

[00:00:01.390] - Lisa Qualls

Welcome to the Adoption Connection podcast, where we offer resources to equip you and stories to inspire you on your adoption journey. I'm Lisa Qualls,

[00:00:10.310] - Melissa Corkum

and this is Melissa Corkum. Don't worry, we get it and we're here for you.

[00:00:18.570] - Lisa Qualls

This week we're bringing you a recording from a recent workshop that took place in The Village.

[00:00:24.450] - Melissa Corkum

In case you haven't heard about it, The Village is our membership community where you can find support and training to meet your needs. For more information, head to the adoptionconnection.com/VILLAGE.

[00:00:35.080] - Lisa Qualls

We hope you enjoy the workshop.

[00:00:41.590] - Greg Lombard Rea

Hi, I am Greg, and it is terrific to have you here for this brand new training that's not been done before. So we are here for why kids lie and what the Bible has to say about it. I've got a Master's in Divinity degree from Bright Divinity School at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. And I've been a bio dad since 1990. I've been an adoptive dad since 2008. In 2017, we discovered that traditional parenting doesn't work with children from trauma, as my kids were both hitting the teen years and discovered and started to pursue learning trust based relational intervention. And then I eventually in 2019, became a TBRI practitioner. I've been a post adoption support specialist for probably four years. I'm also an Enneagram coach and I served as a church pastor, aka preacher for 40 plus years. I am acquainted with single parenting and I am also acquainted with the journey of grief. And I'm thrilled to be a part of the Adoption Connection team. So the goal of this workshop is to reduce our parenting, our dysregulation toward lying by understanding the brain science and reviewing biblical stories. So we're going to do both of those. I am going to go quickly over the brain science because a lot of information is available on that out there. But the biblical stories, I've not seen that anywhere.

[00:02:25.690] - Greg Lombard Rea

So as we start off what I'd love for you all to do, would you write in the chat, or unmute - and maybe a couple of you would be willing to unmute, but I'd like everybody to write in the chat. What is it about your kids lying that makes you crazy?

[00:02:45.970] - Speaker 4

What bothers me most is when we know for a fact it's a lie and they keep doing it over and over again. And then we say, we know you're lying, we approve of everything going on and they keep digging and digging and digging, and then an hour later, they apologize for the lie knowing the lie the entire time.

[00:03:03.130] - Greg Lombard Rea

And that makes you crazy. I know this seems like a stupid question, but what about that in particular just really trips your trigger?

[00:03:14.110] - Speaker 4

Because the process of while they're lying, our son particularly, is that he talks down to us and curses at us and says everything in the book about how bad we are as people. And we know for the entire time it's just him scared, and he doesn't know how to react appropriately, so he just talks down to us because it makes him feel better by himself. He's trying to hurt us because he's hurt.

[00:03:37.090] - Greg Lombard Rea

There you go. Yeah. Frequent and so obviously a lie and denial. I feel like I can't trust them. Feeling of deep disrespect for the sacrifices being made for them. And what the heck? And you lie to me. Utterly disrespectful. Why do they feel they have to keep lying? They don't feel safe enough to tell the truth,

and that hurts, right? Man, come on. You've been with me all this time and you still don't trust me? The constant lying that will ruin our lives. One daughter just ruined her second engagement by needless lying. The pain that it causes that we see them, stupid waste of time and unproductive. Fear of you'll blow all your opportunities in life if you can't have integrity. Shows a lack of respect for us. It increases the feeling of distrust between us. Shows that she doesn't trust us. I think the fact that she can look me in the eyes and lie when we both know it's not true. I value the relationship in the honesty, and I honestly know she does, too. So how could she not be honest? The truth would be so much easier.

[00:04:56.710] - Greg Lombard Rea

But we now understand they lie to cover their consequences. And Julie is so hard when you can't trust a thing a young adult says. Yes. So that, you know, let's see. So my bios are older 20s and early 30s. My adopted kids are 18, and she's 20 now. She's 18 and 20 now and still am told things that are not true. Okay. And I know they lie to themselves, and I do get lied to, and it's pretty darn frustrating. But sometimes I discover the truth. The truth is, admitted, I think it shows immaturity when we're trying to ready them for adulthood. So I think we can divide these reasons into two things. Anger at the past, because this keeps happening, and in the moment, they're just disrespecting us and just it's just crazy. And it just keeps going on and on and on, and it gets irritating and angering eventually. The other one is also reflected in the fear of the future. It's like if you lie, you're not going to be able to hold down a great job. You're not going to be able to have relationships. It's just crazy. We're afraid for the future, so we get angry over the past or sometimes the present because this keeps happening and we get scared for the future. Thank you all.

[00:06:24.820] - Greg Lombard Rea

Well, we're going to dig in now, and we do have a Q&A at the end. So I'm going to go ahead and let's dig into the brain science a little bit. And some of this, some of you have already hinted at that you know it. And I'm going to use this phrase of Dysregulation. Why do kids lie? The problem is Dysregulation. Robyn Gobel, who's fantastic, love her podcast, her blogs, all of those things, her trainings. And she says this regulated, connected kids who feel safe, behave well if they have the skills. Regulated, connected kids. So they're regulated. We're going to talk about regulation. That's a brain state that has to do with our brainstem that's sitting on top of our spinal cord. What regulation has to do with is our brainstem. Connected kids in terms of relationships who feel safe, who their amygdala is telling them that yeah, I've just checked all eight senses and we are good to go. And then my friend Trisha, who actually is a licensed clinical social worker here in Topeka, Kansas, where I live, and she says to her clients and to me and people who she trains in TBRI, she says there is no behavior for no reason. People do behaviors and repeat behaviors because at least at one time it worked for them. Even if it doesn't work now, at least at one time it worked for them, and their brain continues to think about that.

[00:08:01.750] - Greg Lombard Rea

So let me do, here is a fun thing. So you take a look at this. The seeds of Dysregulation come from trauma. Trauma overbuilds the fear center of the brain. So this is a picture of an MRI of two different children's brains. Alright? And what you can say is at the top of it is the front forehead, prefrontal cortex that sits directly behind my fingers here, just above, in between our eyebrows, just above, right here, prefrontal cortex sits there in our brain. And then the bottom part is the back of the brain, that shows the amygdala which sits on top of the brain stem with the rest of the limbic system. I just realized that term sits on top of the brain stem with the rest of the limbic system. What we see is a healthy child, right? So right here the red is high activity, the yellow is medium activity, the green and the black is little and no activity. So this is the amount of heat in terms of what's being used. And the brain is sending blood and energy to that area. So it lights this up. What we notice in this healthy child is that the frontal, this area around the prefrontal cortex and this part of the brain is well lit up. There's lots of activity going on there. And the temporal lobes which connect the prefrontal cortex to the limbic system at the back. And then what we see, and we look over at this neglected child, what do we see? The prefrontal cortex, there's not as much activity. Everything is diminished in this area right here. And look, some temporal lobes are actually missing in terms of helping the prefrontal cortex connect with the rest of the brain. And then look at the amygdala. So big, smaller. The amygdala is that little almond sized shaped organ in our brain. And the amygdala, its job is to scan the

environment through our eight senses. It's constantly scanning the environment, answering this question safe/unsafe? safe/unsafe? safe/ unsafe? And if the amygdala is sitting on top of the brain stem and I'll explain this a little bit more, but if the amygdala says unsafe, immediately the brain stem goes into action and into protection and gets us ready for fight, flight, freeze.

[00:10:43.100] - Greg Lombard Rea

But take a look at this. The neglected child, their amygdala, the energy going around their amygdala is about twice the size of the healthy child. And the reason for that is that the child who is neglected or abused or experiences trauma, they use their amygdala a lot, and they don't use their prefrontal cortex. And if you go to the gym and you only work on upper body, if you only exercise your arms, your chest, your shoulders, right, those are going to get big and well used. But if you ignore your legs, if you don't do your leg presses, if you don't do your all those other things, those leg extensions and the leg curls, and if you don't do your calf extensions, then you're going to have strong upper body, but weak lower body. The muscles that get used, the muscles that get used and against with resistance, those are the muscles that build and get stronger. So for our healthy children, their amygdala is not overly developed because they don't spend a lot of time in fear brain. But our neglected child lights it up, twice as strong as the normal child's amygdala. All right, so let's take a look at this one.

[00:12:09.150] - Greg Lombard Rea

Now, why does that make a difference? Because the amygdala, this little dude right here, this is the neglected child, scans are eight senses for danger. Eight senses? Yes. So we do have hearing, sight, smell, taste, touch, or tactile senses, but we also have our vestibular sense. Vestibular is that inner ear that tells us, are we standing up straight? Are we curved? Are we spinning? Where are we in that way? The proprioceptive sense is that deep muscle that helps us tell our arms where it is so that I can actually touch my fingertips together behind my head, because I've got pretty good proprioceptive and I know where my arms are in space. And that's that deep muscle proprioceptive. If you have a hypo-sensitive, which is under sensitive child, in proprioception, they might stomp as they walk because they're trying to get twice the input to get twice the stimulation to get half the input into the brain. And then we also, it's been discovered, we have interoception, which is the inner parts. How are my intestines? How is my stomach? How is my heart? How is my body? It's scanning my entire body. So our eight senses, and the amygdala does that four times per second. Safe/unsafe? Safe/unsafe? So if you can hear this. That's how fast the amygdala continually scans our environment. And interoception, it says, safe/unsafe. And if anything, the amygdala senses anything that could be off that reminds me from my past or makes me feel unsafe because it's new, then it immediately just says, Brain stem, we're in danger. And the brain stem moves us into fight, flight, freeze. Brain stem, controls heart rate, respiration, pupil dilation, adrenaline, cortisol to the muscles, all of those things. And if brainstem says fight or flight, respiration, heart rate, pupils dilate, adrenaline, cortisol get pumped to the muscles, getting ready to fight or to flee to flight. Or if the brain stem says, there is no way we're going to live through this, we're going to get eaten, then it reduces respiration, reduces heart rate, pulls the blood in from the extremities, pulls it down from the brain, puts the brain into shock, and we go into plan dead, plan possum, fetal position, those sorts of things.

[00:15:06.070] - Greg Lombard Rea

Now, here's what I want to remind you. Brain stem and amygdala work together, and we have no control over it. How many of you? My son likes to watch scary movies, and some of my other kids do, too. And even though the music is telling you that something is going to jump out, and I know that something's going to jump out, when it jumps out, I can't stop myself from jerking. And it happens just that quickly because my amygdala and my brain stem kick booty. They are such a magnificent team. Despite the fact that I know it, I still can't stop myself. So that's what's going on there. Any questions about this? So what Dysregulation is dysregulation is the brain stem has increased heart rate, respiration, pupil dilation, adrenaline, where we can't control it and our kids can't control it. When you understand what that means, because this kid has just lied to you, and you can feel your heart rate, pupil dilation, you're getting angry. You want to attack or you want to run away or you just want to fold. Brain stem's in charge. But if we do have a good Prefrontal Cortex and a little bit is left, we can be aware of others feelings. We can have emotional balance. And the Prefrontal Cortex can actually say, boom, boom, boom. I am actually not dangerous. I understand why I jumped, but I can bring it down. I'm actually not in danger. And the Prefrontal Cortex will calm down the amygdala if you haven't

completely flipped your lid. A Prefrontal Cortex allows us to pause before acting, give us empathy for other people, aware of the greater good, for more people. We can actually think of our community and how my actions, my lies, might affect somebody else. You're right. The lies are all about the child. It is not about you or anybody else. Because they do not have access to a well developed, Prefrontal Cortex. So they are not aware of the greater good unless they are feeling completely safe.

[00:17:15.930] - Greg Lombard Rea

So why do kids lie? The problem is Dysregulation. The brainstem is making decisions without uncontrolled brainstem reactions. Here number one lying is a developmental stage in childhood. All children lie and all adults, all human beings, lie. We think of ourselves as telling the truth. But when your beloved says, do I look okay in this outfit? Right? Some of us know that the right answer is yes. Right? We're going to go through this in just a few minutes. But human beings do lie. Our brains like to say, no, we really don't. And only to protect somebody else's feelings. Or only to protect somebody else. And that can be very true. But we do lie. Lying, for our kids especially, is a survival mechanism. The habits that your children picked up before they were in your care, kept them alive until they got into your home. Okay? So they knew that if they got caught doing something or doing something, they were going to get in big trouble. And so it's a survival mechanism not to get hit, not to have things taken away, not to have dinner taken away, not to be locked in a closet, not to be duct taped to a chair. It's a survival mechanism. Like as you all said earlier in your chat, it's a lack of felt safety. The amygdala has signaled danger. So it could be fear of punishment being hit or injured. It could be a fear of breaking connection. I will be abandoned if they think I'm a bad child. I have to deny with all of my being that I did this because I don't want them to reject me. It's because my first family did. And if they get mad at me because I'm a bad kid, they might get rid of me and abandon me or neglect me as well. It's also a lack of trust in the adult which hurts. It's like, good grief, you've been with me for twelve years and I've been really good at providing for your needs. How can you not trust me? It's also a lack of an ability to stay regulated. Just like I said that jump scare in the movie, the brain stem and amygdala have just been trained. Question did you take out the trash? Yes. Then why can't I see it at the curb? I did take it out. I don't know how it got back. Somebody must have brought it back in, right? Okay. Lack of ability to stay regulated. That brain stem goes off and the lie comes out. It's almost as automatic as adrenaline pumping into the muscles or pupil dilation. Lack of understanding the lying is a big deal. They didn't grow up in our homes with valuing truth. They grew up in families where telling lies just wasn't a moral problem. So it's a lack of knowledge or a lack of skill.

[00:20:55.070] - Greg Lombard Rea

And then the other one is confabulation, and this is a real problem for some of our kids, it's a memory issue. This is really true for some kids on the autism spectrum or FASD. But it happens to all of our kids, is that our children aren't actually always aware of what just happened. And literally, when you say, wait, what just happened? Why did you do that? I don't know. Their brain literally has no clue, and sometimes they have no clue what happened. And so you say, what happened here? And they start to tell a story. Because confabulation is our brains don't like a mystery. We feel safest when we've got a story for everything, when we can explain what happened and what didn't. And so our brains do not like that vacuum of not what happens. It makes us scared. And so human brains will fill in with a story. And here's what I've discovered. It's like when the child or the human being tells that story, the images form in the brain, and it becomes a permanent real life memory of what's happened. And that's why they will swear up and down, I don't know why the chocolate frosting is on my mouth, but I know I did not eat the cake.

[00:22:25.050] - Greg Lombard Rea

Let's see. I'm going to look at the chat here. They often get in trouble much more when they lie, right? But it's not about the future, is it? It's about right here and right now. It's when they drag on a lie. It's when they drag on a lie that they get in bigger trouble. Yes. Now, it could be confabulation or it could be any of those other reasons. Okay, how many of you have noticed that so many of your children's behaviors don't make sense for real safety? So our kids do things. So let's just think of cutting of self harm, right? So it's wait a minute, the child doesn't feel safe, and so they literally make themselves unsafe? What the heck? How does that help anything at all? It's because the amygdala, which is the decision maker, doesn't have access to logical thinking, that's in a prefrontal cortex. So the amygdala says, okay, we got to do something. Let's just do something. And children and teens who do self

harm, they talk about, I feel interior. I feel this pain that I can't name. So if I cut, at least it's localized or it's the other thing is that I feel bad about myself and so I should be punished.

[00:23:53.530] - Greg Lombard Rea

I mean, there's all these bizarre reasons when children feel unsafe, they actually do behaviors that make them literally unsafe. Our children do not have access to the logical brain like you do or like children their age. Our children can be half their chronological age, mentally and socially. Okay, so they're not logical beings, and dragging on makes no sense to us, but they're not thinking logically.

[00:24:30.180] - Greg Lombard Rea

Our twins have been with us since infant and just impulse to lie, even though that's what's never been okay or worked out well, hasn't been hurt if told the truth, et cetera, how do we rewire the impulse response? Yes. So, as you probably know, is that among the things that are the risks for our vulnerable children is in utero. Is that when the baby's brain was developing in cortisol, the amygdala also is over developed when the child if it's an extended labor. right? The child can go through twelve to 24 hours of high stress with no relief. The child, if there is early medical treatment that registers on their brain as trauma and what that means is the amygdala becomes hypersensitive. The amygdala is supposed to be a knob where you turn it, a dimmer switch where you turn the lights on. For a lot of our kids, the dimmer switch is gone and it's just a switch. And there is no reasonable response. It's either I am safe or I'm going to die. And that impulse control. We're going to talk a little bit about rewiring, just a little bit.

[00:25:50.890] - Greg Lombard Rea

Abby and Jordan, we've even told our son that if they tell the truth, they will not get into trouble. And they have only done it twice. We even tell them in the midst of all of it, they still stick to it. Yes. So we cannot hope to get the truth until the children are regulated again. My son will come back and say, you know, when I said that, that wasn't true. Say, thank you for telling me. Dysregulated children will not make the right decisions, even if it's the best decision for them. It's best for the relationship. It keeps them safest, even if it's logical. Dysregulated human beings make bad decisions consistently. The amygdala doesn't have access to the prefrontal cortex. What about huge stories that go on and on that are known? Not true, but they keep telling. This is an adult child who's been with us since six months.

[00:26:50.800] - Greg Lombard Rea

Okay, Cindy Lee, and I'm going to put some links in the chat at the end so that you can access this and you can do it. She's got a great video on YouTube, the difference between lying and tall tales. And she talks about how tall tales are bids for connection. So when they're going on and on about this story, their goal isn't to stay out of trouble. Odds are their goal is to keep you engaged with them. And they don't have the presence or the skills to request it. Alright. My son at 18 now has the skills. He says, this is weird, but I just feel like I have to be around you. You can say that now. 18 years old. Okay, so Cindy says that it's a bid for attention.

[00:27:47.370] - Greg Lombard Rea

The impulse to lie is so frustrating to deal with. Yes, it's as easy as breathing for her, and she's only seven. Yes, it's the jump scare. She has no control over it either. And she doesn't have the skills or the mental capability to shut that impulse down. It stinks. Same with my 22 year old.

[00:28:10.260] - Greg Lombard Rea

Oh, Julie, are your 22 year olds any better? Has there been improvements? Nope. Okay, Dang. Okay. There's still hope. You got six more years of brain development to go.

[00:28:24.990] - Greg Lombard Rea

So, folks, what does the Bible say? Now, a lot of us in our churches and things like that, they will go back for the 9th Commandment. Do not bear false witness against your neighbor. Now, this commandment actually doesn't apply to our situations for the most part, alright? This commandment is not about lying in general, but it's focused on line in a trial or in a court session when a judge or jury are trying to determine the truth in a legal or civil case. Now, granted, we didn't have those things were

designed at the village gate in the Bible days, okay? The elders would gather at the gate, and people would bring their concerns, and two or three witnesses was all it took to convict or to decide a case. And in those days, there's no DNA evidence, there's no cameras or things like that in our community. For our community to be safest, we need every citizen of our community to be truthful and tell us what they actually saw. Don't bear false witness.

[00:29:40.470] - Greg Lombard Rea

Proverbs and others say taking a bribe is wrong, is evil. It's the wrong thing to do, it's breaking the 9th commandment. So that's one thing. However, there are places in the Bible where it says that lying is an option. But let's look a couple of these stories, okay? So Genesis 12:10-16. Abram lies in Egypt. He doesn't lay down in Egypt. He lies, because at that time, there was not enough food in the land. So Abram and Sarah, his wife, went down to Egypt to live there for a while. As he was about to enter Egypt, he spoke to his wife Sarah. He said, I know what a beautiful woman you are. The people of Egypt will see you and say, this is his wife. Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. Tell them you are my sister, and I will be treated well. This is Father Abraham, right? The one from whom all of the descendants, including Jesus, comes from. He's going into Egypt, and he says, Sarah, I want you to lie because they'll kill me and you get to live. So I need you to lie to save my life.

[00:30:55.600] - Greg Lombard Rea

Abram arrived in Egypt. The Egyptian saw what happened, and Sarah ends up in Pharaoh's palace. All right, now we go to Genesis 18. Sarah lies to angels and to God, apparently is there. There are three angels, three strangers are visiting Abram and Sarah, and it's a big complex. There are several tents and things such as that. They prepare this great meal, great hospitality for these three guests who are angels. And maybe one of them is actually God. Where is your wife Sarah? they asked Abraham. Over there in the tent. Then one of them said, I will surely return to you about this time next year. Your wife Sarah will have a son. Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already very old. Sarah is too old to have a baby. So she laughed to herself. She thought, I'm worn out. My husband is an old geezer. Can I really know the joy of having a baby? And she laughs. She thinks that's hysterical. She didn't have TikTok, right? So there's nothing else to laugh at. Then the Lord said to Abraham, so there's God there, so the Lord said to Abraham, why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say, Will I really have a baby now that I'm old? Is anything too hard for me? I will return to you at the appointed time next year. Sarah will have a son. Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, I didn't laugh. But the Lord said, yes, you laughed. So Abram lied out of fear. Sarah lied out of fear.

[00:32:41.810] - Greg Lombard Rea

Now we go to Abimelech. So now we're in chapter 20. Abraham moved south into the Negev desert. There Abraham said about his wife Sarah, she's my sister. Then Abimelech, the King of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her. So God appeared to Abimelech in a dream one night, and he said, you are as good as dead, buddy, because the woman of you have taken, she is already married. But Abimelech hadn't gone near her. So he said, Lord, will you destroy a nation that hasn't done anything wrong? Didn't Abraham say to me, she's my sister? And didn't she say, he's my brother? I had no idea I was doing anything wrong. Early the next morning, Abimelech called Abraham in. Abimelech said, what have you done to us? Have I done something wrong to you? Why have you brought so much guilt on me in my kingdom? Abraham replied, yeah. I thought, there's no respect for God in this place. They'll kill me because of my wife. So Abraham lies to save his own skin. He's very good at it.

[00:33:47.630] - Greg Lombard Rea

Here are some other examples about lying and comments about lying in the Bible. Isaac lies to another Abimelech. Jacob lies to Isaac, his father. Jacob's sons, the ten of them lie about Joseph, who they actually sold into slavery. But they dipped his colorful coat in sheep blood and said, hey, we found your youngest son's coat here in the blood. Is this him? He must have gotten eaten by an animal. But they actually sold him into slavery. In Egypt, bad things happened to truth telling Joseph. So Joseph goes into slavery, and over and over again, the man tells the truth with full integrity, and he keeps getting in trouble over and over and over again. The Egyptian midwives, when Pharaoh says, hey, Midwives, kill all the Hebrew boy babies when they're born. The Egyptian midwives go and say, yeah, these Hebrew women are so strong that by the time we get there they've already given birth and

we're not welcome.

[00:34:58.620] - Greg Lombard Rea

Okay, Rahab lies to the men of Jericho and says, no, there's no spies of Israel here, right? Ananias and Sapphira, they lie and they die. There's numerous New Testament letters speaking against lying. And Jesus says his disciples are blessed when people lie about them. So if your lies are told about you as a follower of Jesus, you are blessed. There's a lot more. But this is a summary.

[00:35:29.810] - Greg Lombard Rea

Here's a question, dang it, did Jesus lie? So in John 7:20, but when the Jewish festival of Tabernacles was near, Jesus' brother said to him, hey Jesus, leave Galilee and go to Judea, where Jerusalem is, so that your disciples there may see the work you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you're doing these things, show yourself to the world. For even his own brothers did not believe in him. Therefore Jesus told them my time is not yet here. For you anytime will do. The world will not hate you. But it hates me because I testified that its works are evil. You go to the festival. I am not going up to this festival because my time has not yet fully come. After he said this, he stayed in Galilee. However, after his brothers had left for the festival, he went also not publicly, but in secret. So the question there is withholding information a lie? Was it justified? Did Jesus change his name? Hopefully what you saw in those biblical accounts is that the biblical characters lied for many of the same reasons that our children do. I don't know if confabulation was a thing, but in terms of fear, of trying to save their skin or save somebody else or something like that. So how shall we respond to lying? With coregulation. Children who are lying because of the impulse, because they're dysregulated, because their brain stem is just responding to the amygdala, saying unsafe, unsafe, unsafe danger. Will Robinson, right? If you're old enough like me that you know that reference, children, our kids struggle with regulating themselves, with bringing down that fear base. Our kids have struggle on their own to move from brainstem, amygdala dysregulation into full thinking, moral development, logical thinking, cause and effect thinking of the prefrontal cortex. Human brains just don't do that on their own. And our kids struggle even more.

[00:37:57.600] - Greg Lombard Rea

So what our children need is a regulated adult in order to regulate. We need to bring an upstairs brain into proximity of our children and share our brain and our energy until our children become regulated, until the amygdala calms down enough and says, OK, we're not in danger anymore. Now we can have some upstairs thinking, now we can have cause and effect thinking. Now we can teach our children about how being lied to is no fun and how it actually keeps them from getting what they want. Co regulation is the thing when little people are overwhelmed by big emotions. It's our job to share our calm, not join their chaos. So our children lie and we lose it. We both have dysregulated brains. A dysregulated 'we' cannot bring down a child.

[00:39:06.650] - Greg Lombard Rea

So how shall we respond to lying? Here's the brain science: help people feel safe. We don't ask questions to children who struggle with this issue of lying because we're setting them up for a lie. Okay? We know if they're struggling with this, we don't say, did you eat the three cookies that were here? Boom. Amygdala is going to go, warning, warning. Brainstem is going to go off and they're going to go 'no' immediately down to basement brain, not an upstairs brain. It's just what they're going to do. So what do we say instead? Dude, all right, it is not okay to eat those cookies. They were for something else. I'm not going to deal with this right now. We've got to figure out what to do, unless you have any ideas on how to fix this problem, right? Then later explain the implications of there's three cookies that were laid out, those are for dessert for tonight. Therefore three people aren't going to get their cookies. What do we do? How do we fix this problem? When both of you have regulated brains, don't ask the direct question. Stay calm and regulated. Do your work. Why is this issue such a trigger for you? I've had to do this all through working with my kids. Why did I get triggered? Counseling, prayer, thinking about it. I remember one night, probably my son was twelve and I just lost it when he said something, dysregulated dad. And the next night I came back and said, hey buddy, you know how I kind of got all frustrated and everything last night? Yeah, I remember. I said, here's why. And I told them some stories from my past, and I said, so six year old dad was talking to you last night. Not grown up dad. So I just wanted you to know that because I figured it out. I'd done some

thinking about why I got triggered. And so that disruption of our relationship, actually that rupture actually got repaired the next night when I said here's why I did that. And he appreciated knowing something about my past.

[00:41:30.790] - Greg Lombard Rea

Connect with soft eyes, warm voice and few words, non-threatening posture. Maybe you get down at their eye level and say, okay, we needed those cookies for dinner. I'm not going to deal with it right now. We're both going to have to figure out we can talk about this later, okay? Not very many words. Not accusatory. If you can work it out, if the kids is actually regulated and you've practiced enough, you know they have the skill to tell the truth because you practice it outside the moment. Maybe you can get away with it. But the most important thing is don't get bug eyed, don't use lots of words, use a warm voice, and don't tower over that.

[00:42:17.810] - Greg Lombard Rea

The brain science also said, what's the need behind the lying? The TBRI mantra says, see the need behind the behavior, what's going on here? And then we address the need, we meet the need. So is this a lack of trust? We double down on connection and trust building. Lack of felt safety. Were they dysregulated because they were hungry? Because we forgot to feed them a snack or leave the food out for them? So were they actually hungry or thirsty and not thinking, well, is this the lack of knowledge or a skill that they actually don't know how to not lie or they don't really understand yet how a household needs to be run on trust and truth telling, and how everybody's happier when the truth is. Redirect or teach when everybody is feeling comfortable and regulated. We can't bring down the hammer and the fire or even try to teach our children in the moment if they're dysregulated.

[00:43:20.950] - Greg Lombard Rea

Now here's fun. So what's Jesus' strategy to help people feel safe? Same strategy. So we don't know that any of these people lied, but I think it's pretty safe to say that these people that Jesus hung out, they were called sinners and tax collectors and all of these other things. I think it's pretty safe to say that the lying was probably a part of their portfolio. And what did Jesus say when he was criticized for hanging out with these liars and cheats and everybody else? Jesus said, it's not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. Right? Here's something really important. We did not save our children. We are the hospital that the people who saved our children brought them to. So if there's a firefighter rescues a child from burning house, they've just rescued them. They've just saved them. Stick them in the ambulance they're brought to our homes where we treat them and heal them from their injuries, smoke inhalation and all of those things that the firefighters saved them from. We're the healers, not the savers. And don't you love it? Jesus says it's not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. Our children have disrupted brain and attachment development. They are in our homes to heal. Okay? It's true that the foster care workers and everybody said, oh, all we have to do is get them in a home where they've got lots of food, that they're safe, that they're not being abused, get them into normal children's activity and they're fine.

[00:45:12.910] - Greg Lombard Rea

I'm going to say they didn't choose to lie to us, but they didn't know. I swear they had to know. But I'm going to go ahead and choose to believe that they didn't know. So what did Jesus do? He accepted people where they were. He stayed calm and regulated and non judgmental. He connected with them. He prided, food, drink, forgiveness. Cast out demons. If you've got a demon, you're separated from your family. If you have a demon, you don't have any voice or choice or power over your life. Jesus empowered them and reconnected to them, to their communities. By releasing them, he met their needs and reconnected them to the community. All right. Jesus built trust, showing people that he was safe. Then there's these scriptures right here that tell all of those things that are right there.

[00:46:11.030] - Greg Lombard Rea

So what's next? Do your work if you need to do your attachment work. Making Sense of Your Worth and Anchored Bible study from the Halo project, top notch. Parenting from the Inside Out by Dr. Dan Siegel. Using The Wisdom of the Enneagram, being in a twelve step program. All of those things can help us stay regulated in the face of lies. Help us deal with the lies and our power issues over that. Adoption Connection resources: become a part of The Village and join The Village Facebook page

and be connected to other folks. If you're really suffering from blocked care. So blocked care, if a child who comes into our homes with blocked trust, our brains, our brain stems and brains will go from connection brains to protection brains. Okay, let's do some Q&A.

[00:47:11.370] - Melissa Corkum

We are so thankful for the amazing guests who share their wisdom and expertise in The Village. Adoptive parenting gives us both the challenge and the opportunity to keep learning new tools and perspectives.

[00:47:23.430] - Lisa Qualls

Each workshop in the village is followed by a live Q&A with our guests. If you're not already a member of The Village, we invite you to join us for regular gatherings and workshops where you will find the tools you need for exactly where you are.

[00:47:37.170] - Melissa Corkum

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[00:48:03.390] - Lisa Qualls

Thanks so much for listening. We love having you. And remember you're a good parent doing good work.

[00:48:11.670] - Melissa Corkum

The music for the podcast is called New Day and was created by Lee Roosevere.