

EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

EPISODE 166: HOW TO MAKE EVERY DAY A GREAT DAY

Albert Schweitzer, a theologian, philosopher and the Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1956 said "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success."

Today we're going to talk about the role of happiness in your business and how it can help you answer the question: "Why don't I do the stuff I know I need to do?"

Today we're going to talk about one of the things that holds us back from taking action we reaaaalllly want to take.

I've taught a lot on some of the things that hold us back (and their solutions) in past episodes, including:

- ★ Overwhelm (Get it all out of your head and prioritize what matters, which my book [Map Your Business](#) helps you do)
- ★ Confidence (Check out the [Biz Confidence Challenge](#) linked up in the show notes)
- ★ Mindset - believing you're capable of growth and that you're not stuck where you are today, which we talk about in [episode 49](#)

But as I've been talking and teaching with you all about building a business despite anxiety and depression, I think we've hit on another: being mentally/emotionally ABLE to do it. Feeling good enough to do it. It's mood/attitude/emotions/state of mind.

Now, overwhelm, lack of confidence, and fixed mindset can all get you in a place where you don't feel like you're able, or you get down on yourself. But even when you get organized, are working on your confidence, and truly believe you're capable of growth... you may still be in a funk or just feel awful.

Luckily, there's been a LOT of research in the last 20 years on this topic. Basically, it's... happiness. Tons of studies show us that when it comes to living the life we wanna live, building our businesses, and relationships... happiness matters.

But first let's get clear on what happiness is. Every time I talk about this with Jay, we first have to define our terms, because we were raised with VERY different understandings of the word and the feeling.

For our purposes here, happiness is a state of well-being that encompasses living a good life - that is, with a sense of meaning and deep satisfaction. ([reference](#))

According to the originator of the field of positive psychology (studying mental health instead of mental illness), Martin Seligman, there are five factors correlated with well-being: ([reference](#))

1. Pleasure (tasty food, warm baths, etc.),
2. Engagement (or [flow](#), the absorption of an enjoyed yet challenging activity),
3. Relationships (social ties have turned out to be an extremely reliable indicator of happiness),
4. [Meaning](#) (a perceived quest or belonging to something bigger), and
5. Accomplishments (having realized tangible goals).

So when I talk about happiness here and your business, I mean, the feeling of wellbeing, not giddiness or enthusiasm. :)

I started thinking about all this, because I mentioned in a Starship chat that I was having a good day because I had done "all the things required to have a good day". A Captain asked me: what is that? Can you do a podcast post on what you do to have a good day?

As I started writing out my day to share with you, I was also reading a book that mentioned Shawn Achor's work, which I've read and loved (I'll link up his books at the bottom of this transcript). I realized that my day pretty much perfectly aligned with Shawn's 5 habits of happiness.

They are:

1. Bring gratitude to mind: Write down three NEW things that you are grateful for each day
2. Journal: About a positive experience you've had recently for two minutes once a day
3. Exercise: Engage in 15 minutes of mindful cardio activity
4. Meditate: Watch your breath go in and out for two minutes a day
5. Engage in a random, conscious act of kindness: write an email expressing your gratitude, send a sweet text, help someone who needs it. (I get asked how to connect to Wifi or do something on their new cell phone by strangers all the time. :))

My own morning routine

- ★ A glass of water with a few drops of an essential oil blend, that wakes me up (orange and peppermint!), boosts metabolism, and encourages a feeling of self-love.
- ★ I go for a run (which is really a run/walk), at least 15 minutes, 2-3 x/week
- ★ Sit in quiet (meditation, prayer). Before I do, I grab Frankincense, which is grounding, and put it on my forehead and chest. I may also turn on the diffuser with sandalwood, Frank, and maybe a citrus like Wild Orange.
- ★ Make my coffee :)
- ★ Journal
 - I write a gratitude list anytime I pick up my journal - at least 3 things that I'm grateful for big and small (yesterday I wrote - "these comfy shorts"). I spend some time REALLY thinking about what and who I'm grateful for and feeling super thankful and blessed
 - After that I often journal - either ask my intuition something and free-write or I make a list of what I wanna work on, or I just write down some thoughts I had while running.
- ★ I often read for 15 minutes to an hour sometime in here, depending on what else is going on this day. I may do this after journaling, or if I'm working at the coffeeshop, I'll do it when I first get there, with my first cup of coffee.
- ★ If I've run that morning, I take a shower, usually after quiet time and journaling. I put a few drops of the Breathe essential oil in the bottom of the shower and the steam opens up my sinuses and clears out any allergens.
- ★ Then, I sit down to work! I use the Motivate blend and/or the Passion blend, both of which just cheer me up as I go.

The important thing with these habits is to start with one, become consistent, and then build on it with another. If you start all at once, it can feel overwhelming. I've been building my morning for the past 4 years and I never get it "perfect". But if I've done $\frac{3}{5}$, I consider it a success.

As an example, this morning we had a meeting with a bank about the comic shop, so all I had time to do was shower, drink a glass of water, make coffee, journal and read on the porch for 20 minutes before it was time to leave.

So that's the list of things that, if I do most of them, I've done what I can to prepare to have a good day. The great thing is, it's cumulative. If I've been running, but I take a few days off, I don't sink as far. And as long as I've got 1-2 things in the morning, I have a totally normal day.

Now, I mentioned the essential oils because, well, I actually use them like this and I know you guys like to know details! But the other reason is that I've got another habit embedded in all this

that has been REALLY helpful in keeping up my mood, that keeps me closer to those feelings of flow that are vital to feeling good.

I want to talk about this with you, because, you know how [back in ep 161](#) we talked about your money stories? I got a million emails asking “but how do you change the stories?” I don’t have a full answer for you yet, but I have a sense that this habit is part of the process.

The habit is this:

Paying attention to my feelings but not believing them. And then taking some tiny action to shift things.

Lemme explain each part of that:

Paying attention to my feelings:

I used to be REALLY GOOD at shoving everything down. I would literally hold my bladder and work for 8 hours without stopping. I would forget to eat. Those are physical sensations, and I was doing this double for emotional sensations. I would just ignore the sadness, fear, overwhelm, joy, enthusiasm that passed, like clouds, over my day.

Since recognizing my panic attacks and anxiety, and then getting really honest about my depression, I started to pay attention. And at first, I paid WAY TOO MUCH attention. I worried that any moment of worry was going to send me over the edge. That any sadness was going to become crippling. I worried that it all was a sign I was totally certifiably crazy. To suddenly be FEELING MY FEELINGS was terrifying and I really worried I broke my ability to cope with anything.

So that’s why you need the second part:

Not believing the feelings.

This is different than ignoring them, this is paying attention and then understanding: feelings pass. They are not necessarily indicative that anything is wrong. Emotions are clouds passing over the sky. They are not the sky. The sky is vast and deep and THERE. The same is true of ME. I am the sky, emotions can pass over me, but they do not change my fundamental me-ness. I can choose to explore them further, or I can choose to take action, or I can change my mood. (All with the purpose not of ignoring the underlying cause of the feelings, if there is one).

I wanna stress that I am not saying you ignore them or that you shove your feelings aside, but rather you don't buy into feelings as facts. If you think the feelings are truly pointing at something true, look into that. Take action to fix it. But if you're not sure, do something to shift the feeling, without letting it run all of your reactions.

And the last step is Doing something to shift the feeling.

There are a million actions you can take - journaling, talking to someone, taking a shower, going outside, petting a dog. One of the fastest things I've found is smelling an inspiring, cheering, comforting essential oil. There are studies that show, this actually works on a neurological level! Your olfactory system leads directly to your amygdala which is the area that process and creates emotions and memories and quick reaction. The aromatic compounds in essential oils (which is just the extract from plants, pure and simple) can attach to receptor sites and trigger emotions or calm other emotions. I actually have a cool chart with the emotions and kinds of oils, so you can identify your feeling, then choose an oil to support that feeling.

I love talking about this, so I'm going to do two webinars diving way deeper into essential oils.

- ★ Tomorrow, July 20th: My Essential Oil Morning Routine
- ★ Next Thursday, July 27: Managing your mood and emotions with essential oils.

You can sign up at TaraSwiger.com/eo

No matter what tool you use, the key is to create a new feedback loop. If you've been believing everything your feelings tell you, you've created a feedback loop of Feel Something -> Believe it -> Act on it. When I start to Notice Feelings -> Not buy into them -> Do something to feel good, the feedback loop started to change. I started to get better at not just noticing my feelings, but knowing intuitively what the right action to take was. So in this way, you're feelings ARE guiding you, but guiding you to get happier and take care of yourself, not to freak out and thrash around. :)

It'll take a while, but this new feedback loop improves your mood over time and builds your trust in yourself, both which are vital to actually getting stuff done in your business.

In the beginning of this episode I read the Albert Schweitzer quote, because that's what this all about - if you think you'll feel good AFTER you hit your goal or after your business pays your bills... well, you won't ever get there. If you're miserable, it's really hard to have confidence, to think clearly, and to take action. But if you can shift your mood, bit by bit, you can have the space and energy to think clearly, take action, and build your business.

So how about you?

What is your morning routine? What are the happiness habits you wanna begin to include in your day? Share your answer with me on Instagram, using the hashtag #exploreyoureenthusiasm.

And if you'd like to join me in learning more about creating a great day with essential oils, sign up taraswiger.com/eo

RECOMMENDED READING:

[Slight Edge by Jeff Olson](#)

[Happiness Advantage by Shawn Achor](#)

[Before Happiness by Shawn Achor](#)

[Emotions and essential oils](#)