



SHOW NOTES

Brave Writer Brave Shift Ep. 1

“Susan Wise Bauer on Homeschooling Culture & *Rethinking School*” —
Julie Bogart with Susan Wise Bauer

Highlights

[Susan Wise Bauer](#) calls herself an “accidental homeschooling guru.” She is best known for writing her homeschooling classic, *The Well-Trained Mind*, and she is a trusted authority in the homeschooling community.

She also has a uniquely comprehensive understanding of the history of the home education movement because she’s been a student, a teacher, and a homeschool business owner.

We are starting this series about Brave Shifts with Susan because we want to learn from her unique perspective on how the culture of homeschooling and education can shift to become even more powerful and effective in families around the world.

Homeschool culture didn’t *really* exist in the 1970s, when Susan was a homeschooling student, partly because it wasn’t exactly legal yet. So, she didn’t know any other homeschooling families at the time.

20 years later, when Susan started teaching her own children, the culture was emerging... although she didn't love the culture she saw.

In the '70s, Susan's family moved away from some of the fundamentalist cultures. They didn't move away from Christianity, but they did move towards communities that expressed it more positively.

When she came back to homeschooling with her own children, it seemed like almost every socialization, co-op, or small community available was still part of that protectionist culture.

However, homeschooling culture now has more diverse opportunities, and the perception of homeschooling from outside communities is also improving.

Other parents aren't as likely to scoff at your choice, colleges recognize that there are many valid ways to get an education, and some people who went to public school wish that they had homeschooling opportunities.

Educational programs should be designed to encourage complex thought, and they should never enforce the idea that students are violating their core beliefs when they are exposed to challenging ideas.

In Susan's college classes, she's noticed that former homeschooling students aren't always exposed to, or comfortable with, her playing Devil's Advocate: basic Socratic dialogue that sharpens the student's thinking by challenging it and forcing them to consider something completely opposite than what they came into the class assuming.

When Susan revised *The Well-Trained Mind* for its 4th edition, she wanted to add a companion that helped people take principles from homeschooling and apply them to their children's education.

The result of that project is the upcoming book *Rethinking School: How to Take Charge of Your Child's Education*, which is a guidebook for parents to think more globally about education systems.

The important thing is that parents realize that they have the last say over how their children are educated, not the school. Even if a parent isn't homeschooling, there are many ways that they can assert their authority to ensure that their children receive the best education possible.

If you are a homeschooler and you want to make a Brave Shift to join this inclusive and fearless academic journey, Susan suggests a simple practice: When you're faced with a decision about your kid, be honest with yourself and consider whether you're making the decision because you are reacting to a parental responsibility or you are afraid of what may happen in the future.

Takeaway Quotes by Susan

- You are trying to sharpen the student's thinking by having them consider something completely opposite to what they came into the class assuming... and that's certainly not something I think homeschooling parents are doing very well, by and large.
- There is a real fear of persuasive argumentation, and I find that anti-intellectual, both as a writer and an academic.
- You have to be willing to make some missteps.
- When a kid is struggling academically, we desperately try to fix the kid – we don't try to fix the system.
- Ultimately, you have the last say about how your child is educated – not the school.

[Listen to the podcast](#)

Resources

- Learn more about Susan: SusanWiseBauer.com | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)
- Pre-order [Rethinking School: How to Take Charge of Your Child's Education](#) by Susan Wise Bauer
- Brave Writer: [Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)
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