

Caitlin: Hey, were Kaitlin and Katie coming to you from our library living room? We are here not just as children's librarians, but as people who are parenting our own children.

Katie: Each month, we'll bring a new conversation about parenting with helpful resources from our library and beyond. This is "Your Family, Your Library" and we're your librarians.

Caitlin: Before we jump into this month's topic, we want to remind our listeners that though we are pretty good at finding resources and we have experiences parenting our own children, we are not child development experts. Our choices don't need to be your choices. There is no judgment here. We're all doing our best with the health and well-being of our families in mind.

Katie: And this month, we're talking about creating boundaries.

Caitlin: I understand that this is something that comes easy to some people. I am not one of those people. How about you, Katie?

Katie: No, I am trying to be better at it. It's hard, though. It's really, really hard.

Caitlin: So when you're thinking about boundaries and setting them for yourself, is it like a conscious thought in your head? Like a reminder. Do you have, like, a practice for setting those boundaries?

Katie: I would say I'm still trying to figure out what that is. I think, in prior years or in my other life, I didn't have to think about it so much. But for me now, I really do. Like if I want to preserve myself for the things that I really want to be doing and, you know, time with my family, then it's like I realize that I need to do a better job of that for myself. What about you?

Caitlin: I, I think the step that I've made is that I, I think about it. It's in the front of my mind now, rather than like, having it not even be a possibility for me to set a boundary or to say no to something. I am a tremendous people-pleaser. And also I'm like, I'm kind of a doer. I just like I kind of like getting things done. And so I find myself saying "yes" to things, even if they're not something that I necessarily want to be doing or something that like I actually have the capacity to do. Because I feel like if I don't say yes, then that thing doesn't happen. Then it doesn't get done. And somehow that feels worse to me than doing the thing that doesn't feel good. So that's kind of the balance in my head. And at least now when I'm doing that, I'm thinking in my head like, you know, I don't have to make this choice. This isn't, this isn't like. This is me doing this to me and not somebody else doing this to me. Because I know even if I don't feel I know that it is okay to say "no" and it is okay to set those

boundaries. But that's hard to like making that connection between what you feel and what you know. And that's hard. Yeah, I don't like it. Why is it so hard?

Katie: I think it's. Umm...

Caitlin: Isn't this why you're like a certified psychotherapist.

Katie: Oh, yeah. In my other career. That's right. For me, at least, it's like I don't want to let people down. I think it is about myself, but it's also, I think, has always been about others. And, like, whatever, you know, how they're going to perceive me or if I don't participate, like how that's going to negatively affect them or...

Caitlin: Right.

Katie: You know, I don't know. I think I'm always kind of looking ahead at how, you know, the dominoes are going to fall. And that's, that's where I kind of get into trouble.

Caitlin: Right.

Katie: With setting boundaries.

Caitlin: It's, I mean, it is it's super hard. And I think like some of it is like your brain can sort of extrapolate down the road, like, what is this going to look like? What is this boundary setting look like in real life? And I think like the practice of it has to be like getting comfortable with like other people maybe not being 100% happy. And that's a bitter pill to swallow for me a little bit. I was thinking about it this morning and like, thinking about like where it's rooted and I mean, I think like definitely in our family we are a family of meeting expectations. And I think like there is tradition and you don't break with that tradition even if it's particularly challenging. And some of that, you know, my family lives up here in Skokie now, but we're from Indiana. And so, like there has been this expectation from our more extended family that we travel home to Bloomington. And it is, it's hard. It is not easy. And I think what's interesting now that we've been here for a really long time was I think I'm starting to figure out that we put that on ourselves. I don't think anybody. You know, like this sort of...

Katie: Like no one's ever explicitly said to you, like, we expect you to be here.

Caitlin: Right. And I think, like, like the, the stated we're really going to miss you, or I wish that we could see you isn't the same thing as you have to be here. But for years and years and years, they felt like the same thing to me.

Katie: But I think it's the emotion surrounding that that make it feel like that.

Caitlin: Right. Like, I don't want somebody to be sad. I don't want my grandma to be sad. I love my grandma. Yeah. Yeah. So, like, yeah, we're going to do something very difficult and inconvenient.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: You know, who's actually, ironically pretty good at boundary setting is my. My dad. And my mom, like, both of my parents, are really good at boundary setting. And complicating it, I think is like being a kid and seeing how, like their parents reacted to them setting boundaries.

Katie: Mm-hmm.

Caitlin: Me seeing that and being like, Oh, I don't know. That's really complicated, right? That's like a whole sandwich of complication because they're doing what's right for them. But somebody is judging them for the choices that have been made.

Katie: It's like meta boundaries.

Caitlin: Yeah, meta boundaries. And then that affects the way that I feel about setting my own boundaries. Because it's like even though what they were doing was appropriate and healthy and remains appropriate and healthy, and the people that were judging them were not correct. I looked at that judgment and was like, "well, I don't want anybody to look at me that way. So I'm going to do the opposite of what my parents did," which is bananas. So I even put those weird impositions on myself with my parents who never have had an expectation that we should be doing things that made us feel uncomfortable. Isn't that weird? Maybe it's not weird.

Katie: No, I don't think it's weird. I think. I think it's pretty normal, actually.

Caitlin: You know, I never thought about that before this moment that, like, that's the thing that, like, I watched my parents, the reactions that my parents got and that probably had an impact on how I think about boundaries.

Katie: Yeah. For us, like, I'm. I'm thinking specifically of the holidays just because we're recording this right prior to the holidays. But like in my adult life with children I've never, never felt that too much. I think it's just because my mom isn't here and like, she was the one that got everyone together and, you know, made holidays happen, really. And so I don't feel that pull in that way. But like, for instance, this year for Christmas, my brother, who lives

in Indianapolis, had invited me and my family down to stay with them for just a couple of days. And then my dad lives there as well. And I finally just had to say like, it's just not going to work for us. Like. Like I only have a few days off or around the holiday and like, I, I don't want for like my physical health and all that. It's just like I don't want to be traveling and come back, like, even more tired and, you know, worn out and then have to, like, work the whole break, you know. So it feels hard to set those boundaries, but I'm finding that I have to for myself and for my family. It's just becoming clear to me, like whereas before I was like, oh, you know, this is just like a phase and like, I'll be back to my old self, you know? And then it's like, okay, that's not happening. And so like moving forward, it's like, I have to find a better way if I want to, like, maintain some sort of normalcy in my life and to, like, be able to show up at work, show up for my family and for the things that I do decide to give myself to in the way that I want to, instead of like being strung out and all directions.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: So, it's like now becoming not just like something that I want to do, but it's like or I like how Edwin says because in his kindergarten class they have "Must-Do's" for the day and "Can-Do". It's like, for me, it used to be like, Yeah, I could do that. But really I could, you know, I can't. I can do all. I can do it all.

Caitlin: You could do it all.

Katie: But now it's like now like I must do this for myself, you know, to chill like.

Caitlin: That is such a smart way to think about it. And I think that's really helpful. Honestly, why would a cool thing that they're teaching a kindergarten class.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: No, that's a really help. Another thing that I get really stuck on is FOMO. Mm hmm. So, like, even if I don't want to do a thing, like, I can feel in my bones that I don't want to do it, I'm afraid that if I don't do it, I will regret not doing it. And so I push. And I do it anyway. And I don't know. I mean, some of the time I'm like, I'm really glad I did this thing, but some of the time I just don't know if the benefit outweighs the the toll that it takes.

Katie: Yeah. Yeah.

Caitlin: It's rough. And I don't I don't have a good answer. I think like one of the things that I really struggle with is work-life balance. And I think it's harder having kids and then having a job

that you feel very passionate about. And so you give a lot of I give a lot of my mental energy and a lot of my creative energy to this job, which I'm happy to do because I love it a lot. But it also means that I don't have a lot of social energy or I don't know, I guess any other really.

Katie: Like zero energy.

Caitlin: Zero energy! So finding a way to create some boundaries around, you know, like work and life is, is something that I super struggle with. But I've been trying really hard, especially in this past year, to do better.

Katie: Me too.

Caitlin: Will you let me know when you actually succeed?

Katie: Because I'm well, I have to say one thing I am proud about for myself in terms of my work boundaries is that I no longer check my email and Slack. Like, I don't open anything at home. That's because I think gets like the wheels turning. Occasionally I will log in because I'm like, Oh my gosh, I really don't know if like I have a meeting they need to be at. And so like, I'll just log in real quick and check my calendar. But I've been really, really, really good about that and I don't have it on my phone. So literally, like if you want to get a hold of me, you gotta text me and only certain people have my number. And so, you know, but I, I feel like that has really benefited me a whole lot.

Caitlin: That's awesome. I think maybe I'm going to experiment with some of that in the New Year because I am I am very bad about separating, not separating my work and my home life. I definitely have all of the work things on my phone and I do check them and it's not...

Katie: I mean, it's hard because it's like it is hard sometimes because sometimes I do miss like a Slack message or I do miss email that someone's asking me something and it's...

Caitlin: It's not hard.

Katie: I feel, because I didn't get this.

Caitlin: Stop. I don't think you need to feel bad about that. I think that's the whole deal with the boundaries is and the FOMO is like, we shouldn't be feeling bad about that and nothing bad is going to happen if we miss a Slack when we're on our not paid time. Well.

Katie: I mean, that's kind of where I'm at. Like, I'm trying not to feel bad, especially if I know it's like a boundary that is truly okay for me to be studying. Like there's no reason I should feel bad for

something that's like if it's not, like, negatively impacting my work or someone else's work or, you know, someone else's life, then like, if they live in or respect me, like they'll try to understand or they will understand. Like I was talking with my aunt this weekend and she has a few chronic conditions and I was just kind of, you know, she was asking what we're doing for the holidays. And so I told her that we just decided to stay back. And, you know, she was like, I hope everyone understood and took it okay. And, and, you know, I'm lucky because they, like my brother understands, my dad understands.

Caitlin: That's so great.

Katie: Like my husband understands and my kids understand even. But, you know, I mean, some people don't. And I think it hurts when it's someone that you love. Like I have a few friends who, you know, I have been friends with like my whole life who, like, don't understand.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: And they take it really personally. And it's like, I don't know how many times like, I mean, there's only so much you can say to someone that it's like, okay, either you just you don't understand or you're just not listening or I don't know, I feel like that's telling of itself, even though that is really sad, you know, because I'm not someone who takes friendship lightly, But I don't know. I feel like if you're truly asking for something that you need, that people are either going to understand or they won't.

Caitlin: I like to try to remind myself and I try to remind my kids, too, that it is okay to take up space in the world.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: And it's okay to inconvenience other people because sometimes people inconvenience you too. And that's just part of being human.

Katie: And I have a really hard time. I felt like I was talking with my doctor and she was like, Katie, it's okay to be the squeaky wheel sometimes.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: And I never it's like I never want no, like, the attention on me. I never want to be that person. But sometimes you have to be that person.

Caitlin: It's okay to be that person.

Katie: It's okay to be that person. Especially if you if there's feeling and emotion behind it. That's genuine.

Caitlin: I think it's the it's separating that that need and that like, like you a very thoughtful person. And I think that like I really trust you a lot and I really value your, the way that you look at the world and the way that you approach things. And I would have no problem trusting and believing anything that you said if you were setting some sort of a boundary or if you were saying like, "no, this is a thing that I need." And I think it's like establishing that line between authenticity and entitlement, you know, like this is and that comes back to Edwin's list, right? Like the must and the can like, you know, I need this, this is a thing that I need versus like, you owe me. This I want.

Katie: Yep.

Caitlin: I have a friend who after like years of therapy and like, working on herself, like she has, she's so great. She has like a, a list that she puts on her mirror that she looks at every day, and she keeps a copy in her wallet, too. That is totally like it is. Okay, you know, like, I am a I am a person of value and I deserve to be spoken to in a respectful way. And like, I love that she has this on her. She made me a copy once and I love it very, very much. She also, I was this is a long time ago. I am a little bit better about this now, though. Still honestly not great. I was sort of moaning about feeling like I had to do things that like, honestly, I know I don't have to do, but like I felt like I couldn't get out of it. And she was like, No, we're doing a role play and we're doing it now. It's like, if you know me, there's like almost nothing I hate more than a role play. And I'm like, she's like, "no, you just have to say no. Just say no!" And I was like, "I can't!" "Just say no." I, I love my friend, very much. Kelly I love. No!

Katie: I mean, I think that's a good reminder, too. It's just like we need to be able to tell ourselves, like, what we need. And sometimes you have to, like, remind you, like, literally have to write it down.

Caitlin: But I think it's hard because that is definitely not the way that I was raised.

Katie: No. No.

Caitlin: I think like, like the, the prevailing wisdom was like, you do whatever you can.

Katie: Yeah, that was my mom.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: It's like you do everything, and then you keep doing.

Caitlin: It and then you keep doing it. You just.

Katie: Yeah, literally. Well, and sometimes I wonder without getting too much into family dynamics, but I wonder, like, if my mom had set more boundaries for herself or if we had helped her do that or whatever it is, if, you know, like she would still be here. I think, you know, even though we're kind of talking about like boundaries, I was just like a list of things like they are things that add up sometimes into something beyond repair.

Caitlin: For sure. I think that's real and I think we've been talking a lot about mental health, but we haven't really touched on the toll that it can take on your physical health, too. I mean, I think that the more I push myself to do the things that, that I don't want to do or that I don't have space to do, the harder of a time I have sleeping and the like, less great I feel. I will also do this really bad thing where I push and push and push and push and push myself until I make myself sick. I'm just like a lump of illness.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: And it's totally just exhaustion.

Katie: Yeah. I mean, I, I talk about this like I do advocacy work for the Alzheimer's Association, and I talk very candidly about, you know, my caring for my mom and stuff. And I, I honestly do believe that a lot of that has led to like some of that health stuff I'm dealing with now because it's like, I have to do this, I have to do it. Who else is going to do that? I was just going to do that. Who's going to help me? It's just part of life. But it compounds. It adds up. And if you're not checking in with yourself and taking care of yourself and checking in with the people around you, or saying being able to say like, "I'm not okay, I need the space or I need whatever it is, you know, I need help."

Caitlin: Mm hmm.

Katie: It's important.

Caitlin: Yeah. I had a long talk with my friend Dan over Thanksgiving break, and he, he and I took a long walk, and we were talking about setting healthy boundaries, so it was kind of cool that we're doing this episode, too. And I was telling him that that was something that I struggle with. And he has he has really worked on this with himself, and he recommended this book called "The Boundary Boss," which sounds kind of silly, but I've been listening to it and it's actually pretty great. But she really recommends making space for doing nothing. And and that involves not having any kind of media or your phone, like actually, like sitting in silence in order to recharge, which I'm going to be honest and say like, that sounds like the 10th layer of



hell to me.

Katie: Yeah, it's hard.

Caitlin: I have to work on it. Like, I know that this is a thing that I really need to work on, but I am not good at sitting with myself.

Katie: I feel like I used to be and now it's like it's hard for me just to be by myself.

Caitlin: Yeah, I love being by myself. I just like to be distracted while I'm by myself, right?

Katie: That's what I mean. Yeah.

Caitlin: Something in my ear. Because otherwise my head's a buzzing.

Katie: That reminds me of a book that I think is down on our Mind and Body downstairs on the first floor. It's called "How to Do Nothing" by Jenny Odell. It's interesting. She kind of talks about similar things, like how people have just become over time, become programmed with all this stuff and with everything in front of us and like, how do we move away from that and like, learn again what time really is and what our time means for us and like using it in the best way individually because for each person it's going to be different. so we'll put that on the book list.

Caitlin: We sure will. I think about these acknowledgments that, that like we're a team, like the way that society in America runs right now is not super great for anybody's mental health or wellbeing. And it's like, we all know this, but I feel like we all need to collectively, like.

Katie: Stop it.

Caitlin: Just stop it. But I think it has to be like a like a one, two...

Katie: You're making some of us look bad. It's like, it's like I just sat in a coffee shop for three hours.

Caitlin: Yeah, it is...like half the people are like the kids that are, you know, turning in the 40 page essays when the teacher only asks for two, you know, it's like, Stop it.

Katie: Oh, yeah, I know it's hard.

Caitlin: I mean, I think that that's that is challenging. Carving out that time to be okay with doing nothing is challenging. I think like books, like "The Boundary Boss" like I was talking about they really

it's written by Terri Cole and she's a psychoanalyst or a psychotherapist. And she, she really, like lays out the work that you have to do to make those boundaries happen. And she acknowledges that it's, it's really unpleasant at times and it's really challenging. But if you can sort of push through and make it to the other side, then it becomes really worth it. And I also like that, she adds anecdote notes from her own life and from other people that she's talked to that I think are relatable and we have a lot of books like that, a lot of self-help and then mindfulness and wellbeing books in the library that we will include in our booklist that are both for adults and for kids as well.

Caitlin: Does your child need some help with their homework or research projects? Your library can help! Browse our online resources like Tutor dot com and Pebble Go. Find the link in our show notes.

Caitlin: And so we were talking about books that help set boundaries and setting boundaries for kids. And as always, Katie and I, I think you and I both love having physical book resources in the library that we can point people to. So we will have people come in and ask us specifically for books like, you know, my kid doesn't like to be hugged. Do you have anything that can help with that? And we definitely do. I was looking up some titles of books that I personally really liked before we came up here, and I found "Don't Hug Doug," which is a picture book that I really love. It's just about this little dude and it's all in rhyming and it talks about all the things that Doug does like, but he does not like to be hugged, so don't do it. And at the end it says, What does a like? And Doug likes giving high fives. And I love this book for a lot of reasons. It's really cute. The illustrations are great, the rhyme scheme is great. It's fun to read aloud. But I also love it because my nephew Asa is not a hugger and it really connected me personally with the material. When I read it, I was like, Oh, that is exactly like Asa. He loves to talk to me. He will sing with me. He loves to tell jokes, he loves to do magic. He is not a hugger and he never has been. He will hug his mom, He will hug his dad. He doesn't want to hug anybody else. And I love that for him. I think it's awesome. And I think it's also awesome that we have these books and these resources, and I think that they're really actively talking about it in schools now that your body is your body and you do not have to share it with anybody else. I mean, there are books in our collection that explicitly say that too, that I'm thinking of off the top of my head are, "We are in Charge of our Bodies!" Exclamation point. And also "We Can Say No." Two separate titles by Lydia Bowers. I love this bodily autonomy talk that we're doing. It makes it easier, I think, to raise our kids.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: In this moment, yeah. Is this a thing that you talked about when you were a kid?

Katie: I don't remember, like, explicitly talking about it. Do you?

Caitlin: We definitely didn't talk about it. Like, there was the expectation that, like, if, you know, Aunt so-and-so wants a hug, you're going to get so and so.

Katie: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Caitlin: And, and also, like, when I was a kid, it was very like, boys will be boys and like, you know, you know, if you want to be a tough girl and you want to hang, you've got to be willing to deal with a certain amount of things that maybe you don't want to deal with. And I love that, that's not that is not the ethos anymore. Yeah, I really appreciate it. And I think I love watching it play out with my kids.

Katie: You mean at home?

Caitlin: Yeah. And me too. I mean, like we have ingrained that message in both of them. Like, it's your body and you know, what you say goes and, and Haven has like 100% turn that around on me like "stop touching my hair" or like, you know, "I don't I don't want to hug right now." And I, I have worked hard on making sure to ask. And that's not always easy, right? I think yeah.

Katie: Especially as a parent.

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: We've done a lot of work around that, too. Although as the boys get older, Orson's nine and Edwin's six, they are very physical with each other. And I don't know if that's just the nature of having two boys, but it's like when they are around each other, they're like touching each other, smothering each other, wrestling like literally even at the library, wrestling each other to the ground. Like, to my astonishment, I mean, and it's really hard because I one on one hand, we want them to be boys. And obviously there's a time and place. I mean, doing at the library is not okay. It was not.

Caitlin: I saw it and it was really funny.

Katie: Yeah, it's like, yeah, but like doing it at home. Okay cool.

Caitlin: You know what it looked like? It looked like. Like a Charlie Brown tussle. Like where it's just like a ball. And like, every once in a while, an elbow or a foot will come out. Yeah, I could tell that you were feeling stressed out by it, so I did not laugh. And I'm really proud of myself that I didn't.

Katie: Thank you, Caitlin. Although I was crawling on the floor and

trying to close the door to the office because it was a Saturday and I was so busy. Yeah, it was horrifying.

Caitlin: So that's real. And my kids have definitely done things that have not made me proud at the library as well.

Katie: But like with the wrestling, like, I feel like it is just part of their nature and I feel like it's, it is age appropriate, especially between siblings. However, inevitably someone gets mad or someone is crying, they get hurt and it's like, okay. And it's just stop. And it's like it doesn't stop. Or, you know, one of them is telling the other to stop. And then, you know, they're so like worked up that they don't stop. So I mean, multiple times a week, we have to like have the conversation of, you know, did you hear him say stop when you the moment you hear someone say stop, you need to stop. Like you can't just like, finish what you're doing and then stop. Yeah. You know, and for me, like, just like raising boys, like it's really important for me that they understand this because, you know, the, like, when they're older, the idea of consent and all this type of stuff, like leading into other relationships in their life, it's very important for me that they're attentive to hearing like whether, you know, I mean, in this case, they're just playing, they're having fun. But it's like you have to be able to understand the point where it changes from that.

Caitlin: And I bet they could tell you like, I bet they know, I bet they hear you. And there's probably just no disconnect. I'm telling you. Like there was a point at which Desi was four or five. And Devin and I were just like, at our wits end, we were like, Nothing that we are saying to this kid is getting through and we like, we have zero cards left to play. And if he pushes just a little bit harder, he is going to figure out that we don't know what we're doing and that like it's all a massive charade, like he is going to pull back the curtain and it's going to be this little old man with some levers, you know. It thankfully never happened.

And like some months later, we heard him parroting back the words that we would say to him over and over and over and over at the park. We heard him say it to another kid and he and I, Devin and I just looked at each other with these, like giant plate eyes, like, "oh my gosh, he heard us." Like, so whatever groundwork you're laying right now, I think it's foundational.

Katie: I do see that outside of the home, like at school. It's like they are very good about that and like being out in the world. But, you know, I think it's the sibling relationship for sure. It's sometimes hard and...I don't know.

Caitlin: Hard and not hard. And, you know, it's, it's probably some sensory seeking and, you know, all of that stuff. Yeah, I'm not going to sit here and tell you that Desi and Haven never lay hands on each

other because my girl will throw a punch, which is not great. But I am happy that she, she does know how to set boundaries with herself. We were at the dentist today and I was really pleased that the dental hygienist was checking in with her. Haven was like, Actually, that kind of hurts. Like she was. She felt comfortable enough saying like, that doesn't feel good. That's the thing that like I struggle with. I definitely struggled with it when I was a kid, you know, because I felt like the more that I could stand, the tougher I was. Like, I really had that thought in my head. Like, if I can make it through this, I will be tougher. And I don't want her to think that way. I want her to be like, it's fine to take up space in the world.

Katie: Yeah, that's great. I mean, that's totally how I have been even up to recently. It's like I try to make it's like I like challenge, like physical challenge, mental challenge, whatever. And I create that for myself. Oh, all the time. And that's what I'm trying to unlearn. And it's really hard.

Caitlin: It's really hard.

Katie: It's really hard.

Caitlin: I'll be like walking out of the store with the wrong thing in my hand and be like, "Caitlin, just tell them it's wrong. They gave you the wrong coffee. Turn around. They want to know."

Katie: And you just paid like \$7.

Caitlin: I know! It's going to make them feel bad. I'm sure they didn't mean to give me the wrong thing.

Katie: I know what you mean though, yeah.

Caitlin: Just tell them it's fine.

Katie: It's okay to be the squeaky wheel.

Caitlin: Well, it's okay to take up space.

Katie: In the world, even if it's just about your coffee. No matter what it is big or small.

Caitlin: You're allowed to feel. Yeah, you're allowed to have your needs met.

Katie: Yeah.

Caitlin: So speaking...Okay, so we talked about, like, physical boundaries and, like, you know, bodily autonomy and setting those boundaries for yourself. But what about, like, the boundaries that you

set as a parent in your house? Like, I think that's kind of tricky, too, especially in, like, one of the things, like Devin and I, we're like big talkers and thinkers. And so we tend to be like, Well, how do you like what's the ideal outcome for like, whatever the the thing is that we're trying to parent around and, you know, how do we stay consistent with our messaging and with our boundaries? And, you know, it turns out that's hard because I guess that humans don't always act the same way.

Katie: Well, and also, Mike and I have been talking about this a lot recently, too. Like, I think it, it's different coming from mom versus coming from dad. And like, also different things from each person I think are received differently. Like, for instance, like I find it a lot easier to set boundaries with them because like, don't know if it was just because I was home for them when with them when they were little. And so like I was used to being like "now, like this is my time or like, we need to be doing this" and like kind of more on a schedule. But with Mike, it's a lot harder for him to do that. And they like, don't listen. Again, it's like the physicality of everything. Like they use him as like a personal jungle gym.

Caitlin: Oh my gosh.

Katie: And they constantly want him to be like dad and like, come and do this with me, you know? I mean, not like I don't do any of that, but like, they're both, like, striving to be with him constantly. And you can imagine, like, what that feels like. And he's really struggling with like, how like, how do I do this now? It's like and so in one way I feel like I've done this to myself, but in the other way, it's like they have to learn. It's like, not like our kids can't do things by themselves, but it's just like they want that, like..time together.

Caitlin: I spend a lot of time repeating the words like I'm a person or I am a human to my kids. Like, you can't when you talk to me like that, it makes me feel terrible. I am a person and I don't deserve to be talked to like that. I don't talk to you like that or I don't do whatever. Like when you climb on me, blah, blah. It works most of the time. But it's like, again, like super boring repetition, you know, my kids say that I am the president in our house. Which I don't quite know how to feel about because it's sort of the same. Like even though I think Devin and I are pretty equal, like he is a really hands on parent and he's very involved and he's every bit as like concerned about wellbeing and housework and all the things as I am. For whatever reason. I think they don't take him as seriously as they take me. I don't know why.

Katie: I think it's the same a little bit with us too. I mean, we're very similar in that like our roles are pretty much interchangeable. But there is this difference, I think, you know, obviously it's a

different relationship or different people, but it's very, very interesting.

Caitlin: Ask them who the president is. I am the queen.

Katie: The Queen?

Caitlin: Yeah.

Katie: The Queen Mother.

Caitlin: I like it.

Katie: Find free or discounted passes to fun attractions like Brookfield Zoo, the Museum of Science and Industry, and more with your library card. Learn more in our show and get exploring for.

Caitlin: So, Katie, what kept you going this month?

Katie: You know, I was reflecting this morning on the experience of doing this podcast with you and Paul and Amber. And it's just been really cool. Like I'm really proud of what we've been able to do together and where we're going with it. And I think for all of us, it's, it's been a challenging creative space to inhabit, you know, a few hours a month. So yeah, and just reflecting and really thankful to be a part of this group. It's different than my day to day. And I have to admit that I was a little like, hesitant at first. Well, I wasn't hesitant because I was like anything I do with Caitlin is fun. It's going to be good. But just like it's different. It's, it's something that I have never thought I would be doing. But yeah it's like been a really cool, like, personal and professional challenge for me.

Caitlin: I think I'm going to piggyback on that and say that I feel the exact same way. I, I think this has gone in so many really interesting and fun directions. I feel like really professional, really fulfilled by some of the rabbit holes that we've gone down. And so some of the learning that we've been able to do and it is a really nice little oasis to come into this room and hang out with you and Paul and Amber every month just for a couple hours. And I remember at the beginning when we first started doing this, I knew it was going to be good. I really knew that that we were going to be able to make something that was cool just based on the way that I think you and I interact with each other. But I have moved from being this like hyper-organized note-taking machine prior to every episode to walking into it, not blind. Like I always do a little bit of research beforehand and I always think about what we're going to talk about beforehand. But I have a much more relaxed attitude about it because I just know that we're going to have a conversation that makes me feel really good.

Katie: Yeah, same.

Caitlin: I'm walking out of here today just feeling like I get to spend a couple of hours with a really good friend.

Katie: That's it from us this month. Remember to keep in touch with us. We'd love to hear from you. Email us at [podcast at Skokie Library Dot Info](mailto:podcast@skokielibrary.info).

Caitlin: And don't forget, if you've enjoyed this episode or previous episodes rate and reviews on your favorite podcaster.

Katie: This has been Katie and Caitlin with your family, your library, produced by Amber Hayes and sound Engineer by Paul Knutson.

Caitlin: Bye, friends.