

### HAPPINESS AS A WAY OF LIFE

If we begin to think about happiness not as a moment in time, but as a way of life, we can begin to shift our perspective on happiness and “cherish the chase as much as we treasure the trophy.”

Most people spend a lot of time seeking happiness, but they are looking in the wrong places. If someone loves us we’ll be happy, if we have money we’ll be happy, if circumstances change we’ll be happy. But all this does is defer our happiness.

### “I’LL BE HAPPY WHEN...”

Think about all of the events or situations that you think would make you happy. Maybe it’s when you get married, when you retire, when you own a home, when you have a nicer car, when you save enough money...

Now think about the things you used to think would make you happy have already happened. Were you finally happy when you bought a new car? When you saved some money? When you paid off a loan? Now think about all of the things you want that other people already have. Are they happy? Stress-free? Think about how that applies to your current context of happiness – if could mean you will never be happy, given your definition of happiness.

Hopefully this exercise will show you that postponing our happiness for some future circumstance that we can’t control is foolish. It’s time to change our context, or story, of happiness.

### HAPPINESS IS NOT PURSUED, IT ENSUES

Take 60 seconds to think about anything and everything you appreciate in your life, anything that brings you happiness. As you write, you may find yourself thinking, “hmmm...does that really belong on the list.” There are a lot of things in life that make you feel good. They may not make you happy, but they make you feel good. Those things should go on the list:

Now having written this list, how do you feel? Do you feel happier? You probably do. That’s because happiness is a byproduct of appreciation. When you were asked to think about things that make you feel good, you focused all of your psychic energy on things that you liked. This increased your levels of appreciation, which in turn, increased your happiness.

This is why people who pursue happiness can’t get it – it’s like grabbing water. So continue to practice cultivating your appreciation. Practice noticing the things that make you happy. You will then be cherishing the chase as much as you treasure the trophy, and discover that happiness is something that ensues, not something that can be pursued.