

The BIG peace



Want to achieve lasting happiness and harmony? Take these simple steps to find your missing peace, says top UK life guru Suzy Greaves

Do you feel you'll only be happy if you achieve X, Y and Z, lose a stone, and have white teeth? Do you feel the past is holding you back and your dazzling future is tantalisingly out of reach? Are you exhausted and fed up? Do you want to stop?

I did. That's why in the last three years, I've been researching and writing a book on how to get off the treadmill, take a load off and find a more relaxed place to live. My timing couldn't have been better.

We are at a revolutionary point in history where we have an explosion of groundbreaking psychological research introducing the scientifically-based idea of 'positive psychology'.

The 'happiness scientists' are focusing for the first time on the question 'How can we be happy?' rather than the old model of 'How can we be less miserable?', and they are now able to provide us with scientifically

proven methods of cultivating contentment and achieving lasting peace and happiness.

I've had the privilege to interview some of the most influential self-development experts in the world and pick their brains – plus I have had access to the most cutting-edge scientific research on neuroplasticity (the way the brain changes) and happiness.

One of the most exciting discoveries I've made is that the decades of scientific research and dogma that said the brain was fixed in form and function have been overturned. It turns out that our brains are like gardens and our neural pathways blossom the more time we spend tending them – be it practising a violin, which expands the part of the brain that controls the fingers, or restoring mental health by thinking thoughts in a different way.

Conversely, it's been found that, if we don't take control of our thoughts and actions, weeds of negative and destructive thinking and behaviour can easily take over. The good news is that scientists say that, with consistent tending, we can vastly improve our 'set point' of happiness and peace of mind.

Here are some of the best exercises to help you find your missing peace:

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6. Hang out with the people you love

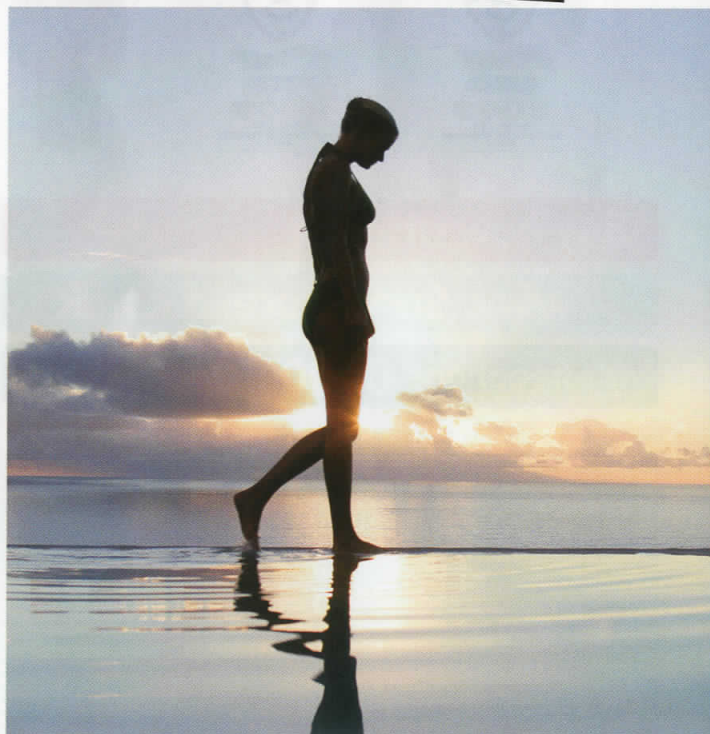
The better your relationships, the happier and more peaceful your life will be. The happiness scientists found that the top 10 per cent of 'most happy' people were the ones who spent the least time alone and the most time socialising. What three steps can you take in the next week which will allow you to spend time with people who make you happy? If this means cancelling all the appointments you have with the people who drain you, waste your time and energy – so be it. Dwelling in negative energy will only bring you more, so hang out with the people who want nothing more than to love you.

7. Sweat the small stuff

Stop focusing on the big picture and start cleaning up the details of your life. Details generally occur in the present and you can do something about them without being paralysed with fear. Take three actions right now that will improve your life instantly – from clearing out your in-tray to doing the washing up. **NH**

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To buy a copy of *The Big Peace* by Suzy Greaves for the special price of £6.99 (rrp £8.99) and free p&p please call Hay House on 020 89621230.



How not to find inner peace

These are the negative actions and thoughts to avoid:

1. STRIVING TO BE PERFECT

Do you remind yourself at every occasion that you've got to get this perfectly right or you will never be approved of, loved or respected? That sounds like a fun way of going about things, doesn't it?

2. COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS

By judging yourself and others, you'll get to feel either smug or bad (but how often will you really allow yourself to feel smug?)

3. MAKING HAPPINESS CONDITIONAL

Do you constantly tell yourself, and others, that you'll be happier thinner, richer or more successful? Well, you're putting your happiness on hold and living in fantasy land.

4. TRYING TO PROVE THAT YOU'RE SOMEONE

By pretending to be someone you're not, you are constantly suggesting to yourself that you're not good enough as you are.

5. SPENDING ALL OF YOUR TIME AND ENERGY TRYING TO MAKE SOMEONE ELSE HAPPY

Some of the time this is okay, but notice how much you focus on other people's lives – do you need to mind your own business?