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Michelle,



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welcome to the autism mommies potty talk Podcast. I'm Michelle B Rogers, autism mom and life coach. I help parents of children with autism who are pre verbal to start communicating a potty train guaranteed



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you're listening to the autism moms potty talk Podcast, episode 49 Hey everybody, Michelle here, and today's topic for the podcast is something kind of near and dear to me, because it's something I felt like I had gone through with my daughter, and it's something that I've been able to experience with a client of mine recently, and the topic is, when we have to go first, and what do you do when there's no road map for your child? What does that mean? So for me, it



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meant that when Julianna was diagnosed, it was always a goal of mine, that I wanted her to live an independent life. I knew



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I had minimal knowledge about autism. I knew that all I knew at that time was Rain Man, if you don't know it, that's a movie in the 80s with Tom Cruise and Dustin Hoffman, where they play brothers, and one it has autism and he needs forever care, and that's all I really knew when she was diagnosed. Now, my sister was a BCBA at the time, and I remember going to a convention, an autism convention. This was like so many years ago, even before I was married. And she indicated to me at that time that most of the kids, if not all the kids, that she works with, will probably need some form of support that they'll never live independently. So fast forward to the day Juliana gets diagnosed, and I'm shaking in my moods, because this is what I think Autism means. And I said, You know what? When I was doing this with Juliana, I looked for adults with autism that had the life I wanted for her. So when I really kind of got out of my shit and I said, Okay, let's get into this. Let's figure out how we're gonna help her,



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I went and looked for people who had autism that were older, even like she was two at the time, right? So I was looking at five year olds, seven year olds, 10 year olds. I was looking for adults, and I couldn't find them. And I was Googling high and low. I was out in the community trying to find somebody who had autism that I think that was going to live an independent, amazing life, and



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I couldn't find it, and but I, you know, my upbringing wasn't the best. And I remember thinking that,



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you know, I've done a lot of things that people said that you can't do. And I know in the world, the exception to the rule exists all the time in life, and someone has to be the exception, to create the rule. And I remember thinking in my head, I'm like, You know what? Even though I don't necessarily have a lot of proof now, in Now, fast forward to today, there's so much proof, right? There's so many families that I've worked with that I've seen transformations in their children. They're going to live independent lives like my daughter. But back then, they're really either, either they people weren't talking about or there weren't many that were kind of flying their flags, so to speak. So there wasn't a lot of examples of what that would look like. And I remember just thinking, Well, you know, what somebody's got to go first. There has to be, you know, someone's going to change the mold of what this could be. And that was my determination for her. And, you know, I was just thinking, you know, I've created so many results in my life up until that point, considering all of the obstacles that were against me, you know, and have a very good childhood and have a very good family experience, and I was still able to, you



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know, live a decent quality of life despite all of that so and a lot of people said that they just don't even know how I could have came out the way I did, considering all the experiences, all the negative experiences I had, and I always thought that, but that made an exception to the rule. So if I could do that for myself, of course, my child could also become the exception to the rule. And



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you know, why does this matter for us parents? Is because I think the danger of believing because I don't see it, it must not be possible, is still something that I think permeates through the autism community even today. So when I think about the exception to the rule, I really kind of just said, listen, even though I may not have an example of this, I'm going to create it. And that's kind of what we did with Julianna. She just to kind of give you a quick synopsis. Juliana was diagnosed, you know, on the spectrum at two, she had lost all of her language. We ended

up teaching her sign language. She potty trained with a sign she was in the most restrictive autism classroom of 614, I picked that classroom to February. By the time September rolled around to start school, she was starting to talk. And, you know, then she went to a 12, one, two. Then I ended up pulling her from that, and then she ended up going, with an RBT, to a general education preschool placement to where she is today. She's chatty, happy. She's about to she's gonna be 13 years this year. I.



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Can't believe I have a teenager. This is crazy, and she's in going to be going into seventh grade all gen ed classes, the only quote, unquote, special ed support. She has a social skills group every other week and resource room, which tons of kids have. And I never thought that that was the life that she was going to have. But if I, if I, if I, if I just resign myself to the fact that if I can't see it, it must not be possible. If there's no evidence out there, then it can't happen. I don't know where she would be today. And so, you know, thinking that it does serve me to continue to believe that. And I've always kind of told my clients this too. And I remember just a couple of months ago, not even a year ago, a couple months ago, I had a call with a mom who wanted to work with me to get her daughter potty trained and talking. And she said to me, full disclosure, I have a child with Down syndrome and autism. And not only that, she is a mother of 13, right? So she was a mother of 13, and her youngest daughter has Down syndrome and autism, and her mindset was that, you know,



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I figured she's not potty trained because of her down syndrome. But, like,



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I don't, you know, know of anybody? Michelle, like, I'm in a lot of Facebook groups for Down syndrome and autism and both, and I don't know anybody in any of those groups that has a child that's potty trained. So she was debating on working with me, and this was like her, her thought like that. You know, listen, why would I do this if I don't have any proof in the world that such a child exists? Now, do I think that that's true? No, but I think that her brain hasn't, had not come across, or had searched for somebody, or had helped her to find somebody, or that had a child that had had a dual diagnosis. But I had said to her, I said, Listen, you know, I've had kids in my program that work with me, and families of kids in my program that work with me that have had dual diagnosis. Maybe I think I've had Down syndrome once or twice. I've had debt but, but it might have just been down syndrome. I might have had global developmental delays. I've had pandas, I've had ADHD with autism. I've had all, all the gamut. I said, I might not be able to say exactly that I've had Down syndrome and autism, but I believe it's possible for her. And I kind of explained to her, I said, Listen, you know what, I get that you're you've looked all over and you don't see anybody like your daughter that has this, but maybe you have to go first. And I said, this is kind of how I felt about Juliana, and that, you know,



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if you give me 90 days, right, which is my program is 90 days. I said, I think that we can do this. I'm confident that, based upon what how she explained her daughter to me, that she was capable of doing this. And I said, you know, I think it's possible, even though she's never gone on a toilet before, she's extremely resistant to it. I said, I think that this can be done, and you don't need to talk, to be potty trained. You don't need to you don't need to have to not have Down syndrome, to not potty train either. And you don't need to not have a dual diagnosis. You don't need to have anything. As long as I think she can't, I'm gonna half ass it at best, right? So the problem with the way that her thinking is, is that if I can't find anybody, I think a lot of people feel like this, if they have a they feel they have their child is the unicorn. They have the exception to the rule. And that, because I have this and I can't find evidence elsewhere of somebody else who is in the same scenario that has the skill that I want, then I've already kind of set myself up for failure. I can't stress like, how many parents I've talked to that? Think every parent, I think almost every parent I've probably ever worked with, says they had the exception. The child that can't that has a different scenario than the rest. And I could say, yeah, there, or have there been some unique situations? Sure. Has there been anybody that I haven't been able to help get their kids potty trained? No, if you don't quit. So I always tell my parents. I spoke to a mom in London yesterday, and she just joined my program, and she said to me,



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I want to join, but I want there to be like, a money back guarantee. And I said, Okay, that's interesting. I said, Well, I have an action back guarantee. And she said, Well, what's that? And I said, Well, if you come to at least my calls, and we have multiple calls a week in my group coaching program, I said, if you come to at least my calls every week, or even if you can't do that because, you know, it's a different time zone. I said, just email me. Email me what you're doing. I'll create your blueprint over email. We'll go back and forth that way. If you can't get the results, you're gonna stay until you do. Oh, and at the end of the 90 days, if we don't get this done, I'm gonna work personally with you until it is done. I said, you know how many times I've had to fill that action back guarantee? And she said, No. I said, zero. Because any parent that shows up and does the work, there's no way we're not going to get to goal, even if you never saw another child with your child's exact situation, not get potty trained. I can't tell you how many examples of that, and I thought this mom's story in particular was just something I wanted to show.



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There on this podcast, because it so resonated with my thought is that, listen, you know,



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someone has to go first, and if I have the thought, well, I want this result for my child, they deserve a parent that believes that they can have this result. But I've never seen anybody out in the world that's like my child have it. Does that give me the right to cut bait and not show up as a parent, to give it a give it a go. And I don't want you to just give it a go from half belief. I want you give it a go from full belief. Miracles exist. Exceptions to the rules happen all the time. So if that happens all the time in the world, why couldn't it be that you were destined to have this child, and you were destined to be one of the first to do this. This child, by the way, potty

trained in about three weeks. She is talking. She is doing amazing. This is a child or a mom who was like, listen, there's no examples of that I've been able to find of a child with autism and Down syndrome, and she potty trained in three weeks. So you need to kind of think about a couple of things. The first thing you want to think about is that, listen, if I feel like I have a situation and I'm out in the world looking for somebody who has that result, if I'm not obsessed and possessed in like finding it, my brain is going to go to work to disprove it. And that's just a normal survival brain behavior, right? Because it knows that what you're trying to do is the exception to the rule, and it sounds like it's going to be really hard. And human brains aren't designed to do hard things. It's designed to conserve energy, seek out pleasure and avoid discomfort. So when you're talking about doing something massive, like, you know, potty training a child with autism and Down syndrome, it's not going to work real hard to help you go find evidence that that exists in the world. And the same thing probably happened when I was going through this, these thoughts with Julianna, when I was searching my brain probably wasn't going to be so helpful and trying to find an example like that. And that moment when I realized I couldn't find it, and I didn't understand how how brain science works. Now I do, you know, but like back then, I didn't, but I knew I had done this before in my life. Even though I wasn't a special education teacher, I really knew shit about autism, and I didn't know anybody who had a child who had autism at like she did that got the results that we did. But I said, You know what? I'm in full belief that I can create exceptions to the rule, and that's what fueled my fire, not being able to go out and find the evidence. So I remember saying to this mom, I said, Listen,



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if I tell you that, you know, I don't offer a money back guarantee, but I offer an action back guarantee, and the only thing I need for you to do is show up. There's no way this isn't gonna get done. And I remember her kind of shifting a little bit when I said that, and I said, um,



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she said to me, I can do anything for 90 days. And it was just that thought. And I could see as soon as she said it, her whole body like her energy shifted. She's like, I know me. I kick ass at everything I do. But with my baby, I'm wrapped. I'm not like, I'm not as like, determined. I'm not as like, I'm kind of soft with her, right? Because I love her, and she's my little mush. And, you know, she's has 13 kids, she's number 13, right? She's probably, you know, baby's her baby, right? But she said, but the first thing she said, that changed everything in the whole conversation is, you know what, I can do anything for 90 days. And sometimes, if I can't believe something is extravagant, maybe it's an extravagant thought to think I'm the exception to the rule. Maybe we just start with, I can do anything for 90 days, and then that would be our bridge to, kind of get us closer to, like, you know what? Maybe I can be the exception to the rule, and you don't need, you know, like I said, like the idea here is



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to kind of like when a brain is in survival mode and you're trying to search for something and you can't find it, you think that you have the unicorn, instead of trying to go right to maybe the biggest thought of like, oh, I want to be the exception to the rule. Maybe what I would think is

okay



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if I found something that would help me, whether it's me or something else, and it said I have to just follow it for 90 days, whether or not I believe the outcome is possible, I can do anything for 90 days, right? And that was just such a simple thought that really kind of kicked her into gear. And I want you to think about this too. So that was one way that I can kind of get myself out of that survival brain and start thinking towards a life of like, maybe I can create exceptions to the rules. And then another thing I might think about is like that beautiful day, that beautiful day where I can imagine her getting up out of bed all by herself, wearing underwear. She springs out of bed because she's fully potty trained, running to the bathroom all by herself, turning on the light, getting on the toilet, hearing her little pee going in the toilet. I remember I was, have I had a thought? Because, you know, a lot of my family's the biggest transformation, their biggest first AHA is potty training. For me, it was the other way around. My first biggest transformation for Juliana, and realizing what she was capable of, that she was kind of just locked inside, and I just kind of had to get her out, was sign language, and I remember



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thinking I didn't want to do it.



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I thought it was a waste of time. I thought if we tried teaching her sign that she'd never have an incentive to talk. I didn't understand, really, the mechanics of how this would work and how this would bring her voice, but I was willing to do it. I said, You know what, I'm gonna give it a go. I know that I can do this. I didn't have the thought I could do it for 90 days, because it wasn't like that. I was doing it myself. But I said, You know what, I'm gonna give this a I'm gonna give it one full day of me just really going hog. And when I go hog, I consider myself a very determined, hard working gal, and I'm really gonna put her, put her through the the put her through the paces to just get one sign by the end of day one. And that's exactly what happened. We ended up getting one sign. We got the sign for cookie by the end of day one, and she shocked me, because in that moment, I realized, after all this time, that I thought she was just on her own island somewhere, and she wasn't even connected to me. In that moment, I realized, by the time I put her to bed, and she was doing that sign for cookie all by herself, I realized that she was inside the whole time, and I was just assuming, because she couldn't talk, that her ears didn't work, and that she was somewhere else and she wasn't with us, but she could hear everything. She just didn't have a way to communicate back. And I remember after I put her to bed at night, laying on the couch in the living room, thinking about what it would feel like to hear her little voice say, I love you. And I had a little glimmer of what her voice sounded like, because she was talking before she was one, and then she kind of lost all her language. And I just tried to imagine the sound of how her voice would be saying, I love you, Mommy. And that wasn't the exception to the rule. Thought, thought, right? That was more of like such fire for me, because it was like, gosh, it's kind of like a vision cast, you know, like I'm just imagining this and and and imagining this wonderful moment. And I remember doing this with this mom of 13, and I said, just imagine her running to the bathroom, using the toilet, washing her hands,

and coming out to the kitchen and telling you exactly what she wanted for breakfast. And I'll never forget what she said. She said, I ball my eyes out. It would be a miracle, and within a month, she got that. So this is just kind of like my shout out to everyone. I wanted to do this podcast for a while, but I wasn't sure how to frame it, and I said, Geez, you know, this mom came into my life about a month or two ago, and we ended up doing something she thought wasn't possible. And I understood, I sympathize, understood what she felt like, because she thought she had the unicorn. And I said, somebody's got to go first. And maybe you were meant to come here. You were meant to get this done so that you could go and be the beacon of hope for the other families that have dual diagnosis of Down Syndrome and Autism who think it can't get done. So sometimes you can't find the model, because you're supposed to be the model, and if I want to continue that model being the exception instead of the rule, I have to go first, even if I'm nervous, even if I'm scared, I No one, no one who's listening to this can deny that exceptions to the rules happen all the time. And maybe this is, this is your like, Call to Arms, so to speak, that maybe that's what's supposed to happen for you and your baby. Every parent has to choose whether they'll stay in survival mode or step into the unknown to give their child a thriving knife and believing what she believed was stepping into the unknown, and believing what I believe about about it was probably stepping into the unknown of when it came to my daughter, and even when I started doing this work, I remember working with my first ever client, because I'm kind of in a nostalgia mode these days, because we're about to open coach certification. I'm gonna start teaching families to do what I do, and Applications close tomorrow. So if anyone's interested in doing that, you can go to my website, Michelle B rogers.com, and go to work with me. Applications close tomorrow at midnight, though. So you want to make sure, if this is something that you want to do, want to do, that you go and get your application in. But I've been feeling nostalgic, because I've been thinking about these new people that I'm going to be working with to make autism coaches. And I was thinking, you know, in my heart, I was thinking,



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I remember the first time I coached somebody. I didn't know if I could help them all I knew, though. I couldn't say, Oh, I'm gonna give her everything she asked for. She had a nonverbal seven year old in diapers. And I said to myself, I don't know if I can help her. And I was very scared. And I said, You know what? Here's what I know about me. I know that I'll give her money back if I can't help her. That was number one. Number two



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is I know no matter what, no matter where we land, after the three months of coaching together, that she'll be in such a better place than she was when she didn't know me and didn't start working with me. And I created something that probably isn't really out there, not like the way I do it anyway. And she we ended up getting her son pie trained in two weeks, and he said Mama for the first time in his whole life to her, by the time we were done working together, and that was just the beginning. So I want you to think about that too, and think about why, where am I waiting for proof when it comes to getting these skills from my child instead of being the proof?



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And if you want help with this.



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This is what I do. So feel free to reach out, and I want to help you and help as many families that I can to go first with their kids.



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So I hope this was helpful. I hope that every parent you know makes the decision to step out of survival mode and step in to the unknown to help their babies, and I will see you next week. Bye, everyone.



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If you're ready to help your baby now with potty training communication or stopping their problem behaviors, I want to invite you to watch my free 10 minute video training that shows you how I took my daughter with autism from pre verbal to sign language, potty training with a sign to making sounds and then speaking, head over to Michelle B, [rogers.com](https://rogers.com), forward slash training, that's Michelle M, I, C, H, E, L, L, E, B, as in boy Rogers, R, O, G, E, R, s.com,



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forward slash training, see you. There you.