



Unlocking the Vast Human Potential of Our Children



Child rearing is as challenging as running a company. Discover how you can help your children meet their full potential for happiness and success.



Janet Doman

James: James Schramko here, welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is Episode 846. Today, we're going to be talking about children and what we can do as entrepreneurs to make sure that we're raising great children. And also, perhaps we might even be a grandparent by now, and we're having that next generation come through.

And as someone who is interested in human potential, certainly working a lot with adults and human potential, I think it's easy to overlook the children aspect of it. So today, I've brought along an expert, who I've been introduced to through a client of mine and a great friend, [Stephan Spencer](#), he's referred me to Janet Doman from [The Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential](#).

We're going to be talking about human potential for children. Welcome to our call, Janet.

Janet: So great to be here. Thank you.

James: When I was doing my research, I discovered you've been in this area for quite some time, it looks like you're a second generation.

Janet: Well, it's right. I've been lucky because The Institutes was founded by my father in 1955. So I actually had the great good fortune to grow up here, and to watch my father at work, and then to join him. Because he was a very clever fellow, and he really made sure that we could be with him anytime we wanted. And we lived on the campus. So we really lived this work from a very young age.

From stroke patients to children

James: How much do you think children absorb habits and behaviors and build their operating system based on their parents?

Janet: I think probably, of the things that are worthwhile, probably 95 percent. Little kids are watching their parents every minute of the day. And little kids want to grow up, and they want to grow up right now. So they see whatever mom is doing, whatever dad is doing. They're watching that very, very carefully. And they have huge, huge respect for adults. Huge respect.

James: So when you were growing up, your dad was pretty much a superhero. It's like your scenario there, growing up with dad in what looks like a pretty amazing environment. You there, it's kind of like Hogwarts from Harry Potter or one of those special schools for gifted, like you see in some of these superhero movies.

Did you ever think you'd want to do anything else? Or was it just a natural, the fruit falling close to the tree?

Janet: Well, you know, actually, it was very much a magical place. But maybe not the magical place that you might think, because our work, my dad's work, was first and foremost with adult stroke patients. So I grew up with 60, 70 and 80-year-olds, who had either traumatic head injuries, or strokes. And those were the people who were my friends, when we first started The Institutes.

Gradually over time, they were kind of edged out by children. Because when my father satisfied himself that he had made a protocol that actually could get that stroke patient back on his feet, back at his job, doing the things he was doing before, he really made the only stupid statement I knew him to make in his entire life, because he was one of those infuriating people that was right 99 percent of the time.

He said, Well, now we've made a protocol, we've made a pathway. And all of our fellow professionals will now follow that, because it's so successful. And so he backed off of that work, and said, Now we're going to help tiny kids. Because it doesn't make sense. We're saving 70 and 80-year-olds, and three-year-olds are languishing in institutions. That's not right.

And so his attention shifted to children. And then I was growing up with severely brain-injured kids. The irony in this is that by 1963, we began doing things with our severely brain-injured kids, like teaching them to read, and discovering that they not only could learn to read at three and four, but if we started at two, they learned even better, and they adored it.

And the better they got, the more uncomfortable my father got and said, This is crazy. We're teaching severely brain-injured kids to read their heads off and become bookworms and across the street in the city of Philadelphia, 45 percent of our youngsters will fail to learn to read at all. Because that was the statistic. And it's probably a bit worse right now.

So all of the things that we're going to talk about, really were the gift we got from putting our attention on the kids in the world who nobody thought would ever make it, would ever have a chance. They were all considered hopeless. And that, I think, is such a piece of poetry. That was the gift my father got for saying, That most-hurt kid, we're going to fix him. That's unacceptable, we're going to fix him. And 40 years later, he had, really, a whole pathway to make well kids much, much, much better.

James: Yeah, I can really resonate with what you're saying, from a few areas there. One is, listeners of this podcast will know I spent quite a lot of time with my grandparents. And I was super lucky, I think, to spend time with my grandpa, my grandma. They taught me things like to paint and about balance.

And we had philosophical discussions. Like, I remember sitting in the backyard with my grandpa and looking up at the moon. And I said, Did you ever think when you were a kid that we'd send a human there? He goes, No chance. They taught me a lot of lessons about light and shade and about old-school discipline. That builder generation was fascinating to learn from.

So what a great treat for you to be learning from that generation and then to get the young generation. I imagine you've had enough time now where you've seen those children go from being two right through to adulthood. Some of them have no doubt done some remarkable things. Do you have any stories that stick in your mind from kids you used to read stories to?

The makings of a smart kid

Janet: Well, you know, when I'm asked that question, so many stories, it's hard for me to pick out one. But I guess I'm struck by the fact that every kid's story is unique and very different. I think one of the mistakes the world makes, they think smart kids are going to be like, out of a cookie cutter.



So I do think we have a curious relationship with making human beings much, much smarter than they are. And it turns out that we're really, in a very substantial way, we're raising our little kids by accident, instead of on purpose. And that's a big mistake. When you're talking about the human brain and how much it grows between conception and three, the growth in that period is phenomenal. It's hard to even describe it.

A single cell at conception, in the first nine months in utero, goes from a single cell to 35 centimeters skull. And between birth and two and a half, you add another 15 centimeters. So now we've got a 50 centimeter brain, you only add five centimeters to that brain for the rest of your life.

And that period of time, when everything is so easy for the baby, so easy, he learns at least one language entirely with no effort at all. But if he's in a bilingual house, he'll master two. And if he's in a trilingual house, he'll master three. Everybody knows that kids are linguistic geniuses.

We kind of take that for granted that a kid will master his language in the first three years of life. Well, it turns out part of mastering that language is the visual part of it. It's just as easy to learn the word banana through the visual pathway at age two, as it is to learn it through the auditory pathway.

And the auditory pathway, we begin right from birth. Nobody thinks it's strange to talk to the baby, we think that's very natural. And that's how that auditory pathway actually grows. Because the brain literally grows by use, just like the biceps, the brain grows by use. It's probably the single most important thing that parents and grandparents need to know, the brain grows by use.

And if we provide stimulation, and we provide opportunity, there's almost nothing we can't teach the small child, and he'll learn it effortlessly. What is difficult at 10, or 12, or 15, or 20, is easy at age three. If we do our job right, if we teach him intentionally instead of by accident, between birth and six, by the time he's six, he's school-proof. He's a made man.

He can read, he can write, he can do math, he can do anything we present him with. He can be physically excellent by then, he can be swimming. I mean, there in Australia, the home of baby swimming, where back in the 70s, the Timmermans put baby swimming on the map. I mean, those babies are waterproof, by the time they're six, 10, 12 months old.

I mean, talk about a fabulous story. This was a scary story, but it's an Aussie baby. In that baby swimming class that we were admiring when we went to see this with our own eyes back in the 70s, Claire pointed out one of the babies, she said, Oh, that baby's my star. And I said, why is that baby your star? The kid was two and a half, maybe three years old, diving in the water, totally happy in the water.

She said, Well, that baby, her parents were in a boat off of Queensland, on a Sunday afternoon, three miles off the coast, paying no attention to where the boat was going. They were just on a little joy ride, when they turned around and realized the baby was not on the boat. Well, you can imagine the panic.

It's really hard for me to tell this story without starting to panic a little bit myself. Imagine the panic of turning around that boat. And you want to go fast, but you have to go slow. You don't want to run the baby down. Well, of course they could see, they didn't know the path they'd come. So they turned the boat around and began slowly wending their way back as best they could. For 15 minutes, they did this, with nothing in sight.

And then they thought they saw a little speck. And so they slowly pushed their way to that speck. And there was their two-and-a-half-year-old baby girl, on her back, happy as she could be, waiting for them to come and pick her up. I mean, that is an incredible thing that a two-and-a-half-year-old, for 20 minutes, three miles off the coast, could save her own life.

And by the way, be very relaxed. She was in no panic. The panic was all on the boat. That in itself shows you the capability of the child is gigantic.

James: Yeah, it's really fascinating. A couple of points there. You basically discovered that by focusing on the people who may have, in society, had the worst chances, you actually enhanced their areas of strength. It's kind of like my grandfather who wasn't good with his vision, he couldn't see much at all, but he could hear like a supersonic radar.

So he'd enhanced the skill that he had left. And that same training I took as an able-bodied person who could see, I learned how to listen properly through observing how he listened. He would lean into that telephone, and he would hear the tone on the other end, and he would hang up, and he'd tell me what's really going on behind the scenes. And he taught me how to interpret what someone's saying.

Child versus adult learning

And I think the story about swimming really hits home with me because I have a two-and-a-half-year-old, and she loves swimming. Of course in Australia, you have to swim. We're surrounded by water. It's part of our culture. And then you go to other countries. I live overseas sometimes in the year, in Asia, and we have a pool there that's available for the area that we live, and it's not very popular, because it's not in the culture. They're scared of it.

So you have these adults who are scared of going to water. I think even my father was very resistant to swim. And he got swimming lessons as an adult. And I want to touch on that in a moment. But that's because his father threw him into the river tied to a piece of rope. So it was all about the way that we train them.

Because my daughter, she loves cheek to cheek, that's what they call it. When she lies on her back and puts her little head on my shoulder and her cheek touches my cheek. And she's floating on her back, she loves it, like, absolutely starts jumping out of her skin when we get to go swimming. But with my father, he was able to learn as an adult.

I'm interested to know, I've seen some research, for example, on languages and they say, you know, contrary to what we're told, it's actually easy for adults to learn languages, but they've probably got a mental block or been told that it's harder to learn as an adult, you know, you're talking about the brain only expanding a little bit. But you also said the brain develops through use.

Is it still possible, let's say you had a bad childhood, you've got to six and you weren't modeling a good parent. Maybe you've got a lot of aggression or a few hangups, because you went to school and you couldn't read or write. So you get into lots of fights and things, you know, you have abuse challenges, or whatever, or you want to learn a language, but you think you're too far down the track. Is there still human potential for people who didn't get the great childhood?

Janet: Well, you've asked me the right question, because most of our experience comes from kids who came to us at eight, or 10, or 15, or 20. And they couldn't crawl, they couldn't creep, they couldn't walk. Some come here blind, some come deaf. Now, they're blind because they've got an injury to the brain or deaf because they have an injury to the brain, not that there's something wrong with the eye, or wrong with the auditory pathway. That's quite different.

But those children have gigantic potential. And if you provide the appropriate stimulation, and effective opportunity, then indeed, they will change, because the brain runs everything. The brain is the most changeable organ of the body. We look at the brain as if it's set in concrete. Maybe because it's trapped in the skull, I don't know. But nothing could be further from the truth.

Our brains are changing every moment. Your brain is changing right now, based on what I'm saying. My brain is changing right now based on what you're saying. We are learning till the day we die. And some of the exciting research of the last 10 years, we always knew what we knew for a long time, that in the first 12 months of life, the baby actually creates new brain cells.

And that was exciting because it was believed that for the rest of us, the trillion we arrived with was what we got. Now a trillion is pretty good. We don't have any cause for complaint, we only use a small percentage of that trillion. But that was thought for a long time. But in the last 10 years, it has been discovered that you and I are also creating new brain cells till the day we die.

But, like the baby, the baby, they found those cells were special, that the baby had to use those cells. And if the baby didn't use those cells, by the end of the 12 months, those cells would slough off. So Mother Nature's kind of tough. She says, Look, I'm not going to oxygenate these cells and provide them with minerals and glucose. If you're not using it, it's gone.

The research into our situation with the cells you and I make, the most recent research done right here in Rutgers in the United States, shows that for you and I, if we want to keep those cells, we have to do something we've never done before. Now, isn't that a wonderful thing? Isn't that the good Lord and Mother Nature having a good day?

I mean, you want to make a better future. That's a good system. But you better get up and do something you never did before.

James: I've seen some research where they're having people in retirement homes play video games, you know, half an hour a day, and they get astounding gains in memory retention and in conversational abilities and so forth, because they're getting stimulated. I think what you're saying here is use it or lose it.

How old is too old to learn?

Janet: And you can stimulate at any point in life. The idea that an 80-year-old is toast is nonsense. In fact, the last time we had Marian Diamond here in this room, literally lecturing from where I am right now, Marian Diamond was famous, she came from the very famous enrichment and deprivation research at Berkeley with David Koresh and Rosenzweig.

And then she moved from Berkeley to Stanford where she was for most of her life. But she continued on with enrichment and deprivation. The last time she was in this room, she showed us slides of brain cells from her rats, because these were all rat experiments. And progressively, she started with newborns and went up.

In the last slide she showed, she just put it up, but she didn't say what it was. And compared to the others, it was almost black with interconnections between the cells. And we said, What's that? And she said, I call this slide "wisdom". That's the oldest rat I have. And that's what we're wasting. And boy, are we wasting it.

So, yeah, we feel as strongly about the 80-year-olds who we used to work with all the time, as we do about the eight-month-olds, because in those two groups, we essentially dismiss them. We put them in wheelchairs, we bundle them in blankets, we hope they'll sleep a lot. When in fact, we should be doing the opposite. No wheelchairs, no blankets, stimulate, give opportunity, and it's a whole different world.

James: You know, when I get to Asia, they're very active, and they're living with the family, and they don't have retirement homes. They don't have childcare places either, which is really fascinating. The early part of life and the latter part of life, very different in different cultures. And they're super valuable and sharp.

I remember my grandma rolled her car on the way to a tennis match when she was 80, so she was really switched on. She was a great influence on me. And always experimenting and I knew, I remember, when I was 18, I had a party at the house when my parents were away. And she was my chaperone. She came to supervise.

And she said to me, You know, if I was your age, I would try every single drug possible. You know, she was an actor when she was a kid, she was really crazy. I learned a lot from her, like this notion that people are sort of over the hill or out and we should just bundle them up, it's not correct. It's all a nice way to think.

Just how active should kids be?

But at the other end of the spectrum, at the children's end, you know, from my own interactions with children, I've got heaps of children of my own. The experience with each child has been different, and dealing with them at different stages in my own life has been fascinating, especially with the most recent one, because I work from home, and I spend a lot of time with my daughter now because I can, and that's something I wasn't able to do with the first few kids.

And watching how she's growing up and how she's advancing, like, she'll walk past the easel with a blank piece of paper on, and she'll ask to paint, and we'll be painting. She wants to sit in the big chair instead of that. And I heard something on your discussion with Stephan Spencer, on his podcast, about an experiment where pro athletes tried to keep up with a kid in a day and had no chance. They're just so active.

And I sort of chuckled when I heard that, because my daughter wants to go to the park like twice a day. I know when I put a step tracker on one of my other kids once, he racked up like 50,000 steps in a day. And they say 10,000 is good for an adult, when most adults these days have been lucky to crack 2,000 steps in a day because of their computer and Netflix and so forth.

So can you just talk about how much activity a child does and how we might actually be underestimating it?

Janet: Well, certainly, we feel very strongly about all things physical, at every step in development. But right now, most particularly the first six months of life, because babies are being bundled up. They're being restricted right at birth. And this is a terrible practice. I would say it's a medieval practice.

There is no basis for doing this to the child, and they certainly didn't have any baby vote on it. I mean, babies in utero are free, as free as you can be in a relatively tight container. But as the baby develops, mother will say he's kicking, he's turning around; to the upset of the doctor, he may turn around right before he gets born for heaven's sake, but he has movement.

And once he's born, of course, he has this tremendous freedom to move that he didn't have for nine months. And what happens to him? Now, I don't know about Australia, but in Philadelphia, PA, there's a very good chance at birth, he will be bundled not in one blanket, not two, not three, not four, five blankets.

So he will be functionally paralyzed from the neck down. And by the way, the look on the baby's face is not a happy face. And the adults, when you say to adults, why are you doing that? Well, babies love it. And they sleep a lot. Because that's what a certain part of the world just wants, the baby to sleep and not be an annoyance.

The last thing you want is to put your baby to sleep. When he needs to sleep, he should sleep, but he shouldn't be sleeping because you've paralyzed him from the neck down and there's nothing else he can do except sleep. So we want to see that baby absolutely free, right from birth.

You know, the Inuits have a custom. It goes back hundreds, perhaps thousands of years, of having that newborn baby, right on mother's body, right from birth, they put the baby on mother's body, and the baby crawls up mother's body and finds the breast to nurse. That's the first thing they do with their babies. And from that point on, their babies are not bundled, their babies are on their bellies, on the floor, able to move freely.

So we want to see that happen for the maximum amount of time for the baby so that in the first few days of life, the baby discovers, I'm mobile, I can move myself. What we're doing is the opposite. We're teaching the baby, you're immobile, and you have no power to move yourself.

And the result is that, here in the United States, it's very common eight and nine-month-olds do not crawl, do not creep, do not walk. They're just beginning the process because they've been bundled up, they've been put in backpacks, they've been put in car seats. Now we take the car seat out of the car, and we put it in the living room, and we stick the baby in it. Oh my goodness! This is true deprivation.

So I think the first six months of life, we should design that house to be baby-friendly. We should design it for the baby, for his use, so that he's always in a warm, safe, smooth floor. We even make a little baby crawling track, and we elevate one end. So when we put the baby at the top of that track, he will find that even the slightest motion of his arm or his leg is going to move him forward.

And so he learns very rapidly, I can move. I did that. I did that. And I can make it happen again. And again. And again. You know, it's probably one of the most important lessons in all of life. I can do something myself.

James: My daughter literally says that, I can do it. She's obsessed with jumping at the moment. Like she jumps from the door to the hall and the hall to the lift and the lift to the thing, and there's a step she'll get up and jump down it, like she's in a jumping frenzy.

Janet: Because the brain, there is a mobility imperative that is telling her, repeat that action until you're really good at it. Because in the first three years of life, the most common injury, serious injury, in the first three years, is a head injury. Because little kids fall down the steps, fall off the wall, fall out of the chair.

So the more your daughter does that, the more her brain figures out, where am I in space? She gets the stimulation she needs so that she gets a little off balance, she knows how to right herself. And she gets the experience visually to know, you know, don't go near those stairs, that's not going to be safe or you.

James: She absolutely, like, craves stairs. There are some stairs we encounter on a common basis, and she just wants to do the stairs. She loves jumping from the couch to the beanbag like over and over and over again, just learning.

Janet: Those are all great things for her to do. And all you have to do is make sure she's safe, not stop her. But just make sure she's safe. And that's the difference. There are two worlds, the world where we remove everything so the kid is safe, but he has no stimulation, it's a sterile world, and the world in which we say, Okay, so you want to jump off the step 400 times, let's pad out the bottom, so when you land, you're not going to kill yourself. And that kid is going to become very safe very quickly.

James: And there's an interesting parallel going on in this environment here. Because, you know, at my age, I'm getting a little bit older now, I'm tapping into the most childlike mode I've ever had in my life where I surf everyday, right? And lately, we've had very big waves every day. It's by far the best winter, we're like, literally in the middle of winter.

This is the best winter I've had in 10 years. I'm the most fit, strong, healthy, invigorated, and I'm just launching myself on these nature waves, like, every day, two hours at a time. I paddle up to four miles in a session every day. And so I've got this childlike release that I felt like when I was chained to a desk, and in an actual job, I used to run Mercedes-Benz dealerships, I was feeling restrained. I was feeling like that wrapped-up baby.

So I guess, my message for a listener would be, if you've got kids, then definitely pay attention to this, we need to open up the stimulation for our kids. But if you're an adult, and you feel like you missed out, it's definitely not too late. And if you're really getting on in the years, it's still not too late.

The barriers that society puts up

Even my mom, she's become a wiz with her iPhone. And it's really encouraging. She comments on my Facebook posts now, and she does FaceTime and things. And it's great to see this. And I think there were implied barriers by society that you shouldn't be allowed to do this or shouldn't be able to do this.

But what really the theme of this podcast so far is, we should be unlocking that. Now I imagine there's some resistance by the old guard to some of the things you're talking about. Not everyone's sending you flowers and chocolates about this sort of message. It could probably threaten their mental model of the world. Do you find there's some pushback when you talk about this?

Janet: Well, I do think most of us have been raised in a world which thinks little kids don't really understand. They don't get it. They don't talk. When in fact, they are talking from a very young age, we just don't understand them very well. But it's a very old-fashioned view of childhood. And I think in Australia, you have less of this problem than we have here.

But I think America is basically a country that's hostile to kids. You know, you have a better shot of taking a pit bull into some restaurants than taking a kid, because we've pushed our kids away. You know, I remember, probably in the 70s, there was a big article in Time Magazine, I think, and the cover story, it was the Soviet Union.

And when I opened up to read the article, there was a centerfold picture that went just straight across the two pages that really chilled me. And it was, I'd say about 30 two-year-olds, all sitting on little toilets, identical toilets, and they were just staring out at the camera, with very dull eyes, not looking like two-year-olds are supposed to look, and I found that so chilling.

I thought, oh, my goodness, thank God we don't live in the Soviet Union, because the article described that these children were essentially grouped together three weeks after they're born, they're all grouped together in a place and taken care of by other people, and their mothers go back to work. And I thought, Oh, my God, thank God, thank God, we live here in the US.

But you know, that was 1970. It's now 2021. And that's pretty much what Americans are doing with their kids. I mean, they're having a baby, and six weeks later that baby is in a daycare center or that baby is with 10 other babies or 15 other babies. You know, we would have gone to war to prevent that.

If in the 70s, the Soviets had marched in and tried to force us to do that, we would have gone to war to prevent it. And now we're doing it to ourselves. And I think that is a big problem because babies need their mothers, babies need their fathers. And one of the great things about the last 10 years and computers and people staying home, is that a lot of fathers have been able to get back in the driver's seat with their kids.

On menfolk and their babies

Here in the US, women are so funny about men and babies. You know, you come into a room full of women, and there's a new baby. And dad walks in, and dad says, Hey, give me my baby. And all the women are like, should we let him have the baby? You know, when they hand them the baby, it's as if they're handing the baby to a gorilla.

And then they'll stand there, waiting for him to do something outrageous to the baby, like break the baby or drop the baby. And then after about 30 seconds, they say, Now, give us the baby back again, because it's assumed that he's not going to know what to do with that baby. It's our experience that dads do things with babies that we women would never do with a baby. And they're great things.

One of the things that dads do much better than moms, they're kind of on the same wavelength with the baby. They kind of enter the baby's space with the spirit of play, Hey, what do you want to do? Let's do it. And then they sneak off and do it. I'm sorry. But for we women, we have been trained, and we're into care, nurture, protect, those are foremost.

And those things can push out, have some fun. Don't be so serious. Dads will do things and teach the baby things that we would never dream of doing. Never in a million years. Dads will toss the baby up a bit. And then as the baby gets a little stronger, toss them up a little bit more. Mothers will never do that. And they scream when they see the father doing it. And the kid is screaming too, but he's screaming, Again. Do it again, please.

So I think even in those early stages, men, fathers, have a huge role with the baby. And the fact that fathers are coming in and stealing the babies and having real time with them is hugely gratifying, to me personally. I think, also, we make a big deal.

And it's true that mothers are the best teachers. And we have a five-day intensive class for parents on how to teach their kids at home. And in that class, we must say 100 times, mothers are the best teachers, mothers are the best, and they are. They are great teachers. But when it comes to problem solving, dads are the best. They are far better than mothers. And by the way, Dad'll say to Mom, Let the baby do that himself. Mom will say, Oh, no, he needs my help. I don't like to see him struggle. Dad'll say, Let him do it. He can do it.



And I think we females say, you know, dads are such babies, he can't be bothered to help him. That's why he's hanging him out to dry. This is nonsense. Dad understands something we don't get, which is, any time a child can do something himself, he should do it. It's a big thing for a child to do something himself.

Even when he tries to tie his shoes, and he's six months from being able to do it, we should let him try. We should let him try. We shouldn't be saying, No, I'll do that for you. And dads know that. So dads are the ones saying, Leave him alone. Let him do that himself.

And kids learn that too, if they get to be with Dad, they learn that dad will teach them problem-solving things that mothers won't teach. You know, Dad will step back and say, You can do that. Do it. Whereas mother will say, Well, why don't I do half of that for you? And then you can do the last little bit. Kids don't want that. They want to do it themselves.

So I think that mom has her great strengths. And no one touches her in those great strengths. But dad has huge strengths. And here in America, it's heartbreaking when dads don't get to weigh in, and be part of that early development, because they do things that no woman will ever do. Ever, ever.

Giving kids their independence

James: Yeah, I think this is a great message, I can relate to this. Having the relationship I have with my daughter now has been the most significant thing ever, and that she's fiercely independent. "I'll do it. I'll do it." And I think you're right. I don't want to deprive her of that opportunity for growth by doing it for her.

I know that anyway, as a coach, I can't solve all my customer's problems for them. But I can give them some tools that help them solve it for themselves, and it's much more meaningful if they're participating in their own solution. So this is great. So what I'm hearing is, we should have a think about the environment, the way we're raising our children.

Let them be more independent. Create a safe place for them to be more free to move, give them more stimulus, let them try things. Have a look at our relationship as mom or dad with our baby. Maybe we're having a rethink about ourselves as a grown up that we still have the ability to learn, our brain is still evolving, that we can take on new skills and languages. And in my case, movements.

I only took up surfing when I was 42 years old. The other people in the water with me, they've often been surfing since they were like six or 10, like we're in Australia here. So I'm at the surfing mental age of about 16 or 18, which is why I'm so excited about it. But as I get older, the more I realize I'm actually getting younger, and the world is opening up.

So it's an exciting thing. This is a message I think is lost on some people who are still in the drudge, in that hustle or the drain. Like you said, the first thing they want to do is just palm off the kid and get back to the grindstone, and that's a mistake. I've been in that scenario where I had restricted time with my kids, when I had a job and was doing my own business.

It's something I can't go back and change, and it's certainly formed me. But I've seen another way now. And I think this is the way I'd like to share, which is why you're here, Janet, and I appreciate the lessons that you've shared with us today.

Wrapping it up for the audience

If we were to sort of tie this in a bow, and you had an opportunity to impart a couple of points that you think you'd like someone to take away from this episode, what would your message be to someone who's listening to this, who has got young children, and is maybe thinking, Oh, I should be maybe thinking a little more deeply about the way that I'm raising my child?

Well, you've got a website there, I'll certainly reference that, iahp.org, you can find out more information about Janet, and The Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential. So there's that resource. What's your imparting sort of bullet point that you would like your message to be?

Janet: I think I would jump off in saying what that would be from your description of your surfing and the powerful thing, because for myself, I cannot look at a picture of a surfer in the curl of one of those gigantic waves without saying, how can anyone doubt the human cortex? That is a sheer act of human cortex.

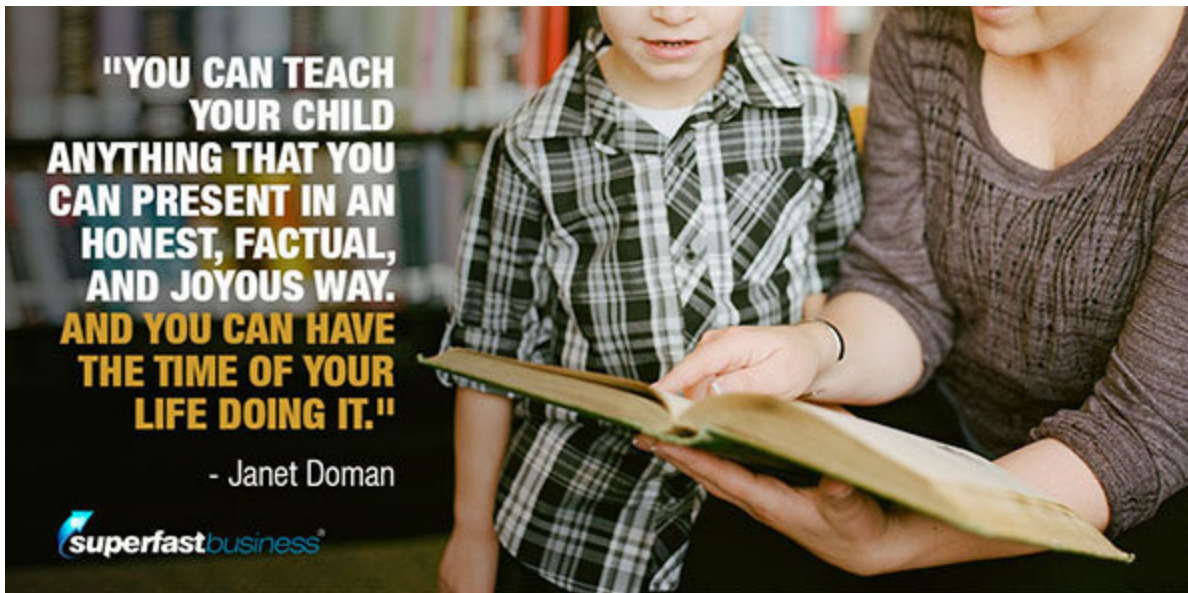
I'm sure there's physical aspects to it. And I'm not saying you don't have to be fit. And God knows you have to be brave. But that shows you, if you can do that, if the human brain is capable of being in the curl of a gigantic wall of water that could crush you in an instant, to do that, and then paddle out and do it again, and again, and again, and survive it...

If I were going to make just pictures to say, what is the human brain, that would be one of my 10 pictures, because it's such a clear example of the superiority of the human being, the ability that the human brain can do anything.

You know, that guy who just climbed that face, that rock, in the United States, literally, with no ropes, no nothing, he free-climbed a sheer rock face, that takes days, two or three days and you sleep as you go on the way, he did it in four hours, you know? And how did he do that? That was the human cortex. He literally figured out every handhold before, it was all planned. So for him, that's what the brain is capable of.

We have a brain many times bigger than what we're using. The potential is gigantic. Whoever came up with the size of the brain, Mother Nature or the good Lord, whoever works for you, they had big plans for our species. And it's time for us. Could we have more serious problems right now that threaten our planet? We need the next generation and the one after that to be much more capable, to be able to sail through life easily.

Your kid's lives should be like molasses out of the barrel. They shouldn't hate school, school should be the simplest thing in the world, or they don't even need to go to school. That would be fine, too. You can teach a baby to read. And the sooner you start, the easier it is. And yes, to be able to read a novel when you're six years old.



Do you think you're going to be made for life? Because I'm here to say you are. You don't have to worry about your teachers. If you're already able to read Shogun and you're six years old, you're not going to have any problems going forward. So I think you can teach your child anything that you can present in an honest, factual, and joyous way. And you can have the time of your life doing it.

The time between birth and six goes so fast. And I meet so many parents who look back and say, I was so tense, I was so busy. I put importances on things that weren't important. Just put your attention on your kid, turn off the iPad, turn off the computer, turn off the Wi-Fi, and be with your kid. And he's going to take you to places you've never been. And it'll be great.

James: That's the best. Thank you so much, Janet. Perfect message there, so relatable. I'm in that phase right now in life. And everything you're saying is resonating. And hopefully, we've touched a few neurons in the cortexes of others. We'll get some feedback.

Janet: You have to come visit us. Do you ever come to this neck of the woods?

James: Well, I've been to the United States many, many, many times. When they let us out, for sure, I'll be over there.

Janet: Well, you know, we have done our best to put as much as we can online for families. So we did put our course for parents online, we have a newborn course also, start right from birth, so parents know not to bundle up their kid. So we're very excited that that course is going to help parents a lot.

James: That's a good idea. You know, I just re-read books and courses, and I've got a few subscriptions to parenting resources. As a parent, I think it's one of the most difficult and important long-term investments. I've got kids at various ages now. And it's just fascinating to watch it unfold. I've been running this experiment for a quarter of a century, and it still surprises me.

So this will be Episode 846 at SuperFastBusiness.com. If you want to get in touch with Janet Doman, her website is iahp.org. We'll transcribe this episode. So if you want to read through it, go and grab it, SuperFastBusiness.com. Thank you so much, and I appreciate everything you shared with us, and hopefully, we're raising better children as a result.

Janet: Well, I think your little girl is very lucky.

James: I'm biased. I think she's doing fine too. She's having a good time. Thank you so much.

Janet: Thank you. It's been wonderful.



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