

The Ten Laws of Happiness



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Have you ever noticed how your emotional state of mind impacts on your wellbeing? When you are happy and content, you feel healthier and exude radiance, but in times of sadness or worry, your body may experience physical pain or even illness. Our emotional state is something we should never overlook.

Tibb categorises 'Emotions and Feelings' as part of six lifestyle factors that lead to optimum health. This means that even with the use of medication, a healthy diet and exercise, if emotions are left unchecked, a person will remain vulnerable to illnesses. Tibb views healthcare from a body, mind and soul perspective and therefore, all aspects of a person's life need to be addressed for optimum health.

Emotions have been linked to illness conditions and are recognized in Tibb philosophy as often aggravating these conditions. Anger, for example, increases heat and dryness in the body and has often been connected as a precursor to problems associated with the liver and digestive faculties. Furthermore, unchecked excessive anger has also been known to negatively impact the heart.

Although the stresses of daily life impact hugely on our frame of mind, health experts from both conventional and complementary modalities are all in agreement that finding happiness within yourself in spite of your circumstances are key to maintaining good health in the long term. Nothing serves you and those you love better than inner peace.

Working towards positive emotions is a process. We grow up doubting our potential or fear what others may think of us, and ultimately we confine ourselves to the expectations of culture and society. Although some conformity is important for the harmonious functioning of society, understanding yourself, changing your attitude and being aware of what your strengths and weaknesses are, are paramount to inner contentment.

Tibb guidelines to the Laws of Happiness?

1. Keep yourself free from patterns of limitations.

It's a psychological fact that people repeat negative behaviour. We may find ourselves attracted to the same 'wrong' type of person, or subconsciously think that only complaining will make others take our problems seriously. Experts believe that on some level most of us get 'attached' to our suffering. It may also be a distraction from facing more difficult issues. It takes courage to change these patterns. Use your feelings as an emotional 'weather report' by actively acting to alter familiar negative emotions. You will be surprised at the change in yourself.

2. Develop loving relationships

"A wise man never loses anything if he has himself."....Michel Eyquem de Montaigne.

Before strengthening relationships with others, we need to find strength within ourselves. We often push ourselves to the point of exhaustion-both physically and mentally. We would never treat a friend in this manner. By being our own best friend we allow ourselves some kindness. This enables us to give more to others. So, by loving yourself, you open up to better relationships with others.

3. Learn to be alone with yourself.

One of the best ways to finding inner contentment is through self-reflection. Don't feel guilty to take a few minutes out of your daily routine for meditation or even just to relax on your own. In these moments you can actively replace negative emotions with inner peace.

4. Live with gratitude

Whenever you feel that your life is lacking in substance or meaning, remember how much you have to be grateful for. No matter how small it may seem, remind yourself of the numerous things that make life worth living. Moreover, showing gratitude to others will be equally rewarding to you in your quest for self-fulfillment.

5. Make choices that suit you.

Understand that the actions you take have consequences, and that you are responsible for those consequences. You direct the path your life takes; live by making choices that uplift you and those around you. When you feel overburdened remember also, that you have the power of choice to say 'no'.

6. Find worthiness and security from within.

You are not measured by your material wealth. Neither can your happiness be built on the way others perceive you. The path to true contentment comes from knowing that you would be the same person even if you didn't have a cent or the approval of others.

7. Find Purpose in your life.

We spend much of our lives living up to expectations of others or making excuses for not pursuing things that we really want to do. Make a list of things that will enrich your life, be it in work, family, relationships or something you have always dreamed of doing. By giving your life a positive purpose you allow yourself to find the happiness that will make you grow.

8. Trust in the moment.

Stay open to what each new moment brings. Do not live your life by the notion, "I will be happy when..." Realise that the past is a memory and the future isn't here yet, all that is real is the here and now.

9. Give and Receive.

Learn to give without expectation and be open to receiving. When we learn to receive well, we give others the opportunity to give too.

10. Live with Forgiveness.

Living without forgiving is like a festering wound. If you do not learn to let go of the actions of others, the person who will ultimately suffer is you. By forgiving you are saying, "I am bigger than this. I will survive!"

Happiness is a journey, not a destination. Finding your own happiness may not always be easy but living with appreciation of everything life has to offer, be it the kindness of a stranger or the beauty of a blossoming flower are small steps towards inner contentment. You are the master of your emotional wellbeing, you have every right to claim your happiness.