

EPISODE 180

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:02.6] PF: Welcome to Episode 180 of Live Happy Now. This is your host Paula Felps, thanking you for joining us today. This week, we're talking with Dr. Robert Zimbroski, that's Dr. Z to most of the world. He's the author of the book *Rebuild* and today, he's giving us a fascinating look at the power we have to restore and revitalize our own health.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:23.7] PF: Dr. Z, it is so terrific to have you join us here today. You know, I'm really excited to talk to you because you look at disease in such a different way. So thank you so much for joining us.

[0:00:34.4] RZ: Thank you for having me.

[0:00:36.9] PF: You know, I think it's really important for people to know that you're not just another medical professional who has written a book about disease but this really comes from your own experiences in overcoming disease. I'm wondering if you could talk a little bit about that journey for us?

[0:00:52.6] RZ: You know, it was kind of a crazy time. some several years back, I had an avalanche of stress happened to me with a drug addict stealing from me in a new home and a relationship that kind of fell apart. It all happened at once, at basically the busiest time of my career, getting my certification as a neurologist in my field and it really just, it happened all at once.

The way that I dealt with my stressors in the past, my MO if you will, was just to hold it in. It was just something that I wouldn't express or talk to people about and I remember not sleeping in the gut wrenching stress for hours on end and sleepless nights. I mean, I drank an incredible amount of wine to try to put myself to sleep. I'm ashamed to say that, but nevertheless it didn't work.

After my stress had subsided along with my unhelpful eating habits and my trying to medicate myself, two years later, 18 months later, two years later, I'm looking at a five inch tumor in my chest and so, the cancer was non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, which started me on a path of crisis care medical care to get the cancer eradicated if I could.

So I went through seven months of chemotherapy, four weeks of radiation and then actually became my own patient advocate, if you will — I think they listened to me because I'm a doctor myself — to actually cut my chest open to remove a tumor, a cancerous tumor that they claim to never have done before.

Following that, I dove into the research to then rebuild myself and write my first book, *Rebuild*, based on my experience.

[0:02:31.1] PF: I think what is so fascinating is you give us hope that not only can you come back from a diagnosis, you as your book title says, you can rebuild yourself to be stronger and better and healthier than you were before.

[0:02:44.4] RZ: You know, it's a great point and I think people don't realize, you know, as we tell people or even as I've written in the book that medical doctors and other healthcare professionals will tell people that their health state, if you will, is based on genes, bad luck, you got struck by lightning, or it's genetic and it really leaves people powerless to take control and I think that's one of the most destructive things and something that's a pet peeve of mine when people talk about remission and again, *Rebuild* is not about just a cancer. It's about rebuilding the internal systems that create disease.

But as I think about the word remission, it really does bother me because what does it really mean in the mind's eye of somebody or an imagination as somebody that a disease is coming back. Whether it's cancer, heart disease and the auto immune disease, which really, the psychology or words and what's out there and what people are being told, leaves them powerless and what I wanted to do with the book as I wrote the book was not only provide the five steps to rebuild from disease but really, to empower people so they feel good about the change.

It's, as I also say, a diagnosis isn't your destiny, you choose what you do with that diagnosis. Again, as we lay out the information in the book for people to do that, to create a personal plan for themselves, I really want people to feel good, I want to empower people and sadly enough, it's not done.

[0:04:03.5] PF: So often, you hear people default to, "Well, I'm genetically predisposed to this." I hear that a lot in my own family that things are just going to happen because of our genetics and you give us the power to use that as, "Okay, that's something that I might have to look at but that doesn't mean that's my future."

[0:04:22.2] RZ: Exactly. If somebody has a genetic predisposition for something, maybe you have to step a little left of the curb to watch it. However, the research does say that it's the internal environment of the body of that communicates with your genetics to then dictate whether you get diseased or not.

If you create unhealthful signals to your genetics that they will turn against you. If you honor them and give them good signals, if you will, then they will give you excellent health. That brings to our point before that empowering people, that if you're told that your health issue is genetic, you just go, "Oh what the heck. There's nothing I can do, there's nothing I can say or do or action I can take to influence that at all."

Which is really a sad state of affairs and if you think about it, why don't adolescent girls develop breast cancer? Why don't people develop Parkinson's disease in their teens or 20's. Because it's not really based on genes, it's how long we've abused the internal systems of our body, if you will, that then those genes become reactive creating the disease. It's not genetic per se, you may have a predisposition but you have the control to turn certain genes on and turn them off or regulate them to have excellent health or not.

[0:05:39.5] PF: Your prescription for excellent health is multi-points; we talk about exercise, you talk about nutrition, you talk about the emotional wellbeing and to be honest, the things that are the great prescription for living are things a lot of people don't want to do. So how do you encourage people to you know, live a healthy life and take the steps needed for perfect health when it's not a catastrophe, when they're not facing a horrible diagnosis?

[0:06:10.3] RZ: You know, I think if people realize that whether it's a life-depleting condition or it's a serious disease, there are simple things to take into account on not only reversing what caused those issues but there's three things that I think people need to realize to make a sustainable change or make a decision that becomes sustainable to them.

If someone is dealing with a chronic health issue or disease, they have to believe that where they are, their current state of health is no longer an option. Whether you want to lose weight, whether it's a chronic illness, you've just been diagnosed with cancer, people have to realize that their current state is not attainable or sustainable. The second phase of helping people realize that they have control, again number one, the current state is they have to realize that where they are is no longer sustainable.

What I call the transition state is a phase or a state of a person where they're no longer satisfied where they are but they're not yet where they want to be. Which then gives you the book, *Rebuild*, where I give you the five principles or five steps outline for people to take simple principles of eating well and getting rid of inflammatory foods, exercising with some intensity, managing your stressors or changing your perception of your stressors, certainly getting a good night's sleep and something that I enjoyed writing it about, reducing contamination. Those are really the five big steps, which is about that transition phase.

The future step, if you want these things to stick or hold, you have to see the future, you have to emotionally feel where you want to be. Maybe you want to be with your family, maybe you want to live longer and maybe you want to see your kids go through college and maybe you just don't want to recurrence. I think there is a few emotional things people need to feel in order to use the principles that are outlined, which isn't that difficult. Those steps aren't that difficult.

[0:08:05.8] PF: Well, what I love about it is, as I was reading this, it's kind of like, it's a perfect book for someone who is in great healthy as just wants to stay that way. That's where I think it is such a wonderful tool because all the advice that you're giving is the way that we are meant to live.

[0:08:21.8] RZ: Well, and as you said, it's very simple. Again, as long as you commit to the process and if you get into your mindset that things aren't changeable then it feels like you're

stuck and rebuilding is about rebuilding the emotional state obviously with the transition state and something we call the future state is that emotional thing.

There's really simple steps, I mean, this is simple. To rebuild yourself, okay, maybe it requires a little work, maybe you have to get a little motivated, you have to celebrate the little wins in between but basically the five steps are pretty simple to follow and I think if people commit to doing those, they're going to see some incredible changes in their health.

[0:09:03.0] PF: One thing that's so terrific about your book is that you frame diagnosis as an opportunity for a new beginning. So can you talk about how you're able to look at it that way, and because you make it almost like this exciting new journey that you get to go on because you got handed this really bad news.

[0:09:19.9] RZ: Exactly and in my personal experience, the destiny of my diagnosis became writing a book, having a new perspective, listening to people more attentively and not that I didn't before but it's a different set of ears, knowing what people are suffering from, whether it's a cancer diagnosis, heart disease, autoimmunity, obesity, whatever it may be.

My perspective is a personal perspective and I think saying that a diagnosis isn't your destiny, you choose what you want to do with it. The information is there, whether you're using or reading *Rebuild* to rebuild yourself or not, the data is all out there, the research is there, that if people use certain protocols, they can rebuild themselves and you always see it, you always see someone overcoming something, being victorious over something and doing something in their lives to help those who suffer.

For me, we're filming a documentary called, *Now What?* To help others overcome and answer the questions of now what when they're diagnosed with a problem. I wrote a book, I've changed my practice solely into functional medicine and neurology because I have a passion for helping people with disease. Really, when I say, "a diagnosis is your destiny", is it exciting? I mean, nobody wants to be diagnosed with a disease, we want to be diagnosed with excellent health. But if you are diagnosed with a life depleting condition or a life threatening condition or serious despises, you have the opportunity at this point to make 18 degree turn around.

[0:10:48.9] PF: You really talk about the importance of being able to envision your future. I think this was a really good point that I wanted to talk with you about because that plays such a key role in the ability to heal and why is it so important?

[0:11:03.1] RZ: I think if you don't have a clear motivating picture of where you want to end up and again, if we're talking about health issues or maybe it is a mental health issue or maybe it is a physical issue, if you don't have a clear motivating picture of the future that you want, changes for yourself won't be sustainable. I mean I see countless people and I don't understand it, where patients have obesity they use walkers, they come in with diabetes, they have eczema all over their body, they have bladder dysfunction and they are not willing to make the sacrificial changes, if you will, for excellent health.

It just doesn't make any sense to me if these individuals or if you don't have a clear picture in your mind, mind's eye Paula, of where you want to be and it is not emotionally felt it is not going to stick. People won't stick to the plan. People won't/ They'll just say, "Oh well it is what it is".

[0:11:54.4] PF: You're a fascinating person to talk to because you have so much that you can teach us about this and I wish we could talk all day because well we could but they'd cut us off. So what I do want to know before I let you go are what three things could our listeners do today to start taking charge of their health?

[0:12:13.6] RZ: One, I think people need to realize, as we said before about the emotional states that where you sit or your current state is unsustainable. Then you have to use or figure out a plan that takes you from where you are to the future and if you have a future plan or a goal in mind or perhaps using the principles in a rebuild will get you to where you need to be which is restored and renewed health and number two, that there's –

Again we hear these things quite often but if I can relay an information about food and diet in all of this and nobody really likes to hear this but there's three things or three things people need to eliminate from their diets or the things that I call three food that kill are bread, dairy, and sugar and for the sole reasons that most of the information and the research that I've outlined in the book describes what those do to our body and if people can get rid of those things.

And use the substitutions that are outlined you will see an entirely different human physiology and different biology and the second thing is because I am an exercise buff and again, if we are going with the principles of using the book, *Rebuild to Rebuild Yourself*, exercise is pretty powerful and I think if people incorporate something as simple as high intensity interval training into their daily routine or bake it into their routine at 20 minutes, two or three times a week, it is just a fascinating way to rebuild your body, lose toxic fat, get lean and it is where I get most of my downloads.

And so as far as the three big things, I think people need to eat well and communicate and socialize with others. I think people need to understand where they stand and where they are and it is not sustainable. They need to see themselves in the future and I think if they read *Rebuild* they will be surprised at how quickly they will have their health back.

[0:13:57.2] PF: Excellent, *Rebuild* is such a wonderful book. In just a couple of minutes we are going to come back, we're going to tell our listeners how they can get a free log book to go with your book and how they can subscribe to your newsletter so they can learn more about how to affect some of these changes in their life.

So Dr. Z, thank you so much for joining us today. I think you have given us a lot to think about and I thank you for writing that book because it really is a great roadmap to better health.

[0:14:22.2] RZ: Thank you very much. I appreciate your time. I hope you're rebuilding yourself.

[0:14:26.2] PF: Absolutely.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:14:31.5] PF: That was Dr. Robert Zembroski, author of the book, *Rebuild*. If you go to our website, livehappynow.com, you're linked to a download for a free logbook that you can use as you rebuild your own health. You can also find a link to Dr. Z's free newsletter. Three proven ways to improve energy and end fatigue for good and speaking of fatigue, here is one person we never get tired of talking to. It's Live Happy Editor, Chris Libby, talking about what we can learn in this month's Finding Happiness Column.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:15:00.1] PF: Well Chris, welcome back to the studio. I guess you should welcome me to the studio because you are in the studio and I am calling in so.

[0:15:07.1] CL: Sure, welcome Paula.

[0:15:08.7] PF: Why thank you, Chris. Thanks for having me. So this is cool, I always love sitting down and talking to you because you find the most interesting things for your Finding Happiness column on livehappy.com and I wanted to – well I was going to act like I don't know but I actually do know what you are going to talk about. So why don't you tell us what I think is a really cool study. So why don't you tell us one of the things you are talking about this month?

[0:15:31.3] CL: Sure, today we're going to talk about being a good neighbor. There is a recent study that came out from the University of Buffalo that says having friends living close to you and making regular positive connections in your neighborhood can improve the overall satisfaction with the neighborhood and improve your life satisfaction as well.

[0:15:49.9] PF: So basically, if you like the people you live around or you are connected with them, you are going to like where you live better?

[0:15:55.6] CL: Pretty much and it's good for the neighborhood too, the neighborhood status when you practice good neighborly habits like looking after somebody's house when they are gone or checking their mail for them, lending lawn equipment, just doing nice and it just makes you feel better and feel safer.

[0:16:12.2] PF: You know, that is really interesting and I want to get back to that research because it really backs up the things that we've heard with Dan Beutener and his Blue Zones research where he really talks about the value of community and having this neighborhood where you can share your time and you feel connected and he even talks about the value of sidewalks because that is what leads you to one another.

So what are some of the things that this study is saying? I mean, did it talk about how you make these connections or what was really the focus of it?

[0:16:45.0] CL: Well I mean, the focus is really about just the overall satisfaction of the neighborhood and how even in disadvantaged areas, neighbors who do these good practices, they can change the perceptions of their neighborhood. Because if you have a negative perception of your neighborhood and people become more isolated, you know bad things like crime or just social isolation which is such a huge problem right now and that can have bad effects on your health, mental and physical.

So it is just a great idea just to know your neighbors and get to know the people around you because you know after all, we're social and cultural creatures and we seek that out. We need that stuff in order to feel good.

[0:17:24.7] PF: Yeah because I think you and I had a conversation before where we are talking about it used to be that people hung out on their porch and they met each other and now, people are like going inside and hiding in their house and trying to find and meet up online instead of going out and meeting their neighbors.

[0:17:40.2] CL: Yeah, a perfect example is my wife. In our neighborhood we recently had a block party. I couldn't attend because I had to work and working too much is another discussion for another day but –

[0:17:52.1] PF: Yes, I think we'll have another podcast on that one.

[0:17:54.2] CL: And the kids were with their grandma. So she was by herself and she said, "Well I don't think I'm going to go," and then she decided – well another neighbor met her outside and said, "Are you going to go? You should go," and she felt guilty and she said, "Okay I'll go." So she went and when she got back she said she's really glad that she did because she met so many new people in our neighborhood and she met a girl who was a young teacher who offered to do tutoring or babysitting and so now, there is a connection that was made and there's people helping each other out and so that right there I think is a great example of this study.

[0:18:28.0] PF: And you know, I lived in Cincinnati for a blink of an eye and the street that we lived on was really cool because the people – it is like their own neighborhood watch but it was

really a situation where they would call you. It's like, "Hey did you know that your backdoor was open?" Or "Did you know..." you know, they really watch out for each other and if someone was going on vacation, we had our own Facebook page and they'd say "I'm going to be out of town can somebody please do this. Make sure my papers picked up," and they would and it was really an interesting little community and its own little sociological study that was going on there where we really looked out for each other in a way that I hadn't seen before.

[0:19:06.6] CL: Yeah, essentially your neighbors are your first line of defense when you are not at home. I think just having more – I mean I have done stories and looked at other research where when you have these economically depressed areas and once they are revitalized and people are able to walk around more and people are outside more, people are just out more, then more eyes are able to see and crime goes down, economic values go up. It attracts merchants, all kinds of good things.

[0:19:38.1] PF: Then if say you are living in an area and you are not having that experience. You are not having the neighborly experience. The other people are slamming the doors and staying inside. What is it, like should you be the one that takes initiative and starts? How does this change? Does it start with one? Do you create your own little neighborhood group? What is a great way to shift that, you know?

[0:19:59.3] CL: Yeah, I mean be the change that you want to see I guess. If you live in a neighborhood where people aren't as friendly as you would like them to be, take initiative. You know there is always a next door app, there's always meet ups, you know, recently here in Texas, I don't know about the rest of the country but there was a night out that was scheduled where everybody as supposed to get out and meet their neighbors and stuff like that. It is organized I believe by the city or the local police departments but yeah, just be proactive. Take a lasagna to your neighbor.

[0:20:31.3] PF: And hope they are not gluten free.

[0:20:33.4] CL: Yeah, take a gluten free lasagna, if there is such a thing.

[0:20:37.9] PF: Well this is awesome. So where and when can we read this and other interesting happiness facts?

[0:20:44.4] CL: Yeah, if you like what you heard and you –

[0:20:46.2] PF: And we did.

[0:20:47.3] CL: Yeah, we can read this study and so much more on my blog, Finding Happiness and it will be out in just a few weeks.

[0:20:55.3] PF: So much more.

[0:20:56.5] CL: Yeah, keep checking livehappy.com constantly for it.

[0:21:00.0] PF: Everyday, several times a day.

[0:21:02.2] CL: Yes.

[0:21:03.2] PF: All right, well Chris this was wonderful, great topic, great talking to you.

[0:21:08.4] CL: Yeah, thanks for having me or I should say it's been a pleasure having you.

[0:21:12.9] PF: No I should say thanks for letting me through the phone line.

[0:21:17.0] CL: Yeah.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:21:18.1] PF: That's it for this episode of Live Happy Now. Be sure to visit us at livehappynow.com to learn more about Dr. Z's book, *Rebuild* and if you like what you've heard here today and want to hear more, go to Apple Podcasts or wherever you get your favorite podcasts, search for "Live Happy Now" and subscribe today so you'll never miss an episode.

Well that is all we have time for today, so please join us back here next week and until then, this is Paula Felps reminding you to make every day a happy one.

[END]