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About the Author

Wendy Atkinson wants to help you simplify your [life](#) and get more enjoyment from every day.

Wendy said, "Despite all the advances in medicine, people are feeling sick and unhappy. Almost everyone is battling [stress](#) and other conditions which are largely preventable."

Wendy said, "After a lot of trial and error, research and discussions with friends, I found some really simple ways that worked for me and our family."

"We had been consuming so much of the wonderful devices and products on offer we had mental, and sometimes physical, indigestion."

The demands of our jobs and the cost of our possessions were taking over our lives. Looking after them and paying the bills were reducing the enjoyment we thought we would get from them."

Wendy said, "I used to enjoy my [job](#) and have more time with family and friends. A year ago, I realized we weren't seeing our friends or even our kids as much."

Wendy said, "These ideas are cheap, or even free, and will bring the zing back to every day."

Wendy said, "I believe each reader will find some ideas in my book to help them get their lives back and help them find the [energy](#) which our modern world tends to suck away."

"Then, they will be on [track](#) for the future they are dreaming of!"

Introduction

If you are wondering what you can do to bring more enjoyment and even fulfillment to yourself and your family, my [book](#) will help.

I want to share the methods which have helped us to simplify our lives and remove the causes of much of the stress and conflict we had.

I will show you how to begin enjoying every day much more than you may have for years.

I found that we were consuming so much of the wonderful devices and products on offer we had mental [indigestion](#).

Our jobs and possessions were taking over our lives. Looking after them and paying the bills were reducing the enjoyment we got.

There seemed no end in sight to the turmoil.

I believe that many people feel as we did and will be helped by the simple, and mostly free, tips I share.

We have less stuff, fewer personal and financial commitments and a lot more [joy](#) in our lives.

Invest in Yourself

What is your most important asset?

Your body trumps anything else you thought of.

But, it is seldom treated as well as our new [car](#) or other possessions.



We can always come up with excuses for putting off a visit to our doctor or [dentist](#). But, we often have less worthy reasons for our actions than we admit. The cost of the visit can be a problem for many people, who perhaps have a difficult budget and may have to forgo the visit,

or have someone else pay the [doctor](#).

But, the visit may result in early treatment of a significant health problem which could keep them off work for a long time and incur bigger medical bills.

Another major reason for delaying a check-up is fear about what might be discovered during the examination.

Despite the rapid and exciting advances in medicine, there are many diseases and other conditions which can cause [fear](#).

These people forget that living with an undiagnosed problem also causes fear which will also affect our health.

The delay in diagnosis can mean more drastic solutions may be required if something is wrong.

The "antidote" to that fear and the despair it causes is knowledge.

Big Returns from Small Investments

If you don't have an exercise program, you probably feel you cannot afford the cost in time or [money](#).

The good news is that you don't need expensive equipment, courses or gyms

to start and maintain a good [exercise](#) program.

The main value of a program and a personal trainer is the discipline they provide to keep you to your routine.

Unfortunately, that is not always enough and many people waste a large portion of the money they paid for memberships because they stop attending the [gym](#).

If you get a [membership](#), make sure to use it as fully as you can. When you have been going for a while, you may have developed enough enthusiasm to follow a program by yourself at home or in a park with a group.

[Walking](#) is one of the most valuable forms of exercise and you can do that almost anywhere when you have a spare half hour.

You can get free exercise information from government agencies, your doctor and the Internet.

Start with, say, three sessions a week. Don't do too much at first.

How much is too much? Ask your doctor.

Getting a check from your doctor is wise because they know your [health](#) status and [history](#).

They match the advice they give to that information.

They give you up-to-date advice and also check for anything which might cause problems when you start exercising.

If you don't, who will?

Although there are many good support services, the responsibility for your health depends on you.

The services are wasted if you don't use them and also do some independent exercise regularly at other times.

Maintenance

You know the importance of maintenance for your car and even your lawn mower.

But, many people overlook the importance and value of maintaining and checking their own bodies and mental processes.

The best way to have less worry is to start to worry less.

I'll share some great ways to do that in later Chapters.

You Can't Buy Happiness

Happiness is sought by everyone but some people's [quest](#) is less successful because they don't understand what happiness is and why you can't just buy as much as you want.



One part of the problem is the false promise which much consumer [advertising](#) offers.

If you have a good working washing machine, you don't need a new one.

How many toasters can you

use?

You are just filling space with stuff you'll have to keep clean and maintain.

Gratification and Happiness

We can't buy "happiness".

We can buy "comfort" or "gratification".

What you really get

If you're [cold](#), a cup of soup doesn't give you happiness, but does give you comfort.

Buying some things gratify your desire to appear "cool" sophisticated or whatever.

Happiness is also a state of [mind](#) which you can generate from within.

Unfortunately, your mindset can also ensure that you don't enjoy as much happiness as you could.

Many people fill their minds with negativity so they don't accept happiness easily or accept that it will last for long when it comes their way.

What if you don't get it?

The absence of happy occasions and interactions can make your [life](#) much



poorer and also reduce your power to attract and interact with positive-minded, interesting people.

But, the good news is that you can change the amount which you get by concentrating some of your

time on improving your current social interaction and repeated [practice](#) at improving our conversational and other skills.

It's fairly easy and well worthwhile!

And, the more you do it, the more successful you will be in every part of your [life](#)!

What's making You Sad?

Everyone has times where they feel sad because of events which badly affect [people](#) they know or care about, or themselves.

Look inside for the reasons



But many people have become used to looking at many things they encounter with a negative focus.

This affects their ability to appreciate and respond positively to those things.

It also causes them to be seen as negative and less interesting by most people.

This causes their interactions to be less successful.

That, in turn, reinforces their negative outlook.

This can, over time, have bad effects on their relationships, self-image and even their long-term [health](#)!

Look Inside again for the Fix

The [answer](#) to that mental darkness is also inside our own heads. Most people have the ability to reach in and start to change their outlook.

It is not always a quick or easy fix because they have ingrained the negative [posture](#) and that will only go if they keep pushing more positive messages into their own minds.

They also need to focus on repairing the relationships which may have been frayed or ignored as their mental image of themselves was eroded by stress and fear,

Remove the Rubbish



The [remedy](#) starts when they recognize the damage their current mental focus is doing to them mentally and externally as well.

Then, they can start changing the tape playing in their minds by consciously looking for positive

aspects of their lives and [work](#).

They can also use affirmations, short, realistic statements relevant to their abilities and goals to focus their efforts on positive outcomes.

Caution: Affirmations apparently work very well for some people and hardly at all for others.

It may be that the poor results come from overstating the possible outcomes from them or by the [speaker](#) not really having built their confidence to the level which would let their minds accept the promised results.

If this is happening to you when you try affirmations, it might be fixed by taking more action so that you accomplish higher results and using the small early successes to [boost](#) your own confidence.

What is Making You Sick?



Everyone feels below par at times, but many of us are feeling unwell more often without any obvious clue as to what might be causing the problem.

There can be many possibilities including poor [dietary](#) choices or poor eating habits.

While most doctors accept that a reasonably healthy person can handle a weekly fast food snack, many people and even families have adopted fast food as a large part of their regular [diet](#). That may be for convenience or apparent low cost.

Unfortunately, over time, those snacks cause an imbalance in our bodies which can be serious.

If you, or your [children](#), like some fast food creations, you can probably save money and improve what you eat by looking for similar recipes on the Internet which use regular vegetables and other ingredients you have in your [kitchen](#).

This can even be a way to teach your kids how to cook!.

Prevention is Best!

Both our [health](#) and our attitude are under constant assault from negative influences.

[Media](#) news focuses on death, disaster and destruction because that's what gets the best ratings!



But, it doesn't help us maintain a positive outlook or make it easy to digest our meals.

The easy answer is to avoid the downbeat stuff or balance it with positive material.

Another problem which affects our digestion and productivity is quick eating. Many workers eat at their [desk](#) or in buildings while others continue to work around them.

This affects our peace of mind and lessens the proper digestion.

A break from our work [location](#) is not the same as a real holiday but the effects of taking our lunch to a place away from machines and car exhausts can help a lot.

It can be even more enjoyable if you meet a friend there or even a colleague so long as you don't talk about your work all the time!

Check Your Equipment



A big problem for people working with computers through the day is avoiding [health](#) problems from poorly set-up equipment or mistakes in using it.

Whatever equipment you use, always take breaks at least every half hour.

Make it a real break by walking away from the area. Just changing from screen-based work to paperwork will not give you a proper break.

The setup of the screen or screens is a major factor in causing eyestrain and it also can encourage strain in your neck and other areas of your body.

A screen should be located about two feet (60 cm) from you and the top slightly below your eye level.

Put a single screen directly in front of you. If you use two screens on a single [computer](#), check with your eye specialist, the screen provider or your human resources section for recommendations.

Check your posture. Charts are available from your State Health department and [doctor](#).

Remember to blink. When we concentrate intently, our eyes may slow the natural blink rate. This can cause discomfort because the eyes do not get lubricated with tears.

Check the comfort level of the monitor's contrast and brightness settings. This can have serious long term effects, including poor [breathing](#) control and soreness in your bones.

These suggestions can also help if you use a computer at [home](#) for work or entertainment.

How Important is a Positive Attitude

I asked my doctor that question and her quick answer was, "Well, it can't [hurt!](#)".

After all, you decide and develop your attitude by the way you view and recall events.

So, a positive outlook can be achieved in most circumstances and it will help when you strike trouble of some kind.

But, your attitude must be firmly based.

So, you should look for positive aspects of your life and [career](#).

Record them in your diary and other ways so that you can review them when you have doubts and diminish them with facts on your previous successes!

Start a Gratitude Diary!

Some friends I know have gratitude diaries which they write two things which they are grateful for each day.

They focus on things which people do for them or having a walk with their [dog](#).

They don't put stuff about possessions.

To try this yourself, get a cheap diary and keep it just for this project.

Every few weeks, just dip into the [diary](#) and read a few entries.

They are so pleased with the effect on their mood and general confidence, I am going to start one for myself in the New Year.

But, of course, you don't have to start at any particular time.

Like most other good ideas, the sooner you start, the sooner you get some good results!

Humor is Health-giving

A sense of humor is a valuable asset for maintaining your own sense of well-being and connecting with other people socially and, where used appropriately, in any kind of [business](#).

But, most people don't use humor as well as they could and that affects their interactions badly at times.

These tips will help you get better results and also know when not to use humor.

A professional comedian told me that the [secret](#) of getting a good response was to practice every joke several times and then work on making it seem like something you just thought of.

If you don't practice it, you may stumble over some words or even forget the point or punchline.

Never use any joke which might embarrass someone else, whether or not they are present.

If they are not present, their friends will think you're unfair by belittling them and the person will probably hear a much worse version of the joke than what you actually said.

The only person that should be the [target](#) of any joke is the person that tells it.

If you tell it well, the listeners will realize you have skills and like that you can make a joke against yourself.

If you tell a joke about someone else, make the point a positive one!

Meet More People

" The more you know, the more you grow."

And, so will your social or [business](#) connections.

Meeting more people is vital for our personal development and that is even better when they are from a range of backgrounds with different experiences.

Another thing to remember is that you never know who the new people you meet and mingle with connect with.

Many businesses have grown rapidly because of new friends recommending them to people they don't know.

Here are some suggestions to help you make better connections.

When you listen

This is the way to make a great [impression](#). Most people prefer to be the center of attention and few know how to listen well.

Keep your attention on the speaker's face.

Move your eyes around their face or they may become uncomfortable and you will find it harder to concentrate on what they're saying.

Ask questions where appropriate and either use some of what they did or put everything into your own words.

Be aware of the amount of space they like to have. Some people are from places where people stand closer together than other people do.

When you talk

If you are talking to an unfamiliar [group](#), start speaking slowly rather than at a quick pace. That can help people absorb what you say better.

You can adjust your [speed](#) as you judge the response you get.

Don't talk too long.

They will appreciate that you let others have their say. Listen to what everyone says as they did for you and you will get more appreciation.

If someone asks you a question, repeat the main point of it so that they know you understand what they want to know.

That will also help other people who may not have heard the original question clearly.

Never Stop Learning

"The more you know, the more you grow!"

The opportunities for learning without attending classes away from your home are rapidly growing in variety, quality and scope.

There are many [college](#) level courses available world-wide from recognized institutions.

Many of those courses are provided free with charges made only if you want documentation of your results.

There are also long-established [online](#) course providers such as <http://www.udemy.com> and <http://www.learnable.com> which have an even wider range of courses available at a reasonable cost.

If you have any interest in taking a [course](#) at some time, I suggest that you join their mailing list.

Then, you will know when Udemy make special offers on some of their courses which they do from time to time.

Udemy also give people the chance to offer a course through their [web](#) site. This can be a great opportunity to make [money](#) and assist other people reach their goals if you are approved by Udemy.

Teach what you know

If you like that [idea](#), check their web site for more details.

You get more than you give

The best way to test your knowledge of a subject is to explain the details to someone else.

Make sure they are interested in the subject or you will waste their time and any feedback they give will not be very helpful.

But, feedback from someone with a genuine interest will help you get better at sharing your knowledge in the most useful way.

Thought Control is Good for You!

Everybody has a series of messages being broadcast from their subconscious during every waking moment.

This information is based on what our [brain](#) is telling itself about our physical and emotional abilities and challenges.

Unfortunately, most people fill their subconscious with negative messages .

That negatively influences our ability to perform all kinds of tasks and the level of our [self-confidence](#).

Danger from within

This system is very powerful, so the effects of the broadcast negativity have an effect which will also influence the self-image which is seen by people you deal with socially and in [business](#).

It is NOT easy to Change

This is one reason that it takes focus, time and effort to change habits and attitudes for the better.

Many people read affirmations and expect to get great results.

But, if they are doing that and not adding other positive material to what is stored in their subconscious, they have little hope of improving.

Get Help if you Need to

For some people, the advice and support of a qualified professional may be needed to get quicker and more lasting changes to the negative aspects of their self-talk.

Some may benefit by help from a psychologist or even an medically qualified [hypnotist](#).

Consult your [doctor](#) about these options.

The cost may be worthwhile because of the time and stress you save.

Minimalism

The minimalism movement encourages shifting from a focus as an individual or family as a consumer to being a careful user who makes far less demands and damage on the environment and the resources it provides.

Some [people](#) become independent of the main power providers (going off-the-grid) and setting up in rural areas.

Others adopt the philosophy to their current [home](#).

They also reduce the amount of possessions they have and sharply curtail their collecting of goods on the basis of need rather than just a desire to possess and consume.

Some minimalists adopt the practice of having just 100 items and getting rid of something when they need to acquire something else on a long-term basis.

Hard Lesson from Pioneers

The [wagon](#) trains which moved pioneers to western areas to settle could be tracked by a trail a discarded, often valuable, [furniture](#) and other items which the settlers found slowed their progress and wore down them and the horses which pulled the wagons.

This was dangerous in areas where Indian tribes were attacking the wagons.

Now, minimalists are cutting back on possessions and consumption to reduce their risks of running out of essential supplies as the population and their rate of consumption grows.

Make it or Make Do

Minimalists also adopt the [practice](#) of “Make it or Make do” by using things for multiple uses, then as scraps for repairs and then making what new items they can.

Learn basic skills

This is a valuable [development](#) which increases the reduction of waste and helps people develop skills which might have become lost .

Pass it on

They also pass on materials and goods which they no longer use or need.

The emphasis of their recycling is on getting the best use of everything with minimum [impact](#) on the level of resources available.

When you consider that there are floating islands of garbage on the seas which are polluting them and endangering [sea](#)-life, this is a welcome development.

The "One day" Trap

The "One-Day" Trap is when people put off their dreams and goals for short-term concerns.

One day, there is no longer any more time left.

Some people have responded to this certainty by creating "bucket lists" of things they try to do before they die.

What are your unfulfilled desires?

What can you do to make some of them a reality sooner rather than later.

You will find the [exercise](#) well worth it.

Not only will those goal you reach become inspiring memories which will propel you toward further goals, but they will improve your personal self-image and confidence in your capacity to reach even greater goals with relative ease.

Before you Throw it Away

We are part of a "throw-it-away" world. The quick [solution](#) is causing increasing damage to our planet and condemning many creatures to painful deaths when they look through our junk for food because we have taken much of the small forms of [life](#) they depended on.

Some questions we can ask which can help us reduce the destruction and pointless waste are:

Is it Dangerous?

Could it be a risk to wildlife or even humans and their pets?

Could the material or contents poison the ground and reduce its ability to produce [food](#) and the land which we can relax in?

Can you sell, swap or share it? There are collectors of just about everything. Maybe, you don't want the bother of cleaning the item and then trying to find a buyer but there are many people who will.

Some charities are also looking for items to sell to fund their work as well.

If you have never attended or taken part in a [market](#) or swap meet, I recommend them as a means of clearing unwanted items to people that will use them and also for the experiences you can have with new and fascinating people.

Help with Habits

Everyone has habits, good and bad.

Some are drilled into us by parents and teachers to help keep us safe.

Others we learn as we develop and explore our environment.

Most people have at least one learned habit which they would love to overcome.

But, it can take months to [train](#) yourself into a different pattern well enough to overcome the ingrained track in our [brain](#) which drives that habit.

Nothing to be ashamed of

Everybody has habits. The people that need to be concerned are those that don't try to become better at dealing with their bad habits and their effects on other people.

Long-term solutions

Most habits are done for years and you need to understand it's a long-term commitment to change them for something better.

But, it can be done in most cases.

There could be significant costs and discomfort along that path.

Beating the odds

There are no records for beating a habit but there are rewards for having the [courage](#) and persistence to do it.

If you fail,

Don't worry if you go back to a habitual behavior. You are, like me, only human.

But, you can think about what caused you to slip back into that habit.

Then, you will be better prepared to try again.

You don't fail unless and until you give up trying.

Get a buddy

With many habits, as with [learning](#) some new skill, teaming up with someone you [trust](#) who is doing the same thing can be an enormous help.

You both focus on being honest with each other and supportive at all times.

The benefit doesn't come from trying to do better than your buddy.

It comes from the feeling that you don't want to let them down because they are supporting and encouraging you.

False Friends

Some times you will think somebody is supporting you when their real aim is to [profit](#) from being around "helping" you. You only find out their true values when you falter and they joke about your difficulties.

That actually can be a powerful spur which propels you faster than before to your goal.

The Coffee Problem.

There are many people we might consider addicted to coffee or other caffeine-loaded drinks.

Coffee has serious effects on us, especially in the way it reduces our ability to get enough quality [sleep](#).

That builds a sleep-debt which can affect us for the rest of our lives.

Our choice

You can choose to moderate your caffeine intake over a short period or remove coffee and the other drinks from your menu.

By the way, some cafés use higher levels of caffeine later in the day than in the [morning](#).

There is no benefit to you from this practice. But, it might make your caffeine habit a little more difficult to shake off.

You can beat Caffeine

It takes persistence and time but you can remove caffeine from your [diet](#).

Remember that anyone that regularly drinks anything with caffeine probably has a sleep debt which won't go away until they do more long sleeping sessions and restore their body's systems to good order again.

Proper sleep is essential for your system to restore your body and also store whatever you experienced and learned in the previous waking period.

If you don't do it right, your [memory](#) recall and ability to use the information will be damaged.

BTW: Never give anything containing caffeine or chocolate to your pet [dog](#) or cat. An ingredient in these substances is a cumulative poison for them.

They will probably not show symptoms until there is already a dangerous or even deadly level in their systems.

Welcome to Your New happier Life!



Thank you for getting my [book](#).

I hope the information is as useful as it has been for my family and the people I've shared it with.

If it has helped you to end just one damaging habit or clear away some stinking thinking which was holding you back, your [investment](#) will continue to pay dividends through the rest of your life.

I hope you will find much to enjoy here and that you will use your greater [energy](#) and better focus well!

Wendy Atkinson

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