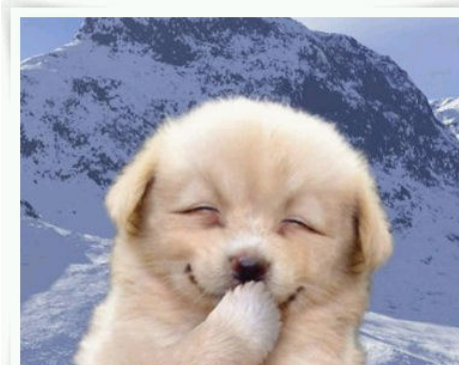


Let's Solve the happiness dilemma and ...

Be Happy all the time!



I was sitting with a wonderful lady and a new friend this week and we were chatting about life and stuff – as you do! She asked me a question which I wasn't expecting, in fact one which I usually ask other people! She asked; 'So, Andrew what is your goal in life?' I was so unprepared for this question that my answer was just the first thing that my subconscious threw into my mouth. I replied with, 'I want to be happy!' My friend took in my response, sat thoughtfully for a few

moments and then challenged my answer. She said I have been reading a great book that said that is it not possible to be happy all the time and if we try we are just heading for misery ...

She went on to tell me that book suggested that there are times when we need to allow ourselves to be sad, angry, frustrated and experience all the other negatives feelings. It is not possible to be happy all the time and if we try we will end up unfulfilled – or words to that effect. This sounded logical to me and did make some sense, but the more I thought about this philosophy the more I disagreed with it...

I expect to get some resistance and disagreement with what I am about to say, but all I ask is that you read with an open mind before deciding on your opinion and philosophy for your own life. Deal?

Happiness is a choice

I am not so stupid or naïve to think that we will never have challenges, difficulties or problems. In fact, on the contrary I believe that one of the very few certainties in life, other than death and taxes, is that we will have problems to deal with on most of the days that we live! So, I know you are asking; 'then how are we supposed to be happy?' The answer is quite simple; 'happiness is a choice'. No matter the circumstances we are experiencing, we get to choose how we respond. We can choose to be happy or we can choose to be angry, sad, depressed, helpless, frustrated, a victim or whatever other feeling we like – it is our choice.

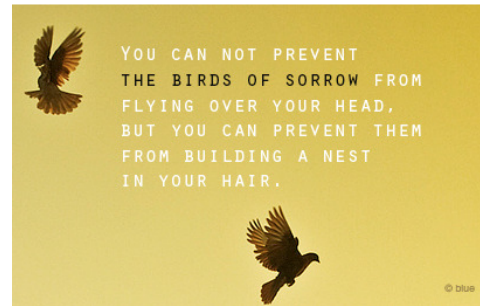


In my humble opinion and that of many other very successful and happy people that I know and have read about, it is always better to choose to be happy! Again this may sound simplistic and naïve, but bear with me here ...

Everything that happens is great!

If we truly believed that everything that happened to us is great, that it is meant to be and there for us to learn from to become a better person, then why would we be anything other than happy? I am like you – I have stuff happen in my life, that on the surface seems terrible. There were countless times in my past when my attitude was totally dependent on my circumstances and I would react accordingly. When something good happened I was happy and when something bad happened I was cranky. The problem with this philosophy is that we can never control all circumstances and so our happiness is largely out of our control.

But what if we looked at adversity differently? We can look at it any way we want – this is our choice. What if instead of saying 'why me, it isn't fair, I am angry, sad or whatever' we would say 'I wonder what the lesson is here and I wonder what good will come out of this'. Do you think we would have a different experience of life? Wouldn't this help us to be happy – all the time?



I am not saying happy as in jumping up and down, laughing and cheerful all the time, but I am saying having an inner knowing that life is good and that everything happens for a reason to lead us to a better place. This will create an inner happiness and confidence that no-one can take from us.

Is it bad or is it for the best?

I recently told the story about our new house. How we were approved for a property that we loved and so we put in notice to leave the home we were living in and started to pack. Then due to the circumstances I explained in my article 'So, what is good about this?' we found out, with only a couple of weeks of having no where to live, that our application had been rejected!

In my past life I would have spiralled into anger and self pity that would have got me no where except homeless and unhappy. On this occasion my first thought was 'great' - there must be a reason why we were not meant to be in that house and there is a better place out there for us. We simply got to work to find it and within in two weeks of that potentially devastating situation we were living in our new beautiful home – we are so glad we got rejected!!! We are happy!!!

Choose happiness

Happiness is not an outward thing – there are plenty of people who are smiling and laughing but are far from happy. Why? Because they have let their circumstances get the better of them but still want to put on a 'brave face' and not show their negative feelings to the world. What a horrible way to live.

It was Petrea King who said that '*happiness is an inside job*'. When we believe that everything that happens to us is for a reason. When we believe in our heart and soul that everything in our life, good or bad, happens to teach us a lesson which will put us on a path to a better place then we will have no other choice but to be happy all the time!

July 31, 2011