

## Happy for No Reason

I just finished reading a fabulous book – *Happy for No Reason – 7 Steps to Being Happy from the Inside Out* by Marci Shimoff. I heard Marci speak at the eWomenNetwork Conference in Dallas last month and loved her presentation.

Six years ago (August 2, 2002) I took early retirement from my public relations job with the Social Security Administration and founded Money Wise Women. I was inspired to take early retirement after reading two quotes:

“You gain strength, courage & confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” Eleanor Roosevelt

“Our purpose in life is to find our gift, perfect it and give it back to others.” Unknown

I’ve always been a happy person, but my decision to step outside my comfort zone six years ago created a happiness in my heart, spirit and soul. Today I’m living a life of prosperity, which I describe as a life I love without worrying about financial constraints.

Are you ready to live a life of prosperity and happiness? If so, I recommend you begin by reading *Happy for No Reason*.

Marci Shimoff interviewed 100 people whom she refers to as the Happy 100. Their qualities included:

- Having a sense of lightness or buoyancy
- Feeling alive, vital, energetic
- Having a sense of flow, openness
- Feeling love and compassion for yourself and others
- Having passion about your life and purpose
- Feeling gratitude, forgiveness
- Being at peace with live
- Being full present in the moment

*Happy for No Reason* discusses the seven steps to being happy from the inside out. Step 1 is *Taking Ownership of Your Happiness*. Begin by ridding yourself of the happiness robbers – complaining, blaming and feeling shame. Know that it’s never too late to kick these robbers out of your life. The three happiness habits for empowerment are (1) Focus on the solution, (2) Look for the lesson and the gift, and (3) Make peace with yourself.

I’ve always believed that everything happens in life for a reason, and there are lessons to be learned from every situation—good or bad. I always ask myself: What’s the lesson to be learned from this situation?

Step 3 of being happy for no reason is *Let Love Lead*. The three happiness habits are (1) Focus on gratitude, (2) Practice forgiveness, and (3) Spread loving kindness.

Several years ago I read this passage in *Oprah Magazine* and it's always inspired me to practice gratitude: "Gratitude comes easily when our lives are in order—when the bills are paid, the children are behaving and our health is good. But our challenges are what bring the chance for transformation. And it is during our deepest pain that we can be most grateful, because we know our hardship will deliver a lesson that redefines our character. As you practice gratitude, give thanks not only for what you have, but also for what you've escaped. When difficulties arise, ask yourself 'What is the lesson for me in this?' And when you give thanks in the midst of your trial, know that you're becoming your finest."

Practicing forgiveness may be much more difficult than gratitude because it means "releasing the toxic resentment and anger you're holding in your heart, finally freeing yourself to get on with your life." *Happy for No Reason* includes a powerful exercise to guide you through the forgiveness process.

Spreading loving kindness is simple – saying something nice to someone, letting someone pull in front of you in traffic, holding the door open for someone at the grocery store, etc.

Skipping to Step 6 – *Living a Life Inspired by Purpose* is one of my favorite steps because it's how I'm living my life. The three happiness habits are (1) Find your passion, (2) Follow the inspiration of the moment, and (3) Contribute to something greater than yourself.

In order to find your passion, you have to take time out of your busy life and look inside yourself what you're passionate about – what do you love to do, what lights your fire. Take the Passion Test which is in the book.

Following your inspiration may not be easy, but it's necessary if you want to fulfill your purpose. According to Marci "When you're inspired, you act from a sense of inner purpose, not out of obligation or to get others' approval."

Contributing to something greater than yourself is what personally drives me. I felt complete when I founded Money Wise Women and began to use my talents to educate and empower women to live financially healthy lives. Of course there are days when I wonder why I work so hard, but when I hear from a woman whose life has been changed (for the better) by attending a Money Wi\$e Women Conference or reading my book – makes it all worthwhile.

If you want to know the rest of the steps to being *Happy for No Reason* don't wait another day to buy the book! It will inspire and motivate you to live a life of happiness or validate that you're already living happy. It's a must read! I couldn't put it down and plan to read it again soon.

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