

# Part VII Happiness



## 19. Focus On Happiness

*There are a few things we have control over in caregiving and life. Fortunately, our happiness is one of them. So, decide to be happy, and believe you can be happy. Caregiving is challenging, yet it does not need to make you miserable.*

**1. Set an intention to be happy. Despite your feelings and circumstances, your caregiving experience can bring you and your loved one many moments of happiness. Write your intention.**

**2. Examine beliefs that undermine your intention to be happy. What do you tell yourself?**

▶ Why do you believe happiness is not possible?

▶ What is preventing you from being happy?



**3. Eliminate negative thoughts that interfere with allowing happiness.**

**4. Demonstrating curiosity about your loved one's life creates a deeper connection, which results in greater happiness.**

✿ What is meaningful in your loved one's life? For example, their accomplishments? What have they learned? Ask probing questions, and remember to listen.

✿ Be curious about those you encounter throughout the day. The receptionist at the doctor's office has a story. The person bagging your groceries has a story. Everyone appreciates the opportunity to talk about themselves. Appreciate and thank them as well.

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5. Look for the miracles or the big and small moments that inspire wonder in your daily life. Then, watch them multiply.

6. Focus on relationships with attention on the positive, what is good, what is working, what is right, and what is possible. Diminish your focus on past disappointments and regrets.

7. Make a concerted effort to trust that friends, family, healthcare professionals, and the “universe” are there to support you.


8. Each day, journal the positive events, successes, miracles, and marvels, and write down three things for which you are grateful. What three things are you grateful for today?



9. Lead with a sweet disposition. Friendly is good!

**Smile at people. Showing warmth and kindness always wins over complaining, arguing, demanding, threatening, and whining.**

10. Demonstrate vulnerability with an open heart by regularly expressing gratitude, generosity, kindness, and compassion toward everyone you meet.

 Being vulnerable may feel uncomfortable at first.

 Keep practicing.

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**11. Offer appreciation, approval, and acknowledgment. It will lift their spirits.**

- ✿ What do you like about the people you meet today, including your loved one? Tell them.
- ✿ What have they done to enrich your life? Tell them.

**12. Give the gift of attentive listening. There is grace when you show a genuine interest in another person and have an unhurried conversation to know and understand them at a level beyond the superficial.**

- ▶ Ask a question.
- ▶ Be quiet.
- ▶ Listen intently to their answer until they finish talking.

**13. Put on your dancing shoes. Have fun, laugh, and play. Life is an adventure. Invite people to “dance” with you. What can you do today for fun?**

**14. Let gratitude be your attitude. If you have yet to start that gratitude journal, today is a perfect time. Three gratitudes a day increases your energy, happiness, and positive outlook on life. What are your three gratitudes?**



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### 15. Develop an eye for miracles.

- ✿ The more you open your eyes to the blessing of life around you, the more you will enjoy the people in your life, the places you go, and the circumstances that confront you.
- ✿ Start by asking for what you need and noticing the response you get from anywhere and anyone.

**What is something you need right now?**

**Sit in silence for a minute. Record any thoughts here and be open to messages and guidance throughout the day.**

### 16. Demonstrate loving honesty.

- Say "yes" when you mean "yes" and "no" when you mean "no."
- Don't be afraid to make promises to people.
- Ask for help when you need it and offer service when others need it.
- Set boundaries that support your self-care.
- Be truthful.

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### 17. Practice reception perception.

- ▶ Tune in to know when your listener has tuned out. Is the person listening when you are talking to them?
- ▶ Consider your words, your tone of voice, the volume of your voice, and the feelings behind the message you are delivering. Are you calm or agitated?

### 18. Cultivate resilience.

- ▶ Life is uncertain. Develop the ability to bounce back after a fall.
- ▶ Stop holding grudges against people who have "wronged you."
- ▶ Learn to shake it off and move on with forgiveness.

**19. Practice makes perfect. This stuff works. When these actions become habits, your happiness increases.**

**20. Teaching new skills helps us perfect them. What happiness insights can you share with your loved one, family, and friends?**



**21. Don't deny your emotions if you are sad, concerned, or afraid. Feel the feelings and realize that hope, positivity, and happiness are all available to you.**