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Creating Your
DEFINITION
of **HAPPINESS**



Life is all about the choices and the decisions we make. Life is like a road. There are long, short, smooth, rocky, crooked and straight paths. There are many routes to make the journey through life. There are roads that lead in every direction good or bad. Some roads lead to fame and fortune on one hand, or isolation and poverty on the other. Some roads lead to misery and disappointment on one hand or happiness and jubilation on the other. Creating your own definition of happiness is about defining the ideal direction for your life to end up where you want to be.

Life, like any road, can have corners, detours, and crossroads. Of all these the crossroads are the ones we should pay the most attention to. When you reach a crossroads you can only go one way or another. So a choice must be made to either continue on your current path or change course to go in a totally different direction. What is the guarantee that we are choosing the right direction for our lives?



There are no guarantees.

You cannot be 100% sure where a road will lead you until you take it. There are no guarantees. This is one of the most important things we have to accept about life. The only

thing we have power over is the decision that we make in each moment in a world of billions of other people making their own decisions. I believe that we have a huge amount of control over our lives even far beyond what most people think. Our thoughts, beliefs and actions change our environment in many profound ways. I am not however a person that believes that any one person can control everything just by thinking and believing strongly enough. That belief must also be accompanied by actions in the right environment. So the thing we can do is make decisions that have the highest probability of success for our desired outcome.

Hindsight is 20/20



Have you ever thought back on something you did and wondered how you could do something so stupid? Or after some unexpected event have you thought... If only I had known... Maybe not, but it is safe to say that if we could see into the future we would all make much

better decisions. Why would you choose a certain path if you knew it would get you lost? Why make a certain decision if you knew from the very beginning that it was not the right one. It is only after you have made a decision and see the results that you realize how

effective it was. If the outcome was good, then you decided well. Otherwise, you could have made a better decision. There is only one reason a person would make a decision they know to be bad.

Emotion

Emotion is definitely something that can influence our decisions and not always in a positive way. Words and actions fueled by emotion can be unpredictable and often only take the feelings of the moment into consideration regardless of negative consequences in the future. It's best to make important decisions when not in a highly emotional state, however we are humans. So the next best thing is to be aware of our emotional state and adjust our thinking accordingly.

Taking Risk



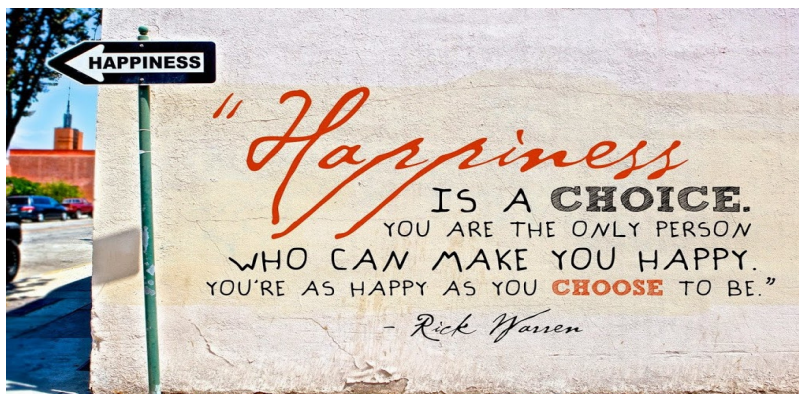
Since life offers no guarantee and you can't be 100% certain your decisions will be correct until you have made them, then you might as well go ahead and take your best educated guess. Whether it is for something 10 years in the future or something that must be decided in the moment. It's better than doing nothing. Even though the turn you thought was right could be a dead end, it could also be an opportunity for success and happiness. Just be careful not to make decisions haphazardly. Taking risk is not about being careless and stupid. All decisions have some risk, but it is about calculating risk vs reward and making the best decision.

Life is a never ending battle against both internal and external forces. If success is in making good decisions while striving for our goals then poor planning and negative emotions are our enemy. In “The Art of War,” Sun Tzu said “The good fighters of old first put themselves beyond the possibility of defeat, and then waited for an opportunity of defeating the enemy.” Along those same lines, we must plan thoroughly weighing the pros and cons of every possible decision so that when opportunities for victory arrive we are ready to take advantage of them.

Create Your Definition

On a broad level, for your own definition of happiness you need to include: who you are, what you are doing, when you are doing it, where you are doing what you are doing, why you are doing it and who else you are doing it with. So it's who, what, when, where, why

and who else. You can get really specific on these things, especially when thinking about the things you want, but I warn you that happiness is not solely in an abundance of money or possessions. Sure, there are many things you need and want, but it is always people that give life to possessions, not the other way around. Whether you want success to share what you have with other people, to have a more exciting life, to live an easier life, or you just want people to envy you and make you feel important, it's still all about people. Once we get past our basic human needs of air, water, food, clothing and shelter, everything else is social. So it's great to have goals for things you'd like to own or things you'd like to accomplish, but just be sure you know why.



Happiness is also not just a destination. Don't think about how happy you will be when you get to a certain point. Think about how happy you are that you are planning, making

your best decision, and acting on the things you need to today in order to reach your goals.

That is my definition of happiness. Go create yours!

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