

Do you ever wonder why some people are happier than others? How did they get that way? People at every age, and every walk of life, list happiness as one of the things they want. Everyone wants to be happy. So most people get busy trying to figure out what will bring them happiness. They start looking toward their friends, hoping they will make them happy. They buy toys and luxuries, thinking these material things will bring happiness TO them. Some people believe their activities will satisfy their need for happiness. But all of us know people who have a ton of friends, or expensive toys, or lots of activities - and they're still not happy.

All of these strategies are based on a common success theory that's a combination of "IF and "THEN": IF I get a good grade, THEN I'll be happy. IF I get her to like me, THEN I'll be happy. IF I get an iPhone, THEN I'll be happy. Basically, we believe that IF we achieve success at something, THEN we'll be happy. So why are so many successful people unhappy? And why are you only temporarily happy when you get a good grade, a new phone, or a trophy?

Answer: because the Success = Happiness formula is a lie! That's right...success is NOT the way to happiness. In fact - let this thought sink in for a minute: [There is no WAY to happiness; Happiness IS the Way.](#) (- Thich Nhat Hanh) What does THAT mean? It means that happiness is a choice people make. It is a way of thinking and acting every single day. Most importantly, success tends to follow happy people, not the other way around. You're more likely to be successful once you decide to be happy! Over 200 research studies have shown that happiness leads to success in school, friendships, sports, business, and marriage. If you're looking for some tips on how to do that, here are 5 strategies that the researchers at the National Institute for Mental Health discovered:

- Write down three things that went well at the end of every day.
- Be thankful for three things every day and keep a Gratitude Journal.
- Write a "Forgiveness Letter" to someone, even if you never send it.
- Use an optimistic style of explaining the unfortunate things that happen.
- Set aside time for meditation or prayer daily.

These techniques really work if you do them every day. You'll still have some bum days, but there's a reason why some people are generally happier than others. They choose happy, and everything from their smile to their swagger says so most of the time. The choice is yours. You can choose "unhappy", or you can choose "happy",... and enjoy the results!

LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Student will learn strategies for raising his/her personal happiness set-point..

INSTRUCTIONS:

Discuss the questions on page two of the handout following the video. Answers to question #1 can be shared. Question #2 is private.

1

Why do people often try to reach happiness through material things?

Answer to Share

2

Write an example of a time when you thought
“IF I get _____
THEN I’ll be happier.”

Private answer