

How to Create Your Joy Map For More Joy in Your Life

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Want your life to include more joy? Use this guide to get started.

1. What do you think holds you back from having more joy in your life?

2. Describe your life as you imagine it if these obstacles were resolved. Imagine it as though money is no object and time is not a factor for you living a life with more joy. Think about, "Wouldn't it be cool if...?"

3. The life you imagine does not have to be "realistic" but it does have to come from your heart. In other words, don't hold back. Just describe your imagined life as it comes to you.

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4. How do you imagine feeling if the top three came true this year?

5. After you identify the feeling, for now, notice other times in your day that you feel this feeling. For example, you may want to feel rich. Ask yourself, "What other things make me feel rich?" Is it eating a special treat? Rich in friendships? You may want to feel free. When are the things that create this feeling for you? Taking a long drive? Write your ideas here.

6. Realize you are responsible for having joy in your life. Drop blame and judgment toward others and yourself. Free yourself from, "If only, he/she made me..." or, "It's not fair" and other rationalizations that connect you to negative feelings. Unless something is happening in this moment, it's already a memory, not an event. Does it make you feel good to remember or think about it? What will you do to change this habit? Are you curious about the results of change? Try it!

- a) Write your thoughts in a journal
- b) Do more intense work around this issue

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7. Look over the following approaches to having more joy in your life. Check the ones that appeal to you. If you are curious about some approaches, check those, too. It could be just the thing for a breakthrough! Now number them in order of your preference. You've made your map! Get started now.

- Breath work
- Meditation
- Integrating spirituality into your life
- Journaling
- Group support
- Improving health, i.e., exercise, reaching ideal weight
- Using music to effect mood, stress and mental clarity
- Traditional psychotherapy; i.e., cognitive behavioral
- Dream analysis
- Grief work
- Reading inspiring books
- Step-by-step guided visualization
- Hypnotherapy
- Art therapy
- Using poetry, either writing or selected readings
- Incorporating nature into your day
- Online e-courses
- Retreats
- Mindfulness or other types of meditation
- Creating a vision board

Your choices _____

Use your "joy map" for self-directed work or to work with your therapist using these methods, or, get in touch with me at DrB@earthlink.net.