

## Introduction

### Opportunity Knocks

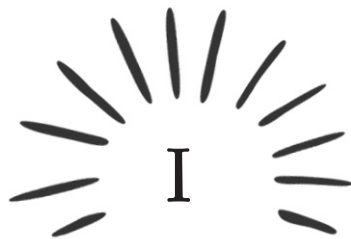
**T**his book is not intended as a quick fix to change your life. It is meant for those who are looking for a little more out of life. To understand “simple happiness” is to realize that you have a choice in how you feel at any given time or in any situation. It is not a particular destination, but merely a state of awareness along your journey of life. You may already be on a quest for happiness. Or you may not. Perhaps you’ve never even given it a thought. No worries. You will still find something as you read that will lighten you up enough to recognize that you are in the driver’s seat.

*Simple Happiness* offers 52 easy ways to help you remove some of the mystery and confusion from your everyday life. Contrary to what some might say, life does not have to be complicated and full of stress. Every day can be a new opportunity to experience joy.

You can certainly read through chapter after chapter, but it is not necessary. Each one represents a particular thought or idea to consider. They can stand alone or you may find that some overlap in a similar concept. You might randomly read a chapter each day as a reminder to be in simple happiness. Or since there are 52 chapters, you might enjoy picking one per week for inspiration all year. As you read, you may find what I offer to be very basic, while others might find it quite profound. There are sections aimed to inspire you and others specifically meant to challenge you. Many offer practical steps or even spiritual solutions. No matter what, please be assured that everything I share in this book is meant for you!

*Simple Happiness* was written from the heart with the intent to give you comfort and hope. Comfort that at no matter where you find yourself, it is just where you are supposed to be. All the experiences of your life have brought you to where you are now—in the right place at the right time. And it offers hope that no matter where that place is, it can always get better, much better. It represents comfort and hope that true happiness and joy are available to everyone—including you!

It is my further intent that these pages inspire you to look at the same old things in a brand new way. However this book finds you, it brings me joy to know that it may open doors for you that you didn't even know existed. I encourage you now to take the first step through a door of opportunity I like to call "Simple Happiness." And as you do so, may you find what your heart desires.



# The Basics

You become what you think about  
all day long.



## We Become What We Think About

**E**ach of us has a powerful but untapped resource within us waiting to be discovered and utilized. We all have the potential of living a life with little or no stress—a life that is full of joy and fulfillment. This power lies in the ability to hang on to thoughts that empower us and let go of those thoughts that are disempowering to us. We become what we think about all day long. Much has been written about this fundamental building block for explaining why some people always seem happy and why others rarely are. Mary Kay Ash said, “If you think you can, or think you can’t, you’re right.” For the most part, we decide what is going to happen before it happens. If you say to yourself, “I’ll never be able to complete that 10k run,” guess what? More than likely you won’t even begin to train. If you say to yourself, “Gee, look at all those people my age who are actually finishing that 10k run,” you are more likely to give it a try. If you think you can, or think you can’t, you’re right!

Start to notice your thoughts throughout your day. Most of us think the same thoughts day after day. Most of our thoughts focus on “what is.” It can be a real breakthrough just to be able to separate yourself from your thoughts. When you are able to step back and observe what thoughts you are hanging on to, you will start to understand why your life is the way it is.

Let’s say you are thinking about your financial situation. You may be saying to yourself, “My parents always struggled to make ends meet.” “I didn’t have the educational opportunities

that others had.” “I guess I’m lucky to have my job, but I am still not able to get ahead.” Your thoughts about “what is” in your life are going to get you more of “what is.” If you want things to change, you have to change something. Start by changing your thoughts. In his book, *You’ll See It When You Believe It*, Wayne Dyer asserts that we can manifest what we want in our lives as long as we believe we can.

Take something in your life that you want to improve. Focus your thoughts on how you want things to be. As you focus on your desired result, notice how good you feel. Bring to mind your desired result and accompanying good feelings as often as you can during the day. Observe when the thought of the *lack* of your desired result enters your mind. Also notice the accompanying bad feelings. This is the exact moment to replace the thought of *lack* with the thought of *fulfillment*. Take charge! Make that thought of your desired result your dominant thought. Your life will start to move into the direction of your desires. Begin to fashion your own life. We become what we think about all day long.



## Thought Systems

**W**hat is the nature of thought? Have you ever considered that? The answer is: “A thought is just a thought.” That’s it, nothing more, nothing less. Our thoughts do not necessarily have to become our reality. They become our reality when we focus on them or hang on to them until we make them our reality. If we could only hang on to the thoughts that empower us and let go of the ones that are disempowering to us, we’d all be a little happier. Did you ever wake up from a bad dream and much to your relief say to yourself, “Phew, it was just a dream!”? If we could only say to ourselves about our thoughts as they pop into our heads, “Phew, it was just a thought!”

It sounds so simple. Let go of the thoughts that hurt us, hang on to the ones that serve us. In practice, it’s really not very easy. Why is it so difficult? It’s difficult because we are who we are—creatures of our life experience. We may have already lived twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years or more. Over the years, we’ve learned to look at the world in our own unique way. We don’t see the world as it truly is; we see the world as *we are*. We have developed our own way of processing and filtering everything that comes our way. Our thought systems have been formed by the people, experiences and situations that influence us along the way.

You have your thought systems, and I have mine. We seem to defend our thought systems as though our lives depended on them. These thought systems, which over time become our

belief systems, can feel good or they can feel bad. Your job, if you want “simple happiness,” is to notice when you are hanging on to disempowering thoughts. When you observe yourself feeling sad, hurt, or depressed, you can usually trace that feeling back to how you were thinking about things. Observing yourself is the first step; choosing a better feeling thought is the next.

We are all creators of our own thoughts. Our emotions tell us whether our thoughts feel good or don't feel good. In our natural state of mind, our thoughts flow freely and easily. When we are stuck in our ego, which is driven by outside influences, we activate thoughts that can ultimately be disempowering to us. We can dwell on the negative emotion that arises or we can use it as a signal to reach for a more empowering thought.

When you understand that your thought systems work alongside your emotional body, you can take control of how you want feel in any given situation. You begin to realize that recasting your thought systems is a major breakthrough in your search for “simple happiness.”