

Allowing Ourselves to Feel Joy During the Day

I've come to the realization that most of us don't allow ourselves to feel joy most days. Sure, maybe on some kind of big occasion, we'll let ourselves run around whooping with joy ... but mostly not.

Think about your past week: have they been joyful and wondrous? Or routine, full of busyness and stress and doing doing doing?

If you felt a daily amount of joy and wonder, you're likely the exception. Most people don't seem to feel joy regularly, or even realize that that's the case.

Let's change that.

Joy and wonder are two emotions we shut down, for so many reasons: it's safe, it's not allowed, we're worried about ourselves, we're stressed. But wouldn't we like to live a life that has joy every day? That feels wonder at the incredibleness of this world and the richness of humanity?

We can still get shit done, still function in society, while having a greater degree of joy and wonder. In fact, I'd argue that the people around us will benefit, our work will benefit, the world will benefit, if we allow joy into our lives. If we start seeing everything with wonder, at least some of the time. Not to mention the personal benefits of this as well — life can start to come alive again. It's like that moment in the Wizard of Oz when things go from black and white to color!

So how do we allow this into our lives? It starts by simply recognizing that we want this. That it's allowed. Give ourselves some freaking permission to feel alive and joyous!

Then we can make it a daily practice. Not a daily chore to add to our task lists, another thing that we *should* do. NO! This is something we GET to do!

OK, I'll stop yelling now. I'm just excited dammit! OK now I'll stop. ☐

Here are two practices you might try:

1. Go outside and see the wonder of the world around you. Let yourself feel alive! Feel the joy that you get to be alive in this freaking amazing world. Run or dance or skip around like a kid, in joy. See the open and vibrant nature of the universe. When you see other people, delight in their humanity! If you feel like it, whoop around joyously, climb a tree, do handstands. Whatever you feel like, whatever would be joyful.
2. Every day, ask yourself a simple question: "Where did I see God today?" If you don't

believe in God, as I don't, you can take that to mean, "Where did I see the divine or sacred today?" or "Where did I see the wonder in the world?" This practice is simply thinking back to the parts of your day when you allowed yourself to see wonder and the divine. It could be in the face of a loved one, or a wonderful person outside. It could be in the joy you felt in winning a game or watching an incredible creation online.

These can be daily practices. They can be anytime practices! Would you like to feel joy and wonder today?