

100  
incredible  
happiness hacks



meghashyam chinnravoori

**100  
Incredible  
Happiness  
Hacks**

**Meghashyam Chirravoori**

<http://www.personal-development-is-fun.com/>

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Who is Meghashyam?

## **What Is This Book About?**

Yes this book is about happiness and how to find it.

You may not believe it but truly, happiness is here with you right now. There is nothing that needs to happen for you to be happy in this very instant.

However, many of us are not happy. The reason is that we offer ‘resistance’ to happiness that is waiting for us! We offer resistance because we are afraid (of what will happen to us if we let go) or because we think finding happiness is very tough and we **MUST** do task a), task b) and task c) to be happy. But all that's not required.

You don't need the best job, tons of money, the best relationship, the best items in the world or the best vacations to be happy. All those things are amazing and they **ADD** to the happiness that is already within you. You create your own happiness. Then, external things increase and amplify it.

The 100 incredible happiness hacks in this book are all about lowering your resistance to the happiness that is in front of you right here and now. I've come up with some interesting exercises and activities which will connect you with the joy that is already there within you. These will make you feel lighter, easier and happier – irrespective of your life situation right now.

Come, “loosen your seat belt”, stretch a bit, open your eyes wide and start off on this incredible happiness journey. :)

## **Happiness Hack #1: Notice Your Breath**

You must have heard this one many times. Whenever you have to relax, they tell you - “Notice your breath”.

Come, let us do it together right now.

Sit in a relaxing posture or lie down on the bed. Now, just notice your breath. Don't breathe faster. Don't take a deep breath. You don't need to DO anything – just notice the way you are already breathing. Notice the air rubbing past your nostrils as it enters your nose. Notice it go inside and fill your lungs. Notice how your stomach automatically rises. Then notice this air coming out of your lungs, through your nose.

You might feel irritated as you do this initially. That's common. I mean it is irritating at first! But let the irritation be. It's OK. You might also be interrupted by many thoughts. That's OK too. Bring back your attention to your breath whenever you become aware that you are thinking of other things.

Keep noticing your breath for a few minutes – maybe even 5 minutes.

That's it. You're done! If you do it correctly, you will feel irritated and harrowed for the first 1 or 2 minutes and then peaceful, relaxed and calm for the next 3 minutes. :)

You will have found your moments of joy in your normal day.

Whenever you have the time, keep doing this again and again. Do nothing: just come back to this moment and notice your breath.

The reason this technique works is very simple: most of our unhappiness is caused by our negative thoughts about the past and future. We keep thinking – “He did that”. “She did this”. “He is so bad!” “I wonder what will happen in the meeting tomorrow!” And so we ourselves become sad thinking about the past and the future. Just noticing our breath immediately brings us back to the present moment.

This moment. Right here and now.

That's what we will learn more about as we proceed through this book. Peace is here and now. So is happiness and joy. So, when we focus our attention on this moment, slowly the negative thoughts disappear and we become happy. :)

If you haven't yet tried this simple technique out – please do it right now! Just 5 minutes...

## **Happiness Hack #2: Look Around in Wonder**

This is yet another beautiful technique that helps me be happy – just so many times!

The technique is simple: for some time come back to the present moment – here and now. Look around you! There are so many things that you may not have noticed in your daily life. For example, if you are sitting at a desk – notice the texture of the desk. What is it made of – wood? Notice how the design on the wood is. Notice the colors of the walls near you. Notice the people near you and the clothes they are wearing. Notice the expressions on their faces. Notice the floor near you. What is it made of? Is there a design on it? Just look around with the curiosity of a child for some time. Come on, when was the last time you just looked around and noticed things without any reason?

As you do this...some thoughts may creep in. As soon as you notice you are thinking of something, let the thought go and come back to the present moment. Again – look around...and observe things you may never have observed before!

Sometimes, I use this technique when I go to dine at restaurants. I notice the tables and chairs. I notice the walls. I notice the paintings. I notice the clothes the waiters are wearing and I notice the expressions on the faces of people.

If you do this for just few minutes, you will feel joy. It might seem irritating at first or maybe even foolish. But do it anyway and the irritation and thoughts will vanish. Soon, you'll think: “Wow. I never knew there was just so much to notice around me.”

Repeat this activity as many times in the day as you want. If you do it often enough, you will actually feel like a world of wonder has opened up. This is because generally we are so lost in thoughts that we hardly look around and notice many interesting things.

The reason this activity works is also similar to the reason the first one works: it brings us back to the present moment for some time and helps us release our common negative thought patterns.

So, well, why not try it right now? :)

## **Happiness Hack #3: Listen to the Sounds Around You**

Almost every time I practice this activity, I feel a greater sense of peace.

Right now – just STOP. Pause. Come back to the present moment. Now, pay close attention to whatever you are hearing. What can you hear? Can you hear the hum of the air conditioner? Maybe the sound of the fan? Or a dog barking? Or people talking? Or the sound of sheets of papers ruffling? Notice these sounds. Just listen. Observe...and feel these sounds.

Again, initially this might seem irritating. Let the irritation be. It is completely natural. For some reason – the path from unhappiness to happiness in this moment – passes through irritation and resistance. That's OK. Don't force yourself to listen or anything – just be – and observe the sounds that you would normally never observe.

If you do this for around 5 minutes, you will feel peaceful and calm. Of course doing this for 5 minutes can also be tough because so many thoughts may interrupt you and distract you from your listening mode. But that's OK. As soon as you become aware of your thoughts, go back and listen to every sound you can hear.

You may soon think: “Wow, there are just so many sounds and voices I always ignored. I mean they were always there in the background – but I am noticing them for the first time!” And that is true. If you keep doing this often enough – you will catch so many beautiful moments that most of us miss. As you are walking down the street, you may hear a bird singing or a car driving past you. You may even hear the sound of the air brushing past your face. And you have always missed these sounds...

Why not try this happiness hack right away? (I can hear myself typing as I write this on my laptop. ;))

## **Happiness Hack #4: Listen to a Person With Full Attention**

This is something that most of us never do in our daily life – but if we do JUST this – we will immediately (within minutes) experience a different kind of joy.

What do you have to do? The next time you have a conversation with anyone (the longer the better), try to listen. You may say, 'but I already listen!' Nope you don't. Do you pay attention to every word the person is saying? Do you forget about your own point of view for a while and completely pay attention to what the person is really trying to convey? Or do you think: 'let me say this in response' even before the person has finished speaking?

This time, let 100% of your attention go towards what the other person is saying. Try to really feel the vibe of the other person. Go beyond the words and try to truly feel what the other person wants to say deep within.

Pay attention to the sound of his words too. Pay attention to the silence between the words the other person utters. When the other person breaks his sentence for a moment to take a breath, notice him doing that. Notice the sound of the breath. Listen – with every core of your being.

I know this sounds weird. Not just that – when you do this for the first time it will appear to be very difficult. No problem! Try again. :) When once you have done this even with partial success, you will feel yourself to be at peace.

The reason is that most of the time our happiness is obscured by our judgements, our desire to be right, our desire to convince the other person and all sorts of random thoughts. When you let those thoughts be and try to genuinely listen to the other person – you activate a higher vibration. You suddenly go beyond normal daily thoughts, and connect with a part of you that is very deep. You go beyond judgement and the compulsive need to say something. You relax. You feel peaceful.

Yes, this technique takes practice. But then, it works! So well, there's someone approaching you for a conversation. All the best!

## **Happiness Hack #5 Feel the Air Brushing Past You and Your Butt Touching the Chair**

Here's yet another happiness hack related to leaving the past and future for a while and coming back to the present moment. The past and the future are not 'wrong' in themselves – just that we obsess over them a bit too much and so we feel unhappy. So a bit of 'right now' always helps. :)

For some time, pay attention to the air near you. We just take air for granted! Feel it flowing past your face. Feel it touching your clothes and moving them a bit. Feel it in between your body and your clothes. Now, feel your body touching different things. Feel the touch of your clothes on your skin. If you are sitting in a chair, feel your bottom touching the chair. 'Feel' the posture in which you are sitting or lying down.

As you feel the sensation of 'touch', you will slowly find yourself relaxing. You will slowly see peace descending. Again – if you feel irritated or if thoughts pop in, let the irritation and thoughts come. Just be. Relax, and bring your attention back to the sensation of 'touch.'

## **Happiness Hack #6: Give in a Way That You Truly Want to Give**

'They' always say that giving makes you feel happy. When someone is sad – it always helps to help other people. However, not any giving makes you equally happy. If you gave \$2 to a beggar on the street, you might feel a different joy compared to when you help an old man climb the stairs.

Basically, all of us have our own unique ways of helping others. We like helping people in some special ways and when we do that – we feel happy.

Do that today. Go ahead and help someone in the way that makes you the happiest. Ask yourself: what kind of giving makes me very happy? Give in that fashion today.

A wonderful website that can help you give in the way you want is [Indiegogo.com](http://Indiegogo.com). If you have not heard of it, it is a website where you can help people do different things – from starting a business to saving a dying person to establishing a new museum. Visit this website and type the name of the cause or activity that interests you. Some people are supporting a little boy who has suffered a massive brain stroke. Others are supporting drinking coffee in straw cups! Yet others are supporting a special kind of mug that has a unique built in coaster under it so that the surface on which it is placed does not get hot. Still others are supporting the production of a solar lamp and charger! Support a cause that you like. You will feel incredibly happy.

And you need not necessarily use Indiegogo.com. Just go out and see how you can help someone in a way that you like. Maybe you like giving people advice that helps them. Go reach out to a friend or a person who you think is currently in need of advice and be with that person for an hour. Maybe you like cooking for people. Offer to cook for your neighbor's family too for a day, and invite them home!

Give in a way that makes you happy and excited. :)

## **Happiness Hack #7: Eat Mindfully**

How many times have you eaten a good deal of your food and not even realized you've eaten it? How many times have you really savored what you ate? I am myself guilty of eating so many morsels without tasting them – at times.

Happiness does indeed lie in the small things because really, it is the small things that make up our whole life.

The next time you eat – eat mindfully. First, look at what you are going to eat with full attention. Smell it. As the food touches your mouth, close your eyes and pay attention to the taste. Feel your tongue making contact with the food and feel the food slowly going inside you. When you use your spoon or fork to dig into the next morsel, notice how the shape of the food changes as you touch the food with your spoon or fork. Again, smell the food and taste it. Chew the food slowly and as you do so, notice your teeth making contact with the food and the pressure they apply on the food.

Will this process spoil the pleasure of eating? Not at all. In fact, it will make eating a very beautiful experience you will look forward to – like a special event. And yes, you will feel amazingly happy.

One of the important keys to happiness is just this – being in the present moment and enjoying it completely with full attention. This act makes even ordinary, everyday moments special.

## Happiness Hack #8: Face a Fear

One of the coolest things you can ever do – something that might truly make you feel blissful is this – facing a social/psychological fear you have.

I know this sounds weird. Firstly – are you even afraid of anything? Secondly, even if you are – why should you face your fear?

The answer is yes – you are afraid of many things. I am not talking about physical fear here, like the fear of fighting a lion – but social fears like fear of embarrassment and the fear that others will think you are a fool.

Right now imagine going out of your home and dancing on the street. Really imagine it. What if you really did it? Well, also imagine people on the street looking at you and thinking you're mad or that you don't know how to dance or maybe dropping a coin near you. Does the thought not sound scary? And yet – what if you truly felt like dancing? Why should you not? Why should you stop yourself? Are you harming anyone? The truth is – you are afraid that others will think unfavorably of you or make fun of you. Simple. Yes, you are afraid.

While the fear above is just a small example, most of us have many social fears. The fear of our boss looking at our computer screen and seeing us logging into Facebook. The fear of our friends knowing of that secret we have not told anyone else. The fear of sharing the truth of your life publicly on your website. Yes, fear is all around – even if it is not obvious.

Without us realizing it, fear blocks happiness from reaching us. You can't be happy when you are afraid of something. On the other hand, facing a fear **DESPITE** the fear being there is intensely liberating. No skills are required in doing this. You let the fear be. You feel your fear. And then go ahead and do what you are afraid of doing anyway. It feels incredible. Fantastic. And you get flooded with the joy that you always had but which was masked by fear.

Here are some common social fears that you can try facing. Of course you can have different fears of your own too.

- 1) Fear of lying down on the road for 1 minute as onlookers gape and think you are a moron
- 2) Fear of shouting at a train/metro/tram that's passing you - "Bye, Bye Train, See Ya!"
- 3) Fear of dancing spontaneously in public without giving anyone any explanation
- 4) Fear of asking a taxi driver or a man on the street: "Which country is this?" or "Who am I?"
- 5) Talking to a stranger or a brief acquaintance about a deeper subject instead of 'secure' topics like the weather or politics.

Facing a fear is very, very easy – but yes – it is very scary. You will feel you are going to die. You will feel you just can't do it. Just let those thoughts be. And face the fear anyway. When you almost tremble with fear but still face it, letting the trembling be, you feel incredible joy. You can't but be happy then.

PS: The free Kindle book [The Flinch by Julien Smith](#) is an amazing read about this concept.

## **Happiness Hack#9: Imagine You Will Die Tomorrow**

Once upon a time, long ago, I was very sad.

On that day, I did something I had never done before: I took around half an hour to completely and wholly imagine that I was going to die the next day. The experience changed my emotional state from “extreme sadness” to “blissful joy”.

What do you have to do? Note the time right now. Imagine that exactly at this time tomorrow – you are going to die. Doctors have diagnosed you with some illness or something has happened to make this day your last. Really think about this. Don't skip to the next lines. Feel it. How would you spend your last day? There is just this day and nothing else. Look at your arms and legs. They won't exist or move after tomorrow. Look around you – these walls, the chair, the computer, the mobile phone – there will be nothing – you will die! Your relationships, everything that you hold dear – will not exist like they are existing right now. Feel this completely. Flow into this state to such an extent that for a moment you truly believe you are going to die tomorrow.

Now – ask yourself – how would you want to spend your last day? What will you do? 24 hours is all you have. If you walk on the street and a stranger shouts at you, what will you do? Will you keep working on your job? If not, where will you go and whom will you meet? Are there some things you need to tell someone? Imagine that last day completely. Imagine it in detail. Flow into that 'last day' emotional state.

When you truly imagine living that last day – a wave of gratitude, appreciation for all that is and joy will enter you. Yes, you will be happy. And that happiness will last for quite some time after you have stopped thinking about your last day.

## **Happiness Hack #10: Forgive Everyone**

One of the main reasons we are not happy is that we hold on to grudges all the time. Right now – look within and answer yourself: “Do I have any grudge against anyone in the world?” Come on, be honest with yourself. If there is a grudge you are not willing to let go, know that happiness will elude you to some extent, always. You see, that grudge is like a guy standing at the door NOT allowing happiness to enter you.

So well, how do you let go of the grudge and feel happy? The first thing to do is this: really make a decision to let go of the grudge. If you think: “OK, I will let go of the grudge” and also think – “No, but my grudge is justified”, you can't let go of it. Holding a grudge is like burning yourself so that the smoke irritates the person you are grudging. Feel the grudge inside you right now. Observe it. Watch it. Can you see how agitated it makes you? It makes you all worked up and angry at some person. This energy of hate is blocking your own happiness. It may be blocking the other person's happiness or it may not be doing so, but it is definitely blocking yours.

Follow these steps to truly forgive anyone:

- a) Clearly know that you are responsible for your life right now. What another person has done may have influenced your life in the past, but that is not so RIGHT now. Right now, you can take control of the situation and rock the world no matter what someone did to you.
- b) Know that every act of violence or hate is born out of pain. The other person was in some kind of pain – that is why he did what he did. Ask yourself – why did the other person do what he did? For some moments, look at the situation from his point of view. Would a happy person do such a thing? What sadness and what pain made that person do that? You need not associate with that person anymore because you need not subject yourself to the other person's pain. However, just relax your hold on that person mentally.
- c) Know that as long as you keep grudging that person, he will keep controlling your actions – and you will not be free, light, easy, happy or at peace. Let go. Even if it was the worst possible thing that could happen to anyone, just let go. Loosen the grip. Wish the other person well and move on.

If you can truly forgive and accept responsibility of your life from now on, you will feel tremendously happy.

## **Happiness Hack #11: Inhabit Your Body**

This is a very interesting happiness hack that always calms me down and brings more peace in.

Lie down on the bed (I prefer that) or sit in a relaxed posture on a chair. Make sure you are alone for some time.

Now close your eyes. Feel the LIFE in your toes. Notice them. Move one of your toes a bit. YOU moved the toe. You are present in the toe – as the life that moved it. Slowly become aware of more parts of your leg – like your calves, your knees and thighs...Bring your attention to these parts of your body. Now notice your hands. Feel the life inside them. Move your fingers a bit and feel the YOU inside the fingers. Inside the elbows. Shoulders. Bring your attention to your stomach. Your chest. All these are parts of you. Now, notice your head. Your face. Your mouth. Notice the 'life energy' inside you. Inhabit your body completely. Feel the YOU that resides inside your body. Be very attentive and notice your entire body.

Initially, this may make you feel irritated. However, once you try it for a while, you will start feeling calm and peaceful. And relaxed and easy. If thoughts come up, let them be – just be aware of them and bring back your attention to your body.

I first learnt about this technique in Eckhart Tolle's book – [The Power of Now](#). And yes, it has made me feel light.

## **Happiness Hack #12: Help a Stranger Anonymously**

This is such a simple way to be happy – that you can do this right now!

Let us say you already know where a certain beggar lives. Well, go up to that place secretly when the beggar is not there and place a gift for him. Surprise!

Or, there is a shopkeeper near your home or office. Place a greeting card in his shop that says “You rock! Keep going!”

Find a homeless guy sleeping on the street? Cover him up with a blanket!

Here are some more ideas:

- a) Write a letter to you neighbor that tells her she is awesome and that she has it in her to rock the world.
- b) Buy a chocolate bar and leave it on the counter as you leave a shop with the note - “Have a nice day, Mr Shopkeeper” written on it :)
- c) Visit Yahoo Answers or Wiki Answers or forums where people have shared a sad story and motivate them – for no reason or gain – just to help them.

You will love it!

For some reason, giving unconditionally makes us all happy. It's like we are wired that way. We just light up!

You can't do this and be unhappy. Not possible!

## **Happiness Hack #13: Stop Comparing**

While half the happiness in the world has been eaten up by Mr Grudge, the other half has been devoured by Mr Comparison.

No matter how peaceful and happy you are – the moment you think: “Oh, but that person is able to live such a better life” or “he has more money” or “success came so easily to him” - there, you become unhappy. And with Facebook showing you everyone's BEST side all the time – you are bound to feel insecure and not good enough.

Don't do that. Stop comparing yourself to others because that is definitely the route to being unhappy. Podcaster and blogger Srinivas Rao says, “Don't compare your inside with other people's outside.” When we compare, we only see the brighter picture in the other person's case and the dimmer picture in our case.

We just don't know what is happening deep within the other person. How many people have you seen on Facebook who say - “Just had a fight with my wife. My life sucks. Here's a picture of me depressed.”? Or how many people post, “Just been laid off. Life has gone for a toss” with a picture of them walking out of office? No one does that – but these things happen all the time. So realize, that what you see on Facebook or what you hear about others– is not always the true story. Everyone has ups and downs just like you. Even the person who seemingly succeeded in an instant had a lot of things going on inside him that you don't know about. That's the truth.

Whenever you feel the urge to compare, STOP. Repeat this to yourself: “I am unique in my own beautiful way. And so is this other person. I don't know what's really going on inside this person. I wish him well and I'll never forget that I rock!”

If this doesn't work – then just become aware whenever you feel the urge to compare. As soon as you become aware that you are comparing, do something else. Distract yourself. Let go of that thought.

All the best!

## **Happiness Hack#14: Do What Makes You Happy and Excited**

Now this is something that is quite obvious – but we don't do it often!

Ask yourself: what makes me happy and excited? What gets you jumping up and down saying, “Hell, yeah!”? It could be anything – dancing, talking to a friend, changing the world, painting, writing a book, playing football..anything! Do it more often. Commit – really, really, really commit – to doing it way more often that you do it now.

We behave very foolishly at times. Not just you. All of us. We spend a lot of time doing things we don't care about that much like watching TV or surfing the web. But we don't spend enough time doing THAT 'happy and exciting' thing we like. So MAKE time for it. For one week, just decide to make more time for \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the activity you like). Do more, more, much more of it than you ever did.

Of course you will be happy. Very happy.

## **Happiness Hack#15: Sing in a Loud Voice**

This is something that you may definitely know about. It is so simple, right? But this is also very powerful – just DO it and you will know it.

It doesn't matter whether you are alone or with friends or with acquaintances. Just go ahead and sing. Loudly. Not in your head- but very loudly. The very process of expressing yourself verbally like that – releases some sort of chemicals in your body that makes you feel good.

Initially, when you are sad or just about OK – you will not feel the urge to sing. You will feel like you are 'forcing' yourself to sing. No problem. Force yourself to sing. Once you start, however, you will not want to stop. After one song, you will want to sing another one. Then another one. And before you know, you will seriously feel better.

It is as if 'singing out loud' creates a happy vibration and sadness cannot even stand it.

## **Happiness Hack#16: Dance – Even If You Are Alone**

This is again something that is underestimated.

When you are sad or not OK, you won't feel like dancing. Just force yourself to shake your hands and legs a bit. Come on do it! Create your own dance. Dance in the most comic ways. Have fun – no one needs to approve of your dance – just do your own thing.

Again, dancing like this lowers your resistance and makes all those negative thoughts vanish for some time. Without even knowing it, you relax, let go and embrace happiness.

## **Happiness Hack#17: Say, “I Want to be Called a Fool!”**

One of the reasons we don't feel happy is because we restrain ourselves too much. One of the reasons we restrain ourselves is because of the fear: “What if others think I am a fool?”

I have already talked about the joys of facing fears earlier.

But this is a bit more specific: For one day just tell yourself that you WANT to be called a fool or that you want to be thought of as a fool. Keep repeating that to yourself again and again throughout the day. Yes, it seems weird but it really works.

The reason is that when you are OK with being called a fool, you become independent of others' reactions. And yes, that is the key – being independent of others' reactions. You can't be totally independent of course. But still, detachment with respect to what others think of you makes you happier. If you are obsessed with what others think of you all the time for example, you will be very unhappy – because you can't control others and they will be thinking lots of things all the time.

So, go ahead and for one day – keep repeating to yourself whenever you remember it – 'I want to be called a fool.'

When you say that for the first time, you will feel it to be a very bad idea. That is OK. It is a weird idea, yes. But if you stick with it for a day, you will slowly see changes occurring inside you. You will see yourself doing things which you normally would not have done because you were afraid of others thinking you were a fool. For example, you may go ahead and congratulate a new colleague with a hug – just because you truly feel like it – despite others thinking you to be a fool. Or you may talk playfully and in a freer way with your boss or a stranger on the street because you would be independent of others' reactions.

Well, OK it is a crazy idea. But what's wrong in trying?

## **Happiness Hack#18: Keep Humming - “Positive Thought and Action!”**

Just doing this literally changed my life.

For one day, keep repeating to yourself again and again – even sing it to the tune of your favorite song - “Positive thought and action!”.

As I've said, we think negative thoughts and that makes us unhappy. The solution: to think only positive thoughts for ONE day and act upon those thoughts.

You wake up. You don't feel like tidying up the bed. You just assert – positive thought and action! Positive thought and action! And before you know it, you just tidy up the bed. Throughout the day, you think either positive thoughts or act on something. You do nothing else. There are no idle thoughts, OK thoughts, complaining thoughts, comparison thoughts, 'what is all this' thoughts...There is only – positive thought and action!

Try it for one day. Initially, you will find it to be very difficult to ONLY think positive thoughts or act. That's because negative thoughts are so deeply embedded, they will keep entering from the back door. Don't worry, just brush them aside as soon as you detect them and sing to the tune of your favorite song: “Positive thought and action!”

## **Happiness Hack#19: Make Your Bucket List and Start With the First Thing!**

Have you heard of the concept of a bucket list?

It is a list of things you want to do before you die. Have you made such a list? If not, why not?

Make it right now. It could be the most 'happiness inducing', pleasurable activity of your day. Just think: What are 25 things that you want to do before you die? You don't need to do all of them right now of course – but come on – some day you want to do these things... And what's wrong in admitting your true desires? They are there anyway? So, yes, make your list of things to do before you die.

Once you have made your list, go ahead and start acting on just one item on the list. Let it be the simplest item – but start doing it. Again, you need not finish that one thing today but do something that takes you in the direction of doing that one thing.

Here are 5 things from my own bucket list.

- a) To sow a seed and grow a plant in a pot – from scratch. To lovingly water it and see it grow.
- b) To help a lot of people in incredible ways, inspiring them to live the best life they can live while parallely moving towards my own best life
- c) To learn how to lucid dream
- d) To visit at least 50 countries and travel extensively through them, immersing myself in the culture and interacting with the local people.
- e) To establish the habit of waking up at 5 AM everyday

Come, write out your own bucket list and notice happiness and excitement flooding you.

## **Happiness Hack#20: Visit 5 Loved Ones and Leave Surprise Gifts At Their Door**

Identify 5 people whose presence you really appreciate in your life. Come on, there must be 5 people you like at least?

If they live near you in your own city, go visit them when they are not there and leave a surprise gift for them – something they would really appreciate. If they do not live in your city, send them a surprise gift by mail. Do this without any occasion and without any reason.

I once felt the urge to do this. I went to a mall and bought a lot of interesting things that I thought people I loved would love. The joy I felt in shopping for those things was really something. I mean, it was different from the normal happiness of shopping for things for myself. This new joy had a special thrill along with it, and it also made me think about what my friends would love and appreciate. It was very nice indeed. :)

What creates happiness here? I think it is the pure giving without expectation that creates it. Whenever we truly give without expecting – on our own – without anyone forcing us to give, we feel good.

## **Happiness Hack#21: Sit Down With a Beggar/Homeless Man And Talk With Him For a Few Minutes**

We pass beggars or homeless people many times in our life but we don't pay attention to them. They may even be dangerous, or so we think.

I am not asking you to befriend a beggar and hang out with him every day. But once, just once, how about saying 'hi' and having a conversation with him? Talk to him about his life. Ask him what he does all day. Pay attention when he talks. Ask him about his family.

Don't worry about him reacting angrily or harming you. Everyone – every single human being wants to be loved and appreciated and will almost always respond back with love if you genuinely give him love.

When you guys part, you can give him a small gift. Of course he will love it.

Now, I know this idea might make you feel: why should I do this? How will this make me happy?

You see, the pure joy in relaxing your guard, in not being afraid, in connecting with another human being without social barriers, is beautiful. It is our fears and social barriers that obstruct us most of the time, once you relax them a bit, happiness rushes in.

## **Happiness Hack#22: Stop Seeking Happiness From Others and Money**

Now, this seems a bit counter-intuitive. Obviously we look for situations, people and other things to make us happy. If we have more money, we will be happy and that's true. If we have a better relationship, we will be happy and that's true too.

But what we do wrong is that we become excessively attached to 'others making us happy.' It's almost as if we are thinking "I can be happy only if SHE or HE makes me happy." or "I can be happy ONLY if I get enough money. Otherwise I can't be happy."

As long as you put such conditions to your happiness, it will be difficult to be happy.

Other things, people, situations increase the happiness that we already have. They don't create happiness out of thin air and gift it to us.

The key to being happy is to realize that nothing really needs to happen to make you happy. You can be happy right here and right now. Your spouse or partner can be upset with you or you may be short on cash but you can STILL be happy. A beautiful relationship and more money are nice but they are not essential to be happy. You CAN be happy just the way you are even if your relationships and finances don't improve. Relax. Let go of excessive attachment to them...

The crux of this point is that we don't give ourselves permission to be happy because we think we SHOULDN'T be happy if we don't have money or an amazing relationship or something else. Release that condition. Realize that you might just be able to be happy – by yourself – even if nothing is working.

Of course, an interesting fact is that everything does actually start working ONCE you are happy. Ironic, isn't it?

## **Happiness Hack#23: Remove People Who Affect You Negatively From Your Life**

If you feel that there are people you interact with who always leave you feeling bad about yourself or others, do something to stop interacting with them.

If you can remove them from your life, do so. If you can reduce interactions with them to a minimum, do that.

The reason this is important is that at some level all of us are vulnerable. At some level, we are influenced by other people – no matter how independent we may think we are. So, if someone keeps saying “This is not good. That is not good. Life sucks.”, please let go of that person.

You might feel: If I let go of a person simply because he is negative, does that not mean I am a bad person? You aren't, because you are choosing to be happy. Remember that you can help other people the most when you are happiest. If you are yourself down in the dumps, whom will you help? Therefore, your being happy is of the utmost importance not just to you – but to everyone because you naturally help and do good when you are happy.

How about changing the negative perspective of the person to a positive one? That would be great but it seldom happens. That can happen only when you are amazingly, wonderfully happy yourself. Are you that way? If not, and if you yourself have some troubles in your head, then you will get sucked into the negative person's complaining game. Before long, you will feel worse too.

Bless the other person, and wish him well but keep away – for the sake of your happiness.

## **Happiness Hack#24: Make a Little Child Laugh With Your Antics**

One of the quickest ways to forget your troubles and feel genuinely, purely happy is to make a little child laugh. Find a tiny tot in your neighborhood and say 'hi' to him or her. Go hide behind a curtain and come out suddenly to watch the little one laugh. Or maybe you can pretend you got hurt and do some comic stunts. Lose yourself in the laughter of the little kid.

Little children are angels in this respect. They make you forget everything on this earth when they laugh.

If you look at the situation carefully, all you are doing is coming back to the present moment. The laughter of the child and your body movements bring you to this moment and erase thoughts of the past and the future for a while.

## **Happiness Hack#25: Play With a Puppy**

Or a kitten. Or any pet. In fact, if you are feeling chronically unhappy – if it feels like nothing can cure your sadness, why don't you just get a pet home?

The experience can be amazing! A little puppy walking around in its own cute and stylish way, running after you from room to room – is something very beautiful. You can watch it eat, you can watch it sip milk, or you can caress it and see it accepting your love completely and fully.

It is very beautiful to love and be loved and a puppy is a perfect example of this beauty.

Really, it is not that difficult to be happy. In fact it is very easy indeed. The world is full of experiences that will flood you with happiness! Come, bring in the puppy. :)

## **Happiness Hack#26: Offer a Hug to an Angry Man**

The next time someone is angry at you or shouts at you or says bad things, forget everything and just hug them.

Flood them with your love. Don't let go. Just keep hugging until the other person becomes so surrounded with love that his anger dissolves like a sugar cube in water.

I know – this is weird. Maybe you have never done this. But then what's wrong in trying? You have definitely tried shouting at the other person. You have tried defending yourself. I am sure you have tried many other things too. Try hugging this time. Hug tight. For at least 5 minutes. Don't let go – just don't.

Now here is the coolest thing about this experience: the other person may hug you back or he may become even angrier. You can't really control the other person's reaction. However, YOU will suddenly stop feeling angry at that person! There is something about touching, and hugging that instantly connects you to another person. Whether the other person responds or not, you will definitely NOT feel angry if you are hugging the person warmly.

Still not convinced? Try it once. Just once. Just for fun. :)

## **Happiness Hack#27: Appreciate a Stranger For Something You Genuinely Like About Him/Her**

Often, when we see a stranger wearing a wonderful t-shirt, we just think “It's nice” and don't say a thing. :) Or, maybe we say, “Nice shirt!” and move on. How about really taking the time to appreciate that t-shirt and ask him more about it?

Remember: the more you genuinely appreciate anything at all, the happier you feel. So, the next time you come across a stranger who is wearing something 'amazing', appreciate him or her for it and talk to him about it. Not only will HE feel good, even you will feel good.

And it needn't just be about the t-shirt. Here are some more examples of how you can appreciate strangers:

- a) If you see a shopkeeper/salesman who's done a good job at talking about the product to you, appreciate him.
- b) If you see a waiter doing a good job managing the restaurant all by himself and you think he's cool, tell him that and ask him how he manages that!
- c) If you see a cheerful man in the train who's amazingly positive, compliment him about it!

I am not asking you to be artificial – I am just saying - express your appreciation because expressing it increases and expands it and that expands your happiness. This will even lead to some wonderful interactions and nice conversations.

But should you not be afraid of strangers? Honestly, that is a myth created by the media. 99% of people are people like you and me who wish other people well. Why should you be afraid of the 1% and not interact with the 99%? Go ahead, take the plunge and spread happiness all around!

## **Happiness Hack#28: Appreciate People You Are Intimate With Genuinely**

One thing we often do is take people close to us for granted. They may do a lot of nice things for us but we may just not notice or assume it is our right to be treated that way.

A great way to be happy is to genuinely notice things people close to us do for us and appreciate them for those things. Your partner's cooked you dinner? Think about it – that's so amazing! I mean, there is someone in this world who's taken the pains to cook for you. Isn't that nice? Your friend helped you with some work? Thank him with a real greeting card that you can send to his home address. If you are thankful, why not express it completely? A loved one's birthday coming up? Think of how you can create a gift with your own hands for that person? Even a simple, hand drawn card would be so nice!

The point is again the same: the more we appreciate the things that are already there in our life, the happier we are. Thinking: “I don't have this, that and that.” causes sadness. Thinking: “Wow, this part of my life is so amazing.” causes happiness. Choose to be happy. :)

## **Happiness Hack#29: Blindfold Yourself For an Hour**

They say happiness lies in being grateful for what you already have. But that's so difficult! I mean how can you be grateful for your eyes or ears – when you know that they are there – just there? You're like – OK, I have eyes but that's OK. I want some more things...

I recently attended a fabulous event called [Antarchakshu](#) (Inner Eye) in New Delhi. In this event, they blindfold you for around an hour and ask you to do a lot of things like eat food, select coins, identify maps, play football, climb stairs, move around obstacles – all while blindfolded. It was a very, very humbling experience for me. After I was done with the event, and even while it was still going on, I realized: I am so, so, so thankful to have my eyes.

You can conduct your own 'Antarchakshu' at home, just for fun. Blindfold yourself for an hour or maybe even two or three hours and go about your normal daily tasks. Don't change your routine, just because you have blindfolded yourself. Do the laundry or write or walk around or shop (don't be embarrassed by the stares others give you, after all this is reality for some people) – all while blindfolded.

After your hour is up, lie down, relax and remove the blindfold. You will feel AMAZING. For some time you will look around and think: Wow. Seeing is something. You might even want to look around and notice so many objects you normally wouldn't notice. You will feel grateful for the ability to see.

And yes, that'll make you feel really happy. Go, try!

## **Happiness Hack#30: Pamper Yourself For a Day**

If you could take a break and spend a day exactly as you wish to spend it (with no obligations at all), how would you spend it?

Would you watch a movie with friends (or maybe alone?), would you head to an adventure park or would you play a sport? Would you gift yourself a massage? Or would you take a long hot water bath in the tub?

Whatever it is that you would want to do in one day PURELY for YOURSELF, go ahead and do it. Pamper yourself. Give yourself attention. Listen to every whim. Adore yourself. Just for one day. You can tell your family/friends in advance of your plans so that they understand too. The point is: a day FOR you completely.

In our desire for work-life balance, in our relationships, commitments and what not, we sometimes forget to give ourselves ample love and attention. And yes, though we may not express it or even know this is so, it keeps us unhappy.

If this is so with you, take just one day off, completely for yourself. Don't worry, nothing will happen in a day. The world will still go on and your career, relationships and other life parts will remain just the way they are.

Go pamper yourself!

## **Happiness Hack#31: Express Yourself by Sharing Your Expertise**

We all want to help other people and especially so by advising them about things we are very knowledgeable about. Maybe you are a gardening expert. Maybe you are a civil engineer. Or maybe you know a lot about how to write. Wouldn't you love to share your expertise with people who would really benefit from it?

The problem is reaching people who would benefit from your advice. People in general won't be interested in what you have to say – so what do you do?

In comes the internet. There are so many people throughout the world who would love your advice! They are even searching on Google for the precise thing that you already know. Go ahead and answer some questions on [Yahoo Answers](#). Or [Wiki Answers](#). Or write an article on [WikiHow.com](#). Or build a lens on [Squidoo.com](#). You can even write or edit a Wikipedia article related to what you know. Why not help people who are truly looking for what you have to give?

As you express yourself by sharing your knowledge with others, you will feel a special sense of joy in writing and helping. You will start feeling good about yourself and also meaningful. If you have never done this, do it just for the experience. You will feel happier. :)

## Happiness Hack#32: Visit a Gift Economy Shop

Gift economy is a fascinating concept that says we don't need to have rational 'give and take' money-based transactions. Instead, just as we give without expecting immediate rewards in our family, it says we should give freely in society as well.

I love the concept of a gift economy though I have not adopted it completely yet. Making this ebook freely available on the Kindle Store is also in tune with the spirit of gift economy.

Experiencing the concept of gift economy is a very beautiful experience. The cool thing is that there are many gift economy shops where everything is free! You can take anything from the shop or give anything to the shop for free.

[Here is a list of gift economy shops in the world.](#)

If there is a shop near you, visiting it will definitely make you feel amazing. Imagine being given real objects for free – just because you are loved without any expectation from you? Wouldn't you feel special?

Here, by the way is a list of gift economy restaurants. These are pretty cool too because you don't have to pay for your meal, it is free. However, it is appreciated if you pay for the meal of the person who will dine after you. :) That's pretty interesting.

[Is there such a restaurant near you?](#)

Visiting these places is a happy experience because for some time, your mind shuts off and you feel connected with everyone around you. For some time, you are not fighting, defending or asserting your rights but instead being loved or given things for free without expectation. That touches something pure within all of us.

So well, happiness beckons you!

PS: If you don't live near any of these shops – how can you experience the same thing online? [Here are some 'free give and take' websites.](#)

By the way, you might love to learn about [this cool woman](#) (who apparently is happy!) who has been living without money for 14 years! That made even me look at things in perspective.

## **Happiness Hack#33: Hug Someone You Are Intimate With Suddenly!**

I read somewhere that what all of us need is 12 hugs a day.

Really, if you DID get 12 hugs a day, would you be unhappy ever? No, I guess all of us would LOVE it like anything.

Therefore, let's make a start. Your girlfriend, your friends, your spouse, your parents – people you love – just freaking hug them! Don't wait for occasions and don't think twice. No matter what they are doing, don't worry, just offer a tight, tight bear hug. Everyone loves it even if they deny it. Wouldn't you love it?

In fact, if you are reading this in a place where there is even one person you know intimately, just go and hug him or her. Let the hug go on for a few minutes. There is something magical about hugs: they just make you feel loved, happy, content and amazing. :) [Don't forget to watch this Free Hugs video if you haven't seen it already!](#)

## **Happiness Hack#34: Talk to an Acquaintance You Have Not Talked to In 5 Years**

If you feel life is stuck in a rut, a simple way to feel more alive immediately is to call someone you knew well once upon a time but have not interacted with in a long time. I know: in calling such a person – you will initially feel hesitant and uncomfortable. But do it anyway and it will really make you happy.

It could be an old friend, a relative you've lost touch with, or someone you had a very nice experience with long ago but haven't talk to ever since. Just dial their phone number (try to find it on the internet if you don't have it) or email them.

You will feel embarrassed initially but once the conversation is in full flow, there will be so much to talk about! Without a doubt you will feel very happy after the conversation.

Again, the reasons for the happiness are many. You connect with the other person or strengthen the old connection and that always makes us happy. There is so much to talk and share and know – that makes you happy. And since this is a person you have not interacted with in a long time, the 'newness' brings you back to the present moment – as there is no recent past or immediate future to talk about.

## **Happiness Hack#35: Feed a Loved One With Your Hand**

If you have never fed lunch or dinner to a loved one with your hand, let me tell you that it is a very beautiful experience.

If you have a partner, you can try this with him or her, or you could try it with a friend or even your parents. The other person whom you will feed may resist or find this to be very childish – but that is just surface resistance. Deep down, anyone who is fed will love the experience. It is a very touching experience.

So, yup – do that today itself. I know – you might be embarrassed to even put forth this suggestion – but then all you are doing is giving pure love. And what can be more beautiful than that?

And yes, it will make you feel super-duper-happy. :)

## **Happiness Hack#36: Decide to Be Happy**

You have done some really commendable things in life. All of us have. Maybe you have aced an examination. Maybe you have graduated from college. Or learnt a skill. Or won a competition. How did you do it?

Simple. You decided to do it. And then you did it without thinking too much about 'not doing it'.

You can do that for happiness too. Just decide to be happy. Just decide to be cheerful today. Decide to help people you meet, to smile at them and rock the world. Let nothing stop you today. No matter what, you will choose to be happy today. Even if everything else sucks, you will find something to genuinely feel happy about. Come on, you've done so many amazing things in life, can't you freaking decide to be happy?

Yes, you can.

And once you do, you will see your whole day suddenly changing. The simple decision to be happy and to not let circumstances affect you – boosts your mood. Make that decision today, right now. Yes, you will be happy. Come, rock the world! :)

## **Happiness Hack#37: Take Action on a Task You Have Been Procrastinating For a Long Time**

One superb way to feel happy is to get something you've wanted to do, done.

What is it that you have been putting off? Is it house repairs? Is it thinking about your relationship? Is it sending a gift to your friend? Or maybe just organizing your desk?

Forget everything else – and finish that one activity you have been delaying NOW. Not tomorrow, but now. Don't rest till you get it done completely. Clean that desk or send that gift – spend as much time as is required to complete that activity but don't abandon it in the middle, finish it. Starting the activity may seem daunting and irritating but start it anyway. After all, you have been thinking of doing it since such a long time that doing it and getting done with it will really, really make you happy.

Focus on that happiness and finish that task!

## **Happiness Hack#38: Be Spontaneous For Half a Day**

Most of our days are completely planned and in planning, we sometimes lose our happiness. Of course planning is essential but it should not lead to such a strict routine that you forget to be yourself – alive and spontaneous.

For half a day, forget about all schedules and do absolutely what you feel inclined to do. Don't say no to yourself at all. Follow your impulses. You want to travel to the centre of the city? Go ahead catch a train or drive there. You want to sit in a park? Sit. You want to surprise your wife/girlfriend? Do it! You want to go and play football? Check. Don't decide what you will do next while pursuing one activity. Be completely in the moment – and enjoy what you are doing right here and now. Once you are done with it – do whatever you feel the urge to do! Nothing is out of bounds as long as it does not harm anyone.

I have had quite some spontaneous hours like this – and each time I have felt splendid! The reason you feel so good is because you come back to the present moment. You cannot be spontaneous and keep thinking right? You can either just DO something or think about the past and future. Therefore, for half a day, your mind gets a reboot and you feel fresh and alive when you become spontaneous. :)

What if you mess up and do something really weird? What if you lose your job or your relationship? Well, come on – nothing of that sort will happen in just half a day. Also, is this not an experience you would want to have at least once in your life? Just once? Go, do it!

## **Happiness Hack#39: Laugh. And Laugh Some More! :D**

If you are laughing, you are happy, right?

Fill your day with humor and things that make you laugh! Here are some cool websites that will definitely make you laugh:

a) Passive and Aggressive and very Funny notes written by people across the world!

<http://www.passiveaggressivenotes.com>

b) Funny pictures and articles

<http://www.cracked.com/>

c) Ridiculously funny picture stories that are also inspirational

<http://hyperboleandahalf.blogspot.in>

d) Unnecessary quotes from across the world

<http://www.unnecessaryquotes.com>

e) Funny news stories

<http://www.theonion.com/>

There are also many jokes sites around and many ridiculous YouTube videos. Take a peek! In fact, you can take many such laughter breaks throughout your day. Only, make sure you take these breaks consciously – or you might end up spending a lot of time on these sites – and that will not make you happy.

Anyways, keep laughing guys. :)

## **Happiness Hack#40: Do Something You Have Never Done Before**

There are times when we are unhappy but we don't even know why we are unhappy. We are bored and a bit uneasy for no reason.

I think this happens because of excessive adherence to routine. We just keep doing the same things again and again.

A wonderful way to feel fresh, energetic and happy is to do something you have never, ever done before – something new. This could be a new path to work, a new dish, a new way to greet people (instead of the popular How U Doin?), a new phrase from a new language – anything new. The moment you do something you don't do every day, you allow freshness and excitement to come in.

Here are some more things you can do:

- \* Dining somewhere you have never dined before, say a new restaurant that you think is crazy.
- \* Making your own interesting meal today by looking up the recipe on the internet.
- \* While you are walking in a crowded area with so, so many people walking with you - just standing still for a while and observing the others walk, the expressions on their faces and your surroundings.
- \* Jogging around to a nearby place instead of walking up to it!
- \* Buying yourself a bar of chocolate for no reason at all, and enjoying eating it in the shade of a tree while looking around and savoring your surroundings.
- \* Not drinking coffee if you drink it daily - drinking juice instead!

There is no doubt, that you will feel better than before!

## **Happiness Hack#41: Imagine Not Being Able to Speak**

As I've mentioned earlier, gratitude for what we already have is an amazing way to be happy. Yet, it is so difficult to feel!

Close your eyes, lie down on the bed, and observe your breath for a minute or so. Calm down. Now, imagine being born without the ability to speak.

Imagine yourself as a young boy going to school but not able to speak. Imagine how you would communicate with your friends using a piece of paper. Some people would be very compassionate towards you but some people – would make fun of you. Imagine coming home – and not talking to your parents. Now imagine growing up and going to college or working on a job. Imagine how your relationship with your partner might have started had you not been able to speak. Imagine all of this in complete detail. All this might seem weird or even useless and you may feel irritated. Keep going. Let those thoughts and the feeling of irritation be. Don't give up until you truly, truly feel that you cannot speak.

Get up after 10 minutes.

Say a word. Sing a song. Just speak anything out loud.

You will feel grateful and happy, at least for some minutes. You will even notice your words and voice as you speak and a feeling that says "Thank you" will pass through you.

## **Happiness Hack#42: In the Middle of an Argument, Start Listening**

This particular thing is very, very difficult. No wonder we hardly ever do it. But if you do it even ONCE, you will feel so happy – you will be blown off by the impact!

When are we most unhappy in daily life? When we are arguing or when someone is angry with us or when we are angry at somebody, right?

When such a situation occurs next time, just listen to the other person. Stop shouting, defending, making your point, convincing the other person he or she is wrong – stop everything and JUST listen to the other person. Let the other person speak and express everything. When the other person talks, don't interrupt. Maybe the other person is angry too and so maybe he or she is not talking sense. Don't worry. Just listen genuinely. As you listen, forget about your point of view for a while. Forget about what you have to say. Really, for some minutes, put yourself in the other person's shoes. Think of the situation ONLY from the other person's point of view for some time. Imagine BEING the other person and NOT you. Don't act like you are listening, really, listen to what the other person is saying.

Sometimes, you will have questions about what the other person is saying. Ask those questions and understand what the other person is saying in an even better way. Just catching the essence of the other person's statement is NOT enough. Listen so well that you understand what the other person is saying AS WELL as he himself does. After the other person is done, restate what you have understood and ask: “Is this what you meant?” Let the other person talk again and clarify further about what he meant.

OK, I'll repeat this once again because it is just so difficult to practice: make sure that you forget your point and LOSE yourself in the other person's point for a while. Keep asking questions and genuinely try to understand the other person's point of view until you really, really get it.

If you do this – you won't believe the amazing change that will come over. The other person will suddenly feel genuinely understood – something he must have wanted to feel since a long time. He will calm down. You will see his anger vanish. And here's something magical: if you've really, genuinely listened to the other person, he WILL actually now ask you to speak. He will say – you tell me about your point of view. I am not kidding. This really happens. After having genuinely understood the other person's point of view, you will NOT lose your point of view. You will still have it. Express it respectfully now. The other person will genuinely listen. You will naturally also talk respectfully because you have truly understood the other person's point of view.

Listening – simply trying to understand what another person is saying can be a source of immense happiness – especially when the two people involved are arguing. It is also very, very difficult to practice. But it is possible and it leads to some amazing results.

Here are some problems you may face when trying to genuinely listen to another person in an argument:

- 1) You may feel that the other person is talking irrationally and you MUST stop him now! Let the thought be and tell yourself – the other person is also a human being, let me truly understand him.
- 2) You may feel an irresistible urge to counter the other person and defend. Let that urge be. Feel it. But choose to understand the other person first.
- 3) You may feel the urge to pretend to be silent when the other person is talking, all the time resisting what the other person is saying mentally. You are not listening to him if you are not genuinely trying to understand his point of view. This is the genuine listening we are talking about,

not “showing the other person that you are listening.”

Stephen Covey talks about listening in his book, “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.” He says that when a person feels not understood – he is gasping for someone to understand him – almost like you will gasp for air when you are on the top of a mountain. At that time – nothing else matters but JUST being understood. Once you have understood the other person's point of view, then he will be willing to genuinely listen to you too.

Even you might have felt this need to be understood in any argument. You must have felt: “I want the other person to really see where I am coming from. I want him to look at the situation from my eyes.” Don't wait for the other person to do that. Go ahead and look at the situation from his eyes.

You will be very, very happy. :)

## **Happiness Hack#43: For 10 minutes – Just Close Your Eyes and Dream**

Someone has said that happiness is created by our thoughts and so is sadness.

Well, let's give the guy who said this thing a chance by applying this cool technique to feel amazing for a while! :)

Lie down or sit on a chair in a relaxed position. Make sure you won't be interrupted for at least 10 minutes.

Now, do something you may rarely have done before: imagine your ideal world. If everything could be just as you want it to be, how would it be? Where would you live? How would you spend your day? How would you spend your life? Go one step ahead and imagine other people too in this ideal world – after all it is YOUR ideal world. How would people interact with you? How would they respond to your words? Imagine your ideal earth experience – change anything you want. Allow yourself to dream freely without any thoughts about it being possible or not. Anything is possible in your world. :)

Once you have really imagined your world, open your eyes. Breathe. How does it feel? The world around you is still the same, but don't you feel better than you felt before?

Most of us deny our truest desires and our best life because we think it is not possible. Therefore, even visualizing it for a few minutes, relaxes us and makes us happy.

Some people may feel bad after this exercise too. For them, I'll say – you haven't yet lost yourself in imagining your ideal world. You are halfway here and halfway in your imagination – so you are contrasting your ideal world experience with your real experience and so feeling bad about the real one. Don't worry, keep going – and keep imagining your ideal world. It'll feel amazing soon.

I know this exercise is a bit childlike – I mean the real world around you won't vanish right? Then what's the point of the visualization? Well, firstly, it makes you admit your truest desires to yourself and that feels good. Secondly, sometimes you may feel so amazingly positive after visualizing your ideal world that you may actually sit up and decide to do one of those things you imagined. And that will really change your life!

In any case, it will definitely make you happy. So why not try it?

## **Happiness Hack#44: Get Inspired By Nick Vujicic**

Maybe you have already seen this video before. Or maybe you haven't. But when you feel down or when you feel your life sucks or when you feel you are no good, [JUST watch this. You can't help being inspired: it is so amazing!](#)

In the video, you'll see Nick – a man with no arms AND no legs who is traveling the world inspiring people to live their dreams. And you can't help wonder- “Where would I be without arms and legs? I mean – with something so important missing, this guy is happy and he is rocking the world? What am I waiting for?”

You may cry. Or you may smile. But yes – the video will touch you. Watch it, even if you have watched it already. All of us require some perspective to look at our troubles. And that perspective is enough to make us feel happy and grateful.

## **Happiness Hack#45: Call 5 People You Are Intimate With and Say “I Love You”**

The simple act of telling people you love that you love them makes both you and them happy. And it's true, isn't it? Of course you love them. So why not say it?

List 5 people in this world you love. Call them up. Say, “Hi! \_\_\_\_\_, I just called to say that I love you. I mean I really do though sometimes I do crazy things and all. :) I LOVE you!” That's it. Then you can shut up and listen to what they say. Then call the next person. Then the next person.

Once you are done with 5 people, just lie down on the bed. You will be flooded with loads of thoughts – and most of them will be very happy ones. You might remember moments spent with some of the people you just called. Or maybe you will feel at peace and relaxed.

In fact, now that I have told you to do this, it's time for me to do this too. I'll be back, time to make a couple of phone calls!

## Happiness Hack#46: Use the 'Clock Technique' to Feel Good

This a stupendous technique that I picked from the book 'Ask and It Is Given' and it's helped me move from feeling very sad to very happy in a matter of 5 minutes.

First, draw a clock and write down the numbers on it from 1 to 12. At number 12, write down the exact thought that is making you feel sad right now. For example, here are some common sad thoughts:

- 1) I am feeling alone
- 2) I am feeling unloved
- 3) I am feeling like a failure

Whatever it is that is making you sad right now, write down one line about it at number 12.

Now, think about this: is there anything that you are genuinely grateful for right now? Is there anything that you're actually thankful about in this moment of sadness? This will be very difficult to find because come on, you're sad! But keep looking. Is there something about your life – or anything you can think of that you're feeling nice about? Take your time. In about a minute, I'm sure you'll come up with one thing you are grateful about even when stuck in this sad situation.

Write that thing you are grateful for next to the number 11 on the clock. For example, you may write, “At least I have such good friends I can talk too.” Or, “At least I don't have to go to work tomorrow, I am so glad about that!”. Write down anything that you really appreciate about your situation right now. Don't write anything just for the sake of writing, write something you are really even a bit thankful about.

Now, think of another thing you are grateful about – right now. Come on, wrack your brains. Something must be going well in your life! Write that thing down next to the number 10.

Now, yes, think of yet another thing you are grateful about! This time it will be easier – since you have already thought about two things. Write that down next to number 9. Think of yet another thing you are genuinely grateful about and write that next to number 8. Keep writing until you reach number 1. As you write more and more things you are grateful about, you will find it increasingly easier to find out more things you really appreciate in your life. In fact, by the time you've written the sentence next to number 1, you will actually be feeling quite good about your life. Seriously, it works!

Take a peek at how I used the [focal wheel technique](#) to feel better after I was upset with my then girlfriend (and now wife) in 5 minutes. :)

Of course if there is something seriously wrong in your life, then this technique will not solve all your problems in 5 minutes. No one can do that for you. However, it will change your “my life sucks” state to “my life's good” state. And once you are in the “my life's good” state, now you can solve your problems or do so many other things to really change your life.

This technique works because most of the time when we are sad – we are thinking negative thoughts like “I always fail” or “I am never going to succeed”. These thoughts are not the truth – we however assume them to be the truth and so we feel sad. Even 5 minutes of thinking nice thoughts is enough to dispel all these thoughts and make us believe in ourselves again. That's why this technique works – since it makes us think nice thoughts for 5 minutes continuously without a gap.

Rock it, with the 'Focal Wheel' technique!

## **Happiness Hack#47: Lie Down and Observe the Night Sky**

We are generally so worked up about our world, that we (and that includes me) forget that there's a sky up there!

No matter how bad you're feeling or no matter what makes you bored or unhappy or not happy, just lie down and take a good look at the night sky. If you can't look at it from the balcony of your house, go to your terrace. If there is no terrace, go out, find a garden and lie down there and look up at the sky.

Look at its vastness. Look at those tiny stars in the middle of so much empty space. Keep looking...Look at the shapes those stars form. In this moment, millions of miles away, that star is shining. What you are seeing is the light emitted by the star years and years ago – maybe before you were born. Let your thoughts of wonder expand...Are these stars as real as your daily problems? Are they even more real? And is the whole of the earth just like the tiniest of those stars – so small and insignificant in the grand scheme of things? Just be for a while. Let go of your earthly tensions and relax.

Lie down for as long as you like. It's OK, other things can wait. This is an experience to have – at least once in your lifetime.

## **Happiness Hack#48: Try to Understand the Problems of Another Person**

A very common reason for being unhappy is being too stuck with your problems. When we are unhappy, we think our problems are big monsters, even larger than elephants.

That is why, going out and understanding other people's problems is a sure shot way towards feeling happier. That makes us understand that our problems are NOT elephants, they are the size of dogs or cats maybe if not the size of ants.

Call up a friend or better still visit one. Or drop in at your neighbor's. Or basically interact with another human being. When you do, don't talk about superficial society based things like the weather and politics. Delve right in and ask them about their problems. Ask them: "How are you doing really? Are you happy with this life?" Discuss something real and concrete in their lives that they are not happy about or want to change. Really understand their problems. For sometimes, let go of your problems and become completely involved in theirs. Don't just suggest superficial solutions to their problems, listen to them and just try to understand. Try to look at the world from their point of view. Of course, if you can, also try to motivate the other person and tell them what you think is the solution but only do so after you've really understood the situation.

The moment you are able to look at someone else's problem genuinely, you forget about yours. It just happens without you realizing it. This happens not because the problem itself vanishes, it happens because the way you look at your problem changes. Now, instead of thinking – my problem is the biggest problem in the world, you start thinking of it as just a small problem that can be dealt with.

So well, all the best to you – as you go help someone...

## **Happiness Hack#49: Make a To-Do List and Finish Off All Items**

Ah, the joy of ticking items off a to-do list!

Maybe you already do this. Maybe you've never done it. In either case, you can make one now.

Write down 5 things you want to do now. These are 5 things that you need to start taking action on right away. They may be 'small' things like fixing the kitchen tap or 'large' things like clarifying your life purpose but these are things that just must be done! Write them down.

Now, and this is critical – DON'T think. Don't think about anything else. Switch your phone off. Don't open the door if someone knocks. Don't reply if someone interrupts. JUST get the first thing done. I know – there are always interruptions but you will entertain NONE until you get your five things done. Period. Finish the first task and tick off that item from the to-do list. Feel the joy of finishing that item. Smile. Now, before you can think of anything else – get to work on the second item and finish it off. Then the third. Then the fourth and then the fifth.

Remember – until you finish the fifth item off, NO thinking. Come on, you've already done the thinking when you made the to-do list. How much more do you need to think? Just act.

Once you are done with all 5 items on your to-do list, NOW relax. Now enjoy the feeling you will experience. Now return those calls, talk to those colleagues, visit Facebook, Twitter or whatever. Let the beautiful feeling of having committed to a task and finished it flood you. There is not an iota of doubt in the fact that you will feel very, very happy.

Of course, doing this is not easy. Here are some things you need to be aware of when you set out on Mission To-do List Check.

- a) No interruptions – politely tell people you will get back later, keep your phone on silent mode or flight mode
- b) The urge to quit – After finishing two tasks you may feel like relaxing a bit and chilling out. Or you may feel, I've done enough work already, a break won't do me harm. Jump up. Repeat this line from a Bollywood movie to yourself, “Once I've committed to something, I don't listen to even myself.” Before you can think, before you can debate whether to work or not, just start working on the next task. Remember, you've already thought about it, there is no more need to think again or plan again. Just act.

All the best! May you smack your to-do list left right and center today. :)

## Happiness Hack#50: Realize That You Are Amazing

If you really thought you were amazing, would you be unhappy? No, because at the core of all unhappiness and all negative thoughts is the common negative thought: “I am not good enough.”

Of course you are good enough! Not just that, you are amazing. You – just the way you are – without any changes required – are actually awesome.

All this sounds like crap? OK, let me SHOW you how you are amazing.

Think about 5 instances, when you did something you are really proud of. Just 5 instances from your entire life. 5 Things you did when you thought, 'Wow, I'm cool!' Don't read on till you can think of 5 instances. Please.

....

You've thought of those 5 instances? You've thought of even one instance when you really were amazing? Now dwell on that instance... It was YOU who did that amazing thing. No one else did it like you did it. You were COOL in that instant and that coolness, that awesomeness is still there inside you. It has not gone anywhere – where will it go? It's present inside you as your capacity to rock the world.

You might think of J K Rowling and say - “She's amazing, she's written the Harry Potter series.” But do you know that she lived on social support for a long time and was rejected by 12 publishers? At that point, after the 12<sup>th</sup> rejection, would she have felt amazing about herself? No, she would have felt that she sucked. But we all know her books are super-amazing and so is she.

The point is – you are harming yourself by telling yourself you are no good. You rock. You have that same potential in you to do big things. You are NOT a moron no matter how much you convince yourself that you are one.

Take another look at Nick Vujicic. Search him up on Google and Wikipedia. He's the guy without arms and legs who is going around inspiring people. He doesn't have a normal career, the best relationship or anything else you think is required to be amazing. And to top all that he doesn't even have arms and legs. Think about that. But watch his video and you can see that he feels he is amazing. He even has a Wikipedia page to his name. That proves that YOU wherever you are, are amazing too.

Keep telling yourself throughout the day, “I rock. I am amazing. I am unique in my own beautiful way.” If you say that for a few weeks, your life will change. And you'll be happier.

Here's a [small picture dedicated to you with love](#). :)

## **Happiness Hack#51: Create Something And Share it With the World**

No matter what's happened to you, you can always feel happier by creating something of your own.

If you have never created anything from scratch, then you can create something for the first time right now!

Here are some cool things you can do right now that will definitely make you happy.

- a) Write a short story and publish it on Kindle ([very, very easy](#))
- b) Paint something even if you've never painted before
- c) Make something out of clay
- d) Use a pair of scissors and paper to cut a nice shape/picture out from the paper
- e) [Create shapes and figures and objects](#) by folding paper
- f) Cook something creative – mix and match ingredients to come up with something cool
- g) Write your own song or poem
- h) Write some [limericks](#)
- i) Make [earrings out of copper wire](#) like my wife Krupa does

The point is: express yourself creatively in some way. Don't worry about making something perfectly – the point is not to win the first prize in any competition. The point is to be happy and to have fun creating. So, go rock it and create something! And once you are done (and this is scary), share it on Facebook and Twitter before you can say “Share!”. Just do it. You will be surprised at how appreciative people will be of what you have created.

So, why not create something right away? I can bet, it'll make you very happy.

## **Happiness Hack#52: Set a Super-Inspiring Goal With a Deadline, Write Steps And Take the First One**

What is the one goal that inspires you and motivates you? Makes you very happy? If that is difficult to think about, how about this: What do you want your life to look like one year from now? Or what one thing do you definitely want to achieve one year or 6 months from now?

Think about one goal that really, really motivates you and inspires you. Something that you feel kicked up about.

Now, write down the steps required to achieve that goal. If you complete these steps, you should achieve your goal. For example, one of my goals for the next year is to grow a tomato plant from start to finish. Here are my steps:

- a) Learn how to prepare compost
- b) Learn how to prepare tomato seeds from a tomato
- c) Learn how to mix the compost with soil and how to add tomato seeds to the soil
- d) Go ahead and do it all!
- e) Keep watering the tomato plant, talking to it and loving it. :)

There you go. Whatever goal you set, just make sure it is super inspiring to you. Your goal may be becoming a millionaire or doubling your income or excelling at some activity – but whatever it is, makes sure it gets you kicked up. That's important. Now write down the steps.

After you've written down all the steps, don't think, just go ahead and finish the first step before you can say “step”. As you know, action is a stupendous motivator. Steve Pavlina says motivation follows action. So go ahead and implement the first step towards your goal!

I am sure you will feel, very, very happy.

## **Happiness Hack#53: Clean Up Your Room, House or Locality**

For some reason, we humans love organizing, putting things in their place and making sure our surroundings are clean. Come on, of course you will love entering a 5 star Hotel room compared to an area near a garbage dump. We are wired to appreciate cleanliness and orderliness.

Go ahead, get going and clean your room today. Put everything in its proper place. Broom and mop or vacuum clean if necessary. Think: how can I make this room look inviting? Put up some charts and posters if you feel like it. Make it your own little heaven. Let it be a place such that when you enter it, you feel blissful anyway. Now, do that for the entire house. Clean it up. Make it YOUR space. Get it organized and nice.

It is a simple tip, but it will make you feel much, much better. And then when you look at the clean house or the clean room and realize that it was you who just did all that, you will also feel very good about yourself. For some moments, you'll think: I rock! And that will be so true. :)

## **Happiness Hack#54: Write Down 50 Things You Like About Your Life**

Take a piece of paper right now and write down 50 things you really love about your life. That's it. Simple. It will make you feel incredibly happy.

When you write your list of 50 things you love in your life, do note these points:

- a) This is a list of 50 things you already have in your life – not 50 things you want but don't have
- b) Make sure you write things you genuinely like. Remember, the list is useless if you write things down for the list's sake.
- c) While you make the list, you will think: but there aren't 50 things that I like. In fact, there are not even 2 things I can mention right away. You are wrong. It is your sadness talking, not you. There are 50 things if you can really look for them. Don't give up. Keep wracking your brains until you get the first thing.

And yes: please make sure you write down 50 things! Don't give up and keep going. Treat this like a medicine for your sadness just like the medicine you take when you are ill.

One interesting thing you will note is that the more things you write down (things you like), more the number of things that keep popping up in your head! It is almost like our brain is wired to find more and more thoughts related to what we are thinking. When you get to point number 50, you will be surprised (seriously, surprised) at how nice you are feeling. You will think: how can I really feel so nice when I have so many problems? But that's the irony, just writing down what you already appreciate about your life is enough to make you feel amazing right now.

So go ahead, make your list. :)

## **Happiness Hack#55: Make Your Life Improvement Plan**

All happiness hacks seem phony to you. You're like – but I am unhappy deep down and until THAT goes, how will I be happy?

OK, I agree with you.

Take a piece of paper or open a word document. Write down all the things that are making you deeply unhappy right now. Write down what sucks and what is NOT going fine. Write down everything – keep writing until you're like - “Ah, OK. I've written EVERYTHING that is going wrong in my life.” Done? Written everything down?

Stretch and smile a bit. :) I mean, you've written everything down finally.

Now, look at each thing you've written down and figure out HOW you can change each situation or what you can do about each situation. Let us say number 1 is...your boss who sucks.

Now think: What can I do about this situation so that I am happy instead of unhappy?

You will not be hit by an instant solution – so think for a few minutes. Figured it out? Write it down. Simple. If the solution is a more detailed one, write down all the details. In the case of the boss for instance, one solution can be – start searching for a new job extensively while keeping at this job till I get a new one.

Once you are done with solution one, move on to the next point. Figure out a solution for the second point. Then do that for the third point. Then the fourth one. And so on.

Sometimes as you write the solution, you will feel: But this is so difficult to do. In that case tell yourself, “It may be difficult but it will make me happy in the long run. If I don't do this then I CHOOSE to be unhappy.”

Sometimes, you will know what the solution is, but you will feel afraid to write it down. Write it down anyway even if you don't feel powerful enough to execute the solution just yet. For instance, you may be sure that you want to break up with your partner and that will truly make you happy but you may not be ready to do that yet. Write it down even if you are not ready. That is because accepting the truth makes you happier than denying the truth even if you don't yet have the courage to act it out.

Once you have written down all the solutions, take another deep breath. :)

You have freaking solved all the problems of your life! At least, you have solutions written. This is your life improvement plan. If you really do all these things that you have written down, then all the things that make you unhappy will permanently go away.

You will already be feeling much better than before just by writing down all these solutions even though you may not yet have implemented them yet. You now know what you need to do to be happy consistently. The only thing to do now – is to DO these things.

Note that you can now no longer blame anyone else for your unhappiness and that looks scary. I mean it is so much easier to be unhappy and say – 'They made me unhappy.' But you can't do that now as you KNOW what you can do to get out of these situations.

So yes, get out of those unhappy situations. Take control. Implement those solutions. Rock the world.

## Happiness Hack#56: Discover Your Life Purpose

Sometimes, unhappiness runs even deeper than solving life problems. You may be unhappy because you may think: what am I doing in life? You may not have any BIG problem at all but you may be bored and fed up with the way you are living. You may want to do something more meaningful – something that touches you at a deeper level. You might want to find the reason for your existence.

Here is an [exercise by Steve Pavlina that helps you find your life purpose in 20 minutes](#).

It is all about reaching deep within yourself and figuring out why you are here on this earth. Do it even if you have done it before because it is always amazing to gain more clarity about your purpose on earth. You will feel much, much happier.

All it takes is 20 minutes, so why not give it a try? Before I discovered my own purpose, I did things without enthusiasm or joy and mostly for money. But after I really found out what got me happy and excited (and full of love), my happiness increased by a great amount – and I did things in the pursuit of that happiness.

Currently, here is what I have discovered about my life purpose (though I intend to refine that more and more):

“To help people immensely by inspiring them to live the best life they are capable of living and by helping them grow as conscious human beings.”

Why am I writing this ebook right now? It is not for money because this ebook is free. It is because of this purpose. And this is making me very, very happy. And when I say purpose – I mean something that resonates with you and makes you come alive – not some fancy words written to impress.

So well, discover your purpose. You may or may not get it in 20 minutes as Steve Pavlina says, but what's the harm in trying? :)

## Happiness Hack#57: Create a Video Dedicated to Someone You Love

This can be one of the most exciting experiences ever!

Create a video dedicated to a loved one in which you talk about how precious and amazing this person is in your life. Include some pictures of the person and if possible, some pictures of you AND that person together. Include some quotations that talk about the situation aptly. You can even create an animated video in which you represent some nice incidents you people shared together! Or you can contact some other friends and ask them to send you videos in which they talk about how this person influenced their life. Come on, make it a special occasion for this person!

What, you're saying you don't know where to start? That's hardly an excuse because the internet has all the solutions. I also didn't know how to create a video but then it is so freaking easy that I created one by learning how to create one online. Here are some nice resources:

a) iMovie – [The inbuilt software inside the Mac that you can use to create videos](#) if you have a Mac

Here's a video [I created using ONLY iMovie and nothing else.](#)

b) [Windows Movie Maker \(for Windows XP\)](#) – The inbuilt software inside Windows XP to create videos. Or you can use Movie Maker in Windows 7.

c) Goanimate.com – Create animated videos from scratch for free. [\(Here's a video I created from scratch using their website.\)](#)

And if you find even all this difficult, no problem! The main point is to spread love and tell a person in your life that you care. So simply turn on the webcam and speak your heart out. Then send that person that video or upload the video on YouTube. :)

When the person actually views the video, of course he or she will love it. That will increase the love and happiness further.

Genuinely spreading love and telling people you love them Always makes you happy. There's no exception. Be happy!

## **Happiness Hack#58: Tell Someone The Truth You've Never Told Them**

We are afraid to tell people the truth about ourselves because we think they will get mad at us or leave us if we expose our true selves. And that keeps our relationships stuck at an OK level. This also lowers our self-esteem because we think that the way we are is NOT good enough.

If you want to feel amazing about yourself and be happy in the long run – you must share your deepest self with at least some people. Otherwise, you will feel guilty about the way you are without even realizing it. And that will make you unhappy.

OK, here's what you can try. What is that fact about yourself that you have never told anyone? Tell that to the person who is most intimate with you or the person you feel the MOST comfortable with. It may or may not be your partner, it may or may not be your best friend. This should be the person you feel the most at ease with. Now, pour out to this person. Tell this person that there is something about you which is very embarrassing but which you need to tell them because you want to be honest with yourself and others. Then go ahead, face your fear and tell them that thing you've held back from them.

Irrespective of the other person's reaction, a part of you will feel peaceful and relaxed. If you pay attention, you will really be able to feel this peace – the peace of having nothing to hide and of accepting yourself just the way you are. The way you are – no matter how bad you think that is, is not wrong. It is OK to be that way. You may want to change who you are – but you need not blame yourself for being the way you are. Self-love comes from baring your soul to other people despite being afraid.

The other person may react lovingly – and in most cases this is what will happen. You will be surprised at how easily the other person has accepted such an 'embarrassing situation.' You may find yourself asking: you won't stop talking to me or think I am a bad guy? In 90% of the cases, this won't happen. In fact the other person will become even more intimate with you.

Sometimes, the other person may react harshly. Don't worry, even then. Firstly, you have done something courageous. You will feel superb after having faced the truth fearlessly. You will feel like a hero. Secondly, the other person will definitely come back to you in a few days and tell you something about HIS life. That's a given. He will know that since you are an honest person, he too can bare his soul with you and tell you the deepest truths from his life. Then the connection between you people will become even deeper.

Hiding things from people causes unhappiness. Being honest, open, genuine and fearless causes happiness. Most people think it is the other way round – but when you hide facts from someone, your relationship with that person can NEVER be completely satisfying because without you even realizing it, you will act out of fear. And fear and love are opposites.

## Happiness Hack#59: Be Your True Self in Public

Here's taking the previous happiness hack to the next level.

Generally, you may share only the good stuff or stuff everyone will like on Facebook or Twitter. When you however, share something that is more uniquely YOU despite knowing that many people will think badly of you, you become powerful. You rise above the criticism of others, and that feels super-amazing. Doing this will scare you to death but it will also make you feel wonderful about yourself – because you will feel fearless. :)

Here are some nice status messages that are also daring, that you can post on your wall or Twitter page:

- a) I rock! (What will people think? Let them!)
- b) I did something embarrassing today...\_\_\_\_\_
- c) I was honestly thinking today that.....\_\_\_\_\_

The point is NOT to make yourself a laughing stock or to PROVE that you can do it. This is not a dare. The point is to get to the point where you respect yourself more than the opinions of others. When you start doing that, you automatically become happier because fear starts going away from your life. The greatest fear is the fear that says, “What will others think?”. When that goes away, you start rocking the world.

## **Happiness Hack#60: Watch a Super-Positive Video Full of Hope**

This is something you may actually have done many times – but well, you can always do it again!

Nothing beats a super inspiring video when you are down. Here are some of my best picks:

[A Holocaust + cancer survivor, 108 years of age is still happy](#)

[Dance like no one's watching](#)

[The last lecture: Achieving your childhood dreams](#)

[I love living life. I am happy.](#)

[Keep going. You've not lost if you haven't given up.](#)

[Age is no bar, if you really want to rock the world](#)

If you would love a regular dose of video inspiration, [KarmaTube.com](#) is an amazing video sharing website. It is the YouTube for “inspiring videos”. So yes, that's one place you can always check out when you are down. Yet another website to check out is [Ted Talks](#).

Rock it today!

## Happiness Hack#61: Read an Addictive Fantasy Novel

Nope, I am not suggesting you use fantasy fiction to escape every grief in the world.

However, sometimes, when you are really sad and fed up with the world, you may not even have the energy to get up and do something about your sadness. If you are really THAT sad, then yes, fantasy fiction can definitely help.

You see, extreme sadness is caused by a regular pattern of extremely negative thoughts about reality. And the problem is that these thoughts keep repeating again and again. If you think someone hurt you, you may just keep thinking of ways in which this person hurt you again and again and that will make you sadder and sadder. A wonderful way to break this pattern is to get completely engrossed in ANOTHER story – that takes you away from your world for some time. And that's where fantasy fiction comes in. I remember how I was extremely sad once long ago and how reading Harry Potter for half a day absolutely dissolved my sadness because I was not thinking about the sad stuff anymore.

Here are some fantastic books ( pun intended!) to read, re-read and read again.

- 1) [The Harry Potter series](#) by J K Rowling – I Love it with a capital L
- 2) The first book of [The Hunger Games](#) by Suzanne Collins
- 3) [The Twilight series](#) by Stephenie Meyer
- 4) [The Vampire Academy](#) series

The interesting thing about all these books is that they take you to a new world for some time and that helps you rise above your grief for some time.

Note that just reading fantasy novels will NOT solve your problem. This is not a permanent solution. It is just a temporary way to 'raise your vibration' or make you feel a bit better. Then, when you are feeling a bit better, figure out how you can address your problem. That will make you even happier.

## **Happiness Hack#62: Notice When You Drift Into the Past and Future**

As I've mentioned earlier – most of our unhappiness occurs because we drift into negative thoughts about the past (regret) or the future (anxiety). On the other hand you can't have your attention completely in the present moment and be unhappy.

So, here's another cool strategy I sometimes use to return to the present moment.

As you go about your day, just try to catch yourself thinking about the past or the future. When you do, just make a mental note of it – say to yourself – ah, that's the past. Or that's the future. Then come back to the present moment. Again and again as you drift into thoughts and more thoughts – just catch yourself. Come back to this moment. Don't blame yourself for thinking of the past or the future. Just observe and come back.

Here's an example. You are walking up to talk to your boss. As you do, you're thinking “I just hope he also approves that leave I want to take on that day. He can be so mean at times. Sometimes I just hate him. Yesterday he talked pretty rudely to me. And then day before yesterday, it is true that I did not complete the work I was allotted but it really wasn't as big a deal as he made it out to me...” [This is when you notice that you are thinking about the past.] Oops. :) You bring your attention back to the present moment. Notice your surroundings. Notice your breath. Notice the sound of your steps. Relax. :)

Basically, just notice your attention when it drifts too much into the past and the future. That's the crux of this point.

Now you may ask: am I saying you shouldn't think at all? I mean of course all of us think about the past and the future so many times a day. Even I do. So should we stop that to be happy?

I wouldn't say the aim is to stop thinking altogether. BUT – and this is a big BUT, most of the time we think absolutely useless negative stuff about the past and the future. It is as if these mental movies are going on and on in our heads and inevitably most of these movies are negative ones which look at what's wrong with the situation. I am not talking about thoughts which have a purpose or thoughts which help us in some way which may be 10% of our thoughts. I am talking about the 90% that are aimless, and that make us unhappy by predicting bad things when they haven't happened yet or by regretting the past that is over. This keeps us stuck and unhappy. I am talking about becoming more aware of our thoughts by labeling them as 'past' and 'future' thoughts.

Another interesting fact about this 'past' and 'future' technique is that when you actually detect that you are thinking about the past and come back to the present moment, you feel really good. It is as if a wave of relief and mild joy sweeps through you. You reclaim the power of your being from constantly chattering meaningless thoughts.

All the best to you as you use this technique!

## Happiness Hack#63: Write Down Ten Solutions to the ONE Problem That's Troubling You

Sometimes we are not generally unhappy – we are unhappy because of one thing which has happened in our life.

You may have lost your job. You may have just ended your relationship. You may have lost some money. There is this one problem that has made you sad right now.

In this situation, you can focus on your breath, you can come back to the present moment – but there is a good chance that the problem will keep coming back to your mind.

The best thing to do in such a case is to take a piece of paper and write down ten possible solutions to the problem. Why ten, why not one? That's because if you write down just one solution, you may then think: but this solution is not feasible because of so and so reason. That will further depress you. If you write down 10 solutions, there will definitely be at least one solution that will work, right? Let us consider an example.

Let us say you have just lost your job. Here are 10 solutions to this problem.

- a) Formulate a strategy to look for another job in the next one month
- b) Use this opportunity to take a break for 7 days and postpone all further decisions till after 7 days
- c) Use this opportunity to start that business you had always thought about. Make the business plan.
- d) Formulate a strategy to convince the existing company management about how you can serve them in other ways
- e) Use this as an opportunity to figure out what really makes you happy in life and do THAT work. Think of how you can be happy and earn money and rock life.
- f) Read TONS of 'Laid off' articles to motivate yourself. [Start with this one.](#)
- g) Read this stunning book to figure out [how to rock your life AFTER you have lost your job.](#)
- h) Write down the feelings you have now and write down HOW you are going to turn your life around
- i) Just talk to a good friend and ask him for advice
- j) Meditate

All the solutions above are practical ones. Yes, someone who has lost a job will actually benefit from all of them. And I didn't do something BIG by writing them down because you can write your own 10 solutions to your problem right away.

Most of the time when we have one big problem, we think: “Ah, life sucks. I am going downhill. Things will never work.” And we keep going on and on until we feel worse and worse. But you don't have to do that. The moment you think of a solution, another solution will pop up, then another one and then another one. Solutions are easy to get if you think of them. They are difficult to get when you keep feeling sad about what happened.

So yup – rock with your 10 solutions and you'll definitely feel super-better.

## Happiness Hack#64: Take a Presence Walk

I first heard of this [concept here](#). But it was not until I really did something similar that I started to appreciate how amazing this concept was.

Here's the concept: go for a walk, go out anywhere, and just roam around. As you do, keep coming back to the present moment. Keep getting your attention back to the things and people you see around you. Try to listen to the sounds you can hear. Try to hear the sound of your feet as you walk. Try to feel the air flowing past you as you walk. Try to SEE everything around you – trees, the road, people, buildings...observe it all. Savor it all. As you walk, sometimes, you will notice that you have started thinking about the past and the future without even realizing it. Let those thoughts be. Don't resist them. Gently come back to the present moment again. Again notice the sounds, the sights, the feel of the air...

That's it. A presence walk of 20 minutes can leave you amazingly refreshed – so refreshed that you may feel blissful despite all the problems in the world.

Initially, it may be difficult to pay attention to so many stimuli. There will be so much to see, so much to hear and so much to feel! To top that you need to notice your breath, the movement of your body and the existence of different parts of your body. And to top it all there will even be intruding thoughts! Don't worry. You can start small by first paying attention to any one thing. You can pay attention for instance to the sights that you see around you. Or you can pay attention to all the sounds that you hear. These are the two things I would recommend when you are just starting out.

A wonderful advantage of taking a presence walk is that even normal day to day errands which are pretty boring become so much more interesting. For instance, sometimes simply going grocery shopping becomes a very happy experience because as I walk up to the store, I see so much that I have never seen before – and hear so much that I have not heard so attentively before.

There is no doubt that a presence walk makes you happier without anything big even happening in your life. Worth a try? :)

## Happiness Hack#65: Meditate In Nothingness

OK: you've heard this a hundred times. Meditate. And you're like – it never works for me. Well why not try it once more with a slightly new technique – the one I am going to now suggest? Because it has really helped me feel peaceful many times.

Here it goes:

- a) Set an alarm to ring after 20 minutes. Lie down on the bed with lights off and eyes closed, or sit down in a comfortable position with eyes closed.
- b) Let go of your body. By this, I mean: feel your body sinking on to the chair or the bed. Drop your body, don't hold on to it. Let it fall on to whatever is beneath you. Release it.
- c) As you release your body, and let it sink into your bed or chair, feel the sensation of your legs and thighs and back touching the bed or chair. Feel the sense of ease as you let go of your legs sink...If you were falling freely in air, would your body not be falling freely without any tension at all? Let your body fall like that on your bed or chair - and feel the sense of relaxation and freeness you feel as you let go of your body.
- d) Keep feeling the peace as you sense your body relaxing. In this peaceful ambience, notice yourself breathing air in. Notice your belly rising as air fills it. Notice your belly becoming flatter and sinking down as you exhale.
- e) Enjoy the sense of peace and thoughtlessness as you feel your body relaxing and sinking lower and lower and the air filling and leaving your lungs....Perceive that in this moment - there is peace - in this moment - this is all that exists.
- f) Feel that all your problems, all your sorrows and grudges exist in the past and future - but right now - you are at peace. You can keep the peace with you as long as you want. Enjoy this peace as you feel your body relaxing and sinking into the bed or chair...and as you notice the air filling your tummy, making it rise - and leaving it...
- g) Be like this - in this moment - at peace - until the alarm rings.

This meditation has made me feel very, very peaceful at times. I stumbled upon this technique as I conducted a [meditation experiment](#) here on my website.

Why don't you try it out?

## **Happiness Hack#66: Gift Yourself Something Special and Make a Big Deal of It**

Pampering yourself can be such an amazing way to be happy. :)

Is there something you would really want to gift yourself but you hesitate to do it because you think: “Mmm...Not yet, maybe later. It's too expensive” or “I don't really deserve THAT!”

Well, for once, go ahead and gift yourself THAT thing. You may not always gift yourself everything you set your eyes on – but we tend to overdo starving ourselves in this respect. Pampering yourself sometimes is healthy and makes you feel amazing. AND – since you're pampering yourself by gifting yourself that iPhone or Vacation or Concert ticket or \_\_\_\_\_, add some icing to make it even more special! When you go out to buy this thing or attend it, dress up! Wear something you do not normally wear – something you would wear on very special occasions This IS a special occasion for YOU. Also, make a big deal of it. Share it on your Facebook and Twitter pages that you are going to buy this favorite thing. Let everyone be happy for you. Make this a very, very special day for yourself. We tend to surprise people on birthdays and do things for them but when was the last time we surprised ourselves and made ourselves feel special?

Someone has said (I've forgotten the exact words) that a nice way to be happy is to give to yourself and to others. It could be time for you to give yourself whatever you've always wanted.

## **Happiness Hack#67: Pay 10% Extra**

This is one of the simplest things to do – and yet we hardly every do it.

The next time you purchase something from someone offline, especially from a small business owner, pay him 10% more money than he's asking for. Just do it and feel the joy.

Now I know this sounds weird. I mean who pays 10% extra? You may ask him for a discount but FREE money – why give it away?

You see, generally, we hold on a bit too much to money, fear, and a lot of other things that don't deserve that much holding on. When you give extra money to a person, you free yourself – from that feeling of holding on. You connect with the other person at a more human level because now you are not saying, “Either I win or you win.” You are saying, “If you win, then I win too for all of us are connected.” And that is a very, very beautiful feeling. This is the opposite of you saying, “Give me a discount so that you lose money but I gain extra value.” When you leave extra money on the table, you transcend the general 'give and take' society we currently live in and enter a 'full of love' society for a while. That's what makes you feel freer and happier.

Maybe you have never tried this before. In which case you definitely need to try this once! The joy you will experience out of giving someone something extra is just too good to miss! On top of your joy, there will also be the happiness of the other person. You will also feel good about yourself. It just naturally happens.

## Happiness Hack#68: Switch the TV OFF for 30 Days

Do you know that I don't have a TV at home and that I've now not had one since the last one year? Do you also know that I have not watched the news (any news) regularly since around 5 years? Just this has helped me very, very much in being happier.

The problem with TV in general and news specifically is that it is all meant to shock you and arouse intense emotions in you. The more you are shocked, the more you react to the 'worst things ever' that are apparently happening, the more they get you to watch their shows and news.

This is evident because what you hear all the time on TV is BAD news rather than news. Someone died at so and so place because of an accident, someone else was kidnapped, the government sucks, a certain Hollywood star has gotten a divorce... It is true that all these things happen. However, do you know that a LOT of positive things also happen in the world? Do you know for instance of an amazing [stockbroker who has saved 699 lives](#)? Have you heard about the [peace artist](#) who paints to unite humanity? Even these pieces of news are true – so why are they not shown and why is all that's not good in the world shown?

Well, whatever the reason why the news channels show what they show may be, you can stop watching news and choose to be happy instead.

You don't need to know what's gone wrong in every part of the world. Just focus on being more positive and happy. You will automatically start doing good things for other people because of your state of happiness.

So, should you just give up news? If you do, how will you know what's happening in different parts of the world? Well, the truth is that if it is something really that important, then people around you will tell you about it. Or you will somehow hear about it. And if it is not an earth-shaking issue, you will anyway be wasting your time hearing about world problems. A better way to spend time is to act and help someone in need in your real world.

In any case, whether you are convinced or not – why not start with a 30 days no news trial? Try to notice the change in your thoughts and feelings as you give news up for 30 days. Notice what you do with that time and notice whether you are happier than before. Then, decide for yourself.

Here are some accounts by other people about why you should stop watching TV/news:

- a) [8 Changes I experienced after giving up TV](#)
- b) [Why you should stop watching the news](#)
- c) [Matt Cutts – Head of Google's webspam team wants to stop watching news](#)
- d) [10 Reasons you should stop watching TV](#)

Please do note that it is better to go ahead and help one person rather than hear about the troubles of hundreds of people across the world and do nothing.

## Happiness Hack#69: Start Journaling

If I could pinpoint one single habit that has brought the most happiness into my life, it is journaling.

I am not talking about writing diary entries in which you vent out whatever happened during the day. I am talking about a 'personal growth' or 'personal change' diary where you solve your own problems by writing about them and inspire yourself.

Let us say you had an argument at work. One way to deal with that is to come home, distract yourself, watch TV and sleep. Another way to deal with it is to come home and journal about what happened. Figure out what caused the fight, and how you could react better.

Maybe your relationship is not working. One way to deal with it is to get frustrated about it. Another way is to journal and figure out some reasons why it is not working. Introspect. Find out what you can change.

Your job is not satisfying. Again, journal about it. Ask yourself: what satisfies me then? List down some solutions. Create your bucket list – the list of things you want to do before you die.

A journal can be a stunning friend who can help you clarify your thoughts. Most of the time we just 'think things over'. The problem with that is that we get muddled or confused or our emotions come in the way and we just don't come up with any solution. Writing things down on paper or in a Word document always helps clarify things and connects you with your truest self.

Some time ago I had some relationships in my life that were NOT working. I was sad most of the time. I journaled extensively every few days and clarified what I really wanted. I figured out what I was doing wrong and what the problem was. And then I told two particular friends that I would not be interacting with them for 6 months. This was a very bold decision but it helped me feel so much happier than I ever was. Yet, I would never have let go of these friends if I had not journaled. I would never have had the courage or clarity to take such bold steps without journaling. I am not saying you should remove people from your life if things don't work out, what I am saying is that you should find out what you want clearly. This is what will make you happier – and journaling helps you do that.

Yet another reason why journaling rocks is that people, TV, friends - are always telling you what to do. Choose this career. Go for this event. Help me in this way or that. People are advising you all the time but what is it that you truly want deep down? Journaling helps you clarify that. It makes you delve deeper into yourself and helps clarify your opinions and choices.

Here's a [wonderful article about what journaling is and how it helps](#).

Hope you rock the world with your journaling!

## **Happiness Hack#70: Listen to Super-uplifting Music Right Away**

Music influences our moods – we all know that. And inspirational music or uplifting music makes you feel amazing. We know that too!

The only problem is that when you are down, you don't feel like listening to super-uplifting music. You feel like listening to sad music or music that matches your emotional state.

That's the time when you should **FORCE** yourself to listen to uplifting music. You see, no matter what emotional state we are in – we will feel like doing things that enhance that emotional state. To change that emotional state, we need to do something that is **NOT** in tune with what we are feeling in that moment.

So yup, make sure you have an inspiring playlist ready and handy always. And then listen to it when you feel sad **EVEN IF** you absolutely don't feel like listening to it. Within 5 minutes of listening, you will automatically want to listen more of this music. Within 10 more minutes of listening you will begin to rock with it even though you did not want to listen to it 15 minutes ago. The music has elevated you to ITS vibration!

## **Happiness Hack#71: Keep Your Phone on Silent to Avoid Interruptions**

This is a very simple tip and we all have access to it AND it can really contribute to your happiness.

The tip is simple: *Whenever you are doing something you love, keep your mobile phone in the silent mode (with no vibrations).*

This is because when you are happy (maybe talking with your partner, pursuing a hobby), you do not want to be disturbed. When you allow yourself to be disturbed, you become irritated without even realizing it. It happens to all of us when we are suddenly interrupted. The irritation alone is not the issue. When you are done with the conversation and you come back to doing what you were doing, you take a lot of time to get back into that beautiful zone you were in earlier. If you were focused on something, you will have lost the focus and regaining focus will take a LOT of time. If you were sharing a beautiful moment with your friend, that moment is now gone.

You can keep your mobile phone in silent mode when:

- a) You are having dinner with your family
- b) You are very happy and don't want to be interrupted
- c) You are working and are completely in flow (like I am as I write right now)

When you are done with a certain chunk of work or when you are relatively free and would now want to check your mobile phone to see who has called, do so. Return the calls you might have received.

You will feel amazingly happy if you take just this and nothing else from this book.

But won't there be urgent calls? What if there is a life and death situation and you are not present?

Honestly, how many times has that happened? It hardly ever happens. Most calls that you get are NOT urgent enough to sacrifice your happiness for. They can wait for an hour or two if not more. Also, the more available you are to be disturbed, the more 'urgent' calls you will get. When you make it clear that you are not available when you are not available, people understand that and you don't get any urgent calls.

Do note that when you are in a very happy state doing something else and you answer your phone, then you are saying no to your happiness in that moment. Every yes has a no attached to it. Saying yes to the person on the other side of the phone means saying no to your family or your happiness even though you may not realize it.

## **Happiness Hack#72: Read 10 Jokes Up and Share Them With 5 People!**

Jokes are always fun, aren't they? :)

For an instant boost of happiness, go ahead and read up 10 jokes from the internet. Here are some nice joke sites.

<http://www.jokesgalore.com>

<http://www.jokesgallery.com/>

<http://www.jokes2go.com>

Now here's the next step which will make you even happier: share these jokes with 5 people. You can email your friends some jokes that really made you laugh. But the best thing is to call them up or meet them and tell them these jokes. Sharing a laugh with another human being is a delightful experience!

So yes, don't stop at just reading and laughing, share and laugh again. :)

## **Happiness Hack#73: Do Crazy Things In Front of the Mirror**

Go, stand in front of a mirror (full length if possible) and act like you are crazy! Move your hands in the air as if you were a monkey. Stick your tongue out. Giggle. Jump. Make faces at yourself.

I bet you'll burst out laughing or at least smiling, no matter what mood you are in.

The more you laugh, the happier you are. :)

So why not give this simple technique a try? You can use it anytime you feel you are unhappy or when you feel you need a special boost in your mood. You can even try out different positions and styles. Maybe a special kind of dance, for instance?

PS: I just made faces and moved my hands crazily in front of the mirror. Of course, I started smiling and laughing. :D

## **Happiness Hack#74: Join a Club or Organization Related to What You Love**

Doing what you love is important and one of the best ways to do MORE of what you love is to interact with a lot of people who do what you love.

Figure out some organizations related to your activity.

Tennis? Join a tennis club. Public speaking? Join Toastmasters. Blogging? Join a bloggers group. Painting? I am sure there must be some sort of artists association nearby. A Google search will tell you about such organizations instantly.

Don't worry if there is no organization related to the activity you love – join an online group in that case! The point is to be encouraged with respect to the activity that makes you feel happy and excited. You will naturally do more of it when you interact with other people with similar interests.

What if you are confused about the organizations related to your group or what if one doesn't exist? Well, go ahead and form one! There's this fascinating website called <http://www.meetup.com> where people organize meet-ups related to a certain hobby or activity. Go ahead and join a meet-up group related to your activity or create one!

The more you do what you love and connect with people about it – the happier you are. Simple.

## **Happiness Hack#75: Send Thank You Cards to 5 Organizations and 5 People**

Gratitude leads to happiness.

Figure out 5 organizations and 5 individuals who have truly helped you in the past and whom you would love to thank. Then send them all a thank you card telling them why you are grateful to them. The experience will be very beautiful and you will feel good for quite some time.

What if you can't think of 5 organizations and people? Well wrack your brains harder! OK. Here's my list – maybe that'll help you.

### Organizations

- a) St Kabir Public School [My school. I learnt good English because of this school.]
- b) IIT Roorkee [I got my first public speaking opportunity because of my college.]
- c) Apple Inc [ I LOVE my iPhone and am so thankful for it! :) ]
- d) Google Inc [The company that helps me every single day again and again!]
- e) Service Space [The organization that taught me about the joy of giving]

### Individuals

- a) Vikanshu [My first 'real' friend – the person I first truly shared with]
- b) Krupa [My wife – who made me learn a lot of things about me that I wasn't aware of]
- c) Steve Pavlina [The blogger whose ideas changed my perspective of life!]
- d) Karan [The friend who made me realize that I was amazing and also taught me many things]
- e) My parents [The people who gave me many, many resources, books and helped me become Me]

So go ahead, write down who you are grateful to. Then send them real cards (NOT ecards!) thanking them for their contribution in your life. :)

## **Happiness Hack#76: Cuddle Yourself**

Have you every cuddled yourself?

If not, you've missed a very beautiful experience!

Lie down on the bed and close your eyes. Make sure you're alone. If possible, cover yourself with a blanket. Lie in the 'foetus' position and then cuddle yourself. Let one of your arms cuddle the head, ears and neck and hold them safely. Gently pat your head with this hand lovingly. As you pat your head and hold yourself in an embrace, tell yourself: "I love you very much. No matter what happens, I am going to love you. Don't worry. Everything will be fine. You are a nice person." Now hug yourself even tighter.

I know this activity is weird but it is so, so effective! You actually start feeling like someone else has said these things to you. Maybe it is the conscious part of us comforting and loving the sub-conscious part of us - the part that needs the most attention.

If you are sad or worried or on the verge of giving up, cuddle yourself. It will definitely make you feel better.

I just want you to know however, that I am also sending you some pure love right now. :)

## **Happiness Hack#77: Stop Choosing Money and Other Things Above Happiness**

Sometimes, we do something interesting. We say we want to be happy but in our heads we choose other things ahead of happiness. For example, we put relationships and money ahead of happiness. When we do that, how can we be happy?

Here's an example. There is a task that yields money but it makes you unhappy. For most people this is a job. Now, you have put money ahead of happiness. You are unhappy but you are “doing it for the money.” Don't do that. If you keep doing that you will always be unhappy no matter how much money you earn. What's the solution? While you are at your current job, keep looking for activities that make you happy. Keep looking for jobs that you can love. If you try hard enough, you'll get to do something you like. Sometimes you may feel that you are already so far down a certain path that you cannot turn back and suddenly do what you love. That is not true. No matter how far you have come down a certain path, if it is a path that you don't love, give it up. It is never too late. At least from NOW on you can be happy consistently if you choose something you love...

Another example: you are in a relationship that drains you and makes you feel unhappy. If this is so – take some action. See if you can improve this relationship. If you can't improve it, then quit and let go. If you put the relationship ahead of your happiness, you WILL continue to be unhappy. Is that what you want?

I know all this sounds very drastic. 'Quit your job' and 'quit your relationship' are very BIG statements. But then, to be happy, in the long term, it is very, very important that you make happiness and nothing else your top priority. I am not asking you to risk your life, but do make sure that you are going in the direction of your happiness. Don't settle for activities that make you unhappy no matter what. By doing that you are CHOOSING to be unhappy.

If you feel you are being too selfish by always choosing your own happiness, do note that the happier you are the more you will feel like helping others. So be happy FIRST. :)

## **Happiness Hack#78: Stop Complaining and Take Control**

Many of us have 'complaining patterns' that prevent us from being happy.

This means that without even realizing it, we start complaining about how bad things are. We automatically notice the bad things and ignore the good things. This is very common.

For example, we may meet someone new at work and immediately form judgements: This person hardly has any sense of dressing. This person is a bit too strict, isn't he? Or you may just keep telling other people: Why are people so careless, they litter the streets like that! No manners...The government sucks. Someone should do something about employment issues here. It's all so bad.

The news and TV don't help. They're complaining all the time.

Don't feel bad if you have the complaining habit because so many of us have it. It is not something to feel bad about. It is something you need to change however to consistently be happy. If you keep complaining about things, you can try other happiness hacks like noticing your breath, observing your surroundings etc. and they will make you happy, but only temporarily. Again and again you will return to your complaining and 'feeling bad' habit.

Quit the complaining habit. Decide to NOT complain even once for 30 days. [Use THIS method.](#) Whenever you feel the urge to complain, immediately ask yourself how YOU can solve the problem. No one out there is responsible for anything. You are. So either quit complaining and accept the situation or change it. No whining. Another thing you can parallelly do is to start genuinely appreciating at least 5 things/people everyday. This technique helped me counter my own complaining habit.

If you try this for 30 days, your world will change drastically. Soon you won't even find things to complain about! When I gave up complaining (to a good extent) some years ago, I realized that my world automatically started becoming more positive.

More and more happiness will flow in very soon. All the best!

## Happiness Hack#79: Wake Up Early

There are tremendous benefits of waking up early – but the most important one is that you end up being happier. Even [this survey says so](#).

When you wake up early, there is no disturbance. You can do whatever you want and there'll be no one interrupting you. That makes you happier. If you go out, you will see or hear birds chirping. The sun is just rising. The morning air is fresh and refreshing. That will make you happier. To top it all you have some hours before the day really starts off – so you can get the most important things you want to get done, done before the day starts. That will make you happy.

Sometimes, our days are so busy that we do not have much time for introspection. Waking up early can help you introspect and ask yourself whether your life is heading in the right direction. You can dream about your ideal life, clarify your values and even plan your day in a better way. These are all extra advantages available to the early riser.

Well, so why not give waking up early a try? :) Yes, it'll make you happier. Here are some amazing resources on HOW to wake up early.

- a) [Steve Pavlina on early rising](#)
- b) [Robin Sharma on waking up early](#)
- c) [Leo Babauta on waking up early](#)

As Benjamin Franklin says, “There will be plenty of time to sleep when you are dead.” :)

## **Happiness Hack#80: Think About This Quote For 10 Minutes**

“Happiness is not in the future, it is right here and now. If you look for it in the future, it will always be in the future. If you think it was in the past it will always be in the past.”

You must have heard this quote many times. In fact I have myself repeated it so many times in this ebook, in different ways. But this time, don't just read it. Let its essence sink through you. Maybe you've read it but missed something while reading it before?

Lie down on your bed or relax in your chair. Close your eyes. Now ponder the meaning of this quote for around 10 minutes. Everyone talks about happiness being in the present moment. What does it mean? Are YOU looking for happiness in the future? Are YOU looking for happiness in the past? How can YOU look for it in the present moment? What does finding it in the present moment mean? These are questions most of us avoid – we just appreciate the quote and move on. But any quote will have an impact only if you can see how it relates to your practical daily life.

Initially the meaning of the statement might seem obvious. You may say – what is there to think about this, I already know this. But wait, don't conclude that so easily. Are you happy right now? If not, you may be missing something. Ask yourself where YOU are finding your happiness. Bring the quote into your life rather than treating it as something to be read and appreciated.

You may get insights, or you may not get them after 10 minutes. But at least you will have thought more about the one statement that is the essence of all happiness books and essays. And there is a good chance you will figure out something related to your own happiness that you may have missed before.

Go ahead!

## Happiness Hack#81: Start Accepting People As They Are

Wanting people to be different from how they are is one of the things that makes us all unhappy.

Have you ever found yourself thinking: why is this person so cheap? Or why is this person so greedy? Or such a jerk? Or – 'My boss sucks! How can someone be so unconcerned about others?' Or, why does my partner NOT change this one thing about himself?

In all these cases, there is denial of what is and that keeps you unhappy. Let's take your boss. If he's a jerk, well he is. He just IS one. Accept that. He is that way – you can blame him for every bad occurrence in your life or say he just doesn't change – but the truth is – he IS the way he is. You've already tried to change him in the past. You've tried resisting him in the past. Now try accepting him just the way he is.

The same goes for your relationship. Your partner just doesn't change no matter how hard you try. Guess what, you'll never be happy if you force your partner to change. In fact you will never be happy until you accept that he or she IS the way he or she is. You need to make peace with that fact.

Acceptance also brings in the possibility of disconnecting from a person. After all, if you accept every person as he or she is – then what if that makes you feel bad consistently? What if you realize that without changes, that person is not a good fit for you? Well, in that case you need to keep the prospect of removing that person from your life open. If you cannot accept the person as he or she is, then you need to let go – so that you can accept your new situation as it is – the situation of disconnect.

Why do we want other people to change? We want them to change because the way they are seems to threaten our existence. By being the way they are, they are affecting us in some way. So you're like – 'please change so that I am not affected in that way'. An employee who does not work well affects you (if you are an employer). A boss who never grants you leaves affects you. A spouse who is not clean and organized affects you. A friend who keeps smoking in your face affects you. You wouldn't want the other person to change if he didn't affect you. You wouldn't care. But because you are affected, you want the other person to do things that make your life better.

The problem however is that other people rarely change the way they are and they definitely DO NOT change when you resist them. If they change, they will generally change only after you have accepted them just as they are.

Here is what you can do if you desperately want someone in your life to change.

a) Ask yourself – can I accept this person JUST as he or she is – without any changes for the rest of my life? If I were told that this is how this person would always be, would I be OK with that for the rest of my life? Don't just say NO instantly. Genuinely make an effort to accept the other person the way he or she is. But if that's not possible...

b) Ask yourself how this person's unacceptable behavior affects you. Don't think of phrases like 'for his own good, he needs to do this...' etc. The truth is that you are so emotionally affected because his behavior affects you. There are so many people in the world exhibiting the same behavior – but you are not trying to change them because they do not affect you. So figure out how this person's behavior affects you. Now figure out what changes this person needs to make. Write them down on paper. Write down everything this person NEEDS to change – things you just cannot accept. Set a deadline by which you want this person to change this behavior.

c) Talk to the person and say to him, "I want you to change this behavior and this one by this date. This is very important to me." If the person accepts, great. See if the change happens. If it doesn't

happen, leave. Disconnect from the person.

I know this process sounds harsh. How can you let go of a person you love like that? But then if you don't leave him, you are being harsh on yourself and you are being unhappy. Either accept him as he is – or ask him to change a quality in a given number of days or leave.

You will definitely be very, very happy in the long run if you do this.

## **Happiness Hack#82: Realize That Life is a Learning Experience and Feel Grateful**

We all know that gratitude rocks and that it makes you happy.

But, how can you be grateful for things that are NOT OK in your life? And admit the truth: there are so many things that you are NOT grateful for, those are the things that make you unhappy.

There is an attitude you can adopt however, which can make you genuinely feel grateful for every single thing in your life including the worst things that happen to you. This attitude says:

“You are here on this earth to learn a lot of things. That is why you have been born. Therefore, everything is happening as it is happening to make you learn your own unique lessons.”

Think about it: why are you here on this earth? Why were you born? And why do bad things happen to you? Who gains if you meet with an accident or if your job sucks? God or the universe or whatever you believe in – why does he/it make anything bad happen to you? Is it for sadistic pleasure?

If you start believing that EVERYTHING happens so that you learn an important lesson you need to learn, then everything starts becoming a good thing. Then you can be grateful for everything and not just things that give you pleasure.

Some time ago, I had an issue in my life. I was not able to say no to people. This made me feel resentful with respect to my boss because I did a lot of things I did not want to do as I was not able to say no. I had a bad time even with many of my friends because I did not say no. Slowly my life situation started getting really bad because I would say yes to everyone's requests. Even my relationship with my wife suffered. At that point in time, I used to think: “Why does my life suck? Why am I never happy? Why do all these things happen to me? Why can't all these people demanding these things from me, vanish?” At that point, I didn't even realize that I was saying yes to everyone and not being assertive. I thought that people out there were the problem.

Today, I am so immensely grateful for that suffering. I am SO grateful that – that phase in life made me REALIZE that I was being too submissive. I was not saying no to things I did not want to do. I was saying yes to everything. That suffering occurred to force me to learn this lesson. Today, all that suffering is gone. I am seriously happy with respect to so, so many things in my life. :) I say no when I want to and I say yes to many more things I truly want to do. And this would never have happened without the pain and suffering I went through.

'Bad situations' happen to teach you something. If some area of your life is not working at all, ask yourself – what is this situation trying to teach me? What are my lessons here? How do I need to get better? In most cases, you will see a way in which you can change.

When you start looking at the bad phases as opportunities to learn and the good phases as – well, the good phases :), you will feel grateful for everything. You will think: how amazing this universe is where everything is happening perfectly to teach me something and make me a better person!

That is real gratitude – gratitude for EVERYTHING that happens to you.

Here's an [article that might help](#). OK, here's [yet another one](#)!

## **Happiness Hack#83: Meditate By Not Moving For 15 Minutes**

This is a meditation that can be very effective, but then it also requires a LOT of self-discipline.

The method is simple: lie down on your bed or sit in a chair and don't move for 15 minutes. Be absolutely still.

That's it. :)

Now here's what will happen when you practice this. For the first few minutes, maybe even the first 10 minutes, you will feel a maddening urge to move. You will feel extremely agitated. You will ONLY want to move and you will feel like you will die if you don't move. It will feel unbearable. Anything to move a bit. What you need to do when you feel all this is – let those emotions be. Know, that you are greater than them. Observe and watch those emotions. Watch your thoughts. Let them strike against you like the waves of an ocean and then let them recede. Don't react to those thoughts, just watch them.

If you are able to watch them for long enough, something incredible will happen. There will be peace. There will be bliss. You will feel refreshed and very calm inside. It will be worth it. It will be as if the stillness of the body has been picked up by your mind and everything is suddenly silent and relaxed.

Peace to you...

## **Happiness Hack#84: Grow a Plant From Start to Finish**

Growing a plant has a certain beauty to it.

I am myself just about to begin the process of growing a tomato plant (It will have started sprouting by the time you read this).

Figure out what plant you want to grow. If it is seed based, sow the seeds in a pot. Water them. Add fertilizers. Care for your plant. Love it. As it slowly sprouts, you will feel pure and unconditional love towards it without even realizing it. It is your baby in a different sort of way. As you nourish it, care for it and also watch it grow, a pure and innocent part of you will also blossom along with the plant. As the plant grows larger and older, a certain calmness will sprout inside you.

To love, to nourish, to give, to create, to nurture and help...these too are basic human needs. And the plant helps you connect with these needs.

Again, let me say what I have said tens of times already, why not give it a try? :)

## **Happiness Hack#85: Send an 'Appreciation Card' to 10 Strangers**

This is a very playful and exciting exercise and it is also deeply satisfying.

Purchase 10 greeting cards that appreciate the person receiving them and say, “You are Amazing.” Imagine a person who is feeling low about himself and who is thinking that he is no good. Write down a message for him in each greeting card. As you write your message, feel that what you are writing will really make someone's day. It will make them feel awesome about themselves.

Don't write your name on any card. Instead, write, “A human being who believes in you.” at the end.

Now, write down 10 random addresses in your city. How do you get those addresses? Search a telephone directory. If you do not have a telephone directory, or any other directory, use an online directory. Simply Google “Online phone directory” or “Online telephone directory” and you will get a large number of sites that list addresses of people. If you are in the USA, [Yellow Pages](#) is a popular directory service. For Indians, here's a [cool directory](#).

Now, send those greeting cards to 10 random addresses! As you post them, feel the love, the happiness and appreciation you are spreading. Imagine how amazed, surprised but at the same time touched the person receiving the card will feel.

And that will somehow make you feel super-happy. Try it!

## **Happiness Hack#86: Start Teaching Someone Something For Free**

There is a joy in helping people learn something they want to learn. And if you do it for free, you start feeling free, easy, relaxed and happier yourself.

Currently, my wife and I teach a word of English a day to my maid (yes, we have maids in India). One word a day means that she will learn around 300 words in a year. Or maybe more. That will mean she will at least understand the most commonly used words.

Whom can you teach and what? Can you teach a skill to a person you know? Think...and you will find someone who wants to learn something you already know. And do it for free. Just for the joy of it.

Initially, this may seem weird. Why waste your time teaching someone something for free? But when you actually do it, the joy you feel is JUST special. Why don't you try it once?

## **Happiness Hack#87: Quotathon!**

This is a cool, cool way to inspire yourself any time!

FLOOD yourself with inspirational quotes. Keep reading more and more and more – as many as 200 at a stretch until you feel at the top of the world. Don't think much about the meaning of each quote, just grasp the essence and move on to the next one! In half an hour, you will have read just so many quotes that it will be impossible to feel sad.

Here are some amazing quotes websites to help you run your quotathon.

[Brainy Quote](#)

[Quotes on Goodreads](#)

[Quotes Garden](#)

[Quotes For All](#)

To make sure you definitely feel inspired, set a time limit for your quotathon. A good time limit is 30 minutes. For 30 minutes, keep reading quote after quote, don't stop. Set an alarm to signal the end of the 30 minutes so that you don't pause at all until you reach the end.

## **Happiness Hack#88: Strike Up a Conversation With a Stranger**

Maybe you are in the subway or metro or maybe you at work. Can you spot one person you have not talked to ever before?

Without any reason, go ahead and strike a conversation with this person. Yes, you will feel a bit hesitant. You will feel a strong urge to NOT involve the stranger. But go ahead anyway and talk to him or her! Get to know this person better. As you do that, you will feel so much better. No matter who the stranger is, you will feel fresher than you felt before. This is a natural reaction to anything 'new'.

You can perform this exercise while traveling in a bus, traveling by train, or even at a grocery shop. Make the initial effort to talk to someone. Most of the time (almost all of the time), strangers are people like you and will respond very happily. They are just waiting for you to start the conversation. Go ahead and start it!

Are you thinking right now that this won't work for you? Or that this might be a cool technique but no – you're not going to do it? Face the fear and try it just once. Come on, talk to just one stranger – and initiate the chat. See how it feels. Then decide. :)

## **Happiness Hack#89: Focus More on Giving and Less on Getting**

In our personal and professional relationships, most of us focus on getting stuff for ourselves. At work, we'll want the maximum possible benefits and the minimum possible work. At least we prefer that. In our personal relationships, we will expect other people to do this for us and that for us. "Why don't you do this and that for me?", we will say.

This attitude to "get things" is rooted in insecurity. We believe that if we don't press for our rights and ask for more, we will be left with nothing. Others are always waiting to exploit loopholes and take things from us.

This attitude (and many of us have it) keeps us agitated. We are anxious because we are always afraid of someone else exploiting us and we silently try to get the maximum out of each transaction for ourselves.

A better attitude, one that can make us deeply happy is the attitude of giving. Give purely and give as much as you can. Say no when you cannot give something, but in general, have that tendency to give without expecting. Delight your family. Delight your boss. Delight your friends. Delight even a stranger you meet on the street. Delight everyone who comes in contact with you. Help, delight and give freely. Have no fear of people exploiting you. Delight others without judgement and expectations. Keep asking yourself, "How can I help?", rather than "what can this person do for me?" This will make you happy.

If you delight people, what if they take advantage of you? Well, as soon as you see that someone is taking advantage of you, say no. If required, disconnect from that person. When someone takes advantage of us, we figure out that the attitude of giving is wrong. The attitude of giving is not wrong, the way the person behaved might be wrong. So, say no to him, not to the attitude. Learn to recognize when you are being taken advantage of and simply say no to such situations and persons.

As you continue to delight people and give unconditionally in ALL your interactions, slowly you will see a lot of support, help, love and money coming your way. This will happen automatically without you even realizing it. And that will increase your happiness even more!

## **Happiness Hack#90: Talk to a Friend and Share Honestly**

This is a very simple tip and I am sure you've done this in the past when you were not that happy. Well, do it more often!

When you are not feeling OK or when you are getting worked up about your problems, call up a friend. Tell him everything honestly. Don't hide anything or don't wait for him to ask you things. You will truly feel better if you share your problems. He may not even provide a solution to you but just having someone listen to you will make you feel much better.

One common reason why we hesitate calling a friend is this: "Why disturb him with my problems?" Most of the time however, the friend would be very glad to help you out with your problems. In fact he would WANT to do that. So instead of hesitating, just give him or her a call! Another common reason why we hesitate calling a friend is because we have not been in touch with the friend for quite some time now. If now, I call him to discuss a problem, won't he feel like I always call him for my needs? STOP thinking and make the call! Your friend knows enough about you to not think that way. Forget about all these thoughts and talk to him.

There is indeed great joy in sharing what is deep within you with a friend. Come, experience the joy!

## **Happiness Hack#91: Adopt a “Friendly” Attitude Rather Than a “Careful” One**

Many of us think of strangers and people we do not know as “those people we need to be careful about.” If you are in a subway or in a bus or even on the road and you meet strangers, what do you do? Most people consciously ignore the presence of another person. We try to avoid meeting strangers who have not been introduced to us via a friend as if it could lead to something really grave, if we didn't.

At the core, we subscribe to the “be careful” mindset. But we take it further – to the extent that we are almost afraid of someone we don't know. When you have this mindset, most of your interactions with people are going to be just about OK (and only OK) and you will end up feeling just about OK (and not happy).

A better mindset to have is the “everyone's my friend” mindset. I am not saying you should go out of your way to say Hi to anyone on the street. But let your vibe be that of a friend. Assume that the next stranger you are going to encounter is an amazing person. Don't be afraid of him or anyone else on the street. Assume intimacy. When you talk to a shopkeeper or a worker or a random person you meet, be genuine, helpful and happy to interact with him rather than cautious and very judgmental. This attitude will increase your own happiness levels by a large extent.

An interesting consequence of this friendly attitude is that you won't even realize it and people will start behaving in a very friendly way with you. They will talk to you more naturally, share with you things they wouldn't generally share and even help you out. And that will make you even friendlier the next time you encounter a stranger!

Yes, I can sense your question: won't being so friendly and natural make me vulnerable? Won't that make people take advantage of me? The answer is not at all! Most of the time other people are as afraid of you as you are of them. They are just waiting for you to open up. The moment you are friendlier, they put their guards down and reciprocate your friendliness. In the extreme case when someone does not respond to your friendly attitude and uses it against you, unfriend the person – but keep the attitude. The attitude is good and will make you happy.

OK, I am taking this opportunity to offer you a virtual hug. As you read this, I am hugging you like a friend. :) Rock your life!

## **Happiness Hack#92: Find Time For Yourself**

Happiness involves connecting with who you truly are. You may do this without knowing you are doing it (like when you are laughing) or you may do it consciously (by journaling).

To be consistently happy however, you need to have at least some time in the week when you connect with who you truly are. Whatever method of connection you choose, you need to go on a date with yourself often.

This is the time when you are enjoying your own presence and are not lost in thinking about other people or other situations.

Here are some ways in which you can enjoy some YOU time:

- a) Lying down alone and being with yourself. You need not do anything but just be aware that you are with yourself right now. Enjoy that feeling.
- b) Journaling about how you are and where you are heading in life.
- c) Writing down your dreams or just lying down and dreaming about what you want to do.
- d) Reading a novel or a fiction book you love in a relaxed way with no worries about other people.
- e) Getting a massage or a pedicure done or taking a relaxed, comforting bath.
- f) Traveling to a new place alone.
- g) Sitting in a cafe, savoring the food and looking around lazily.
- h) Waking up early and sitting in the balcony or porch, hearing the birds chirp and seeing people wake up and stretch in their balconies.

We need 'alone time' because there are generally too many things that are screaming for our attention. This gets us caught in a cycle where we forget to rejuvenate ourselves. We are always fulfilling other people's needs and demands without realizing it.

'Alone time' – time when you are with yourself and enjoying your presence is beautiful and makes you happier. Why not try it this week? Just you and yourself. In a relaxed ambience...

## Happiness Hack#93: Read and Read and Then Proceed to Read Some More

I know the last point was about spending time with yourself. But if you spend too much time with yourself, you do run the risk of being flooded with loads of anxiety ridden, speculative and overall negative thoughts. Nopes! That's what we have been wanting to avoid throughout this book. :)

A very nice way to establish happy thought patterns and avoid really negative ones is to form a reading habit. You see, when you are reading, you are lost in thinking about the characters and their story. Or you are being inspired (if you are reading a self-help book). Either way you are NOT overtly thinking about yourself AND you are definitely learning something. And that is why [reading rocks!](#)

Here are some more advantages of having a reading habit:

- a) You get to interact with a cool person (the author of the book), after all reading the book means listening to the thoughts of that person.
- b) You learn about new cultures and places or at the very least new words. A self-help book reinforces the things you already know but don't practise. So your positive thoughts get supported.
- c) You cannot indulge in self-pity or blaming another person while reading – so you feel good.

To top all of this, there are these [26 more advantages of reading](#). With the Kindle Store rocking the world, ebook prices are lower than ever and there is just so much to read.

As Roald Dahl says in his famous poem, On Television:

“So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,  
Go throw your TV set away,  
And in its place you can install  
A lovely bookshelf on the wall.”

So read and be happy. :)

## **Happiness Hack#94: Stop Expecting Others to Make You Happy**

One of the primary causes of our unhappiness is that we constantly want others to make us happy.

Maybe you think that is not the case with you. Well, have you ever felt that someone else is not delivering up to your expectations? Have you ever accused anyone saying, “Why didn't you do this for me? How could you NOT do this for me?” Or “Why don't you love me in this way or that?” All these are attempts to make another person make you happy.

The truth however is that as long as you expect others to make you happy, they will NOT make you happy. It just works that way. You tell people they are not making you happy and they confront you and accuse you of not making them happy. That doesn't work.

What works is first being happy by yourself and not expecting others to make you happy. Being happy by yourself is easy – there are so many tips in this book to do just that. The simplest of all of them is to just start doing more things that you like doing. Follow a hobby, create a painting, story or a clay figure, learn a language or watch a movie. Do a LOT of things that you love doing. Be happy.

Something stunning happens when you are already happy by yourself and release expectations. Other people suddenly go out of the way to make you happy. Now you may say – that's crazy. I mean when you want them to make you happy, they don't and now that you are already happy, they are making you happier. But yes, that's how it is. :)

You can look at it this way, who would you want to hang around with, someone who's already happy or someone who is always grumpy and sad and expecting favors from you? It's the same with others – everyone wants to help and give to someone who is not needy.

Release expectations. Everyone has their own happiness to choose first, not just you. Choose your happiness and do loads of things that make you happy. Then what others do will automatically be extra happiness and that will make you even happier.

## Happiness Hack#95: Form a 'Positive Habit'

All of us have a tendency to drift into negative thoughts. None of us *wants* to think negatively and complain, but it just happens. It is natural and quite understandable too.

A fantastic way to get out of negative thoughts is to instill a positive habit.

A positive habit is something you do everyday that automatically gets you into a positive frame of mind. That way, you start your day with an extra-positive state of mind so that no matter how hard circumstances try, they can't bring you down.

Here are some positive habits that you can try out:

- a) Read a self improvement article on the internet everyday, first thing in the morning
- b) Read an [inspirational picture quote](#) first thing in the morning
- c) Listen to [podcasts](#) as you drive, shop or cook
- d) Finish the most important task of the day **FIRST** before anything else comes up
- e) Write about how you will rock your day first thing in the morning
- f) Appreciate at least 5 people genuinely through the course of your day

The point is: establish a habit that will get you in a very positive state of mind every single day. That way even when bad things happen, you will remain upbeat and strong.

## Happiness Hack#96: Learn a New Skill

Learning has a special charm to it. And the best thing is, it makes you forget your repetitive “Things are not OK” thoughts. (We all have them).

What is it that you would love to learn but have never learnt before? Take that thing up and start learning. Let this be your new hobby. Everyone is happy when he or she is learning a new skill!

Here are some cool ideas:

- a) Learn to play the guitar
- b) Learn French, Chinese, Italian, Spanish...
- c) Learn how to cook new dishes
- d) Learn how to dance!
- e) Learn how to sing!
- f) Learn art and craft skills
- g) Learn how to create cool animations
- h) Learn to create paper toys by folding paper

The best thing about our age is that it is so easy to learn anything! You could type out the phrases above on YouTube or Google and immediately get wonderful “How to” solutions for each phrase. This means you don't even have to enroll yourself in a dance class or a language class anymore. It is preferred of course, but it is not required.

Here are some amazing free '[learning resources](#)' - in fact 200 of them. :)

Rock it with some new knowledge!

## **Happiness Hack#97: REVERSE Your Patterns!**

All of us have some patterns. Some of us are extremely organized. Some of us react angrily when we feel offended. Some of us are very submissive and let others take decisions for us. Some of us want things to happen exactly as we want them to happen – or we feel pissed off!

Now here's what you can do: identify one pattern you have and for one day decide to do exactly the opposite of what you would usually do.

If you express anger immediately when offended, resolve that for one day – you will do the opposite – you will NOT express it – just to try out how that feels. If you are super organized, try being NOT organized at all for a day. If you are not organized at all, try being super organized for a day. If you are very submissive, try being super aggressive for a day. If you are already aggressive, try seeing how it feels to submit to other people's desires. Come on, be someone entirely different for a day! After all you have been the way you are for so, so many days – being someone different will be fun and even exciting.

For example, here's a cool pattern for me: I generally work from home. A new pattern for me would be to go out, work at a cafe, and keep changing my work location every few hours. That would be fun!

Changing your pattern is always fun especially for just one day, because you get to experience something new. We feel happier when we choose to experience new situations – when we do that, suddenly ordinary life becomes much more interesting. Try this today!

## **Happiness Hack#98: Identify Negative Beliefs and Replace Them With Positive Ones**

I've said it so many times throughout this book that most of our happiness is because of negative thoughts we keep thinking all day. (Yup, I just said it again for the hundredth time! ;) )

A cool way to replace those negative thoughts is to, well, directly replace them.

Take a sheet of paper and write down your common negative patterns. It will be very difficult to come up with your negative patterns initially...after all making oneself aware of one's own negative thoughts is difficult. But if you try for a while, you will catch many such negative thoughts.

Here is a list of negative thoughts for instance, that I was surrounded with at one point in time:

- 1) I am no good
- 2) Everyone is better than me
- 3) My face is not that attractive
- 4) I am fat
- 5) What will other people think if I am completely myself?
- 6) I am very afraid of my boss

The point is – whatever fears you have – whatever prominent negative thoughts you think everyday – write them down. Note that these thoughts are affecting you for the worse. They are spoiling your mood. Also, they are convincing you that what they are saying is true and so they are making you sadder.

Sometimes, as you write down your negative thoughts (common ones), you may end up writing something AGAINST someone. For example, you may say – 'My boss sucks!'. In such cases, go deeper until you are able to write down a thought that talks about YOU and not any other person. For example, at a deeper level, 'My boss sucks' can actually turn into 'I am afraid of my boss' or 'I feel inferior compared to him'. Write down your negative thoughts in such a way that you can accept responsibility for those thoughts – every thought that blames another person can eventually be traced to a negative pattern deep inside you.

What next? What after you have written down your negative thoughts?

Convert them into positive ones. Simple! Write down the exact OPPOSITE of the negative thoughts you have detected. For example, the points I wrote above would become:

- 1) I am no good – I rock! I am super amazing.
- 2) Everyone is better than me – I rock! I am super amazing
- 3) My face is not that attractive – My face is unique in its own beautiful way and I rock!
- 4) I am fat – I am getting fitter and healthier. And even if I am fat, I rock anyway. :)
- 5) What will other people think if I am completely myself? - Let them think I am a fool. I rock anyway!
- 6) I am very afraid of my boss – I want to face my fear. Let me go ahead and confront any fear I

have even it feels like I am being ripped apart.

Now, try to watch your thoughts throughout the day. As soon as you detect the same negative pattern coming up, repeat the new positive thought you've written down with enthusiasm. Don't just repeat the thought – repeat it with energy and excitement. Believe the new thing that you are telling yourself.

For instance, you may be walking down the street and you may feel – 'I suck.' That's the time when you perk yourself and tell yourself – 'I rock! I am amazing. Let what happens happen. I can handle anything.' And as you say these things, feel the energy of this new thought you are bringing in. Talk to yourself like you would talk to a friend and motivate him.

Here's a cool article about [replacing negative thought patterns with positive ones](#). Rock it!

## **Happiness Hack#99: Have Recorded Versions of the Funniest TV Shows Ready**

There's nothing like a genuine laugh to cheer anyone up! Laughter lightens up the tensest atmospheres.

In which case, why not have the most hilarious TV shows with you – accessible all the time? If you catch your favorite TV shows on TV, record them and have recorded versions handy. If you have DVDs, even better. And with the internet, even that is not required. There are so many websites where you can watch your favorite funny TV shows online for free.

One amazing place to watch the most hilarious TV shows for free online is YouTube itself. YouTube has a TV Shows section, just click on it, select the comedy category and you are good to go! Another site (though it has a lot of ads) is <http://watchseries.eu>. This site links to a lot of TV shows like Friends, How I Met Your Mother and others hosted on other sites like YouTube and Gorillavid.

The point is – the most hilarious TV shows are more accessible than ever. Most of us have access to them but we generally don't get the idea to watch them when we are sad or we think – 'no...that won't help'. But if you do want to cheer up, go ahead and force yourself to watch something funny. Slowly, you will cheer up automatically!

When you are feeling all sad and grumpy, take a break, watch a really funny TV show. Smile. Laugh. And then rock the world!

## **Happiness Hack#100: Travel to New Places**

This is a simple happiness tip – but then it freaking works!

You see when we see the same old things every day, that makes us a bit unhappy at times. A fresher and newer environment can change your state of mind.

Take a day or two off and travel off to a new place you have never visited before. It could be a place inside your city or it could be a place far away – but let it be new. Delve into the new place and explore it completely. Let the smells and sounds and visuals of the new place mesmerize you. Come back to the present moment as you lose yourself in the new place!

If you think money is a constraint, well, remember that you don't need to go to another country. Just visit a place in your own city you have not visited before. If you are open to getting lost in the wonder of your place and if you let your senses savor everything the new place brings, it WILL be an exciting experience.

How to find a new place to visit? That's easy in today's internet age! Google it up. And before you can think too much about where to go or whether to go or not, JUST go! Explore. Flood yourself with the spirit of adventure. :) Even a one day trip is fine.

## **BONUS Hack#101: Volunteer Offline or Online**

Again, I've said this so, so many times that you may just come after me when I say it again this time. :) Yes, helping others works wonders.

Do a quick Google search and figure out some organizations where you can directly volunteer and help people. Go ahead and apply – and start helping!

It may seem weird – but truly – the joy of helping someone directly on a regular basis is almost addictive – because it is so intense. You feel blissful.

There are now even online volunteering opportunities and though these may not be as satisfying as offline ones (because the joy of helping someone is amazing when you can SEE the person you are helping), still they're great too. You can also take immediate action with respect to online opportunities. Here's a [website that lists](#) a lot of online volunteering opportunities. .

In fact, this is something interesting and very true: when nothing seems to work, just forget everything and help people. Give yourself up for sometime in the service of someone else. Suddenly, the world will become a beautiful place. :)

## Who is Meghashyam?

Meghashyam Chirravoori was born in a small town in Andhra Pradesh, India in 1987.

Being an only child of his parents, he spent most of his time alone doing guess what? Reading books, of course. :) Since he was alone most of the time however, he turned into sort of an asocial introvert.

In 2005, he got admitted into the Paper Technology program at IIT Roorkee, a prestigious institution in North India. While he was not interested in paper at all, he radically changed as a person in college. He experienced a "moment of transformation" in June, 2007 in which he realized that there was nothing to fear and that he could go ahead and face any fear head on and still exist! He also suddenly saw the merits of positive thinking and started choosing his thoughts more consciously. This "sudden realization" sparked his interest in personal growth.

Over the next few years, he dabbled in public speaking and anchoring, learnt how to be assertive, interacted with hundreds of new people, faced tens of fears like dancing in public and quitting his job, turned into more of an extrovert, fell in love and got married, started an [inspirational website](#) where he conducted life experiments and learnt a lot of other things he'd not known before.

Meghashyam's inspirational website: [Personal-development-is-fun.com](http://Personal-development-is-fun.com)

Get a [free 30 minute phone consultation with Meghashyam](#) or [ask Meghashyam a question for free](#)

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