

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

So what if your child could
learn animation from
someone who brought Tarzan,
the Emperor's New Groove
and the Polar Express to life?

Today's guest is not only a
world class animator,
but also a homeschooling
dad of eight who has spent
the past two decades blending creativity,
storytelling and education
in his own home.

Welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations.

I'm your host, Peggy Ployer,
and I'm thrilled to
introduce you to Chad Stewart,
a veteran Disney and Sony

animator with over thirty
years of experience in the
animation industry.

From hand-drawn classics
like Fantasia in two
thousand to digital wonders
like Story Little Two and Surf's Up,
Chad's work has touched millions.

But behind the scenes,
he's also been investing in
something even more meaningful,
his family.

Chad and his wife recently
completed their twenty-year
homeschooling journey with eight children,
and he's now combining his
professional skills and
personal passion in
teaching animation to the
next generation from his
comfort of his own home.

In this episode,
we'll explore how creative

subjects like animation can
ignite passion and purpose in learning,
how parents can support
kids with artistic talents,
and how Chad's journey from
Disney to the homeschool
world may inspire your own path.

Welcome to the show, Chad.

Thanks, Peggy.

Thanks for having me.

Absolutely.

This is this is great.

So so I have to give the
preface that my daughter
has taken online classes
with you when she was younger.

She's now twenty and but she
she told me that the
feedback that she got from
you really helped her with
her artistic skills.

And so great.

Just want to share that with

you and just let you know

that you are making huge impacts.

And I've heard that from

other people who have used your program.

So it's exciting to see

these budding artists and

how they can just hone those skills.

I really love hearing that

kind of feedback.

We have a lot of students

who just come in and they

just wanna explore and be creative.

And to me,

sometimes when you get into the

professional world, that spark gets lost.

And it's so much fun to hear

from students that they

take the feedback and they

can grow and they can

create and do all these things,

but it doesn't have to

necessarily be super serious.

Right.

Yeah,

I think that's why my daughter ended
up not pursuing a career in
art was because she loved it so much.

And she actually said to me at one point,
she goes, I don't want that to die.

But what a good perspective
to have that as like a
sixteen year old and say, you know,

I love doing art and I
don't want to lose that love.

So I'm going to go into
something else and then I'm
going to keep doing art.

And maybe, you know,
we'll see where that goes.

She's going into library science now.

And yeah, so I said, well,
then you can work in an
archive at an art studio.

And that's kind of where her
pursuit is going.

But yeah, it's still good to know,

you know,

a lot about art and how it's

made and created and in

that line of work as well.

So you just never know.

Yeah.

So let's start with your

animation journey.

How did you get into the

world of animation and what

were some of the highlights

from your time with Disney and Sony?

Okay.

Well,

so I can remember being in a movie

theater.

I don't remember how old I was,

but I was watching sleeping beauty.

And I remember being

uncomfortable to the

armrest and being

absolutely fascinated with the dragon.

And yeah,

after the movie was over,
talking to my mom about, well,
how did they make this?
And she told me that they drew it.
And I thought that made no sense.
Cause I immediately
envisioned people up on
ladders on this big screen,
like drawing massive drawings.
But from that point on
animation and drawing,
I always just gravitated toward it.
I love the silliness of
cartoons and I loved Bugs Bunny.
saturday morning cartoons
and for a while that was
just kind of all it was
until I hit sixth grade and
you start thinking okay
what are you gonna do that
question gets asked yeah
and we ask our kids the
same thing and yeah right

and so it was still you
know baseball player or um
and this idea of there's
people that can do this and
we had gone on a family trip
to Los Angeles and went to Disneyland.

And my mom, again, great,
great influence here.

Right, exactly.

And she called Disney Studios and said,
well,

my son might want to be an animator.

What does he, where would he go to school?

How would he do that?

And this was back in the eighties.

And at the time,

there was only one college in the U.S.

that had an animation program.

And it's a college that's

still there today called

California Institute of the Arts.

And it was actually set up

by Walt Disney himself in

the late nineteen sixties

to train animators.

So many of the

big name examination right

now went to that school

because it was the only place to go.

And so I thought, okay, well now I,

now it's very simple.

I know where I want to go to college.

I know I go through all of

this and I know what I want to do.

And obviously that there is a bumpy road.

I took me three tries to get

into that college.

Wow.

Get serious about becoming an artist.

I had to take art classes.

And then once I did get in,

so my first year at CalArts

was the fall of

just a few months before The

Little Mermaid came out.

And those few years before

that had been really a lot
of growing in the animation world,
but the nineties is now
considered the Disney Renaissance.

And so I,

God was very gracious to me and
my timing was amazing
because from that point on,
from The Little Mermaid,
hand-drawn animation for
the next ten years was just,
there weren't enough animators.

And so,

so a lot of other studios that had
not been doing animation
started to get back into it.

There were a lot more TV shows.

And so that's when, you know, the,
the kind of going from show
to show and there were a
lot of different jobs and a
lot of different opportunities.

And then I got to Disney in,

uh so I've done I've done
some other films before
that um like cats don't
dance and the page master
which are were done by
turner and and then got to
disney and so I had wanted
to be a disney animator
since I was a kid to
actually be doing it uh was
probably the highlight
because once you get in it
was a lot of hard work
And I learned a ton,
but it's probably one of
the hardest jobs I've had in animation.

But these films that I was
able to work on have had
such a great following and
such a great life after being there.

And to really be a part of
the hand-drawn legacy of Disney,
because I was kind of at the very,

very end of it.

And that, that still to me is, is very,

very special to be a part of that.

Um, so, uh, that's cool.

Yeah.

And I love that your, your mom,

was the one who kind of gave

you that nudge and that push.

And she saw something in you

that could be cultivated.

And I think as homeschool moms,

we don't realize how

influential some of the

things that the little things that we say,

the things that we pick out

about our kids that we kind

of point out to them.

My husband has a similar

story about his career path

and his mom making a comment going, well,

you know, you love computers.

And, you know, him going,

is there a career in that?

And you always think that's hilarious.

But, you know,

when not back in the mid-eighties, I mean,

you just didn't.

Right.

And so, yes, but mothers,

we have the ability to

speak and question and help

our kids kind of process a

lot of things that they

don't even know are within them.

And so, yeah,

I love that your story brings that out.

Yeah,

I'm actually going to interview my mom.

later today to be able to

show because so many we

talked to so many parents

and specifically mothers

who just have such a heart

to help their kids and they

want to encourage them but

this is a world that they

don't understand and right

and and now it's so much

bigger than animation so

much bigger and a little

bit more stable than when I

got into it when it was it

was much smaller and

So to talk to my mom about, well,

what did you do?

you know, how did you do that?

How did you balance that?

But yeah, that support, both my parents,

but specifically my mom, always were very,

very encouraging.

And I think it sort of

transferred over to me thinking, well,

if they think I could do it,

then I guess I could do it.

Right.

Yeah, absolutely.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And they say now, you know,

you talked about, you know, this field,
this emerging field.

I think a lot of times we
feel like we need to push
our kids towards fields
that are stable because we
want them to be stable.

But the fact is now they're
saying that kids will
probably have seven careers
in their lifetime,
the ones that are
graduating high school right now.

And so they are going to
have to enter those emerging places.

I remember when I graduated from college,
I entered a field that
there was no degree for.

And and so I had a degree in physics that,
you know, filled that void.

But now you can get a degree
as a biomedical engineer.

My son did.

But that was a field I went into.

But back then they didn't

offer that degree.

So it things just change.

And we have to be willing to

to to really show our kids, you know,

where where they're called

and to back them.

in those places,

even though it may be unstable.

Yeah, it's such a hard thing.

But as you were talking,

my first thought is,

is there any job that's stable right now?

Right, exactly.

It is, it's hard.

But the idea of a, I mean,

there's so many things,

we're such a visual world

and there's so many visual learners.

But it just seems like we're

really leaning into that.

There's so much media,

so many different ways,
and animation plays a role
in many of these different fields,
even that haven't quite
been figured out yet.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And I love that you talk
about visual learning,
because you and your wife
have homeschooled for for twenty years,
and that's just incredible.

How did your work in
animation and knowing that
we are such a visual
society affect your home education?

So it's a good question.

Yeah.

I mean,
we had with eight kids and four
were adopted.

And so they're so different.

I mean, every kid is different.

Yeah.

And so I think Kayla, my wife,

was very good at trying to find

How what was the best way

for them to learn?

And and so I think for me,

I'm a little more one track.

It's like I'm visual.

So I think visual.

So but especially as when they're younger,

it's I think visual

learning books and

illustrations and all of

those things kind of, you know, come in.

to play and that was to me,

the thing I could draw a

quick sketch and I could

spark an imagination, an idea with them,

or I could read a book and

do the voices and picture

it in my head and hope they

were picturing it too.

And so those,

I think this kind of
naturally flowed out.

Yeah, yeah.

And I found myself doing
voices and things and I
didn't even have any acting experience.

It's just,
you knew that they would hold
their attention a lot
longer if you did something
other than just like
monotone read something.
right right yeah so so yeah
we all kind of and I have I
discovered through
homeschooling my kids that
there was there was this
inside performer that I
never knew existed so I
think homeschooling like
stretches even you know
things that we never even
knew we had within us

because we are on the spot
like you said if you have
to sketch something out or
you you may have like
sketch something you never
had to sketch before
for a job because you're
trying to explain it to a child that,
you know, doesn't get it or you're,
you know, or maybe you create a face that,
you know,
just was very different than any
face you ever drew.

I found my kids, you know,
I had one child who had
such a hard time reading
that I ended up reading an
entire one elephant jokes
book and putting it on an
audio cassette so he could
listen to it when he went
to bed because he wanted to
memorize the whole book.

um he did memorize the book
and I was glad I only had
to read it once because he
listened to it hundreds of
times but yes so um but you
had to get the punch line
right you know and so I had
to be get really good at
you know that pause because
he would copy it verbatim
okay so you're still you're
still hearing the cadence
even if you're not the one
right right yes exactly so yeah so
That definitely will stretch
any gifting you have when
you're homeschooling your kids, for sure.
And that's great.
You pointed out something with your wife,
Kayla, too,
is as we approach
homeschooling as a unified couple,
my husband has gifts that I don't have.

And it was so nice to be able to say, well,
this is definitely something that...

I think would be much better

in your wheelhouse and um

and so the two of you to

work together and

especially having eight

kids that's a lot to juggle

so um great that you had

that teamwork um through

that those years yeah and

she's a she's an amazing

teacher amazing

administrator and an

amazing mom so yeah oh

that's awesome so what

inspired you to start

teaching animation online to kids

So it was honestly Kayla.

It was her idea.

So when we grew our family

to a point that we had

eight kids and I had been

working in the studios for
about twenty years.

We were living in L.A.

And I love LA and I love the
studios and I love all of that,
but it's a lot of work and it's,
it's pretty intense.

Um, and so we, uh, I went freelance.

I started working independently for, uh,
as an independent
contractor for different studios and, um,
doing different
advertisements and different things.

And we were kind of going back and forth,
trying to figure out how to
make all that work.

And we moved up to

Washington state where we are now.

Okay.

Now,

just with everything that happens in
family and medical
insurance and all of those

different things,
we were trying to figure
out the best way to stabilize our income.

And at a certain point,
we went back to Los Angeles
just for a short amount of
time to take a job.

And
in that brainstorming she
said you know I think if
you started an online
course we would get a lot
of interest and I said
really uh she goes yeah
because there's there's
students who are talking to
you all the time or talking
to me trying to you know we
would have someone who knew
someone who's right yeah
the homeschool world is
like that isn't it right right
so so we thought okay well

you know it could be I
honestly thought it would
be in a sort of a
supplement like kind of do
it on the side and
freelance and and within
two weeks of her just
putting it out on her
facebook we had sixty
students and with and we
did a twelve week session
So we started another twelve
week session and then that grew to,
I think one, I want to say like ninety.
And then the third one was
was nearly two hundred.
And so we realized pretty quickly, oh,
this could be a full time thing.
And and it allowed us to
move back to Washington state.
And that was ten years ago,
this January that we started it.
And so it really has just grown and

Homeschool, it fits.

We had used online classes

with our kids when we homeschooled them,

especially in the later years.

And so it just seemed to fit

with a lot of other

different families who are

trying to figure out, okay,

a kid wants to do animation.

I don't know how to do that.

I don't know where to tell them to go.

And then they would find us

and then it would be a great partnership.

Yeah.

Yeah.

You bring up a really good

point is there are a lot of those parents,

they worry about supporting

a child who has artistic or

creative interests because

they don't have, I mean,

I draw strict stick people

at my studio and I tell my students,

I'm like, just look past it.

I'll show you exactly what the motion is,

but it's just there for reference.

So yes,

when my daughter started getting

interested into art,

I enrolled her in a class locally.

And I don't know if you know

who Mark Kistler is.

He used to have a PBS show.

And so he actually lived in our community.

And my daughter took classes

from him in person.

And I had no idea who he was.

And it was like a class of three.

And so she had an incredible

art training under him.

But I was like, well,

what do we do after this?

I have no idea.

And so, yeah,

so a lot of parents just need

that support.

So what advice do you have
for encouraging kids who
think outside of that
academic box and need that
extra support to fuel their
creative interests?

Yeah,

it's an amazing time in terms of
resources for kids like that.

And so that's great.

And I tell them this idea of
loving learning,
that goes with you all the
way through your career.

So first off, just love to learn,
and training is essential.

And so you can find good
training in a lot of different places.

But here are the most widely
recognized colleges and universities.

But that doesn't mean this
is the only path because
everybody's different and

they have different resources.

I know of someone who

started off as a security

guard at Pixar at night and

befriended the animators

and started to teach himself to animate.

And he is now a Pixar animator.

And that was his training.

And so there's no one way,

and really even degrees

from these more recognized

universities aren't

guarantees to being successful.

So it's that determination.

And that loving what you're doing,

the creativity,

leaning into your strengths.

If you're a really technical

person and you really love computers,

well,

that opens up six more opportunities

for you.

Whereas if you love to paint

and you're really good at it, well,

that opens a different six opportunities.

And then networking, which...

you know, relationships, communication,

these soft skills that are

so valuable in any field.

Those are different things too.

And this is really one of

sometimes one of the

hardest ones because so many creative

And so many creative people,

but even homeschoolers tend

to be introverts.

And I know I was,

and I didn't want to talk to anybody,

especially as a teenager.

I just wanted to sit there and draw.

And that's one of the things it's so hard,

but I look and I go, man, it was like,

ripping tar or whatever.

I didn't want to do it,

but I had to learn.

And so that's one of the

ways we set up our classes
was for them to get
feedback from professionals
and then have the assignment
to set up so that they're
meant to turn it in again,
that they have to approach the feedback,
they have to get the critique,
they have to start communicating,
understanding,
because that is just as
important as the art part of it.

Right,

because you don't grow unless you
have good feedback.

I took over some students
from a different studio where I teach and
And I, um, they had no feedback.

And so when they started getting feedback,
their parents are like,
why are they improving so fast?

And I was like,
because I'm on them all the

time telling them how to improve and they,
they just suck it up and they love it.

So, um, but yeah,

you do have to be in a place where you're,
they're willing to receive it.

But once a child or anybody

realizes that someone,

the person critiquing you

is on your side and they

want you to get better.

and this is a safe person to

share that with,

then they will embrace that

and see that they are

improving and they want to improve more.

And it is,

it's truly about that love of learning.

And if kids have these gifts

and they're maybe

struggling academically,

This is one way that they

can find those successes,

get the feedback and see

that improvement.

And it kind of like flows

over into other areas.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Which, I mean, that's exciting for us too,

because I didn't really

think that through.

But it is great to get

feedback from parents who say, you know,

this has given them such

confidence in other

subjects and other areas of their life.

And we're just so thankful.

So that's, that's really cool.

Yeah, absolutely.

Yeah.

We, you know,

our audience is basically

parents who have kids that struggle.

Um, and, and so, so I,

I love for you to tell us a

little bit how animation helps students,

you know,
who struggle with those
traditional learning methods.
and have maybe some
diagnoses like ADHD or
dyslexia or executive
functioning challenges.

You know,
what door does art and animation
open that sometimes is
closed because of
traditional education
strategies or even just even subjects?

Yeah, you know,
Animation, and this is why I love it.

You can learn anything and
apply it to animation
because basically you are
creating your own imaginary world.

And so you have to write and
you have to understand
psychology and performance
and acting and thinking and

Also art and color theory
and structure and design
and now technology, physics,
in order to make something
appear lifelike,
we have to understand the
laws of the physical world
and gravity and momentum and inertia.
And if I'm going to animate an elephant,
well,
then I have to understand elephant
biology and anatomy.
anything you come up with
you can find a new thing to
learn and and so usually
there's because we've had a
number of different um
students with learning
challenges and they have a
specific sort of bent to
where they're already going
um or where they're already
kind of moving and

And our art lets them sort
of express that.

And most of them obviously
are artistic to begin with.

And so to take that and then
try to kind of wedge the
door open a little bit and say, okay,
now think about this and
think about adding in this
part or adding in this piece.

So if they're already really great,
it was one came in and it
was just fantastic with
sound and really just could
put all of these pieces together.

And the sound was great and
the visuals just needed a
little bit more,
understanding of design to
be to communicate more clearly.

And to teach him those those ways to say,
Okay,
let's give you the visuals that will

go with your sound.

And then you can express
yourself and communicate
through this story.

And so that's what I love
about animation is you can always sort of
You know, it's like clay.

You can kind of just nudge
it over here and make it
specifically for whoever's
coming to approach it.

And even at the professional level,
we all approach it differently.

So there's always a unique
sort of fingerprint on it.

That's cool.

Yeah.

So what you know,
what you just described is
you're you're approaching
it from a strength based perspective.

Because you're starting with
whatever that child is strong at,

and then you're building
behind the things that can
support that strength.

So if his strength isn't sound,
that's where you're going to start,
and then the visuals will
come in afterwards and be boosted up.

And I think we talk about
that a lot in our industry,
and a lot of parents sometimes that is –
it it's hard to make that
tangible um you know it's
it's a great thing to to
kind of say yeah that we
really should do that but
how do we do that so that
um that's a really good
example of of how that
would work in real life so
yeah so you talked about
different skills beyond
drawing that kids build
through animation um what

you know what are the big ones

So the big skills,

I would say it takes three

things to make a really

good character animator.

And an animation can,

encompass so many different

things but we're really

focusing on characters

bringing characters to life

um and so the the three

pieces of that are acting

because we're the visual

performers and so there

might be a voice actor who

provides a lot of the

performance but all of the

visuals facial expressions

body language timing tempo

all of these different things are

the animator.

And so you have to be a

really good performer.

And then the sort of craftsman,
or I call it a technician,
because in hand-drawn animation,
you have to be a really good artist.

But if you're going to do
computer animation, well,
I've worked with many
computer animators who are fantastic,
but they're terrible
artists because you have to
understand the program and the software.

You don't have to draw.

And so you have to really
understand that extra piece.

And then the third piece is
what I call a kineticist,
but it's basically somebody
who understands kinetics and
the laws of motion and the
laws of the physical world.

And so those are the big three.

Well,

any one of those could you could

spend a lifetime, you know,
really exploring.

And so but but usually
somebody comes in with one
or two as their sort of strengths.

And and that becomes kind of
the the launching ground.

And then there's there's all
sorts of splinter
you know,

paths that can go off of each of these,
where, like I said,
if you really paint well, well,
then there's six other job
opportunities that open up
that you may not be a character animator,
but you may be an art director,
or you might be a texture painter,
or you might be a visual
development artist.

And so there's all these
different roads that can go
in these different directions.

You know,
if you're very technical and you
love the computer, then you can go in,
you know,
there's really a thousand
different support roads and
not even just support roads,
but like key roads,
like even what we would
call a pipeline developer,
which there were, you know,
there was a whole team of
people that were just
building the infrastructure
of how a movie
basically the factory floor of the movie,
how we transfer information
from one department to another.

There's just so many different options.

A lot of times,

I think Walt Disney himself

kind of started that

mindset of the animator is

this sort of magical person.

Right.

Yeah.

You got that little one like Mickey Mouse.

Right.

Right.

But if you look at this, especially now,

if you look at the end

credits and you see all of those names,

they're all right.

Exactly.

That's very important.

Yes.

Yeah.

Mm hmm.

Absolutely.

Yeah.

But you have to like dive in.

And I think that's that's

the main thing is you dive in,

you start somewhere because

you're you know,

none of us really figure

out what we do best until

we try a lot of things we

don't do well at.

Or we're like, oh,

I'll take that one little piece.

And we follow this journey.

I found that with my kids, too,

when we were homeschooling

is we would try something.

And I'm like, well,

that was almost a good fit.

And this is what, you know,

really was a good fit part of that.

Well,

what can we like explore now that

would dive into this area?

And to be on that kind of

like discovery journey of

all those different pathways.

And yeah,

you just don't know where it's an

adventure for sure.

It is.

And as you were talking at
the very beginning,
that that skill to be able
to do that will take you
through your career because
seven different career
paths or you know you you
kind of have to do that in
today's economy now to be
able to say oh I see
there's a really good
opportunity over here but
I'm going to have to take
what I'm good at and add
these three things to it
and then that might work yeah

Yeah, that is.

That's so true.

And and technology is changing.

So even those people that are kind of,
you know,
getting to use use that that
software and all that,

then there's a new version
or there's something that
takes over the industry and
you got to relearn it.

And so teaching our kids just, you know,
how to be flexible,
how to how to adapt and.
and use the knowledge that
they have for moving on.
So that's so good.

Yeah.

So with your students,
what is your greatest hope
that they walk away with
after they do some or
multiple of your classes?

So it's a great question.

And I think when I first started,
my goal was, and still is,
that to give them
kind of the enough skills
and enough knowledge to be
able to tell their own stories in a small,

short animated film.

And we put, when they do finish,

we put those films on our

YouTube channel and you can see, you know,

so many of them and they,

many of them have used

those films to then launch

into a college program and

that's been kind of a

centerpiece of their

college portfolio or

they've started you know

they put it on social media

and they've built

followings and so that's

really still at my heart is

to let them be able to tell

stories and express

themselves through

animation but then we

started realizing that

there were some other

things that that came

through because we do have
a number of students who just want to
explore artistically,
they want to take an art class,
and they want to explore this idea.

And maybe,
so I've seen students that have
gone on to the medical field,
or they've gone on to, you know,
technology fields.

And one of our very first students,
and it's from a
from a family um the close
uh friends of our family he
he got his uh first credit
for national geographic for
uh being for shooting film
and videography for
national geographic and and
so he we talk every once in
a while he's like yeah I
still remember some of those
little early things that you said,

and I apply them to this.

And there are other times I

get email from students who are like,

yeah, I still love animation.

I still love the time I

spent in your classes.

In fact,

this has really helped me with

this other thing.

And so that's really

exciting and cool that I

can help somebody see, well,

maybe animation is not for me, but

But there's some of these

things that we're talking

about that they can apply to to life.

Right.

Absolutely.

Yeah.

It's amazing.

You know what?

When we are teaching kids,

I just remember like things

my dance teacher told me, you know,
when I was so young and it
affects you for life.

And and so to be able to
have people alongside us as
homeschool parents, you know,
to be able to have
resources like yours in the
homeschooling community.
field,

it's invaluable because we can't
always speak those things
into our kids' lives where
they will listen to us.

They'll listen to somebody else.

And so to know that they
have a heart the same as
them for their kids and
that there's classes out
there that will nurture and
grow these gifts within them.

So just so cool.

So what encouragement would

you offer parents who feel like,
you know,

I don't even know if I can
foster creativity beyond
this classroom or being
able to do just maybe an
animation class here and there.

And what can they do within their home,
even if they're not artistic,
to foster that so their
child will explore that or
continue those skills,
even if they aren't involved?

Yeah.

So I talk with a lot of parents and
perfectionism comes up a lot.

And I know that this isn't, I mean,
it's very,
very common in the artistic
fields and the animation field,
but I also know it's common
in a lot of things and a
lot of different kids.

And as you were talking earlier about,
you know, we just teach the kids,
suck it up, you gotta do it.

Like,

I do think there is a big thing about
something that many of them love so much
that they will make a choice
to launch themselves
forward with a character
trait or something else that scares them.

And I think for parents,
that idea of encouraging them to say,
okay,

I can't draw or I can't do this,
but I can help you take that step.

And I can be support for you to say,
part of one of our advanced
classes is writing down a
schedule and following it.

And I can't keep you to that schedule.

And I know your teacher wants me to.

And that's a hard thing for
an artist because I was the same way.

Like, again,

this is why we put it in there

because this took me ten

years of my career to say, oh,

I have to actually embrace this schedule.

I don't just get to be creative.

Right, yeah.

So those are those things

that I try to help institute into,

you know, being artistic.

You'll actually be better if you do this.

You'll be better if you get feedback.

And the parents can really

help be a huge support in

all of those soft skills

that's what they call them

in the business world.

Right.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I think, yeah,

we forget very easily that

how much those impact.

I mean, just keeping a deadline,
knowing when you have to
have something done or certain drafts.
because that does make a
better end product.

But if you just finish it on
the day that it's due,
you haven't had the process
to have it reviewed.

Kids,
they need to learn that and that's
going to actually make them
better in the end.

Any more particular
inspiring stories from
students or families that
have gone through your
course that you want to share?

So it's so fun to see all
the big successes.

And we've seen students have
their films on streaming services.

And we've had students that

have gone on to college.

We've done this long enough

that now some are working professionally.

And all that's really cool.

we also get the the

surprising um and it's not

surprising anymore but it

was at the beginning we

would get an email from a

parent who said hey thank you so much my

my child is trying to figure

out what they want to do.

And after taking your course,

they know they don't want

to be an animator.

And they didn't have to pay

this massive college bill.

Yes, yes.

And at first it was like, oh.

But then as we talked more with them,

it's like, yeah, that they decided they,

you know,

maybe it's like your daughter or

maybe it's something else.

It's like this was...

it's so much harder to make
animation than it is to watch animation.

And some people see it and go,
this is fantastic.

This is what I want to dig in.

I want to spend all my time doing this.

Other people will say, wow,
this is taking away all the joy.

Right.

Yeah.

That's been really cool too, to feel like,

Oh,

we're helping out parents because we
were there.

wondering where should they

go to college what should

they do and and so that's

been really really fun too

to yeah to feel like we're

really helping parents and

we're really helping these families so

Yeah,

I needed to hear that as a teacher

because I own an aerial studio.

So I do like Cirque du

Soleil and I teach it.

But I have some students come in,

they get their foot in the

first wrap and they crumble

and they're like, this hurts.

And I'm like, yeah, it hurts a lot.

And I'm like,

so if you want to do that other stuff,

you just got to get used to the pain.

And some kids are like, that's not for me.

And so, yeah,

I've started offering intro

classes because the parents

sign them up for sixteen

weeks and they have to bear

through it for sixteen weeks.

They can't do it.

But it is good to just say, oh,

now I grasp the reality.

of what's involved in that.

And it's either for me or not for me.

But it's good that they do

get that experience.

Because there's always those

things that gnaw at us,

like when we were younger.

I should have tried that, you know,

and so it's best to give

your kids the experiences

so they don't have that.

Oh, I should have tried that.

Or why didn't I discover

this talent in me until I was, you know,

forty?

I don't know, you know, so.

Yeah, all great reminders for sure.

Can you talk a little bit

about where families need

to go for your animation program,

how they get started,

what are some of the options?

I'm going to put your

website up on the screen

and then also we're going

to share it in the show notes as well.

Great.

On the website,

we try to give a lot of

information about the

different types of classes we offer and

We have three, right now,

kind of three groupings of classes.

We have animation courses,

we have drawing courses,

and then we have software courses.

And there's obviously a bit of overlap.

You can still draw when

you're taking animation courses,

and you're going to still

be using software.

But that becomes kind of the

primary focus.

And so with those three things,

that's a good way to at

least get started.

And we have...

recordings only that they
can watch that are cheaper
or we have our live classes
that have professional
feedback and so all of our
graders are professional
animators who are working
in the field but still
remember being a kid and
wanting to try to figure
out how to do this and
they're great working and
they they're the ones who
give a lot of the feedback
on the individual assignments

So on the contact page,
my wife's phone number, Kayla,
who we run the business
together and she does the
administrative side and
registration side.

If you want to call her and

have a conversation, she's great.

She actually prefers that to
really get to know and be
able to kind of customize
the approach to each family.

That's great.

So that's a good way to go too.

On our Facebook page,
you can see a lot of
different student assignments.

We post the student
assignments and you can get
a sense of the different
styles and types of animation.

Then as I said before,
on our YouTube channel and
just search the animation course,
you can see a bunch of
different things I do.

We post all of the students
films who finish and complete their film.

And then we also have some lessons there,
some interviews,

different things like that.

So we try to kind of keep

everything moving around,

but our website's a great place to go.

And then the contact page,

we'll have the phone number for Kayla.

That's awesome.

Yes.

And I think people don't realize how much,

you know, especially like

Businesses like yours that started out by,

you know, being a homeschool family,

filling a need in the

homeschooling community,

just how much you are

invested in helping other

families and that you want

to be part of that process.

You want to know what what

they're looking for,

how you can help them.

And reaching out is essential.

Because like a lot of our

kids that have unique paths, it's,
it's nice to know that
somebody's on your side and they're,
they're going to help you
work through that.

And how can we help you with, you know,
what your child is looking to learn.

And so that's awesome.

I appreciate that.

And yes, Kayla,
as I've chatted back and
forth with her a couple of
times and it's been a joy, so.

Yes, yes.

And also I didn't mention our email.

If email's easier,
then you can do that as well.

Okay.

Kayla at [theanimcourse.com](mailto:kayla@theanimcourse.com)
is her email and Chad at
[theanimcourse.com](mailto:chad@theanimcourse.com).

So we don't make you type
out all of animation, just A-N-I-M.

And I am.

Okay.

Yeah.

So we'll make sure to share

that too in the show notes.

So awesome.

Well,

this has been such an amazing

conversation.

I really appreciate just you

sharing with us your heart, your story,

and just being there for

the homeschool community

and sharing your unique talent.

It's really cool.

Well, thank you so much.

It's always great to be able to talk with

other people and other

homeschoolers and kind of connect, so.

Absolutely.

Yes, so much so.

Well,

what an amazing journey from Disney

Animation Studios to the
homeschool classroom.

Chad's story reminds us that
creativity is not just a subject,
it is a mindset.

When we invite our children to create,
imagine, and express themselves,
we're giving them a
powerful tool to learn and
connect in ways that go far
beyond textbooks.

If your child's curious
about animation or if
you're looking for a fresh
way to make learning become alive,
I really do highly encourage
you to check out Chad's
online animation courses.

We've included the link in our show notes,
so it makes it easy for you to find that.

And as always,
thank you for joining us for
this week's episode of

Empowering Homeschool Conversations.

If today's discussion inspired you,

please like, share, subscribe.

And don't forget to check

out our full library of

episodes and reels on YouTube, Facebook,

Instagram,

TikTok or your favorite

podcasting platform.

And a special thank you to you, Chad,

for sharing.

your artistic talents and

your heart for homeschooling.

Until next time, keep nurturing creativity,

leaning into grace and

discovering the joy of

learning alongside your kids.

Bye everybody.

God bless.

And we'll see you next time.

This has been Empowering

Homeschool Conversations

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diverse learners.

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Thank you.