

# Positive Psychology: Harnessing the Power of Happiness with Rob Mack

Hi everyone Welcome back to the podcast So a little story here for you Uh I'd say about a month ago my husband came home and told me that they're about this guy that he works with My husband works off at a mine and he said this guy is a heavy duty mechanic works 12 hour shifts You know a lot of people would look at it and be like man that's not the most ideal life Heavy duty mechanic is extremely hard on the physique My husband says it's the hardest job at this mine And he says this guy Jim he said every time I go to this guy and I'll say oh you know and this guy is in his forties hey Jim how's it going He said without a doubt the guy every time says oh so good And I was like really And he's like yeah isn't that cool And I'm like that is so cool And for some reason that has totally stuck with me And I keep thinking imagine if the world was full of more people like Jim where if somebody and I I always think about it in my head like next time somebody asks me how I'm doing I'm just gonna be like oh so good because we just don't hear that Usually we start oh you know how was your day And we start complaining about oh I did this and I work too much and my neck sore and this and I'm tired I didn't sleep well Last night we tend to go down the negative pathway or at least tell people about what's wrong in our lives Rather than hey look at all the great things that happened today And I thought what a different life it would be a different world it would be if we could focus on the positive if we could become happier people And I just feel like there's more unhappy people than there is happy So my guest today lucky for you guys is a positive psychology expert Robert Mack Robert is an Ivy League educated positive psychology expert celebrity happiness coach executive coach and author In addition to completing his MB A course work Robert A attained a master's in applied positive psychology the science of happiness and success from the University of Pennsylvania and Ivy League Institution The map degree is a degree held by only a few dozen people in the world Robert is one of the world's leading experts on the relationship between happiness and success He helps individuals and organizations achieve an energizing balanced and authentic personal happiness and effortless professional success based on time tested face valid empirical data and timeless transcendental wisdom Robert's work has been endorsed by Oprah Vanessa Williams and many others He has been a regular featured

guest expert on Good Morning America the Today Show Access Hollywood E Network's Own and KTL A and in magazines like GQ Self health Cosmo Cosmopolitan and Glamour roberts' first book Happiness From The Inside Out The Art and Science of Fulfillment is a celebrity endorsed and critically acclaimed book You can find Rob at coach Rob Mac dot com Welcome Rob Thanks so much for having me I'm so excited to be here You got a good resume You know it's funny because when I hear it read to me I'm like who's that guy It's not that bad I guess but it takes me a lot to sort of identify with those experiences I guess they've all happened But you sort of um I don't know you forget about these things Yeah but you're popular which tells something about what you're talking about People want to hear it Right Well yeah I mean it's um you know and this is pre pandemic We we've had we've probably well we've never had as many unhappy people as we do today right And it's even more so the case here you know uh 2021 But yes um that also means there's never been a greater opportunity for more happiness in the world Yeah absolutely I you have a sad story Like I've heard you talk about it before on other shows and I would love for you to share you know what basically started to happen to you I think it sounded like you It started to happen to you when you hit your teens Like when the the hormones started to come on board and things started to go downhill So I'd love for you to share your story Yeah So I have I am the unlikeliest person probably in the world to be a happiness coach because I feel like I was born the unhappiest the most miserable person in the world I mean honestly I remember being deeply unhappy and anxious and stressed out and self loathing at like age six or seven Was your was your mom depressed No I mean as far as I know I didn't have an easy life by far and neither did my father Um but I was yeah I mean we had lots of stress in the household I think you know any household that you know financial challenges and all those things But um no I feel like it was partly wired for to be a little low happiness wise and we know that's a thing that we can we have a genetic predisposition for happiness right Um And so everybody's wired a little differently Um So I remember being unhappy at six or seven as I got older I thought I would just grow out of it and I thought for sure if I could do well athletically and academically which I tended to do um I would eventually you know have some friends maybe have a girlfriend and everything would go away But that wasn't the case It just got worse and worse until it got so bad that I was thinking about suicide and killing myself dozens and dozens of times a day I thought about it more than anything else in the world And I wanted it more than anything else in

the world And so I eventually decided to do some research and I looked up the ways means and methods to kill myself I eventually decided I would slit my wrist So I got a steak knife in the kitchen dug it into my wrist and I still have the suicide marks I can't see them there on the screen But to this day and what happened though is very odd and unexpected Like as I dug this knife in to my wrist and I was suicidal but I still didn't want to experience the pain Right That's the point I was gonna say why did you of all the things you could have chosen But yeah I didn't want to be violent about I mean it's violent still but I didn't want to be super violent about it Uh I didn't have access to a lot of the other ways I didn't have a bridge close by I didn't have a gun Or any of these things So I didn't have access to prescription medication So I chose the knife stuck into my wrist and for no good reason at the time with nothing in my external life or services changing I felt this inexplicable peace and sort of limit this love and indescribable joy just wash over me I felt a sense of like well being that I hadn't felt maybe ever in my life And so in that moment I thought this is so strange Like this is not what I was expecting So I decided to postpone suicide you know at that time And now it's laughable but it was just an hour I was like I'm gonna postpone suicide for an hour It's like this is an hour you know But I mean set the set the timer It's gonna be an hour Yeah It was really weird But and I wasn't even committed to the full hour honestly But I said I'll start doing a little research and just see maybe I what what happened to me just now And so I started doing some research and then very quickly that hour led into several hours bled into several days And it's been over two decades now I was gonna say how old were you then When when you did that in my early 20 you know so I had incredible consulting job and I had a great girlfriend and I had a really good life You know two nice German cars the whole thing you know it was but I was miserable Do you think it like are you religious Do you think that was a a God intervention Boy Karen Great question I feel like you do this for a living you know it Uh yes actually I mean it was both and I say this with utmost respect but it was both religion that led me to or contributed to the suicidal ideation and experience But it was also religion that prevented me from falling through completely And so by that I mean I thought I had a lot of guilt a lot of shame I felt a lot of self judgment um as a result of sort of this religious conditioning and programming But also I was so concerned about what would happen to me after I killed myself that it prevented me from fully executing I think I was like I I you know II I read Buddhist texts and Dallas texts and you know I read the Koran and the Bible and and and

none of them had a particularly glowing review of what happens to you if you kill yourself No no no you know No So yeah it was a catch 22 there Do you think though that it was a spirit that that brought that good energy that stopped you from doing it So yeah so now I'm convinced I call it divine intervention and right without question and what happened now And this is taking me 20 years to realize right Is that my mind went quiet and I was still in silence in a deep authentic way for just a moment And in that moment of silence I was perfectly present and I forget about the world to some extent forget about myself to some extent And without anything on my mind I was just drowning in my own divinity You know I was just drowning in the happiness that I ultimately that we all ultimately are Um And so it was just a taste of that but it was the silence and the stillness of mind that allowed me to finally recognize what was always there all along It's just proof I think that of like the higher there's a there is higher the higher power whatever people choose to believe But there is a higher power I interviewed Byron Katie last year and her story is very similar like she was on the uh you know in an attic on the floor ready to go die And same thing she just had something kind of wash over her and literally in an instant completely changed who she was and like came out as the like she was this super negative person that was miserable Her Children hated her and she came out this like glowing loving person that and they they were like who are you But it was a divine intervention And I've had them myself in different means where it's like something just comes to me and I know that it wasn't something I created in my brain or you know make believe it's oh so oh ok Thank you Whoever that was that just dropped that into my head or into my life And I feel like it's divine intervention for sure I love that Um I'm jealous of you I'd be jealous of you especially if I didn't like you so much I mean I love Byron Katie She's one of my favorite spiritual teachers I've read all of her books multiple times and uh very familiar with that story It's reminiscent of Joe Bolt's story too The woman who the author of Stroke of Insight Oh yeah Hers is fascinating I love that too I love it Yeah Did you try So before this happened did you try going on antidepressants Did you think Ok I must have this uh chemical imbalance that I need drugs for So I didn't I very much wanted to and I was convinced as much as anyone could be convinced that it was a biochemical issue you know And so I was concerned for a number of reasons I had a good consulting job and I felt that that might compromise Um you know Yeah II I was afraid that might not go over well if they found out Um I was also um sort of embarrassed by it Um I had also done some research into

antidepressants and I had read a very interesting book called The Emperor's New Drugs And you know it was um essentially an exploration and an effort to challenge Um whether or not these double blind studies were actually double blind or people were break breaking the blind Right And so whether or not they were as valid as they say they were and and whatnot So I was suspicious of of of antidepressants and I was pretty much suff suspicious of everything I mean quite frankly um but no I didn't go down that path and I can certainly understand why people do It's very can be very very helpful and supportive Um at the same time for me and only for me I'm really happy that I didn't um because it allowed me to take a different path that I feel Um well it's worked out Mhm Mhm Yeah And I wonder just how many people and maybe you can share kind of what your experience has been is how many people in the world have considered suicide at some point in their life I think it's probably much more common than we believe it to be because it's not something that people share I know for myself since when I was a teenager I tried as well Very very bad attempt at it I think I used like a leg razor because you know you see people in the movies that take their razor out of the the that little piece of the metal piece out of it the razor out of the thing and then cut So I just had like a lady's you know razor and I tried to cut my wrist with it It was it was a horrible attempt horrible attempt But it was teen it was insane as you I just I just wanted to die I just thought there's what is the point of any of this I was miserable I'm sure it was over some guy that I had broken up with like really silly things But at the time I was down and it was like I wanted nothing to do with this life And the only thing interesting enough that didn't what stopped me from actually doing it was I was set on the fact that I wanted to have Children and that was the thing that saved me I was like I can't kill myself because I need to have kids one day Isn't that strange Yeah That's profound actually Purpose purpose in that Right My my mom shared something similar uh with me You know she was very depressed She'd lost her father very young She lost her mother not long after that And um but she happened to have three kids you know one of which was me and and she said uh you know uh your father um said to me oh you know I know that you're so sad And depressed about this loss And I know that you might be challenging be challenged with even wanting to continue a living But you got these three kids and she said she thought about it and she was like you know you're absolutely right about that and it kept her alive And so I was found that impressive this what you're sharing so deeply inspire inspiring and so life affirming Yeah absolutely And men in general there's a

much higher suicide rate than women And I think that's because you guys do feel like well it's not manly to take an antidepressant It's not you guys don't have the same I think help Maybe that women do I'm not sure But yeah and and uh and generally um men also tend to um uh explore and then leverage much more violent means um with respect to suicide right So they'll take the gun they'll shoot themselves Whereas women will tend to you know use a prescription drugs something that they can sometimes recover from Um So it's interesting you're right about that You know men and women tend to be pretty similar in the levels of happiness Um Although women tend to experience a lot more rumination and they tend to um I think uh experience more depression but you're right Men do commit a lot more suicide um or at least uh are successful quote unquote with with suicide You know the other part of that too which I found most interesting is that most people actually after they've made one attempt don't make a second attempt Which is interesting Right Yeah there's there's something about that There's something um well there's something life affirming about that and clarifying about having that first experience um that allows people to maybe recalibrate Reprioritize and hopefully move in increasingly healthy directions And the reason I asked about your mom being possibly depressed is there's a lot of evidence scientific evidence coming out now about trauma being passed on from the mother into the womb of the unborn child and how that child can come out carrying trauma from her and she could be carrying it from her mom Like it can be a generational trauma which I think is just like yes absolutely And you know and it's and it's interesting too because I know that um when I hear that I think first of all my mind is blown by it and it makes complete sense and it can feel like an incredible challenge and obstacle Um But it's also just a it's a gift It's an incredible gift You know I don't think anything has given me the clarity the insight the purpose and the passion that my unhappiness depression and suicidal ideation has Um It's unbelievable It's um allowed me to experience a depth of happiness that I rarely see in the world because for me it was life and death So how did you go then from that to being in that place Oh pretty much your whole life Which means your brain was very much so wired for depression How do you pull yourself out of that And then go on to become a psychologist and positive real slowly Yeah I'm sure I I took I took the long see route and that's why I do the work now So hopefully people don't have to take the long see routes Um I read and listen to everything I could possibly get my hands on especially a reader a racist reader So I read everything and I was smart enough to know that I

wasn't smart at all that if all of my knowledge and intelligence had got me to a place where I was so deeply depressed and suicidal maybe I should start fresh and not necessarily throw all of that information and knowledge out but I should probably look in new directions So I would read and listen to everyone on the planet Uh You know I started with like Abraham Hicks and of course you know Byron Katie and Ear toll and Rupert Spra and Robert I mean everyone poets a lot nobody was off limits As far as I was concerned everybody had something to teach me And then when I meet happy people out in the world I'd ask them questions I know that they thought I was crazy and I was but I'd say why are you so happy Why you know how did you do this Why are you built this way And how did you get there And I found that lots of very happy people were unaware like you know some of them were just wired that way Um you know and unfortunately lots of people that are just wired that way they don't really have to work at it when something bad happens they can throw be thrown off kilter or off balance so hard that they never recover in the way that they could otherwise So anyway I just read everything I possibly could applied it all and then tracked what worked and then forget about what didn't Wow that's who stood out to you You do you think the most of all the stuff that you research I got all those books too Probably I was probably reading them at the same time You were because we're the same age but same thing I kind of dove in in my twenties Like they mostly my twenties Just all of those people The Wayne Dyers of the world Byron Kay I mean I the remember that the first book was the uh oh my God Not the Law of Attraction One cles the Celestial 00 yeah A prophecy Yes Thank you That was my first one Yeah And I was like oh this is interesting What is this And then dove in like I'm a researcher too So so who do you feel like when you look back Is there somebody that connected with you more than the other ones So I was and Abraham Hicks fanatic I was oh my gosh Are you kidding me I mean I for Esther and Jerry Hicks and God bless us So like I had signed up to the CD program Ok And then and I didn't have money for the CD program I signed up for it But like I didn't read what it is you know they're just and I every book I read and reread I'm I probably to this day back at my mom and dad's house in Pittsburgh I probably have each I probably have at least six or seven copies of each of the books they've ever put out including the ones they self published in the very beginning like a new beginning a new beginning to and Sarah and the Forever of Friends and all these books that lots of Abraham Hicks particularly new fans don't know about But Abraham Hicks stood out to me and the reason was wasn't he

sorry Rob Wasn't he the one to that Weren't they Him and his and like they were talking to a higher beam Yes So this is a big challenge for me coming from a fire and brimstone Christian upbringing you know but I had this knee jerk reaction against sort of you know traditional kind of fundamental kind of Christianity And I wasn't I wasn't reaping the fruit that experience I was you know it was bad fruit for me So I need your reaction I leaned really hard to science because I always had kind of an a mind I trusted science So as I read more and more science I thought ok there is something here about being able to improve your happiness level clearly But what I loved about Abraham Hicks was they put it in a language that felt more inspiring didn't feel so dry and sterile and and and and also they helped me bridge bridge this gap between like this deep spiritual bent that I had inside But my inability to kind of understand why religion showed up in the way that it did in my world in my life And so uh they were just really pivotal pivotal for me in my in my in my journey Oh I bet And just obviously you connected with what they were talking about even though you came from this background of having no idea I mean they talk about um having guides So for for those of you that don't know who they are they would claim to get messages from the other side Let's just put it that way But it was spiritual teachings that were very profound So when you listen to it you think oh I even if it's not true this is great information you just nailed it and that's what I love I I can still remember reading the introduction to the one of the first books and Jerry Esther's wife said something like you know a lot of you will feel funny about where these messages come from but I've always believed in judging a tree bite fruit So don't worry about where it comes from If it's something that you can use and apply in your life use it and apply it and just move on from there And and I did I took that very seriously I said you know what I'm gonna take it If it's a tool that can be used I'll use it and then it just happened to be very helpful Yeah And so then you went on to go to university Yeah So then I found this program I was doing an MB A So work in a consulting company Loved the people hated the job Yeah living in Philadelphia Very cold was very miserable I decided to move to Miami start this MB A program And then I found this other program at the University of Pennsylvania which was then applied a master's degree in positive psychology which is the science and study of what makes life worth living And it's the science of oh yes you well you I'm sure you've read al already read all the books that are in the part of the curriculum anyway You could probably teach it at this point Honestly Karen Um but yeah in this program is super expensive but I had such an



intrinsic interest in the material itself that I was like even if I can't use the degree I don't care I just want to be happy You know So yeah took the program and so what's the difference between just regular psychology and positive psycho applied positive psychology Yeah So business as usual psychology or traditional psychology focuses intently on what's wrong with people focus on mental illness and the curing of mental illness Apply positive psychology focus on what's right with people on their signature strengths their values their character traits and how you can actually double down on your strengths and make life even better So Marty Selman who was the godfather really the grandfather of positive psychology started his career really studying like learned helplessness and depression and all that stuff And he always assumed or thought that if you could just remove what's wrong with people you'll get a happy healthy thriving individual But he found that over the decades that wasn't the case that you can actually remove the dysfunction but you won't get a happy person you'll get a flat lining individual And so he said oh we've got to add something here something that focuses on you know going from zero to something that's positive in terms of a number right Um And so that's how the you know science of positive psychology developed That's really that's really cool I actually looked up that guy's video to his TED talk I watched his TED talk just to get a better understanding of it before we talk today So yeah really interesting man And that so cool that he came up with that that he could see that Yeah it's crazy in it is it's incredible and it and it speaks to you know I'm what a brilliant man and also um you know a guy that's willing to change his mind which is so critical and so important to say you know what I'm what I've been doing has been very helpful and useful and there's maybe something I've been missing here So let's look at that Is there science to back it up Because I think a lot of people would hear like oh you're a positive psychology coach they would kind of think that that's a bit woo woo or a bit you know a lot of attraction and whatever but it's it sounds like it's very much so based in science Like this guy came up with a way to change people's brain around a little bit That's right So the program that I went to is it is um an Ivy League program at University of Pennsylvania And uh the only graduate program in applied positive psychology that I'm aware of um and positive psychology has grown up out of most of the Ivy uh Harvard but also a place like Claremont and University of Michigan and Stanford And so what they've done is they've taken tens of thousands of studies over about 20 year period And they've asked people either directly they have other kinds of assessments and reports

Uh Most of them are subjective reports So you have to ask people how they feel It sometimes hard You can sometimes use MRI scans and pet scans and things like that to look at people's brains to see what's actually going on But yeah these are time tested face valid empirical studies that have been done um in ways that um control for all the other extraneous variables can think in the way of actually drawing a statistically significant conclusion Um So yeah there's um very robust Yeah Do you think Rob that we as human beings are hardwired for more so unhappiness Such a profound question here And I've got it a lot in my life too So the brain the human brain is wired first for survival Yes it's to keep you alive If you're not alive it's very difficult to be happy right So so so I would say that to that extent Yes actually right the first requirement of being happy is being alive Um And so now that being said there are both sort of happiness producing support support of kind of biases heuristics built into the brain But also there are some things that are also negativity type of biases built into the brain right So you've got something like the negativity bias maybe people have heard of it But you know it generally takes about five positive experiences for every one negative experience to compensate for that one negative experience So that's why you get like five sometimes you get 500 likes or positive comments on an Instagram post but you get that one negative comment and you can't help but focus on it to the exclusion of the other So right we found this over and over again and so there's this negativity bias that built into the brain that can make it very difficult Um you know for us to experience that kind of lasting abiding and meaningful happiness that we're ultimately after Um Yeah there's there are dozens of biases built into the brain Yeah because I think I remember somebody talking about it as far as the survival thing goes everything goes back to being hardwired for survival And it's like if we walked around the world as hunter gatherers going well life is so good Oh the tiger Oh no big deal The famine we don't need to get food That's ok Like we wouldn't have survived if we weren't always looking for the problems Well well that's just it Right And that's precisely the way the brain of the mind works is that it works like the center of a ship It goes out looking into the world for problems to solve in order to validate its position Right And so the beautiful thing is caveman cavewoman days That's something that's very valuable still valuable to this day Uh still adaptive in in lots of ways but also very maladaptive in other ways because we no longer live in this caveman cave uh woman era And so most of the challenges the stressors of today aren't life and death right It's like you know paying the rent can be very scary

It can make you feel very stressed out But do you really have to think about it for 30 days in a row every single month before you actually pay the bill or whatever Is it that life and death Well no and if you look up in nature you see all other living creatures they don't live that way right If there's a problem they solve for it as quickly as they and then as soon as they so forward or they do the best they can they forget about it Right And so it's odd and interesting actually that only human beings of all living creatures have made a problem of their own existence in ways that lead to mood disorders or personality disorders or depression or unhappiness Right And so all of nature is blissful except for you know men and women And that's an interesting um it is you know inside and I've heard you talk about how depression since I think you said the 19 fifties has just been crazy on the rise And I have to say that it's the number one complaint I guess you could say from women that I work with is always depression and anxiety and just that just that level of unhappiness with their life and it seems to get worse as they start to transition through their hormonal years of when they're in their forties kind of transitioning into menopause I see it a lot more and I know there's a hormonal piece to it but I think there's a real spiritual shift to that time as well Um It's the time where women finally get to think about themselves Their their priorities are shifting from take caretaking chi little Children and being pregnant or caretaking a home or trying to find the husband trying to get established in her career And so it's this weird time where and I think that it when women can't put their finger on why it is they're feeling that way that it actually leads to depression because they just don't know how to bring happiness into their life And so it is very much so prevalent in today's society Why do you think that it's grown so much since the 19 fifties Boy such a great point and just a at context to precisely to what you said you know uh in the early two thousands we had 10 times the level of un polar and di and bipolar depression that we did in in in 1950 right The average age of uh average age for the first bout of depression was 29.5 years of age in 1950 in the early two thousands it was about 13 years of age So that meant you had 13 year olds the first time in a long time Uh not only thinking about killing themselves but actually killing themselves Right We had more access one and access two disorders And so yeah things were sort of getting worse and worse Um you know there's so many reasons for that I would say that the greatest reason um that I could possibly see and the ultimate root cause I think of all the depression certainly that I've experienced unhappiness is a mind that simply can't sit still and be quiet That's it You know the mind is

plays this game of whack em all day every day and when you're inundated with information and you have access to that information through these really great cool technological you know instruments and um you can see what everybody else is doing in the world And so you've already got a you know say a challenge with comparison competitiveness And now you've got this incredible social media platform to you know magnify all of that and to let you see people that don't only live a couple of doors down but live countries and countries away you know and then on top of that you know um everything and everybody is vying for your attention availability entrepreneurs but essentially we all kind of work in that space a little bit if we're marketing and advertising So we've got we're inundated with information and with not only our own thoughts but everybody else's thoughts as well Right And so when you've got that kind of cognitive overload and you're not at the same time taught how to emotionally regulate how to self soothe how to find peace in the midst of chaos and confusion Um And when everything else that's external becomes a more important priority than everything that's internal you just continue to lose not only focus and perspective but you also find all of these skills and mindsets eroding that generally kept us connected with each other connected with ourselves and connected with the world right And so I would say it's a number of things all contributing or sort of playing to some of the biases and some of the leanings that the brain already has built in Um But interestingly enough you don't have to solve for all of that in order to solve for unhappiness itself right There there are cheat codes right There are master hacks there are there are master keys um to to to experiencing the kind of happiness that you're ultimately after Yeah So you know not everybody gets the divine intervention And I know like as far as how the brain works if somebody has always gone down or tends to go down more of the negative pathways in in their brain where they associate and they're always kind of looking for the negative in their life The bad things that are happening always you know focusing on Oh well I don't I don't have enough money I don't have the body I want I don't have XYZ There's so many things that we all think about How do we go from that when we're so trained to go down those pathways in our brain How do we now how do we pull out of this if I came to you And I'm like OK Rob I'm not I'm not happy Fix me Yeah sure So you know the the first thing I'd say if somebody else is asking us we want to teach through our living Shining example That's number one I I I've I've I've seen both the value and the limitations of trying to tell people what they should do or how

to do it you know um There's nothing worse than unsolicited advice The only thing that's really given and never taste Right Right Now that being said if we are that person who cares about happiness and cares about the happiness of those whom we love There are really four paths OK That I would argue and I I I'm big on trying to simplify things as much as possible because I waited through so much information for so long and I was so lost in the confusion that that could introduce into your life that I really intend on like really simplifying it So it's really four main things happy activities right So that means creating a list of happiness is things that you love feel inspired by that help you to feel alive with very little time energy effort make a list right And do everything you can to spend more time doing those things OK The alternative date sort of flipside of that is happiness valleys Those are things that you don't enjoy no matter how hard you try to enjoy them you just don't enjoy them So you want to do everything you can to outsource delegate reduce eliminate automate or regulate all your values get them off your plate if you can OK So that's the long hanging fruit Then it's about happy people and if not happy people at least people that are as aspire to be happy It's incredible how contagious emotion is emotion is more contagious than anything else on the entire planet You know including the Coronavirus all that stuff It's more contagious than anything You can pass it through a Zoom call you can pass it through the phone through technology with a glance with a look across a room you can pass emotion so happy people It's incredibly important right The the the the third piece of it is really just happy thoughts and that's really what you're getting at is that's about telling a better feeling story based in truth and it has to be based in truth or it won't be believable a better feeling story based in truth about everything and everybody in your life starting with yourself that's just cri just so critical I remember when I was really going through it and I remember looking at my bank account and there was there was less than \$0 there was a negative side and money that I owed the bank for you know over um for withdrawal fees And and so we're being overthrown So I remember thinking I'm broke And then the very second mo next moment I thought I committed to being a happy person even if I'm broke What how is the what is the truthful way of reframing this so that I can feel better in the moment I said well there's only up from here and I'm rich in ways that money can never you know be a substitute for And then I could and and there are things that I currently am or have that I would never sell for all the money in the world my health my loved ones my creativity my ability to pivot right So that's the third path and the fourth path

the way I'd put it is it's also happy no thoughts So the real master key and the ultimate cheat code is being able to see through the sort of tricks that the mind plays all the time not intentionally and get to a place where you can simply enjoy just being even in the midst of a conversation even when you're just swiffer where you're not always lost in discursive thinking obsessive compulsive thoughts not always living in the past not always living in the future or projecting the future you know where you're really just tapped into and and turned on to not only the present moment but presence itself your own awareness right And in that awareness is perfect happiness it is perfect happiness So the ultimate cheat code is that I try to save that for the end because people always think that's impossible And I understand because I felt that way too But yeah this is so different to than doing affirmations You know we talk about the books that we used to read back in our twenties and a lot of it was you know Louise Hay and when you've got this problem in your life you just have to say this affirmation over and over and over and I'm beautiful I'm happy and this is what you're time was totally different And I really appreciate that because over the years I've really come away from that and away from law of attraction the sitting back and just imagining that things are gonna happen and thinking that's gonna just come fall on your lap because you've got that great energy going out I think what you're talking about is much more powerful and realistic where you're you're reframing like when you said that the reframing of situation So you could have when you had no money you could have just gone into the deep dark hole and thought your life was terrible and nothing's good gonna come out of this And I've been in those places and I've gone so good at the reframe which is ok Well this is this is life you know like maybe my car broke down or something you know or something went in the house that cost us a ton of money And it's like you you immediately just think oh my bad luck This is so terrible and my life sucks And why does this happen to me And and instead now I can be like this is like this happens to everybody And if we didn't have this hard times we wouldn't be able to grow from it and learn from it and become happier people And it's just this like instant reframe in the brain that I think is so powerful Oh so eloquently expressed so powerfully said I agree with you and it helps to have some life experience behind you because once you have enough life experience you can first of all see through the empty promises that condition circumstances and other people make you know practically everything in your life and everybody in your life in some way or the other says and promises you I'll make you happy No I'll make you happy

No I'll make you know it's kind of the temptation that we all fall back into And then if you've experienced any of those things and we all have you realize how quickly most of it fades Even the nicest car even the most beautiful man or a woman even the most incredible relationship it fades right The effect that we call that the hedonic treadmill we adapt Hedonic right And so um when you derive happiness from things people places or activities it never gives you as much of it and it doesn't last as long as you ever think it will right So that's the one piece The other piece is this which I think goes deeper than that which is that some of the things that I have prayed for have ultimately happened or the things that I have set intentions for visualized they've happened And I think if you persist long enough you can make a practically almost anything happen you know happen and and and you often regret it So I mean I've prayed for things to happen and like I'll do anything and then it happens and you you know meet the perfect person and you get the perfect job and you're just making all that money and then boom you know you recognize all of a sudden you know the tiger the lion that was hiding inside of this desire that you had And the best thing turns out to be the worst thing but also the worst thing sometimes turns out to be the best thing And so you let go of this idea that you know what's best for you and you certainly let go of this idea that you know what's best for anyone else and you begin to appreciate moments as they are And in that something miraculous and magical does happen which is things do begin to shift and change because your experience of yourself of other people in the world shifts and change as you relax and rest on the inside you become a little more peaceful Suddenly you're easy to get along with other people are easy to get along with You have more energy you sleep better things go better You're more creative efficient and effective as a thinker And all of a sudden life begins to seemingly collaborate and cooperate with you when it's really just you finally cooperating collaborating with life Exactly Oh very well said I love that That's exactly what happens Exactly It's not it's kind of law of attraction but it's not it's that you're you're seeing things in a different lens and therefore different things start to happen and you start to bring forth different things because you've yourself have shifted so good the way I always put it is So once when I was putting myself to business school I was doing entertainment stuff And I remember working a celebrity gifting suite and it was the first real experience that I had where really rich famous people who seemed to have it all were getting really expensive gifts for free And I remember thinking this is interesting I need this watch so much more than

they do or whatever And I thought isn't that interesting that we get what we don't ultimately need or what Once you finally don't really aren't desperate for it don't feel needy around it sort of just comes flooding in and there's some kind of law in the world in the universe like that that the second you become deeply truly happy on the inside everything that happens can enhance that happiness but nothing can give it to you nothing can take it away And so there's just something incredibly attractive both figuratively and literally about being happy We know that happy people are rated as more attractive by um other people in the world Uh They make more money 600 to \$700,000 more over the course of their entire lifetime On average they live 6 to 7 sometimes 11 years longer than their unhappy counterparts They get married earlier stay married longer are ha are happier all the relationships whether they're married or not because we know it's not about marriage they experience less dropping out they enter in the flow state more easily So happiness is a really attractive literally and figuratively um you know a quality And do you so do you believe like 100% then that happiness is a choice It's a great question So there are levels to this one I I would say that yes and happiness is not what you do Although it helps to do happy things happiness is not what you think Although it helps to think happy thoughts happiness is what you are So it's not a lifestyle status It's not a state of circumstances It's not a state of mood it's not a state of mind It's a state of no mind Ultimately that the happiness that we seek in things people place as activities and objects is something that we inherently and intrinsically and innately are But we never stop thinking long enough to recognize it and realize it So I know that's like the postgraduate That's yeah but I can't hold back on that because I know to to probably appreciate that But yes in the in the TED talk that I watched your professor do He he brought it up in a good way And I've seen this before on a documentary I think it was the ha the happiness or happy it was called And they they talk about when somebody is doing something where that he would in the video It was in the documentary It was the person that was rock climbing Um Your guy was talking about somebody that would go that was in the stock exchange and that when he'd go onto the floor in the morning onto the stock exchange all time would disappear and same with the rock climber All time would disappear and they would drop in to this place that they loved so much that because of that the time disappeared and they were in this state of joy and happiness And so I think I I feel like that's what you're that's kind of what you're saying Crushing it right now Go ahead and drop a little tiny mic right there Karen



crushing it What Recognize that's so powerful that's exact And that's why And this is how we come for a full circle right Like Abraham Hicks was such an inspiration to me because I was obsessed with being a professional basketball player That's the truth And I wanted to be a professional basketball player and I would practice in my hands blood One reason I loved professional or love basketball never went on to play professionally One reason I loved it and even loved running which I thought I would never love was because it gave me access to the flow state and flow state is characterized by a loss of self consciousness a loss of time consciousness You're so tapped tuned and turned on absorbed and consumed and engaged with what you're doing that you have no time to really think long and hard about how you're doing right So you're really in a state of appreciation right In in lots of ways a deep state of appreciation but that space less timeless sort of infinite eternal experience of perfect bliss It's another way of describing the divine or spirit or happiness or love or true success Mhm I feel like there's a lot of listeners right now going what Hey what are you guys talking about I don't get it Yeah Yeah And and and that's and that there is the reason we struggle so much with unhappiness is because we have to we we want to figure it all out but to be happy doesn't require very much If you look at little babies and little animals they're often much happier than us Grown adults who know so much and always trying to figure something out and so so true happiness and peace and love is the peace and the love and the happiness that I think passes understanding right It uh it goes beyond needing to understand the world or yourself Yeah of course you work at that but just notice that moment before you slip off to sleep at night where you're so tired that you have no thoughts left in your head and your body is so worn out that you don't want to move Notice how blissful that is and then just practice that during the day Yeah And I think when you said you know write down the things that bring you you know that you like to do and that bring you joy and those a lot of those lists you guys and what's in those lists are times where you will likely drop into the space that we're talking about So I think that that's probably a great first step is to write that list down do more of those things and recognize how do you feel when you're doing that Um I used to do body work I did body work for 17 years and I would experience it quite often when I was doing the body work because I would drop in without even knowing it And that's when I did the most powerful work And I could all these things would come to me like intuitive things about the person about their body about what was wrong where to go on their body to work out that

pain issue And I could just follow it And it was like this magic like somebody was working through my hands and you know one hour would go by in two minutes and I'd be like oh jeez what just happened here and I often feel it now with this job I feel it a lot when I'm being interviewed or I'm interviewing I drop in and it's like an hour interview will go by in like two seconds I'll be like jeez where did that time go with the right person But that I think is that's that's it So it doesn't have to be this great big like you're rock climbing up the side of a mountain It could be simply walking in the woods something you just nailed it Um Ellen LA or the Harvard psychologist brilliant She's done a lot of studies on mindfulness and how you can reverse aging and all these kinds of things She just basically describes it as look for the new things everywhere you go even your own house you know we were spending a lot of times in our homes but just look for the things you haven't noticed before If you could be more intentional about noticing things that either you enjoy that you love or they're simply new you'll find yourself enjoying the moment so much more deeply And if you practice that like anything between about 21 and 66 days your brain will rewire itself to do it in a much more automatic and effortless way And so it's really just about practice and you just need to do it in the moment You don't need to do it all at once and you certainly don't need to climb Mount Everest Just start where you are You know if it's with folding the laundry or swiffer or doing the dishes just try to enjoy it a little bit more you know really try to pretend like it's the last moment you might ever get If you really are serious about that you'd be surprised at how much more enjoyable even the simplest of activities are Yeah In that documentary I'll never forget because I I I've watched this probably like 10 years ago And I remember at the very end when they talked about measuring the brain like looking at the brain when it came to different activities that people were doing and what brought happiness to them Because we all think wealth number one I think would be wealth and looks would bring us bring happiness And it doesn't you just nailed it it and that's the biggest thing is that you know success doesn't lead to happiness Happiness is the greatest success and happiness leads to traditional forms of success right So you're absolutely right about that Yeah And so what they found was which I think this is just so cool The when what they saw was the highest level of happiness consistently that they saw in people's brains was when they gave or when they helped another person I thought that is amazing This is so powerful So that just what you shared is something I discovered and it blew me away because you're right There's this

and it's this positive upward spiral or loop where happy people turn out to be a lot more altruistic they give more blood they donate more money all the things they're kinder and also being kinder being more altruistic being more giving in a no strings attached sort of way makes you happier right So there's this positive upward spiral that happens with happiness and generosity of kindness And so you can kind of get there either way Now the challenge Of course is if you're being kind or you're donating or you're giving from a place where you're expecting reciprocity and it has strings attached You will not enhance or improve your happiness very much at all Right We've all tried that And that was my problem as a kid I would always give and then they didn't say thank you And then I'd be more you know resentful about it but you've just nailed it Um happiness and kindness or generosity are tightly correlated Yeah So there's another little tip or tool that you guys can use if you're trying to just bring more happiness and maybe just go out and do something for somebody else and you'll get that happiness if you don't expect anything back totally And they say that if you wanna learn something teach it Right Yes Yeah That way of doing it Yeah And get out of that head like once and for all in your lives everybody listening let go of the fact that you know you're listening to this podcast So I'm guessing you're struggling with weight Let go of the fact that getting the perfect body getting more money in your life getting the new car the new house is going to bring you that happiness because it's not I really do think it has to come from the inside out So I think you're right It's true And then we could all be like Jim my husband's coworker and when people say how are you doing Oh so good I love Jim I love I love Jim too It's just and you know we could live a lot more like Jim all of us Exactly Exactly If he only knew it we were talking about him He has no idea I'm gonna tell my husband to tell him So tell us that you have something cool coming up soon which is something called Joy School which I think we could probably all go to Yes absolutely You're all invited Nothing more Um There's no question about it Um You know Joy School is really an intensive that I'm offering with a close friend and a coach author um named Lisa mccooy Lisa mccort She's a best selling author She wrote a lot of the Chicken Soup for The Little Soul series and she wrote Juicy Juicy Joy And so she's just this incredibly joyful loving one of the most loving people I've ever met And so she and I are offering this uh school really it's a virtual school and we're going to simply start at a you know and go all with A Z with respect to Joy and the intention is for it to be an applied experience But also one that's participative that is interactive right So we want to answer all

questions We don't have any ego in this I mean I really only love doing what I do because I could just see other people happy That makes me happy Um So yeah we're offering to a school You can go to um Lisa mccourt dot com or you can go to coach Rob Mack dot com and find more info or you can find me on social media and just write me Um but yeah you're all invited and if for any reason you have trouble paying or whatnot we can work that out We're gonna offer scholarships Um And uh you know there's there's no good reason to not do it if you want to do it Uh We'll help you Uh and I'll link to that in the show notes everyone So one final question Rob So as a weight loss and hormone coach um in doing this podcast and being out there in the public with it I feel pressure to keep uh you know a good weight keep that a good weight to keep my hormones balanced to always eat well And I try to be very you know honest and authentic and and tell everybody that hey I'm not perfect I don't claim to be perfect I just had two weeks of eating nothing but chocolate and baked goods because it was Christmas Um Rob do you feel that you have like you always got to be happy And do you have your bad days Like you're just like screw happiness I feel like shit Totally I um gosh I appreciate that by the way that's why you're so sweet and so beautiful too Um yeah you know I you're welcome It's true I you know I I will say anything and anything can happen Ok Um I wonder a lot about things in the world and things are by no means perfect at all anywhere in my life Um and yet I haven't had a bad day in forever You know I I really haven't and I don't mean that things haven't gone really wrong and I don't mean that circumstances haven't been a hot mess Right The difference is for me is that I've really divested a lot Most of my happiness um from the world I've divorced it from that I'm I have preferences very strong preferences about how I want things to turn out And I like making money and I like sharing money I like having a roof over my head and I like all these things Ok Um but I've been surprised and I don't take credit for that but I've been surprised by how powerful and supportive the work has been and all these teachers have been and podcasts like yours have been in my life Like I'm I've been overwhelmed like in one year it seemed like nothing was happening in two years and five years in 20 years some shifts have happened You know I had a I had a my college roommate who I admired so much and respected so much about I don't know eight or nine months ago after we had him on this morning show that I was doing in L A um a couple couple of months after that he he killed himself you know 30 times in the stomach And uh yeah it's a really close friend of mine He lived right down the street from me and um I

was really sad that I was gonna see his face again and connect with him in that way But I was also extraordinarily surprised that I felt in tremendous relief about that and I felt happy for him like what a prison to live in that body in that life And I know I've been there you know and that's not for a second to encourage anybody to do anything but to reach for happiness right And to seek out professional help when you need it Um And that in the same breath nothing really goes wrong You know things may not go according to our desires and wants but everything is really just another opportunity to dive deeper into what's truly real and lasting and abiding and meaningful and I promise you it's not in the world right So um definitely things don't go perfectly or anywhere close to that and lots of things aren't the way that I would want them to be when I think they're my rational brain But when I dig deeper I realized that I've always been wrong I've always been wrong 20 years ago I mean you know you've said hey how about you Go through the suicidal experience and then you work at it for you know I would say no oh my gosh Heck no You know and now I look back and I think oh my gosh I can't imagine anything better that could have happened to me Yeah Absolutely And I and I wish that upon everyone that you could all look back on the hardest moments of your life and see the blessing in it because there is this they're always a learning experience from it and it's always a chance to grow and to become happier and to become closer to who you really are That's I really believe that So will said though I I like that Yeah OK It's been great We could just keep talking all day I'm sure I mean iii I get soul shivers when I'm connected to somebody at the soul level and let me tell you this entire time it's hot here I've got the heat turned up and I'm freezing like so that just goes to show that you know your light your love your laughter your wisdom I'm so deeply indebted to you for sharing it with me for sharing it with all of us I'm so inspired by not just what you do but who you are So thank you so much Uh Thank you you're bringing happiness to the world and we need more of it right now So um everyone you can go find him Coach Rob Mack dot com Thank you Rob Thank you