

Speaker 1: Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave: You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. I am recording this live in Hawaii with Genpo Roshi, who's been on the show once before. Genpo has become a friend, and he's a Buddhist Master who teaches the Big Mind form of meditation and has been studying for about 40 years, and I wanted to take this episode to talk about happiness specifically with him and what he's learned from his path, which has been a very long and interesting path, so we're going to go into it for about a half hour, and I think you'll find a lot of really insightful and useful information because if you want to perform better as a human being and you're unhappy all the time, you're doing it wrong. Genpo, thank you for taking the time out on this vacation that I think we're both having here. You just finished teaching at one of your five-day retreats, and I appreciate the extra time to have an interview for our listeners.

First, for people who missed the first episode with you, can you walk me through your history? What made you become a Zen Master, and what were the big form of experiences, and then let's dial in specially on what you've learned about happiness in your own path?

Genpo: You know, Dave, that's an interesting question. I've been asked similar questions a lot, but you said, "What made you become a Zen Master?" is kind of interesting, so I have to backtrack. February of '71, I had my big opening or awakening that changed my life forever. I now can say forever. Right? Then, at that point, I wasn't sure it was going to be that forever kind of thing, but that awakening ...

I left everything else behind. I gave notice my teaching career that I was going to leave in June, and I did. I went off to the mountains, and I was sitting on a mountain peak in Glacier National Park, and it's called '40 Mountain Peak', and why is from that spot, you look down at 40 mountain peaks.

Dave: Wow.

Genpo: It was pretty incredible, and I'd hiked in. It's a 50-mile hike from Glacier to Waterton National Park, and I was sitting there and contemplating, meditating, and I realized not that I would become a Zen Master, but I was a Zen Master, that that was my life's journey, and that yes, I wasn't really at the time a Zen Master. I hadn't even met a Zen teacher yet, but I have had this profound opening in February, and here, it was in June, and I realized, this was my calling. This was my mission, and now, I just had to fill in the gaps. I had to find a Zen teacher, and I had to study and get the transmission and become legitimately so, but it was like this was who I am, and I use this a lot in ...

In fact, I help other people with this too. Rather than your goal is out there and you have to reach it, already seeing yourself as having fulfilled it, and they come from that place. It's already a done deal. Now, I just have to do go through what it takes to make, manifest it as a reality, and that's been my trip for the last 46 or seven years now.

Dave: Over that time, you've definitely focused on happiness, and you've been a, I'd say a little bit disruptive because you've been talking about, "Is there a way to achieve some of the states of advanced meditation more quickly using different breathing exercises or different postures", and things like that, sort of evolving ancient wisdom, which is being a disruptor is always a little bit challenging.

Genpo: Right. Disruptive.

Dave: Yeah. I guess that's why they call it that. The same thing happens in medicine.

Genpo: Right.

Dave: The doctors would come around and say, "What if what you've put on your plate is as important as the drugs you're taking in", and they're heretics, and then a few years later say, "Oh, maybe there's some value to that", and then things start to change, and I think even one of the people sort of poking the bear for lack of a better analogy there saying, "Is there a way to evolve at least some parts of teaching so that someone who maybe doesn't have 10 years to go spend on a mountaintop tend to at least get some of the benefits?", which would contribute to their happiness and their ability to just be a better human being.

Genpo: Right. Back in, I think it was '73, I was living in Santa Barbara, and I remember being on this walk where I realized that the most important thing for me now was to find a way to help others reach the state of enlightenment or awakening, which happened very spontaneous for me. I hadn't been training and practicing anything. I was just sitting on a mountaintop, the Mojave Desert, and it happened. It's a grace of God or whatever.

It just happened, and I had no practice previously to get there, so I was realizing that somehow, this approach of Zen where we sit in a monastery for years and decades and so on, was going to marry Western psychotherapy. There was going to be an integration or a marriage. In China, Buddhism married Taoism, and became what we know as 'Zen', so Zen is a marriage between Buddhism and Taoism, and I was contemplating there as I was walking in Santa Barbara, "What's going to be the marriage here?", and I realized it's going to be Western psychotherapy. Not necessarily Western religion, but Western psychotherapy, and Zen, Japanese Zen was learning it. In 1999, so whatever that difference is, because that was kind of my thing, my calling you could say, my question, how to help people awaken in the most expedient way, in a way that is not necessarily dependent on years and years of training, meditating, and living on a monastery, and I developed or created what we call the 'Big Mind', now called 'Big Mind/Big Heart Process'.

What that was was I realized that everything is already inherent within all of us, so the state of the highest state of enlightenment is already there, but we don't know how to tap into it. We don't know how to get to that place, that deep place within us that allows us to manifest that kind of enlightened state or enlightened presence. I was training in Voice Dialogue work, and I started that in 1984, '83, '84 with Hal Stone, the founder of Voice Dialogue, and I trained with him until June twice a week, and he

became one of my mentors and teachers, and I realized that there was something to be, let's say integrated into Zen practice, that a way to do it was ask to speak to that part of the brain that's already awakened, and I called that 'Big Mind'. Most of us are operating from a place where our mind is contracted. We call it 'Ego-centered' or 'Self-centered', and we're coming from a place of dualism, where we see ourself separate from the world, separate from others, so you and I are seen as separate.

I'm not Dave. Dave's not me. What I realized was that we could tap in not just to emotions and feelings, but altered states of consciousness, just by asking to speak to it, so I was working with a young gentleman who had just graduated from the university, and I was with a group of 80 people I was teaching, and he was this one participant, and I said to him, "May I speak to Big Mind please?" The moment he said, "Okay. You're now speaking to Big Mind", I said, "Look in and just see how big you are. See if you can find any limit, any borders, any parameters."

Now, the key here is if I'm speaking as the self, and I look into the mind, it's kind of you see thoughts, you see things, but you don't have that experience, but the moment I said, "Let me speak to Big Mind", now, from that place, and our listeners can just do that right here, right now, you just say, "Okay. I'm Big Mind." Now, look in and see just how big you are, and immediately, you can't find the size. You can't find the shape. You can't find the color. You can't find the parameter.

You can't find the limit. You're limitless. You're boundless. You're eternal. You're infinite. You don't find anything called 'Mind'.

That is the Zen experience. Now, that's just part of the journey because we have then the experience that "I am unborn, and I am undying", but we don't live that way, so it takes years to, we call it 'Integrate', and live that, live our talk, walk the talk, be able to manifest living in a place of complete happiness, complete freedom, complete peace, so it does take time, but the experience, a state experience is immediate. It takes no time. It's outside the parameters of space and time. It's outside time and space, but to actually manifest and live that of course takes time, and that took me many years.

It's only in the last, let's say five, six years I could truly say I'm happy. It wasn't something I even searched for because I was taught, and what my teacher used to say, "Happiness is transient. It's impermanent. Happiness comes and goes", and that's true. There is a condition of happiness that we all experience from time to time.

When conditions are right, we feel really happy, and the conditions change, and we're no longer happy, but there is an unconditional state of happiness that's not based on conditions, where we are just basically sustainably happy. We just come from a place of happiness. This place is not based on conditions. It's not based on that somebody may die, and you feel maybe not so happy about that. You feel a lot of empathy, a lot of sympathy, a lot of compassion for your loved ones, and for them, and so on, but you're coming from a place of happiness.

That's your basic foundation, and then you experience happiness, and that on a conditional level can be more or less depending on. Now, in the conditional, I found there's a few things that seemed to be required, and why it took me so long to really be able to say, "I'm truly happy." I wouldn't have said this five years ago.

Dave: Would a traditional Zen Master say they're happy and if it they're

Genpo: Not my own.

Dave: Okay. Not your-

Genpo: Not my own.

Dave: Okay.

Genpo: Tibetans will say that.

Dave: Okay.

Genpo: I meant Tibetan Lamas who will say, "I'm happy", but in Zen, my teacher said, "Happiness, it's not our goal."

Dave: Okay.

Genpo: Okay? Understanding and realization is, so realization is important because one of the things that keeps us from being happy is that we're constantly seeking something other than the way it is, something greater, better, happier, stronger, whatever, and so when we're seeking, we can't be that happy. There is a certain happiness from seeking that comes. We identify as a seeker, and we have a purpose, we have a mission in life, and that gives us direction, and we're quite happy with that, but there's still a gap. There's one who seeks, and there's one who finds, and the seeker never finds. The seeker is always a seeker, so if we're identifying with the part of ourself that's continuously seeking, we're never there, where it's always just a carrot stick away.

The carrot at the end of the stick away in front of a horse, and so we're always seeking. When we see seeking or access that part of our brain that is not a seeker, not seeking that's already there, then there's happiness on a conditional level. My teacher in some ways I don't think ever reached that. In fact, I was here in Hawaii, and I was getting out of the car. My wife said to me, "Do you think Roshi is happy?"

Roshi means Zen Master. That was my teacher. We call them 'Roshi'. I was getting out of the car. I said, "No", and I walked out of the car, and I realized what I just said. I just said, "My teacher will never be happy".

I don't know what the hell am I doing. I mean, this was 1986, so I had been studying with him since 1972, so I just spent 14 years, and I'm saying, "My teacher is not happy and never will be." That really brought up what I call 'Great doubt'. What the hell have I

been doing all these years? What have I given my life to? Really, it gave my life too. I completely gave everything up and entered the monastery and studied with him all those years.

This is all about if I'm not happy, and I was sitting there, and I had this great awakening where I realized that it's a very conditioned thing, and I became one with the whole Cosmos, the whole Universe in a profound way, and became one with him, one with all the Buddhism ancestors, and I remember greeting him about a month later and I gave him an embrace, and it was the first time that there was no separation between he and I. What happened was I accepted him completely as he is, and there was no longer this idea that he had to become or be happy or perfect, and in that moment, I no longer had to become perfect or happy. It was a state of complete, you could say radical acceptance of who I am and who he was.

Dave: You didn't feel like you needed to become happy, but you still wanted to become happy?

Genpo: No. Not at that point.

Dave: Okay.

Genpo: At that point, happiness was not an issue. At that point, it was there was nothing to do, and so on, that ... Yeah. That was '86, and I can honestly say it wasn't until just a few years ago that I really can say I'm happy, so that's a lot of time in between.

Dave: A few big things happened in that.

Genpo: A few big things happened.

Dave: You want to briefly talk about that?

Genpo: One of them was of course that I then moved into that Zen center in 1972, and I trained until his death, 1994. I trained very closely, intimately with my teacher, and became a successor, a Sensei, a Dharma teacher, and eventually a Roshi in 1996, a Zen Master, but I had numerous experiences in that period. I had mentioned earlier to you in '94, I had a profound one, so there was a '86 experience, and then there was a '94 where actually, whatever enlightenment I had attained dropped away. We say you have ascend the mountain, and then you have to descend the mountain, so I had descended it, and then in 1994 was my first descent, where you let go of the enlightened experience, and you see yourself as an ordinary human being, no long as just the Buddha, but now is also an ordinary human being. That was very profound, and it changed my way of teaching. It changed everything about our Zen center, which was at that point located in Salt Lake City.

In that, I felt like it was no longer a monastic practice. We've changed it into more where it was accessible for people in the world, ordinary people, and it became less monastic. At that point, we had 50 monks training there in Salt Lake with me, and then

we opened it up to more to the public, and I started sending the monks out and go share whatever you've learned. Go out and share it. In 2011 was another descent.

We say that there's five stages in towards enlightenment. The first is a glimpse or an enlightened experience. The second is all about devotion and surrender, letting go, letting go, letting go, because of course, almost all our problems are caused by clinging, by holding on. That's a cause of suffering, so we hold on to things, so the process of letting go, letting go, letting go. The third stage is great enlightenment.

That's what happened in '86, and that is a complete loss of ego, and ego drops away, and that's called 'Great enlightenment' or 'Great death'. In '94 was the first descent, so that's the fourth stage where you let go of whatever that is, that enlightenment, and you realize again, there's a greater loss. The ego always comes back. It always comes back, so, and then you know that we've talked about that, but the second one, it was a more complete, almost to the point like I felt like a puddle lying on the floor two consecutive nights, where basically you were so gone that I was dysfunctional, and I still, I had to teach. I was teaching all day long, so I had to pull myself together by 5:00 AM and go out and teach all day, and then the next night, again, the same thing, but that allowed me to see that we need to embrace the ego.

We need to love our ego and appreciate our ego, and validate it for what it does for us, which takes care of us, but we're not run by it. That became a very important point in 1994. In 2011 was the second fall for me, second descent of the mountain, and that one, basically, I lost everything. Everything, reputation, spouse, students, my children. I mean, everything, money.

Everything fell away. That sent me in to a kind of real looking again, "What's going on? How do I find true peace?", because I was agitated, and now, I was feeling a lot of stress, so I came up with a whole new way of meditating, which was much different than the traditional zazen, which is in a straight full lotus or half lotus posture, back straight, eyes open, and very concentrated, and where you tend to melt snow literally. We talked about that. I changed it to sitting comfortably in a chair, legs down, relaxed, eyes closed, and going into very deep states, what we call 'Samadi'. Very deep states of peace and tranquility, where there's very thin line between being awake and asleep.

I'm totally present, totally awake, and yet, the body is almost fully asleep. It's so restful that it's probably worth double the amount of time sleeping, because I'll spend maybe two, three, four hours a night sleeping, and I'll spend anywhere from two to four hours a night meditating. It's very rejuvenating and very relaxing. In this state, there is a kind of sweetness to it that is very, I could say, almost intoxicating in the sense that it's probably the nicest state I can imagine being in, and it's, I'd rather do that than sleep. I'd rather do that than just about anything else, and so I look forward to the nights and I look forward to the times of sitting, and I generally, whenever I wake up at night, it doesn't matter what time it is, then I just go sit for a couple hours and meditate.

Dave: You've mentioned that through that practice and through a few other things, that you feel like now, after a long path, you've cracked the code for what it takes to have happiness at least most of the time.

Genpo: Yeah.

Dave: Not that happiness because I'm doing something really fun, but the happiness that's omnipresent.

Genpo: Omnipresent. Yeah, and I was mentioning, I think there are a few things that seem to have to fall into place or be present, and one of them is freedom, liberation. As long as we're not free both on a physical and spiritual/mental level, I think we can't be really happy. Not sustainably happy, so there has to be a freedom of mind and the freedom also physically. In other words, we're not stressed over finances, over where the next meal is going to come from, or how we're going to take care of our children, and the mortgages or something, so there has to be a-

Dave: Money can't buy happiness?

Genpo: I didn't say that. As you know very well, it does not.

Dave: But having enough money helps?

Genpo: Enough just helps. Enough money that you feel somewhat secure. Of course, security is false anyways, but you feel like you're not worried, you're not stressing over how you're going to pay the bills. Okay? That kind of freedom is also important I think.

I think in the time where we could just go live on a beach in Maui, here, I mean, I'm too old to probably go do that, although, that was always my ace in the hole, and I used to carry a ticket to Hawaii. I figure that's at best or worst. I just go to Hawaii and live on the beach-

Dave: Eat coconuts and you'll be fine.

Genpo: Exactly. Eat papaya and all that, mangoes. There needs to be that freedom, that liberation, and then peace of mind, and I believe that most of us are in some kind of internal conflict. There's a conflict going on that prevents us from being at peace. It was just only I think two years ago that my partner said, "You don't seem to have any internal conflict", and I realized, "She's right."

I don't know when it left, but it's gone. There's no internal conflict, so we're not at war with ourselves because if we are, of course, there's no happiness. What I found is we need that freedom, that peace and liberation, and then we can find that kind of happiness that we're talking about that's more sustainable happy, and not just conditional.

Dave: It requires freedom, it requires peace, and it requires basic needs just being met?

Genpo: Yes, and security. Some kind of false sense of ... Yeah, basic needs being met, thaten we're not ... Yeah.

Dave: Now, we could call that even 'Safety'.

Genpo: Yeah.

Dave: Now, for someone maybe listening to the show, they're commuting into work right now, and they're going into work to get a paycheck that probably isn't quite as big as they'd like it to be, that feeling of safety, so there's this one hurdle that you can't overcome, so just spending less money on things that aren't useful or increasing your career and things like that. Those can help you to get those basic needs met. There's one study from a few years ago that said that they were quantifying happiness on an income level, and they said, "For the average American, it was about 85,000 now", which is a sizeable salary actually, and it also depends on dependence.

Genpo: Right. Right. Dependence.

Dave: This was an average of kids and mortgages and all, but so, let's assume that people realize, "Okay, there is some way that I can make sure that I am economically comfortable, and I'm going to set myself on a path to doing that."

Genpo: Right. Right.

Dave: Then, the next one, the number of people have said, "Dave, how do I handle the voice in my head, the inner critic and all that?"

Genpo: Right.

Dave: That's the inner conflict you're talking about.

Genpo: That's right. Exactly.

Dave: To achieve happiness, you got to have enough basically, a place to live and food, and things like that, but then, now you're faced with that other big challenge. What is the fastest or easiest way to at least remove most of the inner conflict for people?

Genpo: That's a very good question. I know it's a little easy and maybe naïve on my part to say you can do it without years of practice.

Dave: Yeah.

Genpo: I mean, it has been 46, 47 years of meditating, so I would be I think doing injustice to say it didn't take time, and it doesn't take a lot of meditation because I used to spend as much as 10, 12 hours a day when I was living these retreats. Meditating one year was as much as nine months of the year, so there's a lot of meditation. There's a lot to be ... I think the Big Mind process, I now have what I call 'Three legs of the stool' that I feel are very important for my students that I tell them are essential. One is meditating.

Yeah, you do need to meditate. How much, I leave that up to them. I myself will do anywhere from one to about four hours a day generally. One is kind of small amount. I do. I rarely do that, but let's say one to four hours a day of deep, relaxed meditation.

I think that's pretty crucial, and it's where there is no goal and you don't have an agenda. You don't have any aim in your meditation, so you're meditating in the voice, what I call the 'Apex'. It's beyond thinking and not thinking, so I call it 'Non-thinking'. You embrace your thinking mind, because a lot of meditators think they must stop the mind, stop the thoughts, and the more you try to do that is I try to wash blood off with blood. The more you try to stop thinking, the more you think, so you have to get through this in partial place, this place where there's no preference for thinking over not thinking, and there's no judging your thinking if you're thinking and there's no judging if you're not thinking, in which you really do judge your non-thinking, but you do judge your thinking, so you have no preference for thinking over not thinking, for seeking over not seeking, because as long as you're seeking, it's kind of what you were talking about earlier.

When is enough money? I've just decided it's enough. I don't have that much, but I've decided it's enough, and that decision also allowed me peace of mind because I'm no longer seeking to be richer or get bigger income or anything like that. It's enough. I can relax.

Dave: You remind me of a time in my life when I was 26. I made \$6 million at the company that held Google's first servers, and I remember over lunch, I'm talking with another co-worker in a similar situation, and I said, "You know, I'm just going to keep doing this until I have \$10 million because I know I'll be happy when I have \$10 million." What you're saying there about decide when you have enough, and the reality is that I had more than enough when I was a young man, and so I kept doing things, and what do you know?

Genpo: Yeah. Right.

Dave: I lost my \$6 million. A little bit of ego going on there, but yeah, so your point there is you may actually already have enough depending on if you want to live a minimal lifestyle, because one of the conflicts that I've had over the years, there's been times in my life where I would love to go off like I did to Tibet in for a couple of months and learned meditation from the masters, but I also have a career, and now a family, and there aren't many people listening that go, "Yeah. I can meditate for 10 hours a day", because you get fired if you did that.

Genpo: Yeah. Right. Exactly.

Dave: Then, you're happy to try talk you out of it.

Genpo: I made a meditation out of it.

Dave: Right. Yeah. You get paid to meditate. It's different. Right?

Genpo: I get paid to do it. Yeah. That was smart. Yeah. At some point, and it took me to actually the sale of my house here in Kapalua, I really didn't reach that happiness until that sale went through because that was costing me a fortune, and it was keeping a stress level

on me. Once I sold that, the happiness just came because I did feel that security, it's enough, so I do say there is a physical element of some sense of, "It's enough", and you're secure, and you can be happy.

Dave: I'm working on putting together advice for people, if I said I wish that I hadn't had when I was a young man, a lot of the Bulletproof, the nutritional things, the cognitive enhancement, all these things are things that if someone would have just told me this, it would have saved me so much work, and struggle, and suffering, and things like that. A piece of advice I've heard a couple times from really successful people is that when you get your first big win, whether it's a win, fall of some sort or another, or if something happens, you finally saved a million dollars or whatever your number is, that they say, "Put that aside, manage it very conservatively because when you have that and you know that it's safe, it's not in high-risk investments, in Cryptocurrencies or whatever, that it will magically trigger that feeling of safety, but also freedom."

Genpo: I agree. Of freedom. Yeah.

Dave: I can quit my job tomorrow because I have what we called a long time ago, probably still called, it's called 'Fuck you money'.

Genpo: Okay. You're calling it a 'Nest egg', but-

Dave: If your boss come to you and says, "Do this stuff that you hate", you can just say, "You know what? No", but if you have to make your next mortgage payment, the answer is, "Yes, sir."

Genpo: No, fuck you. No. I mean, you're absolutely right. I totally agree with that. That's what I'm saying. One's enough, and I know what I was going to say. As long as it's never enough and we're always seeking more, we're never going to be happy.

Dave: Yeah.

Genpo: I guarantee that. As long as ... More is better, and we always think, "I need more and more", but we have to get to that place where we can make that decision, "Okay. Now is enough. I have enough, and I can stop seeking to become wealthier, or more famous, or more prosperous", or whatever, so that seeking keeps us from really being. You say-

Dave: You can still achieve more, but not be seeking more.

Genpo: But not seeking it. Like I feel I'm honestly not seeking it anymore. It doesn't mean that I'm not doing a lot. I'm teaching as much as I ever. It doesn't look like it to me because I don't have a Zen center anymore, and I'm not busy 24/7.

I have a lot of time to myself. I'm here for three weeks on Maui. I have a lot of a spare time, but if you look at my schedule on BigMind.org, it looks like, "My God, how does he do it all?", but it feels like very little compared to what I was doing. I'm not seeking because I love what I do. I love sharing. I love talking to people.

I love seeing people awaken and have insights, and find their own happiness and their own peace, so there is something that's pulling me, but I'm not being driven by this push here that's got to prove himself or achieve something, and been there, done that kind of thing.

Dave: It's an interesting thing for people who are looking to be more happy in their life, the idea to stop seeking more happiness or stop seeking more of anything, and start allowing, which is very counterintuitive.

Genpo: [crosstalk 00:35:08], but that's the key.

Dave: The same thing happened with me when I started Bulletproof. I'm going to write down all this stuff that I spent hundreds of thousands of dollars learning and the stuff that I wish I had known, and the idea is if five people read my little blog and it has the effect on them that it would have had on me, then like I win karma points. Like it's an act of service, and I just wish someone had done that for me. That was the genesis of the company, which has gone on and on, but I never started Bulletproof out of seeking.

Genpo: Right. Right.

Dave: Like what I'm going to do is I already had a good job with a salary I was comfortable enough and all that, and so to be able to write sizeable books and do this show, and also run a venture-backed company, and be, what I like to think as a good husband and father and all, I don't know how I do it all, and if I was seeking on all those levels, I don't think I could, but it's more about doing the right thing and just allowing amazing stuff to happen.

Genpo: That's the keyword if I was to say allowing is the keyword, allowing it to happen, allowing yourself to be allowing things to manifest rather than seeking you're trying or efforting, and that's ... I started to talk about the three legs of a stool.

Dave: Yeah.

Genpo: I forgot. One of them is the meditation of not seeking. Okay. Not striving, and just learning to be. We call it 'Shikantaza'.

It means to just sit, to just be, to just be still, and relaxed. The other is your Big Mind work, because I do feel that that is a technology that has allowed people to experience an awakening, to experience insights into the self that would normally take years and years, even decades to have, and they can have that one hour say or two hours.

Dave: I got to give that a shot.

Genpo: Yeah, and I do these workshops, which really allow people to experience that very deeply.

Dave: Yeah.

Genpo: That's the second. Then, the third, I still have people do koan practice, because koan practice, and a lot of our listeners may not know what it is, but they could look up the word. The koans are, you could say insolvable problems with the rational mind. You have to transcend the dualistic, rational, cognitive mind, and go beyond, find a place within you that transcends that dualism, where you're one with, and so you have koans, and you become one with the koan. Then, how do you share that? Like you're sharing your things.

Koans teach you how to share your awakened experience and probably the most precise and alive way that most of the time, we depend on some kind of conceptualization. We depend on our kind of interpreting, and it's not live. It's like if you shove me into the water right now, it's not that cold, but it's cold enough for me. If you shove me in that water and I go in and I get out, and I say, "Wow, Dave, that was really cold", that's dead. If you shove in that water and I go, "That's cold. That's really cold", that's a live way of expressing enlightenment or the experience, the direct experience, whereas the other is dead. You've been there, you went into the water, and you start retelling, "Wow, that was cold. That probably is like 70, 80 or something", and I like it 90.

Dave: Right.

Genpo: It's dead, so koans help us express the teachings in a live, vibrant way, a very energetic way that's living versus dead. With these three legs, I say they all complement each other, meditation, the Big Mind work, and the koan work really supplement and augment each other. They really allow the other, because they each have a quality tool that is very unique, and the others won't quite do.

Dave: Those are the tools that help to turn off the seeking and the voice I had.

Genpo: And the happiness.

Dave: And the happiness, so that you've got your overall arching happiness strategy, which is have enough to feel safe and that your basic needs are met, have freedom, [implement 00:39:46] that's your freedom to do the things that are important to you and all, and then the inner peace and the inner peace, three pieces.

Genpo: Yeah. Not just one, but lack of conflict.

Dave: The lack of conflict from maybe those last two both come from the things you just mentioned from the Big Mind and meditation.

Genpo: Yeah. Then, be in a loving, supportive relationship. That is really helpful.

Dave: Now, some Zen Masters are not in relationships at all. Right?

Genpo: Then, they have to be in a loving, supportive relationship with themselves.

Dave: Okay.

Genpo: Yeah. I'm in a very loving and supportive relationship, and I would say that has certainly helped me find my peace and happiness. I would say if I hadn't found that, maybe I still would be happy, but certainly, that has really added to be in a relationship where, I mean, it is about love, but it's also about complementing one another, and I don't mean just being complementary. I mean, complementing in a sense that you're really working together, and I think the key there is complete honesty and transparency.

Dave: Yeah.

Genpo: Like in our relationship, we know anything could happen, but at least we don't lie. We're always truthful of one another, and we come every ... We're transparent, and that complements each other. We help each other grow, and we tell the truth, and if we see something in the other, like if she sees me getting inflated again, she'll pound me. If I see her being too frightened or fearful in her life, worried too much, I'll tell her, but we do it in a loving way that we're really learning and growing together and supportive of one another. I think that's also very important.

Dave: You were that, a good relationship is another probable thing to increase happiness.

Genpo: Yes. If we're in a relationship. Yeah.

Dave: Okay.

Genpo: Yeah. I would.

Dave: Beautiful. Genpo, thanks for sharing your recipe for happiness developed after only 49, 47 years of working on it with a few falls in the middle that have been instrumental and teaching you some things.

Genpo: Right. Thanks.

Dave: If you're listening now, this is one of our shorter episodes, and none of those things we just talked about are super easy to achieve, and that it takes some work to have a career, or some saving, or investing whatever you decide to do, so that you feel like you have your financial needs met, but it's worth spending time and effort on that if you haven't done it, and if you find that your inner conflict is sabotaging you there, then you got to do your work on that, and that's really something that happened to me. I made a lot of money and kept losing it over and over until I dealt with my inner conflict, so there's work there. There's work around dealing with the voice in your head, and there's even work in finding and creating healthy relationships, but if you boil it down to those three things, those feel more achievable to me than this, "Oh, I'll be someday", or, "I'm happy right now, but I'm at a rave."

Genpo: Right.

Dave: It can be all over the place, and so I hope that this podcast is helpful for distilling some knowledge, quite a lot of knowledge actually done into a few areas of focus for you.

Genpo: Thank you, Dave.

Dave: Right. Genpo, I appreciate you being here, and it's such a nice serendipity that we both happen to be in Maui to get away from the winter, lack of sun at the same time, and we actually ran into each other at a local Safeway. It was, "Oh, you're here. Let's hang out", so we got to do an extra podcast. Thanks for listening to Bulletproof Radio.

If you liked this episode, you know what to do. Go out there and be happy. That would be a really good thing to do, and if you're still working on that, you could have a brief act of gratitude, which means going to [Bulletproof.com/iTunes](https://bulletproof.com/iTunes) and leaving a quick review for the show, and you can also check out Genpo's Big Mind/Big Heart meditation work, which I think is worthy of your consideration because he's one of the few Zen Masters out there who's willing to say, "Maybe we can do this a little faster", and that is not an easy thing for any meditation type of person to say, but I fundamentally believe from my experience that there are ways that we can progress more quickly, and that when we take those steps, any of the steps in this podcast, it actually makes us nicer people, and then, you could just create dividend because you're nicer to people around you automatically without having to think about it, and that's kind of a cool thing, so have an awesome day.

Genpo: Yeah. Right. I agree. That's a cool thing.