



I'm sharing with you today The Meaning of Life. 10 messages about the meaning of life I've gathered from interviewing amazing leaders, healers, and change agents over the past 52 weeks.

Welcome to "52 Weeks Of Hope." This is where you get to hear how to feel happy, balanced, and worthwhile, how to make that lonely ache vanish, and feel empowered, confident, and secure. I'm Lauren Abrams, and I get to help you feel that magic again since going through my own dark night of the soul by chatting with incredible leaders, healers, and change agents who give you their messages of hope after overcoming challenges of their own. And today, I've compiled the messages from all these incredible leaders, and healers, and change agents, and I've put them together, and basically I now know the meaning of life. And yes, I know how ballsy that sounds, but I've put together all the messages that I've gotten over the last 52 weeks, and they really do all come together into an incredible compilation of messages where I feel like I now know the meaning of life.

First, in case anybody wasn't around since the beginning of this podcast, let me just briefly tell you who I am, what brought this about, and then what the meaning of life is because that really was my search. I went through my dark night of the soul, which really surprised me because I'm one of these people that when I was a kid I never felt like I fit in, I always felt different. And you wouldn't have known that to see me because I always have lots of girlfriends, but I didn't have that one best friend that you tell everything to because I thought something was wrong with me, that I wasn't given some secret that everybody else had. And so, I just thought that I'd be put away or thrown off or something, so I never let anybody really in. So I discovered drugs and alcohol in high school, and I was often running with those, and just was a mess. I was a total mess, which surprises a lot of people if they meet me today. But I was just really, really in bad shape, lived in an abandoned house, and stuff like that in my late teens, early 20s. I weighed 83 pounds back then like I was just a total, total mess.

And I ended up in my early 20s getting really cleaned up. It was just one of those, I had hit such a low low bottom, and I just wanted to die. I didn't know



there was a way to get help. I really had nothing. I hated looking at my own reflection in the mirror. I just hated what I had become. It was just the grace of God. I am alive and I'm grateful every single day for that. So, I ended up getting an education, putting myself through college, I got a scholarship, went through UCLA, and went to USC law school, got a masters, and created really an amazing, amazing life. Got married, have the two greatest kids in the world, got divorced, and he gave me full custody, and I raise these two amazing kids. Started a beautiful law practice where I'm of service to clients, and started hiring, when I had the kids, I started hiring people. And all of this, just grateful every single day, giving back, giving back, giving back to anybody who was in a similar kind of situation, to let them know there is hope, and that there's a way out. Just always very much a person who was giving back, because I had no idea there was a way out. Just very much of service. I wasn't raised to know that kind of thing. Although my father's amazing. He volunteers five days a week at his hospital in Florida, and he's all about giving back. But I don't know, I missed that message growing up. But he was always working. He worked very hard.

But anyway. So when I went through this dark, dark time, and it was because here I am with this thriving law practice in Beverly Hills which I don't usually say. I went through these financial challenges which shocked me because from the outside everything looks good. So we never know what's going on with anybody on the inside. And I got to a place where I didn't know how I was gonna feed my kids. It was just really dark. But I didn't feel like I could tell anybody. And I got on the other side. We always get on the other side. But it was tough. And, I mean, I had to feed my staff, take care of everyone. I had built up this incredible life, but I was alone. I was really really alone. And I got through it... I talk about it a lot in the first episode when I talk about what brought about "52 Weeks of Hope" about because I was in Angela...I'm a big Angela Manuel Davis groupie. And I was in one of our classes, I was spinning. I didn't have money for that, but I had classes left with my [inaudible 00:04:17] whatever. And it's pitch black in our class, and then she's going, "I don't know who I'm talking to right now, but I know somebody right now needs to hear this." And she did her Angela magic, and I'm in the back row crying and crying.



And I don't know, something shifted, and I knew everything would be okay. And money did not rain down on me, but I got through it. We get through everything, which of course is one of the number one messages that the meaning of life is, the only way through is through. Out of the 10 messages I have to impart, the number one is the only way through is through, which is like damn. Isn't there a back way, or can't we go under or over or around? And no, the only way through is through.

Anyway, so when I got through that one I thought, "What the hell was that?" Because really, I didn't know what the hell that was. It had gotten so dark, and I thought, "What I'm gonna do is I'm gonna go and interview a person a week for a year for me, just for myself, about what is the meaning of life." Like an older demographic, and just they say nobody on their deathbed ever wished that they made more money or worked harder. So what have you gleaned from life? Tell me, because I don't know what the hell that was just now that I had gone through. But I wanna know like why are we here? I don't get it. I know we live to love each other and all of that, but I really was just coming out of that. Like I didn't know what the lesson was, so I decided to go and ask one person a week. I'm busy, I'm a single mom raising these kids, working, a lot of volunteer work, and all of that. So, I'm not a DIYer, and I thought, "Okay, it's a project. Let's do a project for me." And so I started interviewing a person a week. And people would divulge the most personal information to me. I'm not a shrink or anything, but they would tell me the most personal information, and it was so rich and good. And I'd go home, and I'd write it up to my best friend, and in my own verbiage, which is funny, but not making fun of them funny, just what I had gleaned from talking to them. And after a few months, there were similarities in what people were telling me, and I thought, "I'm gonna write one of those books." And I thought, "I'll call it '52 Weeks of Hope,' " where you open a book, and you open it, and you go, "Oh my gosh, that's just what I needed to hear. What, that's just amazing." Or you close it, and then you open it again and go, "That's the story I needed just to feel better right now."

But then COVID hit and I did a pivot because that's what we do in life, we pivot. I find that we do have to pivot in life and be flexible. But anyway, so I started the podcast. And I love podcasting. It just makes me so happy and fills



me up. And I get such amazing emails from you guys telling me how much better these incredible people that I have the privilege to interview, they just bring such richness to our lives. I have gotten this chance to interview all these different people, and that is what brought the podcast about. And I am starting again to work on the book because I have these 10 messages that I've gleaned when taken together, that form such meaning that I do feel like I now know the meaning of life. So I'm gonna share that with you now, and I can't wait to hear your feedback, some of your feedback. Just go to the website, 52weeksofhope.com, and I would love to know what you think. I know this is hubris. I know how it sounds. Looked at this again, and again, and again, and it just came out of me. And first and foremost, what I said before number one, the only way through is through. There's no way around it. There's no shortcuts. We all get through everything, and you don't have to do anything alone, but the only way through is through. And I really think listening to JJ Duncan, she's episode 36, is such a testament to that. She has shared so openly going through everything with her son, Mason. She's the executive producer of Project Runway, Bravo's Project Runway, and it's given her such perspective since her son passed away. But it's not this downer episode. I know a lot of people were scared to listen to it because of the subject matter, and I understand that as a mom. And she really gives such perspective and has been so open about her healing process, and just the only way through is through. And episode 36 with JJ is the perfect example of that, of how we get through anything, and we get through it together.

I think Ken Chasen, Rabbi Ken Chasen's episode, he speaks so beautifully about community, I won't do justice. There's also when I was writing the book initially, I had interviewed him as well. And his chapter is short, these aren't long, on the website, and I don't wanna butcher what he says because he talks so beautifully about community, and how we carry you through things that you'll never totally get over, but we help carry you through them. So, the first message gleaned about what life's about, that the only way through is through. One of the others is we need connection. I think that comes, really a lot of that is probably from going through COVID, but number two we need connection. We're not meant to live in isolation, we're meant to be together in some form or another. Texting isn't enough, it just isn't. We need some form of connection



with each other. We're meant to be together. Number three is resilient. We are a resilient species. We can get through absolutely anything.

And Amberly Lago, episode 33, she's so great. I just love talking to her. She's uplifting. I told her I was really queasy when she started talking about her accident and looking down in her leg being almost...I stopped her, and I told her I could pass out during her interview while we were talking. I did not, she didn't get that graphic. So, I was okay, and I just feel like we're best friends now. I love her. She has that kind of energy though. When you listen to her, you're gonna feel like you're her best friend too. And she's amazing, amazing, amazing. She talks about resilient, and she is because she suffers from chronic pain after that. She saved her leg because she was told she had a 1% chance...I'm not giving away anything if you haven't heard her episode, because really what she talks about is how you keep going. She is all about resiliency. And that is a fabulous episode if you haven't heard that one.

Okay, number four. We become less hard on ourselves and others over time, we become a lot more forgiving. I know forgiveness is in a lot of religious texts in all different religions, but I'm not schooled in religion, so I'm not even gonna go there. You would think with all the different religious practitioners that I have interviewed on here, I would know a little bit more about that. But that's as far as I'll go along those lines. I just know that forgiveness is one of the key principles that I have gleaned from interviewing all the different leaders, and healers, and change agents. That holding on to resentment and all those different things over time takes its toll on us physically and comes out in different ways, which will come out in one of my other things that I've gleaned that I'll come to in a second. Number five is this is a journey to live not to watch on the sidelines. Life is about action. We can't, I said it in a lot of episodes, but one of my Laurenisms is we can't sit in a corner. God doesn't drive parked cars. We can't sit in a corner and wish things to happen, that we have to take an action. And it's by showing up for life that things happen, and we never know, life can change in an instant. We could be having the worst, worst anything and by showing up, miracles happen. And I love Hala Taha, episode number 25, where she's super successful and very young. And she talks about how she makes her life happen. Sean Bradley, oh my gosh, he went from being in



prison. And his episode, I can't even do it justice, but it's insane what he went through as a child, and where he's at today, and how successful he is. And it's because he didn't sit around playing the victim and saying, "Oh my gosh, my life's going nowhere." He's on some TV show, his life, they made a movie about it or one of these reality programs or something right now. He's an amazing story also.

So, life is a journey, life's in session, and sitting around, and even if it's just the smallest action, 10 minutes towards what it is that you're dreaming of doing, it's something. And that's a good segue to the recent episode with Deborah Hurwitz where she talks about perfectionism versus procrastination, is there a flip coin of the exact same thing? Which I never thought of because I'm not a perfectionist, I was always so happy. I am so happy if get anything done, and I'm always so proud of myself because I think I have very low expectations. So, I know I'm accomplished in a lot of different ways, but I'm always so surprised. But I find that interesting that people procrastinate because they're afraid they won't do something perfectly. Like who cares? Just do it. They say just if you want to write a book, just write. And then you start editing, and editing, and editing. And then I heard something so good from these two friends, they just took four days, and they swapped each other's manuscripts and edited the shit out of each other. And when they were done, four days of really solid work, they came out and they submitted their proposals. I just thought that was so great. What great friendships. So I love the perfectionism versus procrastination. And if we stop trying to be perfect, will we stop procrastinating? I just, I find that just an interesting topic. I'd never thought about it. So, that's Deborah Hurwitz.

Oh my gosh, did you hear Heather McWilliam? She finally, finally reported. She's the police officer who finally reported all the sexual harassment that she was under, and being her authentic self, all the people that she attracts now just from being honest and authentic, and that's what happens. When we are our authentic self, and this is one of the things about not listening to the negative self-talk in our head, we can thank it for sharing and give equal energy to something positive, that it's really important to say something to counter that negative self-talk. And that's Kristin Balter, who actually...she's episode 30. So



that's who referred me to Heather who's on right now. But Heather being her authentic self, she's now attracting a whole new tribe. And it's just so beautiful to listen to. And it's just amazing how things just change, and we get to attract that what we are, and as we raise our frequency, we get to attract people that are also vibrating at that higher frequency as well. Which is another good segue into it doesn't matter what modality you are using, yoga, EFT tapping, breathwork, manifestation, whatever modality you use, it all works. Whatever you're called to, use it, it all works. Angels, it all works. And we have had such amazing, amazing episodes. I think I'd have to list half of them because I've had such incredible healers on here. Spring Washam, oh my gosh. She's amazing, amazing. If you haven't heard Spring's episode, take a listen. She's been in that realm for a long time, so she was just so fabulous.

Okay, number nine, if someone doesn't lift you up and support you in your dreams as a naysayer, cut them out of your life. Life is just too short for any naysayers or people that aren't supporting you. You want to feel heard, seen, and loved. So I'm gonna say that again, you want peoples around you who help you feel heard, seen, and loved. Why tolerate anyone who isn't a loving presence in your life? If it's somebody you have to see periodically, a relative or a colleague, there's all these tools from all these episodes for dealing with toxic people, like creating a safe white light around you that no one can penetrate. Just DM me, or send me an email, go to the website if you aren't sure which episode or which expert discusses these. Krishna Desai, they talk about this. And yeah, there's a lot of episodes. So I can help you with that. You can just contact me directly and I can help you. Creating that white light around you is such a good way if you can't just completely cut out these people.

And then number 10, it all comes down to love and helping others. It's all about community. And I mentioned a little while ago, Ken Chasen episode, Rabbi Ken Chasen in episode 14, and Rabbi Jill Zimmerman, she also discusses it, and so does Imam Jihad Turk. And then Rachel in episode six or five, she talks about how she went into the mindfulness realm and became a meditation teacher. She was an actress, and with all these depression and disorders and things like that, and she just has this soothing way about her. I love listening to Rachel Lyle. So many great episodes. You'd think I walk on water now since I



get to listen to all this. So hardly, I will say that I notice my breath, taking really deep breaths whatever's going on. And also I turned to tapping, if I have something going on that's affecting me, I really, the EFT tapping. Mary Sise, thank you so much, and Shalini Yamdagni. They both are amazing, amazing. I'll go to their YouTube, I'll listen to our episodes. So I thank both of them. Mary's my friend now. So I ended up with friends. You listen to these you think, "Oh yeah, I definitely know them." Mary Sise has "Tapping Tuesdays" still. But these people all have communities, and you can have a community too, and you can join up with us in the Facebook group. Mary's doing tapping with us just on Zoom. We all talk to each other, and it's really fun. We're doing different modalities every month. Mary did last month, it's in there, she walks us through. You can go into the Facebook group, and go ahead and do a breathing. She does a whole breathwork session, so you can go into that at any time and take part in that. But I definitely notice my breath. I'm certainly not walking on water, that's for sure.

So I wish I could do all these things I've learned, but I do know that if I feel my feelings, I mean, feel them, lean into them. Feelings peak for five minutes. I mean, think about the worst thing you've ever been through. It's not the whole day, it's part of a day maybe, but they peak for five minutes. And if I really feel them, and feel where I'm feeling them, and feel them all the way through my body, then I'm creating neurotransmitters and a different way of being and thinking. and I grow. So all of this, I mean, it's also interesting, and its life, and it's just the human experience. And sometimes I meet people and I just, you have that thing where you just can talk and talk and talk and talk, and you just maybe we knew each other past life. I have no idea, I just stay open. Every single morning I ask the universe to please give me an open heart and an open mind, and just let me be a channel to be of love and service. That's what I've gotten. That's where I get to go to. And I try to help others.

So. I mean, right now my kids dad just passed away, and so I'm here to help them. I feel their grief. I'm a mom, so I feel everything my kids feel, and my step kids. I mean, it's their dad, the one who gave me full custody. I mean, it's still sad, and I feel. I'm a human being. And yeah, it's just kind of how it works. So, I'm really, really curious of what you think of this list. I keep looking at it,



and I keep thinking, I mean, it starts with the only way through is through, and it ends with love and service that we give back to others. And when we're giving to others, I know for me, it lifts me up, it helps me, it makes me feel better. And for somebody like me that as a kid I didn't even wanna be here and didn't know why I was born, and everything just seemed so weird, and like I wasn't given the playbook or the rulebook or anything else, and now here I am saying, "Oh, here's why we're here." Like how do you get there? I have no idea, but I'll take it. And if you've got some stuff that you wanna add, then definitely go for it.

So I was just at a podcasters conference. I mean, half of it was virtual. I had to fly home because I wanted to be with my son. He was just, I couldn't leave. He flew home from college, and my daughter's flying home of course from college too for their dad's memorial. But anyway, I did the rest of it virtually, but I met such amazing, amazing people, and there were all these new healers there, and different people. So I have all these ideas of more healers, and leaders, and change agents that I wanna bring to you. If you have some people in particular, or some modalities, or some leaders that you would particularly like to hear from, please let me know because this is now "52 Weeks of Hope," we're here. I am the 52nd week. Two weeks, had to repeat because I got married finally. And, so I repeated Rabbi Jill Zimmerman because I love her so much, and I had such good feedback from all of you. So, and Karen Donaldson, because how could you not love Karen Donaldson? I had a command room or what it means when somebody goes like this, it means they're gonna lie or they're thinking about lying. Did you know that if you're on Zoom, and you go like that and touch your nose, those are the two I repeated. So, even though it says it's the 54th week, I'm actually the 52nd. So, I'm celebrating by giving you what I've put together, the meaning of life. So thank you so much for listening. I would love your feedback. And we have an easy way to review now. You can just click on it and send me a review or follow the podcast. I'm Lauren Abrams, thanks for listening.

I hope you enjoyed this week's episode, and take with you the messages of gratitude. I'm just so grateful to have you on this journey, speaking your truth, and let's do this. We get to do this life thing together, and it's never too late to



start. All the podcasts mentioned in this episode are gonna be listed in the show notes. Don't worry about that, it'll have the episode number right there in the show notes on the website. Be sure to tune in next week for another amazing episode from another amazing change agent, and leader, who's also a comedian. She's so great. It was a great episode. That's next week. I've continued interviewing super amazing change agents, healers, leaders, and I cannot wait to share them with you to help you along on your journey. Thank you so much for listening. Please tell two of your friends, and let them feel the magic as well. I'm Lauren Abrams, sending you so much love and gratitude. Thanks again for listening.