

10 ways to lead a happier life



"Happiness is a journey, not a destination."

Buddha

Happiness is a term that encompasses positive feelings such as joy, satisfaction, pleasure, peace of mind and euphoria. It is a general sense of positivity incorporating both joy and meaning in life. Pleasure and joy can be achieved in many ways including spending time with people we love, self-care, doing exercise or engaging in activities that make us happy. Feelings of purpose and meaning in life come from achieving goals, taking care of loved ones, fulfilling responsibilities, and finding meaning in your work.

It's important to remember that being happy doesn't mean you are in a constant state of elation – rather, it is generally feeling more positive than negative in your life. With that being said, we all have off days. Someone who would describe themselves as a happy person overall should still expect to experience the full range of human emotions including anger, jealousy, sadness, boredom, loneliness and frustration from time to time. However, a happy person should feel optimistic through these emotions that their current circumstances will improve and that they will be able to feel more positive emotions again.

10 ways to lead a happier life

	<p>Socialise – spending time with people we love has obvious benefits. Fill your cup regularly by spending quality time with your loved ones and watch your stress levels go down, while your mental wellbeing and resilience go up.</p>		<p>Practice gratitude – notice the things in your life that bring you happiness and take time to recognise them. Try noting down five things every day that you are grateful for, and it will help to positively shift your mindset.</p>
	<p>Set goals – and make a plan to achieve them. Setting and achieving goals helps us to feel a sense of purpose and accomplishment. Be realistic about what you can achieve, but don't be afraid to set yourself a challenge!</p>		<p>Be in the moment – and savour it. Be fully present and notice the small things that bring you joy. Pay attention to things that bring you positive emotions and take a moment to recognise how you're feeling.</p>
	<p>Reframe negative thoughts – there is usually a silver lining. Challenge negative thoughts – this doesn't mean ignoring anything 'bad', but trying to take a balanced view and seek positives from the outcome you're in. For example – you need to walk to work because your train was cancelled but on the bright side, the weather is nice, and you will get some good exercise.</p>		<p>Practice mindfulness – there are countless tools available for this and it doesn't need to take long. Practicing mindfulness can increase your awareness, openness, and acceptance, and is a good opportunity to reset your mind and body.</p>
	<p>Smile! If you need to – fake it till you make it. Smiling causes our brains to produce dopamine, which makes us happier.</p>		<p>Take care of yourself – from eating well to getting a good night's sleep. Taking care of your physical wellbeing and health has a huge impact on our mental wellbeing and happiness.</p>
	<p>Get off socials – social media is a great way of staying in touch with people when seeing them isn't always possible, but it can also have a negative impact on our mental wellbeing. Take a break from social media occasionally to refresh your outlook.</p>		<p>Exercise – it doesn't have to be for long, even just 7 minutes will do the trick. Exercise releases endorphins which increases happiness so it can be a quick way to feel more positive.</p>