

# Happiness

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you can increase your happiness through your own actions.*

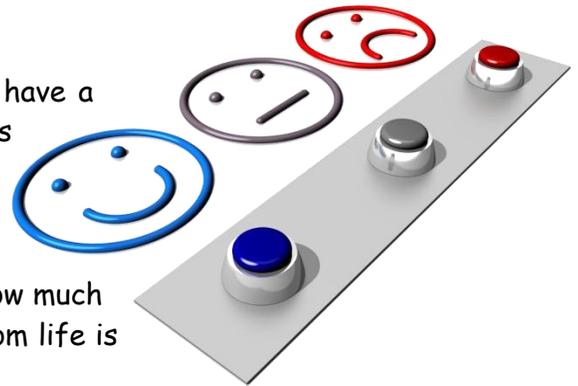
When asked what is the most important thing in life, half immediately answered **happiness**. As people live longer and have more leisure time, the pursuit of happiness continues to grow in importance. Yet more and more, happiness appears to be eluding us.

A University of Toronto study which found the use of anti-depressants had risen 353% in the last two decades, suggests more and more people are seeking happiness in a pill. This may not be the answer as the sense of well-being and capacity to enjoy life appears to be a talent you largely develop for yourself. Regardless of your temperament, upbringing and current situation, you can increase your happiness through your own actions,

## Controlling our Own Happiness

A Rutgers University psychologist has found that once we have a certain minimum amount of money, life satisfaction depends mainly on how much time we spend doing the things we find meaningful and that make us happy.

The happiness we derive from pleasant events depends on how much we feel influenced by these events. The pleasure we get from life is not up to fate, but it is largely ours to control!



In Pursuing Happiness: The Architecture of Sustainable Change, the authors argue that only 10% of our happiness is determined by outside circumstances. This means that even if that are negative forces in your life, beyond your control or influence, they only affect your happiness by a small amount.

**90%** of our happiness can be attributed to our own actions and our happiness set point - the acceptable rate of return on our expectations. Everyone has a different set point usually determined by genetics.

While research has not found a simple recipe for a happy life, it has charted some of the actions and attitudes that seem to bring people closer to that of most desired feelings.

## Steps to Happiness

### Invest in closeness

Make time for your loved ones. Of all the circumstances happy people share, loving relationships seem the most characteristic and the most important.

### Work hard at what you like

Keep busy at work you like. If your job is not satisfying, search for ways to find work that meets your real need to do something meaningful to you.

### Be helpful

Helping others makes you feel good about yourself. There is evidence that altruism relieves both physical and mental stress.

### Make the pursuit of happiness a priority

Discover what makes you happy and make time for it. The determination to pursue happiness is instrumental in attaining happiness.

### Energize yourself

Run, play a sport, dance, or take long walks. As long as you move your body, the choice is yours.

### Organize, but stay loose

Plan ahead, but allow flexibility. Be ready to seize an unexpected opportunity to try something fun.

We all have our highs and lows, but strive for a sense of balance. A counsellor can help you achieve a stable balance and discover what makes you happy and how to live a happier life.

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## CHOCOLATE- THE HAPPINESS FOOD

Many things can make you happy, like eating foods you enjoy. It is okay to indulge once in a while. Chocolate is a great food to snack on when you are not feeling happy. Recent studies have shown that chocolate contains certain chemicals that stimulate the pleasure centers in our brains. So eating chocolate can really make you happy! **Here are few chocolate myths- can you tell which ones are true or false?**

### Chocolate causes acne. **FALSE**

Most studies failed to show a link between diet and acne.

### Chocolate is addictive. **FALSE**

Though people certainly crave chocolate, is not physically addictive like nicotine or caffeine.



### Chocolate is good for your health. **TRUE**

Chocolate contains antioxidant phenols which have been shown to fight cancer and heart disease. But the key is **MODERATION**, as chocolate is high in saturated fats and sugar.

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# Your Logo

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