

## 6. Choosing Happiness

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by Nicholas de Castella

### Choosing Happiness

The difference between Joy and Happiness

The other day I was walking through the timber yard. A man was leaning over his car trying to reach a strap to tie down some timber onto his roof racks. I was on the other side of the car and could see he wasn't going to reach so I passed the strap to him. As I did I felt a wave of happiness rise within me that lasted well after I had finished my business in the timber yard. I wondered at how such a simple act could bring such happiness.

Joy is temporary

It occurred to me that when I get something I want, a piece of chocolate cake for instance, the joy only lasts as long as I am eating it. Then it is gone. Whereas the happiness I felt at the timber yard lasted long after the event.

Joy is an emotion that occurs when we get something we want.

Like all emotions it is temporary, and tiring (like at the end of a birthday party) - it disappears once we feel it, and it is dependant on external situations.

Being self centred causes of misery.

According to the Buddhist Shantideva: 'All misery in the world comes from people trying to make themselves happy. All happiness comes from making others happy'.

Happiness often comes from transcending (Latin transcendere, from trans- 'across' + scandere 'climb.') our ego.

It took Susan and I some time to figure this out with our two young boys. We would just have bought them a treat and before they had even eaten it they would be fighting. We would say: "Come on now, be happy. After all, we have just bought you this lovely ice-cream!" We have since discovered that what actually makes them happiest is when they are making something like a birthday card to give to someone else.

Happiness is a state of being that arises from within us when we create conditions conducive for it to occur. It is enlivening and expanding. The more we feel it the bigger it gets.

We can choose Happiness

At the Happiness Institute in Sydney they believe that we can all CHOOSE happiness by choosing to do what induce happiness. They identify five foundations for the creation of happiness. They are:

C = Clarity (of goals, direction and life purpose)

H = Healthy Living (activity & exercise, diet & nutrition, and sleep)

O = Optimism (positive but realistic thinking)

O = Others (nurturing the key relationships in your life)

S = Strengths (focusing on your core qualities and attributes)

E = Enjoy the moment (live in, and appreciate the present)

Make a list of things that make you happy

My suggestion is that you make a list of things that make you happy and pick one each week to do. Pretty soon you will find that you weeks are filled with happiness.

Liked the article? Questions? Drop me a line.

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PS How long since you had a good laugh?

**Institute of Heart Intelligence**

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