

GO DEEPER with Curious & TRUTH BE TOLD

People, Places and Ideas in TRUTH BE TOLD

JO: "I thought I was **supermom**."

A Supermom is an exemplary mother, a woman who performs the traditional duties of housekeeping and child-rearing while also having a full-time job.¹

- in 1984 the writer Marjorie Hansen Shaevitz coined the term Superwoman Syndrome. "I found that, professionally, some women were at the top of their field," Ms. Shaevitz said. But "emotionally and personally, they were a mess." The problem was that they were trying to "do it all" perfectly, and that simply wasn't sustainable, she said. Some studies have found the do-it-all expectation is particularly trying for Black women and contributes to health disparities.
- "Feminists have been bashing and trashing the whole idea of the superwoman, the supermom, from the beginning," said Letty Cottin Pogrebin, a founding editor of Ms. Magazine. "Supermom is just another way of saying, 'Women do it all. Men don't do very much. My definition of a supermom is a single mother,'" Ms. Pogrebin said.
- Women in two-parent heterosexual partnerships — around 60 percent of families — still spend six to 8.5 hours more a week on unpaid domestic tasks like child care and cleaning. Or, as Dr. Vandenberg-Daves said, "In heterosexual families, men are often doing more than their fathers did, but less than their wives do."²



¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/supermom>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/supermom-work-family-kids.html>

JO: "It's from Shakespeare. **Julius Caesar. The evil that men do lives after them/The good is oft interred with their bones**"

Julius Caesar is history play and tragedy by William Shakespeare first performed in 1599. In the play, Brutus joins a conspiracy led by Cassius to assassinate Julius Caesar, to prevent him from becoming a tyrant. Caesar's right-hand man Marc Antony stirs up hostility against the conspirators and Rome becomes embroiled in a dramatic civil war.

The quote suggests that the negative actions and deeds performed by individuals continue to have an impact long after their death, while the positive aspects of their lives often fade away and are forgotten. This sentiment raises important questions about the nature of good and evil, the legacy we leave behind, and the way society perceives and remembers its individuals.³

JO: "Well, in the play, after Julius Caesar is assassinated, Marc Antony gives a speech, very famous, "**Friends Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.**" You've heard that, I'm sure.

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.

KATHLEEN: "This was a terrible tragedy and I, like so many other parents before me, have now **lost a child to violence.**"

From *Compassionate Friends*, providing support to every family member experiencing the **death of a child**: "The death of a child is devastating and often referred to as the worst experience a parent can endure. A child's death causes a profound family crisis. It shatters core beliefs and assumptions about the world and the expectations about how life should unfold.

The pain of grief is extremely intense as parents digest the finality of never seeing their child again and the loss of future hopes and plans. While memories of the child flood their mind, they also experience a deep emptiness and unimaginable void in their lives. Grief impacts a parent's whole identity as well as the identity and security of other members of the family."⁴

The pain and anguish can be compounded when the death comes at the hands of another human being. (Included here, as it is Kathleen's point of view at this moment of the play.) "Parents and family members can face many complicated issues, even as they try to make sense of the incomprehensible – that someone knowingly, willingly and/or intentionally killed their child. When a

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<https://www.socratic-method.com/quote-meanings/william-shakespeare-the-evil-that-men-do-lives-after-them-the-good-is-oft-interred-with-their-bones>

⁴ <https://www.compassionatefriends.org/grief/>

child dies by homicide there can be many unique issues that may complicate the grief process for the parents and family left behind."

The suicide of a child of any age presents unique circumstances that can intensify and prolong the mourning process for parents, family members and friends. Suicide is the third leading cause of death in the United States among 10-14 year olds and 15-24 year olds, and the second leading cause among 25-34 year olds. Sometimes there are warning signs of the person's intentions. However, clues may be so disguised that even a trained professional or counselor may not recognize them. Occasionally there are no discernible signs and the child's suicide becomes a catastrophic decision that may never be understood. Many bereaved parents wrestle with these feelings, but in time come to a place where they understand their child made the choice to end their life."⁵

JO: "But we clearly see him carrying the automatic rifle, the **Remington Adaptive Combat rifle**. On his waist, we see the **Glock 19**."

Remington Adaptive Combat rifle is a gas operated, selective fire weapon with a modular design. The key idea of the modular system, is that it will provide a wide variety of configurations within a matter of minutes. It was only available for the military and law enforcement market.⁶

Under the name Bushmaster, it became publicly available in 2010. Prices ranged from \$2,600 to \$3,000 for a complete firearm.



Glock 19: A brand of polymer-framed, short recoil-operated, semi-automatic pistols, Glock pistols have been supplied to national armed forces, security agencies, and police forces in at least 48 countries. Glocks are also popular firearms among civilians for recreational and competition shooting, home- and self-defense, both in concealed or open carry. Of the more than 1.3 million pistols used in crimes traced between 2017 and 2021, 19.6% were manufactured by Glock.⁷

⁵ <https://www.compassionatefriends.org/surviving-childs-suicide/>

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adaptive_Combat_Rifle

⁷ <https://www.npr.org/2023/02/10/1153977949/major-takeaways-from-the-atf-gun-violence-report>



JO: "All eight survivors identify Julian as the shooter. Now, **eyewitness testimony** can be notoriously unreliable, but in this case."

Eyewitness testimony is a legal term that refers to an account given by people of an event they have witnessed. For example, they may be required to describe a trial of a robbery or a road accident someone has seen. This includes the identification of perpetrators, details of the crime scene, etc. Eyewitness testimony is an important area of research in cognitive psychology and human memory. Juries tend to pay close attention to eyewitness testimony and generally find it a reliable source of information. However, research into this area has found that eyewitness testimony can be affected by many psychological factors:

- *Anxiety/Stress*: Clifford and Scott (1978) found that people who saw a film of a violent attack remembered fewer of the 40 items of information about the event than a control group who saw a less stressful version.
- *Reconstructive Memory*: It is a feature of human memory that we do not store information exactly as it is presented to us. Rather, people extract from information the gist, or underlying meaning. We make sense of information by trying to fit it into schemas, which are a way of organizing information. Schemas are, therefore capable of distorting unfamiliar or unconsciously 'unacceptable' information in order to 'fit in' with our existing knowledge or schemas. This can, therefore, result in unreliable eyewitness testimony.
- *Weapon Focus*: This refers to an eyewitness's concentration on a weapon to the exclusion of other details of a crime. In a crime where a weapon is involved, it is not unusual for a witness to be able to describe the weapon in much more detail than the person holding it.

Eyewitnesses are susceptible to recollecting that they experienced an event in a way that is consistent with false information provided to them after the event. The effect is commonly called the misinformation effect. Because jurors tend to find eyewitness testimony compelling and persuasive, it is argued that jurors are likely to give inappropriate credence to eyewitness testimony, judging it to be reliable when it is not.⁸

KATHLEEN: "Wrong! Lots of news things...**reports that day were wrong**, just wrong."

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<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/episteme/article/reevaluating-the-credibility-of-eyewitness-testimony-the-misinformation-effect-and-the-overcritical-juror/B8F651467F46D7D1BCA7F73D46C93FE4#:~:text=The%20claim%20that%20eyewitness%20testimony,commonly%20called%20the%20misinformation%20effect.>

From media critic Jack Shafer, "In the age of Twitter, the public had better get used to a new fact of life: News stories, especially the early reports of breaking news events, are very likely to be inaccurate."⁹

News can publish too soon. Newspapers can write several drafts for one event. If two results can happen, both articles stay ready. 'Dewey Defeats Truman' is one such example. *The Chicago Tribune* used this as their November 3, 1948 header – when Truman won the election.¹⁰

The media's frenzied attempt to identify the shooter in the Newtown, Connecticut massacre has been widely documented and discussed, along with apologies, retractions and explanations. Numerous media outlets broadcast or posted a picture of the shooter's brother, attributing the crime to him, only to find out later that they had the wrong man. In the immediate aftermath of Aurora, Colo., ABC's Brian Ross suggested the shooter had tea-party ties, based off an internet search.¹¹



KATHLEEN: "You've never spanked him?"

Who invented spanking? Christians point to Proverbs 13:24: "Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him." However, Olivier Maurel, a retired French teacher author, said the practice appears to be universal in history: "From Sumer to Egypt to China, from ancient India to pre-Columbian America, from Athens to Rome, children were hit," In-school corporal punishment is allowed in 22 states, according to the US Department of Education.¹²



⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/public-editor/getting-it-first-or-getting-it-right.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.writerswrite.co.za/7-journalism-mistakes-that-got-to-print/>

¹¹ <https://www.politico.com/blogs/media/2012/12/after-newtown-a-call-for-information-control-152275>

¹² <https://www.cnn.com/2017/12/06/health/gallery/history-of-spanking/index.html>

Half of the children in a 33-country survey by UNICEF reported having been physically punished by their parents. The prevalence of spanking in the United States is even greater, with two-thirds of young children being spanked by their parents."¹³

70 percent of people in the US think spanking is okay, and by a conservative estimate, 50 percent of parents in this country spank their kids. "The best predictor of a child being spanked by an adult is whether that adult was spanked themselves as a child."¹⁴ Research has long underscored the negative effects of spanking on children's social-emotional development, self-regulation, and cognitive development, but new research shows that spanking alters children's brain response in ways similar to severe maltreatment and increases perception of threats.¹⁵

KATHLEEN: "I shouldn't be talking like this. It's terrible to **speak ill of the dead.**"

From BookBrowse: "While it is socially inappropriate in most circles to speak ill of a person in the immediate aftermath of their death, fortunately this belief does not hold sway for the long term or otherwise, to take an extreme example, we would have no recorded history at all."¹⁶

KATHLEEN: "I know what people think. Everywhere I go, '**There she is. The mother.**'"

Blaming mothers for their children's psychological problems has a long and, unfortunately, respected history, particularly among mental health professionals. Sigmund Freud's work included some such trends, and the more recent coining of such key terms as "overprotective mother," "maternal deprivation" and "schizophrenogenic mother" swelled the mother-blaming tide. So, too, did theorists' obsessional overemphasis on the importance of mother-child "bonding" in the few days -- even the first few minutes -- after birth. With professionals leading the way, it's not surprising that mother-blaming was legitimized in the layperson's mind as well.¹⁷

KATHLEEN: "When I got there Julian was sitting sweetly and quietly reading **Good Night, Moon.** His favorite book.

Good Night, Moon: an American children's book written by Margaret Wise Brown and illustrated by Clement Hurd. It was published on September 3, 1947, and is a highly acclaimed bedtime story. The text is a rhyming poem, describing an anthropomorphic bunny's bedtime ritual of saying "good night" to various inanimate and living objects in the bunny's bedroom: a red balloon, a pair of socks, the bunny's dollhouse, a bowl of mush, and two kittens, among others; despite the kittens, a mouse is present in each spread. The book begins at 7:00 PM, and ends at 8:10 PM, with each spread being spaced 10 minutes apart, as measured by the two clocks in the room, and reflected in the rising moon.¹⁸

¹³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3768154/>

¹⁴ <https://www.thebump.com/a/spanking-children>

¹⁵ <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/21/04/effect-spanking-brain>

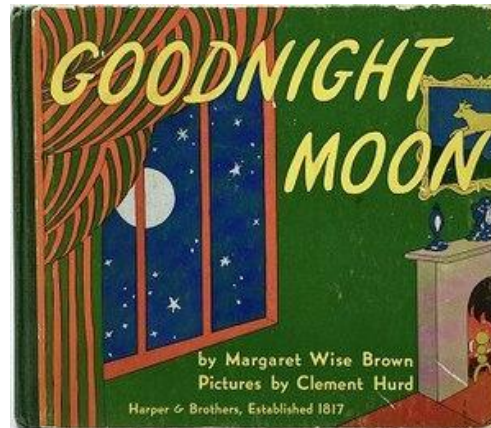
¹⁶ https://www.bookbrowse.com/expressions/detail/index.cfm/expression_number/534/dont-speak-ill-of-the-dead

¹⁷

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/wellness/1987/01/20/havent-we-blamed-mother-long-enough-common-explanations-for-childrens-emotional-problems-are-a-trap/c37d4faa-965d-4e86-860b-5fd2dbe562f6/>

¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goodnight_Moon

Writer Ellen Handler Spitz suggests that *Goodnight Moon* teaches "young children that life can be trusted, that life has stability, reliability, and durability."¹⁹ In his article *Bedtime Books, the Bedtime Story Ritual, and Goodnight Moon*, Daniel Pereira analyzes the function of *Goodnight Moon* as a "bedtime book" that is not only beneficial to children at bedtime, but is beneficial to parents as well, parental interests since they help parents carry out their duty of being an "entertainer, educator, enchanter".²⁰



KATHLEEN: "And he kept saying that over and over. 'Hush, mommy, hush. **The lady whispering hush.**'"

Towards the end of the *Goodnight, Moon*, there is an interplay between the blank image of 'nobody' and the 'quiet old lady who is whispering hush'. This acknowledges the interplay between the aloneness that sleep brings (nobody) and the parental figure (the old lady) who makes sure that bunny is safe and looked after in the dark.²¹



KATHLEEN: "I hate that word. Abuse. It's a **fuzzword.**"

¹⁹ Spitz, Ellen Handler. *Inside Picture Books* (Yale University Press, 2000), p. 34

²⁰ Pereira, Daniel. "Bedtime Books, the Bedtime Story Ritual, and Goodnight Moon." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 2, 2019, pp. 156-172. ProQuest Central, Research Library.

²¹

Fuzzword = Fuzz + Word, by analogy with "buzzword". A term that is deliberately vague or euphemistic in meaning.

JO: "Violent tendencies. Difficulty making friends. Angry little boy."

Violent behavior in children and adolescents can include a wide range of behaviors: explosive temper tantrums, physical aggression,, fighting, threats or attempts to hurt others (including thoughts of wanting to kill others), use of weapons, cruelty toward animals, fire setting, intentional destruction of property and vandalism.²²

Factors Which Increase Risk of Violent Behavior

Numerous research studies have concluded that a complex interaction or combination of factors leads to an increased risk of violent behavior in children and adolescents. These factors include:

- Previous aggressive or violent behavior
- Being the victim of physical abuse and/or sexual abuse
- Exposure to violence in the home and/or community
- Being the victim of bullying
- Genetic (family heredity) factors
- Exposure to violence in media (TV, movies, etc.)
- Use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Presence of firearms in home
- Combination of stressful family socioeconomic factors (poverty, severe deprivation, marital breakup, single parenting, unemployment, loss of support from extended family)
- Brain damage from head injury

What are the "warning signs" for violent behavior in children? Children who have several risk factors *and* show the following behaviors should be carefully evaluated:

- Intense anger
- Frequent loss of temper or blow-ups
- Extreme irritability
- Extreme impulsiveness
- Becoming easily frustrated

JO: "Jake likes to mow the lawn. He has his own little mower."

So why is it that toddlers become so obsessed with certain things? And what role does this play in their development? Rachel Hard is a child psychologist who says that this behavior is very common and a normal part of development. "Much of the challenging behavior we see in toddlers is because they're struggling with feeling out of control and these obsessions are a way that helps them manage that," she says. "In the toddler years, it could be anything that's taken their fancy," she says. "Usually, they've found something particularly soothing or enjoyable about a particular activity or project or are simply repeating something until they master it. This repetition

is self-soothing as it gives them a sense of security and comfort when they know what happens next and what to expect."²³



JO: "David wipes hi mouth with the back of his hand... And then Jakes wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. **Exact same way.**"

We know that children imitate adults, but why do they do it? Developmental psychologist Moritz Daum from the University of Zurich pointed out something interesting. This almost instinctive behavior in humans (and in other animals) serves for more than just learning: imitating also creates a sense of belonging, and it helps humans identify themselves as part of groups. Mimicking begins shortly after birth. Some newborns copy facial movements like sticking out their tongues. However, this process doesn't reliably mature until they're over a year old.²⁴

JO: "I took Jake to this class, **Playful Parenting.**"

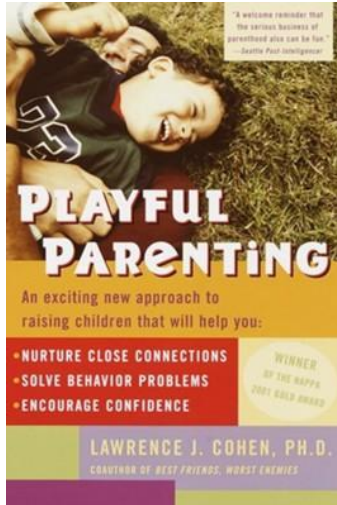
Playful Parenting means joining children in their world of play, focusing on connection and confidence, giggling and roughhousing, and following your child's lead. Created by Lawrence J. Cohen, Ph.D. He holds All-day or weekend workshops for intensive training in the theory and practice of Playful Parenting, for parents and parent educators.²⁵ A three-hour course is about \$150. Here is a preview video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDHG4ltxYEW>

²³

<https://babyology.com.au/toddler/learning-and-development/loved-kind-vacuum-toddlers-become-obsessed-things/>

²⁴ <https://exploringyourmind.com/why-do-children-imitate-adults/>

²⁵ <https://www.playfulparenting.com>



JO: "Her little nose, blood started pouring out like somebody turned on a faucet, all over her perfect pink outfit. **Looked like this pint-sized Jackie Kennedy.**"

Reference to the pink suit Jackie Kennedy wore on the day of the assassination of John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963.



JO: "Jake is the love of my life, **but truth be told**, ever since..."

"**Truth be told**" is an expression used when someone reveals a fact or opinion they might otherwise hold back or lie about. *Truth be told* is shortened from *if truth be told* or *if the truth be told*, evidenced in the written record since the late 16th century. We can find the truncated, and now more common, version since the 1800s.

JO: "Richmond suburb, man carries an **AR-15** into a newspaper office."

AR-15: A lightweight semi-automatic rifle. For more than a half-century, the AR-15 has been popular among gun owners, widely available in gun stores and, for many years, even appeared in the Sears catalog. These weapons can go for less than \$1,000. Because AR-15-style weapons are semiautomatic, the shooter must pull the trigger to fire each shot from a magazine that often holds 30 rounds.²⁶



JO: "Now he says the shootings never happened at all. Nobody died. They were **crisis actors!** The whole thing was fake, staged by some liberal anti-gun – "

A crisis actor is a trained actor, role player, volunteer, or other person engaged to portray a disaster victim during emergency drills to train first responders such as police, firefighters or EMS personnel. Crisis actors are used to create high-fidelity simulations of disasters in order to allow first responders to practice their skills and help emergency services to prepare and train in realistic scenarios as part of full-scale disaster exercises.

In the United States, the term has been used by conspiracy theorists who claim that some mass shootings and other terror events are staged for the advancement of various political objectives. Conspiracy theorists' use of the term is thought to have originated in 2012, when a blog post by former professor and conspiracy theorist James Tracy suggested that the government could have hired an acting agency named Visionbox to help stage the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. Visionbox offered dramatic training "in criminal and victim behavior" to actors intended to help "bring intense realism to simulated mass casualty incidents in public places".²⁷

KATHLEEN: "Harlan bought Julian a pistol, a .22."

Historically, firearms chambered in .22 have been used for things like hunting small game, pest control, plinking or training new shooters how to use a gun for the first time."²⁸ Since the bullets are relatively small, the recoil on a .22 firearm is less intense.

²⁶ <https://www.npr.org/2018/02/28/588861820/a-brief-history-of-the-ar-15>

²⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_actor#:~:text=Crisis%20actors%20are%20claimed%20in,outlets%20such%20as%20True%20Pundit.

²⁸

<https://blog.keltecweapons.com/22-caliber-self-defense-or-target-shooting-only#:~:text=Historically%2C%20firearms%20chambered%20in%20.gun%20for%20the%20first%20time.>



JO: "Did you read the **coroner's report** on Julian?"

A coroner's report is a comprehensive document that contains the results of all aspects a forensic investigation associated with a person's death. The report is prepared by a medical examiner or county coroner and made available to next of kin and law enforcement personnel as well (if a crime is the suspected manner of death). A comprehensive coroner's report can fairly be divided into three primary "sections." These are:

- Death scene investigation
- Autopsy
- Other forensic investigation, including laboratory tests

When a person dies under uncertain circumstances, the county coroner is called to the scene.²⁹

KATHLEEN: "How do you know that?"

JO: "**Research. They conducted a study. Texas.**"

The location of the gun following suicidal gunshot wound was studied by reviewing 574 such deaths in which the scene was investigated by a medical examiner investigator and the body was examined at the Bexar County Medical Examiner's Office in San Antonio, Texas.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/10208326/>

KATHLEEN: "He even has a writer in mind, this woman who works for him and she'd write it from my point of view, with my opinions and **my truth!**"

On its face, speaking about "**my truth**" or "your truth" suggests that truth is relative to an individual. Philosophers call this view "truth relativism". It says that when someone makes a claim, that claim is made true or false by what they believe or how they feel, rather than by the way the world actually is. A problem with relativism is that it seems to leave reasoned debate without any clear goal.

You can stick with this straightforward view about truth and still recognize that everyone deserves to be heard and respected. As John Stuart Mill pointed out in his book *On Liberty* (1859), if we fail to consider a wide range of perspectives, even those views that may ultimately turn out to be false, it is more likely we will be unable to discover important truths about the world. This means that valuing truth should actually encourage you to engage with points of view that differ from yours.³⁰

²⁹ <https://ecobear.co/knowledge-center/coroners-report/>

³⁰

<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/news-opinion/media/2023/with-so-many-people-speaking-their-truth-how-do-we-know-what-the-truth-really-is#:~:text=On%20its%20face%2C%20speaking%20about,way%20the%20world%20actually%20is.>

