

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.