

All too often happiness retains virtual formlessness, waiting for the individual to begin the journey of discovery. This trip will include many false starts and detours, until understanding finally begins to filter through all the false perceptions and superficial trappings thought to be the answer. Then, at some stage along the path, you get to the heart of the matter.

And the heart is the wellspring, the fountainhead, of happiness. The Dalai Lama refers to 'the opening of our heart', then asks what it means to open the heart. He says that we understand that the idea of the heart is a metaphorical one. In most cultures the heart is perceived to be the wellspring of compassion, love, sympathy, righteousness and intuition rather than merely the muscle responsible for circulating the blood through the body. He tells us that the Buddhist view is that the mind is located in the middle of the chest, and that an open heart is an open mind. A change of heart is a change of mind.

Until individuals realise the connection between heart and mind, they will find themselves living in a world of frenetic activity, of almost never-ending stress: or feeling utter frustration if unable to provide for

and sifting through various longings which have persisted over time, it is more than likely that you will begin to focus on what you feel strongly about. Developing your idea/s may involve adaptations, even changes. Clarity comes during the ongoing activity, and the initial idea/s, or attitudes, may be modified or even altered.

This procedure can be applied to different areas of your life. Longing for happiness in a relationship, in the workplace, in a change of career, all require clear thinking and attention to what calls for adjustment, adaptation or outright change. Courage, intention and perseverance to do what is necessary call for vision and decision. Honest communication with oneself involves actually hearing what you think and being truthful about what you feel. When you accept your present situation you will begin to see where change would be beneficial.

A certain amount of probing will be inevitable.

What you

Happiness

themselves or their families. How many have the energy or the will, or take some time to get in touch with the qualities of the heart? The following discourse will lead you to understand that connecting with your heart lifts you onto a level where there is greater mental clarity, emotional equanimity and a sense of peace. In addition to these benefits, it is usual for intuition to play a part in the growth process and all in all you will be led to experiencing happiness.

It is also important to consider the physical aspect of the health of the heart in relation to your state of mind and emotional patterns. These not only have a definite effect, but have a major influence in determining the level of happiness experienced in your life.

Unhappiness is more common than most would be willing to admit and is thought to be caused by more reasons than it is possible to imagine. Every unhappy person will define the 'reasons' for their discomfiture. And, indeed, there are reasons, but those can be turned into stepping stones leading to introspection and contemplation. Understanding will follow, either gradually or rapidly: it is not important how long it takes. It is the process which is valuable beyond reckoning.

And now, having opened your mind, it is possible to imagine new possibilities. By taking stock of your strengths and weaknesses,

consider an honest assessment will alter as you progress on your journey of self discovery. So often we tend to justify our attitude/behaviour because we have not yet delved deeply enough to find that it is our insecurity that causes us to avoid facing ourselves squarely. Freeing hidden negatives creates space for new perspectives. Like the onset of spring bringing spurts of new growth, you too can move into a new season in your life. Happiness, like the blossoms of spring, will bring forth the fruit you desire. As in the cultivation of an orchard, it is the ongoing attention and care which bears fruit.

Happiness is an outcome. It is not something that can be planned. It is essential first of all to have a fair picture of yourself, as mentioned above. This does not mean that this picture is your totality: this is just the starting point. From here on you choose how you want to develop and 'grow yourself': and this ongoing growth



and discovery is what is bound to foster a feeling of happiness. Perhaps the feeling will occur in spurts, leaving you to wonder whether you are 'doing the right thing'. There is no 'totally right' or 'totally wrong', there is ongoing experience which is helping you to discern more clearly over time what you value and what is important to you and those you care about.

As within, so without. The degree of peace you experience when understanding yourself better markedly affects not only your close relationships, but those in your working environment and even casual ones. There can be no doubt whatsoever that happiness hinges on how we feel about ourselves. Accepting oneself makes it more likely we can accept others. Admitting that there is always room for improvement in ourselves makes it possible, not only to be somewhat less judgemental, but to wish for others what we wish for ourselves – happiness.

Peace of mind is sometimes hard to come by. Negative self-concepts and emotions often spark brusque mannerisms which either hurt others, or antagonise them. This is one of the reasons why it is extremely important to gain insight into your own responses and those with whom you associate. Tensions, resentments and frustrations arise, frequently resulting in health problems. For obvious



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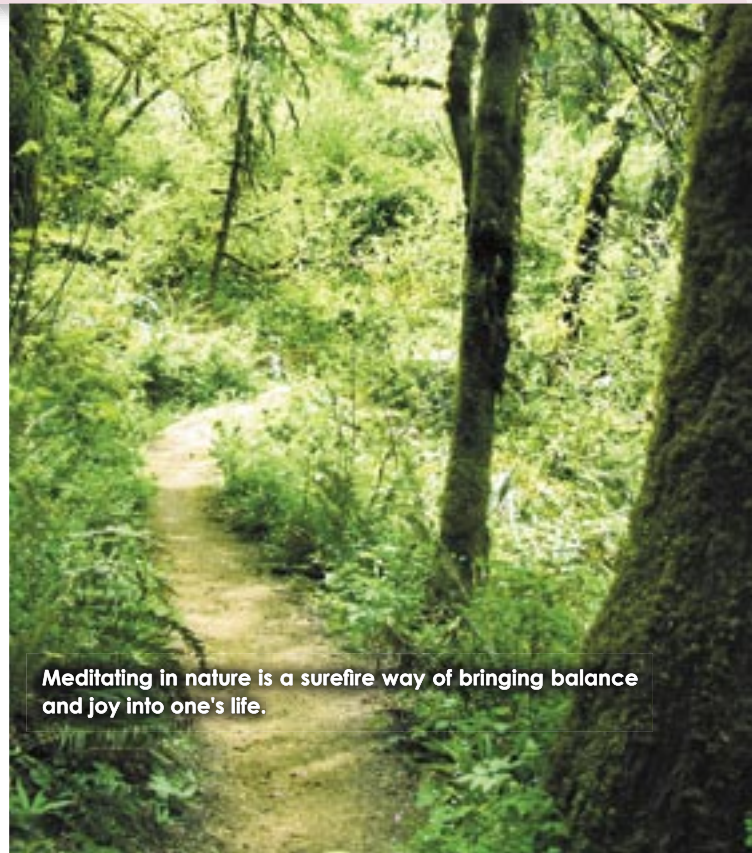


'Happiness is referred to so frequently, yet the term conveys quite different notions in many minds. There is a tendency to equate happiness with particular material benefits. Yet those deemed fortunate to have all they require, or could possibly wish for, have been known to experience unhappiness despite their physical security. The latter and so very many others in varying circumstances long desperately for happiness, but have no idea what it is comprised of, or how to find this elusive quality of being,' says Pamela Krummeck.

reasons it is a service to yourself and to your fellow man earnestly to endeavour to understand this type of behaviour. If there is going to be an improvement in human relations in the world, it will be because each of us is creating an environment for the magic of happiness to infiltrate into our lives.

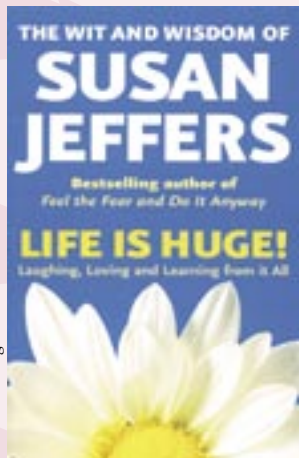
The field known as psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) is recognised by medical practitioners who keep abreast of the results of research, and has been included in the treatment of patients/clients of alternative health practitioners for well over two decades. Studies of the effects of our thoughts and feelings on our health have been central to the teachings of many spiritual organisations since at least the early 1900s. Until relatively recently, medical technology was not sufficiently advanced to prove the foregoing scientifically.

It is far too common for many of us to deny our thoughts and true feelings. Humans tend to pretend. Pretending creates barriers, preventing open communication. Expressing our feelings and thoughts opens up possibilities for clarifying for ourselves and 'the other' what is important and what is hoped for. Agreement might not be reached, but speaking could prevent negativity from settling in the mind and body. Another dimension to this discussion is well put by Cicero, the Roman statesman and orator (106-41BCE): 'In honourable dealings

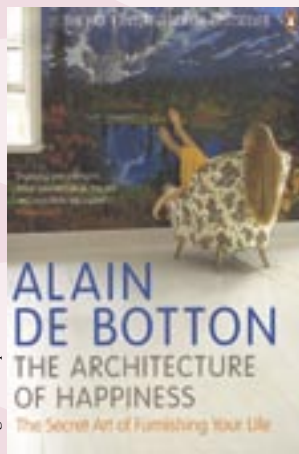


Meditating in nature is a surefire way of bringing balance and joy into one's life.

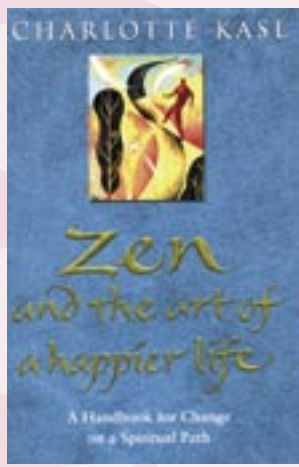
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you should consider what you intended, not what you said or thought.' Indeed, sometimes we hide our real intentions, even from ourselves.

The discussion about the effect of our thoughts and emotions on our bodies and in our lives is crucial and alerts us to the fact that the possibility to experience happiness very often rests with us. Each of us is created as a complete unit. The interactions between our minds, emotions and bodies function according to our commands. This being so, it is therefore possible to influence our mental, emotional and physical health in such a manner that no matter the extent of difficulties we may face, we have the choice to be positive, and to explore the spiritual side of our nature.

Whatever our circumstances may be, it is important to remember to give thanks each and every day for that which is good, beautiful and life-enhancing. Once again Cicero expresses wisdom when he says, 'A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all other virtues.' Century after century we have to re-learn many of the age-old truths. One of these is that happiness arises from within. It does so when we recognise that we are capable of experiencing ongoing growth. Living in this manner inevitably affects those whose lives we touch: they too will feel more secure in accepting their possibilities. In this way happiness knows no bounds.

As long ago as the period between 121 and 180CE, the Roman Emperor and Stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius Antonius said the following: 'When thou hast been compelled by circumstances to be disturbed in a manner, quickly return to thyself, and do not continue out of tune longer than the compulsion lasts; for thou wilt have more mastery over the harmony by continually recurring to it.'

Another apt quote states: 'The greatest discovery of any generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude.' This insight came from William James, a philosopher and psychologist in the mid-1800s. Insofar as we are outgrowing some of our idiosyncrasies and gaining new perspectives, so we allow others the same 'privilege'. Developing this thought in the context of 'an open heart in ourselves', we cultivate the openness to understanding others, practising listening to others and growing in compassion. Is there any question that by cultivating an open heart, peace of mind will ensue? Peace of mind often equals happiness.

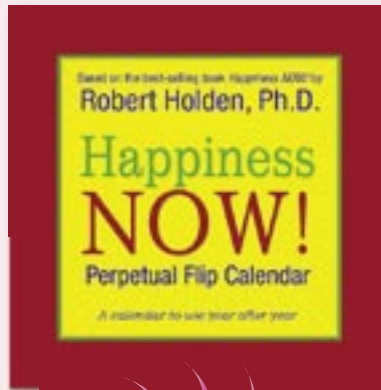
Steve Krummeck, in his book titled *The Keys to Personal Transformation and Happiness* says: 'As individuals and as societies, happiness is what is most longed for: it is our highest goal, even if we don't consciously acknowledge it. And because of its positive effects, it strengthens our desire and ability to achieve many of our other cherished goals.' He emphasises that the most important change to make is to dedicate yourself to establishing in your mind the belief that you deserve to be happy and can be happy.

Life is meant to be lived with love in the heart. And by deciding to think with the heart in mind, we can guide ourselves through life in a way which, surely as the sun rises, will include among all of our experiences, the happiness for which we yearn. ◻

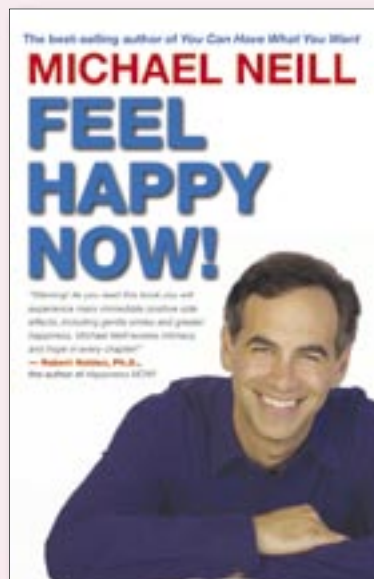


Modern research across several fields continues to provide us with information which proves incontrovertibly the benefits of happiness. Some of the benefits of happiness to families, communities and society at large:

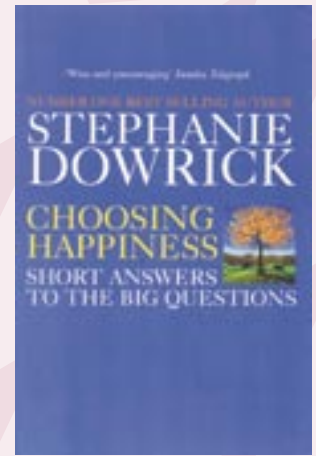
- More likely to be more co-operative, pro-social and charitable
- Stronger immune system
- Superior work outcomes – greater creativity
- Increased productivity
- Higher quality of work
- Higher income
- Longer Life
- Larger social rewards
- More likely to marry
- Less likely to become divorced
- More likely to have more friends
- More likely to enjoy stronger social support
- More likely to enjoy richer social interactions
- Better emotional health
- More activity, energy and flow
- Less symptoms of psychopathology
- Less depression
- Less suicide
- Less paranoia
- Greater self-control and coping abilities
- Persist longer on tasks
- Select higher goals
- Produce superior outcomes
- Discover rewards in mundane ordinary events
- Have better relationships with their peers, boss and customers
- Enjoy an upward spiral of success
- Feel lighter, alive, and energetic
- Are more likely to accept change
- Are in 'flow' with life, are at peace with themselves, those around them and with life in general
- Are able to feel and express love more easily
- Have passions that they pursue with vigour: they have a 'purpose'



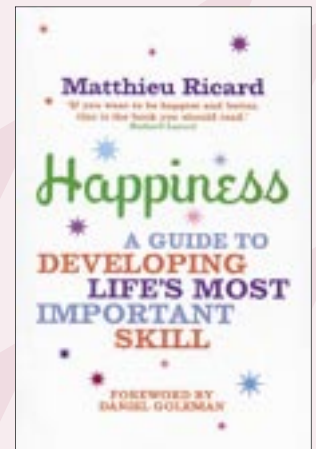
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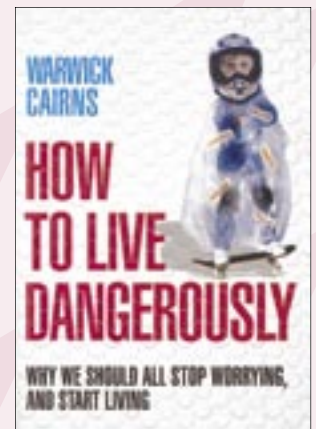
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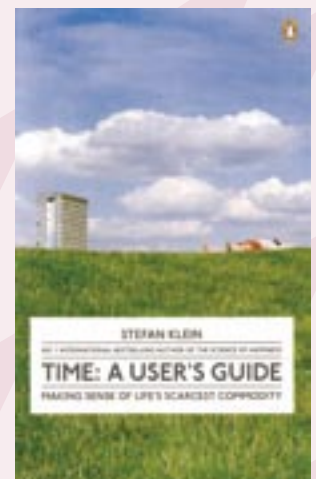
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During 2000 Pamela wrote lengthy 'Letters to the Editor' concerning topical issues and many were given prominence. It was when Pamela edited the e-book written by Steve Krummeck: Keys to Personal *Transformation and Happiness* that she was given the opportunity to examine her life experience, probe the depths of her understanding, and encourage intuition to play a role in her contribution. Her articles have also been published in numerous newspapers.

