

I'm a pretty positive person, but sometimes I want to stay in by bed and not leave the comfort of my soft sheets and feathery pillows. Because, you know, there's tons of things in the world that can bring you down. If you live in or near Chicago and turn on the news, that right there is enough to make you want to never leave your bedroom! But you can't live a life hidden away, you have to come out of your room, head to school or work and live. I think it's hard to do so sometimes especially when you're feeling sad. That being said, I believe happiness is a choice, and every day, and every moment of every day we have to make the choice to be happy. There are a few other things, too, that I think bring happiness, like exercise and practicing gratitude. But, every day it's your choice decide how your day will go.

One way to make happiness happen is by exercising. A movie that I really love is Legally Blonde and in that movie, a husband is killed and the wife is on trial. One of the lawyers says, "People who exercise have lots of endorphins. Endorphins make you happy. Happy people don't kill their husbands!" Seems like I'm not being serious here, but there is science behind this. In her article entitled The Science Behind Exercise and Happiness, Lee says, "exercise can release 'happy' brain chemicals." These brain chemicals are called endorphins, and when you exercise, your body produces them. The big thing they do is to fight off feelings of stress and pain. So, if you want to be happy, put your running shoes on, grab your music, and get outside for a run in the

sunshine. Exercise isn't the only way to create happiness, though, you can also do some reflection...

Something else you can do to **create** happiness in your life is to **practice** gratitude. Gratitude is the ability to appreciate and be thankful for the things you have. This practice might mean that before you go to bed, you **list** three things you're thankful for. It might mean that once a week, you **send** an email or note to someone in your life who has helped you, and you **share** with them why you are so thankful for them. Sometimes people, like myself, are writers, and write blog posts about things they're thankful for. When I write blog posts about the things I'm thankful for, I am instantly uplifted. No matter how you practice, being thankful will in turn cause you to feel happy.

Not everyone believes that you create your own happiness. Some people believe that

Last Sunday afternoon, I walked into church just before 5pm. I was happy to see some familiar faces - one woman named Rosemary I remember meeting last week. I sat behind her again. As I walking to my seat, the beautiful sounds of the choir filled room, all the way up to the tall, decorated ceilings and up to the people in the balcony. Immediately I felt peaceful. When made me realize, we create our own happiness.