

Ten Techniques for Increasing Happiness

Inspired by Dr. Martin Seligman's Positive Psychology

1. Keep a gratitude list. Write in your journal or therapy notebook three things *every day* that you are grateful for, that went well, or that make you happy. For an added bonus, share the daily list with a loved one.
2. Write a letter of gratitude to an important person in your life, and share it with them in person. Do it again with another person who means a lot to you.
3. Practice secret acts of service and kindness. Be as unobtrusive but effective as possible. Begin by doing one per week and work up to once daily.
4. Reframe setbacks as challenges and opportunities rather than as defeats. This may be something to practice with your therapist.
5. Pursue a challenging hobby or avocation. Make time for the interest that you gave up long ago—it may truly improve your life.
6. When speaking with your spouse or loved ones, practice *active, constructive* (that is, engaged and truly listening) *responding*. Don't just say "uh-huh." Listen and comment in supportive ways. Soon you'll find them reciprocating as the relationship improves.
7. Try writing your own legacy. How do you want to be remembered?
8. Learn to savor life as it happens. Practice being in the moment, enjoying the sensory details of the world we live in, and your own physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual response. Do brief meditation/mindfulness moments throughout your day.
9. Be socially active. Seek out the company of others regularly. Even if it's hard at first, it will give a boost to your mood.
10. At this web site: < <http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx> > try the VIA Signature Strengths Questionnaire (scroll down to the middle of the page). You have to register, but you can make up a name and email address if you'd rather not leave your own.