



SOS for Parents in the Trenches

with Debbie Reber, Founder of TiLT Parenting
www.tiltparenting.com

Every Child / Parent Map
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About TiLT Parenting

TiLT Parenting was founded in 2016 by Debbie Reber as a podcast and online community aimed at helping parents raising differently-wired kids do so from a place of confidence, connection, and joy. Debbie is passionate about the idea that being differently wired isn't a deficit — it's a difference. She hopes to change the way difference is perceived and experienced in the world so these exceptional kids, and the parents raising them, can thrive in their schools, in their families, and in their lives.

The TiLT Parenting Podcast is a top podcast in Apple Podcast's Kids & Family category, with more than 2.5 million downloads, and regularly features high-profile parenting experts and educators, as well as insightful conversations between Debbie and her son Asher.

Learn more & get involved:

TiLT Parenting: tiltparenting.com

TiLT Parenting Podcast: Available on iTunes, Spotify, Google Play, Stitcher, Soundcloud, Podbean, PlayerFM (more than 230 episodes)

Differently Wired: Raising an Exceptional Child in a Conventional World by Deborah Reber (available as hardcover, ebook, and an audio book)

TiLT Together: Tilt's online community on Facebook, connecting parents and caregivers for the sharing of resources, advice, recommendations, tools, and more: facebook.com/groups/tilttogether

***** To download a free chapter from Debbie's book *Differently Wired*, text "TILT" to 66866.*****



Question Everything You Thought You Knew About Parenting

Reflection Questions

Where am I regularly coming up against my own parenting expectations not meshing with our current reality?

How might my beliefs about the way things "should look" be keeping me stuck?

Get Out of Limited Thinking

Make a list of 3 things you believe you "should, do" "have to do," or "need to do," when it comes to raising your child, paying special attention to school, activities, friendships, summer camps, vacations, and birthdays. Then, question each assumption one by one by asking yourself, Is this really true? To take it one step further, come up with at least one piece of evidence for how each assumption might actually not be true.

Belief / Thought:

Is it *really* true?

How might it actually *not* be true?



Stop Fighting Who Your Child is and Lean In

Reflection Questions

What aspects of who my child is am I not fully accepting?

In what ways, if any, am I secretly hoping an issue/trait/ aspect of who my child is will eventually "go away" or that he or she will ultimately become "normal"?

Recognize Where You're Fighting Reality

What are your "hot-button issues," a.k.a. areas where you regularly argue with reality in relation to your child?

Reframe What Is

How can you make a conscious choice to accept and embrace aspects of who your child inherently is instead of becoming frustrated by them?



Parent From a Place of Possibility Instead of Fear

Reflection Questions

How might fear be holding me back from making decisions that would benefit or better support my child?

How might my concerns about the future be unhelpful in the way I'm parenting my child and the choices I make?

Get It All Out on the Table

Make a "fear's greatest hits" list by writing down the parenting fears that regularly get you spinning.

Apply the "Gift of Maybe" to Your Fears

Choose one or more fears from above and rewrite them through the lens of possibility.



Let Your Child Be On Their Own Timeline

Reflection Questions

What am I afraid will happen if my child develops at his or her own unique pace instead of what's typical?

What aspect of my child's developmental timeline is most concerning to me and why? What is at the root of my concerns? Are they based in reality?

Challenge Those Timeline Beliefs

Make a list of areas where you're concerned about your child's unique timeline. For each one, consider the following questions: *Why does my child need to know how to do this now?* and *What "negative thing" would happen if he [she] learned this later?* Lastly, for each item, come up with at least one example for why your child mastering that skill in their own time is actually perfectly okay.

Area of Concern:

Why does my child need to know this now?

What "negative thing" would happen if he/she learned this later?

How is my child mastering this skill in their own time just fine?

Be Prepared to Deflect the Doubters

What can you say to people who confront you or say insensitive things regarding your child's unique timeline? Write out a "script" or two so you are ready with the language to respond confidently and in a way that respects your child when someone suggests your child is "behind" in some way.



Become Fluent in Your Child's Language

Reflection Questions

What might my child be trying to communicate to me through their challenging behavior or unexpected emotional reactions?

How might becoming more fluent in my child's language support them in their journey?

Get to Know Your Child's 'Key Phrases' (not just verbal)

How does your child express love?

How does your child express fear?

How does your child express anxiety?

How does your child express anger?

How does your child express happiness?

How does your child express contentment?

Adapt Your Language So Your Child Can Understand You

What communication methods do you have that are most effective in ensuring your child is able to receive the information you want to share? (Remember—this won't all be verbal.)



Recognize How Your Energy Affects Your Child

Reflection Questions

How in touch am I with my personal energy, especially in the midst of heightened situations?

What connections can I make between my energy reactions and my child's behavior?

How do I think my child might benefit if I were better able to manage my internal energy, especially during challenging situations?

Pinpoint Your Emotional Triggers

What are your emotional triggers or "buttons" that regularly get pushed? How are they ultimately about you as opposed to your child? Make a greatest-hits list of your negative emotional triggers and create your coping routine.

Answer the Big Question: What am I making this mean?

Choose one (or more) of your emotional triggers from above and explore in answering the question: *What am I making this mean?* Explore how what "baggage" or pain in your own life some aspect of your child's behavior is bringing up in you.

Design a Reset Ritual

Create a reset ritual for after good days or bad, for the transition between work and home, and/or for the transition from being your child's homeschool teacher to being their parent. How will you consciously push the reset button?



Practice Relentless Self-Care

Reflection Questions

How well am I meeting my physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs right now? If I'm not meeting those needs well, how could my lack of a self-care practice be negatively affecting my ability to effectively parent my child?

How might weaving more self-care into my life positively affect me? My child? The state of my family?

Create Your Ideal Self-Care Practice

Brainstorm a list of self-care activities (from easy-to-implement to special occasion items) that you can commit to incorporating into your life.

Defend Against Your Self-Care Roadblocks

Potential Roadblock

Plan for Defending Against it

Create a Plan With Support and Accountability

How will you consciously build self-care habits into your daily life? What is your plan for staying accountable?

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Let Go of Your Impossible Expectations for Who You “Should” Be as a Parent

Reflection Questions

Where do I think I'm failing as a parent? In what areas do I experience guilt or shame?

What do I regularly tell others I could be doing a better job with when it comes to my parenting?

Unleash Your Inner Critic

When are you most likely to judge and shame yourself for parenting decisions, in-the-moment reactions, and other things that result in your feeling like a failure?

Give Yourself a Break

How can you be compassionate with yourself after less-than-brilliant parenting moments? What is your plan for recovering, letting go, and moving on?

Help Your Kids Embrace Self-Discovery

Reflection Questions

Am I actively fostering and modeling a culture of self-discovery in our family?

Am I regularly sharing insights for my child about their neurodifferences in a way that encourages reflection and self-awareness?

Do I handle difficult situations or challenges in a way that focuses on helping my child learn more about who they are rather than punishing them or addressing only the behavior?

Use Language that Supports, Not Shames

How can you talk with your child about their neurodifferences in a way that lets them know there is nothing “wrong” with them? Write out a script / language here:

Remember that EVERYTHING is an Opportunity for Growth

What challenges regularly recur in relation to your child, at home, with siblings, with you or your partner, with friends, at school? Go through each one and consider what lagging skills are involved and how you can leverage that challenge for growth and self-discovery:

Recurring Challenging Situation:

What are the lagging skills?

Create a World Where Your Child Can Feel Secure

Reflection Questions

In what environments and situations does my child regularly become anxious or stressed?

How might these stressful environments and responses be standing in the way of their learning and growth?

How might my child blossom if they felt more secure and grounded in everyday life?

Identify Your Child's Stress Triggers

Make a list of situations and environments that have the tendency to push your child into a state where their learning shuts down, as well as identifying what that anxiety looks like.

Develop Stress-Coping Strategies

What are some stress-reducing strategies or a coping routine that can help your child in-the-moment when in a difficult situation?

Ensure That Home is a Safe Place

What steps can you take to actively create a safe physical, mental, and emotional environment for your child?