

The Future of Work podcast is a weekly show where Jacob has in-depth conversations with senior level executives, business leaders, and bestselling authors around the world on the future of work and the future in general. Topics cover everything from AI and automation to the gig economy to big data to the future of learning and everything in between. Each episode explores a new topic and features a special guest.

You can listen to past episodes at www.TheFutureOrganization.com/future-work-podcast/. To learn more about Jacob and the work he is doing please visit www.TheFutureOrganization.com. You can also subscribe to Jacob's [YouTube](#) channel, follow him on [Twitter](#), or visit him on [Facebook](#).

Jacob: Hello everyone, welcome to another episode of the Future of Work podcast. My guest today is Haemin Sunim. He is a Zen Buddhist teacher from South Korea and he's also the author of a couple bestselling books including, Love for Imperfect Things, how to accept yourself in a world of striving for perfection. And also, The Things You Can See Only When You Slow Down, how to be calm in a busy world.

Jacob: Thank you for joining me.

Haemin: Oh thank you.

Jacob: You are the first monk and the first Zen Buddhist teacher that I ever had on this podcast.

Haemin: Wow. I'm very honored.

Jacob: But I think a lot of the things that you talk about and I had a chance to read both your books, a lot of the things that you talk about are very, very relevant to the business audience. Usually people who listen to the show all are used to hearing me talk about technology and artificial intelligence and jobs and all these different things that are happening in the world but this episode is going to be a little bit more about what's happening with us. I'm excited to talk to you and kind of change things up a little bit. Thank you for agreeing to be a guest.

Haemin: Okay, good.

Jacob: To get started, why don't we learn a little bit more about you because you have a pretty interesting story. How did you get involved with this? How did you become a monk? How did you become a Zen Buddhist teacher? What led you down this path?

Haemin: When I was young, I asked these big questions and I'm sure a lot of, many adolescents, they would ask, why am I here? What's the purpose? What's the meaning of this life? That kind of big questions drove me. And then I was thinking, I felt as though I was just thrown into this world without any kind of answer. I have to just find my own manual, so to speak. I became very interested in variety of different religions and philosophy and then I when I was in college, I study religious studies and exploring different spiritual path. And then at that time, I was living in Zen center and met my master there and I really, really enjoyed living as a monastics. That's how I, everything started.

Haenim: For those of who are listening, maybe I would ask, have you ever thought why am I here? Is this all there is? Just being successful, making lots of money and being famous, is there any other reasons why we are here? Then you are one step closer to spiritual quest.

Jacob: Yeah, and I think a lot of people are in the process of working on that quest. And just to give some context, you went to school, I read, in Berkeley, Harvard and Princeton. I actually live in the Bay area so Berkeley is a couple miles away from where I live. Now is most of your time spent in South Korea?

Haenim: Oh yes. While I was attending my master's degree program, I went back to Korea and I received proper monastic training there. I was born and raised in South Korea and I came here when I turned 18.

Jacob: Very cool. You mentioned purpose and meaning. I find that to be interesting because a lot of companies nowadays, I don't know if you have heard or have seen some of these companies, but the idea of purpose and meaning is becoming so important even inside of companies. I know Unilever for example, the big organization they have, training for employees to try to understand their purpose and their meaning and a lot of big companies are investing in this. You are seeing that now more than ever, there's this huge quest towards finding more purpose and meaning?

Haenim: I think so, yeah. I think especially among millennial, I think, they care more about just making lots of money. They do want to contribute to a greater goods and they want to make deeper connections to people around them and the environment, bigger issues. I think if you I think especially at this age, peoples are becoming more and more heightenly aware about many different issue beyond their own survival. Yes, I would agree.

Jacob: I think and I think you would agree as well that it's a good thing that everybody's kind of on this quest in the business world and in our personal lives. I took some notes from reading your books. The questions that I have for you are kind of, they're a little bit all over the place but they're all focused on some of the books that you've written. The very first question is around why we're so busy today. You have this really great quote in your first book and quote was, "The world has never complained about how busy it is." I think in that section of the book you were saying that it's not about the world being busy it's how we're busy in our minds and we're very obsessed with things like social media and even now, when you talk to somebody and you say, "Hey, how are you? How's it going?" Everybody always says, "Oh my God, I'm so busy. I have so much going on." People say it as if it's kind of like, a good thing. Whoever the busiest person is should get an award.

Jacob: Why do you think that is? Is it a bit of a problem that we're all so busy?

Haenim: I think living in this very capitalistic society, efficiency and being able to get things done very quickly, is highly prized. Ever since we were very young, we were trained to do things as much as you can within a very limited time. However, as you are very much

goal driven, then you lose a lot of joy in the process. You don't actually get to see the person right in front of you. Rather you think about the destinations. I think it's important to remind ourselves that while it is important that we get things done, but also whether we are enjoying what we are doing.

Jacob: Do you have any advice for people on that? What if, for example, you realize that you're very, very busy and maybe you're not even enjoying the stuff that you're doing. How do you think about the stuff and what do you do if you're not actually enjoying that process?

Haenim: Okay, I think one of the ways to reclaim joy is to rediscover your own intention. What is your first reasons why you got into that particular industry? Or, that particular job. Usually that intention, first intention wasn't just make a lot of money and just do this kind of thing or that. But rather, it usually centers around helping other people or doing something good for the greater society or something. If you can just realign yourself with your first love, with your first intention, that's a one step closer to reclaiming joy.

Haenim: Also, if you feel that whatever you do there is no joy in your life, it probably is because you are suffering from burnout. You have done too much work within a short period of time without caring about your body and your mind and your spirit. What I would suggest is, see if you can take some time off. Just it can be as short as half an hour and you can just take a walk just for yourself for the purpose of enjoying walking rather than trying to get to somewhere quickly. That's another way we can do.

Jacob: I love the idea of reconnecting with why you originally started something. I think a lot of people lose touch with that, especially the longer you've been in business, the longer you've had a job, the longer you've been a manager, the more you start to forget why you got into that industry or for that company. I love that advice. It's simple. It's easy to do. Which is what I like the most about it.

Jacob: What about things like, a lot of us or a lot of people in the business world, they have deadlines, they have managers who keep wanting more from them, they have clients who keep wanting more and it feels like everybody's kind of pulling at you in different directions. Do you have any suggestions or advice or how to think about that or how to maybe put yourself in a better head space?

Haenim: Yeah. One of the reasons why we get stress is because there are a lot of things that you have to do and that different items of things that you have to do, it just keep repeating in your head without any kind of organizations. What I would suggest is you write it down. What are those urgent things that I need to do? If you make a list, you will clearly will see that those are the things that I need to do and then it's much easier for you to deal with them. And then among the things that you have listed and see which one is the easiest and you go and start tackling those, the easy tasks first. And then you will notice that once you get that first task done, then it's much easier to move onto the second and third and fourth. Rather than just putting all of those things that you have to do all in your head, I would advise to write it down.

Jacob: I actually do that. I don't actually write it, I use a tool called Asana and so whenever I have to do tasks, I always make a list of all the tasks I need to do. Otherwise it's all just floating around in my brain and it's just driving me crazy because that's all I think about. Writing it down has definitely been a huge, huge help for me.

Jacob: What are your thoughts on technology? Because this is a big area of concern for a lot of people. Technology controlling us. Spending too much time on social media. Even though I know you're very active on social media, I think you have over a million followers on Twitter and you're always sharing lots of great quotes and advice but what are your general thoughts on people who are addicted to social media or just spending so much time on there?

Haenim: My answer for that is, have a date with yourself rather than trying to just try to seek for how many likes I get, see if you can take yourself out to a nice park or somewhere that you would enjoy and get to really feel your body and feel your breath. How your emotion is currently feeling and what are those thoughts popping up in your head? Rather than perceiving yourself from the perspective of your friends, I think it will be much easier if you can actually feel yourself, what is already there?

Haenim: I think periodically, one of the easiest way to do it is take a walk. I personally, I love to walk and as you are just walking, just without any kind of a technical device, like no cellphone, just walking and just feeling your own body and sensations and all that. This can actually counteract all those addictive impulses I think.

Jacob: I've actually never been to South Korea. And I know in the United States and I'm sure when you come here, you probably see this, that a lot of people are very much glued to their phones or their computers. Is it the same in South Korea, lots of people are constantly on their phones and on technology and on social media?

Haenim: Oh yeah, absolutely. Samsung is a Korean company. Peoples are very much into the cellphones and internets and yes.

Jacob: Does that bother you at all? When you're walking and you see just a bunch of people on their phone or taking pictures or Instagraming pictures of their food. If you're out to dinner, for example, and you see people next to you that are just on their phone texting and taking pictures of their food, does that bother you or irritate you? What do you think when you see that?

Haenim: Personally, it doesn't bother me. However, if you are having a dinner and rather than talking to your family member or friends right in front of you and if you are taking your phone out and then checking your Facebook account or whatever, then you are losing valuable opportunity. I would recommend that maybe when you are having dinner, just put aside, just for the 15 minutes while you're eating and then catch up with your close friends and family.

Jacob: Sometimes it drives me nuts, I'll be honest. If I'm at lunch or dinner with somebody and they have the phone next to them or they have, it's even worse now with the watches

and they can just keep looking at their wrist for all their text messages and sometimes I just want to take those phones and throw them to the other side of the restaurant. Sometimes it can be a little much.

Haenim: This is very interesting Jacob because the reason why we feel annoyed is because we do appreciate when that person paying attention to us and because that attention is an act of love. When you see that, that person is actually paying attention to somewhere else even though their body is right in front of you then this can be very disappointing.

Jacob: It is. It is. It's exactly like you said, the body is there and the mind is who knows where. It's floating around somewhere.

Haenim: Right, right, right. Especially sometime when you are meeting your friend and you haven't had a meal together for number of months. You are looking forward to this and then you sat down however, he keeps looking at his own cellphone. I can see why this can be disappointing.

Jacob: It can be a little much. One of the other things that you talked about and this was in your recent book, you talk about empathy. Maybe let me just start with a very broad question. Why is empathy so important for all of us to practice and think about?

Haenim: Because if you want to have a good relationship with people around you, I think it's crucial that you put yourself in their shoes and try to see from their own perspectives.

Jacob: Basically trying to understand things from other people's point of view and their perspective. Which makes sense. And I would assume that this especially relevant in the business world when you're talking to managers, when you talk to your customers, all those different types of scenarios and situations.

Haenim: Yes. Definitely. Especially if you want to understand how your employees are feeling. You need to sit down and talk to them and try to see thing from their own perspectives. We can get a lot of informations out of it. But when we do that, I think it's important that we listen rather than talk. If you are one of those top executive and people expect you to talk often, however if you let other people talk and listen, then you can learn a lot.

Jacob: I think you actually say that listening is an act of love, which I love that quote. It is important to listen. What are your thoughts on silence? I know sometimes people talk because they're scared of silence, of not having anybody talk. What are your thoughts on silence? Is that okay to have? Is that weird?

Haenim: Personally, if you feel, if silence bothers you and why don't you ask this question, why am I being bothered by having silence? Maybe it can reveal a deeper truth.

Jacob: Yeah, yeah. Sometimes some people think silence is awkward. I've certainly been in those situations where you're at lunch or you're at dinner or first date, or you're both

just kind of looking at each other and it's I think people feel a little scared or awkward of what silence means but I guess it's okay.

Haenim: I guess what you're saying is when you meet somebody for the first time, I think it's important that you create some kind of rapport, what do you call it? Bonding. For that, I think you of course you want to ask a lot of questions and trying to find some kind of a common ground between you. And then I think it's true, only when you know somebody really, really well, than you can be, stay together in silence. However, sometime, if you can in spite of the awkwardness, if you can just stay a little bit longer and then what kind of feeling is right there? That can be also a very interesting explorations about self awareness.

Jacob: What does a typical day look like for you? Again, I've never talked to a monk before a Zen Buddhist teacher such as yourself and I think a lot of people would also be interested because for most people, a typical day is you're probably up at 6:00 in the morning, you quickly eat something, you take your kids to school and then you're working 9:00 to 5:00. And then you come home, have dinner and that's kind of like your day. But for you, how do you start your day? What does a day look like for you?

Haenim: Well for me, it depends on where I am. Usually when I'm in a Buddhist monastery then they have a very strict schedule. We get up at 3:00 in the morning and then we do two hours of sitting and then we have a breakfast at 5:50. And then we do have another meditation sitting and then cleaning the entire monastery. And then having lunch. And then doing another set of sitting meditations. And then we go to bed around 9:00 o'clock.

Haenim: However, when I'm outside the monastery because I am running this School of Broken Hearts in South Korea right now, I usually wake up around 5:00 o'clock and then do my own meditations and sitting and then do a bit of prayer. And then I have breakfast and then I will go out and have at least 30 minutes or one hour of walking. I enjoy walking. And then I will go the School of Broken Hearts and then obviously there's some kind of a, usually there are a number of things that I need to talk about or think about, make a plan together with people, staff. And then I would have, I would get into either a meeting or I do teach a course. And then I generally come back to rest around 7:00 and before doing that I generally try to take a walk one more time. And then I do a little bit to meditations and try to go to bed around 9:30 or 10:00.

Jacob: Wow, waking up at 3:00 AM when you're in the monastery. That is early. The earliest I think that I've heard from executives when I interview them, some people say around 5:30 or 6:00 but 3:00 AM definitely, definitely wins. And when you're traveling, you said you're up at 5:00?

Haenim: Yeah.

Jacob: Okay, that's still quite early. When you think of, for example, the typical day for those people who have 9:00 to 5:00 jobs and up at 6:00, grabbing coffee, taking the kids to school when they're working, do you have any advice on how you would structure a

day? If you were, let's say you were coaching someone, would you design their day differently? Would you make meditation, would you make something like this a part of their daily routine?

Haenim: Well that would be great, if they are willing. I think that one of the most important part is to go to sleep, go to bed early. Nowadays, there's a lot of temptation to just looking at your cellphone and engage in different work. Even at home. However, if you commit yourself, let's say, I'm going to go to bed 30 minutes earlier than the usual my bedtime. Or, one hour earlier, then what happen is, the next morning, you have extra 30 minutes or extra one hour. And then, this will allow you to do a lot of things. You can meditate. You can exercise. You can plan ahead in your mind what are things that I need to take care of this today? Rather than being pulled to different meetings and whatnot, you have a higher awareness about your own schedule and which makes you feel like you are much more in control of your life. And then again, this will also make you happier.

Haenim: Going to bed one hour early or one hour earlier than usual, I think that would be my key advice. And then, if you can include a 30 minutes of solitude, quiet time just for yourself, if you can sit and meditate, and that would be great. Nowadays, there are many meditation app. You can just log into and listen. Or if you prefer, you can just listen to your favorite music but when you listen to music, just listen without doing other things at the same time. This can also bring you the joy of simple listening.

Jacob: Why is something like meditation important? I talk to a lot of business leaders who actually say they started doing meditation, they started having some time for themselves. Why do you think this is such an important practice?

Haenim: I think meditations allows you to become aware of not only how you are currently feeling and thinking but also ultimately who you are. If you have to make a lot of important decisions, you really have to listen to the intelligence of your body. Oftentime, we overlook our own body but our body is actually connected to our unconsciousness or self consciousness and so important decisions can arise out of your unconsciousness. If you try to think very, very hard and try to arrive at important decisions, you may make some mistakes. However, if you can really intuitively listens how your gut instinct is telling you, beyond your intellectual over thinking process then this will allow you to have more wise decision making.

Haenim: In order for you to have this kind of space, mental space, I think having a bit of downtime, quiet time, becoming self awareness time is very important.

Jacob: Self awareness actually comes up a lot in various conversations. Really getting to know yourself. I'm glad you mention that. I'm curious, what are some of the, I guess the biggest questions or when people talk to you, what are they asking for advice on the most? What topics do you get asked about the most? What questions?

Haenim: Well for me, because I'm a monk, they would ask me questions about, question regarding loss. They like for example, they lost their family members or they lost their career. Things that were very dear to them, somehow, they lost and they don't know

what to do with it. This experience of loss is a great opportunity in my mind, to reexamine our lives and see what our priorities are. Those kind of questions about they're dealing with loss is the number one questions.

Jacob: Maybe we talk about that for a couple of minutes because I know in business world people go through loss a lot. Aside from loss in their personal lives, people go through loss of jobs, loss of careers. I've known many people, friends, family members, who've gone through that and it's very hard dealing with loss of job of career. It's part of your identity as well. It's how you kind of get associated with that or where you get your identity from sometimes. How do you deal with loss such as job or a career or even a family member or a friend? What advice do you typically give?

Haenim: If you examine any kind of loss, and you will realize that it's not a complete loss. Usually you gain something from that experience. Like for example, if you have learned certain kind of skillsets from your previous job, then it's not a complete loss. You gained something and then you can move forward with that new skillset. Same thing is true with your loved one. Even though, let's say your mother passed away for example, if you turn in and looking in yourself, there are many habits or elements of things that you share with your mother. It can be your personality, or it can be the way you laugh. Whenever you encounter the elements that resonates with your mother for example, then you realize that your mom is living in you. There is no complete disconnections.

Haenim: Any kind of loss is very difficult and tough but at the same time it reveals that we are more than just our job, more than our skillsets. If you have identified yourself with a certain kind of job, we should also remind ourselves that how artificially we are identifying with that, our identity. If we can identify with something, it also mean that we can also dis-identify with that, disassociate with that. I would say that you are much more, much bigger than your job and also this can be a great opportunity for you to move on to a new field. New things that you always dreamed of doing things. You never know what kind of opportunity you may run into.

Jacob: How do you make that disassociation because I think you're right, a lot of people associate themselves with their job or with their career. Is there, how do you make that disconnection where you're not just your career, you're not just your job, you're other things and to other people. How do you embrace or practice or make that a reality? Or your new mindset.

Haenim: Seeing how artificial it is. If you can, it a heuristically you are temporally attaching yourself to that profession for example. People change jobs. Accordingly, you change your quote unquote, identity. If you can actually see how artificial it is, then you can disassociate yourself.

Jacob: It's about taking a step back and just understanding that it's artificial.

Haenim: Like for example, when you are born, a baby, there is a pure awareness. However, this awareness doesn't have any kind of a gender or nationality or personality but there is a feeling of you existing. This feeling of I am, this feeling continues whereas all the rest of

them comes and goes, including your body. Maybe I'm being monk or monastic here, however, what I will say is that we are temporarily having this human experience in this world. If you see this as a temporal play, so to speak, you are in this movie called Human Life, then you can enjoy what you have while knowing that this is just a play.

Jacob: I like that. I like that approach. I think that makes a lot of sense. One of the other things that you talk about is the importance of self care. I suppose there's two types of self care, self care of the mind and self care of the body. I think I am pretty good at self care of the body. I go to the gym. I look after myself. I look after what I eat. Personally, I don't think I'm that great when it comes to self care of the mind. For example, self talk, the way you talk to yourself. I play competitive racquetball, I play chess and whenever I lose or whenever when I make a mistake, instead of saying, "Oh you know, it's okay, you can do better next time," I get angry. And I have this kind of negative self talk.

Jacob: I'm curious if you have any advice for people and this doesn't need to be with sports, this could be with work, it could be with maybe you delivered a project and the project at work wasn't that good. A lot of people immediately default to this negative self talk about themselves. Do you have any advice for how to practice the positive self talk and the positive care?

Haenim: One of the ways to go beyond this kind of negative talk is realizing that where that negative talk was originated. Oftentimes, a lot of negative self image, it wasn't your idea. It was somebody else's. It could be your parents who always say, "You're not good enough." Say, you are never going to make it. Or it could be your friends or bullies. You will not amount to anything. But, if you are exposed to that kind of negative criticisms over time, and then when you start believing in those comments, then it becomes part of you. Whenever there is any kind of disappointing result then it just automatically reaffirms your internalized this self critic voice. If you can see that, this wasn't your idea, it is just something that other people, their own past experience, based on their own negative experience, they present a certain judgment on you. Then you can slowly free yourself.

Haenim: If you can, what I would say is, if you can just write it down. Not just all the self negative criticisms but also some of the positive things that you see yourself, and if you can just put that positive comments about yourself, somewhere in your room or somewhere in your bathroom, somewhere you see it very often, then maybe you can also include that as part of your consciousness.

Jacob: I like it. No, I think that's good practical advice. What about, let's say somebody came to you and they said, "You know what? I need help finding my purpose or my meaning or my passion." How would you respond to that? How do help or can you even help somebody figure those things out if they want to know what their passion or meaning or purpose is?

Haenim: Usually meanings, people find it when you are doing something beyond your own self interests. If you are helping other people, no matter how small it is, you see that you are contributing something for the better. The reason why it provides you with the sense of meaning is because from a Buddhist perspective, there is nothing but one

interconnected reality. If you just subscribe yourself only in terms of your conceptual thoughts, ideas, then you reside, you live your life mainly from the perspective of your own ego.

Haenim: However, if you are seeing beyond your ego, then you see that there is one infinite interconnected reality and once we, whenever we feel that interconnected reality, that's what makes us feel good because that's who we are. Beyond this, our physical body, there is one interconnected oneness. In Zen Buddhism, we call this zen but many different in religious tradition call it, God or spirit or whatever. That's one of the ways.

Haenim: If you are looking for your own interests and then you want to become successful in this world, what I would usually suggest is that just look around and see what really attracts you. What other area? For example, if you like to become a writer, see if you can go to bookstores and which genre you are interested in and once you have discovered that particular genre, then I recommend that you read as many books as you can. Especially those that are very popular or became very successful. And then, after having read many books, you need to return to yourself. You have to come back to yourself and use your own very particular personal background as part of your resource.

Haenim: From that personal resource, if you can combine with the knowledge of great traditions that you want to become part of, then you can create something very original. Importance here is never abandon your own background.

Jacob: Do you think that, this might sound silly to some people listening but it's not meant to be. Volunteering and helping others, does that sometimes sort of break us out of our comfort zone and help us understand and find that sense of meaning or purpose?

Haenim: Yes, when you feel uncomfortable, that's when you grow. Because we are, when you do things that make you feel a little awkward, feel out of your comfort zone, then that's when you begin to learn new things and making new connections.

Jacob: Great, great. I hope people will volunteer, participate or focus on helping others. I think that's great advice. You had a section in one of your books and it was about encouragement and I think you said something like, "One word of encouragement can change the future." When I was reading this section, I was immediately thinking about leaders and managers of companies who have people who report or work for them and I feel like sometimes managers and leaders don't understand how powerful encouragement is. It's very easy for us to say, "You're not doing a good job. You need to do better. You did this wrong." But having that word of encouragement is so important to us.

Jacob: I'm wondering, maybe you could talk about encouragement for a minute and why that is so crucial.

Haenim: I think there's a saying that if you encourage an elephant, then even elephant can dance.

Jacob: I like that.

Haenim: Yeah. That's very popular saying in Korea nowadays. I guess, I think, there is two different way of making your employee work. One way is to telling them what to do and then chastising. How can I say?

Jacob: Yeah, yeah, no, no, no, that's right.

Haenim: The second approach is to encourage them and then believe in them and the waiting, give them some time to grow. I think the second approach is much more effective. However, this for some people, this can be a very conscious effort that they have to make. Rather than immediately finding faults in your employees, and see what are the inner elements that you really appreciate about the employee. See if you can talk about that first before talking about the areas that you see him or her to improve.

Jacob: I like that. I think it's a very simple, yet practical piece of advice for managers and leaders is you can start with the good before you go into the improvement because very quickly everybody always starts with the things that are going wrong. If you kind of reverse that, I think it changes the tone and changes the conversation a little bit which is great.

Jacob: Let's say you were talking to somebody just graduating college and they were going through whatever college students go through. They're kind of not sure what they want to do. They're looking to try to find themselves. Looking for their first job. What advice would you give to people who are just graduating college now and are looking to join the business world?

Haenim: I just want to give this advice that is, if you cannot find your job immediately, don't blame yourself. I don't know how things are going in the United States but in South Korea, it's very difficult for young people to get a job nowadays. And then oftentimes you feel like you are a loser. But that's not the case. It can be the economy, it can be the system working against you. Also, I think if you already know what it is that you want to do for the rest of your life, then that's really fantastic. You'll take a couple or two, three, four, five years of hard working to feel like you have some kind of footing. Some kind of basis.

Haenim: However, those very difficult first couple years, will be a hugely beneficial if you can just hang on and don't give up during that period. No matter what sort of job you get then the first couple of years is really tough. And then, for those of you who do not know what it is that you want to do, then give yourself couple of years to discover what it is that you are interested in. Because your first job often leads to second job. Usually doing second job somehow is related to your first job. I would spend, if I can, then if I were you, then I would spend more time just to discover what it is that I want to do because spending six month or one year discovering your own passion, this will pay off in the long run.

Jacob: Yeah, no, that's great advice. And I've gone through that too when I first started and graduated from college. I know exactly what that's like.

Jacob: Kind of a weird question for you and I only know we have a couple of minutes left, but sort of a weird question for you and it's when you look at just the business world and you see what people are going through in the United States or in South Korea or in any other part of the world that you happen to go to, what are your general kind of thoughts about the business world today?

Haenim: My general thoughts?

Jacob: Yeah, yeah. Do you think, when you see people working the way they are and the companies the way they are, do you look at that and think that everything is just wrong and backwards and crazy and why would you want to work for this kind of a company? Or do you think that we're moving in the right direction and companies are getting better and purpose and impact and meaning is growing? Or do you still think that in the business world there's a lot of work that we need to do before we create places where employees actually want to show up?

Haenim: To be honest, I don't have a whole lot of experience in this area. However, I will say that once you become quite successful in whichever area, then you begin to think about beyond making a lot of profits. You realize quickly that no matter how much money you are making, just making extra X amount of money, will not make you happier. Rather, instead, if you are seeing your own employees being happy, for example, that will make you feel happier for sure.

Haenim: In Buddhism we are saying that if you are just pursuing happiness for yourself, then there is not guarantee that you'll be happier. However, if you are pursuing happiness for the benefit of making other people happy, then you will surely become happy.

Jacob: I like it. That makes much more sense. And maybe last question for you before we wrap up and I'm asking you this because my wife always tells me this, you had a quote in one of your books and you said, "Being right isn't important, being happy together is." I know personally I have this problem where sometimes I can be a little critical. Sometimes I'm very obsessed with trying to be right. Hopefully I'm not the only one in the world that's like this. How do you shift your mindset from being right to focusing on and understanding that it's about being happy together instead of being right?

Haenim: I think you need to remember the big picture. You want ultimately happiness. Oftentimes happiness comes when you share things. When you are sharing great things together with your wife, husband or your employees. Let's say, even if something amazing happened to you and there is nobody else around you to share, then it's not that great actually. The one time I was traveling Italy when I was in college and I saw amazing, beautiful art and but I was there alone and I wasn't very happy. But when I was traveling with my friends then little thing made us really happy.

Haenim: Just keep in mind that ultimately what you want is happiness. What your ego wants is you want to prove that you're right. You are better than anybody else. That's what your ego wants. However, you are much more than your own ego. You want to feel how you are already connected with everything else in this universe. You are part of this journey and we are here to learn about who we are. I guess that's it.

Jacob: Got to keep that ego in check. I'll definitely work on that. I just had a couple of very quick, just rapid fire questions, just fun questions for you so people can get to know you a little bit better.

Jacob: First question for you, what is your most embarrassing moment? Have you had a really embarrassing moment, maybe while you're traveling or giving talks or teaching? Did anything embarrassing ever happen to you?

Haenim: There are lots of time. I feel sometime I feel very self conscious about my own English, to be honest. Making mistakes while speaking, that makes me feel very embarrassed.

Jacob: Okay, that's a good one.

Jacob: What are you most proud of?

Haenim: I'm very proud of my school that I found, the School of Broken Hearts. This is nonprofit organizations and we're anybody who went through difficulty whether it's loss of your family members, divorce or just recently diagnosed with cancers or whatever, then they can come and participate in different program to get better. I'm very proud of that.

Jacob: What's a book that you recommend, besides your books? Not one of your books but another book, which one would you recommend people read?

Haenim: That's really difficult question because there are so many great books. I really like Tara Brach's books called Radical Acceptance.

Jacob: I haven't heard of that one. I'm going to have to check that one out.

Haenim: Yeah, she's a wonderful American Buddhist teacher. I really highly admire her work. If you are interested in accepting yourself I would recommend that book.

Jacob: Who has been the best mentor that you've ever had?

Haenim: The best mentor is my own Zen master. He showed me with his own humility, with his own sincere effort, and also with his wisdom, I learned so much and even now whenever I have some kind of problems, I will go to him and ask for advice.

Jacob: Great. And then, last question, if you think you were doing something else, let's say you didn't become a monk and you weren't a teacher and you weren't a writer, what do you think you would've ended up doing instead?

Haenim: I have no idea. I would've loved to make some kind of a cappella group.

Jacob: Really? Wow.

Haenim: I was thinking that in Korea when I go back, I want to invite couple of my Buddhist monk friend and we create small a cappella group and then start doing some concert or things like that in nature. Just for the fun of it.

Jacob: That would be cool. I like it. That's a very, very different thing to be including in there.

Jacob: Where can people go to learn more about you. I know you're on Twitter, you're very active on there and you have your books. Anything that you want to mention for people to check out or learn about or connect with you, please feel free to do so.

Haenim: I have a website. It's haeminsunim.com. If you are interested in what kind of writings I have done or where I'm going to appear, check out my websites and also my books. Love for Imperfect Things and also, The Things You Can See Only When You Slow Down. Both books sold over a million copies worldwide and I'm very grateful for that.

Jacob: That's amazing. And I'm going to spell your name really quick just in case people want to go to one of those URLs. It's H-A-E-M-I-N-S-U-N-I-M. If you just put that name together and Google .com, that will take you to his website and you'll be able to see his books, Twitter and all that other sort of stuff on there. You can make sure to check that out. Thank you so much for joining me, I really appreciate it.

Haenim: Thank you.

Jacob: And thanks everyone again for tuning in. My guest again has been Haemin Sunim, Zen Buddhist teacher and author of a couple books. Make sure to check them out. Love for Imperfect Things and, The Things You Can See Only When You Slow Down. I will see you next week.