

EPISODE 477

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:35.9]

FT: Welcome to So Money everyone, thanks for joining. I'm host Farnoosh Torabi. Do you ever watch Super Soul Sunday on the Oprah Winfrey Network? It's one of the things I missed since cutting cable, but I think I can still get some of it online, thankfully. Our guest today is a Super Souler. She's Oprah's go-to parenting expert for years and is a household name in our home since Tim and I became parents.

Dr. Shefali Tsabary, or just Dr. Shefali for short, is gracing our show today, so excited. She's an acclaimed author, international speaker, clinical psychologist. Her award-winning book, *The Conscious Parent*, has become my parenting bible and so many parents' go-to guide. Oprah calls it one of the most profound books on parenting. Most recently, Dr. Shefali came out with a new book. It's called *The Awakened Family: A Revolution in Parenting*, and in it, she gives parents the daily skills and tools to help raise kids without fear and anxiety so you can truly cultivate relationships with them.

And so in our interview, we discuss how to raise money conscious children who grow up to appreciate the value of money, her own battles and successes with money and why becoming a conscious parent she says is not so much an absolute goal or an end game but a work in progress, even for her. And by the way, she's coming to New York. Dr. Shefali is hosting a New York City Summit called *Evolve*. It is a three day workshop where she and her team of experts will expose you to a way of living and parenting that you have never been before. I am going to try to make it myself and she's generously offering you guys, all of us, a \$50 discount if you use the code "50off". For tickets, go to drshefali.com/evolve-nyc. We'll have this on the blog at somonypodcast.com.

Here is Dr. Shefali.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:02:36.6]

FT: Dr. Shefali, welcome to So Money. I am girl crushing right now, you have no idea.

[00:02:41.3]

ST: Oh I'm so happy to be with you.

[00:02:44.3]

FT: I have to say, you've not known about me, I've known about you for some time. I became a parent in 2014 and my nanny of all people, got to love her, she came to my house the first week to help me out with the baby and brought your book and this was *The Conscious Parent*.

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ST: That's incredible.

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FT: I know, what a great gift, right?

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ST: Yes, yes.

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FT: I knew we were going to make a good team when she presented me with your book and so since then, that book was really the game changer for you, right? It really put your work out there in a big way.

[00:03:17.6]

ST: It really did and of course, at first it started in a very grass roots organic way and then Oprah picked it up and understood its' value and that it was talking about something pretty revolutionary in terms of the parenting paradigm and shifting it and since then, it's really gone out into the world. This movement of conscious parenting has become quite mobilized and has pulled together so many mothers and fathers into a new way of raising their children. A liberating and invigorating and empowering way of raising their children.

Now you know my third book just came out, *The Awakened Family: A Revolution in Parenting*, which really even goes deeper than *The Conscious Parent* and ties in all my expertise for the past 15 years of doing this work as a psychologist.

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FT: So *The Awakened Family*, I haven't read it yet, but from what I understand, it really encourages parents to not think of gender as gender or dividing, more that it's androgynous and especially I think these days it's very relevant to educate and nurture your children free of gender confinement. What does that actually look like and in its execution, what is that really like on a day to day basis?

[00:04:37.5]

ST: That's a great question. The book of *The Awakened Family* not only seeks to dissolve the duality of gender but really seeks to dissolve all dualities within the human being, within the parents. Things like "our children should do and then they should be". Or "our children need to be successful and then they'll be happy". Or "we need to be thinking about the future and then we can live in the present". And similarly, "is my child a boy or a girl and what does that mean and how should they express themselves based on gender?"

So all of these gets dissolved in this book and becomes a unified whole within the parent and what that means in specific for gender is that we no longer even have the color of gender as dictating our view point. We simply look at the child as a spirit and the spirit can be expressed

through masculinity or femininity or both and we want really the child to develop both qualities of masculinity and femininity toward that holistic development of their soul.

So some children, girls, can be born with a heavy weight of masculinity and then they need to develop the feminine qualities of dependency or fertility or vulnerability. Or they may be born with heavier weight on feminine qualities and need to develop the masculine qualities of assertion and boundaries and linearity and this could be similar for boys. We want, as parents, to not think of a girl as a girl and who should express girlish qualities but instead, as a spirit that needs to move toward wholeness and in that development, both qualities are essential, the masculine and the feminine.

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FT: Do you find that your clients and the parents that you meet are really, really struggling with this? This specifically like “I have a daughter, I have a son and they’re presenting some behaviors that are perhaps not gender traditional”, you know? I think it can really be a struggle especially because if you’re at home and you’re reading *The Awakened Family* and you’re with Dr. Shefali and there’s an agreement there, they go to school, they go to church, they go to the mall and it’s a very different reception. Gender is everywhere, division is everywhere. How do you reconcile that?

[00:07:17.5]

ST: Well, you know, really you are speaking to a bigger challenge that I have and conscious parents have. Because what I’m proposing is really against the norm. It’s really against the grain of mainstream culture and I talk about that in my book that in many ways sadly, tragically the conscious way, the awakened way, the aware, the attuned, the way where love rules and I don’t just mean love in a cliché way, but truly an embrace of spirit rules our way of being is against the grain. I mean that’s a tragedy, a travesty of how our generation that I have to even say this, but everything conscious will be seen as a challenge and will be defied by mainstream culture.

And that is the courageous mandate of an awakened family to take on that challenge and to say, “You know I understand that culture, or mainstream culture at least, wants to look at gender

in this way. It wants to look at success in this way, wants to look at happiness in this way. But I have understood a deeper and different truth and I am going to expose my child to that truth.” Now will that mean they be absolved of resistance from the outside? Absolutely not. I mean I face resistance on a daily basis and I have had to learn to combat that with simply the authentic expression of my truth.

And if we teach our children that that is the most central obligation they have to themselves and to the world, is to be in deep authentic service to their truth in the most compassionate, loving way possible and of course just by allowing them that, they will be loving individuals because they don't have to fight and they're not shamed by their families for who it is they are, then they will develop that resolution from within that will help them to take it out into the external world.

The external world is going to be the external world and we can only change it by living our truth and embodying our truth and being that luminary for others to then say, “Oh look, I don't have to live with these chains and confines of these dualities anymore. I can also dare to step out,” and slowly and surely, each person waking up will be the creation of that ripple effect that will eventually take over the world.

And not to the last one percent will be changed but there will always be a balance of dark and light in the world I believe, but there will be a strong light out in the world and that's what we need to hope for. It's not easy. Mainstream culture is riddled and ruled by fear and consciousness is ruled by the oneness of spirit and they are at odds with each other but that's okay, we just need to rise stronger.

[00:10:12.8]

FT: How much from your personal life do you pull to teach parents and not maybe just your life as a parent but even as a child? Do you feel like that you had a pretty happy childhood that your parents exhibited and displayed a lot of these philosophies that you're now teaching? Maybe they don't know that there wasn't a framework for it but they were practicing it?

[00:10:36.6]

ST: Yes, they did and they didn't do it maybe consciously and then I grew up and I began doing it in an intentional conscious way. I embarked on this study of mindfulness in a formal way and committed to it when I was in my early 20's. So I draw everything from my personal life and I try to, as best as I can, live to the word. The word is a high word, it's a high standard so I can't always lived to it, and then recognizing the discrepancies of my way of life to the written word is another way of growing, really. It's okay to be discrepant.

My friends will tease me, my husband will tease me, "Oh where is the conscious parent?" Or, "I don't see any awakened family here," and I say that that is the aspiration. That is the highest standard and now, we have to aspire to that. But in the discrepancy, in noticing where we are not that is where the growth lies. If I'm already the written word, I have nothing to grow from and nothing to teach really and then I won't be a human being that people can touch and learn from and want to emulate. Then I'm going to be too high up on some pedestal, which is not a good place to be ever.

So being human, being at odds with the standard that even I write about is totally fine with me and that's what I talk about a lot, are my feelings, are my miss steps, are my mistakes so that everyone understands that this is a path of growth not perfection.

[00:12:14.6]

FT: I love that. Well as you may know on this show we talk about how to become financially savvy, live healthier financial lives, we have a lot of parents who listen. I'm a parent, and so I'm curious in your practice how often does the issue of money come up in the sense that parents don't want to raise entitled children? They want to raise children who can delay gratification, value money. How do you coach parents to be able to raise kids that are financially conscious?

[00:12:44.6]

ST: You know I look at financial consciousness first in terms of worth. It's as much as an energy for me money as love is as the way we create a disciplined and boundary life. It's the energy of life and many times people are afraid of money and look at it as an "evil thing", right? "Our children are getting entitled, our children are getting greedy", and I tell people that it's not

because money itself is evil. It's because you haven't created boundaries around the use of money just like you haven't created good boundaries around your love for your children.

So money is an energy and we have to know how to harness it just like we harness the energy of our others or for ourselves and how boundaried we are in that display of love. We may love food and that's a great love to have but how do we display a boundary around it is key. Similarly, money is also an energy and we need to have boundaries around it and it's all connected just like love for ourselves, love for food, love for each other, love for money. It can only be effective in our lives if there are clear boundaries. It's all related to our sense of worth.

So money is not something that, you know, is only out there for the lucky and for the privileged and for those who have a way to deal with numbers. It's really connected to your sense of worth and are you able to attract it in your life and create boundaries with it? So we want to teach our children that money is abundant. It's an energy that is available to them at their fingertips just like love is. However, there are boundaries to it and we need to teach our children, I believe even the most wealthiest people need to teach their children that yes, it's available but available in a sensible way. Available with boundaries. So we need to teach our children that.

So instead of telling my daughter all the time that we don't have money, I always tell her, for example in my family whether I have it or not is irrelevant to me because it's all energy. So I always have the energy of money with me and the energy of wealth. So I always tell her that there's enough money for every single thing you desire. But the key is to know what we truly need and then wait for what you need and create a plan for it in the future. But it always a yes. I always want to create a sense of abundance. It's always a yes, it may not be a yes right now. So let's make a plan for it.

If you really want that ridiculously expensive piece of machinery, you can have it. I don't agree with it, you can have it but then this is the plan you need to make to get it in three years. And if you really want it, you'll get it. I just can't spend it right now but it's always available. So spreading abundance is key for our children so that they don't grow up thirsty for money. We are a money thirsty culture because we believe it's only with the haves and that there's a sharp distinction between the have nots.

Now I am not saying that poverty doesn't exist, I am not saying that inequality doesn't exist. But I do believe that much of our fear around money comes from the state of scarcity that parents create in their children and actually they make them more thirsty for it rather than making them feel like "I have enough and be grateful for what I do have".

[SPONSOR BREAK]

[00:16:19.9]

FT: Need a website? Why not do it yourself with Wix.com? No matter what business you're in, Wix.com has something for you. Used by more than 84 million people worldwide, Wix.com makes it easy to get your website live today. You need to get the word out about your business, it all starts with a stunning website.

With hundreds of designer made customizable templates to choose from, the drag and drop editor, there's no coding needed. You don't need to be a programmer or designer to create something beautiful. You can do it yourself with Wix.com. Wix.com empowers business owners to create their own professional websites every day.

When you're running your own business, you're bound to be busy, too busy. Too busy worrying about your budget, too busy scheduling appointments, too busy to build a website for your business and because you're too busy, it has to be easy and that's where Wix.com comes in. With Wix.com, it's easy and free. Go to Wix.com to create your own website today. The result is stunning!

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

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FT: Do you think that that is an eastern or western psychology at practice? Because I feel that I have interviewed parents from perhaps the Middle East and Asia and they seem to have at least a broader acceptance of money. They're more open to talk about it, it's not taboo. Whereas here

in the States, I feel like it's the opposite. So when you teach your ideals and ideas around money, do you find that it is coming mostly from eastern or western influences?

[00:17:54.6]

ST: Well, you know, I think the understanding that money is a reality and should not be avoided. It should be explicitly talked about. The thirst for money should be explicitly understood. I think it comes from my exposure to the west where I see that people out there is thirsty for money. But this doesn't mean that people in the east are not thirsty for money. But the eastern philosophy that you are talking about does allow us or allow me to create a detachment to it by understanding that it's available if we create the inner energy to attract it and to create the space for it to be in our lives.

So I think it's always an amalgam of east and west, but you're right. I think having a different perspective than what we see here in the west that it is something to strive for, you have to work hard for it. It is not something that comes easy. There's competition around it, there's envy around it. These things actually obstruct our ability to get money. Whereas an eastern perspective offers certain detachment and an understanding that it all comes from the inner space of attracting it, of creating that inner energy of alignment. That helps us then to ease into it and be grateful for what we have and then work on creating wealth from that inner place of abundance.

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FT: Would you be willing to share, Dr. Shefali, a financial failure of yours? And then we'll talk about success. But I like to have all my guest go to these places and share a little bit about the hard lessons learned about money and then I'd like to know your So Money moment.

[00:19:35.7]

ST: Sure, I think they are both connected. I think I made, I spent an entire generation of my life, a whole decade of my life making money mistakes and they were huge failures. I misquoted my worth, I did not ask for what I was worthy of, for my services, of what they were worth. I

completely miss stepped all through my 20's only because I was terrified again of my worth. I was terrified of asking for my worth. Terrified that I could ask for it and I undercut myself so severely that I lost huge opportunities to attract wealth and to leverage myself and position myself in the right way.

So I spent the last 10 years of my life completely in fear of asking for what I was worth. I lost money and I didn't make right investments in myself because I just undervalued myself by hundreds of dollars at a time. And again, I feel that the biggest so money moment for me came when I understood that fear was at the root of my relationship with money. It wasn't the unavailability of money. It wasn't that people didn't want to give me money. It wasn't that I wasn't savvy enough for it. It was because I was terrified of money and what it meant. I felt that I was too entitled if I ask for money. I felt that I wasn't "a good girl". I felt that I wasn't a "good healer" and healers should ask for money.

I had all these misconstrued ideas about the marriage between myself and money and it was only when I deconstructed those and understood that it was fear that was governing me, not authentic worth that I had a so money moment and since then, I can tell you I have turned my relationship with money around. I have been attracting wealth easily, seamlessly. I don't any longer have anxiety around asking for my worth in terms of monetary compensation and life has opened up. Money is available, as I have always intuitively known but I was so terrified of manifesting.

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FT: So what was the "aha moment"? Did a friend say something to you? Did you see what your colleagues were earning? What made you realized, "Oh my gosh, I'm not earning what I'm worth"?

[00:22:03.7]

ST: Well, I would notice my inner commentary. I would see other women in my position charging four times than I was and I would be envious. I would be like, "Darn it, how did she do it?" And then I would judge them. Because I couldn't do it, I would put a negative on them such as, "Oh

they're so greedy. I would never." But inside, I was dying to do the same and envying them and then resenting my clients.

So it was all so unhealthy and then my husband who's so much more clear about, and of course, the masculine energy is always clear about things like money. They have a better relationship with things like that. He would always tell me, "Don't envy them, don't judge them. You want to be like them, you're just terrified of doing it because you don't believe you are worthy. You don't believe you're worth it." And I would resent him then for exposing me to my truth and making me look at the mirror.

And I'd be like, "I am worthy," and then he'd be like, "You know you're not because you're so scared of putting a number on it. For you those are two separate things. You need to make them one thing, that it's oneness. It's not a duality." And he taught me how to dare to ask and I remember I would be so terrified. When I first raised my price by \$25, I would be so scared and then when my client would say, "Of course." I'd be like, "Oh my God, I wasted six months for \$25, I was so scared."

But I believe so many women are in my position or are in the position I was and especially women who are teachers, women who are healers, woman who are coaches. We have a hard time because we believe that we are here to help the world and rescue the broken. So how can we put a price on it? It's only when we understand the meaning that we have the right to raising our families. We have the right to asking for money to compensate for our services that we will break out of this web, this spell that I was in for my entire decade of my 20's.

[00:24:02.3]

FT: Well, I always say when women make more, the world becomes a better place. Women need to make more money.

[00:24:08.4]

ST: I agree with you. Absolutely and we teach our children to have a healthy relationship with it. There's nothing to be afraid of. It is our right just like love is and that's why I talk about money and love in the same breathe because to me, they are synonymous now.

[00:24:24.8]

FT: And you have an event this fall. Tell us about Evolve 2016.

[00:24:29.7]

ST: Oh my goodness, thank you so much for bringing it up. Yes, I have a fabulous summit that I have put together that collectively brings together conscious parenting into one room, one umbrella, one togetherness. So I call it *Evolve: The Conscious Way Summit*. We are having our next summit in New York City, October 21st to 23rd at the fabulous Broad Street Ballroom downtown financial district.

A fabulous space where I am hoping to bring together this collective energy and deconstruct, do a deep dive into conscious parenting. Parents will learn from me hands on techniques and tools and really be inspired to shift their families forever I believe. I mean this conferences, these summits have had a lifelong impact on people and I'm so excited that it is going to be in New York City this year. So I hope you'll come too Farnoosh.

[00:25:20.8]

FT: I think I am actually going to be next door. My office is on Broad Street.

[00:25:24.9]

ST: Oh that's so great. I hope to see you there.

[00:25:26.7]

FT: So I think I have to be there, okay. Dr. Shefali, thank you so much for joining us. We wish you the best and I didn't even get to ask you about Oprah but maybe if you have a couple of minutes, how did that phone call happen? How did that day — do you remember that day when you got the Oprah, was it a phone call? Was it an e-mail?

[00:25:45.6]

ST: I remember every moment, yes, every moment. Because it was an intentional asking that I did on the universe and it was a very intentional manifestation. I had been asking for Oprah to come into my life ever since I wrote *The Conscious Parent* and even before because I knew that only she could take this message into the world and people would scoff at me and laugh at me and say, "Huh, she's not even a parent. Why would she be interested?"

And I said, "Oh she is a parent, just not in the traditional way." She is in many ways the parent of our humanity, of these times. She is the uber mother, I do believe. She's the carrier of wisdom and the forerunner for our generation. She's a forerunner of wisdom, of transformation of growth. She is mother earth incarnate. So I just focus my energies on Oprah, Oprah, Oprah and people would ask me "How can I help you?" I said, "You can't help me unless you can get me one step closer to Oprah. So put your energy, get me closer to Oprah."

And just by putting that out there and working very hard in daily service to my own message, you know, I just didn't sit passively waiting for Oprah to show up. I knew that I needed to calibrate my message so that I could truly attract her in my life. So that our vibrations would just collide because we were at the same energetic manifestation. So I worked on that. I was in daily service of my own growth, my own vibrational energy, my own message. I would put it out there every single day and it grew to such a level that inevitably I met someone who said, "Hey, I know someone who is a producer at Oprah."

And then the producer just happened to have had a baby seven months before she called me and so she called me and I was in an office building. I ran to the stairwell and I was literary screaming into the phone, you know, hoping that she would understand that this was the most important five minutes of my life and she took the phone call. She said, "Uh-hmm, very

interesting. That's so enlightening, wow," and she was very polite and when I put the phone down, I said, "Darn it! I blew it! I'm never going to hear back from her."

But within I think it was just 10 days or seven days, excruciating seven days that I received a follow up and they invited me right away to Super Soul Sunday and that was two years ago and actually next week on Sunday is the next Super Soul that I am coming on for my new book, *The Awakened Family*. The first one two years ago was on *The Conscious Parent* and actually if you tune in or if you'd already missed it, if this is airing later, then August 7th, you can still catch it on Super Soul Sunday. So yeah, it is a big story. It's a big momentous path for me to have collided with Oprah's path and she's really taken this message forward and I couldn't be more grateful to her.

[00:28:47.9]

FT: Wow. My grin is from ear to ear, my smile. You telling me that story. I just got goosebumps, so deserved. Dr. Shefali, thank you so much and of course if we can't watch Super Soul live when it's airing, I think she airs it on her website as well. So we can definitely find you that way and I encourage everybody to do that. Thank you so much.

[00:29:10.7]

ST: Thank you Farnoosh.

[00:29:12.6]

FT: And wishing you continued success, thank you.

[END]