



10 Tips to Be Happy

Introduction

Years ago I had an email signature quoting Bob Marley that said, “Don’t worry, Be happy.” I should have taken it to heart all those years ago but did not know how to put that slogan into practice.

I am writing this book to share with you tips that I have used to become a happier person. Sometimes we are not happy because of “less than optimal” living conditions. If that is the case, then it would greatly benefit you to deal with the situation. How can you be happy if you live in a home of people who argue or are grumpy for example? If you came from a dysfunctional home like I did (and most of us do to some degree), then therapy can be useful to put the past behind you to let it go. Happiness is hard to achieve if you are struggling with trauma from the past. For years I struggled with “being happy.” I came from a family of “champion negative thinkers” as well as dysfunction. If you have negative thoughts, how can that possibly put you in a good mood?

Over the years I tried many things to “be happy.” It took me a long time to realize that to be happy is a CHOICE. Yes, you read that correctly. We are in the driver’s seat of our thoughts and emotions. Despite popular beliefs, no one can “make” you mad (or fill in the blank with another emotion). If someone did or said something that is anger inducing, fine, you have a right to feel angry. But do you want to carry that anger around with you all day or all week or for 10 years? I realized I did not. Feel the anger if appropriate, then let it go. Don’t let it ruin the rest of your day or week or your life. Choose happiness.

You get to decide how you respond to situations and choose your emotions. Understanding this concept puts you back in control of how you live your life. You are no longer reacting to what people say or do, you are *choosing* how to respond based on how you want to feel. Just as you have the power to react with anger, you have the power to respond with calmness. Yes, that is easier said than done at times, it just takes practice. You know the saying, “One day at a time.” Becoming happier is a one day, one moment at a time practice.

Sometimes we use unhappiness as a reason to motivate us. That’s how common the expression, “No pain, no gain” gained popularity. We look in the mirror and hate how we look so we use that disgustingly fat body (that’s how we see ourselves) staring back at us to get into the gym or go on a diet – pronto! I’ve used that technique on myself and rarely does it work. Why? Because the more you focus on what you don’t want, the more you get exactly that. Thinking negatively about yourself puts you in a bad mood. Ok, so maybe you gained a few pounds. Don’t dwell on it, instead take actions to lose the weight. When you dwell on it you are perpetuating negative thoughts. Let them go. Don’t use negative thoughts to motivate you. Positive works better, I promise!

That leads me to my first Tip To Be Happy so read on!

10 Tips to Be Happy

1. Pay Attention To Your Thoughts – Think Positively

Happiness is a state of mind. The good news is we get to choose our state of mind. How do we choose it? First we recognize the state of mind we currently have. If our current state of mind is not one of happiness, then we choose to create it. How do we create it? With our thoughts. Think about that one for a second. If you think about something sad, what happens? You become sad. If you think about something happy, what happens? You become happy.

This may seem obvious, but if you're not used to thinking positive thoughts, then this isn't obvious at all. Until you really examine your thoughts, you may not even be aware of how negative your thoughts are. Our emotions are a result of our thoughts so if you can start with your thoughts, you can change your state of mind pretty quickly.

If what we think controls our state of being or our mood, then it would be logical to pay attention to what we are thinking, right?

We think about 1300 words/minute. That's a lot of words! Most of us are not taught to pay attention to our thoughts. Therefore our mind "ping pongs" all day bouncing from one thought to the next. You may not realize it, but all of the sudden you could find yourself in a "down" mood.

Did you read something upsetting? Did you get an angry text from someone? Did you see an image on the internet that upset you?

Start noticing what you were thinking about before your mood shifted because we can think ourselves into unhappiness. You might be amazed at what you discover about your thoughts. **Once you start noticing, now you can take action to re-direct them.** That might mean don't read or look at upsetting things. Or if you do, know what it takes to get you back to a happy state of mind. Replace negative thoughts with happy thoughts, whatever they may be for you.



Choose not to look at a situation negatively by employing the old adages, "Look on the bright side" and "The glass is half full, not half empty." These statements have a lot of value, they're not just something your grandma used to tell you.

There is always a silver lining to every negative situation. You may have to look for it, but you will find it if you look. **How we look at life determines how we experience it.** Would you rather look at that glass half full or half empty? Would you rather stay stuck on the thing that upset you or move on to being happy?

I'll give you an example. I work from home. During the summer it can be quite challenging to get any work done when my son is home and bored and wants me to take him somewhere or do something with him. It's not that I don't want to be with him, it's just not always convenient for me because I'm working. One day I was frustrated over this and decided I didn't like the way that felt. How could I look at this differently? When kids get to be teenagers it is rare they even want to be with you so I chose to be thankful for his company. And my frustration melted away! **Change your thoughts, you change your mood.**



2. Smile!

Smiling actually changes our body chemistry. When we smile it releases “feel good” chemicals in our brain.

During the course of my sales career I was taught to start smiling before picking up the phone to call a prospect or client. People can tell when you are smiling even when they can't see your face. And news flash, your smile doesn't have to be authentic to have the desired result. The brain doesn't know the difference between real and imagined.

So next time your mood is not the best, start smiling and see if that helps shift it. Smile at your co-workers, smile at your family, smile at your pet, smile at yourself in the mirror. Just pick someone to smile at and “turn that frown upside down!” I promise it will turn your day around.

3. Flip the Switch

Have you ever heard that expression, “Flip the Switch?” Flipping the switch is a visual you can use in your head to change your mood. Not everyone is capable of this one, especially if you are not good at controlling your emotions, but if you think it might work for you, give it a try. What it means is if you are not in a great mood, visualize flipping a light switch in your head and when you turn the switch to “on” now you are happy. I tried it for years and it did not work for me because I did not have control over my thoughts and emotions. If you are aware of your thoughts and emotions it is easier to re-direct them, then this technique could work for you.

Flipping the switch is similar to the old adage, “Fake It Til You Make It” in that you are re-directing and controlling your thoughts and emotions. Many of us apply this method on a daily basis. Say for example you go to work and your day didn't start out the greatest. But now it's “show time.” You are at work and it doesn't do you much good to go to work in a bad mood so you pretend to be happy. Once you start pretending and smiling, guess what usually happens? Your mood improves.

So go ahead, “Flip the Switch” or “Fake It Til You Make It” – whichever tactic works better for you.

The same technique applies to negative thinking. If you are caught up in thoughts of “I can't do it” or “It's too hard” or “It takes too much time” etc you are creating the self-fulfilling prophecy of allowing that to come true. Next time you catch yourself doing that, stop in your tracks and “Flip the Switch” to halt that behavior.

4. Avoid Negative People and Surround Yourself with Positive People

We've all been around a "Debbie Downer." She's the one who shares how bad her day has been or every gory detail of her life that you didn't ask about. What happens when you start listening to Debbie? You start getting pulled down too.

My best advice to you is to avoid negative people. If you can't completely avoid them, then limit your conversations with them or change the subject to something more uplifting. If you do that you're not just helping yourself maintain a positive mood, you're doing her a favor too.

The flip side of avoiding negative people is of course to surround yourself with positive people if possible. If you don't know that many positive people, maybe it's time to make new friends. Good moods are just as contagious as bad ones. Pick yours!

In addition to eliminating negative people, also avoid watching or reading negative things on TV or the internet. Both can provide a hefty dose of negativity if you're not careful.



5. Have an Attitude of Gratitude

What happens when you are thankful? You start to feel better. I can't stress this one enough. It's easy to let people or situations get on your nerves. Your boss just dumped a pile of work on your desk, your husband is annoying you, whatever the case may be.

Re-frame those thoughts to a more positive outlook. Instead of being upset your boss overloaded you, be grateful you have a job. You can even take it one step further by telling yourself how much confidence your boss has in you that you can do the job. Now instead of being overwhelmed with the additional work load, you actually feel thankful that you have a job and your bad mood dissolves.

BONUS TIP:

Start a Gratitude Journal. Treat yourself to a pretty notebook or just do it online. Every day write down 5-10 things you are grateful for. Once you get the hang of it you can start saying them in your head. Over time you are re-training your brain to be grateful and happy and always looking on the bright side.

When we were taught to say our prayers at night as children we typically included things we were grateful for. There was a reason for that. It puts you in a state of mindfulness to remember what you are thankful for.



6. Tomorrow is Another Day

Adopt Scarlett's attitude! She got that one right.

Leave any anger, hurt, resentments, etc from yesterday in the past. It's like advice your parents may have told you when you got married, "Don't go to bed mad at each other." Don't go to bed mad, frustrated, resentful etc at anyone so you can wake up in a better mood. As you start each day anew with an improved attitude you'll be amazed how much better you feel.

Here's another reason to let go of those things. Emotions stay in our body. The longer we hold onto negative emotions, the more damage they can do to us later. In fact, unresolved issues and pent up emotions are what cause disease. I am not saying don't make happiness a priority today, but if you had a bad day because you aren't used to this "happiness thing" yet, let it go. After all, "Tomorrow IS another day!" So let go of what was troubling you yesterday and start today fresh to make happiness a priority again. Not only will you be in a better mood, you are on the road to better health.



7. Affirmations

Affirmations are a positive statement of something we desire to happen. We use them when we don't currently believe in something, yet want it to come true. For example, we don't affirm the sun will come up tomorrow because we know it will.

If you are struggling with your happiness, use affirmations to turn your mood around. If all you can think about is how much in debt you are or how fat you are or re-playing that argument you had with your spouse last night, then use affirmations to turn those thoughts around into positive statements.

Instead of continually beating yourself up and telling yourself how fat you are (which is not a state of happiness!), tell yourself you are lean. You may not be lean right now, but you gotta start somewhere, right?

By using affirmations you are re-training your brain to think positively and leading you on the road to happiness. It does take time and practice, but it does work. Start out writing or reading them or say them out loud. Whatever works for you. Most importantly, use them to flip those negative thoughts into positive ones.

8. De-Stress and Make Time For Yourself

If you are always stressed out, how can you be happy? Discover what helps you to relieve the pressure. Some people find relief in exercise, others in prayer, others in hobbies. We all need outlets to relieve stress. The more we do something we enjoy the better we feel and the stress melts away. This frees up energy to allow us to be happy.

What you don't want is to turn to addictions such as shopping, eating, alcohol etc. Many people turn to addictions because they are stressed and don't have a positive outlet. Oftentimes we don't even realize how stressed we are so we do these things as if on "auto-pilot."

Carve out some "down time" for yourself. I don't mean watching TV or just hanging out with others. I mean time by yourself to re-connect to nature, your Higher Power, God, whatever your belief system is. That could mean take time every day to be out in nature by taking a walk, praying, meditating etc. As you take this time for yourself practice getting quiet. Still your mind. When you go within you can identify what is bothering you. Once you know that, you can apply these tips to lead you to happiness.

"If you do not Go Within, you Go Without."



9. Live in the Present

Most of our thoughts are anxiety ridden re-living the past or worrying about the future. We often play the "head game" of "coulda/woulda/shoulda" about the past or "what could be" for the future. Both of those take us out of the present and then we miss what is going on right here, right now, in front of us.

If you're not used to paying attention to what you are thinking, you probably don't even realize you're consumed with mundane thoughts of "Did I turn off the stove this morning?" or "Will my boss like my presentation?" Both of these thoughts take you out of the present. The present is where the magic happens. When we are present we are in the now, not thinking about yesterday or tomorrow.

If you've heard the expression of "being in the flow" what that means is being present and letting things unfold naturally. When we let go of trying to control the moment wonderful things can happen. When we free up our mind from the chains of the past or shackles of the future we make space to choose our state of mind. Now we can choose to be happy and let life happen.

If you've ever wondered why happy people seem to "get all the breaks" in life, now perhaps you can see how their attitude and living in the present affects that. ***By letting go of resistance, which includes unhappy thoughts, happy people are in the flow and experience "miracles."***

10. Forgiveness

This is a big one that may not happen overnight so be patient. Whatever happened in your past, whatever wrong was done to you, now is the time to get over it. Forgive! Forgive the person(s), forgive the situation, forgive yourself. Holding grudges or regrets is a big use of emotional energy that most people are not even aware of, especially if we've been harboring negative thoughts for someone for many years. Once you can forgive the person or situation you free up some energy to be happy. Remember, forgiveness is not about the other person because they've moved on. Forgiveness is for you.

Choose your outlet to help you get over the person or situation and open your heart to forgiveness whether it be church, counseling, alternative therapy, clergy, spiritual counselor etc. Once you can forgive, you can forget and move on to a happier state of mind.



BONUS:

Along with monitoring your thoughts, examine your beliefs. They are so important because your thoughts are a result of your beliefs. I could write an entire book just on beliefs and maybe I will after I finish this one.

There are two types of beliefs: empowering ones which move us forward, and limiting ones which hold us back or limit us. We all acquired many common limiting beliefs such as, “Life is hard,” or the more current one, “Life stinks and then you die,” or “You never really get what you want in life” or “No one cares.” Or maybe your head is filled with more personal ones you grew up with such as, “You’re lazy or stupid” (or fill in the blank) or “You’ll never amount to anything” or “You’re not as smart (or fill in the blank) as your sister (or brother)”. These can be very damaging beliefs since most of us were told them by our parents. At a young age we trust our parents so whatever they say must be true. Then we adopt them and start to believe them. Even worse yet, we start to look for proof that these must be true. Now we have become our belief or the old belief our parents gave us.

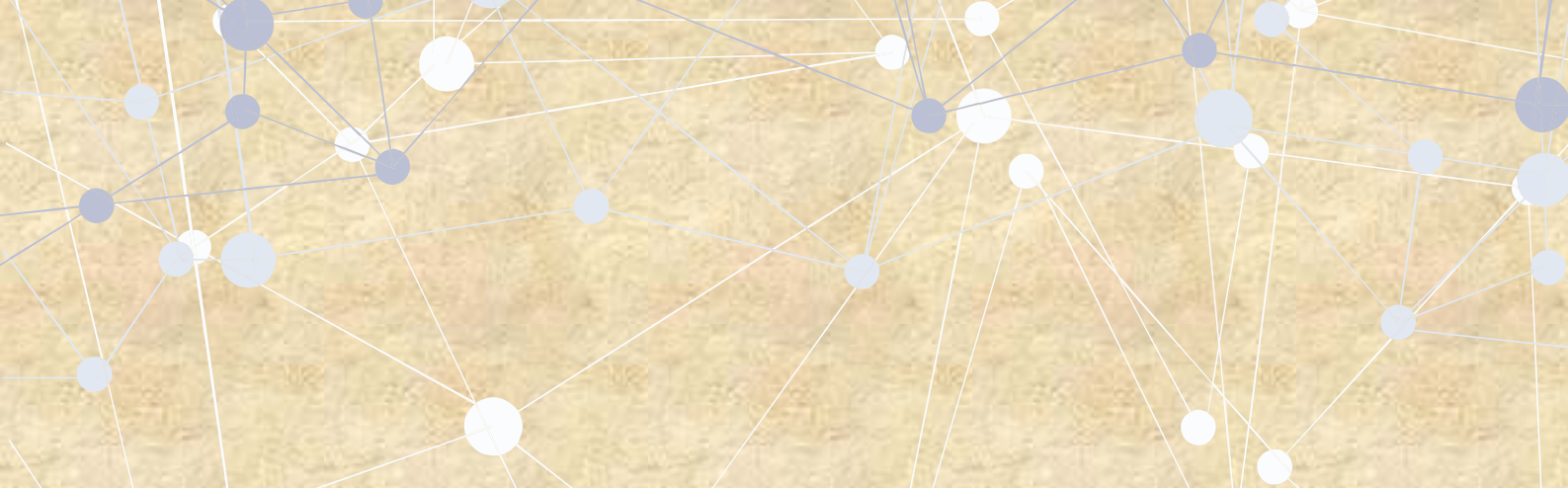
Constantly buying into these old, damaging beliefs, can definitely put a damper on your mood. Take some quiet time to examine those old beliefs and then choose to let them go. Letting them go is not only freeing, it puts you on the path to happiness. Wouldn’t you be a lot happier if you stopped thinking and believing you’re stupid or will never be successful?

Change your beliefs and your feelings and behaviors begin to change. Take the time to start examining them so you can create the life you desire and allow yourself to be happy.

I hope you find this book helpful and use the tips for emotional freedom to get you on the path to happiness. I leave you with this parting quote that sums up beliefs.

“You can have anything you want if you will give up the belief that you can’t have it.”
- - Dr. Robert Anthony

Download my [Limiting Belief Challenge](#) to help you identify what’s holding you back.



About The Author

As a way to create the life she desired and break out of the negative thinking pattern Catherine adopted from her family, she learned about manifesting. To create anything you desire, including happiness, it begins with your thoughts.

Using manifestation techniques that she teaches in workshops, she created a thriving business that has been running since 2004. While it has been fun and fulfilling, Catherine wanted to help people on a deeper level. Going back to her desires from childhood to help people, she became a Certified Life Coach to assist people in their growth to get what they desire. As an intuitive, it puts her in the unique position to use her intuitive gifts to identify the pitfalls and opportunities for growth others cannot see.

Catherine is also a psychic, speaker and author and has been a professional in the business world for over 20 years.

If you are interested in learning about coaching, her workshops or other services, please visit her website www.psychicdallastx.com or contact her: me@catherinecates.com