

Courage to be HAPPY

Happiness is inward and not outward; and so it does not depend on what we have, but on what we are.

Henry Van Dyke

Happiness is our birthright. It's the goal of our life. Yes, there will be times when we suffer, but some of the most influential and healing people on our planet are those who choose and allow themselves to be happy, no matter the circumstance.

In order to experience genuine happiness, one must understand what happiness is and where it comes from. Sometimes, it's easier to start with what it is not. Heartfelt happiness has nothing to do with external circumstances; it's not based on what we have or what we do. The most ambitious accomplishments cannot provide us with lasting happiness, nor can beauty, money or fame. None of the idols we subscribe to can ever fulfill us because happiness comes from within and cannot be discovered outside ourselves.

Happiness is a choice: it's less about our circumstances and more about our attitude.

Courage is an essential ingredient to living a happy life. It requires courage to allow yourself to be genuinely happy. We do not reside in a society that supports happy people. There are countless support groups for those suffering, but not for those who take risks, go beyond self-imposed limitations and live life with gusto.

Since we can't give what we don't have. It will be difficult to embrace another's joy if we are not feeling good about our own life. If you are truly ready to be happy, then you must accept that not everyone will necessarily be happy for you. It all depends on their perception of their own life. Remember this affirmation for living a courageously happy life: "I have the courage to be happy."

In my own life, I have discovered there are certain qualities that a "happy learner" possesses. They are qualities which not only lead to happiness but to integrity, conviction and healing as well:

***Taking Responsibility** realize you are not a victim and are accountable for your thoughts, feelings and actions and everything that happens is occurring for the unfoldment of your greatest good.

***Clear Intention** become clear of what makes you happy, making choices accordingly and setting a clear intention that is in line with your life's purpose.

***Looking for Lessons** acknowledge that every situation is an opportunity for growth and can be reframed in a positive and healing manner.

***Appreciation** actively appreciating your life and the people in it; practicing staying in the moment and having reverence for life as something extraordinary and invaluable.

HEALTH ISSUES WE FACE

After listening to a few stories about other's health issues at this time in their lives, I offer a reflection on challenges we all face as we grow older. Many of us do face challenges with strength, gaining courage and wisdom in the process.

Change and challenge are closely related, and often do follow one another although they are not always intertwined. In our elder years life is a constant cycle of changes, and it is also a continuous series of challenges perhaps some small ones, large ones, every day, every year as we age.

Life challenges only increase as we grow and mature. We have known challenges of our own and have to go through heroic efforts to get through these challenges.

Our greatest personal challenges may not be behind us at this time and may alter the course of our lives. Hopefully, they will allow us to bring forth our greatest capabilities from deep within. Yes, each of us has within us the strength and inner resources to meet even the greatest of challenges whenever called for. So keep putting one foot in front of the other as you walk through the Day!

NAMASTE!

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Happiness an inside Job

"People are about as happy as they make up their minds to be."

*Abraham Lincoln...*Have you noticed that in any given moment one can usually come up with several problems or situations that rob us of our peace of mind? How much energy and time do we lose being angry with other people? How much effort do we put into fault-finding rather than love-finding. A happy person strives to uplift people rather than fault find. How often are we quick to have attack thoughts toward others rather than finding ways to uplift the people in our lives.

We need to look at the little things in life that trigger our happiness. I love this paragraph written by an 85-year old woman named Nadine Stair, from Louisville, Kentucky.

IF I HAD MY LIFE TO LIVE OVER

I'd like to make more mistakes next time. I'd relax. I would limber up. I would be sillier than I have been this trip. I would take fewer things seriously. I would take more chances. I would climb more mountains and swim more rivers. I would eat more fruit and less beans. I would perhaps have more actual trouble, but I'd have fewer imaginary ones. You see, I'm one of those people who lives sensibly and sanely hour after hour, day after day. Oh, I've had my moments and if I had to do it over again, I'd have more of them. In fact, I'd try to have nothing else. Just moments, one after another, instead of living so many years ahead of each day. I've been one of those persons who never goes anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, a raincoat and a parachute. If I had to do it again, I would travel lighter than I have. If I had my life to live over, I would start barefoot earlier in the spring and stay that way later in the fall. I would go to more dances. I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daises.

A happy person may look at the world through rose-colored glasses, but an unhappy person views every event through a dark filter. A happy person has problems and is aware of serious challenges in the world but is always looking for a higher meaning. They believe that somehow, some good will result from life's challenges. In any moment you can make a new choice to see and do things differently. Happiness is a gift you give yourself by changing your perceptions and seeing things differently. Since nothing has any meaning except the meaning you give it, you can use your mind and your creativity to choose a new, more empowering meaning for life's problems.

As you let your own light shine, you give permission to others to be happy, too!

A rose for Mom...

A man stopped at a flower shop to order some flowers to be wired to his mother who lived two hundred miles away. As he got out of his car he noticed a young girl sitting on the curb sobbing. He asked her what was wrong and she replied, "I wanted to buy a red rose for my mother. But I only have seventy-five cents, and a rose costs two dollars."

The man smiled and said, "Come on in with me. I'll buy you a rose." He bought the little girl her rose and ordered his own mother's flowers. As they were leaving he offered the girl a ride home. She said, "Yes, please! You can take me to my mother." She directed him to a cemetery, where she placed the rose on a freshly dug grave.

The man returned to the flower shop, canceled the wire order, picked up a bouquet and drove the two hundred miles to his mother's house.

Take a cheerful view of everything. Trust in God and mind your own business. Pray for a short memory as to forget all unkindness. Cultivate forbearance till your heart yields a fine crop of it. Give your tongue more holiday than your hands or your eyes. Compare your manifold blessings with trifling annoyances of each day. Never reply in kind to a sharp or angry word; it is the second word that makes the quarrel.