

EPISODE **57**

# How Books Shaped an Out of the Box Kid

Guests: Sally and Nathan Clarkson

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## Meet Megan Francis



This mother/son team has just written a new book together called [Different: The Story of an Out-of-the-Box Kid and the Mom Who Loved Him](#).

Sally homeschooled all of her children, including Nathan who has learning differences. This book tells the story of how they turned Nathan's differences into superpowers.

You can learn more about Sally's many books and speaking engagements at her website, [SallyClarkson.com](http://SallyClarkson.com). And catch up with Nathan's writing and acting projects at [NathanClarkson.me](http://NathanClarkson.me).

## In This Episode

Sarah talks to Sally and Nathan about the challenges and unique joys of raising and being an out-of-the-box kid. We get to hear about the special place that nourishing stories held in the Clarkson home and how over time Sally developed a quiet confidence that she was doing the right thing for her family even in the midst of struggles and the judgement from the outside.

## The Listening Guide

**Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.**

- 3:30 Sally and Nathan's new book
- 6:00 What it means to be an out-of-the-box kid
- 8:00 A storyformed childhood
- 11:30 Is sharing stories time well spent?
- 17:40 What Sally did when there was pushback
- 23:00 Courage to follow the still, small voice
- 26:15 Stories helping in dark times
- 28:45 Stories that can help build self-esteem
- 31:15 Questions from listeners
- 39:00 Nathan's advice for young listeners
- 43:00 Let the kids speak

I think children thrive when a mom feels like she is flourishing. - Sally Clarkson

## Quotes and Questions

### \* **Not falling short.**

I wondered all the way through, “Are they really paying attention?” and, of course, everyone in the whole world would say to us, “You’re just not doing enough. You need to do more because in the public school they’re doing this, or in the private school they’re doing that,” and then if my children wrote thank you notes to grandparents and they misspelled words or someone was quick to point out that they added a math problem up incorrectly.

***You’re not doing enough***—the fear at the heart of so many of our misgivings about homeschooling. Because we are with our children all the time, it’s very easy to see the places where they are falling short. How can you emulate what Sally did for Nathan and speak forward to the unique person that God has called your child to be? How can you balance discipline with grace, academic rigor with diligence?

### \* **Helping wiggly kids.**

Nathan: As I mentioned earlier, grew up with ADHD and a lot of focus problems and a lot of learning problems, so the thought of sitting still and being read to for more than five minutes, much less reading myself for more than five minutes, seemed like an almost impossible task.

Sally: I would give him things to play with, puzzles to do, Legos to play with, Cheerios to eat one at a time.

Nathan: I’d be sprawled out on the floor, drawing the stories that she was reading out loud.

Sometimes it can be helpful to have a bucket full of ideas to try. Can you start to develop a list of strategies that can help wiggly kids to focus? For Nathan, drawing really became a true help. What might help your child?

### \* **‘Life-giving routines.’**

“They were all making forward steps all the time because we had established these routines and rhythms- this is what we do; we talk, we do chores, we read, we engage at the dinner table, we serve people in our lives.”

Even when school wasn’t going as planned, Sally said that their family rhythms helped her teach for rest. How can you intentionally build up these lifegiving routines that nourish your family?

## Show Notes

### Books from today's episode:

- [Different](#)
- [Educating the Wholehearted Child](#)
- [The Life-Giving Home](#)
- [The Chronicles of Narnia](#)
- [The Lord of the Rings](#)
- [God's Smuggler](#)
- [How to Win Friends & Influence People](#)
- [Little Britches](#)
- [Freckles](#)
- [Caught Up in a Story](#)

### Other links from today's show:

- [RAR #17: On Living a Storyformed Life, with Sarah Clarkson](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit [ReadAloudRevival.com](http://ReadAloudRevival.com).