



Jacques Coquerel



TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEW

WITH



Deborah Day, Licensed Mental Health Counselor,
National Certified Counselor and author of
***“BE HAPPY NOW!:* Become the Active Director of Your Life”**.

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Jacques: The following interview may change your life forever. Let me ask you a question: Have you felt like you have been stuck in a dead end job? Felt powerless in face of adversity? Depressed at times? If so this interview is really for you. Bonjour my name is Jacques Coquerel from Turning Adversity into Success.com and my guest today is Deborah Day, psychotherapist, accomplished author with a new book “Be happy now”, a successful business woman and mother of three. It’s an honor and pleasure to work on my dear friend Deborah. Are you there?

Deborah: I am here!

Jacques: Thank you so much, welcome on the call!

Deborah: Thank you!

Jacques: Thank you! Before we go further tell our listeners who you are and what you do.

Deborah: Sure, no problem. As you said my name is Deborah Day and I do have a full-time private practice where I work with adults, both individually, as couples and I do group therapy and then I’ve also written my first book and so I’m doing more speaking and talking type of engagements which I love to do so I’m helping people all the time.

Jacques: Great! We can find your book at <http://behappynow-deborahday.com>.

Deborah: Correct.

Jacques: Ok, so the whole URL is <http://behappynow-deborahday.com>. What prompted you to write this book?

Deborah: That is a fun story so I want to be honest about that, hopefully it will motivate your listeners to do the things they’ve always said they want to do and maybe they are busy in life and they have all these excuses why they’re not but that’s pretty much what happened to me is: a girlfriend who’s known me for a while finally just put me on the spot, I’ve had all the reasons in the world why I don’t have time to write a book and she got me involved in one of her internets many endeavours which was like guided writing and that is how actually this book emerged. I would’ve never thought my first book would be this type of book and then when I got to the 4th chapter I couldn’t follow the guided writing and started writing on my own and, there you go, I just kept emerging and finally people said “You got to publish this”. This book is just things I tell clients every day, it really doesn’t matter what the topic is at some point we end up focusing on this things so it was very easy to write because it’s things I say every day. I’d like to tell you I planned for years and years to write this book but I didn’t but it’s a very significant book because it’s me finally stepping into my full potential so it’s going to springboard me into my next book so that is very exciting.

Jacques: You already have another one in mind?

Deborah: I sure do! This book in particular when your listeners read it each chapter could be a book in itself so my next book will most likely be on relationships and boundaries and that kind of thing.

Jacques: What kind of clients do you have?

Deborah: I choose to work only with adults and the reasons I choose to do that are many but one reason is that my major scene, even before I wrote this book, was helping people to take control to the best of their ability back, to live proactively and I find that adults, obviously, are more capable of doing that than an adolescent so I work with all kinds of adults with all kinds of issues but preferably I like to do a lot of empowerment work and work with people that are there by choice and just want to have a more fulfilling life. I do a lot of things that sound a lot like coaching but I'm definitely a true psychotherapist so you get it all when you come to me.

Jacques: Great! And we give more information about how they can get in touch with you or you want to say it now and then we remind people by the end of the interview how can people get in touch with you.

Deborah: Sure, and even when they go to my website <http://behappynow-deborahday.com> that will direct them to my other website which is <http://deborahdayma.com> I think but all of that is on my book website so whatever they want to know about me they can find through those two websites.

Jacques: Great! We are going to talk about adversity in life, people who have been going through difficult times right now, some people have been through foreclosure, have lost a job, some have lost a bank account and they got kind of stuck there. The first question I would like to ask you is really what causes depression, anxiety and that sort of things.

Deborah: Right, and so we have about 5 hours to cover that topic, is that what you told me? I'm kidding. Of course that is a huge question and I'm going to share with you some of the things we can control and before I do that though I want to point out that, certainly, some causes of depression are biologically rooted, I'm not going to focus on those right now but some of those can be produced by medication however outside of those one of the biggest things that causes depression is stress. It's not that stress is bad because stress as you know motivates me and you and we need some stress in our life to get us going.

Jacques: It's like cholesterol you got good stress and bad stress.

Deborah: There you go, right, and it's more about having a rest period. Healthy stress, you think of like a little hill on a line, but then you have a down period when you recover and you regroup and then a little more stress but unfortunately with the way that life is and all the terrible things that are going on so many people are not having that down time it's just one stress, stress, stress, stress and we're only human and many people don't know what to do, they don't know how to take control over the stress if it continues to occur and the body gets exhausted. That is a huge piece of where that depression is coming for so many people right now so I guess might call it also stress management, how to manage all the stress that is going on which is not a simple thing as you know

because so many people even if they have a job they feel that they do the job of 10 people. So being able to manage our stress right now is pretty creative but if we don't do it we're going to suffer.

Jacques: So stress management is something everybody has to do.

Deborah: I don't know if most of the people listening are career oriented or not.

Jacques: Yes they are.

Deborah: So if they are in careers certainly if they are self employed they have some leeway on some things, if they work for a company people are just discouraged with all the changes and so part of stress managing stress in a work place is adjusting to all those changes and one of the biggest ways that you can do that is listening to your body, what is your body telling you, are you feeling tired a lot? What are some physical things going on with you? Are you having physical things like trouble sleeping, difficulty concentrating? Your body will tell you if you need some recuperation. Does that make sense?

Jacques: Absolutely!

Deborah: Because I find that a lot of us don't listen to our bodies, we just keep going on this roller coaster, we just keep riding the ride, we're letting everything control us and we're going to get depressed if we don't take care of ourselves. Pay attention to your body and if you know your body is telling you that it's exhausted no matter what is going on in your corporation you have to find a way to give your body some recuperation time.

Jacques: You are using the word and the verb "listening" and "listening to your body". I don't know how to do that. I can be someone that feels tired all the time and keeps going and, let's say, to keep going I just drink more coffee and I keep going.

Deborah: That is a good point.

Jacques: But that is not my case, I'm just saying that someone might say that.

Deborah: Exactly, and where I would go with that is that to me is someone who is living what I call reactively, they are just doing life and life is winning, life is controlling them. Does that make sense?

Jacques: Yes.

Deborah: Ok, like you said they are denying their own feelings and not paying attention to themselves and my guess would be that they don't feel too happy in life because they don't feel in control. It's about becoming aware, about being intentional, about paying attention. Does that make any sense?

Jacques: Yes, is that living in the moment?

Deborah: Yes that too but you probably heard the word proactive versus reactive?

Jacques: Yes.

Deborah: Ok, living proactively is very different than living reactively. Living reactively is like what you just described. Living proactively is someone that is awake and alert, knows what is going on around them, is making conscious choices about how many hours they're going to put in at work, how much coffee are they going to drink, how much exercise are going to get, how are they going to balance this crazy life that is in front of them right now instead of not addressing that so they are going to pay attention when they are tired all the time and not just give themselves caffeine to keep going. They are going to a lot better job at work too when they have some recuperation time and that is good for everybody.

Jacques: Being proactive is being control of what you do, you are in control of your time and you are in control of your circumstances.

Deborah: Well we are not always in control of our circumstances are we? But we are in control of how we choose to respond to those circumstances so if I'm a company and I'm an HR and there are 27 of us and half of us are laid off I have no control over that I only have control over my reaction to that.

Jacques: Let's take that as an example. I am laid off, I lost my job, my business is failing how can I stay positive?

Deborah: That is a great question. I certainly want to acknowledge that's easier for some people than others because that has to do sometimes with temperament and definitely has a lot to do with our history. When I think about being positive in those terrible times I don't think it means being fake, it's certainly ok to acknowledge what a hard time this is but I notice a big difference when I work with people who are choosing to pay attention to how they are viewing something even as terrible as that. People need to pay attention to their internal biologic, what they're telling themselves about this experience, are they telling themselves: "this is hopeless", "why did I even bother?", "I could never do this again" I mean how far it seems that will get you.

Jacques: Absolutely.

Deborah: I call it reframing, we need to pay attention to what we are thinking about these circumstances and then put them in a correct frame. If you take a picture and put it in an unattractive frame, a really ugly picture frame, the picture looks what?

Jacques: Bad.

Deborah: It doesn't look right good does it? But if I took that same picture and I put in a really attractive frame the picture looks what?

Jacques: Beautiful.

Deborah: Maybe not beautiful but it looks a lot better. When someone is discouraged like that I certainly honor that, of course is not like you never want to grieve or have any bad feelings but then is about reframing your thoughts. Pay attention to your thoughts, what are you thinking about this and correct them, make them the thoughts that are going to dig yourself out of this hole. That is not easy, I understand that, but what other choice do we have?

Jacques: Yes it's not easy so we have to expand on this a little bit. What is a frame?

Deborah: It's called reframing, were you literally tell people to grab and buy one of those little frames and they could use that to remind themselves that they always have a choice on how to look at a situation or how to think about it. They can frame it in a bad, ugly frame or they can put it in more attractive frame. Does that make any sense?

Jacques: Yes, can you give us an example?

Deborah: Yes, just like I've been saying you can say to yourself "this is hopeless, I worked so hard for that job, the economy is terrible, there is no way I could do this again" that is not a very attractive frame correct?

Jacques: Correct.

Deborah: Or I could say to myself "Yes this is difficult but I've survived difficult times before", "I've started from the bottom before and look how high up I went", "it's true time are difficult but I'm really creative and we'll come up with creative ideas" so do you see how I'm shifting my thinking, I'm not being fakey, I'm just acknowledging a different truth. It may be true that the economy is terrible and all that but if all I do is focus on the negative I'm not going to feel good, it's not going to help me.

Jacques: Is there a great relationship between self image and the reframing?

Deborah: Yes, so does depression, there are so many issues on depression but self image was one of the things I was going to say. Self image aside from any biological components is the image we say about ourselves to ourselves so if we already are really hard on ourselves and we talk bad to ourselves inside, I call that our internal dialog the way we chatter to ourselves, some people don't even realise they're doing it but we're always doing it, we are always talking to ourselves on the inside. If someone is already really hard on themselves, they are unforgiving with themselves then of course when adversity comes they are not going to handle it to well so someone who thinks more positive about themselves will handle adversity a little bit better because they have a better foundation.

Jacques: Yes.

Deborah: So to the question of what do you do when you hit rock bottom or how do you get out of depression self image is huge because that is how we view ourselves on a daily basis which will affect everything because our thoughts usually then affect our feelings and then those two things usually affect our behaviour so everything is connected. Does that make sense?

Jacques: Absolutely, so what you are saying is that everybody has a moment when they feel depressed, everybody has challenges and adversity but—

Deborah: At least everybody I know, there might be someone out there but I never met them.

Jacques: So it's how reframe the circumstance that helps us to respond positively or negatively and if someone is reframing very negatively that may be because he has bad self esteem or self image of himself or herself. How do you help people better their self image?

Deborah: I love that topic, it's a fun topic and a long topic but I do start with, I don't do it the same way for everybody, but one of first things I do is I help people become aware of their internal dialog, their internal self talk, internal chatter whatever you want to call it and I introduce the concept of paying attention to that and we can find out right away if they are more hard on themselves or not. If they have an internal, what I mean by that is the thoughts we think inside, nobody else may know we are hard on ourselves but we know we are. If they have an internal, what I'm going to call a really critical parent that is constantly battering them, one of the first things I do is I help them to realise they're doing that because it doesn't really matter what I say until they realise how they are treating themselves on the inside, up here in their head, nothing is going to really change. First I do teach them to pay attention and to identify "Am I being more critical? Am I being more nurturing with myself?" and if they are able to admit they are more critical they I begin a process to help them learn first to pay attention and then how to change how they are talking to themselves. Then we go deeper to into messages they learn to believe about themselves, messages about life and it goes a little deeper and we begin to unravel that so that they are telling themselves what they want to hear instead of maybe what they learned. Does that make any sense?

Jacques: Yes, reprogramming.

Deborah: Yes and I like to call it reparenting. We become our own parent to ourselves.

Jacques: I like that.

Deborah: Because it's just a learning tool: how are you parenting yourself internally, are you being a critical parent or a nurturing. Just ask yourself what I say that to a 7 year old kid and if the answer is "no" they you're probably being critical.

Jacques: Can you give us some steps for reparenting ourselves?

Deborah: Sure, and I have a whole chapter on that in my book, I don't know how well this will work without the visual.

Jacques: Let's try it.

Deborah: Ok, we'll try it. One of the first things I said was the need to first pay attention to even know you're doing it so there are so many different ways you can do that but a really fun way to do it, not all my clients do it this way, just to first pay attention is if you have a watch that has a little

alarm on it you would set it for 30 minutes for every hours and every time it beeps, when you hear that noise it doesn't matter what you're doing it's your job to go check in with your brain so you could be talking on the phone and do this. Your alarm goes off and you go inside and you listen and you state to yourself "Am I being nurturing or critical?" so first I want you to pay attention to what you're even saying to yourself, start noticing. Does that make sense?

Jacques: Yes.

Deborah: Because you're not going to change it if you don't even know you're doing it.

Jacques: Do you write your thoughts down?

Deborah: No, all I'm doing is teaching you to even pay attention because what we usually do is go to our day and we don't pay attention to what we are saying to ourselves we just go through life, working hard and doing whatever and we ignore, usually, whatever that internal dialog is getting in our way. What I am trying to do is train people to just start noticing first and it's really simple: all you have to do is check in every hour, every half an hour but you have to have a way of doing it or you won't remember like an alarm, some people will put stickies up in about 8-10 places throughout wherever they are going to be that says "N/C" that stands for nurturing versus critical. The first thing is to pay attention, pay attention, pay attention and even just doing that it's amazing, even that will start to change your thoughts because you'll noticing what you are doing and once I help someone notice they're doing it more then I teach them what will nurturing look like so we'll write a list of nurturing words and there is a whole chapter in my book that walks people through this. We'll write a list of like 20 nurturing words, gentle, kind, compassionate just a bunch of words then, every time they pay attention and say they notice they're being critical, they are going to replace that with something nurturing. If they notice they're saying something like "Oh you dummy you should've done that, you should know how to do that" which is critical they then will say something like "I really want to learn being more gentle with myself" so I'll start with things like that. I start with things like that, first I start with teaching people to pay attention they I add in paying attention and changing it. Does that make sense?

Jacques: Absolutely.

Deborah: So those are some quick, easy tools and then we get fancier where we'll write out different affirmations that we will learn to believe then we will read different books and then we'll work on the messages so it's like unraveling and it really is like reteaching. If you want to go out and, pretend you've never played tennis, you decided that you really want to play tennis and maybe you'll go and read a book about tennis or watch a video. You watch a video, read a book and you go out and play tennis, are you going to be any good?

Jacques: No.

Deborah: No, it's the same concept. They can read a book about self esteem but just like with tennis they have to go out there and take lessons, take group lessons and they have to play, play, play and they eventually keep getting better and better. It's about starting and continuing and eventually you start to think different about yourself which has a wonderful effect on your life no matter what your

circumstances are. If you go to any other book on depression and anxiety they're going to tell you in a lot of pages what I'm going to tell you in 5 pages of my book so they tell you all about self talk and it's the key to so much, our thoughts have some much power how we feel, over our success, over relationships and I could keep going because I get excited about this.

Jacques: I am excited about this subject too and I like the little cycle of our thoughts: determine our feelings and then determine our actions so if we change a thought then we are changing our feelings and then of course feelings also dictate emotions and our behaviour will follow differently.

Deborah: What we tend to forget in America because we're fast-food and instant gratification and if we feel like something we do it, if we feel like exercising we do it but we have 3 doors we can go through. When you are in discouraged down place you're feelings are probably not so good are they?

Jacques: No.

Deborah: So when my feelings are really, really off I don't that door, that part of me to control me so I'm going to lean more on my thoughts for my behaviours and often when someone has really low feelings usually their thoughts are pretty negative because those two are usually very correlated, does that make sense?

Jacques: Oh yes.

Deborah: So when someone is real bad, sometimes they're so low that their thoughts and feelings are both negative that I have to help them just rely on the B door which is for behaviours. Sometimes my behaviour influences my feelings which then influences my thoughts, sometimes my thoughts influences my behaviours which then change my feelings, you see what I mean, it can rotate the three any other way. We have a lot more power over our lives than we like to believe sometimes.

Jacques: Do you mentally close those bad doors that you talked about?

Deborah: Well I was just giving a visual of thoughts, feelings, behaviours which we always have all of them but we don't always have to rely on our feelings to make good choices.

Jacques: The visuals are very interesting, they can be connected to the bad thoughts we have and we can say this is a door I need to close quickly but mentally how can someone shut bad talk off?

Deborah: In the beginning it doesn't feel right, when someone is brand new at this and I'm teaching them just to pay attention or maybe I'm ready for the step two and I'm teaching them to make the list of 20 positive words and they recognise the negative and I tell them to replace with a positive I tell them to do this whether they believe it or not, I don't really care if you think it's working. In the beginning it's a lot of behaviour stuff, a lot of doing this stuff even if you don't feel different. Does that make sense?

Jacques: Yes.

Deborah: It does take time and this is just one part of the puzzle I work on, at the same time we're working on other ways we're sabotaging ourselves and the more they do it, the more we work on different affirmations to say, we'll change their behaviours slowly, just like the tennis player, they get better and better at it and it begins to be believable, they actually start to believe these new things.

Back when I was in my early twenties doing this it seemed impossible that I'd ever feel whatever positive way. Now it's really natural for me, I don't really have to think that hard to correct my thoughts, I recognise I corrected it and I still have negative thoughts sometimes but it's instinctual. Eventually all this stuff begins to feel like it's a part of us but not over night because we're not robots, we're not computers.

Jacques: Yes.

Deborah: And depending on circumstances if I get a 55 years old in my office who had bad self esteem all her life and is now in a crisis situation versus getting a 22 years old who came out of college who had some rough spots it's a lot easier to correct and change that 22 years old because they had only 22 years with that thinking versus the 55 years old who has been building his or her life on these negative beliefs. It doesn't really matter what age or stage you are at it's never too late to change how you feel about us.

Jacques: Yes. If we would think about what other people have in other parts of the world, if we would know that we would exercise more gratitude for what we have now. I want to ask you how gratitude plays in changing adversity, maybe we have a little that is going wrong and we got depressed over it, maybe the car broke down at the wrong time and instead of being happy that at least you have a car you got completely depressed just because the car broke down. You want to talk about gratitude a little bit?

Deborah: Gratitude by essence of what it is, is going to shift us in a more positive direction, there are books out there like gratitude journals now. I have asked people sometimes to do gratitude journals and that is really about shifting our thinking so it's a form of reframing. There are many books now just on the importance of gratitude and some people will have an easier time with that concept than others. I think it's a hugely important component in our lives and one that it's often not remembered and very important to do but there are people, as you know, who say no, no matter what information we give them the "cup is half empty period". I'm guessing you know about that and you've experienced people that are just negative.

Gratitude for me feels rich, almost spiritual and it's a great redirection. I don't encourage people to use that as a form of minimizing their own feelings but I encourage it as a form of balancing and spiritual connection outside themselves so it's definitely wonderful, necessary and helpful and all those things.

Jacques: I want to talk about adversity a little bit and try to look at differently instead of looking at like a down time can we talk a bit about how adversity is necessary for growth. A lot of people that studied all have adversity even in the Bible you see people like Joseph and David have adversity, Joseph for instance was put in a pit and sold as a slave and every time he is still thankful but it is still a springboard to move to another level. Can we talk about that?

Deborah: I love your word “springboard” because I was a springboard diver growing up so I love that analogy. Everything is a springboard, everything is an opportunity it’s just a matter whether we choose it to be or not and that true with adversity also. I think existing in this world there are going to be difficulties, it’s part of being human. I’m raising children and I’m not praying for them to have adversity so they’ll learn to get strong, it’s not my wish for them. When you use that word I was cringed because you don’t have to wish for problems to come because they are just going to be there because it’s a part of life. We have a choice how we are going to handle those difficult times: are we going to grow from it or it’s going to win and I know that some personalities do a better job at handling adversity. One of the greatest things that help us during adversity is reaching out for help and that is not the time that you want to tough it out alone. It’s the time you reach out to friends, to family, to people because that is not the time you want to go alone.

Jacques: Yes.

Deborah: I think it’s about my inborn personality I have, I’m a survivor, I fight through it and get stronger but I do know people that their temperament can handle only so much adversity and unfortunately it destroys them. I think it’s a balance between personality and choices of how you deal it and asking for help, it’s about the need to ask for help, to reach out, to admit that you need help and let people help you because you are at such a low place and can’t do it alone. When you get some support hopefully you’ll be able to start asking yourself “Have I been through bad times before and how did I get out of them?” Once you start to receive some support you’ll probably start to feel a little more encouraged, a little more hopeful and think a little clearer because in the beginning of such a terrible thing we often reach the bottom of the bottom.

Jacques: You say you are a survivor?

Deborah: Right, I was giving examples of different personalities and my personality like it or not tends to, when hard things come, naturally fight I don’t tend to give up whereas some people when a bad thing comes they tend to just give up, fall apart and then rebuild. I’m not one is better than the other but there are differences in personalities on how we handle trauma and difficult times.

Jacques: So if completely down and reached the bottom of the barrel the first thing it do is to reach out to someone or to reframe, what should I do first?

Deborah: Well, you’re probably too devastated to reframe anything so you need to reach out for help, ask for help from people who can help you and that you know that are safe. I give the analogy of a trampoline, back when I was young the trampolines were square not round and we used to have spotters now they have those big nets that go around, but I think that in our lives before we even have difficulty we need to have a lot of safe spotters around our trampoline to stick to the analogy. We need safe people in our lives, people that are good for us and if we do have some terrible things go on we have those people that can hold us up during those times. If you ask people who have been through really bad traumas, what got them through they’re going to tell you is the connections they had to people, that’s what did it for them, it’s the people so that’s the first thing you do when you are at the bottom of the barrel, you ask for help.

The suicide rate is really high during those times because people don't have a good resource system, they don't have a good resource system and it's critical that when you are that low that you let people be there for you. Some people aren't very good at accepting help and it's really important at that time to let yourself accept help and you'll slowly start feeling encouraged and that's when you can have more energy to think about your thoughts and change your thinking, remember what got you through things before and what are my resources and those kind of things.

Jacques: Some people don't accept help because it has to do with vulnerability, they don't want to feel vulnerable, they don't want to open up and they think "I don't want anyone to see what is happening to me" and at one point it might be a pride issue.

Deborah: That's about our history isn't it? About our upgrowing, about our learning and sadly that's when bad things happen and there are a lot more men, I'm not trying to be sexist, that don't ask for help. Even in my field it tends to be more women that come to therapy but call it pride, call it I don't want to be vulnerable when you are at the bottom of the barrel you are naked and you need help and it's part of being human. That's what it is we're human, we're not gods, we're not machines, we're not computers we're human beings and we can only take so much.

Jacques: Yes, we're coming towards the end of the interview so if someone needs help how can they get in touch with you?

Deborah: They can get in touch with me through <http://deborahdayma.com> or <http://behappynow-deborahday.com> however if any of you listening know that you are in a really discouraged place and you live in Atlanta, Georgia or some other city and you have insurance you can go to your insurance panel and try to find a therapist in your area. Everybody is welcome to get my book, my book is good-for-anybody kind of book, it's not to hurt anyone, it's sort of like everybody-should-be kind of book just to get them going in the right direction but they can go to a counselor, they can get a personal coach, they can go through support group whatever they need to get support through a difficult time.

Jacques: The book is "Be happy now" and that can be found on <http://amazon.com> and other book stores I assume?

Deborah: Right now it's available only online, <http://amazon.com> or at my website but the more you are going to order it the better chance of me getting it in the book stores.

Jacques: Very good. I know that in your book which has eight chapters one of it is "Invest in oneself" which is what we talked about but it's there any conclusive word about investing in oneself, some final advice you want to give our listeners.

Deborah: If you're not going to invest in yourself my question is who is going to? Some people believe that this is the only life we will get so why not make it your best. Some people think we have more than one life but just in case this is the only one why not make it the best we can and I believe that we deserve that and that would be my wish for everybody that is listening.

Jacques: So and get the book “Be happy now” by Deborah day you can find that on <http://amazon.com>, it’s eight chapters and gives good information. I wanted to thank you Deborah and anything else you want to tell our listeners before we conclude our discussion?

Deborah: I just want to be an encouragement and remind everybody no matter what your situation is you do have some power to help yourself and not to give up.

Jacques: Great! I really appreciate the conversation and I appreciate all the steps that you have taken us through, I want to thank you and again “Be happy now” and then of course everything else is in the book and they can get in contact with you by <http://deborahdayma.com>, appreciate it and thank you so much!

Deborah: Absolutely, looking forward to chatting again! Bye now!

Jacques: Bye!