

**LESSON 1:  
*Happiness Is Free and Is Found Within You;  
It Is Not Something You Go Looking For***

*“Remember that happiness is a way of travel - not a destination.”  
– Roy M. Goodman*

***What Women Tend To Think the Definition of True Happiness Means***

- If I just had a man in my life, I'd finally be happy.
- If I just had my own place or house, I'd finally be happy.
- If I moved into a bigger place, I'd finally be happy.
- If I just had a better job, I'd finally be happy.
- If I were prettier, I'd finally be happy.
- If I had a better-looking car, I'd finally be happy.
- If I were slimmer or had a different body, I'd finally be happy.
- If I moved out of this state, I'd finally be happy.
- If I had longer hair, I'd finally be happy.
- If I got married, I promise I'd finally be happy.

There are women in the world who have achieved many of these things and still are not happy. Some have the life that you would love to have, and yes, some of these very women are hurting deeply inside. Don't misunderstand; possibly some of the things mentioned above would create more pleasure in your life than you have now. But, do these things alone really bring true happiness?

**Book Excerpt of *Lessons Learned: Loving Yourself As A Black Woman*****Author Tinisha Nicole Johnson****ISBN: 0-9779698-8-X**

What is true happiness? All seem to be searching for it, if they haven't already found its root source. I believe happiness consists of an ongoing journey through life. It's the way you live your life, how you feel about yourself, and how you perceive the world. Happiness is an inner aspect and feeling rather than an outer showcase. That is a key element that you must grasp. Happiness is more psychological than anything else. Put in its simplest form—happiness is a feeling.

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Put in its simplest form, happiness is a feeling.***

Everything outside is an enhancement or an influence. If you are hurting inside, your view of the outside world is going to be much similar even if you do live in a big house, are married, or have a lot of money. The main thing to understand is, do not start thinking that happiness *only* consists of or is the definition of the above list of meanings. Always remember that happiness *starts* from within. That is Step 1. You cannot start with Step 2 (outside wants) unless you fully understand and complete Step 1. If you are unhappy inside and start looking outside for happiness, you will waste a lot of time and energy. Even if you obtain some of the things and wants, you may still wonder why you are not happy afterward. An inner void will indeed exist.

When you begin searching for happiness outside of you, without taking care of what is inside first, it is similar to competing in a race and having no idea where to start or finish. Put inner happiness first and outside happiness second, remembering this will save you from a lot of unnecessary unhappiness.

Happiness consists of feelings that cannot be bought. Happiness lives inside your mind and heart. You should not go looking for happiness, if you are not happy within first.

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### **Are You Taking A Walk Through The World In Search Of Happiness?**

Why are you thinking happiness is somewhere out *there*? Whatever *there* means to you. Somewhere out there in the world perhaps: Like in this state or that state, or at the bar, or in somebody's bed, or in a marriage—better known as short-lived fun and games and temporary solutions, and sometimes even false promises. There is definitely nothing wrong with those things. However, let's not get the meanings confused.

Real happiness consists of your mind, heart, and soul. All other things are in addition to your happiness. If all other *things* were real happiness, then many problems would not lie in the very lives of those who have the money, the objects, or the person you think happiness is.

Happiness is loving your children. Happiness is feeling good about you. Happiness is spending quality time with family and friends. Happiness is believing in yourself. Happiness is accomplishing a goal or fulfilling your dreams. Happiness is falling in love and having it reciprocated. (The latter is important.) Happiness is taking care of you—mentally, physically, and spiritually. Happiness is believing in God. Happiness is setting standards for yourself. Happiness is having a good laugh.

Happiness is helping someone and giving to others. Happiness is looking into your child's eyes and having him smile at you. Happiness is having your child tell you that she or he loves you. Happiness is watching the sunrise and sunset. Happiness is showing thanks to God that you are alive. Happiness is having faith in God, or a higher spirit. Happiness is walking by the beach, taking in the beautiful scenery. Happiness is enjoying the moment. Happiness is smiling. Happiness is having someone show you that you are loved. Most importantly, happiness starts with you. Anything else is just a reflection mixed in with influence of what is already inside you. Happiness is not something that makes you feel good temporarily and then later fills you with regrets because you realized you were trying to fill a void.

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You have some choices when deciding your happiness: 1) Make the best of your situation in a positive light, 2) Choose to change it instead of just talking, or 3) You could choose to act on fear and negativity, which is the worst because it doesn't give you what you want. Fear, which we will discuss in another lesson, is one of the biggest obstacles that keep women from achieving true happiness.

Are you going to be unhappy throughout your life? Yes, it's a guarantee in life to be unhappy sometimes. We live in an imperfect world, and we are imperfect human beings. However, are you going to allow your life to be based off what you don't like about your life most of the time? Instead, why not refuse unhappiness in your life most of the time by engaging in attitudes and actions that will bring you closer to happiness? What's important is not getting stuck in the past. Do not allow your mind to dwell on the hurt in your past, if you are to move forward with change and a better life. The reason being is simple. If your mind is stuck on the past, then it cannot focus clearly on the present, which may very well affect your future. You will be a prisoner of your past, resisting the key to free yourself into a new direction for your future.

***When your mind is stuck in the past, you are a prisoner of your past, resisting the key to free yourself into a new direction for your future.***

There comes a time to get strong, sister girl. Start thinking about this question: What do you really want out of life? Write your answer down so you can see it with your own eyes. Then read it out loud.

**What do I want out of my life?**

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You may find you need more room to write. If so, grab a note pad and write away. This exercise will grab your attention and force you to look at your current life's situation. It opens your eyes to what you may be missing out on, what you may be settling for, and exactly what you want for your life.

You have to remember that whatever your constant focus is on, that is what will move you closer to happiness or deeper into dissatisfaction. What exactly are you doing to go about achieving your goals and dreams? I know you have some savoring in your mind and heart, waiting for you to fulfill them. Moreover, if you are on the right track, keep moving, because you are on a journey that will continue as long as you do.

*Maintaining constant focus is what will move you closer to  
happiness or deeper into dissatisfaction*

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