

happiness

Increasing Happiness in Life



Dr. Marsha Fralick and Dr. Seth Batiste



Introductions

Dr. Marsha Fralick

- Author of textbooks on college and career success
- Attaining happiness in life is a key theme in all her materials
- Community college counselor for 30 years

Dr. Seth Batiste

- Co-author of college and career success textbook
- Presented workshops on employee mental health and wellness
- Promotes mental health and work/life balance through financial literacy

Key Ideas

How will we achieve happiness in a post pandemic world?

What ideas can you use to achieve happiness?

As we go through this presentation make a list of ideas you can use to improve happiness.

We will share ideas at the end.





Why is
happiness
important?

Happy people:

- Live longer and have fewer disabilities.
- Enjoy their jobs more.
- Have rich and fulfilling social lives.

Happiness is
a common
goal.

GOAL SETTING

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Timely



Happiness is not a goal!

Achieving our goals is one of the ways to achieve happiness.



Happiness or Hedonism?

Hedonist

The hedonist wants as many good moments and as few bad moments as possible.

Why doesn't it work?

Hedonistic Adaptation

The more material possessions we have, the greater our expectations, and we no longer appreciate what we have.

I CHOOSE..

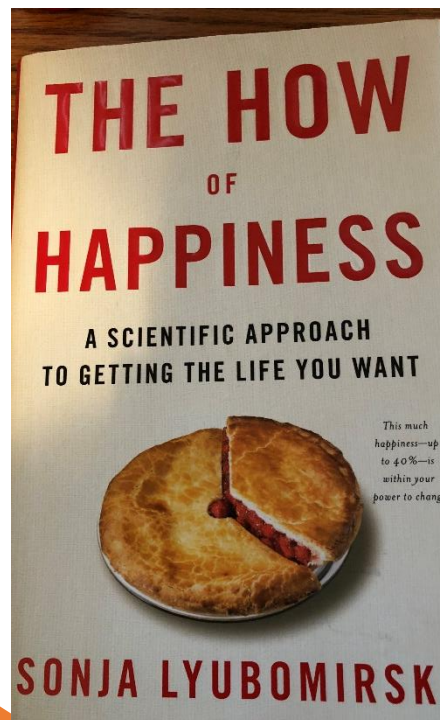


- Expressing gratitude
- Being optimistic
- Being employed
- Having positive self-esteem
- Enjoying leisure activities
- Having good health
- Enjoying friendships

Sonya Lyubomirsky
The How of Happiness

12 Happiness Activities

Which ones can you use?





1. Express Gratitude

Gratitude is one of the most powerful happiness techniques.

What are some synonyms for gratitude?
What does it mean?

What is gratitude?



“A felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life.” -Robert Emmons

Antidote for negative emotions such as envy, avarice, hostility, worry, and irritation



Gratitude Exercise

What are 5 things in life for which you are grateful or thankful.

Keep a gratitude journal. Each week list at least five things for which you're grateful or simply take some time to contemplate why you are grateful.

Make it a Thanksgiving tradition.

Why Is Gratitude Important?

Savoring positive life experiences.

Increases self-esteem.

Helps people cope with stress and trauma.

Encourages moral behavior. You are more likely to help others.

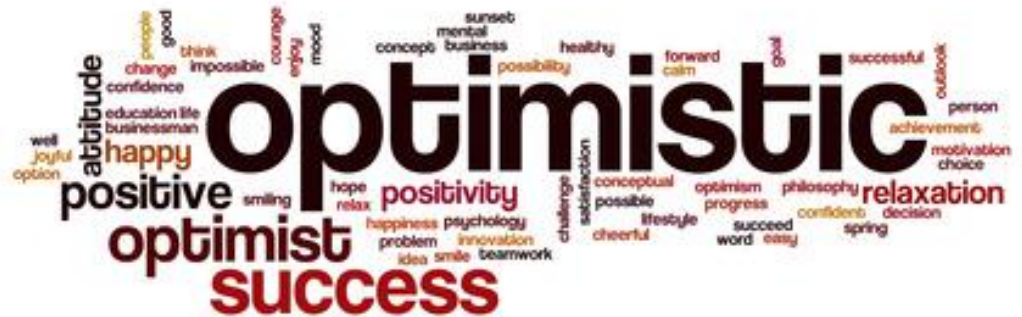
Builds social bonds.

Diminishes negative emotions such as anger, bitterness, and greed.

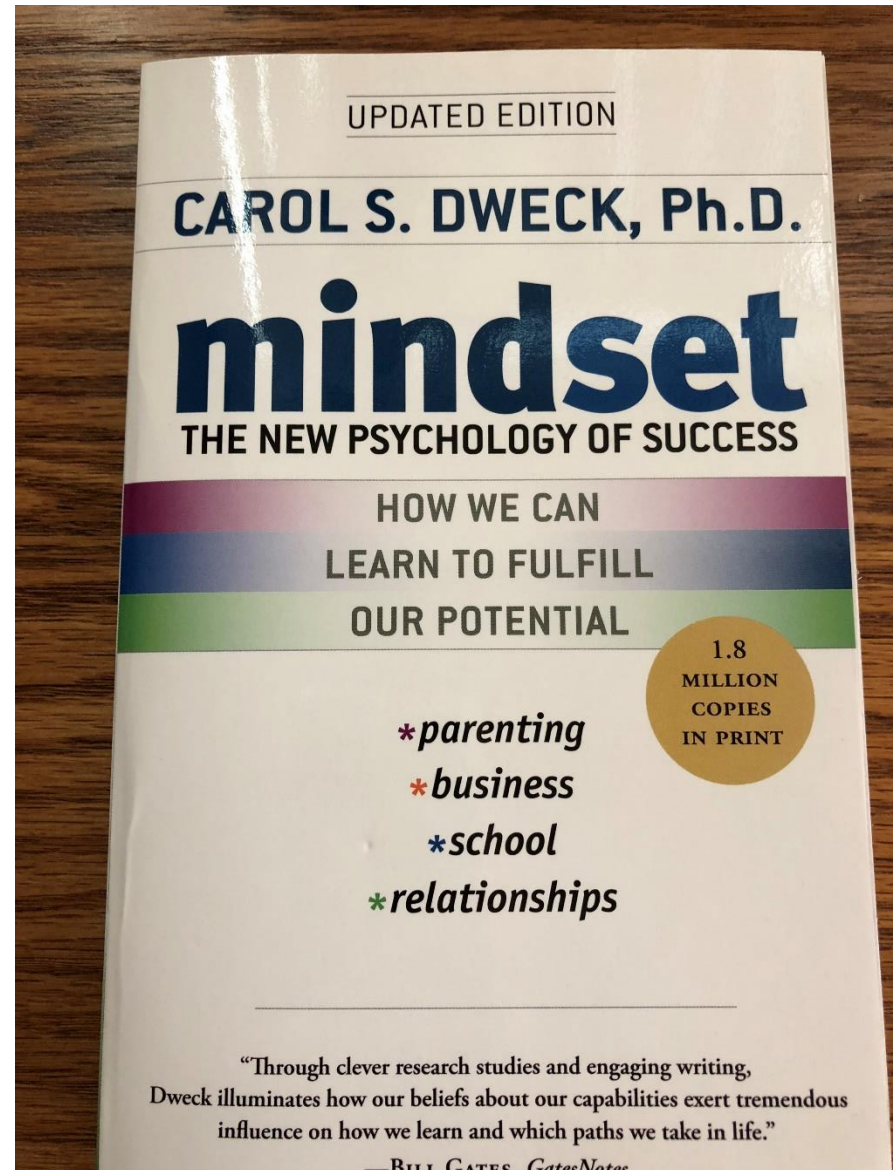
Inhibits invidious comparisons by being appreciative of what you have.

Helps avoid hedonistic adaptation.

2. Cultivate Optimism



Cultivate
optimism
with
mindset.



Positive Thinking and Mindset

Growth Mindset

- Intelligence is increased as you acquire new knowledge.
- Through practice and effort, skills can be improved.
- Failure is an opportunity to learn.

Fixed Mindset

- Intelligence is fixed at birth.
- Increased effort does not lead to success.
- Roadblocks are an excuse to be absent.



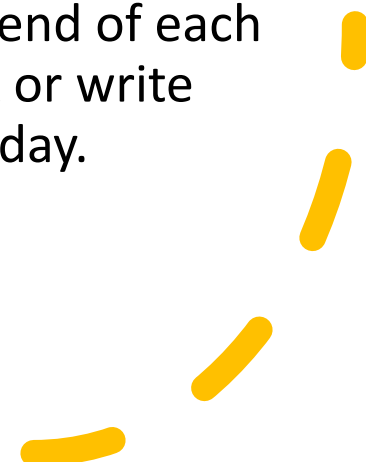


What Went Well Exercise

What are three things that went well last week?

We tend to focus on what does not go well and not enough on what goes right in our lives.

Challenge: For two weeks, at the end of each day, set aside 10 minutes to think or write about what went well during the day.



3. Avoid Overthinking and Social Comparison

“Overthinking is thinking too much, needlessly, passively, endlessly, and excessively pondering the meaning, causes, and consequences of your character, your feelings, and your problems.” – Sonja Lyubomirsky

Negative Consequences:


- Increases sadness
- Fosters negative thinking
- Impairs the ability to solve problems
- Decreases motivation
- Interferes with concentration



Social Comparison

- Noticing our friends, coworkers, family members, and even fictional characters
- Imagining they are smarter, richer, healthier, wittier, or more attractive than we are

Dealing with overthinking and social comparison:

- Yell stop!
 - Don't sweat the small stuff.
 - Will it matter in a year? If so, begin taking small steps to resolve the issue.
- 

4. Practice Acts of Kindness

Why does it work?

- View others more positively
- Connect with others
- Appreciate your own good fortune
- Leads to positive social consequences
- Feel good about yourself
- Chain of kindness





Kindness Exercise

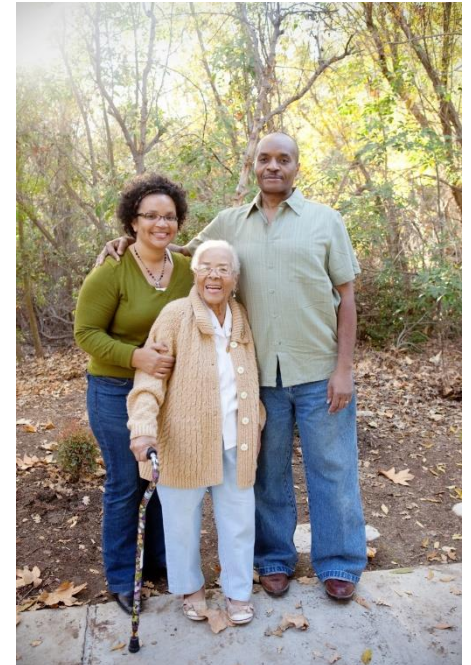
Practice an act of kindness.

Examples?

Seligman states that this exercise is the “single most reliable momentary increase in well-being of any exercise he has tested.”

5. Nurture Social Relationships

- Make time for others.
- Express admiration and appreciation.
- Be supportive and loyal.



6. Develop Strategies for Coping

Meditation
Mindfulness
Breathing
Exercise
Sleep





What is mindfulness?

It is taking the time to notice your environment. It provides distraction from worry.

Examples?

7. Learn to Forgive



8. Increase Flow Activities

- Flow is the state of intense absorption and involvement with the present moment.
- Flow is one of the characteristics of the happy life.
- The key to creating flow is to establish a balance between skills and challenges.
- To maintain flow, we must test ourselves in challenging situations.



9. Savor Life's Joys

- The ability to savor positive experiences in life is one of the most important ingredients of happiness.

Brainstorm: Life's Joys

Relish ordinary experiences

Savor and reminisce with family and friends.

Transport yourself.

Replay happy days.

Celebrate good news.

Be open to beauty and excellence.

Be mindful.

10. Commit to Your Goals

“An aim in life is the only fortune worth finding.”

-Robert Louis Stevenson

“Find a happy person and you will find a project.”

-Sonja Lyubomirsky

Working toward a goal is as important to well-being as it's attainment.

Goals provide structure and meaning to our lives.

Goals help us to master our time.

Accomplish goals with grit.



11. Practice Religion and/or Spirituality

- Provides social support and a sense of identity
- Helps people deal with trauma
- Helps people find meaning and purpose in life
- Provides hope
- Promotes forgiveness



12. Take Care of Your Body

- Exercise increases self-esteem.
- It provides opportunities for flow.
- Spend more time outside
- Learn the basics of good nutrition
- Get enough sleep





Intention Statements

Make a list of at least five things you can do to improve your happiness.

Review these ideas.



Share some of your ideas

1. **Express Gratitude**
2. **Cultivate Optimism**
3. **Avoid Over-thinking and Social Comparison**
4. **Practice Random Acts of Kindness**
5. **Nurture Social Relationships**
6. **Develop Coping Strategies**
7. **Learn to Forgive**
8. **Increase Flow Activities**
9. **Savor Life's Joys**
10. **Commit to Your Goals**
11. **Practice Religion/Spirituality**
12. **Take Care of Your Body**

Discussion Questions



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