

*Happiness Works*

# **Working happily together**

A training program for Australian organisations.

**Resilience Australia**

Training and development for people working in Education, Health and Community Service

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## **Resilience Australia**

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HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



Working Happily Together  
Workshop Training

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## **Happiness Works Training Modules**

We know that happiness is not a lucky outcome resulting from a fortunate upbringing. Rather, happiness generally results from skills that some people naturally pick up. The Happiness Works training modules makes clear that we can all learn to be happy.

The Happiness Works program includes 15 self-paced training modules.

With the Happiness Works training modules, your staff can engage in unique and helpful ways to increase their happiness. This will have a robust effect on their professional and personal lives. It will improve their communication skills, increase productivity, and boost morale.

# Contents

## **Module One: Happiness at work**

- Happiness at work
- What are the most important factors for happiness at work?
- Review questions

## **Module Two: What makes us happy?**

- Introduction
- Why are some people happier than others?
- What makes you and your team happy?
- Subjective happiness scale

## **Module Three: Resilience**

- Developing resilience
- Key points
- Resilience assessment

**Module Four: Relationships**

- Positive relationships
- Review questions

**Module Five: Dealing with adversity**

- Dealing with adversity
- Happiness is more than having a pleasurable life
- Regain your happiness after adversity
- Review questions

**Module Six: Values and Happiness**

- Mapping your values
- Values to action
- I Care cards challenge

**Module Seven: Work Life Balance**

- Work life balance
- Your action plan
- Review questions

**Module Eight: Set Boundaries**

- Begin to set personal boundaries
- Setting your boundaries
- Strengthen your internal boundaries
- Guilt in setting boundaries
- Find support
- Review questions

**Module Nine: Savoring**

- Nine savoring strategies
- Savoring assignment
- Review questions

**Module Ten: Gratitude**

- Eight ways gratitude promotes happiness
- Ways to cultivate gratitude
- Gratitude journal

**Module Eleven: Choose To Be Happy**

- Eight ways to control your happiness

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- Review questions

### **Module Twelve: My Best Self**

- Best possible self future
- Review exercise

### **Module Thirteen: Your Happiness Manifesto**

- What is happiness?
- Happiness action plans
- Be grateful
- Three good things
- Be kind to others
- Daily acts of kindness
- Action plan

### **Module Fourteen: Happiness Journal**

- The Happiness Works journal
- Use your happiness journal to ...
- Sample pages from happiness journals

## **Module Fifteen: Conclusion**

- Conclusion
- Final review



## Happiness at work

The beginning of a new year is a great time to take stock of your work life. Were you happy or unhappy at work? What would you like to change?

It's important to evaluate because how you feel at work has such a large influence on you at work AND at home. When you're happy at work, you have better job performance and more career success. You also have better health and a happier private life.

Unfortunately, most people look back and think exclusively in terms of what went wrong. The things they should have done. The goals they ought to have achieved. The progress that didn't come.

We gain much of our happiness at work (and in life) by appreciating the good things we have and do. Sure, you should also make sure to improve your circumstances and address any problems but it is just as important to be able to appreciate the things that do work.

This is hard. Negativity bias is one of the most well-established psychological phenomena and it means quite simply that our minds devote more mental focus and cognition to the bad than the good. Our thoughts automatically go to problems, annoyances, threats and fears but remembering and appreciating the good in our lives takes effort and focus.

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I think you can achieve much more by turning that around 180 degrees, so here's my suggestion for a little new year's exercise in happiness at work.

Think back at your work life in 2016 and answer the following 10 questions.

It works best, if you take some time to do it and if you write down your answers:

- What went really well for you at work in 2016?
- What did you do that you were proud of?
- Who did you make a difference for at work?
- What new skills have you learned professionally?
- How have you grown and developed personally at work?
- Who has helped you out at work in 2016?
- Who have you admired professionally?
- Which 5 things from your work life in 2016 would you like more of in 2017?
- Which 5 things from your work life in 2016 would you like less of in 2017?
- What will you specifically do to become happier at work in 2017?

Most people think that they must work hard to become successful – and that success will make them happy. They're most likely wrong.

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This year, make happiness at work your #1 career goal – because being happy at work will make you more successful in your career.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Overall, how happy would you say you are these days?

Give your rating on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high)

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# What are the most important factors for happiness at work?

## One - A sense of accomplishment –

People feel best at work when they are getting their jobs done and they can feel a sense of pride about their accomplishments. Key factors that support people to feel a sense of accomplishment include:

- The possibility to shape (influence) their own work
- Seeing a positive benefit to their customers/clients
- A good job fit with their own skills matching the challenges of the tasks they do!
- A strong supportive team

## Two – Good management

Unsurprisingly poor management has a big impact on people's happiness at work. This makes improving the quality of management the most important intervention possible. Managers really do matter and this is evidence to support the well-known saying that "people join organisations but they leave managers".

Promoting people to be managers who are actually good with people (rather than just

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technically good at their jobs) is one way to improve the management system.

- Another is training managers on how to give timely constructive feedback that genuinely helps their teams become both higher performing and happier at work.

### Three – Getting along well with colleagues

- Improving 'how' people work together is critical to happiness at work; such as being supportive, respectful and generous to each other as well as the vital relationship between the manager/supervisor and the people they manage/supervise.
- It is also important to deal with any conflicts in a fair and transparent way so as not to let resentments or tensions linger. These “negatives” can quite quickly undermine trust and cooperation and will seriously impact both the performance and the happiness of people at work.

### Four – Autonomy and Self-control

Having a sense of control over the important elements of a job is an important element of a good job. Academics often call this people's sense of 'autonomy' - their feeling of being empowered to shape their lives - and at work this translates into the ability to influence the daily decisions and make choices about how to do the work. This sense of control is one of the reasons that people feel happier in skilled roles (including management and leadership roles) - they get to shape their own work rather than being told what to do.

### Five – Respectful Climate

Being treated fairly and with respect is a critical factor. In many countries, such as the UK and the US, this is one of the top three predictors of overall happiness at work. A good climate at work is also characterised by high levels of trust, good conflict resolution and a freedom for people to speak up and challenge the system. This not only creates a better atmosphere for people but is also healthy for the whole organisation as it becomes more flexible and adaptive.

### Six – Worthwhile Work

Having work that feels worthwhile and meaningful is very important. People tend to feel happier and more fulfilled at work if they can see their work has a positive impact on the lives of others. In one study 48% of people report having very worthwhile work but 12% feel the opposite - that their work is devoid of meaning and not worthwhile.

### Seven – Work Life Balance

Work is clearly only one aspect of the quality of people's lives and it is important that people achieve a balance that works for them and their families. In Finland 32% of people report a good work life balance which is roughly comparable to the UK where 30% do. 23% of Finns have a poor balance and this in time can lead to multiple work and home problems. For example people with poor work life balance are more likely to quit a job

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even if they are performing well from the organisation's perspective.

### Eight – Using Your Strengths

For individuals doing what they do best on a daily basis is very rewarding. The organisational challenge is to create an environment which supports people to be themselves at work, to use and develop their skills and competencies as well as finding ways of placing people in roles that are a 'good fit' for them.

### Nine – Learning New Skills

Learning is a rewarding activity in its own right and it is well established in the research literature on happiness that people who 'keep learning' have higher levels of happiness and better health outcomes. Work is a great opportunity for people to develop and learn and organisations are rewarded with more competent, creative and happier employees.

### Ten – Fair Pay

Pay is important to people's happiness at work, but it is a less strong motivator than many believe. More important is whether people feel they paid "fairly" - in other words given their efforts and achievements do they feel fairly compensated. In some organisations a sense of fairness is undermined by large differences in the pay for those in the most senior positions and those in the regular jobs.

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## Gender

More women than men are happy at work

Men 37%

Women 43%

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*Reflect on your own happiness by writing a paragraph or two on how you would describe your life satisfaction and your happiness.*

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## Review Questions



Reflect on your own happiness by writing a paragraph or two on how you would describe your life satisfaction and your happiness.

Select two experiences that recently increased your happiness. Now, identify two additional activities and think about how you might implement these within three days from now.

Personal best story: think of a time in your life when you were at your best – using all of your strengths. Describe that situation. What made it your personal best example? What did it feel like? What behaviors did you exhibit? How did others respond to your experience if someone witnessed it?

Reflect on the past two weeks about a moment that you can identify when you were curious. What sparked that curiosity? Was it a person, a situation, a good book, a movie, or something else? How did that challenge you or add to your knowledge and growth? What did you discover? What insights did you gain?

What is something familiar that you could learn more about? What could you explore that you have

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not already done but is on your list of interesting things to do or experience? How will you go about doing it?

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Personal best story:  
think of a time in your life  
when you were at your best  
- using all of your strengths.

Describe that situation.

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## Module Two

# **What makes us happy?**

## Introduction

Happy people are better workers. Those who are engaged with their jobs and colleagues work harder — and smarter.

And yet, there is an alarmingly high number of people who aren't engaged.

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What Are the Benefits of Happiness?

Is happiness a good thing?  
Or, does it just simply feel good?

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Disengaged, unhappy people aren't any fun to work with, don't add much value, and impact our organizations (and our economy) in profoundly negative ways.

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It's time to finally blow up the myth that feelings don't matter at work. Science is on our side: there are clear neurological links between feelings, thoughts, and actions.

If we can agree that our emotional states at work matter, what do we do to increase engagement and improve performance?

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If people become accustomed to  
(and take for granted) anything  
positive that happens to them,  
then how can they ever  
become happier?

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## Why Are Some People Happier Than Others?

I have always been struck by the capacity of some individuals to be remarkably happy, even in the face of stress, trauma, or adversity.

## What Are the Benefits of Happiness?

Is happiness a good thing? Or, does it just simply feel good?

## The Architecture of Sustainable Happiness

A vibrant and continuing program of research is asking the question, “How can happiness be reliably increased?”

## Thwarting Hedonic Adaptation

If people become accustomed to (and take for granted) anything positive that happens to them, then how can they ever become happier?

# What makes you and your team happy at work?

Lots of research has been undertaken in recent years and the conclusions are pointing towards these factors for boosting workplace happiness.

- A sense of accomplishment – people feel good when they get their jobs done.
- Good management – “People join happy organisations but they leave a poor manager.”
- Getting along well with your colleagues. Improving how people work together is critical to happiness at work.
- Autonomy and self-control – Having a sense of control over parts of a job is a happy at work contributing factor.
- Respectful climate – being treated fairly and with respect is a critical factor.
- Worthwhile work – Having work that feels worthwhile and meaningful is important.
- Work life balance – Balancing the needs of a family with the demands of a job is important.
- Using your strengths – spending some time each day doing what you do best.
- Learning new skills – people who keep learning have higher levels of happiness.
- Fair pay – fair pay is a strong motivator for people.

## Subjective Happiness Scale

- To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale.
- Please cite the following scale validation paper in all work mentioning the scale.
  - Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). [A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation](#). *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155. The original publication is available at [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com).

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



Some people are generally very happy.  
They enjoy life regardless of what  
is going on, getting the most out  
of everything.

To what extent does this  
characterization describe you?

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SCALE IS SHOWN BELOW:

*For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.*

1. In general, I consider myself:

not a very happy person    1       2       3       4       5       6       7    a very happy person

2. Compared with most of my peers, I consider myself:

less happy    1       2       3       4       5       6       7    more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

not at all    1       2       3       4       5       6       7    a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

not at all    1       2       3       4       5       6       7    a great deal

## Module Three

# Resilience

# Resilience

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress -- such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. It means "bouncing back" from difficult experiences. Research has shown that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary. People commonly demonstrate resilience.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



Resilience is the ability to  
bounce back when things don't  
go as planned.

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Being resilient does not mean that a person doesn't experience difficulty or distress. Emotional pain and sadness are common in people who have suffered major adversity or trauma in their lives. In

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fact, the road to resilience is likely to involve considerable emotional distress. Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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I'm usually optimistic.

I see difficulties as temporary,  
expect to overcome them,  
and believe things will  
turn out well.

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Currently, a quarter of all employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives. Many of us now work in constantly connected, always-on, highly demanding work cultures where stress and the risk of burnout are widespread. Since the pace and intensity of contemporary work culture are not likely to change, it's more important than ever to build resilience skills to effectively navigate your work life.

The most resilient individuals and teams aren't the ones that fail, but rather are the ones that learn and thrive because of it. Being challenged — sometimes severely — is part of what activates resilience as a skill set.

More than five decades of research point to the fact that resilience is built by attitudes, behaviours and social supports that can be adopted and cultivated by anyone. Factors that lead to resilience include optimism; the ability to stay balanced and manage strong or difficult emotions; a sense of safety and a strong social support system. The good news is that because there is a concrete set of behaviours and skills associated with resilience, you can learn to be more resilient.

Building resilience skills in the contemporary work context doesn't happen in a vacuum, however. It's important to understand and manage some of the factors that cause us to feel so overwhelmed and stressed at work. Our current work culture is a direct reflection of the increasing complexity and demands faced by businesses globally.

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Being hyperconnected and responsive to work anytime, anywhere, can be extremely taxing. 57% of managers surveyed said that their organizations are “weak” when it comes to helping leaders manage difficult schedules and helping employees manage information flow, and that there is an urgent need to address this challenge.

One important distinction to note is that not all stress is created equal and there are even some types of stress that may also have a positive effect on our well-being and productivity. “Good stress,” or what is sometimes known as “eudaemonic stress,” (derived from the Greek word “eudaemonia,” or flourishing) indicates that some types of stress can make us healthier, motivate us to be our best, and help us perform at our peak. A useful way to think about it is that stress is distributed on a bell-shaped curve. Once past the peak or high performance apex where stress motivates us, we experience the unhealthy effects of stress which, if sustained over time, lead not only to burnout but also to chronic disease.

So how can we develop resilience and stay motivated in the face of chronic negative stress and constantly increasing demands, complexity and change? Here are some tips, based on some of the latest neuroscience, behavioural and organizational research:

## Developing Resilience

The good news is that even if you're not a naturally resilient person, you can learn to develop a resilient mindset and attitude. To do so, incorporate the following into your daily life:

**Get enough sleep and exercise**, and learn to manage stress. When you take care of your mind and body, you're better able to cope effectively with challenges in your life.

**Practice thought awareness.** Resilient people don't let negative thoughts derail their efforts. Instead, they consistently practice positive thinking. Also, "listen" to how you talk to yourself when something goes wrong – if you find yourself making statements that are permanent, pervasive or personalized, correct these thoughts in your mind.

Practice thought restructuring to change the way that you think about negative situations and bad events.

**Learn from your mistakes and failures.** Every mistake has the power to teach you something important. Don't stop searching until you've found the lesson in every situation.

**Choose your response.** Remember, we all experience bad days and we all go through our share of crises. But we have a choice in how we respond; we can choose to react negatively or in a panic, or we can choose to remain calm and logical to find a solution. Your reaction is always up to you.

**Maintain perspective.** Resilient people understand that, although a situation or crisis may seem overwhelming in the moment, it may not make that much of an impact over the long-term. Try to avoid blowing events out of proportion.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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I feel self-confident,  
appreciate myself,  
and have a healthy concept  
of who I am.

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**Build your self-confidence.** Remember, resilient people are confident that they're going to succeed eventually, despite the setbacks or stresses that they might be facing. This belief in themselves also enables them to take risks: when you develop confidence and a strong sense of self, you have the strength to keep moving forward, and to take the risks you need to get ahead.

**Develop strong relationships with your colleagues.** People who have strong connections at work are more resistant to stress, and they're happier in their role. This also goes for your personal life: the more real friendships you develop, the more resilient you're going to be, because you have a strong support network to fall back on. (Remember that treating people with compassion and empathy is very important here.)

**Focus on being flexible.** Resilient people understand that things change, and that carefully-made plans may, occasionally, need to be amended or scrapped.

### Key Points

Resilience is the ability to bounce back when things don't go as planned. There are three main elements that resilient people possess.

These are challenge, commitment, and control.

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You can develop resilience in several ways. First, take care to exercise regularly and get enough sleep, so that you can control stress more easily. The stronger you feel physically and emotionally, the easier it is for you to overcome challenges.

Focus on thinking positively, and try to learn from the mistakes you make. Build strong relationships with colleagues and friends, so that you have a support network to fall back on. Work on building your self-confidence.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



I'm very durable.

I hold up well during tough times.

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## **Resiliency Assessment**

Rate yourself on the following items: (1 = very little; 5 = very strong)

\_\_\_ In a crisis or chaotic situation, I calm myself and focus on taking useful actions.

\_\_\_ I'm usually optimistic. I see difficulties as temporary, expect to overcome them, and believe things will turn out well.

\_\_\_ I can tolerate high levels of uncertainty and ambiguity.

\_\_\_ I adapt quickly to new developments. I'm good at bouncing back from difficulties.

\_\_\_ I'm playful. I find the humour in rough situations, laugh at myself, and am easily amused.

\_\_\_ I'm able to recover emotionally from losses and set-backs. I have friends I can talk with. I can express my feelings to others and ask for help.

\_\_\_ I feel self-confident, appreciate myself, and have a healthy concept of who I am.

\_\_\_ I'm curious. I ask questions. I want to know how things work. I like to try new ways of doing things.

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\_\_\_ I learn valuable lessons from my experiences and from the experiences of others.

\_\_\_ I'm good at solving problems. I can think in analytical, creative or practical ways.

\_\_\_ I'm good at making things work well. I'm often asked to lead groups and projects.

\_\_\_ I'm very flexible. I feel comfortable with my paradoxical complexity. I'm optimistic and pessimistic, trusting and cautious, unselfish and selfish, and so forth.

\_\_\_ I'm always myself, but I've noticed that I'm different with different people and in different situations.

\_\_\_ I prefer to work without a written job description. I'm more effective when I'm free to do what I think is best in each situation.

\_\_\_ I "read" people well and trust my intuition.

\_\_\_ I'm a good listener, and I have good empathy skills.

\_\_\_ I'm nonjudgmental about others and am comfortable with many kinds of people.

\_\_\_ I'm very durable. I hold up well during tough times. I have an independent spirit underneath my cooperative way of working with others.

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\_\_\_ I've been made stronger and better by difficult experiences.

\_\_\_ I've converted misfortune into good luck and found benefits in bad experiences.

Total points:

## Resiliency Assessment SCORING

**Low score:** A self-rating score under 50 indicates that life is probably a struggle for you and you know it. You may not handle pressure well. You don't learn anything useful from bad experiences. You feel hurt when people criticize you. You may sometimes feel helpless and without hope.

If these statements fit you or your client, ask yourself, "Would I like to learn how to handle my difficulties better?" If so, use the exercises in this workbook to build resilience.

**High score:** If you rated yourself high on most of these statements, you have a score over 90. This means you know you are already very good at bouncing back from life's setbacks. The exercises in this workbook will validate many things you already do right. Perhaps you can share your story with others and be a role model. Role models are a key factor in resilience.

**Middle scores:** If you agreed with many of the statements and scored in the 70-89 range, then that is very good! It means you can gain a lot from the workbook and become even more resilient.

If you scored in the 50-69 range, you appear to be fairly adequate, but you may be underrating yourself. A much larger percentage of people underrate themselves than

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overrate themselves on the assessment. Some people have a habit of being modest and automatically give themselves a 3 on every item for a total of 60.

One validity check is to ask two people who know you well to rate you on the items and see what scores they come up with. Have a discussion with them about each of the items where there is a discrepancy and listen to what they say.

A second way of checking the validity of your self-rating is to answer these bonus point questions:

- Has asking questions ever gotten you into trouble?
- Has your sense of humour ever gotten you into trouble?
- Has being unpredictable or too complex ever puzzled or bothered others?
- Has your effort to anticipate problems ever had someone accuse you of having a negative attitude?
- Are you such a good listener your ability to understand both sides of a conflict has confused others?

Give yourself a point for every yes to the bonus point questions above, plus an additional bonus point for the item in the quiz regarding self-confidence and self-esteem. These extra questions show that you may not see the connection between some of your strengths. and resilience.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Even once you've searched your soul to figure out what truly matters to you, accept that those priorities might change over time.

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# Module Four

# **Relationships**

## Positive Relationships

Constructive relationship management involves building and maintaining positive partnerships and connections.

- Avoid leaving the success of your relationships to chance.
- Take control of the relationship management process, so you can maintain positive relationships with clients, colleagues and suppliers.
- Prevent conflicts or misunderstandings impacting negatively on your workplace relationships.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



Listening carefully and responding  
in encouraging ways is a very  
effective way to cultivate  
positive emotions and  
deepen relationships

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- Use the principles of emotional intelligence to build constructive partnerships at work.
- Eliminate the poor communication habits which can limit your success at work.
- Become the best relationship manager you can be

Scientific evidence shows that positive relationships can have an enormously beneficial impact on your levels of happiness, health, and well-being at home and at work. Instead of waiting for breakdowns and trying to fix them, be committed to adding positive energy, curiosity, and meaning to the time you share with other people

People who have one or more close friendships appear to be happier.

The sharing of personal feelings (self-disclosure) plays a major role in the relief of stress and depression.

Listening carefully and responding in encouraging ways is a very effective way to cultivate positive emotions and deepen relationships

In one study people were asked on random occasions about their mood. They were found to be happiest with their friends, followed by family members, and least happy if they were alone.

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Positive relationships form a foundation for happiness and success. We all have relationships we have chosen like our friends, relationships we have inherited like our family, and relationships that are a result of our circumstances like work and classmates. How we navigate and participate in these relationships has a significant impact on our happiness as well as our health, longevity, and success.

Creating positive relationships will make us happier, while surrendering to and becoming victims of negative relationships and the related drama will be an obstacle to our happiness.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



Positive relationships help  
people become happier  
and happier people  
are more likely to be  
in positive relationships

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Positive relationships help people become happier and happier people are more likely to be in positive relationships.

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We all have a need to belong and to find positive relationships that help satisfy that need. The word positive refers to whether the relationship involves caring and concern. Unpleasant or unsatisfying interactions result in a negative relationship. It is not just having a relationship, but having a positive relationship that creates the benefits of health and well-being.

Hang out with people even to do little things. Insubstantial interactions like small talk or just enjoying each other's company are important to a relationship. Making small talk about trivial things helps people feel happier and healthier. But talking on the phone was not enough. Seeing each other in person is more effective than just talking on the phone, which has ramifications for today's technology. Facebook, texting, and online video chats are better than no contact, but nothing is better than spending time in person. Face to face contact and doing even mundane things together helped solidify a positive relationship.

Choose happy friends. Hanging out with happy friends instead of sad friends makes us happier. Each happy friend increases our probability of being happy by 9%, while each unhappy friend makes our probability of being happy go down by 7%. Geographic distance is a proxy for the amount of interaction. When a friend who lives 1 klm. away is happy, it increases our probability of being happy by 25%. A happy sibling who lives less than a klm. away increases our probability for happiness by 14%. Happy next door neighbours also increase our probability of happiness.

Relationships are connected to some of our strongest emotions. When the relationships are positive we feel happiness, elation, contentment and calm. When relationships are negative or non-existent we feel anxiety, depression, grief, jealousy, and loneliness. Close relationships with our friends and family help us build our self-worth and self-image. They provide support in times that we struggle, unconditional love, and a reason for doing many of the things we do which helps give our lives meaning. They also provide us with a sense of identity and belonging. Knowing we are part of something bigger in life helps us be happier.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Making small talk about trivial things helps people feel happier and healthier.

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Remember the last time you had a peak experience. A time when you laughed and laughed or got

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really excited or felt like everything was right with the world. More than likely those times all involved other people and positive relationships with those people. People and relationships are the source of our greatest joys as well as our most gut-wrenching traumas.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Relationships are connected to some of our strongest emotions.

When the relationships are positive we feel happiness, elation, contentment and calm.

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## Review Questions



Do I treat people with respect? Give an example.

Do I encourage others to achieve their responsibilities and goals? Give an example.

Do I accept criticism from others? Give an example.

What's the most important or key aspect of building workplace relationships? Tick as appropriate

- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Trust
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Giving Time
- ☐ Respect



Reflect on four of the following questions.

1. I receive the information and communication I need to do my job.
2. I regularly receive recognition/praise for doing good work.
3. The benefits offered here are fair and reasonable.
4. The people here are pleasant and co-operative to work with.
5. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
6. My opinions and ideas seem to matter.
7. My supervisor provides me with feedback and guidance.
8. My supervisor helps me know what is expected of me.
9. My supervisor cares about me as a person.
10. Even if I had the opportunity to get a similar job with another organization, I would stay with my present company.

To get to know your colleagues better, try asking them these questions at informal meetings.

1. What would you be doing if you weren't at your current job?
2. What more are you wanting in your career right now?
3. If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are living right now?
4. Describe your biggest failure in business.
5. What is one word you would use to describe yourself as a child?
6. How do you recharge?
7. If you were to tell one person "Thank You" for helping me become the person I am today, who would it be and what did they do?
8. What one thing about you do you want in your elegy?
9. What movie or novel character do you most identify with?
10. When are you the happiest?

11. Fill in the blank: If you really knew me, you'd know\_\_\_\_\_.
12. What quality in *you* would you hate to see emulated in your employees or children?
13. If you were to start a company from scratch, what values would you build it on?
14. What would you most regret *not* having done by the end of your life?
15. What characteristic do you most admire in others?
16. What kind of impact do you believe you have on people?
17. What one memory do you most treasure?
18. If you could change one thing about how you were raised as a child, what would it be?
19. What super power would you like to have?
20. What would a "perfect" day look like for you?
21. What's the most important lesson you've learned in the last year?
22. How do you think your coworkers see you?
23. If you ruled the world, what would you change on Day 1?
24. How do you act when you're stressed out?

## Module Five

# Dealing with adversity

## Dealing with Adversity

***“What doesn’t kill me, makes me stronger” said Nietzsche.***

Experiencing, and getting through, adversity can actually leave us better off – and happier – than we were before. The aftermath of highly stressful life events like loss of a loved one, diagnosis of terminal disease, financial ruin, divorce, natural catastrophe, war and sexual assault has become a fascinating subject of study by psychological scientists. Several new terms have arisen from this emerging field of study including post-traumatic growth, adversarial growth and stress-related growth.

What are some of the positives that can come from adversity? Increased personal strength and resilience; improved relationships; spiritual growth; an empowered new direction and purpose; and greater appreciation and gratitude.

Nobody asks for adversity but interestingly, many people find that these ordeals change them for the better. They will often say things like, “I wish it didn’t happen, but if it wasn’t for that, I wouldn’t...” or “I didn’t ask for that but I’m a better person because of it.”

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It's not that growth is necessarily preceded by struggle, and nobody would willingly choose suffering as a teacher – but the fact remains, adversity IS a great teacher so when your life is turned upside down, shaken and scattered about, take hope. You WILL come out of it stronger and better.

It's our human nature to rebound and thrive! Humans are amazingly adaptable, resilient, innovative and can actually flourish in the most horrific circumstances. And the people who flourish are not necessarily the strongest, bravest, toughest or “best.” They're just regular people who chose to survive, and thrive. Actually, only a small percentage of people who go through severe adversity end up with chronic problems afterward. Most rebound, and eventually improve their lives.

**Happiness is more than  
having a pleasurable life  
of luxury and ease.**

It doesn't require a life free of pain or uncertainty. It has more to do with finding purpose – and by purpose, I don't mean being pigeon-holed into one or a few occupations or vocations that feel good

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and right to you – I mean you gain happiness by being the best human being you can through empathy, helping, generosity, sharing, growing, learning, experiencing and connecting.

Many people who go through severely distressing events come out of them more compassionate, wiser, creative and generous. It becomes almost a driving instinct for them to want to reach out and help others avoid the pain they themselves felt.

Our everyday routines are disrupted or destroyed in times of adversity and we are forced **to be HERE, NOW and take ourselves off autopilot.**

Still, it's a choice and it requires conscious effort to be happy during and after adversity. Gratitude is one way to actively invite happiness into a situation that could otherwise leave you in a dark place of despair. Ultimately you have to be willing to grow from adversity, be willing to dig as deep as you can and find the hidden blessings and lessons, be willing to appreciate the growth, be willing to express thanks for having had what you lost and the opportunity for the new and good to come into your life.

The script changes. The characters change. The plot twists in unfathomable ways. You get down to the basics of happiness – specifically, relationships and experiences, and not things.

*“The road to satisfying experiences must necessarily pass through the terrain of discomfort.”*

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Happiness is knowing, “Hey, I can get through this. I can hang in there, and I’ll be stronger for that.” If you’re going through a worst-case scenario, then, take heart. Your old ways are falling away and you are free, outside of the expectations that you had for your life. You can reinvent yourself, restructure your life, rebuild it better...

Be kind to yourself. Admit to the difficulty, admit to your own difficulty in coping, and at the same time, infuse the situation with positivity and hope. Loss and growth is part of life. You’re never going to be who you were, before this event. But you’re going to still be you, and better, for having gone through this.

## **The basics of happiness – specifically, relationships and experiences, and not things.**



The bottom line: Everyone suffers losses and serious reversals during their lives. Trying to avoid them would not be an effective strategy even if that was possible. Instead, the research suggests we should recognize that bad things are part of life. Experts recommend trying to learn from past problems without letting them overwhelm you. And as with so many other life events, a strong social network can offer an essential support system.

## **Regain your happiness after adversity**

Life is not easy for any of us. Divorce can mean extreme adversity and upheaval. We have to deal with the bad and accept that it's not fair. Learn your lessons and make whatever changes are required. It really is that simple!

Here are 5 ways to regain happiness in face of hardship:

### **1. Sense of Personal Mission**

Your life counts. It is a blessing that you are here. So, what is your mission? Are you part of the problem or part of the solution? Do you give to your friends, help yourself grow, find a way to provide a helping hand. Do you make more love happen in this cold world? By having an awareness of who you are and having direction in your life, you can be a force for good.

## 2. Staying Healthy – Psychologically, Spiritually and Physically

Do you take good care of yourself? The great 1st century sage, Hillel, was attributed to having said; *"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I'm only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?"* It is not loving to allow others to take advantage of you. There is a joy in knowing that you are protecting yourself and that you are proactive in taking care of your health as well.

We can't help others if we truly neglect ourselves.

## 3. Embrace the Good

Yes, you have been hurt; maybe badly. There is no good answer in this world for suffering. It's the human condition and some suffer much more than others. *Just note that it's one thing to be a victim; it's quite another to become a victim of your victimhood.* You are still a person with dignity. Grab whatever good is around you. Embrace it. A neighbour who cares; a brother who comes through, a beautiful day that warms your heart. There is joy out there, even if you have to dig deep.

## 4. Accept Things

You must learn to accept. This does not mean to deny or forget that bad things happen, or that others have wronged you. You need to make peace with the bad in your life. To forgive does not

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mean to forget. Acceptance means to protect yourself as well as let go of the victim position that can poison your life. Don't allow an abusive ex-husband to hurt you. Get the protection that you require. Vote against a government or municipality that failed you. Distance yourself from people who let you down when you needed them the most. But, let go of toxic anger that only will make you sick.

There is a sweet joy in being freed from hate.

## 5. The Art of Forgiveness

Sometimes you have to grieve a lot in order to forgive. You go through emotional stages; denial, bargaining, anger, depression and then acceptance. You choose to forgive in order to live life fresh and realistically. Once you learn to forgive the people and events that have occurred, liberate yourself by opening up to the goodness of the world. Whether it was natural disaster, a divorce, a troubled child or a bad illness, it's necessary to mourn the unfair nature of the universe and come out of it with your dignity intact;

Pain can lead to wisdom, and this is a meaningful sort of joy.

And, don't forget to seize the joy.

## Review Questions



Here is a reflection on adversity.

After reading it feel free to reflect on how you dealt with and learnt from a difficult situation.

Overcoming Adversity Reflection

I'll Quit When I'm Dead

Why Don't You Just Quit?

I'm sure you have heard these sayings before:

Things aren't looking so great for the home team.

You should have quit when you were ahead.

Fade to black.

It's a wrap.

I am going to be completely honest with you guys. Recently I have been sucker punched by life. My family is doing great. I have money in my bank account. I still have a job. So, what hit me?

A Dying Dream

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I started this year with a plan. I was going to give back in a way that I have never done before. I poured my heart into a cause only to find out it was the glass pitcher connected to a blending machine. My heart was ground into pieces. I had so much to give but it seemed like nobody wanted what I had to offer.

I was overcome with the gut-wrenching feelings of failure and inadequacy. Nothing seemed to soothe the open wound in my chest. My heart was broken. I would have preferred the flu, a cold, or a headache at least for those there is a remedy. Instead I am stuck needing an operation to put back the pieces of what remains before I give up.

What is sad is that I am not the only one feeling the effects. The atmosphere that was once full of optimism and hope is returning to a mundane state of carelessness. We are slowly slipping back into a comfort zone where the norm is to go with the same old routine that got us nowhere in the past. Week after week went by with no progress and you could see on the faces of the people that we were on life support.

Is My Hope Really Dead?

As in my mind I visualized this project taking its last breath and ending a pointless existence I realized that through its potential death there was a chance for a re-birth. It wasn't until I hit the bottom that I learned to appreciate the journey to the top. The main problem was I realized this a moment too late. It died. My heart couldn't survive in pieces.

Then something amazing happened. I received a jolt directly to my nervous system from an EKG machine.

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“Clear!”

My broken heart started to slowly beat again.

“Clear!”

The impossible seemed possible.

“Clear!”

Deflated lungs were filled with air.

“Clear!”

Failure was no longer an option.

“Clear!”

Weak arms gradually regained strength.

Finally, I was able to sustain on my own and now I am in rehab with new determination, a new focus, and a fresh chance to do things bigger, better, with more faith and a renewed sense of purpose.

Never Quit!

I could have easily given up. I clearly wasn't as prepared as I imagined I would be. My unrealistic expectations nearly “killed” me. I had taken my “last breath.”

The challenges we face have a purpose. There is something that I needed to learn and I think it was as simple as never ever quit.

So, for anyone who feels like they are on their very “last breath” I have a simple and powerful statement that will change your life.

“Clear!”

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I don't care how dire the circumstances may seem. It is not over yet. **Never quit.** You have been given a fresh start. So, give up if you want to. That would be your loss. As for me **I'll quit when I'm dead.** I'm about to change the world.

## **My Adversity Reflection**

## Module Six

# **Values and Happiness**



## Mapping Your Values

What makes you do what you do? This module helps you answer this by enabling you to describe the values which are embodied in your personal work and in the wider organisation. These values are probably more influential than anything else in shaping what you do. They might be something that you take for granted, that you think is obvious, or that you've never actually articulated or written down. Defining these values however can be very useful when trying to explain your work to other colleagues and partners.

Start by individually writing down on a piece of paper or a series of cards, what you feel is most valuable for yourself as well as for the organisation. Think of these personal values as the things that make you feel truly alive and passionately committed to what you are doing in your business. For one person, it might be things like helping others, for another it might be creativity or innovation, for someone else it might be honesty, ecological awareness or leadership. Write down a lot of them – even the ones that you are aware of but are less important to you. When you have noted down a wide range of values (ten or more), place them in the relevant fields on a worksheet. Don't worry about getting it right first time – swap them around until you have them in the right place. To focus your activities, have a maximum of five in the 'Always Important' column. Ask your other team members to do the same. Once all their worksheets have been defined, these can be shared and

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agreed upon. Showing your completed worksheet to someone who knows you well and asking for their feedback helps to clarify what is important to you. Together you can establish what values are important to the organisation as a whole.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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What kind of impact do you  
believe you have on people?

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## Individual Values

Always important

Sometimes important

Rarely important

Never Important

Organisational values

Always important

Sometimes important

Rarely important

Never Important

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## List of Values

The following list of values will help you develop a clearer sense of what's most important to you in life. Simply choose the values which most resonate with you. Use this list to help you complete the individual and organization values list above.

While most values on this list will have little or no significance to you (and some may even seem negative to you), some values will surely call to you, and you'll feel, "Yes, this value is a part of me."

Use this values list as a guide. It contains many synonyms but is not exhaustive, so feel free to add unlisted values to your list as well.

## Values

Abundance	Achievement	Advancement	Alertness
Acceptance	Acknowledgement	Adventure	Altruism
Accessibility	Activeness	Affection	Amazement
Accomplishment	Adaptability	Affluence	Ambition
Accountability	Adoration	Aggressiveness	Amusement
Accuracy	Adroitness	Agility	Anticipation

Appreciation	Boldness	Clear-mindedness	Continuity
Approachability	Bravery	Cleverness	Contribution
Approval	Brilliance	Closeness	Control
Art	Buoyancy	Comfort	Conviction
Articulacy	Calmness	Commitment	Conviviality
Artistry	Camaraderie	Community	Coolness
Assertiveness	Candor	Compassion	Cooperation
Assurance	Capability	Competence	Cordiality
Attentiveness	Care	Competition	Correctness
Attractiveness	Carefulness	Completion	Country
Audacity	Celebrity	Composure	Courage
Availability	Certainty	Concentration	Courtesy
Awareness	Challenge	Confidence	Craftiness
Awe	Change	Conformity	Creativity
Balance	Charity	Congruency	Credibility
Beauty	Charm	Connection	Cunning
Being the best	Chastity	Consciousness	Curiosity
Belonging	Cheerfulness	Conservation	Daring
Benevolence	Clarity	Consistency	Decisiveness
Bliss	Cleanliness	Contentment	Decorum

Deference	Duty	Euphoria	Ferocity
Delight	Dynamism	Excellence	Fidelity
Dependability	Eagerness	Excitement	Fierceness
Depth	Ease	Exhilaration	Financial
Desire	Economy	Expectancy	independence
Determination	Ecstasy	Expediency	Firmness
Devotion	Education	Experience	Fitness
Devoutness	Effectiveness	Expertise	Flexibility
Dexterity	Efficiency	Exploration	Flow
Dignity	Elation	Expressiveness	Fluency
Diligence	Elegance	Extravagance	Focus
Direction	Empathy	Extroversion	Fortitude
Directness	Encouragement	Exuberance	Frankness
Discipline	Endurance	Fairness	Freedom
Discovery	Energy	Faith	Friendliness
Discretion	Enjoyment	Fame	Friendship
Diversity	Entertainment	Family	Frugality
Dominance	Enthusiasm	Fascination	Fun
Dreaming	Environmentalism	Fashion	Gallantry
Drive	Ethics	Fearlessness	Generosity

Gentility  
Giving  
Grace  
Gratitude  
Gregariousness  
Growth  
Guidance  
Happiness  
Harmony  
Health  
Heart  
Helpfulness  
Heroism  
Holiness  
Honesty  
Honor  
Hopefulness  
Hospitality  
Humility  
Humor

Hygiene  
Imagination  
Impact  
Impartiality  
Independence  
Individuality  
Industry  
Influence  
Ingenuity  
Inquisitiveness  
Insightfulness  
Inspiration  
Integrity  
Intellect  
Intelligence  
Intensity  
Intimacy  
Intrepidity  
Introspection  
Introversion

Intuition  
Intuitiveness  
Inventiveness  
Investing  
Involvement  
Joy  
Judiciousness  
Justice  
Keeness  
Kindness  
Knowledge  
Leadership  
Learning  
Liberation  
Liberty  
Lightness  
Liveliness  
Logic  
Longevity  
Love

Loyalty  
Majesty  
Making a  
difference  
Marriage  
Mastery  
Maturity  
Meaning  
Meekness  
Mellowness  
Meticulousness  
Mindfulness  
Modesty  
Motivation  
Mysteriousness  
Nature  
Neatness  
Nerve  
Non-conformity  
Obedience



Open-mindedness	Piety	Punctuality	Responsibility
Openness	Playfulness	Purity	Rest
Optimism	Pleasantness	Rationality	Restraint
Order	Pleasure	Realism	Reverence
Organization	Poise	Reason	Richness
Originality	Polish	Reasonableness	Rigor
Outdoors	Popularity	Recognition	Sacredness
Outlandishness	Potency	Recreation	Sacrifice
Outrageousness	Power	Refinement	Sagacity
Partnership	Practicality	Reflection	Saintliness
Patience	Pragmatism	Relaxation	Sanguinity
Passion	Precision	Reliability	Satisfaction
Peace	Preparedness	Relief	Science
Perceptiveness	Presence	Religiousness	Security
Perfection	Pride	Reputation	Self-control
Perkiness	Privacy	Resilience	Selflessness
Perseverance	Proactivity	Resolution	Self-reliance
Persistence	Professionalism	Resolve	Self-respect
Persuasiveness	Prosperity	Resourcefulness	Sensitivity
Philanthropy	Prudence	Respect	Sensuality

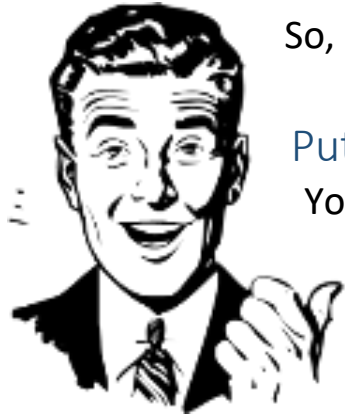
Serenity  
Service  
Sexiness  
Sexuality  
Sharing  
Shrewdness  
Significance  
Silence  
Silliness  
Simplicity  
Sincerity  
Skillfulness  
Solidarity  
Solitude  
Sophistication  
Soundness  
Speed  
Spirit  
Spirituality  
Spontaneity

Spunk  
Stability  
Status  
Stealth  
Stillness  
Strength  
Structure  
Success  
Support  
Supremacy  
Surprise  
Sympathy  
Synergy  
Teaching  
Teamwork  
Temperance  
Thankfulness  
Thoroughness  
Thoughtfulness  
Thrift

Tidiness  
Timeliness  
Traditionalism  
Tranquility  
Transcendence  
Trust  
Trustworthiness  
Truth  
Understanding  
Unflappability  
Uniqueness  
Unity  
Usefulness  
Utility  
Valor  
Variety  
Victory  
Vigor  
Virtue  
Vision

Vitality  
Vivacity  
Volunteering  
Warm-  
heartedness  
Warmth  
Watchfulness  
Wealth  
Willfulness  
Willingness  
Winning  
Wisdom  
Wittiness  
Wonder  
Worthiness  
Youthfulness  
Zeal

## Values to Action



So, how can you make values livable? Here are a few broad ideas:

### Put them in your vocabulary

Your values should be part of the language of your company. They should appear everywhere you can put them: your letterhead, your elevator, your website.

They should be connected with initiatives you undertake. (e.g. “This new health and wellness campaign reflects our **Caring** value.” “Last week we did a **Community** highway cleanup.” “This new product idea came from our

**Inspiration** contest.”)

### Create opportunities to practice them

See those three examples bolded above? Create events and initiatives like them that help you to put your values into practice.

### Measure success by them

Use your values as a framework for setting goals and then measuring achievements.

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### Walk the walk

Make sure you and your leadership are leading by example, and providing your rank and file with inspiration and a model for practicing your company values.

### Identify (and celebrate) behaviour that aligns with them

Recognition (strongest when coupled with a tangible reward) is really the gold standard for making values livable. When someone demonstrates one of your values, make sure there is an opportunity for co-workers to publicly appreciate that behaviour. This confirms the behaviour and it encourage others to follow suit.

Core values come in all shapes and sizes, and they all can work well for the organisations that use them. All they really need to do is work for you, your industry and your culture.

## The I Care card challenge



This is a fun, engaging and introspective activity that can be used for almost any group.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Lay the cards out so you can see each of them. The "blank" cards are to be used as "Wild Cards". The Wild Cards can represent a word or "value" that you feel is important but may not be represented among the 36 other values. If you wish write your own values on one or more of these blank cards.

Study the cards for several minutes and try to identify a meaning that pertains to them. The definitions are subjective and somewhat arbitrary and you do not have to agree with or accept the stated definition. These are provided simply to provide some context for the word. You can use any definition or meaning you like for any of the words.

Once you have had some time to reflect on the words, challenge yourself to identify the five values that best represent you as an individual. Gather all the other cards face down in a pile and end up with only those five "Core Values" face up in front of you.

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Be sure you are comfortable with allowing others to see what you have chosen. Move about the room and see what others have chosen. Discuss any surprises and ask people why they may have chosen a particular value.

Divide your five values into those that would be considered "Ethical" values and those that would be considered "Non-Ethical" values. Place the ethical values on the left and the non-ethical values on the right. For instance, the desire for wealth or the desire for health are not ethical values. Integrity and honesty on the other hand ARE ethical values.

Select the value that you feel needs the most work, the one that you could improve upon the most and share it with someone sitting nearby. Share with the same person why you feel it is the weakest of your values. Once that discussion is over select the card that represents your strongest value, the value that you feel represents you at this time. Share this with a different person sitting nearby. Explain why it is the strongest of your values.

The final step here is to narrow your list down to just one card that represents your most important "Core Value". Take plenty of time for this as it may be as challenging as the first selection. Hold up your card and state the value out loud to the entire group.

End the activity with a discussion around these questions:

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- Would five random people identify the same core value as each person selected?
- Do you walk the talk when it comes to your value and the way that you live your life?
- If so, provide some examples.
- Share your most recent ethical dilemma with a colleague.

You can download the cards from [www.resilienceaustralia.com](http://www.resilienceaustralia.com)

## Module Seven

# **Work Life Balance**



## Work life balance

Fifty percent of your potential happiness is genetic, say researchers. Sorry, you can't do much about that. Another 10 percent comes from your circumstances (geography, family, health). Sorry again. That leaves you with 40 percent you can actually do something about. This falls into a realm known as "intentional activities." Your happiness depends on the proactive choices you make to participate on this planet, your experiences.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Sometimes achieving a better balance between work and the rest of our lives is a matter of tweaking our attitude, like accepting that we can't do or have everything

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The participant experience is one of the most potent and least known paths to happiness and a thriving life beyond the office. It's all about engagement in activities that help gratify core needs, such as competence and autonomy.

Although “work-life balance” is hardly a new concept, employees everywhere continue to debate how best to achieve it. Perhaps the better question is whether work-life balance is even possible.

Unfortunately, there’s no one “right” approach to balancing work-related and personal commitments. For those worried about whether, where, or how to draw the line between work and play, follow the practical steps below to create a life that’s all-around fulfilling.

## **Your Action Plan**

Sometimes achieving a better balance between work and the rest of our lives is a matter of tweaking our attitude, like accepting that we can’t do or have everything. Other times the solutions are simple (think keeping better records of how you actually spend your time or relocating the laptop outside the bedroom). Whatever your challenges with work-life balance, these 15 tips are bound to help you enjoy every day to the fullest.

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### 1 - Pick and choose.

One of the hardest parts of achieving work-life balance is recognizing that we'll never have it all. That is, we'll never make it to every social event while also working extra hours and making home-cooked meals every night. Once you've decided which responsibilities and relationships you find most important (see number two), it's all about prioritizing. So cut yourself some slack when it comes to other achievements in your personal and professional life, and remind yourself that you're making progress where you believe it really counts.

### 2. You do you.

The definition of work-life balance varies pretty widely between individuals. Instead of trying to conform to someone else's lifestyle, figure out what's personally meaningful to you, whether that's developing a relationship with a new partner or working toward a promotion at a new job (or both). As long as you find your life fulfilling, it doesn't matter if your schedule looks different from someone else's.

### 3. Be open to change.

Even once you've searched your soul to figure out what truly matters to you, accept that those priorities might change over time. Maybe you'll start a family, take a new job, or pick up a new hobby—whatever the situation, be prepared for your values and schedule to shift, and make adjustments accordingly.

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#### 4. Accept imperfection.

Let's say you've established that friendships are the most important aspect of your life right now. That still doesn't mean you need to freak out if you miss your BFF's boyfriend's birthday bash because you're working late on a big project. Know that you'll make mistakes, and that obstacles and challenges will pop up unexpectedly. Instead of feeling like a terrible person, try to enjoy yourself and be productive and present with whatever you're doing. Then refocus on your main priorities as soon as possible.

#### 5. Take it day by day.

One clever tip is to combine your work and personal calendars so you don't necessarily prioritize one set of responsibilities over the other in advance. Each day, you can decide whether the staff meeting is more important than getting lunch with an old high school friend, or vice versa.

#### 6. Pursue your passions.

Just because you're working a lot doesn't necessarily mean your life isn't awesome. Some of us (ideally, all of us!) love our jobs, so much so that we're willing to spend hours brainstorming, emailing, and sitting in meetings. If it makes you happy to bring your laptop home and continue working after dinner because you feel like you're making a difference in the world or you simply love the work, go for it!

### 7. Keep track.

One of the first steps to figuring out how we can spend more time on the things that are really meaningful to us is learning how much time we currently spend on all our activities. For one week, try keeping a log of everything you do, from washing laundry to browsing Pinterest. Then go over the lists, pinpoint potential “time sucks,” share your concerns with your family and coworkers, and create an action plan for refocusing on the activities that really matter to you.

### 8. Open your options.

A growing number of workplaces allow employees to work remotely or have flexible schedules. If that possibility interests you, and if you think a new work style could make you less stressed, talk to your employer and see what you two can work out. (The worst that could happen is your boss will say no.)

### 9. Rock to your own rhythm.

Researchers are increasingly paying attention to the topic of chronotypes (biological schedules that determine when we feel tired and awake), and they’ve found that people vary widely in terms of when they’re most creative, energetic, and productive. Think about how your own abilities evolve throughout the day—if you’re most alert in the mornings, try getting to the office early; if you really come alive after 9pm, consider creating a less traditional work schedule (see number eight). That way, you won’t feel like you’re wasting valuable time at work when you’re half-zoned out anyway.

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### 10. Reconsider your commute.

The physical trip to and from the office can be more draining than work itself. If standing like a sardine on a crowded train is making you sick, consider moving closer to your workplace: You'll have a better attitude toward work and feel less like you're wasting a big chunk of your day. On the other hand, don't be afraid of a long commute if it means going home to a neighbourhood you love and feeling happier in general.

### 11. Seek support.

Ultimately, work-life balance is about finding a way to juggle all the different kinds of relationships in our lives. So, don't be shy about asking other people to help you manage your responsibilities. Talk to coworkers about filling in for each other when one of you has an outside commitment, or to family members about sharing dog-walking or babysitting responsibilities on days when someone needs to stay late at the office.

### 12. Don't tear down this wall.

Working from home can be liberating, but it comes with challenges, like potentially getting distracted by the pile of dirty laundry on the floor. To avoid these issues, set up a physical boundary between work life and home life by designating a whole room (or even just a corner) as your office space. Try to keep all work-related paraphernalia and tasks contained to just this area.

### 13. Squeeze it in.

In an ideal world, we'd be able to spend two hours lunching with pals every day and attend salsa lessons every night. But sometimes it's more realistic to grab coffee with a friend and go dancing every other weekend. This schedule might not be exactly what we'd like, but it's certainly preferable to not socializing or letting loose at all. Let yourself enjoy the time you do have, instead of lamenting the time you don't.

### 14. Find fun anywhere.

These days, lots of workplaces are embracing the idea of organized fun, like bonding activities for staff members. And nearly three quarters of millennial workers say they want their coworkers to be a second family. If you enjoy the workday and the company of your coworkers, this experience in itself can count as socializing. Don't feel like you have to create "balance" by spending your weekends and weeknights doing non-work-related activities unless you really want to do them.

### 15. Tackle technology.

Smartphones, laptops, tablets, spaceships: All these tools are designed to improve our productivity and our lives overall. But when these gadgets make us feel like we're supposed to be responding to work emails or finishing up projects at home, we can start to get overwhelmed. On the other side of the spectrum, constantly checking our Facebook feed while at work can lead to some serious FOMO

(Fear of missing out). Manage all this technology-induced stress by unplugging for a little while or by setting limits on when and where to use it.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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One of the hardest parts of  
achieving work-life balance  
is recognizing that we'll  
never have it all.

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## Review Questions



Work–life balance is a broad concept including proper prioritizing between “work” (career and ambition) on the one hand and “life” (Health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development) on the other. Related, though broader, terms include “lifestyle balance” and “life balance.”

Q1. From how many years you are working in this organization?

- a. 0-5 Years
- b. 5-10 Years
- c. 10 to 15 Years
- d. More than 15 Years

Q2. Are you satisfied with the working hours of the organization?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q3. Does after working hours you get enough time for your family?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q4. Do you feel that you are able to balance your work life?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q5. How often do you think or worry about work (when you are not actually at work or traveling to work)?

- a. Never think about work
- b. Sometimes
- c. Often
- d. Always

Q6. Does the organization take initiatives to manage work life of its employees?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q7. If yes, what are the initiatives your organization has taken for managing work life?

- a. Provide flexible work timings
- b. Provide leave to manage work life
- c. Job share option is provided by the organization

Q8. Do you have more pressure of work in the organization or it is evenly distributed?

- a. Have Pressure
- b. Work is evenly distributed

Q9. How do you rate the Flexible Working Hours provided by the company due to current Work Life Management Policy?

- a. Good
- b. Average
- c. Poor

Q10. Does the company provide a family care facility?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q11. Does the company provide maternity and paternity leave to the employees?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q12. How do you rate the leave policy of the company?

- a. Satisfactory
- b. Dissatisfactory

Q13. Does the company organize events and picnics to manage work life and personal life?

- a. Satisfactory
- b. Dissatisfactory

Q14. Do you think that you have good career prospects in the company?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q15. Does the company offer a health facility for its employees?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q16. Do you think that if employees have good work-life balance the organization will be more effective and successful?

- a. Yes
- b. No

## Module Eight

# **Set Boundaries**

## Setting Boundaries

Begin to Set Personal Boundaries

*Do you have a hard time standing up for yourself? Do you keep agreeing to do things that you really don't want to do? Do you tolerate rude comments or pushy people because you can't handle conflict? Do you take things personally?*

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Do you have a hard time standing up for yourself?

Do you keep agreeing to do things that you really don't want to do?

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Creating stronger boundaries is the number one way for most women to improve their lives. Here you can learn how to stand up for yourself! Set personal boundaries and free yourself from the "disease to please" with these three steps!

#### Step 1: Self-Awareness

The first step in learning to set boundaries is self-awareness.

#### Step 2: Setting Your Boundaries

Learn to set boundaries with others. Find support and using specific language.

#### Step 3: Strengthen Your Internal Boundaries

Too often, women neglect to stand up for themselves by avoiding confrontation.

## Guilt in Setting Boundaries

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Learn how to overcome guilt.

Get rid of the obstacles that could be blocking your way to setting boundaries in your life.

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### Step 1 – Self Awareness

Learn how to overcome guilt. Get rid of the obstacles that could be blocking your way to setting boundaries in your life.

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The first step in learning to set boundaries is self-awareness. For example, pay close attention to the situations when you lose energy, feel a knot in your stomach, or want to cry. Identifying where you need more space, self- respect, energy or personal power is the first step.

Another way to identify your boundaries is by completing these three sentences with at least 10 examples.

1. People may not \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I have a right to ask for \_\_\_\_\_.
3. To protect my time and energy, it's OK to \_\_\_\_\_.

## Step 2: Setting Your Boundaries

Start setting simple but firm boundaries with a graceful or neutral tone. This will feel uncomfortable at first, but as you take care of yourself, the personal power you gain will make it easier.

- Be sure to have support in place before and after each conversation. If you can't find support from a friend or family member, you may be successful finding a friend online.
- Vent any strong emotions with your partner *before* having your boundary conversation.
- Use simple, direct language. *To set a boundary with an angry person:* "You may not yell at me. If you continue, I'll have to leave the room."

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



When setting boundaries, there  
is no need to defend, debate,  
or over-explain your feelings.

Be firm, gracious and direct.

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*To set a boundary with personal phone calls at work:* "I've decided to take all personal calls in the evening in order to get my work done. I will need to call you later."

*To say no to extra commitments:* "Although this organization is important to me, I need to decline your request for volunteer help in order to honour my family's needs."

*To set a boundary with someone who is critical:* "It's not okay with me that you comment on my weight. I'd like to ask you to stop."

*To buy yourself time when making tough decisions:* "I'll have to sleep on it, I have a policy of not making decisions right away."

*To back out of a commitment:* "I know I agreed to head up our fundraising efforts, but after reviewing my schedule, I now realize that I won't be able to give it my best attention. I'd like to help find a replacement by the end of next week."

*To set a boundary with an adult child who borrows money:* "I won't be lending you money anymore. I love you and you need to take responsibility for yourself."

When setting boundaries, there is no need to defend, debate, or over- explain your feelings. Be firm, gracious and direct. When faced with resistance, repeat your statement or request. Back up your boundary with action. Stay strong. If you give in, you invite people to ignore your needs

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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What do I need to do (if anything)  
to regain my personal power or  
stand up for myself?

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### Step 3: Strengthen Your Internal Boundaries

One of the reasons that women take things personally is because they have flexible "internal boundaries." An internal boundary is like an invisible shield that prevents you from taking in a comment without checking it out first. For example, when someone accuses you of being arrogant, stop and consider the statement *before* taking it in.

When you use this internal shield, especially with difficult people like an ex-spouse or critical parent, it gives you time to ask yourself the following three questions:

- How much of this is true about me?
- How much of this is about the other person?
- What do I need to do (if anything) to regain my personal power or stand up for myself?

This last question is very important. Too often women neglect to stand up for themselves by avoiding confrontation and end up weakening their internal shield, making it harder to set boundaries at all. So, if someone offends you, it may be necessary to let them know in order to protect and strengthen your internal boundaries.

## **Guilt in setting boundaries**

*Is guilt standing in your way of saying no to the things you don't want to do? Learn how to overcome guilt and other obstacles that could be blocking your way to setting boundaries in your life.*

### Overcoming Guilt

You have to be ready to make tough choices to change your lifestyle. Guilt is the most common obstacle to taking care of yourself. You *will* feel guilty by making yourself a priority. To overcome guilt, face it head on. See it as a sign that you are on the right track.

### Overcoming Resistance

Tell people your priorities have changed and that you are taking care of your needs. If you feel your own resistance to focusing on yourself, remember, when you put yourself first, you are then fully available to others without resentment or anger.

## Find Support

When you start making yourself a priority, you may feel uncomfortable and uncaring. Stay with it and find support from other women doing the same.

More on curing the disease to please:

- Don't be a doormat
- Set personal boundaries
- Your absolute yes list
- Learning to say no to others

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I often have a hard time  
saying "No."

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*To help you set your personal boundaries and determine your true priorities, create your "Absolute Yes List." This list is about setting new priorities for yourself, using your time the way you really want. Put your self-care above anything else—say no unless it's an absolute yes. Choose to spend your time and energy on things that bring you joy and make decisions based on what you want instead of what others want. If you don't set boundaries and take care of yourself, your health and well-being are at stake. And, if you are neglecting yourself, you aren't helping your family and others around you.*



### Ask yourself:

What needs your attention at this time in your life? Think in terms of the next 3 months, not the next year. What needs your attention: your marriage, financial, health, your physical and emotional health? Maybe you need to find a babysitter to care for your child so you can have time for yourself each week. What are the most pressing areas right now? More examples: spiritual well-being, time with friends, school, work, volunteering, finances, household chores, home repair.

Once you've made your list above, pick the top five priorities.

Does your list need to be reordered?

Place yourself at Number 1. Placing yourself at the top may be hard, but ask yourself, "How am I going to take care of others if I am burnt out?"

Remember, this is about you. This Is Your Absolute Yes List.

### Daily Reminder:

Once your list is complete, print this out this worksheet and place it where you will see it throughout the day—the bathroom mirror, the dashboard of your car, your computer monitor, etc.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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I tend to bottle up my emotions  
rather than talk about my feelings.

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## Review Questions



1. I stand up to my friends if they are doing something I don't feel comfortable doing.
2. I speak up when someone is not respecting my personal boundaries.
3. I often have a hard time saying "No."
4. I express my opinions, even if others disagree with me.
5. When an argument is over, I often wish I would have said what was really on my mind.
6. I tend to just go along with what everyone else wants, instead of stating my own thoughts.
7. I sometimes avoid asking questions for fear of sounding stupid.
8. I tend to bottle up my emotions rather than talk about my feelings.
9. If I disagree with my partner, I talk to him or her about it.

10. If a person has borrowed money (or a game, clothes, or something else of value) and is overdue in returning it, I talk to the person about it.
11. I'm usually able to tell people how I'm feeling.
12. If I don't like the way someone is being treated, I speak up about it.
13. I speak up about things I really care about.
14. I am careful to avoid hurting other people's feelings, even when I feel that I have been wronged.
15. I have a hard time controlling my emotions when I disagree with someone.
16. I avoid attacking someone's intelligence when I disagree with their ideas.
17. I listen to other people's opinions, even if I disagree with them.
18. In disagreements, I make sure that I understand other points of view.
19. In discussions, I communicate that I am listening through body language (nodding my head, avoiding rolling my eyes).
20. Even in an argument, I don't interrupt the other person.

## Module Nine

# Savoring

## Savoring

People who are adept at savoring – who report being able to savor positive outcomes in their life – tend to be happier. Interestingly, feeling like we can *savor* positive outcomes has a greater effect on our happiness than feeling like we can *obtain* them. Controlling our attitude may be even more important than controlling our world.

In particular, older adults (about 65 years of age) who can savor more report more intense and more frequent happiness. Perhaps the ability to truly appreciate the good in life is part of wisdom, knowledge that often comes with experience.

People who can savor more are happier, but practicing savoring has similar benefits. In one study, researchers asked participants to take a 20-minute daily walk for a week. Some people were told to focus on the positive aspects around them, some on the negative, and some on nothing in particular. After a week, the positive group was happier and appreciated nature more than the other two groups.

In another study, participants were asked to reminisce for 10 minutes twice a day for a week. Compared to those who didn't reminisce – who thought about general life events instead – the reminiscers ended up happier.

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Different types of savoring may correlate with different positive traits. Anticipation and counting one's blessings are linked to optimism, for example. The ability to savor the present is **linked to higher self-esteem**, and the ability to savor the past is **helpful in coping with stress**. Finally, savoring in general is associated with being more extroverted and grateful.

Savoring may also give us a greater sense of meaning in life. A life full of hardship might feel meaningless, but so might a life full of gifts that we can't seem to enjoy. Savoring helps unlock the treasures that are already in front of us.

## Nine savoring strategies

In *Savoring: A New Model of Positive Experience*, authors Fred B. Bryant and Joseph Veroff identify nine different strategies that people commonly use to enhance their savoring. All of them serve common aims: they either help us move into a savoring mindset (instead of worrying or ruminating, for example), make the savoring last longer, or make it more intense.

Which of the below strategies do you use, and which could you add to your savoring repertoire?

### 1. Sharing with others.

The most powerful savoring strategy brings other people into the mix. In some cases, we are literally sharing the experience with them, like when we attend a concert. We enjoy witnessing their enjoyment, and they may point out new aspects to savor (*Look at that virtuoso drummer!*). Around other people, we tend to laugh and smile more, to be more expressive, playful, and spontaneous. But even if other people aren't present, the mere thought of telling them about an amazing film or a perfect latte can enhance our savoring. We might even take note of more details, just so we can recount them later.



## 2. Memory building.

In this strategy, we actively try to note details of the experience so we will remember them later. I witnessed this at a wedding once, when I could literally see the bride trying to capture every moment and fully take it in. This is a common strategy for rare events like weddings.

## 3. Self-congratulation.

Self-congratulation, a form of basking, extends the pleasure we take in accomplishments. We might think about how proud we are, how impressed other people are, or how long we've been waiting for this; we might even do a fist pump or a victory dance.

## 4. Sensory-perceptual sharpening.

If the positive experience engages our senses with sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or touch, we might try sensory-perceptual sharpening: trying to focus in on a certain stimulus and nothing else. This could be why massage rooms are quiet and dark, and why we shut our eyes for that first luscious bite of dessert.

## 5. Comparison.

As Hector (a novel) finds out in his search for happiness, comparisons are crucial – flying in business class doesn't feel all that good if you're used to first class. But downward comparisons can make us

happier. We savor an experience even more when we think about how it might never have happened, or how we weren't so lucky in the past. A student accepted into graduate school could imagine what rejection would have felt like, or how only yesterday his future was uncertain.

## 6. Absorption.

Sometimes when we savor, we want to think as little as possible – to be fully immersed and present. We might use this strategy when listening to a rousing symphony, as music fills our ears and emotions swell within us, or during a spiritual experience.

## 7. Behavioral expression.

In a famous psychology experiment, people holding a pen between their teeth while reading a cartoon rated it as funnier, thanks to the smile-like expression produced. This savoring strategy involves physical expressions of positivity – laughing, jumping, dancing – that create a positive loop of enjoyment.

## 8. Counting blessings.

With this strategy, we think about how lucky we are to be experiencing or to have experienced something positive. Practicing gratitude like this is actually a form of savoring because it increases our enjoyment of the good things in life.

## 9. Temporal awareness.

In this savoring strategy, we remind ourselves that the experience won't last forever, though we wish it would. It's finite, which makes us enjoy it all the more. This is a common strategy for rare and bittersweet experiences.

# Savoring Assignment

## Practice savoring

- (1) Beforehand, really anticipate how wonderful it will be.
- (2) During the experience, focus on all the sensations and feelings you're having. Use all five senses. Be nonjudgmental. Express your emotions—to whomever you're with or by writing them down later.
- (3) Afterward, look back on the event. Share it with someone. Turn it into a story. Reminiscing is another important part too."

- Savoring allows you to capture moments of beauty.
- It encourages you to slow down and appreciate in the moment experiences.
- Savoring contributes to happiness.

## Activity

- Work on a Savoring Album. This will be an on-going work in progress.
- Reflect upon moments in your past that were joyful; capture as many moments of beauty or happiness as possible.
- Describe in words how you feel now about these treasured moments.

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## Review Questions



- What is meaningful about the moments you chose to capture?
- What do you appreciate the most about this moment?
- How did you feel about what you captured.

## Module Ten

# Gratitude

## Gratitude

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Expressing gratitude bolsters  
self-worth and self-esteem.

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People feel and express gratitude in multiple ways. They can apply it to the past (retrieving positive memories and being thankful for elements of childhood or past blessings), the present (not taking good fortune for granted as it comes), and the future (maintaining a hopeful and optimistic

attitude). Regardless of the inherent or current level of someone's gratitude, it's a quality that individuals can successfully cultivate further.

## **Eight ways gratitude promotes happiness**

First, grateful thinking promotes the savoring of positive life experiences. By relishing and taking pleasure in some of the gifts of your life, you will be able to extract the maximum possible satisfaction and enjoyment from your current circumstances.

Second, expressing gratitude bolsters self-worth and self-esteem. When you realize how much people have done for you or how much you have accomplished, you feel more confident and efficacious. Unfortunately, for many people, it comes more naturally to focus on failures and disappointments or on other people's slights and hurts. Gratefulness can help you unlearn this habit. Instead of automatically thinking, "Woe is me," in response to any setback, the practice of gratitude encourages you instead to consider what you value about your current life or how you are thankful that things aren't worse.

Third, gratitude helps people cope with stress and trauma. That is, the ability to appreciate your life circumstances may be an adaptive coping method by which you positively reinterpret stressful or negative life experiences.



## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hope it will make them happier.

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Fourth, the expression of gratitude encourages moral behaviour. Grateful people are more likely to help others (e.g., you become aware of kind and caring acts and feel compelled to reciprocate) and less likely to be materialistic (e.g., you appreciate what you have and become less fixated on acquiring more stuff). In one study, people induced to be grateful for a specific kind act were more likely to be helpful toward their benefactor, as well as toward a stranger, even when the helping involved doing an unpleasant, tedious chore.

Fifth, gratitude can help build social bonds, strengthening existing relationships and nurturing new ones. Keeping a gratitude journal, for example, can produce feelings of greater connectedness with

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others. Several studies have shown that people who feel gratitude toward particular individuals (even when they never directly express it) experience closer and “higher-quality” relationships with them.

Sixth, expressing gratitude tends to inhibit invidious comparisons with others. If you are genuinely thankful and appreciative for what you have (e.g., family, health, home), you are less likely to pay close attention to or envy what the Joneses have.

Seventh, the practice of gratitude is incompatible with negative emotions and may actually diminish or deter such feelings as anger, bitterness, and greed. As one psychiatrist has argued, “gratitude...dissolves negative feelings: anger and jealousy melt in its embrace, fear and defensiveness shrink.” Indeed, it’s hard to feel guilty or resentful or infuriated when you’re feeling grateful.

Last but not least, gratitude helps us thwart hedonic adaptation. If you recall, hedonic adaptation is illustrated by our remarkable capacity rapidly to adjust to any new circumstance or event. This is extremely adaptive when the new event is unpleasant, but not when a new event is positive.

Unfortunately, because of hedonic adaptation, that boost is usually short-lived. Adaptation to all things positive is essentially the enemy of happiness, and one of the keys to becoming happier lies in

combating its effects, which gratitude does quite nicely. By preventing people from taking the good things in their lives for granted – from adapting to their positive life circumstances – the practice of gratitude can directly counteract the effects of hedonic adaptation.

## Ways to cultivate gratitude

Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hopes it will make them happier, or thinking they can't feel satisfied until every physical and material need is met. Gratitude helps people refocus on what they have instead of what they lack. And, although it may feel contrived at first, this mental state grows stronger with use and practice.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Focusing on people to whom you  
are grateful has more of an impact  
than focusing on things for which  
you are grateful

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Here are some ways to cultivate gratitude on a regular basis.

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***Write a thank-you note.*** You can make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person by writing a thank-you letter expressing your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life. Send it, or better yet, deliver and read it in person if possible. Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month. Once in a while, write one to yourself.

***Thank someone mentally.*** No time to write? It may help just to think about someone who has done something nice for you, and mentally thank the individual.

***Keep a gratitude journal.*** Make it a habit to write down or share with a loved one thoughts about the gifts you've received each day.

***Count your blessings.*** Pick a time every week to sit down and write about your blessings — reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for. Sometimes it helps to pick a number — such as three to five things — that you will identify each week. As you write, be specific and think about the sensations you felt when something good happened to you.

***Pray.*** People who are religious can use prayer to cultivate gratitude.

***Meditate.*** Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on the present moment without judgment. Although people often focus on a word or phrase (such as "peace"), it is also possible to focus on what you're grateful for (the warmth of the sun, a pleasant sound, etc.).

## Keep a Gratitude Journal



So why might this particular practice do such good for our minds and bodies? Research shows that translating thoughts into concrete language—whether oral or written—has advantages over just thinking the thoughts: It makes us more aware of them, deepening their emotional impact.

There is no one right way to do it. There's no evidence that journaling at the start of the day is any more effective than journaling before you go to bed, for instance.

You don't need to buy a fancy personal journal to record your entries in, or worry about spelling or grammar. The important thing is to establish the habit of paying attention to gratitude-inspiring events.

- Don't just go through the motions.

Research suggests that journaling is more effective if you first make the conscious decision to become happier and more grateful. Motivation to become happier plays a role in the efficacy of journaling.

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- Go for depth over breadth.

Elaborating in detail about a particular thing for which you're grateful carries more benefits than a superficial list of many things.

- Get personal.

Focusing on *people* to whom you are grateful has more of an impact than focusing on *things* for which you are grateful.

- Try subtraction, not just addition.

One effective way of stimulating gratitude is to reflect on what your life would be like *without* certain blessings, rather than just tallying up all those good things.

- Savor surprises.

Try to record events that were unexpected or surprising, as these tend to elicit stronger levels of gratitude.



- Don't overdo it.

Writing occasionally (once or twice per week) is more beneficial than daily journaling. Research found that people who wrote in their gratitude journals once a week for six weeks reported boosts in happiness afterward; people who wrote three times per week didn't. We adapt to positive events quickly, especially if we constantly focus on them.

## Module Eleven

# **Choose to be Happy**

## Choose to be happy

One theory in psychology research suggests that we all have a happiness "set-point" that largely determines our overall well-being. We oscillate around this set point, becoming happier when something positive happens or the opposite, afterwards returning to equilibrium.

But this set-point, to a certain extent, can be *reset*. Although our general mood levels and well-being are partially determined by factors like genetics and upbringing, roughly 40 percent of our happiness is within our control. As psychologist William James put it, "The greatest discovery of any generation is that a human can alter his life by altering his attitude."

## Here are eight ways you can take control of your own happiness.

Simply try.

A little effort can go a long way in increasing happiness. Two small experimental studies, published in the Journal of Positive Psychology, found that simply *trying* to be happier could actually elevate mood and well-being. In one study, two groups of students listened to "happy" music -- one group was instructed to make a concerted effort to feel happier, while the other group was instructed not to actively try to lift their mood. The group that tried to feel happy experienced the most elevated moods after listening to the music.

Make happiness your number-one goal.

People who are happy choose to make happiness among their top goals in life, according to psychologist Tom G. Stevens, Ph.D., author of *You Can Choose to Be Happy*.

"Choose to take advantage of opportunities to learn how to be happy," Stevens wrote. "For example, reprogram your beliefs and values. Learn good self-management skills, good interpersonal skills, and good career-related skills. Choose to be in environments and around people that increase

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your probability of happiness. The people who become the happiest and grow the most are those who also make truth and their own personal growth primary values."

Linger on those little, positive moments.

According to Rick Hanson, neuropsychologist and author of *Hardwiring Happiness*, our brains are wired to scout for all that's bad -- the brain is like velcro for negative experiences and teflon for positive ones. This "negativity bias" causes the brain to react intensely to bad news, compared to how it responds to good news. But we can counter the brain's negativity bias -- which triggers us to form stronger bad memories than good ones -- by appreciating and lingering on those tiny, positive moments.

People don't recognize the hidden power of everyday experiences. We're surrounded by opportunities -- 10 seconds here or 20 seconds there -- to just register useful experiences and learn from them. People don't do that when they could.

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## Choose mindfulness.

The secret to happiness could be as simple (and difficult) as becoming more mindful. Meditation -- a practice that anyone can do, anywhere, so long as they're willing to sit and try to silence the mind -- is thought to be a happiness-booster.

## Smile your way to happiness.

The secret to boosting your mood could be as simple as making yourself smile. A study found that workers who smiled as a result of cultivating positive thoughts exhibited improved mood and less withdrawal. Fake smiling, on the other hand, resulted in worse moods and withdrawal from work.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



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The secret to happiness could be  
as simple as becoming more mindful.

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Practice gratitude.

Cultivating thankfulness and gratitude is a scientifically-backed way to increase happiness, and it's firmly within your control to choose to be more grateful.

Grateful people tend to appreciate simple pleasures, defined as "those pleasures in life that are available to most people," according to a report in the journal of Social Behavior and Personality.

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Pursue happiness, find happiness -- and success.

Conventional thinking has it that pursuing success will lead to happiness, but research has shown that it may be just the opposite. Pursuing happiness leads not only to happiness itself, but also to success.

Cultivating a positive mindset could boost well-being and improve workers' performance on many levels, from productivity to creativity and engagement.

People who cultivate a positive mind-set perform better in the face of challenge. I call this the 'happiness advantage' -- every business outcome shows improvement when the brain is positive.

Let yourself be happy.

Bronnie Ware, a palliative care nurse who spent years working with elderly people on their deathbeds, noticed a common theme that came up repeatedly among her patients at the end of their lives: They regretted not "letting" themselves be happy.

Ware, the author of *The Top Five Regrets Of The Dying*, wrote:

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“Many did not realize until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called 'comfort' of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content. When deep within, they longed to laugh properly and have silliness in their life again ... Life is a choice.” It is YOUR life. Choose consciously, choose wisely, choose honestly. Choose happiness.

### Practice compassion.

Want to increase your brain's capacity for happiness? Try meditating on compassion. Brain-scanning studies on French monk Matthieu Ricard found that when he was practicing loving-kindness meditation, his brain produced gamma waves "never reported before in the neuroscience literature." Ricard has the largest capacity for happiness ever recorded, thanks to neuroplasticity. “Meditation is not just blissing out under a mango tree but it completely changes your brain and therefore changes what you are.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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A smile is a  
wonderful beautifier.

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## Actions to Choose Happiness

Happy people realize happiness is a choice. They are not held hostage by their circumstances and they do not seek happiness in people or possessions. They understand that when we stop chasing the world's definition of happiness, we begin to see the decision to experience happiness has been right in front of us all along.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Each of us have natural talents,  
strengths, and abilities.  
And when we use them effectively,  
we feel alive and comfortable  
in our skin.

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## Review Questions



Acts of kindness exercise

Do things for others

Doing things to help others is not only good for the recipients - it has a positive payback for our happiness and health too. When people experience kindness it also makes them kinder as a result – so kindness is contagious! As the saying goes: "if you want to feel good, do good."

Do at least one extra kind act each day for a week, ideally a different one each day.

Ideally your act of kindness should be something beyond the kind things you do on a regular basis.

Use this sheet to keep a record of your acts of kindness. You can also note down how you felt about doing them and whether you found them easy or difficult.

1 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

2 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

3 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

4 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

5 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

6 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

7 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

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## Module Twelve

# **My Best Self**

## Best Possible Future Self

Optimism is a powerful tool for increasing happiness and life satisfaction because it boosts positive feelings about the future, increases self-efficacy, and leads to self-fulfilling prophecies.

The goal of this exercise is for you to experience the power of optimistic thinking.

### Instructions

Previous research has persuasively shown that writing expressively about oneself and one's feelings has numerous benefits for health, emotional adjustment, and well-being. In this exercise, you will visualize and write about your "best possible future self." Possible selves have been defined as personalized representations of goals and comprise all of the futures that a person can envision for herself – that is, her "most cherished self-wishes." Writing about one's possible selves thus can enhance self-regulation because it provides an opportunity to learn about oneself, to gain insight into and restructure one's priorities, and to understand better one's motives and emotional reactions. Writing about one's life goals may also be beneficial because it can reduce goal conflict, as well as bring greater awareness and clarity to one's priorities, motivations, and values.

Thus, this exercise may serve to integrate life experiences into a meaningful framework and allow you to gain a feeling of control. Finally, imagining success at one's life goals can boost psychological well-being, improve performance, boost psychological adjustment and bring to bear a variety of benefits associated with positive thinking

Ultimately, all of these benefits are hypothesized to increase and sustain your happiness level.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Doing things to help others is not  
only good for the recipients -  
it has a positive payback  
for our happiness and health too.

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## Review Exercise



Write for 20 minutes at a time about different experiences and topics.

Here are your specific instructions:

“Think about your life in the future. Imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing

all of your life goals. Think of this as the realization of all of your life dreams. Now, write about what you imagined.”

Do this for 20 minutes per day for three days in a row.

## Module Thirteen

# **Your Happiness Manifesto**

## **Your Happiness Manifesto**

Your happiness

Overall, how happy would you say you are these days?

Give your rating on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high).

What is happiness?

Take a moment to think about what happiness means to you. Note down whatever comes in to your head.

What does happiness mean to you?

Example: Feeling good about how things are going

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Now think about specific things that often make you happy. These could be activities, people, places or anything else that comes to mind.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Overall, how happy would you say you are these days?

Give your rating on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high)

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What things make you happy?

Example: A relaxing day at home with my family  
Score out of 10

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## Action Plans

We would like you to try some simple actions in your daily lives, initially over the course of a week. They may be things you already do. If not, then you may want to make them part of your on-going routine if they're useful.

They are all things that recent scientific research has shown can have a positive impact on people's feelings of happiness and fulfilment.

### More action ideas

These are just three of the many areas where scientific research suggests we can take action to make both ourselves and others happier.

Be Kind Do things for others

Be Grateful Remember the good things

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Be Mindful Do less and notice more

Be Mindful Do less and notice more

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Take a moment to think about  
what happiness means to you.

Note down whatever comes in  
to your head

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Mindfulness is a way of paying attention to the present moment. When we're mindful we become more aware of our thoughts and feelings and better able to manage them.

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Being mindful can boost our concentration, improve our relationships and help with stress or depression. It can even have a positive effect on physical problems like chronic pain.

Anyone can learn to be mindful. It's simple, you can do it anywhere, and the results can be life-changing.

Action: Take 10

Take 10 minutes each day to do a simple mindfulness meditation.

Many of us spend much of our time focused either on the past or on the future, paying very little attention to what is happening right now.

Being mindful involves staying in the moment, spending more time noticing what's going on both inside ourselves and in our surroundings. Rather than trying to change things it involves accepting the way that things are, for better or for worse.

## Be Grateful - Remember the good things

Being grateful is about much more than just saying thank you – it's about not taking things for granted and having a sense of appreciation and thankfulness for life.

People who are grateful tend to be happier, healthier and more fulfilled. Being grateful can help people cope with stress and can even have a beneficial effect on heart rate.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



Perform an extra act of  
kindness each day.

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## Action: Three Good Things

Each day write down three good things that happened. They can be anything you feel good about or grateful for.

Even on a bad day there are normally some things that we can feel good about. Taking time to be grateful is not about ignoring the bad things – it just helps us focus our attention more on the positive, rather than dwell on the negative.

To get used to the idea, start by filling in the boxes below to describe three good things that happened to you yesterday and why they were good.

Try to include why you felt each of the things was really good.

Good Thing 1

Example: Best night's sleep for ages so felt much more energetic!

Good Thing 2

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Example: Lunch with Steve and Jane – great to see old friends again

Good Thing 3

Example: Home in time to bath the kids. We really had fun together

Now repeat this activity at the end of each day for a week. Use the blank spaces on the following pages to write down your Three Good Things down each day.

## Three Good Things exercise

Write down three good things that happened to you today. They can be anything you feel good about or grateful for.

Use this sheet to keep a record of your Three Good Things each day over the course of a week. Try to include why you felt each of the things was really good.

Try to write down your three good things every day if possible – but if for some reason you miss a day then don't worry, just carry on the next day.

You could even talk to your family or friends about your three good things and ask them about theirs.

1 Day/date: Good Thing 1

Good Thing 2

Good Thing 3

## Be Grateful - Remember the good things

Action: Letter of Gratitude

Who are you really grateful to?

Think of three people who have been a really positive influence in your life and that you feel really grateful to.

They could be a member of your family, an old teacher, long-lost friend, colleague or someone else who has made a real difference in your life.

Person 1: Who is it and why are you grateful to them?

Person 2: Who is it and why are you grateful to them?

Person 3: Who is it and why are you grateful to them?

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## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Perhaps the greatest leverage of  
sustaining your happiness  
is to share happy experiences  
with others.

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Now choose one of these people to write to and tell them how grateful you are; perhaps someone you've not thanked properly before.

Think about the impact this person had on you and write a letter to tell them:

- What specifically are you grateful for?
- How did they help you?
- How did it help make you the person you are today?

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You can write the letter any way you like – but try to be really in touch with the feeling of being grateful to them as you write. If possible, arrange to visit the person and read the letter aloud to them. Otherwise post or email the letter to them and maybe follow up with a phone call.

Who did you write your letter of gratitude to? How did it feel?

## **Be Kind - Do things for others**

Doing things to help others is not only good for the recipients - it has a positive payback for our happiness and health too. When people experience kindness it also makes them kinder as a result – so kindness is contagious! As the saying goes: "If you want to feel good, do good"

Action: Daily Acts of Kindness

Perform an extra act of kindness each day.

This could be a compliment, a helping hand, a hug, a gift or something else. The act may be large or small and the recipient may not even be aware of it.

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Ideally your acts of kindness should be beyond the kind things you already do on a regular basis. And of course, the acts mustn't put you or others in danger!

Do at least one extra kind act each day for a week, ideally a different one each day.

Here are some ideas for acts of kindness:

1. Give up your seat
2. Hold a door open for someone
3. Give a (sincere) compliment
4. Make someone laugh
5. Give someone a hug
6. Take time to really listen to someone
7. Make someone new feel welcome
8. Let one car in on every journey
9. Give directions to someone who's lost
10. Have a conversation with a stranger
11. Pick up litter as you walk
12. Let someone in front of you in the supermarket queue

13. Tell someone they mean a lot to you
14. Let someone have your parking spot
15. Read a story with a child
16. Offer your change to someone struggling to find the right amount
17. Treat a loved one to breakfast in bed
18. Buy cakes or fruit for your colleagues
19. Invite your neighbour round for a drink and a chat
20. Offer to help with someone's shopping
21. Tell someone if you notice they're doing a good job
22. Pass on a book you've enjoyed
23. Say sorry (you know who to)
24. Forgive someone for what they've done
25. Visit a sick friend, relative or neighbour
26. Buy an unexpected gift for someone
27. Bake something for a neighbour
28. Pay for someone in the queue behind
29. Do a chore that you don't normally do
30. Help out someone in need
31. Offer to look after a friend's children
32. Offer to mow your neighbour's lawn



- 33. Donate your old things to charity
- 34. Give food to a homeless person and take time to talk with them
- 35. Visit someone who may be lonely
- 36. Give blood
- 37. Get back in contact with someone you've lost touch with
- 38. Organise a fundraising event
- 39. Volunteer your time for a charity
- 40. Plan a street party

## **Acts of kindness exercise**

Do at least one extra kind act each day for a week, ideally a different one each day.

Ideally your act of kindness should be something beyond the kind things you do on a regular basis.

Use this sheet to keep a record of your acts of kindness. You can also note down how you felt about doing them and whether you found them easy or difficult.

1 Day/date: What did you do? Who for? How did it go?

## **My Action Plan - Things to try this week**



- Daily 10-minute Mindfulness exercise
- Daily Act(s) of kindness
- Three Good Things each day
- Letter of Gratitude

"Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions"

## Review Exercise

Here is a sample Happiness Manifesto.

Try constructing your own. One that is yours and that you aspire to live by this year.

### HAPPINESS MANIFESTO

Do these for two months and see the difference they make!

1. **Get physical** Exercise for half an hour three times a week.
2. **Count your blessings** At the end of each day, reflect on at least five things you're grateful for.
3. **Talk time** Have an hour-long uninterrupted conversation with your partner or closest friend each week.

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4. **Plant something** Even if it's a window box or pot plant. Keep it alive!
5. **Cut your TV** viewing by half
6. **Smile at** and/or say hello to a stranger, at least once each day.
7. **Phone a friend** Make contact with at least one friend or relation you have not been in contact for a while and arrange to meet up.
8. **Have a good laugh** at least once a day
9. **Every day** make sure you give yourself a treat. Take time to really enjoy this.
10. **Daily kindness** Do an extra good turn for someone each day

# Module Fourteen

## **My Best Self**

## Best Possible Future Self

Optimism is a powerful tool for increasing happiness and life satisfaction because it boosts positive feelings about the future, increases self-efficacy, and leads to self-fulfilling prophecies.

The goal of this exercise is for you to experience the power of optimistic thinking.

### Instructions

Previous research has persuasively shown that writing expressively about oneself and one's feelings has numerous benefits for health, emotional adjustment, and well-being. In this exercise, you will visualize and write about your "best possible future self." Possible selves have been defined as personalized representations of goals and comprise all of the futures that a person can envision for herself – that is, her "most cherished self-wishes." Writing about one's possible selves thus can enhance self-regulation because it provides an opportunity to learn about oneself, to gain insight into and restructure one's priorities, and to understand better one's motives and emotional reactions. Writing about one's life goals may also be beneficial because it can reduce goal conflict, as well as bring greater awareness and clarity to one's priorities, motivations, and values.

Thus, this exercise may serve to integrate life experiences into a meaningful framework and allow you to gain a feeling of control. Finally, imagining success at one's life goals can boost psychological well-being, improve performance, boost psychological adjustment and bring to bear a variety of benefits associated with positive thinking.

Ultimately, all of these benefits are hypothesized to increase and sustain your happiness level.

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Increasing one's happiness  
can be done through the  
power of reflective thinking.

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## Review Exercise



Write for 20 minutes at a time about different experiences and topics.

Here are your specific instructions:

“Think about your life in the future. Imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your life goals. Think of this as the realization of all of your life dreams. Now, write about what you imagined.”

Do this for 20 minutes per day for three days in a row.



# Module Fourteen

## Happiness Journal



# THE HAPPINESS WORKS JOURNAL

Did you know... Happy people live longer, feel better, function better and are more productive. Use this journal to help you understand your own personal happiness and explore ways to welcome more happiness into your daily life.

Have fun using the exercises, prompts and planners to explore the different areas of your life and how each affects your happiness, then set monthly objectives to work towards, over a year of exploring your happiness. Included inspiring quotes to help you along your happiness journey.

The Happiness Works Journal is a planner designed to help you cultivate happiness by embracing the power of positive thinking, mindfulness, gratitude, and self-development.

The entries in your Happiness Works Journal will help you adopt a positive outlook on life, build introspection into your routine, increase self-awareness, and feel more inspired and fulfilled from within.

In short, while using The Happiness Works Journal, you'll be encouraged to;

- Set goals & dreams that align with who you truly are; that will give meaning to your life.

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- Write down goals that you want to achieve and the action plans you will take.
- Integrate more of what makes you happy into your daily life.
- Plan to make changes to the things that make you unhappy.
- Learn to see the positive in every situation.
- Learn to harness your own personal power, build mental strength, and adopt a growth mindset
- Start each day with a positive and exciting thought.
- End each day with gratitude
- Evaluate your energy and happiness level.
- Reflect on your week & month and the lessons learned.
- Set goals for improvement.

Use your Happiness Journal to:

- Discover yourself
- Identify your strengths and weaknesses
- Integrate more of what makes you happy into your daily life
- Plan to make changes to the things that make you unhappy
- Set goals that you want to achieve and write down action plans
- Start each week with an inspirational quote and an exciting thought
- Pinpoint your focus for each week
- Rate yourself on your energy level and happiness level
- Reflect on your week and see things from the positive side
- Set goals for improvement

## Sample Pages for a Happiness Journal



### **My Week**

This week I am excited about:

What I am grateful for:

Good things about this week:

What I hope for next week:

wed. June 3rd 2008

Today I had only one class!  
When I wasn't busy I  
daydreamed about sailing  
this summer. I've only  
been sailing twice, but  
I'd love to sail around  
Greece someday. Maybe  
when Steve and I retire (?)  
Maybe I go with Matthew  
after high school? Maybe  
next year? Who knows...  
but I'm wishing soon!!



# Module

# **Conclusion**

## CONCLUSION

Can happiness be sustained? It depends. It depends largely on one's desire to intentionally seek ways to sustain levels of happiness and to adopt a worldview that is more positively biased and less negatively biased. Being a critical thinker and understanding that negativity has a role in human emotions is an important component of human flourishing. The goal is to achieve a level of balance of positivity and negative emotion that results in higher levels of flourishing.

“Spiritual emotions make you think of things bigger than yourself.”

This quote causes us to transcend our own happiness and focus on the happiness of others. Caution is given against solely seeking your own happiness. Many ordinary people transcend their own happiness and inspire others to experience greater levels of well-being in their lives.

The experience of happiness can be misleading – what brings immediate happiness might be short-lived. Studies of lottery winners showed temporary lifts in happiness levels compared to non-lottery winners eighteen months later. Researchers refer to another reason why the experience of happiness can be temporary as the “hedonic treadmill” - changes in your lifestyle that increase your levels of happiness over time can become the new normal.

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Perhaps the greatest leverage of sustaining your happiness is to do it with others. Research shows that when individuals use social support networks to achieve goals toward greater happiness, their chances of succeeding improve. New Year's resolutions and weight loss goals, when supported by and with others, are achieved at higher levels than when done alone.

Living happily and sustaining happiness involves intention and includes a focus on self and a focus on others. Transcending your own happiness to affect the happiness of others is a strategy of living happily. A common form of contributing to others' happiness is through acts of benevolence. Helping others can provide greater meaning and purpose. Research indicates that when individuals experience their own happiness, they are more inclined to help others or to help improve their quality of life.

So, can happiness be sustained? I believe it can, but only authentically and with intention.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said,  
"Some pursue happiness - others create it."

With this Guide, I hope you will create happiness.

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# **Working Happily Together Workshop**

[www.ResilienceAustralia.com](http://www.ResilienceAustralia.com)

## Happy people are better workers.

Those who are engaged with their jobs and colleagues work harder — and smarter.

And yet, there is an alarmingly high number of people who aren't engaged.

### HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS



### Working Happily Together Workshop Training

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Disengaged, unhappy people aren't any fun to work with, don't add much value, and impact our organizations (and our economy) in profoundly negative ways.

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It's time to finally blow up the myth that feelings don't matter at work. Science is on our side: there are clear neurological links between feelings, thoughts, and actions.

If we can agree that our emotional states at work matter, what do we do to increase engagement and improve performance?

## HAPPINESS REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Happiness generally results  
from skills that some people  
naturally pick up.

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## Working Happily Together workshop

Increasing one's happiness can be done through the power of reflective thinking. Resilience is just one skill that this workshop will touch on to teach your participants how to be happier. Happiness will spread throughout your organization, and have a positive effect on everyone.

With our **Working Happily Together Workshop** your participants will engage in unique and helpful ways to increase their happiness. This will have a robust effect on their professional and personal lives. It will improve their communication skills, increase productivity, and boost morale.

### Science of Happiness

The field of positive psychology research has massively expanded our understanding of human potential—most of this discovery has happened in the last 15 years. We now know that happiness is a pre-condition for consistent success in life: the evidence is over-whelming.

By the end of the **Working Happily Together Workshop** organisation leaders have a workforce that is in touch with emotional intelligence and ready to respond to initiatives and relationships that build their organisation.

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Workplace happiness is critical in organisations today. Use a proven workplace happiness framework to optimise personal happiness skills and discover how to make staff more positive during the working day.

## Working Happily Together Workshop Training Modules

We know that happiness is not a lucky outcome resulting from a fortunate upbringing. Rather happiness generally results from skills that some people naturally pick up. The Happiness Works training modules makes clear that we can all learn to be happy.

This workshop can be abbreviated to as little as a half day or expanded for in-depth, integrated learning to 2 days.

## Making Positive Change — personally and corporately

The same principles that move an individual through successful growth and change aid in transitioning a team into a new mindset. Powerful and easy-to-apply techniques can boost motivation and direct attention to what matters most.

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## The Happiness Works program runs for three hours

The cost of \$1500 includes all resources making up the Working Happily Together program.

Your program is tailored to your needs from the 15 training modules outlined below.

With the **Working Happily Together Workshop** training modules your staff will engage in unique and helpful ways to increase their happiness.

### **Module One: Happiness at work**

- Happiness at work
- What are the most important factors for happiness at work?
- Review questions

### **Module Two: What makes us happy?**

- Introduction
- Why are some people happier than others?
- What makes you and your team happy?
- Subjective happiness scale
- Happiness Works training modules

**Module Three: Resilience**

- Developing resilience
- Key points
- Resilience assessment

**Module Four: Relationships**

- Positive relationships
- Review questions

**Module Five: Dealing with adversity**

- Dealing with adversity
- Happiness is more than having a pleasurable life
- Regain your happiness after adversity
- Review questions

**Module Six: Values and Happiness**

- Mapping your values
- Values to action
- I Care cards challenge



### **Module Seven: Work Life Balance**

- Work life balance
- Your action plan
- Review questions

### **Module Eight: Set Boundaries**

- Begin to set personal boundaries
- Setting your boundaries
- Strengthen your internal boundaries
- Guilt in setting boundaries
- Find support
- Review questions

### **Module Nine: Savoring**

- Nine savoring strategies
- Savoring assignment
- Review questions

### **Module Ten: Gratitude**

- Eight ways gratitude promotes happiness

- Ways to cultivate gratitude
- Gratitude journal

### **Module Eleven: Choose To Be Happy**

- Eight ways to control your happiness
- Review questions

### **Module Twelve: : My Best Self**

- Best possible self future
- Review exercise

### **Module Thirteen: Your Happiness Manifesto**

- What is happiness?
- Happiness action plans
- Be grateful
- Three good things
- Be kind to others
- Daily acts of kindness
- Action plan

### **Module Fourteen: Happiness Journal**

- The Happiness Works journal
- Use your happiness journal to ...
- Sample pages from happiness journals

### **Module Fifteen: Conclusion**

- Conclusion
- Final review

Enquire about running the **Working Happily Together Workshop** at your organisation.

Contact Michael Auden  
CEO - Resilience Australia

**0405 424 881**

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[www.ResilienceAustralia.com](http://www.ResilienceAustralia.com)

## Happiness Works - Working happily together

A training program for Australian organisations.

## Resilience Australia

Training and resources for people working in Education, Health and Community Service.

1 Wedge Court, Glen Waverley, Victoria, Australia, 3150

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