

Part 2 Super Psyched The Science of Meaningful Connections with Adam Dorsay

Welcome to Peaceful Life Radio. This is David Lowry and with me is Don Drew. Happy to see you, David. Don, we're going to continue with part two of our interview with Adam Dorsay and his book, Super Psyched.

Absolutely. Let's get to it.

Do you subscribe to this onion theory of revealing yourself? Don't do it all at once, but start with the more mundane, insignificant things. And then over time, go deeper and deeper until maybe cumulatively people know quite a bit about us and maybe some people we feel comfortable enough to to share almost anything with.

Love that onion theory. I sometimes call it the dog park thing. You're kind of sniffing around, but yeah, but you're trying to see like, is this, is this okay? But the onion theory is more elegant than the dog park theory. Okay.

I'd like to go back to something you said earlier. You said that failure is nothing more than just data. In your book, you also go on to say, when you're talking about that, that the antidote to fear is getting a plan. What's that about?

So first of all, I want to talk to the, about the failure before I go into the fear. Gosh, you know, we are so terrified of how we will be perceived and there's an old quote I think comes from Teddy Roosevelt and it's something akin to if we knew how little people thought of us We wouldn't care how much they did. I'm saying it poorly but you get the idea. And the idea that failure is merely data comes from Dory Clark. And the only way to live and the only way to grow and the only way to learn, I say, I'm still learning is to fail. You gotta fail a lot.

I mean, learning Japanese, something I did. And one of the costs of entry was looking like a complete moron for several dozen hours and still looking Like a fool and failing. Failure is data. And I thank Dory Clark for that. But there have been so many other folks who have talked about these ideas, kind of inoculation against fear of failure.

Bonnie Burnell says that *failure is tuition*. I like that. I love that what Sean Hayes of Will and Grace says he says, *failure becomes the meat for the best stories later on*. Like I have this story of me and Italy using the wrong term for pregnancy that is so unbelievably funny. And I completely belly flopped. And they're funny stories.

So if we're able to have some levity and some self compassion. One of the things

we know about self compassion, which is not a , an , new agey idea. I mean, the Navy SEALs are using it. Kristen Neff and Chris Grimmer the latter of whom was on my podcast, talked about how to cultivate self compassion. And the reason self compassion has become so popular is because it works on virtually every positive outcome. I mean, if the Navy SEALs themselves are using it and they're getting faster and better results. I think in Steve Kerr, the coach of the Golden State Warriors, who was on my podcast, one of his four major values is compassion. And look at it. He's got tons of rings. He's got, maybe he's number three in terms of the total number of rings that he has on his finger for winning the NBA finals. I mean, it's unbelievable as a player and a coach.

So failure is going to be, I'm going to say, the cost of having a more complete and full life. If I could go back in time and whisper just one thing into my high school or self's head. It would be, *Dude, be willing to fail and be willing to be rejected. Yeah, rejection sucks. Failure sucks. I'm not saying you're gonna love it, but it is definitely the cost of doing business.*

We're so afraid of failure though. That's where the fear comes in, right? I mean, we get paralyzed and so we don't have even give ourselves a chance to learn new lessons or to grow.

You know, I'm so grateful to Brene Brown, who's brought the idea that vulnerability is the precursor for courage. You cannot be courageous if you're not vulnerable. Let's say I'm going to go sing on stage in front of a hundred people, I would be terrified. You know, that's not a thing I do regularly, but for Bono to do it, that would not be courageous at all. That's just something he does all the time in front of thousands of people, wherever he goes and he's beloved requires no vulnerability for him. requires no courage for him. For me, it would require a lot of vulnerability and therefore courage.

So I really want people to feel the fear and do it anyway. There was an old book that with that title by Susan Jefferts, I love that title. Feel the fear, do it anyway. We have inside of us many blockers. We have an inner critic who's like, *you suck*. You know, that's Nelson from the Simpsons if you remember him.

Yeah. And we all got an inner critic that says, *you're gonna look like a moron*. And yeah, we might look like a moron. But what's worse? Looking like a moron temporarily or looking back at your life on your deathbed saying I should have tried that.

I think all of us need to develop something in our life, which that's a big stretch for us you know, you want to do if you could start your life over, maybe you would work towards it, but it's never too late. Is it? I think you should always be having that stretch goal in front of you. And you say, , I'm going to give this a try. I don't know how it's going to work out. But I'm definitely going to do it.

Could not agree more. We've got one time on this merry go round that we know for sure. We don't know what's next. Let's do this and we know that people on their deathbed regret the things they didn't try even if they failed. And a big hairy audacious goal, as sometimes people call it, is a good thing to have and it could be very different at different stages of life. It might be that at some point you decide to go up and say you know what I'm gonna do three minutes of comedy I'm gonna see if I can do it. I don't care if I fail. I need to see what happens. And maybe I'll do it a bunch of times. But having a big goal is something that wakes us up in the morning. Viktor Frankl wrote that great book called man's search for meaning and we've been talking about meaning making and meaning and meaning and if you have that goal and it's intrinsically good irrespective of the extrinsic. It's good to do it and it might be a huge success. It might not. But doing it in and of itself is important. Then you got yourself something really great.

I just love what you're saying. One of the things I really liked about your book is that you have a lot of very practical exercises in it. And I really encourage people to get that book. Super Psyched. You can find it on Amazon and a lot of other places. And we think you'll grow from reading the book. If you had to pick an exercise you really like, what would you recommend?

All right, my man, here's what recommend.

Without giving the whole book away? Okay.

For sure. But one of the things I would ask is. Asking yourself, how am I allocating my time first? Take a look, because there's often a chasm between what we want to do and what we actually do. There's a chasm between common sense and common practice. There's a chasm between all of these things. And including even sometimes what we say and what we do. I would want you to ask yourself, Is there something that is life giving that I know? It could be something simple. It could literally be playing with your dog. And just maybe hitting it 10 percent harder.

Hmm.

One of the things I often ask people to do is who have trouble with laughter. You're not going to believe this, but a lot of us have a lot of trouble laughing fully because for whatever reason I ask them to consider laughing just 10 percent harder.

Put the phone away. Look at your spouse. Look at how amazing it is to be with this person. If it is. I'm not suggesting to do so if it's not. But one thing for sure that we know is what we appreciate appreciates.

And I would ask people to notice when they engage in one of the distractors like FOMO or social comparison. I remember buying my new car. It was the very first

time I ever bought a new car. I bought used cars. But I bought a new car. And I live in a neighborhood where there are a lot of nice cars. And mine tends to be not the nicest. But I got this Hyundai Plug-in Hybrid Santa Fe. And it's not turning heads. But I love this thing. I love this car. I got rid of the OEM tires. I put on some new ones. And the reason I'm bringing this up is every time I turn on the ignition of this car, I have a simple little mantra. I just say, wow, I'm so grateful to have this car. And at some point when I'm driving with my family, it's almost become, it's become a family joke. They're going here. Are these tires amazing? And just simply, I'm just using something really innocuous here. I'm using a car, but what we appreciate appreciates. I freaking love this car and it's authentic. It's not me faking it. It's a hundred percent real.

There are so many things that I loved about about your book, Adam. And,

Oh, thanks.

It's hard to know where to, to, to start with all the different things that could be useful. And I want to really encourage our listeners to go out and read the book. It is excellent. Connection is the main core, I guess. of what the book is about and you talk a lot about connection with family and friends and coworkers and all that sort of thing. But what I'm hearing is connections on all kinds of levels matter. Connections for the things that are important to you because things sometimes are important to us. And then also I think your dog's name is Ricky.

It's Rafi. Yeah.

Okay. I couldn't remember what it was. I knew I read it. Rafi. Great name, by the way.

Oh, thanks man.

But I mean, just the connection that you have with your pet and that all of these connections are vital to our having a good life, a life of meaning.

Could not agree more and all of the ways that we connect. And many of us have actually been told to curb our enthusiasm to borrow the name from a great TV show with Larry David. It's like, wow. , I remember sitting across from somebody in college getting really excited about something. And she looked at me and shot me this really harsh look and said, *wow, you're so easily impressed*. And I said, *no, I'm not easily impressed. I have a high capacity for appreciation*. And I didn't even know I was going to say something like that. I'd never thought that before, but it was just what came out organically.

And I want people to have a higher capacity for appreciation and saying, here's something I could overlook. And here's something I could actually dive deeper into appreciating. And my wife is one person who will never have to worry is her

husband super into her? She knows. She hears about it all the time and what we appreciate appreciates in our relationship.

I believe in being a bit of a gusher. I would rather err on saying, I love you too much, or I appreciate you too much. And here's how I appreciate you. And these are the things. I'd much rather articulate that too many times rather than be that kind of joke, I don't know if you heard the old joke where the couple marries, I think they're from probably from Minnesota and 20 years in the wife says to the husband, *honey, do you love me?* And he said, *Martha, 20 years, I told you, I love you. And I'd let you know if anything changed.*

We need to hit the refresh button regularly. What we appreciate appreciates. Now there are some really stable relationships that don't need to hear it that often, but I would still ask. At least say it to yourself if the other person isn't into hearing it. Let's all increase our appreciation capacity.

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suspect the people you see in your office with many serious problems in their life, it's not because they feel overly appreciated. That's not a problem.

I've heard that zero times in the 20, 000 hours. That's right.

Doctor. I've got to stop this appreciation. It's just kind of getting in the way of things for me.

You're right. I have never heard the term what you appreciate appreciates. Wow. I'm going to, let me embroider that or something. That's really good. Thank you for that. I appreciate that.

You betcha.

I don't think I'm giving anything away when I quote your Closing line. *When you keep your cup filled, there's more of you to go around. Go out and fill your cup.* What do you want our listeners to take away about filling cups, being there for other people, being there for themselves, being there for others, the world, something greater than themselves.

I want them to know that taking care of themselves is not selfish. We know that hurt people hurt people. If I have just been cut off by somebody who flips me off and I go home, I have this cognitive afterimage in my head of this guy cutting me off and flipping me off. And my wife comes over and says, Honey, it's so good to see you. And I'm just thinking. *Some jerk just cut me off and flip me off.* Now, how does that impact our interaction? So what we need is the ability to recover and take a minute before we go into the house and say, *what do I need to be more present?*

Mr. Rogers famously would change his shoes and change his sweater when he was welcoming people into his house. And we need to do something akin to that, take care of ourselves so the best of us can come forward as we are with the people who matter.

Dr. Adam Dorsay, it has been such a great pleasure having you with us on Peaceful Life Radio. Super Psyched is now available on Amazon and hopefully in your local bookstore. We also want to encourage you to check out Adam's podcast, Super Psyched.

Don, that was a fantastic interview with Adam Dorsay in his book Super Psyched. I'm thrilled we could have him as a guest. And, he's quite a magnetic, charismatic personality.

Yeah, he is. And I have to say, we have been very fortunate. Our guests are just super to work with. And he was just an exceptional individual. I enjoyed it immensely.

We had a lot of conversation with Adam offline that our listeners couldn't hear, but I can tell you he is a very generous man, very wise, and he does all kinds of consultings with professional basketball players, people who are big leaders in Silicon Valley and industry. The guy is really well known.

Yeah. Yeah. Very down to earth too.

There's a few things we just didn't have time to talk about it in our program, but I think we should. Let's talk about some of those areas in the book Super Psyched that we think our listeners might want to know more about.

One of the places I want to start is with his definition of what Super Psyched is. He defines it as being truly alive. Now, he does emphasize is that does not mean being happy all the time. We all like to be happy, wouldn't we? Life doesn't work that way, does it?

No, it doesn't. But his idea of being alive, that's important.

Yes, it is. And he cites Viktor Frankl in his book, Man's Search for Meaning.

That guy was in a concentration camp.

Yes, he was. He lost his wife there. He was a famous psychologist and did a lot of great work. I find that book to be exceptionally useful in my life. What his book was about was finding hope despite pain and suffering. And I think part of the message Adam wants to give our listeners is that people can learn to be Super Psyched about life and it helps them ride through these difficult times that are

bound to come at times.

That's so important. I've read that book, Man's Search for Meaning, and it's really an amazing book. And I love that he's continuing to have influence today in people like Adam Dorsay.

I mean, any of us can find meaning in life when things are good and we're on the Hawaiian vacation and we're getting all the perks that we want. But can we find meaning in life when we have to face some unpleasantness? That's the real test, isn't it?

Absolutely. And he actually has something that we didn't get around to talking about, which is called the feed approach.

It stands for flow, educate, energize and depth.

Okay, so flow is a concept that's been around for a while now, and it has to do with people when they're learning or doing something that they're totally involved in, totally focused on and time seems to be suspended. So flow is the, is the first point.

And then the second part of feed is to educate. Being open, educated people are open to ideas, open to learning, open to change.

Got to be a lifelong learner flow is great, but you're going to have to invite more things into your life so that your attention continues that wonderful focus and fascination that you're going through.

It's interesting that you say that because typically somebody who is in a state of flow, knows really well what they're doing. Say, for instance, one of the common examples of somebody who's an excellent snow skier. They know exactly what they're doing. They know how to move the skis just right. But concentration is a effort and a way of becoming even better, learning even more in the process. So flow and educate become critically important.

The third area of feed is what he calls energize. Energize is, a way of allowing those first two things, that concentration, that flow, that education, that learning and desire to energize you and move you forward in life to basically Super Psych your life, essentially.

Yes. And the last one is depth, which is finding meaning and purpose in all of this. It's not enough just to look at something. It's not enough just to be fascinated, but we have to go deeper than the average person. The meaning comes when we mine the depths of something and know more than most people about. Then it becomes a part of our life as well.

Don, the last thing we ought to talk about today has to do with his chapter on children, which is really impressive. He has a little something for everybody in here. And I think everybody needs to know, how to work with children better. And one of the things he says is, *if a child is able to safely attempt a task, we should allow them to do so.*

Yeah, remember the book is about connections and by connections, a lot of times he's talking about relationships. And the chapters are often divided between, for instance, children, friends, mates, and so on. And so in the chapter on children, he talks about this principle is, if a child is able to safely attempt a task, then they should be allowed to.

In other words, you don't necessarily do something for somebody who can do the task because you're telling them that. I don't think you're capable. And I wonder sometimes, David, if we don't do this to each other, often, right? Do it in the workplace. If we don't do it in with our aging parents, and so on. We take a look at them and then we go, *well, they they're, they're frail or they're, you know, whatever, and they're going to mess it up.*

I think if somebody clearly isn't going to hurt themselves or someone else, right, then failure once again, going back to the previous idea, failure is new data. So failing is not necessarily a tragedy. So I think we could find more peace in our own lives when we're trying to help somebody else by realizing that quite frankly we can help more by allowing them to try.

Well, this was a fantastic interview Don and I had with Dr. Adam Dorsay, and his book, *Super Psyched*. You can find that book on sale on Amazon or your favorite bookseller. We encourage you to get your own copy of that. You'll find it's one of those keeper books that will help you get along with your friends, bring a little more peace in the world. It's just a generally great book to have.

Don, great show. Good to see you today and looking forward to next week.

Thanks a lot, David. I'll see you and our listeners next week on Peaceful Life Radio.