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**3 Simple Habits To a Happier You**

We all want a happy life. Happiness brings with it better health, more satisfying relationships, it makes us more creative, and attracts happy people into our lives. But being happy can be a challenge. It’s easy to set our focus on the bad things in life while ignoring the good.

Here three proven habits to help shift the spotlight back onto the good things and create more happiness in your life:

Practice gratitude. People who express gratitude on a consistent basis are more optimistic, less materialistic, and more forgiving. Here’s one method of harnessing the positive power of gratitude:

* On a piece of paper rank your happiness on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being ‘never’ and 10 being ‘all the time’. Seal your answer in an envelope and set it aside. At the end of each day, write down 3 things you’re grateful for. It can be ordinary (clean running water) or uplifting (watching your child graduate). After two weeks, rank your happiness again and compare it with your original score. Chances are you’re significantly happier.

Perform acts of kindness. Giving not only benefits the receiver, it contributes to the givers’ health, happiness, and sense of social connection. Try this simple exercise to get started:

* Chose one day this week and perform 5 acts of kindness. They can be big or small, random or planned, for a stranger or someone you know. Dropping a quarter in a stranger’s parking meter, donating blood, or, at work try cleaning the communal kitchen area, or pitching in on a colleague’s project. At the end of the day write down what you did, how the person responded, and notice the difference you feel.

Offer forgiveness. Keeping grudges means holding onto anger, resentment, and hurt. Practicing forgiveness releases the pain and allows us to move on.

* Think of a grudge you’re holding. Acknowledge your feelings, thoughts, and sensations around the experience then ask yourself, *what areas in my life is this grudge negatively affecting? How is it impacting those around me*? *What positive change would occur if I let it go and moved on*? Forgiveness isn’t about minimizing feelings or condoning transgressions. It’s about letting go and setting yourself free.

We all experience life’s ups and downs. By implementing these habits into your daily life you’ll be better equipped to handle whatever challenge life throws at you and experience more happiness. You deserve a happy life!