

Are you “Happy”

If you were asked this question from a total stranger, how would you respond? If your doctor or your spouse asked you about your level of happiness, would your response be positive?

How is “HAPPY” Measured?

By far, the most common way that researchers assess happiness is through **self-reports**. Using multiple-item scales or a single question, they simply ask people about their level of happiness. People think about their happiness, and it is a subjective state, so it makes sense to ask them about it.

Where Do The World’s Happiest People Live?

On average across **30** countries, **2 in 3 adults (67%) report being happy**: 15% very much so and 52% rather so. Countries with the highest proportion of adults considering themselves as very happy are India (39%), Australia (30%), and Saudi Arabia (29%).

The U.S. now ranks as the **16th** happiest country in the world, lagging just behind Ireland, Germany, and Canada. That's a three-spot gain from last year, when the U.S. was **19th**. The U.S. now ranks above countries like the United Kingdom, Czechia, Belgium and France in an array of happiness metrics.

What is a good happiness score?

The lowest happiness score is 1 and the happiest score is 6. A score of **4** generally means that the person is satisfied; this has also been observed to be the score of the average person.

There are five (5) Keys to Happiness:

1. **Positive emotion.** This doesn't mean putting on a happy face and denying the frustrating events that are intrinsic to our lives. (A sense of control in the rodeo called life!)
2. **Engagement.** This is all about involvement in activities that require your energy, creativity, and commitment. ...
3. **Relationships.** ...(Friendship - Fellowship - Partnership - Companionship)
4. **Meaning.** ... (Core Values - Life has to make sense!)
5. **Achievement.** (Teamwork makes the dream work!)

How to Achieve “Happiness”

(The Mayo Clinic Health System, August 2022 “7 Tips to a Happier Life”)

What is Energy Management?

Think of your energy as a limited resource, like money in an account. You begin the day with a certain amount to spend. The amount varies from person to person based on factors such as age, sleep, stress levels, medical conditions, and lifestyle.

Activities and interactions withdraw energy from or deposit energy into your account. While you may not always have control over activities that deplete your energy, you can take steps to deposit more energy into your account.

Follow these seven tips to increase your energy and live a happier, healthier, more productive life:

1. Eat nourishing food.

A well-balanced, healthy diet is at the core of well-being. But it's common to regard healthy eating primarily as a tool for weight loss. According to the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, a balanced diet high in fruits and vegetables, lean protein, low-fat dairy and whole grains is needed for optimal energy. You really are what you eat.

Consume a variety of foods from all the food groups to get a range of nutrients to provide energy throughout the day. Opt for fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, especially nutrient-dense dark, leafy greens and broccoli, as well as orange vegetables, like carrots and sweet potatoes. You can choose from many types of fish and legumes for healthy protein options. Aim to eat three (3) ounces of whole-grain cereals, breads, rice or pasta daily.

2. Sleep seven to eight hours per night.

Prioritizing sleep is one of the best things you can do to set yourself up for a successful, energized day. Sleep deprivation can perpetuate serious health conditions, as well as negatively affect your mood, motivation and energy levels. Getting quality sleep is a healthy habit many people need to improve. Most adults need at least seven to eight hours of shut-eye each night, so what prevents them from getting it?

Observe your sleep patterns if you struggle with sleep. Take note of how much you sleep each night, factors that contribute to your sleep or lack of it, how rested you feel, and how much energy you have during your day. Then try sleep strategies to improve your sleep, like creating a relaxing and restful environment, minimizing light and noise, establishing a bedtime routine, managing stress, and turning off electronic devices.

Whatever you decide to start with, be consistent. Utilizing the same sleep routine and sleep strategies will help develop your body's internal alarm clock and can lead to improved sleep quality. With improved sleep quality, people experience better health, and improved emotional well-being, lower risk of diseases, and are more productive.

3. Keep company with good people.

Maximize the amount of time that you spend with people you enjoy being around. Connecting with others who radiate positivity and have similar interests will excite and energize you.

On the other side, people you do not relate to or who have negative outlooks, complain often, or make poor choices will only drain your energy account. Be selective about the company you keep.

It's important to set limits and boundaries to protect yourself and conserve your energy when around people who do not refill your energy reserves.

4. Avoid news overdose.

Consuming news is an important way to stay connected to what's happening in the world. It can be educational, entertaining and even uplifting.

Unfortunately, the news too frequently is filled with stories of suffering. These stories can skew your view of the world and cause you to focus on your worst fears instead of recognizing the good that surrounds you.

You can't avoid these stories altogether, but try to minimize your exposure when you can, especially during trying times.

5. Get regular exercise.

Do you find yourself feeling lethargic halfway through the day? Have you ever gotten winded by simple everyday duties, such as grocery shopping or household chores? The Department of Health and Human Services recommends that adults complete at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week. Contrary to what you might believe, this will add to your energy account and not subtract from it.

Exercise relieves stress and tension, strengthens muscles and boosts endurance, and helps your body work more efficiently during other physical tasks or activities.

6. Do something meaningful each day.

What do you feel passionate about? Do you have a special talent that you'd like to practice more often or share with others? Do something you enjoy every day, even if it's a simple act like cooking a healthy meal or listening to your favorite song. Putting effort into the things that matter most to you will help you use and reserve your energy in ways that will bring out the best in you.

7. Think good thoughts for others.

Maintaining a compassionate mindset is another way to conserve energy. One example of practicing this way of thinking is called kind attention. For example, try to make eye contact with a stranger and smile, while thinking "I wish you well." This positive act can keep you from judging that person. Judging others can cause us to place judgment on ourselves, and that type of negative internal dialogue can be exhausting.

A Word of Wisdom From Joyce Meyers - “Think about what you think about!”