

Hack #1: Become Grateful

No doubt you're scoffing at the very mention of gratitude. Because what on earth do you have to be grateful for? You're feeling crappy, unhappy and desperate for change. Life is hardly sunshine and rainbows.

But let me tell you something; you have so *very much* to be grateful for. No matter how bad you might be feeling, despite those restless and unsettled feelings in the pit in your stomach, no matter what you're feeling inside. Beauty is all around us, and right there within us. You only need to discover it.

You see, when you are in a negative place and aren't at all happy with the way your life is going, negativity is all you will notice. All of the beauty in life will pass you by because you just aren't looking for it. You don't expect it to be there, so why would you look?

It's much like a story told in the book 'The Alchemist' by Paul Coelho in which a young man carried two drops of oil on a spoon around a palace, being careful not to spill any. Whilst he did so, he didn't notice all of the beauty in the palace. (Read the story by [visiting Coelho's website](#)).

Whilst you focus on the negativity lying in your metaphorical spoon, you'll never look up and take it all in. Change your focus and you will change your life

Here's what I suggest that you do; you lift up your head, open your eyes and begin actively searching for positivity. Remember that lady who cracked a gorgeous smile at you in the store? Or the feeling of sinking into a warm bath? Or the taste of a delicious home cooked meal eaten with a friend? Or the friendly cat that approached you in the yard?

Of course, you can also make these into a solid practice where you write down three things to be grateful for every day. But you don't have to make it as formal or structured as all that. Just open your eyes and open your heart. You will feel instantly better.

Hack #2: Forgive

Forgive and forget. It's something we've been advised to do time and time again in our lives, but we all know what the reality really is. It's just not that simple. How can we possibly forgive when the event or situation was just so momentous, so selfish, so disgusting, so painful? And do we really want to forgive? They don't deserve our forgiveness.

But the truth is, we've got it all backwards. We feel like we are punishing the perpetrator for their actions and expressing our own feelings in a safe and calm manner. But actually, we are hurting ourselves and trapping ourselves in a place of negativity, hurt and pain.

We 'hang on' to the hurtful events, we keep them alive in our consciousness, and we continue to suffer as a result of what these people have done.

We are acting the victim. This has to stop. We have to stand up, become stronger and move forward with our lives, towards happiness.

There is a process known as '**REACH**' which can be super helpful at helping us to forgive when we are finding it tricky. This is how it goes:

R: Recall the hurt. Remember what they did and how it made you feel

E: Empathize with their actions. Step into their shoes and try to understand how they might have felt

A: Be altruistic. Think back to a time when you caused someone hurt, and you were forgiven.

C: Commit to expressing your forgiveness by writing this person a letter, (even if this letter is never to be posted), or silently telling them you forgive them.

H: Hold onto your forgiveness. Let the anger and hurt disappear and move forwards.

Hack #3: Silence Your Negative Inner Voice

That negative inner voice has a lot to answer for. It's the main thing that is standing between you and realizing your true happiness and you need to learn to silence it so you can start to live the kind of life you really deserve.

I recently read a story about some internet trolls who plagued the life of a particular celebrity and make their life absolutely hell with their deeply wounding criticism, nasty remarks and undeserved attacks on them personally. You've probably read a similar story and felt rather disgusted.

But at the same time, you might accept this kind of thing in your own head. Many of us have our own personal 'trolls' who make our lives a living hell. They pick our positive thoughts and behavior to pieces, pointing out every failing, every hiccup and put a dark and threatening slant on everything they possibly can.

And you believe it. You accept their taunting voice as the truth and limit your life and happiness accordingly. But they have no authority over you, and they don't speak the truth. It's time to push it away and reclaim our lives.

The numerous books on positivity out there have their own approaches which can be complicated and time consuming, but this is all unnecessary. There is a much simpler way.

Just tune in to your thoughts and notice what they are saying. When that negative voice rears its ugly head, thank it for saying hello, but refuse to listen to its warnings of impending doom. Tell it that you will only listen if it uses kind language. And get on with living your happy life.

Hack #4: Get Your Green Vitamins

Have you ever noticed how much brighter and happier you feel after spending time outside? You feel uplifted, energized, and often that weight will be lifted off your shoulders, even if only slightly. Sunlight, fresh air and getting out into green space is the key to feeling happier.

Because it isn't just in your imagination- fresh air and sunshine really is an amazing tool that will help you feel amazing once again. In fact, the [University of Rochester, New York](#) state: "*Nature is fuel for the soul.*"

Most of us don't get outside enough- we have jobs to do, homes to care for and a social life to entertain. Getting some green time can seem dull and unnecessary. But here's the thing- this time is essential, and we really need to make it a priority in our lives if we want to feel great.

Sunlight and fresh air work to improve your mood on so many differently levels. Firstly, the action of sunlight on your skin synthesizes vitamin D for your body which, as most of us know, helps strengthen our bones. Secondly, the action of natural light flooding our retina boost levels of serotonin in your brain, alleviating stress, helping you feel calm, relaxed and happier.

Thirdly, fresh air fills your body with oxygen, feeding each and every cell in your body, and helping you to eliminate toxins that can clog up your system.

And lastly, the calm and quiet obviously helps you to disconnect from the madness of the world and 'return to nature'. As a result, you'll discover that inner peace and happiness that is already right there inside you.

So take at least 20 minutes per day to get outside and feel amazing. Take your lunch out into the nearest park, head for a walk into the open air, along the beach, in the mountains, in the forest, wherever you like. It's better still if you get exercise whilst you're there- cycling, running and watersports are all brilliant for this.

Hack #5: Meditate

If you have a deep-rooted need to achieve long-lasting happiness, simply turn to meditation. Most people do, and everyone across the globe would benefit from starting a meditation practice.

When you hear the word, you might think of a group of hippies sitting cross-legged with their eyes closed, chanting 'Om' whilst the incense burns in the background. But this isn't meditation. Nor do you need to be in any way 'alternative' to start to practice.

Meditation is simply about shifting awareness to your inner world. You'll choose the focus of your attention, become more aware of your inner thoughts, tune in to the world around you, and really start to live according to your core values, principles and dreams. And of course, you will feel much more present and active in your life and your choices, gain freedom from mental negativity and circumstances, and also grasp true freedom with both hands.

Best of all, it's completely free.

Here's how you can enjoy the benefits too:

1. Sit quietly on a chair with your feet firmly on the floor and your eyes closed.

2. Set a timer a short period of time. 10 minutes is a great period to start with, although you can do less if you're struggling.
3. Shift your attention to your breath. Observe it's rhythm without attempting to change anything. (This is harder than it sounds!)
4. Begin to quieten your mind. This means allowing your thoughts to come as they please but not allowing them to catch your attention or get too involved. Simply acknowledge them and let them drift away.
5. Stay in that mental place, and see how you start to feel different. Your thoughts will calm, your body will relax and you will feel much lighter and happier.
6. When your alarm sounds, open your eyes and gently return to the real world. Don't rush; be gentle with yourself.
7. Continue to practice for at least 8 weeks so that you can see full benefits. Get into a habit of practicing at a certain time of day so that it becomes part of your routine and you are more likely to continue.

Hack # 6: Listen To Music!

I've gotten into a habit of listening to music as I go about my morning routine. And this morning, one of my teenage favorites appeared in the playlist, taking me right back to those wonderful happy memories and eternal summers. It brightened my morning immensely and I was able to go about my day feeling nostalgic and happy.

Music has this amazing power. Music can transport you to wherever you wish to go, whether that is back to some distant place in your past, or deep into your emotions and imagination. It has been part of human experience for as long as time, and nothing has quite the same power.

Numerous studies have discovered the music touches the brain in a way quite like no other.

It lights up your entire brain, not just the parts associated with hearing. And as a result releases the hormone dopamine which is involved with pleasure and motivation. It's the same sensation of reward that you experience when you have sex, or eat delicious food, fall in love (or lust) or do any other pleasurable activity.

Clearly, if you want to get an instant feel-good fix, dig out your favorite tunes or discover some brand-new ones and you will feel amazing.