

00:00:00	Biz Ellis	Host	Hi. I'm Biz.
00:00:01	Theresa Thorn	Host	And I'm Theresa.
00:00:02	Biz	Host	Due to the pandemic, we bring you <i>One Bad Mother</i> straight from our homes—including such interruptions as: children! Animal noises! And more! So let's all get a little closer while we have to be so far apart. And remember—we are doing a good job.
00:00:20	Music	Music	"Summon the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
00:00:24	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> —how about we don't? We talk to author Julie Vick about being an introvert while parenting. Plus, Biz has a horrible realization.
00:00:35	Crosstalk Caller	Crosstalk Caller	<b>Biz and caller:</b> Wooooo! Uh, hi! I'm calling with a check-in. I started a new job recently and I really love it.
00:00:38			<i>[Biz cheers.]</i>  And I haven't quit my old job yet, but I haven't decided when or if I'm actually gonna quit the old job. I'm lucky that I can have two jobs and still see my kids. I'm off one job for the summer. It's complicated. I won't bother you.  <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>  But this morning at breakfast, my husband and I were talking about how our three-year-old is having a hard time adjusting. He's gone down to like a part-time schedule at daycare instead of full time and with the new job I'm home more. Except for on three days of the week. And he says, "I don't... want to <u>guilt</u> you. I don't mean to guilt you. But I think she misses you."  <i>[Biz screams in sympathy.]</i>  <i>[Laughs.]</i> Um. Okay! Thanks? Not quite sure... okay. Yeah. I'm sure she does miss me. Because I'm missing bedtime. I miss her, too! We're not in a place where I can just <u>not</u> work. And I'd rather work in a job that I like. I mean, if I have to be away from my kid—my three-year-old and eighteen-month-old—I would like to enjoy what I'm doing, at least. So yeah. I'm... "I don't mean to guilt you." That's how I'm doing. Anyway. I'm driving to my new job that I like!  <i>[Biz laughs.]</i>  Bye!  00:02:17 Biz Host <i>[Laughs.]</i> Okay. First of all, you're doing a great job. This was a great check-in. Congratulations on having a job that you enjoy. And you're right—I—everything else sounds very complicated in terms of two jobs and no job in the summer. Whatever. I'm with you. It sounds like that's really great for you! That's awesome! Now, let's talk about the language issue. Guys? <i>[Laughs.]</i> Wording—wording is important. I am sure that your partner was not trying to guilt you. I am gonna go with their statement that they are not trying to guilt you. However. That wording... is <u>loaded</u> with guilt! <i>[Laughs.]</i> I don't

think—look, we all kind of fail at that and I think depending on where we're from, the kind of language we grew up around, I can see how "she misses you" are the best words that they could come up with at that moment.

Other words could be "the schedule has been disrupted. Our child is definitely feeling that, but I'm happy to step in and create a new routine with our child so that you can enjoy going to work without worrying about it too much." That's a healthier way to put it *[through laughter]* because "missing you" is an unsolvable problem. Outside of quitting. And that's not an option many of us have! It's so funny. This is gonna totally relate to what I'm gonna talk about in my check-in later. So I just want you to know that I think you're amazing. Y'know. We got enough to feel guilty about. There's actually really no controlling sometimes what we do feel guilty about. So... none of that's helpful. You're doing an amazing job. And congratulations on your job and guess what? Everybody is actually fine at home. *[Laughs.]* So... woo! Thank you for calling. And now, it is time for... thank-you's!

00:04:38 Music Music

Heavy electric guitar and driving percussion overlaid with "Ohh, oh-oh, oh-oh" and "Hey-ey-ey-ey-ey" lyrics.

00:04:53 Biz Host

*[Singing]* Thank you... thank you... thank you. *[Regular voice]* Thank you, everyone in the medical profession. Above and beyond. That's what's going on here. You guys are going above and beyond. I want to thank librarians for keeping books in our hands all summer, and offering programs to help us get through the summer. I want to thank everybody who works in transportation. Hey, school bus drivers, you're back! I see you. Thank you. *[Laughs.]* 'Cause that's a... that is a job. *[Laughs.]* And you gotta carry around potentially a whole bunch of young, unvaccinated kids! So I really see you and I appreciate the care that you are putting in and giving to our kids.

Sanitation workers? I don't think there's ever been a time in the history of your service that you shouldn't be thanked. You should be thanked. That is hard work. Keeping all of the dirt and filth *[through laughter]* that we tend to just shed all over the place? I appreciate you. IT, you're doing it. You're helping us stay running. I appreciate it. Teachers, you're back. School staff, you're back. School nurses, you're back. This is not an easy time to be back, and I appreciate that you are and I appreciate the stress and the... fact that there still really isn't an easy choice when it comes to being in or out of the classroom. And a lot of the demands that are being placed on you right now. So I see you.

And finally, vaccines. Thank you, everybody who has gotten a vaccine. I cannot emphasize enough that we need even more people to get vaccines. And let's be kind about that. Just because somebody hasn't gotten *[through laughter]* a vaccine doesn't mean they're a complete jerk. There's a lot of misinformation out there. Some people don't have access, right? Sometimes people can't go in to get the vaccine 'cause they have like three little kids in their house that are under the age of three! Sometimes we can't even get to the grocery store in that scenario! Some people might think it costs money, even though it doesn't. There are a lot of reasons that could be going on as to why somebody has not gotten vaccinated

yet. Let's try and think of it as "not vaccinated yet" versus "everybody who's not vaccinated... willfully not getting vaccinated." Let's go out, help each other, and be supportive. Thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

00:07:46 Biz Host

Now here is my check-in. I had this moment walking through the house last night. I was very tired. I was very tired. I... like many of you know, we've been moving my folks out here and I have spent the last couple of days unboxing and setting up furniture and all that kind of fun stuff. It has been an absolute thrill to see my parents with my kids. That's been the fucking best. But I'm tired. And the kids, when I get home, don't really care. *[Laughs.]* And work doesn't really care. And... y'know, pickup times don't care. Y'know? Like all the stuff is still there.

And then I had that moment where I—and guys? I should've had this moment. Why is this a moment that comes so late for us? But it's that moment where I realized that I'm really not gonna get it back. *[Laughs.]* I'm really not. I'm really not... going to get back the... bandwidth or the space that I had before kids got in my house. To add anything for myself is like adding to what already exists. And I think I was thinking that adding something meant replacing something. Like, taking something away. Not adding to. It's like having dessert but having not left any room for it. And then having to decide if you really wanna eat it! But it's my favorite thing! It would be so nice to have this dessert! I have literally no room to eat this thing.

And... y'know, don't worry. I had a big, long talk with my therapist about it today. And I know it's about boundaries. And I know that as... new choices come along that I wanna make, like our caller who checked in, there's gonna be a lot of guilt tied in with that as to having to make clearer boundaries to the members of my family so that I can do the different things that I have put off for a while. So I just... that's a great realization. I mean it's not a happy one. I'm actually really pissed about it and I'm just gonna sit in it in like a sad way. *[Laughs.]* For like maybe another 24 hours? And then move along. So... there you go. Speaking of sitting alone in a room for 24 hours—*[Laughs.]* That's a dream that we all have! And I think that ties in nicely to what we're going to talk about today, which is what it's like to be an introvert while parenting, with author Julie Vick.

00:10:26 Music Music  
00:10:27 Theresa Host

Banjo strums; cheerful banjo music continues through dialogue. Please—take a moment to remember: If you're friends of the hosts of *One Bad Mother*, you should assume that when we talk about other moms, we're talking about you.

00:10:34 Biz Host

If you are married to the host of *One Bad Mother*, we definitely are talking about you.

00:10:38 Theresa Host  
00:10:41 Biz Host

Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.

Biz and Theresa's children are brilliant, lovely, and exceedingly extraordinary.

00:10:45 Theresa Host

Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

*[Banjo music fades out.]*

*[Biz and Julie repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss the weekly topic.]*

00:10:51	Biz	Host	This week, we are talking to Julie Vick, who is a writer whose work has appeared in <i>New Yorker Daily Shouts</i> , <i>Parents Magazine</i> , <i>Real Simple</i> , and one of my favorites, <i>McSweeney's Internet Tendency</i> . She teaches writing at the University of Colorado Denver <u>and</u> is the author of the new book, <i>Babies Don't Make Small Talk (So Why Should I?)</i> , a humorous advice book for introverted parents navigating the early years of parenthood. Welcome, Julie! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:11:22	Julie	Guest	Hi! Thank you for having me! It's great to be here.
00:11:25	Biz	Host	It's really nice to have you here. Before we get into all things introvert and parenting, I wanna ask you—who lives in your house?
00:11:36	Julie	Guest	Okay. Yeah. Sure. So me, obviously. And then my husband, Dave, and I have two boys who are seven and nine years old. And then we have two three-month-old kittens as well, named Biscuit and Muffin.
00:11:51	Biz	Host	Ohhhhh!
00:11:52	Julie	Guest	Yes! I know! They actually have longer names than that, which I forget. But I think it's Muffin Squirrel and Biscuit Link Minecraft are their full names.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			Yes. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:12:02	Biz	Host	I like to throw a "Sir Biscuit McStuffinpuff." Right? Or a "President—
00:12:11	Julie	Guest	"Yeah. No. That's—wow! Congratulations!
00:12:13	Biz	Host	Thank you. Thank you.
			That—I—ooh, I want a kitten so bad! Except kittens are like <u>also</u> crazy.
00:12:19	Julie	Guest	But they are also crazy. Yeah. Yeah.
00:12:20	Biz	Host	They are—I like the old cat at the shelter that's like, "Look. Let's just agree—"
			<i>[Julie laughs.]</i>
00:12:31	Julie	Guest	"We're gonna just live in the same house." I'm like, "No, no!" <i>[Laughs.]</i> I know! We were initially gonna get older ones but my kids, they really wanted kittens. And a lot of the older ones are like, "No kids!" <i>[Laughs.]</i> "This cat can't handle your kids!" <i>[Laughs.]</i> So yeah.
00:12:42	Biz	Host	That's right. Our agreement is, I sit in your house with <u>you</u> . Not with wild children.
00:12:50	Julie	Guest	Not with children. Yeah.
00:12:51	Biz	Host	Yeah. Well I think that's absolutely amazing. Good job. Seven and nine. That... that's something!
00:12:59	Julie	Guest	Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.
00:13:01	Biz	Host	How's it going?
00:13:02	Julie	Guest	<i>[Through laughter]</i> It's going... it's going alright, y'know. I mean —
00:13:05	Biz	Host	She says, from the inside of a closet.
00:13:08	Julie	Guest	<i>[Through laughter]</i> I know! I'm in a closet, which is like the perfect place for me to hide. Yeah. As you know, this past year and change with the pandemic has been really hard. And we've been... during the school year we bounced in and out of remote and this year I think—fingers crossed—we're gonna start. But now I feel like the whole anxiety is back again. Right? It's like, what's gonna happen with Delta? Is it gonna shut it down? Is it—yeah. Like, we don't really know.
00:13:35	Biz	Host	People need to stop it. Yeah. They need to not fuck this up for us.

00:13:43	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[Julie laughs.]</i> <b>Julie:</b> <i>[Through laughter]</i> That's what I think all parents are thinking. Like, yeah. Yeah. Come on! I know! So.
00:13:50	Biz	Host	<b>Biz:</b> Get. A damn. Shot. Like—come on, please, god! I would like to just say, how has the last year been for you as an introvert? <i>[Laughs.]</i> But before I ask that question, I am obviously <u>not</u> an introvert. I can safely say that. I definitely <u>enjoy</u> downtime and alone time and children have probably... maybe swung the pendulum, as it were, at times. But I know that at my core I am not. So in case anybody else out there doesn't really understand the introvert experience, because they're spending too much time—like me—running around and wondering why people won't play with them— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Julie laughs.]</i>
00:14:40	Julie	Guest	Talk to me—aaah! Talk to me about what it means to be an introvert. Okay, sure. Yeah. And I think it causes confusion sometimes. Especially the difference between introversion and shyness. But so I think that as an introverted personality, you just have a preference for quieter, calmer environments. And you get drained by social interactions. Whereas an extrovert draws energy from social interactions and from sort of external stimulation. So that's at the core of introverts versus extrovert. And some people are ambiverts. So they're sort of in the middle. Right? And then shyness, I think, gets kind of mixed in there. And I also would say that I am shy. <i>[Laughs.]</i> So some introverts are shy as well, but some are not. So shyness is more about feeling anxious in social situations or fearing sort of negative judgment, I think? So—and then sometimes social anxiety disorder is more sort of extreme version of shyness.
00:15:37	Biz	Host	Alright. Well then let me ask my question again—how has the pandemic—
			<i>[Julie laughs.]</i>
00:15:46	Julie	Guest	—been for you as an introvert? <i>[Laughs.]</i> Yeah! I know! I know! So it's funny 'cause I think it hasn't... I think, y'know, I don't know 'cause I'm not extroverted. But I think in some ways it has been easier? Because I do fine with a lot of sort of home time and alone time. Although I do still like to socialize. Y'know. With some friends.
00:16:05	Biz	Host	Occasionally see a human face?
00:16:07	Julie	Guest	Yeah! I do. Just 'cause you're an introvert doesn't mean you don't ever wanna see anyone. So I have missed—especially—I mean, it's gotten a bit better this summer. I feel like, y'know, we've been able to do a bit more. But I did miss being able to, y'know, go and hang out with good friends and things like that. So... I think... initially when things shut down I felt kind of like, "This is kinda nice!"
00:16:31	Biz	Host	Yay!
00:16:32	Julie	Guest	Yeah!
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>

I don't mind it! And plus just as a parent, we're so overscheduled a lot of the times and driving people around and doing this and that. And so it was kind of nice to have a break from that initially. But then... yeah. I think, y'know, Zoom gets old and it's not the same as talking with someone in person.

00:16:48 Biz Host Yeah. But I gotta say, also, you can like being at home and doing home things, but I like doing at-home things by myself. And... suddenly I have my partner, he's working from home, and my two children—lovely as they may be—are home. And three cats. And I think that sensation, for me, was... “Oh my god, there is no place I can go. There's—y'know. There's no place.”

00:17:25 Julie Guest Yeah. This is a good point.

*[Biz laughs.]*

Yeah. I think that was really hard, especially with remote school and when we were in that. And both my husband and I were working from home. So then you're just never alone. Yeah. I know there's some articles about, y'know, escaping to your car to eat sushi or something. Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:17:44 Biz Host I'm gonna tie that in very quickly to your book. So you just came out with this really fantastic new book, *Babies Don't Make Small Talk (So Why Should I?): The Introvert's Guide to Surviving Parenthood*. And there's lots in here. But one of my—*[Laughs.]* Parts that had me rolling—and I'm not a professional book interviewer. Author interviewer. I jump around and I give away the plot right away.

00:18:15 Julie Guest *[Through laughter]* That's fine.

00:18:16 Biz Host It was the butler. But you've got this little section on travel reviews of everyday parent getaways. And this was so relevant during the pandemic. So you've got like the different places you can go to be by yourself with star ratings. As if it was a travel guide. So there's, like, the closet. Like, it's two stars.

00:18:36 Julie Guest *[Through laughter]* Which is where I am.

00:18:38 Biz Host The laundry room gets three. Pumping gas. But the one that made me roll was under the bed gets you four-and-a-half stars. It says, “Not the best hiding spot when you've got a crawling baby, but this getaway is great for parents of slightly older children, especially if their kids are afraid of monsters.”

*[Julie laughs.]*

Spot on. And what's great is I'm like, “Yeah, alright. That's actually a really good idea. I am just gonna lay there. With my arms kinda spread out. There's like no—” But that actually sounds kinda nice! I know, right? Yeah. Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:19:11 Julie Guest

*[Biz laughs.]*

It's like maybe satirical but maybe not. You can actually try it out. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I know. I am in a closet literally right now recording it. So. *[Laughs.]*

00:19:23 Biz Host That's totally fair.

00:19:25 Julie Guest Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:19:26 Biz Host So talk to me about writing the book. I mean, there really isn't... there's something about—you have kids. Somehow kids get in your house.

00:19:37 Julie Guest Mm-hm. Somehow. Somehow.  
00:19:39 Biz Host Somehow. A lot of different ways. There are a lot of different ways. Sometimes I'm like, "Did that one just come through the crawlspace? I don't even know where that one came from." And I don't think we're prepared or anybody even talks about just the social obligations alone that suddenly come up. That you never thought you had to do. I mean, it's just like another reminder that you have... like... possibly lost control of having any say *[through laughter]* in what goes on in your life! Right? So talk to me about getting into this book!

00:20:12 Julie Guest Yeah. I mean, I think it's interesting 'cause I think there is a lot of stuff about introversion out there but not as much about parents, specifically? And so it was an interesting process writing it 'cause I think I went back to some—like, Susan Cain's book, *Quiet*, is a famous book on introversion. And some of the sort of things that can be more challenging for you. And I think it made me realize, like, one was noise! Obviously I think annoying noises are probably annoying for no matter, y'know, if you're an extrovert or an introvert. There's probably some noises that annoy you. But I think that is a trigger point for me. When things are getting really loud, or certain noises over and over again. And just realizing this through the process of writing it I think I realized some sort of trigger points for me. Which are maybe good to know about, y'know?

*[Biz laughs.]*

Like I think I sort of knew it, but I was like, "Oh. Maybe. This is what I need to cut back on a bit more. Being sort of overstimulated." So it was interesting, I feel like, y'know, through writing it I did learn some more things. And then you're right. The social obligation—I mean, it is interesting. I think that's something that I didn't think about at all. Is just—you change! Y'know, it's such a big change to go through and you're meeting new people just by the nature of it. And trying to navigate, y'know, new friendships and different parenting styles and who your kids want to hang out with—

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:21:33 Biz Host —versus who you want to hang out with. So.  
00:21:35 Julie Guest Yeah. Versus who you might wanna hang out with. Yeah. Yeah. It doesn't always match up, unfortunately. Yeah. Yeah. But yeah. So I think it's just—it's definitely just a lot and I think it's something I hadn't fully thought about or read about, so I think it's hopefully something that kinda adds to that conversation.  
00:21:51 Biz Host Well, y'know—*[sighs]*. Like all things I love, it's very funny. But the best humor comes from a place of honesty. And it's not just the social obligations. It's really... everything is suddenly there to push buttons you didn't know you had. To push boundaries you didn't know you had. Y'know. You can have really extroverted kids. You can have... y'know, a partner who doesn't need the same thing to rejuvenate or refill. And... y'know, noise—noise is a great example. Even I, as a—I'm an extrovert. I don't get stimulated by noise. In fact, there are times where, y'know, somebody drops a pot and I have my claws in the ceiling like a cat. Y'know? And you're just like, *[inaudible]*. Touching? Touching, I think. Human touch. Human touch is both good and a lot.

00:22:53	Julie	Guest	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Yeah. I think the being “touched out” thing is big. Right? Just especially when you have little kids and they’re just hanging on you all day. And I think there’s maybe been more of that with the pandemic. More sort of, y’know, kids wanting to cling a bit more.
00:23:06	Biz	Host	No, I 100% agree. And again, it’s like this constant pivoting of... what you have space for; what you have to push to give more space for. And then what you need to push back on. I want to talk about some of the— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Some of the places you can go as an introvert to maybe find space. Like... it would be very easy for me to be like, <i>[snottily]</i> “Well if you’re introverted—” ‘cause I’m a total asshole and that’s what I sound like—“Well if you’re introverted, then you can just go online. That must be so nice.” And then I’m like, “Oh, wait. I’ve been online before.” <i>[Laughs.]</i> It is an unfriendly, horrible place. Except for the <i>One Bad Mother</i> community. You’re wonderful.
00:24:02	Julie	Guest	Yeah! Your community is really nice. Yes. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:05	Biz	Host	Well, we struggle. We struggle, but we all try. The goal is—we’re trying. But those early days when you didn’t know where to go—I was in Brooklyn with my first kid. And that place was an infamous place for parent message boards and these parenting groups where people... just... <u>shat</u> on each other. Like, all day. And that’s also a form of noise. That’s also a form of intrusion. But you’ve got amazing insight into the online groups. You have a section—yeah, the rules for online parenting forum fight club.
			<i>[Julie laughs.]</i>
00:24:51	Julie	Guest	Which is so good. Talk to me about that. Yeah! So I mean, I think—like you said—parenting group—y’know, online parenting groups can be really awful and sort of fights erupting all the time. But I think there are, y’know, ones that are better or a better fit. Maybe they’re smaller. Maybe they’re more—I know there’s one specifically for introverted parents. Or specifically for working parents. Or for a certain job.
00:25:17	Biz	Host	Oh yeah. You can—yeah.
00:25:18	Julie	Guest	Yeah. So for me, like, writing groups are some that I’m in. So I think, like... it’s kinda choosing the right one for you? If you’re gonna delve into it? And you probably are gonna delve into it somewhat. Y’know. In this day and age.
00:25:31	Biz	Host	Well it’s better than Google—asking Google questions? Sometimes it’s better to go into a group and see what people are talking about. But yeah.
00:25:39	Julie	Guest	Right. And I think it is a place for people to sort of share feelings. It’s funny. I think they feel comfortable and maybe I think some introverts feel more comfortable sharing sort of in what seems like an anonymous forum rather than, y’know, to their friends or people that knew them. I mean, it depends on the situation. But so yeah. I think being careful about the ones that are not a good fit for you or that you’re getting—I mean, it’s really hard.
00:26:04	Biz	Host	Yeah. No. It is.
00:26:06	Julie	Guest	Y’know? ‘Cause you kind of go on and you want advice but then you get, like, a ton of conflicting advice.
00:26:11	Biz	Host	You get opinion. You don’t get advice. You get—I mean, most of the time it’s an opinion. And that can <u>really</u> make you feel judged and... like you’re failing. And y’know, I have openly cried after



posting things. And the responses. And I'm like, "Jesus fucking Christ! I don't need you to tell—I'm just looking for how to help my kid who doesn't wanna swim learn how to swim. I don't need you to tell me he's gonna die and it will be my fault that he does." That nightmare keeps me up on my own, thank you very much!

00:26:47 Julie Guest Yeah. Yeah. I don't need you to tell me. Yeah.

00:26:50 Biz Host I don't need you to tell me that. Well—book aside, what did you find to be really challenging or surprised you once kids got in your house?

00:27:01 Julie Guest Yeah. I mean, it's funny because I think I say this in the book somewhere, but my husband and I are both very mellow people. *[Laughs.]*

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:27:16 Biz Host And I think I sort of thought, "Oh, my kids will be extremely mellow." Yeah. They're definitely gonna have green eyes because we both have green eyes. And they're gonna definitely be mellow. Yeah.

00:27:24 Julie Guest Mellow. But that does not—we do not necessarily —

00:27:28 Biz Host That's disappointing when that happens. God. Yeah.

00:27:32 Julie Guest So I think that just getting used to, like, y'know, a completely different human in your house and their personality and I don't know. It's funny 'cause I think I have friends who are like, "Oh, well before I had a kid—" Like, they had a more rosy idea? But I feel like I had friends who didn't know it's hard.

00:27:54 Biz Host You went into it way more dark. Way more grounded.

*[Julie laughs.]*

00:28:00 Julie Guest Than the shitshow it could be. Yeah. And then it's funny—on the flip side, I see sometimes people being like, "I don't know if I should have kids 'cause all the real honest parenting stuff out there now." But I think it's better that you're not thinking it's just gonna be super rosy. But I think, like... yeah. I think I did have some assumptions, maybe, about the type of personality of kid *[through laughter]* I was gonna have.

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:28:30 Biz Host And I think they—I have two very active, lovely boys, but they, y'know, are not just like... quietly sitting in a corner. Sadly they don't wanna just curl up and read a book at this stage. Yeah.

00:28:34 Julie Guest Yeah. I know. Surprising, right? Surprising.

00:28:36 Biz Host It's disappointing, I think is the word you're looking for. I remember—it's sort of like, "Where did this kid's curly hair come from?" I have no control over this! And like... yeah. I can remember how disappointed I was—*[Laughs.]* I was that 80% of what I imagined was not what happened. And... even worse, that the second kid was nothing like the first. So whatever I had gotten used to doing or whatever worked... didn't work. For the —

00:29:10 Julie Guest Yeah. The same. You think, you're like, "Okay, I kinda got some stuff figured out now." And then you try it and—*[Laughs.]*

00:29:16 Biz Host "Why isn't this working? Just fucking go to sleep! I don't understand!" It's so—yeah.

00:29:23	Julie	Guest	It's hard with the advice thing, too, because I am prone to gathering advice and then I'd have friends be like, "Well try this!" Which worked for their kid but then it wouldn't work for your kid. So... I found that hard.
00:29:37	Biz	Host	Yeah. This is a startling fact. That no one child is like another. And that makes it really hard. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:29:43	Julie	Guest	Yeah. To just be like, "These are the steps you follow!" Yeah. Yeah.
00:29:49	Biz	Host	Well that's why books like this are really excellent? Because so many other books really—parenting books, y'know, I hope—sometimes it doesn't feel that way—come from a place of wanting to help. Right? Wanting to make a new parent feel better. But because no one's child is the same, y'know, you—as a new parent, you read it and you think, "I'm somehow broken. And my kid is—something's clearly wrong with my kid, because A, B, and C. They've given me three options for what my kid could be, and my kid's not any of those options!" Y'know? It's just... it's frustrating. And now that yours are now seven and nine you said, right? Mine are just about to turn twelve in a couple of days and seven. And... that— <i>[sighs]</i> . A lot happens during that window. And I feel almost like I used to could use them as babies to remove myself. "Oh. I've gotta go feed Ellis. Oh, the baby is sick." Or whatever.
00:30:55	Julie	Guest	Yeah. That was a good trick. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.
00:30:58	Biz	Host	Really a good trick! But with older kids it's not as easy because you start to realize that they do need to go out and if they have an interest you should maybe support it? Might be good in the long run? But then that puts <u>you</u> out there.
00:31:13	Julie	Guest	Right. For sure.
00:31:15	Biz	Host	And not only does it put you out there... like, socially—like, as an introvert that suddenly you have to sit in a crowd of people and cheer on your kid. At an event. Or at some sort of function. But also, that's one more—not to get super depressing on this show—but that's one more event that takes away time. From you!
00:31:39	Julie	Guest	Yeah. Yeah.
00:31:41	Biz	Host	And I think that that's just like a weird assumption that as parents we're way down for that experience. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:31:48	Julie	Guest	Mm-hm. No, I think you're right. And I think that is one of the challenging things. I mean, I think initially when I first had kids that was one of the challenging things was just realizing your time is not your own, you know? And I think —
00:32:00	Biz	Host	Bye-bye!
00:32:01	Julie	Guest	Yeah. And that initially—especially after I had my first kid—that was definitely an adjustment for me. I almost think having my second kid was a little easier 'cause I was already a little in it? Yeah. Yeah.
00:32:11	Biz	Host	You were in it. Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:32:13	Julie	Guest	I was sort of new. Even though it's a totally different kid, right? Yeah, and then you're right. And I think it is—as they get older and they want to do different things—or sometimes they <u>don't</u> want to do different things but you think they should do them? Or y'know you're trying to balance like maybe they should push themselves a little bit but don't be overscheduled.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:32:34	Biz	Host	I dunno. So I struggle with that a lot. Y'know. Like — Oh yeah. That's an impossible place to be.

00:32:36	Julie	Guest	Yeah. But you're right. It is tricky that—and just trying to find time that's your own or realize that your time's not your own as much as it used to be. And especially this past year, right? With childcare not really being available and hopefully things seem to be getting better. But.
00:32:53	Biz	Host	We all just need to carry wood around with us and knock on it. Forever. Whatever hoodoo or... like, superstitions you have out there, everybody? Cling to them. Y'know. We need this. Does it—I almost have found the slow opening up harder. Because it's very confusing. Like, should we go out? Should we not? Should we—right? Like, my kids aren't old enough to get vaccinated and —
00:33:24	Julie	Guest	I know. I especially think for like the “kids under twelve” crowd? It's still —
00:33:30	Biz	Host	It's the same!
00:33:31	Julie	Guest	It's the same and it's—decision fatigue has completely set in. Of, “Is this okay? Is this not okay?” Y'know.
00:33:37	Biz	Host	Well right. Because as adults who are vaccinated, it's like, “Well, okay, I'm gonna go see a friend. But I—how much do I see them? Do I—y'know. And it's like, y'know, we've had a million people say this on the show. It's the old ‘You're not wearing a helmet but you're expecting your kids to.’” Y'know, in a variety of ways. And I keep thinking about last summer, when there was <u>zero</u> activity. Right? There was no camp. There was no—it was nothing. And I gotta tell ya—that summer <u>flew</u> by. It felt like it went so fast! And I—I gotta imagine part of that was because we weren't trying to get places all the time? Or thinking in terms of “this week versus this month versus...” Right?
00:34:30	Julie	Guest	I think you're right. It's the same for me, 'cause that was the first summer my kids had nothing. No camp. No whatever. And then this summer we're back to—they've been doing some camps. And I have been feeling like, “Drive you all around!” And I think our camps finally ended this week 'cause we'll go back the week after next. But. But it is interesting. And actually it's funny 'cause I think previously I would've sort of feared that scenario of no —
00:34:55	Biz	Host	Oh, I was terrified! I was freaking—I just walked into my husband and I said, “I understand that you're working from home. You need to understand. I am going to turn the television on <u>all</u> day. We just need to get on the same page right now. Don't come out looking at me like I'm supposed to come up with an activity. Zero activities!” <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:35:18	Julie	Guest	Right. Right. Right. I know! But you're right. It's interesting that it—yeah, it turned out okay. And maybe went, yeah, a bit faster. And then I mean it's so hard! Because I think there is like this—it's draining to make all these decisions and try to decide. Does the social benefit of them doing this outweigh the risk of—y'know. So.
00:35:40	Biz	Host	And great. There's still no really good answers.
00:35:44	Julie	Guest	Yeah! And luckily there's no— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:35:47	Biz	Host	Yeah. Luckily. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:35:49	Julie	Guest	Not luckily.
00:35:51	Biz	Host	That's like you already had all these shitty choices as a parent in general. But you're constantly questioning and trying to make. And now it's just like, “Was that not enough? Let's just make it really hot in here.” Y'know? Let's make it—let's try this. Do you like this? Hold on. You really think that the person next to you is not able to give you advice 'cause their situation's totally different? You're right! They can't! 'Cause it's totally different.

*[Julie laughs.]*

Well, Julie, thank you so much for joining us and talking about this stuff. And actually I wanna wrap up on one last question. I like that you said that after writing the book you were like, “Oh, some of these—look at—look at all these things that are true for me!” Was there—and we’ve just spent twenty minutes making fun of advice. So... let’s end on some advice. *[Laughs.]*

00:36:45 Julie Guest  
00:36:47 Biz Host

*[Through laughter]* Okay.

Just kidding. Not advice. Like... what... what would you have wanted to hear before a kid got in your house? Like, what—as an introvert, was there something that like looking back you’re like, “God, I just wish somebody had said this.”

00:37:04 Julie Guest

Right. Before having my first kid? Yeah. I mean, I think just... I think this is sort of maybe an introvert thing in general. Is just like—it’s okay to not wanna do everything and keep up with what everyone else is doing? I think I still struggle with this sort of. Like they’re missing out or we should be doing this ‘cause somebody else is doing it. Even when my kids were babies, I was like, “Oh, I should’ve—I never made it to baby yoga.” Y’know. Like—

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:37:33 Biz Host

I never got to baby yoga! Yeah.

Baby yoga, by the way, was super fucking unfun. I did like one. All these moms are laying there and their babies are like totally just sitting there with them? Mine was gone. Mine’s gone! I’m like, “How am I supposed to do this when my kid is on the other side of the fucking room?!” Anyway.

00:37:52 Julie Guest  
00:37:54 Biz Host  
00:37:56 Julie Guest

That’s partially why I didn’t go! My kids crawled really early. Right?

You’re very smart. *[Laughs.]*

And they did not sleep well so they were not gonna just like go quietly.

00:37:59 Biz Host  
00:38:01 Julie Guest

“I’m failing at baby yoga!” *[Laughs.]*

But yeah. So I mean, I think just, like, it’s okay to give yourself a break. Do the things you wanna do, but you don’t have to be doing what everyone else is doing. It’s a different experience for everyone. Kind of. And I love the tagline that you all have of “You’re doing a great job!”

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:38:18 Biz Host

You’re doing a great job! No matter—no matter what.

No matter what! No matter if you showed up for baby yoga or—now I’m just thinking of like hot baby yoga? That would be horrible.

00:38:27 Julie Guest  
00:38:29 Biz Host

*[Through laughter]* I know!

I don’t even wanna do goat yoga, despite how much I really wanna see a goat? But I’m just like—how am I supposed to be in shavasana and there’s a goat walking around!

00:38:40 Julie Guest

Well I think they crawl on you, too! Don’t they jump on your back?

*[Laughs.]*

00:38:45 Biz Host

No! I’m not at a circus! Alright, Julie. Thank you so much. We’re gonna make sure we link everybody up to where—and look. Again. Everybody, you know where to get books. This is just a thing I’ve said now for like nine years and it’s habit. We are gonna make sure

people have a link to where they can find out more about you and about *Babies Don't Make Small Talk (So Why Should I?): The Introvert's Guide to Surviving Parenthood*. Thank you very much, Julie.

00:39:11 Julie Guest  
00:39:12 Biz Host  
00:39:14 Music Music

Thank you so much for having me!

Absolutely. Bye!!!

"Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.

*[Music fades out.]*

00:39:31 Music Music  
00:39:32 Biz Host

Cheerful ukulele and whistling plays in background.

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*[Music fades out.]*

00:40:49 Theresa Host

Hey, you know what it's time for! This week's genius and fails! This is the part of the show where we share our genius moment of the week, as well as our failures, and feel better about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That's 206-350-9485.

00:41:08 Biz Host  
00:41:16 Clip Clip

Genius fail time, everyone! Genius me, me!

*[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]*

**Biz:** Wow! Oh my God! Oh my God! I saw what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying attention! Wow! You, mom, are a genius. Oh my God, that's fucking genius!

00:41:30 Biz Host

Guys? Here... is my genius. I drove a 20-foot truck on Tuesday. Tuesday was the day when the movers came to the apartment loading dock to unload the stuff for my parents. Several things that needed to be unloaded also should not go to the apartment. They needed to go to a storage space? And not gonna get into the complications of navigating that operational nightmare, but I will say that part of that involved me walking to the U-Haul and renting a 20-foot truck and driving it and feeling like an absolute badass. And... that's it! *[Laughs.]* It was really, really fun! Toot, toot! I'm driving a truck! I'm driving a truck. Toot, toot!

00:42:32 Caller Caller

*[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi, *One Bad Mother!* I'm calling with a genius. My youngest kids are five and seven and have always struggled with being told to turn off the TV. So a year ago they had an obsession with talking to Alexa? And I realized that maybe they would listen better to Alexa? So I started setting timers for screentime and it's like magic. Most of the time. So now I set a timer and I tell the kids when the timer goes off

they need to turn the TV or screens off? And sometimes we use other timers and it—it so works. And sometimes they set their own timers if I tell them “You can watch TV for 45 minutes,” they’ll set their own timer. And any time a timer goes off now, they’re like, “What does that mean? Do I need to turn the TV off?”

*[Biz laughs.]*

00:43:30 Biz Host So just thought that maybe other people could benefit from that! You’re all doing a great job and thanks for the show!  
Oh. I plan on benefitting from that. You are a genius! You know what? You are completely correct! *[Laughs.]* They don’t listen to me. They listen to my Alexa. Or my Siri. Right? There is something definitely depressing about it. But at the same time, I like how empowering you have allowed the situation to become. Plus it really frees you up from being the bad guy! Now Alexa’s the bad guy. So good job. Take that, Siri. Failures!  
00:44:05 Clip Clip *[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]*

**Theresa:** *[In a voice akin to the Wicked Witch of the West]* Fail. Fail. Fail. FAIL!

*[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]*

00:44:12 Biz Host **Biz:** *[Calmly]* You suck!  
Fail me, me! Alright. I was picking a book to read with Ellis at the end of the day. I’ve known Ellis their whole life. *[Laughs.]* And I am keenly aware of how sensitive Ellis is to... any harm that may befall, like, an animal. Or like a bug. Or anything. Right? Ellis... has... y’know, gotten very upset about watching kids feed worms to chickens at a farm. Like I said—can’t eat a cupcake with a face. I made an Oscar the Grouch sugar cookie once. Nope! Can’t eat that! Why would you make that? Very upsetting. I know all of this! But there’s this book that we’ve had forever and it’s really fun for little kids and I thought it might be fun to re-read now, because I think seven-year-olds enjoy talking about super gross stuff. And it’s a little book and it’s called *That’s Disgusting!* And so each page is a kid rolling in mud. And then next page says, “That’s disgusting!” Playing in cat litter. “That’s disgusting!” Right? *[Laughs.]* Going along, and—y’know, “Picking your boogers and putting them under a chair!” “That’s disgusting!” And then I turned the page. I saw it. I saw what was coming. And I quickly flipped the page, but Ellis saw it too. And it was, “Eating worms.” “That’s disgusting.” And he started—just the image of eating worms made him start crying. And I was like, “It’s okay! It’s a silly book! You also wouldn’t play with cat litter or blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. This is just—it’s exaggerating. Yada, yada, yada. I’m so sorry. Let’s just—” I don’t know. I don’t know! I’m running out of things to read! Because conflict has to happen to animals sometimes in a story so that children learn things. I don’t know. But I tried to do something silly and absurd, and shame on me. Shame on me.  
00:46:26 Caller Caller *[Answering machine beeps.]*

Hi, Biz and Theresa! I’m calling with a fail. *[Sighs.]* This is a glitter fail. Let’s be honest. Is there ever a time when glitter is involved with a genius? I’m guessing no.

*[Biz laughs.]*

I think that my husband believed this would be a genius. However. I knew. And I told him, "Don't give the four-and-a-half-year-old glitter." He said, "She can do it. Here's a little cookie sheet. She'll keep it on the tray." Okay. I did not feel like being the bad guy. That is my actual fail. That I just wasn't the bad guy. Because next thing you know, there is glitter everywhere. All over the rug. Now people have been walking in it. The dog's been walking in it. So it is all over the house. Did I mention that our house goes on the market next weekend?

*[Biz laughs.]*

So... I stayed cool and calm. When my husband came to tell me, "You should not have let her use glitter," I just smiled and said, "I hope the new homeowners like glitter." Thank you. You guys are doing a good job and I am definitely not.

*[Biz laughs.]*

Because we're gonna have a lot of sparkle in our lives for the next few weeks. *[Laughs.]* Bye!

00:47:48 Biz Host

Wow! Yeah. No, you're right. The word "glitter" and "fail" go hand-in-hand! Like a perfect marriage of failing. I—*[Laughs.]* I really like that the fail is not being the bad guy. You are right. You have pinpointed what the fail is. We just had a genius in which we were talking about how a parent had let Alexa be the bad guy. Right? By telling them what to do and what not to do. Maybe we should just start programming all of our devices to have like, "No. That's not a good idea. We should not do that." Like, programmed in? And then be like—your partner's like, "Glitter? What's the big deal? It's fine. They can handle it." And then you can be like, "Alexa, what do we say to this?" And then Alexa's like—and I'm sorry if I'm turning everybody's fucking devices on right now. Anyway. *[Laughs.]* And then she-who-shall-not-be-named will say, "I do not think that is a good idea. We should not do that now. Thank you." Yes. You're doing a horrible job. I also agree that glitter is a gift to your new homeowners that will never, never end. How thoughtful.

00:49:03 Music Music

"Mom Song" by Adira Amram. Mellow piano music with lyrics.

*You are the greatest mom I've ever known.*

*I love you, I love you.*

*When I have a problem, I call you on the phone.*

*I love you, I love you.*

*[Music fades out.]*

00:49:28 Promo Clip

**Music:** Fun, cheerful music.

**Kirk Hamilton:** Video games!

**Jason Schreier:** Video games!

**Maddy Myers:** Video games! You like 'em?

**Jason:** Maybe you wish you had more time for them?

**Kirk:** Maybe you wanna know the best ones to play?

**Jason:** Maybe you wanna know what happens to Mario when he dies?

*[Kirk chuckles.]*

**Maddy:** In that case, you should check out [Triple Click!](#) It's a podcast about video games.

**Jason:** A podcast about video games?! But I don't have time for that!

**Kirk:** Sure you do. Once a week, kick back as three video game experts give you everything from critical takes on the hottest new releases—

**Jason:** —to scoops, interviews, and explanations about how video games work—

**Maddy:** —to fascinating and sometimes weird stories about the games we love.

**Kirk:** *Triple Click* is hosted by me, Kirk Hamilton.

**Jason:** Me, Jason Schreier.

**Maddy:** And me, Maddy Myers.

**Kirk:** You can find *Triple Click* wherever you get your podcasts, and listen at [MaximumFun.org](#).

**Maddy:** Bye!

*[Music finishes.]*

00:50:13    Promo    Clip

**Music:** Tense sci-fi music.

*[Announcer narrates in voiceover intercut with dialogue from the show. Dialogue is slightly fuzzy, as if being heard through a speaker.]*

**Announcer:** Strange planets, curious technology, and a fantastic vision of the distant future. Featuring Martin Starr.

**Martin Starr:** So we're going on day 14. Shuttle still hasn't come.

**Announcer:** Aparna Nancherla.

**Aparna Nancherla:** *[Cheerful and electronic]* The security system provides you with emotional security! You do the rest!

**Announcer:** Echo Kellum.

**Echo Kellum:** Can you disconnect me, or not?



**Announcer:** Hari Kondabolu.

**Hari Kondabolu:** I'm staying.

**Announcer:** From *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, Geoffrey McGivern.

**Geoffrey McGivern:** Could you play Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Want to Have Fun"?

**Announcer:** It's *The Outer Reach: Stories from Beyond*.

**Announcer 2:** Now available for free at [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org), or anywhere you listen.

*[Music fades out.]*

00:51:00 Biz Host

Alright, everybody. Let's snuggle up and listen to a mom have a breakdown.

00:51:07 Caller Caller

*[Answering machine beeps.]*

*[Through sobs.]* Hi, this is a mom having a breakdown. This is a weird one, I guess. 'Cause I'm breaking down about my mom. Who just wasn't very nice to me today. I don't think she understands all the baggage and how she's treated me and when I was young; how that affects how I see how she's treating me now. And I get she's a big help and I really love her, but she wasn't very nice to me today. And she doesn't know that. She doesn't realize, like... that what she says really makes a difference to me. And I try and be really... sympathetic or apathetic or I don't know. Whatever. Because I am not a mom. I'm an adult. A child with children. But I'm a mom. And I've tried to be really clear with her about how I need to communicate with her and I need to understand that she is not capable of that. And it's just really hard. And so—yeah. So here's to all the moms having problems with their moms. You are all doing a really good job. Thanks for the Hotline. Bye.

00:52:50 Biz Host

You are doing such an amazing job. And I wanna start with the notion of, "I know that the other person doesn't have X, Y, or Z in them. That they may not change." And this idea that we have to accept that. There is some truth there, depending on how much you wanna accept and what sort of, y'know, relationships you want to have in your life. But it doesn't—accepting it or even saying that that's something you need to accept or telling yourself that you need to accept it—is not like a balm or... it does not serve as an eraser for how shitty it still makes you feel. Okay?

You got two things going on. One, your mom does not have a form of communication with you that serves you. That makes you feel good at certain times. And not only does it just hurt when somebody doesn't make you feel good, it's all wrapped up in the complications of it being your mom. And then the other factor in this is understanding that your mom and trying to be empathetic with her and knowing that you love her and knowing that it's really helpful to have her around. And that she might not change. And that's really complicated. And that—y'know, we can accept that shit

all day long but it doesn't take away the sting and it doesn't take away how we feel.

And I just want you to know that I'm so amazed and in awe of all that you've already done in terms of trying to be clear with your mom about what the best ways to communicate are. You are right. We all have our baggage. And there can be words or expressions or responses that trigger us to make us feel like we are twelve years old again and they are deeply disappointed in us. Or whatever the situation is. And I just think those aren't easy relationships to put boundaries on and... it is very complicated to be a mom and have a mom? And I just think you are actually doing a remarkable job. And I really see you? And... I just think you're fucking great.

00:55:51 Biz Host

You know what, everybody? This show is just a reminder that—  
[Laughs.] We have just so little control anymore. I mean, who really had control before they had kids? But at least felt like you had more of the illusion of control? I mean, what did we talk about today? Y'know it started off with our check-in and having a new job and are you gonna feel guilty? "Maybe—don't feel guilty that your kid might miss you!" Like, I can't control that! Right? That's out of my control because we have to have money to do things.

And then I talked about the sense of suddenly having very— realizing that adding anything to my life—whether it's work or whether it's self-care or whether it's whatever—it's just adding on. It's not replacing something else. It's not like space opened up. [Laughs.] I'm just parking a car on top of another car.

And then we talked with Julie and just about, like, the social and the emotional increase that we feel when kids get into our lives. Especially if you like—for example, you're an introvert, that pressure, that feeling of you're missing out or you're failing or you're not doing a good job as a parent because you don't really—not just that you didn't go, but you really didn't fucking wanna go to whatever X, Y, or Z event has popped up in relation to your children. It's really okay to say no.

And it's really okay if you're doing it differently. Because every kid is different. And we all are different as parents. And it's not always just what works for the kid; it's what works for you, too. So I guess that is to say... none of us are alone in having those feelings. And you are all doing a really remarkable job. Julie's right. There still are no easy decisions. They're just complicated ones. And it's still very hard to mirror our choices on each other. So I see you. Let's go out and see each other. And I will talk to you next week. Bye!

00:58:31 Music Music

"Mama Blues" by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. Strumming acoustic guitar with harmonica and lyrics.

*I got the lowdown mamma blues  
Got the the lowdown mamma blues  
Gots the lowdown mamma blues  
The lowdown mamma blues.  
Gots the lowdown mamma blues  
Got the lowdown mamma blues  
You know that's right.*

00:58:55	Biz	Host	<i>[Music fades somewhat, plays in background of dialogue.]</i> We'd like to thank MaxFun; our producer, Gabe Mara; our husbands, Stefan Lawrence and Jesse Thorn; our perfect children, who provide us with inspiration to say all these horrible things; and of course, you, our listeners. To find out more about the songs you heard on today's podcast and more about the show, please go to <a href="http://MaximumFun.org/onebadmother">MaximumFun.org/onebadmother</a> . For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out <a href="http://OneBadMotherPodcast.com">OneBadMotherPodcast.com</a> . <i>One Bad Mother</i> is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to <a href="http://MaximumFun.org/donate">MaximumFun.org/donate</a> .
00:59:24	Theresa	Host	
00:59:47	Music	Transition	<i>[Music continues for a while before fading out.]</i> A cheerful ukulele chord.
00:59:48	Speaker 1	Guest	<a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
00:59:50	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
00:59:51	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
00:59:52	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.