

GOOD HEALTH TIMES

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HAPPINESS
YOUR HEALTH
& WELLNESS

ABCs
of relationships

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Dr. Mark Rowe

Releasing the Happiness Within

Pause for a moment and ask yourself this question... How many people do I know that are genuinely thriving in happy, fulfilling, and purposeful lives?

It's not that easy to think of candidates who fit the criteria is it? The disappointing reality is that even if you reckon 3 out of 10 in your network fit the bill, then you are enjoying an above average share of highly positive people in your life. Research has found that only about 20% of people see themselves as flourishing, or living close to their optimum potential. Unfortunately the other 80% identify as living a great deal less fruitfully than they know they are capable of. The problem is the human brain is not hardwired for happiness, but for survival. Happiness should manifest itself as a bonus when the needs of survival have been met. However, modern society presents us with so many challenges, so much negativity, and in such a perpetually distracting way, that it is my belief that happiness and fulfilment are no longer optional extras, but essential needs to be cultivated to ensure our wellbeing and that of those around us.

The good news is that there are simple methods to train ourselves to develop happiness boosting habits. Adopting this approach won't just impact on how we feel, our physical

health, and our wellbeing; but it also contributes greatly to our ability to become successful in our lives. Of course success is subjective, it means different things for different people, but regardless of whether your idea of success pertains to career, relationships, health, or productivity; maintaining a positive outlook is an important first step in the right direction to achieving your full potential. And be assured that the contagious nature of positivity will guarantee that you will be surprised by countless other benefits when you bring your happiness into all your day to day interactions.



Happiness, & Your Health & Wellness.

This month's theme celebrates the United Nations International Day of Happiness on March 20th as a means of recognising happiness as a fundamental human goal.

// Something to think about:
A great definition of happiness: something useful to do, someone to love and something to look forward to. //

Take 5 - Five Ways to Boost Happiness

- 1 Be more kind & compassionate.
- 2 Build rich relationships.
- 3 Embrace Simplicity.
- 4 Express Gratitude.
- 5 Be on purpose.

As humans we enjoy the most satisfaction when we are engaged in positive relationships, have meaningful productivity, and a sense of purpose and accomplishment. In the end, we are greatly affected by what we do, and by extension we are more affected by what we do every day, than those things we rarely find the time to do. The smallest of actions exceeds the noblest of intentions. What this means is that we must endeavour to take action on those things we wish to do, simply dwelling on the idea of them isn't enough, and can indeed have negative effects on us as we develop a tension between what we think, and what we do.

Beneficial behaviours can become just as habitual as destructive ones so each of us can empower ourselves by building habits such as expressing gratitude, exercise, and embracing realistic optimism. But we must make that choice to take action, embrace the belief that the potential for everyday happiness lies within each and every one of us. Releasing this potential will provide you with more balance and harmony, and it is this foundation that can truly provide a platform for success, and for a life of significance.

Dr. Mark Rowe

Dr. Mark Rowe – Editor

For more on releasing the happiness within and the small choices that make big changes, visit www.doctormarkrowe.com

The ABC's of Relationships

Any meaningful discussion about inner happiness and fulfilment includes the importance of relationships in our lives.

Not just our nearest and dearest but our families, friends and work colleagues. Truth is we thrive or simply survive based on the quality of those human connections.

Research from the field of positive psychology, (a strength based approach to living, focusing on wellbeing and positivity rather than weakness or negativity) backs this up. Rich relationships are like powerful magnets attracting positivity and forming the basis for a rich meaningful and flourishing life.

More often than not, they are the leading indicator of your wellbeing.

Having real friends, the flesh and blood variety who provide fun, security as well as the proverbial shoulder to cry on, if and when needed, is really important. Friends can provide support and meet many of your needs: love and acceptance, certainty, variety and often significance. There is something special about relationships, something life-enhancing. Cultivating and investing in the relationships in your life can provide you with a well of long-term satisfaction and meaning.

Here's an ABC to consider when it comes to your relationships.

A - 'Absence makes the heart grow fonder.'

So the saying goes but it can also make the heart weaker. Loneliness is the most terrible poverty. Quality relationships are integral to your physical wellbeing. In a study from Duke University, researchers found that people with fewer than FOUR quality friends were more than twice as likely to die from established heart disease as those that had more than four such friends.

Often when people are stressed; instead of investing in their relationships they divest and go back into their shell.

B - Be mindful of your associations.

Research indicates that the most important determinants of who you will be in five years time are the self-development work you do and the five people you associate with. There is a part of the brain that encourages you to copy or mirror your friends and those people you spend time with. You are always being moulded by your experiences. In this mirroring effect, you can take on the habits, beliefs and mannerisms of the people you surround yourself with. It's as if your brain will practice doing something that you have just seen which makes it easier for you to carry out that behaviour in the future.

C - Contagion Effect.

Exciting research from Dr Christakis in Yale University has found that emotional positivity spreads through your social networks, not just to your friends, but also to your friends friends and your friends friends friends - in other words outwards to three degrees of separation. And this 'social contagion' applies to your lifestyle habits as well.

If your friends take regular exercise and have a healthy diet, then you are much more likely to adopt a healthy lifestyle also.

Health Tip: Just 20 minutes of exercise a day can help you destress, boost your motivation, positivity and sense of wellbeing.