



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition October 2013 Issue 80



Five feelings – talking about happiness

Getting ready

Happiness is one of those words that means different things to different people. Some people do not like the word and would prefer to say something else like contentment, joy, well-being, gladness or delight. For some people happiness is the purpose of their life but this is not the same for everyone. This issue looks at alternative views to the idea that life is just about happiness and also to look at what does make people “happy”. The history of the idea of happiness can be summed up as:

- Happiness - luck (Homeric)
- Happiness -virtue (classical)
- Happiness - heaven (medieval)
- Happiness - pleasure (Enlightenment)
- Happiness – a warm puppy, smiley face (contemporary).

The idea of happiness is even in the American Declaration of Independence:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”.

US Declaration of Independence 1776

This issue offers a variety of information and background about what has been thought and written about the question of happiness. It offers some ways to approach talking about happiness with children.

Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Gather

The idea of gathering today is to create a “happy space”. Prior to the Meeting for Worship collect magazine, newspaper, postcard pictures of people who look happy, joyful, pleased, content, joyful, glad and delighted. Sit in a circle and say that this time together there is going to be talking about happiness. Either pass the pictures around the circle or hold them up one at a time to the group and ask the children (and adults!) to copy the expression so that they can imagine how the person is feeling. Now go on to talk and do activities about some of the questions in Engage.



Underpinning references

Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions.

Dalai Lama

Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony.

Thomas Merton

Engage

Thinking about happiness

Throughout this section a variety of questions are offered that can be used with children of different ages. The questions are intended to help children into thinking and questioning about what otherwise might just be common assumptions. *Resources needed for this session include: black card or paper; gold pens or crayons, plain white paper, wax crayons, coloured pencils, marker pens and felt tips.*

Say something like, happiness is a thing that people have wondered about for a long time. Some people's writing about happiness, from China, India and Greece, goes back a long, long time, over 2500 years. This is because happiness is one of the things that people say is most important.

Ask the children: *Why is happiness, being happy, important?*

Adjust your language according to the age of the children. When you judge that those children who want to speak have done so go on to say something like, the question I just asked was something called 'philosophy'. This means asking 'big questions. It also means how each of us, of you, think about life, the world and everything or how they want to be – with friends, family, animals, sport, the world. We are going to talk about a person or people who can help us all think about big questions, especially about happiness. They are called philosophers.

Four people who have thought about happiness. See *Additional Resource 80.A* for information about four people who have thought and written about happiness. Choose one or more of these to help talk about what happiness is and might mean.

Confucius was a Chinese philosopher who lived in 551 BC. Say something about his life and what happened to him. Say that he had something he called a 'golden rule' that he thought would make people happy. Depending on the age of the children, read out a version of the Golden Rule – this is on *Additional Resource 80.A.* along with some other sayings that you might want to read out

Ask the children: *'Do any of you have a 'golden rule' like this?'* or, if the golden rule has not been read out, ask, *'what do people need to do to be happy? What can the children do to help people be happy?'*

Lay out black card or paper with gold pens or crayons for children to write or draw their 'golden rule' or answers to the questions. Younger ones might need help with the thinking. You could go on to ask children what the Golden Rule means in more detail. Could it be used to help people lead happy lives today?

Epicurus was the name of a Greek man who lived about 300 BC. Say something simple about what he thought. His key idea is that people can make happy lives but that wanting things can stop this and make you sad.

Ask the children: *'What do you think of this idea? Can wanting things make you sad? Can you be happy if you haven't got a home or enough food?'*

Zeno was a Greek philosopher who lived 335 - 263 BC. He started the way of thinking called 'stoicism' – 'stoics' means the 'people who hang out on the porch'. One of his main ideas was that to be happy you have to be simple in everything you do – food, work, parties, homes – not having too much of a good thing and not getting too excited about anything.

Ask the children: *What do children think of these ideas? Do they think the Stoics had much fun? Is fun important?*

Abbot Christopher Jamison. This follows on well from talking about the questions in the above section about Zeno. On *Additional Resource 80.A* there is some writing by Abbot Christopher about consumerism. Read this for yourself. Talk with children about the monks list. Do the 'keep and throw' poster activity.

When you have completed an Engage conversation or activity move to Respond.

References & other resources

'You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids'

Merrill Lundgren,
Carol McCloud,
David Messing
(Illustrator)
ISBN-10:
0978507517

'All Seeing Boy and the Blue Sky of Happiness'

Nick Kettles
ISBN-10:
1559393718

'Philosophy for Kids: 40 Fun Questions That Help You Wonder...about Everything!'

David White
ISBN-10:
1882664701

Books available from the Quaker Bookshop – 020 76631030 or

www.quaker.org.uk/shop

On *Additional Resource 80.B* there is an activity about positive and negative thinking.

Additional Resources 80.A and 80.B can be found at:

www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

References & other resources

A 'Natural Happiness' resource can be found at:
<http://tinyurl.com/oxhorpj>

Collage making ideas:
<http://tinyurl.com/q4yytrg>

'Happiness is a Watermelon on Your Head' - paperback
Daniel Hahn,
Stella Dreis
(Illustrator)
ISBN-10:
1907912053

Links to further resources and information can be found at:
www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

This has links to 'happiness research' and books for more reading.

Additional Resources 80.C and 80.D can be found at:
www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

Respond

Happiness Activities:

Happiness words Resources for this activity: big marker pens, large sheets of paper, collage materials (see sidebar for websites for resource ideas).

Ask the children to think about all the times we hear the word happy such as: *Happy Birthday, Happy Christmas, Happy New Year, Happy Thanksgiving, can you think of any more? Happy.....*

Start by asking children to think of all the words they can that mean or are about happy or happiness. Alternatively children could think about sentences with the word happy or happiness in them. Write these down as a list – use a big sheet of paper. Next give children a moment to think about and then say all the things in their lives that make them happy - make a note of these on another big sheet of paper.

Now either make a collage together using natural materials to show what happiness means to each person – see sidebar for *natural happiness and collage websites*, or create maze where you can find happiness in the middle after an interesting journey around the maze. Perhaps you could invent barriers to happiness on the route? String, masking tape or chalk can be used to mark out a maze.

Happiness cards Resources for this activity: A5 white card; coloured pencils, felt tips, drawing pencils, magazines to cut up, scissors, pva glue and brushes or spreaders, maybe a laptop to do designs on.

There are some pictures of examples of happiness cards on *Additional Resource 80.C*. Ask children what do you think of them? Do they like them? Have they got any of this type of card in their houses? What about the colours and the messages - is there one that they really like? Ask children what they would put on a happiness card? Ask if they want to design one as a group or as individuals or both? Make happiness cards. These could also be on the theme of 'Keep Calm and think of.....'.

Happiness songs On *Additional Resource 80.D* there is a selection of happy songs that are easy to learn and have well known tunes. Have some fun singing together.

Happiness measuring. Resources for this activity: white paper, pencils, pens, felt tips, rulers and anything else needed for drawing and designing.

The government in our country is trying to work out ways to measure happiness. They have some very complicated ways of doing it that are hard to understand. Ask children if they have any ideas about how you could measure happiness. Is there a happiness measuring machine that could be designed? What would a happiness measuring machine look like? Ask children if there is a way that people's happiness could be counted. What questions could people be asked – questions like these for example, 'out of ten - do you have enough food?'; 'out of ten – are you more happy than sad?' 'Have you had a holiday this year? Out of ten, how happy was your holiday?' What would a happiness chart look like? Can children draw one after sorting out questions, asking each other or even asking other people in meeting?



Reflect

The word happiness can mean many different things to different people at different times.

Whilst it is an individual experience it is also something that is wonderful to share.

Ask children to think about happy things in their lives that they might want to share with others. It may mean saying sorry or giving someone a smile or sharing a story about what happened to you.

Ask everybody to close their eyes for a moment and imagine themselves in a quiet and comfortable place where they feel safe, secure and happy.



Review

Have the children found different ways of looking at the word happiness?

Have they been able to see that this is something that people have been talking and thinking about for a very long time?

Have they thought about any philosophies in their own lives?

Have they made any connections with the Quaker way of life?

On reflection is there anything that you would do differently?

Is there any follow up needed as a result of children talking about happiness?

This issue was written by Adrienne Jeorrett and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. Chris Nickolay worked on the Topical activity.

Issue 81 will offer ways to think and talk about jealousy. Available from 1 November 2013.

Issue 82 is the last in the series about feelings, this will offer ways to think and talk about grief. Available from 2 December 2013.

Issue 83 is a one off issue about Quakers and work. Available from 6 January 2014.

Materials available online are:

Current issue Additional Resources Sheets

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

Links to other resources and information

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

A topical activity – about elephants and chimps being set free

Also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; a discussion forum and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

Go to:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren and choose from the range of links in the sidebar.

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Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resource 80.A

Engage

Thinking about happiness



Confucius was born around 551 BC in Lu province China in Chou (Zhou) times. His parents were nobility, but had become poor when the empire disintegrated into feudal states.

When Confucius was about 15 years old, he became quite interested in learning. In those days, only the nobility and royals were allowed education. All the teachers were government officials.

His family were poor and it was hard for Confucius to find a way to learn. He couldn't go to the public library or go to public school. These things did not yet exist in ancient China.

To solve this, he went to work for a nobleman. This gave him the opportunity to learn and to travel to the imperial capital. Confucius studied and learned until he probably was the most learned man of his day. People heard of his knowledge and sent their sons to study with him. He was the first private teacher in China. Confucius taught anyone who was eager to learn. His ideas, called Confucianism, stress the need to develop responsibility and moral character through rigid rules of behaviour.

When traditional Chinese principles began to deteriorate Confucius recognized an opportunity—and an obligation—to reinforce values of compassion and tradition. His social philosophy was based primarily on the principle of "ren" or "loving others" while exercising self-discipline. He believed that ren could be put into action using the **Golden Rule**:

What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others.

Here are some of Confucius' other sayings that he used to help people live better, happier lives.

The more people meditate on good thoughts; the better will be their world and the world at large.

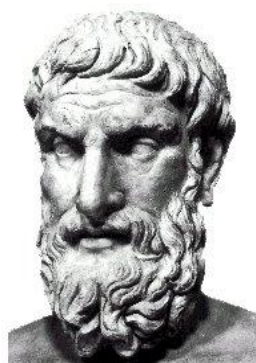
To be wronged is nothing unless you continue to remember it.

When anger rises, think of the consequences.

See also: www.biography.com/people/confucius-9254926 & <http://ancienthistory.mrdonn.org/Confucius.html>

Epicurus says:
"Life is good!"

Make sure to
enjoy it."



Epicureans were named after their founder, Epicurus, who lived around 300 B.C.E. Epicureans believed that the main reason for studying philosophy was practical: to make a happy life for yourself. They said that you would be happy if you had more pleasure in your life and less sadness. But sadness is caused by not getting what you want. Like if you want a new toy or computer game and you don't get one, you feel sad. Or if you want to play basketball but you can't because of your asthma, then you feel sad. For information go to:

www.historyforkids.org/learn/philosophy/epicureans.htm

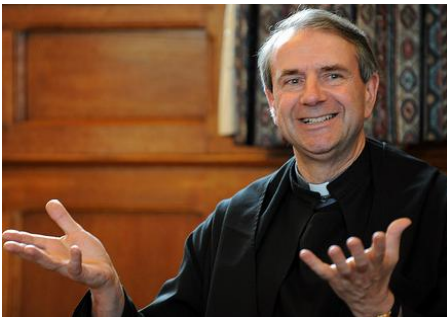
The Epicureans said that the best way to be happy and not sad was to not want anything. It is the wanting things that leads to pain. If you always want more things, then you can't enjoy the things you do have, because you're always suffering the sadness of not having things. The Epicureans advised people not to make close friends or fall in love, because it could lead to sadness if your friend went away or died. The less you want, the happier you will be.

Stoicism



A stoic is a member of an ancient Greek School of philosophy started by a man called Zeno. *"A stoic achieves happiness by submission to destiny.* He lived from 335 - 263 B.C.E. Zeno lived in Athens, in Greece, which was a great centre of learning. He used to lecture not in a classroom but outside in Greece's sunny weather, on the porch of a public building. The word for porch in Greek is *STOA*, and so people called his students Stoics, "people who hang out on the porch."

Zeno thought people should try to reach inner peacefulness. The best way to be peaceful was to be moderate in everything. So people should not eat too much, even of good food, and they should not party too much. But they should not work all the time either, or diet all the time. Men (Zeno didn't mention women much, but there were women who were Stoics) should give to charity and help out in the government, but they should not go to the extreme of rebellion. People should try not to want anything too much, but be happy with what they had. This would lead to a happy life.



Abbot Christopher Jamison. Christopher Jamison is a catholic monk who worked at Worth Abbey where he was Abbot. Here is an excerpt from his book *'Finding Happiness: Monastic Steps for a Fulfilling Life'*. Read this for yourself.

Resources: You need plain white paper and wax crayons, coloured pencils, marker pens and felt tips for this activity.

"So we live in a culture where shopping is virtuous and where greed is the hidden agenda. How can we overcome such overwhelming cultural forces and restore the purity of heart that we desire? We must first of all

acknowledge that just as greed will always be present in our hearts in some form or other so consumer culture is going to be the place where we live even as we try to change that culture. We will need to shop at supermarkets and our children will need to buy trainers. Monks too will read the newspapers and use computers, travel by car and be tempted by the latest gadget. Yet this need not completely overwhelm our freedom of spirit and there are some simple ways that we can resist the consumer culture's takeover of our lives.

Once a year in Lent (before Easter), we English Benedictine monks have the custom of writing out what we call 'a poverty bill. We write down an inventory of everything we have for our personal use and hand it to the abbot. It's a very revealing exercise and enables us to ask: do I need all this? I have the following rule of thumb: if I haven't used an item in the last twelve months since the last poverty bill then I probably don't need it, so I give it away. I recommend this practice to everybody; it is a wonderful way to heighten self-awareness about material possessions, is quite liberating and you may be amazed to discover what you don't need."

Tell the children what the monks who live with Abbot Christopher have to do each year – make a list of everything they have and think if they need it anymore. Say that this is about thinking about what we need to be happy.

Put out paper, pencils and pens – ask children, and adults, to start writing or drawing a list of what they have. Young ones might need some help. After a few minutes start talking about the lists – is there anything children and adults think they can do without? This is an opportunity for thinking and reflection. Allow for the fact that children may have nothing they want to let go. If children, and adults, have identified one or more things they think they don't need anymore they can make a poster, using big marker pens and bigger sheets of paper, that is headed, 'Keep – throw' or another title they can think of. If children haven't identified anything they can continue writing and illustrating and talking about the things on their list – ask what do they really like?

This could be an activity that children ask adults in meeting to undertake. What could be done with things that people choose to get rid of? A sale in the Meeting House? A charity shop delivery? Ask children what they think could be done.



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 80.B

Engage

Positive and negative thinking



Stress and worry can make changes to our thoughts. Stress can make a person *think* either *positive* or *negative* thoughts.

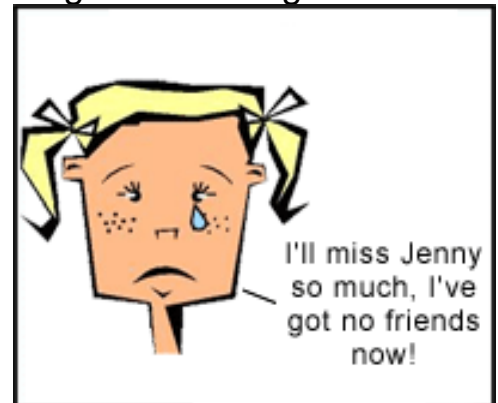
These pictures show *positive* and *negative* thinking.

Something happens, for example, a best friend moves schools:

Positive thinking



Negative thinking



What to do: Show children the pictures on this sheet and talk about the feelings that they show. Ask children to choose particular situations or events in which they had positive and negative thoughts. These can be a different or the same situation. The process can be helped by asking questions like: What was the *situation*? What did they *do*? How did they *feel*? What were they *thinking*?

Ask children to draw a picture or cartoon to show themselves and their positive thoughts and then one showing their negative thoughts.

Here are some other ways for children to record their story:

Write about it; draw one scene that tells it all; design a cartoon strip; make a collage of magazine cut outs.

See www.headroom.net.au/Content.aspx?p=175



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

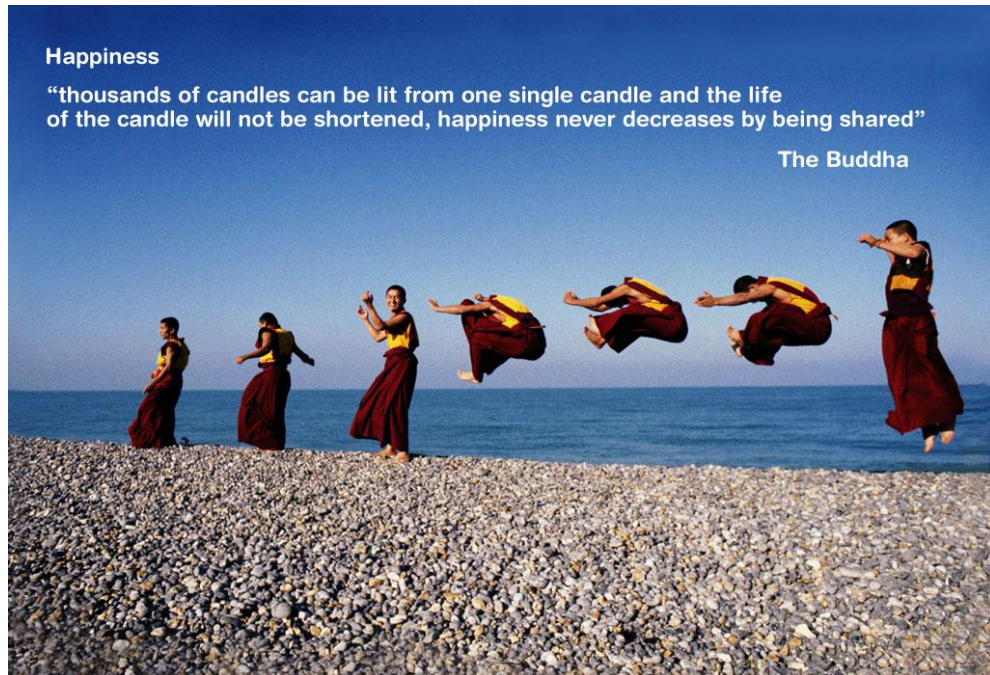
Additional resources 80.C

Respond

Happiness cards



What do you think of these cards? What are the images saying to you what about the words and the colours? Do you agree with the messages?



*The Grand essentials of happiness are:
something to do, something to love,
and something to hope for.*

- Allan K. Chalmers



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Five Simple Rules For Happiness:

1. Free your heart from hatred.
2. Free your mind from worries.
3. Live simply.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less.

LOVE





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 80.D

Respond

Happy songs



A comedian called Ken Dodd sang a song about happiness, here are the words to HAPPINESS (Bill Anderson 1963 Ken Dodd 1964.)

Listen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4a5valsaxB8>

Happiness, happiness, the greatest gift that I possess
I thank the Lord I've been blessed
With more than my share of happiness

To me this old world is a wonderful place
And I'm just about the luckiest human in the whole human race
I've got no silver and I've got no gold
Just a whole lot of happiness in my soul

Happiness, happiness, the greatest gift that I possess
I thank the Lord I've been blessed
With more than my share of happiness
Happiness to me is an ocean tide
Or a sunset fading on a mountain side
Or maybe a big old heaven full of stars up above
When I'm in the arms of the one I love

Happiness is a field of grain
Lifting its face to the falling rain
I can see it in the sunshine; I breathe it in the rain
Happiness everywhere

Happiness, happiness, the greatest gift that I possess
I thank the Lord I've been blessed
With more than my share of happiness

A wise old man told me one time
That happiness is nothing but a frame of mind
I hope when you go to measuring my success
That you don't count my money count my happiness

Happiness, happiness, the greatest gift that I possess
I thank the Lord I've been blessed
With more than my share of happiness

Happiness, happiness, the greatest gift that I possess
I thank the Lord I've been blessed
With more than my share of happiness

Here are two more happy songs :

O Happy Day
Oh happy day
Oh happy day
Oh happy happy day;
Oh happy day When Jesus washed
Oh when he washed
When Jesus washed
He washed my sins away!
Oh happy day
Oh happy day
Oh happy day
Oh happy day
When Jesus washed
Oh when he washed
When Jesus washed
He washed my sins away!
Oh happy day
Oh happy day

I'm H-A-P-P-Y
I'm H-A-P-P-Y
I know I am, I'm sure I am
I'm H-A-P-P-Y
I'm H-A-P-P-Y
I'm H-A-P-P-Y
I know I am, I'm sure I am
I'm H-A-P-P-Y
I'm L-O-V-E-D
I'm L-O-V-E-D
I know I am, I'm sure I am
I'm L-O-V-E-D
I'm L-O-V-E-D
I'm L-O-V-E-D
I know I am, I'm sure I am
I'm L-O-V-E-D

Children and adults could make up their own words to this song to be spelt out.

There are a lot of other songs with the word happiness in the title - you may like to look some of them up or share them with the group. It might be a song that just makes you happy. Ask children and adults what songs make them feel happy. Can they bring them on a CD or memory stick to a session? Can they sing all or part of them?

Ask the children to have a go at making up and writing a happiness song.