


# Author Biography

*Rebecca Myers*

 [www.livehappy.group](http://www.livehappy.group)

 [@work\\_in\\_your\\_work\\_out](https://www.instagram.com/work_in_your_work_out)

 [www.facebook.com/wiywo](https://www.facebook.com/wiywo)

 [www.linkedin.com/in/rebeccamyers2](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rebeccamyers2)



## About the Author

Rebecca Myers is the founder of Live Happy – the health and well-being company. It consists of a network of physical gym facilities, a holistic app product, and a host of corporate health and well-being consultative services.

Her qualifications span from personal trainer, nutrition coach, mental health first aider, counsellor, BSc business graduate, mum to two beautiful but demanding ‘tweenage’ boys, and wife to long-suffering husband, Sam – who has put up with hours of looking after the children whilst this book has been written, plus being IT support to ensure all the words aren’t lost!

## Book Synopsis

*Why do we strive to do the things we do? To make money, to experience different things, to feel fulfilled ourselves, or to help others to feel the same? It all boils down to finding and feeling happiness!*

*Live Happy delves into the science of happiness – what happens in our bodies when we feel happy, what external factors make us happy, and what we can do about finding and sustaining these positive feelings.*

*Divided into three comprehensive sections, Live Happy looks at the practical ways to move and relax our bodies, how to eat better to feel better, and provides tips and exercises to practice improving and sustaining happiness, so you can live a happier life!*

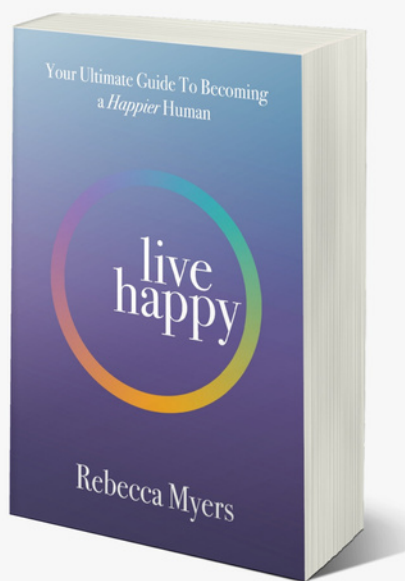
# Advance Information Sheet

From Book Brilliance Publishing

## Live Happy

Your Ultimate Guide To Becoming a Happier Human

by **Rebecca Myers**



Why do we strive to do the things we do? To make money, to experience different things, to feel fulfilled ourselves, or to help others to feel the same? It all boils down to finding and feeling happiness!

Live Happy delves into the science of happiness – what happens in our bodies when we feel happy, what external factors make us happy, and what we can do about finding and sustaining these positive feelings.

Divided into three comprehensive sections, Live Happy looks at the practical ways to move and relax our bodies, how to eat better to feel better, and provides tips and exercises to practice improving and sustaining happiness, so you can live a happier life!

### ISBN:

978-1-913770-78-5

**Price:** £17.99

### Publication Date:

22nd November 2023

**Format:** Paperback

**Size:** 229 x 152 x 20 mm  
370 pages

### Category:

Non-fiction; health and well-being; diet and nutrition; fitness; positivity; mental health

Available from Gardners worldwide, on Amazon and all good bookshops globally as a paperback and eBook, and direct from the publisher.

### About the Author:

Rebecca Myers is the founder of Live Happy, the health and well-being company. Live Happy consists of a network of physical gym facilities, a holistic app product, and a host of corporate health and well-being consultative services.

As well as being a personal trainer, nutrition coach, mental health first aider and counsellor, Rebecca is a mum to two demanding 'tweenage' boys and wife to long-suffering husband, Sam.

### Key Sales Points:

- Live Happy adopts a multimedia approach by using video, the Live Happy app and written exercises, ensuring that Rebecca reaches as many people as possible using different learning styles to keep the reader engaged and on track to living happier lives.
- Divided into three sections – Feel, Move, Eat – the Feel section is based on a happiness survey of over 100 people that Rebecca conducted as a framework for writing the book.
- The Move section contains workouts for both home and gym, beginner to advanced, where readers can access Rebecca demonstrating the exercises via a QR code.
- The final section, Eat, features tried-and-tested recipes that are also available on the Live Happy app.

*“Rebecca Myers’ book is a valuable guide to living a fulfilling life. It’s a must-read for anyone seeking to balance the triangle of life and discover the true essence of happiness.”*

*- Susan Howard, Psychiatric Nurse | Holistic & Aesthetic Practitioner*



# REBECCA MYERS

*Healthy Lifestyle Guru Reveals How To Live Happy*



**In a world where we are bombarded with health and well-being labels, leading-edge lifestyle guru Rebecca Myers knows the power of defining yourself from the inside out to live a happier life.**

By fusing Feeling, Moving and Eating together, she has found the ultimate recipe for greater happiness and well-being as a human.

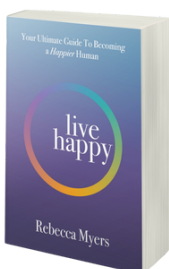
In her new book *Live Happy: Your Ultimate Guide To Becoming a Happier Human*, Rebecca talks about the psychology and emotional well-being of everyday lives, providing her readers with Action Time activities. She believes you can read a plethora of books, but without action, no change will take place.

*Live Happy* is divided into three sections – Feel, Move, Eat – where Rebecca combines her expertise as a mental health first aider, personal trainer and nutrition coach. Much of her book reflects her holistic *Live Happy* app, which readers can download and use alongside the book.

To be launched at The Business Show at London's ExCeL on Wednesday 22nd November, *Live Happy* adopts a multimedia approach by using video, the app and written exercises, ensuring that Rebecca reaches as many people as possible using different learning styles to keep the reader engaged and on track to living happier lives.

Rebecca's philosophy about being happy promotes a range of lifestyle habits that are important for overall health. She knows that when you are happy, you are more likely to eat healthier and move more.

Rebecca says, "Strive to find balance in your life and it will generally work out for you. Balance is the key!"



Being realistic, Rebecca does not only describe happiness, but considers the opposite side of the coin, and has coined the term 'anti-happiness', bringing her readers' attention to their awareness of what brings negativity to their lives.

# REBECCA MYERS

Healthy Lifestyle Guru Reveals How To Live Happy

The 'Feel' section is based on a happiness survey of over 100 people that Rebecca conducted as a framework for writing the book. She discovered that family, pets, hobbies, music and alone time are among the things that make people happier, so establishing positive habits in these areas allows you to become a happier human.

The 'Move' section contains workouts for both home and gym, beginner to advanced, where readers can access Rebecca demonstrating the exercises via a QR code.

The final section, 'Eat', features tried-and-tested recipes that are also available on the Live Happy app.

Rebecca, from Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, is the founder of Live Happy, the health and well-being company. Live Happy consists of a network of physical gym facilities, a holistic app product, and a host of corporate health and well-being consultative services.

She is also a mum to two demanding 'tweenage' boys and wife to long-suffering husband, Sam.

Rebecca says, "My philosophy on life is that we aren't on this planet for that long, so make the most of it as opposed to thinking 'I could have done more'."

## What Readers Are Saying About Live Happy:

*"Whether you are looking for dinner inspiration, a new workout routine, or a deeper understanding of life, Live Happy has you covered. Whether you take away one positive message or adopt several life-changing habits, this book is a valuable addition to your reading list."*

Gemma Leeks - University Lecturer

*"Rebecca Myers' book is a valuable guide to living a fulfilling life. It's a must-read for anyone seeking to balance the triangle of life and discover the true essence of happiness. Highly recommended!"*

Susan Howard - Psychiatric Nurse and Holistic & Aesthetic Practitioner

*"I was more than a little intrigued by its holistic 'triangular' approach to life's journey. The book is well-researched, factual and data-rich, yet it maintains a freshness and not-too-serious tone, resulting in an enjoyable and fulfilling read."*

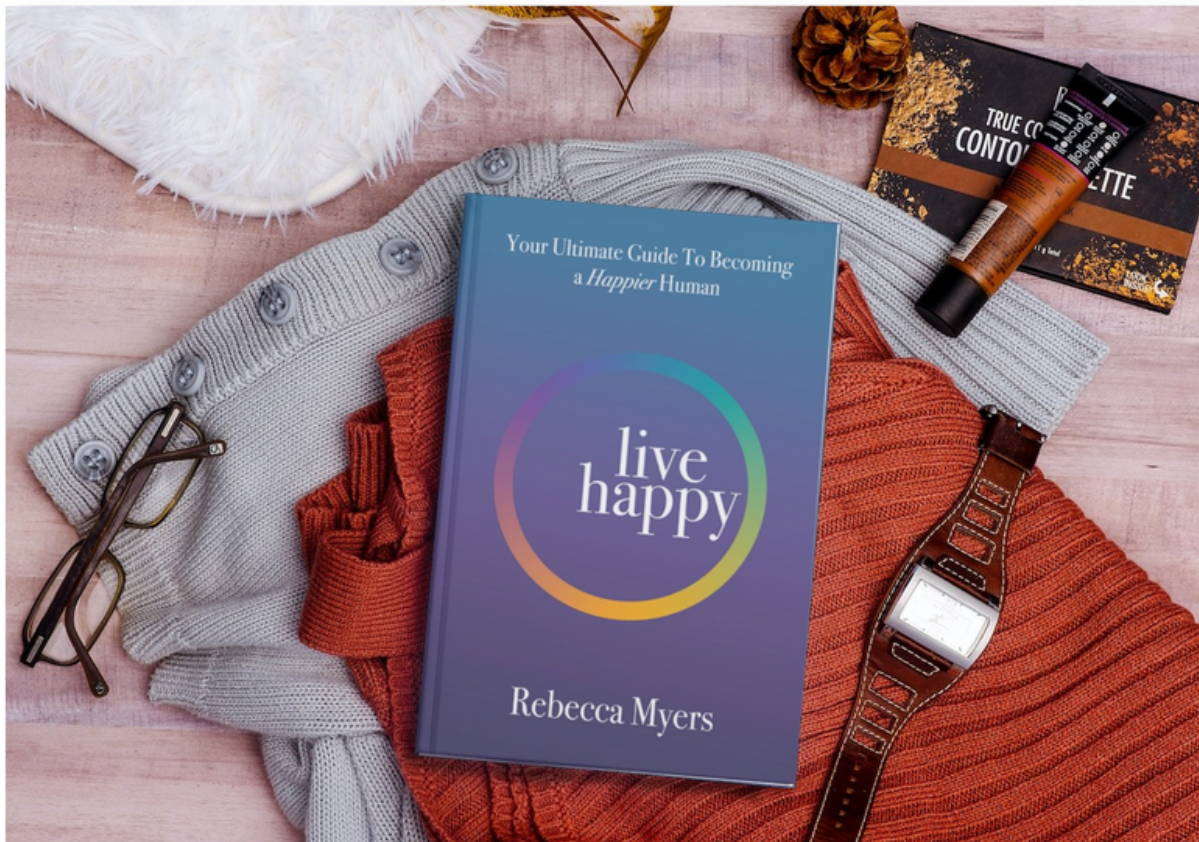
Phil Wharam - Managing Director of Vineuse Ltd,  
Author of award-winning novels and screenplays: Greed, Right to Live, and Mengele

# REBECCA MYERS

Healthy Lifestyle Guru Reveals How To Live Happy

## Notes:

- Live Happy: Your Ultimate Guide To Becoming a Happier Human by Rebecca Myers, publishers by Book Brilliance Publishing, 22nd November 2023, RRP £17.99, ISBN 978-1-913770-78-5.
- Live Happy was officially launched at The Business Show, London's ExCeL, Wednesday 22nd to Thursday 23rd November 2023.
- Rebecca is available for interview: [admin@bookbrilliancepublishing.com](mailto:admin@bookbrilliancepublishing.com)
- High-resolution images of the cover and the author are available from the publisher: [admin@bookbrilliancepublishing.com](mailto:admin@bookbrilliancepublishing.com)



Your Ultimate Guide To Becoming  
a *Happier* Human



live  
happy

Rebecca Myers

This book is for you if...

- you are searching for some inspiration in your day-to-day life
- you are looking for an educational yet fun read on happiness
- you need practical advice and exercises to help you find your inner happiness
- you want to immerse yourself in a journey of discovery that will help you find your true self
- you are hoping for a thought-provoking read
- you crave motivation to galvanise you into action
- you want an interactive guide that you can dip in and out of at your leisure
- you want to delve into a book that takes you on a journey with help, support and love
- you need to explore some new recipes and motivational moves to get you fitter and healthier
- you wish to learn some life-changing tools that will help you connect with your mind, body and soul
- you need help to find a fresh start to living a happier life

“In her book, *Live Happy*, Rebecca Myers presents an all-inclusive description of what it means to be happy in the modern age. She demonstrates this with a comprehensive story of the neurobiological, social and emotional influences on happiness. Alone, this is impressive, but to do it in such an accessible and engaging way is inspiring! Rebecca peppers her absorbing text with examples from her life, others’ lives and quotations from thought leaders, to produce a well-rounded description of the foundations of happiness. Finally, there are numerous practical (and fun!) exercises for the reader to take part in. Even just reading the book puts a smile on your face!”

Dr Eoin Harty  
Consultant Anaesthetist  
North West London Hospital

“*Live Happy* is an inspiring, educational and practical book. Rebecca Myers has managed to combine scientific fact with a more light-hearted view of happiness, including some heartfelt and honest examples of her own. *Live Happy* is a thoroughly enjoyable read! It not only provides interesting insight into – let’s face it – what we are all trying to aim for in our lives, but delivers the information in a bite-sized and manageable way, keeping the reader engaged throughout.

Well done, Rebecca! Can’t wait to see what you follow this up with next!”

Isabella Mevola  
Regulatory Strategy Director  
Pfizer UK



“What an amazing book! Rebecca Myers explores the meaning of happiness, including many personal experiences that engage the reader and help them to explore their own journey, with an understanding that they are not alone! It’s wonderful to be able to pick up a book that covers these topics and not feel preached to but instead find help and support, or a simple reminder, whilst taking one’s own personal journey. I love !” Live Happy

Brook Nolson  
Chief Operating Officer  
Inspiration Healthcare Group Plc

“Practical, inspiring, and uplifting, Live Happy connects the history of happiness research and turns it into practical life-changing tools that allow us to connect with our mind, body and soul. This level of self-awareness is life-altering with a network of deep human connection and support. Rebecca Myers has been my personal trainer and coach, and has helped me create healthier and happier workplaces. Most importantly, she is one of my deep human connections. Live Happy!”

Sarah Kleinpeter  
Vice President  
Novo Nordisk

"In Live Happy, Rebecca Myers invites the reader to embrace the idea that we all deserve the opportunity to be happy, and that we have the capacity to make that happen. Neatly balancing philosophy and theory with real-life examples and practical advice, Rebecca has distilled and blended ideas and perspectives from an eclectic mix of sources, as well as her own experience in the corporate world and as a personal trainer and wellness entrepreneur. There is something for everyone in this book from nutritious recipes and endorphin-boosting movement, to happiness cultivating exercises; all fuelled by Rebecca's own infectious energy and enthusiasm."

Antonia Boyce  
Director, In-House Counsel  
Leading Global Media Company

"Live Happy embodies a positive can-do attitude. It is a clear manual offering a wide variety of tools from which to choose; aimed at making you feel happier by making your body feel great.

Rebecca Myers has been my personal trainer for two years. I did not aim to become an 'ultr-endurance athlete' but I did aim to get fitter, and I am on that road, getting a little further every day. The added benefits I pick up on my road to fitness are those great 'happiness chemicals' which never fail to improve my mood and make me smile. I attribute this to a mix of exercise, great advice from Rebecca, and positive delivery."

Julie Hutchison  
Global Asset Lead  
Ipsen Bioinnovation Ltd

“Upon receipt of Rebecca Myer’s book, Live Happy, I was more than a little intrigued by its holistic ‘triangular’ approach to life’s journey. The book is well-researched, factual and data-rich, yet it maintains a freshness and not-too-serious tone, resulting in an enjoyable and fulfilling read. Get on the triangle wherever it suits and start wherever it feels right. Joining the dots of Feel, Move and Eat has been a real pleasure and I’m now looking forward to putting Live Happy into practice.”

Phil Wharam

Managing Director of Vineuse Ltd,

Author of award-winning novels and screenplays: ‘Ground’, ‘Right to Live’, and ‘Mengele’

“In this guide, Rebecca Myers effortlessly transitions between delving into the science behind our own happiness, to practical tips on how to spark happiness in the day-to-day. As someone who can’t live without a to-do list (!), I especially loved the round-ups of each chapter with advice and steps to take to translate some of these learnings into real life. I flew through the book, finding myself nodding along to the questions Rebecca poses to her readers. Do we know happiness without suffering? How important is resilience in our quest for happiness? What should I cook for dinner?! While I don’t claim to have all the answers yet, Live Happy has given me a kick-start to my own version of sustainable happiness – in a way that works for me! Thank you, Rebecca, for this Ultimate Guide!”

Mary Ellen

Senior Manager, Operational Strategy,  
Multinational Technology Company

"I have known Rebecca Myers for over 14 years, and she has always been a source of incredible energy; able to successfully juggle a family life, as well as being an entrepreneurial businesswomen. Live Happy is a valuable resource for anyone seeking to enhance their well-being and provide a catalyst for the action they need to embark on their journey to a happier life. It is truly the pinnacle of who Rebecca truly is. I believe that when one door of happiness closes, we often look so longingly at the closed door, that we do not see the new door that has just opened. This book brings that to the forefront... So, dive in, learn something new, and embrace all that makes you personally happy. Enjoy the journey, and live happy!"

Perminder Gray  
Founder and Creative Director  
Another Level Medispa  
(Bringing Inner and Outer Wellness of Mind, Body, Spirit and Soul)

"Live Happy brilliantly dissects the concept of happiness, offering practical advice and thought-provoking insights. From finding joy in simple moments, to exploring the impact of work and relationships on our well-being, Rebecca Myers' book is a valuable guide to living a fulfilling life. It's a must-read for anyone seeking to balance the triangle of life and discover the true essence of happiness. Highly recommended!"

Susan Howard  
Psychiatric Nurse and Holistic & Aesthetic Practitioner

“Live Happy explores the concept of finding and keeping happiness. It delves into the science of happiness, the external factors that contribute to our joy, and the actionable steps we can take to find and sustain those positive emotions. You can either read it cover to cover for a deep understanding, or pick it up whenever you need a dose of inspiration and guidance. Rebecca Myers is passionate about her work, and her commitment to helping us find happiness shines through every page. She takes a down-to-earth and practical approach, providing readers with tangible advice to enhance their daily lives. Whether you are looking for dinner inspiration, a new workout routine, or a deeper understanding of life, Live Happy has you covered. Whether you take away one positive message or adopt several life-changing habits, this book is a valuable addition to your reading list.”

Gemma Leeks  
University Lecturer

# Your Ultimate Guide To Becoming a Happier Human



Rebecca Myers



First published in Great Britain in 2023  
by Book Brilliance Publishing  
265A Fir Tree Road, Epsom, Surrey, KT17 3LF  
+44 (0)20 8641 5090  
[www.bookbrilliancepublishing.com](http://www.bookbrilliancepublishing.com)  
[admin@bookbrilliancepublishing.com](mailto:admin@bookbrilliancepublishing.com)

© Copyright Rebecca Myers 2023

The moral right of Rebecca Myers to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Acts 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover than that in which it is published and without similar condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available at the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-913770-78-5

This book is not intended as a substitute for the medical advice of physicians. The reader should regularly consult a physician in matters relating to his/her health and particularly with respect to any symptoms that may require diagnosis or medical attention.

# CONTENTS

Foreword	1
Introduction	3
<b>Section 1: FEEL</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1A: Defining happiness</b>	<b>9</b>
What is 'happiness'?	9
Balancing the triangle of life	20
Cultivating gratitude	24
Watch out: happiness is catching!	30
The power of laughter	36
Anti-happiness	40
Exploring habits and addictions	55
<b>1B: Happiness survey</b>	<b>63</b>
We are family	63
Love actually, is...	70
Why do pets have such a positive impact on our lives?	77
Our chosen hobbies	81
Music for the soul	85
Material girl	91
Booked it. Packed it. F**cked off	97
A bit of alone time	105
Sleepy bunnies	110



<b>1C: Happiness and work</b>	<b>119</b>
It's all work, work, work...	119
Understanding your personality profile	128
Let's be SMART about this	136
Lady Luck or hard graft?	143
<b>1D: Happiness over time</b>	<b>149</b>
Happiness over time	149
Parenthood	153
Viewing life like a child	158
Look up and experience life, don't let it pass you by	163
50 things before I'm 50	167
<b>Section 2: MOVE</b>	<b>173</b>
Let's get physical... Why should we exercise?	176
Embrace your inner gym bunny	179
Staying motivated	182
What type of exercise to choose	186
Walking in nature – the importance and popularity	189
Relaxation techniques for happiness	192
Exercise programme ideas	195

<b>Section 3: EAT</b>	<b>243</b>
The basics	249
What is a calorie?	266
Food intolerance	269
Top 10 nutrition tips for health	272
Eating for happiness	275
It's not all about lettuce!	277
Recipes	279
Epilogue: On Balance	331
References	335
Acknowledgements	351
About the Author	353

## FOREWORD

Live Happy is a feeling that we all want to experience in our lives. This book uniquely illustrates how we can do that when we

choose to take action to create lasting change. Rebecca Myers uses her training, experience and expertise to find a fun and lasting way to embrace happiness.

When you ask 'why' you should do something, finding evidence that clearly illustrates that answer is essential. In Live Happy, Rebecca expresses the reasons, benefits and lasting change that takes place when you decide to do something different. As she demonstrates, it's about commitment to being your best version and finding a path that quickly leads you to Live Happily with consistent action. Finding that joie de vivre that Rebecca enjoys is contagious, as she takes the reader on a passionate and compelling journey.

The book's cleverly crafted structure engages the reader with ease, and the advice is precise and clear on how they can connect to their happiness. With three main themes – Feel, Move and Eat – each individual chapter finishes with a call to action for the reader to engage in. Live Happy is not simply a book offering advice. It embraces a multi-media, multi-sensory approach with a QR code taking the reader directly to Rebecca as she demonstrates how to do all of the exercises included on the pages of the Move section.

I believe including the recipes is an innovative approach to everything Rebecca discusses and shares within the book. As these are her

recipes, they have certainly been tried and tested and look delicious! The recipes can also be found on Rebecca's Live Happy app.

It is clear to see and feel that Rebecca is passionate about her work, which is more than a career; it is her purpose, and she gives the very best of herself based on her own experiences. She has not just shared her story but provides other evidence of why she believes in what she teaches. This transparent approach will leave the reader with no doubt that Rebecca is an authentic expert in her chosen field of fitness and well-being.

Packed with personal anecdotes and examples, Live Happy is a book that will take the reader on a journey of truth and discovery.

**Roderick Martin**

***Co-owner and CEO of GO2 Health, Australia***

Rod is dedicated to the health and well-being of others. He founded GO2 Health, arguably the most dynamic and broad-ranging health space in Australia. GO2 integrates many different types of care to ensure the most effective treatment for patients, including general practice, nursing, psychiatry, physiotherapy, acupuncture, massage, psychology, dietetics and exercise physiology. He is also an acupuncture practitioner, member of the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia, and has degrees in Microbiology, Health Science and Business. Rod has risen to 7th Dan Gojuryu Seiwakai and JKF Japan karateka and is a Hoshindo karate chief instructor.

[www.go2health.com.au](http://www.go2health.com.au)

## INTRODUCTION

Why do we strive to do what we do? Why do we prefer to do certain activities more than others? Why do we prefer spending time

with some people (or pets) than others? Why do our bodies react in certain ways depending on what we do or eat? Why, why why!! These are some of the questions I get asked all the time. I believe it all boils down to finding and keeping happiness.

“The pursuit of happiness: More success, more money, more friends all to come closer to our goal in life: happiness. But once we have it, we are still not always satisfied. We want to experience this feeling again and again, even if it might become too much of a good thing. We are not satisfied with the condition of satisfaction... Happiness is rather a state of continuous pursuit.”

(The Happiness Project)

YOU are the reason I am very happy in my job – my wonderful clients (past and present), my social media followers, my gym members, the people who have attended my webinars and conferences, and last but not least, YOU, my readers. You have made the effort to interact with me, and I am much happier and better for it. This book is for you, dear reader! If you take away one positive and helpful message, I will have done my job! So, take your time to read this book, learn something new, and try to do as many things as you can that make you personally happy!

I haven't gone too deep or spiritual – I didn't want to write an academic or an ethereal book! For example, if you want some inspiration for

dinner, then turn to the Eat section. If you are bored in the gym and want a new workout suggestion, then flick to the Move section. However, if you are struggling to understand life a bit at the moment and want further depth and explanation, start at the beginning and work your way through. At the end of each chapter is a summary as well as mini exercises (Action Time) to practise what you have read. Look out for the little Rebecca avatar!

“Action may not always bring happiness,  
but there is no happiness without action.”

Benjamin Disraeli (1804 – 1881)

British Prime Minister and writer

When thinking about happiness, my first port of call was to turn to facts and science. I realised that I needed to conduct a survey. I surveyed over 100 people of different demographics, gender and age, and asked them the simple question,

“What makes you happy?”

The results were as follows:

- Spending time with family and friends
- Walking in nature (countryside, mountains, beach)
- Pets (in particular dogs)
- Exercising/looking after their health
- Hobbies
- Seeing other people happy (particularly their children)
- Food (either eating out or certain foods such as chocolate)
- Addictions (cigarettes, alcohol)

- Spending time on their own
- Listening to music
- Holidays/travelling
- Achieving goals/winning (small and large)

I wasn't particularly surprised about any of the answers, but was pleasantly surprised about how quickly people responded – they were very pleased to discuss this topic and it made them feel proud to say so.

### **How to use this book:**

Section 1, Feel, is dedicated to delving into the above answers in much more detail – why do these, in particular, come top of our list and what can we change to do more of it? I also look at the opposites; what makes us unhappy – I have called this anti-happiness.

Section 2, Move, delves into further detail about what makes our bodies feel better, with some gym and home-based exercise ideas for you to try as well.

Section 3, Eat, features some yummy and healthy recipes for you to experiment with, and talks about different food groups and how to eat better for a happier life.

Enjoy and live happy!  
Rebecca

**FEEL**

Sample



# 1A – DEFINING HAPPINESS

## What is ‘happiness’?

Let’s start with a bit of science. What, from a scientific perspective, is happiness? Happiness is a state of mind that has been described

in many ways. To pick a few of my favourite definitions:

The Oxford English Dictionary definition is simply: “the state of feeling or showing pleasure, or the state of being satisfied that something is good or right.”

In her book *The How of Happiness*, Sonja Lyubomirsky, a noted positive psychology researcher, used a definition that I also liked, that goes into a little more depth: “Happiness can be defined as an enduring state of mind consisting not only of feelings of joy, contentment, and other positive emotions, but also of a sense that one’s life is meaningful and valued.”

(Lyubomirsky, 2007)

Kendra Cherry, MEd, defines happiness in an article she wrote for the Verywell Mind website:

“Happiness is an emotional state joy characterized by feelings of fulfilment.”, satisfaction, contentment, and

In all of these definitions, there is an overlap. Happiness is a feeling that we strive to attain. This section is called *Feel for a reason* and goes into a level of detail as to why we want these feelings and what we do to continue getting them.

## Happiness and research

The great philosopher and polymath Aristotle was probably the first to study happiness in great detail. A pupil of Plato and founder of the first scientific institute, the Lyceum, based in Greece, Aristotle's teachings regarding the science of happiness were the most advanced of their time. One of his most influential works is the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In these lectures, he sought to answer "What is the ultimate purpose of human existence?" That is to say, what is the end goal for which we should direct our activities? Aristotle would argue that happiness is the end goal of every person, and after my research, study and experience of the human interactions and goals I have witnessed, I would certainly agree with him 2,300 years later!

"Happiness is the meaning and purpose of life,  
the whole aim and end of human existence."

Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC)  
Greek philosopher and polymath

He suggested four levels of happiness:

Level 1 – happiness from material objects

Level 2 – ego happiness, from comparison and doing better or being more admired by others

Level 3 – happiness from doing good for others

Level 4 – perfect happiness

The last level is hard to describe but could be considered as finding a spiritual connection to the larger universe.

Some believe that happiness is a result of our circumstances, while others argue that it is entirely within our control. However, in recent years, the science of happiness has emerged as a field of study that provides a more detailed understanding.

## FEEL

Although Aristotle may have started the science of happiness, the advancements in this area of study are vast. Studies have found that happy people are less prone to sickness and stress, and have a better overall well-being. There are many examples of this, but the following story in a paper by Steven Greer & Maggie Watson truly highlights the reason why. The paper suggests that being happy and having a positive attitude could help heal.

“A 24-year-old happily married woman who complained of a mole which had enlarged and begun to bleed was diagnosed as having a malignant melanoma. She was found to have metastasis disease. She was started on intensive cytotoxic therapy but responded only partially. She insisted on knowing her likely prognosis. When she was told she had two years at the most, she declared, ‘I will prove them to be wrong,’ and she said she would continue to live a normal life. This she did to the great surprise of the clinicians involved in her care. She is still alive and well four years later. She is convinced that her (positive) attitude has pulled her through, since other patients who were diagnosed at the same time as having malignant melanoma or an equivalent stage, have already died.”

(Greer & Watson, 1987)

Research has also identified several factors that contribute to our happiness, including positive relationships with others and remaining social. From 1938, the comprehensive and groundbreaking happiness study of Adult Development by Harvard University has been gathering health records and detailed interviews about the lives of 724 participants. The latest report concluded: “The most consistent finding we’ve earned through 85 years of study is: Positive relationships keep us happier, healthier and help us live longer.”

One of the key factors is our social connections. People who have a strong social support network tend to be happier and live longer lives. Vibeke Koushede, Professor and Head of the Department of Psychology University of Copenhagen, states:

“Ultimately, the good life is about something as simple as having someone or something to get up for in the morning. This is true whether we are young or old. We simply need each other.”

(Happiness Research Institute, 2002)

Additionally, factors such as financial stability, good health, and satisfying work contribute to long-term happiness. I discuss each of these in more detail in later chapters.

Are you aware of what is happening in your body to make you feel happy? It's all about wonderful and very clever chemicals!

## **Happiness chemicals**

When we experience happiness, our bodies release a variety of natural chemicals that contribute to our overall sense of well-being. One of the primary chemicals involved is dopamine. Often referred to as the ‘feel-good’ neurotransmitter, dopamine plays a crucial role in reward and pleasure systems in the brain. It is responsible for the sense of motivation, pleasure, and reinforcement we feel when something positive or rewarding happens in our lives. Dopamine also helps regulate our mood, memory, and attention, leaving us with a sense of happiness and contentment. Smelling your favourite perfume, watching your child's face when they accomplish a task for the first time, or hearing your absolute favourite song playing on the radio – all of these things instantly release dopamine!

Another chemical released during moments of happiness is serotonin. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that influences our mood, appetite and sleep, among other functions. It is often referred to as the ‘happiness hormone’ due to its role in promoting feelings of well-being and contentment. Balanced serotonin levels contribute to a stabilised mood and a sense of calmness, allowing us to experience happiness and emotional stability.

## FEEL

Furthermore, endorphins, known as 'feel-good' neurotransmitters, are also released during moments of happiness. Endorphins act as natural painkillers and stimulate feelings of pleasure and euphoria. They are responsible for the 'runner's high' experienced during intense physical exercise and contribute to a sense of well-being and relaxation. If you are at the gym and have completed a great run or weights session, you may be hot and sweaty and your muscles may feel tired, but you have a strong feeling of satisfaction, pleasure and positivity. That's your endorphin chemicals kicking in! It happens time and time again as well, so means that you want to keep going. We are clever, aren't we?

These chemicals work in combination to create the sensation of happiness, promoting positive emotions, motivation, and overall well-being. They help reinforce positive behaviours, encourage social bonding, and contribute to the overall balance of our mental and emotional state. Watch out, they are addictive!

This is a quote from one of my clients after she finished her first Sprint Triathlon and the happiness chemicals were flowing strongly:

"This sense of achievement is overwhelming! If you had asked me six months ago if I would ever be able to complete a triathlon, I would have laughed in your face. But I have done it. I've DONE IT!!! You believed in me and I am so happy!"

But will my client feel the same way if she completes a second and third triathlon? Do the chemicals work the same way when we repeat something we find extreme happiness in? The concept of hedonic adaption would perhaps suggest they wouldn't.

## Understanding hedonic adaptation

I believe the concept of hedonic adaptation is crucial to understanding our happiness levels. Hedonic adaptation is a psychological phenomenon when our brain gets used to the changes in our environment, and the effects of positive events fade away over time. For instance, getting a new job or buying a new car can bring happiness initially, but the effects will soon dwindle away.

Hedonic adaptation is based on the idea that humans have a natural tendency to adapt to their circumstances, whether positive or negative, and that their initial response diminishes over time as they become accustomed to these circumstances. This adaptation process has been observed across various life domains, including relationships, wealth, material possessions, and even life-altering events.

For instance, imagine winning a significant amount of money or purchasing a material possession that you have long desired – that new car you have had your eye on for ages! Initially, this change may bring an immense amount of pleasure and happiness. However, over time, you might notice that the level of happiness or satisfaction you get from that money or possession diminishes, and you return to your baseline level of well-being. Similarly, if you were to experience a negative event, such as job loss or a breakup, your initial level of distress would likely decrease as you adapt to the new circumstances.

“People who win the coveted lottery prize experience high levels of happiness at the time. However, according to psychologists, the winners tend to return to their previous levels of happiness once the novelty of the winning experience wears off.” (Corporate Finance Institute)

Interestingly, a specific study of the happiness of millionaires by Grant Donnelly and his team at Harvard Business School discovered firstly that it matters how you gained that status; if you earned it yourself or if

you inherited it. The study suggested that if you earned the money, you would be happier. Secondly, if you have a net worth income of circa \$8 million (about £6 million) you are at your happiest, in comparison to other levels of millionaires. I discuss levels of income and happiness in more detail at a later stage.

“The evolutionary task of our ‘happiness module’ is to improve our chances of survival and reproduction by helping us distinguish between useful and harmful, good and bad. This concept does not allow for everlasting happiness. Would the state of happiness last, we could no longer distinguish this state from others, thus losing its quality.” (The Happiness Project)

### **Factors influencing hedonic adaptation**

While hedonic adaptation occurs in most individuals, the speed and extent of adaptation can vary depending on several factors:

**Duration and intensity of the event:** Short-term and intense positive or negative experiences tend to result in more significant fluctuations in happiness levels initially. However, in the long run, individuals tend to adapt back to their baseline level.

**Personality traits:** Some individuals are naturally more resilient and predisposed to adapt more quickly to changes, both positive and negative. Traits such as optimism, emotional stability, and gratitude can influence the speed of adaptation.

**Comparison and social factors:** People’s happiness can be influenced by their social comparisons, as they often compare their circumstances to others. This proves Aristotle’s Level 2 Behaviour which is ego happiness, from comparison and doing better or being more admired by others. If individuals constantly compare themselves to others who seem to have more, they might struggle to maintain a sense of contentment, despite positive experiences.

## **Implications of hedonic adaptation**

Understanding hedonic adaptation has several important implications for our pursuit of happiness:

**Pursuit of material possessions:** Hedonic adaptation challenges the notion that acquiring more material possessions or achieving certain life goals will lead to lasting happiness. It suggests that focusing on external factors alone may not bring sustained happiness. I explore this in further detail later.

**Gratitude and mindfulness:** Practicing gratitude and mindfulness can be effective ways to counter hedonistic adaptation. By consciously focusing on and appreciating the positive aspects of our lives, we can enhance our overall well-being. I delve into more detail on this later on.

**Variety and novelty:** Introducing variety and novelty into our lives can help counter the effects of adaptation. Engaging in new experiences or regularly changing our routines can provide a boost in happiness by preventing complete habituation. This is part of the reason why a holiday break is so important. Further explanation is discussed later on in the book.

**Building strong relationships:** Relationships and social connections play a crucial role in our overall happiness. Instead of pursuing material possessions, investing in meaningful relationships can provide a more sustained sense of satisfaction. This is covered in more detail later.

## **The role of genetics**

It is also worth noting that while many aspects of happiness are determined by our environment and circumstances, studies have also shown that genetics play a role in our overall happiness levels. In fact,



it is about 30% – 40% genetic and the rest is up to us! (Marianna Pogosyan, 2019)

However, the Body Worlds Museum in Amsterdam (The Happiness Project) suggests that it's more like 50% genetics:

“Happiness is a combination of how satisfied we are with our life and how good we feel on a day-to-day basis. It varies from person to person, but approximately 50% of our happiness is determined by genetics, 40% by our thoughts, actions and behaviours, and only 10% by circumstances (e.g. rich or poor, healthy or unhealthy, married or single)... So our actions really can make a difference.”

It does seem that some people are naturally more 'happy-go-lucky' than others. I explore this in further detail later on.

## **Summary**

The science of happiness has given us a better understanding of what makes us happy, and it can help us make conscious decisions to increase our happiness levels in the long term. While some factors such as genetics and our personal circumstances are outside our control, we can focus on practising gratitude and fostering strong social connections to boost our overall well-being. These topics are discussed in more detail later in the book.

## Action time

This is a written action.



1. Using the space below, write down 5 things you are grateful for in your life at the moment. They don't all have to be huge things – it can be as simple as having a cup of your favourite tea!

2. Come back to this list when you are having a bad day to remind yourself of these 5 things.

My examples:

- I am grateful I have my health and very rarely have anything wrong with me.
- I am grateful I have a loving and understanding family support network around e.
- I am grateful I have amazing clients who appreciate what I do.
- I am grateful I have a short commute to work.
- I am grateful we have managed to book a holiday for next year.

---

---

---

---

---



“Rebecca Myers’ book is a valuable guide to living a fulfilling life. It’s a must-read for anyone seeking to balance the triangle of life and discover the true essence of happiness.”

*Susan Howard*  
*Psychiatric Nurse*  
*Holistic & Aesthetic Practitioner*

Why do we strive to do the things we do? To make money, to experience different things, to feel fulfilled ourselves, or to help others to feel the same? It all boils down to finding and feeling happiness!

*Live Happy* delves into the science of happiness – what happens in our bodies when we feel happy, what external factors make us happy, and what we can do about finding and sustaining these positive feelings.

Divided into three comprehensive sections, *Live Happy* looks at the practical ways to move and relax our bodies, how to eat better to feel better, and provides tips and exercises to practice improving and sustaining happiness, so you can live a happier life!

Rebecca Myers is the founder of Live Happy, the health and well-being company. Live Happy consists of a network of physical gym facilities, a holistic app product, and a host of corporate health and well-being consultative services.

As well as being a personal trainer, nutrition coach, mental health first aider and counsellor, Rebecca is a mum to two demanding ‘tweenage’ boys and wife to long-suffering husband, Sam.



£17.99 ♦ US \$21.99 ♦ €20.99  
ISBN 978-1-913770-78-5



9 781913 770785 >