

HAPPINESS COMES FROM WITHIN (Personal Power)

*We are what we think, all that we are arises
with our thoughts; with our thoughts
we create our world*

BUDDHA

During our life, most of us believe that happiness comes from outside of ourselves. We are all searching for that elusive quality of 'happiness' and 'peace', (whatever it means to each of us) and for some reason we often look to external influences to find this happiness and peace.

"When I have moved house, things will be better. When I have enough money, things will be ok, when I change jobs, I will be happier", when I am not so stressed, etc. I am not advocating that we don't strive to improve our own particular circumstances, or that there are occasions when life feels very unfair and deals us a poor hand - it's just, I wonder sometimes that we use things as a reason not to change, not to move on.

It's not what happens to you, it's what you do with what happens to you, that's what makes the difference.

If you believe life wont improve until.....before I continue, I would like to tell you a short story.

One day a very old woman was walking along the road when a stranger carrying a bag stopped and asked her how far the nearest town was. She told him and then he asked, "What kind of town is it to live in?" The old woman replied, "What kind of town are you from?" The stranger replied, "Oh its awful where I am from, people are critical of each other, its not very neighbourly, no one helps anyone and people are generally miserable, I am glad to be leaving" "Well," said the old woman, "I am very sorry to have to tell you that's exactly what it's like where you are going".

A while later, as the old woman continued on her journey, another stranger happened by and asked how far it was to the nearest town. The old woman told him and then he asked, "What kind of town is it to live in?" The old woman replied, "What kind of town are you from?" The stranger said, "It's a great place, people are kind and helpful, I have made some good friends and where

*ever you go there is always a welcome and a smile; I am sad to be leaving".
"Well," said the old woman, "I am pleased to tell you that is exactly what it is
like where you are headed".*

*The moral: No matter where you live, the attitude you take with you will depict
whether it is horrible or wonderful.*

To find happiness, whilst many of the things mentioned above are important in the short term, they are just a 'quick fix' and we need to look within to find self-acceptance for true happiness to emerge.

There have been many books written, there are many therapists with a plethora of techniques and tools and many an advertising campaign that would suggest buying this or that product. Whilst some (or all) of these things could be helpful along your voyage of discovery, the truth is that everything you need to find personal contentment and happiness is within you. The question to ask is, are you prepared to take the step that will set you along your road of personal discovery; are you willing to explore?

Two thousand five hundred years ago Lao Tzu (a famous Chinese philosopher) said; '*The biggest problem in the world is that individuals experienced themselves as powerless*', today, this is still our biggest problem.

The biggest barrier to happiness and success is the feeling of powerlessness. Powerlessness courts negativity, anger, anxiety, inertia and fear.

Personal power comes from an inner sense of security, from knowing who you are, connecting your thoughts and feelings with your inner self and then accepting yourself. Once you accept yourself, you can be yourself and other people's opinions and criticisms cannot create the insecurities that take you to that state of worthlessness where you give away your personal power. Personal Power comes from within; no one can give it to you.

Taking control of your thinking and knowing you can decide how you think, which, determines how you feel, your behaviour and your attitude means, you keep your power. Take care of yourself; look after your physical, emotional health and spiritual needs. Let no one be in charge of your life but you and by being prepared to look after yourself, then you will be able to care for and look out for others.

We cannot change how others relate to the world, or how they relate to us; however, we can change ourselves. Look closely, at what blocks your inner vision and you will be amazed how quickly the fog disappears and a clear focussed picture emerges.

Your attitude and the way you think feel and behave, this is within your control; we can change all three. In taking this action, you will keep your power and with it a sense of inner peace. This internal happiness will show on the outside. Happiness is not far away and unobtainable, it is always here:

Stephen Covey teaches: 'Joy emanates from the spirituality of our core principles'. He calls this our Personal Mission Statement. Our moods and our emotional well-being is influenced from within.

Happiness is attainable now. There are no magic tricks, there is no great mystery, - you have the power within; happiness is within you, now.



Find something in each day to make you smile