# Episode 264: Creating Exceptional Children & Polymaths Using Games of Genius
# With Opher Brayer

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

This episode is brought to you by one of my favorite people, Isa Herrera, and her Pelvic Pain relief system. Let's be real for a second… having kids can be tough on your pelvic floor health. And even if you haven't had a child, there are many things that can cause pelvic dysfunction or discomfort. If you've ever leaked urine as you laugh, cough, sneeze or jump, it may be a sign that your pelvis could use some help. The good news is that these types of problems can be helped and that is exactly what Isa helps women with! In fact, I can say that after carrying six babies, I can jump on the trampoline with them or run around to play capture the flag (or sneeze when they bring home a cold) without worrying about leaking urine, but I know many women who struggle with these activities. If you ever have, you've got to check out Isa's free masterclass which teaches things like: How to stop the bathroom trips, improve your posture, and put the fire back into your sexy with a super easy stretch (that you can do in just 30 seconds, anywhere, anytime).and why kegels might be causing leaking or making your pelvic pressure and pain worse, how to know if this is the case, and what to do instead. Even your doctor won't be able to share this with you. Isa has helped almost 15,000 women to find relief and freedom. Claim your spot at her incredible free masterclass at pelvicpainrelief.com/healing.

This episode is brought to you by Four Sigmatic, creator of all things superfood mushrooms and founded by my favorite Finnish Fun guys. I love all of their products, and in fact, I'm sipping their Reishi hot cocoa as I record this. These superfood mushrooms are always a part of my daily routine with their coffee + lions mane or coffee + cordycepts in the morning for energy and focus without as much caffeine as coffee to their chaga and cordyceps in the afternoon for antioxidants and immunity and the Reishi elixir at night for improved sleep. They also just released skin care that so clean you not only can eat it, but it's encouraged. Their charcoal mask has activated charcoal to clarify, chaga and cacao for an antioxidant boost and other herbal and superfood ingredients. It's so clean that it can literally be made into a cup of hot cocoa as well! Their superfood serum contains a blend of avocado and olive oils with Reishi and herbs for a hydrating skin boost. As a listener of this podcast, you can save 15% with the code wellness mama at foursigmatic.com/wellnessmama

Katie: Hello and welcome to "The Wellness Mama" podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com, and today's episode is going to be so fascinating because I am here with Opher Brayer who is a world famous talent coach and the creator of something called Games of Genius that we're going to talk about today. In 2018, he won the Tribeca Disruption Innovation Award for his revolutionary program. And he coaches the best and brightest in Silicon Valley. And he has taught innovation at many leading companies, including IBM and Disney Imagineering. He developed Games of Genius for parents of children ages four to eight because the educational system hasn't changed in decades. And it's not preparing our kids for a world where robots and AI will outperform humans and replace many of the jobs that exists today. And essentially, this helps children and various different ways we're really going to delve into them today. But, Opher, welcome, and thanks for being here.

Opher: Well, thank you, Katie. It's a pleasure for me to share, you know, my knowledge and my thoughts with moms. And I also would love to hear from them soon as possible to learn more.

Katie: Absolutely. And I'll make sure we have links in the show notes, of course, to everything that you talked about in this episode so people can find you and learn more. And I love this topic so much because I've said for years that, you know, the modern world has changed so much and education hasn't changed with it. And that's actually one of the reasons that we chose to homeschool and we use a very specialized system with our kids and have tutors that help with the idea of trying to, like, keep things like creativity and critical thinking that sometimes aren't necessarily focused on in school. But I'd love to start off by finding out how did you get into this and into education in general?

Opher: My dad was a teacher, so I was born, like, 62 years ago, a little bit more than that. And for me, education was a part of my life. And because other kids loved my father so much, I was in competition, you know, on getting his attention. And then when I was three years old, I decided I want to be a teacher because if I will be a teacher I will be loved. I just didn't know that some kids don't like their teachers. But for me, it was about how can I get the love from the students like my father did? And I started to teach my puppets when I was three years old. I started teaching at three years old.

Katie: Wow, that's amazing. And then it's obviously something that's, you know, been a theme throughout your life. Is that right?

Opher: That's what I've been doing all my life, even though when I was a consultant, like, for CEOs of companies, and they used to call me, "The teacher is here." Nobody said the consultant or the coach or anything else. "The teacher is here. He came to help us to learn." And I'm not really teaching, I'm helping people to explore. And I'm helping them to learn, not teaching them. So it's not about teaching. But this is what I found is the best way to learn, by exploration. That's what I've done, you know, all my life. I was homeschooled, by the way.

Katie: Were you? That's awesome. And I've heard you're called an education hacker as well. So can you explain what that means or how that differs from just teaching, like you said?

Opher: I'll explain. When you go and talk to government or to mayors of cities and/or to principals and say, "Let's change education," they said, "Yes, yes." But they're afraid of change. They will not risk. So they say, "What works works, even though it's not exactly what the world needs, it still works. Still." So it's either you fight with the governments or either you fight with the local authorities, you know, mayors of cities or you hack the system. And since I'm from Israel, hacking is part of our life. That's how we take care of ourselves, like cyber hacking. The good side of cyber hacking, not the bad side of cyber hacking.

So for me was is to find a way how to hack this, the systems at the point when they cannot tell me that I'm not allowed to do what I'm doing. So when I went like three years ago to the Czech Republic to change the education system there, the only thing I asked the teachers is, "Do you really teach the 50 minutes of a lesson or do you have like 5 minutes that you talk to the kids like small talk?" They said, "Of course, we have small talk." So I said to them, "Do you know what? Instead of small talk, like give it this kind of games, play the game instead of a small talk and look for the results. And the results can be, you know, within four month, you have seen amazing results." And then the Education Minister came to me and said to me, "How did you do it

without our permission and get results?" That was the biggest question. That was the point. So hacking means, "Look, don't change the education system. Stop trying to change it. It's so hard to change. Add something into it."

Imagine like if you have a car, okay, let's make an analogy for a second and your car has a 200-horsepower engine and you spend 2 liters on every, you know, 40 miles. If I doubled the ability of saving the gasoline, right, to save the gas, and I will enable your car to have...doubling the power, to double the power of the car. So you will have a stronger car with less gas being used. "Would you be willing to give me $100 for this, now you have a car for $20,000?" Of course, you would say, "I would rather give you $1,000, if you can make this car much better for such a low cost and less investment in gas." So this is the same thing. I'm just adding something to the system that changes the system totally, instead of trying to change the system. No need. Make a slight change, a slight change, and that can change everything. You know, there was a guy 100 years ago, he invented this idea of 80/20 rule. And he said...it was Pareto was his name. And he said that you need to invest in the 20% that creates the 80% of the results. So for me, it was, you know, investing the time on the 1% that creates 99% of the results. That's hacking. Don't change, don't fight, collaborate. Make a slight change that can change everything.

Katie: That makes sense. And I've heard of the 80/20 principle and I'm curious how...like walk us through a little bit of the practical side of this. Like what is this methodology and how do you implement it? Because I love that you say you don't have to change the system, it can work with an existing system. I'm assuming whether it'd be homeschool or regular school, but what does the system actually look like within these games?

Opher: It's quite simple. It has four elements. The basic thing that kids do when they're born, it's simple. You just have to keep it because they do it. You see, kids when they're being born, they want to explore the world. They have all the motivation in the world to learn how to walk and how to talk and how to communicate and they happen naturally. You don't have to convince them. You don't send them to motivational speakers. Okay, they're four-month-old and they're trying to learn how to move and how to smile and how to talk. So this exploration is natural. Because in the school systems, we are losing this natural ability. We just have to bring it back. How?

So we did a research the last 18 years. And we watched kids at home to see what mothers are doing with the kids. We just watched them. I mean, we used cameras. At those time there were the big cameras. It was the VHS cassettes kind of. Something like 20, 30 years ago. And we saw a couple of things happening when the mother is talking to a child and we saw the development of the children and we did with a couple of hundreds of kids. And the first thing we found that kids, what they do, they're trying to understand the world by doing pattern recognition.

They ask, "How does it work?" So if I have a Lego, they look and say, "Oh, how did you connect those parts that it looks like a house? Hmm, this is interesting." And then they will take the how did you create it, they will turn it into small parts, and they were trying to build either, again, the house, which is copy this pattern that they've seen, or sometimes they will try to create a different house or a different element, let's say, like a car from the same Lego parts. So we saw in the videos, hundreds of hours of videos, that what kids do when

they're young, let's say, between the age of two to six, they play Lego parts, okay, games of different kinds, but trying to break things and assemble them and break them and assemble them and break them and assemble them.

And what we saw that they're looking for patterns. When they see a pattern, they can copy the pattern. Or if he sees, let's say, a train when he's traveling with his parents in the weekend, he comes back home, he take the Lego parts and he's trying to build a train because he's seen one, or he's trying to build something very imaginative because they can imagine anything. Nobody tells them not to imagine. So what kids do, they do pattern recognition naturally. The moment we start to add data to their life in tests, then there's no need any more for the imagination for them, unfortunately, and they're losing their ability to innovate new patterns, what we call patterns design. Look at the pattern. It could be passive like an art form, it could be an active pattern, behavior of a parent.

"You're breaking it to parts. How does it work? How does my parents do it?" Or, "How did you paint this?" Or, "What is the painting? What are the parts?" And they look at the patterns and break them into parts and they do pattern design. All of these, two things, pattern recognition, pattern design is natural being lost over the years and is the most important thing in life. When you communicate with new people, you look for patterns, dynamic patterns. When you see a technology, you're looking at the technology as a passive pattern or an active when it's an app. "How does it work? How does it work? How quick can I create something similar? How does it work?" Pattern recognition, creating something similar. It's pattern design.

And all this comes to one point which we call composition. Kids love to compose. They love to create things and say, "Mom, look, look, look what I've created." And the mom think that her child is a genius. And she's right because he's done something that he's has not done before ever, just using his imagination and some skills, not knowledge, skills in pattern recognition, pattern design. This is the composition part. And in order to understand how things work, sometimes the child will use something being called analogy. Analogy is just, you know, three words. "This is like..." "Oh, I understand. It's like a car but it's a train. It's like a cup but it's a glass. It's like a fork but you can use it outside, you know, if you want to plant something. It looks like..." So we use an analogy easily to learn something faster because it looks like so you don't have to understand too much of it to analyze.

So this four elements, pattern recognition, pattern design, analogy, and what we call real time composition are the natural elements of development of human. If you look at kids, you will see that's what they're doing 90% of their time. However, when we start to teach them and to take them into test and to test their knowledge, and not to test their creativity and their ability to recognize new patterns and ideas and concepts and technologies, okay, that's we're starting to lose them in their creative process. These are the four elements, pattern recognition, pattern design, written composition, and analogy.

We are just bringing back what was natural for the child. And the moment he has that backing him, his motivation to explore the world grows by thousands of percent. And all the greatest inventors of our time have these four abilities. They love to explore and they're highly motivated. Look at Elon Musk and people like him. These are the leaders of the world and that's why they do so well. So Elon Musk went to look for how

NASA is sending a rocket. And he said, "But why can't the rockets come back? Why does it have to spread into parts in the air, you know, in the outer space? I want to create something that will come back."

And people told him, "It's not possible." But for a child, nothing is impossible. And he's quite childish, Elon Musk, but very much when it comes to creation. And this is kind of the people who lead the world. He looked at the patterns of behavior of the rocket. He knows something about science, but he's also a very creative person and made some analogies to other fields and recomposed the rocket so it can come back and go back and forth, back and forth, you know, to the outer space and send some materials over there with everything need to do. Like a truck rocket, like a truck that, you know, take things over to the sky. These are the elements.

Katie: That's so fascinating. And I think it's probably a pretty universal sentiment among parents that, you know, we all want our kids to grow up to have certain traits and to be kind and to contribute to the world, but also to be able to have some degree of success in whatever that is in their life. And so I'm curious, I mean, we alluded to it, but with the current education system, not necessarily being the entire solution to that type of equation anymore. And so I'm curious if you can speak to the, like, nature versus nurture part of this equation. You know, for kids, how much of this is innate talent or things they're born with versus things that we can nurture in them no matter what gifts they may or may not be born with?

Opher: Look, there are two parts into that. Look, as I told you before, pattern recognition, pattern design, analogy, and composition is natural. They're being born with it. Without it, they couldn't learn a new language and to control their body and to become more physical and even to learn emotional cues. "Oh, my father is laughing, is smiling at me," "Oh, maybe I will learn how to smile back. Let's see what the feedback will be."

So this multi-talent ability is by nature we've had it. However, there's another part. Because parents don't know how to grow those geniuses multi-talents, they don't know and they're guessing but they don't know, by chance, 1 out of 1,000 kids, will work through the right path with his mother or his father. That is by chance. But nobody shows us the process. And therefore, 999 out of 1,000, will lose it over time. Because we tell them, "You have to read and write. You have to learn mathematics. You have to learn this. You have to learn that." These are the things that you have to do, have, have, but is it correct that you have to do them? Yes, of course you need to learn how to read and write. Yes. And you have to understand and physics and sciences. But the question is how to learn it and how to understand it and how to make it useful for you. So nurtured, it's because we lost it. When we went to the kindergarten at age five and we were studying how to read and write and understand the world in some ways and they didn't let us to ask questions anymore. Why? Because there are 20 kids in the class, so I am the teacher, I will ask the questions, you answer at the tests or it's your homework.

But kids, they question forever. They can ask you why 20 times one after the other. They can ask you what. They can ask you how, how things work. And then when they go to school, we ask the questions. We don't let them ask the questions. And they are losing this ability to explore those things out there. And then when they grow up, we're trying to teach them creativity, which was natural. We send them to read books or to go to events about motivation with motivational speakers. For what? They've had it before but they have lost it.

They have lost. So now we have to nurture what was lost. It's natural. All the kids learn how to work and how to speak and how to smile naturally. So they can learn everything naturally.

But we think because we were educated in certain way that there are other things more important than this. Let's bring them back to the natural state. They've learned a language out of nothing. They came to the world without knowledge of the language because if the child was born in England or the child was born in Turkey, it could be the same child. But it's not by nature for him to speak a language, his learning a new language depends on which country he lives in. So it could be a language or behavior. It depends on the context, the ability is the same ability, all kids have the same abilities. Now, it depends how we nurture it, what is the environmental he lives in, which country, which city, which are his friends? Who are his parents? What do they know? Do they know how to develop a multi-talent personality? And do parents understand that he might be multi-talent personality because we don't know what will be the jobs of the future anyway.

You can teach them coding, but is coding is the profession of 10 years ahead? Not for sure. It's the best profession now. Ten years ago nobody knew that there will be a profession of social media experts. And maybe in 10 years from today, they will not be one. Maybe social media will be done by AI and robots. So it is natural. Let's bring it back because it's the fastest way to learn something out of nothing. And the child is learning something out of nothing. And language, which is out of nothing, his learning behavior out of nothing. So depends on which family he is or which country. Like kids in Turkey and kids in China, they behave differently.

I just gave a lecture for graduates in business in Stanford. And I came to this event to speak. And I was shocked at Stanford, one guy was a Jewish guy from Russia. Ninety-nine other people or were the graduate there were Chinese. So there is something in China that is happening that make them highly motivated for success. And I'm not saying it's good or bad, it's okay because I don't know the other parts, the negative parts of it. But I'm saying that when you look at Chinese people and you look at Italian people, the Italian people or Spanish people, they want siesta, they want to enjoy life. Chinese, they don't enjoy life, they need to get somewhere. So it depends on the environment. But the child is a child.

Take a Chinese, a guy who was born on the first day, send him to Spain or, I don't know, Venezuela, he would behave differently, even though he's Chinese. So can it be nurtured? It should be nurtured. Is there something natural there? Yes. And it's so simple. We don't have to seek if my child is musical or not. Ninety-nine percent of the kids are musical. Ninety-nine percent of them physically can be built to do martial arts. Would they become the best in the world? I don't know. But all of them can do it. So it doesn't matter which field you're going into. It just depends on what you do with the time you have. Natured, natural, it's a composition.

Katie: That makes sense. And that's good perspective. And I love that you mentioned kids naturally asking why so much because I have six kids. And I joke in my bio usually that I'm highly experienced in answering the question why because I get asked it a lot with all of my kids. But I also have always had this kind of sense that that was a really important teaching moment and that those were great times to, like, keep their curiosity and to springboard that curiosity into other things. And my husband and I have also talked a lot about how...just like you said, like our careers that we have, you know, a blogger, an author, an online creator, that didn't even exist when I was a kid. So I could never have thought to be that because it didn't exist yet.

And likely, our kids will have the same potential in their life of being able to be things that don't even exist yet. And so how do you prepare them for a world you don't know? And our thought was you want to make them things like adaptable and able to learn new skills quickly and creative and like connect dots where other people don't see them, which sounds like the same thing you're talking about. So can you explain like on the practical side how or maybe what these games of genius are and then how they're helping to ignite those things in children?

Opher: I'll show an example, a very simple example. Two days ago, I sent those games to a guy in Hong Kong and he said, "Let me try with my kids." I gave him like five exercises, five games. Today, he wrote me an email. "You changed my whole perspective about my life, like more creativity with my child." So what is it? It's quite simple. Imagine, this is the most important word in the world, imagine. Imagine you have two pens, okay, two crayons. One of them is black, one of them is yellow. And you hold them in your hands. One is on the left hand, one of them is on your right hand.

And on the word you will hit for me, you know, I will say to you change. I don't want to say any other words. Naturally, after two seconds, the child will change that the yellow one will go to the left hand and the black one will go to the right hand. Please remember right hand was with the black one. Change, probably the child would change positions. You do some other things. Most cases 90% of them change the position. Now, you have two elements, black and yellow. And now when you turn them is yellow, black. They resemble pens. Imagine that one of them was big and one of them was small. And both of them were black. And I will tell you, change.

So will have big, small and then small, big. And the child will tell you, now, the big one is on the right hand instead of the left hand. Oh, so we know the pattern, we see the pattern of two elements. We can see it in colors. We can see it in shapes. We can see it in formats. We see it in different ways. Now will tell you go to the piano, go to a xylophone. Here are two notes. Just two notes. Two black ones. One knew each other. Can you play the first position and second position like you did with your hands? So, black, yellow, yellow, black. And now the child goes to the piano and plays do-re, re-do. Do-re, re-do.

Now he made an analogy from a visual world of colors changing positions into two notes. And then you take the challenge time. "Let me teach you martial arts." And he says, "Okay." "Cool. You can hit me. You know, hit me in my stomach lightly, please. Don't kill me. And my shoulder." So they're two elements, right and left hand. And the child will do right into the stomach and left him to the shoulder. And then you say, "Change." And he will change positions, which means first the shoulder then the stomach. But if you tell him also change hands, then instead of left, right, he will do left, right, right, left, or right, left, left, right.

Now we started this lesson less than 40 seconds ago. The channels, tools in martial arts or maybe four if you change hands, he knows how to make a pattern of colors and shapes, big and small, yellow black, and he play two melodies, do-re, re-do. Imagine that after 7 minutes, he will be able to do 216, to play 216 melodies with 0 mistakes. And remember which one he played and which one he didn't play yet. This is a magic, a magical moment for a child that can play 216 melodies. If somebody would have told me that he can teach me 216

melodies within 7 minutes, I would not believe him. Mathematically, it's possible. So we nurture the mathematical brain instead of teaching algebra.

You start to see patterns in mathematical forms. The point is that it's very hard to teach mathematics because mathematics is abstract. And children love to use imagination at least until the age of 11 when they start to completely lose it because of the education systems, most of them, not all of them. But sadly, the next 7 minutes, I'm learning to do 216 moves in martial arts, and then the next 7 minutes to 216 drawings of shapes of patterns on a cup. After 21 minutes to do all this, it's basically doing the impossible. You have to see the faces of children playing so much music and drawing so well after 20 minutes. You should see the faces of the parents. They run to bring their cameras immediately. They want to send it to grandma and to friends and they go to the Facebook, "Look at my child. Seven minutes ago, he knew nothing about the piano. He can play 216 melodies. My child is a prodigy."

And it's just a skill. It's not knowledge. This is just a slight example out of 14,400 games. But it's not about the 14,400. Why? Because oftentimes their parents who will use it also in his work, by the way, naturally, besides with their children in their home, it will come and language at home. If they go to a restaurant, they will think how to design the plate. When they're traveling somewhere and they will look, it's a field with flowers, and you will start to see patterns. And they go home and do pattern design with flowers. Like, you know, like a flower shop. It's everywhere. It becomes natural. It's part of life. And if you can see patterns, and you can see patterns in marketing, in branding, in technology, because it's all about pattern recognition. So all those games, simple games. However, if you go to game number 2,000, now, you will not be able to do it. But game number 2,000 is as easy as number 1 if you follow all of them as a sequence, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 until 2,000. You can get to 2,000 games in less than a year. And your child will be able to learn patterns in history in class or English lessons 10 times faster than his friends.

Katie: That's so incredible that it's almost like unfathomable to understand and I will of course put links in the show notes so people can actually experience and to see it because it truly is astounding. So how are these most often implemented? Are these typically done by parents or are school systems now implementing this? And kind of what's the best way and age and timing to implement?

Opher: The age could be a three years old and above. But if you take in six years old, he will learn it very fast. Kids who are 12 years old, in the beginning they go slower than the kids who are 6 years old, but within 2 weeks, they become faster than 6 years old. But why? Because they've seen more in their lives or they have more data that can be useful for this creativity. However, the implementation was done in two ways. We do it in couple of countries. One way is we go to school systems, we train teachers. And after the teacher understand the language and know how to speak the language, he will go into class and recreate his own lesson plans. Like you will do, by the way, or the parents, you will create your own lesson plans, you will be able to do this. Okay, it's like a platform for you.

Now, in the school systems that the teacher is getting into class, play a game between three to seven minutes and then she teaches, you know, the subject. That could be history, it could be English class, or it could be mathematics. So to play a game at the beginning of class, every hour, the results are phenomenal. We have now in the Czech Republic 2,000 kids going into this process with 80 teachers, and it's growing fast. And the

results are phenomenal. Unbelievable results that they have. And it's the teachers that do it. With parents, it's quite easy. And you get all the videos, you just follow them, watch the video, do the game, watch the video, play the game, watch the video, play the game. That's it. You play the game and the child plays the game. Both of you have to play because you have to speak the same language. And you have to become a model for the child. Although over time the child will become your model.

Now, when you do it once a day for seven minutes, the abilities in creativity and in understanding conventional sciences and technology and stuff will grow by 2X, right? Like by 100%. If you play two games per day, you double the speed. If you play three games per day...I can tell you that what we've seen that many parents started with one game every day, seven minutes go to a child, that's it. It's an exciting moment for the parents and the kids. However, the kids, they create the demand. "Can we play another one? Can we play another one? Can we play another one?" And suddenly, you can see them at 6 years old child playing with a brother who is 12 years old. Because it's the same game for both of them.

Now, this becomes a communication system at home and you start to see patterns all the time and exploring all the time. So for parents, you can do it once a day. You can it do in breakfast, if you have the time. You can do it in the weekend, like for one hour playing those games. It's better if you do it every day because the brain can accumulate itself, you know, and sink into this kind of thinking. So it's better to do every day. If you skip one day, it doesn't matter. And if the kids want to do a two or three or four of them per day, and it can become even a nice evening at home when you would play and ripping other people. And we bring grandma and grandpa or if we can meet with them sometimes for the weekend or on vacation, and play it all around. And because it can be played anywhere, anytime with any materials that you find in nature even, then it becomes easy.

I can tell you that kids fall in love with it and for a good reason. That immediately they can show how smart they are to themselves. And also get, you know, recognition from the environment. Because getting recognition only from parents is not good enough. If you're not good at something, if your parents are telling you that you are great, you're deceiving them. They know that they're not good. However, if they're good and don't understand that it's good, then you have to help them. But what if they're good and you're telling them that they're good? That's the best way to go. "Oh, this is wonderful. How did you play those things?"

Now they go into a chess board and suddenly they can see patterns. They can follow your patterns. They can deceive you into game. They can find new ways to play the game. They go into the kitchen with mom and say, "Mom, but can we cook it this way instead of this way?" So it's everywhere. So the moment you do it, like, two games per day or three games, it will take you around 20 minutes. So I believe most people would love to devote 20 minutes to coach their children for this kind of brain. However, it will become natural so you will play the game without noticing. When you're traveling, when you're going, when you're meeting, when you're home, when you're cooking, when you're doing other things.

So over time after, like, three months, it becomes natural. So you continue with the games because they teach you the next level, the next stage of development. Again, because it's always kind of trying to take you to the next level but it becomes natural. So I've seen parents just doing this all day long, at work, on Skype, on the WhatsApp. Calling their kids, "Hey, I saw this..." Or they take videos of like patterns of cars or like on a

highway. And kids look at the patterns of the behavior of cars, how they move. So it becomes a language. But total three games per day is plenty.

This episode is brought to you by one of my favorite people, Isa Herrera, and her Pelvic Pain relief system. Let's be real for a second… having kids can be tough on your pelvic floor health. And even if you haven't had a child, there are many things that can cause pelvic dysfunction or discomfort. If you've ever leaked urine as you laugh, cough, sneeze or jump, it may be a sign that your pelvis could use some help. The good news is that these types of problems can be helped and that is exactly what Isa helps women with! In fact, I can say that after carrying six babies, I can jump on the trampoline with them or run around to play capture the flag (or sneeze when they bring home a cold) without worrying about leaking urine, but I know many women who struggle with these activities. If you ever have, you've got to check out Isa's free masterclass which teaches things like: How to stop the bathroom trips, improve your posture, and put the fire back into your sexy with a super easy stretch (that you can do in just 30 seconds, anywhere, anytime).and why kegels might be causing leaking or making your pelvic pressure and pain worse, how to know if this is the case, and what to do instead. Even your doctor won't be able to share this with you. Isa has helped almost 15,000 women to find relief and freedom. Claim your spot at her incredible free masterclass at pelvicpainrelief.com/healing

This episode is brought to you by Four Sigmatic, creator of all things superfood mushrooms and founded by my favorite Finnish Fun guys. I love all of their products, and in fact, I'm sipping their Reishi hot cocoa as I record this. These superfood mushrooms are always a part of my daily routine with their coffee + lions mane or coffee +cordycepts in the morning for energy and focus without as much caffeine as coffee to their chaga and cordycepts in the afternoon for antioxidants and immunity and the Reishi elixir at night for improved sleep. They also just released skin care that so clean you not only can eat it…. But its encouraged. Their charcoal mask has activated charcoal to clarify, chaga and cacao for an antioxidant boost and other herbal and superfood ingredients. It's so clean that it can literally be made into a cup of hot cocoa as well! Their superfood serum contains a blend of avocado and olive oils with Reishi and herbs for a hydrating skin boost. As a listener of this podcast, you can save 15% with the code wellness mama at foursigmatic.com/wellnessmama

Katie: I think to help people understand a little bit more too, this is not like your typical just online video game, right? Like I know a lot of parents are familiar with some of those like ABCmouse or these different online learning games for kids. So I'd love to hear, A, kind of your opinion of those kind of things, but also just maybe differentiate a little bit more the nature of these games so parents can kind of understand how they will implement it.

Opher: I will. First of all, you know, they say that if you have a screen and you work with a screen, it's interactive. I'm sorry, I'm talking about real interaction. Not with the screen but between two human using physical things. It's very nice to drive on an Xbox a car. But it doesn't mean you'd be able to drive the car outside the house. Because in Xbox you can make an accident and nothing will happen to you, in reality, if you have this kind of an accident, it will be a disaster. So when we talk about interactive games, it means like, let's play together physically. And that also helps us to perform communication around it. It's not, like, I was playing on my computer for two hours and then I'm sharing with my parents what they went through.

No, we're sharing now in real time. We compose in real time. We're playing the game real time. We look at each others' eyes. We enjoy. We have fun together, not alone in front of a screen. In front of a screen, there's a lot of loneliness, even if you play against other kids in other places on the screen, you're still lonely. So in fighting this loneliness, which is one of the problems of our society, we make everything interactive because we need the brain and the body, okay, and the mind to be connected well to each other doing those things. You can't throw a ball on interactive game. But it's not like holding the ball and throwing it. Not into brain, not in your body, not development of your body and not development of your brain. There are other parts of the brain that work when you're moving physically to develop the brain's ability.

So we can go like this. We can take two shapes. Like we take too like a box or pick anything. You can pick an iPhone and a pen. And we start to see combinations. Different kinds and play with them. "Hey, look, hey, this look like this, this look like this." We will start to make analogies immediately. They compose. A game is a family of composers. And then we say, "Okay, let's move to the piano now and see what we can do on the piano." For the child to do something, I'm doing something and then they're games that we do together. And it sounds beautiful, by the way. It sounds like they're musicians. But we're not teaching you to become a musician and not a designer.

So we move from design to music, to music to martial arts. And each one of them is up to seven minutes. Because the reason is not the after-school activities, it is just the tool that we're using. And then we can move to choreography and then ballet dancing. And then we play chess and then we go to cook. And then we do other things. And we can move from one field to another. All the games I've designed are around 14 fields, but it can be useful in other fields. And then we can go also to the Xbox and start to see patterns during play together.

And now what's happening that are through those series of after-school activities, let's call them, okay, those forms of arts and sports and brain triggers, we start to develop high level imagination. But also there are other things that are being developed into game, which are important to know. One is the engineer's mind. Why? Because we construct all the time. We build something new. There are two other things in those games that are happening. You know this guy, Steve? You know, Steve. I'll tell you in a second. Did you notice his friend, other friend was called Steve?

They changed the world. They invented the iPhone. Highly imaginative machine at those times. Did you know that you can move your finger on it and push things like in a book, you know, and move them around? Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. One of them came from design. He was a designer. The other one was an engineer. Imagine those two elements of Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak in the brain of one child, one is imaginative and artistic and other part in the brain is engineer. So all those games are creating these kind of elements. Okay, this kind of skills, imagination and engineering at the same time. So it doesn't matter where we move. So you want to patterns with flowers, it's fine. If you want to do something else, if you want to learn coding, you will start to see patterns immediately. And you create a game by coding something.

The basic element is designed in different fields. The design of the combat in martial arts, real-time design. The design of improvising music. It's designed. It's a real-time design, real-time composition. So we go through

these games and every day we explore new abilities, because the span of attention of kids is pretty long. And they need to move from one field to another every couple of minutes. So if they do it naturally, anyway, why do we move? But on the back of it, there's one system that they're learning. So it's the patterns in arts and in music and in cooking, and in chess that are the same. Suddenly, we have one brain that can be used with all these skills into all professions in the world. These are the games.

Katie: It's so amazing and, I mean, it's clear how it can prepare them for a wide range of futures, and in a so much more practical way than just strictly like testing and schooling. But I am curious because when you mentioned pattern recognition, for instance, and analogy, like those are things that are very common on IQ tests, and also when I took the Mensa test. So I'm curious. Does that have an effect on intelligence or IQ? I know that wouldn't even necessarily be the goal, but I'm just curious if there's a passive impact.

Opher: Let me tell you a story, we did not do any academic research on it. However, we do have results. So when we started into it, we do it in Israel, Czech Republic, you know, in Singapore, and many countries, but it's Czech Republic where we started. There was a teacher that is teaching retarded kids. Retarded means IQ of 50. And please remember that retarded kids never raise IQ. And one day the teacher came to class when I was training them, the teachers. These are teachers that I was training, not my trainers. These were the first people I trained in the Czech Republic.

And she's an expert. She learned all the courses in the world and all the books by psychologists on how to deal with retarded kids, or what we call unfortunate kids. And one day, she said to me, "Opher, would you come to see my class?" I said, "Sure, I'll travel there." I took the train. I had to travel over there. I came to the class and she says, "You see this girl, four months ago before we started to play the games, like three or four times a day, this girl didn't know how to count from 1 to 10 and she is 11 years old. Four months later, she could count to 10,000. And she can do adding and subtracting which she couldn't do before. We saw how it was developed by your games." And some of the games that she created, because it's an open source. So you can create your own game. So she created her own games based on the same model.

Then she showed me the other girl. "Look at her. She's 12. She can read," she says to me. "She can speak quite nicely. She can write words. However, she was not able to ever to compose a sentence. Now she writes stories and poems for my theater." And then I didn't know but she did an IQ test to the kids, because they have to do every six months IQ test for some reason. I don't know. It's the law or something. She said, "Opher, all the kids raise IQ between four to seven points, which is almost impossible for a regular child to go through. Nevertheless, you know, retarded." Last night, I had a webinar with them, with the teachers. And she told me that one of those kids on this class, they're like 11 kids in this class, went through a test that they have to do every year. And the test came, declared that he is normal now and not retarded. And she says, "It's only about the games."

So I remember a couple of months ago when she told me about those two girls that couldn't read and do mathematics and she asked me, "Opher, how does it work, this system, on this kind of kids?" And I said, "Oh, Susanna, I have no clue. I have no idea how does it work. But let me ask you a question. Do you have an iPhone and you use it even though you don't understand how it works and it works great. Just continue. I have no answer." I did ask some professors. Okay, one of them from MIT about those games, about the test and

they said that what the games are doing, they create a new connections in the brain that have been lost. But it's not academically researched. The research will be done probably next year. For now, what I can tell you, we see the results.

We see classes of kids, of underdeveloped class, not retarded, but, you know, kids with issues. Seven kids for one class went to competition in sciences. It never happened in those kinds of classes ever before in the Czech Republic. Usually, it's the kids from the gifted classes who went like two or three of them for a competition. Can I explain exactly how it works? No, but it works. So, yes, I'm sure that if somebody would go to a Mensa test, I'm sure, I don't know, I cannot promise, after playing one year of this, it would be easier for him to show improvement in IQ. Although IQ is not the most important part in our life. We'll talk about that by the end of this call.

Katie: Yeah, I think that's a huge point as well. And definitely, I'm glad that you brought that back up. That's just one measure and I agree, not the most important, especially when we're talking about long term success for our kids and the things we actually hope they enter adulthood with. I think that's a really, really important point. I'm curious too, because there's a lot of parents listening, can these games be helpful? You mentioned even like a 14-year-old kid could learn them. Can they still be helpful for older children or are they really just effective in that four to eight-year-old range?

Opher: They're effective for every age. I've seen kids of 17 years old moving so fast unbelievably. They can finish those games like eating rice. One, two, three, four, five. They move fast. Is it helpful for them? Let me go further than 17 years old. I've trained people in my country for a special unit in the Israeli army. It's the cyber unit. Many of them were accepted to this unit, which is hard to get to this unit because it's the highly qualified intelligent kids. But I wasn't…when I was working for...when I did these workshops for Disney many years ago, some of the people that asked me, "You know, Opher, can we go like to..." people that they knew in Orlando. And they said to me, "Can we go to Miami to an elderly house?"

I'm going to this elderly house. I go up there, do a workshop with these games. These are 80-years old kids. Eighty years old. And we played the games. And suddenly one of them, he went to the door, he closed the door like a ninety-years-old guy. Closed the door. He went to the window, it was the 14th floor, or something, I don't remember. He threw the keys outside to the swimming pool. And he told me, "Mr. Brayer, we're all millionaires. You're not going from here because this is exactly what our brain needs. Don't go from here." After two hours, we can feel that the brain started to work again.

So 17 years old, they would love to do it. It's even beautiful because the 17 years old would love to show it to other kids who are 6 years old and 5 years old and play with them. This interactive, really interactive game, it's a game for everyone. I've done it for companies, you know, like Microsoft and playing those games. And people were able to see how to do pattern recognition in business, in marketing, in sales, in networking easily. So if you have a child of 17 years old, let him lead the games at home, become the leader, play the games with the kids. I mean, if you have other kids and… There's no one in the world that does not need to work on this pattern recognition and pattern design abilities and to use his highly imaginative brain. No one.

Katie: Yeah, that's wonderful. And yeah, I'm so excited to continue this journey with my own kids. And there are a lot of parents listening both homeschooling parents and working parents who probably are wanting to figure out, like how to implement this in their own life. And I'll make sure that link is in the show notes as well, but to speak especially to the homeschooling parents for a minute, I'd love to hear your thoughts on if you could kind of create what you would consider an optimal learning environment, or an optimal education type system in general. Obviously, it would include these games, but do you have any other insights of what kind of environment it would be or other factors that could help kids in various ways?

Opher: There are many things we need to teach our children. But let's start from the beginning. We talked about pattern recognition, pattern design, and analogy, and written composition. We develop imagination system, engineering abilities, and research and development abilities, which we haven't talked yet about. We teach children how to research and how to develop something out of it. Not to make a research for the sake of research. Imagination, engineering, research, and development are the parts that created the iPhone.

In a second, I will explain everything. Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, imagination and engineering when they meet up. They formed a team of research and development to create iPhone, right? All this in one person's life can help us to use these four elements of analogy with a composition and stuff and using these sources of imagination, engineering, research, and development into the fields that I believe are the fields of the future. Arts, so whatever artistic thing you do at home, bring the analogy of integral position into it. You must teach your children to understand technology because these are our partners for life at least for the next 15 to 20 years.

So if they need to learn coding, or engineering, or electronics, or anything else, we need to teach them sciences because when you want to build an iPhone, you need to understand chemistry and physics and other things. And we have to teach them also economics, because economics is a part of the business of life, of saving, of investments, you know. So when we take the whole picture of arts, science, technological skills, sciences, sciences, arts, technological skills, and economics together with these skills of imagination, engineering, research and development and with the source code of analogy, pattern design, and written composition, then everything that you teach at home, teach them technology, they need to know. Teach them arts, they need to know. Teach them sciences, they need to know. Teach them economics, they need to know.

And if you connect all of them through those four elements in developing imagination and technology, imagination and science, imagination and economics, imagination and arts, engineering and technology, engineering economics, engineering in sciences, engineering, and arts, research in arts. We do research in art. In order to create something new. And if you do research and technology, research and science, okay, research and economics, development of arts in your art forum or new designs, the development of technology, development of new economical models, development of sciences, it's one world. So if there is a plan at home to teach our children about sciences, arts, technology, and economics through these four elements of imagination, engineering, development, and research through the games of analogy, pattern, design, and written composition, the child will become a polymath thinker. These are the next century innovators.

If you go to Wikipedia and you read about polymath, like poly and mathematics, polymath thinking, you will be surprised that this was developed more than 600 years ago. And some of the most amazing innovators of the world have been these people. And since the world is about innovation and since everything else will be done by machines, we can connect those elements into one language, teach them sciences, teach them technology, teach them economics. In our model of 12-year development of children for the school systems as well as in the long term for the parents, we will combine everything inside.

For now, we're doing just the arts. But then we connect it into technology, into sciences, into economics. And the games continue to help the child to be able to innovate by the age of 11. I mean, scientifically, doing the work of innovation, not a game of creativity. So just connect all the dots because it's all one. So all these four elements should be around all these areas of art, science, technology, and economics. However, there's one thing we need to understand. The moment we develop a smart human, we need to develop a good human. We don't want the child to be highly intelligent, a billionaire, leading the world of technology and science and economics and have a bad heart.

So in our system, we also combine these elements, which is not on this first course, but it's on the next courses. How to make this child becoming the most successful on earth and how to bring everything back to society because this is crucial. If the child does not have the heart of a compassionate person, it'd be used in a bad way. So over the time, we work on that part too, being compassionate, thinking about others, thinking about the poor. And how, not by thinking, by taking action, and creating innovations that will help technologies, whatever, that will help the poor people to survive, to grow, to learn, to become like us.

Katie: Wow, yeah, that's amazing. And I think that is truly the key at the end that you mentioned is also making sure that they have good heart and kindness and a desire to help others that that absolutely is the key or else you could be creating an evil genius of sort. So, I love that focus, it's so important.

Opher: You know, I come from a Jewish family because I live in Israel and my parents ran through the holocaust. The guy who killed 6 million Jews and another 13 million Russians and another...okay, I will not mention his name who came from Germany, basically. This guy was brilliant but so mean. We don't want these kind of kids. There are destroyers in the world. They're minority but there are a lot of developers in the world. And we want our children to be there.

So, like, in the schools that we are working, we teach them how to take care of their environment and the local neighborhood and do things for the neighborhood to enable old people, or retarded kids, or people with Asperger's to communicate better. We teach them how to create the things that will not be for money. They need to create something. They need to do something. They need to take action to understand compassion, not to learn about it. So this is part of the work.

Katie: I love that. And I can't believe how quickly our time has flown by. I know that you guys have created a special link for anyone listening. It'll be in the show notes as well. But it's gamesofgenius.link/wellnessmama. But can we end on a practical note? If people want to start with this, and I know that I'm doing it and I'm

fascinated by it, but if other parents want to get involved, or parents want to get their schools involved, how can they do that and keep in touch with you?

Opher: It's quite simple. I answer emails every day, around 200 emails per day. Just write to me. Just write. Tell me your needs. We manage it here in the office. Like if it's like a regular answer, like, that can be answered so it will not be me. But if it's a real question, how to get it into school, we know how to get it in schools. Yes, we want to get it to the schools. We want it to be in schools and at home. So you just write to me to opher@stages.global. That's where I answer. And the rest of it if you just go in and you start the course and you download it and start to play the games and you have questions, we will have a Facebook page where you can answer, ask me questions, and you can talk to me.

I'm there and I'm trying to be there as much as I can to really support, to answer the questions and to learn and to take every problem that we need to face and how to face it and how to do it because children are different and environments are different. So it's quite easy. We are there. We have a whole team and people will answer you and work with you. And if it has to be me, don't worry, I do answer a lot of emails and on Facebook.

Katie: Amazing. And you guys will find me in that Facebook group as well. It's fascinating these games truly are. They're fun for parents as well like you said. And the link is gamesofgenius.link/wellnessmama. And that will be in the show notes, at wellnessmama.fm along with some additional links to things that we talked about today. But thank you so much for your time and especially for the work you're doing for our children and for the next generations because this is truly astounding. It's really amazing. And I'm so appreciative of everything you've done.

Opher: Thank you, Katie, so much. You know, it's a life mission. We have to do it. And, you know, in our office, we never used the word should. We don't say we should change education, we change. So I think in our case, if we all will take the responsibilities in those fields as parents, as teachers, even as kids and 17 years old kids, you know, I think we're going to have a much better world and very fast.

Katie: I agree. And that's why I was so excited to have you on and I think that's a perfect place to end. But definitely for you listening, I highly encourage you to check it out. Amazing and a fun bonding experience with your kids that has ripple effects for their whole life. So thank you so much for being here. Thanks to all of you for listening and I hope that you'll join me again on the next episode of "The Wellness Mama" podcast.

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