

Achieving Happiness

THE ELUSIVE BUTTERFLY



MINI-BOOK

www.the7gears.com

Joy. Satisfaction. Fulfillment.

PART 1

We all want to experience that wonderful feeling of happiness. Why does it often seem like an elusive butterfly, oftentimes hard to capture. Everybody has their own idea of what happiness means. Merriam -Webster dictionary defines it as "a state of wellbeing and contentment. Joy, satisfaction, fulfillment- the opposite of sadness." The subject goes back to ancient philosophers Aristotle, Epicurus or more recent authors, John Stuart Mill, and popular writings today such as The Art of Happiness – 14th Dalai Lama, The Happiness Project – Gretchen Rubin, and Stumbling on Happiness by Daniel Gilbert.

WHAT CHALLENGES US?

Happiness is an emotional state of being, and we as humans are driven more by our emotions than logic. Human brain research scientist Dr. Joe Dispenza tells us that we average over 60,000 thoughts a day, and most of those are on negative memories of the past or thoughts of the future. Getting to a state of happiness can be a real challenge. We are constantly bombarded with negative influences, experiences, and encounters such as the daily news media, a bad day at work, or an argument with a friend, relative, or coworker. We can't stay "happy" all of the time. We can't always have the king of the hill or mountain top experiences. That's just the way it is in this world. There is a Law of Polarity that tells us that "everything is dual, everything has positive and negative poles or opposites. These are varying degrees of the same thing. Heat and cold, love and hate, good and evil, happiness and unhappiness. The good news is that happiness leaves clues and tracks that can increase our odds of experiencing more feel-good states and experiences.

My definition of happiness is more like a winning combination of some of today's best authors like Brian Tracy and Tony Robbins. Happiness, however, is something that YOU define and has three common denominators:

MOVING THE ODDS

- ✓ **Progress** – Tony Robbins talks about this in his many events, and I agree there is something inside of us that causes us to feel good when we are making progress in any area of our life. Recall times in your life when things were really clicking and moving forward. You won the deal, lost 3 pounds, saved \$50.00, gained a new friend. How did that feel at the time? As I describe in my book, *The 7 Gears Between Cause & Effect (Gaining Mastery Over Your Outcome, Results, and Conditions)*, There are 8 core goal areas that every human being should focus on. Financial, Educational, Relational, Personal/Business, Career, Family/Home/Recreation, Mental/Spiritual, Physical body- health and Service- giving back. When we make any kind of progress, no matter how small, we feel good whether we are consciously aware of it or not. We were made for improvement, and it's part of our fulfillment formula. Author Thomas Troward put it eloquently when he said, "Getting things into a better order is the greatest secret of progress." Before moving on to the next key element in the secret of happiness, I have one caveat, don't let perfection become an enemy to your progress. Just do what you can with where you are and with what you have to work with.
- ✓ **Control or Influence** – "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you're doing, you will be successful." – Albert Schweitzer. No matter what you're doing, when you have a sense of control or influence, it simply feels good, and it contributes to your overall state of happiness. Whatever you're trying to accomplish, whether it's winning a deal, a contract or sale, or negotiating with your kids or loved one, when you feel you are in control of the process, you contribute to your happiness. Gear 6 Decision–Choice is a power factor that we all have, and it's a form of control or influence. When you make a decision and say, That's it! I've had it! No more of this! or I'm ready to begin a new path, and you just took control. How does it feel? Think of a time when you made a decision, and you likely felt empowered by it?
- ✓ **Faith - Belief** - There's a chapter on Faith and Belief ([Gear 3](#) in *The 7 Gears Between Cause & Effect*) describing the overwhelming power and influence of what we believe to be true and its controlling effect on our outcomes and experiences. There's not enough space to go into it all here. Suffice it to say that what we believe or expect has a tendency to come true in our lives, and it has a commanding influence on the quality of our lives.

Values Aligned

If what you are doing aligns with your values and purpose, it feels good; it adds to your happiness. When you are in a conversation or working with someone who shares your values, it becomes an enjoyable, happy experience. It's been said that the most valuable part of reaching your goals is what you become in the process, not the goal itself. The wonderful thing about advancing in any of those 8 goal areas mentioned earlier is that you can enjoy the process. All of this creates a sense of fulfillment, and that gives you joy and happiness.

OTHER CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Check out the chapter on State of Mind-Confidence: The Growth Zone, in *The 7 Gears Between Cause & Effect*, for a deeper discovery of happiness factors and other empowering states.

"You are your best investment, so don't major in minor things."

RECAP PART 1

Making Progress

any progress in any of our 8 goal areas

Gaining Control or Influence

in our actions and behaviors

Values in Alignment

with what we are pursuing

In part 1, we talked about the challenge of getting and holding an emotional state of being we call "happiness." We touched on the big three key areas that have a profound effect on our level of happiness; Making Progress- any progress in any of our 8 goal areas, Gaining Control or Influence in our actions and behaviors, and the importance of having our Values in alignment with what we are pursuing. When you live consistently with your best, higher self, you can't help but experience great happiness.

The Law of Happiness

PART 2

In Part II, we will include other important contributing factors in our constant pursuit of that 'elusive butterfly' called happiness. What makes this condition of happiness so elusive is traced to 3 main reasons:

1. We are not aware of what is required or what the actual recipe is for happiness. We may stumble upon some fabulous moments and later say, "Wow, that was great! The circumstances were in alignment, and well, it just happened."
2. We don't know how our brain functions in these matters. Our brains are not wired to give us happiness but rather to survive. This is why at the deepest subconscious level, survival is first and foremost.
3. We don't know the exact combination of the 'lock' of happiness or the order and sequence of conditions to achieve it.

THE LAW OF HAPPINESS

There is a law or principle of happiness that says, "The quality of our lives is determined mostly by how we feel in the present moment." Since the present moment is also the point of power that shapes our destiny, it makes sense that this is the starting place of change, control, and influence on our mindset. In that present moment is our God-given gift of choice. We have the ability and responsibility to exercise good, empowering decisions, and the point of power is in the now! As business philosopher and author, Jim Rohn pointed out, "It's not what happens to you. What happens, happens to us all; it's what you do." Or, as The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People author Steven R. Covey said, "Between stimulus and response is our greatest power, the freedom to choose." Hey! That's Gear -6, Decision-Choice in The 7 Gears Between Cause & Effect, which we will explore later. This reminds us of where and when we can make the change, the now point.

IF, THEN

This is one of the traps we fall into so many times, creating conditions to be a prerequisite to happiness. "IF my income reaches \$XXX THEN I'll be happy." If I weigh exactly XXXlbs., THEN I'll be happy. IF I reach my goal of XXX, THEN I'll be happy." And on, and on. As a business entrepreneur, T. Harv Eker puts it, "If you want to be a lot happier more of the time, your happiness must be unconditional."

Did you get that? Unconditional.

Because when you insist on "IF, THEN" conditions, you take yourself out of control. You are at the whims and results that may or may not be in your favor until your goal is realized! Who sold you on that plan? You did!

In this scenario, your happiness depends on some event in the future! It's not that you won't be happy when you achieve your goals and objectives; of course, you will feel some level of elation. But what if your IF, THEN goal takes two years to reach? What will you be between now and then?

Yes, you need conditions set as parameters and mile markers to know if you're on track. They don't need to be written in stone as a commandment!

OTHER THAN...

Prodigy philosopher and economist of the 19th century John Stuart Mill who was considered one of the highest IQ geniuses, put it this way. "Those only are happy who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness, on the happiness of others, on the improvement of mankind, even on some art or pursuit followed not as a means, but as itself as an ideal end. Aiming thus at something else, they find happiness by the way." What he is saying is that when happiness is pursued directly as a goal as a means unto itself, it amazingly eludes us like the elusive butterfly we've been using as a metaphor in this series. But when we fix our minds on some positive, forward objective that more often than not includes serving others somehow and does not depend on the "give me first" mentality, happiness shows up in our lives.

BE HAPPY NOW.

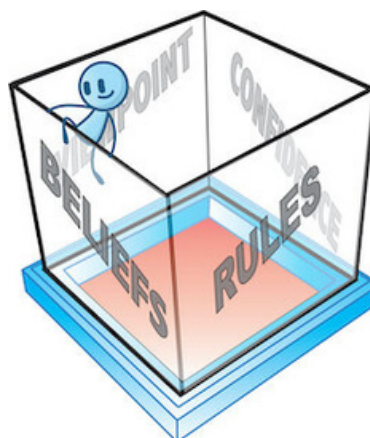
Here's one more key in this second installment; be happy first.

"Yikes! is that even possible?" You say to the campfire! Give me heat first, and then I will throw in the wood! This is an extension of the section above on The Law of Happiness. It offers one powerful idea of what to place in the gap or space between what happens to us and our response or reaction. This approach has been called the "short-cut" by experts in psychology and personal development. And I know what you're thinking. "Easy for you to say!" One of the criticisms of the Norman Vincent Peale era of "Success Through A Positive Mental Attitude was," if you could think it, it would be so..." We all know how effective that is. And yet, while they had the right idea, no one at the time seemed to understand how to make it work.

Fortunately, today enough research has been conducted to validate the concept of "Be happy now." Everything we want is an objective and a goal. The point is, as free-will thinkers, we really can choose to be happy. When you allow (a choice-habit) external circumstances or events to command how you feel, you've handed over control to the event.

"We are only limited by weakness of attention and poverty of imagination." - Neville
" ... and our beliefs." TK Tolman

In Part III, we will go into more depth on just how to make the idea of "be happy now" work.



How to feel Happiness more often.

PART 3

In Part III, we will continue on this eternal subject of how you can feel happiness more often. Since we know we can't be happy all the time, and we can't be depressed all the time either, what can we do to change the ratio of happy/unhappy? Even though we are wired for survival first, the good news is we have the inborn ability to be happy, and whatever level of happiness you are experiencing now, you can be happier. All of these methods, ideas, and emotional factors are presented to make you aware that you have options, choices, and tools to increase your level of happiness. There will always be disasters and disappointments that rain on our party of good state feelings. But everything we've offered here can serve to strengthen your resiliency to better recover from any attacks on your happiness.

INTERNAL PROGRAMMING OR CONDITIONING

As mentioned in Part I, what we believe to be true exerts power and influence over our outcomes and results in any of our 8 goal areas. There are some people (hopefully not you) that think they have never been truly happy. Some don't believe they deserve happiness; they carry perspectives and viewpoints that have been programmed since childhood.

"Who am I to seek happiness when we live in such a terrible, evil world?"

"These are my conditions that must first be met before I can ever be happy!"

"I would feel guilty if I were to gain too much happiness. What would my friends and loved ones think?"

"Money can't buy you happiness." and on and on the justifications go ...

MOVING THE ODDS

In Part II, we were just getting into the "shortcut "concept of: Decide to be happy now.

Think about this, **happiness can only exist in this current point in time**; not in the past, and not in the future. Impossible, you say? Try this simple exercise. Think of a pleasant memory from your past, a time when you really felt all the positive emotions of being truly happy. It could be anything. The time you got your driver's license, graduated from college, experienced your first kiss, won an award, or got married. Where is your point of reliving that happy experience?

If you think about it, it is not in the past; it is **right now!**

Now, move your thoughts and feelings to some future point in time. Think of an experience, event, or accomplishment you are looking forward to in the future. It could be ten minutes or ten years. It might be graduating with an advanced degree, having children, or stepping on the scale at your ideal weight. Where is your point of happy-state feeling?

That's right, here and NOW.

And where is the one point in time you have authority and control over? **Right now!**

"You don't find happiness; you connect to it." - T. Harv Eker

There's a famous mantra that says, "For things to change, you must change." It's a good concept but too vague. WHAT needs to change? Our thinking. Still too vague.

What defines our future? Our present moment thinking.

There's more to it than that, but for right now, let's focus on this high-level precept. When you are angry or frustrated, it's always because of your response to references to your value system. And even if you never deliberately sat down and listed your values and beliefs, you still have a value system in place and running. Your value system frames all your decisions and responses to what's good, bad, beautiful, or ugly. Whether by design or default, it defines your reality. Take some time to reflect on what your value system is made up of. What are its priorities? Is it moving you forward or causing you harm? Does this have anything to do with your level of happiness?

**YOUR FEELINGS ARE YOUR SELF-APPOINTED GUIDE.
(GEAR 5)**

Your feelings and emotions in the present moment frame and direct your future, whether it's for the day, week, month, or year. In Part I, we described one of the core three factors of happiness: to align with your core values at some level.

**ATTENTION - AWARENESS
(GEAR 1)**

In Part I, we learned that we average 60,000+ thoughts a day. Researchers also tell us we lose our attention 6-10 times every minute! It's really no surprise when you think of how many distractions we are bombarded with every day: 2,500 TV channels, YouTube, Netflix, Hulu, Pluto, Tubi, Internet "clickbait," and on and on. Pinterest can be a fun diversion and give you a momentary fun feeling, but it also can be a time-wasting distraction.



ENERGY STREAMS WHERE ATTENTION BEAMS

In The 7 Gears Between Cause & Effect book, the first Gear is about Attention-Awareness and how it affects our outcomes, results, and life conditions. Let me ask you right now, are you focusing on what you do want or what you don't want? Be honest because your attention is pointing either at one or the other - always. Every waking moment! Start practicing this exercise today. As odd as it sounds, be aware of your attention. It's not hocus pocus; it's focus, focus. Practice being mindful of where your thoughts are at. Are you thinking plus or minus?

FAITH-BELIEF (GEAR 3)

When doubt and worry creep into your thinking and are dwelt upon at great length, your thinking becomes clouded with a negative attitude, a state of mind, a pattern controlling thought and action. A negative attitude that becomes a habit is a powerful negative force to reckon with, as it will influence your performance level.

There's a story about a traveling salesman who's been on the road for a week and has had no success selling his product. After calling on several potential clients, nobody wants what he's been attempting to sell. One evening he gets to his hotel room and calls his wife. She senses how down and out he is and says to him, "Don't worry about how sales are going. I have some great news! We just won the lottery, and what you're doing doesn't matter that much. We can celebrate when you get home!" The following day and for the rest of the week, he was energized, happy, full of excitement and joy. Of course, his mood change carried into his presentations, and by the end of the week, he had more sales than ever before. When he got home, he bursts through the door and says "yahoo!! Where's the money?" To which his wife says, "I sensed that you were really feeling down, and so to cheer you up I made it all up." After he calmed down enough from an enraged moment, he changed his perspective and thanked her for helping him make the best week in sales he ever had.

Now, here is the question. What really happened here? For one brief moment, he believed he was rich. But what else? His expectation created elation. He felt very happy, didn't he? What is the lesson here? As we said at the top of Part III: What we believe to be true exerts power and influence over our outcomes and results in any of our 8 goal areas.

EMOTION-FEELING (GEAR 5)

Emotions and feelings are the motors that contain the energy that moves us either forward or backward in our 8 goal areas. For those of you who are thinking "goal areas? What are the 8 goal areas?"

Everything you do in your life involves these 8 goal areas; financial, educational, relational (personal, business), career, family/home/recreation, mental/spiritual, physical / vitality-health, and last but not least service, that is giving back to your community.

Every waking day we are running through the gambit of emotions and feelings, up, down, hot, cold, angry, happy, unhappy, etc. The point here is that our emotions and feelings have a direct impact on our overall happiness. And that there are ways and methods to harness them all. Check out *The 7 Gears Between Cause & Effect* to get an understanding of some of those observations.

HAPPINESS - BRAIN SCIENCE

We've established that what we all want is to feel good. As brain scientist & researcher Dr. Joe Dispenza often says, "Thoughts are the language of the brain, and feelings are the language of the body." Meaning our moods and feelings are the results of constant mind-body interaction. Happiness at times can involve more than just getting to a mental-emotional state of bliss or contentment.

There are levels of depression that are not just a condition of the mind but actually involve some form of imbalanced body chemistry. This is an area that goes beyond the scope and space of this basic series. But it's important enough to include. The role serotonin, endorphins, and adrenaline play in our moods and feelings are known. Recent research has discovered that at the most basic cellular level our bodies have "messenger molecules" that are a type of "code" in what are called neuropeptides which have a direct effect on our moods. A low level of these "chemicals" can override any positive self-talk or attitude tuning exercises. Diet, stress at work, ongoing arguments, anxiety, too much caffeine, etc. can drain our feel-good cocktail. The good news in all of this is that there are certain things we can do to eliminate this problem.

We are not done yet! There's more to come in *How To Achieve Happiness – The Elusive Butterfly Part IV*

Move it!

PART 4

In the Cause & Effect Continuum Gear 7 is all about the importance of movement, of doing, of action and habit patterns and their effect on emotions and feelings. Our daily habit patterns can have a huge impact on our mental-emotional states.

I love this verse "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." -- your mindset -- The key here is not just once in a while but every single day preferably in the morning. Even though you may be carrying unhappy thoughts and feelings from the day before. Always think of this day as a new, clean slate. And if you really think about it, it is. Your day is what you make of it.

HABITS

Your morning routine coupled with your overall demeanor is the rudder of your day. Good habits can make our day more efficient. Those habit patterns come up out of the subconscious as a conditioned response. Know this. You and I have habits that are always contributing to either our happiness OR our unhappiness. It all stacks up. Everything counts.

Exercises:

Try this right now unless you're in a car or on an airplane, stand up as tall as you can.

Really stretch, shoulders back. Now look up, and take 10 deep breaths. I know this sounds so simple and this is not new but, it's still an effective action-habit that works. All these exercises are designed to override your established disempowering habit patterns, not "break the habit "

Next time you're out walking make a conscious effort to look up, up, up. Look at the tops of the trees and buildings,

PERSPECTIVE-VIEWPOINT (GEAR 4)

What are you focusing on? What you want, or what you don't want? It's always, always one or the other. If you don't seize control of your thinking you will fall into what speaker Mel Robbins calls "default mode" which accounts for about 46 % of our daily thought habit patterns. We must deliberately make the effort to steer our thinking into the kind of thinking that says "NO" to the default rut thinking. I'm not saying it's easy, but I am saying it's worth it. One way to do this is by assembling key questions about any possibility without restriction. Instead of the disempowering conditional thinking of, "IF/THEN" , you ask yourself, "What If?

THE ANSWERS ARE IN THE QUESTIONS

The following is just a sample of perspective-changing empowering questions you should ask right now.

Questions like:

- What could I do differently today that would move me in the direction I really want to go?
- If I choose to procrastinate on this important decision, how will I pay for it later? Is it worth the price?
- What can I start today that's new and different and forward moving?
- What can I stop doing today that's not moving me forward?
- What can I do more of?
- What can I do less of?
- What's preventing me from reaching my goal?
- What am I grateful for right now?

IF "every adversity carries with it the seed of an equivalent or greater benefit." As Napoleon Hill says what is the hidden benefit in what I'm going through right now?

- What do I value above all else? Why?

OK now here we go, be honest, be diligent DON'T leave the room or your present space until you can walk away with an honest answer!

- What am I happy about in my life today?

My definition of happiness is more like a winning combination of some of today's best authors like Brian Tracy and Tony Robbins. Happiness, however, is something that YOU define and has three common denominators:

Check out the chapter on Gear 4 and learn about the “big six” question destiny shaping tools.

“When you change what you look at, what you look at changes.” Wayne Dyer

Expressing sincere, heartfelt gratitude is a great way to change your moods and attitude



Gear 6: Decision/Choice (Revisited)

“Most people are as happy as they decide to be.” – Abraham Lincoln

CAN YOU 'CHOOSE' TO BE HAPPY ?

Yes, you can! the reason is there is a gap or space between what happens to us and what we choose to do. We can react or respond, It's always our choice. And for various reasons, we get distracted from important guiding principles or spend too much time majoring in minor things. We forget about our gifted power of choice-decision and how the quality and direction of our lives is determined by the decisions we make every day. As Brian Tracy says, “everything counts.” This gear-factor really counts in framing our destiny and influencing our level of happiness. This gear-factor carries great influence in the quality of our lives, the choices we make about what to do, what to believe, how to respond or react, what to stop or what to begin.

One more thing; If we sincerely want to make changes that move us in the direction of our goals and aspirations, we must be committed to our decision and back it with intense desire. In other words, you gotta really, really want to invest in these ideas and exercises to have any value. The decisions and choices we make every day have much more influence on our lives than any external experiences and circumstances. That's how powerful Gear 6 is in shaping our outcomes, results, and conditions. With regard to our happiness-related decisions Tony Robbins puts it quite eloquently when he boldly states, "The most important decision you can make above any on the face of the earth is deciding that no matter what happens in your life, you're going to live in a beautiful state."

It is my hope and desire that you commit to thinking through and studying each of these concepts and that you go back and reread all four parts again. I guarantee you will see something of importance that you didn't see before. Here's to your happiness!

-Thomas Tolman, Author of The 7 Gears Between Cause & Effect



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THE 7 GEARS WILL EMPOWER YOU TO REACH MORE GOALS, BETTER FULFILL YOUR LIFE PURPOSE, AND RAISE YOUR STANDARD OF LIVING BEYOND THE NEXT LEVEL.

If outcomes and results can be controlled, then how does it happen? Learn more about how these 7 gears will empower you to reach more goals, better fulfill your life purpose, and raise your standard of living beyond the next level.