

Tom-McGovern-Interview

Wed, May 03, 2023 3:33PM • 35:25

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

elevators, justin, learn, kid, talking, people, work, trains, heard, big, watch, interact, moments, recognizing, teacher, brain, shut, autism spectrum, parent, wife

SPEAKERS

Thomas McGovern, Paul Huddleston

Paul Huddleston 00:05

and today we are talking with St. Louis Community College at Florissant. Valley STEM Division Dean Tom McGovern, how are you doing? Tom?

Thomas McGovern 00:12

I'm good, thank you.

Paul Huddleston 00:14

So we're going over it is autism awareness month, we're discussing with a number of people, various facets of people on the autism spectrum. And you have a little bit different perspective from some of the other people that we've talked to.

Thomas McGovern 00:28

So I have a son who's on the spectrum, would have been classified as Asperger's. But due to where timing comes in, that is a diagnosis. They've moved to just part of the autism spectrum disorder. He also has some ADHD. And so combining those two, which is fairly common, yes. Makes her some interesting and different situations as it grows up.

Paul Huddleston 00:53

So as a parent of a child who is on the autism spectrum, what have you noticed that is different in that parenting experience?

Thomas McGovern 01:02

There's a lot starting from when he was young. I, we, we noticed that eight months that something was different in the way he acted and interacted with things. Okay, we were fortunate, my wife had worked for special school district. And so she was already trained for some of these things that he stopped eating. So in the course of normal development, you go through the variety of soft baby foods, and then start working into harder foods. And he had just gotten to that point where he was eating a little bit of spaghetti and a little bit of ground beef kind of things. And then overnight, he just quit eating. Wow, he

went back to exactly one kind of baby food and any other kind of baby food from six feet away, he was like, nope, not eating it, and you could not force them. And, you know, the whole thing of well just wait till they get hungry, which you hear is advice. Yes, it does not work with with people on the spectrum at all, because it just isn't important. It just doesn't register in their head that this is something they need to do that that fortunately led us into figuring out that he also had what was called sensory defensiveness disorder. Okay, and that is so the idea on sensory defensiveness disorder is that the brain's operating in a different way, which is part of where the the neurodivergent discussion comes in now of of classifying or not classifying or titling, but describing the group as opposed to autistic he, to process things, your brain has a certain capability. And his senses act on a higher level, more range, more attunement, more sensitive than typical, you know, and he, for five months, he's pointing out airplanes, 30 seconds before they're in the sky, wow. He would, he would turn his head to things before anybody else heard it kinds of stuff. And in eight months, he was overwhelmed. And to protect himself, his body shut down every other sense that it could, in this case, include a taste. And that was that was a guide for us. Over the course of about two years, we did what was called some musical, not not music therapy, but I've forgotten the technical name for it. But the idea was that you use music in a different way to try and train the brain to grow and accept a wider range of senses. What happens with sensory defensiveness, right, like I said, in his case, he shut down on food. Well, we also noticed he'd walk into things. And, you know, you see this with a lot of younger kids. That, how did you not see that table? You know, does, it's really printed, sir. But if what you've done to protect the rest of your brain is eliminate every color before you can imagine what happens in your world, things just don't exist. For us as as typical people, they don't see it. It's really it is legitimately not part of their world model part of their worldview.

Paul Huddleston 04:04

And so this is really tying into because that's one thing that I've noticed, as I've been talking to people more and looking into this more, and dealing with it myself, I have relatives, friends, friends who have children that are on the autism spectrum is the conversation is moving away from as you said, it used to be you'd get diagnosed with something like Asperger's syndrome, or there's a number of other ones are just autistic and that it was autistic spectrum disorder, autism spectrum disorder, and now it's being referred to as autistic neurodiversity, as opposed to neurotypical which I hate using the term but normal, I'm doing finger quotes. And that really kind of explains that to people who don't get it. It's it's not a difference in capability. It's a difference in processing and perception.

Thomas McGovern 04:55

Right. And that ties in and that was one of the early signs with him. We spent about two years with this with this technique for listening that we, I mean, we all are familiar with what row row your boat Mary Had A landed limb sounds like, right? Well, he would listen to versions of it where it was attenuated. So instead of being the normal melody, it would jump an octave high and an octave low at odd and weird places, which what it did was force his brain to stretch. Because the brain wanted to hear the song and knew the melody that this was the way it's supposed to go. But that note was missing. And so it had to stretch to catch that note. And that was a a technique to allow it to re integrate. This was always done while he was doing something kinesthetic, we spent hours and hours in swings, where he would swing and listen to music on a headset for 20-30 minutes at a time, where our big breakthrough was one Thanksgiving meal, finally, where we're sitting there, and we've got his one food that he normally would

eat, and everybody else at the table this big family at Thanksgiving has everything else out. And by this point he was about to, and he reached out with a fork and took a piece of Turkey and ate it. And everybody at the table just stopped when he just do we all see that really happened. Anyway. Good. He would eat turkey and his other food.

Paul Huddleston 05:04

There you go. But there is that stretching, then that pushing of their I don't want to say their boundaries? But their integration?

Thomas McGovern 06:30

Yes. They instead of seeing four colors, he was then seeing eight and 10 and 12. And then there was a corresponding? Yeah, there's always the normal clumsiness, as kids are learning to use their arms or legs. But the extreme, how does he not see that? How does he not know that? That began to dwindle, he became more typical from that standpoint.

Paul Huddleston 06:53

So you talked about some of the things with your son and your family? Are there any other challenges that you've worked through? And how did you get through those? That's a way to look at

Thomas McGovern 07:07

it right? I mean, that was the early part right getting getting through that trained both my wife and I to recognize things are not going to work the way we normally would expect them to. You know, there's there's been some key moments through on much like other little kids, you still get to go through the terrible twos, but sometimes it's not to our phase it was at about 12. Okay. it was ten eleven twelve is when we really had terrible twos, because some things are delayed and integrate later. And language was a big one with him. He, he knew his letters before he was two, because he learned them while he was in the bathroom. And he, you know, that was not a problem for him and picking up individual words was not a problem for him. He did not use his own language, what he would do is take things he had heard and splice them together. So, for example, there was one day that we were in the car and it started raining. And he spliced to this whole thing together about how the rain was falling on our head, the drops were sounding really loud on the roof. Could we cover his ears, and not a single bit of it was something that he had said himself, but he put the words together himself. And we only knew that because we had watched the hours and hours and hours of Dinosaur Train and whatever else he fixated on. And we could pull those pieces. And we knew exactly where each of those phrases came from whether it was from peg, Peg plus cat or wherever. And you use them all right. But it was this piece from the show and this piece from the show and this piece from the show. And it was scripted, right is the term for it. When you're when you're scripting, you drop into something you just can't get out of finishing saying whatever that whole show was, which is one of his talents. For good and bad. When he's memorized something from Fortnite we don't really need to hear it all. On the other hand, despite my dad having been a nuclear scientist, I learned things about Chernobyl that I'd never known. Because Justin watch the special on that. And one day, I mentioned something about having taught something in class and Justin, went "did you know"... and started in in his announcer voice, which is what we call it when he starts doing this? Yes, because it is it's exactly whatever he heard word for word. And he and he had this huge, almost half hour thing on Chernobyl how and how it all worked.

And he was right on every part of it. And then he hit a piece that I was like, get Oh, can you explain that more? And he went, Well, hang on, I have to switch tracks. And that's what he actually said. And then he switched to another piece that he had heard that talked about this particular aspect of which was fascinating. Yeah. And so learning how to integrate that piece in your life of No, this is the disappointment a little bit of can you make up your own language on that because you ask him to tell you what happened in a story and you're gonna get the story you don't get his version of the story you get the story

Paul Huddleston 10:10

right you don't get the the synthesize through his lens he delivers you exactly back what happened, right,

Thomas McGovern 10:20

which is something we've had to work on right that is an issue in school because I don't comprehension ties in on reading math, science, everything. You know, he's he's very good at math, where it's cut and dried without the word problems. He's fantastic science he's reasonably good at part of that is his weird collectiveness of what he chooses to watch sometimes. But even even younger, the literal part neurodivergent people tend to take things very literally, they have a hard time with that comprehension and reading in social cues or other expectations that aren't explicit. And we spent years saying, Justin, tell us how your day at school was, just and tell us who your friends are. And what we would get is how your day at school was how your friends are. Which part of being a parent is really frustrating. Talking to other parents that are like, oh, yeah, my kid came home and they were working on this in science. And they did this and he's got a playdate with his best friend. And we don't even know who Justin's friends are. Because he can't name them. He can't tell us the names of them. Right, right. And he does a therapy with Equine Assisted Therapy, horseback riding, for a variety of special needs kids. And he's been doing it since he was about two. This was one of the sensory integration things we did. And in third grade, his teacher said, Justin, tell me how many ornaments are on the tree. And we all could see there were four. So we expected four right? It's a clean, clear cut question. Anyway, how many ornaments on the tree? And I had an epiphany at that moment. I was like, move the comma, Tom. Instead of Justin, tell me, comma, how many ornaments on the tree. He heard Justin tell me as a command. And he repeated how many ornaments are on the tree? I shut it up. Justin, how many ornaments are on the tree? And he said four with this attitude of like, you're an idiot. Can't you see that? And all of a sudden his world opened. Because I looked at data and I my wife and I said, Did you hear that? And she went No. And I said, Let's try it again. Justin, tell me how many horses are in the arena? Anyone? How many horses are in the arena? Justin, can you count how many horses are in the arena? Yes. And I had to think a minute. Because I get asked him? Yes. No question. Can you count? I did ask him to tell me how many there were. Right. How many horses are being ridden Justin for with that same attitude of Can't you see this? And so that's part of it too. But it's

Paul Huddleston 12:54

it's it's almost like learning to speak in his language or in their language when when you have to parse your requests or your statements. So that they're understood.

Thomas McGovern 13:08

And we spend a lot of time thinking others should adjust to us, and why should I have to adjust to them? When it comes down to his love, I adjust to him so that I can be part of his world. And as I do that, right? I when I go home now, it's generally hi dad, and I fall up on the couch next to him and I say what's going on kid? And it'll tell me what he's doing. And and I have learned to try and consider my language when I'm talking to him. If he says something, what projects? Are you working on? What interested you today? I try and very carefully ask that question so that he opens up and talks with me. Otherwise I get there real quick. Same kind of problems.

Paul Huddleston 13:49

And it's and that is that is something that I don't think a lot of people think about when again back to the the neurodivergency there's a different way we're speaking the same language, but there's a different way in processing it.

Thomas McGovern 14:05

Here's another one that I you know, I haven't told a lot. But Justin so so neurodivergent people, particularly those on the spectrum, tend to become experts in certain things right. And Justin's first expertness was in steam engines. He loves trains. We rode trains everywhere we could we've traveled cross country where we can do ride trains and our summer trip this summer. We're going to ride trains we've never written Oh, that's cool. We still do that. But his second love was elevators, which I know sounds strange. But he learned everything he could about elevators so he can walk into any elevator tell you the manufacturer, what the power system is how long it probably has been there. And when it's probably due for the next inspection. Wow, that was in response to something else that happened to him. We once again When he was younger, probably, I'm gonna say five, six. He had loved riding elevators. And so, you know, instead of taking your kid to the park, we took our kids to ride elevators. We'd be driving along somewhere to go elevator stop, right? And, you know, as rewards, we would still ride them. I can't tell you the number of hours we rode the Westport one up and down and the

Paul Huddleston 15:23

one on the outside of the building. Oh, that is fantastic.

Thomas McGovern 15:25

is right on the Twitterverse with elevator experts that one is one of the famous ones. But then he stopped riding elevators completely. absolutely terrified of them. We would try and walk to the elevator he grabbed us and pull us back. And just cold turkey one day Wow. Loved him next day. Terrified we had to skirt elevators like walk, we would have to walk against the wall as far away from the elevators, we could get to go around to the stairs. four storey building for hotel for a family vacation. And I walked every flight of stairs and carried things as we had to my wife card on everything up and down. And we met her at the right floor. And it took months. months, I want to say it was almost a year to get out of him what happened and what changed. And finally he said to one of the surface elevators eat people. We were like, okay, you know, scratch our head and start doing the puzzling. All right, where does that come from? You know, and we're thinking through everything he's ever watched that we've heard about or known and, and nowhere in any of it than elevator eat people the elevator where his therapy place was, had a front and a back door. And a girl with her mom went in the elevator, they went down. And

when Justin saw the come out, it was only the mom, and the kid had disappeared. Oh, elevators eat people. We had to convince him it was okay to get in this elevator and show him what happened. And that was a lot of trauma, because I went to the elevator and he was just freaking, you know, furious mad, everything about it, while we, my wife dragged him around to the bottom to show him the door open on the other side. And I wasn't, you know, I was totally fine. And then we're okay, then we're right back to riding elevators. But again, you know, we're not incident, right? That you don't expect that you're like, Okay, our life is totally different now for a year, because there's nothing he can't explain, we have no idea what happened. That's the life of a special needs parent, you never know when or how any of that is going to happen.

Paul Huddleston 17:40

And so much of that seems to come with or come as a result of adaptation. And that's something that I think more people need to look at when talking about and dealing with, or interacting with neurodivergency and neurodivergent folks, is there is a need to adapt or to at least question and inquire as to what we can do to bring them into the fold or to to interact better.

18:14

Yeah, I think one of the skills I would like to believe that I'm better at is listening to people and trying to find the root of what really is the problem? Because I there was a we had a speaker here from one of our professional development things, Jonathan Mooney, yes, right well known expert in this area. And he started out with a comment of anybody who needs to get up and stand and move around instead of sitting in those chairs, do it because that was a prison for me for 14 years. Right? Justin never sat in the circle in kindergarten or first grade ever. He wouldn't do it. And initially, his teachers were like, he's disobedient. He doesn't fit in. He's not following the rules. And of course, we already had the diagnosis. And so we're explaining No, that's not the case, test him on it. And you know, then they would they would ask him questions, and he repeat word for word back with what the had said. And it wasn't the case. That he wasn't paying attention. He was, couldn't sit and pay attention. Yes, because the act of sitting took up the brain power and forced the issue. That kinesthetics right. Lots of studies, studies are showing that whole writing out your notes isn't just about writing the notes. It's a kinesthetic motion, which helped to get it in the brain. If you think back to that widening your senses, widening your brain and training the muscles. It was all done as the swang. it was swinging or walking kinesthetics it's another gateway that bypasses some of the the walls that we put in in place.

Paul Huddleston 19:41

The fun thing about that though, is it's not just for those who are neurodivergent. A lot of times especially younger children, that kindergarten through maybe third grade, it tends to be not good for any child to sit down, shut up, pay attention, learn that That's not necessarily the best pathway for them. And for some people, it's never the best pathway.

Thomas McGovern 20:05

And I agree on that I, I do my absolute best once an hour to get up and go walk, because I can't, you know, I can, I've developed the maturity and variety of things that if I really have to sit here for two, three hours, I can, I guarantee you, I am not mentally engaged that whole time. I'm escaped in other ways. And and that's, you know, that's part of part of the whole process too. We've, we as a society

have emphasized a lot more alternative teaching methods, alternative learning methods, and I think that is being really beneficial for the awareness of how to interact and work with divergent people.

Paul Huddleston 20:42

And hopefully it helps with everybody, as well. Because even though yes, this this does absolutely benefit neurodivergent people and, you know, addresses some of the issues that they have with the way things are currently done doesn't mean that it's only for that purpose, right? That that's beneficial to a lot of folks, regardless, what advice would you give to other professionals to help them support autistic individuals or folks who are neurodivergent?

Thomas McGovern 21:16

It's tricky at times in that some people, you have to work with each individual, right? Right. Some individuals don't want anything different, don't want anything, any attention, call to it, don't want anything. And that is that is a choice, that is an allowed thing. There are places that in classes afterwards, when I could catch just the one person that I've stopped and said, hey, you know, this is none of my business. But these are things I notice, from my personal background, I want you to know, there are these resources available, and I'm perfectly willing to talk with you about anything we need to do we're not and and in a lot of cases, just to the fact that I'm approaching it that way, means a lot to them on the respect side of a in the same way of approaching anybody, right? We all nobody likes to advertise how they're different, or how they don't fit in or you know, those kinds of things. Nobody likes that attention drawn to

Paul Huddleston 22:20

it. Nobody wants to feel called out. Yeah.

Thomas McGovern 22:23

And so respecting, respecting him from that same way you would want to be approached is really important. The other, the other thing that can be kind of hard, and you have to learn ways to deal with it. It's a lot like some of the other classroom issues, that the worst thing you can do to somebody who's neurodivergent, when they have something to actually contribute, is shutting them down. Because every time you do that they draw back into a deeper shell. Or in my son's case, he does not he is not an introvert he is not quiet. You know, when he's around? And I think that get he gets that from me. My mom used to say I was quiet until I was two and then I haven't shut up since right that I have verbal diarrhea and I don't exist if I'm not making noise.

Paul Huddleston 23:11

Yes, I somehow I can identify with that, for some reason

Thomas McGovern 23:16

why a lot of kids get told that right? But Justin that it's very true with Justin, he has no, no filter, and everything that goes is going on in his life as part of your life. And as a as a teacher professional, capitalizing on those moments where it's appropriate, and really reinforcing that. So for example, they were talking about spacecraft, and how high humans have gone. And you know that you need a space ship to actually do certain things and just piped up and said, that's not actually true. Red Bull jumped

out of a plane at what was essentially space. And the teacher said, Really, unfortunately, the teacher was was a science teacher, and went, that sounds kind of interesting. Can you share more, and then he went into his announcer voice Yep. And said, if I'm allowed to pull it up on YouTube, and he pulled up a little video, and then he talked about that whole red ball jump, and everybody in class learned something from it. And so we made a big deal of that day, it was a really good introduction and interruption instead of some of the others. He does

Paul Huddleston 24:21

as an as a teacher, which you have been for many, many years prior to becoming an administrator. How have you integrated your interaction and your personal connection with someone who is neurodivergent and on the autism spectrum, in the classroom, when you see that student that I really I'm picking up some things and how has that affected when you interact with students here?

Thomas McGovern 24:51

So one of one of the big things I I tried to do in the last six, eight years, right because it is a learning thing, right as a parent, there's that initial shock of this can't be my kid, this can't be my life. And, and I will fully admit I still deal with moments of this is not what I expected or wanted or envisioned doing with my child. But I, I try and ask the question very early in classes, how can I help you learn and give them that opportunity to provide the feedback, whether it's written or email or catch me, personally, whatever they're comfortable in, I also make a point of at the beginning of class saying, you know, if you need to get up and stretch or move around, just try and do it in a way you're not distracting anybody else. And be conscious that we're community here and, and being part of a community means some, there are some tenets of how you fit in. If you need to talk with me about any of those, please do so. Right, I try and make those those opportunities available. And I and I've had a couple of people that had various levels of autism, it's not uncommon in the engineering and tech side, right? People, people will go into science or into the hard subject of the hard sciences, I'm doing my air quotes, right? Because they're cut and dry. Right? Right,

Paul Huddleston 26:12

there's, there's not a whole lot of

Thomas McGovern 26:14

very right or wrong, there's no in between. And so in some ways that's easier for processing. And, and then a real big piece of it is trying to engage them in the areas that they're strong at, you know, those are those are places where special needs kids are either going to be tremendous assets in the class, or are going to be seen as huge distractions to everybody else. And it's really kind of your choice, what you cultivate, how you how you approach the problem in the room, and whether you how you how you handle that, and, you know, it can be difficult, finding others to talk to both as a parent, I, the first moment we went to the blue, special hockey, blue, special hockey is any kind of special needs, whether it's autism, Down syndrome, physical needs, and it's ages six through, I think our oldest players 45-50. So you know, a big range of, of players and things, our first practice when we went to it, and a kid decided to just sit in one of the tires and be dragged around on ice. I went, That's okay. We're not alone, these people understand, as opposed to the first time I'd taken him to indoor soccer and 10 minutes into it, I had to pull him off the field. Because his idea was that once the ball was gone, you ran

over and you push to the attacker who shot the ball. And I was like, you know, I can't, I can't do that I can't let my kid be that kid in this crew. Blue special hockey, that wasn't an issue and then you talk to those parents, and you get the similar stories. And, and it's really important as a parent to know there's others, yes, and be able to share some of those stories in a way that people aren't going to judge you of what a terrible kid. Because they're not. And that's the thing is, is you you find those moments where they're truly amazing and fantastic.

Paul Huddleston 28:10

It is sometimes very, almost awe inspiring, when you talk with some of these people, and they have these amazing reactions, or ideas or ways of looking at things, that where someone who is neurotypical would would see a problem and just keep running into it headlong. They metaphorically take about a 45 degree different angle on it and come at it from that way and they bust right through the problem or the obstruction

Thomas McGovern 28:45

arguing with with not arguing but having that discussion with your son why he can't do something as he continues to come up with? Well, what you're really saying is this. And feeding back to you some of your own lines of things and providing a truly good complete rational argument becomes an interesting exercise. Sometimes it can be difficult. And you'll learn around those. The other thing is is recognizing their world is different. And, and in our case, Justin has a truly interesting, unique sense of humor and has since he was born, at three days old, he was fake burping. He knew he knew to get more milk, he had to burp. And so he would, he would he would turn and go at and then look at you like where's one milk with all of the attitudes you could possibly put in his face. And we have a picture of that bit later. I would always be the one to get him up from the crib. And he'd light up and big smile his arms, he flies his arms out, you know, come get me. And I had told my wife about this and she tends to be that night owl and I'm early bird and so she never saw that and she's like, I really want to see that somebody said well you gotta get up on and and so one morning she did And she went in, and Justin looked up at her and I, I didn't want to be in his sightline. So I didn't want to spoil anything. So I was trying to hide where I could kind of watch. He looked like he was going to cry. He did the whole pouting face. He just eyes got really big, He curled his hands up next to his body was like, trying not to cry herself just devastated. Okay, no, kiddo, good morning. And then you could see the glint in his eye. He was faking the whole thing. He knew exactly what he was doing. And he was waiting for her to cry in the instant, she started to like, tear up and threw his face out and his big eyes and his arms. And he's been like that, ever since there, there are some things that are mommy things and some things that are daddy things. And randomly, he will walk up and give you a gigantic hug and just say I love you. And, you know, he may choose to sit on the floor right there with his iPad, watching, doing whatever, while you're doing whatever, because he just wants to be near you. And those are really good moments to have,

Paul Huddleston 31:08

those are really good with any child. The fact that a child acknowledges you exist and I want to be around you is a good thing. It is

Thomas McGovern 31:16

it is and and you know, you have to you have to latch on to a lot of those kinds of good moments where, where, you know, they were doing the right thing. And, and, you know, and even when they recognize it, I we've struggled a lot with behavior issues with Justin and finding, finding the right things. There's lots of tools out there. Between the sensory solutions is where we worked on sensory defensiveness. Easter Seals has some fantastic free, not benefits, but free assets or resources, right? We do some counseling with Easter Seals. So there's lots of really good resources out there. And making use of them is important. And then recognizing, okay, it's not a bad thing, when Justin gets up in the middle of class and says I need to leave for a few minutes before I lose my Yeah. And walked out of class. And with a a normal student, you'd be going well, that's horrible how dare you walk out on the teacher? But recognizing that he is self regulating, so that there isn't a bigger issue becomes one of those things that once again, as a as a professional, you've got to be aware of who's in your room and how they're interacting with things. He's ultra competitive. And so any game where they play, there's a danger of him blowing up, you know, Kahoot, he hates to lose. And so we've been working on how do you change that lose mentality. So that, okay, my name is not on the board, but I'm having fun with this. And it's not about my being on the top score. And keeping you cool. And part of what makes it hard is is you deal with all the same things that any kid would deal with. Right? We still have to deal with puberty, we still have to deal with all of a sudden he likes girls and thinks there's things he shouldn't shouldn't do. And, and then tie in the fact that he has no sense of personal boundary talking to you for two inches is just the same as talking to you from four feet, we're across the house, he expects you to have heard whatever it was he said that to him was important. So you have to work through all of those at the same time.

Paul Huddleston 33:23

Was there anything else you'd you'd like to add on that we didn't touch on today?

Thomas McGovern 33:28

I just one of the things is that you can't take what you learn in one situation and apply it to everybody. Right? There's a there's a saying that once you know, a special needs kid, you know, a special needs kid, just like we don't like to generalize on anything, right? However, a lot of the tools can apply the fact that my son, you know, we watched the Temple Grandin movie. And she for whatever reason found this whole thing with a gate to be super funny. And nobody else in the car is laughing and doesn't understand why just does the same thing. There are things to him that are just funny. And and what I have done at times is to start laughing and finally he'll go Why are you laughing? Because you're laughing? Why are you laughing? Sometimes he would tell me. And other times he's like, it's just funny. And I'm like, That's what funny is it's just funny. Now the times where it's something destructive or hurtful, I'll stop him and go, Why are you thinking that's funny? Let's let's talk about this from a greater society. So I mean, the big thing I would say is try to get as a parent, as a as a educator, as a professional. Find some of the other resources and and just be aware that when you run into one of these situations, you know, if you're treating it with love and kindness, it may not be in hindsight, you may go wow, I wish I'd done something a little different. But that's how we grow. And everybody everything on the planet is there for us to help us grow. We learn a lot lot and the reflection of the people around us and a special needs kid in particular will show you things about yourself If you're open to listening and hearing it, that nobody else ever will.

Paul Huddleston 35:13

Thank you so much. Again, we were talking with STEM Dean Tom McGovern from here on the St. Louis Community College of Florida and Valley campus. Thank you so much, Tom. It was great talking to you today. Yeah, anytime.