

# HAPPINESS

## Joy of Life Satisfaction

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Feel happy, be happy, and enjoy the joys of life satisfaction. This is what has been the message contained in the 26 Boxes of alphabetical guides shown in the Picture. These are the 26 ways if incorporated in your daily life can get a sparkling smile on your face. Researchers have found that smiling reduces stress and keeps the heart healthy.

Dr. Simon Young, Professor at McGill University, Montreal in Canada says that a chemical is produced in the brain called “Serotonin” that has a far reaching effects on human behaviour and emotions. The neurochemical Serotonin is the Happiness Molecule that essentially leads to changes in Mood. Thought process releases Serotonin which creates a sense of well-being and calmness. Indirect evidence suggests that Bright-Light acts on both the Serotonin and Dopamine Systems. Those who suffer from Depression can be treated with exposure to Bright-Light. Meditation can make people feel more positive, happy, and calm. Foods when given in purified form can help in the treatment of Clinical Depression. Foods rich in Folic Acid like fish oils, leafy vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans, eggs, milk, and meat release neurochemicals that affect Memory. Exercise improves Mood and boosts Serotonin levels. Serotonin is greater during Walking and Running which improves Mood to feel Happy. Another important factor that is associated with better mood is having a larger “Social Circle” which also influences Social Interactions and Social Behaviour.

There are several other key variables which affect Happiness. These are: Income, Freedom, Trust, Healthy Life Expectancy, Social Support, and Generosity. On the basis of these variables, the UN produced Happiness Report-2019. Data of this Report indicate that FINLAND is the Happiest country in the world. Among 156 Nations surveyed, the rank of 32 countries are presented in the following table.

| HAPPY TEN   | Rank | UNHAPPY TEN    | Rank | SUPER POWERS | Rank | SIGNIFICANT OTHERS | Rank |
|-------------|------|----------------|------|--------------|------|--------------------|------|
| Finland     | 1    | Haiti          | 147  | UK           | 15   | Pakistan           | 67   |
| Denmark     | 2    | Botswana       | 148  | Germany      | 17   | China              | 93   |
| Norway      | 3    | Syria          | 149  | US           | 19   | Bhutan             | 95   |
| Iceland     | 4    | Malawi         | 150  | Japan        | 58   | Nepal              | 100  |
| Netherlands | 5    | Yemen          | 151  | Russia       | 68   | Bangladesh         | 125  |
| Switzerland | 6    | Rwanda         | 152  |              |      | Sri Lanka          | 130  |
| Sweden      | 7    | Tanzania       | 153  |              |      | India              | 140  |
| New Zealand | 8    | Afghanistan    | 154  |              |      |                    |      |
| Canada      | 9    | Central Africa | 155  |              |      |                    |      |
| Austria     | 10   | South Sudan    | 156  |              |      |                    |      |

# An alphabetical guide to feeling happy

**Y**ou'll never know, 2019 may just be the year we actually manage to stick to our resolution. Life coach Denise Chilton offers techniques to ensure you keep your spirits up and start to enjoy life. Whether you are 16 or 60, there are 26 ways to feel healthy, happy and back in control!

**A CTIVITY**  
It doesn't have to involve outward-bound courses and weekly marathons. Just taking 15 minutes to walk around the block after work or getting off the bus a stop earlier can get the endorphins — the feel-good hormone — into action.

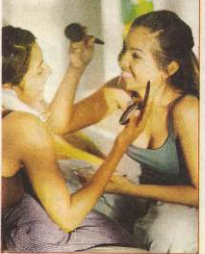
**B REATHE**  
We all do it, every second of every day. But have you ever just stopped for a few minutes to notice and focus on your breath? Close your eyes and take your attention to the tip of your nose and just notice. After a few minutes, you will realise your breathing is getting deeper and you will start to feel relaxed.

**C OMFORT ZONE**  
Most of us like to be safe and steady but there are benefits in doing something that gets us out of our comfort zone. It could just be going to the cinema on your own or learning something new. Initially you may be apprehensive. But when you've done it, your brain will reap the rewards.

**D O**  
Doing something nice for someone can instantly make us feel good. Helping others may not be in your nature, but thoughtful actions can boost not only your own mood but the person you have helped.

**E NERGY LEVELS**  
Are you an early bird or a night owl? We tend to have a time in the day when our energy levels are at their highest. Whichever you are, always do those tasks you don't really want to when you're at your peak.

**FRIENDS**  
Make time to spend with your radiator friends, who make you feel warm and glowing. If busy schedules keep you apart and it's not always possible to get that cup of coffee together, call them — it'll make you feel instantly better.



**G RATITUDE**  
Focusing on what we have, and not what we don't have, is the secret to happiness. Every day, just before you go to sleep, note three things you are grateful for. It could be your partner, your children, a warm house or a nice mist to come home to.

**H EALTHY TREATS**  
We all know that getting our five a day of vegetables and fruit and staying hydrated is essential to keeping our bodies working. But to maintain a good mood, we need to keep our blood sugars balanced. Always have some healthy treats such as nuts and protein snacks. Mix these with the right fatty oils, omega 3 and 6, and you have food that feeds your brain and balances your mood.



**I NTERESTS**  
Getting in touch with the things you love to do just for a few hours can make you feel good and give the brain something other than work and stress to focus on. Finding a new recipe to try, doing craft activity or completing a sudoku — it doesn't matter what it is as long as it is something that you really enjoy.

**J OURNAL**  
Writing down your feelings can help you manage emotions, whether they are good, bad or ugly. If you are starting to feel frustrated with someone and want to avoid an outburst, pausing to write down how you feel helps get the emotion out in a controlled way.

**K INDNES**  
Be kind to yourself. We are often our own worst enemy, beating ourselves up because of something that didn't work out the way we wanted it to. So talk kindly to yourself and check on yourself frequently to make sure you are treating yourself kindly.

**L AUGHTER**  
When was the last time you had a really good laugh? A real belly laugh that made your sides hurt. Laughter releases the whole body, eases anxiety and fear and relieves stress. Not taking yourself too seriously is an instant mood lifter. So, get giggling.

**MUSIC**  
Listening to music can lift our mood. Instantly — as long as it's the right tune. If things in your life are a bit bumpy, putting on a sad song may only make you feel worse. Scientists have demonstrated that listening to something a bit more upbeat can instantly improve your mood.



**N O**  
Learning to say no can be very liberating, leaving a big impact on your mood and making you feel empowered. So, why is it so hard to say? Have a few phrases to hand that help you politely decline invitations or requests you do not want to fulfil. 'Thanks for the invite but I won't be able to join you' or 'I'd love to help but I just haven't got much on at the moment' can help!

**O RGANISATION**  
Getting organised and decluttering areas of your life can be very satisfying. Start small with what seems a favourite area for the new year — your wardrobe. Make it fun and get a friend to help or get the whole family involved. Recycling to a charity means your efforts are making a difference to help others.

**P ERFECTION**  
Give yourself permission not to be perfect. So many of us always strive for perfection, and it's exhausting. If you aim to do your best rather than be the best, then you aren't setting yourself up to fail.

**Q UESTIONS**  
When you need to make a big life decision, ask yourself positive questions. For example, you are offered a new job and the first questions that come to mind is probably 'What if I don't like it?' and 'What if I can't do it?' Instead, try something more upbeat, like 'What would I do if I knew I couldn't fail?' or 'What would I tell my best friend to do in the same situation?' Positive questions are more likely to lead to the right decision.

**R EADING**  
There is nothing quite like a good book. Don't just save them for holidays because a book can be a real pick-me-up and give you something to look forward to. Go one step further and become a critic by joining a book club or even starting your own.



**S ILENCING YOUR GREMLIN**  
We all have a gremlin and they come in many forms. It's the nagging voice in your head that tells you it won't do you any harm to finish the box of chocolates even when you're on a diet. Your gremlin likes to think it's in charge of your moods and will do all it can to sabotage any good feelings. Learn to recognise when it is trying to trick you and find an activity to distract it.

**T IME**  
If only we had more time... is a phrase we all find ourselves saying, though I'm sure if we did, we would only fill it with more things to do. There are 168 hours in each week and we all make choices how to use those hours. It is essential that you allocate time well. Try to be aware of your time-wasting ways so you know when to tell yourself to snap out of it.

**U NUSUAL**  
Variety is the spice of life, so whether it is adding something totally outrageous to your wardrobe, collecting pictures of funny street signs or playing a random game of 15 in the office, try doing something that creates fun, no matter how odd.

**V ICTIM**  
It is helpful to remember you are human and sometimes, you just won't want to shake off the grump when permission to be a victim for 10 minutes, then try to get positive again.

**W ORDS OF INSPIRATION**  
Some people seem to know just what to say to bring a smile to our face. Check social media; there will be always someone sharing some inspirational thought or picture. Keep a collection that can bring a smile instantly.



**X FACTOR**  
We all have our very own X factor. It may be a talent like singing or something seemingly simple, such as making an amazing roast dinner. If you find yourself looking at others' talents and wishing you were like them, think about your X factor and remember what you can do rather than what you can't.



**Z IZZZZ**  
We can become obsessed with how much sleep we get. Experts say when we lie awake at night tossing and turning we may nod off for short periods without realising. Going to bed at the same time each night, as far as possible, helps put your body into a healthy routine. Don't fret if you've become out of sync over the festive period. A few early nights in the new year will help you wake feeling refreshed, rested and ready to face the day ahead.

— Daily Mirror

Bolstered by Population Growth, overall World Happiness has fallen over the past few years. For example, India was ranked 111 among 156 countries in Happiness Report-2013. It came down to 133 in 2018, and further down to 140 in 2019. Similarly, Germany is down from 15 to 17, US down from 18 to 19, Japan down from 54 to 58, and Russia down from 59 to 68. This down trend in Happiness is mainly attributed to Mental Illness. Around 10 per cent of world population at any point of time is affected by Mental Illness mainly due to Depression and Anxiety Disorders. Therefore, mental well-being is a gateway to Happiness.

Economists found that happiness rises with the increase in material wealth but only upto a threshold level beyond which life satisfaction begins to dip. The counter view is that Money can not buy happiness because it is a state of mind and not material possession. Another view is that it is the GDP of the country that brings happiness. The level of GDP at \$5400 per capita is the highest level of life satisfaction. The widely held view is that happiness enhances health and longevity. But this is unfounded. A study has revealed that there are three Golden Triangle Ingredients of Happiness: a loving partner, \$1,00,000 income, and Social Activities with a purpose. If you want to be happy, have more sex. Those having sex two to three times a week feel higher level of happiness.

Similarly, eat good food, lead healthy life style, and be happy. A Pan-India survey, however, found just opposite. They have reported that even those who eat unhealthy food and lead a sedentary life style are still Happier. Thus, food habits and Life Styles are not the pre-requisites for happiness. A study in Poland found that Good Looking people tended to be more happier than those who are less attractive. London School of Economics study shows that things that matter most for our happiness are our Social Relationships. Failed relationships have greater role in Unhappiness than Monetary Issues. Love is a bigger cause of Unhappiness than Cash.

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