah. yeah. It's very difficult, isn't it. Yeah. The moods definitely seem to feed off of each other. Yeah. I know my kids are never as, I don't know what the word is, like, as Difficult as when I'm in a bad mood.

[00:15:11.560] - H

(wryly) surprising.

[00:15:13.790] - R

Yeah (both laugh). So that that time that you were telling me about where he whined and then you snapped. What was going on for you. I don't know if you remember what was going through your mind, how it felt in that moment.

[00:15:28.420] - H

I just. I was, you know, at the end of my tether, I was at, i cant remember what was happening? But obviously there was a lot happening and there were a lot of things that were that were happening at that moment. And obviously, on top of it all, he was not cooperating and that that was why i snapped at him. You know, so. (R: Yes.) And I think it had been just a day of him, you know, just one sort of, like, tantrum on top of the other. And I just lost it.

[00:16:04.940] - R

Yeah, yeah. So you're thinking it was, um and a buildup in the day to that moment.

[00:16:11.700] -H

It must have been. Look, I can't remember it very well, but, yeah, there was, I do remember there was a lot of things happening and my mom was talking to me about something, i cant remember aBout what? But it was a few things. And then on top of it, you know, he he wasn't cooperating or wasn't listening or was nagging for something or, you know. And then I just. I just screamed at him.

[00:16:34.600] - R

OK. OK, so sorry, I misunderstood. It wasn't necessarily There were a lot of things in that day, but in that moment they were several things that were calling your attention. Plus, the whining on top of that. I mean, it sounds very, even when you describe it, very chaotic, like frayed and all over the place.

[00:16:56.270]

[ comment: chaotic mental space where things are happening, not a chaotic physical space necessarily ] Yeah, I mean, it it is. look, I mean, it's not that a lot of things are happening and that we busy because we're not busy. I mean, we aren't really doing anything. It's just, you know, there's a lot of worry. There's a lot of concerns. I mean, you know, worrying about him and when school is going to go back and what's happening at home in the world and the work and finances and other things. So, yeah, there's a lot of worries. And we just and we kind of just sitting here being helpless and feeling helpless and not and not being able to actually do anything about it. Like, I can't you know, I can't I'm waiting for the school to tell us when they going to open. I can't do anything about it. You know, there's literally nothing that I can do. So it's it's very stressful.

[00:17:50.900] - R

Yeah. And of course, the resources that you would normally have to to cope with taken away, you don't. You have less time to yourself and less time out in the house you have. Yeah, so it it makes it worse. Of course.

[00:18:08.770] - H

[ comment: what happened here? ] For sure. Yeah.

[00:18:12.240] - R

So, OK, pre-locked down. I'm just curious. Would you have found yourself getting overwhelmed in the same way or has that changed in the last little while? Look, they would give you moments before lockdown.

[00:18:31.590]

You know, definitely we I mean, we laugh wasn't problem free before lockdown (both laugh). I would definitely, you know, there were definitely issues.

[00:18:41.440]

Yeah. But I just I just feel. I feel like. I don't know how to describe it, really, I feel more scared, you know? Yeah. Even though they were, you know, I mean, obviously life is full of problems but i could sense. . . And I could maybe deal with them a little bit better. And then I wasn't. So hopeless. well helpless. I wasn't so helpless. And now I'm feeling very helpless.

[00:19:10.490] - R

[ comment: and here? what a weird comment to make for me ] OK. I mean, it's really. Yeah. That is very helpful. And it's really interesting around being helpless. And it's not a word you used, but powerless as well.

[00:19:22.360]

No, for sure. Powerless.

[00:19:24.840] - R

Yeah. (starts speaking) . . .

[00:19:26.690] - H

You know, I've just tried. I mean, I suppose I mean, I'm not the only one that had these, like, when lockdown happened, had these fantasies of like, you know, a wonderful home schooling schedule and everything would be, you know, ummmm. orderly and productive. And I'd have so much time to do thing that you really wanted to do but didn't have time before. And the children would be like, you know, doing fun Educationalt activity (laughs derisively) i hasn't happened. (laughing- almost hysterical sounding)

[00:20:03.540] - R

No.

[00:20:04.660] - H

And I just can't figure out what what is wrong. Why can't I just sort of like have a schedule and why can't we keep a schedule and why can't he do the damn activity that his teacher said he didn't have a problem doing them before when he was at school? You know, why is he not doing them for me? She sends, I feel terrible she sends, like, these beautiful little activities and worksheets and and pictures that, you know, you have to cut out and do make little whatever you like. I'm not like that. I'm not, you know. Yeah. I don't do little, you know

[00:20:40.210]

yes. i mean is there there a feeling from you of I should be able to do this.

[00:20:43.950] - H

Yes.

[00:20:44.740] - R

OK, yeah.

[00:20:47.350] - H

[ comment: majorly identifying with this and want so badly tome her feel better and tell her my own story and shout 'you're not alone!!!" ] [ comment: why is this funny? makes me want to laugh? it feels like its so ridiculous ] I feel like am I the only one when I think of like the other moms in his class, I think. Am I the only one that's struggling with this? Because I get you know, I'm I'm the mom's WhatsApp group. You know, the mom are saying, oh, you know, Morah Shelley, thats the teacher. oh you know, shes, fantastic. You know, we love your little. Your little flower activity, whatever. and im thinking What? We didn't even do that flower activity.

[00:21:12.540] - R

Yeah.

[00:21:13.200] - H

[ comment: not being enough. not good enough ] What is she talking about? You know, so I'm thinking like I'm the only one that's not doing any of the activities. I'm not watching the videos and stuff, and I feel terrible. And he's not obviously not learning anything. I'm sure you know, its a problem. I don't know. I mean I mean, obviously, I realize in reality there's more that are not not coping. I mean, he is the only the only child in his class that doesn't have siblings that are close in his age. You know, he goes to like a very froem school and they all have lots of like, like, lots of kids. And, you know, so there's, you know, like I feel like they have it easier because and quite frankly, a lot of moms are actually nursery school teachers. Believe it or not, though it's that easy for them because. They, you know, that they used to it and there's other kids around that they can play with. Yeah. Anyway, they just feel like they just look a lot more like together,

[00:22:21.600] - R

[ comment: who did I say this for? me or her? ] at least in whats app group (both laugh)

[00:22:25.630] - R

I mean, there also comes a feeling of like. And I mean, did you say am I the only one? It's like, is my child the only one? And it's some sort of societal pressure as well around. Does that leave the thought of. And there's something wrong or I'm doing something wrong or he's doing something wrong?

[00:22:50.990] - H

[ comment: identifying again with her so much. and want to hug her. strong urge just to reach across nd be like, its ok! again her or me? ] ummmmmmmm . . . .sighs. . . . . I mean, I definitely feel that need to be sort of more together. Like, I have a lot of guilt around that. But I mean, like, that is my personality. I mean, that is something that I always feel in in pretty much any situation is that I'm not good enough. That is like a feature of my makeup. But with him, look at F I do have a lot of anxiety that he is. ummmmmm . . . . Develop mentally slow. OK. Even though there's really no ummmmm real evidence that he is. He's always managed. He's always coped. I think emotionally he's not as mature as some of other kids his age. ummmm. oh, another or another issue I forgot to mention is that he is not yet toilet trained. And that and, you know, is hoping that During the lockdown, he would we would have time to be at home, at least when it started, was still very warm. And I thought, you know, this would be a perfect time to get the toilet training done. And that has not worked. That has been a complete failure. And I know his father is freaking out that he's not toilet trained. But he did try and toilet train for about a week. I really, really, really did try. And it didn't work and

[00:24:15.560] - R

was he just having lots of accidents or . . .

[00:24:16.480]

[ comment: felt as if this was for my benefit. she's not useless she's had a professional confirm her thoughts ] no no, he's completely not interested. completely not interested. He doesn't want to he doesn't want to sit on the toilet. He doesn't want to talk about the toilet. He doesn't want to wear his paw patrol underwear. He does not he is not interested. So I actually am. And then every time I try to put him on the toilet, it became an issue. And I, I felt that, you know, that is actually doing more harm than good, that, you know, every time he has a tantrum because he doesn't want to sit on the toilet, he's not ready, ummmmm although he is almost 4. And anyway, I did I did speak to the pediatrician about it and said, look, you know, if if he's resisting, then you can just just leave it for a while. But it is a it is a concern because he is the only one in his class as far as i know. He's the only one that's not toilet trained.

[00:25:11.830] - R

and then there comes the societal pressure again around, everyone else can do this, but mine isn't and . . ..

[00:25:16.910] - H

And, and school has already said before lockdown, there were really like saying, oh, you know, why isn't he toilet trained? You know, what can we do to help you Toilet train him and, you know, things like that.

[00:25:30.440] - R

i mean How about you? Does that make you feel guilty or embarrassed?

[00:25:34.970]

It makes me feel like a failure. Like, I just, you know, I mean, look, it is not only child. I don't know what the hell you know, I don't know how to toilet train.(R laughs -No), like how many books You can read it. I mean, it's you know,he, I, i mean, I, I I can't. He's not following a textbook.

[00:25:53.030] - R

No. No. hes not a manual

[00:25:54.270]

[ comment: again wanting to comfort her so much and tell her its normal. and I relate. but there's something else here around her own lack of ability to equip herself. find the resources. speak to someone. empower self ] Yeah, he's not. Yeah. hes not a machine that follows protocols . So. So you know whatever i tried didnt work or whatever so what am i going to do. But I am, I'm a bit worried about it. That's why I did. I have, we set up an appointment to do a, for a, to play therapy. This is a able to see him in person. OK. Yeah. OK, but it just it makes me feel very, like, Like I failed. I haven't tried hard enough that I should have been more and that I should've stuck with it for longer that I should have persevered. But with Yakov I mean everything is whatever you want him to do It's a huge issue. And I don't know. And also because, like, I feel like I don't have experience with other children. I don't know if it's normal for, you know, for all toddlers to resist, you know, brushing their teeth every day or whether. I don't know. It's hard for me to say.

[00:27:07.520] - R

[ comment: what is going on for me here? reassurance? you can do this? you're not alone? I feel it too? ] three and a half is enough outrageously difficult age, you know, and in some ways harder than two maybe because they've got more more willpower and theyre bigger. And so it is much more harder- things like brushing teeth and I mean even at three and a half. I think a lot of boys, especially i dont know why its boys, it just take forever to toilet train and and especially around pooing. There seems to be something on pooing that just takes them forever and is difficult

[00:27:35.150]

[ comment: she completely resist my urge to comfort her here. it feels like she turns me down and says no you're wrong and mine is worse. ] Well, he's not interested in pooing or weeing, you know. So it wasn't that he was making progress with it, but making a wee but he just wasn't interested.

[00:27:46.900] - R

[ comment: now I feel like I need to vacate because I 'got it wrong' ] [ comment: do I hear that? yes. but again speaking to myself here ] Yeah. Yes. But I also hear in what you're saying so much the balance between trying to read his cues and and say, like, okay, he's clearly not ready. VS the cues it everyone else is giving you around. He needs to be ready. He needs to be honest and trying to balance that. And it's so difficult. Creates a lot of pressure on you.

[00:28:09.360] - H

It is it's yeah. It's been a lot of pressure

[00:28:13.360] - R

and trying to do the right thing. Yeah, yeah, yeah, whatever it is.

[00:28:21.540] - H

Yeah, and I don't know what I do. I just I wonder. I just want him to be healthy and happy and well. And but I also wanted to be like an effort, you know, like it just feels like everything is an effort. Getting him to train and making him brush his teeth and getting him to be interested in things is such an effort And he pushes back so hard. ummmm. ya

[00:28:51.370] - R

[ comment: why did I go here now? I moved away from something ] ummmmm, are there times, where you feel as if he is raging or Tantruming or pushing back and you feel like I've got this like I did a good job today or not today, just like in that moment. 'I handled it well'.

[00:29:11.160] - H

I think in the beginning, when when when he really started throwing tantrums. It was very difficult for me to tolerate to to not ummmmm to kind of come to his rescue and to accept that, you know, attention was part of his developmental process and that it was normal. It was very difficult. It's also very, very difficult for my mom, who I, because we live with her. I mean, she's obviously very involved. And then for her, him throwing a tantrum was particularly intolerable because his distress was, even if it was just, you know, I mean, it wasn't you know, he wasn't in pain or anything. he just wasnt getting his own way. It was just completely devastating for her and for me. But to a lesser extent. So, you know, a long time, unfortunately, we gave in to him, you know,

[00:30:08.910] - R

giving him what he wanted when he was having the tantrum.

[00:30:13.190] - H

[ comment: interesting. here she walks away and disconnect a bit? even though she is wanting to be thoughtful in this moment ] And then. You know, over time. Over the past, like two years, I'm really much better at letting him have his tantrum. Not not not trying to appease him in any way. Just letting him tantrum, getting it out of his system. And, you know, and and that's it. So nowadays, when he when he has a tantrum, when he throws a tantrum and I walk away and I say to him, Son, when you calm down you can come and talk to me. And I go and like, then I feel like I'm in control of the situation.

[00:30:53.700] - R

And that feels better for you. Your'e like good. I'm glad i . . . . (she interrupts)

[00:30:57.390] - H

And when I can I can keep in mind that he's not going to have long term psychological damage from having a tantrum. when hes like three. You know, he doesn't get his own way. It's not you know, he's not going to develop negative personality traits. So, I mean, my mother is interesting. My mother's generation, was that you never let a child tantrum. They're going to become like, you know, irritable, anxious and aggressive kind of people when they grow up.

[00:31:30.410] - R

Right.

[00:31:32.090] - H

But my own personal feeling is that you just have to let them get it out. And, you know, and that was that was like a bit of a tension for us, for my mom and I. And I think that's what, she wanted to hold him and, you know, carress him and, you know, and give in. And I did not you know, I wanted to just let him have his tantrum and get it out of his system. And then, you know, talk to him when he's calm down. so. But now it's better. its alot better And I'm just, cut that very long story short. You know, I feel like I can handle it a lot better now.

[00:32:12.420] - R

OK. I mean, I'm curious, is that how your mom was with you? Do you think?

[00:32:16.790] - H

ya, probably ya probably, is that how she is now? Is it hard for her to manage if someone is upset.

[00:32:26.420]

Look, I feel like, you know, it was very different with me. I suppose grandparents are different with the grandchildren. It was. Yeah, it was for me. I don't really think I don't really think she cared that much. (we both laugh) And I dont want to say that too loud. She's probably listening. But I mean, she was kind of in the same situation as she was single mom with a small child. And it's very difficult. And she prioritize her time. So, you know, a screaming child was probably, you know, not you know, she's had to get on with things. But now she's this is this is a grandson who, like the light of her life. Yeah. You know, the absolute, you know, joy. And for her, it's difficult to see some distressed. Yeah. You know. But she probably was a little bit firmer with me.

[00:33:21.140] - R

OK, and and your relationship now with your mom.

[00:33:26.220] - H

Oh, (sighs and prevaricates. R laughs)

[00:33:29.160] - R

you look like where do we start

[00:33:34.260] - H

(laughing) do we have enough time for that. Look, it has its moments. It's it's very difficult. I mean, you know, she Ya, i could talk for like days. ummmmm It's OK. its a work in progress.

[00:34:01.670] - R

has it changed. I mean, how long have you guys lived together?

[00:34:06.670] - H

So, well, I moved in when I was three months pregnant, OK? I left my husband when I was three months pregnant. We separated. I moved in with Mom. So we. Yeah. So it's been over three over four years.

[00:34:21.120]

OK. OK. And has it changed your relationship with her?

[00:34:26.780]

Uh, yeah.(hesitant). ummmmmmm In various ways, I mean, just by virtue of the fact that I'm older, I'm a mother now.ummmmmmmmm. But we've always had. We've always had a complicated relationship. ummmmmmmmmm

[00:34:45.670] - R

Yeah, yeah. And it must be different, and I can just imagine during lockdown how much harder it is because everybody is everybody is

[00:34:55.110] - H

exactly on top of each other.

[00:34:56.900] - R

[ comment: I move away from this again. something difficult and painful ] Yeah. But you obviously I mean, she also sounds very helpful with Son.

[00:35:04.530] - H

Yeah, she really is.

[00:35:06.260] - R

And she loves him.

[00:35:08.630]

Yeah. she does. hes her life. Yeah. So she does look after him. She does. You know, it's also I mean its hard for her. she doesn't have like the patience to sit down and, you know, do like a craft activity or with him, you know, because he's his attention span is so, so short. Yes. But but I think she has actually a little bit more patience than i do at this point.

[00:35:40.650] - R

OK. OK. She. Do you think she's feeling less frayed- like Less pulled in different directions with him.

[00:35:52.770] - H

Maybe. I mean, I feel like we both have our moments to to break down. So, like when she, you know, very anxious and very concerned about, you know, just the situation generally, then I'm the strong one. And when I'm, you know, breaking down and I'm sort of at breaking point, then she's like, she's the strong one.

[00:36:17.320] - R

OK. All right. And is that helpful?

[00:36:20.830] - H

Yeah, definitely. Yeah. OK.

[00:36:24.490] - R

And do something. I mean, there was something i wanted to ask. Do you think he sort of acts up more with you? Or do you think it's sort of equal between you and your mom?

[00:36:34.780] - H

It's probably me. Probably with me, you know.

[00:36:40.390] - R

Yeah, and I guess moms are the ones that set the rules and set the boundaries. So they're the ones to battle against a little bit more as well.

[00:36:48.580] - H

mmmm. mmm. (she doesnt say more. i feel the need to prompt)

[00:36:51.100] - R

are there times- do you guys find. you know, times that you feel like you're connecting with him moments here and there. There's no other distraction and you having a good time.

[00:37:08.020]

I think so- there are times during the day. You know, where. He's calm and I'm calm and, you know. Yeah, they are.

[00:37:20.450] - R

OK. Just wanted to check that. Yeah. Times that you feel like it's . . . something else that you've said, which I was thinking about is about, you know, how you have changed over time in response to his tantrums. And it feels like you're saying you almost had to live, um, to learn that you could survive the tantrum, that you would be OK if he kept tantruming. It would be alright.

[00:37:43.950]

[ comment: interesting- she's way more engaged around this topic than where we were before. feels like she shut down and now she's animated again ] Yeah. Exactly like the world. It's not going to end because he's black throwing a tantrum. I mean, definitely. And that was just, you know, just grinning and bearing it. And and and. And doing it and and seeing that, you know, the the less I involve myself in his tantrum will try to stop the tantrum. The quicker it would end. Yeah. So. So. Yeah. That that took a bit of time. You know, it's interesting because I knew that intellectually, you know. I knew that. I mean I know that you know that you just let Them have a tantrum and you let them vent a little bit. And the more that you try and stop it, the longer it's going to go on for. And I knew that. And yet with my own child, I mean, that is what I would tell other moms or. Yeah, that. But with my own child, it was very difficult to survive. But eventually, you know, I did sort of pull myself together and and, you know, let him just have his tantrum. And obviously, it you know, it it it didn't end in disaster.

[00:39:00.870] - R

I mean, I wonder. And this. This might be very difficult question to answer. But do you think the when, sorry, before the surviving of the tantrum, when the tanrum was going on and you maybe were trying to stop it from happening. Was the fear around? Oh, my gosh, I cannot manage this or is it around? Oh, my gosh. He's in so much pain. I need to stop him from feeling pain.

[00:39:25.680] - H

Yeah. ummmmmmmmmm a bit of both, I guess.or both. You know that. Yeah. That I couldn't I couldn't watch him be in pain. Yeah. His pain was just too much for me to bear.

[00:39:45.880] - R

Made you feel awful.

[00:39:47.760] - H

Ya, ya. And then it's quite connected, you know, because that's in some way feeling like I can't carry on feeling watching this go on i need to make it stop.

[00:39:56.100]

Yeah. I need to, i need to, take it for myself. I need to bear the pain for him.

[00:40:01.450]

[ comment: are we intellectualising and moving away from emotion here? ] Yes. OK, and. Sorry am just making some notes as we go on ummmmmmm and I had other questions that I wanted to ask you. But now they've gone straight out of my head. And. Yes, so, I I'm just thinking about what you're saying. There's something about. like knowing that everyone is going to be okay afterwards, that you can only learn once you actually experiences, because when you say you know it intellectually, but there's something emotional that goes on, it's very difficult to separate off from that

[00:40:38.850] - H

because when you win a two on child, it's different. And it is my first time as a mom, so I hadn't had the experience of a tantruming child before. It was a new experience for me. And obviously the feelings that I put up with new experiences for me and I didn't I didn't even though I knew, you know, I had had read whatever, you know, theoretically about, you know, dealing with tantrums. And it's happening right in front of you. And if your own child a little bit different.Yeah. You know, but but I. I kind of felt that I resolve that. Yeah. I mean, I don't think it's completely resolved, but I'm much better at it, you know. Yeah. I think when hes totally outgrown tantrums I'll be perfect. (both laugh)

[00:41:34.160] - R

And I just wanted to ask you, what do his tantrums look like. Does, is he. Is he a kid that throws himself on the floor or is it just that's a crying

[00:41:41.920] - H

sometimes. I mean, they vary in intensity. i mean he has little ones and giant ones. I mean, some of them have been tantrums where hes thrown himself on the floor. and kicked and screamed and.It's been a couple or maybe one where it was very scary, actually. And he threw things around. He started throwing his toys, literally like, throwing his toys. I think that was probably the worst. But generally, it's that he starts screaming and crying and is not able t verbalise, what's upsetting him And now he looks a little bit better because I make a point of saying, if you want something, you need to take a dummy out of your mouth and you need to use your words.

[00:42:32.580] - R

Right.

[00:42:33.020] - H

He's a little bit better if that. So but obviously, I mean, when when he was two, it was obviously, you know, he couldn't he couldn't express himself. And that was very frustrating. But but I mean, now it's become less and he has a few sort of like mini ones throughout the day.

[00:42:52.970] - R

OK. Yeah, of course.

[00:42:54.300] - H

And not some of them are not even don't reach the threshold of tantrum really. They just sort of little outbursts.

[00:43:05.000]

OK, ummm. What I wanted to get back to is something that you had seen around. What did you say? Sorry, I wrote it down so I wouldn't forget it. Talking about needing to get things right. Were you saying did you say. And there is something about you. You're someone who likes to get it right or is anxious about that. Or did I mishear you

[00:43:31.570]

I said that I am always worried about not being good enough

[00:43:35.460]

Oh, that's right. Thank you. Yes. Yes. Yes. OK. Is that in all areas of your life?

[00:43:41.580]

Absolutely. I can literally, look I mean, it's obviously something that I've I've explored a lot in therapy. So I am I am a social worker myself. But, you know, I have a lot of experience with therapy. Yeah, I mean, it's it's been. Yeah, it is all facets of my life and continues and I have a lot of self-doubt and, you know, just just having for want of a better word. I know that they use bad self-esteem. but they Talk about entitlement now, right? . That that has been just a major facet of a major issue in my life. and continues to be. Yeah. Going to have to continue sort of like consciously remind myself that I don't have to be perfect and I don't have to be umm good enough. You know, what I am is good enough. And you know, and it's just a conscious ongoing thing that had a process that has to happen.

[00:44:49.990] - R

Yeah. I mean, do you think. And does it relate to being liked at all? Like needing to be liked. And because that in some way equates to being good enough.

[00:45:05.900] - H

Being locked by who

[00:45:07.850]

Well, I'm thinking to. I'm thinking we might hit is going is thinking around. Sometimes it might be difficult to put to say no. Because that means you might be the bad guy doing a good job.

[00:45:19.790]

[ comment: again hit a wall ] Possibly. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I do I do sometimes feel guilty if I have to say no to him because I feel like I feel like I'm being. I'm depriving him even I know that, you know, like eight hours of. She might deprive him of another one. Eight hours of television and how dare I. Yeah, probably. .

[00:45:47.320] - R

[ comment: how badly I am stumbling here. something about her makes me want to backtrack ] OK. All right. Yeah. Maybe something. OK, but it's hard. Nothing. I mean, I can understand and mothering is such a hard job already that we are bound to get wrong. It is going to push those buttons about not being enough, not being good.

[00:46:04.890] - H

[ comment: ] Well, absolutely.

[00:46:08.600] - R

OK. And do you and do you do you clash with his dad at all and he does his dad It's very different parenting style to you. Do you guys agree?

[00:46:18.070]

We we are very similar. I mean, I think we do disagree, but he generally defers to me if that happens. But generally speaking, I don't think that we disagree. Thank God. I mean, that is one area of my life that actually is so helpful for me, so positive for me at the moment, is that we actually we were never meant to be married, but we actually very good friends You know, marriage was a complete disaster. But we are actually, thank God, very supportive of each other. You know, I've been very supportive of him and he's been very supportive of me. And we we you know, we've seen a lot of time together as a the three of us. Yeah. OK. I spent a lot of time with his family, his extended family.

[00:47:10.840]

So its a complete co parenting system you've got.

[00:47:15.010]

Thank God. Yes. I mean, we don't even have really like a parenting plan or anything formal. I mean, I think that is a parent's plan. But we just sort of make up as we go. You know, we just. You know, we, he sees him. I take him to his house. He comes to our house. hes there for supper. You know, so we just do what we feel is is right.

[00:47:37.080] - R

Yeah. Does Yako sleep over at his dad.

[00:47:41.300]

no we haven't managed.We keep talking about I think it slept over twice. ummmmm I think the first time it was was the first time he he didn't last. He lasted for about ten o'clock. And then. And then I was phoned to come pick him up. And then the second time he actually stayed or actually went to sleep and then I don't know. But he he just wanted to come home at say 10:00 morning. So we haven't really tried that again.

[00:48:14.920]

OK.

[00:48:15.690]

So he goes they he goes they often for like or a bath and supper.

[00:48:22.730]

OK. OK. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[00:48:25.470]

And then. And then he comes home

[00:48:27.800]

ok. Yeah. I mean sleeping out is so big isn't it. It's such a big you know

[00:48:33.590]

and you know Son still sleeps in my bed. So this is actually his bedroom actually. But he doesn't use i.

[00:48:46.410]

I mean yes that actually reminds me. Know, I mean you did mentioned clingy when you mentioned he sleeps in your bed I was thinking and. I wonder when you get to persoanl space. Not being touched much. Do you have any personal space or any personal space?

[00:49:04.560]

I mean, it's it's it's it is very, very overwhelming. I don't have you know, I don't have any alone time, really, unless I go. I mean, before locked down, my my sanity was really going to a coffee shop and sitting down and having a cup of coffee and just being alone. You know, now this is another like. It's taken away everything that I was like, you know. I mean, almost everything. I mean, we used to we went to shul. Shul was like a big part of our lives. We'd go every week. It was my time to Iike actually have conversations with adults. And just to socialize a little bit. And that's been taken away. And and now and now, obviously, you know, I can't go to a coffee shop. So it's the. I mean, sometimes i just go for a drive. You know, just to get at a little bit and have some.

[00:50:07.130] - R

I was just thinking about times when you may be more likely to lose it with you may be more short tempered or more overwhelmed. Yeah, but I think I feel like we've already talked about those really. There's a lot going on. sooooo is there anything else you wanted to talk about- any questions you had for me.

[00:50:36.510]

No. No, not really. OK. Just about. OK. Thank you.

[00:50:43.860]

I really appreciate it. I mean, everything you're saying is so interesting. And so part of the research is to do a follow up interview, I advertized as two to three. But obviously, you know, we could see in the second one how you feel. Would that be or act with you to do a follow up show?

[00:51:06.060] - H

ok.

[00:51:06.190] - R

So, yeah, the follow up is just really about like, how is this interview and did anything come to mind and sort of the same really. OK. I, I mean is this kind of time good for you.

[00:51:23.540]

lets makes it Thursday so maybe the week after the 11:00.