

A PEACEFUL LIFE – YOUR PODCAST FOR NAVIGATING LIFE’S CHALLENGES

SEASON 1 – EPISODE 1

[00:00:00] INTRODUCTION

David Lowry: Hello, everyone. This is David Lowry, and my good friend, Don Drew, is alongside me. Don, let's give our listeners a preview of our show today.

Don Drew: Today, we are going to introduce our listeners to this podcast, tell them what it's all about, and explain why they should listen to us.

David Lowry: We're brand new, and we want to tell you about the tools and skills you'll need to make peace.

Don Drew: And we'll teach people about the importance of developing communication and conflict resolution skills.

David Lowry: This podcast isn't just about avoiding conflict. It's about embracing challenges as opportunities for growth and finding meaning in all aspects of life. Whether you're facing conflict at work, struggling in your family, or simply seeking more peace and joy.

Don Drew: I can't wait to get started, but before we do, I want to ask our listeners to like, download, and subscribe to our peaceful life radio podcast. It only takes a minute, and it will help us out a lot.

David, let's begin our program by talking about our vision for this show.

David Lowry: Yes, it's a vision of what this whole podcast is all about. This podcast has been many years in the making, starting with a book I wrote called Peacemaking 101.

It's a result of work I've done in mediation and working with people individually. And then, of course, it's based upon you and your experiences as a long-time faculty member and teacher of organizational behavior. Don has a doctorate degree. I have a doctorate degree. Something that we're both very proud of is our advocacy for peace and peacemaking and living a peaceful life.

So I think if people are listening to this show for the first time, they may be wondering what in the world is it all about? So Don, let's run through some questions that you think people might have and we'll answer them the best we can.

[00:01:45] EMPOWERING YOU TO LIVE A FULFILLING LIFE: UNVEILING THE MISSION OF A PEACEFUL LIFE

Don Drew: Okay. Well, let's start this really simple and What is our mission?

David Lowry: Our mission is basically threefold. We want to empower people to live fulfilling lives. I believe everybody deserves to be happy, have well-being, and have a chance to flourish. This program is designed to bring those things into your life, give you hope that those things can come into your life, and give you ideas on how to do that.

The second is to give you essential skills, tools, and some knowledge to handle the interpersonal conflicts that come up in your life.

Most of all, Don, to get rid of the stupid drama drives you nuts. You know, all that back-and-forth stuff that people get involved with. We want to see if we can get it out of our lives if we possibly can.

The last one is more of a lifestyle approach. It's mastering life changes and challenges so that you can work with people and manage your challenges, people, places, things, events, and situations—those things that come up in your life that mess with your serenity. That's what I call it. And so, how do we deal with all of those things that mess with our serenity?

[00:02:49] BEYOND THE DRAMA: YOUR GUIDE TO BUILDING STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS & INNER PEACE

Don Drew: We're going to try to help out in a couple of different ways. Number one is this Peaceful Life Podcast. And David, I'll let you say a little bit more about that if you want, but also, we have a Peacemaking 101 website, that's Peacemaking 101 dot com. We're trying to integrate both the podcast and the website, so you'll find a lot of additional useful information and tools there.

David Lowry: Yes. We'll be doing a weekly podcast with new information, and we'll post that information on our website so that you can listen to us and then find even more information, books, whatever. So, between the two of them, you're bound to like something.

Hopefully, there will be some benefits for our audience.

I wrote a book on peacemaking, Peacemaking 101. It's an online textbook that was used. I've taken a lot of videos from people who have studied and taken college courses and made them available to anybody who wants to see them. So, why do we do this? We believe in this message of reducing drama and conflict. We believe that if you learn how to be a better communicator and develop your conflict resolution skills, you can minimize stressful situations and build a healthier relationship.

[00:04:12] WHY SHOULD PEOPLE LISTEN TO THE PODCAST?

Don Drew: Okay, so those are some great benefits, but I listen to several different podcasts. I enjoy listening to podcasts myself, but I have to be kind of choosy about where I spend my time and who I want to listen to, so why is it worth my time, or why is it worth our listeners' time, to listen to this?

[00:04:28] STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS

David Lowry: Our approach will be based on relationships and communication. And I believe, Don, that 99 percent of the trouble people

face in their lives is caused more by their relationships and misunderstandings of what to do in those relationships than anything else.

So our focus here tends to be on developing great interpersonal relationships with you and other people and also with the things that you have in your life, even the inanimate objects that you have in your life, maybe like a car or house or something like that. So that the things that you have in your life actually contribute to your peace.

[00:05:04] BECOME A MORE AUTHENTIC PERSON

David Lowry: We're working on how you can improve all of those aspects of your life. And I'm really hoping that niche right there working on your relationships to be a more authentic person where you can be who you need to be, allow others to be who they are, but develop a great relationship between you, nonetheless, even if you don't see eye to eye, but enjoy one another despite those differences, we think can go a long way to bringing peace into your life.

[00:05:31] HAVE GREATER CONTROL IN YOUR LIFE

David Lowry: We're going to do another thing here. We're going to teach you how to have greater control over your life. As we teach you communication skills, give you ideas on how to make peace, and talk about living your peaceful lifestyle, we think that your life will come under greater control.

Don Drew: So, in order to do this, we're going to be providing various guides and strategies. Some of this you can find on our website. But we'll be providing step-by-step instructions and frameworks for navigating specific conflict situations. We'll be talking about workplace drama, family conflict, and ways to grow through that and learn how to live with that and perhaps find peace through a whole new set of skills. We'll also have scripts, templates, exercises, and activities, and of course, we also want to provide a supportive community or network for individuals to share similar goals and offer encouragement and guidance to one another.

[00:06:22] BECOME MORE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT

David Lowry: Absolutely. We hope that the things we teach you here will make you more emotionally intelligent, give you ideas on how to manage stressful situations that come up in your life, how to deal with people, places, things, events, and situations, and give you a little more knowledge and wisdom than the average person has.

Over time, if you listen to us, you'll hear ideas that will just make sense to you. And you say, you know, I think I can do that. Maybe you'll hear an idea, and then one day you'll remember, oh yeah, I remember I heard that on A Peaceful Life podcast or on the Peacemaking 101 website. And you'll find that it makes your life better. And mission accomplished if we do that.

We're not selling anything to you, not trying to be your guru, not trying to create a religious experience for you, not taking your money, but we do hope that what we have to offer you, based on our years of experience, might benefit you and someone you know and love.

[00:07:18] THE PEACEMAKER PHILOSOPHY

Don Drew: Tell us about what you call a peacemaker's philosophy.

[00:07:21] CHALLENGES AS STEPPING STONES: EMBRACING GROWTH THROUGH LIFE'S OBSTACLES

David Lowry: So, it's this belief right here. Your challenges aren't meant to overwhelm you but to serve as a stepping stone for personal growth and positive change. everybody, right? I mean, there's an old saying that man plans, and God laughs. That has been true in my life. I have been so low at certain points in my life that I honestly did not care if I lived or died. And I think everybody goes through those valleys and those very low lows sometimes. But I've learned from those low, low, lows. And one of the reasons I have a steadier, even life and have become such an advocate of peace is because I've learned many things about peacemaking.

Don Drew: Right. And I think it's important to understand that one of our messages is that even in times of great stress. It's possible to find peace,

and it's possible to be a peacemaker. It takes work, and it takes awareness, and that's what we're looking at.

David Lowry: That's exactly what we're saying. Now, this is something I believe. If you don't believe it, put it into something you can believe. I believe we come here ready to do some sort of mission. We don't know what it is exactly. But each of us, through our training and growth and development and learning, becomes suited to do certain things that other people can't do. Okay. We develop into this uniquely qualified person. And we've had all kinds of challenges and roadblocks on the way. And we've seen them as frustrations and hindrances, and we've gotten angry about it.

[00:08:50] YOUR MISTAKES ARE YOUR TEACHERS: LEARNING VALUABLE LESSONS FROM LIFE'S CHALLENGES

David Lowry: But what if, according to my viewpoint, we said, wait, wait, wait, maybe those were necessary to help me become more of who I'm supposed to be? What if they were my friends and not my enemies? What if they were like the boulder in the water that parts the water to one side? If we look at life that way, we can begin to see how peacemaking can be a really convenient tool in our lives. Because, okay, we have a problem; it's part of life, but it is also an opportunity to become more who we're supposed to be.

Don Drew: Mm-hmm, yeah, I'm thinking of that phrase, no pain, no gain, that's used in exercise a lot, right? It is true that until you put stress on a muscle, it's not going to grow and strengthen. And anybody that's had any kind of an injury they have to recover from has found that it takes time to rebuild that muscle.

David Lowry: Instead of viewing these difficulties as roadblocks, they could be something that is meant to help us grow. As we actively engage with our problems, we gain insights into ourselves, others, and the world around us.

I've made tons of mistakes in my life. And I know that if you're honest and say, yeah, I've made them too, but did you learn from them? If you did learn from them, then your mistakes fulfilled the purpose they were supposed to do. They taught you something about life and living. It gives you wisdom. Congratulate yourself. It gives you a new direction to go. And you shouldn't spend a lot of time beating yourself up over it because, guess what? You learned your lesson, or you learned something from it. And the next time it comes up, we think you'll do better.

[00:10:26] BUILDING BRIDGES, NOT WALLS: THE POWER OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN RELATIONSHIPS

Don Drew: Realistically, this will result in us developing the essential skills necessary to navigate the future.

So, the first part of the Peacemaker's philosophy has been about learning to see challenges as opportunities, growing from them, and, therefore, developing the essential skills we need to navigate challenges in the future. What about building strong relationships? How does that play into the Peacemaker's philosophy?

David Lowry: As we face challenges with each other, we develop a sense of shared purpose and connection. We learn how to build relationships by respecting people's different perspectives and learning when it's appropriate to trust somebody. We also learn how to empathize when we have problems with one another. All those things together can build strong relationships.

[00:11:14] NAVIGATING CONFLICT WITH EASE: PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS PEACEFULLY

David Lowry: Sometimes, we have to go through things together as a family. Let's say you and your partner are struggling in some way. You're not getting along well, and you're not even sure if you're going to stay together. But if you can build the relationship and find your way forward, just think of all the things you will have learned from that.

Even if you can't move forward in the relationship, you learn from that, too. That can be a good thing because you learn about the obstacles you can face, and you'll be a little more careful next time.

All these obstacles you face will help you become more compassionate, caring, and empathetic, or you will be of no use to anybody. We hope you'll be an empathetic person and not a bitter person.

[00:11:55] HOW DO WE FIND MEANING THROUGH CONFLICTS AND CHALLENGES?

Don Drew: How might we find deeper meaning through conflicts and challenges?

[00:12:00] THERE IS ALWAYS A DEEPER MEANING IN EVERY CONFLICT YOU HAVE.

David Lowry: There's a deeper meaning in every conflict that you have. I truly believe this. Some people say the challenges that come your way come your way for a reason. You can argue whether the universe works that way or not. However, I found it very helpful to look at the conflicts in my life as having a deeper meaning than being a mere inconvenience.

Recently, I've had to assume the guardianship and conservatorship of my sister, who's got early dementia. That's a really tough lesson to learn right there, right? But I've learned so many things by going through all of that.

I've learned about this disease that cripples millions of people in America. I've learned about the healthcare system. I've learned about the legal system. I've learned about the financial problems people face going through all of this. There are so many wonderful lessons I'm learning that I didn't know before. I was totally unaware of it.

The deeper meaning of all of that is that it opens doors for me to be more empathetic and compassionate to other people and maybe be a potential agent of change. There's always an opportunity to extend what's happened to you and to find some greater meaning in it.

[00:13:09] TAMING THE TIGER: MASTERING YOUR ANGER FOR POSITIVE CHANGE AND ADVOCACY

Don Drew: Emotions often get a bad rap. We're told that we need to control or manage our emotions. What are some ways that we can fuel positive change?

David Lowry: We look at emotions as something you shouldn't fear. It's a fuel source if you will. It's energy in motion. Emotion, energy in motion. Honestly, the people who study emotions, Don, say we only have about six really pure emotions and that everything else is sort of like the color wheel. We just mix and match things, and we come up with different variations of emotions. Anger is one of them, right? Or sadness and depression and things like this are part of our emotional makeup. And they give us challenges at times. But frustration, anger, and even joy are not something that we should run away from but seek to use as an energy source to help us make the change we need to make.

[00:14:03] FROM FRUSTRATION TO FUEL: TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE EMOTIONS INTO POSITIVE ACTION

David Lowry: Once you've had joy in your life, you say, how can I have more of this in my life? If you've had anger in your life, you may say, what can I do to change this anger into something more productive instead of just carrying around bitterness and letting it burn me up? Maybe there's a way that I can do something to make things better. We can use it to make positive changes in our lives.

[00:14:25] PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE: ESSENTIAL SKILLS & TOOLS FOR OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Don Drew: In our peacemaker's philosophy, we started talking about challenges as opportunities for learning and discovery. Let's finish up this part of our discussion with challenges as shaping forces for our lives.

David Lowry: Challenges are there to cause you to become a wiser, more skillful, more resilient person who can navigate what life throws at them. If you follow the peacemaking lifestyle and learn more about how to be a

peacemaker, how to be better related to yourself, better with other people, and better with your situation and environment that you're in, you're going to develop some complexity that makes you a very rich and deep person and allows you to be a qualified agent of positive change.

I don't know if you're like me, Don, but sometimes I see these people who are throwing out their shingle as life coaches or something like this, and they're all about 22 years old. And I and, you know, more power to those people. But I sometimes think, what do you know? What have you been through that makes you uniquely qualified to help people through their difficult situations?

But all of us who have been through problems learn that we can grow and become better people as a result of our problems. We didn't enjoy them at the time, but we can learn how to be better. And that makes us wise. That makes us valuable. And those things that maybe you've been through, maybe it was a struggle with an addiction, or maybe a divorce or a marriage that went sideways, or maybe you lost a job because you didn't do it right. Whatever those things you consider to be failures can be Something that makes you even more qualified to help other people if you've learned your lesson. ,

[00:16:02] CREATING A PEACEFUL LIFE: PRACTICAL STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PEACEMAKER PHILOSOPHY

Don Drew: David, if we try to apply what we've been talking about in the Peacemakers philosophy to what we're trying to accomplish through Peacemaking101.com and a Peaceful Life podcast, there have to be some different elements that can be applied in very practical ways. For instance, challenges can be considered opportunities for growth.

David Lowry: Exactly. We want this to be a very pragmatic and powerful way to live. First of all, we don't want to talk theory all the time. We want to talk about what practical things you can do. So, we really want to talk about developing skills and understanding. For instance, let's say that we talked to you about different ways that you solve conflict.

Maybe it never occurred to you that there are many different approaches you can use to solve a conflict. Most people rely upon whatever has been working for them in the past, and they're what I call a one-trick pony. They just use the same thing over and over and over again, and when it doesn't work, they have a life full of conflict. It never occurred to them that there were many other ways of approaching a problem that they could have used, right?

So, we're going to give them some very practical skills and ideas for understanding. The other one is just to share the knowledge that we've gained over the years about peacemaking, how we make peace, what things seem to be working with people, and give people some ideas to try. So, when you have something that comes up in your life, and you say, Hey, do you have an idea on how I can handle this situation? We hope that this podcast will give you all kinds of ideas on how to handle your situation. Maybe one week working with your kid, or maybe one week it's your boss or whatever it is. You'll find that I can definitely use it in my daily life.

[00:17:45] EMPOWERING YOURSELF & OTHERS: CONTRIBUTING TO A BETTER WORLD THROUGH POSITIVE ACTION

Don Drew: Some of the things we might really be interested in bringing forth here is a better understanding of people in our lives and highlighting the significance of developing healthy relationships for overcoming challenges in those relationships. The website and podcast will offer guidance on effective communication, conflict resolution, and building strong interpersonal connections. Then, it'll address things like specific situations and problems, view challenges as opportunities for learning, and encourage others to use practical problem-solving strategies to address these issues.

David Lowry: Absolutely. And Don, we want to talk about handling emotions as well. For instance, I mean, we'll have a whole program in the future talking about anger. Anger is one of those rage emotions that people find themselves in from time to time, and they don't know what to do with it. But guess what? When you learn that anger can be the tool that moves

you to assertiveness and then from assertiveness to advocacy so that you can make really great positive changes where they need to be made, suddenly, anger is not to be feared anymore. Anger can be the emotion that tells you, Hey, I need to do something here. Instead of using it improperly, we can teach you how to use it more beneficially.

Don Drew: So, at the end of the day, a peaceful life podcast can support individuals in embracing the challenges outlined by the philosophy we've been discussing here, providing the tools and knowledge necessary to navigate challenges effectively. It can also shift your personal perspectives on these challenges from overwhelming obstacles to opportunities for growth and meaning. Lastly, it can empower individuals to contribute to a better world by addressing problems and finding solutions that will benefit themselves and all of their friends and loved ones.