

A SIMPLER LIFE...

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Follow your heart...

SIMPLICITY
LIFE COACHING

Find the joy and let go of the struggle!

Helping you to De-stress, Simplify and Create a Life you Love!

Dear Simpler Life Readers,

It's been a while since the last newsletter and a lot has changed here at Simplicity Life Coaching! We have moved to Salt Spring Island (located between Vancouver and Vancouver Island).

There are a myriad of reasons for moving here - like more peace, more space (we now have 5 acres), being closer to nature, a slower pace of life, a community that shares the same values and simply because we LOVE it here!

We also got our first dog – his family couldn't take him to Toronto – so we now have a boisterous nearly one year old Lab/Shepherd cross called Dexter!

To record our experience of island life, I've started a blog – with the intention of entertaining and hopefully also inspiring you to follow your heart and live the life of your dreams. See www.lifeonsaltspring.com

Also, there's a new fun tool to help you start figuring out some simple things that make you happy. Go to http://www.simplicitylifecoaching.com/tools_resources to find out, "What makes my heart sing?"

So, if you know someone who feels stuck –perhaps wondering what they want from life and how to get there, or someone who wants to create **more confidence and joy** in their lives I'd love to hear from you! As always, thanks to my family, friends and ever-fabulous clients!

Warmly, *Emma-Louise.*

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

"Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

Harold Thurman Whitman

Happiness or Pleasure?

Many of us are seeking happiness – but instead are settling for pleasure - a short-term fix which usually takes us further away from happiness.

Of course 'happy' and 'pleasure' are simply words and mean different things to different people. But bear with me for a moment.

PLEASURE is an extreme feeling. We can directly CREATE pleasure by doing, buying, viewing something that gives us pleasure. The pleasure lasts as long as we're doing whatever gives us that pleasure. It comes from OUTSIDE of us.

But we cannot directly CREATE happiness. We either ARE or are NOT happy. HAPPINESS is a wonderful, relaxed state of mind that ARISES when we are at peace with the world and it comes from INSIDE of us. OK, so what's the big deal?

Well, we live in a stressful society - there are lots of pressures - a lack of time, high expectations (from self and others), bills to pay, retirements to save for, families and friends to please and non-stop information (TV, internet, cellphones, over 3000 advertising messages a day, newspapers, books etc).

Because we need to unwind and de-stress we turn to pleasurable activities to make us feel better. BUT, as soon as the pleasurable activity ends (or pleasure from a purchase wears off) we're back to feeling wound-up or stressed. Nothing has changed, we've just had a brief, pleasurable, respite from life. From pleasure straight back to stress.

A simplistic example would be to compare watching TV (pleasure) to a relaxing walk on the beach (happiness).

HAPPINESS helps create ongoing contentment and inner peace, and unlike pleasure there is no big let-down when it ends because it wears off gradually.

And BONUS! Things that make us HAPPY are usually cheap or free - and easy to do. Happiness comes from simple things that connect us to our deepest values (eg. love, calm, fun, beauty). Maybe watching children or dogs playing, walking barefoot on the grass on a sunny day, listening to our favourite music, painting, quality time with friends and family.

With pleasurable things there's always a risk that we will be disappointed; the restaurant provides bad service, the movie plot is poor, you feel bad because you waste two hours playing video games instead of paying your bills.

Happiness is ultimately more satisfying, longer-lasting and can be life-changing (it's often in a state of happiness that we think about what's important in life and have realizations that inspire us to better our lives).

There's nothing wrong with pleasure, but perhaps next time you're on autopilot for a quick 'pleasure' fix, consider doing something different – something that might make you happy!

Curious what might make you happy? Try our new tool at http://www.simplicitylifecoaching.com/tools_resources

RECOMMENDED READING

1. **Learned Optimism** *Martin E. Seligman*
If you're interested in learning how to have a more positive outlook and beat that negative self-talk this may be the book to do it!
2. **Holy Cow** *Sarah Macdonald*
One woman's search for meaning in India. If you liked "Eat, Pray, Love" you'll probably enjoy this. While it's different, the outcome is similar; acceptance, thankfulness for what we have, love.

PS. Don't forget your local Library - you might be able to read these books for free!

ENLIGHTENING LUNCHBREAKS

www.authentichappiness.com

Martin Seligman's happiness website - with quizzes and resources for you!

www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/documentaries/features/century_of_the_self.shtml If you can find a way to watch even just part 1 of this 4-part series you may find your attitude to spending **completely** changes. Never mind feeling guilty about wastefulness. Think you're not being manipulated into buying more and more stuff you don't need? It started in the 1920's! We know buying stuff doesn't make us happy - but it certainly keeps us busy and under 'control'. I got this fascinating documentary from my independent video store.

There is no such thing as... "UNhappiness"

I like to think that happiness is our natural state and that when we're 'unhappy' - it's actually just a 'temporary lack of happiness'.

Happiness is available to us any time, any place and in any situation. It's a state of contentment, peace, acceptance and non-resistance in the world.

The opposite of happiness is sadness - and like happiness we can't directly create sadness. Sadness is gentle and arises from WITHIN - a natural response to a situation, a loss, something not of our own choosing.

UNhappiness on the other hand is a choice - it's created by what we choose to focus our thoughts on.

Because we live in a society where the focus is on lack - what we don't have, what we don't like, where we need to improve - we naturally focus on these things and cause UNhappiness in ourselves. As long as we continue (in our thoughts) to fight reality and wish things were otherwise - we will be unhappy.

There will always be sad situations where there is a 'temporary lack of happiness'. But where sadness is gentle, peaceful and ultimately passes on its own, UNhappiness resists, complains and clings for as long as WE let it.

♥ "Only one thing has to change for us to know happiness in our lives: where we focus our attention." Greg Anderson

WHERE MIGHT YOU PULL YOURSELF AWAY FROM HAPPINESS?

Take a moment to ponder these...

1. **On an average day**, what do you do automatically (ie. without thinking) that draws you away from happiness?
2. What do you do for pleasure on a regular basis that could easily be replaced (or reduced) by something happier or more meaningful?
3. Think back to a time you were **disappointed**. What expectations did you have and how did that contribute to feeling disappointed? What values did you not meet? How did the situation work out perfectly?
4. What do you secretly wish you did less?
5. What do you secretly wish you did more?
6. What are you **avoiding**?
7. Imagine yourself as a happiness expert. What advice would you give yourself? What suggestions would you make about how to live your life?

Allow these questions to float around. See what comes up over the days and weeks ahead!

*"Everything is habit forming,
so make sure what you do
is what you want to be doing."
Wilt Chamberlain*

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If you know **someone else** who might enjoy this e-zine, simply **forward it on** or they can **sign up on the website at** www.simplicitylifecoaching.com

CHALLENGE OF THE MONTH!

The aim of this box is for you to help **Change the World** - one action at a time...

I believe we change the world by enjoying **OUR** lives first. Once we've looked after ourselves we then have time and energy to willingly help others...

Get enjoying your life and:

- ✿ **LEVEL 1 - Gentle.**
Do **1** thing that moves YOU towards happiness EVERY month.
- ✿ **LEVEL 2 - Challenging.**
Do **1** thing that moves YOU towards happiness EVERY week.
- ✿ **LEVEL 3 - Extreme.**
Do **1** thing that moves YOU towards happiness EVERY day.

TIPS: a) You could complete the new tool "What makes my heart sing?" on our website *or*
b) Simply look inwards and ask when you have been happy or joyful. What were you doing (or not doing?). Where were you? Who were you with (or not with)? *Now ask* "What was special about that?", "What made it so special?"