

Steps To Happiness: Wiki Thingi

1. Find the true Path to Happiness. So, if you're able to escape materialism, how can you find true happiness? There are many ways, and each of us is different, but here are some things to try:

* **Grateful list.** Make a list of things about which you're grateful in your life. Give thanks for them daily.

* **Think positive.** Try eliminating negative thinking from your life, and think positive instead.

* **Small pleasures.** Make a list of small things that give you great pleasure. Sprinkle them throughout your day. Notice other small pleasures as you go through your day.

* **Kindness.** Practice random acts of kindness and compassion. Do it anonymously. Help those in need. Volunteer. Make someone smile.

* **Love.** Make an intimate connection with your loved ones. Develop your friendships. Spend time with them, converse, understand them, make them happy.

* **Health.** Exercise and eat healthy — it sounds trite, but it can bring great happiness to your life.

* **Meaning.** It's often useful to find meaning, either through a church or spiritual way, or through those we love in life or through the things we're passionate about. Give yourself a purpose.

* **Flow.** Eliminate distractions, and really pour yourself into whatever you're doing, until you forget the outside world.

* **Know yourself.** Become attuned to what brings you happiness. Study yourself. Learn about what you love, and about your ability to love. Increase your capacity for compassion.

* **Experience the natural world.**

2. Limit television. Do you really enjoy watching TV for hours? Think about which shows you really, really love, and only watch during that time. When the commercials come on, go do something else. Or use Tivo to watch TV. You can even give up cable TV entirely, if you're brave — you may just discover it's one of the best things you've ever done.

3. Eschew the news. Journalists will never tell you this, but if they're completely honest, they'll confess that the most important part of any news company, from TV or radio news to internet or print news, is the advertising division. It's the division that provides the paychecks for the rest of the company. The news is important in driving traffic to the advertising. So when you're watching or reading news, you're really being sucked in to advertising. Try this instead: boycott the news for a week. It won't hurt you; it will help you a lot in finding reliable and worthy news sources minus advertisements; it'll also decrease your exposure to negative stories 99% of the time.

4. Limit Internet reading. This isn't asking you to cancel your cable internet subscription or anything. Just check out the sites that you truly love reading, that give you the most value, and limit your reading to those. And just do it once a day, for 30 minutes or so. If you can do that, you've gone a long way towards tearing yourself away from advertising. And support sites that do not advertise with your devoted readership.

5. Give up magazines for books. Magazines are also designed with advertising in mind. And they rarely give you much value. Try reading an ad-free book instead. It's a much better use of your time.

6. Don't go to the mall or Walmart for entertainment. The only purpose of these places is for you to spend money. If you just want a place to spend your Saturday afternoon, find a place where you don't need to spend money to have fun — a park, the library or a beach, for example. If you need to buy something, go to a single store (not the mall) and go in and get what you need. Don't browse and walk around looking at stuff. You'll get sucked in.

7. Monitor your urges. When you're online, or watching TV, or at a store, keep track of the number of times you want to buy something. Keep a little notebook or index card, and just put tally marks. Once you become more aware of your urges to buy things, you can start to control them. If you could control them, limiting your consumption of media (see above tips) isn't really necessary — although arguably doing so still gives you a better quality of life.

8. Use a 30-day list. If you still really want to buy something, put it on a list, and write down the date you added the item to the list. Now tell yourself you cannot buy that item for 30 days. It might be difficult, but you can do it. When the 30 days have passed, if you still want it, then buy it. But you can't buy anything (besides essentials like groceries) without putting it on the list for 30 days first. Many times, our urges to buy something will pass during this waiting period.

9. Declutter. You will find it pretty amazing to see all the rubbish you buy over a period of years, when you go through closets and other possessions and start getting rid of stuff you don't use or want any more. It's a gratifying process, and at the same time, it makes you realize how useless all our consumer shopping is. You don't need any of the stuff! When you do this, you may be less likely to buy more stuff. Especially if you enjoy the decluttered look of your house - most people do!

10. Find other forms of entertainment. There are other things to do besides watching TV or movies or reading magazines, newspapers or the internet. Try playing sports or exercising, or playing board games, creating art, writing or reading a book. Try doing fun things with your kids or visiting relatives and other loved ones. Try volunteering with a charity. Come up with 100 free or cheap things to do and do them!

11. Buy used. When you get the urge to buy something, and you're convinced that it's needed, try finding it used instead of new. Look in thrift shops, recycling depots, second-hand dealers or garage sales, flea markets or similar places. Provided it works, it'll do the same job as a new one and cost you much less and you spare the Earth a little longer from additional junk being thrown away or produced.