



Wake Up Happy with Dr. Margarita Gurri

HOST

Kym Yancey

SPEAKER

Dr. Margarita Gurri

PRESENTATION

Kym Good morning. This is Kym Yancey. Welcome to Wake Up Happy. Listen, I just want to tell you, every now and then you run into what's called a little technical snafu, so we're having a little technical snafu this morning, and Margarita's not been able to join us yet. She's been trying to get on the line.

And so what I'm going to do is I'm going to really get into some great facts and share some information with you. And also, for those of you that are at your computer or on your phone listening, if you want to send in some questions or add some things to the chat, I want to encourage you to do that. But we're going to have a great time, and I do expect that Margarita will be joining us at any time, and we should hear her voice. Okay? So, with that, the show today, by

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the way, is about the Power of Presence: Connect, Attitude, Fun, and Humor, so I'm really excited about having that time with her.

Let me give you some things that we have talked about on Live Happy, and these are just some great facts that I really want you to take in for a minute, because I think that clearly most people see happiness as something that they aspire to have, something they want to bring into their life, not really getting in touch with the fact that it's accessible to them right now.

In fact, I had an interesting conversation this morning. I work out in the morning, and I try to work out no less than four times a week. Here in Texas, I work out outside. For me, I discovered that working inside the gym wasn't the optimal environment for me. I started working out outside with a trainer with another buddy of mine. I love that being outside, the sun, the lights, seeing the sun rise and hearing the birds chirp and all that kind of stuff, but it's really outside at a park.

But here was the interesting conversation this morning when my workout partner and I were walking and talking. And he said something to me, he says, "Kym," he says, "tell me, for you, since Live Happy, have you found that it's made a profound difference in your life?" Okay, so we're getting some feedback.

Margarita, are you there?

Margarita Yes, I'm here now.

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Kym Oh, great, great. I was just sharing with them that sometimes we run into little technical snafus. You know what I mean? So, that's great, Margarita. Margarita, stay right there. I'm going to bring you right in. I'm just going to finish the story that I started.

But anyway, he had asked me about the impact that Live Happy has had on me and said what's been my epiphany or the biggest aha? And I told him, I said, "You know, just the mere fact that we're walking around this park, neither one of us are in any pain whatsoever. We feel good. We're breathing in fresh air. We're hearing the birds. I'm here talking with a really good friend." And I'm like, "How does it get better than this?" I said, "We're walking in an extremely happy moment right now."

And what he said to me, Jeff was his name, and Jeff says, "Kym," gosh, he says, "I just have to so remember to be in these moments." And I think that's one of the biggest keys to our happiness is being in these moments. By the way, when I say "I think," I really want you to know this is also based on science. The science of happiness is all about being present, being in the moment. So, I thought I would pass that on to you.

Let me tell you about Margarita. It's so great to have her here. Dr. Margarita, I want to make sure, your last name is pronounced "Jerry?"

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Margarita Gurri.

Kym Got it. Got it. Welcome to Wake Up Happy. It's great to have you here.

Margarita It's nice to be here. Thank you.

Kym Yes, absolutely. For over 30 years, Dr. Margarita was also known as the Red Shoe Lady. I'm really anxious to find out about the Red Shoe Lady tag that you are known by. She has engagingly and skillfully used therapeutic humor in keynotes, coaching, and consulting to heal and energize individuals, leaders, and teams. She's a best-selling author, radio host, certified speaking professional, and licensed psychologist with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology.

Dr. Gurri has worked with government officials, corporate leaders, professional athletes, and the U.S. Department of Defense, with the ability to inspire even the toughest audience to melt their presence. I love that. She's been inspiring global audiences for over 30 years as a communications, leadership, and conflict management specialist.

Dr. Margarita, so wonderful to have you here with us.

Margarita Well, it's a pleasure to be here. Thank you for having me. It's a happy day.

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Kym Yes, it is. It really is. Presence, let's talk about what you mean. You said the power of presence. Talk to us about the power of presence and what that all means.

Margarita Alright. Well, let me start with the Red Shoe story, because then you can see how I learned the power of presence. We escaped from Castro's Cuba when I was a very little girl. And at that time, Castro had this policy that families could only leave with \$5 per person and a suitcase for the family. In that moment, my mother, who was a very lively and determined woman, chose to wear red shoes kind of as an *oomph* to Castro.

Kym Yes.

Margarita And so there was an incident at the airport, and they took her away. The last thing that I saw as she was walking away was her red shoes. And I heard her little [*speaking Spanish*], her little heels, and I thought, well, will that be the last time I see her? But she looked so elegant, so regal. She said in a very calm and majestic voice to my brother, "If I don't come back, take the girls." It was my older sister, Irene, my twin sister, Elena, and I. "Joe, take the girls and meet Daddy in Miami."

So, just as we're about to board we heard my mother's little shoes, and then I saw the red tips coming, and I knew that the world would be okay. And in that moment, I knew that we can choose our happiness and we can choose how we invite others to behave all around us, because by her demeanor, she commanded not only calm and joy, but I knew that the world would be fine.

And so for me the power of presence is how we present ourselves to move not only in our own selves, but to others. What do we invite? Are we choosing happiness? Are we inviting some sort of grumpiness or are we inviting excellence in all those around us? So, the power of presence has to do with how we choose to behave. It's in who we are and what we do and how we do it. It's in the impact that we have on others.

Kym How do you train people to tap into the power of their presence? What are some of the things that you advise to people?

Margarita Well, it depends on how they are when they come in, but if people are excited about making an impact, they have passion, and then you go through their passion. So, what impact do they want to have? Do they want to inspire others? Do they want to make people feel better? Do they want to heal? Do they want to lead? Depending on where they come, you help them go with the energy that they have. So, their biggest energy is passion, you go through that. If their biggest energy is anger or sadness or frustration, you start there. The power of

presence is in knowing who we are, accepting where we are in that moment, whatever the feeling.

Maybe it's a yucky feeling, a feeling that feels yucky like anger. Well, there's a lot of power in anger, and that's the antidote to depression, so yay, you're angry. [Indiscernible] calls me up when they're frustrated, angry, upset, so you use that energy and you invite them to take a look because that's when they're the most motivated.

Kym I want to explore this a little bit more, just this whole thing around taking that anger and you have them use that anger. Walk us through that a little bit, because it's fascinating.

We talk a lot about happiness, but there are these other moments in your life, these other things that we all deal with. But how do you use the anger as a way to transition, or as you said, you start with that and go from where they are and move them to a different place, use that anger in a positive way or however you use it in a way that allows you to have the presence you're talking about?

Margarita Well, to me, anger is a gift. It's passion. It's energy. And so sometimes we're angry for good reasons. I mean, it's your righteous anger. Something yucky happened.

Kym Right.

Margarita But sometimes we're angry because it hit something from our past, our sense of entitlement, when someone said we couldn't do something, and so we bump into that. And so we feel sad for ourselves. We're having a little pity party. For instance, this morning I was working with this beautiful woman, brilliant attorney, and she is this blonde bombshell, Puerto Rican to boot, right? So, Latina, you've got to love a beautiful Latina. And I told her that she had to get away from the little girl pink shoes with the big silly bow and put on her red stilettos, because she wasn't owning her power. And I think we all have those little pink big-bow moments in our lives where we give up our power, the nina boba moment, the silly girl moment, or silly boy, and it's about not playing small. How do you step up? Well, you use your sadness and anger, and you say okay, what impact do I want to have? Where do I want to start?

So, happiness is a choice. It's not about the lack of yucky feelings, or yucky events. It's what we choose to do with what we've got and where we are.

Kym Do you think that people move in and out of power, move in and out of it?
There are times—

Margarita I think we have all the power we ever need now. I think we move in and out of using it and acknowledging it. I created this theory called the Big Red Couch,

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and I think that if you're looking at a big couch, because I spent many years looking at a three-cushion couch, on the left is the third cushion, maybe 20% of the people sitting there, and they're all the way dead to awareness. They're not aware. And they have the power, but they don't know it, and they are on automatic mode, drugs and alcohol, pity party, whatever.

Then there's the couch cushion all the way to the right, which is cushion one, the awareness cushion, and maybe 5% to 10%, maybe on a generous day 15%, maybe because your program we're pushing it to 15%, where people are all the way awake and aware. And they know who they are, they're aware of the context, they're aware of other people, and they're diving in to making a difference. Now, that doesn't mean they're lacking in pain and whatever; they're just using it productively to make a difference.

Then there's the middle cushion where most of us are, and that's the half-awake, half-asleep, you live good lives. There's nothing bad about cushion two, but you're not really owning your full power. And no one says we ever have to, so we need to live smaller and work smaller for a while. We can push that cushion down a little bit or we can sit in the crack. There's that 3-2-crack, which I call the fart crack, where life is just thinking. And you can't stay in a crack for very long. You have to either slither down to the totally unaware or bounce back up to cushion two or one.

And then there's the nearly fart-free crack, where we all slide to from time to time when we feel sorry for ourselves, when we forget that this is our life, when we're blaming other people, we're not giving credit where credit is due, we owe an apology, we don't give it—those little things that keep us from power. So, my question to everybody in the audience is how are you sitting? Are you sitting pretty?

Kym Are you sitting pretty?

Margarita Yes.

Kym Walk us through a few things that are vital to bringing out your presence, to standing in your power. What do you do? How do you get people to embrace that?

Margarita I took a page from Sue Gardner, who's executive director of Wikimedia Foundation. And she, I think, has the secret of how do you get enough personal power, is a question I asked myself, which is a question you asked, is by being authentic. One of the questions you ask yourself is what is your super power? What makes you different from others? And what's your kryptonite?

So, you ask yourself first, what's authentic about you, good or bad or ugly? It's your gift. It's how God made you, and you're supposed to be that way. So what

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is the dubious or wonderful gift given to you? And then you have to be honest about it, which is what the couch cushions are about, mindfulness about judgment. It's about awareness. You have to be straightforward, not sneaky. Don't lie to yourself and others. You have to be working hard all the time.

And then here's the kicker, to be a true leader or to really gain in personal power and to own it and not throw it away, you have to let yourself be vulnerable, because no one can trust someone who's not vulnerable. So, if you're willing to be vulnerable, to admit you made a mistake, to admit you don't know something, to admit you can't log in to an online radio show, like myself, then maybe you can be a good leader.

And then there are things we can do to avoid giving away our power. If we want to be genuine, we do those things we talked about. To take down that there's the genuine, we have to ask ourselves what is clouding our awareness? Is it shame? Is it guilt? Is it that we think we're supposed to be something that we're not?

In my family, for a brief period of time, I was supposed to be a nun. I was born sweet and kind, and so I was chosen by some of the other relatives, not my family, not my parents, thank God. I was supposed to be a nun. So, if I had a truly clouded awareness, I'm thinking if anything bad happened, maybe it's

because I didn't become a nun. So, there's superstitions, there's cultural expectations for roles, etc.

And then there's values/behavior disconnect. Am I living in a way that matches my values? So, if I say God and country and family are super important, am I showing that in my day to day, or week to week, or month to month?

And then there's skill challenges. We are all really good at some things and really terrible at others. Do we need to delegate some of those things we're not so good at, or do we need to get better at some of these skills?

And then there's the question of how do we deal with conflict? Are we holding on? It's like with *Frozen*, let it go. What are we doing with the power of conflict? Are we using it or throwing it away?

And then the last thing is fear, what's holding us back? What are we afraid of? And so many people are afraid of owning their power and sitting beautifully on cushion one. And I suggest to everyone, put on your beautiful red shoes and claim that cushion, because I believe everyone in the world can claim that cushion if we all work together to make it happen, which is what I love about your website and program. And I love your Happy App and Happy Notes. I think maybe with that, maybe we could all move to that cushion one.

Kym Yes. Let's talk about presence. This is really fascinating. Let's talk about the power of presence and the relationship presence has with happiness and success, the way you work it.

Margarita Okay. Well, let's look first at what happiness is. Something I figured out a while ago from talking to lots of people and making my own mistakes is that happiness cannot be a goal. It's a byproduct of making good choices. It's a byproduct of accepting what is and working with that. If we owe an apology, if we owe a debt of gratitude, what is it that we're living with in terms of doing what we need to do?

And I think happiness is also about living, and Denis Waitley has a quote about living every moment with love, grace, and gratitude. We can collect wounds and grudges or we can decide to let it go and dive into love, grace, and gratitude.

Everyone in the audience, if you have someone to apologize to or someone to thank, pick up your phone and send a text, "I love you." "Thank you." "I'm sorry." You know, we're all jerks from time to time. We have a little jerk fairy that sits on our shoulder, and we take turns in this world. Has it been your turn to have a jerk fairy on your shoulder? Lift it off, say thank you for reminding me I'm human, and let someone else have a turn with the jerk fairy.

In terms of happiness, the other mistake I think we make besides making happiness a goal is to think of happiness as the result of success, when in fact it's the other way. And Buddha has a quote that "Happiness is the key to success. Success is not the key to happiness."

Kym Yes, "Happiness is the key to success. Success is not the key to happiness."
Right.

Margarita Happiness is the key to success, yes. If you love what you're doing, you will be successful. And that's the Buddha quote, "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success." If you love what you are doing, you will be successful. And that's Buddha. And then Maya Angelou says, "Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it."

And I do believe those things are true. And your whole initiative and the happiness movement that has tickled our nation and our world has come at a great time because I really do believe that if we work together to build a community of happiness, we can be more productive and creative, more innovative. We can help make sure everyone is well-fed and safe. We can help people get back from destructive behaviors to be more productive.

Now, there's always going to be some yuckiness in the world. With the yin and the yang and the Tao, there has to be. There's good and evil. Isn't the yuck

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what invites sometimes people to action? Yes, and even comedians who I love, so many of them are dealing with depression and other demons that are torturous, and yet they give the world a gift in how they respond to those insecurities and painful childhoods or whatever. And I think that happiness is just amazing. And so my question is what are you willing to give up to be happy? That's the main question of happiness.

Kym That's an interesting way, what are you willing to give up to be happy, and you say that because?

Margarita Because I think that sometimes people think they're supposed to be happy by following a path that isn't genuine. So, are you willing to give up the delusion that you're good at having your own business? Some people aren't. So, are you willing to give up the delusion that you're an honest person because you're not? Are you pretending not to be an alcoholic? Are you pretending to make more money than you do? Are you living beyond your means? Are you thinking you're a good father, but really you don't spend time with your children?

If we looked at what keeps us from living a genuine life, a powerful life, if we look at the presence we're putting and match it to who we really are, what are we giving up? So, are you willing to give up some of these fantasies, or clouded awarenesses? Like Mulan, I have a little granddaughter who's five years old, Karen, and so we watch all these Disney movies. Disney is great at bringing forth

now girls that aren't playing the role they're supposed to play. Mulan, Tiana, they're not the typical girls from Disney. So, are you willing to give up being the cute little princess who doesn't work to have the life that you were meant to lead? What is it that you need to do?

And I think that if we ask that question, what are we willing to give up to be happy, and we don't come up with an answer, we can ask ourselves, why am I not happy? What's getting in my way? And so sometimes we look at the things and the not things, and whichever way is the best way to address it and help us look at the reality is okay. Whatever is the best way for you works.

Kym Yes. Do you think happiness requires bravery?

Margarita Yes, I do. I think there's a lot of courage in living in the world of personal power. We have to be courageous to claim who we are. We're all so wonderful and awful. I know I'm desperately disappointing in some ways, and so are you. So is everyone else. And that's okay.

Kym Wait, wait, wait. Say that again. You know what? Say that again.

Margarita We're all desperately disappointing in some ways. So we have to be courageous. Now, it's okay to be disappointing. We live in a community, and in fact, one of the secrets of happiness is how we work with others and how we play with others.

If you were perfect at everything, would you need to come up with a solution?

So, I think pain and conflict and problems are sometimes the great innovators in life. I think if we forgive ourselves for being human—my mother used to say, “We’re all one bite of the apple away from perfection,” and then she’d laugh and say, “Sometimes two,” depending on where we are. Depending on where we are in any given time. So, yes, I think it takes a lot of courage to be ourselves. I have an identical twin sister. I’m very different from Elena. And my goddaughter’s getting married on Sunday, and I’m so excited. And as I see her going through the wedding and her life or whatever, I see how different we are. If I wanted to be a happy person, I’d choose to be happy and glorify our differences. Sometimes, though, people get stuck in being resentful, or they criticize another person—it’s not my way, so it’s not right.

I think happiness comes with the courage to be mindful and not be judgmental. So, to sit in cushion one, we have to accept people the way they are. That doesn’t mean we can’t ask them to behave with us a little differently, but maybe they can’t. And if they can’t, we have a decision. Am I willing to give up with this relationship?

Let’s say you have the perfect love partner—male, female, whatever, but it doesn’t quite fit. It’s like that perfect pair of shoes that pinches. You can choose to wear it, but then you can’t complain because you’re now pinching.

So, sometimes you have to give away that perfect pair of shoes and find someone else who can wear them for you. Maybe the man who isn't the perfect one for you or the woman that's not perfect for you is perfect for someone else. Let it go.

So, the courage to really notice and not think of things as a failure, because noticing things is always the successful thing. It's painful as all get out at times, but one of the secrets of being happy is to be able to live with unhappy thoughts and the angst and the agita of it all. You know?

Kym What do you do when you are having down moments or you're not feeling very happy, your thoughts are taking you down a path that you know because of your training that this is not good? How do you transition yourself away from that right away to get yourself in the right presence of mind?

Margarita Okay. There are some things that a bunch of the research comes, out and they have five recommendations. I call it the SHMET, like "May the Power of the SHMET be With You." There's sleep, humor, meaning, exercise, and touch. So, diving into something that you know is self-care. For me personally, I swim. I play with the people in my life. I can always call a friend and talk about my—we call them [indiscernible] moments, not a very polite word, but the yucky moment that you had. Talk about the big mistake I just made or I think about the things that are funny.

The other day I was on an airplane, and I was on my way to Maui. We landed, and I've never been in Hawaii. There was a little plane with like 20 people or something like that, and we're stuck on the tarmac. People are complaining, and they're whining and whatever. And I, myself, am feeling a little cranky. And then suddenly there was this amazing smell that emanated from the front row. I started laughing and the tears were running down my face. Then the flight attendant who's in that little jump seat facing you started laughing, and pretty soon everyone started laughing. And then there was this old lady, like 86 years old, incredibly beautiful, well-dressed, polished, she stood up, she did the queen's wave, looked at everyone, and she said, "I claim it."

Kym I claim it. I claim it.

Margarita And so when I'm unhappy, I think about other people's cushion one courageous moments. I think about the horrible things that one of the—I'm a public speaker. I have to say sadly the very best standing ovation I've ever gotten was when I had a skirt that was a little short maybe, and I was younger, and I was rocking the look, I have to say, at the time. I went up the steps to climb the podium and I fell, and I showed everyone my beautiful drawers.

Kym Oh.

Margarita And I got up and did an elegant bow, and I got a standing ovation.

Kym Yes, yes.

Margarita Sometimes how we react to our most humiliating moments, luckily I had beautiful, clean drawers on. You know, how your mother says always wear pretty underwear just in case? Well, I listened to my mama.

Kym Well, you know—

Margarita So, I mean—yes?

Kym Well, I was going to say, you just did something. I'm going to start a whole new thing with all of our guests, just to show their vulnerability and their willingness to share. But the first thing you've got to give us still is your most embarrassing moment, or your—you've got to be willing to share that, you know?

Well, listen, I want to thank you so much for being part of this. By the way, what part of the country do you live in? Where are you from?

Margarita I live in Davie, Florida, which I love. It's near Fort Lauderdale, Florida. And if you wouldn't mind, I wanted to make a shout out. Today would have been the anniversary of my father's birthday.

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Kym Oh, wow.

Margarita And his name was Dr. Joseph Gurri, and he co-founded the [indiscernible] Institute. And he always said that the best thing that a man could be is a good man, so he was a very good man.

Kym Oh.

Margarita And he and my mother did a great job of teaching us the red shoe attitude, which is the secret of success, and I think, sir, you have a great red shoe attitude. My parents would have been proud of you and what you're doing with this show.

Kym Oh, that's so nice. I have to tell you that I am compelled, like I want to see you live. I want to see you speaking. You know what I mean? I really do. It's just—

Margarita Well, come on out.

Kym Yes.

Margarita Why don't we do a happiness series of seminars live? Let's make it happen.

- Kym Yes, I'm telling you what, I just know you are only just getting started. There's so much depth to you in your life and what you can share.
- Margarita Oh, thanks.
- Kym I love it. But people can find it on Facebook. You're the Red Shoe Institute on Facebook, and Twitter is redshoeinst, or is that L-I-S-T? Redshoe?
- Margarita Because no one can spell institute, so it's @redshoeinst.
- Kym Oh, I get it, redshoeinst, I-N-S-T.
- Margarita Yes, @redshoeinst. It's been a real pleasure, and I'm glad to add to the contamination of the joy and happiness in the world. Have a great day. I'm just super delighted to have been on the show. Thank you so much.
- Kym Well, thank you for being—you're our final guest for this week, for this month of Wake Up Happy, and we couldn't have wrapped things up in a better way. Thank you so, so much. You have a fabulous day too. And to all my guests, all of our listeners, you know what to do, keep smiling. And it's bye-bye for now.