



## Happiness@TheSpeedofLife Newsletter Edition 83: Nine Strategies to Avoid Happiness

**1,302** words of content including **fourteen strategies to nurture negativity, plus bonus tips to tickle your funny bone!** Approximate reading time required: **5.21** 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. NINE STRATEGIES TO AVOID HAPPINESS

*On a plane...with a cold...for three hours. Ever been there? Your nose runs continually, ears block up, hearing drops to nil, and your itchy eyes fight to pop out of your head, which feels three times its normal size and weight.*

*Rather than struggle with my misery, I decided to embrace it. The following emerged from my darkly creative mood. Enjoy!*

#### Nine Strategies to Avoid Happiness: How to Live as a Victim and Still Control the World!

1. **Take Everything and Everyone for Granted.** After all, it's their job to take care of you, right? Practice rudeness, then sneer at the ones who can't handle it. On those rare occasions when someone meets your impossibly high expectations, be sure to point out something that wasn't perfect, even if you have to make it up.  
**What to Avoid:** Never say "Thank You" or express Appreciation for anything. Gratitude totally kills the buzz of a bad mood.
2. **Cultivate Pessimism.** The world is a dark and dangerous place; make it your mission to remind people of that. No matter what anyone suggests, frown and say, "That will never work!" Scan the global weather channel daily so when people say "good morning" to you, you can remind them of a recent earthquake, typhoon, fire, or flood.  
**Exercise:** Practice slumping, frowning, and rolling your eyes to deepen your skill.
3. **Use Social Comparison as a Weapon.** When you notice any positive self-talk happening, immediately think of someone who is smarter, prettier, or more skilled than you – that will tamp down Self-Confidence before it gets out of control. When a coworker receives recognition for their work, ice that down quickly by pointing out, "I've seen better."  
**Child-rearing Tip:** when your child brings home an essay or artwork, put on a Sad face and say, "too bad you're not talented like <insert name of a friend> is."

4. **Never Give Anyone a Break.** Make 'No' your favorite word. Never give of yourself, and for heaven's sake avoid volunteerism. Performing Acts of Kindness releases serotonin in your brain, which makes you feel better – and that's the last thing you want!  
**Bonus Tip:** Being mean to someone in public carries causes most bystanders to feel a little Depressed or Angry all day. Double your impact!
5. **Push Other People Away.** Isn't it annoying when your family and friends try to "take care of you?" Stay strong! Keep declining invitations until they stop coming; then complain about Abandonment. If you must attend, sit in a corner and whine about something irrelevant.  
**Special note about pets:** Avoid warm-blooded pets, which tend to form icky Emotional bonds. If you *must* have a pet, get a lizard, fish, or something with a reptile brain – there's no risk they will ever care about you!
6. **Reject Simplicity.** CNN apparently thinks you can handle three to six simultaneous streaming data feeds, so stay connected to The Grid at all times. Respond to every email or call immediately (your global clients will be impressed when you respond at 4AM your time).  
**Special note:** When you slow down and allow yourself to enjoy just one thing in the present moment, you risk allowing Happiness and Joy to take root. So keep it complex!
7. **Avoid Commitment.** According to Barry Schwartz's work on the Paradox of Choice, having more options does not make us happier; in fact, we get more stressed. So keep your options wide open! Shun goal-writing exercises, as those create undesirable consequences like greater focus and discovery of your life purpose. Live randomly and put off decisions until you have 100% of all data (which of course will be...never).  
**Bonus:** Lacking a strong foundation, you need never Respond rationally to anything; instead, you will strengthen your Anxiety muscles and get really good at living in React mode.
8. **Sit Down!** Did you know that studies of clinically Depressed people prove consistent exercise raises Happiness levels as much as Zoloft? This is why you must guard against Wellness (a thinly disguised conspiracy to control your life). Skip all health seminars, and when they start distributing salads and pedometers in the company cafeteria, drive to lunch at McDonalds. Look, if your Physical energy improves through better Self-Care, it will naturally pull up your Mental, Emotional, and Spiritual energies, and you can't let that happen!  
**Caution:** If you accept even a tiny responsibility for personal Well-Being, it's a slippery slope. Soon you'll be expected to manage your own Happiness, too, and how unfair is that?!
9. **Nurture Resentment.** Never let go of anything. Remember, Forgiveness is for weaklings. It takes a determined person (like you) to hold on to all those old slights – real and imagined -- and still endure the new crap that's getting dumped on you.  
**Take it a level deeper:** Plan regular time to Obsess about someone who wronged you in the past. Daily attention ensures your negative emotions remain at a constant simmer, burning away your immune system. You'll get sick more often, of course, which will give you lots of opportunity to Hate those people who did this to you!

**Remember, Practice builds stronger muscles.** Exercise at least one of these nine daily, and soon you'll find yourself snugly tucked away at the bottom of the Deep Dark Pit of Despair, finally safe from all those nasty "happy" people who, by the way, are totally out of touch with the way the world really works.

**But you know the Truth, don't you? BWAHAHAHA!**



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**The 13 Principles of Happiness** offers the opposite of what you want. DO NOT VISIT <http://www.theexecutivehappinesscoach.com/happiness/philosophies.cfm> to download them. If you practice any of those 13 habits, you'll never achieve your goal of UNhappiness.

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## II. COMMERCE DIVISION: SUPPORT FOR WELLNESS PROGRAMS

*If the two articles this month hit a little too close to home (as in, they sound like YOUR workplace!) call me right away! Meanwhile, here are some ideas to nurture a healthy culture in your office.*

**Wellness is the new Hot Benefit, loved by HR and Finance people alike**, as wellness programs are an important offering to attract and retain good employees AND the investments pay off in lower healthcare costs and higher employee productivity.

**Remember that fitness centers and cholesterol screenings are just the beginning.** Wellness includes Emotional Well-Being (Stress being one of the Big Four drivers of healthcare costs).

**The Free Stuff section of my new website includes many [Articles you can use in your Wellness newsletters](#)** for employee support or simply to expand the wellness conversation.

FYI: I recently created a new talk that's been very popular for employee meetings, **Happiness, Stress, and the Quest for Wellness** (see details [here](#)).

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## III. IN THE WORKPLACE: TIPS FOR AN UNHAPPY WORKFORCE

**Most employees are already Unhappy, so it doesn't take much effort to nudge them into Insecurity, as well.** Here's a quick reminder of how easy it is to keep your ungrateful subordinates in their place: under your control.

1. **Keep Them Guessing.** Tell them nothing that's not essential to their tiny little jobs. First, it's none of their business. Second, they're probably too stupid to understand important business concepts like you do.
2. **Watch Them Like a Hawk.** Show them why they can't be Trusted. Check their bags for smuggled company pens. When you spot phone numbers of friends or family on the call log, highlight those and send an invoice; as a convenience, offer to dock their pay rather than requiring a bank check.
3. **Isolation is Your Best Offense.** When you see coworkers talking, tell them that sharing ANY company information is a terminable offense. Don't communicate with other departments; if no one knows what you do, it will be easier to act hurt or outraged when your budget gets cut.
4. **Leverage Fear to Keep Your Calendar Clear.** To minimize useless meetings, loudly slam things around when you're in your office alone. If you don't have walls, put on your headset



and pretend you are screaming on conference calls. Avoid eye contact with underlings – it creates false hope that you are approachable.

5. **Remind Them Why You're the Boss.** When you know the answer to a problem, say it quickly so you can demonstrate how smart you are. If you don't know the answer, sit back and let them solve it, then point out your excellent facilitation skills.

**Remember, It's ALL about the Title:** Who needs to learn leadership skills when fear, intimidation, and the exercise of raw power can get the job done with less effort? Tell your people to get happy on their own time, not yours.

<<**P.S. Note from Jim: I did NOT have to make up any of this. Each of these bad behaviors came from stories shared by audience members. Hopefully none of them work for you!>>**

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#### IV. ABOUT THE COACH

**Hi, I'm Jim Smith, PCC, The Executive Happiness Coach®.** I work with smart, successful people like you, who secretly struggle with stress and fear that you won't have what it takes to succeed at the next level. I help you become a more Confident Leader and dramatically reduce your Stress.

**Here's what one client recently shared about the value of coaching with Jim:**

- *"The cumulative effect of investing time with you in the coaching process is a **substantially increased bandwidth for leading in the face of uncertainty**, navigating highly complex situations that frequently arise in our globally connected world."*  
~Jeff W, senior partner

I have helped thousands of leaders and business owners just like you to increase effectiveness at work AND live a happier, more balanced life. I invite you to contact me for a free Leadership Strategy Session to learn how you can create a **less-stress leadership presence**.

Reach me directly: [Jim@TheExecutiveHappinessCoach.com](mailto:Jim@TheExecutiveHappinessCoach.com) or +1-440-885-3247

If you received this from a friend, [SUBSCRIBE](#) now to get your own copy in the future, plus you'll get a valuable leadership report!

#### **All things Happiness Coach:**

Blog: [www.LifeWithHappiness.com](http://www.LifeWithHappiness.com). Connect on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#).

View past editions <http://www.TheExecutiveHappinessCoach.com/newsletter/archives.cfm>

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**Happiness is a decision, not an event.**

**How will YOU decide today?**

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