**What Is Happiness?**

Happiness is an electrifying and elusive state. Philosophers, theologians, psychologists, and even economists have long sought to define it. And since the 1990s, positive psychology has been dedicated to pinning it down. More than simply positive mood, happiness is a state of well-being that encompasses living a good life, one with a sense of meaning and deep contentment.

Happiness can improve your physical health; feelings of positivity and fulfilment. Happiness has even been linked to a longer lifespan as well as a higher quality of life and well-being.

Researchers find that people from every corner of the world rate happiness more important than other desirable personal outcomes, such as obtaining wealth, acquiring material goods, and getting into heaven.

Happiness typically involves times of considerable *dis*comfort. Genetic makeup, life circumstances, achievements, marital status, social relationships, even your neighbours—all influence how happy you are. Regularly indulging in small pleasures, getting absorbed in challenging activities, setting and meeting goals, maintaining close social ties, and finding purpose beyond oneself all increase life satisfaction.

Signs of a Happy Person

Happy people live with purpose. They find joy in lasting relationships, working toward their goals, and living according to their values. The happy person is not obsessed with material goods or luxury vacations. This person is fine with the simple pleasures of life—petting a dog, sitting under a tree, enjoying a cup of tea. A happy person is much more than some of the following:

* Is open to learning new things
* Is high in humility and patience
* Smiles and laughs readily
* Practices compassion
* Is genuinely grateful
* Is happy for other people
* Does not feel entitled and has fewer expectations
* Is not spiteful or insulting
* Does not hold grudges