



7 Steps to Feeling happier each day

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Lots of people tell me they want happiness in their life. Lots of people tell me they are not as happy as they would like to be. Happiness is not something that is easy to obtain; just look at the numbers of people who say they are unhappy. Often the more you look for happiness, the less you find it. And perhaps this is because we don't know how to be happy. We don't really know what it means to be happy. Happiness is not something you find when things are all working out the way you want them to. I don't know many people who have a life that is exactly as they wish it would be. Happiness is a state of mind. You can be happy when things are not as you would like them to be. You can be happy when you are facing many challenges in your life. Happiness is something you can decide you want, and you can often improve it by focusing on what is going right in your life rather than what is going wrong. Below are some simple steps to take each day that won't necessarily make you overjoyed with your life, but which will help you face each day feeling a lot happier and at peace if you apply them to your life.

1. When you wake up in the morning you want to *focus on what you are telling yourself*. Our thoughts play a very big role in how we feel. You can either tell yourself things that make you miserable or you can tell yourself things that make you happy. Affirmations are positive thoughts that someone has already developed that put us in a good mood. If you don't feel like coming up with your own positive thoughts, you can make use of affirmations when you wake up to put you in the right mood for the day. Below are some examples of affirmations you could use when you wake up in the morning.
 - a. Today is going to be incredible.
 - b. I am full of courage.
 - c. Opportunity is everywhere around me today.
 - d. I can conquer anything.
 - e. The morning sun fills me with energy.
 - f. I am going to be more than okay.
 - g. I believe in me.
2. Make *a gratitude list* each day. Our brains do tend to dwell on what is going wrong in our lives. Often our thoughts are of what we lack. Most people have many things in their lives that they take for granted and which they really like. So, make conscious the things you are grateful for in your life. Do this every day. If you need to repeat items that is fine, there is no reason you cannot be grateful for the same things each day.

3. As we get older we don't *laugh* much. And if most of our day is spent consuming news we are definitely not likely to laugh much unless we have a very warped sense of humour. So, laugh. Make sure you find some time to laugh every day. Spend five minutes watching something funny or listening to some funny play or stand-up comedy.
4. Block out a minimum of 20 minutes of *me time* each day to do nothing for other people. You need it. You need to give your mind a chance to just relax from what for most of us is a very stressful and challenging life.
5. Do at least 5 minutes of *exercise* each day. Everyone can find five minutes to just put on some music and dance. So, do it. Make it a habit.
6. Be with people, at least some of the time, who brighten up your day. *Happy, positive, caring people* who make you feel better for being in their presence. The chances are good you will never be able to spend the entire day with people who make you happy. So at least try and spend some part of the day with people who are good for you.
7. At the end of the day write *up three successes* you achieved during the day. A success could be many things. It may be a phone call you didn't want to make but you did. It may be completing a task that you really wanted to put off till later. It may be an act of kindness you did during the day. You definitely will have three successful actions to put down each day. And sometimes, knowing you have to put three successes down at the end of the day can spur you on to making sure you do achieve successes during the day.

None of the above is difficult to do and none of the above takes up a lot of time. Yet, each item makes us feel better. There is no benefit to walking around miserable all the time. For the most part, when you are miserable you just make other people miserable. Focus on making yourself feel happier. It is a choice, and if you make the choice to do so, you make yourself, as well as those around you happier too.