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5 Surprising Secrets of True Happiness

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By Peter Economy

Finding happiness is, without doubt, a daily struggle. We search for it endlessly, through self-help books, TV shows, ice cream sundaes, or deep conversations with friends. The true keys to unlocking happiness, however, are much closer than you think. Consider these 5 surprising secrets to true happiness, and how you can access them yourself.

1. Don't compare

There's nothing worse in the world than pitting your own accomplishments against those of someone else. As the old saying goes, the grass is always greener on the other side. So don't make assumptions about your own work or talent in light of others. If you've done something great--something that you're proud of--remain proud. Everything is relative; it's imperative to your happiness that you remember that.

2. Listen to your inner voice

Although the thoughts and opinions of others echo loudly in our everyday lives, it's important to recognize that there's nothing as important as your own voice. Know yourself, trust yourself, and don't ever be afraid to. In almost every instance, it turns out, your gut knows what's best. Second-guessing yourself due to a lack of self-confidence will lead you down a less-fulfilling path.

3. Love being alone

Introspection and reflection arrive only when you're completely alone. Take a couple moments each day to allow yourself this "alone time." You'll find you're much more aware of who you are--and who you hope to be soon. The sense of being grounded will surely aid you in finding contentment.

4. Be present

With the advent of extreme technology, it's so easy to be distant from the present moment. Try to remain where you are, when you are, and at all possible times. If you don't milk the most out of every single second, you're wasting away the precious memories you could be making by simply having your thoughts and emotions elsewhere. Be fully present, so you can enjoy your current happiness before it passes.

5. Do things that scare you

Taking risks, while frightening at first, is definitely the way to success--and happiness. If we never venture outside of our comfort zone, we'll never know the things we're capable of. Too often, we get sucked into routines of complacency, content with doing things the way we know--afraid to try something that may be more efficient or satisfying. That's a mistake. Push the boundaries of what's routine in your life, and enjoy the happiness you'll gain as a result.