“The ultimate aim of the exploration? To be happy with what we already have. Who we already are. The world we currently occupy. Rather than constantly seeking to upgrade our pay packets, homes, bodies, relationships, holidays, even ourselves” **Catherine Gray – ‘The unexpected joy of the ordinary.’**

**Activity**

* Allow yourself 10 minutes or so of quiet time and write your answer in the spaces below.
* Don't analyze your thoughts just write your answers down.
* Add extra things to your list that come up in the days and weeks ahead.

**Tips**

* Just for a moment imagine you're blissfully happy and feeling true joy - free and light of all cares and worry. You can't help but smile outwardly and from inside. You feel relaxed and at peace with yourself and the world.
* You could think about your 5 senses; sight, hearing, touch/feeling, smell and taste - you could come up with one joy for each sense.
* Some of my answers are: The smell of suntan lotion, my daughters laugh, dancing, being on a beach, fresh bed sheets, a sunny day, chocolate, a long bike ride and cake and coffee at halfway. Learning something new. Puppies.

**Step one: Answer this question: "What are my Top 10 Joys in Life?”**

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**Step Two: Write below, what insights, themes, or surprises are there? How easy are they to do? What stops you doing them more often?**

**Step Three: Think of ways you can bring some of these more into your life. Perhaps plan an opportunity for an extra one of these every day. Write below one specific action you will take to bring more joy into your life.**

1. Happiness is linked to lower heart rate and blood pressure, as well as healthier heart rate variability.
2. Happiness can also act as a barrier between you and germs – happier people are less likely to get sick.
3. People who are happier enjoy greater protection against stress and release less of the stress hormone cortisol.
4. Happy people tend to experience fewer aches and pains, including dizziness, muscle strain, and heartburn.
5. Happiness acts as a protective factor against disease and disability (in general, of course).
6. Those who are happiest tend to live significantly longer than those who are not.
7. Happiness boosts our immune system, which can help us fight and fend off the common cold.
8. Happy people tend to make others happier as well, and vice versa – those who do good, feel good!
9. A portion of our happiness is determined by our genetics (but there’s still plenty of room for attitude adjustments and happiness-boosting exercises!).
10. Smelling floral scents like roses can make us happier.
11. Those who are paid by the hour may be happier than those on salary (however, these findings are limited, so take them with a grain of salt!).
12. Relationships are much more conducive to a happy life than money.
13. Happier people tend to wear bright colours; it’s not certain which way the relationship works, but it can’t hurt to throw on some brighter hues once in a while—just in case!
14. Happiness can help people cope with arthritis and chronic pain better.
15. Being outdoors – especially near the water – can make us happier.
16. The holidays can be a stressful time, even for the happiest among us – an estimated 44% of women and 31% of men get the “holiday blues.”
17. Happiness is contagious! When we spend time around happy people, we’re likely to get a boost of happiness as well (Florentine, 2016; Newman, 2015).

This list is taken from <https://positivepsychology.com/happiness/>