



We enable individuals, companies and organisations to transform from their current to their chosen desired state. The coaching process makes it possible to be more focused, and raise the level of performance, thus becoming highly effective. We facilitate personal mastery, the transformation of people's lives, personal reinvention, and enable people to achieve any, or all of their goals, and to lead balanced purposeful, fulfilled lives.

The following **guidelines to increase your happiness levels** are brought to you courtesy of The (W)Right Coaching CC (Steve Krummeck) and have been obtained from many highly respected sources. Where no copyright existed on the material, I have merely re-written sections to be more reader friendly.

Follow the guidelines below and you WILL increase your happiness levels. Mention should be made that these guidelines should be read in conjunction with my book, "The Game of Life & Success – Steps to Self Mastery & Happiness". Alternatively, you are welcome to approach me directly for powerful life altering coaching sessions.

All the best in your journey

*Steve Wright Krummeck*

- **Nurture yourself**

Just as you stop to fill your car/automobile with water, oil, and petrol/gas in order to ensure it keeps running, so too do you need to take time out to ensure you 'keep running'. The human body is designed in such a way that it needs nutrition and rest. If you don't feed your body sufficiently, you will suffer on a mind, body, soul level. That is, if you are not taking in sufficient nutrition, your body cannot function and could fall prey to sickness and disease. At the same time you will lose your capacity to think clearly. In effect, your brain functioning reduces dramatically. Therefore, just as you take time out to fill your car, take time out to nurture your mind, body, and soul. This will have a

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direct and positive impact on how you feel, on the level at which you are able to operate, and therefore your overall levels of happiness.

As already alluded to many times, your body chemistry has an effect on how you feel. This chemistry is affected by your thoughts and emotions as well as the way you live your life. Our brain alone produces many chemicals that naturally raise your levels of happiness. Endorphins are one example. Endorphins are a natural pain killer. Another example is serotonin which naturally calms anxiety and relieves depression. These chemicals are permanently on tap, ready at any time to raise your levels of happiness.

A stressful life style (too much work, stress, drugs, alcohol, sleep deprivation, a diet that is not nutritious enough, and little to no exercise, for example) hinders your body's ability to produce its natural happy chemicals, which in turn negatively affects your ability to be naturally happy, feel generally good (including the brain operating at peak or improved efficiency). Leading a balanced and healthy lifestyle is essential if you wish to raise your levels of happiness.

Your moods are linked to four neurotransmitters in your body that produce a 'state' of happiness. Neurotransmitters (refer to definition below) are fuelled by nutrients called amino acids. Amino acids are supplied to your body through the food that you consume on a day to day basis. It goes without saying that if you are not taking in the correct foods that have the required amino acids, your levels of happiness will be reduced. That is, if the amino acids are high enough, you will generally experience a good mood and be happier.

The **Merriam-Webster** Online Dictionary (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/neurotransmitter>) defines "**neurotransmitter**" as follows: -  
Function: *noun*

**A** substance (as norepinephrine or acetylcholine) that transmits nerve impulses across a synapse

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The **Merriam-Webster** Online Dictionary (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/synapse>) defines “**synapse**” as follows: -

Function: *noun*

Etymology: New Latin *synapsis*, from Greek, juncture, from *synaptein* to fasten together, from *syn-* + *haptain* to fasten

The point at which a nervous impulse passes from one neuron to another

If you are uncertain as to whether your diet is appropriate, that is, positively contributing to your overall health, wellbeing, longevity, and levels of happiness, visit an experienced nutritionist (and possibly even a biokineticist) to obtain a blood analysis and balanced eating plan.

At the end of the day, studies and research clearly demonstrate that a balanced eating plan that’s combined with regular exercise (exercise increases the flow of endorphins, the natural high brought about through exercise), healthy breathing techniques, and sufficient rest and sleep (at least eight hours a night), increases (amongst other things) your energy levels, your ability to concentrate more effectively, overall health and well being, a natural state of joy, and optimal levels of happiness.

In their book, *Happy for No Reason*, Marci Shimoff and Carlol Kline make mention of Dr. Henry S. Lodge, an assistant clinical professor of medicine at Columbia University and co-author of *Younger Next Year*. They go into detail about how Dr. Lodge states that the body replaces approximately one percent of the body’s cells on a daily basis, which equates to a whole new body every three months. He goes on to say that when you exercise, the muscles of the body release specific substances that tell your cells to grow. *On the opposite end of the scale, when you lead a sedentary life style, your muscles send out chemicals that tell your cells to die.* If this alone isn’t sufficient motivation to get you off your behind and get a life, to be happy, then heaven alone only knows what is.

- **Orchestrate your own happiness**

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Where you are not able to change the events in your life, move yourself towards the 'state' of Being that enables you to respond appropriately to events. That is, move towards responses that are not negative, aggressive, and defensive, out of fear or anger. Move towards responses that are neutral, that support well-being for all, that support peace and harmony, that support positive outcomes for all concerned.

When appropriate and you are able to, orchestrate events as YOU want them to be. This should be done in such a way that is not at the expense of others.

- **Managing Your Desires**

Allowing your thoughts to be dominated by desires for more things, more accomplishments, more money, a better job, a better mate or other such prizes, can dramatically limit your happiness, especially if your connection with your deeper self and with the individuals in your life suffer neglect.

While you may long for improvement in your material circumstances (more especially if experiencing lack), decide concurrently to make your happiness and that of others your greatest longing. This will strengthen your ability to stay focused on the progress you are looking for in your career, and put into perspective the material things you want and need. *Keep in mind that one of your most deeply rooted, often unconscious values, is to be happy.*

- **Exercise (part of “nurture yourself” above)**

Exercising vigorously (such as a brisk walk or jogging) for approximately twenty to thirty minutes, a MINIMUM of four times a week, has been shown to increase levels of happiness within a very short period of time. Fit people are usually in high spirits after a *lengthy* exercise. Short, high intensity workouts don't work. Therefore it's best to have lower intensity workouts that last longer.

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Exercise increases the ‘happiness chemical’ endorphins which bring on a ‘feel good’ state. Endorphins are neurotransmitters produced in the brain (released by the pituitary gland) that reduce pain and have also been known to induce euphoria, NATURALLY. Endorphins are the body’s natural pain reliever.

Exercise seems to have a positive effect on people’s emotional reaction to stress by altering their mood.

- **Think Positive and/or Different Thoughts**

The ‘\*placebo effect’ is a good example of how our thoughts can induce a state of happiness.

Through scientific studies, researchers have shown that by giving patients a placebo (refer below \*for the definition of a placebo), they often get well as a consequence of ‘thinking’ that they’ve received medication and will therefore recover/get well. The result, they often recover/get well.

\* A substance containing no medication and prescribed or given to reinforce a patient's expectation to get well.

An inactive substance or preparation used as a control in an experiment or test to determine the effectiveness of a medicinal drug.

Put simply, you can think yourself into a state of happiness. Remembering to feel happy comes about by developing a positive perspective on whatever may come up in our day-to-day lives. Over time this *habitual* practise increases our happiness.

*Optimistic people* tend to have increased levels of happiness. So, *stop worrying, especially as most of what you worry about never comes to be!*

Worrying consumes a huge amount of energy. Just imagine what you could achieve if you channelled your ‘worry energy’ into more constructive thoughts and outcomes. Analyse *why* you are dissatisfied with where you are now.

Then, look at *what* you are dissatisfied with. Finally, shift your attention to

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*what you are satisfied with.* Focus your attention and energy on what you ARE satisfied with. Going a step further, reflect on *what you wish your 'future desired state' to look like (realistically), what it will consist of, and feel like.* Set some firm goals and actions in this regard, always remaining optimistic about a positive outcome. Focusing your attention and energy on what you are satisfied with tends to expand those things.

**Sit or lie down and focus on feeling happy.**

There are a number of ways to achieve this, such as just sitting and smiling. Alternatively come up with pleasant thoughts such as “I really have a lot to be grateful for”; or “I feel great because this is a new day and I can decide to enjoy what I do”. It is important to focus on such thoughts you come up with as this process will assist you to get in touch with and strengthen pleasant feelings of happiness within yourself at will,

**Remember to be happy.**

By doing so, feeling happy becomes a habit without even having to think about it. Evaluate which events in your life give you maximum pleasure, and deliberately choose to minimize those which cause displeasure, thereby achieving greater happiness. In this way we learn how to increase pleasure, thereby assisting you tune into these pleasant feelings/state of happiness at will, resulting in greater happiness.

We have to keep two things in mind, however. One is that pleasure and happiness are as important to those with whom we associate as they are to ourselves. The other thing to remember is that what makes you happy might not make one or more of those around you happy. A vital factor, therefore, is to remember that 'no man is an island unto himself'. So, in seeking pleasure and happiness create space for both yourself and others to examine possible scenarios which are most likely to allow for a good outcome for all concerned. This, undeniably, is another and important aspect of happiness.

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Carry out these appraisals on an ongoing basis, committing them (the lessons you've highlighted) to memory. By doing so; you will begin to unconsciously apply the lessons to your life. *The process of committing beneficial learning to memory is called integration. Your aim is to have your positive appraisals, and your happiness, become habit.*

### **Practice happiness.**

As in sport, practice makes perfect. Endeavour to 'practice'/think happy thoughts at regular times. The time you set aside for meditation/prayer/contemplation might be particularly suitable. Choose feelings and the thoughts associated with them which impart a sense of happiness. Write them down to emphasize them and entrench them in your subconscious. Bringing to the surface thoughts and feelings which have made you happy, or could induce happiness, in all likelihood will result in you thinking "I am abundantly happy!" Sessions such as this will make it easier to get in touch with your FEELINGS of happiness.

By the same token, happiness depends on the thoughts you hold concerning different events in your life. It is almost inevitable that some circumstances in your daily life may cause you to experience frustration, fear, anger, resentment, hurt, and even bewilderment. When (if) this occurs, pause, take a few deep breaths and allow yourself to realise that this negative energy could block positive outcomes in your life if you allow it to infiltrate and overtake your mindset. It's at times like this that it is vital to decide to empower yourself by choosing to adopt a positive attitude. If the situation requires that you communicate your feelings and perspective, then do so with an open mind, expecting a good (at least reasonable) outcome. If the result does not prove satisfactory it could possibly be to your advantage to consider a shift in approach or, alternatively, a change in your circumstances (e.g. job or relationship).

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Above all, regardless of circumstance, remember at all times that it is of primary importance to understand *the fact that your thoughts influence your feelings, and your feelings affect your thoughts*. Learn to consider both in conjunction with each other. You can then choose to construct the most positive and best possible outcome for yourself, your life, your loved ones and associates. Practise, practise, practise and you will experience happiness.

- **Happiness entails dealing with life positively, but realistically.**

Whatever expands you, whatever expands your energy, raises your levels of happiness. By drawing towards yourself that which expands your energy, you reinforce behaviours that raise your level of happiness. Move away from that which contracts your energy, that which makes you feel drained, negative in your mind, body and soul.

See all the events that happen/ed in your life (good and ‘bad’ – not that I believe we have bad experiences) as having taken place for your good, so you can grow and benefit from them as a consequence of their having taken place.

- **Focus on how you *feel*.**

That is, move out of your head and away from your thoughts. Focus on the endogenous (Definition of endogenous: Growing or produced by growth from deep tissue. Produced or synthesized within the organism or system/body) pleasures within your body (e.g. our skin, arms, legs, etc.). By doing so you can learn to continuously stay in touch with these happiness-evoking pleasant feelings. That is, instead of getting your happiness primarily from what is going on around you, or what is going on in your head, you can get it from the pleasant feelings that are an inherent, physical part of you.

- **Go on holiday.**

You are sure to have noticed how relaxed, refreshed, energised, AND happy you are while on holiday AND after returning (provided there aren’t too many

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related stresses, strains, anxieties, and so on). Taking a vacation is one of the most effective ways of raising your happiness levels and may well provide some of the happiest memories you will have.

- **Emotion and mood work.**

There are findings published by psychologists that suggest our entire emotional experience is comprised of six universal emotions, namely happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, and disgust. One reason they are described as basic and universal is that, when people across the world are shown a photograph of a person expressing these six emotions, they are able to accurately identify any one or a combination of the six emotions. The same doesn't apply to other emotions. It's theorised that other emotions comprise various combinations of the six universal emotions.

Happiness is pleasant, while sadness, fear, anger, and disgust are generally unpleasant. Surprise is considered to be neutral, leaning towards the unpleasant. Strive to minimise the five unpleasant emotions while maximising the sixth emotion, namely happiness. Why so? These six emotions and the moods they create (if sustained); ultimately determine the extent of our happiness.

- **Change your beliefs if you are not happy.** *The most important change you can make is by dedicating yourself to establish in your mind the belief that you deserve to be happy and can be happy.* Changing your beliefs can be brought about by repeating a positively stated affirmation (the new belief which you wish to adopt) at least once a day, but preferably more often. This process was discussed in an earlier chapter and can be used to adopt the belief that you are happy, thereby enabling you to become happier.

You may want to adopt the belief that you are mildly or even very happy. Regularly (daily) repeating these positively stated, already achieved happy beliefs, will ensure the 'new belief' becomes stronger and you will gradually

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come to feel a state of happiness. “I’m confident, self assured and happy,” is an example of an ‘already achieved’ belief.

It will take several days utilising this technique for a noticeable increase in your happiness to occur. Several weeks of using the technique will bring about a significant change, while several months will be required to ensure a lasting increase in your happiness. Be careful not to get to the point where repeating the new belief process becomes repetitive and therefore less effective.

There is the distinct possibility that you believe you don’t deserve to be happy. Use the belief -changing technique discussed earlier in the book to ‘plant’ new empowering beliefs around happiness. A belief you may wish to adopt is, “I am happy, joyful, loving, loved, and appreciated.” This can be achieved through a positively stated affirmation repeated at least once a day. Feeling undeserving, however, may require some introspection. If mainly negative thoughts come to mind, begin to impress on yourself that every human being is unique and whatever may have occurred in the past, we humans have the power to construct our lives anew. Each one of us is born to become aware of the miracle of the brain and body which can take us to whatever state of mind and place in life (within reason) we wish to reach. The main requirement is the desire to reach for that new mindset and circumstance.

- **See happiness as the *point of your life*, not only as your measure of success.** Happiness is an aspect of life with inherent value. That is, to some degree everything else is valuable only to the extent that it increases happiness. When you truly embrace this philosophy, you will devote more time and effort in ensuring this value is fulfilled.

Make your measure of success on a personal level to be happy. Being happy IS success, regardless of your financial status.

- **Smile regularly.**

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Let's face it, it's virtually impossible not to smile at someone who smiles at you. And smiling makes you and others feel really great! Smiling is the easiest way to feel happier. Smiling encourages us to be happy, to be in a happy frame of mind. *Smile at yourself every morning in the mirror*, for at least twenty one days. In all probability you'll find that you land up laughing at yourself, which will raise your levels of happiness even further. Laughter suppresses stress hormones which are damaging to your body and long term health.

Look around and you will find many reasons to smile: an adorable infant or child, puppies romping, a beautiful tree, a full moon, an elderly couple walking hand in hand, a young couple totally engrossed in each other.

In fact, **while you're looking at yourself in the mirror, purposefully take time to laugh, laugh out loud**, for five to ten minutes, every day. Find anything to laugh at; **feel** the laughter from your core.

**Looking at yourself in the mirror and saying "I love you" is very powerful.** It's important that you mean what you say. Truly 'feel' the love for yourself. I'm not encouraging arrogance, self-centredness, or a conceited form of love here, but rather a deeper, spiritual love for yourself, a love for all that you are.

**Take a moment while looking at yourself and acknowledge all your good, your positive qualities.** You DO have positive qualities. Find them, recognise them, and embrace them. Tap into being compassionate, accepting, validating, and encouraging of yourself. See yourself as having these qualities. Look in the mirror and recognise them in yourself. All of the foregoing WILL have a positive impact and raise your levels of personal happiness.

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Last but not least, while looking into the mirror at yourself, *give thanks* to yourself, to others, to Divine Consciousness (if this fits into your frame of reference), *for everything*.

There is beauty and promise whenever and wherever you are open to seeing it.

- **Share good news every day with those you come into contact with.**

Imagine how uplifting it is to share good news. The media tends to focus on bad news, death and destruction. Therefore, make a concerted effort to find some good news and share it. Simply go onto the internet, do a search for ‘good news’ and you will be amazed at what you’ll find. There are thousands, if not millions, of good news stories that occur every day. By sharing good news you lift your own and others' spirits. Your whole outlook on life will change for the better.

- **Stay happy when sadness rears its ugly head.**

Being sad doesn't help us, or others for that matter. It drags us down, negatively affecting our body chemistry and our health. Keep your spirits up, even in times of difficulty. You should change your thoughts if you find yourself slipping into a state of ‘sadness’. Do something that is fun and that raises your ‘joy meter’. However, know that you can be sad and still be happy at your core. The two are not mutually exclusive. If a situation comes about that is unpleasant, shift your focus from the ‘unpleasant’ or what makes you sad, to another aspect of the situation that brings about a better feeling within you, a happier, more positive feeling. In effect you will be shifting your energy, your focus, and therefore not become preoccupied by the unpleasantness or sadness you feel. This will change for the better the way in which you react and deal with the situation that you find yourself in. Take cognisance of your happy experiences, reflect on them, and savour them. Move your thoughts toward joy, bringing joy into your life, and Being joyful.

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It is also helpful, though, when sadness is the result of death or loss, to accept that a grieving period is normal. Even so, it is important to focus on the fact that each day offers new possibilities for restructuring your life. As days pass you will increase your awareness of the ongoing beauty and love which is ever-present in the world. This will sustain you and bring increasing happiness into your life.

- **Be optimistic.**

Those that are optimistic tend to be far happier. Keep in mind that if you are a pessimist, you draw towards you what you are being pessimistic about. On the other hand, if you are an optimist, you will tend to draw positive things to you, including a state of happiness. It has been said that most things we worry about never come to be. Worry is wasted energy. Happiness research shows that worry is the number one enemy of happiness. So stop worrying. Take time to reflect on and enjoy the positives in your life, be it an event, a person, an emotion, anything positive in your life. Feel it, sense it, experience it as if it were present, a part of you. Feel the happiness you experience as a consequence. The effect will be an increase in your levels of happiness experiences on an ongoing basis.

- **Comparing yourself with others.**

It's best not to compare yourself with anyone. YOU are the most important person in your life. *Believe in yourself* and your happiness levels will increase. Like yourself in a non-conceited way. Accept yourself for who and what you are. As a consequence all others will truly accept you, the good, the bad, and the ugly. Remember beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

- **Remove money as a motivator for achieving happiness.**

Money has very little effect on your happiness. Making more money will not make you any happier. Spend more time and effort on *activities* that will make you happier, such as giving to a cause that's greater than you. Again, research shows that those giving to a cause greater than themselves (or even

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time given to a charity for example) are usually enjoying better health, overall well-being AND happiness.

- **Invest time and effort in developing and nurturing relationships.**

People are the most important source of happiness - Knowing this fact will motivate you to invest your time and energy in developing, enhancing, and maintaining close friendships and becoming acquainted with more individuals. Our families are equally (if not more) important. Therefore it is imperative that you devote time and effort to nurture your family relationships.

Choose your relationships carefully, paying attention to draw those into your life that nourish and support your happiness. Research shows over and over again that it's those that have strong social connections, and consequently healthy relationships, are happy.

Having said the foregoing, it's important to be happy with yourself, to be able to be happy by yourself. Enjoy being with your friends but *be careful not to derive your happiness from them*. Keeping this in mind, a sense of belonging is nevertheless essential to sustaining a state of overall well-being and happiness.

Make an effort to truly connect with others that you come into contact with, acknowledge them, don't just brush them aside. Recognise them for who they are, smile at them, ask them how they are and *genuinely be interested in their response*. You will feel a deeper more sincere connection as a result of your earnest intent to 'connect' with the person. This in itself will raise the levels of happiness of both of you. We are social 'creatures' and thrive on quality contact with other humans.

Keep in mind, the closer you are to a 'state' of Being happy, the less likely you are to be affected by negative people and negative circumstances that you may come into contact with from time to time.

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- **Awaken and nurture your spiritual side.**

Become aware that everyone and everything is connected and feel one with all that is, with Divine Consciousness. Be Present in the Now! TRULY commit to find your particular/preferred way to connect with Divine Consciousness, others and all that surrounds you. This can be achieved through prayer and/or *meditation*. To become properly aware of others, be conscious that their birthright is the same as yours: their souls come from the same Source. Being deeply connected to and part of Divine Energy' - of Divine Consciousness – which is greater than you, than the world, will help you to live a happier, richer, and more joyful life. The core of who you are, your Divine Essence, your soul, is an individual expression of Divine Consciousness. Studies show that those who are happy more often than not have happier marriages, generally cope better with the challenges they may face, maintain an enduring 'state' of well-being, and do so because they regularly 'connect' with or tap into Divine Consciousness. While research suggests that those who don't have a spiritual dimension in their lives tend to be less happy, have less happy marriages, and cope less effectively with difficult or tragic circumstances in their lives, it has to be said that there are some individuals who seem to be born with an inner strength and wisdom which enables them to move through life well and able to handle whatever circumstances arise. .

That's not all. It's been established through much research that those who have a spiritual dimension in their lives, handle life's problems more easily, have stronger immune systems, have improved blood pressure and fewer of them have life threatening diseases such as coronary heart disease, cancer and stroke.

Happy people tend to see themselves as connected to everything. On the whole they don't consider different nationalities, religions, race, or ethnicity as cause for division. This obviously does not apply to all 'happy' individuals.

There are countless people who consider themselves happy, whose lives have

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been constructed in such a way that they live in cocoons, except that they don't experience a metamorphosis and enter the world as beautiful butterflies to pollinate flowers and thus enable nature to replicate its beauty.

Be your authentic self every waking hour. By being your authentic self you embrace the essence of who you are, thereby naturally and powerfully raising your innate happiness. Therefore, meditate/pray for twenty minutes a day. The way you feel will be profoundly transformed.

- **Contribute without expecting anything back.**

Give and give generously. Give to those in need. Give your time, money, expertise, and wisdom. The Law of Attraction will ensure that what you give is returned, and SO much more.

Embrace the Xhosa proverb “umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu” - a person is a person because of persons. *Ubuntu* translates roughly as ‘humanity towards all’. *Ubuntu* advocates mutual support, in order to help your brother/sister (humanity). *Ubuntu* teaches us that our purpose is to be a true friend to one another.

- *Begin each day with the meditation and/or prayer (referred to as meditation) – “How shall I be today? Today I will be happy, energetic, filled with JOY, relaxed, and loving.”*

This is ‘implanted’ into your subconscious which positively moves you towards this state. As YOU are ‘aware’ in this state of this meditation (which is ‘energy’), so too is Divine Consciousness, and the creation of your meditation begins instantaneously! Turning inward through meditation/prayer is recognised across the world as a means to ‘plug into’ Divine Consciousness. All that’s needed is ten to fifteen minutes of meditation/prayer a day. This will require discipline on your part. Make the time just as you make time to fill your car/automobile with petrol/gasoline when it’s nearly empty. If you can find time for that, you can find/make the time to connect with the silence, with

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all that is, with Divine Consciousness. This alone can and will make a huge difference to your overall sense of well-being and levels of Being happy. In fact those who meditate/engage in silent prayer are less likely to experience states of panic or get upset, regardless of what happens to them. Furthermore, meditation has been shown to ‘stimulate’ (for lack of a better word) certain areas in your brain that are associated with happiness and compassion thereby increasing your levels of happiness and compassion towards others.

- **Make a list of the reasons to be happy.**

Once you’ve made the list, read it at least once a day. Visualise these reasons as already being in existence. Decide once and for all how important being happy is to you. Simply write down everything that is important to you, rank their importance from most to least important, and then check where ‘being happy’ lies in your list. If being happy is low on your list, you are less likely to commit to truly being happy. If you TRULY want to be happy, you will need to make a conscious decision to prioritise your focus on being happy and then focus on it every day.

- **Establish what your obstacles are to happiness.**

Write down your ‘perceived’ obstacles to happiness. Obstacles are often obstacles merely because we see them as such. See them as opportunities and your perspective changes immediately. That is, if what was formally an obstacle now becomes an opportunity, you’ll be more inclined to move forward, through the opportunity, thereby growing, and achieving a state of happiness.

- **Spend some time each day *doing what YOU want to do.***

Time alone doing what you want to do will ensure you are more balanced and fulfilled. Make time for yourself. There is no such thing as, “I don’t have time.” You don’t have time because you don’t make the time! Use this time to treat yourself, to do something that lifts your spirit, something that fulfils you, that makes you feel whole. Use this time to set *realistic, achievable goals*. The

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achievement of *realistic* goals has a positive impact on increasing your levels of happiness. One of those goals should be to *have a quality life*. Another goal to add to your list is to regularly have *leisure time*. Make sure your goals are supported by actions which will contribute to their realisation. Follow through on your actions, hold yourself accountable, and reward yourself handsomely for achieving your goals.

- **Regularly have a good night's sleep.**

Sleep deprivation negatively affects your levels of happiness whereas a good night's sleep contributes beneficially to your ability to function well and feel good.

- **Write your obituary. WOW, write my obituary?**

This is one of the *most powerful tools for defining your life, determining your destiny and legacy, and achieving your happiness*.

Take time to write a detailed obituary. This affords you an opportunity to define the life you have lived and, *more importantly, intend to live*.

Accompany your obituary with a '*wish board/dream board*'. A '*wish board*' is a board that has your most important wants and needs, your affirmations, your goals, all in picture format. That is, if one of your wants or dreams is to move from an apartment to a house, place a picture of the kind of house you would like to own on your '*wish board*'. If, on the other hand, you long to own a Lamborghini (arguably one of the most stunning - and expensive - sports cars in the world), place a picture of a Lamborghini on your '*wish board*'. If one of your dreams is to travel to an exotic location, have a picture of an exotic location on your dream board. The sky is the limit. Be careful not to restrict yourself, yet remember it is important to be realistic. Look at your '*wish board*' at least once a day, visualising yourself as already having what's on it. Support this with proactive action over time in order to achieve what is on your '*wish board*'.

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**There is a multitude of other ways to improve your levels of happiness. Some of which are listed below.**

- **Enjoy your work.**

If you don't enjoy it, find something that is an expression of your authentic self, which is a part of your core being, that ignites your levels of happiness. It could be feasible, as an alternative to leaving that position, to looking for ways in which you could be more innovative, more productive, and more positive within the existing situation. It might be advantageous to look at the situation from a perspective of possibilities.

- Go to happy, joyful **motion pictures, and live acts (the theatre);**
- **Read magazine articles** that ignite your happiness levels;
- **Read , newspapers, internet sites, magazines, and books that focus on 'good news';**
- Attend or start a **happiness self-help group;**
- **Savour your positive experiences,** reflect on them deeply;
- **Allow yourself to move beyond negative thoughts,** take them for what they are, negative and not necessarily reality;
- **Sing, smile, dance, listen to relaxing music, have a sense of humour, and acquire a pet.**

Studies show that those who own a dog as a pet have lower, healthier heart rates. (There is more and more evidence in the literature that individuals who specialise in working with animals have found that animals are highly sensitive to their owners' moods, state of health and need for companionship. The variety of animals which have benefitted their owners' lives is astonishing.) Furthermore, carrying out these activities/behaviours increases the production of your body's natural happy chemicals (amongst other healthy chemical and chemical reactions) which in turn raises your levels of happiness, accelerates healing time, reduces pain, relaxes your muscles, and reduces the likelihood of cardiovascular disease and infections;

- Remember the events that unfold in your life are not what bring suffering and unhappiness to you. *It's what you create out of the events that bring about the*

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*suffering and/or unhappiness.* At the end of the day, a great deal of suffering comes from what we tell ourselves, from our thoughts. *Keep in mind you are not your thoughts or feelings. You are far more than that* as will have been revealed when you worked on the “who am I” section of The Game of Life and Success. The more you resist and fight your thoughts, especially the ‘negative’ ones, the more they will remain with you. Learn to let go of inappropriate, ‘negative’ thoughts. *Let go of self imposed self-judgement.* Therefore, change the way you respond (as outlined in The Game of Life and Success) to your negative thoughts and the ‘so called negative events’ in your life. By doing so you will eventually derive happiness from them. You will feel happier;

- **Stop blaming.**

People who blame others rob themselves of their happiness. Blaming is a negative habit, constricts your energy, and prevents you from reflecting objectively on what’s happened and therefore learning invaluable lessons as a consequence. Look for the lessons, the meaning in what happens in your life. When you blame others you perpetuate the cycle of what you’ve drawn to you in the first place. Move to a place where you don’t see events as ‘good’ or ‘bad’, but rather as events that afford you a wonderful opportunity from which you can learn and grow. Move yourself to a place of knowing that what happens, happens for the best, for a reason, from which you can evolve;

- **Be grateful; express your gratitude for all that you have.**

Be grateful (whether it be writing in your journal or taking a moment out of your day to be grateful) for everything you have in your life, including the air you breathe. Those that are in a state of Being happy tend to focus more often on gratitude on a daily basis than those that don’t;

- **Live life with a purpose and passion.**

Happy people have a passion and, more importantly, have a purpose on earth. People who have found and have a purpose have a sense of meaning, and are inspired. Remember purpose can be described as doing what’s meaningful to you, your calling. Those that have a greater sense of purpose have been shown to be happier than those that don’t. As discussed in Chapter Six, discover and

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embrace your core values, have specific goals associated with your core values, and find ‘meaning’ in your life. In so doing, you will begin to discover your purpose or calling. People who live a life with purpose live a longer and healthier life (according to health and longevity studies).

Those who experience a loss (a life partner or life-long job for instance) but have a greater purpose, are able to move on more easily, retain a sense of purpose, direction and satisfaction in life. Those who experience the same loss but don’t have a greater purpose, tend to lose their direction and overall satisfaction in life.

Having a purpose energises you, which invariably leads to being more inspired, which in turn naturally leads to drawing more success towards you.

Your passions lead you to your purpose. So, as discussed in an earlier chapter, find your passion/s. This in turn is sure to lead you to your purpose, to your calling.

In her book, *The Passion Test*, Janet Attwood outlines a simple process to find your purpose. Reading Janet’s book may prove useful. If you seem unable to uncover your purpose/calling, Janet believes that what you love, your passions, and what G-d's will is for you, are one and the same. Janet shares her wisdom by stating that you should make choices day by day based on what you most care for, what lights your fire. These guidelines reinforce those set out in Chapter Two. Earnestly considering your real longings will definitely clear the way to begin or continue a rewarding, if challenging, journey for you to set out on.

Engage in an activity or interest that’s all absorbing, where you lose the sense of time, where you are naturally focused and attentive, where the activity/interest brings about a sense of inner flow. It’s when you enter this state of inner flow that you know you are living one of your passions. Know one thing for certain. When you know you are living your passions on a day to

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day basis, you'll feel immense energy from within you that guides you to where you should and must be. When this happens, you begin to move towards living your purpose and as a consequence, will experience immense happiness, and inner joy.

*The crux of the matter is that those who feel they are following a 'calling,' who have a purpose, experience far greater satisfaction from their work and are happier in their lives.*

We enable individuals, companies and organisations to transform from their current to their chosen desired state. The coaching process makes it possible to be more focused, and raise the level of performance, thus becoming highly effective. We facilitate personal mastery, the transformation of people's lives, personal reinvention, and enable people to achieve any, or all of their goals, and to lead purposeful, balanced and fulfilled lives.

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