

00:00.00

theautismhelper

Hi Dr. Russell thank you so much for joining me well I'm excited to just spend some time talking about executive functions which is really one of my favorite things to talk about because I find again and again, it's such.

00:01.88

Dr Norrine Russell

Thank you for having me I'm excited to be here.

00:15.49

theautismhelper

A global thing that so many adults and children are struggling with.

00:18.87

Dr Norrine Russell

Absolutely, they are and they're just I say all the time they're just basic life skills right? We don't have to get intimidated by this idea of executive functioning skills. They're just basic life skills and we all have strengths when it comes to our executive functioning and we all have. Areas that are a little less developed.

00:38.20

theautismhelper

I know especially when you start to learn about them. You realize in yourself which ones come naturally right? like organization comes pretty naturally to me but task initiation does not so everyone has their different kind of repertoire of of what yes skills and strengths they have when it comes to to these. Gills.

00:57.23

Dr Norrine Russell

Yeah, yeah, if I was ever going to develop. Um, you know any kind of training for you know people who are getting married. You know one of the things I always joke about when I'm doing a session on Executive functioning is if you. Are a task initiator then make sure you marry someone who is great at goal directed persistence so they can finish everything you start and if you are great at the goal directed persistence find yourself a task initiator. Um, yeah.

01:18.35

theautismhelper

Ah, ah.

01:23.31

theautismhelper

Oh my God I Love that idea like relationship training and like a dating app related to your executive functions. How amazing could that be. But.

01:28.50

Dr Norrine Russell

Right? right? I mean well and I think it's just so important for us as adults to know what our strengths are and which areas are a little less developed or or possibly even a little less. Important to us I know when I started getting training on executive functioning skills. Um I was trained in the dawson and guar smart but scattered model which I think is a great book smart but scattered and there's one for teens and they have an informal assessment in the book and. What my informal assessment said was that you know I had all these great executive functioning skills planning organizing I mean I was feeling great Sasha and then my flexibility score was like rock bottom rock bottom. Um, and I was like you know this is.

02:18.64

theautismhelper

Um, ah.

02:24.33

Dr Norrine Russell

Good insight for me and so often when we're working with families at Russell Coaching we'll say to parents. You know you're welcome to take the adult version of this and really have some um you know some understanding of how this creates certain dynamics in your family. You know if mom is. Super organized and super great at time management and task initiation and the student which you know is likely still developing their skills in that area. It helps to have a more balanced family conversation if we know what might be driving some of our um. Anxiety about kids getting work done.

03:04.19

theautismhelper

Yeah,, That's a great point and I think ah you know in in addition to being aware of what things come more naturally to you being aware of what supports that you may be unknowingly put in for yourself. I I tell these teachers all the time to almost like think aloud. Strategies that you set up for yourself like I always put my keys in this spot because then I don't forget them like that's ah that's a coping strategy that you've added to your your daily routine that helps you and we don't always realize all these little tricks that we've added for ourselves. Yeah I Want to talk.

03:30.48

Dr Norrine Russell

Yes, absolutely we learned them as we go.

03:36.80

theautismhelper

Specifically today about I know we could probably you know cover so

many different strategies with all these different skills but I want to kind of focus in today on problem solving and planning in particular I think teaching and building problem solving can seem so overwhelming for teachers and parents because it's such a big skill like problem solving. You can't rote memorize this. What types of students. Do you see struggling with problem solving.

04:03.42

Dr Norrine Russell

You know that's a good question and obviously any student can struggle with problem solving but I do think that students with autism struggle in very particular ways with problem solving probably mostly having to do with um. Needing to develop some theory of mind perspective and then our anxious kids struggle from a um am I doing this right? You know a perfectionistic point of view like is this the right answer is this what I'm supposed to be doing and then our kids with Adhd.

04:32.87

theautismhelper

Um, ah.

04:39.76

Dr Norrine Russell

You know struggle for a few reasons but also sometimes you know because they have trouble sorting through the information. Um and then staying focused long enough to see the the problem from start to finish So Those are. 3 you know neurode developmental issues that that I really see as getting in the way of problem solving in the classroom.

05:09.40

theautismhelper

So talk kind of big picture about what problem solving is because you touched on some of that and that answer which was really helpful. What are like the foundational skills and steps we need to be a problem solver.

05:20.33

Dr Norrine Russell

Right? Well I mean the first thing and this is going to sound kind of silly is we need to realize it's a problem right? me because honestly when you when you look around. Not everyone defines a problem the same way right.

05:28.77

theautismhelper

Yes.

05:40.14

Dr Norrine Russell

Sometimes I mean I'll throw myself under the bus here. There's a lot of things I think are problems that my kids don't necessarily think are problems. Um, and so.

05:40.40
theautismhelper
Um, it's true.

05:46.90
theautismhelper
Um, yeah.

05:51.93
Dr Norrine Russell
Recognizing something is a problem now in a more structured classroom environment where you're given a problem to solve. You know that's a little more obvious. Um, but then and this is the tricky part I think then it's coming up with what are your possible options. To solve this problem right? and and many many people go with the first one. The first thing they can come up with that's what it is because thinking of options is really hard cognitive work. Um, it just it is um and so. That I think is an area where we can really hone in on on helping kids in the classroom and at home. Okay, so what's another option. What's another option and then third step evaluate those options. What's going to happen if you choose you know solution number 1 what's going to happen if you choose solution number 2 what have you done in the past that might be relevant to think about here and then selecting the solution but don't stop there right? We have to evaluate the solution after we solve the problem and see.

06:53.80
theautismhelper
Are.

07:05.75
Dr Norrine Russell
Okay, was that a good solution. That's a lot of cognitive. It is a lot of cognitive effort. Um.

07:08.50
theautismhelper
Um, yeah, there's it's a lot of stops. But yeah and it's like a lot of gray area too. It's not and I could see why some more Rigid thinkers could really struggle with this because it's not just like. Yeah,, there's a corrector and incorrect. There's probably multiple options that could be successful. So There's a lot of this gray area space in this whole process.

07:28.76
Dr Norrine Russell

For sure I'll give you an example, my daughter is a ninth grader and in her english class she is supposed to write an essay on a life event Sasha she's had this assignment I think for a good three weeks um and she does online schooling and it's self-paced and you know, um, you know she's successful at school I'm not overly worried about this but every single time that she has a decision like that to make it paralyzes her and you know we have all the conversations like okay well what would be.

07:47.38

theautismhelper

Um.

08:05.70

Dr Norrine Russell

3 possible life events. Why can't think of any you know? Okay, well let's stop and think you know and repeating the question. What things have happened to you in your life total blankness like she is just not good at.

08:09.36

theautismhelper

Um, ah.

08:23.28

Dr Norrine Russell

Generating options and so it's something that takes a lot of time on my part as the homeschool teacher if you will um to get her to come up with what are the options. Um, she's just you know she's just. She wants to find the 1 right answer and do that.

08:41.45

theautismhelper

Um, yeah, and that it it's I can ah empathize with that and see how it oh well, it's like a waste of time to think through these wrong answers. But you know there's not always that perfect right? answer and sometimes that's part of the process is brainstorming and thinking through everything.

08:57.71

Dr Norrine Russell

Yeah, absolutely I think that kind of divergent thinking you know, being able to look at something from multiple perspectives is so incredibly valuable and um, we do. Some of it from a very academic point of view. You know in k 12 education. But I'm not sure. There's you know enough focus on problem solving divergent thinking creative thinking you know and then it becomes hard to think about. What are the options you know and and some students are just particularly talented at that. But I do think our kids with autism can struggle with that because it's not concrete or black and white.

09:32.30
theautismhelper
Um, yeah.

09:44.32
theautismhelper
Yeah, So so what are some ways that teachers can bring this more into the classroom and I think even Beyond just like an academic problem but a social problem or a you know you know, but more independent behavioral type Problem. What are ways that teachers can support kids that are struggling with this and in school big question there that.

10:02.94
Dr Norrine Russell
You know what I want to say as yeah, it is. You know what I want to say there is from the big picture is I think it's most helpful if a school has a philosophy around.. How do we teach problem solving you know and and then it can permeate curriculum. It can permeate. You know, executive functioning development. It can permeate social stuff but you know the difficulty for schools is that coaching.

10:25.70
theautismhelper
Um, ah.

10:40.16
Dr Norrine Russell
A student or a group of students through problem solving is incredibly time intensive and so that's really hard I think in a classroom you know what teachers can do you know is very explicitly say okay we are going to work on.

10:44.25
theautismhelper
Um, yeah.

10:59.32
Dr Norrine Russell
You know, whatever problem it might be you know? Maybe they're you know in middle school social studies and they're going to build a diorama of a historical building you know? Okay, well what challenges are you going to have what are your options right.

11:08.27
theautismhelper
Are.

11:16.40
Dr Norrine Russell

And and have the students independently complete some of that work you know and then have some discussion around. Okay, what are the options. What would be the pros and cons of building a you know pyramid versus building. You know a national monument versus the eiffel tower you know. Um, but I think it's it's giving enough time to students to think through. Okay, what are my options I need to come up with 3 options and then what will be the pros and cons of choosing to build you know a Greek. Temple versus a pyramid versus the white house. Um, and that part I think is hard and I think we as adults still jump in a lot there. You know and and that's where maybe we need to pull back as parents educators professionals. And and make sure that the student or students who are working on that have enough time you know, especially your kids who have slow processing speed your kids who are frequently distracted I think. You know I know this is really a big picture question. But I really think the problem with teaching problem solving is the time that it takes um because you can't make it happen any faster than it's going to happen. Um, but this is what we talk about all the time in coaching.

12:39.20

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

12:50.52

Dr Norrine Russell

If you continuously use the same set of questions to guide a student or a child through problem solving that becomes their inner dialogue if we're constantly providing the solution to you know the mean girls or the mean boys or you know. I didn't get picked for a sports team or you know, whatever it is then we deprive a child of that ability that opportunity to to problem solve you know and when I'm training my coaches for Russell Coaching I say the absolute last thing you're ever going to do is provide a solution to the student. You know. You can sit and wait five ten fifteen minutes you can summarize you can active listen but when we provide the solutions which we do often because we feel rushed for time then we deprive that child of an opportunity to problem solve.

13:40.37

theautismhelper

I Think that's such a great point and you like hit the nail on the head on the time and even it with this example that you gave on the historical monuments like you could envision the teacher being that like okay, let's just pick one and let's move on. We got to get to the next lesson the next class but you know spending that time and I think.

13:55.62

Dr Norrine Russell

Um, right.

13:58.21

theautismhelper

Teachers really identifying the reason and the why behind spending the time and I think if we can teach more teachers that that like hey there's a purpose here and there's a reason why we're giving this wait time and it might feel painful to do this but this is why we're doing this and this is what we're going to teach in the long run. There could hopefully be more of that.

14:21.11

Dr Norrine Russell

Honestly, Sasha I think given how pressured teachers feel I would you know with a project like that which is a pretty common middle school project. You're gonna you're gonna build something. Um you know for history class social studies. Whatever. Really think the time is probably better spent not doing the building but talking about what are your options. What would be you know the challenges of building that what would be you know the easy parts and then go through your 3 options.

14:52.56

theautismhelper

Are.

14:57.20

Dr Norrine Russell

And really weigh those options and write out what are the pros and cons and then the decision making um you know? Okay, So how did you choose this option and why did you choose it. You know my kids went to a middle school where the history teacher was very project based but you know. Which in general I think is is great. Um, but both my kiddos spent so much time figuring out how to insert a toothpick into a ball of clay to you know stand you know a piece of wood on and.

15:19.38

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

15:34.00

Dr Norrine Russell

We want to make sure that we're getting really to the root of the lesson or the skill and so sometimes planning things is more important than doing things I think that's going to be an unpopular opinion. But.

15:45.39

theautismhelper

No I Totally agree because I mean yes, the fine motor skills and the stem-based components of actually building out something is great, But

what's really the goal and in your in your continuing with the same example, if you were to spend 80% of the time on this whole planning decision making process. Think about how much you're going to learn and talk about those 3 options that you've decided on like you've basically built each one in your head so that that you're getting that even even more value than just like picking one moving On. You're not even thinking about the other two anymore. So you're getting to that goal of of the lesson in the activity or the project.

16:10.61

Dr Norrine Russell

Yes.

16:23.79

theautismhelper

In such a better way.

16:24.27

Dr Norrine Russell

Another area where I think this skill is so vital is in helping kids of all ages with social dynamics. Um, you know they're upset you know at the in the younger years you know.

16:33.95

theautismhelper

Are.

16:43.63

Dr Norrine Russell

Well, she left me out of the lunch table or you know whatever it is We All know what the social situations are that can be upsetting for for all of us. Um, but when we you know in our role as parent or professional are listening to that child. Um, or that student I think it's so important that our listening be about question asking and reflection Invitation. You know So Okay, so you got kicked out of the lunch table today. That's kind of Ick You don't need to say anything more as the adult.

17:21.59

theautismhelper

Are.

17:23.54

Dr Norrine Russell

Don't but we as adults rush into well who else could you sit with at lunch. Well do you think they'll you know have space for you tomorrow you know and we heighten the anxiety. Um, and so for. Social and emotional intelligence I think it's so important that we have a set of strong questions that we can use that guide students and kids through thinking about Okay so you know that didn't feel so Good. Do you think

that's. Likely to happen again. You know and then again listening because kids are this is stuff they have to think About. We can't rush it. Um, okay, Well what?? what are your Options. You tell me what are your options you know and then the ultimate question.

17:56.32
theautismhelper
Are.

18:14.25
Dr Norrine Russell
What do you want? What do oh I think it's a very hard question to answer. What do you want? Yeah I learned that from someone like ten years ago or something and um I use it a lot in making business decisions.

18:16.96
theautismhelper
Um, that's hard for adults to answer sometimes. But.

18:32.53
Dr Norrine Russell
What do you want? um you know and and so I think teaching kids to look at it from that perspective. Okay, you've got choices. You've got options. What do you want and if a kid says well I want them to invite me back to the lunch table. We can respond to that with empathy right? like.

18:34.22
theautismhelper
Um, yeah.

18:49.40
theautismhelper
Are.

18:52.40
Dr Norrine Russell
Yeah I probably want that too in your shoes I Hope that will happen I do and maybe it's a good idea for us to talk about some other options.

19:01.13
theautismhelper
You know as you're like going through this whole situation I'm so guilty of as a parent jumping to the solution right away because you know time is also a factor parenting but also you like you want for your kids obviously to not be left out to not have these struggles. And and my husband's actually a little bit the opposite of me, He's always like struggles are good. Struggles are good. They make him top their life. So easy I'm like they're little.. It's Fine. Um, but even

like the bcba and teacher and me is like let let let's let's get to the answer right away and it's and it's such a rushed process without that. Time and letting them kind of drive that bus.

19:36.24

Dr Norrine Russell

It is and then you know I think what we're starting to see in the culture right is parenting has shifted so dramatically in the last ten to twenty years and I think there has been a decrease in problem solving skills and I think that's why. A lot of kids when they go off to college you know are calling their parents about every little thing or texting their parents about every little thing and why their parents are doing every little thing for them. You know connection is great. Talk to your parents every day about what you're doing and how you're feeling connection is great I love technology for connection.

20:04.80

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

20:14.39

Dr Norrine Russell

But you know what excuse me what I see a lot is parents jumping in to rescue or solve as opposed to saying Well I don't really know how you would know if that's a mandatory book or not, you know how would you figure that out or you know.

20:30.85

theautismhelper

Um, yeah, yeah.

20:33.19

Dr Norrine Russell

I Don't really know why your Bursar account is frozen. Where would you figure that out at you know we are the generation of anxiety right? And so as parents we're Anxious. We want our kids to have what they need. We Want to be good parents. We're very earnestly trying to be good parents and and our kids are anxious. And getting to the solution makes us feel good. Um, but your husband's right, You know the skills you develop when you are independently problem solving. Are so much more valuable than getting the solution that day.

21:12.52

theautismhelper

And I can see how you said earlier it kind of adds to that child's anxiety because when a parent gives an answer right away that feels like the right Answer. It's. Oh My God Well they got the right answer. How did they do that that fast I can't do it that fast and now you're you know, developing this like kind of cyclical behavior of like well now I know where to go for the answer and if I it stresses me out to

even try to figure it out on my own.

21:34.92

Dr Norrine Russell

Yeah, yeah, yeah, my one of my teenagers the other day said to me mom. We don't have any dog food and I was like oh really now? Sasha I know how much dog food there is in the house I'm not as dumb as I'm pretending to be. Um, um, we don't have any dog food I mean I'm just slowing the whole pace of this conversation down to give him some time to think about this? well.

22:05.34

Dr Norrine Russell

Um, so so what should we do? We don't have any dog food and he's like I don't know but there's no dog food was like okay, yeah, there's no dog food. You're 15

22:21.77

theautismhelper

Um.

22:22.41

Dr Norrine Russell

Let's think about what some possible solutions are like I don't want you calling me in 10 years when you have your own dog and saying what do I do with there just no dog food. You know like I mean.

22:33.67

theautismhelper

Um, me and there and there's adults that totally do that. But yeah.

22:37.19

Dr Norrine Russell

Yes, there are I mean that's kind of a silly example and I I acknowledge that but I think when we rush in to problem solve. It's exactly what you said you know the voice inside the child then says oh someone else is going to have the right The correct answer. I'm not.

22:56.90

theautismhelper

Um, yeah, and talk a little bit about the value of in this problem solving process picking quote unquote the wrong answer not necessarily that there's a wrong answer. But ah, you know a solution that.

23:09.75

Dr Norrine Russell

Um.

23:12.30

theautismhelper

Maybe doesn't get you where you intended and like what that teaches.

23:15.91

Dr Norrine Russell

Oh that is the best thing ever right? I mean that is so completely awesome and we want that. But again I think parenting has changed so dramatically you know that.

23:21.78

theautismhelper

Um.

23:34.47

Dr Norrine Russell

We are afraid to let our kids make mistakes I think this conversation is very analogous to the whole boredom conversation like I'm bored I'm bored you know and it's like okay well you're bored like you're bored I have work to do I'm going back to the office like I'm not.

23:40.19

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

23:48.49

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

23:49.94

Dr Norrine Russell

Fixing your boredom I am not giving you solutions for your boredom. The whole point of being bored is to come up with your own creative ideas to spend your time in the summer like great I'm glad you're bored now both my kids probably want to take a hammer to my head when I say that because they've heard it for years and years and years like great I'm so excited. You're bored. What you're going to tell me tonight when I get home you know and I think that you know this is kind of the same thing you know great like you made a mistake. Um I think there are stories of. Inventors and innovators that can really be helpful for our kids look at how long it took you know whoever insert you know anyone from Thomas Edison to Steve Jobs great you are one step closer to figuring out what could work better. So.

24:34.30

theautismhelper

Um, have.

24:43.61

Dr Norrine Russell

Absolutely you want to take mistakes I know you know from a business perspective. Um, you know one of the people on our team talks a lot

about if you're landing you know, kind of every opportunity then you're not reaching high enough you know like if you're not failing.

25:00.92

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

25:03.30

Dr Norrine Russell

Then you're not reaching high enough. Um, and and I think we have to make making mistakes a positive thing for kids. Um, yeah, so um, you know and we have to not be flustered like oh well, that's.

25:14.64

theautismhelper

Um, ah.

25:22.86

Dr Norrine Russell

Okay, don't worry, you'll get it right? The next time none of that language is helpful like okay so you know that didn't work out. You had a plan to make your you know tepee out of fabric and popsicle sticks and the whole thing fell apart and.

25:25.57

theautismhelper

Um, yeah, yeah.

25:39.82

Dr Norrine Russell

Now you have to figure out what to redo. Yeah, you know there's um I wish I could remember who who I learned this term from but I love this term for working with kids sports casting just narrate. What's happening you know as opposed to fixing or solving or.

25:40.62

theautismhelper

Um, yeah, it's so true.

25:54.37

theautismhelper

Um, ah.

25:59.60

Dr Norrine Russell

Redirecting just narrate. What's going on. Yeah, the popsicle sticks fell. Yeah when you cut the fabric it. It didn't end up being the right shape.

26:06.99

theautismhelper

I Love that term too because it allows people to contribute and I think that's the hard thing you know for teachers and I and I see this a lot with paras in class too like great hardworking amazing paraprofessionals. But they're like jumping in so much because they like want something to do in a way to help and this is a way that you can contribute and be a part of it without.

26:26.23

Dr Norrine Russell

Right? right? like and this is the most valuable thing you can do because you're teaching them. How to think you're teaching them how to problem solve independently. It doesn't feel as rewarding as having the answer right? I mean who doesn't love to be the answer guru like oh I've got a great idea.

26:26.69

theautismhelper

Jumping in with the solution.

26:33.32

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

26:44.80

theautismhelper

Um.

26:45.17

Dr Norrine Russell

Well if we you know take a cone of paper and use that as a pattern for our tepee and we cut the fabric out using the cone pattern then it'll all be great. Well okay, great like you Mr or Mrs Adult just made a tepee.

26:56.62

theautismhelper

Um.

27:03.61

Dr Norrine Russell

That kid didnt make no no, no, you know.

27:05.46

theautismhelper

Ah I know when you see kids projects that you're like that kid didn't make that but when you were talking about the dog foodot example I was thinking about you know in in maybe early childhood classrooms or classrooms where students maybe have you know, limited verbal skills on on kind of the same idea that when kids are. Are needing something

that so often we swoop in too quickly with like oh my God I forgot to give you the the ketchup for your chicken nuggets at lunch and let me run and grab it or you know I gave the paint without the paint brush and that we can provide some of that wait time and and allow that like productive struggle I think especially in.

27:31.11

Dr Norrine Russell

Yeah.

27:43.29

theautismhelper

Structure Classrooms life skills Classrooms Everything is so curated for the child because well they're not flexible. We don't want to get them upset and not that we want to make life hard but we kind of want to make life hard a little bit in a way that they can are in a safe classroom environment where they can learn and we can support them.

27:56.14

Dr Norrine Russell

Well and that's really I think what you learn as the parent or the educator or you know the professional is the more you practice this the more skilled you are at gauging.

28:11.88

theautismhelper

Are.

28:12.30

Dr Norrine Russell

The right amount of scaffolding right? because kids will need support sometimes but a lot of times we provide too much support and so as adults practice this skill of figuring out exactly how much support is needed through. Using things like sports casting and using questions for problem solving. You know you're going to see when the child starts to get overly frustrated you know and we don't want that I don't want. You know my kids who have autism to get to the point where they are so. Burnt out cognitively from thinking of options or evaluating options. But the other side of that is we have to build that up over time if you don't experience frustration to a manageable extent then you're not going to get to the next level Of. Frustration management and I think that's true whether we're talking about you know, neurotypical people people with Autism Adhd or anxiety. You know we have to get right in that you know educators call it the zone of proximal development right? If you're providing too much support. Then the kid's not challenged if you're not providing enough support then the kid gets frustrated and checks Out. Um and so the more we practice this the better We can gauge that and and it's very individual and I think that part is hard for Teachers. You know how do you individually meet a child.

29:43.81

Dr Norrine Russell

Where they're at in a classroom you know, even if it's a small group of 6 or 8 or the larger classroom of you know 20 to 22 um that that's hard. It's hard to find the time for.

29:54.20

theautismhelper

Yeah, exact, it's that sweet spot that is the tricky piece and sometimes when I talk about this really briefly. Let's say on like social media I'll have people that are like oh that's so me and you're not, You're just gonna like not help a child I'm like this is what I'm saying but it's finding yeah where that you know. Right? Amount of not too much. You know, not too little is at and it's definitely a ah practice thing and I think not only is that hard for educators. But then really hard to maybe teach your team as well. Especially when staff is so short or you know there's so so much staff turnover.

30:23.20

Dr Norrine Russell

Um, my heart.

30:27.11

theautismhelper

That now you're like reteaching again and again to maybe the paras in your room.

30:30.89

Dr Norrine Russell

Yeah, yeah, no, that's a great point is you know how do you quickly get people up to speed on this skill that really you know is a little bit of um, you know it's a little bit of. An art form. You need to really carefully observe the student to see okay where's their stress level if you're you know, taking a look at that on a scale of 1 to 10 does that particular student tolerate frustration up to let's say a 3 and then that's when they need. The co-teacher or the para to step it does this other kid tolerate frustration up to like a 7 level before you know he throws his pencil across the room and those are things we can only know about kids when we're really carefully observing. There's no one size fits all.

31:21.68

theautismhelper

I know what it changes I was just thinking as you're saying that like well then you know what's a 3 on on Tuesday might the same the totally different experience could bring them to you know a 3 or a 7 based on how they slept or what happened on the on the bus ride I mean even from you know my own experience you you have a. Similar morning but something else throws you off.

31:40.27

Dr Norrine Russell

Exactly our executive functioning skills are affected by you know in in a temporary sense affected by sleep mood food interactions you know, and absolutely if if your bucket is a little empty that day.

31:58.96

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

31:59.65

Dr Norrine Russell

You might you know start throwing the pencils or breaking the pencils a little sooner in the you know in the classroom. Um, and then I think we have to just remember that everyone's doing the best they can and kids who have neurodiversity you know. Are certainly doing the best they can do. So you know if you have a kid with autism who's really struggling with figuring out how to read people socially, how do I take these cues. How do I then change my behavior you know. We just have to come back to kids do as well as they can you know in the words of Ross Green you know who I think is a genius kids do as well as they can and I think the same is true for adults and so you know as we're addressing problem solving with kids with autism.

32:45.61

theautismhelper

Um.

32:53.18

Dr Norrine Russell

Kind of normalizing The idea that some problems are going to be harder for them to solve and and those might be the social problems and you know we have to be Patient. We have to recognize their efforts and we have to listen to them on what's challenging about this and if it's. Ah, goal They really want to be working on.

33:13.52

theautismhelper

Yes, oh my gosh? Well this I could like talk to you about this forever. Well thank you so much. This has been such a great conversation I feel like we covered a lot and you gave a lot of really helpful actionable strategies where can people go to learn more from you and about the coaching that you provide.

33:29.91

Dr Norrine Russell

Sure, um, our website is www.russellcoaching.com and what we do is work with students grades 1 through 12 to build executive functioning skills. And then in middle school and high school. We add in their

study and learning strategies and um, we also secondly work on social and emotional skills so we are the largest student coaching practice in the country for kids who are neurodiverse. And we really specialize in kids who have autism Adhd and anxiety and try to you know, alleviate some of the conflict at home. Um, that can happen when kids are you know.

34:27.94

Dr Norrine Russell

The executive functioning is getting in the way of their academic achievement. So. That's what we do. We've been doing it for 14 years and we absolutely love it It's so joyful to be able to work with a student who has the capacity. To do well in school academically but their executive functioning skills have been the thing holding them back and creating conflict at at home and you know to be able to get in there and coach that student and really help them develop. Okay, how do I manage my time. How do I prioritize what has to get done today. How do I get myself to do all this work that I don't really want to do you know and so wrestlecoaching dot com is us and then all our social you can link to from there.

35:04.56

theautismhelper

Um, yeah.

35:08.31

theautismhelper

Great. Well I will put your website and your social channels in the show notes. So people can reach out if they are interested. Well thank you so much. Dr Russell for joining me. This has been such a great conversation.

35:20.17

Dr Norrine Russell

Um, thank you for having me a really fun conversation.