

Social Media For Mompreneurs

EP 156

5 Steps to Managing Anxiety and Living a Fulfilled Life with Robyn Graham



Do you have a God-led calling, but anxiety seems to hold you back from your full potential... your purpose! Do you have these big hopes and dreams, but stay planted where you are because of the overwhelming pain in your gut, or the sleepless nights that keep you hidden in the shadows?

Get ready for a raw, inspiring and empowering episode. My amazing friend and podcast bestie, Robyn Graham, is back and we're diving into how anxiety plays a huge role in entrepreneurship. Robyn also shares her 5 Cs to identifying and handling anxiety and we discuss her new book for teens and parents, *You, Me and Anxiety*.

If you're ready to unlock the chains and fulfill your God-led purpose, then grab your favorite cup of joe and let's dive in.

Hey there sister, welcome to the Social Media For Mompreneurs podcast. I'm your host, Allison Scholes. And I am on a mission to help mompreneurs like you ditch the Instagram overwhelm and take control of your time on the app and build an extraordinary brand and business, but still be fully present with your family and just be crazy happy with your life.

[Boss Lady In Sweatpants](#)

This show is filled with Instagram strategies, marketing hacks, branding, and business tips with a side of coffee and Jesus. If you're ready for some juicy content, you know what to do. Hand your kiddos those tablets, open those juice boxes, grab your coffee, whiskey, or wine and let's dive in.

Allison: Robin Graham, my branding bestie is back. She is no stranger to this show. I think this is her third or fourth time being on, maybe

Robyn: I'm a regular,

Allison: You are regular. So using the power of brand strategy, Robin helps women build personal brands and businesses with solid foundations for long-term brand and business success.

She has been a huge inspiration in my business. So welcome back Robin.

Robyn: Thank you. Alison, it's always an honor to be here with you and I just cherish you and all of the amazing things that you're putting out into the world. So thank you.

Allison: Oh, thank you. And right back at you, and it's just so fun chatting with you.

I think we spent maybe 20 to 25 minutes just chatting before we hit record for this episode. So we just have a great time together, but I'm really excited to dive into our topic today. So it goes without saying that entrepreneurship, it's hard and we both know that.

There are so many emotions that go along with entrepreneurship. And I think anxiety is a big one. And I think it's safe to say that everyone has experienced anxiety in their life and even their business. So Robin, how has anxiety impacted your life and your business.

Robyn: Oh, Alison, I don't even know where to begin with that question. I had anxiety as a child, so anxiety has just consistently built for me over the years and I had to learn to navigate it.

And I, some people say, oh, you can totally overcome anxiety. I'm not sure that that's actually the case. I think that we learn skills, techniques, change our habits and we discover ways to navigate it in a positive way. But I think if you genetically are predisposed to anxiety and then you throw environmental factors on top of that, especially in the era that we're living in right now, where digital marketing is key to all of our businesses, we're exposed to so many things that can make that anxiety bubble up in us.

And I think that it's just a matter of learning to navigate it. And so that, that is where I am, is I've learned strategies, I've learned tools, I've learned techniques that helped me keep myself in a place where if anxiety rises, I can hush it. I can quiet it. I can make it so that I can still move forward and not sit in a place of procrastination or comparisonitis or imposter syndrome.

Because it's holding me back because I'm thinking, what if, what if, or they're doing it better. I can't do that. So trying to quiet those negative thoughts, those negative emotions and feelings that anxiety tends to rise in people.

Allison: Did you find that you had to figure out what triggered your anxiety? Do you think that's like the, one of the biggest things that people really need to start understanding is what is triggering it?

Robyn: Yes, 100%. In my upcoming book, I actually have a section in the book where I encourage people to write down those triggers. So as you experience those feelings of anxiety and for all of us, anxiety presents in different ways.

For me, anxiety presents in stomach pains. So just in the center of my belly, it, it just feels like I'm sick. Like it's like a burning, it's cramping. It just, and I... and I have learned that. Oh, okay. Somewhere inside me, anxiety is bubbling up and now I need to figure out why.

Robyn: But as you start to recognize, maybe it's sleepless nights, maybe it's headaches, maybe it is stomach pain. It could be trouble breathing. It could be any number of things for any individual. But once you start to recognize what those symptoms are, then you can start focusing on, okay, what triggered that?

And you really have to go back and think, okay, in the past 24 hours, what have I experienced? Who have I talked to? What have I done? And think about what those things are that could have triggered that. Because sometimes the symptoms won't show up immediately when the trigger occurs. Sometimes it happens, you know, a day later or, you know, hours later. So you have to backtrack to see, okay, what has caused this to, or stimulated this experience that I'm feeling. And so when you start to recognize those and writing them down, you can catch them more readily.

Allison: Yeah. I actually realized in the last few years, because I would get anxious or have anxiety and what happens to me is my body becomes very rigid. So rigid that my hands cramp up and my fingers actually feel like they're going to break.

And yet I can logically think through the situation, but it's almost like an out of body experience where my body takes over. And it took me a while to figure out what the trigger is. So now knowing what my trigger is, which is if I'm ever in a situation where I feel trapped and my mind starts going and I can't get out of this situation for a period of time, that's what triggers my anxiety.

So I have to know. Yeah. So I have to actually kind of preplan and be like, am I going to be in a situation where I'm going to feel trapped. Or I can't get out of it for an amount of time. I need to plan for that. I need to kind of have, you know, what am I going to do? Who am I going to be with? Is there maybe some CBD I can take to chill me out before I go into that situation?

But it took me a while. Yeah. It took me a while to figure out what that trigger was. And I think that's something that's really important.

Allison: Now, today, you're here to share your five Cs to overcoming and dealing with anxiety. So I'm going to let you take the lead Robin. I might pop in with some questions, but I'm going to let you take the floor on this and I'm really excited to learn this.

Robyn: Okay. So, um, so I really say, you know, these are the ways that you can navigate anxiety. And my book was written with teen girls in mind. However, there is, there is something for every single human in this book. Like you could literally take this strategy, whether you're a parent, a teen, or an entrepreneur or a person in corporate and don't have children. Um, the, the steps that I recommend can help anyone.

But the first is similar to what we talked about, is to catch those thoughts, catch whatever that is that is swirling around in your mind, that's making you anxious. And we know that our thoughts create our results, so to speak. So as entrepreneurs, if we're thinking anxiously and we're thinking negative thoughts, then we're going to cause negative emotions. And those negative emotions are then going to re... cause us to, probably not take action or take action that is not intentional or effective, but most likely stay in a place of procrastination or paralysis.

So it's really important to catch those thoughts. When we catch those thoughts, then we need to challenge those thoughts. So if you're thinking that...let's just use you as an example because you, cause you brought that up. So if you're, if you're in a position where you're say you're at a dinner party and someone has kind of cornered you and you're having a conversation and you feel like you're trapped in this conversation and can't escape.

Your mind's going to go to, okay, what if I can't get away from this person? What if they ask me a question I can't answer? What if they say something that hurts my feelings. What, what if I miss a drink opportunity? Or what if I miss dinner? Because this person has me trapped in a corner and your mind is spiraling out of control, right?

Robyn: If you can catch those thoughts and challenge them, okay, is this realistic? Can this person really keep me in this corner or will my husband see that I'm trapped in this corner and come to my rescue? Will they really have dinner if I'm not seated at the table, you know? And you start to make the decision to emphasize those thoughts in a way that, are they rational? Like no. And most of the time our anxious thoughts are not rational.

They... one question, one what if leads to another, or one should leads to another. And so it starts to spiral out of control. So if we can catch those thoughts, the first one that comes in, and then discover, is it rational then we can say to our self, No. And we can change that thought. Okay. No, no, Alison, this is not rational. This person cannot trap me in this corner. I, all I have to do is say, excuse me, and I can walk away.

But we have to train our brain to be able to recognize, you know, to catch and then challenge it and then change it. And what I like to say is that the more we do this exercise, and sometimes it takes more than just thinking it in a situation, but then journaling about it after the fact to say, you know, to really map it out and make that mind to paper connection, because there's such a strong connection there that then we can start to control those thoughts. So we don't have them as often because we've trained our brain to catch them before they become an issue for us before we start experiencing those physical symptoms or emotional symptoms.

And then the more we control those thoughts, the more confident we become. So if we are in that situation where there's a possibility of feeling trapped, we can feel confident that we can escape that situation without having the anxiety, without having our hands buckle up in pain or, you know, being rigid or whatever physical symptoms that the person may be experiencing.

Allison: So first we need to catch those thoughts, then we need to challenge them, control them, and then that's where the confidence comes in.

Robyn: Yeah. So catch, challenge, change, control, and then confidence. Yeah.

Allison: I want to go back to the beginning there because it made me think of something when you were, when you were walking us through all the thoughts in our head. I'm wondering, and maybe this is...it can't be just me, but do you think the majority of people when they are in that thought process, why is it that we create the worst case scenarios in our head? Like why do we do that?

Robyn: So, so when you think about anxiety, anxiety causes fear. So anytime we're in that state of fear, when you think of, like, the prefrontal lobe of our brain, that's, that's our fight or flight, right. So we're going to immediately go to that place of I've got to escape.

I mean, this goes all the way back to the caveman, you know, we're, we're created to have fear and fear is a positive emotion because it's going to keep you safe. And so when you're anxious about something, you're immediately going to go into that state of fear and think that you have to react to rescue yourself or save yourself.

And then if that fear is saying, well, you can't do that. Or that anxiety is saying, well, you can't do that. Then that fear is just going to keep escalating.

Allison: So that's probably why. Yeah. So that's why we're thinking the worst case scenario. So really when we catch those fearful thoughts and we need to challenge them, do you think the way to change those thoughts is to think of fear is really the same feeling as excitement. Like if, when you're fearful, it's almost the same feeling as being excited. If you think about it.

Robyn: Yeah. And, and I think every person has a different reaction, but you know, if you think about when, when you get really excited, you get butterflies in your stomach a lot of times. Well, when I'm anxious, I get, it's a feeling it's not quite like butterflies, but it's still my stomach.

Like I, that is where my center of my emotions kind of lies is in my gut. Don't ask me why, but that's what it is. It's been that way since I was six years old. But, so you know, sometimes those emotions can get confused too. Right. Like if your physical symptoms are the same, they can get confused.

Robyn: So you really have to, to know your body and then respect what it's telling you. It's that mind, body, soul connection. We're so interwoven. God made us so intricately that it all connects. And, and that's what I think a lot of people miss is that they think they're struggling with headaches, but what is causing those headaches? And, you know, they go to the doctor. Well, there's nothing wrong with you.

Okay. Well, there is clearly something wrong because you're experiencing this, but what is triggering it? And that's when you go back to, okay, I'm having these headaches after I've had such and such an experience or after I've been with someone. Sometimes it's a person that is triggering us, you know, and if it's a negative person, negative emotions, maybe it's a client, maybe it's someone that is on social media that is causing you to feel intimidated or not good enough or imposter syndrome.

You know, all of those things can trigger anxious thoughts, and then that anxiety is going to trigger fear and sometimes anxiety will trigger anger. Sometimes it'll trigger fear, and then, you know, any of those can then result in shame. So it becomes a downward spiral if you don't catch those thoughts sooner than later, and then work to change them.

Allison: Oh, that was so good. I love those five CS: catch, challenge, change control, and then confident. And it just sounds so, like, I don't want to say like, duh, but it sounds so logical, but we do get in our own heads and it's hard to stop in that moment.

So what is your advice to someone who, because these last two years has been a real kick in the pants for a lot of people, and there's a lot of people that are really suffering from anxiety and fear and stress, and won't even leave their house. What do you say to someone in those beginning stages of trying to work through these steps?

Robyn: So the very first thing I would say is it's not easy.

Are you thinking about writing a book? I'm thinking about writing a book, but mentally I just put it off until the near future. Most entrepreneurs out there have been thinking about writing a book, but less than 1% of them ever will. Fortunately, I won't be one of them thanks to The Book Writing Blueprint.

The Book Writing Blueprint is everything I need to take my ideas out of my head and begin to structure and write my book using the simple three by three by three system. I even have access to other aspiring authors and bonus modules on author mindset, book, topic, selection, and editing. And you have access to The Book Writing Blueprint. It's time to stop dreaming and procrastinating about your book and start putting pen to paper and publish your book.

With The Book Writing Blueprint, you will gain confidence in your writing, develop your book concept in an outline, and then into writing actual chapters so you can finish a full first draft. And you'll write a book that has the power to change lives and leave a legacy that will travel with you through the years. Visit <http://www.jessibeyerinternational.com/allison> to get started and outline your next bestseller in less than 60 minutes.

Robyn: I mean, I, this has taken me years of practice to, to navigate. And you know, it's, you often can't do it yourself. And if you need therapy, there should be no shame in that. We as humans, we're not meant to be alone. We're not meant to do things on our own.

So if you can't afford therapy, you have prayer. You can try self-help books, but unless you're actually taking action on what the self-help book is saying, you're not going to get anywhere. You're not going to make any changes.

Robyn: Um, you know, the Bible is very clear that we are not to worry. We're not, you know, and that we can put our trust in God, in all of our anxiety will disappear. So it's very important that if you, if you are a person of faith, tap into that, read the scriptures, create a mantra for yourself, an affirmation that you can just recite every day, all day long, if you need to. Um, you know, ask God to change you make, you into a new person and change your thought by changing your thoughts.

You know, there's so many different things you can do, and sometimes people need medication. The, the scientific data out there is that it takes six months of consistent combination therapy. Therapy with a psychiatrist, psycho psychologist, counselor, whatever, and medication to overcome anxiety and depression.

Now, sometimes that's not available to everyone, but when you think of the fact that with medication and therapy in combination, they say, you need to go for six months in order to change what's happening inside of you. So if you're trying to do this on your own, imagine how much longer that could take.

But the key is action. If you just sit in a place of oh, okay. Yeah. That was a negative thought but you do nothing about it, it's never going to change, Your brain is just going to keep having those same thoughts. You're going to keep experiencing those same reactions every time that trigger comes into play.

So you have a choice. You can move, remove yourself from any known triggers, but sometimes that's not possible. It could be your child's behavior that is causing your anxiety to rise, right? You can't just escape your child if you know it, or it could be your partner, it could be a boss at work. It could be a client. If you're an entrepreneur, you can't always remove yourself from a situation. So you have to learn how to navigate the emotions and the feelings and the thoughts in order to change them.

Allison: And as you were just talking about that, you're so good at this because I think what you were teaching and really just being honest about anxiety, it completely aligns with your message on branding. Because you've been on the show before talking about branding and it just came to the front of my mind.

You really talk about yes it's mindset and yes it's strategy. But the other missing piece is action. And put those three things together, that's when you're going to get the results that you want.

Robyn: Yes.

Allison: So that's just like in life. Yeah. You can, like you said, you can read all the self-help books and do all the mindset work and then highlight all the strategies. But if you don't take action and get the help and do the daily work, you're going to be right where you were on day one.

Robyn: 100%, 100%. And you know, I see it in my clients all the time, you know, where they'll... they have a task and, you know, I've assigned them different things, different activities to do before we meet the following week and something completely blocks them up and they just cannot move past it.

And so, you know, if you can't navigate first, the mindset and then employ a strategy, then you're not going to be able to take action. But you can't have mindset and strategy and not take action. You can't have mindset and action without a strategy because you're not going to be taking intentional action that's going to move you forward.

And dealing with anxiety, living with anxiety is just like that. If you're in a situation, and I love the example you gave, you know, feeling trapped. So you have to have a strategy to remove yourself from that situation. So if you know, there's a possibility that, like you said, you plan ahead. If you know that there is a possibility you're going to be in a certain situation where you're going to be with a certain person, you have to be prepared to then take action to remove yourself from that situation. And that starts with that strategy. Thinking ahead, planning ahead, knowing what, what steps you need to take to then take that intentional action to remove yourself.

Allison: Ah, so good. Now you've teased a little bit about your, your book called *You, Me, and Anxiety*. I want to know. Tell us more about the book and then what led you to write this book? You wrote it with the focus on teenage girls, even though really it could be applied to anybody. So can you go a little deeper on that?

Robyn: I can. So as you know, photography has been a passion for me my entire life, and I was a professional photographer in between my pharmacy days and what I'm doing now. And I've always had anxiety since I was a little girl from the age of six on. And my son actually experienced severe anxiety as well from the time, like, I don't know, sixth grade to ninth grade ish.

And so watching him navigate or helping him navigate his anxiety really taught me about navigating my own. I really hadn't done the work that was necessary. I hadn't done any of this until he experienced it. And that caused me, forced me to really evaluate myself too. And it changed how I parented. It changed my relationship with my husband, with my sisters, with my mother, with everything that I did in life.

So originally I thought, you know, I've had all these experiences, I can help other people. And so I thought I would create a photo book of teen girls with anxiety and I chose girls because I had the mind of a teenage girl at one point in time with anxiety. And I needed to tell my story versus my son's story.

And so I decided I was going to photograph teen girls and I would tell the story of anxiety through pictures. So if someone went to a therapist, but they could not verbalize what they were feeling or experiencing, the therapist could say, can you page through this book and point to the pictures that show how you feel.

So maybe it was someone who, you know, it was like this, for example, The one girl that posed for me, she like was wearing, they were all black and white. They were very powerful images, but she was like laying on her side and she had her arm like up against a black back drop. And it was that, that concept of, I can't get out of bed, like I just need tide.

Robyn: And so, you know, showing that image to someone. How does that make you feel? What thoughts go through your head? So to help them verbalize what they were experiencing, but it was very hard to get models, as you can imagine, it's a very, very vulnerable to share your story with anxiety, because especially as a teen, you think that you're different.

You think you're odd, you're not necessarily accepted. And so, and you can't handle certain social situations. And so, you know, depending on the individual. Creates a lot of vulnerability.

So a lot of therapists that I was crazy. Cause I wasn't a therapist. Now, mind you, I have a doctorate in pharmacy. I had done a ton of writing and studying in psychology over the year or so. It's not like I was foreign to this, but for whatever reason, it was a challenge that I decided this is not, this is an uphill battle. And I think that if I tell my story, I could make a bigger impact. And so I decided to tell my story, but I sat on it for a long time.

And I think you interviewed Debbie Keven on your show. I remember listening to the episode, so I just happened to meet her through a virtual networking type experience and we had a coffee chat and I was like, so I just want to ask you about your publishing. And I said, I've had this book on my heart and I told her about my book and she started to cry and I started to cry because she had had an experience with anxiety with one of her children and our stories were so similar and so aligned in terms of the parenting experiences we've had.

And she's like, you have to tell this story. So I hired her to help me publish my book. So she's edited it published in she's the one publishing it.

So meeting her, it was a year, it'll be a year ago, March 3rd, that, um, I signed my contract with her, but that really pushed me into going through with this. I had already written the first draft. So. The experience led to, was me having to dive really, really deep into a lot of dark places that I didn't want to revisit.

Robyn: So writing, it was very, very hard because as she made me tell more stories to connect with the readers and all of that, it was really diving deep into a past that some things I wasn't so proud of, some things, just brought back a lot of hurt, , and different things.

But if I can help one girl, one woman not become a drug addict, not use, you know, sex or drugs or alcohol as a crutch, not commit suicide. Then I will have done my job.

Allison: Oh, that is just so beautiful. Robin. And I cannot wait to read your book. This was such an amazing conversation today. So where can the listeners or the viewers see your work?

Robyn: So my website is the best place to find me always. It's that therobingraham.com. There is an author page on the website and there are [free resources](#) there. I have, a guide to navigating. I can't remember the exact name of it, but it's like, you know, creating healthy mind to, or navigating anxiety to have a healthy body, healthy mind, whatever it's called.

I'm so sorry. , I'm sure you'll put the link somewhere, but anyway, that's there. If people want to download that and then the book's available on Amazon, so you can just search on Amazon You, Me and Anxiety and it'll come up.

Allison: Awesome. Well, I will make sure that I put everything in the show notes and thank you again, Robin, for being on the show.

Now, before we end, I'll leave everyone with this. Isaiah 41 verse 13 says for, I am the Lord, your God who upholds your right hand, who says to you do not fear. I will help you.

I can't thank you enough for listening today and supporting this show. The best way to support me and grow the podcast is by [leaving a written review on Apple iTunes](#). I promise you, I read every review and take them to heart. And don't forget, head to bossladyinsweatpants.com to grab all my freebies or hang out with me on Instagram [@allisonscholes](https://www.instagram.com/allisonscholes).

I'll see you soon.