00;00;09;14 - 00;00;48;12

Harry Psaros

Every day I woke up, I thought about bringing the Warriors mentality into raising my son with SD Wake up with Hope. There's themes in my book. It's hope, positivity, resilience and grit. You need all of those. And when I say that, I need bringing that that determination, that vigilance every single day. I owed it to my son and I owed it to the privilege of raising my son to do every single thing I could on a daily basis to help him improve.

00;00;50;13 - 00;01;02;06

Courtney Ringstaff

Welcome to Adjusting to Sales, a podcast for parents, caregivers and service providers for Children with Disabilities. I'm your host, Courtney Ring Staff, and this is my co-host, Melina Danko.

00;01;02;16 - 00;01;05;08

Melina Danko

Hi, everyone. We are so glad you've joined us.

00;01;05;16 - 00;01;35;23

Courtney Ringstaff

Melina is the assistant director of communications marketing at the Center for Excellence in Disabilities and the project director of the West Virginia Family two Family Health Information Center. I am a licensed social worker in Morgantown, West Virginia, and I've created this podcast to be a platform for parents, caregivers and service providers. Can come together, exchange information, educate one another, and find support and connection through the relatable topic discussions.

00;01;36;17 - 00;01;45;21

Courtney Ringstaff

We cannot change the direction of the wind or the strength of the storm, but together we can adjust the sails.

00;01;49;20 - 00;02;12;20

Harry Psaros

My name is Sarah Swan. I'm the author From Strength to Strength The Father's Journey with Autism and the Power of Hope and Positivity. I'm an executive neuroscience specialist for AbbVie, which sounds very fancy. What I really do is basically develop therapeutic Botox clinics that cater to migraines. I'm also a top social media fluent server for the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Pitt Athletics.

00;02;12;29 - 00;02;39;05

Harry Psaros

So I've been a senior writer for Pittsburgh Sports now. I've been doing sports writing for, gosh, 25 years now. And tell just a little bit about what I'm involved with. I am the on the board of directors for the Autism Caring Center, which is here in Pittsburgh, very hands on. I'm one of the founding families for North Fayette Powells, which stands for providing acceptance, love and support and organization for for special needs children that we founded in this area.

00;02;39;09 - 00;02;58;14

Harry Psaros

I am former president, just recently had to step down but have been too busy with the bulk of the Parks and Rec Department. We do all things social for North Fayette Township by the airport here in Pittsburgh. But my favorite title by far is Father. I love being the husband as well, but I love being a dad, and that's the reason I wrote this book.

00;02;58;16 - 00;03;19;09

Harry Psaros

It's an homage in a way to my wife and I are development of our son Gus, who is oldest son Gus, who's on the autism spectrum. To August is 21 right now. He's a student at Kent State University. Again, the book is all about his development and his journey and my thoughts on on raising a child on the spectrum.

00;03;19;09 - 00;03;42;02

Harry Psaros

And my youngest son, Max, Mad Max, is 18 years old and a freshman running back for Allegheny College. Go Gators in Meadville, Pennsylvania. So a little bit about my background. As you can see, I had my hands in a lot of things and I absolutely enjoyed every minute of being an author heard from people around the world with my book, and it's just been an absolutely amazing experience.

00;03;43;05 - 00;04;15;13

Melina Danko

I love that you're involved in so many diverse community organizations and wear so many different hats and roles and those because you bring being a dad to a son with autism to every one of those organizations as well. And so I'm sure that that perspective has contributed to some of those groups learning more and being more accepting and be more open to changing something that they do or offering something a little bit differently.

00;04;16;09 - 00;04;40;03

Harry Psaros

Absolutely. First of all, I have a saying. If you're breathing air, you should be helping others. I come from a family of people, my my mother's. And we are in West Virginia Hall of Fame for service. So is my uncle and my cousin. My brother is a both national and internationally known philanthropist. We believe in giving back. So that's first, first and foremost.

00;04;40;15 - 00;04;58;12

Harry Psaros

When you when you marry that with being a father with a child on on the spectrum, you educate people. You know, I and I think anyone with a child on the spectrum, they could relate to this. Sometimes you hear, oh, I'm sorry and I'll stop them and go, No, I love being Gus's father. And he's taught me more than anything.

00;04;58;12 - 00;05;17;16

Harry Psaros

And I loved educating people on autism. I want to I want to normalize it, for lack of a better word. They shouldn't be a scarlet letter. You know, if you mention it, it does give me a platform. I've been fortunate. My my book was on the front cover of the National Herald, which is a significantly large publication nationally.

00;05;17;21 - 00;05;35;12

Harry Psaros

Greek Orthodox publication Hellenic News of America had me. I had a feature article on my book, and ironically, the Greek church was just trying to figure out how to preach to a lot of these family speakers. If you have a child with sensory issues or a child, they just want to sit down. It's often hard to go to church and sit in the pews.

00;05;35;20 - 00;05;51;12

Harry Psaros

And if you think of a Greek Orthodox church, we have a lot of chanting, a lot of incense. So things that could really play on their their senses. So it's been great to be a resource to them. And I'm getting more and more involved with the church, kind of helping them with those families as well. So I love being a messenger.

00;05;51;12 - 00;06;07;24

Harry Psaros

I wear wear as a badge of honor. And as you said, it's been great. What's great about the book, too, now is it's creating, I think, a difference on a national level. People didn't know a lot about autism that are reading the book. And it pleases me to no end that they're learning about it through the pages of my book.

00;06;07;24 - 00;06;10;02

Harry Psaros

It's great.

00;06;11;20 - 00;06;16;22

Courtney Ringstaff

Can you tell us a little bit about where your journey began and maybe where your book begins also?

00;06;17;17 - 00;06;35;08

Harry Psaros

Absolutely. And what I'll do, let me start first about the origins of the book, and then I'm going to go back as the two we go together nicely. But so there was the autism notebook that was very prevalent here in Pittsburgh. And in 2014, and it was run by Kelly Kane, who is a beacon of light in this area in Pittsburgh.

00;06;35;08 - 00;06;59;11

Harry Psaros

She's also now the founder of the Autism Caring Center. And Kelly said to me, would you mind moderating and speaking from a father's perspective? And when I tell you this was new, no one had done this. I got on stage and I had about 20 to 25 minutes to speak. You can imagine this. And as I'm speaking, mothers start lining up and they weren't even asked to come up front.

00;06;59;11 - 00;07;21;17

Harry Psaros

But I had I could count. I remember 10 to 12 lining up and my initial thought was business. Did you say something inflammatory? You know, did you offend them somehow? But then I realized they were all very emotional. And when I was walking off stage, they physically grabbed me and said, Harry, we need your help. Our husbands aren't on board.

00;07;21;23 - 00;07;41;18

Harry Psaros

We have a lot of pressure on us in our children are drifting off. We feel into the abyss. So I am not shy. I am a type A, I said, give me their phone numbers. I'll set up whatever it takes, a dinner, a cup of coffee. I ended up having one dinner, one lunch, a multitude of cups of coffees and two hung up on me.

00;07;41;18 - 00;08;08;28

Harry Psaros

They were too proud to speak to me. And what I found at that time was males want to fix things. It's in our DNA. And they it's one thing if your child falls off a bike, you go and you put a Band-Aid on the wound. When you're told your child has autism, it's a very weighty diagnosis. And they were almost in a in a morass, almost like a wet blanket over them, trying to sit there and figure out a very stoic, trying to figure out how to solve this.

00;08;09;11 - 00;08;34;10

Harry Psaros

Well, there is no solving it, you know, it's something the child has for a life long period of time. And I was able to talk them through that process and get them reinvested in their spouse and reinvest in their child and really just get them moving forward as opposed to staying in neutral. So I went back to my wife and I said, you know, I think there might be a bulk here, but I held off and I'm glad I did because life everyone knows, offers you multitude of experiences.

00;08;34;21 - 00;08;59;10

Harry Psaros

So two years ago I delivered the keynote address to the Autism Caring Centers Mothers Day conference with about roughly about 400 mothers in place. But as they delivered the speech, I had the same reaction. I had people physically running to me, after you can imagine this, they're running up and grabbing me and telling me how much my help is needed or how much they realize their husband wasn't involved.

00;08;59;10 - 00;09;25;03

Harry Psaros

After speaking with me and I had looked at my wife before the speech and I said, This speech is my book. And I happened to attract the attention of Corey Alice Publishing, and Corey Wamsley did that. Owens came up to me and said, Your voice needs to be heard. And I started doing some Googling as well. And what's amazing is at that time I think it was like 15 years post diagnosis for my son, 17 years.

00;09;25;09 - 00;09;52;10

Harry Psaros

There really hadn't been a lot of male voices out there. So that was the origin of the book. And the book is 150 pages or less for a reason because of my many, many experiences it fundraisers and speeches dealing with belligerent fathers. They didn't want to accept the autism diagnosis. I realized that if you hand these guys talking to Lord of the Rings, the War and Peace, it's out the window.

00;09;52;24 - 00;10;13;19

Harry Psaros

They're not going to look at it. So my book is meant to be simplistic but effective in terms of breaking that morass that they're in, that that denial. You know, I wanted it to be a tool for them and a tool for their spouse where they could hand it to that that father or boyfriend or whomever or partner and go read this.

00;10;13;19 - 00;10;31;27

Harry Psaros

It's not that long. It's a day long read. But see if it breaks through and it really has based on the feedback I'm receiving, I, I can tell you it's been emotional reading some of the emails and receiving, but going back to my story when my son was young, you know, I tell everybody, you know, what you know?

00;10;31;27 - 00;10;52;06

Harry Psaros

And when you don't have another child, you don't have anyone to compare them to. So Gus was born and he was this beautiful child. But as he started to mature and I'm talking going into the twos and threes, Mommy intuition kicked in with my wife and my wife was noticing that he wouldn't look you in the eye, you would walk in the room.

00;10;52;06 - 00;11;13;11

Harry Psaros

He wouldn't sort of acknowledge your presence. She spent those early years of development with him, like in preschool, and noticed that he wasn't interacting with his peers and she was starting to become really concerned. And she came to me with it. And I will be the first to tell you I was that guy. I was that belligerent husband.

00;11;13;16 - 00;11;45;10

Harry Psaros

I'm the type of guy that could have fun at an insurance seminar. You you put me in with a group of monks in having a party. So my thought was, how can my son have anything that would debilitate him socially? But it just made no sense to me. And I at times got very angry with my wife. And you have to juxtapose this with her going to pediatricians at that time and looking her looking at her like she was crazy or she had a among thousands by proxy, you know, like there was something going on like they couldn't figure it out.

00;11;45;22 - 00;12;09;28

Harry Psaros

So she was under immense stress. And then two critical things occurred. We went to a birthday party on my cousin Maria, who is a physician in the Ohio Valley. We went to her daughter, niece, my niece Perry went to her birthday party, and all of the children were given utensils to write with and play with and things like that, where they were all kind of collectively together and drawing.

00;12;10;06 - 00;12;36;18

Harry Psaros

My son sat there on his own and I watched him and he spun the pencil repeatedly, and that's all he did. And she mentioned to me again and I said, Well, you know, he was the outlier. I noticed it. I thought it was very odd. Then what happened a week later, there was a preschool birthday party at a a pizza place, and all of the children were in one corner and they're all looking at the cake and, you know, looking at the presents.

00;12;36;28 - 00;12;58;12

Harry Psaros

My son was we now know it was stimming. And anyone with the child on a spectrum understands that that is, he would Bongo Drum is the victim and she couldn't stop him from bongo drumming. He kept walking around, then he found a fan and he was very fixated in on fans and engines, which is another commonality with an AC child.

00;12;58;28 - 00;13;23;22

Harry Psaros

She could not pull them away from the fan and all the other children were there together, interacting, singing, Happy Birthday. And our preschool teacher, Ms.. Jose, who's a hero in the story, grabbed my wife and said, I love you and I love Harry, but I really think the Goss is on the autism spectrum. So when I say broken, Michelle came home just broken upset right there.

00;13;23;22 - 00;13;41;00

Harry Psaros

I had a bit of an epiphany and I said, you know, maybe I've been wrong on this. And if I'd been wrong on this, I owe my wife a significant apology. Well, we were really lucky. We went all in and said, we need to get him checked. And we did receive the diagnosis. And I write about this in From Struggle to Strength.

00;13;41;14 - 00;14;03;23

Harry Psaros

You know, we had a two hour drive home to Pittsburgh. It was myself, my wife, my son Gus, and his best buddy, my father George, who passed away a year ago. And I just remember our, first of all, the palpable guilt that I had, because here was my wife pressured by physicians, a belligerent husband. But she saw through all of it and kept pressing on.

00;14;04;03 - 00;14;24;27

Harry Psaros

So I knew I owed her a huge apology in then I have I boxed. I am very ensconced in the martial arts and I got into a hyper dreamlike state the second our home. So I went from my room. You go through a mourning period when you first find out, I think any parent would agree with that. A frustration period of mourning period.

00;14;24;29 - 00;14;47;00

Harry Psaros

Mine lasted one hour because that second hour in I got into that hyper adrenal state that I'm typically in and like a boxing ring or a dojo, and I go, Not my kid. I wanted to do everything possible to help him. I think that that it was like getting hit over the head with a cardio. Like, everything hit me at that moment that I was wrong.

00;14;47;03 - 00;15;09;26

Harry Psaros

I got to get in unison with my wife and we need to get this kid help. You know, I wanted to really help him as much as I could. We pulled the car in, and in typical Greek fashion, my parents had food ready to go, and they were jamming cookies in my son's mouth. I ran right out the door to Barnes Noble and purchased every single book they had on autism.

00;15;09;26 - 00;15;35;24

Harry Psaros

And I will tell you, in my library right now, I probably have an excess of 60 to 100 books. So, you know, my first thought was educate myself, educate my family and educate our friends that are around us and kind of go from there. So that that's kind of the preliminary story in terms of how it went down and what I talk about, and I think it's a great analogy, I try to get through again to the belligerent father.

00;15;36;00 - 00;15;57;23

Harry Psaros

My wife and I like to kayak and individual kayaks. We're great. We're actually pretty, pretty darn good. And we loved it. Our second home is Bethany Beach, Delaware. We go and kayak there, Fenwick Island. And we tried a few years ago to do a tandem kayak and it turned out to be an excruciating experience. One minute we had it going left, one minute we had to go.

00;15;57;23 - 00;16;23;11

Harry Psaros

And right there was a lot of obscenities going out at the very end of the journey we were on, my wife and I started paddling in unison. We finally got it down and will shock me with how fast the kayak went once we're in unison. That analogy applies heavily to parents with a child on the spectrum. If you're not paddling in unison, you're not moving forward.

00;16;23;23 - 00;16;49;13

Harry Psaros

And it's absolutely critical. I can't emphasize that. So I talk about that piece in the acceptance piece very heavily in the beginning of my book, and I go through a lengthy journey. I talk about with my son most parents, I think listening to this, if they're new, they'll experience it. If they're battle tested, they've gone through this. But our house became a subway station.

00;16;49;13 - 00;17;10;06

Harry Psaros

They looked at us and said, One of the two of you asked, It has to be home. So my wife, who's a nurse, lovingly resigned from her position at the hospital. We had therapists coming in in the morning, therapists coming in in the afternoon. We had their supervisors coming in midday. They did a lot of the behavioral therapy.

00;17;10;06 - 00;17;34;01

Harry Psaros

We had food therapy. I could go on and on. You know, there was so much going on. It was a full time job for Gus. It was a full time job for my wife. And I would often come home and immediately try to relieve her because when you're entertaining, which is kind of what you're doing, if the therapist are there on and you're also getting involved with the therapy, it can be very, very mentally taxing.

00;17;34;29 - 00;17;54;15

Harry Psaros

And I would always try to relieve her and we'd always try to give ourselves time for a little bit of self-care. If she wanted to go and just get some air or go do yoga or read, I would try to free that time up for her, but it became a full time job. On top of that we had up here, it's called Wesley Wonder Kids.

00;17;54;23 - 00;18;15;08

Harry Psaros

We would send Gus and Gus would interact with peers comparable on the spectrum, and they would grade him out on every social interaction and give us hints on how to help him. We had food therapy because most of these children eat what's called the base diet, and you're looking to expand that diet. On top of that, you always have to factor in.

00;18;15;08 - 00;18;41;20

Harry Psaros

We had multiple, multiple physicians appointments, neurologists, pediatricians, and I should add, and I talk about each one in the book, but on top of autism, Gus can't hear out his right ear. And we discovered that a few years later, which which wasn't great because he already was impaired socially. And all human beings have a right ear advantage. You actually hear better and quicker through your right ear than your left.

00;18;42;01 - 00;19;03;06

Harry Psaros

So he heard everything. It ticked later than his peers. And then we found out, I thought it was just him that he actually had Tourette syndrome. And I used to yell at him, I would try to correct him. Behavioral modification therapy, right. If I. But I kept hearing this guttural noise coming from him. And then the one day I saw his neck flexing.

00;19;03;06 - 00;19;34;05

Harry Psaros

And I have a friend with Tourette's who does the same thing. And I walked up and I said instead of correcting them, I said, Buddy, can I ask you something? Can you stop that? And he goes, No, Daddy, I can't. And I realized, Oh my goodness. So that led to another series of appointments with neurologists for Tourette's. And he also has for thing on primary ciliary dyskinesia, which is a an issue in one in 25,000 children where their cilia doesn't move effectively in their lungs.

00;19;34;05 - 00;19;52;17

Harry Psaros

So they're more prone to infections. And in things like, you know, you have to put them on antibiotics and steroids, which is really terrible for a child on the spectrum. So you had a young man with four strikes against him? I talk about the acceptance piece in my book. I have a lot of people that go oh out of the fore.

00;19;52;17 - 00;20;14;11

Harry Psaros

I bet you just rip. If God came down and after you'd rip autism away. And I always tell them, No, no, God doesn't make a mistake. I try to emphasize that to every parent. But as a newly diagnosed child, God doesn't make a mistake. He gave me my son as is now. If I didn't have to rip something away, I'd give him his right hearing that I'd give him that right ear.

00;20;14;11 - 00;20;39;01

Harry Psaros

Functional. I loved him as is. I wanted to improve him as is. You know, I didn't say cure. I want to emphasize that improvement, which is key. I think once you get past the shock of the diagnosis and understand that God saw within you the strength to be there for that child, the rest of their lives, whether they're mild, moderate or severe.

00;20;39;07 - 00;20;58;18

Harry Psaros

He chose you. And I will tell you and I write about it in the later stages of my book, but I have learned more from my son than I have ever taught him. It's just been a big piece of that, you know? It's been incredible. So I talk about it heavily, like I said, on top of working in unison with your spouse.

00;20;58;18 - 00;21;20;06

Harry Psaros

I also like to talk about, you know, building that village, that support system, because you're going to need it. And the acceptance piece, if you don't accept what's going on with your child, you can't move on mentally yourself, you know. So just understand, your child's not broke and they were just handed to you as is. Just do everything you can on it on a daily basis to be vigilant and to assist them and help them.

00;21;21;03 - 00;21;38;29

Melina Danko

But she might share some of those things that you did on the daily basis that you feel helped him become the man that he is now and how he has gotten through school so successfully and is now a college student.

00;21;39;17 - 00;22;05;11

Harry Psaros

Absolutely. I'm going to go over and there's two concepts that are in my book. One is the site invasion concept and the other is the 2% war. I'm big on vision for social status. Up front, both my sons have a vision board where they want to go. And you, anyone with a child on the spectrum, you have to have both sites in vision and let me separate those two site is the what are we doing today the grind?

00;22;05;15 - 00;22;33;00

Harry Psaros

What are we doing every day to help that child improve? The vision is looking into the future and going, Where's this child potentially going five years from now, in ten years from now, and preparing for that. So going back to the site piece, I got it in my head one day. I sat there and I wrote down, Don't ask me why, but I wrote down 2% on a piece of paper.

00;22;33;13 - 00;22;59;14

Harry Psaros

And I said, Mike, what I didn't want to do because you could get overwhelmed as a parent with a child with ASD, there's a multitude of issues that you have to help them with. What I decided was I was going to wake up every day and I preach this module to my wife. We're going to make our child 3% better and you know, you could be looking at anything from a sensory issue, social interaction, activities of daily living, dimming.

00;22;59;20 - 00;23;21;15

Harry Psaros

I mean, you can go on and on there is so many different issues you have to sort of stamp out and work on that you could get overwhelmed. So what I would do is go today we're working on this item and you're a work in unison with what the therapist we're working on, or I decide that it's Dad's day, we're working on social interaction, we're working on an activity of daily living.

00;23;21;25 - 00;23;40;09

Harry Psaros

So if we were at the park and I'll get into that too, I don't believe you should hide these children at all. I like all interaction is great interaction. I would take us everywhere. I would take him shopping. I would take him to the park, I would take him to football games. Because if he interacted with an eight year old or an eight year old, that's a great interaction.

00;23;40;09 - 00;23;57;16

Harry Psaros

I wanted that. That's therapy, but I would also watch him and go, Hey, hey, hey, buddy. You know, when that person asked you about your day and you didn't answer, right, you got you got to talk back right? Tell them how your debuted. So I would try to find something every day to get him 2% better. That was my goal.

00;23;58;01 - 00;24;12;00

Harry Psaros

And if you if you happen to work on a few things by happenstance and they improved, then you knocked it really out of the park that day. Or it might be, hey, hey, you know, we're going to work on you're getting you're going to pick your outfit out today. You're going to get dressed today. We you're going to brush your teeth today.

00;24;12;08 - 00;24;36;22

Harry Psaros

So I would try to find one thing, but that's my 2% rule. It gives you a tangible, easy goal. I'm going to wake up and work on X, you name it. And I will tell you, I want to say this upfront. I have been a lot of fundraisers and I spoke about the 2% rule and I have people walk up and go, Well, your child was more mild, mine is more moderate to severe.

00;24;37;02 - 00;24;59;13

Harry Psaros

I don't know if that applies. And I look him right back immediately and go, You can't be myopic in your thinking. A child that might be severe. Your win may look differently than my son's, but a win is a win is a win. There's still big goals you could set for that child. So that's my 2% rule. And that applies again to the site piece.

00;24;59;22 - 00;25;26;13

Harry Psaros

The vision is what is my child capable of doing? Can we, you know, can we send them to middle school? Will they have to go to a specialty school is college in their future? So the best example I could give you in terms of changing of a vision, when we were in middle school, we did not know if my son would end up in a college or more or less a skill or blue collar job.

00;25;27;00 - 00;25;58;18

Harry Psaros

And I don't talk about a lot of specific modalities in my book. And the reason I didn't do that, there are a million how to box out there that are giant. You can go through with supplement modalities. If you meet one child on the spectrum, you meet one child on the spectrum. My son, he went from answering questions, writing almost in an infantile manner to writing age specific in specifically answering the questions appropriately.

00;25;58;18 - 00;26;28;15

Harry Psaros

He was starting to advocate for himself a little in class, things he didn't do before. So when we got past that and his grades start improving, our vision went from, okay, maybe he's going to be blue collar or trade school. This kid could probably get a degree. And I'm of the opinion that if you're doing your job, that you're doing your due diligence with the site piece, the grind every every day, trying to help that child, then what you're going to find is that vision piece will just keep improving.

00;26;28;28 - 00;26;53;05

Harry Psaros

There's something there for them. I am cognizant. I am very cognizant that there are children where even at a young age, it appears they're going to be with their parents for the rest of their lives. I don't want to discount that. I vehemently disagree. And you have to understand between panels, between Autism Speaks, between the Caring Center. I have a multitude of parents I interact with.

00;26;53;18 - 00;27;24;00

Harry Psaros

I am a huge advocate for living your life. Just because your child's on the spectrum doesn't mean you should sequester your house yourself to the house. Keep that child in front of a computer all day. I think it's imperative to go in, let them experience life in every interaction we have with the human, with with a child, with that, with an older individual, even just getting out it at a concert, at a ballgame, at a park that's all built in therapy.

00;27;24;00 - 00;27;44;00

Harry Psaros

You can work with them doing that. There's a well-known speaker out of New York. She's a former Pittsburgher. Sara Keenan. I was on her podcast recently. She's the mother of two nonverbal autistic children. She's three total. One is neurotypical. She takes them everywhere. And I give her a lot of credit and she goes along with what I said.

00;27;44;00 - 00;28;15;02

Harry Psaros

They're out there moving. The other thing strongly suggest, too, is I know that sports are often very difficult for children on the spectrum, but I am an absolute advocate for teaching them self-care, eating, clean, moving. It only helps them neurologically. And I have a chapter on on self care in my book. If I could expand a little anyone purchasing my book, you're going to see Gold Boxing Gloves on the cover and you're going to think, Well, what does that have to do with autism?

00;28;15;02 - 00;28;44;14

Harry Psaros

First of all, gold is the color of hope. So I wanted to include that in the front. Second of all, again, I boxed I have multiple black belts in Tom Trudeau and Akito and I thought for my book every day I woke up, I thought about bringing the warrior's mentality into raising my son with ASD and when I say that I'm not walking around punching the walls, I mean bringing that that determination, that vigilance every single day.

00;28;44;19 - 00;29;00;09

Harry Psaros

So the reason I use that fighting analogy tonight, the boxing gloves, when you go in, anyone, if a good fighter knows, if you drop your guard, what's going to happen? You're going to get knocked out. You're you're going to get kicked in karate. You're going to if you're Muay Thai, you're getting an elbow to the face or you're getting in boxes, you're getting straight on punch.

00;29;00;29 - 00;29;21;29

Harry Psaros

And I didn't want to go a day. I dropped my guard. I owed it to my son and I owed it to the privilege of raising my son to do every single thing I could on a daily basis to help him improve. So I didn't take a day off. I brought what I call the Warriors mentality every day to raising them.

00;29;23;01 - 00;29;42;18

Harry Psaros

Garcia's become, I think, a beacon of light for a lot of people. Gossage I think what good looks like, it hasn't been easy in college. It's taught us that we're in a marathon, not a sprint. But the fact that he's there, he is producing a strong GPA and in about a year and a half to two years, we're going to have our first degree.

00;29;42;18 - 00;30;11;09

Harry Psaros

I'm overjoyed. I don't do negative if you can't tell I'm a lunatic, type A, but I really believe you set the tone. I challenge parents, I challenge fathers. You set the tone within the house. So if you're waking up and I know I've been there, I've been there through and I've been there through the meltdowns, I've been there through the rigidities where I couldn't even get my son through the door if we didn't shut the garage door the right way.

00;30;11;25 - 00;30;33;02

Harry Psaros

I've been through all of it. You have really hard days. I get that. But these children are struggling. These children have a multitude of issues neurotypical child doesn't have. They don't need your negativity. So when you wake up every day and when I talk about my book, wake up with optimism, wake up with hope, there's themes in my book.

00;30;33;14 - 00;30;57;19

Harry Psaros

It's hope, positivity, resilience and grit. You need all of those. And when you set the tone of optimism and positivity, it permeates through the house and I referenced the TED Lasso effect in my book because I knew someone would read this book and go, Oh my God, this guy is a hippie. This is all psychobabble in my my response is utter nonsense.

00;30;57;29 - 00;31;21;27

Harry Psaros

And if you look at the TED lasso facts and if you're familiar with the show Ted Lasso, it was a paradigm shift in parenting, in leadership, in coaching. It's being taught now naturally in anyone not familiar with the show, basically a ex-wife is very angry at her husband and she has a terrible soccer team, decides to hire a guy from the United States.

00;31;21;27 - 00;31;47;02

Harry Psaros

That's an actual football coach, not a soccer coach. Believing he'll just run it into the ground in cricket, irritate the ex-husband. What Ted Lasso brings is hope, positivity, empathy and warmth. And he slowly starts to turn around, not just the soccer team, but he breaks through to the ex-wife, breaks through the community and uplifts everybody. And he's changed the way people think.

00;31;47;11 - 00;32;11;07

Harry Psaros

So I want you to think about that every single day you get up. Don't be grouchy. Don't yell at your spouse. Don't complain about the therapist coming. Wake up with a sense of hope, positivity and optimism in your child who's learning for you is going to replicate that. So I can't stress that enough. And that's a big part of my book in a big in a big chapter that I spend in my book.

00;32;11;24 - 00;32;30;10

Harry Psaros

So there's a lot of concepts I know throughout you but I wanted these is a foundation to help parents. You have sight, you have vision, you have the 2% rule, the grind every day. What am I doing? How am I getting my child? 2% better. What are we working on? You have the building a village piece, which I think is critical.

00;32;30;10 - 00;32;53;13

Harry Psaros

You need that support system and waking up with the mindset every day of hope and positivity. I think all of these are just absolutely critical for the maturation development of a child with SD. I think I feel I don't talk about my religion a lot, but I really feel like God has directed me to to kind of move forward and help a lot of people in this way.

00;32;53;13 - 00;33;09;05

Harry Psaros

So it's a blessing and it pays back tenfold. And I ask nothing in return. So it's great. Again, I'm honored just to be on here and to be able to share my vision with people.

00;33;09;05 - 00;33;24;24

Melina Danko

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