

Neuroscience of Happiness

Hacking Your Own Hardware

Happiness is not just a feeling; it's a chemical cocktail you can mix yourself.

1. The Big Four Chemicals

Dopamine: *The Reward Chemical.* RELEASED BY: Completing a task, eating good food, celebrating little wins. **Oxytocin:** The Love Hormone. RELEASED BY: Playing with a dog, holding hands, giving a compliment. **Serotonin:** *The Mood Stabilizer.* RELEASED BY: Sun exposure, nature walks, mindfulness. **Endorphins:** The Pain Killer. RELEASED BY: Exercise, laughter, dark chocolate.

2. Neuroplasticity

The Rule: "*Neurons that fire together, wire together.*" **Implication:** If you complain every day, you are building a superhighway for negativity in your brain. **The Fix:** *Deliberately practicing joy physically changes the structure of your brain over time.*

3. The Negativity Bias

Evolution: Our brains effectively "Velcro" for bad experiences (survival) and "Teflon" for good ones. **Counter-measure:** *You must hold a positive thought for 15-20 seconds to transfer it from short-term to long-term memory.* A quick "that's nice" isn't enough.

4. The Tetris Effect

Concept: If you play Tetris for hours, you see shapes everywhere.

- **Application:** If you scan your day for 3 good things, your brain eventually starts scanning the world for positives automatically.