

HOW CAN I BE A HAPPIER PERSON?

Happiness is an internal sense of well-being and satisfaction that is stable in spite of life's ups and downs. It is the ability to see things in a positive light. Happy people have more positive than negative emotions. They tend to have good relationships, have fewer illnesses, live longer and can get through difficult times more successfully.

Unhappy people cannot hold on to good feelings very long. They often think that if they had more money, prettier clothes, a nice vacation, a bigger house, etc. they will achieve the happiness they long for. But in the absence of an internal sense of well-being, good feelings will not last.

Scientific studies show that genetics, environment and intentional activities contribute to happiness. Chronic negative life circumstances such as poverty, violence, illness, and abuse, political oppression can certainly limit ability to experience happiness. Genetics create a predisposition that may make it easier or more challenging to be happy. But the rest lies within a person's capability to make the choices and decisions that would enhance life experiences and derive greater life satisfaction.

So how does one achieve this thing we call happiness?

Start getting to really know yourself. Get honest with your feelings, thoughts, fears, desires, likes and dislikes. Only your true self can guide you in making the wise choices and decisions that will enhance your life.

Identify your strengths and weaknesses. Do not let fears stand in the way of your pursuit of happiness. You cannot explore and sample what life has to offer if you are riddled with anxieties. Build your inner strength by facing and conquering challenges.

Take care of your body and mind. Exercise, eat well, use optimal health behaviors, practice good sleep habits, and meditate. Develop and/or sustain meaningful relationships. It is not the quantity or number of relationships you have that contributes to happiness. It is the quality of the relationships.

Greater happiness is an achievable goal. You CAN be happier if you take responsibility, make a commitment and start the journey to a more stable, long-lasting sense of well-being.