

Why do we do what we do?

Tony Robbins

Certainty in Uncertain Times

The now-famous [Tony Robbins TED talk](#) that introduced the Six Human Needs took place over 15 years ago, back in 2006 in Monterey, California. That talk, “Why We Do the Things We Do,” was one of the first six TED talks ever. Tony is a captivating speaker and every person on the planet wants to understand themselves a little better so he was a superior early speaker choice.

In this episode of the Tony Robbins Podcast, you will hear Tony delve deeper into why we do what we do. He’ll discuss each of the [Six Human Needs](#) – certainty, significance, variety, love/connection, growth and contribution – and how each influences our thoughts, feelings, behaviors, actions and even [what we buy](#). It’s a taste of what you will experience at his signature event, [Unleash the Power Within](#), an epic four-day seminar that challenges you to find your true purpose and pursue your goals. And it’s one of the most important skills that you will ever acquire.

The importance of human needs

What shapes human behavior? Why is there violence, greed and negativity in the world? Is it human nature or can it be stopped? Great minds have been debating these essential questions for centuries.

You don’t have to be a philosopher to want to understand human behavior. It’s just as important for your [personal growth](#). Because by understanding the needs that shape your behavior, you will be able to take back control over your life and learn how to create new patterns that lead to lasting fulfillment. Once you’re able to identify which human needs have been driving your decision-making, you can more accurately work to fulfill those needs.

You can also predict others’ needs and better respond to them. Whatever emotion you’re after, whatever goal you pursue – whether it’s building a business, [understanding your partner](#), raising a family or traveling the world – the Six Human Needs are a powerful tool.

So – why do we do what we do?

There are six basic, universal needs that make us tick and [drive all human behavior](#). Every person in this world has a reason for what they do. Everyone has a story – but there are only six reasons behind every story. What makes us individuals is that each of us value and prioritize these needs in different ways, and each of us have [varied beliefs](#) about what it means to meet those needs. This is what becomes the driving force behind why we do what we do, and determines the direction of our lives.

We can fulfill our needs in ways that are positive, neutral or negative, and the things we do to fulfill our needs [become our patterns](#). But many patterns don’t serve us. “Most people meet their needs in a way that works in the moment but not long term,” Tony says. Understanding how to break negative patterns is how we become the architects of our lives, instead of bystanders.

The power of certainty

There is one need that is the most common answer to why we do what we do: certainty. We all need to feel certain that we can avoid pain and that, ideally, we can have comfort. The [need for certainty](#) is a survival need. As Tony says, “People are driven by more than one thing. And often that thing is certainty.”