

# HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE

True happiness doesn't come and go, depending on your circumstances. It's a way of life that can be learned and practiced.

*Happy people can answer tough questions.*

Questions like: What am I grateful for? What Choices do I have? What actions can I take to improve my life? What are my primary strengths?

Questions that help them lead happy lives.

Happiness is neither a mood nor an emotion. Mood is a biochemical condition, and emotions are transitory feelings. Happiness is a way of life - an overriding outlook composed of qualities like love, optimism, courage and a sense of freedom. It's not something that changes every time your situation changes.

People often think happiness is something you're born with, but you can learn the qualities of happiness.

## *Appreciation*

This is the most fundamental tool. It is a form of love that asks for nothing and gives everything.

Taking time each day to appreciate what you have, to think about people who have made a difference, to acknowledge the love you have or have had - each of these things can turn your attention to the good in your life. This process shifts your attention away from fear, which is often the basis of unhappiness.

## *Choice*

Feeling like you have no choices or options in life is like being in jail. It leads to depression, anxiety and learned helplessness. Unhappy people make the mistake of giving in to fear, which limits their perception of the choices they have. Happy people turn away from fear and find they have an array of choices they can make in almost every situation.

## *Personal Power*

Personal power has two components: taking responsibility and taking action. It means realizing your life belongs to you and then doing something about it. When you're secure in your personal power, it keeps you from becoming a victim. When you have it, you know you can handle whatever life dishes out.

## *Leading With Your Strengths*

Focusing on your weaknesses reinforces unhappiness. By focusing on your strengths, you can solve problems and improve situations. People often think fixing their weaknesses will save them, but it rarely works because it's so painful. However, building and broadening your talents and positive qualities feels good and improves your rate of success in every endeavor. People get energy from building on their successes, not fighting their failures.

## *Power of Language*