



The Top 5 Science Based Techniques To Boost Your Happiness & Confidence

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CONTENTS

Why be happy?	3
Another 5 reasons to be happy	3
Your happiness is in your mind, and it can be improved!	5
Expressing Gratitude	7
Start your attitudes of gratitude today!	8
Meditation	9
How to meditate	10
How to manage out of control thinking.....	11
Physical Activity	12
Natural exercise = OTMs = Opportunities to Move!.....	13
EVERYTHING COUNTS!	13
Nutrition.....	15
Adopt a Palaeolithic Diet	16
Eliminate the Poisons.....	17
Milk is poisoning us.....	17
Cereals grains	18
A Stoic Mindset	19
Confidence	19
5 Stoic Lessons	20
Acknowledge your negative emotions	20
Visualize the things that annoy you	20
3 questions to ask yourself every day.....	21
What's Your Ikigai?	22
Retirement is a modern concept	22
Clever marketing.....	23
How to find your Ikigai	23
University of Pennsylvania Authentic Happiness Test Centre	25

WHY BE HAPPY?

"All of us want to be happy, even if we don't admit it openly or choose to cloak our desire in different words. Whether our dreams are about professional success, spiritual fulfillment, a sense of connection, a purpose in life, or love and sex, we covet those things because ultimately we believe that they will make us happier."

"Yet few of us truly appreciate just how much we can improve our happiness or know precisely how to go about doing it. To step back and consider your deep-seated assumptions about how to become a happier person and whether it's even possible for you is to understand that becoming happier is realizable, that it's in your power, and that it's one of the most vital and momentous things that you can do for yourself and for those around you."

~ Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky

Shawn Achor from Harvard University, whose Happiness Advantage training is now the largest and most successful positive psychology corporate training program to date in the world states:

"When we are happy—when our mindset and mood are positive—we are smarter, more motivated, and thus more successful. Happiness is the center, and success revolves around it."

And goes on to say:

"When our brains get stuck in a pattern that focuses on stress, negativity, and failure, we set ourselves up to fail."

Another 5 reasons to be happy

1. It gives you a positive approach to life

Having the attitude of a positive approach releases endorphins that are essential for the well being of a person.

Even putting a pencil between your teeth and simulating a smile releases happy hormones in the body ([Strack et al](#)) and people with a positive approach to life handle their problems more effectively without creating unnecessary fuss. Read More: www.psychologytoday.com

2. It improves friendships

“Friends- they are generous and cooperative with each other in ways that appear to defy standard evolutionary expectations, frequently sacrificing for one another without concern for past behaviors or future consequences.”

~ Professor Daniel J. Hruschka

True friends act in caring , selfless, generous ways, sharing emotional experiences in mutual aid and concern for the other.

3. You are more satisfied with life

Life is full of hurdles and unless you can adopt a happy state you will be challenged with staying positive.

The easiest way to feel satisfied and total contentment is to adopt the mantra of happiness in life. This then releases the “hormones of satisfaction” also known as “hormones of euphoria”.

4. You look young and feel younger

Being happy is the surest key to keeping the mind and body healthy.

And research from the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin suggests that smiling makes people think you are younger than your years.

In the study, 154 young, middle-aged, and older adults guessed the age of 171 faces of young, middle-aged, and older men and women with various expressions portrayed on a total of 2,052 photographs.

People who were smiling in their photograph were most likely to have their age underestimated by an average of about two years.

5. Stress and work productivity

It is well researched that chronic stress is linked to physical and emotional problems, strained relationships, and serious mental health issues such as depression.

It’s also becoming accepted that stress also kills health, well-being and happiness at work. And when we are unhappy at work, we often become disengaged, cynical, and toxic to others.

If you value your career or business, isn’t it about time you adopted happiness as your best friend?

"In sum, across all the domains of life, happiness appears to have numerous positive by-products that few of us have taken the time to really understand. In becoming happier, we not only boost experiences of joy, contentment, love, pride, and awe but also improve other aspects of our lives: our energy levels, our immune systems, our engagement with work and with other people, and our physical and mental health.

"In becoming happier, we bolster as well our feelings of self-confidence and self-esteem; we come to believe that we are worthy human beings, deserving of respect.

"A final and perhaps least appreciated plus is that if we become happier, we benefit not only ourselves but also our partners, families, communities, and even society at large."

~ Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky

So, I think we've established a good enough set of reasons to work on our happiness muscle, don't you?

But, how do we build and boost our happiness?

"In a nutshell, the fountain of happiness can be found in how you behave, what you think, and what goals you set every day of your life. 'There is no happiness without action.' If feelings of passivity and futility overcome you whenever you face up to your happiness set point or to your circumstances, you must know that a genuine and abiding happiness is indeed within your reach, lying within the 40 percent of the happiness pie chart that's yours to guide."

~ Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky

Your happiness is in your mind, and it can be improved!

Through remarkable studies with identical twins separated at birth, scientists have discovered that about 50% of our happiness is determined by our genetics.

They call this the, "happiness set point". It's the level of happiness we tend to gravitate toward.

So, 50% is in our control. And when they say 50%, this is of course an approximation and the "50" you work on can outperform your genetic makeup as well.

Now, there's another 10% of our happiness that's determined by our life circumstances.

Most people spend all their energy trying to affect this part.

You know it well - fame, fortune, riches, the fairytale partner and lifestyle, the perfect body, good looks...

But, research shows that increasing our wealth, attractiveness and stuff like that has both a negligible and a temporary impact on our well-being.

In fact, research shows that wanting external rewards like cars, money and such is detrimental to your health and well-being:

"Placing a strong emphasis on extrinsic goals is associated with lower well-being."

~ Kasser and Ryan 1993, 1996, Ryan, Chirkov, Little, Sheldon, Timoshina & Deci 1999, Schmuck, Kasser & Ryan 2000.

"Making progress in one's goals only benefits well-being when the goals are intrinsic, not when they are extrinsic."

~ Sheldon and Kasser 1998.

Which leads us to the 40% of our happiness we can influence positively and which we want to focus on.

"What makes up this 40 percent? Besides our genes and the situations that we confront, there is one critical thing left: our behavior. Thus the key to happiness lies not in changing our genetic makeup (which is impossible) and not in changing our circumstances (i.e., seeking wealth or attractiveness or better colleagues, which is usually impractical), but in our daily intentional activities.

"With this in mind, our pie chart illustrates the potential of the 40 percent that is within our ability to control, the 40 percent for room to maneuver, for opportunities to increase or decrease our happiness levels through what we do in our daily lives and how we think."

~ Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky

This 40% is what it's all about and it's all about you. But, it takes EFFORT to create happiness. It's like a muscle that you have to work regularly, like going to the gym

So let's look at what you can practically apply to boost your happiness.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE

How about a quick 25% boost in your happiness levels? Does it seem possible? Well, read on.

A study conducted on gratitude by Professor Robert Emmons has shown some great results.

Researchers split participants into three groups. Every week the participants kept a journal where they described, in a single sentence, five things they were either grateful for (the gratitude condition) or displeased about (the hassles condition).

The neutral group simply described five events that happened (the events condition).

Here's what the first study reveal.

After the 10 weeks they examined the differences between the three groups on all of the well-being outcomes that were measured at the beginning of the study.

Participants in the gratitude condition:

- Felt better about their lives as a whole
- Were more optimistic about the future

To put it into numbers, according to the scale the researchers used to calculate well-being, **they were a full 25% happier than other participants.**

Amazing, right?

Emmons tells us that:

"participants in the gratitude condition felt more joyful, enthusiastic, interested, attentive, energetic, excited, determined, and strong than those in the hassles condition."

So, what else can you do to elevate your attitude of gratitude?

"Here's a frightening statistic: by the age of twenty-one, the average adult will have seen one million TV commercials. By playing on our desires and fears, these ads fabricate needs and cultivate ingratitude for what we have and who we are."

~ Robert Emmons

This is known to lead do anxiety and depression. So, how about starting to reverse that 'ingratitude' attitude and boost your happiness by watching less TV and not being so wrapped up in your social media account?

Start your attitudes of gratitude today!

The No1 practical method for expressing gratitude is proven to be keeping a gratitude journal.

It's really simple.

Every day, write down (or record on your phone like I do) five things for which you feel grateful for in your life.

Keep it simple and just take a few moments to identify a few things you feel grateful for.

I start every day writing or recording 5+ things I'm grateful for in my life. I also think about some as I'm going to sleep at night. I always sleep well and never have nightmares. I wonder why?

I feel really grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

"Gratitude has never, until recently, been examined or studied by scientific psychologists. It is possible that psychology has ignored gratitude because it appears, on the surface, to be a very obvious emotion, lacking in interesting complications: we receive a gift—from friends, from family, from God—and then we feel pleasurably grateful. But while the emotion seemed simplistic even to me as I began my research, I soon discovered that gratitude is a deeper, more complex phenomenon that plays a critical role in human happiness. Gratitude is literally one of the few things that can measurably change peoples' lives."

~ Robert Emmons

MEDITATION

You probably know that meditation is good for you, but maybe you didn't know the science of WHY.

Well, maybe you did or didn't know, but it's a fact that we have a right and a left hemisphere in our brains. Basically, our left side is logical and analytical while our right is holistic and intuitive.

Now, did you know that for most of us, our hemispheres are unbalanced?

This then leads to mental illnesses such as:

- Feelings of separation
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Isolation
- Depression

This state is called "lateralization" and: "The greater the lateralization of the brain, the greater the feelings of separation—and the greater the feelings of separation, the greater the stress, anxiety, and isolation."

"The innate duality of the brain is made more acute by the fact that in virtually all people, the two hemispheres are unbalanced, a state called brain lateralization."

~ Bill Harris

Fascinating, right?

So, how do we get our brains balanced?

One powerful method is meditation.

Let's hear it from the expert:

"Whatever the technique, the effect on the brain is substantially the same: synchronization of the two brain hemispheres—and after much practice, an experience of connection with the rest of the universe, accompanied by profound inner peace and happiness. Any kind of focusing will bring about a degree of brain synchronization. The greater the focus, the greater the synchronization, and the deeper the meditative state."

~ Bill Harris

How to meditate

It's a lot simpler than you think. Some practitioners and teachers want to make it more complicated than it needs to be. But, think about this for a second - meditation is our natural state.

Unfortunately, we've unlearned it and some people are so caught up with 'stuff' that simply letting go of everything is difficult for them to do.

So, let's look at how simple we can make it:

Step 1.

Sit down, lay down or even stand if you want.

Step 2.

Take some deep breaths to start with and then let your breathing become more relaxed.

Step 3.

Relax as much as possible.

Step 4.

If you have any thoughts, let them go.

Step 5.

Trust you are doing the right thing and repeat.

You only need to meditate for 30 seconds to begin with. And sometimes, you might want to go back to just 30 seconds.

After a while you might want to try different techniques. There is no one right technique. The only thing that is important is that you practice it regularly.

How to manage out of control thinking

If the thoughts are really running riot in your mind, and for some this is often the case, you might want to try this technique devised by Dr Daniel Amen.

- *Write it down. When those automatic negative thoughts (ANTs) start tumbling around in your mind, write them down to clearly identify them.*
- *Investigate. Ask yourself, are these thoughts even true? Uninvestigated thoughts can lead us to act in harmful ways.*
- *Talk back. If you discover that these negative thoughts are false, talk back to them! Tell these thoughts you know they aren't true!*
- *Practice these steps each time you feel automatic thoughts entering your brain. By labelling, investigating, and then talking back to your automatic negative thoughts, you'll turn your mind into "an ANT ghost town."*

Our brains are wired to focus on the negative in order to avoid things that might hurt us. Fear definitely serves a purpose, but what happens when all we seem to focus on are negative thoughts? Bad things. Take a look at these compelling facts

Every thought you have releases chemicals in the brain.

Hopeful thoughts release chemicals that help you feel happy and calm.

Negative thoughts release chemicals that make you feel stressed and sad.

If what you bring your attention to determines how you feel and act, focusing too much on negative thoughts can lead to destructive behaviors—behaviors that can ruin your important relationships and ruin your mind.

We live in a world where we are constantly bombarded with fear and bad news that triggers our automatic negative thinking—ANTS! Need proof?

Just turn on the TV or cruise through the net. Doom and gloom stories dominate the headlines—because fear makes us pay attention.

You can learn how to kill your automatic negative thoughts (ANTS) and focus on the positive.

~ Dr Daniel Amen

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

"If we could give every individual the right amount of nourishment and exercise, not too little and not too much, we would have found the safest way to health."

~ Hippocrates – traditionally regarded as the father of medicine

It's a fact that exercise is critical to your health and well-being and worldwide studies and science state that exercise is excellent for relieving symptoms related to:

- ADD
- OCD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Addiction
- And aging!

Exercise unleashes a cascade of neurochemicals and growth factors that physically bolster the brain's infrastructure.

Exercise increases levels of the hormones that are good for us and make us happy, energetic and positive, such as:

Serotonin

Norepinephrine

Dopamine

You've probably heard of serotonin, and maybe you know that a lack of it is associated with depression.

"I mean I love movement. I mean the energy that comes from the way I move. We get energy from how we move. I mean the control I get from knowing everything about how my body feels and how it is working."

~ Conor McGregor

Exercise releases neurochemicals that can reverse the negative effects of the toxins that build up in our body's through daily life, physically bolstering the brain's infrastructure.

In fact, the brain responds like muscles do, growing with use and decaying with inactivity.

Neuroscientists have just started to study how exercise affects the brain cells, and the genes themselves. Yes, our genes. Even there, in the roots of our cells, they've discovered signs of the body's influence on the mind.

*"I tell people that **going for a run is like taking a little bit of Prozac and a little bit of Ritalin** because, like the drugs, exercise elevates these neurotransmitters. Exercise balances neurotransmitters – along with the rest of the neurochemicals in the brain. Keeping your brain in balance can change your life."*

~ Dr. John Ratey

Natural exercise = OTMs = Opportunities to Move!

"Too often we think that anything short of a full-on, super sweaty 30-45-60 minute workout "doesn't count." Science says that, quite simply, is not true."

~ Dr. Michelle Segar

If you've got one minute, you've got time.

Dr Michelle Segar shares the secret to getting to love exercise with this quote, "Count Everything and Choose to Move!"

EVERYTHING COUNTS!

When we realize that everything counts, we can look for little ways to move throughout the day.

For example-

Take a "Long Cut" rather than a short cut by deliberately parking further away

Take a long walk to the grocery store

Walk around while you're on the phone

Or, get on the floor and do 1 or 5 press ups or sits ups, or 50, or 2, or squat 3 times.

Remember: Everything counts.

Here is a question to ask yourself regularly:

“Have I done my best to manage my time efficiently, at least achieve my daily mini-exercise habit and appreciated the joy of moving my body since I last asked this question today?”

~ James Gough

Fun Opportunities to Move are EVERYWHERE.

Let's find them!

NUTRITION

"Your brain uses 20 to 30 percent of the calories you consume. It is the most expensive real estate in your body. Because of this, one of the most important things you can do for your brain and personal health is to get your nutrition right. There is simply no way around it. You can exercise all you want, think all the right thoughts, meditate, and take dietary supplements, but if you continue to eat highly processed foods laden with sugar, bad fats, and salt, and made from ingredients grown with pesticides, flavored with artificial sweeteners, colored with artificial dyes, and treated with artificial preservatives, there is just no way to keep your brain and body working at their peak. If your food is not the best, you will never be your best."

~ Dr Daniel Aman

Our bodies have an amazing innate ability to keep us healthy and vibrant. But, when we overdo it and put too much stress on ourselves with work, bad food, inadequate rest, alcohol, drugs (including those prescribed by doctors) and other aspects of modern living, we push our detox systems too far and our bodies just can't keep up. This leads to disease and our system starts to break down and shut down.

The first signs are simple signals the body gives like:

- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Irritability
- Lack of concentration
- Colds and flues

However, this then leads to more serious consequences like:

- Depression
- Heart disease
- Diabetes.

How do you know if your body is in toxin overload?

"Commonplace complaints such as headaches, bowel irregularities, allergies, weight problems, depression, anxiety, and pain are largely caused by failing detox systems. Looking older, feeling more tired, and losing the radiant lustre of health are also directly related to this overburdened state. Yet all of this can be reversed and, frequently, healed when we pay attention to detoxification."

~ Alejandro Junger, M.D.

So what's the answer?

Adopt a Palaeolithic Diet

Paleo = old. Lithic = stone

We've only been eating the food available in supermarkets for a few decades. Most of the ingredients in food today weren't even available in the 1900's!

We haven't been around that long and we certainly haven't been eating the way we do or even had the abundance of food the western world has today.

ANIMAL AGE - 530 million years ago to 2.6 million years ago

PALEOLITHIC AGE - 2.6 million years ago to 10,000 years ago

AGRICULTURAL AGE - 8,000 B.C. to A.D. 1769

INDUSTRIAL AGE - 1769 to 1946

INFORMATION AGE - 1946 to present

Just remember, we are talking about MILLIONS of years in the above bullet points.

And it's only 10,000 years ago that we started to hunt and gather food. And that food was straight off the trees and bushes or fresh animal kill that was 'maybe' cooked and eaten straight away.

It's only recently that we've started to add preservatives, additives and sugar to our food.

So think about. We ate fresh unadulterated food for millions of years and now we consume mostly altered, processed foods full of sugars.

So, one of the basic ideas behind the Paleo philosophy is that we'd be wise to learn a little more about what things were like for millions of years when we were still 'wild' and way before the agricultural revolution came along.

Back in the wild days we had to be careful not to eat something poisonous. We would smell, taste and test everything before consuming it and be very aware of the effect it had on us because it could be the difference between life and death.

The same should be true today. When you go into the grocery store think about what you are about to eat. Look at the ingredients. Buy it as fresh as possible. Ask yourself if tastes 'natural'. And more

importantly, become aware of how your body is feeling. If you feel sluggish, can't sleep at night, are ill often, can't concentrate, are overweight, depressed or not just feeling great, CHANGE YOUR DIET!

Eliminate the Poisons

So, before you go on a diet, start by eliminating the poisons first. It doesn't matter how many vegetables you eat, if you are consuming sodas and chocolate bars and microwave foods you're not going to change your health.

And remember to look out for the hidden toxins. It might be hard to believe, but the worst is cane sugar and all those syrups they put in food.

It was due to the British Empire and slavery that allowed the mass production of cane sugar. Before that our Paleolithic ancestors NEVER had the kind of sugar we now eat.

The average American consumes 152 pounds (68 kg) of sugar every year. That's the bodyweight of the average woman!

Milk is poisoning us.

It really is that simple. In fact, according to Dr. Junger drinking milk is "like putting jet fuel in a motorcycle."

Nature provides milk for mother mammals to feed their infants during the early days of their lives.

For humans, that helps us grow from a birth weight of usually 8 pounds to a weight of around 20 pounds in just one year. A cow on the other hand grows from a birth weight of around 80 pounds to over 1,100.

Milk slows the body's lymphatic system down.

You should cut the milk out of your diet if you suffer from symptoms like these:

- Catarrh
- Blocked nose
- Sinus problems
- Frequent colds

Dr. Neal Barnard, author of Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes believes that eliminating dairy products is critical to optimal health and puts it this way:

"Just as a car performs dramatically better when it has the fuel it was designed for, your body performs far better when you give it the food it needs."

"Cereal grains are the seeds of grasses. The top four—wheat, corn, rice, and barley—account for nearly 70% of global agricultural crops by weight. Along with sorghum, oats, rye, and millet, these grains account for 56% of all calories eaten by humans.

"The seeds of cereal grains contain toxic proteins. Many of these toxic proteins are intended to make it difficult for a grazing mammal to digest the seed. From a seed's perspective it doesn't 'want' to get digested—it wants to make a new plant. The goal is to exit a mammal's digestive tract still intact, dispersed and covered in the manure that will fertilize the seed's growth.

"The toxic proteins are more heavily concentrated in the outer shell (also known as the 'bran'), but are found throughout the entire kernel. Grains that contain the heavily toxic bran are described as 'whole grains,' and are often mistakenly viewed as entirely healthy."

~ John Durant

Everyone agrees that sugar = poison.

However, cereal grains are normally touted as good for you and one of the basic food pyramid elements.

Unfortunately, they are not good for you.

"In wheat, for example, gluten makes up the majority of wheat protein. Even though gluten is associated with the small percentage of people with celiac disease (about 0.4 to 0.8% in the United States), it causes gut inflammation in over 80% of people."

~ John Durant

I know this may be difficult for some to swallow, but check out the facts. Look up the research. And, just look around you. Something is going wrong when 70% of the population in the USA and UK are overweight, right?

A STOIC MINDSET

Got problems with your soul?

These days, you'd see a psychotherapist, but before they came along it was the philosopher who'd help you feel better—they were the preferred physician of the soul.

Stoicism was founded in Athens by Zeno of Citium in the early 3rd century BC.

Modern psychotherapy, especially in the form of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), the most 'modern' of our contemporary schools, can be traced back to the ancient therapeutic tradition derived from the informal philosophical circle surrounding Socrates (470-399 bc), and ancient stoicism.

Stoicism is predominantly a philosophy of personal ethics which is informed by its system of logic and its views on the natural world.

According to its teachings, as social beings, the path to happiness for humans is found in accepting this moment as it presents itself, by not allowing ourselves to be controlled by our desire for pleasure or our fear of pain, by using our minds to understand the world around us and to do our part in nature's plan, and by working together and treating others in a fair and just manner.

Later Stoics—such as Seneca and Epictetus—emphasized that, because "virtue is sufficient for happiness", a sage was immune to misfortune. This belief is similar to the meaning of the phrase "stoic calm".

The Stoic virtues:

- Courage
- Self-control
- Practical wisdom
- Justice or equanimity

Confidence

Want to maintain your confidence and develop an abiding trust in yourself?

It's simple.

SIMULTANEOUSLY DO YOUR VERY BEST AND KNOW THAT THE

RESULTS ARE ALWAYS OUT OF YOUR CONTROL

This way you can love what happens and always be happy irrespective of what happens around you or the outcome of your actions.

You learn to live with *arête* which is living with virtue and excellence, moment to moment.

The example of archery might explain this idea best.

The beauty of archery is you only have control over everything leading up to releasing the arrow. Then you literally let it fly and know that the ultimate outcome is beyond your control.

For example, a wind may come out of nowhere and blow the arrow off course and it's hard to control that variable.

"Cicero uses this analogy of the archer shooting an arrow at a target. His ultimate wish is to hit the target, but he can only do everything within his power to shoot his arrow straight, and so shooting straight, as opposed to actually hitting the target, must be his primary concern, and so it is with life in general. Nowadays we say, 'All that anyone can ask is that you try your best.' Marcus Aurelius writes, 'Thanks to action 'with a reserve clause'... there can be no obstacle to my intention.'"

~ Donald Robertson

5 Stoic Lessons

Acknowledge your negative emotions

People think that stoics are emotionless and don't want to experience emotion, but that's not true. Instead, they learn to accept the emotion, but not let it influence their judgement and actions.

"What you can do is to acknowledge the emotion but say 'yes, but I'm not going to act on it. I'm going to do better than my immediate emotional response would suggest.'"

~ Professor Massimo Pigliucci.

Visualize the things that annoy you

Professor Gabrielle Oettingen, a Professor of Psychology at New York University, has been researching for over twenty years how visualisation impacts cognition, emotion, and behaviour.

Her acclaimed WOOP technique suggests that positive visualising alone can in fact have a detrimental effect on our motivation to reach your goals.

She also goes on to suggest that solely visualising reaching goals and the use of aids like vision boards can cause negative side effects like depression.

Stoics have been practicing this form of negative visualisation for thousands of years.

"I pick a quiet spot and start to go over the list of possible challenges during the day, things that might create problems, and then I remind myself of which of the fundamental virtues might be necessary to deal with (the problems)."

~ Professor Massimo Pigliucci.

3 questions to ask yourself every day

It's when you reflect on your actions you learn from your mistakes in life.

Ask yourself these questions every night and see what you can learn:

- What did I do right?
- What did I do wrong?
- What did I fail to do?

WHAT'S YOUR IKIGAI?

It's a Japanese term that means, "the realisation of what one expects and hopes for". You can think of it as your calling in life, or the reason you get yourself out of bed with a smile on your face in the morning.

Don't be mistaken with this as being just a quaint term for an abstract concept either. Scientists who study the Okinawans in Japan believe their [ikigai](#) is the reason they live on average 7 more healthy years than the average person does here in the west.

Unlike us, the Okinawans have an Ikigai, but they don't have "retirement". Retiring isn't something they do and they just don't have a word that means "retire" in their language. It isn't a concept that they are familiar with because that's the domain of their Ikigai.



Retirement is a modern concept

Strange but true, it was in 1883 that Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck of Germany set the age at 65 for retirement and it was in 1930's America that the first proposed plan for retirement was set in place.

Created by Dr. Francis Townsend (1867-1960), American physician, author, political organizer, the Townsend Plan soon became very popular even though it was criticised by economists of the time.

In the UK, the Old Age Pensions Act was passed in August 1908 and the first payments were made on 1 January 1909.

It used to be that we worked until we died. Our work was who we were and if you were lucky your work was also your passion. But, then along came the marketing “people”. They started to change our views on what growing old should look like. They made retirement look like something that we should look forward to.

Now in the western world we all look forward to the day when we finish our final day at work. For the younger generation looking at the years past 70 it consists of putting on your slippers, doing jigsaw puzzles, playing golf and buying a caravan to travel at 25 miles per hour around the countryside.

Yet, most of the retired generation still have lots of energy and vitality. Lots to contribute and offer. They still want to live a life, but have been duped into thinking that their work is done and now is the time to relax and stop pushing themselves to achieve more. A lot more.

How to find your Ikigai

The alternative is to find your Ikigai again. Find your passion, your why in life. Find your reason to get out of bed in the morning and discover again your reason to be.

The word *ikigai* is usually used to indicate the source of value in one’s life or the things that make one’s life worthwhile.

So, the formulae for finding your Ikigai can be found in the diagram further up in this page and repeated again as I think it is so important-



What is your Ikigai?

Four simple questions to position you right in the sweet spot of having a WHY in life.

- What do you do, or did you do until you had to retire, that makes you feel great, energised and full of passion for life?
- What is that you are just really good at, maybe a natural?
- What is it, or was it, that you get paid for or that you believe people would want to buy from you?
- And, what does the world need right now?

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA AUTHENTIC HAPPINESS TEST CENTRE

The purpose of their website is to provide free resources where people can learn about Positive Psychology through readings, videos, research, opportunities, conferences and.

There is no charge for use of the site.

If you would like to take their questionnaires, you first need to register.

<https://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/testcenter>