Happiness Exercise

1. List one person that you have a close relationship with.
2. List one thing you have done for someone else in the last day/week.
3. List something funny or something that has made you laugh, that has happened in the last day/week.
4. List something that you have found yourself immersed in- something you enjoy so much that you lost track of time doing?
5. List one way you have been active in the last day/week.
6. List one of your strengths. List one way you have used it in the last day/week.
7. List 3 things you are thankful for.
8. Last one- With a partner- share 1 thing about yourself from the list. And find 2 things you have in common.

-Why did we do this?

-What do all of these things have in common?

Relationships, humor, caring for others, exercise, flow/meaning, using your strengths, showing gratitude: They all contribute to your happiness. The more you engage in these habits, the happier you will become.

-Best part about these things is they can be learned and practiced and put into place.

-Goal: try to do these things everyday- they don’t have to be big things but little things – hold the door for someone, make a phone call or text to someone, do what you love, etc

**Positive Psychology and the Science of Happiness**

Source: [www.pursuit-of-happiness.org](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org) , Martin Seligman.

Recently we have seen a dramatic upsurge in scientific studies on Positive Psychology and the science of happiness or to put it simply, discovering what makes happy people happy. Fortunately, many of these studies point to specific ways of thinking and acting that can strongly impact our sense of well-being and happiness. The resulting discoveries are enriching the practices of counseling, clinical psychology, psychiatry and life coaching. Here, we review the most scientific studies and translate the results into non-technical English.

**The 7 Habits of Happy People:**

1. [**Relationships**](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/science-of-happiness/communicating/)

**Express your heart**. People who have one or more close friendships are happier. It doesn’t seem to matter if we have a large network of close relationships or not. What seems to make a difference is if and how often we cooperate in activities and share our feelings with a friend or relative.

1. [**Caring**](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/science-of-happinesss/caring)

**Cultivate kindness**. People who volunteer or simply care for others on a consistent basis seem to be happier and less depressed. Although “caring” can involve volunteering as part of an organized group or club, it can be as simple as reaching out to a colleague or classmate who looks lonely or is struggling with an issue.

1. [**Exercise**](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/science-of-happinesss/exercise/)

**Keep moving**. Regular exercise has been associated with improved mental well-being and a lower incidence of depression. The Cochrane Review (the most influential medical review of its kind in the world) has produced a landmark analysis of 23 studies on exercise and depression. One of the major conclusions was that exercise had a “large clinical impact.”

1. [**Flow**](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/science-of-happinesss/getting-in-the-flow)

**Find your flow**. If we are deeply involved in trying to reach a goal, or an activity that is challenging but well suited to our skills, we experience a joyful state called “flow.”

1. [**Spiritual Engagement and Meaning**](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/science-of-happiness/spiritual-engagement/)

**Discovering Meaning.**Studies demonstrate a close link between spiritual and religious practice and happiness. Spirituality is closely related to the discovery of greater meaning in our lives. As the psychologist [Martin Seligman](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/martin-seligman-positive-psychology/) emphasizes, through the meaningful life we discover a deeper kind of happiness.

1. [**Strengths and Virtues**](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/science-of-happiness/strengths-and-virtues/)

**Discover and use your strengths**. Studies by experts such as Martin Seligman in the new field of [Positive Psychology](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/martin-seligman-positive-psychology/) show that the happiest people are those that have discovered their unique strengths (such as persistence and critical thinking) and virtues (such as humanity) and use those strengths and virtues for a purpose that is greater than their own personal goals (Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment).

1. [**Positive Mindset: Optimism, Mindfulness and Gratitude**](http://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/science-of-happinesss/positive-thinking/)

**Treasure gratitude, mindfulness, and hope**. Of all the areas studied in the relatively young field of positive psychology, gratitude has perhaps received the most attention. According to studies conducted by Martin Seligman, grateful people have been shown to have greater positive emotion, a greater sense of belonging, and lower incidence of depression and stress.