

Make The Choice To Be Happy

By Judi Moreo

How can we be happy and passionate every day when we are dealing with the stresses of life? Worrying doesn't accomplish anything. Worrying simply strangles our creative abilities and keeps us from being able to look for solutions to our problems and challenges. But how do we turn off the worry channel and get back to a happy place?

Focus on the positives in your life. Happiness is a way of looking at things. It is first a decision and then it becomes a habit. When you focus on positives, you are putting your faith into action and giving up uncertainty, doubt, and fear. As children, many of us were told to "look on the bright side." Sometimes, it's not easy to do. Some situations don't seem to have a bright or positive side. However, in most situations, there is at least something we can learn from it. Most successful people believe "everything happens for a reason." Looking on the "bright side" simply means to look for what's right, what you can learn, and realize things could be worse. We can learn a lesson from the goldfish swimming in a fish bowl half-filled with water. One fish said to the other, "Is this bowl half-full or half-empty?" The other fish said, "I don't really care. I'm just glad it's enough." Are you glad that you are enough?

Stop and think for a minute about the times in your life when you were the happiest...those expanded periods of time when you felt content, joyful, cheerful, or even bliss. What was going on then?

Turn off the television. Research tells us the average American household has the television on at least seven hours a day. Each year, television programming becomes increasingly more violent, inane, and abusive. The negative energy it puts into our lives becomes more and more difficult to overcome. We are subconsciously programming ourselves to be negative by what we are watching. We learn to accept abuse and violence. We are numb to it, even hypnotized by it. We turn that TV or radio on the minute we wake up or walk into the house, because we don't know how to be alone with our thoughts. We don't know how to listen to our inner voice. We may even be afraid of what we hear.

Tell your face. While attending a seminar to observe another presenter, I noticed a woman sitting in the third row with her arms folded tightly across her chest and a terrible scowl on her face. She sat like that all morning. At the break, the presenter, Carol, went over to the woman and asked, "Did you come to get anything particular today?" The woman didn't change her body language or her facial expression one bit and curtly said, "I'm fine." Carol probed deeper and the woman kept saying, "I'm fine." Then I heard Carol say, "Well then, tell your face." The woman burst out laughing. Lucky for Carol. Later I asked her what would make her say something like that to a person in her audience and she said she didn't think. It just came out her mouth. Later, I started thinking about how many of us sometimes forget to tell our face we are ok. When we put a pleasant look on our face, it changes our entire physiology. The very act of changing to a more positive outward express will make us feel better inwardly.

Find your strengths. Alfred Lord Tennyson once said, "The happiness of a man in this life does not consist in the absence but in the mastery of his passions." Do something that you are passionate about. Find your talent. When we use our natural abilities, we are being ourselves... who we were meant to be. This brings us happiness.

Visualize what you want. Pursue it with passion. Listen to your heart. Watch for opportunities. Choose to be happy and tell your face!

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(My mother gave me the following poem in a small frame when I was a child. I've kept it on my desk throughout my life as a reminder.)

I'm Happy Being Me

*Imagine how happy and free I could be
If I took me a little less seriously
If I'd laugh at my faults every once in a while,
And accept my mistakes with a shrug and a smile.
If I'd take little setbacks and failures in stride
And remember successes with pleasure and pride -
Imagine how happy and free I could be
If I did all I could to enjoy being me!*

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