

# Ep #101: Resilient Autism Mom Program



## Full Episode Transcript

**With Your Host**

**Lisa Candra**

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You are listening to episode 101 of *The Autism Mom Coach*, Resilient Autism Mom Program.

Welcome to *The Autism Mom Coach* podcast, I am your host, Lisa Candra. I am a lawyer, a life coach, and most importantly, I am the full-time single mother of a teenager with Autism and other comorbid diagnoses. I know what it is like to wonder if you are doing enough or the right things for your child and to live in fear of their future.

I also know that constantly fueling yourself with fear and anxiety is not sustainable for you or of any benefit to your child. That is why in this podcast I will share practical strategies and tools you can use to shift from a chronic state of fight, flight to some calm and ease. You are your child's greatest resource, let's take care of you.

Hello everyone and welcome to the podcast. I am so glad you're here and I hope you are doing well wherever you are in the world. I have been pretty busy, but in the best way. This past weekend I had the pleasure of meeting Autism mom and author Carrie Cariello and her husband Joe in real life. It was so nice to meet them. And my goodness, they are a stunning couple. They are so tall and they're just the nicest people. Carrie was at her book signing at Beanz & Co in Connecticut. And she took the time to read a passage from her book and answer questions. And it was an all-around lovely experience.

Okay, for today's podcast, I want to talk to you about the big announcement that I made during my webinar last week. For those of you who weren't at the webinar or who are not on my mailing list. I announced my new one-on-one coaching program, Resilient Autism Mom program, where you can take control of your Autism parenting experience in 90 days. I am so excited about this program because of how I created it.

I don't think I explained this on the webinars so I want to take a little time now to do that. So the three pillars of the program are managing stress, taming anxiety and beating burn out. The way I settled on these three pillars came from my exhaustive review of three years of client notes. This

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was a big undertaking, but one that I am so glad I did. First, it was just enjoyable to read the notes from the first sessions and to see the progress over the months and all the extraordinary work my clients did to change their Autism parenting experience.

And doing this really made apparent the common themes that emerged in different flavors, but among clients with very different circumstances. And by that I mean some of these clients were stay at home moms, single moms, moms who work from home, moms who work outside of the home. Lawyers, doctors, engineers, therapists, educators, clinicians, economists. Some clients had twins, some clients had children under the age of 10. And a couple of clients had children over the age of 20.

Some clients had children they identified as higher functioning, while other clients had children with more significant needs. Through all of these differences, though, the issues they brought to me were remarkably similar. And from that came the three pillars. For now I'm just going to walk through each of the three pillars to give you an idea of the issues that I was seeing.

First, chronic stress, this showed up as moms who were in a constant state of fight, flight. Their nervous systems were dysregulated. They would describe this as always walking on eggshells, waiting for the other shoe to drop or staying calm at first and then exploding or imploding. All of this is indicative of a person who is in a chronic state of stress. And no surprise, most of us walk around with our heads on a swivel. Many of us are dealing with past or present traumas like elopements, aggressions, public meltdowns, property destruction. So yeah, we're stressed.

And the thing is, this stress lives in our bodies and it stays there, it's cumulative. And what I saw in client after client is that they had no mechanism for relieving this stress as it was accumulating. Instead, they let it build up and build up until they exploded or imploded. And what I saw across clients was that addressing this first and foremost was really the foundation for our work and the foundation for all the work that they were able to do with their children and in their homes.

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Next was anxiety gone wild, the never ending loop of thoughts and dead end questions like, am I doing enough? Am I doing the right things? I don't know how to fix this. What will they be like in two years, 10 years or 20 years? The catastrophizing, the all or nothing thinking, the future tripping, the over focus on what is going wrong, the resistance to what is, which sounds like this should not be happening. This should not be so hard.

All of this for so many of my clients was the constant background music of their daily experience. Which meant that each of them had to go to work in becoming the watchers of their own mind and learning how to interrupt and rewire these patterns.

Last but not least, burnout. No surprise. Living in a chronic state of stress, constantly fueled by anxious thoughts, results in burnout. It's a vicious cycle, one that I've experienced and one that I saw. And in client after client, this vicious cycle was kept in perpetual motion by the same thing, every single time. I'm going to call this the big lie lurking behind the people pleasing, the lack of boundaries, not taking time for themselves. Believing that it is selfish to spend time, energy and resources on their own needs, denying themselves breaks.

Making caring for themselves an either/or decision. Either I take care of my child or I take care of myself. And this big lie is the belief that we have all been socialized to believe that the wellness, comfort and opinions of other people are more important than our own, especially our children and especially our children with special needs. We make it a moral thing, a virtuous thing to run ourselves into the ground. We make it mean that we're good mothers and that we really love our children.

This rigidity, that's all or nothing thinking, this either or, this is all keeping us in this vicious cycle of burnout. And guess who benefits from this? Absolutely no one. Maybe initially the people in your life benefit from this because you're always doing for them. But this is only initially because what happens as the burnout, as this vicious cycle continues and you get more and more worn down, your capacity diminishes dramatically. Your

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ability to stay calm, your ability to be present, your ability to enjoy or like the people in your life, all of that is impacted.

And so the result of you not taking time for yourself, the result of you putting other people before yourself can actually be you resenting the very people for whom you're sacrificing your own wellness. And then so you really have to ask yourself, why am I doing this? And look, I believe the answer is, as women we've been socialized to do these things and we're perpetuating that. It is patterned into our way of thinking, what's acceptable.

And it feels safer for us to just do all of the things than to be that mom who said no or created a boundary or who's not people pleasing or, God forbid, does something for herself. That is really uncomfortable to us. But, and I tell my clients all of the time, your discomfort is not a problem. You already know how to feel uncomfortable. You're feeling uncomfortable now. And so what I invite all of my clients to do is to practice feeling discomfort, that enables them to take care of themselves so they can show up as the parent they want to be.

That about sums up the three pillars and their origin story. As for the name of the program, Resilient Autism Mom, after going through all of these notes and coming up with the pillars, the name of the program was obvious. I am ultimately teaching my clients how to nurture and grow their resilience, which is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties. Because the fact is in life, things that we don't want to happen, happen, things that we think should not be happening, happen. And in the life of an Autism parent, this feels like it happens a lot more.

We are already living a life we did not expect. We are already having experiences that we did not expect, we did not want, we did not choose. And so the ability to navigate these challenges, to manage ourself through them, that is what it means to be resilient. It means we get knocked down and we get right back up. It doesn't mean we don't get knocked down, it means we get back up.

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And what I have found from the last few years of doing this work, in all of the things that I have experienced in the last four years, I recover quickly, I recover better. That is the gift of learning these tools and these strategies and incorporating them into your life over and over is that, when life happens, you don't feel like it's happening at you. You are more in control of your experience and your ability to respond to, again, life happening.

So there you have it. Resilient Autism Mom program, 90 days to take control of your Autism parenting experience. If you are ready to change your Autism parenting experience for the better and take 100% responsibility for the one thing you can control in this journey and that is you. Then I want you to schedule your consultation call now. The purpose of this call is for us to get to know one another and to decide together whether it makes sense for us to work together. Whether we do or not, you will come away from this call feeling better.

Alright, that's it for this week's episode. I will talk to you next week.

Thanks for listening to *The Autism Mom Coach*. If you are ready to apply the principles you are learning in these episodes to your life, it is time to schedule a consultation call with me. Podcasts are great but the ahas are fleeting. Real change comes from application and implementation and this is exactly what we do in my one-on-one coaching program. To schedule your consultation, go to my website, [theAutismmomcoach.com](http://theAutismmomcoach.com), Work With Me and take the first step to taking better care of yourself so that you can show up as the parent you want to be for your child with Autism.