



**What is happiness? And how can we achieve it?**  
***The Rough Guide to Happiness* is a deeply refreshing,  
irreverent and really useful take on the whole  
happiness question**



Avoiding the approach of most 'happiness' books and experts, author Nick Baylis, Cambridge University Science of Well-Being lecturer, offers no cure-alls or quick fixes. Rather, **The Rough Guide to Happiness** will help you navigate through all parts of modern-day life, exploring your very own route to well-rounded happiness.

Looking at life through many lenses, Nick examines what we can learn not only from psychology and science, but also from the arts, faith, philosophies and therapies to make the most of our body, emotions, thoughts and relationships. From cognitive techniques to energy therapies, self-hypnosis to relaxation, dancing to good nutrition, it highlights the most exciting ideas from every field, while challenging those that just don't cut it.

**The Rough Guide to Happiness** begins by examining what 'happiness' means, then goes on to explore how we might achieve it by considering such areas as our subconscious and conscious minds, our bodies, our loves and passions and our environments. The guide concludes with a practical look at how we could go about making the changes to our daily lives that will help us reach a more profound happiness.

This wide-ranging guide could form the basis of a variety of thought-provoking features, including:

- Why two of the UK's dominant forms of therapy – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Positive Psychology – might not be the answer to our problems.
- How modern technology is stressing us out rather than making life easier.
- Why we should stop watching 'Strictly Come Dancing' and 'X-Factor' – and start dancing and singing ourselves.
- Where to seek our own 'joie de vivre'.
- The importance of creating and nurturing friendships – and that doesn't mean social networking.

#### **About the Author**

Dr Nick Baylis has lectured at Cambridge University on 'the skills of well-being' for seven years. He helps train leading schools and businesses the world over, and is also a practising therapist, working with everyone from young offenders to stressed airline pilots. He was formerly Dr Feelgood for The Times.

#### **Notes to Editors:**

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**To request a review copy or to discuss possible extracts or features please contact Viv Watton on 0207 010 3720 or [vivienne.watton@uk.roughguides.com](mailto:vivienne.watton@uk.roughguides.com)**

Please see over for an extract from the introduction to the book. Other sample pages available on request.

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#### **10 'films for thought' in the pursuit of happiness:**

1. **Singing in the Rain** – Gene Kelly's dancing for joy despite getting soaked to the skin reminds us that it's not what happens to us that affects us, it's what we decide to do about it.
2. **The Wizard of Oz** – life's a journey, but 'there's no place like home'.
3. **It's a Wonderful Life** – shows us how re-evaluating our lives and seeing things from a new perspective can be the start of a lovely tale.
4. **American Beauty** – reminds us it's never too late to rediscover our passions.
5. **Brokeback Mountain** – this compassionate tale of forbidden love highlights the toll of not following our hearts.
6. **Das Boot** – a fine portrayal of the camaraderie created by a shared mission.
7. **Terminator 2** – Arnold Schwarzenegger's 'good' Terminator represents the protector and mentor that young people need to flourish.
8. **Frankenstein** – the continued film adaptations of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* speak to us loud and clear as a powerful warning against the threat of technology.
9. **Breakfast at Tiffany's** – Holly Golightly embodies a bold-spirited willingness to embrace adventure.
10. **Good Will Hunting** – how the right therapist can help us release self-destructive anger.

*An extract from the introduction to The Rough Guide to Happiness:*

In cultures where elephants are conscripted into the human working world, it is common practice each night to tether the baby elephant to a wooden post from which the chubby little fella can't escape. It seems that even though the elephant grows much wiser and stronger in so many ways, they never again challenge the authority of that post. They've long since presumed it can't be done. But if only they knew what they were capable of, and explored the possibilities.

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### **Not narrowing down, but opening up**

The bookshop shelves devoted to happiness and well-being are groaningly heavy with one-horse wonders that advocate their single silver bullet to solve the problems of modern life, their patented panacea that will put us all right. Happiness itself is often sold as the latest in a long line of cure-alls for stress, depression and our highly demanding lifestyles. Taking a stand against all of that, this handbook is neither trying to get its arms around everything, nor to distil the essence; rather it endeavours to illustrate the richness of life. Unless you're a pompous professor with a book to sell, or a blabbering drunk (the two personalities are often indistinguishable), you'll appreciate that there are no right answers, just intriguing possibilities, many of which you'll devise for yourself en route as counter-arguments to what you read here.

If that's what happens, then it's all to the good.

This isn't an encyclopaedia of happiness you're holding, nor a satellite navigation device barking out orders. It's a chance to compare notes. These ideas aspire to start discussions rather than finish them. To be a fuel for debate rather than a defence against dissent. To prompt controversy rather than police it. They offer an antidote to all those bestselling books peddling their happiness hype and humbug, which give only one point of view of what works. As Voltaire said, "I honour the man who seeks truth, but despise the man who claims to have found it". In respect of this, these pages challenge the accepted wisdoms with some of the most compelling evidence that flies in the face of proclamations by the latest TV professors and government officials. More than occasionally you will hear an irreverent voice calling out "The Emperor's wearing no clothes!", because when it comes to life guidance, there have been some big lies and bad science. This book blows the whistle on all of that baloney. You might even say it's an elephant in sheep's clothing, because it's pulling at that post in the ground, to find out what's possible.