Early Dreams of Speaking and Helping Others

I had thought since like my sophomore year that I was going to be, I always thought it was going to be like a Tony Robbins. Yeah. That's what I thought.

I was going to be just like Tony. I'm just going to go around and speak and help people on big stages. And so I just, I always knew I wanted to help people because I'd been so hurting and even, you know, the, the over 20 elementary schools that I went to growing up.

being the kid who was picked on and always thinking, I'm never gonna be like this. I'm gonna make sure that I help people who feel like I feel, like I always wanted to.

And it just started taking, I don't know if there was a catalyst moment, but I know that I was just tired of living inauthentically. And when I was in Europe playing basketball and living like a rock star, I was like, this isn't what I was created for.

And it was finally like, all right, God, I'm ready. April 22nd, 2008, I woke up in the morning knowing that I was about to go to the airport to see the man who murdered my mother when I was 12 years old in person.

Really? How old were you? I was 34 ish. 35. 34, 35. And how old were you when your mother, when he killed your mother? I was 12 when he killed her. Wow.

And so for the last year and a half, the man whose name is Bob, he and I had been in communication on the phone, but two weeks before April 22nd of this day, um, he had attempted suicide and I wanted to fly across the country and help save his life after he survived and give him hope so that he could make a difference in the world.

Like I believed that God had helped me to do. So there's that. Yeah. Cool. Well, we're sitting here with Dean Smith, not the Dean Smith of the UNC basketball team.

Totally different. Totally different. Dean Smith is actually our director of coaching at Mavericks. At the time of this recording, he's just joined our company a couple of weeks ago, right?

And Dean has an amazing story that we're going to dive into tonight. And we're going to dive into that and just how that led you to coaching and who knows where else.

But you can also get a copy of his book called The Forgiveness Habit. It's right there. The Forgiveness Habit. And we'll talk more about it as we go. But I'm curious, because you know, my dad died when I was 13. Pretty traumatic, right?

It's pretty traumatic losing a parent. And that was, you didn't have a father, right? Your mom had been married and divorced a couple of times? Four times.

And so this guy, who's Bob, he was married to my mom for two years before. So he was number four? He was number four. Were you close to him? No. Okay.

Was he good to you as a stepdad? He was good for the first year and then he got in a car accident and started getting addicted to medicines and other kinds of drugs and alcohol and weed and all at the same time kind of a thing.

So he became a jerk, just like the other fathers before him had. So there was really, yeah, they were all verbally abusive and physically as well. Had they started out nice and then became verbally abusive?

Yep, they always do. You know, you want to get on the good side of the ladies kid. Hey, and they bribe you with stuff and then reality bites once you move in and they don't have to be as nice.

Okay, so you know my story. My dad died when I was 13. Pretty traumatic. I was sitting next to him watching a baseball game. I'm really curious. I mean, I think your transformation is phenomenal.

We'll dive into that. I'm really curious about the period between 12 and 34. Because for me, I didn't grieve my father's death for 44 years.

Childhood Trauma and Losing His Mother

It wasn't until Christine and I were at Punta Meda on vacation, and I woke up from a nap going, and I was transported back to that green room. I called the green room because the carpeting was green.

It was panel walls, family room, and it was a green floor. And I was immediately transported back to that green room. And I had never grieved my father's death.

Have you grieved your mom's death? Yes, but it wasn't until just a few years ago. Really? Even after… Okay, so tell me about that. I'm really curious about that.

Because you're 50ish? I'm 51. You're 51. So I'd forgiven this guy, and I'd been traveling around the country talking about how forgiveness is important, but I never stopped to grieve my mom.

But I also had to forgive her, which was weird to realize my mom did some things that a normal person would say that was a really shady thing to do with your kids, the environments that she let us be in and with these guys.

So I had to forgive her first. I mean, I don't know what the order was. It wasn't like I'm going to forgive her first and then I'm going to check list.

But it was forgiving her and then also grieving her like, Oh man, mom, like, wow, I miss you. And you, you know, she died so brutally. How old was she when she died?

She was only 30, 22, 32. She was only 34. 34. And you were 12. Oh, she was 36. That was 12. Yeah. So she was young when she had me. Wow. In that period, from the period of like 12 to say, okay, let's just go 12 to 34. In that period, how did you view your mom and how did you justify your mom?

So fortunately, I was adopted by a pastor and his wife, and I'd never had a good father figure. And this guy comes in and he's a great dad. So I call him my fifth and final dad, and he was a good guy.

He became my hero. And my new mother was more standoffish, and it was perfect because I did not want a replacement of my mom, but I was so desperately seeking a father figure.

And so he came in and taught me to be a man Okay, so let me, well, so my mom was difficult, right? Now, granted, she lived until she was 85, right? So she died in whatever, 2017. But I justified my mom's actions because my mom, like, so, you know, it's, I was reading the book, Your Body Keeps a Score.

Have you read that? Your Body Keeps a Score? No, but yeah, but everybody tells me I could. How in the world have you not read that book? Ladies and gentlemen, please read that book.

No, you need to read it. No, I know. Yeah, yeah, yeah. We all need to read it from over here. That's a great book. Okay. So in it, they use this analogy.

So I'm reading it a couple of months ago and I'm reading the book and I go and they talk about They talk about people that have been through traumatic experiences minimizing the people that did the thing to them or the experience.

So they do a lot of work with people that have been in combat or they did a lot of work with women that had come from abusive homes or husbands or something like that.

And they're all like, well, it wasn't their fault because they had XYZ. Right. Did you ever find yourself doing that with your mom, that it wasn't her fault or minimizing her responsibility?

A hundred percent. So how? How would you do that? So, you know, everyone was abusive, but she was my one safe place. So she was my… She was abusive and safe?

No, no, no. She wasn't abusive. but everyone around us was. So she was my safe place, so she was my refuge, so she could do no wrong. Because if she could do wrong, my whole view of the world would be, there would be nothing good.

But yet she put you in abusive environments. Whatever it was, I could justify a way. You could justify, yeah. Because my mom loved me, and she showed me love.

So if she showed me love, then she's good, no matter what, at all costs. What's your mom's name? Denise. Denise, okay. You weren't mad at her that she kept marrying these guys that were…

Never occurred to me to be mad at her. Did you think about being mad at her as you got older? No. Really? When I needed to forgive her, I realized I'm not mad at her, but that was just kind of lousy.

It just landed on me like lousy. And I had distracted myself for so long that I think the anger snuck out of the little hole in the bag kind of thing.

I never… was never mad at her, disappointed when I started processing, like just disappointed, like, wow, I know you love me, but that was irresponsible, immature.

F'd up. F'd up, totally. When did you start to realize that it was F'd up? How old were you? 40 something. Yeah, I mean. Yeah, so it was before all the forgiveness stuff, right?

Yeah, it was after the forgiveness stuff. Really? Yeah. I find that incredibly fascinating. The forgiveness stuff helped me to see other things that I was blocking, even though, yeah.

So my filter began to change. I was starting to see things more clearly because I wasn't hanging onto the bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness, thoughts of revenge towards Bob.

And then, oh, and then there's that piece of my story. Oh, and oh, she did. So that's how that happened. And you have brothers, sisters? I have a sister who was four years older.

Her name is Gianna. So she was 16 when my mom was murdered. And her life went in a very different direction. What direction? Unhealthy relationships from house to house.

She was invited to live with me and the pastor and start a new family. But they had, what are they called? Rules. And she did not want to abide by rules.

16. So she rebelled. She didn't want to abide by rules. And I was probably more controllable at 12, but she was like, no way. So… I can imagine. She had a lot of coping mechanisms for her anger and resentment, and it was unhealthy relationships, eating disorders, and that kind of a thing.

Childhood trauma is fascinating to me. I think because I lived two very big chunks, right? And I didn't realize I, even with my dad's death, I never realized the impact that that childhood trauma had on me through my teens, 20s, 30s, 40s, even up until I was 56 and turning 57 years old.

Wow. Like, I would always minimize my dad's death, and I would say, well, it was one of the best things that

happened to me, because my mom was nuts, okay?

And she was verbally abusive, and she was not an emotionally supportive human being, so she wasn't around. So I got to be on my own. I'm the youngest of six kids, my brothers and sisters have left the house.

My sister Molly was kind of sort of around, she was like 16, but she was off to college soon, and my mom was gone. So I would say, oh, I get insulated from that, right?

You had freedom. I did. Wasn't necessarily good. And I always say, well, because of that, I went to Ferris and I met my first wife and had my three beautiful children and all that.

And then I realized when I got older, I'm like, oh yeah, that wasn't a blessing at all. That was horrible. Did you ever think that the murder of your mother was good for you?

Was it a blessing? Did you ever have that viewpoint? Yeah. Tell me about that. I mean, at first, my life's turned upside down. Yeah, but your life had been turned upside down 20 times before, right?

You'd moved 20 times. Totally. And so now, all of a sudden, there's stability. It was weird. I didn't like stability. Stability was boring, and things stayed the same, and I liked when things changed.

That's still the truth today, isn't it? Right, yeah. I like variety. But then I was able to start when I started forgiving, which took a lot of years of after coping mechanisms and pretending I was completely happy and healthy on the outside and being a class clown to distract myself, but having some really deep-seated anger on the inside when I forgave and that was transformed and was able to start speaking into other people's lives.

I'm realizing, wait a minute, I'm uniquely qualified to help a whole lot of people only because of what I went through. And so it began to change my filter of like, I'm not happy my mom was murdered, but I am so thankful that so much good could come from it and so many other people's lives could be blessed because of the choices.

I believe that the choices God has empowered me to be able to make to speak into their lives. What was the hard part about it? Because you're, I mean, you're doing what I did, right?

Forgiving His Mother and Understanding Her Choices

Like, I always had a very, I still do to a certain degree, a very positive viewpoint of my father's death. Now, granted, my father wasn't murdered. But I don't think that that's of a parent.

No, I don't think it's a good thing. Yeah, it's not a good thing. Right. I guess I look at it and I can choose to decide what I look at, what I focus on.

And I look over here and say that was really sad. And those guys in my life who were jerks, those dads were horrible. But, and there was a lot of great memories.

I get to choose. It's such a huge part of my purpose because I got a chance to help a lot of people with forgiveness and that's how I became a coach. I'm like, I want to help people with mindset and becoming the best they can be and transforming their business.

And pretty soon it's like, this is my thing. But it started with a very awful thing. It started with an awful thing. And now I get to help other people overcome the challenging thinking habits they have from the things because everyone's got a story.

Yeah. You know, maybe it's not murder or the dad dying as they're sitting watching TV, but they've been through something that if they don't, they're not intentional about overcoming.

A lot of times it will taint and sabotage the person they end up becoming. So I get to help them with that. The other

dads. The bad dads. That's what we call them?

Yeah. I mean, do you forgive them? Have you forgiven them? Yeah. How hard is that? Because I'm, you know, some people are going to be listening to this and I'll be, you know, I hate to play devil's advocate.

I hate that people say, I'm going to play devil's advocate. I'm like, just tell me you're going to be… But I'm going to do it anyway. But I'm going to do it anyway.

How hard has it been to forgive them? Was it harder than Bob? It was easier, because Bob was hard. And then… Because he was an actual physical human being in your life, sitting in front of you?

Well, I forgave him before I sat with him. I didn't wait to see him to forgive him. I forgave him by the phone. I mean, I told him I forgave him, but the inner work was done.

The relational forgiveness, him and I having a friendship didn't happen until later. But the other dads, there was a lot of time, and I know that that played a part in it too, but I tracked down the address of the most villainous father.

Oh, really? The guy that was so physically abusive to my mom. Just my first memory is him pinning her down on the couch and beating her to a pulp. Jesus.

My first memory. I was like, that's another balls cut off. Go ahead. Yeah. And so I found his address. I did the inner work first. It didn't take as long as Bob because there was more time maybe.

And I knocked on his front door. I was wearing a suit and a woman came and evidently he had died like a year before that and this woman had no clue who I was and I didn't but I was like oh and I had to tell her hi my name is I said Dean Smith I kept it really short cuz she was freaking out cuz I she was pretty short and I'm six foot six and I felt like she was kind of scared cuz I'm a random and dogs were barking on the inside and I knocked on her So she was kind of like, who are you?

And I probably looked like a salesman because I was wearing a suit. But I had forgiven him. And then I also tracked down my birth father. And I got to befriend him in the last two years of his life.

This is back in 2011 through 13 or 14. He got lung cancer after we met each other. But he was physically abusive to my mom as well, and I don't really have very many memories of him.

But I got to try to be a blessing in his life as well. It started becoming very interesting. I'm going to track him down, and I'm just going to try to be a light in his life.

And sure enough, he lived a lonely life, and I got to bring light to it. What did he say to you? Well, first, I have a father-in-law who is a… He's really into tracking down ancestors, and he gets all my information, and he's just a total numbers nerd.

He tracks this guy down, and sure enough, we get the guy's… My birth dad had a twin. And we reached the twin and he said, I'll pass the message on to my brother, Don, which is my birth father's name.

And if he wants to call you, he'll call you. I'm in the AT&T cell phone store getting a new cell phone and my new phone that's never gotten a call yet starts ringing.

Oh, you already have a call on your new phone. I go, who is it? And it's a California number. Oh, that's my birth father. I've never talked to him before.

Do you mind if I? And they're like, what? And so I take this call from my birth father and he goes, hello. And I said, hi, were you married to Denise Marie Cassidy back in whatever year?

He goes, yes. Did you have a son named Dean? Yes. I said, hi, I'm Dean. Oh my god. And it was a trip. So I

caught him up on my whole life, you know? And by the way…

While you were in the 18T store? Yeah, I was just cruising. And then, you know, I get to the part where you're like, oh, and by the way, my mom, who you married and divorced, and he ran from child support for years, and it was dicey, but he said, I tried to find you, but I couldn't find you.

There was no internet back in the 70s and 80s. And we started a conversation, and I… So this is a trip. So I fly him up. to Washington state and he gets to the dinner table and I say this weekend is going to be kind of a special weekend.

It was the premiere of the documentary made about my journey to forgive the man that murdered my mom. Wow. It was showing in a theater and I said we're going to go to the theater and by the way and I told him the story and it was really that that should have been filmed because seeing his face go we're going to do what you're going to see who the story is about what so that was kind of just a funny little What was his reaction when he watched the movie?

So overwhelmed. I'm getting overwhelmed just thinking about it. I haven't even seen the movie yet, and I'm not even related to it. He was totally overwhelmed by just like, A, I have a son who's alive.

Wow, I knew he was out there somewhere. B, so my dad wasn't very tall. and I'm tall and he was a he's an introvert quiet guy and I'm not and it was just very interesting how different we were and just a nice guy but just constantly like I'm introducing him to everybody and their mother you know like hey this is my birth father just he's like oh my gosh oh my gosh so that was a trip you know as a parent and your father I'm a father Can you imagine what that must have been like for him?

I mean, not seeing your son for God knows how long, what, 30 years? 30, yeah, I mean, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, about 30 years. Yeah, whatever, 30 years, okay?

And then, you know, I'm not saying your birth father was a good guy or a bad guy, but you said he was lonely, right? Sounded like he lived a fairly nondescript life.

Very. And here's his offspring. doing this amazing kind of work. It must have been really fascinating. Cause you know, my kids are, my boys are older now, right?

They're 27 and 20, right? My daughter's 30. Yours are in their teens, right? Your kids are in their teens. It's really fascinating to see how much they change.

Like they really then start to understand like a little bit of their calling and they're finding their way through, you know, they're fumbling through life, like, you know, in a dark room looking for a light switch, you know, with chairs in the way, you know, I think that would be really…

I'm trying to imagine what that would be like as a father. Yeah. So when he got lung cancer, my sweet wife Molly and I got to be with him in those last couple weeks.

We went down there a lot. And on his deathbed, he knew he was gonna die within a couple weeks. He said that me coming into his life three years before was the greatest thing that ever happened to him.

I bet. So that was pretty cool. That was cool. Yeah. So mission accomplished. That's what I was hoping to do, is just bring some light. And yeah, he was a security guard.

at a mall here in California. And he would walk around. For 20 to 30 years, he'd just walk around with his CB, you know, not a gun. And everyone knew, all the mall, all the stores, hey, Don, hey, Don.

He was that guy, but just an old guy. Went home, his one bedroom apartment, and smoked cigarettes in the apartment. And I got to go in at one time, and it was, you're immediately watering eyes, oh my gosh, because it's

so saturated with smoke.

Sounds a lot like my Uncle Jim. And so that's the life he led. Didn't have many girlfriends even. Never got remarried. Total loner. So interesting. Was he military?

No. No. No. What about his early life?

Finding a Father Figure and Going Off the Rails

Just… Non-descript. Non-descript. Yeah. So interesting. We had thought we tracked my dad down. We're like, for sure, my father-in-law said, here he is.

And he was the motivational speaker. And I was so, this makes so much sense. This is before we found my actual, this is it, this is who I am. And it wasn't him and it was really weird.

I call this guy, hey, and it's nope, not wrong. So that was interesting. You find this dad, you just don't know. And you kind of hope you're alike, but we were so unalike.

Well, I mean, your circumstances clearly have had a pretty massive impact on you. Yeah. I mean, I think that… I think, you know, if you were to meet my brothers and sisters, there's a picture of us at a Chicago White Sox game in, like, 2006 or 2007. So I'm from Chicago.

We're White Sox. Most of us are White Sox fans. And there's a picture of my brothers and my sisters and I, and you can't not, I couldn't disown them if I wanted to, because we all have the same eyebrows and eyes.

Like so much so that I was a kid growing up, youngest of six, my brothers were in rock and roll bands, and I'd be at bars and people would come up to me and go, hey, are you a fucking Galoagly?

No way. Yeah, so I'd have to make a decision. I'm either going to get hit or they're going to buy me a beer, because one of my brothers had a side business.

I'll just leave it at that, okay? And I'd be like, yeah. And I never got hit, but a couple of times I'd be like, yeah. And they're like, I love your brothers.

Let me buy you a fucking own style, right? And I'm like, oh, thank God. I did have one time where a guy's like, I should kick the shit out of you for what your brothers did to me.

I'm like, please don't, because you're a lot bigger than me. But it's fascinating because, like, that's the only way that we're similar. I'm vastly different than they are.

Because of circumstances, right? Like, I grew up in a very different place in a very different environment. And, you know, yeah. So, okay, so you're 12 years old.

You go to the hospital. You see your mom beaten to a pulp. She doesn't make it through the night, right? You wind up moving in with this pastor and his kids.

And he becomes your fifth and final dad. And his name is? Rex. Rex. Okay. How do you start to get to this place of forgiveness? Because I would imagine 20 homes in 12 years 12 year old kid, hormones are starting to rage.

You've just lost your mom. Your sister is AWOL. It couldn't have been that easy, Dean. No. And I was, you know, as a pastor's kid, you go to church 374 times a week and you're surrounded by all the messages.

And I just kind of went along with it, that part of it. And… When did the messages sink in? Well, they were planting seeds. Okay. And the seeds took root after I got so desperate.

So the college years, you know, I went… Did you go off the rails? I went off the rails completely. You know, my dad's not there mentoring me every day, giving me…

I'm alone. I got a basketball scholarship in Oregon and I'm partying like a rock star. I got married at the age of 20. Oof. Got divorced at the age of 22. She thought…

Let's repeat those family cycles. All right. She thought she'd married a nice, kind, gentle pastor's kid and learned that she married a guy who wanted to be anywhere but home, hanging out and being a family man.

And so when I graduated from college in 97, divorced, high, drunk, and I got into the business world and I had these big plans, these huge expectations for my life.

I'm gonna do this and this. I'm gonna make a lot of money. I'm gonna help a lot of people. And my reality was way down here. And I tried all the personal development things that I was supposed to do, and there was just still something missing.

And people who know me go, you seemed like you were doing fine. And on paper, I was doing fine. But in my soul, there was just something just so out of alignment.

And I knew as my dad's tormenting words that I would never live in the fullness of my God given potential until I made forgiveness a priority. And so how did I get to forgiveness is what you asked.

And the answer is it was my last option. And how old are you, 22? 20, mid-20s, like 25-ish. Like 25-ish. Yep. And so I started this process and I made a decision I'm going to forgive him.

But when you make the decision, it doesn't mean that you don't have the wanting to punch him in the face. And so that took time. And I just went through this personal development process and spiritual development process.

All right, let's talk about it. What was the, what was the, which came first, spiritual or personal? Spiritual. Okay. So let's talk about that. So for me, okay.

So then it's gotta be, I'm imagining I'm as I'm going to guess it's more than just a couple of words on a piece of paper. What are the words on the piece of paper?

I don't know. Pick one out of the New Testament. Okay. Right? It was more than words on the piece of paper. Well, you know what I mean. Like, I would imagine it's, there's that gap between, okay, I'm reciting this at church or I'm reading this in a book to actually living this.

Yeah. So it had to do with my, I mean, it's thoughts, words, you know, so yes, I was reading the scriptures that said you should forgive, but that wasn't making me go, oh, I feel better.

But praying and learning about empathy and I think, I believe that God helped just, it changes my filter. Like he was a human being who made a really bad decision, didn't make it right, hated what he did, but just all these different aspects.

And then from the personal development side, you know, only speaking words of life, not letting myself speak negatively about him, speaking more intentionally positive about myself.

And I'm not a victim. I never acted like a victim. But your actions showed that you might have thought you were a victim. Yeah. You may not have thought you were a victim, but you were playing it out.

Right, totally. Because you were doing what everybody does, and that is you reach a certain level and your subconscious mind says, whoa, whoa, whoa, who the fuck do you think you are?

Right? Sure, totally. Right? And so yeah, I guess it was things that I guess now they'd call cognitive behavioral

therapy, but I didn't know you're doing these exercises or whatever.

Talking things out for the first time even with my dad my mentor dad who was a great listener and Would ask so many questions before he got to the part where he would expound on some point of wisdom that Like so that kind of stuff over time.

Okay, when did God become human to you? When did he go from a nice bearded guy to to a real human being to you. Did that ever happen? A real human being.

Where it became skin, flesh and bone? Probably after, probably in the year 2000. Okay. And you had been out of college for how long? Or no, you were in college.

I graduated in 97, I got the opportunity to play professional basketball in Germany when I was 99, 2000. And my friend who I was playing with, we were just a couple of Americans on this team, and he was my best friend, and we're both pastor's kids, and we were living like rock stars over there, and we felt convicted.

Like, this is kind of, this is fun, but we knew we had a purpose bigger than partying. Okay. And so we came back in 2000 and I got, I think that's when I got truly connected with God.

And I told you that there was a lot of seeds that were being planted. I think they started to take root and I was ready to start being a man from 26 at the time.

How did that look? Like how did your, when you say the seeds had taken root and they were sprouting, What started changing, not like you quit going on partying, not like you quit sleeping with everything that walked.

Well, that was a big part of it. That was helpful. Well, I know, but I'm saying there's something that happens before that. What happened before that, before you stopped drinking?

What was the thing inside of you that said, I got something better? Where you started to really realize who God was. I had thought since like my sophomore year that I was going to be, I always thought it was going to be like a Tony Robbins.

Yeah. That's what I thought I was going to be. I was going to be just like Tony. I'm just going to go around and speak and help people on big stages. And so I just, I always knew I wanted to help people because I'd been so hurting and even, you know, the over 20 elementary schools that I went to growing up.

being the kid who was picked on and always thinking, I'm never going to be like this. I'm going to make sure that I help people who feel like I feel like I always wanted to.

And it just started taking, I don't know if there was a catalyst moment, but I know that I was just tired of living inauthentically. And when I was in Europe playing basketball and living like a rock star, I was like, this isn't what I was created for.

And it was finally like, all right, God, I'm ready. And I had always said someday I would be a pastor or something like that. Like when I said 50, because 50 sounded so old at the time when I was in my 20s.

Careful, I'm seven years past that. Now that I'm 51, I'm like, ah. But I just… You know, you're just starting to realize how stupid you were for the last 15 years.

I am, I am. That's what I figured out with 50. See, I wanted living without a purpose or living in what you think is your purpose as a miserable place.

And you and I just did, what is the analysis you just did on me? In the kitchen with the computer? Oh, human design. The human design. And then we put it through chat, yeah.

Is you'll see that. Like if I'm not living in my, it was funny to hear you say, if I'm not living in my purpose, I'm just miserable. Yeah. In the same way.

So even like a month goes by and I realize I haven't been in that vein. It's, it's like, well, it's so. Okay. So you start, you start making this transition in your life, this transformation.

What was some of the hardest parts of this? So you're 25, 26 at this point. And in 34, so in eight years, you'll be sitting across from the man who murdered your mother.

What were those eight years like? Walk us through some of those things that were going on for you to get to that place to be. Because I would imagine it's got to be pretty damn hard to sit across from the person who murdered your mother and forgive them.

So from 26 to 34. From 26 to 34. Well, I want to say something. The time I got in front of him, if I had not already fully forgiven him, it would have been a violent moment.

I would bet. So I'm looking at him and he's telling me all the details about the day he took my mom's life. Oh, God. The details Friday, Saturday. He took her life with a baseball bat on a Tuesday.

And over 10 minutes, he's looking at me. He's sitting exactly as far as we're sitting from each other. giving me the details and he gets to the day he took her life and he tells me how many times he hit her.

Jesus. And what her last words were. What were her last words? Why? Why are you doing this to me? Oh my God. And he tells me how he hit her and how many times he hit her and if I hadn't forgiven him I remember I would, before I'd go to bed for years, I would fantasize about, it was always I'd see him in a grocery store, that's the fantasy.

I'd be shopping and I'd see him in a grocery store and I would just drop my bags and I would run to him and I would fantasize how I would kill him as fast as possible.

It's horrible, I know, but that was real. But that's the common, you know, look, I mean, we just had an assassination. I mean, by the time this comes out, it'll be a couple months after when Charlie Kirk had been assassinated.

And there's people that are applauding it, and there's people that are condemning it, and there's all kinds of things, and there's people that are like, we need to go kill everybody, right?

I mean, I could totally see, like, I think most people listening to this would go, you would be justified to beat the living shit out of him and take his life.

Totally. So I had forgiven him. The point is I'd forgiven him before I sat in front of him and heard those things. Because when he told me those things, there was already like, imagine all the anger, all the torment, all the bitterness was truly gone.

And then there was room for something else. And that's what I'd been filling it with. Love, peace, comfort, joy. How?

The Turning Point Toward Faith and Purpose

How did you fill it with love, peace, comfort, and joy? Well, two things. One, I believe in my relationship with God. And two, being really intentional.

And through Jesus, right? Through Jesus Christ, yes. And through very specific personal development, whether it was journaling or being really intentional about visualization and seeing myself being the way I was committed to being.

The leader that I believed I was created to be but hadn't stepped into, being intentional about stepping into that helped me to step into that. I started, the quote is, what would I do today if I already was the person I most wanted to be?

Yeah, and I started doing that and then all of a sudden you're doing it and it is the person you want to be and one was Forgiving and loving and not a secretly resentful person So Did you feel your heart softening and opening over time?

It felt like I was always Wherever I was I'd look back and go. Oh I was a lot better last year. Wow, I'm better, but I never, it's like you don't know you're in the good old days until they're passed.

Right. I wish I could, you know, you wish I could know I'm in, I feel like I'm in the good old days with my kids right now. But that's what it was like with healing.

Like I looked back, oh! That's right, I did that thing last month, and that was way different than it used to be. And then it felt like every year that would go by, I'd look at the year before as I'd reflect and go, I'm growing.

I'm also stupid last year in a lot of ways too, and I still need to grow, but it's another story. I find journaling to be one of the most powerful things in the world that somebody can do.

I still journal just about every morning. Get up. For how long? Like, how long does it last? It depends. So, I used to journal handwriting. And then they got found by somebody.

Oh no. And they used it against me. Boo. Yeah. And in a lot of ways, shared them with people. Because you know, you put your… I put my… deepest, darkest…

That would be horrible. Oh, yeah. Like… The ultimate betrayal. Yeah, like, you know, when you have those, you know, as a parent, nobody knows what the fuck they're doing as a parent, right?

And so, like, I would journal about how, you know, I feel like I'm failing my kids and… Of course. Right? And I'm being a horrible dad because I did X, Y, and Z, or da-da-da, and they use that against me, yeah.

and showed it to my kids. And so I don't journal in a notebook anymore, but I still have them all. I probably have about 40 of them from going back to my college days.

And I would journal and then I wouldn't journal for six months. Now I use an electronic on my laptop that is highly security that has a password and a fingerprint.

And you have to go through like two or three passcodes to get to it. But I journal just about every morning and I do it one of two ways. I am typing and I generally close my eyes and put my fingers on the keyboard because if you look at the words, you see the mistakes and you back up.

So I will sit there, I'll have coffee. It's in the morning, I put music on. It's usually the first, second or third thing that I do, you know, get up, go to the bathroom, brush my teeth, get some coffee, have some water, let the cat out kind of thing.

And then I sit down and I put music on and I will close my eyes and I will journal. and I just type it, whatever comes through my head, whatever it is.

I don't edit, I don't back, I just da-da-da-da. It's amazing how few mistakes there are when you are not looking at the screen. Stream of consciousness, huh?

The other thing I will do is sometimes I will, about 10 to 15% of the time, the tool that I use has a, you know, I can record and it'll… Yeah, cool.

And then what I do is I'll just record like sometimes if I'm just sleepy and I don't feel like it or if I'm lying in bed I'll just Record what were the dreams that I had the night before?

I'm I have a very vivid dream life. I dream in color smells stereo sound. Yeah Yeah, yeah, I get a lot of messages when I I get unbelievable messages when I sleep I get downloads lucky.

Yeah Sometimes sometimes you're like fuck. I just want to sleep So when you journal, do you feel a relief or what do you, do you feel anything after you get done journaling?

So I'm one that likes to process. So for me, getting it out of me clears the space for me to be able to process it. If I hold it in, I can't process it.

I can't create space. It's kind of like trying to move the boxes around a crammed moving van. Nice. So I have to take all the boxes out of the moving van and put them in rooms and then unpack them from there, is how I have to do it.

OK. So you have to think about it later. What you journaled is what you're saying. Sometimes I'll go years. I'll get something and I won't think about it again.

And then I'll be journaling and I'll get like a message going to remember when you said this. And then what's cool about the electronic version is I can type in the words and it'll take me right to that entry.

That's cool. Yeah. Yeah. So I've been using an electronic journal off and on since 2015. I mean, I would use paper, then I'd go back and forth. But now I use exclusively electronic.

And I think it is… I think it's… I was really captivated by Winston Churchill journaling every day, because I think he's one of the great heroes, not only of the 20th century, but I think of one of the all time.

If you ever think you're having a bad day, him and Abraham Lincoln, and they both journaled a lot. If you ever think you're having a bad day, go look at their life.

Winston Churchill, I just saved the empire and you guys kicked me out of office four months later. So when I read that, I was like, that sounds like just a good practice to have.

And I think it has helped me process, and the deeper I go with the work I do with psychedelics, especially when I do psychedelics in the next couple of days afterwards, I'm really open and really free.

Yeah, it's really good. I highly recommend it. Because I think what society teaches us, and this is one of the things I want to ask you, in our work with doctors, and you'll realize this, and you've only been with us a couple of weeks, is that doctors are disconnected from their hearts.

They're very heart-centered people. And they're heart-centered because they want to heal humankind. But they go to medical school, and they cut their head off from their heart, and they make all mental decisions.

They try to be the smartest, which doesn't make for the best health care, by the way, right? It makes, in my mind, some of the worst health care, because it's only brain.

It's not heart-centered. You don't get to listen to that still voice inside you. So that's what it's really helped me. It's helped me tap into my sacral.

It's helped me tap into my heart, my throat, all of that. That's great. So how did your… Was your heart… When you were in college, were you connected to your heart?

No. When do you think you really started to become connected to your heart? I think it was when I came back into the country and I'm like, all right, I'm going to get my life straight.

I met my sweet wife, Molly. I love how you always call her my sweet wife, Molly. thank you she's very sweet and just started having a stable relationship like I'm gonna marry this lady and I need to get my life together because I was doing the thing again where I'm like I'm the pastor's kid I'm a good boy but I wasn't a good boy still you know I was Most pastor kids are not.

There was duplicity there, but I wanted to be better. And so I had to get in my heart to do that, to answer your question. What were some of the practices that you had in order to forgive Bob, the man who murdered your mother?

And that's an acronym, right? Bob is an acronym? Yeah, I gave him the name Bob, just because it was the first name. And then later I thought, well, we could say it was the burden of bitterness.

So sometimes now, if I'm talking about forgiveness, I'll have people find their own Bob's, those people they can't forgive, and it's the burden of bitterness.

But you're asking what specific practices? Yeah, like, what did you do? I'm curious. I think we live in a society where people try to just work things down to like four steps.

And people don't understand the process of transformation because it's fucking hard. It's a hell of a lot easier to stay the way you are, no matter how miserable that life was.

But what were some of the things that you did? Not necessarily checklists, but what did that transformation look like on a day in and day out basis? Yeah.

a perfectly imperfect process of just trying to, you know, just trying to think about working on forgiveness a little bit each day. Like again, perfectly imperfect.

Did I forget lots of days? Yes. I mean, and there's just, there was so many little things I did for a little bit. And then years later, oh, I remember I did that little thing, for instance, just something insignificant in and of itself.

But looking back, like, but maybe it helped me in that those few weeks I did it, you know, taking a scripture and instead of putting in like, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, God so loved Bob.

you know and just like replacing it with like if God loves me this much that means he also loves Bob and it was really weird so how did that hit you well I'll tell you that hit me when I was in the hotel room and this this is a this is a huge moment in my life that I haven't talked about I'm looking Bob in the eyes he's telling me how he murdered my mom how he hit her and then he keeps talking a little bit and I'm having getting this download that's still small voice and it was first it was I love you Dean because I love you because I love you and there's nothing you can do to make me love you more and there's nothing you can do to make me love you less I'm with you right now Dean and I've got your back And I'm feeling this peace and there's part of me that's like, okay, I'm going to make it because I'm in my, this is the inner monologue and he's just chatting.

And then there was this like, okay, I'm going to make it. But then the small voice said, and I love Bob because I love Bob because I love Bob and there's nothing Bob can do to make me love him more.

And there's nothing Bob can do to make me love him less. And I'm in this moment realizing I've been the Bob so many times and God has loved me the whole time.

It was like, that was, that was, that was a huge breakthrough moment for me. I bet. I left that hotel room that day realizing that this was going to be part of my message to help other people find this freedom of forgiveness that I found.

And that's, I mean, do I talk about forgiveness with my coaching clients? Sometimes if they want to, but a lot of times they want to work on other things.

Not everyone wants to make forgiveness a priority, but when they do, it certainly makes a tremendous impact on their lives. Can you have forgiveness for someone else if you don't have self-forgiveness for yourself?

I used to say no, because you can't give away what you don't have in principle. But now I've experienced people who have truly, I see, are free. They've forgiven the parent or the betrayer or the abuser, but they still live with guilt and condemnation.

That's my experience. Really? Yeah. Really? Yeah. And you think it's as powerful, if not more powerful?

Forgiving Bob and Confronting the Past

I think it's more powerful when they've also forgiven themselves, 100%. Yeah, okay. For sure. Yeah, okay. But I don't know that forgiveness is necessarily a total destination.

That's why I wrote The Forgiveness Abbot. It's more like it's a lifestyle today. Bobs keep on bobbing, life keeps on lifing. You make a commitment, I'm going to deal with the bad things in life, or the Christians would call it the sin in life, I'm going to deal with it with forgiveness.

It doesn't mean that there's not going to be consequences for those people. It doesn't mean I'm going to have people in my home and hug them, but I'm going to have freedom on the inside.

And forgiveness I usually talk about is not the reconciliation kind, because that could only come if it's appropriate and possible. Right. And it's not possible a lot of times.

I'm talking totally not possible. Forgiveness to me doesn't mean reconciliation, even though in my case it was. It's what's here and here. That no matter, you know, it's like you're angry at your neighbor so you burn your own house down.

That's what unforgiveness is like. Don't do that. Be free, my friend. And you can only find freedom from the bad things with forgiveness. And it doesn't justify or validate what the person did.

It just sets you free and unshackles you from the pain of the past. You do a lot more work in this space than I do. What do you see in the transformation with the people that have forgiveness, even if they haven't forgiven themselves, but if they forgive their oppressor or abuser?

First I'm gonna say this for anyone who's watching this is whatever my answer is, it will never do justice because there's this thing, picture waking up out of nowhere.

You don't know where you are or like, but you know you're not in your house and you've got something and you hear a voice you've never heard and they say to you, where are you?

And you're like, I don't know, I don't know where I am. You don't know anything because you're disoriented. That's what it's like on the other side of forgiveness.

You can't imagine what can change. And now I've worked with thousands and thousands of people and seen them go from, I'll never forgive him. F you for talking to me about it.

Then they went through their own journey. And the things I've seen are… My story seems big and miraculous, but I've seen way bigger and more miraculously things of people like, I never thought I could…

Whether it's a relationship, whether it's a job, whether it's a breakthrough in a mindset, whether it's being a good dad after being abusive, whether it just…

So what's possible? What's the transformation? It's indescribable what's possible. Because when you don't have the… And you have room for the… It's endless.

I've read a lot of stuff about World War II, okay? And one of them is the Baton Death March. which, you know, was the Philippines, you know, and it was MacArthur, right?

And so MacArthur leaves by boat because he's commanded by his president to leave, get out of there. And he has to leave his men behind and, I don't know, 50,000, 100,000 military servicemen, whatever the number was, 25,000. And they, you know, had no guns, no food, no water, no clean water, no medical supplies.

And they surrendered to the Japanese and the Japanese marched them. through baton and not giving them water and they're killing them on the way and put them in these camps that have no sanitary conditions and people are dying and then they get taken to slave labor in China and the boats are getting shot by their own planes because they don't realize that they're transporting like, okay.

And this guy goes, I was reading this guy, watching this interview with this guy. And he survived the Bataan Death March. And he goes, you know, it wasn't until the 1970s that I finally forgave my oppressors.

And he said, what happened was that I was talking with a pastor, and he really helped me with this. And he made a comment of, you're still in bondage to them.

And he said that really hit me. And he said, when I forgave them, I had put myself in bondage from 1941 or early 1942, all the way up until whatever, the early 70s.

And he goes, and when I finally forgave them, it was like I was finally free after 30 plus years. And that really stuck with me. The power of forgiveness, I mean, I think you hear all the time, like, people are like, oh, you know, you're letting him live rent-free in your head and all that stuff.

But it's really not that simple for a lot of people. I mean, there's some really horrible fucking things that have been done to people. Yes. It's one thing to know that it's eating you alive on the inside, but to do something about it, because you think that being mad is going to make them pay.

Did you ever want to give up in your forgiveness process above? No. Really? No. Only because I tried everything. I was like, there's nothing else I can do.

I tried everything. I want to tell you a last story. When I was in Tennessee, to see Bob, I asked him, do you ever think you could truly forgive yourself for what you've done?

He said, his words exactly were, Dean, I don't think anyone who's ever done the action, take the actions that I've taken can ever say they truly forgive themselves.

And I said, would you let me help you make forgiveness a priority in relationship with Jesus over the, you know, and to help you find the freedom I found.

He's like, okay. So when we start making the documentary… Yeah, Jesus makes people really uncomfortable. Oh, totally, totally. Yeah, there's some people right now that are, like, turning this down.

Oh, totally. And, you know… They just said Jesus. And I don't… You know, I usually speak into people's listening, but you opened the Jesus box earlier, so I'm saying it now, but I don't go around…

Hey, man, Jesus is my homeboy. I don't go around preaching, typically, unless I'm in church. But I'll tell you… I'm not a big fan of Christians, but I love Jesus.

There are some Christians I like. Thanks. Yeah, no, I mean, I'm going to get some Christians are going to be here. I prefer to follow the teachings of Jesus, not the teachings of Christianity.

Fair. Does that make sense? Totally. Yeah. Because if you take the red letters, I tell people all the time, go get, don't fuck the Old Testament. Literally, just fuck the Old Testament and then just get the four gospels and then get

the gospels written in the red letters.

And instead of saying Jesus said, say, Tony Robbins said, Oh, And if you just read that, you'd be like, hot damn, I'm in. Because most people, they're like, well, I don't like religion.

I'm like, good, neither did Jesus. He came to get rid of it. The root of the word religion is re, return, to bondage. Jesus is not here for bondage. He's here for freedom and unconditional love.

Is Matt preaching right now? Well, hell yeah. So we, Christine and I went to go see, um, Jesus Christ Superstar at the Hollywood Bull. It was great. It was beautiful.

18,000 people. You had Cynthia Revo. You know who she is? Who's in Wicked, the lead Wicked. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. She's a lesbian. You had Adam, I forget his name.

Lambert. Lambert playing Judas, a gay man, an unabashedly gay man. You have all these people that were in the LBTT community, right? And I apologize that I'm missing letters, okay?

And I guarantee you, she's like, what did you think? And I said, I think God was upstairs in heaven, chicken-winging, Jesus, his son going, hey, look at your brother and sister.

Look at how great they're singing. Aren't they just beautiful? Look at how they're using the gifts that I gave them. We spend way too much time in the Christian faith going, you're a sinner.

You're going to burn in hell because you had an abortion, or you're gay, or whatever. I guarantee you, as a father, I would never love my children any less if they did any of those things.

I love them unconditionally. That's true. And we spend way too much time in this country saying, I'm right because I'm a Christian. Fuck you. You're probably watching porn, you son of a bitch.

I'd rather… You're probably going home and jerking off after sermons. Seriously. You know why? Because I know a lot of guys that do it. Sure. And like, that's the problem.

Like, I think, and for those of you listening, if you're offended by hearing the words of Jesus, do that. Go get the Red Letter Gospels. You can get on Amazon and put Tony Robbins' name in.

If you don't like, put Oprah. I don't care. Put Aaron Judge. I don't care. Pick somebody that you follow, that you worship. Because it's undeniable when you listen to, when you read the gospels from the perspective of Jesus, it was very simple.

I love you. Sound wisdom. Right? And love. Yeah, it's just love. You know? And you can't, there's no way you could have forgiven Bob unless you understood the depth of God's love for us.

I'm convinced of that. 100%. You know? 100%. So there you go. You can leave 10% at the altar. No, I'm kidding. Don't. Me too. Okay. Thank you. I'm joking.

That's another thing you don't have to do. That one elicited a lot of comments, by the way. So how does this work in your day-to-day now? So you've been coaching executives, business owners now for what, 12 years?

13. 13 years. Okay. And you've been speaking, you got to speak. I do. Okay. How does this, how does this forgiveness, this whole process, how does it play in your day-to-day work?

You can't, okay. So you can't be forgiving without being loving. Okay. Tell me. So I can't, if I'm gonna be loving the way that I feel I'm committed to being loving, I want to be forgiving.

I have to be forgiving. So that means I need to love myself by the way I treat myself in my mind. So when I find

myself, so how it plays out is like, I'm taking you in, I start to beat myself up because I'm not living up to like, hold on a minute, be loving to myself.

So it starts with the thoughts going back to the journaling or the scripture or the affirmations or the visualization or any one of many possible tools.

So that's one thing also. you realize that you get purpose from life. I get my best fulfillment. Once there's good self-care, when I don't focus, when you don't focus on your own problems and you try to, you'd help someone else, it actually helps you heal.

And so as a coach, it's been pretty awesome that I get to grow. You know, I tell my clients to do something and then I'm immediately like, you better make sure you're doing that thing, dude.

And so it's been, get to coach yourself. And my wife will be the first, sweet wife, Molly will be the first one to say, hey you better practice with your coach or practice what you preach buddy like and that that don't tell me what to do is in my head and i'm like she's right okay and plus the more coachable i am to my sweet wife molly then the more voice i have to say hey you too yeah great coaching comes from being unbelievably coachable gotta be right gotta be because You know, I've coached for years.

I've done one-on-one. I do group. This will be the last couple of months that I do one-on-one. And it takes a toll. It's hard. What's the hardest part about it for you?

Well, you hear… Especially I do relationship coaching. So I'll coach married people and sometimes there's… Oh, God. You… There could be so much hate and fault-finding and it just becomes…

But I feel like I was made for it. When I leave, because I see how other people handle those, I'll start to… Someone else will be telling a similar story and they'll talk about how it breaks them and I'm thinking, I think I'm made for this.

It hurts me. But I can recharge pretty quickly. But I feel like this is part of my purpose. Like I've been through enough stuff. I've been through a lot of stuff.

Just like, but I'm using it for good. And I feel like I hear this stuff and go, okay. You ever think about how two people can love each other so much and wind up in front of you, despising them and finding all the shortcomings in the other person?

You've ever thought about that transformation and what causes it? Yes. What do you think causes it? One trip around the coping trap. Oh, tell me about that.

I'm not sure I understand what you mean. I called the coping trap ready start at the top we're going to go around at the 12 o'clock it's we'll call it bad things or sin.

They said something hurtful and a bad thing or a sin leads to negative consequences and.

Meeting His Birth Father and Bringing Light

negative, what is it, sabotaging emotions and negative consequences. Now you gotta deal with those. So you have coping mechanism. I'm just gonna, we're not gonna talk about it.

We're just gonna let, I'm just gonna let that go. You don't forgive them. There's no healing. You're just gonna ignore it, which leads back to more bad things slash sin, which leads to more negative emotions and consequences.

And pretty soon you go around and around and it's a compounding effect. The only way out to healing, freedom, and blessing is forgiveness. Do you go backwards then on the clock?

No. It has a little arrow that goes into a different cycle. Really? Okay. So you make it, so my sweet wife Molly and I,

our mantra is we forgive first and we forgive fast.

We don't go to bed angry. The Bible, whether you believe it or not… No, we really don't anymore. We did when we made the commitment, but I promise you, she'll wake me up when I try.

She's like, we're not going to do this. But it took a long time to get to this place of commitment. You've been married how long? 23 years. So it's not like we decided and then it happened.

I always tell people, don't take marriage advice from me. I've been married and divorced twice, so what do I know? You've learned a lot. Yeah, I've learned a shit ton.

Anger gives a foothold to the devil, the scripture says, and whether you believe in the devil or not, it's true. It only can hurt you. How would you apply that rule to business as a leader, as a CEO, as a founder of a business?

Because a lot of it can be the same, maybe. What do you think about that? Can you apply that to owning a company and running a company? A little bit. You want to learn from the mistakes.

But I can't believe I did this. It could be one way. How could I be so stupid is how you can process something. But that doesn't help you be better. So I look at stuff like that.

Let's ask a more productive question. What can I learn? I did something. I made a huge mistake in that business decision. I lost everything. what can I learn from it and what can I do different to make sure it doesn't happen?

You know, just being intentional about where you focus, where your focus goes, your energy flows, says Tony Robbins. And so focus on that. Who do I need to be today to head here instead of…

So stuff like that is kind of like business forgiveness, being intentional about where your thoughts go, and also realizing everyone makes mistakes and, like, the most successful people have usually made the most success.

That's what I try to tell myself, at least. Well, I will tell you, there's a lot of truth in that. And I've been told, when you fail, Winston Churchill has a quote that says, when you're going through hell, pick up the pace.

And I lived by that for a long time. When I go through hell, I don't pick up the pace anymore. I think that there's a big mistake in processing the pain too fast.

because I'm really good at processing pain. You lose your father when you're 13 years old and your whole world gets pain turned upside down. And the guy that was the protector against your brothers and sisters, against your mom, and verbal abuses and occasional physical abuses, when that's gone, you learn really, really fast to process that pain as quickly as you can.

Because if you look like everything is fine, then you're not going to get abused, right? Emotionally, I was never physically abused, for the record, okay?

But emotionally, verbally abused. And I think a big mistake, I was having this conversation with Dr. Tracy Gapin. I think entrepreneurs move too fast through the pain or the failure.

So what's the alternative? It's not to wallow in the pain and it's not to wallow in the failures, but it's to feel them fully. Okay? It doesn't mean you have to stay there a long time.

I'm not talking about, woe is me. I've done that. That doesn't work. When I'm in bankrupt, I did that. As soon as I quit wallowing and I felt the pain a bit, it actually moved a lot faster.

So you have to, I think feeling pain, feeling disappointment, And resting in it is an incredibly powerful tool. They say that what you resist will persist.

Yes. And so there's a lot of value and research done about allowing yourself to feel. I know I could be better at that. It's not one of my fortes. So to your credit, that's…

Well, I didn't learn that till the last year. Yeah, I was going to say, that's something I could learn. I just learned that at the age of 57. Yeah, it's funny to think there's been research on just like, yeah, go ahead and feel it.

And to your point, not as a victim, but it'll actually help it go away faster by taking a beat. I'm really, really sad right now. Okay, so let's do the flip side of that.

What if you treated sex where you didn't feel it, that you moved through the sex as fast as you possibly could? It wouldn't be very fun, would it? No.

I mean, sex is great when you can actually slow down and enjoy it, right? Like that's, you don't have to comment. I'm just going to make a comment. I'm not going to make you do this to Molly.

You can just not look at me with bright eyes. But like, you know, the great thing about being older is sex is a lot more intentional. You know, in 20s, you're like, let's have sex, right?

When you're 57, you're like, fuck, I may never have sex again. Like, I could be gone tomorrow. I'm gonna enjoy the fuck out of this. No pun intended, okay?

Right? And it's the most enjoyable ever, okay? Compared to the 20s, like, I wanna call up, like, ex-girlfriends from the 20s and just say, I'm sorry. I had no idea what I was doing.

And I think with pain, I don't think, I know with pain, we rush through it like an 18 year old rushes through sex. Yeah. And we don't understand how, what a beautiful gift it is.

Cause pain is a beautiful gift. Yeah. You know? It's like love, the pendulum of love. The deeper the love is equivalent to the pain. Also, you could stay nice and safe.

We loved each other, but we didn't get hurt too bad. You're right. You can't have great love unless you're willing to risk unbelievable pain and disappointment.

Thoughts? Vulnerability. How important is vulnerability? Was vulnerability for you to get to healing with Bob? It's incredibly important. Courage. What's her name?

The vulnerability expert. Oh, Brené Brown. Thank you. God, what a great book. So taking a beat from her, she asked a group of military leaders, who here has seen any act of courage without vulnerability?

you know, and no one raised their hand, and the head officer says, ma'am, I've been in three tours, and he's like, there is no courage without vulnerability.

And so, yeah, it's vulnerability. I grew up thinking it was wussy. Mm-hmm. You know? So did I. You're a wuss. Yep. And I would, when I was the very abusive dad, he would spank me if I would cry.

So I went a lot of years… You cry at a moment, you cry at a frickin' drop of a hat now. Oh, yeah, I'm an emotional guy. But back then, for years before I was healed, I didn't.

I just bottled it all up. And so being vulnerable enough to feel emotion was a huge deal. So I have, I still don't think I've done like the, you've done the work in the last year where you really feel it to me, letting myself feel it for 10 minutes was like, whoo, that was a lot, you know, and it still helped.

Yeah. How important then is that vulnerability? You know, when you work with CEOs and founders, are the best ones the most vulnerable? Oh, yeah. Yeah?

Oh, yeah. What would you say to somebody who's like a doctor listening to this? Because they're not necessarily designed to be vulnerable. They're designed to be kind of a bit of a robot.

Totally. How much of a better healer you think they would become? And you can't, if you're listening to this doctor and you're thinking, oh, he wants to go, we want to go cry together.

That's not it because you can probably wouldn't hurt. True. But it's, but it's more like, I'm going to take this on as though I really need it. Cause sometimes doc doctors in particular come in with, I tried that before and that didn't work.

To come at it like, I'm going to try the crap out of this tool or this technique or whatever. I'm going to try the crap out of it. That is as though I could actually use it and not, this is silly.

Because I think some of the best tools are also the most simple, but things that are simple to do are also simple to not do. We know we should eat moderate amounts of healthy food and exercise regularly.

It's so simple. Pretty hard in America, but yeah. But not everybody's doing it. And the same thing with even transforming your mind to be more resilient or to transform your identity to be a more successful business person.

Same thing. Yeah. What's the word that you're most proud of in your work with clients? Where do you get the most unbelievable amounts of satisfaction where you go, that's why I was created?

It's the person who, a lot of people, I start working with them because they want to make more money and transform their business. Great. I'm most proud of the fact that I'm, well, I'm always secretly thinking, great, we're going to do that, but you have no idea.

Because usually I always say my greatest, my biggest fans are my clients' spouses.

Journaling, Healing, and the Power of Presence

And it's because helping them be more present at home and therefore more present at work and having them go, holy crap, I'm more confident than I've ever been, but I'm also enjoying my journey.

both, and again, with my wife or husband, and with my children, and there's, and I'm living authentically, like whatever there authentically is. Seeing people who think that they're happy also be learning to be fulfilled and peaceful in the midst of crazy work.

You can't put a price on peace and fulfillment. Like somebody who all of a sudden actually freaking loves what they do again to have a passion again. That's very fulfilling to see someone not loving, not loving stupid stuff, but just loving in general life again.

That's fulfilling, man. Yeah. There's a lot of doctors listening to this right now and they're like, I haven't felt that in a long time. Yeah. I haven't felt that in a long time.

How do you become more present? be intentional about it. So this is one of the most like- Okay, but you gotta- No, I'm gonna, no, I'm gonna, so check it out.

So I'm with the client, we're gonna, you know, I'm always distracted, you know, and I'm not home a lot. So, and then I get home and they're working on charts in the living room while the kids are there or they're on their phone or whatever it is.

Say, all right, so this is where as a coach, you step into the more, I'm checking on you. We're gonna check, I'm gonna be checking on you. let's make some guidelines.

At what time are you going to put your phone away and be completely present with your 13-year-old son? Mm-

hmm. Oh, well, and they, him and Hawn, at what time?

And they're, well, he does come into the living room. You can actually plan it. It's like, it's not very sexy. Sometimes when parents have to start planning sex, for instance, like, well, we got to plan it, but I want it to be romantic.

No, you can, you might have to plan it if you haven't had sex in three months. That's okay for, at the beginning. It's okay to get started. So you start, you forge it.

They're going to put their phone away at X o'clock and they are going to ask their son a question. They get to decide what the question and just like you have to hold some people, some people are never present.

They're never freaking present. Put your freaking phone in another room too. It doesn't get to be right there. Just that is like a big deal for a lot of people.

And then you're gonna sit there and you're not gonna do anything else except be present. What if you're just gonna be there? It's gonna be rough. And then you learn, it's just like anything.

When you start bench pressing and you haven't bench pressed in a long time, you can't do very much. And you can only do like, I was gonna do five sets like I did in college.

No, you're gonna do a few sets of being present. Trust me, you can't do five sets like I was in college. Right, you're gonna do a few sets of being present.

And then you're gonna do a few sets with your wife being present. And then you're gonna but I'm somebody's gonna encourage you and hold you accountable this because everything in you is gonna fight being present Yeah, but when you are present and you learn how to have an interaction there's another thing is just learning to communicate more effectively is that you can get so much more out of an interaction with somebody when you learn to listen to understand rather than listening to respond that's another thing and that you have to be present to do that but then all of a sudden you leave a discussion and go you feel something because A you're present and B Walls were down and you got you gave so much more and you got so much more.

So How do you do? How do you make someone more present was the question? Help someone be more present with a lot of structure and encouragement and accountability.

I was listening to I think it was Tony Robbins one time and He talks about everything has a place I'm pretty sure it was Tony I 99% sure as Tony. And he says, everything has a place.

And he was talking about how with COVID, place didn't mean anything anymore because everything was in one place. People were sheltered in place, working from home.

They didn't have home offices set up. And so they were doing things like working in bed. Well, they'd get up in the morning, go to the bathroom, come back, sit in bed all day, and the bed would be covered with stuff.

And they couldn't turn their mind off because they had been in their bed all day working. And so then they couldn't fall asleep or they don't want to have sex or whatever.

And it made me think of something that a mentor of mine told me. And he said, I'm going to give you a rule for success. And I said, what's that? And he goes, bedrooms are for two things.

And they both begin with the letter S. I said, what's that? He goes, sleep and sex. He said, there are to be no TVs, no cell phones, nothing in the bedroom, no work ever done in the bedroom, no office in the bedroom.

They're for two things. You're either in there sleeping or fucking. This guy was like 70 years old. Yeah, it was great. Working at private country clubs and golf clubs from 16 up until 30, and he used to be a golf pro, you meet some pretty amazing people, you get some pretty amazing life advice.

And he was right. He was absolutely right. And I thought of that when I heard Tony talking about how everything just kind of got mashed together during COVID, because everybody had to all of a sudden work from home.

That there was no separation between anything. So, cool. What are some final thoughts you want to tell people when it comes to forgiveness? You're a doctor, you're listening to this, you're watching this, and latch on to one thing that my dad told me, and I'll put it in several different languages.

You know, like the Bible has several different versions? I'll put it in different versions. My dad would tell me, he was a pastor, so he said, you'll never live in the fullness of your God-given potential until you make forgiveness a priority.

But the truth is, you'll never live in the fullness of your doctor potential unless you let go of the resentment and bitterness that you have. You'll never live in the spousal potential, your spousal potential, your parental potential.

You just, you can't have the fireball eating at you even if you're, it's just a compartment on the inside while at the same time being the best you, that you can be.

So, and everyone's journey looks different and I know I used words that people don't use because that's not their language of Christianity and that's totally fine.

because there's been several thousand, across the world in the last 50 years, two to three thousand research studies done on forgiveness. Most of them have been done without a spiritual component.

Really? Yeah. Only about 15% have the spiritual component. And they still find a place. It's just if you work on forgiveness, you will get an improvement in freedom and peace and healing.

And the correlation is actually time spent. To work on forgiveness. Yes. So some of it is empathy training. It's all different kinds. So the point is, find a path that works for you.

And it can just be the tiniest thing at a time. And it's like the thing you chip away at, but can make such an incredible difference. Like, huh, I think about my ex-wife and I don't want to punch a wall.

That's good because then when I see my nurse who came in and asked me for something after I thought about my wife, I don't get snippy with her and I can actually be a more peaceful guy in general because I'm not trying to act like everything's cool, but I'm hanging onto this frustration towards people.

That's about forgiveness. Forgiveness really to me is the pathway to light and unconditional love.

Forgiveness in Coaching, Business, and Family

And I think forgiveness for me, from my perspective, until you can forgive yourself and love yourself unconditionally, I find it virtually impossible to forgive others and love them unconditionally.

Because we have so much condemnation that exists in our lives. And especially, I've worked with entrepreneurs for 25 years now. coached them for almost, yeah, since 2004 I've been coaching.

So 21 years I've coached entrepreneurs. And they're probably the hardest people in the world on themselves. Big time. Next to doctors. Now I work with doctors.

And they're unbelievably hard on themselves. I'll have doctors who just start with us and then be like, oh, I'm sorry I haven't gone on and gone through the first five videos.

I'm like, you signed up yesterday. Like, relax. Like, just take a breath. It's OK. You're going to be fine. It's really fascinating. Tell everybody about the movie.

So this movie that is out, where do they get it? And what's it called? It's called Live to Forgive. It came out in 2011 and it has a Christian component.

I'm just letting people know that. So you've got Tom Cruise with action thrillers, and then somewhere, and then you've got romances and dramas. And at the very bottom of the list, you have Christian documentaries of the market need.

And then there's Live to Forgive. It came out in 2011. You can get it on YouTube at this point. I also have it at livetoforgive.com if you want a digital version for $4.99. But that's how you can get it.

And you see the scene of me in the hotel room with the man who murdered my mother. Oh, they filmed it live. Yeah, I brought a documentarian with me on that trip.

Are you serious? Wow. Yeah. One of the coolest parts, I started a story earlier about asking him if he could forgive himself, and I asked my sister the same thing.

My sister, Gianna, when we started filming the documentary, the key people in my life, I said, do you think you could forgive Bob? And she said, not only would I not forgive him, but I believe there's a law in Washington that says if i ever see him i can take his life there's no law like that she was crazy but she wanted to kill him and i asked her the same question i asked him do you think would you be willing to join me in making forgiveness a priority and so you can find the freedom i did she said sure fast forward one year I'm at a church and I'm telling my story of forgiveness and at the end I say, ladies and gentlemen, please help me welcome to appear on the stage someone who God loves and I love as well.

Help me welcome Bob. And Bob stands up. He flew up from Tennessee. He joins me and my sister came to church that day too. And she said, this is one year after saying she would kill him.

And after making forgiveness a priority for a year, she walked into a little room before the service and said, I'm ready. And she walked in, gave him a hug.

She said, I forgive you, but I didn't do this for you. I did it for me. And then she pointed to her three kids. So, during the service, I call Bob up and he begins to tell his story about how his purpose became helping other people who had done really bad things.

He was uniquely qualified. And without being prompted in the audience, my sister Chana stands up, walks up, puts her arm, so the three, imagine this, me here, I'm holding the microphone for Bob.

I wanted to kill him and fantasized about it for years. Bob a year earlier tried to tried to kill himself because of self condemnation. And now he's walking in his purpose.

And on the other side of him, a woman who a year ago, my sister said she would kill him if she ever saw him and by making forgiveness of priority for a year was now had her arm around him.

But the coolest part was the three kids who are looking up and thinking, Oh, this is what we do? This is what happens when bad things happen, we forgive.

Okay. And my sister said she can tell a big difference between her oldest child who grew up with her in the unforgiving years and her younger one who came into consciousness as a kid in the, as she had forgiven.

And what a difference her parenting and how she parented so much different and with so much less emotional instability and volatility. And so if we can forgive those people, you can forgive, we can all forgive anyone for anything.

It's not gonna be easy, but it's possible, and it's worth it. Yeah, it's a beautiful, beautiful story, beautiful way to end. Dean, thank you for taking the time.

Thanks for having me. I appreciate your story very, very much. And get his book, folks, The Forgiveness Habit. There it is. Whoops, there we go, like that.

There we go, The Forgiveness Habit. On Amazon and everywhere they sell books. Especially Amazon. Especially Amazon. Thank you, my friend. Thanks, Matt.

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