Tool No. 4: Where Are You Parenting From?

Your child isn't the only one with patterns.
This reflection helps you check the emotional source of your reactions — not to judge yourself, but to become more aware of what's really driving the moment.
Because if you can name it, you can change it.

What's Driving Me Right Now?
Think back to the last time you felt overwhelmed, yelled, shut down, or parented in a way you didn't love.

Check all that applied in that moment:

- ☐ I was overstimulated or sleep-deprived
- ☐ I was trying to avoid a meltdown or conflict
- ☐ I was scared of being judged (by family, friends, other parents)
- ☐ I was reliving something from my own childhood
- ☐ I felt disrespected and needed to "prove" I was in charge
- ☐ I was trying to avoid my child's discomfort (or mine)
- ☐ I was rushing or multitasking
- ☐ I wasn't even sure why I reacted like that

What Would I Rather Parent From?

Now, take a breath and re-center.

Choose what you want to lead with instead:

- ☐ Calm / Neutrality
- ☐ Curiosity
- ☐ Boundaries, not control
- ☐ Teaching, not punishing
- ☐ Love + firmness together
- ☐ Long-term growth > short-term compliance

Write a sentence about the kind of parent you're becoming on purpose:
"In hard moments, I want to show up as someone who..."

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Try This in the Moment:

Next time things get heated, ask yourself silently:

"Where am I parenting from right now — fear, shame, or clarity?"

— Melissa | Parenting Dirty

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