

A BETTER LIFE WITH RACHEL ROFÉ

A CONVERSATION WITH
**WES
CHAPMAN**

IF YOU HAVE A
CHOICE, CHOOSE
A BETTER LIFE.

Wes Chapman

[0:00] [music]

Rachel Rofe: [0:02] My name is Rachel Rofe. I created this show, because I wanted to help you see that if you have a choice, you can choose a better life.

[0:09] If you're listening to this podcast, you're in a pretty fortunate position. You have free will, ability to connect to the Internet and access to all kinds of new education. This podcast is meant to help you make the most of your good fortune. We talk with all kinds of people here from all walks of life, because I want you to see that no matter what your situation, there's always a way to create a life that you're proud of.

[0:31] Hello, everyone. Today, we're here with Wes Chapman. Wes has been an entrepreneur since the age of eight-years-old and was self-sufficient by the age of 16. Having amazing successes and epic failures, Wes has learned the most important part of being an entrepreneur is to hold your head up high in your failures and stay humble in your successes.

[0:49] Wes started consulting CEOs of Fortune 500 companies at the age of 19. He's had his work featured in over 350 different industries and been a part of over 5,000 brands. Wes has now changed his direction in life and founded a human project, a for-purpose nonprofit 501c3, which a mission to create a community of empowered youth.

[1:12] Wes' experience in life and his skills in the entrepreneurial community have prepared him for his greatest life mission. I actually met Wes a few days ago when he reached out via email and told me he thought that he had a lot of value to bring to "A Better Life" listeners. I googled him and I found some extremely impressive things.

[1:29] For example, on one page he wrote that he had been abandoned at age one by his father, then at 6.5 by his mother, and tried to commit suicide 12 times before his 16th birthday. Having gone through everything that he has, he says his mission now is to eliminate the words broken, worthless, and victim from the children's

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vocabulary that he reaches.

[1:50] Although, I don't know Wes too well yet, I just know that he has a lot of great things to say, and I trust that this is going to be a really inspirational and enlightening interview. Wes, thank you so much for being here.

Wes Chapman: [2:00] Thank you. I feel honored to be on your program and humbled at some of the things you said, thank you very much for that beautiful intro.

Rachel: [2:07] My pleasure. The intention behind "A Better Life" is something that I think that you really stand for, too, and it's just to show people that if they have a choice, that they can choose a better life, and I know that you help people that don't have choices as much. In this spirit, can you just take a minute to share with us just some of the things that you're most proud of in your life?

Wes: [2:25] I have two beautiful children, I think that that is the first and foremost.

[2:29] If someone were to ask me what's my greatest accomplishment, it's them and seeing them go through life and learn from both my positive and negative choices. I believe that we're all, so many times, we look at our negativity or our mistakes or the things that we did wrong in life and say, "Oh, I don't want anyone to know about those."

[2:47] Those are learning points for ourselves and, more importantly, those are learning moments for our community. My greatest accomplishment in life is my children. Secondly, I would say that my greatest accomplishment is actually really in its infancy.

[3:00] Building [A HUMAN Project](#), our for-purpose mission, our for-purpose organization, that is looking to really reach out to youth who are in situations where they may think they don't have control, and actually, show them how they can truly empower themselves and, thus, build a community around themselves to enable them to deal with life.

[3:20] Some of the stuff that you mentioned about my past, when

people look at my story, and everybody has a story, many times my story is just a drop in the bucket compared to others. All of us have stories, and all of us react to our situations differently. It doesn't really matter how crazy your life was or how crazy that moment in your childhood was or what you've gone through, it affects you.

[3:43] How it affects you is the same in so many psychological ways. I won't get too geeky on people. In all reality, the brain doesn't necessarily understand the difference between a slap and a punch. It's still physical pain. The body registers it as pain and physical, but your emotional side of that abuse is still there.

[4:01] Finally, after about 17 years of me teaching this to audiences, science has finally caught up. That is, we look at abuse. We tend to put levels on it. We say, "OK, you were sexually abused. You were physically abused. You were emotionally abused, that's a one, two, and a three." If you're at a three, wow, your life was horrible.

[4:21] What about the person that was at a one? Does that mean that their tragedy, their thing they went through, wasn't just as daunting on their personality, on who they are? Science has finally come and said that the brain calculates the same type of...if you were sexually abused, your brain registers that and calculates it very similar to if you were neglected or if you're not loved.

[4:42] The chemicals, the way everything works in the brain, is very, very similar. My greatest accomplishment is really in the works and that is teaching people this and teaching people that, out of the 51 million children in this country that are abused or neglected on a daily basis, there's hope, that there's a way for them to break this cycle, the cycle of dysfunction, the cycle of hopelessness, the cycle that they're in.

[5:06] There's a way for them to break it. It doesn't require mentorship. It doesn't require programs. It doesn't require anything very complicated. It simply requires a community surrounding them and them being the youth in a way that if something happens, if I get hit by a bus or something happens to our other volunteers in our organization, the community still stays strong by surrounding each individual with other individuals who are in similar situations, who can

give similar life stories.

[5:34] I hope didn't roll around in circles there, but kind of give you some things.

Rachel: [5:39] Not at all, that was really helpful just to hear more about it, and I love how you mentioned how different things, they register to different people.

[5:46] I mentioned actually in another podcast about how I was in a mastermind of people and we were all talking about just things that happened to us from our childhood. I resonated with you because I had a crazy childhood, too.

[5:58] But what I noticed, one of the women there, she started crying and she felt like she had no right to be upset about anything that happened in her childhood, because hers was like, she said nothing compared to what mine...

[6:10] And it was like, "No, that's not true!" Like you said, it really depends, the different levels compared to different people's personality, and even not just the personality, but anything. It can register as really traumatic for people, I love that you say that. That actually makes me curious. The people that you work with, then, do you work with just all children? You don't have specific...

Wes: [6:31] We haven't said, "OK, this particular abuse." Because to your point, what we were just talking about, I call it the Elmo effect. Elmo the doll. I call it the Elmo effect, and let me explain that. There can be something in somebody's childhood, somebody's past, and it may not even be their childhood. It may have been when they were 25-years-old, who knows?

[6:51] There can be that one or two or three events that happened that maybe to the world look very silly. Maybe they weren't, they're not something like traumatic like we hear. Maybe something the world would shun away and say, "Come on, grow up, get a life," those kinds of things.

[7:07] But to that person, it was something very, very traumatic, and why I call it the Elmo effect is it can literally be something as simple

as maybe you were six-years-old, seven years old and you had a birthday party and you really, really, really wanted an Elmo doll, and you psyched yourself up for it, you really thought you were going to get one, and everything was just going to happen. Then, your birthday comes and goes and you don't get the Elmo doll.

[7:30] Then, maybe there's no communication with your parents, with the people around you explaining why you didn't get the Elmo doll, and maybe you translate that in a way of neglect and you don't feel good and you feel like you weren't loved and all these things, and then you carry that.

[7:43] It sounds so ridiculous and it sounds so simple, but I promise you, I've seen it with thousands and thousands of people where you identify some of these issues. Like I said, it's not this way with everyone, but you identify some of these issues, some of these small things, and they're able just to release them and just let them go.

[8:00] And they open up and it's like, "Wow, I've been carrying that around?" and it becomes almost comical to them and they just let it go, and it doesn't really matter. If it's the Elmo doll then they're like, "Oh my gosh, I can't believe I let that hold me back all these years."

[8:13] Or if it's something as severe as child abuse they go, "Wow, I can't believe that I let that abuser who abused me for two or three years or two or three summers control my life for 20 or 30 years." It doesn't really matter. The brain is a weird little computer that doesn't really care about what the level of trauma is, but if it affects us in the trauma way, it's something that creates some malfunctions. But the superhighways aren't working as well.

[8:37] That's to that point, which I really want to hammer in with the audience. Because I agree exactly with what you said. Too many people don't communicate their feelings or their fears or their pain, because somebody else like me or you, or whoever else gets up on a stage and says, "Oh, listen to my life, and listen to how horrible it was," and then they go, "Wow, I have nothing to complain about. I just need to be quiet and just sit here and deal with my own stuff," and that's not healthy.

[9:01] To your second point about the youth, our target audience, our

"sweet spot" is between the ages of 11 and 14. That's where we feel we can have the biggest impact, because that's that age group that's coming out of being a child and going into being a young adult.

[9:18] There's a lot of social things that happen in that point. You're going into high school, you're leaving middle school, you're leaving grade school. You're leaving some of the things behind, but you're still not...maybe you haven't made all those decisions like teen pregnancy or massive drug addictions or anything like that, there's still time to help you re-energize your life and really move you forward.

[9:38] But with that said, we work with youth on both sides of that spectrum. As far as the psychological target, we're looking and we're attracting youth that are in hopeless situations, broken homes, father's an alcoholic, maybe he isn't around very much. Maybe mom has to work two jobs just to keep the family afloat.

[9:57] We have everything from homeless youth, youth that just got out of juvenile detention, youth living in two or three different homes, because of step-parents, and because of this and that. It's really just the youth that don't have that stability and are really living a more dysfunctional lifestyle.

Rachel: [10:12] You mentioned the Elmo effect, which I think is really a great point. I'm curious, for people who are listening, if they have children or children in their life, is there a way that they could help in advance before this Elmo effect accumulates?

Wes: [10:27] There are really simple ways in life to have a good life.

[10:30] As human beings, we want everything to be complicated, because it really gives us that internal pleasure, that, "Aha, we solved the problem," and it was so complicated. If you look at Thomas Edison or Albert Einstein, or whoever else was a great individual on the planet, they simplify things, and that's how they found solutions.

[10:47] The brain is no different and this family communication is where it starts. I don't care if you're a single mother, if you've got mother and father. I really don't care what that situation is. These things can be prevented very easily by talking to your child and really

listening. What's the true definition of communication? Listening, it's not talking.

[11:07] Really, listen to your child's fears, their concerns, set boundaries. Again, some people will be like, "Oh my gosh, if I give my child everything I want...." No, that's what it's about. It's simply about listening to the child's fears, listening to their feelings.

[11:22] As "child issues" they may be, to them it's a reality. To them, that is their life, that's their reality, and being heard teaches them that when they have feelings, when they have these emotions, they can talk about them. Once you talk about anything, I mean, just as an adult sit around and think about how amazing it is to talk to a friend when you had a bad day, or how amazing you feel after you talk to a counselor, or whatever it is.

[11:45] And we pay millions of dollars, billion-industry industry right now, the self-help world. We spend billions of dollars as an adult population to feel better and really all we're wanting to do is be heard. If you can teach that to your child at a very young age, that, "Hey, you didn't get the Elmo doll? Well, let me explain to you why."

[12:03] Don't sugarcoat things. I think that as parents we try to protect our children too much, and sometimes you need to say, "Hey, the reason we couldn't get the Elmo doll was, because I couldn't make it to the store in time for your birthday and it didn't happen." Or, "Hey, we're struggling financially. I'm trying to give you the best that I can. I really do love you. I really do care about you."

[12:22] Of course, keep boundaries, again, but really start that communication pattern. That's going to help them throughout their entire life so that they know that they can communicate, and especially young daughters.

[12:32] They know they can communicate their feelings and their emotions, and so, they don't get into situations where maybe they get a boyfriend and they've got something going on and they're trying to prove to that boyfriend that they love them, and you know where I'm going with this, and they make wrong mistakes.

[12:45] Same thing with men. Teach them that, hey, it's OK to have

feelings, it's OK to cry, it's OK to...you can still be a man by expressing your feelings and who you are. Really simplified. It's just communication and just listening.

Rachel: [12:58] As you say that I was thinking about my best friends, two things popped up in my mind.

[13:03] First of all, my best friend is one of the only people, I think actually maybe the only person I've ever met who when you talk to her about her patents, she has absolutely no baggage, no complaints. She's just super in love with her parents.

[13:14] [laughter]

Rachel: [13:16] I remember I went to visit her childhood house with her and we found this letter that her father had written her.

[13:22] Basically, she was like, I don't know, junior high and she had wanted to model. Her father, they wouldn't let her model. They said, "No way."

[13:30] But we found this letter where, basically, he wrote her a letter about why he wasn't letting her do it. It was like, "I love you very much. Here's the reasons why we don't you to do it. Hope you're not upset, but here's the thing." I was just so impressed and blown away to just see that she had her feelings acknowledged. That matters so much.

Wes: [13:50] It does, and the problems that we're seeing is just that, and this isn't something that's happened over five years or 10 years.

[13:57] This has really been going on, if you really want to get into it, it's been going on since the mid-'40s. We're starting to accept things that shouldn't really be acceptable. We're starting to accept divorce, we're starting to accept a broken home, we're starting to accept single parenting.

[14:10] We're starting to accept so many things that really start creating chaos in the fabric of humanity and start creating chaos in the fabrics of "normality," and then, we're not addressing those and we're not explaining those and we're not really having that conversation, and we're not being honest about certain things. Then

thus, children have been over the years interpreting on their own.

[14:30] Again, that would be like sitting a five-year-old in front of a nuclear bomb and saying, "Hey, go ahead and try to figure this out," and the five-year-old's saying, "I have no idea." "Well, here's a pair of scissors and here's a blow torch. Go ahead and figure this nuclear bomb out. See you later." None of us would even dare do that, right? We know that we would just completely ruin everything about who we are and blow up our city and everything else.

[14:54] In so many, so many ways we've done that with our psychology and our need to protect children, our need to whatever with them, and not really just having that open conversation. Back to your friend, that open letter probably meant more to her, of course she was upset that she wasn't a model.

[15:10] But then, she saw, and I'm just assuming that some of the things is why he didn't want her to be a model was some of the worldly model things. He didn't want her to get into that world and have her heart broken or have things happen to her, to make decisions or whatever his decisions were.

[15:22] But that probably made her say, "You know what? My dad really loves me, he respects me, and he cherishes me as who I am as a female and wants me to cherish my body and cherish my existence as a person," and I guarantee you that has translated into, if she's married, into her relationship where she is that much more giving to her husband because of that act. I could be totally wrong, but...

Rachel: [15:44] No, those were definitely some of the reasons. She's not in a relationship yet, but I know that when she is, she will definitely be a phenomenal partner.

[15:51] The other thing that I wanted to call attention to is you mentioned about just being able to speak the things that are in your head. I know even as an adult, I think for everyone listening realize that this makes sense for other adults in your life, too. Is just being able to speak what you have shame about is so liberating.

[16:11] I know like for me with my mastermind, if I have something

that's going on that maybe I have shame about, or even if it's not even shame, just like I remember a couple months ago, I was helping my boyfriend hold an event and we had a whole bunch of different things going on. We had his event, and then I was flying out somewhere and a million other things.

[16:30] I just remember going on Facebook, we have a Facebook group, and just going on and on and on about all the things that I was stressed about that were frustrating me. Just as soon as I was able to get it all out there, it just fizzled out. I was like, "Phew, I was heard, this is great."

[16:43] Same thing with things that I've been extremely ashamed about. I just went through...and same thing, like when people say to me things that they're really ashamed about, that they're really scared to say. Just that spirit of being vulnerable. Once you're heard, you just are able to free up so much more energy and able to move on to be the next, best level of yourself.

Wes: [17:03] You are, and it's amazing what, how liberating that is. The marketing world, creative, everything you just said, being vulnerable, being honest, all these things is now buzzwords.

[17:13] But really, on a psychological level, what that does for the individual is absolutely...I don't even know. I don't think there is a human word that we can, or an English word, excuse me, that we can associate with it.

[17:27] Because it's beyond liberating. It's beyond exhilarating. But once you have that storage full of waste and depression and anger and pain and guilt and sadness and shame and all of these negative things, once you're able to express them in a very controlled way and doing it with the right intentions, all of a sudden, it's just, it's like, "Ah..."

[17:49] It's like you have a car on your body and it just disappears, the car just disintegrates and it's gone and you're able to just breathe again in such an easy way. Then, all this enlightenment comes to you and really get to go through it, and that's exactly what we teach the youth. Let it go.

[18:07] You mentioned in the intro, I hate the words fixed, I hate it when somebody says, "Oh, we'll fix that person." I'm like, "There's nothing word with that person. They're not broken. This isn't a freaking China doll that fell on the ground and you need to get some superglue. That's not what's going on here."

[18:22] I hate this whole concept of being a victim. Look, you're only a victim at the moment at which the action takes place. After that you have total control. I think we just like to say, "Well, I was a victim of this." Yeah, you are, but by continually acknowledging it in that way, you're just giving power right back to the action.

[18:42] For me personally, I went through all forms of abuse between the ages of zero and 19, but really, my hardcore abuse was between the ages of zero and seven, actually, one and seven after my father left and my mother attached herself to another man. It wasn't until I was 16-years-old I had kind of "Aha moment." I was on 20-plus pills a day and my liver failed when at 16-years-old after being on these pills for about 11 years. My liver completely failed.

[19:09] They gave me three options in life. Number one, hope and pray you can get a liver transplant. Number two, we'll drain all the liquids out of your body, blood, everything, and try to recycle it and try to cleanse your liver. Number three, pray to god that you're going to live. I picked number three because the other two options were just financially, timing, all that stuff just wasn't going to work in the situation I was in.

[19:32] I had that moment by myself in my room, I'll never forget, where I had to make a decision of all of the abuse, all of the things, all the victim mentality that was sitting in my head. I had to say, "You know what? For 10 years, this man has still been touching me, has still been beating me, has still been hurting me, and I've let him do that, because I've allowed myself to be a victim. No more. I'm not going to be a victim anymore."

[19:57] When I made that mental shift, everything started to move in my life. It didn't happen overnight. Even to this day I still have to continually work through and remember things, but it was an instant shift. Since that moment I dropped all the pills I was on, I was labeled

with everything under the sun. I was told I'd never drive a car, never have a girlfriend, never have a normal job, never be an asset to society. Imagine getting that diagnosis at 13 years old.

[20:22] It was all of this stuff that was plowed on top of me, and I just said, "No, this isn't my reality. I'm not going to play victim anymore," and I've never taken a pill since that day. 33 now, whatever that math is. I've never taken another pill again. I constantly have to be working on different things.

[20:40] Of course, there are things that happened in my past that affect who I am. I don't allow them to control me, and in fact I have a quote that I really hammer in with the youth is that, "The choices of your yesterday have direct impacts on our todays, but don't define our forevers."

[20:58] I know that's grammatically got so many things in it, but what it means is things that happened to us yesterday definitely affect us and impact our lives today. That's true. If you break your arm today, tomorrow you're still going to have a broken arm.

[21:11] You don't have to let that affect you forever. You don't always have to remember the pain of the broken arm and whine and complain about having a broken arm. It's like, you know what? I have a broken arm. There's nothing I can do about it. It's broken now.

[21:21] Let's make the best of it and let's move forward with life. You're always going to remember you had a broken arm, but you don't always have to live in that moment of pain, of regret with maybe doing something, or whatever. I hope that resonates with your audience, and that's such a valid point, and that's the first transformational piece we do with our youth is pulling them out of these words they're so accustomed to using.

[21:44] These words that really feed the system, feed the programs, feed the dependency, and we break that. We say, "Look, no. This isn't your reality."

Rachel: [21:52] That's beautiful. Do you have any examples of when you're talking to a child, and maybe even something where they were using this kind of terminology and you were able to shift it? The

example, and then also, how they shifted it. Like, what happened through it?

Wes: [22:06] I've got hundreds of examples. One that when you say that comes to mind is of a young man that we have in our system.

[22:15] I openly cry, because I want the audience to know that. I am very in-tune with my tears. I cry in "Rudy" and I've cried in "Finding Nemo," if I tear up in telling these stories, it's simply, because that's who I am.

[22:26] We have a young man in our program who is homeless. He and his mother are homeless, and his mentality over the last, they've been homeless now for, officially homeless without living in a residency for almost two years now, but they've been dealing with homelessness, bouncing to and from relatives for about six years. It's been a long journey in this young man's life and he's in his teens.

[22:51] When I first met him he was very shy, but more so full of shame. His father left when he was very young and his father is doing OK, meaning, he has a home, has a place to live. He's on the other side of the country. His father doesn't pay child support. His father's not a part of his life in any way, shape, or form, except for occasional phone calls to make sure he's still homeless. I know that sounds really low, but that's what he does.

[23:16] This particular boy was in a very, "Woe is me, I'm homeless, my life is..." A dark position, but trying to live a light life, if that makes sense. He was hiding his homelessness. In fact, many of his schoolmates didn't even know he was homeless until this last summer. That's how he got into our program.

[23:35] But anyway, his mindset was all about, "I can't, I can't, I shouldn't, I am, I am the system, I'm the victim, this is who I am, this is my reality." We were able to spend about two hours with him talking to him and talking him through the word can't. Something so simple.

[23:53] Now, with this shame for him comes this total lack of being able to share his existence with the planet. Not just share his story, but literally his existence. He's an incredibly talented young man. He

loves to play the guitar, he wants to learn how to sing. He's an amazing writer. Grammatically, he's got a lot of stuff that he's working on with obvious reasons.

[24:13] But just his creative space, being able to write poetry is phenomenal. The guy could be a songwriter and write hit songs right now on the radio. He's got all these gifts to give the world, but yet, his shame, his fear, his mentality of victim is holding him back from doing any of that.

[24:29] Just recently, I was able to work with him one-on-one in our program. He came to one of our Elliott partners' three-day events, and he was there with his mother, and his mother was very similar in concept and just trying to survive mentality.

[24:43] He came to the event and we spent, I don't know, between the volunteers that helped, myself, and other people we probably spent 12 to 13 hours one-on-one with him and his mother talking to them about shifting the mindset. Shifting the mindset from I can't, I can't, I can't to I can, I can, I can.

[25:00] Shifting the mindset from victim to I, wait, I control some things. I don't need to be dependent on the government. I don't need to be dependent on disability. I don't need to be dependent on these things. I can actually create my own futures, and even though I'm exhausted, even though I've been battling this for years and I've been fighting this uphill battle, there is hope. There is a chance. There is a way for me to go the extra distance to make this happen.

[25:22] Giving you the background. In that three-day time period, they literally, and especially our youth, made a huge shift. Such a huge shift that he was able to perform live on-stage to about 15 different people, and then record that and allowed us to play it live in the auditorium in which there was about, over 400 people at this event with him being in the room and able to share his vocal talent, his writing skills.

[25:51] He wrote a very short, like about a 45-second little poem to his mother and wrote the song chords to it, all that fun stuff, worked with one of the volunteers at the group and was able to perform this piece in front of all of these people.

[26:05] More so, after the performance and after everybody knew who he was and was wanting to come up and say hi to him, he was able to conduct conversations with these people, and actually, have conversation back and forth not just about his circumstances, but about what he was going to do in life and where he was going to go in life.

[26:26] Just recently, with all of that mind shifting, all of that movement in their energy, they have gone from living in a very dark and, I called it a step above a KOA park ground. They're now moving into a much better situation, and we're putting together a plan to actually get them independent and living in their own apartment.

[26:45] Without just "volunteer" or donation or government support they're actually looking to build income strategies, to rebuild some of the passions in life that his mother had. More importantly, he now is seeing how powerful his thoughts can be. How powerful he can be just by changing the simplest things of I can't to I can and I'm not a victim. I'm actually in control of my own destiny, and I'm actually in control of my own life.

[27:14] That just happened recently, and it was an amazing, amazing shift, and I'm not even doing it justice. But it was an amazing shift in just the psychological patterns that had been created over a six-year period of time and even longer where his father, I believe his father had left him nine years ago. Obviously, he's been creating these patterns in his mind.

[27:34] Change is instant. I want people to know that. You can make a change instantly. It's the habit of maintaining the change that takes time, and that's where the support needs to come in from a community.

[27:45] Somebody makes a decision, "I don't want to smoke anymore," that's instant. A snap of the fingers. "I don't want to smoke anymore." Continuing that goal and building the habits of not smoking? That may take 10 years, 5 years, 12 years, depending on the person. But the concept of changing, that's instant.

[28:01] When you're talking about psychological patterns, those can instantly be broken, those can instantly be changed. But then, you

have to have the community reinforcing that behavior and creating the habits behind it, and that takes time, and there's no getting around that. It takes time to reprogram, to rethink, to remap your brain and move forward from there.

[28:19] That's one example, and then, I have other examples of youth who are building that, like I said in the very beginning of the interview, that empowerment shield around them. So that when they go into their circumstances, that was my "Aha moment," when I started "[A Human Project](#)" was I've done volunteering for prisons and homeless shelters and foster-care facilities and boys' homes.

[28:38] I've done those for years, for probably about the last 10 years I've been involved in some capacity, in something like that. It wasn't until I have this "Aha moment" in a public school, where my 15-minute speech ended up being almost four hours. That's where these youth, over 200 youth came up to me one after another telling me their stories of abuse, of abandonment, of issues, of pain, of sexual abuse, physical abuse, all these things.

[29:00] Then, it was probably the third or fourth child in and the bell rang and they were like, "Oh, I've got to get home, I've got to leave." My question was, "Wait, are you, where are you going?" "I'm going home. It's my father I was telling you about. Please don't tell anyone." That's when the light hit me and I was like, you've got to be kidding me.

[29:14] Like, these children are still stuck in the situation and the way the system works. The system can't help them. The system's overloaded with X, Y, Z. We need to create something where these children can learn the coping skills, the mechanisms, they can get the education, the empowerment, when they go back in these situations, they can deal with it.

[29:33] Our little boy who's homeless, he didn't leave the event with a home. He left the event going back into his homeless state, but he also understood what power he had and how he now controlled the outcomes of his life, not some government or some phone call or some case worker.

[29:49] But he could actually start controlling the outcomes in his life,

and now he has empowerment going back into his situation so he can deal with and solve his own issues. I hope that makes sense.

Rachel: [30:01] That makes total, total sense, and you bring up just such a great point about how powerful our minds are.

[30:08] It just makes me think, we have a group on Facebook, RachelRofe.com/facebookgroup for anyone listening. It's a free group, just because I agree with you so much about community and how it's important to surround yourself with people who can hear you when you need to speak and who can support you and all this stuff.

[30:24] But when you were talking it was making me think about those women who, every day for the last couple of days I've just been posting on Facebook and I've been saying, "Pick a word for your day. Whatever happens in your day, I just want you to have this word you're choosing that you go back to and just refer to throughout the day and make it your navigation tool."

[30:43] Her word for the day was pleased, and so she said she was just going through her day and something happened where she was reminded of something that happened to her in 2006, and she said it was extremely just distressing to her in the past. It just really took her down every time she had thought about it.

[30:59] But she thought for a second and she said, "Well, what's my word today? My word's pleased." She just applied pleased to that situation and she said it was able to free up so much of that energy that she'd been pent up for eight years now, and she was shocked that in a minute she was able to just alleviate so much, because our minds are just that powerful.

Wes: [31:18] They are, and we don't even understand them. I had the opportunity to meet Gary Douglas, who's the founder of "[Access Consciousness](http://www.AccessConsciousness.com)."

[31:24] It's all about almost exactly what you said. A, understanding the words that we use and B, understanding the power of those words in our own mind.

[31:35] If you over and over and over and over again, I mean

everyone's going to get this analogy. If you stand in front of a mirror and you over and over and over again say, "I'm ugly, I'm ugly, I'm ugly, I'm ugly," no matter what anyone else tells you, you're going to feel ugly. Every time you see yourself, every time you think about yourself, you're going to think you're ugly, and we all understand that.

[31:53] But we do that in so many other ways that we don't even pay attention to, and figuratively the mirror is right there all the time, and we're saying things, and we're asking for things that we just don't understand its true potential.

[32:06] For example, if we say, and this is one of the lessons that we worked with with this youth. If you say, and this is, go with me on this one for just a minute. But I said the words, "I'm homeless," OK, and I said, "I need a home, I need a home," what I'm really saying to the universe and all that, I don't really, really care. What I'm saying to myself is, "I need," which basically translates to, "I'm unwilling. I'm not putting forth the effort."

[32:37] My mind is in a position of needing means somebody else take care of me. Needing means, somebody else bring me the solution rather than, "I'm going to get a home." It's that simple little shift that completely changes the way in which we think about things.

[32:54] Because if you're sitting around saying, "Man, I need more money. I really need more money. We need more money to survive," what are you saying to the world, to yourself, to all that? More importantly, what are you saying to yourself?

[33:03] What you're saying to yourself is, "Somebody needs, somebody needs, somebody else needs to solve my problem." Instead of saying, "I'm going to get us more money. I don't know exactly how I'm going to do that, but I'm going to get off my derriere and I'm going to out there and get us more money, and I'm going to make these things happen." It's a complete mind shift.

[33:22] This young man was saying, "I need a home." That was his mentality. Instead of him saying, "I'm going to do everything I can to obtain a home, to get a home." It's just like the word serve. I know a lot of people will say something like, "Hey, I would love to serve you, I would love to help you."

[33:36] Understand what the word service means. It's a derivative of servant, which is a derivative of slave. What you're really saying to somebody is, "I want to be enslaved to you." That's not what you mean, but that's how you're programming your mind.

[33:48] Anyway, this stuff is deep, this stuff is crazy, it's fun, it's very enlightening. I recommend anybody getting old-world dictionaries and actually reading what some of the words we use today. Checking out Gary Douglas, the nominal resource of understanding the mind, the languaging of the mind and exactly what you're doing.

[34:06] I know a lot of this sounds like foo-foo and crazy, but this is coming from a guy who, I was on the upper echelons of entrepreneurialism and working with some of the most amazing human beings on this planet from major corporate leaders. This is the kind of stuff that they would investigate to take themselves from a \$200 million company to a \$600 million company to a billion dollar company.

[34:30] Some of these things were just engrained in them on a financial level and on a never give up, like a Steve Jobs. You couldn't say the word can't around Steve Jobs. You would be fired if you said, "That can't be done."

[34:44] These mentalities that make people so wealthy and make people really move on a whole another level, on a monetary level, people are understanding, you can do that with trauma in your life. You can do that with these cards you've been dealt with where you can really shift the perspective and give yourself so much power that it's limitless. It's like the movie "Limitless" exactly. It's like without the drug you can do this by the way you talk to yourself.

Rachel: [35:09] Absolutely. I love it. Absolutely. I'm so on-board with you. We have a lot in common.

[35:14] This is great. One of the things that I would love to ask about, you've overcome a lot in your life. You've been able to impact a lot of people. I know you're helping a lot of children. What's a specific action step that you take in your life on a daily basis to make your life better?

Wes: [35:29] The first thing is, and I've said this before on some other interviews and it's going to sound crazy. I have my own daily checkup. I go into my own head and I have really weird conversations with myself, as I'm sure your audience can imagine.

[35:40] [laughter]

Wes: [35:41] Or, I really just talk to myself as if how I would want somebody else to talk to me.

[35:48] I almost imagined in a situation where, I have a beautiful fiancé. She's amazing, and many times I'll imagine it's like here and I talking, but it's really me and me talking. It sounds crazy, but I'm having that personal checkup where I'm just kind of, "You know, hey, look. Here's where we're going through. Here's what we're dealing with."

[36:05] Really vulnerable, and really personal is that with building this project and building "[A Human Project.](#)" we ask for people to donate \$10. To me \$10, I mean, we waste \$10. I don't care what your economic standpoint is, you're wasting \$10 on something that isn't relevant, something that you could literally live just fine without.

[36:26] For me, I'm so passionate about what I'm doing and about helping youth and about building this community, doing it at such an amazing velocity and we're having such phenomenal success with youth that I'm sitting here thinking, "Man, getting 5,000 people tomorrow to donate \$10, that's a piece of cake. Look at our videos from our youth, look at what we're doing, look at the movement we're creating."

[36:48] I will get into a position in some days where I'll be sitting there and it'll be like, "How come no one's donated? Do they not understand what we're trying to do? Do they not understand what we're doing here? I mean, come on people, wake up."

[37:00] I'll put myself in this little cycle where I'm really feeding up the energy around me and just getting into a place of, "Well, oh, I mean, why can't? I know this person. Why don't they stop going to Starbucks or why don't stop doing this or why don't they stop doing that and put their money here?"

[37:16] We're doing, I'm gathering donations and volunteers at an amazing rate, and things are going very, very well. But of course, my personality is more, more, more. I'm sitting here and I have to take a breath and I go, "Ah. OK." A, you need to understand where other people are coming from. B, you need to focus on what you're actually doing and what's actually happening and continue moving that forward. Don't get stuck on the what-ifs, don't get stuck on the should bes.

[37:45] I heard a great quote, "We all need to stop shitting on ourselves," the other day, I love that. She said it with a southern accent so it was even funnier. We do that a lot. This should be this way, it should be this way. It's like, you're just programming your mind.

[37:58] Something I do on a daily basis that checkup, is that communication with myself, and having many celebrations for the achievements that I've had. That's where I've got to say, "OK, you know what? Hey, this was great, this was an amazing time, an amazing moment, you did something really great. Hey, you just got on Rachel's podcast and she's rocking it. She's making things happen in her life and she's got an amazing audience," and all these things are happening.

[38:23] Chapman, you know what? Celebrate that. That's a small win. There's going to be another couple thousand people that hear your message, great win. Keep it up. That is something that if more people did that, then, we wouldn't go to social media, we wouldn't go to our friends, we wouldn't be draining energy from our significant others to validate our position here on earth.

[38:44] We're getting it from ourselves, and so then, we can go onto social media, we can go into our relationships with other people and we're a light, and we're actually lifting people up rather than being this energy source of drainage where people are like, "Oh yeah, you're great Chapman, you're awesome Chapman."

[38:59] My sweet fiancé being like, "Yeah, honey, you're doing everything great," and her having to constantly or my social media having to constantly lift me, where it's reserved. Where now I'm an

asset, I'm a value, and I'm affecting people in a positive way instead of effecting people in a negative way, which thus makes it, so I've got more positivity and I'm able to help other people. Then, when I do get that amazing compliment, it means something more.

[39:25] A longwinded answer, but there you go.

Rachel: [39:27] No, that makes sense, and I think just on a human level we feel like we're more worthwhile when we're able to give to the community instead of just take from it all the time. I think that's a really good piece of advice.

[39:37] The other thing I'm curious about, so when people donate, what happens? Where did their donations go and what exactly do you do?

Wes: [39:43] That is a great question, and thank you so much for asking that. We have several different programs with inside of "[A Human Project](#)," let me just very simply break down. Every dollar we get in, \$1, here's our case study.

[39:57] 41 percent of that dollar goes to managing our programs, which I'll explain here in a second. 25 percent of that dollar goes to fulfilling what we call daydreams, which I'll also explain. 17 percent goes to messaging to the youth. This is where we've got everything from letters, swag, posters, videos, all of our marketing material that we're actually using to brand "A Human Project" with the youth, which is a very, very important structure in our company.

[40:24] We're not looking to build a territorial charity. This is literally something, we had a chapter open up last week in Russia, and we just had a chapter apply to open today in the UK, and another one in Ireland. This is not something that's just locked into a geographic box. That was one of the missions that I wanted to create. 17 percent goes to supporting that messaging and marketing and strategy scenarios.

[40:48] Then, 12 percent goes to team support. This is maintaining our teams, salaries, employees, 12 cents out of every dollar. Then, five percent goes to our overhead. Our goal is to keep our overhead very, very, very low, because we don't need a fancy office or anything like that. That's where each dollar goes. 41 percent to managing

programs, 25 percent to dreams, 17 to marketing and messaging, 12 percent to team support, and five percent to overhead.

[41:14] What we do at "A Human Project" is we work with the youth on five fundamental principles. We've broken the word human down to really understand, what does human mean? When I came up with the name "A Human Project," I said, "OK, that's great, but what does human mean?" We say we're human beings, we say we're Homo sapiens, all these things. What does it mean?

[41:32] I broke it down into this. Hope. The first thing we need as a human being is we need hope. We need to understand that there is something better and bigger coming. That next part is we need to understand. We need to have an understanding of our environment, of what's happening.

[41:47] We need to in a crazy, morbid way, especially with the youth, they need to understand why that person is abusing them, why that person's hurting them. That it has nothing to do with them, but it has a hundred percent to do with the person that is actually commitment that horrendous crime.

[42:02] Then, we teach the youth, "OK, you have hope, you have understanding. Now it's time for you to make a choice. You need to make a choice in your life. Are you going to left, are you going to go right? Are you going to keep moving forward, or are you going to stay stagnant, or are you going to move backwards?"

[42:15] Then, once they make that choice, we then have action steps. Things that they can actually do. This is what we call the rubber meets the road. This is where many of our programs lie. Everything from our human tour, which is us going and working directly with the youth. Everything from our summer camps that are coming up.

[42:32] We have so many things in there. We have third-party partnerships that we've created with some massive brands and massive trainers. People who are donating their \$40,000 mastermind program, and then, they're switching it to be in a youth perspective. We're giving that to the youth and they're going through it, and I'll explain that at the very end. Then, our last piece is nourishing.

[42:53] It's great, you have hope, you have understanding, you've made some choices. You've got to continually nourish that cycle. That completes the human cycle. That's what makes us different than any other organism on the planet is we understand the importance of nourishing. We understand the importance of repetitive habits. We understand that.

[43:09] We're not just doing it because it's DNA-based in us and that's what we do. We're not salmon that just always swim upriver. We understand why we swim upriver. We understand what we're doing, and we can process that.

[43:20] The nourishing cycle is us really full-circling this and teaching the youth on a daily basis how to maintain their hope, maintain their understanding. Make the right choices, take the right actions, and finish that. The way we accomplish this is using technology.

[43:35] We're actually, this is really exciting. We're building a complete virtual world, a literal virtual world. Imagine any game, anything you've ever seen. We're work with some very high-up individuals who are donating this software to us where we are literally creating a virtual educational world where these youth can create their virtual character and walk through this virtual world.

[43:58] Rachel, you could have an educational program and a knock on your door and they sit one-on-one with you and actually have this in-depth, in virtual world experience, where they're learning, and they're taking in all of the knowledge, and all of the expertise that you're giving them.

[44:12] But as we build that, right now we have a back-end system where the youth, once they're accepted into the program, they're able to go in and then they see everything from a 30-day happiness challenge to some books that they can read to some podcasts they can listen to to some courses they can go through on every topic. From health to nutrition to wellness to education. We're building all kinds of what we call courses.

[44:37] Then, by accomplishing those courses and achieving, and they've got to take little quizzes and do the whole thing, they then get points. Those points are then turned into daydreams, and daydreams

can consist of anything from a ski trip to a day at the beach to a day at a winery and maybe learning how wine is made, whatever the child and the youth want to do, they're able to earn that.

[45:02] Which then, again, remember what I said? Change is instant, but it takes the time of learning the habits? One of the best ways we learn habits is that we have some kind of incentive and people get all uptight about incentive. But as adults, why do you go to work? Why do you do what you do?

[45:15] Yeah, you can give me the line about you love what you do and you love helping the world and all that, and I get it. I'm right there with you. But at the same time, we go there because we know that if we put eight hours into the job, the job is going to give us \$200 back or 500 or whatever. You're going there, because you're really incentivized, and you have to be incentivized. Otherwise, the power bill doesn't get paid by hope and love and dreams. There's reality in life.

[45:37] We're teaching these children that look, if you work hard and you create positive, and this is the key, you create positive action and positive reinforcement, you're now going to get attention. You're now going to get rewards, so that starts breaking the cycle of, "Well, the only way I'm going to get attention, the only way I'm going to awards is if I act out this way, if I become pregnant, if I do this, if I do that."

[45:59] That's a real bird's-eye view of the program. It's complicatedly simple in the sense that what we're doing is teaching them to put good into their brain and get good out and they're being rewarded by doing that.

[46:10] Which is creating a community, and enables us to create these micro-communities all over the world where these youth can come together and create these little clubs, and these little organisms and these little micro-communities that are part of a bigger community, and then they create all these different things.

[46:26] We've got competition that goes in, points, and we have different clubs that will work together on different sides of the country and doing different service projects. There's so much going on, but it's all based on the simple philosophy of, "Here's something good."

You're going to be rewarded by doing that good thing, but it's not a reward owed just because you're doing it good. It's because, oh, you implemented the good behavior into your lives."

Rachel: [46:52] I love that, and if you heard clicking while you were talking, I clicked twice because I was going over the page, and as soon as we hang up I'm going to leave a donation.

Wes: [46:59] You are amazing. Thank you.

Rachel: [47:01] No, thank you, really. I'm looking on your page, just for everyone listening, the founder of "Make a Wish" is on the board for this. There's some really other really amazing people here helping. This is something that people obviously really, really believe in, and just when you're sharing everything that you're going to do to help, I just love that piece about actually implementing. It's so important.

[47:22] With that said, can you let people know where they can go to find out more about you and where they can go to donate?

Wes: [47:27] Yes. I know everybody's busy and you can google me and you can go and see all that stuff on my personal website, which is WesleyDChapman.com. But what I really want to leave everybody with is go to AHumanProject.com.

[47:41] If you don't have time to do anything else, there's a button. AHumanProject.com, you'll see About and Stories. Go to Stories and just hear from the mouths of babes if you will, some of the children, what "A Human Project" means to them.

[47:55] I can't put it into words any better than one of our young, amazing youth did called Ruby. The link is AHumanProject.com/Ruby, Ruby. Listen to her tell her story, and also listen to what she compares "A Human Project" to. For me, it was the defining moment of, "OK, what we're doing is literally working."

[48:17] You mentioned some of our board members. You know Frank, who's the founder of "Make a Wish Foundation." When I told him the story, when I told him my vision and I put this in front of him to have him join us, he gave me a very daunting compliment. He said,

"Wes, what you've built here has the potential of having a larger impact than the "Make a Wish Foundation."

[48:36] That just sent chills down my spine in so many ways, because I've known Frank for such a long period of time and he's such an amazing human being. Again, this is not about me. The program and the system and the potential of our youth on this planet is like we've never seen before. Our youth are so much more intelligent than we've, we've never had a more intelligent human race on the planet at one given time.

[49:03] We throw out so many things. "They're so entitled, they're so lazy, they're so this, they're so that," but they're such amazing human beings. If we blame anything about their entitlement or their laziness or anything like that, we need to look in the mirror.

[49:15] Because we are the generation, that 30-to-60-year-old generation, we're the generation that built the video games. We're the generation that built all these things, because that's what we wanted. Now, we're saying that the youth have it and so all of a sudden they're entitled and they're lazy?

[49:30] No, it's us that needs to look at ourselves and say, "OK, how do we embark our knowledge onto these youth, and how do we take their skills and their uniqueness and really give them the opportunities to shine like no human race has ever done before?"

[49:44] It's just an amazing time in the world, and it's sad that 51 million out of the 98 million youth that are in our age demographic, 51 million of them are being abused or neglected. 21 million youth over the age of 12 are addicted to some type of drug by the time they're 13 years old.

[50:03] We've got a problem and we need to solve it, but we don't need to solve it by crazy programs or doing anything. We need to solve it by just simply listening and empowering our youth and giving them opportunities to have a better future than we did, which is all we've ever wanted.

[50:17] Rachel, thank you so much for having me on your program. I love it. I love your energy. I know we haven't met but I can feel it, and

I know you and I are going to become great friends over the next few years. I'm guaranteeing that. I'm excited to get to know you more. What an honor. I'm so glad I sent you an email.

Rachel: [50:32] Me, too. I was actually, that's so funny you said that. I was going to say the same exact thing. Like, we're going to be friends for life. In fact, I can feel it. Just amazing.

[50:40] [background music]

Rachel: [50:40] We have so much synergy. This has been so good. Thank you so much for emailing me, and thank you for just being who you are.

Wes: [50:46] Thank you. Have a fantastic day.

Rachel: [50:49] Thank you so much for listening to "A Better Life." You can find all show notes for this episode at RachelRofe.com.

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Review

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Thank you in advance!

I really appreciate you.

With love,
Rachel Rofé