Answers

1. **(28:04-29:38)** According to Mo Gawdat, what makes us happy and what is the 'happiness equation'?
   It is not just the specific events which make us happy or unhappy, it is the comparison between the event and the expectation in your mind of how life should be. happiness equation is: 'your perception of events minus your expectation of how life should be.'

2. **(29:38-30:18)** Why are we happy in nature, and what has no-one ever said in nature?
   We are happy in nature because it is exactly what we expect. It is chaotic and disorganised but we expect that. Nobody ever sits in front of the ocean and says, *"I like the view but please mute the sound."*

3. **(30:18-31:04)** What were we wrongly told about happiness, and what doesn't matter?
   We are wrongly told that happiness is found in events such as a gathering at the pub, a party, an activity or some kind of pleasure or fun. These are what Mo Gawdat refers to as an 'escape'. In reality, happiness is found in whether these events beat expectations making you at peace with what life is. It doesn't matter what life actually is, what matters is whether you are ok with it.

4. **(31:04-32:14)** What two situations does Mo Gawdat describe here, and how does he relate them to happiness?
   If your boss is annoying, but you expect your boss to be annoying then you will not be upset about it. It is not the event that causes unhappiness but your perception of the event. Your partner might say something hurtful on Friday at 4pm, and on Sunday morning you might think that he/she doesn't love you any more. This is your perception, and you compare that perception to your expectations, which can tell you whether you are happy about it or not.

5. **(32:14-32:37)** What can blur our idea of happiness, and why do these exist?
   6 grand illusions and 7 blind spots. The 6 grand illusions are pathways that the modern world teaches us to navigate the world that are not true.

6. **(32:37-33:31)** What illusion can cause us to feel unhappy, and according to the happiness equation, why can it cause us to feel unhappy?
   Control. We are never in control, the design of the universe is chaos, so if you try to control it then a lot of events are not going to live up to your expectations. You have to be selective over what you can control. Expect that things can fall out of your control.

7. **(33:31-33:46)** Why does Mo Gawdat struggle with this illusion, what do you think is implied by his comments here?
   He is a mathematician, a software developer, a physicist, an engineer and a senior executive. He is implying here that due to the fact that he has these roles he really struggles to let go of control.

Answers

8. **(33:46-34:19)** How did Mo Gawdat take this illusion to an extreme level with his wife?
   He had a spreadsheet to tell his wife when they should wash the clothes with colours and when to wash white clothes based on their average consumption as a family in order to save the environment.

9. **(34:19-34:40)** What are 6 illusions that can disrupt your view of what to expect from life?
   Thought, self, knowledge, time, control, fear.

10. **(34:40-35:55)** What is a 'blind spot', and what examples are given to illustrate this?
    The blind spots come from the way your brain is designed. It is designed to tell you what's wrong. If a tiger appeared then your brain wouldn't tell you how majestic the tiger is, it would tell you that you're going to die. Our brain looks for what's wrong which blurs the events of life. A mother might exaggerate when her child is ill. If they were ill 2 times in winter, then a mother might say that their child was ill all winter. Exaggeration is another blind spot. Through this you compare the wrong event to the wrong expectation, and the happiness equation falls apart.

11. **(35:55-37:02)** What does the interviewer assume about the viewers at this point in the interview and why?
    That many people listening or watching will be annoyed because they are saying that happiness is a choice, and people don't like to take personal responsibility.

12. **(37:07-37:35)** What are the exact words that Mo Gawdat says in these 28 seconds?
    [see page 5 for a mini transcript and accent guide]

13. **(37:35-37:57)** What happened on page 11 of Mo Gawdat's book "Solve for Happy" and why?
    He had a sentence that said that happiness is a choice. at that page he lost 8% of the readers, and most of the 8% that left were already in depression. It is disturbing to hear that it is your responsibility to get yourself out of your unhappy situation.

14. **(38:32-39:30)** What does 'neuroplasticity' tell us, and how do we make ourselves unhappy?
    If you run some sort of happiness activity once a day, every day your brain will be better at it. Most of us watch negative news every day, swipe through toxic positivity on social media, drowning ourselves in negativity, so we become good at being negative. Our bring thinks that being negative is important for us, so it aligns our neurons towards that.

Answer to Question 12 and Guide to Some Features of an Egyptian English Accent

Transcript of the video (37:05-37:35)

Key - Some differences between the Egyptian English accent and Standard English:

Blue text	**The 'r' in the Egyptian English accent is very different to most other English accents.** The 'r' that you can hear in the video is known as an 'alveolar trill', which is like a rolling 'r' made at the front of the mouth. It is similar to the 'r' heard in Spanish, Italian, Russian, Greek and Arabic. I can also be heard in Scottish English accents as well.
Bold Text	In Standard 'Received Pronunciation' English, 'filler' words such as 'are / to / a / can / of / for / from' are reduced to very quick sounds which are hard to hear . Each of these words contains some form of 'schwa' sound, which is a kind of lazy 'uh' sound. This occurs in all accents, including US accents. This gives English the rhythm that we are used to hearing from most native English speakers. However, in an Egyptian accent, as well as the Indian accent, the full pronunciation of these small words is used instead. This completely changes the rhythm of speech in comparison to US, UK, and Australian English. **The small words in bold text are pronounced fully where they would otherwise be pronounced with a schwa in other English accents. This is also a feature of South Asian English accents, and is a common feature among many second-language European speakers of English. This clear difference in rhythm is the main difference between an Egyptian English accent and a Standard English accent.**
Grey text	The real transcript of the video

When I **wr**ite books in gene**r**al I **wr**ite them like softwa**re**, so I issue **a** beta ve**r**sion, ok **and** I get
When I write books in general I write them like software, so I issue a beta version, ok and I get

two hund**r**ed **and** seventy people, I don't know why two seventy..I get two hund**r**ed **and** seventy people
two hundred and seventy people, I don't know why two seventy.. I get two hundred and seventy people

to **r**ead it, on Google Docs, so I give them edito**r** p**r**ivileges, so they **can** actually edit the text, **r**ight, **and**
to read it, on Google Docs, so I give them editor privileges, so they can actually edit the text, right, and

then something fascinating happens. They edit **the** text **and** then othe**r**s edit what they edited **and**
then something fascinating happens. They edit the text and then others edit what they edited and

the**re** is **a** conversation happening **and** basically it takes **the** book **to** its best possible ve**r**sion if you
there is a conversation happening and basically it takes the book to its best possible version if you

want
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