

EPISODE 624

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:33.1]

FT: You're listening to So Money everyone, welcome to the show, September 11th 2017. It is a day of reflection and it is an important day for all Americans, all humans as we reflect on all the families and all the victims of the September 11th attacks.

Our guest today is probably the best guest I could think of to have on a day like this. It is the one and only Dr. Deepak Chopra. He's the founder of the Chopra foundation and cofounder of the Chopra center for wellbeing. He is a world renowned pioneer in integrative medicine and personal transformation, a prominent figure in the new age movement and he's written multiple books, he's one of the best known and wealthiest figures in alternative medicine.

How did I get this interview, right? Well, my friend Kabir emails me and asks, do I want to meet Deepak Chopra in New York City at his book launch? And of course, I immediately cleared my schedule and emailed him back, YES! I can't remember how many exclamation points. Then, Kabir wrote to me in reply and said, "Do you want to interview him for your podcast while you're here?" And at that point, I nearly choked on my bagel and who is Kabir and how is he such a super power? You might be wondering.

Kabir Segal is a friend and he's a friend of the show and he is the bestselling author of *Coined: The Rich Life Of Money and How Its History Has Shaped Us*. He was on So Money talking about that book as well as his own money journey and that was episode 73 if you're interested. Kabir, as it turns out, is friends with Deepak Chopra and recently, he and Deepak and Paul Avgerinos released a new book called *Home: Where everyone is welcome: Poems and Songs Inspired by American Immigrants*.

It's a collection of about 34 poems, 12 songs, all inspired by a diverse group of immigrants who've made big, huge significant contributions to this country. Yoyo Ma, Audrey Hepburn, Albert Einstein, Deepak Chopra and the poems symbolize the many roads that lead to America

and which we expect will continue to converge to build the highways to our future. So that is the book and that what has prompted this meeting between myself and Deepak and as it turns out, hundreds of other people come to this event, it was a magnificent event, before it happened, I got the chance to sit down in Deepak's office, which is at ABC Carpet in New York and it was very surreal.

We talked about the way you wear money and the way that you spend it and how it reflects your inner most values. We talk about the guilt that we sometimes feel around making money, how that can lead to poverty consciousness and I am going to roll to the interview now, but before I do, I want to apologize because this was a very last minute interview. I had all the right technology, I showed up, I had the questions but sometimes you get really bad ambient noise and you're in New York City and his office is right overlooking Broadway.

So at that nine minute mark, you're going to hear a really annoying fire siren. I just want to apologize for that, I didn't want to interrupt him as he was giving me his explanations and answers, which were so good. And you can still hear him, but it is not without this really annoying siren in the background. So I apologize, I hope you'll understand.

Here is Deepak Chopra.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:04:17.5]

FT: Welcome to So Money Deepak Chopra. This is such an honor, I'm here in your space at ABC Home in New York City. A store where you normally come to shop for home furnishings.

[0:04:30.2]

DC: Look around, see who's been in this room?

[0:04:31.6]

FT: Are you serious?

[0:04:33.0]

DC: From Rosa Parks to Obama, to Bill Clinton, to Dali Lama if you look around.

[0:04:40.9]

FT: You have a very...

[0:04:40.7]

DC: This is a very sacred place and I'll take it over there where we do events and tonight it will be 200 people plus.

[0:04:49.3]

FT: Celebrating your new book called Home with a book of poetry. Tell us about this. It's in collaboration with a friend of mine, Kabir Segal, who wrote *Coined*, wonderful book and you wrote it with Paul — I won't pronounce his name, you can pronounce it for me. How does his last name...

[0:05:04.8]

DC: Avgerinos.

[0:05:05.8]

FT: Avgerinos. It's basically, I understand a book about immigrant stories.

[0:05:11.7]

DC: These are poems inspired by immigrants who changed the face of America. Some very famous and some not that famous. So we have Einstein and Khalil Gibran and Celia Cruz and many interesting people that...

[0:05:32.8]

FT: And Deepak Chopra. You have an interesting immigrant story. I had the privilege of meeting you earlier this summer at Chase. You gave a great keynote about financial wellness and I had a chance to pick your brain a little bit about money and you had a really interesting story about coming to this country for the first time. A really memorable experience and also, your introduction to our money culture here. Can you take us back to that time in your life and what happened?

[0:06:04.9]

DC: I was only 23, I finished my little school, I was asked to come to the United States for advanced training, which was actually an excuse to get cheap labor into community hospitals because, you know, most American doctors were in Vietnam, which was a war that was coming to an end but still that period.

You couldn't leave India without more than \$8 of — I got \$100 dollars from an uncle of mine. 108 is mythologically a suspicious number so I thought I'd do something fun, I went to Paris and I spent it all in one evening at the Moulin Rouge.

[0:06:47.4]

FT: As one should.

[0:06:48.2]

DC: As one should. When I got to the United States I had no money at all and I made a collect call, the hospital sent me a helicopter and picked me up from JFK. I ended up in New Jersey

and I wasn't actually working right away. So I went to my dorm that I was introduced to, I was watching television and I'd never seen TV in my life.

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FT: And you're how old?

[0:07:17.0]

DC: 23, and it was in color, I was enjoying it, the program got interrupted, there had been a shootout at a local bank and these people were being brought to the emergency room where I was going to work. So I had my first episode of the great American...

[0:07:36.0]

FT: Not wasting any time.

[0:07:37.8]

DC: Yeah. America's epidemic panic and anyway, there, pronounced the patient et cetera. Worked for 24 hours and that was pretty good because in 24 hours I became extremely comfortable with trauma, stitching people up, and pronouncing them dead and whatever.

Then, I had time off after 24 hours I went into main street, this little town, Plainfield, New Jersey and there was a shop there with all kinds of televisions in the window so I was looking at them and the salesman came and he said, "Do you like them?"

[0:08:23.7]

FT: You had no money still because this is the next day?

[0:08:25.8]

DC: Yeah, the next day.

[0:08:26.6]

FT: Moulin Rouge, New Jersey, now we're at shopping for television.

[0:08:30.3]

DC: Right, and you said, "You want that?" He said, "Don't you want one of those?" I said, "Yeah," he said, "Why don't you get one?" I said, "I don't have any money." He said, "All you have to do is sign this piece of paper," and you know, it was a loan note or whatever, I had no idea, I signed the piece of paper, took it back to my dorm but there were 20 other television sets. Then I worked another 24 hours and then I went to a Volkswagon Beetle.

[0:08:58.0]

FT: Dealership.

[0:08:58.2]

DC: Dealership and I said, "Can you give me that yellow piece of paper, so I want to buy that automobile," and I actually drove out with one. This great American culture where you spend money that you have learn to buy things that you don't need to impress people that you don't like. Then everybody's stressed.

[0:09:15.9]

FT: Right. Well, so that was your introduction to money, how did it change from there? You must have had an epiphany or realization that this is not the way that you want to live your life. What was that moment or series of moments? Did you have a consciousness about it?

[0:09:32.9]

DC: It was a gradual evolution where I realized, I mean, you're with the money was, so you know that of the \$2.2 trillion dollars that circulates in the world's markets only less than 2% actually provides goods and services and a lot of those goods and services are guns and tobacco and drugs. Very little money actually provides goods and services that I use for, compared to the total amount that circulates the rest is what you guys call derivatives, which is leveraging debt. It's used to make money which is used to make money.

Then you have all these crisis in the stock market up and down, which reflect the emotional turbulence of investors who were stressed and their identity has become money. So I decided earlier on that I would – you know, the way you earn money and the way you spend it, it actually reflects your inner most values. For me then, making money through helping society achieve a better quality of life became the goal.

[0:10:48.7]

FT: I read somewhere that you are not shy to admit that you like to earn money, this is something that sometimes we have a hard time admitting and saying out loud but there should be nothing wrong with actually appreciating money.

[0:11:02.7]

DC: No, if you have guilt about money or making money then you'll be poor for the rest of your life, you know? Then you'll also be jealous about all the people who are making money and you'll be very judgmental. If you are guilty about making money then that assures poverty consciousness.

But abundance consciousness comes from the fact that, you know, you have access to your creativity. If you ask yourself, "What's my passion? What's my purpose? How can I serve? How can I improve the quality of life?" You pursue excellence, then success is a byproduct.

[0:11:43.8]

FT: Your book *Home* is about immigrant stories and I think my parents are immigrants, they have many stories, I think it also formed who I am as their offspring. Even though I didn't go through their journey, I still experienced it through their words and through their way of life and their way of living. I do think that I am the way I am with money because of my parents for better or for worse.

I would love to – I don't know if anyone's ever asked you this but what about your upbringing shape your take on what kind of a relationship you should have with money? What influenced you?

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DC: It's upbringing all the way, especially the upbringing that influenced you in the first three years of life. If your parents were always worried about money, if they are complaining or criticizing or condemning other people for being successful, if they were playing the victim that gets programmed into your consciousness as a result of phenomenon that we call mirror neurons.

You have to ask yourself, "Why do I think like this? Why do I have this limiting beliefs? Are they true? Am I 100% sure if they're true or not? What does holding on to these ideas do to me? Who would I be without these? What's the opposite of this particular thought and why don't I have it?"

If you really want to make money, and feel good about it, then you have to change your consciousness, you have to have abundance consciousness. I know a lot of people whose identity is money and they have lots of money, millions of dollars or hundreds of millions of dollars but they're always thinking about money. It's a cause of concern. So in that sense, they're really poor.

[0:13:38.9]

FT: You defined money for me, define it for our audience. I think it's really fascinating how you put it together.

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DC: Money is a symbol of our state of consciousness. To open yourself to abundance, you have to be grateful for whatever you have, be respectful of what you have because people who don't have that. You have to learn to be quiet and still, you have to exercise and use your unique strengths and talents, you have to have meaning and purpose in your life.

You have to create a network of friends and professionals that have the same ideas as you have because these days, you know, it's not just a lone effort many times. Today we are seeing something that many psychologists called emergence. When you have a lot of people with the same vision, when they bond emotionally and spiritually, when they complement their strengths, when they ask themselves the right questions. If they're open, transparent then emergence happens. Whatever the vision was, it's emergence.

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FT: You said money is just something, it's a human construct.

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DC: It's a symbol, you know? The origins of money are barter. "I will give you a haircut and you can give me a chicken," or whatever. So you know, until somebody decided, "Let's use this symbol to actually define what's a chicken worth and what's a haircut worth, or what's a shoe worth," and suddenly we have this construct called money as we have many other constructs. You know Wall Street is a construct, right? It's just people right now hedging bets, it's a casino.

[0:15:32.9]

FT: Throwing darts, I like to say yeah.

[0:15:35.5]

DC: Throwing darts and it reflects the state of anxiety most of the time. So you see these big huge ups and downs and the wise people like to say, you know, the big investors like Warren Buffett, etcetera, they don't get sucked into the melodrama. They know what business is providing service and has essential strength despite the ups and downs of the market and sooner or later, the average is it does well. In fact, it's a strong company. One of the things I tell investors is look at the –

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FT: You advice investors? You work with investors or?

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DC: No, if they asked me.

[0:16:19.2]

FT: If they ask.

[0:16:19.9]

DC: Yeah, is look at the employee turnover rate in a company. If your employees are turning over very fast, that means they are not fit for you and ultimately, they're not happy. Employee engagement translates directly into customer satisfaction, which translates directly into investor satisfaction.

[0:16:46.9]

FT: You do a lot of work examining biology to explain our actions and reactions and how we choose to live our lives. Is there a biological context for why money is such a source of stress for us?

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DC: You know, it's your problem. It's not — money, by itself is not a source of anxiety. It is your attitude to money and your state of poverty or abundance consciousness. If it becomes a source of stress then it's measurable. You have inflammation in your body and there are inflammatory markers that you can use, cytokines and many other things, that are easily measurable and they reflect your state of ease or stress.

So I think any time money is really concerned and all these thinking about money, they should get their inflammatory markers measured.

[0:17:45.9]

FT: There you go, go see your doctor.

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DC: Yeah because people spend their entire life trying to make money but all the stress remains and then by the time they have made it, they are stressed out and there's inflammation and now they have to spend it all to get healthy again.

[0:18:03.5]

FT: You don't have financial freedom as a pillar of wellbeing. So I want to know where money, freedom and financial health falls on your spectrum?

[0:18:14.4]

DC: There is such a thing as financial security that some people will always have if they have insurance, if they have provided for and provided they get sick and this is something that employees should make sure and businesses should make sure they should have retirement benefits. But after a certain amount, money doesn't add to your happiness. Money adds about 12% to your daily happiness experience. The rest is 40%, 45% is the —

[0:18:47.9]

FT: No matter how much you're making? Or is there's that Princeton study that said if you make

—

[0:18:53.3]

DC: 75, yeah, I think that's a known study now. So you know 75%.

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FT: Twelve percent, I never heard that statistic before.

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DC: 10 to 12%, yeah. The remaining 80% is your attitude to life while using life as a problem or as an opportunity, what's your set point in the brain and then the remaining is the daily choices that you make, things like people make two kinds of choices every day. One is for personal pleasure like shopping or sex or alcohol or entertainment. Those actually bring a lot of joy to a lot of people but their happiness doesn't last long, only for a few days.

The real way to happiness is to find meaning and purpose and engage with social networks to make other people happy. Actually the one thing that stands out more than anything else in terms of longevity and health and wellbeing is do you have happy friends and family?

[0:19:59.5]

FT: You can't buy your friends, you can't buy your relationships.

[0:20:02.4]

DC: Yeah but you can give them attention, appreciation, affection, acceptance and then you're a happy person and if you're happy, you're likely to make wiser choices even when it comes to making money.

[0:20:15.1]

FT: Right. I ask guest on this show to finish this sentence, what is — the one thing I spend my money on that does make my life easier or better is _____.

[0:20:25.4]

DC: Causes that I believe in especially those that validate what my passion is; consciousness and biology.

[0:20:37.3]

FT: You had written that giving is one way to manage your money in a way to lead to happiness.

[0:20:45.0]

DC: Yes, if you give money to things that you believe in you'll be happier. If you spend money on experiences rather than on things, you'll be happier. If you spend money on family and friends and with them having an experience, whether it's going to a movie together or a picnic or Hawaii, you'll be happier. You have something to look forward to, you enjoy the experience and you have good memories. If you buy a new iPhone or a computer or a boat or a jet plane, after six months it's the same.

[0:21:15.6]

FT: Right, you probably even paid it. Just bemoaning the fact that you have to maintain this boat and parking is expensive. I want to be conscious of time, are we okay? Okay just a few more question then.

[0:21:27.3]

DC: And we won't be in a hallway.

[0:21:28.8]

FT: Of course, yeah so let's revisit *Home*, this new book that you've co-authored, would you like to share your excerpts or something that you'd really like?

[0:21:39.0]

DC: Well you can read one poem, which is inspired by Einstein. It is one of my favorites here.

[0:21:45.0]

FT: And Einstein was an immigrant from Germany.

[0:21:48.3]

DC: Yeah and of course, this poem kind of reflects on both the divine and the diabolical aspects of scientific discovery. He came up with the theories of relativity, which opened this new age and also brought mechanized death and atom bombs to us.

[0:22:09.6]

FT: Pros-cons.

[0:22:10.2]

DC: Pros and cons, yeah.

"Space time asked matter to move, matter asked space time to curve. Gravity asked bodies to fall, black holes demanded stars to vanish. Is the moon there when no one is looking? Does the

universe have many histories? Infinity asked universe to expand, cosmos asked consciousness to reflect, mind asked matter to dream, time demanded future to accelerate. When mathematical abstractions obscure doom, is it too late for Einstein's nightmares? Scientists asks atoms to react, presidents asks planes to fly. Nuclear asks bombs to explode, waste demands morality to explain. Teleport me now to another dimension away from this junkyard of infinity."

[0:23:13.3]

FT: I love that this book is coming out now, really symbolic. Very timely for various reasons. One of the lines that really captured me, it said let's see, "Does universe have many histories?" What do you think about that?

[0:23:32.7]

DC: Well that's now a theoretical possibility that yes, depending on the questions. You know the universe doesn't tell us what it is. It only tells us what it is depends on the questions we ask. So this is one of the basic principles of science and it was actually spoken about by Einstein and also Niels Bohr. Depending on the measurements we make and the questions we ask, the universe retrospectively could have more than one history.

This is the principle in quantum physics too, you know, when photons come from the sun and hit your eyes and experience this world seriously, those photons will have taken many pathways all at the same time. This is my model.

[0:24:30.3]

FT: Your heads wants to explode, right? My father is a physicist but I didn't get any of that DNA I don't think and none of those genes. I wish, but it is mind boggling.

[0:24:43.0]

DC: Yeah, you can read the Alice in Wonderland and that classic book had, in many ways, an inkling to the deeper reality.

[0:24:57.7]

FT: What's next for you? What is your next history?

[0:25:00.5]

DC: I just go with the flow. I am writing a book called *Meta Humans: The next phase of human evolution*.

[0:25:05.9]

FT: Tell us about that, we're going to live longer? Should we look forward to this?

[0:25:09.4]

DC: That's only part of it. I think we are also going to have multi-sensory perceptions. So VR and augmented reality and how we extend the range of our experiences, we'll be able to experience the world as experienced by a snake or a dragonfly or an insect.

[0:25:27.5]

FT: Oh my gosh like virtual reality stuff or?

[0:25:30.9]

DC: Yeah, this will all be an extension of your own.

[0:25:33.5]

FT: Are we ready for this?

[0:25:34.5]

DC: Yes, we are ready it is already there. I am using virtual reality to give people the experience of the Buddha in 18 minutes.

[0:25:41.3]

FT: Well, sign me up. That would be great because I'm a busy mom of two. I don't have time to meditate let alone learn the history of Buddha in 18 minutes or?

[0:25:50.5]

DC: No, no the experience of Buddha.

[0:25:51.4]

FT: The experience of Buddha even better.

[0:25:52.7]

DC: Enlightenment under the bhodi tree.

[0:25:55.8]

FT: What's the price on that?

[0:25:57.2]

DC: You just download the program from iTunes and buy a cardboard oculus for \$19 and it's called Finding Your True Self.

[0:26:06.6]

FT: I love it. Okay I have to ask you this question and forgive me if this is like an eye roll question, but I write for Oprah Magazine, I am a big fan of Oprah. I have yet to meet the Oprah Winfrey but when I do have the opportunity to interview somebody who's had a brush or not more than a brush, I mean, you basically had many, many shows with Oprah and she's a big fan of yours.

What was that encounter like? And I know that was very much of the early stages of your career helped you get out there in the main steam, I don't know, anything you want to share about that? I always say well what's it like to meet Oprah?

[0:26:42.0]

DC: Oprah is real. She doesn't come across as a celebrity. She talk like a real person that she interacts with real people, she's authentic and she gets the best out of people when she interviews them. She gets their story out. She is more interested in their story than talking about herself. So that makes for a good journalist.

[0:27:09.5]

FT: Yeah, we love her. Last but not the least, I always have my guest answer this, finish this sentence, okay? I'm Deepak Chopra, I'm So Money because ____.

[0:27:21.9]

DC: I'm Deepak Chopra, I'm So Money because I pursue excellence and ignore success.

[0:27:30.2]

FT: Pursue excellence and ignore success, I love that. Success is for amateurs, isn't it?

[0:27:35.5]

DC: That's right, been there done that.

[0:27:36.8]

FT: Been there, done that, it's connecting the dots.

[0:27:38.9]

DC: It's overrated.

[0:27:39.9]

FT: Blueprint, you can do it, mail it in. But it's much harder to find fulfillment and take it to the next level. How do we get there? Is there an easy shortcut?

[0:27:52.2]

DC: Make that your mantra. Pursue it.

[0:27:55.2]

FT: Make it your mantra. All right, thank you so much for your time and congratulations on your new book.

[0:28:00.0]

DC: Thank you for doing this. Thank you so much.

[END]