Bob: All of us feel this, at some point in time, like: “Life is way too busy,” “Things are moving way too fast,” “Things are out of control.” Kay Wyma knows how you feel.

Kay: “You don’t have to be good at math, English, history—on the varsity team. You don’t have to be all of it”; you know?—even though we’ve been given those messages that you do.

Even women—you know, it was when I first had children—and it was this message: “You can…” “You can do it all!”—that is the message. The part of the message that gets left to the side a little bit is that you can’t really do it all well at the time.

Bob: This is *FamilyLife Today* for Friday, April 5th. Our hosts are Dave and Ann Wilson; I’m Bob Lepine. If life is moving at a pace for you, where you’re saying, “I got to call a time-out, or something is going to give,”—spend a few minutes with us today. We’re going to talk about that.

And welcome to *FamilyLife Today*. Thanks for joining us. You know, I remember when my kids were in high school and, then, in college—and their schedule would get tight—because maybe they were in the school play, or there was something going on—they had a big paper coming due. There was just a lot in their schedule. They would get overwhelmed by that. I would think to myself: “This is the time of your life when you will have the least amount of responsibility ever! If this is overwhelming you, you are not going to be able to function in the real world.” [Laughter]

And I do think there is some calibration—and I think, “When you look at peoples’ lives, there is some relativity here,”—but our kids can easily get overwhelmed by all that they feel the pressure to achieve, especially in our day. I think the kids today feel more pressure than we did, when we were in school, to have to do it all/be it all—get the scholarship, perform well, and have your resume all buttoned up so you can get into college and maybe get a scholarship.

Ann: That’s so interesting; because when our kids were in high school, once in a while, I would pull them out of school for their birthday—some people won’t agree with that. I remember our youngest son was in high school, and I think he was a junior. I said:
“Hey, today’s your birthday. Let’s skip school, and let’s just go celebrate. We’ll go out to lunch; we’ll go shopping.”

He goes: “Mom, I can’t do that. I’ve got homework, I’ve got practice, I need to get an ‘A’ on this next test,”—he felt the pressure. I’m like, "Dude, Chill!”—you know?—“It’s not that big of a deal”; but they feel it—so much so that he would never, ever take a day off.

**Dave:** And the scary thing is—like you said, Bob—it’s like they’re teenagers. You think: “If this is the easiest time of their life—and yet, I’m the guy driving the car with them, pounding the dashboard out of being overwhelmed because I’m late, and I’m trying to get them somewhere,” and “We’ve got this practice…” “…going to this musical thing, and I’m overwhelmed.”

**Ann:** Wait; were you driving them there? [Laughter]

**Dave:** I drove once! It’s the one time I did drive. [Laughter]

**Ann:** No; you did drive.

**Bob:** Here’s the reality—we live in a face-paced culture. There’s a lot of pressure on us/a lot of pressure on our kids that wasn’t there before. You throw in social media; you throw in smartphones—and all of a sudden—now, the competition level has increased. Kids are feeling this more than ever.

We’ve got a friend, who’s joining us again, on *FamilyLife Today* to help us talk about this. Kay Wyma is back. Welcome, Kay.

**Kay:** Thank you.

**Bob:** Nice to have you here. Kay’s a wife and mom, who in Dallas; she’s got five kids. She’s an author and a blogger. This is her third book, which is called *Not the Boss of Us.*

**Dave:** Bob, I want to hear her say it again—she says it so well. [Laughter] Go ahead; shout it for us.

**Kay:** As I shout to my kids: “This stuff is not the boss of you!”

**Dave:** There you go!

**Kay:** And it isn’t the boss of us! [Laughter]

**Bob:** You are challenging all of us, as moms and dads—but also, as we raise our kids—to figure out how to deal with the overwhelming pressures that this society throws our way and not become submerged by it/not drown in the middle of it.
Kay: It’s scary, because you see stats that take your breath away. You see stats that suicide is the number-three killer now between, I think, kids: ages 12 to 24. That’s—I mean, seriously?! That takes your breath away—and those of the incidents that make their way to a hospital to be counted. You know, that doesn’t come with the stuff that’s so quiet.

You have all kinds of unknowns that freak parents out that do involve the phone. You’ll put parental controls on stuff, but the truth of the matter is they’re looking at the phone next to them; so you really got to equip kids to be able to navigate it—you know, standing on their own two feet—because these things are bombarding them. We call them stress bombs.

Even in our house—because no matter how hard we try to say: “This is who you are,” “This is Who’s you are,”—the bombs are still hitting them. It comes in the form of very well-meaning educators, college counselors, friends—so many people that just want you to be okay; but “In order for you to be okay, you have to do this.”

It starts when they are young, and they feel it. I hate to say—I think that they feel exceedingly more pressure than we ever did—ever. I sit there, and I look at them—I can’t wait for them to get a job—because I’m sick of this stuff. It’s like they can, literally, get up at six a.m. and got to bed at midnight and not finish everything they have to do—it’s ridiculous.

Bob: We wanted our kids to achieve. They’re going to high school—we wanted them to get good grades; we wanted them to be in extra-curricular activities; we wanted them to work hard/do their best. This is a part of how you grow up and become an adult. So how do you instill, in your kids, a sense of responsibility—

Ann: Yes; what’s the balance?

Bob: Yes!

Kay: Okay; the operative word that you said, first, is: “their best.” That’s the first place to start. When you have the best—with something defining what best is—that takes it from being the person to an object, and we talked about that last time.

You have that messaging for these kids that comes in the form of resumes, which—it’s hilarious! The things of this world—the culture, the stress, and that kind of stuff that isn’t true—it will change. For the resume of a high school student—if it’s ten pages—“Happy Day! Woo-Hoo! You’re doing it, because you have a ten-page resume!” Now, flip—you know, fast forward four years—and the resume is one page. Really and truly, is that resume going to define our worth? It’s like, “Don’t do it!”
Part of it is calling these things out and saying: “They exist—you are in the world—grades are a part/GPA is something—there are numbers and grades that are going to be associated with you, along the ride, because it’s the way it is; okay? But those things do not define your worth or your identity, and let’s keep talking about that.”

It’s hard! When society is pushing kids as a product, it pushes process to the side.

**Bob:** Explain what you mean.

**Kay:** A product is something that’s on a resume—it’s like: “This is what you get,”—“You achieve this; you get that.” Well, a human being isn’t a product; a human being is a **person**—and processes involved in people—and along the way with process, is failure. You know, you learn from failure. We are so scared of it; we can’t even do it. In the whole game of it, keep saying: “You don’t have to be good at math, English, history—on the varsity team. You don’t have to be all of it”; you know?—even though we’ve been given those messages that you **do**.

Even women—you know, it was when I first had children—it was new, relatively-speaking, for women to work and have kids. They were trying to figure that out, like job-sharing—there’s all kinds of stuff that’s not around anymore. It was this message: “You can do it all!” That is the message.

The part of the message that gets left to the side a little bit is that you can’t really do it all well at the time; you? [Laughter] Just season it with a little bit of truth and then start to breathe. In order for our kids to start to breathe, we’ve got to put the oxygen mask on ourselves, first, and actually **believe** it. Believe that these children are God’s—that woven within every one of them is unique gifting and purpose—that it’s theirs—like it’s theirs. It’s a gifting that they are born with—it’s the thing that they do that makes them happy.

By the way, you’ve got it too; you know? Can we celebrate the purpose and gifting just for a second?—and then, let the rest play out? If you really sink into it, and buy into the truth, it dials down the volume of these pressures that are pervasive in culture and society.

**Bob:** Dave, we’ve talked about this before. You were a D-1 college quarterback; right?

**Dave:** Are you going to bring that up again, Bob?

**Bob:** I thought I would. [Laughter]

**Dave:** I’m loving this guy!

**Kay:** It’s your happy day!
Bob: You had three boys, who all played football. I’m guessing that you wanted your boys to excel at football.

Dave: I did. But it was really interesting—the girl sitting over there, my wife—and she already told you, in our last conversation, why—she grew up in a performance base. That little Olympic gymnastic medal thing defined her in many ways. She brought that pressure to our marriage and—

Ann: —to our kids!

Dave: —and to our kids.

Bob: When the boys were playing football, you’re the one who’s pressing them?

Ann: Dave—I feel like he is very secure in who he is and in his identity. He has this freedom; and I always felt this freedom from him—just be who you are—and he would give that to our kids. I, however, carried way more baggage. Our kids would be doing things—and I was a PE major; so I’d be like this coach, too—like: “Come on! We’ve got to work harder!”

Dave: I’m coaching; and I can hear her in the stands, yelling, “Come on!” I remember, one time, I was coaching my oldest son—how old was CJ then?

Ann: Like seven?

Dave: Seven—basketball. By the way, why are they playing in leagues at this age anyway?

Bob: —at age seven. [Laughter]

Dave: I never did at that age, you know?—but we live in this culture—three years old!

Kay: I know—of pressure! What is three years old?—that’s when it starts.

Dave: Yes!! “You don’t get them in, they’re going to fall behind,”—I’ve heard it all.

Ann: I’ve felt that pressure!

Kay: I love what you just said though, because it is exactly that: “If you don’t get them in, then they are going to fall behind,” “If they aren’t in this, they won’t have a seat at the cafeteria table,” or “…someone to play with on the playground in elementary school.” And it keeps going up.

Are you going to solve the problem by putting him on the team because “That solves the problem!”?
Ann: Oh, I feed the problem! [Laughter]

Kay: Right! Okay; that's what's so fascinating—I'm so glad you said that, because it is like: “Let's call it out,”—that's one of the first things to do. When you start to feel the overwhelmed stuff, call it out—like say it, out loud: “Okay; there's an issue here.”

When my kids were little, people would go and sign up at the Mothers' Day Out—literally, get up at three in the morning to get into the “right Mother's Day Out”; because, “If you didn't, then they wouldn't have any friends” and “Then, they're going to be with the Goth group,” and “Then there isn't a college with that for everybody”; you know?

Ann: —and their sports teams!

Kay: It's like—and you know, they're six months old; and like you're already hitting college; you know?

Dave: Unbelievable.

Kay: It's like ridiculous! So you call it out and “Something is not right here,”—and just say it.

The truth of the matter is: “If you're bold enough to say it, you might get another wonderful aspect of life; and that is together. You say it to the person next to you; and it's like, "Hold on, a second; you feel that way too?" “Yes!” “Let's work with each other and not do that. We're going to call out the truth; alright?”

This idea of group mentality is big that fuels that: “They've got to be on a team, or they're not going to have friends.”

Ann: As moms, we're well-meaning because—

Kay: Everyone is well-meaning.

Ann: Yes; exactly. And we think, “If they are not on that team, then they're not going to be very good,”—and then it forwards to—“What if they're bullied, then, because they're not good enough in sports?”

Bob: A little reality-check thrown into the middle of this. You got kids in high school, and they're going to take the PSAT. How they do on the PSAT—we're talking real dollars—

Kay: Right; right.

Bob: —in their pocket/your pocket—we're talking tuition money—
Kay: Right.

Bob: —based on this. You’ve got the decision: “Do we get them up at six-thirty for that pre-PSAT study thing?” or they go, “Well, they’re just too overwhelmed.”

I don’t care if they’re overwhelmed, we are talking thousands of dollars in how they do on that test.

Kay: Then, you certainly go to your priorities—what your priorities are. If the schedule is too much and it is overwhelming—and your priority is that PSAT—then something comes off the schedule; okay?

With all these things, it’ll be like, [whining voice] “Well, it’s just not fair…” You just keep hitting home: “By the way, this stuff does not define you,” “By the way, today it’s the PSAT. It’s a number; and if you do your best—I don’t care—because whatever the number is—is a number. You are not a number. But we live in a world that does. That’s going to be a parameter that’s going to allow you to do some things and not to do others.”

And then it goes away from—one of the chapters, “Don’t Be Overwhelmed by ‘Formulaic Right Ways’”—because the “formulaic right way” would say, “Well, I’ll get a certain grade on the PSAT, and then I get scholarship…blah, blah, blah.” Even in our world—we have five children, Bob—and I’m just saying: “The college tuition thing—I don’t care how much scholarship you have, it’s not enough”; you know? [Laughter]

Anyway, there are a lot of creative ways to do that. What’s so cool is that we have encouraged our kids to go to community college. And in that—it’s like, “I don’t want to do that, because it’s not like everybody else.” But in every single time that we’ve pushed them into something that may not be like just the “formulaic right way,” it actually gives them solid ground; because we get to talk through these things—that: “It may not feel right,” or “It doesn’t look right.” Then, we go: “What doesn’t look right? Let’s add just common sense. There’s nothing—if you were in the store, and you had a Coke® that cost $5 dollars and the same product that cost 50 cents, you would buy the 50 cent one!”

It goes to the whole thing: “This stuff isn’t the boss of you.” Today, it’s a PSAT; tomorrow, it’s going to be Wall Street versus whatever. I don’t know what world that every person is living in, but it’s going to be the same game, everywhere you are.

Dave: How has this worked for you? You said you have five kids. Does it work? How has it worked for your own kids?

Kay: Right; yes.
Ann: Can you give us an example of a conversation you’ve had with one of your kids over something?

Kay: Yes; as in yesterday—

Ann: Yes!

Kay: —I mean, it’s daily, which I think can get a little exhausting, too; but the truth of the matter is—I get to hear it. I’m convinced I must be the one that’s needing to hear all this, because I say it so often.

Bob: What happened yesterday?

Kay: Yesterday, it involved the grades, again; because I have a senior in high school, who’s about to embark on whatever her next step is—she’s feeling a lot of pressure. Again, I had to say to her: “It’s not these things that define you. Your grades are your grades. It’s going to be okay,”—is what I kept saying to her—“You know what? Any choice is going to be fine. It’s a choice—it’s simply a choice. Whatever you choose, it’s going to be okay. And if it really isn’t okay, guess what? You can back up and start again. You’re alright. And let me remind you of why you are alright, because of Who’s you are.”

Then I start going down the list of “Who I Know Her to Be”: “You are kind—I watched you—I watched what you did with your brother, yesterday, when you carried his backpack. I watched you fight for a friend,”—because she’s the one who lost a friend, when overwhelmed, made this young girl think that the world would be better without her. I watch my daughter fight for those girls, walking alongside: “That grade doesn’t define you,”— I’ve heard her say it over, and over, and over to her friends, who have bought into it.

If you don’t think it’s real—a teenager is saying it—it’s the lifeline for the teenager. Some of these kids know the Lord and some don’t, but it doesn’t change the fact that a grade doesn’t define them; okay? There worth is not that. And then she, specifically, will call out things that she sees: “I love your sense of humor.”

She had a friend, who played sports with her, that felt like—in order to be okay, she had to be drinking and loose with boys. And to watch this kid [Kay’s daughter] fight for that young lady—it was beautiful—to be able to say to her: “You don’t have to do that. You can—and I’m not going to stop liking you—but you don’t have to do that. You have so much more worth than that.”

Ann: Kay, you are speaking life to your kids. As I listen to you, I picture you taking all these backpacks of pressure off your kids—of saying: “You are enough,” “You don’t have to be perfect.”
Kay: I love that you said, “You’re enough,” because that heads straight to Scripture. You bet, you’re enough; and your beyond enough, because of Who says it!

Ann: And I love that you’re giving your kids strength and a gift, every single day; and it probably feels wearisome, at times. Every day, you’re giving them this ammunition to walk out into the world.

Dave: Have you ever heard this line? Tell me—if anyone can tell me where this comes from: “I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I’m not enough, every single lie that tells me I will never measure up. Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low? Remind me once again just who I am, because I need to know—[singing] ooh oh.”

Kay: And you sing?—and you sing too? [Laughter]

Dave: You recognize this song? Whatever—

Ann: He’s kind of amazing.

Dave: Come on! Do you recognize it?

Kay: He’s a Renaissance man.

Bob: I don’t!—no; what’s the song?

Dave: This is—last year—Lauren Daigle released this—You Say; and it blew up around the world—

Kay: Oh, yes! That’s exactly right; yep.

Dave: —why?—because it’s identity.

Kay: It blew up across markets.

Dave/Ann: Yes!

Ann: —into the secular world.

Dave: Across markets, she was one of the best-selling things ever to come out of a Christian market. It’s like: “You say I am loved when I can’t feel a thing. You say I am strong when I think I am weak. You say I am held when I am falling short. When I don’t belong, oh, You say I that I am Yours.” Then she adds, “And I believe…”—that’s the question: “Do we believe it?”

Kay: And here’s the beautiful part—is that we don’t even have to put that on ourselves either. I love, in Scripture, how the gentleman came to Christ when he wanted his
daughter to be healed. He said, “Help me in my unbelief”; and the Lord didn’t turn around and go: “Good luck with that,”—like—“Come back to Me when you’ve got it,”—He never says that; it’s so beautiful. He says: “I clothe you in righteousness,” “I make you strong.” All through the Psalms—“...in His steadfast love,”—steadfast—it doesn’t move.

It’s crazy! Do you get Who’s you are, and do you get how much He loves you? And He loves you—like He’s running after you—He finds you; and you’re safe, and He’s safe. That’s what I love about Scripture—is that you see Him saying these things about Himself. You see everything He says come true—it does! Then, you see other people leaving testimony about these things—it’s like: “Wow!” And then, it puts fuel in your tank—like: “I can breathe.”

Here’s the cool part after that—you might be able to see the person next to you, because you’re not so focused on yourself anymore.

**Ann:** Yes! That, right there, makes me want to run to Jesus; because He’s the One that speaks life over us. I don’t go to Him because “I need to put my time in now,”—I used to do that.

**Kay:** Me too! I hated it. [Laughter]

**Ann:** Now, it’s like, “God, I need You.” [Speaking to Kay] Me too! It’s like, “I have to check that off my list.”

**Kay:** It was so depressing.

**Ann:** Now, it’s like: “Oh, God, I’m living in this world of being overwhelmed of hearing these lies in my head that I’m not enough/that I’m failing. Who do You say that I am again?”

**Kay:** Yes.

**Ann:** And I look at Him, and He’s always speaking life and hope over us.

**Dave:** And I’ll add this—I can tell, looking at the two of you—you are two moms—I think this is so critical, and it needs to be true for us dads too—right, Bob?—but you are two moms, who speak this life and identity into your kids. I’ve watched Ann do it; I’m hearing you, Kay. It’s like: “Oh my gosh. How critical is that?”—

**Bob:** Right!

**Dave:** —“for the home and the parents—be a place where the child comes home and that’s where he finds real, true identity.”
Ann: Yes; home becomes a haven.

Bob: It does.

Dave: He’s not going to hear it [elsewhere]; yes—he’s running home to get that from us.

Bob: You may think, looking at your kids, “I don’t think they’re overwhelmed.” You probably just aren’t paying enough attention. So go to your kids, even if they are not overwhelmed, and say, “Do you know what Jesus says is true about you?” Remind them where their identity is, and what makes them valuable, and what makes them special.

That’s at the heart of this book. It will transform a kid and give them a sense of peace, and security, and safety, and belonging, and give them a foundation they can stand on. When the world comes and tries to buffet them, they go: “No! You’re not the boss of me!”—right?

Kay: Yes!

Bob: “You’re not the boss of us!” And that’s the title of the book Kay’s written.

Kay, thank you for coming and talking with us. You’re passionate about it.

Kay: I am!

Bob: You’re really passionate about this.

Kay: Because I really care about kids, and I don’t like this stuff.

Bob: Well if you’re feeling overwhelmed, let me add one more thing to your to-do list; and that is, get a copy of Not the Boss of Us. [Laughter]

Kay: Thank you, Bob. [Laughter]

Bob: And add this on that pile of books that are sitting on your nightstand that you still haven’t gotten to. [Laughter]

Kay: It’s funny!—

Bob: Put this at the top of—

Kay: —it’s the good, the bad, and the ugly. [Laughter]

Bob: Put this at the top of the list and work your way through it. We’ve got it in our FamilyLife Today Resource Center. You can order it from us, online, at
We want you to be praying for three events that are taking place this weekend in Newport, Rhode Island; in Omaha, Nebraska; and here in Little Rock, Arkansas. We've got Weekend to Remember® marriage getaways taking place—hundreds of couples, who are going to be gathering for the weekend, to hear more about God's design for marriage. Please keep those couples and those events in your prayers.

Thanks to those of you who make these kinds of events and this daily radio program possible with your support. We couldn’t do what we do if it weren’t for folks, like you, saying, “This really matters.” It matters enough that [you] will make either an occasional donation or—those of you, who are Legacy Partners—supporting us each month. We’re so grateful for that support and grateful for your partnership with us.

If you can help with a donation today, we’d love to send you a copy of Dave and Ann Wilson’s book, Vertical Marriage, as a way of saying, “Thank you for your support.” Ask for the book when you donate, online, at FamilyLifeToday.com; or call to donate at 1-800-358-6329—that’s 1-800-“F” as in family, “L” as in life, and then the word, “TODAY.”

Well, it's been good for us, this week, to spend a little time thinking about our priorities, and the things that drive us, and whether those are healthy things. The President of FamilyLife®, David Robbins, is with us today with some thoughts about that. David—

**David:** Yes; one of the themes that I really appreciate—that I heard from Kay over and over again today—was to simply stop and regularly get perspective. Step back and think about what you’re doing and being drawn into rather than just jumping in without thinking. It’s the power of a pause: Pressing “pause” isn’t wasting time; pressing “pause” isn’t putting dreams aside and putting them away; and pressing, “pause” isn’t running from the great purpose God has for us and for our kids.

The ways of Jesus are often counterintuitive; perspective and principles that are from the Kingdom of God, sometimes, simply are not natural for us. But they are essential to being all God calls us to be and do and all that Christ invites us into. In the pause, the Holy Spirit whispers redemptive words and invites us into a bigger story than ourselves—one where Jesus is the protagonist in the story—not us and not our kids.

**Bob:** It’s the principle of focusing on the important and not being driven by the urgent; right?

**David:** Yes.

**Bob:** That’s good. Thank you.

FamilyLifeToday.com; or call to order: 1-800-FL-TODAY. Again, the website: FamilyLifeToday.com; or call 1-800-358-6329—that's 1-800-“F” as in family, “L” as in life, and then the word, “TODAY.”
I want to thank our listeners for joining us today. I hope you have a great weekend. I hope you and your family are able to worship together in your local church this weekend. And I hope you can join us back on Monday when we’re going to talk about the ongoing conversation we need to be having, as parents, with our kids about sexuality: “When do we start that? How do we have that conversation regularly?” Jessica Thompson and her brother, Joel Fitzpatrick, will be here. We hope you can be with us as well.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, along with our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our hosts, Dave and Ann Wilson, I’m Bob Lepine. We will see you back Monday for another edition of FamilyLife Today.

*FamilyLife Today* is a production of FamilyLife of Little Rock, Arkansas; a Cru® Ministry. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.

We are so happy to provide these transcripts to you. However, there is a cost to produce them for our website. If you’ve benefited from the broadcast transcripts, would you consider donating today to help defray the costs?

Copyright © 2019 FamilyLife. All rights reserved.

[www.FamilyLife.com](http://www.FamilyLife.com)