

Catch Celebrity Happiness Coach Robert Mack's Conversation with Brendan

Welcome to you version two podcast with me your host Brendan mcauley And today we have a fantastic special guest all the way from Miami Rob Mac Rob Thank you so much for spending time with us here today And uh it's a great pleasure to have a conversation with you And I'm looking forward to you sharing your life experiences with us and your journey so that we can learn from it So Rob would you like to tell us something about yourself please Sure Uh So the pleasure is all mine by the way Thank you so much for having me I feel so grateful and honored to be here Um Yes So I'll give you the pr friendly intro and then I'll give you the Rob friendly intro So you know I'm a positive psychology expert and a celebrity happiness coach and the author of Happiness from the Inside Out I worked for about 20 plus years on helping people sort of strike this energizing balance of authentic personal happiness and effortless professional success based on time tested face valid empirical data and transcendental or timeless wisdom right So that's just big words like that's the pr friendly version You know I mostly think of myself as someone like I think all of us who's always sought and wanted to be deeply truly happy inside but has struggled more than or as much as anyone on the planet with that Uh it's a lot of depression and suicidal ideation earlier in my life And so I'm like the least likely person to even be having this conversation Ironically enough Look how life turns out how paths can change It's fantastic And um just as we get into this a little disclaimer obviously that we're gonna end our interaction will be about happiness your personal life experiences obviously events may come up let it flow if you're not comfortable sharing But I think you will be because we we we could we could remove it from the broadcast But please relax and let's enjoy this moment I know it's gonna be great So simple question Rob what does happiness mean to you Yeah So happiness can't be explained can only be experienced and anything you explain isn't quite the experience But I would say that it's mostly that experience of peaceful aliveness that is always within you but not just within you that is you So happiness isn't what we do It's not what we think It's not a state of mood it's not even a state of mind It's a state of being that is always there underneath above beyond between and below Every thought feeling perception and sensation of your life And so happiness is our true nature Hm Fantastic And our challenge is to find that I

suppose and there's so many distractions in life that can take our attention away from that So then you give us a fantastic description When was the last time you were really really helping Yeah Right now I mean all right I I live for this friend you know I live for this my friend I spent so much of my life being so deeply depressed so stressed out so anxious so self loathing and self hating that it feels mostly like most moments are the happiest moments of my life just because I'm more in touch with that inherent innate and intrinsic happiness that's always there But that being said I love these conversations I live for these conversations So this is currently the happiest moment of my life And I and I mean that quite legitimately like I I just I live for these conversations The uh th th this is something also I've um self development and and personal growth and looked into myself obviously the living in the present moment and the now is is one of the key things that we should all learn to to do you know to avoid the Actually I have a little app that sort of gives me inspirational words and some quotes from the Bible and various things And today it says don't worry about tomorrow tomorrow take care of itself because you've enough to today to deal with So it's the now it's learning to just actually live with the now in the moment that's here right now because we can't we can't make the future et cetera et cetera So I've learned that and I appreciate it And even in these conversations and these actions and steps and past I'm going I was recently having a podcast with a guy who was lived in Scotland as an architect and then moved to Dubai and is doing something similar and he wants to help them reach out to people It was like talking to my twin and it's just surreal It's surreal and I'm actually loving doing these because you connect with other people We're talking about happiness and trying to make other people happy And how can that be a bad thing You know that's fantastic You're right about that If there's one thing we need more of in the world it's happiness you know that and we know from you know part of what I love about the work I do is that I get to have these conversations with people like yourself It just is such a thrill And the other piece of it is that there's so much science to support all this right So we know happiness leads to altruism Happier people are kinder they're friendlier they donate more time money blood resources and it makes them a better person So the happier you are you'll notice you're easier to get along with and you also find everybody else easy to get along with So if we want a world that feels more peaceful and loving we certainly want to strive for happiness ourselves and we'll find that that becomes contagious Um The other you said which is just so profound and and I love it so much which is that happiness is

presence You know the more present you are the easier it is to be happy the more distracted you are it feels impossible to be happy So another I think synonym for happiness really is presence And that doesn't only mean being present to the thoughts feelings emotions sensations experiences and conditions into your life but also going deeper into that And I'd say that there's a state of presence that isn't filled with overthinking or over analysis but it's a quieter cooler more composed state of being that we all ultimately are Yeah I I love it I love it Would you think that happiness in itself can fade away with time No the happiness that people mistake for happiness pleasure for instance So we know there's something called the Hedonic treadmill or Hedonic adaptation but it basically means that everything fades everything wears out Even the most novel exciting experiences eventually get old even the worst of conditions and circumstances we eventually adjust to and acclimate to um that kind of happiness the kind of happiness that I would call not happiness but pleasure and or just positive emotion that we attribute to an experience an event a condition of circumstance maybe a new purchase maybe an achievement that will always fade without question And that's part of the problem If you chase or look for happiness in ephemeral experiences achievements or acquisitions you will always find that happiness is But if you look for it where it's eternal and infinite and never fading you'll find that you experience an unconditional kind of happiness the only true kind of happiness um that I ever really talk about Um But yeah you're absolutely right about that There are lots of places to look for happiness but really only one place to find it I recently I'm a member of Toastmasters here in Turin in Italy And um I did a recent speech on you know dopamine hits you know and the difference between pleasure and happiness and how societies created this system where we start to associate pleasure with happiness but scientifically happiness serotonin pleasure dopamine which one outweighs the other So the more dopamine the less serotonin it's it's quite amazing But science as you said you know there's there's the science behind these facts as well So it's um absolutely And and you and you just nailed it There's always that that trade off right And you know to your point happiness the kind of true happiness that I think we're talking about is uh it it's pleasurable but it doesn't equate to pleasure You know it's um sometimes full of anticipation but it doesn't equal anticipation It can be exciting but it isn't excitement itself right So the state that I call happiness is something that can even include moments of frustration of concern of worry of upset There's something underneath all of that that if you can stay tapped into dialed into stay aware

of allows you to feel a peaceful aliveness and feel that everything is still ok even though you're riding or experiencing this wave of maybe a little confusion a frustration of upset So there's something underneath all it it's sort of like an ocean on the surface there's always waves and turmoil But if you go deep enough you discover really nothing but peace and true happiness and love Despite the fact that the waves are still there on the surface right Part of why you're putting your attention fantastic fantastic guidance I hope everyone listening is learning as we discuss now to an experienced man like yourself Robert I think the next question would be relatively easy for you But you know imagine if we met each other in a restaurant or a gathering or something like it And how how how are you doing now Who are you where are you from Typically It's so oh hired mcauley I'm a construction manager and I I work in this and this and this and and we define ourselves a lot of the time by what we actually do So the question of who am I I'd like to ask Robert to finish the phrase I am with whatever you want to finish it with So Robert Mack I am That's it It was in the silence in the silence Right I didn't wanna I didn't wanna keep you hanging for too long But it's it's just that's that's that's the beginning and end of it entirely It's just the I AM presence it's just the I am presence So um lots of lots of ways to sort of describe who and what I am You know I could say I was most shy of my high school class I was saluted toward in my high school class I was the most depressed person that I ever knew I was suicidal You know I was a corporate consultant I worked as a model and an actor for a long time All these things you know I'm a brother and I'm a you know son and all these things and and yet none of them describes the true eye So we have thoughts but we're not our thoughts we have a body but we're not our body we have a job but we're not our job There's something that's aware of the thoughts the sensations perceptions the job That's not it That awareness is thoughtless wordless faceless formless infinite internal That awareness is what I simply call the I am presence but it's that knowing that you simply exist So before you know what you are you know that you are and that which you are is silent right Anyway so I don't know I don't want to draw people into more and more esoteric or abstract conversations But yeah for me the I am is in the silence there Fantastic It's a great response We can all learn from that when we ponder on what you've just said Anyone who's listening I suggest you pause rewind and listen again to what's been said because it's profound stuff So Robert I'm sure that uh we already know a lot of what you do and what you do to spread the word of happiness and love throughout the world You

possibly in a space that you're happy with Maybe maybe not I'm not sure So what do you want to devote more of your time Energy and money upon a great question you know Um II I have to say and this is probably strange for a guy who's historically loved to think so much I love to read so much I mean everything I just was reading I just devour books and I love authors And I've often considered my best friends like dead authors who I never met they just always felt like friends somebody that I met in my life even though I hadn't I would say that um above all else I think I really want to spend Um and I love spending more time in the science itself Um you know even if I'm busy with activity so there's that and I love spending time in these kinds of conversations You know where I'm connecting with folks who are open and receptive and uh you know deeply curious about these things and also deeply educated and well versed in these areas But I'd say that for me I'm sort of most open and exciting to excited to see what the universe life intelligence source will call God Um unfolds through me in my life You know I've often set lots of goals I don't know about you Brendan but I've had like a you know goal setting here and five year plan here and one year plan here and you know it could be all great but life has its own logic and I've often been wrong about what I most want I think I want accent then I get accent It turns out terribly or I want or I don't want why and then why happens anyway And then it turns out wonderfully So I let go of this idea that through my human mind and human wisdom that I know a whole lot And I'm leaning more and more into just trusting that what unfolds through me as me is to my highest benefit And I don't mean that in a sort of Marty like way I mean that in terms of happiness and peace and love And even if it's like like living the life of faith you know what will be will be and being happy to to move in that Um That's that's a challenge in itself to I think to to live that type of life because it involves trust trust and a lot of belief in yourself and and in others But I was chatting to a guy from Australia this morning and he reminded me and I I truly believe it Don't forget Brendan When you just give give give give don't do it We don't do it to get but it's just gonna come back to you So give give give It's you don't call it an ancient science an ancient rule a secret of life the more we give and help and serve others It's it's written it's written in the stars whatever you want to say So it's fantastic It's so great I just want to underscore that because it was so powerful and so pointed You're right about that without question early in my life I also sort of heard that but not in quite the way that I hear it Now when I was young I would give and give and give I wanted to be a good person I thought was the right thing I also very much

thought and hoped it would come back to me And the difference there was that I was giving from this very empty bucket and was giving with this expectation of reciprocity and reward and qu quote quote even if it was just expecting back that somebody would thank me and often it wouldn't happen I was like what the heck people are so ungrateful and this is you know and then as they get older you start to discover why people say things like giving is the greatest receiving It's the greatest reward Because when you truly give it's perfectly selfish It's like giving the way a rain cloud that gives you know you think about a rain cloud it fills itself up with as much water as and moisture as humanly possible So we don't wanna be rain cloud You fill yourself up with as much peace and love and joy as humanly possible And as this rain rain cloud you get to a point where you can no longer contain yourself you can't hold it in anymore and you just indiscriminately unconditionally shower all that peace and love and joy down upon the earth and all the living creatures on the earth simply to relieve yourself of the burden of carrying that peace love and happiness around all the time and you do it without expectation of reciprocity not for quid pro quo not to get something in return without strings attached right It's that kind of giving I think it's true Giving Every other kind of giving is really just trying to get Yeah Yeah Yeah It's nail in the head there You know it's it's uh I I loved your nature analogy using the cloud and things like that And I think also I have found certainly in recent years when I've moved to where I now live just being surrounded by nature in itself and listening to the birds and see like we're in spring now and seeing the growth and the blossom that just the analogy of nature It does something about us and in our lives and pondering on it and thinking about it like I just love going out for a walk in the garden or there's a forest behind me and just listening or watching and observing and there's so many analogies I can do because I like gardening as well you know and vegetable packed whatever Because thankfully here in Italy it's warmer than Ireland So I can actually grow stuff But it's it's just beautiful and nature does something for us as humans It's it's something I think is profound and um I could do These analogies are fantastic I love them You nailed it Brennan That's exactly right You're spot on I love spending time in nature I love spending time in um particularly next to beaches next to big bodies of water And you're right I mean if we look at it all of nature is perfectly blissful except for humankind You know only people make a problem out of their own exists you know the little in the field and the trees and the rivers they're perfectly at peace Right And they're perfectly blissful

And it's only people that have really made life into something that's very problematic because we overthink and overanalyze everything and we seek our happiness peace love and joy in something other than presence itself in something other than this very moment here and now Right And so you just are absolutely right about that And I think when you spend time in nature you're spending time really reconnecting with the still stillness silence and presence that seems outside of you but is actually within you right That actually is what you are But yes it's extraordinarily life affirming Yeah And you know I mentioned some things I would go for a walk in nature and various things to seek comfort or solace Is there any is there things that you like to do Robert to just to seek comfort or to relax or Absolutely I mean you know particularly at the very beginning of my happiness journey in this lifetime I I spent a lot of time exercising for me getting out and running was very helpful because if I could exhaust my body my mind could finally rest and relax That was one thing I still exercise a lot First thing in the morning it's very helpful The other thing I love doing of course um I'll call it meditation but it's really not that it's just trying to enjoy myself as often as possible as possible without thinking a whole lot Just enjoy my breath And the final thing is I love spending time in in in the the sunshine I mean sunshine is like instant optimism It's like instant happiness for me So even if it makes the hardest day better Absolutely It's again you know from coming from Ireland the wife says she's had enough of the gray skies but there's something about just seeing the blue sky or feeling this the the sun rays on your body You know sometimes I'd come out of the office and go out in the middle of day just just to be heated the heat from the sun It's just it's great to feel it on your body It's something beautiful about it and it is powerful And then in the evening I'm just looking out my window here in the office I can see the sunset Uh It's it's just beautiful and calm and the colors So there's so many good things about the sun especially the heat holy And you know you speak to something too you know in positive psychology which is this science about 20 years old it's all about the empirical support for what does and doesn't lead to a happy life and how that does or does not affect affect the success in your life or influence the success of your life One of the things they say is if you spend time in nature or you spend time just in wonder or awe So a sunset sort of gives you this experience of wonder or awe If you think about the planets or you look to the you know sky that's full of stars there's like experience of wonder and awe there And in that experience of wonder and awe you do reconnect with that presence and stillness and

silence and happiness and peace and even love and connectivity inside of you right I mean ultimately you start to feel this oneness with whatever it is that you're viewing or taking in or experiencing through you know these very limited five senses So it's incredible that you mention that I love that so much It's also a reminder I think with the sun thing is that it's a reminder that you know it takes light to recognize light and I think it's a testament to the light that each of us is and is full of you know we're literally stardust You know if you look at it from a physics perspective we're literally made of stardust So any case yes I think there are very good reasons why we love being in nature why we love taking in the sunshine and why it's so good for us Absolutely So Rob I have a few I have three simple quick fire questions You can elaborate on them if you wish or just answer with yes or no or like your I am one you can be in silence if you want just spend the whole 30 minutes Appreciate the moment So um what are you grateful for you I'm genuinely grateful for you Anyone who is taking time out of their busy schedule to not only prioritize happiness because that's good for all of us but to also spread and share a message that encourages all of us to be happy Grateful for that I'm also so grateful for I mean really countless things my life I'm steeped in abundance and I don't mean that in just financial terms you know I'm a I'm a short way far away from you know being you know a billionaire or anything like that But but but I will say that to simply have air in my lungs and a heart that beats and a brain that orchestrates it all to have running water to have food and shelter to not be um kind of duress to be safe and sound So I'm grateful for all these things I'm also grateful for the books I continue to love to read Um and I'm most of all grateful for the gift of life itself Like if we think about it life itself is unearned It's like undeserved I didn't do anything to receive it And yet somehow we all hit this cortical lottery and we get to be alive for another moment for another day or another year It's incredible Grateful to wake up in the morning healthy and alive as you say 11 thing one little tip you give the listeners when you wake up in the morning start with the Gracy Just say thank you You've just had a good night's sleep and you woke up Love that love it Are your relationships going well Yes And here's why so that doesn't mean that everybody's showing up in the way I want them to you know they're I'm nobody's boss So not everybody does everything that I would like them to do or want them to do And I don't really um have much interest in that But what I will say is that when and as I find harmony and peace and love and happiness within myself I find that same harmony peace love and happiness with everybody and everything else

regardless of whether or not they find it with me So as far as I'm concerned I feel love for everyone or peace or just because I'm selfish not because of anything special It's just I like feeling good So yes as far as I'm concerned my relationships are all fantastic Other people might have different perspectives on that But I genuinely mean that I just you know I try to stay in that place where I feel peace and I hope that it rubs off Absolutely I was that was the words I was thinking you know if it's working well for you it could rub off and they might take a piece of happiness away with them And finally Rob how are you making the world better Hm Trying to be the change that I want to see in the world I just that's it I want to be the change You know it's it's uh I think that self reform is social reform I think a lot of us um with very good intentions and I love it and we encourage it focus mostly exclusively on social reform I get that I love it and we want to make sure that we're not polluting any of our social causes with the same energy that created the problem in the first place right So for me it's really mostly about trying to be and embody the traits and qualities and states that I'd like to see manifest in the world more fully and I am human like anyone else So I am never you know perfect in that way but I continue to do my best I would say uh you hit on something there the change starts from within And that's when I realized that in in multiple quest multiple things until I decided to do something and make that change people could advise me all day long and give tips and said why did you try this Ok But until I decided and then started focus on on myself and self awareness and changing those things I could be given advice all day nothing would happen But and that happened and I appreciate it And I realized it wasn't all the other things in the world that were having the problems The problem was me I needed to change and I started to change and I want to help others to do that change Because when we do have that self awareness and make that change as you alluded to earlier on we can that can brush off on so many other people and ultimately we can spread the word spread the love spread the happiness so so good You just nailed it there I just want to reflect back the wisdom of what you said there because it's so true It's like when we change the world changes our experience of the world changes immediately But also just by us changing we influence people to change in a much bigger better way I think we we can show people better than we can tell them We can teach people better through our living shining example than we can with our words You know we're always trying to preach to each other and I love words But I also recognize that words have been very helpful in my life but more helpful than that has been to see and

feel and experience a person who is a walking talking living light and example of what I wanna be So I've exhausted my questions I've truly enjoyed this conversation Rob I could continue talking to you all night long but I'm sure you have things to do And I have I have my wife and kids upstairs waiting for dinner But um but that that that's there's another thing simple thing And I I learned that I think from my grown up in my large family but my parents every evening made sure we all sat down together and had dinner and there's something powerful about that sitting with friends or family just that time to get together in the evening after a busy hectic day with all the challenges that we have whether it's school or work or or life Just that eating I love barbecue and I love inviting people around and spending time together because that's a great opportunity to to spread a bit of love and happiness because when people have food in their stomach and it's good they're happy Yes It's in a way it's our first love language or maybe we'll call it the second But it's it's just right That's sustenance and food And one thing is true is that even if you're having a tough time with someone you still connect through experience of sharing or having food together Yeah So I've enjoyed having this food for thought this evening with you Rob and I really appreciate it and I look forward to having more conversations with you and everyone I suggest you go and check Rob out you'll find him on the website coach Rob Mack dot com and you'll find him on Instagram and the usual social media platforms full of positivity full of a great message Go read his book you learn something new every day So Rob thank you so much I appreciate you and I appreciate your time My pleasure I appreciate you Thank you