

Happiness

**“A PERSONAL
CHOICE”**



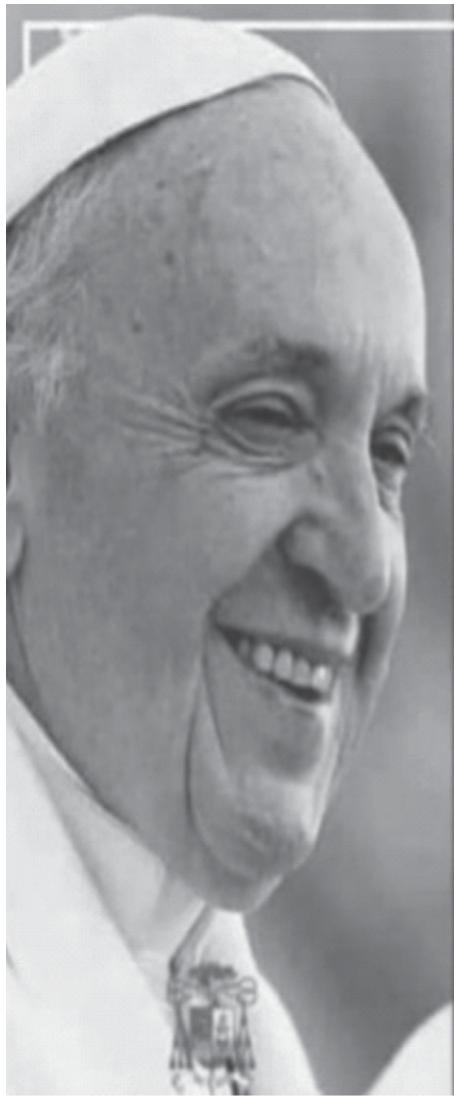
MFON UMANA

Happiness

**“A PERSONAL
CHOICE”**



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“ Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is...Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you.

Pope Francis

HAPPINESS - A PERSONAL CHOICE

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DEDICATION

The book is dedicated to God Almighty, who sustains life, the Beginning and the End, the Bright and Morning Star, the Lily of the Valley, the Rose of Sharon, the I am that I am, may His name be exalted for ever more. Amen

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My appreciation goes to all fellows of goodwill, both in my former organisation, the Department of State Services (DSS), the entire management and members of Dominion Chapel International Churches for various supports. I am indebted to all of you.

I sincerely thank my wife, Mercy, of 22 years of marriage and our children for all the support and encouragement they give me. I am grateful for the love and encouragement from the Umana family and my in-laws, the Eyeyes'

I also express my thanks to Daniel Oreva for assisting in typesetting and Pastor Mrs. Chima Onusiriuka for proofreading the manuscript and writing the Foreword. May God continue to keep you strong for us in Jesus name.

FOREWORD

Happiness A Personal Choice is a rare title. It is not the kind of title that is easily found on bookshop shelves. Yet happiness is a core value in a fulfilled life span. Everybody wants to be happy but most people want happiness thrust on them. Only a few are aware that happiness is a virtue that must be diligently cultivated and continuously nourished.

In this book, Mfon Umana has taken pains to dissect the title into tiny segments in very simple language. With this unique style, the message can be assimilated by any race, class, gender and even moderate literacy level.

Mfon Umana has taken pains to do an extensive research on the title gathering relevant results from various scholars. He even went to the extent of collating a large number of quotes to buttress positive opinions on the necessity of happiness.

A whole chapter is dedicated to the opposite emotion SADNESS its causes, effects and how

to cope with it. Notable quotes on sadness were also featured in this chapter. In the rest of the book, Mfon Umana took time to go deep (still in simple language and without any ideological or religious bias) into the different segments of the title. What does one stand to gain by being happy? Is it just easy to be happy or are there challenges? How do I live a consistent happy life? Is happiness worth celebrating as a global phenomenon? These and many more are questions that can only be answered as you do yourself a world of good by studying this handy book.

The crux of the matter is that **HAPPINESS IS A PERSONAL CHOICE!** Your happiness lies in your own hands. Read this book and learn how to take ownership of your emotions.

Your lifestyle will change for good and you will surely live healthier and longer.

Pastor Mrs. Chima M. Onusiriuka
Director of Administration
Dominion Chapel International Churches.

INTRODUCTION

Happiness is a choice, not a result. Nothing will make you happy until you choose to be happy
Ralph Marston.

It is a general belief that God created the world in its perfection and put man in charge of the earth. Man was then empowered with the will to discern between good and evil and the power to choose either of the two.

However, during the process of life, man got entangled with various earthly activities, starting from the quest to self-govern leading into various forms of world governance. These various governments led to colonization, autocracy and now the most popular, democracy. None of these has brought succour to man, rather they have led to conflicts, wars and the resultant decimation of humanity.

Along with these come sicknesses, diseases, growing world unemployment, varying and increasing threats to nations and world security which have all put man in a precarious situation

devoid of happiness but full of growing incidences of sadness and depressive emotions.

Today, man is faced with all manner of activities that put his happiness or well-being in jeopardy. Going out daily is fraught with all forms of dangers. Man is in dilemma of how to truly live a happy life. What then constitutes a happy life and how can it be achieved in these precarious situations?

The 2019 World Happiness Report reveals that negative feelings are rising around the world and the United States is particularly hard hit with the epidemic of addictions. Tellingly, the report also shows a widening happiness gap, with some people showing much more well-being, while others show much less within each country. It also reported that only two third of adults globally (64%) are happy.

The world happiness report, released annually on the International Day of Happiness (20th March) every year, ranks countries based on their life satisfaction in the Gallup World Poll. Resident rates how satisfied they are with their lives on a

scale of 0-10, from the worst possible life to the best possible life.

According to the survey, since 2005, people across the globe are more satisfied with life, when their governments are more effective, enforce the rule of law, have better regulations, control corruption and spend more on health care and less on military. It also applies to countries with more political stability, less violence and less conflict. Overall, being confident in your government goes hand in hand with a satisfying life.

Equally, research in same 2005 suggests that unhappy people can fight for change. It further reveals that citizens of nations who are less satisfied as a whole tend to vote against the incumbent politicians and that election results can make a country happier. Arising from the above, nature has in all circumstances, given man alternatives by placing every attribute in pairs for his (man's) choice to make in any given situation. It is either good or bad, left or right, right or wrong, forward or backward, wealthy or poor, healthy or sick, happiness or sadness.

The choice to make, therefore, is in our hands, barring all circumstances beyond our human capability. Looking back at my growing days to date, one has made some choices that have come out good and fulfilling while others might not have come out as expected. However, given another chance, may be one could have taken some more fulfilling decisions. Such opportunities may no longer be possible because some choices or decisions are time-bound. It is therefore, worth noting, that some choices or decisions do not have to be delayed as they are time-bound such as educational fulfillment, marital and parenting issues.

The impetus to write this book came from the realization in my marriage of 22 years that happiness is indeed a matter of personal choice. One has to propose in his heart and apply it physically to make it work. The same issue that can cause one to be sad can be turned around as a happy issue in the end. A few years ago, I remember an issue that occurred in my home. On my way home, I was already rehearsing what to say or do as I was sure the reception would not be too good. My thought was either to take a calm disposition or

take a tough disposition. In all sincerity, none of the options looked promising because I had defaulted. To my chagrin, the reception was of a calm and smiling disposition from my wife. On enquiry from her on such warm disposition, she replied, You think I will react harshly, no, she said and she continued by saying Thank God for the spirit of maturity and I said Thank God for the spirit of choice.

This book is intentionally written in simple language devoid of much psychological, sociological imputes and religious quotations to enable for wide reading and understanding, as a contribution to the total well-being of humanity.



HAPPINESS



*Remember this that very little is
needed to make a happy life.*

-Marcus Aurelius

Happiness is the state of being happy or showing pleasure or contentment with one's current situation. Happiness is a state, not a trait. In other words, it is not a long-lasting, permanent feature or personality trait. Happiness, equated with feelings, pleasure or contentment, means that it is not to be confused with joy, ecstasy, bliss or other intent feelings.

Happiness can be either just kept as an inward feeling or it can be allowed to show; meaning that happiness is not necessarily an internal or external experience. It can be both.

Happiness is an emotional state, characterized by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment and fulfilment. It involves positive emotions and life satisfaction.

Psychologists, when talking about emotional state, use the term subjective well-being (SWB), to describe a person's feeling about life in the present.

The key components of Happiness are;

Balance of Emotions: While everyone experiences both positive and negative emotions, feelings and moods, happiness is generally linked to experiencing more positive feelings than negative.

Life Satisfaction: This relates to how satisfied one feels in different areas of life, such as relationships, work, achievement and other important things.

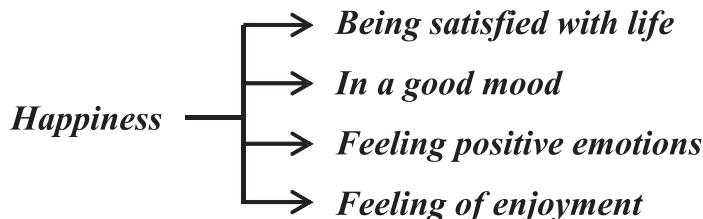
According to researchers, Chukim-Prieto, Ed Diener and colleagues (2005), the three (3) ways happiness is approached in positive psychology are:

- Happiness as global assessment of life and its entire facet.

- Happiness as recollection of past emotional experience.
- Happiness as an aggregation of multiple emotional reactions across time.

When do we feel happy?

- When problem has been solved
- When we receive good news
- When goals are accomplished
- When a great sum of money is earned
- When deeply in love



SIGNS OF HAPPINESS

Some key signs of Happiness are:

- Feeling like you have the life you wanted.
- Feeling that the conditions of your life are good.
- Feeling that you have accomplished what you want in life.
- Feeling satisfied with your life.
- Feeling positive more than negative.

Happy people still feel anger, frustration, boredom, loneliness and even sadness from time to time. But even in these states, they have an underlying sense of optimism that things will get better. They also feel that they can deal with what is happening and that they will be able to feel happy again (power of choice).

TYPES OF HAPPINESS

There are basically two types of happiness:

Hedonic: Hedonic happiness is derived from pleasure. It is doing what feels good, self-care, fulfilling desires, experiencing enjoyment and feeling a sense of satisfaction.

Eudemonia: This type is derived from seeking virtue and meaning. This includes feeling that life has meaning, value and purpose. It is associated with fulfilling responsibilities, investing in long term goals, and concern for the welfare of either people or living up to personal ideals.

Psychology terms the two as pleasure and meaning as research suggests that happy people tend to rank high on eudemonic life satisfaction and better than every hedonic life satisfaction.

However, some of life's activities may be both pleasurable and meaningful while others might be skewed one way or the other.

Other types of happiness are:

Joy: Relative brief feeling that is felt in the present moment.

Excitement: A happy feeling that involves looking forward to something with positive anticipation.

Gratitude: A positive emotion that involves being thankful and appreciative.

Pride: A feeling of satisfaction in something that you have accomplished.

Optimism: This is a way of looking at life with positive upbeat look.

Contentment: This involves a sense of satisfaction.

HAPPINESS vs. PLEASURE

Happiness is a state characterized by feeling of contentment and satisfaction with one's life or current situation while pleasure is sensory based feelings we get from experience like eating good food, getting massage, receiving complement, love, reading good books etc.

<u>Happiness</u>	<u>Pleasure</u>
Cannot be achieved from substance	Can be achieved from substance
It is experienced in social groups	It is experienced alone
Pleasurable experience can give momentary feelings of happiness	It is a positive experience of the senses
It is an inner-most sensation	It is emotional in nature and depends on the 5 senses
In happiness there is a stable calmness	In pleasure, emotions and feelings are active
There is no addiction in happiness	The extreme of pleasure leads to addiction whether from substance or behavior

ELEMENTS OF HAPPINESS

Martin Seligman, a Psychologist and promoter of Positive Psychology identifies 5 elements of emotional well-being and happiness also known as PERMA

- Positive Emotion
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Meaning
- Accomplishment

Positive Emotion: It talks of how happy we feel how many times we laugh and have fun on a daily basis; how many memories are made and how many moments of gratitude we feel or felt.

Engagement: Has to do with being really engrossed in and connected with what we do or are doing.

Relationship: Do we really spend time enjoying our family and friends? How often do we spend time with extended families on phone or is it a compulsive activity?

Meaning: Do we get deep meaning in the activities or work we do? Do we believe our life has values and is contributing positively to someone or something else and does that meaning give you satisfaction?

Accomplishment: What have we achieved so far in life? Can we do retrospection and feel proud or satisfied with our contribution?

LEVELS OF HAPPINESS

PLEASURE:-

This is the first level and includes the fundamental areas in one's life which is physical pleasure and gratification. This form of happiness is relatively short lived and shallow e.g. delicious meal, clothes and even listening to favorite music.

PASSION

Being passionate about something is a good source of happiness. However, it is usually based on need to satisfy one's ego. If one is not careful, it could result in trying to remain afloat to the detriment of others. It is not an enduring form of happiness.

PURPOSE

If you use your talents and skills to serve others, these can give you a sense of purpose, fulfilment and long term happiness.

ULTIMATE GOOD

This is the fourth level - ultimate good. Many find this form through religious beliefs. Others can find happiness in the pursuit of truth, beauty, love and goodness in them and in helping others. This level is considered the most enduring and profound.

This Chapter introduced us to happiness, its key components, signs and types of happiness, elements of happiness and levels of happiness. In the next chapter, we will be looking at Sadness, the opposite of happiness also referred to as negative emotion.



SADNESS



Every human walks around with a certain kind of sadness. They may not wear it on their sleeves, but it's there if you look deep.

- Taraji P. Heason

Sadness is another type of emotion, often defined as a transient emotional state characterized by feelings of disappointment, grief, hopelessness, disinterest and dampened mood.

Sadness, like other emotions, is something that all people experience from time to time. In some cases, it can be prolonged and severe and can turn to depression.

Sadness can be expressed in many ways, such as; crying, dampened mood, lethargy, quietness, withdrawal from others etc.

Sadness can lead to people engaging in coping mechanisms such as avoidance, self-mediating, rumbling on negative thoughts etc. such behaviors actually exacerbate the feeling of sadness and prolong duration of such emotion.

Sadness can cause you to;

- Cry more
- Have trouble sleeping
- Have no appetite
- Drink more alcohol
- Lose interest in things you once enjoyed

CAUSES OF SADNESS

Causes of sadness, as culled from healthslot.com are;

Brain Chemical: These are mainly brains that are resilient to stress.

Weather: Some people suffer from seasonal affective disorder that can cause depression

associated with sleep, appetite and sexual activities.

Vitamin Deficiency: Vitamin D and B₁₂ deficiency can be linked to depression.

Hormones: Certain hormones especially those that the thyroid gland produces, influence depression.

Expectation: If we do not achieve our expectation, we feel sad. If we expect a fair or special treatment all the time or expect things to never change, we are bound to be disappointed.

Childhood Adverse Events: Trauma, abuse, neglect by parent or loved ones make the brain less flexible and result in sadness.

Stress: Stress arising from finance loss or low income, loneliness, bullying, academics, job denial, unemployment, non-promotion in the office can contribute to stress and sadness.

Negative Rumination: Brooding about past life disappointment or why life is not going our way triggers sadness.

Inner Critic: If inner voices are constantly judging and criticizing your actions, decisions, behavior and so on.

Loneliness: Loneliness or feeling of being left out can be stressful and cause depression.

Some other causes of sadness are:

- Poor relationship with family and friends
- Struggling to do well at home, school or work
- Being ill or dealing with loved one's illness
- Moving to a new place
- Losing a loved one due to death or separation
- Physiological changes linked to puberty, aging, changing season or substance use
- Feeling out of control or overwhelmed with world's events
- New thought pattern that is unhelpful
- Feeling lonely in a relationship

EFFECT OF SADNESS

- Feeling sad can alter the level of stress related opioids in the brain, increase the level of inflammatory protein in the blood that could increase the risk of heart disease, stroke and metabolic syndrome.
- Sadness leads to depression which can affect the brain's chemical balance and could, on the long, cause difficulty in concentrating and memory loss.
- Sadness can cause distinctive physical sensation in the chest, tight muscles, pounding heart, rapid breathing and churning stomach.

COPING WITH SADNESS

- Acknowledge you are sad
- Be honest with yourself
- Check your diet, exercise and sleep well
- Avoid negative thoughts
- Devote energy to other areas or chores that engage multiple senses
- Get creative. Engage in things like artworks, drawing, writing etc.
- Seek help from a professional if your sadness becomes overwhelming

- Get involved with your community through volunteering
- Connecting with others or talking to a friend or loved ones

Sadness, as an emotion, is part of the ups and downs of life. It is not totally bad to be sad. However, remaining sad is another thing entirely. Also, feeling sad does not mean you have depression. But if the mood starts disrupting your life and how you function, then you may be depressed.

Feeling sad, if well managed, can lead or prompt one into making choices that could improve one's life. Recognizing that one is sad and understanding that it is okay to feel sad, is a sign of a stable sense of well-being.

SADNESS vs. DEPRESSION

<u>Sadness</u>	<u>Depression</u>
Sadness is temporal	Depression is long-lasting
It is a negative emotion and fades with time	It is a mental illness ; it impairs social occupation
There is no suicidal thought involved	Suicidal thoughts are signs of depression
There are specific triggers causing sadness	There are no identifiable triggers that caused depression

SADNESS QUOTES

Sadness flies away on the wings of time.
-Jean De La Fontaine

Sadness is but a wall between two gardens.
-Kahlil Gibran

Sadness is also a kind of defense
-Ivo Andric

The walls we build around us to keep sadness out also keep out joy.
-Jim
Rohin

Behind every sweet smile there is a sadness that no one can ever see or feel.
-Tupac Shakur

Life is too short to be angry or sad for long.
-

Alphonsons Daries

It doesn't hurt to feel sad from time to time.
-Wille Nelson

Proud people breed sad sorrow for themselves.

-Emily Bronte

The saddest thing that befalls a soul is when it loses faith in God and humans.

-Alexander Smith

It is sad not to love, but it is much sadder not to be able to love.

-Miquel De Unamuo



BENEFITS OF HAPPINESS



*Happiness is the Meaning and purpose of life,
the whole aim an end of human existence.*

-Aristotle

Happiness is the peaceful state of mind, the positive feeling or emotion that makes one feel happy. It is the key to success and prosperity and gives the true purpose to living. A leading researcher in the field of gratitude, Robert .A. Emmons, sums up the benefits of happiness in his book; Happiness makes good things happen. It actually promotes positive outcomes.

Its benefits include;

- Higher income and superior work outcomes, greater productivity, higher quality of work.

- Larger social rewards, such as satisfying and longer marriages and more friends
- More activity, energy and flow, and better physical health, such as bolstered immune system, lower stress levels and less pain.

GENERAL BENEFITS OF HAPPINESS

- Adds several years to life expectancy
- Better sleeping habits
- Lower heart rate
- Lower levels of stress hormones
- Lower levels of cytokines that are markers of diseases.
- Lower rate of heart diseases
- More Immune boosting blood cell.
- More emotional stability
- Strong Relationship
- Happiness Lengthens our life
- Happiness improves our physical health
- Happiness primes us to perform at our best
- Combats diseases and disability
- Happiness is linked to better decision making and improved creativity

- Happier people are also less likely to engage in risky behavior
- Happier people are even more financially responsible
- Happier people help others around them to become happier too.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF HAPPINESS

- Improved heart health and lower risk of heart diseases by 13-26%
- A strong immune system, as happiness supports strong immunity system.
- Happiness is linked to several positions and highly beneficial health conditions
- It can help reduce pain, as we are in position to accept new thoughts easily, which lead to lower experience of pains.
- Happiness increases longevity.

HAPPINESS AT HOME

A happy home is a place where you feel safe and secure (69%), a place you can relax (64%), a place you can be yourself (54%).

THINGS THAT MAKE YOU UNHAPPY AT HOME

- Your environment, does it inspire you or otherwise?
- Neighbors, do you have friendly neighbors or tolerating ones?
- Do you feel secured or unsafe in your home?
- Do you live in tight home or spacious home?
- Do you have regular supplies of utilities at home?
- Unwanted stuffs in the house occupying space
- Keeping collections that bring bad memories
- Unmade beds before leaving home daily
- Heavy drapes in the living room attract dust and shield the room from sunlight or air
- Wrong color paintings or coloring at home
- Keeping broken or spoilt items over the place
- Keeping heaps of papers scattered in the house
- Clustered house
- Too much work to be done alone at home

- Activities of children, relatives and siblings living with you at home.

THINGS TO MAKE YOU HAPPY AT HOME

To be happy at your home one should be able to do things that he loves to do, and also create an environment that is not distracting and not also frightening. Some of the things to do to be happier are:

- Make your bed
- Bring every room back to ready (putting the house in order before leaving for work in the morning)
- Display sentimental items around your house like wedding pictures, choice gifts, children growing pictures etc.,
- Start a one-line-a day gratitude journal (Before bed jot down one memory for the day)
- Cleaning dishes or helping out in the kitchen or home (it is your home anyway)
- Set a programme for each day
- Do small favors to your housemaid or somebody lower than you periodically without expecting anything in return,

- Call at least one friend or family member a day.
- Spend money on things that cultivate experience at home.
- Spend a few minutes meditating each day.
- Let your home be clean and airy
- Provide minimum physical security in your home.
- Make sure you are up to date with your bills to avoid being disconnected and embarrassed.
- Keep friendly disposition with neighbors.

HAPPINESS AT WORK PLACE

Happiness at work place is the feeling of an overall sense of enjoyment at work, being able to gracefully handle setbacks, connecting amicably with colleagues, co-workers, clients and customers and knowing that your work matters.

It is an emotion, a sense of well-being that comes when one feels good about the work we do.

Work place happiness comes when:

- We enjoy doing the task assigned to us

- We feel right about the people we are working with.
- We are happy with the financial benefits we get from the job.
- We have the scope of improving our existing skills
- We feel respected and acknowledged at work.
- We feel free to work and not put under pressure.

IMPORTANCE OF WORK PLACE HAPPINESS

Shawn Achor (2011), states that a company with happy employees could increase their sales by 37%, and Productivity by 31%. Also, the Eye Opener Institute, in one of their studies, revealed that employees who feel happy in the work place are 65% more energetic than employees who do not and that they are two times more productive and more likely to sustain their job over a long period of time.

Happiness in the work place can lead to the following:

- More employees' commitment and drive to work and contribution beyond job description
- Happy employees are more loyal than unhappy employees
- Benefits decision making and creative problem solving
- Improved individual and team productivity
- Better customer service and satisfaction
- Reduced stress, better health and less cost to employees on health related bills
- Increased motivation and fewer workplace accidents
- Increased creativity, improved health and well-being.

WHAT NEGATES WORK PLACE HAPPINESS?

- Low job control
- Effort reward imbalance
- Rigid hierarchy
- Unclear Structure and Clarity
- Lack of Psychological Safety (trust)

- Lack of Dependability
- No clear meaning of work
- Lack of impact of work on staff
- Poor remuneration
- Lack of recognition
- Lack of support from colleagues and management

PROMOTING WORK PLACE HAPPINESS

Research conducted at the University of Warwick finds that joyful professionals are up to 12% more productive than the unproductive ones.

Work place happiness can be promoted by the following:

- Creating a strong organizational or business culture
- Work place autonomy and freedom to decide
- Task variation and scope for creative ideas
- Effective engagement of all employees
- Encourage and support downtime
- Help staff find purpose outside work (work-life balance)
- Social support within the work place
- Promote work place wellness and programme

- Encouragement of departmental engagements
- Keeping work place and environment clean
- Encourage staff socialization, vacation and recreation
- Put in place flexible working hours
- Put in place constructive feedback mechanism and brainstorming sessions
- Office decoration and ergonomics are essential
- Encourage training and mentoring sessions
- Promotion and growth opportunity.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HAPPY PEOPLE

- Happy people are more successful
- Happy people are better at reaching goals
- Happy people are healthier
- Happy people live longer
- Happy people have better relationships
- Happy people learn better.

Life's activity of a person revolves around the home, transit, place of socialization and workplace. Therefore, the question to ask is, where do I spend much of my time on a daily basis? If the

answer is my home, then put in place things or activities that can encourage your happiness or increase the essence of your well-being at home. If it is in the office, you do likewise. Get loyal staff, good cosy environments with things or activities that are pleasing to your soul' nothing else to give you unnecessary stress and unhappiness. However, if you are in a situation or environment that is already there and might be difficult to change, then attempt improvising by putting little things even if they are mobile to give you a little comfort. Believe and determine that it cannot be so forever, change what you can, tolerate that you cannot change, plan to move ahead and do things that please your heart content.



CHALLENGES OF FINDING HAPPINESS



*Life is full of challenges, but being happy
should not be one of them.*

-www.idlehearts.com

Intrinsically, no human being would want to be unhappy or choose unhappiness over happiness. Equally whether it is a matter of choice or not, there are certain factors that determine or could influence the state of our happiness. In this chapter attempt is made to identify some of these challenges.

DESIRSES: Compulsive crave for pleasures could lead to excess and addiction. In the end, it results to pleasure with pains and hence unhappiness. We should always put our desires in check or in conformity with acceptable standard.

AVERSION: Unchecked anger, frustrations and unnecessary hostility when we perceive that life has not been what we expect it to be. We create our concept or perception of an ideal life. Life should not be of rigidity, there should be room for adjustment and a little bit of bending to accommodate other ideas or perceptions.

MENTAL FATIGUE: Dull and sluggish state of mind can sap out our concentration and ability to see others and the world around us clearly. There is the need to relax the brain and mind to be able to accept other ideas or activities.

FEAR AND ANXIETY: Fear of taking risk or trying something new and the fear of failure in life can affect our life outlook and happiness. We need to gather relevant information, test them and ensure they meet acceptable standards that will give us the confidence to take decisions without any fear.

PROCRASTINATION: Postponing ideas or decisions for a perceived better time or day results in not taking actions, wasted efforts and lost

opportunities and the resultant consequences. It is said you cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.

RESTLESSNESS: When we are restless and always uptight to situations, it affects our reactions, relationships and results to unhappiness. The way out is take time off, relax and possibly do some exercise.

DOUBT: When we continually doubt our capabilities and others, it places us in a doubtful and gloomy disposition and affects our emotions.

VALUES: The value we place on things can affect us. Some people place values on wrong things as against the generally acceptable values in the society. This puts them at bay and sort of differentiates them from others.

NOT SEEKING SUPPORT: When we develop gloomy disposition, or have issues with life expectations, the way out is not to withdraw into the cocoon, but to seek support of diverse forms. It is said that anything is possible when you have the right people there (around) to support you.

HAPPINESS AS END POINT: Happiness should not be seen as an end point but a means to a successful life. We should do things that appeal to our emotions or values and expectations or strive cultivating day to day well-being therein happiness can evolve. Calvin Holbrook explains that science shows that happiness really is a journey and not a destination.

UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: Involvement in unhealthy or toxic relationships can spur unhappiness. Unhealthy relationship could result in gradual loss of self-worth. It is advised that one breaks out from unhealthy relationship before it gets to a point of violence and disaster.

POVERTY: Poverty or inability to make ends meet can be frustrating. Research has shown that people living in poverty report lower life satisfaction, lower subjective well-being and lower levels of positive emotions. The way out is to reassess one's priority and live within one's income or resources and avoid copy-cat-syndrome.

INGRATITUDE: This has to do with poor returns for kindness received. It could also be referred to as ungratefulness or thanklessness. There is a saying, never put your time into the hands of the ungrateful. An ungrateful person, aside the psychological consequences, has a way of disassociating people from himself or herself. This may result in loneliness and end result of unhappy life.

NOT LOVING SELF: To love one is accepting yourself as you are in this very moment for everything that you are. One should not compare himself or herself with others. But love yourself the way you are. Let us stop comparing ourselves with others. Do not worry about people's opinion of you. Do not be afraid to let go bad friends or bad company. Process your fear and trust self-decision.

ILL HEALTH: When one is sick, the capacity to be happy is hindered especially when it is a terminal illness. Here one might not have the choice over the illness or its cure, but with knowledge, one can still be happy, live a good life within the period and make people around happy too.

INDECISION: Inability to make quick life decisions. It has been argued vividly in this book that happiness is a matter of choice so somebody who does not have the capacity to make quick decisions might not be successful in life. An unsuccessful life is likely going to be an unhappy life.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDE: Negative attitude is characterized by constant worrying, complaining about anything and everything, lack of confidence, gloom and anxiety and can be soul destroying.

SCATTERED FOCUS: Scattered focus is trying to do many things at the same time. This leads to inefficiency. Directed focus is the ability to focus on one specific task at a time. The best way to avoid scattered focus is to avoid distractions.

As it has been said, life is full of challenges but being unhappy should not be part of the challenges of life in itself. Challenges are either self-made or not self-made. However, we try as much as possible to right the wrong we can and leave the ones we cannot to posterity and still cultivate the positive emotion to be happy.

In life there are numerous reasons to be happy as there are equally numerous reasons to be unhappy. So which is the best option? I would advise that we choose to be happy. It is good for us and our health as it will radiate to people around us and at the end we could start creating a happy world. It is very possible.

*The most important thing is to enjoy your life -
to be happy; it's all that matters.*

-Audrey Hepburn



HAPPINESS A PERSONAL CHOICE



We can't control the world; we can only control our own reactions to it. Happiness is largely a choice, not a right or entitlement .

-David C Hill.

Authentic happiness comes from within; it comes from making wise decisions including the choice to be happy. When our external situation is going well, it might be easy for us to choose happiness, but when it is not the case, it is not that easy. One can be happy even when things around one are nothing like one would want them to be.

Happiness is an overall attitude, a state of commitment or satisfaction, not a temporary emotion such as joy or relationship. Therefore, we

have the ability to be happy even when we experience these other emotions. Aristotle says ***Happiness depends upon us***. Happiness is not a destination, it is a journey. It is continuous and a feeling of fulfilment. Happiness is a state of mind. Positive and good emotions create it. Happiness is a state of inner peace and calmness. Happiness and inner peace come from the same source - from within. Therefore, through training, one can reach a state where happiness and peace are experienced more and more often.

Happiness is a choice not a result. Nothing will make you happy until you choose to be happy. No person will make you happy unless you decide to be happy. Your happiness will not come to you; it can only come from you.

-Ralph Marston

The key to being happy is in knowing you have the power to choose what to accept and what to let go.

-Dodinsky

Happiness isn't always measured by the person you're with; it is by the person within yourself.

-Damian Stafon

The happiness you seek can be found within yourself.

-Lailah Gifty Akita

Real happiness lies within you.

-Sathya Sai Baba

Happiness is your own treasure because it lies within you.

-Prem Rawal

The above quotes point to one fact - happiness is imbedded in us; it is in us, it lies within us. There are factors beyond our control that impede happiness such as socio economic status, genetics, illness etc. However, just because one is not able to choose happiness in the first instance does not mean that one will never be happy. The application of the right perspective, resources, relationships, determination and support can bring happiness within our reach.

Is Happiness a choice? The answer is likely to be a yes. Many happy people realize that happiness is a choice and it is up to them to intentionally choose it every single day. Happy people are not held hostage by their circumstances and they do not seek happiness in people or possession.

A large scale study revealed that life satisfaction or happiness is induced as;

- 50% genetics
- 10% external events
- 40% individual activities

While we might not be able to regulate activities around our genetics, we can surely regulate activities around our individual lives that can spur us to be happy. Assuming, in the worst case scenario, we acquire about 25% of 50% from our genes, 5% of 10% from external events or environments, and then we have 40% on our individuality to toy with to determine our state of happiness or well-being, the import of the above is that the greater personal choice to be happy lies heavily on us as individuals.

CHOICE TO MAKE TO BE HAPPY

It is not enough to know that happiness is a matter of personal choice, experiencing it requires a conscious effort or decision to choose to be happy each day.

Here are some choices to make to be happy:

- Pursue intrinsic goals
- Enjoy every moment
- Count your blessings daily
- Always manage to carry a smile
- Speak daily affirmative words to your life
- Wake up every day on your own terms
- Hold back complaints
- Practice one life-improving discipline
- Use your strengths, natural talents and abilities
- Accomplish one important task often.
- Eat healthy meals
- Treat others well
- Meditate regularly
- Keep in tune with your Maker
- Exercise regularly
- Make peace with your past, so it will not spoil the present

- Take a break regularly from social media
- Spend regular and quality time with nature
- Forgive people in advance
- Make plan for the future

SOME CHOICES PEOPLE MAKE TO BE HAPPY

Here culled are some choices people had to make in life to be happy. They might not be palatable for others, yet they made it and are happy and move on in life;

1. A woman, who lives alone, has excellent relationship with her nieces and nephews, gives charity and finds meaning in work.
2. A man who is happily married with three (3) healthy children and relatively low pay job.
3. A widow who enjoys regular visits to and from children and grandchildren and volunteering for a local church.
4. A cancer patient who has a wonderful support system and finds meaning in making others make it through chemotherapy
5. A social worker who works 70 hours a week with no overtime to ensure children in her care is in good hands.

6. An unmarried man in a Monastery, with no earthly possessions and no salary but finds meaning in communing with God
7. A teenager in a foster home, with close friends and enjoying playing football on the school team.
8. A man, who lives with several pets, enjoys a high salary and loves his job.
9. A lady not married but decided to take and train two of her sister's children as like her own children.
10. An old widow in the village, who goes to sweep the church early in the morning every day.

HAPPINESS AND AGE

Happiness is believed to shift profoundly and predictably over time and varies with time. The five-stage variation in terms of age is here enumerated;

- **TEENS:** Happiness is experienced as excitement
- **MID 20's:** Happiness is experienced when we feel successful and capable

- **MID 30's:** Happiness is more associated with balance
- **MID 40's:** Happiness is connected with growing a sense of meaning that comes with raising a family, a sense of spirituality and community and realization of the impact we can make in the world

CHOICE AND TIME FRAME

Making a choice in life is time-bound as it is said there is time for everything: a time to be born, a time to grow and a time to die. Equally, some look at the phase of life from three perspectives or seasons - that is the morning season, afternoon season and night season.

The implication of the above is that one has to be in tune with time and season and make a choice of what he or she wants in life. Aside infants whose choices need be made for them, adolescents, youths and adults have to make their decisions within a time frame or may get it wrong, resulting in wrong decisions and the consequences over one's well-being.

As an individual, the best time to start making quality choice of life is at youthful age. This is when one, with the help of parents and counselors, makes a decision of life career and how to go about it, when to finish schools, when to marry and the type of spouse to marry. The above will project one to life and in tune with what one loves and can make one happy. After the projections, then there has to be a deliberate effort within a set time frame to help one achieve one's life goals and aspirations.

MILLENNIAL THOUGHT ON HAPPINESS

Culling from a data used from the Geneva Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), which started in 1984, the study asked the millennial adolescent '**Do you believe that one needs a partner to be truly happy or do you believe that one can be equally happy or happier alone**'. Over time about 4,540 adolescents from different cohorts provided answers. Interestingly in the year 2000, almost 78% thought they need a partner to be happy whereas the number decreased to 48% in 2015.

The latter the adolescence were born, the less they were likely to affirm that a partner was important

for their personal happiness. This is a worrisome trend, which should be of concern to humanity especially parents and religious bodies.

"All happiness or unhappiness solely depends upon the quality of the object to which we are attached by love" Baruch Spinoza.



POWER OF CHOICE



*Life is a matter of choice, and every choice
you make, makes you .*

-John C. Maxwell

*You have brains in your head, you have fat in your shoe,
you can steer yourself in any direction you choose .*

-Dr Seuss

Choice allows you to start growing .

-John Maxwell

Every person has the inert ability to succeed in life, but what stands as a barrier to our success is how we use our power of choice. What is power? It is the ability or capacity to do something. What then is choice? It is the act of choosing (selecting) between two or more possibilities.

The dictionary defines choice as the act of selecting or making a decision when faced with two or more possibilities. Choice suggests the opportunity or privilege of choosing freely, the right or ability to choose.

Decision versus choice

The differences between decision and choice are slight; however they are here differentiated:

Decision: The act or need for making up one's mind. It is more of process orientation, meaning going through analysis and steps to eliminate options.

Choice: The right, power or opportunity to choose. It is more of a mind-set approach, meaning we have a perception of what the right or wrong choice may be.

Power of Choice; This means the right to choose, the ability that you and only you have in your life. No person can choose for you or else it will not be choice anymore.

Power of choice is a critical part of our self-development, and each of the choices we make shapes our life's experience and bring us to our expected outcome.

Choices define who we are. They show our character to the world. To enhance the probability

of making better choices and surviving bad ones, personal characteristics and inner spirit play essential roles.

Power is control over what other people do; choice is control over your own outcomes. A personal opinion, quality or thing belongs or relates to one particular person rather than to other people.

Personal Choices: Personal choices could be in these areas,

- Choice to get a dog/pet
- Choice to save money automatically monthly
- Choice to give money to people in need.
- Choice to eat healthy
- Choice to exercise everyday
- Choice to read a book everyday
- Choice to get excited every day
- Choice to a career you love
- Choice to the right partner
- Choice to the right friends
- Choice to live life yourself

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN MAKING DECISIONS

- Remind yourself of your priority, goal and future impact of the outcome
- Never allow emotions to sway decisions
- Use intuition and not the head when making decisions
- Consider as many alternatives as can be available with which to make an informed choice.

WHAT DETERMINES CHOICES

The choices we make are determined by values, our personality, propensity for risk, potential for dissonance of decision.

- Our choices define our character, who we are, our authentic self
- Life is nothing but a totality of conscious choices that you continuously make
- The choices we make not only affect our lives but those choices affect and influence the lives of all the people who love us and care about us.

CHOICE: IF YOU WANT HAPPINESS

- If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap

- If you want happiness for a day, go fishing
- If you want happiness for a month, get married
- If you want happiness for a year, get fortune
- If you want happiness for a lifetime, help others

Chinese proverb

POWER OF CHOICE QUOTES

'Choice is the greatest power in the universe and it is all yours'

- John. P. Hickey

'I've realized that being happy is a choice. You never want to rub anybody the wrong way or not be fun to be around but you have to be happy .When I get logical and I don't trust my instinct, that's when I get into trouble

-Angelina Jolie

'It's not complicated to embrace life. You just have to make the choice'

-Faith Hill

'Our parents bring us into the world but in the end we are responsible for what we become

-Kahlil Gibran

'Life is about choices and economics is about how incentives affect those choices and shape our lives. Choice about our education, how we spent and invest, what we do in work place, and many other personal decisions will influence our well-being and quality life'

-Catherine Pulsifer

'Our lives are fashioned by our choices. Then our choices make us.'

-Anne Frank

'Empowerment is being aware that there is no one to blame for my choice and actions; that I have a personal choice and responsibility for my life'.

-Steve Mariboli

'It is not hard to make a decision when you know what your values are'

-Roy Disney

'Life is the sum of all your choices'

-Albert Camus

*'Attitude is a choice. Happiness is a choice.
Optimism is a choice. Kindness is a choice.
Giving is a choice. Respect is a choice.
Whatever choice you make makes you.
Choose wisely -Roy.T.Bennet*

'Often people ask how I manage to be happy despite having no arms and legs. The quick answer is that I have a choice. I can be angry about not having limbs or I can be thankful that I have a purpose. I choose gratitude

*'May your choice reflect your hopes not
your fears'*

-Nelson Mandela

'Destiny is a matter of choice; it is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for. It is a thing to be achieved'.

-William Jennings Bryan

'Life presents many choices; the choices we make determine our future'.

-Catherine Pulsifer

'If you choose not to decide, you still have made a choice

-Neil Pearl

Choices are very important inert ability in humans. The ability to use that choice wisely makes or mars us in life. It is said that whatever becomes of one or what one becomes in life, is a matter of choice made either rightly or wrongly, consciously or unconsciously. What will ultimately make us make informed choice is to seek for knowledge through reading books, research and surrounding self with quality people (show me your friend and I will tell you who you are).

'Without choice and decision other people will simply be in control of your life

--John Mark Ikeke.



TIPS TO LIVING A HAPPY LIFE



Happiness means different things to different persons. To some, it is having peace within, to others it is having peace with people around and yet to others, it is fulfilling some desires or aspirations in life.

Regardless of one's definition of happiness, it is within one's reach to make or achieve. All one needs do is to focus on his or her dreams/aspirations, develop the can-do-spirit, or do we say can-be-happy spirit and go ahead making the choice to be happy.

Researchers have found that more than half of happiness depends on things that are actually under our control. This means that everyone can be happier. A big part of how happy we are depends on mind-set, habits and the way we live each day. By learning the key ingredient of happiness, we can use them to become happier.

The key to living a happy life is doing things that give one positive feelings; also the ability to know how to manage our negative emotions.

Herein espoused are some tips and keys to living a happy life:

SEVEN TIPS TO LIVING A HAPPIER LIFE

- Eat nourishing food; pay attention to what goes into your body
- Sleep seven-eight hours at night
- Keep company with good people
- Avoid news overdose
- Get regular exercise
- Do something meaningful each day
- Think good thoughts for others.

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING: KEYS TO HAPPINESS

1. Practice mindfulness; meditate and concentrate on the here and now
2. Practice gratitude
3. Surround self with positive people
4. Listen to music
5. Get outdoors and enjoy good weather
6. Accept yourself as you are
7. Find time for yourself
8. Let go of grudges
9. Do more of what you love
10. Do not be a loner
11. Do not compare self to others
12. Spend less time on social media.

STRATEGIES TO HELP CREATE HAPPINESS

- Dream big and have passion
- Write down your goals and watch them to fruition
- Believe in yourself and your abilities
- Always do your best because everything you do matters
- Treat people with respect and kindness

INGREDIENTS FOR A HAPPY LIFE

▪**Positive Emotions:** Feeling positive emotions on a daily basis has a big effect on our happiness. Therefore we must inculcate the habits of doing things that give us positive feelings. Also know how to control negative feelings when they come around.

▪**Strength and Interest:** Let us discover our areas of strength and utilize them; therein lies our happiness. The things we are good at, and like to do, are our strength. Activities like music, arts, cooking, reading, writing, painting and qualities like humor, kindness etc.

▪**Good Relationship:** The people in and around our life are important and add great values to our life. We must therefore inculcate good relationships as to be there for them while they also come to our needs when we need them. Relationship can be built by, understanding, expression of emotion, empathy, kindness, gratitude and developing a sense of assertiveness.

▪ **Finding Meaning and Purpose in Life:** Live life based on the values that are important to you; take time to think of what really matters to you like helping someone or the environment.

▪ **Achievement:** Set realistic goals and actions. Take steps to achieve them. Then celebrate success with people who care; it makes it sweeter and encourages others in the regard.

DAILY HABITS TO HAPPINESS

Happiness looks differently to different people. To some, it may be peace within; to others, it may be peace without and yet to some, it may be network of friends or freedom to pursue your dreams. Regardless of your version of true happiness, living a happier life is within one's reach. A juggling of one's regular habits can help you secure a happier life. Some of the daily habits that can induce happiness are;

- Smile
- Exercise
- Get plenty sleep
- Eat with mood in mind
- Be grateful

- Give a Compliment
- Breathe deeply
- Acknowledge the unhappy moments
- Keep a journal
- Face stress head on
- Get regularly into nature
- Take yourself out for a treat once in a while
- Create a thought list (control your thoughts)
- Take care of your body
- Re-evaluate your goals.

HOW TO BE HAPPIER WITHOUT SPENDING A LOT OF MONEY

It is said that money cannot buy happiness but some say money can make things or life better. However, no matter how one looks at it, the end is to be comfortable and to be able to meet one's needs in life; that is the basis for true happiness. Here are some of the things we can do to be happy even without spending a lot of money;

- **Strengthen bonds with family and friends:**
Studies have shown that having close relationship is one of the most important elements of a happy life.

- **Create a Grateful Journal:** Reminding self of the things you are grateful for helps one live a happier life and journaling helps the memory.
- **Go for a Walk:** One does not need an expensive gym to exercise. Just take a regular walk around your environment for free.
- **Define Fun for You:** What is fun for others might not be fun for you; you do not need to join the bandwagon. Ask yourself what gives you fun and stick to it.
- **Say NO:** Learn to say no to establish boundaries or practices that are not convenient to you. Try developing a sense of assertiveness.
- **Smile even if you do not feel like it:** When we smile, we improve our mood. Researchers have proven that just the act of smiling can trick the brain into feeling happier.
- **Strive for Serenity and Security:** Spend money on things and activities that make you more secure and peaceful. Peace of mind is critical to happiness.

HOW TO BE HAPPY WITHOUT FRIENDS

- Own your life
- Find your purpose and pursue it
- Be a bit less on social media
- Put down your phone
- Explore Spirituality and religion
- Let your imagination run wild
- Spend quality time with yourself
- Try volunteering
- Learn to cook or learn some new skill
- Explore your creativity
- Prioritize your health
- Self-Acceptance

CHARACTER TRAITS TO CULTIVATE LASTING HAPPINESS

Happiness is not something you postpone for the future; it is something you design for the present. -Jim Rohn

There are character traits that are associated with happy and successful people. However, no individual can possess it all but attempt should be made to do some work on them and live a happy life thereon;

- Dependability/Resourcefulness
- Willpower
- Patience/Passion
- Humility
- Gratitude
- Honesty/Loyalty/integrity
- Responsibility
- Compassion
- Forgiveness
- Bravery
- Kindness/Generosity
- Perseverance
- Optimism
- Reliability
- Self-discipline

GET HAPPIER

- Manage your mind-set
- Calming your mind
- Be always confident (carry aura of confidence)
- Build your self-esteem
- Do things you enjoy/ Cultivate good relationships
- Look for the good in every situation
- Ignore what people say about you.

- Develop an attitude of gratitude.
- Once it is past, let it go.
- Do not listen to gossip.
- Design your own life pattern



CELEBRATING HAPPINESS, INTERNATIONAL HAPPINESS DAY (IHD)



"Happiness requires that we celebrate the positive sides of life. Peace requires that we accept both the positive and the negative outcomes of life and move on

- Terry Mark

The International Happiness Day (IHD) is celebrated all over the world on March 20th, as established by the UN General Assembly resolution 66/28 of 12th, July 2012. The resolution was initiated by Bhutan, a Buddhist Country which values happiness over money and adopted a goal of Gross National Happiness (GNH) over Gross National Product (GNP).

Ndaba Mandela and Chelsea Clinton, launched the first Commemoration in March, 2013 at a Conference observed by 193 member states in

New York City. In 2015 the UN created the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) with the aim of reducing poverty, inequality and protecting the environment. The UN in approving the day recognizes the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in Public Policy Objective.

The UN invites member states, international and regional organizations as well as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and individuals to observe the International Day of Happiness. This is done in an appropriate manner to include Education and Public Awareness activities.

The aim therefore is to inspire people to spread positivity amongst people of all races and encourage each nation to prioritize the happiness of its citizens. The theme of the year 2022 is 'Build Back Happier' aimed at achieving global recovery from Covid-19 pandemic. Since families and

friends have not been able to be together due to the lock-down and its related norms, the economy and livelihood equally affected brought many nations' happiness to its lowest ebb.

Equally is the concern for the many crises across the world including the war in Ukraine, Yemen, Gaza and other places? Focusing on happiness in these areas is difficult, so IDH brings to fore the need to remind ourselves of our actions and their effects on all, no matter where we are as we can contribute to a more compassionate world.

HOW TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HAPPINESS

- Surround yourself with positivity
- Create a joy list
- Spend time in nature
- Do something kind to someone else
- Focus on gratitude
- Learn a new happiness tool
- Host a world-wide happiness dinner.

DETERMINING HAPPIEST COUNTRIES IN WORLD

Since 2022, the World Happiness Report has used statistical analysis to determine world's happiest country. The report monitors progress in six categories;

- Gross domestic product per capital
- Social support
- Healthy life expectancy
- Freedom of the citizens to make own choices
- Generosity of the general population.
- Perception of internal and external corruption.

TEN MOST HAPPY COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD (2019, 2020, 2021 2022)

The World Happiness Report is a publication of Sustainable Development Solution Network powered by Gallup poll data,

<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Finland	Switzerland	Finland	Finland
Denmark	Denmark	Denmark	Denmark
Norway	Norway	Iceland	Iceland
Iceland	Iceland	Switzerland	Switzerland
Netherland	New Zealand	Netherland	Netherland
Switzerland	Austria	Luxemburg	Luxemburg
Sweden	Finland	Sweden	Sweden
New Zealand	Sweden	Norway	Norway
Canada	Netherland	Israel	Israel
Austria	Germany	New Zealand	New Zealand

UNHAPPIEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD 2020

- 137. ZAMBIA
- 138. MALAWI
- 139. TANZANIA
- 140. SIERRALEONE.
- 141. LESOTHO
- 142. BOTSWANA
- 143. RWANDA
- 144. ZIMBABWE
- 145. LEBANON
- 146. AFGHANISTAN

TOP LEAST HAPPY COUNTRIES IN AFRICA

- ZIMBABWE 148
- RWANDA 147
- BOTSWANA 146
- LESOTHO 145
- MALAWI 144
- TANZANIA 142
- BURUNDI 140
- SIERRALEONE 138
- ZAMBIA 137
- TOGO 136

- MADAGASCAR 135
- MAURITANIA 134
- ETHIOPIA 133
- EGYPT 132
- COMOROS 131

NIGERIA HAPPINESS INDEX

The happiness ranking is part of the World Happiness Reports on about 146 countries. The report ranks nations based on such factors as personal sense of well-being, levels of GDP, life expectancy among others.

The scores are based on a survey in which respondents evaluate the quality of lives on a scale of 0-10.

NIGERIA'S RANKING 2013-2022

<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>
2022	118
2021	116
2020	115
2019	85
2018	91
2017	95
2016	103
2015	78
2013	82

Happiness, being argued as an issue of personal choice, also has the component of government action towards total populace happiness. The categorizations indices of GDP per capita, social support, health life expectancy, freedom of choices and perception of corruptions could, if improved upon by countries, aid the happiness status of the populace.

The Nigeria ranking perception index has not been good all this while, the best it has is in 2015 with 78 positions to date. The position is getting bad with the year; the position for 2022 is 118th position of 146 countries ranked.

The celebration of International Happiness Day is not given much attention in Nigeria; equally there is no sensitization of the citizen on the issues of happiness. The best ever issue of happiness at governmental level in recent times, was the establishment of a Ministry of Happiness, by the Governor Rochas Okorocha led administration in Imo state. The establishment of the Ministry and its activities could not be said to have been successful as the populace did not buy into it. The best that

could have been done was to establish it as a Department in the Ministry of Social Development or place it under the Governor's office.



HAPPINESS QUESTIONS AND QUOTES



In this chapter some questions are prompted to help test our happiness status. Equally some inspiring happiness quotes are enumerated to enable us grab the understanding of the subject of happiness from the eyes of other prominent scholars on the subject.

- Are you happy when you wake up in the morning; why and why not?
- If you could transport to the happiest place in the world, where would it be?

- What activity or hobby do you feel happiest doing?
- Is your happiness dependent on other people or yourself?
- Do you feel that happiness is luck or is it a practiced mind-set?
- What is something small that always makes you smile?
- What is your favorite way to spend free time?
- What is something about you that has never changed since you were little?
- What would your younger self tell your current self to do today?
- What have you done in life that you are especially proud of?
- What did you dream of becoming as a kid?
- Is fear of failure holding you back from any particular goal?
- At age 100 years, what would be one thing you would regret not doing or loving?
- What are the things (language, sports) you will like to learn?

HAPPINESS COMPARES

HAPPINESS VS JOY: They are both of different emotions. Happiness is an outward expression, bliss, pleasure, though could not necessarily be a good pleasure. Joy is internal or inner feeling; it is selfless, sacrificial and consistent. Joy is purely good.

HAPPINESS VS CONTENTMENT: Happiness is temporary feeling, short term and influenced by external forces or stimuli, whereas contentment is long term and more of a way of life and not necessarily influenced by external forces or stimuli.

HAPPINESS VS PLEASURE: Happiness is ethereal, more of giving and can be achieved without taking substance, whereas pleasure is short lived, visceral and more of taking and not giving and could be achieved with substance (temporary pleasure from drugs)

HAPPINESS VS MONEY: Money does not necessarily make us happier, but could improve

happiness and makes life less stressful. It could help us to pay off some chores or activities such as laundering, cooking, settling bills etc. It can surely not buy happiness in the true sense of it, but may help to achieve some level of happiness.

HAPPINESS VS SUCCESS: Happiness is usually attributed to an individual effort, whereas, success is attributed to group efforts.

HAPPINESS VS AGE: Expert from the London School of Economics and Political Science found that happiness peaks at the age of 23-69 years. Equally, research showed that Americans actually get happier as they aged despite their health conditions and other problems that arise. Also study shows that, the happiest days of our lives will occur at old age. Study shows that the happiest age range between 30-34 years, while unhappiest age is between 47-48 years.

HAPPINESS VS FULFILMENT: Happiness is a feeling which creates a sense of accomplishment, as something we achieved or happened the way we wanted it happened. On the other hand, fulfilment

is a sense of satisfaction, a sort of permanent accomplishment. Fulfilment gives one a mental peace and not impulsive feeling which fades with time.

HAPPINESS VS SADNESS: Happiness and sadness can arise instantly or develop overtime. Though one is a positive feeling, the other is a negative feeling. It both affects us physically, mentally and emotionally. Happiness is desirable and healthy, while sadness is undesirable and unhealthy. Sadness that lingers for a long time can lead to depression.

HAPPINESS QUOTES

Happiness is a direction, not a place.

Sydney J. Harris

Happiness is not the absence of problems; it's the ability to deal with them.- Steve Maraboli

Happiness is not being pained in body or troubled in mind. -Thomas Jefferson

Happiness is always a by-product. It is probably a matter of temperament and for anything I know it may be glandular. But it is not something that can be demanded from life; and if you are not happy you had better stop worrying about it and see what treasures you can pluck from your own brand of unhappiness. -Robertson Davies

The greatest happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved; loved for ourselves, or rather, loved in spite of ourselves.

-Victor Hugo

All happiness or unhappiness solely depends upon the quality of the object to which we are attached by love. -Baruch Spinoza

Happiness consists more in conveniences of pleasure that occur every day than in great pieces of good fortune that happen but seldom. -Benjamin Franklin

To enjoy good health, to bring true happiness to one's family, to bring peace to all, one must

first discipline and control one's own mind. If a man can control his mind, he can find the way to enlightenment and all wisdom and virtue will naturally come to him. -Buddha

The secret of happiness is freedom; the secret of freedom is courage. -Carrie Jones

It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness.

-Charles Spurgeon

There is no happiness like that of being loved by your fellow creatures and feeling that your presence is an addition to their comfort. -Charlotte Bronte

The only way to find true happiness is to risk being completely cut open. -Chuck Palahniuk

Nobody really cares if you are miserable so you might as well be happy. -Cynthia Nelms

Happiness is not a goal; it is a by-product.
-Eleanor Roosevelt

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

People are unhappy when they get something too easily. You have to sweat that's the only moral they know. -Dany Laferrière

We cannot control the world. We can only (barely) control our own reactions to it. Happiness is largely a choice, not a right or entitlement. -David C. Hill

Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace, and gratitude.

-Denis Waitley

I think the key to life is just being a happy person, and happiness will bring you success.
-Diego Val

Happiness is being content with what you have, living in freedom and liberty, having a good family life and good friends.

-Divyanka Tripathi

The world is full of people looking for spectacular happiness while they snub contentment.

-Doug Larson

Learn to enjoy every minute of your life. Be happy now. Do not wait for something outside of yourself to make you happy in the future.

-Earl Nightingale

No medicine cures what happiness cannot.

-Gabriel García Márquez

My family did not have a lot of money, and I am grateful for that. Money is the longest route to happiness.

-Evangeline Lilly

Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort.

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

We tend to forget that happiness does not come as a result of getting something we do not have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have.

-Frederick Keonig

There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different from the things we do.

-Freya Stark

Happiness is a by-product of an effort to make someone else happy.

-Gretta Brooker Palmer

Happiness and sadness run parallel to each other. When one takes a rest, the other one tends to take up the slack.

-Hazelmarie Elliott

True happiness is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.

-Helen Keller

All happiness depends on courage and work.

-Honoré de Balzac

Real happiness is cheap enough, yet how dearly we pay for its counterfeit.-Hosea Ballou

The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance, the wise grows it under his feet.
-James Oppenheim

Happiness is where we find it, but very rarely where we seek it.
-J. Petit Senn

Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others and in their pleasure takes joy, even as though it were his own.

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Three grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.
-Joseph Addison

It has been my experience that you can nearly always enjoy things if you make up your mind firmly that you will.
-L.M. Montgomery

If you look to others for fulfilment, you will never be fulfilled. If your happiness depends on money, you will never be happy with yourself. Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are. When you realize

there is nothing lacking, the world belongs to you. -Lao Tzu

There are two things to aim at in life: first, to get what you want; and after that, to enjoy it. Only the wisest of mankind achieves the second. -Logan Pearsall Smith

Let us be grateful to people who make us happy, they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom. -Marcel Proust

The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts. -Marcus Aurelius

There is no cosmetic for beauty like happiness.
Lady Blessington

Happiness is a constant work-in-progress, because solving problems is a constant work-in-progress the solutions to today's problems will lay the foundation for tomorrow's problems, and so on. True happiness occurs only when you find the problems you enjoy having and enjoy solving. -Mark Manson

Happiness is when what you think, what you say and what you do are inharmony.

-Mahatma Gandhi

In my life I've learned that true happiness comes from giving. Helping others along the way makes you evaluate who you are. I think that love is what we are all searching for. I have not come across anyone who did not become a better person through love.

-Marla Gibbs

Happiness is the experience of loving life. Being happy is being in love with that momentary experience. And love is looking at someone or even something and seeing the absolute best in him/her or it. Love is happiness with what you see. So love and happiness really are the same thing just expressed differently.

-Robert McPhillip

The happiness of life is made up of the little charities of a kiss or smile, a kind look, a heartfelt compliment.

-Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Happiness is a conscious choice, not an automatic response. -Mildred Barthel

Our capacity to draw happiness from aesthetic objects or material goods, in fact, seems critically dependent on our first satisfying a more important range of emotional or psychological needs, among them the need for understanding, for love, expression and respect. -Alain De Botton

Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose. -Helen Keller

The fact is always obvious much too late, but the most singular difference between happiness and joy is that happiness is a solid and joy a liquid. -J.D. Salinger

Folks are usually about as happy as they make their minds up to be. -Abraham Lincoln

There are two ways of being happy: We must either diminish our wants or augment our means either may do the result is the same and it is for each man to decide for himself and to do that which happens to be easier.

-Benjamin Franklin

Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.

- Nathaniel

Hawthorne

If you want to be happy, set a goal that commands your thoughts, liberates your energy, and inspires your hopes.

-Andrew Carnegie

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.

-Dalai Lama

Just as a cautious businessman avoids investing all his capital in one concern, so wisdom would probably admonish us also not

to anticipate all our happiness from one quarter alone. -Sigmund Freud

We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it.

-George Bernard Shaw

For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is not what you have or who you are or where you are or what you are doing that makes you happy or unhappy. It is what you think about it. -Dale Carnegie

Happiness is not something you postpone for the future; it is something you design for the present. -Jim Rohn

Judge nothing, you will be happy. Forgive everything, you will be happier. Love everything, you will be happiest.

-Sri Chinmoy

We cannot be happy if we expect to live all the time at the highest peak of intensity. Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance and order and rhythm and harmony.

-Thomas Merton

Most of us believe in trying to make other people happy only if they can be happy in ways which we approve.

-Robert S. Lyn



CONCLUSION



The Psychologist, Williams James, says the greatest discovery of any generation is that a human can alter his life by altering his attitude. Equally research has proven that 40% of our happiness is within our control, which is that, we can determine or choose our happiness status.

It should be noted that while we cannot control our emotion, that is, happiness or sadness, we can control or make a decision based on knowledge to determine how long the emotion lingers on in our mind. That is the power of choice we can develop.

This book is therefore an attempt to remind us of the power of choice within us to exercise, no matter whatever circumstance we find ourselves. A popular Nigerian senator, Dino Melaye, once stated, if you tell the truth you die; if you tell lies you die; so why not tell the truth as the result might almost be the same. So as they say life is transient and outside our control; it is better to live a happy life as long as it last; after all as they say 'Life is for the Living'

Equally, Fela Anikulapo of blessed memory, sang 'suffering and smiling' depicting the way Nigerians were standing and hanging on buses on hours in traffic on Lagos roads and in the midst of that were still smiling and believing in hope. The only explanation to that is that, when in a situation you cannot help, hang on to hope and keep life going. After all they are going home to their perceived happy place of abode (hope at the end of the tunnel).

The maxim 'suffering may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning' might just be the tonic we could imbibe especially for religious minded

fellows (as no condition is permanent). I therefore beseech you in the name of God Almighty that, as we put all our hope in God as we developed the positive emotion of happiness in our hearts, leading to a radiating smile on our faces. Let us this day choose happiness over sadness especially in situations we cannot change.

The book, **HAPPINESS, A PERSONAL CHOICE** is intended to remind us of the true essence of life. God created the world, with all its beauty and splendor, and handed it over to man, the most intellectual of His entire creatures. God therefore, empowered man to take charge, gave him the wherewithal to control and dominate his environment. Wherein then could man not be happy to fulfil his God-given assignment devoid of all setbacks and remain happy.

This book, therefore, is an attempt to remind man that he has the power of choice to be happy on earth, no matter whatever circumstances he finds himself or herself in. The book is made of nine chapters, commencing with the Introduction, then chapter one that discusses the main topic,

happiness, talking about what happiness is all about, its signs, types of happiness, happiness versus pleasures, elements and levels of happiness and how to find happiness.

Chapter 2 discussed the opposite of happiness, the negative emotion, sadness. It defines sadness, looks at the causes, effects and strategy for coping with sadness. It also does a comparison between sadness and depression, symptoms of depression and ends with some sadness quotes.

Chapter 3 espouses some benefits derived from living a happy life, at home and in the office place. Chapter 4 looks at some challenges of happiness. Chapter 5 has the main theme of the book, 'Happiness a personal choice'. It uses various quotes from world authors to support the notion that happiness is a personal choice. It ends with the advice that making happiness a personal choice is time-bound.

Chapter 6 looks at the power of choice. Chapter 7 tips to living a happy life. Chapter 8 x-rays celebrating happiness with focus on the

International Day for Happiness, as established by the United Nations and thereafter named some happiest countries and not so happy countries and their performance index.

Chapter 9 features some happiness questions and quotes culled from the works of various authors. Chapter 10 concludes the book

It is my sincere hope that reading the book will prompt the mind-set of happiness, positively impact our total well-being, and invariably radiate to the environment and at the last resort to the country at large. World Health Organization (WHO) says that, progress in governance positively affects the World Happiness Index of the country.

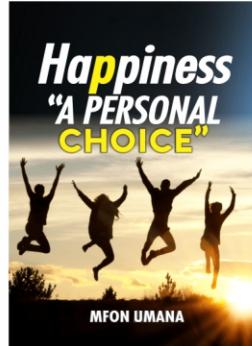
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Anadi I John Bosco:The choice that makes the difference.

About the Book

The book Happiness “A Personal Choice” is intended to remind us of the true essence of life, and the original purpose of man to rule and dominate the earth.

It further reminds us that we have the power of choice to be happy on earth no matter the circumstances we find our selves.



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