

Help Your Kids Overcome Procrastination

Reaching Roots Podcast, E13

Leslie Josel, Order Out Of Chaos

[Intro]

Jaison Dolvane: Leslie Josel is an ADHD-academic and parenting coach. When her son was first diagnosed with ADHD, Leslie founded Order Out of Chaos with a mission to help parents guide their students to success in learning and in life. Leslie, is an award-winning author of 3 books including her recent book, “How to Do it Now Because it’s Not Going Away”. She is a weekly columnist for ADDtitude, a premier magazine for ADHD and LD and an international speaker, named by Global Gurus as one of the top 20 Time Management experts in the world.

Do your kids wait until the night before to do their homework or wait to start a project until the day before the due date? Leslie says “Everyone procrastinates. All the kids are doing it! So take some comfort in the fact that you’re not alone.” One study found that over 80 percent of high school and college and students delay doing homework and assignments until the last minute.

Procrastination has a negative effect on students’ schoolwork and grades. Kids experience more frustration, guilt, stress and make poor quality and rushed decisions. Procrastination can develop into a bad habit that builds resentment and sabotages success - the effects of which can be more acute with high school students, who have an increased workload.

Kids don’t procrastinate because they are lazy, but instead due to deeper issues of fear and difficulty. Your kids may feel the task is too hard or too vague, or might be afraid of failing. Subconsciously, we believe that time will give way to progress over fear. Sadly, it is the opposite – the longer we defer action, the more apprehensive we become, the lower our self-confidence. For your kids, this can start a downward cycle at a time when marks count.

This is frustrating for parents who may feel it is easy to avoid these consequences. We’ve often heard ourselves tell our kids something like, “If you had just started

your homework when you got home, you'd be finished already... ". We can lecture our kids on the bad decisions that got them into this mess, but this approach is rarely constructive.

Leslie Josel helps us understand the deeper issues on why our children procrastinate, so you can help them unlearn this behaviour and set them up for success in life and work. In her book "How to Do It Now", she provides practical advice, tips & tools to teach students how to become more efficient. Her techniques will let your children get stuff done, so your life is easier and you can free up more time for yourself.

JAISON DOLVANE: Welcome, Leslie.

LESLIE JOSEL: Thank you so much for having me. I am actually so excited to be here today.

JAISON DOLVANE: Great. It's great to have you here. So let's get into it. You know, I kind of was researching a little bit about this topic and it really is fascinating. You know, obviously all parents go through the same issues of having our kids sort of get things done. Before we sort of jump into that, tell me just a little bit about yourself and you know, how did you sort of get to doing what you're doing today?

LESLIE JOSEL: I call myself the accidental entrepreneur. So my youngest son is 22 and when he was five, so I think a lot of people out here are going to relate. He was diagnosed with ADHD and executive dysfunction and other learning issues. They have to remember I'm old. So back then there weren't podcasts and telly summits, right, and conferences and all this information out there. And I really needed to figure out how to untangle. And that's my word, that untangled, I think it's a great word. Both at his life, both at home and at school. And I'm going to try to give you the reader's digest version. And if anyone wants to read the real story, they can head to the site.

But what happened is really, I had to rely on my own guts, my own instinct to figure out ways and what I did back that was pretty revolutionary. You

wouldn't maybe think it now, like I took closet doors, you know, off, I took doors off closets because what he couldn't see didn't exist. I took dressers out of the room and lined things with bins that were clear and easy because if you're giving your student more than something that takes more than two or three steps to do, they're not going to do it. So I basically redid my home top to bottom and school as well, and had friends who saw what I did and basically said, can you come do this for me? And I turned to my husband and I said, but I don't do this for a living. I was fully employed at the time. And he who has ADHD who thinks out of the box went well, you do now. And literally that was how order out of chaos was born 17 years ago. I was going house to house door, to door, to work with families who had children with ADHD to create systems and structures. And now 17 years later, we are global, virtual, over 75,000 parents who come to us for products and programs, workshops, webinars, all sorts of things to help guide them, to help their students and learning in life.

JAISON DOLVANE: Okay. Tell me a bit about, you know, so you're talking about sort of ADHD and your son was diagnosed with it, but could you just give me a little bit of, a little more color around, you know, what were some of those symptoms that kind of led you to, you know, even find a diagnosis for it?

LESLIE JOSEL: Oh, wow. If I had to really pinpoint it, it would be, this is frustration, lots and lots of frustration. And I think parents who I work with now say that like my son was uber bright and uber smart reading when he was three and communicating. But there was definitely things that frustrated him. Like if he couldn't find what he needed, if he couldn't communicate what he needed, if he couldn't remember what he needed, being time blind, even organizing systems, remembering things. I mean, we don't really pinpoint remembering, and I know this isn't an ADHD and executive functioning podcast, but working memory, which is an easier way of saying it is remembering to remember is a real frustration for those that have that deficiency, whether you have ADHD or executive functioning, the thing I want to remind everybody out there is if you have a student at home that has ADHD, they automatically have executive dysfunction. It's not the other way.

So you could have a child that has executive dysfunction, but they do not have ADHD. So really for me, looking at the granular for him, how was he

functioning at school? And at home was what put me on high alert to get him diagnosed and get this figured out.

JAISON DOLVANE: And when you say frustration, what was the kind of behavior that he was demonstrating?

LESLIE JOSEL: It was a bunch of things. And I'm, you know, he's 22 now, so I do want to protect his privacy. So there are certain things that I do not, I think that's important as a parenting podcast to put that out there too. You know, when he was eight, I was way more forthcoming about what he was exhibiting. Now, he's amazing. He's graduated college. We're all good. But back then, there was a lot of explosive behavior, a lot of explosive behavior, and it would go from 0 to 10, like you'd have whiplash. And I think a lot of your listeners probably understand exactly what I mean.

So figuring out the triggers was essential for him to be able to function, really be able to function, making sure he was available was another key thing that was very important. And something else that I noticed right away that availability to absorb information, to be available, to listen, to be available to learn, you know, that distractibility, that internal conversation. How do we calm that so you can take an information.

JAISON DOLVANE: Yeah. That's very interesting. You know, obviously we didn't want to dive too deep, [05:26 inaudible] just for the listeners, I mean you know, you do a lot in this space and there's a lot of great resources on your website. So certainly we'll point them to that and the resources also.

LESLIE JOSEL: No, and honestly, I want to point this out. Even to bring it home, even to discuss and one of the things I say right off the bat, even when we talk about procrastination is what you're talking about is brain-based behavior. So we're all very good about going, as you said in the intro, like, you know, if you could have just studied more, if you could have just, you know, started earlier. Well, no, that's not necessarily going to happen if your child has some brain-base behavior issues going on. So I do think it's important that we touched on it.

JAISON DOLVANE: Let's talk about that. So, why are kids procrastinating?

LESLIE JOSEL: Oh, you have five podcasts? So I love the conversation about procrastination because as a student coach and a parent and coach, this is the number one easily, easily, the number one thing that comes to our table, right, this dialogue, this conversation, this frustration, this confusion, this anger, you know, my child is 13, he should be able to. And then, so the book is really based on, I have to say this on the student's perspective and that's really what I want to bring home. So what I'm telling you is really what I feel students are saying, not what a parent is perceiving. And I think that's an important distinction. For most students, procrastination is actually skill-based. So bottom line is if your student doesn't know how to do something, they're not going to do it. It's the equivalent of like putting your child in the gym and saying here's a 20-pound weight lift it. They can't.

So instead of lifting it, they're going to avoid things at all costs. So big proponent of procrastination in students and it's what I think looks differently than adult procrastination is this fundamental of, I don't know how, I don't know. I don't understand. And then if we dig even deeper, I just want to say one more thing, it's about control and choice. Remember, a student has very little control over what they do, how they do it, when they do it, even where they do it. So that is definitely right off the bat a massive reason why they procrastinate, because they're not tapping into their best practices. They're asking, they're being asked to do things that go against the way they learn, the way they understand information and a whole host of other things.

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. And so this is sort of like the difficulty part, right? In terms of like, they don't know how to do these things, or they perceive it to be you know, more challenging than what they're capable of. Is there a fear aspect to this also?

LESLIE JOSEL: Yes, of course. I mean, there's no, you know, I don't want to say the beauty of procrastination, but the fascination about procrastination is the, there's always something behind it. So it could be something as

simple as your child is disorganized. And therefore it looks like procrastination and down the scale, time, planning, routines, rituals, all of that study skills. But then we go into the emotion aspect of it, is your child to perfectionist? Does your child have a fear? Is your child fearful of you or even their teacher? I mean, that comes out a lot in my work. You know, do they even understand? Is it too overwhelming? I call that my too student, too big, too vague, too much. Just overwhelmed by the overwhelm. There's that whole emotional piece. There's an anxiety piece and I very, what do I like to say, I am acutely aware of where I begin and end in this conversation. I'm not a doctor. So like, if your child is really presenting with major perfectionist tendencies or major anxiety tendencies, you know, I urge you to seek outside help.

JAISON DOLVANE: Professional help. You know, you've talked about that the reason that students, or children procrastinate is different from adults. But certainly all the things that you've just talked about in terms of, you know, too difficult, too vague. I mean, I could put myself in that situation say, yeah, I feel that way too.

LESLIE JOSEL: I know what I really, I didn't say that that was the difference with the one I said that I really see the differences. The one that a student really comes home on is choice, choice, choice, choice. I have no choice. This is how I am told to do my homework. This is how I'm told to study for an exam. And that's actually, I don't agree with that with a student, you would have a lot of choice when it comes to studying. This is when I'm told to do my homework. This is when I'm told to even do my chores or responsibilities or go to school even. Now I know as adults, we have work, and we have that too, but our brains are also more mature. So, you know, when I work with parents, it's all about choices for me, for students. How can we, you know, give our students as much choices we can. But putting aside the fact that they need to understand what they're doing that sits in its own silo. That's a big one.

That is a massive one because, and I want to say this and listen, I'm a parent. So I am not disparaging parents in any way, trust me, I have to check myself at the dot all the time. But we are really good as parents saying to our kids, what do you have to do? And most of the time, your kid is pretty good at going. I have this, I have that. I have this, I have that. They give you what to do list, not all kids, and we're never talking in absolutes. But the better

question is, do you understand what is being asked of you? There's a huge difference for your student to know what they have to do versus understand what they have to do. When I ask that question, that's when I get the blank stares.

JAISON DOLVANE: So it's kind of like, you know, as opposed to dictating to them what they need to do, you're flipping into a question.

LESLIE JOSEL: I'm always asking, do you understand, do you understand what you need to study? Do you understand how to study? Do you understand even what the test is on versus what do you have to do tonight? I have to study for a test. That's a two-pound weight. Going back to that, that's the two-pound weight. Your kids going, I have to study for a test. There's no effort there. There's no brain, right? There's no mental heavy lifting. Now let's break it down. Do you even understand what that means? Now I have to try to, and that's the 10-pound weight.

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. It's kind of like the execution part of it. Like what are the steps needed to actually do that?

LESLIE JOSEL: Exactly. Exactly. Sorry about that. I thought I shut off my phone to be honest. So that's okay, sorry about that. I thought I turned everything off, but so that's, but that's a major, major difference, major difference.

JAISON DOLVANE: So, a lot these things that you talk about I mean, they're sort of difficult. They're a bit elusive, right? To really kind of assess or figure out what's really going on. So tell us about, you know, how can parents kind of look for these and how do they really get to the bottom of you know, what is causing the, or what are the causes of procrastination for their particular kids?

LESLIE JOSEL: So I think as parents and I'm going to give parents a lot of credit I think if you're tuned in you, you kind of start seeing similar things happening. So there's two camps here. There's, in my book. And I don't even

mean my book book. I just mean like in my book, you know, if you notice that your child is flailing and I can't find things and I did write it down and I need to text a friend and all that, and I don't like this, and I really want to bring this point home. Procrastination is not just about school.

You know, procrastination, overcoming procrastination is a life skills, not necessarily a school skill. I think that's an important point as well, but you'll start seeing if it's an organization piece, if it's a, even a decision-making piece of your child has, you know, decision-making issues. If it's time management I will say this, and this is not research proven. This is Leslie proven that for in my work time or lack of it, or a lack of understanding of time being time blind is a massive reason. It's probably the first one. And then I would say the second one is concrete skills to know how to do homework and study. If I had to really bring it into that kind of a granular that's where I really see the disconnect. A lot of our kids are time blind. They don't know where they sit in time. And as parents, we expect them to be able to manage their time. And I go back and say, well, if your child can't see their time, then there should be absolutely no expectation on your part. I mean like that they should be able to manage it.

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. Right. So if I took a situation you know, as simple as I've got a 13-year-old daughter who is procrastinating or not going to basically do her work what are my next steps as a parent?

LESLIE JOSEL: Okay. So there's a lot of steps there. So the first step is, is she truly procrastinating? You know, for someone to truly procrastinate, there has to be a negative consequence afterwards. So my example there would be, so if you expect your daughter to do, like, let's say she has a report due Monday, and you want her to do it on the Monday before, because that's how you work. And that's how you operate and that's your best practices. And she doesn't want to do that. And in your eyes, she's procrastinating because she's not going to sit down until Saturday and work on it. She gets it done. She gets it even done well, is that procrastination? Maybe you feel it, but no, it's not. That's her best practice, that works for her. For a lot of our students, particularly those with ADHD and they need to see that horizon right in front of them to get that adrenaline going to do their best work. So there's that distinction right there. So if you're, so the other thing I would be doing with your daughter is tapping into what I call her best practices.

So there's where the choice comes in. What does she need to be able to activate? So does she need external communicators, like a clock, a calendar, an alarm, anything that externalizes time so that she can see her time? Does she need, does she need music? Lot of my students need music to activate music helps us to plan and attend and initiate. Where does she like to do our homework? Is sitting in one place alone, not activating for her. Maybe she needs to be moving around the house. I'm all about doing math in the bath. That is my signature thing. Get your kids moving because movement helps us to activate and stay the course. So do you see what I'm saying? There would be for me, I wouldn't be tapping in is figuring out what is going on. Is she just delaying it? Does she even understand her assignment? Is it broken down enough that it's task specific?

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. Okay. And is there a way to, I mean, you know, we talked earlier about, you rhymed off sort of various different reasons why somebody might procrastinate on the difficulties and also the fear side. I mean, are there ways for us to sort of get deeper on this to really see if there are other issues?

LESLIE JOSEL: So I want to, yes, I mean, so here's where I want to be very, cause, like I said before, I'm very acutely aware of where I begin and where I end. You, as a parent will know if your child has great anxiety about work. You know, I see it in the work that we do, a child that can't get started. Not because they're not, they don't understand time or study skills, but they're so scared of doing anything wrong that stuckness, you know, so that's, again, I think to be fair, the two things I would say to you, there is one you need to be watching your student.

And I would also be in contact in school and see if there's something similar happening in that school setting. If there's something that is fluid like that, meaning it's happening at school and it's happening at home I would just urge you. I want to be fair, to dig deeper somewhere else, like to get help. But I would start with the school because again, I'm going to keep saying this with procrastination, particularly in our center, I use the word student, if you notice, I don't use the word child because I feel that a lot of this also, if you're seeing this chronic, chronic procrastination, chronic needs, that is really affecting your child's self-worth, self being, their life, like their schoolwork, like I'm not talking about, okay, we just missed, you know, we

all miss things, that happens. But if you're really, really seeing that the school is probably your first, is your first place to go.

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. Okay. I want to come back to the skill question. You know, you talked about the fact that obviously skill has a really big part to play in the fact that someone's actually procrastinating because they just don't know how to do it. Now, you know, if something's due tomorrow and they're procrastinated and now they don't have the skill to do it, that's like having your back against the wall. So what are some of the, some of your tips or thoughts around how to sort of address that situation?

LESLIE JOSEL: But I love that situation because what we tend to do as parents is save our students before we get to see what is truly happening. It's like, so I'm going to give you a, I'm going to tell you one story that I have a ton of tips for you. So it's rare that I coach a parent and a student together, but this was a couple of years ago. I had a parent, and I had a student, and the student was a young boy who was 16 years old. And we happened to have been meeting on a Friday afternoon. It was a long weekend and he had something due Monday evening at 11.59. And the mother was he's procrastinating has this thing due, it's Friday afternoon. And he's sitting around, he's watching tv, he's playing video games. I could give you the litany. He should be working on it now. And the student very quietly turned to his mother. And he said, you can yell at me at midnight on Tuesday, but not a minute before. How powerful is that? And the student ended up getting up on his own on Sunday and working on the project.

My point is that if the mom had, and again, I'm a parent. [20:08 inaudible] trust me, if my kids came in here, they'd say, okay, she has imposter syndrome because she has us. But my point is sometimes it's okay, because if we are the ones dragging our child along, you're not seeing what's happening underneath. If we're saving our kids consistently, you're not going to get the why. It's why I don't mind. Like when I asked my students questions all the time and when I tell parents to do the same and they go, but what happens if my students, that my child says to me, I don't know. I love, I don't know, because I don't know it is going to give you intel. I don't know, it is going to show you where that break in that chain is, so that's what I want parents to do. Because it will allow you to, you'll allow you to really get a

bird's eye view. Now, should you be scaffolding and supporting your child? Absolutely.

So I'm going to just give you the time thing as like, as a thing, if you and I do this and I challenge parents, and I say it in a nice way. How are you externalizing time for your student? How are you supporting them at what I call point of performance. So I'm time manage, you read my bio, right? One of the top time management. I have, I'm sitting in my home office right now and I have six ways that I externalize time. I have an analog, I have a wall calendar, paper planner. I have a watch. I have my phone and I have a timer. That was six. And I'm an adult who's pretty time managed. So how have you set up your home so that you are supporting a scaffolding, your child and teaching them that skill of time. Do you have an analog clock in every single room that your child spends time in, including the bathroom, especially the bathroom. Because if you're not, then that expectation that your child will learn the skill of time, I'm going to leave it there.

JAISON DOLVANE: So is there something on the analog clock? Like it has to be analog, not digital, is something there?

LESLIE JOSEL: Okay. So if I was to pick up mine, so here's the thing what's so fascinating to me about time. We think it's invisible, but yet it's omnipresent, right? It's like, it's all we talk about. It's everywhere. The thing about an analog is that it shows you the sweep of time. Time is three-dimensional, has a beginning, middle and end. I want to be able to say, can you see 10 minutes from now? Can you show me 20 minutes ago? Do you know how much time you have left? Your digital does not tell you that, your digital gives you one time and that's the present. And if your kid or student or child does not see where they sit in, time, two things happen.

Number one, they're completely unmoored. It's like being in the ocean, right? Seeing nothing around them. Where am I? Where am I in relation to the rest of my day? Where am I in the relation to the rest of the zoom call class? Where am I in relation to sitting in this class? The second thing is for your child to be able to initiate and stay the course, they need to be able to see done, done is super powerful. The power of done. When you see, trust me, ask every kid out there. If they're sitting through a zoom call or they're sitting through a, you know, an in-person class and they're like, oh my

goodness, this has to end. I just can't do this for another five minutes, because trust me, they're saying that, not disparaging teachers, just what they do. They're looking for something external to go, how much time. And they look for that clock. And the clock shows them, I only have five more minutes. Now they can pause. They can picture. They can like get themselves ready and they can see done. And that helps them to keep going. Trust me the power of done, ask every kid. They will tell you, I got to see done. I got to see done.

JAISON DOLVANE: It's kind of like, what you're saying is that the analog clock allows you almost to visualize time better and almost see the countdown of time.

LESLIE JOSEL: Sweep. I call it the sweep or the countdown. Here's the other thing like right now, especially now, it is very, very, not sustainable for us to be constantly relying on our ex, our internal motivation, right? I'm an adult. And I get up in the morning and go, I'm like, god, I'm just not in the mood. How many times do we say that? So any way that we can lighten the cognitive load, lightened the load for our students, give them other things that are sharing in that motivating piece. So, you know, clocks are one, timers, your environment, even just where they're doing things. Music is one of the most motivating tools we have for students. All of those things help your child to not only initiate, but stay the course.

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. Maybe you can talk about, so time's one of those things. What about distractions? You know, so often I would see you know, my children feel like they can do perfect homework in front of a television, obviously as a parent, you know, we think otherwise, what are your thoughts on that?

LESLIE JOSEL: To know me as to know that I have very little, like non-negotiables in my world, right? I have two non-negotiables for students. One is no homework. I really don't like homework on the bed. They can read on the bed. And I really don't like homework in front of a television, unless it is really mindless, mindless. Like I've got to cut and paste, you know, something to do. I find that the way to really come back distractions. And again, you know, there are people out there, and I know you had a fabulous

expert on, about, you know, screens and all that. For me though, as the academic coach, what I use to combat distractions is movement.

Cause the thing, what I see with my, again, my students is where the distractions come in is it's the I'm so not focused. I'm so not focused. What else can I do? So if your child is sitting in one place in the quiet, trying to do one subject at a time that brain fade is going to come fast and furious, it's like, I'm doing math, kind of doing math. I'm pretending I'm doing math. I'm so not doing math. So again, if you keep hearing me say everything for me is lightening that load for them, movement does that. Moving around the house, moving your body, moving material. Because for me, what that does for your students is help them focus and focus is the opposite of distraction. So if I have a kid sitting in the bathtub with a pillow behind him, you know, working on math for half hour, it's fun. It's engaging, it's sensory seeking. We're good. They're way more focused. So therefore the distractions kind of go down. [27:12 inaudible] time to move to the next location.

JAISON DOLVANE: Yeah. Yeah. Makes sense. Makes sense. So let's go back to choice then. You know, you've talked about this big question, right? Where we as parents and I mean, you know, even the example that you just gave us around you know, a parent getting mad at their child for not actually sort of moving in a direction to get their homework done, you know, that's kind of like parent anxiety, right? And parent anxiety, that's why, you know, we're busy. We want to do lots of different things. And so we tell our kids what to do. And so, you know, your thought on this is, you need to rephrase this as a question and you know, can you talk a little bit more about that? Or maybe some techniques in terms of give us one question there, but are there other questions or are there other ways of how we can go about trying to get the most out of the kids?

LESLIE JOSEL: So, I come from the philosophy that it's your job as the parent to set parameters, but it's your child's job to negotiate them. And again, you know, it's going to depend on how old your child is. So I feel that, you know, the younger, your child, the less parameter they have, I just do, you know, as you know, cause you know, you want, as your child gets older, more independence and more responsibility. So for example, if I had an eight-year-old at home and I want them to do homework, I'm not going to sit and say to them, go get your homework done, go get your homework done because I'm just not going to do that. But what I'm going to figure out in my

own head is what do they need? So are they the student that has, you know, that when they come home from school or they're done with their day, because I know everybody's doing different things right now, do they have that attention residue where they do have that focus and they can get down to business or were they like my son who came home from school and he was like a dish cloth. Like he just you know, he was done, put a fork in him. Literally put a fork in him. He needed to recharge.

So if I know that first about my student, then I'm going to figure out, okay, do you want to start your homework at 4.08 or 4.17? Now that is as basic as it gets. But if you have a young child at home, you're starting choice right off the bat. The other thing, if you noticed I did there, I'm like the sneaky chef who threw something in, I didn't say four o'clock or 4.30. That is boring, too boring and no one wants to activate at 4.00 or 4.30. They don't. And I don't know who brought that rule that you have to start things on the top of the hour or the bottom of the hour. You don't. 4.08 is funny. It's different. It's a little quirky and that's motivating because it's not boring. 4.08, I love that. I'm going to start at 4.17. Now I have buy-in, I have choice. I have buy-in I have something that's fun. Do you see, so I'm all about tapping into your child's best practices. Your child and I have a lot of kids who do this, like, what does your child need to get activated? Do they need quiet? Do they need noise? Do they need a study playlist? Do they need like a quiet room or a big space? Do they need a small sensory thing? Any kind of choice of where they do it, how they do it, when they do it? You know, like I said, I have kids who are doing homework under the kitchen table, in the pantry closet, in the bathtub with earphones on blasting music with a playlist, because that's what works for them.

The other thing is, when a student has to sit down and study for a test, that's where they have the choice. That's where they can decide how best to study. Homework always not so much, right? You have five problems to do, but studying for an exam. That's where I'm like, no, you actually have the choice to decide. Do you want to do, you know, giant sticky notes across the wall where you write all over the place, I'm telling you, I'm fine. I'm dinner and a [31:07 inaudible]. Seriously, I have kids moving and going and outside with sidewalk chalk or creating a dance we're singing, you know, your periodic tables, because that's what speaks to them, boring study guides might not work for your creative brains kid, but you know, creating a song that's going to work.

JAISON DOLVANE: But so much of it is, I guess the children need to also figure this out for themselves, right? Like what works for them? You know what I'm hearing you is like, we need to sort of give them that space to figure this out a little bit.

LESLIE JOSEL: Within parameters. And that's what I want parents to take home. It's like, it's your job to set parameters, but it's your child's job to negotiate them. And I'm all about asking my students questions. Not just do you understand, but what am I, and you asked me this. What is one of my favorite questions? One of my favorite questions to ask, I have two actually is what is your priority today? If you're asking your student, what do you have to do today? That's a two-pound weight. If you ask them what their priority is, that's a five-pound weight. Now they have to figure out, it's an executive functioning like on steroids. What comes first? What's due tomorrow. What's going to take me longest what might be my hardest. All of a sudden, they have to formulate that answer. Other question I love is what is your plan? So if you have a young kid at home, what is your plan after dinner? What is your plan when you come out, you know, if they're not virtual, what is plan when you come in after school.

It's getting them some future awareness. It's getting them to think about what comes next. For an older student you can have longer lead times like, oh, I see you have, I know you have to test Friday and you have x, y, and z on Thursday night. What's your plan to get your studying done for that? What's your plan on getting your work done for that? These questions really help your student.

JAISON DOLVANE: Yeah, no, that's excellent. You know, it strikes me as a form of empowerment and to make them feel like they're in control.

LESLIE JOSEL: That's the key. That is, I mean, listen, they have a whole host of reasons why they don't want to do what they don't want to do. Trust me, but if I'm really to distill it down, choice and control is huge.

JAISON DOLVANE: Well, that's excellent. So Leslie, tell us about, a little bit about your book in terms of you know, what do parents kind of get out of that? In terms of just the structure of how the book flows and what they basically gain from it?

LESLIE JOSEL: So the book is obviously about procrastination. And it's written to, it's to kids, to teens, really, to teens. I want to make that clear, like, you know, for an elementary school student, no. But even because this is very much geared to teens and college students, but what I absolutely think people are going to, why the book has been resonating is it's broken down into chapters by the most predominant reasons why students. So there's an organizing chapter, there's planning and prioritizing, there's routines, study skills, homework, time, emotion, distraction, all of that. But it's not just my voice. And I really, so I have been at this for a long time.

So we interviewed all as many students as we could find. And what we did is we peppered the book with their stories, their case stories, like what they came to the table with, what we did for them, what worked, what, didn't, the reasoning behind their procrastination. And then we did something called classroom confessionals, where we really asked kids like, okay, you know, give us the [34:46 inaudible], like, what is the best grade you ever got for something you didn't do? Or, you know, what's, you know, when did your friends come and clutch for you and like really get their voices into the book. And that's really, I think great because what students are saying is, oh my goodness, the kid that's been writing his homework assignments on paper towels is my kid. That's me. You know what I mean? Like, there's those kinds of crazy stories. There is a story here about a kid who writes his assignments on a roll of paper towels for an entire year.

JAISON DOLVANE: Awesome, great. Well, that's really insightful and I'm sure it is going to be extremely useful for not just students, but certainly parents also, because it allows us to get a, you know, how these guys think.

LESLIE JOSEL: You need that bird's eye view, like a parent needs to read it. Cause I really feel that they listen, it's been out for a few months. So people have said, I've walked away with a completely different

understanding of what my student is thinking and feeling and doing. It's given me the why, and it's given me the how.

JAISON DOLVANE: That goes a long ways. So that's great. So Leslie, tell me you know, how has this work that you actually done, obviously you've got this personal story with your son, but how has it kind of transformed you? Do you feel like it's having more of an impact on your life or changing the way you think, or, you know, how you're sort of going about things?

LESLIE JOSEL: So, yes, yes and no. I mean, I want to be super honest. I've been at this for a long time. So I feel like I always say this, I feel like order out of chaos and my son grew up together and I am very, very blessed that I'm able to do this personally and professionally. And my son is, you know, he's 22, so he's grown and flown so to speak. But what did has done is I am very tapped into how people learn and how people process.

And I feel like what it has done is I just feel, listen, I work with students and parents all day long. So I feel like the peacekeeper in a lot of ways, really being able to do the work, to help parents understand their students and help students feel better about themselves and give them the skills to boot. Nobody gets the, there's nothing better than that, but on a personal level, even in my own home, like there's just a lot more grades. There's just a lot more grade. Like, I need to hear that again, because that's how I process, or you didn't remember that, but I understand why you didn't or I'm way more mindful. We didn't talk about this, of what I called up. Oh, by the ways and don't forget. As somebody walking out of the room as parents, we are very good at going, oh, by the way, don't forget assuming that our student or child heard us and more importantly remembered it. So I definitely am more mindful of, you know, what that is not the right way. I catch myself, not saying, but asking. So obviously you, as you know, when you're a coach, you've got to really be mindful of your teaching it, but are you really practicing this at home?

JAISON DOLVANE: Yeah, that's great. That's great. And Leslie, is there a one feeling you have as a parent that you would rather not feel?

LESLIE JOSEL: Worry, right now, particularly worry. Can I be honest? Cause I am a major, I mean, I think you got this, I am a straight-forward, I tell it like it is, I'm a New York girl. This is what I tell the parents, your kid who was like 13 and 14 and 15 and all that, they will be okay. They will be okay. They really will be okay. You know, I have a 22-year-old who, you know, stuck in the middle of the pandemic who was a 2020 graduate who missed a lot of that, you know, independence and what is going on in the world now. I wish I didn't worry as much as I did right now. And I have to sometimes say to my 75-year-old self-meaning, I'm not that you know, [38:49 inaudible] in the future, way in the future was all that worry worth it?

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. So what are you worried about? Like, what's the worry?

LESLIE JOSEL: The worry for me is right now that these kids, that this particular age group of college students are having, remember [39:07 inaudible] college students all day long. They are having a lot of, you know, they're having a lot of worry. There's a lot of anxiety. There's a lot of choice. You know, I'm not having the full school experience. All of this is virtual. Do I continue? Is this what I'm going to do? Will I get a job after school? There is, you know, this is now gone on for, [39:28 inaudible] you asked, I'm going to tell you, you know, we're rounding the corner to a year. You know, this, none of us thought we would be here. So it is producing social anxiety, work anxiety, school anxiety, life anxiety. This is the age group that should be grown and flown. And for a lot of them, they're still home. They're unemployed or they're living at home, doing school.

JAISON DOLVANE: Got it. So you feel like it's really kind of like created a gap in that transition from school to, you know, I want to get out of my own and work and will I be successful?

LESLIE JOSEL: Will I be successful? And what, and every month or year that goes by with this, you know, what is that going to do? That's why I tell parents your 14-year-old will be fine. Your 14-year-old will be fine. Your 16-year-old will be fine. Your college student, we need to talk about it.

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. Yeah, makes sense. So what is your hope for your audience? You know, you're spending so much time with parents and students. What's your hope for them?

LESLIE JOSEL: That's easy. That's our mission. I mean, I am very proud of the fact that I started as a sole entrepreneur, like one house at a time. And now we have this, you know, massive audience who comes to us for all of this stuff. And I might, our mission is always to help a parent understand their students better so that they can be successful in learning and in life. And if you notice, I say learning, we never say school, because all of that, what we do at order out of chaos, we really feel our life skills and not school skills and they can be learned. So if we can give parents the tools, then students will get them too.

JAISON DOLVANE: Right. Makes sense. That's great. So Leslie, can you tell us, or can you tell the audience where they can just learn more?

LESLIE JOSEL: Sure. We make it easy. Cause remember more than two steps, they are not going to do it. So the name of my company is order out of chaos. The website is orderoochaos.com. We tell you to go there. And from there you can find our programs, webinars, our products, the book, and all of our social. We're very robust on social. So you can find all our stuff there, but just go to orderoochaos.com and you'll, you can go anywhere from there.

JAISON DOLVANE: That's great. And we'll put these resources in our links when we publish this podcast also. Leslie, thank you so much. It's been great having you here.

LESLIE JOSEL: Thank you. This has been great. You ask amazing questions. Really great questions.

JAISON DOLVANE: Thank you.

[Outro]

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