

# Warmth and Doubt

Dr. Kara Powell

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# Summary

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Dr. Kara Powell brings a wealth of knowledge, wisdom, and research to the table when it comes to cultivating "sticky faith" in young people. It is a messy process that takes time and intentionality, but parents and faith leaders will have more insight after watching Dr. Powell describe practical, research-based ideas, such as creating warmth in the family, encouraging students to wrestle through their doubts in a safe environment, and promoting intergenerational relationships.

## Memorable Quotes

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- ★ "Every young person is on a journey ... The journey toward identity, belonging, and purpose is more complicated now than it was a generation or two ago."
- ★ "Grace is the center of our faith, and why we obey is not to make God like us or love us more, but because we are so full of gratitude."
- ★ "It is not doubt that is toxic to faith, it is silence that is toxic to faith."
- ★ "The church should be the first place young people go to talk about their tough questions."
- ★ "Grandparents are more influential today than in previous generations."

## Key Ideas

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- ★ Warmth in the family is important in faith transmission and building lifelong faith.
  - ★ We need to show students that we care about what they care about.
  - ★ Children must understand that actions warrant consequences, but we need to be careful not to shame. Consequences are not about who they are, but about choices they made.
  - ★ Doubt plays a role in faith development for many students.
  - ★ 70% of students surveyed (freshmen in college) said they have doubts with their faith.
  - ★ When students are in an environment where they feel safe to express/explore their doubts, there is a greater correlation with faith maturity.
- ★ Intergenerational relationships are extremely important for kids.
  - ★ Studies show a correlation between faith development and the significance of intergenerational relationships and worship.
  - ★ Kids need to know and feel that they are part of the larger intergenerational body of Christ.

## Reflection / Discussion Question

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- ★ Am I paying attention to my son's or daughter's emotional needs? How connected am I to their heart?
- ★ Am I a safe place for my child to come with his or her faith questions and doubts? How can I increase our relational trust and transparency?
- ★ Are my children connected intergenerationally? Who are their adult influences?

## Practical Applications for Parents

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- ★ Own the 5:1 ratio -- Each of your children need to have 5 identifiable adults in their lives that are actively pouring into them, adults who are on their team.
  - ★ Create this team for your kids. Identify the adults your students already has a relationship with. Then, be intentional to let those adults know that your student has identified them as an influence.
- ★ Make sure your kid is experiencing intergenerational worship.
- ★ Encourage your children's grandparents to use technology to stay connected with their grandkids.

## Resources from the Interviewee

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- ★ [Fulleryouthinstitute.org](http://Fulleryouthinstitute.org)
- ★ Sticky Faith by Dr. Kara Powell (Book)
- ★ Growing Young by Dr. Kara Powell (Book)

## Speaker Bio

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Kara Powell, PhD, is the Executive Director of the Fuller Youth Institute (FYI) and a faculty member at Fuller Theological Seminary. Named by Christianity Today as one of "50 Women to Watch," Kara serves as a Youth and Family Strategist for Orange, and also speaks regularly at parenting and leadership conferences. Kara is the author or co-author of a number of books including Growing Young, The Sticky Faith Guide for Your Family, Sticky Faith Curriculum, Can I Ask That?, Deep Justice Journeys, Essential Leadership, Deep Justice in a Broken World, Deep Ministry in a Shallow World, and the Good Sex Youth Ministry Curriculum.