



**Episode 124:**

**Seth Perler on Helping Kids Work Through  
Resistance (Part 2, for Parents)**

Debbie: Hey Seth. Welcome back to the podcast.

Seth: Good morning. It's so good to be here. I'm excited.

Debbie: I am excited for this too because as we're recording this, the first part is about to come out. The first part of this which for listeners aired last week and I actually edited much of this episode myself and it brought up so many questions for me and actually I just have to say in hearing your conversation with Asher, which I just loved getting to listen in on that, but hearing it I was like, Wow, this kid really knows a lot about this stuff and yet it doesn't necessarily translate to actually practical day to day life so I'm super curious to hear you go through this for parents and also really learn how we can best support our kids and just recognize that this is a process, right? It's not something that we snap our fingers and have everything change.

Seth: That's one of the points I want to address today. Yes. It's a process and it's a lot longer than you think it's going to be.

Debbie: Yes, yes. I'm getting that sense, so I would love you to just start us with this conversation. I'm just super excited to translate this for parents.

Seth: Okay. Awesome. Well, in this podcast, I really wanted to go into - It was intended for back to school, but you can listen to it anytime because it has to do with resistance and there are so many back to school things and I love helping people get back to school in a great way - but I wanted to think of sort of a really powerful creative way to approach back to school a little bit differently and that is dealing with resistance because resistance is the number one problem that you will deal with as the parent of one of these kids, and I'll go into what that means in a in a bit, but hopefully by the end of this podcast you'll, you'll understand how to have a better school year by understanding resistance really well and having some tools to work with that.

Debbie: It sounds awesome and exactly what I personally need right now. So I'm excited about this.

Seth: Cool. And what do you think it would be like if parents felt like they had better tools for dealing with that resistance?

Debbie: You know, I just think this is one of those things that triggers so much fear in us, you know, because in one act of defiance or resistance, we can be projecting five, 10, 15 years down the road and just go to that place. This kid is never going to be able to show up to work. They're never going to want to do anything they don't really want to do and that's a terrifying thought.

Seth: Okay. So having better tools around this would take away some of the terror and hopefully give you a little bit of peace of mind.

Debbie: Yeah, peace of mind and also just not getting triggered. I know that I personally just, it's a button for me. I'm sure it is for many listeners and so I get triggered and then I know that I'm not responding in a way that is actually supporting Asher's development of these skills, so I'm probably, if anything I'm, I'm making things worse.

Seth: Oh Wow. Thank you for saying that. I'm going to put that at the end of my notes here just so if we don't get to it, I want to get to that — triggered parents. Okay, and how do we deal with that? Fantastic. Well, let's go ahead and let's sort of define resistance together. I'll go ahead and get started here. Then I want to hear, you know, what you can add to it, what your audience goes through, but essentially what I did is I started with what is a really basic definition of resistance and it's basically when people don't do what needs to be done. Now to go a little bit deeper on not doing what needs to be done. That can go into many areas, many things to resist doing, but basically what we're resisting is nonpreferred action.

We don't resist things that we want to do or that we feel like doing. So basically when we're resisting, it's important to know that we're resisting non preferred action. And resistance often involves denial. I'm not seeing things clearly, not being honest with oneself about things, about the consequences of things, about how long it takes, but how much energy it takes. Um, resistance often has to do with procrastination, putting things off, lying about things, forgetting about things, completely putting it out of your mind. Um, oftentimes adults and kids, we intended to do things, but the intention does not mean that the thing that needs to get done gets done. So some of these kids really do intend to...they really have the best intentions. They really mean to get it done. They meant for it to happen, but it's Sunday night at 8:00 PM and they say, oh my gosh, I have a project due tomorrow that I haven't even started.

They intended to do it earlier when they got the assignment four weeks ago. They intended to have it done on time. Oftentimes resistance has to do with being overwhelmed. They literally don't know where to start. There's so many pieces of the puzzle. They don't have any strategy for like when you're doing a real puzzle, for example, starting with the edge pieces for example, or things that are a certain color and doing all of that color and image in the puzzle, they don't even have that strategy to even know where to start. And that's overwhelming. So they resist starting. So yeah, that's sort of a definition. What can you add to that?

Debbie: Yeah, I mean, everything that you said, I think, you know, those are things that we experienced that I know many many parents do. Yeah. I think it's just that sense of ... overwhelm is the word that, you know, when you talked about that that feels most resonant, that it's just too hard. It's too big, I can't do it. That kind of fixed mindset piece and that just stops everything. And it's really tricky when you know that it's something that they need to do or have to develop the skills to move through that.

Seth: Yeah. And I'm glad you said develop the skills because it's not a willful thing. We'll get more into that, but we have to develop skills to approach it.

Debbie: Yeah, I know that's probably coming towards the end. I'm like, how? But no, I don't want to rush you. You've got a plan.

Seth: So let's ... I have a few sort of background topics that I want to get to before we get to the solutions. But the next background topic is, what do we resist? And really in thinking about the very, very, very basic, most common things to put this in, a very simple box for listeners, what we resist or what our students are resisting or where your children are resisting his schoolwork ensures that's the simplest way to put it. And then most of the things that we would talk about would be subcategories of those. But there are other things that we resist, which we'll get to more. But those are the two main categories you want to think about. And again, it's only a problem when it's a non preferred activity that is in our own self interest.

It's a problem if it's in our own self interest and we're not doing it or if there's a negative consequence and we're not doing it. So in oftentimes obviously not learning is as simple as it sounds. Well not learning to take responsibility to do your chores is going to affect all areas of your life when you get older, if you, if you can't do something like that, uh, you know, you were talking about being worried about 10 or 15 years down the road because we see that not even doing things like chores and then definitely not being able to execute on schoolwork is going to interfere with their ability to execute when they need to.

Debbie: I'm just thinking, you know, is this something that all kids have blocks but some kids are able to just push through it? Like they are more naturally inclined or you know, wired to be able to push through resistance? I mean, I imagine most kids don't love doing chores, right? So I dunno, I guess I just want to understand where it, where our kids fall in the big picture of young people.

Seth: Sure. Everybody struggles with resistance in different ways, but I'm an executive function coach. My focus is executive function. My focus is helping kids execute. So by default the families that come to me come to me because their child is struggling to execute, they're struggling to do what needs to get done and they are particularly resistant. So there's definitely a spectrum. Some people are more resistant than others and they've developed very good tools to resist, to get you off their back, to get around doing things even when it's not even hard, even when it is something that matters to them, even when it can be something that is fun for them. Sometimes these kids, the issue is so complex. Now having said that, on the other side of the spectrum, there are kids, there are adults who don't struggle much with execution. They do what needs to be done.

Some people are motivated by crossing things off their list. These kids are not. For a parent who feels relief and who feels good when things are organized, when things are crossed off the list and who has a sense of accomplishment, it's very, very, very difficult to understand the other side of the spectrum when their child is not motivated by those things, they don't have that. It doesn't. It literally

doesn't feel the same in the body. They feel overwhelmed, oh my gosh, I have to do so much, and some people on the other end of the execution spectrum, it's like, ah, okay. I got that crossed off, got that done. I feel good about this, you know, but I'm glad that you asked that too because some people who are very good at executing, they also maybe are too compliant where they're doing things that may not be in their best interest or where their self esteem is fed by that and that can be good, but that can also be in a negative way, so you have to really watch that. Are they doing it to be compliant? Are they seeking external validation from the world and not learning to internally validate and listen to their own internal compass, so that's something that on the other end of the spectrum people need to listen to. Are they getting out of balance? Are they not doing self care because they're executing so much for what other people want them to do? Things like that.

Debbie: That's super helpful and I'm glad I asked too just because I think even hearing your answer, it made me realize that for me personally and again probably for many listeners, one of the problems for us, I mean I love to get things done. You totally describe me crossing things off my list and that sense of organization and so it is such a disconnect. Like I can't understand how he can't see how great that can feel. So that helped me kind of put it into context.

Seth: Now people who can execute well on tasks also, and I just want to mention this, I was going to get to it later, but I'll mention it now. They can also resist other things in life that you may not be aware of. For example, some people who are very good at execution may have trouble and may resist having difficult conversations speaking their truth to someone or dealing with any number of...

Debbie: Conflict or anything uncomfortable, right?

Seth: That's a good way to put it. Anything it's still a non preferred activity like having an uncomfortable conversation is a non preferred activity.

Debbie: Yeah, makes sense.

Seth: So that there might be other areas, but back to this episode we're really are dealing with mostly with school things or with general life responsibilities, because when it comes to things that are fun or that matters to them, then it's easier for them to execute. Obviously if it's video games or social things or things that matter to them and it is a preferred activity, execution's not a problem, which also can be very confusing to parents because parents will say, well, I know you can do it. I can see you do it in this way. Why won't you do it here? And then it appears to be an issue of willfulness and then certain messages get perpetuated, which I'll get into in a moment as well.

Debbie: Okay, great. All right, let's keep moving through then.

Seth: Cool. So I wanted to mention how resistance hurts us. What's the problem? Well, the problem is it's self sabotage. It interferes with launching a great future. So the purpose of education, the word education comes from the Latin educare. Educare

means to raise up or to lift up or to bring forth and think about the words we use when we talk about raising, we raise our kids, we use that word raise, we bring up our kids, we use the words bring up. And I love the metaphor of launching. We're trying education. The purpose of Education is to launch our children to help them when they're 18, when they're 22, when they're done with high school and they're done with college. When they're done with education, supposedly they should have the skills and the knowledge should be able to launch a great future. Obviously that doesn't always happen. And when we resist too much, when we, when we can't work with the resistance, we self sabotage ourselves so that we can't launch effectively and then we can struggle for years or decades. Obviously we do not, like you said, you can see down, you know, 10 or 15 years. We do not want to see that happen. We want to see them launch a great future. So that was how resistance can hurt us.

Debbie: And before we go on, is that something that our kids care about? I mean, I think, again, if that's something that we as parents are concerned about them not being able to do that, does it backfire if we bring that up as something they should care about it?

Seth: I don't know that it backfires. But I think that a lot of times, um, adults are trying to logic kids into being motivated. I think it's very, very, very important to have these conversations and have them openly. But sometimes the way we have these conversations is , Why can't you just see that if you just did it this way, life will be easier? And they can comprehend that they do want a great future. They can talk in that conversation about it, but when it comes down to the moment when they have to pick up their laundry off the floor or when they have to start writing that paper or read that chapter in the book, reminding them of that conversation you just had isn't going to provide the quote motivation to do the task. Okay. So I think again, it's very important to have these heart to heart conversations, but to do them in a really supportive non-shaming way, um, where they can really feel heard and it's also important to hold boundaries and have firm boundaries and be clear on what those are, but it does not create like we said at the beginning of the podcast, you need patience. So this takes time. That is not going to, it's not a magic pill just to have, have the right lecture.

Debbie: Darn. Okay.

Seth: So then I guess that brings up another issue which is, how do we as adults stay detached in a healthy way? How do we let go in a healthy way while still being supportive? That's kind of the question. The answer to that question, um, no, I had a pretty bumpy launch. I'll give you as much insight as I can and I will say this at this point too, when I'm working with students, my job is essentially to work myself out of a job. I want to get the student as independent as possible; essentially that they don't need me to help them with execution anymore. And I think it might be interesting to note that I very, very rarely have those conversations with my students where I'm trying to motivate them in that way. I will ask them, what's important to you? What matters to you? What do you want to do when you're older? What are multiple things that you want to do? I very carefully approach those conversations and I want to know what's important to

them, but essentially when I'm helping them execute, I really just sort of want to get them the, as we said before, the skills to execute, the skills to overcome the resistance. This skillset, which is not a simple step by step recipe. There are a lot of aspects to this, but I want to get them to have the resources to do it on their own, to become more independent in overcoming the resistance and walking through that so I can hopefully help you with that, but I'm not like having these conversations with them. I'm trying to get them the skill and then I do a lot of reflection so and I, I want there to be buy in and ownership so when I do reflection with them and I say, alright, cool, we just finished this. What did we just do that got that done? What worked for you? How did we overcome that? And I want them to be able to articulate it back to me because if they don't, then they're not connecting the dots in terms of how they overcame that. So that metacognition, that introspection, that reflection, that self-awareness, that mindfulness around these issues has to be developed. So me as a coach or you as a parent or you as a teacher or a therapist. We're trying to help them not only just get the things done but have an awareness, a mindfulness around this stuff so that they can more consciously be making the choices that are going to get them to move through that resistance and accomplish their goals so that they can have a great life.

Debbie: Yeah, I mean I think that's one of the questions I ask and I guess you just keep asking it, you know, when Asher does do something or you know, works through something, it's always like, well how did you do that? Like, what did you actually do that enabled you to push past that? And as much as I can, just trying to get him to think about it and reflect on his own and try to think about the strategies that worked. And I guess that's something we just need to consistently do.

Seth: Yes, I agree. We need to, I'm going to re-articulate that because it's so important. We need to get them to take ownership in the conversation and to describe back to us, reflect back to us what worked and what didn't work. What, what helped you move through this resistance and execute in this situation, what was working and they don't have to articulate it perfectly. That's not necessarily important. What's important is developing this skill of reflecting. Again, they do not have to reflect perfectly. It's not that they get the answer right, that they notice it exactly. Although you can go as deep as you want that conversation, but what's important is to develop the skill of reflection, of introspection, of looking back because they don't do, often these kids are not the kids that say, Oh wow, that really worked well. I'll do that again next time, or oh, that didn't work. I better change something next time. They're not reflecting. If they struggle with execute function, they often are not reflecting like that in that kind of a way.

Debbie: That's great. I don't think I've ever heard it put that way, so that is just a super helpful thing to keep in mind. I mean just knowing that is something I'm going to be thinking a lot about, you know that that's the priority. That's great.

Seth: Yeah, and too sort of connect that dot more, uh, in that, that will be coming later in the episode, but I, I'll just skip it when we get there, but to connect that thought more since it's so relevant right now to me. All of these words are the same. The word reflection, introspection, self-awareness, metacognition,

consciousness, mindfulness, all of these things do the same thing, which is to help raise the awareness so you can make a choice that's going to help you get what you want to achieve your goals. Now I'm talking more about obviously long term goals rather than short term goals. Short term goals. I mean usually when we have these problems with resistance, it's because the short term goal is to do something fun, engaging, interesting. Not to do something that's not interesting or not meaningful or not fun. So the problem again comes when it's non-preferred. I'll say that about 50 times in this episode.

Debbie: Alright. So where are we going to go next then?

Seth: Alright, why it matters. And we sort of mentioned this education Educare, what are the future goals? What do you want for your children and what we want is we want them to be happy and I know that that's a huge blanket word and everybody defines it differently, but essentially it's very simple. What we want first children when they launch is we want them to have a happy future. We want them to be successful. Again, another word that's subject to interpretation, but we want them to feel successful in life. We want them to be healthy. We want them to meet their potential. We want them to have doors open to them, be able to go for their dreams and their goals have many possibilities and in order to do that neat thing, they need to be able to move through resistance and execute. So I just wanted to sort of put a container around what it means for them to have future goals and where we're going with education and put it in sort of the words that parents use all the time.

Debbie: Yeah, I like that. Definitely wired kids tend to have some pretty awesome creative ideas about, about what they want to create in the world and they have the potential to do it and I think that would be really a bummer if they weren't able to have the opportunities available to them because this, you know, not developing these skills and, and then suddenly their dreams aren't going to be as available to them.

Seth: Yep. That's the fear. That's why I do what I do because I want them to be happy and have a great life. And also because our communities are, our world literally needs them to develop their unique approaches to life and their unique talents. We need them.

Debbie: Yep. I couldn't agree more.

Seth: So now I wanted to talk about sort of these two journeys, going from point a to point b, what are we doing here in this podcast? What are, what are you listening for? And what you're listening for, uh, in, in the one sense is you want to help your child get from a point where they're not doing the things that need to get done to being able to do that. Right? So in that sense, that's more immediate this, this semester, this year, this month, you want to help get further down the road of helping them learn to execute, learn to get through the resistance and be able to execute.

Seth: The next a to b though is you want them to be able to go from where they are today, right now, right here in this moment to be able to launch. And that's more of the big picture, the zoom out. So I just wanted to sort of define those two journeys because of what we said earlier with the patience that's required for this, getting them to be able to execute in such a way where you don't have that fear or that terror anymore and you're like, ah, okay. I think my kid's going to be okay. Like that's where we want to get to in order to get to that point. It's not going to happen this month and it's not going to happen this semester. No magic bullet. You have to keep persisting. Keep going. Sometimes you'll see huge breakthroughs a lot of times after summer break and you'll notice that your child is like a new kid and parents are like, I don't know what happened, but when they went from sixth to seventh grade, everything you know, or 10th, 11th or sometimes there's like a huge shift.

Sometimes an event happens, sometimes a conversation happens and you have these giant steps, but that is not the norm. You're not looking for that. You are looking for the marathon, you are looking for persistence. You are looking for consistently working on this stuff millimeter by millimeter, bit by bit. All right? So there's those two journeys and you gotta be patient with this and just do not give up. What you do matters. Parents, adults, teachers, whoever. What you say, what you do matters in this, even if it doesn't look like anything has changed, the conversations you have, the efforts you're putting in, they count. Don't discount that. Know that. Keep going, keep going, keep going because sometimes it clicks. As you well know, Debbie, and I'm sure you've heard this from so many of the people you've interviewed, but sometimes it clicks when you least expect it and it's because you've had 7,000 conversations or efforts to help and then one day something happens. So don't stop.

Debbie: Okay, good reminder that everyone needs to hear that.

Seth: And then next I sorta wanted to talk about more about unpacking what this resistance looks like and, and when we have resistance that we have these voices in our head, these limiting beliefs, these inner critics, these mindsets that help us resist executing, that keep us stuck and some of these mindsets that parents will hear a lot or that parents and adults even we say in our own head a lot, uh, with the things that we resist. Um, but what you'll hear from your child a lot is, I don't want to. This is stupid. It's too hard. This is no fun. Why do I have to do this? Why are you making me do this? You always, whatever. He never let me do this. I hate this. The teacher hates me. All my teachers hate me. I'll do it later, I promise. I swear to remember it. I don't need to write it down. I don't need to use a planner. I promise. Just leave me alone. Get off my back. That's not good enough. I don't know where to start. It's not perfect enough, so I'm not even going to get moving. It's not perfect enough, so I'm not going to continue. I'm not going to finish. Why should I even try? So these are some of the voices.

Debbie: Everything in my world right now is just really boring and uninteresting.

- Seth: Ooh, I don't think I said that boring. I'm writing that one down. So you hear a lot of that, of this is boring and this is uninteresting in terms of that, that's how the resistance, the voice of the resistance.
- Debbie: Yeah. It's just, it's not seeing. Seeing the point. It seems mundane. And the other one that I hear a lot is just hard. It's, I don't know where to start. I don't know what to say. I didn't know what to write, you know, it's just, it's that task initiation that everything feels impossible.
- Seth: Yeah, and then when parents or teachers are dealing with this and they're saying, okay, this kid needs to get this stuff done, or they need to get started or they need to execute, they need to move through this resistance. Well then what I'm going to move onto now is how do we try to quote motivate them and oftentimes what adults are doing to try to motivate them is not working or it does not work in the long run, so things that we do as adults to motivate them often would be things like punish them, reward them, try to use logic or reason to reason with them and lecture them, yell at them, give them the silent treatment to punish them. We'll do contracts with them, written contracts, contracts and school behavior contracts, agreements with them, or we'll tell them, just be disciplined. Just be more motivated. Just try harder, just work harder. Just get started. So our way of trying to motivate them often is not working yet. We continue to do these things as adults over and over and over, even though we see that it's not working and then what we're doing is we're putting it on them. They must just not be trying hard enough or they're just being willful.
- Debbie: Well, I think, and these many of these are things we have tried, you know, the contracts, the rewards, the consequences, you know, all those things. I think when we feel like we don't have those, then we've got nothing left in our toolbox. You know, like we don't know what else, what else to do and it was a period. You can just feel super powerless like I've got nothing. Like there's nothing I can do so I know that you're going to tell us what we can do. So I'm excited about that. Yeah.
- Seth: I will. And I'm also gonna say that it's not that those things never work. Sometimes those things have punishments or rewards or or yelling even a depends on who you are and how you say it, but the point is is that sometimes those things work or work to an extent or give a structure or framework to the child to move them through a hump, but they just don't tend to be reliable. Methods have changed and I think part of the reason, because I've thought about this a lot. I think part of the reason that adults use these things is because we want to see results fast and it's very hard to see the growth in millimeters or fractions of millimeters. But that's generally where it happens.
- Debbie: So I'm just going to interject again because I mean you keep saying this and I just, I guess maybe I want to emphasize it for myself and for listeners and you know, I've had Zach Morris on the podcast who I think you should meet at some point, but we talked about worldview transformation and just like, again, looking at the big picture and this is a process and it takes a long time and I think that is the biggest challenge. Just not knowing if what we're doing is working and it could be

years off and we just kind of lose patients are, you know, it's hard to continually move forward and, and, and trust that they're going to get there. To me that feels like one of the biggest challenges for parents is just...I don't mean to jump ahead, but how do we figure out how to stay in that place of, of trust through this process and not let our own agenda continually kind of muck with it. Yeah.

Seth: How to know when to let your own agenda get in there because it's also, it's important sometimes, but you have to do it in a way where it's able to be received. Yeah. It's. It's such a challenge. I will say this, I, I do know beyond a shadow of a doubt that as I said earlier, your efforts matter, even if you don't see it, it's kind of like when when your child is four years years old and you stand them up by the doorway and you use a crayon to mark how tall they are and you know a month later they don't look any different to you, but if you stand them up next to the wall and mark how tall they are, they've grown and you're looking at your child and you're like, oh, I didn't notice that they've grown so much because I see them every day. It matters. It matters. What I tell the people I work with is that growth in millimeters is everything that matters. Baby steps. How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. It is the baby steps that matter. These tiny things that these efforts that adults are doing do not stop even if you don't know if you're doing the right thing, as long as you aren't trying to do the right thing, have faith that things are going to be okay. Okay?

Debbie: Thank you for that.

Seth: You're welcome. Alright, so I'm going to talk more about what we resist. I started it earlier by saying mostly schoolwork and chores, but I'm going to go a little bit deeper with that. So here's a list of a bunch of stuff that we resist. Doing our homework, telling the truth, being forthcoming. These kids resist being forthcoming about things using their planners, doing, taking time to get their stuff organized, advocating for themselves, asking for help from their teachers, from their parents, from the school counselors, from administrators, receiving help from any of these people getting started, follow through, doing chores, responsibilities, studying, writing papers, doing projects, doing job applications, college applications, paperwork, et cetera. Is that a good enough level and a lot of times there are complex non-preferred multi step tasks that they really get stuck on and this would be like getting a driver's license where they want the outcome. It is a preferred outcome. They actually really, it's important to them, but for them to do all the little things to get it all the paperwork, finding all the numbers and details for the paperwork and all of the little pieces of the puzzle that can prevent them from getting that driver's license or they want a job but doing 10 different job applications at different places, going to the places and spending the time on the applications, writing everything out to executing on that stuff.

Those are non-preferred but very complex tasks where they can get stuck. So anyhow, I just wanted to bring that up that they can get stuck at any point on the thing and that can mess up the whole goal for them. And so whereas with many people having that big goal in mind is enough to keep them moving forward. But for many of these kids, that's not enough. It does the opposite. For some people

it's like, okay, now I got this part of the app done, I got this part done, now I have to check this off my list, make this phone call. And they feel like they're moving towards the goal. And they have that mindset. Yeah. These kids are like, oh, this is, this is horrible. Let's go play video games. Let's go ride bikes. I did want to mention at least four times, and you may have others, Debbie, but when one resistance actually does make sense. So there are times when our child is resistant and we need to sort of step back and say, Whoa, maybe this actually makes sense. One is self care, uh, when a child goes to school for seven hours and then comes home and as four hours of homework, they have no time for other things in life. Um, and they really, part of the resistance is because they need downtime or they need self care time or they need playtime or laughter or family time or friend time or social time or something. They really genuinely need that, so that's a time when it makes sense when we can say, Whoa, we need to advocate here and really help explain to the teacher, look, this is taking so long. This is actually not okay in our family. I understand that our child needs to redo these skills by doing homework or practice these skills or work on this thing, but this, the volume is not sustainable literally. And that often comes into play, especially when there are processing issues, especially when something that takes a lot of kids 15 minutes takes your child two hours.

But anyhow, that was self-care. Resistance makes sense when, when the thing, when you're resisting doing something because you really do need to take care of yourself. And oftentimes in our culture where like push, push, push, be driven, be driven, accomplish, accomplish, accomplish and not self care. And then we ended up in, uh, in our thirties going, what the heck is going on with my life? Where am I? Why am I so stressed out? So next when resistance makes sense is when something really is. the word you used before boring, or when there's a lack of meaning and work or when there's busy work that just doesn't feel meaningful, so it makes sense. And how can we as adults, uh, and particularly teachers, how can teachers design curriculum that's more engaging and meaningful rather than just doing whatever the district is passing down to your whatever. You're using the same worksheets year after year. You're really asking ourselves as teachers, is this meaningful and how can I make this meaningful and not busy work for the student?

Another time when resistance makes sense is when a teacher dislikes a student. And um, I, I hear this all the time and this is definitely exaggerated. I had a student last year who said, all my teachers hate me. I don't think all your teachers hate you. And I got to know his teachers throughout the year. And there was really one that I felt really did not like this kid. Now, whether that was, we could go all psycho babble and say, well, that may be that kid was the reflection of this person or Yada, Yada. That doesn't matter. The fact is that there are teachers that, um, shame kids and that kids come out of that class feeling bad about themselves. I see it year after year and this is a real thing. I like to think that all teachers are awesome. They're not so, and I, I love teachers and I'm, I'm, hesitant to even say this on the podcast because I've had teachers who feel like I don't like teachers or something that is far from the truth. We need them. I love them. Teachers I think are one of the most important jobs in our society, but there are teachers that shame kids and when resistance makes sense, when a kid

really feels that shame or that condescension, that tiny little dig sometimes that teachers will make to try to get them to do things. It's a and they are resistant. It makes sense. That's one of the four times when it makes sense. Why would I want to work for somebody who I don't feel valued by? Now, on the other hand, I've had kids who hate the material but they feel valued by the teacher. And they'll work for the teacher even in a content area they were not formerly interested in.

Debbie: Yeah. Respect is huge. And so many of these kids are so sensitive and perceptive as well. And so they, if the student is disrespecting them or shaming them. They're going to notice it.

Seth: And that sensitivity, like you said, a lot. A lot of our differently wired kids are even more sensitive. Yeah, exactly. They feel very, very deeply. I hear it when I'm working with my clients. You hear it, parents hear it, so I'm now. Not that that's always the case, obviously, because sometimes it's exaggerated or the teachers pushing them into a really good way like, oh, my teacher hates me. No, they're setting a great boundary that you need. So sometimes that's happening now. The fourth time when I think resistance makes sense is when something really is off and you've got to listen to your gut and I don't...that's sort of a blanket statement, but sometimes something's off in the child's life or in a relationship with somebody in their life. Just something's off and listen to your gut. And, and, and those are four times when it does make sense, but again, it's not just that they're being willful.

Debbie: Well, I think what I'm hearing with everything that you've just explained in these four different examples is just the importance of asking our kids and really listening to what they have to say. I think we often make assumptions. I know I do. I'm sure I'm not alone out there, you know, making an assumption that this or that resistance is because of a reason that I have in my mind. And sometimes when I ask, I find out there's actually a real valid reason why he's having that reaction. So it's a reminder. I think all of these is to, to just know that there's a reason. Maybe the reason isn't valid, but maybe it is.

Seth: Yep. And you have to, you have to look at and see that and what you said about the communication. I'll get to that in a moment to um, and now I want to start talking about how to deal with it. And this is when it doesn't make sense. So what I just said was for reasons when it might make sense for times when it might make sense, but when it doesn't make sense, in other words, when it's actually not in your best interest to resist and you actually should do the thing for your own wellbeing, your own launch, you should execute on the thing because it's for your good legitimately. What are you gonna do about that? So let's do it. I have a lot here. But one of the things is the more ownership and buy in your child has, the less resistant they're going to be. Again, this is not a quick fix. I'm gonna say this one last time there's no magic bullet. It's not like you can find the ownership and buy-in recipe and then they're going to not be resistant anymore. That is not how it works, but the more you as parents and teachers can help get them to take ownership in the activity, the thing that they're resisting, the more buy-in they have, the more they're a part of it, the more they've made choices around that

thing, the better off you'll be. Quick example that just popped in my head. Let's say that you have 17 chores that need to be done and let's say that your child hates doing floors, but they'll actually, they're okay with unloading the dishwasher. Well then just let them do the one that they're going to do like say, which one would you like to do?

Seth: You can do what's called a false choice where you say, would you rather do floors or would you rather put the dishes away? That's a false choice because they could choose to do none of it, but you're not giving them that choice, but they say, I would rather unload the dishwasher, that's buy-in. They've got some ownership in it. They've had some choice in it. Does that mean that they're going to do it? No, I'm telling you that it will help make them less resistant slightly. So again, no magic bullets here, but ownership and buy-in is really important, really helpful and a lot of times we try to make the decision for them and tell them what they need to do. A lot of times when it comes to schoolwork, we're saying this is what you need to do and how you need to do it, and there's no ownership and, and that it loses meaning. So the more ownership and buy-in you can create, the more meaningful it will be and hopefully less resistant. What do you think of that?

Debbie: I absolutely agree. And I think it's just a great policy in general for life, you know, um, for helping these kids is just, I say this to Ash all the time, you know, it's not about everything, but you know, if he asks me something, can I do this? I'm like, you know what you can, why don't you make the decision that you think is right for you, you know, like giving him that feels so good to kids when we're able to just give them permission to be autonomous in a decision or to own something or to have a choice that they can feel in control.

Seth: Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. Number two is not believing everything you think. So knowing that your child does in their own head, they have the inner critic, they have a story going on, they have a narrative. It's probably exaggerated. It's probably not true. They think it's so horrible to have to do this thing. It feels so overwhelming, feels bigger than it really is. The brain is responding to stress in a very real way. Even though the story has exaggerated that stress or how bad that thing will be. So they don't have the skills yet to know, hey, this is just a thought it's going to pass by. I don't have to listen to this thought. So that's a skill we want to help them develop is not to believe everything they think.

Debbie: Yeah, that's a great one. I mean, Ash and I talk about this almost daily and I know he talked with you about it on the podcast and the chairman of the board or something he was talking about it and that's an ongoing conversation and he knows that intellectually and it's something I just have to keep reminding him when I hear him giving a lot of credence to that inner critic. Just reminding, you know, I don't think your inner critic is being very friendly, in fact, I think he's lying his butt off to you right now. You know?

Seth: Yep. Um, the next thing, number three is understand that, again, this isn't just a matter of will your child is actually having an emotional experience there. Something going on somatically in their body. Their nervous system is responding to what they're perceiving as a threat. It feels constricting. Um, and

what we can do about that and understanding that they're having these bodily experiences is helping them notice what's going on in the body, helping them learn about the brain and the amygdala and how that their nervous system is responding to a perceived threat. Just helping them understand this, that that's, that's what's going on. Your brain thinks there's a threat. There is not, there's no bear. You know, it seems like this test that's coming up is, is a big giant bear that's going to attack you and, and to help them notice in their body where what we do is we tend to grip in, in different places in our body. I do it in my shoulders. I don't know about you, Debbie. Do you respond to stress in that way?

Debbie: Yeah. I'm probably clenching fists and tightening up all over. Yeah.

Seth: We can do it in our jaw, our fists or neck or back, and we're not really good at being in touch with how our emotional experiences are manifested in the body and slowing down to become more mindful of this and learned about this is incredibly powerful, so it's again, it's not just will. They're having an experience. They're not just being resistant. They're feeling something. So helping them get into that and be like, wow, what's your inner critic saying? How's that manifesting in your body? While I noticed I noticed your arms are crossed right now, or whatever it is. Helping learn about that is really powerful and the next one, number four is very related to that and that's mindfulness and again, mindfulness, being conscious, self aware, awake metacognition, introspection, reflection, knowing who you are and how you operate and learning about that. A lot of people don't ever even think about helping your child to stop and think about why they're making the decisions they are, what's going on underneath the surface. They're not just being resistant. Something's going on. How can we raise some awareness and mindfulness around that so that you can make a choice that's going to get you the goals you want in life, even though in the short term you don't feel like it.

Debbie: I'm just gonna throw this out there and I hope this makes sense, but just as you were talking about that, one of the things that we use in talking about, you know, the mindfulness and self reflection is even just using humor, you know, sometimes just pointing out like, oh my gosh, kind of going over the top and, and personifying the inner critic and a silly way can be a really nice way to become more aware of these things and also lighten the mood. Is that something you approve of?

Seth: I'm so glad you brought that up. I didn't even think of that in this list and that's so good. Um, I, I heard one is playful, play, lightened it up. So important. This stuff does not have to be that heavy. I'm really glad you said that. You can just start joking around and be like, all right, let's, let's get this going. You know your kid. What's gonna? Make them laugh. Lightened it up. Yeah. And then another word you said is personify. And this whole idea of resistance. I initially heard about it through Seth Godin, who was referencing Steven Pressfield, and then I read about it and to have Steven Pressfield's books and he talks about the resistance in this personified way and to personify any of these things, the other people in the room, the other voices in your head, the inner critic, to personify these things really helps to take away power from the resistance and to empower oneself. So

awesome. Thank you for bringing those up. The next, and this is related to mindfulness, but be the watcher so that person at the head of the table is, Asher was saying, there's this part of us where we're watching where we can notice what we're doing. We can watch and say, Oh wow, that was an interesting thought. What's that about? Oh, Seth, why are you frustrated at this person driving slow in front of you? You're the one who left late, so being able to notice one cell from sort of an outside perspective, being the notice or the observer of the mindful part of you listening to your own thoughts, watching how you're behaving, being the watcher, I'm being more mindful helps you to respond versus react. So in other words, reaction. If you think of reaction, it's, it's, it's robotic, it's instantaneous. It's not mindful, it's just, boom, this happened and I did this. I didn't even think about it. Responding implies a pause that we've noticed, something we've watched, we've made a choice, so we want to get a bigger pause so that we can respond to life rather than just go through reacting to everything.

Debbie: I have a little to add to that one. Something that I've learned to do to be the noticer and I'm sharing with Asher is to imagine that you're sitting in a movie theater and the words of your inner critic kind of going across the screen so you're just watching them so it automatically separates you and reminds you that you are not your thoughts that there this separate thing that exists outside of you and creating that distance helps you to be more thoughtful. I'm responsive and not reactive.

Seth: I love it. Totally goes with don't believe everything you think and it's also sort of not personifying it, but similarly to what the personifying it does is it puts it outside of yourself and like having it on that movie screen. It's like, this isn't me just thoughts on the screen. I don't, I don't have to react. I can respond. I love it. Thank you. You're so good. I love your podcast and listening to you. Thank you. You're welcome. I hope you leave that in. Everybody know this. She's amazing. Um, reframe number six, and this, this has to do with thoughts too, but we have a frame or a perspective or an attitude about something or a child does. When we are resistant with something, we have a frame. And to reframe it means to change the way we look at it, change the way we think about it.

So what we tend to do a lot of times with resistance as we think, what if, what if I do this paper and then I don't have time to play? What if I do this and I'm bored? What if I do this? And it's stupid? What if I do this and I fail? What if I do this and I can't even get done to don't even turn it and they get to zero. So we have all these what ifs, and you can challenge yourself to do a thought experiment to do the opposite. What if, what if I do this and I get a good enough grade? What if I do this and it's done and I feel better in? So what's the opposite of that? What if it is a really great reframe tactic? Um, what if it turns out awesome, what if I get what I want? And it turns out good anyhow and a or what if I don't get what I want and it's fine. So, reframing. Yeah, where we get to choose our attitude again, don't believe everything you think you can frame it differently.

Debbie: Well, I am trying to help Asher reframe his thoughts but not in this way. I really like this often. Um, I'm trying to come up with alternative thoughts but that

aren't the spin on the what if. And this feels a lot easier actually because I'm trying to come up and help them come up with the thought that his whole thought that feels true, but that's, you know, in a positive light. But this is just opening up that possibility, right? Like what if this actually does work? What if you are successful this time? What if you write the paper and it turns out. So I really like it because it's just enough to loosen that rigidity.

Seth: Yeah. And like we were talking before the podcast started, Debbie and I were talking a little bit about practice, how anger is practice for frustration, complaining, whining. These things are practice and practicing a different frame. The, the, the what if is such a nice container for an easy way to access any situation where you want to reframe it. So yeah, it's, it's a practice to, to try these opposite what ifs. Yeah. I love that. Very accessible. And so this is a great tool. Yeah. So there's um, and this is very related to this. Number seven, this is another sort of reframe, but it is do your best and do a little bit better. I'm a lot of times our kids just do the bare minimum. So this is how to get a millimeter further. And one of the things that I'm trying to do with my clients is let's say that I can get them to do the bare minimum if I can get them to do a millimeter more.

Again, I don't really care necessarily about the assignment, believe it or not, I care about the long game and if I can get them in the habit of having a little more grit and practicing that, doing a tiny bit more, oh you did 17 out of 30 questions. Awesome. Can you do 18? Can you do one more and I'll leave you alone with this promise. Can you do one? And sometimes they'll do three or five more, but I want to expand that threshold with them where they can get more grit, more perseverance because they need that in life for no matter what career they go into, they have to have the ability to push through that resistance and that just getting the bare minimum done.

Debbie: I love that. I do that sometimes by challenging, you know, like I bet you can't do one more, two minutes time or you know, because he's always up for a challenge and suddenly it's a whole different ball game.

SSeth: Yeah. And you've broken through that little barrier through that resistance. And I, I tell them sometimes, yeah, I'm just trying to trick you and I want them to know that because I want them to know too so that they can trick themselves too. So I want to reflect on stuff like that. And I do want to say to parents that a lot of times when I'm doing stuff like this, do your best and do a little bit better. And let's say we only get 18 out of 30, done. I'm not looking for them to be perfect. Often we are pushing them to finish, to complete. And I think, you know, teachers often will be like, this is incomplete. You need to finish and they're so beaten down by this stuff. They've just worked longer than everybody else in class on it and now they have to do corrections and Yada Yada.

And there's a lot of this sort of perfectionistic push. But I'm, I'm, again, I'm looking more at the long game. I want them to build these skills. I want them to have a life and be able to play and be with their families at night. So there's also a time when you have to leave well enough alone. You have to have that attitude. You know what? I'm proud of you. You did 18, you were going to do 17, you were

going to do none, and I really want them to feel that, hey you, you did work hard. You did do a good job. I don't care that you didn't do all 30.

Debbie: Good reminder. Yeah. Now that might be a different story when you're dealing with the teacher and they're like, no, this isn't complete, and they return it and stuff like that. But you can do.

Seth: That's a different issue. I'm not going to get into that. Number eight, you need to worry about sleep, nutrition, exercise, breathing. Your, your human body. Are you taking care of yourself? You're going to be more resistant. Your child's going to be more resistant. When they are dysregulated, they're gonna. Be More dysregulated when they're not getting these base needs in a really balanced way. Is this easy? No, no, but a lot of the resistance is because they're already dysregulated because those basic things are out of whack and getting those balanced is a huge challenge for most families, I'd say.

Debbie: Yeah, and it's something, you know, I heard Asher talking to you about this even when, when you were interviewing him, I was sitting in the other room and I could hear him talking about that spiral, you know, and he, he knows it, he knows he has a better day when he exercises, he knows when he gets a good night's sleep and those are priorities to him, but, but it is, it's a real challenge to get our kids on board with prioritizing these things if it's not something that you're naturally interested in. Yeah.

Seth: Now another, uh, I'm going to go onto nine. This is why we are resistant to things. Sometimes there are hidden things that might be causing more resistance directly or indirectly. Again, these are things that might be hidden, things you might not see on the surface. So there might be past traumas that really are affecting them or affecting their ability to start. They really might have fears that they're not even able to partake, typically late from past traumas were maybe in first grade and a teacher yelled at them, uh, with a test and they're in seventh grade and, and you know, so sometimes it's connecting dots with that can be helpful. They might have sensory issues. That's a hidden thing. You might not even know that their sensory systems are so overwhelmed, they're not filtering out well and they're taking it more than other kids in the class.

The sounds are bugging them. The Lights, the buzzing fluorescent lights, uh, uh, smells, things that other kids might not even notice might be affecting them. And allergies, food sensitivities. So there are other possible hidden things. Those are just a few examples. So you want to keep an eye out for those things. When you're dealing with resistance, could there be something going on beneath the surface and beneath that surface? So you want to look out for that stuff in number 10, like you'd mentioned before, is sometimes just ask them and listen, why are you resistant and have a conversation. That's my, that's just my approach constantly. But I know you know a lot of kids, I hear this from a lot of listeners is their kids just aren't as interested or as open or communicative with them and so they have a hard time getting any sort of meaningful feedback back from their kids.

Debbie: Do you have any thoughts about that or is it just salute?

Seth: My favorite thought about that is on wait time and I actually wish that I did more of this with Ash or I wish we could have talked for like four hours, but wait time. And that is when, when you ask a student something, you have to wait and then they're going to respond. Often they're going to react. Often they're going to say the first robotic thing that comes into their mind. Now what we do often as adults is we respond to that with our reaction, our robotic mindless reaction to that. Well, we've just missed a great opportunity. So what you want to do is use wait time. You ask the question that you're interested in finding out about, and then they respond and then you pause. You wait and you just create this awkward silence and you look at them. You are not looking at your phone. You're not on your computer. You're attending to them and you're really listening and you create this gap where they can feel emotionally safe to continue speaking and then after they're done speaking again, you want to continue that gap. Now of course there might be a time when they say, I'm done, and then you can be like, okay, they're done, but this wait time. This skill that adults need to learn has been one of the most important things in my entire career. When I'm working with a child and they're struggling with anything. I do a lot of asking them questions, diving deep, trying to figure out what's at the bottom of what's going on. Because every kid's different and now there's a lot of patterns in the kids I work with, but every. The specifics with every kid is different and when I can create an emotionally safe space where I'm holding space for them and they know that they are emotionally safe to share and not be judged and not be shamed by me and that I will really listen to them and I will really hear them and will really see them and I will really understand them and take the time to do that. They will then tell you the things that you need to know in order to help them, so just ask and listen and wait and learn to cultivate the skill of holding space in a more powerful way with your child.

Debbie: Thank you for that reminder. Something that I know intellectually and sometimes I do it and every time I do it it works. There's always more, but I just really appreciate you reminding us to do that.

Seth: It's so important and I do elementary through graduate school. Even with graduate kids, I do that awkward silence in it. They will tell me something. I'm like, oh great, now we can problem solve. Now we've got some really good information to work with and I'll tell you a little story. I don't want to get too diverted, but I was teaching fifth grade at one point and I had this student and she started crying in class one day. I'm like, what in the world is going on? So I pulled her aside, I said, what, what's going on? And she doesn't say a word and I said something to the effect of I'm here to listen, tell me what's going on, let me know how I can help you. And I waited for almost a minute before she started talking and then she was able to start saying stuff that minute felt so long.

And I'm not saying five or 10 seconds, I'm saying it was like a minute. Uh, I've had a few students where it's taken like 30 seconds. This was the longest. The minute was probably the longest ever. But some of your kids, you're going to really have to wait and be patient. You can always keep the door open and you can say, look,

I've been waiting. You're not saying anything, but I want to understand you and I'm going to come back to you in a few minutes and see if you want to share anything so you can leave that door open. They might need a few minutes just to pull their thoughts together. You can revisit it the next day and say, Hey, we were talking yesterday. Do you want to share on that? I'm here to understand you. So anyhow, I, I, I'm sorry to take so much time on this debbie, but it is, it is so powerful that I think it's worth this time.

Debbie: Yeah, I agree. And I think it's for parents, it's just a matter of not just a matter of, but it is a matter of learning to be comfortable in that silence. I think it's something we just have to deal with our own issues or whatever comes up in that space, you know, and quiet our own mind and just kind of hold the space open for our kid.

Seth: Yeah, that's a great point too. It feels very long. So, um, um, I'll move as quickly as I can. Thank you audience for listening. By the way, I hope this is helpful. Number 11 is the one percent rule which I mentioned before, uh, do one percent more help your child when they're resistant to just do a percent. Don't worry about finishing. That is too stressful for them. Parents just can you do one percent more? Can you do one more problem? What is in you hinted at at the beginning of the podcast, what is a chunked down tiny little baby step chunk that you can do to move forward? What is the smallest possible thing that we can do one percent forward? That's all we're working towards because then you can gain the momentum if they, if they think, oh my gosh, I have to finish this five page paper, you're not going to get anywhere, so you actually want to back up in order to move forward.

Number 12, don't look for motivation. I do not really ever talk about the word motivation with my kids. I don't tell them to be more motivated or how do you get more motivated? I don't do that. It's a non preferred activity. They're not motivated to do it, at least this is my frame on it. I'd love to hear what you think about it, but it's a non preferred activity I'm not concerned with are they motivated or not, so I don't go there with them and I've been doing this a long time and I'm able to help them take that millimeter steps so that they can take more steps. I'm not trying to motivate them. I'm trying to make it feel not overwhelming. I'm trying. When they are stressed out and they're overwhelmed and they can't act and they can't and they're resistant and they can't execute, it's because it's abstract to them.

What they have to do is somewhat abstract and it feels too big. It's overwhelming. In order to get it to feel less abstract, you need to make it feel more concrete, smaller, concrete, digestible, so how do we. How can we do a tiny concrete step so I'm not trying to teach them to not procrastinate or not be unmotivated. I want to have a real positive frame. What can we do to execute? I'm going to say that again. I want to frame it positively. How do we take a step? What can we do to execute any way, even though you don't feel like I know you don't feel like it. I wouldn't feel like it if I were you, but it's in your own best interest for us to get this done or done well enough. How do we take a micro step anyway? I'm trying to teach the skill of taking a step, not trying to make them

accomplish the thing necessarily and not trying to get them motivated. I'm trying to get them the skill of how to do it anyway.

Debbie: Yeah, I mean when you were talking about that, I was thinking just about laundry. For example, one of the tasks I'm doing today is not something I'm motivated to do because I want those clean clothes. I don't like doing it but it has to be done and so I have my ways of just doing it and making it okay to get it done and I think that is such a good reminder because a lot of times we as parents think, well they should want to do this. You know, so and so his kids are really motivated and you know, and so my kids should want to do these things too and I think that's just a great reminder that we're not trying to get them to want to do it. We're trying to help them know how to do something they don't want to do and the nuance around that.

Seth: When kids are motivated to do it, it can seem like they're motivated by what we would lecture them. In other words, it would seem like, oh, the other family there kids are motivated. They understand that this is in their own best interests for their future. No, they're not necessarily thinking that because these kids at this age anyway haven't really developed future thinking regardless of how well they do with execution, they're not great at future thinking yet. Most of them are so many times the motivation is that necessarily because of their future, but it's because of the rewards that they get with their self esteem or with feeling like they've accomplished it. It's, it's actually more immediate and short term. I don't know if that makes sense, but we have to compare apples to apples when we're thinking about comparing our kids to other kids.

Well, what is actually motivating that other kid? Do we really know? I'm number 13. How do you chunk it down? Well, there are two ways. One is with a timer. Timers are the most simple thing in the world, Debbie, but it is so important. I use timers with these kids all the time. They, again, abstract versus concrete. It feels abstract. Oh my gosh. I have to do all this. Reading will. Hey, can we set a timer for two minutes and read? Can we set a timer for five minutes and work on the math? Can we set the timer for one minute and work on your backpack and reorganize it and the timer again? It is a trick and I tell my students this, I'm not just tricking them. I tell them that, okay, I just tricked you. I want you to trick yourself. What we did is we tricked you into doing this for one minute, but we actually worked on it for 19 minutes.

So timers are so powerful because they're concrete. They are auditory, this is the timer. They are kinesthetic, they are visual because you can see the time on them. So simple, but they're really powerful. So that makes it concrete to help. Start at number 14 is where do you start again? They're overwhelmed because it's abstract. They don't know where to start. They don't have the skill of planning. So where do you start? Well, you have to make a plan. These kids obviously are going to tell you, I don't want to plan. I don't need a plan that I don't feel like planning. So you as the adult, as the teacher, as the parent have to help, baby step them into even learning how to make a tiny plan and for whatever they have to accomplish. Sometimes it can just be talking. Now, let's say you have a, uh, an assignment to do and the plan is just to talk it out.

- Seth: Where are you going to start on the assignment? Well, I'll put my name on it. Great. Then what are you going to do? Well, I'm going to skip around. Okay, fine. Where are you going to skip around to first? Well, I think I'll look at it. You know, it doesn't matter how, again, you're building the skill of planning. It doesn't have to be perfect but you're starting to build and refine that skill of planning.
- Debbie: So again, in order to get concrete and less abstract and I'm able to execute you want to use timers implants that's 13 and 14 and I just for listeners, I did an episode with Asher in the first six months so his voice will sound very different because it was over two years ago, but we did an episode and goal planning and how we approach it and I think I even have some downloads of the goal planning worksheets that we use, so that might be something listeners are interested in checking out and I'll leave the episode number in this show notes for this.
- Seth: Cool. And I have a daily plan on my site that we can link to as well and an article or video on that. Awesome. Next is, and this is huge as well, but number 15 is routines and habits. When we can help build routines and habits, then even if it is a non preferred activity, we're not making a decision. We don't have that analysis paralysis opportunity, we don't think about it. So there's, we can't complain and procrastinate as much when it's a routine or habit. So there are things that your children do that they may not be preferred, but it's a habit. Like if they do brush their teeth and it's a habit and they don't think about it or get dressed for school in the morning, it's now habit. So the more you can make nonpreferred things a route, the more you can put routine around it, the easier it's going to be to move through resistance. Yeah.
- Debbie: That has been something that's worked well in our household. And what we actually do is, you know, we, we know that it takes 30 days to really set a new habit. And so I've created a simple check sheet for every day so we can visually make sure that we've done it every day. It doesn't always work that that new habit is established, but often it does.
- Seth: Yeah, and it might take twice as long for these kids to develop it. And then that goes also back to what we were talking about earlier with ownership and buying in. The more you can get ownership and buying and developing the routine and the habit, the more you're going to more bang for the buck you're going to get out of it. Now, number 16 is you want your child to develop certain things too that are real positive. You want them to develop their passions and their talents and the gifts that things they're interested in and the more that you can weave in their passions or their interests or their talents or the gifts and things like that, the more you can weave them in to the non preferred activity, the less resistance you're going to have. And teachers can really do this by having more flexibility and assignments, learning about content process and product. I'm not going to go into that here, but teachers researching content, process and product and how can you give a lot of flexibility in the content and the process and the product. The more you can do that, the last worksheet it is, the less busy work it is, the more choice, the more buy in, the more ownership you can give kids in this, the less resistance you're going to have.

Debbie: Makes total sense. Especially with the many dates. Kids just have such deep areas of interest and it's amazing what they can do when they're working in that space.

Seth: Yeah, and that's what they're going to build a career on. Anyhow. True. Uh, the next one is I'm posting. So you were mentioning your visual checklist, posting things or making things visual that are inspirational, that are reminders, reminders of quotes that your child likes or things that motivate them. I know I just said a whole thing on motivation that might sound contradictory, but things that are inspirational that remind them of what's important to them. Those are great. We use those as adults so that helps a little bit with the resistance. Next thing 18 is the sacred study space, so my site, I talk about sacred study space and we have to really intentionally designing and create a space for them to focus, to remove distractions into, to increase focus and a lot of times it's just like let's sit at the kitchen table, let's sit on the couch and you can do homework in different places, but to have a sacred space where you know that you can ever routine to sit there, get prepped and to have that routine around a space helps remove the resistance.

Debbie: So does this space, you know, they say you should only use your bed for sleeping. Like you shouldn't read in bed, you know, you shouldn't do anything else. It's just for sleeping. So you associate sleep with that. When you talk about this, you know, I think about Asher and I know a lot of these kids have projects or doing things online that aren't game related but are still not necessarily their schoolwork. Does this sacred space just have to be about schoolwork? Is it confusing it if you, if they are working on other potential computer projects and that same space...

Seth: So there's probably all kinds of research that'll give you all kinds of different different thoughts on this stuff. My frame will be this. I would zoom out and say, regardless of how you design it, if they are able to execute on the stuff that they are resisting, then you're doing fine. So if you're able to, if they're able to do what needs to be done when it needs to be done reasonably well, let it go. On the other hand, what I say that it's I think the. I think that doing homework in bed is the worst place in the world to do your homework and now am I going to tell a student never do that? No, but am I going to dissuade them and try to say, you know what? Let's get some more routine about this and let's get you in a place where you can really focus because the sooner they're done with their work, the sooner they're free.

Debbie: So now in the sacred study space, can they do other things like if they're into robotics or something like that?

Seth: In an ideal situation in an ideal situation that that would just be for studying and they would have a separate area but we don't all have that and you know, sometimes you have to find a little nook in the house that is you might not have a lot of space to work with and you just have to figure out what works. But again, the ownership in the buying and getting them to be a part of designing the space, really thinking about intentionally maintaining it, getting it clean. Like it

shouldn't be cluttered with laundry and robotics stuff and video games and toys and stuff like that. It should be a place where they can come home, opened their planner up, see what they need to do that night and then when they're ready to do their homework where they can sit down, focus without distractions and get from point a to point b with her work.

if they're able to do that and have their hobby stuff there, that's fine. I'm not going to complain at all, but if they're not, I'm going to really try to get them to take ownership and be like, what's going on? Do you really want to be spending this much time and energy on it? Would you like to be more focused on it so you can get to your free time quicker, blah, blah, blah? Yeah. Okay, cool. Let's see. Next one. In terms of being less resistant is really being clear on knowing why you're here. Now, a lot of kids don't know what they want to do when they grow up in a way, but they do know that they want to be happy, they want to be successful, they want to be able to launch a great future, and I think them having that attitude and families having these conversations a lot, hey, the world needs you. You got work to do here on this planet. You're here for a reason and having those conversations a lot helps a tiny bit and moving through the resistance, hey, there is a reason for this stuff. It's not just to get your work done. It's so that you can be the most awesome version of yourself possible.

Debbie: I love that. I love the language around that too. You've got big stuff to do in the world and we need you literally. Yeah. Yeah.

Seth: The next one is knowing it's not you. It's just a thought and resistance is just thoughts. You can't even touch them, so the thought, it's not you. It's not the essence of you. It's not the real you. It's just a thought that's in there and that kind of ties into earlier in the conversation. Number 21 is knowing you are not alone. Even some of the best, most successful people in the world have had to learn how to master, executing and moving through the resistance. So tons of people go through this. You're not alone. You're not the only person. There's nothing wrong with you that you're not bad, not broken, none of that. Yeah, totally funny examples of famous artists and authors who've taken years and years to accomplish their feeds and not that we want them to emulate that, but we want them to know that they're not. You know that they're not alone in struggling with that. Yeah. Yeah, and that's part of it. Part of my story. Yeah.

I mean, I failed out of college and then I dropped out of college before I failed out. I almost failed out of high school and this, this is part of why I do what I do today. It was such a struggle for me to learn how to do what I needed to do for my own best interest and I still have struggles around it, but I have worked on developing skills around it. And that's what, again, back to what we're saying, helping the kids get skills. They're not alone. People can learn this. Next one, 22. Don't worry about getting all your ducks in a row. People want to get things perfect at the beginning. They want to be Jimi Hendrix without spending all the thousands of hours it took Jimmy Hendrix to become Jimi Hendrix the a guitar player. That is, um, don't worry about getting all your ducks in a row that things do not have to be perfect. Go ahead and do it anyway. The people want to get it, get it perfect. We've actually, you know this and your podcast, I'm sure, like if you had to have

a perfect podcast when you launched it, you wouldn't have done that. You just dove in.

Debbie: Well, there's also, you know, there's something called the Kolbe Index. I don't know if you're familiar with that. It's an online test you can take to find out your conative style, like how you do things in the world and one of the types is a fact finder and those are people who could spend years planning something. They need to know everything, but they often have trouble executing. So I think, you know, also just knowing some of our kids are naturally wired this way and, but that's, that's normal. And there's ways then to or just knowing that that's something to work on, to try to just do something and see what happens and know the world doesn't end if you do something without lining all those ducks up first.

Seth: It's resistance. Resistance. Yep. The next thing with the resistance is do it anyhow and don't try to get rid of the resistance. Sometimes people are taking the mindset of I need to get rid of this resistance. No, don't overthink it. Just do the thing. So that's just a mindset thing. Same with fair. They're not going in a way. So we can push them away, just have an alliance with it and do it anyway. Move forward. They just need to develop the skill of moving through it anyhow. So next one, number 24 is advocate. So you're resistant. Well, and, and you have to communicate to teachers, uh, and this more or less goes to middle high school and college kids because the younger than that, it's really more of the parents that are doing this, but you have to learn to tell the teachers how much time it's taking you and that you need a life. Like look your teacher in the eye and be like, I'm taking an hour on this and it looks like other people are taking 10 minutes. It takes me a long time. I need a life and I need you to work with me.

So advocating and that goes back to sometimes the resistance is reasonable and when you feel resistant and something's off and you see your kid doing this, just advocate for them and you gotta. Keep telling him, next, helping your child learn how to unit task instead of multitasking. Having them learn to do one thing to completion or relative completion. Again, you know if they're going to do part of it.

Debbie: Now, this is one that I was telling a Asher and the students on the student one, but it was apologize, but as far as resistance to sometimes you going to your kid and just owning something and just saying, Hey, you know what? I am sorry that that wasn't cool. You know how? How do we make this better? That can help really if there's emotional stuff going on that can help clean the slate and then you can help move through resistance so it makes sure that there's unfinished business that you're taking care of it.

Seth: I am a huge fan of apologizing and I do it frequently and I've set this on the podcast before that. It really changes everything. A genuine apology will shift things fairly quickly in a positive way. Yeah.

Seth: And the next one is for parents especially is the modeling. Know that you are modeling what your words, your behaviors, your actions, the way you are, the

things you say, the messages you convey. You are modeling this for your child. You are teaching them through what you do. They see it, they're there, you know it. Uh, the people listening, US adults, you know, we're 30, 40, 50 years old. We'd look at our parents and say, I never intended to be like them and I'm just like them. And you know, we, we learn through, um, through the models that, that we are surrounded by. So notice yourself adults, notice what you do, what you say when you're complaining, how you're executing, how we contradict ourselves. This is not to shame anybody listening in any way as now the point of this, this is the more introspective and more reflective of the more subtle where the more metacognitive we are, the more we're able to respond and model the things that we want to model rather than being more robotic and reactive.

Debbie: Absolutely. And I would just add this as like, you know, I always say that these kids are the greatest teachers. This is a great opportunity for us to continue doing our own work. You know, because when you're noticing you're going to be more consciously doing things and that's where the growth for us happens.

Seth: Yep. Do your own deep inner work. That's one of the best things we can ever do for our kids is to do our own work. Yeah, absolutely. And the next one is parents again, is to do your own self care. Pause, take a breath, smile, get present, be positive, recalibrate your compass. Remember why you're here, enjoy life, enjoy your kids. Good reminder. And then I think, I think that's it. I don't know about you, but my brain is about fried.

Debbie: Can I just tell you my brain is fried, but I did take three full pages of notes because that helps. That's how I process information. I think I do this every time we talk. I'm just writing all this down and wow, is all I can say. This is such, such helpful information. I think there's so many nuggets in here and just practical takeaways for parents and I don't think anybody can listen to this conversation and not walk away feeling like they've got some new insights and um, I don't even know how to thank you for your generosity with this community. It's so appreciated. I hear from so many parents just how grateful they are to receive this from you. So thank you for, for doing this, for the prep work that obviously went into doing this back to back episodes. I just know it's going to be so useful for our community.

Seth: Thank you for the opportunity. Like you, I love what I do. I believe in it. I believe in education. I believe that every kid has their own gifts and talents and interests and things that the world needs and that they'd served. I have a great future, not a mediocre one really, really they can have a great life and the kids that I work with are the ones who struggle with resistance and execution and if they can't execute, they're not going to be able to have that great future. So it means a lot to me personally. So I just really want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to share.

Debbie: Well of course. And I actually before we go, um, when you just take a few minutes, I know a lot of our listeners are already following you and are signed up with your list, but can you just remind people where they can connect with you

and also make sure that you share about your, your upgrade, the grades course that you've got going on?

Seth: Sure. So I, I blog and make videos at [inaudible] dot com and if you go to the homepage of [inaudible] dot com, you can sign up there and then what I do is I send out a free course that helps people. It's a video course where I have some videos for students where I'm speaking to students, a lot of the videos that I make on youtube, I'm speaking to students and parents have shown that they really appreciate that. So if you sign up there, you'll get that course and then I send a weekly update and then I have a course called upgrade your grades or usually Wiji and that's a semester long in depth course. Or I go through how I coach students. Um, and there's a parent and a student section in that course. You can check that out on my site. I'm, it's in depth. It's, it's Wacky, it's weird, it's fun, it's a, it's a, it's good. So, and then I'm going to do a discount for your listeners. So they go to south Broadway.com backslash tilt. I'll have a discount for the course and I'll just leave that open for the semester and I will also make the notes that I have here, Debbie, I'll make a document with all of the notes here that I'll put on the page as well on my site.

Debbie: That is so excellent. Thank you so much for doing that. At listeners, I'm gonna include the link. It's pretty easy to remember Sethperler.com/tilt, but I will also have links on the tilt website, show notes page for that for success course and the other resources that we talked about in the show, so thank you for taking the time to go through this with us today.

Seth: You're welcome. Thanks Debbie. Thanks so much for how you serve. I appreciate you so much in the world.

**RESOURCES MENTIONED:**

- Seth Perler's website and blog
- Special page for TiLT listeners on Seth's website
- UpgrAde Your GrAdes Student Success Program (virtual class)
- A "Masterclass" in Executive Functioning with Seth Perler, Part 1 (podcast episode)
- A "Masterclass" in Executive Functioning with Seth Perler, Part 2 (podcast episode)
- A Conversation with Executive Functioning Coach Seth Perler (original podcast episode)
- Seth's Executive Functioning Assessment
- Seth Perler's YouTube Channel
- Seth Godin
- The War of Art: Break Through the Blocks and Win Your Inner Creative Battles by Steven Pressfield