

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Happiness Genes

By James D. Baird with Laurie Nadel

1. How did you get the idea for this book?

In researching spiritualism and happiness for some 20 years, for 2 other books, I finally realized that spiritualism and its link to happiness had a genetic basis. Then a few years ago, I was excited by the breakthrough findings of the Human Genome Project, in identifying and mapping the approximately 20,000–25,000 genes of the human species. This means there was now a process of identifying our spiritual happiness genes, and it could be productive to write a book that might encourage that discovery.

2. What are happiness genes?

I term happiness genes as those spiritual genes that predispose us for natural happiness. An organism's genes control how it looks, functions and reproduces. Genes normally form a stretch of DNA which is basically the building plans for any organism.

3. Does the state of our mind have any effect on happiness?

Our mind is divided into conscious and unconscious mental states. The conscious mind is used to solve problems and make decisions and is under our control. Our unconscious mind is basically a CD recording of all our life experiences, ancient instincts and habits. It runs on automatic and causes all the thoughts that continually bounce around in our head. These thoughts are usually connected with illusionary worry of the past and fear of the future. These two mind modes are associated with our two types of happiness.

4. What is the common meaning of happiness?

I term the type of happiness that most are pursuing-‘common happiness’. It is a feeling of satisfaction, by acquiring material items, being the winner and pleasures, such as food, sex, partying, etc. However, it never satisfies for long and is totally dependent on our ever changing external conditions. Common happiness is always in our unconscious mental state.

5. What is natural happiness?

Natural happiness comes from within; it is the positive emotional reward of joy and peace that comes from expression our spiritual genes, by spiritual altruistic acts, such as doing a good deed, compassion, etc. We are always in our conscious mental state and it is not dependent on external changing conditions and never saturates.

6. Is there any scientific proof that spiritual expression results in happiness?

Try it out and you will be the proof.

7. If natural happiness is always available, why are we frequently unhappy?

The components of our unconscious mind, such as; ancient instincts, competition for resources and desire for power have a higher genetic priority and frequently block our spiritual genes. Our collective unconscious minds are the main cause of world violence.

8. What can we do to resist our ‘caveman instincts’?

A new science called ‘epigenetics’ shows the mechanism by which we can turn on or off certain ‘caveman’ genes with the power of our conscious mind. This book provides a practical 28 day program of mind exercises to increase natural happiness by turning off negative primitive instincts and habits.

9. How can your 28-day Program help me?

It can help you train your conscious mind to turn off genes that block your spiritual genes. In addition, increasing your conscious and decreasing your unconscious mind can greatly reduce suffering from worry and anxiety.

10. What's the take-away message of your book?

We were created to be happy, but the lengthy evolutionary process is out of sync with our present environment. The new science of epigenetics can teach us how to do 'genetic engineering' and turn off our negative primitive genes without waiting for evolution to catch up.

11. Why are the citizens of other countries happier than we are in the U.S.?

The response to the happiness polls indicated that to the respondents, satisfaction and a sense of well being were considered happiness. Levels of happiness were highest in the less developed countries. The highly developed countries with the high levels of competition, materialism, hyperactivity and resulting stress, such as the U.S. has low levels of happiness.

12. How important is financial wealth to someone's happiness?

Successfully working towards financial wealth brings a degree of satisfaction, and common happiness, but when you reach your goal, the happiness disappears. But financial wealth does not need to detract from pursuing natural happiness.