

Welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations,
your authority in
navigating the world of
homeschooling diverse learners.

Featuring Peggy Ployer from
Sped Homeschool,
Annie Yorty from AnnieYorty.com,
Leilani Melendez from Living with Eve,
Stephanie Buckwalter from eLARP Learning,
and Dawn Jackson from Dawn
Jackson Educational
Consulting and Tutoring.

With over seventy five years
of combined homeschooling expertise,
experiences and perspectives,
this group is eager to
share their wealth of
wisdom to empower your
homeschooling journey.

So grab your favorite mug,
settle in and get ready for
insightful discussions,

valuable insights and practical tips.

Give your homeschool the
power boost it needs to
successfully educate the
unique learners in your home.

Hi, everyone,
and welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations.

Today,
we are going to talk about Beyond
the Classroom,
Exploring Alternative
Education Models for Homeschool Success.

And my guest today is Jonas Copeland.

He is an award-winning
education innovator and
creative force behind the
popular education YouTube channel,
Sprouts.

As the author of The
Unschooler's Educational Dictionary,
Jonas has crafted a
comprehensive guide to

alternative education

models that helps parents

make informed and confident

school choices for their children.

In this invaluable resource,

he delves into the

complexities of education,

exploring diverse

approaches such as Montessori,

micro schools, Ivy schools,

Unschooling Waldorf and More

with engaging visuals, practical insights,

and thoughtful overviews of

alternative educational history.

This book is an essential

tool for homeschooling

parents and anyone

interested in reimagining education.

We're thrilled to have Jonas

here to share his expertise

and insights with us today.

Welcome to the show.

Welcome.

It's an honor to be here, Peggy.

Yes.

Yeah.

So a lot of times when
parents homeschool children
with learning complexities,
which is our audience,
the traditional model doesn't work.

And so parents are always looking for
something different because
they've proven already and
their child has proven the
traditional model is not
something that fits or is
something their child.

I always often say a child
can be at a contortionist
and some children are much
more able to contort into
these boxes that we make
for them called educational models.

And yet some kids have like
this limb that just sticks

out and doesn't quite fit into that.

And so we kind of have to
design school around them
or find alternatives that work better.

So I'm super excited to be
talking about this topic
today and just helping
parents to understand
kind of think differently
about education and just
how to approach it.

So I'd love to know just
what inspired you to write
this book about
unconfessional teaching and
schooling methods for
homeschooling parents.

Right.

So I think, I mean,
I've been now for ten years
in the field of education.

I went myself to an alternative school.

My mother was a roller

school teacher and then she
started her own drama
school for young kids.
in munich and um i myself
never really felt um very
excited once i became a
teenager to go to school
even though the school was
it was a nice school it was
a small school but i was
just bored and um and many
and then yeah i i dropped
out basically when i was
around i finished school wow
And yeah,
kudos to my parents who still trust me.

Right.

And I went to work a little
bit and did my social service.

And then I went to travel to
India and some Asian countries with,
I think, just turning nineteen.

And I left home for a year

and I came back and my
mother convinced me to go
back to school to finish
high school so I could go to college.

And I did that.

But it taught me a very important lesson.

And I think one of the
takeaways was when I went
back to high school then,
it was very simple for me.

I was just older than everybody else.

I was much more calm.

I was relaxed.

I knew I wanted to do this for a reason.

And so I had a purpose to finish it.

And it was, yeah,

it was a stroll in the park
compared to some of the
other kids who were super
anxious of not getting the
grades they needed and things like that.

Yeah, then I, um, became an entrepreneur.

I, um, started a few companies, uh,

unrelated to education, but, uh, later in,
uh, around, um, ten years ago,
I came across, um, um,
all these online learning, um, methods,
which are spreading up like, um,
Coursera and all of that.

And I got super excited because, uh,
it showed that there's
suddenly an opportunity to
just learn from the very
best without being present.

Right.

right and i wanted to share
that with my with my team
and some of my employees
but around fifty people in
the company and uh most of
them were not excited about
um development and and you
know learning more and um
and it was made me really
deeply sad and um i
realized um many of them

are products of a very
rigid educational system
right to ask questions and
we're not allowed to
explore and they don't
really know what they
what they're interested in
and what they don't know.
That feeling that people in
their thirties arrived at
their maximum level of
interest without then
exploring new things made me sad.
And so this is when I
started my educational
journey around ten years ago.
And I started with YouTube.
A friend of mine invited me
to write some scripts on YouTube.
And then we also developed apps.
And I opened up a micro
school and a lot of other things.
And eventually,

we got approached by a
publisher who liked our YouTube channel.

And they asked me to write a book.

And so I wrote a book on a
perspective of myself when

I was fifteen years old.

with the knowledge I had

then after publishing

hundreds of videos on

YouTube on educational methods,

psychological methods,

and reading a lot and

researching a lot on education.

And so that's the book basically.

It's a sarcastic, humorous view,

but it should provide

parents really an overview

of what is there and why

many kids are struggling in school.

That's that's awesome

because it's hard to get

into the mind of a fifteen

year old and and figure out

what's going on because you
don't know if it's attitude,
if it's hormones,
because I had I had a child like that,
too.

And it's very it's
disturbing for a parent.

I'm sure your mom who
started a school really struggled a lot,
having you kind of walk
away from education and

So was there any experiences
that you had when you were
away from that kind of
interim time when you went
to Asia and all of that,
that kind of shaped you or
gave you an idea of the
importance of education or
just kind of a perspective on yourself?

Yeah, I mean, I went to India in,
this was in,
and it was a very poor country then.

I believe it still is quite poor.

I haven't been back since, but it was very,
very poor.

And so I realized what kind of, you know,
luck I had in life to be
born in a country where
everybody is relatively well off.

I mean,
you saw everyday people basically
with limbs missing, you know,
lying on the street asking for, you know,
I don't know, a dollar or something.
and a rupee.

And so I think that changed
me quite a bit.

Um, I went, uh, when I arrived back home,
I started a nonprofit and, uh, I,
I organized a lot of events on, uh,
basically hip hop events.

So we invited bands to play
free of charge and we, um,
donated the money.
to charity the first year

we've completely failed we
had over a thousand people
coming and paying but we
spent more than we
anticipated and so at the
end we didn't donate
anything but we did it
again and then we donated
thirty thousand dollars and
then it happened for
another seven times seven
years in a row and so I
think I grew quite I think
a lot of being away during that time
Because I followed my passion.
I worked at around thirty different jobs,
I would say,
to save the money to go on a trip.
And I think a lot of teenagers,
I'm not sure so many girls
because I'm not a girl and
I don't know them that well in that age,
but I know a lot of boys

when they turn fourteen, fifteen, sixteen,
they're just not interested
in physics or in chemistry or in
they're interested in
independence and they're
interested in showing that
they can take care of themselves.

And so I think that was a
main driver for me.

I didn't want an adult with
a beard and some glasses
telling me what I should be
interested in.

I wanted to basically show
my friends that I can make
a little bit of money and pay for,
I don't know,
pay for the milkshakes or
whatever we drank back then,
maybe for the weed.

We smoked some weed back then.

So I think the drive for
independence and not having

a strong authority to tell
you what you ought to do is
what hinders a lot of young
boys and maybe also a lot
of young girls to really
become excellent.

And it's a shame because if
you look at when people
reach their peak kind of excellence,
a lot of people reach it in
the mid-twenties, right?

And, um, um,
and a lot of genius have their
most productive period in
the early gen early twenties.

And so we take away the opportunity,
I think, uh,
in fruit traditional
education to identify, you know, um,
these geniuses, you know, some of us,
you know,
they shouldn't show it for good grades,
but many will not because

they're just bored.

Right.

And what they have to learn and,

and we'll never learn.

that um that they have a lot

of fire in them and yeah so

it's so so true yeah we we

kind of beat it out of them

with the education system

that that drive and that

individuality um their

ability be to be creative

and to kind of pull from

inside um they're just kind of

you know spewing out what

what's put in them i know

my daughter's best

experience after high

school was not to continue

school she went and did

retail for a while and she

had some incredible

experiences she was put in

charge of redesigning the
whole department at the age
of eighteen um but um the
perspective that was even
better that she took away
from that was she i
she came home every night and she's like,
I feel so sorry for these managers.
They are stuck.
They have kids, they have mortgages,
you know,
all these things that they have
to pay for.
And so they can't actually
pursue something that they
want to do because they
just have to earn money.
And that was probably the
most invaluable experience
for her was being around people that,
you know,
had had followed followed the track.
And she's like, I just don't want that.

So.

So, yeah, I, I,

I completely agree that that that's super,
super important.

And it's a great perspective
for us to give parents when
they're thinking about about schooling,
too.

um so what are some
unconventional teaching
methods that you discuss in
your book that have proven
effective for homeschool
students who really
struggle with these
traditional models i mean i
personally um and i write a
lot about that and i'm a
very big believer in
experiential learning and i
think um if it's paired with some
social elements um then I
think um it's yeah it's on

it works on steroids and
and I think so so for
example if you you know get
it a group of young people
together and uh and they
and they have to do
something even if they fail
at it um but I do it
together with the mission
then they will learn a lot
of things a lot of things
we cannot quantify later
and you know they will not
appear in a report
because they don't really
know what they learn, right?
It's like walking.
We all learned how to walk,
but it's very difficult to
describe for an adult how one walks,
right?
It's impossible.
Absolutely.

But I think so learning by
doing and making it exciting,
so aligning it with the
passions by letting the maybe kids...
challenge themselves.

And I think adults can help
create challenges either by
incentivizing them
correctly or by just
showing them and connecting
them with the right kind of role models.

So if you look, for example,
at the Erickson theory of development,
which has eight stages, and the infant,
the very infant is mostly
mostly attuned to and also
learns the most from the mother.

And then it's the family and
then it's the kids around
the block and then it's the
kids in school.

And when you're a teenager,
you mostly learn from your

peers and some role models.

Right.

And so if you, for example,
had a homeschooling child
who is interested in, for example, music,
um learn from her or his
favorite musician how they
do things and how do they
did things and how do they
for example plan their
tours and you know what
does it i don't know income
statement look like from
somebody who organizes
tours for these um for
these artists then you have
the passion right and so i
think that's that's that's
really important i think
that that's a huge
opportunity for
homeschooling parents um
because they have the

flexibility to do to let

their children do that

Yes.

Yeah.

And yeah.

And another thing I'm a big

believer in is it's if you

want to structure it more formally,

it's the active learning method.

And we did a video together

with Carl Gehman on this.

He won the Nobel Prize in

physics before he became

interested in education.

And so he spent a lot of

time last ten years on

studying how active

learning can improve learning outcomes.

And the way it basically works is

in a nutshell is you present

a problem and you give

three possible solutions

and then you ask your child

to make a bet on which
solution they think is the right.

And you might even want to
incentivize that in one way or the other.

And then ideally you have a group.

So you have maybe four kids

to do that or six or eight

or you have other family

members who join that.

So you have A, B and C and the child picks,

let's say A and then

You start conversations

about their solutions and

you try to convince them of

maybe another solution

which you think is right

and your child convinces

you of their solution.

And so this kind of

argumentation there creates

a lot of feelings, emotions, right?

Which makes the whole topic

already very sticky.

And then basically once you've done that,
you ask everybody to vote again, A,
B or C,
and you will see whether the vote changed,
right?

and only after that you go
basically and present a
solution explain why that's
the solution right and so
that uh model we made a
video and it's quite
popular and kardian
became a co-author of this
video which was amazing
because he worked there you
know as a physicist from
from the united states one
of the belt price and he
was uh you know on the
script with me writing that
video and i think um

Yeah,
that's a very powerful way because

you have the buy-in from
the very beginning and you
have a stake in the outcome.

And so I recommend that as one,
for example, one method.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I think the only thing that
our kids have at stake is
grades and they almost feel
like they don't have a lot
of control over that.

They you know,
it's just somebody's
arbitrary way of grading.

You know, even if they write a paper,
they you know,

I still hear my daughter in
college coming back.

Well, I know I wrote it the best I could,
but, you know,

I don't know what my grade
is going to be.

Um, but, but to be able to, to, you know,
to work towards that and
know that there was, you know,
there's something that they
can invest in it.

And, um, you know, more so than just,
I'm just handing this over
to an authority figure now
to make the decision for me, um,
that there there's more into that.

I love that.

Um,

Yeah, very true.

One study I quote in my book,
and I didn't quote too many
studies because we do a lot
of that already on YouTube.

And it's written sarcastically.

But one study we quote is
from Roland Fryer.

He spent a lot of money, government money,
public funds, he's from Harvard,
on experiments with

teenagers on how to

motivate them to learn.

And so he gives them

basically enough money to buy an Xbox.

And one of the big insights,

he totally spent, I think,

twenty million dollars on

these experiments in the last ten years.

And one of the insights he

has is if you spend it on,

if you incentivize them

just to read something they can control,

time spent reading a book, it works.

But if you incentivize them

to get a good grade in English,

it doesn't.

Yes, because they can't control that,

right?

That's beyond their control.

So even if they could win

four hundred dollars to buy

themselves an Xbox,

they're not going to work hard.

But if you tell them, you know, OK,

at ten dollars an hour,

you just read the book, you know,

five dollars an hour, I don't know,

two dollars an hour,

I don't know what it came down to.

Then they do that, right?

And I mean, coming from Europe and

from Germany,

we would never spend money on

our kids to learn.

But on the other side, you know,

for some kids that works quite well,

apparently.

And I know

bit divided on that topic.

I wouldn't do it for my own kids,

but for many kids,

it feels like work going to

school because they don't like it.

And they earn something they

don't care about,

only some other people care about.

And so I think for some kids,
maybe you should just pay
them to go to school.

It is kind of like a job for some kids.

I've never even thought of
that as a perspective before.

But, you know,
it's like when you clock in and clock out,
you're doing work because, you know,
you just are going to get paid.

And that ends up being the incentive.

And so, yeah, it's...

we would love for our kids
to want to learn.

We do find a lot of kids, especially,
you know,

in our community that are burnt
out on learning just
because the school system
has burnt them out.

And so parents are often in
a sticky place.

They're required to teach.

Their kids are required to
do homeschooling.

And what do you do?

So maybe that's,
the solution.

I don't know.

I haven't thought about that before.

You don't have to pay him a whole lot,
but yeah,
that might work for a while in
the interim.

For some kids, it might work.

I think it's probably better
to pay them a little bit and
get actual results than to
just keep hoping that they
should be wanting to learn something.

Nobody asked them whether
they want to learn that in
the first place, right?

And I think in homeschooling,

I'm not exactly familiar
how it works in the United States,

but I think you have a bit
more flexibility to
structure how to approach a topic.

Yes.

And so you have much less of
maybe of that.

But still, as a parent,
you might sometimes want
them to learn a bit more or
study a bit harder because at the end,
maybe some of your children
need a degree to do
something else later in life, right?

Right.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And that's the wonderful
thing about homeschooling.

I know with my kids,
each of them had different paths.

And so I had different
graduation requirements, actually,
for each of my children,

all from the same school,

but different graduation requirements.

And that's great.

That's fine, because, yes,

two of my went to college and one didn't.

And so, of course,

the the bar was going to be a bit higher,

especially one that's an engineer.

And yes,

he needed to have certain classes.

So so, you know.

Traditional method versus

unconventional methods.

I think a lot of parents

kind of lean towards, well,

are the unconventional

methods only for kids that

maybe the traditional

method doesn't fit for?

Or would it benefit any

child to learn unconventionally?

It really comes down to how

the unconventional learning, I think,

is delivered, right?

I think if the parents have

the resources and time,

Then I think most children

would benefit from

homeschooling or even

unschooling if the parents

pay enough attention to

what actually happens throughout the day.

Then there are a lot of, I think,

good programs for kids when they're young,

which I think most kids

would benefit from,

which are not traditional,

forest schools or Waldorf schools,

Montessori schools.

At the end, I think, I mean,

it comes down to the

teacher and the other kids in the class,

right?

And I think that's,

and the opportunities the parents have.

I mean,

some don't have the opportunity to
do alternative education
because they either don't
have the money or there's
nothing around where they live.
or they don't have the time.

And then, yeah,
they can just hope that
their kid is doing kind of
okay in a traditional school.

Maybe they strive in a
traditional school and they
won the jackpot.

But for parents who have the
resources or the time or
the ability to choose,

I think, yeah,
many kids benefit from a
different system.

I think one of the main
problems of a traditional
school is that you send a
child through for twelve years,

always telling them what they need to do,
and then you ask them at the end,
so what do you want to do?

And they have no idea
because it's the first time
you ask them that, right?

And then they go to college,
and maybe many parents want
that to happen fast.

And then they maybe even add
a master to a bachelor,
and then they're off to work.

And then they're forty,
and they're miserable
because they finally
realized that they wanted
to do something else.

Right.

And I think, yeah,
so especially having either breaks,
you know, maybe a year break, a gap year,
even when they're a bit younger,
to explore something else

or slow it down a bit or

don't push them straight to

college or give them, yeah,

take them out of the rat

race a little bit,

I think is beneficial for

almost every child, I would say.

Yeah, I completely agree.

All of our kids had gap years and it was,

It was life changing for each of them.

One of them actually pursued

more education.

Actually,

two of them did after being in

more like hands on type of

work situations.

And so so, yeah,

you just don't know where

it's going to take them.

But but they learn a lot about themselves,

too.

So it is it's a great opportunity,

even if you don't have that time.

And I love that you
emphasize that it takes
time because the
nontraditional method is is
very especially for if
you're doing it from a
homeschool perspective and
you don't have those schools to tap into.

Especially when they're in
the high school years,
it is very time intensive as a parent.

I know I did unit study
learning for my oldest in high school.

And there was a lot of
planning and a lot of
making sure things got done
and tracking hours and all of that.

It paid off because he was
just a very hands on learner.

But but I had to be on top
of it all of the time.

So so, yes,
there is a trade off if if you

have to have to do that.

Yeah,

I think it really has to come down to
each family situation and
to decide what is the right
thing for them.

And I think many homeschooling parents,
from my understanding, they do it,
then they realize, okay,
now my kid wants to
actually try school again,
then they maybe do school
for another few years,
and then maybe they go out
again and do more
homeschooling or join a...
a micro school or now with
all the online options available,
there's so many other
opportunities they have to
learn together with other
like minded people or kids.
So I think every family has

to decide for themselves

what is the right thing

that they can manage in terms of time,

resources, money.

I mean,

I think in America there's a big

shift now towards vouchers

and helping families really

with school choice,

which I think is a huge, huge deal.

In Europe,

there's a lot of charter schools

already since many, many years,

but it's quite difficult to

be innovative because it's all, yeah,

to get basically recognized

as a specific school,

as a Waldorf school,

That took years at the beginning.

Now it's well known and it's easy to open,

relatively easy to open one.

But if you want to do something else,

because Wallace School is

also a very specific school.

It's not very competitive.

Everybody's trying to follow

the original Rudolf Steiner curriculum,

which is very particular.

So if you want to try something else,

and then there's a lot of roadblocks.

I think it's going to be

very exciting how it plays

out now in many of the states in America,

which embrace,

give parents a choice what to do.

I think it's going to be

quite good for many kids.

Yeah.

And yeah,

homeschooling is now the fastest

growing educational model in the US.

And I just saw a report from

my local school district.

They're like,

numbers keep declining on

kids enrolling and

Because parents had that
taste in twenty twenty of, oh, you know,
I remember before that I
homeschooled way before twenty twenty.
And, you know, parents would always say,
oh, can't do that.
You know, just that, you know, I'd love to,
but can't do that.
And then they all had a
taste of it when they were forced to.
And they're like, oh,
I guess I can do that.
And and it took, you know,
a little bit off of of their.
I guess, their hesitancy to school.
Yet, you know, a lot of parents,
as soon as schools opened, they're like,
I'm done.
So what would you have as
advice for parents who
still are kind of hesitant about
I think this isn't a good fit for my child,
this traditional method,

but I just don't know where to start,

what to even start

exploring as a non-traditional method.

Where do we begin?

Mm-hmm.

Right, I think, I mean,

looking what happens in

your community is probably

the most valuable thing, right?

To see, you know,

who else is homeschooling,

are there some learning paths,

are there some micro schools,

are there some alternative schools?

And just go, you know, visit these places,

you know, and see, you know, how the kids

what are the kids feeling

about going to these places?

Do they look happy when they walk in?

Is the energy, does it feel good?

Does it not feel good?

I visited many schools in my

life since I went into education.

I went to the green school in Bali.

I went to like democratic
schools and I went to a democratic school,
for example,
which didn't prohibit screen
time in school.

And so you had all these young kids,
you know, starting age seven,
who are most of the time
just looking at the screens, right?

All the entire day.

And so I didn't feel like
this would be a school I
want to send my kids to,
even if they have, you know, democracy,
right?

And you could pick whatever
you want to learn or not.

But

No, so I think it comes down to, you know,
seeing and feeling what's happening.

And I think if you live in
an area where there are a

lot of alternatives, then yeah,
go check them out.

I think that's the very best
thing you can do.

Yeah, I love that.

And if you have the flexibility to move,
you know, I mean, look for school,
look for community.

If you like it, then, you know.
move that.

Right.

Yeah.

So many people have flexible jobs.

They can work from home.

So why don't you just move
your home and pick

something that works for your family?

Road schooling has become popular too,
where people just hop from
place to place and learn as
they go when they're living in their RV.

So

Lots of different

alternatives for families

now that didn't exist

before and just embracing those.

That's a good way to learn.

There's no one best way.

Would you have to agree with that,

that nothing comes to the top?

Right.

I think, for example,

if you are from an unfortunate background,

but you're academically

very attuned and let's say, you know,

have a very high IQ,

a traditional school might

be exactly the right place for you,

right?

Because you are

because you are in an

environment where teachers

will recognize your ability

and there may be

scholarship options and

there are ways to to strive

and to really uplift not
only your own life,
but then the life of the entire family.

And so

For kids like that, you know,
maybe traditional school is
the very best thing there is.

But I think if parents
realize that their kid
hates to go to school or
doesn't like to go to school, and I mean,
we published another study
in our book on suicide
rates and how they go up
when the school opens and
drop during holidays.

And I think, you know,
if you're in a situation
where you realize something is really,
really wrong with my child
going to school, like,
i think you have to take
them out i mean even if you

have no other plans yes
right because right because
it's an emergency and i
think so that's um the
families have to find um um
find time i think that's
the most important um
headspace to think about um
the opportunities and and
and the downside of
different options and um and one of the
is one of the reasons i
wrote the book is to have
give them a little bit of
an overview of what kind of
different schools are there
are and it's uh and what
are they good at and we do
it with the assumption that
the schools really follow
the philosophy because you
don't know often for
example montessori anybody

can open a montessori

school there's no trademark

or anything like that

So I could open a school

tomorrow called Montessori

and it would be a Montessori school.

But is it a Montessori school?

Do I really follow three

hours of uninterrupted playtime, you know,

things like that?

Maybe not.

Right.

So I think, yeah,

we wrote the book under the

assumption that the

educators or the families

who are behind the school,

they follow the philosophy

as it was developed.

Right.

And then we advise, you know,

what sort of kids fit in

what kind of school.

So, for example, for Montessori,

I think if you have a very

introverted child which

likes to go really deep on

a specific subject,

a Montessori school can be very,

very good.

On the other side,

Montessori schools are

maybe not that great to

teach social skills because

compared to Waldorf schools, for example,

which are very structured,

many people don't know that,

but they're very structured

to the minute and

and they follow a very rigid curriculum of,

okay,

in the first grade you work with clay,

in the second grade you work with wood,

in the third grade you work with fabrics,

in the fourth grade you

work with... And all of

these activities happen together.

And so I think if your child is...

and wants to make friends

and be part of a group,

then that might be a better choice.

Because in Montessori school,

maybe most kids just sit

there and go deep into

their subjects for three

hours and not talk much with each other.

So these are just two

methods which we explain

and why I think that school

might be better for a child

which likes certain things

as opposed to other things.

Right.

Yeah.

And even in the homeschool setting,

you know, you're using a curriculum.

That curriculum really

dictates a lot that happens

in your day just because as a parent,

you don't have always the
time and the ability to
create everything from scratch.

And so you're following somebody's model.

And, um, so,

so it's good to be

knowledgeable about these

types of things because

you're bringing that structure,

you're bringing that

philosophy and all of those things into,

into your day.

And it does depend on what

your child needs.

So, um,

so those are some really good

perspectives on, um,

just taking it and a good,

good to know that you need

what you need to know.

Right, exactly.

Yeah.

And that's, I think,

one of the other reasons I

wrote the book.

Because, I mean,

if you're a new parent and

you first time have to think about school,

let's say your child turns

three or four or five or

whenever that point is, you have no idea.

know even about the words or

the vocabulary or what you

know what a school consists

of right exactly and and so

that that's why i made it

the dictionary so it's you

know from a to z um for

homework it would say

something like you know a

regular exercise which um which helps

kids from um i think from

from um privileged kids get

ahead of those from broken

homes that's the definition

so it's written in

definitions um to just give
parents the different
vocabulary they need to go
to school and with my
perspective from a yeah
fifteen year old truant
basically um and and uh and
and the knowledge i now
have on education and so
I think, yeah,
knowing what there is and
what you should at least
know that you could research more about,
I think that's the main
purpose of the book.
We're not exploring deep in the subject.
It's just to give you an
overview of all the
concepts on learning theory,
on psychology, on alternative education,
which we think parents or I
think parents should know about.
Absolutely.

Yes.

There's so much I didn't know.

I didn't have any background
in education when I first
started homeschooling my kids.

I had a degree in physics
and I was just forced into it.

And so...

Yeah,
I felt like I didn't know anything
all these people were talking about.

I was walking through
homeschool curriculum fairs.

They're talking about, you know, phonics.

And I'm like, what is that?

I have no idea.

Yeah.

And so, you know, to even, you know,
think beyond the subjects
and to like whole, you know,
schooling models was just
very obscure in my brain.

So but yeah.

But yeah,

it's really important because it

structures your whole

teaching methodology and

just how you run your day.

So important.

So could you share a success

story or personal

experience where an

unconventional approach

significantly benefited a student?

Yeah, I mean,

there are many famous people

who went to Montessori schools.

I mean, I think, yeah.

a lot of the tech

entrepreneurs and a lot of

very famous people and very

exceptional people were

homeschooled back in the day, right?

I mean, start from Mozart,

then there's Billie Eilish today,

then there's Nikola Tesla.

There's a lot of, I mean,
if you look at the list of
people who did exceptional
things and who are either
autodidacts taught
themselves or taught by
their parents or by tutors
back in the days,
It's immense, right?
Out of personal experience, besides myself,
of course, I mean,
I know from all of my
friends who went to a Waldorf school,
many of them chose a very
different career, I think.
Very few went into traditional jobs,
like going to a bank or
working for a big company.
Some did, but then they quit.
One became a very famous producer.
He's regular at the Academy Awards.
He didn't win the Oscar yet,
but was nominated twice

already for his films with
a very close friend of mine.

Another one became also a
very good friend of mine,
became first a carpenter
and then started his own
company and now he builds
amazing homes and

And the third one went to Audi,
a car company,
and then he didn't like it at all.

And now he started his own
financial service company.

And so a lot of them are entrepreneurs,
I would say.

Not necessarily started right away,
but eventually they became
very autonomous and independent.

And I think that's one of
the biggest advantages of
learning early that
that there are other ways to
do things and that you

don't need to follow the
rules all the time.

And I think that then
basically becomes a topic for your life.

I mean, for some,
maybe it doesn't work out that well,
right?

But on the other side,
I think many of them,
from personal experience, people I know,
it did them very good.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Lessons I wish I had learned
now that I own two companies myself.

You know, that's where, you know,
you find your sweet spot,
but you wish you wouldn't
have found it till you turn
your forties and fifties.

But yeah,

it's amazing just to kind of see how
students now that had been
homeschooled that I'm
bringing on and hiring into my,
my businesses,
just their perspectives and,
and how differently they look at,
at life versus how I was brought up and,
and the ability to just, you know,
rely more on their own understanding and,
and not feeling like
somebody has to be telling
them all the time what to do.
They're always, you know,
interjecting and have ideas and, and,
and really thinking instead of just saying,
well, what do I do next?
So I love that.
Absolutely.
Right, right.
I think that's the biggest problem,
basically, right?
That kids are always

incentivized to be the good student.

And if you're not, you don't fit in.

And you are often, you know, just,

you know, you basically just

shut down,

basically don't even listen

anymore because you know

you're not going to be good anyway.

But even those who are

listening and following the instructions,

they're going to listen for

a long time afterwards and

following the instructions,

and they're going to miss a

lot of opportunities to do

something extraordinary with their lives.

And it goes, I think,

as far that a lot of

research on what happens to

Harvard students who are always,

these are all kids which

are exceptionally smart,

but always follow,

or most of them just follow
instructions of what to do, right?

And then they get a good
grade and they go to an
amazing university.

And then they, of course,
have to go to an amazing company,
which is usually a big bank or maybe,
you know, tech companies.

And then they have to also, of course,
do really well there, right?

Right.

It's the striving.

Exactly.

And then they have to get a spouse,
which is amazing looking, you know,
and hardworking and intelligent,
you know.

And then they're, you know,
forty-five and they're
divorced and they wonder like, oh
is the
ideal kind of person you

can ever become is terrible
because it just leads you
very often to the wrong path.
And there's nothing worse than, you know,
probably have you know not
finding or like finding the
wrong partner and having
children right I mean this
will be with you that
conflict will be with you
for your life and um right
and if it especially if it
stops you from finding the
right partner right which
is and so I think it's um I
think it's it's a very long
term kind of um investment
which parents have to take
um but it will pay off and I think um
those parents who understand
the payout and how big it can be,
they should try their best
to find the right school or

to homeschool their
children or to unschool their children.

Yeah.

So true.

Yeah.

It's yeah.

It,

you can't let life just slip through
your fingers or your kid's fingers.

And I think that's, um, we're setting,

we are setting them up in

traditional models to

eventually fail because we,

we make it look like if you

just follow these steps,

everything works out.

And I remember, you know,

my dad telling me that too is, you know,

it's like,

get your degree, get your job,

don't rely on anybody.

You know, that's, that's how I was raised.

And,

and yet it's all about relationships

and it's,

it's not about always following

the rules and, you know, and that's,

that's life.

And, and,

And yeah,

it was a big letdown when you

realize it doesn't work.

So what trends do you see

emerging in the realm of

homeschooling and

unconventional education in

the coming years?

Yeah, I think, I mean,

there's a huge drive towards, I think,

micro schools at the moment,

mainly in the US,

but also in other countries it's coming.

In China, for example,

you have a massive growth

of Waldorf kindergartens.

because parents realize it's

not worth it to send your
kids off too young to
compete for the most
precious kind of spots in
the universities.

In India, that's hopefully happening soon,
too.

It's a very competitive
educational system.

I think what happens

Globally,

in countries which follow the

British or the American

system is that you will have,

and a lot of Asian countries, for example,

which follow the British

system or the American system,

but mostly more the British,

you will have specialized

middle and high schools coming, I think,

because you already start

to realize what the kids like.

Right.

What they what they not like so much.

And because you can

You can specialize quite early.

For example, in the British system,

you can specialize from the GSSC.

It's around age fourteen.

So let's say grade ten.

You can pick five, six,

seven subjects of your choosing,

for example,

only in the sciences or only

in business or whatever you

are interested in.

And then also do your A levels there.

And so in the US,

I think that's partly as well possible.

And so I think you will have

schools which focus on

specific interests and then

develop exceptional well

programs to help kids

understand this concept and

get good passing grades.

And because they pull the
kids together and they all
have the same interest, they learn.

Right.

I think that's going to be a
very big trend.

I think the online learning
as well is going to expand dramatically.

I mean,
now everybody learned how to use
Zoom and how to do online meetings.

But it's still in the
infancy of how to deliver
an online classroom in a very active way.

But it's coming slowly.

So there's a company called class.com,
for example,
which was started just two or
three years ago.

And they have a lot of
interactive tools for the educator to,
for example, run polls during class.

And so I think a lot of that will come.

And so...

I think that will help

homeschooling parents a lot,

that will help online high schools,

online middle schools,

online colleges a lot,

because you can make it more fun, right?

Right.

Not just listening and maybe like,

you know, debating, but it's also polls,

maybe there are games

within the... Right.

You know, there's stuff like that.

And so I think that's going to happen.

And then I think, I mean,

what happens with AI, we don't know,

and how it's going to impact.

But I think, I mean, my oldest son,

my oldest child, he's seven,

and he starts to talk to

JetGPT on certain topics.

And it's amazing in a way, because, I mean,

once this gets to a point

that we can trust that it's
mostly correct what they hear,
then they get the answers very fast,
right?

Right.

and probably faster than
what the teacher needs time
to think about the question
and get the right answer, right?

Right.

And so they're going to
learn on steroids if we
find a way to channel that
technology in the right way.

Yeah, absolutely.

And still let them teach,
still let them experience
how it works when you want
to write something by yourself,
obviously.

Right.

The balance, yes, exactly.

But I think, yeah,

I think AI and specialized schools,
micro schools, online schools...

And parents,
homeschooling parents who realize,
you know,
my kid is really interested in physics.

And then, you know,
going to a website like Outschool,
for example,
and finding a fantastic
physics teacher from a
university who teaches high
school students at university level.

That's amazing, right?

And so that all will become, I think,
quite normal in the long run.

for those who take control
over the education of their children.

And so I think I'm very
optimistic for
homeschooling parents
because the technology,

I think it's just about to start.

I mean,

what we had with Coursera ten years

ago and some of the other

big platforms was not bad,

But I think what's coming

now and serious games, for example,

there's a lot of serious

games like simulations, for example.

So the kids simulate things,

let's say running and

running a retail store.

Right.

And there's one of the

Harvard Beer Game and

there's a company called Foreo, I think,

in Australia.

They do the simulations.

So you have one child is the retailer.

The other child is a customer.

The third child is the wholesaler.

The fourth is the producer.

And then the beer becomes

famous because the celebrity endorses it.

And then the retailer orders
a lot and the wholesaler
orders even more and the
producer orders even more.
And basically it takes an
hour with four players.
And at the end you count
your stock because the
demand drops again and most
of them are left with a lot of stock,
right?

Most of the players.
the the company which has
the least stock is the
winner and so it's just one
example of where you can
make learning really
engaging and you teach a
lot on supply chain and
supply demand and how
celebrities impact trends
and and and and so that i
think parents who who have

the resource and the time
to look for these kind of
things um i think they can
really nowadays and
especially in the in this
near future benefit a lot
from these developments.

Absolutely, yes.

It would take thirty years before schools,
I mean, before public schools have,
you know, have heard of these things.

That's the problem.

Oh, yeah.

No, it takes so much approval.

And yeah,

and it's always cost them more
than a parent.

But and because it has to be developed,
it has to meet certain standards.

It's just there's so many,
so much red tape that's
involved where a parent can just say,
yeah, that's good or that's not.

And I don't need to have a
committee vote on it.

So that's so true.

And yeah,

just the explosion that's

happened since twenty

twenty being in this

industry now for twenty five years.

It's amazing just how much

has changed since I first

started homeschooling and

and just how exciting it is

to see the the ramp up.

the changes that have been

happening and i'm super

excited too to see where

that's going to go and and

how all that's going to

play out so um i'd love for

you to talk a little bit

about your book um and

where people can find that

the it's the unschoolers

education dictionary right

yeah it's on amazon and i

think it's also in bands

and novels and a bunch of

bookstores across the world

And it's, I think,

two hundred fifty pages.

It's mostly a dictionary.

So that was ABC.

And I started, I think, with twelve,

number twelve,

because twelve is

apparently at the time a

middle schooler pays

attention in an average class.

It's twelve minutes.

Ah, okay.

And so some concepts are very short,

some are a bit longer.

And we also write about

attachment theory and how

it impacts learning and

Piaget and Erickson.

And so, yeah,
this is the first section of the book.

And then at the end,
we talk about alternatives.

So what are the options?

And we go through sixteen
different alternative
schools or approaches.

And there's also a checklist
for parents with all the
most important questions,
what they should ask the
school and themselves when
they sign up for school.

And it starts with things like class size,
what is the class size ratio?

And simple things,
but new parents often don't know.

And I think it's important.

So there's around thirty
questions I think they
should ask either the
school or research for

themselves to understand

what this specific school is all about.

And then they can hopefully

make a more informed choice

on is school the right thing?

If yes,

what kind of school is the right thing?

If school is not the right thing,

is it homeschooling?

Are we, you know,

with our child at the point

where the child is so young

that we can just do

unschooling for some time?

Or do we travel for a year

and we unschool?

Or does our child want to do

a gap year where we unschool,

just see what happens, you know?

Maybe we don't support the

child financially anymore.

So maybe, you know,

he gets a job for a year, right?

See what that feels like, you know,
stuff like that.

And so I think, yeah,

The book is really for
parents trying to find the
right school for their kids.

Or if it's not a school,
what kind of method is at home?

And I think so far the
feedback is very good.

We got a few reviews on Amazon.

And people like it a lot and
they find it funny.

And so I'm very excited.

It's very new for me.

I didn't know how to write a book.

We got approached by this publisher,
Mango.

It's the fastest growing
publisher in the United
States at the moment.

They approach basically
content creators like us

because we have close to
two million followers now
on YouTube in English,
plus five hundred thousand in Spanish and
Yeah, many,
many hundreds of thousands in
other languages.

And so they approached us to
write a book and I wrote it
and now it's available and
I have to promote it a bit
so people find out about it
and they seem to like it.

So I hope it's going to be a project which
which I will work on for another few years,
maybe writing the second
version of it over in Chile.

I don't have the second book.

I think I just want to update this one.

It's very exciting.

So far, it's very exciting.

Very good.

Yeah.

And then you've got a
website and a YouTube channel,
Sprout Schools.

What can parents find on there?

exactly so on our website we
have a hundred fifty video
lessons which are free of
charge for homeschooling
parents these are all
cartoons um and so it's not
you're not listen the kids
are not going to listen to
a another teacher talking
about something he's
explaining videos and
cartoons and they're for
mostly for kids who are
interested in social
science so psychology
economics um pedagogy and um
We make them available free of charge.
You just can play them
straight from the website

or straight from YouTube on the website.

You can also download them

without background music

because some children with, yeah,

which are very sensitive,

they don't like background music.

It distracts them from

understanding the concept.

But we also publish all the

sources on the website to

each lesson and we publish

links to dig deeper as well

as activities.

So every video lesson has an

activity which you can do

in class or at home.

And yeah, that's basically a website.

It's a result of ten years

of working and we have our videos now in

is so meaningful for me is

the videos are they're

played every day uh we have

around hundred thousand

views every day but what is
what is amazing to see is
that they are mostly played
uh during school hours and
that they're also
incorporated by many
universities so we can see
for the analytics who is
playing them and we have
tons of universities in
schools using them in class
um to to basically get the
initial you know interest
in the subject through cartoon
That's what you can find on the website.

That's very rewarding just
to know that people are
using your materials and
benefiting from them.

Well,
thank you so much today for doing
this interview and sharing with us.
insightful, delightful.

And I know our time

difference is quite dramatic.

So we had to kind of

schedule around both of our schedules,

but it was well worth it.

So thank you so much, Jonas,

for your time and for all that you do.

It's

Thank you, Peggy.

It was an honor to be here.

And thank you also for

waking up so early to make

this call possible.

Really appreciate that.

Absolutely.

It's definitely worth it.

And thank you all for joining us.

Next time,

we're going to talk about

unlocking sensory success.

I'm helping your unique

learner thrive at home.

We're going to be talking

about some sensory...

that sometimes kids have in

learning and how to get around those.

So you'll want to join us

for our next show about that.

Until then, thanks everybody.

Take care.

God bless.

And we'll see you next time.

Bye everyone.

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