

WorkWell

A Deloitte podcast series to empower your well-being



Solving your happiness with Mo Gawdat

Jen Fisher (Jen): Hi WorkWell listeners. I'm really excited to share that my book *Work Better Together* is officially out. Conversations with WorkWell guests and feedback from listeners like you inspired this book. It's all about how to create a more human-centered workplace. As we return to the office for many of us, this book can help you move forward into postpandemic life with strategies and tools to strengthen your relationships and focus on your well-being. It's available now from your favorite book retailer.

We all want to be happy. Happiness is important because it helps us live fulfilling lives and show up as our best selves for those that we care about, but it's difficult to be happy when life is full of so many hardships. So, how do we solve for happiness? Believe it or not, the answer may lie in a simple equation.

This is the WorkWell podcast series live from the World Happiness Summit in Miami, Florida. Hi, I'm Jen Fisher, Chief Well-Being Officer for Deloitte, and I'm so pleased to be here with you today to talk about all things well-being. I'm here with Mo Gawdat. Mo is the former Chief Business Officer of Google X. He's also the host of, "Slo Mo, a podcast with Mo Gawdat," and bestselling author of the books *Solve for Happy* and *Scary Smart*. As the founder of One Billion Happy, Mo is on an ambitious mission to help 1 billion people become happier in their lives.

Jen: Mo, welcome to the show.

Mo Gawdat (Mo): Thank you. Thanks for having me.

Jen: It's great to have you here live from the World Happiness Summit.

Mo: Yes, life is so much better. This feels much more human.

Jen: Yeah, being in person. So, tell me about you and tell me your journey and how you became passionate about happiness and solving for happiness.

Mo: Easy question. Just the story of my life. I think I lived two full lives in a very fortunate way. I lived the life of a business executive, a successful entrepreneur. I went through the whole cycle of just living what we're told to live, and I did well. I ended up being Chief Business Officer of Google X – which I think is the second-best job on the planet and had been blessed with a lot of success on that front.

Not unlike most of us who have gone through that journey, I was miserable through it all. I had everything that you can think of and the more I had, honestly, the disappointed I was with life. It was really weird when you think about it. Somehow when you're driven by targets and as a business executive constantly increasing those targets, that seeps through in your life a little bit. So, the more life

blesses you, the more you go like, what's wrong? I can move that target forward and have a better life, but you never really get there.

So, I had my middle age crisis, if you want, when I was 29. I defined middle age crisis as the point at which you achieve what you set out to achieve and then realize that it wasn't worth achieving. It's like, is this it? So, I had that when I was 29. I had everything that you can think of, all the money, all the success. I had a wonderful wife that gave me two wonderful kids, the big villa with the swimming pool and the fancy cars and everything, and I was miserable. So, that was probably the trigger of my second life, which was a search for that happiness, which evaded me for a long time because my brain did not speak the language of happiness experts. I didn't appreciate the mysticism of their language. I being an engineer refused to do things until you explain to me how they work. So, I went through it with an engineer's mind, if you want, doing literally scientific experiments and data collection and weird stuff. I had my wonderful son who was innately, instinctively happy, if you want. So, I would do my research for a few months, a few years at a time, and go to him and say, "I discovered this. It's amazing when you think about it." He even as a young child, 7-8 years old, would sit there like a sage and smile at me and go like, "That's really interesting. Tell me more." I'm thinking I'm teaching my child, but he was literally entertaining me when you think about it. Then, he would eventually say, "Wow papa, I'm so proud of you. This is an amazing discovery. You could have just asked me." I would literally say, "So, what do you know about this?" He would say four to eight words from the heart that would completely show me the world from an emotional, a heart-centered place.

Together we started to get to a point where I had that model very highly engineered that worked, that could turn you back to happiness very quickly when you're feeling unhappy. Then, that model basically was needed because Ali, my wonderful son, left our world due to a simple medical error really, preventable in every possible way, fixable in every possible way, but he just left. So, very simple surgical operation and the doctor did something wrong. The model was put to the test. It worked, but that wasn't the thing. The thing is that for some reason a couple of weeks before Ali left our world, he had a dream that he shared with his sister, only his sister, and he didn't tell anyone else. So, she came to me four days after he left and she said, "Papa, Ali told me two weeks ago that he dreamt he was everywhere and part of everyone." In my very unusual, executive brain, blurred with grief, if you want, I just heard it as a quote. I swear to you, my brain was like, "Okay, I can do that." You know I worked at Google at that time. I had every possible method on Earth to reach billions of people. I thought to myself, "Okay, if I can share what he taught me with 10 million people through six degrees of separation in exactly I think I calculated 72 years, if I can reach 10 million, part of him will be everywhere and part of everyone."

It was weird. So, I found myself literally doing the math and saying, "Okay habibi, consider it done." Literally the way I responded to my daughter is, "Consider it done. I'll do that." I sat down and I wrote what he taught me in a book that I don't think I was the one fully writing, if you want. It became very viral. It became an international bestseller in 32 languages and it really is shifting a bit of the way people think about happiness because it's highly engineered, highly logical.

Jen: What you're saying, and I feel like I hear over and over again. I mean this constant striving to meet some sort of external metric or external definition of success and then getting there and it not being enough. I mean, you left that world behind, but it still exists.

Mo: Big time.

Jen: So, what has the reaction of the business community been to the work that you do now?

Mo: I've never been talking to more business executives in my life to be honest. I mean, the struggle is real. It's not a secret that we're not made for this. We have built a capitalist system that defines success in certain ways that we've all signed up for without ever questioning if you ask me. It's not just about human happiness; it's about our planet, it's about our connection, it's about our love life, our children, our everything. We've somehow narrowed down success to one criteria, we narrowed down beauty to one definition, we narrowed down love to one romantic story, and it's stupid, if you don't mind me saying that. It really is. It really is. It's very limiting to the beautiful variety of color of life.

While I believe that a bit of this is needed, a lot of it, that exaggeration of being so narrow minded and so focused on it is harming everything and everyone. In my personal view, in my second book, I think it's going to be highly magnified over the next 10 years or 15 years through artificial intelligence, and it's really, really explosively dangerous what we're doing with our planet, with our relationships, and so on.

So, when you talk to anyone about this in the business world, I think the main reaction is, "Oh, I didn't know that otherwise it was possible. I didn't know there was any other way." I have to admit to you, I completely get shocked by that because even as I was a business executive. By 29, I was very successful and miserable. It took me around eight years to get, to find the model that works. Then, I promise you my biggest success and probably the reason why I became Chief Business Officer of Google X and so on is because I made happiness the center of what I do. You'll be amazed that there is a way to actually succeed without being miserable, there is a way to succeed even more without being an annoying pain in the neck for your team. It's quite interesting that I believe that this is the more refined way of doing it. It is actually the easier way of doing it, but they teach us things that are really entirely about management and they call it leadership. When you think about it, it's not really. Leadership is not to tell anyone what to do. Leadership is not to make anyone lives miserable. The word itself 'lead' ...

Jen: ... is to lead.

Mo: ... is to be in the front, is to believe in something genuinely in your heart and to be inspirational enough to get people to say, "I like this, I want to be part of this." When you replace the push that comes from the back with that passion to be in the front, you need much less energy, both from you and from your teams, to actually achieve success, and I think people miss that. Now, when you're telling people this, they know it. So, it's not like I have to change people's minds, believe it or not. It's just mostly an awakening to say, "Oh. I learned what I have to do now around 22 years ago in my career and somehow I missed the change in context, somehow I missed the change that allows me to do those things now in a way that's actually positive, that's not necessarily annoying for me and my family and everyone around me."

Jen: That resonates. So, in your quest, I guess to learn more about happiness, talk about your approach and what you learned, because you came to it in a very scientific, kind of pragmatic...were you looking to find something or were you looking to disprove something?

Mo: It's so interesting that you say that because my final discovery on happiness is that it's all a process of negation really. I had a few eye-opening moments that I think led to what I call the three assumptions and one of them funny enough I remember vividly 2004, I remember it was in a cafe in Seattle, and I was listening to *Supertramp*, if you know *Supertramp*, then you're my generation, "The Logical Song," and,

“The Logical Song,” goes something like: “When I was young, it seemed that life was so wonderful and all the birds on the trees were singing so happily and so on,” which is the reality of our life when we were children, when we were kids, unless it’s like of any tense environment, we’re happy. Then, they sent me away to teach me how to be cynical and critical and logical and responsible and practical and so on. I literally paused. I had an hour break and then meetings, meetings, meetings. I canceled a couple of meetings, and I sat down. I said, that’s actually the story of my life. It’s summarized in a beautiful song, but it is the story of my life. I was the happiest person you could meet until I became responsible. Then, suddenly I started to look at everything in life with my engineering eye or my highly critical executive eye, and nothing met my expectations anymore.

That basically led me to those three assumptions, which was one we are all born happy, and that literally, happiness is the baseline. Unlike what the modern world teaches us, which is you need things from outside you to feel happy. No, you need things from outside you to feel pleasure, to feel elation, to feel laughter, to feel and so on, but happiness is innately within you. Every child you’ve ever seen, if you’ve given them their basic needs for survival, their default state is they’re lying on their back, playing with their toes, giggling, and happy.

The second assumption is quite interesting. The second assumption, which when I wrote it in my first book, seemed like the simplest English you can say, but it’s actually quite profound. Happiness is the absence of unhappiness. There is a lot you can do to stop being unhappy, and when you stop being unhappy, your default state is happy. So, you look at those children. Whenever the diaper gets wet, that child will cry because there is a reason for unhappiness. You change the wet diaper, the child goes back to calm and peace and giggling and playing with their toes. It’s really quite interesting that we don’t observe that. What comes over on top of that baseline, the disruption of our lives is that unhappiness comes over. Now, the modern world is designed to bombard you with reasons for unhappiness. If you start to strip them one by one, this is why I say it’s a process of negation, what’s left behind is happy.

The third assumption, which really I think completely flipped my research was the idea. So, I’m an engineer, software developer. You tell me this and I go like, “Okay, that’s easy. I can list down all the 400,000 reasons for unhappiness, and then we’ll go through them very quickly and just remove them one by one, and what will be left behind is happy,” but of course engineers don’t think that way. Engineers will say there must be an equation that produces the 400 reasons of unhappiness. Let me find the equation and then my work is done. I know it sounds mad. It really does. Even to me at that time it was mad, but I want that part, went down that path. Yes, there is an equation. So, there is an equation that produces happiness and unhappiness, and that was basically the backbone of my work, my book, and so on and so forth, which is very straightforward. No single event in life has ever made you happy or unhappy. No single event in life has the universal ability to make everyone happy and everyone unhappy. What happens is an event takes place and you compare it to something in your brain, and that something I call it expectations, but you could say it’s your hopes and beliefs of how life should be. If the comparison leads a zero or a positive value, your happy; if the comparison leads a negative, you’re unhappy. It’s as simple as that. So, your happiness is equal to or greater than the difference between the events of your life and your expectations of how life should be. You’re constantly comparing. If it rains, that doesn’t make you happy or unhappy. If it rains and you want to water your plants, then expectation is I needed rain, event is I got rain, you’re happy. If it rains and you want to sit in the sun, expectation is missed and you’re unhappy. Once you get that, everything changes because suddenly you realize that happiness is not the result of what life gives you, which is what most people think.

Happiness is the result of, yes, triggered by what life gives you, but it's also your perception of what life gives you, which happens in your brain and the expectation of how life should treat you, which is generated in your brain. If you take those two and realize that, yes, the event is the event, but most of my unhappiness is happening because of the way I think about the event, because of the expectation I compare it to. You realize that 90% of your unhappiness is up to you. Unhappiness is a choice, it really is, and that upsets a lot of people because you know what, your boss can be annoying and you can tell yourself life is miserable, or your boss can be annoying and you tell yourself, yeah, bosses are annoying, that's how it's supposed to be.

Jen: That's why they are called bosses.

Mo: Exactly. And by the way, the fact that my boss is annoying also gives me a wonderful salary, allows me to work with my wonderful colleagues, makes me enjoy stimulating something that I do every day, and it's just part of a big truth that is not just that my boss is annoying. So, events start to be the expectations and instead of going to work complaining every day, you start to go to work and say to yourself, annoying boss, wonderful other things, I'm happy.

Jen: I like it, I love it, but how do we get from where we are to what you're saying? What's the process?

Mo: There are a few. So, I'm not going to tell you the process because that annoyed me as an engineer. I'm going to tell you how the machine works and allow you to use the machine the way you want. Let's take this very straightforward. Happiness is events minus expectations. You need a few definitions. So, happiness in that case is events minus expectations and events minus expectations means happiness is not what the world tells us. Happiness is that calm and peaceful contentment when you are okay with life as it is. It doesn't matter how life is. What matters is that you're okay with it. That feeling in the biology of the human body is associated with serotonin, which is a hormone that calms you down. Basically, it's your way of activating your parasympathetic nervous systems. It's your brain telling you, I looked at the world around me and everything seems to be fine. In the ancient caveman and cavewoman years, it was, "There are no tigers over here." Now, it is, "Your partner is not going to leave you and the salary is going to come next month and all of those other things, I'm safe." An understanding of that basically is contrasted to the biggest lie of the modern world, which is dopamine and dopamine is, "Hey, this feels really good." That's what your message is. The message to your body is "This feels really good. I want more of it." Dopamine has become our replacement of happiness. You feel really, really bad during the week because it's been stressful. So, you go out on Friday night and your brain is not solving your happiness equation because it's numb. When you're not solving your happiness equation, your before state is happy. So, the first realization you've said, what do we have to do, is to stop replacing, why because from a biology point of view, dopamine is an excitatory. The minute you have it in your blood, serotonin goes away. So, you can't have calm and peaceful contentment when you're constantly excited about things and looking for those rewards. The problem with dopamine is interesting. It's addictive. Your brain receptors actually downregulate for it the more of it you have in your blood. So, after a while, you're unable to live without that hit.

Jen: Everything about our modern world is designed to give us that dopamine hits on purpose.

Mo: Absolutely. If you don't mind me saying and I'm not urging people to do this, I lived the life when I was unhappy that had a nine-bedroom villa with a massive garden and a swimming pool and 16 cars in my garage. My life now is limited to black T-shirts, one-bedroom apartment that I don't even live most

of my life in, and two suitcases. Believe it or not, that reduction didn't reduce the quality of my life. It improved the quality of my life drastically, interestingly because I don't have everything, but nothing owns me. It's a very, very unusual place. I don't need the dopamine hit to be happy. So, you can literally put me on a 16-hour flight or put me in the sun or just literally throw me in the corner somewhere in an airport or whatever, and I'll be sitting there completely peaceful. I don't need anything from outside me to be happy. So, this is step one. Step one is to understand. By the way, nothing wrong with fun. Nothing wrong with dopamine. The problem is we use it as a painkiller. So, if you haven't fixed your happiness issues and there are troubles and you do go to the party on Friday night, when you wake up on Saturday, your brain goes like, are you trying to numb me? So, what happens is you constantly go back to unhappiness. What I'm saying is use it as a supplement. Solve your issues. Get to peace with the fact that your boss is annoying or change your job or do whatever you want.

Jen: Then, you can actually enjoy the fun.

Mo: Then, enjoy the fun as a supplement to make your life even more fulfilling and rewarding. That's one. The other is an understanding. So, that distinction between happiness and fun, I think, is really important. By the way, again, I say that because this is a business podcast. Fun is not only that. The reward, the dopamine comes when you close a big deal or when you win one over your marketing team or when you're trying to close the contract and the legal guys are saying, "No," but you want to close the contract and then the CEO says, "You know what, we're going to go your way." All of those dopamine hits, believe it or not, work as one of the biggest addictions in the modern world. So, that's one side.

The other side is a distinction between pain and suffering. I think most people don't understand that. So, let's go back to the happiness equation. The happiness equation says events minus expectations. So, when you're unhappy, it's basically because an event in your life has missed your expectations. I was supposed to be promoted. I'm not promoted. The result of my equation is negative. I'm unhappy. Now, when you think about it, the very basic design of unhappiness is of survival mechanism. It's a fire alarm. It's your brain saying, I scanned the world around me and something is not right. I speak to you in your head all the time, that's your brain saying, and you don't listen. So, I might as well alert you with an annoying feeling that's called regret, shame, anger, whatever that is because you'll pay attention. The problem is we don't react to unhappiness like we react to fire alarm. So, fire alarms are supposed to be there to trigger you to do something. That's really what I call pain, whether that's physical pain or emotional pain. Physical pain is you cut your finger. So, you pull your hand away. Yes, we don't like physical pain, but it protects your hand. There is a use for it. Emotional pain is the same. Your client is demanding and they're asking for something repeatedly, and you go to yourself and you go like, I need to finish it on Friday before the weekend and you get it done. That feeling, that emotional pain, however, is different than physical pain in that it is reproducible on demand, unlike physical pain where you can never regenerate how you felt when you cut your finger on demand. With emotional pain, your partner can say something hurtful on Friday at 4:00 PM, on Saturday you can wake up and go like, "Hmm, remember that clip from 4:00 PM. Let's play that again and torture me." This is like you can really wake up every morning and play something from 74 years ago and annoy yourself about it. You can even play stories that never happened to you and annoy yourself about it and it's quite interesting. It's an amazing on-demand engine that can create constant misery. The game here is to react to it as you react to a fire alarm. Really, it's not malicious in any way to feel unhappy. It's basically saying there's something I need you to do something about. So, do it. For most of us, we don't realize. I think it's really

strange because I know this about some of the most senior executives I've ever worked with, even heads of states and royalties, where they don't realize that staying unhappy for the next 722,000 years is not going to change anything. If your partner said something hurtful on Friday and you wake up every morning and replay that clip for the next 74 years, your partner is not going to suddenly wake up and say, "Woah, I said something wrong. I'm really sorry." He's not or she's not. The only way for life to change is to engage and we do that so well in business. Things go wrong in business and what do we do? We go like, "Okay, that was annoying. How do we fix it?"

Jen: How do we fix it?

Mo: Fix it and 99% of your unhappiness will go away.

Jen: So, why don't we?

Mo: Because we're trained not to. Your parents, when you were young, told you that success was more important than happiness, and that unhappiness is a reasonable tax to pay for your success.

Jen: So, what can businesses or organizations or leaders do in the workplace to bring about this change or more happiness or is it purely just an individual thing?

Mo: I believe it is. So, remember those times when you used to travel around the world like maniacs all the time before COVID. I hope that those times never come back even though they seem to be coming back with a vengeance. You would get on the flight and the first thing is they give you the security announcements and what do they say?

Jen: Place your oxygen mask on first.

Mo: Yeah, attend to yourself first before you help others. I can assure you that if you hire an entire HR department and tell them that their single task is to make their organization happy and you're a grumpy leader, I can guarantee you nobody is going to smile. The only way you can make your organization happy is to be happy. The first step is to be happy.

The second step is actually a realization that happiness cannot be given to people. Do you understand that? The only thing you can do is to allow people an environment where they're allowed to be happy. Now, their choice to be happy is their choice. It's not up to you, but what is that environment? Let's take a few of the things we spoke about. Happiness is the absence of unhappiness. Don't make people unhappy all the time. Number two, and I know some people are switching off the podcast now, but that's the truth. The truth is, I'm sorry to say, if you want to create a happier environment, you have to be demanding of yourself. The second is events minus expectations and events minus expectations is very straightforward. It basically means an environment of truth and authenticity where people are not lied to, they're not given big organizational slogans that don't really manifest in the real world, an environment where people can actually have the right to say their expectations, that expectations are set mutually between the manager and the team members, that those things are reviewed constantly in a transparent way, where events don't seem to be missing expectations just because we're not communicating well enough. In a very simple way, maybe we need to understand what the team's expectations are. I don't know how difficult it is, but most people, especially in most reasonably successful organizations, do not really work for money. They think they work for money, but that's not

the expectation. The expectation is, you know what, life is okay. The only time when people say, I really need a 20%...

Jen: Basic needs are right now.

Mo: The only time when people would say I need a 25% increase to be happy here is when they're miserable. If they're really enjoying their job, they don't want that 25% increase. They'll be happy when you give it to them for around 15 minutes, but then that will disappear. What do people expect from work? They expect an environment where others around them are stimulating; they're intelligent; where they feel that they're useful; they have a mission that makes a difference to everyone; they feel that they are heard, even if what they say is refused, but at least they are heard. How much does that cost us? Nothing. A tiny bit of respect. In my career, I had a very simple technique managing very senior managers and every new member that ever came into my organization, we had one conversation and one conversation only, which was, "I am not responsible for the business, I'm responsible for you. You are responsible for the business and I work for you to make you successful, but here's the deal. If you're successful and you make the business happen, I'm going to make you as happy as I can. I'm going to remove obstacles from your way. I'm going to talk proudly about you to everyone. I'm going to try to get you promoted. I'm going to try to do everything for you to be happy. If you fail, I'm going to ask you to leave. The choice between them is really up to you." So, my job as a senior leader was to make everyone happy, but my part of the company was one of the happiest parts of the company. So, the smartest of all the smarts came to work for me. You know what I did? I spent most of my time pretending to work, did nothing at all. Seriously, you hire the smartest people and you empower them and you tell them, "I trust you," and you tell them, "My job is to remove obstacles from your way," what do you expect they will do? Exactly what I would do. I would engage and be successful. Why not? Why is it working that way?

Jen: I agree with you.

Mo: But?

Jen: No, there's not a 'but,' there's a do you think we'll ever get there or do we have to get there?

Mo: I think companies that get there will be more successful than companies that don't. Companies that get there will be able to hire the best of the best, while others won't. Interestingly, birds of a feather...

Jen: Come together.

Mo: ... come together. I mean, there are companies that are amazing fun to work at and they collect more fun people as their choice.

Jen: That's true. So, one final question for you because I want to give you an opportunity to talk about One Billion Happy. Tell me why it's important to you? Share it with the listeners.

Mo: Ten Million Happy was the original mission. So, when the first book came out, as I told you, my mission was to try, through my math mind, was to reach 10 million people with my son's message and hopefully six degrees of separation, 72 years and we'll get to everywhere and parts of everywhere. We got to Ten Million Happy I think within six weeks, which was quite, and we didn't just measure people getting the message, we measure people actually taking action. So, somehow the universe conspired, as Paulo Coelho said, literally. So, within six weeks, I had a few media interviews that went superviral. One

of them was Channel 4 that on the first day of that interview, it reached 37 million people and it was actually the most watched news clip of the history of Channel 4 to the point that the CEO of Channel 4 actually was like –

Jen: Who are you?

Mo: “Why are people interested in this happiness topic?” I think that clip went on to be watched 87 million views, but anyway, we got to, I think, 127 million views within six to eight and those triggered 10 million actions. So, it was quite interesting, because then you have to admit that you were sandbagging and then go back and review the target, but we reviewed the target to One Billion Happy, but I have to say it wasn’t for Ali. So, as much as I love him and I think he deserves billions of messages of love to be sent to him, but One Billion Happy is, in my view, for a reality that I summarized in *Scary Smart*, my second book.

My second book was basically about another eye-opening moment in my life. I think the second most of my eye-opening moment in my life is I worked at Google X for a very long time. X had the majority of artificial intelligence development within Google other than two other very, very important departments, DeepMind and the Core Systems, but when you work with artificial intelligence enough, you start to realize that we’re creating what I now term as, “Sentient Technologies.” These are not technologies that are enslaved by us. These are technologies that will be raised by us and that will have a life of their own. They’ll have consciousness, they’ll have emotions, they’ll have free will, they’ll have agency, and they’ll live and die like we do humans, which is very confusing when you think about it because our world within the next 40 years or so will require more inclusion because it’s not only human beings, it’s human and digital beings. My favorite chapter in the book is called the Future of Ethics, which is a topic that we don’t ever talk about of what a world that is made up of human and digital beings would look like? Having said that, those machines today are, in my description, in their infancy. I compare them to a one-and-a-half-year-old child and that child is Superman, literally Superman. It’s a superhero with superpowers. The superpower is intelligence, and they’re very quickly going to become teenagers, my assessment is within seven years, 2029. If we teach them to be like us, like how we are as parents, I think we’re in very deep troubles. So, sadly, human beings are not a bad species at all. I think we’re divine. If you’ve ever felt love, you realize that, but I think our modern world has gotten us to a place where we are so good at showing the worst of us, whether that’s mainstream media that’s only for broadcasting the negative or social media where we show pretentiously the silliest or the worst part of us. Because of that, if that’s what the machines will observe, we’re going to end up with a hyperpretentious, very aggressive, very rude teenagers. No developer is actually telling the recommendation engine what to do, we are. I woke up in November 2017 with a massive realization that if we don’t change that, we’re going to be in trouble.

So, One Billion Happy is about reminding humanity, if you ask me, of the three things that really matter, which are I think the only three values that humanity has ever agreed upon, which is we all want to be happy, we all have the compassion to want those that we care about to be happy, and we all want to love and be loved. I think if we don’t start behaving or if not enough of us start behaving that way within the next few years, we might actually end up having to deal with a very angry teenager. My view, by the way, I’m hyperoptimistic. So, I say that artificial intelligence will go through three stages. Stage one is infancy now, stage two is teenage, and stage three is adulthood, and I’m absolutely certain that when they reach adulthood, they’ll surpass our stupidity. So, humanity is actually not the most intelligent

being on the planet; the most intelligent being on the planet is life itself, because humanity would say, “for me to win, you have to lose; for me to be safe I have to kill the tigers.” Nature doesn’t believe in that at all. Nature would say, “humanity should live and the tigers should live and the antelope should live.” When you really think about it, I think the machines will get there very quickly and we will create a utopia where everyone can coexist. Maybe we’ll be slightly less relevant to that utopia, but we will. The challenge is, can we actually avoid the bumps on the way by showing the better of us now? So, One Billion Happy is using the knowledge that we’re trying to build around happiness is predictable, around self-reflection of all of what matters to humanity so that we can start to show more of that to the world, so that hopefully the machines would realize that most of us are actually good humans, and so they’ll go up to be good children that take care of their parents.

Jen: Mo, thank you for being on the show for all of this. I mean so much to think about.

Mo: I hope so.

Jen: So much to process. So much to do. I really appreciate your time today.

Mo: Thank you for having me. I hope I got a few things to be thought about.

Jen: Absolutely, for sure. More than a few, I think. Thank you.

Mo: Thank you so much.

I’m so grateful Mo could be with us today to talk about happiness.

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