

How to be Happier



Introduction

How important is happiness? Many would say it's the most important thing of all. If we are happy, we have more chance of finding success in our pursuits. If we are happy, we are more likely to make choices that contribute to our own wellbeing. If we are happy, we are more likely to have better interactions, giving us the opportunity to experience the joy and wonder of positive relationships.

We often hear of people saying that they are looking for happiness, implying that it is something they will find. However, rarely do we stumble over happiness during our journey through life. Happiness is not something that you have or don't have. It is something you create and each of us has the opportunity, every single day, to create happiness for ourselves. Considering happiness has an effect on our health, relationships, productivity and even our life span, it is one of the most important investments you can make in yourself.

We have created this simple and user friendly online program to start you on your journey to being happier. To utilise this program, you don't need to consider yourself unhappy. You can be happy right now and still gain enormous benefit from working through this free resource. After all, there can never be too much happiness in life!

What is Happiness?

Let's study happiness more closely for a moment. It is interesting to examine the difference between how children think about happiness, compared to adults. Obviously, there are vast differences between the two groups.

Children generally avoid the things that they know will not bring them happiness. They search for an immediate gain in all of their actions. In addition, they prioritise happiness. They might think: "I can't make my bed now, I am playing on the swing".

As adults, we tend to do the opposite. We tend to put the things that make us happy on the backburner, in favour of the must do activities. We think we'll do the fun stuff in our spare time, when less pressing matters are at hand. The problem is, for most of us, that spare time is minimal and irregular at best. At worst, it is nonexistent. In essence, as adults, we have swung the pendulum too far from our childhood view on happiness. Most of us could benefit by swinging it back a little. Not back to childhood, but just to the middle ground between the three year old pleasure seeker and the 40 year old success seeker.

Step One

The first step to swinging that pendulum back somewhat is through Happiness Boosters.

Happiness Boosters are simply activities you can engage in every day, to increase your happiness each day. Happiness Boosters can be big or small activities, as well as long or short, and novel or recurring.

So what exactly are Happiness Boosters?

Happiness Boosters can be summarised as your happiest priorities. The fun stuff you like to do. These are the activities or behaviours you prioritise that will bring you joy. Knowing what your happiness boosters may be will be dependent on understanding what you value in your life, and what you most enjoy. Some examples might help. Potential happiness boosters could include:

- having your morning coffee in the fresh air
- reading a story to your children
- practicing a musical instrument
- watching a movie
- reading a book
- catching up with a friend
- going dancing
- partaking in relaxation activities

Some of your happiness boosters might just be for fun, like watching a movie or listening to music. For the most part, there might not be a future benefit in such activities. They are just for fun in that moment. Other happiness boosters might be just as much fun, but also contribute to what you value or prioritise. These happiness boosters could be catching up with a friend or reading a story to your

children. You might find these activities are fun, as well as contributing to the future of important relationships. So you are doing something for a future benefit for yourself and someone else. Therefore, some happiness boosters are just for fun, while others are for fun and at the same time, contribute to the meaning in your life. The most important thing about happiness boosters is that they have to make you feel positive and happy in the moment.

For the time poor amongst us, you'll be pleased to know that happiness boosters can be incorporated into activities you will be doing anyway during the day. For example, you could take the scenic route to work, listen to music you enjoy whilst cooking dinner, acknowledge the value an important project brings to you as you're doing it, or have your lunch break in pleasant surroundings.

The single most effective way to ensure you include more happiness boosters in your life is to plan them. We each need to prioritise happiness boosters to ensure that they happen each and every day.

Exercise One: What can I do to actually be happier?

In the space provided in the ideas table below, make a list of all the happiness boosters that come to mind, which you would like to incorporate into your life. Add things to this list you can do every day as well as activities that you would like to embrace periodically, such as on weekends. Your list should be comprehensive to give you maximum choice as you plan your future happiness boosters.

Happiness booster ideas table

Step Two

Thinking about the happiness boosters you would like to incorporate in your life is a great first step to being happier. Now you need to plan your happiness boosters in order to ensure they happen. The next short exercise will help you do exactly that.

Exercise Two: Making A Habit of Happiness Boosters

In the space provided below, choose two happiness boosters you will incorporate into your day for the next three consecutive days. You can repeat the same two boosters on each of the three days, or you can choose different happiness boosters each day. Once you have nominated the happiness boosters for each day, transfer them to a time in your diary.

Day One	Day two	Day three
1.		
2.		

To increase the enjoyment of your happiness boosters, make a concerted effort to clear your mind where possible and be in the moment. This means consciously acknowledging that you are experiencing something that you enjoy and that you can be grateful for.

For the average adult, it takes 30 days to form a new habit. Make the commitment to enjoy a minimum of two happiness boosters every day for the next 30 days and notice how you feel. This is a great way to take charge of your happiness and make the most of the joy available to you every day.



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