

3 keys to happiness

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Here is just such a simple solution, presented in the form of three keys, that when remembered and practiced, keep us going in the right direction and while we walk the path, they also are the catalysts in bringing happiness.

When people, events and circumstances go against our wishes, desires or expectations, they create reactions of anger and frustration within us. These reactions are natural and must not be denied or ignored - rather their underlying reason must be seen and overcome - that of our pre-decided ideas and expectations being thwarted.

These emotions occur as a natural progression of painful events and are fine as long as they are felt and released. The problem lies when we cannot let go of the feelings and they tend to seep into our hearts where they fester till treated. If such is the case, these negative feelings tend to influence our way of thought, and necessarily, of action and become an integral part of our outlook towards life itself. Then everything that originates within us carries the subtle flavour of these very negative feelings.

The first secret of happiness says that no matter what emotions we feel temporarily, our hearts must remain free of hate.

We worry when our thoughts travel either to the future, or linger in the past. Worry is a phenomenon which depletes energy and divides attention - leaving us incapable of giving our best to the moment before us. The only way to give a 100% of yourself to the task at hand is to be totally present in the present moment without thinking of what's gone by or what is still to come - both cases where we have no say or control anyway.

Performing the action totally and to the best of one's ability brings back a positive result based on the law of karma - "As you sow, so shall you reap" - a result which would not be possible had we divided our inner being with worry.

The second secret of happiness is to always perform actions based on careful thought and planning, but without worry.

It is crucial for our happiness to come to the realisation early in life that it is our own expectations and pre-conceived ideas and hopes, which when frustrated, cause most of our pain and agony. Once this understanding has stabilised within us, we begin to live for the moment, and within ourselves instead of seeking outward or external reinforces for our self-esteem or happiness. It is not enough for us to be passive spectators of our own life, we must also be willing to give and share freely of our best qualities without waiting for a similar return.

It is both wise and practical to remember the advice of numerous spiritual masters that "It is in the giving that we receive." The free giving of your own self without strings attached bring both peace and contentment in the long run. **The third secret of happiness is to give a lot and expect very little.**