

## Parenting Reflections in Stillness

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People ask me for parenting advice all the time. They actually pay me a lot for this advice. A part of me hates to give it—because I have to reduce something so grand, into a linear, digestible sentence with a “to do.” And there are some questions that require this type of answer—but often the questions we have don’t need to be answered, but merely felt, in stillness, as the myriad of unanswerable questions that float around, which tempt us away from the present moment.

Stillness; the expression of the self in the universe, the expression of the divine, in human form. I want to invite this stillness into those parts of yourself that make you feel crazy with your children. Because the feelings they hold and the awareness of those feelings are what you’re missing, and your children are missing in you. I want to invite ALL of you into your home—so that you can embrace and be embraced by your whole self. I want to call forth awareness in your parenting. I want the observer in you, the one who notices feelings, thoughts, and actions in yourself—your observer-self, to be the parent, with the child. I want you to let go of the sentences that you say, that follow the script of those roles, and step into Being and Awareness with your child.

What does this look like? We no longer feel the need to respond to much of what our children say to us. We no longer need to react, correct, control, persuade, cajole, or do anything. We step into a place of being Present with them. Observer Mom. Observer Dad. We feel into their needs. What do they need right now? How am I feeling? What are they really telling me?

Go to a child right now, and just watch them. Pretend you are their mirror. Everything they do and say is reflected back to them. Do they feel their beauty? Do they know their preciousness? Do they see themselves in your eyes? Let them feel your attunement, for the first time today. Feel the moment where you are so quiet that you can see their inhale and their exhale. And that makes you feel your own. In and out, watching and feeling the child’s breath. Feeling his life. Knowing that you are alive too, together, in this very moment.

You and the child are the same. The child wants things, just like you want things. The child laughs at funny jokes, just like you. That child knows sadness, just as you know sadness. The loneliness you felt recently, pangs your stomach in the same fashion this child felt yesterday. Keep breathing into this unity of spirits, unity of needs, union of being. You know what it’s like to hate, to want to kill, to fear, just as this child knows. So what is the difference? This child doesn’t know as well as you, how to keep those feelings inside. She can’t help it—they just come out. They just come out. Imagine being in a meeting with your boss, and not being able to keep your mouth shut about your feelings about her. They just slip out. Shoot. I wish I wasn’t who I was, you’d feel, after everyone turned toward you looking aghast. You just told your boss that you hated her because she made you finish the report and you wanted to watch TV. And then you went and told her how you felt about her in front of everyone. You told your truth, and she responded with what felt like a slap in the face: “you’re fired.”

I notice the lashes of your eyes today. That’s what I will notice today. I know the words you speak or that I speak, are not as important in this moment, as those lashes. Those lashes may take the same form as the ones you will have when you are ninety. And they may be similar to the ones you had at birth. At this moment, right now, I am noticing your lashes. Even as you say “Mom, can you take me to Ryan’s house.” “Mom, mom, are you there?” You see, you were worrying about what to make for dinner, before the lashes came to your consciousness. But now, you are noticing the lashes framing your child’s face, and you gasp a yes, or a no in response to your child’s question. But it’s different now. Your child feels your presence, and the love pouring out of your stillness. And he stops for just a moment, taken in by your gaze. Something feels different about this exchange. It takes him to himself. He stops and wants more, or is energized and repeats the question, or, has this urge to tell you something about who he was today. Whatever it is, the moment of Presence that you gifted him, touched him deeply, and soothed you both.

Instead of answering questions, I like to support parents on their personal journeys toward greater consciousness, as they feel into their difficult parenting moments, quietly, peacefully, being the Presence that nurtures their child’s world. This grows the parent into becoming who they already are, in every breath they take, as they parent their children, as they live their lives.