

# EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

## EPISODE 167: HAPPINESS AND RADICAL RESPONSIBILITY

A grumpy person doesn't get much work done. A person who is focused on all the reasons something WON'T work doesn't make much progress towards making it work. The good news is: you're in charge of this.

You are responsible for your perception and your attitude. In turn, that affects how smart and hard you work, and that affects your results.

Last week I talked about my morning routine and in doing so hit on how it lined up with the research on happiness. Y'all wrote in to tell me that you listened to that bit about happiness habits on repeat, so today let's dive into the happiness research deeper.

This isn't necessarily about happiness and MOOD, as much as it is about creating the life (and business) you really want, by paying attention to how you perceive the world around you.

I got much of what we'll talk about today from Shawn Achor's books. As a positive psychologist researcher ("positive psychology" is the branch of psychology that studies successful people; as opposed to other areas of psychology that study the ways we can be unwell), Achor is reporting on experiments (both his own and others') on how perception shapes reality.

*Perception* = how we see the world

*Reality* = how we then act in the world.

**"IT TURNS OUT THAT OUR BRAINS ARE LITERALLY HARDWIRED TO PERFORM AT THEIR BEST NOT WHEN THEY ARE NEGATIVE OR EVEN NEUTRAL, BUT WHEN THEY ARE POSITIVE." -SHAWN ACHOR**

So we're going to get our best results from shifting our perception from the negative, to the positive.

When we talk about perception vs. reality it sounds a little woo-woo (but the science shows it's a measurable fact!), so I like to think of it like this - in the middle of winter, after days and days of sub-freezing weather, a sunny day in the mid-50s causes you to exclaim that it is SUCH a nice, warm day! BUT a sunny day in the mid-50s during the heat of the summer, will having you commenting on how cold it is.

This is an example of how your perception changes your reality: the same temperature can warm you up or have you shivering. The temperature (reality) is the same, but the reality of your situation changes.

This same perception/reality thing comes into play in your business: Is a month with a \$1000 in sales a "good" month or a "slow" month? Neither answer is objectively right or wrong; it depends on your situation.

So this conversation is about THAT: whether you are choosing a positive (and true) reality or a negative reality (which might also be true, but closes you to finding more opportunities and paths to success). Studies show that when you operate from a more positive place, you actually SEE more opportunities.

I love reading studies about this, because it reflects exactly what I hear from YOU.

Many of you have amazingly brilliant ideas and you did have lots of enthusiasm... until you started to focus on the competition, on all the hard work, and how very many things could go wrong. The enthusiasm and energy drains out of you, until you can't see ANY of the opportunities in front of you, and you can't spot any path that would lead you to success.

I was delighted to read that it's not just you (or me) - it's how our brains are wired (watch out for danger, in order to stay alive!). But I'm even more delighted to have learned ways of getting around our Inner Eeyore + helping you find the light + enthusiasm again.

### So what do you do?

1. Realize that you're choosing your perception of reality and take responsibility for choosing the one you want.
2. Take action towards shifting your perception.

There is a LOT you can do here, from tiny actions, to changing your framing of something.

It's hard. This afternoon I was cranky with Jay. And I didn't want to sit down and write about happiness because I was cranky and I didn't want to be a hypocrite. But then I realized: I could take some actions and shift my perception.

For starters, I could reframe what I'm cranky at him about. Or I could decide not to think about that right now and instead think of this podcast episode. I could put on music and dance around. I could start diffusing some uplifting essential oils. I could pick up a book and read. I could do any of the things I know cheer me up.

### Here are some more things to shift your perception:

1. When challenges loom and we get overwhelmed, our rational brains can get hijacked by emotions. Regain control by focusing first on small, manageable goals, and then gradually expanding to achieve bigger and bigger ones.
2. Recognize that you set the parameters of what "good" or "successful" is. Define success so that it's a bigger target (easier to hit) or pick a closer target.
3. Reframe reframe reframe. When we reframe failure as an opportunity for growth, we are all the more likely to experience that growth
4. Celebrate successes. Write down all you've done toward your goal already. Write down all the assets and strengths you have. (Showing yourself that you're closer to your goal changes the perceived difficulty, which makes it easier to do).
5. Shift your body. Change positions. Go for a walk. Smell some essential oils. Dance around the room. Literally changing your body will change your perception. This is why I like essential oils - your olfactory bulb leads right into your limbic system where stress, worry, and all your emotions are generated. By smelling an oil, you can shift the chemicals in your body and thus your mood and perception in a matter of seconds.

I love talking about using essential oils so much that I'm holding a webinar tomorrow: Essential Oils for Mood Management. If you wanna know more how to use oils for shifting your mood or dealing with anxious or depressed feelings, join me at [taraswiger.com/eo](http://taraswiger.com/eo)

### One last thing:

#### *Take radical responsibility*

1. List all the things you can control - recognize this is WAY MORE than you've been told.
2. List all the things you can't control.
3. Sing "Let it go" while letting go of all the things you can't control.

My hope is that this episode can help you shift your perception, see the opportunities in your reality, and at the very least have a more joyful, enthusiastic day.

## LINKS:

[Shawn Achor's books](#)

<https://taraswiger.com/podcast115/>

<https://taraswiger.com/podcast3/>

[Essential Oil for Mood Management](#)