



Episode #187:

A Special Conversation Between Debbie Reber and Seth Perler for Teachers and School Administrators

December 10, 2019

Debbie: Hello Seth, welcome to the podcast.

Seth: Hello Debbie. Welcome to my YouTube channel.

Debbie: This is the first time I've ever done this. You may have done this with other, other people, but we are, yes, we're doing a joint podcast video, something that we can share on both and multiple mediums. So we'll see how this goes, but I'm excited.

Seth: Me too. Yeah. Hi everybody. If you're watching me on YouTube, this is Debbie Reber and um, Debbie and I have known each other for a while now and we really are very aligned in terms of how we see things in the education world and are very passionate, both very passionate about it. So I have a heck of a lot of respect for Debbie. She runs the Tilt Parenting podcast, which is an amazing parenting podcast where she interviews all kinds of incredible people and dives really deep into important topics that if you don't already follow her, you will definitely want to check out Tilt.

Debbie: Thank you for that kind intro. And my podcast listeners, just so the video people know, I've already introduced Seth so, and I sing his praises every chance I get. But, so this is just to give you a heads up for this episode and this conversation. Seth and I have been talking for a while about having a discussion about education. We both feel passionate about, about extending the work that we're doing into the world of education and we have been having conversations about how do we get teachers onboard to this work that we're doing, this paradigm shifting work of trying to better support differently wired children. And we recognize that school is a big part of these families' lives. So how do we get teachers on board? How do we get the schools to understand, how do we get teachers to buy in and how can we help the school to get it? So that's what we wanted to really, I mean, this is a ginormous conversation so we don't expect to cover it all today, but we wanted to get that conversation started. Is there anything that you want to say, Seth, before I move forward?

Seth: Yeah, so our intention was that both of us, Debbie and I, both our primary audience is parents. I probably have 80% parents, 20% teachers and a few therapists and counselors and others sprinkled in there. And Debbie, probably what's, what's your breakdown?

Debbie: Yeah, it's probably 85% parents and caregivers and then a lot of, you know, coaches and therapists and people who work and not so many teachers. I don't think.

Seth: So this was really inspired by this, you know, we really intended, even though we're speaking to you parents and our audiences, we are making this so that you can share this with educators, with teachers, with administrators. And the reason

we're doing this and the reason this is so important to us and we put a lot of effort into really planning this is because we both get so many parents who email us or who are in our Facebook groups and who put comments to people who say, how do we get schools to get it? How do we get teachers to get it? How do we get the teacher to understand? How do we get the teacher on board? So our intention really, while we're speaking to our audiences, because you're our audience, is we really want to have the conversation for teachers. So we intend for you to share this with them so that they can quote 'get it.' So that they can understand what we believe they need to understand in order to serve our kids and address some of the issues that we hear over and over and over and over. Because that's why teachers are there, is to serve kids, they want to serve kids. So I just wanted to clarify that intention.

Debbie: Absolutely. And this is something that, you know, we have talked a lot about, I've been going to a lot of conferences this past year and we are always talking about education, but we are having these separate conversations and we're just, we need to start having, getting out of our little corners and having these conversations together. So that's just really important. So again, we're hoping that this is the first of many of these conversations. We want to be a part of bringing people together. And so for this episode, this video, we want to kind of have a very honest and open conversation and that's just critical. That's critical for this. There, we're going to be there, you know, Seth and I, if you follow our work, you know that we are very authentic and open in what we share and the way that we show up for our community.

So we want, we will do the same for this and we're hoping that this starts conversations. So maybe just taking a minute, Seth, to introduce ourselves a little bit about our personal perspective and not, we won't spend too long cause I think our audiences know a bit about us. But my point of view and my kind of experience leading up to the work that I do is as the parent of a differently wired child who's now 15, and he is someone who when he was a young guy, little guy, was in private and public school system. Two private schools, one for highly gifted children, one that was kind of the backup school when things did not work out at that first private school and then in a public school system with an IEP, it was a full-time gifted program. And we would have actually been in public school the whole time, except we were told that he needed kind of smaller classrooms, more focused.

So we kind of didn't intend to go that route, but we did. But we really struggled in that system. We struggled because he is differently wired. He's twice exceptional. He has severe ADHD and sensory issues and executive functioning challenges and was very dysregulated as a little guy. And so we ended up homeschooling for years. And it's been really interesting now doing this work that this is what I hear from so many parents is oftentimes people find me right when they're at that point where they're getting the information that school's not working at all and they feel stuck and helpless and upset. And it feels very personal because it feels like when people don't understand who your kids are, it feels like a really, it hurts your heart. And so that's kind of what I had gone through and I have so much respect for teachers and I know we're going to talk about that too in a little

bit. But that, that's the perspective that I have. I really want to help those conversations. I want to support parents who are in that situation experience it differently and I want our kids to have, to really be able to thrive in the educational systems and in a way that works for, for everybody. So that's kinda my POV. How about you Seth?

Seth: Yeah, the perspective that I'm coming from is, first off, I was that kid. So I was the kid who really struggled in school and who I really felt bad about myself. I almost feel, I always felt like even the black sheep in the classroom, I almost failed out of high school. I did in fact fail out of college. I dropped out of a second college before failing out. Felt like a failure myself. Felt like I didn't have opportunities in life and I just didn't feel hopeful that I was going to be able to figure it out. Obviously I turned that around and it was the hard, one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life. And then I ended up falling in love with education and becoming a teacher. And I got a master's in gifted and talented and I taught multiple grades and multiple subjects.

And I got a master's in gifted and talented education and started working with gifted kids a lot and then a lot of 2e kids and I also had a lot of special ed background as well. And so I, and then I also worked on the Navajo Indian reservation. I worked in different types of schools with different, different populations of kids and I really have a very wide experience range in terms of all of these different types of brains that I've gotten to work with. So, and then my perspective after teaching for 12 years, I left teaching because I really felt stifled by teaching and really felt like I had other work to do during my lifetime. And so since 2010 I've been going down the executive function coaching route since before, I don't even know if there was such a thing as executive function coaching in 2010, but that's when essentially I started doing the work that I do today.

And so now I'm coming from a perspective of I go to, like you do, conferences or speak at different schools or different groups and I hear a lot of different perspectives from parents. And I also hear a lot from therapists and teachers and other people, but I hear a lot of the struggles that parents are going through. And in my coaching practice, locally and online, I hear a lot of perspectives from parents. And also since I do the YouTubeing and the blogging, I get tons and tons of email from parents. And many of these parents feel isolated. They feel like they're the only one. They feel like there's something wrong with them or that they're broken, or that they're not a good enough parent, or that they're, that they just don't know what to do to help their kid. And they're very, they're very confused and they're very concerned and they want real answers. So this, those are sort of the different perspectives that I'm coming from in my work.

Debbie: Yeah, I love your story. So, I just think it's, you just have such a unique perspective and this is you, you live it to give it and I just think it's so important that you do the work that you do and it explains your passion for the work that you do. And anyway, I could go on, but I won't. Okay. So.

Seth: Thanks. I think that's important, real quick to sort of piggyback on that, that the reason I do my work, the reason you do your work is because we do believe in education and we do believe that the purpose of education isn't to get good

grades or good test scores or all of these things that we're often overly focused on. But the purpose is to give our kids what they need in order to have a great life. A great childhood now, a great youth, while getting the skills and tools that they're going to need to grow up in this extremely complicated world.

Debbie: Absolutely. And through the lens of the differently wired kids I also, and I, as I know you do, believe that these kids have such incredible strengths and gifts and that's why it's really critical that they, that they love their life, that they love to learn and that they feel empowered to tap into those gifts. So this is really, this is important. This is really big stuff. Before we kind of get, get any deeper into this, we wanted to just kind of put out a disclaimer for the educators who are watching this. So Seth, do you want to share, you know, we talked a lot about this and we both get feedback sometimes from educators who feel that we are, you know, the content we're doing isn't recognizing their reality and the challenges of the construct that they're working within. So do you want to say a few words about that?

Seth: Yeah. And if I leave anything out, go ahead and fill in the blanks. So the day that I contacted Debbie with this idea, I had just seen a comment from a teacher in one of the groups where the teacher said something about how it hurt them that there was so much what they perceived as teacher bashing. And I really want to, Debbie and I want to make a disclaimer that this is in no way intended to bash teachers. We love you. We need you. We want your service. We appreciate your service. We both believe and we know that a lot of parents and probably a lot of teachers out there. I was a teacher for 12 years. I have so much respect for teachers. I do not, 50% of teachers quit by year five. I do not want teachers to be so burnt out that they are quitting by year five.

I want them to be engaged. I want them to thrive. I want them to feel supported. I want them to feel understood. We both believe that there are some teachers that don't belong in the classroom. We know that you have probably worked with some teachers that probably don't belong in the classroom. And some parents certainly feel that certain teachers don't belong in the classroom. We believe that that's probably the minority of teachers, that the vast, vast majority of teachers want to be the best teachers that they can be. They want this information. They want to be able to serve all kids, all neurodiverse kids, not just typical kids, but all learners. So if anything comes across in this podcast as hurtful or teacher bashing or anything, we want to be extremely clear that that is not our intention in any way.

Our intention is to be of service to you teachers, to give you everything that we can possibly give you, but in an honest and unfiltered way. We do not believe we are going to do you any service by being fluffy around this or by being, by not being really serious. And these are really serious topics. There's a lot of intensity around it because people are really suffering. Parents are really suffering. A lot of kids are really suffering. And we know a lot of you teachers are too. This isn't a competition of any sort. We are on the same team. We are all trying to serve kids and Debbie and I are trying to give you what we feel is a very important conversation that's not being had openly enough and we want to present that to you today.

Debbie: Thank you. Yeah. Thanks for sharing that Seth. So we wanted to start by talking about what we believe are the, the ingredients, the attributes of a great teacher. And we know as you just said, there are many great teachers out there and so we put together a couple of, of these attributes that we believe make a great teacher. So Seth, you are the former educator in here, so I would love you to kind of take the lead here and share from your perspective what those attributes are.

Seth: So we have four ideas. Feel free to add anything, Debbie. What was the first one? Cause I don't have the note.

Debbie: The first one is connected.

Seth: Yeah. So a great teacher, a truly gifted, awesome teacher is one who connects with all kids, all the kids in the classroom. Whether or not this teacher is left brain or right brain, whether or not this teacher is highly organized or struggles with executive function themselves, whoever the teacher is, one thing that they do well is they connect. They are attuned. There's a word called attunement, from the therapy world. They are attuned emotionally to the kids in their class. They are very gifted at seeing all of the different subtle emotions that the kids are going through and really noticing them not just as an educational being as, as a student, as a learner, but really seeing the kids as these emotional human beings who are having experience in their classroom.

And they're very attuned to that and they really want to create an emotionally safe place where they feel connected. And connection has a lot to do with what's called attachment theory, where they're creating a safe emotional attachment with the kids, where the relationship with their students, the students feel seen by their teachers, heard by their teachers, understood by their teachers, known by their teachers. They know their teachers have their back. And Debbie and I often have families who are going through things where their kid doesn't feel like the teacher has their back. But those great teachers are really gifted at connection, at having that attunement, at really having their kids' back and really making the kids feel safe and seen in that way.

Debbie: Yeah. I'm so glad you mentioned the word attachment. That's something that's actually come up in a lot of recent episodes is how critical a child feeling attached, and that is having that emotional connection, to the adults in their lives. And so as parents it's obviously we want our kids to feel that sense of security and safety and attachment with us, but they spend so much time in school that it's really important they have that kind of relationship with their teachers as well. And to not have that can be really hard, can be really hard for a kid if they don't feel that they're getting that, that they're being seen. So yeah, that's a, that's a huge one. I think it's kind of the foundation for everything, right?

Seth: And you had mentioned the word empathy in that, under connection as well.

Debbie: Yeah. I mean, I'm just so immersed in this right now. I'm, I'm interviewing Dr. Becky Bailey tomorrow for my podcast and she's the author and she does a work called conscious discipline. And so much of this really is empathizing and again,

helping our kids feel seen and heard and respected. And that all begins, you know, that's really what connection is about, is feeling that they can let their defenses down because they, they feel safe in that environment. It all starts with that connection.

Seth: And then we had one more word in there under connection, which was co-regulation. And for any educators out there who haven't heard about co-regulation, there's this idea of emotional regulation and co-regulation is when our nervous systems are communicating together and we are co-regulating. Our nervous systems are always bouncing off of each other. And a teacher is sort of the master co-regulator for a classroom. They're sort of the one who sets the emotional tone. And these kids are so sensitive, they really pick up on what's going on with, with what's going on in the teacher's world emotionally. So the more a teacher is able to do their own emotional regulation and be that strong solid nervous system in the room, the more they're going to set the tone and co-regulate with all of the kids in the classroom to provide that safe space. And so kids really sense that. And that has a lot to do also with something called polyvagal theory, which you can look up on your own and you may, teachers out there want to look up polyvagal theory because it's some really amazing next level stuff that might really help you in your journey in terms of learning more about your own emotional regulation and ways to co-regulate.

Debbie: Awesome. So the next attribute that we wanted to mention is a desire to serve and being service focused. So can you talk about that?

Seth: Yeah, I mean, I feel like you said earlier, I feel really lucky that I had the struggles that I did because it, I turned into the person who I do what I do out of a sense of service. And I think that probably all teachers go into teaching with that sense of service. I think that that sense of service might get dimmed or pushed aside as the pressures coming from all sides on teachers, the pressures from the administration, the pressures from the curriculum manufacturers, the testing regulations or whatever, the pressures maybe from other teachers, the pressures from parents, the pressures from kids, the pressures from everywhere on the teachers, we can kind of forget why we're there. And I think really keeping that forefront that like the great teachers are always focused on why they're there and that they're there to serve.

Debbie: I have nothing to add to that. I totally agree. And I think it, I recognize that it's hard to hold on to that within the, the just the pressures faced, especially in a traditional educational model where it's, it often from what I hear from educator friends, it's not about, it's often not about the teaching. It's about the other things that you have to do just to, to kind of get by in that system. So the third thing is content mastery. So say a little bit about that Seth.

Seth: Yeah. A great teacher has mastered the content that they're teaching. This can be really hard for an elementary teacher who teaches math, science, social studies, reading, writing and listening 'cause they're teaching all of these subjects. Whereas a lot of times when you have a middle school or a high school teacher, they are, they have more of a specialty area and they're often teaching in that specialty area. Though there are tons of circumstances where a middle school

teacher who specializes in math, the next thing you know, they're teaching some other subject that is not their specialty. And this happens all the time with middle and high school teachers. But any way you look at it, a great teacher either has mastered the content that they're teaching or they're working on mastering the content that they're teaching. And for me, I felt that like when I grew up, I didn't like social studies and I ended up teaching social studies and I felt that it was part of my obligation and responsibility to fall in love with social studies because I knew I couldn't fake it.

And once I started diving into the content and falling in love with it, I feel like it's a lot easier to, to teach something you love and for kids to learn the content that you're in love with and to find value in it than when a teacher is going through the motions and they're not really that into it or they don't find a lot of meaning into it. So I think a great teacher masters the content that they're teaching or is working towards that mastery of the content. Because so much of what we see these kids are not, are often not falling in love with the content. They're just doing things to check it off their list or get the teachers or their parents off their back rather than actually doing something that they find meaningful and valuable.

Debbie: Yeah. And the fourth attribute that we discussed is connected to curriculum, but it, it's also more related to who our kids are, to the neurodivergent students and that is differentiation. So can you explain what you mean by that Seth?

Seth: Yeah. And I really want you to fill in some of the blanks on this one in particular, Debbie, because you have such a vast experience base with neurodiverse kids, neurodiverse or atypical or differently wired, kids who learn differently. But a fantastic teacher really understands neurodiverse kids. Now saying that is kind of a loaded statement because understanding neurodiverse kids means that you understand extraordinarily complicated concepts in all these different areas. Obviously that's not even humanly possible unless you really devote your life to that. And that's, there's so many areas of neurodiversity, it's crazy. But a great teacher, like you said earlier, they're empathetic, they're compassionate, they understand that they don't understand and they're always trying. There's a, there was an old saying that was best practice in special ed is best practice for all kids and then it was best practice in special ed and gifted education is best practice for all kids.

And what that means is that in special education and gifted education, you have these things called IEPs or ILPs. The common word in those is individual. Individual learning plans, plans that are personalized, that are customized, that are tailored, that are designed for the individual, that recognize that these kids are on different parts of bell curves and that they have different, legitimate different needs. And teachers who are great at differentiation really see these different needs and they're really able to adapt curriculum and learning experiences and content and process and product to a group of completely different kids, which is a really big task. But great teachers really take on that task and really develop their skills in terms of meeting these diverse needs.

Debbie: Yes. And I'll just share, I just interviewed Melanie Hayes yesterday who's the creator of the Big Minds micro-school for twice exceptional students in the Bay area. And we were having this conversation about what teachers can do in the classroom to support these kids. And this was what it really was about. And a lot of it, you know, my takeaway from that conversation and certainly what I've seen in my community and my personal experience is, is kind of not being as rigid in terms of how learning is demonstrated. You know, so many of these kids, they may be able to demonstrate their learning in different ways in terms of maybe they're really visual-spatial. And so having to demonstrate it in this very one way that completely doesn't tap into these gifts that they have, well, they may know the content, but they get, they're not able to show that in the way, you know, if everyone's expected to deliver in this one way.

And so that is something, you know, that she was encouraging teachers to think about. How can I, how can I still give this child a chance to, to demonstrate their mastery of material while not kind of setting them up for failure? So that is one area, the delivery, an assessment if there are ways to support other kids. That I have found even, you know, in homeschooling too, that was a lot of what I did was really followed the lead of Asher's strengths in terms of where his interests were and thinking about how can I use this as a way to demonstrate his mastery of whatever we were doing at the time, history, science, you know, whatever it was. So that not being so rigid is a really big piece. And the other thing I'll just share because this is fresh in my mind regarding differentiation too. If a child, especially a gifted student, knows work already, this is something that Melanie also shared, is thinking about maybe not making them do things again, just for the sake of checking it off a list.

If they already have mastered the material, thinking about assignments that might actually really hurt their love of learning if they're forced to do practice tests or exercises when they're like, but I already know this. And so we, that's important too, is to really kind of look at the student and being willing to think how is this serving them? And if it, if it isn't and it's, and it doesn't affect their mastery or learning of the material, then maybe thinking, okay, maybe this is something that this child doesn't have to do. So it does require looking at each student as an individual. But there are certainly ways within, you know, any given curriculum with the goals that a teacher has to still kind of use a child's strengths as a, as a foundation for how to help them move forward and reach the goals that you have for them.

Seth: Yeah. We're going to talk about some of the challenges, but as you're saying that, I'm thinking about the teachers listening and, and there are a couple of challenges that come to mind right now that I want to mention. And one is that a lot of times teachers are given curriculum by the district or by the school and they're told this is what we're going to use. And then teachers go through trainings or start learning how to master these particular curriculums. Then oftentimes schools after a few years say, oh, well that one didn't do the trick, we have decided to start this one. And then they start a new one three or four years later. And then teachers have to spend a few years getting used to another new curriculum. So it, the challenge is real and I just want to, you know, reaffirm that

to teachers that we know that the challenge is real to figure out. You know, a lot of times these curriculum might have ideas for differentiation, but the other, another problem with that is as you're trying to implement this as a teacher, oftentimes you're trying to figure out how to differentiate from everybody. Next thing you know, you're onto the next unit. You've just finished this unit and you're onto another one. Another one. The year goes by in the blink of an eye. And, it's a lot and there's a lot of pressure sometimes to follow.

Debbie: And that's exactly why we need to discuss these things, right? Because parents need to hear this perspective. Parents need to understand what the challenges are for educators. Educators would be better served by better understanding the parent perspective and what we see as the challenges for our kids. And in order for things to change, we do need to work together. So I, that's again why we need to have these discussions so we can kind of join forces ultimately.

Seth: Yeah. And two more things that the parents might want to know about in this sort of situation too, is teachers always take their work home. So a lot of these teachers, when they're learning these new curriculum they're taking their work home, they're trying to learn this new curriculum. They might have multiple curricula, you know, they might be doing one, one particular one for math, one for science, one for language arts, whatever. And they're trying to take it home and they have a life. They have a family, they have to go to the doctor sometimes. They have to go grocery shopping and do laundry and normal life things, you know, and so they're often taking their home, their work home with them and it is, it's a lot to manage. Like not only are they planning and grading, but they're also learning new curriculum. And so there's a lot on their plate.

Debbie: There's a lot. And we're going to go into what we see as kind of the biggest problems. So we've already started that a bit, but before we do, we wanted to just plant the seed for everyone listening, everyone watching, to start thinking about what problems come to mind for you. What big problems, systemic problems do you see that are impacting you personally? Because when we're done, again, we keep saying this is the first of many conversations we hope. And so at the end we're gonna give you an opportunity to share things that come to mind for you. So just kind of planting that seed to be giving that some thought and our plan, we've, we've kind of outlined 10 problems that we see.

Seth: Can I interrupt you here?

Debbie: Of course.

Seth: All right. Let's review those four things that we had. Here's what we said were the four characteristics of great teachers. Great teachers are connected, great teachers are focused on service, great teachers are masters of content and great teachers are masters of differentiation. And then Debbie and I are inviting you to share what do you think are the biggest problems, teachers and parents, we made a Google form for you. And before we dive into these 10 problem areas, what are the first ones that come to mind for you? Keep them in the back of your head. Think about what's popping into your head right this second. When I say what is problematic. We want to know before we start impacting your thinking

with our list of 10, what are some of the things that you want to share with us? And we want your input and we're going to use that input to deepen the conversation in the future.

Debbie: And I just have to say that another attribute of a great teacher is someone who recaps things very clearly as you just did, Seth. So thank you for that. That was awesome. Okay. So shall we dive in with our?

Seth: Yep.

Debbie: Okay. So the first one that we have here is that the teachers feel like, this ties in with what you were just talking about, teachers feel like they're being bombarded and many are ill-equipped and ill informed to support the differently wired learners that they have. But, and you know, just statistically speaking, we know that definitely wired kids are in every classroom. You know, if the statistic is 20%, which I believe is a gross underestimate, I think it's much higher than that. So we know that every classroom has a handful of kids who are neurologically atypical. So.

Seth: And oftentimes it's invisible.

Debbie: Yeah.

Seth: You know, if somebody is, is impulsive and hyperactive, well that's very easy to see. You know, if they're calling out all the time or especially if they're hitting or if they're getting up, you know, that's one thing. But some kids may be having things that we just can't see on the outside.

Debbie: Yeah. They could have, they could be stealth dyslexics. They could be, they may manifest, you know, I think the kids who are more emotionally dysregulated and comes on in behavioral problems, that is a sign that a kid often is, in some way doesn't have the skills for, for what's happening in the classroom. But there are kids who fall apart or who get really quiet or who cry, you know, so it can look so many different ways too. But I think you mentioning the invisibility of so many of these neurodifferences, sensory issues, giftedness, can be masked or just not recognized. So, it's a lot. Like this is the one, when I think about the challenges, this is the one where I just feel, I feel so much empathy for teachers. Because of being in a classroom where they aren't, they don't necessarily have the background. Even in their graduate program, there's so little focus on how to identify and recognize differently wired kids or things that might be showing up and then let alone recognize, but then how to support them. So it's a lot.

Seth: Yeah. And another thing, you know, particularly teachers of middle school and high school, when they have classes of 25 or 30 kids and they have six or seven classes a day. So if you have what, what's three times seven, if you had 30 kids seven times a day, that, I mean that's right there, what 210 kids a day. How are you going, and they pop in for 50 minute classes, how are you going to serve them? So that, that's one of the, that's one of the 10 problems that Debbie and I feel are really, is really big is that teachers feel bombarded, they feel

overwhelmed, they feel unsupported. And they're often not given the training or the support that they need to recognize and/or address these needs.

Debbie: And even in cases where students have IEPs there's often not even, it's not realistic for those IEPs to be implemented as written. So, yeah. So the challenge is real. Anything you want to add on that first one before we move on?

Seth: I, you know, I think that's a really important point too. And you know, I always talk about parents and I tell parents be the squeaky wheel, make sure that you communicate with the teachers, tell them what's on the IEP, send them a short bulleted email that's going to say this will help my kid. Because again, particularly with middle and high school teachers who have so many students, if they get a stack of IEPs, let's say that what Debbie was saying is correct and there's 20%. Now there's not going to be probably 20% who are identified or have an IEP. But let's say that they are truly 20 or 25% of the kids that are neurodiverse and really do have different needs. How, when is the teacher going to have that time to soak in those IEPs? And if they do it at the beginning of the year, do they even know those kids at the beginning of the year? Later in the year, are the teachers going to have the time or the wherewithal to remember to pull those IEPs out, soak them in in a meaningful level so that they can change how they differentiate for the kid, for the rest of the class, the rest of the school year.

Debbie: Yeah. Huge, huge problem.

Seth: So I'm not necessarily providing solutions, but I'm pointing out, you know, this is a problem.

Debbie: Yes. And that leads to the second one, 'cause you touched upon this, that parents feeling a need to be this squeaky wheel, that parents feel as if they're not being heard. There is a lot of suffering that goes on on the parents' side when you find out that your child is not doing well at school where you know, again, they're spending most of their day, that can be really just overwhelming and sad. I used to say that I felt like I was sending, I was feeding him to the sharks every day when I dropped him off at school because I, he was struggling so much and, and I was a squeaky wheel, but I was very conscious of not wanting to alienate teachers. Like it was this dance I was always trying to play and sometimes I was brushed off even though I knew. I could say, listen, here's my strategies that I know are gonna support my kid. And some teachers were open to that and some were not. Some were like, we've got this, we're the expert and so I did feel, just not heard and therefore helpless to kind of fix that situation. So that is the other side of this is the parents' experience.

Seth: I think you worded it perfectly. We don't need to go too deep on that. Parents don't feel heard. And that goes back to the attachment stuff we were talking about before. Really this is all about relationships. And in this case it's the relationship between the teachers and the parents, the parents and the teachers. In this particular case, point number two, it is how the parents, the sense of healthy and secure attachment, if you will, that they feel with the teacher. They don't feel heard. They don't feel understood. They don't feel seen. They don't feel

known. They don't feel like the teacher has their back and therefore they're afraid for their child or it's all, it's all related. Now I, I'm not trying to say this is black and white or this is all the time, but this is, this is one of our top 10 problems. Is this number two, parents not feeling heard.

Debbie: Yeah. And then the third piece of this equation is our third problem. And that is the child, the child not being seen or embraced or respected. And we talked about that earlier, how important it is that they feel that way in the classroom. And so when kids are kind of stuck in this environment or system where the communication isn't happening and they aren't, their needs aren't being met in the classroom, they kind of take that on. They start to recognize that, um, yeah, that the way that they learn isn't being seen, who they are, how they're showing up, isn't being respected or embraced. And that is the start of a lot of pain. And we're going to talk about that a little bit later, but they're the third party in this equation that really it's what this is all about. I mean, this is about supporting these kids. That's what education is all about, is helping these kids be happy and live meaningful lives. So, anything add to that Seth?

Seth: Nope, that was perfect.

Debbie: Okay. So the fourth problem, and this is a systemic problem and it requires a reframe, is that the system in many ways dwells on deficits instead of building on strengths. And I'll just share what that means to me and then Seth, I want to hear about your experience. So, what I always talk with parents about is this idea that we do tend to, when we identify quote unquote 'problems' with kids, or maybe they are identified as having a learning difference or lagging skills in this area, so often that's where we put all of our energies and, and we ignore these areas of strengths and gifts that these kids have, the creativity or the, you know, the visual spatial or, or whatever those things are.

And instead we really just spend a lot of time in this area of deficit or relative weakness. And that is not, I mean I just think about that as a, as an adult I have many deficits and if I had to spend all of my time like working on those instead of working in my sweet spot and all my strengths where it's just where I love to do, that would really, that would really stink. That would really take a take a hit on my self esteem and self worth and all of those things. So, but that is kind of baked into the way we typically address kids who are struggling in some way is we put all our energy there and we kind of ignore all the gifts and strengths that they have. So what's your perspective on that, Seth?

Seth: Yeah, this is, this one is a really, really complicated issue. I mean, there are many, many, many systemic problems that are the, of our top 10 problems. There are many systemic problems that are so deep that we have been indoctrinated in these ways that this is how we do teaching, this is how we do school. That even private schools, even charter schools, even schools that seem really outside the box are still often not as progressive as they think they are because they're still steeped in a lot of these old ways of doing things that nobody's questioning or nobody's questioning deeply enough and certainly nobody's challenging. So, with the focus on the deficits, it's a massive problem. However, there are amazing,

amazing, amazing professionals, reading specialists, math specialists, people who are in the schools that are focusing on deficits that do need to be addressed.

So Debbie and I are not saying that we don't address any deficits, but it is how much we focus on the deficits. It's how we focus on the deficits. And it's how little we focus on other strengths, particularly strengths that are not measurable. Because we, in our educational paradigms here, we like to measure things. Data is king. We think that if we can measure it, that that's everything. And, and we really lose out on a lot of strengths and interests and passions and talents and things that are meaningful and purposeful to these kids. We miss out on a lot of these things because they are more abstract. They're difficult to measure. And we don't value that stuff as much. And that's really a shame because these kids are going to build, ideally they're going to build a career and a life out of their strengths, out of the things that matter to them, that are purposeful, that are interesting, that they care about.

You know? So in that, and I'm sure there are plenty of people listening right now who have, you can be in one job and let's say that there's a new boss, just because there's a new boss, it can feel like you hate your job. Now imagine being a kid and one year you have a teacher that you feel like is crazy about you and has your back and another year you just can't wait for the year to be over. So there's all, you know, it's where, what are we focusing on and how does that affect the kid and impact them and how they feel about who they are and how do they internalize that stuff? So, it's important to look at strengths and weaknesses but in a very mindful, compassionate, meaningful, thoughtful way. Not just, you know, here's our battery that we use and these are the, you know, these are the things that we're going to use to determine how we focus on these things. We really need to step back and look at these things.

Debbie: Yes. As I always say, question everything you thought you knew about parenting, but in this case question everything you thought you knew about education. Because you know, this leads into number five, you talked about, you know, the, this building of their strengths and things and when our kids don't have the opportunity to really feel good about their strengths and spend time in that space of competency and zone of genius, flow, all of those things. And they are, it's disproportionate, the amount of time they, that is spent dwelling on deficits and they are repeatedly getting the message, there's something wrong with you.

Seth: I'm broken.

Debbie: Yeah, I'm not smart enough. I can't do this. That is what really takes an emotional toll on these kids. And we know, and you may know more statistics than I do here, Seth, but we know that these kids are in much, much higher risk of anxiety and depression and suicide and you know, existential crises. I mean, these are kids who really struggle to make their way, especially in the middle school and high school years, and that is really the result of a lot of what we're talking about here. Anything that you want to add to that?

Seth: What was the, what was the header? That was number five, right?

Debbie: That was number five. Just that their self esteem is really plummeting as a result of this. These kids are identifying as bad kids. They're identifying as being broken. They're taking this on.

Seth: I guess, since we're speaking to teachers, something that I'd want teachers to know that they're probably pretty aware of, but I just, I guess I, I want teachers to know this because I hear this from so many parents, you probably do as well, Debbie, where parents don't feel heard, don't feel seen. Where the kid is coming home and they're trying to deal with these problems, whether they're dealing with it in a healthy way or not, doesn't matter. They're coming home and they're, they're sort of decompressing from their perception of all these things. And I think that, I think that there's a disconnect here where teachers don't see what goes on at home and how much suffering there really is. They see them in class. Things seem to be fine, but that these kids can feel things often so deeply that gets missed.

So I guess that's a big concern of mine. That I hear the parents side of the story, oh my kid comes home, they're crying about the teacher with this and that they feel like this from this teacher or this experience. So just to know that these kids are, they have a lot of pressure. There is a lot on our, on our kids' plates in terms of being able to manage the portal and keep on top of things, manage the planner, the executive function skills, the processing differences that a lot of neurodiverse kids have. The intensity, a lot of our neuro diverse kids are highly intense. They might, may be intense in terms of their senses, just their physical senses taking in so much, but they may also be very emotionally intense. And they're cognitively trying to learn the things that they're trying to learn. So, and then extracurricular activities and there is so much pressure.

Debbie: Yeah.

Seth: I guess I just want teachers to know and I'm sure you do, but just that when they go home, a lot of times it comes out with the parents.

Debbie: Yeah. And especially, you know, this time of year I'm hearing from so many parents about school refusal and that might not be something that parents or that teachers are even aware of. How many of these kids are every day to get them to go to school can be, can be a battle, can be, you know, there's just such a resistance to going and that is because of what we just talked about.

Seth: It feels bad. For a lot of kids. And I'm not saying all teachers or all kids are, but for a lot of kids, especially the school refusal ones, it's because they are having an emotional experience. It feels so bad. They do not want to go to the environment where they feel bad. I'm being very careful not to say the environment where teachers make them feel bad. I'm not pointing blame at anybody, but the experience that they are having feels, in their body, they have this constricted resistance. I do not want, why do I have to go to this place where I feel horrible?

Debbie: I just want to add one more thing to that before we move on and I'm thinking of a conversation I had with Dr. John Duffy recently. He wrote a book called Parenting

the New Teen in the Age of Anxiety and we talked a lot about what he called psychic pain, that is really impacting so many teenagers today just because of the world that we live in. It is so different from the world, certainly the world as it was when I was a teenager. But same for you Seth, and I imagine most people listening, you know, the world is a much different place. The pressures with social media and technology and all of those things that's changed how they experience the world. And so there is like a heaviness that most teens experience and then our neurologically atypical teens, they experience it on a more intense level, most of them. Because as you said, the higher sensitivities and the gifted kids are very, they're, the existential crisis is real, you know, the, the asynchronous development that they may have this intellectual understanding and awareness of things that socially and emotionally they can't handle.

So yeah, so they're, they're dealing with a lot and okay. I think we've talked enough about point 5. The next problem is the biggie. They're all big, but it's the system itself. So we've referred to the system in this conversation, but the problem, and Seth, when we were kind of brainstorming this conversation, this is the one that really struck out at me. And so I really want you to kind of talk about this idea that we are all a part of a system. We have to navigate a system that we didn't create, that we didn't build. Yet here we are. So can you talk a little bit about that?

Seth: Yeah, I'll be pretty brief about it, but there's so many levels to this. So we have these massive systems, first of all, they started a long time ago. And do you remember when the first cell phones came out? The big brick ones that, you know, we don't use those anymore because we use something like this that has an entire computer and everything on it. So the, we update things. And while there has been a lot of progress in education in many ways and there are a lot of innovative people who are doing amazing things either on their own or in bigger ways and making bigger waves in education. While a lot of that goes on, a lot of the ways that the system is done is not even questioned.

We don't question grade levels, we don't question letter grades, we don't question summer break. And I'm not saying nobody questions these things. Obviously there are like year round schools and there's this and that. But generally speaking, we do not question a lot of massive, massively impactful ways that we do things. So we don't have the conversation at all. We just, it's the way we've always done it so that's the way we're going to keep doing it. And so that, that's part, I'm going to refer to the note again just so I can keep what my thought was. As far as we're the main people who engage with it, a lot of the decisions, big decisions that are made about how school is done is not made by the teachers and the parents or the students. Wouldn't it be great if parents, students and teachers, the people who are in the day to day, got together annually or whatever.

And part of the educational experience was discussing contemplatively and thoughtfully and mindfully where we want to go this year, how we want to feel. We don't talk about how we want to feel. Well, what if we actually had dialogue about how do teachers want to feel? How do parents want to feel? How do kids want to feel when we're in school, when we're leaving school, when we're doing

homework, how, you know, if we had these other types of discussions. But instead we have essentially the people who are making decisions. We have textbook manufacturers, we have curriculum manufacturers, we have testing manufacturers. So I just said three things that are big money. We have politicians, we have superintendents, we have people who are not, are not in touch with the day to day. And then we have like these curriculum people that go to schools and they come and they present, oh, here's why you should purchase our thing for your 30,000 kids.

And, you know, I'm not saying these people that the, you know, those people aren't well-intended or the politicians aren't well intended or the superintendents aren't well-intended or whatever, but these people are not in the trenches. And we have this system where we, we need to make massive changes on massive levels. Little great people who are making little innovations, not to discount that at all, that's fantastic. But it's not doing the trick. And the stakes are so high and these are people's lives we're messing with. These are our kids' futures. Now you're hearing me get really passionate and worked up, but it's, it is infuriating to me. And I know it is to Debbie too. And I know it is to a lot of you teachers. It is infuriating to me to see a child suffer when I know things don't need to be the way they are. And to see them struggle and to know that the potential consequences if this kid doesn't learn to believe in themself and work with their strengths and learn how to let go of some of the things that are hurtful to them and not internalize it. And know that they are inherently worthwhile and that the world needs them and people need them and, and feel good about themselves. To see somebody suffer when we could change things so much deeply, deeply, deeply bothers and disturbs me.

Debbie: Yeah.

Seth: So, another problem, the system.

Debbie: The system. Yes. Thank you. I have nothing to add.

Seth: Sorry to rant so much everybody, but that's why I'm here and that's why I think Debbie's here. We want our kids to have every opportunity to have a great life.

Debbie: Yep. Okay. So let's move on to number seven and that is regarding the administration. And so we've talked about a lot of things, but we haven't touched upon the administration, you know, the principals, superintendents and those kinds of things. Can you talk a little bit about that Seth?

Seth: Um, yeah. As we said at the beginning with the disclaimer, this isn't to make anybody feel bad or anything, but honestly, I hear so many comments from people who are conveying that the administration is out of touch. It's not even funny. And the lack of engagement or involvement from administrators or superintendents or people at higher levels in schools, the amount of interaction and involvement from those people in some of the conversations that you and I have and see and are surrounded by in the online world and the lack of involvement from them in things where we want, where families, parents, teachers need them to hear, is astounding to me. They seem very out of touch. No

offense. If any administrators are listening, please chime in. Please. You know, I'm, I'm doubtful that many are, but the ones who are, kudos to you.

Debbie: I have nothing to add to that.

Seth: Really? I feel like -

Debbie: Well, no, I don't. I mean, I haven't, honestly, I've had mixed a mixed bag of experiences with administrators. I know that a lot of people get into administration and from people I personally know who have gone through, you know, who were teachers and they made that shift because of really feeling like this is how I can effect real change. If I can, I need to get out of teaching and move into this. And it doesn't always work out that way because I think, again, the system, you know, I think once you, these people get into those roles, they realize how kind of hemmed in they are, and restricted by the system. So, and then it can be easy, I think to just get bogged down in that. And then you're not in the classroom every day and then it's probably easier to get out of touch. So that's -

Seth: Can I go back to, and I do want to thank you for saying that because there are, you know, we appreciate you. We, we know that that must be a really challenging job. And we know that a lot of you are out in your hallways, you're meeting with kids, you're supporting families and a lot of you really are in the trenches. But I, I guess I want you to know, it goes back to the attachment thing, teachers want, and I know this because I was in a lot of schools, I still am friends with a lot of teachers, teachers want to be seen by you administrators. They want to be valued for what they bring. They don't want to be nitpicked at. They don't want to be having to prove themselves. Teachers want to do well. They want you to say, hey, how do you want to grow this year? And, and they want authentic goals. They know how they want to grow. They don't want to be nitpicked at and micromanaged. And they want to shine. They don't want to feel like they have to close their doors and just focus on the kids and that they're not supported. They want to know you have their back and they want to be heard. They want to be listened to. And they want to shine. They want to feel supported to do that.

Debbie: Yeah. Thanks for sharing that, Seth. Okay, we are going to move on. I kind of want to combine eight and nine because they seem very connected to me and they're really about the cycle that we are all kind of stuck in. This idea that there's a lot of blame being thrown around, especially because of what we talked about earlier. Teachers not having, you know, maybe getting defensive, not having the information they need, parents feeling like they're trying to advocate but they're not being heard. It's a very, as we said, it's a very isolating process. This also strikes me as that so many of the parents, again, I'm just bringing it to my perspective, that we're not actually talking about it with other parents. So we all feel like we're in this alone too. And so then I can imagine on the teacher end, they're hearing about it from all these different individuals.

So we're all just kind of stuck in this. There's no formal way to communicate in a healthy way other than that IEP or a SIT meeting or whatever, if a child even has that kind of support. But there isn't, we're just kind of stuck. We're, we're like in a spin cycle right now of parents kind of doing what they need to do, getting

through the year and then moving on and then, then it starts all over again with new teachers. The teachers have new kids and so there's this kind of cycle that we're stuck in.

Seth: Yeah. I have this little theory. I like theories and I have this one where, you know, as communities, as people, you know, we like to help each other. People like to support each other. But we have this situation where you have a kid in kindergarten, the parents go in there, they're all excited, their kid's first day kindergarten, they're going through it. Especially for the neurodiverse kids in particular. The ones who tend to fall through the cracks, where parents are seeing a lot of the struggle at home. You know, the kid goes on and the, you know, maybe they had a good kindergarten, maybe it was rough, whatever. They move on to first grade, second grade, third grade, and they're kind of, and then they get into middle school. And oftentimes for these neurodiverse kids, at least the ones that I'm working with who struggle with executive function, things often fall apart in middle school. There may have been red flags before that, but things really tend to fall apart in middle school. And then I start working often with kids in middle and high school when things are really falling apart.

And then, you know, parents, they're going through this year with their kids, eighth grade, ninth grade, and they're learning all these things about the grade and then they finally get through that one and then the next one, by the time their kids are 18 and their kids are graduating high school, they're not, those parents aren't communicating with the parents of kindergarteners saying, hey, here's what's coming. Here's what you got to know. Here's what we've learned. Those conversations just never happen. And it's like this big sigh of relief once they graduate. And rightly so. I mean, they, they've just gone through all these years of education and, but somehow something's missing. And people aren't having conversations that they could, where we could be supportive.

That just, the forum doesn't exist. There's a lot of online groups where there's a lot of support for people. I know that you have your Tilt groups that are supporting a lot of people. But generally speaking, there's a lot of shame, I think, for parents who feel like they're not good enough parents. And they look at other families or parents on the playground or at the, you know, after school at pickup and whatever, and, and feel like you said, very isolated. Like they're the only one. And I think that some of the shame for parents is reinforced by systemic messages that are, that basically say, hey, back off, just trust us. We got this. Don't listen to your gut type thing. But yeah, the cycle continues and yeah, it's.

Debbie: Yeah. And that is, you know, I think personally that's the, that's where I feel there is a lot of opportunity in, in stopping this cycle and figuring out and we don't, that's for another conversation. But I really think there is a big opportunity to figure out how can we, how can we stop this cycle and create some, okay. I'm, I need to stop because I'm just going to go off in a whole other direction. We'll talk about this in another episode, but stopping the cycle is, is a big part of this.

Seth: And I think just to wrap that up, you and I see tons and tons and tons of emails from people who are really suffering and they all say the same thing. And the people who are writing the emails feel very alone. Like they're the only one. And

Debbie and I just want to go, no, you are absolutely, positively not alone. You are not alone. And that's part of why we're having this conversation right now for the teachers. But a lot of these parents feel very isolated.

Debbie: Yeah. And it's not okay. I mean it's just not. Like it doesn't serve anybody and, and it's not true. So. Okay, let's move on to the number 10. Which, again, we keep segueing nicely. This was really nicely organized, Seth, because we kind of one leads right to the other. But we're talking, you know, this last one is that the system itself is, it is inherently alienating. It doesn't provide for stopping this cycle. It doesn't provide for us speaking openly because of the stigma. And you know, I believe so deeply, and people who know my podcast and my work know that I think it's so important that we do speak out loud about our truth, that we talk about what's going on and have those vulnerable real conversations. Because that is the only way I believe that we're going to move this forward and make the changes is to really see each other. But again, the system, there is no infrastructure set up to have those conversations openly. So that is what we've identified as a 10th problem here.

Seth: Yep. Systems don't like to change. Systems don't like when somebody rocks the boat. Systems don't like to be shook up. But if we are going to do right by our kids, and again there is no reason we cannot change things, there just isn't. There is resistance. There is resistance from parts of the system that do benefit. Make no mistake. There are people profiting and benefiting from the system remaining exactly the same. So, systems don't like to change, but if we want to do this, we have to get our voices heard, we have to communicate, we have to hear each other, we have to have these conversations. It has to be brought to a rumble. It has to be brought to a yell. We have to be heard. We have to, I am so, so, so thrilled with all the teacher strikes that have been going on.

Like I just, I love seeing my teachers just go out there and be like, we are demanding X, Y and Z and just getting people to understand that they are, they are trying to help our most valued things in the world, our little people, our humans, our kids, our children. And these people are trying to live good lives while helping our kids and we are not helping them do that very well. When we, I forget what the number is, we spend 700 billion on the military and 70 billion on education, one 10th. Like it shows you where our priorities are. We spend on what we value. If we really value our kids, we could be really empowering teachers. So anyhow, I don't want to get too ranty on this one. Debbie and I were going to go for like 45 minutes and we've probably just gone like five hours so far. But the point of number 10 is conversations openly. We're on the same team.

Debbie: And that is a really nice segue to the, we wanted to summarize a few, a few highlights. The things that we really believe deeply, is important in making this shift. And that is part of this whole conversation. And the first one is that we do need to be working together. We believe that that's why we're doing this. Again, we want to do more of this. We have to work together and remember again that it is about our kids. I love that you just said that, they are our greatest resource through the future. And you know, especially, you know, I always say the differently wired kids, I really, these nonconformists, these unconventional thinkers are the ones I believe who have the potential just to, to really solve the

big problems of the world. Not just of the future but of today. And so that's what we're, that's what's at stake and that's what we need to remember that that is what we're here for. That's what we're in service for.

Seth: Perfect.

Debbie: The, the next one, which I just love and is so important and I love the word compassionate and that's part of this, I've been talking for the past year to my community about the importance of being a compassionate educator in how we talk about our family's experiences among our parenting friends who don't have atypical kids or with teachers, to really take the time to be compassionate in how we share what's going on. To see the other person's perspective, to also know and believe that most people's intention is really good. You know, I believe deeply that teachers, most teachers are doing it because they deeply care about kids and they want to see them succeed. They, they are passionate about the work and, and so we all have a responsibility, me as a parent, all the parents listening to this and teachers, to see, try to see the other's perspective from a place of compassion.

Seth: Yeah, that's perfect. I'll mention the first two and then we'll go onto the next one where I have more to say. So number one of four was we need to work together and we're here for the kids. Number two is we need to be compassionate with each other and see each other's perspective because us teachers and parents are all struggling to serve the kids and we all have valid things that need to be heard. Number three,

Debbie: I love the way you recap. Okay. Number three is so critical and this is what I spend most of my time doing, but with my community, we as the adults in the room need to be doing the work on ourselves. So we, change takes intention, changing mindsets, reframing our experience, showing up in a compassionate way. It requires that we get honest with ourselves and uncover things that may be preventing us from doing that. And it takes work. I show up every day doing work on myself and reframing beliefs that I have that might not be serving my kids or my community. And so we all have to show up to do this. It's not going to happen if we don't do that.

Seth: Yeah, and I definitely have the same thing like we need to be doing our own deep inner work. That means that the people that are listening and watching, if we really want to help kids, we all need to do the difficult looking at our skeletons in the closet. We need to deal with our old dysfunctional family stuff. We've all got it. There's no shame in it. I'm so sick and tired of people thinking that they have to be perfect. We've all got dysfunction. We've all got junk. We've all got baggage. There is nothing wrong with that and as long as we hide from that, we can't do anything about it. Debbie and I are both people who do a lot of work on ourselves. There is no shame in that.

You know, I've been to many therapists in my lifetime. I love therapists. Thank you all the therapists out there for all the work you do, but I use them. This isn't just for our kids. This is for us as adults to deal with our own baggage and deal and become better human beings and deal with the scary stuff that we don't

want to look at. And the fact that we have fears and we have vulnerabilities and we can be selfish and we can be dishonest and we can do things that are wrong. We've hurt people. And we can work on this stuff and we need to, if we want to, you know, expect kids to be great people, we need to do our own difficult, deep inner work, our own journaling, our own self development, our own therapy, our own, you know, being vulnerable and saying, Hey, I'm human.

I messed up. I want help. I want to be better. Learning how to ask for help. If we want our kids to ask for help, we have to ask for help. This goes for everybody, parents, teachers, everybody, all, all of us here. You know, the only reason I'm able to do my work today is because I dove deep and worked on, on my stuff and it was, and is, the hardest thing ever. But the rewards are amazing. I'm a free human being. I'm free in my mind. Now I'm getting ranty, Debbie, but I did a 10 day meditation retreat a year and a half ago and one of the takeaways from that was, wow, I'm in a pretty good place. I have done my work. I am not perfect. But you know, I had 10 days to really reflect.

But we, we can face the scary stuff, the things we don't like about ourselves and the fears we have. We can walk through this stuff and walk out the other side and be like, okay, you know, I'm, I'm okay. Not perfect. I'm not horrible. And anyhow, we need to do the deep inner work. So anyhow, Debbie and I were just both like, look, if there are these four takeaways in the, if there, if we want to help kids, what do we need? Part of what we need is to do our work, to model for kids that we care enough about ourself. That we actually are modeling that we do it too. We're not just saying, hey kid, you need to shape up, you need to do this, you need to do that. You know, we walk, walk the walk.

Debbie: Absolutely. 100% what you said. So let's move on to our closing. Yeah?

Seth: Yep.

Debbie: I'll say a few words and then I want to hear what you have to share. But, yeah, I guess, again, just to,

Seth: Oh we did, we did the three and four together.

Debbie: We combined them. They were kind of combined. Okay. So we just want to reiterate kind of in closing again, you know, first of all, I just want to thank you, if you are an educator or an administrator, you work in the education space for listening and watching this. I'm so excited about the potential for what we can do together and I value and respect the work that you do. I just want to say that I am so grateful for the teachers in Asher's life right now. That's my ninth grader. He's got incredible teachers who see him and, and he loves going to school now and I'm so grateful for that. And so just know that we want to be a part of this conversation. We want to, I want to help my community join the teaching community. I want us to have these more meaningful conversations and really see each other and stop having antagonistic relationships or feeling like we're walking on eggshells and feeling stuck and like we don't know how to communicate. So that's where I'm coming from in this. And I hope again that this is the first of many conversations where we can, we can do this. I believe so

deeply that we can do this, that we are not stuck and there is a way to move forward and see progress together. So that's what I have to say and some, how about you Seth?

Seth: Same thing. Teachers, thank you, thank you, thank you. We need you. You have the most important job in the world. We appreciate you and we value you and we want to support you and we are all on the same team for the kids. Thank you. Please stay teaching. We need you. We need great people who care about kids to continue to develop their skills. We quite literally need you.

Debbie: And I'll just say that we want to hear from you. I would love to know just personally what you need more of from my community, but even, but even taking a zoom out, Seth and I have put together a Google form where we want you to, it won't take long, it's super simple, but just whether you're a parent, whether you're a teacher, you're an administrator, wherever you're coming to this conversation from, we would love to hear what your number one takeaway was or if you had an aha moment and something that really jumped out at you or struck you. And then we also, we asked you at the beginning of this conversation to think about what problems come to mind. If there's something that we didn't cover that you're like, wow, I really wish they would have touched upon this. Tell us. Because again, we're going to do this again and we, we're committed to being a part of this solution, whatever that solution looks like. We want to play a role in that. So please consider this the start of a conversation.

Seth: And I don't have much to say. I'm just, I'm imagining teachers getting all the way to the end of this conversation. I'm just feeling so much gratitude because this is deeply meaningful to Debbie and I and to all the parents listening in. Obviously if you're listening, we just appreciate that you care enough to take this very seriously and to be a part of, of the answers more than the problems. And, thank you. Just deep, deep, deep gratitude. Thank you for what you do for our kids.

Debbie: Yes, thank you. Thank you. And Seth, I just need to give a little thank you to you. As always, I love having conversations with you about the stuff we talk about this stuff even when we're not recording. So, I'm just grateful for the way that you continue to show up and do this work and so happy that we can join forces and amplify this. So thank you.

Seth: Great word, amplify it. Thank you. It happens to be a guitar word too. And, yeah, and I guess in closing, to amplify the message, please, parents, teachers, anybody listening, please take a moment right now to share this with somebody who you think should hear it. That's how we get the word out. So please take a moment right now, just click share. I don't care where or how but share this conversation with someone who it matters to.

Debbie: Awesome. Alright. Bye everybody.

Seth: Bye.

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

- Seth Perler's website
- Seth Perler's YouTube Channel
- Introduction to Dr. Stephen Porges' Polyvagal Theory
- Becky Bailey and Conscious Discipline
- Dr. Melanie Hayes