

SAWSP #1 Happiness From the Inside Out with Rob Mack

The first episode of Self Awareness with Sarah podcast Obviously Rob it is such a pleasure and an honor to have you here Um We met in 2019 on the set of Good Morning La la Land which was such a blast I I'm assuming they stopped production of it Yeah Uh stop the production of that show and then pandemic hit and whatnot And uh but it was such an incredible experience not the least of which because I get to meet you know meet you That was like so amazing You had such incredible energy and I just always love connecting with you Thank you Yeah it was so funny I remember I was like how did I even start talking to Rob And there is it must have been some Tira Brock or like Eckhart's Foley book on the Table And I was like oh I love this book and you're like I love this book too Um So definitely at the end of this we'll have to get like a list of your favorite books for people because I'm sure it's expensive Yeah I hope you have additional two or three hours for that One Yeah great great We set up the Zoom meeting for three hours So you never know Um Speaking of books I am a proud owner of your book Happiness from the inside out I love it Um When did you write this book Oh my goodness So long ago it was like I think 2007 2008 And it was initially just me tracking what led me to live a happier life versus an unhappy life Like I was basically just reading the most brilliant people I could possibly find you know whether it was authors and watch videos And I would ask random people what sort of they discovered that led them to live a happier life And I would start like applying whatever tips tricks tools and techniques they recommended And um you know that's the way the book started So it wasn't initially designed or written to be a book It was just like my personal like happiness Journal that eventually over time became a book that's amazing And so amongst other things So you're an author you're a celebrity happiness coach and then also you uh help with going into companies like Google or youtube Can you tell me a little bit about what you do with those companies Yeah So I work as an executive coach and I basically help individuals and organizations achieve increasingly authentic professional success sort of an energizing bounce between you know increasingly authentic professional success and increasingly effortless personal happiness right So in other words I help them get better results with less time energy and effort by applying time tested face valid positive psychology principles

and tools I worked for a while as a management consultant So I draw on lots of the you know methodologies and techniques that I learned through the management consulting career But mostly I'm helping uh individuals and businesses become happier and more successful Wow that's amazing And you talk so much about in your book and of course I'm always following your Instagram posts and you talk a lot about how happiness is a precursor to success which I have always found to be true But I didn't always know why Why do you why do you think that is oh my goodness so many reasons And you're right just to contextualize that a little for folks Lots of research thousands of studies have found that happier people experience happier circumstances and conditions and not vice versa So in other words happiness is not only the greatest success I mean it's the reason that you want success but it also leads to success So we know that happy people make 607 \$100,000 more over the course of their entire lifetime On average they live 6 to 7 years longer than less happy people they get married earlier stay married longer and are happier in all relationships whether they're married or not they experience less jobs burn out really in all ways Happiness improves the circumstances and conditions of your life right And relationships and relationships happy people are even rated as more attractive than unhappy people So just knowing that knowing that happiness is not only the greatest success but it also leads to success um is very helpful And I think part of the reason is that just optimism itself is extraordinarily has an adaptive value Meaning when you're an optimistic person you tend to persist particularly in the face of adversity or challenges And if you're not very optimistic you're probably gonna be likely to give up a lot sooner Also when you're optimistic you tend to exercise or flex more control over things particularly things that are controllable or inherently controllable right And so there are lots of reasons for that Um But mostly I think that you know happy people persist longer Um They don't they they they tend to be more resilient they control what's control They're a lot more grateful and appreciative And also that is emotionally contagious You know happiness is emotionally contagious And so yet it just in of itself improves your relationships both your personal ones and professional ones your platonic ones and romantic ones just by being happy you uplift people around you So they love being with you or spending time with you and they want to spend more time with you So that helps you get promoted it helps you maintain relationships it just really improves everything Wow That was like the best answer and so comprehensive I didn't realize I mean it's it's it's so difficult to even imagine all of these the domino

effect that it has in every area of your life It's sort of like I picture like if you and your happiness is a point like uh in every direction sort of like a God I wish I paid more attention in geometry but like like like just this energy that's emanating from you in every single direction and every facet of your life it's it's going to improve it Um What's I love so much I took so many notes I was reading through your book and um um my boyfriend Weston was like are you studying for an exam So I was just like oh my God everything about this like if you go through the book I'm pretty sure the point of highlighting is to like point out certain things but I have like pages Um OK so something I would love to ask is what are the biggest misconceptions that people have about happiness Yeah Uh with so many I think the first thing is is that happiness is something that you can get through other people places or things right I think that's the biggest one of all that's why we spent so much of our lives trying to improve circumstances conditions relationships and it's not that you shouldn't do those things it's just that that's the long scenic indirect path to happiness and ultimately happiness is not outside of you in the future Probably the greatest myth or misconception around happiness Happiness is something that exists now here inside of you right That's number one So that sort of invitation there is not to route your happiness through middle people or middle organizations or middle men or middle women or middle things but instead to go directly to the to the source for it So that's probably the biggest misconception You know another misconception I think lots of us have is that you know happiness is a state of mind and I don't always go fully there in the book and happiness from the inside I only just touch on it but ultimately happiness isn't even a state of mind It's really a state of being right Something that you probably experience with less thinking you know certainly less negative thinking but less thinking overall your happiest moments you'll often find are when you're so tapped and tuned and turned on and so fully present and engaged and absorb and consume with what you're doing that you don't have a whole lot of time to evaluate or analyze that is so true A happier I have never been more unhappy than when I'm just listening to the voice in my head thinking Oh OK I got this guy speaking to the boardroom of like different voices thinking you know you have control over your own happiness by yeah I mean there's always another problem there's always another problem for you to solve And it's like OK one I remember back in September moving back to L A sort of as the pandemic I mean I thought it was slowing down at that point but um I was like ok first priority I wanna pay my bills and have all that taken care of

And I was so happy for a little bit while I was like yeah I got my bills paid like I'm doing it and that was like an hour of like satisfaction and then it was like well I could be making a lot more money and you know the next problem arises Um so tried and true fails don't do it And I love what you said about how happiness is a way of being because happiness itself I think people confuse happiness and and inner peace a lot as well And I think they're really interchangeable in a lot of ways but happiness comes and goes and peace is something we can always have But that happiness arises so much more easily from that Sara that is so profound I mean this is why I love conversations with you so much I mean it really is it took me quite some time to come to that recognition that happiness is really a peaceful alive feeling inside or an alive Peacefulness that you experience more than that it's not even something that you necessarily experience It's something that you are right And so you're absolutely right about that I think that's another myth and misconception that happiness is excitement or that it's anticipation or that it's um pleasure You know it may include all those things in moments but happiness is something that's so much deeper more meaningful more lasting and more abiding and it feels more like a life piece It's like a dancing that goes on inside of you But that dancing is still it's like a song that goes on and plays on inside of you But that music is silent right So there's a silence and stillness that is full of this EHES joy and peace But it's in a life piece It's not you know a funeral dirge It's not a it's not you know something that's very depressing or sad or boring It's um really your life Well it's interesting as you were talking I was sort of visualizing you know I I have been using the com app for about four years I'm very proud because I knew about it before anyone else And now it's this huge app and like Harry Styles or Shania Twain and lebron James are like doing you know their own little segment on the app and I'm like uh I was here before anyone Um so I've been using the app for like I said four or five years and one of my favorite parts of the app is a is a walking meditation and I used to do it all the time walking to class when I was still going to school And I recently started doing it again And what I realized is that stillness as I as like I'm walking through a neighborhood or looking at trees or flowers or taking in you know scents or as in you know smells Um There's there's a part of me when I'm tapping into that stillness where fear comes up And i it's it's so interesting to me because I think that I reach for obsessive thinking and it just incessant thinking as a like a means of protection or something to even numb myself a little bit And you know of course everyone has their method whether it's you know

nicotine or overeating or social media But for me it's like wow I just do not stop I just keep keep thinking and it's it is scary to to cultivate that inner stillness because it's like taking away your pacifier a little bit and then you're allowing things to pass through you And what I what I was thinking about as I said when you were talking is how in order to let happiness in we have to let everything in and you know you can't take in the trees and the flowers or you know the bees that are so beautiful that you're walking by If you're like well I can't feel this pain or this anxiety Can can you talk to us a little bit more about how to how we can open ourselves more to all of it and maybe why that's important Yeah for sure I mean boy that was really poignant Sarah and um profound everything you shared there I would say that every case of unhappiness is a case of mistaken identity right And so we mistake who we are for a body and for a mind and we have a body but we're not our body we have a mind but we're not our mind We're something that's aware of the body and aware of the mind and that awareness like the sun itself Ok Um Illumines itself in the world just by being itself right It's already just perfect light light And sometimes if you're the sun clouds pass through the sky right But at no point in time does the sun misidentify itself or mistake itself for the clouds It doesn't and it doesn't panic about it doesn't worry about them it doesn't let them bother it And at the same time it doesn't fight the clouds doesn't try to get rid of the clouds the clouds do its thing And so part of the challenging opportunity if you care about happiness and peace and love is to simply be aware in a nonjudgmental way of the thoughts and the feelings that you're having without identifying with those thoughts and feelings And that's really the challenge in order to do that you need a little space And sometimes that's why having a great friend or colleague or a girlfriend like you is so incredibly helpful or going to a therapist is so incredibly helpful because what those people are doing is they're holding space and basically allowing for unconditional or nonjudgmental regard right That and of itself is healing that is transformative We know the most effective therapies in the world are effective not because of the therapy but because of the therapist and what the therapist does so well that's so healing and so transformative is they hold a space for unconditional regard where they're not triggered by every thought or thing you say right So that's really the opportunity for all of us is to recognize that you can have thoughts or not have thoughts have feelings or not have feelings but you're none of those things You're something that is thoughtless and worthless and body that is infinitely and eternally unaffected by anything that passes across the screen of your mind

or body Yeah And that awareness is so tucked away that it's it is so hard I was um as after I finished your book I picked up um the untethered soul and I was really trying really you know I mean so many books talk about you know just watching your thoughts and just letting them be But wow it was like the first day or two of trying to watch myself It was nearly impossible I was like every two seconds I'd lose track of it But um but I love what you said It so so beautiful What you said about how the sun doesn't stop shining It doesn't need to get rid of the cloud It can just be what it is and trust that at the end of the day it'll still be there whether or not there's a rainstorm the the sun's still there it's not going anywhere And likewise with with our peace of mind And you know that's something that I am I I've I've experienced two lesser degrees You know if I'm feeling say triggered or insulted by somebody trying to have awareness of what that feels like and it's still painful Yeah I mean it's not easy but it's like it's when I'm aware of how I'm feeling and when I'm aware of my thoughts it's really similar to having a friend or having a therapist hold space because I'm starting to hold space for myself a little more Right And and what ultimately is prayer or meditation than that it's simply practicing the presence of God or source or spirit or peace or love or happiness I think those are all synonyms That's all it really ever is right It's coming with that or commuting as that And so you're right It can feel really challenging in the beginning and very difficult in the beginning But when you practice it it makes everything else easy in the end right It makes everything else easy in the end including all the stuff that we worked so hard to try to achieve or accomplish or acquire with our hands and with our brains right And so I love what you're saying and I totally sympathize with you And I think also to your point we can complicate these things And if you're trying to find peace or love or happiness through the mind the mind is very good at sending you down all these dark alleys and convincing you that it's gotta be much more difficult than it sounds and it tends to do that very well And so you know sometimes I just simply remind myself that the awareness I'm seeking is not something that I had to go looking for It's actually from it's that place from where the seeking is even happening just being aware that you even exist that already is the awareness we're talking about in the beginning It feels like nothing It's like oh I'm aware that I am we're all aware that we are in order to be aware of anything else you have to be aware of that that ultimately is the peaceful aliveness and happiness and self love or love that we're all looking for But because we're so distracted by everything happening in our line of vision or sight everything happening in our brain

and our bodies we don't put enough time and attention on that very awareness itself I love that because I think what is going on is we have so many um self love is such a buzzword these days and it's everywhere all the time I'm and when I'm in a when I'm in a bad place or I'm not feeling super great seeing self love and I need to love myself more It it's sort of misleading because I think it's difficult to understand self love from a a thinking mind because it's like well how can and that's where in seeking status and money or fame comes from because it's like well the mind is something that's only gonna look for things externally because it can't access that awareness Your mind will never be able to do that because it's not that So I'd love that You said that because self love really is awareness But it's it's uh something that is kind of difficult to describe Yes that's right And and and that's when you know you're close to it or that you are you really are it right Like you know um there's a great book I'm sure you've probably read it Dying right And Stephen Mitchell's version of the Dody is just powerful and profound And you know essentially it says the Dody the dow that can be told is not the real dow or the God that can be named is not the real God that we have these concepts of things and the map territory and you know reading a menu is not the same as eating the food that is indicated pointed to in the menu right And so that's the challenge with all these things that you know increasingly it becomes very difficult to have conversations about it Because experience is the only explanation you know experience is the only explanation You have to experience it for yourself to really know But that being said I would argue that we all experience love of the self love for the self all the time It's the only love there really is that really exists It's just that so many of us seek a deeper experience of that through paths and through means that aren't very effective So it's like you know injecting the drugs into your vein not very effective for short term maybe long term not so much right And so we just again we try to route our peace our love our self love through all these other things people and places But it's again a long scenic indirect ineffective you know way of doing it Yeah And it reminds me of how it's difficult to wrap your head around this But when you feel when you love someone or you feel love from that person it's really something that was already inside of you that you're feeling and that's really difficult to sort of accept because it's like well I don't feel that way when they're not around So how can that be How can that be So do you have an answer for that Yeah So um so what happens is and this is my experience and I'm open to you but my experience is that any time I feel anything what I'm feeling is ultimately coming through me it's in

my awareness And so it's me essentially And what happens is we most most of us we project it on the first visible sign you know our first visible person or whatever we you know it's easy to describe that or attribute that feeling to something or somebody else And so but in order to experience what you're experiencing it has to always come through you it has to always come from you You're the one feeling it nobody else is feeling it in the way that you are and lots of people in your shoes wouldn't be feeling what you're feeling right And so yeah so there's a tendency because all of our five senses are really projected outwards And you know there's a tendency and a temptation to attribute what we feel on the inside to something outside of us And that's because we're so outward focused and outward directed So that is part of the temptation And it's part of also the reason why when we pray and when we meditate and when we kiss we close our eyes not always but often part of it is to shut out the external world and to have a deep visceral guttural internal experience instead of attributing something outside of us Right And you know we're clear it's you know great to have a boyfriend a girlfriend It's great to connect with things and people in the world But ultimately we want to remember that whatever it is we're feeling we're feeling it right I think it's so for me I always forget that not everybody's like me So when I get if I get a you know offended by something or triggered by something I assume or even when people don't act the way that I would act in a certain situation I I remember like a few years ago being in some situations where people were not doing what I expected of them do And I was shocked I was shocked I was like whoa I thought everybody thought like I did and partially that's you know I can attribute that to you You know my childhood you know being surrounded by people who instilled you know these values in me and my parents sought out friends who had those values and so their kids did And I I was lucky enough to grow up in a community where that belief system was reinforced And so I was like oh OK this is this is how the world is people act like this in these certain situations And it was a big big learning curve for me to go oh not everybody has these values or they just they just value different things and that was a little earth shattering for me But it was also really really liberating like oh ok Um if that person doesn't see this as offense I don't have to take things personally That's another big thing that that I've been really learning the last couple of years Sarah That's so good Oh just so delicious Like and it really is right It's fired You know it's been and and interesting because we all do that We all assume that what we think and feel everyone thinks and feels or should we Right And and that's the that's the

psychology of separate realities We each live separate and different and distinct psychological reality and we forget that fact over and over and over again And that's why when you're ultimately truly want to keep commit or connect with someone you have to go beyond the mind If you just really only believe that love is agreeing with someone or finding agreement mentally you're gonna have a very limited experience of love You have to get to a place where it's really more about a heart connection which is still in silent You have to be able to connect despite somebody not agreeing with you not seeing things the way that you see them or feeling the way you feel about them And not only be ok with that but welcoming that and celebrating that there's diversity of thought in that in perspective in that And that can make life a lot more interesting and stimulating But there's also a deeper level or experience of love that goes beyond thought He yeah it's like um the roomy quote out beyond ideas of right doing or wrong doing There's a field I'll meet you there that I really believe that's what that is saying And you know otherwise we're interacting from I'm interacting from my ego someone else is interacting from their ego And then we're not actually having a true intimate connection whether it's a partner or a parent or whoever it's just our ideas about how things are interacting You know that I love that so much You're absolutely right about that And then there's not just two people in a relationship you and the other person there's your thought of who you are there's your thoughts of who they are and then you there's the thoughts of what the relationship is and the other person is doing the same exact thing right So there's like six people there's 12 people who knows how many people are in this relationship but it's all happening in our minds and not happening in quote unquote reality And you know I think it was you know who once said that you know really all relationships just only happened in your mind that you know really that's the only place And I've heard say something very similar which is like really there's no such thing as relationships There's only really relating because there's only the present moment and in the present moment you're simply relating But if you go even beyond that there's not even relating there's just oneness but that's a whole you know another ball of wax It is And like man that is when when I really start to go that deep it does scare me because you start to realize you can't hold on to anything And that's of course where the freedom and the beauty and liberation lies But it's scary to recognize like you only have this moment and relationships as you were saying in a sense don't even exist If nothing is outside this moment exists And it's like by holding on for something which

is you know why we have an identity why we have an idea of ourselves is to orient ourselves in this world It's it's a very good point you make And um you know one of the ways out of the concern and worry and fear about that is to remember and then ultimately to to experience the infinite internal nature that you and and energy that you essentially are right So it's like the sky like is the sky afraid or feeling in some ways insecure or unstable because it has nothing to hold on to no that the sky includes or call it space It it includes embodies captures encapsulates everything There's nothing that isn't encap or bodied or by space and space is infinite right There's no end to it There's no borders and boundaries And so there's no losing anything with respect to space and there's no gaining anything with respect to space because again it's infinite eternal and that same you know space lessness and placeless that that exists not only within us but is us And it's hard to put like words into it to it But the but the idea essentially is that if you perceive it it's in some ways already part of your experience right And ultimately that's not even you know put it quite right But the idea is is that yes we all have this very human experience of losing things and wanting to gain things But again that's part of the both trap and opportunity to go beyond that and realize that ultimately whatever it is that you're searching for you are already it's already included in your very existence Yeah No but it's not I I always have a hard time myself explaining these things how because a lot of it gets into the realm of science then I'm like I remember that right Like in a New Earth my boy Eckhart I love love him so much He was the first um author that I read once I started meditating and I was meditating because my my therapist had recommended I do it and I didn't I spent like eight months to a year Kind of like uh I don't want to It sounds so boring and I I really didn't understand the point And so once I started really sitting down to meditate I was determined to do it I got to a place where I was not happy Um reading his book showed me oh I get it now So it's a and it's to also just quickly say what I loved so much about your book and what I love so much about you is that you bring in um spiritual elements and components that are still digestible to say an American audience or uh you know Canadian Western European audience who people who are not used to that kind of vernacular That sounds a little bit more Eastern and it has some mysticism to it because ultimately life is mystical But uh us out here in the West are just not used to thinking in those terms So to anyone else you have to get Rob's book because it's for anybody I appreciate that so much I'm gonna be you and zeal you and I'm going and you had check and a wire transfer the whole nine all the things like you and I

appreciate you saying that so much because I mean honestly I did you know I didn't become a happiness coach I didn't write a book for any other reason except that I was deeply depressed insanely suicidal for decades I mean really I wanted nothing more than to kill myself And I was authentically and genuinely trying just to be happy And I started you know doing things like writing a book or sharing things that I was reading just because I wanted to be happy and I wanted other people to be happy too That was it And so I think sometimes when your heart is really pure about something I think you have the tendency to make it digestible And that could be a real challenge because again we're trying to sometimes put words to something that's worthless right But that's also why I talk consistently about happiness at the end of the day and the ways in which happiness if you could prioritize happiness the ways in which it kind of allows everything else to be added or how everything else follows when you prioritize happiness first and foremost Hm Yeah I really was I I was I was hoping that at some point we could we could talk about your experiences because um also I feel like and I'm not sure if this is something you experience but I think I'm in my twenties and so many people I know in their twenties are experiencing this insane pressure to succeed And you're somebody who has been so successful and it sounds like not uh you know based off of our whole conversation But um it it didn't give you what you were looking for and did was that part of what um made you more unhappy or did it compound that Yes Yes And Sarah you are an old soul I mean my goodness you are in your twenties But it's like you've been around obviously for lifetimes and lifetimes Like I would say that you know no question I mean I remember being unhappy and depressed from the age of four or five and I always thought I'd grow out of it that if I had enough friends if I eventually you know could buy all the toys I wanted whether they were you know kids toys or adult toys later If I could be successful on the athletic field I want to be a professional basketball player I always thought that those things would allowed me to grow out of the unhappiness and the depression But actually as my life got better on the outside I felt worse for it on the inside And that shocked me It floored me and I got to a point where I was so depressed that I began to experience suicidal ideation like hundreds if not thousands of times a day I thought about it almost I felt like it was I was thinking about it every moment And so I got to a point where I decided I was gonna research how to kill myself and I decided I was gonna do it And I went to the kitchen I got a kitchen knife and I rammed it into my wrist And probably can't really see on the camera there But I had a really strange and

unexpected and unpredictable experience when I did that you know I for no good reason without anything on in the external or in the objective conditions and circumstances of my life changing And remember I had a pretty good life you know it wasn't like I was doing badly I had friends I had a girlfriend I had money had a couple of nice German cars but without any of those things changing on the inside I felt this inexplicable peace and joy just sort of rush or wash over me And I remember being really strangely surprised by that and I decided in that moment I would postpone the suicide for like an hour And honestly even the hour I wasn't committed to it was probably like a couple of minutes while I just did a little research But that couple of minutes changed my whole life because I began to discover that I wasn't alone There were lots of people feeling what I was feeling Wow that is so powerful Do you remember what age were you when that when that happened I was in my young twenties early twenties Yeah So just a couple of years ago Well look it when you told me you wrote this book in like 2006 2007 I was like looks like you wrote it yesterday You look exactly the same Um you look great Um Well thank you for sharing that Um that I I think that is a story that can bring so much hope to so many people And what from was it from that point on that you thought Ok I'm you know I'm go like you have um a degree in applied positive psychology from U Penn which is such an amazing degree Not very many people have it Was that something where you thought Ok I'm I'm gonna go back to school to learn about whatever it is I just felt how to have that more Great question So so initially I just went and accessed whatever books and videos and stuff I could find like online or whatever That's where I started And actually Abraham Hicks was very influential in that early part of my journey Um because I found a lot of peace in this idea that if I could find happiness that things would improve in my life and that if I didn't need to you know try so hard all the time I just need to reach for a thought or a feeling of relief it was very helpful So I did that and then eventually I was led to the masters of Applied Positive psychology program at Penn But it was much later when I already really turned the corner on this unhappiness thing Um But it was a great program very expensive but it was a good program And uh and and very helpful Um But yeah there's there are enough resources available and online that you can turn practically anything in your life around if you just sort of look hard enough That's so and that's something that I find to be so reassuring and yet you know there are so many people who um have so much resistance to it or like there I mean obviously you're never supposed to this is even in your book

you're not supposed to try and persuade people you know just be that example and then it may shift other people But at the same time there's that curiosity is it just that people need to get to their personal rock bottom to say OK I have to try something new Why is it that there's so much resistance to becoming happier Yeah it's uh well you know on one hand there aren't a whole lot of individuals or organizations that plant the seeds of where and what leads to true happiness right I mean and and there's and and and there are lots of reasons for that part of it is that you know how many people do you know are genuinely truly deeply happy happy in the way that you and I are talking about it The other part of it is that there's not always a whole lot of money in teaching people that they don't need to buy something new you know in order to in order to be happy that that you know it's not necessarily um you know always great for business in that in in that respect So that's the other piece of it you know Um So I said that yeah it's um a lot of programming a lot of conditioning and we don't get a lot of encouragement to seek happiness directly from the source And that can be a very challenging and frustrating thing But at the same time my level of gratitude and appreciation for it now particularly because I went through a period when I was so unhappy my appreciation gratitude for happiness is so much higher than it could have possibly ever been Had I not gone through a period of suicidal ideation and depression So also my commitment to happiness you know it's amazing what you can accomplish when it's life or death for you You know at some point it was like I'm either gonna live blissfully happy and alive or I'm not gonna be alive And that kind of laser focus often is very helpful in becoming quote unquote good at something pretty quickly you know and that that pretty quickly still took me years Wow that's so interesting I love what you said about focus because focus is such a such an important part of being happy in that first of all focusing your attention you know and Al Pacino I think said uh there's no such thing as happiness only only focus or only attention something like that And I think that's so true And then I love the quotes you put But in your book by Charles Kingsley we act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life When all that we need to make us really happy is something to be enthusiastic about And when you're enthusiastic when you have focus there's there's meaning there's there's a goal it it drives you forward and I but at the same time it's ok I think not to have that pull or that direction because that means that you're in acceptance of the present moment So it's kind of having both of these things be true You you nailed it I mean so and first of all I I gotta call

this out you have got to be one of the few people I know who can quote like Tara Brock Eer Toll and Al Pacino in the same breath That's amazing and pretty incredible Love that Yeah real good Um So yeah you know it's um interesting I think the challenge that I had early on was that I wanted to still achieve and accomplish and a choir things And I thought what's wrong with that What's wrong with having a lovely comfortable abundant life on the outside But I also wanted that you know comfortable abundant and prosperous life on the inside too And so you can get a little stuck like is the point to accept and just be ok with what I have or should I strive for more And I would argue that you know it's both right that you can deeply truly love where you are and also be really eagerly excited or anticipating what's coming next right And you can do it in a way that isn't stressful and anxiety ridden But if you have to choose you want to double down on enjoying the present moment as much as humanly possible Because I promise if you take care of the present moment the future will take care of itself Uh That is really the crux of what I've been trying to work through is it's like OK also if I if I have everything I need to be happy right now it were all of my goals and all of the things I was striving for was that coming from a place of trying to be happy or was it because it makes me happy And I think I think there's a little bit of both but for what this is gonna sound or this is you know maybe tm I but like um a few weeks ago in therapy I was really discussing how restless I felt and um just life felt very dull and you know she had me tune into my body do some deep breathing and and feel into where I felt this sort of frustration and I isolated it in my chest and got you know more and more um sort of in touch with with this feeling and I was like it feels like this black hole And uh the thought that I had as soon as I again was in touch with it was I'm afraid that life is meaningless which and I started crying and I never thought that life was meaningless I always thought life was so beautiful But lately as I've been working through these two different ideas of of being happy where I am and yet where do I go If I am meant to accept this It's been hard Sarah boy just you definitely need to plotted and command it for your confident vulnerability I mean that is a superpower that that it is it that transparency is a superpower and it makes it so easy for I know me personally and the rest of us to relate to you So thank you for that Um And I would say that I've had that thought and I've been on both sides of the fence where it's like life is meaningless and also life is meaningless right Like you know so it's like you know and and I would say that the way I say it sometimes is that life is actually without meaning uh which doesn't mean

that it's meaningless doesn't mean it's meaning full without meaning meaning that if you look into nature you know all of nature exist perfectly in a perfectly blissful way despite experiencing the same traumas and loss and adversity and illness and death and accidents that we do as human beings only people make a problem of their own existence right And they don't seek and search out meaning to make their lives worthwhile Right now Another way of saying it maybe a clear way of saying that is that meaning and purpose is not found in and wrapped up in the future Meaning and purpose is wrapped up in the present You know it's a gift it's in the present moment And so if you're seeking and searching for meaning and purpose in the future the tendency is to always project that meaning and future into some future moment that never arrives So you you think that you'll take this future oriented mindset with you into the future and you'll be different then I'll have a present moment you know minded present moment minded attitude to them But generally you don't do that You take this future moment minded attitude with you into the future So you're always projecting the meaning and purpose into something out ahead of you outside of you and that's deeply and truly problematic So meaning and purpose for me is found not in the future And yes of course you can find meaningful and purposeful things to do and think about in the future but it's not even found in this moment in my mind as much Although I find moments that are meaningful and I can connect the dots here and there But for me the meaning and purpose is found in the deepest most lasting and abiding way when I'm not lost in my mind and I'm not lost in these stories that I make up about how the moment could be better or different Wow that's so beautiful Thank you Thank you for saying that It's so hard not to think about It's so hard not to think about the future when especially uh I mean you know I I as an actress too and it's like you think about the uncertainties of of this career and then throw into that the uncertainties of life whether it be you know job loss loss of life loss of you know in some ways loss for many people of their homes in California I mean with homelessness I mean everything's uncertain that's obvious and it's it's so hard not to seek out that certainty in the future But that's going the only thing certain about doing that is that you'll make yourself unhappy Uh So there's a beautiful me um Meister Eckhart quote which is something like and I won't get it perfectly right But it's like the I that looks for God is God right The idea essentially is that the uncertain the the certainty that you seek is actually the certainty that you are coming from So the only way you can be aware of what's uncertain is that you're coming from a place of perfect certainty If you

were also moving as everything outside of you was all was moving you wouldn't be able to notice or recognize it as uncertainty It would The only way for you to really notice what's changing is to be coming from a perspective that's changeless That's unchanged Yeah Incredible I've never heard that Yeah that that that I I feel so such deep resonance around that because that's always been my experience too You know it seem seemingly my experience which was like I want security and I need stability and I want you know just to feel like safe but there is no safety and security to be found outside of you in the world The safety and security you seek is the safety and security that you are And you can know that simply by observing the insecurity and instability and lack of safety that you perceive in the world otherwise you couldn't perceive it I am so glad I talked to you today You are you articulate really complex ideas in a way that is so clear and well thank you for that You're just a great filter to take all of these really abstract concepts and just go OK here we go Something that's really approachable Well don't ask me to tie my shoes or cook or I can't do anything else like this is the one thing that I've ever only really felt a ton of passion around and it's absolutely mind blowing to me that I would ever get an opportunity to connect with you in this way Because it's the one thing I've always wanted my entire life I was to be able to have these kind of conversations with someone who truly got It could reflect back to me could share other ways alternative ways deeper more profound ways of seeing things and understanding things And so I just want you to know how much I appreciate you for that Sarah like and I mean that thank you so much I and you know that's a great I would I would love your advice on this too I because I feel so again I feel so passionate about this also and it feels like I can you know when other people have that passion it feels like I can truly connect to you and then also to myself and and what I love And it's not always you know it's not always very easy to find that many other people who have that priority or or that desire And how how do you recommend finding people in your life that really resonate with you finding community Yeah So I'm gonna give this answer in two ways I'll give you the answer that probably most of us are wanting and then I'll give you the answer that I truly feel at a deeper level So I you know I would say that um you know see there are so there are so many communities of people that are up to this work and that are all about this work and they're enjoying it and they're everywhere And so I would say if there's one tiny little thread or theme in your life so maybe it's an author You love maybe it's a video you love maybe it's an audio book that you

found Just pull on that one thread and it can keep time on that one thread You'll be led to more and more people and resources that continue to fill your life up with you know incredible wisdom And that's been the key the case with me I mean I can literally go to a bookstore and like that title is interesting and maybe I don't end up going home with that book but then I browse the book and then there's another author in there and the next thing you know Right So that's probably the best way is you know look into your life now and notice the one little thread Maybe it's a video you maybe it's this podcast right So you could reach out to me you could reach out to Sarah and then you could find it you know the things that we're up to and the people that we're connected to and you might find an entire community of people there So that's one way you know the other thing is you know and I joke about this a lot is my best friends are often dead authors Right And so you'll find the living masters or find the people that exist in a physical body in the world today And that's great Ok But I would argue that you'll probably find even more unconditional love and understanding from folks that aren't really embodied in a physical way on the planet anymore That was the case with me I just read a ton of books and I listen to books and I feel like I actually know Joel Goldsmith and I know you know Raman Maar and I know Jesus and Buddha like it feels like you know that's how the relationship feels um to me Um But that's it that's the second thing And then third thing I would say that you know if you find that you're loving this work and you're loving this material you know I would question whether or not certainly reach out to people but whether or not if you can't find anyone to connect with if that's not really a golden opportunity to connect more deeply with yourself right So those are I guess the three responses is that you know the top level pull on the one thread Also there are professionals that do this for a living you know beyond that I would say stick to the resources that you love And if you can't find people that are alive today stick to the ones that have made their transition Um And then finally remember ultimately that the connection you're most desiring is the one with yourself Hm Thank you That is so true Uh yeah I I remember I uh I went through a period of time in college for um my junior and senior year where I really this is when I really started getting into meditation and really started reading and reading and reading all these authors and I withdrew really from having any sort of social life because I didn't really like who I was When I was with other people I felt sort of insecure unsure of myself So I was like ok well it's at least a little easier to be alone So I'll start from there And what I found was the more

deeply I connected to myself the loneliness or anxiety the insecurity all went away And then when I did find it was like people came into my life it wasn't even that I sought them out Um I will say though it is a little challenging in in pandemic times and you know outside of college not being around like a massive community of of people my age and things like that But you know um I'm really excited to get more involved with different you know communities or whether they're meditation centers or community service places And so yeah I I appreciate that And I think you're absolutely right that the way to really more deeply connect with others is to first make sure you're absolutely fostering your relationship to self and Sarah Absolutely I mean honestly and you said it just so eloquently that is the master key That is the cheat code you know stay lit up just do whatever it is that makes you stay lit up If you can stay it up I promise everybody else will make their way to you by the light right That you're sharing and shedding on the world So it's all about staying lit up And I think often you know we get into a space where we want to curse the darkness instead of just simply being light you know don't curse the darkness just be the light You ask to be a light And the only way to really truly know that you're the light is to occasionally or more than occasionally maybe consistently experience and notice the darkness right That's why you're here in this world is that you are a light you are the light And so if you can just do what you can to keep that dimmer switch turned up as high as possible you'll find that you'll have the opposite problem very soon which is you'll you know try to find out how you can get some time away from people that are like minded or whatever You just want some alone time Um Anyway that's I think that's your your experience in my experience there which is like if you stay lit up it's amazing who and what you attract Yeah Yeah Well I think that it is such a great place to you know come to our conclusion If there's anything else that would you have a message that you would like to send to people who are doing the work who are on this path to happiness Any sort of words that you would give of encouragement Yeah I would say that you know if you're really struggling with like obsessive compulsive incessant negative needy desperate thinking and thoughts which is ultimately what most of us are pretty aware of is that if we can't get outside of our head I found that really drowning yourself in other people's thoughts whether or their words whether it's books or videos or audio it's extraordinarily helpful you know and I used to do that all the time I would just turn on my Abraham Hicks or my ear toll or my Rupert Speer or whoever And I would even if I didn't want to especially if I didn't want to

and just let it play in the background just let it play And you're surprised that the seeds get planted and planted and planted and they eventually take root grow and come alive inside of you And so I would say if you're really struggling just keep it moving by consuming as much positive uplifting inspiring content as you can even when you don't want to and those seeds will take root and you'll be surprised at the fruit that your life will begin to bear Thank you Thank you Rob It's so amazing talking to you My heart is warm Um I I'm so blessed to have met you and to be a part of your profound wisdom that you're sharing with the world And thank you so much for everything that you're doing and of course for coming on my podcast Thank you You have no idea You are so welcome and I fully received that and please know I wanna perfectly reflect that back Sarah You are such a special and rare gem And I mean that in every way you're multi talented and multifaceted and for you to have this deep wisdom that you're sharing to be sharing it in the authentic and confidently vulnerable way you are is fresh air I mean it's the it's the it's the freshest air So thank you for doing that and thank you for having me and please know I want to continue the conversation forever I know me too I thought I don't want to keep them Um Thank you so much Rob Thank you