

Shane Trotter - Episode 807

Sat, Aug 12, 2023 5:07PM 1:59:48

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

kids, teachers, people, learning, students, education, talk, give, today, smartphone, parents, norms, health, understand, world, point, athlete, educators, change, test

SPEAKERS

James Geering, Shane Trotter

J James Geering 00:00

Welcome to the behind the shield podcast. As always, my name is James Geering. And this week, it is my absolute honor to welcome on the show educator strength and conditioning coach, and the author of the book setting the bar, Shane Trotter. So in this conversation, we discuss a host of topics from Shane's early life, his journey into education, training the youth athlete, creating an environment for kids to thrive, standardized testing, student mental health, physical education, and so much more. Now, before we get to this incredible conversation, as I say, every week, please just take a moment, go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the show, leave feedback and leave a rating. Every single five star rating truly does elevate this podcast, therefore making it easier for others to find. And this is a free library of over 800 episodes now. So all I ask in return is that you help share these incredible men and women's stories, so I can get them to every single person on planet earth who needs to hear that. So with that being said, I introduce to you, Shane Trotter enjoy So Shane, I want to start by saying Firstly, thank you to Phil white for connecting us and secondly, to welcome you on to the behind the shield podcast today.

S Shane Trotter 01:41

Thank you, James. Yeah, it's a pleasure to be here. And absolutely, thank you, Phil white. Yeah, he's he's amazing guy and a great mentor and thrilled to be here.

J James Geering 01:51

So we you have written an incredible book, as we discussed, before we hit record, there's a lot of perspectives and passions that we definitely align with. But I'd love to start with your own personal journey and kind of walk to the point where you even decide to write it. So let's start at the very, very beginning. Where were you born? And tell me a little bit about your family dynamic what your parents did and how many siblings?



02:13

Okay, yeah, so I was born in Anchorage, Alaska, or actually Elmendorf Air Force Base, my dad was, my dad explains a lot of my unique perspective on the world. I think my dad was an emergency room physician who left the emergency room while he was an ER doctor, he got his PhD in philosophy, and he left the emergency room to get into doctoral philosophy and medical ethics. So you know, just very wide ranging, he was also a black belt and kind of an adrenaline junkie, just to just to not stereotypical person. And so that that definitely influenced me a lot. We talked a lot about honor and, you know, kind of virtues growing up at the dinner table, which is abnormal. So all that was in me, and you know, I was born in Alaska, like I said, we moved a little bit, I ended up going through high school, mostly in the St. Louis area, the Illinois side of the Mississippi River. And, right, I knew I had phenomenal coaches and teachers I knew that I wanted to teach because some of my greatest influences were my coaches and teachers. So I went into education, intends to change the world, I was going to be the educator that, that, you know, that, that influenced people like like I was influenced, but that, you know, I heard about the flaws in the American education system, and I was hell bent on changing them all by myself. And I got into education and was really mystified by just how low the standards were and how many roadblocks that were took to doing what was right. And in creating the impact that I wanted to create. I eventually I gravitated towards strength and conditioning. Because here in Texas, athletics are a big deal. And I found it to be one of the few places where you could really push people towards excellence. But I find that that's a little bit misleading for a lot of people. Because I am a giant nerd I Love You know, I'm a history major. But I love learning in general, I have a passion for psychology, for really every aspect of every subject and aspect of human development. So, you know, I did not leave the classroom for lack of love for education. It's my truest passion of thinking about how education should look and trying to meet those needs is my truest passion. But I did find an avenue to to become a full time strength and conditioning coordinator, which has really opened up a lot more autonomy in my work schedule, which has allowed me to do a lot more writing and pouring into some of my other creative projects. So that's what led me there.



James Geering 05:18

All right, I'm gonna go all the way back to the beginning. So an ER physician, who decides to go down the route of philosophy, but then specializes on medical ethics. What was some of the common denominators that your dad had frustrations with when it came to the world of medicine?



05:39

The bureaucracy is that my dad has no patience for bureaucracy and for nonsensical roadblocks to doing what is right. And he's has a lot of stories about people who kind of get drunk with their own power bureaucrat to get drunk with her own power. And they're thrilled to come in and try to write people up on these minor infractions, without any recognition for the fact that they're, they're getting in the way of people who are trying to save other people's lives. I have a feeling that resonates with you.



James Geering 06:17

I got a lot of people listening to their heads nodding right now. Yeah, yep. I know exactly what you're saying.

 06:23

Yes, so that was that was a lot of what frustrated my dad that he could not stand. He is probably libertarian, somewhat libertarian by politics, but definitely libertarian by disposition. And, and, yeah, he's definitely inculcated a strong sense of commitment to do what's right, not what is what is policy, per se, but the right thing in me. So yeah,

 James Geering 06:59

now what martial arts? Was he doing? What was he a black belt and

 07:03

kama Bucha chi, which is just a form of, you know, it's a, it's a karate. And he, yeah, he was actually on the cover of Black Belt magazine at one point, which was pretty cool. For me it, you know, my adolescent age.

 James Geering 07:22

So we're gonna obviously get into a whole bunch of subjects, from parenting, from social media, in all these, these influences that are definitely creating a more challenging environment for a young boy or girl to thrive. When you look back at your childhood, because I look back at mine, I grew up in a farm in England, almost every single meal was around the kitchen table, it lasted, you know, especially the Sunday roast and those kind of things that would last like two hours, you know, just conversation. You know, all these different types of people walk through the door from from literally travelers and Gypsies through the extended royal family. So I was so fortunate, which is why I try not to be kind of condescending in the interviews, because I was very fortunate to be raised in an environment that really did set me up for success. I mean, obviously, you know, there were there was an orchard, you know, there was a vegetable garden with all the things I had to work with my hands and muck out stables and lamb sheep. And so I had all the things that, you know, realize kids today, you know, that I had that upbringing that was so fortunate, but so many people don't. When you look back at yours, what was some of the elements that were in your childhood that allows you to have the perspective of some of the problems today?

 08:35

Well, I mean, first and foremost, just to, to, to have a strong sense of a virtue of what virtue was, this was, you know, these, these were vague concepts in my family. They were things we talked about at the dinner table. They really, and we talked about heroes, and we had a strong sense of what, you know, who were heroes, we we told, you know, there were these stories that we told, you know, that very clear ideas ahead of, you know, John McCain and his experience in

Vietnam War of Pat Tillman, and, you know, so, so just that clarity of what it meant to live a good life and of what the expectations were that there was, you know, that there were things that were a lot more important than being happy in any moment or you know, it just feeling good. So, I think that in itself was unique. The, you know, the other thing philosopher for father debate was in the water, you know, our, our home was an idea lab, it was never, there was never any sense that your opinion was should should just be you know, your opinion should be respected just because You had it, you know, I, you know, the concept of truth was really important to us. Other things, advantages I had for sure they my father at a really young age, you know, he made it a habit of at the dinner table quizzing us on things. I remember in fourth grade, the teacher didn't believe that I could name all the presidents in order. And, you know, when I did, you know, I had this great sense of pride, and that's, you know, kind of led me to love history to enter to take pride in learning. Reading was that it was like, it was a duty growing up, like it was something that, you know, I just assumed every single adult was reading books, as you know, just as a way of being in the world. You know, so those were kind of attitudes and dispositions and expectations that were set for me as a young person, you know, we we were athletes, there was an expectation of kind of kind of being an athlete taking care of yourself in that regard. So so a lot of those a lot of that, that I guess that those expectations about how the world works and what it meant to be a good person in this world. I certainly took for granted as a as a high schooler but but I don't know.

 James Geering 11:26

Now you mentioned that the the household being athletes, your dad was a martial artists, did you go down that road? or were there other sports that you were passionate about?

 11:34

No, I did martial arts and elementary and then I, I kind of got to look at you with your T you're so pretty.

 James Geering 11:44

Screen T says Japanese. I'm very eclectic.

 11:50

Um, yeah, I drifted away from martial arts, football was really my sport. I loved football growing up American football. And, and, you know, I did track and field as well. But that was my main sport growing up. And but, you know, grew up playing outside all day long. That was another thing that's unique in my upbringing, I think is that there was especially comparable the day is there was an expectation that I was going to be outside all summer that I would be walking to school, that I would be, you know, just going to the park after school and playing with friends that that was normal for me, which certainly helped create a sense of confidence that I could go out in the world and a love for, you know, being outside playing, you know, that continues today.

 James Geering 12:41

Now, what about career aspirations? When you were in the high school age, what were you dreaming of becoming?

 12:46

You know, it was really, I wanted to be a middle linebacker for the Chicago Bears. And then around high school, I think I let that that dream go away. And it shifted pretty quickly to becoming a high school teacher. And that was just because my greatest influences were high school teachers. I certainly flirted with the idea of wanting to go into the Marines or something like that, at times, I flirted with that as well. My brother was Army infantry. And so that was there was patriotism, and in a sense of duty to country was always there. But yeah, being a teacher, for the most part was my greatest aspiration. Throughout high school anyway, I didn't in college, I became a far better student. And I dug into my studies even more, and it's probably at that age, I started to think, maybe a little bit bigger, I have this natural love for learning and education. But I think I think, you know, I started to think, you know, potentially, that I could start a school someday, or maybe do something a little bit more entrepreneurial, which is still in there.

 James Geering 14:07

Well, you have this lens. Now, as an educator, when you think back to being a student, what are the pros and the cons of the way your schooling was as a child?

 14:19

Um, the pros were, I had very, I had very good teachers, where I grew up. Most of my teachers had a master's degree in their content area, that that was how it was structured in Illinois, which is fantastic. It's not been my experience in Texas. So that was, that was really neat. So there was there was an expectation that there would be, you know, for example, in history or social studies courses that there would be essay and short answer on every single test, that there was a lot of reading and even in high school, so that I was I found myself far more prepared for college than most of my peers. And I thought that was fantastic. The, you know, some of the, the less the not so good elements of school are really what I still see today. You know, there's there's little little to no instruction in, in personal Psychology and Organizational practices in how to there were probably wasn't enough Socratic debates and exposure to basic logic and learning the, you know, those foundational logical fallacies so that you could poke holes in arguments. So, so that was lacking. But you know, also just that health and school in general, it was that way when I wasn't in school, and it's certainly that way, the day that the, the, you're basically in a, in, in a poor health factory that pumps out a lot of unhealthy people, you know, there's vending machines everywhere. So that lunch, sweets at lunch, the norms, the typical structure, what you're led to believe is normal is, is a recipe for for lifelong poor health unless you figure out how to change it.

 James Geering 16:18

So you get into education, you have a love for history, before we even get into your kind of educational journey and out the other side, kind of educate us all on the evolution or one could argue the devolution of the way school is today. I know that, you know, it was a certain way the kind of small town schoolhouse, and then if I'm not mistaken, the kind of industrial revolution paid into it. And we're starting to groom people not a bit more to be able to work in an office or a factory. I know those were influences. But you know, you're you're the expert, and this kind of walk us through, was it better at a certain period in our history? And how have we got to where we are today?

 17:01

Oh, yeah, I mean, you, you have the one room schoolhouse. And then of course, as you said, it kind of becomes an industrial model where you're trying to pump out and you know, industrial workers who are very good at doing a being a cog in a machine. And of course, there's the the Dewey progressive revolution to where we start to think more about, you know, the Dewey progressive approach to education is, is a lot more individualized, there's a lot less emphasis on character, and a and a, I guess, a classical approach to education, and in a lot more, you know, kind of this, this sense that, that everyone will, will learn what they need to do by following their own their own passions. And I don't know that I find that all bad, I do love a classical approach to education, because I think that there's a strong sense of commitment to finding what is true, what is good, and what is beautiful and organizing, a an education around the the importance of learning as a way of being rather than learning for a career. I think that's a very important distinction to make. Learning as a way of being versus, you know, learning, because I need this specific, this specific skill and in, in the workforce, I think that's an especially important distinction to make today. Because the jobs of the world, we have no idea what careers are, are, our children are going to need need to be prepared for. But then what they need is they need to know how to how to learn, they need to, to know how to poke holes in arguments to to strive towards truth. And they need to, to discover a real love of learning. Because I don't think that you learn anything at a deep level without some sort of intrinsic motivation. And so, that is certainly lacking today, if you want to track what, where education has gone wrong. There the incentives in education today are such that you are the overwhelming emphasis is on the lowest common denominator. The there's very little that is pulling people to aspire the standardized tests, for example, the Texas standardized tests for freshmen in biology, it's the STAR test. You know, we will brag about how over 90% of our students passed the star biology test. But what we don't tell people is that the passing standard is 18 correct out of 54 questions, and this is the sort of thing, there's this sort of magic trick, we play a play all the time. What that does is, in effect is it puts takes a teacher, and it puts all their attention on those that are failing the test. And we can, you know, teachers can know, with relative certainty that, you know, students coming from from, from, you know, good homes that have some sort of academic expectation of them, you don't have to worry about, they're going to pass these tests. So the teacher is led to put all their attention on that lowest common denominator and to take that, you know, a few steps further, you know, there's IEP s, there's five oh, fours, these are legal documents that are sometimes extremely extensive, and they have very unrealistic expectations of the accommodations that a teacher is supposed to be able to, to maintain for someone with some sort of learning disability or, you know, etc. And so again, these are legal documents, it takes, you know, you, you create a situation where teachers are having to juggle five, six, you know, sometimes it's been a 10 of the students in their class and their specific accommodation. And it creates a scenario where the teachers can hardly you know, they only have so much attention and energy, and it's all going to those to

those students and it and, you know, so you're incentivizing teachers to, you know, we've gotten to a point now, where, in the standard educational classroom, almost no one is doing an essay test outside of English, there's, you know, not near enough writing, which is particularly problematic in a world of AI. And, you know, we've gotten to a point where we're note taking, unless you're in an AP or, or, you know, college, college, equivalent course, you're not taking notes, you know, we're having students, you know, fill in the blank notes. And there's also this kind of deification of technology, rather than understanding that the, that the, you know, that AI is so powerful that it requires a deeper capacity to think and a and work rather than understand that we've kind of allowed technology to substitute for human capacity. So to we've participated in our own human evolution, and deified just any use of technology in the classroom is seen as a great thing. And so, you know, this is, this is the exact opposite of what you need in in a in the modern world. But, uh, but so those are, if I had to pinpoint some of the most problematic trends in education, those, those are them.

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James Geering 23:01

I'm saying that from where I'm at, at the moment through AI, and I've had people say, I'm writing a book at the moment, say, Oh, you can use AI and then it can, you know, write a chapter for you, and then you can move it around. I'm like, that sounds fucking awful. Opposite of creativity. You know, that's back to like you said, I'll just, it's like the the, the career tests, you know, us back in the day used to plug in your information about Yeah, you're done as a box of rocks. You could be a plumber, or, you know, sir, could scrape toilets for a living, you know, good luck, kid. And it was the same thing. It was two dimensional, you know? bullshitters. So yeah, I mean, technology is amazing. We're, exactly and we're doing this now through space. So it's incredible. It's mind blowing. However, yeah, there's there's this leaning in. And this is what I see now. Oh, if you want to put content out in AI, is it you know, chat a GPT, or whatever it is? Someone told me and I tried it. I'm like, This is terrible. Absolutely. For me. Like if you're a creative person who speaks from the heart, this has no place whatsoever. Now the AI that's transcribing this conversation is pretty amazing. Yeah. So put it into words. So I don't have to sit there and type which I wouldn't do. You know, the Skype, though, I mean, the zoom that we're talking about phenomenal. But absolutely. When it comes to the effort and the personal creativity and that love of learning, if you're not careful, you like our little autocorrect you don't know how to spell you're fine. And now the you know, the entire system goes on one day. And we got a bunch of people that speaking in, you know, lol.

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24:30

Oh, absolutely. Yeah, in so often, it seems like the people who make projections as to what this technology is going to mean at the outset. Their projections are so silly. And you're kind of two dimensional, as you say. It's just, it doesn't even make sense. I remember to give any idea of the sort of short sighted thinking that's so common in education. I remember when I first got in, there was so much talk in education about history. not really being important to kids anymore, because they could just Wikipedia everything. And it's like you're you fundamentally don't understand the value of history, you know, looking dates up was never the point of history. It was about understanding principles about the organization of human societies that you can see recurring throughout time. And it's about understanding context, right, the context of an era and how it creates certain trends. It's about you know, you know, for example, the understanding the role of technology throughout history and time and place, the role of

disease, whatever it is, it takes a lot of context, you need to be able to reference many, many, many different scenarios and situations, to be able to really understand how, how different elements work throughout history. So, you know, the idea that you can look something up on Wikipedia doesn't, doesn't, doesn't make history less valuable. The reality is, in a world where there is this much content, and this much information being thrown in at us at all times, where there's so many different perspectives, it's more important than ever, that we understand history, so that we can make sense of, you know, arguments and kind of pick out what opinions are BS and not. So, you know, this is the sort of thing that's so common with, with new technology.

 James Geering 26:44

So one of the things I think that is terrifying, and you hear this push to, you know, removing books from schools, you know, but then there's other ones that are totally fine, that are talking about some obscure stuff, you know, so that's, that's a whole separate conversation. But I want to kind of get your perspective on this. As I've got older, and I've learned more, and I've become slightly wiser. And I always was into, I was into history and the world, and definitely the kindness and compassion side. And it stayed with me my whole life. So like, when I was really young, I was reading about Stanley and Livingstone and discovering Victoria Falls, and how he helped, you know, basically began the abolition of slavery by the British, and that, you know, that was endearing to me, I watched, you know, Cry Freedom instead of Robocop at the cinema one day, partly because I wouldn't, they wouldn't let me watch Robocop, but, you know, I was blown away. And I was bawling at the end, you know, of the atrocities that was going on there, and that particular event. But now, so here I am now, you know, firefighter for 14 years, a very unique perspective on the world. And I'm looking back and going, there is a glaring common denominator when it comes to suffering and war and death. And that is when a tyrannical few get to the point where they can, you know, corral the masses, and get them to do things that they probably never would have fucking done if that person was never there. And we see it time and time and time again, you know, we'd been slavery with genocide with and I would argue now, the division of the last two, you know, political parties, different color tie, same exact shitbag trying to deliver to separate people, rather than bring them together. So why is it that we're not learning this lesson when it's so glaring century after century that the people, if kept together as a community, rather than divided, actually do want to cohabit and do want to live in a relatively peaceful world? And but you know, over and over again, a small group of people seem to dupe at the masses in their country?

 28:48

Well, I mean, that's, that's a great question. I think it's extremely complex. A large reason is that we don't learn history, and that the nature of the world is to be unequal. And to be, you know, economics is about how to deal with scarcity. There's a scarcity of the things we want, how to make decisions when there's an opportunity cost. And because our own personal interests are often at odds with each other, and we struggle to compromise. It's very easy for people that are not well educated for people that are have not learned the importance of compromise and dialogue, it's very easy to just get upset and point the finger and to do us versus them. So that's something that people who want power have been able to play on for a long time, particularly when there are when we don't know our history. And the thing that is makes this this even easier today, obviously social media, which is It's built to play on our

emotions and to make us more emotional and to give us a very, you know, a siloed perspective so that we are even, even even more prone to confirmation bias and not able to see other people's perspectives. But even more, not just social media, these are kind of your stereotypical responses, I think, also, you have to factor in the amount of entertainment. In 1985, a guy named Neil Postman wrote a book called entertaining ourselves to death. And basically, at the time, it's the rise of cable, and we just have so it's so easy to be distracted. And to, to kind of just not do the work to have anything but a superficial understanding. And so, that's, of course, only gotten worse since 1985. You know, we're, we're almost 40 years later. And, you know, the amount of you know, we are truly entertaining ourselves to death by and large. So I think those are, those are the many factors that go into that.

 James Geering 31:15

Well, I appreciate your perspective. Getting back to your kind of journey as you started being taught how to be an educator, I think the problem is, again, is like you said, it's that black and white conversation with so many things, you know, are these frickin teachers, they're not doing their job? Well, I would argue there's some great teachers, there's some terrible teachers in a very broken system. And I know, lucky, very, very lucky, my son. I mean, I got to see both, I got to see phenomenal teachers, mostly, I had an issue where a principal deviated from all written protocols, and it ended up with my son being sent in a semi to our psychiatric hold completely for no reason, like completely unjustified. So technically kidnap my child. And, and there was the SRO, the, the school resource officer was a part of that too. And basically, a couple of jobs worth wanted to just get on with their their evening. And, you know, didn't even contact me, the parent, I actually found out by trying to find out why the hell he hadn't got home already. So it completely, you know, fucking awful, but he has had some phenomenal teachers outside of that. And I've never one to paint, you know, entire group just because of a bad experience. So I know there are some amazing men and women that spent, you know, a lot of money out their own pocket just to put things in their classroom, and they'll maybe take care of some of the kids that they know, you know, maybe aren't eating or in the clothes, or whatever it is. So some beautiful humans in education. But as with medicine, I'm sure your dad talks about this, that you're not taught about exercise and nutrition and sleep and the proactive preventative elements. What was some of the glaring things that you saw with the educational preparation of a teacher and through your eyes?

 32:57

Well, that's a great question. I had a few phenomenal educational Professor professors, and in the education department at TCU, where I went, most notably, my educational psychology teacher, that was phenomenal. And if I can say anything, it's that most teachers I know, don't get that background. The big, glaring missing element in most teachers educational background, is that they have no training to understand. Most educators have no idea how people learn the psychology of how people learn best, they don't they do not understand how to study. You know, all you know, there's a great book called Ultra learning. But there's a science behind how people learn best. And we, most educators are never taught that and they never teach students that which is a glaring issue. The, you know, the other thing is, is that there is too much in education, there's too much kind of a kumbaya approach to teaching. It's very it's not a hard science in any way, shape, or form. So too much of it is is you feel this way, or are we just say these broad statements like, like, you know, I'm trying to think of a specific

one, but we say these broad statements about, you know, it's important to, to, to, you know, give students to recognize that modern students are often very distracted. So to give them a lot of options for for, you know, searching the web have been doing things like that these are things that you're told, but they don't have any bearing and like help how students actually learn or the or the needs of the student. So those of them obviously, we don't teach our teachers how to be healthy, we don't really do a good job of giving our educators access to, to wellness, to resources to, to promote their own wellness, which is going to transfer down to their students. So those are issues too. But yeah, the biggest thing is that, that education is just not a hard science that we don't teach. We don't teach students. We don't teach teachers how to learn. We don't teach the science of learning. We don't teach teachers how to think clearly, to, you know, basic logic, logical fallacies. So that, you know, we get into education, and there's not very concrete direction on what actually matters. I would say that there's kind of this dogma amongst educators that you need to be a trained educator to become an educator, and you know, so there's a lot of emphasis on, on that public schools are better than private schools, and all these other realms, because we are trained educators, we're trained to be educators where you can go be a high school teacher, and you don't necessarily have to have a degree in education, or an educational certification. And my experience is that you learned that you learn to be a teacher, by teacher, it's the only the only real, really valuable training and education I've had was my student teaching was getting in there and actually doing the thing. And that most talented people with leadership qualities can be good teachers, that there are many teachers that are not good teachers. And there are many, like you said, that are amazing human beings, amazing teachers. And, but that that that dogma doesn't doesn't really hold true. In my experience,

 James Geering 37:14

I had a gentleman on Pasi Sahlberg, who's educated from Finland, he now lives in Australia, but he tours the world talking about the Finnish education system, which I think was most, you know, holding on the pinnacle. And it was incredible to hear just how different it was. And they looked at the child as the holistic human being, you know, like you said, it wasn't, I remember my son, I think he was eight, doing a three hour standardized test an eight year old sitting in front of a computer for three hours, you know, their, their school day is shorter, they actually bolster the schools that are, you know, struggling, whether it's, you know, socio economic, whatever it is, that creates more trouble in that area. They actually give more resources more funding to, but also he I remember him saying that the teaching route, you had a much higher level of training, you know, I think it was, as you said, like a master's level. When you look at our system now, are there other countries or maybe even small areas in the US that are doing it differently? You think that we should push towards that model?

 38:16

Yeah, I mean, I've read a lot and written a lot about the finished model, you know, that the whole child approach? You know, I know that every single student in Finland gets PE, and art in music every single day, or art or music every single day. And that, that seems obvious to me, the the I've written actually a initiative in my own district that has been used by by my son's Elementary School, where we're there, they're now required to get three recesses a day throughout elementary. That, to me, seems seems fundamental. So just looking at, you know, you can't, you have to honor basic human needs. It's, you know, any, any writer, any anyone

who wants to be productive, they still have to honor their need for sleep. You can't just say, oh, you know, I could get more done. If I had 24 hours to work every day, you will, you will be far less effective. And that's actually one thing I found writing my book is that when I was pushing way too hard, when I was trying to write for, you know, eight hours a day, and not sleeping enough, because I was trying to find more time to write, I created crap. I created more issues than I solved. And, you know, when I finally scaled back and limited myself to three hours a day, you know, it really popped out. It was crisp, it was clean, it worked. And so they're just basic, you know, finite human realities. And so, yeah, the Finnish system does a great job of that. I'm sure that there are different areas of the country that do it better. For example, here in Texas, the the incentive structure, I think, does not promote a high enough level of teaching. That's not to say there aren't amazing teachers, or, you know, some of the best teachers I've ever met are here in Texas, at, you know, at the school I work at. But the, the way our PayScale works is you come in making pretty good money actually. But there is really no incentive to get a masters. And so particularly not a master's in your own content area, the pay bump for getting a masters is only like to \$1,000. So there's almost no incentive to go get a masters. And that's per year, you know, before taxes. So there's almost no incentive to get a masters in your content area, the people that go get masters get to get a masters in admin, and it's just a route to get out of the classroom. And you see that a lot. And, and so the, you know, that, in my, in my experience, this, the standard of scholarship is lower, because you don't have people that are actual scholars in their subject. In Illinois, where I grew up, the nearly every teacher I ever had had a master's in their content area, because the pay bump was so substantial for you to do that. So that created, you know, these were people that were true scholars in their content area, you know, I remember my teachers would put, you know, on their off period, they'd come to another teacher history teacher I have, and you'd see them start debating things, and there was this real passion for the subject area. So, you know, I think that that is something that from state to state might be different. You know, so I'm sure that there's a broad range of differences from state to state, to your point. There is definitely room in my opinion, for far better professional development for educators. The, you know, basic understandings of, of human psychology, of cognitive biases, you know, an understanding of the mental health, you know, the causes of this mental health epidemic is too often the approach in education is, rather than to educate people about mental health and the causes of this mental health epidemic, we just kind of give this band aid approach everyone play these socio emotional learning videos for your, your class. So we don't prepare the teacher teach the teacher or you know, even expect anyone, you know, I don't know, hardly anyone in this giant school district I work in who has who understands these basic psycho psychological principles that can help under Help people understand what is going on. With the mental health epidemic right now. I mean, it's very basic stuff that all teachers should be taught, we don't bring anyone into teach teachers and develop them and give them an understanding. We just kind of give this blanket or play these videos, you know, and they're very superficial videos and give you an example. There's a, you know, anxiety, I had an anxiety disorder in college. So I learned it inside and out, it's the most, I've often said, The most important thing that ever happened to me, you know, I've grew a ton, it changed me entirely. It changed my outlook on the world and my passion. But I had to really dig into human psychology and understand psychology in order to work through this. Now anxiety is a very, very treatable, very well understood psychological phenomenon. One of the, you know, the, probably the most well founded solution for it is exposure therapy. And basically, you know, an example of that is, if you have a phobia of fiber of spiders, you know, anxiety, you know, through exposure therapy with a good, good psychologist, you can usually be able to hold a tarantula within two hours, you know, they kind of gradually increase your, you know, they habituate you to, to more and more anxiety. Same thing with elevators, ladders, whatever the phobia is, right? So avoidance creates greater anxiety avoidance is this big issue with anxiety would be really, really nice for teachers to

understand this kind of basic psychological principle. There's actually a lot of success that there's an organization called space, supportive parenting for anxious childhood emotions, where they help treat childhood anxiety by bringing the parents in for training. Leave the kid at home, the kid has anxiety, leave the kid at home, come in and we're going to teach you how to stop accommodating your students anxiety or your child's anxiety. And they've had phenomenal success with this, this form of treatment, all as to say that, you know, that's the sort of training that every education educator in America would benefit from, you know, this this bit, you know, we have anxious people all over. But but that you don't really see in public education today.

 James Geering 45:19

Well, speaking of adding more education in the fire service, our actual hands on, you know, the trade school element of our training as fire academy EMT, you know, paramedic, very, you know, work related job specific skills, which are incredible, and a fraction of the cost of higher education. I went to University of North London and graduated also from the University of Florida here with my just my bachelor's and, you know, comparing and contrasting, usable skills, especially dollar for credit, you know, the trade school blue, higher education out the war, yeah. And I've watched my wife go through, she's in optometry school now. So she's becoming a physician or physician of Optometry. But all of the prereqs that she had to do, I mean, years worth of prereqs, high level math and, you know, multiple Englishes. And, and you're like this, you're not using this in this profession. So in my, my kind of view on especially American higher education is, it's become such an industry that there's almost a what's the right word, disassociation between the career you're supposed to be sending someone's awards and just patting the shit out of their Courseload. So you can make 10s of 1000s more dollars. So in the fire service, for example, it's a shame that we don't have higher levels of courses that include special operations training, and, you know, like a higher level of Paramedicine, and things that you could create higher education, but still more job specific. But like you said, it goes to the admin side, like, Oh, you want to go sit behind the desk one day, well, then take these classes, and you'll have all the pieces of paper that you need. So with that lens, you know, there's there's a yearning for more education and a lot of professions. What is your perspective of higher education? And again, king for a day? How can we change it so that a young man or woman that is basically going to voluntarily put themselves in debt to better their career actually gets the most efficient education they can for the lowest amount of money?

 47:27

Oh, boy, that's a great question. I would say that, it starts thinking about that starts with high school. Now they have all these, you know, kind of silly ideas now that we should, you know, that we all need a college education. So we should, we should fund that now, you know, not just to fund a public education fund fund all the way through college education. I think the reality is that we waste a ton of time, there are some fundamental, truly core to thrive, subjects that all people need. And we mostly neglect them in high school. And so we spend, on top of that, we spend far more time teaching spend far more time in our standard education than we need to, you know, students, students could could finish that in far less time, and get out there into the real world. far earlier, I think that most men and most young young men are not ready at age 18. To, to appreciate a college education. The the standard approach, in attitude towards college that I see is that I need to pay this money so that I can get this degree so I can

go out and get a job. So I, I think that the norm structure should be flipped, more or less, I think that most men I've seen that have actually benefited from their college education are those that go into the military, then they come back to it when they're 25. Or they go get a job, they're in a trade, and then they decide they want to change, change careers around age 25. And then they take it seriously. I think it's far too big of an investment to just kind of blanket say that today's 18 year old, so, you know, long life strategy, we're less mature at 18 than we were 20 years ago, today's 18 year olds who are less mature than those 20 years ago, should go in and should spend, you know, over \$100,000 over the course of four years for an education. The diploma is now far far more expensive, and far, far less valuable than it's ever been before. You know, it used to be that you know, for not very much money, you could get a college degree. And it would be it would guarantee you long term employment with benefits at a fantastic company. That's just not the reality today. You can also look at the great inflation in college. It's It's dramatic. The number of hours on average that college students are spending per week is, you know where it was, I'm pretty sure this is outside of this in a couple of essays. But where it was over 40 hours a week in the in the 60s, it's less than 15 hours a week today. So everything is broken, when it comes to how we think about college education. I agree with you, I think that the best approach would be to most of most of what we're trying to teach in a liberal arts university. And most of what we need to teach students I think, could be done in less time. Or, or consolidated, at least through the standard education and done by the time were 18, I think at that point, it would make far more sense to kind of make make the training more. More in home, that, you know, as you're talking about, you know, that that each kind of more vocational, more of an apprentice model, that would make a lot more sense to me. But I don't have all the answers there. But I can tell you that the the the college education, the model that we have the kind of the standard path to success that we promised children is a broken model, and that parents need to, to question it and look for different routes. And, or, at least, at least, to be very intentional about the way they approach college, because I think most parents are wasting money on it on it on, basically, for their kids to get a degree that without learning much. And then they're going out in the world without and having to learn on the job, the skills they actually need.

J James Geering 51:52

Why No, and this is to be fair, this is the UK and the US, I did sports science and Exercise Physiology. So again, the goal was to Okay, I'm going to be very well versed in the world of coaching and it's going to help me as an athlete, but the classes were so myopic, in what you were studying, that I actually got so much more out of simply coaching at a CrossFit gym, taking, you know, strong fit certifications, and the T sack and NSCA, CSCS, and all these different things that you could literally do in a semester, that would give me the CSCs, you can do it in a semester. And that gives you pretty much the most respected strength conditioning certification. So ironically, I do it. Yeah. So then you have one of my semesters was simply the CSCs, it was a prep course. And then you took it at the end. So that was you know, that was the the lens that I had, it wasn't like I've never been to college and anti College is the opposite. So I can go to paramedic school for a year, and walk out the door, and then start cutting people's holes, you know, cutting people's throats open and sticking tubes down and putting needles in their chest, and you know, sending electricity through their body and deciding if they live, we know if we call them as we're going to work them or if they're going to die. I mean, it's it's insane the level of responsibility. And the same with the fire service, less than a year Fire Academy, you know, full time, I think it's like three months, I did it part time. So you know, you have these these professions where as you said, it's condensed, it's compressed to the point and as an understanding, as you said, we're teaching that that's giving you the toolbox, but

then it's you're on the job training that you're really going to learn how to do it. But what I saw with the higher education that you said is there's no real sense of a profession at the end of it, unless you're in law school or med school, something is very specific. And you're just kind of fumbling around these classes that don't even there's no synthesis between them. They don't they don't come together and give you purpose and give you a kind of a through Zed journey that on the back end, you're like, Alright, I'm employable, and well trained, let's do it. Yeah, they're



53:55

not a program to any, any destination. They are very, very rambling on it, forgetting it might be the Pareto Principle, or something. I think that's, I'm thinking of the right principle, but basically, it's work expands to fill the time you've allotted for it. And it strikes me that that's what we do in education over and over and over again, it's not about actually demonstrating a competency and a readiness, it's about okay, you know, right now society accepts that they're going to pay for college for four years, and we we've got a we've got a customer for four years. How do we feel that? You know, it's a very backwards model? You know, so often we forget the principle, you know, the principles behind things, the principle behind education is, you know, some sort of competency, some sort of disposition, some sort of readiness, and, and when you forget those things, and you just go count, you know, you kind of go unintentionally through a model, a checklist, just because it's there for you, that's what you get?



James Geering 55:06

Well, let's transition to the strength conditioning role. So you go in education, what takes you to, you know, to go into the kind of physical education side ultimately?



55:17

Well, you know, being an athlete and being someone who loves training myself, they I just, you know, it was a hobby that I learned a lot over the years, because I read it. And so when I got into education in Texas, I also got into coaching. And what I learned very quickly, you know, it kind of, I was the new guy on staff on the coaching staff, and I watched, how they, how that football team trained how basketball, everyone that conditioning, that lifting. And it was, it was quite obvious that, that everyone was kind of just doing stuff they had done, there was no rhyme or reason they, they weren't running programs, they didn't understand really simple, straightforward principles of strength and conditioning, you know, principles of training of, of trying to create specific adaptations in the body. And so there's an obvious need, in in Texas, there's, there's a need, and they they take sports really seriously. So I started to just kind of put thing bring research to coaches, you know, as they were designing their, their programs, Hey, have you seen this, Hey, here's an article on this, Hey, knows you're doing this, you know, that, you know, the research actually says that you should warm up this way. You know, I had I just kind of gradually did that. And over the course of a year, you know, Coach after coach on campus was like, Oh, well, you know, they were seeking me out to write their programs. So it was Right Place Right Time, to some degree there there throughout Texas, there were strength and conditioning coordinator with becoming a position where it hadn't been before. So there were a couple other ones throughout the state, and I sought them out, kind of talked to them

through what the route is to this or went out and got like the CSCs, like you talked about and few other certifications. And, and I wrote a proposal to my district to create this position. And we in you know, I got the athletic director on campus, in my corner, kind of fighting for that too. And, and that's how that was created. As I said, it was a it was kind of born out of the fact that you could strive for excellence and and athletics still, you could strive for athletics and training and physical training, where I didn't see really a route to do that very well. And in academics.

 James Geering 57:48

Well, I want to get to the physical education side, but before we do, it's a question I ask a lot of the coaches, especially if they work in colleges and schools, when I first moved to the US, and I apologize, people listen to this podcast, because I've told this quite a few times, but I was blown away by how many men predominantly I met, that were in their mid 20s 30 that had the same uncle Rico story, it was I could have should have would have been the next NBA, you know, whatever star if it wasn't for blowing out my knee, my shoulder, whatever. When I started thinking, What the fuck are they doing to children in this country, they're having, you know, geriatric injuries at in their teens or early 20s. So as I've progressed through and learn more obviously, myself as a coach and athlete, but also exposed to the education system through my boys, and then hearing, you know, the, the incredible coaches that are doing things differently, I realized that there was a very gray area between performance and the wellness of the of the athlete of the of the student. So for example, you've got the obese, you know, huge Junior, who's six foot three, and at the moment, 300 pounds, there's not a we need to get you losing some weight because of your health conversation. It's like you're a brick wall on the grid iron, let's get you bigger, and or the baseball pitcher. And this is again, to be fair, this obviously involves the parents too. And this whole conversation involves the parents and we'll get to that as well. But the kid that throws you know, 100,000 pitchers with the same arm goes to travel ball and summer camp and, and now all of a sudden, you know, again, 16 years old, his arms about to fall off. So you have a kind of unique lens, you're on the teaching side. Now you're on the strength conditioning side. What has been your perspective of that performance at the expense of wellness of some of our children?

 59:49

Oh, you couldn't have said it better. It is the the giant issue I see and I've done a lot of writing proposals in my district to affect health and wellness in the district. But this is a super tough cookie to crack. Here in Texas, I find that people do not value health that the norms are such that we are truly indoctrinating kids in norms that are going to kill them young and create lifetimes of poor health of lack of energy, of pain. And again, we're shortening their lifespan. So this is a big pet issue of mine. Sports is we've we've really divorced. The idea of health from sports, as wild as that is to say, but but we completely have. And, you know, part of that is the success of American football. As you know, you kind of reference the linemen example, gaining weight for football, this obsession with gaining weight, especially among linemen, you, you know, just treat their bodies like like, trash cans, basically. And they glorify that the, you know, the big uglies or whatever, it, it's truly, it's awful. And, you know, health has to be the the number one priority always, you know, sports are phenomenal, that teach, you know, so many life lessons, but first among them has to be a value for health and throughout life. So I couldn't agree more. There's studies I've cited and a lot of I recently gave a presentation on this, but there's a study that that's showing that in the last I think it's decade or two athletes are

actually more likely to be overweight and obese than then, you know, former athletes are more likely to be overweight and obese than those that were not a competitive athletes throughout throughout high school, which is terrifying and backwards in every way shape, or form. And fairly counterintuitive to and it really speaks to the to the issue. But you know, you see this you see this in every single sports program, you know that the foods they feed their their athletes throughout the season, when they're at a at, you know, at a game or whatever. There's kind of a culture starting at a young age and youth sports when we have the snack bag culture blows my mind when I take my kindergartener to, you know, to soccer game and the I mean, it's not it's not just an unhealthy snack. Now it's an it's a halloween bag full of unhealthy snacks, that we feel like we have to give our children. So yeah, it's a very, very frustrating culture. And to your point on the, you know, the the example of the baseball player baseball is, so this really gets into an entirely different arena, that is just as important to note, you know, two things are happening there. First, there's a lack of general physical preparation amongst athletes. And so you're taking a an athlete that is not very well developed, who sits inside, you know, who doesn't go outside and play as a way of being growing up, you know, who so they're not developing, they're just this general physical strength, well rounded, general physical preparation that the average kid would have 30 years ago, you know, playing outside climbing, the monkey bars playing tag, there's a lack of core strength, all these things going on. And so you take this, this young person who lacks general physical development, and then you hyper specialize them at a young age. And, and pretty quickly, you get them into a situation where they're playing year round sport, the same sport year round. This is something I've written on called the that I've called the culture of youth sports exploitation. And it's this really vicious circle where you, you know, it's most obvious in baseball, where you basically take a kid, you you make his entire life about baseball, often to the point where blows is UCL, and his entire life that was about, you know, getting a college, scholarship and baseball, which of course, will not be a full ride. And they finally get that and they play for a few years. And then they might even go you know, get drafted and you know, 200 or 300 Overall, and it's been a couple of years in, you know, one a professional ball, and then they come out the other side and they have no skills whatsoever, other than a fastball. And so they go into this, this this industry of, you know, becoming a of opening a baseball center. You know, they have batting cages and they then have to become part of the problem where they convince their their livelihood is based on convincing other parents that they need to put their children down the same exact model and pay them A year round because they were relying on, you know, to pay their bills, they're relying on these parents believing that they need to put their kids in year round sports and year round baseball. So it's it's become a very toxic environment. I don't know the answer, other than to inform parents. And I've said many times we have to do something to make it so that that the healthy choice is to put your kids in sports. Because you know, my wife and I talk all the time about, you know, what sports can we try to get our children into that are going to be healthy, long term for them.

J

James Geering 1:05:36

I'm very lucky, my son fell in love with running. I got him in martial arts, he did jiu jitsu for for a few years when he was younger, but then you got just then he is focused on the scholarship, his goal is actually to go to the veterinary school like his granddad, which, you know, again, super pliable, if he changes, you know, the day graduates, I told him, as long as you've got some ideas and things that you're passionate about, but even with the running, you know, he's getting the tightness in the knees. So I'm telling you, right, we're going to do some foundation

training, we're gonna do some, some some exercises, we're going to work on your posterior chain and get that balance back. But these very fortunate that is that least understand somewhat, you know, some of these issues because I was broken myself. Yeah,

 1:06:14

that's it. Can I ask you real quick? Do you have an opinion on shoes, footwear for runners?

 James Geering 1:06:20

I am. So again, I'm not a runner. And obviously, it depends on the terrain. Me personally, James Geering. I am a huge advocate and as much time as you can spend barefoot or minimal shoes as possible. To me that's the go to and actually took him shoe shopping. He ended up I think it was a Brooks. But there was a couple others they sent and these things look like we used to call them moon boots when I was little like, soul is like a frickin inch thick. And I'm like, totally detached from what you're running on. You know, you've lost all proprioception. So, for me, I love it when he's running on the track. And he has his cross spikes because they are literally like minimalist shoes. So I'm just trying to every time he wants shoes, trying to find the most minimal leaning shoe to try and maintain as much of his you know, integrity in his legs.

 1:07:10

Yeah, yeah, that's where my bias has always led me to I tend to, to, to, to err towards the biological norm. But uh, I, you know, I certainly respect those with other opinions. I don't I don't know the ins and outs, as well as, as other people for sure.

 James Geering 1:07:28

Yeah, well, I had one a long time ago, I had a podiatrist on and it was amazing when you hear again, the evolution of the sneaker, you know, it's just it has to change every year has to change. So it's very often very little about performance and a lot more about recycling and changing looks and getting that demand. Someone Someone signature on a shoe isn't gonna make you a good athlete, but it's gonna add another zero to the price.

 1:07:52

Yeah, yeah, I don't I definitely don't ever want to sound like a conspiracy theorist. But the consumerist marketing revolution has transformed society in so many ways.

 James Geering 1:08:04

Were you talking about and I love that perspective. You know, you get a kid that decides they want to play bad baseball and good for them good for the kid for getting off their ass and going to play a sport but without that foundation of movement. Just simple human movement. Then

again, that's that's a fast track to an injury as well. Have you heard of the documentary? The motivation factor?

 1:08:26

Yeah, I have I in fact, boy, long ago, I actually got to speak to Doug orchard. And I think Ron Jones is the guy's name who made that film. So ya know, that's a I've given many presentations that to PE teachers on the last year a model and kind of the, the, what we can, what we can take from that and apply to modern physical education. So big fan of my football team does the last year last year is strength and endurance routine. They do that once a week throughout their offseason actually, they've got it down the cadences and everything

 James Geering 1:09:05

beautiful. Yeah, Doug, Doug was on the show, we became good friends. And when you talk about that, what I love about that whole philosophy and for people listening if you haven't seen it, firstly, first of all, one of the only strength conditioning coaches I've had that has seen it, which is an absolute travesty, you know, that needs to be well known. But the this kind of almost like belt system P program that they do in teams, so forges camaraderie. And they each level you have to test out you know, X amount of push ups and, you know, paintball climbs and runs and all this thing and they get fitter and fitter and the ones that are the most elite. You know, I would say they could all be on the front cover of Men's Fitness, you know, every single one of these kids. So you have this base level of fitness and if you want to go and then play the oboe for four years, beautiful, your lungs are gonna be perfect for the oboe. If you want to be a football player or baseball player, as you said, You've got a phenomenal level of fitness and muscular balance, where it's going to give you the resilience to perform your sport. But it's not the only thing that you do. So it blows my mind that there was so much resistance to going back to that, or a version of that.

 1:10:18

I couldn't agree more the, I've made that argument many times I've written, like I said, a proposal for my district on this. There's a ton of research to show that if you have PE before your other classes, you will perform better in them. It's such an obvious investment. Again, it's you know, more time does not necessarily mean mean more out outcome. If we can honor the needs of the human body, we will get more out of it academically, emotionally, spiritually. And so it seems like a no brainer. And when you're talking about what is core, what is core curriculum, you know, the reality is, most, I would say half or more of the students who go through schooling, will not need their junior level will not use hardly any element of their junior level, algebra class, you know, probably 50%, we just won't ever use that. But every single students to a person will need a will to be healthier, and to understand how they're, you know, to have a competency in human movement, to have a competency and understanding how to feed themselves and maintain their health throughout their lives. That is a core competency for every single human alive. And we just completely neglect it. Not only neglect it, but we we actively promote habits that work against it. In our school system. It's it's, you know, I can sound like a nut saying this, but it seems like the most obvious thing in the world to me,

 James Geering 1:12:02

because to me, too, and like I said, going back to my upbringing, you know, I was on a farm picking stones and picking up hay bales and just moving and lifting and chasing and getting run over by sheep and all the other stuff. So that's what you know, that's that's what the human when it's not destroyed by technology, the comfort crisis. That's what we do, you know, whether it's Mongolia or Ethiopia, or Tibet, or wherever, you move, you climb, you lift, you know, you fight once in a while, whatever it is, that's normal human movement. You don't need to have all these movement practices and, you know, cold immersion therapies and all these other things, because you're just living and it's uncomfortable sometimes. And that's a beautiful thing. So that I would argue Doug's in the last year a model is the absolute pinnacle. So let's contrast it for a second. What are you seeing through your lens of physical education in the American system at the moment? And then obviously, we'll add on what about the nutritional side in the school cafeterias and vending machines?

 1:13:04

Yeah, again, it might vary from state to state, but the majority of states require hardly anything. As far as daily physical education is non existent, I think there's think Oklahoma may be the only state that requires daily physical education. Maybe Illinois just jumped on that too. For the most part, you know, in elementary when I think daily physical education makes the most sense. I shouldn't say that, I think daily physical education makes sense all the way through. But in elementary, for example, the my son gets it gets it two days a week. And that's at the school that that is running my pilot program to having three recesses a day, I mean that that so they would value health. So an elementary kid getting it twice a week in high school in my school district, you must take one semester of PE one semester and what that looks like by and large is a you know, often students bring their phones and they're they're not dressing out like they once were, that you know, they can walk the track they can sit in the corner and scan their phones there the standards are as low as is they can get now this is in every school I'm sure there are school districts that take a lot of pride in and I'm sure that there are PE teachers in my own school district that take a lot of pride in at the high school level. But by and large it's it's it's a you know, a coach who's far more concerned about having time to prepare for his team's practice than actually caring about you know, we don't have we don't value health it's so there's so they don't feel that mission of PE that I think should be there. So yeah, that's that's what it looks like. It's often you know, if you're to compare it to the last year model, the last year model was a very deliberate in what they're trying to create. They, you know, they had it split up into three unique spheres. You know, you know, martial arts being something they believed everyone needed restorative arts being something that they believed everyone needed. And then you know, games and, you know, it was just a third of it. You know, nowadays there's there's not very clear objectives, it's kind of just haphazard, throwing, you know, throwing things out there. And as long as you're moving, that's great. You know, another great model comes from, oh, I want to say Libertyville. In Illinois. Paul's, the Tarski is the PE teacher, he's got a great TED Talk. But he is he's a different model than last year, but he's had great results. And kind of kind of focusing on on fitness and frequent testing, and small sided games. So rather than large hope, big group games, he does what are called Small sided games. So it's like three on three, and a lot of things like that, where you can have a lot more three on three games going on at one time, so that every one is active. So that's a pretty cool system that he's put together to, but I think that's something that you can really take from the last year a model is, is frequent test is kind of having benchmark tests, you know, the belt

system, they had the short system, I think that's extremely motivating, but just assessing frequently having benchmark tests that you're allowing students to, you know, just, you make it easy for them to test, you know, on a consistent basis, maybe once every month, maybe once every two weeks, and so that they can start to see the progress. And when you do that, I think that in and of itself is highly motivated.

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James Geering 1:16:56

Well, one of the things that I talked about so much during the pandemic was, we have a captive audience, this is clearly a virus that is opportunistic, because most this there are anomalies. And that was basically we couldn't see under the skin of some of the fragility of some of these men and women, the second as well. But it was a clear mirror held up by mother nature, that we are a very sick population. And if it's not COVID, then it's going to be called something else that decimates the next group of people. So no better time to now bolster PE programs to now look at the way that we actually serve food in our schools. And it's funny because you Jamie Oliver did a show in England and one in here. And it was like, you know, heresy you know, they got the big Cisco trucks and they're coming in with all the god knows what ground up and serve to kids. Now you're gonna you're asking me to cook food. But you think about it again, go back, not very long. That was the norm, you know, the dinner ladies, when I was younger, it may not all have been, you know, picked from some garden around the corner, but they were cooking meals, you know. And so talk to me again, about the nutrition side, there's a lot of kids and we'll get to the home life next, but a lot of kids that aren't really exposed to you know, home cooked meals, especially to be fair, you know, there's some areas where mom and dad are both working just try and pay their mortgage, or single parent family or the grown up in some high rise apartment, nowhere near a farm, even grass. You know, what is your perspective and nutrition in our schools and again, king for a day? What do we need to do?

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Well, you know, to your point, the, the reality is we've made life so busy on families, that it's never been harder for the two working parent households to keep their kids healthy. We've made it very, very difficult with just how busy life is my wife and I spent hours every week trying to prepare healthy healthy meals, you know, and it's, it's outside of our work day that we have to keep ourselves healthy. Although, you know, I'm pretty lucky to have you know, a weight room right there. But, you know, so that, that in and of itself, the cultural apparatus itself is not working with us. And on top of that, you know, in a sane world the default would be for the schools to serve only healthy foods and if you wanted your kids to have sweets and you know convenience food well you had to provide that you know that but our defaults are completely backwards the if you if you know there's there's no more it's a you know, schools are poor health factories. We often start the school day far too early. You know, my school is high school starts at 725 Given the all the research in the world will show you that, you know, an adolescent at these ages is biologically inclined to go to bed later. So my my students show up everyday sleep deprived, hardly any of them get eight hours of sleep, and that's where we start them. The breakfast options available my school that so many of our students utilize every single day are almost certainly, you know, it might be a funnel cake for breakfast. It's it's every single sugar bomb cereal you can think of Cinnamon Toast Crunch excetera it might be pancake on a stick, I mean weird things like that. But it's all Sugar Bombs. And, you know, chocolate milk, these are just just the standard breakfast options. You go through the halls,

there's the vending machines, it's Coke, it's the same candy bars, the same chips that you were exposed to as a kid, these are all over our vending machine, say, you know, have these these misleading load slogans on them straight straight from Coca Cola, you know, that balance would you eat, drink and do as if you know, 150 calories of of coke is the same thing as a few almonds. I mean, you know, just this, this kind of this culture that has no understanding of basic health or respect for it, the PTA will be in the hallways a few days a week selling cookies, Otis Spunkmeyer cookies, which, you know, are more alluring than, you know, the siren song, you know, Odysseus, you know, just impossible to walk by, or they're selling Chick fil A biscuits in the hallways, these are just, you know, we're constantly making money off of the poor health of our students and the indoctrination into this sense that these are normal habits to eat this way. You know, lunch is the same as what you remember, it's pizza, it's burgers, it's nachos. So it's this entire complex that is constantly funneling our kids to poor health. If you know, the FCA meetings, you know, FCA meetings, kids are being handed, you know, cookies, Oreo packs, all these things, every single, every single meeting, that, you know, we incentivize, virtually every single childhood function is incentivized, with more sweets with more processed industrialized food. If you're on a sports team, you're traveling with that sports team, you're invariably being served pizza, and you know, so this is just the there is it at an almost no point in the students. entire educational career they exposed to any sort of value for health or since that, you know, the, the, obviously wise, or, you know, the the the wise option would be to go with a, you know, a sensible, healthier option. That's never even, you know, in the, in the consciousness of our kids. So when I come and I speak to our athletes about how to be healthier about, you know, what they should, should be doing, which are the basic principles of health, and how they can thrive in their own sport, how they can feel better every day. It's a completely foreign notion, and I'm very easy to typecast as the health nut. My perspective seems radical. And that's pretty radical.

J James Geering 1:23:23

Yeah, it's, it's sad is what it is. I mean, you know, the fact that so many of these campuses now have allowed these fast food companies, these soda companies to put their stuff front and center and yet demonize the concept of just bringing in real food because I know with Jamie's show, the first few days, the kids were like, What are this, but then kids get hungry, and then they stay in it. And for example, they made chicken nuggets, but they made it with chicken breast, and some reading, and the you know, deep fried it and had it with, I forget what the there was salads, and maybe even sweet potato fries, I forget, but they they had turned it to so you could still have the kind of foods that you like, but it was a much healthier version. And then, you know, fast forward a couple of days, and all the kids were eating it because you know, their kids, they're just hungry. They're gonna eat what you give them. So yes, it's just maddening that this is allowed. And, to me the same way as I am so appalled by, for example, fire departments that bury firefighter after firefighter but don't do anything to change. It's the same with administrators. When you're watching your kids getting sicker and sicker and fatter and fatter. How can how can you go to sleep at night, knowing that you're allowing that to happen and that you're forging a generation that from what I've heard, a lot of people say is going to be the first generation where their parents outlive their kids. If that doesn't fucking haunt you, then I don't know what well,

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it is staggering, that there has not been adaptation. You know, the Harvard projection from a

2016 study study was that of youth at that time, ages two to nine Seeing over 57% would be obese by the time they were 35. I mean, the, the trajectory that we have set our children on is criminal. And I stand up and I present these, these, these studies and maps. And there's just not a lot of yearning to do anything about it. It's very interesting to me. I often I think, you know, when I would talk to a sports team, and I work with them to do a healthier pregame meal. You know, I'm all I'm often confronted with, you know, because you can actually convince sports teams about the pregame meal based on the fact that, you know, you can convince them that this is going to help your performance, but even that, they'll change on because their parents will push back and say, well, Johnny doesn't like to eat this, Johnny's not gonna eat that before a game, that's not something Johnny eats, you know, to your point it, they would eventually eat it. But it is, it's interesting. It's the entire EPA apparatus seems to be against that. It's also interesting, how we got to the state, because as you say, we this was not the norm structure 50 years ago. But but it there has been, you know, part of it is, is the gradual decay of norms, as you as you went over a generation of kids to these, these cereals and Pop Tarts than that is normal, you know, they, it just takes one generation and the norms can radically change. Part of it is misinformation, you know, the, the number of misinformation campaigns that that have, have worked in, in the nutritional marketing space are pretty staggering. You know, when I reference often, it's amazing ads about how it was the I forget, it was basically the sugar lobby that random but for over five years, they ran these ads about how Johnny crashes because he didn't have enough sugar, you know, take care of Johnny and give them sugar every day. And they have these pictures of these pretty women eating ice cream or cookies. And it's, you know, stave off the fat time of day, prevent overeating at dinner by having an ice cream or cookie an hour before your meal. You know, so there's this sense that we you know, for for almost a decade, were trying to convince people that eating sugar was going to help them under eat later in the day, just insane things. So there's been such a interesting transition to that, to this point, that it's very hard to unravel what it really takes, you know, this is a big emphasis in my book is that I mean, the the, there has to be a sense of duty amongst educators amongst the education system, if you're going to see any change, there's going to have to be people that can stand up and say, like, This is wrong. I'm here to do what is right. I'm here to be the authority in human development and know what is better and worse. No, maybe I won't know everything, but I can certainly know that. That that the the manner that we're feeding our kids and is completely inappropriate.

J James Geering 1:28:30

Absolutely. Well, you mentioned your book, setting the bar. It's funny when when you begin the book, you talk about basically the kind of eye rolling kids kids these days mentality that a lot of people talk about, and I've pushed back against that a lot. Because with so many things, obesity, for example, you know, so very well for me to say, oh, what's wrong with these people? Well, they just get up at four and eat salad and run and they'd be like me, because I'm awesome. When again, you know, I firstly, I'm not awesome. Secondly, I grew up on a farm where we grew food and you know, I raised livestock and you know how to walk three miles to the bus stop. And it was ingrained my norm was this very active lifestyle and an understanding of nutrition. It wasn't called nutrition, it was just food, but that was what I was groomed. So how dare I stand on a pedestal and then throw shame. So you've got to bring in the environment as well. With the whole kids these days thing, the participation trophy. It's to me that rhetoric is doing the polar opposite of what you would assume mums wanting to do, which is discouraging kids or trying anything unless they're standing on the number one podium, you know, participation trophy right to point out someone the other day, you have done a Tough Mudder 30 miles through modern obstacles where they give you at the end, the fucking participation

trophy. What's wrong with that you completed this incredible adventure. You help some people along the way. You kind of went through as a team. That's a fun little thing to look at and remind yourself something you did. So there's a lot of rhetoric around that the little children giving no credit. So firstly, the ones that are out there getting it every day, like my son and all his teammates, but secondly, discouraging, contrasted with the Instagram. You know, if you can't be this diver then why even learn how to swim that we they struggle with as well, that again, we've created an environment that discourages movement and discomfort and a lot of things that people claim fictionally that they were doing every day in their childhood. So big, big kind of pre call to my, to my question, so. So talk to me about that observation. Kids today. I'll just kind of open with that.



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Yeah, well, I think it's important to because there's also this knee jerk reaction to the idea of kids these days, that, that well, because we've been saying kids these days, you know, it's well founded that every single generation has looked back and glorify their own upbringing and said that we're, you know, the, we're headed down the shithole right now with this, this generation. And, you know, we're seeing ours, the decay of our civilization right here. So there is, I think, a warranted, you know, knee jerk reaction to the sense of kids these days. And my first chapter is, is trying to help acknowledge that, though, that might be the case, the there is something very different about what's going on right now. And you have to be able to recognize that if you're going to change course, and it isn't the kids who are to blame, if this is happening, it's the adults, we set the environment for them. So, and it's certainly not to say it's every single kid. And that's the interesting thing, when you're talking about an entire generation, there are so many students today that, you know, that are at a level I've never seen before. There's example, after example, of phenomenal outliers. But by and large, some of the, you know, for example, the health of our of this generation, it's not their fault, it's certainly not but by and large this generation is in is far less impressive physically, and in a far worse position to live a good life than any generation previously. And I do believe that, that being healthy and having a comp, a physical competency is going to enhance your life substantially. So, you know, by default, not being healthy, is going to diminish your life considerably. So, you know, that is that is worth speaking about. The I opened the book with a scene where I'm biking to work, like I do, and I bike by a group of students waiting on their bus, they, this is something I did growing up, you know, many of the listeners probably did as well. We have these, this vision of students waiting on a bus, probably, you know, the people that I wait on the bus, but they were like an extension of my family, they lived in my neighborhood, we were on the bus together for years, we poke fun at each other, you know, we knew everything about each other. This is just a group and you see him every single day. The vision you have of kids waiting on a bus is completely different than what you see today. You know, as I passed this group, they are it's a group of seven kids sitting on the curb, not standing waiting on the bus, they're literally sitting on the curb heads tilted to the side scrolling. And it's one of those moments where I think to myself, What the hell are we doing to these kids? I've had so many of those moments, in the 13 years in public education. So many of those moments, you you know, what you see in the halls, it's, it's terrifying. And it's not the kids fault. We put them in a position where they think it is okay to live their entire lives, walking through the halls scanning these devices, where they think it's okay to you know, not make eye contact with adults when they speak or they think it's okay to to, you know, to in every single moment of their day have earphones in, you know, even even in the classroom and they think it's okay to talk back to an adult when there is not,

you know, there's a lot of of, of norms that that are are in place today that they're not the kids fault, but they're they're self sabotaging. So that that's the point I was making in that in that first chapter.

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James Geering 1:35:09

Yeah. And I think like you said, it's completely appropriate. And that is you can underline something I've said as well. If you're talking about kids today, well, who's responsible us, the parents? So really, we should be saying parents today and rolling our eyes, you know, they are the products of us and our schools, and what we've allowed to happen in our schools, whether we're teachers, whether we're parents, and it is terrifying. I had a guest on Dan Bornstein, who was talking about the obesity epidemic, especially in our youth, and the national security element, like the group that we get to choose to become soldiers and firefighters and police officers is shrinking. I mean, you know, some people say we've still got enough, okay, fair enough. And a very valid argument is the ones that are fit are really, really fair with CrossFit and mud runs. And you know, everything else has come through our faith are incredibly fierce, as beautiful. But that pool, you know, we we get, we get to choose from less and less and less, and the fire service right now nationally, is going through a hiring crisis. So we have created this nightmare. And again, if you are a kind, compassionate leader in your community, you don't want your children to be obese, you don't want them to have scoliosis. You know, 12 years old from hunching over device. So this is an I don't, this is what drives me crazy. The world will lose their mind over what's on the front of a Bud Light can but that totally unmoved by the cancer and obesity epidemic. Like to me the latter was more important personally.

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Oh, absolutely. We're so distracted from what actually matters in this country. It's amazing. Yeah, to your point, there was a report that came out in January that 77% of people between in America between 18 and 24, were not eligible for military service, because of physical impairments, obesity being the primary one, so yeah, it's, we're setting these these students up for failure were on top of the, you know, the the malaise, the, the lack of energy, the disease, you know, one of the things that you're just not allowed to say, you know, my mother dealt with her with, with with her weight throughout the majority of her adult life. About 10 years ago, she, she lost over 100 pounds, she's kept it off since then. And she talks all the time about how much it changed her life. She's very passionate about this. And she's, she's told me, you know, it was this giant, you know, this weight on her, her, psychologically, for so many years. And she talks about, you know, what it was like to you know, that, how she felt getting on a plane, how she dreaded being on a plane and feeling like, you know, she was, she was, you know, to shoot the, there was this chair that she was, you know, not able to fit in, like she had wanted to, in and there's so many scenarios, you know, where we should not, we should be able to talk about how Yeah, there is a real psychologically psychological effect of this, and it has nothing to do with fat shaming, it's just, you know, the, the reality of not being the person that you you would want to be, and that's hard on people. To another thing that you said, though, you know, rather than kids these days, we should be saying parents these days, I think that's absolutely true. To a degree, I think that these parenting trends have been in place long enough now that a lot of parents in my generation are simply passing on what their parents did to. So we're really in a pickle when it comes to that. And the other thing is, we have no precedents for dealing with some of the issues of today, the world has, has gotten really

complicated for parents. When we talk about youth sports, there is no precedent for the modern youth sports environment used to be that you know, it's pretty much uniformly you know, you put your kids you encourage your kids to play sports, they're going to play for the their school teams, they're going to be able to compete and it's going to be a net productive Well, you know, quality experience for them. That's not necessarily the case anymore. And the the other one that is this is obvious is the smartphone, the smartphone has really changed parenting, and we have not yet gotten a grip on what are the the productive norms for society in regard to to smartphones and parenting.

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James Geering 1:39:53

So let's expand on that a little bit. That is one area that a lot of the mental health professionals have had On that specialize in kids who did at one point in their career, or point two. So there's social media where they come to and I saw my son my eye, when he was younger, he had a phone because he got to the point where he was able to get on the school bus and I'm like, Okay, well, this phone is a great device for me to keep tabs on you. Okay? If you're gonna go out play with your friends, you're, you're this age. Now, I'm going to start kind of trying to loosen the apron strings a little bit, but I want you to check in every 30 minutes, just so I know, you're right, then you're good to go. You know, when you get off the bus, okay, I'm down. I'm here. Okay, beautiful. I know where you are. And so we had that, well, my ex allowed him to have Instagram. And it was at a turbulent time in his childhood, as well as it was around the same time when we had the issue with the school because she was dating someone at the time, it was very toxic between the two of them, he was exposed to, you know, arguments, and he was kind of hide in his room, the times I asked to go around and pick him up. And they were still arguing that even though he'd gone because they couldn't hear him when he was banging on the roof and all the screaming and again, not this is not throwing shade at my axe, it's just this was the reality of this child's exist existence. And I watched this the social media, which I have on my phone. Really, you know, he was taking pictures of himself all the time and putting out there and I was like, No, we're done, you know, and I took it off. And then it was, you know, a year or so a couple of years before he was able to, and he's matured and become a very, very different stage of his life. And then you know, it would Okay, now with all of his friends out there all communicate through Snapchat, okay, you can have this, you know, we're going to, we're going to monitor it again, then we're going to taper if we have to. So again, it's not demonizing the technology, but I got to see, you know, if a kid's not in a good place, this fucking technology can be devastating. I mean, we know it sent some children to suicide. So talk to me about your observation of trying to raise a child when they are exposed to the social media. Well,

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yeah, the the thing that is very pronounced and noticeable to anyone who walks into a school is the smartphone is the great Levana miser. And that is very troubling to me. I think that the only way that we can, in a world where technology is so often substitutes for human capacity, the only way for humanity to thrive is to have a clear ideal of human excellence that you inculcate in your culture. And you set as a standard for your culture. And I see the exact opposite. In our culture, I see I see smartphones and hyper palatable foods, creating really putting us on a trajectory towards you know, the, the, the Wally, the humanoids, and Wally that dystopian view. And so that's very troubling to me. As a now retired teacher said to me, that, you know,

standardized testing day she was talking about and how it used to be a nightmare for teachers, because kids had sit there for hours doing their standardized tests, they were fidgety. And when the final test went in, you know, the whole class basically erupted and pandemonium, like, they couldn't contain themselves anymore. And she says, Now, the entire, you know, three, four hours of standardized testing, you see the kids just sitting there so anxious to get their phones back. And as soon as that last test is handed in, they, they all rush to get their phone, they turn it on, and it's as quiet after the test is as it was during the test. And that's terrifying. And that's been my experience. I've talked to you know, throughout my school district, I've been asked by a lot of principals to come speak to the parents on this on smartphones and in particular and technology in particular, I had a fifth and sixth grade or intermediate Intermediate School as we call it here principal told me about a game night they hosted for their families at the beginning of last year. And they you know, they brought in bounce houses fifth and sixth grade they brought in all these these things, you know, that cornhole boards a whole nine. And it was a game that they were putting out there for for families. And what ended up happening was the students showed up and they walked around the whole time on their phones. And so they did the same thing in the spring but they were explicit about saying no phones, and she said it was a completely radically different event. Everyone running blast families interacting, it was everything she had dropped off. And the only difference being the smartphone. So you know, I you can kind of look at it as you know, it's an environmental design thing, you know, you that this experience, whatever experience you're setting up whatever environment you're in, you know, whatever experience you're gonna have. It looks this way if there's if smartphones or Ave But looks this way if smartphones are not available. And that's not to say that these tools aren't awesome tools that with phenomenal upside, you know, the the amount of learning I've done from from podcasts and audible are fantastic. The amount of you know, the way I can organize and capture information and utilize later in my writing and, and thinking based off of my OneNote app and so many other apps is amazing. But that is not how, first of all, we're not instructing anyone in how to use it that way. If you're going to use it productively, you're going to have to do that, based off your own initiative, by and large, that needs to be that part of the core curriculum nowadays. We're not instructing people how to avoid manipulation by these devices, how to understand what the devices, what the specific mediums, platforms, how, what the economic structure is that they make money on, and what they're trying to do, how they're trying to manipulate you. So we have not given any of our families or our students a frame for framework for using these devices with without being used by them. And so that we, you know, we are, our biology is often being manipulated. I like to give the analogy of you know, I was sitting on a dock in Florida and St. Pete, Florida with my nephew, and we were watching a there's a fluorescent light underwater, and there's just these these fish circling that fluorescent light all night just constantly. And we're watching them. And my nephew Braden says, you know, why are they doing that? And, you know, I, of course, I did crush the nice little moment and say, well, it's just like humans in the smartphone, that's the endless scroll, you know, basically, these fish were designed for a world that did not include underwater lights. And so their biology has been hacked. And now they're, they're, they're, you know, without knowing why they're just mindlessly circling this this light forever, it's the same thing as humans on Instagram. And, to your point, again, they're not all negative things. But we have not been given a framework for using these tools without being used by them. And so when I think I think there needs to be kind of a set of tech manners, that schools start to help teach, you know, I think it has to come from the schools, that schools need to be in the authority and human development, and they need to help parents think through these issues. Because when they don't, it puts a lot of pressure on parents, you know, for example, the argument I make often to parents is listen, you know, Jonathan hight has a ton of research, there is a ton of research out there, that really points to, to the fact that social media, more than any other factors is causing this, this mental

health epidemic in our in our young people. The there's, if anyone is interested in looking at Jonathan Hite, he's, he's put a ton of his research and arguments onto his substack after Babel. And I've cited that quite a bit. He's also in the process of writing a book on this called the anxious generation. And so it's great research. He's also testified to Congress about this. And but one of the most important things you can do to empower parents is to help them or to help, first of all, to help students is to delay the age of getting a smartphone. One of the best things we can do is tell parents that you don't have to give them a smartphone First, you can just give them a standard footfall like we all had. It's it's the number of options. The other thing we don't instruct parents on Israel, if you give them a smartphone, there's screentime, there's bark, there's all these apps to monitor. There's a lot of fantastic apps just on the iOS or you know, Android has the equivalent. There needs to be education on this process, because it is you know, it isn't an entire world. It's very complex. But one of the most important things you could do as a school is say like based off of the research, we recommend not giving your kid a smartphone until this age, you know Jonathan height the he goes to which is the age that that Bill Gates went to with the age that that Tim Anderson, a lot of other people in tech community have done with their kids is 14 for a smartphone. And so to look at the research and to say to parents, we recommend waiting till this age. Here are the steps we recommend the process for giving your kid a smartphone, how you should introduce it. I think that needs to be there in the modern world. It might sound a little invasive or too much, but they're suggestive, it's education for the parents and what that does Isn't it empowers the parents, because what I see is so many parents who say, I didn't want to give my kid a smartphone until junior high or high school, but by age 11, all their friends had it. And I was stuck in this position where I didn't know if I was doing more harm by keeping them from this world that their friends were on, or by giving it to them. And so we're putting parents in this very, very rough situation, when we don't give them that information.

 James Geering 1:50:28

One trick that I did, because it was a smartphone that mine had, when he was in, started getting the school bus was I gave him the ability to phone, but he didn't have the data. So he could phone if there was a problem. And of course, he could use Wi Fi, you know if he was around, but most of the time, he couldn't access any of those things. But he could download Spotify and have music and make phone calls and do all those things. And that was a kind of happy meeting, because it is that is a real thing. Otherwise, you're the loser with no phone when everyone else is like, I'm gonna send you my snap. And you're like, you know, what is what a snap? You know, so it sucks, but it is what is. But I realize, yes, there are some things and even and that's on the other side, the ominous side, just for parents, one of my guests that come who was recently told me that there are apps that are disguised to look as the Calendar app, the clock app and actually a secret social media app. So as a parent, you got to be Be careful that your kid isn't duping you on what is on their phone to.

 1:51:32

Yeah, they're they're always a step ahead of us. There's no doubt no doubt about that. Yeah. And I know that screentime and bark are kind of some of the the standard monitoring devices. But But yeah, I would look into that for sure.



J James Geering 1:51:51

Absolutely. Well, so that was your book, I want to get some closing questions, so I can be mindful of your time and obviously we'll get to where people can find the book. Is there another book that you recommend that can be related to our discussion? Or completely unrelated?

 1:52:06

Oh, I love this question. Because there's so many books I recommend. One of them will be one that you referenced in your book. It's the first one I always recommend which is tribe I think that to understand the modern world the modern experience how to thrive in this world anyone on your who's listening to this podcast I'm that's the book I would I would start with a tribe is an amazing book. The some of the other one I referenced Jonathan Hite. His book The happiness hypothesis is, is probably a good weigh in on him. Righteous mind I liked more, but it's a little bit more, you know, for psychological nerds. But he also wrote the coddling of the American mind, which is more well known and it is it's a good primer on some of the issues going on with with youth today. So I would I would definitely recommend those as well.

J James Geering 1:53:07

My dad actually recommended that books me I got it sitting behind me but I'm writing a book The second book so I'm a chance to read it yet but he's like, this whole kind of woke ism. You know, that my house my dad at EA one. And he's just like, it's you know, he's blown away because he's a pretty middle of the road kind common sense kind of person. But these extremes in obviously, there's an equal one on the other side. It's just he's pulling what little hair out has, you know, he has left out, like, you know, what is going on here for crying out loud. So, yeah. All right. Well, then what about films and or documentaries?

 1:53:42

Ooh, that's a good question. Um, I mean, I don't have any you know, my favorite documentaries. I there was a great documentary on Enron, but I don't know that I have anything. It's called the smartest guys in the room. I just found it interesting. I don't know that I have anything's particularly valuable. Documentary wise film. It's the standard ones. You know, Saving Private Toronto Saving Private Ryan

J James Geering 1:54:11

that was saving Ryan's private city.

 1:54:13

Yeah. Braveheart you know, the Gladiator. All those all those standard greatest films ever. Are my go twos.



James Geering 1:54:29

Brilliant. Well, next question. Is there a person that you would recommend to come on this podcast as a guest to speak to the first responders military and associated professionals of the world?



1:54:40

Oh gosh, I wish I had prepared that I'm gonna leave someone out and kick myself later.



James Geering 1:54:45

But you can always you can always send me other ones down the road I



1:54:48

think on that and send it to you later for sure. Yeah, gosh. If you can get Sebastian younger on not to go back to try but that would be just phenomenal and it seems like it'd be right up his alley. He certainly has dedicated his whole life basically to thinking about the that type of worker.



James Geering 1:55:09

Yeah, no, he's actually been on I think it's three times. And he's coming on again in September. So yeah, yeah, we



1:55:16

do it. I'm going back to listen to those. Yeah, I have a slight man crush on him. Yeah, phenomenal thinker.



James Geering 1:55:25

Ya know, truly, truly amazing, man. All right. Well, then the last question before we make sure people know where to find the book and yourself. What do you do to decompress?



1:55:35

Um, well, I read differently. I love to read. I skateboard. That's, that's kind of a new hobby that I've picked up. I'm always trying to learn a couple new hobbies. So my best friend, he's really into skateboarding. He actually works a skateboarding company. And so he got me into skateboarding. So that's been good. I'm learning the guitar. And, you know, workouts and, and

long walks, you know, getting up early for walks. And then of course, just family time, I've got a wife, wonderful wife and two kids, a boy and a girl. Ace is six. And my baby girl breaks is going to be five here and about two weeks. So. So that keeps me keeps me. Pretty busy.

 James Geering 1:56:26

Did I hear right when the other cut the other interviews? I heard you on that you adopted the kids?

 1:56:31

Yes. Yes. We adopted so ace was they our biological siblings, Ace was 18 months and Brooks was she was just born when we adopted and yeah, that's, that's been pretty, we're unbelievably fortunate. Adoption is it's a challenging process for sure. And it couldn't have worked out better for us. We just we've got two amazing kids. And we're just so fortunate,

 James Geering 1:56:59

beautiful. Well, that kind of circles round to the the theme of this conversation, you know, the love that phrase, if you want to change the world start at home, you know, and the world needs mentors, and it needs parents that are present. And we can't again, demonize a household because it's got one parent or the grandparents or raising, you know, we need all of us to you know, it takes a village everyone that kind of fill in the gaps and help not only in our own home, but then step outside our front door and make a difference in our community as well.

 1:57:27

Yeah, you know, going back to, to the the reading question, there's there's two essays that I would recommend to people one one they're both titled Get serious. The first one is get serious about suffering. The second one is get serious about purpose the written by Katherine Boyle. But but that is the her gets serious about purpose really makes a strong argument for the the importance of, of having a purpose larger than yourself. And if contributing is really the backbone of, of a good life and a fulfillment. So yeah, that I couldn't agree more.

 James Geering 1:58:11

So the book setting the bar for people listening, firstly, where can they find that?

 1:58:16

It's, you know, anywhere you buy books, you know, online, you can get it at, you know, through through Barnes and Noble through Amazon is probably the most common way of getting it Amazon, just setting the bar. You can order it on walmart.com. And you know, really wherever you like to buy your books



James Geering 1:58:36

you have and then if people want to reach out to you, where are the best places online or social media?



1:58:42

The best way is, you know, I check my email more than social media. I am on Instagram. For most of my you know, seven newsletter and I usually do a post whenever I have a newsletter go out. But, but through my website Trotter shane.com That's TR o TT er, sh a in the.com. There's a link to email me through there, my emails on the website as well. And yeah, I love hearing from people.



James Geering 1:59:13

Beautiful wishing we could have talked for another four hours easily. But I want to be mindful of your time and I do have a child. It's nice to be fed so but I want to thank you so much for all the different areas that we've walked through today and being so generous and coming on the behind the shield podcast today.



1:59:30

It's a pleasure to be here. This has been a blast. Thanks so much.