



**Happiness@TheSpeedofLife Newsletter
Edition 18: Reframing**

1036 words of content -- approximate reading time required: **4.1** minutes. And isn't your happiness worth it?

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Welcome to my e-newsletter, which focuses on defining and applying the Principles of Happiness and Positive Emotion in your life and work.

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I. REFRAMING THE FACTS AFFECTS YOUR FUTURE

Have you ever had conversations about the same subject with two different people and noticed two entirely different outcomes from those chats?

Over the past few weeks I've had several such conversational "pairings" and find myself reflecting on what makes the difference.

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Marge is ranting about how determined she is to fight the elimination of her job, and how there's no way she's accepting the severance package. I sit there remembering how for the past six months she's talked of little other than leaving because she hates her job and no longer believes in the company.

Meanwhile, Mark contacts me, all excited (yes, excited!) about the fact that he's just lost his job, to tell me about the meetings he's got set up for the next week. "This is just the push I needed to get out of there!" he says to me.

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Leslie says, "My boss changes his mind constantly, and he's a terrible communicator. I need a strategy for working with him before I go completely insane. There's got to be a way to anticipate what's going on with him."

Ed is also having boss problems. "He's moody and unpredictable. I'm getting beat up from all sides, but does he care? So, I guess I'm just stuck in this mess – there's nothing I can do."

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After a two-week run of warm, dry spring days, it is raining. As I walk into a meeting with a colleague, he moans, "Can you believe this sh\*tty weather? I guess this is the best we can hope for when we live in Cleveland." As I shake off my umbrella in the lobby, another colleague practically bounces in the door, exclaiming, "I just love a good spring rain, don't you? And we



really needed this. Everything looks so green!" Hmmm.... Whom do you suspect is going to have a better day?

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What is it that makes the difference in outlook?

It depends on the "lens" you use to process the facts about the past or present. If your lens is opposition (you fight everything), you live in resentment – your inner dialogue might be "I am a victim" and when that happens you give others the power to control you. Those events, those facts, dominate your life. When you live in blame and resentment in the present, the future lens is typically resignation: "It doesn't matter what I do; I have no choice; they made me feel this way."

	Fact (past/present)	Possibility (future)
Oppose	Resentment	Resignation
Accept	Peace	Expectation

The alternative to opposition is acceptance. Acceptance does not mean agreement. You can disagree with an action or be upset about something, yet still accept it. It happened. OK. Move on. You can declare that the other person's actions or the events – no matter how difficult -- are not going to control you or define you. If you can accept what is, you can live in peace. And once you have reframed the past you are more able to look to the future with ambition and expectation.

Like Mark and Leslie, your question becomes, not "Why?" but "How?"

Essentially, you can hang on to the past, or you can let it go.

Do this for yourself:

Learn to forgive. Let go of anger and resentment by writing a letter of forgiveness to a person who has hurt or wronged you. Inability to forgive is associated with persistent stress or dwelling on revenge, while forgiving bolsters positive feelings about your past and gives you peace of mind. Forgiveness is not about letting someone else "off the hook" – rather it is about setting yourself free from having to dwell in that place anymore.

If you'd like to download a 1-page summary of the 13 Principles of Happiness as a reference, you can do so right now: <http://www.1leadercoach.com/happiness/philosophies.cfm>

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II. IN THE WORKPLACE: FACING CHANGE

The speed of life – referenced in the title of this newsletter – is about living life at a pace and rate of change unprecedented in human history. I believe that change – in anything and everything – is inevitable. To me, this is a fact. Change happens.

How do you respond to change?

Do you fight it? Do you spend time lamenting the loss of “the good old days?” Do you live in stress because of the change, suspicious of management and telling yourself (and others) that you have no choice but to “do what I’m told”?

OR

Do you accept that change is part of every business? Do you look for ways to participate in the change process? Do you look for the positive in the change, even when it feels “uncomfortable”?

Sometimes, all it takes to make a change work is for someone with influence to stand up and say, “hey, I’m on board – what’s next?” Why not have that someone be you?

Remember: Leadership is not about a title – anyone can be a leader when they focus on helping others succeed!

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III. RANDOM FUN – GIVE LIFE

I have been donating blood through the American Red Cross since I was in high school. I recently made my 48th donation, bringing my total to six gallons over my lifetime. The woman in the next cot had just reached three gallons, and we had some fun doing a bit of math. The literature at the blood bank tells us that a typical unit of whole blood is split into different components and can provide assistance to as many as eight people. So we calculated that my donations might have helped as many as 384 people.

I feel incredibly blessed to possess the health that enables me to be a donor. I especially appreciate this ability since I was prohibited from giving for nearly ten years while I was on medication.

People need blood. Every day. And despite the fact that a large percentage of the population is eligible to give (must be 17 years old, weigh at least 110 pounds, and be in good health) only 5% actually do. Have you ever considered it yourself? It only takes an hour, and I can promise you you’ll feel great that you made a difference.

To learn more, go to <http://www.redcross.org/donate/give/>. To actually line up a donation, call 1-800-GIVE LIFE, or go to www.givelife.org.

Your gift of an hour may save a life!

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IV. INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION



Happiness@TheSpeedofLife

Jim Smith is The Executive Happiness Coach™. He is a recovering corporate executive whose passion is to help people discover and increase the amount of Happiness in their lives and work.

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Drop me a line anytime with your feedback and queries! Jim <mailto:Jim@1LeaderCoach.com>

Happiness is a decision, not an event.
How will YOU decide today?

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