

## **Success Ingredient #9: True Happiness**

The great persuaders I have found and interviewed are happy people. They love and enjoy life. They are very successful. They attract people to them. How does society define success? By fame, fortune, achievement, or material wealth. Notice that every single one of these measures is external. None of them has anything to do with inner peace or purpose. We think we will be happy when we finally make our fortune, graduate from college, retire, are promoted, or end up at the top in business.

The truth is that none of these things will give us deep or long-lasting happiness. Numerous studies compare happiness in children versus adults. Why is it that children laugh 400 times a day and adults only laugh 15 times a day? Obviously, the children aren't smiling and laughing about their great status or impressive accomplishments. They find joy and happiness in the simple things—and in simply being. They aren't so worried about impressing others or climbing the ladder of success. What is *your* definition of happiness? We would all do well to check where we've set our sights. What a shame to find at the end of a long life that we've chased the wrong dreams.

Success is getting what you want; happiness is wanting what you get.

—DALE CARNEGIE

Here are just some of the ways your life is enhanced when you are happy:

- You perceive the world as safer.
- You are more open with your feelings.
- You make quicker decisions.
- You reduce stress, fear, intimidation, embarrassment, and anger.
- You rate people more fairly.
- You experience better relationships.
- You have greater life satisfaction.
- You have a more positive self-image.
- You are friendlier toward others.

- You make more money.
- Your relationships are enhanced.
- You are more skilled at persuasion.
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Today, we have more inventions, more ways to save us time and energy, yet our happiness has decreased. There are two main reasons for this tendency. The first is that we feel tension and unhappiness with our conflicting goals. In other words, we have goals and aspirations in life that conflict with each other, thereby causing incredible tension and personal unhappiness. Simply understanding that you have conflicting goals is half the battle. Most people just get tense, uneasy, and unhappy over such issues and question why.

Victor Frankl, a celebrated psychiatrist who survived the terror and brutality of the Nazi concentration camps, stated in his well-known book *Man's Search for Meaning*: "Happiness is a condition rather than a destination. Happiness cannot be pursued. The more we aim at happiness, the more we miss our aim. If there is a reason for happiness, happiness ensues. It is a side effect of having a purpose and meaning to life."

This is profound wisdom coming from someone who endured the closest thing possible to hell on Earth. What we can learn further from Dr. Frankl's insight is that because happiness and unhappiness are both states of mind, both of them can be habitual. We are back to mental programming. Most unhappiness, when you get right down to it, is simply our own interpretation of influences in our lives as harmful to our mental, emotional, or physical well-being. Recall a time when you were truly happy, when you were eager to rise each morning and start the day. Chances are very good that you felt an inner assurance and security about what you were doing, and where you were going. Happiness very often includes the constant progress toward an exciting goal or objective. Regardless of the external factors in your life—where you live, what car you drive, how much money you make, etc.—you will feel happiness when you feel a sense of purpose and direction.

