



The Western Slope's

Sunny Side (of Life)



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Sunny Side-Up:

Simple Ways to Become Happier and Healthier

What is Happiness?

By Cathy Hartt, RN, CNM, MS
Health, Life and Business Coach

There are many different ideas of about happiness floating around. According to the Worldnet Dictionary, happiness is defined as:

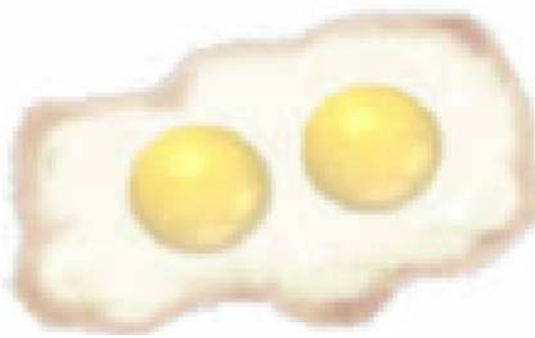
- 1: state of well-being characterized by emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy
- 2: emotions experienced when in a state of well-being

So, if happiness is an emotion we feel while is a state of well-being, it seems we could increase our happiness by increasing our sense of well-being. And the recent research in positive psychology (or happiness) has found this to be true.

Before we go further, I would like to point out that we know people have a somewhat genetically determined set-point for happiness. We probably all know people who always seem to be happy-go-lucky and those who have dealt with on-going depression.

It is true that the happy person may well have inherited a high set-point for happiness, just like some slender folks have inherited a set-point that allows them to

stay slim without dieting. The good news is that people, regardless of set-point, can increase the amount of time they spend in a state of well-being through a variety of activities. When I coach, I am simply teaching people to experience more well-being.



I want to go back to the concept of happiness. Researchers in the science of happiness believe there are three types of happiness. These include pleasure, engagement and meaning. Let's take a closer look at these!

Pleasure is an easy one for most Americans to understand. Pleasure could be the taste of ice cream, the sight of a sunset or the smell of a rose. I believe we often confuse pleasure as the only type of happiness - pleasures like money, sex, wine, etc. only last for a short amount of time. This is probably why we see so many people seeking more pleasure only to feel more depressed when the short-lasting impact wears off.

The next type of happiness is called engagement or flow. This is a concept that seems less familiar than pleasure to most folks - but it is really not so foreign.

Take a moment to recall the last time you were so involved in a hobby, game or sport that you lost total track of time. I loose myself like this when I am writing. While I am not grinning ear-to-ear, I look back on these experiences as a time when I experienced a state of well-being.

The last type of happiness is meaning. We find meaning through using our strengths to serve something bigger than ourselves. When I use my coaching skills to help a group to increase their satisfaction with life, I feel I am serving something larger than myself. Many folks would call this type of happiness a "calling", and so it is.

Many folks ask me, "Is one type of happiness better than the other?" My answer is that balance between all three types is important. Having a 'calling' without taking time to smell the roses or have a hobby leads to burnout. Smelling roses or tasting fine wine without a sense of life purpose will only lead to a few short seconds of happiness. The best part about coaching is that it helps people find balance AND, at the same time, increase all three areas of happiness.

If you want to experiment with the three types of happiness, take time each morning to plan an activity that is a pleasure, one that involves flow and one that feels meaningful. Take note of how happy you feel doing each!

For more in-depth information on increasing happiness through personal coaching, contact Empower! @ 970-240-9562 or cathyacnm@msn.com!

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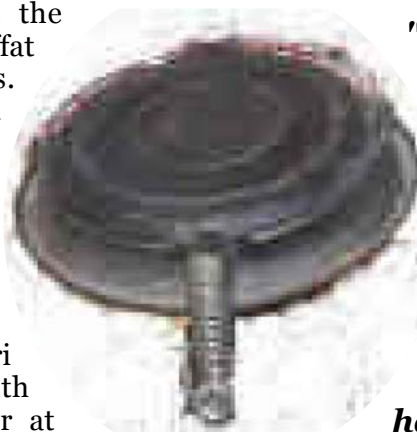
Short Stories about My Family's Western Slope Pioneer Days

Axe man, spare that tree!!!

In the early 1900's, there was a fellow named 'Missouri Bill' McCausland who later was called upon to tell his story to the Forest Service as

and-a-half-foot Engelman Spruce in order to clear a little land. My great grandfather Spragg stopped old Missouri with the words:

a way to document the early history of Moffat and Routt Counties. Missouri Bill worked as a sheepherder for my grandfather, John K. Hartt. As a sheepman then, he recounts earning \$15.00 a month.



"Son, when I was a young man living in Nova Scotia, an old Quaker once told me that we aren't on this old earth very long, and if we can't do any good, do as little harm as we can."

It seems old Missouri Bill was working with my great grandfather at granddad's Pioneer Sheep Company Headquarters one morning when he learned an important lesson. Bill was just about to deliver his first striking blow to a 6-

Missouri Bill later reported that by 1948, the tree had grown to stand approximately 45 feet tall.

Reference: The History of the Routt National Forest



ABOVE: My great grandfather Spragg going fishing with my aunts Pearl and Marie circa 1920 near Hahn's Peak in Northwestern Colorado.

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