

Why Wait? Be Happy Now!

Monthly Happiness Newsletter ~ Brought to you by Dr. Donna Daisy

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Happiness may be the most sought after experience in the World. Yet,

- **Less than 30% of people report being deeply happy.**
- **1 in 10 Americans are now taking drugs to combat depression.**
- **World Health Organization predicts that by the year 2020, Depression will be in the top two medical concerns in the world, second only to cardiac problems.**

I'm Dr. Donna Daisy. In today's fast paced world, all of us face challenging circumstances that threaten our happiness - job loss, financial concerns, health issues, loss of a loved one. My message to you is this:

"The human spirit is an amazing thing. Given the right tools and strategies, each one of us can live a rich, full, satisfying life regardless of our circumstances."

Message for November

Creating Relationships That Work In Retirement

I have heard it said that there is good news and bad news about retirement. The good news is that you get to spend more time with your spouse. The bad news is that you get to spend more time with your spouse!

When couples retire, even if they live in the garden spot of the world, it isn't unusual for them to experience strain in their relationship. Each person's role may have changed. The income and status from previous jobs are gone, and children are usually no longer living at home. The golf games you were looking forward to aren't as satisfying as expected, and finding interesting things to talk about at dinner each evening can be a struggle.

To make matters worse, most couples have never spent so much time together, and in such immediate proximity. It is easy for couples to become angry, frustrated, and irritable as they find themselves together twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, without having ever considered how their relationship and their lives should look in this new situation.

If you and your partner are looking toward retirement, or even if you are already retired, you may have some decisions to make. You can either choose to sit down and discuss your dreams for retirement with each other, or you can choose to make no preparations, maintain old patterns of interacting that aren't working for you any longer, and risk experiencing the disappointment and lack of fulfillment that comes from living out retirement in what I call "quiet desperation." Retirement is a time that you can choose to recommit to a new life and to your partner, with each

sharing the responsibility for maximizing happiness, and making ret the fun, exciting, joyous segment of your life that you have always dreamed it would be.

When my husband and I retired, we had an unusual amount of chall due to his serious health problems. He was faced with finding a way happy despite his illness, and I was coming to grips with being thrus the role of full-time caregiver. Below are some of the strategies that found especially helpful in our relationship as we dealt with retireme the particular set of problems we faced. You don't have to wait until retirement to start using these skills. They are helpful in any commi relationship at any time of life.

1. Build and maintain intimacy. This is the golden rule that is at i heart of everything else in your relationship. You build intimacy by b truly honest with each other - - talking about your hopes, your fears dreams, and feeling safe doing it. Stephen Covey, the author of The Habits of Highly Effective People, teaches that we have an emotiona account with every person we communicate with. Just like with a re bank account, you make deposits and you make withdrawals. Positiv interactions are deposits. Negative interactions are withdrawals. It is essential for a warm relationship that the positive interactions (depc outnumber the negative interactions (withdrawals). Here is a formul you may want to remember: You need 5 positive interactions to bal: every negative interaction.

2. Prioritize time for communication. When you sit down to talk, sure you have no distractions – no TV – no newspaper. Give your fu attention to your conversation. 3. Make communication safe. In add expressing the appreciation you feel for one another, establish grou rules for communication, so that each person can be assured of not criticized or demeaned. The rules can be as simple as: - Treat each with respect. - No hurtful criticisms. - No passive-aggressive behavi Listen deeply and without judgment to what the other is saying. - TI before you speak.

3. Establish one or more shared goals such as rebuilding a healt mutually enjoyable relationship, and creating a happy, fulfilling retir life for both individuals.

4. Establish that each partner is interested in the well-being o both – You might say things like, "Here are some things that are important to me in retirement" and "Tell me about the things that w make our retirement years most enjoyable for you." Then you look f ways to blend your wants and needs.

5. Begin with the end in mind. When interacting, keep the focus what you are trying to accomplish (a healthy, mutually enjoyable relationship and a fulfilling retirement.) Choose words carefully rath reacting with anger and sharp, critical words.

6. Discuss issues that are important to the relationship such a

- How is our marriage doing?
- How is our retirement doing?
- How much time do we want to spend together and separately? It is important that each person maintain his and her sense of individuali need a combination of time spent together, and time doing things w others
- Who is responsible for what? Who does the grocery shopping? Who the cleaning? Who plans the social calendar?
- What are the financial issues that need to be discussed?

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In short, in my experience, what will bring greatest happiness and the most harmony to any relationship is 1) the attention by both people to their desire for a healthy, mutually enjoyable relationship, and 2) the effective communicating in a manner that is focused on a mutual goal, feels good to both people, conveys appreciation of one another, and is respectful of both points of view.

My Commitment to You

As you know, during my husband, Charles' illness, I made a commitment to share with others the mindset, tools and strategies that literally changed our life, allowed us to rise above our challenges, and live a rich, fulfilling life. I am now able to honor that commitment through my workshop presentations, keynote speeches, my books, magazine and newspaper articles, and media including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and my blog site.

Science has found the answers that make happiness and the achievement of our goals (career, weight loss, relationship, financial) within the reach of everyone. You don't have to change your genetics, have perfect circumstances or depend on other people to make you happy and fulfilled. You can improve your relationships, and increase your health, wealth and happiness level dramatically by practicing daily habits of thoughts and behaviors that support happiness and success. It is these habits and behaviors that I teach in my book, ***Why Wait? Be Happy Now!***

Lecture Topics

- Happiness At Any Age and How To Achieve It
- Aging With Vitality: How To Add Years To Your Life and Life To Your Years
 - Manage Your Stress Before It Manages You
 - Happier Is Healthier. Why Wait? Be Happier – and Healthier – Now!
- How To Create The Retirement Of Your Dreams
 - How To Find Happiness in Difficult Times
 - Is Your Marriage "Retirement Ready?"
 - How To Increase Your Health – And Wealth – By Increasing Your Happiness.
 - Creating Relationships That Work
- 15 Minutes A Day To A Happier, Healthier, Wealthier Life

Happiness is a CHOICE! Why wait? Be happy now!