

## **Intentional Happiness and the Happiness Index**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights that among them are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

What is Happiness? Are there some clues in TDI? Is there fake happiness and true happiness? Personally I think there is – but each of us is on our own path to find it.

Have you ever made a happiness list? What makes you smile, cry or just feel good? Here are a few things from my list:

Heroes – reading about them, knowing they are out there

Playing games with friends

Good conversation (not superficial)

Seeing God do something for someone through me

Friends who call me

Playing the piano and immersing myself in worship

Seeing my children grow in wisdom

Making a gratitude entry in my journal

Waterfalls

Puppies

Variety

Learning new things

Singing and harmonizing with others

Mysteries – and problem solving!

Jones suits

Truth

(Well, the list goes on – make one of your own?)

**Great relationships can make you happy. Feeling loved. Knowing the love language of family and friends:**

- 1. Acts of service**
- 2. Physical touch (how hard is a hug!?)**
- 3. Quality time (conversation or shared activity)**
- 4. Gifts**
- 5. Words of affirmation**

Fact is, if you do something for someone and they don't seem to appreciate it – it probably is not their love language. Would you like to take the Love Languages Test? Let me know.

Happiness can co-exist with devastation and pain. Pain may always be a part of our lives. Accepting this can be the foundation for building a peaceful life.

Our happiness is born is our courage to see all that is beautiful and good and all that is painful and unfair – and choosing compassion, kindness, hope and love anyway. The Bible tells us to dwell on whatever is good and lovely.

If we rely on external factor for happiness – romantic love, material things, adrenaline highs – we will be forever yearning for happiness. And we may feel betrayed by life and loss.

Can a budget make your life happier? My experience tells me yes. And having a full-blown written plan?

Even more so! What does the song say – Don't Worry, Be Happy? Ben Franklin was right – healthy, wealthy and wise. Good stuff.