

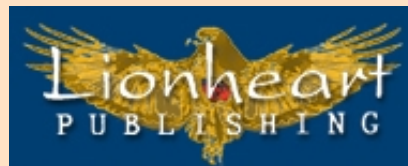
Six Keys To Happiness

Practical and Effective Steps

For Finding Happiness

In Your Everyday Life

Based upon Toltec books written by Théun Mares



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Six Keys To Happiness

A Practical Guide,
Based upon Toltec books by Théun Mares.

Books By Théun Mares

This Darned Elusive Happiness

The Quest for Maleness

Unveil The Mysteries of the Female

Return of the Warriors

Cry of the Eagle

The Mists of Dragon Lore

Shadows of Wolf Fire

To find out more about these books, and to discover more useful articles and resources on the Toltec approach to personal growth, visit www.elusivehappiness.com

Are You Looking for Lasting Happiness?

In this ebook, you will discover some effective keys to finding Happiness. By practising them, you can change your outlook on life, and, of course, as your outlook changes, so will your whole life change. You will discover that happiness is not something elusive and just outside of your grasp, but that it is fully within your ability to achieve.

Although it may seem strange, happiness is a choice, and a simple choice we have to make daily.

You see, the rule is: “We choose to be happy, or we choose to be miserable, but in both instances the amount of effort required is the same.”

However, the fact that a choice is simple, does not mean that it is always easy. Happiness is an art, and like any art, we need to learn skills, and also keep putting our skills into practice.

Here are some keys to help anyone break out of the mindset that is causing unhappiness. These keys are simple, but powerful. They work, but only if you are prepared to let go completely of whatever has been making you unhappy.

These keys are based on some of the techniques contained in *This Darned Elusive Happiness*, by Théun Mares, and others of his books too. For more, including articles and other resources, visit www.elusivehappiness.com

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Key One

If you are not happy with yourself, how can anyone else be happy with you?

Your life revolves around your relationships. So, if you want to be happy, start by asking yourself “How well am I relating, firstly to myself, and then to others?”

Your relationship with yourself is vital, for if you do not like yourself, how can you expect anyone else to like you? All other relationships flow from the relationship you have with yourself.

So look carefully at your relationship with yourself. Are you clear on what you want out of life – on what your hopes and dreams are? Do you show respect to yourself, or do you take yourself for granted? How aware are you of all the different thoughts and feelings that you have throughout the course of your day? Are you fully aware of your state of being – what’s going on with you – right now? You need to start taking all of this into account, for if you cannot establish a relationship with yourself, you cannot relate to others in any meaningful way.

Then, look at your relationship with others. Ask yourself, “Am I aware of their state of being when I try to relate?” Are you really trying to connect, or are you, through insecurity for example, secretly competing against other people in your life, whether this is at work or at home?

As an exercise in rating your relationships, make a list of them all, giving special attention to those which you so often take for granted, for example, your relationship with your neighbours, your maid, your pet and, of course, your primary relationship with yourself. Are these relationships uplifting or destructive, are you fully aware of what is going on with others, as well as with yourself? How much do you listen? How much do you respect?



“To relate implies understanding.”

Key Two

Take a risk and drop your self-image.

We tend to go through life believing that we are inseparable from our self-image. Yet, our self-image is what most often limits us, and certainly prevents us from finding happiness. Our self-image is complex, and it is made up of everything we believe about ourselves, and it includes our self-esteem, or the value we place upon ourselves.

The reason why our self-image tends to trip us up, is because we tend to place our value or worth in external attributes. For example, most people look upon themselves almost entirely in terms of external attributes: a married woman who has a husband, children, and a career; or a single professor who is also a piano teacher. Yet all of these attributes, for that is exactly what these amount to, are only possible because we have physical bodies. How could you be a mother without your body, or how could you play a musical instrument without hands?

So, if you want to be happy, it is important to start to accept that you are not your body, or your mind, or your emotions – in short to take a risk and drop your self image. You may then discover that you are not what you have always thought and felt about yourself. You may also start to realise that you have a potential that is infinitely greater – but it is up to you to find this. The only way you will do so is by letting go of your self-image, and by getting to know the real you.



“Today is the first day of the rest of your life...”

Key Three

Learn to use conflict constructively.

Conflict is an inevitable part of our life. We can allow it to cause us great unhappiness, or else we can use it to become stronger and wiser.

What happens when you are faced with conflict? Are you the type of person who just reacts – either by becoming aggressive, or by running away? Instead of simply reacting, how can you stand detached and make constructive use of the conflict situation? What does it mean to handle conflict constructively?

It may sound strange, but all of life revolves around conflict, for conflict has a purpose. This purpose is to enable us to uncover new knowledge. Think about it for a moment. If there were no conflict, there would be no need for us to come up with solutions. Think about the saying, “Necessity is the mother of invention.”

The person who understands and makes use of this concept, will, instead of fearing conflict, be able to take new knowledge out of any conflict situation. Instead of fuelling or avoiding the conflict, the new knowledge can bring about the reconciliation of opposites. Any new knowledge based on experience is, of course, power - power that you can use to become happier, more self-confident and more successful.

Key Four

Learn how to handle your fear.

Fear is also a natural part of life. This natural instinct for self-preservation forms part of our survival mechanism, enabling us to flee faster or fight harder. When we are out of physical danger the fear normally subsides and we move on.

However, what tends to happen is that, instead of facing our fear and moving on, we allow our fear to debilitate us. We do this by worrying about what might happen, and playing all sorts of scenarios through in our mind, with the result that we end up feeling weak and powerless.

So, how do you handle fear? The first step is to detach from it and gain clarity. This is important, since it stops you from becoming enmeshed in and therefore debilitated by your fear. Through detaching, you can recognize your fear's origins and you can determine whether there is any valid basis for your fear. Gain clarity by asking questions such as these: “Why do I feel afraid?” “Are there other reasons I am not acknowledging?” “Is there a factual basis for my reasons?” “How can I get a better, more objective picture of the true situation and my fears?”

The next step is to take action. It is tempting to wait until you have all questions answered before embarking on a course of action. However, when we are dealing with a life crisis, events move quickly and procrastination means that we can end up being overtaken by our fear.

With practice, you will find that you are not only able to handle your fear, but that you can also start to use it to your advantage.



Key Five

Let go of Guilt.

We have all done things that do not make us proud. Some of our past actions can make us feel very ashamed and guilty, and we can carry our guilt around with us for years. However, guilt is probably one of the most debilitating and negative emotions there is – one that can, and often does, destroy a person's life. Therefore, if we want to live happy lives, we need to deal with the consequences of our past actions and not allow our lives to be wracked with guilt.

Feeling guilty should not be confused with taking responsibility for our past. Taking responsibility means that we actively address the consequences of our actions in whatever way we can, in particular by changing our behavior patterns. Taking responsibility also includes moving on by making peace with the past.

Unlike taking responsibility, which is redeeming and positive, guilt has absolutely no value. Guilt does not encourage us to change in positive ways but debilitates us, leaving us unable to take the action we need to bring about change.

As a behavior pattern, guilt often becomes a self-perpetuating cycle: we do something, we feel guilty about it, we punish ourselves and, because we feel bad, we end up repeating our behavior at the next available opportunity.

The debilitating cycle of guilt continues largely because we do not take full responsibility for our actions or for changing our behavior. So how do we start the process of taking responsibility? By considering, with complete honesty, the part we play in any situation and accepting our role in creating events.

The purpose of this self-examination is to evaluate truthfully whatever occurred so that we can learn how we contributed. Through learning and honest self-assessment, we change our thinking and behavior. We can also forgive ourselves and move on with experience and wisdom.

Real forgiveness has nothing to do with feeling sorry or apologizing – neither of which actually changes anything. True forgiveness is contained in its literal meaning. The word "forgive" is very old, and the prefix "for" means literally "to reject." So the word as a whole means "to reject the giving."

We need "to reject the giving" because, if we think we have wronged someone, we use our sense of guilt to “give” to that person. By giving, we hope to make it better, and to exonerate ourselves from our actions. Conversely, if we feel that someone has wronged us, we will continue to demand payment for that offense.

But giving from a sense of guilt can never lead to forgiveness. Neither can forgiveness be bestowed by another; it has to be brought about by ourselves. In the end, unless we can reject all this giving and truly forgive ourselves, we can never really move on and be free of the past.

Key Six

Stop playing the blame game.

Are you preventing yourself from finding happiness because you cannot let go of blaming someone? Perhaps it's a failed relationship, perhaps it's your parents, or perhaps it's even yourself.

“Our tendency to blame others is one of the main barriers to achieving success, fulfilment and joy in our lives,” says Théun Mares, author of *This Darned Elusive Happiness*. He explains; “When something unpleasant happens to us we tend to look for someone else to blame, for clearly someone else must be at fault.” But where does this attitude leave us?

If we blame another, we are not taking responsibility for our part in what happened. This leaves us in the role of victim, and this leads to a vicious circle of retribution and retaliation. However, victims are not able to take responsibility for their lives – they are always at the mercy of someone or something else. And if you are not able to take full responsibility, you cannot experience true happiness and success.

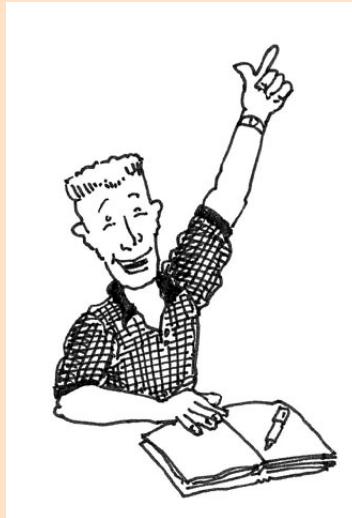
Instead of being a victim we can choose the way of the victor, who takes full responsibility for his or her life. Taking responsibility means responding constructively to events, by asking, for example, “Why did this happen to me?” “What was my role in all this?” By looking at the bigger picture and then bringing it back to us, we can look at our part in perpetuating the situation, and we can learn.

By asking, “What is my role in being a part of the event,” you are taking responsibility for your life, in the sense of taking charge and responding

to the events of your life. You are thus empowering yourself. By asking, “What can I learn?” you are acknowledging your ability to learn from your experiences – to grow and to benefit from them.

Not all experiences are easy, but when something happens to us, we can either give up, or blame, or we can learn. By learning, you are able to turn even “bad” experiences into something meaningful, worthwhile and of value. Through learning, and through seeing our place in the bigger picture, we can truly move on and be healed, since all sense of blame falls away.

Both blame and denial (e.g. saying “just get over it”), keep us forever stuck in the role of victim and unable to claim our happiness.



These keys are based on some of the techniques contained in ***This Darned Elusive Happiness***, by Théun Mares, and others of his books too. For more, including articles and other resources, visit www.elusivehappiness.com

About Théun Mares

Théun Mares is a teacher of the Toltec approach to personal growth, and author of 7 books, including the highly successful, *This Darned Elusive Happiness*. The book contains a wealth of information as well as practical techniques for handling interpersonal relationships and finding true and lasting happiness. He explains how to understand conflict and deal with it constructively, how to handle fear, and how we can learn to stop blaming others – as well as ourselves - for the events in our lives. He shows how we can identify when we are resorting to blame and guilt, and then how we can let go of our past, however bad or difficult it might have been. Through being able to let go of the past and move on - without guilt or blame - we are able to open the doorway to a new future, and to the chance of creating a solid foundation for lasting happiness and joy in our lives. These are only some of the techniques described.

To find out more, visit www.elusivehappiness.com

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