

# A Capstone Conversation With



Roland Williams  
Celebrity Author, Speaker, Performance Coach  
and Super Bowl Champion



CAPSTONE MARKETING

## Capstone Conversation with Roland Williams Celebrity Author, Speaker, Performance Coach



Roland Williams

Hello, this [Jean Caragher](#), President of [Capstone Marketing](#). I am happy to be talking today with [Roland Williams](#), celebrity author, speaker, performance coach and proud dad. This is the first Capstone Conversation with a Super Bowl champion! I met Roland Williams at a chapter meeting of the National Speakers Association and he is kind enough to join me today.

Roland is a retired football tight end who played his college ball at Syracuse. He was selected in the 1998 NFL draft by the St. Louis Rams. He was a multiyear starter and went on to win Super Bowl XXXIV in the Rams victory over the Tennessee Titans. Roland went on to play with several teams including the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Oakland Raiders.

In 2006 he had a career ending knee injury, but his persona has labeled him as one of the most positive and energetic athletes in professional sports. He has received many awards for his charitable efforts including the prestigious NFL Unsung Hero Award; he was a two-time Oakland Raiders Man of the Year, the Press Radio Club Pro Athlete of the Year Award, and a multi-year finalist for the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award.

Roland has also been a sports analyst for many stations including ESPN, NBC, NBC Sports, CBS and now Roland is a motivational speaker, a trainer, and an author of three books: "365 Happy: The Simple & Funny Playbook For Happiness You Really Should Read ASAP," "Happy In A Hurry: The Seven Simple Secrets To Happiness You Can Unlock in 60 Seconds Or Less," and "365 Happy Poetry: The Journey." Roland, welcome to the Capstone Conversation.

**Roland Williams:** I am so glad to be here and we are only days away from the Super Bowl, which is a very sentimental and a happy time of the year.

**Jean Caragher:** Well, let's start off that way! Tell me, what does it feel like to be a Super Bowl Champion?

**Roland Williams:** In your life, you always have goals and objectives and every time you pursue a goal, it's a dream, a task. No matter what it is, when you pursue it you want to be successful and the Super Bowl, for people who are professional athletes, is the end goal; it is the ultimate desire, it's the Crème de la Crème. To get a chance to play in that game and to succeed in that game, it brings completion to a career for many. It gives you the sense of accomplishment that nothing else can compare to it. So it's a



phenomenal thing for you, as a professional athlete, and I'm just happy for all the teams that get a chance to compete and try to win one.

**Jean Caragher:** It's something that when you started playing football as a kid that, probably, just a small number of football players get the experience that you had. So, Roland, tell me about your happy mission.

**Roland Williams:** In my life, I've had a chance to have a lot of, what people can call, "success." I've had a chance to make a substantial living through professional sports, I got an education, I traveled, and then where people may call me a celebrity for my job. I've had a lot of fun and done a lot of things and people always assumed that because of that success, that I was always happy as a person. For most of my life, before I started getting into understanding what happiness really means, I was always saying, "Sure, I'm happy." But one fateful night, I actually got online and started investigating into the meaning of the word "happiness," which means a feeling of well being and contentment, and I realized that there was much in my life that I was unhappy about. Moreover, when I started looking around at the people who were close to me who were also "successful," I realized that there's an epidemic of people who are unhappy with their lives. In fact, studies have shown that, two out of three Americans are unhappy with some part of their life. To me, this is a problem. We talk about the obesity epidemic, and we talk about drugs, and we talk about all these other things that are hurtful to our society; it bothers me that the most important topic of them all, to me, is our overall well being and it's not at the forefront of everyone's mind.

I went through some personal storms in my life and these storms allowed me to realize the most important thing in life is not things or what people expect you to want in your life, it's about you being comfortable with who you are and what you love. So happiness should be the ultimate priority and I was able to repurpose my life and not be driven off of the things like sports, for example, or driven off of accolades, or off of statistics, or a measurable. I changed the measurable and began to realize that happiness is the objective and when you are honest about where your happy place is, you can set a realistic and an honest road map to get there. So I'm as happy as I've ever been in my life and I'm a proud dad. I love what I do now in my life and, truly, happiness is the driving force.

**Jean Caragher:** Why do you think that some people are happier than other people?

**Roland Williams:** It goes back to a similar premise to people with physical fitness. We all know that being as healthy as you can be is the best way to live your longest and most fulfilling life. There are some people who might be over obsessed within and you might see them with 6% body fat and it looks phenomenal, and then there are some people who are morbidly obese. The difference comes with the commitment and the actual end goal in mind. I believe that when it comes to happiness, we all can be the super fit, 6% body fat person. We all have the ability to develop and to cultivate our



happiness, just like people cultivate and shape their bodies. Just the way you shape your mind when you are going to get a degree or when you are going through anything else, you have an ability to impact your happiness the same way, but it takes a plan. It takes discipline and focus similar to when you are building up your body from a fitness perspective.

**Jean Caragher:** On your website you have information about your 365 Happy Academy and what you call “happiness fundamentals.” This list includes a lot of important things, one of which you’ve already mentioned, goal setting. So, you feel that when people set goals in what they'd like to achieve in their life, that goal setting helps them to be happier, am I understanding that right?

**Roland Williams:** Well, literally, it’s actually goals for your happiness. A chapter in the book, “365 Happy,” talks about departmentalizing your life into the various categories that are important to you. For me, for example, there was the “dad” department, my “physical health” department, my “mental health” department, my “relationships” department, and my “career” department. Each one of these departments in our lives has a current grade or a current place where it is. If we are honest about it and give ourselves a report card, we’ll find more often than not, that we’re not getting A pluses across-the-board. Any place that we’re not getting A pluses across-the-board impacts our happiness in some form or fashion. What I believe is that, if we set goals within those particular things specifically, that we will also, at the same time, incrementally improve our happiness goal. For example, I’ve looked at myself as a father and I gave myself a grade a couple of years ago as a C+ dad. In my mind, I was a C+ dad. I’ve seen dads who are A’s, and I was impressed, and I’ve seen some that are F’s, not so impressed, and I felt there was room to improve. Instantaneously, it creates a goal; I would like to be an “A” dad. Once you set that goal, you can begin. So goal setting is directly correlated to your happiness, especially when you set goals that are applied to the biggest principles that are the major building blocks of your persona.

**Jean Caragher:** Another of these fundamentals that actually is listed first is “accountability,” and I know we’ve spoken a bit about my consulting work in the accounting profession, “accountability” is a big word in that profession, especially when it relates to marketing and business development, and goals or promises they may make in marketing and business development, and how they could be accountable or perhaps the lack of accountability. Talk to me about the importance of accountability and how you’ve seen that work.

**Roland Williams:** The word “accountability” has so many different meanings and the 365 Happy Academy is going to be an environment to transform and to elevate individuals to be better teammates, to be better individuals, to be better human beings. There is the accountability that’s from my sports career, where the accountability of having people being able to depend on you and you being able to understand what’s necessary to deliver for your team, for the greater good. But with the Happy Academy,



accountability goes towards a whole different level. It's personal accountability to put your priority on trying to improve your happiness, your spirit of well being and contentment throughout your day, throughout your life because when you become happier, this is why this really matters, research has shown that you become more adaptable, creative, dependable, energetic, engaged, flexible, focused, honest, mentally stable, physically healthy, proactive, productive, and your thoughts are organized. So said simply, an increase in happiness equals an increase in your production and performance. So what business or what entity wouldn't want that? One of the things that people or businesses miss is, "I don't want to just make you happier for my work place, I want to make you happier in your life, and it's going to ooze into my workplace." Does that make sense?

**Jean Caragher:** It absolutely does. You've actually stolen another question because I was going to ask you, "How do we benefit from being happy?" and you just gave us a whole list of fabulous ways that we can benefit.

**Roland Williams:** Absolutely! The important thing is to say, "Hey! I want to help you become happier as an individual, I want to help you address and have a game plan or a blue print to be accountable to yourself." To say, "improving my happiness is important for myself and after it's important to myself, it's going to ooze over into my workplace." You want happy people around you, on every team that you play on, even the person next to you in a restaurant. This is life and I think that the more we focus on the end goal, the more we'll get the right people. I don't want people working for me that are unhappy people. Even if they are great employees, if they're unhappy people, ultimately, the long-term affects are going to have a negative impact on my organization.

Conversely, if I have a bunch of hard working happy people working for me, over the long haul, we have a chance for growth, for learning, for all these thing, and you don't have to pay as much for people who are happy, by the way, because they're happy.

**Jean Caragher:** I just saw a quote recently that said something like, "If you look at everything negatively, you can't expect a positive outcome," and I thought that was so true. We do need to look at the positive side of things, which I'm sure you know, helps make a person happy.

**Roland Williams:** Absolutely! Accountability is a commitment that I want to make myself happier, that is something of value in my life. The pursuit of happiness is what life is all about. When you think about it and you go place it in any job or anything you do, it's like, "Okay, I would like to be a great accountant." Why? "Because it was my profession in college." Okay. "Well, I've studied it in college." Well, great! Why? "Because I want to make a lot of money." Why? "So I could buy nice things." Why? "So I could be happy." You see, it all ends at the same place no matter what you're doing.



**Jean Caragher:** Right.

**Roland Williams:** It all ends with the feeling of well being and contentment. All I like to do is teach people and help people make that connection and keep that self-perpetuating engine of happiness flowing throughout their lives, in the business world, and in their personal lives.

**Jean Caragher:** Now you've obviously, through your career, both in sports and outside of sports, worked with different types of people with different kinds of styles, and some were leaders with effective leadership styles. Talk to me about leadership and happiness and the impact that leadership may have on accountability. Or is accountability, in your mind, a personal thing?

**Roland Williams:** I think that accountability and leadership are all interconnected. There is leadership at different levels; there's leadership at the micro and macro level. As an individual, you have to be a leader of one. If happiness is not a priority for you, as an individual, then that's the first thing we have to cultivate and develop because there's a reason why.

When you delve into the reason of why, we begin to unlock some of our blockers; some of our things that hold us back and the things that I mentioned about increase happiness and making yourself more productive, and punctual, and mentally stable, and honest, and focused. The drill of unlocking your own personal happiness is going to create and develop a little leader in you. On a larger scale, people love to follow leaders who communicate a spirit of well being and contentment, people who are calm, people who have the ability to feel good about what they're doing. There's nothing better than an energized, happy leader. You can just tell that the guy is happy where he is, and attitudes are contagious, and your actions are contagious, and your creativeness and all the things that come with being engaged and present in the moment. These are the things that as you get happier and learn how to live in the spirit of gratitude, learn how to go through your life and suck all the happiness out of there, which our training will help you to do. You can't help but see the end result in your daily business and professional leadership.

**Jean Caragher:** When we met, you mentioned that because, of course, I shared with you my work in the accounting profession, you mentioned that accounting is one of the unhappiest professions. Do you know why that is?

**Roland Williams:** I don't want to speculate. I guess that there are a lot of accountants out there that can probably tell me, but unfortunately, it's also lawyers, accountants, financial advisors, etc. There has been a lot of research put into this and so it's interesting that, again, these occupations that have so much prestige to them, the folks who do it every day, day in and day out, are inherently unhappy with so many parts of



their lives and to me that's so unfortunate, but it is something that gets me excited. I'm excited about creating a customized program to help the accounting universe improve their happiness incrementally. I think that this incremental improvement of happiness will pay big dividends for accountants, for their ability to market, their ability to connect with new and current customers, and to be able to be more efficient within their current team. There is so much room for improvement and I think that happiness is the answer for a lot of organizations, and it's not that expensive, which makes it even better.

**Jean Caragher:** That's right, and I like that, too! So, Roland, if you had one piece of advice, and we talked about a lot of great things here, for the benefit of our readers and listeners you can find a lot more information at [rolandwilliams.com](http://rolandwilliams.com), what would you recommend as the first step if someone recognizes that their life could be happier? What is the first thing that they should do about that?

**Roland Williams:** I think that the first thing that has to happen is an honest assessment and until you take an honest inventory of where you are in your life, by department, I think that you are missing a true snapshot of yourself. Again, there is a host of drills that our Happy Academy does. There are things inside my book that give you the blueprint to help you take this process on, but you have to have courage to be confrontational and to believe you can be better despite your current happiness. This isn't just about unhappy people, this is about people that want to become happier. That's the point, it's not about morbidly obese people becoming like Arnold Schwarzenegger. It's not that. It's about people who are functional, people who are happy in a whole lot of other ways just realizing that they want to improve themselves and take it to the next level. That's what our Academy does and that's what my mission is, to help people take their happiness to a whole new level, and it starts with confrontation and honest assessment.

**Jean Caragher:** That sounds awesome! So, if people are courageous enough, that's the first step that they could take?

**Roland Williams:** Absolutely. You have to be courageous enough to want to go to a different level.

**Jean Caragher:** Right, wonderful! We've talked a lot about happiness, but before we end, you knew this was coming; I need your Super Bowl prediction. We've got the Baltimore Ravens and the San Francisco 49ers playing in New Orleans, who do you think is going to win?

**Roland Williams:** This is going to be an exciting game, let me tell you! Already both teams, in my opinion, are truly worthy of the game. Ray Lewis is a buddy of mine, so I want him to win the game, but the 49ers are just so darn young and athletic and they play it so hard. To me, they are the better overall team and I think that the 49ers are



going to win the football game, even though I want the Ravens to win. I want the Ravens to win, but I just believe that the 49ers are going to win because their quarterback is so athletic, good gracious.

**Jean Caragher:** This will be his 10th start as a quarterback and he'll be playing in the Super Bowl.

**Roland Williams:** That is amazing! The great testament, of course, is the great story line of two brothers playing and coaching against each other.

**Jean Caragher:** Yeah. That, too!

**Roland Williams:** This is going to be a riveting game. I can't wait to tune in and watch it, and certainly I'll be happy. I'll be happy no matter who wins!

**Jean Caragher:** Well, the way my luck has been going each team that I root for losses. So I think I'll be better off not putting it on tape who I'm rooting for. We've been talking today with Roland Williams, author, speaker, coach, and proud dad. Roland, thanks so much for your time today. It was a pleasure.

**Roland Williams:** You guys are great. Thank you so much.





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