

Gen Y Shift

Gay Hendricks

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Ben: Welcome back everyone to the Gen Y series. This is Ben Hart with you again. I'm very happy to be with you all in this beautiful Tuesday or I suppose Wednesday depending where you are in the world or I guess it could be any day if you're listening to the recording. But thanks so much for being with us.

I'm very happy and excited to be with you tonight with Gay Hendricks. In just moment, I'm going to introduce Gay, but I just want to quickly say that when putting this together this series just looking at all the different presenters and people we could invite in, it felt like bringing in Gay near the beginning was such an important opportunity based on what we're going to talk about tonight with the ideas from his book, "The Big Leap." He just has so much to offer in terms of inspiration around living into our true potential and really living a life of happiness. Certainly, with those of us in our 20s and 30s, it's such a rich opportunity to really lay the tracks for that early in life. So I'm very happy to have Gay on tonight talking about this.

For those of you who don't know, Gay Hendricks has served for more than 35 years as one of the major contributors to the fields of relationship transformation and body-mind therapies. He is the author of a rather amazing 33 books, including "The Corporate Mystic, Conscious Living and The Big Leap." After a 21-year career as a professor of Counseling Psychology at University of Colorado, he and his wife Katie founded the Hendricks Institute and they offer seminars worldwide. So Gay, thank you so much for being with us tonight.

Gay: Well it's my pleasure, Ben. I really enjoy having these conversations with The Shift Network and so I'm really looking forward to this one.

Ben: Well, thank you. Thank you. Yeah, you've been quite prolific around our network, which is great. We're happy to have you anytime we can get you.

Gay: [Laughs]

Ben: Yeah. So I'd love to just start is for people who haven't read the book, I definitely recommend checking it out and hopefully that the conversation will lead you to checking it out. But I would like to just kind of jump into some of the questions and ideas based on the book. So where I'd love to

start is in this idea of the one problem that holds us back in our lives and what you call the upper limit problem. If you could give a description of that and just relate that to people's lives, that would be great.

Gay:

Yes. Well the upper limit problem is caused by the fact that we get our thermostats set too low in childhood about how much love and abundance and positive energy we allow to flow through our lives. So sometimes by the time we kind of begin to waken up in our adolescence and our early 20s, we've kind of already been programmed from an early age not to be able to accept or express too much positive energy and too much abundance and too much love. So the upper limit problem is that most of us have one foot on the brakes and one foot on the accelerator and the big leap shows you where the problem starts and how to fix it.

So that's kind of what I wanted to focus on in this conversation is more on how to deal with it. But just the description of what it is, think of it as you get to moving at a certain speed and then for some reason usually unconscious, you put the brakes on because you're afraid of going into that next higher level of positive energy. So many people use addictions for example as one way of upper limiting themselves. I've worked with lots of people that things are going along really, really well and then some unconscious urge overtakes them and they decide to overindulge in liquor, food, drugs, television, all of the drugs that are available to us in our culture.

So the upper limit problem once you understand how it works, it gives you a huge tool to really make changes pretty much from moment to moment, day to day in your ability to give and receive positive energy and your ability to receive abundance in your life and your ability to let the flow of creativity move through you. All of those things are affected by the upper limit problem and that's why I say that if you're going to focus on one problem to solve in your life, put your intention on solving your upper limit problem.

I did that in my own life and once I found out why I was holding myself back, like the next year, my income tripled so there's very practical benefits to this. But also in the area of love and relationships, once my wife and I started really focusing on this when we first got together a little over 30 years ago now, we realized that we had exactly the same problem in relationships. Things would be going along for a while well and then one of us would torpedo the relationship, start an argument or criticize the other one or something that would bring the old, the whole level of vibration down to a lower level and then it would take us a while to get through that and move back again back into an easy flow.

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So the upper limit problem shows up in pretty much every area of life so I'm really glad you're having this conversation early in the series because it's kind of a meta problem in the sense that it controls a lot of other things that we struggle with in life.

Ben: Yeah, absolutely. What I love about the concept and the way you present is you're saying something that's rather confronting in this idea of we're taking our foot off that brake, if we're getting rid of these invisible barriers, we can actually experience an ever increasing amount of joy and love and fulfillment. But at the same time, in you it feels so integrated that that's not wishy-washy positive thinking that is really rooted and yet feeling fear and feeling sadness yet knowing that we could open up to even more and more of these positive emotions. I wonder if you say a bit more about that dance and the idea that it can keep increasing and keep getting better?

Gay: Yes, I remember one of the first things, I got my doctorate in counseling psychology at Stanford back when I was in my 20s and I think I was there from about age 25 to 28 when I was working on my doctorate there. I met a couple of the most amazing people when I was there. One of them was a Gestalt therapist who had worked with Fritz Perls kind of the master of Gestalt therapy. He had a slogan which is you don't have to be sick to get better. [Laughs] In other words, the point was you didn't have to identify yourself as having a problem to keep expanding all of the time in positive ways.

That really made an impression on me because at the time clinical and counseling psychology was very much concerned with helping very, very sick people get better and I realized that that was not my main focus. I wanted to help people who were already doing okay. I wanted to show them how they could get to their full potential and that became the area that I really liked to focus on. So it's been my pleasure over the years to help people, a lot of people from the business world but others too to move into what I call their zone of genius. We can talk about that a little bit later. But your zone of genius is really where your true strengths lie in life. In your 20s and 30s, it's a really good time to be able to start opening up to finding out what your true genius is because it took me longer than that. I didn't start finding that out until a little bit later, but once I did it made everything just go so much easier in my life.

Ben: Beautiful. Well would you like to just jump right in to talking about how we can identify and begin to and dissolve some of those upper limits?

Gay: Yes. One thing is to think of yourself – here's a good image. As it happens right now, some men are out there in the street near where I'm speaking to you outside my office trying to fix a broken water main and so there's

disturbances in the flow in the neighborhood. So let me just use that as a great right now example.

So if you think of a garden hose with a nozzle on the end of it, well what a lot of times people try to deal with their feelings by thinking that good feelings come out of one nozzle and unpleasant feelings come out of the other nozzle and what you're supposed to do is crank up the nozzle on the positive feelings and crank down the nozzle on the negative feelings. But in actual fact, there's only one flow. It's the flow of life energy and if it happens to be flowing through the zone of you that's angry at the time, well then you feel angry and if it's flowing through a sadness place in you at the time, you feel sad. But there's only one flow, there's only one going through the garden hose. There's only that one flow and it's up to us to open the nozzle and allow life to flow as big as it flows in us.

So then here is the ticket to feeling good all the time because really happiness is not an emotion in itself. In my experience, it's a feeling about all of your feelings. In other words, if you're open to your sadness or you're open to your fear or you're open to your joy, or you're open to love, you're participating with all of those at the same level. So in life, you've got to think of the flow there just being one flow that moves through us and if we participate with it then we get to ride that beam of energy that comes to us from the creator force of the universe. In other words, we land in these incredible divine human body beings and then our job is to make the most of that incredible creativity the gifts that are given. A lot of the decisions that you make in your 20s and 30s are really key to opening up the full dialogue with that creative flow of energy inside yourself.

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I call it the zone of genius because in my experience, I first began to open up that space when I was probably – well I had a flash of it there at Stanford when I was working on my doctorate, but I couldn't quite get it integrated in me, and then again when I was about 30 I started having real flashes of how this upper limit problem worked. But I wasn't able to really test it out until after I was 34, which was how old I was when I met Katie. So relationship is really a great place to test the upper limit problem because what it should do is take your attention off what you fight about in relationship struggles and put your attention on how long a period do you go through feeling the flow, feeling really good before one of the other person sabotages that flow.

So I recommend that people focus on lengthening that flow time so that you increase the amount of time that things are flowing and feeling good and you begin to stop doing the things that break up the flow. Like there was a time in my life for example when I was obese many years ago and I found that if I ate to kind of feed my old programming, it made me obese.

But if I judged every bite of food with the question of is this going to feed my true spirit, is this going to feed the real me, the real me that I want to bring forth, within a short period of time, I took a tremendous amount of weight off of myself, literally pounds of fat off of myself by simply asking that question about will this feed my spirit. In a way, the zone of genius you accomplish getting to the zone of genius, Ben, the same way by asking yourself on a daily basis really is what I'm doing what I most love to do. If you keep asking that question and finding more about what you most love to do, you start shaping your life around what you most love to do.

When I was in my 20s well certainly when I was in my 20s, I had a bunch of jobs that I didn't really like and so I think that's maybe typical of a lot of people in their 20s. Maybe if you found a great job in your 20s that you love, god bless you, but I sure didn't. A lot of my friends didn't either. We were experimenting. We were getting fired, we were screwing up. So in developmental psychology, we have the saying that in your 20s you experiment, in your 30s you find your life, in your 40s you build your life and in your 50s you enjoy your life. Now hopefully you'll enjoy it all the way along.

But a lot of people in their 30s, I mean in their 20s really need to kind of forgive themselves for all of the experimentation that they're doing. A lot of people feel guilty or like they're wasting time in their experimentation, but if it's experimentation in the service of really finding yourself, well that's good experimentation. Of course, a lot of people experiment with things that blunt their awareness of themselves or take them down, take themselves down alleyways that are hard to get back from such as through addictions and things like that. I certainly did my share of that in my 20s too.

I was addicted at the time to being in relationships that were a struggle and so pretty much throughout my 20s, if you had accompanied me on my relationship life some week, you would have found me in some kind of a troubled struggling relationship. So it wasn't until my early 30s that I began to figure out what I was doing that caused all of those relationship difficulties. A lot of them were things that I just had learned to do growing up like concealing my feelings and lying to people about things and cheating and doing things that are guaranteed to make you miserable. I guess I had to kind of prove to myself all of the things that made me miserable before I could find out all the things that made life blissful.

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Ben:

Beautiful. There's so much in there. That's very rich, Gay. Thank you for sharing that. One piece that you mentioned that I want to drill in on as you're saying how we should reflect or we can reflect on what is it that I

love to do and just following those threads especially earlier in life when we can give ourselves the freedom even more hopefully to experiment. I know that you're somebody who also really carves out time in your day to just be reflective in whether that's meditating or journaling or just sitting with thoughts, I'm wondering what you would recommend for people in their 20s and 30s? I mean would you recommend just using that as a mantra and just everyday kind of reflecting on what is it that I love to do or really carving out time each morning to journal about that question? Or what would be your recommendation about how best to integrate that into our lives?

Gay:

Well journaling is really great. Whenever I come up against some thorny issue, I'll sit down with a journal and just kind of sketch it out and draw about it and write about it. So I think that's very, very powerful. I'll tell you though if I could recommend one thing, it would be to develop some body-mind process that you do on a regular basis. Like for me this morning if you've been watching me as a matter of fact right here in my office where I was when I first get up in the morning, I come in and I do a few minutes of stretching and I do some breathing activities and then I sit down and I meditate for 15 or minutes. So that whole little set of processes maybe takes me a half an hour or so. But I'll tell you it's a half an hour I wouldn't trade for anything because it gets my day really started in kind of a serene, clear, open to creativity way. Then after I finish my body-mind practices, then I start my writing and my creative work and things like that.

But I'll tell you I think that one of the most underutilized things in human existence is the power of human consciousness when it reflects upon itself in meditation or I suppose prayer would do that for a person of faith. I go more for kind of experiential processes, like meditation really appeal to me. The first time I ever did it 40 years ago, I was just kind of hooked on it for life. I actually have not missed a day of meditation since 1973. So I have a real long meditation streak going of whatever 365 x 35 is. I don't know how many days in a row that is, but it must be thousands and thousands of days of just starting out every day doing a little bit of body-mind practice.

It's kind of like if you go to the gym everyday and work out for 30 minutes, you'd be a lot stronger at the end of the year than if you just went once a year for one full weekend. So I'm a big believer in that daily doing a little bit of work every day as a way of getting stronger.

Ben:

Beautiful. Yeah, we had Brian Johnson on last week who I know you're buddies with and we were talking about the importance of fundamentals and you are a beautiful example of what it is to really rock those

fundamentals for years and years and years and the amazing fruit that that can bear so thank you for that example.

One thing that's occurring to me as you're talking is this idea of coming up against our upper limits and working to dissolve them and be with them, bring the light of awareness through them. I'm aware in your book and in your teachings that I've heard you talk about the power of identifying the beliefs that we have. You talk about you feeling flawed or feeling like you're going to be disloyal or like you're a burden and these various different beliefs you list. You also talk about just working with the energy through breath and just feeling into the positive sensations in your body. So I'm wondering if you could give us some sense of how to integrate both those strategies and how you use them on a daily basis.

Gay:

Yes. Well, underneath upper limits problems, most of them can be traced back to four big fears and four distorted limiting beliefs. One limiting belief is based on the fear of outshining. So a lot of us when we're kids especially in relation to our brothers and sisters, sometimes we hold ourselves back. We're kind of given unconscious messages not to outshine the others. So in a lot of times, a lot of people I work with are people who were gifted as a kid but were kind of given the message to tone it down a little bit so you don't make everybody else feel bad or feel stupid or don't raise your hand every time to answer the question in the class because you make everybody else feel bad.

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So a lot of that message of not to outshine other people and the problem with it later on in life is a lot of people I've worked with hold themselves back from going to their full level of success because they still carry that old unconscious fear of outshining other people that they've had for a long time. So that's one to really keep your eye on.

A second one is the belief and the fear that somehow in a way my existence is a burden in the world. I've worked with people that maybe they were the last of seven kids or something like that where they kind of got the message of, oh my god, can we afford one more kid and the kind of negative messages that come in about is your existence a burden. So all of these are what one of my colleagues Tom Ferguson called imaginary crimes because they're crimes that somebody convicts you of without your knowledge. In other words, if you're the 7th child or the 14th child in a family of 14 ,you don't know that you're a burden. You're being projected on to that you're a burden but somehow it gets into the cells of your being. So later on, when you start expanding in more love and positive energy, suddenly that feeling of being a burden comes over you. So that needs to be what I say it needs to be breathed through.

You can't ever get rid of things, you just kind of open up to them and see them and then breathe through them. They're all a part of us so where would they go. You can't really dismiss something from your body or have it zapped from you because these things don't work like bacteria or viruses or anything like that. They're qualities of our mind. These are ways we think.

So another big fear and a big negative limiting belief is based on the idea that if I really make profound changes in my life, I can't do that because if I did that, it would be disloyal to or leave people behind that I'm still dedicated to. So it's a belief that is often projected on to very gifted people that people don't want you to shine quite so much and they give you the message that if you do shine too much, it's almost like being disloyal, you're disloyal to the family tree. So I've worked with lots of executives very high-powered people who still carry that around inside them so they couldn't really enjoy their success.

The biggest one, the fourth one is really the one that's at the base of a lot of the others too and it's the fear that there's something fundamentally wrong or bad about you. Sometimes, that's projected on to you for whatever reason, often early even before you were born that there's something wrong with you or you don't belong here or some projection on to you by someone in your environment. So what happens is we kind of feel guilty of that imaginary crime and begin to live down inside the guilt of that, that there's something fundamentally wrong with us.

So all of those are imaginary. There's no reality to them. They're all based on early things that you either picked up by osmosis being in the particular setting you were in and the class you were in and the family you were in. Or maybe they were based on real life traumas that occurred in one way or the other. Like a good friend of mine for example was cruising along very well in life until he got polio at age 9 and had to spend nine months in an iron lung and it had a profound effect on him for the rest of his life. So there are lots of things in life that look like at the time really intense challenges and yet like in my friend who spent nine months in the iron lung, he became a very famous body therapist later on because he was so fascinated with the microscopic movement of the body.

So what I'm after in life and what I did with my own life is gradually begin in my – well in my late 20s and early 30s I begin to home in on what is it I most love to do. Hmm, of all the things I love to do, what is I most love to do. I honed it down to something I could actually put in one sentence and my sentence is that my mission in life is to expand in love and creativity everyday as I inspire others to do the same. So that's what I most love to do and that's why I get just as excited talking about this now 30 years

later than I did talking about it on Oprah in front of 10 million people. It still turns me on exactly as much. I don't detect any difference in the quality of this conversation than a conversation in front of 10,000 people in the orange bowl in Miami. They're all the same if the quality of passion is brought to them and it's what I most love to do. So I think that's one of the great tasks.

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In fact, one of my mentors Krishnamurti, the great Indian philosopher, Krishnamurti said that the sole purpose of education, the sole purpose of learning is to find out what with all your heart you most love to do. So I really believe that every moment I've turned more toward doing what I most love to do, it's been incredibly richly rewarded. I've created my life now so I get to spend all my time doing what I love to do. So that's been the case for a long time. But there was a struggle period where I had to make constant choices about do I want to do ten more minutes a day of my creativity or my true creativity or do I want to do 10 minutes more drinking a cup of coffee or watching television or whatever I was doing to distract myself at the time. But gradually, it kind of gains momentum. The more time you devote to doing the things that you most love to do, the momentum gathers and it becomes a life force of its own that carries you along by virtue of the fact that you've chosen it over and over and over again and so it gets strengthened in yourself.

Ben: That's beautiful. I really want to highlight what you're saying about those various false beliefs and those of you who are listening, it's a pretty big concept to take in as Gay's talking it through so definitely go back and listen to the recording or check out the book. Because actually when I read the book the first time years ago, it was one of those moments where I can picture the exact place that I was. I was in San Francisco reading your book and thinking about those false beliefs just landed in my core so strongly as, oh, this is one of the glasses through which I'm looking at reality.

Ever since then, I felt such a greater freedom in seeing, oop, there is one of those false beliefs. Mine were I am bad and the fear about shining. Since then I just feel a whole new level of ability to show up and be happy and fulfilled so thank you for that, Gay, and I definitely recommend everyone just taking some time to reflect on that for yourself because it's definitely huge.

Gay: I really appreciate that, Ben, because one of the best things you can ever say to an author is that you read his book and it changed your life. So it sounds like it really did so I'm very grateful to you for that.

Ben: Yeah, absolutely. I mean I think in a large part you and me here on this talk right now is a product of me letting go of my fear of outshining and

really realizing, oh, no, I'm here to help inspire as much as I can by showing up fully so, yeah. Humble, humble thanks for that and I'm so glad to say it right to you.

Gay: [Laughs] Good.

Ben: Yeah. So I want to definitely go more into talking about how to move fully into the zone of genius as you're so well describing. But I do think it'll be a good time actually to just stop in the middle and see if anybody has any questions thus far because I think we've covered a lot and then we can go back into talking about the zone of genius. But if anybody has question, please hit 1 or if you're on the webcast, you can type it in there and we'll see if anybody has anything they want to go into now. Otherwise, we'll jump right back in. So I see one hand going up so I'm going to call on you. It looks like you're on the general pin. You called in from 760, if that's you you're live, go ahead.

Male Caller: Hello? Hello?

Ben: 760. Are you there? Okay. Well maybe just inadvertent hand or a shy person for now. Okay. But everyone just have your questions ready because we'll take questions again at the end of the call. Let's jump back into talking about the zone of genius. Because one thing I love that you said in your book was the idea of really committing to your zone of genius before you even know how to live into it almost just like fully committing to this is what my life is going to be and I don't know how I'm going to make that possible. So I don't now, do you have anything else from what you said thus far about stepping more fully into our zone of genius?

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Gay: Yes. The key technology to know about for how to get more of your genius on the line is though what I call wonder questions. A wonder question is a question that you genuinely do not know the answer and you genuinely want to know the answer to it and it would really move your life forward if you knew the answer to it. So it's a question like, hmm, what is my real genius? That's a powerful wonder question because it's asked in the spirit of wonder. Hmm, what is my true genius? So if you begin to ask yourself sincere questions around your genius like that, what begins to happen is more of your genius begins to be revealed simply because you asked an incredibly liberating question.

E.E. Cummings, the poet, once said something along the lines of it's always the beautiful question that brings forth the beautiful answer. So if you can focus in on opening up to the questions that you most with all your heart want to know, questions like how can I enjoy the maximum amount of love in my life, that's a beautiful wonder question because the

answer to it becomes enjoying more love in your life. As it begins to reveal itself, it begins to let you know if you ask the question sincerely and in a genuine state of wonder, your deeper self will begin to communicate with you and let you know more things that you can do in your zone of genius. So then it just happens, one little choice at a time.

I think for many people, the first biggest adventurous step would be to go into a room by themselves for ten minutes and just don't do anything except wander around in the room or sit around in the room asking wonder questions that you really need to know the answer to. Like hmm, how can I make a great living off of my genius? Very powerful, wonder question that in your 20s and 30s can be a real lifesaver. How can I open up to my genius in such a way that I make an abundant living because this is a time when the old employment systems are kind of falling apart as everybody well knows so it's getting harder and harder to get a traditional job. So the calling there I think is to breathe through the fear of that and really wonder deeply into what is your genius and how can you bring it forth to help people with the biggest challenges of their lives.

See, I'm very much after things in me that I can do and meet that also have an effect on helping other people. That's just what's always turned me on. When I was a kid my grandmother told me that when I was four years old, I set up a cardboard box in the corner of her living room and I had my grandparents write the word problems on it. I would commute to this cardboard box and I would sit in my box and people were supposed to come to my office and tell me their problems.

Ben: [Laughs]

Gay: So somehow even when I was a little kid, the impulse was there. I mentioned that for a particular reason because almost always, you will find ideas from your childhood in your zone of genius. In other words, there's something about that story I just told about the cardboard box that embraces my genius. Because to this day, nothing hardly turns me on more than helping someone move through some kind of problem they're stuck on or some kind of a limitation they're feeling. I've had the pleasure of doing that in all sorts of settings, but in a way it feels this is good now. If I'm doing it maybe with the CEO of a big corporation, it feels just the same as it did when I was doing it with some juvenile delinquent I was working with in my first job in 1968. So to me the sweet spot of my genius has to do with that experience of helping people expand in love and creativity as I'm doing the same thing.

For everybody else, there's something down in there that you love doing more than anything else, and I've helped people over the years with this question like what is my true genius. One of the questions I used to help

reveal that is the question what do I most love to do. That's one of the best questions that comes out of "The Big Leap Book" is that question what is it I most love to do. Because if you can hone in on that you begin to feel how well there's a feeling maybe that you had when you were playing marbles when you were seven years old or when you were playing dolls or something when you were four years old. Whatever your play was, there was often the seeds of your genius in what you most love to play with and play at. So it's a really good way to open up a dialogue with your deeper self is to really just begin to focus in on that question about hmm, what is my zone of genius and hmm, what is it I love to do more than anything else.

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Ben:

Hmm, that's beautiful. I love that question and it certainly runs through my mind often. I think the word genius actually can be quite loaded for some people thinking about what am I better than anyone else at or what am I most excellent at. I think you make such a great distinction in the book between our zone of excellence and our zone of genius by bringing in laws in terms of genius. I'm wondering if you could just tease that apart a bit more for people because I think especially as a young person really getting clear on excellence versus genius can save so much heartache down the line as we get into a career that we don't truly love.

Gay:

Oh, that's such a good point because I can't tell you the number of people I've worked with hundreds if not thousands that have been around age 40 and have burned out doing some job that they hated that they started doing right after college. So I noticed especially a lot of attorneys that I've worked with seemed to hit a real wall somewhere around in the 35 to 40 zone where they suddenly get sick of doing what they're doing.

But it can happen to any of us. I even got to the point, I loved being a university professor, but I found after a while that it was in my zone of excellence that I could teach a really good class. I worked mostly with graduate students who were themselves being trained to be counselors and therapists and life coaches and that kind of thing at a university. But it wasn't really making the true use of my genius so in my zone of excellence. What you find in your zone of excellence are things that you're better than most people at. You're really good at something and you can often make a good living doing it, but it has a limitation built into it that your zone of excellence often is not what you most love to do. It's often very frustrating to people. Like I mentioned the attorneys that get burned around age 40 is that it's very frustrating to them that they're making a lot of money doing something that's not really what they want to be doing. Whether you're making a lot of money at it or not, it provides a kind of a rattle in you if you're not opening up to your zone of genius.

Because in my heart of hearts, I really believe that all of us have that zone of genius inside. It's not such a special thing as many people think that I think that there are lots of ways to genius inside ourselves and we need to just keep asking the questions to open up that area. Because a lot of times, you mentioned kind of the stigma that's attached to genius. It comes with baggage in the sense that a lot of times, genius people are considered weird and geniuses held up as you know something kind of eccentric genius or crazy mad scientist and that kind of thing.

But that's not really what I'm talking about. Certainly, there are people who excel in radical ways. Like I worked for a while coaching Michael Dell at Dell Computer and some of his top executives and some of the most amazingly gifted brilliant people I'd ever met, and at the same time just like every other human being struggled with things like fear and anxiety and sadness and anger and all of the common elements of life. So just because you've got a higher IQ than everybody else doesn't make you immune from all of the problems of living that all of us have. By the same token, I think that underneath all of those limiting beliefs that many of us carry around is a real zone of genius that everybody has. Anybody that's capable of asking the question what is my zone of genius is capable of finding that zone of genius. That's my promise.

Ben: Beautiful. Thank you. Well let's see I see actually a hand going up and I want to welcome people on to the line because I know that'll open the conversation up even more and make it more rich. So if anyone has questions, please hit 1 and we can jump in that direction. I see Matthew, you're there with your hands so why don't you go ahead, Matthew, you're live.

[0:40:06]

Matthew: Excellent. So I just want to first say I'm really enjoying the conversation you two are having and thank you, Gay, for being here and, Ben, for helping put this together. I wanted to ask a question. I found here in my I guess younger life in comparison to some others, I've been able to achieve a level of success in finances in everything and doing my work and I've become rather comfortable now. I have bigger dreams and visions and ways that I want to serve and answer some of those great wonder questions of being paid to do what I love in different ways. I find as much as I have the ideas of what it will bring and how I'll be lit up in life and give my gifts, it's not quite motivating me to make the big shift to that, the big leap I guess the better word for it. So I'm curious what you would say to help kind of break through that and to be in a new place to just go for it and be out in the world sharing my gifts more boldly and more fully.

Gay: Great question. Well thanks, Matthew. Here's a good place to start just right now face to face with me here, what do you feel like is your zone of genius? What is that you most love to do?

Matthew: Well I am listening to you speak and I'm like wow, this sounds a lot like myself. I work with people on those deep beliefs that you mentioned and really what I find I most get lit up by is helping people to live into their genius and kind of uncover the blocks of that. I'm very passionate about optimal living in all areas of relationship and spirituality and making money through our life purpose. Sometimes, it gets a little overwhelming actually about how many passions and interests that I have, but that's really what I feel gifted and what I've been doing a lot of mostly on a one on one and small group context.

Gay: And when you really tune into that level of activity, go a little deeper with me into what specific aspect of it feels like the part of it you most love to do?

Matthew: When I'm able to help someone shift or re-pattern or eliminate a misunderstanding like one of these imaginary crimes you talked about that really is the keystone that turns their life in a whole new direction.— I mean I live for those moments to be able to do that with people and to see where they go from there just lights me up like nothing else.

Gay: Good. So let's hone in on that as a great place to create a wonder question. A good wonder question right now would be something like hmm, how can I arrange my life so I get to do that two or three times more than I'm doing now? That would be a good type of wonder question. Would that appeal to you to wonder that with me?

Matthew: It does. I **[0:43:29] [Indiscernible]** get a little blocked because I've set up my life to do that as much as possible especially through having one on one clients and I kind of maxed that out. I did it to full extent so I think it's a good thing to wonder about. I don't have an immediate answer but I guess that's the point of a wonder question.

Gay: Yeah. So just evoke the wonder, that's the key thing. So right now --

Matthew: Yeah.

Gay: -- take a moment to sincerely, genuinely hmm, just kind of get a good hmm going with me, okay? Hmm.

Matthew: Hmm.

Gay: Hmm. Get that sense of true wonder where you really would love to know something. It's not like you're pressuring for an answer but it's just like you're genuinely sincerely wondering about it, hmm.

Matthew: Yeah.

Gay: Hmm. Hmm. So maybe also it's not just having two to three times more of those experiences, but it's also having them in new areas that maybe energize different aspects of your genius.

Matthew: That sounds good.

Gay: So hmm, how could you make that happen. Hmm. Just hmm with me. Hmm.

Matthew: Hmm.

Gay: How can I make --

Matthew: Yes.

Gay: How can I make that happen, just kind of genuinely wondering, not pressing for an answer just get your body into the wonder of it.

[0:45:01]

Matthew: Yeah. I feel like I'm there because I'm not immediately getting an answer, which is good for me I think.

Gay: Good. Keep playing with that, keep breathing with that and it will be great if you continue to be part of this series to check back in let everybody know what you came up with, what are some of the things that brought forth out of your wondering.

Matthew: Excellent.

Ben: Beautiful. Thanks, Matthew.

Matthew: I will continue to wonder with you. Yeah.

Gay: All right. Thanks a lot, Matthew.

Ben: Happy humming.

Matthew: [Laughs]

Ben: [Laughs]. Great. So we have another question from Manju, go ahead Manju, you're live.

Manju: Yeah. Hi. This is probably a repetition of what you were talking about, at 20s when they come to like more later in their 30s and 40s and they have this life pattern that has been established for them throughout their life. I think I'm pretty much going through that phase myself. As long as I can remember being geared to become a doctor and I'm a doctor and I'm pretty successful and all that stuff. But I'm going through that phase where I feel like it's just not enough or there's something else I need to be doing. But I feel like I have not been exposed to anything else to see what it could be. I see I'm stuck. I mean I like, I love doing what I'm doing but it doesn't feel that I'm supposed to be where I am right now. I don't know if I'm making myself any clearer. I'm pretty--

Gay: Sure.

Manju: -- confused about this myself.

Gay: Sure. We'll take a moment right now to wonder with me about that. So hmm, what you're doing now is reasonable successful but there's something missing and what is it that's really missing?

Manju: I think space and life to find what I need to find out. I'm pretty involved in self-inquiry and all those stuff for the last couple of years and it has helped me tremendously in my own life and changing the things, how I relate with patients. But I feel like I don't have space enough for myself right now and whenever I ask myself that question that's what always come up is I don't have enough space.

Gay: Yes. So let's solve that problem right now.

Manju: Okay.

Gay: Just take a moment with me in this moment to tune in to the dimension of space inside yourself.

Manju: Okay.

Gay: So give yourself space inside first before you try to do anything on the outside. Giving yourself space and the best way to give yourself space is to love yourself exactly as you are. So go ahead right this moment and give yourself the ultimate gift of space. Love is partly about being able to be in the same space with something, to unconditionally just be there with it. So let's begin by doing that yourself.

Manju: Okay.

Gay: Opening up and loving yourself inside and just sharing space with yourself free of any kind of judgment or criticism or free of any even kind of cheerleading for yourself. Just letting yourself be, a sense of loving acceptance exactly as you are. I'd like everyone just listening to this to join us because this is not just something for our guest here Manju that we're talking about is that it's something that all of us in fact define our lives by is how open we are to love and our own sense of loving ourselves is where it needs to begin, that sense of inner spaciousness of not constantly pushing on yourself to criticize or to try to improve even. It's that sense of real spaciousness inside. So that's where I'd like you to really put your attention first. As we talk about that, what are you experiencing?

[0:50:14]

Manju: Well I'm experiencing some release of tension in my body, that's the first.

Gay: Oh, good, I'm glad to hear that.

Manju: Yeah. I feel like when I'm paying attention to that part, I am able to breathe better and I do feel a little bit more expansion in my chest and lots of thoughts coming in, the usual self-critical. I just realized that constant feedback that I'm giving myself is I need to improve **[0:50:54]** **[Indiscernible]** is also a judgment and --

Gay: Yes.

Manju: Yeah. I have been kind of maybe holding that up as an expectation as well which may have been a little bit more of a block than anything else.

Gay: Very good insight. I appreciate that.

Manju: Yeah. So is this something – the hard thing is it's probably making excuses but the way my life is and so erratic. I'm not like you were talking about finding time in the morning to do the body-mind stuff. I find it's hard enough to get up in the morning to go to work.

Gay: **[0:51:38]** **[Indiscernible]**

Manju: 5 o'clock in the morning. Throughout the day and after the day, I'm tired enough to just come home and then feel frustrated about the whole day. How do I incorporate this what we just did?

Gay: Yes. Tell me like right now when we're speaking what time is it in the part of the world you're calling from?

Manju: Probably, I'm on the Eastern Time zone. It's probably 8:30 or 9 o'clock I don't know. I don't have --

Gay: Okay. Good. Well I just wanted to find out how long it is between now and midnight. So you got about three hours say between now and midnight. Would you be willing to take 10 minutes and do something totally brand new? Go into a room by yourself for 10 minutes and do nothing but keep coming back to loving yourself over and over again. Whenever you have a thought love yourself for having thoughts. Whenever you have a feeling, love yourself for having a feeling. I'd like you to give yourself 10 solids minutes of giving yourself that amount of loving attention. If you feel the need to improve yourself, great, love yourself for needing to improve yourself. But just for ten minutes I want you to solely focus on giving yourself that sense of inner loving space. Would you do that tonight?

Manju: Yes. Oh, yeah, I can do that.

Gay: All right good and then notice what happens tomorrow as a result of that.

Manju: When you say loving yourself, even when you want to improve, does that mean allowing those feelings to be there and --

Gay: Yes.

Manju: --being okay with it?

Gay: Yes.

Manju: Okay.

Gay: That's exactly what it is and like well like right now tune in, in yourself and your whole life and think of someone that you know for absolute sure you love.

Manju: Okay.

Gay: And who came to mind?

Manju: My daughter.

Gay: Okay. So take a moment and feel the quality of love that you have for your daughter. Can you feel it right --

Manju: Uh-hum.

Gay: Do you feel it right now in your body?

Manju: Yes.

Gay: Now I want you to love yourself exactly like you love her.

Manju: I see. [Laughs] I've never done this before. [Laughs]

Gay: [Laughs] Well I like that. I kind of live for that laugh that breaks out when people do that so thank you for sharing that with us tonight.

Manju: I appreciate the... [Laughs]

Gay: All right. Well may you have many, many rollicking, wonderful experiences of that. But for sure going to do 10 more minutes of that tonight, okay?

Manju: I will absolutely. Thank you so much. I'm really grateful and appreciate you giving some time to me.

Gay: Thank you. Blessings to you.

Ben: Hmm, thank you, Manju. Beautiful. We have question for you off the webcast, Gay, if you're willing to take in a bit more?

Gay: Sure.

Ben: This comes from Catherine. She's asking, when you feel yourself hitting your upper limit and you start sabotaging yourself, what are specific action steps to take in that moment?

[0:55:01]

Gay: There are three things that you can always do in the moment. As a matter of fact, sometimes if you come to the Hendricks Institute take one of our seminars, you get a little wristband, a little silicon wristband that says breathe, move, love on it. We give them to people as a going away present because it symbolizes the essence of three things that you are already quickly equipped to do. So when you're feeling stuck, the first thing you want to do is take a few breaths, kind of unlock your breathing. Take a few big, easy breaths. The second thing you want to do is move your body around a little bit and the third thing you want to do is what I was just doing with Manju, which was to love as much as you can from wherever you are.

In life sometimes, you're going to come up against such huge challenges, I know I have, where the pain almost feels overwhelming. Like when a relationship breaks up or whatever it is, there's this tremendous pain

associated with it and sometimes you need something just to do in the moment to get through that stuck place, that awful feeling. Well breathe, move, love is the quick ticket in a way because the moment you open up your breathing, all it takes is about three big, easy breaths to change the stress chemistry in your body and starting melting the stress chemistry out of your body. Then if you can move your body around a little bit, it doesn't get frozen into place, then if you can remember to love yourself as much as you can from wherever you are or love the situation as much as you can from wherever you are. That's the three things to do that are kind of like the quick fixes, but they're also things for your whole life that your whole life becomes an expression of more breathing, more moving, move loving, more opening up to the vibrance of life.

Ben: Perfect. Thank you, Gay. Thank you Catherine for the question. We got Chantal here on the phone, go ahead, Chantal, you're live.

Chantal: Hi. Actually, it's Chantal but that's okay. My question is I feel as though I've definitely found my genius. But I want to know from either one or both of you how do I get beyond that fear of can I support myself while still doing what I love. How can I make money while doing what I love?

Gay: Yes. Well one thing the ancient Sufi mystics had a great saying that I remember getting from one of my mentors back in my 20s and it was that in the early stages of your career, you have to do your spiritual work with your left hand. That's assuming you're a right-handed person. But in other words, the idea there, the metaphor is that oftentimes you're working on one hand with something you're not really crazy about doing and at the same time your other hands needs to be involved in experimenting and dabbling in and working with other things that are going to help you reveal your genius to you.

A lot of us, I know I didn't begin to really tap into my genius until was in my 30s begin to be able to understand it and I think really that it wasn't until my 40s that I began to express it in the biggest way I knew how. So I just want to say that to give you permission to not feel so bad or guilty about working at a job you don't like or having a hard time finding a job. But to really as much as possible hold it in the heart attitude of experimentation and trying things out and experimenting with different types of things until you begin to home in more on that genius.

Chantal: That makes sense, absolutely. So I mean because I feel like I've really been working in the last couple of weeks releasing those old vibrations, those old thought patterns and kind of just making space for it. Because I feel like it's kind of like with the previous caller what she was saying. It's like I've got to create the space and the time in order to allow the new stuff to come in.

Gay: Yeah, I think that's right and I think that it's really done ten minutes at a time. Like before you go to bed tonight, take that 10 minutes of really focusing in. Just go in a room by yourself or go for a walk by yourself, clear your mind and spend 10 minutes just kind of meditating with that question about hmm, what is my true genius and how can I make a great living expressing it. Hmm, what is my true genius and how can I make a great living expressing it.

[1:00:35]

Chantal: So is it more a matter of putting it out there to the universe? For me, because I'm a spiritual reader and I do reiki and it's a matter of that I really want to – I want to help millions of people, I want to touch as many lives as I can. I mean I get emotional just talking about it because I'm just so passionate about it. So it's just a matter of allowing things to shift so the new clients come in? So is it a matter of like I'm wondering with your experience as a professional just any opportunity even if you thought it was kind of weird or something that you wouldn't normally do? Did you just say okay, I'm going to do it? This is really different. Does that go back to working with my left hand instead of my right?

Gay: Yeah. Well what I did was just follow lots of passions and some of them turned out to be not very rewarding, some of them turned out to be great, some of them didn't last very long. But I think you have to keep kind of homing in on it all the time until it kind of lights up on your body. So will you give me ten minutes tonight before you finish up tonight and go to bed of just going into a room and putting that sincere wonder question about what is my true genius and how can I express it in the world in a way that I make a great living?

Chantal: Okay. I will definitely do that. Sounds great.

Gay: All right. Thanks for checking in.

Chantal: No worries. Thank you.

Ben: Great. Thank you, Chantal. It looks like we've come to the end of our time so, Gay, again thank you so much, a big humble hug and bow to you for everything you're offering. Just the commitment that you've had to living into your genius is just such a beautiful shining example for all of us to do that in our own lives. So thank you for who you're being in the world.

Gay: Thank you very much, Ben. Blessings to you. Thanks for inviting me aboard here.

Ben: Absolutely. Thanks and have a beautiful rest of your evening.

Gay: Thank you.

Ben: Everybody else who's on the line, I just want to let you know that I'm going to be out of the country for the rest of May, but we're going to be back in June with some amazing guests that we'll announce later in the month. Yeah, we're just looking forward to more and more of this and we'll be bringing on more of these elders to share their wisdom and also some of the younger people who are in their late 20s and 30s who are just doing amazing things in the world to share some of the ways they've integrated their wisdom and share their inspiration.

So look forward to being back with you all in early June and until then have a beautiful, beautiful month. Those of you who would like to stay on the line and go into discussion groups, to discuss your upper limits, discuss your zone of genius, please stay on the line and I'll be happy to put you into a group and you can talk as much as you like. If you're on the webcast, go ahead and call in now so I can stick you in a group.

Again, thanks everybody so much for being here and we'll see you again soon.

[1:03:58]

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