

You

All right, so my name is Cooper Griffin. This is my interview of my dad for COM 330 um dad thank you so much for sitting down or sitting on the phone with me today there's part of my family communications class and the purpose of this interview is to understand how parenting communication patterns in our family have changed across generation so basically kinda have the way you were raised and how it influenced how you chose to raise me and my siblings. The first part of the interview well I'll ask you some questions about what your childhood was like and how your parents raised you and then the next part of the interview we'll talk about how that upper brain shaped your own parenting style. I'll record in the audio just so I can transcribe this accurately later for my paper and I'll be using or is that OK with you? Is that OK with you?

Dad

Yes, yeah that's perfectly fine

You

Awesome do you have any questions before me before we start? OK, good deal well, I'll just ask that you introduce yourself first for the interview.

Dad

I do not know Search name, Scott Griffin I am actually Cooper's dad and I'm living here in Birmingham, Alabama where Cooper's actually song

You

Awesome so just kind of star so, can you tell me a little bit about what your household was like when you were growing up?

Dad

Oh so you grew up in I was born in the late 60s 1968 on 5 7 and so you know my dad had been a very successful man unfortunately and so you know we grew up with a lot of firsts

You know when I was a child, you know whenever technology came out we were able to utilize it and you same with your appliances and things like that and the reason I bring this up is because it truly you Helped me go down the path that went down, but me and my wife went down to raise our children and so you know my family was a happy family and then when I was 10 years old, I was the only child in the house My brother was eight years older than me and had just got off college and my sister was 10 years older than me and had already gotten married so I was the only child that was there at the age of 10. My parents they did get divorced and that also played a big role and how we decide to raise our children and really kind of my philosophy of being not only your dad but also husband. And so you know, as I grew up, we went from you know obviously having a lot to my mom who had not worked in 21 years had to go back and start all over and get a job since working in the basement of a local company in Montgomery, Alabama, which is where I'm originally from and you know she started at the very bottom and we didn't have a whole lot even though my dad you know, even though my mom got me in the divorce I was allowed to go as much as I wanted to over to my dad's and vice versa and so My mom You didn't have a whole lot and yes, my dad had to continue to pay alimony and child support but you know it's still wasn't what my mom was used to and what I was used to and you know a few years later my dad moved on and got remarried and she had children of her own as well and so we were you split household with her children on that side and our my siblings on on the other side and you know who owes me story. It's just a story about how we went from you know since having everything. To we were not, you know poor down on a lot by any means, but it just wasn't the same and so as I continued to grow up, I realized you know I don't want to be in the situation and when I get married, I am going to get married and it is going to be forever And so you know that was one of the philosophical changes that came out of being raised in my family and to this day my wife and I are still married. We been married in December for 29 years and I'm truly blessed but that was all kind of shaped by my childhood I saw you know how a divorce could hurt both you know my dad and my mom and I just didn't want to do that to anyone and so I literally got lucky and I found the right person and here we are today and that's Cooper's mom. As far as technology goes, you know when we when technology started coming out for the kids, you know the different video games, and and cell Phone devices and things of that nature in the beginning when we would get them the devices we decided to wait until they were older and when I say older, maybe you know preteens 15 years or less, and that was for my first child my oldest, which is Cooper's oldest brother and you know most people can imagine that overtime the next child got it a little sooner. The next child got it a little sooner and you know and then I have the

You

Yeah

Dad

twins so I four children, but then the twins got their devices, the earliest. And we did it in the beginning you'll have brutal boundaries with the devices and screen time and you know what they were allowed to see on their devices and things like that and sadly again overtime, things change and one of the I think mistakes that we made, but I would argue. Majority of parents in America make is not limiting screen time for much longer than what we actually did. You know making them sign off on their phone. You know, especially at a young age when they're in the household under our roof you putting it down and going to bed and that's kind of one of the things that I regret but I will say you know technology kind of dictates that and then when you have more than one child in the house and the other ones are you why does he get to use his phone? Why does she know all that you know he's older than you and he's a senior in high school that doesn't matter you know So it's a it's a very tough dynamic. Try to balance you know I think communications and technology and things like that is a great thing. You know, we definitely try to have a line of communication with you know not only me and my wife, but you kids as well and you know that kind of as a direct result of when I was a child growing up Kind of felt like there were some secrecy stuff going on in the house and what I mean by that is things they didn't wanna tell me about probably the shelter and probably to protect money but I will say you know when they got divorced at 10 years old when I was 10 the last 2 1/2 years three years were not the best between them. A lot of arguing a lot of screaming a lot of things like that and and so I joke. You know to my wife that as far as a divorce goes, it was actually a pretty good divorce because my dad was very successful and he was an extremely busy busy man he own three businesses and I never saw him like I played three sports growing up and I never saw well you have three or four, but I never saw him like at practices he'd come to games and stuff, but I just wouldn't see him and so When the divorce happened and I started playing you know that the season of football came around I don't think he missed the practice and I don't think I don't think he missed the practice of baseball and I don't think he missed practice of basketball either and so that was really I also was kind of an oops baby and I was the baby of the family so you know I get it you know he wanted to be there for me and that that's awesome. What that what that did for me as far as the lack of communication between my parents and you know the secrecy and things like that I try to be a little bit more upfront with not only my wife, but also you kids and you know Cooper

was very involved in your you know the three sports played growing up and you coached everyone.

You

Yeah

Dad

And you know, I will get up at the crack of dawn and get to Coleman for a basketball bunny for a baseball game or baseball all day baseball tournament and you know that a lot of that was driven by the fact that you know my dad never coached love a lot of talents. He probably wouldn't. I didn't have time because he was trying to you know provide for us and be a success and things like that, but it did stick out and just you know. Me having an opportunity to do the opposite and be heavily involved in your lives. I think I think it made us closer and get to this day. I still miss coaching and I miss you guys playing sports and you know we were even though I'm not I was never a cheer cheerleader, but we were heavily involved in and you know Addie's activities a cheerleader and you know that that came from mom you know and she was determined to be there because her mom was there for her and made sure they got all the practice and things like that because her dad is in the military as my dad and. Yeah, that's kind of how things overtime have shaped. You know the person. I am how we you know used technology probably in some negative way some are very positive. You know for example you know your brother and all the guy that is all the different things he's done it would you know the battles that he's going through in the journey that he's been on And hopefully you will continue to be on, but I mean, you know he's known nationally and even worldwide and that's the direct result of you know the technology that's out there on the web that's out there and us doing a great job communicating across the country in the world about his issues and you are fight and you know it just made a huge difference, but I will tell you this and I don't know if you know we have any more questions or not means you want me to

You

Yeah, I got a couple more but noworries. You're good.

Dad

OK, yeah I will tell you this as Incredibles communication is OK. It can be very dangerous too, and I've learned that I think we take for granted you know the the. As you guys might refer to the olden days of the 80s, you know when we didn't have all the stuff and all we would do is go outside and play till the sun sun went down in the street lights came on. We had to be home. The communication these days can be scary. I mean it's amazing how incredibly fast and like the speed of light things get out there like you know something can happen you know at us in a moments notice and everybody everybody's got their video on their phones recording and the next thing you know you know you're your sister who don't even you know she's not even in the same city as here you know she's got access to it. She like oh my gosh so I think that plays a very. Scary role and I think we have to be very careful how we use it because Everybody has a phone everybody has access to photos and everybody can actually take videos and so it can be scary for these young you know for people that are in your class that are trying to look for a job down the road or whatever you darn sure do not want this stuff to come back and haunt you because they'll find it

You

What is kinda interesting that you brought up technology as much as you did and kind of in the same same realm is that how would you describe like your parents approach to parenting and kind of how that affected and how that's changed overtime you mentioned like technology and how you would always go outside to like play around till the sun went down your mom would just tell you he'd be home for for supper at this time and that's really it versus. I know nowadays I know we have Life360 and that's utilized to kinda make sure that we're safe and we're OK so how would you describe like your parents approach to parenting versus how you have changed or kind of evolve that when it comes to parenting with us

Dad

Right it's gonna make me sound like an old fuddy dud, but you know it is what it is so be it my mom literally if we were not home at dark like I mentioned earlier the street lights came off. She would stand out our front door and ring a bell like an old tiny nail that has a handle on it and you could hear that sucker from it seem like miles away, but probably one miles away and if you weren't home, you know within a certain period after that, you know you were in trouble and I don't mean. You know bad things I just mean **my dad was a military guy. He flew out for 21 years in the Air Force retired of major so you can imagine being in the military family.** You know that you know, papa you know Tracy's dad was in the army and

you know they're very strict and they are very disciplined and. You know and again I don't need anything bad I just mean they keep their word. You know if you don't do this then this will be the consequence, and it doesn't matter how much you cry about it, please don't you know please don't put me on restriction. please don't take my bike away. It's happening you know because in their eyes, what lesson have you

You

Yeah

Dad

learned if I said this was the consequence? You knew it you accepted it you went ahead and did what I told you not to do anyway and nothing happened to you you know You know, I guess there's no consequences in that case I'm so what is that you know if your mom and I said something when you were when we were raising you growing up, which we never done right? But if we had said something, and you guys didn't do it, you know if if she would come to me sometimes a good cop cop she would come to me and say stuff like you should be really mean she would really take phones away. I mean, whoever is you know Turner, Cooper, Addie, Gabe should we really take their phone? OK, what did you tell me we're gonna take their phone warming yes OK So clearly you know there were no consequences to what they did you said don't do this. They did it you said if you do it, I'm taking your phones away and so that's really that's one Takeaway that I do have from my childhood is that my dad in the military and you know if anybody in the classroom or your teacher or whatever has any military people in their family they're just built different. You know they're told to be somewhere at a certain time. They're told their barracks have to look like this they're told you know that they need to learn this and if they don't, they're a major consequences and that's just how we were raised you know I mean. To me it's a very common sense approach you just you you literally you knew that if you did this You were gonna be in trouble you did it anyway for example you restriction and you know you're not supposed to leave the house. OK well I did it. OK I'm not gonna say I didn't. I'm not older than now, but let's say one of you guys snuck out of the house and I found out because there was a party you want to go to and we were like your all and you're not going so when I find out about it cause I will find out about it and specially with Life360 and your phones and find my iPhone and all that stuff but once I find out about it and you come home and I say you know what. Just forget about what I said, and I'll just overlook the fact that you were totally against what me and your mom said you know why you live under our roof and you

know not only did you go out but she stuck out and took the car too, and but we're gonna don't worry about it. We're just gonna turn another cheek I mean, what? What has you have a child learned that they can get away with stuff

You

Yeah

Dad

And I think that's kind of what you know developed today across the world, but you're more importantly here in America I think people stretch the boundaries to see what they can get away with and how far they can go to

You

I can have a kind of a follow up question on that cause I kind of see the road that you're kind of going down one of our one of our discussions we had was a very interesting one on whether the use of corporal punishment is warranted, especially in today's society and not necessarily like like I'm not saying like like obviously beating or abusing your kid is OK but the kind of the basis of the argument was what what is more effective and what should be allowed kind of corporal punishment or more so like verbal punishment was kind of a discussion and so I kind of feel like you're kind of going down that that wrote of what like what how that did so how did your parents discipline and how have you translated that over to us that's kind of where I feel this conversation conversations going on

Dad

Again, you know military actually my dad was retired. When I was born right after I was born he went ahead and retired at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery and I mean, I'm just gonna be honest with you. You know you didn't. You didn't know my dad long because he passed unfortunately, but I think you have memories of him and he was that he was the biggest sweetest nicest man. You know that my grandkids mean that his grandkids know in you, Addie turn Gabe and but I'm telling you you know when we were little there were consequences I don't mean physical you know, but there were consequences and you know if they said you do this you're grounded for 2 to 3 weeks? And when I say, I mean you

come home from school and most cases you go to your room and you do your homework and you stay in your room and then sometimes you know we eat in our room sometimes we could come out for dinner just depended on what the issue was and how bad it was in their ass. Sometimes the only thing we could do is come out and eat dinner and you know I mean, I obviously shower bathroom stuff like that but you know it wasn't intended to eat something fun you know. And the older you guys got what we started finding is if we really wanted to hit you guys weren't hurt and what not literally but you know you did something wrong. We told you there was gonna be consequences. All we had to do is take your device away and let the meltdowns begin. And I mean, you know tantrums like 10 11 12 year-old kid not necessarily you you'll probably you know the twins but You know just seriously

You

Yeah

Dad

I would I wouldn't even get to the point with your mom and just say this worth it is really worth it. Yeah they've been in their room yelling and so upset for now and a half because we took the phone away and you know I think that is it's the sad idea as I just think people truly feel like they can't live without their devices the same way sometimes I mean what is the biggest panic moment in the world I won't say biggest cause I mean, there's obviously bigger things than what I'm about to say. But you know you did it the other day you literally went to get your phone out of the pocket. You're like where's my phone? Where's my phone? Oh my gosh where's my phone? Where's my phone and it was like sitting right in front of you under the napkin, but I asked you I said how that makes you feel your

You

Yes

Dad

heart dropped in my stomach for a second and that's I think most people are that way that depending on their devices and you know not to mention that you know but just. What everybody uses it for and you know I don't like schoolwork and things like that just social

media. It's all about clicks and they want they want it to be as convenient as possible and better convenient way to do it then they have the device with you pretty much you know

You

Shut up

Dad

24 hours a day I mean, you know when you sleep it's plugged in right by your bed and if you can't sleep, you wake up roll over and you start scrolling and you're like. Hey I wonder how many people like that post I made on Instagram or you know or that thing you know that video I put out there on TikTok and I guess That to this guy seems to be more important to people and to me growing up even my parents defense even to them. It was very important to raise a family. You know having three children in the family and my sister and brother you know they wanted kids and they wanted to raise a family and it was just a different time you know and again military and structured and common incidence and consequences and things like that. But you know, because of all of that, I think when you look at your parents and how they communicate with each other, how they communicate with the children, you know the use of technology you lack of I think there's some good and bad takeaways that have shaped the way we parent And I would like to think that you know we took mostly mostly the good from them you know and you know not as much bad but in some instances, it just can't be avoided that you know I mean, if you're if you thought you know this is This is how I was raised and I was told that you know there's gonna be consequences and you're gonna

You

That's that's very that's very interesting that you brought that up because one of like the core

Dad

restriction

You

principles that I looked into one of our theories that I wanted to bring in his interview, it's called social cognitive theory, which is basically stating kind of vicarious learning that you learn by model behavior like you observe it like from your parents, things that your parents did and how you pass that on to us like kind of what things did you observe that your parents did parenting you that you've kind of translated over to us like what trait, habits or or like any like communication styles that you picked up from them that you that you bring over to us

Dad

So I think that the biggest and probably really the two biggest things that I carried through my life from them and by the way, I know I'm making sure my dad's gone. My mom's been gone since oh1. And so, but the two main things is accountability in common sense that's it I mean, I don't know how you can argue against those two things you do something wrong there's gonna be accountability. You know you were talking about what did you refer to it earlier as the punishment I don't wanna use.

You

Corporal corporal punishment

Dad

Corporal punishment, I mean, you know gosh no Never lay a hand on you So obviously, we don't. We don't believe in that. I'm never a hand on any of the kids and obviously we don't. We don't believe in that but they're definitely needs to be consequences in my opinion and in household. The other thing is just common sense you know You act like you know a fool there's going to be consequences. I mean, you know you don't go off racing your car against a buddy because he challenge you and said you know that I mean just things like that but with your things obviously you don't you never done or at least if you have, I didn't know about it. But yes, so so some of the things that I took away from my parents some of the positive things that I tried to capitalize on are you know your consequences and just use common sense you know great when you're little kid common sense has to be instilled in you and you need a little direction right you need a little direction. OK look That is hot. You probably don't wanna touch it again. You know what I mean that's a

You

Yeah, yeah

Dad

candle that's a candle that's a flying. That's the stove. You know things like that and so it's a learned behavior but as you get older and you continue to do those same things over and over again you gotta really sit back and go. You know, why do you keep doing the same thing you know whatever that saying whoever said that I can't remember doing the same thing over and over and over again

You

Oh yeah, yeah and then the "the

Dad

expecting a different outcome

You

definition of insanity yeah

Dad

Yeah, doing the same thing over and over again and expecting you know a different outcome you know OK when you were little kid you touched the handle and it was fucked. You're now 15 and you're putting a candle out your two fingers do you think that was a smart idea.

You

No, no

Dad

You know so that's probably a stupid example what you get you you get my point and so I do think that my

You

Yeah

Dad

parents you know taught us certain things regarding accountability structure to a degree. You know we probably do a good job with you on this.

You

Miss

Dad

When When we literally, I hope these people don't think my family was just But literally when I was when I was young, and I was whether I was in my dad the only parents household as young them being married, or I was visiting over at my dad's house with his new

You

No

Dad

wife. There were rules and things that were expected to me I did not leave the kitchen or the table. Without washing or rinsing off my plate, putting it in the dryer I mean in the dryer in the washing machine in the dishwasher and making sure the area where I was was left

better than it was when I got there because somebody had to clean the table right and it's it's not she'll be any appreciation if you just come in there and you know jack it all up and you know you leave corn napkins, and you know butter on your knife sitting at the table so and again this is probably a little military in him In the morning, we did not leave our room unless it was picked up and our bed was made and all of our clothes off the floor and put up so how's that one working for you?

You

Working pretty good yeah well I make sure every time you come into town I make sure my room is picked up. That's for sure.

Dad

Yeah, yeah Well, that's true Cell Again, I don't know if it's the sports or the military or whatever it was but when I would go places and I will try to make sure you understood this you know when you leave Before you got there, somebody had to fix it all up and get it clean. There's no more disrespect than you leaving it and I'll give you a perfect example locker rooms like when you when you will use football example when you play football, I'll never forget on your last game you

You

Yeah

Dad

know it was a very sad night. Of course it always is for seniors, and somebody took a picture of your locker. It was spotless and the jersey was folded up, not just thrown in there and it was literally sitting on the bench inside the locker and I remember thinking to myself wow maybe maybe I did do a little something right but but you know like when you go to hotel room, we've traveled song together Seeing what I do when we leave, I always take all the towels that we use and put them in the tub right because that's kind of where they that's what they want you to do so they're in one place and not throw all across the room and I literally just tried to you know obviously Sheets have to get changed and all that other stuff but everything else I try to leave it better than it was when I got there or as best as I can

cause obviously I can't wash the sheets but and so I do think that that was something that my dad and my mom raised us you know about him and you know growing up we had you know we were fortunate to have some help at the house And you know she would work hard you know my dad's like you no no no no no you're not. You're not gonna just disrespect her. You know in that way and stuff like that and so I just I think you respect. The people that were there before you that made the place You know

You

What it was

Dad

that Made the place that you may wanna go back to does that make sense because it was extremely enjoyable. I mean, you don't wanna walk in and you know pizza slices be all over the floor and you know and stuff like that so you know hopefully that that touches on a little bit of what you were asking, but just wherever you go, just have respect for the people that work there you know.

You

I am I have one one final question for you if I ever become hopefully if I become a parent someday, what advice would you give me especially kind of what you've learned across generations of like your family in our family

Dad

Oh well, I will

You

Or what advice they don't even have to be me you could just be anyone if anyone were to become a parent one day

Dad

Well, first of all I hope you do

You

Yeah, I hope so too

Dad

if it's if you know if it's right for you and whoever your future wife isn't on you obviously we want a lot of grandchildren but when the time is right so But I would say introduced technology as late as you can be smart about it and you know I guess however you think about raising your first one don't give him to you know oh well you know my daughter has a phone and she's only six or or whatever it is, you know Stay with what you feel is right tweak what you feel was wrong OK but standard row and you know if you're in other words with the consequences if you take it away and you're screaming in the nuts and crazy driving you crazy you know don't give it I mean, you know again what they what that just told him is the I get the more I get back you know I mean, not not the more loudness I get back the more items that you've taken away from me because of our restriction or whatever So so that would be one thing to do you know just make sure they show respect I mean and this is not a knock on anyone out there whose parents believed otherwise because I have some relatives his parents believe otherwise and that's their choice but I raised you guys no matter what where win hell you were to say yes sir yes ma'am, no sir no ma'am and maybe that's the military in me but for us it's always been a sign of respect you know I did you know my dad He was like I said many times he was in the military. He was very very very much. You know a gentleman to my mom and always open the doors always pull the chair out always do those things and that should roll down to you guys as well. You know I have one daughter and you know if she ever called me and said you know that I don't know why he didn't open the door or pull the seat out for me or whatever time that you just can't do it right I mean you know you go to run around the car door or go to the car door and she's already opened it in the car you know what that happens but I mean I want her

You

Yeah

Dad

to you be with you know a gentleman and somebody that respects her and you know use them as being equal partners because it is a day if you know, your wife or husband isn't bought into this, it'll never work. It'll never work no matter how I mean you can try it. Excuse me, but deep down you know if you guys aren't bald him with one another and there's gonna be things that I do that wrong And there's gonna be things that Your mom does that's wrong, but you work through those things and you know I would also say get your children and get very comfortable and have peace with a really really really great church environment And I would start you know as as long as you can and you make it you know you make it a habit I mean it's just part of life right it's nice today Sunday what we do we go to church today's Wednesday what do we do? you know some people go to church Wednesday some people go to church for you know whatever. Your belief is OK Go with that and you know it's not for everybody sadly but that's just kind of a Where where I fall and as you know, I mean, we're not perfect and you have a brother that has some serious serious struggles with a incurable disease and the church thing has been a struggle for us and you know looking back is probably an excuse. I'm probably literally just making an excuse on you know, but those are just some of the things that I think. Would You know it would benefit you guys raising children and I'm telling you technology is it's fantastic and you're not talk about it all the time especially AI and you know these chips from Nvidia and you know things like that But I'm just telling you once you open up at Pandora's box at whatever age it is it it's opened

You

Nothing

Dad

and you know I just would be very thoughtful about you know when that day is in the problem is a lot of people like kids look at it as a contest and so parents are like, yeah my kids four years old and already got the brand new iPhone. You know whatever of it you know. And and You don't get it don't be pressured into anything you know like for example when you come home and go your little Billy he's got even though an iPhone a burner phone he's got all this other stuff. He's got you know an Instagram account that's private. That's a fake one he got that. OK, that's a little Billy. You know that's that's not

You

Yeah

Dad

Cooper. That's not whoever so I mean I hope you know that gives you an idea of how things have changed over time and I will say this no matter what age the peoples parents are in this class or your teacher, I will tell you this and I will go to my death dead believing this. The 80s are the best decade ever

You

Yeah All right well that's all the questions I have for you again thank you for doing this. I appreciate you taking the time to share the stories with me and do you have any? Do you have any other questions for me?

Dad

Well no, I mean something comes up or you know you think of something else just you know where I live

You

All right, well thank you

Dad

Yep.