

ŁUKASZ ZAŁUCKI

The Mammal Whisperer, Trainer of Life,



how to be a parent..... easier

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to my friend Kasia Z. — for the pressure. She pushed me for so long to start a YouTube channel with this material. I never started the channel. Instead, I wrote this book. The pressure landed somewhere other than intended, but it landed. Sometimes the best thing someone can do for you is refuse to leave you alone.

Thank you to my parents, and especially to my mum — because I think she had it hardest with me. Dad is Dad — he was always a strong player. But it was Mum who twice had to close the front door on me so I'd come to my senses. And it was the best thing she could have done. Because a sixteen-year-old living in a mate's basement, or at another mate's house, doesn't snap in half — he gets his life together one level up and starts thinking about opening a car workshop. If I'd been wrapped in cotton wool, I probably wouldn't be alive today — the suicide statistics don't lie, and my teenage years were not easy ones. I'm a tough nut, people. And that's because of her.

Thank you to my Scottish brother, Kamciu. You were the only one who, when I was preaching my parenting theories — without having any human-mammal children, just three Dobermanns — actually agreed with me and said: "Łuki, you need to have kids, because your approach is brilliant." Everyone else said: "Łuki, what can you possibly know — you don't have kids." Turns out I knew more than all of them put together. How many conversations did we have about Gabrys — that you've got this problem or that one, and you're thinking of doing it this way or that. And you, mate, are our shared certificate of quality. You won the fight for your son during the separation, and I don't think we could be prouder of your success. Gabrys — you're the best, young friend. I love you, my birthday brother.

And finally — as if I could not mention my WuWu. It was hard. More than once, what I was doing hurt you, because you were emotionally invested on the side where it was doing damage instead of helping. But with every year you could see it was working. And all things considered, you let me bring in the new, the better, the best — and now we're flying through life like the fastest drones.

Dedication

To my children.

So that being a parent comes easier to you than it did to me.

And so you understand why you handle life so well.

Introduction. What Makes This Book Different

I've read a lot of parenting books. A few of them I actually recommend — you'll find them at the back.

The rest — and there's a lot of it — does one thing and one thing only.

It teaches you how to adapt to your child so they'll want to listen to you.

Not how to prepare them for the world they'll actually live in. How to change your tone, your wording, your expectations, your rules — so your child feels cooperative.

And it works. It really works. The house gets quieter, there are fewer arguments, evenings become manageable.

Except there's a catch you can't see until eighteen years have passed.

The World You Built Has Two Residents

The day your child walks out the door, it turns out you were the only two people on the planet playing by those rules.

No one else will adjust to their pace. No one will repeat something a third time in a gentler tone. No one will check whether they're hungry or tired before placing a demand. Not their boss. Not their university. Not their landlord, their bank, their partner, or their client.

You taught them to live in a world made of one apartment and two people.

And that world just ended.

The Bill

Your life was easier for those eighteen years. That's true and there's nothing wrong with it — every parent takes the path of least resistance, and I did too.

But instead of a person who can handle things, you raised an adult who can't handle anything. Because they lived in an artificial, wonderful world tailored entirely to them. They had a glorious childhood.

And they will be a child for the rest of their life.

The world won't go easy on them. Not because it's cruel — because it's indifferent. It won't notice that this particular one was raised differently.

Instead of watching your children thrive as adults, you'll be babysitting them for the rest of your life. And there's a real chance that at forty they'll still be living with you — because of course Mum and Dad will always help.

Which means: Mum and Dad will always do everything for them.

And no, this isn't just a mother thing. It's a whoever-does-most-of-the-caring thing. A father who takes on the primary caregiving role falls into exactly the same trap just as fast.

Raise a Man, Not a Boy

I once saw an entire shelf of books on raising boys in a bookshop.

And to me, that title is already the mistake. Because if you raise a boy, what you end up with is a fifty-year-old boy.

The goal isn't a boy. The goal is a man.

It's worth looking at the numbers, because they're very specific. In Poland in 2025, 4,776 people died by suicide. 3,975 of them were men — roughly 83 percent. That's about five men for every one woman, giving Poland one of the highest gender gaps in Europe on this measure.

And I have to say something here that can't be glossed over, or I'd be exactly the kind of author I've been criticising a few paragraphs up.

These numbers don't mean that overindulgence kills. Suicide has many causes — illness, addiction, loneliness, crisis, pain that no one on the outside can see. No parenting book has the right to point to a single cause, and I won't.

But these numbers say something else that is within our reach. Men attempt suicide at roughly the same rate as women — and die at five times the rate. They ask for help less often, and later.

So if I had to say what it means to raise a man rather than a boy, it means two things at once — and they don't contradict each other:

First — that he can manage.

Second — that he can say when he can't.

These aren't opposites. They're two halves of the same capability. A man who can handle everything except asking for help isn't strong. He's just alone.

A hundred years ago, a man hunted, walked into danger, took on risk so the family could eat. Today, the boy sits at his mother's house and can't make a doctor's appointment.

That won't happen at my house.

I wish you exactly the same resolve.

If you or someone you love is in crisis — free, round-the-clock support is available. In Poland:
Adult Mental Health Crisis Support Line: 800 70 22 22. Children's Helpline: 800 12 12 12.
Emergency: 112. If you're reading this elsewhere, please search for the crisis line in your
country.