

How to be happy

The art of making yourself happy is something we can all learn and practice.

No one is happy 100% of the time. Life has its ups and downs. Even so there are some sure fire ways to increase your happiness.

1. Don't wait to see if you are having a good time. Instead of going to places and seeing if it is fun decide in advance to have fun regardless of the circumstances. Enjoy the day regardless of the weather. Make the most of the occasion regardless of the company.

2. Go outside and play. You were told to do this as a kid and I'm telling you to do it again, play more. Go for walks, throw a dog a stick, skip, sing loudly or imagine yourself to be a spy passing through enemy territory. Whatever does it for you. Make a promise to play more.

3. Develop deep friendships. Your friends are your true wealth, Value them and see them regularly, Let them know how important they are to you. Most people only have two close friends so don't fool yourself into believing you are less popular than most people.

4. Increase the closeness of extended family. Keeping in close contact with your family gives you a support base for difficult times and also strengthens your sense of where you come from. Feeling you belong in a family is a powerful way of being happy.

5. Play to your strengths. Have a good long hard look at yourself. What are you good at? Make a commitment to develop your skills, talents and abilities as much as you can. If you don't develop your own unique talents the world misses out.

6. Seek out groups that most strongly value what you have to offer. Finding the niche where your abilities are valued is the basis of success.

7. Avoid social groups where your unique attributes are not valued. Not everyone is going to like you or think you could amount to much. Get used to it. Accept that it is so, and then get out of their way.

8. Live in the dreamtime. Find and follow your passions. Dream big dreams and make a promise to yourself to live a wonderful life.

9. Laugh a lot more. Find people, shows, books, films and situations that make you laugh and surround yourself with them.

10. Have something bigger than yourself to believe in. Think about the contribution you can make while you are on this planet and do it.

11. Love as much as you can.

How to make yourself miserable

Being miserable is an art form. There are many ways of achieving it. A few sure-fire ways are below.

1. Wait for the situation to be right before having a good time.

One of my favourite Chinese proverbs is "People who wait for roast duck to fly into mouth, will wait long time". Put off having a great life until you have the right job/ house/ partner/ friend is a great way of putting off life all together.

2. Compare yourself to others. Spend hours thinking about how much more beautiful, happy, intelligent, creative, insightful and wonderful everybody else is compared to you. Think that glossy people who are featured in glossy magazines have glossy lives despite lots of evidence to the contrary.

3. Give others the power to control your life.

Don't do the things you want to do, Let other people choose your life directions and priorities for you. This allows you to avoid responsibility, When you end up miserable (and believe me you will!) blame the people you let make the decisions,

4. Try to make other people happy. Try to fix other people or spend your life trying to please them. Base your life decisions on what other people will think of you rather than what you want to do.

5. Feel it is better to avoid rejection than to love.

Play safe. If you don't try to love people you can't be let down or hurt. Resign yourself to a life of perpetual disappointment.

6. Talk yourself out of stuff you really would like to do.

Spend time telling yourself you can't do things because you are not smart enough or talented enough and you can really begin to believe that if you don't try, you can't fail.

7. Believe you don't deserve to be happy.

8. Say yes when you mean no. It's nice to be helpful and agreeable but if you say yes to things you don't want to do, you can end up feeling really bad about yourself or resentful of people. Long-term resentment turns into bitterness.

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Some warning signs that it could be an idea to talk to someone about how you are feeling

***Your "get up and go" has got up and went.**

***You eat lots of junk food and especially don't eat breakfast.**

***You can't remember the last time you really laughed.**

*** You don't sleep well and lie awake worrying.**

***You don't contact friends or family because you don't want to burden them.**

***You rarely go outside and enjoy the world.**