



We Need A Little Happiness



I started this newsletter and thought....all I want is positive, happy, and encouraging articles. As I looked for these articles, I kept coming back to what is happiness? Most of us probably don't believe we need a formal definition of happiness; we know it when we feel it, and we often use the term to describe a range of positive emotions, including joy, pride, contentment, and gratitude. The term happiness is used in the context of mental or emotional states, including positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. It is also used in the context of life satisfaction, well-being, prosperity, and success.

I think happiness is different for everyone. Someone may find happiness by helping a friend. While others find happiness by laying on the beach listening to the waves. Everyone is different and unique, so do what makes you happy.

Some people may struggle to be happy because of depression. Depression isn't a simple condition with a known cause. Some people are more susceptible to depressive episodes while others are not. It's important to discuss symptoms with your doctor.

Happiness does not mean that you will never feel sad again. Sadness is a normal and healthy emotion. The goal is to feel less sadness, but it's unrealistic to think you won't experience any sadness at all. It also doesn't mean that you'll be blissfully blind to the negative aspects of the world. There is still sadness, fear, and pain.

So, my wish for you is to find more happiness in your life. Think about what you have; children, health, family, friends and much, much more. Re-evaluate what makes you happy and get rid of negative thoughts/people that make you unhappy.



"Learn to enjoy every minute of your life. Be happy now. Don't wait for something outside of yourself to make you happy in the future. Think how really precious is the time you have to spend, whether it's at work or with your family. Every minute should be enjoyed and savored."

– Earl Nightingale

Parents Take Care of Yourself

PROTECT YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH

Improving your physical wellbeing is one of the most comprehensive ways you can support your mental health. You'll have an easier time maintaining good mental habits when your body is a strong, resilient foundation.

- **Exercise daily.** Exercise can take many forms, such as taking the stairs whenever possible, walking up escalators, and running and biking rather than driving. Joining a class may help you commit to a schedule, if that works best for you. Daily exercise naturally produces stress-relieving hormones in your body and improves your overall health.
- **Eat well.** Eating mainly unprocessed foods like whole grains, vegetables and fresh fruit is key to a healthy body. Eating this way can help lower your risk for chronic diseases, and help stabilize your energy levels and mood.
- **Get enough sleep.** Adults generally need between seven and nine hours of sleep. A brief nap—up to 30 minutes—can help you feel alert again during the day. Even 15 minutes of daytime sleep is helpful. To make your nighttime sleep count more, practice good “sleep hygiene,” like avoiding using computers, TV and smartphones before bed.
- **Avoid alcohol and drugs.** They don't actually reduce stress and often worsen it.
- **Practice relaxation exercises.** Deep breathing, meditation and progressive muscle relaxation are easy, quick ways to reduce stress. When conflicts come up between you and your family member, these tools can help you feel less controlled by turbulent feelings and give you the space you need to think clearly about what to do next.

PRACTICE GOOD MENTAL HABITS

AVOID GUILT

Try not to feel bad about experiencing negative emotions. You may resent having to remind your spouse to take his medication, then feel guilty. It's natural to think things like “a better person wouldn't be annoyed with their spouse,” but that kind of guilt is both untrue and unproductive. When you allow yourself to notice your feelings without judging them as good or bad, you dial down the stress and feel more in control. When you feel less stressed, you're better able to thoughtfully choose how to act.

NOTICE THE POSITIVE

When you take the time to notice positive moments in your day, your experience of that day becomes better. Try writing down one thing each day or week that was good. Even if the positive thing is tiny (“It was a sunny day”), it's real, it counts and it can start to change your experience of life.

Excerpts taken from: [Taking Care of Yourself | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)



I AM IN
CHARGE
OF HOW I
FEEL AND
TODAY I AM
CHOOSING
HAPPINESS.



Path to Improved Health

Eating better (for children and families)

- Start the day with a healthy breakfast. It refuels the body and provides energy for the day.
- Let kids help plan and prepare 1 meal each week.
- Eat together as a family as often as possible.
- Take time eating, and chew slowly. It takes 20 minutes for the brain to tell the body that you are full.
- Eat more vegetables and fresh fruits. Aim for a total of 2 cups of fruit and 2 1/2 cups of vegetables each day.
- Eat more whole grains. Examples include oats, brown rice, rye, and whole-wheat pasta. Try to eat at least 3 ounces of whole grains each day.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Choose water, low-fat or nonfat milk, and low-calorie beverages.
- Serve a variety of foods.
- Serve food in small portions.

Eating better (for parents)

- Reward children with praise, not food.
- Do not demand or reward "a clean plate." Let your children ask for more if they are still hungry.
Read nutrition labels for serving size. This information can help you select foods that fit your family's needs.
- Bake, broil, or grill foods.
- Avoid cooking with butter or vegetable oil. Use healthier versions like olive, canola, or sunflower oil.
- Choose snacks that provide nutrients and energy. These are essential for active, growing children.
- Ask your doctor about vitamin supplements for you and your children.

Being more active (for children and families)

- Move more. Try to get between 30 and 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Short sessions of movement throughout the day add up.
- Include physical activity in your daily routine. Walk as a family before or after meals.
- Make playtime with your family fun. Be active by shooting hoops or playing tag.
- Be active in the home. For example, you can dust, vacuum, garden, or walk the dog. These activities are good ways to burn calories.
- Include activities, such as hiking or biking, when you go on vacation.
- Know your daily calorie needs. Balance calories you consume with calories you burn.
- Limit TV, computer, and video game time to less than 2 hours per day. Encourage physical activity instead.

Excerpts taken from: [Tips For Healthy Children and Families - Health Tips | familydoctor.org](https://familydoctor.org/health-tips-for-healthy-children-and-families/)



The 5 Love Languages of Children

Different kids crave different kinds of attention and affection. Dr. Gary Chapman, author of *The 5 Love Languages* and *The 5 Love Languages of Children*, believes that we all express love, and experience it through physical touch, gifts, words of affirmation, acts of service and quality time, but each of us has one way that matters most to us. Our job as parents is to know how to communicate with each of our children so they genuinely feel loved.

The first step in identifying your child's primary love language is to pay attention to how he shows you love. Why? We all tend to offer affection in the way we wish to receive it. As we get older, we learn that the Golden Rule can backfire in our relationships because we need to give love unto others in the way that works best for them. But since kids generally don't pick up on that, they offer the brand of affection they crave. The other piece of the puzzle is what your child requests.

What do the love languages look like and what can you do to show your kid how much you love them:

Language	What we see	What can you do	Common Pitfalls
Physical Touch	When you come home, does your child run to the door, grab your leg and climb all over you? If children are constantly in your space, touching you, or playing with your hair, that is a signal that they need to be touched more.	Snuggle on the couch Ask your kid if she wants to sit on your lap Offer hugs and high fives. Holding hands Rough house play Good morning/night hugs	A slap or spanking is hurtful to any child, but it is devastating to one whose primary love language is touch.
Gifts	Someone whose primary love language is gifts tends to care about how a present is wrapped, and he often remembers who gave him what for months or years after the fact, may have trouble getting rid of things someone gave him, even if he hasn't looked at them in ages.	Your child sees a gift as a symbol of your love. Although it's fine to keep a closet full of wrapped dollar-store toys, you don't need to spend money. Leaving a precious object for the child to find (rock, flower, car, crayon or others) Hanging their artwork Have a "precious things" table for their creations	Be careful about overdoing gifts. Give kids gifts that are appropriate for their age and that will be helpful to them, rather than just what they want. Resist the temptation to shower children with presents instead of also using the other love languages.
Words of Affirmation	For kids who listen intently and speak sweetly, your loving words matter most. If your child beams whenever you praise her or offers you lots of sweet feedback she probably relishes words of affirmation.	Babies and Toddlers - at eye level Tell them "You are the best thing in my life. You are so important to me." Gossip with a favorite stuffed animal about how wonderful your kid is Older children Little notes in their lunch box Texts	Insults cut deep it is particularly important for these kids to hear the words "I love you" standing alone, rather than, "I love you, but ..." that can imply that your love is conditional.

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Acts of Service	Acts of service is the most peculiar-sounding love language, but kids who speak it appreciate thoughtful gestures, he may beg you to tie his shoes for him, fix a broken toy, or fluff his pillow. As a result, parents of these kids often end up feeling like servants.	Make exceptions to a general rule (helping the child to pick up toys) going above and beyond (such as warming clothes in the dryer on a cold morning) Encourage self-reliance and expect them to do what they can for themselves, the best act of service you can provide is teaching him, step-by-step, how to be more capable	Do not jump at every request, sometimes a thoughtful response will do, even if it's to deny an ask. And watch out for how those exceptions to rules pile up - how many times have you picked up the toys alone, stop and rethink it!
Quality Time	These children feel most valued when you choose to spend time with them. A child who often says, "Watch this!" or "Play with me," is begging for quality time.	Just being together Offer your undivided attention Create "special time" it can be short, but let your child choose the activity One-on-one time or chat	For the child craving quality time, isolating them in time out away from you, that's a severe punishment to her. Also, don't assume that spending extra time together means that you need to abandon your to-do list. Have them help with it or even read beside your child when she's absorbed in her own play will let her feel your warm presence.

Though Dr. Chapman believes that love languages are like personality traits that stay with us for life, your child's preference might seem to change from moment to moment and stage to stage. A toddler who craves snuggles may grow into a 7-year-old who likes to roughhouse. A kid who basks in praise might become skeptical of your reassurance at some point and instead just need a little quality time.

Stay tuned in to what your child's reactions and behaviors say about the type of love she needs in any given moment and there's no doubt that you'll continue to connect—and reconnect—as she grows.

Article Adapted from - Cornwall, G. (April 2, 2019). The 5 love languages of children. Retrieved from <https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/advice/love-languages-of-children/>

“You is kind.
 You is smart.
 You is
 important.”



I LOVE
 YOU 



“You are the
 best thing in my
 life. You are so
 important to
 me.”





UniCare has some exciting new benefits for their members. Did you know that if you are pregnant, you may qualify for \$100 in fresh fruits and vegetables? You may also qualify for diapers or a car seat for your newborn. Members can also receive a personal hygiene kit and other gifts for good health practices like completing wellness checkups and screenings. To find out more about these great benefits, visit UniCare Health Plan's website at www.unicare.com/wv. UniCare members can redeem some of these benefits online by logging into their secure member account on the Benefit Rewards Hub or by calling UniCare's Customer Care Center at 1-899-782-0095 (TTY) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6p.m. You don't want to miss out on value added benefits and services!



Aetna Better Health® of West Virginia

Effective January 1, 2021, adults who receive WV Medicaid are now eligible for dental benefits! This will allow adults to receive cleanings and other restorative care. There is a \$1,000 cap, per person, per year, for this benefit. Contact your health plan for more information.



2021 brought several positive and exciting changes for members including the addition of Adult dental benefits for members 21 and over. This benefit is \$1000 annually for preventative and restorative dental procedures. Members can contact member services at 1-888-613-8385 for additional information.

Beginning January 1, WV CHIP coverage is now being managed by managed care organizations, including The Health Plan, Aetna Better Health and UniCare. This benefit is for qualifying members aged birth to 19 and qualifying pregnant women.

In addition, value-added benefits also changed on January 1st. Benefits include incentives that are given when annual well-visits (ages 3-21) and dental check-ups (under age 21) are completed. Child and adolescent members also may have membership for boys or girl scouts paid for annually. Other value-added benefits may be accessed through our member services portal on our website at <https://www.thehealthplan.org>. Members can also receive care coordination by care managers and nurse educators. Finally, members may qualify for a cell phone to help manage their medical needs with free calls and text messages from The Health Plan for reminders of well visits and appointment.

SNOWBALL

by Shel Silverstein

"I made myself a snowball,
as perfect as could be.

I thought I'd keep it as a
pet,

and let it sleep with me.

I made it some pajamas,

And a pillow for its head.

Then last night, it ran away.

But first, it wet the bed."



WV Birth to Three/RAU 7
1411 North Walker Street
Princeton, WV 24740
1-866-207-6198



Winter Songs

by Douglas Florian

"The winter sings a windy song

That hustles rusty leaves along.

The winter sings a song of hail

That pings and pangs like falling
nails.

The winter sings a song of sleet,

As sloshing cars slip down the
street.

The winter sings a song of snow,

A whispering as whiteness grows."

Behold My Breath by Michele Meleen

"In and out,
fast or slow,
I feel my breath,
but can't see it go.

When winter arrives
my breath comes
alive

In and out,
fast or slow,
In the cold
winter air
My breath is
there to behold!"



MOUNTAINHEART
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