



## “Choose Happiness”

by Dede Lyons

Is Happiness a choice?  
Is Happiness inside of us?  
Is Happiness attainable?

Did you know that you are in charge of your happiness  
and you can choose to be happy everyday?

Wikipedia says: ‘Happiness is a mental or emotional state of well-being characterized by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy’.

Happiness is so fundamental to the human condition that “the pursuit of happiness” is a human right in the United States Declaration of Independence. Recently, the United Nations declared March 20th as the International Day of Happiness to recognize happiness and well being as universal goals. Did you know there are 54 million websites about happiness and its pursuit that include websites where people hug you through your computer screen, and even one that is solely devoted to make you giggle.

The “happiness” class (Psychology 1504) at Harvard has become the most popular undergraduate course, eclipsing Introduction to Economics. Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar, Harvard psychologist, who created the class, authored two books on happiness. He is a leader in the rapidly growing field, Positive Psychology, says ‘the quest for happiness has always been an innate human yearning,

dating back to the times of Confucius and Aristotle”.

Happiness lives inside each and every one of us and it is our choice to feel it, be it, project it and bring it out in others. Pharrell Williams, in his huge hit song *Happy* says, “Clap along if you feel like happiness is the truth, because I’m happy”, did a great job of bringing out the happiness in others. *Happy* was the #1 song in more than 30 countries. Watching Pharrell and several others dance and sing along with a song and music video was so contagious. It had pangenerational appeal and successfully connected people of all ages across all countries. Senior citizens to small children were enticed to sing and dance along with the *Happy* song.

Recently, my husband and I spent a very happy week connecting with our two toddler grandsons; 3 year old Casey and 16 month old Braden. We learned so much from them about being happy and how to create it, immerse ourselves in it and maintain it. The process was quite easy and all we had to do was follow along, stay in the present moment, give and receive love and be playful. How fun and effortless it is to play hide and seek, peek a boo, chase the waves, take nature walks, read story books, dance, sing, kiss and hug.

Now that we are in a heightened emotional state of well-being and our grandsons have headed back to California, we are mindful of the tremendous joy we experienced and are intent on choosing to maintain these gleeful feelings.

You too can feel happy by the choices you make each day. In my seminars I recommend the following daily “**Five Feel Good Express Happy Tools**” to sustain joy and to uplift your spirits:  
**Happy Smiles:** Smile often when greeting people for the first time and see how easily you elicit a return smile. You will find that your smile can brighten their day and in turn yours too.

**Happy Play:** Choose to play for 30 minutes at one of your favorite activities: dancing, swimming, walking, jumping, cycling, yoga, etc., that makes you smile and feel your mood elevate.

**Happy Kindness:** Perform daily random acts of kindness: pick up groceries for your neighbor, put coins in an expired parking meter, compliment a stranger, etc. Take notice how this exercise raises your state of joy.

**Happy Song:** Pick a song or songs and sing one everyday either in the shower, driving to work or wherever it feels right. Singing along with friends and loved ones with a big smile on your face can be the best feeling ever.

**Happy Gratitude:** Write down every day three things that you are grateful for and watch your happiness soar.

Remember, happiness is a choice and its all up to you to practice and create joy in your life, and others too. Often the most cheerful feelings and experiences occur right in your own back yard. When you share the sunshine in your smile, you light up the world and everyone glows with you!

*If you would like more information on The Feel Good Express, please email Dede Lyons at [dede@feelgoodexpress.com](mailto:dede@feelgoodexpress.com) or visit her website at [feelgoodexpress.com](http://feelgoodexpress.com). You can also view her “Feel Good Tweet of the Day” on Twitter @dedefeelsgood.*