

This talk is abt being happier by changing your personal philosophy

Personal philosophy is the principles you live by. The principles that govern how you behave, how you respond to situations, how you think of other people and yourself. It's basically just the way that you think

Preface by saying I'm not trying to tell you 'should' do- you are the only person who can formulate your own personal philosophy, I can't do it for you and don't have the right

I'm just giving you information that you may or may not choose to use in that formulation

This is stuff that's helped me and others I've given this advice to- I've found that for these people and myself this is a useful worldview, but there's no catch-all solution to happiness and I'm just one man sharing the things I've learned from just 19 years of living

I'm gonna talk about ten points in this, and when moving on to a new one I'll make that clear

Also what I'm saying isn't the views of Project:Talk, I'm using them as a platform for my own

Before I even say a point about other people, I'm gonna talk about something much more fundamental- how you perceive yourself

1. 'What you think you are'

How you perceive yourself -> how you act -> how others respond to you -> how you perceive yourself

Everyone has things they dislike about themselves and things they want to be- even have an image of their ideal self in their head

Ppl fantasise and desire and hate that they aren't what they want to be instead of trying to improve

Improvement- wilful self-betterment- is the most important thing and it starts with mental improvement and changes in perception

Identify something u want to be, a small single thing- maybe don't fake laugh- and work towards it, and repeat

You don't have to be the best, just better. Forgive mistakes, but strive to do more

This helps but also compliment yourself- treat yourself how you treat others- you don't have to believe it, you will over time. Push past that initial disbelief and out of sheer stubbornness, continue to respect yourself even when a voice in your head says don't

This will improve how you perceive yourself- and suddenly that vicious cycle earlier is a virtuous cycle because everyone likes confidence

Summary

2. 'Fake it til you make it'

Everyone believes feelings influence action, but the connection between them is so strong that by acting a certain way, you can trick your brain into feeling it

It sounds hard to believe but next time you're upset and by yourself and lack any consolation, just try whistling or singing a tune to yourself. It sounds stupid but it kinda works

So by just *acting* confident, over a long period of time as these actions become habits and those habits become second nature, your brain actually starts to feel more confident, and in the short term it's a minor boost

Speak slowly and confidently, have a great posture, smile, whistle: this actually changes how you feel and how you perceive yourself

Everyone likes confidence- fake it and people will respond well, which boosts confidence: positive feedback loop from earlier

Over time, because what you think you are, you become what you fake. You fake it until you finally make it

3. Compare yourself to yourself and hold yourself to your own standards

It's normal to envy others and compare ourselves to them, but it's never a fair comparison

Everyone has totally different circumstances: genes, family, social life, education, amount of time, current mood, self-esteem. Everyone is so distinct and complex they're like a whole nother universe, so you can't compare yourself to them

Everyone is flawed and insecure about something- so never wish you were someone else

Don't compare yourself to others, just yourself- that's the only fair comparison

Bc you're comparing yourself to yourself, you can only hold yourself to your own standards- everyone is different, have their own standards for what they want to be, so want you to be different things, so you can never please everyone

So don't try. Disregard people's opinions/judgements and focus only on whether *you* are satisfied with your own conduct. And if you are, that's all that matters

4. 'Every day is a new life to a wise man'

Obsessing/thinking of the past or worrying about the future never helps. Plan and prepare for things, but obsessive worry is unhealthy. Live in the present

So consider each day as a whole lifetime. Tomorrow is a lifetime away, yesterday was a lifetime ago. Narrow your focus only to this day

5. Be friendly and polite to everyone you meet, and get to know them

Socialising w friends makes us happier bc brain releases oxytocin. But any positive social interaction w anyone also causes oxytocin release

So talk to the ppl you see every day- the bus drivers, the Source café cashiers, the friends of friends you see at pres or flat parties but never rly talk to

It also leads to new friendships and thus new opportunities so this makes you happier

6. You can never understand others fully

Everyone's wondered why ppl do the things they do at some point, esp during friendships/relationships breaking down/up, and past the point of a brief rational analysis it's not healthy

You can never actually fully understand why ppl do the things they do so trying is futile. Remember, everyone is their own universe. You can barely fully know your own, it's not your responsibility to know others peoples'

It's important to note that everyone thinks differently than you do. So the same objective event can be perceived in many diff ways. E.g. someone makes a rude joke abt you, you perceive it as hostile, they see it as friendly

Important not to mistake ignorance for malice- 9/10 times when someone annoys you they either don't know it, didn't mean it that way, or you misinterpreted it

Nobody does the wrong thing intentionally

It can be helpful not to analyse someone's actions, bc you can perceive them in a way they weren't intended to be, but someone's intentions. If you reckon someone's just trying to be friendly, even if they're annoying tell yourself they're not doing that on purpose

7. See their side and avoid grudges

I've said obsessing over why ppl do what they do is bad and futile- and it is. But there's a balance- a brief, rational analysis is extremely useful

Honestly examine their motives and feelings: if you can relate to them, replace anger with compassion. If you can't, pity them for being misguided/upset and replace anger with that

Grudges hurt you more than them. They don't feel your hatred, you do

So after an injury, pick one of three options: forgive them wholeheartedly, confront them (More on that later), or if you can't do either detach yourself from them emotionally and forget about them, erasing them from your mind

8. Don't bottle up emotions but confront people properly

Bottling up emotions is terrible for your wellbeing, but also when someone else bottles them up it's equally bad. E.g. one time I told a joke at someone's expense and throughout the night they kept lowkey referencing it and sniping at me, tryna make me look bad

Nobody benefits from this. You don't get decisive closure, they feel antagonised, everyone feels uncomfortable. It is vital in this world that when faced with an issue, you do something about it. You confront them- but properly

Don't get them defensive or angry, as then they won't want to solve it. Do it privately, neutrally, non-confrontationally

Basic formula for those bad w confrontation, explain what's wrong, how you feel, what they should do, even if that's just 'please stop'

Most people are nice and once they realise they're upsetting you, they'll feel bad and want to stop. If you yell/insult/intimidate them, they won't *want* to stop as they'll resent you, so you're not rly solving it

Avoid generating resentment in others if u can. Resentment is opposite of goodwill, you want bad things to happen to them. Unless you have absolute power over someone- like totalitarian state levels- ppl will eventually get an opportunity to act on their resentment and screw things up for you in some way. So don't be rude to others if you can avoid it. Generate goodwill in people

Obvs this talk is geared more towards everyday interactions rather than genuinely malevolent people

In the moment in front of groups and in private confrontations, always ask 'what do you mean by that', 'why did you say that'. Gives you closure and allows them to clear up misunderstandings or to backtrack

Nervous laughter/smiling will be taken as compliance bc many want to do the right thing but aren't emotionally intelligent. Straight face is awkward, but communicative

9. Acknowledge your emotions: you can only change them in the long-term

I hope this is good advice, but by following it you aren't gonna immediately extinguish stress and will still feel stress at some points

The path to happiness is a slow one and it takes time to get the right mindset properly ingrained in you. Just as it takes a while before a regular action, e.g. exercise, becomes a habit and then a longer while before it becomes second-nature, so will new ways of thinking take a while before they become your main way of thinking and finally second-nature

When feeling stress/sadness/anger/whatever, ignoring or denying it never works. You cannot suppress your emotions and trying to do so will exhaust and stress you. Acknowledge them and accept them- sincerely doing this helps

10. Accept that which you can't control and don't base happiness on it

Tying back to the last point, you can't control your emotions- how you respond to them and what you think about them, yes, but not emotions themselves. Accept it

You can't control other people- what they say, what they think of you, what they decide to do. You can influence it, but you can't actually determine it. Accept that and don't base happiness on it

It's hard- everyone wants to be liked- but often it can be v hard to make a new friend, change someone's opinion of you, be accepted into a new friendship group, etc. You could be the most likeable/confident person ever and some ppl wld still do these things. You have to accept it

More importantly, transcend the habit of basing your happiness and self-worth on how others act towards you and what they think of you

The only thing you should base happiness on is the only thing you can control- *you*

Our actions, our conduct, our responses to situations and emotions is all we can control: base happiness on that

Caveat: often we do things that we dislike simply out of habit/instinct, e.g. fake laughing earlier. That's OK, bc you can't control instincts, but you can control your response to it: forgive yourself and, as I described earlier, make it a conscious effort to try

To try- that is the most important thing you can control. Your urge to try. Don't be apathetic. Don't just give up. Trying- in every aspect of life- is vital

If the principles of this talk sound like something you want to incorporate in your own personal philosophy, sincerely try to live by them. It will be hard and it will take time, but try. That's all you can do.

11. Lifestyle

Epilogue: this talk has focussed on mindset, but happiness is more than that. It's all about how you live, and you'll have heard the importance of a good diet, regular exercise, frequent socialisation, a good routine, etc. I'm not gna focus on it, but it's just a disclaimer that it's easier to reach happiness if you combine mindset with other factors

But there's no one-size-fits all lifestyle for happiness. For example, don't get up at 5am and sleep at 8pm because you read it online if that doesn't work for you. There are some things that really do help everyone, like regular exercise and socialisation, but generally your optimum lifestyle is personal to you

It's the same with mindset. Different ppl are gna come out this talk with different ideas on how useful it is, and that's OK. There is no one-size-fits-all personal philosophy that grants universal happiness. Diff ppl think in diff ways and are comforted by diff things. I just hope that this talk has given you some tools to find that personal philosophy which works for you.

Thanks so much everyone for listening, it's a privilege. If you anything you wanna ask me, say to me, or talk to me about, just come up to me and say it. I'm here for as late as possible I'm happy to be here, please don't hesitate if you wanna come over and say anything, no matter how long or short.

Thank you everyone.