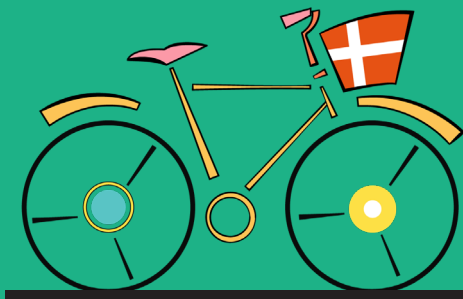


The Happy Booklet

Tips for a happier life





Happiness Research
Institute

42 courses

www.happinessresearchinstitute.com
www.42courses.com

Welcome to the happy booklet

We have put together for you eleven practical happy tips for you, with an extra one thrown in for good measure.

These tips will provide you with easy ways to help bring some extra happiness into your life and the world at large.

All the examples given here are based on scientific research, so you can be sure they will actually work.

We hope you enjoy it and wish you a life full of happiness.

All the best

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark".

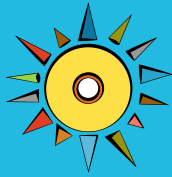
01

Spend More Time With Friends & Family

High quality relationships are a key driver of happiness. The latest World Happiness Report, showed that although people in the USA are on average wealthier, there has been a decrease in overall happiness over the last 10 years. This has been caused in principle by a decrease in the quality of community and social relations.

HAPPINESS TIP

Volunteer to help your local community. You will not only help yourself by expanding your network and meeting new friends, you'll also make the same possible for other people.



02

The Hedonic Treadmill

The 'hedonic treadmill' deals with our tendency to remain at a relatively stable level of happiness (despite positive or negative changes in fortune) or the achievement of major goals. For example, as a person makes more money, expectations and desires rise in tandem, which results in no permanent gain in happiness.



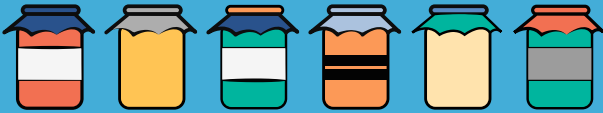
HAPPINESS TIP

We tend to overestimate the amount of happiness or sadness we will derive from a future event. Instead focus more on enjoying the journey.

THE JAM EXPERIMENT

Experiment 1

When 6 different jams were for sale,
30% of people bought jam



Experiment 2

When 24 different jams were for sale,
only 3% bought jam



03

The Agony Of Choice

Having many choices in life is great, but being exposed to too many choices also correlates with unhappiness. This happens because we all have a tendency to believe that the grass is greener on the other side.

HAPPINESS TIP

Try to give people less choice for everyday things like deciding where to eat out. Less really is more. Be conscious about how you evaluate your choices in life but don't be too hard on yourself if you make the wrong choice. It happens to us all, especially with limited information.

04

Happiness Sweet Spots

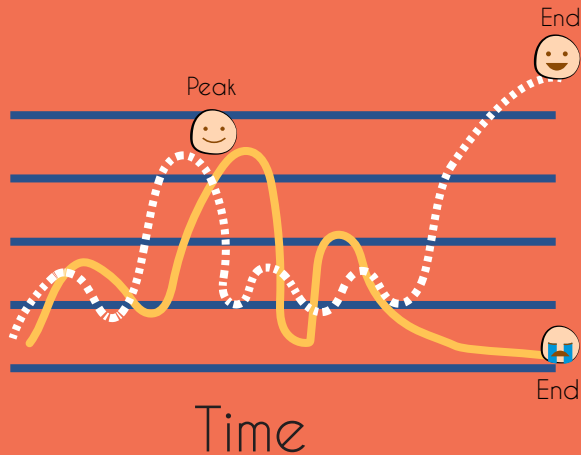
Happiness has several dimensions. Sometimes a life event will promote one type of happiness at the expense of another. For example, playing video games eight hours a day, and having several orgies may be a hedonic happiness dream, but it won't satisfy your purposeful, 'eudaimonic' happiness side. Alternatively, dedicating your whole life trying to develop the cure for cancer may bring you purposeful happiness but it will most likely crowd out your 'hedonic' happiness in life.



HAPPINESS TIP

Discover activities that promote both purpose and pleasure. For most people this involves greater dedication to social relationships and local communities.

Satisfaction



05

The Peak-End Rule

The 'peak-end rule' states that our memories of past events or experiences are very biased towards remembering the most intense point (the peak) and the end point. How things end makes a huge difference to how happily you remember it. For example the memory of a great meal can be ruined by a bad coffee at the end.

HAPPINESS TIP

When things go wrong, focus on the positive goal you're working towards to keep your mood up. Try your best to end experiences on a high note. As Shakespeare says, "All's well that ends well."

06

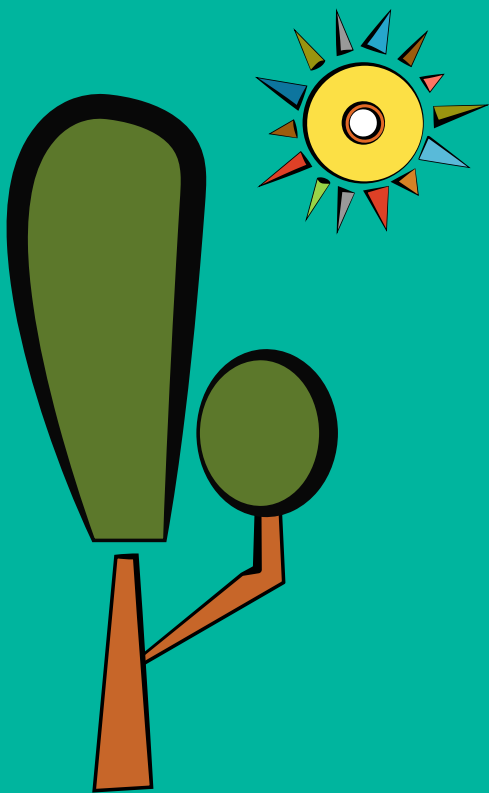
Be Mindful Of Comparisons

Your happiness is very dependent on the comparisons you make with other people's lives. If other people are doing exceptionally well, it can make your bad day seem even worse. Social media profiles rarely expose other's flaws - we only see the filtered, happy moments. Comparing your own life to those perfect Instagram pictures is a quick path to misery.

HAPPINESS TIP

Take a break from social media - A recent study showed even a weeks break can noticeably decrease anger, sadness and loneliness, whilst increasing life enjoyment, decisiveness and happiness.





07

Get Outside

Exposure to outdoor light is crucial for a positive mood, in part because sunshine helps to enhance your mood and energy through the release of endorphins.

Getting sun exposure outdoors helps you optimise your vitamin D levels. Vitamin D deficiency has long been associated with sadness, as well as depression.

HAPPINESS TIP

Fit in some time in nature during your day. Even if it's just a 20 min walk. If possible make time at the weekend to get out of the city for a hike or try the Japanese art of 'forest bathing', essentially a relaxed walk in nature. If you can't get outside bring in some fresh cut flowers to lift your mood.

08

Exercise

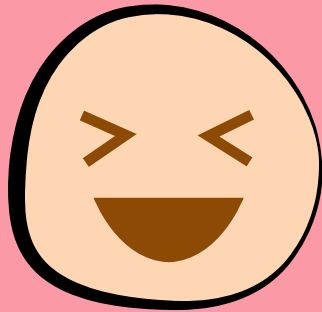
Exercise boosts levels of happy brain chemicals like endorphins, serotonin, dopamine, and anandamide.

These chemicals reduce some of the effects of stress. It is considered one of the most effective prevention and treatment strategies for depression.



HAPPINESS TIP

Even 7 - 15mins of exercise a day will have a positive affect on your mood. Start small and build it into a habit. Get on your bike, go for a run, or take a brisk walk. Regular, small amounts of exercise will increase your happiness levels.



09

Spread The Joy

Much like yawning or a case of the giggles, happiness is contagious. When we are surrounded by smiling people it makes us smile too. This works the other way around too. Simply thinking about positive events and smiling can make you happier and more upbeat.

HAPPINESS TIP

Try and spend more time around happy people. Make a conscious effort to smile more and find the positive side. Do a random act of kindness, even buying a stranger a cup of coffee will increase not only their happiness, but yours too.

10

Buy Happiness

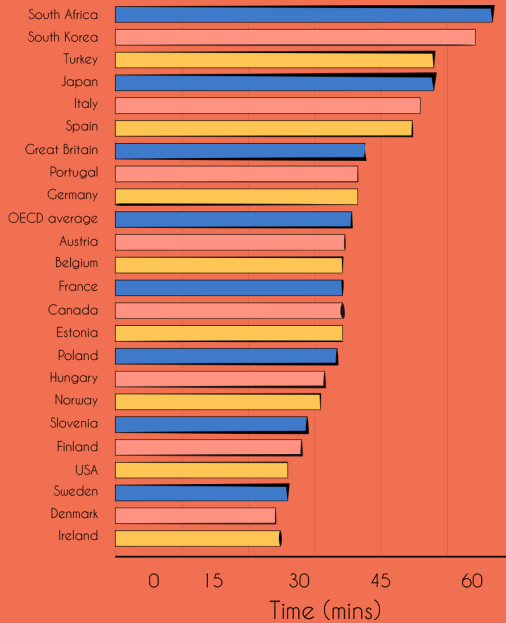
Studies have shown that money absolutely can buy happiness. The view is that if we spend our money on doing things, rather than having things then we will be happier in the long run.



HAPPINESS TIP

Buy experiences rather than things. Learn how to dive, rock climb, or book a holiday. In fact the longer in advance you book experiences, the longer you'll be happy. This gives us something to look forward to and helps us get through down days.

COMMUTING TIME



SOURCE: OECD, 'How's Life? Measuring Well-being: Commuting Time', 2011

11

Reduce your commute

A short commute to work is worth more for your happiness than a big house.

There is an increase in stress and anxiety with every minute for trips between 15min up to 3 hours.

The worst peak is if your journey time is between 1 hour and 1 hour 30mins. Interestingly the negative effects cancel out for commutes over 3 hours long.

HAPPINESS TIP

Move closer to work or if you like where you live find a job closer to home. Ideally keep your commute to under 15mins. A new job with a pay rise that has a much longer commute may not be worth the extra money.



“Happiness is perfume, you can’t pour it on somebody else without getting a few drops on yourself.”

- *James van Der Zee*

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