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Hi, welcome to *You Keep Me Sane*.

I'm Aileen.

And I'm Julie.

And we're two friends navigating life's ups and downs together from opposite sides of the world.

Hi, and welcome back, everyone.

Hi, Julie. How are you?

I know. I'm actually really tired.

Oh, it's an early start for you today. You pulled the short straw.

I know. Well, I used to wake up at five. I remember when I used to go for those walks, but I don't know, five... maybe it's the age. I'm just playing.

Anyway, other than that, I'm fine. How are you?

I'm fine. I'm quite tired as well, but it's not my early morning. But no, I'm actually good because I'm just loving that Christmas is coming so soon. I've got the tree up. Have you got your tree up?

I do. I put it up on the weekend. It's a bit lopsided. I'll send you a photo.

Is it a fake tree? Or did you buy one?

It is because it looks real. I was buying real ones, but I just started to do the fake one, but the problem is I don't know... I've not got good storage here.

I was at Sir Pilates yesterday and the teacher had a Christmas tree in the studio she just put in there, but it's just the top. She said, "I've only got to find... it's just really little. I can only find the top." She says, "I got all my trees out of the attic and I've got three tops and no bottoms."

How did she? Why would you have...?

That's so interesting. You need to send me a photo actually.

It's just the top. She's put it in a pot.

That's so funny. Does it have lights on it?

No. I don't know. I think she's in progress.

We do need to send us a photo. Actually, we should put it online somewhere. It's brilliant.

The cats bit through my wire at the bottom, so now the lights don't work throughout the tree. So I had to go out and buy new lights.

Oh no.

They nearly electrocuted themselves a few times for Christmas.

That's terrible.

This is two of them as well, chasing each other around the tree. And then eating the wires. Yeah. Be fun.

Anyway, so today I wanted to talk about a line I read. Actually, I read this a few months ago and it's that line that we'll know our children as adults far longer than we know them as children. And I don't know why that line hit me the way it did, but it just really landed for me because those early years — like babies, toddlers, the million playdates we did — they feel so vivid in my memory. And when you're in them, you genuinely think they'll last forever. It feels like a long time, right?

But now suddenly we're both doing right. I'm looking at my two and it just feels like a few short years, they'll be finished with school. So that whole amazing childhood chapter... isn't that crazy? It just made me so sad.

You could have another baby.

No. No.

I know what you mean. Yeah. When you said that to me a few months ago, I really felt that too. Because you think they'll always be kids. Well, they're always going to be our babies anyway, but it's such a short time when you don't realise it at the time.

And it made me think, oh my God, you've been in Australia for eight years now. I mean, eight years. How did that happen? I don't know. And we've been back in London for over four. I mean, we've been back here for nearly as long as we stayed in Spain.

And it sounds dramatic, but that sentence about knowing your kids longer as adults — yeah, it really feels real. Suddenly I could see how quickly everything has moved. The countries, the homes, the seasons, the kids. And that's when I looked over at Amelia, who's now taller than me. Okay, it doesn't take a lot, but she's walking through the kitchen with her headphones in and I had that little, "oh God, childhood is so short" moment.

It's such a short moment.

How tall is Amelia now, by the way?

Five foot one. Five six.

Oh my gosh.

So she's taller than me, obviously.

Yeah, she's taller than you. So it doesn't take much to be taller than me either, but still, that's crazy, isn't it?

It's nuts. Don't know how it happened.

But your perception changes, right? There's this research that says that time feels faster as you get older because each year becomes a smaller percentage of your overall life, which I found interesting because I was always like, why does time go faster now? And I always think it's because we're so busy, but they're saying it's because each year is a smaller percentage of your overall life, which kind of feels really sad. It's very Debbie Downer here.

But I actually don't even know if that's true. I think it's because you're in the moment, right?

And I feel like those early years with the kids were slow because we were so present. Bedtime, leaving the house, snacks, wipes, spare outfits — I feel like I was really in it. And now I look back and it's like, what? That's all done. That was like a whole chapter.

I can still picture you with the buggy and Noah and his little board. The biggest buggy ever.

It was a big one — that Phil and Ted's.

And Amelia says to me, "My life's passing so fast." And I'm like, I don't remember thinking that as a child. And I think it's because they're always on. Phones, entertainment, constant stimulation. We were bored sometimes — and boredom made time feel slower.

And what gets me is how sharp the memories actually are. I can picture chubby hands, toddler voices, mispronunciations. I'd pay good money just to hear those voices again.

Those toddler days were so good. Exhausting, but so precious.

And we always say you never realise you're in the good old days until you're out of them.

From Iggle Piggle to festivals to Lapland to Scotland — it all feels like yesterday and forever ago at the same time.

Now it's mascara, music, eye rolls and moods. A whole new chapter.

They're half child, half teen. They want independence but still crawl into bed after a nightmare. And we're shifting too — who are we when the house gets quieter?

That's why that line hit so hard. We only know them as children for such a short amount of time. We'll know them as adults for so much longer.

So being here now really matters. Not rushing it. Not wishing it away.

Because every stage ends.

And one day we'll miss this too.

So if you're listening and feeling the shift, you're not alone. We're right here with you — watching our children grow faster than we ever imagined and trying to stay awake to the moments we still have.

Hug your kids. Notice the day you're in. Childhood is short — but the love lasts their whole lives.

Thanks for listening.