

EPISODE 1556

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FT: So Money episode 1556, Ana Homayoun, author of *Erasing the Finish Line: The New Blueprint for Success Beyond Grades and College Admission*.

“AH: *This is hard, and we are coming out of a few years where all of the rules kind of went away overnight, and we had students that develop mentally. They missed certain key experiences, or they're out of practice. So this is all about how do we erase the finish line so that 18 or college acceptance or college admissions isn't this finish line of adolescent development. Because we know as adults, right? All of us can say, well, the things that we knew at 18, and we've learned since, right? If somebody considered us a finished product at 18, that would be a problem.”*

[INTRO]

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FT: Welcome to So Money, everybody. I'm Farnoosh Torabi. Before we get into today's episode, did you check out Monday's show, my live episode with Michelle Buteau, the phenomenal stand-up comedian, actor, and creator of the Netflix series, *Survival of the Thickest*? Please go back and listen. It is one of the most hilarious episodes, one of the most insightful episodes. Michelle rocked our live show, and I hope to do many more of these live shows in the future. So stay tuned for updates on my whereabouts, and tell me who you'd like to see. What city I should come to next?

Today, today, we are re-envisioning education. My guest is friend and education expert, Ana Homayoun. She's out with her fourth book called *Erasing the Finish Line: The New Blueprint for Success Beyond Grades and College Admission*. I am so thrilled for this book. I think everybody who is on their way to college, every parent, every caregiver needs to read this book because it gives us permission to give ourselves options and to know that college is not the finish line, nor should it be.

This idea that you go through high school with the goal of just getting in to college is problematic because along the way, you might miss out on learning far more important life skills and habits that can really prepare you for the real world. Grades matter but they're not everything, and Ana has spent over 20 years working one-on-one with students and families and caregivers and school districts to create this new blueprint, this new vision that goes beyond what she calls the faulty finish line. You'll want to share this episode with your friends. Here is Ana Homayoun.

[INTERVIEW]

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FT: Ana Homayoun, welcome back to So Money. I'm so excited to unveil your latest book, *Erasing the Finish Line*, a book that so many of us parents and caregivers need and prospective college-bound students. Or, hey, maybe that's not even your goal, and that's kind of the point. Let's – I want to start with your thesis here, your big idea. You have worked for over 20 years helping young people matriculate and get prepared for the real world. You've been on this podcast many times, sharing your work as the founder of Green Ivy Education. But in this book, you really wanted to spell what you say is a myth about college being the end-all. If that is the finish line, we need to erase it. Take it away.

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AH: Absolutely. Well, always excited to talk to you, Farnoosh, so thanks for having me. So, yes, I've been doing this work with middle school, high school, and college students for the last 20 years and really recently started working with companies on early career development because what we were seeing was that this college acceptance is looked on as this finish line. What it's doing is it's undermining the development of habits, routines, and skills that students need not just for college but for the workforce and for their daily living in general.

So my whole focus on *Erasing the Finish Line* is helping parents and caregivers and students and educators think that we need to look beyond this one moment of time and really focus on these fundamental skills. There's four pillars that I talk about in the book around systems,

connection, perspective, and acceptance, and really make that the forefront of helping each student build their own blueprint.

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FT: I want to get to that, to those four pillars in a moment. But a little bit more on this mind shift really that's required of us, what are you seeing? What are you seeing as far as students arriving, let's say, in college and not being equipped? Then what are the things that they're – what are the elements that you wish they had before, whether they go to college or anywhere else for that matter? But what are the ingredients or like the life skills that you think are being ignored?

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AH: Well, I think what is really important for parents to understand is that feeling organized decreases stress. At a time where we're really focused on students' mental health and well-being, we've overlooked that these key skills around organizing, planning, prioritizing, starting and completing tasks, and being adaptable thinkers are almost looked on as secondary.

So just last week, I had a mother call my office because her child had done really well academically in school and was now at this really prestigious university and really floundering not just academically but overall because they couldn't get up in the morning. They weren't making it to class. They didn't know how to do their laundry. They weren't able to manage their meals. All the day-to-day life management skills that when I asked her, I said to her, “How much of this were you doing for a child when they were at home?” Her response, she was really honest. She said, “You know, I really just made sure that my child only focused on academics, and so I did most of these things. Or I had a hand in it.” Like they would get their kid up, and they'd drive them to school, and they would manage their activities and call the doctor.

So we underestimate how this daily living impacts how students show up and then in the workforce too, right? Like offensive deadlines and urgency and getting things done. So it really is pervasive having parents understand these underlying skills.

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FT: Yes. I mean, I empathize with that parent. I get where there could have been more emphasis on the child, taking almost executive functioning and organization skills themselves. But college, as we know, is so hard to get into, so hard, way harder than we were applying 20 years ago. So this logic that parents use of, well, you got to – it's like if I have to choose where are my kids going to divide their time. I mean, it's going to be with the academics, if the goal is to get into not just even an ivy league. But like literally, any college now, you need to speak like all the languages and of all the extracurriculars and have all the great grades.

So maybe this gets us into your pillars in terms of how households can balance this act because I don't think what you're saying is don't worry about academics. It's that we need to pay as much attention and enforce as much these other important life skills that does lead to things like mental wellness, which is at the end of the day what we're hoping for at the end of the day.

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AH: Right. We want to think about it this way, right? So doing an audit of the skills and the things that you take care of for your child that they're going to need to take care of once they go to the workforce, they go to college, they move out of your home. Look at all the things that you're doing that they're going to have to do for themselves.

Then what I would recommend, even when they're in middle school and high school, have them pick one of those things to start to take control of. The number one thing I found was actually just waking up and getting up in the morning without any parental interference, right? That was the major issue.

This isn't a – what I want to make sure that families know is that I am not coming from a blame, shame, or anything like that. This is hard, and we are coming out of a few years where all of the rules kind of went away overnight. We had students that develop mentally. They missed certain key experiences, or they're out of practice.

So this is all about how do we erase the finish line so that 18 or college acceptance or college admissions isn't this finish line of adolescent development? Because we know as adults, right? All of us can say when the things that we knew at 18, and we've learned since, right? If somebody considered us a finished product at 18, that would be a problem. Yet the message that we send today to parents, to students is that they're supposed to be further along than they are. No matter where they are, they're supposed to be further along and that there's this finish line around college admissions.

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FT: Suppose – I guess that's the first pillar you talk about, which is developing a system where it could just be as simple as, like you said, getting up in the morning on your own. That, as a parent, requires allowing your kid to fail, which is a really hard thing for parents. Like your kid might not wake up and might miss first period.

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AH: Right. But –

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FT: When you – yes.

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AH: Yes. I'm not saying that this is an all the time thing. I'm also saying it's not an overnight thing. But going back to that parent that called my office, right? Now, she has a child who's on academic probation at college because they've missed all these classes. This is serious. That's not just this one child. I'm seeing this over and over and over again right now with not just college students but also with these companies that I'm consulting with, where they're saying there's no sense of urgency or deadlines or getting things done or the communication with clients. They just don't have practice.

These are all things that go back to the book, and what are the things that you fundamentally should focus on, rather than this hyperfocus on grades and test scores. See, what I always say is if you focus on the habits, the grades will come, and they'll be better than you ever expected. But if you focus on the grades, it's a very short-sighted and transactional experience. So that's it, just expanding the perspective of how we handle all these things.

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FT: I do wish colleges would be open to this. I wish they would ask the leading questions of tell us about your routines. Tell us about how you care for your mental health. Tell us how you – tell us something you're really passionate about. Tell us something – you know what I mean? As opposed to like show us your transcripts, tell us all the languages you speak. Tell us how many – how fast you can run a mile.

It takes a village to basically adopt this erasing the finish line concept. I feel like households can certainly do their part. But at the end of the day, we live in a world where the gatekeepers may not be using these same metrics. How do we reconcile with that?

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AH: Well, I think it's also important to recognize that my research shows that when you learn a system, when you cultivate connections, and when you expand perspective, you actually end up doing better in school. That's the other win part of it, right? It's not an either or. The students that I went back and I interviewed, these are students that I knew 15 years ago that are now in their early 30s. Consistently, they told me that what I taught them in the office, what they learned from the office were skills that they're learning and using in their jobs today in different careers across platforms. So these are the underlying skills.

One of the students, for example, when he started with me his sophomore year, he had a 2.7 GPA. He says to me when we went back and interviewed, if I had asked him what his grade goal was the first time he had walked into my office, he would have said a 3.0, right? I didn't. I said let's focus on the habits. Let's build the system. So then he goes from a 2.7 to a 3.1 to a 3.5. By this time he was a senior, he had a 3.7 GPA. The college he ended up going to was not

even going to be an option when he started sophomore. So it's actually not only did he develop these skills that he now uses in his job today, right? He talks about that. But also, he was able to build his own academic performance.

He was actually in my first book as well. That crumpled paper was due last week. So what was cool for me is that I was able to go back and revisit some of the students that were in my earlier books and share their stories of like where they are now, what really works for them, and how their journeys were winding. I think all of us know that our journeys as adults are winding. But parents have so much personal pressure on themselves of like, "Oh, my gosh," staying up at night. "What if this one thing doesn't work out for my kid?" My hope with *Erasing the Finish Line* is that we alleviate some of those concerns and those worries because we help them see let's move beyond this one thing and expand our worldview.

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FT: My son has ADHD, and one of the things I'm learning is that – you work very closely with children with this neurodivergence. What I'm learning is that they're already coming at the world with feeling less confident, let's say, in their skills because the world is not orienting in the way that like sort of they see the world and how they respond to the world. So the best thing that I can do for my son, one of the best things, is to build up his confidence. How do I build up his confidence? Not by telling him he's great all the time but by setting him up for success.

I think, as I'm hearing you, part of that could be for him as he gets older is these like sort of like small wins that he can have daily, whether it is just like helping himself get up in the morning, helping himself make breakfast, helping himself remember certain things that he needs to do for school. Ultimately, that confidence plays out in other realms of your life, in your relationships with friends, in how you show up in school, how you show up on your tests.

Am I extrapolating too much? I'm trying to connect the dots for myself here. I see them.

[00:14:56]

AH: You're exactly right. So let me just say a couple things. One, I've spent a lot of time working with students with neurodiversity. In fact, neurodiversity is one of the chapters of the book. Students with ADHD in particular, a lot of the conversation has been around building these routines and skills. But especially for students with ADHD, what I talk with them about is two things.

One is around their own acceptance. So that's one of the four pillars. It's the final one. That means an acceptance of who you are and what your strengths are and what are the support systems you need to thrive. A lot of times, the mistake we make when students have ADHD is parents will call my office, and they'll say, "How many sessions does it take to kind of cure them?" I'm like, "No." It's an acceptance of who they are, especially if they are not familiar, right?

Then the other thing to think about is how feeling competent builds confidence. So just to – like you said. Now, with students with ADHD, what I say is we need to focus on energy management, not time management. Here's why. When you have ADHD, there are times when you have a lot of energy, and you feel like you can get anything done, and you're hyperfocused, and you can work for hours. Then there are times where you feel like you're exhausted, and even just picking up a towel from the floor is asking too much.

When I work with students is I really help them step back and identify what are the areas that they have more. What are the times that they have more energy, one? But what are the situations that they can do to energize themselves? So that might mean making sure they exercise in the morning, making sure they eat breakfast, making sure they do meditation. So all of these different touch points throughout the day. In fact, one of the stories in the book is – actually, at least one of the stories in the book outside of the neurodiversity chapter is a student that I worked with with ADHD.

So then looking at those different touch points and routines that help balance your energy or maximize it. So not asking yourself to do tasks when you know you're low energy because that's where the confidence starts to fall, right? That's where that idea of inhibitory control, like our ability to control impulses and our ability to manage with coping mechanisms, goes out the window. If we're tired, if we're exhausted, you know this as a parent, of parenting a student with ADHD, child with ADHD. It is tough. No two days are the same.

But thinking about energy management saying, hey, how do we help you maximize your energy. When you're low energy, let's put off the tasks for when you have different amount of energy so that it doesn't feel overwhelming to you. That's the other piece is like preventing the overwhelm by looking at energy management.

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FT: It begs repeating, but you have – this is road-tested advice. Like you have literally been doing this on your own with your clients, with your families and your households and your kids for 20 years. I just want to brag about you there for a second. In your part two pillar, the develop connection section, you talk about how because we are training our kids for college, say, that's the goal post and because then it's all about transactions, right? It's like take the test, get the good grade. Do everything for the transcript. Do everything for the college admissions.

Along the road, along the way, what the kids miss out on is really having meaningful relationships with people. They're just moving so fast and always with like a tunnel vision. So talk to me about this concept that you write about in the book called transactional socializing and how we can move away from that or, yes, unintentionally encouraged, right? It's unintentionally encouraged.

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AH: Yes. So families really need to think about their kids' social connections and their ability to practice face-to-face conversations. What we find now is that even those small introductions are harder because so much of our conversations and our introductions happen online and that ability to build, to develop small talk skills in a low-stake situation. Maybe it's having a conversation with the person at the coffee shop or the family friend that's an adult. That ability to have these small talk skills creates that opportunity for smaller connections that can be weaker ties, that can lead to stronger connections. But you have to start from somewhere.

Oftentimes, with transactional socialization, and this is true for adults, as well as kids, that we make relationships based on proximity and similar interests. We lose sight of the diversity of

different perspectives, and we sort of tend to have all of our friends in one basket, like they're all in one sort of place. So when we're in middle school and high school particularly, we know that friendships transition. That's totally normal, but it can be really hard for some kids.

One thing that parents can do as a preventative is help make sure that their kids have multiple non-overlapping circles of connection. What I mean by that is maybe they have friends in robotics. Maybe they have friends in the marching band. Maybe they have friends at summer camp. Maybe they have the cousins, multiple places where they feel a sense of belonging that's not overlapping. That helps them feel like, okay, if the friends here aren't working out, I have other spaces where I feel connected. Maybe it just ebbs and flows, and that's okay.

Particularly, for kids where energy management is important, it's important that they feel like they can be in multiple spaces and feel a sense of belonging because they really react incredibly profoundly to any sense of feeling rejected. So to really buffer that is by having multiple spaces where they feel connected. Does that make sense?

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FT: Yes. Also loneliness, right? I was so lonely at Penn State, a campus of 50,000 people but – so you know how could that be. But it's because I just didn't feel like – and now, it worked out. But in the beginning, it was really unsettling for me because I didn't feel like I found my people. It was a – I think that's a quintessential college experience for a lot of freshmen. But what are you seeing in terms of that? Because layered on to that is also the isolation that came from COVID and now maybe reimbursing into a very social environment like college. I can't even imagine what the outcomes are like there.

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AH: Well, what I found in my research was that a lot of kids are out of practice in terms of the social skills. So the very basic things that we take for granted around having conversations, introducing ourselves to new people is exhausting, right? It feels in some ways overwhelming. It's like a boulder that you and I go into a coffee shop, and we have a small talk with a barista. We don't think anything of it.

But you and I have had multiple experiences over the years where we're constantly talking to others, and we're constantly meeting new people. It's nothing that we think twice about, and we take it for granted. A lot of adults take it for granted too because if you want to think about it, a lot of the rules went out the window at a very pivotal developmental moment for kids.

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FT: Do you follow Professor Scott Galloway? He has two teenage boys I think, and he talks a lot about being a dad and one of the things and loneliness too for his sons because during COVID, of course, that was really difficult. One of the tips he gave parents or I guess he just sort of likes to talk about what he practices with his kids. One thing that he says is that if I'm ever out with my kid at the store out in public, he is not allowed back in the house unless he has gone up to a stranger and made a conversation with that person. It doesn't have to be like a 15-minute conversation. It can be something like, oh, like petting their dog and asking them about their dog or giving someone a compliment or – I don't know.

Just I think he's trying to build, first of all, their awareness of the world around them but also how to, to your point, make those conversations. That can feel very intimidating more every day and less intimidating.

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AH: What he's doing is something that I talk about in the book is gamifying socialization. What I mean by that is lowering the stakes and making it more fun. So the tip I often give students, especially if they're starting a new school, is that they have the goal of making three to five new conversations per week with kids they don't know. They don't have to be long, but they have to be more than, "Hi, my name is – I went to middle school at this school." What it does is it creates these little snippets of conversation and gives practice that every time a child has done this, and this has now been over 15 years that I have given this recommendation, the kid will come back six months later and be like, "Oh, my gosh. I made all these people that I know, and I made these two friends again." Not everyone is going to become your friend, just like Professor Galloway knows.

But the practice of having the small talk leads to the small connections, which then can potentially grow into larger connections. But if you can't even start the initial conversation, you're blocking yourself off. What we found so much over and over is that kids want to have that initial conversation, but we haven't necessarily prioritized that as a skill, and it is a skill.

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FT: Yes. I love what you say in the book too about perspective and how it's important to create that for your kids. Sometimes, it has to be like intentional, right? Because if you grow up in a very, let's say, affluent suburb where everyone looks the same, drives the same cars, goes to the same vacation spot, like you can see where I'm going with this, right? Like you go to college. I had college roommates. Not roommates but college classmates at Penn State who had never seen a person of color before in their life until their freshman year. Can you believe it? Like in real life. They maybe had watched *Diff'rent Strokes* growing up, but that was pretty much it or *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*.

But like they've never – my roommate had never met an Iranian. I mean, I'm a little bit more of an outlier, I guess, than like someone who's black but like still. So I've been really intentional about where we live because I feel like that's a really easy way to – just baked in. You have diversity of race, of religion, of – I mean, I overhear parents sometimes go, “Oh, we don't want to live in that part of New Jersey because it's too wealthy.” I'm like, “You know –” I don't know. What do you think about that?

I think like it doesn't matter. It just matters that you are intentional about what you're exposing your kid to. I actually think it's great for kids to see how the wealthy live. For me, I did that in Philadelphia. All of a sudden, immersed in like a very rich suburb. We were not like the others in that economic bracket, but it led me to, to your point, get perspective. Oh, I can actually go to a really great college and get a great job and work in the city and maybe buy a home one day. That stuff didn't occur to me until I saw others do it.

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AH: You bring up an incredible point, and there's two ways that I talk about expanding perspective. It's really around encouraging curiosity and openness to expand the narrow definition of success. The stories that I give in the book are twofold to what you say, right? For a student that may grow up in incredible affluence, there is a narrow definition of what success looks like. So many times, these kids will come into my office and say, "My goodness," because my office is in the heart of the Silicon Valley, which is where I moved when I was 12 years old. It's like a mile from – I've literally worked on the same block since I was 14. It's kind of a funny joke. But this narrow definition of what success looks like in terms of what kind of school you go to, what kind of house you have, all these things. So that's very narrow, and it's exhausting.

On the other end of the spectrum as well, though, if you aren't exposed to things and having shared experiences, you may not think that that's for you or accessible to you. So this idea of opening up pathways is what expanding perspective is all about. Now, what's so exciting for me was when I went back and interviewed my students from 15 years ago, here's what I found. Over and over again, the jobs that they were doing that they loved didn't exist when they were in middle school or high school. But what they consistently told me was like, "Look, I am using these habits, these skills, these routines that I learned when we were working together. And I'm doing it in this new job."

So one of my students, he got his MBA. He really wanted to work in college athletics, and he had come back to talk to me before he got his post-MBA job. I remember talking to him, and I said, "You've always been about building your own blueprint." So he went to get a job in college athletics and data analytics, in a field that did not exist when he was in middle school or high school, right? It's a very new field, and he has now since – he's moving up steadily in the ladder of his career, and he's really using, though, the daily touch points that we talked about.

So expanding perspective is there's not one college. There's not one career path. There's not one place that you can be successful. How do you expand your notions of what that looks like? Because, you know, Farnoosh, you've been so incredibly successful. But I bet you if we told 15-year-old Farnoosh –

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FT: Oh, my God. I mean, Ana, there's a whole chapter on rejection in my book that's coming out in October. I got rejected from, I think, 80% of the colleges I applied to. I ended up going to the one that was my last ditch, like didn't – my father implored me. He was like, "Please, apply to a state school because we cannot –" Cash flow –

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AH: Yes. We'd rather be smart.

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FT: Yes. He's like, "We don't do student loans." I'm like, "What?" Like, "But everyone's taking out the student loans. It's like what you do." He's like, "No, we don't do that."

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AH: That set you up for success long term in your case because if you had that debt, you would have had to make different choices. So that's around what expanding perspective is. There's not one way to be successful. I was just talking to a producer this morning about that. Like plenty of people that she works with went to all these different colleges, and they're all at the same place.

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FT: Interesting. It's really hard when you're 19, when your prefrontal cortex hasn't quite fully developed. I'm sure even with your clients today as older adults who are successful, like they can look back and see that, this truth. But when they're in it, what's the advice, right? Because nobody could have consoled me at 19. I was despondent when I didn't get into those colleges, and I did not see the path. What can kids at that age appreciate as far as when it comes to things like rejection and needing to be flexible at the end of the day, which is really, really hard?

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AH: Well, I think one of the reasons rejection is so hard is that many times, students haven't had the little rejections. So you get to 19, and you've done everything right or so you think. You've checked all the boxes, done everything. Maybe you've had a disappointment here or there. You didn't get the star in the school play, whatever. But then suddenly, this seems like a looming thing and especially because we have put such value around character and worth on college acceptance, right?

I have a little bit of a different story. As you probably know, I was rejected early decision to the school I applied to. Nobody thought that was going to happen. My school counselor was in shock and all of these things. Also, I was like, "Why didn't you tell me they were rejecting kids early because I wouldn't have applied early?" I was a very risk-averse. I didn't even visit schools until I got in.

Then I got into Duke. Duke, people would consider, "Oh, that's a good school," blah, blah, blah. They still say that. But for me, it was all about those underlying skills because once I got there, I was out of my depth, right? These were kids that had access resources that even though I had moved to the Silicon Valley, I didn't know what the invisible handbook really was, right? I was sort of always on the outside looking in, very much an observer. Nobody would know that I didn't know. But I was always like this person that's like, "Huh."

That actually was not helpful because when I got to college, I wasn't ready to jump in, and I wasn't – there were a lot of things that I was like, "Gosh, I got to junior year," and I tried. I was like, "Wow, what if I had known about that freshman year? It would have probably changed my friend dynamics. It would have probably –" Again, that idea of expanding perspective and open and curious.

I remember one key thing that I'm like I don't have any regrets. But I do think that this is like a good example. I'm not a person that has – what 18-year-old Ana could have heard a message about is try new things, and be open and curious, which meant like when they offer those freshman orientation things that you don't know anyone, show up. You might meet people. You might meet people in a low-stake situation that they may not become your best friends, but they'll become your acquaintances. Then they'll expand your social circle, and you'll make connections. So my point –

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FT: And maybe – go ahead.

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AH: Go ahead.

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FT: Yes.

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AH: No, go ahead.

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FT: Well, we would have been friends. I think I would have said to myself back – going back, I would tell my younger self that there is no such thing as failure, and there isn't even anything really as rejection. If anything, rejection is like have fun with it. Like keep going. Let rejection be your permission to keep trying because every rejection is one step closer to acceptance. You are getting warmer and warmer and warmer.

Every time you maybe are somewhere where you're like, "This is not a fit. This is not a fit. I'm not a fit. They don't want me," you don't want to be with those people. You need to keep moving and moving on. That's how you ultimately, I think, land where you are loved. But you have to kind of go through it. It's just part of the process. Nobody immediately enters into an embrace.

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AH: I love that idea. Land where you are loved because one of the things that I think that you and I have both experienced in different ways, right? We've talked about this offline is these little rejections that, honestly, both of you – both you and I have had these rejections where we're like, “Oh, yes. That happened.” Then 24 hours we have moved past it, right? I think that if we didn't have them and like we are like, “Okay, I'm going to process that.” Honestly, we're both like, “That's not great. I'm not excited that that happened.” But 48 hours, we have moved on. We are like on a new ship. We are on a new train. We have a solution.

I think that is one of the things that we can also lower the barriers for moving past rejection or something not working out and being adaptable and flexible and having cognitive flexibility. So to your point, when you talk about that rejection and being despondent, it is okay to process rejection. What we don't want is that to feel like the end for any child, right? I will tell you one story because it's related to having an immigrant mother who when I got rejected early. So it was right before the Christmas holidays, and I got this thin envelope. So it wasn't even a deferral, people. It was just a full-on, “Peace be with you. Have good luck.”

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FT: Good luck.

[00:34:25]

AH: I had all these applications to finish, and my mom let me like cry for a day and been like, “I did everything right, and nobody's **[inaudible 00:34:33]**,” whatever. Then she like comes in the room, and I'll never forget it because I was like sitting at my computer, just like despondent, and she goes, “Pull it together. You've come too far to give up.” She was just like, “Get it together.” I was like, “Gosh, that is grit and resilience and like buoyancy and bounce back.” I just like kind of looked at her like, she's not wrong.

I think that that's also that idea of perspective, like there's not one pathway. So that place didn't let you in. Look at where else is the options. Keep it moving. So that's why it also decreases a lot of the stress and anxiety around any one thing being the thing. As you know and I know, we've had very cool things come our way after things haven't come our way.

[00:35:21]

FT: Yes. It's typically a net positive, I think.

[00:35:25]

AH: Absolutely.

[00:35:26]

FT: Not that I'm keeping score, but you know I am.

[00:35:32]

AH: You put good out in the world, so let's also finish on that. You do and it comes back to you.

[00:35:37]

FT: Well, I have to say it's been really fun to do this whole, and I think this is both book number four for us. Like we're both on our fourth babies here, and it's been really lovely and great to confide in you and work with you behind the scenes, as we're both bringing our books to the finish line. I'm a little behind you, but you are my future, and the future looks bright.

Ana Homayoun, thank you so much. Everybody, please check out *Erasing the Finish Line: The New Blueprint for Success Beyond Grades and College Admission*. So, so needed right now. Thank you for writing this book.

[00:36:14]

AH: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:36:17]

FT: Thanks so much to Ana Homayoun for joining us. A link to her book is in our show notes. The book is called *Erasing the Finish Line*. It comes out very soon. So pre-order your copy now and be one of the first to get your hands on it. See you back here on Friday for Ask Farnoosh. In the meantime, I hope your day is So Money.

[END]