



A Heart For All Students

Podcast Episode Transcription

AHEART #31 Why Do We Even Bother

Hey, friend, in today's episode, I did an impromptu one. I was actually driving in the car, so bad I was in a parking lot. I was waiting for my daughter and so I decided to check my private Facebook community. And one of the sweet mommas in there, who I've just developed a relationship with, and I'm so grateful for, she had made a comment about the fact that she had tried so hard to get her family all together, scheduled and ready for some family pictures.

And we all know how family pictures can go. Whether the picture turns out well, which let's be real, it rarely does. Or not just the preparation in and of itself to coordinate your family for a family photo. Especially when you have a child with ADHD or executive functioning issues at all. You know how tough that is.

So this sweet momma said, "why did I even bother?" Because a daughter got sick, something happened and it just got scrapped. It didn't happen.

And she asked that question. Sometimes it's like, why do I even bother? And it really stuck out to me that she asked that question because just a couple of days before that, I had that same dialogue with myself. And I really feel like God has and did at that moment, just give me some clarity. So I needed to speak to it. So while I was driving home, I spoke into my phone. Listen in. I hope you'll be encouraged. We're in this together.

Hey, friend, welcome to A Heart for All Students podcast. My name is Lindsey Levitsky and it's my honor to be with you each week to talk about how we can homeschool and parent are outside-the-box kids so that we can equip them with the tools and strategies that they need to thrive as exactly who

God has intentionally designed them to be. If your child doesn't fit into the box of the world's expectations, this is the place for you together.

One mom at a time. We can change the narrative for kids growing up with ADHD, ASD are no acronym at all. Let's do this. We're in it together.

Hey, friend, I am in my car recording this episode, and so forgive the noise because it's not going to be a perfect recording. But I'm by myself and one thing I'm learning is that I always have to be available to pivot. So I'm turning right right now. You may hear the clicking sound of the car, and that's OK, because we're just going to roll with it because we're moms and we get it.

So I just was prompted with this little comment that a friend in <https://aheartforallstudents.com/> private Facebook community had written. She's a momma who I have developed a relationship with literally through Facebook. Through my Facebook community, and I'm so grateful for her and for so many of the women that are in there with me because I have such a heart to equip mommas, to feel confident, to parent and educate their children differently than the world tells them to do so. Especially when our kids don't think and process the world the way everybody wants them to. So I digress. That's not really even the point of why I am chatting it up in the car, recording this podcast to speak to this.

But a sweet mom, a friend mentioned that she had tried so desperately to set up a time for her family to finally, finally have formal family pictures done. You know, if you have a child with cognitive differences or you're just raising kids at all, that family portraits or family pictures, they they're like the bane of my existence.

Yes. They look so perfect on the outside. Once you get the pictures, if you're lucky enough to get them to look, quote, perfect. Come on now. Who really gets a perfect picture? Nobody. But they do look sweet and lovely once you get that final product. But the reality of actually scheduling and then following through with and getting everybody together and getting everyone looking halfway decent and somewhat coordinated so that you can get just one decent family shot, it is torture.

Let's just be real. It is torture. Especially when your kids navigate harder things than when they are navigating the world. That just is constantly feeling like an uphill battle for them. Because when it's an uphill battle for our kids, it's an uphill battle for us anyways.

This sweet momma, she, I believe, has her own health issues. And she, she has children who think and process the world differently, but she is like, you know what? I'm just going to go for it. I'm just going to try it. So she schedules this family photo session and as things tend to happen with our families that need a little extra care, it didn't work out. Someone got sick and it didn't work out. And she made this comment at the end of her post saying it made me think, why do I even bother? And I was like, oh, my word, yes, this is my story. This is what we all experience.

Why do we even bother? We're like, gosh, why do they even bother? Why even bother trying this? Why didn't even bother trying that? I literally had this conversation with myself. Honestly, I think it was within the past 48 hours.

And I told her that, quite frankly, so much has happened in the past 24 hours that I don't even remember the exact situation that prompted me to feel and to hear in my own head the words, why do I even bother?

But I did. I literally had this conversation with myself, why do I even bother just a few days ago? And so I want to speak to that. Why do we even bother? Well, first of all, after I made that statement in my own head just a few days ago. I remember clearly hearing. Not audibly.

But I truly believe it was God's intentional mercy to help me articulate this thought, which was: I try and I bother because if I don't, if I don't shoot for it, if I don't do my best to be intentional, to create those moments and opportunities for my family, even though most likely it's going to be really hard or it may not even work out, I do it because if I don't, then *they will never happen*.

They will never happen, but if I am intentional and I do my best, then sometimes they will happen. And when those moments happen, like whether you're going to try to create family portraits, right, you're going to try to have family portrait time. And if anybody has ever been on my website, you will see the landing page website.

I mean, excuse me, the photo on my homepage is literally a picture of my family photos that we took probably almost two years ago. And you will see on that homepage, my son, filthy, dirty, lying down in the forefront of the rest of us. Filthy, filthy, dirty.

And my girlfriend. Sweetest, dearest, most lovely friend who I could cry just thinking about her, my sweet Amy friend. She's an amazing photographer and she took those photos for us. And let me tell you, when we took those photos, it was fall. Right, it was fall.

So I had us all coordinated in our outfits. I had worked really hard the night before to get these outfits that, I'm like, it's just one family photo. We can do it. So we all looked cute on the outside. It's fall. The colors outdoors are fall colors. So I put us in fall looking outfits. Navies, we had jeans on and some boots. We all looked, you know, as best as we could.

And I remember literally getting out of the of the of the minivan. And we were in the most beautiful kind of picturesque field and it had fall trees and it was beautiful.

And we get out of our van, into the parking lot of this gravel parking lot. And within, like two seconds, I'm like, oh, my word, because no joke, it was the state, we're in the south. And it was like this humid heat wave and within like, no joke, five minutes, I am dripping with sweat. My husband's dripping with sweat.

We're all just gross and sticky, sweaty, humid nastiness. That's within five minutes. Then within ten minutes, my husband gets attacked by a mosquito. The mosquito bites my husband. Guess where he bites him? In the center of his forehead! No joke. He had the brightest, it was like literally a bull's eye on my husband's forehead within ten minutes of trying to take these photos.

Well, within those 10 minutes, of course, my son was filthy, dirty because he managed to find every ounce of mud that he could jump into. He did. And it was like the whole time I couldn't help but laugh. I couldn't help but laugh, I'm like, seriously, this is hilarious. This is comedy.

And I just remember this after about forty five minutes taking photos. And Amy oh, she's just amazing. She took so many amazing photos.

I was done. We were done. Oh. And my oldest she'll kill me for mentioning this but my oldest was like melting down. She was. She had been to a sleepover the night before, barely got any sleep and she was done.

No joke. She was starting to cry.

Yeah. This was when she was probably 12, maybe 13 at the time. So we were all just losing it. And so we were done. It was like forty five minutes in and I told my friend I was laughing about it. I was like, girl, we're done, we're done, we're done.

And she said to me, "wait, wait, wait, Lindsay, Lindsay, I don't have the photo. I don't have the family photo, I don't have a family photo."

And I was like, all right, let's look. So I had her bring me the digital camera. And we went through that camera and I saw that picture of my son, filthy, dirty in the mud lying in front of us.

We aren't even all together. He is literally lying on the ground in the forefront of the image. And I looked at that picture and I said, "that's the shot." I said, that's the shot.

And she's like, no, no, no, I'm going to get you, you know, the picture.

And I'm like, no, that's it. And I'm laughing and I'm dripping wet. I'm disgusting. And I'm like, Girl, this is my life. This is that season that we will never, ever forget.

And so, well, I could have been so bent out of shape because we didn't get that perfect family photo. We're all sitting perfectly together, smiling happily. That was the shot. And if I hadn't tried, we would never have gotten that shot. And if I had been as bent out of shape, which I normally would have if I had these expectations in my head.

This is the thing. If I had these expectations in my head, that it had to turn out this way, this perfect way in order for it to be sweet and beautiful and worth it, then I would have never have been able to capture those moments. I would have missed the the comedy of it. I would have been miserable. I would have made everybody else miserable that whole time.

And I will tell you, I have spent way too many years with expectations in my head of what everything is supposed to look like. Because the world tells me it's supposed to look like this, because the

church tells me I'm supposed to look like this. It's supposed to be this ideal. And if it's not, then it just sucks.

Well, that's not the truth. That's not the truth. So mommas you might be in a hard season with your child. Your child may be struggling emotionally, behaviorally. You might be in that season that I was in years ago where I was barely able to get out of bed in the morning because I was so emotionally, so physically exhausted from having to every single day fight with this little boy who was so unregulated and who needed desperate help. But I didn't know how to help him. And even when we do know how to help our kids, sometimes it's still going to be messy.

Some days are still going to be hard. But that doesn't mean that we shouldn't try. And that doesn't mean that we're a failure. And that doesn't mean that God's not in it with us. So why do we try sweet friends, especially that momma who I just adore in my group?

Because if we don't, then we're never going to have these moments.

And the other thing is to just pivot. To be willing to shift our thinking. We and our culture and adults and teachers and professionals constantly complain about the executive functioning skills of our children when we don't even use them ourselves.

Part of executive functioning is flexible thinking and being able to shift our perspective in the moment. Changes everything. Adults, we mommas, when we can shift our perspective. To change our expectations, to see the good in the hardest, in the messiest moments.

Girl, I am not telling you that it is easy at all and I'm telling you right now, I fail. Fail at it to this day. I fail all the time. I lose it. But I catch myself now by God's mercy. And that's the only thing that helps me get through those really crappy days. The days when I blow it. The days when I have no energy to function. The days when I have tried so hard to make something happen and it falls apart. My ability to shift my own thinking, to use my own adult, mature executive functioning skills changes everything. *It's all about perspective.*

Girls. We just do our best. We just do our best and why do we try that statement, why do we even bother?

I got to say one more thing about this.

Why do we even bother? A few days ago when I heard that in my own head, it was, why do I even bother? And I know deep down, behind that was “Lindsay, you’re so stupid.” Why do you think you can possibly try to make this plan work out? I think it had to do with scheduling some sort of class for my son that wasn’t panning out.

It was why do you even bother? And there was shame behind that, “you’re so stupid, Lindsay.” You know it’s not going to work. Why do you even bother? It was shame-based. And guess who loves to just cover us in shame?

If you’re a believer in Jesus, if you’re a believer in Christ, you know we have an enemy. That why do we even bother statement, that’s just covered in shame? We need to just throw that away and keep that in check and remember and take that thought captive to Christ.

We bother because we love our families. And yes, we’re going to be disappointed when things don’t work out exactly as we planned. And when things fall apart and those are the moments where we go. “I try because. I want to. I love my family.” Well, and sometimes that’s not going to work out the way I want it to. And that’s OK and God is still in it.

Be encouraged, sweet friend, I’m praying for all of us. Have a great week.

Hey, friend, are you exhausted and overwhelmed by your child’s big emotions and meltdowns? Girl, I get it. For years I struggled in complete desperation, brokenness and isolation, navigating my son’s volatile behavior. Nothing I knew to do as a good Christian momma worked with this kid. We lived in a cycle of shame, chaos and confusion for years.

But by God’s mercy, he allowed me to learn so much in this season. And I can tell you now that we are in a completely different place. That’s why I’ve created the Free Five Day Devotional video teaching series for the exhausted momma, who knows deep down inside, that there has to be a more peaceful and life giving way to parent her outside-the-box child. Sign up for the devotional series at <https://aheartforallstudents.com/>.

Hey friend, guess what? You just finished:an entire episode. Give yourself a pat on the back. In this season of parenting, where we are barely surviving, every accomplishment is a victory. So take it. And while you're at it, if you found this episode to be helpful, please consider leaving a review on iTunes or wherever you listen to your podcast episode and don't forget to subscribe, so you never miss a thing...

And if you're looking for more practical tools and encouragement as you homeschool and parent your outside-the-box child to thrive, go to www.aheartforallstudents.com. There are tons of resources, freebies and lots of extra support over there. Don't miss anything. I don't do this thing alone. Friends were in it together and together we can change the narrative for our neurodiverse outside-the-box kids.