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Seth Perler

Executive Functioning and Supporting the Struggling Student

Welcome to Happily. Family I'm Cecilia Hilkey Jason Hilkey and we're delighted today to have Seth Perler with us. Seth is a teacher turned education coach who specializes in executive function. He helps struggling students navigate the educational landscape while doing his part to disrupt and improve education. Welcome, Seth. It's great to have you Good to see you guys again. I appreciate you.

Yeah. I'd want to start by asking you if a parent is listening to this and they have a child who maybe has gifted, maybe has some executive function struggles, but they're struggling in school. Where's a good place for them to just start to figure out how to help them. You know, I guess that's a great question. So for those of you watching,

I don't know the questions that are coming, and that's a really great question because what comes to mind is sort of the programming that we have as parents and teachers. And I don't mean programming, like conspiracy theory stuff. What I mean is that since we are young people in our cultures, our subcultures, our societies, our family systems, our educational systems that we grew up in,

we had messages and messaging that we grew up with. And those messages say certain things to certain people. We all interpret them differently, but there are some really common ones that really get in the way. So at the answer, your question, which I am doing the, some of the messaging, the first thing that I think we'd want to do to sort of get started is sort of imagine that you can throw away everything you think,

you know, and imagine that a lot of the thoughts that are gonna occur to you about how to help serve your child, how to find interventions, how to get support, what support is, what it looks like, how to define it, what works, what doesn't work, throw it all away and start with a clean slate. Because what I see in my work is that there's a lot of confusion between can't and won't.

And this is a massive, massive misunderstanding that causes a lot of division and families that causes a lot of shame and suffering and children that causes a lot of misunderstanding that

causes us to spin our wheels. And you use interventions that aren't working over and over and over, and sometimes try harder at things that aren't working and so on and so forth. So the first thing that I would say is if you want to help them forget everything,

you know, and, and then let's look at the can't versus won't question. And, and this is related to everything that you think, you know, so there's can't and won't so oftentimes, unfortunately the assumption with kids who are struggling in school is that it's a won't. And what I mean by that is that a child won't do what they need to do.

They won't just motivate. They won't be more disciplined. They won't try harder. So the, the messages that we send them are, Hey, stop being lazy. Just motivate yourself. Why are you so unmotivated? You need to be more disciplined. Why don't you care about school? If you just cared about school more, you would work harder. If you just work harder,

you're going to be fine. It's not as bad as you think. If you just get this done, your life will be so much easier. Why don't you just, you know, get that thing crossed off your list. Why can't you just start? Why are you procrastinating? All of these sort of messages assume that the child is willingly or is unwilling to do what they're being asked.

They're being willful, that they won't Do it. But what if it's a can't wow. The first objection that parents or teachers have, when you say that, perhaps it's a can't is that parents and teachers will say, well, I've seen them do it before. I know they can do it. Well, maybe cognitively they can do the task they're being asked to do,

but they can't rally the level of executive function. That's necessary to do what they're being asked to do in that moment. And let me tell you there's a lot that's going on right there. For example, one thing that maybe you say they can't, but I've seen him do it. Well, maybe before they weren't as beaten down, maybe before they had more support and more scaffolding to be successful at what they're doing,

maybe before they weren't stressed out or traumatized by certain things at that time, maybe before they had had a good breakfast or a good night's sleep, or weren't having a social problem that day, maybe before the, the structure around where they were going to learn it or do the homework or the schoolwork and where, and how, and how long they had in the supplies around them and all those things or not an issue.

So there's all these things that can influence this. So this kiddo just doesn't, it it's, it's a can't, they can't, they don't have the executive function to do what we're asking them to do. Maybe cognitively the task, but there's a lot more going on. It's not just do your homework. It's do you even know what it is? Do you Even read the directions?

Did you even hear what the teacher explained as far as what the requirements were? Do you even have a good relationship with the teacher and feel like the teacher sees you and hears you

and understands you and supports you? Do you even like the content? Do you know, are you even able to focus or concentrate today? So there's all of these other things going on.

So assuming that it's, what if it's a can't and it's not a one now, as they get more jaded and more beaten down, more disillusioned and more frustrated with school. And as our kids who struggle with this stuff, feel like every time they try, no one sees how they try and no one gives them credit for what they did. Right.

And no one, and they try so hard and then they end up hearing over and over and over. It's not good enough. You need to redo it. You need to finish it. You need to do the test retake, you lost it and you didn't turn it in, or you turned it in without your name and you need to redo it.

Or you need to add more details to your answers. Or they hear this stuff all the time. And there's just like, why am I doing this for a D why am I putting so much effort in? And I fail, why am I putting so much effort in? And, and, and so the older they get, the more does become a wound.

So as they get more beaten down in middle and high school, it becomes a can't and a won't both. And then what do you do with that? So I think your question was, I don't even remember what your question was, how do we get started? So I think so it's a sort of circle back around it's to forget everything you think,

you know, and then understand that it's not a won't, it's a can't and then look for what's the camp all about. Then we can start taking real action. That actually makes a difference. I love this conversation. So go ahead. So when we're, when we're looking at our kids and we're seeing, okay, it's probably can't and not a won't,

what are the ways that we can really listen to them and hear what's going on? You're asking the right question right there. Let me just tell you that, because what we often got, what parents and teachers often go to is not, how do we listen and hear what's really going on. They go to, how do we get them to get stuff done?

Those are two completely different questions. And you're asking the right question if there was a right and wrong, but you're asking the right question. How do we have a relationship such that they feel heard and seen, and known, and understood and safe, safe to be able to say, I don't know, I don't know where to start. I don't know why I didn't do my homework.

I don't know how to do this school thing. I hate this and not to say, Oh, we shouldn't hate it. Oh, well, you know, but to say, what's that about? What do you mean? You hate it? What, what is that like for you? How can I, what, how can I be support? You know,

like to really hear them is where it starts. Because once we in all of us have different family dynamics, but most families have some level of, we can call it dysfunction or whatever, and this is not a put down on anybody. We've all got it. But we have some level of dysfunction where

we're not always hearing each other. And if we're going to get our kid to take the emotional risk of execution,

executive function, executing, doing schoolwork that they don't want to do, they don't feel motivated to do they feel is too hard or too daunting, or blah, blah. If we're going to get them to start taking risks, to put some effort in and turn things around, they have to feel connected to us. Like we're really hearing them patients with us because they're not going to turn around overnight.

Like really, like they can be who they are authentically and, and, and be as imperfect in, in the confines of the system that they're in as they need to be, because our kids are great. The system, doesn't the structure of the system. I don't know if square peg round hole is a good metaphor, but it's like, you know,

it's not built for these nerds, Virgin kids. So they appear judging by those standards to be failing. But we're often not looking at their strengths and their talents and their gifts and their interests and their passions and their curiosities. And we're not building curriculum around that. Yeah. It's interesting. You're saying this because I think many families are coming off of,

or may still be doing different kinds of school at home while also be dealing with, you know, just how do I do with my kid bringing homework home, or how do I support my cubit homework and finding that balance of figuring out if it's a camp, figuring out if it's a world or the combination of those and to maintain that relationship and that support to be like the coach or the counselor or the consultant for them while also holding them to kind of a standard.

I think this is where I struggle is like, how do I, like, I know what they're capable of and I want them, I want to like see them as being capable. And at the same time, I don't want to let them off the hook essentially. Like, like, yeah, I don't want to enable them or baby them or go into learn helplessness.

Right? Yeah. Okay. So, excellent question in the discussion that it brings up is a discussion that I have about what I call the threshold and the comfort zone. So essentially I say, play in the gray. So if we want to help a kid, we have to play in this gray area. Now for me, or a teacher or tutor or coach or certain people,

that gray area, it can be nice and big. But for parents, that gray area is very small. You understand what I mean in just a moment? So here's an, oftentimes the parents, if it's a two parent family are polarized on, on the both, both sides of this issue. So here's how it works. So basically you have the comfort zone and on this side of the comfort zone is learned.

Helplessness land is enabling, is doing too much for them. Is, is you are their executive function too much. You're rescuing things like that. What's that over helping over, over, helping in an effort to help you're over-hyping and it's not helping. Yeah. Things like that. So that this is the comfort zone. And that's, that's, what's beyond that.

Now on this side is the threshold. And it's, if you push them too far past the threshold, you've lost them. So this is often times punishment and rewards. This is nagging and bugging and using logic and reason and trying to get them to see the light and lecturing and lecturing and lecturing, and trying to convince them logically that they should do something.

And you're pushing them so far that they're either going to do what you're asking them to do, just to get you to leave them alone, or you lose them and they shut down, they might shut down in anger, or they might shut down and withdraw. They might slam the door and go high, but either way you lose them again, they may fake it and just do it to get you off their back.

But that's, that's not an internal locus of control. That's not that they're learning responsibility or things like that. They're just complying in the moment. So we want to push them past their comfort zone and not beyond the threshold. So that's the gray zone that I work in. I need to push them beyond the comfort zone, or they're not going to grow.

If I push them past the comfort zone. And me, Seth, the coach is working with them and I annoy them too much or pressure them too much or whatever they they're going to be like, I don't want to work with that Seth guy. So we're working in this zone, gray zone here. And again, parents for you, you know,

you might push their, they might have a million buttons and you push them and you've lost them. You know, for me, I may have five buttons to push, you know, I'm just picking arbitrary numbers, but just to illustrate the point here is like your, your zone that you're working in, you have to work a lot more. You have to work a lot more than I would on the relationship because they've already,

they know your buttons. They know how to play like violin, they, and so oftentimes we have one parent on the side and one parent on this side, not always, but that that's very common to see to one parent who says, you know, we're not doing enough. We need to, you know, let them fall more, blah, blah,

blah. And the other ones, you know? So, so that's, I hope that does that answer. Totally know it's kind of abstract, but the, the, but the goal is, is that we're trying to find where that zone is. And I, I can relate to both of those zones. I mean, I can see, like,

as you were saying, all the logic stuff, I'm like, and there's a problem with that. Like, like, yeah. And I, cause I fall into that. I fall, I quickly fall into like, let's, let's just logic it out. We can figure this out. The engineer in me says, There's a problem with that. If they're not receptive,

if they're receptive, like if you're talking to a friend and they want a solution and they're, you know, but if your child, if it's not landing, then there's a problem with it. If it's landing you're in the gray zone. Yeah. Good point. And I assume that this gray zone also moves around a little bit from day day That it's not like a static thing,

but it depends on kind of like how our child is, slept, how much food they've had, what they've, you know, what's happening socially that this there's a little ebb and flow. And, and maybe even the, maybe especially even like their emotional state at that time and particularly anxiety, what, what role does anxiety have with the gray zone or just stuff that we should be considering in general?

Yeah. So, so many kids are struggling with anxiety. Now, some people don't even know what anxiety it is or what it looks like. Some kids don't even know that that's what they're experiencing. So I want to start off by saying that, that it's really important to know. So for those of you who are not super familiar with it to really learn about anxiety and see,

you know, some parents don't even know that they're highly, that's just how they've lived for so long. It's normal. So what's happening with anxiety is, is that our nervous system, which is designed to help keep us safe is saying you are not safe. So what happens is I talk about the narrative to look, I'm using two hands all day today.

I don't know. I talk about the body and the story. So on the one hand we have a story or a narrative. We have a story in our mind about whatever's going on. Let's say for example. Yeah. All my teachers hate me. That's a story. That story may or may not be true. That story I've heard a million times.

That story probably is not a hundred percent true. Probably all my teachers hate me is exaggerated making mountains out of molehills. It feels very scary in the moment, but it's your teachers probably don't all hate you. Yeah. All my teachers hate me. This is a waste of time, so I'm not going to do it. So that's the story, right?

So we have the narrative and the story, or, you know, Hey, you said you were going to clean your room at four o'clock it's six o'clock what's up. Why haven't you cleaned your room? You're so mean, get off my back, leave me alone. Why didn't you trust me, stop bugging me. Why do you always do this?

You're not fair. You know, that's a story that's going on. And that narrative in that story is a story that says, I am not safe. I feel threatened in this moment. Now back to your discussion, before that there is a time and a place to set boundaries and you know, it's like tough. You got to do that. You know,

you gotta do the thing, get out, sorry. You know, and there's family conflict and all this stuff. And that that's, that's fine. I'm not saying anybody has to be perfect or anything, but there's a story and a narrative. And when that story or the story could be, Oh my gosh, there's a rattlesnake. That is a real live rattlesnake,

two feet away from my foot. What am I going to do? Now? That's a real danger. But the same thing is happening in the brain and eight or, Oh my gosh, we have a pop quiz today. I didn't do

my homework. I'm not rating. Like all of these stories, the one with the rattlesnake is where we should be appropriately anxious.

The other three, we can really get into anxiety and looping in that story and stuck in the story and stuck in the victim mode where we're just going down these rabbit holes with the story and we will. But the problem is, is that we feel unsafe. So what happens is the story sends a message to the amygdala, this little tiny part of the brain and the amygdala gets the,

the message from the brain. We're not safe. The amygdala says, cool, I got this brain. We're good. The amygdala sends message to the adrenals, which sends adrenaline to the heart, which sends adrenaline to the muscular system so that your child or you, or whoever's ready for fight flight or freeze. And then we can get into polyvagal theory,

which I'm not going to do on here. But the, but it's really probably bagel. Theory is really neat, but there's, it's, it's basically fight and flight or active in freeze. It is static and stuck. So, but basically either way, the nervous system, the body, your child's body, when they're in this state is not comfortable.

It's very uncomfortable. And S and some kids are looping. Some kids have anxiety all day long. They're spiking in and out of it. Everybody has a little bit of anxiety throughout the day. I mean, somebody honks the horn at you. What, Oh, sorry. You know, didn't mean to get into your lane or whatever, you know,

we're, we need to be having levels of it. But what happens in like a situation like that with the car is we go, Oh, I was in the wrong lane. I wasn't paying attention. Okay. But he turns around and we reregulate while would happen sometimes with people with a lot of anxieties. They're not, reregulating, they're getting, they're getting into the,

this, these loops and they're spiking and spiking. They're just, and it's becoming a ha habituated. And their nervous system is really saying, this is an unsafe world. And this can be very hard to see, especially on some of your quiet introverts, you know, they can really hide it and mask it and chameleon and stuff. And that's not good.

So, so this anxiety can really, and what I think a lot of the anxiety comes from is exactly what we're talking about. Executive function and the pressure, the external pressure from your school, from your parents, from teachers to do things that you can't do, and you can't win. And no matter how hard you try every semester, the mountain,

you, the whole, you have to dig yourself out of gets bigger, and you keep doing this and you don't know why, but you start getting bunch of zeroes and missings and incompletes, and it just gets daunting and you either try harder or start giving up. So, but either way, if this anxiety is building, then these kids, aren't just dealing with like getting schoolwork done and,

and you know, the difficult regular difficulties of growing up. But they're also dealing with extraordinarily intense emotions that are very hard to shake. Very hard to deal with that. Don't just go away when you say, so we'll stop thinking about it. We'll just do your stuff and you won't be anxious anymore, or things that we often do. It doesn't address it.

Doesn't give them tools to process these very real emotions. And we often invalidate kids by saying things like that. Like stop thinking about it. Do you know what? Here's the classic don't cry? What do you mean? Don't cry if somebody is crying, why do we, but this is a, you know, in our culture, it's we really are big on ignoring our feelings in our culture.

And, and we often, you know, spend decades of our lives, ruining relationships with ourselves and others and stuff like this to finally be like, Oh God, nobody helped me. Oh, people have researched this stuff for many, many decades, and there are solutions. Yeah. But we want to help our kids, you know, learn to regulate emotion,

learn to work with anxiety, depression, big feelings. We have more anxiety and depression than ever. Why? Well, I think it's because there's so much pressure, so much homework, not even so much homework, so much work just to sift through the BS on the portals, to even find out what the work is. It takes a half hour to even figure out what the work is.

There's some, and there's more homework and more extracurriculars, more social pressures. And it's, it's just a pressure cooker on these kids. And, and it often seems like there's no scape out. So I don't mean to talk so much. Well, maybe I do, because that's what you have in here, but Well, no, and I think this is an important topic,

especially, and I w what I was going to ask is about anxiety while it's affecting a lot of kids. We've known that we've heard this over and over, how is it affecting two kids specifically? Or is it affecting them more? And how do we support them? That might be different than what other people are saying about how to support kids that maybe don't have that kind of a quality,

I guess the biggest consideration that pops into my mind regarding two kids in particular are gifted kids in particular, that might be different. I mean, anxiety for everybody is anxiety. It's uncomfortable, it's difficult, it's scary. It's something we want to avoid and get away from. It's something we need to learn to work with. But one of the characteristics of gifted kids is often they're highly sensitive.

They're very intense. They're very deep, even if they don't look like, and I just want to stress that, particularly for, you know, the people who are listening, who know kids who are, again, particularly the ones who are quite an introverted can often, or just good chameleons. I mean, even, even the ex, a lot of the extroverts are the,

but you know, don't just look at their outsides and assume everything's okay, really attuned to their internal world and ask what's really going on. But these kids are very deep. They're very

sensitive, very intense. So dealing, imagine, imagine that, you know, if you're dealing with, let's say one of these gifted kiddos, and you start to notice that they're struggling with some anxiety,

just imagine for a minute that it's 10 times worse than you think it is, meaning their experience of it is 10 times more intense than you think it is. And start from that place just as a default, just to really take it seriously and be like, Whoa, they're really having very intense feelings. And it's, it's like taming a wild horse.

It's like, ha how do you do this? You know, they don't inside of themselves. They know how to mask it maybe, but they don't know how to really process feelings. Okay. That's good. That's helpful. And that's good to remember that what it looks like on the outside may not necessarily be what's happening on the inside. Especially with the two weekends,

we have got a lot of practice on putting up a front a lot of times, so I can see that. Yeah. And when I really appreciate about what you're saying is that this is helping parents tune into what's going on for kids, because that is sometimes like one of the things that I don't know that we struggle with, what do we do with the child?

How do we help a disorganized child get organized? Well, I, I want to back up because you said the word attune, and I think that's a really big thing. And I want to tell you what I think the biggest block to attunement is there's a term attunement co-regulation by being all of these terms sort of mean that we're on the same page.

You know, you guys are nodding as I speak. That means, okay, they're listening or they're pretending and listen. And I'm not saying you guys just like we're tuning to each other, you know, you're smiling. Like we're, we're tuning. We can tell we're, we're constantly vibing. Right? Well, the biggest block to attunement and vibing and co-regulation and noticing what's going on with each other.

I think that, that I see is that what we mentioned before our kids says, Oh, I hate this math class. And the parents says, well, just get the homework done, just get it done. And I'll take you for it. So now right there, the parent didn't hear what they just said. They're going into logic, reason,

lecturing, nagging, bugging, re helping them to see the light or whatever you call it. But they're not in the moment they miss the moment. The moment was that they're having, I hate, I hate math class hate. That's a strong word. There's an emotion that that's charged. We're not even dealing with that. So we often go into the memories of the narrative and the story.

We often go into our story and aren't attuning to what's really going on. So I just wanted to mention that because it's so important. It's I see it so much. You guys see it so much and we have to really cultivate the skills to attune. If we're really going to serve them, then we can start talking about how do you help get a kid organized.

Yeah. So before you get into that, because you said something really great there with attunement, you demonstrated what it looks like to be, not attuned. Can you demonstrate what it looks like to be attuned? Cause that's sometimes harder for parents to like, grab onto like, okay, I know what I don't want to say, but I can't figure out exactly what I do want to do.

Does that sound like The, the first thing I'll say is, is that it's messy. And when a family system starts changing, or one member of the family starts changing and starts really attuning and starts really tuning into their own dysfunction that they grew up with and their own maladaptive patterns that they still use. And they, they really start tuning into that.

And then they start changing the conversation with their kid. So one way that attunement looks is it's, it is, it's not how it looks, but it's how it sounds. The conversations start to change. So the conversation starts to change to, wow. That sounds really hard rather than let me fix it for you or tell you what you need to know about the situation and use my logic.

Wow. That sounds really hard. Wow. Tell me more. Wow. No, I'm really trying to listen. I really want to know. I mean, if you have an angsty teenager, this is very hard and it takes a long time for them to understand that you're really trying to listen. They're not just going to believe you after a deep conversation or to their default is my parent never listens to me.

Why the heck is this any different? So there, it's going to take weeks of, of really by the conversation changes, the conversation changes to rather than coming out of left field. Hey, you got, I just found out that you have an F in this class, what the heck is going on? Like saying, Hey, we need to talk in a little bit.

You're not in trouble, but this is a serious doc. And we'll talk tonight and just want you to know that's coming. And what do you think and how are you going to solve that problem? And how can I be supportive? So the conversation starts changing where the parent goes into a more collaborative place than an authoritative place. So that's how a one-way that attunement low looks or sounds the other way that it looks is it looks messy.

It looks sometimes regulated. Sometimes dysregulated, sometimes yelling, and then sometimes saying, I'm really sorry. I did not mean to do that. I'm noticing. So you're modeling. I'm noticing that I just yelled. I feel bad about this. I, I, I'm trying to listen to you. What were you saying? I will not yell again, you know,

like catching yourself recalibrating. Like, it looks messy as heck. And, but sometimes it looks connected and regulated and like two people are hearing each other and, but there's usually a lot of repair before that point that has to happen, but it looks connected. I really appreciate you talking about how it looks messy, especially early on, because I think as parents,

we beat ourselves up because we have this high standard and we think we know how it should be, and we have this model of how it should be. And then when we, we are messy that we don't

give ourselves that permission to, to be on that path and to recognize like, Hey, this is all part of it. And actually, maybe this is a good part of it.

This is a good part of getting connected and like, recognizing like we're changing. And so I really appreciate it. Everything you said, that was a fantastic, I've heard very few people talk about the messy part we talked about. Here's how it should sound. Here's how we don't want its own. And we don't talk about anything in between. And most of the time we're spending our time in the,

in between I think, and beating ourselves up about it. So yeah, that's what I acknowledge that and bring light to that. So thank you for that. That's great. Yep. Those are the steps that get you to where you need to be. That's great. Yeah. Okay. As we're wrapping up disorganized child where we're tuning, we seem curious,

we're trying to ask some questions. Do you have, even beyond that, do you have any tips about how we help those kids? I mean, there's, there's so much, that's what all my work's about, but I guess the thing is this is that there are, as far as school is concerned, which is generally what I'm working with. There are,

there are concrete systems that these kids are not directly taught that kids with decent executive functions seem to pick up through osmosis. They don't, but it seems like they just pick it up through osmosis. And like, they're just trying harder and more willing and less defiant and blah, blah, blah. It's not the whole story. So there are systems that these kids need.

They don't just figure out how to use a planner. They need guidance. And why is this important? How do you use a planner? How do you plan for your day? How do you organize a backpack? How do you organize a folder? They need direct instruction. We don't do that in school. We teach math, science, social studies,

reading, writing. We have pull-out programs for kids later on. Once they, you know, resource teachers who will help with this stuff later, but we had never planted the seed in a formal way, sadly earlier, to help them start building skills for years. And again, the ones who seem to pick up through osmosis, they've been picking up these tips for years,

but so we teach, we teach them the systems of organization, time management and so on and so forth compassionately. So that that's part of how we teach it. We, we actually teach it and show them how to do these things. And the second thing I want to say, and I cannot stress this enough. I talk about something called what I call clean slating.

So remember the old chalkboard used to be made of slate when you clean a slate that that whether we're talking about is, you know, you wipe down the slate of a chalkboard. That's what clean slating is. You know, you're getting all the chalk off this piece of slate. They used to make them a slate. And what we really want to do is clean slate,

our kids' lives and our lives. What does that mean? That means minimize. That means the clutter that means get rid of junk. And we are in such a consumer society. And for some parents, there's a massive anxiety around getting rid of stuff. They're so attached to stuff. And I just, you know, I've been there myself. I've just am now a minimalist,

but it took a long time to change my whole thoughts about this. And, but when I'm working with kids, the more stuff they have, the more stuff they have to manage. And if you have a kid who doesn't know how to manage their papers and their schoolwork and their bedroom and their life and their music stuff and their sports stuff, and get half,

the more stuff they have, the harder it is for them to ever learn how to manage it. So the first thing, if I had a magic wand that I would do is I would clean slate everybody's house. I would get rid of all the papers in your family's life that you don't need all the clothes in your family's life that you don't need.

All the books, all the toys, all the clutter, I would declutter your inboxes. I would get, you know, I would get rid of your TVs and blah, blah, blah. But that may be going a bit far, but I would really say, what does this family value time together? Connection. Laughter joy love. Well, what,

what do we value as a family? Honesty? What, what, you know, what kinds of things do we do together or do we not do together that we value? And we wish we did together and really sit down and look at your life and say, what do I value? I have my kid for X, many years while they're living in the house and X,

many years until the day I die, what do I want with my relationship with my child, our quality of life, our connection, what, what matters to us? And then look at the clutter, the mental clutter, the digital clutter, and the physical clutter, the mental clutter, the digital clutter in the physical clutter that gets in the way of what your bottom line is in your value system.

And then start the process of getting rid of that. Now I'm getting, I'm kind of abstract in a more concrete way. You know, if you're going to help a kid get organized, you want to get rid of their papers or boat, you know, their extra clothes that they don't wear anymore. You know, if your kid has 50 pairs of socks and they're a sixth grader and they really only need 15 pairs of socks,

you know, then get rid of 35 pairs of socks. You know, if you know, and I'm just, that's just one example. You know, if they have, you know, 200 books and they don't read anymore, keep five or whatever, you know, you get the point like really say, you know, what, what, what do we value them managing and having in there,

if I, if I can use a bolder term, cause I'm, I've been in Boulder for a long time, not in Boulder, Colorado anymore, but what do we want in their sphere of energy? You know, what, what, what, what, cause the way I think of it is that everything we have in our life has a residue.

So those guitars have a residue. The bag of garbage has a residue. The, you know, the extra socks have a residue, the extra emails has it. So what do we really value? So I guess that's our, I'll wrap this up, but that will be my challenge. She is saying, you know, if we're going to help this kid get organized,

let's clean slate first. Then we can start really well not then. I mean, you can do them simultaneously, but then we can really start building out some good systems where they can manage, what's manageable, their folders, their backpack, their desk, their locker, their clothes, their books, their toys, their digital world. Like we really have a manageable.

And again, this, they are so anxious today. Cause it's, it's not manageable. They can't do what they're being asked to do and have a social life and a fun life and time for themselves and time to move their bodies. And you know, So yeah, I like that. It reminds me very much in the classroom. We would set up the environment for them to succeed.

And that sounds very much like what you're talking about here. It's just creating that decluttered environment so that they can be more successful so that they don't have all these other things, cluttering them up and causing friction difficulties in succeeding. So I can really relate to that. So as we're wrapping up here, do you have any final words or a big ass or the folks that are here?

I mean, I think that was probably enough, but I guess the, That was a good big ask, by the way, I just had to clean slating. That's a big ask, but if you had something else to add, The relationship is everything, that's it. And when it, when it all comes down to it, and it's all said and done,

forget about grades, forget about organization, forget about executive function. You loving your kid and building a good relationship is the most important thing of anything. That's fantastic to be reminded of. I appreciate that. And you know, there's a lot that you have out there online, available, you offer a lot, what's the best way for people to find the things that you have available.

You have a lot of free things. You have your conference. Can you tell us how people could best reach out to you? Seth perler.com. Got freebies for parents, teachers, blah, blah, blah, tons of content on there every week of my life. I put out one thing on Sunday to be of service to human beings.

And I really tried to be helpful to you every Sunday to have a YouTube channel. That's where I host the videos. It's called Seth Perler executive bunker or something. I'm easy to find those subscribe on YouTube, start absorbing that stuff. And three, I have a summit called executive function, summit.com. The Hokies we'll link to this. I do it every year.

It's amazing. His work is amazing. We all support each other to support families and it's a free three day conference. And then if you want to buy it, you can buy it, but it is get great experts.

And it's just an, a good, I guess you could call it an intensive to really turn some more. The wealth of the conference is a wealth of information,

as well as all the other things that you offer out there. We'll include links to those in the show notes, Seth, thank you for all that you're doing. Thanks for, thanks for all the support you're writing for parents and for kids, especially with this kind of challenging group of Tuohy and executive functioning is a tough situation and a tough area to address.

Thank you for that. I know a lot of women benefit and love you for this. So thank you. Thanks for being here and talking to us and everyone here and look forward to talking to you again in the future. Bye bye. Thank you guys so much for your service to people. We need you to thank you. Thank you.