

Rob Mack UNCOVERS: Positive Psychology and How This Improves our Happiness and Well-being

I bet just get straight into it right Ladies and gentlemen Ok Not so fast You not so fast I'm not that guy Yeah Yeah So are we good Yeah what's going on Ladies and gentlemen we are bringing uncovered live from Zoom land because you know COVID auntie COVID is continuing to you know stop me from being in the United States to see this man So when we're gonna do it via Zoom which is awesome Anyway um you know if you're listening to us on Just fly um audio this is Fay here and I've got my boy it's your boy Nick Live and Hot for my Macbook Air It's crazy It's crazy But I love you know what like before we get stuck into I wanna just say something like I love the fact that we that COVID has given us the opportunity I know people say this a lot but I really do think there's been a huge silver lining about COVID because the truth is you know if we didn't have the opportunity to realize the power of things like Zoom and how easy it actually is to connect with someone even via Zoom uh we probably wouldn't be having these connections we probably would be having these conversations because someone would be like I don't wanna do an interview on Zoom bro Like I don't wanna do that if you can't if you can't come to L A Thank you Thank you No thank you No thank you So I'm really really blessed to you know I'm really really trying to see the positive um positive light which kind of links perfectly into what we've got going on today We talk about positive psychology and being able to put that in the forefront of your mind So we have the king of positive psychology is to rob the knock What's going on Rob knock Oh man fellas What's up man Such a great point You're right We otherwise wouldn't get to connect in this way and I have to wait for you to come to L A or I'd have to come here to Australia Exactly Exactly Which is crazy It's crazy Right That we get to be I mean what is it 16,000 miles or something like that Something ridiculous Um And it's just like you're right in front of me crazy And like this is our first time like we've done this podcast now for like two years and this is our first time doing a podcast with a guest from That's international We've actually never done this before and like even doing it right now I think this is so we should do it well often Yeah Well this is a big deal You're our first international guest A lot of pressure man It's a lot of pressure can't represent the rest of the world So this whole episode is just gonna be us asking Rob about what it's like to be American What's

American life Exactly Exactly What do all Americans represent Rob What do they what do they all say Oh man But look I'm really really excited for this podcast I think this one's gonna be great and I think that a lot of our listeners are gonna be able to benefit so much for it And I guess the way I want to kind of start it right Is that obviously you've worked with big celebrities you worked with big organizations you've worked with Microsoft you've done all these things what made you want to get into the route of positive psychology Like where did it all kind of stem from Oh man great question You know uh it was very humble beginnings brother very humble humble beginning I was like the unhappiest kid you can ever imagine I was just unhappy from like basically birth I remember being really unhappy really self loathing I hated myself and I was just filled with stress and anxiety and I always thought over the time I'd grow out of that You know what I'm saying I was like into basketball you know I didn't love school that much but I did pretty well because I was afraid to my dad you know a disciplinarian and he made sure we you know did what we needed to do to get through school and stuff So I always thought look I'll get good grades Maybe Who knows I'll get a college basketball scholarship I have a girlfriend at some point Maybe I'll even make some friends I'll just grow out of this unhappiness But that didn't happen man It just got worse and worse and worse I became more and more depressed to the point that I became suicidal And then I decided I was gonna do some research on ways to kill yourself I decided I was gonna slit my wrist So I went to the kitchen got a kitchen knife and then just rammed it into my wrist you know And oddly enough man at that moment without anything in my external circumstances or conditions changing because honestly I had a good life I was healthy I had a good job I didn't really like the job I made good money I had a beautiful girlfriend you know I had a good life But despite all that was still so deeply depressed when I ran this knife into my wrist for no good reason Without anything else changing I just felt like peace for the first time in my life It was really like this palpable joy and uh even love you know And so it was very very unexpected you know it was a bit of a surprise to me So in that moment I was like oh this is odd you know maybe I should put off the suicide thing for like an hour And that's all I committed to in the beginning Man It was like an hour you know it was like and honestly I wasn't even committed to the whole hour I was just like uh maybe an hour But in my head I was like I probably could do five minutes And in the five minutes I started doing a little bit of research and then lo and behold I started finding out that there were a lot

more people out there in the world who were deeply depressed and suicidal than I was ever aware of And I also discovered that there were lots of people that had solved for it So that's what became my sort of research and that eventually led me to discover you know the field of positive psychology So how did that Because that's a that's a big transition right To go from being in that kitchen to now being someone that's dedicated their life to positive psychology What's that in between Like how what was the transition into that Did you you know did you have to like what was what was the thought process that that's huge That's a huge transition It's a great question You should you should do this maybe for a living or something you know it was it it it was it it mean in between that moment and when I actually matriculated into that applied positive psychology program at the University of Pennsylvania it was like over a decade and in that decade mostly it was me taking two steps forward like 100 steps back reading everything I get my hands on asking people random people sometimes like you seem like a happy person Why are you happy You know like just everything I could basically discover about happiness and unhappiness I tried to discover and little by little I started digging myself out of this deep dark depressing hole that I had dug for myself Somewhere in that period of time I made some very drastic decisions as well You know the first decision of course was that instead of focusing on unhappiness and depression and all the reasons I had to be depressed I started making a study of happiness Right Second was like look if this really good job and great money and really you know very troublesome relationship but beautiful wonderful woman is all leading me to feel so deeply depressed maybe I should make different decisions you know So I decided well I'm gonna move to Miami from Philadelphia I didn't like the cold weather I like warm weather I like beaches you know I decided I was gonna you know work this corporate job anymore I was gonna try and do something else and I made all these decisions and honestly I didn't know what I was doing I was just trying to do something new and I was trying to you know mix things up a little bit and it was scary but one thing led to the next led to the next And so in that period of time I was like tracking everything that was working in terms of happiness tips tricks and tools and I was keeping it in a journal And then when I would eventually book these modeling gigs because at some point in time when I didn't have a corporate job I couldn't find any other jobs I was approached once on this uh road called Lincoln Road in Miami South Beach by a guy And he said hey you ever modeled before Now I thought I was the ugliest guy in the world man

you know so I never thought something was possible for me So in any case I thought he was mean I know that's true I know you look clean I could tell I could tell Um So you know he said hey you wanna come to the agency I thought I was joking Then it happened to me again the following week So eventually I went into the agency But long story short I started this modeling and acting career for about 10 years But the entire time I really just wanted to do my little scene and then get back to the trailer so I could read my happiness books and my don't kill yourself books you know and take notes on them because that's what I was doing So long story short I was doing that and then I eventually found this program at University of Pennsylvania um and applied positive psychology and uh my private practice That's amazing So you went on your uh sorry sorry to cut you because the other thing that was just really interesting So you were on your own pursuit of happiness right And what was the point where or was there ever a point where it kind of clicked to you that Ok I'm either starting to become happy or I am now happy you know I felt like I was recreating the wheel from scratch you know and so I didn't really even know what direction it turned So it took me longer than it needs to take anybody else But I would say it was like man it was probably a year and a half or two before I suddenly came to the recognition that oh wait I haven't thought about killing myself like dozens of times today and I kind of don't really remember talking thinking about that yesterday either You know like it it was like that kind of thing It was it was it had happened so subtly and and yet at the same time so suddenly right It was like so slow but all of a sudden it just occurred to me that I it must be working Some of these things must be working So it took me probably about a year and a half or so before it really started to click and then build more and more momentum and at some point you hit a tipping point and then you have momentum behind you and it becomes a lot easier Yeah it's incredible And I think what really stuck out to me is the point that you were talking about You had all these things that I guess from any external point of view is like yeah you're ticking all the boxes for happiness You know you've got a girlfriend you got a job maybe a loving family you've got all these things So it's like ok well why aren't you happy Why are you now at the verge of now being like I'm gonna slip my wrist I'm suicidal I'm trying not to kill myself And I think those are the signs that people often don't really recognize They think that from an external point of view It's like yeah everything's gravy That's what happiness is That's what it is that I'm striving for But we see it time and time again you know we see these celebrities these people that people idolize that

at the verge of wanting to end their lives So what do you think takes people to that point or what do we I guess actually let me reframe that question to be What do you actually believe happiness to really be happiness is your true nature It's innately intrinsically inherently who and what you are So when your mind is cool quiet calm collected composed essentially when you are not thinking or overthinking you already are perfect peaceful aliveness That peaceful aliveness is happiness right In another word for them is love of happiness peace they're all synonyms they're different expressions of the same energy But ultimately it's what you are right And it is an experience of peaceful aliveness that feeling that you have when you're just happy for no reason you're just peacefully alive or alive in a peaceful way for no reason at all you can come up with reasons why but it just sort of transcends all of that And so we all experience of we always we all experience that all the time but it's so clouded and covered up with so many thoughts and so many concerns and worries and so many activities that we don't take enough time to sort of deepen into or rest and relax into this inherent innate intrinsic peaceful aliveness that's always inside of us right And so that's what I did I think most of us do that We take a long scenic route or path to happiness we route it through other people other things other places you know and eventually come around to realizing that even the most beautiful car most beautiful man or woman even the most incredible job and unlimited money can't give you the one thing that you you know actually essentially are Hm So so I think that's that makes a lot of sense So happiness is trying to achieve that true alignment with self right So that begs the question So first of all it means that you're trying to eliminate the external factors So it makes me beg the question like OK so do external factors draw you further away from happiness So if they may not be adding to your happiness but does that mean that they're actually drawing you further away And if that's the case should we be trying to avoid those things and going on a on a on a iron kind of journey of trying to discover yourself You have thought about this before haven't you Yeah You know it's funny that you say that because I think a lot of us um I know I certainly struggle with that particular question and I will answer that question by saying yes and no right So in other words like if you play it out long enough everything and everybody ultimately lead you back to yourself because you come to realize and recognize through your experience with that person place or thing that they can't deliver on the false promise they make which is I will make you happy Nothing and nobody can ultimately lastingly meaningfully and abidingly and make you happy It's

impossible because that's what you are right And so in the long term all those things eventually lead you back to yourself But in the short term you have these experiences and you think oh for a little while I got a little pleasure and it did make me happy but then it fades and then so you chase a bigger version of that or a better version of that or a different version of that and then you get that and then it fades you know and so you're always chasing this moving target Um And interestingly enough the target that you're looking for the goal that you're seeking is within you It's yourself right And so the answer is that yes external things lead you away from the source of true peace love and happiness itself And yet the same time they also lead you back to the source of true love peace and happiness itself And then there's also something greater than that which is and I don't wanna go too far with this but all those things also are contained within your consciousness itself And so they actually aren't external to who and what you are because who and what you are is consciousness itself right So there's a whole another level to it which is that So it's yes no And you know all things being equal you can't really ever leave the source you can't really ever go after anything external because it's all inside of you The world is not that's out of your society right So I know that might get a little bit abstract or esoteric but that's just the truth Yeah that makes I think that makes perfect sense because it sometimes you need that external reminder that isn't the one that's actually doing its job but it's just reminding you that you are capable of doing that job right Like a good let's say for example a good manager or a leader they're not the one that's actually doing the job for you and making you good at the job but they're the one that is ex you know showing you that you are the one that is capable of it Yeah so good man I I love the way you put that It's true I I kind of think of everybody and everything in the world as a personal trainer for unconditional happiness or personal trainer for self love or personal trainer for unconditional peace to your point It's like yeah I mean we see all these things that people in places as in on one hand is something we're trying to achieve on the other when they're not desirable we see them as something to be overcome But ultimately if we look at it they're all unwittingly or wittingly cooperating together collaborating together for our good for our happiness right And it doesn't always look that way or feel that way when you're in the throes of an argument or you can't you know get the girl you can't you know get the money or whatever But ultimately at the end of the day it's all bringing you back to a much deeper fuller recognition of your unlimited power and your unlimited limited happiness Some of that I

wanna ask you Rob what what is the role that epigenetics play in happiness Because we're going off the angle that happiness is intrinsic It's up to us Surely there's like a genetic makeup or there's something in there that plays a role in our happiness Great point man So there's a formula you know positive psychology researchers have come up with a formula for happiness which is basically $H = C + S + V$ So H is the happiness equals C circumstances and conditions That's usually what most of us think about when we think about happiness It's you know it's the money it's the car it's the health the beauty it's the youth whatever that believe it or not only accounts for 10% of your overall happiness score So if you were to think about or dream up your ideal life with unlimited money and unlimited partners whatever it is you want in your life that would only still account for 10% or less of your overall happiness score rating OK Then there's the um so the C the S is really what we're talking about when we talk about sort of epigenetics And uh and DNA really we're talking about a genetic set point So we all are born or coming into the world with a set point We're hardwired for a certain amount of happiness essentially And about 50% of our overall happiness score is hardwired into our body Now here's the thing it's not really truly hardwired it's more like soft wired And so as you go about living your life you can turn that you know number up you can turn it down based on you know what you eat who you spend time with the activities you engage in the thoughts that you entertain in your head And so that 50% is perfectly malleable right So it's not like height you know it's not really like eye color you can change it it's changeable it's plastic right And so that gets into the science of neuroplasticity But the point is is that you can turn on and off jeans simply by the thoughts you think or the company you keep or the food you eat or the environment in which you spend your time And so that 50% totally malleable the the final uh 40% of this happiness equation is the V which is voluntary activities And so really what we're saying is at least 90% I would argue 100% but at least 90% of your happiness is totally within your control man That's you know that's actually really exciting So like for the people that I listen to people that feel like uh I can't be happy or my circumstances my conditions or whatever then allow me to have that fulfilling and enjoy my life Basically from what I'm understanding you're saying Rob is that we have the choice we have the power to be able to bring happiness into our life because it's something that's ingrained with us And it's interesting because in a lot of our experience because we are we're off the back of it from a clinical perspective in the hospital A lot of the people that

we speak with they've been exposed to significant amount of traumas significant amount of conditions that have had significant impacts on their life the way they go back to doing things Um and all these preconditions that have occurred in their life And if I understand correctly we're saying that only 10% of that um contributes to our happiness So that means then for the people that are stuck and are feeling like they can't go past their traumas What kind of advice would you say to them Oh so good man You guys give me shivers just connecting That's I get these soul shivers you know when you're connecting with people that you just feel like you're one with right And so I'll say two things to that you know one is I don't want anyone out there to feel that First of all first of all I wanna say happiness is an equal opportunity endeavor Ok Now that being said that being said there are definitely extenuating conditions and circumstances in our lives that make it extraordinarily difficult or more difficult to find that happiness right If you come into the world you're born wired a little low on happiness or you're born into abject poverty right You're born out without parents or you have you know it makes it can make it much more difficult in lots of ways to find that happiness Now in other ways it can actually facilitate and expedite your finding the source of happiness within you right Because all of a sudden you know you're you're forced to turn back on yourself and look deep inside for whatever it is that you're trying to find in the world right So that's the first thing Um and and positive psychology is about that you know if you're not able to pay your basic for basic necessities and you're living in abject poverty more money will increase your happiness right And so please know that that it's not just that you know if you you know are absolutely homeless and you know poverty stricken that you know life is just you know um gonna be charmed existence It's not now further than that More importantly what we found is that you know PTSD post traumatic stress disorder gets most of the airplay and the air time in the world So we hear about people going through major trials or tragedies um or some kind of travesty and they experience adversity and they experience you know host of sort of a negative effects as a result of that adverse you know mental and physical health effects as a result of that And when we talk about PTSD but interestingly enough post traumatic growth is a much more consistent much more common outcome even when people experience ptsd first right So post traumatic growth what that means is that most people actually may experience all kinds of negative repercussions or effects as a result of facing some kind of major life tragedy or adversity And yet most people still experience post traumatic growth you

know on the heels of that And so post traumatic growth is a much more common outcome of even the worst kind of adversity and tragedy in the world And so believe it or not whatever it is that you're experiencing as maybe your greatest problem right now It also points to I think your highest purpose and your greatest purpose which ultimately for me is all about happiness And how does that how does someone start that journey for post traumatic growth How does that kind of start Because like Nicholas said if we're looking at it from our own clinical experience it's a very difficult thing right It's kind of like yeah of course you can of course you can climb that wall but I've done you know you're starting from 6 ft underneath the ground you know and it's so much harder to get out of to even get to level ground to start climbing the wall So how do people start that process of being able to grow through that um traumatic experience Yeah So I'll separate out a separate out a little here two different phenomenon There's resilience Ok Resilience is something that generally can build right And so that's mostly revolves around um your explanatory style So a more optimistic explanatory style um around good good events and negative events that that's gonna help you be a lot more resilient right So when something bad happens do you personalize it do you see as pervasive do you see it as something that's gonna persist through time and space and all that good stuff Right And so you want to develop an increasingly optimistic sort of explanatory style that will help you continue to move forward in your life So even the face of diversity and and trauma and stress Ok So there's that right But when we talk about post traumatic growth what's interesting is that it's often the people that are least resilient who actually benefit or experience the most post traumatic growth And what they found is there's two main qualities or traits that are associated with the most post traumatic growth and the most consistent experience of post traumatic growth And that's openness and extra version So openness is being open to experiences new perspectives new thoughts new people new environments right A new life right The other extra version is really that's a desire or a sort of um feel feeling inspired to reach out you know sort of beyond you seek out help connect with people right So those two qualities of traits if you can cultivate those things will let you grow as a result of any kind of adversity or stress that you face in your life But I would say that those three things together are generally good pieces of advice for all Anyway is do what you can to reach out to other people especially if you need help But also in order to help other people you know also helps to stay open open minded openhearted open hand But also you know develop an

sort of an optimistic explanatory style Those three things are extraordinarily helpful in sort of overcoming almost any adversity Amazing Amazing I wanna just switch the the direction a little bit because what I'm hearing is this this concept is amazing But like you said it's quite abstract and almost you know the abstractness of psychology usually goes quite hand in hand with spirituality right So I wanna ask you what's your take on the the role that spirituality has in our own happiness And do you find that people that are more spiritual in whatever capacity tend to find more happiness due to the fact that they can give them peace purpose calmness whatever Um And is it something that you encourage people to to look into such a beautiful poignant profound question man Like I so when I I grew up Christian you know and uh and the most incredible parents but I had a knee jerk reaction against like traditional Christianity OK Like I felt a lot of guilt and I had a lot of problems with Christianity And so I had this knee jerk reaction So I kind of put religion to the side for a long time And I began to look into science And when I was struggling the most I was leaning into science because science is something that I could not just believe in but see evidence for ok like you know lots of studies thousands of studies whatever and that could get behind you know behind that But what I found was that over time science and psychology only took me so far like you know it took me to the place where I could sort of you know come up with better feeling but truthful stories about my life I could put into action these coping skills that I had learned and that was all very helpful and sort of keeping me from you know spiraling back in the ways that I had before you know self ruination all that good stuff But it was actually ultimately spirituality I think And to this day it still is that brings me in the most peace and the most calm in my life And so you know I have a hard time and I know you know probably some of my more purest you know friends psycho you know psychology pure They they probably don't love that I often have this tendency to like mix language a little you know because for me it's kind of they've been both so helpful and I can clearly see the delineation between the psychology and spirituality But there is a spirituality to psychology and there's a psychology to spirituality And so ultimately I would say that if you left me a choice at this point in my life and I had to choose between all my psychology books or all my spirituality books I'm probably gonna stick with the spirituality books at this point They just bring me a lot more peace and calm and true happiness That's awesome And I and I like the exact same as well because I know that for myself like Fey and I were both Christians and there's been times where I felt

so low unmotivated I had symptoms of me experiencing things that I would normally tend to enjoy that I no longer find the joy in doing those anymore And for me it was like kind of what we've been saying this whole kind of podcast is that that ability to be able to connect internally and kind of find that element of peace And calmness within but something that was missing for me trying to find those external factors that were giving give me that short kick of happiness but then suddenly fade away And I found that with my faith and when I come back to spirituality that I can just really sit in it for much longer And then I can take that with me to you know throughout the rest of the day into my life And there are obviously gonna be moments and step backs where external factors might influence my mood again But I always know that my safe place um is within Christianity and having my faith So what do you feel then about people you know having that safe space in terms of their journey for for happiness Is that really essential or not Absolutely Absolutely So you know from a psychology perspective we know that folks who have a spiritual bent or a spiritual religious tradition that they associate or affiliate with generally report higher levels of happiness And of course they do for multiple reasons not the least of which is a you know community of people that they have shared values with right That's extraordinarily helpful We know when it comes to happiness from a psych positive psychology perspective almost nothing is more important than relationships relationships matter and they matter a great deal and it doesn't have to be romantic relationships at all Just relationships where you feel connected platonic or professional or romantic or you know familial it doesn't matter But that connection you know having a robust social network is everything when it comes to happiness from you know a positive psychology perspective I would go beyond that and say that for me spirituality has also allowed me to create to find a safe space with others Yes But more importantly to find that safe space within myself that I can always retreat into or live from that abide in you know and um that allows me incredible you know depth of peace and happiness and love The other piece it too is that there's a transfer of responsibility that happens in spirituality It doesn't happen in psychology right You are fully responsible for every little bit that happens in your life And that used to stress me out you know even new age spirituality doesn't allow for that necessarily because it says well every thought you think is gonna manifest in some way And so you know I became almost obsessive about that I was stressed out and anxious that every thought I had was gonna manifest in something scary you know if I wasn't

very careful But when I went beyond that and I went deeper I began to realize and recognize that you know the mind is a beautiful tool and psychology makes great use of that tool Um But it also you know could be an incredible troublemaker And so spirituality I think is particularly mystical spirituality allows you to go beyond the mind to discover this place of no mind where there was nothing ever but perfect peace man that like I'm so taken back on this podcast what you're saying I was like this is so good and I know that ah like like even myself I'm learning so much from this podcast and it's so beneficial I wanna ask you a quick question and I just have to ask it because it's like you just reminded me but it's on the topic of relationships Um And I know might be smiling because he probably saw this coming But um a lot of the clients that we speak to a lot of their happiness or they were in a relationship romantic relationship to be clear And maybe for the first five years they found joy in that relationship They were happy they were living their best life however they want to define it and then noticed it and then suddenly they found a dip but the dip was coming from their partner and that their partner was manifested in energy that wasn't congruent to how they wanted to feel Talk to us about how people in these relationships can navigate happiness while still having the responsibility um of the other person Wow It's a really great remark and insight you have there Great question You know the happiest relationships consist of two independently happy people I have to repeat that because we always find ourselves wanting to blame or hold responsible the other person for how we feel You know and it doesn't happen just in Roma you know romantic relationships it happens in all relationships But the happiest relationships consist of two independently happy people And so a huge piece to being happy together is knowing how to be happy alone right If you can be happy in your aloneness you can be happy in your togetherness But if you don't know how to be happy in your aloneness you can never be happier in your togetherness with anyone else You know And so we always not always but usually particularly when we're a little younger and we haven't you know learned the whole yet a lot yet We you know hope that relationships will save us that they'll complete us that somehow some other person will make us happy But of course we are quickly disabused of that idea You know if we've had enough relationships so the key really and the challenge is you know to be responsible for your own happiness to make happiness your happiness your job and to encourage the other person to make happiness their job right And to remember that it's not your pleasure and privilege to make the other person happy not just that

but if you were successful at making the other person happy you would actually do them a great disservice because you would train them away from the very source of happiness within themselves And if they did the same for you if they made you happy by doing everything you always wanted them to do just when you wanted them to do it they would train you away from your source of unconditional happiness within you and they would do you an incredible disservice And so relationships are designed not really to make you happy They're designed to make you aware particularly self aware and aware of your own source of happiness within But when you become increasingly aware you become increasingly happy right And so that's really the key there is you know if you can we call it cognitive agility and emotional regulation or self regulation self But in other words you know you gotta make happiness your own job pleasure and privilege and you gotta make or encourage the other person to do the same And then that therefore you won't be two beggars in a relationship that are each trying to beg for money off the other you'll each be independently wealthy So you have something to share in the relationship Yeah Spot on I think that's spot on because that's something that we speak about all the time about about relationships right And you know we're not relationship experts at all but from our own experience and our own clinical perspective we know that you know before you can even have like you said you can before you can have a fruitful and thriving relationship you need to have a relationship within yourself Your solidity needs to be within yourself because you know two uneven beams or unsteady beams are not gonna be able to support each other Right They're not they're not they're not gonna be able to work well I think that what you're saying is so powerful and people don't realize it enough because a detri like the same way that a a good healthy thriving relationship is super beneficial The same is on the is on the on the on the reverse a toxic unhealthy you know uh unloving disruptive relationship is highly detrimental to our own peace and happiness and and positive psychology So I think that being able yeah so being able to understand that is a huge huge point I'm glad that you guys did So now you absolutely that right there I mean you're absolutely right about that You know it's easy um you know to fall into the trap of thinking that your happiness is somewhere outside of you and in the future that's the ultimate trap That's what practically every you know every mistake we make around happiness is really kind of two kinds of mistakes One mistake is looking for happiness outside of you in the future or in the past when it's really inside of you right here And now and the second is that

every case of unhappiness is really a a case of mistaken identity right You you you think that you are this lifestyle or you think that you are this job or you think that you are this money or you think that you are this body or you think that that you are this mind And so when something happens the body or the mind the reputation the job the money something that you think something's happened to you but you're that which is aware of all these things You're so much bigger than that right You're so much more all encompassing than that and you're so much more untouchable and invincible and immovable and unshakable than that right And so yeah at the end of the day it's just usually some erroneous ideas that we have around happiness that misleads us or misguides us in terms of finding happiness for sure for sure So for the people that I've been inspired including myself off the back of this and they're wanting to pursue their journey of happiness where can they start And I want us to kind of like maybe if you would mind for the first part about relationships because I think that was so powerful and for people that are in relationships they might be like yeah I've been quite codependent on this other person bringing my joy and happiness And now I wanna step away How do people firstly have that conversation to be like you need to be responsible for your happiness I need to be responsible for my happiness And then after that what does the for people that aren't in relationships What does the journey kind of look like for when they want to start that journey Yeah Yeah So you have that conversation with a partner or a lover Very carefully very diplomatically very sensitively right Um So you know I am a big believer in positive communication So there's an acronym that I use that I love which is before I speak think and think stands for T the T is true So I want to say what I'm gonna say in a way that's just as true The H is helpful The I is inspiring the end is necessary and the K is kind So you wanna try to say what you wanna say or what you need to say in a way that's true Helpful Inspiring Only share what's necessary and say it in the kindest way possible right So it might sound something like you know sweetheart you know I love you so much and there's nothing that makes me happier than knowing that you're happy and I want to be happy and I know that you wanna be happy And I've also discovered I'm not really good at always making you happy in just the way that I want you to be happy And I've got a feeling that you're probably even better than me you know at finding or being a happy person And I know that you ultimately are And so I know that my job and my pleasure and privilege is to find and to work on you know deepening my own happiness And I want to do everything possible everything that I can do to

support each of us in finding the happiest relationship or creating the happiest relationship possible And so I'd love to talk to you about you know how I can deepen my happiness and how I can support you and you deepening your happiness And you know let's talk about it because at the end of the day we're in this thing because we both want to be happy and there's nothing that we want more So anyway be something like that But if you want to do what you can to try and stay focused on what you're gonna take responsibility for and the ways in which you want to support them in finding or gaining or achieving what they want what you wanna be careful of is doing the opposite of that which is telling them what to do or telling them what you're not gonna do You know you can say all that stuff but you gotta you want to say it in a way that they can that keeps their mind and their heart and their ears open to actually receiving it and actually against it if that makes sense right In in terms of you know folks that are or aren't in a relationship you know I kind of think of it as that of the happiness journey is like maybe a four step process It is possible to jump directly to the fourth step because the fourth step is a cheat code ok It's like a master key and I sort of you know give a little teaser on on that a little earlier But the four steps are are very simple The first step is you know it's all about happiness being what you do right So when we start a happiness journey we mostly think look I wanna take some trips I want to see some beautiful women or some incredible guys You know it's like I just want I wanna make some money you know it's that So what you wanna do is you want to just track or write down what I call your happiness islands Those are activities or things that you enjoy doing that you feel inspired doing that You feel energized for having done but write down your happiness islands right So those are activities that with very little time energy effort allow you to feel happy to be alive But then at some point you graduate beyond that And so it step two you wanna begin looking into your life your social life and do what you can to only spend time with people that if aren't happy at least aspire to be happy One of the most detrimental things you can do in terms of happiness is spend time with people who don't want you to be happy or don't even have happiness on their radar at all Right Generally the happiest person doesn't pull the less happy person up Instead the least happy person pulls the happy people down Ok So it doesn't matter how strong you are in happiness Generally if you're surrounded by unhappy people they will pull you down Ok So that's number two the third step is really about telling a better feeling story about everything and everybody in your life starting with yourself So you tell a

truthful but better feeling story So instead of saying you know it's a terrible day outside you say oh it's raining today just stick to the facts or I really love the sunshine I'm really looking forward to the sunshine right Or if you have \$0 in your bank account you don't need to say I'm broke You might say something It's only up from here You know it's only up from here But the story has to be truthful but better feeling right Because if it's not truthful it won't be better feeling That's the third step It's really about positive thinking We'll call it That goes a little bit beyond that But the fourth step is so at some point in your journey you realize that happiness is not what you do because sometimes you're gonna be doing something that you thought was fun and exciting But today it sucks Happiness isn't just about the people that you spend time with because sometimes you can be with the most loving incredible people But you still feel miserable Happiness is not just about the thought you think because you can sometimes have the same thought you had yesterday but one day you were happy having the thought and the next day you're really miserable having the thought right Think about having relationships You've been in that same person the same thought about the person made you feel happy at one point miserable at the next So the final stage is is is is a recognition that happiness is not what you do Happiness is not who you just who you spend time with Happiness is not what you think It's not a state of mind Happiness is not even a state of mood Happiness is a state of being and by being I mean no mind So you get to a place where even positive thinking becomes stressful and anxiety producing and too much work and you rest and relax into the thoughtless wordless infinite eternal awareness of your own existence It's just like sitting here and for a second just being an idiot not thinking not worrying not think you know not plotting or planning or scripting anything just breathing not thinking And then that is already perfect happiness And you realize that you can do it once just rinse wash repeat you can do it again and again and again and you can stream together an entirely happy peaceful and loving life That's amazing I really like that It's like you set it up you think it's this this this this but it ain't any of that Very good But I wanna ask you like how how aggressive right For lack of better word should people be on this pursuit Right Because let's say for example if I've got a physical health condition and I'm really like because I I've got one about prediabetes right You've got to be aggressive in the fact that you got to change your life right You gotta cut that out and really be really really strict about be drastic If it's gonna if that thing is impacting your health you've got to cut that out straight away you gotta move away Is that

the same kind of process that you should be doing with your happiness Should you if it's a toxic relationship bounce if it's a toxic workplace get out should how aggressive should people be or could it be a very slow and gradual Sure There's probably gonna be different courses for different horses and everybody can have it does a different approach But what do you think is probably your your piece of advice or not Yeah So there's levels to this thing and that's a great metaphor you use You know the truth is in the beginning you have to be very aggressive you have to be very assertive about it You want to make some very dramatic changes and shifts in your life um especially in the beginning because that's when it's hardest Ok And that's when even the smallest things pull you down right When you're just learning to walk everything is a problem the wind blows and you're falling back down Right So that's when you have to be very passionate and in intentional and very single pointed about this happiness thing And I often joke you wanna make happiness your top career or at least an additional career but it should be your main goal You know if anything else is your main goal it will always come before happiness and you'll always be postponing and procrastinating on this happiness thing So I believe in making happiness your top goal and then trusting that success will follow lots of science show that that if you can find a way to get happy without all the stuff you want you get all the stuff you want much more quickly easily effort uh effort effortlessly and e effect effectively It's pretty mind blowing right So happy people make more money over the course of their life they get married a lot younger stay married longer are happy in all the relationships whether they're married or not they're rated is more attractive you know in all the ways happiness improves the objective conditions and circumstances of your life So it really is a master key to success right And so in the beginning then you want to be very aggressive intentional and single pointed about it But what happens is over time as you build up momentum you suddenly find that because of the neuroplasticity of the brain neuroplasticity of the brain that the brain begins to rewire itself for a much happier healthier and wealthier experience of life And within about 21 to 66 days if you're very consistent with your happiness practice you'll notice that happiness becomes a lot less effortful a lot easier and a lot more enjoyable And so at that point things that used to push you up bound don't so much Now you got that one friend who was always super annoying whom in the beginning you had to completely ignore and you know reject all his phone calls Now you like have a smile for him and now your energy dominates the now your energy dominates the conversation right

And so it's a whole different ballgame So in the beginning to be very intentional then it becomes automatic And then once it becomes automatic you still want to be intentional and you'll find yourself doing it without much effort But the things that used to knock you off balance no longer do Hm I think that was a that was a great question for you by the way And I think that's an even excellent answer of it I really think you guys know that both and I think that's a perfect way to kind of end it there so many more questions that I would like to ask There's so many things that we can explore um which we probably need to do a part two at some point because you've got so much knowledge and insight in this area of positive psychology that I think that a lot of people need to hear because it's so beneficial It's so powerful when you're really deeper and for you guys that are listening to the audio I really want you guys to replay you know slow down the speed and really deep what this man is saying because this is some powerful things that might go over your head And I really want you guys to absorb as much as you can because this is so so powerful But for the guys that are listening Rob and they're you know they're interested in your journey tell us like what's what's next with you guys with you on your pursuit Where can people find you plug yourself Well uh the very next thing is a part two with you guys because I'm truly truly inspired And I mean that like on so many levels man you ask great questions you're fully present I could tell your heart's in it your minds in it your souls in it Like you guys have done your work Like I'm I'm telling you I love where you guys are at with this and I appreciate you including me as part of the conversation Um In order to find me folks can find me at my website at coach Rob Mac M ac K dot com You can find me on all social media platforms including um Instagram at Rob Mac official Uh My book happens from the inside out is available everywhere Great books are sold including Amazon and Barnes and Noble And then the next thing for me I'm working on four books that will be published in the next two years Uh The first one's on Love is called Love from the Inside Out Um And then I'm working on a couple of TV shows Uh We'll see what comes with those the other unfolds and then mostly just trying to live the message you know trying to live the teaching man That's like where it's at for me because this world is and life is not always easy right But happiness is worth the effort right It's worth the time and the energy So for me it's mostly about just continuing these kind of conversations with guys like yourself and really living the teaching what a way to end happiness is worth the effort of far out That's perfect That is just unreal Well look it's been a Absolutely I honestly

it's an honor to have this conversation with you Rob Like I think that so many people like Nick said are gonna come out of here and really do uh an analysis of themselves and I think that that's the big thing that we that this conversation is gonna get out Like where am I actually at with my happiness Am I putting enough effort Isn't my top job My top priority If not why not And then coming to that realization and being able to to us it doesn't need to get to that low point before we have that trigger It doesn't need to get to that And I think that you're an inspiration Your story is inspirational What you're doing now is inspirational And I hope that people really get to that point where they can really see that and make their own transition and make their own uh start their own pursuit because I think that's amazing Love that preach preach that amazing Awesome Well look that was another episode of the Uncovered Podcast I'll put all Bob's details in the show notes If you guys want to follow us and you want more insight you know where to find us at Nick and Fey everywhere And until next time you guys have an incredible week and I'll see you guys in the next episode of Uncovered with Nick and Femi It's enough