RICH in Happiness

7 Steps to Living Happily
For the Rest of Your Life

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Everything we do is to fill up our measures of happiness: go to work, develop friendships, buy things, and reach for dreams. In fact, every thought and decision we make is ultimately for the outcome of personal happiness. People are scrambling and laboring so hard to find it. When I consider our current society, I see people riding on one another’s necks and pressing one another to death to get foremost in this race called life. Yet, people are not satisfied.
Observe and you will see this dissatisfaction all around. People who own Mercedes are no happier than owners of GMs. Those who live in bigger houses are no happier than those who live in small ones. Powerful and influential people are no more satisfied than average citizens. Cover girls are no happier than plain women; in fact, they may be less happy.

A counselor had a patient who was as beautiful as any woman he had ever seen, in magazines or in the movies. She was intelligent and charismatic. But she spent her life being tormented by the possibility she may come across another woman who was more beautiful than she. He also dealt with a large number of extremely wealthy people and observed that they were perhaps some of the most miserable clients he had ever encountered.

In the autobiography of the famous basketball player Wilt Chamberlain, he wrote he enjoyed sexual relationships with what he guessed to be over a thousand women.¹ One may well guess some of these women probably were quite good at sensual arts. Why wouldn’t ten suffice, or even twenty?
Kings and presidents lust for more power and cause wars. The wealthiest embezzle to get more. Even with all they have, they struggle to be happy. In our day some of the most influential people have died attempting to fill their void, but the wrong way—people like Elvis Presley, Whitney Houston, and Heath Ledger. We have seen billionaires and even top leaders of nations taking their own lives.

If left untreated, the void of happiness can result not only in the death of oneself but of others as well. I will boldly state this, it is usually those who are hurting who hurt others. Truly happy people have no reason but to love.

People have different personalities and some are prone to be more optimistic and happier than others. However I would like to emphasize, happiness is primarily what we learn. It is a matter of discarding bad habits and replacing them with good and healthy ones.

Some people are also born into better circumstances or with better physical conditions than others, but if you choose to apply the principles of happiness that are presented in this book and seek
to live differently from the majority of mankind, you can be happier than those who may have had those things handed to them.

The benefits of happiness are all encompassing. Research reveals that happiness promotes enhanced brain functioning and better memory.\(^2\) On the other hand, depression, fear, and stress paralyze both the mind and the body. Healthy emotion impacts every area of one’s life: mental, physical, relational, financial, etc. When happy, you think and act better. That is why the happier you are the more successful you will be. The reward of our pursuit of happiness is worth its weight in gold—certainly it is a goal worthy of our highest endeavor. I am confident if you apply the principles shared in this book, you will be happier, more excited, and more successful than you have ever been before.
How Happy Are You?

If you would be happy for three hours, get drunk.
If you would be happy for three days, roast a pig.
If you would be happy for three months, get married.
If you would be happy for a lifetime, plant a garden.

~ Chinese proverb ~

Many people don’t believe happiness is possible, or for those who do believe the way toward it appears puzzling and complex.
Everyone goes through different mood changes, from valley to mountain peak experiences. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if you lived at the peak of happiness everyday? Although that may be difficult to achieve, I believe living most of your life near happiness peak is possible. And that is the destination we want to reach by the end of this book.

Before you go anywhere you have to know where you are first. So let’s first measure your present level of happiness. Look at the Happiness Scale below. It has ratings from zero to ten. A score of zero means you are extremely unhappy most of the time. A rating of ten means you are extremely happy, that you live in the state of ecstasy where you just don’t know what to do with yourself!

Rate yourself on the scale. You can do this by drawing a vertical line and dating above the number between 0 and 10 on the scale.

If you find yourself on the lower part of the scale, don’t be discouraged. You are among the majority of people. Continue to plot along the scale as you apply the principles mentioned in this book and make gradual progress. Only make sure that you live deliberately to be happy.