



life after divorce
COACHING
with Doreen Yaffa and Jeff Wilson

Ep. 129 – Is it Happiness or is it Success?



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Jeff 00:00

Hello, everybody. Welcome to Episode 129. Today we're going to explore the differences between happiness and success. Which comes first, and why. So if you're ready, let's get started.

Doreen 00:23

Are you ready to create a life that's better than ever before? We are Doreen Yaffa and Jeff Wilson and we are here to give you the strategies you need to create the life after divorce that you deserve, and desire. As partners both in marriage and coaching, we use our expertise as well as our own personal experiences to help you make the next chapter of your life, the best chapter. Hey, there.

Jeff 00:55

Hi, Doreen. How are you?

Doreen 00:56

I'm hanging in there.

Jeff 00:58

Hanging in there? Sound a little better than that. Come on. Let's try that again. Hey, Doreen. How are you?

Doreen 01:05

I'm great!

Jeff 01:07

Oh, that's much better.

Doreen 01:09

We've got Zen, our dog in the back, our little Frenchie in the background giving us a little Hello.

Jeff 01:14

He's our director.

Doreen 01:15

Yeah!

Jeff 01:16

You gotta be pumping it up there.

Doreen 01:18

We named him Zen. Isn't that interesting?

Jeff 01:20

Yes!

Doreen 01:20

Because I don't know if he's very zen though.

Jeff 01:23

He's not very zen, he's more like crazy.

Doreen 01:26

Well, he's a puppy. Still a puppy.

Jeff 01:29

He's still maybe brings us some Zen in our life.

Doreen 01:31

He did. Definitely. Don't animals do that, though?

Jeff 01:34

They do.

Doreen 01:35

They certainly bring a lot of happiness to people.

Jeff 01:37

Happiness and I guess success.

Doreen 01:40

Isn't it interesting? I'm gonna go on a rant. You know, that we know that animals, dogs in particular. They only live for an estimated time. We know that. Right?

Jeff 01:52

Yeah.

Doreen 01:52

So we usually outlive our dogs. I think we've had trying to remember how many dogs? Six?

Jeff 01:58

Probably six or seven? Yeah.

Doreen 01:59

Yeah, since we've been married, going on 15 years. So you know, you have these dogs and you love them and they love you. And they bring such joy to the family and you know that they're likely going to pass before you are. And that's so sad but you know, we keep doing it. Right? We believe in love and yeah, so we just keep doing it.

Jeff 02:21

I guess the ratio of happiness and that one day of sadness that they pass is well worth it. Because it's definitely a very high ratio when it comes to the joy that they bring us.

Doreen 02:33

And the morning of a dog or any animal can be longer than a day or so. But we just lost one last year. Remember Blue?

Jeff 02:33

Yeah.

Doreen 02:36

Of course you remember.

Jeff 02:42

Of course I remember blue.

Doreen 02:47

Yeah, another Frenchie that we had that died suddenly at the age of five. So that was hard. But anyhow, let's talk about something else.

Jeff 02:54

Yeah, we're talking about happiness. And here, we're talking about dogs passing away.

Doreen 02:58

I wanted to come in and give this two cents.

Jeff 03:01

Okay, so what is the difference between happiness and success?

Doreen 03:06

Sure, we're gonna talk about that.

Jeff 03:07

You know, we talked to people who think that these things are very, very clearly defined, but they really aren't. And they really don't have them defined in their mind, or know what the differences are between the two of them.

Doreen 03:22

Yeah, in fact, most people don't separate the two desires, and they kind of make them mean the same thing.

Jeff 03:29

Yeah.

Doreen 03:29

But they're really not the same thing.

Jeff 03:30

That's true. It's kind of like, it's part of our culture, that we have this goal in our lives to strive towards success. You know, because there's kind of this promise that when we are successful..

Doreen 03:31

Right? Whatever that means.

Jeff 03:46

Whatever, yes, in your own brain, whatever success is, but when we finally reach our opinion of success, then we will be happy, we will find happiness at the end of the rainbow, so to speak.

Doreen 04:00

And I think that when most people think of success, or successful people, the first things that come to mind are like, you know, stars and singers and, you know, athletes.

Jeff 04:13

Well its about, you know, they've made a lot of money.

Doreen 04:16

Well, the people we see in social media and the news and all that, right? The people with the limelight, the money, the bling all those things.

Jeff 04:24

Right, right.

Doreen 04:25

Go ahead. I'm sorry. I think that it's pretty normal for us to think that success means that you've made a lot of money, right? Or that you have that you've achieved.

Jeff 04:35

Fame.

Doreen 04:36

Fame, right?

Jeff 04:37

Everybody knows who you are.

Doreen 04:38

Everybody knows who you are. And, you know, thinking about the world, the word, I'm sorry, thinking about the word success and being successful, are huge associations. I think typically with money and being able to purchase things and to demonstrate that success, right? We get a lot of that bling bling down here in...

Jeff 04:59

Not in Boca Raton.

Doreen 05:01

We love where we live. But we have a lot of bling, as my kids would say, it's a lot of..

Jeff 05:07

Bougie.

Doreen 05:08

We're very, it's bougie.

Jeff 05:10

Bougie.

Doreen 05:11

Lots of bougies going on.

Jeff 05:12

Well, I'm gonna ask every our listeners a question, how do you define success for yourself? Especially after your divorce, you have to kind of figure out what is your definition of success? And is that how you want to define success for yourself?

Doreen 05:30

Right. The other question that I think we can ask ourselves is, how do you define happiness? After divorce? Is it really associated with success for you? And do you want it to be associated with success? Because it doesn't have to be. They're very much independent, thoughts and feelings, right?

Jeff 05:57

Actually, yes. And you know how I love to go to the Google's to get definitions. And that's what I did.

Doreen 06:04

So you're gonna tell us what Google says?

Jeff 06:08

When the Google says success is, is the accomplishment of a name, and attainment of popularity or profit, which I thought was fascinating. And it attained, attaining prosperity was a part of the definition as well. Now that's different than how they defined happiness, which is a feeling of contentment, delight, or being pleased, you know, so obviously, they're very different definitions. And I think it's important to distinguish between them. And I think it's really important to define them for yourself, especially after what you've been going through or still going through.

Doreen 06:52

So let's, let's break it down a little bit. Right. So let's talk about what success first. So first, to accomplish success, you need to define, and you need to understand your goals, because how you will know when you have achieved success, is by knowing what your goal is, a lot of people don't have goals, they don't understand, they don't really define their goals. You know, they'll say something like, I want to make a lot of money. The real way that we think is best to do that is I want to make \$10 million by x day. You know, we've talked a lot about smart goals.

Jeff 07:31

Absolutely.

Doreen 07:32

Okay, let's go do the other..

Jeff 07:35

So you have definitely the specific, measurable, attainable, it has to be relevant and time-dated. So how are you ever going to know you're successful? When you get there, if you don't know where you're at?

Doreen 07:51

Correct. If you aren't the one defining your success, I want to ask you who is defining it. So I think it's really, really important that you sit down and figure out your goals, right? And I like to and when we coach our clients, we prefer to have them work on one goal at a time, we might make an exception and have them work on several goals. But they have to be like, smaller goals. And that's because this is a learned behavior. This is something that if you can master

one goal, and you can be successful at the one goal, then you can learn it. And then you can do it with other things, anything you want in your life really,

Jeff 08:34

And the issue comes with, especially after divorce that a lot of people think that they're trying to meet society's views of success, or what our parents may have defined in our when we were younger, or maybe people in our life today as you're going through the divorce what they consider success and you're defining it for through their views instead of your own.

Doreen 09:01

That you know, I continue to go back to this I've been trying to understand Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, social media platforms more because I really want to understand like what the younger generation is dealing with and I have to tell you that I think a lot of the younger generation is defining their goal of success based on what they're seeing out there what others are defined as being successful whether it's the way you look, the way you dress, it's the purse you carry, it's the amount of money you have in your bank account the house you live in, right and you're right. It's a lot of times success is kind of I'm not gonna use the word, use the word beat into you, but I don't mean that like literally physically be, but what your parents have defined as successful and have embedded in you or ingrained in you since you were a child. And so, you know, divorce is a beautiful opportunity, as we say, to reinvent yourself and reinventing yourself and finding who you are. It's like that perfect push, you know, is that perfect push, because you probably hit what many will define as rock bottom and a lot of ways. So you know, when you hit that bottom, it's a great time to pick up the pieces and move forward.

Jeff 10:25

Yeah, and when you reinvent yourself, you're also redefining what you want redefining your ideals of success. And then you can ask yourself, have you set yourself up to be successful based on your ideals?

Doreen 10:41

Or somebody else's?

Jeff 10:43

inaudible self success.

Doreen 10:45

I think you're gonna find a lot of our listeners were in marriages in which they lost their own identity, or they found that they were putting placing other people's needs in their family above their own. And really just that success was the Paramount focus, right? So this is an opportunity to let me say it, because it's really okay, be selfish, to look at yourself. And, you know, to really think about what you want for your future, and what that's gonna look like, because you can truly create it, it is possible. And we know it, because we've seen how many people go through the process of divorce. I mean, in my 30 years of practicing, and as coaches, we've seen people hit the bottom helped them, you know, stand up tall again, and recreate their life. And they do get to a better place. It takes hard work, it takes hard work. But you know, this is all using your prefrontal cortex, your human brain, to create the goals you want in your life, right? And as I always say, what, this is not a dress rehearsal rehearsal, right?

Jeff 11:57

And then also, you know, thinking about being selfish, you know, we've talked about it even just last week about putting your mask on first, and taking care of number one and loving yourself. So if you do think you're being selfish, reconsider the fact that when you're in your game, or you're at the top of your game, because you've taken care of yourself, you're able to be a better human, whatever. A better friend or parent.

Doreen 12:25

A better just person in this world that can really use a lot of better people, right?

Jeff 12:31

Surely, if you love yourself, other people can love you more.

Doreen 12:34

Absolutely.

Jeff 12:35

That is a biggie. Now, the same is true for happiness.

Doreen 12:37

Yeah, I was going to talk about happiness.

Jeff 12:40

All right, tell me about happiness.

Doreen 12:41

So Well, the first thing I want to ask the listeners is, what are you waiting for? Right? If happiness is a feeling of contentment, as you just explained, and if you've listened to our podcast, you know that our philosophy and many coaches philosophy, you know, this is not something we've created, because we've learned from the best of the best. And you know, what coaching really is all about is, and what we show people is that, it's you're all about your feelings, feelings are created by your mind, and your thinking, right? So happiness is a state of mind, it's a state, it's a feeling that stems from your state of your thought from your mind. And it's always you may not think this, and you may not believe it, but it's always, always a choice.

Jeff 13:32

And it's always available. It's always available, there's gonna be easy at times to get there. Yes, but you still have the choice whether to get there or not 24/7, you have the choice to think certain things, feel certain things. It's all up to you.

Doreen 13:48

Yeah. So I think that one of the important things that I like to remind myself of, and I like to remind our clients of is that, are you postponing your happiness until you achieve and fill in the blank, whatever it is, lose 10 pounds, get a certain amount of money, find a new love, you know, so are you postponing your happiness until you achieve and then fill in the blank, whatever it is you want? If you are, I'm going to suggest that you're not going to find happiness.

Jeff 14:22

You're postponing your happiness until you achieve whatever this undefined success is. And they spend most of their time beating themselves up for not achieving this thing. They don't even know what to put their finger on. I'm not even sure what it is.

Doreen 14:39

Well, and I think that also that they post, like I was saying they postpone their happiness until they achieve it. They spend most their time beating themselves up for not achieving it. They may define it. But they just beat themselves up along the way. I love to use I think because it's so easy to talk about, if you have a goal of any, you know a goal and it's measurable 15 pounds, right? And you know, it's 15 pounds, you know, how many times are you not enjoying the journey along the way of reaching that goal, you're not happy because you got on the scale and you only lost a half a pound or you got on the scale and you gained a half a pound. Whatever it is, it's like, as long as you keep sustaining your objectives, and you know what it is, which we all know what you need to do to get in good shape and to feel the best you can feel health wise, weight wise, whatever it is for you. You just have to keep going right? It's not going to happen overnight,

Jeff 15:38

Especially those who are considered unhappy eaters. You're almost setting yourself up for failure. Because if you're unhappily unsheathing the goal, you're going to be constantly getting farther away from the goal because your unhappiness is creating. You want to eat more.

Doreen 15:55

So what do you mean, happy eaters?

Jeff 15:57

You know, sometimes when they're depressed, or they're sad, they buffer by eating? So if you're not happy, because you're not at the 15 pounds, you're kind of setting yourself for never..

Doreen 16:09

Oh, I see what you're saying.

Jeff 16:10

And constantly be eating because you're unhappy.

Doreen 16:12

Because what happens is, is that your unhappiness, generally when we have unpleasant feelings, we try to buffer them. It's, it's our human nature to try to avoid negative feelings. And so sometimes people do that by artificial means. Because look, if you drink alcohol, eat sweets, you know, watch porn, do all these things shop, I can name it social media, you know, surfing the social media, chat channels, and all this to access, you're buffering because the dopamine in your brain actually is increased, right? It's a false sense of pleasure. It's a false sense of happiness. So that's for another day, we've talked about that before. So the issues show up when we when you believe that you need to be successful in order to be happy, because this is thinking backwards, right? Success does not lead to happiness. In fact, it's happiness that leads to success. Let me say that, again. Success does not lead to happiness. In fact, it's happiness that leads to success. You know what, I'm going to highlight that right now. Because I am having a team meeting tomorrow with my law firm, team, and others. And I am going to quote that.

Jeff 17:28

I'm sure they're listening right now, anyway.

Doreen 17:30

Well, it's going to be tomorrow. So this won't play till later. But you can look at many of the people you know, in our society that are supposedly, "successful", that are just miserable, right? Hey, I can talk about it all day long. Obviously, I can't talk about it, because I can't give names. But I can tell you that having done divorce, you know, litigated for 30 years, people with 10s of 1000s, I'm sorry, 10s of millions of dollars, with successful businesses, with all the blank, you know, famous athletes and people I've represented throughout the many years that I practice. They're unhappy.

Jeff 18:09

Yeah well, that's also, the social media and the television and everything that puts this fake facade in front of us. And it's not showing the real person behind the facade.

Doreen 18:23

Well, they have all the exterior, that's what you're saying. They have all the exterior signs of success, they have the money, they have the fame, they have tremendous fan base, you know, whatever. They're incredibly talented, maybe in whatever they do, they're very successful in their career. And they're just miserable.

Jeff 18:43

Exactly.

Doreen 18:44

So I think focusing on first - happiness, and why we want to be happy, and then focusing on success. And why you want to be successful is the first place to start.

Jeff 18:58

As key. Yes. In other words, finding happiness in this moment without having to achieve anything additional above that, really working on this concept that doesn't get better. At this moment. Right now, this is the time.

Doreen 19:15

Hard for me.

Jeff 19:16

It's not easy for anybody.

Doreen 19:18

Hard for me because I'm such a high achiever in business. I'm always reaching for that goal in business and you know, it's hard to find that that happy point when you're like looking at that goal, whatever that is, for me, it's it's a lot of different things in business, but let's just take the money part of it, you know, I want to reach x amount of dollars, whatever it is, and I'm like, oh, you know, didn't reach that goal this month, or didn't reach that goal today. And it's like, you have to remember I have to remind myself even as a coach. This is just always a work in progress.

Jeff 19:53

I'll coach you through it.

Doreen 19:54

Okay.

Jeff 19:55

Yeah, because remember, what do you always say about 50/50?

Doreen 19:58

Well, life is a balance of 50/50. It's good and bad, because let me ask you something. I mean, I'll ask you specifically, but I'm gonna ask the listeners, have you reached a goal in your life? And everyone's gonna say, yes, right, you've reached some goal, you know, and think about when you reach that goal. And were you did it bring you the happiness. Even though the success was there, you reached the successful goal you would attain to, but then you sit there and you go, Wait a second, I don't feel so amazing. I don't feel so happy. I was thinking that when I did X, Y, and Z achieved this, I was gonna be like, Oh, this is it for me. Right?

Jeff 20:38

Well, the goal that came to mind, because I thought you were really going to ask.

Doreen 20:42

I am asking you, I want you to give an example.

Jeff 20:45

I'm on my fourth degree black belt that I achieved, and I was ecstatic when I got it. But what question I thought you were gonna ask. And what I'll ask our listeners now is have they ever achieved a very important goal in their lives and not had failure along the way.

Doreen 21:02

Of course, you have failure, you can't, there's no way possible to reach a goal unless, you know, I can pick a very few examples, in order to reach a goal. A meaningful goal, right? When that you really thought about you defined and is going to take some time to get. You know, it's, you're going to have failure,

Jeff 21:32

Exactly.

Doreen 21:32

It's anticipated. In fact, one of the things that I do with my goal setting is I anticipate the failures because when you anticipate the failures, it doesn't make the failures as hard to take, I'll look at a goal. And also I anticipate the failures of x, y and z, we anticipate them as teams also in our business. And that way, we can think of how to how to get around those failures right away, we're ready for them.

Jeff 22:03

Well, then in that case, that was your coaching session right there. Because you can do the same exact thing, anticipate and expect the unhappiness with the happiness, because they're both going to come for you to really, really be happy at. Imagine trying to be happy all the time. It's impossible. Now when you know, you're happy, if you haven't experienced the sadness? How would you even know that you're happy? If you haven't experienced unhappiness?

Doreen 22:28

Absolutely.

Jeff 22:29

So I really, really agree with you that life is 50/50. And you know, imagine if somebody passes away, or somebody is hurting in your life, it's so normal to fear or you're supposed to,

Doreen 22:44

I mean, you expect when something horrible happens, you're an accident, someone you love is hurt, illness, death, you lose a job, these types of things, you know, you anticipate, you know, not anticipate I'm sorry, your emotion is normally going to be one of sadness.

Jeff 23:01

Exactly. Like when you lose a dog.

Doreen 23:03

Yeah, exactly. So let's talk about some things that we can give some tips on.

Jeff 23:09

Okay.

Doreen 23:10

So first, focus on happiness, because on happiness, you find yourself that is always available, and that you can create it with your thoughts.

Jeff 23:20

And they are your thoughts, right? I mean, 24/7, they're available to you. That's the I think the only thing that we truly have the power over ourselves is our own thoughts.

Doreen 23:34

Well, and here's the thing, a lot of the listeners are probably saying, yeah, well, you know, sounds great. How do I do that? How do I switch my thoughts from unhappy thoughts to focus on happiness? And the question, or the answer is, you hire us as a coach. No, but we do we do. Like this is part of our foundational work, we do show people how their thoughts create their feelings, actions and the results in their life, right from whatever circumstance they have, right? So it's work, but it's a gentle movement. It's like when you're you gotta first know what your thought is. that's causing the unhappiness, and then just take gentle shifts towards a different thought, I'll use the the example of the weight again, get on the scale, and you gained a pound, right? So your thought might be, I've been on this diet. Here I go, I've gained a pound. This isn't working. I'm so unhappy. The feeling is unhappy. Right? But that's not really the case. You could easily choose to say, you know what, I've done everything I can do. I'm on the right path. I may have cheated a

little yesterday. I'm not going to beat myself up. I know, this could be many things. It could be water weight. It could be you know, whatever I'm wearing. It could be a lot of things.

Jeff 24:57

There is gravity and increased.

Doreen 24:59

What?

Jeff 25:00

The Earth's gravity increased.

Doreen 25:03

Yeah, it could be that too, I guess. And you could just shift your thought to I'm doing a good job. I'm going to keep up the good work. And you can turn it into just happiness. Right? Second, second thing.

Jeff 25:16

Well, secondly, you want to make sure that when you do set your goals, and make them, make them a little challenging, you know, make your life a little bit more interesting. When we define what success means to us, we define exactly what our goal is and how we want to attain it. And that way, it challenges you right, and it takes all these obstacles will be almost like you're bulletproof. And you're 10 feet tall, you can see the goal above the trees, but you're also bulletproof. All the obstacles just bounce right off of you, and it makes your life something that's a lot more interesting.

Doreen 25:53

Well, I think that's what we started the podcast with the episode with was, was really defining it, you know, because when you when you're very clear on your goal, you know, when you've achieved it exactly, you've got to write it down, you've got to make it smart, we went through that already. So you can go back and listen to that. And then you can allow yourself to acknowledge it, because you'll know when you achieved it, right? To feel the emotion that comes along with that acknowledgement from the achievement, right? So once you achieve your goal, then you can certainly be happy in your accomplishment, right? It's just not going to bring you like total happiness, so that everything in your life is all rainbows and daisies, and you know, unicorns, as they say.

Jeff 26:39

There's always going to be even at this very second very moment, happy things, sad things, you know, that are going to be a part of your life all the time, just because you achieved one specific success. That doesn't mean there aren't other things in your life that aren't.

Doreen 26:56

Of course, you know, in life is always changing, right? And you can't control certain things, you can certainly control your thoughts, which control your feelings, your actions and your results. But there are circumstances which are facts that happen exactly Where's take place. People, like I said, get hurt. Things happen. And, you know, so the other thing that we had mentioned, just to reiterate that and circle back is it has to be your goal, what you want, you know, and you define what that looks like for you. And then you want to show up with a lot of love for yourself. And a lot of appreciation be kind to yourself. Right?

Jeff 27:38

You know, what they say is, the happier you are, you're going to be more creative, you're going to be more excited, the more tapped in you're going to be the more you're going to be able to create whatever kind of success it is that you want in your life. Once you've defined it. You're on your way there.

Doreen 27:55

Absolutely, absolutely. All right. So you know, in closing, happiness and success are two completely different things that are achievable in completely different ways. So don't get them confused or mixed up. The bottom line is, are you

achieving happiness? Or are you happily achieving? So think of that today as you get ready or start your day and your day, whatever part of the day you're in and love to hear from you hear about your successes, your goals and your happy place.

Jeff 28:28

Have an amazing week.

Doreen 28:29

All right, we'll talk to you next week.

Jeff 28:31

Bye bye. You have the vision of what you want your life to look like after divorce, but maybe you just don't know how to get there. So if you're ready to take control of your life and want to find out more about our coaching, visit us at lad-coaching.com. That's LAD as in lad-coaching.com.

Doreen 29:02

Until next time, have an amazing rest of your day. And remember, yes you can..

Doreen & Jeff 29:08

Have an amazing life after divorce.