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# How to be (reasonably) Happy for the Rest of Your Life.

Dr. Ron Rubenzer, Fellow - American Institute of Stress January 2019

## **YOU write the story of your life.**

If you are not influencing the story of your life, who or what is? "Free will" is what makes us human.

Starting NOW, Make the Rest of your life, the best of your life (or at least better:-). Time only moves from this day forward.

"Nothing ever happened in the past that can prevent you from being present now (Eckhart Tolle).

## **Make Happiness a G.L.A.D. Habit.**

The pursuit of Happiness is a top course at Harvard.

Some principles of being content, can be boiled down to G.L.A.D habits.

G.L.A.D. stands for

Gratitude

Laughter

Acceptance

Devotion.

You are invited to "fill in the blanks" under each section.

### *GRATITUDE.*

You owe a Debt of Gratitude to your parents. By today's standards, you cost almost a Quarter Million dollars to raise from childhood. (\$233,610.00 USDA, 2017). Be grateful to your parents.

You owe thanks to the countless "makers" of everything you use, consume or enjoy. (Look around you. What item have YOU made, that you use.) We are interdependent on hundreds of others through our lifespan. (Do YOU "make", from scratch, your own food, car, house, electricity etc. There are those who can't even make their own bed). Be grateful for those who have a work ethic.

The ungrateful ENTITLED, actually believe life **owes them**, forever. (By way of review- Entitlement -- a personality trait driven by exaggerated feelings of deservingness ... [which] may lead to chronic disappointment <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/09/160913134442.htm>)

If you have been through many storms, be grateful you are STILL STANDING. For a brighter day choose to be positive. Keep a "judgment free" gratitude journal.

Gratitude STEM- I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_. I can "pay forward" by \_\_\_\_\_

**LAUGHTER.** Make Fun of Stress. Some actually believe "stress is your friend." Your sense of humor is your sense of balance. Even in the hospital- your response to humor is a marker of "cognitive fitness". Keep a humor file, in case of emergency. Try to have One "good humor" man (i.e. Person) in your life.

Humor Stem- A funny thing happened to me \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCEPTANCE**, it is our mind's default setting to want things to be- the way We want them to be (wishful thinking). Accepting things as they are (it IS what it IS), is a beginning point to calmer, effective action that will change our circumstances or our minds.

According to the “Big-Five-Trait Theory” of the Most Valuable Person on the job, being Agree-able is an “added value” trait.

Acceptance Speech - Just for today I will “Grin and Bear” it when \_\_\_\_\_ (start small)

***DEVOTION-*** Dedication to any valuable cause beyond yourself is almost guaranteed to bring you happiness. If you have a pulse, you have a purpose. NASA has already told the universe (in writing) “We come in Peace.” If nothing else, you can make your home peaceful.

Devotion Stem. I am dedicated to (the one I love) etc. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Reality Check**

Perhaps once a week, check if you are really being GLAD.