

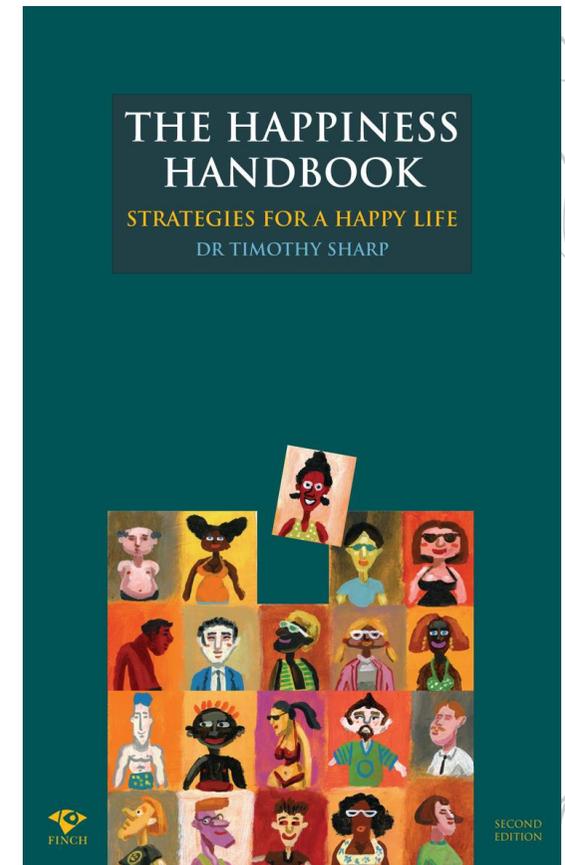
The Happiness Handbook

Dr Timothy Sharp © 2005, 2007 2nd Ed.

According to Dr Timothy Sharp, psychologist and “Chief Happiness Officer” at Australia’s Happiness Institute, happiness is a choice we make and is the practise of a few positive disciplines each day. Just as wealth isn’t the elimination of debt and health isn’t the resolution of sickness, happiness is more than removing distress

Sharp and US pioneer Dr Martin Seligman (author of Authentic Happiness) are from the school of positive psychology. This field is about working with strengths instead of traditional clinical psychology which focuses on fixing problems. “Positive psychology is like the financial adviser who helps you create significant wealth instead of the accountant* who helps you reduce tax and debt only”

Sharp’s tips for becoming happy cover working with your strengths, creating positive relationships, thinking optimistically, managing your well being and knowing what you can and can’t control



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*Our apologies to our accounting colleagues who clearly do more than just this. It is just that this quote had something positive to say about financial advisers, for a change, which made us happy!

CHOOSE to be happy

Clarity of goals, direction and purpose

Healthy living

Optimism and positive attitude about you and the future

Others (positive relationships)

Strengths which we leverage

Enjoy the moment and have fun and be appreciative

Happiness is not simply one thing. Instead it is a collection of emotions including contentment, satisfaction and fulfilment as well as joy, excitement and pleasure

What signature strengths can you apply?

Wisdom and knowledge	Courage	Humanity and love	Justice	Temperance	Transcendence
<p>Curious and enjoy ambiguity</p> <p>Being an expert</p> <p>Careful critical thinker</p> <p>Ingenious and original problem solver</p> <p>Emotionally intelligent</p> <p>Bring perspective</p>	<p>Bravery to take on new challenges</p> <p>Persevere and finish</p> <p>Honest and genuine and down to earth</p>	<p>Kind and generous to others</p> <p>You love others and allow yourself to be loved</p>	<p>Exciting and loyal team player</p> <p>Fair and equitable and give everyone a go</p> <p>Organise and lead while keeping good relationships</p>	<p>Keep your impulses in check</p> <p>Look ahead and ensure caution</p> <p>Modest and don't seek the spotlight</p>	<p>Appreciate beauty and excellence</p> <p>Aware of good things and express thanks</p> <p>You are optimistic and future focused</p> <p>Strong and coherent spiritual beliefs</p> <p>You can forgive</p> <p>Like to laugh and play</p> <p>Passionate and enthusiastic</p>
<p>Instead of the wisdom of self-help books that focus on finding your weaknesses, you should focus on finding your strengths and using them to achieve more. You'll find yourself more happy. If necessary surround yourself with people who address your weaknesses.</p>					

On relationships

“The likelihood of experiencing true happiness is significantly increased if they are connected to and enjoy the company of others”

Know what your ideal relationship looks like

Happy relationships require 1) individuals to be happy, 2) communicate well and 3) know what you need from relationships

SUPPORT others in your life ...

- strengths
- unconditional love
- praise
- positivity
- openness
- respect
- trust

Doing those things that make your loved one happy should make you happy

Being optimistic

Thinking optimistically is a powerful way to enhance happiness

“Control your thoughts, control your life”

Challenge automatic negative thoughts and “thinking mistakes” which include:

- Over-generalisation, filtering out positive thoughts, thinking in black and white, personalising (and taking unfair responsibility), “catastrophising”, mistaking feelings for fact, mind reading / assuming other’s thoughts, fortune telling and pre-deciding, using “should” and “must statements”, magnify negative and minimise positive information

Develop helpful automatic thoughts

- What’s good about this situation, what did I achieve today, what did I learn ...

Imagine what would your life be like if you were really happy

Managing your resources

Eat well (proteins, plants, carbohydrates; less fats, salt and alcohol) and drink plenty of water (many confuse snacking hunger for thirst)

Exercise is an anti-depressant; it's simple just do more walking, stairs, play ...

Peak performance in athletes depends in part achieving adequate rest

Get plenty of sleep – average person needs 1-2 hrs more ; control worry which keeps you up as does evening drinking of caffeine and alcohol

Take breaks, meditate or “do nothing”

Manage your mood – anger and negative emotions are physically draining

Create a happy (work, home) environment

Control what you can - not what you can't

Happiness is elusive if you try to change the unchangeable

You don't control the past

The achievable desire to be happier should not be confused with the unattainable goal of 100% pure happiness, 100% of the time

**Manage time – many of us try to do too much
*[see our earlier review about Creating time]***

The world is not perfect in part because many people have different views of what perfect is

Acceptance isn't giving up, it's active coping

Some happy thoughts ...

“For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness” - RW Emerson

“Happiness is good health and a bad memory” - Ingrid Bergman

“Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, when they go” - Oscar Wilde

“If you want to be loved, be lovable” - Benjamin Franklin

Happiness is the ultimate purpose of life - Dali Lama

“Attitude determines altitude - the way we think about things largely determines the extent to which we are happy”

“Happy people interpret the world around them in a fundamentally different way, even though the world they live in is the same world in which we all live”

“Some people seem very good at finding problems, others seem to excel at finding solutions – which do you want to be” - Timothy Sharp

**Ask yourself how you will know when you are happy?
Ask yourself this often!**

About Professional Wealth and these summaries

About Professional Wealth

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We focus on professionals and those who value professional service

We strive to set a new level of professionalism, by

- providing unbiased high quality advice
- being free to recommend a broad range of investment and insurance solutions
- being remunerated only by our clients, refusing all commissions and rebates
- making education an important part of our offer

About our Executive Summaries

We regularly review interesting writing on wealth topics that we think our clients will find useful

Our summaries are of the authors' views and we encourage you to read their work to learn more

These should not be considered personal advice as your needs and circumstances will vary

Please contact us or your personal advisor to explore further how you can *Make Work Optional™*

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