

## Episode 8 Understanding Foster Parents Transcript

Cat

Hi, there. This is Cat and I am here with Jack. And we have a very special guest today and the fostering the future studio.

Jack:

Can I just say that this is the person that I always tell people that I want to be when I grow up. She is an incredible mom, to many kids and a great friend. And she's always one of the people I call when I'm struggling with a foster care issue. And I'm so excited to introduce Lynne to you guys.

Cat:

Okay, I have a very serious question for you, Lynn. What is your favorite drink at Starbucks?

Lynn:

I'm definitely a creature of habit. So I would have to say I always get a cafe latte.

Cat:

Well, that's a good drink. Let me just intervene here and say that every foster parent should get a free drink at Starbucks.

Lynn:

I mean, I'm not complaining about that concept.

Jack:

We've gotta talk to Mr. Bucks there.

Cat:

I know. The foster parents special should be in effect.

Lynn 2:16

I agree with that.

Jack 2:17

We could definitely use the caffeine. Yeah.

Cat 2:19

I mean, dogs get a free little something.

Jack 2:22

Dogs get an puppacino. Yeah. Yeah.

So I have a question for you, Lynn, what is your favorite thing to do with your kids?

Lynn 2:38

So my favorite thing to do it's kind of low key, but I love to just sit on the front porch with them and just observe our yard and our animals and just be you know, they if you're just really relaxed with them, and you just sit and be with them. They they build a relationship with you and they learn to trust you. And they can just you know, spilled the beans with you.

Jack 3:02

I love that. Cat. Have you seen her for a porch or her yard? She has like the most fun house ever. I know like any foster kid or any kid at all that goes her house feels like they win the lotto. That's amazing.

Lynn:

Yeah - we just like to be big kids too.

Cat:

Yeah, I mean, any house or the yard, that that's that's that big that you can even do that. You're so lucky. That's awesome.

So to piggyback on that, what is your best memory with your kids?

Lynn 3:33

My best memory was my kids on Mother's Day, one year. We went out in our backyard, and we just laid in the really green grass and took selfies. I when I look back at those pictures, because you know, there's just so many memories with all of those kids. And the conversations that we had while we were doing that we had one of our old horses out that was just kind of wandering around the yard. She was very old and very sweet. And she was with us during that photo shoot. And we talked about that photo shoot a lot.

Jack:

Oh, that's really cool. Because like your favorite memory is actually in print.

Cat:

Yeah, so cool.

Jack 4:17

So I think we kind of need to establish something first. Do you think we need to establish the quantity we're talking about?

Cat:

I mean, there is like an elephant in the room. How many kids do you have?

Lynn:

Today have 17?

Jack:

Okay. So 17 kids, and I know some of them are biological, right? Some of them are adopted, and some of them are foster and some are adults.

Lynn:

Yes, we have. I don't know. I think we have five adult.

Jack:

Why don't you go ahead and give me one word that you think people would use to describe foster parents. Maybe not necessarily people who know us, but what's what's like, like a word that..

Lynn 5:00

A lot of people would use to describe foster parents.,I think all foster parents and it may be true. have to have some level of crazy.

Cat:

Do you think that that is true about you?

Lynn:

Absolutely. We have 17 kids, that in itself is crazy. I think it's definitely true

Cat:

Is that like the frog in the hot water. Like, the frog in the hot water that like it starts to boil on the frog never jumps out.

Lynn:

Yeah, I would say so.

Jack 5:34

Okay, what was your first experience or knowledge of foster care? How did you get acquainted with foster care?

Lynn 6:02

So when my husband and I were first married, we had a friend who dated a foster girl. And I remember we asked her so many questions about her life, I just, I couldn't fathom like, so you don't live with your parents? What's the plan? Like? I was? So the plan? Oh, my gosh. Just ask me like, what's the plan? where we're going?

Jack 6:05

No Routes Found.

Lynn 6:11

My little tag thing is I can do anything with a plan. Little did I know when I first got into foster care, the plan. So that was our first experience as a married couple with foster care.

And we knew that after it can get kind of emotional here. But after our first pregnancy, we had a miscarriage. And I thought, well, I don't ever want to do this again. I mean, I want to have kids, but I don't want to experience this great loss, which is kind of, you know, crazy, because foster care is about so much loss.

Yes. And so I thought immediately, well, we can't do this, again, we need to just adopt, how do we do that. So we started researching adoption. And I was too young. So at that time, you know, you had to be a certain age, and I was only 20. And so um, adoption wasn't an option at that time. But you know, it's something that I feel like we always kept in the back of our mind, in both of us, or from from, you know, our childhood, we loved other children. And my husband's mom has told me before that he would bring his cousin's kids home, like younger kids home with him for the weekend, to give his cousin's a break, and to just hang out with them and have fun.

And so I know, he's always had that heart, to take care of kids, and just really love on kids. And so, you know, we knew that it would happen at some point, but we had three biological kids. And we It was our, our son was 17, our oldest one at the time. And he said, Well, why don't you guys foster? And I thought, you have no idea. Absolutely no idea.

We're not doing that. And then we did talk about the loss then. And so he's he did say, you know, well, you guys maybe can't do it. But God can do it through you. And so our eyes were opened huge with that.

Jack 8:20

That's really cool. And one of the things that you bring up is your husband and we talked in a previous episode about how it's so important as a foster parent, that your partner's on board with you, and how I know you've seen it, too. You see foster parents come in where one of the partners is like a little begrudging, maybe, and that a lot of the times that ends not so great, because it breeds resentment, right?

Like if our husbands weren't like, gung ho onboard, excited to be foster dads, like they would definitely hate both of us, right?

Lynn:

Oh, absolutely. And I, you know, in our house, it's always been, we vote on things, everybody gets a voice. And I think it's really important that everyone in the family does have a voice. I mean, at the end of the day, we have had to make some decisions that were our kids had a voice. But ultimately, my husband and I had to make a decision for people's safety.

But in our home, everybody gets a voice. And if anyone votes no, on us having another placement, then the answer's no.

Cat:

How long have you been fostering now?

Lynn:

for 13 years

Cat:

Oh, my goodness. Okay.

Jack 9:32

And so, what was it that made you really want to be a foster parent? Was it your interaction with your friend's girlfriend? Or was there something else at play?

Lynn 9:46

I think so. We always wanted to do more for kids who didn't have the same kind of parents

that my husband and I are and so that was always in the back of our mind. But our three biological kids were older and we had parented a couple of girls in our neighborhood. Never on a formal level. They they lived with us on and off, and they would go to church with us.

And one day we were in church and I just, I was raised good old Southern Baptist, I didn't believe in all the hokey spooky, I got a vision kind of thing. And I did, I experienced this crazy vision of myself holding a baby. And it shook me to my core, like I couldn't get it out of my mind. And I shared that with my husband. And he said, Well, I don't know unless God himself because at that time, he had had a vasectomy I had had instructed me, and he was like, unless God Himself brings a baby to our front door, that's not gonna happen.

And so I said, Well, you know, we talked about adoption. And that's when my son actually started bringing up to us about fostering. And he said, You guys have really loved on a lot of our friends. And so what's the difference? And that's when you know, no way, there's a lot of loss in that you have to love these kids. And then you have to give them back. The typical reason that most parents would say are most people would say, Oh, I could never foster because you have to give them back. And I think now, having more foster experience, I think that really is a cop out. Right?

Jack 11:29

Well, and I wish we could give them back more often, right, and, you know, I think repairing these families is such a privilege, that unfortunately, a lot of times doesn't get to happen. So it's funny that a lot of people's biggest fear about foster care, it's like, Man, I wish that would happen more often.

Cat 11:48

Yeah, it's almost a myth. It's just so rare.

Jack 11:50

Well, aside from last week

Cat 11:53

Exactly. We need to get some stats on how often that really happens. Because it's, you know, it's not happening as often as it needs to be.

Lynn 12:01

And I think that was my greatest fear, was loving a child and then suffering loss myself. And that's when my son said, you know, you can't do it. You're right, but God can do it through

you. And I thought, him and I were or on a mom and son date at the time, and I thought, wow, looking across the table at him, I said, You're wiser than your years. I can't even imagine how wide you are like, an I get to be your mom.

And so that began our journey. And we went home and discussed it with my husband and he said, Ah, no, not gonna happen. And so I said, Okay, well, I'm just gonna continue to pray.

And so I journaled for two years, I prayed and prayed and prayed, and I journaled and to read that journal now is really uplifting to me, just to see how far he came. After two years of pray, and I had mentioned to him, you know, there's, there's an orientation for foster parents, and it's on Monday, can we go? And he said, No, I told you like, that doors closed. I really don't want to do that. And so I said, Okay.

And another, you know, God would show himself in a crazy way, we're church, and he leaned over at me to me and said, Yeah, I think you need to sign up for that class on Monday. And I was like, home, I said, Okay, so I don't twist my arm. What am I going to pray around now? Right. And so, I know. Little did I know, I had no idea.

And so I signed up the following day, and we went and, you know, talk about one of those things. My husband left me with my jaw on the ground, because in the class, he says, you know, you do the introduction, and he was like, so, Hi, my name is Mr. Lin. And, um, my wife and I are here to foster. We're just so excited about this. And I was like, really? We are. But from that moment forward, he has just been all in he dove in headfirst, and he hasn't stopped. And we've had some some hard moments, but he's he's remained steadfast.

Jack 14:20

Yeah. And just from my experience with him, I'm so surprised that he was the one that had to be convinced in the beginning because he's such I don't know you such you're like classic. Like supportive, gung ho, foster dads. So that's, that's really cool. What do you think has been the biggest surprise about being a foster parent?

Lynn 14:47

I really think like we were talking, wishing that more there were more reunifications my surprise is that they're the amount of kids that Don't get to return home. You know, when we first entered into foster care, I thought that there were going to be so many more kids that returned home. And, and it is surprising.

Jack 15:11

Yeah, I definitely agree. Yeah, that's really hard. I mean, a good portion of kids do end up going to family members, but not enough reunifications.

And what do you think the hardest thing about being a foster parent is?

Lynn 15:32

Not knowing, not having that plan? It's definitely because like I said, you know, my little tagline has always been, oh, I can do anything with the plan? Well, there really is no plan. So plan for no plan or plan for plans to be changed a lot.

Jack 15:49

Anytime you get a plan, it'll be a different plan by the time you receive it.

Cat 15:55

And what has been the most fulfilling thing for you?

Lynn 16:00

Seeing kids feel safe. And their behaviors completely changed. Once they have that felt safety? I can't just say that there's one single thing that has been the biggest reward for me. There's so many seeing moms that visits when they're clean. My first reunification? Those are such sweet memories that I can't really just say that there's just one particular thing that has been the biggest reward.

Cat 16:32

Yeah. Well, those are really fulfilling moments. I'm so glad you shared those with us.

Jack 16:38

What has been your biggest disappointment

Lynn 16:42

When the system fails our kids? And you know, we've tried as foster parents, to advocate, the guardian ad litem has tried to advocate, even the case manager has tried to advocate and somehow the system still fails the kid sometimes.

Jack 16:59

What would you change about the foster care system?

Lynn 17:03

Say what you mean and mean what you say, you know, bring it back to the child, I think I

tell other foster parents, what was the reason, you know, when they're telling me that their kids have whatever behaviors and it's really hard for them. And they're kind of like, these are their deal breaker behaviors, I encourage them to think back to why they became foster parents. And I would say almost 100% of the time, they say, because of the kids, until I wish that the system of care could really just stop just pause and think we're doing this for the kids. You know, in many times, it can be like that. But there there's a whole lot of times that it's not.

Cat 17:54

Speaking of deal breakers, has there ever been a deal breaker for you? Like, is there a kind of child that you cannot work with?

Lynn 18:02

I think when my husband and I first became licensed, you know, they asked you what your deal breakers are. And I said, a child that has experienced sexual abuse, that's my deal breaker. And that was simply and I don't mind sharing this at all...

I grew up being sexually abused for a lot of my life. And so I just said, You know, I thought that would be too triggering for me. And, you know, we might my husband was okay with that.

And then, you know, oftentimes parents, foster parents say, we can't take a child that's had this or done this, or, and we just don't know, when kids come into care. You don't know, you know, the parents either aren't forthcoming? Or it's just something you don't know. Yes.

And my husband our first placement where we knew like something's not right. And we suspect sexual abuse, my husband said, Who better to care for this child because, you know, everything that this little girls is feeling? And I would have to say that he's right. It has been, you know, there have been triggers. But he's been there along the way with with me to say, you know, I think maybe we need to just stop and think about this. We need to pray about this. And what would you do or what what do you wish that someone would have done when you were their age? And how would you have handled it if you could, you know, go back and do it all over again.

And so not only have there have been triggers, but there's been so much healing in my own life and I don't recommend people go well, I have this extensive abuse or you know, trauma in my own life. Let me sign up to heal.

Cat 19:46

This isn't like an alternative healing modality they're recommending for people

Lynn 19:48

I recommend that you work through all of those things, and you feel ready to move forward before you decide to foster but and I had worked through so much of my trust. But even working through it, you know, your body never forgets. And things happen, you know, even though you think you're healed, you just have to revisit it and go, Okay, let me use my skills that I've learned in counseling and to work through it.

Cat 20:17

I was a caseworker for two years in Texas, and kids would be removed for all kinds of reasons. And I remember that probably like, right before I quit, I felt like every child that had been removed for every kind of reason, by the time, you know, their case, had been transferred to adoptions or reunified, some kind of sexual abuse disclosure had been made. And I was like, has every child been sexually abused? Right? And the answer was almost always, yes. Almost everybody.

Lynn:

Yeah. That's so sad.

Jack 20:50

Um, I have a question, because here at fostering the future, you know, we have very small goals in mind. Like, we just want to change the world.

Cat:

We just want Starbucks.

Jack:

Also, we also want Starbucks. But we also want to change the world, you know, just a small little Feat. So we want you to help us come up with an idea for how to change the world.

What do you think we could change in our community that would help less kids need to come into care?

Lynn 21:20

More support for parents. Absolutely. I mean, we all make mistakes. And you know, a child's life shouldn't be like, hanging in because their parents make mistakes. But we all need that support. And if we have that support, you know, I think the foster community, we

find our little, I guess, support groups within our community, other foster moms, other foster dads, you know, caseworkers that we just click with therapist, we have that, and I wish that biological parents could have that same community,

Cat 22:02

We were just talking about that.

Jack 22:05

Yeah. And I think, like, when I think about our community, I feel like the vast majority of kids are coming into care, either directly due to drugs, or because of a side effect of drugs, right. So I feel like if we got the opioid crisis, especially in our counties under control, that that would solve that problem. Right? It would, I think it would drastically limit the number of kids coming into care, right?

So when we were talking last week to a biological parent, she was I was asking her how the same question and how do we have less kids coming into care because of drugs? And as as a recovered addict? What is it that makes a difference?

And one of the things she was saying was inpatient rehab, so maybe maybe we need more funding for inpatient rehab, or more pushing from judges when someone gets in trouble for drugs to be pushed into inpatient rehab, but also, she was saying, it's an embarrassing thing, when you're an addict to try and get help, and you feel ashamed. So maybe if there was some type of hotline. She said, I wanted to talk to someone who wouldn't judge me, but when helped me Yeah, so maybe like more like a toll free number that people can call and talk to someone that could encourage them to do like inpatient rehab. She said, a big part of beating addiction was in cutting ties. So like deleting those numbers off the phone? Yeah, stuff like that.

Lynn 23:42

So those are the people that they look at as their support plate, you know, like, I have our support community. And I think drugs is a huge part of it. But then if you look even deeper, and you go, what why are they using drugs, it's the trauma, the trauma or self medicating and the trauma that they've had.

Cat 24:01

I think that Jack is just scratching the surface with like, the changes that we need to make, right, because people are afraid that they will get in trouble, which is why they don't seek help. Right for they'll, they'll be judged. And but I think that I'm also just scratching the surface, there's a lot I don't understand.

Jack 24:16

So I think a lot more information on also needs to be shared about trauma, and, and about how trauma creates addiction and mental health, undiagnosed mental health conditions, can turn into addiction. And, you know, I think we just need to investigate that more and see if we can find some practical solutions. Because, you know, right, we didn't keep we can keep churning out these children through the foster care system, or we could try and slow it down. Because as you know, it's just been increasing every year.

Cat 24:48

And you know, I've I don't know if you guys have heard that quote. We're all like one to two financial decisions away from like homelessness or more. I think the same is true for some of these other consequences like it could have easily been me, or anybody else, like, you know, I had my own trauma for sure we all have had trauma. And if we haven't, then we easily could have absolutely you know, I mean, I know our generation was like the first generation that have the kids on the milk cartons and things like that those kids could have been us that we easily could have had more significant trauma. And we easily could have made one different decision that could have led to a series like a domino effect of different decisions. And so I think the moment that we forget that we, we were no longer able to make the same kind of change that we need to make.

Lynn 25:38

I tried to put myself in, in the bio parents place, you know, put myself in their shoes. And I've said many times, I was a terrible mom of three kids. You know, my three kids were the guinea pigs, and I made some poor decisions, but add a wise husband there. And both of our parents were super helpful. Without that support, and many of our bio parents are like a fish out of water just flailing around. Yeah, I don't help the supports.

Jack 26:08

Well, one of the things that, you know, I always think about when I think of you is, and we this is also something that we talked about, on our second and third podcast episodes, where, when foster kids come into the system, they've come from a place of trauma, and they're scared, and they really need someone who is calm and nonreactive. And when their whole world is exploding that you can, like, safely hold them and not take things personal and stuff like that. And one of the things I always think about you is how nonchalant you are with some of the wildest stories?

So like, I feel like you're just like, such a great example of someone who is nonreactive. And like, such a perfect calm and someone's storm.

Lynn:

I think my kids would probably disagree with that.

Jack:

I mean, I'm sure you know, everybody's kids will, you know, catch those moments in us. But can you share any, any stories that that, you know, might surprise people about how sometimes when you're, when you have kids in your home, you might have parents who kind of don't respect healthy boundaries?

Lynn:

Do you mean, like the guy in my attic?

Cat 27:34

I was hoping that you would bring that one up.

Lynn 27:36

Yeah, that was certainly an experience. He's definitely a psychopath, certifiably and my my oldest, one of my older kids was coming home from work on a Friday. And she went to turn her key in the lock. And she was like, well, the alarm is doing something really weird. And my key is really working really weird. This is odd. And then she heard something in the attic.

And this particular girl has, like, She's my strong willed save the world, like, superhero girl. She's like, I'm just gonna go in and investigate. I'm like, runnin like, heck no, there's somebody in there and locking myself in the car. Not this girl. She goes in cause her dad and says, I'm, I'm in the house, and somebody is in here, somebody is in our attic. I'm following the noise as they're going through our house. I can hear them in the ceiling.

We look back at this story. And we're like, how in the world like, seriously,

Jack 28:39

but what's so funny is this is your child. So of course they were nonchalant and casual and why would you tell the story? It was like, Oh, no big deal. You know? What am I kids dances is climbing through the attic. It's okay. Like, we got to put up word cameras like no biggie.

Lynn 28:55

Yeah, so we definitely have security now, on a whole different level that I never thought I would have. And my husband just happened to be driving in the driveway as she's calling

him. And they both like I would have said let me call 911 and wait out here, right? No, not them. They both chuck it in. He's like, Where's he at? Where's he at? You know, and I'm guessing he like climbed out. Like went the other way and climbed out because there's two attic accesses one in our house and one in our garage. So I guess he climbed out of the garage one and hightailed it through the woods before they can catch it.

Cat 29:29

I might have a heart attack before this ended.

Lynn 29:31

I am pretty sure I'm going Gosh. So that was interesting. We call the police and, you know, always the right people show up and she had it. The one officer that showed up had a history with foster care. Some of her family members were foster parents and they had some pretty traumatic things happen with biological families.

I do like to say like the disclaimer is that's not the typical, right? We've fostered many, many, many, many kids and you No for that to happen is is pretty rare. We don't want to scare off any prospective foster parents, but you know, law enforcement did come into play. They definitely, we have a restraining order. And we definitely will use it if we ever have to.

Cat 30:19

Yeah. How do you find out where you live?

Lynn:

Um, medical records, the doctor's office sent medical records.

Jack 30:26

It happen all the time.

But you know, most parents aren't going to like, and they don't have any beef with you. Like, you're just taking care of their kids. And also even the ones that would do something like that. probably know, like, if I do that, then I'm probably not getting my kids back, you know. But every once in a while you you run into someone

Lynn 30:49

Yes. And we had visits with this parent, our visits from day one, throughout the whole case, or at like the lockdown secure videotape facility. So we knew that that he was very dangerous. And prior to him coming in our attic, he also tried to kidnap the kids at a local

Festival, where case management was also there with us.

Cat 31:16

So yes, so back to that deal breaker question there really aren't any - are there.

Lynn 31:24

And we do say safety comes first. And everyone gets to be safe in our home. So you know, some foster parents disrupt kids. And I wish that I could say over 13 years, we've never had a disruption. But we have we've had one disruption, and it was a little boy that I wish that I could have changed things in his life. But it came down to safety and everyone gets to be safe, including him. And so and our kids know that they at least will talk about that little boy. frequently. We just talked about him today and one of the kids that I wonder where he's at and what he's doing. And so you know, I try to encourage them. I wonder too. And we just have to believe that he's safe. And he's loved wherever he's at. Yeah.

Cat 32:14

I think that's one of the hardest things about foster care for me is that there are so many kids I wonder about all the time.

Jack 32:20

Oh, yeah, I, I will never forget, there was this boy, I don't know if you remember him because he was only my house for like three or four days. But at that time, we were like, absolutely no kids older than I do remember him? 100%. Not he didn't. They called me one night. And they were like, please, just for the weekend, he has nowhere to go. If you don't take them, he's gonna end up in a group home. We found somewhere for all his siblings, please just take him for a couple of days. And then next week, when we have our full staff, we can you know, it's past the weekend, we can call we can find a place for him. So they talked me into it. And that was the first time I ever had like a child older than my son. And honestly, fear got the best of me. And when they called me the following week, I was like, Can Can we talk into keeping him and I was like, No, this is my rule. I told my son that he would always get to be the oldest kid. I can't take that back.

But that boy was so like, first of all, like, I will just never forget that placement. He was only with us for a couple of days. But I will never forget him. He is ingrained in my mind. I think about him all the time. He when he first got there, I want to say he was 12 years old. I think he was 12. And when he got there, I almost think he was having a panic attack. Because he was hyperventilating. He was pacing. And he's like, I'm scared. I'm scared. I don't know where my mom is. I'm scared. I don't know what's gonna happen, what's going on. And not only was it just like he broke my heart when that happened. But the way my kids came

together in that moment, just filled my heart in a way that I can't even explain.

You know, my oldest kind of corralled everybody, and they all walked into the room where the boy was pacing back and forth. And my son put his hand on the guy's shoulder and, and said, You're okay, you're safe. Nobody's gonna hurt you. And he looked at them. And he said, Are you all foster kids? And they were like, Well, some of us are and the ones that were pointed out and they're like, You're okay, like, everything's gonna be okay. And they just, I just remember them coming around him in a circle and they all like had a hand on his shoulder. And he just like you could see his body calm down. And then by the end of the weekend, he was like, crying Please, can I stay Please, can I stay? Can my brother come? Can we stay with you? We don't want to go anywhere else.

And I was just I was so committed to honoring my son's requests to remain the oldest that I was like, I'm sorry, like, this is like, we were only able to take you for a couple of days. But then I always wonder like did at that age, she probably ended up at a group home, it was in a group home, is he still in a group home? Like sometimes I want to call and be like, you know, is he okay? If he's not bring him here.

Right. But that won't I will never forget that placement. And and how he was when, when he left and how security was and you know, I have this picture because we went hiking that weekend down and one of the parks and there's this picture and he's, he has such peace in his face. Like he was so relaxed, but he was just like, you look at his face, and it's like peace calm. And it was so opposite from how he was when he walked in my door. That you know, there's just so much about that kid that I think about a lot. But

Lynn 35:45

isn't it awesome? When we see you, we're talking about your kids coming together. And so many of our kids have had so much trauma, and to see them really corral around him and support him and come together that just shows you know, the heart of your home and, and how the kids are in your home. They're seeing that from you and your husband.

Jack 36:08

Okay, so one time today, you know, we have a new placement this past week have three siblings. And you know, they were very nervous. They're very shy. At one point today, my oldest had, because the oldest boy that came to stay with us had some sweet tea, but wasn't sweet enough for him. So he was asking my oldest son to add some sugar to it. So my oldest, you know, he's 11 this boy and seven scoops this child up in his arms holds him like a baby's, they're spinning him around. He goes, I got sugar for you. And he starts kissing the boy's forehead. And they're both like cracking up. And it's so nice. When new

placements come and they're so nervous and anxious. It's so nice to see them laugh and smile and just be kids like that. Yeah,

Lynn 36:54

I love those moments, scooping up and laughing. You know, that's a Saturday morning on our bed in our room. It's come in on Saturday mornings when we are snuggling and laughing. And it's just so neat. We have our newest placement has stood by our door and watch that on Saturday mornings.

And it took her a while to join in. And I was able to share with her therapist. Well, you know, we've had some some moments. But this happened. And so she just she jumped right in on a Saturday morning jumped right in the middle of everybody, and was laughing and having so much fun. And I think laughter is so good for our soul.

And to see that. just totally like First of all, it melted my husband's heart because he was like, look like she's standing back like observing anymore. Yeah. So you know, that's, that's really awesome to see that. The humor and the fun and just laughing and having fun with each other?

Jack 38:00

Yeah, it's what it's about, right?

What do you wish biological parents knew about foster parents,

Lynn 38:12

That we really do want to help them that we're not kid collectors.

We do want to help them, we want to mentor them and that we have also had our own struggles. And you know, they may not be the same. But some of my, my struggles can be even more intense than, you know, some of my biological families. You know, I wish they seen that, that we're people too and we make mistakes. And hopefully they can understand by building a relationship with us that we're not judging them.

Jack 38:43

Yes, I think that's a big thing is like, I feel like a lot of the times they will avoid the relationship because they feel like like they must think they're better than us because they've got our kids like we don't think like and i i tell Mac all the time, like you know, one one difference in our life and I could be in your shoes and you can be alive shoes. And you know, I I highly respect anybody who makes huge changes in their life like that, like it takes

some strength and bravery.

Cat 39:15

What do you want the public to know about foster parents?

Lynn:

That were average every day people we don't have superpowers.

And you know, it just takes love. It takes love and you know a little bit of compassion. You put those two things together and you have the start of very awesome foster parents.

Jack 39:45

Yeah, I think that's that's a perfect way to put it. A lot of people are like, they'll be like, Oh, you're just you're such an angel. You're such a saint. You're Oh, you're like amazing. And I'm like, I'm not amazing. I am a normal mom. The only difference is like I made a choice to do this. But I feel like when people try and put you on a pedestal like that, they make it like it's impossible for other people to do. Yeah. And it's not.

Lynn:

And its uncomfortable right?

Jack:

Yeah. I get to hang out with these kids. Its an honor and its a privilege. We are like every other family. We just keep some extra beds in the closet.