

OBSTACLES TO HAPPINESS	EXTERNAL OBSTACLES	INTERNAL OBSTACLES	INNER TOOLS FOR HAPPINESS
1. THE TRUTH OF IMPERMANENCE	WHAT WE HEAR / SEE	WHAT WE BELIEVE (as a reaction)	HOW WE HAVE A CHOICE
Everything is always changing.	We are told that we “need” politicians to change things because we are incapable of doing it ourselves – that they will be our “savior.”	The disintegration of America will continue unless we elect certain people or adapt certain policies. It will always be this way and there nothing I can do.	We don’t have to blame ourselves for the fate of our country or the politicians. Guilt is unnecessary. Awareness is necessary.
We began as specs in the Universe – and in fact we are specs in the Universe.	White men were created by God to be a superior race.	I feel torn as to who to believe. I’m confused. None of this makes sense.	We can sit in the discomfort and unknowing. We don’t have to take sides or polarize ourselves. In fact, that only makes things worse.
We are simply molecules in a Unified Field of Energy.	America needs to be the best, better than other nations. We have a responsibility to take care of the world.	Everything feels out of control.	You’re not out of control. We can use tools like meditation, yoga and breathing to develop more self-control and shift our perspective of what’s really happening.
Our particular existence is constantly changing (age, body, relationships etc.) and will continue to change throughout our whole life.	Things are getting worse and we need to police them more, take the “bad” people away.	Things are awful and hopeless. There is nothing I can do. I can’t bear it.	The evolution of our country will continue to change – that is the nature of life. We can choose to how we respond to notions of “greatness” or “better.”
We see the world as us vs. them – but there is no separation on a human or spirit level.	The media and politicians tell us we should be “opposed to” or “against” other groups of people and the earth.	We need to protect ourselves; others make us unsafe. Therefore, we need to get rid of (immigrants, Muslims & Jews, silence women,) and have guns.	We can recognize that we are all humans and have a common desire for being loved and connecting with others. All of our desires stem from this basic need, however different they may end up.

2. THE OBSTACLE OF IDENTITY	WHAT WE HEAR / SEE	WHAT WE BELIEVE	HOW WE HAVE A CHOICE
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We believe that we are the center of the Universe – which is not true.	White, male, economic privilege is what makes America great.	I don't know what to believe. Everything seems to be so conflicting.	We experience things through our lens of collected experience that we identify as <i>mind</i> . In truth, things are happening just as they are and they are not as personal as we interpret them.
Most of us cling to the idea that the way we experience things is the truth .	There is a right way to think which is based on what “most” people believe is right.	I can't change my beliefs.	We can step back and see that what is happening is very different than how we perceive it's happening. Being “in the moment” means we let go of how things are “supposed to be” and just witness how they are.
Beliefs are things we've been convinced of based on patterning. They can change and do during our life.	Political viewpoints are important to knowing who you are and how you relate with others.	I have to be in a certain category so that I fit in and know how to think.	Beliefs are simply engrained habits and social/environmental patterning. We can break out of any belief by recognizing that there are many ways to see and interpret any situation.
We see everything through the filters of life – whether that is fear, paranoia, joy, frustration, anger, hopelessness, anticipation, anxiety, etc.	You should be angry. At whatever side you think is wrong.	I can't trust my emotions. They're always changing. But I don't know how to see beyond them.	When we see the world as right & wrong, we are closed to any other option. Opening ourselves to the possibility of other options creates a paradigm shift that can affect our whole life.
The media is telling me what to think.	You have to trust (x) news source. And you have to listen/read/watch all the time or you'll miss something pivotal.	I don't know who to believe. I don't want to watch, but I can't not watch! But who in the media can I trust? Who is telling the truth?	We don't need all the information that's available. As a global society, we think we need to take it all in and be informed of everything. But we can choose what to take in that will be the most helpful/beneficial to being informed as accurately as possible and still finding peace within you.

3. THE OBSTACLE OF ATTACHMENT	WHAT WE HEAR / SEE	WHAT WE BELIEVE	HOW WE HAVE A CHOICE
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<p>Not only do we see things through our filters, it is very hard to change this because we are attached to seeing things in this way.</p> <p>When we aren't open to changing our filters, we get stuck.</p>	<p>You "should" see things my way and agree with me.</p>	<p>I "should" agree with people around me or I will make them upset, even if it makes me defensive or angry.</p>	<p>Be careful of using the word "should" as it is always based on expectation and assumption. Try to find a way to express your desires and needs without using "should." Try "I want" or "I desire."</p>
<p>We cling to things being the way we want them and we are afraid of change.</p>	<p>You want to be comfortable. Anything that makes you uncomfortable is bad, especially if they are different than you (i.e. different religions, ethnicities, nationalities, etc.).</p>	<p>I am afraid of change. Change is bad.</p>	<p>Change is actually okay. What makes it scary is our attachment to things being the way they are. Get curious about why you want things to be how they are and create some space for things/people/situations to look and feel different.</p>
<p>We believe our happiness depends on certain outcomes in our life, like relationships, jobs and our definition of success.</p>	<p>You have to have these certain things to be a valuable member of society. People who don't have these things are worthless.</p>	<p>I am not good enough unless I have a certain amount of money, the perfect relationships with my partner and family and enough material stuff.</p>	<p>Failure teaches us a lot more than success. When we go outside the box of our normal circumstances, we learn so much about what we are attached to and how we can shed these attachments.</p>
<p>When we depend on specific external outcomes for happiness, the happiness is fleeting, at best.</p>	<p>You have to change your job/relationship/career/family/living situation to be happy. And it all depends on how much money you have.</p>	<p>I am unhappy and there is no way to change that.</p>	<p>Everything changes. In fact, that is the only thing we can trust. What makes us happy today will eventually fade. Developing trust in ourselves creates a stable happiness that doesn't change. The Dalai Lama has no money and he is one of the happiest people alive!</p>

4. THE NEED FOR DISCOMFORT	WHAT WE HEAR / SEE	WHAT WE BELIEVE	HOW WE HAVE A CHOICE
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We tend to arrange our world to stay out of discomfort.	Shut up and sit down. You don't have a voice.	I can't speak up. I'll be humiliated or worse.	Change has to start somewhere. And it is always uncomfortable. Try to find some gratitude for the discomfort and the fact that it WILL eventually lead to positive change. The only thing constant is change. There is much more certainty in the discomfort of change than in things staying within our narrow comfort zone.
We often push away or deny information and experiences that make us uncomfortable, including what the media, politicians and activists tell us.	Don't believe what you hear, from anyone except [me].	I don't want this to be happening. It is wrong. I should just hide out until this is all over...if I survive.	Take small, gradual steps to start accepting what is. The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. Start today.
There will always be things that make you feel uncomfortable. That doesn't mean they're wrong, just that you're not used to them.	People who disrupt the status quo are troublemakers.	I know something needs to change but I have no idea what to do or where to go for help.	From a place of acceptance of <i>what is</i> you can then choose to do something specific based on empowerment & factual understanding.
If things stay comfortable, they will never improve. We need to be willing to experience discomfort to become better people, have better communities and a better world.	We have to fight against other (countries, nationalities, immigrants, political parties) to make things right. They'll never get better unless we exclude certain people.	This is the worst thing imaginable. It couldn't get scarier than this and there's nothing at all I can do.	Be aware of how you use your energy – being <i>against</i> something or being <i>for</i> something. Being “against” something doesn't actually change it – it might just add energy, frenzy and the feeling of having “done” something - whether or not it was a productive thing to do.

5. THE TRUTH ABOUT DEATH	WHAT WE HEAR / SEE	WHAT WE BELIEVE	HOW WE HAVE A CHOICE
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<p>The certainty of death is probably the most uncomfortable information we have; our own death and that of people we love.</p>	<p>Our current politicians are doing things that bring our attention to death. The media is also highlighting this.</p> <p>There are fear tactics that are getting us to believe what others want.</p> <p>(ACA repeal, Russian fear, fearmongering, racism and Muslim ban, cutting state department, cutting federal regulations for a clean environment, money to schools Secretary of State not meeting with other diplomats, lack of foreign communication)</p>	<p>There will be disaster. We will all die - I will die. I will go crazy. There will be no more joy in my life from this moment on.</p> <p>I can't think about this. I feel like I'm drowning.</p> <p>I am helpless. I am hopeless, this is my fault. I can't stop it from rolling over us and killing us all.</p>	<p>There is always a chance that things will end in disaster. We may be experiencing in a state of shock, but we can learn to live with this uncertainty about our life and inevitable death.</p> <p>We don't have any evidence that things will end in disaster. In fact, this might end in great change for the better. We don't have to wait for the world to change to be happy.</p> <p>We are being programmed and manipulated to feel shock and paralysis. I can be empowered to realize that things in my life ARE in my control. I don't have to buy in to this fearmongering.</p>
<p>We pretend we have all the time in the world to get around to enjoying life. But something inevitably will cause our death, someday.</p>	<p>I may be losing my health insurance. The whole healthcare system is falling apart. Only the white, rich and privileged can have adequate health.</p>	<p>Without my health insurance I will die alone. I refuse to believe that I am failing.</p>	<p>Find joy in the little moments of your life, like being in nature, talking with friends, drinking your favorite tea, eating nourishing food.</p> <p>You can decide to be a person who makes others feel happy and inspired.</p>
<p>This is it. We can choose to be at peace with whatever imperfect lives we have, or we can change them.</p>	<p>Our politicians are putting us in grave danger of the next World War. Other countries are trying to undermine American values and take over our country.</p>	<p>I have to see every country in the world now. I may only have a year left so I need to do it NOW.</p>	<p>Let the truth of your mortality inspire you to live a <i>better</i> life each moment instead of in fear of when death comes.</p>



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<p>Each moment we spend complaining is a moment gone.</p> <p>As specs in the Unified Field of Energy, our perspective of life has always been changing. Death is simply a shift in perspective from our individuality back to the Unified wholeness.</p>	<p>The underlying fear we all have about the current world climate is that it will cause our death</p>	<p>I haven't done enough in my life. (I'm not good enough).</p> <p>My individuality and uniqueness disappear when I die.</p>	<p>The world will be just find when I die. It was fine before I was born.</p> <p>As a country we have not gotten in to WWII yet. There's no reason why we would, now.</p> <p>People are fighting for equity, justice and peace.</p> <p>In Buddhism it is said that we cry at birth and celebrate death. In Western civilization we say the opposite.</p> <p>As specs in the wholeness, we manifested (came into creation) for a certain time and space. That is only meant to be for a time. We are actually timeless and infinitely expansive, not limited to our personality.</p>
<p>We won't get it back</p>	<p>Many politicians are pushing to cut millions of people's health insurance with no desire to help them.</p>		<p>we have no evidence that we can't bear death; on the contrary if we listen to the sages, mystics and realized beings, they say we can and do and already have</p>

