

A CITATION PARAPHRASE

It's common to hear people say that fame only brings unhappiness. Not true! As these wise words from modern and historical celebrities (and a group of happiness scientists) show, they've figured out the secrets of happy people and a happy life. Let's hear it in their own words, shall we?

1. Happiness is who you are - "I am determined to be cheerful and happy in whatever situation I may find myself. For I have learned that the greater part of our misery or unhappiness is determined not by our circumstance but by our disposition" - Martha Washington. Genuinely happy people have an almost magical ability to stay in good spirits even when there isn't a great deal to be cheerful about. When happiness is a core aspect of your personality, nothing can force you to be unhappy.

2. Happiness is a choice you make - "I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today. I can choose which it shall be." - Groucho Marx. The next time you find yourself in a difficult situation, ask yourself this: would you rather have a difficult and unhappy time, or stay happy through the tough times? Your choice.

3. Happiness comes from self-consistency - "Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony." - Mahatma Gandhi. As any psychologist will tell you, it's human nature to want your thoughts, words and deeds to be consistent—but you'll often find yourself trying to fit the mould of what you think other people want instead of being fully and consistently yourself. That leads to conflict in your mind, which leads to a less happy life.

4. Happiness is your responsibility - "Don't wait around for other people to be happy for you. Any happiness you get you've got to make yourself." - Alice Walker. There's nothing more depressing than waiting for the happiness delivery guy. Why? Because he doesn't exist. Decide to deliver your own happiness, and you can free yourself from a very long wait.

5. Happiness is best served in moderation - "We cannot be happy if we expect to live all the time at the highest peak of intensity. Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance and order and rhythm and harmony." - Thomas Merton. Guess what? Spending all your time wishing you were happier will only make you more depressed. Aim for a comfortable day-to-day background level of happiness, rather than a huge blast of ecstatic joy that leaves you feeling wiped out.





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6. Happiness is not in your memories - "The first recipe for happiness is: avoid too lengthy meditation on the past." – Andre Maurois. Reminiscing about good memories can leave you feeling happy for a while, it's true, but the source of happiness is now. Dwelling on past happiness doesn't change today, so stay in the present to make this your happy day. And if you find yourself dwelling on unhappy memories instead, let them go—all they do is keep you from achieving happiness today.

7. Happiness is not in your ambitions - "Future: That period of time in which our affairs prosper, our friends are true and our happiness is assured." – Ambrose Bierce. The author of *The Devil's Dictionary*, Ambrose Bierce knew exactly how to be happy: simply avoid pinning your hopes on the unpredictable future. (He also knew a lot about sarcasm.) Hopes and ambitions for the future are nice, but being happy in the moment is better.

8. Happiness is contagious - "Whoever is happy will make others happy too." – Anne Frank. It's a fact: smiling at somebody tends to make them feel happier. Laughing has an even stronger effect. So wherever you go, share your happiness with the people you meet, and surround yourself with happy people if you can.

