



Transcript: Wake Up Happy with Mike Duffy

HOST

Kym Yancey

SPEAKER

Mike Duffy

PRESENTATION

Kym Good morning. This is Kym Yancey broadcasting from Dallas, central headquarters for Live Happy International. Welcome, welcome, welcome. Listen, this is what we do. We're about to start our second day in our five day series of *Wake Up Happy*. We have a fantastic guest on our show today, Mike Duffy. He's the Founder of the Happiness Hall of Fame and the author of several books. And I'll tell you a little bit more about him. But we're really going to explore some fun stuff.

If you're happy and you know it, I want you to put a smile on your face right now. I'm telling you, I'm serious, just put a big smile on your face and you'll feel a difference immediately, because you're wired for happiness. But put that smile on your face, because your brain knows you're wired for happiness, and when you put a smile on your face your brain knows you're happy. So, let's get it going on, alright? Let's get the smile happening right away.

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Here are some of the things we're going to discover this morning, is how do people find their purpose in life. There are a lot of books on happiness, and we're going to talk with Mike. I want to understand some of the ways that his are different. There are a lot of people that are unhappy, we're going to talk to him about what would you say to get them happier. He's got a very specific happiness formula, and we're going to explore that with him. We're going to also talk about how you can be happier in traffic. If you've got any kind of commute situation that's driving you batty, we're going to talk about that. So, a lot of great things.

Also, I want to say hello to Tamara in Houston, Jean in Denver, we see you. Hello to you, Beverly in Indiana, Jackie up in Canada. And Negash in India—India—it's great to have you on the line too, Negash listening in and being a part of this.

This, again, as I had mentioned, is our second day of our *Wake Up Happy* series, so it's so great to have you here with us. I invite you to join the Live Happy community. We're really on a mission to share the secrets to authentic happiness, all based on the science, the proven science behind happiness. And I want you to engage with us. Just so you have it, our Twitter handle is LiveHappy, or you can find us on Facebook by searching Live Happy.

Also, I want to encourage you, if there's anything that you want to share with me, write this down, this is my personal e-mail address, wakeuphappy@livehappy.com.
Alright?

Okay, well let's get started with our very special guest. Mike Duffy is an evangelist for happiness. He has written four books on happiness, including *The Happiness Book for Men*. He has been researching happiness for 30 years. He loves to speak about how you can gain greater happiness and joy in your life. Mike started the Happiness Hall of Fame to recognize, encourage, and celebrate people that make other people happy through their hard work, talent, and sacrifice.

I've got to tell you something, I was at the Happiness Hall of Fame, and Jeff Olson, the owner and founder of *Live Happy*, was inducted into the Happiness Hall of Fame. What an incredible event. This took place on the campus at Stanford University, and just a fabulous thing. There's something that is totally electric when you bring a group of people all dedicated towards helping to make the world a happier place, so, Mike, kudos to you for what you did to bring people together like that and how that's going to continue to grow and build.

Mike is also the CEO of Happiness Publishing. Mike has been speaking professionally since he was a standup comedian at the age of 19. And I've already bargained with him, I want to joke on this. We're not getting off this line today

without a joke, okay? He was an MC at Woodstock '94. He has performed at Carolines on Broadway, the Comic Strip, and many other comedy clubs.

Mike, I'm tickled already and just can't wait for this conversation today. He uses humor to deliver the life-changing message that sustainable happiness is possible in everyone's life. He has spoken at universities, corporations, churches, and civic associations about happiness. His purpose in life is to help others get happier.

Welcome, Mike, to *Wake Up Happy*.

Mike Thank you, Kym. It is so great to be here, especially the fact that I know you, I met you at the Happiness Hall of Fame, we've spoken so many times, and I have so much respect for you, Kym. While my purpose in life is to help others get happy, that's your purpose, too. So, it's wonderful to be talking to somebody and spending time with somebody that shares the same purpose.

Kym Yes. Thank you for that, Michael. And that's what's important for all of us as we do this today, is that happiness is contagious and it spreads. And there's no doubt, and we all know this, that it's a choice, so with all of us spreading this message it's going to have a great impact.

Mike, let's talk right away about some of your books. You've got the four books on happiness, how are yours different?

Mike Mine are different for a few reasons. Number one, I've interviewed the top psychologists from Stanford, to Harvard, to Tel Aviv, and I'm friends with some of these incredible people. Not only have I read all of their books and read their research, but also I've entered into relationships with them to really get their story and the back story, and I've been researching happiness since I was 17.

Sometimes out of very tragic things great things happen. When I was 17, that was the year my mother died of cancer. And when she died so did most of my happiness. Anybody out there that's ever lost a parent understands exactly what I'm talking about. So, I tried to get my happiness back by getting a degree in psychology and reading hundreds of books and studies on happiness. I've been obsessed with learning the secrets to happiness my entire adult life.

Kym, I'm very happy to say that I'm one of the happiest people that you'll ever meet. My books are based on the science of positive psychology, but they don't read like boring scientific books. How many times have you bought a book and it was boring, you couldn't finish it—

Kym

Right.

Mike —and they just stack up against your wall or your bookcase. My books are designed to make you happy while you read them. I have four books on Amazon currently: *The Happiness Book for Little Christians*, *The Happiness Book for Kids, Volume 1 & 2*, and *The Happiness Book for Men*.

My first book, *The Happiness Book for Little Christians*, is a biblical guide to happiness. So, that's kind of where I separate myself from the pack as well. I go back into the Old Testament and the New Testament and I blend positive psychology with spirituality and also Judeo-Christian values. I fill in the blanks where more austere, typical psychology books don't. My first book was illustrated by my 9-year-old daughter, Kendall, and I chose only inspirational verses to back up the scientific findings, like giving makes you happy.

For my book *The Happiness Book for Kids* and *The Happiness Book for Men*, on the left side of every page is a picture of a funny French or English bulldog mimicking the happiness tip that I recommend on the right side of the page. These books are easy to read on purpose. They're specifically created to help people live a happier, more fulfilling, and joyful life.

As I said, my purpose in life is to make others happy and share all that I've learned about happiness. These are the results of over 30 years of researching happiness,

and I've spoken to people that read them and they love them because you can't wait to turn the page to laugh and smile because the dogs are hysterical.

Kym That's good.

Mike Yes. And you can read *The Happiness Book for Men* in 30 minutes. I heard a statistic on the radio last week that 50% of people haven't read a book since high school. I think one of the reasons for that is because sometimes books can be intimidating. If you can read *The Happiness Book for Men* in 30 minutes and laugh while you're reading it, scientifically it shows that you'll enjoy it, you'll actually get through that 30 minutes, and it will sink in deeper.

Kym Oh, that's great, Mike. Great, great, great stuff you're doing. Let's talk about, there are a lot of people that are unhappy. What would you say to them to get them to be happier? How would you approach that?

Mike Well, after all these years of researching and being obsessed with happiness I came up with a happiness formula. It's very simple, it's: $P + P = H$. Purpose + Progress = Happiness. What I'd like the readers to do is to take out a piece of paper and write down what their purpose is. If you haven't done it so far, you must. You can have more than one purpose in life. I have three main purposes to my life: to be a great husband to my wife, Shannon, who is an executive at Facebook; to be a great father

to my wonderful 5- and 9-year-old kids; and to educate people on how to be happier by writing books and doing public speaking. If you ever want me to come speak at your company, you can reach me at mike@happinesshalloffame.com.

But I want your listeners to ask themselves right now what is their purpose in life, because, Kym, we're not here on this planet just to be consumers and accumulate stuff.

Kym Yes, yes, totally, totally. So, the Purpose + Progress, and the progress part of that is, you know, it's funny you mention progress because I love the Greek definition of happiness. The Greek definition is: "The joy you feel striving toward your potential." The joy you feel *striving* toward your potential, which makes me think that whole notion of, remember the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness*? And I know Chris Gardner, he's a great guy, but I think when you look at the positive psychology side of this, it would be the happiness in the pursuit. What are your thoughts about that?

Mike Yes, absolutely. I know Chris as well. He's a great guy. Because you see the thing is a lot of people are under the false assumption that happiness is a destination. "When I get that promotion I'm going to be happy." "When I find the love of my life I'm going to be happy." And what they end up doing is missing the beautiful days

of their life, which is a gift. Every day is a gift. So, you have to understand that happiness is a journey; not a destination.

I love that, and I'm going to steal that from you. I've got to go look that up and I'm going to put that in my brain. That's great.

Kym I don't know if this is representative of how some of you might feel on the phone, but we all have been around people who are working at a job or career that they really disdain, they don't like it. And they're waiting for, because I'm this far away from retirement, or I'm just going to do this and this is going to be my sentence here on this planet, and I'll be happy when I get off work. What are your thoughts about that, people that hate their job, hate their careers, how can they be happier? What would you tell them?

Mike What I want people to take a mental note of is the acronym CAM, C-A-M. The "C" stands for Choose to be happy. You must choose to be happy throughout the day. Most people in this country work in retail, and when you work in retail you have to bear the brunt of mean customers. But they must understand that putting up with irate customers is part of the job. When you have a rude customer, put up with it, and choose to be happy. Brush it off, though. Move on. Shake it off. Don't ever let anyone steal your happiness. What you can do is laugh about those losers later with your co-workers. That's actually part of the fun of working, right?

And then, "A," avoid negative people at work. Stay away from the negative Nancys. They will drag you down to their level of unhappiness. I'm sure if everybody thought right now about somebody that they work with, the negative person, try to avoid that person.

Then "M," make friends at work, especially your boss. They're people, too. They need friends. Your friends at work can make you laugh and be your advocate for promotion. If you're going to spend most of your waking hours at work, why not have fun?

Then you also must understand that some jobs are just too toxic and you have to leave them. Always try to find your career and not just a job. Get a degree online if you have to, but find a career that you love.

Kym Mike, tell me how you feel about this statement, okay? I know when I have spoken at audiences and I've asked people, "Who here has the capacity and would like to be happier? If you're willing to bring in more happiness to your life raise your hand. If you'd like to be happier, raise your hand." And everybody in the room raises their hand. They're all saying I've got more capacity. I've got more room.

And then I ask, now here's the big question, then I ask, "Who here is afraid of happiness?" No one raises their hand, but every now and then there might be one lone person who might raise their hand. And I say to them, and I want to get your reaction to this, I say to them, "That woman," or "that man, is the bravest person in the room, because the fact is all of you said you want more, but that happiness takes work, it is not for sissies, and usually what this means is there's something you've got to change. The thing that's blocking you from being as happy as you want to be, to experience your full expression of happiness, is change has to take place." Talk about that, Mike, what's your view of that?

Mike I absolutely agree. First of all, you have to change your perspective and you have to be grateful. Part of founding The Happiness Hall of Fame, I get to go out and meet the most incredible, happy people and get their take on everything. I would say that change has to take place in your heart and in your mind. You have to change your perspective.

One of the people that has become an incredibly good friend of mine is Lionel Ketchian, who's founded 115 happiness clubs all over the world, his latest one's in Romania, where people get together and they talk about how to get happier. He has a theory about happiness, and he believes that 95% of happiness depends on your gratitude.

In my book *The Happiness Book for Men*, I say “Be grateful” because you’re still on this side of the dirt. No matter how bad things get you still have things to be grateful for. Count things like rational thought, existence, the gift of sight, the love of family and friends as a blessing. You have many more things than you don’t have. That’s what I would say: change your perspective and be grateful.

Kym Change your perspective and be grateful. Gratitude, that is the foundation of everything from all the experts when it comes to happiness, is if you cannot be grateful, if you’re not able to look at each day and find things to be grateful about, you’re not going to have that full expression of happiness, are you, Mike?

Mike Absolutely not. I’m a glass not half-full guy, but a glass completely full guy. In 2008 I think all of us went through somewhat of a mild, if not disastrous depression, right? It was some bad times. That was really our generation’s version of the Great Depression. And I look back on that time as one of the greatest things that ever happened to me, because it really got me into researching more, and that’s when I started writing books, I went back to church.

So, you can look back on some of the worst things in your life, for me it was my mother passing away at 17, and saying, you know what, while that was bad, I got some great things out of it. That’s how I approach life.

Kym Tell me about, you said that people can be happy in traffic. What's your formula for that? What's your advice about people with commutes and all that, how can they be happier in traffic? What can they do?

Mike Yes. Getting back to shifting their perspective, how many times have you said to yourself, I need some alone time? When you're in the car by yourself there are no screaming kids, no complaining bosses. Commuting in traffic is alone time, so make the most of it. You can pray. You can organize your thoughts.

If you have Bluetooth, please only do this if you have Bluetooth, you can call those who you love. As soon as I hit traffic I call the happiest man in the whole world, he's my dad. He's 82 and he lives alone. He needs those calls as much as I need those calls. Traffic helps me never regret that I didn't call my dad enough.

I asked Professor Daniel Gilbert, from Harvard, for my book, *The Happiness Book for Men*, how the average person could get happier. Professor Gilbert has one of the most watched TED talks of all time. He said: "Have good relationships. We're the most social animals on our planet, and it's not surprising that our happiness depends mightily on the number and strength of our ties to other people. If you ask most people if they'd rather lose their friends or their eyesight, they choose the former, which is a bad choice. Blind people are perfectly happy people. Friendless people are not."

So, traffic can help you have good relationships by using it to call loved ones, thereby traffic can actually make you a happier person. It's all how you look at things.

Kym Let's talk about, Michael, the great, great, I love it, and you can feel really the happiness in your DNA, truly. No, I mean that, that you've really gotten to a place where your positive emotions are coming right through during this conversation. But let's talk about those moments when you do feel challenged. How many kids do you have?

Mike I have two.

Kym And your kids, give me their age range, where are they age—

Mike Five and nine.

Kym Five and nine, okay. They haven't hit that teenage period yet.

Mike No.

Kym Alright, what do you do, Mike, when you're not having a happy day, happy moments? You have those times when you're by yourself in your car and you're saying, I'm not particularly excited at this moment, what do you do when you're faced with a challenge?

Mike Okay, so I'm going to throw out another acronym that I use with my children. This is how I live my life, KLAP, K-L-A-P. I have decided to live my life with Kindness, Love, and Patience. I am very blessed to have my children. They are the essence of my soul, and I'm so grateful for them.

Now, do they act up and fight with each other? All the time. However, I'm only going to have them for a short period of time. I was thinking the other day that I really only have my daughter for nine more years. She's probably going to go away to college, and who knows if she'll come back home. Most kids don't. So, for this beautiful nine years that I have left with my daughter, I'm going to pour into her all the love, and kindness, and patience that I can muster.

But when I run out of it then I ask God for some more, because I'm not in this life alone. And that's how I differentiate myself from the other folks in Happiness. I have a very strong spiritual component to my life, and God is my partner as I walk through this life.

Kym Got it, got it. With anything, with work, career, or if you find yourself, you're disappointed about something, what do you do to bring yourself out of that?

Mike I look to the past. You see the thing is the future is a big foggy haze, and that's where fear comes in. Fear and happiness cannot co-exist. They're in the opposite end of the spectrum. And I look back and I say, you know what, I got through all the bad times before; I'm going to get through this now. I consciously make this effort, Kym. So, I said, I had some tough times in the past, like everybody did, everybody does, and I said, you know what, maybe this challenge that I'm facing right now is going to turn out to actually advance me even farther.

Tavis Smiley has: "Your setbacks are just a setup for your comeback." And I just love that. Every challenge that you face can promote you if you let it.

Kym Yes. Let's talk about, from Shawn Achor, to a lot of the research in positive psychology, and the 21 Day plan, they'll talk about whether it will be three different gratitudes a day. And I won't go through the entire formula on this call, but as you speak to this audience today and you give them four or five key tips, or key takeaways as it relates to, from this day forward here are some things to put in practice for yourself. You've given us some good formulas, but I just want to expand upon that in terms of when you get off this phone, off this line today, or off your

computer, whatever it might be, what would you tell them to do to expand and to further feed their happiness?

Mike Sure. I love to seek wisdom. We are bombarded with information, but information is not wisdom. So, seek out people that are very wise, through their books, and bring your relationships closer.

One of the things that I rely on almost on a daily basis, is the scripture, it's James 1:5, and it says: "For all of you that need wisdom, turn to God and he'll provide it in abundance." When I was writing my books you would get writer's block. And I would sit there in front of the screen and I would say, okay, James 1:5, you promised me that if I needed wisdom you would provide it. And I have to tell you that my fingers within 45 seconds would start typing, and I would run out of time before I ran out of things to write. So, really that's one of my core verses.

Then also you have to let things go. You're going to be slighted. There are going to be people jealous of you. There's going to be people that actually want to hurt you.

And you have to get in your mind, if you remember the movie *The Matrix*, when they're firing bullets at Keanu Reeves and he actually bends over backwards, you have to be like a bullfighter. All the barbs that come at you, just step out of the way and don't let them in, and don't let them fester.

I would recommend to read and keep learning. It's probably going to be mostly adults on this call, you can go to your local community college, or for example, I live close to Stanford University, I took a course on happiness, which I got an A on, I'm very proud of that. And I got into a relationship with Dr. Laura Delizonna, who taught the class at Stanford, and I inducted her into the Hall of Fame. And she's a good friend of mine now and I go to her for wisdom. So, turn off your television, and actually take an adult learning course. You'll find people of similar mindset, and I believe that you should keep learning until you actually pass.

Kym Yes, yes, powerful. That's great. I couldn't agree with you more. Michael, I want to share a few announcements with our audience and then I want you to give us one of those jokes. I promised them a joke, so I'd like to hear some of that comedy from you.

I want to invite all of you to, if you are a subscriber to *Live Happy* magazine, thank you for doing that. And, please, help us spread the word. Maybe consider getting a subscription for someone else. I know my brother did it for a friend of his that was going through a terrible divorce, and I just lit up when he called me and he said, "Kym," he said, "I want to get a subscription for one of my friends who's going through a divorce. He just needs something that will lift him up." I just loved that,

that he thought of that, realizing I want him to have more happiness in this life, and he couldn't think of a better way to do it.

So, I just want to tell you, just visit livehappy.com and look at what we've got going on. I was sharing with Mike, I just want to give you guys a heads up on this, on March the 20th we're doing the first worldwide, 24 hour Happiness livestream. From anywhere, from your smartphone, from your tablet, from your computer you can watch us with interviews of nothing but positive psychologists for 24 hours. No, you don't have to stay up with us for 24 hours like I will, but you can tune in at any time you want and check out just great ideas. We're putting up a program guide and everything. So, there will be more about that, and we'll send all of you a notice about that.

I also want you to know that tomorrow we're going to have Dr. Jay Kumar, and we're going to be discussing Happiness Beyond Sex and Success. It probably will be just a big, big special call just because we said "sex."

Alright, so now the other thing I want to tell you is a huge conference, Leading to Well-Being in Workplaces, Organizations, and Communities Conference, and you can find out more about this. This is from—George Mason University is hosting their sixth annual conference. It sells out every year. It's March 26th-27th.

Now, all you've got to do to find out about this, and I really suggest you do if you're into happiness, because the fact that you can go someplace and in a compressed period of time get really just the best of the best, the best information, it's wellbeing.onmason.com. That's the web address to find out about this, wellbeing.onmason.com. It's a Live Happy featured showcase event that we've got there for you.

Alright, so, I'm ready for that joke. Leave us with something funny.

Mike Sure. Well, you know we just had the Super Bowl, and I heard about a man that his whole life's dream was to go to the Super Bowl. And he actually won a ticket, front row, 50 yard line, his dream has come true. He goes there, he sits down, and he can't believe it, the Patriots versus the Seahawks.

And he turns to his right and there's an empty seat. And next to the empty seat is an 80-year-old lady, and she is dressed to the nines in Patriots gear. She's got her hair up in a bun. She's got two little Patriots flags at the top of the bun. And she's got her makeup on and she is just beaming. And he says, "Whose seat is that?" And she turns and she says, "Oh, that's my husband's seat. That was his ticket, but he passed away." He said, "Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. But don't you have any family or friends that could have taken that seat?" And she said, "Oh, yes, but they're at his funeral."

Kym That's a fan. Oh my gosh. Oh gosh. Alright, Michael, well, listen, we really appreciate it. And to everyone, this is your moment. This is the moment. The one yesterday is over. The one for the future hasn't gotten there yet. This is your moment. Soak it up. Enjoy it. Keep smiling. And like I said at the beginning of this, I asked you to put a big smile when you started, I want you to have a big smile when you leave. With all that, we'll see you tomorrow. Have a great day, everybody. Bye-bye for now.

Mike Thank you. Take care, Kym.

Kym Thank you, Michael.