

Happiness: Bringing it Into Your Daily Life Some Helpful Tips

1. Focusing on positives and allowing good thoughts and feelings to emerge, develops new neural pathways and connections in the brain.
2. # 1 does not mean to discount negative thoughts, feelings, bad experiences that have occurred, or are occurring. It simply means not to dwell and only focus on them. Acknowledge it, refocus on something positive that may have occurred from the bad—i.e., recognizing that you have more strengths than you had previously thought, and move on. If that is not possible, then simply acknowledge the negative thought and then refocus on a positive thing, image, and feeling. If you need to do this more than once because you go back to a negative place, repeat the exercise.
3. The more you practice some of the exercises—i.e., positive thoughts, meditation, relaxation techniques, visualizations, the easier it is to get back to that calm place when under stress. Additionally your normal body state will be one of responsiveness of calm, contentment and peacefulness.
4. Starting your day with a gratitude journal can be a useful tool to starting your day out in a happier place. Pick two or three things that you are grateful for each day—even if it is simply that you have a home and a warm bed to sleep in.
5. If facing a challenge or something difficult, remind yourself of other difficult situations you have mastered in the past.
6. Exercise can help release endorphins and get rid of stress.
7. When devising visualization, pick something that only has positive associations to it—nothing negative or stressful. For instance, if you are feeling lonely, don't picture walking on the beach alone if that image might trigger an association to being "friendless" or more alone.
8. If negative feelings or unhappiness continue for more than a few weeks, it might be helpful to contact the EAP for further evaluation and assistance. We can be reached for a confidential appointment at x7-5600. Our program is also available to family members and significant others of employees.