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Happiness is Yours for the Taking By Chris Widener

Is happiness truly elusive or do we simply not know how to take hold of it?

by **Chris Widener**

894 words | 3 pages

Happiness. The pursuit of so many. In fact, we are known in America as those who live for "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." But so many seem without happiness. Why is this? Is happiness truly elusive or do we simply not know how to take hold of it?

It is my contention that happiness is yours for the taking. That is, anyone can be happy if they choose to be... and if they know how to get it.

So what does it take to bring us to a state of happiness? Here are a few thoughts to get you on your way:

Do not try to control circumstances. One of the biggest "happiness busters" I see is in the frustration people experience (and wallow in) because circumstances have gone awry. This is because their mind-set, whether they know it or not, is that they should be somehow able to control circumstances. But let's get this straight: You can't!

> **So the first thing you can do to give yourself happiness is to stop trying to control, or taking responsibility for circumstances that are outside of your control! Understand that you can only control yourself.**

There is only one thing you can control in this world and that is yourself. You can't control the weather, other drivers, your kids or spouse, or anything for that matter outside of your own beliefs, thoughts, attitudes and actions. Focus all of your attention on developing yourself and doing what is right – controlling yourself while letting what will happen, happen - and you will find happiness opening up within you.

Decide what it is that you want out of life and then stick to it relentlessly. This is two parts: First, know what you want. Get real clear with yourself. Take a private retreat to be alone if you have to, but come to grips with what you want your life to look like. Secondly, devote yourself to that passion and do not be sidetracked. It is interesting to me how many options we have - good options - that if we pursue them they will actually crush our happiness because they will take us away from what will really make us happy.

Live for a legacy. We cannot be self-absorbed and live only for ourselves. Yes, we only control ourselves, but we can live for the betterment of others.

> **Live your life in such a way that others are touched and you will find yourself feeling happiness in ways that you could never imagine.**

For example, I get some of the most touching emails from people I have never met (and probably never will) who tell me how I have helped them. There is little else that brings me such happiness!

Settle your finances. Whatever your financial goals are, get them! Having poor finances is one of the major causes of unhappiness. Now, some people are completely content on $30,000 a year. Others need $200,000 a year. That is okay. We all have different desires, needs, and goals. But the key is to know what you want your financial life to look like and then do what it takes to get there. Among the major things to do is to eliminate as much debt as possible, if not all!

Surround yourself with good friends. Good friend are such a blessing! I have some of the most intelligent, capable, successful, and caring friends a person could have. I have three or four people in my life that I completely trust and admire. When friendships are clicking, there is almost nothing that provides more happiness. Take time to develop your friendships. Spend time with them, do fun things with them etc. Even as life gets more and more busy, make time with your friends a priority.

Develop your primary love relationship. I spoke at a groom's dinner recently and one of the points I made was that marriage will show you both heaven and hell! Marriage, when it is going well will send you out the door each morning on cloud nine. When it isn't going well, it affects every area of your life negatively. Do whatever you can - work hard - at developing your primary love relationship. The rewards of happiness you reap will be tremendous!

Happiness is yours for the taking - and hope you will take the time to develop your life in such a way as to be able to experience all of the happiness you can handle!

Chris Widener is an example of how anyone can overcome any odds to achieve a successful life and help others achieve the same. Chris has overcome many obstacles... living through his father dying suddenly when he was four, being sent away from his family to live with relatives at age nine and becoming involved with drugs and alcohol by the age of twelve. Chris overcame those obstacles and has for the last ten years worked with some of the most financially successful families in America, helping them to achieve both personally and professionally. Now he can do the same for you!