**HOW TO FEEL MORE JOY IN LIFE**

***“It is only possible to live happily ever after on a day-to-day basis”***

***Margaret Wander Bonanno***

1. ***Value your successful coping during tough times***
   * Studies show that people who view overcoming trauma or painful life experiences as successful coping experience an increase in resilience, well-being, and self-confidence.
2. ***Spend money on experiences, not possessions***
   * People get intense pleasure and stimulation from social bonding that only occur during experiences. Even the anticipation of an event that is pleasurable or holding pleasant memories of an event can stay with us longer and promote an overall sense of well-being.
3. ***Take time to focus on yourself***
   * Taking time for yourself has been shown to increase levels of feeling a sense of well-being and life satisfaction.
4. ***Take time to focus on your relationships***
   * Engaging in social relationships has the capacity to increase positive feelings and greater satisfaction with those we spend time with.
5. ***Do for others***
   * Research shows spending time doing for others increase feelings of happiness.
6. ***Read or see something sad***
   * Exposure to sad movies or books can increase feelings of joy due to the paradoxical effect of appreciation for what we have.
7. ***Bring happiness to your commute and alone times***
   * Taking control of your experience while alone or commuting often lead to a sense of pleasant feelings and release of endorphins.
8. ***Fake happy until you feel happy***
   * Studies show feelings are reversible. The act of smiling can slow heart rate, promote a feeling of calm, and increase feelings of joy.
9. ***Appreciate your strengths and focus less on making improvements***
   * Research shows people who appreciate and apply their top 5 strengths and don’t focus on improving weaknesses are happier and have less depression.
   * www.viacharacter.org