

# Growing the 5 Seeds of Happiness

**Coordinator Packet**



**WIC WELLNESS WORKS**

## Dear Coordinator,

You could say that growing happier is much like growing a garden. Planting one seed is nice, but planting a variety of seeds means you are really blooming! You and your coworkers can start today.

**The challenge for you and your coworkers over the next five weeks is to grow the 5 seeds (of positive behaviors) and grow happier.**

They will see that every positive step they take: helping a neighbor, laughing, volunteering, taking a walk, helps a positive attitude take root and happiness grow.

Research has shown that actions steps in the following areas of behavior ("Seeds of Happiness") commonly lead to feeling content with life:

- 1 Meet their Basic Needs
- 2 Participate in Supportive Relationships
- 3 Practice Positive Thinking
- 4 Fill their lives with Meaning
- 5 Give and receive Kindness

As employees "grow" more happiness and wellbeing, they can pass that good feeling on to clients. Positive communication circles back around! Feelings of support created by strong employee-client relationships increase happiness for all involved.

Let's get growing!

**The University of Texas at Austin  
Health and Evaluation Team**

## What you can do this month:

- ✓ **REVIEW** the *Coordinator Checklist* on the next two pages for suggestions on how to help your co-workers and your clients "grow" happier!
- ✓ **DISCUSS** each of the *5 Seeds of Happiness* with staff. Use p. 3-7 in the employee packet for descriptions of the seeds and their action steps. Ask staff to consider which seed they would like to work on first.
- ✓ **CREATE** a *Happiness Grows Here* board in a central location. Employees will collaborate on a *Happiness Grows Here* board sharing what "Happiness Is..." to them and what "Happy Acts" they have accomplished...
- ✓ **POST** the *Happiness Fast Facts* tip sheet found on p. 6 in a central location.
- ✓ **DISTRIBUTE** the *Happiness Quote* magnets to employees. See pages 3 and 11 for ideas on how to use these magnets and other inspirational quotes.

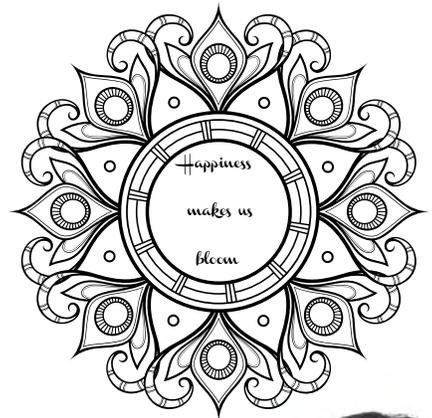


# Growing the 5 Seeds of Happiness

## Coordinator Checklist

Below is an at-a-glance look at suggested activities for the 5-week happiness challenge. Each idea is further explained in the remaining pages of this packet and in the employee packet. It is helpful to read the employee packet before you read the coordinator packet.

- DISCUSS** why happiness matters with your coworkers by sharing information from the *Happiness Fast Facts* tip sheet found on p 6. Post it in a visible location so that employees can see how powerful feeling good can be to our health!
- ENCOURAGE** employees to take the challenge. Over the next five weeks you and your coworkers can plant five seeds of happiness in your life and grow more joy and wellbeing. Ask coworkers to choose one "Seed of Happiness" (p. 3-7 in employee packet) to start working on first (i.e., kindness). Remind staff that there are action steps for each seed or they can choose their own steps.
- SHOW** the *Mandala Tracking Tool* found in the employee packet on p. 9. During the challenge, employees can track their progress by coloring in a mandala. Mandalas are abstract designs used throughout history for meditation, stress relief, self-discovery, and creative fun.



## Coordinator Checklist, continued

- POST** Happiness Everywhere — Find a prominent spot to hang the *Happiness Quotes* motivational poster shipped with this packet and the *Happiness Fast Facts* tip sheet (found on p. 6) . Consider picking a spot where both employees and clients will see these.
  - CREATE** a *Happiness Grows Here* board with your staff. Ask employees to create a place to share what Happiness Is... to them, and which Happy Acts they want to do for others or themselves. Use the *Happiness Grows Here* banner provided with this packet or staff can work together to create one.
  - DISCOVER** *Ideas for Happy Staff Meetings*. Kick off a happy staff meeting with one of the tips on p. 4-5. Create a clinic playlist and start your meeting in a groove. Challenge your staff to smile more. With your coworkers, brainstorm other ways that you can make staff meetings happier.
  - ENCOURAGE** staff to “keep growing” by practicing everything they’ve learned during the challenge and by using the additional *Keep on Growing* resources sheet in their packet. Explore the list and brainstorm other resources your team can share with each other.
  - SHARE** Happiness Quotes: “Most folks are as happy as they make up their mind to be,” Abraham Lincoln. Share this quote as well as any others that your staff finds inspiring. Each employee will receive a quote magnet with their packet. Ask them to bring their quote to your next staff meeting and share it with the group. See *Ideas for Happy Staff Meetings* (p. 4-5) and the sheet of quotes on p. 11 for more ideas on using inspirational quotes.
- 
- WIN** free happiness goodies! Send a photo of your clinic’s board by November 20, 2015 to [Debbie.Lehman@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:Debbie.Lehman@dshs.state.tx.us) and be entered to win a *Happiness Gift Basket*. Don’t miss this opportunity to share more happiness with all your co-workers.



# Growing the 5 Seeds of Happiness: Main Ideas

- Small positive actions, like showing kindness, can increase overall happiness.
- These positive actions can be grouped into five types (the 5 Seeds).
- Most happy people have planted each type of “seed” in their lives.
- The more positive actions you “plant,” the more joy will take root in your life.
- Any step toward happiness, no matter how small, can make a big difference.



## Ideas for Happy Staff Meetings

With small efforts, you and your staff can enjoy a big increase in the quality of your staff meetings. “Happy” staff meetings – those that take place in an uplifting environment – result in higher job satisfaction, better team morale, more creativity, and greater productivity.

Here are some tips for growing happier team meetings (which, by the way – pave the way for a happier day at work and happier clients!).

### Create a “Clinic Playlist”

- Ask each employee to write down a list of five songs that make them feel good and compile them to form a clinic playlist.
- Choose a song or two to play at each meeting and hold a brief “boogie” session.

**Smile more.** Scientists have researched the simple human act of smiling and found that it is a very powerful “delivery vehicle” for happiness!

- At the opening of a staff meeting, ask everyone to be aware of their facial expression and to try to smile during the meeting.
- At meeting’s end, ask employees if they felt that smiling more made a difference in the quality of the meeting.

### Happiness Is...

- As a meeting warm-up, ask staff to take a “Happiness Is...” note card and write down something that happiness is to them. Use the template on p. 9 to create note cards for your coworkers, or simply use a sticky note or other materials.

- Afterward, ask employees to share what they wrote.
- Then, ask them to post their notes on the Happiness Grows Here bulletin board.

### Share Inspiration

- Ask staff to take turns reading and discussing the quote magnet they received with their packet.
- Create a “Quote Jar” filled with slips of paper or cards featuring inspirational quotes. You can use the quotes provided on p.11 or create your own. Ask a coworker to start each meeting by reading a quote from the jar. After each quote has been read, pin it to the Happiness Grows Here board and add a new quote to the jar.
- Feature a “Quote of the Day” or “Quote of the Week” that inspires staff throughout their work day. Employees can find and share favorite quotes to display or use one from the clinic quote jar.



### Keep it short

- Studies show that shorter, well organized meetings are more enjoyable. No surprise there!
- Shorter meetings tend to be more on track with more focused goals – making everyone feel more productive and energized.

### Provide a healthy snack

- Most people enjoy a good snack at a staff meeting, but a good and healthy snack holds double joy. Not only is a plate of fruit refreshing, but you can also feel good about being kind to your body.



### Move!

- Have a “moving” meeting instead of a “sitting” meeting. Exercise is a happiness builder.
- Try a walking meeting or have a physical activity warm up like dancing to that great clinic playlist your staff has created.

### End on a positive note

- End the meeting with a happiness-promoting activity.
- Employees can share their happy acts or a recent happy experience, cue up a song from the clinic playlist, or give special recognition to staff members for a job well done.



# Happiness Fast Facts

Here are just a few reasons to grow your happiness!

## Did you know?



People who report feeling happy most of the time:

- Are better at dealing with stress and challenges
- Miss 41% less work than people who don't
- Get sick less often
- Heal faster from injuries
- Have lower rates of heart disease
- Live longer
- Are more successful, creative, and productive at work
- Report higher job satisfaction

Happiness increases over time: (Experience + Wisdom = Feeling Good!)

- After dipping in middle age, happiness keeps increasing into our "golden years."
- We often gain better coping skills as we age, like having fairer expectations of ourselves and, when in need, asking friends and family for support.
- This is proof that you really can grow happiness skills.



Strong, positive social support is key to happiness:

- Science has found it's not the number of friends that we have, but the quality of the relationships that matters.
- Many studies show that feeling supported by friends, family, and important others affects happiness more than any other factor in our lives.
- Feeling supported by friends, family, and others is as effective in helping us lead a long life as exercise.

# Create a "Happiness Grows Here" Board

By sharing the things that make us feel good, we experience even more joy. With your co-workers, find a central location to make a *Happiness Grows Here* bulletin board. You can create a more decorative board or keep it simple.

The main goals in creating the board are:

- to share and celebrate happy moments experienced by your staff and
- to inspire each other to plant more seeds of happiness.

The happiness board features two sections: 1) Happiness Is... and 2) Happy Acts. Each section is described below. A banner linking both sections (reading "Happiness Grows Here") is included with this packet. Feel free to use this banner or you and your staff can personalize your own.

## Section 1: Happiness Is...

What is happiness to you and your co-workers? This is an opportunity for your team to share and celebrate all the little (and big) things that make you feel good.

- A night out with free babysitting
- A great book and a free afternoon
- Spending time with your best friend
- Volunteering in your community
- Cold fruit on a hot day!

### Instructions

1. Copy and distribute the *Happiness Is...* notes provided at the end of this packet found on p. 9, or use whatever material is on hand (colorful "sticky" notes, note cards, etc.).
2. After employees have written down their moments of happiness, post them under the title "Happiness Is..." on the board.
3. Staff can also put other happy items up on the board, like a card that made their day, a funny bumper sticker, photos, children's drawings, etc.
4. Ask employees to share what happiness is to them, whether lighthearted or more serious.



# Create a "Happiness Grows Here" Board

## Section 2: Happy Acts

Use the other half of the board to share and perform various Happy Acts.

The international movement called "Happy Acts" encourages people to "make the world a happier place" by doing something kind. By performing Happy Acts, you and your staff are planting seeds of happiness.

Here are some examples of Happy Acts. I will share happiness by:

- Sending a card to a family member just because...
- Being an extra courteous driver at rush hour
- Buying some flowers to put on my desk

### Instructions

1. Copy and distribute the *Happy Acts* notes provided on p. 10, or use sticky notes, index cards, etc.
2. Share with employees that showing kindness builds happiness. Ask them to think of a time that they did something kind for someone else, and how it made them feel. Ask them how they feel when they are kind to themselves.
3. Tell employees about Happy Acts, the international movement to spread happiness across the world by doing kind acts. If you or your coworkers want to learn more about international participation in the Happy Acts movement, visit [www.happyacts.org](http://www.happyacts.org).
4. Ask employees to write down any kind acts they plan to do and post them on the board. They can also share a kind act after they have done it.
5. Remind them that writing these kind acts down isn't bragging – it's inspiring!
6. Send a photo of your clinic's board by November 20, 2015 to [Debbie.Lehman@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:Debbie.Lehman@dshs.state.tx.us) and be entered to win a *Happiness Gift Basket*.



Ask employees to track progress on their mandala each time they do a Happy Act.

# Happiness Is...

Encourage your colleagues to write down what happiness is to them. "Plant" the completed notes on your *Happiness Grows Here* board or use them as a fun starting activity for your next staff meeting — make sure to have several copies of this template for employees to use!

✂

Happiness Is...

# Happy Acts!

How can you and your staff give more happiness? Do Happy Acts! The possibilities for Happy Acts (doing something that will give happiness to yourself or someone else) are endless! Pick a Happy Act, write it down, and post it on your clinic's *Happiness Grows Here* board — make sure to have several copies of this template for employees to use!



I will share happiness by...



I will share happiness by...



I will share happiness by...



I will share happiness by...



I will share happiness by...



I will share happiness by...



## Inspirational Quotes That Help Happiness Bloom

Motivational quotes are a great tool for building positive thought. Cut out the quotes shared below and put them in a *Happiness Jar* (or mug, coffee can, etc.). You and your colleagues can use these inspiring thoughts in a variety of ways: post a “quote of the day” or “quote of the week”; take turns reading a quote each staff meeting, add to your *Happiness Grows Here* board, and so on. You and your coworkers can add additional quotes if you’d like.



*I am determined to be cheerful and happy in whatever situation I may find myself. For I have learned that the greater part of our misery or unhappiness is determined not by our circumstance but by our disposition. -Martha Washington*



*Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened. -Dr. Seuss*



*There is no cosmetic for beauty like happiness. -Lady Blessington*



IF YOU WANT TO LIVE A HAPPY LIFE, TIE IT TO A GOAL, NOT TO PEOPLE OR OBJECTS. -ALBERT EINSTEIN



Think happy thoughts and they will shine through your face like sunbeams. -Roald Dahl



Be the rainbow in someone else's cloud. -Maya Angelou



DON'T WAIT AROUND FOR OTHER PEOPLE TO BE HAPPY FOR YOU. -ALICE WALKER



With a positive attitude, you can be anything you want to be. -Selena Quintanilla-Pérez



**PEOPLE WITH MANY INTERESTS LIVE, NOT ONLY LONGEST, BUT HAPPIEST.**

**-GEORGE MATTHEW ALLEN**



# Growing the 5 Seeds of Happiness

This packet is brought to you by The University of Texas at Austin Health Innovation & Evaluation Team.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

© 2015 Department of State Health Services. Nutrition Services Section. All rights reserved.

Stock no. 13-06-14624



# WIC WELLNESS WORKS