

# 30 Happiness Tips: Program Your Life for Optimum Enjoyment

For many of us, the goal of life isn't ultimate wealth, a massive amount of stuff, or the perfect car. It's happiness, plain and simple.

Some people may be created happier than others, with enjoyment of life programmed into their hardwiring. For others, getting to happiness isn't always that simple. You weren't programmed that way.

But like any programming, yours can be changed. Rewrite your life program to include as many of the following tips as appeal to you, and the ultimate goal of happiness can be yours. If you've already achieved complete happiness, well done!

1. **Experiment to find out what makes you happy.** Different things make different people happy. If you aren't sure what your hot spots are, experiment. Try different things out. Find out what you enjoy most. The answers just might surprise you. Try a few of the following for starters.
2. **Surround yourself with others who are happy.** If you are around angry, depressed or sad people, it will transfer to you. You can't help it. But if you're around people who are happy, that will also transfer to you. You'll also learn their habits, and learn to react the way they do when something bad happens. Slowly weed out the negative influences on your life and replace them with positive ones.
3. **Count your blessings.** When something bad happens to you, try not to focus on it. Instead, take a minute to count your blessings. Everyone has good things in their lives, whether it is health or loved ones or whatever.
4. **Gratitude sessions.** Along those lines, it is a good practice to have a daily gratitude session. Think about what you have to be thankful for, and silently thank those who have done something good for you in some way. If you have time, take the time to call them or email them to thank them.
5. **Think solutions.** Instead of thinking about problems, move to the next step: how to solve it. When someone says to me, "Oh, this is so hard," or "Oh, I can't seem to do this," or "Man, we don't have any more of that," I just ask them, "Well, what's the solution?" If you develop solution-oriented thinking, you'll be much happier.

6. **Connect with others.** As much as possible, spend time with those you love, and with others who you enjoy. It could be a simple phone call, or a short visit. Or take a day with the person or people you'd like to spend time with. Have a conversation, do things together, be intimate.
7. **Accept things.** We are often unaware of it, but we usually want things or people or ourselves to change. And that's a sure way to lead to unhappiness, because we cannot control the world. We have to accept things as they are, try to understand them, even love them. Including and most especially ourselves: accept who you are, allow yourself to be yourself, try to understand and love yourself. Then do the same with the others in your life.
8. **Take time to savor life.** Instead of rushing from one thing to another, resolve to have less to do each day, less appointments and fewer tasks. Then do each thing slowly, with mindfulness and ease, and try to be present in the moment. And truly enjoy whatever it is you do, from talking to eating to walking to just sitting.
9. **Notice small things.** Along the same lines, try to notice when you feel good, or you're not suffering, or you are tasting something really delicious, or you feel something cold or hot, anything. Noticing the little things will help keep you focused on the present.
10. **Treat yourself.** Take a few minutes each day to give yourself a little treat, whether that's something like chocolate or berries, or a bubble bath, or walking barefoot in the grass, or taking a nap. Whatever it is, treat yourself. You deserve it.
11. **This shall pass.** When bad things happen, and you're having trouble accepting it, think to yourself the same thing the ancients did: "This, too, shall pass." And it will. And you'll survive.
12. **Volunteer.** When you give to others, whether that's money or the stuff you no longer need or your time and love, you become happier. It's true. Take 5 minutes today to call a charity and volunteer to donate some time sometime this month. It will make a big difference in your life.
13. **Follow your passions.** If you do what you love to do, especially for a living, you will be extremely happy. This is one of the best things you can do. If it seems impossible, don't give up. Others have done it and you can too.
14. **Look at your achievements.** Instead of looking at what you haven't done, or what you've failed at, think about what you have done. Many times that's much more than we realize.

15. **Laugh.** Just the simple act of laughing can make you happier. Watch a funny movie, tell jokes, read a book by Douglas Adams or Terry Pratchett, go to humor sites on the Internet. And laugh your head off.
16. **Realize that you deserve it.** You deserve happiness. That simple statement is actually profound for many people, as they don't believe they really deserve to be happy. It's often unconscious. If you feel that within yourself, you need to first realize that you deserve happiness. Repeat it if necessary.
17. **Get into the flow.** There is a state of doing known as Flow, which is when you completely lose yourself in a task and forget about the world around you. It leads to happiness, and productivity. Set yourself up for it by clearing distractions, giving yourself a challenging (but accomplishable) task, and making it something that you like doing. Then try to lose yourself in that task.
18. **Have a goal.** Too many goals will lead to ineffectiveness. Try to choose one goal and really focus on it. And work to accomplish it. Goals lead to happiness, if you make progress on them.
19. **Get inspired.** Take time to read blogs or books or magazine articles about success stories related to what you want to do. It will get you energized.
20. **Celebrate.** When you do something right, when you accomplish something, when you feel like it, reward yourself. Celebrate. Have fun, and pat yourself on the back.
21. **Autonomy.** Try to have at least one area in your life where you have autonomy. It's best if this is at work, but if not, find another place, such as a hobby or civic activity. You need to be in control of what you do to be happy.
22. **Spend time doing something you love.** Make room in your life by eliminating some of the commitments you don't really like doing, and replacing them with something you truly love.
23. **Show little acts of kindness.** Each day, try to be kind to others in little ways, opening doors, smiling, giving up your place in line.
24. **Exercise.** Just a short walk or run could lift your spirits and reduce stress. Nothing difficult. Just get outside and move.
25. **Catch negative thoughts.** Monitor your thoughts. When you catch negative ones, try to think of something good instead. Corny, but it helps.
26. **Jealousy doesn't help.** Many people obsess about others who are successful or happy. That gets you nowhere, fast. Instead, be happy for them. Then focus on yourself, and what you do right.

27. **Stop watching and reading news.** Sure, this sounds like a head-in-the-sand suggestion. But really, if you give this a try, you won't miss a thing. And instead, you can focus on reading books and listening to music that lifts you up.
28. **Learn something new.** It's strange how many of us are afraid to try new things, or admit we don't know something. But learning new skills or new information is one of the most fun things there is to do. Give it a try.
29. **Check out nature.** Go and watch a sunrise or sunset. Watch the water, whether that's a river or ocean or lake. Watch the stars, or the clouds. Watch animals. Watch people. Watch children. And be inspired by it all.
30. **Laugh some more.** When you are in the middle of a bad situation, look around you, realize the absurdity of the situation, and just laugh. In a year, no one will care. In two years, you'll be laughing at this anyway. So laugh now, and be happy now.

*Written for Dumb Little Man by Leo Babuata*