

Robert Mack, Celebrity Happiness Coach Discusses How to Find Happiness

Hello everybody and welcome to the powerful personal brand podcast I am your host Claire Bond And on today's episode I am so excited to introduce Robert Mac Um He has an absolutely amazing um resume Let me kind of tell you a little bit about him So he is an Ivy League educated positive psychology expert a celebrity happiness coach a published author and a TV host and producer He has been featured on Good Morning America the Today Show Access Hollywood E Network and Own Thank you so much for being here Robert I am so excited about doing this Um Yeah how are you doing today I'm fantastic I love to have a conversation with you and of course super excited to be here So thank you so much for having me Yeah I mean it's just it's so exciting um basically to give people that are listening So we met two years ago It's just it's absolutely crazy but we yeah c extenuating circumstances we couldn't make this happen Obviously 2020 happened Anyway here we are so excited And what is crazy is I remember when I when you told me what you did I was like I was like oh my God I think I instantly was like I want to interview you and you were like absolutely And I didn't want you to tell me what you did because I wanted to learn Um because you know I just wanted you to tell me So can you please tell me what what is a happiness coach Please tell me a story How how did you get started What is a happiness coach Please tell me well I have to say that most of my life I've learned things the hard way Claire So I'm the least likely person probably in the world to be a happiness coach because I struggle with happiness for so long I mean I feel like I was born an extraordinarily unhappy kid I was stressed out and anxious and self loathing and self hating and insecure for as long as I can remember And I always thought I would grow out of it You know you think that you know maybe I'll make money one day I always wanted to be a professional athlete I thought that would happen Maybe I'd make some friends and eventually I just grow out of this unhappiness But actually I just became more and more depressed Got to a place where I was seriously suicidal did some research decided I was gonna actually slash my wrist and that was the way I was going to kill myself Yeah I was kind of dramatic because I was experiencing a lot of suicidal A really for for years before I decided to actually do the research and choose you know slashing my wrist is a way to execute it And so

something very strange happened though because when I went to go get the kitchen knife and I dug it into my wrist and I still have the test on my wrist to this day Didn't see them too well on the camera there But I had the most unexpected unpredictable inexplicable experience which is that for no good reason without anything in my external conditions or circumstances changing meaning I had a pretty good life objectively speaking but I just felt miserable on the inside despite it all in this moment of digging the knife into my wrist I felt real joy and a sense of well being and it like limitless love that I had really never experienced before in quite that way And so at that moment I thought you know I'm gonna put off the suicide thing for just a couple of minutes It wasn't very long player like and even at the time I thought it felt like a very tall order to postpone the suicide because I was just so deeply miserable But in that you know 5 10 15 minutes I started doing some research and I very quickly discovered that I wasn't alone There were lots of other people in the world um that experienced deep depression stress anxiety had been suicidal And so you know that 15 minutes began to sort of bleed into several days and several weeks And now it's been a few decades but really the entire point and purpose of sharing that is that I was really deeply unhappy and I had just made a commitment that I was going to be happy and live as happily and bliss as humanly possible or not live at all And it was always a very selfish motivation from the very beginning And it just sort of unfolded in a way in which I eventually became you know a happiness coach Um you know in the beginning it was just about being happy myself and doing whatever it took to be happy But then things sort of lined up for me when I made that single decision Um So you know I went back to a program at the University of Pennsylvania It's an Applied Masters of Applied Positive Psychology program It's all about the study in science That's what makes life worth living I was paying for school by doing a lot of entertainment stuff I was a model and an actor And um you know I met some incredible people along the way and they you know really helped to prepay the publishing of a book that I was working on But really that book was just a journal of things that made me happy and practices and activities I discovered that made me happy Um but it's interesting how things unfolded in terms of becoming a happiness coach really from just a decision that I was going to be happy no matter what Yeah And then and then wanting to help others that were struggling with the same thing Yeah I sort of discovered that I really enjoyed having the conversation like the conversation that you and I are having I just love the idea that um you know something about this very

painful past of mind could be helpful to other people in the world And so I sort of become obsessed with reading books about happiness and listening to videos and then also sharing what I was reading and getting other people's thoughts and ideas and it sort of became a patient And so before too long friends would say you know Rob I know we're here doing this commercial or this magazine thing But have you ever thought about just charging for what it is you do now already like in a trailer which is having this happen to conversations And I thought that's a great idea That's precisely what I started doing That's good Well that I mean that that's kind of how stuff happened for me too You know people are just like can you personally brand me Have you ever thought about personally branding executives like you do you and I'm like no there you go So it's it is kind of crazy how sometimes they kind of it really organically happens because it's something you're passionate about and you do it for yourself Absolutely I mean the best things that have ever happened in my life have seemed to happen out of thin air and it's usually happening when I've been busy working at something else Right Um but down deep inside I always knew I wanted to find my purpose I wanted to be helpful to other people Um you know and I wanted to make people's lives better Um I just didn't know that this purpose of mine was hidden within this really painful problem that I was experiencing called unhappiness Yeah But I mean I'll just tell you a little like last year I mean I used to be very involved with with social media Obviously it's a huge part of what I do I hated Instagram and Facebook There was so much negativity It was just it was awful hate hate all over the place and I couldn't stand it and I was like I can't I I just left the platforms I kind of started focus focusing more um on positive youtube stuff and and linkedin and I definitely focused more on those platforms today But yeah I really the whole everything going on in the world started getting me depressed and it was just like a weird thing because I'd never really been there before Um and I know that I'm not alone with that I mean so many people were like I never thought experiences like that before but 2020 just kind of rocked everyone to their just core And um are you finding that a lot like you have just more people coming to you because of what's going on in the world Absolutely No question about it You know at the beginning of like 2020 there was a dip Um and my practice was still very busy but the waiting list I had began to shrink You know I'd always had a waiting list and and I you know wondered um you know people were hit hard by 2020 but as things sort of rolled on my practice became busier than ever I mean you know and on one hand you're you know excited

because you want to be able to provide value and service to people and you want to help people on the other It's sad right That folks are struggling and um you know suffering so much So yeah I mean I don't think I've ever been busier in my entire life and it's a really great thing on one hand and on the other it's sad that people are sad So yeah it's been an interesting time I think folks are a lot more in touch though with what truly matters in their lives Um they're much um getting and working on getting much clearer about you know what happiness is and where you can find it and what happiness isn't and where you can't find it Um so yeah there's no question there Um that you and so many people are not alone and you know really experiencing uh you know a tough couple of years Really Yeah Yeah It's just it's been bizarre So like what what does it look like You're like a day in your life Like what is it what does a happiness coach do Like what does that look like for you Yeah So it's a lot of back to back one on one coaching sessions and group coaching sessions too Um you know I get up really early Um I'm like at 3:30 a.m. or so I get up early because I like to do a few things that I've discovered allow me to stay established in happiness which is like you know read and meditate and go to the gym and just have a little time before I dive into clients And then honestly it's a lot of me listening and asking open-ended seemingly innocent questions that are secretly leading people down a path hopefully to greater peace love and joy Um And so I do that most of the day into the evening I um you know do group coaching sessions too which is a lot of Q and A Um and then I do other things I you know I've got about eight books one of which is being published this year The other seven will be published following that But I like to write and not at all No not not so much not so much you know it's like it's great to be busy about That's right It's right there It's true It's like you know but I have found that it's so much easier to be disciplined about things you love Yeah Right Yeah I mean I know that like when you know psych psychologist psychiatrist when they're when they're dealing with clients they often have to have someone that they can kind of bounce I you know talk to as well because do you feel like sometimes that you carry some other people's stresses and they're because you're telling them good things But do you do do you is that why you take that 3 30 time for yourself Because you need to just kind of like let it go Well that's what that's what I that's why I drink That's what I was drinking for No not really I mean um so I used to experience that a lot actually Claire I used to really hang on to and hold on to you know clients problems and friends problems and family members problems and I had a hard time letting it go

because I felt that I was suffering with them and for them and I was responsible for solving their problems and I've discovered the air of my ways Um and I don't do that anymore I mean I have found that when I can lean into that all abiding peaceful presence more consistently both in the conversation and after the conversation I find that I'm a much better listener I'm much more helpful and sessions are much more transformative and I enjoy it so much more and I live a much happier healthier more peaceful life And so really my teaching is to sort of show people more than tell people and try to live through my shiny example Um So I don't carry people's problems I try to forget the problem as soon as we discuss it and move on because it's just not you know smart or happy to let it take up too much real state in your head I I have to admit that it is surprising to me to hear your story especially when I you know met you And if people looked at you you have got this amazing smile and that brings joy and it's just it's surprising to me and I think that that in that surprise it's also relief and you know that you know you you you know what I mean Like that you have also you've experienced it too And I think there's this relief in that that you know someone can be you know have a great smile and be putting out this outward thing But you experienced deep depression I think a lot of people don't think that everyone does You know and and and then it can look like a smile when you're putting on this happy face Yeah so says the Colgate and Crest spokeswoman herself So I mean that you know it take light to recognize light and I fully receive that And thank you for saying that Um But you are absolutely right about that you know I think um so so many of us hide behind smiles and you know there's something in positive psychology called a Duchenne smile So a Duchenne smile is a smile that you cannot fake There are like hundreds of muscles that are activated when you genuinely feel joy or happiness or appreciation about something OK And so you know you'll notice if you're paying attention that you know not everyone has a Duchenne smile and even when you're trying really hard to force a smile down deep inside you're really unhappy or stressed out or anxious it comes through in countless ways in micro expressions right And so um I love what you're saying because it's a testament to the fact that I didn't always have a smile and I used to really struggle being authentically you know happy and smiling big and honestly and authentically Um So I appreciate that so much Um The same goes for you obviously Claire it's like folks would look at you and they'd hear your story and they'd be surprised because they say how could this incredible extraordinarily successful you know happy woman have gone

through what you just described a few moments ago right in the last year or two So yeah I think um Elizabeth Ross is right when she says that you know beautiful people don't just happen you know beautiful people um are basically built and created by having experienced some of the worst tragedies and trials But it's come out on the other side triumphant And um you know I think that's the case with most of us that you know you have to go through some stuff in life But when you go through it you end up coming out on the other end better and more blissful Hopefully Yeah that yeah definitely Well so not everybody can you know was gonna be able to be a private client and work with you What can you give like three tips that that maybe you know things that people can do to help them get out of of some depression to help them find happiness Is it is it something that can be done Yes Yes And um and science at test for that um I think each of our life experiences attest to that and all my clients attest to that I would say that you know I'll give you four OK So the first is um we'll call it positive or happy activities So just create a list of what I would call your happiness islands Those are things people places in activities that for with very little time energy or effort make you feel energized uplifted inspired happy to be alive And so you want to list those things out and you want to do everything you can to get those things scheduled into your life more consistently or more often The opposite of those are just happiness Deserts happiness is deserts are things that you don't enjoy No matter how hard you try you just cannot enjoy it You want to do everything you can to outsource delegate reduce eliminate automate or regulate those six things And that goes for both your personal life and your professional life Um And so that's the first step is sort of like identifying happiness islands and happiness deserts or valleys Um The second piece is learning to tell a better feeling story based in truth about everything and everybody in your life starting with yourself So there are always at least two ways to tell a story And one is by focusing on what's not working and what you don't love and what you don't enjoy And the second is by focusing on what you do love and what you do enjoy what is working And so I call that telling a better feeling story based in truth So it's like if you have \$0 in your bank account are you broke or is there only up from here It's only up from here right Look more supportive more supportive story Um So that's all about vetting thoughts and conversations not based solely on whether or not they're true but also whether or not they're helpful or supportive to you and others Right This number two So the first you can think of as positive activities or happy activities The second is like positive

um thoughts and stories um or happy thoughts and stories And the third is learning to not think at all You know there's such value in this and this is something that you know 10 years ago or especially 20 years ago I would have just roll my eyes at But the idea is that you don't have to always obsessively compulsively be thinking about everything and everybody all the time I mean my little moments by far are the moments where my mind is either thinking very simple thoughts or is completely quiet that moment right before you sleep off to sleep at night When you're so tired you can barely move your body and you're so tired that you are all out of thoughts or out of interest in any thoughts It's such a blissful moment you know and you're so perfectly peaceful So one way to practice that is what we call micro meditation A micro meditation is just one breath that you take as often as you can throughout the day But the only goal being to enjoy that breath as deeply as humanly possible right You wanna pretend like that breath is the last breath the last moment you'll ever have on this planet and to really try and juice or milk that breath in that moment for as much joy as you could possibly get out of it And the way you do that is you breathe in the stomach you let all your thoughts go and you just seriously sincerely try and enjoy that one breath It's like into the nose like out of the mouth It just that if you could do that like almost like it's I feel just kind of just like I I don't know relaxing sensation just by doing breath Like just yeah I I love meditation I don't do it enough But I yeah I it is transformative So I love that breath idea Exactly So everybody can do one breath Sometimes my meditation feels like torturous and it feels hard to sit there for 30 minutes or for even 10 minutes But one breath we can all do If you can do one breath you can do another I love it Yeah It it bring me so I I forgot um that the idea that was in my head before I asked you that question And then it came to me So I come from actually a modeling background I was in New York doing a lot of commercials Um and I had a commercial um he was an agent and also AAA teacher Uh I don't know Barry Shapiro if you remember him do you know So I did Barry Shapiro's class and he was like Claire you smile it's plastic So he taught me the laugh to smile So the and I would always come up with a much more and so it's funny I'll be with my stepdaughter and I'll do the laugh to smile and it makes her start cracking up So like we'll have photos of her like cause she can't handle the laugh She's like yeah he's kid anyway So it's funny because even in acting you know you're just you're there and you have to slate your name and it's all weird and you're reading the lines and like you just you have to have a genuine looking smile in this one photo cause that's

all they have So that was kind of the hack to get It was yeah something funny Do Yeah So but it would but it worked um And probably transform it for my career really because it was the difference between this like or the actual laugh to smile He's like do you see the difference Do you see Polaroids Like do you see the difference I need to find those They're so funny It's so powerful and poignant Clare and there's really so much there to unpack Um You know we don't have time to unpack it all but like in addition to the really beautiful point you just made you know um I and we we have lots of things in common Um Clearly you know models act was into acting for 10 years Right I did that and we would sometimes joke but it was mostly for me it felt like being unemployed because it was really hard to book jobs You know I would always tell people my job is to be a professional audition and I'm not that's what I do for a living I don't Yeah Exactly Exactly And one of the beautiful things that you said is you know sort of like laughing and rolling that into a smile And the other thing was the Smith right The is the real thing that with your eyes and when you actually are smiling and you you mostly smile with the eyes But one of the tricks is always to try and think what you want to emote or think what you want the camera to pick up And so sometimes just thinking when you want the camera to pick up was enough to create the micro expressions in your face to make it register in the actual picture and in the actual video And so it's like you want to feel playful think of something playful if you want to feel um or come across as fun or you wanna come come across as sexy you want to think something sexy in your mind And it's interesting how that lands both in the camera and on the picture or in the video And so again there's so much to be learned really if you look at any particular industry or space or any kind of job that you have there are lessons there on happiness already right And that's something I discovered about sort of modeling and acting that I never expected to discover was that you can communicate a whole lot without saying barely anything If you can just embody the emotion or even think the thought that you want to communicate to the rest of the world I love that Well one thing So because this is the powerful personal brand podcast I wanna talk about how your personal brand has really helped you I mean you have a lot of celebrities coming to you How did you kind of do was it a was it a conscious effort to build the brand or did it kind of just organically happen It um most that most thing organically happened I was you know doing the modeling and acting thing So it was already in the world of entertainment And so a lot of the conversations I was having already were with you know models or

actors or producers or other folks musicians or whatever And so that was the first piece of it And then you know as time went on um you know and I had written a book that I was getting hit up by more folks in that industry because they kind of heard that oh he can understand what I'm going through because he was a model or he was an act he's done some production work And so in any case it sort of happened organically And then uh you know several years later I booked a TV show called Famously Single And I was a love coach and a dating coach and a relationship coach on that show And so that only solidified this sort of brand and reputation as a celebrity love and celebrity happiness coach even more deeply Um So yeah um it was something that was organic but I realized um I should probably embrace instead of fight all the time And so I just embraced it But really the techniques and tools and tips and tricks that I offer are you know ones that apply and work for everyone That's awesome Awesome Do you So we're gonna we're gonna like have to wrap up But can you tell me like you know you work with a lot of clients obviously don't name names but is there one sort of like transformation Um you know one client that you work with like there that it was an amazing kind of transformation for you Yeah Well actually I'll give you an example and um with a client actually um could have been a client But so um I think I shared this maybe on my Instagram stories once but essentially I'm walking I'm in the Beverly Center like outside the Beverly Center in Los Angeles And um you know I like nice clothes I've always liked nice clothes My mom raised me you know to sort of appreciate nice clothes and iron everything and all that good stuff But anyway I was coming off of doing um a TV show like I you know that morning and so I'm like buying something and I'm leaving the store and this uh gentleman calls over to me and says hey hey hey um hey you got a moment I'm like yeah he's like hey I love your outfit I love your outfit And I'm thinking we're just gonna talk about clothes And I said that's so kind of you Thanks so much And he asked me where I got it And then very quickly the conversation evolved into one where we're talking about why I like nice clothes and I like to dress nice And I said you know what makes me feel better And I'm a happiness coach So I believe I'm feeling good and uh I don't need them to feel good but I love any help I can get right And he said oh that's interesting You've been through some stuff up for what And I said yeah I've got these suicide test marks I gave him the story Next thing I know I look and this whole time I'm having a conversation I felt the presence of somebody else standing there but I didn't get a chance to really connect with the other

person Turns out the other person was this gentleman's son And I look and all of a sudden this kid is crying he's just sobbing And I'm thinking oh my goodness I hope I didn't trigger this kid in some way I hope I didn't offend him or make him feel bad And so I just said hey you know brother are you doing OK Is everything ok What's going on And he said Rob like I know I just met you He said but you have to know today was gonna be the day and I was like the day for what he's like today was gonna be the day that I was going to literally kill myself today And he said I am blown away that I just had this conversation with you who had this experience and is talking about how much happier you are when you had gone through a very similar sort of suicidal ideation period And because of this I'm not gonna do it I'm not gonna kill myself today And I remember thinking holy smokes you can't script that you can't plan for that I wasn't trying to coach anyone I'm trying to teach anyone I'm not trying to do anything other than just connect with two people and share my honest truth around my experience And lo and behold this kid is in that moment transformed not by me but by the experience and the conversation itself So I said that for me that's probably one of the most transformative and mind blowing and heart wrenching experiences I've had inspiring uh experiences because it happened so quickly It happened unintentionally and it happened just from having a conversation in an authentic way from a place of pure innocence and purity and wanted to share Yeah that's I mean you know whether someone believes in in God or you know what like you just kind of there's whatever you believe in the universe God or whatever someone it was like this this is this is meant to be I have to put right uh in in this this young man's path because we have this has got to change And that is absolutely amazing I totally believe in in you know yeah higher power I'm not like a very super religious person but I definitely so many things have happened in my life where I was like I random people that I don't even remember their names have made profound like impacts on my life I was like thank you know I just thank God for you Like thank you for wow So that's amazing I totally believe in that I love what you're saying so much It's so powerful so profound and you're absolutely right about that It's like if my life was left up to me and my devices it would be a much bigger mess than it is currently So I believe in God the universe life that hangs the earth on nothing He never does that I know I'm one with and I know it's also you know cooperating collaborating with me in the highest possible way Yeah That's amazing Yeah Um So many stories that that have been kind of life changing and I'm like I wish I could remember that person's name and

Yeah Yeah it's absolutely amazing Um I literally I feel like I talked to you for hours I yeah you are amazing and I just so positive and I absolutely just love your energy and everything about you Um But unfortunately we can't do that for two hours So tell people because you are so magnetic how they can how they can connect with you Where do you want someone to find where can someone find more about you Yeah So first you got to give me your cash app credentials I can send you a check for the compliment The money for the compliment was super kind of you And just so you know first of all thank you I fully received that and please know you are like just a such a special rare gem of a human being such a gift And I feel so privileged honestly and so honored to be in conversation with you and to know you So thank you so much for that I live for these conversations Claire So you've made my day truly know that and for all the folks that you know want to continue the conversation you can find my book I mean it from the inside out everywhere Great books are sold including Amazon and Barnes and Noble both in the store and online You can also find me at my website at coach Rob ma dot com and on all social media platforms most consistently Instagram at Rob Mac and AC K official Love it So go connect with Rob and thank you so much for being here I'm so excited and um yeah I you know I love being connected to you too so just a positive person So thank you so much and thank you everyone for listening and I will see you in the next episode Bye