

Let's Talk Learning Disabilities

EPISODE 40

Welcome to Let's Talk Learning Disabilities with Laurie Peterson and Abby Weinstein. Laurie & Abbey spend their days talking about dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, & ADHD they talk to parents of struggling students and adults who have had a lifetime of academic challenges. They want to share those stories, along with their own insights with you. So, *let's talk learning disabilities*.

Laurie: Hey everybody. Welcome to episode# 40 of Let's Talk Learning Disabilities. This is Laurie,

Abbey: and this is Abbey.

Laurie: And today we are super excited. Abbey, tell us who's here.

Abbey: We have a very special guest with us today. We've got Leslie Josel who is coming to us today to talk a little bit about procrastination. She is a woman of many. She wears many hats and does many things, um, especially within the ADHD community. However, she does have some really good information to share with us today about procrastination, which I believe impacts not only the only individuals living with ADHD, but a lot of neuro-typical individuals struggle with procrastination and it's a big, big thing that parents, we hear parents struggling to deal with it with their children. So welcome, Leslie.

Leslie: So happy to be here and, and find you all. Like, I feel like we became BFFs, like immediately.

Abbey: Absolutely welcome. We're happy to have you, and we're happy to be your BFF as well.

Leslie: I love it. Thank you!

Laurie: We should, we should probably preface this by. I should probably tell you that my go-to saying is why do today what I can do tomorrow. So this is going to be incredibly, um, it's going to hit home, really hit home because I'm really, I'm like if everyone else learns, great! But I'm pretty sure I'm the one who's going to benefit the most from this.

Leslie: Yeah, that's, that's a big say. That's what the book was called, How to do it now.

Abbey: I actually was telling my mother this morning about. Who we were interviewing in our topic for our podcast, that we were recording. And I told her it was about procrastinate nation and my mother who has known me all too well for 47 years said, now you better be listening with both ears. So both Laurie and I are excited to benefit. We know our listeners are going to benefit as well.

Leslie: Yes, we have a lot to cover, a lot to chat about.

Abbey: Yeah. So start out, Leslie, if you would just tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be doing the things that you are doing.

Leslie: So I'll give you the reader's digest version because I've been, I've been around for a very long time. I've actually been in business for 17 years. So I started my, I know, right? So, um, it's actually, I think now it's 18 actually. So I started my business when my son, who is now 24, was five and right off the bat, I do want your listeners to know that anything I say about my son, he gives me permission. And I think right off the bat, that's an important point to show them respect and privacy and treat them that way. So he does allow me to tell the story when he was five, he was diagnosed with ADHD, executive dysfunction, and a few learning, you know, learning challenges. So you have to remember back then, there were no amazing podcasts like you guys and what you do. There were no tele-summits and conferences or things like that. So I really had to figure out ways to untangle his world both at home and at school. Um, and back then, I probably did think. That were revolutionary back then. You would not think of them as revolutionary now, but I remember for him like what he didn't see didn't exist. So taking doors off closets, taking dressers out of rooms and putting clear bins and coding,

everything blue that belonged to him. Cause blue soothed him, like just different things and to make a very long story, short friends saw what I did and friends of friends and all of a sudden now I worked at. Regular full-time job. And my phone started ringing, Hey, I saw what you did, or I heard what you did. Can you come to my house to do this? And I turned to my husband and I think it's important to say that he has ADHD. Cause I'm very linear thinker, right? If I don't have all the details and he, and I said, but, but I don't do this for a living. And he said, well, you do now. And I was like, what do I call myself? And he was like, order out of chaos and well, like, I mean, it was so crazy, cause I did not set out to start a business. I did not start out to even understand that there was a need for this. And within a month I quit my full-time job. And within six months I had a team I kid you not. And what I specialized in was creating systems and structures, um, and piece and Saturday for families with ADHD now, fast forward. Um, 17 or 18 years later, we are now a 100% virtual business. We are global. We have about 75,000 parents, teachers and related professionals who come to us for products, programs, workshops, webinars, and coaching. Wow. All for the mission to help parents help their students, those that are neurodiverse, but we also get mainstream as well, um, to help them be successful in learning and in life. That's how we say it.

Abbey: Wow.

Leslie: Um, yeah, and I, we create products. Um, I write books. I, um, Some of your listeners might know attitude magazine, which is the premier magazine for those, with ADHD. I write the weekly dear ADHD, family coach column. I'll have somebody say I'm like the dear Abbey. I bring A's to your Q's on a variety of topics. So, and a host of other things. So we do a lot.

Laurie: You're busy.

Abbey: You are busy.

Leslie: We are really, um, yeah, it's amazing. And listen, we are, I feel very blessed that, um, Know, if I turn around and look back at 18 years of what we've developed and what we do. Um, I always say that I think the reason why we are sustainable and why we've grown is that we are a very community oriented company. We don't do anything without asking the people that are part

of our family, um, what they want. Like, I know that's not why you came to hear about, but that's really what we base our business on. It's not about me. Like I'm not gonna create a webinar. No, one's going to show up. I'm not going to create a product if nobody wants it. So that for me was a very big reason. Um, I believe that the sustainability is, we always say we bring our community along for the ride with us. Like, what book do you want me to write? Seriously? Like what planner color do you want? Like what, what webinars the next webinar you want? And, um, one, it definitely mitigates risk, but it also really, um, Allows you to kind of like really be in, you know, really helps to understand what it is. People are, what their pain is. And so my segue is procrastination is probably the number two question or pain we hear from parents.

Laurie: What's number one?

Leslie: What?

Laurie: What's not that number one?

Leslie: So yeah, understanding how to study is probably the number one thing we get. My kid does not know how to study and I, I, we do a study skills webinar twice a year and I twice a year, and I could probably give it every month. Every single month. So, but procrastination would probably be, my second would be the second thing that we hear a lot from parents is my kid procrastinates. So that, so that understanding and that nuance was really important. And it's so universal. And it, doesn't not just with kids that are, that are neurodiverse. It is, it is across all kids.

Laurie: So when you have someone come to you and say, okay, my number one problem is procrastination or my child or whatever. What is, how, where do you start? Like, what's the very first thing you want to tackle with them? Or what's your process?

Leslie: What's your definition of procrastination? That is the first question we ask the parent to say to us, my kid procrastinates and I am, I love parents. I'm going to be, I'm like a New Yorker. I am never rude, but I'm

feisty. I just have to tell your listener's that. They'll say, well, she puts things off.

Laurie: How?

Leslie: And I'm like, okay, how has that procrastination? And a lot of that is, and that's not to trip them up, but it's to get to change that mindset. So the first thing we start with is the true definition of procrastination and what most people say procrastination is, is delaying doing something, but that isn't the full definition. The full definition of procrastination is delaying doing something. Knowing, there's a consequence on the other side. And that's the key. That's really the key. So for themselves, I'm like, let's say you decided on Saturday, you were going to clean up your garage. It was time, it's overflowing. I know, I know I pick the worst thing in the world, but there's a point why I picked the worst thing in the world. So here it is. You've got the bags you bought, you got the bins, even at a dumpster. You're ready to go. And Saturday morning you wake up and it's a gorgeous day and you're like, you know what? I just don't feel like doing this today. I don't want to waste my day. I'd rather do something else and you go off and do something else. Are you procrastinating necessarily? No, you're not. You're delaying something you wanted to do, but maybe there's no, but there's no consequence on the other end, unless you're selling your house and you have to. So when a parent comes to me and says, my, my, my students should have started his work, or he should have done that paper, and started it a week ago. And I don't understand why he's not, he's procrastinating...And my favorite story, and this doesn't happen often is one time I had a parent and a child on at the same time on a zoom call and the student was a 16 year old, like sophomore. And we had a meeting and it was Friday before a long weekend. And the mom and I'm not picking up moms or dads just happened to have been a mom. I'm just saying I happened to be a mom. She was like, I don't understand. I don't understand if you should be starting at today's nothing going on, he's sitting around. And he very quietly turned to his mother and the, and the, the work was due like Monday night at 11:59. And he turns our very quietly and said, you can yell at me Tuesday at midnight and not a minute before dinner for him, but that's it. Now I know that's a very vanilla-esc, but it's powerful. If you say.

Abbey: That's how he was thinking about it. And it's so important that you guys, before you start working together, you have that working definition outlined exactly what you mean with when you talk about procrastination, making sure you're on the same page with what exactly it is.

Leslie: A hundred percent were always about. You asked me what's the first course of action and the first course of action is always mindset. It's always mindset. And it doesn't mean like we're disparaging the parent is just, it's just getting you to view things differently. And then the second thing is we usually will explain to them what we feel is after obviously lengthy conversation what's going on behind, behind the scenes. Um, because I, in, in my view and I'm, and here's what I also want your listeners to know. Some of the stuff I always say is research proven. And some of it is anecdotal. Meaning if it's institutional history, it's being in the field for 17 years, you gather it lot of institutional history. And, and I'm not even here to sell you to sell, sell a book. But one of the things we did when I was writing that book on my procrastination and the book is geared to students called, How to Do it Now, Because It's Not Going Away. I didn't want it to my son. Titled the buck. I was great. Right? I didn't want it to be solely my voice. I really wanted to bring my students' stories to life and really allow parents to hear what their kids were saying. What, what kids were saying. We went back and interviewed as many students that I've worked with over the course of the years, as we got. And we ask them some very powerful questions and we asked them some fun questions. Like, you know, like what's the best grade you got for something and never worked on, right. Or how long did you progress, but things that parents needed to hear and the two themes that came out of the book about procrastination, the meaning, the real behind the scenes, like why... were skill. Like the lack of skill that a student was really able to say. Now, I should tell you that the age range was about like 15 and up. So we're not talking about eight year olds here. Right? They were like the lack of skill. Really not knowing how to do something. Like, I don't know how to study. No one's ever taught me not disparaging teachers, but there is definitely a lack of knowing how to do some of these things. And the second one was choice and control.

Abbey: Hmm

Leslie: I saw the choice and control, way more with those that were neuro diverse, that they are sending out your shed. You can't all see it, but we're doing a lot of head bobs here. And I hope people listening are doing the same. That those that are neurodiverse, it was more with them, said they could not handle being told always how to do something when to do it, because it clearly did not work for them with all of this kind of like, parameters in place and that when they were given the freedom to do things their own way in their own time, they procrastinated less.

Laurie: Would you put the, so when I talked to a lot of parents, my experience with procrastination has always been because I get so overwhelmed, I don't know where to start, how to start. So I'm just going to put that off and do it later and I'll think of it. And then before I know it it's due tomorrow. And so that overwhelmed feeling is really part of the skill issue. Correct?

Leslie: Yes, it's we call, so I, and I apologize, but we have our isms at order out of chaos, like what we say. So we call, we call it overwhelmed by the overload, right? The brain is we call it our T00 child or student too much, too big, too hard, too vague. Right? And it really plays into that executive functioning of decision-making that decision fatigue. And what we find is when we talk about the app, and I know this isn't a bowtie of skills, but I feel like it all mushes, it's all one big mush, right? Isn't that professional? Mushy mush! I talk to kids all day long. So mushy mush is about right.

Abbey: Right?

Leslie: We talk about like time or we talk about working memory and we even talk about impulsivity or organizing. We don't really talk very much about effort. And I always say effort is where lazy, the perception of lazy lives, right? It's that decision-making, it's that effort level. It's too many decisions. It's it's what do I do? How do I do it? When do I do it? And slowly and slowly, the brain just goes, I know I have to wait, but bleep it. I'm not right, because it's way easier. So yes. To your point. Exactly. That's that's the linear, that's the linear miss of, of overwhelm. Is that just my brain is just done. Like put a Fort, you make too many.

Laurie: I'm over it.

Leslie: And that's a big mindset for parents. So that's that whole perception of laziness. Right. And I say perception because it's like, because that's what it is. When a kid comes and says, my parents think I'm lazy, or my teachers think I'm lazy. Our joke is it's not really a joke, but you go back and tell them, you just have a hard time sustaining effort.

Abbey: Sustaining effort. That's true. Right?

Laurie: It is so true.

Leslie: So yes, I'm on your page that overwhelmed. Is, and we're seeing more utilizing, I would say we used to call it like the step-sister like Cinderella, like, you know, it was always in the back, you know, cleaning the chimney, like, like in Cinderella and the other executive functions were on the forefront. And I would say I would even go out on a limb and say that since the pandemic. It has really changed course. And all we're talking about right now is overwhelmed.

Laurie: That's interesting.

Abbey: We hear a lot of that too, from parents and clients about just being overwhelmed with so much and not knowing where to begin, how to begin,

Laurie: How to prioritize

Abbey: How to prioritize

Leslie: How to break it down and make everything very like, manageable and task oriented. It's all my it's all ma make it manageable and we equate it to, and I, this is a real important visual for parents is we equate it to like lifting weights. Like the brain is a muscle, like every other muscle in the body, the brain is a muscle. So think of a little brain dude, right. And he's got his dumbbells in his arms and he's very, I can lift a two pound weight

without thinking. Right. Like, all right. I can do my math homework, and this is not about academics. I just want to be clear. I can do my math because oh, okay. Go to page 52 and do problems one through five it's very task specific. There's nothing to figure out. That's a two pound weight. I go, no, I can see the weights, but that's a two pound weight. Okay. Now let's like, let's now let's move on to history or social studies and it's like study for your Mesopotamia test. Okay, well, what does that mean? That is like a, like a 10 pound weight. And if you have a child who has like, like learning issues or has executive dysfunction, like that is just, that's a 10 pound weight, then their brain is just not capable of being able to lift that. There's just too many decisions. So that's my great visual for kids. I think it's a great visual of the, of the weight. And it's also what we use for parents.

Laurie: It makes sense. And it does, no it, it definitely helps it make sense. So once you determine that a child is, or, or a student is truly procrastinating, like they are absolutely. They fit the bill. Well, now what?

Leslie: So it depends on what's getting in the way. And I think that's another important thing for, I always, this is again, anecdotal. Um, procrastination doesn't live on its own. This usually it's masking something, right? Is it masking time management? Are you like? So sometimes if a parent says, well, my, you know, my child procrastinates and we dig deeper, sometimes we find that maybe your child really, well, yes, there may be procrastinate, but it's a really good time. It's a time issue. They're time blind. They have no time awareness. There's no future awareness going on. So our work there is not so much to teach the student not to procrastinate. It's how to teach them to be more than. To be time aware or they have no planning or they don't know how to study. I have to tell you, they really don't know how to study. I will say that our, probably our number one thing that was professional. Sorry. Is teaching kids. And here's an interesting thing for, for how we, how we approach studying. We feel the pain when it comes to homework, because there's very little choice. I want to keep using those words, choice and control is very little choice and control when it comes to homework, meaning the teacher assigns homework and that's the way you. And I now, and I feel terrible, but that's what it is. And there's things we do around it obviously. And that's for another podcast, we'll talk to you about what we do for homework, but with studying, you have choice and control and that's an aha moment for the

student. Yes. Maybe you were assigned a study guide that the teacher gave you when they're required to do it, but that's about it. Are there otherwise you are completely in control of the methods that you use. Just to, to study for your tests. So here's what we do. This is our little thing. Keep using the word thing. I'm sorry, but you gotta remember. We is we, we have, we have a, a saying that when we teach studying, we want to make it as tangible task specific and as concrete as possible. So it's a, it's a, see it, say it, hear it, do it. That's how we, we literally take a giant sticky. Remember everything we do is virtual, take our giant sticky and we make four boxes and it's a see, say, hear, do. And we say to the student, you've got to now pick a hear, a say, a see and a do. And right off the bat, they can handle that because right off the bat, what we've done is we've gone like this and we've made it, we've put parameters and now ready with a can pick whatever it is they want. You want to go study with your best friends, because we all know that's the best way to study. Teach one another. Great. That's a say it. You want to watch YouTube videos? I don't know if anyone knows this, but in the last two years, YouTube is the number one medium that kids have learned subjects on. Yeah, that's a YouTube. I want to attend, you know what I'm saying? I don't want to go through it, but you understand what? So right then and there we're able to drill it down. And then within that, we make it very specific about what it is you have to do. So we take that, go study for your Mesopotamia tests and it's. You know, what are the seven gods? What is the cultural significance of each? What is the, I'm sorry, I really know my mesopotamia.

Laurie: Yeah you do, I'm way impressed.

Leslie: And then, so we define it. Define, define, define, and if there's anything that the student doesn't understand that it's not defined enough. So we go from defining and then we call it define and assign.

Laurie: I don't want to, I don't want to get up on the whole study skills study thing, because that is a whole nother thing. But I am curious, like when you have a student, what we run into a lot is kids can regurgitate information, but it doesn't mean they understand it? And so trying to figure it out. Do you, are you regurgitating this? And you're just giving it right

back to me. But when it shows up on the test tomorrow, it's not worded the same way, so you're not going to understand it.

Leslie: So, it's hard for me not to answer you without talking to you about study methods. So, and I know this wasn't, we could do another whole podcast on it.

Laurie: Which we probably will.

Leslie: Well, so the two things that we do is we pull everything apart. What we've find really happens, and I'm going to try to explain it in a way that everyone's going to go, oh my God, she's in my head. It's a lot of things we tend to, we tend to go over things literally or chronologically. So if we really understand, and I always say, there's a difference between knowing and understanding, right? So if you really understand one and you really understand three, but you don't understand two, right? Let's say you're going. But with the brain says is, oh, well, if I know one and I know three, then I'm somewhere in the universe, I must know two. And I'm just going to pretend I know two, cause it's going to work. It's. So we pull everything apart. So like study guides, we cut them up, we rotate them around. We, we really pull information apart so that everything you are learning has to stand on its own. It doesn't have that crutch, so that, so the, and then there's ways we do it and I'm not going to go into them because. So, and the other thing is that everything is set because I see it all the time. I might know it here. I'm sorry. I'm pointing to my head, but I don't know it here and I'm pointing to my lips. So it's all about, can you, can you answer my questions? And we have study, we've come up with study tools that really help our students dig into the understanding. Versus just knowing.

Laurie: But I think, and I think too, you know, I know we're getting off on a little bit of a tangent, but again, back to the whole point of, I think having good study skills and being confident in knowing exactly what you're going to do, alleviates some of that desire to procrastinate. It's like, okay, I have a plan. This isn't so overwhelming.

Leslie: It's so planned for them. And the other thing that I do want to say this, cause I think this is super interesting is we also tend to, and I think,

and the reason I am, I am talking about studying. Cause it is by far the number one reason why kids procrastinate or writing is we tend to lump our, what we know and what we don't know together. And so we tend to, so we tend to spend time on the things we know and give that the same amount of time to the things we don't. One of the first things we do is we pull that apart as well, which right off the bat then gives the student a much smaller amount of stuff to learn and to really know which does help overcome that procrastination because they're looking at everything, all and giving everything equal importance and we're not.

Abbey: Right. And then that increases the overwhelm and the overload. So, and it sounds like not only does the strategies that you're teaching and helping them with studying help with less procrastination, because now I have a plan to plan of attack. I bet it alleviates a lot of testing anxiety, also going into the testing session, which we see a lot of students with test anxiety.

Leslie: Yes, it does. And I want to say this too. It's not. Weighted across the nation isn't necessarily like, and this is something we were talking with with parents too, about the, I asked my child to do something and he doesn't do it. And so our, our joke is that we need to eliminate what we call the oh, by the ways and don't forgets. See, I got you guys to laugh. And while we do that, they're like, oh my God, she's so in my head, but your child's walking out the room and you're going, oh, by the way, don't forget. And so it's things like that as well. And then the other thing that we really focus on too, to, to try to build that non procrastination muscle is, um, I feel that we're all very good as parents. And again, I'm not disparaging parents. I'm one, and I totally have to check myself at the door. Um, is that, we're very good at asking our students what they have to do. Hey, what do you have to do? Um, I have a bio lab to finish. I have some math problems. Maybe I have some like Spanish vocab. No. It's better, like, do you ever ask, like, do you understand what it is you have to do? And it's a really nuanced question, but it's a really important one. Because when you're asking the student what they have to do, it's a to-do list. But when you have that, they understand now you're really digging into the whole like, Oh, no, I don't know really, if I understand like what I'm supposed to do, writing my paper or how I'm supposed to finish that essay. So we work a lot on those because we hear that too, from

our students, that that is the understanding portion, which goes back to the decision-making portion, which is a massive, massive thing.

Abbey: Hmm. Hmm. And then the helps the parents too with, I think if you ask the student, if they understand what they have to do, then that kind of helps them understand that procrastination feature of determining kind of the why behind the procrastination, is it because they don't have the skill?

Laurie: Right. Does it feel like your work with, you know, I know you work on organizational skills and planners and you have so many other different pieces, but don't you feel like all of that folds into the procrastination piece. Cause if I'm organized and I know exactly what I need to do, and I have a plan, a plan I'm not going to, I mean, I'm just going to go, you know, you make those routines, you start following through with it. You're less likely to like, errrr. I'm not doing it.

Leslie: Yes. And they, you know, it's, it's really, um, what we do at lot of...We tend to work with older students. So like when we work with our college students, even, um, we are very much about not only helping them plan, like, okay, let's look at your schedule on like, what's your priority. But we try to make as much of the, decision-making take the decision-making out of the equation. So for example, if a student has, let's say a class Monday at 10 to 11, and then doesn't have another class till two, we actually, it's not just, oh, you should use that time in between to get work done. It goes even farther. What is it exactly you're going to do at that time? Because what starts to happen particularly in college is we see repetitive things like, okay, every Friday you have like a, you know, a one sheet do or every Sunday at 11:59, right. You guys know what I'm talking about. There is a lot more than people real more than when I went to college, there is a ton of consistency and days. So it's, so it really presents itself and allows us to say great Monday, Monday between X class and Y class is your calculus time. And that really helps because it really helps them. Because again, what we're trying to do is take, is take all that decision-making out. So the we're kind of funny, like even before school starts, like we put certain things in place for the student, we have them, and it doesn't matter, even if you're in college or high school. So we, we have them pick five places, whether it's in their house or on campus. That they're going to study in, because we believe

in moving around. So that's that happens. We are big on making study playlist. If music is something that really works for you. So that happens. We also do something. We have it on our site and it's free. That's why I'm bringing it up. It's a, um, it's really your homework profile. Personal homework profile. And it's 15 questions that taps into your best practices. So I can't help. I can't change the way your teacher assigns homework, but what I can do is tap into your, your best practices to figure out what is the best way for you to do it. So what's your energy level? Do you want night or morning? Do you want to be in a group? Do you want quiet? Do you want music? Do you want wide open spaces? Do you want, I mean, I'm going through it all, but we fill the, I, we fill those out. No matter if your child is eight or 18, and if we even have a kid in a college, we do it after, before every semester, because things change and that ended up itself really does help with procrastination because we find when students get stuck, go back and refer to that and say, Hey, you did really well when you saved your reading for night. You know what I mean? But did your essay writing and the morning, or you really did much better when you had, I mean, defense facility, but have popcorn next to you because whatever.

Abbey: And instrumental music playing.

Leslie: We didn't really talk about it, but environment, and this, this is both research proven as well as Leslie proven, environment is so key to combating procrastination. Your cause I say this and this is for adults too. Relying on your internal motivation is just you get up again and put a fork in you. So what is your environment communicating to you? How can you share that load? Lighten that load. How can you let something else or someone else share that motivation burden with you? And so tapping into our environment is something we spent so much time, not only working on with students and parents, but talking about it in our workshops and webinars.

Laurie: And I think too, you know, I like that kind of developing that, that structure that we talked about. That's so important. It's easy then if you do. Quote, unquote, "fall off the wagon." It's easy to go back and figure out. Okay. Let's look and see what, what triggered that, what happened in this plan that we've made and how do we make sure that doesn't happen again? So it's easy to find where things might go wrong. And I liked that too. It just, everything is laid out so perfectly.

Leslie: And we talk about rituals too. We talk about pre-work rituals a lot with our students, and they really understand that because our students understand practicing. They understand that they practice a sport where they practice a musical instrument or they practice for a theater or dance or a play. But they also know that prior to playing in a game or getting on stage that there's warm up exercises. Right? So we equate a lot. We take that theory of. The sense of like, okay, you understand that concept. You also understand that to practice something makes you get better at it, makes you feel more confident at it. Well, it's the same with calculus or AP bio or, but right? But even before we do anything, cause the same way we have to warm up our bodies, we have to warm up our brain. So how do you warm yourself up to get ready to receive? The work you're about to do. So we talk a lot about setting ourselves up for rituals. So perhaps it's, you know, getting your, you know, getting coffee or co some of my, some of my colleagues who say, I say, I take a walk, I call my mother. I get a coffee. I'd come in. I sit down, like, I light my candle. I put my music on. All of that is yes, it's a ritual, but it's environmental. But putting those practices in place, we've seen it over the years has really helped that whole procrast, that whole procrastination not look. If you don't know how to do something, you don't have to do something, but this is a completely different way to overcome that, that, that procrastination.

Laurie: So your team is made up of individuals that meet with students, parents. I mean, usually you're not meeting with all these people yourself, are you? I'm like, wow, because you're really busy, then we're really busy. So we need to let you go.

Leslie: People are surprised to hear that I. I do still coach a very small group of students. I will never not. Number one because I absolutely love kids. I do. I only coach college students. Cause I just think they're the coolest people. It keeps me young. Um, but it also they're my laboratory. Right? Like how do you write and speak and do all this if you are, if you're not in the trenches. So yes, we, our, our, our company is made up of two groups, we've got people working behind the scenes that obviously are working with parents or students, they're running the company that, you know, the product business, they customer service, all of that. And then I have coaches, yes, that work one-on-one with students, um, parents. And also we run boot

camps for our younger students. Our middle school students that are bootcamps are much more skill driven. Whereas coaching is a little more nuanced as you know, a little more supportive, a little more team approach. Our bootcamps are way more skill driven. It's, we were finding that. That parents really wanted some, you know, okay. Yeah. It's great to be coaching my kid, but he's like teenage fleas. So we came up right way and that they're one-on-one, they're not that we never do anything in a group because we just found that that didn't work.

Laurie: Right. Right. So if someone wants help from your company, tell us the process of how that works.

Leslie: Oh, easy. We try to make everything easy. Um, you, so we have, we have a few websites, but you would go to our website, you go to orderoochoas.com. There's a page right there where you could just send it. You could call us obviously, or you can send an email, then you don't even have to know the email cause it's right there. And we have a community manager and her name is Laura and she is in charge of basically every coaching, bootcamp, client. She starts the process. She is your person. She is your go-to. She is the one you want. She's the one you want to ask and she'll walk you handhold you, you know, through everything.

Abbey: And so parents. That need help helping their students. When I, I'm kind of thinking of maybe some of the younger students that are struggling with procrastination and getting started on tasks and studying, and they personally may be an eight or nine year old, is not ready and equipped to work one-on-one with a coach, but the parent coaching piece is going to be very beneficial. So as far as the parent piece coaching. Have specific ages that the parent coaching is for or any age?

Leslie: Any age we code. So I do some of the, I do some of the parent coaching and I have somebody else who does parent coaching and the same process Laura, as your person. She, but, um, we coach, we always we've, we've coached kids as parents with kids as young, as like five who are newly diagnosed and don't know what to do. Um, and we've coached. I have kids that are even 25 and 30, who don't know what to do. Yes.

Laurie: So you'd kind of covered all of the executive functioning type coaching, right? Like, you know, not just procrastination, but all of those?

Leslie: We are, we call ourselves academic life coaches. I like that term. I mean, you notice people call themselves executive functioning coaches or ADHD coaches. I don't like ADHD because I find them very limiting. I really personally like academic life, because as you get older...So a wise man, one time told me this in college professor, my freshman year, first class said, I'm going to give you guys a little bit about school. He goes, it's 30% academics and 70% everything else. Then it's 70%. That's going to make you successful. So we really like calling ourselves academic life because we do spend a lot of time, particularly with our older students. You know, upper high school and college on life, not so much on studying, but on time and willpower, willpower is a big one, massive one and relationships and, and accountability and advocacy and all of those things.

Laurie: Do you do anything with like career, career coaching or choosing or making decisions?

Leslie: We try not to. As you well know, and I'm sure you do when a parent finds you and loves you, they want you to do everything. Um, like we'll advise like I'm, I'm very big and very vocal about saying what colleges. I don't feel right, if college is the path your child is taking. I want to make that clear. I don't believe in college for everybody, but if college is the path, but when it comes to career, we might give it. But now we have people like I have someone I know who's amazing. And a career coach for kids that are neuro timers, I will put you there. So the joke at order out of chaos is if you have a 22 year old, who's working full time and you want coaching, we will not take you on. But if you have a 30 year old who went back to school, we will take you on, we are, we are student oriented. We are parent oriented to help your child. But we are student focused. That is our, yeah.

Abbey: I was going to ask about, you know, adults that were struggling in the workplace, but that's not your niche really, you refer them out.

Leslie: We have it's the same way people come to us all the time and say, can you make an adult planner? No. Now a lot of adults use our small planner are, uh, we are products designed for students in mind.

Abbey: I love that.

Leslie: So we are very listen. I, I stay in your lane, stay in our lane. I, you know, I, I'm very good about always saying, um, I know where I begin an end. That's kind of my party line. I know where I begin and end. Um, but now I would be really bad at coaching a 50 year old lawyer.

Laurie: And I think too, you've built up the relationships with people that if you're not going to do it, you know, who can, and you're gonna send them to the right parts. And then that's kinda how we feel too.

Leslie: Right. Laura spends like Laura and Stephanie spent half their time doing. Here's somebody you should get already, man, but very much about staying in our lane, knowing what we do and, and because it, when we stick, look, I always say, if you're talking to everyone, you're talking to nobody and we're just very good about what we do. And I'm going to say it where we're really look, you don't stay in business for 18 years if you're not good at what you do. I have no problem saying that. I always say, I am, I am narrow and deep. I am not long. And why there's a million things we are, I'm awful at what I do. I do.

Laurie: Well. That's awesome. So we definitely would like to have you back, you know, for, I would love to do a study skills because that is something we see a ton of. And, and I think that could be a really great conversation.

Leslie: I love it because it's fun. It's tactile.

Laurie: It is fun. Yeah. And a lot of people would not use fun to describe study skills. So that already says that we've got a lot to learn.

Abbey: Absolutely.

Laurie: So we will definitely share your website and all your information. We would like to put a link to your book all in the show notes.

Abbey: I just have a quick question. So your book that you wrote most recently called how to do it now, right. Um, what, what would you say is like the reading level. I mean, it's geared towards students, but like if I like, what's the readability level or grade level?

Leslie: I'm going to be very honest. We wrote the book geared to high school and college. What we're seeing though is. I would say like 13 and up. And what we're seeing is parents. So parents of all ages, because now granted, so what you have to know about the book very quickly is there's the first chapter is about procrastination and then there's nine chapters after that, that support. So like one is on homework, studying, organizing, prioritizing all of those things. So obviously maybe the homework and study, but what parents are saying is you could have written this as a, as an adult procrastination book, uh, minus the study and homework chapters, but readability for, I mean, it's a little saucy, cause you've got to remember that there is some. You know, I'm, I'm talking about college students and high school students. So for example, we did something called classroom confessionals where we asked kids rapid fire questions and they're peppered throughout the book. So one of the questions like what's your favorite snack to eat while you study? And some kids say Ritalin. And we've left that in because we needed parents to see that this is really why this happening. So maybe you don't want your 12 year old to read that, but your 15 year old can handle it.

Laurie: For sure. That helps.

Abbey: That is helpful.

Leslie: It's a little it's like people said it to be very respectful to that age group that it was good. It was well, people laugh and say I'm 18 and a 50 year old body. Do you know what I mean?

Abbey: Exactly I say that sometimes too. That's awesome.

Laurie: Yeah, that's cool.

Abbey: Awesome. Thank you so much for sharing such great information with us today, Leslie. We really appreciate it.

Laurie: I think we're going to get a lot of people hope. We're big on like there is, I feel like just listening to you talk. I feel like parents are going to think, okay, we can do this. We can tackle it.

Leslie: Oh yeah. If I could tell you guys can do it, it's really look, you know this, um, and this is, this is another podcast, but it's, it's a lot of it is the verbiage that you use when you're speaking to your child. It's all about the verbiage really is.

Abbey: Yeah.

Leslie: But there is help kids do learn, you know, some of them outgrow it. Some of it learns skills, but it's, it's really getting into that underbelly and understanding what's truly getting in their way.

Abbey: That's perfect.

Laurie: Thank you so much. If you guys have any questions specifically for Leslie, we'll have all of our contact information in the show notes. You can always reach us at letstalklearningdisabilities@gmail.com. Be looking out for our brand new website for our podcast are excited. It should be coming live like really any day now, I think. And so we'll have that out. And, uh, thank you.

Leslie: Thank you so much.

Abbey: Thank you.

Laurie: You guys, everyone have a great day. Thanks for listening.

Thank you so much for joining us today. In our show notes you can find information about today's talk, as well as links to the resources and other episodes. If you have questions about today's talk, have ideas for future episodes or just want to stay connected, you can contact us through Diagnostic Learning Services on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. So, Let's Keep Talking Learning Disabilities. This podcast is sponsored by E Diagnostic Learning. You can find more information at www.ediagnosticlearning.com.

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