**[7 Steps to Permanent Happiness](http://www.chadhowsefitness.com/blog/2013/09/7-steps-to-permanent-happiness/)**

As a culture, and society, we talk at length about [happiness](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Happiness) as a *motivator,* as something we need to pursue. And this can be a good thing, when we pursue things that make us happy, we should be able to create happiness, but it can also be a harmful outlook on the subject as well. There’s a far more powerful way to view happiness, on that will have an immediate impact on your mind, body, and even on your bank account.

This outlook is what we shall discuss, and how to create happiness in the present is what we shall discover.

**Why It’s So Important to Be Happy**

I know you *know* you should be happy.

I mean, the whole point of living, in one respect, is to be happy. We create happiness through different avenues, whether it’s giving, creating, or trying new and exciting and fun things. But do you know the “urgency” that is tied to being happy?

Happiness isn’t an elusive future goal that we need to *create*, find, or stumble upon; rather, happiness is something we should *be* in order to have more money, a better body, and a better life. Happiness isn’t the end of the rainbow, it’s the most important *tool* of your current and future success. If you’re *not happy now*, you won’t build the life you want to build in the future. If happiness is eluding you now, money, fame, and power won’t bring it into your life. Happiness needs to come first for everything else in your life to be able to arrive.

Most people define their success with a dollar amount. *When I make X amount of dollars,* or, *When I have X amount of homes and my company reaches the Fortune 500, then I’ll be* *successful*. Here’s the problem with that line of thinking…

If your happiness is defined by a dollar number, an achievement, a milestone, or some future goal that you’re currently [working hard](http://www.chadhowsefitness.com/blog/2013/07/how-to-conquer-your-greatest-obstacle-live-the-dream/) to achieve, what you’ll find is that even when you *reach* that dollar amount or the status you so passionately crave, you’ll be left with more of an empty feeling, one of loss, not the elation that you always dreamed would accompany you when you reached your milestone.

You’ll find that you want more, and that your mission isn’t “done”, that you still have a lot of work left, you still have more to create, and you still have more *to do*. It’s also counterproductive to define your success with the *end* of something, like the end of a goal, a path you’re on, or a dream fulfilled. You’ve achieved what you want. Now what? How are you supposed to be happy with your life if your purpose is over, finito, dead?

**It’s so important to be happy in the present, and to do what makes you happy, not only because you’re going to enjoy life more, make a greater impact, and have more fun, but because you’re going to *do more*, *make more, and be more*.**

Happiness is contagious.

People love happy people. They want to spend more time around them, and they want them to succeed. You’ll have an army of people who will help you reach those goals in your life that you deem most important (we’ll talk about *how* and *why* you need to set your goals with a certain intention a bit later). By *being happy* you’re also going to have more energy, be more [motivated](http://www.chadhowsefitness.com/blog/2013/09/cant-stay-motivated/), and find much more clarity because your happiness is guiding your life, not your selfish desires, or monetary goals and aspirations.

When you’re guided by what makes you happy, decisions become much easier to make. Happy people have also been shown to be far more creative than unhappy people. The correlations between happiness and wealth are not there – evidence shows no real difference in happiness between people making $5,000/month and $5 million/month, as long as their basic needs are met – yet people who genuinely love what they do, and work hard, make far more than people in the same line of work who *don’t* love what they do.

Happiness isn’t something you’re going to find in the future. You need to understand this It’s something you’re going to create in the present, right now, because of this article, and because you’re a smart enough person to know that more money, success, or fame, aren’t going to make you happy if you’re not already a happy person.

**How to Be Happy NOW**

We’ve established that happiness is something you have to create in your own mind and heart *before* you find whatever successes you want in life.

It’s being happy that will make you more successful, not being more successful that will make you a happier person.

Alas, we’re at a crossroads, a precipice, a fork in the road. One one side we’ve defined happiness as our future state, when we’re successful, rolling in the dollar bills, beautiful bride by our side, and the world in our palm. Now, however, we’ve discovered that this mode or definition of happiness won’t work. What we’re stuck with is more questions than answers.

If happiness isn’t accomplished by how we *thought* it would be, then how do we become happier people *right now*?

**First, You HUSTLE.**

Having a purpose and working as hard as humanly possible to achieve that purpose, will make you happy. In life, what you’ll often find is that it’s the journey that is both the most rewarding, fulfilling, and happiest time of your life. It’s when you’re in the arena that you feel most alive, not when you’ve reached the finish line and your hand is being raised or you’re trying to climb from defeat.

Hard work will make you happy, immediately.

Laziness breeds envy, sadness, and a feeling of worthlessness.

There are those who think that “living in the moment” means doing whatever you please. They feel that doing what you love is doing whatever you like. They’re wrong. This point of view isn’t a recipe for happiness, rather, a great way to lie on your deathbed crushed by regret, loneliness, and emptiness.

“Whatever you want” isn’t a good compass. Some days you’ll want to sit on your ass and watch TV. Other days you’ll want to strangle your boss, cheat on a test or your spouse, or sleep in and buck your responsibilities as a [man](http://www.chadhowsefitness.com/blog/2013/08/the-20-rules-of-manhood/).

**If all you do is “whatever you please” you’ll never *do what you love*.**

If you only “do what you please” at any given moment, you’ll never *create* self-worth. Without self worth you can’t truly be happy. You’ll also never create your own path and your own way in the world. If you spend your life completely dependent on others, emptiness and an internal void will be your roommates.

To be your *happiest*, you have to do what you love for the majority of your moments on this earth. But doing what you truly love is a BIG THING. You don’t love being mediocre or average, you like being great, ambitious, and excited about what you’re doing. You like being challenged, pushed to do more and extend your reach beyond your grasp.

There’s a myth that exists world wide that tells people that happiness is easy. It isn’t. It’s harder than self-loathing, it takes more work than worrying, and more [courage](http://www.chadhowsefitness.com/blog/2013/08/dare-mighty-things/) than being dependent and lazy. It won’t be easy. You NEED to hustle. Doing what you love is hard. It requires long hours, sacrifice, and risk. You’ll have to work when others sleep, when others vacation, and when you’d rather sit on your ass. But you’ll be paid handsomely for it both in the self-worth you’ll create, and the life you’ll create for yourself.

If, right now, you’re doing a job you hate, do what you love in your spare time. There’s always time you can dedicate to work, always. This, however, still doesn’t mean you should be lazy doing the job you hate. You’ll just end up hating it more. Hard work *doing anything* creates happiness.

**Second, You Need to Take Control of Your Thoughts.**

*“Self-disciplined begins with the mastery of your thoughts. If you don’t control what you think, you can’t control what you do. Simply, self-discipline enables you to think first and act afterward.” ~ Napoleon Hill*

You have control over the thoughts you put *into* your mind, as well as the ones you choose to follow and focus on.

This is an immensely powerful fact that few recognize or do anything about. This also means that you have control over your thoughts.

So how do you take control over your own thoughts? Start by being aware of what you’re thinking. Spend a couple days writing down what you’re thinking. Write down your negative thoughts, why you’re having them, and if they are at all helping you in life. Also write your happy thoughts down and ask the same questions.

You’ll find that your negative thoughts are completely useless – especially the thoughts focused on fear and worry – but the happy thoughts, if at the very least give you more energy and help you enjoy life more, will add to your success. If you’re always worrying and fearing outcomes that have not yet occurred, you will not be a happy person.

**Third, Don’t Worry.**

So you’ve snatched control of what you’re thinking, now you have the power to rid worry from your mind and your life.

There’s one thing that you need to understand as a fundamental truth: Worry is useless. It does no good, it only brings bad things to your life.

To get rid of your worries you have to be aware of them. Our worries are often underlying emotions. They’re fears, sometimes hidden ones, that manipulate our self-talk and prevent us from enjoying life.

Once again, write down your worries and work through them. Go through them in this order.

a. Write down what you’re worried about.

b. Identify the absolute worst possible outcome.

c. Write down the most likely outcome (think positively when writing this outcome).

d. Write down the *best* possibly outcome.

e. Hustle. Do what you can to make the best possibly outcome the reality.

f. Accept whatever outcome arises.

After you’ve worked your butt off, there’s really nothing else you can do. Be okay with that. After that point there’s no benefit to worry – not that there ever was. If you don’t stop it in its tracks, worry will eat away at your soul and suck all of your happiness from your life. Don’t let it. You’ve got too much to lose to let you get beaten down and defeated by your own damn thoughts.

**Fourth, Define Success Properly.**

We’ve gone over this already, but the point needs to be made on its own…

**Your definition of success will most likely have the greatest impact on your happiness.**

Success in life *has to be* tied to your happiness, and the things you hold most important in your life, like family. If seeing your family happy and [free](http://www.chadhowsefitness.com/blog/2013/07/33-steps-to-freedom/) from worry means you’re a success, you’ll do whatever you need to do to make that come true – which will make you a much happier person.

If doing what makes you happy is how you define success, you’ll find yourself doing things that make you happy rather than projects that simply make you rich. By doing things that help your family but also improve your happiness, you’re going to love what you do, how you make a living, and what you’re giving your time to. You’ll have more energy, make more money, and be far more creative than you would be if your compass for success merely led you down a road to fame and riches.

Happiness, when it’s how you define success, isn’t elusive. When you *do it*, you compound its effect. This isn’t a milestone because it’s not a singular act like making a million dollars, its something you *do*, and something you *are*, so the more you do it the better you’ll get at it.

Spend more time doing the shit you love for those you love most. Success and happiness will be your lifelong partners in life.

**Define your success like you’ll wish you had when you’re 80 years old.**

**Fifth, Greet People With a Smile.**

People will either aid you in your quest to be a happier person, or they’ll remove happiness from your life. What you’ll find is that their impact on you is completely on your shoulders.

No matter the situation, greet people with a smile. Whether you’re seeing a friend, meeting a new person, or buying a coffee at your local cafe, greet everyone with a smile. For one, you’ll make more friends because more people will like you, but you’ll find that everyone will smile back. And having more happy people in your life is a very simple and easy way to be more happy yourself.

Be your own contagious driving force behind your desire to be happy, and simply smile more.

**Sixth, Be Grateful.**

Wherever you are right now, you *can be happy*. It won’t, however, happen by chance, you have to *make it happen*.

To create this happiness simply count your blessings. Every day I write down 3 different things I’m genuinely grateful for. The key words are *genuine*, and *different.* Don’t write down the same 3 things. Vary them. Be passionate about them.

This exercise, as much as any other I’ve talked about, will help you be happier so you can do more and succeed to greater heights.

**Seventh, Live With Honor.**

You’re not going to be happy if you’re not proud of the man you are. You need to be a [man of honor](http://www.chadhowsefitness.com/blog/2013/05/where-have-men-with-honor-gone/) to be a truly happy person. You can’t have one without the other. It’s impossible.

How do you live with honor?

You live in alignment with your values. Sure you’ll mess up here and there, that’s all a part of the process, but learn from those mess ups and become a better man *as a result of them*, don’t let them pull you away from your values.

Also, treat people well, think of others before you think of yourself, and be good. If you do those things it becomes evermore difficult *not to be* happy, happy, happy.