



how to be
happier

Workbook



Ken Johnston

How To Be Happier: Workbook

www.HowToBeHappier.com

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(Nobody likes to read this kind of stuff. We wish we didn't have to do it.)

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Table of Contents

Quick Start Topics

Maintaining the Status Quo.....	1
Being a Fan	3
Sleeping Well.....	7
Exercising and Being Fit	11
Meditating	13
Making Positive Comparisons	15
Having Expectations	17
Having Some Control Over Your Life	21
Having Freedom and Choice	27
Having a Pet that You Like.....	29
Finding “Flow” in Your Life	31
Enjoying Holidays, Celebrations, and Rituals	35
Having Friends.....	39
Helping Others.....	41
Being Appreciated	43
Appreciating Someone	47
Feeling Grateful	51

Intermediate Topics

Having Leisure Activities	55
Finding Meaning in Your Life	57
Having Children	59
Loving Something	61
Bouncing Back from Adversity.....	65
Being Positive	67
Being Loved	69

Advanced Topics

Being Happier with Work	73
Having a Close-knit Family	77
Having a Good Relationship with your Parents	81
Choosing Religious or Spiritual Beliefs that Bring you Comfort	85
Having Happy Memories.....	91
Being Optimistic.....	97
Loving Someone	101
Having an Intimate Relationship.....	103
Being Married	107

Progress Journal.....	109
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The Progress Journal

Before you start any chapter, it's a good idea to use a journal to track your progress.

If you'd rather not buy one, go to Page 109 and print out the "Progress Journal."

Make multiple copies, perhaps one for each chapter for which you intend to do the practice.



Quick Start Topics

**PRACTICE FOR:
MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO**

Outcome

At the end of this practice you will have identified at least ten major “status quo” things that give you great comfort.

Practice

A. List at least ten areas of your life that you depend on to bring you comfort and happiness. This might include small things like your bed and pillow, or your first cup of coffee in the morning, or large things like the smile on your child’s face when he or she sees you.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

B. Decide how often you’ll re-visit your “Status Quo” list, to add anything that has now become status quo, and remove anything that no longer is status quo.

C. How often will I return to update my Status Quo list?

- Daily Weekly Monthly

Please update your Progress Journal (print a copy of page 109 if you already have not done so.

You’re done when:

Your list of “status quo” items is as complete as you can make it and you’ve decided how often to re-visit and update the list.

Now it’s time to go to the complete list of “Happiness Habits” (in the Table of Contents of this workbook, or in the textbook), and select a new topic. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
BEING A FAN**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have discovered activities for which you are already a fan, and what triggered your choices. You will have learned the habit for becoming a big fan of other activities.

Practice

Below, under the column "I'm a fan of..." list everything that comes to your mind; discover what you are already a fan of. Item by item, think back to when and how you decided to become a fan. Questions to ask yourself are: What triggered becoming a fan? When did I become a fan? Why did I become a fan? Make notes about that.

I'm a fan of	When/how did I become a fan?

After you've looked at each of the items on your list, you might see a pattern developing. You might learn what triggers enthusiasm for you. You might learn what it takes to unleash your passions.

If you have trouble making the list, or putting very many items on it, you may want to try one of the search engines, such as <http://www.google.com>. Type in "I'm a big fan of" with the quote marks, and read what other people are big fans of. This will give you some ideas.

By the end of this first practice, you will have a better idea of what triggers you to become a fan, and you'll have some ideas of things you might want to put down on "My Fan Page" list. Do that now.

My Fan Page List

Daily: Scan your "My Fan Page List" list. Take one fan support action for one of the items on your list. Or, if you've thought of something else, edit your document, and add the new item or items to your list.

Quick Start Topics

(A fan support action is any action that makes you feel like you are observing the outcome of, supporting, rooting, applauding, celebrating, or enjoying the thing you are becoming more passionate about.)

Date:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

You've reached the point where you can mentally scan your list and take some support action without opening your Workbook. ∞

PRACTICE FOR: SLEEPING WELL

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have discovered whether lack of sleep is a choice or a physical problem, by researching the Internet and possibly reading related books.

Practice

- A. Make some notes for today's date about your present sleeping situation.

- B. Think about which of the following activities may be keeping you from sleeping soundly:

- Working, playing, watching TV, working on computer right up until bedtime
- Getting up during the night to help with children/pets etc.
- Staying up late to do chores
- Using nightly sleeping pills
- Sleeping with a pet (in bed or in room)
- Drinking caffeinated beverages after lunch
- Variable schedule for going to bed and getting up
- Worrying, thinking about situations
- Light bedroom

- C. Then make notes about your goal, e.g. which of the following actions could you adopt:

- Establish a pre-bedtime ritual. 30 minutes before bedtime stop all stimulating activities, such as TV or working on the computer. Read instead.
Or take a warm bath right before bed.
Or, listen to soothing music for 45 minutes before bedtime.
Or do yoga, or meditation.

Quick Start Topics

- Stick to a schedule, going to bed and getting up at the same times.
- Each week gradually add 15 minutes daily to your sleep.
- If you have a partner, enlist his/her help to rotate such things as duties with the children.
- Don't stay up late to do chores. Instead, get up an hour earlier.
- Try some safe, natural cures instead of sleeping pills, such as warm milk, valerian, magnesium or chamomile.
- Move the pet(s) to another room.
- Stop drinking anything with caffeine in it at noontime.
- Keep your bedroom as dark as possible.
- Put a notepad next to your bed so if you think of something you want to remember, you can write it down and deal with it in the morning.
- After 20 minutes of not sleeping, get up to read, drink something warm and decaffeinated, read a magazine; don't reinforce the "can't sleep" situation.
- Take early morning walks.

New sleep actions I will adopt:

Resources for sleeping well:

Simple sleep tips can be found at:

<http://www.stanford.edu/~dement/howto.html> (available as of March 2005).

Some information about sleep disorders can be found at:

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/disorder.cfm>.

Use any search engine such as <http://www.google.com> and enter words related to your interest about sleep e.g. "not enough sleep," or "can't sleep," or "how to sleep longer."

Go to <http://www.Amazon.com> and enter "sleep" in the search for related books.

Go to the forum on "Sleeping Well."

Quick Start Topics

Date	Sleep Difficulties	Sleep Improvements

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

You're satisfied that the amount of sleep that you're getting is sufficient to give you energy each day for the work and fun that is part of a happy life. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
EXERCISING AND BEING FIT**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have created the habit of choosing either

- a. dieting one day in the future, or
- b. a one-day diet or
- c. a combination of the two (you may also choose to add the one-day exercise program)

Practice

Weigh yourself and write down your starting weight.

Starting Weight: _____

Then write down a goal weight (not the ultimate goal but one that would be achievable in the next 60 days).

Temporary Goal Weight: _____ As of: _____

Write the commitment to weigh yourself every day for 60 days, and to choose either the "One day diet," or to say to yourself "One day I'll diet."

I commit to weighing every day for 60 days. ___yes ___no

Quick Start Topics

Date	Choice (one day diet or one day I'll diet)	Weight	Date	Choice (one day diet or one day I'll diet)	Weight
1			31		
2			32		
3			33		
4			34		
5			35		
7			37		
8			38		
9			39		
10			40		
11			41		
12			42		
13			43		
14			44		
15			45		
17			47		
18			48		
19			49		
20			50		
21			51		
22			52		
23			53		
24			54		
25			55		
27			57		
28			58		
29			59		
30			60		

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

When you've weighed yourself daily for 60 days, you've completed this step and have begun a lifelong habit of weighing yourself. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
MEDITATING**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have chosen one of two ways to meditate and will have developed the habit of meditating.

Practice

If you need to, re-read the instructions for both Simple Meditation, and Active Meditation. Select the one you like the best.

I choose: _____

Decide whether or not you choose to meditate for a one-month trial, or if you choose not to proceed at all.

If you decide to proceed, make the commitment for one month. It will take you that long to see if you find the payoff to be worth the time you invest.

___ I will meditate for one month.

Log the time and duration of each meditation in the past 24 hours. Mentally, recommit yourself to the one-month trial. Check the forum for input on meditation; see if you want to comment about your experiences. That's it for meditation for the month.

By the end of a month, you'll have built a habit that will pay off in a happier, calmer, healthier, less stressed life. Your meditation log is on the next page.

Meditation Log

Date	Length of Meditation
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

You have meditated daily for one month. ∞

PRACTICE FOR: MAKING COMPARISONS

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have made a habit of feeling good about who you are, what you do, and what you have.

Practice

Daily: note any thought from the previous day where you had even a twinge of envy, jealousy, inferiority, or inadequacy. Bring to mind the thought and situation.

Replay it to find the comparison that created the feeling.

Then: redo it in your mind, the way you would like to do it in the future:

Make a different comparison.

Use a different standard.

Make it okay for the person or situation to be different, or whatever is needed to feel grateful and appreciative about who you are, what you do and have, rather than what isn't.

Soon you'll start doing it automatically, as it comes up.

Note:

If this is difficult for you, and you find it hard to stop making negative comparisons, request a "comparison buddy." On the forum, you and your buddy can compare notes and support each other in a skill that is more difficult for some people than it is for others.

PRACTICE FOR: HAVING EXPECTATIONS

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have learned to experience the positive force of anticipation and will have developed the habit of finding the good in your experiences.

Practice

1. Pick at least one thing that will happen in your life in the next five to ten days that you can feel comfortable anticipating happily. It could be a grand event, or even something humble (like the next episode of a favorite TV show, or the next week's sermon, or maybe a visit to a store you like.) Put the entry on your page. Aim for about five to ten days ahead, because you'll pick something else tomorrow. Then you'll be anticipating two things, and then three, and so on.
2. Add a couple of thoughts about what you anticipate the most about the event.
3. Imagine how much you'll enjoy whatever you chose. Exaggerate the feeling of positive anticipation. Practice feeling the feeling you get when you feel like you "just can't wait." Become familiar with that feeling, you want to feel it often.

Return to your "Expectations" page each day for two weeks.

When you're actually experiencing one of the events you were anticipating, be in the now, and find everything you can find that is good about what you're experiencing. You may find yourself comparing the now experience with what you had anticipated. When you do, practice thinking to yourself, "This doesn't have to match what I had anticipated. Find the good things about it. It's okay to be Pollyanna about it. There is good here, I'll find it."

Each day when you visit your "Expectations" page, make a note of two or three things that you liked about any experience that you've now had. Remind yourself of the good you found.

Once you've been doing your log for a couple of weeks, you'll have a number of items on it. Some items will be in the future, where you will practice feeling positive anticipation in advance of the item. Some

items will be in the past where you can scan over your notes about what you enjoyed about it.

Expectations

Date	Coming Event	Anticipation	What I liked
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			

Please update your Progress Journal.

Make a note of your starting date. Make notes each day about how you are feeling about accomplishing this habit.

You're done when:

You're done when you can easily anticipate an event with positive feelings, and once the event is over you can recall and enjoy the positive aspects of it.

Once you feel comfortable with Expectations, consider working on "Being Positive" and "Having Happy Memories." ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
HAVING SOME CONTROL OVER YOUR LIFE**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have the habit of examining your “to do” list and doing less of what you *don’t* want to do, and more of what you *do* want to do.

Practice

A. Make notes in each column as follows:

Column I: List things you do that you don’t want to do at all, or you want to do less often, or would prefer to do for less amount of time.

Column II: List things that you choosing to do (things you have some control over).

Column III: Prioritize from high to low the items on columns I and II by how much time you spend during the week, doing them.

Column IV: List things you would do if you had more time (things you want to do but never seem to get to).

Goal: To move as many *whole or parts* of items in the first column as you are able, to the second column. (see next page)

Quick Start Topics

I) Don't want to do; want to do less often or for less time	II) What I choose to do (I have some control over)	III) Priority (how much time is spent)	IV) Things I would like to do

B. Column I:

Examine each item and look for:

To what extent — if any — is doing it (or the frequency, or duration) affected by ideas, standards, rules, learnings, etc. that are someone else's? In other words, to what degree are you doing it as often, as long, or as completely as you think you are *obligated* to do versus how much are you *choosing* to do?

If you find that you are doing it because you think you should, or must, or what you think is expected of you, then mark it "changeable."

Whenever you can, break the whole item down into parts that are different. For example let's say you listed "laundry" in column I. You might break it into two parts:

1. I have to do *some* laundry, *some* of the time. Write items like that into Column II (things you want to continue doing).
2. I do *some* laundry *more often than I have to* (or take longer at it than I would have to if I changed my habits, opinions, or choices about it). Keep those items in Column I.

Daily: Take one item — only one item — a high priority thing you do, but don't want to do (or want to do less often, or want to do for less time), from Column I. Ask yourself the questions below. Think about different ways to do something. Think about alternatives, e.g. think about somebody else doing the things you really don't want to do, e.g. paying, trading, bartering, exchanging, or eliminating the item totally. Get creative.

Post the following questions on your wall.

- How much control do I have over whether I do it or not?
- What would happen if I didn't do it at all?
- How much control do I have over how often I do it?
- What would happen if I did it less often?
- How much control do I have over the time I spend doing it?
- What would happen if I spent less time at it?

C. Column II

The next step is to examine each item in column II and ask:

Could you change your opinions, attitudes, rules, standards, or beliefs about what, how much, and how often you do something on the list of things you are choosing to do? If so, modify the item or remove it.

D. Column IV

Is there anything on list Column IV that you would rather do, than some of the things on the list of things you do because you want to do them (column II)?

Halfway to Happier

You are halfway to regaining control over your life when the items on Column I are short, fast, and infrequent as you can make it. And, the second list in Column II has grown to the extent that you see that you are doing all of those things, as often, and for as much time as you choose. And, you see that you are doing all of the things on the second list because of who you are and what you value, rather than feeling bad about missing any of the items in Column IV. For example, Alice put "taking the kids to soccer practice on Saturdays" as an item on Column I, and "reading a good book" on column IV. When she thought about it, she decided that she really wouldn't trade watching the soccer games for a book, so she moved soccer practice to Column II.

The idea is to discover items that are really your choice, things you wouldn't give up and that you do really have control over.

You'll get as much happier as you can from this set of practice when you learn how to find meaning, satisfaction, pleasure, love, and maybe even joy in the activities that are on your second list. You'll get as much happier when the activities you do (or the activities that you do the way you do them, and as frequently as you do them), are exactly what you choose them to be for this time in your life.

E. New questions for each item Column II:

- What meaning does this activity have for me? For another? For others?
- How can I find pleasure in doing this meaningful activity in the way I've chosen to do it?
- Is there any way I can change the activity to find flow? (Add to the challenge, or build skill to reduce frustration.)
- Can I accept that I've chosen, for this moment in my life, to do this activity, the way I've chosen to do it, and for the amount of meaning I give it, and the flow I can find in it?

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

When you've found what meaning each activity on the second list has for you, and you've added as much flow as you can create, and you confirm as you do each activity that you are choosing to do this, and doing it your way. If there are any items on the first list, reclassify them as work (whether or not you are employed, or get paid for it).

Choose whether you take the list with you to the step on finding meaning and flow in work. If you still feel dissatisfied with your 'work' list of things you do but you don't want to do, you might take the work step and learn more about finding meaning and flow in your work. ∞

(x)

**PRACTICE FOR:
HAVING FREEDOM AND CHOICE**

Outcome:

At the end of the practice you will be able to distinguish between “maximizer” and “good enough” purchases. You’ll learn to convert many activities to “good enough.”

If you think you’ve been a “maximizer” in too many situations for too long, then read “Paradox Of Choice” by Barry Schwartz. (Click here to buy from Amazon). While you’re waiting, do these practice.

Practice

A. Make some notes:

A1: Things I bought	A2 “Maximized” or “Good Enough”	A3: Future Purchases	A4: “maximize” or “good enough”

- A1. Make a list of everything that you can remember that you bought in the last year. Include any big expenditures you can remember from the prior four years.
- A2. Go through your past purchases and for each item mark the purchase as “maximized” or “good enough.”
- A3. Make another list of all of the things you are going to buy, or might consider buying in the next year.

Quick Start Topics

A4. On your list of possible future purchases, mark each item as to whether you will try to maximize the purchase, or whether you will find something that satisfies you and is "good enough."

B. Daily for 30 days:

1. Write down any purchases you made.
2. Mark them as "maximized" or "good enough."
3. Make special note of any regrets you've had in the last 24 hours, about past purchases you've made.
4. Remind yourself about any regrets that "done is done" and that decision is over, "no regrets," never look back.
5. Accept that purchase, and accept yourself.

For thirty Days:

Date	Purchase	Max. or Good Enough	Regrets

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

At the end of the 30 days, look over your list of future purchases you might possibly make. Wherever you had marked "maximize," consider changing the purchase to a search for something is satisfying and "good enough." You're on your way to never again having buyer's remorse, or regrets, and toward being a happier and happier shopper. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
HAVING A PET THAT YOU LIKE**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will be able to make a choice for a pet that will fit your circumstances.

Practice

Make a list of five possible pet choices.

- Write down the needs and care each might require.
- Decide if any pet matches your willingness to commit.
- If you decide on a dog, investigate some websites and/or read books that will give you some direction about which dog would suit your needs best.
- If you decide on a cat, investigate some websites and/or read books that will give you some direction about which breed of cat would suit your needs best.
- Visit someplace like the humane society to consider those possibilities.
- When you make an initial choice, feel free to post it to the forum. Ask for advice and concerns about your choice.

Pet Choice	Needs and Care	Commit?	Outcome
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

...you're comfortable with the research you've completed, and choice you've made. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
FINDING FLOW**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have learned the habit of adding flow to tasks that have been boring in the past, and finding flow in things that used to frustrate you.

Practice

- A. Make a list of activities, chores, or work in your life that you find really boring.

Things I find boring:

- B. Make a list of challenges that frustrate you. You probably don't do them, but might like to. Look for things like learning to do recordings on your VCR. Another example might be cleaning spam out of your email inbox by learning the filters or rules in your email program.

Things I find frustrating:

- C. Select items from the lists
1. Pick an item from the "boring list" and think about ways you can make the task or activity more challenging.

Something boring: how can I make it more challenging?

2. On the “too frustrating list,” pick one thing you’d really like to be able to do, and set out to learn how to do it. Learning, by itself, often produces flow. If the book or course you take is not too complex or too simple, learning can engage you. As you build your skill in whatever you’ve chosen, begin to challenge yourself with the task that used to frustrate you.

Something frustrating: how can I conquer it?

3. You might find it useful to jump onto the forum and see what other people are doing to make boring things challenging, or increasing skills to make frustrating things doable.
- D. **Daily**, make a log entry on each list of anything you’ve done in the past 24 hours toward the process of adding flow to your life. If you don’t have anything to record, read the current forum comments on the topic of flow.

Quick Start Topics

Date	How I've added flow

You can always add things to either list as you discover them in the future.

You can start with one item at a time, or if you feel like being challenged, try one from each list.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

You won't really be done with practicing flow there aren't any aspects of your life that you find boring, and nothing you want to do frustrates you, which brings you a fully engaging life. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
ENJOYING HOLIDAYS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RITUALS**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have noticed times when you lifted your mood, and times when you were invited to be negative. You will have learned the habit of converting the potential negative reactions, into neutral, and sometimes positive reactions.

Practice

Daily

- A. Open the document and write one example of someone in the last 24 hours who was happy and positive.
 1. Give yourself a score of from 1 to 5 for the positive example. A score of 1 means you lifted your mood a little with the happiness, and 5 means you let the positive mood lift your mood a lot. 2, 3, and 4 are somewhere in between.
 2. If you can't remember even one example of someone being positive and happy, you are either blind to happiness or running with the wrong crowd. Don't worry about it; that will change.
- B. Write down an example of someone who was unhappy, or negative.
 1. Give yourself a score of -1 to -5 for the negative example as well.
 2. If you really joined in the bad feelings and became negative, give yourself a score of -5. If the negativity didn't affect you a lot, give yourself a -1. Scores of -2, -3, -4 are somewhere in between.
- C. Add the positive and the negative scores together and give yourself one net score for the day. (see next page)

Date	Positive Example	Score of 1-5	Negative Example	Score of 1-5	Sum

Don't expect much change for a while. This practice seems to take some time to sink in. Allow yourself plenty of time to let this change happen. Actually, the longer it takes, the more powerful it is, and the more life changing it will be.

Be persistent. Do it daily. Allow yourself to have thoughts about it during the day. Become more aware of people making positive and

negative statements. Become more aware of people's positive and negative moods.

If, from the beginning you have consistently positive scores, you may have been doing this skill naturally.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

When you run a string of fourteen straight practices with net scores of plus three or higher, you graduate. Welcome to a lifetime of being happier. You're getting ready to graduate to positivity, or any of the more challenging things you can do to become happier. ∞

PRACTICE FOR: HAVING FRIENDS

Outcome

When you complete the practice, you will have a plan for becoming closer to at least one of your current friends or acquaintances.

Practice

A. Making closer friends

1. Make a list of all of the people currently in your life whom you consider as friends. List as many as you can think of.
2. Make a list of old friends with whom you would consider catching up.
3. Select one or two people with whom you would like to be closer. Select people that you think would be happy to become closer to you.
4. Decide on one action for at least one of the people on your list, for each day in the coming week.

Friends (1)	Old friends (2)	Action (4)

Instant Messaging

If you've never used instant messaging, here's a website that (as of March 2005), seemed to do a nice job of explaining how it works:
<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/instant-messaging.htm>

Email, Addresses, Phone

If you haven't contacted someone in a long time, you may not have his or her email address. There are helpful websites that can give you that information. You may need to first find the person's real address, in order to have enough information to locate them. Or, find their phone number.

If you find a website that was particularly helpful, please add it to the library so others may benefit.

Record the action(s) you plan to take for making new friends, or becoming closer to your existing friends. Come here each day for two weeks, to review what you have accomplished, and make new plans. If you have not accomplished what you committed to do, resolve to do it or change the action. Keep enough notes in this log that so that some time in the future when your mood needs a boost, you can review what you've done, and feel good about it.

Two actions to take:

1.
2.

Please join the forum to meet new friends.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

...you no longer feel a need to expand your contacts with more friends, or closer friends. ∞

PRACTICE FOR: HELPING OTHERS

Outcome

When you complete the practice, you will have chosen at least one action for helping someone.

Practice

B. Helping Others — Make Three Lists:

1. Make a list of people who are active in your life, and are people you might want to help. Examples: a mother who could use help taking care of children; someone who would like to have the dog walked; an ill person who would appreciate a home-cooked meal; a lonely person who would enjoy your company.
2. Make a list of your extended family members (e.g. nieces/nephews, second cousins), who are currently not active in your life. Make notes about what those people might like: help with homework, starting a business, etc.
3. Make a list of a cause, or charity, or a politician whom you can be passionate about, and want to do something for. (This, by the way, may fulfill two things: you will be helping others at the same time you will make new friends.)
4. From these lists choose one or two actions that you'd like to take and make a commitment to follow through.

People to help (1)	Extended Family (2)	Causes/charities (3)

Other references: <http://www.onecer.net/giveaway/index.html>
<http://www.onecer.net/wish>

Please join the forum to meet people who have ideas for helping others.

Please update your Progress Journal with one action you planned, committed to, or took, to help someone.

You're done when:

... you have a plan for helping others (who, when, how) and have begun implementing your plan. ∞

(9)

**PRACTICE FOR:
BEING APPRECIATED**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have surveyed one or more people (who are important in your life) and discovered their views on appreciation. You may discover what ways their views differ from yours. You'll make a habit of valuing the appreciation you get.

Practice

- A. Make a list of the people in your life from whom you would like to get more appreciation.

- B. Take one person at a time, and conduct an interview with that person. You can explain that you're taking a course on the Internet, and your homework is to find out how each of the important people in your life feels about or expresses appreciation.

Here are some sample questions for your interview. The interview can be face to face, or by email, or by telephone.

1. I want you to think about someone in your life (outside of me), who you really appreciate, or have appreciated. Is there someone that you really appreciate or have appreciated?
2. Have you ever told or shown that person how much you appreciate them?

3. What did you do to express your appreciation?
4. If you decided to express your appreciation to that person again, how would you do it? e.g. phone, email, card, speech. What might you say or express?
5. Talk about frequency. Do you or did you express your appreciation to that person often? What frequency seems appropriate to you?

It's not unusual in this practice to discover that the person you want more appreciation from doesn't find it easy to express appreciation. You may discover that you've already gotten more appreciation from this person than the person is comfortable giving.

Whatever you discover, give the person a lot of appreciation for helping you:

- Multiple: You helped me so much. Again.
- Permanent: I can always count on you to help me. You've always helped me.
- Personal: I appreciate you in my life and everything you mean to me.

See what you discover.

C. **Daily:** For one month, open your notes from the interview, ask yourself, have I gotten all the appreciation this person has to give? Was I aware as it was given? Was the appreciation given the way the person gives it? If I were to show appreciation for this person in my life, could I do it in the voice, language, gestures, or methods this person uses?

Quick Start Topics

Date	Review Interview	Date	Review Interview
1		16	
2		17	
3		18	
4		19	
5		20	
6		21	
7		22	
8		23	
9		24	
10		25	
11		26	
12		27	
13		28	
14		29	
15		30	

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're Done When

After two weeks of daily updates, begin the Happiness Activity: "Appreciating Someone." Let the two steps overlap for a week or two, and think about them both together. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
APPRECIATING SOMEONE**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have delivered appreciation to at least one person whom you value, and you will have begun to develop the habit of giving appreciation to others.

Practice

- A. Make a list of people who are important to you in some way.
- B. Decide how you want to communicate that appreciation to each one. What medium will you use?

Important People (A)	How will I communicate? (B)

C. **Daily** practice:

- 1. Pick one person from the list.
- 2. Draft the strongest message of appreciation you feel comfortable with.
- 3. Decide how and when that day you will deliver it.
- 4. Deliver it. You may notice that some people are not "good" at taking appreciation. Instead of simply saying "Thank you," they may discount it by saying, "It wasn't anything," or "You can't mean that." Just know that by responding at all, they heard

Quick Start Topics

- you. How they respond isn't important. (Be sure when someone appreciates you that you let them know — in a positive way — that you heard them.)
- D. Write down any reactions you got in the last 24 hours from prior appreciations you've given.
 - E. Note your feelings about your reaction. Did it make you happier?
 - F. Continue with the next person on the list, until you have completed your list. Feel free to add to the list as you go along.

Person (C1)	Reaction (D)	My feelings: (F)

One Time Practice

Dr. Martin Seligman discovered this exercise while working with his students at the University of Pennsylvania. This exercise produces an extremely powerful and meaningful result. It — by itself — has been a powerful force for change in people's lives.

1. Think of one person who has made a big difference in your life, whom you've never properly thanked. Maybe he or she was a teacher who opened your thoughts to your chosen career, or, maybe a boss whose leadership taught you to lead, or a coach who was an inspiration to you. Select someone you can locate.
2. Write a personal letter, no more than one page, to that person, telling that person the impact he or she has had on your life, and how grateful you are for having that person in your life.
3. When you are pleased with the letter, contact that person; make an appointment to see him or her; go to visit that person. While you are with the person, read the letter aloud. Leave when you are done.

This practice has changed many lives. It makes the grateful person more comfortable being grateful. It gives the recipient a live reminder of how he or she has made a difference in someone's life. The richness of the message, delivered face to face, is something the recipient can treasure throughout the remainder of his or her life.

When you have completed this practice, please post your experience (maybe even some or all of your letter, if you feel okay about it), on the forum. Share what it meant to you, and what you observed in the reactions of the recipient.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

...you have communicated your appreciation to all of the people on your list. ∞

PRACTICE FOR FEELING GRATEFUL

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have established a daily pattern for being grateful to people, things, and events in your life.

Practice

Daily: Start a grateful log:

1. Each day write down three things, people, situations, etc. for which you are grateful. They can be small things or big things. Your goal is to find three new things each day. This starts out being easy, because you've so much to be grateful for. As you daily strive to find three new things to be grateful for, you'll find it is more challenging. Persist, even though it may feel challenging.
2. Each night before sleep, you'll focus on several new good things in your life that you feel grateful for. (Many people call this the "blessings" practice, and those with deep faith find it widens the scope of their thoughts of their own lives.) See next page.



Intermediate Topics

PRACTICE FOR: HAVING LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have examined the ways you spend your leisure time. You will have the habit of replacing the less satisfying activities with those that are rewarding, engaging or meaningful.

Practice

- A. List all the ways you've been spending your leisure time during a typical week. Ignore eating, sleeping, working, grooming, and housekeeping. Just note how you spent the leftover leisure time. (see next page)
1. Beside each item, estimate the amount of time you spend on that activity.
For example, if you routinely watch the local and national evening news on TV, you'd put down 7 days times 60 minutes or 420 minutes per week. Or, if you spend 30 minutes a day reading a newspaper you'd put down 7 days times 30 minutes or 210 minutes a week.
 2. Then give each activity a grade, based on how happy you felt while doing it, and after doing it.
- B. Daily:** note how you spent the past 24 hours. Did you find it satisfying?
1. Begin to notice which of the things you spend your leisure time on that are making you happier. Gradually (not all at once, which upsets the status quo), you might try changing your routine so it avoids those shows, newspapers, and other news that don't make you happier.
 2. Look to your list of leisure activities that do make you happier, and do more of that. Or, take the activities you've chosen that will add meaning and flow to your life and substitute those for the unsettling activities that you drop.

Intermediate Topics

Leisure Activity (A)	Est. Time Spent (1)	Happiness Grade (A2)

Decide how often you will revisit the way you spend your leisure time and see if it still is exactly how you want it to be. If you find a month or two down the road that you've changed back to some of your old leisure activities, you might begin the practice again, and visit the topic daily for a week.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're Done When

You've completed this step when your daily review of your activities stops changing. Once you've stopped the activities that weren't rewarding, engaging or meaningful — and replaced them with activities that are — your daily review of your leisure time may not help further. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
FINDING MEANING IN YOUR LIFE**

Outcome:

At the end of the practice you will have discovered your five strengths and virtues and will have used those to uncover more meaningful things in your life.

Practice

A. Make a list of the most meaningful things in your life. Change the list as you think more and more in the future about what you want to do to make your life seem more meaningful to you.

B. Take the free survey about strengths, on Dr. Martin Seligman's web site. When you do that you'll discover which five of twenty-four virtues and strengths are your Signature Strengths.

Your top five strengths are your unique, personal set of tools. Dr. Seligman and his team have made it simple for you to detect or discover — within yourself — the strengths you can use to achieve your dreams and goals. These same strengths are what you will use to find the meaning in your life. When you discover what your dreams and goals are, you'll know what will add meaning to your life. When you discover what will add meaning, the five signature strengths are the tools you'll use to realize your dreams or reach your goals.

1. Please go there now and take the free survey, then return here. <http://www.authentichappiness.org/>
2. Post the results — your five signature strengths — on your "meaningful log." (see next page)

C. Daily: Until it becomes a habit burned into your mind, come to your Meaningful Log, and note one example in the last 24 hours where you used one of your signature strengths to have some effect on one of the things on your "most meaningful" list.

D. If you are still struggling after a week or so to find things that are meaningful to you, share your search on the forum. Your fellow members and the HowToBeHappier team will help you.

**PRACTICE FOR:
HAVING CHILDREN**

Outcome

At the end of the practice if you have children, you will have increased coping skills. If you're thinking about having children, you will have checked out whether your expectations were realistic, or not.

Practice

You already have children

If you have a child, or children and wonder why you aren't happier having had this child, we can teach you some excellent coping skills you can use to minimize any bad feelings, and maximize the good feelings that parenthood brings. If you haven't already read it, please read "Four Questions Four Choices." If you have read it, go further in the learning and take the audio-visual programs (or read the book) "Four Questions and a Map."

You're thinking about having children

Make a list of what you think would be realistic expectations about having a child: what it means to you, your spouse, your family; what changes it would bring to your lifestyle; what financial impact it would have; what long-term impacts it would have.

Realistic Expectations:

After you have this list, check in with the forum to see if these are indeed realistic expectations. Also, check bookstores for helpful information.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when:

...you're satisfied that if you are making to have or not to have a child feels right to you. If you have children, you're done when you feel comfortable using the four questions to cope with difficult situations. ∞

**PRACTICE:
LOVING SOMETHING**

Outcome

When you complete the practice you will have practiced the habit of making a commitment to love unconditionally something that brings you pleasure. You will also take a least one thing from the list of things you want to learn to love, and take some action toward that goal.

Practice

- A. Make a list as long as you can about:
 - 1. Things in your life that bring you pleasure and joy
 - 2. Things in the future that you want to learn to love
- B. Go back to the items on your lists and make notes about whatever keeps you from loving them unconditionally. (see next page)

C. **Daily:**

1. Take one thing from the list where you made notes about something that keeps you from loving it unconditionally. Ask the four questions. Decide what you'll do about that in the future, and commit to yourself to love that thing unconditionally in the future.
2. Take one thing from the list of things that brings you pleasure and joy. Mark your appreciation for that in some verbal or physical manner. Feel the pleasure it gives you. Carry that feeling for the day.
3. Take one thing from the list of things that you want to learn to love. Take some action. Log the action.

(C1)	Commitment	(C2)	(C3)	Action

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when

...you have chosen and committed to love something unconditionally and have taken action toward that commitment. ∞

**PRACTICE:
BOUNCING BACK FROM ADVERSITY**

Outcome

At the end of this practice you will have learned and practiced the formula for resilience so that it becomes a habit whenever you think about or experience an adversity.

Practice

Write down today's date and the answer to the question: "On a scale of one to five, where one is low and five is high, how well do you presently handle adversity?"

Date: _____ How well do I handle adversity? _____

- A. Make as long a list as you can, of possible adversities you are currently worried about.

Things I'm worried about:

- B. Daily: For the next 45 days (add two days for every one you miss) read the formula:

**It's not about me. It isn't my fault. Life happens.
I will bounce back quickly. I'll adapt. I'll adjust. I'll get on with my life.
It only affects one small part of my life. I've got so much more.**

- C. Take one possible adversity you have worried about, and practice applying the formula to that adversity. Repeat the words in your

head. Imagine you saying the formula to yourself as you think about suffering that adversity.

Use your imagination to visualize that adversity. Imagine yourself saying the formula. Imagine yourself living out the formula.

Imagine yourself on the other side of the adversity, over it, getting on with your life.

If you'll do this for the next 45 days (or more, if you've missed any), you'll be fully prepared to handle any adversity that life throws at you. You'll be ready for anything, and able to handle anything (and, quite by accident, you'll have a slightly more optimistic outlook on the future).

One wonderful side benefit of this set of practice is that you'll stop worrying so much about those things you were worried about before, because you'll know that you can handle them. If people around you think you worry too much, this is going to be a sure cure for that.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You'll know you're done when...

... you automatically recite the formula when you face a new adversity. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
BEING POSITIVE**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will increase the number of positive thoughts.

Practice

A. Daily:

1. Write at least three things that you did to express positivity in the last 24 hours.

- In the beginning, you might have little to write. That will tell you truly how negative you have been. It will also prompt you to remember "today" to look for the good in at least three things.
2. Note the question you asked your comparator to search for. Gradually, you'll find three examples easily. You've begun to become more positive.
- B. As soon as it's easy for you to find three examples, raise the bar for yourself.

The next day, find four, then five, and so on.

When you get to six or more in a day, you don't need to write them down, it's enough to just recall each of them and congratulate yourself for each one. (We don't want you to take more than 5 minutes out of your day.)

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done with this Happiness Habit when:

At the end of the day you can easily remember 6 positive thoughts you've had. ∞

PRACTICE: BEING LOVED

Outcome

After completing the practice you will have acknowledged someone who offered you a kindness, and will have selected ways to become closer to others. You will have researched what others have done, as well.

Practice

Note: If you think you have created situations with others that are causing them to *not* love you, or someone else has done something that you can't forgive (someone with whom you value the relationship), you may want to take the audio-visual program called "Four Questions and a Map," so that you can learn to forgive yourself and others.

- A. Think about a recent experience where someone offered help to you (offered a kindness). How did you respond? Did you accept the offer or did you rebuff it in some way? If you did not accept it, find some way to contact that person and tell them that the offer meant a lot to you and that you appreciate it.

Recent experience: How did I respond?

- B. Make a list of people (either family or friends), with whom you spend some time. Make notes for some of them about ways you can become closer (offer your help, make time to get together one-on-one, etc.).

Family Members – Ways to become closer:

Intermediate Topics

- C. Daily for two weeks, write one commitment for accepting a kindness or gift, and/or your commitment for getting closer to a family member or friend.
- D. Make notes about a situation where you were approachable to a new acquaintance.

Date	Commitment	Notes
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		

- E. Join the “being loved” on the forum. Ask for contributions of people who gave a kindness and had difficulty receiving one. What did they do? How have people become more open to receiving kindness?

Please update your Progress Journal.

You’re done when:

... you are comfortable that you are approachable and open to being loved and you feel comfortable when someone offers you kindness.



Advanced Topics

**PRACTICE FOR:
BEING HAPPIER WITH WORK**

Outcome

When you have completed the practice you will have uncovered the times at work when you have been in “flow,” and you will have the habit of creating more “flow,” as well. Using the four questions (from the “Four Questions and a Map”), you will have converted some of the unhappy aspects of your work into happier experiences.

Part One:

1. Write down your thoughts regarding anything at or about work that makes you unhappy.
2. Write down your thoughts regarding anything at or about work that makes you happy, e.g. what’s good?
3. Make notes about things you find boring.
4. Write down difficult activities that are frustrating.
5. Write down your thoughts regarding what is *meaningful* to you about the work or the product of your organization (i.e. what are the activities you perform that make you feel good/proud; what do you like about the product)?
6. Write down your thoughts about what is meaningful about the work you do in support of the mission of the organization (i.e. what does your work contribute to the betterment of the organization)?
7. Make a note about anytime that you found yourself in flow. What activity were you performing?

1. Things that make me unhappy about work:
2. Things that make me happy about work:
3. Work activities I find boring:
4. Work activities that I find frustrating because they're difficult:
5. What is meaningful about the work or product/service (activities that make me feel good/proud; what I like about the product/service).
6. What my work does to contribute to the betterment of the organization:
7. When in flow, what I was doing:

Part Two —Using the lists above:

1. In your free time, use the list of unhappy thoughts or assessments (item 1 above), as input to the audio-visual programs entitled “Four Questions and a Map,” where you will learn something about making wise choices. When you complete the process, write down the wise course of actions you chose.
2. Each day: (item 2 above) review your list of good things. Pick one thing to be grateful about that day.
3. Using the answers to item 3 above, create an action you could take to add challenge to an element of your work to attain flow.
4. Using the answers to item 4 above, create an action you could take to reduce frustration a part of your work, to attain flow.
5. Each day: (item 5 above) review what is meaningful to you about your work. Appreciate it for a day.
6. Each day: (item 6 above) review what meaning your work has for the larger mission. Appreciate it.
7. Each day: (item above) make notes about when you were in flow and what you were doing.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You’re done when:

...you get up to go to work in the morning, and you’re looking forward to one or more activities you will be performing. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
HAVING A CLOSE-KNIT FAMILY**

Outcome

At the end of this practice you will have learned the habit of using the four questions to turn an unhappy situation between you and another family member, into a happier situation, resulting in becoming closer to that person.

First Practice

Set a goal: What would you like to accomplish? Write that here.

I would like to: _____

- A. List all family members that you would consider your (extended) family. (see next page)

- B. For each member, note:
 - 1. Things that were problems between you (things you didn't like), if any.
 - 2. Positive things that you remember about the relationship with that person.
 - 3. If you hardly know the person, make a note of that.

- C. Select one individual. Take the list of things you didn't like, or problems you had, and use that list through the process outlined in the audio-visual programs "Four Questions and a Map."
 - 1. If action is required, write that down; commit to it; take it.
 - 2. If asking is the wisest choice, write that down; commit to it; ask it.
 - 3. If acceptance or forgiveness is called for, write that down; commit to it; practice it.

Family Member: (A)	Problems: (B1)	Positives: (B2)	Act/ask/accept: (C)

You are done today’s practice when:

You are through with this practice today, when you are clear about the commitment and action(s) you will take.

Subsequent Practices (Daily)

- A. Make notes about the effectiveness of your actions to get closer to a family member. Don’t be discouraged if it isn’t working perfectly right away. Some family members take time to get accustomed to the change and accepting of your actions.

- B. Select another individual. Take the list of things you didn’t like, or problems you had, and use that list for the process outlined in the audio-visual programs “Four Questions and a Map.”
 - 1. If action is required, write that down; commit to it; take it.
 - 2. If asking is the wisest choice, write that down; commit to it; ask it.

3. If acceptance or forgiveness is called for, write that down; commit to it; practice it.
4. Write down the commitments you made in (A) above.
5. Create one other action (large or small) toward getting closer to that family member. Refer back to "Friends," if you need some ideas. Write that down, as well.

Come back tomorrow and select another person and go back through steps above.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done with this Happiness Habit when:

If your present situation matches the goal you wrote in your Progress Journal at the beginning of this action (i.e. you accomplished what you set out to do), you are done.

Please write a story about your experiences getting closer to your family members. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
HAVING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARENTS**

Outcome

When you have completed the practice you will recognize what has created the breach, and will have taken at least one step toward healing it. You will have learned the habit of curing breaches as they occur.

First Practice

A. Make notes about your relationship as you see it today.

(A) The present relationship:	Commitment:

B. Make a list of things your parents did to hurt your relationship. Don't spend a lot of time "wallowing" in unhappy feelings; just make notes.

(B) What parents did:	(D1)Choice:	(D2) Commitment:

C. List things you did to hurt the relationship, e.g.:

Acting out external actions that damaged the relationship (drugs, alcohol, sexual behavior)

Internalizing, (sulking, depression, suicidal acts, anger, disrespect, etc.)

Advanced Topics

(C) What I did:	(E1) Choice	(E2) Commitment:

- D. Take list (B) through the process outlined in "Four Questions Four Choices."
1. State what choice you will make for each item.
 2. Choose one item on the list and commit to acting, asking, accepting, or forgiving, as needed.
- E. Take list (C) through the process outlined in "Four Questions Four Choices."
1. State what choice you will make for each item, if any are needed.
 2. Choose one item on the list and commit to acting, asking, accepting, or forgiving, as needed.
 3. Write down your choices for actions you will take in the next day.

Choices for actions:

4. Write down any thoughts you have about this.

My thoughts:

You are done today's practice when:

You are through with this practice today, when you are clear about the commitment and action(s) you will take.

Subsequent Practices (Daily)

Make notes about the effectiveness of the previous action(s) you took to get closer to your parent(s). Don't be discouraged if it isn't working

perfectly right away. Some people take time to get accustomed to the change and accepting of your actions.

- A. Look at the list (B).
 - 1. Review the choices you made to see if they are valid. Make any adjustments.
 - 2. Choose one item on the list and commit to acting, asking, accepting, or forgiving, as needed.
- B. Look at list (C) through the process outlined in "Four Questions Four Choices."
 - 1. Review the choices you made to see if they are valid. Make any adjustments.
 - 2. Choose one item on the list and commit to acting, asking, accepting, or forgiving, as needed.
 - 3. Write down your choices for actions you will take in the next day.
 - 4. Write down any thoughts you have about this.
- C. Weekly or Twice Weekly: take a step — small or large — to heal the breach. Perhaps do this only internally at first. When you're ready, reach out and pick one step to take. When you've done that, read the forum

You are done today's practice when:

... you are clear about the commitment and action(s) you will take.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done with this Happiness Habit when:

You are finished when you have addressed each of the items on list (B) and (C).

Please write a story about your experiences getting closer to your family members and review it occasionally. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
CHOOSING RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL BELIEFS THAT
BRING YOU COMFORT**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have chosen to either work on some current beliefs that cause pain, or investigate the meaning of life through other spiritual methods, or add meaning to your life.

Practice

Choose which of the three kinds of practice would help you most.

- I. I have a strong set of religious or spiritual beliefs that enrich my life and sustain me, but within those beliefs there are one or more sub-beliefs that bring me pain, misery, or guilt. I want to keep my beliefs, but rid myself of the pain, misery or guilt caused by some sub-beliefs.
- II. I do not have a strong set of religious or spiritual beliefs. I am uncomfortable with the thought that there might not be any meaning in our existence, and that life simply ends with no after life. I sometimes wonder, "Why are we here?" or "What does it all mean?"
- III. I would like to add meaning to my life, but I am not particularly interested in the spiritual side.

Practice for I:

I have a strong set of religious or spiritual beliefs that enrich my life and sustain me, but within those beliefs there are one or more sub-beliefs that bring me pain, misery, or guilt. I want to keep my beliefs, but rid myself of the pain, misery or guilt caused by some sub-beliefs.

Make notes about what outcome you would like to achieve for this Happiness Habit.

Desired Outcome: _____

- A. List the beliefs that produce dissatisfaction, guilt, fear, or discomfort for you.

Beliefs: _____

- B. Take one belief and see if it could be adapted, modified, reshaped, or otherwise changed, so that it brings you the comfort and good feelings beliefs are intended to provide.

1. Read Appendix B, which is an excerpt from the book "Sagery," by Ken Johnston. (<http://www.sagery.com>) If you wish, break it into smaller sections and read about a page each day. Read it with these points in mind:
 - Understand that you have chosen your beliefs.
 - Understand the purpose of beliefs. A belief is chosen to answer the unanswerable, or know the unknowable. The purpose of a belief is to bring relief and comfort.
 - Understand that some beliefs come as a set, with some parts that bring comfort and relief, and some that potentially could cause pain, misery or guilt.
 - Understand that since you chose the belief, you can change your mind and choose another set of beliefs. Or, you can choose for yourself which of the sub-beliefs you will decide to stop believing because it brings you pain instead of comfort. Or, guilt instead of relief.
2. Go ahead with reading Appendix B now, then return here.

Case Study

Take any one of the following situations and answer the questions that follow.

- The Mormon girl who is uncomfortable with polygamy.
- The Whirling Dervish who gets queasy from whirling.
- The "traveler" who is uncomfortable with incest or child marriage.
- The Muslim who is uncomfortable with suicide as a religious act.

Advanced Topics

- The Indian wife who is pained at the thought of throwing herself on her husband's funeral pyre.
- The Christian Scientist who is uncomfortable not going to the doctor for the physical problem she has.

What would you tell a friend who came to you with this situation?

Are there cases where it is better to choose not to believe a sub-belief, rather than give up the entire package of beliefs? Or, rather than give up your faith altogether? _____

What would you be wise to tell yourself that would allow you to maintain your chosen religious beliefs that give you strength, spiritual nourishment and comfort, while choosing not to honor one or several sub-beliefs that bring you pain? _____

If this practice doesn't help to free you from the guilt that might come with failing to honor a sub-belief, consider using the four questions on the issue, and find the wisest resolution to your internal dissonance.

Look at your intended outcome. How far have you come toward reaching your goal? What more is left? Make notes about your thoughts.

You are done with this practice when:

... when you feel as if you've reached your goal.

Practice for II:

I do not have any religious or spiritual beliefs that bring me comfort. Am I out of luck? Is this thing that makes so many people happier not available to me?

Make notes about what outcome you would like to achieve for this Happiness Habit.

Desired Outcome: _____

Ah, yes. You came to this web site looking for the meaning of life. Well, sorry to disappoint you, but we have no idea what the meaning of life is.

We do, however, have a number of thoughts that you may find useful.

1. Many people find it easier to embrace religious beliefs as they get closer to the end of their lives. So, you may yet find the comfort, strength, and nourishment that come from having strong religious beliefs. (As Yogi Berra famously said, "It ain't over 'til it's over.")
2. There are several theorems that suggest that "In the absence of knowing for sure, there is less risk in believing than in not believing."
3. There may or may not be a readily understood meaning of life. Maybe there is a meaning of life, and we just can't grasp it. In the course "Four Questions and a Map," there is some counsel that would guide you not to ask questions to which the answers are unknown or perhaps unknowable.

Look at your intended outcome. How far have you come toward reaching your goal? What more is left? Make notes about your thoughts.

You are done with this practice when:

You're done when you feel as if you've reached your goal.

Please write a story about your experiences in adding meaning to your life and post it on the forum.

Practice for III:

Another question that you could ask yourself is "How can I make my life meaningful?" or "How can I find more meaning in my life?" Those questions have some answers.

Advanced Topics

Make notes about what outcome you would like to achieve for this Happiness Habit.

Desired Outcome: _____

Advanced Topics

A. Identify some causes that would add a larger meaning to your life, e.g.:

- World hunger
- World peace
- The environment
- Poverty
- Local hunger
- Needy elders
- Needy children
- Etc.

B. Choose one cause that means the most to you. Dedicate yourself to some kind of service to that cause.

1. Study about it. Research it on the Internet. Read about it.
2. Identify ways you might serve that cause.

If this does not interest you, you may find ways to be happier in the Happiness Habit: "Finding Meaning" in your life.

Look at your intended outcome. How far have you come toward reaching your goal? What more is left? Make notes about your thoughts.

Feel free to join the forum to ask for help, or to read what others have said.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You are done with this practice when:

You're done when you feel as if you've reached your goal.

Please write a story about your experiences in adding meaning to your life and post it on the forum. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
HAVING HAPPY MEMORIES**

Outcome

At the end of Practice I you will have taken painful memories and made wise choices about how to handle them. After Practice II and III you will have purposely distorted some memories so they are more positive.

Make notes about the effect your difficult memories are having on you today.

Effects of difficult memories:

Practice I:

A. Make notes of some of the memories that haunt you today. Do this quickly; do not dwell on any single item. Use code words, if doing so makes it easier to write down the item

Remember, these are memories that hurt. Don't allow them to hurt you as you write them down on the list. Remind yourself that you are going to repair these memories so they hurt you less, or disappear completely.

1. Things others have done that hurt me

Memory	Wisest Choice

2. Memories of things I've done that hurt others

Memory	Wisest Choice

3. Memories of things I'm ashamed of or feel guilty about

Memory	Wisest Choice

4. Memories of losses, or failures, or mistakes

Memory	Wisest Choice

- B. Separate the intensely painful memories, from the rest. Don't go for the biggies right away. Practice on the less painful memories, one at a time. Come back for the biggies later.
- C. Using some of the less hurtful memories, use the process from "Four Questions and Map," to do the following:
 - 1. On each memory, list the action you think would be the wisest choice for you.
 - If the wisest choice for resolving the memory is to take some action then schedule the time to take the action.
 - If the wisest resolution is to ask, then ask. Do what it takes to resolve the situation to the best of your ability.

- If the wisest resolution is to accept that what happened, happened, and there is nothing to be done to change the outcome, then make the choice to accept.
 - If the wisest resolution requires you to forgive some person, or yourself, then choose to forgive.
2. Now take some of your more hurtful memories and make the wisest, most rational choice for handling it.

Practice II:

In this practice you'll make an effort to reduce the pain of any memory by looking at the event in the most positive possible manner. Look hard for any possible positive outcome that came from the event or situation that holds bad memories.

Example:

John said, "Being falsely accused of theft and fired from my job was the most horrible thing that ever happened to me." When he re-examined the event and asked, "Did that event have any positive Outcome for me?" he realized that his success building a business of his own was prompted by the firing, so he was able to remember the event as a catalyst that changed his life for good, and led to the success he was having now.

Perhaps some of your current strengths and virtues had their roots in adversities in your past. You are today the sum total of your genetic predisposition and your life's experiences. Somehow, no matter how bad some of the adversities were, you are who you are today because of them.

For instance, maybe it was one of those things in your bad memories that set you on your present path of working to be happier.

So, the second practice is to go through each of the remaining bad memories on your list, one by one, looking for any connection that memory had to whom and what you are today. The goal of this practice is to give you a positive counter association for each bad memory. Therefore, in the future, you want any recollection of that bad memory to come attached to the positives in the present that you've associated with it.

Practice III

The final challenge is to take any remaining bad memories that still have the power to bring you pain, guilt, or regret. On this final pass, it is useful to look for purposeful distortions.

Examples:

"Yes, my father was a sadist who beat me, but as a result I am the strong, self-reliant person I am today. *And, I'm sure he thought he was helping me build character.*"

"The rapist tortured me for hours, and I still have nightmares about it. I've forgiven him because I know that's what I need to do for me to be free of the pain. I am the person I am today, in part, because of that event, and I like who I am today. *Besides, I feel sure that he is more tortured today by his crime and his vile life than I was.*"

"I was thrown out of three schools because of my drug use. The moral strength and persistence I have today came from learning how to escape addiction. I've forgiven myself because that was the only way I could ever be free of the guilt. *The pain and shame I caused my family brought them all closer together than they would have been.*"

Call it rationalizing. Call it distorting reality. If you can't change the past, and it only serves to make your life painful, it is wise to accept the past and move forward in a positive, healthful way. Any mental gymnastics that serve to reduce your painful memories are powerful tools for you in learning to be happier for the future.

(Please notice that we do not advise purposeful distortion, or unrealistic rationalization as a way to deal with present adversities. We reserve those mental gymnastics for *things from the past*. Use them only for painful memories of events that cannot and will not change just because we regret them.)

Editor's note: We want to be scrupulously honest with you. We also recommend purposeful distortion when you are thinking about, or talking about, or interacting with your spouse. We suggest you become blind to his or her faults, and appreciate the heck out of his or her appreciables.

Editor's second note: One more time when purposeful distortion is useful is when you see or interact with your child. Your child "is" the most appealing, lovable, remarkable, child that anyone has ever had.

You are done with today's practice when:

You are through with this practice today, when you have worked with as many painful memories as you are able.

Come back tomorrow to "Subsequent Practice" and select one or more memories to work on.

Before you leave, feel free to visit the forum for ideas from others.

Update your Progress Journal

Subsequent Practices

Make notes about how far you've come in resolving painful memories.

- A. Go back to the list of hurtful memories to see if any are still unresolved. If you need to, revisit the process from "Four Questions and a Map."
- B. Discover what strengths and virtues had their roots in these remaining adversities.
- C. When possible, look for purposeful distortions.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done with this Happiness Habit when:

If you look at your original list of painful memories and recognize that they no longer have a hold on your feelings.

Please write a story about your experiences about resolving painful memories. ∞

(c)
**PRACTICE:
BEING OPTIMISTIC**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have the habit of being able to take any thoughts about the future, and use the formula for optimism to convert potential negative thoughts into positive thoughts.

Practice I:

Write down on a scale of 1-5 how optimistic you are (1 is hardly ever, 3 is sometimes, and 5 is almost always). _____

- A. Think about something that will happen in the future (anything; it doesn't matter). Write down one example.

- B. Pay attention to the thoughts that come through your mind. Notice any thoughts that are negative. If any of them are negative, use the optimistic formula:

Bad things won't happen to me; they happen to others.

If anything does go wrong, I'll handle it, and get on with my life.

I've got a rich, full life; I could lose any single piece of it and still thrive.

That's the Practice. Every day write at least one example of the process you used in the last 24 hours.

As you go through the "Sagery: Book One," pay special attention to the elements of Time, Scope and the Parts, because these are where thoughts are made pessimistic.

Time = long time to forever

Scope = me not them

Parts = all of me, not just a single part

Practice II:

A. Start with this list of things to think about:

- Global warming
- Taxes in the future
- Social Security
- Mad Cow disease
- What party will win the next election?
- Middle east peace
- The future of Iraq
- US relations with European Countries
- The future of the middle class

Take one item.

1. Get your immediate thoughts about it.
2. Create an optimistic assessment.
3. Choose to take the optimistic view.

Chosen Worry (A Above)	An Optimistic Assessment

B. Create your own list of things you worry about for the future.

My Worry	An Optimistic Assessment

1. Take one per day, create an optimistic outcome and choose to hold that view.

2. Write in your log: one example of countering a pessimistic thought about the future, with an optimistic view. Confirm that you prefer now to think about that issue more positively.

Please update your Progress Journal.

Continue this practice for at least 60 days ... and you'll have the habit available for the rest of your life.

You're done with this Happiness Habit when:

You are comfortable that you can convert any worry into a more optimistic view. ∞

**PRACTICE:
LOVING SOMEONE**

Outcome

When you have completed the practice, you will have learned how to take a list of characteristics that you don't like in a specific person, and shortened the list. You will have learned the habit of taking good feelings and maximizing them, while minimizing bad feelings.

Note: If you are seriously interested in enhancing an intimate relationship, please also see "Having an Intimate Relationship."

Practice

A. To Start:

People I've loved: (1)	Things I do like: (3)	Things I don't like: (3)	Would like to love: (2)	Things I do like: (3)	Things I don't like: (3)

1. Make a list of people you already love or have loved. Make the list as long as you want to.
2. Make a list of people you might like to add to the list. No reciprocity or notice required.
3. For each person, make a sub list of what you don't like about him or her, and what you do like.
4. Using one person for whom your "don't like" list is substantial, and use the process you learned in "Four Questions and a Map."

Person chosen: _____

5. When you finish, combine all the things you discovered that you like about that person, into one long list. Pick the five things you like most.

B. Daily:

Read through the list of the things you like, and mark the good feelings. If you're unclear about marking good feelings, re-read the text associated with this topic.

Appreciate the person and what you really like, and remind yourself during the day of who and what you are celebrating today.

C. Weekly:

Pick one of the people (only people who really know you), and write an email saying that you were thinking about the person and how you always have loved, enjoyed, or been delighted by this special attribute you have been thinking about.

D. Monthly:

For each one you love who is on the "don't like" list, go through the "Four Questions and a Map" process again.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done when...

... you are able to maximize good feelings and minimize bad feelings, 80% of the time. ∞

**PRACTICE:
HAVING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have practiced maximizing good feelings and resolving bad feelings.

Practice

Note: If you do not have an existing intimate relationship, think of someone in your life whom you're close to, a good friend perhaps, where things are not going as well as you would like.

- A. Review the charts from the text you just read. Select the one that is the closest to your existing relationship, based on the coping mechanisms for good and bad feelings. _____
- B. From that chart, write down what coping mechanisms are being employed. _____
- C. Using the checklist that follows, make notes about how you are handling the feelings. Write down the mechanisms you use. (see the next page)
- D. Write down three recent experiences where you took for granted or discounted good feelings.
 1. Review the good situation, and re-experience in a way that helps you feel good.
 2. Keep building this list. Come back to each daily to create a reservoir. Look for any small thing that you can feel good about, and treasure it. Mark it. Appreciate it. Tell you partner you appreciate it.
 3. Since your partner will probably have been experiencing the same negativity that you feel, start adding five positive interactions each day, for every one negative one
- E. Write down three recent experiences where you maximized bad feelings.
 1. Make notes about what you can do about the experience. Will you ask your partner for something, or accept it, or forgive it?
 2. Make notes about a plan to discuss it with your partner.

**The Coping mechanism I'm Using
(From the Relationship Charts in the Text):**

How am I handling my feelings (i.e. what do I do), when I experience the following:

Good Feelings

Maximize them _____

Take them for granted _____

Discount them _____

Bad Feelings

Maximize them _____

Take them for granted _____

Resolve them _____

Three recent experiences where I took for granted or discounted good feelings:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Three recent experiences where I maximized or took for granted bad feelings:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

If you're trying to create the ideal "Happier and Happier Relationship," continue the same process above, moving toward maximizing good feelings and resolve bad ones.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done with this Happiness Habit when:

You feel confident that you can maximize good feelings, and resolve bad feelings over half of the time. ∞

**PRACTICE FOR:
BEING MARRIED**

Outcome

At the end of the practice you will have identified those communications with your partner that end on a positive note, and sustained a positive to negative ratio of five to one over a period of one week.

Practice

- A. **Daily:** Make a note of at least one communication with your partner that was positive.

- B. Write down any example of any conflict that you avoided.

- C. Write down any example of a negative communication toward you, which you deflected.

- D. Write down any example where you appreciated your partner.

Any time you find the relationship becoming less positive, return here to refresh your skills.

Please update your Progress Journal.

You're done with this Happiness Habit when:

You are finished with this practice when you have maintained a positive to negative ratio in your communications of five to one, over a period of one week. ∞

