

Developing inner happiness

We all know how to achieve conditional happiness. If seeing a particular movie will make us happy, then we buy a ticket for that movie and go watch it. Happiness (albeit short lived) is achieved. But how do we develop the type of happiness that comes from within? Research has shown that some people are up to 50% more genetically predisposed to happiness than others. These people seem to find it easier to connect to that inner acceptance, optimism and fulfilment - key components of happiness. So does that mean that those without this gene are doomed? The simple answer is no. The reason? **Happiness is a learned skill** and as such, this means that everyone is capable of it. For some people, more effort is required to achieve this state, but the rewards make it all worth while; and as time goes by, it becomes less of an effort and more of a natural state of mind.

Know that you can't be happy all of the time. You will still experience negative emotions such as sadness, anger and frustration. These are a normal part of life. Those that develop inner happiness however, tend to bounce back from these emotions much faster.

Developing Happiness Checklist

As you read through the checklist below and on the following pages, tick those areas that you feel you are already achieving reasonably well.

Health and Wellbeing

Take care of your wellbeing – it is very difficult to be happy when you are not feeling well.

Eat a healthy, balanced diet.

Practise regular stress management including rest, relaxation, play and nurture .

Exercise regularly – 30 minutes daily or 3hrs per week (Note: aim for moderate exercise. Excessive exercise can sometimes counteract happiness)

Eliminate unhealthy habits. Use appropriate resources (doctors, hypnosis, patches, counselling, EFT etc.) to eliminate smoking, drug, or other addictive habits.

Minimise excessive caffeine intake (coffee, tea, soft fizzy drinks) and alcohol. Avoid caffeine from 4pm onwards to ensure restful sleep.

Live holistically.

Relationships

Build a social circle. Socialise at least once a week.

Work towards healthy relationships.

Maintain your relationships and be open to new friendships.

Create a balance of give and take in your life.

Volunteer your time or other resources to charity.

