



Episode #109:

**Author and Entrepreneur Jonathan Fields
Talks About How to Live a Good Life**

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Jonathan: The other huge benefit to practices like this are that it allows you to over time be less reactive and more intentional. And that's a huge gift for everybody. It's a huge gift for you and it's a huge gift for everybody who you would interact with.

Debbie: Welcome to the TiLT Parenting Podcast, a podcast featuring interviews and conversations aimed at inspiring, informing, and supporting parents raising differently wired kids. I'm your host, Debbie Reber, and I have a special episode for you today. While most weeks I bring on parenting experts and coaches doing work specifically relating to raising children or differently wired, my guest today is an expert on life...specifically how to live a good life.

I'm talking about Jonathan Fields, a mega-firm lawyer turned award-winning author, serial entrepreneur and expert in applied personal development and human potential. Jonathan is also the man behind the *Good Life Project Podcast*, which is consistently ranked as one of the top podcasts in the world with more than 1,000,000 downloads/month and large global audience. I am one of those million, and it was through listening to Jonathan's podcast that I got connected to his books and a project he ran several years ago called Revolution U that was actually a significant support in helping me when I was first developing what would become TiLT Parenting. In that way, I consider Jonathan to be one of my mentors.

Jonathan's most recent book is *How To Live a Good Life: Soulful Stories, Surprising Science, and Practical Wisdom*, and so today I asked Jonathan to talk with us about his book and what we as parents raising different wired kids can learn about creating more purpose and meaning in our daily lives, even when we may sometimes feel as though we don't have the bandwidth or energy or wherewithal to do so. I hope you enjoy our conversation.

Before I get to that conversation, as you know my book *Differently Wired* comes out in just 3 weeks! Ahh!!! And so today I'm excited to announce I've put together a few really cool and exclusive things you will get if you pre-order the book before June 12. If you buy the book in any format, you will also get these four things: more than 30 downloadable PDFs of check sheets, templates, sample contracts, and basically a ton of daily tools you can use with your child about everything from screen time to goal planning and. Basically, I've gone back and gathered all the materials I've created for Asher over the years and put them together in one place so you can grab them and make them your own. Next, you'll get my cheat sheet for what to say in difficult situations with others, teachers, family members, and more. Then there is the *Differently Wired Digital Resource Guide*, which is an online way to interact with essentially every single resource—articles, books, research, podcast episodes, experts—mentioned in the book and created a special web page where you can easily access all of it with just one click. And lastly, when you pre-order, you'll get access to a live, virtual 4-week book club where I'll be sharing additional behind-the-scenes and



tips and tools that I use related to certain aspects of the book, as well as time to ask questions and learn from other parents in the same situation as you.

All of those bonuses will be available only to people who pre-order before the book comes out on June 12. If you want to get them, go to tiltparenting.com/differentlywired to find out more.

Also, if you live in or near Seattle, Portland OR, San Jose, Chicago, Washington DC, Maplewood NJ or New York City, I am coming to your neck of the woods this June for my Differently Wired Tilt Your World Book Tour. I am so excited to be in the same room with members of the TiLT tribe for these special events where we can have meaningful conversations about how we can change the future for differently wired kids. For all the dates, the tour stop info, and to register for one of the events, just go to tiltparenting.com/tour. I hope to see you there! Thanks so much, and now, here is my conversation Jonathan!

Debbie: Hello Jonathan, I am really happy to be bringing you onto the podcast and to have this conversation with you today. And just to kick things off, would you mind just taking a moment to introduce yourself and just tell listeners what you do in the world?

Jonathan: So, I'm a father, a husband, I live in New York City. I'm also an author. Every couple of years of book magically appears out of my head. I travel around the world speaking and I run a company. I'm the founder of a business called Good Life Project where we produce podcasts and media, events, trainings really all focused around the bigger question of what it means to live a good life and a lot of the more granular questions around mindset, health, vitality, work, and relationships.

Debbie: Yes. And just to share, it was through your book *Uncertainty: Turning Fear and Doubt into Fuel for Brilliance* that I first learned of your work and then became a total *Good Life Project* fan and have been consuming your just incredible interviews with the most fascinating changemakers and social change agents and thinkers and makers for years now. They have been just hugely inspiring for me and you know, for listeners out there, I recommend if you're looking for a burst of inspiration, definitely check those out. And I want to spend most of this conversation talking about your book, *How to Live a Good Life*, but before we go there you are very much a part of how I created Tilt Parenting because of some really interesting work you were doing around this idea of social change revolutions and I actually had the chance to participate in something you offered called, Revolution U. I think I did that in 2015 and that was a really critical piece of my development of this podcast and the revolution that I'm working to push forward on behalf of parents like me, parents raising differently wired kids. So before we talk about your book, I was just wondering if you could take just a minute to explain that aspect of your work.

Jonathan: When I was in college like way, way, way back when I actually had hair, I was a dj and I think that was one of the early things that turned me on to this really fascinating dynamic where one person can sort of be behind a booth and by



simple choices that, that person is making dramatically affect the energy of large numbers of people. And a chunk of years back it was actually, when we started seeing a lot of changes happening geo-politically, I got really fascinated by the idea of nonviolent revolution and how large numbers of people would move to action, and joined together to try and make some really big mission driven thing happen. And so I started studying, you know, the theory of nonviolent revolution and how that actually happens. And that led me to the work of one particular professor named Gene Sharp who actually recently passed. And who was really the guy who wrote the playbook for most of the revolutions that have happened around the world. And then I got really curious also as a lifelong entrepreneur, could you take some of these ideas and somehow apply them in the world of conscious entrepreneurship to build either a social venture or a movement in a very different sphere? You know, could you take these ideas and translate them or would it just completely bastardized them? Would it fall apart, would it not work? So I started geeking out. I'm very much a maker slash scientist. You now I can go deep into research in the name of creating things that hopefully go out into the world and help people. And, and this led to a pretty deep project that led me to develop a framework to that essentially lets you do that.

And originally it was just supposed to be for me because I want to figure out how I could do that with the things that I was building. And I shared the idea, the framework, when it was in actually in very rough form in a small private event in the form of a sort of a rapid fire keynote. There are about 90 people in the room. It was never supposed to get out. I had never shared it with anyone before and it was very hesitant to do so, and the whole time I was speaking in heads were down, there was almost no interaction at all and I thought, you know, people just thought I was crazy and they couldn't wait for me to get off stage. And I finished and there's a beat of silence and then a standing ovation. Then people were chasing me down saying, what is this? Where did this come from? How, how can I get more of it, you know, do you consult? Is there a book? And I said, no, no, no, no, no. That led to a series of sort of failed on top with bigger and bigger audiences. And eventually that led to the way that we started jamming together, which was there was such a strong call for some sort of teaching experience around these ideas that we created this course that kind of just put it out into the world. For anyone who wanted to say, well know would this work for what I'm doing to help grow it? And, and happily you became one of the awesome people who became part of that.

Debbie: Yeah, the timing for me was just so ideal because, you know, I didn't know if I was gonna write a book first or you know, I knew I was going to create Tilt probably since Asher was five or something and then just kind of Revolution U appeared and I was like, that's it. So yeah, listeners, again, this is just how I helped-- so many of you have written to me about the manifesto and just that it's really connected with you and, and it was through working with Jonathan that I really wrapped my head around the ideas that I wanted to share. And so that's why I feel-- I do feel like you're part of this. So it's really a, it just means a lot to me to have you on the show. It's really cool.



- Jonathan: And it's an honor on my side, to have been a part of anything that you're working on right now. I just think what you're up to. It's just so important.
- Debbie: Thank you so much. So, okay. I want to talk about your book. You wrote a book, *How to Live A Good Life: Soulful Stories, Surprising Science and Practical Wisdom*, which came out maybe a year and a half ago, or is that about right?
- Jonathan: About that time, it was just around the end of 2016 actually. So yeah just around there.
- Debbie: Yes. And it kind of a different direction for you. I think it's super relevant for my audience and again, not the typical kind of conversation that we have, but I think parents, like me, were really hungry to find tools and strategies for, to living more fulfilled lives, especially when many of us feel like we don't have a lot of choice and we're constantly in reaction mode, kind of the way we move through our life on any given day. So I want to get into some of the key takeaways from your book, but could you tell us kind of generally what it's about and who you wrote it for?
- Jonathan: Yeah, you know, so I'm 52, I'm sort of, you know, and in that place in my life where I've had incredible highs and I've also been knocked around a whole bunch as well and I've got a family and responsibilities and obligations and I'm not at a point where, you know, I'm just going to blow everything up because I want to go and do something different. And what I found was that a lot of quote self help books and the offerings were, were really kind of more tailored towards people who are a bit younger, or maybe a bit more metaphysically wired, which is fine. But I wanted to really speak to the audience that I knew was a lot of the Good Life Project audience. A lot of our listeners, a lot of the people have been to our experiences who tend to be more like me and what we really wanted is practical, vetted tools and ideas that were just where you could wake up in the morning and just have a sense for is there a little something I can do today that will make me feel more alive, that will help me feel a little more in control. That will help me feel like I'm flourishing. I'm happier, more connected to people around me and I knew also had to go to write the book in a way where it could be consumed in little bits and chunks at any given time. You didn't have to sort of read it in the big linear fashion like a tome and that whatever I offered had to also be something that was fairly quick and easy to do even though the benefit of doing it might not be experienced until you started doing it on a regular basis. And it became more of a practice. And I also have the benefit of having spent years and years now diving into just reams and reams of academic research and also sitting down with hundreds of some of the most incredible people, innovators, primary researchers, in almost any field in the world and asking them questions and learning from them. And I wanted to kind of distill that and share it. And that's really what the book was about.
- Debbie: Yeah. I mean you talked about just making it something that people could jump in and jump out of and, and through the daily explorations, and I want to talk about some of those specifically, but that's one of the things I loved about it was



so tangible, you know, it's so practical you, you really tell people exactly what they can do if they want to play in these different areas. And that's not something you find in a lot of self help books, you know, that you can really just take it. And it's almost like a toolbox in that way.

Jonathan: Yeah, it's funny you use the word toolbox because that was kind of the way I was thinking about it. There's a lot of great wisdom out there, but a lot of it requires you to spend a lot of time just learning it and then a lot of time doing it. So even if it works and even if it's great, if it doesn't, if it doesn't work with the way that most people live their lives these days, it's just, it's not going to make a difference. And I don't, I don't really have an interest in writing a book just because I feel like I've got something to say, you know, I'd like it to actually in some way move people. So, so that was why we made some of those decisions to really just try and say, okay, so how do we, how do I not only express my craft as a writer, but also make this genuinely of service to the people who most need it?

Debbie: And so, you know, you break things down, you break your ideas down into three buckets, which you know, is thinking which of these is most relevant to parents with differently wired kids, you have connection, contribution and vitality. And really, I couldn't even say that just one is because they all feel like they're such a critical part. And I guess that's probably the idea, right, that we need pieces of all of these aspects in our lives.

Jonathan: Yeah I mean if you think of, you know, people are always asking me the question, what's your definition of a good life? What does it mean to live a good life? And the simple model is if you think of your life is three buckets, vitality, connection and contribution. And your vitality is about optimizing your state of mind and body. Your connection is about cultivating deep and meaningful relationships. And contribution is generally about contributing to the world in a way that shows you with the sense of purpose and the fuller. Those three buckets persistently are the better your life is. And if any one runs dry or gets really low, it becomes a drag on all of the others. It means that you can't fill the others. So it's not just about one, it's about all of them. So there really is a deep relationship between all three.

And it's funny because people often asked me what is, what do you see now that the book's been out in the wild for a long time and tens of thousands of people who have interacted with it, you know, it's which one is commonly the lowest. And I think it really depends on sort of who you are. But you know, what we've seen is that a vitality is always one of the ones that takes a really big hit because we tend to surrender that in the name of being of service either to work or to family to people who we loved. And we want to make sure our. Okay. So we kind of figure, you know, let me make them okay or let me meet my deadline. You know, I can always come back and sleep more or eat better or meditate or whatever it may be. And the truth is it's sometimes hard to do that, you know?

Debbie: Yeah. I interviewed a lot of parents like me when I was working on *Differently Wired* and that vitality, which you know, often came up just in the form of self care when I would ask people like, well, what are you doing for yourself? And



invariably it would be the question that was met with silence and then crying or you know, it just, it is especially when we're running around and you know, we're managing schedules and therapies or we're negotiating just having to feel like we're not in control of our schedule because maybe we're dealing with meetings or unexpected phone calls for pickups and it is so easy to let that piece slide and I think it's so important for everybody, but even more so, you know, for parents who are already kind of spread thin or, or running, thin that piece is just critical.

Jonathan: Yeah, I'd love to sit here and say, well, you know, there's a really easy way to fit all this in if you have a differently wired kid or if you have multiple differently wired kids and you just have to do this and this, but that would just be so wrong of me to do because the reality is life can sometimes be hard. Like let's actually just acknowledge the fact that they're going to be moments are sometimes extended windows where it's just really hard, you know, and you are going to be really stressed and you're going to have very little time in your life to do those little things, you know. So I think it's really important to acknowledge that and to honor it and to not say to somebody, well, this is just, you're just, it's just a priority thing. It's like, no, like my priority is going to be my kid and my kid is suffering or there's like a million things I need to, you know, for most parents they're always going to tell you I will, like, I'll fall on the sword to make my kid okay. And at the same time we also have to acknowledge that and accept it. And at the same time say, in order for us to be most of service to our children, our families, our partners in life. There's gotta be some way, even a moment here and there. There's got to be something that we can do to make us physically and psychologically okay. Or else we will crash and burn. You know, we will melt down in a major way. I made the analogy to like an Indy 500 race. Like if you, if you watch really long high speed races, what you see really quickly is that the cars all pit stop along the way. And the reason is because they have to have maintenance, they get new tires, they get gassed up, they get new shocks, they get the windows clean and stuff like that. And there's no option not to do that.

And if you don't do it, then eventually the car grinds to a halt. The engine explodes and you had to take way more time out then if you did it a little bits and pieces along the way. And I think it's kind of the same thing with, with people. We kind of think we don't have time, you we don't have time, we don't have time in a day to day basis that is the feeling. That is the experience, and at the same time if you end up breaking down, if you ended up physically destroyed, then your body is going to actually make you stop for a much longer time and in a much bigger way and a much more dysfunctional way. Then had you taken three minutes here and there to do it. So again, I'm not. There is zero judgment on this. I get it. Life can be really hard and at the same time, the more that we can just find little tiny windows along the way. It doesn't have to be these big things. You don't have to meditate for half an hour every day, but if you can just find ways to hit pause, to refuel, to expose yourself to a little bit of nature, to eat something a little bit better, to be aware of things. You know, those can be difference makers even though you don't feel like they're doing a whole lot in the moment. There's a cumulative effect to the tiny little things you do along the way. Does that make sense? I mean, does that resonate with you?



- Debbie: Absolutely! Yeah. I think it's great and I appreciate you, you know, also acknowledging how so many people, how so many parents feel and are going through their, their lives. I think that piece of even just the awareness and just knowing that it's something that you went to work into your life and you want to remember that you're allowed to have a purpose that's yours outside of raising your child or all of these pieces. It's really easy to just be like, well, I'm lacking in those so I'm just going to shut that door for now because I can't deal with it and I'm failing and instead be compassionate with yourself and don't judge yourself and just consider it a work in progress. And as you said, looking for those moments, I write about looking for the bright spots, which for me might be literally one interaction with Asher which was really positive or signals some growth or whatever it is. And I can, if I just stop in that moment and notice it, as you said, those things add up and they do make a difference.
- Jonathan: It actually brings up something. I'm really curious. I want to ask you about this because I'm curious what your lens is on this. So a chunk of years back, I owned a yoga studio in New York City and, and I and I taught yoga for seven years and you know, we had a big staff of people and, and for a part of those years we taught kids yoga too, little kids, and there was an experience where at the end of every one of these classes, the teacher would generally have the kids all lie in a circle on their backs with their eyes closed in place, like a little sand bag and the shape of an animal all over their eyes and over their belly. And, and invariably parents would come and they would peek in the room and they would freak out. They're like, did you drug our kids? Because they would tell us, you know, like our, our kids are screaming. They're really challenging there. They're bouncing off the and say we don't, we don't know what to do with them at home and somehow we come here and this happens and I wonder if part of a potential way for parents to actually carve out the time to take care of themselves would be to find other experiences and people who can provide experiences for their kids that the kids find center while also a dual-purpose of creating the time for you to find center too. And again, I, I don't, I can't comment from the standpoint of having any information about who in that class may have been differently wired or not, but it just, it all just kind of stayed with me and, like, you know, I've seen so many times little kids respond so differently to a change in environment and the change and the people who are sort of like quote in charge in that environment and at the same time create breathing room for parent. I'm just, I'm just curious what, like what your response is to, to that observation?
- Debbie: Yeah. I think it's so interesting. It brought up a lot of different things for me and even just the first little thing is that I did postnatal yoga with Asher and he was the kid who was just, you know, wailing while everyone else was zen you know, and that instructor would pick him up and carry him over and sit on a bouncy ball in her kind of zen state and I would just surrender finally and often cry because I was so relieved that I was having this break and he would often just settle in with her. So anyway, just hearing that story made me think of that moment and how grateful I was for that. Yeah, I think it's about, for a lot of us



it's about finding the right person. I do think our kids are super tuned into our energy so they're often aware of what we're feeling before we are right.

Debbie: And so if we're not doing that work on ourselves, it's really hard for them to respond in a positive way to suggestions of breathing or meditation or yoga or whatever it is. You know, that we're coping routines, whatever it is. We're trying to help our child learn how to do it, but with the right person. Yeah, I think it absolutely makes sense and it's doable and I've seen it happen with, with Asher too. The right person is like magic elixir or something, you know, your child can respond to them and, and it's a really cool thing to see. I would also just add to that that one of the things that I do personally and that maybe can be helpful for listeners is I've worked really hard in Asher's case, to teach him to love nature. I don't know how I did it. It took me a long time because I used to take them hiking and he, he would just resist and stomp and you know, just not be into it. And that's really kind of an important centering, calming place for me. That's kind of my church, you know, if I were to have a church and you know. Now he'll hike with me and so he's getting what he needs and I get what I need and it's a way for us to. Yeah, just both take care of ourselves and it's deepened our relationship. So there I think there's also possibilities of trying to discover what it is that you can do together that is self care for you and also your child benefits from.

Jonathan: Yeah, I mean that all make so much sense to me. And, and, and you and I, you know, nature is a huge reset for me also. I think, and that's part of the research that I shared in the book too, is that it's not just you and I, it's, you know, we are wired as human beings for that to literally change not just our psychology but our physiology. I mean, you know, it literally reduces inflammation in your body to be in nature, but, and the response from a lot of people as well, that's nice if you have a forest next door. But the cool thing is that what the research also shows is that really subtle changes like as small as having a plant in view when you're inside actually makes a difference as well. So even tiny things like that can make it make a change.

Debbie: That's so cool. Okay, so I actually went through the book again and was looking at some of these daily explorations again to see like what are a couple of we could touch upon that are especially relevant and again, I think they all are, but I just wanted to ask you about a few things. What I wanted to start with you talk about cultivating compassion and in that you actually tell a story which I had read about in the news and then to read it again and, and specifically involves the differently wired community. So can you talk about that takeaway and why you included the story of Kelvin Moon Loh?

Jonathan: Yeah so Kelvin was in *The King and I* on Broadway and there was a performance one night and apparently, during the performance there was a mom who brought a child and the child was having a lot of outbursts and the audience turned hostile against the mother and the child. And later in the show Kevin looked up to see that the two seats that they had previously occupied were empty. You know, like they, they left. And so he took to Facebook the next day, not to lambast the person for disrupting the show, but to actually kind of rail in

a socially conscious way against the audience for being so incredibly intolerant and devoid of compassion and you know, to say like, who knows, maybe this mom had had a child who was autistic or differently wired in some, any number of different ways and you know, they've been working for a long time to build up to this moment to come to the show and, and she was doing the best she could and the child was doing the best they could and they did, you know, last as long as they could and instead of, you know, being received, you know, this happened also at a very dramatic moment in the show where it was very emotional for a lot of people. And he just, he said, you know, to be received with so little tolerance and so little compassion is just this, this is not what we're here to do and this is not the way that we're here to be. And you know, I thought it was, it was telling both about, I think the state of culture these days and, and about the state of compassion in culture these days. And you know, there's a lot of research that shows that compassion is really important and that it also is a trainable experience. And it's something that I think, you know, it makes a lot of sense for us to both cultivate in ourselves and you know, for, for anyone to be able to cultivate it, just the way they move through daily life. I remember a couple of years back, I sat down with Sharon Salzberg, who's this wonderful insight teacher and meditation teacher.

Jonathan: And she told me that on the way over to the studio before we taped a conversation, she was walking down the street doing something called a Meta or loving kindness meditation. And she was literally just looking at strangers on the street. And as they'd walked by, she would think to herself, may you be happy. And another stranger would walk by and she think to herself may you be healthy. And another street who walked by and think to herself, may you live with ease. And she literally just moved through her day and walked down the street offering these, these intentions of loving kindness to complete strangers and she didn't do it for them. She did it for her because it changed the way that she was in the world. And there's actually now really compelling research that shows that that practice is one of the things that actually allows us to train compassion in ourselves.

Debbie: That's so great. Yeah. I love that meditation and just imagine, right, if we, if we all were doing that in the world, how different things would be. It's kind of mind boggling to imagine the energy that could be shifting. I think the compassion piece is so relevant to parents who with a differently wired kids because of that compassion piece for yourself. So many of us don't. It's, you know, maybe tied into the self care piece, but we can be so hard on ourselves and you know, that we're not doing enough or placing blame or the guilt and all those pieces. And then there's the compassion to your partner. If you have a partner in this parenting journey, that piece is so critical because it's tricky if you're not on the same page and you're both dealing with challenging situations with your child through your own lens and it can be hard to remember to show compassion, show your partner, and then there's compassion to your child for who they are, you know, which they don't get a lot of, you know, from some of their teachers or other things. They get a lot of, you know, you're screwing up or your behavior is not acceptable or we need to make these changes. And when we respond to atypical kids- to any child with compassion, it's incredible what can



happen for them. And then I also talk about compassionately educating everybody else. You know, we have a lot of work to do and shifting this paradigm and the people who don't get it. And I think it's really important that we find a way to be compassionate while we're educating them and kind of cluing them into what's going on.

Jonathan: Yeah, I mean I think that's an important point to make also is that, you know, it's compassion operates at a number of different levels both to and from. And you brought up the idea of self compassion, which is just so important. Also, it's funny, the one of the ethical teachings in Yoga is a Sanskrit word Ahimsa which translates roughly to nonviolence. And when most people first learned about the concept, they think, well, okay, so the teaching is, you know, nonviolent, part of my ethical constraints is that I'm, I am to be nonviolent to others, like cause vs. cause no harm, but what they don't think is that part of that same teaching is nonviolence toward self. Like how do I not be violent towards me because it's very hard to carry that out into relationships with others if you are not cultivating the ability to avoid violence towards yourself. And compassion is one of the things that let you get to that space.

Debbie: Yeah. And I think to so many of our kids are perfectionists and we're modeling for them like they're watching everything we're doing so...

Jonathan: ...right!? We're like, where's this coming from? It's this crazy new phenomenon in society. It's like gee, I wonder.

Debbie: So I wanted to ask you, I don't know if it's the first mobile, but one of the early explorations in the book, his Own the Unknown and for me, you know, I think that is, I know there are no guarantees in any parent's journey and that's all good and fair and I think for parents with atypical kids, we often feel like we're just have absolutely no clue what the future looks like and being uncertain about so many things and what this is going to look like and what is the journey like is really, that's probably one of our biggest challenges. So I'm wondering if you could just talk about Owning the Unknown, directed towards parents who are feeling like they want to have more information than they do.

Jonathan: Yeah. I'm at a completely natural response. We want control, we want security, we want to know what's coming next. We want to know everything's going to be okay and to the extent that you can gather information, take action and do what you can do to, to make that happen. Do it. You know, but the, certainly the root cause of suffering is trying to make certain of future, which is by definition not able to become certain, and we spend so much of our lives trying to make certain that which can never become certain, that that translates to spending so much our lives basically embracing suffering in the name of something we can never have. So that's a really hard thing to deal with because we're actually neurologically wired to experience the unknown, to experience uncertainty as physical and psychological unease. The Amygdala, the fear center in our brain lights up and sends both electrical impulses and chemicals coursing through us that make us want to throw up that make us want to run that make us feel physically and emotionally uncomfortable.



Jonathan: And we just don't want to feel that way. So we try and do everything not to rather than saying there are some things that I can control. There are some things that I can control and no matter what, I will never be able to lock down the future. So you, it's the serenity prayer when it comes down to it. Right? Do what you can to control what you can control and then the work is not to try and then control the rest of it, but to say, okay, of the things that are, lie in the unknown, how can I cultivate a sense of equanimity, as much equanimity, as, as, as possible, as much ease, as, as possible, as much acceptance in this state and allow, what I have no control over to happen and then know that I'm cultivating this stillness and developing the skills to respond in whatever way that I can respond when it happens. Sometimes that will be really effective. Sometimes it'll be a total meltdown, a disaster. But when you pile on the anxiety of expectation, on top of the reality of the unknown, what you're doing is you're compounding suffering. So it's, you know, that the idea is can I can I essentially train in the alchemy of uncertainty? So that and one of the most fundamental ways to do that, that I know of is a meditative practices. You know that, that's my go to practice. And I, for me, it's my everyday. I wake up every day in the morning and I do some breathing exercises to just kind of bring myself into a center place and then I do a mindfulness practice first thing in the morning and um, it's changed my life. It hasn't necessarily made it easier, it hasn't made it more certain. But what it's done is it's helped remove the layer of suffering that comes from me trying to control circumstances that they can't control. And it's made me, the other huge benefit to practices like this are that it allows you to over time be less reactive and more intentional. And that's a huge gift for everybody. It's a huge gift for you and it's a huge gift for everybody who you would interact with.

Debbie: Absolutely. Yeah. Thank you for that. That's so powerful. And that word suffering a used several times when you were describing that. And I think that's such a powerful word and I think it's appropriate. You know, I think that we don't realize that that's really what's going on and that we are compounding it by being so kind of stuck in swirling around in the unknown's and spiraling about the future and, and all of those things.

Jonathan: But by the way, Shoutout to a dear friend of mine, Susan Piver, who's a Shambala Buddhist meditation teacher and a fabulous *New York Times* bestselling author and all the other yada yada yada. She has a book, I don't know when this is gonna air, but she has a book that's soon to come out called *The Four Noble Truths of Love* and for any grown-up who is in a relationship where there's a huge amount of sustained uncertainty and mess and lack of control within the relationship, this is such, such an important book. I would definitely encourage you to read that book at some. I, you know, I'm married a long time now in a relationship in a long time and I learned so much. Um, and it's, it's all, it's really builds on these ideas, but it applies them very specifically to longterm grown-up relationships.

Debbie: That sounds fascinating. I will, listeners, I'll leave a link to that in the show notes page so you can check it out. I am going to check it out. It sounds great. And I want to be conscious of the time and so before we say goodbye, I think we could



be, could spend hours talking about all this stuff, but before we say goodbye, could you just tell us where people can find you and what's coming up for you? I know there's the camp that maybe some of our listeners would be interested in. So can you share that with?

Jonathan: Sure. Yeah. So the best place to find everything that we're working on is just goodlifeproject.com. That's sort of the center of everything. And as part of that, as you mentioned, we, we have every year at the end of August, the last three and a half days of August, I think we bring around 400 people together. We take over a kid's sleepaway camp a beautiful 130 acres sleepaway camp for an adult summer camp. And it's sort of the best of all of the fun amazing activities that you would do as a kid in summer camp blended with really beautiful talks and workshops on everything from relationships to health and vitality and awakened careers. But honestly the most important thing that happens here is probably just you get to step out of your everyday life. You get to breathe again, you get to spend time in a safe place with just amazing kind, open-hearted facade, free adults and hit reset. So yeah. And so that's interesting to anybody. There's plenty of information that goodlifeproject.com.

Debbie: Awesome. Someday, someday I will be going to your summer camp. That would be fantastic. Yes, it's on my list. I check it out every year. And just with the Europe thing, it's, it's hard to make it work, but it's, it's, it's gonna happen. All right, well listen Jonathan, I will let you go. Thank you so much for just sharing all this with us. Again, I'm listeners. I'll include links to Jonathan's book, his website, and all the other things we talked about on the show notes page. And Jonathan, thank you again for coming by.

Jonathan: Yeah, it's been my pleasure. Thanks so much for inviting me.

Debbie: You've been listening to the Tilt Parenting podcast for the show notes for this episode, including links to Jonathan Field's website, his podcast and community The Good Life Project, his books, and all the other resources we discussed, visit www.tiltparenting.com/109.

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Or you can also find a link on the Tilt Parenting website. The other way you can help is to head over to itunes and leave a rating or review or both if you haven't done so already. There are a lot of parenting podcasts out there and new ones coming out every single day. So those ratings and are really help keep our podcast highly visible, which in turn makes it easier for me to go out there and get those big guests. Thank you so much and thanks again for listening. For more information on parenting, visit www.tiltparenting.com.

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

- [Jonathan Fields' website](#)
- [The Good Life Project](#)
- [How to Live a Good Life: Soulful Stories, Surprising Science, and Practical Wisdom](#) by Jonathan Fields
- [Uncertainty: Turning Fear and Doubt Into Fuel for Brilliance](#) by Jonathan Fields
- [Camp GLP](#)
- [The Four Nobel Truths of Love](#)
- [Revolution U](#)
- [Broadway's Kelvin Moon Loh Seeks Compassion After Child with Autism Disrupts Show](#) (The Today Show)
- [Gene Sharp and Albert Einstein Institute](#)
- [Susan Piver](#)
- [The Four Nobel Truths of Love: Buddhist Wisdom for Modern Relationships](#) by Susan Piver