

Robert Mack ~ Love from the Inside Out | Interview with Banyen Books

Welcome to Banyon Books Branches of Wisdom celebrating the joy of bright ideas and heartfelt lifelong learning. Branches of Wisdom is a series of intimate conversations with the world's most influential authors and visionaries. We explore spirituality and the human mind, ecology and culture. Most episodes are recorded with a live audience. You can join our live events and submit questions to your favorite guests. Check out our upcoming schedule at Banyon dot com. Since 1970 Banyon Books has been a rich oasis at the crossroads of Wisdom and philosophy, offering resources for humanity's evolving paths. We're a locally owned independent bookstore in the heart of Vancouver's Kitsilano neighborhood. Visit us in person or shop online at Banyon dot com. Please subscribe, follow, like, and leave your reviews for the podcast and now enjoy Hello and welcome. Uh, My name is Jacob Steele, the events manager for Banyon Books. Today we are delighted to be hosting Robert Mack, discussing his new book, Love from the Inside Out. Robert Mack is an Ivy League educated positive psychology expert, celebrity happiness coach, executive coach, and a published author. Robert studied under the direction of Martin Seligman, the founder of positive Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Robert is one of the world's leading experts on the relationship between happiness and success. He helps individuals and organizations achieve an energizing balance of authentic personal happiness and effortless professional success based on time-tested science and timeless spiritual wisdom. Robert's work has been endorsed by Oprah, Vanessa Williams, and many others. Uh, He's been seen on Good Morning America, the Today Show, Access Hollywood, Health, Cosmopolitan, Glamour, many other magazines, and shows. Uh, He's the author of Happiness From The Inside Out and his new best-selling book, which he will be speaking on today, is Love from the Inside Out. Lessons and inspiration for loving yourself, your life, and each other. Uh, In this book, Robert shares a fresh new perspective on the meaning of true love. He explores the frustration and futility of seeking love from others instead of yourself and in the future instead of the present. He weaves together time-tested scientific findings with timeless transcendental wisdom. And you can find out more about uh, Robert's work at coach Rob Math dot com. That's coach Rob Math ac K dot com. And now, without further ado, please give a warm, banging welcome to Robert Mack. Thank you so

much Jacob That was amazing I so appreciate being being here and so appreciate you having me Uh So today I wanna talk a little bit of course about love from the inside out but I want to talk about why I wrote the book and really what the pur sort of point and the purpose of the book is So the question I want to start with is why are you here Right And I don't mean here at this live streaming event uh with books we know that those good folks and Jacob and I sort of drag you here screaming and kicking But why are you here on this planet on this earth That was a question that drove me nuts I mean absolutely insane It drove my mom nuts probably my dad nuts and both my sibling nuts Um Since I was a very small child I was obsessed with this question of why am I here on the planet For what reason For what point what purpose what meaning And so as time went on that question did not leave me alone And I continued to ask that question along with many others to my mom to other parents to teachers And as I continued driving everybody else nuts I drove myself just as nuts with the question In fact I became so crazy and so obsessed with that question that I was eventually led to experiencing more and more suicidal ideation right So this existential angst and anxiety grew and grew and these feelings of sort of self loathing and anxiety and stress that I experienced as a small child really just grew and grew over time And despite doing well in school I was saluted to in my high school class despite doing well academically despite doing well athletically uh despite doing you know ok socially I didn't have a whole lot of friends I was also more shy of my high school class I eventually found that my depression kept becoming deeper and deeper and I got to a place where I was seriously suicidal And so I began to experience uh suicidal thoughts dozens and dozens of times a day I thought about killing myself more than I thought about anything or anyone else And I eventually got to a place where I decided I was going to do something about it So I did a little research and decided I was going to slash my wrist And so went to the kitchen got a kitchen knife and dug it into my wrist Still have the suicide test marks uh to this day And strangely enough without anything in my external conditions or circumstances changing remember I had a pretty good life at the time I mean I had some friends I had a beautiful girlfriend at the time I had a great job uh had two beautiful German cars all the things that you really hoped to achieve and accomplish a choir Um when you're young I felt like I had most of it and yet I was deeply depressed And so without anything changing in my external conditions as I rammed this knife into my wrist I had the most inexplicable unexpected ineffable experience had ever had for no good reason Without

anything changing I felt this deep peace and happiness and limitless love The kind of love that you feel has always been there And yet at the same time could never go away The kind of love that washes over you entirely that allows you to feel a deep peace and safety and security and and at the time I didn't know how to make sense of that right That love and that peace and that joy that I felt I didn't understand it at all But I did know that I should probably postpone the suicide for like five or 10 minutes which is what I did So I postponed the suicide for like 10 minutes which now is practically laughable Then it was a very tall order It felt like a really impossible that would last a whole 10 minutes But I did And in that time I started doing some research I started studying habits in particular And as I began that study those 10 minutes bled into pardon the pun several hours and several weeks And now it's been over two decades and I wanna share what I learned in that experience Usually I share what I've learned from that experience from the perspective of happiness right So I'm a happiness coach a positive psychology expert And so really my sweet spot is happiness But I want to share today really what I learned about love both in that experience and also through the last 20 or so years of working as a love coach and dating coach which is surprising and strange to me because I never set out to do that You know I'd always set out to really just be happy myself and I had planned that you know if I did that that other things would work themselves out and even if they didn't I was happy and that's the point and purpose of it you know all anyway right So in this sort of path and journey as I became happier and happier by applying every tip trick and tool that I could possibly apply After reading every book I could possibly read including Marion Williamson and to and Abraham Hicks and Robert Mahi and Rupert Spru And I mean all the folks all the teachers I couldn't I could never get enough of those folks After doing all that I found my life was improving you know bit by bit and day by day And I began to uh grow a private practice and in that private practice I called myself a happiness coach because I still consider myself a happiness coach But strangely enough most people called me because they were struggling with relationship problems So I assumed that you know when I put up my website and said hey I'm a happiness coach and I wanna help people live happier lives Um And hopefully as a result of those happier lives you'll also live more successful lives wealthier lives healthier lives We know that's all true Based on decades of empirical data I just assumed that people would call me and say hey Rob I'm really unhappy I'm really sad I'm really miserable I'm stressed out and anxious Can you please help me That is not

what happened what happened instead was that most people called me said you know Rob I've got a girlfriend or a boyfriend or a husband or a wife or many girlfriends or many boyfriends or both and they just are making my life miserable or I have the lack there of of those things or of those people and that's making me miserable And so I want you to fix those people or I want you to fix those things or fix this situation And I always found that so highly problematic I understood it but I was frustrated by it for a long time until I began to discover a few I suppose misconceptions misperceptions myths around happiness and love And so I wanna share some of what I learned today about love specifically and also how it relates to happiness I think most of this won't be new for you but it might be a new way of expressing it Um And you'll certainly feel I think an intuitive hit as I share some of these flawed premises misconceptions or myths around love Ok The first thing that I sort of wanted to speak to you right away is that you know love seems and feels and appears to be something that is very different from happiness right That it's something somehow is very different And I discovered that as I was talking to people uh couples and single people that we can almost reduce every single problem in our lives down particularly every relationship problem down to one problem That problem is how do I define or describe love Right So what is love right We all explain understand describe love in different ways without knowing it So every relationship problem really comes down to it is reduced down to two people who have different understandings or appreciations or experiences of what it means when they say I love you So when you say I love you what do you mean by love Right What do you mean by love And what do you mean by I and what do you mean by you Right So as I begin to explore this question myself my own personal benefit you know and part of this was of course came up came on the heels of that suicidal experience but it also came by virtue of having my own challenging relationships over the course of my life And then you know sort of living vicariously through and with um the experiences of my clients and friends and family members I discovered that the very first challenge opportunity sort of myth around love is that love is what you think it is right The truth is at least in my experience is that love is not what you think it is So the suicidal experience that I had for instance I felt love despite not thinking any thoughts at all right huge mind blowingly inspiring insight and revelation to have wasn't sure what exactly to do with it But it took me about 20 years to come around to truly appreciate the understanding that when I was not thinking at all when I was contemplating at the end of my

life and I came to the end of that con contemplation and decided to do something about it that in that moment that my mind went quiet it was cool calm composed and I was essentially existing in a state of no mind which I will call a divine mind that I experienced This all pervasive love peace and happiness that transcended thoughts So it's not that it could include thoughts but it transcended thoughts and this peace love And this happiness was not something I was thinking right It was something I was feeling despite not thinking much or anything at all And so the first clue for me there is that love is not what I think Love is not what you think Love is not what anybody thinks It is Love is not what happens when you think love is what already is underneath all your thoughts about what love is love is what already is underneath all your thoughts about everything and anything that does or does not exist in the world right So love is what you feel when you stop thinking about love your love your love life or your lack thereof Right So it's this ever present reality that is the very ground of being right So that's the first sort of myth um that I had to bust for myself Um If there's one thing that I'm clear about in these kinds of conversations it's that um every little insight that I share is always genuinely and primarily and firstly meant for me right So the first was love is not what you think In fact love is not what anybody thinks Love is what you feel when you don't think right that you're already feeling or already sort of existing in and as when you're thinking but you feel sometimes more palpably more deeply more profoundly when you're not thinking at all right So second sort of insider revelation that I sort of had and then I sort of share in the book is that love is life Felt Love is life felt in the words life love is life embraced love is felt oneness with life right So we don't have a life we are life right We don't have consciousness we are consciousness that life that consciousness that awareness when you feel in your oneness with that we'll call it love That's what I call love right Love is just the self felt It's just the self embrace the self of the capital as your true self right Your divine self your spiritual self love is felt not oneness with the self the same self that is the self of me and you and everybody and everything else in the world right That felt oneness is love Another way of saying it is that love is God felt right Love is God Embraced love is love is felt oneness with God right And so it's not that we that love is something that we do Love is something that we are we are love You are love full stop right Because you are life and life is always one It's just really exists as one right So the true you is nothing but love It's nothing but life or nothing but uh light as well right So that's the second sort of insight I wanted to share is that love

is life felt right That felt oneness with life Third love is not a relationship And I think this is one of the probably most exciting I think insights around relations at least for me personally especially because I'm single So maybe it's a bit of confirmation bias Who knows But I will say that love is not a relationship right So most of us think maybe probably not not most of us here in this audience I think we've mostly been disabused of this idea but we think of love as being a relationship that's a relationship status or it's a state of relationship But love is not an exclusive relationship that we have with one person Love is an inclusive way of relating to everybody in the entire world Right So it's not an exclusive relationship with one person It's an inclusive way of relating to everybody and everything in the whole world So love is really this unaddressed love letter to the entire universe to sort of life itself right now That's a difficult concept I think for lots of people to get their head around not for folks here But so we want to kind of keep that in mind The fourth insight is that love is not only not a relationship it's also not an emotion it's not a state of mood it's not an emotional state right It's not a state of emotion Love is what is underneath above below beyond and between all of your emotions right So love is what is underneath all of your emotions includes all of your emotions but it's not in and of itself an emotion It doesn't mean you don't experience it occasionally as an emotion but it's something that is um deeper than that more profound than that more basic than that Um And this is certainly uh sort of more um all pervasive infinite eternal thoughtless worthless sort of reality or ground of your being right So it's not a state of mood Also back to the original point Love is also in a state of mind right So it's helpful of course to have loving thoughts I'm all for loving thoughts definitely prefer loving thoughts to unloving thoughts But love the kind of love that I'm talking about which is not a love that comes and goes it doesn't sort of visit stay for a while and then leave and talk about the love that's always there Underneath above below beyond between all your thoughts emotions perceptions sensations activities conditions circumstances and people in your life right That context that ground up being that is always there that we're only occasionally aware of is what we'll call love right And we know that and we feel that when we finally tune into it right So love doesn't come and go Only our awareness of love comes and goes And so love always is in fact only love really is right Only life really is another word for love is really life or felt oneness with life So only life really is and therefore only love really is And so love is not the guest We sometimes think of love as being a guest that comes and visits and then leaves Love is the

host right Love is the host So love doesn't visit stay for a while and then leave Love moves in and makes itself at home right So it always has its home in you and in me and love always has its home as you and like me right So again another way of saying that is that life always has its home in you life always has its home as you right This felt oneness with life And so it's a good reminder I think because for so often and much of my life I assumed like most of us that love like happiness was something that I would find outside of myself in the world in other people places things or activities Um And I would always find in the future or the past and never quite the present right And we know at least I know and I think all of us here know both intuitively and uh experientially right That love is something we have felt when we have been surrounded by nothing but unloving conditions circumstances and or people at least seemingly unloving conditions circumstances and people and um loveless this is something we've often felt we've been surrounded by nothing but loving people conditions and circumstances right And so love is something that does not depend or is not conditional on people places things activities conditions or circumstances is something that you feel or don't feel based on whether or not you're aware of it or not right So it's an awareness Really love is awareness So the other piece I want to share and I think this one really resonates with me probably as deeply as anything is that love is joy love is happiness love is your happiness Shared love is bliss overflowing your bliss overflowing right And so love and happiness aren't two different coins They're two different sides of the same coin They're not two different phenomena or phenomenon There are two different perceptions of the same phenomenon They're not two different energies it's the same energy perceived or looked at in two different ways right So love really is happiness and happiness really is love right And so the way I explain it is this is that when you're happy in your aloneness you call it happiness right When you're happy in your togetherness we call it love So in other words when you're happy and you're all alone and you're introverted that particular day at that particular moment we call it happiness when your happiness and you share that happiness with others and you're extroverted you're outgoing that particular day at that particular moment we'll call that happiness love right So love is your happiness your joy and your peaceful life and is shared with the world right And so it's a good thing to think to remember because love like happiness is often got a bad rap right We often think about love as something that is full of pain as full suffering as full sacrifice And I would argue that um love is not full of pain love is not

full of suffering and love is not full of ego In fact I'd argue that all of those things are an indication that you're really um coming from a place of ego instead of love Right If you're coming from love love um is happy and it's joyful and it's peaceful and it's free and anything less than that would be what we might call suit of love Right It wouldn't be the kind of love that we're talking about here real love or we'll call it divine love or spiritual love But the kind of love that is um uh omnipresent right Another way of saying what I just said is that love is your self love shared right So I often joke and say you know the best love is self love We've all heard that before I think that's true I say the greatest love is self love and self love leads to other forms of love Right now I'd say there's only really one kind of formless love but love does take different forms right To be romantic love or platonic love or it could be familial love or it could be you know um professional love or spiritual love right A company But in any case love is your self love shared And so when you love yourself you automatically love other people We know that right When you're loving yourself everybody else is so easy to get along with And also when you love yourself you're so much easier to get along with right It's also why called happiness Because when you're happy you automatically love other people You don't have to be reminded you told to love other people You do it automatically and effortlessly It doesn't always look the same It doesn't need to look in any like anything in particular right You stop judging yourself you automatically stop judging others That's the other way to say it right And so one great metaphor that I love using and sharing is uh this metaphor of rain cloud So I like to think I like to be a ring cloud and I like the idea of us all being ring clouds right So a rain cloud basically fills itself out with so much moisture We want to fill ourselves up with so much peace and love and joy so much self love and peace and joy that we get to a place where we can't contain it any longer We can't hold on to it any longer where we have to literally share it with the world where we have to relieve ourselves of this burden of being so filled up and so full of peace love and joy that we can't contain it And we simply shower down all of that peace love and joy indiscriminately on the entire earth and everybody and everything on that earth without an expectation of reciprocity without any quid pro quo without any strings attached without any expectation of reward at all Right That's what I call love that your bliss overflowing If your happiness shared your self love shared right It's the overflow right And that's what we call the abundant life right And so the key really that I'm sharing here again Not no no not new This is not a hot take right But it's a but but it's

an an expression of my experience um of love is that we are essentially um the source of love And so love is never found right Because it's never lost right It's never found So therefore it can't be lost Love is not found it's freed right We are the source of love ultimately And so even that isn't true that it's free Love is not free Love is free right So we could say in one breath that love is free it's something that we let go of or allow to be expressed through us right As a transparency or a transparency to that love at the same broke we can also say it's free right That it's never really held hostage We can occasionally find it obscured or veiled um maybe slightly or softly concealed Um But it's just an unveiling it's just a revealing it's just a freeing Uh even that's not accurate to describe it right And this is the challenge with really speaking about anything that's worth speaking about is that no words are ever adequate No words can ever really describe or explain or certainly define we only limit ourselves that way but we gotta do something while we're here right So love is not found It's freed It's not even really freed It's free already It's not discovered It's rediscovered right So it's essentially who and what you ultimately are It's not even really discovered It's uncovered right It's not discovered It's not like it's something new It's something you know first and foremost I mean the naked awareness of your own being is love right The naked awareness of your own existence is love already is that I am that I am that I am recognition already is the peace love and joy that we're ultimately after that we ultimately seek right And yet it's not something we seek need to seek at all In fact our seeking leads us away from it right Our seeking leads us astray from it So love is not something discovered it's something that's uncovered So it's simply an unveiling that takes place right And so ultimately we're here on this planet to do And at least where I'm at now in my journey is that it's not that we're here to get love we're here to give it right We're not here to acquire love we're here to express it to extend it And we're not even really here to give love If I were to be completely accurate and honest with myself I'd say we're here to be love right And that just means being ourselves being love just means being yourself right It just means being thus self And what is that self That self is this thoughtless world is infinite eternal faceless formless peaceful aliveness that we all ultimately are We'll call it life It's life unedited it's life uncensored not life conditions not life circumstances It's the nonphysical energy we can call it that that exists not only within us but as us right So it's not really about being loved It's not really even about being loving It's about being loved being the source of love All right So again let me say that again just so I can hear myself say it to make sure I said it clearly

It's not about being loved It's not even about being loving it's about being love being the source of love and then letting that love show up in whatever form and fashion that it wants that it dictates right And so and then every relationship problem in our lives ultimately doesn't matter if it's platonic or professional romantic Every relationship problem is really just one problem and it's looking outside ourselves for what only exists within It's looking for love where it doesn't live where it doesn't exist And so it's looking for love in the world instead of ourselves the capital s we call it God right Because it's life it's love And so it's looking for love at all really That's ultimately the challenge and the opportunity for all of us Instead of being the love that we ultimately are right Instead of being in love with and being in love as the all right So it's not looking for love at all It's being the love that is the all that is God is the self right So every relationship problem then is just one really every problem in the world ultimately is just one and it's looking or depending on others to feel love or feel loved Another way to say that is looking or depending on or making contingent your experience of love or happiness or peace on anything or anybody else in the world right So it's depending on others to feel loved to feel love depending depending on others to feel happy or to feel happiness right And so ultimately finally then love is not achieved accomplished or acquired love is not reached it's recognized it's simply realized it's not what we do It's what we ultimately are We know that best when we're not lost in discursive thought when we're tapped into it and turned on to that thoughtless worthless faceless formless infinite eternal presence that we ultimately are You can call it God You can call it source you can call it life best if you not call it anything at all Call love when you're tapped into and didn't turn on to that which you always are But you're aware that you're tapped into and didn't turn on to that you already are existing as the love that you intrinsically inherently and innately are right And then it shows up in all kinds of different ways thinking you know sort of forms and fashions right So the last thing I'll say then I wanna open up for questions a little bit is that from my very unique perspective right And also not unique at all love is the whole meaning and purpose of life It's the whole end and aim of human existence We've heard that quote before and usually it's shared around happiness And because I see happiness and love as s in them because I see joy and love is the same phenomenon appearing in two different ways or appearing in from two different perceptions Love and joy Love and happiness are not really even two words in my heart and my mind it's one word love happiness or love joy or joy love Because I feel like joy really

should even come before love Because our I think our experience and understanding of joy is a much healthier understanding and appreciation than the one we often have around love And right And so to be love or to be really just to be and exist at all is to love because to be and to exist at all is to be life itself Life is love Ultimately when you feel into it right So life felt is love So to live is really to love and the whole point and purpose of life is to love and to be love and to even say receive love But it's really to be love right So in some ways I would argue love is even greater than life because love gives life meaning right With love without life makes life somewhat meaningless I mean I've experienced that You probably experienced that and when you have life but you don't have love life can feel meaningless and pointless and purposeless and not have a whole lot of value And the second you have love even if you don't have a whole lot of life left you feel this deep meaningful lasting and abiding joy and happiness It's impossible to express and uh is fulfilling in of itself right So life really is the opportunity and love is that opportunity Realized Life is uh the flour and love is the fruit Love is the fragrance of that flour right So that's what I wanted to share with you today You know if I were to boil it all down I would say the most important thing for me to share is that first of all love is happiness Ok When you're happy you're easier to get along with You're loving already When you're happy you feel loved already Also when you're happy not only are other people easier to get along with but you're easy to get along with Not only do they feel loved but you feel loved just by virtue of you being happy right And so the challenge of course is not to create love achieve love accomplish love acquire love It's to simply acknowledge recognize and realize that you ultimately are love You can do that best not through a whole lot of thoughts and words although they do help and they point us in the right direction It's by spending more time feeling in to the faceless formless presence of love within you already And so right now if you want you can feel into your hands and into your feet to any of your body you feel a vibrating energy there right So it just feels at first like barely anything It's life it's life force it's life intelligence that vibrating energy that pulsating energy that peaceful aliveness that you feel when you feel into your body is love We call it life right That love that life is also the same life and same love that's in everybody and everything else that is everybody and everything else and that life and that love is always and eternally and intently available as an experience to you or me or anyone else regardless of whether or not we have a lover right So we can experience love without a lover Whether or not we

have a partner we can experience that whether we're in a crowd or whether we're all alone the more that you experience and fill into that experience of peaceful aliveness that I call happiness and also call love The more attractive and magnetic we all become we know that we experience that when you are totally truly in love with yourself and having a great day and really feeling yourself Is there any better feeling in the world And do you not notice how many other people recognize and respond to that in kind Maybe not everyone but certainly you aren't even noticing or paying much attention to people that don't Right And so I think there are lots of ways to improve upon the world I suppose I'm not sure the world needs improved upon I do know that when I feel love I am much more loving When I feel loving I tend to find I'm happier when I'm happier I am more loving and when I'm happier I'm also much more easy to love And so my encouragement I guess to today to all of you and certainly to myself is to just explore this idea about love What is love What does it mean Really You know if you think about all the conversations and challenges and difficult sort of experiences you've had with other people or with yourself I think you'll discover that most of them boil down to the ways in which we define and describe what love is true Love can't be defined can't be described we only limit it that way it can only be experienced right And so the way to experience love is to feel into your own we'll call it body but it goes beyond that It's just to be become aware of your own presence your own awareness your own consciousness It's what being aware of awareness is Being conscious of consciousness is the more consistently you do that for its own sake for joy's sake alone right So it's sort of like spending time with your mom or your brother or your good friend You do it for its own sake not to get something from that experience from that person Um Not for some future reward not for some future meaning and purpose You do it for its own sake for joy's sake alone And you discover that as you do it you enjoy it more and more and as you do it and enjoy it more and more it's easier to do more and more And then before long you become more and more contagious with this love and this peace and this happiness And then without saying a whole lot doing a whole lot even thinking a whole lot you're tapped in tuned and turned on to this all absorbing all consuming energy that is yourself Thank you today so much I'm so grateful and appreciative that you shared time with me today and give me an opportunity just to share my thoughts and my experience And I love to take questions if there are any questions uh that folks have there's lots of questions Thank you so much for for sharing all this wisdom So I'll begin with uh just a comment

from uh Malaya right Uh I just wanted to say your consciousness is so deep Thank you for reminding us love is not to be searched outside of us We can be the love that we already are love that also Good Thank you Malia So here's a question from uh Luia Um How do you go about being love I think many of us understand the concept that are unclear about how to be love in a world that challenges you every day Oh It's such a great question Gosh that's a probably 15 more books on um I would say you know so so for me it's a number of things It's um first of all prioritizing love above everything else And um second it's also not becoming attached to the form that love takes right Um True love is formless right And so one day it takes the form of friendship and the other day it takes the form of our romantic encounter Uh Maybe the next day it takes the form of uh donation money it could be donating blood Um But I would say that not to be attached to the form but instead to um tap into tune in to turn on to this experience a peaceful liveness in your body and it's a good place to start It's just notice how much peace love and joy exist inside of you already OK So at first it doesn't feel like much but there is something that is hanging the earth on nothing OK And it's at the same time that it's hanging the earth which is just a big rock on nothing It's rotating it on this axis OK And as it rotates on its axis in a very wobbly fashion it revolves around this super hot star and that super hot star is has been shining for as long as we know and it's gonna continue shining for as long as we can possibly imagine and it shines and it keeps us at just a distance to not freeze us and to not burn us up right And that same we call it life intelligence Universal intelligence also is beating your heart and breathing your lungs and allows your brain to orchestrate it all It grows the grass and it allows the rain to fall and it's been doing it for as long as we know that love it's not love What is it that infinite intelligence is also within you and within me And I would argue that it is us it is you and it is me to feel into that experience in a moment to moment basis for its own sake for joy's sake alone And to trust that whatever intelligent intelligence it is that's hanging the earth on nothing rotting on its axis revolving around the sun and been doing it forever is also taking care of you in your life and it's been doing that forever It's how we're even having this conversation today So if you can kind of feel into the presence of that sometimes I call it God I don't know what God needs And that's why I like using the term I feel into that life that non-physical energy inside my hands and my feet Sometimes you are able to graduate from that and you can feel into the peaceful liveness and side You Sometimes you even graduate from that and just become aware that

you're aware it's probably the highest possible way to describe it is just noticing that you're aware of full stop It's not noticing what you're aware of It's noticing that you're aware right So noticing that you're aware that you're alive stop there can breathe in the stomach or not breath of the nos And when you notice thoughts you just let them go you don't judge them You're not trying to change or fix any of it But if you feel into that experience of peaceful liveness consistently I call it practice in the presence of God That's what we call him Christian mysticism And uh if I tell you might call it self inquiry it's the same experience of just noticing or being aware of the I am that you that you are that I am just that alone already is being loved You're being love all the time It's just bringing awareness to the fact that you are love all the time So as you practice this more and more you'll turn what I call maybe a blind eye to the world to your circumstances and conditions For long enough that you become that this new experience of loving awareness becomes your reality It feels much more real to you than whatever is coming to you or from you uh to you And at you from the news from media from friends and from family members it becomes more of a sort of resting place you're always consistently resting in And as this loving awareness this God this happiness this peaceful liveness that you are you're just always want to rest in and as that as you go about your day And so the idea is to never give all of your attention away to anybody or anything else to always keep part of your attention inside yourself as the self as the self resting in And as God right in this loving awareness it's not thinking it's not doing it's not fixing it's not changing it's not judging it's just resting in And as that and it's trusting that to interesting in that in such a way that you become sort of more and more of a transparency for what wants to come through in the moment right So it's easy And I think the challenge with writing a book on love of all things my goodness or unhappiness or on any of these things is that you you know we all use a lot of words and they all sound ok some of them sound better than others But ultimately what we really want to do is we're wanting to simply practice the presence of love inside ourselves that formless love as consistent as possible for its own sake And then let it show up in whatever way it does Sometimes it shows up as words often doesn't show up as any words It's just stillness and silence And we all know this experience of being around someone they don't say a whole lot or do a whole lot And yet we feel peace and we feel suddenly not only loved but we feel loving and not only towards them but towards everyone else too right So we're just wanting to be more and more of that We're wanting to stand sort of firm in this thoughtless

world this resting place of love even as we swiffer vacuum do the laundry to data entry and do it for its own sake not to get something out of it And then because your motive is pure you'll find that situations and people and opportunities begin to shift in ways that seem and feel a lot more loving loving and cooperative and collaborative Um So yeah I hope that answers the question a little longer way than I was uh attending originally But yeah before we were we were glad we you and I were talking about uh simplifying like almost spiritual practice Being more about simplifying that than necessarily adding things Yes Yes Um So uh there's a question from Angela She writes hello Rob So what's the thing that makes our hearts beating so fast when we see someone that we like Oh I love that It's love Right I mean it's just love I mean look there are there are lots of other things we could talk about there too right We can talk about chemistry right So we can talk about um biology we can talk about chemistry we can talk about evolutionary psychology right So often times and this is a great question here because it helps us to introduce a little discernment here So love often is lusty but love is not lust right Love can include lust and it can include those um those heart palpitations you get includes that it allows for all of that right Um It's like the sky it's always alchemy it's all embracing it's all accepting and love doesn't equate to doesn't equal Lust Love is exciting often but it doesn't equal or equate to excitement Love is often full of anticipation but it doesn't equal or equate to anticipation Love is not a thought emotion perception or sensation Love is what exist underneath so to speak between above below and beyond all thoughts all emotions all perceptions all sensations all experiences all conditions and circumstances that's an important recognition to have Because if you don't have if you don't remember that you'll find that you only think you're feeling love or in love or feeling loving when you're having some kind of physiological or biological or physical response And um that is um understandable but it's one of the greatest mistakes and errors that we make in this life is that we assume that unless we're feeling something emotional we're not feeling love and would argue that love is not something again that comes and visits for a while and then leaves It's always there underneath all of that includes all of it but it's underneath all of that you can kind of I think of it kind of is the well it's in Asian traditions to talk about the movie screen right So you're watching a movie and all kinds of characters and images do all kinds of things on this on the screen Some of them are fun and exciting Some of them are scary Some of them are sexy and we get so caught up in the movie that we forget to

scream and then we mistake sort of this movie um for the screen In other words the screen which is behind all the images that thoughtless word this faceless form as we call it in this case um Awareness of everything that happens on the screen is itself already love because it's already all welcoming all embracing all accepting of whatever shows up or appears on the screen and yet it's not the screen right So so the challenge with most of us is that with love we fall in love with the images that that's sure we think we fall in love with the images that appear on the screen not realizing the entire time that we essentially are this screen itself And so everything that we experience and accept um or everything that we experience in general is already at some level accepted and welcome to our life And so I don't know if that provides a little additional context information around that But it's a great question because we often think of love as an emotional state when really it's not a state of mood it's not a state of emotion it's not a state of relationship it's a state of being it's our inherent innate natural state of being It's the one that we always are but aren't always aware of I like how you um uh and you know because there's a lot of traditions that would seemingly like negate uh that kind of uh that form of love But you you say well it's it is an expression of love but it's also it isn't also the the uh the kind of core of love that we're talking about It's a good thing within it almost like you you just know that's absolutely beautiful I think in my life I've suffered the most when I've become attached to the form or the face that love shows up on when I've let go of that and come back to realizing and recognizing that love is formless and that it can appear in any or every form and in any and every face and yet it can never completely contain that love It doesn't it's just an expression to your point of that love Then I find that my suffering is reduced if not eliminated entirely because now love isn't something that can I could have ever bottled or ever lost and then found it's something that's always exists in and as in in and as the self this true self that we ultimately are And it's something you can experience and do experience all day every day And the only question is where are you focused Where is your attention Where is your awareness Is it on the form or is it on the form is um at the level So here's here's a question that uh kind of touches on form but it's interesting one It's from Kenya Um Can we give someone a sense of value and self-worth who has received a lot of bad messaging growing up et cetera So are we able to give that to somebody Can we quote this may be a separate question But can we save someone that we are entering a relationship with Oh boy I've been down that path I've spoken like someone who um is um

experience the challenges with that and also the desire with that Um so um I'll share my so my experience is that um a couple of things I'll say first of all um it's very understandable and human to feel that way and to want that Ok Um second um I do agree with Byron Katie here as with most things that um we don't ever save anyone else Um uh we can uh do lots of things and then later find that they're better or worse off and they say that we did or not save them but that's all a story Um at the end of the day um nobody really needs saved Um because nobody is really lost Um And if they're lost they're lost in life and if they're lost in life they're lost in love Um So it may you know look like uh lots of undesirable uncomfortable circumstances and conditions on the surface And this is why you see things like in scripture like judged not based on appearances because um while it also feels very real and very scary ultimately we're all resting in and as the lap of love right So there is no um there is no escaping that there is no escaping that Now you can escape Um You can feel that you're escaping that by having an experience that suggests something otherwise you can certainly suffer and you can certainly be in pain and I think you can be in pain and suffer too Um But that's all ultimately very illusory The same way A dream is so great metaphor is we all go to sleep at night we fall asleep and then our sleep we occasionally dream and have nightmares And in those nightmares I mean all kinds of things happen we go all over the world and scary stuff that couldn't even happen or we don't think it happen in this real life happens in our dream state and we freak out and we lose our minds and then at some point the dream often gets or the nightmare gets so bad that we were woken up from it And as we're woken up from it we come to realize that we are safe all along We are always tucked in safely and securely into our own bed wrapped in our comforter you know and nothing was really at risk awakening journey spiritual awakening journey It's very much like that Right It is I mean if you look back even in your own life and none of us have to be enlightened uh in a traditional way to know that like if you look at anything in your life think back to all the scenarios that you've suffered experiences you've suffered in your life and how many of them never actually happened I mean that in of itself or the things that did happen that weren't nearly as bad as you thought they were I mean there was a time in my life when I lost a corporate job and um I had two beautiful German cars and a house at our apartment and I lost all these things and I thought that's gonna be the end of me if that all those things happened You know that's how I felt before and it happened I was like this is the worst it gets it feels pretty good I felt pretty free which is very

strange right So I say all that to say in the end we don't save anyone else Ok We we can make up a story about we save somebody else Second nobody needs save We're all resting in and as God already third we can often imagine or picture something different from that and we can suffer that we can suffer our stories and thoughts about that which could be scary Um For sure Uh fourth if we want to be a true help and assistance to somebody else we want to be beyond needing help and assistance ourselves So in other words the best thing you can possibly do for someone who is suffering is access those thoughts words feelings experiences that they're having trouble accessing on their own So a person who is drowning does not need you to be drowning too Ok That's gonna be the least helpful thing You can do a person who is experiencing depression or sadness which is lighter than depression or anxiety or stress does not need your stress and anxiety and depression On top of it they need you if anything to feel into and to stay firm and stand in your knowing this that all is well that all is always well and you have to know that so deeply and so fully within yourself and you have to know it despite and regardless how things turn out based on appearances right So the real challenge then is to find that place within yourself where there are no problems And so so therefore you need no solutions where there is no illness and therefore you need no healing or they need no healing where there is no conflict And so and there's only peace right You wanna you wanna stand firm in that place consistently when you're interacting with them when you as often as you can and you don't wanna fake it you really want to be genuine and authentic about it So this is why the work is so invaluable And if you can do that consistently as you connect with them then you'll still meet them with your words right So you meet them with their words reflect back what you heard if I heard you correctly Jacob I heard you say Xy and Z right And then you validate normalize I if I were in your shoes I'd be feeling exactly the way you are meaning If you had their childhood If you had their upbringing If you had your thoughts in your head and you had their experiences you'd be feeling and behaving and speaking exactly the way they are That is not a spiritual platitude That is an actual fact as a literal truth right Validate normalize empathize And then in the entire time returning again and again to that place of peaceful aliveness or perfect peace within yourself we call it loving awareness within yourself If you can do that consistently that will be much more helpful than anything you can possibly think say or do and still your most inspired creative thoughts words and actions will come from that place of loving awareness and peaceful aliveness from God

essentially right So um hopefully it's helpful Um Yeah yeah One thing that I thought of when you're describing that too I mean there there can be so many motivations if we're trying to save somebody or like we're not And one of them is often just that we we um want to be needed like we want to So there's a lot of cooks that we might have not necessarily coming from a place So Jacob that's so good I just love that so much Um Brother um you know funny you should say this because I I mean the only reason I speak about any of these things is because I was the poster boy for all of these challenges still probably am right So and um the one thing I discovered to your point is that when I suffered most profoundly from this savior complex right Um was when I was really struggling to find my own purpose in life And so I wanted to be needed I want to be valued and I wanted to have a purpose And these um seemingly although none of them were broken folks that would show up in my life that would try to spend so much time and energy and effort saving I realized later um it was a great benefit to me because it woke me up to this flat premise or misperception misconception that I had which was that um I was there for their benefit They were there just as much for my benefit And also I needed to come to a recognition realization that even with my greatest effort and my greatest intelligence I could never ever save anyone else right So for me my big trigger was suicide right I experienced my own suicidal um and my own suicidal experience And so anyone who would show up that was su I would really show away and I would be really I would do anything and I would feel like I was trying harder than even they were to save themselves And I would just like and I realized over time that first of all there were so many illusions built in there One was that life was infinite or or or ephemeral that that wasn't true It was like the physical life probably is But as I dove deeper into most every spiritual religious tradition and dove deep into meditation you do come to recognize that life is eternal life just continues to life There's right That recognition for me was huge Second I also realized and remembered that when I was suffering so much that um one other people suffering did not help me They often would just project their suffering onto me which only increased my suffering Third I realized that um even suicide for instance um has its role and its place in the world And I'm not encouraging anyone ever to commit suicide But I will say that I've lost a few friends to suicide and those folks were in so much pain in their mind and their body that I felt relief for them just knowing that they thought they had found a solution not that they had actually found a permanent solution to it because suicide is never a permanent solution to um it's a it's a temporary

solution to a very permanent problem so to speak right It doesn't solve the ultimate problem like the person who wants to commit suicide for instance or is very depressed thinks they're trying to escape the body they really trying to escape the mind right And there's a there's a there's a there's a misidentification there So in any case the point is save yourself first and foremost be the change you want to see in the other be a living shining example of what you want them to think and be and do and then know that all is well no matter what happens no matter what appearances testify to the contrary Thank you Um Here's a question from Safina She writes uh Gandhi said any be that changes that from Gandhi Yes Yes definitely Uh She says Gandhi said that love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable his highness the whole the Dalai Lama would undoubtedly agree How can we use this force to stop us from killing each other in war or at home It seems to me that people or cultures uh and she references Bhutan or Tibet that quote run on love so often get taken advantage of Hm it's powerful So it's a great point right Um There's a great story and maybe most of the folks here maybe have heard it about uh this snake uh that was uh you know in the wild and um you know kids and other people come by and throw rocks at the snake you know or the snake was studying under a spiritual teacher So the snake was meditating the snake was becoming more loving all the time And so at some point you know um the uh snake bumps up against a spiritual teacher and says you know teacher teacher I have to you know say that this meditation stuff has been great You know spiritual journey has been fantastic I'm just feeling more loving every day The only problem is uh these kids and even adults are throwing rocks and they're really abusing me I'm all beat up You know spiritual teacher looked at the snake and said oh snake you're really bloody you're all beat up and you don't look good you're right He said well what's going on here And he said well you told me to be loving to be loving towards all people And so I've been doing that and the teacher said well yes be loving you know to everyone all the time and don't forget it's OK occasionally to hiss kind of occa right So so so that I say boundary setting right We just talking about boundary So um being loving being loved is not being being a doormat OK When you are completely convinced and know that you are love you no longer people please in the way that you did before and you no longer or a doormat in the way you were before because your love is no longer on the line Your self love is no longer on the line Your happiness is no longer a line Your peace is no no longer line You found the source of it yourself and you

are the source of it yourself And so you can extend it and you can extend it express it from an infinite source So where wherever that love came from there's always more from where it came from And what that means is that in the same breath you can also say no and you can say no with just as much love as you say yes Right You could say not today with just as much love as you say Um You know yes right now and here and now you can also um in the same breath defend yourself you know you can defend yourself right now I would argue that this is where it gets slippery and you know um for for me um it's always been easier for me to defend other people than it has been for myself Um But I will say that my experience has been that when I'm truly deeply living from a place of love not from a place of pseudo love not from a place of like I need to love the world Um And meanwhile I'm sitting here feeling very unloved or feeling not valued or not feeling needed that when I am resting in and as the source of love folks can occasionally sure take advantage of you They might steal a little bit of money doesn't mean you don't lock your doors right So you still lock your door and love people You can still you know protect your space And I I was in it for me when I rest in and as love and as loving awareness as consistent as possible for its own sake I find that that and of itself changes circumstances in people in ways that I could not possibly do on my own or through my own effort or might or power And I don't find myself needing to defend or explain or over explain or react at all to what folks are doing Now again it does come down to like if it's a life threatening experience that's all that's all kind of situation generally What happens is if you're existing and in and as love as consistently as humanly possible you know whatever the need is in the moment generally takes care of itself So often people will just quite frankly just leave you alone or you might find yourself defending yourself I can't tell you I don't know what will happen I don't even know what I would do in that particular cc in your situation But I would say the illusion that we want to see through a little bit is if you think if if if this death thing is a big deal right And so much of our ideas about love are interrelated um to our ideas about death And if you feel that or believe that life is finite and that life is ephemeral and that your only opportunity um to be alive in order to love in order to experience happiness is um in his physical body in the way this physical body is now then you're gonna find yourself I think consistently challenged um by the world's suffering in ways that you don't need to be Like I love what Abraham Hicks said They said kind of well he said you know if you had any idea how blissful the quote unquote death experience is you would never use death as

punishment for the people who you feel do so much wrong in the world
Right And so in other words I'll just say that And I think most of us who
have done any meditation or um certainly if you've done a lot of meditation
um there's probably very little if anything that is more blissful or joyful or of
listening or inspiring it just feels better than forgetting everybody and
everything in the world and forgetting yourself entirely forgetting all your
fears and all your desires and simply just resting in it as this timeless
mindless faceless presence that you are And as far as I know the death
experience is that magnified without the struggling strain And and so so so
yes I would Um it's a great question Ultimately I think that I encourage
people to love for loving sake alone and to spend as much time living in and
as loved as consistently as possible And then let that dictate what you do and
say and how you show up in the moment and you'll find that over time more
and more you're taking advantage of less and less because you set better
boundaries because you're no longer making your love or your experience of
love or your love life dependent or contingent on what anybody or anybody
or anything else is doing in the world or showing up as I don't know if that
makes sense Absolutely Yeah I was just reminded we were we were talking
before again before we were like we were talking about Matt Con a little bit
I remember him him saying um this thing about um if you can't really truly
say yes unless you give yourself permission to say no And so sometimes our
guesses and our nose are both expressions of love Oh my gosh this is Jacob I
love you and I love that so much I love that so much Yes Like I sometimes
think of it in a very similar way I'll often say when saying no becomes
impossible saying yes becomes meaningless right Saying yes becomes
meaningless So um we want to keep that in mind Um Love isn't dependent
on form and isn't dependent on you and doesn't need you to say yes to
anything or everything In fact I would argue that um Warren Buffet once said
the difference between extraordinary successful people and extraordinarily
successful people is that extraordinarily successful people say no to almost
everything I'd argue that's also largely true or true in lots of ways with happy
people or extraordinarily happy people and also loving people like you can
say no to a lot of things and and you're not saying no to the person right I can
say no I'm I'm unfortunately I can't give you that \$10 million today And I
can still say yes to the person I could say hey there's lots of other ways I
want to support and help you You know you could say no to letting someone
take advantage of you And yet at the same time give a very loud life
affirming yes to who and what they are as their essence So I'd say this that's

the greater point when folks talk about like seeing the Christ in someone seeing the Buddha in someone I used to always struggle with that I'm like I don't see a little Christ in there There's a little Buddha that you know I know it's so literal for me and for me that means filling into the Christ mind or the Buddha mind Um Another way of saying fill into the peaceful life is in my own body is completely impossible Recognizing that's also at the heart and center of everyone else too In fact that is what everyone else essentially is When you do that you don't want to quote bear fault with a false witness against people And that's the highest way to love someone is to feel into that oneness that we all experience but feel into it within your own body When you do that a lot of these um issues around boundary setting and expectation management sort of clear up on their own because then you're like oh wait I can you know say no to this particular form but I don't say no to this fullness essence of who they are And I'm gonna do everything I can to support them while they're living in this form But I'm not so not gonna do it in a way that I take on undue suffering or pain right So self betrayal is still betrayal self sacrifice is still sacrifice It's not better In fact I'd argue with sometimes the greatest sacrifice or the greatest betrayal So we wanna be careful of that Like I'm gonna be so loving that I'm gonna love people back to wholeness Well I secretly empty myself or right So yeah thank you so much and thank you for um bringing all of your wisdom and uh an insight to us today And um I I get I very much get the sense that you are like that kind of rain cloud You describe you're just sharing a lot of like good vibes and good energy So it's been just a pleasure to to meet you and uh be able to host you And um yeah I wanted to just also uh remind everybody uh you can purchase Robert Max uh books including his new One Love from the Inside out from Bannan dot com Banyen dot com and you can learn more about his work at coach Rob Mack dot com That's Coach Robm AC K dot com So on behalf of Bannan Books and myself uh thank you so much and thanks for everyone for coming out today Thank you so much and I appreciate you so much Thanks everyone Thanks for joining us for Branches of Wisdom a podcast of Bannan Books and Sound Canada's spiritual and healing resource since 1970 Our podcast producer is Jacob Steele The show is edited by Abdul Haba Watch all our conversations on youtube by searching for Bannan books or listen on your favorite podcast platform Please subscribe follow like and leave your reviews and comments We love to hear from you for all our live events books and more Visit us at Banyon dot com