

## Happiness Lemonade Recipe: Is it Possible to Be Happy?

Written By Nancy Stampahar



Your happiness potential is like the sugar that has settled at the bottom of your glass of lemonade. It's inside the glass; it's inside you. It's there for you when you can't take life anymore and when you're ready to make a change. But it can become stuck. Stir it up! It's holding in your courage, assertiveness and passion--necessary sweeteners. Stir them up to taste the sweetness of life. You need to act with courage, communicate with assertiveness, find your passion, and make your life sweeter. Imagine how weak, sour, and bitter your life would be without any sugar. Just as lemonade needs sugar, you need courage, assertiveness, and passion to reach your happiness potential.

Since you were born, your environment and experiences have shaped you. Every person you met, every object you saw, every smell you smelled and every sound and word you heard made you think and behave the way you do to this day. If you had experiences that empowered you to use your courage, you probably think and act in courageous ways. If you had experiences that stifled your courage, you might not think and act in courageous ways. If you were told repeatedly that you couldn't do something, and did not receive the nurturing and love to feel good about yourself, you might think that you're incapable or undeserving of being happy. You may say, "That's just for other people. Why should I even try?"

After hearing that you "can't" do something, you may believe you can't do something and accept the status quo. Challenging the status quo and being courageous shakes things up. Conforming types do not like this. Some of your friends may not want to be your friends. Others may criticize you, because *they* may feel rejected, inadequate, or envious.

*To make your life happier, you first need to make yourself happy.* To make yourself happy, you need courage, assertiveness, and passion. You can find happiness that has been suppressed. Sometimes, you end up settling, for whatever comes your way. You go with the way things are instead of pursuing what *could* be better for. You lose your courage, assertiveness, and passion.

*Courage is the power behind making lemonade.* It is the power behind choice. Whenever you face problems in life and work, there will always be an element of fear. You have a choice in how you respond to people and circumstances. When you demonstrate courage, you are taking action to face and overcome your fears. Acting on your fears is the hardest thing to do because fear is driven from your core being. Finding courage is the most important action step for a happier life. When you honestly want something, you will find your courage and take action. Want good things to happen for you. Make wise choices for yourself regardless of your fears and obstacles.

With any challenge, you risk mistakes and failure. On the upside, of challenge, you might achieve and succeed. Fear of failure can consume you. You choose not to try, and become complacent. When you learn from your mistakes and failures what won't work and what to avoid the next time, you become smarter and boost your chance of success.

*You deserve to feel successful and to be happy.* To become happy, you need to adopt an assertive behavior approach. Decide whether you will try to please others or head in directions unique to you without disrespecting

other people. If you seek deeper relationships, a loving home, or advancement in your career, you need to begin respectfully sharing your thoughts, needs, and feelings, without regard for others' approval--or fear of disapproval or rejection.

When you react with respect for yourself and others, respect and a sweeter life will come your way. Of course, you must wisely decide which battles to address. You can approach your situations with aggressive, passive, or assertive reactions. Many assume that the way they behave is just the way they are. They say, "This is just who I am." In truth, it is not *who* you are--it is *how* you *choose* to be. When you *choose* to be passive, you say, "It's all about you, Mr. or Ms. Superior. I don't respect me. I don't want any conflicts that could cause stress or rejection." As Eleanor Roosevelt said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." You deserve respect.

When you *choose* to be *assertive* you say, "It's all good. I respect you, and I respect me. Let's try to resolve this together." This approach is appropriate for most situations. It brings win-win results. It brings about the confidence and respect necessary to pursue your aspirations. When you find the courage to be assertive, you are telling people how their ways of being are affecting and hurting you. By sharing your expectations and feelings, you are reducing frustrations, mistakes, and false assumptions. This earns you respect from others and earns respect for yourself.

When you understand yourself and your needs, you know what to communicate assertively as your boundaries, expectations and feelings with others. This gives you more "me-time." You will be living your life according to your wants and needs instead of living a life of "shoulds." Are you saying and doing things because you "should" or because you "want to"? If you are living a life of "shoulds," you are living a life by what you believe you are "supposed" to do--a life of complacency, frustration, boredom, and dread. When you live your life according to your unique interests, talents and values, you do things because you need and want to for your happiness and fulfillment. You enjoy life. This does not mean you are to become irresponsible and do as you please without regard to others. It means you realize *why* you are doing what you are doing.

If you embark on something not aligned with *your core* values and beliefs, you are not living with integrity. You are not being your authentic self.

When you live your life according to your unique interests, talents and values, you become passionate. Find kindred spirits who share your passions. Together, you will be energized by the great support and fun you give each other. When you are passionate, you feel happy about what you are doing. Passion makes it easier to get up each morning and enjoy your day. I invite you to achieve your happiness potential by achieving what you really want in life.

***Be strong, be wise, be delicious!***

Nancy Stampahar  
The LemonAID Lady