

MISSION: JOY GUIDE

AN INVITATION TO CREATE JOY



Photo credit: Miranda Penn Turin



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OVERVIEW



Welcome! You're busy, and you took the time to pick up this guide. Thank you.

The world is hurting (and you may be, too). There has never been a better time to share this message. Nobel Peace Prize spiritual leaders have joined forces to help each of us have more joy in our lives. And they made it as easy as possible. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu stacked the deck in our favor by distilling their boundless wisdom down to its essence regarding both the 'why' and the 'how'—all of which is now backed up and fine-tuned by the latest neuroscience.

YOU CAN START BY WATCHING A MOVIE. SERIOUSLY.

AND BEWARE: If you're in the mood for a sermon or an academic treatise, look elsewhere. His Holiness and Arch, as his friends called him, transcended any notions you might have about how powerful leaders or spiritual masters or human rights activists should act. In the film, they have FUN. They tease each other mercilessly. They speak from the heart, in a no-nonsense way. They prioritize human connection over rules. They show us—not tell us—how to create joy for ourselves, no matter the circumstances of our lives.

This film is YOURS. His Holiness and Arch wanted you to see it, and we can't wait for you to see it! And to share it with your community.



Photo credit: Miranda Penn Turin

This guide is also yours. No matter how much time or experience you have, we've got you covered. Whether you graduated from the School of Hard Knocks or an elite university, whether you live in Italy or Indonesia, we all have one thing in common: **WE COULD USE SOME MORE JOY.**

We think you're going to be so excited by all the JOY in the film that you're going to want to bring it to your community. No stress—we'll walk you through the nuts and bolts of how to run an event. We'll also dive deeper into the how-to for helping ourselves feel better in the moment and into the science that supports these micro-actions. And if that's not enough, we'll also present additional helpful information that just couldn't fit in a 90-minute movie.

AND THERE'S MORE: This guide is only one tool in a larger global project, the JOY Campaign, with **A MISSION TO HELP EVERYONE KNOW THAT THEY DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR JOY: YOU CAN CREATE IT FOR YOURSELF.**

For more information on the JOY Campaign, go to MissionJoy.org.



YOU + YOUR COMMUNITY + JOY

Photo credit: Zibik

Feel free to adapt these materials in any way that makes sense to you, depending upon your group size, setting, and the participants' familiarity with one another. When creating this guide, we were thinking it would be used for post-screening discussions and workshops at universities, faith-based communities, and workplace settings. But literally any setting is a good setting for understanding more about the why, the how, and the why-bother of joy.

There are a lot of ways to approach these materials and a lot of ways to get people to connect to it. What's your angle? Thinking about the following questions (which all came up as we prepared this guide) will help you focus.

- What is the difference between joy and happiness?
- How can we try to control our own emotional state?
- How can joy help us manage and overcome challenges?
- How much does our DNA determine our emotional state?
- How can we improve our brain health by transforming our minds?
- What does science show us about the impact of joy on our overall physical and mental well-being?
- How can the teachings of His Holiness and Archbishop Tutu provide a touchpoint for joy, healing, and well-being for you and your group, and for communities around the world?



FILM SUMMARY

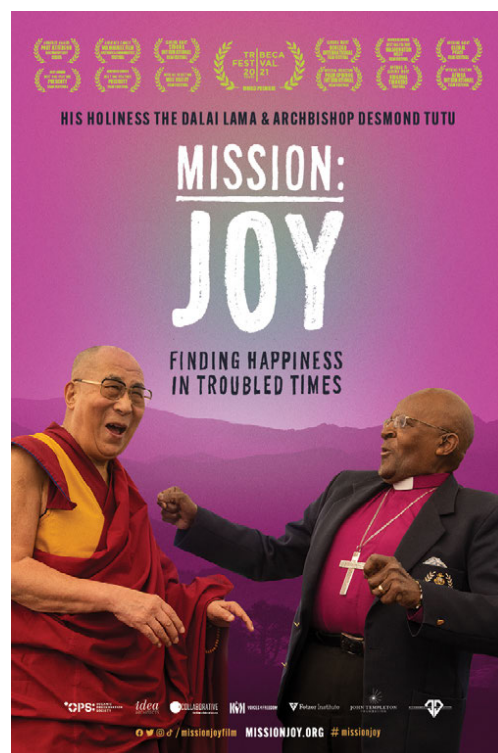


Photo credit: Miranda Penn Turin

Deeply moving and laugh-out-loud funny, **Mission: JOY— Finding Happiness in Troubled Times** is a documentary with unprecedented access to the unlikely friendship of two international icons who transcend religion: **His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu**. In their final joint mission, these self-described mischievous brothers gave a master class in how to live with joy in the face of challenge. They offered **neuroscience-backed wisdom** to help each of us **LIVE WITH MORE JOY, DESPITE CIRCUMSTANCES**.

The film showcases a five-day exchange between these two Nobel Peace Prize winners, which led to the *New York Times* bestseller **The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World**. Consisting largely of never-before-seen footage shot at the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharamsala, India, the film invites us to join these luminaries behind the scenes as they recount stories from their lives, each having lived through periods of incredible difficulty and strife.

With genuine affection, mutual respect, and a healthy dose of teasing, these unlikely friends impart lessons gleaned from lived experience, ancient traditions, and cutting-edge science regarding how to live with joy in the face of life's challenges, from the extraordinary to the mundane. **Mission: JOY is an antidote for our times.**





LETTER FROM THE FILMMAKERS

Two dear friends were meeting after years of being apart—and they knew it would be for the very last time. Both were in their 80s, one undergoing cancer treatment. Both had weathered some of the worst that life ever serves up, including the kind of violence and hate that can scorch and fester. Yet... they united in one final mission: to help us all activate more joy in our lives.

HOW COULD WE NOT JOIN IN?

(The fact that they were laugh-out-loud hilarious is an added bonus.)

These friends happen to be two of the world's most respected and beloved human rights heroes and spiritual leaders. But **what stopped us in our tracks is that these men—who suffered so much and had every excuse NOT to feel joyful—cracked the code about how to activate joy, no matter the circumstances.** We wanted in on that knowledge. And we wanted to help everyone else be in on it, too, by telling that story far and wide.

This film was thousands of years in the making—or three decades, or six years, depending on when you start counting. It's a distillation of thousands of years of ancient spiritual wisdom grounded in 30 years of neuroscience research that took six years, start to finish, to bring to the screen.

We were entering the most intense and critical phase of filmmaking when COVID-19 struck, laying bare so many of humanity's wounds. During that time, we often reflected with awe:

- After all this time, this film is coming out at just the moment when a hurting world needs it most (and only one week behind schedule in production, which is a miracle in 'normal' times, let alone during a pandemic), and
- Heart-wrenching issues such as racism, inequality, and climate change call upon us to focus MORE on creating joy, not less. Perhaps more than anyone else in recent history, Arch and His Holiness helped humanity take some of its most transformational leaps forward in the evolution of human rights. They each faced horrific oppression, yet their actions were fueled not by hate, but by compassion, and they kept themselves energized not through anger, but through joy.



Photo credit: Miranda Penn Turin

**MAY WE ALL FOLLOW THEIR LEAD.
MAY WE BE ENERGIZED BY JOY, THE ULTIMATE CLEAN FUEL.**

Through this film, we are honored to take you with us on a journey punctuated with the deep satisfaction of overdue belly laughs and the catharsis of a good cry. After 90 minutes, you will notice that something inside you has shifted.

Please accept that shift as a gift from His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. That gift still reverberates within us every day, and we hope the same for you. It is your birthright.

**Imagine a world where we are all empowered to create more joy for ourselves.
Now let's make it so.**

Peggy Callahan, Co-Director and Producer
Louie Psihoyos, Director

"What we learn from these two extraordinary global icons could transform the lives of millions of others around the world struggling to find more joy, meaning, and love—it worked for me."

Louie Psihoyos, Academy Award-winning Director Mission: JOY



"His Holiness and Arch confirmed what our lived experience (and now neuroscience) has proven: Joy originates INSIDE of us—we can each block it or actively choose to create it. Then it shows up most fully when it's directed OUTSIDE of us—when we're helping someone else or helping our world. Joy is the ultimate inside-out job."

Peggy Callahan, Co-Director and Producer of Mission: JOY



BEFORE SCREENING



Photo credit: Dario Valenzuela

“Joy is the reward of seeking to give joy to others. When you are caring, compassionate, more concerned about the welfare of others than of your own, you suddenly feel a warm glow in your heart because you have in fact wiped the tears from the eyes of another.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*



PREPARE AND PLAN FOR YOUR EVENT



Photo credit: Sean Hall



Consider Your Priorities and Goals

As you think about inviting a group in to watch the film and have a great discussion after (assuming that's the format you want to work with), you'll want to consider a few things off the bat.

- It's probably fair to assume you want your group to enjoy the film. (That's the first priority, right?) We're guessing you would also like them to walk away with specific how-to's to create more joy in their lives.
- What else? Maybe also you want to:
 - Encourage group members to build relationships with each other?
 - Give them the time and space for individual reflection?
 - Invite guests who can introduce perspectives participants may not be familiar with?
 - Something else?



Planning, Planning, Planning

You're going to want people to feel safe and ready to share. You'll want the event to be inclusive, accessible, and respectful to all—which is not as daunting as it may sound. Just think through the details before you get going: weekday vs. weekend, time of day, physical accessibility, childcare, and refreshments when possible (if in-person).



Visit MissionJoy.org/Host-A-Screening host a screening at a high school, college/university, faith-based gathering, community group, or at workplace settings.

If you want to attend a public screening that's already organized, such as a film festival, visit MissionJoy.org/Watch-The-Film to see all the listings.



- **CHOOSE IN-PERSON, VIRTUAL ONLINE, OR HYBRID** (some people in person and some online).
- **SET A DATE AND TIME.**
- **CHOOSE A FORMAT.** Some options:
 - **Panel discussion:** Invite two or three individuals plus a moderator to discuss questions from Dialogue with Q and A (below), questions from the audience, or your own questions.
 - **Community discussion:** Choose an option from Dialogue with Q and A (below). If your group is meeting virtually and is large, consider using poll questions, breakout rooms, or other ways to encourage participation. The JOY Cards (included in this Guide) can also be a great tool to bring in as a part two of a discussion.
 - **Workshop:** Dive right into the JOY Cards and invite your group to discuss them with each other. If possible, provide pens and paper (or even a journal if you want to get fancy) so individuals can jot down notes and reflections.
 - **Your own strategy:** Feel free to ignore us and use your own good ideas about how to engage with and learn from the film!
- **TAILOR YOUR QUESTIONS, CONVERSATION PROMPTS, AND ACTIVITIES** to your group. Make room for all voices to be heard. Pick and choose from this guide to meet your needs.
- **MAKE SURE YOU'VE GOT EVERYTHING YOU NEED** to carry out your chosen format:
 - The film (please contact MissionJOY@RocoFilms.com if you have any questions)
 - Venue (if you're meeting in person)
 - Online screening service (please contact MissionJOY@RocoFilms.com if you have any questions)
 - Small things like pens, pencils, notecards, journals, and so on. Don't forget snacks!



Get the Word Out

You know how to gather a group of friends. This isn't much different—you'll just need to keep a few things in mind.

- Choose an invitation format that best suits your group.
- Make a guest list.
- What are you going to call your event? What will catch people's attention? Think about your audience (faith-based, students, activists, community leaders) and be playful and inviting!
- Send the invitation early, if possible, so people can make arrangements to attend, but also don't hesitate to organize a last-minute event or invite an additional person at the last minute.
- If your event will be online, send instructions on how to use the platform in advance and maybe send it again as a reminder 24 hours in advance.

"The ultimate source of a happy life—even physical health—is inside, not outside."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*



Everything You Need to Know About Moderating

Don't worry. We've got your back. Just keep these tips in mind. Watch the film in advance, thinking about how to guide your group through the discussion. Make lots of notes.

- **Take a moment to recall** your own experiences of joy (yay!) and adversity (boo!). You might want to bring them into the conversation, if appropriate.
- But of course, this isn't all about you. **Plan to moderate in moderation!** A moderator guides, rather than leads, a conversation. Introduce a question or theme and then step back and let the group share their own thoughts and reactions. No experience? No worries. Keep reading for more tips on this.
- **Be ready for strong emotions.** It is likely people in your group will have different levels of comfort and experience sharing... well, emotions, as well as talking about beliefs, faith, spirituality, and science.
- Get comfortable with the idea that **different people will have different perspectives** just like His Holiness and Archbishop Tutu did.
- **Prepare to encourage curiosity, active listening, and respectful exchange.** The goal is for people to try to understand each other, not to change minds.
- **Try to get everyone to share.** Is someone taking over the conversation? Is someone else hesitating to speak?
- **If one person is dominating the conversation, it's time for a new topic.** It may be helpful to keep an ongoing list of ideas on a white board or a shared online space so your group can remember and return to them later, even if you move on from them during your conversation.
- **Give participants plenty of time to put their thoughts together.** Thoughtful expression sometimes takes a minute. Don't interrupt or allow others to interrupt. It may be helpful to provide pen and paper and suggest people write down their thoughts before responding.
- **And listen, listen, listen.** (And make sure everyone else does, too!)

For organizing a screening event at a high school, college/university, faith-based gathering, community group, or at workplace settings:

- Visit MissionJoy.org/Host-A-Screening to host a screening
- Visit MissionJoy.org/Watch-The-Film to be notified about future screenings

Photo credit: Peggy Callahan

WHEN YOU'RE DONE

Photo credit: Courtney Cook



Offer Participants Some JOY To Go

Here are two great (and easy) gifts for your participants, ways for them to continue increasing the amount of JOY they create for themselves:

- ➔ **THE BIG JOY PROJECT:** This is a free weeklong program in which participants spend about seven minutes a day doing one Act of JOY—a micro-action that science shows can help us feel more joy—and logging their emotions before and after. At the end of their week, each participant receives a free-of-charge **individualized JOY Report** about the amount of joy they created for themselves and customized recommendations about how they can best increase their joy going forward. Visit MissionJOY.org/BigJoy
- **PUT THE QR CODE UP ON THE SCREEN** (file formats are available in the Digital Screening Toolkit) and/or print out and post the large QR code at the end of this guide. Enjoy!
- **THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER ON DEMAND:** His Holiness and Arch gave a special gift for each of us—their laughs. It's true! We've bottled their infectious laughs into a short audio clip that gets emailed to you immediately, for free, by going to MissionJOY.org/Email. Some people are making this audio clip their phone ringtone so they get to hear it all the time. (Everyone who signs up for The BIG JOY Project receives this laughter audio gift, too.) Some people are making this audio clip their phone ringtone so they get to hear it all the



Let Us Know How It Goes!

We're cheering you on throughout and can't wait to hear what the screening and discussion was like for you and your group!

- **EMAIL US:** at MissionJOY@RocoFilms.com. We'd love to know how many people attended (any and all numbers of people will be celebrated!) and how people responded to the discussion and exercises. Compliments and constructive criticism alike are warmly welcomed!
- **SHARE YOUR JOY PUBLICLY** as a #JoyStory by visiting MissionJoy.org/JoyStory
- **SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA**, which may inspire others to follow your and and host a screening to spread JOY!



WARM-UP

Photo credit: Molnar Balint

Once everyone has gathered, set the tone for the whole event by creating a sense of community. Here are a few suggestions to warm up your group.



A Sneak Peek at Creating Joy

Lead your group through the following activity without telling them the steps ahead of time.

- Give each participant a piece of paper and a pencil or pen.
- Say: *"Using a scale from 1 to 10, rate how you are feeling, 1 being 'in pretty bad shape' and 10 being 'ecstatic.' Write this number on the top of the page.*
- Next, have them list eight things they're grateful for under the ranking number. Just a word or a phrase for each item is enough. This should take just a couple of minutes.
- Last, say: *"Now, at the bottom of your paper, think about how you are feeling at this moment, again using a scale from 1 to 10 scale from 'in pretty bad shape' to 'ecstatic.' Write this number on the bottom of the page."*

Invite participants to turn to the person next to them and chat about the exercise.

- What did they notice about their emotional state?
- Did it shift after listing the eight things they're grateful for?

We know there's always a weird moment of awkwardness before people dive into activities like this. It's OK to acknowledge it and laugh. (Maybe there's even some joy in it!)



Additional Warm-Ups (Optional)

A SHORT CLOSED-EYE EXERCISE

This exercise adapted from *The Book of Joy* will get everyone in the right headspace very quickly.

- **HAVE EVERYONE FIND A GOOD PLACE TO SIT COMFORTABLY** (on the floor or on a chair—it doesn't matter) with their hands on their laps.
- **ASK THEM TO CLOSE THEIR EYES** and take several deep breaths in and out, letting the body relax, and bringing awareness to the breath.
- **NOW ASK: "WHEN DO YOU NOTICE YOURSELF FEELING JOY?"** Give them 3 minutes to think about this, and let them know that it's OK to let the mind go in any direction, just bring it back to the question when it goes too far afield.
- **NOW ASK THEM TO SHIFT THEIR FOCUS TO GRATITUDE.** Acknowledge gratitude for whatever and whoever brought joy.
- **END BY SAYING:** "*Joy is not something we have to wait for. It is something to learn and to grow stronger at creating.*" Let it sink in. Invite the group to open their eyes and adjust to being present as a group.
- **SURPRISE!** Some of your participants may never have meditated before. If that's the case, congratulate them! Meditation is known to help us create joy for ourselves. Meditation does not have to be long or difficult in order to have JOY benefits.
- **SHARE** this brief description of meditation from Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard:

"Meditation is a familiarization with a new way of being, a new way of perceiving things which is more in [accord] with reality, with interdependence, with the stream and continuous transformation which our being and our consciousness is."



A JOY CONVERSATION

If your group members know one another and the community is strong, organize them into pairs and have them choose one or more of the prompts listed below. This is an opportunity to deepen connection and open up new insights even before you watch the film together. You can list these on a handout or project them in the room on a wall. We recommend keeping this opening conversation to five minutes max. We want to have plenty of time to watch and discuss the film!

- What brought you to this event today?
- Share an experience or memory of a particularly joyful time in your life.
- Share an experience or memory of adversity and pain, and if possible, how you were able to move forward.
- Share current obstacles or roadblocks you are experiencing to greater well-being and joy in your life.
- End with an expression of gratitude for the conversation and acknowledgment of sharing connection. It can be as simple as "Thank you for sharing and being present."



Photo credit: Yingchou Han

WATCH

MISSION: JOY

FINDING HAPPINESS IN TROUBLED TIMES



Now that you're all warmed up, it's time to watch the film!

Let your group know: "The documentary is 90 minutes long so sit back, relax, and enjoy. We'll get back together after the film."



CLICK TO WATCH

MISSIONJOY.ORG/HOST-A-SCREENING

AFTER SCREENING



Photo credit: Tenzin Choejor

“Every day we have the opportunity to create and re-create our lives. This is the power we yield. No dark fate determines our future.”

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*



CONNECT AND SHARE



Photo credit: Marcos Paulo

We know there is so much to share after watching *Mission: JOY*. Depending upon your group's size and available time, there are several ways to move from watching to engaging to connecting (and experiencing joy!).

- Get in pairs for a brief conversation, or small groups if your event is large.
 - How you are feeling right now after watching *Mission: JOY*?
 - Describe a favorite scene or moment from the documentary.
 - What is one question you would like to ask either His Holiness or the late Archbishop Tutu?
- Have participants think of one word that describes how they are feeling after watching the film.
- Go around the room (or the small group) inviting each person to share their word.





THE BIG REVEAL



Photo credit: S B Vonlanthe

Let them in on the secret!

Now it's time to go back to those eight things everyone listed before the film. Tell the group that that activity was not only a handy introduction to the film, but it's actually a scientifically proven way to increase the amount of joy we feel. **(Really!)**

It's also an example of the micro-actions that we, along with our neuroscientist and research psychologist advisors have identified as Acts of JOY—tiny things each of us can do to feel better any time, anywhere, at any age.

It's called The BIG JOY Project, and it's absolutely free of charge.

Participants spend 7 minutes a day for 7 days creating JOY for themselves. Each day they receive an email containing one micro-action to take and a check-in to log how you're feeling. It's an opportunity to spend a few minutes doing something that is scientifically proven to help you feel more joy, and at the end of the week, you'll get a personalized report about which Acts of JOY (see a few of these on page 24) were more effective for you, and which additional actions might work especially well for you.



At the same time, you'll also be helping scientists better understand how all of us can feel even more joy. Data about your experience will be combined with that of many others to form the largest ever crowd-sourced science project on joy. Amazing!

See if your group members would like to all start BIG JOY on the same day!

That way you can encourage each other during the week, compare experiences, and celebrate completing it together. It'll be fun.

If you'd like to try The BIG JOY Project, sign up at MissionJOY.org/BigJoy or by scanning the QR code right here (and in larger format at the back of this guide).

It takes just a few minutes to sign up—and you're already ahead of the curve. You've already completed the very first exercise—listing the eight things you're grateful for!—so go ahead and sign up now.

If you don't want to sign up to do BIG JOY, no problem. There are lots of other ways to spread and experience joy.



Acts of JOY

Here are four Acts of JOY below.

(They're from "The How-To of JOY" section of our website at MissionJoy.org/Science to get you started. You'll get to try even more through The BIG JOY Project!)

EXPRESS GRATITUDE

Whether we're appreciating people or pets or moments or memories, we can feel grounded and joyful when we express our gratitude—to ourselves or to others!

SHIFT PERSPECTIVE

When we take a moment to look at a situation from a different point of view, we can often see the bigger picture, expand our perspective, and learn.

MAKE A CONNECTION

It has been shown again and again that the single most important predictor of mental and physical health is the amount and quality of our relationships. We felt this loss particularly during the global COVID-19 pandemic. Connections are life affirming!

BE KIND

Kindness and connection go together. When you're offering kindness, you're reaching out to another to ease their pain, lend a hand, share your love, show you care.



Photo credit: Benigno Hoyuela

TAKE THE BIG JOY CHALLENGE!

7 minutes a day for 7 days to
create more JOY in your life

You're invited to be part of the world's
largest ever Citizen Science project
on JOY



YOU WILL RECEIVE

- An immediate boost in your mood, after doing just 1 Act of JOY
- A free-of-charge **individualized JOY Report** about the amount of JOY you created for yourself
- Insights about how you can best increase your own JOY going forward
- An additional boost of JOY, knowing that you are part of a global project that will benefit people around the world and the planet itself

THE HOW-TO OF JOY

We could all use more JOY. Neuroscience-backed ancient wisdom shows us exactly how, but too few people are aware of these life-changing discoveries. Everyone deserves to know about the exact how-to of JOY.

YOUR JOY EXPERTS

Mission: JOY has worked with researchers from the **Network for Emotional Well Being**, which includes **UC Berkeley Greater Good Science Center**, **UC San Francisco, Well-Being Laboratory** at UC Riverside, **Center for Healthy Minds** at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and **Harvard Center for Happiness** to:

- Identify the easy micro-actions that take just a few minutes that science shows can help us feel more JOY
- Create a **fun 7-Day challenge** that will help strengthen your well-being and learn about yourself
- Contribute unprecedented findings to the science of well-being

NEED MORE HELP BEYOND BIG JOY?

The [MissionJOY.org](https://missionjoy.org) and The BIG JOY Project can help us create more joy for ourselves, and serve as on-ramps for deeper conversations about mental health, but are not the same support as what you may need if you are experiencing a mental health crisis or are seeking to treat or prevent a mental health condition.

Here are organizations that specialize in helping everyone get the mental health assistance they need:

In North America:

- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**
1-800-950-NAMI (6264) or info@nami.org
- **Crisis Text Line**
In the US: Text HOME to 741-741 / In Canada: Text 686868
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
Call 800-273-TALK (8255)
- **The Jed Foundation (JED)** - www.jedfoundation.org

In Other Regions:

United for Global Mental Health works with mental health organizations in every region of the world.

unitedgmh.org/mental-health-support

GET YOUR OWN JOY REPORT!

Go to MissionJOY.org/BIGJOY

Everyone could use
more JOY.



Photo credit: Ben O Bro

the BIG JOY project DONE!

PROGRESS

✓ INTRO: SHARE A LAUGH!



✓ DAY 1: CELEBRATE ANOTHER'S JOY!



✓ DAY 2: MAKE A GRATITUDE LIST



✓ DAY 3: SHIFT YOUR PERSPECTIVE



✓ DAY 4: DO SOMETHING KIND



✓ DAY 5: DWELL IN AWE



✓ DAY 6: BEFRIEND YOURSELF



✓ DAY 7: HEAL THE WORLD!



CONGRATULATIONS

You finished your BIG JOY! Here is a summary of how the Acts of JOY that you tried impacted the way you feel. There are no good or bad results — this is just for learning about what works for you personally. "Know thyself!" Self knowledge is power.

The images below provide informal feedback about this past week and are not diagnostic and do not indicate mental health status.

your BIG JOY Report

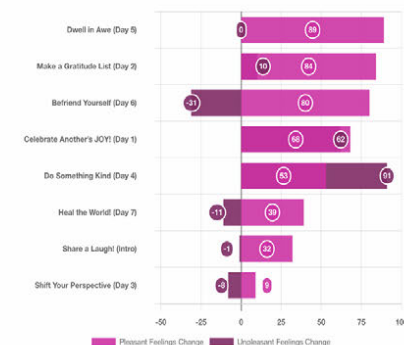
7-DAY WELL-BEING SNAPSHOT

This chart shows how your answers to survey questions about well-being changed from before to after BIG JOY. Many factors can affect this score, and the image does not indicate mental health status. To create more JOY, you can explore additional tools on Greater Good in Action.



HOW DID I FEEL BEFORE VS. AFTER EACH ACT OF JOY?

Acts of JOY can improve how you feel both by increasing enjoyment and decreasing unpleasant feelings. This chart shows the difference between your "How do you feel right now?" responses from before vs. after each Act of JOY.





LET'S KEEP TALKING



Photo credit: Igor Alecsander

Adapt these ideas and questions to the size and needs of your group - have fun!



Brainstorm Questions with Your Group

- **For a small group:** Suggest sitting in a circle. Distribute Post-it Notes or small notecards to each person. Ask participants to write any questions that surfaced after watching the film and stick them on the wall, or collect in a bowl. Choose a question from the wall or pull one out at random from the bowl for your group to discuss.
- **For a larger group:** Pass out small notecards before the documentary begins and ask participants to jot down their questions as they emerge during the screening. At the end of the film, collect the cards and choose several questions to bring to the larger group for conversation in pairs or as a larger group.



Sample Questions

- Do you understand the joy differently after listening and learning from His Holiness and Archbishop Tutu?
- Both leaders reference their own personal suffering—His Holiness living in exile as a refugee and Archbishop Tutu fighting against the apartheid system in South Africa—as critical for their understanding of and experience of joy.
 - How do you understand the relationship between suffering and joy?
 - Do you agree or disagree that suffering is an opening for more joy?
- What was new to you about the psychological and neurological science of joy?
- What spiritual ideas and values did His Holiness and Archbishop Tutu share, despite their different traditions?

- During the visit to the Tibetan Children's Village in *Mission: JOY*, one student showed deep emotional pain when sharing how she had to leave her family when she was five. His Holiness responded by reframing saying, "Now you should think at present you've got complete freedom and have opportunity to study, not only modern education, but also, you see, study, learning our ancient, thousand-year-old rich culture. So look that way and you feel ok." Archbishop Tutu simply listened to her story and said "Sorry..."
- Thupten Jinpa, the English translator for His Holiness, reflects after this encounter, "His Holiness always is aware that there is a kind of expectation on his part to be the rock. To be the anchor. You know, for every Tibetan. So I think that on his part it was not so much giving comfort per se, but giving courage. Whereas Archbishop's immediate response was to give comfort."
 - What are your thoughts about these two different approaches to others' suffering? To your own suffering?
- His Holiness, the Archbishop, and the *Mission: JOY* team did not mean that this film, the JOY Campaign, and The BIG JOY Project are replacements for assistance from trained mental health professionals. These tools can, however, serve as on-ramps for conversations about mental health and well-being, and can provide all of us—regardless of whether we have a mental health diagnosis—small ways to help ourselves feel better day to day.
 - In your opinion, what kind of conversations about mental health and well-being are missing from your community/city/country? What might be done to help remedy that?

"What really was important about kindness was that you're connecting with another person by doing acts of kindness."

Dr. Richard Davidson, Scientist, University of Wisconsin-Madison, *Mission: JOY*

oops...
wrong photo!



JOY CARDS



Another way to make deeper connections after a screening is to pull out a deck of JOY Cards.

We've designed two different decks--One deck is meant for individuals, and the other is for groups. There are a total of 30 cards, 27 are already created for you and three are blank for you to create your own!

And...30 cards makes it handy to have one for each day of the month if you are using them for your own daily practice.

- **THE FRONT OF EVERY CARD** contains a quote from the film or relevant research on the science of joy.
- **ON THE BACK**, there's an invitation to "Try this" with proven ways to create more joy.



HOW TO USE

There's no right or wrong way to use these cards! But here's a good place to start:

1. Print out the sheets, cut the cards out, fold and if you'd like, glue or tape the edges together.



2. Choose how you want to use them.

For pairs or small groups: Use the group **JOY Cards** to start an exchange of ideas in a post-screening discussion. You can select the same card for all to discuss or mix up the deck and let everyone choose their own.

On your own: The possibilities are endless! Keep your **JOY Cards** in your backpack, next to your bed, or on your kitchen counter for your daily dose of joy.

3. Talk about the parameters for respectful conversations, so everyone will feel included and heard.

We took great care in creating the cards, but remember that some exercises might provoke a strong or painful emotional response. As His Holiness and Archbishop Tutu shared, joy can emerge out of suffering. If pain does arise, acknowledge the moment and sit with the feeling. Remember that we can choose to reframe painful feelings. If you know there will likely be strong feelings that surface, consider working in partnership with a local mental health organization and have counselors available.

4. Follow the prompts on each card.

5. Have fun!

JOY CARDS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

<p>1</p> <p>“Joy is the reward of seeking to give joy to others. When you are caring, compassionate, more concerned about the welfare of others than of your own, you suddenly feel a warm glow in your heart because you have in fact wiped the tears from the eyes of another.”</p> <p>Archbishop Tutu, <i>Mission: JOY</i></p> <p>MISSION: JOY www.MissionJoy.org</p>	<p>TRY THIS:</p> <p>SHARE A STORY ABOUT....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ a kindness that you offered to another→ a memorable act of compassion or kindness that you received→ an act of compassion or kindness you witnessed <p></p> <p>When and where did it happen?</p> <p>How did you feel?</p> <p>Are you smiling yet?</p>
<p>2</p> <p>“The ultimate source of a meaningful life is within our own self. Usually everybody seeks happiness, joyfulness from the outside, from money, from power, from a big car OR house. The ultimate source of a happy life—even physical health—is inside, not outside.”</p> <p>His Holiness the Dalai Lama, <i>Mission: JOY</i></p> <p>MISSION: JOY www.MissionJoy.org</p>	<p>TRY THIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ You can't control the events of your life, but you CAN control how you think about them. Reframing the story—looking at it from a different point of view—can change everything.→ Remember a time in your life that felt difficult or unpleasant. Now try to think of one positive thing that came about as a result of that difficulty.→ Share with your group your example of finding joy from the inside!
<p>3</p> <p>“Joy is our essential nature, something everyone can realize. We could say that our desire for happiness is, in a way, an attempt to rediscover our original state of mind.”</p> <p>Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, Author, and translator for the His Holiness the Dalai Lama, <i>Mission: JOY</i></p> <p>MISSION: JOY www.MissionJoy.org</p>	<p>TRY THIS:</p> <p>THINK ABOUT A CHILDHOOD MEMORY THAT MAKES YOU SMILE. IT MIGHT BE...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ a favorite holiday→ your favorite game→ someone who made you feel loved <p></p> <p>In pairs or small groups, share your memory. Do you notice any similarities among the memories?</p>

4

“One study found that people who did acts of kindness for others became happier and actually stayed happier for about two to four weeks after the study was over. They also showed changes in their body that were associated with a stronger immune response— a kind of anti-inflammatory response.”

Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky, University of California - Riverside, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

- Share a memory of a time when you were kind, or when someone was kind to you. Or of an act of kindness that you witnessed.
- How do you feel after exchanging stories? Notice any changes?
- Talk about your reactions to Dr. Lyubomirsky's research. Why do you think acts of kindness might cause physiological changes?

5

“What really was important about kindness was that you're connecting with another person by doing acts of kindness.”

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

FIND SOMEONE IN YOUR GROUP TO CONNECT WITH, AND TALK ABOUT KINDNESS:

- Who do you think you learned kindness from?
- Can you think of a time in your life when an act of kindness led to a deeper personal connection? Maybe with a friend or a neighbor?

6

“What the Dalai Lama and I are offering is a way of handling your worries: thinking about others.

You can think about others who are in a similar situation or perhaps even worse a situation, but who have survived, even thrived. It does help quite a lot to see yourself as part of a greater whole.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

FIND A PARTNER AND TAKE TURNS SHARING SOMETHING THAT MIGHT BE WORRYING YOU.

- Can you or your partner think of someone who has experienced a similar situation?
- How has that person survived, or even thrived? Offer them empathy and compassion.
- Offer YOURSELF empathy and compassion, and know that you are not alone!

7
“The equivalent of neuroplasticity in genomics is epigenetics, or how genes are regulated and expressed. Think of genes as something with volume control that can be turned on or off. Studies have shown that with eight hours of meditation from skilled practitioners there is evidence of a measurable difference in gene expression—from purely mental practice. In other words, our brains and genes are dynamic and have a great deal of plasticity.”

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison, in a TED Talk

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TRY THIS:

TALK ABOUT YOUR REACTIONS TO THE EVIDENCE THAT OUR BRAINS AND OUR GENES CAN ACTUALLY CHANGE BASED ON PRACTICES LIKE MEDITATION.

- As the mind changes, the brain changes. In what ways would you like to change your brain?
- What possible effects do you think this information might have in your life? In the world?

8
“Suffering [is] opportunity testing you. There is someone who is a Tibetan who spent many years in the Chinese gulag. [The] Gulag is difficult. Hard labor, torture. He told me that during those 18 years, it was a difficult period. He faced some dangers. I thought there was danger to his life. I ask, what kind of danger? He told me, danger of losing compassion towards those Chinese perpetrators.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

THINK OF A PERSON IN YOUR LIFE WITH WHOM YOU HAVE A TENSE RELATIONSHIP.

- Ask yourself, what difficulties may this person have experienced? Can I put myself in their place?
- If you are comfortable doing so, share the problem(s) you faced with them and any insights to their lived experience.

9
“Every day we have the opportunity to create and re-create our lives. This is the power we yield. No dark fate determines our future.”

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*

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TRY THIS:

ONE OF THE PRACTICES SUGGESTED IN THE BOOK OF JOY IS “MORNING INTENTION SETTING.” LET’S TRY IT RIGHT NOW, NO MATTER WHAT TIME IT IS.

- Set an intention for how you would like the rest of your day to go. Share your intention with your group.
- And try it again tomorrow—and every morning—to see how positive intentions can re-create your life!

10
“There’s a concept that we have in South Africa, the concept of ubuntu. It says, a person is a person through other persons. I mean I could not speak as I am speaking without having learned it from other human beings. I could not think as a human being except through learning it from other human beings.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*



TRY THIS:

- Think about someone who has had a positive impact in your life.
- Take a moment to think about how you would describe their influence.
- Turn to a partner or a small group and describe this person. Talk about their impact on you. Does their influence continue to shape your life?

11
“Forgiveness does not mean forgetting. You should keep the memory about negative things. But because of that, there is the possibility of developing anger or hatred. That control, that’s the meaning of forgiveness. So it is totally wrong that the practice of tolerance and practice of forgiveness are signs of weakness. Totally wrong. Hundred percent wrong. A thousand percent wrong.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*



TRY THIS:

THERE ARE THREE PARTS TO A GOOD APOLOGY:

1. Say you’re sorry.
2. Admit your mistake and take responsibility for the impact it had.
3. Make or offer a reparation to set the situation right. If you don’t know what you should do, ask—and then follow through.

Discuss with a partner:

Have you received or offered an apology like this? What was your experience like?

12
“Well-being is a skill. Well-being can actually be learned, it can be nurtured, and it’s a skill that can enable us to live a happier life. We know that if you want to learn to play the violin, you’ve got to practice. If you want to learn a complex sport, you’ve got to practice. If you want to learn well-being, you have to practice.”

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison, *Mission: JOY*



TRY THIS:

THINK ABOUT “WELL-BEING” IN YOUR LIFE. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE FOR YOU? SHARE A FEW EXAMPLES.

- Share an experience that illustrates how you practice well-being in your life.

OR

- Talk about the ways you would LIKE to practice more well-being in your life.

13
"Neuroplasticity describes the fact that the brain changes in response to experience and in response to training, wittingly or unwittingly. Our brains are constantly being shaped, and we can actually harness the power of neuroplasticity. It turns out that when we cultivate wholesome qualities of our mind, our brains change accordingly."

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison

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TRY THIS:

DR. DAVIDSON'S STUDIES TELL US:

- An average American pays no attention to what they are doing 47% of their time.
- When they are not paying attention to what they are doing, they are significantly less satisfied.
- Talk about your reactions. Why do you think paying attention might make people feel more satisfaction?



What are you training your brain to do right now?

Where is your mind right now?

At this moment, how happy or unhappy are you?

14
"The two leaders had told us over the course of the week that there is no joy without sorrow, that in fact it is the pain, the suffering, that allows us to experience and appreciate the joy."

Douglas Abrams, co-author of *The Book of Joy*

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TRY THIS:

SHARE A STORY OF SUFFERING AND TRANSFORMATION. IT MIGHT BE:

- A personal story from your past
- A story of someone else's journey
- A story about someone you admire who overcame adversity
- Talk about the feelings that arise when you hear each other's stories.

His Holiness and Archbishop Tutu believed their own suffering offered them opportunities for growth and transformation.

15
"At age 24, I lost my own country. Because I became refugee, a new opportunity comes. If I still remained in Potala, in Lhasa, some people, you see, describe [this as a] golden cage. So I personally, I prefer the refugee life. It's more useful. More opportunity to learn, more experience."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

Can you think of a time in your life when a painful experience led to an unexpected new opportunity? How did it feel to make that realization?

Share your thoughts and reflections with your group.

“Mental health is actually not simply the absence of mental disease. It is something more.”

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison

16



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TRYTHIS:

- Taking care of yourself physically and emotionally is an important part of health and well-being. There are lots of ways to practice self-care: through nutrition, exercise, quiet time/meditation, etc.
- But self-care can also be small moments in our day: Taking a few deep breaths, or closing our eyes for a minute.
- What form of well-being in your life do you already practice and have learned well?

“Joy is the reward really of seeking to give joy to others. When you are caring, compassionate, more concerned about the welfare of others than of your own, you suddenly feel a warm glow in your heart because you have in fact wiped the tears from the eyes of another.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

17



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TRYTHIS:

- Find a partner and ask one another about your well-being today.
- Take turns truly listening—with no interruptions—for about two minutes.
- Then take a moment to express gratitude for the conversation.

“Taking care of what matters most is the way our mind functions. It is the ultimate thing that determines the quality of our experiences.”

Matthieu Richard *The Book of Joy*

18



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TRYTHIS:

- With a partner or a small group, talk about what matters most in your life. Make a list of your top five priorities.
- Talk about how you take care of those priorities, and other ways you take care of yourself.

19

"I was actually with my dad when he and the Dalai Lama first met at a museum in, of all places, Newark, New Jersey. Honestly, the energy between them is eight-year-old boy. I look at them and I think, I am so glad that I was not your third-grade teacher, because they're so playful. So much fun and teasing."

Mpho Tutu van Furth, Priest and Author, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

You don't have to be a neuroscientist to know that laughter can reduce stress and improve your mood. But did you know laughter may also boost your immune system and relieve pain? Just a smile can make a big difference!

Now...

Think of a funny story you've heard or experienced. Turn to a partner and exchange your stories with one another.

Have a good laugh - and notice how good it feels!

20

"JOY is an inside-out job. It begins inside, with each of us having some agency over the amount of JOY we feel. Then joy multiplies with the eternal dance between connecting deeply with others and nurturing joy internally."

Peggy Callahan, Co-Director and Producer, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

DISCUSS IN PAIRS OR SMALL GROUPS:

- When is it easiest for you to use your agency and do one of the things that science shows helps us create JOY for ourselves (called Acts of JOY)?
- When is it the hardest?
- What might help you set yourself up for success in choosing to create JOY more often?

21

"Think of joy as a more meaningful type of happiness. 'Hedonistic happiness' is fleeting, and only includes emotions we tend to think of as positive. 'Eudaimonic happiness' includes meaning, growth, and acceptance even of emotions we may call negative."

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TRY THIS:

THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO KINDS OF HAPPINESS. ONE IS FINDING PLEASURE AND AVOIDING PAIN; ANOTHER IS FINDING DEEPER JOY DESPITE PAIN.

- In pairs or small groups, talk about your understanding of the different kinds of happiness. Share stories that exemplify one kind or the other.
- Have you experienced both types of happiness?

22

“His Holiness and my dad are both people who have very strong disciplines of prayer and quiet time. When I went to seminary... I had the experience of learning my dad's language in a way.... The most important lesson that I have taken is taking time for prayer and taking time for quiet.”

Mpho Tutu van Furth, Priest and Author, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

Take one minute away from the group to quiet your mind. Think about your breath as you inhale and exhale. When thoughts or feelings come up, acknowledge them but don't indulge them.

NOW REJOIN YOUR GROUP TO DISCUSS:

- Is quiet time a regular part of your schedule?
- How might you benefit from more quiet time?
- Share ideas about how and when to make quiet time part of your daily routine.

23

“We have to take care of ourselves without selfishly taking care of ourselves. If we don't take care of ourselves, we cannot survive. We need to do that. We should have wise selfishness rather than foolish selfishness. Foolish selfishness means you think only of yourself. In fact, taking care of others, helping others, ultimately is the way to discover your own joy and to have a happy life. So that is what I call wise selfishness.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *The Book of Joy*

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TRY THIS:

Can you think of a time when you were “wise selfish?” When you took the time to help another, but you benefited from the good feelings too?

Share your stories of “wise selfishness” with your group.

24

“Joy subsumes happiness. Think of a mother who is giving birth. Almost all of us want to escape pain. And mothers know that they are going to have pain, the great pain of giving birth. But they accept it. And even after the most painful labor, once the baby is out, you can't measure the mother's joy. It is one of those incredible things that joy can come so quickly from suffering.”

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*

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TRY THIS:

- Have you ever had a personal experience where pain (emotional or physical) was juxtaposed with joy?
- Find a partner or a small group and talk about experiences that might be a combination of pain and joy.
- Do you see similarities in your stories?



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“If your health is strong, when viruses come they will not make you sick. If your overall health is weak, even small viruses will be very dangerous for you. Similarly, if your mental health is sound, then the disturbances come, you will have some distress but recover quicker. If your mental health is not good, then small disturbances, small problems will cause you much pain and suffering.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

TRY THIS:

Well-being is a skill that can be developed with practice, and one of the simplest ways to start is to focus on gratitude.

Make a list of eight things you feel grateful for today. People, events, feelings — anything! As you write, let yourself really feel the good feelings you associate with each thing.

Now turn to your group and share some of the things you’re most grateful for—and feel your well-being rise!

P.S. If you make a habit of doing this once a week, you’ll feel even better. It’s all in the science!



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26

“We really become something, something quite special... At our first meeting I noticed this person, I always look at people, firstly, human level, so I don’t consider the importance of their rank or position. Only on the human level, this person is very nice, humble, I think very, very, joyful... I think, at the time of my death, I will remember you.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

TRY THIS:


DO YOU KNOW HOW IMPORTANT FRIENDSHIP IS? SCIENCE TELLS US THAT STRONG SOCIAL CONNECTIONS:

- Strengthen your immune system
- Help you recover from disease faster
- Lead to a 50% increased chance of a longer life



Think of one strong connection in your life — friend, family, co-worker...

In pairs or small groups, talk about the importance of that connection. What about it nourishes you and brings you joy?



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“It’s no surprise that when the essence of their wisdom is distilled, the key to joy is to get in touch with your own natural compassion and find a way to live from there.”

Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, author, and translator for His Holiness, *Mission: JOY*

TRY THIS:

Hold the word “compassion” in your mind. As you focus on compassion, allow yourself to think of other words that feel connected to it.

Now write “compassion” in the middle of a sheet of paper. Write the connected words all around it, creating a word web.

Share your word web in pairs or small groups. Talk about the connections you see. How can you live with more compassion?

JOY CARDS FOR YOUR INDIVIDUAL USE

“Joy is our essential nature, something everyone can realize. We could say that our desire for happiness is, in a way, an attempt to rediscover our original state of mind.”

Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, translator for His Holiness, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

IN YOUR JOY JOURNAL (SEEMS LIKE A GREAT IDEA TO HAVE!) **WRITE ABOUT A CHILDHOOD MEMORY THAT MAKES YOU SMILE. IT MIGHT BE:**

- a favorite holiday
- your favorite game
- someone who made you feel loved



You might also share your memory with a friend or family member. Do you think joy is something we're born with?

“One study found that people who did acts of kindness for others became happier and actually stayed happier for about two to four weeks after the study was over. They also showed changes in their body that were associated with a stronger immune response — a kind of anti-inflammatory response.”

Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky, UC Riverside, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

CLOSE YOUR EYES. TAKE A MOMENT TO RECALL A RECENT ACT OF KINDNESS THAT YOU PERFORMED FOR ANOTHER PERSON, OR THAT SOMEONE PERFORMED FOR YOU.

- Try to remember the details. Where were you? How did it happen?
- Do you remember how it made you feel?



Does that memory affect the way you're feeling right now? Why do you think acts of kindness might cause physiological changes?

“What the Dalai Lama and I are offering is a way of handling your worries: thinking about others. You can think about others who are in a similar situation or perhaps even worse a situation, but who have survived, even thrived. It does help quite a lot to see yourself as part of a greater whole.”

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

Take a moment to think or write about a situation that's been worrying you.

Now think of someone who has experienced a similar hardship. A friend, family member, or even someone you've just heard about.

Think about the ways they survived — even thrived — after their experience.

Allow yourself to feel empathy for them. And then feel empathy for YOURSELF, and know that you are not alone!

"There's a concept that we have in South Africa, the concept of ubuntu. It says, a person is a person through other persons. I mean I could not speak as I am speaking without having learned it from other human beings. I could not think as a human being except through learning it from other human beings."

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

REFLECT ON ALL THE PEOPLE WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR LIFE...

- parents who gave you life
- teachers who taught you
- the people who grew your food and made your clothes
- the people who invented things that make your life better
- your ancestors, who worked to give you what you have today

"We really become something, something quite special... I think, at the time of my death, I will remember you."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

STRONG SOCIAL CONNECTION:

- Leads to a 50% increased chance of longevity
- Strengthens your immune system
- Helps you recover from disease faster
- May even lengthen your life

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TRY THIS:

Friendship is SO important. Today – right now – send a friend a text message just to say hello.

Or better yet...

Connect with a family member or friend on the phone or in person. Tell them you're grateful for their friendship.

Opening your heart to another will bring joy to BOTH of you. Even when you're feeling down, you'll feel so much better if you connect with a friend!

"It's no surprise that when the essence of their wisdom is distilled, the key to joy is to get in touch with your own natural compassion and find a way to live from there."

-Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist scholar, author, and translator for His Holiness, *The Book of Joy*

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TRY THIS:

Compassion is the impulse to help others. The action that follows that desire is generosity.

Think of generosity as giving time, treasure, or talent.

Now, think about a place or person that you can give time, treasure, or talent to.

Make it happen! Even if it's a small thing. Because...

When we care for others, we experience the most joy!

"Cognitive reframing is really a powerful technique to change your mindset, and in the Buddhist language we call it outlook. This is a fundamental insight... and that's why so much emphasis is placed in Buddhist psychology on changing the way you see the world. Instead of resentment and bitterness, reframing can help us, liberate us from that resentment and free us."

Thupten Jinpa, Buddhist Scholar, Translator for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

Write a few sentences about a recent time when you felt frustrated or upset.

Now - list three potential "bright sides" of the situation. Missed the bus? You also missed the annoying guy who sits next to you. You got a little exercise. You saw some great things you would have missed if you were riding.

It might be challenging, but give it some thought. Changing your perspective changes everything!

"Wellbeing is a skill. Wellbeing can actually be learned, it can be nurtured, and it's a skill that can enable us to live a happier life. We know that if you want to learn to play the violin, you've gotta practice. If you wanna learn a complex sport, you've gotta practice. If you want to learn wellbeing, you have to practice."

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison, *Mission: Joy*

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TRY THIS:

Journal about what "wellbeing" means in your life. What does it look like for you?

How do you practice wellbeing in your life? Make a list the things you regularly do to make yourself feel good.

Or...

Make a list of the ways you would LIKE to practice more wellbeing in your life!

Resolve to do at least one of those things today!

"Mental health is actually not simply the absence of mental disease. It is something more."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

Science is proving what many spiritual traditions have known for generations—our need for connection, happiness, and joy is a lifeline to our physical and mental wellbeing.

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TRY THIS:

Do something right now that you know is good for your mental wellbeing. It can be anything - taking several deep breaths, closing your eyes, going outside, thinking of someone you love, remembering a beautiful place you visited - ANYTHING.

Keep this mental image in mind for as long as you can. Carry it with you through your day.

"The two leaders had told us over the course of the week that there is no joy without sorrow, that in fact it is the pain, the suffering that allows us to experience and appreciate the joy. Indeed, the more we turn to suffering, our own and others, the more we can turn towards joy."

Douglas Abrams,, *The Book of Joy*

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TRY THIS:

The Archbishop and His Holiness believed their own suffering has offered them opportunities for growth and transformation.

In your journal, or as a quiet meditation, remember a time when you or someone you know experienced suffering or difficulty that led to personal growth.

What are the good things that came from that transformation?

Acknowledge the growth that came from that difficulty.

"At age 24, I lost my own country. Because I became refugee, a new opportunity comes. If I still remained in Potala, in Lhasa, some people, you see, describe [this as a] golden cage. Dalai Lama, holy Dalai Lama would have been like that. So I personally, prefer the refugee life. It's more useful. More opportunity to learn, more experience."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

His Holiness's acceptance of the refugee life as an opportunity to learn is a perfect example of reframing and positive outlook.

Think of something in your life at the moment that feels challenging, and take the opportunity to shift your perspective – even if it's only for a moment.

Is there a potential opportunity that might come from that challenge?

"Taking care of what matters most is the way our mind functions, it is the ultimate thing that determines the quality of our experiences."

Mattieu Richard, *The Book of Joy*

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TRY THIS:

We often get so busy that we neglect the things that are important.

What are the most important things in your life?

Make a list of your top 5 priorities. Then answer these questions:

- Do you regularly devote time to each of your priorities?
- What are the things that most often get overlooked?
- How can you give more attention to the most important things in your life?

Think of joy as a more meaningful type of happiness. 'Hedonistic happiness' is fleeting, and only includes emotions we tend to think of as positive. 'Eudaimonic happiness' includes meaning, growth, and acceptance even of emotions we may call negative.



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TRY THIS:

BEFORE YOU GO TO SLEEP TONIGHT, TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON THE DAY.

- Notice whether you fulfilled your intentions.
- Think about your long term happiness - your Eudaimonic happiness - and how you have grown today.
- Express gratitude for what the day has given you.
- Look forward to the next day as a new journey!

"JOY is an inside-out job. It begins inside, with each of us having some agency over the amount of JOY we feel. Then joy multiplies with the eternal dance between connecting deeply with others and nurturing joy internally."



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Peggy Callahan, Co-Director and Producer, *Mission: JOY*

TRY THIS:

IN JOURNAL OR AN A PIECE OF PAPER, WRITE YOUR RESPONSES TO THESE QUESTIONS:

- When is it easiest for you to use your agency and do one of the things that science shows helps us create JOY for ourselves (called Acts of JOY)?
- When is it the hardest?
- What might help you set yourself up for success in choosing to create JOY more often? Look forward to the next day as a new journey!

"If your health is strong, when viruses come they will not make you sick. If your overall health is weak, even small viruses will be very dangerous for you. Similarly, if your mental health is sound, then the disturbances come, you will have some distress but recover quicker. If your mental health is not good, then small disturbances, small problems will cause you much pain and suffering."



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His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*

TRY THIS:

Wellbeing is a skill that can be developed with practice, and one of the simplest ways to start is to focus on gratitude.

Make a list of 8 things that you feel grateful for today. People, events, feelings - anything! As you write, let yourself really feel the good feelings you associate with each thing on your list.

I'll bet you finish with a big smile on your face! You'll feel even better if you do this once a week!



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“His Holiness and my dad are both people who have very strong disciplines of prayer and quiet time. When I went to seminary... I had the experience of learning my dad’s language in a way.... The most important lesson that I have taken is taking time for prayer and taking time for quiet. For him, that’s the first priority, and everything else flows from that.”

Mpho Tutu van Furth, Priest and Author, *Mission: JOY*


TRY THIS:

Find a place to be quiet and focus your attention inwards.

Close your eyes; quiet your mind. Take several deep breaths. What thoughts and feelings come to you?

From this place of quiet, open your eyes or bring your focus back to your physical space.

Consider adding quiet time to your daily routine. Celebrate the connection with your inner being!



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“We have to take care of ourselves without selfishly taking care of ourselves. If we don’t take care of ourselves we cannot survive. We need to do that. We should have wise selfishness rather than foolish selfishness. Foolish selfishness means you think only of yourself. In fact, taking care of others, helping others, ultimately is the way to discover your own joy and to have a happy life. So that is what I call wise selfishness.”


His Holiness, *Mission: JOY*

TRY THIS:

If it makes you feel good to help others, you already know about being “wise-selfish.”

Think of a specific incident when you took the time to help another, but you benefited from the good feelings too.

Tell the story in your journal. Remember the details. Especially remember how it made you feel. Remembering it gives you a taste of that good feeling all over again!



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“Joy subsumes happiness. Joy is a far greater thing. Think of a mother who is giving birth. Almost all of us want to escape pain. And others know that they are going to have pain, the great pain of giving birth. But they accept it. And even after the most painful labor, once the baby is out, you can’t measure the mother’s joy. It is one of those incredible things that joy can come so quickly from suffering.”

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*

TRY THIS:

Can you think of a time in your own life when emotional or physical pain was combined with joy? Maybe something that required great effort, but resulted in great joy?

Journal about your experience, or about an experience you saw someone else go through.

Be sure to celebrate the joy that comes at the end of the story!

"I was actually with my dad when he and the Dalai Lama first met at a museum in, of all places, Newark, New Jersey. Honestly, the energy between them is eight-year-old boy. I look at them and I think, I am so glad that I was not your third-grade teacher because they're so playful. So much fun and teasing."

Mpho Tutu van Furth, Priest and Author, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

YOUR MISSION...IS TO HAVE A LITTLE FUN!

Turn on a funny movie, listen to a favorite comedian, or get together with an old friend and share some laughs.

Laughter is important - especially in times of stress and challenge. Laughter will bring you joy! We know that from our own experiences, and it's also proven by science.

"Joy is the reward really of seeking to give joy to others. When you are caring, compassionate, more concerned about the welfare of others than of your own you suddenly feel a warm glow in your heart because you have in fact wiped the tears from the eyes of another."

Archbishop Tutu, *Mission Joy*

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TRY THIS:

IN THE *BOOK OF JOY*, HIS HOLINESS SHARED, "IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ONLY WAY TO TRULY CHANGE OUR WORLD IS THROUGH TEACHING COMPASSION."

- Open your journal and write about what "compassion" means to you.
- What other words do you think of when you think of compassion?
- How would you teach someone compassion? What would you say to someone who didn't understand what compassion is? group.

"Neuroplasticity describes the fact that the brain changes in response to experience and in response to training, wittingly or unwittingly. Our brains are constantly being shaped and we can actually harness the power of neuroplasticity. It turns out that when we cultivate wholesome qualities of our mind, our brains change accordingly."

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin - Madison, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

Your brain is changing, whether you know it or not!
How would you choose to change your brain?

One of the easiest ways to start a new thought pattern is to prompt yourself with something you do every day.

For example:

- When your feet touch the ground each morning, set an intention for the day.
- When you brush your teeth, think of 3 things you're grateful for.
- Find a joy ritual that works for you!

“Forgiveness does not mean forgetting. You should keep the memory about those sort of negative things. But because of that, there is possibility to develop anger or hatred. That control, that’s the meaning of forgiveness. So it is totally wrong that the practice of tolerance and practice of forgiveness are signs of weakness. Hundred percent wrong. A thousand percent wrong.”

His Holiness *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

Is there someone or something in your life that needs forgiveness?

In your journal, or with a friend, explore this simple process of forgiveness written about by Archbishop Tutu and Mpho Tutu:

- Think about a person or an event you want to forgive.
- Tell your story.
- Name the hurt.
- Grant forgiveness.
- Then renew - or release - the relationship.

“What really was important about kindness was that you’re connecting with another person by doing acts of kindness.”

Dr. Richard Davidson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

Connection is the essential key to a joyful life.

Reach out to connect with someone important in your life. It can be as simple as a quick text or a phone call. Maybe you can visit together in person.

If it’s not possible to actually reconnect with that person, find a photograph or memento that reminds you of the deep connection you once shared.

“The ultimate source of a meaningful life is within our own self. Usually everybody seeks happiness, joyfulness from the outside, from money, from power, from a big car, from a big house. The ultimate source of a happy life, even physical health, is inside not outside.”

His Holiness, *Mission: JOY*

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TRY THIS:

What are you paying attention to?

Studies have shown that our behavior is affected by our attention.

Take some time to think about where your attention is most often drawn and ask yourself:

- Is my attention aligned with my values?
- Is my time being spent the way I want it to be spent?
- If not, how can I make changes?

"The equivalent of neuroplasticity in genomics is epigenetics, or how genes are regulated and expressed. Think of genes as something with volume control that can be turned on or off. Studies have shown that with eight hours of meditation from skilled practitioners there is evidence of a measurable difference in gene expression from purely mental practice. In other words, our brains and genes are dynamic and have a great deal of plasticity."

Dr. Richard Davidson, TED talk



www.MissionJoy.org

TRY THIS:

YOU HAVE AN AMAZING BRAIN THAT IS CONSTANTLY GROWING AND CHANGING! HERE'S A CHALLENGE:

- Learn something new. Something big or something small. Learn to play Hearts. Learn to speak another language.
- And if you want to double-down on the joy – teach your new skill to someone else. That way you'll be growing your brain, making a connection, and helping another. ____ A joy trifecta!

"Suffering [is] the opportunity testing you. There is someone who is a Tibetan who spent many years in the Chinese gulag. [The] Gulag is difficult. Hard labor, torture. He told me during those 18 years, it was a difficult period. He faced some dangers. I thought there was danger to his life. I ask, what kind of danger? He told me, the danger of losing compassion towards those Chinese perpetrators."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Mission: JOY*



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TRY THIS:

Think of someone who has been particularly challenging in your life. What are some of the problems you faced with this person?

Now think about the difficulties this person might also have experienced. Can you put yourself in their place for a moment?

As you keep this person in your thoughts, say to yourself: "May you be happy, and free from suffering."

How do you feel after thinking of this person with compassion?

"Every day we have the opportunity to create, and re-create our lives. This is the power we yield. No dark fate determines our future."

Archbishop Tutu, *The Book of Joy*



www.MissionJoy.org

TRY THIS:

JOURNAL OR THINK ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS:

- At this moment, how happy or unhappy are you?
- If you could recreate the moment you are in right now, what would you change?
- What are the obstacles that keep you from making a change?
- Can you take one small step towards creating a new experience for yourself?



NEXT STEPS: JOY RESOURCES

Photo credit: Peggy Callahan

Mission: JOY film and campaign: www.MissionJOY.org

The Book of Joy, co-authored by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Douglas Abrams: www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/533718/the-book-of-joy-by-his-holiness-the-dalai-lama-and-archbishop-desmond-tutu-with-douglas-abrams

Greater Good in Action at University of California - Berkeley,
Mission: JOY's partner in The BIG JOY project: ggia.berkeley.edu

IMPORTANT: *Mission: JOY* and The BIG JOY project offer micro-actions that we can each use to help take care of our emotional well-being on a daily basis. All *Mission: JOY* resources are meant as on-ramps to deeper conversations about mental health and well-being, and they are NOT a substitute for trained mental health care. If you or someone you know are in need of more assistance, please contact a mental health professional immediately.

For suggested resources: missionjoy.org/mental-health-support

SCAN FOR MORE JOY!



MISSION: JOY

FINDING HAPPINESS IN TROUBLED TIMES



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