

# The Book of Happiness

Brilliant Ideas to  
Transform Your Life

Heather Summers and Anne Watson



CAPSTONE



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## About the Authors



**Heather Summers** is an experienced senior executive who now runs her own successful human resources and management consultancy business. As well as strategic consultancy she specialises in executive coaching, personal growth coaching and training. Heather believes we all have much more potential than we give ourselves credit for. All the training that she is involved in, including the Luck Workshops she runs with Anne Watson, help people find and fulfil that potential.

Heather holds an MBA, has an MA in English Literature and French, is qualified in Psychometrics and is a Master Practitioner in NLP. She is married with two children and lives in Harrogate.



**Anne Watson** runs an executive search business that focuses on finding high-achieving executives for businesses, and works with teams to ensure that they achieve their potential. In 1998 she sold a successful business, gaining the freedom to work in those areas that she is most passionate about. This includes running Luck Workshops with Heather Summers and challenging participants to take charge of their

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## Introduction

Most people aspire to being happier than they already are. They want to experience more enjoyment, more laughter, more pleasure, more success in life, work and relationships. However good it is, it could be better.

This book tells you how you can increase the amount of happiness in your life.

Start by filling in the Happiness Questionnaire either in Chapter 1 of this book or on-line at [www.switchtosuccess.co.uk](http://www.switchtosuccess.co.uk). This will give you an instant snapshot of your current state of happiness and you can use this to help you decide which critical aspects of happiness you need to focus on.

Our research shows us that those people who consider themselves to be most happy believe that happiness is a choice and a habit. We also know that it only takes 21 days to get rid of an unwanted habit and to acquire a new one. Just think of that – 21 days from now your life will be transformed! You will have decided that you control your own destiny and your own level of happiness. Not only that, you will have read the hundreds of Brilliant Ideas that you can adopt to help you get there. You will feel new energy and new enthusiasm for life. You will reappraise the critical elements that make up your life such as your job, your



relationships, your health, your money, your lifestyle and where you live. Make your starting point the belief that you could be happier and then this book will work brilliantly for you.

It is impossible to look at happiness without also considering unhappiness. A lot of our potential for happiness is reduced, restricted or even sabotaged by unnecessary unhappiness. You will learn in the course of this book many strategies for reducing unhappiness.

When we talk about happiness we don't mean euphoria, although that is a part of happiness, nor do we mean pleasure for pleasure's sake. It is making the most of what we have at each moment in time. This habit stops us from always postponing the moment when we believe we will be happy. Instead of constantly projecting happiness into a future time and place, 'when I retire', 'when I graduate', 'when I have paid off my mortgage', 'when I meet the person of my dreams', 'when I win the lottery', 'when I have travelled the world', 'when I have a family', 'when my children grow up', happiness will always be now. This skill of learning to live in the happy, present moment will also give you a bank of happy memories. These memories, just like photographs and videos/DVDs will provide happiness in the future and will be a brilliant resource to draw on when you are facing tough times or unhappy situations.

This book has been built on a solid foundation of research. Thousands of people have filled in our Happiness Questionnaire on [www.switchtosuccess.co.uk](http://www.switchtosuccess.co.uk). We have used this data to analyse the true nature of happiness and to use a model that describes how you can build happiness at six different levels.<sup>1</sup>

We were assisted in our research by the Innovation and Enterprise Unit of Lancaster University. They conducted an analysis of whether different age groups have different beliefs around what constitutes happiness.

Important findings across all age groups were as follows.



- ❖ Good health does not give you happiness but poor health makes you unhappy, whether it is yours or someone else's.
- ❖ Comparing ourselves to others affects our happiness. Generally people compare themselves unfavourably with others. They look at who they are and what they have and this comparison leads to feelings of unhappiness and discontent.
- ❖ Having more and more possessions does not increase happiness. It simply makes us want more.
- ❖ The most powerful source of happiness is human contact, whether it is with friends, family or closer relationships.

One surprising but wonderfully British finding, was that weather impacts more on people than you could ever imagine. The research showed that bad weather was a strong influence on how people felt and could go a long way towards explaining why so many British people own a place in the sun.

A salient difference between the age groups related to attitude to money. Younger people thought that money made them happy whereas older people thought that money was not a significant factor when thinking of happiness.

The research also demonstrated very clearly that youthful optimism is gradually eroded and as people get older, they become less happy. This is caused by people allowing themselves to be affected by things outside their control. We, on the other hand, believe that happiness comes from within and that we have control over it. Whatever age you are you can choose how to look at circumstances and events in such a way as to increase happiness. Rather than allowing yourself to be swept along by events, emotions and experiences, decide now that happiness is inside you and within your control.

All of this goes to show that there is no natural entitlement to happiness. It means different things to different people. None-



theless the structure of happiness remains the same for all of us. It does not arrive on a plate but needs to be developed, worked at and grown. We believe that by understanding the six steps on the Stairway of Happiness and by using the self knowledge gained from the Happiness Questionnaire you will be able use the Brilliant Ideas in a very practical way. *The Book of Happiness* will show you how to change any unhelpful attitudes and responses to ones that will transform your life. Make sure you enjoy yourself along the way!

<sup>1</sup> The concept of logical levels of learning and change was initially formulated as a mechanism in the behavioural sciences by Gregory Bateson, based on the work of Bertrand Russell in logic and mathematics. The term ‘logical levels’, as it is used in NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming), was adapted from Bateson’s work by Robert Dilts in the mid 1980s and refers to hierarchy of levels of processes with an individual or group. We have used this thinking as part of the inspiration for our Stairway of Happiness.



# The Happiness Questionnaire

How happy can you be? Before you can take any steps to increase your happiness, it's best to check how happy you are right now.

We may or may not be born with a natural flair for happiness, but everyone can make or increase their own happiness in different parts of their life. It is simply a question of knowing how. Fill in the questionnaire below before you read the book and discover how truly happy you think you are.

When filling in this questionnaire, first of all remember that there are no right or wrong answers, with nothing bad or good about any score. Use the results to decide how you are going to read the book. Remember that this will be a reflection of how you are choosing to be at this particular moment in time. You can change if you want to and if you are willing to learn how to change.

You can also do this Happiness Questionnaire on our website [www.switchtosuccess.co.uk](http://www.switchtosuccess.co.uk). If you take the time to do that as well, then you will receive by e-mail an individually tailored Happiness Profile.

Overleaf you will find 36 statements. Read each statement carefully and decide whether you agree with it more than you disagree.



If you mainly agree, tick YES.

If you mainly disagree, tick NO.

Answer every question and remember that although some answers may be harder to find than others, the more honest you are, the more valid the results will be.

Don't spend too long over any one question. If you are undecided, it's important to put down the first answer that popped into your mind.



	Yes	No
1 I love where I live and work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 I wish I was happier with what is going on in my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 I get out and about to places I want to be	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 The key relationships in my life are not how I want them to be	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Many of the people I mix with drain my energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 I love the sights and sounds that surround me daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 When things go wrong I remember happy times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 I make time for the things that give me pleasure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 What I do in my daily life at home or work sometimes gets me down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 I enjoy many different interests that fill my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 I know I could take better care of myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 I talk nicely to myself and to other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 I feel I could make much more of the talents I have	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 I like to learn new things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 I know I am always improving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 I find it difficult to change myself at times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 I tend to assume that I am not good at many things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 I use my imagination and my mind to develop myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Sometimes I struggle to get up in the morning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 I believe life will go my way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 I value the people in my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22 I know what is important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Yes	No
23 I tend to take the good things I have for granted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24 I know I can tackle anything life throws at me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 I am happy with my roots	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26 Sometimes I wonder if I really matter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27 There are times when I wonder who I am	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28 I am a worthwhile person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29 I am glad that I am who I am	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 Knowing who I am makes me happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31 I am unsure where I am going in life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32 Life is meaningful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33 I sometimes feel out of step with the world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34 I feel part of a larger whole	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35 My contribution will last	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36 I am able to let go of things that really don't matter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### The Stairway of Happiness Scoring Grid

Transfer every answer (Yes or No) into the relevant box in the Scoring Grid below. Score one point for every answer you have that appears in a shaded box.

Then add up your totals.



# THE HAPPINESS QUESTIONNAIRE

							Totals
1	2	3	4	5	6	Step 1 – <i>Surroundings</i>	
7	8	9	10	11	12	Step 2 – <i>Behaviour</i>	
13	14	15	16	17	18	Step 3 – <i>Skills and Capabilities</i>	
19	20	21	22	23	24	Step 4 – <i>Values and Beliefs</i>	
25	26	27	28	29	30	Step 5 – <i>Identity</i>	
31	32	33	34	35	36	Step 6 – <i>Purpose</i>	