



# DAILY HAPPINESS PRACTICES

UNCOVER YOUR LEVEL OF HAPPINESS, AND TAP INTO 30 DAILY PRACTICES THAT WILL HELP YOU TO BUILD A LIFE FULL OF PURPOSE, MEANING AND HAPPINESS.

# COPYRIGHT NOTICE

**COPYRIGHT ©2021 BIG LIFE SOLUTIONS**

All rights reserved.

This book / material is reproduced with permission from Big Life Solutions Ltd. This book / material or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

Published by Big Life Solutions Ltd in the United Kingdom.

First published, 2019.

For usage and reproduction enquiries, please contact

[info@biglifesolutions.com](mailto:info@biglifesolutions.com).



## REAL HAPPINESS IS WITHIN YOUR GRASP

Happiness can often seem elusive and out of reach. It can feel as if 'happy' is for other people, and you just have to 'suck it up' and carry on. But it doesn't have to be that way. With intention and commitment, you, too, can enjoy genuine, lasting happiness.



Over the page you'll find an adaptation of a proven 'happiness measure' (The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire), that will give you insight into how happy you really are right now.

But, knowing how happy you really are is only part of the story - you also need to do something with that knowledge.

So, once you have completed the questionnaire and interpreted your score, you'll find 30 tips, each of which is designed to boost your happiness, that you can implement as a daily practice.

## WHY DOES HAPPINESS MATTER?

There is plenty of evidence to demonstrate that when you don't experience happiness, your general well-being suffers. And, when your well-being suffers, your adventure into becoming your best self takes a hit.

Of course life happens, and no-one is ever genuinely happy all of the time. The trick is to make sure that you set yourself up to allow happiness into your life as often as you possibly can.

When you know how to tap into things that make you happy, you can deal with those times when your happiness eludes you, and take active steps to press the reset button and boost your well-being.

And that is exactly what this tool will help you to do.

---

"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony."

*Mahatma Gandhi*

# INSTRUCTIONS

## ABOUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Two psychologists at Oxford University, Michael Argyle and Peter Hills, developed a questionnaire to provide insight into the current level of happiness an individual is experiencing.

Be sure to note the use of the word 'insight'. But, keep in mind that happiness is subjective. And, therefore, the results the questionnaire gives you should not be seen as a definitive measure of your happiness, but rather as a guide to manage, maintain and build your levels of happiness. Used with that caveat in mind, this tool is super-useful in helping you navigate your adventure towards becoming your best self.

You can even use the questionnaire to see how using the tips at the end of this booklet impact your happiness levels over time, by taking it again.

## HOW TO APPROACH EACH QUESTION

Read each question carefully. Don't take too long over them (the whole questionnaire should only take a few minutes to complete), and remember that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers, or trick questions. The first answer that comes into your head is probably the right one for you, so go with it. And, if you find some questions tricky, give the answer that's generally true for you most of the time.

## SCORING YOUR ANSWERS

Score your answer for each question using the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree

2 = moderately disagree

3 = slightly disagree

4 = slightly agree

5 = moderately agree

6 = strongly agree



# THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Using the guidelines from the previous page, please answer each of these questions (be sure to answer them all) honestly. Write your score in the box next to each question.

1. I feel particularly pleased with the way I am.
2. I am intensely interested in other people.
3. I feel that life is very rewarding.
4. I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone.
5. I generally wake up feeling rested.
6. I am not particularly optimistic about the future.
7. I find most things amusing.
8. I am always committed and involved.
9. Life is good.
10. I think that the world is a good place.
11. I laugh a lot.
12. I am well satisfied about everything in my life.
13. I think I look attractive.
14. There is no gap between what I would like to do and what I have actually done.



- 15. I am very happy.
- 16. I find beauty in some things.
- 17. I always have a cheerful effect on others.
- 18. I can fit in (find time for) everything I want to.
- 19. I feel that I am in control of my life.
- 20. I feel able to take anything on.
- 21. I feel fully mentally alert.
- 22. I often experience joy and elation.
- 23. I find it easy to make decisions.
- 24. I have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life.
- 25. I feel I have a great deal of energy.
- 26. I usually have a good influence on events.
- 27. I have fun with other people.
- 28. I feel particularly healthy.
- 29. I have particularly happy memories of the past.



# WHAT NEXT?

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

Like we said in the instructions for the questionnaire, the results you get are purely a guide. They offer insight into how happy you feel right now.

So, if your score suggests that you are truly unhappy, that is not a reason to be despondent or disappointed. In fact, if anything, it is a huge opportunity to use that insight to work on some of the happiness practices that we've given you.

Equally, if your score comes out indicating that you are possibly the happiest person alive, remember that it is simply a snapshot of your happiness level right now and, as we said earlier, happiness is subjective, and the levels of happiness you feel at any given time can change.

So, far from an excuse to kick back and feel like you've got it all sorted out, a high score should inspire you to use the tips we've given you to make sure you maintain (and maybe even build on) how you feel right now.

And, remember, you can take this questionnaire as many times as you like, so that you can monitor your happiness levels over time, and look for patterns - when your happiness levels are high, and when they are low - and the factors that may lie behind those patterns.

Armed with that knowledge, you can get super-intentional about implementing the tips that will help you keep, or get back to, the levels of happiness you want to have.



# SO HOW HAPPY ARE YOU?

## CALCULATE YOUR SCORE

OK, so you know that the score you come up with is not set in stone, nor is it conclusive proof of how happy you are (or aren't) - it's just an indication for how you feel right now. But, that indication is really useful information, so let's unpack how you arrive at your 'Happiness Score', so that you can use it to power your adventure into becoming your best self.

Start by adding up your scores for each of the 29 questions. The highest possible total is 174 (29 x 6), and the lowest is, of course, 29 (29 x 1).

Next, divide your total score by 29, to arrive at an average 'Happiness Score'.

Finally, make a note of your score, and the date you took the questionnaire, so that you can use it to compare future scores, and assess the impact of implementing some, or all, of the 30 'Daily Happiness Practices' in this booklet.

Here's a couple of examples of how to calculate your score...

**Example 1:** Total score of 97. So, dividing 97 by 29 equals 3.4, so your 'Happiness Score' would be 3.4.

**Example 2:** Total score of 136. So, dividing 136 by 29 gives you a 'Happiness Score' of 4.7.





# WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

## MAKING SENSE OF YOUR SCORE

So you came out with a 'Happiness Score' of 3.4, or 4.7, or whatever it turned out to be, but what is that actually telling you?

Well, keeping in mind that it is a subjective measure, and the score you got is purely a snapshot of how you feel right now, use the following guidelines to put some meaning to your result...

### 1 : NOT HAPPY.

If you answered honestly and got a very low score, you're probably seeing yourself and your situation as worse than it really is. This may just be a blip, or it could be indicating something more long-lasting.

If you've been feeling this way for a while, you may consider seeking help, perhaps starting with your doctor. Or, if this is a new way of feeling for you, perhaps consider taking the questionnaire again, after you've put a few of the tips to the test, and seeing how you score then.

However you respond to your score, be sure not to ignore it - it may well be nothing, but it could be an early warning sign of a threat to your well-being and, in particular, to your mental health.

### 2 : SOMEWHAT UNHAPPY.

You could use a boost. So, try implementing some, or all, of the tips at the end of this booklet (the 'Daily Happiness Practices') for, say, one month. Then come back and take the questionnaire again to see what's changed.

### 3: NOT PARTICULARLY HAPPY OR UNHAPPY.

A score of 3.5 would be an exact average of happy/unhappy responses. This is a pretty good space to be in, but it could be better, right? So, just as with the lower scores, see if you can boost your happiness levels by putting some, or all, of the 'Daily



# WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? (CONTINUED)

Happiness Practices' to work. Then, why not take the questionnaire again to see what's changed?

## **4 : SOMEWHAT HAPPY OR MODERATELY HAPPY.**

Studies indicate that this is what the average person scores. You're starting to creep into a 'Happy Zone'. Overall, chances are you are pretty satisfied with life, but not so satisfied that you feel it's all a neat and tidy done-deal.

You can still benefit from the boost those 'Daily Happiness Practices' can offer, but you could also use them to make sure you at least maintain your current levels of happiness.

You should also probably think about taking the questionnaire at regular intervals (say monthly), just to be sure that you are keeping things on track, and that your levels of happiness aren't slipping.

## **5 : RATHER HAPPY; PRETTY HAPPY.**

Right now, things are looking good. But you want them to stay that way (or even to get better still), so those 'Daily Happiness Practices' can really help you to make sure you stay happy (life's inevitable ups and downs notwithstanding), and maybe even push that score higher.

## **6 : VERY HAPPY.**

There's more to being happy than simply feeling good. The benefits of being happy extend far beyond a feeling - research demonstrates that many aspects of your life - health, marriage or intimate relationships, career, friendships and achieving your goals, for example, have all been shown to improve as your happiness levels increase.

Be sure to put at least some of the 'Daily Happiness Practices' to use so that you can navigate the bumps in the road without having your happiness levels dented too much.

## **6 (AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW): TOO HAPPY.**

Yes, you read that right - you can be too happy!

Recent research seems to suggest that there's actually an optimal level of happiness



## WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? (CONTINUED)

when it comes to achieving success. The evidence points to it being possible that being “too happy” could actually result in reduced levels of performance and success.

Given that this applies to a number of key life areas, including career, education, relationships and mental and physical health, if you are scoring the maximum score of 6, you should move forward with caution.

You may also want to 'sense check' your score - it may be that you weren't 100% honest in some of your responses, or you were just 'on a high' when you took it (maybe you'd just got back from the gym and those endorphins were pumping!).



# TIPS

## 30 DAILY PRACTICES TO HELP YOU BUILD YOUR HAPPINESS

You know your happiness level right now, and it may be a score you are happy with, or it may be a score you really want to change. Either way, the tips you'll find on the next few pages can help you both boost and maintain your levels of happiness, depending on what you want to achieve.

Each tip is a practical step that you can implement on a daily basis (should you wish), incorporating them as a regular practice in your life. Over time, the more regularly you use them, the more they will become second nature - a habit - and the more consistent their impact will be.

Remember, happiness is subjective, and some of the tips may not appeal to you or, indeed, be appropriate for you - so leave those to one side. You may want to start with just one or two, and gradually implement more as you get more confident with them. It's totally up to you.

But, however you put them to work, you need to know if they are working for you. What's the point spending time and energy doing something if it isn't having the desired effect, right?

So, think about regularly re-taking the questionnaire (maybe once a month for the next six months), and see what changes applying some of the 'Daily Happiness Practices' has on your happiness levels. That way, you can get an idea of what's working, and what's not, and make adjustments accordingly.



## TIP 1

---

Identify your top 3 priorities and the top 3 things that get in the way of you pursuing those. Then identify 5 things that you could do that would help you remove those blockages, make a list of those things and how they will help you. Then, make a commitment to actually doing those things.

## TIP 3

---

Identify the top 10 things that drain your energy and how they appear in, and impact, your daily life. What adjustments can you make to get rid of them?

*Pro-tip: find patterns in how your energy zappers affect you, and where they crop up, and see if you can kill a few birds with one stone.*

## TIP 5

---

Embrace the tough times. Rather than looking at challenges as something you might fail at, see them as opportunities to grow - to discover more about yourself, learn more and take strides towards becoming the best version of you. Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn.

## TIP 2

---

Identify a negative thought, assess the impact that thought has on you, then either reframe that thought into something positive, or counter that thought with a positive thought.

## TIP 4

---

Accept imperfection. Remember, everyone makes mistakes. Being imperfect is part of being human. You never signed a contract to be perfect, but you did sign a contract to be the best version of you - so make that, rather than perfection, your target.

## TIP 6

---

You are never too old to learn. Approach challenges with curiosity rather than trepidation. Ask yourself: what can I learn from this? How can I use this experience, good or bad, to improve myself in the future?

## TIP 7

---

Reframe failure. Instead of calling something a 'failure', look for key takeaways and learnings from the experience. It might sound glib, but it really is important to reframe from 'failure' to 'learning opportunity' or 'growth opportunity'. Give it a try and see the difference it makes.

## TIP 9

---

Enjoy the process. It's all too easy to want the outcome, without having to put in the time and effort that getting that outcome requires, so you end up looking for shortcuts. And shortcuts rarely, if ever, lead to the results you want. Learning occurs over time, so enjoy the ride.

## TIP 11

---

Be patient with growth. Remember that learning doesn't occur overnight. Sometimes learning comes quickly, but more often than not it takes time, and follows a path that has an abundance of bumps and mistakes along the way. And that's fine.

## TIP 8

---

Instead of seeking approval from others, seek it from yourself. External validation should be the icing on the cake. It's internal validation – you telling yourself that you are great and did a good job - that is essential.

## TIP 10

---

Shout about your victories! Sharing successes with people you trust helps you to build motivation and restore your energy for learning. Share your success with others. Enjoy the success that they share with you. And own your progress.

## TIP 12

---

Don't take criticism personally. Criticism is not a negative, or a call to stop doing what you are doing, it's an opportunity to grow and to learn. It's actually a positive. So, when you receive criticism, take time to identify the learning opportunities, and don't see it as anything personal.

## TIP 13

---

Take time for reflection. Self-development is not only an active pursuit, it is also a reflective process. Take time to not miss any part of what you learn and the ways in which you grow. Only when you have the full picture will you be able to reach your potential.

## TIP 15

---

Learn from others. Everyone makes mistakes, so learn from those who made them already. When you take on board the lessons of those who have gone before you, you give yourself a good chance of avoiding making those same mistakes, or at least of handling it positively if you do repeat it.

## TIP 17

---

Expose your hidden time-wasters. Review the last 7 days, and identify the 3 activities that were the biggest time-wasters. What **one** thing could you do to reduce the amount of time you waste in general? Now identify 3 things you can do in the time you've freed up that will have a positive impact on you.

## TIP 14

---

Accept you are a work-in-progress. Build 'yet' into your vocabulary and see how that changes your perspective: 'I cannot do that yet', instead of 'I cannot do that'. 'Yet' primes the mind for possibility and keeps the brain open. And possibility and openness are at the heart of growth.

## TIP 16

---

Make a new goal for every goal achieved. Learning is an endless, lifelong journey. You will never know everything, be able to do everything, or have unlocked every aspect of who you are. So, love the fact that you are not, nor ever will be, the finished article. Stay focused on learning and becoming better at things.

## TIP 18

---

Identify what's important to you. Maybe it's family, friends, kindness, trust, integrity, love, or the environment, for example. When you know what matters to you, and focus your energy on those things, you bring meaning and purpose to your life. And meaning and purpose lead to happiness.

## TIP 19

---

Figure out what you enjoy doing. Seriously. This may sound obvious, but so few people know what they really enjoy. Take some time to figure out what puts a genuine smile on your face and spring in your step, and commit to doing at least one of those things every day.

## TIP 21

---

Keep a Gratitude Journal. Each day, make a list of things that happened that you're grateful for and spend a few minutes reflecting on why you're grateful for them and how that thing made you feel.

## TIP 23

---

Keep a daily log of things you have learned about yourself. Every day you will make new discoveries, and unless you are intentional about recording each learning point and discovery you make, they will eventually be lost. Don't miss out - keep a log and revisit it often!

## TIP 20

---

Create a bucket list and state why each item on it matters to you. When you know what's important to you, and what you enjoy, use that information to keep you focused on the things that align with who you really are. And nothing keeps you focused like a list of things to do before you die!

## TIP 22

---

Carry out a Daily Stock-take. Each day make a list of three achievements - areas you made progress in, or enjoyed success in. Then take time to reflect on how that success or achievement made you feel. Be sure to congratulate yourself, and maybe even give yourself a reward.

## TIP 24

---

Practice self-care. In the hustle and bustle of daily life, all too often you are bottom of your list of priorities. But to fully enjoy life - to be happy and to be engaged with everyone and everything around you - you need to be on top form. Be sure to take at least 15 minutes out each day just for you.



## TIP 25

---

Accelerate your productivity. Look at what you can do to increase the pace of your achievements. Maybe you need to pass a few things off to other people, enlist a bit of help, even say 'No' to a few things. Focus on what truly matters to you, and the door to happiness opens.

## TIP 27

---

Set three priorities for the week ahead. List out just three things that are your top priorities for the next 7 days. Even if everything else goes by the board, if you get those things boxed off, it will have been a good week, and you will feel good about yourself.

## TIP 29

---

Give yourself a theme for the week ahead. Decide what you want your week to feel like, and what you want to be driving it. It may be something like 'energy' or 'calm' or 'completing', for example. Then focus on that theme as you approach each day.

## TIP 26

---

Finish what you started. Loose ends drag you down. Pick just one thing that needs finishing off and commit – in writing – to getting it done in the week ahead. When the following week rolls around, and that thing is no longer on your to-do list, rinse and repeat!

## TIP 28

---

Create a Positive Portfolio. Identify one positive emotion you regularly experience (e.g. gratitude, joy, contentment). Then spend one week making a portfolio of pictures, mementos and objects that evoke that emotion, and spend time in it, savouring the emotion it builds in you.

## TIP 30

---

Make a to-do list. When you carry around a list of things in your head, not only does that take up useful capacity in your brain, it also usually ends up with you forgetting things. And, when you forget things, you feel like you've failed. And that will erode your happiness in a flash.