**P1:** There we go, great. Hi, so how are you?

**P2:** Yeah, good and you?

**P1:** Good thank you. It's quite strange to do this on Zoom.

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** Yeah, but like I have some friends that have been blind dating on Zoom, so I imagine this is a bit like that.

**P2:** Oh, wow.

**P1:** Yeah. [laughter] It's kind of weird.

**P2:** It's crazy, it's a weird, weird world yeah.

**P1:** It is. Um, so there's no set questions or anything it's more like just a discussion. Um, so maybe just to get us started, you could tell me a bit about you and your family and your kids and what your situation is like.

**P2:** Okay, cool. Um, so, uh, my husband and I have two little girls. Um, one is three and a half and the other one is one and a half.

**P1:** I'm taking notes while you're talking if you're wondering why I'm looking down here. So sorry, you said one is three and a half and the other one is…?

**P2:** One and a half.

**P1:** Oh, okay -- okay. Had you, um, had you wanted girls or you didn't mind?

**P2:** Um, I didn't mind. I grew up with two older brothers, so I thought I was going to have boys, but I think I needed girls.

**P1:** Okay. [laughter]. Um, okay. And what are they like?

**P2:** Um, Ketra, the older one, is -- she's quite outgoing and friendly. Um, but also extremely, extremely sensitive. Um, like very similar to -- to me. I don’t know if that's because of like personality or just what we've kind of instilled in her. Um, but the little one is -- the little one is extremely serious. Um, [laughter] uh, like very clingy. Like a real mommy's girl but very strong. Like, yeah not friendly doesn't need anyone.

**P1:** Except mommy.

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** [laughter]

**P2:** She's been given the nickname Roo from Kangaroo because she's like literally attached to me.

**P1:** Oh, goodness and it was different from, um, your first one, Ketra?

**P2:** Yes, she's very independent.

**P1:** Okay. That's interesting. Um, so what was it like the difference because they were obviously quite different babies?

**P2:** Um, yeah they were -- they were quite different. Uh, what was it like? Yeah, Ketra is amazing but it was also like first time so I don’t know if they have to be amazing or what it is. Essie was not. Like she was a difficult sleeper, yeah.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** **[Inaudible 00:02:58].**

**P1:** [laughter] Um, and your pregnancies, were they -- how were they? Were they -- did you have complications?

**P2:** No, both were easy thank God, yeah.

**P1:** Did you have a lot of support?

**P2:** Um, did I have a lot of support? Yeah, like my family is quite supportive.

**P1:** Okay. Are they all around close by?

**P2:** Um, yeah. My family is around. My parents often go overseas, but they're back and forth, but when they're here, like extremely supportive.

**P1:** Okay -- okay -- okay. So, um, you obviously saw the advert on Facebook somewhere, I posted it all over.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Right. And what made you want to participate?

**P2:** I don’t know. I just saw that you were doing you PhD and I thought it was amazing, and I thought I would be happy to assist.

**P1:** Okay. Thank you. [laughter] I really appreciate it.

**P2:** Really, yeah.

**P1:** And what did you -- I don’t know if any thoughts came up for you when you were thinking about the topic? Um, you obviously had like a lot of time to wonder what we were going to talk about.

**P2:** So, I did but I can't -- do you -- do you know what the -- how you advertised it and then I'll…

**P1:** Yeah. Um, it was just about moms having overwhelming feelings, um, well how moms manage or what it's like when they get overwhelmed with their kids and then they -- um, and whatever happens when that happens.

**P2:** Yeah, so when I saw it, I thought -- because I feel like I've had like a change -- like a drastic change during lockdown. Like I used to get very overwhelmed all the time like working fulltime, husband working fulltime coming home to the kids and I didn't really deal with it like very well or the way that I wanted to. And I feel like now since I've had more time, it's -- it's kind of I've been able to deal with them better and deal with their tantrums better.

**P1:** Yes, what do you think made the difference?

**P2:** I think time. I think having time.

**P1:** Okay. Having time for yourself or just like being around tantrums more often?

**P2:** I think having time to understand them, to understand that they're children. To not judge them, yeah.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Like just having time to think and…

**P1:** Right.

**P2:** …yeah, to understand what I need also, yeah.

**P1:** Yes, okay. That's really interesting, um, what you're saying actually and it's bringing up a whole lot of questions because it makes me wonder I'm also just forming my own thoughts. But so previously what were your hours like when you were working fulltime?

**P2:** Um, so first it was -- it was like, 9:00 to 4:00 or 8:00 to 3:00 it varied. Uh, now it's been 8:00 to 3:00 or 8:00 to 4:00 and I've been picking them from school at 12:00 during my lunch break. Um, being late to work every day because I was taking them to school, then like the guilt of not being home, coming home and coming home late and still having to do shopping or whatever it is.

**P1:** Yeah, um, and then what time would they finish school?

**P2:** They finished at -- the little one finished at 12:00 or 12:15, 12:30, and then I'd have to wait for the older one who finished a bit later.

**P1:** Okay -- okay.

**P2:** I would fetch and then wait, yeah.

**P1:** Oh, I see -- I see, I see. Okay. I got it. And then would they go home?

**P2:** So, then I would take them home, yeah, and they would eat -- um, I have a fulltime maid, thank God. They would eat and then they would go to sleep. Um, but yeah, I would still call and see how they're doing and I call and see if they're awake because as soon as they're awake there was guilt.

**P1:** Yes -- yes. So, you would rush back to work, but you, I mean, it sounds like you were always split into two places. You want to find out what's going on home but you also trying to be at work.

**P2:** Yeah, and then rushing them out of school or rushing them into school and not being able to deal with their tantrums because I needed to be somewhere else.

**P1:** Yes -- yes -- yes. So I really hear what you're saying about time, because it sounds like -- and I think this is what you said, but the time that you're talking about is time for yourself. Is more time around yourself to just be able to think clearly. Or not clearly just to be able to think.

**P2:** Think yeah, for sure.

**P1:** And not have the rushing around. What -- I mean, what would it look like for you when you might get overwhelmed? How would you react?

**P2:** So, I started off as a very sensitive person, but like I would -- I would get very overwhelmed by them. Um, like a lot of shouting at them, but Ketra my older one, doesn't listen to anything. [laughter] So I didn't work because as soon as -- as soon as there's like force, she -- yeah, she goes to war. So, it didn't work out. Um, yeah. Like tantrums at home, also just like result in just arguing. And then, yeah, like I didn't actually know how to deal with her very well, yeah.

**P1:** Yeah, so she -- so you shout and then she sort of like doubles down and then it becomes a power struggle between the two of you?

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** What are the kinds of things that, uh, set you off, for example?

**P2:** I think I was a lot stricter with her, until I realised that she is just a child. And yeah a lot more awareness now during lockdown.

**P1:** Yeah, I mean, three is a difficult age as well.

**P2:** Yeah, for sure. Um, yeah the thing that drives me mad, is the not listening. But again she's three, so the expectation was wrong.

**P1:** Sure -- sure. But do you think it's, um -- do you think it's, um, they're not listening also when you're in a rush for example like?

**P2:** For sure. It's worse when I'm in a rush.

**P1:** Yeah -- yeah, and what -- what does it feel like? I mean, I don’t know if -- is there a particular moment that you could remember when you have felt like, "Arrgh." And then lost it? [laughter]

**P2:** So there was one, she -- I fetched her from school. We moved her to a new school, um, and I fetched her and I don't know she was having a tantrum because her -- her little sister had a biscuit and she liked taking the biscuit **[00:10:00]** from her sister because she preferred her treat on a Friday. So, she -- her sister had finished her biscuits, so there was a major tantrum in the classroom. Everyone is trying to help, and the more everyone helped, the more she got -- she yeah, she screamed and I just let her tantrum. I carried her out of school screaming. Uh, we go to the car and then I needed her to sit in the car seat. And I'm like I'm petrified of having accidents when they're not sitting in the car seat. And she just wouldn't sit. And like screaming. Me trying to push her into the car seat, screaming not working. And then I eventually took her out and gave her a bit of smack on the bum, and it calmed her down but then I was left with the guilt of now smacking her to get her to calm down because, yeah.

**P1:** So were you -- and were you -- um, your little one was with you at the same time?

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** Obviously. So, were you carrying them both out?

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Okay. Okay [laughter]. I can imagine the -- what -- I mean, what were all the things, I don’t know if you remember how long ago it was, but remember all the things that were going through your mind?

**P2:** I was very calm in the beginning. And then when she just wouldn't sit in the car seat, which is like -- it's kind of like -- that's like life -- it's like safety is really important and I was just so cross that she just wasn't listening and I tried to reason with her and there was nothing and then I was getting late and then just like anger and lack of power. You don’t have power over them.

**P1:** Right.

**P2:** Um, yeah. And then there was the guilt after.

**P1:** Yes, after the -- the little smack on the bum.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Yeah. What was the guilt about? What was going through your mind feeling guilty?

**P2:** Um, the smacking on her bum.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Um, that if I would have had more time, I would have been able to sit there and wait for her to calm down.

**P1:** Okay. So, was it a thought like, I should have sat and waited or I wish I had…

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** …more time to -- okay.

**P2:** It was I wish that I had more time. Um, because that's what was -- was stopping me, like now that I've learned that about time, I can sit for whatever yeah.

**P1:** Was there ever -- I'm just curious because it was such a public tantrum. I mean, was there anything as well about like people watching or what are they thinking, um?

**P2:** So, I didn't -- I didn't -- it was -- I was a bit like anxious about it, but I was okay with it. I let her do what she needed to do, and I was quite proud of myself that I did that.

**P1:** Yeah -- yeah.

**P2:** But then I felt like I failed at the end by smacking her.

**P1:** Okay. [laughter] Okay got you. So, yeah, it was going well, and then it's interesting -- it's interesting how it started out, um, well I mean, the tantrum sounds like it was really hard. Um, but you've -- but you've -- it feels like as you got more and more closer to the end of it, it got more and more frustrating. And did it feel like it was building up or was it -- did it just happen in a moment? Sorry, I don’t know if that question…

**P2:** No, it did build up, because I couldn't -- as for the biscuit. I couldn't give her a biscuit. And the more people spoke to her the worse it got. Um, so it did build up.

**P1:** You mean her tantrum.

**P2:** And she just wasn't being heard.

**P1:** Oh, I see. Okay, so you're saying it built -- sorry, so you're saying it built up for her?

**P2:** It built up for her and it -- it -- it only built up for me in the last bit.

**P1:** Okay. So, for the whole first bit it was calm?

**P2:** Yeah. Like figured most parents have gone through that.

**P1:** Yes -- yes. All right. It was only when you had to get in the car, and she had to get in the car and this thing had to be done.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** She has to sit in the car seat.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Um, and that's when -- okay.

**P2:** It's just like when there's expectation and rules, that's when parenting is extremely hard.

**P1:** Yes. Okay. That's interesting. I'm trying to think about that, um, because it feels like -- I mean, just around that incident, it, you know, maybe it feels like it's understandable. It's okay we can understand that you can't have that biscuit and that you really want it and that's sucky if you're three. You know, that's quite hard. Um, but it becomes less -- does it become less understandable around the rules like why can't you just sit in the car or you need to sit in the car seat and you need to get on board with this?

**P2:** Um, yeah like it's more difficult because there's no other option.

**P1:** Yeah.

**P2:** There's no way out for me besides for her sitting in the car.

**P1:** Yes -- yes -- yes. So, it has to happen.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** And that's the power that you were talking about, um…

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Sorry, did you use that word? I can't remember if you used it or I used it but, um…

**P2:** Um, yeah -- yeah.

**P1:** Okay. That's interesting, and then I'm -- I mean, is that typical of what would happen often, more often?

**P2:** No.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** It wouldn't -- it wouldn't -- it wouldn't get there.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** But we would -- we were quite strict with her.

**P1:** Yeah, in what kinds of ways?

**P2:** Um, sharing.

**P1:** Okay. With her sister?

**P2:** Being kind to her sister. So, at first it was with her cousin. I think at that point we didn't know that children don’t have to share and don’t share and it's normal. Uh, then with her sister, not grabbing and then as soon as she like doesn't listen. So, we'll say like, "Stop wetting the floor." And she'll just like pour a whole bucket of water on the floor. Um, but it didn't -- yeah, that was extreme, because normally like it would settle quite quickly.

**P1:** Right, uh, okay. So, um, it settles like once you've laid down -- so, you would say don’t wet the floor, as an example. She would continue to wet and then you might shout and then it settles?

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Okay. And when you said she's quite sensitive, so how did she react to the shouting?

**P2:** So, she says, "Don’t shout at me. Stop shouting at me. You're hurting my feelings." She's very expressive. [laughter]

**P1:** Okay. And then does she calm down?

**P2:** Uh, yeah she does.

**P1:** Okay. It's not sulking. It's not like she then…

**P2:** Not at all. She's not a sulker, no. That's the second one.

**P1:** Oh okay [laughter], that's so funny that she says, "Don’t shout at me, you're hurting my feelings."

**P2:** Don’t shout at me. Yeah, it's amazing.

**P1:** How is it for you when she says that?

**P2:** Um, so when she says, "Don’t shout at me," I feel like horrible. Like extremely guilty.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** So, we've been trying not to shout at her.

**P1:** [laughter] Um, yeah I mean I was wondering what -- what happens for you, I mean, the wetting of the floor, is that -- I mean, is that another thing that has happened? Is that a real example like pouring water on the floor?

**P2:** Real example.

**P1:** [laughter] It sounds about right for a three-year-old. Um, what happens for you when she doesn’t listen? I don’t know if you could speak more about what goes through your mind.

**P2:** I'm extremely frustrated.

**P1:** Yeah.

**P2:** Uh, kind of like I know better, but she's just like doesn't want to like…

**P1:** Yes.

**P2:** It's -- it's definitely -- there is, I don’t know if power or ego is the right word, but there is definitely that involved.

**P1:** For you, you mean?

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Um, I think -- I think recently I've learned to try parent without ego. She doesn't have to listen to me. I'm not her boss.

**P1:** Yes.

**P2:** Like not safety wise but like the silly things. Um, but it was quite hard I think also for my husband to kind of just let her not listen. Not respect.

**P1:** Okay. Um, that's I'm just thinking about that because that's really -- it sounds like a very difficult, um, uh, mental leap to take about, you kno, um, and -- and letting go of something to parent without ego. It's quite a nice…

**P2:** Yeah, I heard it on a talk. [laughter] Again time to listen to talks. [laughter]

**P1:** Yeah, I mean, what do you think is behind the ego? Is that about, I'm the boss so I'm in control? Or I am the parent, obviously you are the parent.

**P2:** Um, I think control.

**P1:** Yeah.

**P2:** I think control. Like it's frustrating when they won't listen to you, you can't actually control them. That’s a separate being to you.

**P1:** Yes.

**P2:** I think it's control.

**P1:** Okay. And -- and the power that you mentioned and there's nothing you can do to make them listen.

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** [laughter] Um, yes, sorry. Don’t stand on the keyboard please. Sorry. [laughter]. Um, **[00:20:00]** okay I lost my train of thought. So, all right, so now that you've had more time, I mean, do you imagine that this is something that would change permanently for you?

**P2:** Um, I think I would have to -- I would have to implement changes in my normal life, to allow this to happen.

**P1:** Yes.

**P2:** To allow this to like stick, because I noticed that as soon as I've got stressed again, and she was -- she was doing something I didn't want her to do, my kind of what I thought was to just shout at her so she could just go away, but I realised that it's just because I'm stressed and I need a quick fix. So, I would definitely have to try and implement something.

**P1:** Okay. It's almost like the, I wanted to say the fallback response, but I'm not sure if that's what it is. It's like when you're stressed then it comes out quickly.

**P2:** Yes, there's no time to think of what a better response, yeah.

**P1:** Yes -- yes do they -- does it feel overwhelming in that moment? Do the emotions feel overwhelming?

**P2:** Yeah, definitely.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** I think -- I think trying to deal with my normal -- my stresses, gets me so overwhelmed that I can't deal with her.

**P1:** Yeah -- yeah. Does it feel -- is there a physical response? I mean, do you feel the emotions the overwhelmness, if that's the word, physically? I don’t know if that makes sense? Like do you have sensations probably in your body if that makes sense?

**P2:** Well, probably like adrenaline, but that's -- I don’t -- I think that's more because of my stress. I think maybe when I have that, when I can feel the adrenaline, I need to like run and that's why I can't respond to her in a -- in a slow way whereas I think she needs -- children need time.

**P1:** Yeah -- yeah.

**P2:** So, yeah there's definitely…

**P1:** Okay. That is interesting. Um, I mean, so you're making me think about how when we are stressed, our brains -- our brains go into fight or flight, and then our thinking brain, which is the front part, shuts down. You know, and then we really really have trouble thinking and accessing our thoughts and logic, you know. And then we respond more in an animal way, which is…

**P2:** So that make sense, yeah.

**P1:** Yes. Um, and then that makes a lot of sense in what you're saying around being stressed and rushing from thing to thing and feeling like you need to get going and it's all like building up to the point where you're like, "Get in the car," or, whatever it is. [laughter]. How do you think she sees you? What is her experience when you shout?

**P2:** Um, I think -- I think she probably gets anxious. Um.

**P1:** Okay. What makes you say anxious?

**P2:** Uh, just I've been looking at her just trying to see her response to what I do. And I can see that when I -- when I shout, she does get anxious. She like does things quickly and like…

**P1:** Oh yeah.

**P2:** Um, yeah.

**P1:** Okay. And do you think she knows more when you're rushing? Do you think she sees a difference between like mom now and mom like trying to get to work and then home and then…

**P2:** I don’t think so.

**P1:** [laughter] Yeah, what makes you say that?

**P2:** She probably sees that I'm rushing, but or I think what I'm saying is that for her it's not an excuse. She doesn’t -- I don’t think she sees when mom is rushing, then she's going to shout, but when she's not, she's not going to shout.

**P1:** Yes, yes, yes, yeah. She's not capable of understanding like mom is in a rush, so she's more likely to get upset now?

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** That's too much.

**P2:** And it's as if she's going slower. Like my husband and I always joke that when he's dropping them at school, they're like in freeze mode. [laughter] They just will not… [laughter]

**P1:** It's so funny. I wonder what it is about, um, about them that they do that.

**P2:** I don’t think they -- they react faster. Maybe they react well when they're being rushed. Like I noticed I took them out today to their granny. And the process of doing that, was exhausting. [laughter] Like I have decided they don’t leave the house. I've decided they don’t need to go anywhere. Like it's just…[laughter]

**P1:** Oh, that’s very funny. Yeah, okay. So maybe I don’t know something about I don’t know if stubbornness is the right word, but, um, something about fighting against what you were wanting in that moment.

**P2:** Yes, [laughter] yes.

**P1:** But your little one -- sorry, I was just looking at my notes, you said -- okay so she's quite different, you were saying.

**P2:** She is quite different.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Um, yeah she was -- she was really good. She started to like kind of become a bit independent. So, like dressing her is a fight.

**P1:** Okay. Yeah.

**P2:** But she's not -- yeah, she -- she listens, I guess yeah.

**P1:** Right.

**P2:** Um, so, she's a lot easier besides the fact that she's attached to you the whole time. [laughter]

**P1:** Yes. Do you find that difficult?

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Normally it's okay, but like when I need my time, it's very hard to hold her, and like do other things.

**P1:** Yeah, and I'm sure at the moment, um, is even -- you know, you have less -- you have less resources, you are able to get out of house less. You have less you time.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** So, it must just feel like more -- do you find -- I mean, I'm not sure this might not be you but the clinginess can make you a bit more -- get overwhelmed more easily?

**P2:** Only sometimes. Only when I snap. But normally I'm quite patient with her.

**P1:** Okay. What makes a difference between when you snap or don’t snap?

**P2:** Um, I've just been with her the whole day and I'm trying to do something else. It's often when I'm trying to do something else. I realised when I'm just doing what they want me to do, everything is fine. [laughter] When I'm doing what I need to do… [laughter]

**P1:** Yeah, so like trying to make supper or go to the bathroom [laughter].

**P2:** Literally. Or do work, and they don’t want to do work.

**P1:** Oh, okay. You mean their work or your work?

**P2:** Their work. Both. [laughter]

**P1:** Okay. Right. Okay. Yeah, so that it sounds like that -- it sounds very similar to what we were saying just now. It's a bit about power struggles and control and like trying to find the boundary between like what I, um -- what I want to do and what needs to happen now and -- and where that, you know, you still have to bump up against what they want to do.

**P2:** Yes -- yes.

**P1:** And that's where it can start to get quite tricky and, um, tricky for you and then difficult for them obviously.

**P2:** Mm-hmm.

**P1:** Um, how does she -- so you said, so how did she react to shouting? Sorry.

**P2:** How does she…

**P1:** How did she react to shouting?

**P2:** Um, how does she react to shouting? She listens but I don’t have to shout at her often, because she -- she listens. But she's extremely sensitive. Like, um, what happened, I think she was standing on the glass table, and my husband told her to get off. And she just ignored him. She does that. [laughter] Uh, so then my husband took her off, and said, he's going to give her a smack and literally like tapped her with his finger, she stared at us and then like a minute later burst out crying as if like no, it was [laughter] so extremely sensitive and holds a grudge.

**P1:** Oh, okay. So upset for a long time afterwards yeah. Okay. Um, so how was that for you? How did you feel when that happened?

**P2:** Well, yeah I said no more. Essie is not one -- not one to even like -- **[inaudible 00:29:08]** it's like it's not -- it's not an option. It Destroys her soul.

**P1:** Okay -- okay. It's interesting…

**P2:** Like Ketra, like I will still use it as a threat, but Essie.

**P1:** No, because she's just, okay. It's interesting how different kids can be obviously siblings but **[inaudible 00:29:26]** and people, but the responses are just so different. And it's also interesting because then your response is so different as well. You know, you taper the way you are to each child because you know what works or what doesn't work.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** I mean what were -- how was your mom with you? Oh, sorry. Um, I lost her. Um, I was saying how was your mom with you? Do you remember much from **[00:30:00]** that time? Oh, no. Oh.

(Video error)

**P2:** …there's like guilt around -- or there was guilt around me allowing someone else to fetch my kids from school, um, or me not being around them. Uh, but I think it's been a lot easier.

**P1:** Sorry, Terry. You cut out there. You froze for a whole bunch and I only…

**P2:** Sorry.

**P1:** …sorry only got you at the guilt part. Oh, no are you there?

**P2:** Sorry, yes, hold on.

**P1:** Sorry.

**P2:** Can you hear me? Can you see me?

**P1:** Yes -- yes. Sorry, I only got you at the part about guilt around not fetching and, um…

**P2:** Okay. So I just said like my mom was extremely strict. Um, she also worked fulltime, so my maid would come fetch me from school. So, I've made it a thing that I have to fetch my kids. Like I have -- I have kind of accepted that it's okay. It's -- it's but yeah, it started off with that. Um, so there was a lot of guilt with anyone else fetching my kids and not me.

**P1:** Yes. Because how was it for you that the maid fetched you? I mean, obviously that was something that was difficult for you.

**P2:** Yeah, I hated it.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Even though she was -- she was incredible. Only now that I'm older do I see the -- the good in it. But at the time like…

**P1:** Yeah, you had wanted your mom to fetch you?

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Yeah, okay. And did, um, I mean, did your mom -- and strict you were saying in other ways as well?

**P2:** Um, yeah, very strict. Like I needed to do whatever she said. Didn’t even argue. It wasn't actually worth it.

**P1:** Yeah.

**P2:** Um, so that's kind of my fear that I'm too strict with kids and then I don’t let her argue with me because there's something about the child being able to argue in their safe space. If they can do that, they can do it outside.

**P1:** Right. So, being able to say no I don’t like that. Or…

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** Um, okay. That is something that you feel that you didn't have or that you weren't able to develop as well?

**P2:** Yeah, for sure.

**P1:** Okay. Do you find it -- do you find it hard to say no now currently as an adult?

**P2:** Um, I have learned -- I have learned to do it, but yeah, it's taken -- taken time.

**P1:** [laughter] Yeah. I mean, I wonder do you think that that makes it harder for you to put -- to put boundaries in place for your kids as the mom?

**P2:** Um, no. It's actually -- it's actually been the opposite, which is what has -- has scared me. But I think that's because I was in the -- I'm normally in like a stressful situation so it's like fight or flee, so I do what I saw. So, it's only now that I've been able to think about things, have I been able to see what I want to do and I don’t want to do.

**P1:** Right. Okay. And had you realised that you were doing it that way? Um, it sounds like you're saying similar to your mom?

**P2:** Mm-hmm, um, I think I realised but not too -- I don’t know if it was not to the same extent or I just didn't know how to change it.

**P1:** Okay. Right, got you. Because it's a response it sounds like it comes out during stress.

**P2:** Exactly.

**P1:** It's almost automatic.

**P2:** Exactly.

**P1:** Okay. That's really interesting. Why do you think your mom was that way with you?

**P2:** I don’t know. I think she had my brothers first. They were very naughty.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Um, but it must be from also her upbringing.

**P1:** Right, right.

**P2:** Um, her dad was very, very strict, so it must be passed on.

**P1:** Yeah -- yeah.

**P2:** Um, but there wasn't -- there wasn't a need to be like that with me.

**P1:** Yes.

**P2:** As I'm very pleasing and I find Ketra extremely pleasing.

**P1:** Right.

**P2:** Um, so there isn't a need to be strict with her.

**P1:** It makes me go back to what you were saying earlier around the kids being so different and that you tailor your response to the kids. I mean, do you feel like mom didn't necessarily tailor her response to you versus to your brother?

**P2:** She definitely tried, but as soon as she was stressed, she couldn't. I don’t know if she couldn't or what it is. But when she was stressed, it didn't happen.

**P1:** Okay. And then it all became strictness. The shouting -- was she a shouter?

**P2:** Yeah -- yeah.

**P1:** And your dad?

**P2:** My dad is very placid, very calm. Yeah.

**P1:** Was your mom in charge of the house?

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** Okay, he went along. [laughter]

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Okay. All right, so do you feel like you've got a mix between your mom and your dad or do you feel like it's your mom that comes out a lot?

**P2:** I feel like I'm my dad, but when I'm stressed my mom comes out.

**P1:** Okay. It's really interesting.

**P2:** Um, yeah.

**P1:** Okay. So, and what was it like for you as a kid with the way your mom was?

**P2:** Um, I think I just was always trying to please. I was just trying to not -- not be naughty as naughty as I could be. Like everyone jokes about how good I was or how good I am.

**P1:** Okay.

**P2:** Yeah, so I think it was -- it was tough, as a child you want to please your parents. Um, yeah.

**P1:** All right, did that feel -- did it feel impossible like it was something that could never be done or were there times really where you did feel like…

**P2:** It was difficult definitely. There were times where it was okay and I think a child's response is always to make it okay, but there were times when it was difficult, yeah.

**P1:** Okay. I mean, it sounds like you're saying looking back as a child -- looking back as a child, you made it okay. Sorry, does that sentence…

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** …make sense. Now as an adult looking back, you're like, "Hmm, was it? Wasn't it?"

**P2:** Yeah, for sure.

**P1:** What is your relationship like with her now?

**P2:** Um, it's a lot easier as an adult. Um, I think I've been able to kind of be stronger about things, but yeah, every now and again you resort to being a child, but thank God, I think it's a lot, a lot better than it used to be. But again, it -- it happens when she's under stress that I go back into the child and then yeah.

**P1:** Yes, okay. It's so interesting the way that happens. It's almost like a cyclical pattern.

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** Of managing stress.

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** Yeah. Interesting, okay. And, um, there was something else I wanted to ask you but it's gone straight out of my head. Um, talking about your mom. Sorry, I can't remember. But um, so I mean, something else I wanted to ask you, is -- is there a time when you are happy about how you've managed, um, one of your kid's meltdowns, or?

**P2:** Um, yeah, definitely and definitely more during lockdown.

**P1:** Okay. Can you remember a specific time as an example?

**P2:** Um, I cannot remember a specific time. Not -- not off hand.

**P1:** That's okay. That's no problem. So, maybe you could speak generally then around, um, what do you -- what happens for you when you know they're melting down and you know what happens when you deal with it better. Maybe what goes through your mind?

**P2:** Um, so I can see her having the meltdown. Like tonight she -- she was at her gran's the whole day. She came home. She didn't have a nap. I knew she was going to be overtired, so she's very good at pushing -- pushing sleep off. So, tonight I tried to putting her to sleep, finding excuse. Um, getting upset about that not getting what she wants. Um, but like I couldn't find what she wanted. So, um, then trying to put her to sleep and she keeps pushing the boundaries. So I read her a book, she wants two books. So, I then eventually told her no. And then I knew she was overtired at that point. So, I knew that the second book is not going to help. And I actually just let her -- let her do her thing and then I did go inside, told her is she sleeping? I told her she's going to get punished if she doesn't -- no I didn't -- I didn't punish. I said, "Is she sleeping?" And then I closed the door. And she hates the door being closed. And then she started crying more. So, I opened the door and I said, **[00:40:00]** "If you don’t -- if you don’t go to sleep, I'm going to close the door." And then she said, "Can we read two books tomorrow?" I said, "Yeah." And then that was it.

**P1:** Okay. -- okay. So how were you feeling throughout all of that? It sounds quite intense.

**P2:** Uh, yeah. Um, I -- I realised this time that she's overtired. So, I knew I had to hold my ground. I really wanted -- I tried to read her a second book, and then she's picky about with books, so I found one that I wanted which was short. She didn't want that. And then I was like, "No, I'm not doing this." I wanted to keep going back to give in, but then I decided just to hold my ground, because I realised she's just overtired. Because I think I kept saying that to myself. She's just tired. And she'll be okay. It's not going to cause damage for me to say no. For me to tell her to stop waking up her sister. To stop making noise, to go to sleep.

**P1:** Yeah, that's really interesting, because I wonder if there, that word again, power. I wonder if there's a power that comes when you know exactly what's going on with them and what they need and what's going to help in that situation.

**P2:** Yes.

**P1:** Um, yeah. So, you're like…

**P2:** So, it's actually yeah…

**P1:** Sorry, what were you going to say?

**P2:** So, it's actually it's not a power struggle, it's me -- the fact that I know what she needs, gives me the power. So, I don’t need to -- yeah.

**P1:** Yes, which makes me think about, um, yeah, you know, it's just like when kids are like, "I want the blue cup. I want the green cup. I want it cut in squares. No I want it in triangle." And you're trying so hard to please and you can't get it right. Versus when you're like, "I know they're tried. I know they need to sleep."

**P2:** Yeah.

**P1:** It's really really interesting. How has this interview -- how has it been for you talking about your feelings, thinking about these feelings?

**P2:** It's been really nice to kind of be able to have someone kind of give their part. So, I think it's like working through -- so it's quite interesting to -- to like take it to another step. Um, yeah.

**P1:** Okay. Um, are there times -- I mean, are you worried about -- I know these things are so difficult to speak about and, um, are you worried what I might think at any time? That I might think that you are not doing something right or…

**P2:** No. No. Um, yeah, I think I'm quite -- like I speak to my sister-in-laws often and I quite -- like kind of, um, I quite want to like self-improvement and kind of doing things better for them and for myself. So, I don’t -- I don’t mind. It's only when it's like an external person which could use it against you, that's when I get like -- I don’t like that. But this is like happy.

**P1:** Okay. All right. That's lovely. Thank you. I mean, it's been really interesting and it's, um, yeah a lot of interesting things have come up.

**P2:** I hope that it helps.

**P1:** Yeah. So, what I would like to do is, um, so part of it is to talk again. Um, maybe one more time and then or maybe two more times. But generally maybe we could see it next time how it goes.

**P2:** Okay, sure.

**P1:** So, what I will do is I will go back and I will listen to this again, sorry. Do you need to go?

**P2:** Um, yeah. Just hold on one second. Really are you lying? Okay. I'll come change you.

**P1:** Hello. Okay, so we were finishing off anyway, so that's all right. I was just going to say maybe then we can think about if anything came up in between and if anything came up after the interview and that type of thing, next time.

**P2:** Yeah, sure.

**P1:** It's okay. Thank you.

**P2:** Thank you.

**P1:** Thank you. Thank you so much. Bye, have a good night.

**P2:** Have a good night.

**P1:** I hope you get some sleep. Thank you so much Terry.

**P2:** Thank you.

**P1:** I'll make a new time with you, I'll send you a message and we can arrange it.

**P2:** Perfect okay.

**P1:** Thank you so much.

**P2:** Thank you so much. Have a good night.

[End of Part 1]