

Top Seven Obstacles to Happiness

By Julie Fuimano, Personal Development Expert & Success Coach



Most of us want to be happy in life. That is our main goal: to be happy. But how many of us actually achieve happiness? Can you admit to feeling happy every day? Or are you still silently wishing you could erase your life and start over?

People aren't taught to be happy. We aren't raised that way. Parents raise you to be responsible, to get a job, and to take care of yourself, but does that include happiness? Who role models "happiness" for us?

People do the best they can. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to know whether people are truly happy or putting on a good show. You cannot look at someone's exterior and know what's going on inside. Are they living true to themselves, or are they living a lie of some sort? Have you ever heard of someone going bankrupt, being laid off, or getting divorced or even arrested and you were totally surprised? You thought everything was fine. The fact is that you never know what is truly going on.

Many people *appear* to have money. They have the right clothes, drive the right car, have all of the right "stuff" but in reality they have no money. They are broke. In debt. They may make a great living but they live way beyond their means and have not learned to be financially independent. Everything they do is for appearances: they appear to be rich when in fact, they live in a hole.

Do you focus your life on making impressions or "looking good"? Happiness is an inside job. You cannot buy enough stuff to make you happy. There will always be a longing for something more.

We get in the way to our own happiness in many ways. In my book, [*The Journey Called YOU: A Roadmap to Self-Discovery and Acceptance*](#), there are at least thirty obstacles presented that describe ways in which we falter and there are tips for moving beyond them. If you can identify how you get in your own way, you can learn to stop giving yourself a hard time and [go get some happiness for yourself](#). Here are the top seven things that people do to impede their happiness and success:

- 1) You don't know what happiness is. It seems to be elusive. Whenever you think, "if I only had X, then I'd be happy" and you finally get it, the happiness you feel is fleeting if it comes at all. And joy, what's that? Life is supposed to be hard and you're so busy that there's no room for joy.
- 2) Somehow you have accepted your place last on the list of importance in you life. You seem to matter less than everyone else. You spend your time attempting to make everyone else happy and have never considered your own happiness.
- 3) You cannot say "no" to any request. You don't know how to stand up for yourself and you hate the idea of confrontation. You cannot stand to not be liked so you go out of your way for people to like you. You are a good girl or boy and do as you are told. This isn't always happy, you don't feel like people really respect you, but it's a huge boost for your self-esteem when you can do something for someone else, even if you don't have the time and would rather be doing something else.
- 4) You avoid things that need to be said or done. Either you deny the unhappiness in your life or you know it's there but refuse to address it. There is an elephant in the living room and you just keep walking around it hoping no one notices. If you think it's easier to live blind to what is, know that there is a great cost to you. You pay a high price for living in denial with lost sleep, high stress, and unhappiness, as well as lost opportunities where you could be spending time doing things that bring you joy. The time of your life is slipping by and it takes so much effort to ignore the elephant. It's draining your life force.
- 5) Someone else is to blame for your unhappiness. It's not your fault. It was your parents, or the economy, or your boss. You refuse to accept responsibility for your life and, in so doing, you give your power to some entity outside yourself to control how you feel inside. Being a victim keeps you powerless.





- 6) You're too busy to stop and consider if you are enjoying yourself. If you stay busy, you don't need to think about how unhappy you are or how quickly the time of your life is passing you by. You enjoy the rat race and so, you just keep running.
- 7) You are afraid: afraid of success, afraid of what others think, afraid of your own greatness, afraid of the power you have to create your own happiness, afraid to feel that good! You are afraid of the unknown. You know how to manage the chaos and struggle; it is so familiar to you after all. Happiness, abundance, and effortlessness are new to you and that's scary.

Do any of these sound familiar to you? There are, of course, many other barriers to success and happiness. If you are not comfortable with feeling good, then you will avoid it. Unless you are consciously seeking a new experience, as a creature of habit, you will automatically do things the way you've always done them and you will want to feel the way that is most familiar and known to you, even if it doesn't feel good.

Give yourself permission to be happy and to feel good, to be successful or wealthy. That is the first step to change. Give yourself permission to go after what feels good for you. Take a life inventory and assess where you are right now and where, perhaps you are not so happy. Be rigorously honest with yourself because awareness is the power you need to make a difference. Happiness is created by eliminating the things that get in the way as much as it is by doing what you love. And often what needs to be eliminated is the mind muck, or the junk that goes on in our heads. Happiness is really an inside job. Happiness comes with an untroubled inner world. Learn to align your mind and success will come easier and will be sustainable.

Julie Fuimano, RN, MBA, CSAC is named one of the TOP 100 THOUGHT LEADERS in personal leadership development. Your happiness and success is her business! Her coaching clients experience dramatic and profound results in their productivity, level of confidence, and their relationships. As a certified coach, accomplished writer, and motivational speaker, Julie empowers your personal best and teaches you simple, practical tools for meeting your goals, communicating effectively with others, and enjoying yourself at work and at home. Visit www.NurturingYourSuccess.com to learn more about coaching with Julie or contact Julie@NurturingYourSuccess.com to have her speak at your next meeting or conference. Subscribe to her blog at www.NurturingYourSuccessBlog.com.

