

# The Behaviors That Lead to Higher Life Satisfaction & Personal Happiness

Mainly through studies done in two modern branches of psychology - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Rational Emotive Therapy - many behaviors) have been identified which promote higher levels of psychological well being - and thus higher satisfaction with one's life. Here are some (listed in random - not priority - order):

**1. Realize that your behavior & decisions affect others, and adjust these actions accordingly.** (You don't play your stereo super loud when you know there's a high probability that the sound will disturb your neighbors.) Psychologists call this "interdependency".

**2. In all your dealings with others: (the CIC Index)**

**Be CONGRUENT** (one's inner values match one's outer behavior)

**Use INTEGRITY** (Say what you do & always do what you say; always keep commitments, deadlines & appointments)

**Be CONSISTANT** (one is predictable & not "moody"; folks know what behaviors & attitudes to expect from him/her)

**3. Use ASSERTIVE STATEMENTS when making requests of others.** Assertive statements have 3 parts:

Empathy: I'll bet you're enjoying listening to your stereo at that volume level,

Conflict: but I can't study with the music that loud,

Action: so would you please turn it down.

**4. Use "I-statements" (focusing on self) rather than "you-statements" (which are accusatory).** ["I get concerned for your welfare when it's after midnight and I don't know where you are" - a opposed to "You make me so mad when you don't come in by the agreed-upon time and you don't even call me".]

(The following 3 characteristics come from "Transactional Analysis", a branch of psychology developed by Dr. Eric Berne)

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**5. Mostly live life in (and make decisions from) the Adult Ego state.**

**6. Enter the "Natural Child" and "Nurturing Parent" Ego States through choice made in the Adult Ego State.**

**7. Avoid the "Not-OK Child" and "Critical Parent" Ego states.**

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**8. Master "The 7 Principles of Bonding".**

1. Be sincerely interested in other people

2. Smile

3. Remember & use the other person's name

4. Self-disclose

5. Be a good listener [1. eye contact, 2. interjection, 3. non-verbal (facial expression, body language, gestures), 4. & 5. comment or question about what was said + self-disclosure about what was said]

6. Talk in terms of the other person's interests

7. Use AFFIRMATION.

**9. Exercise, eat right & have physical check-ups to know your "10 Numbers" & work to maintain their proper values.**

1. Body weight (correct for height) (Effective people are NEVER overweight.)

2. Resting heart rate (< 72)

3. Blood pressure (<120/80)

4. Total Cholesterol (< 200)
5. HDL (>50)
6. LDL (< 100)
7. Triglyceride level (< 150)
8. Blood glucose level ( $70 < x < 100$ )
9. Eye pressure (< 16)
10. (for men) PSA level (<4.0)

**10. Always do the BEST you can with what you've got - right now.**

**11. Practice the 8 behaviors of physical health:**

1. Eat right (proper nutrition)
2. Exercise (Effective people ALWAYS have an exercise program.)
3. Get enough sleep (7.5 – 10 hours per night for ages 14 – 24)
4. Avoid substance abuse, especially drinking alcohol to excess
5. Spend time with the people you care about
6. Have periodic physical exams
7. Maintain correct weight for your height.
8. Do not smoke (cigarettes, cigars) or use tobacco products (snuff, chewing tobacco).

**12. Be a MASTER of time management and of prioritizing tasks (importance vs urgency).**

**13. Let Sexual behavior be nurturing.** Only have sex with people you care about; use your body to make their body feel good - NOT "use their body to make your body feel good".

**14. Know & use the 5 ways to express Love for another person:**

- Quality time
- Acts of service
- Gifts
- Physical touch
- Affirmation

**15. Understand that the motivation for behaviors is determined by Egoism vs Altruism (Social Orientation) and Duty vs Passion (Driving Force).**

**16. Have changed the relationship with his/her parents from Dependent Child to Fellow Adult Friend.**

**17. Have developed a definite code of Ethics & Morality based on some combination of "The 4 Ethical Bases" that determines what behaviors are right & wrong for you:**

- Religion
- Law
- Family & Friends' Values
- Secular Humanism (wrong behaviors harm me or other people or their property)

**18. Use POSITIVE conversation:**

- Don't use pejorative words (like stupid, dick-head, ridiculous, "That sucks", etc.) or profanity.
- Don't disagree. Instead, say "you might/may be right."
- Talk about what you like; avoid talking about what you don't like.
- Never complain.
- Talk mostly about successes. Speak of perceived failures only in terms of what you've learned from them.

- Talk about what's fun/pleasant/enjoyable in your life - NEVER about "what's a drag" (what's not fun or unpleasant or not enjoyable)

**19. Use Affirming (vs. Discounting) conversation:** Use compliments generously & acknowledge achievement. **Avoid** “dissing” conversation: dis-agree, -count, -like, -parage, -courage, -approve, -dain, -respect, -tort, -turb, -like, etc.)

**20. NEVER argue;** instead say “You may be right.”

**21. Know the “rules for safety in an urban environment”** - see separate list

**22. Acquire the power to persuade, entertain, inform, inspire & motivate by mastering the 26 characteristics of Public Speaking** - see separate list.

**23. Knows how to use the DECISION SCHEMA** to choose between alternatives - see separate document.

**24. In relationships, knows where to “draw the line” in expressing intimacy:**

1. Talking face-to-face
2. Brief pat on non-erogenous zone
3. Arms around waist or shoulders
4. A-frame hug
5. Holding hands
6. Full-body hug (genital areas touch)
7. Touching face or head
8. Chaste kissing (quick peck on face, head, lips)
9. Erotic kissing
10. Body massage, non-genital
11. Caressing erogenous zones (breasts – genitals – buttocks)
12. Oral/manual stimulation of genitals
13. Sexual intercourse, vaginal or anal