

THE GREATEST OBSTACLE TO HAPPINESS AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT

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Our life is about a string of moments in time. So often we stand in our unhappiness trying to improve a future moment. The problem is that this moment is where we are creating what we call our "future".

Most people are looking toward a future time for pleasure and a feeling of satisfaction, but very few experience it in the NOW. Yet NOW is the only time that exists. What you are being, living, thinking and feeling *in the present moment* will determine your happiness. It also determines how much time you spend on worrying about the future.

Your Point of Power

Think of your present moment as your Point of Power, because it is the only point where you can exercise your full power. For most of us the present moment exists only as mental concept. If there is such a place where all the creative forces of the universe come

together, how do we know it is the *present moment*? What evidence is there that this is true?

Consider this; all your hopes for the future and even your memories of the past can happen only in the *present moment*. The present moment is that one point where everything comes together.

When does life start? When does it end? When do cause and effect take place? When is it that we meet every challenge? When are problems born and when are they resolved? When do we feel pain? When are we healed? This all happens in the present moment.

We have been taught that those moments are separate from each other, but in truth, they all take place in the *now*. No matter what happens in life, it is always *now*, then *now*, then *now* - always in the present moment.

Nothing exist outside of the NOW

Nothing ever happened in the past. – It happened in the Now.

Nothing will ever happen in the future – It will happen in the Now.

When you think of the past it is stored in the mind as a former *now*. And, when you think about the past, when do you do it? – You do it *now*!

When the future comes – it comes in the *now*. And, when you *think* about the future, when do you do it? – You do it *now*!

The past and the future have no realities of their own. Their realities are “borrowed” from the *now*.

The insanity of future time

Ideologies such as communism, socialism or any other type of “ism”, as well as rigid religious beliefs systems operate from the assumption that the highest good for all lies in the future and therefore the end justifies the means. The end is an idea or a point in the mind projected into the future when solutions - whatever form they take – happiness, fulfillment, equality, liberation, etc. will be attained. Not infrequently the means of getting there are enslavement, torture and murder of the people in the present.

For example, 50 million people were murdered to the future cause of communism to bring about a “better world” in Russia and China. This is a chilling example of how a belief in the future can create a present hell.

How does this pattern operate in your life? Are you always trying to get somewhere other than where you are? Are you focused on achieving or attaining or chasing some thrill, pleasure or excitement?

All unhappiness is caused by denial of the present. We think problems are caused by our situations in life, but attachment to the past and future and denial of the now is the real problem. Ultimately then, there is only one problem in life – not living in the now.

You cannot be unhappy *and* fully present *now*. It is impossible to have a problem when your attention is in the *now*. When you live in the *now*, a situation is either dealt with or accepted *now*. A problem means you are dwelling on a situation mentally without having a true intention or possibility of taking action *now*.

Answers come in the NOW

Perhaps you are seeking answers to your questions or problems. Notice that sometimes you receive your answer, but most of the time you don't. Why? Because you are not in the present moment when the answer arrives! *Anytime your mind is out of the present moment you cannot receive the answer you need from Higher Intelligence.*

The answer can come in many ways and at any time, but it will always come in the present moment. If we spend most of our time regretting and living in the past or worrying about the future we place ourselves *out* of the present moment where all creativity and answers take place. Does it make any sense at all to desire, request, yearn and pray for that which is closest to your heart and necessary to your life and then not be paying attention when the answer arrives?

Our Point of Power can only exist in the present moment. We create from this moment whether the materialization appears instantly or later as a complex event. However, all creation takes place in the *now*. If we really understand this truth, we will have an inexhaustible supply of usable energy at our command.

It is only our thoughts, attitudes and emotions in the moment that have power. It is not what occurred to us in the past that will force us on a path that we would rather not be on. It is how tightly we hold on to that past by reliving its trauma and drama in our present moment. When we constantly worry and re-examine the past in order to discover what's wrong with the present, we reinforce the building materials that will create exactly that which we are trying to escape.

Vibrational Energy of the NOW

Understand that in every moment you are sending out a vibrational energy through your thoughts. This vibrational energy is magnetizing and attracting everything to you. If you send out a vibrational energy that you don't have what you want, you will end up with more of the same - having what you don't want.

If this is true, (and it is) then what could be more advantageous than using this moment to send out a vibrational energy or thought that is in alignment with what you want in your life? The answer is nothing is more important!

I am talking about the power of FOCUS. Ask yourself, "Am I activating what I want in this moment or am I focusing on something that doesn't allow me to have what I want?"

Energy is tied into DESIRE. Anything that feels opposite to that energy or desire creates a situation that prevents us from having what we desire.

Why we have trouble living in the NOW

Why does the mind habitually resist the now? It is because the mind cannot function and remain in control in the present moment. It only knows about your past personal history and the cumulative mind-set you inherited. In order for the mind to remain in control, it must continuously seek to cover up the present moment with the only thing it knows – the past.

Let me ask you a question – can you be free of your mind whenever you want to? Have you found the “off” button? If you are constantly focusing on the past or future, you are not using your mind; your mind is using you. You don't even know that you are its slave. It is almost like being possessed without knowing it.

Watching the thinker

If you find it difficult to live in the NOW, try this: Stand back and just *observe* the habitual tendency of your mind wanting to escape the now.

You will observe that the future is usually better or worse than the present. If the imagined future is better, it gives you hope, pleasure and anticipation. If it is worse, it creates anxiety. Both are illusions.

Don't judge or analyze what you observe. Watch the thought – feel the emotion, observe the reaction – become the silent watcher. This will help you to focus on the moment, because the moment you realize you are not present, you ARE present.

The Origin of fear

The reason you don't put your hand in a fire is not because of fear. It is because you KNOW you will get burned. *The psychological condition of fear is divorced from any true and immediate danger.* It comes in many forms – unease, worry, anxiety, nervousness, dread, phobia, fear of loss, fear of failure, fear of being hurt, and so on. This kind of psychological fear is always of something that MIGHT happen, not something that is happening *now*.

Freedom from unhappiness

Problems of the mind cannot be solved with the mind. Studying the mind might make you a good psychologist, but doing so won't take you beyond the mind just as studying madness isn't enough to create madness.

When you create problems you create pain. All it takes is a single choice – a simple decision that no matter what happens you will not longer create pain by trying to live in the future or the past.

Are you worried? Do you have many “what if” thoughts? Ask yourself what “problem” you have right *now*, not tomorrow, not five minutes from now. What’s wrong with this moment?

Is your goal is taking up so much time and attention that you reduce the present moment as a means to an end?

Are you waiting to start living? If you develop such a mind-pattern no matter what you achieve or get the present will never be good enough. The future will always seem better. This is a recipe for permanent dissatisfaction and non-fulfillment – don’t you agree?

Are you a habitual “waiter”? How much of your life do you spend waiting for the next holiday, better job, your child to grow up, success, make money, be important, and become enlightened?

Waiting is a state of mind. Basically it means you want the future. You don’t want the present. There is an inner conflict between your here and now, when you don’t want to be here and a projected future is where you want to be.

The key is to break the old patterns of present moment denial and present moment resistance. We must learn to withdraw our attention from the past and future whenever they are not needed.

Should a situation arise that you need to deal with *now*, your actions will be clear and decisive if they arise out of present moment awareness. Your response will not be a reaction coming from the past conditioning of your mind, but from an intuitive present moment awareness of the situation.

Goal Setting in the NOW

Throughout this book we have talked about goal setting. It is important to understand that there is nothing wrong with striving to improve your life *situation*, but you cannot improve your *life*.

Your life situation consists of your experiences and the circumstances. As we have learned, goals are important. The mistake is using them as a substitute for living in the NOW.

You are on a journey. It is helpful to know where you are going – but don't forget the only thing that is ultimately real about your journey is the steps you are taking in the present moment.

Your Inner and Outer purpose

Your journey has an *outer purpose* and an *inner purpose*. The outer purpose is to arrive at your goal destination – to accomplish what you desire, to achieve what you want, which of course, implies the future.

But if your destination or the steps you are going to take in the future take up so much of your attention that they become more important than the steps you are taking now, then you completely miss the inner journey's purpose. Your inner journey's purpose has nothing to do with WHERE you are going or WHAT you are doing, but everything to do with the *now*. It has nothing to do with the future.

If you don't understand your inner purpose you will fail at your outer purpose. Keep in mind that the outer purpose is just a game that you may continue to play because you enjoy it. And often you may fail, but so what.

Ultimately EVERY outer purpose is doomed to "fail" sooner or later because it is subject to the law of impermanence of all things.

The sooner you realize your outer purpose cannot give you lasting fulfillment the better. When you have seen the limitations of your outer purpose you can give up the unrealistic expectation that it can make you happy. More importantly, you make it subservient to your inner purpose.

Have your dwelling place in the NOW and pay brief visits to your past and future when required. Always say "yes" to the present moment. Surrender to what is and see how life suddenly starts working for you instead against you.

The key is to LIVE in the present moment, but know that you are creating your future in this moment. What you are looking for is balance in your thinking. In other words, living in the present moment while giving thought to something you desire and expecting it.

The true source of joy

While living in the present moment, the true source of experiencing enormous joy lies in one act: **discovering and following what excites us the most in any given moment each day, all day.** Doing the things that excite us is the only way that we will ever experience ourselves overflowing with joy and love.

Each one of us needs to find our joy. Something that we can't wait to get up in the morning to do something we can't get enough of, something that makes our heart sing. It could be anything. It could be more than one thing. Something that makes us feel good, allows us to be ourselves, gives us freedom to grow and expand, something that leads us down the path to more joyful things and exciting challenges.

The way to be your most creative is following your joy. If you follow your joy and excitement and do what comes *natural* to you, not necessarily *easy*, but joyfully, you will be the most beneficial to yourself, others around you and to the world at large.

Dare to be different

We discussed throughout this book the idea of choosing what we desire and following our dreams. What stops many people from following their joy is that they are afraid that their way of doing something it will not be good enough or accepted. They compare what comes from them naturally with what is considered the norm. That whole process of conformity starts in school. They ask you to write a poem and then it is compared to another poem and if it is in the same form then it gets an "A". If it is different and has a form of its own then it gets a "D." When I was in first grade the teacher

asked us to draw a picture of a cat. When I was finished my picture was considered so poor that I was told I have no talent as far as art is concerned. I never drew or participated in any art form after that.

Perhaps you decided that you couldn't paint because you are comparing your form to another form. But the truth is you could no more paint like Van Gogh than Van Gogh could paint like you. The difference is that Van Gogh believed in himself and in his style of painting. That's the magic.

No one can do what you do exactly the way you do it. This includes business, the arts or any area of life. A person's self expression cannot be judged other than by a total fool. What you do, whatever makes you feel alive and joyful, is your unique expression. And it is probably the only thing that will bring you true joy and excitement.

The unhappy majority

Unfortunately, for many of us, we spend much of our days following and doing what we have come to believe we need to do, rather than what truly excites us and what would, for that very reason, end up bringing us the joy we seek.

Can we truly expect to experience enormous joy and happiness in our lives if the first concern we have in the morning upon waking is to be on time to a job that does not bring us joy and excitement?

If seventy percent of our days are filled with activities that do not bring us joy, excitement and love, then the remaining thirty-percent cannot compensate for that. All the seminars, books, meditation, and affirmations are not going to help.

Yet the more time we spend doing things that do not truly bring us joy and excitement, the more money we spend on other things trying to compensate for our growing unhappiness, and this ends up bringing us more debt. So the end result is that we are tied even more into working at what we dislike. It is a self-defeating circle.

Have you ever been in a room with many unhappy people? How did it feel in there? Now imagine what billions of unhappy people are doing to the world. Unfortunately we have become so accustomed to this energy that we don't even notice it anymore. It's as thick as molasses everywhere with the exception of a few pockets of joy now and then.

What we fail to understand is when we have billions of people doing things that they do not want to do, it creates unhappiness, That unhappiness creates a collective energy that goes into the environment and causes more damage to the environment than everything else combined. It is like anger causing an ulcer. The anger created the ulcer and people's sadness creates the negative result in the environment.

There are many people concerned about the environment of the planet. They want to save the rivers, oceans and the forest. While

that may be commendable, I can tell you that the energy from so many unhappy people on this planet is what is poisoning the environment *more than everything else combined*.

We will not solve our environmental problems until we solve the *sad energy problem*. What we don't realize is that our physical environmental problems are created from the negative energy that comes from billions of unhappy people. Instead of trying to clean up the environment, we need to clean up the thinking and unhappiness of the people who are cause of our environmental problems.

Others may not like it

You have read over and over throughout this book that *all change comes from the inside*. Trying to change things using the outside-in approach is always doomed to failure. On the surface this looks selfish, but you know by now that *we can only change the planet one person at a time*.

As you begin to search for and follow your joy and excitement you may feel this process appears a bit selfish. There may be other people around you that feel you are being selfish, but that is only because they cannot understand that by allowing you the freedom to find your joy and excitement that this will in turn make it easier for them to find and follow their joy also.

In the beginning having family around you and also having children can at times make following your joy and excitement more challenging. Sometimes following your joy may feel like you

are not being practical or looking after your responsibilities. You could subconsciously be afraid that you will end up playing away your time, or indulging yourself, rather than looking after your family. In the beginning it can be a delicate balance, but as time goes on you will be much happier and the quality of time you spend together will improve considerably. Also, other things that need to be done will seem more enjoyable when you allow yourself to do them when it feels right rather than when you thought you should be doing them.

As you follow your joy and excitement people will automatically see how much happier you are and how much more you are enjoying life. This gets their attention and will slowly rub off on others around you. So in the beginning you could possibly receive some resistance from those close to you, even some resistance and fear from yourself. This will pass as you become happier and more excited to live each day. Joy is very addictive and draws people towards you. As people see that it is okay to follow your joy and excitement and that it is creative rather than destructive, they will very quickly attempt to bring this process into their own lives.

Finding what brings you joy

If you are not sure what your true joy might be, ask yourself these questions and record your answers.

What subjects do you most enjoy reading about?

What television or radio programs do you most enjoy?

What are your favorite types of movies?

What are your favorite hobbies or pastimes?
What type of volunteer activities do you prefer?
What subjects do you enjoy discussing with friends?
What subjects come to mind when you daydream?
What have been your favorite jobs?
What were your favorite school subjects?
What are your pet peeves?
If you doodle, what do you often draw?
If you ran the world, what changes would you make?
If you won a million bucks, what would you do with it?
What are your favorite kinds of people?
How would you like to be remembered after your death?
What are your favorite toys?
How would you describe your political beliefs?
Who do you most admire in life and why?
What tasks have brought you the most success?
What tasks do you think you could do well that you haven't yet done?

Examine your answers. Do you see a certain behavior or belief in more than one aspect of your life? What information do you see repeated that seems to reveal a behavior pattern? What are your long-lasting interests?

Using this information, paint a self-portrait by completing the following statements:

I am mainly interested in...

I believe most in...

I most value...

I can do the following well...

For a good life, I feel I need...

Now ask yourself if your current job or career helps you achieve these five statements. If it does, you're probably on the right path. Chances are; however, that the nagging voice means your are not satisfying your core desires. If this is the case, then it's time to find a better fit.

As you can see, finding what brings you joy and excitement isn't that difficult. Essentially all it takes is to think about the things that you the dream about, the things you think about that you feel would bring you pleasure. After you have your list, the next step is to *remove the things from this list that are an escape from what you are doing*. There are a lot of things that we do to escape some of the unhappy situations in our lives, *these are not the things that will truly bring us the joy and excitement we seek*.

Sometimes we do things that have ulterior motives attached to them and we think we do it because it brings us joy, but if it's really the ulterior motive that we are after then it is not really following our joy.

That's sort of like working at a job that you hate to get something that you want. Although it can work to some extent, in the end those eight hours of unhappiness are going to be very hard to compensate for. Remember that if you are working at something that does not bring you joy, you will spend twice as much money

trying to buy some happiness and in so doing you will need to work even more at what you don't like.

A step at a time

Following our joy is not one large step, like quitting our job and spending our days sitting under a tree. That is not following our joy - that is escaping. There is a big difference between following the things that truly excite us and doing things to escape from a life that does not bring us joy.

The trick is to find, *in the present moment*, the things that would bring us the most excitement, and then do whatever we can to follow that excitement, even in the smallest way. This causes a chain reaction that brings us more opportunities to do what we love to do.

I think that the hardest time people have with following their joy is trying to make a living and at the same time trying to follow their joy. I have noticed that one of the very first things we fear is our financial concerns. That's why we start off slowly following the path little by little and letting things build upon themselves slowly.

However, I will tell you this, whenever I followed my joy it always turned out to be the most financial rewarding thing at the end. When you follow your true joy, wherever that leads you, and even if it changes from time to time, then the details will work themselves out on their own. If you try to work out all the details and debate them to death, you will go insane before you find the

right answer. But if you just follow your joy and what brings you excitement then you will end up doing what is best for you and everyone.

Whatever we desire is waiting for us to claim it. You have already learned you do not have to know the details or how to do anything. All you have to do is focus on what you want. I can't take away your fears and doubts no matter how many pages I write. You will just need to trust yourself and the Power within you that you can truly follow your joy and do things in a way that bring you joy and have it all work out.

The greatest obstacle to happiness is not living in the present moment and not following your joy. The solution is to do just the opposite. If you find yourself focusing on the past or the future, remind yourself that the present moment is all there is, and then surrender to what is and see how life suddenly starts working for you.

If you put the same amount of effort into finding what gives you joy as you put into going to work at a job you dislike, you will end up with results that will make you think, "Why did I wait so long to do this?"

Final thought

I have come to understand that when we enter this world we all do so with two wings. One is the Wing of Infinite Power. This is your connection with the Universe. And whether you know it or not, that

wing is flapping by your side supporting you twenty-four hours a day 365 days a year from now to eternity. The other wing is that which you have consciously activated. This is the Wing of Self-Effort. This wing has to fly equally as hard as the Wing of Infinite Power. When it does you will have flight into the world of unlimited possibilities where anything and everything is possible for you. Then and only then will you understand how truly powerful you are and that you have all it takes within you to create what you desire.

So follow your joy whatever it may be; in whatever form it may come; let it come forth as it may; to be as it may. Let your joy, excitement and uncensored creativity carve you into the image of the Creator. For the crevasses and lines on our faces show not our age but how much we have dared to be true to ourselves.

**From – Dr. Anthony’s “Advanced Formula For Total Success”
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