

## Shmanners 158: Mister Rogers (LIVE!)

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[theme music plays]

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** Hi!

**Teresa:** Hello.

**Travis:** Hello, internet! And San Jose.

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

[audience cheers]

**Teresa:** And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy!

[audience cheers louder and longer]

**Travis:** And you're listening to and watching Shmanners!

**Teresa:** It's extraordinary etiquette...

**Travis:** For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

**Teresa:** Hello, dear!

**Travis:** I'm sorry you didn't get a warm welcome.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** That was so rude. Uh, how many people here, by round of applause, this is your first Shmanners experience?

[audience cheers and applauds]

**Travis:** Wow!

**Teresa:** Oh boy!

**Travis:** That's very exciting. I'm so glad to have so many new friends here. So, our show is about etiquette and manners, both about the history and how it applies to the modern age.

We are non-judgmental. We believe that etiquette and manners is about being your best self, and not about judging others, and sometimes, from time to time, we do biography episodes of people who have had a big impact on the world of manners and etiquette and society, and so I requested that Teresa do an episode this week on Mister Rogers!

[audience cheers and applauds]

**Travis:** Um, especially because it really bridges the—like I said, the history and the modern, because history—you know, we grew up, our generation grew up watching Mister Rogers' Neighborhood.

**Teresa:** It sounds like he has a few fans in the audience.

[scattered cheers]

**Travis:** And now, our daughter is a huge fan. Her favorite show is Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood—

[scattered cheers, one very loud one in particular]

**Travis:** And it's so—like, it's a very big bookend—bookend to my life? I'm not about to die, what am I saying?!

**Teresa:** [laughs]

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** Oh, no! Oh, goodness gracious.

**Teresa:** It's quite nostalgic for us.

**Travis:** Yes, indeed!

**Teresa:** Because we recognize a lot of the songs, even some of the video clips are reused? I don't—

**Travis:** Yeah, don't judge 'em.

**Teresa:** Well, I mean, here's the thing. I definitely recognized Going to the Crayon Factory format.

**Travis:** Oh, yes.

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** That's a classic episode!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** So, not only did Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, but also the land of make-believe that Daniel Tiger lives in also has a crayon factory?

**Travis:** They had a crayon factory, and I assume other factories as well, but they have yet to address those. I'm sure it'll come up. Where do the clothes get made? I don't know. Does Trolley run on gasoline?

**Teresa:** These are all questions—

**Travis:** Is he diesel?

**Teresa:** —for another show.

**Travis:** Electric? You would hope he's electric! Does he have a soul?

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** That's something I think about all the time when I watch Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, 'cause they talk to Trolley, and sometimes he'll ding in response,

which means he's processing what they're saying, so at the very least he's very advanced AI!

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** And yet, they command him around?

**Teresa:** I'm staring at the water bottle that I wish was wine.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** I just—Trolley just doesn't seem to have a lot of free will? That's a different show. We'll talk about this later.

**Teresa:** Yes, it's a different show. So—

**Travis:** So, Mister Rogers.

**Teresa:** —[laughs] Mister Rogers. You know, here's the thing.

**Travis:** He was a sniper?

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** With tattoos—

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** —all over his arms.

**Teresa:** No. Mm-mm. He was also not a drill sergeant. I think I've heard that rumor about him and Bob Ross, and I think that Bob Ross—

**Travis:** Wait, I thought the Bob Ross one was real!

**Teresa:** —was actually a drill sergeant.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Teresa:** Or he was a—

**Travis:** You were about to shake me to my very core.

**Teresa:** —he was at least in the military. But Fred Rogers was not. He did, however, make a very impassioned speech in order to um... persuade the committee on the budgetary decisions during President Nixon—

**Travis:** He saved PBS.

**Teresa:** I mean, yeah.

[audience cheers]

**Teresa:** You may have seen that. Anyway, let's get some of the, you know, facts and figures out of the way, here.

**Travis:** Time to exposé Mister Rogers. Here's all the messed up stuff he did!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** That would be a very short show.

**Travis:** Yeah. Aw. I know.

**Teresa:** And, uh, my clock says we have 25 minutes left, so—

**Travis:** Oh boy.

**Teresa:** —we got a longer show than that. Um... so, Mister Rogers was born on March 20th—

**Travis:** Oh, we just missed it.

[scattered laughter]

**Travis:** His birthday. What? That wasn't a joke! We did just miss his birthday!

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** Look at a calendar!

**Teresa:** The celebration of his birth occurs every year, even though he is passed on. About 40 miles east of Pittsburgh—

[two or three whoops]

**Teresa:** Oh! People are familiar with Pittsburgh!

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** Land of steel and rivers. Industry!

**Teresa:** What? Okay. So, he was kind—

**Travis:** I've never been.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** I'm from Cincinnati. [fake derisive laughter] I wouldn't go to *Pittsburgh*.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** He was kind of a sickly kid. Had several of the, you know, what we would have called childhood diseases—[under a cough] preventable diseases.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** [clears throat] And he would often be quarantined up in his bedroom with very little to do, and he developed his extensive imagination, sitting there playing games to himself.

**Travis:** Listen. Sometimes we do really funny episodes, and sometimes we do episodes where, like, y'all probably gonna cry?

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** I'm probably gonna cry? I'm gonna have a hard time making goofs about Mister Rogers, 'cause I'm just gonna sit here like, "Yeah! Yeah he did! He's a—he's a hero!"

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Um, and very early on he learned to play the piano, and that was his main form of emotional expression.

**Travis:** That and sweaters.

**Teresa:** And sw—sweaters.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** He learned about sweaters at a very young age!

**Teresa:** [laughs] So, I mean, because he—

**Travis:** No, I can make jokes. It's fi—okay!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** You can make jokes.

**Travis:** Okay, we're through the woods! Phew!

**Teresa:** You found some, you found some.

**Travis:** That was scary for a second! Alright, alright, alright.

**Teresa:** Something that we are just coming to terms with in our society is toxic masculinity—

[scattered cheers]

**Teresa:** —and this is—yeah. And that was one of the character traits that was kind of cultivated in young men of the time, so he didn't really feel like he could laugh or cry or really express himself, other than through music.

**Travis:** And—sorry, around what time was he born? Like, what year?

**Teresa:** ... Oh no.

**Travis:** [laughs]

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** My notes say 1998, and that's not right.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** That's—there's no way that's true.

[audience laughter grows]

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** [distantly] Paul knows. Honey, Paul knows.

[laughter continues]

**Teresa:** [loudly] 1928, thank you Paul!

[audience cheers loudly]

**Travis:** Paul knew. Now, 19—

**Teresa:** I will be doing the rest of the podcast from under the table, thanks!

**Travis:** 19-*twenty*-eight.

**Teresa:** [quietly] Yeah.

**Travis:** Like, one number was wrong. I think that's still okay.

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** She's still doing a great job.

[audience cheers loudly]

**Travis:** If he was born in 1998, he would be making, like, YouTube vlog videos.



[audience laughs]

**Travis:** And he'd probably be terrible. Not that everyone born in 1998 is terrible. Just 95% of them.

[audience laughs and cheers]

**Teresa:** [sighs] It's so hot in here.

**Travis:** [through laughter] Look to your left. Look to your right.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Okay. [pauses] We'll fix that in post.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Teresa:** Alright. He acquired a bachelor's degree in music composition at Rollins College in Florida in 1951. He did, however, go to Dartmouth before that, and that's where that famous commencement speech is at. If you haven't seen it, you should look it up on YouTube. It is amah-zing.

Um, and music, as I said, would play a key role in his life, because he not only voiced all the puppets, conceived the show, but he also wrote all of the music for Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. So it was—

**Travis:** Yeah!

**Teresa:** —it was really, like, a one man show.

**Travis:** He's a hero!

[audience laughs and cheers]

**Teresa:** Um, he met his wife, Joanne, there at Rollins.

**Travis:** Okay. Not on the show.

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Okay. He met her in the land of make-believe. She was a puppet.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** No, he's a hero! Dangit!

**Teresa:** [loudly] Don't cross that line, McElroy!

**Travis:** Travis!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Okay. So—

**Travis:** It's a funny premise, though.

**Teresa:** —his senior year of—

**Travis:** A person being married to a puppet? Hilarious!

**Teresa:** I'm ignoring you now.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** His senior year of college he was all set to become a minister, which he would, eventually. But—

**Travis:** What?!

**Teresa:** Yeah! Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Okay.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** He never wore a collar, but he was a Presbyterian minister.

**Travis:** Whoa.

**Teresa:** I'll get to that.

**Travis:** Okay, alright. Sorry!

**Teresa:** Um, and so, on his senior year, he came home one summer and found, in the middle of the family living room was this newfangled device, a television set.

**Travis:** [simultaneously] A puppet.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** [muppet voice] "Hello, Fred!"

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** "Yes?"

[creepy muppet voice] "I'm your destiny, Fred!"

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** And it—it so moved him, the programming that was available at the time for children so moved him that he ended up putting off seminary to go work in television! It was like a calling, one might say.

**Travis:** Same thing happened to Jerry Seinfeld.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** It was the name that popped in my head.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** It's a dumb joke. Please, continue on, my intelligent wife.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** He was hired as an assistant producer at NBC, because [through laughter] there were only, like, three networks, so if... you know. People got hired because they're like, "This is new! We need people!"

Not to say that he wasn't qualified, but, like, come on. NBC? Like... anyway.

**Travis:** No, hold on. I think that's okay. He was studying to be, you know, a minister? I would say he wasn't qualified to work in TV just yet. I think that's a safe bet to make, honey! You know what? You're all wrong, she's right!

[audience cheers and applauds]

**Teresa:** He was later promoted to floor director for the Lucky Strike Hit Parade, the Kate Smith Hour, and NBC Opera Theater, so he was pretty good at it.

**Travis:** Yeah. The Lucky Strike Hit Parade, Opium Presents, all kind of shows!

**Teresa:** We know a lot of things now—

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Teresa:** —that they didn't know then!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Like... cigarettes are not good for people who are pregnant.

**Travis:** They're just not good! Cigarettes... dot dot dot... not good!

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** That's my favorite scene in Mad Men, where he's like, "What if we're just honest?"

"You're fired, Don!"

"Aw."

"But if we lie, you're re-hired!"

**Teresa:** So, at the request of the first community-sponsored educational television station in the nation, WQED, he moved back to Pennsylvania—

**Travis:** We got some fans in the audience?

**Teresa:** Ooh!

[audience cheers]

**Teresa:** Yes! He moved back to Pennsylvania, and they wanted him to develop the first children's program for the station. Um... it was called The Children's Corner. I mean, it was okay. It wasn't, like, standout awesome, as opposed to, like, some of the other things that were going on, because although it was hosted by a fairly charismatic woman, they had puppets and music and—and they often used, like, kind of B-roll, it wasn't what he was looking for. It was still—

**Travis:** It didn't have the soul.

**Teresa:** Yeah, it was still—

**Travis:** The heart.

**Teresa:** —a little too simple, a little too slapstick, a kind—you know. I have to imagine it's something like Punch and Judy, if anybody's heard of that.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

[scattered whoops]

**Teresa:** Yeah. I mean, that's the puppet section. But, like, it was just kinda okay.

**Travis:** [loudly] It didn't respect children! Didn't treat them with the respect they deserve!

[scattered cheers]

**Travis:** Children.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** I know I said that like a joke, but... I mean it?

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** It really wasn't. So, he felt like they could improve on this. So he was invited to create another television show for the CBC Network in Canada.

**Travis:** And it was M.A.S.H.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Little known fact! It was from his experience in the military. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** And that was in 1963—I'm so sorry, honey. I just have to ignore your jokes. I got a lot of stuff to get through.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** No, that's fair! No, no, no, I get it, I get it. Why should it be different onstage than it is at home?

[audience laughs loudly]

**Teresa:** At home I ignore your jokes to encourage you to workshop them.

**Travis:** That is true.

[audience laughs and cheers]

**Travis:** That is true. If you think my jokes are bad now, you should've heard 'em at home.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** I only laugh at the really good ones at home.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** It really helps.

**Travis:** About once a year.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Okay. Um... but they moved back to Pittsburgh. They seem to kind of be all over the place, here. But moved back to Pittsburgh in 1966, and in 1968... [dramatic pause] The first Mister Rogers' Neighborhood... was broadcast.

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** Now, I do—

**Teresa:** Can you guess what this show, the plot line was about?

**Travis:** [quietly] No?

**Teresa:** Well, it's, uh—

**Travis:** Puppets?

**Teresa:** No? The plot line, not the characters.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Okay. Some of you may recognize this as a modern theme. King Friday wanted to build a wall.

[audience groans]

**Travis:** Huh!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Because he was irritated that people were changing things. He didn't want things to change.

**Travis:** Huh! Huh!

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** Timeless!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** And so, the citizens of the neighborhood—

**Travis:** Overthrew him!

[audience cheers loudly and applauds]

**Teresa:** Well, yeah!

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Teresa:** They tied peaceful messages of love and kindness to balloons—

**Travis:** For a second I thought you were gonna say they tied him up.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** —to balloons, and they floated them over to the wall, and after King Friday tried to shoot them down but failed, he instead saw that his neighborhood, the people of his—of his, uh—what do you call it? Land. Fine.

**Travis:** [laughs] His fealty.

**Teresa:** Wanted tenderness—

**Travis:** His serfs.

**Teresa:** —and peaceful existence. So, they took the wall down.

**Travis:** Huh.

[audience cheers and applauds]



**Travis:** I also—just math-wise, this is not—I know it's a lot of, like, Facebook shared post thing, but he was 40 when he started Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. He was 40 when he started a thing that made him iconic. Just think about that when you're like, "I'm 22 and I haven't done anything!" That's okay!

[audience cheers]

**Teresa:** That's alright. You'll get there.

**Travis:** Yeah! Maybe when you're 40, you'll just completely, like, destroy the concept of toxic masculinity all by yourself.

[audience laughs and cheers loudly]

**Travis:** [loudly] He's a hero!

[audience cheers]

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** Hey, everybody! I sure do hope that you're enjoying this live episode of Shmanners, recorded in San Jose California. Uh, it sure was fun and heartwarming to record, but real quick, why don't you take a second to tell you all about Quip. Quip is a revolution in tooth brushing, I would say.

You know, how often do you think about your tooth health, and how well you're taking care of your teeth? Well, let me tell you something. It's important, and most of us don't do it properly. But Quip is gonna change all of that, with sensitive sonic vibrations, and built-in two minute timer pulse. Quip was designed to make brushing your teeth more simple, affordable, and even enjoyable!

Brush heads are automatically delivered on a dentist recommended schedule every three months, for just \$5, and Quip is one of the first electric toothbrushes accepted by the American Dental Association, and have thousands of verified five star reviews.

Quip is backed by over 20,000 dental professionals. Quip starts at just \$25, and if you go to [Getquip.com/shmanners](https://www.getquip.com/shmanners) right now, you get your first refill pack for free! With a Quip electric toothbrush. That's your first refill pack free, at [Getquip.com/shmanners](https://www.getquip.com/shmanners).

Real quick, I just wanted to say thank you again to everyone who came out to the San Jose show. Thank you to the City Civic Center for being such a wonderful host, and now, back to the show!

[music plays]

**Janet:** Hi, I'm the JV Club Podcast's Janet Varney, and I used to suffer from indecision. I couldn't choose between Star Wars and Star Trek, whether to call or text, or the best way to cook my eggs. But now, thanks to my weekly dose of We Got This on Maximum Fun, my decisions are made for me! Thanks, Mark and Hal!

**Speaker One:** Warning: We Got This may cause shouting, phone throwing, the illusion that the hosts can hear you, laughter on public transit, and death.

**Speaker Two:** We Got This with Mark and Hal: we know what's best.

[music plays]

**J.:** Hey, everybody, this is host J. Keith van Stratten, host of Go Fact Yourself, a live game show here in the Maximum Fun network. Make sure to listen to our next episode of Go Fact Yourself, with guest Kurt Braunohler.

**Kurt:** I did a show in Flagstaff, Arizona where the venue just didn't list that the show existed.

**Audience:** [laughs]

**Speaker Three:** amazing.

**Kurt:** Uh, and I— and it is the smallest crowd that I've ever done a full hour of stand-up for. It was three people.

**J.:** Wow.

**Speaker Three:** Oh my God.

**J.:** And Sarah Schaefer.

**Sarah:** Yes, I love crafting. It's my hobby. I have a craft nook in my home.

**Speaker Four:** You do?!

**Sarah:** I do, it has all of my supplies displayed in an adorable manner.

**Speaker Four:** Wow!

**Audience:** [applauds]

**Sarah:** Yes! Yes, applause!

**Speaker Five:** Applause for a nook.

**J.:** That's Go Fact Yourself, here at [maximumfun.org](http://maximumfun.org) or wherever you get podcasts.

[music plays]

**Teresa:** This was not the last politically minded episode. He also tackled later the assassination of Bobby Kennedy. He tackled the segregation of swimming pools, the racial segregation of swimming pools—

**Travis:** That's a pretty famous episode, right? Where, like, he has a kiddie pool and he puts his feet in and, I think it's—

**Teresa:** Officer Clemmons.

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** Officer Clemmons.

**Teresa:** Was the neighborhood policeman, police officer. And it was a very hot day, so he invited Officer Clemmons to share the wading pool. So they both are sitting in this little kiddie pool, enjoying the cool water on their feet. It's very tender.

**Travis:** Yeah. Yeah. A hero!

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** I'm about to cry!

**Teresa:** [laughs quietly] Okay. No—

[audience aww's]

**Teresa:** Aww, don't cry, honey!

**Travis:** I am, I know! He's a hero.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** No, listen. I can sit here and say that like a joke, but he is, like, one of my heroes? Of, like, someone I think about—

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** —this is one of the reasons I wanted to talk about this, because now, as a parent, I do see the way that he spoke to children and the way that his lessons... not only taught lessons, but explained why those lessons were important, 'cause that's the thing that still holds true in Daniel Tiger. Like, not only is it like, "Hey, don't be sad." Instead it's, "It's okay to be sad!"

And, like, the lessons are a lot more about, like, instead of just saying, "Don't do that," saying "Here's why that happens." And it's just—it's—he was so ahead of his time, as far as, like, how to speak to children, and treat them like people.

[audience cheers and applauds]

**Teresa:** He would go on to address the subject of superheroes, because there were several children of the country who, in their efforts to be like Superman, found themselves tumbling out of windows. So he had to discuss the difference between people and superheroes.

Again, he talked about death, divorce, getting lost, all of this stuff, because these are the things that he knew—these are the tools that he was able to give children as they grow up.

**Travis:** Once again, remember: '68, so, like, this—for a long time, the things that we taught kids was like, "We'll tell you about that when you're older,"

completely ignoring the fact that, like, a 10 year old understands when someone dies. Like, they don't understand what it means unless you teach them, but they can see, like, this person was there, and now they're not anymore, and to think, like, "They don't—they don't need to get it. I'll tell 'em later," is, like... No! That's completely unhealthy!

He's just so far ahead of his time. I—he's a hero.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

[audience laughs and cheers]

**Teresa:** And, a lot like the themes of the shows that he wrote, he also started the call and response through the television, and you see this a lot on children's programming today. They'll ask a question, like, "How many apples are on this tree?"

[pauses]

**Audience Member:** [distantly] 5.

[audience laughs loudly]

**Teresa:** And then—

**Travis:** Whoever just said 5? You're also a hero.

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** 'Cause you're right! That *is* how many apples were on the tree!

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** And just like you—

**Travis:** Everyone else who didn't answer? Where were you?

**Teresa:** Just like you, the silence in the program encouraged the children to answer, and this is something we see a lot. I mean, we watch a few children's programs, like—

**Travis:** A—a few bajillion.

**Teresa:** —[laughs] Mickey Mouse Clubhouse does this. Daniel Tiger does this.

**Travis:** The Little Einsteins does it.

**Teresa:** The Little Einsteins do these, like—all of this answering in the silence—

**Travis:** [simultaneously] Vampirina doesn't.

**Teresa:** No. Well...

**Travis:** There's just a ghost, and they never address whose soul it is.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** This is—this is a current obsession of Travis's, I guess.

**Travis:** It's a different—I'm just saying, why won't they set him free?

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** Help him finish his unfinished business, then salt and burn his bones. Have they not watched Supernatural?

[audience cheers]

**Travis:** It's not important. Supernatural does this a lot. "How many ghosts are in the tree?"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** And so, very quickly, I would like to walk you through what is called by some of the people who worked on the show—it's called "Freddish", okay? And it is the way that he constructed his scripts, so that it was inclusive, so that children didn't feel talked down to, so that everyone could identify with the situation at hand. So, here's the example:

"It is dangerous to play in the street."

Now, that's something that even a preschooler can start to understand, but it needs to be rephrased in a positive manner in Freddish, so the next—you change it, so now:

"It is good to play where it is safe."

Okay, that's positive. Great. Now you can rephrase the idea, bearing in mind that preschoolers can't make the, you know, subtler distinctions, and need to be directed to authorities they can trust. So:

"Ask your parents where it is safe to play."

Okay, so now you need to eliminate all elements that could be considered prescriptive. Okay. So, we wanna get rid of the word "ask," 'cause we don't wanna tell people what to do. So we have:

"Your parents will tell you where it is safe to play."

Okay, well—so now we need to get rid of anything that expresses certainty, so we're gonna change "will" to "can."

"Your parents can tell you where it is safe to play."

Alright. So now—[laughs quietly] it's a 10 step process, you guys. So now, we need to rephrase the idea to eliminate that might not apply to all children, because unfortunately some children don't live with parents.

"Your favorite grownups can tell you where it is safe to play."

[audience aww's]

**Teresa:** Right?

**Travis:** [high pitched noise]

**Teresa:** Then, we need a simple motivational idea that will give these preschoolers a reason to follow, because, you know, we have to let them know why.

"Your favorite grownups can tell you where it is safe to play. It is good to listen to them." Right?

**Travis:** [high pitched noise]

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs] Alright. Now we know that it's good, but that's another value judgment, so here is it rephrased again. This is back to step three. So:

"Your favorite grownups can tell you where it is safe to play. It is important to try to listen to them."

Okay? And this is the last step, here. You need to relate it to some kind of development station that preschoolers can understand, so here's the final line:

"Your favorite grownups can tell you where it is safe to play. It is important to try to listen to them, and listening is an important part of growing."

[audience cheers and applauds]

**Travis:** Right?! And, once again, I just have to reiterate, like, the thing that's amazing about that is the respect and the care that goes in to thinking through that, instead of just saying "Don't play in the street." Right? Like, that's a great lesson! Yes, of course, don't play in the street, yes, absolutely! But if you said that to me and I hadn't learned that lesson when I was a kid, I would say, "Why not?" And then if someone said, "Because," I'd be like, "Okay, shut up!" [laughs] Like—

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** —and so this idea of, like, the nuance and the respect that goes into— and that's why I really wanted to talk about this, 'cause... manners isn't just something that we teach kids to use when they are adults. It is something that not only should we teach kids when they are kids, but we should teach adults how to have manners with kids?



[audience cheers and applauds]

**Travis:** Because this is—this is a thing that I now find myself, like, constantly having conversations with Bebe in which, like—for example, this is—we had a whole thing about sharing, where I was trying—not just, like, "Hey, you have to share." And, like, "Why? I want this!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Why would I give this to somebody else?" And, like, find—and it took me a while of going through the same kind of thought process, of saying, like, "Well, you should share because it makes the other person happy. And when other people are happy, it makes you happy!" Like, happiness is like a shared—sharing, you share your thing and they share their happiness, and it's an economy of sharing—and, like—

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** -[loudly] I didn't use the word "economy of sharing," of course—

**Teresa:** He put it—he put it a little more simply.

[audience laughs loudly]

**Teresa:** For our two year old.

**Travis:** She's—she's two. But, like, it also—this is the other thing that—I really think one of the things that made Fred Rogers such a lovely human being—and, I mean, I'm inferring, but for me, talking to Bebe that way... it's that thing of like with martial arts sometimes, where they say, like, "The only way to improve at a certain level is to teach other people," and, like, once you start explaining something to someone else, and saying, like, "And this is why, this is why this is important."

Like, it makes you actually think about it in a deeper way than just the things that you take for granted, of just, like, "Well, we share 'cause it's nice." It's like, "Yeah, but why is it nice? Why do you do it? What is empathy? Why does it matter to think about someone's feelings other than we just should think about someone's feelings? Like, how does it—what does it change?"

And, like, once you start teaching it, it makes you understand it better. And so, I do find him to be an inspiration.

**Teresa:** Now, quickly, quickly, before—

**Travis:** And a hero.

[audience cheers]

**Teresa:** —before we end, I would love to list off some of his accolades. So, he not only became a Presbyterian minister, he also got a graduate degree—

**Travis:** [simultaneously] Was a sniper.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** —in child development—not listening.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Um, he wrote several books. So, he wrote *Mister Rogers' Playtime Book*, *Mister Rogers' Talks With Parents*, *Dear Mister Rogers*, *Does It Ever Rain In Your Neighborhood?* *Mister Rogers' Parenting Book*—he also received more than 40 honorary degrees from colleges like Yale, and Hobart and William Smith, and Carnegie-Mellon, and Boston University, and St. Vincent College, University of Pittsburgh, North Carolina State University, University of Connecticut, Waynesburg College, Rollins College and Dartmouth College.

[audience cheers and applauds]

**Teresa:** Phew!

**Travis:** I also—one more thing I wanna say, 'cause we talked about that he did, like, the call and response thing, right? I also would be willing to bet that he was the first, if not an early pioneer of, like, the clubhouse mentality children's show, right?

Of like, having the nooks and crannies, the things that you went back to where you're like, "Here's the fish tank, here's the trolley, here's the ca—" Like, that he

had specific areas that he could set scenes in that it made it feel like a special place, for, like, you and him to go to? Oh, I'm gonna cry again.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But, um, that feeling of like, it's not just wacky adventures, that it's like, here is a place where you can be yourself, and that we can learn these lessons in safety—I *am* gonna cry!

**Teresa:** Don't cry, honey.

**Travis:** I know!

**Teresa:** You'll smear your—your makeup.

**Travis:** I know.

[audience laughs]

**Teresa:** Okay. If you would like to learn more about Fred Rogers, there is a Fred Rogers Center located at St. Vincent College, which is dedicated to nurturing interactions with young children, and the thoughtful use of new educational technologies.

Here is the kicker: their mailbox says "Speedy delivery" on the side.

**Travis:** [gasps]

[audience gasps]

**Travis:** Oh! My heart! It's grown painfully three sizes!

**Teresa:** [laughs]

[audience laughs]

**Travis:** Alright, so that's gonna do it for us. Thank you all—

[audience cheers loudly and applauds]

**Travis:** —thank you, new friends.

[cheering continues]

**Travis:** We're gonna take a quick break, by which I mean an intermission, while we go off the stage, and those young upstarts the McElroy brothers get ready to come on for the second act.

Uh, we would like to encourage you—out in the lobby, there is gonna be some posters out there that were designed by Caleb Cleveland. There might still be some signed ones out there, if you wanna grab some of those. They're absolutely gorgeous. I think they were, like, one of my top five favorite posters we've ever had.

And also, you know, grab some drinks, and maybe say something nice to each other? Who knows? Let's see. What else?

**Teresa:** Well, we always like to thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for our theme music.

[audience cheers]

**Teresa:** It's available as a ringtone where those are found. It is a banger, you guys!

Thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. You can reach us @shmannerscast on Twitter.

Thank you to Keely Weis Photography for our cover banner for the fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners. Please join that on Facebook if you love to give and get great advice!

**Travis:** Thank you to Maximumfun.org for hosting us. Thank you, San Jose. Thank you to all of you!

[audience cheers and applauds]

**Travis:** Please join us again for the next episode!

**Teresa:** No RSVP required.

**Travis:** You've been listening to Shmanners...

**Teresa:** Manners, Shmanners! Get it?

[audience cheers and applauds]

[theme music plays]

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