

THE HAPPINESS HANDBOOK

The Art of Beneficial Change



Nine
Steps to
Happiness

By David Lee Ph.D.

Here is your sample chapter from “The Happiness Handbook”

Chapter 2

The Art of Beneficial Change – Nine Steps to Happiness

By David Lee Ph.D.



We all change as we move through life. Most change is slow and gradual. We age, we learn, we mature. Most change is natural and requires no direction on your part.

Time now for you to take some degree of control over your change process. Learn how to bring yourself greater happiness and peace of mind, achieve greater success and improve your relationships. As you read this you are learning how to take charge of your life.

Here are nine specific things you can do to achieve your increased happiness. There are undoubtedly many more, but these are the nine that I have found useful. You don't need to try all nine. Just one or two good ones will do. This is your cafeteria list. Select the one or two items that really appeal to you.

1. Personal Research

Use this book as a starting point. Find more books on personal growth, like the Dali Lama's "The Art of Happiness". Read all you can on psychology and personal growth. Books like Carl Rogers' "On Becoming a Person".

Take a course in psychology from your local college. Search on-line for information on growth and fulfillment. Listen to audio recordings that discuss personal development. Learn everything you can about how to change your life for the better.

2. Find a Teacher/Guide

It's really hard to achieve growth totally on your own, especially in the beginning. That's because you are using your own mind to effect change in your own mind, and it usually doesn't want to. Your mind will just throw the same stuff back to you that it's been doing all your life. So find someone to help you with the change process. Maybe a shrink, or a minister or church leader, maybe a friend who has been through the growth process. The Internet will turn up counselors in your area, as well as therapists who work by phone. Feel free to interview several potential guides before selecting one. If you get any feelings of doubt about a potential guide then politely go on to the next candidate. As you progress in your process of change you will find a new teacher from time to time. There may be many teachers in your life.

3. Learn to Meditate

Meditation is the art of blanking your mind. It's not easy to learn, as we are accustomed to a continuous chain of thoughts all during our waking hours. Once you learn to break this chain and give your mind a break, all kinds of good things can happen. It frees up your mind for change, and also brings you tranquility. There are plenty of books, recordings and classes on meditation.

4. Start an Exercise Program

The discipline involved in an exercise program all by itself will improve your life. So experiment with a regular exercise program and observe the beneficial results. Any exercise will do as long as it is regular. Classes or a personal trainer might be a good idea especially in the beginning. Consult your doctor if you have any physical problems, or even suspect them.

5. Listen to Uplifting Recordings

A lot of your inner mind formed before you acquired language. These are the hardest parts to change, but it can be done. A large part of your subconscious mind formed after you developed language. The things people said to you, the things they said to each other, how they said them. All of this can be reprogrammed the same way they went in; with words. Almost every chapter in the book "The Happiness Handbook" has a recording at the end that you can download. These recordings run from five to fifteen minutes and are free. You can listen to them anywhere and at any time. Many other beneficial recordings are available on the Internet. There is an example recording that you can download at the end of this chapter.

6. Create a Brand New Experience for Yourself

Chances are that you have a pretty routine life. It's very rare that you try something for the very first time, and branch out into the unknown. Maybe it's time now. Find something that has always interested you but for some reason or other you never followed up. It can be anything at all, just so you get a sense of excitement. Change any one thing in your life and change becomes easier in many other areas.

7. Evaluate Your Life

Make a list of all the things you do every day in your life. Then, beside each item, list the things you like about it and the things you don't. Then describe the way you could improve the situation for each item.

Next step is to imagine that you are very, very old and are looking back at your life. What is the thing that you wish you had done, but somehow never got around to? Then think back to the profession you wished you had entered but didn't for practical reasons. Or the unique skill that you never developed because you didn't have time, or money, or some other reason. Now ask yourself what it would take to pursue that interest now?

8. Be of Service to Others

Find some way, every day, to benefit another person or group of people. Retired multi-millionaires in Beverly Hills compete to become crossing guards for the local schools. Countless organizations need volunteers. Meals on wheels, big brothers, service organizations, all waiting for you to help them. You will find that you benefit the most of all. If you really want a jet powered growth experience, become a volunteer counselor. Your clients will teach you more than you could ever imagine.

9. Develop your Relationships to Higher Levels

Our relationships with other people are both key to happiness, and a strong indication of our well-being. Solitary confinement is one of the worst possible penalties. Dysfunctional families have very few contacts outside the immediate family group.



People with healthy and fulfilling lives tend to have warm and fulfilling relationships with a number of people. So here are two suggestions for you; first tell a good friend at least one thing that you appreciate in them. Do this at least once a day. Next, tell your husband or wife or lover or best friend how much you love them and appreciate them, and be very specific about the qualities you admire in them. Do this often. Then, as time passes, notice the effect that these acts of kindness have on your own happiness.



In case of emergency...

There is one path to a better life that is very special, to be used only if you feel that you truly need personal attention. You can email me at david@truefortunes.com, or you can call me at 310-396-5459. I promise to respond to everyone who contacts me. No charge for this service. All our communication is strictly confidential.

Learn more about David Lee Ph.D.

<http://truefortunes.com>

Read more on our blog: Overcoming Life's Difficulties

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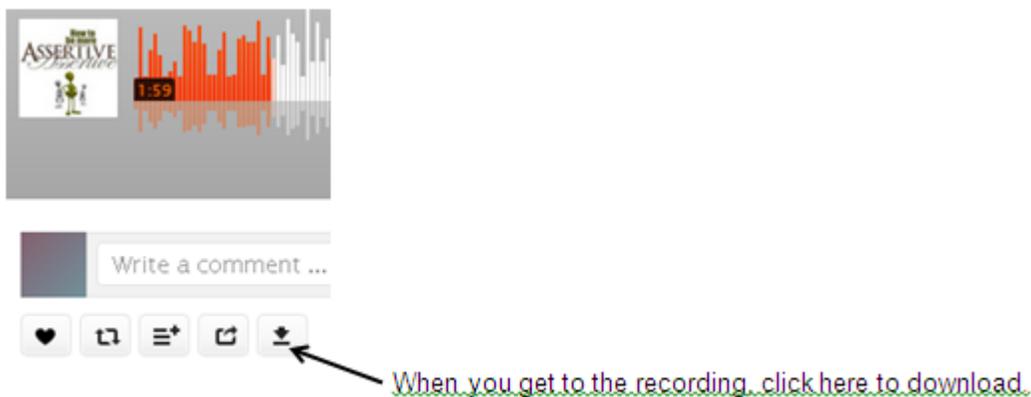
How to download your recordings

First go to the download URL, like this example:

<https://soundcloud.com/truefortunes/assertivenessA>

There is a similar link at the end of most chapters.

You will get a window that looks like this, and the recording will start.



The complete recording will load into whatever file you select. You can then transfer the recording into your phone or player or memory stick.