

## **Get & Be Happy! The Art and Science of Happiness! by Rosemary Rein**

*"When I am in New York, I want to be in Europe, and when I am in Europe, I want to be in New York" -- Woody Allen*

I am blessed to be part of a creative community dedicated to the art and science of happiness. If you're raising an eyebrow that happiness is now a science worthy of our attention...hmm...consider the following research and statistics. After you look at the hard facts, we will give you 5 simple soft touches to get and be happy:

**-The World Health Organization** predicts that by the year 2020 depression will be the second-leading cause of mortality in the entire world, affecting 30% of all adults.

**-What determines happiness?** Research on fraternal twins indicates 50% is indeed determined by a heredity set-point, 40% via intentional activity and 10% via life circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

**-Wealth and Happiness?** When asked about their overall satisfaction with life, North Americans in 1940 reported being "very happy" with an average score of 7.5 out of 10. Today it's 7.2. An important note is: that more than one third of all homes in 1940 did not have running water, indoor toilets or bathtubs/showers. Ah, so TV's, iPods, microwave ovens and indoor bathrooms do not buy happiness? Go figure!

**-Quantum Physics.** Japanese researcher Masaru Emoto saw the need to study water which represents 70 to 90% of our body matter. Emoto photographically documented changes in water as he subjected the water to non-physical stimuli of music and messages. He studied water crystal droplets to music ranging from Mozart to Heavy Metal. Not surprising, (at least to me anyway) under Mozart's influence, the crystals appear beautiful under the microscopic eye and under heavy metal influence appear ugly and deformed.

Emoto went on to place signs on bottles of water, one with the message "I love you" or "Thank you" and another bottle with "You make me sick". The water with the positive messages responded with beautiful crystals and the negative messages created unsightly images.<sup>2</sup>

**So, what does all this mean?** Is genetics linked to our happiness? Well, it's indeed a 50% ingredient. How about financial condition and circumstances? Good news in this economy, it accounts for only 10%. The better news is: What we can do/control with the 40% of our intentional actions to get and be happy. One of the best books of my year has been "The How of Happiness" by Sonja Lyubomirsky.

### **In the meantime, here are 5 simple practices to get and be happy:**

1. **Make a list/journal** of your most positive experiences in life. Re-live the places, people and positive emotions present and feel them!

2. **Move:** Did you know that you will not change your mood until you physically move your body? Feeling Blue? Take a 2 minute vacation and move it, move it! Move your body and move your mood in a positive direction.

3. **Help Others:** Yet again the research indicates a significant elevation in happiness when you make other people happy. Sonja Lyubomirsky recommends 5 random acts of kindness for others each week. Examples: paying someone's toll, writing a thank you letter, etc...

4. If you fake it for 15 minutes, you can feel anything. **Act Happy!** While this is one of my mother's kitchen table wisdoms shared with me as a young girl dreading going to school one day. I teach this simple acting technique on positive emotion in my customer service courses and EEG brain research proves the value! Simple Fact: Happy people smile more and you look more attractive. Fake Happiness and see what happens to your happiness.

5. **Indulge your Senses:** As I write this, I have just experienced the multi-sensory delight of the most beautiful garden in the world "The Keukenhof" an oasis of flowers in Holland that for a brief 6 weeks in springtime literally takes your breath away. Luxuriate and indulge all of your senses; the aroma of a bakery, the scent of a flower garden, the power of music on your mood, the feelings and emotion that jump off a work of art. Focus on the beauty of life's simple pleasures.

**Bring Happiness to Your Workplace** and see what happens to Customer Service. Teamwork Creativity!

*References for this Article:*

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