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Peter Harper & Val Payne

Peter is a consultant clinical psychologist and Val is an education consultant and teacher. Both have had and enjoyed many years of experience working with children of all ages. Together they have developed a primary school programme based on the 10 Keys to Happier Living which has increased the wellbeing of students, and teachers say it has helped them feel happier too!





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ABOUT THIS BOOK

So you want to explore happiness and find out how to feel happier. What a great idea! Everyone wants to feel happier!

The good news is that scientists have been working on this topic and they have discovered many different activities and ways of thinking that can lead to a happier life for us all.

You might already have some ideas about what helps you to feel happier and this book will help you discover lots more. Whether you're feeling happy right now and want to stay that way or you need some ideas to feel happier, this book is for you. It's packed full of activities to try.



You'll need to think like an explorer or a scientist. Pick an activity and try it out to see what you discover. Think of it as an experiment – see what you feel and what you notice.

You might want to find a notebook that you keep especially for your experiments and your discoveries.

10 KEYS TO HAPPIER LIVING

Everyone's path to happiness is different. Based on the latest research, experts at Action for Happiness have worked out 10 Keys to Happier Living – the areas where we can take action to help us feel happier and more fulfilled. You'll find that all the activities in this book fit into one of the 10 Keys. There's a chapter for each:

1. GIVING
2. RELATING
3. EXERCISING
4. AWARENESS
5. TRYING OUT
6. DIRECTION
7. RESILIENCE
8. EMOTIONS
9. ACCEPTANCE
10. MEANING



TIPS for STAYING SAFE (and tidy!)

- Always tell your parents or carer where you are going and who you are going with.
- Ask your parents or carer or another safe adult to help you with the activities, especially for messy projects or ones you may find difficult.
- Be careful when using scissors or sharp objects.
- Wear old clothes or an apron for 'create and make' activities.



SEE PAGE 63 FOR A NOTE TO PARENTS AND CARERS.

GETTING STARTED

This book is full of activities and ideas to help boost how happy you feel. You can work through them in order or pick out pages at random. Here are two great starting points to begin exploring happiness.

★ THINK FOR A MINUTE

What are all the things that help you feel happy? Think about people, activities, places – anything! There are no wrong answers. You could write or draw them in your notebook. Now think about what really helps you feel happy. What are your top three things?

★ BE A HAPPINESS INVESTIGATOR

We are all different people, so what helps each of us feel happy can be different too. Ask other people to share three things that really help them feel happy.

Ask as many different people as you can. You could ask a friend, your mum, dad or carer, brother or sister; grandparents, aunty or uncle; or even your teacher. Keep a note of their answers in your notebook.

Now investigate the list you have made. Are there things that lots of people share? How does what they say compare to your list? What's the same and what's different?



HAPPY FACT

Scientists are finding that happiness can do us good. People who feel happy are less likely to catch a cold, they are more likely to help others, more likely do better at school and make friends. When they grow up they might also do better at work and in their relationships too.

DOES FEELING HAPPY NEVER MEAN FEELING UNHAPPY?

Can we be happy all the time? Well, that's not realistic. Struggles and difficulties are part of life too. Sometimes things happen that naturally mean we feel sad, angry, upset or afraid. For example, if a good friend moves away, we don't get something we really wanted, someone is unfriendly to us or we sense danger.

Living happily isn't about ignoring these feelings but learning how to respond in the most constructive way we can.

There are also times we need to work hard and deal with challenges. This may not feel good at the time, but can lead to feeling happier later. Think about when you've learned something new, maybe a musical instrument, riding a bike or a new type of sum in maths. At first it may have felt really hard, confusing or frustrating, but once you had finally learned to do it, you felt a real sense of achievement.

The good news is that the activities in this book can also help you cope with difficulties and bounce back more quickly when things go wrong. That's all part of happier living!

Now let's get started on unlocking the secrets to feeling happier – see what you can discover!



1 GIVING

DO KIND THINGS FOR OTHERS



Isn't it funny that the very first key to happier living is about other people's happiness rather than our own?

Well, scientists have found that when we do kind things for others, not only does it help them to feel happier, we feel happier too. In fact, science shows that helping others can have the same effect on our brain as receiving a gift ourselves or eating our favourite food! Helping others can also take our mind off our own worries.

HAPPY FACT

In an experiment people were asked to do five new acts of kindness in one day (things they didn't already do). They felt happier for up to six weeks afterwards!

QUICK START: MAKE TODAY A KINDNESS DAY

What kind things can you do today (or even right now) to help or be nice to someone else? Here are some ideas to get you started...

- ★ Open a door or carry a bag for someone.
- ★ Clear the table without being asked.
- ★ Offer to help your teacher or someone at home.
- ★ Give a friend a hug or a high five.
- ★ Draw a picture and give it to a friend.
- ★ Say something nice to someone.
- ★ Smile at someone.
- ★ Say thank you to people who do things for you but aren't always thanked – perhaps your teacher, the bus driver, or your mum or dad!



WHAT OTHER THINGS COULD YOU TRY TODAY? CAN YOU TRY TO DO AT LEAST FIVE KIND THINGS?

1. THE POWER OF KINDNESS

Think about a time when someone has been kind to you:

- ★ What was the situation? What did they do? What did you feel?
- ★ Next time you see the person, remind them what they did and thank them.

WHEN YOU.....

I FELT.....

THANK YOU!

2. THE 'MANY WAYS OF BEING KIND' CHALLENGE

Make a list of all the ways you could be kind or help other people. Some things will be quick and easy; others will be harder or take longer.

How many ideas can you think of right now? Keep thinking and add to your list – can you get to 100 different ways of being kind, giving or helping people?

Some ways of being kind

- ★ Be friendly to a new kid at school.
- ★ Organise something to raise money for charity.
- ★ Offer to walk a neighbour's dog.
- ★ Offer to tidy your room so your parents don't have to moan at you!
- ★ Write a letter to say hello and brighten the day of a grandparent, auntie or uncle that you don't often see.
- ★ Bake cakes (ask for help from an adult) and give them to elderly neighbours who live alone.
- ★ Stop yourself from being mean to someone and say something kind instead.
- ★ Find out where your nearest food bank is and ask your family, neighbours and friends to help you collect food to take there.

Now take the challenge to the next level. Your goal is to do everything on your list! It may take a few weeks or even months and you might need help with some things, but give it your best shot – how many can you do? Make sure you check your list with a safe adult before you start.

Don't forget to tick off everything you've tried!







3. SET UP A KINDNESS BOX AT HOME

Ask an adult for a box to keep at home. This is a place where you and your family can put messages, photos, stories, drawings or thank-you notes about the kind things people have done for them or they've seen done for others.

- ★ You may want to label or decorate the box.
- ★ Find time to share the contents of the box with everyone.







4. BECOME A KINDNESS DETECTIVE

Over the next week, look out for acts of kindness or helping happening around you. Make a note of each act of kindness or giving that you see during a whole week. For example:

WHO	WHAT	HOW	WHERE	WHEN	WHY
Jenny	Helped Dad prepare tea	She buttered the bread and laid the table	At home	Saturday	So Dad didn't have too much to do



5. GIVING AWARDS

YOU WILL NEED:

- A4 sheet of card or paper
- Colouring pens or pencils



Once you've been a kindness detective and spotted lots of ways people around you are kind or help others, you can give them something – a Giving Award!

For each person on your kindness list, create a certificate. You may want to decorate it or draw a picture of the person they helped or what they did.



GIVING AWARD

This certificate is awarded to: .....

For their acts of kindness: .....

.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS!



TIME FOR THE AWARD CEREMONY

- ★ Invite everyone at home to attend an award ceremony.
- ★ Explain that it's to celebrate acts of kindness.
- ★ Agree a time when everyone can be there, perhaps after an evening meal.
- ★ Decide a place where the ceremony will be held, such as the living room.
- ★ Present a certificate to everyone at home during the ceremony.