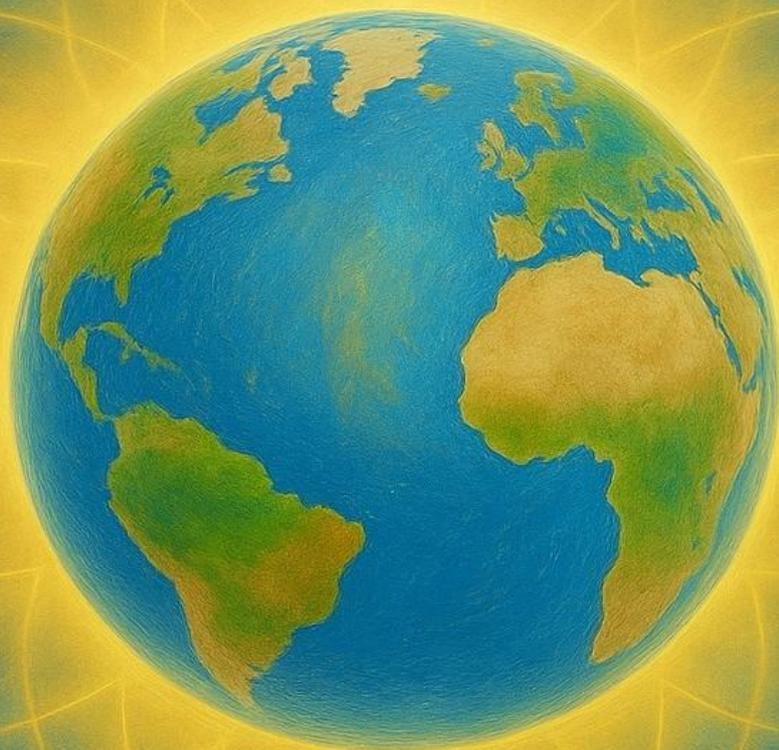


# THE WORLD PLATFORM



SOULFUL  
HORIZONS,  
*The Collection*

## Soulful Horizons, The Collection

### Happiness

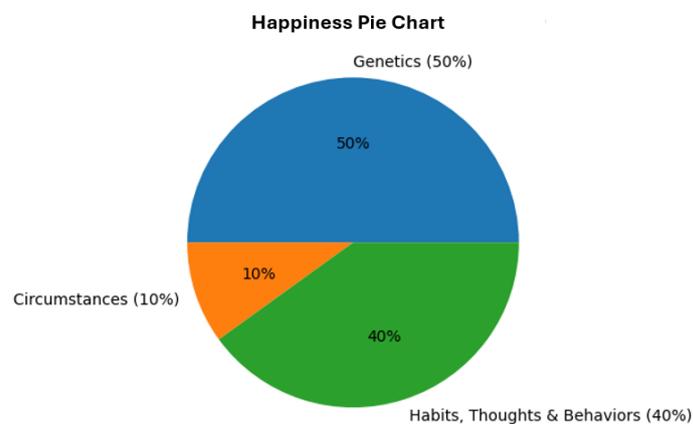
#### Happiness

**Happiness** is feeling good about our life while experiencing moments of joy (pleasure and positive feelings), contentment (inner peace and satisfaction) and purpose (a sense that our life matters).

#### The Happiness Pie Chart

Positive psychology research suggests long-term happiness tends to arise from **3 main sources**:

- 50% genetic baseline (= our natural disposition)
- 10% life circumstances
- 40% habits, thoughts and behavior (=influenceable)



Source: Sonja Lyubomirsky et al.

### 1. 50% Genetic

We are born with a natural disposition for mood. Some people naturally recover faster from stress, feel positive emotions more easily and are calmer or more optimistic. Others are more sensitive or reactive.

This doesn't lock our happiness permanently. It just determines our starting level, like a thermostat setting.

### 2. 10% Life Circumstances

This includes things people often chase for happiness, like money, job, relationship status, house, possessions, appearance and achievements.

These do affect happiness, but surprisingly little and temporarily.

People quickly adapt and return near their natural disposition.

### 3. 40% Habits, Thoughts and Behaviors

This is the area we can actively shape. It includes gratitude and appreciation, meaning and purpose, relationships and kindness, mindset and interpretation of events, mindfulness and regulation skills and self-care habits.

These daily mental and behavioral patterns continually push our happiness up or down.

This means that a large part of happiness is influenceable.

Circumstances matter less than how we live and think each day, so happiness isn't mostly something that happens to us. It's largely something we practice.

Research in epigenetics (the study of how our environment and behavior influence the activity of our genes) shows that our habits and environment can influence how our genes are expressed and as a result shift the natural disposition our body or mind tends to return to after changes. This means that **intentional activity largely impacts our happiness.**

## Expansion, Contraction and our Natural Disposition

Our **2 main life energies** (expansion and contraction) constantly shape our natural disposition.

### 🌀 **Contraction energy (protection mode)**

This is the survival state of the nervous system. It shows up as fear, worry, defensiveness, control, tension, overthinking, withdrawal or shutdown and reacting instead of choosing.

Contraction is not bad. It keeps us safe, but when we live here most of the time, the brain learns that the world is unsafe. Over time this **lowers our natural disposition**, because the mind repeatedly practices stress chemistry.

### 🌀 **Expansion energy (growth mode)**

This is the regulation and connection state. It shows up as curiosity, gratitude, compassion, creativity, presence and trust. Here the nervous system learns that life is workable. Repeated experiences of expansion train the brain toward safety and possibility, gradually **raising our natural disposition**. Over time this becomes the new normal.

Our natural disposition rises as our life contains more moments of expansion than contraction, because the nervous system learns what state to call 'home'.

## Be Happy First

Most people think they will be happy when things go right or when they get more of something (fame, money, looks), but these are myths. Happiness is a skill we can train, independent of success, money or approval.

Being happy is an inner state of peace and wellbeing that doesn't depend on external circumstances. We can enjoy our life - even when it doesn't go the way we want - by not extracting happiness from our life circumstances, but by bringing happiness to life. When we are happy first, our life improves — not the other way around.

People who are authentically, lastingly happy, live longer, have more successful relationships and careers and their life is more fulfilling in every way.

Happy People share some specific habits that keep their happiness stable even during problems:

- 👁️ They take **responsibility** for their own life and interpret events in empowering ways instead of blaming themselves or others.
- 👁️ They foster **positive thoughts** and practice meditation, reflection or calming routines to **reduce mental noise**.

- They have the appropriate **body chemistry**: dopamine for motivation, reward and pleasure ; serotonin for mood and well-being ; norepinephrine for alertness and focus ; GABA for calmness and relaxation and glutamate for learning and memory and see **self-care** as rightful.
- They surround themselves by **inspiring and uplifting companions**.
- They **live in appreciation**: gratitude, compassion, loving kindness, forgiveness and generosity have become a default perspective.
- They **live an inspired life** through learning, healing, creating, caring, guiding, serving and discovering.
- They **serve a bigger purpose** in life than themselves. Meaning sustains lasting happiness.

These habits move us in a state of expansion, raising our natural disposition.

### Key Takeaway

Don't manage happiness. Train your daily habits, thoughts and behavior and happiness stabilizes on its own.

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This material is based on publicly available research and presented in an original framework developed by **The World Platform**.