

# FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

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## How to be Happy: Tips for cultivating contentment

Source: [mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management)

**Are you tired of waiting around for happiness to find you? Stop waiting and start getting happy with these tips.**

Do you know how to be happy? Or are you waiting for happiness to find you? Despite what the fairy tales depict, happiness doesn’t appear by magic. It’s not even something that happens to you. It’s something you can cultivate. Start discovering how to be happy.

### How to be happy: What science tells us

Only a small percentage of the variation in people’s reports of happiness can be explained by differences in their circumstances. It appears that the bulk of what determines happiness is due to personality and more importantly thoughts and behaviors that can be changed.

So, yes, you can learn to be happy or at least happier.

Although you may have thought, as many people do, that happiness comes from being born rich, beautiful or living a stress-free life. The reality is that people who have wealth, beauty or less stress are not happier on average than those who don’t enjoy those things.

People who are happy seem to intuitively know that their happiness is the sum of their life choices, and their lives are built on the following pillars.

- Devoting time to family and friends
- Appreciating what they have
- Maintaining an optimistic outlook
- Feeling a sense of purpose
- Living in the moment

### How to be happy: Practice, practice, practice

If you’ve been looking for happiness, the good news is that your choices, thoughts and actions can influence your level of happiness. It’s not as easy as flipping a switch, but you can turn up your happiness level. Here’s how to get started on the path to creating a happier you.

### Invest in relationships

Surround yourself with *happy* people. Being around people who are content buoys your own mood. By being happy yourself, you give something back to those around you. If you have friends and family who will support you during difficult times and celebrate with you during good times, take the time to nurture those relationships.

Pretend you have an emotional bank account. Fill it with kind words and actions. Be careful and gracious with critique. Let people know that you appreciate what they do for you or even just that you’re glad they are part of your life.

### Express gratitude

Gratitude is more than saying thank you. It’s a sense of wonder, appreciation and yes, thankfulness for life. It’s easy to go through life without recognizing your good fortune. Often, it takes a serious illness or other tragic event to jolt people into appreciating the good things in their lives. Don’t wait for something like that to happen to you.

Make a commitment to practice gratitude. Each day identify at least one thing that enriches your life. When you find yourself thinking an ungrateful thought, try substituting a grateful one. For example, replace “My sister forgot my birthday” with “My sister has always been there for me in tough times.”

Think about what you are grateful for before you go to sleep and when you wake up in the morning.

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November is the month  
to remind us to be  
thankful for the many  
positive things  
happening in our life.



Cultivate optimism

Develop the habit of seeing the positive side of things. You needn’t become overly optimistic, bad things do happen. But you **do not** have to let the negatives color your whole outlook on life. Remember that what is right about you almost always is more than what is wrong.

If you are not an optimistic person by nature, it may take time for you to change your pessimistic thinking. Start by recognizing negative thoughts as you have them. Then take a step back and ask yourself these key questions:

- Is the situation really as bad as I think?
- Is there another way to look at the situation?
- What can I learn from this experience that I can use in the future?

Find your purpose

People who strive to meet a goal or fulfill a mission—whether it’s growing a garden, caring for children or honoring one’s spirituality are happier than those who don’t have such aspirations.

Having a goal provides a sense of purpose, bolsters self-esteem and brings people together. What your goal is doesn’t matter as much as whether the process of working toward it is meaningful to you.

Try to align your daily activities with the long-term meaning and purpose in your life. Research studies suggest that relationships provide the strongest meaning and purpose to your life. So cultivate meaningful relationships.

Are you engaged in something you love? If not, ask yourself these questions to discover how you can find your purpose:

- What excites and energizes me?
- What are my proudest achievements?
- How do I want others to remember me?

Live in the moment

Don’t postpone joy waiting for a day when your life is less busy or less stressful. That day may never come.

Instead, look for opportunities to savor the small pleasures of everyday life. Focus on the positives in the present moment, instead of dwelling on the past or worrying about the future.

Spending time with supportive friends or family, cultivating a grateful attitude and an optimistic outlook, focusing on your purpose, and living in the present can help you take steps toward being happier. Start today toward your goal of being a happier person, and find ways each day to include these strategies.



Healthy Eating Tips for the Holiday Season

Source: Institute of Agriculture, The University of Tennessee  
Developed by Betty Greer, PhD, RD Professor  
and Nutrition Specialist, Family and Consumer Sciences.  
<http://extension.tennessee.edu>

Holiday Survival Tips to Avoid Adding Extra Pounds

- When a holiday social event is planned for the evening, do not starve yourself all day. This will lower your will-power and lead to overeating, so in the long run, you will consume more calories than if you had eaten normally.
- If it is not a dinner party, then eat dinner before you go. This will prevent hunger and help you make better food choices at the event.
- Offer to bring an item. Make something really tasty that is also healthy. Most hosts/hostesses appreciate the offer.
- Drink lots and lots of water!
- Try to avoid the alcohol. If you are going to drink, make sure that you drink one 8 oz. glass of water for every glass of wine or cocktail you consume.
- Instead of alcohol, pour some sparkling water into a wine glass and slowly consume it. That way no one will try to give you a “drink”.
- At the food table, be reasonable. Fill up on veggies and fruit first. Then go to lean proteins (if available) such as shrimp. Protein will help you resist the fat and sugary foods.
- Portion control is important all year, but it’s vital when faced with a daunting supply of high-fat and even higher-sugar foods at holiday time. Choose the healthy food choices first to help you resist the temptation of the fattening foods.
- Reminiscing with relatives is great, but why not bond with them and stay in shape at the same time with a game of touch football or even a long walk around the neighborhood?
- If you “fall off the healthy lifestyle wagon” at some point, simply get back on. It is important to NEVER GIVE UP. Determination is the key to success.



Let’s Talk Turkey—A Consumer Guide to Safely Roasting a Turkey

Source: [fsis.usda.gov](https://www.fsis.usda.gov)  
Last Modified Sep 28, 2015

Fresh Turkeys

- Allow 1 pound of turkey per person.
- Buy your turkey only 1 to 2 days before you plan to cook it.
- Keep it stored in the refrigerator until you are ready to cook it. Place it on a tray to catch any juices that may leak.
- Do not buy fresh pre-stuffed turkeys. If not handled properly, any harmful bacteria that may be in the stuffing can multiply very quickly.

Frozen Turkeys

- Allow 1 pound of turkey per person.
- Keep frozen until you are ready to thaw it.
- Turkeys can be kept frozen in the freezer indefinitely; however, cook within 1 year for best quality.
- See “Thawing Your Turkey” for thawing instructions.

Frozen Pre-Stuffed Turkeys

USDA recommends only buying frozen pre-stuffed turkeys that display the USDA or State mark of inspection on the packaging. These turkeys are safe because they have been processed under controlled conditions.  
DO NOT THAW before cooking. Cook from the frozen state. Follow package directions for proper handling and cooking. Allow 1<sup>1/4</sup> lbs. per person.

Thawing Your Turkey

Two ways to thaw your turkey safely—in the refrigerator, or in cold water.

In the Refrigerator (40 F or below)

4 to 12 pounds—1 to 3 days  
12 to 16 pounds—3 to 4 days  
16 to 20 pounds—4 to 5 days  
20 to 24 pounds—5 to 6 days

*\*Keep turkey in its original wrapper. Place it on a tray or in a pan to catch any juices that may leak. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1 to 2 days. If necessary, a turkey that has been properly thawed in the refrigerator may be refrozen.*

In Cold Water (30 minutes per lb.)

4 to 12 pounds—2 to 6 hours  
12 to 16 pounds—6 to 8 hours  
16 to 20 pounds—8 to 10 hours  
20 to 24 pounds—10 to 12 hours

*\*Wrap your turkey securely, making sure the water is not able to leak through the wrapping. Submerge your wrapped turkey in cold tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Cook the turkey immediately after it is thawed. Do not refreeze.*

Roasting Your Turkey

- Set oven temperature to 350 F.
- Place turkey on a rack in a shallow pan.
- Cook a whole turkey to an internal temperature of 165 degrees.
- Let the turkey stand for 20 minutes before carving to allow juices to set. The turkey will also carve more easily.

(You can read the rest of the article at [https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/poultry-preparation/lets-talk-turkey/CT\\_Index](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/poultry-preparation/lets-talk-turkey/CT_Index))



KIDD KRADDICK’S FAMOUS BROWN BAG TURKEY

Directions

Pre-heat oven to 375

Ready In: 4 hrs 30 min  
Serves 6-8

Ingredients

2 paper grocery bags  
1 (18-20 lb) whole turkey  
2 stalks celery  
1 carrot (roughly chopped)  
1 onion (cut into quarters)  
3-4 crushed garlic cloves  
olive oil  
Gravy Mix:  
6 oz chicken broth  
1/8 cup corn starch

**\*Note:** The advantage of the brown paper bag over the Reynolds cooking bag is that the paper breathes causing the Turkey to ROAST. In the Reynolds bag the turkey STEAMS, giving it a different taste.



- ⇒ Take everything out of the turkey. There will be a giblet bag and some other stuff.
- ⇒ Cut onion into quarters, chop carrot and celery sticks, crush garlic and put all vegetables inside the turkey.
- ⇒ Rub turkey all over with olive oil, not butter, because butter usually has salt in it and salt is the enemy of a moist turkey. Make sure the whole bird is covered in olive oil.
- ⇒ Put turkey in roasting pan and cover it with a large brown paper bag. You can also use two bags and overlap them in the middle. Sprinkle the bag all over with water. Place in oven on the middle rack.
- ⇒ Roast 13-15 minutes per pound. The meat thermometer should register between 165-170 degrees.
- ⇒ Remove from over, cut away the bag and remove basting pan. Do not throw out the drippings.
- ⇒ To make the gravy, strain the pan juices into a big pot. Add boiling chicken broth and corn starch, add more corn starch if gravy is not thick enough. Cook on low heat till ready to serve.

Nutrition: Serving Size 1; Servings per recipe 6; Calories 1609.5; Calories from Fat 799g; Total Fat 80g; Saturated Fat 22.5g; Cholesterol 667.3 mg; Sodium 666.1 mg; Total Carbohydrates 3.6g; Dietary Fiber 0.8g; Sugars 1.5g; Protein 203.9g