

Family Firm with Emily Oster

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It's just like a fruit preferencing. So I think if I had to articulate a mission and I think my husband has, has sort of vaguely agreed with. It would be something like we're trying to raise adults. We're trying to make choices that set our kids up to sort of be independent adults.

Yael Schonbrun: That was Emily Auster on psychologists off the clock. We are three clinical psychologists here to bring you cutting edge and science-based ideas from psychology to help you flourish in your relationships, work, and health.

Debbie Sorensen: I'm Dr. Debbie Sorensen, practicing in mile high, Denver, Colorado, and coauthor of ACT Daily Journal.

Yael Schonbrun: I'm Dr. Yael [00:01:00] Schonbrun, a Boston based clinical psychologist, assistant professor at Brown University, and author of the upcoming book Work, Parent, Thrive.

Jill Stoddard: And from sunny San Diego, I'm Dr. Jill Stoddard author of be mighty and the big book of act metaphors.

Debbie Sorensen: We hope you take what you learn here to build a rich and meaningful life.

Jill Stoddard: you for listening to Psychologists Off the Clock.

Yael Schonbrun: Psychologists off the clock is proud to be partnered with Praxis Continuing Education Praxis is the premier provider of evidence-based training for mental health professionals.

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Hey psychologist off the clock listeners. I'm going to guess that if you are listening to this episode, that you love to geek out about books in psychology.

Katy Rothfelder: So if you are a fellow book, nerd like Yael and I, and all of the people around you are tired of you talking about books. Then you can join us once a month to really take a deep dive into the books that we're going to be reading to you.[00:03:00]

Yael Schonbrun: And even though books themselves are not therapy. many books offer huge therapeutic value. So join Katy and I with our background in acceptance and commitment therapy and other evidence-based psychotherapies. to explore together how we can apply some of these ideas from great books in psychology to our everyday lives.

Bring your questions, bring your insights and join us for deep conversations. Once a month, starting May 5th at 12:00 PM Eastern standard time in the U S and if you're interested in joining us and we hope you are . Just send us an email at, off the clock, psych@gmail.com and we'll send you the zoom link.

We hope to see you. there. I'm here with Jill today to introduce an episode. With Emily Auster. She was on episode 87 to talk about her book Cribsheet. And she's back to talk about her latest book family from, so this is a book about parenting more in the elementary school years, which.

It's very [00:04:00] relevant for Jill and I, because both of our, both of us have kids in elementary school and I adore Emily. She's one of those hilarious

scientists. And I love that combination. And it was such a fun conversation for me because we got to talk about her book and parenting in the middle years. But we also got to talk about the relationship between social scientists and policy makers.

And if you stay tuned until the end, we also got to talk about her amazing newsletter, which has really gained in popularity in the past couple of years in provides sort of an ongoing resource for parents who are interested in the latest research on parenting and other related areas, including COVID.

So, Jill, I know that you were eager to hear this episode. What were your general feelings?

Jill Stoddard: Well, I thought this was such an interesting episode for a number of different reasons. And I've said before, I'm somewhere on the podcast. I think that when, whenever I read anything Emily writes or when I listened to your last episode with her. My overarching feeling is this like, ah, you know, this like, [00:05:00] um, weight lifted off my shoulders because ultimately what she often ends up saying is kind of like, whatever you do, it's all good.

Like whether you breastfeed or you don't breastfeed, it'll all be fine.

Yael Schonbrun: And here's the data to support that, you know, either way, you're not condemning your children to a life of, I don't know, obesity or low IQ, that there are many pathways and research often shows that.

Jill Stoddard: Exactly. There are a lot of right ways to do things. No matter how vehemently you hear other people say you must do sleep training this way. Emily comes in with the dataset. It's a little more complex than that. And here's what the data say. And, you know, sh you guys talk in the beginning of this episode about how she almost didn't write this book because it's a lot harder to look at these factors among school elementary school aged children so I felt a little bit less of that. Like, ah, there's lots of right. Ways to do things. And where you guys went with, this was talking less about [00:06:00] content, right? Like less about . Here's what data say about the benefits and drawbacks of this. And it was more like here's a process for how you can go about making that decision.

And I mean, in reality, that's important at any stage because. Data are averages among groups of people. And so that doesn't necessarily mean that what the data show will be the right thing that works for your kid or your family. So ultimately I think as parents, families, we need to find a way to be able to make

good decisions for ourselves, our kids and our families and, and you and Emily do a nice job of walking through some of that.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. And that's always been what is so compelling to me about how Emily talks about data? Is it. 100%, a passionate, scientist who cares very deeply about dating good data and sharing data. But she's also very honest in saying there are limitations to how data can inform what we do. And [00:07:00] that's been true of her past books, but it's especially true of her most recent book, because as you're saying, the decisions are so much more complicated and nuanced and the paths that families and children take, you know, in, in this stage of life.

Just the diverge. Like there's just so many different ways that kids go. They become their own little people and there's not a one size fits all or even a two or three size fits all kind of approach. And so you can look at the data and she really walks you through what data are available about various decisions, whether it's, you know, what sports your kids should do or how you should encourage them to eat and healthy ways or how you should support their social, emotional development.

But at the end of the day where she comes back is this idea of figuring out what's right for you, which as we talk a lot about on this podcast has a lot to do with values and clarifying your values as parents. But also she walks me through and in her book really goes in detail into a process of clarifying family values, which [00:08:00] I just love because it's so act consistent.

Jill Stoddard: Absolutely. And there's a part about halfway through the interview where you guys talk about activities and you know, whether to grit or quit as Angela Duckworth says. But, you know, I think lots of us have had that question about whether to let a kid quit an activity. Um, you know, how many activities should kids be involved in?

What activities should they be involved in? And she doesn't really quite answer those questions specifically, but I think gives a really helpful framework for how. These things. And I will admit that I am one of the people that you ask about during that time, you say, my colleague has this question. That was me.

Um, and I will say like, I did actually feel better about it. She didn't give me what I wanted was for her to say yes, Jill did the right thing. And she definitely did say that, but I felt okay about it because I felt like we followed our values based on what we know about our particular child.

And that's what.

Yael Schonbrun: [00:09:00] Yeah. Yeah. I think that that is okay. And I think it is so hard not to want like a right answer. And I actually got a chance. I interview to ask her about, you know, more personal things like what she, how, what are her family values and how she manages things? And one particular area that I think was really interesting is I asked her sort of how she manages the working parent balance, um, because she is a very involved parent and she has a very demanding career.

And you know, this is another area where. You know, the, the solution that works for her isn't necessarily one that's going to work for everybody. And I think there are so many areas of life where that's going to be true. You know, the choices that you make versus what your neighbor does or versus what your parents did, you know, way back when,

Jill Stoddard: a hundred percent

Yael Schonbrun: so we hope you get a lot out of this episode with Emily Oster. I have today with me, Emily Oster, who's a professor of economics at brown university. She's a mother of two and the author of expecting better, crib [00:10:00] sheet, which she joined me to discuss on episode 87 and the family firm which came out this past August.

Emily Oster: that's right.

Yael Schonbrun: And all of her books analyze data behind the choices that we make in parenting and family from takes this approach to parenting in the early years, looking at data on schools, extracurriculars, sleep, and providing a decision-making framework to make hard decisions and address the logistical challenge in this period of parenting.

Welcome back, Emily. Thank you so much for making the time.

Emily Oster: I'm excited to be back. Thanks for having me.

Yael Schonbrun: All right. So as I understand it, you didn't really intend to write a book about parenting in the middle years, because the kinds of approaches that you used in your first two parenting books didn't seem to fit in these years of parenting. So can you share how your data guided approach differs in the middle years compared to the earlier years?

Emily Oster: Yeah, absolutely. So, so I think you're right. I did not intend to, uh, to, to write this. And I think that the reason was, you know, if I sort of look at the first two books, they have like a real sort of cadence of like [00:11:00] walking you through like your pregnancy or the first early years. And it kind of chronological like, okay, you're in the delivery room, what are the choices?

What does the data say? Now you're at home. Like they need to sleep. And so it was sort of those, it was very easy for me to see, like, this is what people. This is kind of what people are asking about. This is the sort of shared experience that like we're, we're kind of all having. Um, and as I got into these older sort of older kid years, people's experiences just like really bifurcate, like the things that you're worried about, any even bifurcate that would be too, they just like, it's like the Nile Delta or something, right?

Like the path that you're on is so specific to your, to your kid. And so it was hard to imagine like writing. It said, okay, let me walk you through all the choices you're going to have, because many of those choices are completely different for different families and, you know, beyond that different for different kids.

So when we are looking at evidence from younger kids, you know, of course there's a lot of variation across kids, but. There are many things where it's much easier to say, okay, [00:12:00] here's kind of what you'd expect. You know, here's what we know about circumcision. Here's like, and it's not that it's different for every kid or that every kid will react differently to that.

It's like we have some data and they kind of average is about, is about right. Is pretty consistent. And with older kids that just wasn't like, that's just not true. Like the answer to like, is that Montessori, the right kind of school for this kid is. That's it just a totally different answer for kids in different, in different families or different kids in the same family.

It's just so it felt like a little bit intractable to say, okay, I'm going to like provide data here. So. So I sorta thought, okay, like, forget it. I'm done. Like two bucks is good. I'm fine. I'm out. And this is a cool, good run. Um, but, but ultimately, ultimately that isn't, that isn't what happened. I think, you know, what I, what I sort of came to think in, in writing the family from was that, you know, one, there was actually some interesting data that sort of, uh, applicable at least to a broad range of kinds of questions we had.

So, you know, in the book I talk about the, I do like the sort of standard, like Emily data [00:13:00] thing about like nutrition and about. You know, family

meals and about, um, like how much sleep is needed. So there is a bunch of those pieces of data, which I think a lot of people do wonder about, but then there's another piece of the book it's sort of where the book starts is in saying, okay, you're going to face a lot of decisions that are very unique to you.

Uh, What you need is not an answer, but a sort of framework in which to maybe put some of the data. And so a lot of the book is, is about this kind of like what is a good way to make decisions? How can we be more deliberate about our decision-making and the pitches that in this era of kind of where logistics are really important and where everyone's questions are really different, what you need is not so much like a decision, but sort of a way to decide.

And that's kind of the work of the, of the book.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. So, and, and you have this dominant theme of, I mean, the title is the family from, so you're, you're sort of talking about running a family a little bit, like running a business, and so I just wanted to kind of ask [00:14:00] you to. What are the particular benefits to thinking about family in this way?

And I may have a special interest in hearing you talk about applying this to co-parenting and marriage.

Emily Oster: Yeah. Um, so I think. at least when I talk about like, run your family, like affirm people sort of think that what I mean is like, is like have more spreadsheets to like optimize your kid. Like there are product and like, you know, you're trying to like, and that's not really, that's really not quite, I do like spreadsheets, but not for that purpose.

Yael Schonbrun: Your love of Google docs.

Emily Oster: do have a Google form, a Google doc it's the best. Um, but you know, I think really like the, the sort of piece that I want to, that I, that I, the parallel that I think is more important for me is the idea of, um, of kind of structured decision-making of saying that okay. Rather than just like, kind of deciding.

Like on a whim or not, or kind of assuming that it'll all work out, just cause we all like each other. Um, that, that there's a role [00:15:00] for, for saying even if we like each other, we could still want to make our decisions in a structured more formal way. And, and that firms often your well-run firms have systems.

That make it possible for many different people to make choices for us to all be sort of rowing in the same direction. And that if we take some of that formality, whether it's in the, how do we make a big decision or even in the day-to-day of like, how do we keep our schedules organized that can take away some of that.

Just like some of, like, there are some things which is just better for your computer or your schedule to manage that rather than you like holding it all in your head. And I think we're sort of too often too reluctant, um, to, to do that, partly because it feels like cold, it feels a little bit like cold and clinical and like, you know, not very family family-ish and, and I, I, that's not how I feel about it, but I think that's, that's some of the resistance, but I think if you can get past that, it's really.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. And then on the other side, I think sometimes we get. [00:16:00] To upset and emotional with our partner and thinking about it from the business. I can actually warm things up, but you have this comment in there. Considering treating your partner more like a business associate, like would you talk to your business associate and the way that you talk to your partner when you're frustrated with them?

And I think that that can be really helpful. Like if you have a partner and you're, co-running the household to really think about the way that you can collaborate more effectively together in the business sense and how you do that in the workplace may have some good information to guide how you would do it in the home space.

Emily Oster: Yeah, I think the biggest thing there is. Respect piece that we often at at work, we emphasize a lot that, you know, we could disagree about something and we expect to disagree. And so we develop these tools where if I disagree with you about, you know, you want to hire this person, I want to hire this other person.

I don't like it. I don't feel that as like, you, you know, you don't like me or you don't, it's like, yeah, of course. Sometimes we're going to disagree. And like, of course I'm [00:17:00] always right. But like, I can hear you, you know, I can hear you and like we can move forward. And that, and the next day, like, even though we had an argument at that meeting, like the next day, we can say like, okay, like I still respect you.

And we're still, we're still kind of like working together. And I think we just don't imbue those disagreements with the emotional valence that we do it, that we do it. Um, I think it's much harder not to hear criticism from your, your

partner in the same way, but. There is this, like, if, if you could almost, you almost want to do it on purpose and be like, okay, we're expecting to disagree.

Like we're expecting to have like a logistical discussion in which we're working with some constraints and which we don't necessarily, we're not necessarily like completely aligned because I have something to do at that time. And you have something to do at that time. And like, we just need to like figure out the way to move forward.

And if we can do that while separating like that from our kind of emotional relationship, I think there's a lot of value. It's not that easy.

Yael Schonbrun: It's not that easy, but I [00:18:00] think as you're saying, if you do it with more deliberate intent, it can be more available to you. I actually had, so I'm a couples therapy specialist and I had a supervisor at one point. He said, you know, when you're helping couples. And negotiate these difficult conflicts.

One thing that he recommends to them is just saying, you know, the business of this business is business. Like try to sort of see it as a negotiation. And in that way you can sort of bring some of the emotion down and really think about it from a more practical standpoint and that can make it easier to, to sort of, you know, make your way through the thorny.

Emily Oster: Yeah. And I think that we. You know, there's, there's so much emphasis when we talk about like loving each other and like on the idea that like, that's, that's kind of all that you, that you need, you know? And I think it's, it's, I think part of what makes this aspect sort of transitioned into parenting hard is that, you know, when we are, you know, for a lot of people, like before you have kids like that, it's not like, of course that's not always [00:19:00] enough, but there's a piece of it, which is like, you know, things are not that there's not so many constraints.

Like if I like to, you know, Go like ride my motorcycle around all weekend. And you like to like, you know, I dunno bake. Like we can sorta both do that. And like, if you want to be out all day on your motorcycle, that's like your jam. That's totally great. And then once you introduce these additional constraints, the logistics of like, lack of time, lack of money, all this stuff that comes with kids, all of a sudden, we're like much more frequently having to make those kinds of trade-offs where.

It is a real trade off and there is a real negotiation if we're just sort of expecting it to work out. Like, I don't know why, like, I don't know why would we expect it to work out? Like what, what about our previous experience would say that like, this is just going to like magically work, you know, it's, it's just not.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. And so from the economist perspective of really being. Uh, willing to examine the opportunity costs of various choices. My opportunity class, your opportunity cost are constraints, you know, our time opportunity costs, [00:20:00] and just really recognizing that there's always opportunity costs when you make a choice, rather than trying to eliminate them, being more deliberate about choosing how you're going to pick.

I think. So you start readers off with a recommendation to begin with the big picture of values and principles as a family. And we, we actually recently had an episode where the cohost shared our podcast mission and value statement and discuss the importance of doing that as individuals, we actually have a worksheet that listeners can get and we'll link to it in the show notes.

But I love the idea of doing that as a family. And I'm curious if you could sort of walk our listeners through how you and your family have articulated your overarching family mission state.

Emily Oster: So, so it's very interesting because I talk about, I talk in that part of, sort of this big picture about the idea of having a mission statement and then the idea of diving into like, what are the most important things on the practical level to do and, and, you know, like what are the things you most want to see every in your.

or, you know, that are like your, your main [00:21:00] priorities. And part of the reason I do both of those things is I think for some people, this idea of a mission statement is like really compelling. They're like, yes, that's how I can summarize my family's values. I'm going to say like, you know, we're trying to, and then for some people it's like, I don't know.

What do you, what do you mean? Like, like do, do good stuff. Like, you know, like, they're just like, not that that's not as compelling, but saying, but putting it in the practical of like, you need to, you know, here's the things I want to do. Like, that's actually like, oh, I can, I can say that. And so I would say our family is more in the practical.

I want to ask my family what our mission statement should be, and my kids were. Well, they were trying to find something we all agreed on and they were

like, no papayas, if, because like no one in our family likes papayas. I was like, I don't know. It doesn't seem like a, it's not like a mission.

It's just like a fruit preferencing. So I think if I had to articulate a mission and I think my husband has, has sort of vaguely agreed with. It would be something like we're trying to raise adults. Like we're trying to make choices that set our kids up to sort of be independent adults.

[00:22:00] But what I'm much more confident about is if you ask us to sort of write down what are like the key things that are important to us to prioritize, um, they would be sort of Particular aspects of family time. So family dinner, you know, some time every weekend that involves us doing a activity, ideally outside as, as a family and so I think things like that would be sort of the key, kind of the key things, but much easier to, for me to say that than to say, like, what's the mission.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. Well, I love that you translate it into really sort of day-to-day things. And so the kind of therapy that might I, my cohost do is called acceptance and commitment therapy, and there was. Strong emphasis on clarifying your values and then translating your values into concrete behavioral action. And I think that that's a really Good example of you, um, sort of having this overarching value of wanting to raise independent adults and then bringing it also into the day-to-day of, you know, having connected time, having, um, time to, you know, do [00:23:00] activities that are important.

Before we started recording. We also talked about that, you know, they do have independent time away from you and your husband because you guys work and you have a very demanding career.

Emily Oster: Have a job.

Yael Schonbrun: Um, and so how do you manage to sort of be such an engaged parent while maintaining such a demanding career?

Emily Oster: so I think there's a few different versions of the answer to that. You know, one is that one of the really great aspects of my job is that it is demanding in terms of hours, but it is not demanding in terms of FaceTime. And so it is relatively straightforward to kind of move things around. So I, I get the time that I want, like, so I could have dinner with.

You know, most nights because I can work later, I can work earlier. So that's, that's an aspect. I feel very lucky. I think the other thing is I just have a lot of

help. Um, and so, you know, we have always prioritized, we have always put a lot of emphasis on outsourcing things that we can outsource or we're lucky enough to be able [00:24:00] to outsource.

And what I was saying to before we record, we started doing. As we have this, we have this really amazing nanny at this point, who does a ton of, you know, stuff with the kids, obviously. But at this point, really like a lot of household stuff. And I have realized, you know, having someone I can, who can take those pieces off.

So when I come home at the end of the day, like most of what I'm doing is stuff that involves engaging with the kids. I think that's been, um, that's been, been really good and, you know, it's gotten easier in some ways, as my kids have gotten older,

Yael Schonbrun: how old are they

Emily Oster: So there's six and 10, um, or, you know, almost seven, almost 11. And you know, my daughter is in fifth grade and she is, she's really pretty independent. You're kind of realizing, like she comes home at the end of the day and she does her homework and she practices her violin. And then she, you know, she's kind of hanging out with us after that, but like, she, you know, she, she's got a lot of alone time, which sort of makes me a little sad, but also I'm very proud that, you know, like, I mean, I don't know those emotions about parenting are so are [00:25:00] sort of so hard to work through.

Like you want them, like, you want to celebrate them, but also it's

Yael Schonbrun: There have been bittersweet.

Emily Oster: Yeah. You know, like you sort of, I don't want you to need me, but also I kind of want you to need me. That's why I'm glad I have a six year old cause he definitely needs, he can't seem to put his own socks on. So, you know, I think I've got a few more years of like where I'm going to be needed.

Yael Schonbrun: Oh, that's sweet. And I do think it speaks to this interesting. This isn't an area of anthropological research that I've gotten very interested in, but you know, this idea of aloe parenting and sort of the value of deli being able to delegate to help is actually good for kids, um, in part, because they think it increases their independence.

It teaches them how to seek help. People that aren't their parents, um, how to creatively problem solve for themselves, how to do things on their own. And so I think that sometimes, you know, in, in these ways that we feel constrained, there's actually surprising gifts to be here.

Emily Oster: uh, yeah, I mean, I think, you know, for. W one of the things, sometimes people, you know, we've had [00:26:00] nanny is my home, my kids' whole life. And sometimes people will sort of say, well, , how do you feel about like, don't you feel like you're like bad that, you know, someone else's engage with raising your kids and, and so on.

And like, I have never felt that. Um, and I, I think part of it is I just see the things that they get from other people that I. You know that I don't, I don't bring them in. So I tend to be fairly, I like quiet with my youngest one. I'm like a bit, I would say I'm probably more permissive than anyone else in the, in the family.

And so, uh, so we had this experience the other day with our, with our babies. Where my son wanted some red cabbage to do some like science thing. He had gotten whatever. And so he was like, ma so you'd be sort of joking, but he was like, mom, buy me some bread cabinet. It was like fine.

And then I was like, well, I don't, I don't do the grocery shopping. And then he turned to the babysitter's there and he was like, Claire, could you please put some red cabbage? Please like in this, like totally like, and it was such a contrast.

And she was like, yes, of course. And then she was like, I make them [00:27:00] say, please. I was like, okay, thanks Claire. Yeah, I hear what you're saying. But it was like, it was a really good illustration of he cut you kind of like, like learn. They're like really getting something there about that that I think is good.

Like I would not, I it's okay. It was okay for me that he talked to me like that I would not want him to talk to other people like that.

Yael Schonbrun: So He's getting different lessons. from different caregivers.

Emily Oster: to yell at mom, but Claire, you gotta be polite, which is a good lesson.

Yael Schonbrun: Oh goodness. Okay. I love this. Getting back to the book. , you talk a lot about framing questions that we have in this sphere of parenting. I mean, I think this is applies to many areas of life that if we're looking to make

decisions, It can be helpful to start with asking a good question. So I wonder if you can provide some guidance in framing good questions in the realm of parents.

Emily Oster: It might be the biggest mistake people make in framing the questions they have about parenting. Is to only have one option and then have the other option be like, [00:28:00] or not, you know? So should we, you know, send sh I mean, this came up all the time in COVID, but it comes up in, I mean, you know, should we send our kids to daycare or not, and then it's very, that's not a very helpful question because, or not, isn't a childcare solution.

It's not easy to evaluate. And when you frame things like that, It's very natural to focus on kind of the downsides of the, the one thing that you have that you have like outlined as an actual choice and say, well, here are all the reasons why that, you know, here are some reasons why that's good, but then here are all the reasons why, like, maybe that's, that's not ideal.

And if you haven't said what the other choice is, the other choice just seems like this magical. Wonderland with all of the possibilities. Um, and so, so really I think that is for me the core insight and framing. The question is just that the right question is. And sometimes when you try to do that, you're like, oh, actually there's no, there's no B [00:29:00] like, I really, I kind of have to do a it's like, okay, well, I guess your guests you're done

Yael Schonbrun: That's your answer.

Emily Oster: that's the answer. Um, and, and, you know, sometimes you need to you'll realize, okay, well actually, you know, the best feasible, alternative, you know, isn't really something that I like. And then sometimes you'll say, okay, we actually have these two sort of concrete alternatives and now. We can really dive into, what are the pluses and minuses , of those things.

But I think that, that, that idea of just a choices between two things, the choice is not between one thing and the universe of all other things that have ever existed. That's really important.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. So anchor your choice into like what the, alternatives actually are. And then the family firm approach to making decisions has these four F's that you walk readers through. so maybe you can just give us a quick synopsis of what those.

Emily Oster: Yeah. So the so the four F's are intended to be a way to structure, like sort of big picture decisions, things that are, that are kind of hard or have a lot of moving, moving parts. So the first step is to frame the question talked about the second [00:30:00] is what I call fact-find, which, uh, which is a step in which I sort of encourage people to like get whatever is the relevant data.

Also whatever is like often the relevant logistical information. So you're thinking about some, you know, out of school or extracurricular activity often that is wrapped up in a lot of other logistics around, you know, how are we actually going to make this work? You might care, you know, how important is soccer for my kids?

I don't know, like emotional development or physical health or whatever, but you also want to think about, you know, who's driving them there and how's that going to work with the other things we want to be doing. Um, so you kind of get all the information at one time. Final decision is the third F to, to sort of take all that information, actually plan a time to sit down and make the decision and then move forward.

And I think that's that the idea there of, of. Picking a moment at which the decision will be made. And then we will not revisit the decision the next day or three hours later, when something else occurs to us, we have actually like [00:31:00] separated. We got all the information we needed. We made the decision.

We're not going to talk about it anymore, except there's fourth F which is follow-up, which in which I encourage people to. Plan a specific time to follow up on their decision and decide whether it was, you know, think about whether it was the right choice. So we decided to do the soccer. You should have an explicit idea that at the end of the soccer season, you can say like, Hey, let's like take a step back.

Like, is that something we're gonna, you know, gonna want to do again? Like how did that, how did that go? Because I think we end up in these sort of almost like a history cyst of our, of our decisions. So if we did something before we're going to do it again, and then sometimes that actually. Maybe if we had had the decision-making and we wouldn't have, you know, we wouldn't have made that choice.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah, I think that follow-up step is a really important one. It's actually something when I'm counseling couples on problem solving conversations is a part of my communication training that we sort of walk

through kind of similar to your four F's, but like making a decision together, you know, [00:32:00] sharing each person's perspective on what the facts are, making a choice and then setting like a trial period to sort of explore, like, how does that decision.

Feel when implemented and then, but, but giving it a certain amount of time, again, as you were saying, not like three hours later, you know, reconvening to discussed it at work for those three hours, but rather a month or six months, depending on what that decision is. And then really being deliberate about coming back and saying, how did that go?

Do we want to change it? Do we want to keep it? Um, because as you're saying, like, otherwise we just kind of end up in this autopilot of doing whatever we did, even if it didn't didn't work well for us.

Emily Oster: I think the other piece of it, um, I really liked that. And the other piece of it is the, the kind of, we don't want to have. Like, we just don't like, we don't like to be wrong. So we don't like the idea that we made a decision and it was not the right decision. And there's, so this is like a, almost like a cognitive dissonance around, like, why don't, I just don't want to like, acknowledge that possibility.

I think if you plan to acknowledge the [00:33:00] possibility, it's somewhat easier. It's like, well, I wasn't wrong. It was an experiment. Like it's not, there's not right or wrong. It's like we were going to experiment and then we're going to see how it, how it was. But it's, it's that explicit framing of there's a plan to follow.

We're not following up because things got messed up. We're following up because we plan to follow up that may make it a little bit easier to kind of change what you're doing.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah, maybe that gets to like the sunk cost fallacy of like, I already spent a season with my kid in soccer. They have to do soccer, you know, cause we already committed to it. But actually, you know, they're in third grade, like you spent one season and you can, you can pivot.

Emily Oster: Yeah, you can. Exactly. And like, yeah. Yeah. So, so they, like, you know, if it's like, Marie, look, you got to like, Marie Kondo your activities, like look back at soccer and like thank soccer for showing you that it was not for you.

Yael Schonbrun: I love that. Yes. I love that. Marie Kondo your activities to Be grateful. even for the ones that didn't

Emily Oster: Be grateful that they taught you something like my kid can't play soccer. I [00:34:00] totally Marie Kondo soccer with my older kid. Like, you know, like it taught me, she cannot focus on the soccer field. She loves to look at her mittens and that's, you know, that's a lesson.

Yael Schonbrun: a valuable lesson. All right. So, can we talk a little bit about extracurriculars? Cause they think this is a really common topic. You, I mean the book dives into many, many topics that we won't have time for whether to buy your kids a phone, whether to send your kids away, to sleep away, camp, how to support their emotional life.

But I want to talk about extracurriculars. Um, Whether it's beneficial to put our kids in sports, music, lessons, French lessons, astronaut camp, all that is, is something that I think is a modern parenting dilemma. And when you're around parents who do a lot of these activities, it can really cause panic that your kid will be behind in life.

And in family from you described that you sometimes have that panic too. So how does that data help us to manage the social pressure? And what does the data say in this.

Emily Oster: So, yes. So you're totally like, I am like prone to panic in these situations. So, [00:35:00] so I think those kinds of, I was like, let's separate the two things. So, so first sort of when we dig into the, into the data on this. I feel like so much of the social pressure aspects is so much are, are, are about like achievement or the idea that somehow these extracurriculars are our road kind of avenue into something.

And the truth is it's not even really clear exactly what that is like. Does everyone think their kids going. To the Olympics. Does everyone think their kid's going to cardio? Like what exactly do we think? We're, where are we think we're headed with this? Um, but there's a clear that there's a kind of like, there's something that we're achieving and it's a thing to sort of sort of achieve when you look at the data on extracurriculars, uh, and like, what are some of the benefits the benefits are all about?

Um, socio-emotional like basically happiness. So there's a bunch of stuff around kids being happier and more supported and sort of having, this be a [00:36:00]

support for their, for their emotional lives. And some of it it's like, we talk a lot about like the idea of belonging.

You know, for kids, like there can be certain, you know, particularly for some kinds of kinds of kids, like there are moments at school or moments at home or places where they just feel like they're, they're sort of not happy and extracurriculars of whatever type can be a different peer group can be a sort of set of people who, where you feel like you belong when things are, you know, you're struggling elsewhere.

Actually the same thing comes up with. So that's like a lot of the kind of positive benefits of summer camp or around the idea of like a different peer group opportunity to like experiment an opportunity to sort of feel like you fit in somewhere. So that has nothing to do with going to the Olympics.

Um, and you can feel that you belong, even if you don't go to the Olympics, um, or even the junior Olympics, any Olympics of any sort. Um, but I, what I think is, is useful about that is, um, Is in part that I think it should shape a little bit how we think about what extracurriculars are kids [00:37:00] might want to do, because it puts them a lot of premium on something that the kid enjoys and feels that they are good at.

And it's that important that they be good at it, but that they feel like sort of supported. And like it's some, it's something where they connect with with people. Okay. So there was one of the most clarifying conversations I had with someone about the book was they were explaining to me that.

They lived in California and that people where they live want their kids to row crew like usual sculling, because the Ivy league is always looking for rowers from California for whatever reason, like the Ivy league has trouble. I, this seems made up, but like the idea, like this had gotten into some zeitgeists that Harvard is constantly, they're overwhelmed with rowers from, you know, new England.

So if you're a rower from California, like that gives you like whatever leg up. And for me, that was so the idea that even if your kid is like, I hate. I [00:38:00] want to like, play volleyball. You're gonna be like, I'm sorry, but Harvard already has a lot of volleyball players from LA. They don't have any rowers.

And so that's sort of exactly wrong. you know, that's exactly wrong and it really, it should be sort of about what your kid, what your kid likes. Um, so that's kind

of the. The database. And then how do you translate that into like, feeling okay in our, in our moments of panic? Like, I'm not very good advice about that.

It's not my best thing, but, um, but I think it is, it is like all of these choices in parenting about confidence and about sort of saying, okay, I thought about this. I thought about why my kid should do. This particular activity or shouldn't do any activities or, you know, we, like, we only do one thing or we, I thought about it and I made the choice.

That was right. And like, it wasn't your choice, but that's why, but I made it and I made it thoughtfully. And I think that sort of competence piece is a lot of what we're trying to deliver with this more deliberate choice. Choice-making ,

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah, I'll add onto that because I think when one thing [00:39:00] that I find real reassurance and from looking at data is an opportunity to kind of unhook from the social pressure and have something else informed the decision. So, you know, it's easy to sort of be influenced by what other people are doing, but if you have some other ways to kind of think about the problem that are . Separate from the social pressure. It can just give you a different lens and an opportunity to, to be more thoughtful and deliberate, which is exactly what I think you're saying. But it's sort of like this very tangible way that you can unhook from the social pressure, at least momentarily.

Emily Oster: yeah. That you need, you basically like other than the social pressure, like what is there for making the decision? Okay. This is another. It's not, it's this thing. I'm choosing this, this avenue rather than the sort of do whatever everybody else says. Avenue

Yael Schonbrun: Exactly. Okay. So there's another element of extracurriculars that I think comes up a lot for parents and this a colleague of mine and I were talking about this and she shared, that one of her dilemmas is whether to force the kid to commit versus letting them quit. [00:40:00] And for her at least, you know, she was. , from a values oriented perspective, committed to seeing, making her kids see the season through to teach commitment, but it turned out he had symptoms of ADHD and soccer became like torture for him, for him, for her and her partner for the team and the coaches. So they let him quit. But, you know, then she gets worried about whether she's teaching him that he shouldn't have to deal with boredom in his life, but, you know, she also wants recreational activities to be fun.

So she has no idea about the right way to be thinking about.

Emily Oster: Yeah. I mean, that's like a sort of classic example of like, there really isn't. Like there, isn't sort of a right decision here and you're, and you're trading off pretty legitimate, you know, kind of factors in both directions. And I don't think we know very much also from the data about , what is the value to your, to your candidate?

Have, you know, making them push through. I mean, this is probably related to this sort of grit, this idea of grit and like, it's, sometimes we should have hard experiences, but how hard, um, he, [00:41:00] there's not, there's not some rule. There's a point of which your kid is unhappy enough with soccer that you can let them quit.

Like, you know, data's not going to help you is not going to help you think, think about that. Um, so I think, I mean, that's why, that's why that's like a hard, that's why these are hard questions.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah.

Even Angela Duckworth, who we had on, I asked her a similar question and she said, you know, th the question really is like when to grit and when to quit. And it's valuable to know when to quit. , we do need to know that it isn't just about seeing everything through for totally miserable and not getting anything out of the experience.

Emily Oster: Yeah. Yeah. And I think that there's, I mean, you know, in an, even in this sort of like less Valent way, a lot for a lot of parents, like, you know, kids, you have your kid play the piano, like when do you let them quit? If they don't like it. You know, and I I've sort of, I, I was on a podcast with, um, with a Skype call me Hughes the other day.

And he was explaining to me that like, he hated playing instruments and the, but like his parents made him keep doing. And then eventually he, he sort of came to really like it and actually be professionally successful and its own. So it was like, I'm glad my parents didn't like, let me, [00:42:00] let me quit.

Okay. But Maybe sometimes it's so like, there's just, it's very hard to know. It's so much as an eye, your own kid, like, sort of, is it just that, that, you know, today they're annoyed with having to practice or is it that this is like genuinely not the thing for, for them and you know, there's ways like I, like, you know, in my own parenting, the way I've often thought about this is, you know, Like, what would we replace it with? I think it's important that you do some kind of music. And so if you want to quit, you know, this, the thing that, you know,

we've chosen, you need to replace it with something and what would we replace it with?

And I think sometimes when you do that, feel like, well, actually this is all like all the things. This is the, this is the best thing. Sometimes that can be a little, like, like a little bit revealing of what where's people's preferences are.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. And on the pushing front, I'm just sort of thinking about the battle hymn of the tiger mom by Amy Chua. I mean, she pushed her two daughters to play violin.

Emily Oster: They did go to Carnegie hall. One of

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah, one of them

did, but I think if I'm remembering correctly, I read it a little [00:43:00] while ago, the younger daughter, it really created her relationship with the younger daughter to be so adamant that the daughter was going to continue to play.

And so I think, you know, part of it is about your kid and what their preferences are. And part of it is about really thinking about , your parent child relationship, and not just in the immediate term, but more in the long run.

Emily Oster: Yeah. And I think about that all, all the time. There was this, she says movie like Ladybird.

Yael Schonbrun: Oh, Yeah. With sourcey Ronan

Emily Oster: Yeah. I

Yael Schonbrun: butchering her name with, and like the woman from Roseanne, the sister from Roseanne.

Emily Oster: Exactly. So I know, I don't remember very much about this movie, but it's, it's about, there's like a relationship between a mother and a daughter in it. And at some point. They're like having a fight in there, driving down the road of them, father like stops at a red light and the daughter gets out and like, leaves, you know, or something like that.

And, and sometimes my husband, I will bring that up. Like, you don't want to be there. , how can we like make sure that I don't end up [00:44:00] in that, you

know, that we don't end up with that kind of relationship with, with our kids. And of course, you know, you can never , not fight with your, with your kids, but, but, I think part of the idea of, of raising adults is just trying to figure out like, I'm, I'm also trying to raise like an adult relationship with my kids and one where, like, we, we have things in common while simultaneously recognizing that, like I am their parent and you know, you have to do your homework and I'm not your, you know, I'm not your friend.

And like, if you've committed to doing this thing, like you have to study for the math test. That's that. So I don't, I don't know. Parenting is hard conclusion, conclusion, It is difficult to be somebody's parent, even in the best of circumstances.

Yael Schonbrun: It is very difficult. It's very complicated. And I think, you know, it's sort of this combination of love and limits of discipline and connection is really key. It's a, it's a hard line to walk and I think you don't get it perfect at any one point. And I think it's really about zooming out and figuring out like on balance am I getting some of, both of these sides of love and limits in [00:45:00]

Emily Oster: Yeah, exactly. It's a sort of like authoritative rather than authoritarian, um, which is just like a really hard, it's just like a really hard balance to hit.

Yael Schonbrun: It is. Yeah. I mean, especially in particular developmental phases or, you know, if you're stressed out, I'm wanting to take the opportunity to transition out of specific parenting questions and talk with you about the way that social scientists answer big questions. So for anybody who's been living under a rock, Emily Oster has been a leading voice in COVID and, um, you've just been reading.

Such a leader in collecting data and looking at it and thinking about how it can lead policy. And I think that what has happened with you is really something that happens with a lot of scientists who discover things that don't necessarily fit with. Popular beliefs, um, are already suggesting. So I actually spoke about this on a recent episode, uh, about addiction with a psychiatrist, Carl, Eric Fisher, about how data boring as it may seem, can sometimes unleash real big [00:46:00] controversy.

And he actually argued in a New York times piece that we should not call alcoholism a disease. And he got a ton of really harsh pushback. And I know that you've gotten a lot of pushback from collecting and interpreting data on

various things in parenting and in COVID. So, you know, the objective of science is to discover things that we didn't previously know, and that can feed into areas like how we guide parents, how we treat illness and how we modify social policy.

So, given how involved you've been in advocating really high level decision-making how do you think that scientists should be interacting with systems outside of science? And I do think that the question is particularly interesting when widely accepted ideas don't agree with the data that scientists collect, what, what those data seem to be saying.

Emily Oster: Yeah. I mean, I think this is like a. This is a very hard question. And I think that there are a bunch of pieces of it. So, so, you know, one is just one of the things I've thought a lot about over the last year is sort of what is the role of scientists in [00:47:00] policy? Like what is the role of sort of data and social science and kind of our role within the academy in making policy?

Because, you know, until the sort of advent of COVID. No one asked my opinion about any PO policies. You know, I mean, like some of my work has vague policy relevance, but it was never like no one was going to implement this stuff that I was doing in my, in my, in my region. And then, you know, in the, in the COVID sphere, I started collecting a lot of, a lot of data and sort of doing things that, you know, that did have like a research component, but were really oriented towards policy.

You know, we wrote a paper that was very specifically about the question of like three feet, like use data that we had collected, but was about the question of, should you have three feet or should you have six feet distancing? And in schools, you know, a paper with. More or less translated to policy like the next week.

Right? And that, that, like, in some ways you could say like, wasn't it the dream of like an academic someone's finally listening to you. Um, but, but it's also, it's also very [00:48:00] jarring because I think we're not, we're not, we're not, it's something you're not used to. And it's, it's a very different way of, of interacting.

and you know, as you said, like some of what. What we learned last year, particularly around schools. I think that the kind of, when the data started coming in, it was not really in line with the priors of what a lot of people, thought, and that was. You know, that was, that was very hard because they think many people were not interested in, in hearing it.

And you sort of immediately get into like, well, what's it like, what's motivating this and, and, you know, into the sort of motivations of the people of the people doing it. And I think the truth is we all have our, like, we all have our. Biases and our life experiences. And we try very hard to keep that out of our, uh, keep that out of our research.

I try very hard to do that, but I think it's very easy to sort of say well that, you know, you just think that because of your, of your, of your bias and, and then, you know, people don't really want to engage with the, with the data pieces. So I'm not sure there's great [00:49:00] answers to this. It's something I've spent a lot of time thinking about and trying to work through over the last year

Yael Schonbrun: And, and I guess I do have a personal question, which is how hard was it for you personally, to be outspoken about data when people felt so strongly as therapists? My co-host and I are curious about how you've been coping with some of the ferry personal attacks and what motivates you to keep going,

Emily Oster: yeah. Um, so, you know, , I think there's a, there's a few things, uh, you know, one is, I have like a pretty short memory for when people get, get mad at like, are mad at me. And so even though I feel very bad about it in the moment, I sort of forget, I'll forget that it happened, but like, I forget how I felt.

Um, and so I think that was like somewhat, somewhat protective. Um, you know, I think that the truth is around this school stuff. I felt like what was happening was very bad. Uh, and, and it just, it felt like something where, where, even though it was hard, it's sort of needed to be like, there was something that I could contribute and there was something that needed to be said if you know, and I [00:50:00] think one way I put it sometimes is like, if some kids got to go to school instead of not going to school and the cost of that was that like, I some people yelled at me on Twitter, , that's okay.

Like, You know, that's like, that's like, that's a fine trade and one I should be willing to, uh, to make, but, you know, but it was really, really hard night. Recently as this sort of like the world of COVID like died down a little bit. I basically said like, I'm not going to be on sort of engaging on Twitter anymore because you know, Twitter in particular I think is quite toxic on this stuff.

And, and, you know, ultimately kind of being constantly yelled at it, like emotionally, just really hard, even if you sort of wish you were like, Different person who didn't have that reaction. Uh, I'm not a different person.

Yael Schonbrun: I like that about you. And I think that comes through in your writing, that you're such a human person,

like that you, you worry, you freak out, you feel uncertain, [00:51:00] you love your kids, you love your work, but you also get really tired and annoyed and that your daughter sometimes calls you out.

Emily Oster: yes. I freak out a lot she says, I forget a lot.

Yael Schonbrun: So I, I love the humanity that comes through, and yet you are such a committed scientist and committed to sharing the data with the public.

Emily Oster: Yeah. And I think that, one of the interesting things for me over this pandemic is, is I have a lot of faith in data. And so I have a lot of feelings, like, okay, if we just had better data than we can all look at it and we would like, we would all agree.

And if I have learned nothing, uh, or if I've learned one thing, uh, in the, in the pandemic, it is that like, that's not how everybody feels. Um, and that there are a lot of situations in which. It doesn't really matter what the data says. that's not where people want to engage either.

They don't find it reassuring. They don't understand it well enough to find it reassuring. They don't care that it's reassuring because there's another thing that they're sort of putting more, more weight on. And so, I [00:52:00] mean, I'm still, I still have. incredible data, data forward bias.

Right. So I was talking to some people the other day about, okay, like master coming off in, but you know, we're gonna, we're gonna like in schools in particular, but you know, there's going to be a sort of point probably next winter in which we're going to want to think about, like, is this a useful thing to, to return.

And we have, you know, what is likely to be a sort of seasonal surge, uh, in, in the virus. And so like, okay, in order to best answer that question, what we need is data. And like, we need to construct a reliable, publicly accessible, like dataset with information on masking. And like, so like maybe we'll try to do that, but like, I still have this instinct, like if only we had that that would be, that would help us answer the question. And I think the reality is that stupid. that would help us answer it a little bit. And it's not that it's not valuable, but the idea that somehow you know, Ben Shapiro and like, you know, whoever is like the Ben Shapiro of the left, like, you know, are going to agree on this just because I

put together like a really pretty clean dataset, like put it on the internet, that's, that's overly [00:53:00] optimistic.

Yael Schonbrun: Well, and interestingly there's data about that, that people are the way that we make decisions tends to be much more driven by our emotions and that the facts are more after the fact

Emily Oster: we use the facts to defend the thing we wish were that like the emotions? Yes.

Yael Schonbrun: Exactly. and so for a scientist, like that can be really tricky, right? Because if you're, I think this is in a way it's kind of like the nutshell of the issue.

If you're finding data that disagrees with what people believe it's going to be hard to convince them, because the way that they feel about particular issues, masking schools being open, um, drinking while pregnant is so powerful. Yeah.

Emily Oster: Yeah. Yeah. And I think, and you know, in most, like almost all settings are kind of data poor in some sense, like there's, there's very frequently a situation in which you could pull something which which would support your position.

The position is. And so, you know, it's not that it's necessarily the best data, but like there'll be [00:54:00] something and people will pull on that. And then, you know, that's kind of, then there's like the motivated reasoning aspect of it.

Yael Schonbrun: yeah. Okay. So let's end by talking about your data-driven newsletter for people who are open to it, current data, which you release biweekly. And I actually, I have to share that. I remember reading it in The midst of a particularly difficult part of the pandemic. It was particularly difficult for me, but I think it was particularly difficult for every.

The first winter and schools were still closed. And I remember I didn't actually go back to it. It's just in my memory. But you had written about how hard of a time you were having, and you shared a moment of being outside in the freezing cold spring water for an ice rink with your kids while listening to Taylor swift.

And there was something about Emily Oster losing herself in Taylor, swift music while doing something kind for her kids. And I really credit period of life. Just made me feel less alone. And I think your writing is very human and connecting and in general and the newsletter's ability to stay. So current really

makes a lot of your readers feel less alone and able to laugh and also better prepared to make good choices in a tricky world.

So I was curious [00:55:00] if you could address where you see the newsletter going beyond the pandemic.

Emily Oster: Um, that is a great question. If I could address it, uh, that would be great. Um, you know, I mean, I think that I had envisioned this newsletter sort of coming into the, like, I started it in like January of 20, 20 well-timed. Um, and I had envisioned it at that time being really about, you know, parenting and kind of about new studies and about sort of helping parent parents.

Like now that not, then there were no controversial things, but like more like, should my get, have juice and like, what about sleep training? And that could the kind of those, those questions and, and it became very much about COVID and, you know, the audience grew vastly larger than I had anticipated in the frequency of the newsletter in the amount of time that I spent on it.

Um, kind of it became a much. Much bigger thing than I had than I had imagined. You know, now of course there's like as the, as the pandemic piece of this, I think has become less important, I, I guess what I would like is I think that the, that the newsletter sort of would ideally serve kind of [00:56:00] two purposes.

One is to be something where in some of those moments and you know, like where, of, of kind of where we're all feeling, something that is anxiety provoking or upsetting or whatever that like, I'm kind of there to like, Almost tell people that they're not alone. Um, and there are, you know, those moments are, yes, they've been more frequent in COVID, but they happen sometimes.

And, you know, particularly some of these, like there's a new study that says the following panic inducing thing, like I kind of want to be there for that. And I think the newsletter will remain. And I think then the other I'm hoping that the, that in some ways it will, it will lighten that a little bit on, on the rest of the time that like, this will be something that people want to read.

Cause they're like interested in data, on parenting and interested in statistics and interested in like how, you know, how we understand evidence, which is the thing that I am really passionate about. And so I I'm working on how we sort of transition into that. Into that world where this becomes something that you enjoy reading and that you look to, you know, if there is [00:57:00] something that you're kind of like, huh, is that something I should be worried about that?

Like, you, you look to this. Um, but that it, that it, that we aren't hopefully always, you know, in a world where like, you, you need the newsletter like that one about the ice rink. Although I think that was a good, that was a good newsletter.

Yael Schonbrun: Oh, is it really? It's really stuck with me.

Yeah, So I guess I have a follow-up question to that, which is, you know, you and I are both, um, have a background in social science. And so, you know, looking at the data doesn't feel scary. We could pick up a study and read it and you do a great job of translating it for people who are outside of academics.

But you know, other than reading books that are translated by academics for the. What do you typically advise people who are interested in what the data say, but don't have a social science background, but are, but are sort of like wanting to gather more information. How do they find sources that are reliable if they're not going to go to the primary studies?

Emily Oster: Yeah, I think it's really hard. Um, and the, the main kind of general advice I try to [00:58:00] give people is th no single study is, is this is the end. Right? So, so anytime somebody says, oh, a new study says this, if you can go back to what other studies say, and you don't need to do that so much, even by going to like the.

into like the original research or whatever, but you can often get a sense of well, what have other, what does the media said about this before? And you know, if you did that on something like where they say, you know, coffee makes you die early, if you did like a quick Google search, you would find often like the same outlet three weeks ago said actually like coffee makes you live forever.

And you're like, okay, well I guess like maybe there's some disagreement. And so I think that's, that's probably the most concrete guidance is just remember. There are very limited situations in which a single study is a definitive and getting a sense of the literature can often give you, um, you know, give you a better sense.

And, you know, sometimes when things are like particularly political, I will tell people, like, try to see what the other side is saying. I mean, that worked, that worked pretty well in some COVID things like [00:59:00] people would say, you know, I found this, you just like, go see what the other side says. And, you know, don't nothing you should believe them, but like get the like extreme sort of other side view and try to use that to sort of discipline a little.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah, I mean, in a way that's sort of. The scientific method to how you look at the research itself, which is kind of to take a step back and look at, you know, the alternative hypothesis and really be deliberate about, um, being skeptical about the data that are the information that's being presented to you.

Emily Oster: Exactly.

Yael Schonbrun: I love that. Well, thank you so much, Emily, for taking the time. I know you're super busy. Folks can pick up your book. Episode 87 to hear us talk about Crip sheet. And then where can people go to find out more about you and sign up for your newsletter?

Emily Oster: I think that parent data, so it's Emily Aster. That's upstack.com. It's called parent data. I think that's the best place to find all the, all the stuff that I'm doing.

Yael Schonbrun: Well, thank you so much.

Emily Oster: Thank you so much.[01:00:00]

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