

SEVEN STEPS TO HUMANIST HAPPINESS

Ask a group of people if they want to be happy and almost everyone will raise their hands. The problem is that while nearly everyone wants to be happy, not everyone knows how to achieve happiness. Individuals chase idle dreams, religions and even other people in the hopes that somewhere along the way they will become happy.

It turns out that there is a very simple approach to happiness that has been taught by some of the most famous teachers of all time. This approach to happiness is the philosophy we now know as Humanism.

The Humanist approach to happiness is really quite simple. Here are seven steps that Humanists follow to help them lead a happier more productive life.

1) Accept Responsibility:

The first step to leading a happier more productive life is to accept responsibility for your actions. It is your life. You are the only one who can choose how to act and how to behave. Accepting responsibility for the choices you make helps you gain control over your life.

2) Choose Wisely:

The reason it is important to accept responsibility for your choices is because your actions have consequences. You can choose to act in a way that makes things better. Or you can choose to act in a way that will cause you problems. The choice is yours. You are the one who has to live with the consequences.

3) Confront Your Problems:

The best way to solve your problems is to confront them. Yes, it can be scary. And yes, it would be nice if we could magically wish our problems away. But the world doesn't work that way. If you have a problem, it isn't going to get better until you solve it. Don't wait for other people to solve your problems for you. It's your responsibility to fix your problems and no one else's. The good news is that just committing to solving them yourself is empowering and that always feels good.

4) Embrace Reality:

Knowing what is real and what isn't is important. You can't solve a problem unless you know what is causing it. As tempting as it is to embrace supernatural solutions to your problems, you will be more effective and therefore more successful if you look for solutions grounded in reality. It really doesn't take that much effort to find out what is real and what isn't. You just need to be skeptical of

anyone who claims they can solve your problem. Finding out what the skeptics have to say will help you become more effective at finding solutions that actually work.

5) Be Ethical:

Humanists strive to be the best, most ethical person they can be. This is because being a good person benefits your life here and now. The other reason to be ethical is because you will feel better about yourself as a human being if you are.

6) Be Compassionate:

Be compassionate with everyone you meet, including the jerks. The reason to be compassionate is very similar to the reasons why you should be ethical. It is hard to feel good about the things you do if you are not acting with compassion. The other reason to be compassionate is because exercising compassion will help you feel less stress. Less stress translates into more happiness so you would be wise to practice compassion.

7) Put Your Compassion Into Action:

It's not enough to want to do good. You can only be a good person by actually doing good things. The best way to find happiness is to help other people. When you reflect back on your life, the moments where you felt happiest about what you were doing are probably those moments when you were helping others. When we help others we reach our highest calling as human beings. Humanists know that the true path to happiness is to put our compassion into action by working to make the world a better place for everyone.

(Word count: 661)

About the Author: Jennifer Hancock is the author of the book: *The Humanist Approach to Happiness Practical Wisdom* and *Jen Hancock's Handy Humanism Handbook*. She can be found on the web at: www.jen-hancock.com