

5 Proven Ways To Instantly Increase Your Happiness

Written by Christina Tetreault

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“More than anything else, men & women seek happiness” (Aristotle, 300 b.c.)

Go up to someone and ask him or her what they want in life and you will probably get the very generic answer, “To be happy!” But what does it take to be happy? For some of you money may have popped up in your mind. Perhaps freedom or maybe the vision of being a famous powerhouse or having an amazing family.

Happiness is not something that just happens (though it may seem to at times). It is not the result of good fortune or random chance (though it may seem so). It is not something money can buy or power command (though it may seem so). It is not dependent on outside events, but, rather, how we interpret them.

Here are five ways that are proven to increase your happiness levels instantly.

1. Spend Your Money On Others

Whoa, that seems backwards right? Not quite...

Elizabeth Dunn, author of “Happy Money” did a research study (Dunn, Aknin & Norton, 2008, Science) that concluded that people who spend their money on others (whether it's through donating, gifts, charities) are claimed as much happier than people who spend money primarily on them.

Take action: Next time the situation arises...give a little back.

2. Give Gratitude

Although such a simple task, whether you are more conscious throughout the day of saying thank you to people, starting your morning off by writing 10 things you're grateful for in a journal or sharing with a friend or partner 3 great things that happened to you that day gratitude is an extremely powerful task that increases happiness.

The Journal of Happiness studies did a study of over 200 men and women who wrote three letter of gratitude over a 3-week period and found that the results of writing the letters increased the participants' happiness & life satisfaction.

Take Action: Reach out to someone that you care about and say why are you grateful for them.

3. Get Your Om On

Many studies using brain-imaging techniques show that right after meditating we experience feelings of calm & contentment and that doing meditation regularly can rewire the brain to raise happiness levels. (Tang, Y, et. Al, 2010, Short-term meditation induces white matter changes...)

Take Action: Download the Headspace app for 10 days of 10 minute guided meditations.

4. Work It Out

As Elle Woods said in Legally Blonde, “Exercise gives you endorphins. Endorphins make you happy.” You know the rest.

Many research studies show that after exercise, even if it's after a few minutes release proteins and endorphins (known as the ‘happy’ hormone) making us, well happy!

Take Action: Start your morning off with a walk, even 10 minutes.

5. Spend More Time With Your Favorite People

“We are happy when we have family, we are happy when we have friends and almost all the other things we think make us happy are actually just ways of getting more family and friends,” Daniel Gibert, Harvard happiness expert explains.

Studies show that people who have solid, social relationships have increased happiness.

Take Action: Write out a list of people you love spending time with and plan out with them in advance to get together.

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