

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 One Bad Mother 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.
00:00:21	Music	Music	"Summon the Rawk" by Kevin MacLeod. Driving electric guitar and heavy drums.
00:00:25	Biz	Host	<i>[Continues through dialogue.]</i> This week on <i>One Bad Mother</i> , we journey beyond the binary with Cynthia Sweeney, author of <i>The Pink Balloon</i> . Plus, Biz faces hard choices.
00:00:36	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz and caller: Woooo!
00:00:41	Caller	Caller	Biz: <i>[Quietly]</i> Woo. <i>[Laughs.]</i> So. My daughter doesn't know what a chicken sounds like. She's five-and-a-half. Very—very bright young lady.
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i> But you know that show <i>Arrested Development</i> ? And you know how they have this running joke that they make the wrong sounds whenever they're calling someone chicken? They like go "chee-chaw, chee-chaw" or—
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i> "Woo, woo" or whatever. Whatever chicken sound that is incorrect, they make it. Well we do that around my house, making incorrect chicken sounds. My daughter has apparently picked it up, and now makes incorrect chicken sounds. <i>[Laughs.]</i> With usually the head waddle and a jumping back-and-forth on her feet to imply a chicken. And you know what? I don't have the heart to correct her, because I love it. I love that she is inadvertently quoting one of my favorite TV shows. So that's all. You're doing a good job. Hope that everything's going great. Buh-bye.
00:01:36	Biz	Host	You're doing a great job! First, can we all sit here in the glory of this not being something you considered a fail. Right? Like, this—I was like, "Is this a fail?" but no! We've reached a new place where we've decided that our children not knowing chicken sounds? Can be delightful for us. Right? Like, it's not a fail. I'm sorry I even said the word "fail" around this, 'cause it's beautiful. And I'm with you. There is <u>lots</u> of things we never corrected the kids about. <i>[Laughs.]</i> In what they said. They figured it out. Y'know. And not all figuring out came through humiliating moments in public, so that was good. And I really... stand behind any choice that makes the experience of parenting, like, more bearable? For you? And if this is—if being reminded of your favorite TV show or just seeing your child not make a correct chicken noise brings that joy to you? I am 100% behind it. I love this. In fact, I wanna know how long we can go! Can we go all the way to college with this? This is—y'know. I'm trying to think, when are we asked about chickens? Not a lot! We're not asked about chickens a lot. You could always say, "Oh, that's the noise that Swedish chickens make." That's what— <i>[Laughs.]</i>

00:03:32	Music	Music	<p>'Cause they do! 'Cause the Swedish rooster says, "Cooka-lick-ooo!" Which I—it is like a cock—it's probably more accurate than "cock-a-doodle-doo." I don't know. I'm not around roosters. No one's ever asked me. You are doing a wonderful job. Thank you for checking in! Speaking of thank-you's—it's time for thank-you's! Heavy electric guitar and driving percussion overlaid with "Ohh, oh-oh, oh-oh" and "Hey-ey-ey-ey-ey" lyrics.</p>
00:03:47	Biz	Host	<p>Guys? This pandemic is never going to—<i>[Laughs.]</i> Never going to fucking end! Isn't that nice? Isn't that nice to have one thing we can all be really sure about? <i>[Laughs.]</i> So with that said... thank you, teachers. And I'm gonna give a special shout-out, teacher-wise, to preschool and daycare and kinder teachers, because you are with kids that cannot get vaccinated at this point in time. And for you and your students and their parents, this is essentially a completely non-changed world since this thing started. That you have all the same limitations, all the same—it is a super shitty bubble that you're in. It's barely a bubble. It's like if you're trying to blow a bubble with Trident gum or Big Red and you really need Hubba Bubba or Big League Chew to blow that bubble? That you are in a very bad bubble.</p>

And everybody else kinda gets to go traipsing along with vaccinations and maybe just having to step out of school for a shorter period of time, and you're—I'm sorry! I just see you? I really see you. And I know you've got kids of your own and family of your own and parents of your own that you may be caring for. And I just... thank you. I recognize that nothing has really changed. I also wanna say thank you to everybody in the medical industry. All of you—everybody. Everybody that—supporting cast, especially. I'm looking at you. All the people. The intake nurses. The people who are working to get rid of, y'know, biowaste. Y'know? The red thing with the—you got it! That's a job that deserves thank-you long before the pandemic. Yikes.

Thank you for the people who are keeping our doctors' offices, ERs, hospitals, clinics—all of the places—clean? So that it is a safe environment for us to go into and dirty up all over again? And thank you—nurses, it really sucks. I'm really sorry. You're working nonstop. And I don't know how we're gonna come out of all of this, but I hope we come out of it in a way that celebrates you all the more. So, thank you for everything that you're doing. Thank you to volunteers. That is just remarkable work that you're doing, be it food banks, be it helping the homeless, be it working in shelters, being those who work with women's groups and children's groups and LGBTQ groups. I just... thank you for using that spare time that you have—not that it's really spare—to help those who are in positions to not be able to help themselves as well as they would like. Thank you. I see all of you, and I really appreciate you.

Last group that I want to say thank-you to today are veterinarians. Animals get COVID. I don't know a lot about that, so I'm not gonna talk—*[Laughs.]* In detail. About COVID affecting animals. But animals still need things, and you are a branch of the medical industry that I think largely goes ignored. And you are making it work so that we can bring our animals to you for care during this time. Because if you are a pet owner, you know how much those

pets have helped you get through this pandemic. And I really appreciate the work that you are doing. That's—which ties into what I'm gonna talk about today.

00:08:06 Biz Host

You know I have three cats. If you've been listening to this show. It might as well be *One Bad Cat Owner*. That is like—I talk about the cats all the time. There's Bee, who is just a porch lady. She's just an old lady who doesn't like anybody. I mean, she likes us, but she's not a lap cat. She never will sit in your lap. But she will sit next to you. And she hates all other animals in this house. Then there is Onion, who is one-eyed, smelly cat who we love very much and who is—who does not have a lot of time left. With us.

And we had to have some hard conversations over the week with the kids [*through laughter*] and with Stefan, who would really rather not acknowledge death? And that is fair. That is fair. But that will be a decision that I will need to make sooner rather than later. But in the meantime, we are just... giving Onion all the love and Onion can be as stinky and as poopy and as accident-y as Onion needs to be. On me. That is why I have a washing machine. And I can shower.

And finally there is Steve, a big boy Steve. Who—just last night, we—I was like, “I haven't seen Steve all day. This is weird. Where is Steve? Steve is usually out and about.” And then I found him under the bed and he was clearly hiding and clearly miserable and clearly all the things that, as a person who has had cats my whole life, recognizes as a bad sign. We got him into the cat hospital this morning. And... it turns out he has a very bad urinary tract infection and a mucus plus in his penis! This is horrible news! And he has to stay there for like 24 hours and up to two days. And I am very thankful that we caught it and that we took him in and I am incredibly thankful to everyone at the animal hospital, because they clearly like Steve 'cause they said that he was a... “robust boy.” Which is very nice. I said, “Stefan, did they say anything about his weight?” “They just said he was a lovely, robust boy.” And I said, “Well that's good.”

So... that—it's just been kind of a shitty couple of days around here, and I am grateful for all of you who work with animals. Thank you. And... y'know. I'll keep you guys updated on how things are going. It's a journey! It is a journey. Which is an incredibly weird segue into what we're gonna talk about today, which is journeying beyond the binary with Cynthia Sweeney, the author of *The Pink Balloon*, as well as an incredible advocate for the LGBTQ community. Yeah! I'm looking forward to talking with her. [*Laughs.*]

00:11:19 Music Music
00:11:20 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.

00:11:27 Biz Host

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

00:11:31 Theresa Host
00:11:35 Biz Host

Nothing we say constitutes professional parenting advice.

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

00:11:38 Theresa Host

Nothing said on this podcast about them implies otherwise.

[Banjo music fades out.]

[Biz and her guest repeatedly affirm each other as they discuss the weekly topic.]

00:11:45	Biz	Host	This week, we are talking to Cynthia Sweeney, who is the author of the inclusive children's book <i>The Pink Balloon</i> , as well as the cohost of the podcast <i>Hey, Cis!</i> — <i>[Laughs.]</i> Just love that. Which is a beyond binary journey into being a better human. She is also the founder of Simply Good Form Inc., the Canadian consultancy for beyond-binary thinking based in—I'm just gonna say Halifax, Nova Scotia. I will let Cynthia say the more official name of where this is located. Blah, blah, blah, big mistakes everywhere. Welcome, Cynthia! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:12:24	Cynthia Sweeney	Guest	Thank you so much! I'm so excited to be on the show.
00:12:28	Biz	Host	It's so nice—please pronounce the Canadian town in which Simply Good Form is located. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:12:35	Cynthia	Guest	Yeah! So Halifax, Nova Scotia is based in—it's Kijipuktuk, which is the Mi'kma'ki word. So we're on the ancestral non-ceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.
00:12:46	Biz	Host	Oh, wonderful! Thank you so much for clearing that up. Also, I would like everyone to know that I was 90% there in pronouncing that when I was practicing it before the show. But I am so glad that you were here <i>[through laughter]</i> as someone who has practiced it more than me! Thank you so much! Before we get into everything that we would like to get into today, I would like to know—who lives in your house?
00:13:11	Cynthia	Guest	Ah-ha! Well, that has— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:13:15	Biz	Host	<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:13:17	Cynthia	Guest	This is always the most fun question. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			It is! It is. So at the moment, who lives in my house right now is—it's a three-ring circus most of the time. So there's my husband. And I have two children living at home right now. I've got a seventeen-year-old and then I have a fifteen-year-old, and our eldest—she's off at university. And she went away. So she's actually in Ontario studying at the University of Guelph, which is just outside of the Toronto area. And so she's not—she's back at Christmas and kicks me out of my office, which is her bedroom. And she's not coming back now for a while 'cause she's doing co-op and going to work there for the summer. So she's kinda fluid—a fluid visitor. And then we've got a whippet that we brought over with us when we moved here from Ireland overseas. And we've got two cats. <i>[Inaudible]</i> Guzman and Toonces, the driving cat if you've ever watched that <i>[inaudible]</i> .
00:14:12	Biz	Host	Yes. Toonces the driving cat. Okay.
00:14:14	Cynthia	Guest	And then we've got—we have an eyelash-crusted gecko and a bearded dragon. Not that I own them. They're my son's. So.
00:14:22	Biz	Host	Well that is a lot of living things in your house. Alright. Let's get you talking about why we're having you on. We have met through Theresa.
00:14:33	Cynthia	Guest	We have!
00:14:34	Biz	Host	The lovely, wonderful Theresa Thorn. And we have... done so because you had a book that came out recently and it is called <i>The Pink Balloon</i> , which is a children's book but also sort of... I see it more as a nice guide. <i>[Laughs.]</i> For people with children or about

to have children. So I would like to start with that question that is such a trivial question, because, y'know, *[goofy voice]* "Why did you write the book?" "I don't know. 'Cause I had things to say." But I do want to know, what led to the book? And a little bit about who you felt it would be for when you started writing it, and maybe who it's wound up being for.

00:15:22 Cynthia Guest
00:15:24 Biz Host

That's a big, loaded question. And—
You're welcome! *[Laughs.]*

00:15:25 Cynthia Guest

[Cynthia laughs.]

Thank you for that. Let's start easy here, right? Just dive right in. Yeah, so well—*The Pink Balloon* is a story about gender identity and shining as your true self. And you're right, it was kind of written as one part to be kind of a guideline or to offer some guidance for familiar around understanding gender identity. But it actually—so I'm the mother of a transgender child and they transitioned in elementary school. And so in their own time—when they first came to us and had given—they had been given the language, basically, to be able to describe these feelings that they'd been grappling with for years. Language that we often don't share in elementary school from quite early on.

And so... I wanted a book to be out there in the world that would help other children not be erased all through their elementary school career, because essentially they had been grappling with these feelings. But in turn, because there was no visibility, there was no language, you start to compartmentalize it like there's something wrong with me. I don't fit. Why is there nobody else out there like me? And I just... I really wanted to try to find a way to break down that stigma.

And so *The Pink Balloon* itself is—it's inspired by a true story. And the true story is linked to the coauthor, BriAnna Simons. And so—and it's a beautiful story. And so I knew I wanted to tell a story. I knew I wanted to write a story. But I didn't want it to be... our story wasn't as positive when it happened. There was a lot of really bad stuff that kinda, y'know, just ensued. And it came from lack of understanding. School policies written on paper that weren't worth the paper they're written on. And, y'know, a lot of fear from administrators. Fear from parents of children. All of that kind of stuff. And so I didn't wanna tell that story. I wanted to show a happy story of what it shows like when you have—when you give space to a child to show you who they are in the world.

And as parents, what happens when you listen and how everybody can thrive. And so... BriAnna and I, we actually met at a parents' support group for children—parents and caregivers of trans and gender-expansive children. Became fast friends, and she loved sort of South Shore, Nova Scotia? I'm up in Halifax. And we were running this support group up in Halifax, but she—through her own private practice—also was connecting with parents of young kids, too, that were looking for support for their trans children. And just trying to navigate this murky water. And resources were really hard to find up here in Nova Scotia. I think they—well, they still are for a lot of parents. So we connected and decided to start up another

group on the South Shore to help reach parents down there. Back in the day where we could meet in person.

[Biz laughs.]

Now it doesn't matter where you are, right? You could do it virtually. And we were doing a working weekend one day and she shared this story with me about her own experience around her pregnancy and the excitement and how it kind of... led in whatever way to a gender reveal party, sort of unintentionally. And when she told it to me, I'm like, "That—that's the story!"

[Biz laughs.]

"That is what needs to be written! Can you trust me to write this story?" And she was like, "Absolutely." And so we kinda—we kinda went from there! Y'know, it kinda ended up being really out there for who we intended it to be for, and really that's everyone. But we wanted it for families with young children. We wanted it for educators to be able to use as a resource tool. I think it has really shaped up to be that way, because when you take the trans piece out of it—which tends to be the scary word for parents, like, "Ohh... why are you talking about transgender with a six-year-old? They don't understand that." Well then we say, "Y'know, we're celebrating gender identity. And guess what? Everybody has one! Not just trans and nonbinary people. We all have a gender identity. So stop narrowing the conversation." So really it is—it's a book for everyone.

00:19:35 Biz Host Yeah, I think that's... the power of language and giving people language is... so helpful. And it—I think that part of that fear that's out there and part of the... what can sometimes get in the way of beginning the conversations? Is this—is not clearly understanding what your gender identity is versus your sexual identity. Your—y'know? There are—I— [Laughs.] I constantly am asking Raiden, like, "Alright. Break it down for me again? I need to [through laughter]—there is how you present. There's, y'know, how you feel. And—" Right? Like, and it's... that's... so helpful to know! But it has... usually very little to do with whatever weird thing I've conjured up in my head. [Laughs.]

00:20:36 Cynthia Guest Oh, y'know, you're so right. 'Cause gender—it's confusing. It can be. I think of Janet Mock's book, *Redefining Realness*. And how the whole point of that book is how much of our true selves do we actually show to the world? And I think about how kids know their gender identity sometimes as early as age two. Or y'know from the time they can start expressing or showing their gender to the world. But at the same time, we're inundated with all these messages. These binary messages around us. And that pressure to conform starts to narrow the ability to truly express yourself. And sometimes by the end of elementary school, that power of conformity has kind of really, really narrowed so many children's ability to safely and confidently share who they are.

00:21:25 Biz Host Sometimes I'm just like amazed—like, after sort of our little journey, AKA even before my kids expressed, y'know, their own exploration when I was with Theresa as Theresa was starting this journey with Grace. And my youngest at the time was probably like two or three? And we were getting clothes at a store and they were like,

00:22:59 Cynthia Guest y'know, "Can I have this skirt?" And it was this moment of... I can't think of a valid reason why I would say no. Like, there's no reason for me to say, "No, you can't." I couldn't make up a reason that made sense for me to say. Right? And... because of that experience and all the experiences I've had since then, I am sometimes just fascinated— *[Laughs.]* When I see restrictions placed on anybody, anywhere, anytime now. It's really hard to say, "Wow. In this country just how we set up our, y'know, language. That there are only these two pronouns, for example, that we were taught for so long. And how much that has limited us in... so many ways we interact with the world around us." It's sort of like you—the more you learn, the more you get to the other side of it and you're like, "Ohhh. I feel like we've been wasting our time!" *[Laughs.]* I know. And it's amazing how relaxed you can become. Right? Like, as a parent. Like I was raised in a really strict, kind of religious, conservative kind of background. Y'know, I remember my grandfather at the cottage saying, "Oh, speak when you're spoken to." All of that stuff at the table. And I realized that, y'know... now actually knowing that I actually have ADHD, there was no way I could wait to speak when I'm spoken to! That just was never gonna happen for me as a child!

[Biz laughs.]

But y'know and so I began probably trying to break that down. I'm not gonna be like my parents when I raise my kids. But then somehow those morals and values, they kinda creep in. You don't really know why they're there, but you're like, "This is what's expected from us in society. This is what society expects of us." And then... for me, I think when my child came to me—well firstly, I didn't know a thing about gender identity. I thought, "Okay. Priscilla, Queen of the Desert. Drag queen."

[Biz laughs.]

00:23:56 Crosstalk Crosstalk

I thought—
Biz: I'm like, *Victor/Victoria!* *[Laughs.]*

00:23:59 Cynthia Guest
00:24:02 Biz Host
00:24:04 Cynthia Guest

Cynthia: Like, I totally like— *[Laughs.]*
I'm like, "Okay, so you want clothing? Maybe you're just a tomboy."
What are we, Annie Hall-ing it? Yeah. *[Laughs.]*
And they're like, "Mom, get with the program!"

[Biz laughs.]

00:24:23 Biz Host
00:24:25 Cynthia Guest

Y'know. And so then I got, "Oh, shit! I've been duped! I've been duped! Like, I've been told and fed a lie my entire life and it's affected my parenting!" And so, y'know. Shame on society and then how did I not notice? You're gonna go through all those things as a parent.
You get to go through all that. Yeah. That's—
And then you just relax, though! You're like, "I love my kid. I'm gonna get behind them." I was lucky enough to kind of be able to go, "This isn't about me." And so then you kind of like... afterwards it's kind of crazy, the conversations you can have in your household. Like, y'know, for some kids they might want an STP.

They might want, y'know, something like that. So we're like, "Okay. Do you want a penis? Alright. Let's—what do you want for Christmas?" Our lists are different in our house.

[Biz laughs.]

00:24:58	Biz	Host	We're talking about crazy things and we're laughing about it and you kind of think, "Wow, how far we've come." <i>[Laughs.]</i> Well I know that's—that's true. Not just within our own homes, but societally. Y'know, I feel like... just in the last ten years. The—having books out there now geared towards children and families and having this language evolve and be available to us. And more importantly, to kids. To allow them space. And... to kids to, like, explore and try out these different things. And it gives—I think the place that Stefan and I got to was, "Oh. We don't really have to say or do anything, except... tell our children that we love them and give them space to try all the stuff they wanna try and figure it out." Right? Like, it's going to—some things will stick, because they will find that that is a really good fit. Other things might evolve. But turns out they're actually capable of doing that. Which is maybe scarier than some of the language around it. So... you also have the podcast, and you started this whole organization—I feel like we actually have to kind of shift to the organization first.
00:26:20	Cynthia	Guest	Sure.
00:26:21	Biz	Host	The Simply Good Form Inc. This is a group of consultants. You guys go in and help businesses and—I assume schools, as well?
00:26:29	Cynthia	Guest	Yeah. Yep.
00:26:31	Biz	Host	Sort of do these audits. We have also had a group come in. <i>[Laughs.]</i> To take a look at inclusion and inclusive practices at the school. One of the things that's actually come out is where about they're—they're working with the LGBTQ community at our school in taking the first steps towards really clearing up the language in our handbook and sports. <i>[Laughs.]</i> A lot of things like that. Like, y'know. "This is the boys' team. And—" Y'know? Because we're such a school that was so, like, loose with it anyway? And very responsive when kids say, y'know, "These are my pronouns and this is my name" and all of that. But then there was this gaping... it was almost like, "I can't believe we hadn't fixed <u>that</u> ." <i>[Laughs.]</i> So this is the work that you guys do! So can you actually—I found this fascinating that there were groups doing this. So tell—tell us about what it—the work is that you guys do.
00:27:36	Cynthia	Guest	Sure. So we do exactly what you said around the audits, but then we also do workshops. So we've got a Beyond Binary Level 1, and then a Beyond Binary Level 2 workshop. We do them in elementary schools and then we also work with public and private sector businesses and organizations. And within the schools, what I guess we really wanted to do was traditionally here, based on the curriculum, is they don't really introduce concepts around gender identity until, like, grade five/grade six. And at that point it's lumped into sexual orientation. It's lumped into, y'know, puberty. And all of that. And so it becomes really confusing. And really actually... ends up cementing any kind of stigma that might already be evolving?

And it creates disastrous junior high experiences for kids that are identifying diversely. And so we wanted to connect with teachers and start and administrators and get this—the programs into the

early elementary school level. Where they're learning how to use more inclusive language. They're—and not just around Pride Month in June or Trans Day of Visibility, but like even your math examples. Your equations. Celebrating LGBTQ athletes. Y'know, in health class. There's ways that you could be, y'know, interweaving these concepts all the time. And breaking down the binary. And so Simply Good Form—it actually evolved out of a blog, because I wanted to—it's called *The Invisible Parents Club*, which maybe you could relate to a little bit 'cause in the beginning I just was struggling just to find other parents with young transgender children.

00:29:18 Biz Host
00:29:19 Cynthia Guest

Young kids, yeah.

Yeah! And then I realized, "Wow, it's like this hidden underground society." That if—because of safety, fear, perhaps your dynamic of where you are—for whatever reason. And I'm—I have a journalism background. And so I'm really good about finding accurate information 'cause we all know there's so much misinformation out there around trans people.

00:29:39 Biz Host
00:29:40 Cynthia Guest

[Laughs.] Yes.

And so I wanted to share that information. I wanted a place to share it, but also to share navigation. So like, what do you need to do? What are your first steps? Or what does transitioning mean? That kind of thing. So I created that hub, and then it evolved out of there from—I was being asked to do educational talks and keynote speaking and then I recognized, though, "I can't do this myself. I'm a pink elephant in the room. I'm a cis white woman and, y'know, I can help support allyship? But I can't take voices away from." And so Simply Good Form, I'm the only cis person there. And everyone that we contract is trans or nonbinary. And our purpose is to help elevate the voices of the trans community, but also to create that inclusive space. 'Cause eventually my kiddo, our kids, are gonna be, y'know, your client or your employee or maybe your boss. And it's important that these spaces start to catch up and change. And—yeah.

00:30:35 Biz Host

That is true. It's funny. Yeah. It is interesting how... my radar and my, like... awareness during school meetings, during class—y'know, during work things. Y'know, really shifts. And I think that's it. I think it's because one day, it's gonna be my kids who are in those spaces. Right? And what will those spaces look like? It's so good! Thank you! [Laughs.] Thank you for doing that! Okay. So. You've got the podcast. You do the podcast with your cohost Isaac, who I know is also with Simply Good Form. And he's trans, correct? They are—

00:31:22 Cynthia Guest

Yeah. Isaac's a trans—trans-nonbinary professional and educator. Yeah. They contract with us. And they were the first person actually to connect with me 'cause I also do volunteer work through PFLAG and—y'know, via PFLAG in the States there, too. And Isaac came on with me as a volunteer and then we quickly—that's where we just thought we need to kind of evolve this. And so COVID hit and we moved all of our workshops that were in person online. So we have that on-demand, but also live virtual. And then in the next lockdown we were like, "Ugh. How can we continue? What can we do?" And I said, "Why don't we podcast? We've got a lot to say and we're all about stories and storytelling and connecting with people."

And so it's kind of—it's become a voluntary arm of what we do. We're hoping that eventually we'll get some sponsorships to help us be able to, like, y'know, really... really elevate it and get it out there more. But it's been fantastic. It's been a really fun journey and I've met so many amazing people. Trans people across Canada doing awesome things and people advocating for trans people. So... yeah. So it is. It's a beyond binary conversation and I like to say in being a better human. 'Cause it's just—we wanna just break down, ask those hard question that maybe you're fearful of. Cis people, like—those who their gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth—often they're just afraid of making a mistake and nobody wants to mess up. Nobody wants to feel that embarrassment and—

00:32:50	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Biz: Oh, we love messing up on this show. <i>[Through laughter]</i> We mess up!
00:32:56	Cynthia	Guest	Cynthia: —so we just wanna get you past that. Well yeah, right? I can laugh at myself! It's like, that's okay. But y'know, if it's causing you a barrier from ever interacting or ever trying to have a conversation with somebody, y'know? It's like if somebody tells you they've got cancer and then you don't know what to say and you just think, "Oh, I wanna call them but I don't wanna overstep" and then you don't call them. And they're just left kinda going, "I wish my friend had reached out." And it's kinda like, "Can we just get past all the discomfort?"
00:33:16	Biz	Host	Oh my gosh, go to last week's show! We had a wonderful guest on last week talking to us about ADHD, and like—
00:33:22	Cynthia	Guest	I heard!
00:33:23	Biz	Host	Yeah! And she—at the end, she was like, "This is what you say" and I was like, "Oh my god, that applies to everything!" Right? Where it's like, "I've got cancer. My child has ADHD. My—" y'know. "My child's nonbinary. My child—" Whatever. And you just be like, "Hey! Tell me more. Tell me more." That was what it was all about was the "tell me more." And I think that's so... relevant, well, to pretty much everything. Alright. So here is a question that I think sort of... is housed in the journey of allyship. Okay? But you write the book. You are doing the podcast. You're asking hard questions. You're going out. You're leading things. And I guess I—using the book as an example, when you started it to when you finished it, was there a journey within that? Did you start it and then maybe you had another experience based on this other work that you're doing and then you had to go back and revisit? Like... were there moments like that where you're like, "This is the language we—Oh no! Maybe this isn't the language anymore!" Right? Like— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:34:39	Cynthia	Guest	I'm trying to think if I'm going to answer this the way you're asking it? But if I—
00:34:42	Biz	Host	Well the answer can also be, "No, Biz." <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:34:45	Cynthia	Guest	Well so I'm—well just going from the beginning of the journey. So what's really interesting is I knew I wanted to write a book. A children's book. From when the kids were younger. And I think—so what happened when my child transitioned, I found myself going into the school a lot. Just saying—so when they transitioned, it was the end of the school year. And I was asking, "So what do we do? What do we do?" And my child had said, "Well, y'know, these are

my pronouns and this is my name.” And so the guidance counselor had said, “Okay. So we’re just going to tell the class that. And that’s it.” And this was June. And the teacher—the administrator at the time sort of had a different idea and was like, “Well, no, I think what we’re gonna do is we’re gonna take some kids. We’re gonna ask their parents for permission and take them aside.” It was just this really bizarre, scary—and I thought, “You’ve read a book to my kid that said, ‘We exist in the world.’ And then you’re not—” Y’know. So, um—

[Biz laughs.]

—my child actually ended up negating it and just said, “Screw that. I’m going in the next day.” And he just told everybody. He was just like, “This is it.” And it was—it was great! But then school ended and September came and I was so nervous as a parent. Y’know. And just... like, “What’s gonna happen?” So I was emailing the school and talking and said, “Okay, what work are we gonna do around this?” Like, “I’m happy to even send an email to the parents of the kids in his class saying, y’know, this is what this means and this is who they are and this is, y’know, like how you can talk to your kids about it. Or will you do—” Anyway. And I experienced a lot of gaslighting. A lot of gaslighting. Nothing happened. It was radio silence.

The year went really badly where, y’know, the boys wouldn’t play with him ’cause you’re not a real boy,” the girls are like, “Well, you’re a boy. We’re not gonna play with you.” Y’know, it’s grade six. They’re twelve years old. Eleven years old. And it was awful and it had a lot of really bad repercussions that you hear those statistics that happen around trans kids. And normally older, but they had all happened to him before he was twelve. Like, even experiencing like a physical assault and things like that. Only, really, out of confusion. From some of the kids. Because they weren’t having these conversations. And I found I was being gaslit so much.

So that’s where I thought, “Okay. I’m gonna start a chapter of PFLAG here in Halifax. We don’t have one. And if I do that and I’m helping the community, people might listen as well if we want to talk about gender identity.” I kinda created my voice, I think, or my platform to have a voice. ‘Cause then it evolved into the workshops and I took several courses in gender studies and certificates and I got WPATH certified and I wanted just to basically give myself the credentials that nobody could gaslight me as a overprotective mom. ‘Cause I had that. It’s like, “Oh, you’re just a mom and you’re over-worried. Well, they’ll work it out! They’re just kids!” Like... No. I’m sorry.

00:37:38 Biz Host

That is—motherhood, they name is gaslighting about everything. “You’re not really tired. You’re not—Oh, are you tired after giving birth? No you’re not.” Like, “Oh, are you depressed? No, you’re not.” “Are you overprotective?” “No, you’re not. In fact, we’re gonna come up with a weird name. You’re a helicopter, Biz!”

00:37:55 Cynthia Guest
00:37:58 Biz Host

You just need to be more organized! Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

You’re a free range! You’re a blah, blah, blah! Yeah. Or you’re just... a person. *[Laughs.]*

00:38:03 Cynthia Guest So I just—I wanted to, I guess, get myself in a position where people would actually stop—start and listen. Because I never wanted to shame anybody, either. I recognize that you could be me. You might have a child that is transgender and you have no idea, so... y’know... the sooner you do know, the better you can help them to shine. And to feel great about themselves. And we can do that in positive ways. And so yeah. So that’s kind of where it all came, and then the book really was just another way to tell a really positive story, but also to kinda work our way into the classrooms. So we created—I created lesson plans. I created—because often I found teachers were just uncomfortable, and then they were also feeling afraid of the parent pushback that they were getting. So we’d have these reading events. It actually started with a reading event where we were celebrating *It Feels Good to Be Yourself*. Theresa Thorn’s book.

[Biz laughs.]

Renee Jennings and Jazz and then there was another book that we did. So I created that event. And I found some parents would hold their kids back and say, “I’m not sending them in.” And teachers didn’t really know how to handle it or teachers were saying, “Okay, thank you for the lesson plans.” Because we would show them exactly—like, here’s a craft. Here’s to answer—how to answer tough questions. Here’s what you do. I’m giving it all to you. And I’ll even come in and read the book and answer them for you! So we did these great events as a way then to help empower teachers to get more comfortable around it, too. And it’s always that “ah-ha” moment. And once you know it, you can’t unknow it. Right? Like, you don’t know what you know until you know it, and then it’s not gonna go away. So—

00:39:42 Biz Host No! Thank god it’s not gonna go away! That’s good news!
[Laughs.] And I think it’s important to like... point out what is so helpful about the work that you’re doing is just as much as we deserve to give our kids space. To, y’know, explore and to figure this out—just to give them the space to be them. We also need to give each other and ourselves the space to navigate this. To learn the language. To... to have those “ah-ha” moments. Y’know. No one walks into this knowing all the information or how they’re gonna react or how they’re gonna feel or what might wind up being upsetting versus something else. And y’know, to give ourselves and each other that, ‘cause your “ah-ha” moment can lead to someone else’s “ah-ha” moment. And then down the “ah-ha” rabbit hole, which is just fantastic. Alright. Last question. How can we best support each other and new maybe parents whose children have just come out to them. How can we support—how can we show that support? What are the best ways to support fellow parents in this situation? Because I know when it comes to kids, it’s “Tell your children you love them and then shut up.” *[Laughs.]*

[Cynthia laughs.]

00:41:22 Cynthia Guest That’s not true. There’s more to it than that. But to help support each other.
Mmm. Well, I mean, I do think story time is so great. And sharing stories with lots of, y’know, celebrating diversity in lots of different

ways with your kids is so important. But even before that, I think as for new parents who are so excited about bringing a child into the world and y'know, you have all these—you can't help but, I guess, have all these ideas of who they might be in the world. And that. But just to maybe pull—push—pull back a little bit and give that space to recognize that your child has so much to show you about who they are. And that's okay. Y'know. It's okay. And by giving space, you're only gonna let them shine more. That we don't have all the answers, y'know. But the journey is so unique. And I think y'know this whole binary narrative that we've put upon ourselves in society—it's just been so restrictive and confining for youth and for parents and all of that. That sometimes we forget little pieces of it ourselves, because they've kind of been pushed out of us. We can't behave this way. We can't say that. Yeah.

00:42:27	Biz	Host	I go down those little thoughts all the time. Of like, "Huh. Y'know, like, where was I—what was I called, what was, y'know, what made me feel strongest when I was walking through the world. What did I experiment with to try and feel strong when it came to how I presented in the world." And yeah. But without any of the language. Y'know? And it's very interesting—it's very interesting. And I, y'know, I think I really like that thought of... when you said—
00:42:58	Cynthia	Guest	Reflexive.
00:43:00	Biz	Host	Yes. But when you said step back and give space to your kids, I thought... well that goes against every parenting book I've ever read! Ever! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:43:13	Cynthia	Guest	<i>[Cynthia laughs.]</i>
00:43:15	Biz	Host	"They're gonna make a mistake!" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:43:19	Cynthia	Guest	"Aaaahhh! Everything is a mistake! Everybody's watching!" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:43:41	Biz	Host	Oh, jeez, yeah. Honestly. And y'know, and it's scary, though! It is scary because language is... y'know, it's—the people will say, "Oh, it's hard. I can't use they/them pronouns. I can't get it right." And I laugh because back in the late '70s, early '80s, everyone said, "Ms. will never catch on. Oh my god, it's Mr. and it's Mrs. and that is it. I will not use it."
00:43:46	Cynthia	Guest	I was <i>Ms. Magazine</i> 100%. I was Ms. all the—I still like to use Ms.
00:43:48	Biz	Host	I was in that camp too. Yep, yep. So. I gotta tell you—what's great about books like <i>The Pink Balloon</i> as well as Theresa's book and all of these others is it's not just... parents. I—like, my mom <u>really</u> wants to get the language right around my kids. And y'know, they/them—to that generation—is so ingrained just from a grammatical standpoint. Right? That y'know, she came to me the other day and she said, "I'm really struggling with using they/them because I—and I know this can't be right—but is there more than one person inside of them?" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Cynthia laughs.]</i>
			And I was like, "No, it's not <i>Sybil</i> . We're not a split personality. It is just— <i>[Laughs.]</i> That's really it. I know—we all know—that you're not talking about multiple people. And it's okay. Let yourself—let that go!" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:44:42	Cynthia	Guest	And it's—can I—do I have time for one quick story?
00:44:46	Biz	Host	Yes! Yes.

00:44:48	Cynthia	Guest	So it was interesting 'cause I'm part of a book club and we were texting away about when we were gonna be meeting up next, and I happened to say, "I think if—y'know, I said their name—chooses the book then we'll be doing it at their house, so they're gonna be the host." And next thing I know I get a text back from one of the moms who's like, "You called them 'they!' You said 'they!' Should I be using that too? Do I need to be doing that?" And I stepped back for a minute and I'm like, "You know what? I didn't even think about it!" I said, "I guess I do it so often. I was so proud of myself that at that point I just use it." Because in my workspace I'm using it more often. I don't make those assumptions around gender. But I was like, "Yes!" I'm like, "Oh, honey, I didn't even think about it. You can do it if you want to, but."
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
			"It's—y'know, go with your comfort space and whatnot." But in this situation, she was definitely a she, y'know. And there was no—they're not "they." But the ironic thing is, we're all they/them as well. I'm she/her and I'm they/them depending on the context of the sentence. And they/them has always been a singular or a plural pronoun. So. Yeah.
00:45:56	Biz	Host	Yeah! No, it's just—I love—I love that kind of story. I love my mom overthinking it.
00:46:03	Cynthia	Guest	Yeah! Yeah!
00:46:04	Biz	Host	This is where I'm happy. I'm happy that your friend could ask you. And I'm happy my mom could ask me. And like...
00:46:13	Cynthia	Guest	That's it!
00:46:15	Biz	Host	I want the questions. And, y'know, not that we'll always have all the answers? But like, questions lead to learning. So. Yayyy!
00:46:25	Cynthia	Guest	It's a beautiful thing to be curious, isn't it? A beautiful thing.
00:46:28	Biz	Host	Oh, I love being curious. Isn't it wonderful? Poke that hornets' nest. <i>[Laughs.]</i> There might be candy inside! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Cynthia laughs.]</i>
00:46:35	Cynthia	Guest	I'm not sure about that advice for parents, but. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[Biz laughs.]</i>
00:46:40	Biz	Host	This is not a parenting advice show. Alright. Cynthia, thank you. Not only for joining us today, but thank you for the work and the commitment you have put in to helping, y'know, I—all of us find a way to become even more mindful of inclusivity. As well as helping all of us learn how to make our spaces and places more inclusive. And just, y'know. And where we're stepping in it. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I think that's always good! So thank you so much. We're gonna link everybody up to where—you all know where to buy books. But we're gonna link you up to also more information on Simply Good Form, as well as <i>Hey, Cis!</i> The podcast. Thank you <u>so</u> much.
00:47:33	Cynthia	Guest	I appreciate the time and you celebrating my little book. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:47:36	Biz	Host	Oh, no. Thank you for writing it. Don't forget, everybody, you wanna get three copies—one for you, one for your school library, and one for your regular library. Alright! Thank you, Cynthia!
00:47:47	Cynthia	Guest	Thank you.
00:47:49	Music	Music	"Ones and Zeroes" by "Awesome." Steady, driving electric guitar with drum and woodwinds.

00:48:06	Music	Promo	<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:48:07	Biz	Promo	Cheerful ukulele with whistling plays in background. <i>One Bad Mother</i> is supported in part by KiwiCo. <i>[Singing]</i> It's a new year! <i>[Regular voice]</i> And a new year is always a great time to discover new things about ourselves and our interests. And with a KiwiCo subscription, your child can make new discoveries all year long. I love KiwiCo. And they are kits for kids of <u>all</u> ages! Hello, wink, wink. Even at the age of 48. <i>[Laughs.]</i> So we have had so many KiwiCo boxes come through this house. One of my favorites that I did with Ellis—or really, Ellis did with me—was this perpetual motion machine that he built? That still sits proudly on his bedside table. You can redefine learning with play and get 50% off your first month, plus free shipping on any crate line with code “badmother” at KiwiCo.com . That's 50% off your first month at K-I-W-I-C-O.com , promo code “badmother.”
00:49:15	Theresa	Host	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> 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 <u>better</u> about ourselves by hearing yours. You can share some of your own by calling 206-350-9485. That's 206-350-9485.
00:49:35	Biz	Host	Genius fail time. Genius me, me!
00:49:39	Clip	Clip	<i>[Dramatic, swelling music in background.]</i>
00:49:53	Biz	Host	Biz: Wow! Oh my God! Oh my <u>God!</u> I <u>saw</u> what you did! Oh my God! I'm paying <u>attention!</u> <u>Wow!</u> You, mom, are a <u>genius</u> . Oh my <u>God</u> , that's <u>fucking genius!</u> Okay! I will. My birthday was last week. It was on a Thursday. And I was a genius, because—one—I ordered lunches for my children. So I did not have to wake up and make lunches. Or listen to anybody whine about lunches. And then two, I have finally—it was like the first day of an after-school class for both of them? And it turned out they could both be there on the same day?! So I—on my birthday— <i>[Laughs.]</i> I got to wake up, enjoy breakfast and presents, and then I didn't have to worry about taking them to school or fixing their lunch. And then I didn't have to worry about picking them up until 4:30! And let me tell you what I did. I lay on that couch like I was 20 and in-between jobs. And I watched almost an entire season of <i>Doom Patrol</i> , 'cause Stefan got me HBO for one year for my birthday. And I watched so much <i>Doom Patrol</i> and it was fucking good. And I had a lovely time. Geniuss! <i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i>
00:51:04	Caller	Caller	Hi. I am calling with a genius, 'cause I just have to brag about myself for like two seconds 'cause nobody cares and my husband just kind of looked at me like, “Okay, great. Like, good job.” So for Christmas this year—for my two-year-old—I decided that I'm going to go to the thrift store. And I found one big flipping bag of plastic animals. And I bought that for three dollars, and I wrapped each one individually to stuff her stocking with. So Christmas morning, Santa has brought an <u>huge</u> amount of little animals for her to play with and she'll have lots of time unwrapping each individual one and we saved a shit-ton of money and I'm a genius. So thank you for the show. Love you guys. And I'm sure I will be calling you

again with my either fails or whatever. You guys are great. Thanks. Bye.

00:51:55	Biz	Host	<p><i>[Laughs.]</i> You are doing an amazing job. We probably should have a category of “whatevers.” <i>[Laughs.]</i> This is genius. Big reminder—shoutout to thrift stores! This is a great place. Does your kid like buying stuff and just feel like they need to buy stuff all the time? Take them to a thrift store. That is genius. And finding an entire bag of plastic animal toys—especially for like the three and under set? They don’t care about packaging and like whatever. Okay. Massive money-saving stocking stuffer? Genius. Wrapping each one individually? Genius. And let’s just carry this on into our normal life, guys. At any point in time, we can go to the thrift store, find something like this, wrap things individually—‘cause unwrapping things is fun for small children, and a time-filler. You are doing a great job. Failures!</p>
00:52:53	Clip	Clip	<p><i>[Dramatic orchestral music plays in the background.]</i></p> <p>Theresa: <i>[In a voice akin to the Wicked Witch of the West]</i> Fail. Fail. Fail. <u>FAIL!</u></p> <p><i>[Timpani with foot pedal engaged for humorous effect.]</i></p>
00:53:00	Biz	Host	<p>Biz: <i>[Calmly]</i> You <u>suck!</u> Okay. Because when it rains, it pours, last week—even though I was celebrating my birthday—somewhere between birthday celebrations and all of my cats having issues, Raiden had to have four adult teeth pulled to make room for the rest of their teeth and the braces. So we had to go to a special place and have them, y’know, pulled. And we let Raiden go into, y’know, twilight sleep so that they could not feel anything.</p> <p>Whatever. That’s not the point. The point of this is... the night before we were going in, I said to myself, “I know that parking lot is cash only. I’m gonna put some cash in my purse. And I know that I am paying for this out of a special account, so I need to get a special account checkbook and put that—like, the one that I use maybe once every five years?” <i>[Laughs.]</i> So I think this is what I need to do. I should get out of bed and I should do it now. And then I was like, “No, I’m not gonna get out of bed and do it now ‘cause I’m thinking about it clearly and I’m gonna remember to do it in the morning.”</p> <p>And that morning? I did pull the checkbook. I did pull the cash. And then I went to take Raiden to get <u>their</u> teeth pulled—speaking of pulling. And that’s when I realized that I left that cash <u>and</u> I left that checkbook, like, next to my purse? I didn’t put it <u>in</u> the purse ‘cause somewhere between getting it to put it in the purse and leave, I had to put it down to go find something else that I needed to take with us. Like, I don’t know. Maybe Raiden? And yeah! So I got there and I had to do a whole—they were like, “The procedure won’t start until all of this is taken care of.” <i>[Laughs.]</i> So like... it was a lot of jumbling. Thank you for online banking. I really appreciate that. That wasn’t easy. Thank you for overly-priced ATMs located in the building. That was nice, too. But I just fucked that up. I just made</p>

00:55:08	Caller	Caller	<p>that more stressful than it needed to be and it was already stressful, guys. So there ya go. I'm—I'm winning. Winning. <i>[Answering machine beeps.]</i></p> <p>Hi! Keep it—what is this? Let's not play with that, okay? Okay. I'm calling with a fail. Okay. My kids—almost two, almost four—they were fighting over a toy. So I put that toy in my bedroom and I locked the door with a skeleton key. And then I proceeded to lose the skeleton key. So now I can't get into my room.</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p> <p>And not only that, but I was trying to pick the lock with an Allen wrench, as YouTube tells me that I can do—although I cannot. And I got the wrench somehow stuck in the lock. So now I don't even know... if... I'll be able to get the door open once I get the skeleton key, which my spouse is going to buy right now. So I think I'm going to have to climb out of the window. My kids' window. Go on the roof. Go over and try and unlock the door from the inside of our room or somehow break the wrench that's in the lock. I don't know. But I'm locked out of my room. So. Yeah! And it's—it's bath time. It's the kids' bedtime. So winding down and this is so funny! So very relaxing evening here. And I don't know how I'm going to sleep tonight.</p> <p><i>[Biz laughs.]</i></p>
00:56:49	Biz	Host	<p>That's all. That's my fail. You guys are doing a great job. Me? Eh, questionable. Thanks for the show.</p> <p>Oh! Yeah! This is a great fail! You're doing so awful! <i>[Laughs.] [Singing]</i> You locked yourself out of your room! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! <i>[Regular voice]</i> That'll show those kids not to fight over that toy. I'm very sorry that you did this. I felt like I was walking through it with you. And yeah. Don't ever share that with anybody. Because they'll all know. They'll all... they'll all judge you. And... yeah! Like I said, you're doing a horrible job punishing your children by taking their toy away and locking yourself out of your sanctuary. Oh well!</p> <p><i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:57:35	Music	Music	<p>"Mom Song" by Adira Amram. Mellow piano music with lyrics.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
00:58:00	Promo	Clip	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i> Music: Strumming guitar.</p> <p>John Moe: I'm John Moe. My show, <i>Depresh Mode</i>, is all about mental health. And this week, I talk with Amanda Knox. She spent four years in an Italian prison for a murder she didn't commit. That's a lot of trauma. And she's okay talking about it!</p> <p>John: If I touch on something that you'd rather not get into, just say so. We'll cut the whole exchange out. But it also seems like you're pretty open— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Open about a lot of things.</p>

Amanda Knox: Yeah. Yeah. I am having trouble imagining anything that you could talk to me about that I've—

[John laughs.]

John: I know. I know. What are we gonna throw Amanda Knox *[inaudible]*?

[Amanda laughs.]

John: *Depresh Mode*, with John Moe! Only on Maximum Fun.

[Music fades out.]

00:58:40 Promo Clip

Music: Mellow keyboard and drums play in background.

Speaker: For over a decade, MaxFunCon has been an incredible weekend of learning, connecting, and laughing with folks in the MaxFun community. And—if all goes according to plan—the last regularly-scheduled MaxFunCon will take place in Lake Arrowhead from June 3rd to June 5th, 2022. We have a very limited number of tickets remaining. To make them available to the maximum number of people, we'll be opening our waitlist for tickets on January 23rd at 5 PM Pacific. That'll be your chance to be first in line to purchase tickets, and we'll go down the waitlist until we're at capacity. More details at MaxFunCon.com. And mark your calendars for Sunday, January 23rd at 5 PM Pacific.

00:59:20 Biz Host

Alright. It's time—that special time—in which we listen to a mom have a breakdown.

00:59:26 Caller Caller

[Answering machine beeps.]

Hi, this is a rant. I've actually called before about my child's multiple sicknesses since starting preschool a few months ago. Coming back with another rant, which is how isolating it is to be trying to have your kid safely go to preschool. And he still gets sick, and then you try to do the right thing. We don't have any family nearby and so my mom keeps trying to come visit us. And... we are always sick. And then she cancels her trip, because that's the right thing to do in a pandemic. And we were gonna quarantine the kids before her visit this weekend and... the kids are still sick! And so we took the baby in and they did a flu test and he has the flu. And... so we're gonna cancel her trip again.

And I know that the theme of this pandemic has just been isolation and... that's just what it's been and this is not new. But it felt like there was supposed to be some hope, I think? Some semblance of normalcy? Like my mom's COVID vaccinated and we're COVID vaccinated and it feels like we should be able to be less cautious. I don't know. And clearly we can't and that's not logical. And it is what it is. But I'm really disappointed. And I would really like to see my mom. And I would really like my kids to not be sick anymore. That's all. That's the rant. Thanks for the hotline. You guys are doing a good job. Bye.

01:01:14 Biz Host

So are you! You're doing a really good job. And... that was a great rant. That was wonderful. You're right. I—yeah! The theme of the pandemic has been isolation, but I think an even bigger theme is

disappointment. Because that— *[Laughs.]* That's exactly what that was! It is disappointing to make plans. I mean, we—*[sighs]*. We went through the beginning of this pandemic with things being cancelled. And then school being cancelled. And then work and like—I mean, that was a lot of disappointment. And then we all kinda were thinking, “This won't take very long!” And then that was disappointing. *[Laughs.]* That it was still going. And now, when we have put things into practice that can make life a little more normal—when even those things can't prevent the disappointment? Or can't prevent things from falling through? Yeah! That really sucks. It is a punch in the gut.

And you are doing—it sucks doing the right thing! Alright? Let's just all sit in it. Yayyy, we did the right thing. Yayyy! And now we get to pay for that! *[Laughs.]* Like, I get it. Who wants to do the right thing? You do! We all do! But it comes sometimes at this cost and I... I just want you to know that I really see you. I think this is that other thing about the pandemic. Kids get sick all the fucking time before the pandemic. Especially at the age that your kids are in. Y'know. I mean, Theresa—years of her kids just—everybody—the year they went into preschool, everyone was sick all the time. And then she had another kid. That kid? Sick all the time during—and then finally, Curtis. That—sick. Alllll the time. Mm-kay? And that is part of the preschool experience.

But with COVID, it suddenly makes that so much more stressful. Right? Like, if your kid had a cold your mom would still have come. Right? *[Laughs.]* Right? Unless there were medical issues or concerns that your mom might have had. But now, everything is a risk of COVID. And the flu. And it's—*[sighs]*. It just sucks! I'm really sorry! And I...*[sighs]* I wish there was some way we could figure it out for all of those who have kids under five. I said this at the beginning of this show, too. This just really sucks. And I'm really sorry. And... I see you? And... you are not alone? Despite how isolating it can feel. And it sounds like you've got a really great family. Who is respecting all of these restrictions. And I think that that's really great. And... I see your mom as well, having to cancel. I know that she's probably incredibly disappointed, too. And... you're just doing a remarkable job. Like... above and beyond a remarkable job. Yeah. That's it.

01:05:08

Biz

Host

Everybody? That's it. And that's enough. That's enough! In fact, I'm done. How about you guys? I'm done. I've had enough. No more for me, thanks! I'm driving. *[Laughs.]* It is disappointing! Things are disappointing. After a year of disappointment. After a year prior to that of disappointment. And we're all still parenting. We all still have kids in our house. We all are still working and it's all work. No matter what it is that you do all day. It's fucking work. And we all are carrying a lot. *[Sighs.]* 'Cause it's never just one thing. Like, I feel like... sometimes society, TV, magazines, catalogs, all of it makes it look like it's just one thing. And it's so many things. Maybe they just can't cram all those things into a thirty-minute sitcom. That could be it. But we all know it's many things. And it's a big fucking surprise that it is. I'm still surprised, everybody! I am still surprised by how tired I can get. How I can get excited about something and then it like crashes. How I think we're in the clear. *[Goofy voice]* We're in the clear! Everybody's doing so well in this house! And—

[Laughs.] Then they don't! Aah! So... let's just continue to extend ourselves some grace. And forgiveness. And patience. And let us do that with each other. We don't have to be the horrible shitshow that the news tells us we are. *[Laughs.]* 'K? We get to go out and be kind and listen and generous with each other. And even just... see each other. You're all doing an incredible job. And I'll talk to you next week. Bye!!!!

01:07:16 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.*

01:07:41 Biz Host *[Music fades.]*
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 MaximumFun.org/onebadmother. For information about live shows, our book and press, please check out OneBadMotherPodcast.com. *One Bad Mother* is a member of the Maximum Fun family of podcasts. To support the show go to MaximumFun.org/donate.

01:08:09 Theresa Host *[Music resumes for a while before fading out.]*
A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:08:33 Music Transition
01:08:34 Speaker 1 Guest MaximumFun.org.
01:08:35 Speaker 2 Guest Comedy and culture.
01:08:36 Speaker 3 Guest Artist owned—
01:08:37 Speaker 4 Guest —Audience supported.