

## Happiness Starts with Your Brain Type – Dr. Daniel Amen – #910

Dave Asprey:

You're listening to the human upgrade with Dave Asprey, formerly-Bulletproof radio.

Dave:

You're listening to the Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey. I promised you that I would tell you why you should listen to a show so you can decide at the beginning, there's tons of podcasts out there. This podcast has to have a high return on investment. You're going to spend an hour with me with my [minister 00:00:31] group, The Upgrade Collective, who is secretly feeding me questions during the interview. You can join that as well. And sometimes I get guests on who are really, really transformational both in the world around us and in my own world. And the reason you want to listen to the show today is to look at hardcore neuroscience-based habits, rituals, choices that change your mood so that you can be focused on things that make you upgraded like values, purpose and goals.

And the promise from this episode is that if you learn from the show and from the book that I'm going to talk about, and from the wizard, who's our guest today, you can be 30% happier in 30 days. And I think this is real. The reason I think it's real is that Dr. Daniel Amen who's our guest today wrote a book many, many years ago, called Change Your Brain, Change Your Life. And I read it when I was failing out of Wharton, the Ivy league business school. And that book convinced me that maybe I had a hardware problem instead of a moral failing, or maybe just not being as smart as I thought.

So over the course of years, I had a chance to get to meet Dr. Amen, and get to know him. And we've become friends. And I'll tell you that looking at the brain is a big deal. He's been featured in my books because he's one of those few guys who said, "Maybe, I could measure it. Let's see if it works." Instead of, "Let's do what we think works and sitting on a couch and talking about cigars and your mother." There's a lot more to it than that, at least, I think there is. Dr. Amen, my dear friend. Welcome back to the show.

Dr. Daniel Amen:

Hi, Dave. Always great to be with you. That makes me happy.

Dave:

You don't need to write any more books. People think, "Oh, you're just writing books to make money." And I'll just be blunt, no one writes books to make money. It's very, very low dollars per hour for being an author. It's always a labor of love. And you're at a point in your career, you don't have to write books. Your clinics, you have a lot of them. I've sent family members there multiple times. I've been a couple times. They're doing fine. Why did you set aside a major chunk of your time to write a book about happiness, which is by the way, hard to sell as a book? What made you do this now?

Daniel:

Americans are the unhappiest they have been since the great depression.

Anncr:

[inaudible 00:03:02] Human Upgrade.

Dave:

Why did you set aside a major chunk of your time to write a book about happiness, which is by the way, hard to sell as a book? What made you do this now?

Daniel:

Americans are the unhappiness they have been since the great depression. So when you think of the pandemic, the societal unrest, the political divide, I have become horrified to see the depression, actually, tripled from February of 2020 to August of 2020. Currently, depression in children have doubled, suicide in teenagers has doubled, and I could write another book about mental illness.

Dave:

Yeah, you could.

Daniel:

But nobody wants that. And quite frankly, I've already done that.

Dave:

Yes.

Daniel:

I wanted to spend my time and energy and research on happiness because, ultimately... And I say this in the introduction of the book, happiness is a moral obligation because of how you impact other people. I guarantee you, if you ask anyone who was raised by an unhappy parent or married to an unhappy spouse, whether or not happiness is an ethical issue, I just guarantee you, they will say yes. And there's been a lot of books on happiness, but as you read them, they miss this big central point. The brain is the organ of happiness, and if your brain is not healthy, you are not likely to be happy.

And so, I love this book so much because I got to spend just a lot of time, energy with happiness. And actually, because we now have 10 clinics. I'm like, "Can I find happiness in the brain?" And so I gave 500 consecutive patients, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. And then I looked at their scans and it's really clear if you have low-

Dave:

There's real data? Oh my gosh.

Daniel:

If you have low activity in your frontal lobes, you're much more likely to be unhappy. And brain health is central to happiness. So that's why I did it. I mean, I love writing. Some people love golf. I just can't be frustrated for five hours when I could perhaps do a chapter.

Dave:

I hear you loud and clear and you have a couple 100,000 brain scans over 20 years. And we say, brain scans, it's different than the ones... You guys heard me talking about brain scans. I work with EEGs largely in my companies because we're doing real time feedback and you do some EEGs, but the scans you're talking about... Tell me about the kind of scan that you do at Amen clinics that's source of data for your happiness book?

Daniel:

So we do a study called brain SPECT imaging. And SPECT stands for single-photon emission computed tomography. It's a nuclear medicine study that looks at blood flow and activity, looks at how your brain works. We also do quantitative EEG, but I like SPECT because it's this cool, 3D, deep image of the brain. And now we have over 200,000 scans and they taught me so much about brain health, mental health, and why people struggle and why they're successful. And ultimately it's the brain. It's the organ... I saw Justin Bieber, I'm in his new docu-series, Seasons, and I love him. And he came into my office and like a lot of celebrities, sometimes he'd do what I'd say and sometimes he wouldn't.

But he came into my office one day and this is when he got it, the light went on. And he said, "My brain is in organ, like my heart is in organ. If you told me I had heart problems, I'd do anything you said." He said, "Now I'm going to do what you say." And then he got radically better. I think he just got nominated for three Grammys. And when I first saw him his name was synonymous with trouble and now it's not. And I'm so proud of him. But part of it is because he understands his is an organ.

Dave:

Tell me about marijuana, cannabis, pot i.e THC specifically and happiness. What do you know?

Daniel:

Well, for some people it can make them happy in the short run. For most of the people I see... I published a study on a thousand marijuana users, every area of their brain is lower in activity. For some people who smoke, it makes them anxious. For other people, it makes them paranoid. For teenagers who use it, actually, increases their risk of psychosis 450%. And I want you to do things that help you feel better now and later versus now but not later.

Dave:

I've seen some of your posts about lowering blood flow in the brain from cannabis. And I've been meaning to ask you... I've probably asked you in the comment threads, is it the same if you eat it versus smoke it versus vape it versus, I supposed, you could use it topically if you wanted to?

Daniel:

I don't know.

Dave:

Okay.

Daniel:

Because when I do the research, typically, it's on our patients who smoke it or vape it. Vaping has just become this scourge. My daughter went away to college and she said, "Half the kids there are vaping."

Dave:

They're vaping cannabis, not nicotine.

Daniel:

Well, it's cannabis or nicotine. And the problem is, is they're wearing out the nucleus accumbens. So if you hit the nucleus accumbens too intensely or too often, you begin to wear it out. And the nucleus accumbens, the part of the brain that responds to dopamine and it sort of makes you pay attention. Like this morning, Tana was getting ready to go for an appointment and she just looks so beautiful. And just looking at her, I know it was dopamine hitting my nucleus accumbens and it made me happy.

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:10:23] But I think there was testosterone in there, I mean.

Daniel:

No.

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:10:26] Testosterone had to play a role there. But I know you, I know [Tana 00:10:31], she's been on the show, come on.

Daniel:

It's dopamine.

Dave:

He's blushing.

Daniel:

In that moment. It was dopamine. And-

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:10:39] All right, I'll go with that.

Daniel:

And it's the difference between dripping dopamine or dumping dopamine.

Dave:

Okay.

Daniel:

And I love that concept because fame dumps dopamine. And if you dump it, if you hit the nucleus accumbens too intensely, or too often, it wears it out, which means you require more and more to get that same feeling. If you drip it, so that look I had, what I felt when I saw Tana, that's dripping it. Or if I hold her hand or... I saw my grandson over the weekend. It's getting those, I call them the micro moments of happiness that it just helps keep you level and positive versus jumping out of an airplane, that'll dump dopamine.

Dave:

So does the love release dopamine? I know oxytocin typically is more associated there. So what's the role of dopamine in holding a loved one's hand?

Daniel:

I love to talk about oxytocin because all of these chemicals, oxytocin, serotonin, endorphins. They're double edged in that. If you push on the nucleus accumbens too much with dopamine, you wear it out. Oxytocin happens when you hold someone's hand, when you in their eyes. But it bonds us to one person often at the expense of others. And so, I often say, it's why Red Sox fans hate the Yankees. It's because they're so bonded to the Red Sox, they have to sort of hate everybody else.

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:12:34] So tribalism is driven by oxytocin, not dopamine?

Daniel:

[crosstalk 00:12:37] Correct. And respect, like I have great respect for you and I feel honored that you'd have me on the podcast again, that's serotonin. So when we get disrespected... Had a fight recently with NPR over the issue of CTE, chronic traumatic encephalopathy or football dementia. My serotonin went low for a while and I'm like, "No, we have to fight about this." And it's fun sort of thinking of the chemicals of happiness. It's not just dopamine. That's a big mistake people make. It's all of them.

Dave:

Now serotonin seems to be really bad for you, if it's too high. It's pro-inflammatory all kinds of bad things happen. But if it's too low, you get super depressed. How do you know if you're sitting here listening to the show, "Jeez, is my oxytocin where it should be? Is my serotonin high enough? Am I dripping dopamine versus dumping dopamine?" Without some really careful measures of... What? Salivary, something or another. How would anyone ever know what's going on?

Daniel:

So one of the really unique features of this book is I talk about the seven neuroscience secrets of happiness no one's talking about. And the first one is happiness needs to be geared to your brain type. That everybody's different. You need to know, are you balanced, which means most anything will make you happy. Are you spontaneous? That's my ADD group. They tend to have low dopamine. Are you persistent? Worried, rigid, inflexible. Things don't go your way, you get upset. You tend to hold grudges and could be argumentative and oppositional, your serotonins probably low. Are you sensitive? You really need other people. Was the pandemic, particularly, hard on you because of the isolation? So I think of oxytocin and endorphins. Or are you cautious? Which means your GABA levels may be low, and so knowing your brain type is essential to knowing what makes you happy.

Because somebody, for example, the spontaneous person, they need novelty. They love extreme experiences. They love surprises. If you're married, for example, and your wife is persistent and she likes routine and we can have sex on Tuesday and Sunday morning and that's it, makes you crazy. Because it's like, "No, no, I don't like routine. I like spontaneity." And so knowing your type and the type of your partner is really important to creating a happy life. And that's been one of the most fun things I've discovered from the scans. It's like, "Oh, people are different." And I've written about seven types of ADD and six types of addictions and five types of over readers. But I realize it's just sort of how we live day to day. If you're a spontaneous CEO, because a lot of CEOs have ADD, if you're-

Dave:

What's a CDO?

Daniel:

A CEO, a Chief Executive-

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:16:15] Oh CEO. Sorry, I misheard you. Okay.

Daniel:

Yeah.

Dave:

Right.

Daniel:

Like you and I are CEOs.

Dave:

Yeah. We're CEOs. Okay.

Daniel:

But if we're spontaneous and we have all these great ideas, we need assistants that are persistent and cautious that follow through. If you hire a spontaneous assistant, nothing gets done and the IRS comes and visits you because you didn't file all the right paperwork.

Dave:

That is exactly the way it works. And you and I both know that because we're successful CEOs. But if you don't have people around you who are the opposite of you... But how does that work in, in relationships? So, you mentioned the husband and wife thing, where one is ritual based or time based, the other one is spontaneous based. Are these malleable, can you change your brain type to more match your partner? Should you?

Daniel:

Well, you should be flexible. Around my house, I adopted my two nieces. I don't know if I told you that, but they were growing up in chaos and I was like, "Okay, they should come live with us." And I would always walk around the house with my little sayings and I'd go, "Who survives a pandemic?" And they would respond, "People who are flexible." If you're not flexible, this pandemic was really hard for you. Yes, understanding helps. And sometimes you can change it.

Anncr:

Human Upgrade.

Daniel:

Yes. Understanding helps. And sometimes you can change it. When I first started ordering scans, I was seeing this couple and after about four months of seeing them, I'm like, "I am not going to help them." I mean, I was so stressful for me because like you, I want to make a difference. I like it when my work matters. And at the end of nine months, I'm like, "Okay, I got to tell them to get divorced because this isn't working." And I just started our imaging work. And so I sent them to be scanned before I told them to get divorced. And she had a persistent brain type. He was spontaneous and I'm like... And I put him on a little bit of a stimulant for ADD I put her on Prozac to boost her serotonin levels.

No lie next month, they like each other. They're holding hands, they're having sex. And I had taught them lots of good things, they could now use what I taught them. And 32 years later they're still married. And I just love that because you just want to balance your type. Because their goal was to be together, I was the fifth marital therapist they saw. So they're persistent. They wanted to be together. It's just how their brains work always got in the way.

Dave:

Interesting. You talk in your book about how there's five primary brain types. There's 16 subtypes and you have quizzes and you have assessments on how to do that. You always have good stuff on your website and it's part of the book and part of what you've learned in your neuroscience. Can you walk me through the five kinds of brains? I want listeners to understand what do they generally look like? I think, we've talked about two of them but just walk me through the map of those five types.

Daniel:

So the first type is balanced, is they have a very healthy brain and they're focused and flexible and positive and mostly relaxed. Type two is the spontaneous is type. They have low activity in the front part of their brain, often associated with lower dopamine availability. Type three is the persistent type. They have high frontal low activity, especially in an area called the anterior cingulate gyrus. And interesting, in my happiness study, the people who were unhappy had high anterior cingulate gyrus activities.

Dave:

That would've been me during my first scan, if I remember right.

Daniel:

They were worried and [crosstalk 00:20:50] the persistent type, they have trouble letting go of negative thoughts or sometimes even negative behaviors. The fourth type is the sensitive type, who often make great therapists, but they don't like when they have relationship conflict or they feel separated from the group. Often the empaths among us are the sensitive type. And then type five is the cautious type. They're basal ganglia and amygdala tend to work too hard. Often they've had childhood trauma and they're looking for what's scary. And they spend a lot of time preparing for problems coming up in the future, which makes them unhappy.

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:21:43] So these are preppers?

Daniel:

These are often preppers and GABA is often the problem. And so taking GABA or taking ashwagandha or theanine or magnesium can be just so helpful for them. And then the other types. So for example, type

six is our spontaneous-persistent group. They have features of both. And they're often children or grandchildren of alcoholics. I just noticed that. There's a particular interest of mine and I noticed, "Oh, they're generally..." If you come up with type six, I'm asking you about your family history of addiction.

Dave:

Now, when I think about these types of brains, you've got a couple 100,000 data sources. You can look at those, you can identify them. One of the things I've very much liked about the arc of your work, in your very early books you were mostly a pharmaceutical interventionist, I would say. Going back 25 plus years I go, "Wow, okay." You're saying, "Here's the tool that I know about the most with my MD to move the neurotransmitter in the right direction." And as you evolved your knowledge of work, you got more data, you've become more and more nutritional. You have your own line of supplements and things like that, that are designed for the brain. And now you're in this nice middle ground where you're totally happy to say, "No, we tried the natural things with you. You're going to do better with a little dash of insert name of SSRI here." But you don't blanket prescribe them and you're doing different doses.

So, the fact that you're open to pharma, but that you're doing lifestyle and sleep and intervention, things like that. To me, that's a hallmark of being a curious human because it's very easy to get on the pharma train and just stay there and not look at the rest. What got you off the pharma train at the beginning, so you'd be willing to consider supplements and be where you are now? Which is, I would say, very curious but walking in the middle.

Daniel:

So I'm a classically trained psychiatrist. I trained at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC. And they really trained us to be whole people psychiatrists. I was the primary care doctor for a person's mind and I would do their therapy once or twice a week, prescribe their medication. I didn't get any lectures on supplements or food in medical school or in my psychiatric training. In the early 90s, when I started to look at the brain, I'm like, "Uh-oh, some of these medicines are dangerous. Some of these medicines that I was taught to prescribe like opiates and benzos, they make your brain look worse, not better." And so that was the trigger for me to go look for other options for my patients, because in medical school, one of the first things they teach you is first do no harm. And I would just be horrified, personally, if I was hurting anybody. And then something pernicious happened in the early 90s, managed care took over medicine.

And managed care was never about patients, it was about profit. And they're like, "Psychiatrists are too expensive. Let psychiatrists do the medication and we'll pay therapists to do the therapy." Because I love doing therapy, I love sending people to therapy. I'm like, "Oh no, I'm not okay with this." Because they really pushed us into this current model we have in psychiatry, which I just think is awful. It's the 15 minute med check and psychiatrists have really become the candy man for pharmaceutical reps and think it's just damaged my profession. And at Amen Clinics, we will have none of that. That's not even an option for us to have 15 minute med checks because I just think it's horrible what's happened to psychiatry. Now, as you learn about natural ways to heal the brain and you pay attention as the scientist, it's like, "There's a whole bunch of studies on Omega-3 fatty acids, on B vitamins, on vitamin D." Or from a happiness standpoint. My favorite supplement is saffron. There are 24 randomized controlled trials showing it has equal efficacy to antidepressants for depression. And I'm like, "Count me in."

Dave:



I've been wanting to ask you about that. So I formulated the extract of saffron quite a long time ago into one of the supplements I made when I was at Bulletproof. And as far as the manufacturer of the concentrate tells me, we were the first people to hit it out commercially. But when I took it for more than three days, I got weird. Almost like it does have an SSRI like effect, but I don't know if it was... It was just a very strange mental state. Do people take too much saffron? Are some brains not saffron compatible?

Daniel:

I wonder what you formulated it with. I make something called happy saffron. It's got 28 milligrams... No 30 milligrams of Affron, a specific extract-

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:27:23] Yeah, that was the stuff we're using. And it was Zembrin plus Affron. Zembrin is a south African bush with similar effects.

Daniel:

Yes. I wonder if it was the Zembrin, because we formulated it with zinc and curcumins and-

Dave:

So it's a pretty straightforward formulation that way. Okay. And what was its name again?

Daniel:

Happy Saffron.

Dave:

Happy Saffron. Okay.

Daniel:

Yeah. And I'm curious about Zembrin, I know a number of other companies produce that and it has some research. The cool thing about saffron and this is what made me pay attention and you'll know it fits me. Not only does it improve your mood, but there's actually been studies with Alzheimer's disease showing it improves your memory. And then there are other studies... And this was the home run for me. Is it improved your sexual function and most of the SSRIs decrease your sexual function. I mean, when I put someone on an SSRI almost have to apologize. I be like, "It could decrease your libido. It could make it harder for you to have an orgasm."

And for anybody that's premature ejaculation, SSRIs are miraculous because they can help you go forever. If we ever have low census at the clinics, I'm like, "Oh, we should market premature ejaculation." Because they're really good for that, but when I thought of mood, memory and sex, and then the pandemic started. And I lost my dad and had to close my Manhattan clinic for a couple of weeks, I started taking it and it's just the one thing I always make sure I take every day.

Dave:

Wow. I really appreciate that. And I've had hundreds of people tell me that, that combination of saffron and Zembrin was their favorite thing ever. But for me, I was kind of like, "This is very strong." But I think it may have to do with my brain type and it's okay for people to experiment with supplements, to see

what works for their brain. And in your new book, you actually talk about types of supplements match to brain type, so that you have a better chance of knowing what's going to work for you.

Daniel:

Right. And we've had about five million people take our brain health assessment and we just have lots of great... It's like "I'm a type three." One of my favorite stories is, one of my friends went to an addiction treatment program. She was going to lose her kids. Her mother came to be with her to help her, but they were fighting like cats and dogs. And [Tamar 00:30:02] was a two and her mother was a three. And her mother went on serotonin mood support, which helps boost serotonin saffron, 5-HTP. And they just got along so much better because her mother became less rigid. When you walk around with all these rules in your head, it can be really hard on other people, especially if the past is always present, right? If you're stuck on the past and it goes over and over in your head. So in the book I talk about these seven secrets. So one is, know your brain type. Two is get your brain right. Three is supplement your brain because when your brain has the nutrients it needs, you're happier.

Dave:

I've definitely experienced that. And it seems like getting enough energy and enough nutrients to build energy... Or getting enough ingredients to build neurotransmitters into the brain, to build proper cell membranes and things like that. If the electrical side is working, then you can focus on tuning a little bit. But a lot of us don't make enough power. And if we do make enough power, then we're not allocating it properly. But when you balance all that stuff out, then you can start doing therapy that works. But if you're trying to do therapy and you have big holes in metabolic function in your brain, because you're lacking the core building blocks, it seems like therapy is almost useless. If your brain can't do it because the part of your brain you're trying to activate, doesn't have what it needs to do it. We should start with the biology of the brain and then move to therapy, or am I overstating the case? I mean, you are a therapist.

Daniel:

[crosstalk 00:32:12] No, you are exactly right. Think of it like hardware and software. I mean, would you ever try to program a computer that wasn't working right? I mean, that would be a waste of energy. And in fact it demoralizes a lot of people because you go and you go, "This is going to help me." And when it doesn't help you either blame the therapist or you shame yourself.

Dave:

That's what I was doing. Yeah.

Daniel:

[crosstalk 00:32:35] And I'm like, "Is this a hardware problem or a software problem?" And often it's both, if you have hardware that is not working right, you end up with psychological problems because you try and it doesn't work. You try and it doesn't work. You try and it doesn't work. And then you say, "To hell with it. | And you stop trying this concept from Martin Seligman called learned helplessness. And you were working really hard, but when you saw your scan, it's like, "Okay, this is not a software problem or not just a software problem." And when you got your brain healthy, it was easier.

Dave:

It was. And by the way, if you're listening to the show, [brainhealthassessment.com](http://brainhealthassessment.com), that's the one, you said five million people have taken this. So you want to know your brain type, you do that. And then you read Dr. Amen's new book about happiness. And what you find is, magically, you've taken a shortcut to figure out what to do. Even if you never get a SPECT scan at one of his clinics or anything like that. What I want you to do and what I want you to learn from the show is, "Hey, if I do this, it has a greater likelihood of helping than just doing nothing and just kind of randomly doing something." So the idea is it'll probably work, but it might not. So if I can reduce the chances of something, not working, then I'm going to tell you to go do it and [brainhealthassessment.com](http://brainhealthassessment.com)... Or is it.org or .com. That's where you put your-

Daniel:

.com. Yeah, [brainhealthassessment.com](http://brainhealthassessment.com).

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:34:12] [brainhealthassessment.com](http://brainhealthassessment.com). And it is just worth doing. And then if you're interested in happiness, 30% happier in 30 days, I actually a hundred percent believe that because, well, it's based on real data. It's not on some belief system about drinking celery juice and-

Daniel:

So we did a 30 day happiness challenge.

Dave:

Okay.

Daniel:

So after I finished the book, I'm like, "Okay, does this work?" And so I filmed 30 short videos based on the content of the book. And we got 32,000 people to sign up, to take the 30 Day Happiness Challenge. And at the end of 30 days, 32% happier for the people who finished. Their energy was up 30% and their memory was better. And I'm like, "I love this." And the stories were phenomenal. That very few people know that happiness is a brain function or that happiness needs to be geared to your type or that supplements like Omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D and saffron matter. And I love secret. Number four, it's love food that loves you back.

Dave:

There you go.

Daniel:

And I talk about the relationship people are in with food. I did the Daniel Plan with Mark Hyman and Rick Warren. And one of the pastor's wives told me she would rather get Alzheimer's disease than give up sugar. And I'm like, "Now that is an abusive relationship."

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:35:50] Because you wouldn't be able to remember that you like sugar. So it would be okay.

Daniel:

Well, it's like, you're in love with so something that beats you up.

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:35:58] Exactly. It's totally dysfunctional.

Daniel:

And people don't understand that you want to eat food you love. So both of us, we eat food that's delicious, but it's also nutritious. We love the food we eat, and it loves us. To do anything else is not rational. And you have to ask yourself, the United States has 4% of the world's population, but 15% of the world's COVID death. Why? It's because we're sick. With 72% of us overweight, 42% of us obese, this is not a good thing. And I wish that the messaging from the government was more about, "Get well. Let us help you get well." Rather than the nonsense that we have gotten.

Dave:

I wish they would also look at what's most likely to kill you by age group. Because when I look at the 24, whatever, the 18 to 24 year olds, it's actually suicide and drug abuse deaths, not any kind of infectious disease or cardiovascular or Alzheimer's. It's that we're making a world that they don't like being in. And that's a pretty scary stuff, so maybe we should address that.

Daniel:

[crosstalk 00:37:23] And those are deaths they don't count. They don't count those deaths.

Dave:

[crosstalk 00:37:25] Oh, yeah. No, they don't count those death, but they do count them. They just count them as something else, as long as they can. Yeah.

Daniel:

Yeah. No, we can do better and food is so important. And secret number five, I love this one so much. It's master your mind.

Dave:

Yes.

Daniel:

And gain psychological distance from the noise in your head. And new for this book, the first time I ever wrote about this technique I love called Give Your Mind a Name just so you can begin to separate from it. And when I heard this technique from my friend Steven Hayes, I'm like, "What would I name my mind?" And I remember I had a raccoon as a pet when I was 16 and she was a troublemaker and I loved her and she was great fun and just amazing to pick up women. But she used to TP my mother's bathroom. She ate all the fish out of my sister's aquarium. She'd leave raccoon poo around the house. And it's just like my mind. My mind is a troublemaker. It'll like, "You're a failure or you're not enough or someone else is better." And when I can just shut that down, turn it off, put the raccoon in her cage. Life is so much better, if you can separate yourself from the constant chatter in your head.

Dave:

You talk about using Byron Katie's questions and she's been on the show and you talk about, is it true? And what went well today? Why are those important for happiness?

Daniel:

So I love her and-

Dave:

She's great.

Daniel:

She has the most elegant form of cognitive therapy I've ever seen. So cognitive therapy, which is basically therapy for your thoughts. So once you get your brain right, you have to program your mind, right? Now, this is the software part. Whenever you feel sad, mad, nervous, or out of control, write down what you're thinking. So I call them ANTs, automatic, negative thoughts. And then question them. And I love her question so much, I got her permission to use them. And I tell people, "If you write down a hundred of your worst thoughts and then just subject them to these questions. Is it true? Is it absolutely true? How do I feel when I have this thought? How would I feel without it? And then turn the thought to the opposite. You do that. You're going to begin discipline your mind."

Now, along with that in the book, I talk about positivity, bias training. One of the really great movements in psychology, the last 20 years developed in part by Martin Seligman's group, out of the University of Pennsylvania. We need to really think about resilience, not illness or not just illness. And so I have nine positivity bias exercises in the book. And my two favorite ones are the book ends. I start every day... It's actually on the top of my to-do list. Today is going to be a great day. And when I did it this morning, I knew we were going to talk. And during a pandemic, we haven't been able to see each other but we can see each other today. So it sets your brain up to look for what you're looking forward to, what's right. But my favorite exercise is the one I go to bed at night. I go, "What went well today?"

And I actually start from early in the morning and I go through my day looking... Not for trouble, but looking for what went well. And it's so helpful. I mean, even the night my dad died. I did it because it's just my habit. You wouldn't think somebody would do that. And I just thought about all these really great things that happened that day, including holding his hand before the mortuary took him away. It's a discipline that will help you. In fact, if you just do it for three weeks, you'll notice a significant improvement in your level of happiness.

Dave:

It's pretty similar to the gratitude practice I do with my kids, "Tell me three things that went well today, three things you're grateful for." And what I found, telling someone is useful, but if you write it down... What my brain does is it'll edit out most of the good stuff. You forget it almost instantly, but if you just keep a running total, every time something little, good happens. At the end of the day, you can have this huge list of good things. But if you sit down at the end of the day to think what good things happened, you'll come up with two or three. Why do we literally forget all the cool stuff that happens almost as soon as it happens?

Daniel:

Because we're busy, our brain's always looking for what's next. What do I have to do? Especially, you and I. There's an exercise in the book on looking for the micro moments of happiness. And it's like,

"What's the smallest thing that's happening that I've really like, that makes me happy." And so for me, I have gardenias outside of my front door, smelling them when they're on bloom is amazing or watching hummingbird or holding my granddaughter's hand. It's like if you start looking for the little things you'll drip dopamine and that'll help sustain happiness. And then you won't have to... Is my book, a New York Times Best Seller, which is a dump dopamine. And whatever it is, it is. I've learned that by now. Whatever it is, it is. And I wrote a piece during the summer during the Olympics on why the Olympics are bad for the brain, because here are all these Olympics that have to be the best.

That's a prescription for unhappiness because you have to beat somebody. Where if you have to be your best, that's a prescription for happiness because you have to hang out with people who are better than you. That's the only way to be your best, is know what you want and find out who's doing it and befriend them. And so you don't have to beat them, prescription for unhappiness. You just want to have progress. I think I heard Anthony Robbins say that once that happiness is progress and for so many people, that's true. "If I'm better than I was, that makes me happy."

Dave:

It's funny too. When you look back at the founding fathers of the US, they didn't talk about creating a perfect union. They talked about creating a more perfect union because you can always be more perfect. And that's a reflection of that competing with yourself versus competing with someone else because you'll never achieve perfection, but you can always at least move in that direction. And that's the competition thing. I-

Daniel:

[crosstalk 00:45:08] And I've seen people who have more titles, more best sellers, more gold medals. And it's not a prescription for happiness.

Dave:

You mentioned the New York Times list. I was doing my evening gratitude a while back and last book, I just received notice that morning that I'd hit the New York Times list for the second week in a row. And as you know but listeners probably don't, the more weeks are on the list, the more you can puff up your chest and say what a big author you are. Even though if you're on there once, you're in New York Times, the Best Selling Author, good to go. So I'm sitting there talking with the kids, thinking through the good stuff that happened that day. And I completely forgot. That's a relatively large achievement, but I just... Wow. My ability to forget good stuff is pretty big. And like you said, you're busy and it's all kinds of stuff going on. So that's why I do my best to write it down now and-

Daniel:

[crosstalk 00:46:08] Well, on my phone, I actually have a cool events note tab, where if I see somebody I really like or look up to, or I get to speak, or if I do something that really is meaningful to me, I write it down. And I actually got the idea from one of the singers I saw who was so focused on... He was 50, something that Rolling Stone wrote about him when he was 16. And I'm like, "Have you ever written down your accomplishments?" And he never had. And so I'm like, "Your homework, before you come in to see me in a couple of days is, I want you to write down your top 50 accomplishments." And he said he felt so much better by just being able to focus on what was cool rather than on a hurt that happened 34 years earlier. I mean, isn't that nuts. I mean whenever you try to do something new, someone is going to hate you. And there's a science to deal with the haters.

Dave:

And it's funny. I actually cited you in Game Changers, my book about what do really successful people do in mass to become successful. And I told the story of just how much crap you took for talking about SPECT scans early on and how you persevered. And finally like, "I have more data than all of you clowns. Here's how it works. Let's do this." So you've been very much vindicated by sticking to your guns. But you had to some hits. And I did too, just for talking about butter and coffee and grass fed and all that. And so, you do end up developing that skillset, but there are no books about that skillset. So how did you know to develop the skillset to persevere in the face of all the criticism you took early on?

Daniel:

Oh, I was so anxious and so furious for so long. And then I read a book called the Structure of Scientific Revolution and it helped me so much. And Thomas Kuhn wrote it in 1962 and he said, "Scientific revolution happens in five stages. First, someone notices a problem." I would diagnose you with major depression, like I was taught. I would put you on an SSRI and you want to kill yourself, or you want to kill someone else. And I'm like, "We have a problem." "And two is the people in charge, like the American Psychiatric Association, make small fixes." Like there's been six versions of the DSM. They make small fixes, but they're not throwing the whole thing out. "Three, someone comes up with a new paradigm." Get your brain right, and your mind will follow. These are brain health issue, not mental health. Stop using the term mental illness.

"Four, you're rejected." He said, "It's the most reliable of all the stages because..." And even Machiavelli said, "There is nothing more dangerous than coming up with a new paradigm. Because the people who are making money from the old paradigm, will try to kill you."

Dave:

That is totally true.

Daniel:

I have been there. And then, "Five is the old group dies and a new group finds it rational and helpful. And you become the leader of the new group." And last year we had 10,000 psychiatrists and medical professionals refer patients to Amen Clinics. And so whenever I got criticized... I just had a recent fight with NPR, very unhappy with them, because I've raised over a hundred million dollars for public television stations and we had a fight over CTE. And what I ended up saying to the reporter was, "I've changed more people's lives than any of the critics probably by a thousand fold. And so I don't know what to tell you. If you don't look, you don't know, just probably stop lying about it."

Dave:

Wow. And CTE being basically, brain damage from repeated concussions to the head.

Daniel:

Yeah. And the fight was, I say that people have had repeated brain damage that we should image it and then we should go about healing it. [crosstalk 00:50:57] And I published a study on... I mean like, "Why is this a problem?" And they're like, "You can't use SPECT scans to diagnose CTE." "They're absolutely, right. It's a autopsy diagnosis." But I can use SPECT scans to say your brain got hurt, right? And I mean it's a standard indication for SPECT and it's like they were purveyors of despair and their pushing on me because I'm a purveyor of hope and it's just irritating. But the coolest thing that happened last year that

made me happy was the Canadian Association of Nuclear Medicine came out with new procedure guidelines for SPECT as if I wrote them. And of the 10 authors, five of them were my students. So I was really happy about that.

Dave:

You're making a difference. And for a lot of people listening now, if you're younger... I'm kind of right in the middle from the average human lifespan, I'm only at 28% of my lifespan. But when you look at this, it takes way longer to create change than you think. It's like when you're five years old and 10 years old is so old, they're twice as old as you and all of that. But you realize it really does take about 10 years to see a major swing, in terms of the acceptability of grass fed being different than industrial fed. I'm starting back when my first post about grass fed butter came out in 2010, it took about four years for there to be global shortage of grass fed butter, as people started doing this because they felt it working.

And now if you go to any Whole Foods, there's racks of grass fed all this stuff, right? And it's going to take another 10, maybe even 20 years for there to be availability for supply to meet the demand that's out there for grass fed meat and everything like that. But this is like a 10, 20, 30 year kind of timeline. And if you're 25 and you're out there starting your career, it feels like it's forever but it's not. It happens in your lifetime. You just have to keep at it longer than most people would expect. What part of your brain kept you at it? What do you have in there that made you keep going against all of this?

Daniel:

So growing up, my dad called me a Maverick and I've always sort of pushed against things that didn't make sense to me. But really the story that changed everything for me. So I started imaging in 1991. I loved it. I knew it was the future. I wanted to invest in camera companies. I'm like, "This is the future. How do I know unless I look." And I had the benefit of also being a writer and I wrote a column in the local newspaper. So I had visibility and I started writing about it and I love that. But 1993, the hate just came really strong. "You shouldn't do this. This is only research. You're taking advantage of vulnerable people." And I'm just like... 1995, I got a call from my sister-in-law Sherry. It was a Tuesday night. She told me my nine year old nephew, Andrew, attacked a little girl on the baseball field for no particular reason. And I haven't thought about this for a while.

And he's my godson. And I'm like, "Well, that's horrible. What else is going on?" She said, "Danny, he's different. He's mean, and he doesn't smile anymore. I went into his room today and found two pictures he had drawn. One of them, he was hanging from a tree in a suicide attempt. The other picture, he was shooting other children." So if you think about it, Andrew was Columbine or Parkland, Florida or Sandy Hook. And 999 child psychiatrists out of a thousand. Would've put him on medication and in psychotherapy. My first thought is, "Can you bring him to the clinic tomorrow, I want to scan him." And they lived eight hours from me. And when he came to the clinic, I'm sitting with my godson and I'm like, "Buddy, what's going on?" He said, "Uncle Danny, I don't know. I'm just mad all the time." "Is anybody teasing you?" "No." "Is anybody hurting you?" "No." "Is anybody touching you in places they shouldn't be touching you?" "No."

And so I scanned him. I actually went to the imaging center with him and held his hand while he held his Teddy bear. And when the scan came up on the computer monitor. My mentor, so his mother wouldn't hear, wrote down... He was missing his left temporal lobe. It was not there. And I'd never seen that before. And my mentor wrote down cyst tumor stroke. And we got an MRI and found he had a cyst, the size of a golf ball occupying the space of his left temporal lobe. And when the neurosurgeon took it out, I got two phone calls, one from his mother who said, "The surgery went really well. And when Andrew woke up from surgery, he smiled at her." She said, "Danny, he has not smiled for a year."



And then I got a call from Dr. Lazarus who said, "Oh my God, that cyst was so aggressive. And it put so much pressure on his brain, it actually thin the bone over his left temporal lobe." He said, "If he would've been hit in the head with the basketball, would've killed him instantly. Either way, he would've been dead in six months." That was the moment the war started for me. It's like, "I'm in this and I'm always going to be in it." If you don't look, you don't know because how many people are there like Andrew, that no one's ever looked at their brain and they're shamed. They're labeled as bad when they're not bad, they're sick. And it's just not conscionable. And I find anybody who does something great, they have passion stories. And I have a lot of those stories, but Andrew is ultimately the reason why I do what I do.

Dave:

That's the one they kept you going through all the crap that... It's inevitable. Like you said, it's the structure of reality. So for everyone listening, if you feel like you're going through crap and no one understands what you're doing, it's one or two things, you might actually be wrong and bad shit crazy, that's why you have good friends and advisors and mentors. Or you might be onto something, in which case you just have to keep doing it. And the more they try to cancel you, the more... I don't know. Joe Rogan yells at you, probably the more good you're doing in the world and that's okay. Right. So you have to look at that as, "Wow, I'm getting push back." And if you're doing work with a therapist and all of a sudden, you're really angry, you're really off and you hate your therapist. That's really good work because you're just stirred up something that probably needed a little bit of stirring up. And so the things that you don't like are oftentimes sign a progress and that can be a motivation for going forward. At least, knowing that works for me.

Daniel:

I love that.

Dave:

Now, you talk about these three regions of the brain that are responsible for happiness in the book. The orbital frontal cortex, the basal ganglia and the brainstem. I'm a bio-hacker, okay. I have lasers. I have pulse electromagnets. I've had my head locked into a thing with transcranial magnet stimulation where you can target... I have TDC to run current, over very specific parts of the brain. What can I do to directly stimulate the happiness parts of my brain without opening up my skull and becoming Elon Musk clone army guy?

Daniel:

So you could use TMS over the left front side of your brain, not the slow frequencies, but the faster frequencies. This will activate the left frontal lobe tends to treat depression and help your mood. If you're anxious, you can do the slow frequency over your right frontal lobe, that tends to calm anxiety. I think some of the most important things is you can protect yourself from not damaging your frontal lobes. Like don't let your children hit soccer balls with their head. Don't allow them to play tackle football and really watch the substances that you use that take your frontal lobes offline, so you can be happy for a little bit, which is marijuana and alcohol, nicotine.

Dave:

And nicotine. Ooh, we got to talk about nicotine. I am a massive proponent of low dose, one milligram, two milligram, three milligram doses of oral nicotine without smoking. As we age to hit the nicotinic acid

receptors in the brain and lower risk of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's based on the research since about 1986, that shows pharmaceutical nicotine not smoking reverses Alzheimer's because it's a metabolic stimulant that raises PGC-1 $\alpha$ . Sorry, I went fast guys, but I know Dr. Amen followed everything I said. So is it true that nicotine even in low doses is always bad for these things or is it possibly good in low doses?

Daniel:

Well, anything that constricts blood flow to the brain prematurely ages it. Now the nicotine I see are from smokers.

Dave:

[crosstalk 01:01:13] Yeah, that's bad.

Daniel:

[crosstalk 01:01:14] They're not people that are using micro doses that potentially maybe helpful. And so I think it'd be fascinating to study the same thing with caffeine because I know you make coffee and I've seen caffeine be a vasoconstrictor and that worries me. Because I'm always trying to get better blood flow to the brain, but perhaps in small doses, it activates the brain and doesn't correlate with the vasoconstriction.

Dave:

It's a tough one because, look, you have quantifiable data. People who drink five cups of coffee a day, have this going on in their brain, and what I look at... And it is totally okay to blow holes in this. This is just exploration not a battle of egos and debating and proving who's right or wrong. I think you're one of the masters and I always listen what you have to say. I'm looking at brain energetics. So how much electricity can I make in the brain. And blood flow, which brings in nutrients and oxygen is a major component of that. So is AMPK activation in the brain. So is mitochondrial activation.

So as long as I'm getting enough blood flow, that I can get enough metabolic activity in the form of electrons made, it's going to be good. And there's all these great studies around coffee and all sorts of lower cause mortality and just a lot of good stuff around antiaging. So what else can I do to increase blood flow? Like ginkgo, maybe a little vinpocetine, coenzyme Q-10. I'm doing all that stuff also. So I feel like there's probably an argument for one cup of coffee a day for a lot of people. And it made feel-

Daniel:

[crosstalk 01:03:00] I don't think one cup of coffee hurts people.

Dave:

You don't. Okay. So it's like five cups a day or three cups a day or-

Daniel:

When it's an addiction is, when you get withdrawal.

Dave:

Okay.

Daniel:

So, I don't want people to be on anything they can't stop without pain, right?

Dave:

You mean like [exercise 01:03:21]?

Daniel:

Like benzos, that can't stop without pain.

Dave:

Yeah. Benzo are a big deal. What are those different-

Daniel:

[crosstalk 01:03:29] Or SSRIs, they can't stop without pain.

Dave:

Right.

Daniel:

Benzos increase your risk of dementia.

Dave:

Right.

Daniel:

They damage memory. And I was taught to prescribe Xanax. Xanax came onto the market when I was as a resident. And I'm like, "Oh, how exciting?" And some of my professors were using like eight milligrams, which for people who don't know, that's a ton. And I'm like, "All right. Yes." And then I saw brains that looked like they were drinkers. And I'm like, "No. What are the natural things I can do?" I think it's just all endlessly fascinating, but if you stop and you get a headache, that may not be really great for you. I'm trying to keep your neurons as healthy as I can. And not only blood bring nutrients, but it takes away toxins. And if you don't have good blood flow, you have more toxins in your brain. And that's one of the big surprises from imaging. I have all these lessons from imaging and that things like mold as you know or-

Dave:

Yep. You've seen my scans. I can talk about them because you don't have to worry about HIPAA, if I do. But you looked at it, you said, "Dave, you had chemically induced brain damage from mold toxins. That's why you look like you were on street drugs, living under a bridge." This is a direct quote from you. I don't know if you remember that, but that's kind of how I felt. I was worked over. So yeah, that's real. A hundred percent.

Daniel:

So I'm always going, "How can I have a better brain or how can I create..." Bella Hadid and I, just came out. I've been treating her and doing a campaign on Bella's beautiful brain campaign. And I just love that so much because the pretier, your brain is on the inside. The pretier you are going to be on the outside. Because with health, my friend Earl Henslin said, "No forethought equals no foreplay." I just love that so much. And your brain, because we have your brain... What? 13 years apart. It's so much healthier because of all the things that you do. And look what you've done with your career, it's just spectacular. I'm just so proud to have you as a friend and in large part because your brain, which can help you be more consistent, more creative, more reliable.

Dave:

People will never know because as the guy you trained, who did my first scan, he said, "Dave, you have the best camouflage I've ever seen." But I was truly desperate if I had not read your book and gotten a brain scan, I probably would've dropped out of Wharton. I just couldn't do it anymore. It didn't matter how much I tried. And when I got that back, I'm like, "Oh thank God. I can fix hardware problems but if I'm just a dumb-ass, I can't fix that because I can't pay attention, no matter what I do." So just seeing those holes was really liberating. So truly, all the stuff that I do, wouldn't have happened if I hadn't have just stumbled on your first book and taken action on it. So you've had a big ripple effect, my friend, including all the work that I've done. You can take credit for that too.

Daniel:

Wow. I love to be alongside with you, alongside of you. And if you just think of all the people who didn't have that knowledge and you just see where their lives go, both... And they just feel like they're never enough because they got nowhere near their potential. And that damages your self-esteem.

Dave:

It's an esteem issue. The you are not enough people, including the book by the title author's been on the show. Some of that comes from you knowing that you have capacity that you haven't reached and knowing there's something... In my case, mold toxins and metabolic things... Oh, and lead and mercury and Lyme disease and a long list of everything you could throw down in front of someone. But whatever it is, if you know in your gut that there's more and you're not exhibiting it, it actually hurts in some weird way. And hurting all the time, it's a chronic stressor that I don't think is well enough studied because it's very mushy to describe it, but it wears you down. Right? And it makes you feel defeated.

And I feel that today, there's some kind of weird force that wants people to feel defeated. It's almost like we're lining up all the things you can do with isolation and smiles and everything else where there's a lot more people... And that's why our tripling of depression is happening that you talked about at the beginning of the show. People need to be able to go out and express what they do and to use their potential. And without that, something very deep and visceral is wrong and it feels wrong. And if you don't right the wrong, you get depressed.

Daniel:

Well, there are forces that are controlling us in a really evil, awful way.

Dave:

Yeah.

Daniel:

Never before and history, in my life, never before has a governmental body told me I couldn't prescribe a medication off label. Never. And to say, I can't do early treatment to a disease that kills people, there's evil behind that. And whether you think ivermectin works or not, I should have the right to prescribe it because there are 39 randomized controlled trials saying it does work. Brand new study just out of Japan.

Dave:

Yeah.

Daniel:

And it's like, "Well, that's between me and my patient, when did it become between the governor and me? The governor didn't go to medical school."

Dave:

Yeah.

Daniel:

And I'm furious because I see many people have died unnecessarily and it's setting the wrong precedent for bureaucrats to be able to tell well trained, board certified physicians, what they can describe than what they cannot prescribe. And this is not okay when their message should have been, "We're sick as a society, let's help you get well."

Dave:

They were already derelict in their duty, starting in the 70s with the food pyramid, getting worse and worse and worse. And selling themselves to commercial interests to the point where they feel they have the right... And they don't have to apologize for stripping a patient of their right to work with whoever they want, including their doctor to treat themselves for their own biology. That's why a lot of my social media. Yes. I've been shadow-banned. Yes. I'm banned from doing live streams on my half a million person, Instagram account right now, because I talk about this stuff. And to me, you can't biohack, you can't live to 180. You can't fix your brain. If a bureaucrat gets to say what medications you have to take or aren't allowed to take it, doesn't work like that. So this is one of those. Do we want to survive as happy humans or do not want to survive as happy humans? So I'm going to keep talking about that stuff. And if people want to follow me on telegram [t.me/aspreyofficial](https://t.me/aspreyofficial). Do you have a telegram channel, by the way?

Daniel:

I don't know what that is.

Dave:

It's another service that's replacing Twitter and Facebook and Instagram because they don't censor. And I've gone from zero to almost 40,000 followers in a few months because I started posting stuff there that gets censored on the main platforms.

Daniel:

And it's like, "Why does Google have a dog in the fight?" It's just not okay with me and... Yeah, I've been really unhappy that this is going on in our society, which is why I need to use all the happy tools in the book.

Dave:

Your book is coming out the right time, because it's easy to get unhappy. You look around at all the garbage behavior from governments that seems to be aligned around the world at the same time. Particularly, I'm going to call out Canada, Australia, Austria and Germany as being some of the worst. Although, I keep hearing stories about other countries where I just have less exposure. Like people have said, "Well, there's a problem in Singapore. There's a problem in different countries in South America." I just don't hear as much because it's not the same language I usually see, but it's all lined up. Normally people just flee from bad countries to good countries and take their assets with them. But there isn't anywhere to go right now. So I'm not sure what's going to happen, but I do know that if I'm happy along the way that I'm still winning. And that's one of the reason I want to have you on the show. Guys, you're listening to the show, learn how to be happy no matter what the bureaucrats do, they have to sleep with themselves at night.

Daniel:

Yeah, no. And they're in denial about the pain they're causing because it's too damaging to their egos. But secret number six in You Happier, is no notice what you like about other people more than what you don't. And I found myself during the pandemic... So many of my patients they're on the blue side or the red side, that they're in family conflict more than I've ever seen in the four decades I've been a psychiatrist. "We're not getting to get other for Christmas. That person can't come over unless they're vaxxed." Even though being vaccinated, doesn't prevent you from getting or spreading Omicron. And what I kept saying over and over to them, "Is you have no influence without connection. You have no influence without connection. Don't lose the connection. Listen to the other side, don't be angry. Say what you have to say in a thoughtful, calm way. And then you have to talk about something else. Let it go. Otherwise, you'll lose the connection and will get depressed because you're going to be isolated."

Dave:

Yeah. I love that. And I just posted about it today. Look hating someone because they're in a different political party is lame because hate's expensive biologically. Hating them because they did or didn't get some treatment that you think is good. Personally, I hate people who take aspirin. I mean, it is tied to macular degeneration in a study. And I have a whole rage page and I troll aspirin takers. Or I can say, "Look, take whatever drugs you want, man. That's up to you." And so, it's not okay to hate people who are 17 vaxxed or to hate people who aren't vaxxed yet, because their doctor told them that it gave them extra risk because they had a mast cell disorder. It doesn't fricking matter.

And it's the TV stations. It's just big media and advertising and social media that are trying to make you hate people like that. And it's dumb. So we can stop all that and the reason that you want to stop all that is what you just described, Dr. Amen. It's that if you have connection, even with people disagree with you, you're happy. And if you're happy, it means they lost and you won and that's good. So that's why I-

Daniel:

[crosstalk 01:15:08] And if you're happy, we're connected and it's hard to divide us. But this... I wrote a book you actually interviewed me for it, The End of Mental Illness. And in The End of Mental Illness, I

had a writing device where I just imagined if I was an evil ruler and I wanted to create mental illness, "Well, what would I do?" And basically I would've created the last two years, fear and isolation and pitting people against each other, the hateful politics that we've been in this cycle for five years, six years. Like, "Wow, this is how you create mental illness." And it's so true. I mean, we're seeing it by the numbers.

The last principle though, I love a lot it's live each day based on clearly defined values, purpose and goals. I think businesses, your business, my business, we have a one page strategic plan. We have a purpose, we have a mission, we have core values. We know what we want. And we have a plan on how to get it. People don't do that for their lives. And in the book I talk about how to know your values, what's your purpose. And then to develop clear goals, biological, psychological, social and spiritual goals. And that's a happy people. And the question is, does it fit? Does my behavior fit my values, my purpose and my goals. And I just find it's essential to happiness, because that's where progress happens. Like our core values at Amen Clinics, authenticity, we live the message. I mean, would you ever believe a cardiologist who told you to stop smoking who was overweight and smoking? No, you have to be authentic.

We're science based. Everything we do has references that it's rational. If you're going to push the envelope, you have to have science as your first cousin. Outcome driven, we want people to be better. That's why we go to work to get people better. And ownership, want all of our team members to feel like they're part of the process. I think I told you, we did an ESOP for Amen Clinics. So it's an employee owned company. I love that so much. But so all of our decisions, and you should do it for your life, all of decisions go, "Does this fit my core values?"

Dave:

Well said in making that part of the plan for happy brain is cool. Because what if you spend all your time, every day doing something that's against your core values, because you never thought of your core values. You never wrote them down. You never figured it out. It matters. And this is that weird area where brain hardware science, how's my brain working ties to psychology. And then you get into this personal development realm. What's my purpose. Why am I here? And sometimes that's psychiatry, sometimes it's psychology and sometimes it's something else. But I think you touch on that just the right amount in You Happier that it's part of the recipe for happiness is knowing why you're here and showing up for that. So thank you for writing yet another transformative powerful book, Dr. Amen. Thank you. [danielamenmd.com](http://danielamenmd.com) is the URL and some of the URL for the brain typing scan that you do.

Daniel:

So the URL for the book is [youthappier.com](http://youthappier.com) and if they pre-order the book, we'll actually give them a bottle of Happy Saffron.

Dave:

Oh geez. There you go. [youthappier.com](http://youthappier.com) get a bottle of the supplement. The Saffron supplement that we just talked about. That's fantastic.

Daniel:

Yeah. So that it's actually worth twice the cost of the book. And then we'll enroll them in the 30-day Happiness Challenge. Tana [Amen] wrote a brand new cookbook, "You Happier." They'll get a digital copy of that. And they can learn about our imaging work at [amenclinics.com](http://amenclinics.com) and find their brain type at [brainhealthassessment.com](http://brainhealthassessment.com).

Dave:

All right, I'm going to boil that all down because that'll all be in your show notes for you. It'll be on [daveasprey.com](http://daveasprey.com). But [youhappier.com](http://youhappier.com) equals free saffron extract that's good for your brain and erections, apparently. So you want to do that because it more than pays for the cost. So the book you guys want to read the book, I was going to wave the book around for you because I got the advanced edition, the cool ones you get that don't have the author's name on the back or they have the authors name on the back, but don't have the little blurbs on the back but my wife stole it and she's got it in the bedroom, in the house. So there you go. If you can't tell I'm a huge fan of what Daniel Amen has done in the world.

And so I really think if you've never read any of his books, try this one. If you're happier, it spreads. And that's something that we didn't talk about in the interview, but I know this and it's a big part of why I do what I do. When you get enough nutrients, you're nice to other people. When your metabolism works, you're nicer to other people. And so every time you do this, you can actually defuse the hatred between red and blue and vaxxed and unvaxxed and all that kind of stuff just by being nice, just by doing simple things. But you have to have happiness to do it. And that's why this book really matters. So thanks again, Dr. Amen, I will see you next time. Anytime you do something new, welcome onto the show.

Daniel:

Thanks, Dave. Really grateful for you.