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Week 45

Randy Robison & Blynda Lane

Dr. Daniel Amen

“Think Better, Feel Better”

MALE ANNOUNCER: The following program is sponsored by friends of Life Outreach International.

DANIEL AMEN: We need to discipline our minds. So you ultimately are your habits, all of us, you know, from what we eat and how we sleep, how we think. When you take thoughts captive, when you do the process of memorizing Scripture, you're doing neuroplasticity in a positive way.

ANNOUNCER: Dr. Daniel Amen helps you change your brain every day, next.

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RANDY ROBISON: Welcome to "Life Today", I'm Randy Robison.

RANDY: This is Blynda Lane.

BLYNDA LANE: Hello, Randy.

RANDY: We are back here again because on another program on "Life Today", which you can catch all the programs at lifetoday.org, as well as on our app to stream, we were talking with Dr. Daniel Amen about "Change Your Brain Every Day", and some other things that he's got going on. And we're just loaded with questions.

BLYNDA: I know if you saw that episode, you were like, "I want more," that's how we felt, we were like, "We have to have more," it was so good.

RANDY: So we got it.

BLYNDA: We did, he stayed another episode. Thank you so much for staying with us.

DANIEL: It's such a pleasure.

RANDY: So one of the big questions that we did not get to on the last program is this scriptural idea-- and by the way, I love when science catches up with Scripture, right, because it's like, God knew. But this idea of taking every thought captive, is that just--is that an analogy for something spiritual, or is there more to it than maybe we realize?

DANIEL: So in the last program we talked about the WHOLE-4: biological, psychological, social, spiritual. Taking each thought captive actually is all of that. Negativity is bad for your brain.

I published a study on 2000 people, showing if you tend to be negative, you have low activity, low blood flow in very important areas of your brain. Believing every stupid thing you think gives your mind trouble, makes it more anxious, more depressed. It ruins your relationships if you don't know how to question the noise, the nonsense that goes through your head, and it separates you from God.

And the antidote is 2 Corinthians 10:5, "Take each thought captive." So whenever you feel sad, mad, nervous, or out of control, just write down what you're thinking and then ask yourself, Philippians 4:8, "Think on whatever is true." Is that thought true?

Or Romans 12:2, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Then, you can test that thought. Does it fit God's good, pleasing, and perfect will?

And it's like, "Well, what's God's will?" John 10:10, "The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy." Is this a thought that kills, steals, or destroys me or my relationships?

Or, Jesus said, "I have come to give you life, and give it to you abundantly." So where does that thought fit?

And there's nowhere in school we're teaching kids to manage their mind. So now, with 57% of young girls being persistently sad, it's because they believe the noise and have never learned how to take each thought captive.

RANDY: Okay, the rest of that Scripture is "to the obedience of Christ," which is why you're talking about all these Scriptures, right? Is it even possible to do that without knowing what Jesus said, what the Scriptures say, what is true, because, I mean, there's your age-old question, "What is truth," right? Can we do this outside of a scriptural foundation?

DANIEL: Well, you can, but it's not nearly as effective, right? If you think you're just here by random chance because of an explosion that happened a long time ago and none of this has meaning, you're much more likely to be depressed. But when you believe in a loving God who is your Father, that you are part of a community, it's easier to do.

But even those of us who believe, we need to discipline our minds. We need to take these thoughts captive, and then direct it. So the second part of Philippians 4:8, "Think on whatever is true, noble, excellent, worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things," but if you have social media on your phone, you are focusing on what makes you mad, on what makes you anxious, on what makes you afraid, which is why Meta just got hit with a $17 billion penalty from the attorney generals in the United States, because it's toxic.

They created algorithms to upset you, because if they upset you, they keep you on longer and they make more money from you. This is why in the Lord's Prayer, the last verse is, "Deliver us from the evil one," and I think discernment is so important. What you allow in your brain is often gonna determine how you feel and how you act.

BLYNDA: You talked about noise, and I know that that's a big thing, turning off the noise, and then you talked about writing down. So for me, there's a wiring that happens, if I'm gonna memorize Scripture, I have to write it, I have to speak it, I have to then kind of come up with a little-- you know, I take the first letter of each one, like, I have a process for me to memorize, 'cause I don't memorize things as easily, so I have a process. Is there a rewiring that happens when I actually take a pen and write some things down, and then look at the Scripture and then write that down?

Like, there's a process, because you said a whole bunch of things, you said, "Write it, look at the Scriptures, look at the other Scriptures." Is what's happening at that time, is my brain rewiring when I'm doing those things? Why is that important?

DANIEL: So let's talk about neuroplasticity. So you've probably heard of neuroplasticity, which is your brain is constantly changing. But neuroplasticity isn't a good thing, it's just a thing.

If you constantly focus on that person that hurt you, you are wiring your brain for hurt and negativity. When you take thoughts captive, when you do the process of memorizing Scripture, you're doing neuroplasticity in a positive way. So you ultimately are your habits, all of us, you know, from what we eat and how we sleep, how we think.

And so many people, because they don't have any ability to manage their mind, they drink to shut it off, or they use marijuana to shut it off, or they use pornography or other things that are not helpful. What I want people to do is go into their mind, go into their thoughts, and then just question them. And the mother thought that's driving society now is, "I'm not enough," because of social media.

"I'm not enough." Well, I've seen some of the world's most famous people who have 250 million followers and they go, "I'm not enough." And I'm like, "If you're not enough, who's going to be enough?"

But when you flip it, so in the book, "Change Your Brain Every Day", I talk about a process. So whenever you feel sad, mad, nervous, or out of control, write it out. Is it true?

Is it absolutely true? How does that thought make me feel? How would I feel if I didn't have the thought?

And then take the original thought, "I'm not enough," and just turn it to the opposite, "I am enough." And meditate on that. "Jesus came to die for me."

"I am enough, as a child in his family." And that's where you meditate. Rather, if you don't question it, your brain spins on "I'm not enough," and it just drives you to feel bad.

RANDY: So the Scripture you reference, you know, "noble, good, pure, true, think on these things," we can take that as sort of a nice little line, but--.

DANIEL: It's direction.

RANDY: It's direction. Okay, so part of what you do is you look at the organ of the brain to see changes, right? When we think on these things, are you seeing a physical change in the brain?

DANIEL: Yes, actually, in the book there's a study I did with Noelle Nelson, who's a psychologist, and we scanned her brain when she thought about all the things she loved, and then we scanned her brain when she thought of all the things she was afraid of, and so negativity dropped the activity in her brain in very important parts, parts that make her irritable and parts that don't allow her to inhibit her behavior. And you know, often when I lecture, I go, "How many people are married?" And like half the audience raises their hand, and I'm like, "Is it helpful for you to say everything you think in your marriage?"

And it's like, "No, no, no, no, no." But if your brain's not right, those things get out.

You don't take those thoughts captive, they get out and they hurt other people. Better brain, better marriage.

BLYNDA: It's like we talk about leaky gut, it's like we can have leaky brain, where we're saying things we shouldn't say.

RANDY: I know that if I have not slept well, especially for a few nights in a row, I have to tell myself, "Don't say everything that pops into your head," because one of your good brain habits is proper sleep, and for me, when I don't get it, I can not control my tongue.

DANIEL: Well, because your frontal lobe, so the front third of your brain, it's the largest part of the human brain, 30%, focus, forethought, judgment, impulse control, empathy, learning from the mistakes you make. You're just much more likely to not be intentional. Because you never wanna hurt someone, but all of us have weird, crazy, stupid, sexual, violent thoughts that nobody should ever hear.

The brain is a sneaky organ. But when you take those thoughts captive and you just get a thought, rather than attach to it, go, "Oh, it's sort of like the weather.

And if I just wait a few minutes, I'm gonna be fine." And so learning to manage your mind in the WHOLE-4, getting your brain healthy, your mind positive and loving, your relationships, notice what you like more than what you don't, and your soul, living the reason God put you on earth, life is so much better.

RANDY: So much better.

BLYNDA: So much better. So, I've always kind of grown up hearing, "Oh, we only use a very small portion of our brain. There's so much that's untapped."

Have you seen when people get their brain healthy, does it actually unlock more usage, more of the brain? Like, is there an intellect, even, that changes? Like, how is it affected in that way, is there any?

DANIEL: Well, I like a term called brain reserve, the extra tissue we have to deal with whatever stress comes our way. Think of it this way: Take two soldiers, put them in a tank, expose them to a blast, same angles, everything's the same. One of them walks away unharmed, the other one's permanently disabled, why?

It's the brain they brought into the accident. And so, if we all work to keep our brain healthy, well, aging is not gonna be nearly as bad.

If we end up getting divorced, it's not gonna be nearly as bad, even though it's bad, right? We're able to deal with whatever life comes our way.

BLYNDA: So it really does provide a buffer, almost, wow.

RANDY: Interesting, all right, you cover, in the book, so many healthy brain habits, and we've touched on several of them in a couple of programs. What are some of the maybe more obvious ones that we don't necessarily think of where you go, look, you want a better brain, you know, you want a healthy thing you can do, what are some of the maybe easy ones I could start, like, right now?

DANIEL: Saunas, so people who take the most saunas have the lowest risk of Alzheimer's disease. Another thing you can do is scan all of your personal products, like there are websites or apps like "Think Dirty". It allows you to scan them, and it'll tell you on a scale of 0 to 10 how quickly they're killing you.

So whatever goes in your body becomes your body, but whatever you put on your body affects your body. So for example, I shaved with Barbasol for 50 years, and on a scale of 0 to 10, 0 is live a long time, 10 is die early, it's a 9. And so now I shave with something called Kiss My Face, it's a 2, it's good for me.

Just simple things, from your shampoo to your makeup to your underarm deodorant. Read the ingredients, like we read ingredients on food labels. We should do that on product labels.

So saunas, not putting toxic things on your body, support the organs, detoxification, drink more water, which you mentioned. Eat more fiber, to flush things out through your gut, sweat, with exercise, and hold the alcohol.

Alcohol--the American Cancer Society came out against any alcohol, because any alcohol is associated with an increased risk of eight different cancers. And it's just not good for you, and don't believe the lie marijuana is innocuous, because it's not.

RANDY: It's pretty bad, actually, from what I've looked at, and I've always avoided that, but I actually don't like wine, so I don't drink wine, but I've seen health studies that say wine's good for you, so, I mean, you see a health study, coffee is good for you, coffee is bad for you.

DANIEL: But who sponsored this study? Brand new study out this week, that cancer deaths from alcohol since 1990 to now have doubled. And it was about 1990 that the messaging came out, "Alcohol is a health food."

"You should have," you know, "one or two glasses of wine a day." But anything that makes you wake up the next day and ask, "What happened last night," is not good for your brain.

RANDY: I get that, but yeah.

BLYNDA: I have a question about the food groups. So right now I feel like it's a lot of talk about high protein, everybody's eating high protein, but is there a food group that isn't good?

You know, it's high protein, but now we know we need fats. Oh, but let's stay away from the carbs, but you need your fruits and vegetables, so have natural carbs, like, how--.

DANIEL: So there are a lot of things most of us agree on. Sugar is not your friend. It's pro-inflammatory and inflammation, in BRIGHT MINDS, that's the I, the first I is inflammation.

It underlies a lot of chronic illness. So I would kill the sugar and the foods that quickly turn to sugar: bread, pasta, potatoes, fruit juice.

RANDY: Alcohol.

DANIEL: Alcohol. Colorful fruits and vegetables, more vegetables than fruit, high-quality protein and healthy fat like avocados, nuts and seeds, healthy oils. I think most of us agree, that works.

For some people, ketogenic diet, where you're basically getting rid of all the carbs, it can stabilize, some people have pretty severe mental illness. I think that's interesting, but it's not a sustainable diet for most people. And we're creatures of habit.

I tell my patients, "You only have to find 20 different meals, 20, that's it, that you love, that love you back," because you're in a relationship with food. You know, people go, "I love donuts," well, donuts don't even know your name, right?

RANDY: I hope tacos love me as much as I love them.

BLYNDA: Same, that's actually a question I feel like all the women out there are like, what about-- just, is there, though-- can the brain recover, if I'm realistic about my life, that I might have my 20 great meals, but I'm gonna have a birthday, I'm gonna have a Christmas, I'm gonna have a-- I'm gonna go on vacation. And there's going to be desserts, and there's gonna be--is there still room for those kinds of things to still have good brain health?

DANIEL: Yes, until you love yourself more. The more you love yourself, right? Because people go, "Oh, well, everything in moderation," which is the gateway thought to hell, because as soon as you say that, it means you're gonna cheat.

Drew Carey lost a whole bunch of weight, and he said something that was just brilliant. "Eating crappy food isn't a reward, it's a punishment." Notice how you feel when you eat--.

RANDY: Wow, you're changing the way I think about food and changing my brain right there.

BLYNDA: So this is like how a father kind of disciplines a child in the right way, this is how I feel. You're just very gently saying, "You are crazy, you're not on the right track here," but you're gonna--.

RANDY: Okay, I think what he was trying to say is, "You know what, if you would change your thoughts and change your brain, you would actually be healthier."

BLYNDA: And I'd feel so good I wouldn't want to go to any of those things.

DANIEL: Well, you begin to see the enemy for what it really is. It's like, "I'll have a little," but a little then becomes a habit, and a little is every day.

RANDY: All right, well, you've changed my brain just in a couple of programs.

BLYNDA: Just in two programs.

RANDY: I just gotta do it every day, right? Okay, we want this for you as well. You can change your brain, and there's so much positive on the other side of it.

What I would like to do is, one, send you this book if you request it today, but I would like to invite you in to change a situation that really needs changing, and that's where people don't, not just have the right foods, they don't oftentimes have any food. And so, in our Mission Feeding program, we invite viewers like you to come alongside of us to make it possible.

I'm asking you to consider that today. Watch this.

ANNOUNCER: This is a clinic for mothers whose children are suffering from the effects of malnutrition. Kiera Pretorius, daughter of Isak Pretorius, is seeing for the first time Angolan children struggling to survive the consequences of not having enough food to keep them alive.

ISAK PRETORIUS: So you can see the other signs, I mean, you can see how his ribs are just sticking out. You see how--I mean, look how little his arms are. I mean, his arms are like the size of my thumb, you know?

KIERA PRETORIUS: And it's just skin, there's no muscle.

ISAK: No, it's just skin and bone really, because that's the state at which its nutrition is at. It's so weak and so malnourished that literally the body starts to shut down.

KIERA: Do you think he'll recover?

ISAK: Chances are that he will survive, that we will be able to save his life, but there are also many children in this state that don't leave clinics like this. Just do it. It's okay to cry, it's okay.

KIERA: I've grown up knowing many of these stories and seeing the photos and hearing, yeah, the heart-wrenching stories of young mothers with their young children that want to do their best for them, but genuinely just don't have the resources. Every time I see or hear these stories and being here today, it affects me, and it deeply hurts my heart, so I'm asking you to not let it become normal to you. Don't let it become something you become immune to.

ISAK: I ask you to hear that appeal from a 19-year-old girl who knows what happens if you look away, who knows what happens when this starts to become normal, when we shut our hearts down, when we try to think through this with our heads instead of just listening to our hearts. And so I'm asking you today to listen to your heart, listen to the heart of Kiera, listen to my heart, listen to your heart, because our heart's cry is the same as this mother's, and I believe yours is too. And that is to do everything that we can do to save this little boy, everything that we can do to give this mother what she needs for her child.

RANDY: It's hard to watch.

BLYNDA: It's very hard to watch, and actually, Randy, I recently got to walk in that malnutrition clinic, the same one that Kiera was at, and I got to see these mothers holding on to the children who look like it's their last breath. And it's so painful to watch those stories, and now I've been there and I've seen it.

And yet, Isak was saying our heart becomes the heart of the mother, but I believe our heart becomes God's heart. He has a heart for these children to be saved, to be freed, to live full, and when I capture what God's heart is, Randy, I want to do what I can to be the hands and feet of Jesus, because I know it's reflective of his love for them.

RANDY: Yeah, yeah, well said. Let me tell you how we're doing that right now. The Mission Feeding program is such a beautiful program, and it's one that has been proven for many years now.

The only reason Isak would say that odds are this child will make it is because Mission Feeding was there that day, and there are places where Mission Feeding is working, but there are also places where it does not exist, and we want to take it there. We want you to be a part of taking it there. How does that look?

Let me tell you real quick. On average, it's about 11 cents per meal to deliver that life-giving bowl of--we call it soup, it's thicker, there's more to it than that, it's vitamin-enriched. That nourishment, is what it is, is given to a child every day for about 11 cents per meal.

That means your gift of $44 today would provide 400 meals. Imagine, when one meal will save a life, what 400 would do. Some of you could give $77 to provide 700 meals.

$110 would provide 1000 meals. You can do so much. Some of you could give $1100.

That would actually help provide 10,000 meals. Our goal right now is to provide 20 million meals, because there are that many children that need a meal not just once, but every day. Will you join Mission Feeding right now?

Will you be that hope for a mother, that nourishment for a child, that expression of God, his heart? I hope you'll go online, go to the phone, make the best gift that you can.

ANNOUNCER: This holiday season, many families will gather around tables filled with food, but for mothers in impoverished communities, simply finding enough food to feed their children can be a daily struggle. Through Life's Christmas Meals Blessing, your generosity can help provide 20 million nutritious meals for hungry children. One meal, one child, and one precious life at a time.

Eleven cents, that's all it takes to provide a life-saving, nourishing meal. Your gift of $44 today can help provide 400 meals, $77 will provide 700 meals, and $110 will help provide 1000 meals for children in desperate need. And with any gift, you may request James Robison's final book, "A Life Proclaiming Freedom", as a thank-you for your support.

Discover the freedom James found in Jesus and how you can experience it too. With your gift of $110 or more, request the "Fruitful and Flourishing" bundle, a beautiful collection of daily encouragement to remind you of God's faithful care and his promise of guidance from Isaiah chapter 58, verse 11.

Finally, with your gift of $1100 or more, you will help provide 10,000 meals for children in need, and can request Life's beautiful bronze sculpture, "The Good Shepherd". So please call, write, or make your gift online today.

RANDY: Please do go online, make the best gift you can, go to the phone, whatever, just be a part of changing someone's life for the better. And I hope these programs have changed us for the better, as well as everyone else.

BLYNDA: They have, even though they've been convicting, they've been so helpful, so thank you, Dr. Amen, for helping us and for writing this book so others can be helped.

DANIEL: I'm deeply honored.

RANDY: amenclinics.com?

DANIEL: amenclinics.com, I have 11 clinics around the United States. They can also learn about our WHOLE-4 program at amenwhole4.com.

RANDY: Wonderful, thanks for being with us. We appreciate you, and we appreciate all of you watching. Please come back, we'll see you again next time on "Life Today".

♪♪♪

♪Oh, you can't hear me cry ♪

♪See my dreams all die ♪

♪From where you're standing ♪

♪On your own ♪

♪It's so quiet here ♪

♪And I feel so cold ♪

♪This house no longer ♪

♪Feels like home ♪

♪♪♪

ANDREW FARLEY: He's taken the law, he's not watering it down so that you'll see, "Whoa, no wonder I need grace instead.

ANNOUNCER: Next week.

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