

## Feature Article

### Looking at Happiness as a Choice

Are you a person who can act on tough questions?

Questions like: What am I grateful for? What choices do I have? What actions can I take to improve my life? What are my primary strengths? How can I live a more balanced life?

People who can act on these questions likely also describe themselves as happy.

“Happiness is neither a mood nor an emotion. Mood is a biochemical condition, and emotions are transitory feelings,” says Dan Baker, Ph.D., director of the Life Enhancement Program at Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Ariz., and author of *What Happy People Know*. “Happiness is a way of life, an overriding outlook composed of qualities like love, optimism, courage, and a sense of freedom. It’s not something that changes every time your situation changes.”

People often think happiness is something you’re born with, but you can learn the qualities of happiness by mastering Dr. Baker’s happiness tools described here.

#### Appreciation

“Taking time each day to appreciate what you have, to think about people who have made a difference, to acknowledge the love you have or have had. Each of these things can turn your attention to the good in your life,” says Dr. Baker. “This process shifts your attention away from fear, which is often the basis of unhappiness.”

#### Choice

Feeling like you have no choices or options in life is like being in jail. It leads to depression, anxiety, and learned helplessness.

“Unhappy people make the mistake of giving in to fear, which limits their perception of the choices they have,” says Dr. Baker. “Happy people turn away from fear and find they have an array of choices they can make in almost every situation.”

#### Power of language

You think in words, and those words have the power to limit you or set you free. Similarly, the stories you tell yourself about your life eventually become your life.

“Self-talk is powerful, so it’s important to choose your words carefully,” says Dr. Baker. “If you use destructive or critical language, you’ll push yourself deeper into fear. Even something as simple as calling an unexpected situation a possibility instead of a problem can change the way you look at it.”

A good rule to follow in self-talk is to talk to yourself the way you want others to talk to you.

#### Multidimensional living

There are three primary components of life: relationships, health and purpose, or work. Many people, though, put all their energy into just one area.

“But doing so never works,” says Dr. Baker. “Happiness comes from living a full life.”

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### This Month's Webinar: Mindful Meal Planning

Most of us would like to eat healthier, but cost can be a major deterrent. By investing a small amount of time and effort in Mindful Meal Planning, you can easily save 30 percent on your family's food bill. In this fun and informative workshop, you will learn how the simple strategies of meal planning can save them time, stress, and money when it comes eating healthy. Topics covered include: Meal Planning Basics, Why Your Freezer is Your Best Friend, Time Saving Food Prep Tips, and Save Money While Eating Healthy.

Watch this webinar any time throughout the month of January when you log in to IMPACT on the Web at [www.MyImpactSolution.com](http://www.MyImpactSolution.com).

## New in 2020



### National Awareness

#### Topic: National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week

Talking to your kids about drugs may not be easy, but

it is important. A helpful Parent Resource Guide and companion booklet on Opioid Facts for Teens developed by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) will help you start this critically important conversation. It is available now on the Impact website under the new Addiction Resource Center.



### Addiction Resource Center

This new website center is easy to navigate and offers information on commonly abused drugs as well as addictive behaviors such as gambling, shopping, internet use, food addiction and more. You will find helpful information at your fingertips.

Visit [www.MyImpactSolution.com](http://www.MyImpactSolution.com)

Forgot your login information?

Give us a call at 800-227-6007.

## Eldercare Spotlight

### Changes Over the Holidays

The holidays are over. The decorations are packed away. Perhaps you feel relieved that life will now return to "normal." Or maybe, after visiting older loved ones, you instead feel fear or a sense that "normal" has been drastically altered.

You may wonder if your loved one has just been too busy to pay attention to the small details, but, upon reflection, you remember that:

- The outside of the home looked neglected.
- There were some strong odors in certain rooms.
- Unopened mail cluttered the counters interspersed with thank-yous from unknown charities.
- The food in the cupboards and refrigerator looked moldy, had expired or was only partially eaten.
- They repeated the same stories and often appeared confused.

If something seems out of place, maybe it is. As challenging as it may be, perhaps it is time to start talking about plans for what comes next. Rest assured: you CAN begin planning; you do not have to wait for a crisis. Your IMPACT Solutions' benefits give you free access to BRI Care Consultation™. Call today to find the support and guidance you need.

Contributed By: Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging

Information in IMPACT on Wellness is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional.

You can contact IMPACT Solutions for professional counseling and guidance 24 hours a day at 800-227-6007.

## Health and Wellness



### Website Resources:

- **Assessments** including HRA's, cardiac risk, diabetes, well-being, depression, anxiety, and more
- **Health Videos** - over 700 videos from NBC Universal on topics from allergies to urology
- **Recipes** - over 200 dietician-reviewed recipes with nutrition information included
- **Health Information** including hundreds of articles, tip sheets, and content on a wide range of health related conditions

***Did you know...* Your IMPACT EAP & Work/Life Program offers wellness coaching services with a nutritionist?**

Your IMPACT EAP is an excellent source of information to help you reach your health and wellness goals. Visit us on the web at [www.MyImpactSolution.com](http://www.MyImpactSolution.com) to learn more about common health conditions, complete helpful assessment tools, watch informative videos, and download dietician approved healthy recipes all in one convenient location. You can also contact IMPACT at 800-227-6007 to schedule an appointment with a nutritionist who will help you get on the right track to a healthier lifestyle.