

## Balanced Living – November 2020

---

### Looking at Happiness as a Choice



Are you a person who can act on tough questions? Questions like: What am I grateful for? What choices do I have? What actions can I take to improve my life? What are my primary strengths? How can I live a more balanced life?

People who can act on these questions likely also describe themselves as happy.

“Happiness is neither a mood nor an emotion. Mood is a biochemical condition, and emotions are transitory feelings,” says Dan Baker, Ph.D., director of the Life Enhancement Program at Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Ariz., and author of *What Happy People Know*. “Happiness is a way of life, an overriding outlook composed of qualities like love, optimism, courage, and a sense of freedom. It’s not something that changes every time your situation changes.”

People often think happiness is something you’re born with, but you can learn the qualities of happiness by mastering Dr. Baker’s happiness tools described here.

### Appreciation

This is the most fundamental tool. It is a form of love that asks for nothing and gives everything.

“Taking time each day to appreciate what you have, to think about people who have made a difference, to acknowledge the love you have or have had. Each of these things can turn your attention to the good in your life,” says Dr. Baker. “This process shifts your attention away from fear, which is often the basis of unhappiness.”

## Choice

Feeling as though you have no choices or options in life is like being in jail. It leads to depression, anxiety, and learned helplessness.

“Unhappy people make the mistake of giving in to fear, which limits their perception of the choices they have,” says Dr. Baker. “Happy people turn away from fear and find they have an array of choices they can make in almost every situation.”

## Personal Power

Personal power has two components: taking responsibility and taking action. It means realizing your life belongs to you and then doing something about it.

“When you’re secure in your personal power, it keeps you from becoming a victim,” says Dr. Baker. “When you have it, you know you can handle whatever life dishes out.”

## Leading with Your Strengths

Focusing on your weaknesses reinforces unhappiness. By focusing on your strengths, you can solve problems and improve situations.

"Building and broadening your talents and positive qualities feels good and improves your rate of success in every endeavor," says Dr. Baker. "People get energy from building on their successes, not fighting their failures."

## Power of Language

You think in words, and those words have the power to limit you or set you free. Similarly, the stories you tell yourself about your life eventually become your life.

“Self-talk is powerful, so it’s important to choose your words carefully,” says Dr. Baker. “If you use destructive or critical language, you’ll push yourself deeper into fear. Even something as simple as calling an unexpected situation a possibility instead of a problem can change the way you look at it.”

A good rule to follow in self-talk is to talk to yourself the way you want others to talk to you.

## Multidimensional Living

There are three primary components of life: relationships, health and purpose, and work. Many people, though, put all their energy into just one area.

“But doing so never works,” says Dr. Baker. “Happiness comes from living a full life.”

## QUICK TIP!

Reclaim your joy by mastering the principles of positive thinking, which can lead to greater self-confidence, more respect for others, and...

[Log-in to check them out...](#)

## Please access our free November Educational Webinar:

### “Top Social Issues for Teens in Today’s World”

#### Presented by Ellen Contente

Teens have different issues to deal with today. Social media has amplified the struggles they face, and many suffer from anxiety and depression. They are exposed to violence on the screen and in music. Let's not forget drugs and alcohol and peer pressure, which have been a problem for decades. Join us for a discussion about signs to look for in your teen and how to help them deal with today's pressures. Please go to [www.espyr.com](http://www.espyr.com) to view this webinar. Log in using our password, click on “webinars” and select the featured webinar.

*“Please feel free to submit questions relevant to the webinar throughout the month. The subject matter expert will answer these questions and they will be posted alongside the webinar recording. The questions and answers will be a permanent part of the webinar archive to which you will have access.”*

Our webinars now have an enhanced process. Each month, the webinars are released in a recorded format and users may submit relevant questions throughout the month. All answers are posted alongside the recording by the subject matter expert. This new process allows all participants the convenience of watching the webinar **“on demand”** any time after publication.

For additional online information and resources about maintaining well-being and wellness as well as trainings and self-searches for child and eldercare resources, please go to [www.espyr.com](http://www.espyr.com) and log in using your password:

**interioreap**