getting back to happy

by: boni lonnsburry
Introduction

“The only important thing is staying in the state you prefer.”
- Bashar

Who doesn’t want to be happy? It’s so much better than sad, or mad, or hurt. Everyone knows how great “happy” feels—but few know what “happy” does.

According to a study in the Netherlands,¹ happiness increases longevity amongst healthy people (not people who are already sick). And not just a little bit. According to this study, the effect on the body of happiness vs. not happy is comparable to that of smoking or not smoking. Other studies have shown that happiness also combats stress, protects your heart, and increases your immune system.

And those aren’t even the most compelling reasons to make being happy a priority. Being happy creates more reasons to feel happy.

You create your own reality—and your emotions are the generating force. What you feel you attract—literally. If you feel fear you attract more reasons to be afraid (slowly—because negative emotions are simply less powerful than positive ones). When you feel prosperous you attract more reasons to feel more prosperous. And when you feel happy—well, you get the idea. Learning the skill of happiness (yes—happiness is a skill and a choice) can, quite literally, change your life.

DISCLAIMER: Happiness alone won’t make all your dreams come true. You

¹ Study done for ZonMw, the Netherlands organization for health, research, and development.
still need to have desires, change beliefs that are in opposition to those desires, and then take action on those dreams in the physical world. But happiness supports those dreams, whereas more constricting emotions (fear, anger, blame, hurt, jealousy, etc.) will oppose them. That’s right—learning how to be happy may be one of the most important things you ever do!
Your “getting back to happy” toolkit

Life works better when you have a strategy. You weren’t born knowing how to consciously create your reality or how to stay happy. Well, maybe you were born knowing how to stay happy—and it was “societized” out of you. Nevertheless, you can learn how to stay happy now, with these tools. I’ve been using them successfully for years, and now “happy” is my default.

Your “happiness tools” include:

- Say “no” to happiness stealers
- Choose
- Believe in happy
- Narrow your focus
- Get out of your space
- Be inspired
- The magical elixirs
- Be grateful
- Remember who you are

Learn them, one by one, but more importantly, use them. Happiness is available to all of us. But for some of us it doesn’t come automatically—we
have to work at “happy.” Ultimately, that’s okay, because there are
definitive steps you can take to ease on down that happy road. So, let’s
get started. First …
Say “no” to happiness stealers

“The person who seeks all their applause from outside has their happiness in another’s keeping.”
- Claudius Claudianus

When I was a kid, I was a little OCD. I remember writings lists on my blackboard:

- Clean room
- Do homework
- Do chores
- Get outfit ready for tomorrow

I also remember not being able to relax or be totally happy until everything was checked off that list. Sigh. It started young.

I took my “I’ll be happy when...” attitude into adult-hood. Oh, it wasn’t simply not having my housework done that stole my happiness. It was more “real” problems—when my kids had issues in school, when my mom was sick, when my husband was entertaining job offers in places I didn’t want to move to. Worry became my number one emotion. It was as if I were obligated to worry. I felt that if I didn’t worry, it somehow meant I didn’t care.

As I grew wiser, I realized worry doesn’t prove you care, and in fact, it’s detrimental to those you worry about. I changed the belief that it helps to worry, and I began to imagine those I cared about happy, healthy, and healed instead. “Compassionate detachment” is now my go-to response when those I love are challenged.
Worrying about others isn't the only “happiness stealer.” Oftentimes we find ourselves ruminating about our jobs, our relationships, our finances, our bodies, etc. and become focused on what we “don’t want” rather than what we “do want,” and our happy goes right out the window, replaced by disappointment, dissatisfaction, and powerlessness.

We have to stay awake and aware of the emotions we slip into, and remember that if there’s something we don’t like in our lives, we have the power to change it. We can’t necessarily change someone else, but we can change ourselves and our lives. When you find yourself the “victim” of a happiness stealer, trace back the “unhappy” to the thought that got you there. Then take your power back! And create it differently. Once you do that, it’s time to …
Choose

“Now and then it’s good to pause in our pursuit of happiness and just be happy.”
– Guillaume Apollinaire SJ TW

Choice is powerful. You likely have no idea of exactly how powerful choice is. Think of it this way … You know intentions are powerful. You know beliefs are powerful. You know your thoughts are powerful. You know your feelings are uber-powerful. Choice is all of those things wrapped up in one power-filled package.

So, when you choose—not wish, not hope, not want—but truly choose happiness, it’s gonna happen. You’ve decided. You’re behind it. And that decision, that resolution, has power. It’s a statement to the universe: “Happiness. Is. Mine.”

I didn’t believe my choice was that powerful way back when. But I tried it anyhow. I’d found myself overwhelmed at work, my boss was being over demanding, I was being over demanding of myself, and I just wasn’t having fun. But then I stopped myself. “This isn’t what I want,” I thought. “I want to feel happy.” When that would happen, I’d take some time, and get away (even just to the lady’s room), to clarify my choice. “I want to feel happy,” I’d proclaim to myself and the toilet.

Then, I would ask my higher self to help get me there (and keep me there), “Higher self, I know happiness can be mine, and I choose to feel happy. Please help me solidify that choice and help it take hold in me. Also please help me to sustain and expand my happiness.”

And sure enough, much to my surprise, it worked! Choosing (powerful
choosing—not just mouthing the words) and asking for that support, magically transformed my emotional state back into happiness. Suddenly the “drama” of the day didn’t seem so dire, and I remembered the reason I worked, the reason I do anything, was to be in joy—to enjoy my life. What a concept eh?

When you make that choice, when you (truly) have joy as your highest priority, the universe listens. And it delivers.

Why? Because you are creating it all! You, ultimately, are the writer, director, and actor in your universal play. When you believe you can choose happiness and you do choose happiness (thereby giving up your right to complain, whine, point fingers, and play the tragic victim), happiness, my dear, is yours.

It’s a handy tool, but wait, there’s more! You can also …
Believe in happy

“You do not exist to impress the world. You exist to live your life in a way that will make you happy.”
– Richard Bach

You may say you want happiness, but exactly how happy do you think your life can get? “Really happy!” you shout. And I say, “Saying and believing are not necessarily the same thing.” Your conscious mind may believe you can allow unlimited happiness, but your subconscious mind may believe another thing entirely.

How can you tell if your beliefs allow for you to stretch for your pinnacle of happiness? Look at what you’re creating. How happy have you ever been? How many super-happy people are in your life? When you look out in the world beyond your life, what do you see? Happy? Or something else?

If you want to stretch your happiness believability quotient, test yourself for these beliefs:

• It’s hard to stay happy all the time.
• I shouldn’t be happy while others are suffering.
• If I’m too happy, someone will take it away.
• I can’t be happy until __________.
• If I’m deliriously happy, people will think I’m [crazy, boring, shallow, selfish, irresponsible, etc.].
• If I’m too happy, I won’t be motivated to create more success.

If any of these beliefs test positive, change them to something like:
• It’s easy to stay happy all the time.
• My compassionate happiness can lift others who are suffering.
• If I’m really happy, someone will be inspired to create their own happy.
• I can be happy now.
• If I’m deliriously happy, people will think I’m [lucky, exciting, wise, selfless, responsible, etc.].
• If I’m really happy, I’ll enjoy myself as I use my passion to create more success.

We hold beliefs around everything—but every belief can be changed. Meanwhile, day to day you’ll find it easier to stay in that happy place if you …
Narrow your focus

“The most simple things can bring the most happiness.”
— Izabella Scorupco

We live in a tough world. Our ancestors didn’t have so many things pulling at their attention. Yes—they did have a lot more chores to do—but that just proves my point. We live a comparatively easy life—we have automatic washers, dryers, dishwashers, ovens, hair dryers, smart phones, robot vacuum cleaners, etc. So why does it feel as if we have so little time?

Because technology is a gift and a burden. It frees us and then vies for our attention like a two-year-old having a tantrum. And if we aren’t careful, it succeeds. Oh, the attention grabbing has become very, very sophisticated—two year olds could learn so much. Most of the time we don’t even realize our attention has been diverted. We are often oblivious—me included.

We have to stay awake and aware, and more importantly, be educated as to how important our attention is. Remember your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs create your entire reality. So, when your attention wanders, so does the direction of your future.

It’s vital to realize, you’re on your own with this. The media, the companies, the “man”, doesn’t want you to take the reins of your own life. They want to lead you to where they prosper. You’re going to have to be super-proactive to wrestle your attention (read power) away from those who desire it. But...

My oh my—the rewards are worth it!
When you can narrow your focus and be present, here and now, you’ll find choosing happiness is much, much easier. And as you learn to stay centered and happy, your creations will manifest quicker and easier than ever before—not to mention that feeling happy, centered, and present simply feels great.

As I sit here in a coffee shop in Denver writing this, I have my “device” (an iPhone 7) next to me. I struggle, as most of us do, to draw my attention away from my device and back to the present moment. Instead of checking my email for the tenth time this hour, I focus on the soft, just-warm-enough breeze blowing through my hair. I notice the truck engine roaring on the street next to the café and I acknowledge how grateful I am that the truck moves on. Then the bluer-than-blue sky catches my attention, and next I notice the soft-spoken people around me—seeming so gentle and intently focused on their conversations with each other.

When I narrow my focus, I stop thinking about what happened yesterday, and all that I have to do today, and I give all my attention to “now”. I notice how I feel in my body, what is happening around me, and I take my emotional temperature, too. If I’m less than happy I ask my higher self to help me to get back to joy.

Narrowing your focus helps you to stay conscious, choose what you want to focus your attention on, and enjoy your life more. Being super aware of yourself, your surroundings, your body, and your energy, forces you to give thought as to whether you are doing the things that make you happy, in a way that makes you happy. It gets you off the merry-go-round of a stressful life and allows you to slow down and choose where to direct your energy.
(focus). It will also make you more productive, as studies have shown multi-
tasking actually reduces productivity by 40%.²

But sometimes you need a more drastic shift to find your happy again. If so, it’s time to …

² https://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2017/02/06/want-to-be-more-productive-stop-multi-
tasking/#53254fd855a6
Get out of your space

“One of the first conditions of happiness is that the link between Man and Nature shall not be broken.”
– Leo Tolstoy

Sometimes all you need is to get out of your head and into nature. Nature is healing. Nature is restorative. Nature can help you find your happy.

It doesn’t take much—go for a walk, sit in a garden, look out the window at your backyard. Nature is nurturing. She will heal you if you give her a chance, and she will restore your happy if you make time and space to revel in her.

Studies have shown, over and over again, that nature increases happiness and decreases depression. But in order to fully reap the significant rewards of nature, you must do more than just be in it—you must pay attention to it. Sitting on a park bench with your cell phone checking emails isn’t going to be half as beneficial as walking through that same park and paying close attention to the beauty, divinity, and connectedness of nature.

How can you make nature a habit? Or, at the very least, a restorative response to your physical and emotional depletion? Maybe plant a garden. Explore parks and hikes close to your home. Make being in nature a habit. Find a nature buddy to take regular walks with (but make sure that buddy is giving you space to let nature in—i.e. quiet, reflection time, not complaining and gossiping time). Nature is there as a resource for all of us, but we are the ones who have to choose to connect.

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Unless it’s raining out, then you may want choose another path to happy instead …
Get inspired

“Why bother to live an unhappy life?”
- Richard Bach

We all fall into ruts. I know I do. I’ll find myself, without rhyme or reason, suddenly sullen, without motivation, or drive, or excitement, or, well, being happy.

I know I have to do something to shift my mood when I’m in that space, because sullen does not make for great creations. So sometimes I revisit my favorite inspiring books to remember there is a bigger picture here on this planet, in this lifetime, and I am here to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Here are some authors and books I find particularly inspiring:

- Delores Cannon
- Sanaya Roman
- Sonia Choquette
- Lazaris
- Machaelle Small Wright
- Jane Roberts
- The Emmanuel Books

Read what you find inspiring. And turn to those writings in your time of needing and wanting to be happier. But sometimes you need more than that, so …
Take a magical elixir

“The art of healing comes from nature and not from the physician.
Therefore, the physician must start from nature with an open mind.”
– Paracelsus

Sometimes it tough to shift your mood. Whether something has happened that has you tied up in knots inside or there really isn’t a reason, but you feel “off,” every so often (or even regularly) it’s good to have some help. One of my favorite ways to shift out of heavy/resistant emotional energy is to take Bach Flower Remedies.

I believe that the earth holds everything we need to heal. Edward Bach, creator of Bach Flower Remedies, believed it too. Dr. Edward Bach (1886-1936) was a medical doctor, bacteriologist and homeopath. Bach developed the remedies by forcing himself into a negative emotional state, and then finding the support from nature (in the form of an essence from the appropriate flower) that healed this state. Bach Flower Remedies are potent but gentle, with no negative side effects even if you take the wrong remedy or take the entire bottle at once.

Even more exciting, you don’t have to consult a professional to take advantage of the emotional healings these remedies provide. You can consult a good book (I like Bach Flower Therapy: Theory and Practice by Mechthild Scheffer) and choose the remedies by your symptoms. Or you can do as I do, use a wheel of all 38 remedies and use a pendulum to determine which ones are right for you.

To do this, I get quiet, and take the pendulum in my hand. I say, “I would like to connect with Irahna (that’s my higher self’s name).” I wait for the
pendulum to respond with a “yes” movement (for me a “yes” is the pendulum moving in a clockwise direction, while a “no” is counter-clockwise). When I receive a “yes,” I then ask the following questions:

- “May I have permission to ask about a Bach Flower Remedy for myself?”
- “Do I need some Flower Remedies at this time?”
- “What is the first remedy I need?”

I then hold the pendulum in the middle of the wheel, and watch it point to the remedy I need. I write it down, then repeat as many times as is appropriate. I put 3-4 drops of each remedy I test for in my water bottle and sip it throughout the day. If I am testing for someone else, I ask to be connected to that person’s higher self, while I mentally see that person or animal in my mind, and then ask permission, etc.

Bach Flower Remedies always shift my emotions, unless there is some deeper emotional or belief work I need to do. I try to take them nearly every day. Then I’ll forget for a while. But when I remember to test myself and take the remedies regularly I feel more balanced, at peace, and focused.

They also work amazingly well on children and animals. Recently a young mom called me in a panic because her toddler daughter had been waking up screaming several times during the night, every night for ten days in a row. I connected to the child’s higher self, determined the remedies she needed, and her mom gave her four drops of her “treatment bottle” three times that day. That night, and each night thereafter, she
slept through the night and didn’t wake up once. The little girl begged for the drops and loved taking her “medicine.”

If you make the remedies for someone else, you may want to give them a “treatment bottle,” which allows you to put all the remedies they need into one bottle and extends the life of the bottles you purchase. To make a treatment bottle:

- Purchase an empty 30ml bottle with a dropper in the lid (try the local pharmacy).
- Sterilize the bottle and dropper by boiling it in water for 5 minutes.
- Add to the bottle two drops of each selected remedy.
- Fill the bottle 7/8 of the way with still (i.e. not fizzy) mineral water.
- Top it off with brandy or vinegar to preserve the bottle.
- From this bottle take four drops, at least four times a day.

Bach Flower Remedies work amazingly well and I personally will never be without them. Yet another way to shift your emotional state back to being happy is to ...
Be grateful

“Gratitude is a force born of intimacy and compassion, giving birth to joy and beauty, growing into magical and mystical success and never-ending happiness.”

– Lazaris

Did you know that studies have shown that the simple habit of feeling gratitude can increase your happiness by 25%? Gratitude is a powerful tool to increase happiness, but beyond making you happy, gratitude creates!

Well, technically, your energy creates—and even more exacting, your emotions attract your reality—literally. All of the things, the successes, the people, the health, the happiness, the fun, the creativity, are caused by your feelings (and thoughts which are the cause of your feelings, and beliefs, which are the energy of thoughts and feelings emanating 24 hours a day).

When you feel gratitude for everything in your life, you create more to be grateful for. If your beliefs are in alignment, gratitude is the only technique you need to create unstoppable abundance, love and joy.

So, what stops you?

Most likely:

• You forget that you are powerful.
• You forget that gratitude is a powerful tool.
• You forget to feel grateful.

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4 From the book, Thanks! How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier by Robert Emmons, PhD.
Gratitude works best when it’s a habit. It’s a pro-active form to create happiness and great realities. Start making it a habit in your life. And then …
Remember who you are

"True joy comes from operating with Inner-Directedness and recognizing who you are."
– Sanaya Roman

Let’s face it—the vast majority of the people who aren’t happy feel that way because they aren’t living the life they prefer. They forget or never knew the fact that we are all part of the divine and we each hold an incredible power: We create our own realities!

Hellooooo? Have you let that in???

There is absolutely nothing in this world more important or more life-changing than that fact. I assume, because you’re reading this, that you’ve heard this amazing information before. But if not—this is your lucky day! All of the great spiritual teachers have alluded to, or spelled out this truth.

You.
Create.
It.
All.

But hey, you’re on earth. And most people on earth don’t exactly promote this information. Your attention and energy are pulled in a million directions—very few of which are empowering. You have to bring yourself back to the core truth that you came here to remember—that you create it all and that your wildest dreams can come true.

As you begin to remember your power and your dreams, happiness follows.
If your dreams are true (i.e. they truly excite you) and your expectation of them happening is real (if not—change those beliefs), you will absolutely be brought back to happy as you allow yourself to imagine your life exactly the way you want it.

But remember—it’s not about creating a dream that looks a certain way (ultimately that kind of dream won’t make you happy). It’s about creating a dream that makes you feel a certain way.

Human beings will always seek more—more love, more abundance, more success, more joy, more belonging, more fun, more creativity, etc. Embrace your human gifts of desire and creation and let your dreams come alive in your imagination and bring you back to happy.

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To learn more about creating a dream that makes you ecstatically happy, read The Map – To Our Responsive Universe, Where Dreams Really Do Come True!