

25

SIMPLE WAYS

TO BE

HAPPIER

TODAY

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The logo for 'inspiyr' features the word in a lowercase, bold, sans-serif font. Above the letters 'i', 'p', and 'y' are three small, light blue circles of varying sizes, arranged in a slight arc.

More often than not, do you feel truly happy? If your answer is no, that's something we need to fix.

Um, yeah. Fix all of my life problems? I'll get on that right away.

I'm going to ignore your delightful sarcasm and make a disclaimer here: your life will never be perfect in the strictest form of the word. Life will inevitably throw you some curveballs, and sometimes, it might be difficult to be happy.

But if you're not happy the majority of the time, that's something we need to work on.

Happiness is not far out of your reach. It's all about mindset. But there are also a few little tricks you can try to help keep you feeling cheery and blessed.



1. Remember how lucky you are to be alive

There are many reasons to be happy, but let's start with the basics: you are alive. It's so easy to take this for granted, but think about how many little things had to come together to make your presence here on Earth a reality.

Not only that, but your body is doing so much work that you're not even conscious of just to keep you breathing, to keep you able to face the day and take on life. Your body is an amazing, functioning wonder—and never let yourself forget that.

2. Surround yourself with positive people

It turns out happiness is, indeed, contagious. According to [one study published in BMJ](#), researchers found that “clusters” of happy and unhappy people exist, meaning that those who are surrounded by happy people are more likely to become happy, while those who are close to unhappy people are not. Rid yourself of toxic people in your life, and you’ll have an easier time finding true happiness.

3. Remind yourself that you’re loved

Make a list of these people that view you as one of the most important parts of their life. All of them are reasons to be happy. Cherish them and express your love to them as frequently as you can – maybe take them out for dinner and tackle #2 at the same time. 😊

4. Get a furry friend

One of the biggest health benefits of having a pet is the effect a pet can have on stress levels. In a study by [Karen Allen, PhD](#), participants had to mentally solve math problems. Their heart rates and blood pressures were monitored when their pets were in the room, as well as when their spouses, family, and friends were in the room. The participants were calmer in the presence of their pets. Your pet can help keep you stress-free so that you can have some peace and live a happy life.

5. Smile

If you're feeling blue, just force a smile. No, I'm not kidding. According to a [study done by researchers at Cardiff University](#), the expressions we make can affect our emotions, so a smile all by itself can inspire some happiness. It might feel ridiculous, but after you cheese it up a bit, you might actually start to become happy yourself.

6. Help others

[Research shows](#) that helping others can make you considerably happier, so consider volunteering for a charity you care about, or even just take a loved one out for a dinner on you. You'll feel a boost in your happiness levels after that, unless you're The Grinch – in which case, go steal Christmas presents from innocent children or something.

7. Make a list of (lofty) goals

It might not seem like it, but you have so many opportunities to do anything your heart desires. Want to take a cooking class? You can. Want to travel around Europe? You can. Want to write a book? You can!

Make a list of all of these dreams, and work towards them actively. You can do anything you set your mind to.

8. Eat right...

We at Inspiyr always encourage healthy habits, and for many reasons. Here, we're suggesting it for the sake of your happiness! Nutritious eating will help regulate your body, including your mood. On the long term, [research suggests](#) that good nutrition will keep your body—including your brain chemistry—regulated and healthy.

9....and work out!

Get your body moving to keep a smile on your face.

But working out will just make me tired and sad, won't it?

Nope! On the contrary. Working out regularly will help get those wonderful endorphins pumping, which make you feel good, happy, and even more energetic. The long term effects of regular exercise combined with healthy eating will help you feel and look good.

10. Find your mantra

Is there a short quote that always lifts your spirits or gives you resolve no matter what? A common one is "this too shall pass." There are many positive affirmations you can tell yourself, from "I can do this" to "Good things are coming my way."

Figure out what your mantra is so you can repeat it to yourself whenever you're feeling down. (Repeat it silently, though—don't freak out people around you!)

11. Pursue your passions

Ask yourself two questions. First of all, what do you love to do? And, more importantly, are you doing it? Many might know the answer to the first question immediately, but yet still answer “no” to the second.

Whether it requires an extra half hour or so to dedicate to a hobby, or an entire change of career path, pursue your passions, because your passions will help you find happiness.

12. Count your blessings

According to [studies](#), gratitude is linked with well-being and happiness. Expressing your gratitude and keeping in mind all that you are thankful for will help you to concentrate on the positive and good in your life.

13. Get outside!

Don't lock yourself indoors all the time – get out there and get some sun, you vampire. [Studies have shown](#) that being outdoors in all-natural environments will generally make you happier than being in an urban or indoor environment. Take your work (or playtime) outside.

14. Drink plenty of water

Sounds random, but according to a study done by the [USDA](#), water can help keep a smile on your face. Researchers split a group of subjects approximately 20 years old into two groups. One group worked out without water, while the other worked out with water. At the end of the test, their mood was assessed. The researchers found that a lack of hydration was associated with fatigue, confusion, and an overall negative mood.

Even if you're not a gym rat, the level of dehydration experienced among these participants was at approximately the same level as many experience daily without working out. So if you've been in a bit of a bad mood recently, try keeping hydrated to raise your spirits.

15. Remember: you have countless good memories ahead of you

Isn't it a wonderful thought that some of the best moments of your life haven't happened yet? Your favorite memories are still ahead of you, and you will have countless moments in the next few decades that will make you smile, laugh, or even cry from happiness. You will have moments that touch you, that make you feel ecstatic to be alive. Remind yourself of that during the hard moments to help them pass by easier.

16. Meditate

One of the daily habits we at Inspiyr recommend all the time is to meditate, and for good reason. Meditation can lead to a ton of health benefits, not to mention lower your stress and brighten your day!

17. Get proper shut-eye

According to [one study published by the BPS Research Digest](#), having a bad night's sleep can make us more prone to negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, and fear. Make sure to get adequate shut-eye so that you can be bright-eyed and bushy-tailed throughout the day.

18. Plan your day before you go to bed

Do yourself a favor and make yourself a to-do list for the next day before you go to bed. This will help you plan your day so you don't lay in bed all night thinking about it (and get that great night of sleep we recommended); plus, you'll be able to optimize your time for the next day so you have plenty of time to relax and have a happy day!

19. Wear an outfit that makes you feel great

During tough times, it may be tempting to grab the nearest pair of sweatpants, but ignore that urge. Grab that suave sweater or your favorite pair of jeans, instead. If you feel good about how you look, it's just one more positive thing to add to your day. Wear the outfit that always makes you look your best, and you'll be more likely to feel your best!

20. Work on your positive thoughts

Make one of your most important daily habits to improve your thoughts. Positive thoughts can help you perform better and improve your quality of life. Try making yourself react to things by thinking of the positives instead of the negatives.

Think of it this way: you're working on being your own personal cheerleader instead of your own worst enemy!

21. Laugh

Laughter is fun, but [studies](#) show that it also releases those wonderful aforementioned endorphins, which not only make you feel good but also can even increase your pain tolerance. So put on those George Carlin specials and laugh away!

22. Make love

Your partner can help get those endorphins flowing. [Research shows](#) that endorphins are released during the peak of sexual intercourse, so to get that happy, blissful feeling, grab your partner and pump up the romance.

23. Clean the house

It's hard to be happy when you know you have a mound of chores to do, or when you're in a messy environment. Mess and clutter can add unneeded stress to your life, so to give yourself a more relaxing environment, try sprucing up your house a bit, and put some organizational rules in place so that you keep it clean.

24. Let go of your grudges

Let go of all grudges, and stop yourself from developing any new ones. Embrace forgiveness. Not only are there many health benefits of forgiveness, but if you think about it, it does you no good whatsoever. If there are toxic people in your life, let them drift away peacefully instead of holding resentment towards them.

25. Read self-improvement books

Some scorn self-improvement books, thinking that they're associated with low points and life crises. However, getting knowledge on how to grow as a person is something to be lauded, not scorned. Learning about yourself and new ways to think, act, or treat yourself is something you should always be doing. Who wouldn't want advice on how to be a more productive, happier, healthier you? Buy yourself some and get reading!



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