

[Announcer:](#) Bulletproof Radio: a State of High Performance.

[Dave:](#) You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day is that microwaved grapes make plasma fireballs. To make your own homemade plasma, you just cut a grape in half, leave the two sections connected at one end by the grape's thin skin, you heat it in the microwave for a few seconds and then boom, an actual small plasma fireball will erupt from the grape. And this is a mixture of electrons and electrically charged atoms also known as ions. And people have been wondering why this actually happens, and they've said it's about the connecting skin. But when you put two whole grapes together, you can get it to happen as well, which is cool.

[Dave:](#) Similar sized waterlogged beads called hydrogels will also do it. What's happening here is way cool and something we didn't understand is that grapes act as resonators. A single grape is just the right size that the electromagnetic wave gets trapped in the fruit, bounces back and forth. We basically pull together some heavy-duty physics ... I say we being humans and scientists ... and figured out that it's the size of the group that does it. So, number one, you're not supposed to try that home. Of course, number two, you will cause that's how humans are, especially if you're my kids.

[Dave:](#) Number two, I actually have a microwave that was in my house, but I use it to store plates because microwaving your food really doesn't make it bulletproof. Microwaved food doesn't taste as good, and it has weird heat pockets that form 10,000 degrees that screw up proteins in food. So, if you have a microwave, you should probably not use it, and it probably leaks some stuff around the door that's probably not good for you. So, if you do the experiment, wear a tin foil hat, lead aprons and run away screaming while you do it, but it'll still be fun. Or you could just do it and have a good time and not worry so much.

[Dave:](#) All right. In my usual spirit of foreshadowing, today's guest is going to mention that having thoughts knock around in your head during meditation is part of the experience, pretty much just like the grape in the microwave. See what I did there with my foreshadowing? I'm getting pretty good at that. Right? All right. Before we get into the episode though, today's guest is Light Watkins. This is guy who clearly was named to be a meditation teacher. You can tell, right? He's been immersed in that space for two decades. First, he just started out meditating like a lot of people, then as an apprentice to a Vedic meditation teacher and finally became a teacher himself.

[Dave:](#) You'll find light Watkins traveling the world, giving talks on happiness, inspiration, meditation. You've seen him probably in a lot of major media, written very popular books on happiness and meditation, and he teaches some very heavy to just celebrities how to meditate. If you've ever met a celebrity and had a chance to talk to them as real people, they have seriously bad stress levels because they fly over, they have to look a certain way, there's all kinds of pressure. If you can teach a celebrity to meditate, you're doing something right. Even Deepak Chopra himself says, "Light Watkins approach to meditation is both simple and profound." Deepak and a bunch of other cool people say you're good, well, you must be. I'm saying it too. Light Watkins, welcome to the show.

[Light:](#) Thank you Dave. Good to be here. It was funny when you were talking about your fun fact in the beginning, I was thinking Dave Asprey doesn't use a microwave. What is he talking about?

[Dave:](#) I was helping some other people on the show. I was just thinking there's other people listening who'd be going, "What the heck? This isn't actually happening." But yeah.

[Light:](#) You lost me at microwave.

[Dave:](#) I'm assuming you don't use one either, or do you?

[Light:](#) No. No, I don't. I've never used the microwave.

[Dave:](#) I actually got pushed back from people in the office. I said, "I'm not exposing all you guys. I care a lot about you." We bought a much more expensive convection steam oven thing for people to reheat their things because those little things that just change how you feel and how you perform during the day are great. We have a toaster too for people want to go down the evil bread route.

[Dave:](#) Now, I wanted to go back with you. One of the things that attracted me to interviewing you was that you talk about spending years sitting in uncomfortable positions with whirling thoughts and feeling like a meditation failure. Tell me what that was like, because I think a lot of people who meditate now are dealing with that and I certainly did when I first went to a monastery years ago and all that. It's like, man, I suck at this. What was going on with you?

[Light:](#) For years, I was dabbling in meditation and it was an extension of my interest in yoga. I had started practicing yoga, taking yoga classes, and then ultimately, I became a yoga teacher. That's where my struggles with meditation were really highlighted because people look to yoga teachers as experts in meditation, but it's like looking to your doctor as an expert in nutrition. When you read about it, doctors don't really get a whole lot of nutritional instruction when they're going through medical school. What they learn how to do is treat symptoms. Same thing with yoga. When you go through a yoga teacher training, at least back when I did, there was no meditation instruction. You meditated here and there a little bit, but 99% of the instruction was about how to do a downward facing dog or how to do a crow pose and these kinds of things.

[Light:](#) When I'm teaching yoga now, people are projecting meditation expert status onto me, and I'm feeling like a fraud there at the front of the room because all I know how to do is to imitate what I've seen, which is the guys sitting with their back straight and their legs crossed and the straighter your back supposedly, the more expert you are in meditation. You have your fingers come together, your thumb and your index finger come together, and that's supposed to be a part of the look. But inside, I'm sitting there-

[Dave:](#) The look?

[Light:](#) Yeah. I'm sitting there thinking about just all these random things and insecurities and just ... my mind is all over the place, and I have no idea if I'm doing it right or if this is what's supposed to be happening or what Samadhi even is. Obviously, I could explain those concepts very eloquently from my yoga reading and spiritual reading, but I never had a direct experience. That was the struggle beforehand when I met my teacher back in 2002, and he was telling me that, there's two basic categories of meditation. There's the monastic track, which you've been trying to do, and then there's the household or track, which is coexisted in tandem with the monastic track for thousands of years.

[Light:](#) This household or style is better suited for people like you. People who have a job, people who are in relationships, people who have recreational activities. The main hallmark of the householder style is you want to actually sit comfortably. You want to get off the floor, you want to uncross your legs and you want to sit like you're about to binge watch a Netflix series.

[Dave:](#) If you were to just trade Netflix and chill meditation, I think you'd be a very wealthy man.

[Light:](#) I've used that before on my social media.

[Dave:](#) Okay. Thought I made something up there.

[Light:](#) Yeah. When I did that, it completely upgraded the quality of my experiences, and that's where I first had the tangible experience of bliss or Samadhi or whatever you want to call it, where you go beyond your surface mind and you feel like you're in some deeper place in the meditation.

[Dave:](#) I've talked with Doug Brackman, who's a friend who teaches people to meditate with a sniper rifle. His perspective on this is that you've got the monastic tradition and then you've got ... we call it the householder tradition. He says, "But the monastic tradition is fine. You're going to go live in a cave. You're committed. You're probably weird." Really the way it was often done is your parents gave you to the monastery because they either couldn't afford your cause you were unmanageable. If you go back thousands of years, that's the function of some of these monasteries and they teach you to hone your mind and all that.

[Dave:](#) But he says, "Look, if you're a farmer, this householder style is going to work really well for you. But if you're a warrior, you're one of those people who's wired to run towards explosions instead of away from them. The meditation isn't going to work for you." Is there any validity to that perspective? These crazy entrepreneur ADD minds, maybe they need something even different than in an armchair.

[Light:](#) Yeah, that's interesting. Well, I'm not sure what the context was around his statement, so I don't want to say it's incorrect. But just to give more context to my understanding around it is that you want to really ... instead of having meditation in its own category of experiences that's completely unrelatable to anything that we claim that we need in our Western world, we want to put it into the rest category. If we can put it in the rest

category, then it can make a lot more sense, then we can justify spending that time. Because ultimately when you're engaging in the householder track, ultimately what you're gaining from that is a degree of rest that you wouldn't otherwise get from sleeping.

[Light:](#) As you and your audience probably understands, we're in an epidemic right now where most people are not sleeping properly. They're getting mediocre to low and sleep.

[Dave:](#) I've got to interrupt you for a second there. Last night, new personal record in seven hours of sleep, three and a half hours of REM sleep.

[Light:](#) Exactly. That's the deal. It's not even about how many hours, it's about the quality of rest that you're getting. I think that conversation is starting to become a more popular now among hackers and people who are looking to optimize the productivity. And so, meditation is the ultimate rest hack you can get. If you can get a meditation or two into your day and you can enhance the quality of rest that your body is able to get, then everything else starts to become more optimized. If you're a warrior, what are the skill sets that a warrior needs to do their job well? They need to be able to strategize. They need to be able to see things more clearly. If you're a sniper, you need to be able to be able to home in and focus on things a lot better.

[Light:](#) These are classic benefits that someone who is more rested are going to have over the same version of that person who's not rested, who's sleep deprived. You read the studies about how when you miss out on the quality of sleep that you should be getting at night, it's like you're waking up in the morning drinking three or four cans of beer and then going to drive and then going to work. That's how responsive you're going to be. That's how focused are you going to be. You're going to be under the influence of sleep deprivation, which is worse sometimes than being under the influence of alcohol.

[Dave:](#) You can cancel that out, Light. All you got to do is just take the cans beer, you put them in the blender, add butter. You just blend it right up, and you'll be good to go.

[Light:](#) I forgot who I was talking to. [inaudible 00:11:17] can optimize the alcohol with a little-

[Dave:](#) Sorry. Keep going with. They have done studies. Keep going on. Today I love it. Sorry. I just had to say it.

[Light:](#) They've done studies comparing drunk drivers and sleep deprived drivers, and guess who drives better? Drunk drivers. Legally intoxicated drivers can drive circles around sleepy drivers, but it's not illegal to drive while sleepy. But that's how most of the accidents are happening because people are falling asleep at the wheel or they're just not very focused.

[Dave:](#) That's one reason, yes, you want to focus on the quality of your rest. I've been saying since the start of the blog, the reason modafinil or provigil is a known substance is ... Look, you should have one of these in your glove box because it could save your life and it's way better than a caffeine pill. It's frankly in the middle of the night, even if you've

drank all the coffee, you can your eyes are still crossing, that stuff is going to get you through. Staying awake sometimes is a matter of life and death and being focused and performing well can be as well.

[Dave:](#) You should use every tool you can to not drive like you're sleep deprived. Ideally, sleep would be the way to do it. So, you're saying people can't meditate if they haven't slept well. Or was it they can't meditate very well-

[Light:](#) People can't do their job if they're not rested. Meditation as a very practical application, can help them become a better ... whatever. Lawyer, comedian, doctor mother. There's no one who can't benefit from having more rest.

[Dave:](#) Can you replace sleep with meditation? The reason I'm asking you, before I had kids, I said I'm going to wake up at 5:00 in the morning because everyone knows good people do that. By the way, game changer is I show the evidence that you should wake up when you should wake up. But anyway, I did this and that meant I was sleep deprived because my natural bedtime is 2:00 in the morning or something. Sometimes I wouldn't get enough sleep, but I found I could replace maybe two hours of sleep with an hour of meditation. Really deep breathing, chanting energy stuff, heavy duty stuff. Do you find as a Vedic meditation teacher who's spent three months in the Himalayas ... is it reasonable to say I could sleep less if I meditate more or is that just BS?

[Light:](#) Well, I think what it does is it enhances the quality of your sleep that you are getting. I'm sure there are exceptions to everything, but I would say as a rule, you still want to get enough sleep so that your body has that ... the body still needs a sufficient amount of sleep. It's still needs the dreaming, the REM state, and it needs the waking state in order to achieve maximum balance.

[Light:](#) The experiment that I think that your listeners and whoever else can run for themselves so they can gain some sort of empirical evidence for this is to ... when you want to get up 15 or 20 minutes earlier to meditate, you do that, you force yourself to get up, you sit ... even if you just slide up to the headboard of your bed and close your eyes and you meditate for those last 20 minutes and you notice how you feel coming out of your practice, and then you split test it. The next day you stay in the bed, and you hit the snooze button three times for those 20 minutes. And then you see how you feel coming out of the alarm experience. You'll see which one has a better quality of clarity and rest and perceptual acuity coming out.

[Light:](#) My guess is that it's going to be the meditation experience. I've heard certain teachers say meditation can give you two to five times deeper rest. What's what they mean by that is if you take any part of your nighttime sleep, the deepest parts usually are between 2:00 AM and 4:00 AM. If you take any 20 minutes from that chunk of time and multiply it in terms of levels of rest times 2:00 to 5:00, that's the quality of rest that you are supposedly getting when you're sitting in meditation. That's been my experience. If I'm tired because I went to bed late and I'm waking up a little bit earlier to make sure I meditate before I engage in activity, I find that I'm a lot clearer from waking up earlier and doing the last 20 minutes of meditation versus hitting the Snooze Button and then being alarmed out of rest and feeling all out of sorts and all over the place.

[Dave:](#) You actually traveled with your meditation teacher, MV to Rishikesh, in the Himalayas, which is about a day and a half by driving from the source of the Ganges River. That stuck out to me because I actually went to the actual source of Ganges River in mount Kailash, and watched on mount Kailash, where I discovered at least, the first tried a yak butter tea, which became Bulletproof Coffee. We were in the same neighborhood basically, a while back. I spent about three months in that part of the world, not at all doing meditation work, but did a bunch of Tibetan meditation and all.

[Dave:](#) But you went there, you took three months, you did 1,000 hours of meditation to complete your training and become a formal Vedic meditation, a teacher. When you were in the Himalayas, do they talk about alarm clocks and proper ways to wake up or is it completely divorced from the world that you and I are immersed in today?

[Light:](#) It's interesting because in my training, it was very much a controlled environment. When you're meditating so much as I would ... we were meditating up to 14 hours a day in periods of ... we we're doing rounds of meditation, which would last ... one round with less than an hour. Then you do another one and another one like that. And there's a certain sequence of Pranayama, yoga, eyes closed, seated meditation that you were doing within those rounds and things had to be timed, certainly.

[Light:](#) Sometimes you would even use a soft alarm, just to remind you to get to the next sequence. But you'd also have little pennies and things in front of you so you can count how many times you've done a certain part of the sequence so that you didn't lose track. There were some alarms that were involved in all of that. But generally speaking, no, they don't. Nobody used alarms when they go in or out of meditation. One of the reasons why you don't usually use an alarm is because most people aren't doing meditation enough to be alarmed out of meditation. They're actually buying their time and they can't wait for the experience to be over.

[Light:](#) When you start to have the householder experience, that's where an alarm can become useful because you're enjoying it so much, and it's very possible that you may over meditate. With me, I remember back in Santa Monica a couple of years ago, I was single at the time. I had a date, that was the first date. I decided I was going to sit on my couch and do a meditation before I go on this date because I'm a better version of myself if I meditate first and then go and-

[Dave:](#) Those who aren't expert aren't expert, meditate for a hot day.

[Light:](#) That's right. Meditate before your date, don't leave home without it. I ended up over meditating about 30 minutes. I was really late to this first date. Even though everyone loves meditation nowadays and everyone's looking at meditation, it's still not ubiquitous enough for that to be a reasonable excuse to be late for a date. It just looked like I was a jerk and on and didn't really want to be there even though I did want to be there. I had to remind myself the next time I had really important appointment, then I needed to use a little soft alarm to come out of meditation.

[Light:](#) But again, the purposes is because if I don't, I wouldn't come out of meditation because I go so deep into it and it's so enjoyable, and I look forward to it so much. That's one of the reasons why we use an alarm when we sleep at nights because we know that at some point, at least, even if for the sleep deprived people, they may get to a deeper state of rest maybe just before the alarm goes off. The alarm is your backup to remind you have things to do. I think that's where you want to be. If you have to use an alarm, you want to use it because you enjoy it so much, you can't come out versus, I need it to remind me of the time because I can't wait for it to be over.

[Dave:](#) That's a beautiful explanation of it. What was it like to go learn this Vedic meditation in the Himalayas? Most people listening to this show may have heard of Vedic meditation. I know Emily Fletcher has been on who talks about it, you're a very well trained in Vedic meditation. Just tell me, what was the process like? Are they hitting you with sticks? I know that's more of a Zen thing and in Japan, bad meditators, smack ... How do you actually become a master in this? I want to know the daily thing. How painful was it? What's it like?

[Light:](#) All right. I'm going to take it back just a couple of steps. All right. I met my teacher, in the living room in West Hollywood in February 2003 when I met him, I would say he was one of the happiest people I've ever witnessed and that's what really appealed to me to the style of meditation was figured if he was embodying that degree of happiness from meditating in this way, then I wanted what he had. He taught me how to meditate, and I went through the instruction process. During the instruction process, you have to bring food, you have to bring flowers. There was a picture of gurus. There was some hints of India at the very beginning.

[Light:](#) I didn't know anything about it. I didn't know what it meant. I didn't know why there was this little brown powder that I learned later with sandalwood paste. There was some camphor powder and all of these things. Because I'd never been to India before. I started apprenticing my teacher because I just wanted to be around him so much and hear him teach other people and I knew inside that I was meant to at one point become a teacher, but they were no teacher trainings. This is 2003 remember, so there were no apps, there was no YouTube, there was nothing that we have today with someone to access to this stuff today.

[Light:](#) But I would just shadow him around, and then about three or four years later, he invited myself as well as some of his other proteges to come to India. Why India? Because that's where he learned with his Indian teacher up in Rishikesh. India, for those of you who had never been before, it's shaped like a diamond. Rishikesh is at the top end of the diamond and the Himalayas as they call it, they're the border of the northern part of the country, the northern part of that diamond. Rishikesh is not that far from that border, and you go up there, and it's nestled right into the foothills of that mountain range, and it's right on the Ganges River, which is the sacred holy river road of ancient India.

[Light:](#) Culturally, there's some western conveniences, but there's still enough of the ancient Indian culture present, so that you feel like you're getting a little bit of both of those experiences. There's an old ash room set up where my teacher used to train his teacher who was Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who you may have heard about. He's the guy that

started transcendental meditation. My teacher spent many years there studying with Maharishi. There are other landmarks sprinkled around in the area.

Light:

I don't know if you've ever been to Jerusalem, to Israel. We've all heard about these different places from the Bible. That the sermon on the mountain, and the Sea of Galilee and all of these different places. They're all there. I went to Israel a couple of years ago and it's surprising because it's like looking around and Venice, California. You think that these places are so far away, but they're all there and you realize these guys were just really talking about their hood and all these things that took place that we're still talking about 2,000, 3,000 are basically within a circumference of a few miles of one another.

Light:

Rishikesh is the same thing for the ancient Vedic culture. All of these different landmarks that you read about in the Bhagavad Gita and the Mahabharata, the classic texts of that culture, they're all within the same relative, this entity of the temples and the Ganges River and this, that river and this thing. This cave over here, which was significant because this master meditated in that cave.

Light:

If you engage with those lineages, you're ultimately going to find yourself up in northern India at some point. What it does is it just adds a lot more ... it gives you a lot more context as a teacher. It's like someone who's studying origami going to Japan or floral arrangement going to Japan and studying the source of it, or if you wanted to become an Italian chef, you go to Italy, if you want to be a French chef, you go to France.

Light:

You have access to the culture, which gives you, which informs you in a way about this tradition that you wouldn't be informed if you were just in Kansas learning to become a teacher. I think a lot of it is intangible. It's not something that necessarily is going to come up in a course when you're teaching someone how to meditate, but it definitely adds to your own level of understanding of why do they use these particular offerings, why sandalwood paste? There's a whole story behind that.

Light:

You would wet sandalwood powder and you would spread it across your forehead, and that's because the Indian sun is so hot, and it'd be something that was calming. But it was also expressive of transcendence and why fruits and my flowers because when you're in the foothills of the Himalayas away from the river, the master's wouldn't have access to these things. And so, in order to gain entry into the Ashram, you would bring those offerings. You would bring things that they would use to beautify the space to make the space more aromatic from where you came, and that will initiate you as a student.

Light:

I think those are the things that would make the big difference when you go and train in a place like in India. India is India. India is the complete opposite of the West. Here in the West, everything was very orderly. Everything is very logical. But when you look in someone's eyes in the West, he made see hints of anxiety and uncertainty. In India, it's flipped. Everything is chaotic externally, nothing makes sense. But when you look at people's eyes, you may see a sense of peace and serenity. It makes sense because in that culture, they place a premium on an inner work on spirituality. In the West, we place a premium on capitalism and making as much money as possible and that equates to success and this kind of thing. The best thing that can happen to a person in the East

and that culture is to find one's teacher and to become self-realized. That's still very much a part of that culture.

[Dave:](#) You brought this back from India, and I'm going to steal a question from Maria Shriver. You were on her show, Architects of Change. I was just on it recently as well and really support her Women's Alzheimer's movement. She's a fantastic person, but she asked you this question. She said, "How do you feel you're moving humanity forward in this moment in time?" That's a massive question and frankly, ballsy to ask to open an interview. There's a bunch of meditation teachers out there. The meditation has become cool. There's companies with meditation apps worth \$1 billion and all that stuff. How is what you're doing moving humanity forward given that meditation has become a thing?

[Light:](#) That's a great question. The first thing that comes to mind is the parable of the young man, the young boy walking along the beach with all the starfish scattered all around on the sand and he's tossing them in back into the ocean. This old man CSUMB and walks up to him and says, "What are you doing?" And he says, "I'm trying to save the starfish." And the old man says, "Well, there's millions of these starfish. You can't possibly save them all." And he picks one up ... the little boy picks one up and tosses it in, and he says, "I saved that one." He picked up another one, "I saved that one."

[Light:](#) I think anyone in any type of profession that has the intention of leaving humanity better than how they found them, I think you have to come to terms with the fact that you can't save everybody. You can't have a bigger effect than what you're having. If that's your intention, I think the intention needs to just be to do the best you can with whatever you have available to you. This could be anybody. You're a bus driver, you should try to make your passengers feel as comfortable and as safe as they can on your route that day. You just never know how the ripple effects of your humanity and your good intentions are going to affect everybody else.

[Light:](#) What we do know is we can't suffer in isolation and we can't be happy in isolation. I think this is a really important point for people to embody. Because I think we live in a time now where because we have such access to information and social media, it looks like everybody else was out there making a much bigger impact than what we're making. It's very easy to feel like we're not doing enough. I heard Oprah on one of her podcasts talk about this with somebody. She was saying ... I forget who she was talking to, Paulo Coelho or somebody like this. She told him, she opened up, she said, "I feel like sometimes I'm just not doing enough." Oprah Winfrey feels like she's not doing enough.

[Dave:](#) I've had the same thought, to be honest.

[Light:](#) It's become clear that everybody is, feels like this. When you come on up in an interview or you give a talk and they do your introduction and you hear somebody else list off all the things you've done and the big impact you've had and the people who look up to you, sometimes it feels like they're talking about somebody else. Because in our little world and in our mind, we just feel like, "Oh, I'm just me. I'm the same I've been since I was 15 years old and just out here trying to do the best I can. And I know what all my

flaws are, and I know where my shortcomings are and my blind spots. And yeah, I've got a long way to go still."

[Light:](#)

I think this is a good way to be, because it keeps you humble, it keeps you focused on the process and not the outcome, and that's really the big difference. I think if you stay focused on the process, we don't know how this thing's going to go. We don't know how someone that I get a chance to work with is going to affect someone else. They may become president, they may become some big leader of a corporation that changes the landscape of all the other corporations. You just don't know. I try to just keep it in the mind the whole parable of, you can give a man fish, feed him for a day or teach them how to fish and feed him for life and just keep teaching people how to fish for happiness, for peace, for bliss. It's not my control. What happens after that. My job is just to make sure I'm doing the best job teaching people how to fish for happiness.

[Dave:](#)

It's awesome that you're talking about happiness there because a lot of the things that you teach on your website ... and by the way lightwatkins.com if you're listening and you appreciate Light's perspective on things. You're talking about happiness. After I interviewed these 500 people for *Game Changers* and I boiled down the three things that people really have a big impact on the world are doing, one of them is they're happy. They're doing things to increase happiness. They're not happy because they were successful, they were successful because they learned how to be happy and that made success easier for them. What's your take on happiness?

[Light:](#)

I think that the first thing that needs to happen is we should redefine success for ourselves as individuals. Because when people have an idea of success that is not in alignment with whatever's happening inside of them in terms of callings or in terms of what their passionate or charms are, then even if they are achieving those goals and even if they are living in alignment with that, they may not feel very happy. They may feel like they're inadequate in some way like the Einstein quote, "If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it's going to spend his whole life feeling like it's stupid."

[Light:](#)

I think that's an important conversation that we need to have with ourselves. We need to really sit down and think about, what does happiness mean to me? What does success mean to me? And then happiness is a state of contentedness that comes from knowing that we've done everything that we could do to live our lives and in alignment with that pursuit of whatever we determine success to be for ourselves. It's very individual and it's very subjective and no one else can tell you if you're successful or not. Only you know that. Only you know if you are moving in that direction or not.

[Light:](#)

On outside, it can look like you're the most successful person in the world. You can have all this money, you can live in a mansion, you can have beautiful people all around you, drive fancy cars, but inside, if you know you're not doing what you're here to do, whatever that is, then you're probably not going to sleep very well at night. You're probably going to feel a bit anxious and you're probably going to be seeking validation from outside of yourself, which is going to then lead to other bad things in dependencies and addictions and whatnot.

[Light:](#) I don't think it really ... You can't really gauge this based on what it looks like on the outside. I think that we need to come to terms with it for ourselves. Maybe that needs to be a part of the conversation as well. Maybe that's something that we should as a society talk more about. Instead of asking people at a party, "What do you do for a living?", We ask them, "Were you happy? And what makes you happy?" And then that becomes the new gauge for success.

[Dave:](#) Yeah. Because what you're doing probably isn't what's making you happy. I think that's certainly something that happened earlier in my career. Like, "When I get this successful, I'll be happy." It doesn't work like that. Now, you talk about something else though that I haven't heard others talk about in the same way. You talk about the difference between bliss and happiness. What is the definition of bliss compared to happiness?

[Light:](#) I would say that happiness ... again, happiness is a state of contentedness and bliss is like a flavor. Bliss is a flavor of happiness. When you're able to get ... particularly in a practice of meditation, you're going to get into a state of bliss. It means that you're able to access an internal state of contentedness that is so great, that is so serene, so supreme, that you're not aware of much else. It's something that you can go into like when you go into a hot bath. You go into a hot bath and your perfectly still, and what happens, you start to become numb to the experience because there's just stillness.

[Light:](#) You can't feel anything because it feels so good. It's not until you start agitating the water that it actually feels even better is the agitation. The agitation is when you take the bliss back into the eyes open experiences, and that becomes to happiness. Happiness is bliss mixed with action.

[Dave:](#) Happiness is a warm bath, and bliss is when you turn the bubbles on?

[Light:](#) No, is the bath. Bliss is-

[Dave:](#) Sorry. I had it backwards. Okay. Bliss is the bath, but without bubbles.

[Light:](#) Right. Bliss is the bath. That's the quiet, still, settled, state. Numb, You can't really feel anything because it feels so good. But you don't know it feels good because nothing is happening, nothing is moving. Happiness is when you take the bliss experience and you agitate it, you take it into action essentially. When you go to work, when you go to your ... when you communicate with your friends and your family, when you're with yourself watching television or whatever you do, and you feel that sense of happiness, the contentedness inside, it's happening. It's being more stabilized because you've been emerging yourself in the bliss in your meditation practices or whatever your indoor practices are.

[Dave:](#) Is there a meditation to get into happiness or bliss? What's the fastest meditation for that?

[Light:](#) The fastest meditation to get into bliss is silent meditation. This is something that I've been contending with for a while especially nowadays with all the apps and everything. Look, I'm not a hater of meditation. I think that any type of meditation is useful and valuable and there are a lot of on ramps to meditation. At the same time, I think we as a society have come to label meditation as an experience that requires some level of guidance. Guided meditation. We've made guided meditation and the gold standard for meditation. If it's not guided, then it's not something that I want to be doing.

[Light:](#) If you go back to historical times, there's no precedent for guided meditation. Guided meditation is really a Western construct that came out of psychology circles in the 1980s, where you get visual cues and different other verbal prompts and it's a way to help people cope with their busy mind, to focus your busy mind while sitting with your eyes closed. But in historical meditation, it's mostly silent meditation, and you're sitting there. This is what I talk about in my book, Bliss More, you have to go through those "busy mind thoughts" in order to arrive at the bliss. The bliss is just beyond the busy mind.

[Light:](#) The question becomes not how do I stop the thoughts because you need thoughts, but how do I transverse the thoughts? How do I go through them in the most efficient way possible? I would say that the best meditation for doing that is a side of the practice that gives you the tools to meditate in concert with those so-called busy mind thoughts so that your mind can then settle through the thoughts individually arrive at the inner bliss.

[Dave:](#) That makes a lot of sense. This is always tough because all of the states of meditation are felt states and there aren't words to describe them. You and I can agree that's blue because we can both see it. But when you're saying, "I'm feeling this thing inside", there isn't really a word or the word that I used to describe it isn't the word you use to describe it. I think that's why meditation teaching has thousands of years of people trying to do it better and eventually learning how. That's why neurofeedback in heart rate variability and all have me excited. Even binaural beats, these different technologies that allow you to say, "Well, if you can do this with your brain, this is the word for that. But until the lights turn green or you hear a buzz or whatever, you probably haven't done it."

[Dave:](#) At the corollary, if you're at a monastery or a meditation thing, you've got someone in the front of the room is really tuned in, and they're watching you and when you get it, they're like, "Yeah, you got it." They tell you. They can sense when you're there. The problem is if they were distracted that day because they were looking at another student and you got it, you didn't know you got it. So, then you're sitting there still struggling and not quite getting there. I'm hoping tech makes it better. Do you think tech is going to make it better though, or is that a bit of a perversion of meditation?

[Light:](#) I absolutely feel that if you can measure meditation properly, you become very enthusiastic about it. Just because you're able to see your own progress. But that's one of the things that I wanted to bring to the conversation. Going back to your last question, was something that I can do to change things, is I wanted to take put words to the experience because I find that that's something that's been missing. There's a big gap in people. Most meditation instructions and instructors are just going to say, "Close

your eyes and just watch your thoughts are of witnesses or monitor that." But they don't really talk about the detailed process of what one experiences, so that one can then verify that experience. Validate and verify the experience with whatever the bigger graph is or the bigger pathway is.

[Light:](#)

In my book, I literally break down the different layers of thinking, going from the very surface level of thinking, which I call the focus thinking zone. This is where you have all of your awareness. This is where you know you're meditating. We all start there. And then below that, I have a layer of thinking called ... I call it the random thinking zone. I call it random because it means that the thoughts you're going to be experiencing at this level here are not going to be related to the awareness that you're meditating, but they're still going to be related to whatever's happening in your current life.

[Light:](#)

And then below that, we have the daydreaming zone, which is where you're going to have a mixture of these focused surface thoughts. Things about the past, things about the future. But you also may have thoughts that don't make a lot of sense, like when we daydream. And then below that, we have just the dreaming zone, which is where all your leprechauns and rainbows and blue jays and those kinds of things live. The thoughts that are completely unrelated to ... and maybe even feeling a little bit unhinged from our regular reality. And then below that is the set of mind experience.

[Light:](#)

One has to go through all of those zones in order to arrive at the set of mind experience. If you have a handful of meditation experiences and you reflect back after the meditation, ... don't do this during meditation or it will ruin the effects. But if you reflect back after the meditation, you'll be able to see, oh I was here, and then I was there, and then I was there. I can get examples of the thoughts that are going to be having each one of those zones.

[Light:](#)

I haven't seen this in any other meditation book, and I think one of the reasons is because most people who write meditation books aren't meditation teachers and that's another big misconception. Again, I don't have any hate, it's just the way things are. You and I know in the book industry, it's not about what you know, it's about how big your platform is, and so people who have these bigger platforms end up getting the biggest book deals. But most of the people who were writing about meditation are marketers or doctors. Doctors and researchers are great, but they're not teaching people how to meditate everyday as a full-time profession.

[Light:](#)

When this is your full time profession and you're listening to this repeat back day after day and week after week and year after year, you're able to really quickly determine who's having the experience, who is not having experience, and what the best practices are for achieving the desired experience, and that's what has become a unique advantage in the market in the field of meditation. So being able to not just know it, but also to be able to articulate it in a way that feels accessible for people who have little to no interest in meditation, but to make them excited about it in the same way that they may be excited about watching the Superbowl or binge watching Game of Thrones Season 6 or something like that.

[Light:](#) But yeah, there's absolutely a process that everyone experiences and once you know what that process is, you take the guesswork out of it and it allows you to relax into it a lot more. It's because you're relaxed about it, that you're going to end up experiencing the deeper aspects of the meditation a lot easier, and that's the irony of the whole thing. When you have to use a lot of guesswork, you can end up sabotaging your best efforts and you end up staying at the surface and makes you feel like it's not working.

[Dave:](#) The staying at the surface problem was an issue for me. I did a lot of meditation classes. I actually spent five years doing Art of Living at, which helped me a lot. It's out of India, set of breathing exercises, Pranayama forms and things like that and a bunch of chanting work based on this guy's work, Dharma Singh Khalsa who wrote a book called Meditation is Medicine and then yoga and all this stuff. I haven't talked that much about that on the show, but I've put a lot of hours into this stuff.

[Dave:](#) But what I found is that you realize, "Oh man, I've been doing it this way for the last eight years or five years or whatever, and I was doing it wrong. I was breathing and I was moving energy from my toes towards the top of my head, but it turns out that thing from the Chinese forum is actually you breathe through your feet. Holy crap. All this time, I didn't know that I was breathing my energy ..." What am I talking about? If you don't meditate, everything I just said was complete gobbledygook. But I can tell you if someone had just told me that, it would have saved me 500 hours. That's as many episodes of the show as there. 500 hours of sitting there meditating and getting only half the return, and that pisses me off, to be honest.

[Dave:](#) I feel like we have a duty. Everyone's too busy right now. We have a duty to tell me, "Look meditate faster. It's okay. Do it better." I think you've dialed into a lot of this with what you just said right there. [crosstalk 00:39:52] frustration around me.

[Light:](#) Another part of that meditation conversation that we need to have more of, is we need to openly acknowledge that all meditation is not ... meditation is a generic word. It's like cooking, it's like sports. To say that you meditate, and you're getting this result doesn't really tell someone else that if they meditate they're going to get that same result. We may need to go in a little bit deeper than that.

[Dave:](#) You can meditate on spilling the blood of your enemies, and it's not going to have the same result as long as other ones. Agreed. You can have junk food, you can have real food. Who's the guru who knows which meditation is the best one? Is it you is it MV?

[Light:](#) That's a good question. My whole thing is, look, you don't want to depend on anyone to tell you these things. There are certain things that you can do to determine for yourself which one is going to be the best one for you. I try to stay away from the words, this is the correct meditation, or, this the right way to meditate because people in meditation industry don't make that. They don't like when someone suggests that theirs the best or the right way and this kind of thing. But what I will say is that depending on the effects that you want from the meditation, there are always best practices to achieve those particular results.

[Light:](#) Just like you, I had vowed to myself ... I think in 2016 I used to live around the corner from this really big steep hill in Santa Monica. And I said, "I want to lose some body fat and this and that. I'm going to run up this hill. I'm going to talk up this hill 10 times a day, every other day for a year." And I started doing that, and I did that for three or four months. I talked to a friend of mine who's a nutritional expert and he was telling me, "You don't want to jog up the hill. You want to sprint up the hill. If your goal is to lose body fat, you want to make sure that you're sprinting and not jogging."

[Light:](#) I was so upset because I had spent all this time thinking that I was doing the right thing, in jogging up that hill for six months. But at the same, I was happy I had that experience because it made me appreciate the correction a lot more. I think with meditation we want to look at it as a marathon, not as something that we do for a couple of weeks or for a month to achieve a certain result. We want to look at it as preventative maintenance that we're going to be doing pretty much for the rest of our life.

[Light:](#) Any kind of course correction would be useful as we become more and more familiar with that internal landscape. But we also want to just know that there are specific practices that can help us achieve whatever the desired goal is. The way you spot diagnose which style is best for you, in my opinion, is you go to the ... you meet the person or you go to the talk ... and by the way, if you really want to learn this, you want to study with someone. Reading a book is great, looking at a video is great, but no one who's written a book or created a video that has gone that's become massive ... Usually, those people didn't learn how to meditate from a book or video. They learned from someone.

[Dave:](#) Can I just double down on that? You're listening to the show, you care about doing things with excellence. Having a teacher is so legit. Read the books, do the courses, use the software, all that. But I'm telling you, doing a yoga video is not the same as having a yoga teacher tell you, your pelvis is tipped a little bit backwards and you didn't notice. Just take Light's advice on that. If there's one thing you get out of the show today, it's find a teacher when you're ready. It's okay to start with a book, but find a teacher. You might even start with *Bliss More*, the new book that Light wrote. But whenever you start with, please don't ignore that advice. All right off my soapbox. Keep going, Bliss. Oh, Bliss. I just called you Bliss dude. I mean Light.

[Light:](#) Yeah, I like that. Bliss Light.

[Dave:](#) Bliss Watkins, that could be your sister, right?

[Light:](#) I would say go to the teacher, go to the center, go to the studio or what have you, and look around the room and see who all is in there and find the people who are enjoying whatever that particular approach happens to be. Find the people who are enjoying it the most. If those people look like you and they're dressed like you and they're enjoying life in the same ways that you're enjoying life, then that's probably going to be a style that works best for you. However, if you find the enthusiasts, the super fans of that particular technique, and they're all sitting around wearing robes and their heads are shaved and their lifestyle is drastically different from yours, that's where that technique is going.

[Light:](#) In order for you to get the most out of that particular approach, you're probably going to have to at some point, give all your clothes over the goodwill and go buy yourself some robes and shave your hair off and join a monastery or what have you. I think if we-

[Dave:](#) Is that why you have no hair?

[Light:](#) Well, as my friend Neil Strauss says there's balding and there's choosing to be bald and-

[Dave:](#) I love Neil.

[Light:](#) Yeah, he's awesome. I would say that whatever it is, if the people that you connect with are very similar to you in lifestyle, then that's probably going to be a technique that you go to also enjoy it. They enjoy it.

[Dave:](#) There's a caveat. I want to test this advice out with you because it's what I've shared with people. A friend of mine who was really perceptive just said, "Hey Dave, you should try this art of living thing." This is going back like 15 years. I said, "All right, fine. I'm open minded. I'll try stuff that's not supposed to work." Most of the companies I worked for in Silicon Valley were started by Indian entrepreneurs. I've had my share of great Indian food at Amber India and got immersed in that culture. And so, I go to this thing and just like you said, there's bowls of fruit candles, burning white robes, and I'm just like, "I'm an engineer. I can't connect with this stuff. I'm out."

[Dave:](#) I did the one class, and we tasted a grape with mindful awareness without microwaving it. It's just all this stuff. I just didn't connect, and I never did the exercises. About two years later, the CEO of the company I worked for, [inaudible 00:45:41], one of the best CEOs I've ever worked with, an early investor in Google and just a guy I had been doing yoga at his house every morning for 30 years, he said, "Dave, why don't you come to this at one of the Intel founder executive people at their mentioned in Saratoga. It's for executives." I go in there and I'm like, "Oh, I'm not yet an executive, but I'm on my way." This was a room full of people who have really succeeded, and they changed the language.

[Dave:](#) Say, here's why you do this breathing. Here's what it does when you have a different mindset. All of a sudden, I'm like, "I get it." And so, I did this practice every morning for five years, and it really rocked my brain. When I was in Silicon Valley, every Saturday morning at 7:00 AM, and we'd meet at [BV's 00:46:22] house, and there's probably 20 of us in this room doing this weird breathing fast breathing exercises with your arms and weird poses because it worked. But for me, the robes repelled me. I would say even if there are weird robes and yoga pants that you're not really comfortable with yet or whatever, you got to try it for a week or two.

[Dave:](#) But just know you can say, "I'm never going to shave my head. I don't want to buy a robe. It's going in that direction maybe at some point, but can I skim the surface, pick up some knowledge and figure out what's going on?" As long as you don't get shades of brainwashing in there, it seems like a good way to sample a smorgasbord of options. Is that good advice or dangerous advice?

[Light:](#) No, no, no. I think I absolutely tell people to try everything because at the very least, it will allow you to appreciate when you stumble upon the thing that feels most in alignment with who and what you are. But don't discount or deny your own direct experience either.

[Dave:](#) There you go.

[Light:](#) Don't believe something is working because someone else tells you that it should be working, and you just have to ignore whatever you're feeling right now because you're just not at a certain level of enlightenment yet and this kind of nonsense that. That hasn't been my experience. My experience is that there are certain approaches to practices like meditation that actually feel amazing from the very beginning, and you don't have to be in a certain level of consciousness or enlightenment or history of yoga or any of those things. Keep exploring and eventually, you'll learn the better questions to ask when you go meet new teachers.

[Light:](#) Also, always keep an air of humility with everyone who's out there teaching people. No one's teaching meditation to get on the Forbes 500 lists of wealthiest individuals. Even though they may be charging a good amount of money and all of that, they're not ... there're much easier ways to become wealthy and in our society than trying to teach people how to meditate. We're in an age now where meditation is very much a profession for a lot of people and you get what you pay for in certain ways, and I think this is something that we also need to become more educated about as Westerners, is that this is ... we're the reason why I think money is a big part of the exchange in America and in the West is because that's something that we worship the most.

[Light:](#) Teachers don't really care about your money. They just want to know how attached you are to your stuff. If you're more attached to your stuff, then that tells them, that informs them that, well, this person's probably not going to be that open to what I have to tell them. They're probably going to think it's weird and whatnot. Or if it's something that they can't see and feel tangibly like they can with whatever they purchase with their money, then it's probably going to end up standing in the way of their progress. By making that exchange on the front end, it opens you up. It makes you more humble. It tells the teacher that you're willing to be a student, and you're not going to try to go in there and teach them how to teach you. That increases the quality of the experience. I just want to put that out there.

[Light:](#) I actually mentioned it in my book as well. I talk about exchange, the importance of the exchange. It's not just money. It could be volunteering your time. In India it's a big thing. When Elizabeth Gilbert in her book *Eat, Pray, Love*, went to India to learn meditation, she was on her hands and knees scrubbing the floors of the ash room for hours a day. That was her exchange. That was her way of making a contribution in exchange for her instruction. I think that that's a necessary component for anyone to approach a practice like meditation, so that they get the most out of the experience. Because you're in there feeling like you know everything, you're just ... it could be the highest quality teacher or highest quality approach and still not going to have the same effect.

[Light:](#)

You want to make sure you have all of those different requirements in place in order to get the best effect. That's the ultimate goal behind the book I wrote. I wanted people to learn how to ask better questions. When you're out there in the field ... and I say this very openly in the book, this is a great start, but ultimately, if you really want to get good at this, you want to find some person to teach you how to do this, and this is what you want to ask. This is how you can vet teachers. This is how you can know that they know what they're talking about. They're telling you to quiet your mind, run in the opposite direction because it's not possible to quiet your mind, and they obviously don't understand that well enough yet. Maybe they'll get there soon, but they're not there yet. There are other little things like that that can help someone find the best way, the best person to teach them.

[Dave:](#)

You're talking about your book *Bliss More*. I haven't mentioned the subtitle there, but I think you nailed something really important. The subtitle is, *How to Succeed in Meditation Without Really Trying*. When I first started doing really serious meditation related neurofeedback, I was really struggling to get my brain into this state of someone who's done advanced meditation. It took about 10 days of really focused effort before I realized the problem was, I was pushing really hard. It was when you just stop, and all of a sudden, my brain waves were bigger than when I was trying to force it.

[Dave:](#)

It's the same I've found, even with growing a company or, you know, creating a piece of art or whatever it is. It's like you allow something versus try. It's very hard to put it in language, but I you nailed it in your title. That's one of the secrets to meditation is stop trying so hard to meditate and just sit there and let it happen. When I first started meditating, I just sat there to try and let it happen and I think about naked people, anything that might be a threat and how hungry I was, the big three mitochondrial behaviors. What do you say to a newbie meditator? It's all right. I decided to not try it, and I sat there, and I just thought about Jelly donuts the whole time. What's going on with that?

[Light:](#)

The difference in a seasoned meditator and a new meditator is a couple of things. Number one, a new meditator, oftentimes, they don't have any structure in their practice. They are just in there using shoddy guesswork. What they're hoping for is that most of their thoughts are going to be positive in nature, and the ones that are not positive or that are neutral in nature, those are the ones that tend to get rejected. It's a knee jerk reaction that this is what they've been doing their entire life, rejecting those thoughts in favor of the positive affirmative thoughts.

[Light:](#)

The seasoned meditator has an understanding and really learns to do this with a lot of repetition and practice that it doesn't really matter what you're thinking about. It doesn't really matter what you're thinking about in terms of the process, as far as the process is concerned. Your attitude is everything. The more passive, than more nonchalant you can become while you're meditating. Especially around what may be termed as intrusive thoughts, the more your mind will respond positively in terms of settling itself through the thoughts. You have to go through those thoughts. You have to embrace those thoughts in order to go beyond those thoughts.

[Light:](#)

The second thing that the new meditator and the seasoned meditator have in terms of their separate approaches is the new meditator does not appreciate all of the things that had been happening before they started meditating. Which means that your body has been taking on stress. You probably are a bit sleep deprived, and so that has a major influence on the quality of your thinking experiences as well and stress had a big head start on the effects of the meditation. Meditation is very powerful, especially when you have structure. It can be extremely powerful for your mind and your body, but the stress had a big head start and it's not going to happen overnight.

[Light:](#)

Just like when you go to the gym at 40 and you've never worked out consistently in your entire life, you're going to feel sore for those first week or two. The meditation version of the soreness is you're having all these crazy random thoughts. I equate meditation, in that sense, as a plunger. It's like a plunger, and it's unclogging the crap that's been stored up in the body that's been clogging up your potential. Just like if you have to do this in a bathroom or in a toilet, what's coming out is not going to be pleasant. It's not going to be nice. It's not going to smell good.

[Light:](#)

But ultimately, the goal is to unclog the toilet. The way you know the meditation is working, is not based on what you're thinking about in the meditation. It's based on how well are you sleeping at night? How adaptable are you during the day? How compassionate are you with the people that you care about? A lot of people treat their clients and coworkers better than they treat the people they professed to love, and that's because we bottle up the stress at work and we'd come home, and we don't have an outlet for it, so we just let it all out. And so the people we professed to love and up and up taking the brunt of our reactivity and us being triggered at work, and it ends up ruining those relationships and we're sitting around wondering why we have a bad marriage, why our kids don't like us, why can't seem to get my life together, but I'm very successful in my job.

[Light:](#)

That requires more balanced. When those areas of life start to improve more and more, that's how you'd know meditation is working. But meanwhile, in the meditation itself, you're thinking about Jelly donuts. You're thinking about what movie you want to see next, or you're having anxious thoughts, or you're feeling like you're having depressing thoughts. What people also don't understand is that whatever went into your body at any point in your life can potentially come out of the body when the plunger gets to work. If you had a history of 14 or 15 years of depression or anxiety and you start meditating, your body sometimes as it's releasing this stuff, it can make you feel like you're re-experiencing it.

[Light:](#)

It feels problematic in the moment, but as a seasoned meditator understands, this is something that's leaving me, it's not coming in, then it allows you to relax more into it. Just by again, changing your attitude, reframing the experience. This is not a bad thing. This is actually ... this is a sign of progress because I'm not doing anything different. I'm still sitting here on my bed, I'm still engaged in the process and yet I'm having these randomly crazy thoughts. Oh, this must be something that's on its way out. Let me just stay relaxed, stay calm as much as possible. As a result, it allows the mind to continue to settle beyond that, and we find that the quality of our experiences can go up when possible.

[Dave:](#) It's the do less, accomplish more approach to meditation. Beautifully put, the idea that that some scary and ugly stuff comes out during meditation. That's been my experience for sure. They teach in the ancient practices as well, but it's not something that you're necessarily going to hear about when you download the latest app, so I'm happy you said that.

[Light:](#) No, no. The app is all about meditate for abundance, meditate for gratitude and this ... again, it's a nice thing. You're not going to get particularly deep in those experiences, but it's good to just get people familiar with the idea of meditating and then ultimately, you want to graduate from that and you want to find some instruction or you want to just take it a little bit more seriously so you don't have to be tethered to your phone in order to meditate.

[Dave:](#) I'm 100% with you there. Now, one more question for you. That is my new question at the end of the show, post Game Changers. I've been running an antiaging nonprofit group for almost 20 years now, and the question for you is how long do you want to live? How many years?

[Light:](#) I'm ready to go out today, Dave. I'm a big believer of leaving it all on the field, so anytime. I think practically speaking ... what's the average? They say it's 80 years or something like that.

[Dave:](#) It is 80, 87, somewhere around in there.

[Light:](#) I think if I can get a good quality 80 something years, I'm happy with that. I wouldn't want necessarily to live past all of my family and friends. I think the natural cycle ... I'm good with that. I'm good. I've done a lot of reading and research in the afterlife and what that's about, and I'm not sure how much you've talked about this on your podcast, but there's some pretty compelling research and evidence that things are actually pretty good on the other side as well. In fact, some people would go so far as to say that's our home and this is actually just REM sleep version of the spiritual dreaming.

[Light:](#) I'm happy to go back home, if that's what's happening. I'm also happy to be here and keep contributing and become very clear that my life is really about just trying to inspire as many people as possible, trying to leave the world in a better place. When it's my time, it's not really in my hands anyway, so I'm happy to ... at that point obviously, my work will have been done and ... yeah. I don't really care much about making as much money as possible or trying to be comfortable, any of those things. In the Vedic tradition, what they say is that there is no such thing as death. There's body life and there's body death, but the spirit lives forever.

[Light:](#) The thing that you take with you at the end of this life is your consciousness, and that consciousness can be shaped and can be informed by the quality of our personal day to day interactions. As long as you're approaching every interaction as though there are no throwaway moments, there are no throwaway conversations, then I think you're going to be in a better place when you ultimately transcend this body and move on to the next thing.

[Dave:](#) That's beautifully put, but you got [inaudible 00:58:49]. There's yoga gurus ... I lived 247 years. I lived in a cave for 50 years on just water. There's a long tradition of people ... they're living longer than they're supposed to. How do you reconcile those practices from the lineage of your teaching?

[Light:](#) These guys who say this, are mostly under monastic category. They're living in caves and things like that. I'm a householder. I'm not a monk. I like living around people. I like going to family reunions, Thanksgiving and I don't want to be the guy that's 120 at the Thanksgiving, and everyone else's is 40 and 50 years old talking about the latest technology that I could care less about. But again, if I ended up living to be 100 say, then I know that it was relevant for me to keep doing what I'm doing and I'm just going to keep getting ... hopefully, I'll keep getting better and less concerned about myself and more concerned about the planet and how I can be of use. How can I use whatever gifts and potential that I have to the best of my ability? That's really where I try to keep my attention. It's not necessarily on the quantity, but on the quality.

[Dave:](#) There you go. Just like sleep. You want it to be really high quality, even if the quantity is less. I'm with you there. Light-

[Light:](#) What's your answer, Dave?

[Dave:](#) I think at least 180.

[Light:](#) Okay. Why 180? If you can get to 180, why not 200? Why stop there?

[Dave:](#) That's why there's a least on there. It's because I know we can do 120 because enough people have done it, and they've done it without knowing most of what we know today. I'm just counting on over the next 100 years, we ought to be able to get 50% more out of this. Because I'm friends with a lot of the people starting antiaging companies, I've looked at the technologies and how they've evolved and I feel like I'm being a little bit conservative there, but that it's achievable. But the real answer there is I'd like to die at a time and by a method of my choosing. If I'm done before 180, I'm happy to sign out. Like you, hey, there's probably something interesting on the other side and one of two things is true. Either there's nothing on the other side, in which case I'm not going to know it, or there's something on the other side and I'll figure out what it is and be curious about it. I can't lose.

[Light:](#) That's right. That's right.

[Dave:](#) Well, we mentioned your book, which is really ... if you're looking at meditation, you're looking at learning what this is about, I think there's some great knowledge in Light Watkin's book called *Bliss More: How to Succeed in Meditation Without Really Trying*. What we didn't mention is your Shine Movement where you actually have meetups around the country, and you teach people how to do this.

[Light:](#) Correct.

Dave:

You have info on all that stuff at lightwatkins.com, [Light Watkins](http://lightwatkins.com), as you'd expect, [.com](http://lightwatkins.com) Light, thanks for being on the show. Thanks for doing what you can to make the world a better place. I think it's working.

Light:

Thank you. I want to acknowledge you for being such a big proponent of all of these different hacks for the body, hacks for the mind, hacks for the spirit, hacks of bliss. There are a lot of people who are being introduced to these practices because of the work that you're doing, and I'm just appreciative to have been able to cross paths with you in this way. Hopefully, we'll get a chance to sit down and have more time to talk about these wonderful things.