Choose Happiness

Happiness is defined as positive emotions with meaning *and* satisfaction. Happier people are more productive, energetic, cooperative, resilient, successful and engaged. Happiness comes largely from your choices.

Solid science tells us that yes, happiness comes from our genes, but also from the choices and thoughts going on between our ears and surprisingly little from life circumstances.

1. Soothe Stress

Science tells us that *how* you cope has a huge effect on your well-being. Your natural fight, flight or freeze reaction is usually not the most helpful response in the workplace.

Apply the science to soothe stress:
- View stress as energizing – rather than limiting – it's healthier and boosts happiness.
- Get exercise. It's great for managing stress, improving thinking and boosting your mood.
- Use meditation or mindful moments.
- Avoid over-thinking, ruminating & excessive comparisons.

2. Flow to Goals

Science tells us that progress toward clear and meaningful goals fuels happiness. Focusing to get into flow and progressing towards goals can boost your engagement and happiness at work.

Apply the science to flow to goals:
- Visually record progress toward clear and meaningful goals.
- Get into 'flow' by focusing, undistracted, on challenging work.
- Train your brain to avoid multitasking; meditate to boost your ability to focus.

3. Prioritize People

Science tells us that quality relationships are a major source of happiness. As social creatures, we need real connection with others to be at our best. Mirror neurons help us connect with each other.

Apply the science to prioritize people:
- Invest in people and relationships.
- Be kind & forgive – assume positive intent.
- Practice active constructive responding to others' good news.

BONUS CONTENT: Practice Positivity

Science tells us that practicing positivity can significantly affect your happiness. The way you approach your work will have a large effect on your happiness in it.

Apply the science to practice positivity:
- Be actively optimistic – write down your best possible future for the next 3 years at work.
- Act like a happy person (it's contagious!) – interact positively throughout the day.
- Savor life's joys (past, future and present) and notice the best in people and things around you.

The place you have the most effective chance of changing your happiness level is in your own mind. You can choose happiness: soothe stress, flow toward your goals, prioritize people, and practice positivity.

Further reading:

The How of Happiness by Sonja Lyubomirsky ; *Your Brain at Work* by David Rock ; *Flourish* by Martin Seligman ; *The Happiness Advantage* by Shawn Achor. For more recommending reading and other free resources visit www.HappyBrainScience.com

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Quotes and Notes

If you'd like to, feel free to use this space to record the notes and quotes you want to remember.

For a summary of The Science of Being Happy and Productive at Work!, complete with quotes and audio, check out
http://firstround.com/article/Heres-Why-Founders-Should-Care-about-Happiness

Choose Happiness Action Plan

Select one or two intentional activities—thoughts and/or actions—that you will act on. You may:

❑ **Choose an activity that fits a source of unhappiness.** If you multitask, you might work on focusing and getting into flow. If you tend not to have great relationships at work, you might invest more time getting to know people.

❑ **Choose an activity that fits with your strengths.** This basically takes the opposite approach. If you are already good at pursuing meaningful goals, do more of it. If you are already good at expressing gratitude at work, do more of that. Whatever sounds most natural and easy to you, do more of it.

❑ **Choose an activity that fits with your lifestyle.** If you don't have any time to spare, you might choose an activity that doesn't take any extra time, like avoiding multi-tasking or focusing on the positive.

My Personal Happiness Activities: To be happier I will do the following things repeatedly:	When and where I will act on this: