

## 0:03 / 1:03:40 The Eight Principles of Happiness with Robert Mack

This episode is brought to you by three books Number one Happiness From the Inside out Number two love from the inside out and then as always conversations how to manage your business relationships One conversation at a time by yours Truly Ivan Farber all three books are available on Amazon and Kindle Hello everybody and welcome to Conversations about conversations on today's show We're gonna discuss one of the most important conversations that there is happiness your happiness my happiness all of our happiness how to be happy My guest is the happiness coach Robert Mack Robert is one of the most exciting engaging and extraordinary coaches and speakers in the world today especially in the field of happiness He is a positive psychology expert with a master degree from the University of Pennsylvania in their masters in applied positive psychology program just world renowned He's the author of two books that I mentioned Happiness from the Inside out the art and science of fulfillment and love from the inside out lessons and inspiration for loving yourself your life and each other and a number of books that he hasn't published yet He's a repeat guest of the show and I'm delighted to call him a friend and someone who's made a difference in my life My goal isn't to repeat the conversation we had previously on the episode From earlier this year I will include in the show notes a link to the episode called Happiness Leads to success But this is happiness part two And please help me Welcome back to conversations about conversations Robert Mack Robert Welcome back I am so excited to be back Thanks for having me I wanna give you an opportunity to make an opening statement Would you Yeah sure Um First I'm just so grateful to be here Ivan I love and appreciate you and your work so much Every time we connect we have the most fantastic conversation So I'm looking forward to that I mean the most important part for me right now It's just I'm grateful to be here I'm grateful um to be in conversation with you I'm grateful as well I have a phrase that I like and I am grateful and full of greatness Oh that's awesome I love that And you know I'm a wordsmith and concept sort of a connoisseur of language and uh vocabulary So any little turns or phrases like that are so easy for me to remember And uh it's a beautiful one right there I want to use a framework for this conversation and the framework is right from your book The Eight Ways to be happier starting right now And what I'm gonna start

with is by reading off the eight principles and then one by one go through them unpack them at the risk of over using a cliché metaphor but go through them touch them be with them and see what comes out So here are the eight ways from your book Number one the principle of smart energy investment Number two the principle of non attachment Number three the principle of positive focus Number four the principle of self appreciation Number five the principle of appreciative thought and language Number six the principle of constructive response to adversity Number seven the principle of inspired action And number eight the principle of self empowerment in relationships love it So those are your eight principles And what does it feel like when I read them the way I just read them it um in one hand is extraordinarily validating um on the other It's refreshing and by refreshing I mean you're refreshing my memory you know you write something and you make such a big deal about it when you're writing it and it is a big deal And then later you move on to different ways of thinking about things and talking about things and they are just as true now as they've ever been And uh at the same time I probably use different language you know just different ways of talking about it Um Hopefully the language is just as clear and just as clean Um But yeah I'm such appreciation for that book and appreciate you sharing those eight principles Um Not the least of which is I now remember them well and you wrote it a long time ago at this point Yeah it wasn't recent No it was over probably 14 years ago or so Yeah So the principle of smart energy investment tell us what that is It's lazy intelligence So it's taking the Laziest but smartest approach or path to getting what you most want Most of us source our happiness our peace our love our self love through other people places things and activities But the encouragement and happiness me inside out and the encouragement for me is to go straight to the source for what you want So instead of needing your happiness to be fed through middle people and middle things and middle activities just go directly to the source for it which is within yourself It's always within yourself That's what that really is ultimately about when it comes to happiness But it means cutting out all of the extraneous non-essential stuff in your life so that you can get what you most want and get it most quickly easily effectively and Enjoyably So the direct path the path of least resistance the path is the way no matter what the path is The word though that sticks out to me is the word lazy Yeah because the word lazy can have negative connotations how do you mean the word Lazy Yes I choose that word intentionally because I like so many folks who struggle with happiness um was wired or felt wired for taking the most effort

path possible to get what I wanted This flawed premise that happiness only came through hard work It's not entirely untrue but I would say that it's not the deepest truth So by lazy I simply mean the most efficient and effective and dare I say enjoyable path you know the more enjoyable the less effortful it often feels the less work it often seems to require Um But that doesn't mean it's not an investment of energy right So I'm just wanting to encourage folks to increasingly reach for or allow for the possibility that happiness is easier than easy that it's something that you experience and enjoy not because you achieve accomplish or acquire it but because you simply accept and acknowledge it right It's something that exists already and that we've made hard work out of happiness When the truth is it's a lot harder work to remain unhappy because happiness is your true nature It's your original face It's your Christ's mind your Buddha mind We've made hard work of experiencing and enjoying that and we've made easy work of doing the hard thing which is being unhappy Uh So the lazy phrase there it's just an invitation for folks to realize and recognize that happiness is closer to you than than your own breathing nearer to you than your own hands and feet that it's something that exists and that you can tap into tune into turn on to and really just recognize you're always tapped in tuned in and turned on to through something that feels more like relaxation than you can You can through something that feels like achievement accomplishment and acquisition Relax your way into happiness Let it happen because too often and I'm speaking about myself for myself I've effort to be successful in order that I could be happy I've been a victim Oh I haven't done enough to be happy someday I've been a martyr Like all of those things that are normally associated with success Like we always talk about in our society hard work will lead you to success and then success will lead you to happiness Your take on it is very refreshing And one thing I got out of the chapter and the idea of smart energy investment is looking at a return on your investment So actually kind of as the businessman and me thinking of it that way And you don't say this directly But there is a principle from economics that you that you write about the principles of diminishing marginal utility And I love the concept of happiness islands happiness deserts And the idea that as you're getting a good return on your smart energy investment at a certain point in time it will diminish you still may be getting more but it's diminishing and that's how you know to stop just like in our capitalist society That's the pricing mechanism Yes that's right You get less and less happiness Bang for your buck right Literally And figuratively you hit a tipping point where more

money doesn't get you more happiness And I'd argue that even when we measure happiness what we think we're measuring is happiness is actually um maybe quality of life Um It's not happiness happiness is something that's deeper and it's all pervasive Um It's more fulfilling But in any case the idea there um at least from a scientific perspective is that you can only squeeze so much happiness out of success right And if you look real closely and you look at all the studies you'll find that you actually squeeze very little happiness out of success You might uh squeeze a little bit of pleasure out of success Um And you can squeeze out a lot of quality of life out of success but you don't ultimately end up squeezing much or any happiness out of success And that's why success doesn't lead to happiness You know if that was the case then we'd see all these rich famous people being extraordinarily happy instead of being extraordinarily unhappy and depressed and suicidal And that's not all of them of course And then the additional piece there to your point is not only that success doesn't lead to happiness but happiness does lead to success right And I'd argue happiness is the greatest success It's the reason you want success So then again we come back again to this point which is like if you're trying to route your happiness through success or money or health or kids or family you're not wrong But there might be a much more direct much more efficient effective and enjoyable path for you One where you don't have to wait into the future or wait until somebody or something else changes before you feel happy Because happiness is right now and here and here that's right within us all around us within everyone Your point though is very well received by me as someone who is one of the most successful people that I know and one of the least happy other people don't necessarily know that because they see this successful guy that looks happy and it's not like I don't have a great life I have a I I like to smile and I don't like people to see that I'm unhappy and most of the unhappiness is a quiet inside by myself suffering on my own But your book is my new manual my framework for being happy Like it is the textbook for happiness At least of all the books I found I don't know if any book else like it And the principle of smart energy investment is the first principle Now the second did you wanna add something on on that Just just that I'm getting I get shivers throughout my whole body Ivan because you're you consistently say things in a way that hits me at a level that no one else does I wrote that book because I felt precisely the way you felt to describe feeling most of my life I mean that's the reason I wrote the book It wasn't like I want to become an author In fact I was quite sure nobody's gonna buy this book Nobody cares

about this book you know but I cared I wanted to be helpful and I wanted to clarify my own thoughts And I also more than anything else it was a selfish attempt to commit myself to clarifying the principles that were working for me and to commit to continuing to practice them right That so when I hear you say what you say it just resonates so deeply It's a visceral palpable uh response I feel inside because it speaks to a truth deep within me Uh So thank you for sharing that It that means the world to me really well I like frameworks and constructs And I admitted to you before I officially kicked off the episode that although I read it once after our first conversation and I liked it and I felt good about it It wasn't until I read it a second time and I'm now underlining and actually taking notes from the book and I have it in a Google Doc and wait there's more I will record some of it in my own voice and play them as affirmations for myself I do a I do a lot of that already Thanks to one of my guests uh from a year and a half ago named Doctor Shad Helmstetter who wrote a book called What To Say When you talk to yourself So I listen to positive self talk every day But as I'm writing through some of this stuff I I'm going to add it to my affirmations The eight principles Just they're gonna become part of me as a reminder as a present So yeah we we're very connected Absolutely The affirmations by the way the audio audible or audio version of those affirmations That's brilliant I love that I record it I upload it to Google Drive and then I just click on it It's playing in my ears I I swipe through the different affirmations I've lost £30 because of the eating affirmation What That's fantastic Yeah I didn't set out to lose weight but I had heard Doctor Shad Helmstetter said but when he started doing what he was doing about 30 years ago he lost £38 and he never gained it back And I took his affirmation I read it and I listen to it again and again and it plugs into how I'm wired Like one of the things he says in the affirmation is meal time is achievement time And unfortunately because I've been so addicted to achievement and it's never been enough and the achievement has all been to try to get happiness of which it never led to happiness But it it still sinks into the hard wiring in me But other things like less food on your fork is less food on your waist and less food on your plate is less food on your waist and just listen to those mantras and it it works I love that And it's they're pithy punchy little statements You've got there Those affirmations They're sticky love Have you recorded any affirmations for yourself or for others Uh Yeah I used to that was a practice I definitely um participated in for a long time Um I actually started because I had a trou I had trouble listening to my own voice because that was my own little

insecurity I um would listen to lots of other people's affirmations I would try to find the ones that resonated with me Um I remember listening to you know Abraham Hicks a lot Uh They didn't always just share affirmations but then through every I found Louise Hay Louise Hay was like the godmother of affirmations and she had this very grandmotherly voice and it was so nurturing And then at some point I did record my own and I practiced that for a while It also by the way helped me get over this insecurity around listening to my own voice which is a beautiful little side effect But yeah I love what you're saying there and it is important I think can be useful It resonates with you to record them in your own voice I would like to send you a link to one or two of my favorite ones and then you can just listen to it as you're working out or walking around or whatever And I'll be curious to get your feedback on it Please send it to me I know I'm gonna love it I'm gonna love So I'll preface it with that But yes please I would be I'm always open to receiving uh any and every form of abundance And it is really interesting the relationship we have with our own voice and our own self image and our own image in the mirror and how we show up on pictures and and these are all things that are in the way of us having high self esteem One of the images I thought of just this morning as I was preparing for this and wanting to use the principle of smart energy and actually some of the other principles of self appreciation And I decided this morning that I would put myself up on a my own pedestal like like high self esteem meant like visually but also body language putting myself up and putting my steam up in the air above me in the shower this morning Like OK wait a minute What You're not putting yourself down put yourself up above yourself So it's just interesting when I heard you say yeah listening to your own voice you're not alone I would say most people but I think it's just into that attachment to how we should look or sound or or whatever it is beautiful Absolutely greed I love that You get this download I mean and this is the beautiful thing I think about life and about just tuning this sort of radio station that is our attention Because when you sort of tune to a different channel you start hearing different things you start seeing different things you start experiencing different things and it first doesn't seem like that big a deal But what you just shared there is so powerful and so profound right And the interesting thing about it is there was a time when I mean I was struggling with this whole like selective attention thing like selective perception thing like just trying to focus in ways that were more constructive and productive and profitable And I read a book called the handbook of Mental Control Really Struggling And

the handbook of Medical Control is hundreds of studies about what does and doesn't work with respect to controlling your focus and thinking what you want to think essentially And the one thing the book one of the many things the book shared was that we mostly think in pictures but we verbalize it so quickly and we put words and language around it so quickly that we are almost it's almost invisible to us that we think mostly in pictures and especially when you worry it's mostly pictures So one of the best antidotes to fear or worry or uncertainty or insecurity is coming up with different or better or more constructive mental pictures Imagery You did that so beautifully right there without having to read any more books about it just gives you naturally something that I didn't of course think too much about but you just did it So anyway that's part of the many benefits that I think accrue to us when we dial our radio station or tune ourselves to a different frequency because we start to see and experience and hear downloads and insights that we might not otherwise hear that only help us do more of what we're trying to do or feel more of what we're trying to feel Yeah And the context where that download came from was spending the last several days you know with your book and that's where it came from was thinking in my mind OK Of the eight principles What do I need to do right now I need to think positively I need to appreciate myself I need appreciative thought and language That's what gave me the image of of putting myself up on a pedestal The second principle is the principle of non attachment I'd like to hear what you mean by that Yeah So sometimes when I would read books written by happy people or books written about happiness I would hear a principle of non attachment and often it would sound like giving up your goals desires and dreams It does not mean that not in the least All right So if you have desires and dreams and goals please continue going through your goals and your dreams and your desires It doesn't mean giving up goals dreams and desires It simply means giving up the struggle and the stress and the strain and the strife around your goals and desires In other words it means letting go or detaching from or not being attached to this idea that your happiness depends on your goals desires or dreams coming true or being realized or being fulfilled So in other words instead of attaching your happiness to what does or doesn't happen you want to attach your happiness to simply you just let it be and rest and depend and be contingent on only what you think and do because that's the truth The truth is it doesn't depend on what doesn't doesn't happen outside of you It depends on what doesn't doesn't happen inside inside of you So that the invitation there is again not to

give up what you want want what you want Just don't attach your happiness to getting what you want or having what you want If you can do that not only will you feel better but as a result of feeling better you do better And you also tend to find that you get what you want a lot more quickly a lot more easily and a lot more Enjoyably So now the journey is enjoyable and the destination is enjoyable The journey is something you experience and you have a ton of fun with and you're happy during the work that you're putting in or during you're reaching for the goal or you're doing you know your attempt to carve out this dream for yourself But you're also you also get there faster whatever your destination is And then when you get there you also find you can enjoy the destination or the dream and desire so much more which is often not what extraordinarily um successful and overachieving and ambitious people experience or do you know they're usually pretty unhappy desperate needy greedy during this during the process of it then if they're lucky enough to make it happen sometimes they often do they're not happy when they get it and then before long something else replaces it And now they've got a whole new goal dream and desire to chase after And so this journey called life mostly ends up being stress and struggle and strain and strength I'd win an award at work And what did I want another award And then I win another award at work And what did I want another one and another one and another one always thinking about the next one was going to make me happy And if I was happy it was just for that instant and it was the leading up to the getting it that there was this moment of happiness and being non attached or giving up attachment to that it certainly makes me happier because otherwise there's the unhappiness of not getting and much like when you get a lot of presents on Christmas you you have all these presents and it's hard to really let them in take them in and value them because there's there's too much abundance Well I guess in that vein you can have too much success give all this success around you but you don't appreciate it and then you are attaching your success to your happiness and it just doesn't work work well when you do that said so much there my gosh we can unpack that for hours upon hours I I mean you're absolutely right about that and this is something that I didn't share in the book quite this way It's there but it's not written this way happiness You can call it fulfillment you can call contentment Use any word you want Sometimes the word happiness doesn't resonate with people as deeply as other words but I'll call it happiness for now Happiness seems to be something that we experience when we realize our desire or fulfill a dream or reach a goal but it's not a



feeling of a desire that eventuates in happiness It's actually ultimately the forgetting of desire the forgetting of the dream dream or even a goal for a little short period of time that forgetting is blissful That's why at night you can have the most difficult day But when you get into bed and you slip off to sleep and you forget the world you forget your desires and your goals and your dreams and even your fears you feel so blissful you feel so happy And so that right there is evidence and proof that the fulfillment you're seeking through other peaceful places things and activities through success through a desirable goal or dream you actually have inside of you all along And the desire or the goal of the dream as beautiful as it may be is often a distraction from the fulfillment that exists inside you all the time You actually are overlooking that the fulfillment that exists inside of you to go chasing it through or by trying to realize this dream or trying to fulfill this goal or achieve something else in your life right And so it's just think about that for a second it could be a little hard to get your head around that But the idea is that we often go chasing things not because we want those things so much but because we want happiness and the reason we're able to chase those things in search of happiness is because we've overlooked the happiness that is right here now right So another way to put it is you said this gosh you said this I've been so well which is we think we're in it for the presence presents but we're actually in it for the presence presence right So we think we're in it for the good stuff for the presence for the gifts But we are actually in it just the happiness and fulfillment that exist in this moment always in forever while you were sharing that I was thinking about a situation that you're uncomfortable in for whatever reason And then as you mentioned the falling asleep and you're like oh I can I can relax Now what was it about the mechanism that at that moment you could relax that you didn't have access to it when you were in that stressful moment Like if you really had that why do you not always have it And I don't know that you can't always have it unless you're really really being present and saying wait a minute I'm off come back to presence I'm off come back to presence practice the principles But yes I think we have that power in us to leave whatever circumstances and follow the principle of non attachment Much easier said than done But something that could be developed Yes and also sometimes easier done than said in other words we're doing it all the time and sometimes we recognize it and sometimes we don't that's all we In fact I'd argue that more often than not You're doing it You know if you're feeling any positive emotion at all Peace love joy excitement you're already doing it you're already doing it right So

you and you do it every night by the way for 567 hours as you sleep you have to do it when you know you're too tired to move a whole lot You have to do it when you're in Strangely enough even when you're in severe pain your body's in pain But at that point in time often not always but your mind not suffering so much you know not suffering is what we call unhappiness often So yes I've been absolutely It's something that you want to um that you can cultivate and practice Ultimately of course you'll discover that happiness is something that you can't cultivate that you don't need to cultivate and that you don't need to practice because it's a non practice It's like sitting right sitting isn't something that you need to practice unless you've spent your whole life Standing up Sitting is a relaxing of effort not more effort And happiness is a relaxing of effort Ultimately not more effort but in the beginning because you've been squeezing those fists so tight for so long it feels so effortful it feels like it takes so much work Um you know this relaxation thing But I promise as you continue doing it it gets easier and easier And then one day it becomes much harder to be unhappy for very long than it does to be happy Well I have the playbook now And as you point out in the book these principles build on each other So we've got the principle of smart energy the principle of non attachment and then the principle of positive focus which we're basically just touching on which is drawing back your positive attention as you put in the book give your conscious attention to the better feeling aspects of all experience And because I have the author here that I can ask number one I want to ask you to talk about this point this principle in general But number two I think you very deliberately left off the the s at the end of experience And so I wanted to ask that as a two part question Yeah So um yes So focusing on the best feeling aspects if you'll notice there is no such thing as a perfect place or person or activity no matter what it is in life it seems that we exist in the world of duality because it seems that way And so there's two ends to every stick it seems like there's a bad end seems like there's a good end there's left there's right there's up there's down right So that means that no matter what you're going through in your life there's something about it that you probably don't love or like entirely And there's something about it that you also do prefer or like or love And so the invitation there is to focus on the positive end of the stick the better feeling end of the stick that part of that person plays finger activity that you feel better for when you're focusing on So for instance and I think I may have used this example before but plenty of times in my life I've been broke You know I've had no money and that doesn't feel so great What does feel

great However is knowing that you can only go up from there right And this starts to get into this this other principles sort of around the conversational piece of it But the idea is in every situation that you're in every environment wherever you stand or sit or lay down look for focus on think about and ultimately talk about only the best within that person placing or activity And you want to continue practicing that until it becomes a habit until it becomes automatic That's the first part of the question the second part of the question you might have to repeat to me because I don't know if I caught it all So the word at the end of the sentence give your conscious attention to the better feeling aspects of all experience versus all experiences Yes yes So the better feeling aspect of all experience I would say for me at least is happiness itself right So that one experience this is where language becomes you know when we're talking about any of this stuff particularly things that are ineffable Everything we say is a concession to language right So not everything's a pointer nothing's actually it So you wanna be careful I want to be careful that when I'm pointing the moon I don't take the finger for the moon It's like look where the finger is pointing not what you know the finger is So in that respect I'd say yeah the one thing that I feel deeply about and it's funny and ironic that I would say this considering that I was always on the other side of the fence most of my life is that happiness what we might call peaceful aliveness what we might call the experience of life itself The liveness is life itself Um Life is um not only we might call consciousness not only in everything it ultimately is everything everything consists really of consciousness and we can talk about it in lots of different ways But if we talked about physics for instance we could say um all right there's matter and then there's energy But actually when you look more deeply we know there's only energy And if you look more deeply into that you realize there's mostly only space that all matter is essentially energy and all energy essentially is mostly space And so life is much like that It looks like there are conditions and circumstances and other people and places in your life Ultimately all of that is what we might call consciousness And that consciousness is mostly emptiness And that emptiness is what I would call happiness And emptiness is what I might call f it's a fullness it's a full emptiness which is a strange thing to say But the idea is that happiness pervades everything and everyone uh no matter who or what that thing is or that person is that's a hard thing to kind of hear It sounds so abstract almost very esoteric And it's something that you have to feel your way into No need to get your head around it today But the idea essentially is that there's only one experience ever happening

there's happiness and then there's your lack of awareness of that There's abundance and your lack of awareness of that There's peace and your lack of awareness of that And so when you overlook peace we call it conflict or stress or anxiety When you overlook happiness you call it unhappiness or depression or any of these other things But there's only the experience that's ultimately happening And then there's the overlooking of that experience which we call the opposite of that experience And so yeah it's a little bit I occasionally try to do these things where I write these sentences and I mean you're really good about picking up on these things where I'm trying to say something more deeply but I don't want to go fully into it because it might just confuse people but the people that are there already will get it And um yeah hopefully I elucidated that in a way that was meaningful I mean it didn't draw you into more uh murkiness It drew me into into space it drew me into the final frontier You know it drew it drew me in a lot of good ways One of the best things about being a podcaster and being someone who produces and edits his own work is we're having this conversation now but I'm gonna have it multiple times as I go through it and there's things that you said in the last conversation that still hit me and and I like wait I've heard I've heard Rob say that Well yeah I heard him say it I made the little clip of of what you said and this is an answer that is going to is going to move and move with me and through me Yeah I love you saying that that's how I always felt too I mean and what's funny is I definitely experienced every conversation I experienced that with you You'll say these things and then I think oh wow that's so when I see it the second time I'm like it goes deeper and the third time it goes even deeper right And I find we find that with ourselves sometimes too something comes out especially if you're just tapped in I mean the one intention I set try to set at the beginning of every conversation particularly conversations like this is that um I can get out of the way and whatever it is that life or the universe God whatever you wanna call it wants to say through me that I allow for that to come through And so sometimes I listen to something else I've said and I'm like I don't remember saying that And that's fascinating I'm not sure I even understand that Let me go back and see if I'm just talking gibberish or if it came from somewhere else So I love you saying that And um in the East they say um existence consciousness bliss all synonymous is what they say Um And I'm saying essentially the same thing here I'm just trying to use different language for those of us who might not be as familiar with some of the eastern um spirit trait traditions Now these eight principles build on each other like a staircase And I'm gonna ask for a subtle subtle

difference or subtle distinguishing the third from fourth So the third is principle of positive focus and the fourth is principle of self appreciation And to me they're pretty connected But why why do you have them as separate Yeah So I realized I was getting pretty good at something which was focusing call in a positive way constructive way even better on other people places and things And I really struggled to turn that positive of focus and attention or that constructive focus and attention back on myself And so I felt deeply that it deserved its own chapter At the very least it probably deserves its own book I think in fact thousands of books have been written specifically and only about that Um Ultimately at the end of the day you'll find that they're very similar And if we were gonna deep enough into any mythical tradition we essentially find that there is only one self And so when you're seeing the positive out there in the world you're also experiencing the positive inside yourself right So it's one of the same beyond that I think most of us struggle with this self appreciation bit and use it as a correlation You know when you judge yourself you tend to automatically judge other people and when you stop judging yourself you you tend to automatically stop judging other people right So that's just a natural sort of outcome generally of doing the work Um But sometimes you know you need to be reminded of that that you know if you do it the other way you stop judging other people we love that you might still not have solved this stopping juking yourself thing So anyway they both deserve I think um their own chapter It's essentially the same theme But one is sort of turned outwards and one is turned inwards But the idea is focus on the best feeling aspects of yourself to the exclusion of everything that you don't like or love or can't accept about yourself And if you do it long enough I promise even though it feels like you're burying your head in the sand when you focus long enough on what you do love and appreciate about yourself Genuinely Even if it's one thing when you turn back to look at those things that you thought you didn't like you didn't love and you couldn't accept suddenly you do like and love them and you do accept them It's mind blowing It's like a miracle of all miracles And so this does require putting aside for a little while At least this idea of self improvement You know we tend to think that self-improvement leads to self acceptance and it leads to self love It doesn't we've all tried that game You know it's like chasing the horizon You just never ever catch the horizon And so you wanna turn that sort of carton horse around prioritize self acceptance self love self appreciation first and foremost and then trust and know that whatever changes or improvements you need to make in your life

will come a lot more easily and Enjoyably and often even unconsciously when you focus on self love first Well I love 34 and five I should say I love all eight principles But but I love 34 and five as a group because principal positive focus tells me OK focus my attention on the positive Then the principal self appreciation is well don't forget about you Like you're a part of focusing on the positive and then the fifth principle the principle of appreciative thought and language And then as we've distinguished here also imagery pictures maybe metaphors like different ways to sink into it outside of thought and language But these three principles as kind of the middle of the eight they go together and yet they deserve their their special focus Is there anything from your perspective about the principle of appreciative thought and language that you want to highlight here Yes Um I would say so that's all about telling a better feeling story based in truth right And it's how you talk to yourself and it's how you talk to others That's what chapter is all about And the idea there is it has to be or feel true If it feels true it'll be believable feels believable then you're moving in the right direction If you try to make it a snow job So often we try to tell ourselves these things that we know aren't true or we feel deeply aren't true that doesn't work very well So it is a bit of an art doesn't require a little bit of artfulness and skillfulness to find the words in the language that allow you to focus on what's true But in a more constructive and productive and supportive way right So when I was broke for instance let's say you have no money It's hard to say I'm rich and I'm a millionaire It's hard especially if you focus on money But you can say I'm rich in ways that money can't purchase or buy Right I'm rich in ways that are perfectly priceless creativity my health running water my friends and family the love and connection that I have I desire to be happy All those things are perfectly priceless And in fact if somebody came along and said can I buy those things from you You'd say ah I'm not gonna do it right So there's a way of telling the story to yourself and others where you're not just these days we call it positive or or toxic positivity But the idea is you don't want it to be a snow job Sometimes you can reach reach for something that feels a little less a little more unrealistic Sure But you wanna make sure that it's you're focused on a better feeling not just better thinking but a better feeling conversation with yourself and others And that leads into principle six which is the principle of constructive response to adversity recognizing the advantages to be found in difficulty when you're talking about being broke and then realizing you have the sun and the moon and the stars and enough food to have and water to drink And also if you're broke but you're

not owing a million dollars to other people then you're better But either way Principle six the construction of a response to adversity that also includes the appreciative thought and language is is how I would connect those Absolutely I've been very well said Um yeah you know the challenging thing about adversity and sometimes I call adversity contrast Thank you very much Abraham Hicks When I was really struggling in my life I picked that up from them And um the interesting thing about it is that first of all when you're in it it's extraordinarily difficult to find your center to find any joy and sometimes that can feel like too tall and ambitious in order But what you do know for sure what we all know for sure even when we're the mist of adversity is that adversity or contrast forces you to stop slow down and prioritize or rep prioritize which truly and who's truly important in your life you know that's just critical It really does help you regain perspective on life and you stop majoring in minor things and minor in major things so to speak So with that particular law you're reminded that it's the contrast of life that makes life so beautiful that the sweet is that much sweeter because of the sour And when you're forced to go without to slow down to go with less than what you think you need or you want whatever it is whether it's a loved one or it's money or its health you come to realize what's truly important And you also tend to find that includes your relationships So all of a sudden that weak relationships are weeded out and the strong relationships are strengthened and that's extraordinary clarifying can be extraordinary validating at moments It can be also alienating confusing and you can feel lonely as well No I want to take away from that Another way of talking about this briefly is that it's what we call post traumatic growth right So post traumatic stress to go against a lot of you know airplay Um but post traumatic growth is a real thing And uh what that essentially means is that even if you experience the worst kind of adversity and you find that you are experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD even then often many people in fact quite a few more people lots more people experience post traumatic growth than experienced PTSD even if they also experience PTSD right So that means that you come out better somehow not just bitter PT GP T GP TG That's right The seventh principle is the principle of inspired action So folks I know I did often felt like ok this happiness thing feels like it's mostly about what I think and what I say you know and that's true Happiness we could describe at least the beginning of our journey is a state of mind so to speak state of speaking a way of speaking Um It's also about action right And it also means you know we're physical for a reason there's a reason to

and we have these bodies and you know whatever level of capacity or functionality you have in your body you want to enjoy it you know if you can and the challenge often becomes well you know how can I take the most inspired action possible How can I going back to that first principle Take the Laziest but smartest action humanly possible And the key there is to find that peace and that happiness and that joy and that love find the inspiration first so that you can take action out of either a place of desperation or or from a place of inspiration from a place of frustration or from a place of inspiration And you'll find that if you take it from a place of desperation or frustration things tend to get worse you might accomplish and achieve and acquire a whole lot But it doesn't seem like you've made a whole lot of progress with this subjective quality of experience that you're after happiness or peace or love And you could say wow how can I have spent decades working so hard at something and feel like I'm not any further ahead We all know people like this we probably are people like this to a large extent You know it's like look at how many things you have now that not very long ago you prayed to have that If someone took away today you would just pray and beg to have back and yet notice how all this achievement and acquisition accumulation and it hasn't really made most of us very much or at all happier at all Right So again it's about you know coming back to realizing that there's a smarter lazier approach to getting what you ultimately want and that includes taking action but taking inspired action instead of desperate to needy greedy action So instead of taking action from a place of unhappiness where you're hoping that whatever action you take is gonna make you happy You take action from a place of increasing happiness and then whatever you do adds to your happiness So another way of saying that is whatever you achieve accomplish your choir only has the ability to magnify what is already there If you're unhappy and you take action from that place it's gonna magnify your unhappiness if you are happy and you take action from that place but if you achieve a require can enhance the happiness Um but it's not gonna you know fill you up inside you're reaching for a positive feeling before you act within a framework of return on smart energy investment and a focus on not attaching yourself to it But focusing on the positive focusing it from appreciative thought and language and appreciating self putting yourself up there such that when you take that action it's inspired action because there's so much freedom and power behind it you know it you couldn't have said it more concise there beautifully I mean it's one of your sweet spots It really is one of your sweet spots is summarizing things in a way that's very concise



and succinct And uh you absolutely know it That's precisely the idea Now the eighth principle First of all thank you The eighth principle is the principle of self empowerment and relationships And I I can see how this kind of ties it all together and then gets you ready for your second book of Love from the Inside out But tell me when you came up with the Eighth Principle what you were thinking Yeah Um relationships are hard relationships are really hard OK There was a movie I watched called The 36 Chambers and the 30 It was basically a martial arts movie You may have seen it in the 36 Chambers is like the ultimate greatest sort of task or level you can reach And that's relationships you know Um it doesn't mean only romantic relationships My goodness No it also means platonic ones and professional ones and familial ones and all of that And so the idea here is now let's take all of these incredible tools some people might call them weapons and let's go into relationships with ourselves first and foremost with our friends and our families and our romantic partners Let's go into all of that with an eye and intention and commitment to applying them and applying them consistently and applying them consistently Not only the rest of the book says to get results If you focus on getting results that's a sure way to not get the results you want If you focus on this step right here and now and you focus on enjoy this step here and now being fully present in this step here and now and just making this moment that means to some other moment or means to some other end the end itself It's like imagining this is the last moment you have left in your life you just make it that So every time you have that conversation with whomever including yourself you want to put into practice all of the other seven principles If you do that consistently you'll find that first of all you're enjoying your relationship so much more Second of all you're way more attractive OK And you're especially more attractive to people that are also happy or wanting to be happy You might not be as attractive to people that are insecure or people that don't like to be happy OK But also and and so you would improve who you attract You become more attractive literally and figuratively you experience and improve the the entire relationship itself and you're enjoying that but you also improve the results of all of that as well That doesn't So there's no guarantee that the person you're with just because you apply all this is gonna want to stay with you or that you're gonna wanna stay with them But that's not the point The point is happiness not to be stuck in a relationship just for relationships sake Uh So yeah that's what that final chapter is ultimately about Can you imagine if happiness was taught to young people in school I just love the idea so much I

and I see them experimenting with that in different places and I'm looking forward to seeing a whole lot of that a whole lot more of that Well I envision it I can see a class in happiness in the conversations that surround happiness that empower happiness that bring about happiness And obviously I believe conversation should be taught That's why I'm uh founding Conversations Academy Conversations University down the road And there's a whole list In fact I did an episode called 23 classes that should be in college and 23 is not even I had a list of 83 but you could keep going But when I think about like the core things how to have conversations with people and how to be happy Like if I was taught those if other people were taught those imagine we have many more people with the technology of being effective in conversations while also be happy in the conversation such that there's the principle of self empowerment that leads to the principle of everyone empowerment that we're using appreciative thought and language that we're positively focused that we're all looking out for each other In terms of I wanna make sure that you're getting a good return a smart return on your energy investment If I hear you being not fully appreciative and I'm like hey what can I do What space can I be to support that So anyway I've got I've got some visions I'm terrified by my visions too of like well if I get attached to them if I just say yeah I'm I'm the possibility of those We are all the possibility of those Yeah then it's then I can flow with it Oh That's so good So I love that you're doing this work Gosh I fill you in the 83 Um I'm inspired that you made the list I remember so many times in my head having a list but never wrote it down Um The conversations was especially I mean I'm just uh really excited about that and uh looking forward um to spreading the word on that and you're right You know there is an opportunity for us all to learn how to have these conversations with ourselves and others and how to be happy and the beautiful thing about happiness and think the beautiful thing about life is while you can't change the past it doesn't seem like you can always influence the future very much And you're like oh what can I do You can always enjoy and experience what you want to enjoy and experience here in this moment right now that's all that's ever in our hands is the present moment And the opportunity is to take more advantage of the present moment and to dive more deeply into the present moment at every turn Right And so that I think is and the other thing I'll say is this and well I am 100% agree with you uh in agreement with you about wishing that these things were taught in uh well at the earliest age possible and they can be I'm also deeply grateful that it wasn't for one reason which is without those if I had had that conversation or

I was taught that at an early age or both of us were we probably wouldn't be in conversation right now And I can't imagine my life being any different Like there's something about not having had it that makes me so much more deeply appreciative for you Ivan And for all the phenomenal other authors that I've read over the course of my life um The ones that I continue to read um for the work that I do now for my clients like it um you know came with some suffering and there's definitely a smarter energy investment there that could have come earlier Um But I am very grateful if for no other reason that it it's allowed me to intro for us to become you know introduced to each other for us to be in conversation and to for us to be friends So you know that I am so grateful for you Thank you as we begin to wrap up this conversation what would you like to say at this point in time so that you can be complete Yeah Um uh nothing needs to be said to be complete You're right And I will say this anyway um which is the most one of the most challenging parts of this journey for me and I can't speak for you was that I felt like my unhappiness was and you can call it anything stress anxiety my suffering my frustration I felt that it was justified and legitimate and valid And for that reason I felt that and I was attached to it I almost had an identity in it And that made it very difficult to let go of when I came to recognize and realize that I can be justified and legitimate and valid in my unhappiness and my suffering But that I wasn't doing anything other than messing up my own life my own present moment and my future life it became a whole lot easier to let go of it right When you suddenly realize what am I getting out of this again This frustration and unhappiness Oh wait I can be justified in what I'm feeling and yet I can still choose to feel something differently because I want to feel better and because I want to do better So I think that's the main thing I'd like to share is that whatever you're out there feeling doesn't matter what it is you're justified and legitimate and and and it is bound to feel and you're allowed You're welcome In fact life is so free you can choose to continue to suffer and exist to your happiness You can and and I don't want for a second take that away from anyone if they want to hold on to it And that being said there's a huge invitation here that there is a life a life waiting for you That's so much happier and more blissful and more loving and more joyful and more self loving that from your current perspective and place of standing you can't possibly imagine how good that life is I guarantee it You can't possibly imagine So that's just the invitation the encouragement maybe a strong recommendation to let go of whatever it is that you think is causing your unhappiness Because at the end of the day it's just a thought and a thought

can be dropped I accept your recommendation your invitation and also the part of it of I'm going to continually let go of in order to accept Like that's unfortunately part of it or fortunately depending on how you think about it Oh so good Oh I love it We should accept it It's great It's great My my closing statement is this episode is complete Like I really feel complete about going through the eight principles with you and really through them like not just listing off but getting through them and having said that you can be complete but noted And I think this conversation this episode is complete But part of me wishes I could just knock on your door and then we go walk on the beach and we walked from Miami to Key West and I believe that if we did that we would not run out of things to talk about going there and coming back And so in closing this is just the beginning of of a beautiful friendship and like we have a long walk to do and a lot of work to do Dean of Dean of conversations dean of happiness And there's a lot of of good we can do and it comes from dark places for both of us like times when we were not happy with our with ourselves and whether whether or not we were justified in feeling that way knowing what I know about you we felt that way And so I just want to encourage anybody who's hearing our words right now to be in conversation with us no matter how tough life appears to you right now You're living it You're alive and let us know how we can be of service to you Oh so good I love that And by the way I'm up for the for the knock on the door and I walk along the beach Anytime brother you let me know I'm always in last month I was almost I was there I was so close I was in no the next time we'll do it next time next time Well Robert saying thank you is is not sufficient Uh I'm grateful and have to have you as a part And everybody out there too as a part of this conversation about conversations Thank you I appreciate you so much All right we jammed Amazing I've been I will you're so good at this You're so talented at it But I mean this you really when you talk about mastering comic you really do a phenomenal like you really master your craft I mean really you know really another thing I almost said which by the way we're still recording So maybe I maybe I am saying I I kind of judged Tim Ferris and uh Joe Rogan for having these super long episodes Like who wants to listen to a 234 hour episode But having had this conversation and we just didn't prepare for that I could see how maybe doing 10 episodes a year but they are the three hour episodes with the right person and the right background and topic So yes I mean and especially I think with you because you don't you ask first of all you're so well prepared Oh my gosh Um is that second of all the way in which you connect And you do this

wonderful thing where you're able to guide the conversation in a very um organic way if you have your intention set but you guide it in a way that feels natural and organic which in itself is very difficult to do Especially with people like me we get on here we want to talk about 29,000 different things You do such a great job of that And it is almost like it's like you're steering but it's hidden you know it's like how we so yes I agree Those long conversations um can be so powerful and so profound with the right host and the right guest Yes 100%