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For Immediate Release

**THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE**

**A Positive Approach To Pushing**

**Your Child To Be Their Best Self**

By Dr. Chris Thurber and Dr. Hendrie Weisinger

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“All parents worry that they are pushing their children too much...or not enough. Two sophisticated psychologists, Drs. Thurber and Weisinger, tackle this problem head-on. With up-to-date science, great wit and wisdom, and readable case examples, they show parents the right way to support their children.”

—Michael G. Thompson, PhD, author, *Raising Cain* and *Best Friends; Worst Enemies*

“**THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE** provides parents the tools to transform harmful pressure into a positive force that will encourage children to follow their passion and perform their best, be it on the soccer field or in school.” —Gregg Berhalter, Head Coach, US Men’s National Soccer Team

**THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE**  
**New Book By Renowned Psychologists Helps Parents**  
**Transform Unhealthy Pressure Into A Powerful Force That Guides**  
**and Motivates Their Children To Be Their Best Selves**

Many experts agree that parental pressure contributes to anxiety, depression, and even addiction among children. But according to renowned psychologists Chris Thurber, PhD and Hendrie Weisinger, PhD, pressure itself isn’t bad – the issue is *how* pressure is applied. Their new book, **THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE: A Positive Approach To Pushing Your Child To Be Their Best Self** (Hachette Books; July 2021), is the first to provide in-depth solutions for creating *healthy* pressure, offering step-by-step advice that parents and care-givers can begin to use immediately with profound long-term results.

“Parents apply pressure because they care, but they hinder progress and create problems because of *how* they apply it,” Thurber and Weisinger write. “Our goal is to give parents a healthy road map and practical tools to ensure that the instinctive pressure they apply to their children promotes development, not distress.”

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The authors have identified eight ways to transform harmful pressure into healthy pressure. In **THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE**, they provide multiple, true-to-life sample conversations to show exactly how to adopt these behaviors, which, in turn, will nurture internal motivation, improve parent-child interactions, build deep connections, sidestep cultural pitfalls, and, ultimately, help children do well. “With a modest adjustment today, you can be an even more effective parent tomorrow. Week by week, your modest adjustments to how you push your child will pay bigger and bigger dividends in their mental health and performance,” they explain. The eight transformations are:

**Expect *Their Best*, Not *The Best*** – How parents state their expectations to their child has an enormous effect on the youngster’s motivation. Unfortunately, when expectations emphasize highly specific achievement or perfection, kids may develop low self-esteem and become pessimistic about achieving goals.

**Tame Your Core Expectation** – When parental expectations are unrealistic, they can induce harmful thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in their children. Parents can avoid expressing unhealthy expectations by emphasizing consistent *effort* instead of specific *outcomes*. The authors point out that a parent’s definition of success will always differ from their child’s, and they discuss the insidious and constant expectations established by social media.

**Increase Your Warmth** – “The difference between warm and cold parenting is not in the *emotions* that we feel but in the *affect* we display—how we express our feelings,” the authors write. They explain what parenting with warmth looks like, and how it will change a child’s experience of parental pressure.

**Turn Up the Heat** – Building on the importance of warmth, Thurber and Weisinger provide a variety of strategies that will enhance one’s ability to parent with warmth. Many of these hinge on demonstrating empathy, and the authors describe how empathy will enable parents to better convey the lessons they wish to teach.

**Earn Respect, Not Rebellion** – To earn respect, not rebellion, parents need to engage their children in more conversations about thoughts and feelings and not let conversations about expectations and outcomes dominate their interactions. The authors provide examples showing how this works as well as a chart that illustrates the differences between harmful and healthy communications.

**Praise, Criticize, and Question Effectively** – The authors offer a multitude of tools – including the Six S’s of effective praise: Soon, Spontaneous, Sincere, Specific, Striving, and Stand-Alone. They also address effective criticism and questions, including discussions of rewards and consequences.

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**Be the Believer** – As children age, they demand increasing amounts of independence. The authors offer detailed guidelines for determining the optimum level of parental involvement in a variety of circumstances.

**Open Your Mind and Your Heart** – Parents are not the only source of pressure on today's youth. **THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE** addresses sociocultural sources of pressure, and how parents can contribute to local, national, and global movements that support children's healthy development.

"Never do we suggest that parents stop pushing their kids. Quite the opposite, in fact. We endorse the balanced pressure that parents apply when they combine high standards, reasonable rules, and unconditional love with the freedom for kids to make some of their own decisions, falter, and learn from mistakes," assert Thurber and Weisinger. The unique approach they provide in **THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE** will enable parents and caregivers to exert the healthy pressure that children need to flourish.

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

**Chris Thurber, PhD**, co-author of **THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE**, is a board-certified clinical psychologist, educator, author, and father with a BA from Harvard and a PhD in child and adolescent psychology from UCLA. An acclaimed keynote speaker, he serves as a clinician and instructor at Phillips Exeter Academy.

**Hendrie Weisinger, PhD**, co-author of **THE UNLIKELY ART OF PARENTAL PRESSURE**, is a world-renowned psychologist and pioneer in the field of pressure management, as well as the author of a number of bestselling books. He has consulted with and developed programs for dozens of Fortune 500 companies and government agencies.