

15 Ways to Be Happy

Smile for a Good First Impression

First impressions occur within the first three seconds of meeting someone. To feel your best when making your own first impressions, be sure to smile, whether you feel happy or not. It's free and it's fast. And research suggests that smiling may improve your mood, slash stress, boost your immune system, and lower blood pressure.

Pursue Goals With Passion

Passion can be a vital key to success. Research shows that high achievers have a strong interest in their work and passion for their goals. To find where your passions lie, "Think about what you loved as a child," suggests Oregon life coach Joy Hatch. "What excites you? Makes time stand still? Discover what feels like play and you've found your passion."

Accentuate the Positive

Staying positive can keep your body humming. It can slow signs of aging and even help you bounce back after a bout of sickness. Tips for staying positive: Remember what's working in your life, evaluate what isn't, and keep moving forward.

Get a Move On

Want to stay mentally sharp, sleep great, and reduce your risk of depression? Get moving. Research shows that about 120 to 150 minutes of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activity a week can help you control your weight, strengthen your muscles -- even live longer.

Mind Your (Table) Manners

Put your best fork forward at meal time. Good table manners show that you're a class act and you think your friends are, too. Top table manners to cultivate include maintaining good posture, chewing with your mouth closed, using your napkin, and excusing yourself from the table when you get up.

Smell Good

Give your confidence a boost by smelling your best. Smelling good can make you feel even better, which makes you more attractive to others. Wear clean clothing and shower regularly -- especially after a strenuous workout. Find a great perfume or cologne, shampoo, and deodorant whose scents don't clash. Keep your breath minty fresh by caring for your teeth and gums as your dentist recommends.

Dress the Part

Looking sharp shows that you're prepared. To dress for success, start with a black, grey, or navy suit. Add coordinated accessories and shoes. Go easy on the perfume or cologne. Your hair and nails should be neat and clean. Keep jewelry and other accents low-key.

Be Kind and Polite

We all need good relationships to be happy. Being kind to those around you shows you value them as people. It makes you feel better about yourself, too. Practice being polite. Develop compassion. You'll impress others and boost your own well-being.

Take Time to Be Timely

Punctuality shows people you're in control and that you respect them -- all before you ever say a word. Set yourself up for timely success. Use calendars and schedule reminders. Prepare for important events and meetings the night before. Estimate how much time a task will take and plan for bumps in the road, like rush-hour traffic.

Gain From Giving

Carving out time to volunteer can benefit you, both mentally and physically. People who regularly volunteer report higher levels of happiness, self-esteem, and purpose -- and lower levels of depression. Studies also show that people who give of themselves tend to live longer and enjoy stronger relationships.

Take Time Off

Want to succeed and actually enjoy your success? Take a break from time to time. If you think vacation time means wasted time, think again. Taking time to recharge not only renews your energy for work, but it can also help you avoid health problems related to stress and anxiety.