

[IMAGE]

The Secret to a Happier 2021

By Editorial Staff

After all that we've been through in 2020, a happier 2021 seems like both an eventuality and an absolute necessity. But it's more than just a catch phrase; there's a real science behind attaining happiness in 2021 and beyond. So take out your list of New Year's resolutions for this year and get ready to make some changes that will help *you* make changes for the better.

What's the key to happiness this year? Look beyond things like losing weight, exercising consistently, eating more vegetables, etc. Those are great goals, but research suggests that not only are most people unsuccessful at attaining them, but they also won't deliver true happiness. What will? *Doing things that make the world a better place.*

According to self-determination theory (SDT), we all have a natural, built-in tendency toward behavior that is effective and healthy. Whenever you willingly act in a way that helps others, you satisfy the three basic needs postulated by SDT: autonomy (choosing to do something you believe has personal value), competence (creating a sense of accomplishment by taking on challenges) and relatedness (establishing a connection with others).

2021 - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark By acting in this way, you satisfy the basic requirements for your own happiness – and of course, you're probably more likely to succeed. After all, which are you more likely (and willing) to do this year: lose weight or help, say, a family member in need? SDT proponents would say that the latter is not only more likely, but also more rewarding in terms of your personal happiness.

So review your list of resolutions and make changes where necessary. Focus more on how to improve others and the world this year; in doing so, you'll have a happier 2021, say SDT advocates, because your essential psychological needs will be met. Achieving a happier you – isn't that what your New Year's resolutions are really designed to accomplish?

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