

TAHN: I'm Sorry You Don't Understand

Transcript

00:06.068 Heather Welcome to That's a Hard No, the podcast about learning to say no and set boundaries to live our best lives. I'm your host, Heather Drago. You may think because of this podcast that I'm a boundary-setting expert, but I'm not. I'm an expert at struggling to set boundaries. But you know what? I'm working on it, and it is getting easier. Follow along with me as I learn from fellow strugglers and experts so that you too can start saying no without feeling fear, guilt, or FOMO.

01:30.086 Heather I am so happy to welcome my dear friend, Sarah Saunders, who our regular listeners may remember from season one and season two. Sarah was my co-host, my pal, my shoulder to cry on, and is the Owner and primary therapist, I guess, at Purposeful Growth and Wellness, a therapy center in Broadview Heights, Ohio. You can talk a little bit more about that to our new listeners who aren't familiar with you. We love Sarah so much. And as we mentioned at the beginning of this season, Sarah needed to take a step back. But, you know, she's part of our family forever and always, and she'll come back and visit us here and there. And this time we're going to talk about why she took a step back and what's going on in her life. So, hi.

02:24.064 Sarah Hi. It is so nice to be here. It feels like it was just yesterday that we were recording and it feels like a lifetime ago.

02:34.250 Heather I know, right? It's so strange. Yeah, yeah, yeah. We always miss you and everyone always asks about you and you are beloved. So, how are you?

02:43.434 Sarah What's happening? You know, it's so interesting when I get this question, you know, like, how's life or how are things going? I'm really working on saying, you know, life is full right now instead of busy because I notice when I'm saying, like, the reality is life is very full. Our schedule's full. It is busy. And there's so much beauty that is happening amidst the chaos. For those of you that are new listeners, I am a mom to four sweet little boys. Beckham is six. He's going to be going into first grade. Anderson will be five in September. However, he will be going into kindergarten, which was like a huge tobacco, but we did decide we're going to be sending him. Our three-year-old Tristan who when we originally started the podcast he I was like nursing him at seven weeks postpartum he just turned three and we actually we just received an autism diagnosis for him and then Noah my little baby he just turned 15 months. Oh my god. Right. Wow. Yes. Oh, my gosh. Wow. Wow. Yeah. Yeah. So with that being said, I'm a mom. I am a wife to my incredible husband, Justin. And then I am the owner and lead therapist at Purposeful Growth and Wellness, my Cleveland-based therapy practice. We have another clinician there so I'm doing supervision with her and you know growing the business. I just hired someone else on who will be starting in September so thank you. So life is very full to say the least.

04:36.773 Heather It was already full. I mean, it was so full. And then, you know, you started to work through this autism diagnosis process. Tell us about that. And you're so generous to share this with our listeners. I'm sure there are other parents out there who are facing similar situations and don't know how to navigate it. So that's why you and I agreed this would be a good topic to talk about. So I don't mean to, like, gossip about your family or anything, but we're hoping that this might help people kind of understand what's involved.

05:11.515 Sarah Sure. And, you know, I do want to circle back for a moment. You know, this podcast originally started based on really wanting to live a life that is in alignment with who you are, right? And so in the season when we first started the podcast, my goodness, did this podcast save me in so many ways. And our message to listeners was just we have to say no to things to leave room for yeses that truly allow us to live in alignment. And so going back and again one of these days I am going to be able to say I'm a retired perfectionist but at this point I

am still a recovering perfectionist and I had these narratives in my head, these expectations of here was where I was going to be. three years, five years, ten years down the road.

06:11.601 Heather You are a very planful person and very driven and you have big ideas.

06:17.024 Sarah Yes. And I will say in what I'm learning and what I, you know, teach clients is that naturally as humans we have movies that play out in our head, right, of how we think that things should be And it can serve us in certain ways, the planfulness, you know, being prepared, having these visions. It definitely serves me in a lot of ways and has created the success that I have. And two things are true, it's really served me and it can definitely be a barrier. And so by doing, you know, being doing season one and season two and just where my life was then and I remember you know ending season two and we were like I was about to have Noah and I just said you know what like yeah like we're gonna keep going I'm so excited about this during that time Tristan was 21 months when Noah was born. It was at 18 months that I really started to, I felt like the fog had lifted of the postpartum. Tristan was 18 months and I started noticing, you know, things were different. I wasn't sure him being a pandemic baby. He was born in June of 2020, the same month that I opened the practice. I had two toddlers at home. The postpartum was really hard. So I was like, a year went by and I thought maybe the fog had lifted and I started to, you know, just recognize some things. And I thought, you know what, maybe, maybe I'm overthinking this. Maybe these are just, you know, some things that had happened based on the pandemic, right? So it was then that I started recognizing, you know, As a therapist, I think the hat that I wear, it really, it helps in a lot of situations, but it also makes sometimes being a mom really hard. And so I recognized, you know what, like, I don't know the answers and I need the support. And so I had reached out to Help Me Grow, which is a free service in the community that parents, if you have a child that you're wondering, you know, any developmental delays or whether it's their speech or finer gross motor skills, they may not be walking or crawling or you just feel like something may be off or you just have questions or need support, Help Me Grow is an incredible resource. And that's a local resource?

09:01.104 Heather It is. So I would assume, then, that all health departments in every county, community, state will have links or information about those kinds of same resources. So anyway, sorry to interrupt.

09:13.787 Sarah No, that's OK. So we ended up having Help Me Grow come. And my concern at first was that Tristan was not talking. And he was also, he has always been an active baby. I mean, I never had to do kick counts when he was in utero because I just, I felt him all the time. And he came out exactly like that, just a very active baby. So with that being said, When the Help Me Grow team had come out, we had discovered that he actually had a lot of sensory processing needs. And so until those sensory processing needs were addressed, he wouldn't be able to retain the language skills that he needed. So Help Me Grow came on. We ended up getting speech and occupational therapy services through that. I then started to do more research to understand how to best support him. And then we had found out that there were some other delays that were happening. And so with all of that being said, I'm going to fast forward that there are so many things that I feel, again, from my perspective, it was just I've had two kids. his age, this was the first time that I've ever had a Tristan, right? Sure. And so every single child is different and the things that I wish, the things I know now that I wish I could have told myself then, like it's all gonna be okay. Right. You don't have to figure it all out now and to just really focus on the support, right?

11:00.969 Heather So let me ask a quick question. So tell me a little bit about, and we can get into the nitty gritty of this a little later if you want, but like, it sounds to me like it isn't just a matter of a diagnosis. It's like every kid has very specific needs and figuring out those needs is a long process and there's an order in which you address them in order to be able to help them. Like, that's a lot. for a parent to learn. And so I can see how that might be exhausting and just extremely time consuming. And the other thing you mentioned was how being a therapist sometimes can make it hard to be a parent. And I wanted to ask a little bit about that. Is it

because you feel that you should know this stuff already, that it's a reflection on your professionalism if you have to ask for help, or you feel bad as a mom that you don't know this already? Tell me more about that.

12:00.509 Sarah So I really appreciate you asking that, and I think there's so many directions and so many thoughts that pop up when you say that. As a mother, as a woman, there are a lot of expectations, whether they're learned or placed on ourself. It's kind of this maternal instinct. And I think, especially with Tristan, I'm like, oh my gosh, how did I not see this sooner? And I really have to pause and remind myself, and we're seeing it now, right? It's not too late. Early intervention is key. And I think the reality of having multiple kids so close in age, it's really hard not to compare. And so, again, you know, when you go into parenting, you kind of have an idea in your head of like, this is how I want to parent the kids, right? Or this is how we want to do things. And one of the things that I have to constantly remind myself, and again, I share this with my clients, is that kids, humans, are people, not projects. And so when we received the initial diagnosis, I will say it was extremely emotional. I remember the words coming out of her mouth and it was like the rest of the time, and thank goodness my husband was there, I saw her lips moving and I didn't really, I just remember feeling like, wow, like that's very permanent, right?

13:41.714 Heather Yeah, and scary and overwhelming. And I know exactly what you mean. When I got my cancer diagnosis, it was like Charlie Brown adults. Wah, wah, wah, wah, wah. And thank goodness my husband was sitting next to me with a little notebook, just taking notes, taking notes, taking notes, so that when I was ready, I could absorb that information. Yeah.

14:00.506 Sarah And it's just wild, again, what the human brain does. And so in these moments, it's really giving yourself permission to be human. I'm a huge advocate for two things are true, the power of and, and reminding myself, like, Tristan, who he is today, is no different than who he was yesterday and who he'll be tomorrow. And autism, this diagnosis, it is a cluster of symptoms that categorize you know, what is going on for him and that diagnosis doesn't define him, right? And I think especially being in the mental health field and I know I've shared, you can go back to previous episodes, you know, I don't work with insurance companies. I am a private pay practice and part of that is unfortunately because of the red tape around insurance and also the stigma related to diagnoses. And so a lot of the work that I do coming from a systemic perspective, I do a lot of couples work and parent coaching and even the individual work I do, it's all relational. And so that is a Z code, which actually insurance, it's relational codes. Oh, I see. Okay. Which insurance companies don't accept that. I see. Okay. And so with all of that being said, it's we want to help people feel, understand themselves better. However, we also, especially with autism and educating, you know, my other boys about it, we don't want to use that label as like an anchor or like a box to put us in. I was just thinking a restriction. Exactly.

16:03.743 Heather Yeah, it's not, he has autism, he isn't autism, right? 100%. And it doesn't, yeah, we don't want to limit him. Sure.

16:13.112 Sarah Right, right. However, my brain plays tricks with me. Oh, sure. And so sometimes, and to give myself permission to recognize like when that intrusive thought comes of like, these are the limitations, I don't know what his social world is going to look like. I don't know what his future is going to look like and I know right now he's getting the support that he needs and when I look at him and I think of you know Heather I'm sure you can remember when the kids you know would go to the pediatrician's office and they would talk about percentiles and I would never I don't care about the percentile I would look at the growth curve and I would say okay like but are they growing according to their own body composition right and that's the way in which I'm choosing the lens that I'm looking through is that he is making progress. It looks much different than the other boys and we're celebrating the progress he's making and also slowing down to really look at him as a person and figure out what are his needs, where are where will he feel most supported and a hard thing that I'm wrestling with at the moment is that

he will be going to a different school than the other two and so there's a bit of grief there. I'm grieving the expectations of this movie I played out in my head of what I thought come August would look like with sending you know the kids to school and It's a really interesting opportunity for me to look inward and to just say, you know what? What is this teaching?

18:03.683 Heather Yeah. I can so relate with that. But first, we got to take care of business. So we'll be right back. So as you were talking about grieving this image playing in your mind, this movie playing in your mind, I instantly remembered a moment in my child raising time. So one of my children is on the LGBTQ spectrum. And when they first came out to me, I was more concerned about their mental health, their physical health, and reassuring them that, you know, mom and dad love you no matter what. This is not a reason to be, you know, feeling bad about yourself or, you know, accepting bullying or anything like that. And this was like, you know, middle school, early high school. And I was just more concerned in the moment that they were okay and they knew that they had a, they always had a place in our home. And then like a week later, I was driving in my car by myself and I literally had two minutes of grief where I got really upset because the image of the traditional wedding with the white dress and the black tux and the big church and all that stuff. I was like, oh, we're not going to have that in our family. And I got really upset and I started to cry. And then I kind of had this like mental slap moment of like, what are you talking about? Of course, of course they can get married. Of course they can have children and I can have grandchildren. Just because it isn't the way I thought it was going to happen doesn't mean they're going to have a less fulfilling, love filled life. So it was I know that like you have to kind of snap out of that and be selfless as a parent and just say, you know what? You know, maybe it isn't what I thought it was going to be, but it can still be great. And they're still great. And they're still valued. And yeah, you got to let go of your own ego.

20:14.732 Sarah Well, and I really appreciate you sharing that. And I know As parents, I mean, we're new parents at every age and stage of our kids. And I think what's really interesting to me and something that I personally am working through, and I know a lot of the people that come into my space, in my therapy space, they're wrestling with these things too, is it's these expectations of external expectations, right? And it's so interesting because I think we are in a movement right now where we're purposefully pausing and people are saying, you know what, that may have worked then. That may have been what... And may still work for some people. Absolutely. And having, you know, a neurodivergent child or just these tiny humans in general or, you know, your adult children, like, It's really interesting to just observe and to kind of connect with them in a way of what makes you feel most in alignment, what makes you feel your best. And it's not always that you have to agree, but how do you support them so that they can feel their best self, right?

21:41.450 Heather So we've talked a lot about them and him. Let's talk about you for a minute. How are you taking care of yourself?

21:51.537 Sarah You know, part of taking care of myself is practicing what I preach, and I've really been having to say no to a lot of things. I feel like The podcast was something that was so life-giving and it was a big time commitment. Oh, sure.

22:12.260 Heather It's a lot of work people don't realize. Right. And I know you really struggled, like you really didn't want to back away. And it was difficult. Sure. But you knew that, you know, there are only so many hours in a day.

22:23.868 Sarah Right. Yeah. And so my sweet little Noah, he's 15 months and he's still not sleeping through the night. We had a little period of time where he was and then he's teething. So right now what is really, you know, serving me is I have been getting back into running. And I have been, I'm actually training for a half marathon in October. Well, lady. Yes. Holy moly. Yes, and I've been doing a lot of trail running.

22:55.727 Heather Oh, so getting out in nature, too. It's not just, you know, in the suburban streets. Yeah, yeah.

23:03.171 *Sarah* And it has been such a beautiful gift for me. I, when I was pregnant and postpartum, I did a lot of at-home workouts and that really served me during the season that I was in. And now, so I have a trainer that I'm working out with two days a week. I'm doing strength training and then I am doing Yeah, I'm trail running, road running, I do the towpath quite a bit, and I do the early end, so I'll go to bed. Sleep is like, sleep is medicine, and so although it is still broken up, I'll go to bed early so that then I'm able, I'm getting up around, you know, 4.45 or 5, you know, to get those runs in. And then, you know, Justin, I get home, Justin leaves for work. We do have, I'm not superhuman here, folks. We do have a full-time nanny who is my right-hand man. And I can attest, I've been at your house.

24:07.359 *Heather* Yes. That full-time nanny's there and you're right there alongside her. It's like a, it's a team effort. Right? Because you can't do man-to-man with four boys. It's team, what do they call it? Zone defense.

24:18.404 *Sarah* Right, right. Exactly, exactly. So yeah, I've really been, you know, just being mindful and it's so, as I think about some of the miles that I've been doing, every day the choices that Justin and I are making it is to prepare ourselves for the endurance challenge of raising these kids, right? And so there's times that, you know, it's really hard to wake up in the morning and it's harder to have a short fuse or to have low energy. And so I'm just really you know, getting into the habit stacking, understanding, and I've shared this before in previous episodes, but it's that whole metaphor of the plane, putting your own oxygen mask on first, and these runs just like how at one point the podcast was saving me so that I could then save the kids, you know? Right now like running and being mindful of my nutrition, making sure I'm drinking a lot of water, a lot of those basic needs are what is allowing me to have this stamina so that I can keep up with these kids, so that I can advocate for them in a way, and also to have the mental clarity so I can, you know, show up for my clients.

25:50.714 *Heather* So, I mean, I'm glad you're taking care of yourself. That really makes me happy to hear. I'm gonna have to come root you on at this half marathon.

25:58.560 *Sarah* That's pretty exciting. It's the Cleveland Towpath half, October 7th.

26:03.264 *Heather* Oh, wow. If you guys don't know, if you're not in Cleveland, you don't know about the Toe Path. We have this amazing metro park system and urban revitalization, and there's this long, amazing path, and it's cool. You should come to Cleveland. Anyway, so sidetrack. I'm really glad you're taking care of yourself. I'd be interested to hear more about how you've had to set boundaries and adjust your life in order to prepare yourself for this endurance sport of parenting and dealing and running a business and all this stuff. Like what other no's have you had to make? And then I'm also very interested, and I think this might help other parents, on boundaries you've set relating to how the outside world interacts with your son.

26:51.091 *Sarah* Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. So start wherever you want. Sure. The boundary setting, it's so funny because I wish I had a sign that was just like, I'm about to set a boundary, right? But that's like not how- It's a boundary alert. Right? But that's not how life works. And so what I have learned is We, Justin and I, with these four kids, we are both working. He actually just participated in a Half Ironman and he's doing another one. Of course he has. I know, because we have nothing else going on. You two are incredible. Oh my God. So our training schedules, again, that is self-care that is just as important as a business meeting, getting our workouts in. We plan two months in ahead, like we see both the schedules, but we have like a weekly meeting. Sundays are a day that we say no to things because Sundays are our prep day. And so we do our meal prep for the week because, again, in order to show up the way that we want, we need to be fueling our bodies. And I don't know about you, Heather, but I am someone that if it is not there for me to just heat it up or if it's not portioned, I will just grab something out of the pantry and not make healthy choices, which definitely affects me. So we have really had to, especially in the summer, we've had to be really cognizant of things that we've been invited to. And we've had to just very, you know, gently let people know, you know, unfortunately, that's not going to work for us. Let's find another day. I think also, for example,

Justin, when he did participate in his Half Ironman, I was invited to like a bachelorette party that weekend and I could have made it work, absolutely. And I checked in with myself and I was like, I know that I'm going to be solo parenting this weekend. And I know that if I go to that, it is going to deplete me. And so what can I do to protect my peace, preserve my energy so that I can show up? And that is not always something I've been able to do. It's been a muscle you have to exercise to strengthen because the recovering people pleaser in me, the expectations of like, well, it's expected that you go, right? So same with sleep is medicine and with these kids and especially with Tristan we know if he doesn't get a good amount of sleep his behaviors are going to increase. He's going to be more irritable and so ensuring that like and even with sports with the kids like we've had to decide Maybe in our minds we're like oh they should and I'm air quoting they should be participating in all of this but we're like wait a second that then is going to impact our schedule. We want to make sure the kids get to bed at a certain time so that Justin and I you know can do our things. So right now we're in a season of kind of It's pretty structured in a way, but also for Tristan, we need his rigidity. It's really hard for him to be flexible.

30:24.278 *Heather* Yeah. As you're talking, I'm being reminded of what we learned from a guest earlier this season, Sarah Knight. And, you know, she's not as gently eloquent as you are. In that, I mean, she's eloquent, but she's a little more in your face about it. And she calls it, you know, you have a fuck budget. And it's like, there's only so many fucks you can give. And, you know, just like the money in your wallet, you can't overspend or there will be consequences. And so I think making yourself and making your family a priority and then making everything, you know, setting boundaries so that everything else has to work around that. I mean, I think that's, I really think that's the only way you're gonna. make it work so.

31:07.559 *Sarah* And I also feel like adding in permission to change your mind.

31:12.281 *Heather* Oh yeah I always I I hear you say that in my head sometimes I'm like I have the right to change my mind.

31:19.684 *Sarah* Right and and that's where I think it's just a beautiful tool to be able to write yourself that permission slip that right now in the season we're in and it's wild you know to think like fall is going to be here before we know it But it's like, for this summer specifically, like, that is what we have had to do. And then guess what? Like, you take the Etch-A-Sketch, you shake it, what worked, let's talk about it. What didn't work, let's talk about it. And then let's come up with what's going to support us moving forward. And then when things go haywire or when something life popcorn pops up, like, We'll talk about it and that's where communication is key. And then you had asked like specifically with Tristan and you know the diagnosis and just how he operates in the world. I think I'm, I have really good days with it and I have really not so good days with it where anger can become a primary reaction for me that I have to be mindful of because I get angry on Well, people should just know, like they should just get it, right? And I think even me as a mental health professional, there is so much about autism that I am learning. What I do know is Tristan is the expert of him. He knows himself best. We're figuring him out. And what I have to remind myself when certain people don't get it. And they may make comments because Tristan is verbal. He is verbal. He repeats himself over and over. He gets very stuck on things. He has echolalia. He has delayed echolalia. He's a gestalt language processor, which means he learns language in chunks. And people will say, well, He looked at me and he's talking, right? So he's all fixed now. Right. And so they don't, they have again these expectations or these narratives in their head of what they think a child on the autism spectrum behaves like, looks like, and Tristan is, maybe you can put like a picture on social, but he's the sweetest little thing.

33:50.743 *Heather* Your boys are so beautiful and so sweet and honestly, Maura and I always talk about like, we go to her house and we're like, These children are perfect.

34:00.647 *Sarah* Oh, my gosh. Well, we're a hot mess, but I appreciate that. I'm working on accepting compliments.

34:07.495 *Heather* And they're so happy and they're so, you know, you're doing such a great job. But like, I hear you and I'm sure that part of you has the instinct to teach, to stop and teach people. But this is hard. This is a hard thing to deal with. And you're freaking exhausted. And you probably don't have the patience to be like, well, actually, no, let me inform you, blah, blah, blah. Yeah, I'm sure you're just frustrated. Why can't you guys just, A, don't say anything, B, back off.

34:37.357 *Sarah* Right well and you had asked like that is the double-edged sword of being a therapist is because I feel like it is my responsibility and my job to like teach or to again advocate and in a way yes it is and by setting a boundary of just having some little phrases in my toolbox that when my emotional temperature is heightened because I am exhausted, I am overstimulated, I am angry, right? I can just say, I'm so sorry you don't understand. Period. Right? It is not my job to fix, rescue, save. It's not my job to make you feel comfortable. Oh, that's a big one.

35:30.713 *Heather* That is a big one with any any kid who has any special situation. Yeah. Yeah. And it's not your job to educate the world. You know, I mean, we do that with this podcast, but like in your personal life.

35:44.477 *Sarah* Yeah. Yeah. And so I think giving myself permission to, like I said, I'm sorry that you don't understand. Right. Or Tristan is Tristan. right and and to or you know to even just advocate for and to say you know what that didn't sit well with me let's let's talk about this at another time right yeah but to me it's this language around I'm learning how to protect my peace, to preserve relationships. And there are times, and I'm going to say like my body battery has more juice in it, and I can have these conversations, but The later it gets in the day, the more the caffeine is wearing off. The more stuff is happening at that moment. My body battery, it's my bandwidth that I don't always, I can't show up in the way that I want and I'm accepting. That is okay. That is the human experience. And as we've talked about, like, no is a complete sentence. And to just also, for me, it's modeling. It's not always by what I'm saying, but it's how I'm showing up. And for Tristan, there are times where he does stimming and so he gets really excited and he just flaps his little sweet little hands or he does a lot of visual stimming and he will take of his boss anything with wheels but he'll like slam it on a table not because he's mad he's actually excited but doesn't realize he doesn't really he doesn't feel pain and he also it's a sensory input that he's getting by banging things but I will have people you can't do that. Take that away from him." And so I'll have to like, you know, just step in. Of course, teaching Tristan boundaries too. Hey, why don't we do that over here? But I also am not, I am going to step in even if it is someone who thinks that they know. I know how to support him. So just being able to speak up and that wasn't again it wasn't always the case.

38:02.269 *Heather* Yeah. I'm remembering a conversation we had during our holiday miniseries with our friends over at Connecting for Kids and and Sarah Rintamaki was sharing you know she has two boys now older boys teenage college age. But in the beginning and this is partly why she founded Connecting for Kids and I know you know them very well and you have a good relationship with them. that she really had to set boundaries with her family and like his holidays were really stressful and like sometimes you have to say I'm sorry we're not going to come if you can't make these accommodations that I know my my kid's going to need or and that's hard to you know the family expectation thing is just family dynamics in general can just make it so tricky but Really, our first jobs as parents is to defend and protect our children. So kudos to you for stepping in and also for giving yourself grace.

39:03.501 *Sarah* I also think, because going back to even holidays, growing up Italian, everything was at 2 o'clock and it was on a Sunday. And going back to what I was saying, Sundays is something that we preserve that day. And so that was a hard thing. And then we do parties on Saturdays at four because it allows for us to get the kids their naps. And then it kind of supports us during witching hour. So like, you know, the kids are up, we have people around, and then we have still our Sunday. But with that being said, I think one of the things that I have

learned to do is to also understand and hold space for the discomfort that it may cause or the friction it may cause in the beginning and not to be resentful. I used to. I used to be like, you should understand. I can't believe that you are getting upset about this. But also recognizing that was their pattern for so long. So, I also have to give them grace to adjust, right? And so, sometimes two things are true, looking through that lens of like, we are setting these boundaries, we are doing this because it protects our peace, it helps the people within the walls of our home, and your feelings are valid too.

40:31.482 Heather Yeah, I mean it takes adjustment and it's almost like you have to like I love that what you were saying about giving yourself space and giving others space to adjust to these boundaries because it's going to be uncomfortable sometimes and you might hurt feelings or you know there may be some difficult negotiations that go back and forth but eventually it can work out and smooth out and it's sort of like short-term pain for long-term gain, right?

41:00.026 Sarah And even if, because there are situations where it doesn't always work out the way that you had hoped, it's also being able to hold space for yourself and to recognize, like, right now I am doing the best I can with the resources I have. And going back to that, what I was saying before, like, I'm so sorry that you don't understand.

41:22.764 Heather Yeah. Yeah. There have been people in my life that I've had to say goodbye to because they could not respect my boundaries or, um, I knew that they were not serving, like that relationship wasn't serving me and it was always super difficult to, you know, make room for the other things that I had to do. So it's hard sometimes and sometimes, and as you said, you talk about seasons a lot, sometimes friendships go in and out of season and come back and, you know, so.

41:57.915 Sarah Yeah and I think that is also something that has really felt like a warm hug to me. There's a beautiful poem and it's called Reason, Season, Lifetime and it really talks about how people come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime and especially through Tristan's journey, when I find myself getting caught up in what is his future gonna look like, I'm able to pause and say, you know what? I have made it 100% through my hardest days. I remember there's evidence in my evidence bucket when I was like, how am I going to get through this? And yet, when I'm able to be more regulated, I'm more open to seeing these people just literally falling into my life. And it's like, it's such a God wink. And it's like, but I just feel the more that I'm able to be grounded and again set boundaries to protect my peace, I can see it's all going to be okay because it's worked out, we're gonna figure it out, and for those of you that know me and maybe, you know, you're getting to know me, if there is something out there that that child needs that doesn't exist, I'll create it. So he's gonna be okay and it's more of when I'm bracing for impact, when I'm feeling the pressure, when I'm setting these unrealistic expectations or I'm constantly performing, thinking I have to appease this person and I have to make this person happy, that's when it's like I black out and I don't see the hope or I'm not open to what are these people trying to teach me in these moments, right? So it's that, to me, it's just been a constant mind shift, mindset, and just flipping the script.

44:07.497 Heather Well, Sarah, thank you so much. You're so generous with your time and with sharing your story and the ins and outs of what you're struggling with. I know that there's so many insightful things in this conversation that are going to help parents. Tell us about Purposeful Growth and Wellness.

44:26.975 Sarah Sure, so Purposeful Growth and Wellness is expanding. We offer a hybrid model, so we do both in-person as well as virtual therapy. We do Therapy, coaching, consulting. We have a wonderful therapist, her name is Madeline, and she is accepting new clients. She sees kids and young adults and she works, does a lot of the parent coaching. I am not accepting new clients until September. However, I'm working with couples. I'm doing a lot of parent coaching. I also do motherhood across the lifespan, a lot of individual work. And then I also recently hired on, her name is Victoria. She will be just doing virtual, but she offers EMDR. She also She works with adults, a lot of perinatal mental health, a lot of birth trauma, and works

with women. So she's going to be a wonderful addition. And then I'm also, I started the Connected Parenting series, which I have been doing, I do speaking engagements. So I talk a lot about breaking generational patterns, reparenting yourself, parenting as a partnership, division of labor, and real life strategies.

46:01.673 Heather Wow, good for you. Well, I could talk with you forever. I know, I know. Thank you so much for coming in. Thank you for spending this time with us. Also, thank you to our special guest, the fly that's been in this room this whole time. Sorry. for folks watching that video. But it's just, you know, I love you.

46:21.968 Sarah I love you and thank you for having me and holding space for, I don't even know all the directions this conversation went. I was like, are you going to send me, what do you want me to talk about? And then Maura, you know, was just like, you guys are just going to talk. And I was like, I can do that.

46:38.607 Heather We got a lot to catch up on. So yeah, you know you're welcome back anytime. And, you know, well, I'm sure we'll be touching base with you as life goes on. Okay, well, thanks again. And that's it. We're done. Yeah. Thank you. Got questions or a boundary setting success story or flop? It's easy to get in touch with us. Send an email through our website, hardnopodcast.com. DM us on social. we're at Hard No Podcast, or leave a message at 216-370-3410. We'll be featuring some of our favorite questions and messages in future Mailbag episodes, so get in touch. You can find show notes and a transcript of today's episode on our website, hardnopodcast.com. Make sure to like and subscribe on your favorite listening platform so you don't miss any new episodes. If you liked what you heard, please give us a rating and review, especially on Apple, so others can find us too. That's a Hard No is a production of Clever Girl Marketing, a strategic marketing agency based here in beautiful Cleveland, Ohio. You can learn all about us at clevergirlmarketing.com. Written by me, Heather Drago, and our amazing marketing and production coordinator, Mauro Del Rosario. Production support, Evergreen Podcast, Noah Fouts, producer and editor extraordinaire. Our awesome new rock anthem was written by Noah and performed by his band, The Big Leagues. I love it so much. Thank you, Noah. Shout out to Jake Donnelly, the videographer and photographer who's the creative force behind our YouTube videos. You demand, Jake. You can find him at rjdonnelly.com. Until next time, thanks for listening. And remember, saying no isn't just okay. Saying no is the key to living an authentic, fulfilling life. So do it. Find your no and say it unapologetically.