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Kieryn:

I'm Kieryn.

Eve:

I'm Hannah. This is Kitchen Table Cult.

Kieryn:

Where two Quiverfull escapees talk about our experiences in the cultish underbelly of the religious right.

Eve:

Press release from the American Academy of Pediatrics, Orlando, Florida. Corporal punishment or the use of spanking as a disciplinary tool increases aggression in young children in the long run and is ineffective in teaching a child responsibility and self-control. In fact, new evidence suggests that it may cause harm to the child by effecting normal brain development.

Eve:

Other methods that teach children right from wrong are safer and more effective. Corporal punishment and harsh verbal abuse may cause a child to be fearful in the short term, but does not improve behavior over the long-term and may cause more aggressive behaviors, according to the AAP. In one study, young children who were spanked more than twice a month at age three were more aggressive at age five.

Eve:

These same children at age nine still exhibited negative behaviors and lower receptive vocabulary scores, according to the research. Research has shown that striking a child, yelling at or shaming them can elevate stress hormones and lead to changes in the brain's architecture. Harsh verbal abuse is also linked to mental health problems in pre-teens and adolescents. Hi Kieryn.

Kieryn:

Hey Hannah.

Eve:

I'm pretty excited about this statement.

Kieryn:

I feel vindicated.

Eve:

I mean, if the money was directed at studying this stuff earlier, we would have known this stuff before. I'm just really glad that somebody has finally paid for the research into this because we knew all this.

Kieryn:

Yeah. I feel like its something we've been saying for a while.

Eve:

And honestly, I'm kind of the school of thought that believes that if they did more research into this, they would discover that a child's body cannot tell the difference between spanking and the physical arousal reaction that that event causes and being sexually assaulted as a child or molested, which is a bit of an extreme assertion, but the little evidence there seems to suggest that that's true. Again, it's about the money. If people would just fund that study, I'm sure that the results would come out along that.

Kieryn:

And we've kind of touched on corporal punishment a bit before, and it's something that I've noticed just by existing, because it's not just fundamentalist culture, it's a huge part of American culture. My parents' entire generation was just very like, "No. Spanking is how you train kids," and it's been that way for so long. And we keep wondering why we're so violent. And it's like, well, you're hitting children before they even understand what they're being hit for. What do you expect to happen?

Eve:

Right. And if you look at any of the psychology behind like attachment theory, which is kind of a school of thought about how you build bonds with other humans and how you build relationships and develop empathy and all of that, attachment theory really does reinforce the fact that if someone that you're attached to turns on you and hits you in these formative stages of child development, you cannot tell the difference between that and what the rest of the world sees as normal love.

Eve:

And so that's what you look for. You look to get hurt when you go into relationships ever after. It has these massive, massive ramifications. And I think a lot of the ignorance or a lot of the assumptions stems from a large-scale public ignorance about child development and how child psychology works. I think they think that their brains are the same as ours from the get.

Kieryn:

Yeah. What always really bothers me about parents who haven't bothered to study child development at all is they're surprised that their child doesn't spring forth fully knowing everything that it took them their entire life to figure out. It's like, no, children don't have the ability to parse this. My mom told me when I was three not to cry in public.

Kieryn:

And because I was three when she told me that, I did not understand the nuance. That meant don't cry in front of people because they'll make fun of you because that's what she was saying. So what I did was I just didn't cry at all, ever, in front of anyone until I was like 20.

Eve:

Obviously today's episode is about corporal punishment, about spanking, and we're going to get pretty serious here. And we're not going to mince words. So please know, this is your content warning. If this is too much for you, please bail. Come back and listen to our next episode or listen to earlier episodes because this one's going to be a little bit heavy.

Kieryn:

Yeah. Heavy trigger warning for this episode. Take care of yourself.

Eve:

Drink lots of water.

Kieryn:

Yes. And coffee.

Eve:

And coffee. Are you able to breathe at all? Do you want to let people know you're doing in Oakland right now?

Kieryn:

Yeah, I haven't been able to see the skyline in like a week and a half. The air is terrible. I live in a like old Victorian. It used to be a hotel, but it's converted into apartment. So my living room seals itself off from the rest of the apartment. So I am just running an air purifier in here and it's like the one pocket of air. And there is a noticeable difference between my living room and my kitchen as far as being able to breathe because the Victorian has no insulation.

Kieryn:

So yeah, it's rough, but I'm quarantining myself in a living room with breathable air and I'm just not leaving. I was going to go to school on Thursday and I got a text while I was on my way there that campus was shutting down. And then like two hours later, they sent out another email, text, phone call thing. They were like, the entire Peralta district is shut down until Monday because of the air quality. It's terrible.

Eve:

Man. That's rough. Well, please be careful. Please continue wearing your masks.

Kieryn:

Yes. I'm wearing my mask. I'm actually beyond the vogmask usefulness at this point. So if you're listening from California and you have the ability to go to a hardware store and get yourself a respirator and a P100 filter, do that, because that will be way better for you.

Eve:

I did see your friend Jesse was saying that the quality has gotten a little better in the last two days.

Kieryn:

Yeah. Well, it has where they live, slightly North of me.

Eve:

Okay. Well please be careful. I'm glad you're here. So spanking is a big part of American culture in general, but it's prevalent in fundamentalist Christian culture in kind of a different way. It's not just something that's accepted as a thing people do. It's something that is...

Kieryn:

Expected?

Eve:

Yeah, it's expected and it's theologically justified. I mean, it's like the difference between someone who doesn't have an opinion about guns and someone who's a card carrying member of the NRA.

Kieryn:

Right. Yes.

Eve:

It's like there's an entire theological rubric backing this up.

Kieryn:

Right. And there's books on exactly how you should spank your children and discipline them. There's an entire market, I guess, dedicated to corporal punishment in Christian fundamentalism.

Eve:

Well, yeah. I mean, beyond the books, there's like a black market in spankers that purportedly won't leave bruises. There is a whole market around this. I mean, I had a childhood friend whose dad was selling them at homeschool conventions.

Kieryn:

Oh my God.

Eve:

Yeah. And he was making them at home. It's a whole thing. So one thing to preface all of this, what I mentioned about child psychology, is that not only are these people unwilling to accept that child psychology is real, they're also unwilling to accept that any mental health issues are real. I think that's a pretty fundamental piece underlying all of this for spanking.

Eve:

If you have depression or anxiety, anxiety is like you're not praying enough. You're not giving your worries over to God. Depression is like you don't have faith in God's providence and goodness, and plan for your life. And anything beyond that is just like demon possession. They really just don't acknowledge that these things are real. And so when it comes to child psychology, they already have this doubled down mindset of like, yeah, that's fake. You want to talk about the theological side of it, Kieryn?

Kieryn:

Yeah. The biblical justification for beating your children, because let's not mince things, it's just beating, comes from these two places in Proverbs, Proverbs 23 verses 13 to 14, which is in the New King James Version because it's too early in the morning to read King James.

Eve:

You're going to hell for your modernist bullshit.

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Kieryn:

I'm reading the version of the Bible that has been tainted by Satan. So anyway, Proverbs 23, 13 to 14, "Do not withhold correction from a child for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod and deliver his soul from hell." And the other one that is referenced is Proverbs 13:24, which in the NIV, I know...

Eve:

Now you've gone from like modernist bullshit to post-modernist bullshit. I don't think you believe in morals at all.

Kieryn:

I mean, clearly, have you seen my hair?

Eve:

Do you even believe in the literal six day creation?

Kieryn:

Not since I watched cosmos.

Eve:

Speaking of which, guys, Neil deGrasse Tyson as a rapist. Look it up. Bye.

Kieryn:

I'm not surprised.

Eve:

He did a Bill Cosby in like 1984.

Kieryn:

Oh my God.

Eve:

Are they classmate in grad school. Okay. I'm done. I'm done with that rant. I'm sorry. I get really mad about it.

Kieryn:

I'm just disheartened. I'm not surprised. All right. Proverbs 13:24 in the NIV, "Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them." So that's where you get the spare the rod spoil the child adage. It comes from that verse in Proverbs.

Eve:

And where's the verse that's the train up a child in the way he will go. And when he is old, he will not depart from it.

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Kieryn:

Yeah. That's somewhere also in Proverbs.

Eve:

And that's the one that's the title of one of these books.

Kieryn:

Yes. To Train Up A Child by Dobson.

Eve:

If you're not familiar with Dobson, he founded Focus on the Family. He was part of that whole group. And he really brings these like 1950s like ideal family kind of stereotypes into his work. And I'm sorry for our listeners that the dog is chewing a bone in the background and I can't get her to leave the room. So Dobson founded Focus on the Family, which we all know from Adventures in Odyssey and they did the teen magazine Brio for a while.

Eve:

And they really kind of like established themselves as this like very respectable organization that you could go to as the authority on almost anything Christian. And they would encompass pretty much any evangelical denomination's viewpoint in like the most simple terms. And he wrote this book called To Train Up A Child, where he lays out his theories of child-rearing, and they are based on this theology where you believe that children are fundamentally simple. Can you talk about the theory of original sin and all of that for a sec?

Kieryn:

Yeah. So it comes from Adam and Eve in the garden, and Eve ate the fruit or whatever. And from then on, humanity was cursed in bad, and you were no longer born in God's goodness or whatever. You were born a terrible, sinful creature who's going to hell and needs to be saved. And there's no way to escape that. And you are just bad by default because of that sin that happened.

Eve:

The sins of the father are passed down to the child. Oh, wait, that's a different verse that's says the opposite.

Kieryn:

That's a different thing. Yeah.

Eve:

Yeah. So the Bible is full of contradictions like this.

Kieryn:

You don't need to logic it.

Eve:

There's another passage that completely debugs this. But the theory of original sin that the church has taught over the century, the Catholic church and the Protestants alike, is that because Adam sinned, everyone else is born with this sin nature.

Kieryn:

Yes. The part I missed was that it wasn't Eve's sin that was the original sin. She was the catalyst. The actual sin was Adam listening to Eve and biting the Apple, at least as I was taught it.

Eve:

Right. So men, ignore your wives. Actually, I've heard sermons that have posited that based on that logic. So yeah, you get this whole thing where the Catholic church, in order for Jesus to be born sinless, Mary had to be born sinless so that she didn't pass her original sin on down to him. And there was like a special dispensation for her birth where she was born without sin. That's like a whole thing that's...

Kieryn:

Well, and Jesus was born without sin because he didn't have a father. His father was God.

Eve:

No, no. They say it's metro lineal. That's why Mary had to be born without sin. But in the evangelical church, we don't parse that, that far. We just get to the abuse really quick.

Kieryn:

Why waste time, really?

Eve:

Why waste time on esoterics when you can destroy someone's life in the present? So you are born fundamentally sinful. I remember my father and other fathers in our church holding a cute little baby and being like, "Oh, look at you, you precious little sinner," like a newborn, who hadn't done anything besides shit and sleep. Right.

Kieryn:

But because you're born with every sin ever by default, you can't come back from that. My parents had to do this theology hack to explain how my stillborn siblings were in heaven because they didn't live, so their spirits were still in heaven because they weren't born alive.

Eve:

Well, there's a whole Baptist thing called the age of accountability, where that's why they won't baptize children, like infants. So they won't baptize infants because they believe that until you understand the ramifications of your sin, you can't be held accountable for your actions. So I grew up in a much more reformed Protestant doctrine where they would dedicate children and have you baptized later.

Eve:

But infant baptism is a part of that tradition when you get into more theological pure strains of it in like the Presbyterian church or whatever, where they do believe that the child can be held accountable. And

so that's why they baptize them at infancy. And that's why when Baptist kids are seven or eight, they are urged to like accept the Lord Jesus as your Lord and savior because that's when it becomes a question.

Eve:

Because at seven or eight, you're more conscious of the world. You understand a little bit of right and wrong and that your decisions have consequences. And as soon as you can understand that your decisions have consequences, then you are theologically responsible for accepting your actions. So that's that whole thing.

Kieryn:

Yeah. My parents discovered that after the stillborns and they were like, "Ah, yes, this makes sense."

Eve:

So that's why when you see the Left Behind movie, all the babies go away. All the kids under seven disappear because it's that theology being played out in real life. So your parents, were they as hardcore as mine about believing that little children were simple?

Kieryn:

Yeah. I don't remember them ever holding a baby and being like, "Oh, you're such a cute little sinner," but they definitely went to great lengths to remind us how sinful we were and how bad we were and how we needed Jesus to save us and how we were not good by default. And we were just terrible, horrible human beings by default, unless we were Christian.

Kieryn:

Eventually they encountered the age of accountability stuff. So that didn't hit so much for infants as you would have thought initially. But they still saw everyone and treated everyone as like basically demons who were just... The thing that this does is it always ascribes malice to things that are just ignorant, like you're seeing your child being a child and you see that as like a rebellious sinful nature for them learning basic dexterity.

Eve:

Right. So a very common example would be a kid is 18 months old, two years old, and won't eat the oatmeal that you have given him for breakfast. That is interpreted as an act of rebellion. So I've known parents who would starve their child until the child broke down and ate the oatmeal from like day one. Sometimes it might take a couple of days. Sometimes it would just take an afternoon or hours sitting in the play chair, high chair or whatever. But that kind of like, "Eh, I don't want to eat it," or, "Oh, I'm throwing it on the floor," which is a lot of kids learning how the world works, learning how physics works, learning how limits and authority work.

Kieryn:

And autonomy.

Eve:



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Yeah. They're just testing boundaries and collecting data. It's not malicious. But that's interpreted as malicious. And so they're punished as if it is intentionally disrespectful. So when did your family start spanking kids?

Kieryn:

They've always spanked.

Eve:

From what age?

Kieryn:

I want to say around the time kids could start crawling and getting into things.

Eve:

So can you give an example?

Kieryn:

Yeah. So if one of my siblings, who was crawling or whatever, and a lot of the time it was for things like trying to play with something they shouldn't be getting into that could hurt them or whatever. And they'd just like whack their hands away from the object, which is something that is pretty standard for most people.

Eve:

Did they do blanket training?

Kieryn:

No, my parents didn't, but I know people who did. And I feel like that is just ridiculously cruel and utter bullshit.

Eve:

So blanket training... Forgive me if I'm getting this wrong, because I bought these books for research and I haven't had the guts to open them up yet. I believe it's from the Ezzos.

Kieryn:

Yes.

Eve:

Okay. And the Ezzos are the series of parenting books that are purportedly based on stages of child development. They're not actually.

Kieryn:

They're not at all.

Eve:

They're not scientific. They're really, really bad. If you want to look at a good...

Kieryn:

If you want to learn how to damage your children's relationship to you from day one, follow that.

Eve:

Yeah. So the Ezzos, they would lay a child, maybe like a three or four month old, something where they're starting to roll over in scoot a little bit. And they'd lay them on a blanket and they'd put something just outside of the reach off the blanket. And they'd be like, wait for the child to go reach for it. And then they'd pick them and say no and train them to not reach for anything outside of this limited box. And they talk about actually breaking your child's rebellious spirit.

Kieryn:

Yep. Also, the Pearls and Dobson talk about breaking your children's rebellious spirit.

Eve:

Okay. So what does that mean? What does that phrase entail or encapsulate? What are the assumptions? What does it imply?

Kieryn:

The way I experienced it was like any assertion of individuality or autonomy that goes against whatever your parent deems is acceptable is seen as rebellious. And your parent is allowed by God to literally beat that out of you. I know so many people who've just been beaten by their parents for minor things. My parents had the system of checks where if you got one check for any minor infraction, you'd get like a talking to.

Kieryn:

If you got two checks, you'd get one spank. And if you got three or more checks, then you would get like beat five times with a belt just to physically stop you from expressing whatever it was that you were expressing and doing whatever it was that you were doing, which could have been something like starting a fight with a sibling, but it could also have been forgetting to do a chore.

Eve:

Right. So one, did you have any way of appealing punishment? And two, did your parents talk about... My parents were really big this, the delayed obedience is not obedience and first time obedience or nothing.

Kieryn:

Yes. It was first time obedience or nothing, but we didn't have an appeal.

Eve:

I can't remember who came up with this. I feel like it might've been Tedd Tripp, the shepherding your child's heart stuff. But it's like this idea of if your child says, "Just a minute," they are testing your limits

and that's a way of subverting your authority. So you need to crack down on that and break them of that habit. So they have to be prompt and immediate and responsive.

Kieryn:

Immediate and cheerful.

Eve:

And cheerful. Right.

Kieryn:

I was punished for not being cheerful enough, even if I was immediate.

Eve:

Right. Because your attitude is another way you can subvert the authority. And if you're not in line with that cheerful obedience, then you are obeying but rebelling in your heart and it's still the same level of disrespect.

Kieryn:

I feel like sometimes that's almost seen as worse, at least by my parents. That was more of what they came after me for, is whenever I was exhausted and I lost the ability to mask that, that was when I would get the most punished.

Eve:

Yeah. I would get that kind of in high school when I started not being able to wake up at 6:00 naturally and my body wanted more sleep because I was growing and changing and needed more rest. I would get in so much trouble for sleeping until 8:00 in the morning, because that was me being rebellious and disrespectful and not participating in helping the family.

Kieryn:

Right. And definitely not something that your body literally needed for you to grow and develop.

Eve:

Oh no. No, no, no.

Kieryn:

That's ridiculous.

Eve:

So my family started spanking probably around six, eight months. Not hard. But definitely as soon as you were walking and getting into stuff, that's when it got super serious. And my mom, to give her credit, kind of knew something was messed up with us. And I remember this really weird way of talking about it that she would have where she'd be like, "I struggle with discipline," where she would see herself as a bad parent because she didn't like spanking her children, which reading between the lines tells me that

there was an other side to that conversation where my father I would assume did enjoy spanking the children. I don't understand that. But it's interesting to think about.

Eve:

My mom would delay punishments until the end of the day when he would get home and then like hand us over to him and be like, "You deal with it," which is really... She compared it to being sent to the principal's office. But there would be times where you would get sent to the half bathroom downstairs and told to just wait there until your father came home. And it might be like four o'clock in the afternoon. You might wait there for an hour. And it would be just like stay in there until your father gets home to deal with you.

Kieryn:

Yeah. My mom also did that, where she would wait for my dad to get home. My dad would be the one who administered it.

Eve:

How did this make you feel about yourself as a human?

Kieryn:

I was terrible. I thought I was awful and going to hell and there was nothing that could be done. I thought I was just like... I mean, it worked because that was what they told me, is that I was just this terrible human being who deserves nothing. My dad literally sat us down on the couch and told us that we were worth less than dirt if we weren't Christians.

Eve:

Oh, yeah. That phrase came up a lot.

Kieryn:

Yep.

Eve:

I mean, I think some of it comes from the Calvinist theology stuff, where if you read Jonathan Edwards Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God, there's all these metaphors of like you're a worm, being held over a fire. You're a vile thing that God is repulsed by. And this comes up in Job. He talks about this stuff.

Kieryn:

Yeah. That's where my parents got it.

Eve:

Yeah. I'm less than dirt. So there's this like rich theology of seeing yourself as shit. And I think that the apostle Paul might actually have used that phrase, like saying my good works are shit, like actually the Greek word for poop. There's a really strong Christian tradition around this. And so yeah, I thought that I deserved it.

Kieryn:

Yeah. I definitely thought I deserved it. I thought I deserved everything that my parents did to me.

Eve:

Did your parents ever explain the gospel in terms of spankings? I just remembered something.

Kieryn:

Not that I remember.

Eve:

Okay. So my God... My dad. My God. Wow. Ooh. All right. I'm going to take a minute. My dad used to talk about how God punishing his son for our sins was like if my mom volunteered to take my spanking.

Kieryn:

Okay. Yeah. They did explain it kind of like that.

Eve:

I remember one time I was like, cool, I'm going to try this. My sister was being sent to the bathroom and I was like, well, if I'm a Christian, this is the thing that you do. So I'm going to take her punishment for her. And I don't know why I had this super twisted little understanding of it, but I did. And so I did it and my father kind of went to the bathroom. And I don't think he had the heart to spank me.

Eve:

He was pretty angry at my sister and I think it just like dissolved as soon as we closed the door. He was like, all right, I'm going to hit... I think he hit the toilet to make a noise or hit his hand to make noise so that everybody would think that he spanked me and he didn't. But it was this idea of substitutionary atonement that was really deep there.

Kieryn:

Yeah. Now that you mention that, that was totally also a thing. That didn't really happen very much, but things were explained that way.

Eve:

My parents would pull your pants down, smack your butt. And there was this whole thing about you weren't supposed to cry because that was like disrespecting the system. We would have to show appropriate remorse afterward. But if you fought or bucked or reacted, you would be seen as like resisting your pain and that was disrespectful.

Kieryn:

Oh wow. We were kind of the opposite, where we were expected to cry. And so I retaliated by not crying.

Eve:

I would retaliate by getting angry, and that's actually how my spankings finally ended was when I was 16 and my father was still spanking me fairly regularly. And I just kind of turned on him. You all have to know, I was pretty skinny. But when I was 12 or 13, people were assuming that I was the parent of whatever baby I was carrying. I did not look quite as young as I was. And part of that was how I was dressed, but also people used to have those kind of messed up that my father was still spanking me at 16 like, really? What?

Kieryn:

As soon as the girls were like 11 or 12, like as soon as my periods started happening, spankings for me stopped. That never became a thing.

Eve:

So that was not a thing. And I think I definitely tried to get out of spankings at one point by being like, yeah, I'm on my period. And he was like, "Well, it doesn't matter. Just keep your underwear on."

Kieryn:

No, that is fucked up.

Eve:

Yeah. So my last spanking happened when I was 16. I had been taking martial arts for a couple of years and I suddenly realized I know how to take this guy down. I don't think he really wants to be doing this anymore. And I feel like I was so angry about whatever was happening. I don't think I actually hit him. Maybe I did. But I remember reminding him, you have been putting me through martial arts. I know how to fight back. Are you sure that you want to do this?

Eve:

And that was a truce that happened. But this mindset of authority was pervasive and persisted until I was like 20 and dating my boyfriend and decided that kissing was not sinful. And then my father found out like six months later and he confronted me and he was like, "Why didn't you ask my permission. By not asking my permission, you were like blatantly disrespecting my authority." There's this sense of possession of me and what my body did that was really deep down. And it all comes from this like spanking control stuff.

Kieryn:

Yep. Spanking teaches kids and parents that like their body isn't theirs and it's up to the parent to do whatever it is that they want with it and it's theirs to determine. And that is so bad. That is so terrible.

Eve:

That's the psychological side of why I consider spanking to be like sexual abuse of children, because it teaches them that their body doesn't belong to them, that suffering and nonconsensual encounters are to be expected and normal. And it teaches them that they don't get a say. They don't get to fight back because if they fight back, they're just disrespecting God.

Kieryn:

And if they fight back, it's worse.

Eve:

It's so ducked up.

Kieryn:

It's so bad. It goes so far and touches so many things.

Eve:

There's this whole thing that I've been experiencing with my puppy, because I've been training a puppy this entire time we've been doing this podcast. And when I was 12, I was doing so much babysitting for my siblings. And there were a couple of instances where I got pretty physical with my younger siblings when I was babysitting because I was so frustrated and angry and they were so out of control and I didn't know how to control them.

Eve:

And I'd sort of been given latent permission to spank. So I kind of just like went for it. And I'm super ashamed of that. I feel like that... But also I was a kid and I didn't have the tools I needed. And so I've always been a little leery of like, would I be a good mom? Because I don't know if I have the self control to be the adult in the room because of those experiences when I was younger.

Eve:

But having this dog has been so reassuring because it's like, oh yeah, you can do that. And she can be getting into stuff and destroying a really nice pair of shoes or something and I'm like, she has a puppy. She's going for things that smell good and she wants to taste. This is an interesting set of sensory experiences and she's just exploring the world around her.

Eve:

I don't feel at all inclined to hit her. I don't feel at all inclined to yell at her. Sometimes if she's not focusing and she's trying to run off on me and I've got her in the yard without a leash, maybe I'll yell them, and that's just to get her attention. But it's like none of the impulses for corporal punishment that I watched my parents act out on me reside in my body. I don't feel inclined to do that because... I think this is where my mother saying she struggled with discipline comes down to, is I think you have to train yourself to be a sociopath.

Kieryn:

Yeah. We had this wooden paddle that hung up in the kitchen and we never used a paddle for our spankings, but we had one anyway that just said, "This hurts me as much as it hurts you." And every time I saw that, I was just like bullshit.

Eve:

I think that's why my mom didn't like it. I think she legitimately was like bereaved over the theology and really was aware of cognitive dissonance there. I don't think my father gave him a shit.

Kieryn:

Yeah. And my mom would kind of get hung up on it sometimes and like I'm so sorry that whatever. And I'm like, you have the choice to not do this. You are the adult in the room.

Eve:

But you don't have a choice because if you don't do it, then your child is going to hung.

Kieryn:

Right. Yeah. It's so hinged on everything. And also if you don't, then it means you don't actually love your kid. It tells the person perpetrating it that the only way to love someone is to be abusive. So it tells the victim to expect abuse as love and it tells the person perpetrating it that that is love. And then we wonder why we have this problem.

Eve:

That's so twisted. And then people were like, so why were you with your ex-husband anyway? And I'm like, you see. There's this whole like really twisted mindset behind all of this. I literally didn't think I could get any better than that. I still have trouble trusting people who are super sincere and nice at the get. I have a set of professors who were just the nicest people in the whole world.

Eve:

And when I first met them, I was like, you guys are too good to be real. I don't believe that this is... I think this is an act. And it wasn't. And it's great. But it was that's the residual effect of this, is expecting people who care about you to be mean to you.

Kieryn:

Yeah. The trust issues it brings up.

Eve:

They're huge.

Kieryn:

They are. And of all of the people I know, even though my parents are very adamant about spanking, I had less of it because my parents eventually realized, well, one, my parents had boundaries, and everyone else I know their parents didn't stop at puberty. But my parents were like, no, there is a line here. We're not spanking past this point.

Eve:

You're lucky.

Kieryn:

And that was rare. And so instead they were like, we'll just separate you and verbally abuse you and emotionally abuse you and all that.

Eve:

We did their job well enough that we should be able to control you, but just by guilt.



Kieryn:

Exactly. And I feel like that's rare in my experiences with other people. But it still is enough to mess up your sense of trust. And it's just terrible.

Eve:

So thank you, American Academy of Pediatrics. Parents, don't spank your kids. Learn a little bit about child development and understand that there's a reason your child is acting the way they are.

Kieryn:

And it's not malicious.

Eve:

And it's not malicious

Kieryn:

They're just being kids.

Eve:

The kids because that I have met who did not get spanked ever are the most empathetic, sweet, eager to help and be participating and listen and respect other people. They're so good. It's so great to see that possibility.

Kieryn:

Yeah. It's surprising how if you put more than the minimum amount of effort into having a relationship with a kid and teaching them something, instead of going straight to hitting them, that they learn how to use their words and accept feelings and interact with people in a way that isn't violent.

Eve:

Right. So America, you could probably solve your shooting problem if you stopped spanking people. And church, like re-examine your theology. This is really messed up. Anything else you want to say?

Kieryn:

I want to swear mostly.

Eve:

Yeah, me too.

Kieryn:

That's where I'm at now.

Eve:

I will just say one thing. We're on the board of Coalition for Responsible Home Education, which we've mentioned before. And this organization we're a part of maintains a database called Homeschooling's

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Invisible Children. And it's all these instances of child abuse or death that were enabled by homeschooling. And a lot of the times when there's a death involved from a religious homeschooling family, one of these books that we've mentioned has been in the home and has been recommended by those parents. And especially the Pearl's book. The Pearl's book has directly caused a lot of children...

Kieryn:

The Pearls book is like a how-to guide.

Eve:

Yeah. It's how to make yourself a sociopath and murder your child. A lot of parents have taken stuff so far, but they've gone beyond this emotional terrorism and physical terrorism in the home and broken themselves at any empathy for their child and then killed them. And so there's like a really, really dark place this can go beyond everything we've talked about already.

Eve:

And if you want to look into that more, you can look at that database. Look at the case of Hana Williams, H-A-N-A. She is kind of the poster child for how this can go wrong and our kind of watch word in terms of like remember Hana Williams, remember what this can do.

Kieryn:

Don't spank your kids, just don't splice. It's so much easier to not. It's so much better for the world.

Eve:

All right. Well, thanks for joining us.

Kieryn:

We'll see you next week, if like there's still air in California.

Eve:

Join our Patreon. Check us out. And subscribe if you want to get access to this stuff 24 hours earlier than the rest of the world. If you want access to after dark episodes where we get debrided and swear and have fun. It's really great. You can find us on Twitter. I'm eve\_ettinger.

Kieryn:

I'm mxdarkwater.

Eve:

And you can give us coffee, money or wine money if you please. Mine is Venmo at the same handle as my Twitter.

Kieryn:

And my Square Cash handle is Kieryn. K-E... I can't spell it right now. I'm exhausted. The smoke is getting to me. K-I-E-R-Y-N. It's been a week of not being able to breathe.

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Eve:

All right. Okay. Well, let's save some air and stop talking. Have a good day.

Kieryn:

Bye

Eve:

Bye.