



LIVE with Heidi Powell, Episode 6 (04/08/20)
Guest: Dr. Meg Meeker

Show Notes:

- 0:00: Heidi has a couple of technical difficulties, explains her WIFI issues. She talks about how excited she is for today's interview and thanks viewers for joining episode 6. She talks about the format of the show and how she chooses her guests—those who have bettered her and her family's life. She says her guests are true heroes in her eyes and have so much great information. These are informal conversations with her guests, and Heidi share how viewers can participate. Her hope is that viewers can use this time to help them in their lives.
- 3:25: Heidi introduces Dr. Meg Meeker. Dr. Meg has been a pediatrician for more than 30 years, practicing pediatric and adolescent medicine and counseling with teens and parents. She hosts the podcast, "Parenting Great Kids."
- 4:00: Dr. Meg joins the show. She really likes Heidi's setup. They joke about how Heidi calls her ex-husband the wrong name.
- 4:58: Dr. Meg has authored 6 best-selling books, she's been recognized as the country's leading authority on parenting teens and children's health, she's been on numerous media outlets, including the NFL Player Engagement Fatherhood Initiative. They talk about one of Meg's books. Meg has been married for 38 years to her husband Walt, she has 4 kids and 5 grandkids. Dave Ramsey calls Meg "America's Mother." They talk about this title. Dr. Meg's truth: One of the best things I can do to help kids is help their parents.
- 6:45: Dr. Meg tells the story about how she came to this truth. Parents have the influence and the power over their kids. Dr. Meg talks about how she still loves her job after 30 years. She's now helping past patients with their own kids.
- 8:40: They talk about how amazing it is to be able to do what you love for a living. Heidi talks about how important it is in her/Chris' line of work to teach parents about transformation.
- 9:10: Dr. Meg talks about helping parents who want their kids to lose weight and how it's a family process, not a child process. She talks about having a hard time getting parents to buy into it. It's a delicate process to navigate. They talk about doing another show on this topic.
- 10:40: Heidi dives into the situation at hand (pandemic) and talks about it and how it affects families. She begins with some questions.
- 11:42: Heidi asks Dr. Meg how we talk to our kids about the virus without making them feel afraid and anxious?

Dr. Meg says kids already know something big is going on. She talks about what some of the negative things some kids are experiencing. She'll tell kids that most people who get the virus are fine. She wants kids feel secure and the germ really only affects adults. And then she reassures them that there's an overwhelming chance their parents will be fine too. She goes on to give more advice about how to talk to kids. Heidi talks about the different ways her kids are handling the virus. Always give parents and kids hope.

14:45: Dr. Meg talks more about the virus and what she thinks will happen in the future with the virus and some other realities about the virus. It's spread hand to face. We need to try and train our kids about this.

16:30: Heidi asks Dr. Meg about communicating with kids and how much information do we share with kids? How do we be just honest enough?

Dr. Meg says parents over speak to kids. Talk to them on their level. Keep it very simple for younger kids. Go into more detail for older kids. Give them facts without fear and watch how they respond. Only say things once for some kids.

19:15: Heidi asks if there is any research on vitamins and/or supplements that can help children's immune systems fight any type of virus? Or the flu?

Dr. Meg suggests vitamin C and echinacea and healthy eating. If kids are picky eaters, she also recommends a multi-vitamin. Kids need to drink enough water, get enough sleep, and a healthy diet: lower on sugar, higher on protein. Heidi tells a story about Ruby cutting her sugar in half.

21:10: Heidi asks Dr. Meg how much sleep kids should be getting?

Dr. Meg says kids should be getting more than we think. Teenagers and college kids need about 12 hours, younger kids need at least 8 hours of sleep. Kids need more sleep as they get older.

23:08: Heidi asks Dr. Meg if kids and adults should be wearing masks in public? It is safe for babies and toddlers to wear masks?

Dr. Meg says masks will help you keep your hands off your face, and since the virus is airborne, wearing a mask can protect others from you if you get the virus. Dr. Meg talks about how the virus infects you through your mouth, nose, and eyes. Not through the skin.

25:14: Heidi asks if people should be wearing gloves also?

Dr. Meg says she does, but it's not an official recommendation. She wears them to the grocery store and then takes them off when she leaves. You don't need to wear gloves around the house, just when you go to a public place where you'll be touching things.

25:50: Heidi asks Dr. Meg if it's safe for babies and toddlers to wear masks?

Dr. Meg says no for babies or toddlers. Keep babies and toddlers home.

26:25: Heidi asks Dr. Meg about self-isolation and if a family member gets the virus. Should they self-isolate from the rest of the family?

Dr. Meg says the person with the virus needs to be primarily in their room, and when they come out, the mask comes on, they wash their hands, and they don't touch anyone. Stick to your core group and set boundaries around that group. Dr. Meg talks more about how the virus infects people and symptoms.

- 29:05: Heidi asks Dr. Meg about the virus and pregnancy/trying to get pregnant and if she has any specific guidelines for these women. (They laugh about the “Corona Virus Boomers”—a lot of babies will be born 9 months from now).
- Dr. Meg says newborns do better than we think because they have mom’s immunity through their blood for the first 3 months. She says they’re not sure what happens to pregnant moms if they’re exposed/get the virus, but the babies do fine. The same with nursing, although it’s unknown if the virus passes through milk. She suggests moms nurse anyway.
- 31:28: Heidi asks Dr. Meg about kids and routines during this time.
- Dr. Meg talks about how everyone is struggling with routines right now since everything has changed. It can be harder getting kids on a schedule since it feels like summertime. She gives some tips on how to create schedules for kids. Create schedules gradually. Give yourself and your kids some grace at this time.
- 33:25: Heidi talks about how she’s welcoming this new routine and not traveling, etc., not doing all the things she’s used to doing. Heidi talks about boundaries. Dr. Meg reminds her to take advantage of this time with her kids because eventually they’ll be out of the house.
- 35:15: Dr. Meg talks about what she thinks will come out of this about learning how to spend quiet, quality time with yourself and others. Things she thought she needed to be doing she really didn’t need to be doing. It’s a time to re-evaluate and makes some cuts. Heidi talks about choosing what you want your new “normal” to be.
- 37: 35: Dr. Meg talks about mom and dad health, emotional health, stability and physical health and how we don’t take care of ourselves. Try and do less so you’re not as mad at our kids when they try and distract you.
- 38:10: Heidi asks Dr. Meg how to help kids embrace boredom and what tips she has to help kids embrace boredom.
- Dr. Meg tells a funny story from years ago on *The Today Show*. She says kids need to be bored and that kids need to figure out how to entertain themselves. A lot of life is boring, and if we raise our kids thinking that they should never be bored, we’re doing them a big disservice. Dr. Meg shares how they’d do the first 2 weeks of summer every year. Push your kids into boredom. Moms aren’t to entertain their kids 12 hours a day.
- 40:35: Heidi talks about how she handles boredom with her kids. Dr. Meg offers some fun advice to help kids learn to entertain themselves or do a chore. You’re not letting your kids down if they’re bored. Parents need to stop feeling so guilty about not giving their kids everything. Parents are parents, not friends.
- 42:05: Heidi and Dr. Meg talk about the importance of kids working for everything. Work and chores are important for kids. It’s good for kids to learn how to work because it increases their self-esteem. Kids aren’t going to be happy all the time, but they will be okay. Empathize with kids but let them know they’re going to be okay. Letting kids go through hard times teaches them that they can be okay on their own.
- 44:17: Dr. Meg talks about how her mom and dad made them work. Her mom didn’t babysit their kids, and Dr. Meg was okay with that. It’s good for parents to set boundaries. Heidi says her mom is the same

way. Heidi talks about how her and her mom's relationship is never strained by babysitting issues. Her mom gets to be Noe, she gets to be grandma, and spoil them without having to discipline them.

46:05: Heidi asks Dr. Meg what she thinks about screen time. How much is too much right now, and is it okay to relax the usual screen time rules at this time?

Dr. Meg says that yes, it's okay to let kids have more screen time right now. Everyone's trying to figure things out. Don't fight about it. Still monitor their screen time though. It's okay to use screen time for parents to get a little break. In general, screen time depends on the age of the kid. We know that the amount of time a girl is on social media is directly proportionate to her risk of depression. Violent video games for boys and pornography are easy to get hooked on very quickly. She encourages parents to sit down with each teenager and ask what a reasonable amount is for screen time. Then come to a compromise/negotiate. Split screen time into time blocks throughout the day. The longer they stay on at one time, the harder it is for them to stop. Kids cannot self-regulate screen time. Make screen time age appropriate. If kids get upset, oh well.

49:44: Heidi asks Dr. Meg is there is an app or ways to make screen time more productive?

Dr. Meg says she doesn't, but parents need to know what their kids are watching and doing, and that this is a good thing to come out of this coronavirus time. She recommends educational programs for kids for screen time. Find the ones you like and then offer kids some options to choose from. Find exercise programs for kids. Exercise with your kids. Dance with your kids. Heidi talks about doing Tik Tok with her kids.

51:20: Heidi asks Dr. Meg how parents can manage anxiety and fear?

Dr. Meg says if momma's anxious, everyone's anxious. If anxiety is out of control, go get a counselor and FaceTime. If you're just frustrated, schedule some alone time for yourself. No house cleaning, just spend time with yourself. Remember that this will pass. Just hold on. Heidi talks about setting boundaries and past parent guilt, and how she's needing some alone time but feels bad feeling that way.

54:35: Dr. Meg talks about moms who are now working from home and how they're feeling guilty not getting their work done and guilty not spending time with their kids. She remembers telling her kids that "mom" is not a swear word. Let go of mom guilt. One of the best things you can give to your kids is a healthy you. Don't feel guilty for saying "no" to your kids. They need to hear it, and you need to say it. Heidi talks about being beneficially selfish and how it's hard to do it yourself.

54:53: Heidi asks Dr. Meg what things parents can do now to fill their parental buckets?

Dr. Meg says sleep is really important, get some air, get outside, take a walk, go alone if possible. If you're married, tag team alone time. You have to be willing to ask for the time and not feel guilty. Make sure you're setting boundaries at home. Kids can entertain themselves for a while.

57:25: Heidi asks Dr. Meg is she has favorite resources for parents to use during this time? Heidi mentions Dr. Meg's "7 Tips for Staying Sane When Life Turns Upside Down" blog post.

Dr. Meg talks about writing this blog post and how it came about due to common questions. Just remember that this is a transition time, and transitions are so hard. For parents, Henry Cloud's book, "Boundaries," can be helpful. Kids will be fine if you say "no" to them. She talks about the Meeker Parenting Community.

58:55: Heidi asks Dr. Meg how can we help ourselves and our kids find and embrace the positives during the time and how can we then use them to make us better now and in the future?

Dr. Meg says one of the best things we can do for our kids is show them that they can be empowered. Show them what they can do and challenge them. It's a great thing to do now since they're with us. Challenge them to do things that are not performance-based. Kids start to believe we love them because they do a lot of good stuff. Challenge their character. Dr. Meg offers some examples of how to do this. Serving other people is a good way to help kids realize they can do hard things.

61:00: Heidi connects this to letting your kids be bored. Kids won't do challenging things unless you get out of their way, and it's a hard thing to do. Dr. Meg talks about simple things we can do to grow our kids' characters. Heidi talks about the importance of praising their efforts, not their outcomes.

64:00: Dr. Meg talks about how to help kids see their qualities, perseverance, for example. Find the good things they're doing and praise those.

64:40: Heidi asks Dr. Meg a rapid-fire question: What's your #1 pandemic-related tip for each age group? Dr. Meg says hands, hands, hands. Teach your kids to know where their hands are at all times. Don't touch your face and stay away from people. Gloves can help kids be aware of where their hands are. Wash and sanitize hands.

65:50: Heidi thanks Dr. Meg for being on her show and tells her she'll have her on the show again. Heidi thanks everyone for watching. Dr. Meg's closing words: Don't be afraid, and know that you're strong enough to do this, parents.

Connect with Dr. Meg Meeker:

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