

### Tony Robbins: Why we do what we do

0:13 Thank you. I have to tell you I'm both challenged and excited. My excitement is, erm, I  
2 get a chance to give something back. My challenge is: the shortest seminar I usually do is fifty  
hours.

4 0:23 (Laughter)

0:24 I'm not exaggerating. I do weekends — and what I do (I do it more than that obviously),  
6 is coach people — but I'm into immersion, because how did you learn language? You didn't  
learn it by just learning principles, you got in it and you did it so often that it became real.

8 0:36 And the bottom line of why I'm here, besides being a crazy mofo, is that — I'm really in  
a position — I'm not here to motivate you, obviously, you don't need that. And a lot of times,  
10 that's what people think I do, and it's the furthest thing from it. Erm, what happens, though, is  
people say to me, "I don't need any motivation." And I say, "Oh, that's interesting, that's not  
12 what I do." I'm the "why" guy. I want to know why you do what you do.

0:56 What is your motive for action? What is it that drives you in your life today, not ten  
14 years ago, or are you running the same pattern? Because I believe that the invisible force of  
internal drive, activated, is the most important thing in the world. I'm here because I believe  
16 emotion is the force of life. All of us here have great minds. You know, most of us here have  
great minds. Right? I have a lot of fun with the gag. But we all know how to think. With our  
18 minds we can rationalize anything. We can make anything happen. We can, erm —

1:23 I agree with what was described a few days ago, that — this idea that people work in their  
20 self-interest. But we all know that that's bullshit at times. You don't work in your self-interest  
all the time. Because when emotion comes into it, the wiring changes in the way it functions.  
22 And so it's wonderful for us to think intellectually about how the life of the world is, and  
especially those who are very smart — we can play this game in our head, but I really want to  
24 know what's driving you.

1:47 And what I'd like to maybe invite you to do by the end of this talk is explore where you  
26 are today, for two reasons. One: so that you can contribute more. And two: so that hopefully  
we can not just understand other people more, but maybe appreciate them more, and create  
28 the kinds of connections that can stop some of the challenges that we face in our society  
today. They're only going to get magnified by the very technology that's connecting us,  
30 because it's making us intersect. And that intersection doesn't always create a view of  
"everybody now understands everybody, and everybody appreciates everybody."

2:15 So, I've had an obsession basically for 30 years. And that obsession is about what makes  
32 the difference in the quality of people's lives<sup>(1)</sup>? What makes a difference in their  
performance, because that's what I got hired to do — I've got to produce the result now. That's  
34 what I've done for 30 years. I get the phone call<sup>(2)</sup> when the athlete is burning down on  
36 national television, and they<sup>(3)</sup> were ahead by five strokes and now they can't get back on the  
course. And I've got to do something right now; I get the result or nothing matters. I get the  
38 phone call when the child is going to commit suicide; I've got to do something right now.

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40 And in twenty-nine years, I'm very grateful to tell you I've never lost one in twenty-nine years. It doesn't mean I **won't**<sup>(4)</sup> some day, but I haven't **done it**<sup>(5)</sup>. And the reason is an understanding of these human needs that I want to talk to you about.

42 2:52 Erm, so, when I get those calls about performance, that's one thing: how do you make a change? But also, I'm looking to see what is it that's shaping that person's ability to contribute, to do something beyond themselves. So maybe the real question is, you know, I look at life and say there's two master lessons. One is: there's the science of achievement, which almost everybody in this room has mastered to an amazing standard. That's: how do you take the invisible and make it visible, right? How do you take what you're dreaming of and make it happen? Whether it be your business, your contribution to society, money — whatever it is for you — your body, your family.

50 3:23 But the other lesson of life that is rarely mastered is the art of fulfillment. Because science is easy, right? We know the rules, you write the code, you follow those, and you get the results. Once you know the game, you just — you know, you up the ante, don't you? But when **it**<sup>(6)</sup> comes to fulfillment — **that**<sup>(7)</sup>'s an art. And the reason is, it's about appreciation and it's about contribution. You can only feel so much by yourself.

56 3:43 So, I've had an interesting laboratory to try to answer the question of — the real question, which is, what's the difference in somebody's life if you look at somebody like **those people that you've given everything to**<sup>(8)</sup>? Like all the resources they say they need. You gave them not a 100-dollar computer, you gave them the best computer. You gave them love, you gave them joy, you were there to comfort them. And those people very often — and you know some of them, I'm sure — end up the rest of their life with all this love, education, money and background, spending all their life going in and out of rehab. And then you meet people that have been through ultimate pain. Psychologically, sexually, spiritually, emotionally abused — and not always, but often, they become some of the people that contribute the most to society.

64 4:19 So, the question we've got to ask ourselves really is, what is **it**<sup>(9)</sup>? What is it that shapes us? And we live in a therapy culture. Most of us don't do that, but the culture's a therapy culture. And what I mean by that is, the mindset that we are our past. And everybody in this room — you wouldn't be in this room if you bought that theory, but the most of society thinks biography is destiny. The past equals the future. And of course it does if you live there. But what people in this room know and what we have to remind ourselves, though — because you can know something intellectually, you can know what to do and then not use it, not apply it.

72 4:47 So, really we've got to remind ourselves is, decision is the ultimate power. That's what it really is. Now when you ask people, you know, have you failed to achieve something — how many have ever failed to achieve something significant in your life? Say, "Aye."

74 4:58 Audience: Aye.

76 5:00 Thanks for the interaction on a high level there. But if you — if you ask people, why didn't you achieve something? Somebody who's working for you, you know, or a partner, or even yourself. And you failed to achieve a goal. What's the reason people say they failed to achieve? What do they tell you? Don't have the — didn't know enough, didn't have the knowledge, didn't have the [audience: money] money, didn't have the [audience: ?] time, didn't have the [audience: ?] technology. You know, I didn't have the right manager.

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5:24 [Al Gore: Supreme Court.] Didn't have the Supreme Court.

82 5:26 (Laughter) (Applause) (Cheering) (Applause continues)

5:43 And —

84 5:44 (Applause)

5:47 What do all those, including the Supreme Court, have in common?

86 5:50 (Laughter)

5:51 They are a claim to you missing resources, and they may be accurate. You may not have  
88 the money, you may not have the Supreme Court, but that is not the defining factor.

6:01 (Applause) (Laughter)

90 6:07 And you correct me if I'm wrong. The defining factor is never resources; it's  
92 resourcefulness. And what I mean specifically, rather than just some phrase, is if you have  
94 emotion, human emotion, something that I experienced from you day before yesterday at a  
level that is as profound as I've ever experienced [to Al Gore:] and if you'd communicated  
with that emotion I believe you would have beat his ass and won.

6:28 Audience: Yeah! (Applause) (Cheering)

96 6:34 But how easy for me to tell him what he should do.

6:37 (Laughter)

98 6:39 Idiot, Robbins. But I know when we watched the debate, when we watched the debate at  
100 that time, there were emotions that blocked people's ability to get this man's intellect and  
capacity, and the way that it came across to some people that day — because I know people  
102 that wanted to vote in your direction and didn't, and I'm — was upset. But there was emotion  
that was there. How many know what I'm talking about here? Say, "Aye."

7:02 Audience: Aye.

104 7:03 So, emotion is **it**<sup>(10)</sup>. If we get the right emotion, we can get ourselves to do anything. We  
can get through. If you're creative enough, playful enough, fun enough, can you get through  
106 to anybody, yes or no?

7:12 If you don't have the money, but you're creative and determined enough, you find the  
108 way. So **this**<sup>(11)</sup> is the ultimate resource, but this is not the story that people tell us. Right? The  
story people tell us is a bunch of different stories. [...]

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