My hero full episodes

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"The hero's journey can take place on a battlefield or in a cubicle. We can live it out amid public clamor or in the soundless vault between our ears. The demons we are dueling are always the same. They are our journey is universal. It is every woman's and every man's." -Steven Pressfield MeSamong | Shutterstock Did you know that you are the hero of your own story? Living life from behind your eyes, you are the protagonist, and you are the author. Some might say you are the co-author with destiny or with your higher power. You may have understood this at one point in your life and circumstances got in the way of your ability to see clearly that you can still captain your own ship. You see, on every hero or heroine's journey, the hero gets lost. The hero wants to give up. It's an essential part of the journey, in fact. If you are lucky, you will find your way back quickly, or after a little time. Some people get lost for so long they forget what it was like to be themselves. You know the ones-people who once walked in their full power but now sag beneath the weight of their disappointments and losses. Sometimes the pain in life can seem too much to bear, and there are those among us who suffer harder, maybe even feel deeper. Pain is inevitable, but sufferingthe story we tell ourselves about the pain-is optional. We are all heroes and heroines -either answering the call of our highest selves or not. We will most certainly get lost when we don't answer, and we most likely find our purpose when we don't answer, and we most likely find our purpose when we don't answer, and we most likely find our purpose when we don't answer and heroines. take the journey with them. We see how the obstacles almost overcome them. We see how they grow as human beings or gain qualities or show great qualit initiation. The initiation we go through includes the tests, the leaps of faith, the actions we must take a chance at getting hurt and trust the process of relationship. If we are starting a business we must take one step at a time towards our vision often with failure coming before success. During the initiation, you will need to persevere and you don't give up, you will need to persevere and you don't give up, you will need to persevere and you don't give up, you will need to persevere. When you persever and you don't give up, you will need to persever and you do of your own story means stepping back from the overwhelm of any moment and seeing that every journey has ebb and flow, up and down.Don't wait for someone to save your Save yourself. Step into your power and become the hero or heroine of your own life. Subscribe on iTunes, Stitcher Radio or TuneIn Meet the Dermatologist Who Wants to Save You Money — and Just Hit a \$200 Million Milestone for Patients Your Employees Want This Perk, and Giving It to Them Can Improve Your Bottom Line The Hidden Dangers of Not Taking Your Vacation Days This Family-Owned Manhattan Jewelry Shop Struggled to Rebuild After 9/11. Today, 2 Sisters Who Run the 46-Year-Old Business Reveal What Iting Your Vacation Days This Family-Owned Manhattan Jewelry Shop Struggled to Rebuild After 9/11. Takes to Persevere. Businesses Need More Women Investors. Here's How That Can Happen. Franchising Isn't for Entrepreneurs, It's for Systempreneurs, It's for Systempreneurs This week on We Are Parents, Julia Dennison and Shaun T talk about single parenting. Featuring Emma Johnson, author of The Kickass Single Mom, creator of Wealthy Single Mommy, and a single mom by choice, it's clear that no two single-parent families are the same, but these moms are true inspirations. "Single parenting is excruciatingly difficult," Adrienne—who looks after both her daughter and her mom, who has Alzheimer's and dementia—said on the podcast, "And nobody talks about how hard it is to be a parent in general, but when you literally have no one to help..." Catching up with Adrienne after she recorded the podcast, she admitted that "I must've been having a very good day because I grossly downplayed how hard it is to be taking care of my daughter while trying to work! Since I taped the podcast, my mom has come back home and I am struggling mightily!" Even with the hard times, especially now during the pandemic, Adrienne's decision to have a child on her own was a blessing and truly meant to be: From the 13 eggs she got after two retrievals, 12 of the eggs had abnormal chromosomes. "My one chance was my daughter." For Emma Johnson, a mom of two, lifting up other single parents—who, as Adrienne and Emma showcase in this episode, have just as many struggles as they do rewards that come along with being a parent—has become her life's mission. Parenting, relationships, work—single parent equals loneliness. Single parent equals struggle. But I'm going to make this a success story for myself and start changing that because I want my kids—my son and my daughter and people that are watching me—to assume something different just by osmosis. So that's my journey." Upcoming episodes and topics this season include: Parenting with disabilities Divorce, co-parenting and blended families Multicultural parenting The family you didn't know you had Listen to We Are Family on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, iHeart, TuneIn, Stitcher, Google and everywhere podcasts are available. Listen to episode 8 right now: Parents.com/FamilyPod-Ep8 Plus, follow along here: Emma: It's all those messages. Single parent equals poverty. Single parent equals loneliness. Single parent equals struggle. But I'm going to make this a success story for myself and start changing that because I want my kids—my son and my daughter and people that are watching me—to assume something different just by osmosis. So that's my journey. Adrienne: I so hope that I'm showing her what a strong woman is like. Sometimes she'll see me getting angry. She'll see me being stressed, and I want her to know that those emotions are fine, too. But I really hope that I'm teaching her how to be resourceful. How to not wait for anyone. If there's anything that I can't do, and I want her to feel that as well. ------------ Music transition ----------- Julia: Hi, I'm Julia Dennison. Shaun: And I'm Shaun T. Julia: And this is We Are Family, a podcast from Parents magazine. In this show we celebrate all the different ways there are to build and be a family—and that includes single parenting, too. There are 11 million single-parent households in the U.S. Whether you become a single parent by choice or due to the end of a relationship or the loss of a partner, or maybe you never even had a partner taught us how to navigate through struggle. Julia: I shared my story about co-parenting with my ex and realizing the beauty of my extended village back in our first episode. So today, we're bringing you two more perspectives. Emma Johnson is the author of a book called The Kickass Single Mom, which really helped me when I was adjusting to becoming a single parent. And my colleague at Parents, Adrienne Farr, is a single mom by choice, raising her daughter, Madison. Shaun: We're going to hear Julia's conversation with Emma first. Julia: Emma and her ex-husband split when she was pregnant with their son and their daughter was still just a toddler. She started her blog, Wealthysinglemommy.com, to show single moms, and much more. Julia: Emma, let me just say that you are my hero. I read your book early on in the process of getting divorced and working out custody, and there were just so many points that I kind of held to my heart as I was hashing it out and really kind of stood up for that 50-50 custody, and there were just so many points that I kind of held to my heart as I was hashing it out and really kind of stood up for that 50-50 custody, and there were just so many points that I kind of held to my heart as I was hashing it out and really kind of stood up for that 50-50 custody, and there were just so many points that I kind of held to my heart as I was hashing it out and really kind of stood up for that 50-50 custody. Especially in America, I feel surrounded by so many ideas of what it means to be a single mom, and so much stigma around it. And it's just so refreshing to read your book and think about it as something that's positive, potentially, and not necessarily a negative thing. So, anyway, I just wanted to start talking by saying, thank you for being so awesome and doing what you do. Emma: Oh, well that's lovely to hear and, well, thank you for going down the road of equally shared parenting 'cause that is a huge act of activism for gender equality, for child welfare, for all of society. And I'm sure we'll get into that. Julia: It's obviously a really difficult time to be parenting solo. You recently wrote on your blog that as crazy as things are for single moms deal with is less this time around. Can you talk me through that a little bit and sort of how the pandemic has exposed some of these dynamics? Emma: Yeah, it's interesting. I mean, I came to this project. I was going through a divorce. I'm a child of divorce myself. Raised primarily by my mom and she just really bought into that stigma that she's a single mom and therefore she's poor. She's a single mom and therefore there's no good men out there. It's all those messages. Single parent equals loneliness. Single parent equals struggle. And my mom's experience was her experience. She's a different person, but she also was of a different time. And women did not have the legal rights to have money in their own name until the 1970s—that is crazy. And it is so easy to take that for granted now as women. And while we're still struggling to close that pay gap. I mean, it was assumed that I would go to college, it was assumed I would have a career, like we're outraged that we don't earn equally. Granted, I'm an educated white woman coming from a middle class background. So I have a lot of opportunities that people don't, but I'm like, I'm going to blow this up. I'm going to make this a success story for myself and start changing that because I want my kids—my son and my daughter and people that are watching me—to assume something different just by osmosis. I want my osmosis story to be different for others. So that's my journey. Julia: To break that stigma, Emma runs a Facebook group of 15,000 single moms who connect and inspire each other. Emma: There is some social shame and it's varying degrees based on your own personal story. A lot of it's where you live in the country and the United States or in the world. What's expected of you if you're community that's maybe, politically conservative, religious. You can find yourself the only single mom in your social circles, in your neighborhood, in your church community, that's expected of you if you're community that's maybe, politically conservative, religious. and that is so isolating and it's so lonely and it's so lonely and it's so lonely and it's so hard to find the support that you need to go and live a full, successful life. So bringing this back to COVID, everybody's going to struggle. By all indicators, we're headed for a really, really long, tough economic time. Julia: Absolutely. And you talk about that in your book, the importance of giving back when you can, because that also helps break the stigma that, you know, we're victims as single moms. Emma: So just in general there's like one little trick that I did for myself when I was going through my divorce and like, there were very lean years. I would always make sure that I had some kind of recurring donation—and I don't care if it's \$5 a week or, you know, 50 bucks a month—that you give to a local charity, to your house of worship, to a candidate that you support. Set up that recurring donation, because when you're going through your back. And we all do. And maybe it's in time, maybe it's an energy, and maybe it's an energy, and maybe it's in being a good friend. We're all in this together. I've got something to give. You need it. So we're just spreading it around for the time being. Julia: So, Emma, what advice would you give for single moms who've maybe just lost their jobs or are worried about finances and it just feels like, you know, total despair? Emma: Unemployment benefits are really very generous right now. Often paying people more than making with their regular wage. So by all means, sign up, no stigma attached at all. Take advantage of everything, of food stamps, if those apply to you, your local food bank, there are resources out there. And it is going to be hard. I'm not going to kid you. So I think that, take that to heart. Julia: Emma stresses that living frugally—even when it means giving up opportunities for your kids—is an investment in their future. Emma: I just got an email from a mom. She's just going through a divorce. She's unemployed. Her kid's dad is not able to contribute financially. And she's like, "Oh my God, I feel so bad because I can't send my kids up for extracurriculars. They're used to having dance and sports and all these." I was like, "No. Focus on the basics." Oh, she was saving up for a house. That was a really important goal for her. It's like giving your children the gift of financial security. And I'm not talking about abundance of wealth. I'm talking about you're confidence that you can pay the bills every month, your own confidence to look your kids in the eye and say, "I'm doing everything I can to take care of myself in my older years so I'm not a burden on you." You're giving your kids the confidence that you're dating from a place of confidence and not financial desperation. Julia: Mhm, mhm. Emma: Such a gift to your children. They don't need the fricking dance classes. Your kid is not going to be Baryshnikov. It's just not, you know, you're not depriving your kid. They can do without, or they can go to the YMCA and do the cheaper thing or whatever. They don't need that. They need to be financially secure. Julia: I'm sitting here doing quiet snaps. Quiet snaps. Quiet snaps. Yes. I absolutely agree. So as a white single mom, I really try to check my privilege, just for the very fact of being a white mom. How do you think race, class, sexual orientation, and other identity factors like those impact perceptions of single moms, and how are the messages different and challenging for the various groups? What are ways we can work to help everybody? Emma: Well, yeah. So that is the stereotype that single moms are poor and Black. And statistically we know that disproportionately Black women and Latino women are more likely to be single moms and be lower income. So. You know, I, in my work, I'm very mindful of that. But then again, my work is very much based on personal experience. So I have no business speaking about anyone's experience except my own, though I do very much based on personal experience. So I have no business speaking about anyone's experience except my own, though I do very much based on personal experience. So I have no business speaking about anyone's experience except my own, though I do very much based on personal experience. So I have no business speaking about anyone's experience except my own, though I do very much based on personal experience. So I have no business speaking about anyone's experience except my own, though I do very much based on personal experience. majority of single moms are not divorced. If you are divorced, you are rich and you're not just at the mercy of the family court system. The goal after divorce or a breakup is not for everybody to maintain the lifestyle they enjoyed because that's impossible. The goal is for you to move on as an independent woman. And support your own house on your own because when you're active in the workplace, when you're active in the workplace is a support your own. lift everyone up around you. You inform the men—the white men who are making the decisions about what's up. I'm here at the table with you. That informs all the women who are watching you about what is possible for them. And then we are all collectively lifted up. Julia: Emma is passionate about gender equality, and sees co-parenting and custody agreements as a way to create new norms. We'll hear more on that after a quick break. ----------- Julia: Hi, I'm Julia Dennison and you're back with We Are Family. We're talking to Emma Johnson, author of the book The Kickass Single Mom. Emma is a big proponent of 50-50 shared custody after separation—and so am I, because studies show it's better for kids. Emma: We can't have gender stereotypical families are the kids stay with the mom and the dads get visits. They get their allowed visits with their own children, and women are financially dependent on men by way of child support and alimony. And what do we get? You got June Cleaver. Women as caregivers, men as breadwinners and as irrelevant fathers. So we wonder why dads are the, you know, like bumbling Homer Simpson characters—because they've been told this by society. They're only good for making money and checking in once in a while for a fun weekend. It's not even about being a friend with your ex, like I'm not friends with my ex—drives me fricking crazy and I know I drive him up the wall. But just to be basically on the same page. Basic respect that is, both of your kids, they need both of you because by every single study, there are 60 peer reviewed academic studies that find that equally shared parenting is what is best for kids. When a father is not actively involved in their kids' lives, the chances for dropout, addiction, incarceration, and we're talking about every single demographic, you know, get out of your mind if you think what I just said only applies to those people, right? This is across every single demographic in this country. And if we can stem that as moms, everyday moms, to take steps, even if the dad's like, eh, I'm good with them every other weekend. Go to the judge and be like, "Nope, this is going to be a 50 50 deal." Julia: Yes. Right. And I actually almost think that there is a lot that my married friends, my nuclear family friends, can take away from my co-parenting experience. Emma: Hell yes. They want your life. Julia: 50/50 thing. I mean, I can't tell them. Tell you how many times I will say, let's go out and get brunch on Sunday. And I'd have a friend that would say, "Oh, I don't know. I took a Sunday off like two weeks ago. I really should just be home with the kids." Or even now with COVID, I have, you know, all these parents who are juggling the working full time. So the way I have her, and it's 100 percent parenting, 100 percent working and taking calls with Ezzie, and just figuring it out. But for two and a half days, it's nothing and I can get work done. So I said to my friends, why don't you take a page out of that book and you tag team—and I mean that literally you let your husband watch the kids while taking calls. And then watch the kids while taking calls the next day. And they were like, well, I couldn't ask him to have the kids while I'm taking a call. And I said, well, I have to. So clearly you can. Emma: Every time I do some public speaking, I always insert this joke. It's like inside of every married mom is a single mom, and it gets laughs because it's so freaking true. Every mom has either felt like she doesn't have the support of her partner or she fantasizes or has thoughts, or maybe made a call to a lawyer because she's so fed up and that's the thing I couldn't ask him to step up. Well, why the frick not, right? It's like it's not rocket science to take care of, keep a child alive. Again, this is a conversation for very educated, affluent people. We have turned child rearing into a competitive sport, and it's just like, get kids video games, give them a box of crayons, whatever, and do your work and yeah. There've been a lot of really beautiful things written by men who say, like it's overwhelming when you have kids, right? And our only, for most of us, our main point of reference was our own childhood. One generation ago, the world was very different and it was a lot more chauvinistic than we would hope it would be. So we all just blindly slip into these gendered roles. I am convinced that separated families in the numbers that we represent today and divorced families are the ticket to closing the gender gaps. Julia: Totally. I mean, the mental load for me just got fixed very quickly when I divorced and started co-parent when he has Ezzie. OK. So talk to me a little bit about dating. I know it's a little bit of a weird time to be talking about dating because I just saw a report out of Harvard that says we might be social distancing until 2022 and I thought, "Oh my God, am I not going to go on another first date until 2022?" Trying not to dwell on that. But thinking about dating as a single mom, that is a huge stigma. And it was really refreshing to read your book and hear you talk about setting a good romantic example for your kids and not necessarily hiding the fact that you're dating while also reassuring them that their home life will remain stable. Emma: The idea that you're dating while also reassuring them that their home life will remain stable. Emma: The idea that you're dating while also reassuring them that their home life will remain stable. Whether you are romantic and sexual with a long-term husband or as a single person. You're going to be, obviously, speaking about your sex life with your kids, but why wouldn't you just let them know you're going to a date. They're going on a date. They're going on dates, starting at, what, 14, 15 years old. Why is it OK for a 14-year-old to go on a date, but not a 40-year-old mom? Of course, it's just a normal thing. And I write about this in my book, like my mom was single and she'd go through periods when she would date a lot, and she loved it. Like, she was so happy. So I like loved watching her get all dressed up. And this is back in the '80s and the guys were probably raised in like the '50s and '60s and they'd come over to the house. We lived in a small town. They'd go out to restaurants that we would never go out to, and it was just like, this really positive memory as a child. So this is such a great opportunity to model healthy dating, right? Not rushing into serious relationships, not having some guy move in right away because you need help with the rent. Just keeping obvious, healthy parent-child boundaries about it all. But again, showing that this is a normal, healthy pare of maturing as a person. Julia: Right. You make a great point that it's a really great time in your life to be dating because for once you don't necessarily, and this doesn't apply to everybody, but for me at least. I don't have this pressure to necessarily meet somebody, get married, have a baby the way I might've had before in my dating life. Right? Emma: I totally loved it. And for me, it was such a wonderful, I mean, I've been in a relationship now for three years, but I dated like crazy for a long time and it was such a convergence of that freedom that you just described. Right? I didn't need any sperm. I didn't is so awesome. Like any hangups I had about my body. I was like, my body made these gorgeous, chubby, healthy babies. And I was just like, so over it, you know? And also like getting older, and I'm older and dudes are older too, and my body isn't perfect, but guess what? There's isn't either and just like being so much more forgiving of myself and my lovers. And I dunno, it was, it was just this very, cathartic, freeing, empowering experience for me. Julia: I love that. Emma, thank you so much. Did you have anything else you want us to talk about? Emma: No, I really appreciate it. That was, you know, it's all my favorite topics. Shaun: Julia, I really appreciate you and Emma having this conversation so candidly, because I believe that being a single mother is actually an amazing thing. I don't think it's any better or any worse than being in a relationship. I know the struggles could be a little different because there's two people versus one. But just having a parent that is empowering and strong and showing you the

right way the best that they can is great in itself. And then when it comes to gender roles in the household, as a gay guy in a same-sex relationship with kids, we never planned the roles. We both work and we just figure it out. Our kids come to us both if they want to change their diaper, they come to us both if they want to learn something, they come to us both if they're crying and they need a hug. So I love breaking down the gender roles and gender stereotypes in a relationship. Julia: I love that. Smashing the patriarchy one mental load at a time. Shaun: Before we had children we actually discussed oh, well who's gonna stay home, and who's gonna do this role and who's gonna do that role and then we immediately were like, this is a dumb conversation to have because we can't plan what our strengths are gonna be having children. Or what our weaknesses are gonna be interested in and what our strengths are gonna be having children. So the roles, the gender roles thing, I think, I like to say, where I'm from, it's played out. Everybody should do their part, everyone should be 100 percent involved whether the kid has to eat and you have to cook for the family, whether the laundry has to get done, or maybe someone loses their job and the other person has a strength and they can make more money. Julia: I love that too because it's a sense of being intentional, and having that conversation about who does what within the household that you have to have both in a single-parent household. So I think that there is a strong takeaway there for more heternormative "traditional" nuclear families to talk about these roles and not just fall into them as a default. Shaun: I love it. Julia: Emma and I are both divorced, single moms. But for a growing number of people, single parenthood is a choice. One of them is my colleague Adrienne Farr, the executive operations coordinator at Parents magazine. She used a sperm donor to conceive, and gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named Madison, who is now almost 4. I caught up with Adrienne one night after she put her daughter to bed to talk about her path to becoming a mom. Julia: So I'm here with Adrienne Farr, who is part of the Parents fam. Adrienne, I love you. I'm a big fan, coworker extraordinaire. Adrienne: Oh my God. First of all, Julia, I love you, too. Thank you so much. Julia: You know that I fangirl over you all the time, Adrienne: Adrienne at almost 9:45 at night because you had bedtimes to get out of the way and everything else. And you know, finally, here we are at almost 10 o'clock at night. But I mean, that's just par for the course, isn't it? Adrienne: Absolutely. This is like the only time I can think. Sometimes when my daughter goes to bed, even though I'm tired, I still sit up for like another hour or an hour and a half, mindlessly scrolling through my phone. Because it's the first time all day that I don't have to answer any questions. I don't have to do anything. Like I can literally just be mindless and kind of download from the day, Julia: As crazy as parenting can be, Adrienne always knew she wanted to be a mom. Adrienne: I met my last boyfriend when I was 39 and I turned 40 dating him. And you know. It just wasn't working. And it was time. Unfortunately, women have that biological clock, so I had to figure some things out. Courtesy of Adrienne Farr Julia: Talk me through what it means to be a single mom by choice, but tell me a little bit about your journey. Adrienne started going to meetings for prospective SMCs and joined an online community, where she learned about sperm donation and IVF, and connected with other women. Adrienne: The women are amazing. They were called thinkers, beginners, and I think there's triers, and moms. So I was a thinker in the beginning and then everyone was just so helpful. So that's how I first came about it. But from the first meeting until the time I got pregnant, two years, it was two long hard years of conception and like finding out information. There were many tears and many phone conversations with friends and the therapist.. Julia: In terms of picking the sperm, what went into that decision and how do they present that to you? Adrienne: First of all, you have to decide whether you want an open or closed donor. So a closed donor does not want to be contacted, never to know who they are. The open donor gives your child that option. So that already cut the list down a lot. Then I'm African American. So I wanted the donor to also be African American. So that cut it down even more. And so then you start to look at all of their history, their age. We have to go through genetic testing. I think it's almost a thousand different forms of genetics that both of us have to do, a test that we have to take to make sure everything is normal. And then you can get a picture of the person when they were a child. And also an interview as to why they decided to donate sperm. And then you also get their family history too—their parents, their siblings, to see if there were any sort of, you know, illnesses that they had, like cancer or anything like that. So once I looked at everything, I finally settled on someone. Julia: What did it feel like when you knew you had found the right donor? Adrienne: When I first started that search, I literally, cause there's just so many men, and it's like. I was really thankful. I felt sure it was, there was no like, question or waffling back and forth. I felt like this is the guy. So it felt really good. Julia: Then it was time for Adrienne: There's a lot of fertility clinics, and you just have to find the right one because some of them, the bedside manner isn't what you think it is. You just don't feel comfortable. You feel like you're on a conveyor belt. When the insemination is about to happen, you have to go in like almost every day. So I am like a pro with the needle. Like they have to take your blood and test it to see if your FSH level is exactly right Julia: That's short for follicle-stimulating hormone. Adrienne: So that they can inseminate you that day, sometimes or the next day. So yeah, it's constant needle sticks, constant trying to figure out your work schedule, cause how am I going to go down and do this and still get to work and I have to take all these days off. It's a lot. Julia: Adrienne did about eight inseminations, but still didn't get pregnant. So she decided to try IVF. Adrienne: But, so I finally decided to do what's called, mini in vitro mini IVF, which is a lot less drugs. And, thank God, I went to egg retrievals, which is where you're under anesthesia and they extract your eggs on your follicles and they bank them for you. And you know, finally, they fertilized. Sometimes none will be fertilized. Sometimes you'll do an egg retrieval and you won't get any eggs, or sometimes you'll get a lot of eggs, but none of them will take. So my two egg retrievals, I got 13 eggs, and thank God they were all fertilized. Only one egg out of 13 was normal. Every other egg had abnormal chromosomes. They were chromosomally abnormal, and my one chance was my daughter. Julia: Oh my God. As we've talked about before on the show, trying to conceive can be so difficult emotionally—whether you're trying to get pregnant, but kept some of the details vague. Adrienne: I didn't tell them like each step that I was taking because the failure rate is so high. The last thing I needed was, "Oh, did it happen? Oh, I'm so sorry." I remember thinking, "Oh, I wish I had somebody to do that with." But It was fine. I did it all by myself because that's just how I prefer to do it. And they do actually, one of the fertility clinics that I went to, it is mandatory to speak to a therapist at least just one session because they just want to make sure that you understand what you're doing and this and that. Julia: I love that. So, what advice would you give to people who are considering becoming a single mom by choice? Adrienne: Oh man, single parenting is excruciatingly difficult. And nobody talks about how hard it is to be a parent in general, but when you literally have no one to help. Julia: In addition to her daughter Madison, Adrienne has also been taking care of her mom, who has Alzheimer's and dementia. Adrienne has also been taking care of her mom, who has Alzheimer's and dementia. Adrienne has also been taking care of her mom, who has Alzheimer's and dementia. to make it to the next day. Not knowing. So if there is someone who is like truly going to be a single parent, the first thing I would say is look at your network of people, and if there is someone who is like truly going to be a single parent, the first thing I would say is if you're one of those people who are on the fence and really don't want a kid, but you're thinking that, you know, the whole world says I'm supposed to have a kid, so maybe I'll have a kid, so maybe I'll have a kid, but you're thinking that, you know, the whole world says I'm supposed to have a kid, so maybe I'll have a kid, so ma might tell them not to. Courtesy of Adrienne Farr Julia: Adrienne says it's important to reach out for support—seek out communities and meetings for single parents by choice in your area. Adrienne says it's important to reach out for support—seek out communities and meetings for single parents by choice in your area. Adrienne says it's important to reach out for support—seek out communities and meetings for single parents by choice in your area. that I certainly could have done better in the early days. And then the next thing I would say is if you're someone who wants a closed donor, which is to not have a father unless you happen to marry someone, but you don't know if that's gonna happen. I would say to really think about how your child is going to feel if they never even have an opportunity to find out what your child might want as they grow up. Julia: When I've heard people speak about being a single mom by choice one interesting pro that they talk about is the fact that it's all your decisions. There's nobody that you need to run anything by. You get to call all the shots, and I think that that's an important thing to think about. You know, when 50 percent of marriages end in divorce, there are a lot of people who are going to end up parenting with the person that they're not married to anymore. And you know, I'm lucky because I co-parent with somebody who we may not have been great as husband and wife, but We're great as parents together. But I suppose with a single mom by choice you get to call all the parenting, whatever you want to do, however you want to do, how you want to do, how you want to do, how you want to do do, how but that is the exact type of situation that it would have been. I think we would have been an amazing provider, I just don't see how we could have co-parented at all. So, that's very true. So yeah, it is literally whatever I say goes, and on the flip side of that, it's like sometimes you kind of like, can somebody else make a decision? Like, do I have to think about every single thing? And then on top of that, it's, of course, financial. Everything is on me as well, so it goes both ways, but being the type of person I am, like how you were saying in the beginning when you were conceiving about like, yes, control thing and being a planner. Yeah, I kind of in that sense. Yeah, definitely. It's good to be able to make all the decisions. Julia: What do you think Madison's learning from seeing you do everything that you're doing? Adrienne: Wow, I so hope that I'm showing her what a strong woman is like. I don't know why I'm getting so emotional right now, but I try. I am trying. And let me tell you something—sometimes she'll see me getting angry. She'l can't think of one thing that I can't do, and I want her to feel that as well. I so hope that that's what I'm teaching her right now, and also how to manage her feelings. You know, when she gets frustrated or upset or something, that's fine. If I get upset, she goes "Mommy, breathe out." [Laughs] So because I know that as she grows up and life gets to her, she's going to need those tools. So I hope that I'm helping her manage her feelings. Julia: I love that. Oh. But it's so hard these times. Literally today, I've just been feeling so guilty this evening because I feel like I get so stressed from work, and then I get like snappy with Ezzie and because it's like trying to do it all and it's, you know, it's not easy. And you know, watching you do it with grace, you're an inspiration. And I appreciate that. Adrienne: Thank you, Adrienne Farr. You can read her stories at Parents.com. And you know, watching you do it with grace, you're an inspiration. And I appreciate that. Adrienne Farr. You can read her stories at Parents.com. And you know, watching you do it with grace, you're an inspiration. And I appreciate that. Adrienne Farr. You can read her stories at Parents.com. And you know, watching you do it with grace, you're an inspiration. And I appreciate that. single parent listening out there—single moms, single dads, everyone—I just want to say you're doing a great job. I know you feel crazy because your kids are running around and you're trying to do everything you're doing a great job. I know you feel crazy because your kids are running around and you're trying to do everything them, and they're going to remember it. Stay strong, stay connected to your village, and take care of yourself, too. Julia: And that's all for this episode. Thanks for listening, and we'll catch you next time on We Are Family. Thanks to our production team at Pod People: Rachael King, Eliza Lambert, Susie Armitage, and Lene Bech Sillisen. This show was recorded in New York and Arizona, edited in New York City, and can be found wherever you get your podcasts. You can find Parents on Instagram at @Parents. And you can follow Shaun at @ShaunT, and Julia at @juliadennison.

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