

# Mindful Minute

## G.L.A.D. to be Happy, for the Rest of Your Life (In JUST 60 seconds)

By Ron Rubenzer, EdD, MA, MPH, MSE, FAIS

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*This is **your** life story.*

If you are not influencing the story of your life, who or what is?

Free will is what makes us human. Starting now, make the rest of your life, the best of your life (or at least better). Time only moves from this day forward. Nothing ever happened in the past that can prevent you from being present now (Eckhart Tolle).<sup>1</sup>

*Make Happiness a G.L.A.D. “Practiced Habit.”* Some principles of being content can be boiled down to these G.L.A.D “practiced habits.”

*G.L.A.D. stands for:*

**G**ratITUDE

**L**AUGHTER

**A**CCePTANCE

**D**EVOTION

**G**ratITUDE

You owe a debt of gratitude to your parents. By today’s standards, you cost almost a quarter million dollars to raise from childhood. (\$233,610.00 USD, 2017).<sup>2</sup> Be grateful to your parents. You also owe thanks to the countless “makers” of everything you use, consume or enjoy.

If you have been through many storms, be grateful you are still standing.

*Entitlement, the Anti-Gratitude Attitude.*

By contrast, the ungrateful “entitled” actually believe *life owes them*, forever. (By way of review, entitlement is a personality trait driven by exaggerated feelings of deservingness... [which] may lead to chronic disappointment.<sup>3</sup>

**Gratitude Stem:** I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_. I can “pay forward” by \_\_\_\_\_. (e.g., giving a heartfelt compliment)

## **Laughter**

Make fun of stress. Some actually believe stress is your friend. Your sense of humor is your sense of balance. Keep a humor file, to use in case of emergency. Share your “smiles across the miles”. Try to have one “good humor man” (i.e., person) in your life.

**Humor Stem:** A funny thing happened to me \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Acceptance**

It is our mind’s “default setting” to want things to be the way we WANT them to be (wishful thinking). Accepting people and things as they ARE (he/she actually thinks that way) is a beginning point to calmer, effective action that will eventually change our circumstances or our minds.

**Acceptance Stem:** Just for today I will “Grin and Bear” it when \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., he tells the same joke for the hundredth time)

## **Devotion**

Dedication to any valuable cause beyond yourself is almost guaranteed to bring you happiness. If you have a pulse, you have a purpose.

**Devotion Stem:** I am dedicated to: \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., the ones I love).

## **Reality Check**

If you really want to be happy for the rest of your life, perhaps once a week, check if you are really being G.L.A.D. Practice Gandhi’s wisdom. “Be the change you want to see...”<sup>4</sup>

Always remember, the pursuit of happiness has been our birthright for over 245 years. The quest for happiness is the bedrock of our Declaration of Independence.<sup>5</sup>

Pursue your happiness, **now**, my friend, don't let it pass you by. Don't say, I'll be happy *when* I finish this or that.



If you can't be happy, make at least another person happy, and as the saying goes, you WILL be happy too.

To make our readers happy, the Mindful Minute evolved.

Mark Twain once said, *'I didn't have time to write you a short letter, so I wrote you a long one.'*

#### References

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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Ron Rubenzer, EdD, MA, MPH, MSE, FAIS** is a Contributing Editor with The American Institute of Stress. He holds a doctorate and two master's degrees from Columbia University in New York City. He won a doctoral fellowship to attend the Columbia University's Leadership Education Program. While serving as a school psychologist at Columbia, he won a national student research prize of the year for an article written on the brain. Dr. Rubenzer worked at the Washington DC Office of Education. Also, while at Columbia University, he wrote an article for New York Magazine on enhancing children's development of their full potential. He has devoted his career to specializing in "reducing stressing-during testing" for better outcomes. He has worked as a stress manager for a hospital based cardiac/stroke rehabilitation facility and their Employee Assistance Program. He also coordinated a wellness program for a large school system. He is a fellow with The American Institute of Stress and writes focus articles on "using stress to do one's best" at home, work and school.

He has also conducted speaking engagements for conferences and presented for a number of television shows.

His latest book is *How the Best Handle Stress – Your First Aid Kit* <https://www.amazon.com/How-Best-Handle-Stress-First/dp/1731056508>

## **Combat Stress Magazine**

*Combat Stress* magazine is written with our military Service Members, Veterans, first responders, and their families in mind. We want all of our members and guests to find contentment in their lives by learning about stress management and finding what works best for each of them. Stress is unavoidable and comes in many shapes and sizes. It can even be considered a part of who we are. Being in a state of peaceful happiness may seem like a lofty goal but harnessing your stress in a positive way makes it obtainable. Serving in the military or being a police officer, firefighter or paramedic brings unique challenges and some extraordinarily bad days. The American Institute of Stress is dedicated to helping you, our Heroes and their families, cope with and heal your mind and body from the stress associated with your careers and sacrifices.

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