



7. Recharge

If you're short on day-to-day happiness just now - or even if you're not - it's good to be able to create some internal joy for yourself; in fact, it's recommendable. It's a battery charger.

What makes you feel a tiny surge of joy? The more you tune into noticing little happy things, the more you can boost your own joy.

Of course, there are the big, exciting things like holidays, weddings, parties, big nights out and those cosmic sexual experiences we're apparently supposed to be having on a regular basis. And all these things can be wonderful; but they won't do the job of the smaller, daily doses of happiness we need to keep us buoyant and energised.

And then of course, there's booze, drugs, chocolate biscuits and binge-watching, which can cheer you up short-term but often become problematic, to say the least. So, let's leave the subject of addiction for now.

What we need, more than the big stuff, are regular little top-ups of happiness, and these don't need to be in any way grandiose. A house plant putting out a new leaf. A favourite jumper. A song you sing along to. Mundane sex. The touch of a hand. A nice cup of tea in your favourite mug.

Where are the places, who are the people, what are the activities that have given you little boosts? Is your home environment nice to be in? A favourite cushion, a throw, a lamp, a picture?

Do you have trouble stopping? Are you so busy trying to wring every second out of life that you find yourself running out of juice? Do you ever allow yourself to sit down and close your eyes for a minute or three? A few short minutes' rest can do absolute wonders. ...

If you're wound up like a clock-spring right now for any reason, you deserve a restorative treat.

So, take a couple of minutes now, to stop and settle down.

You can let yourself breathe more deeply and slowly, and give yourself permission to relax. Think of something quite small that makes you feel a bit warm inside. A robin. A puppy. A baby laughing. If you're in a place where you can look around and appreciate things that look lovely, do that. If you're not, you can always close your eyes and think of someplace you feel happy: a garden, a pub, a park, a beach – it could be anywhere.

Just enjoy wandering around amongst a few happy little things, in your mind's eye, or with open eyes.

That's it. It's ridiculously simple, but it's an immune-boosting break.

Do it often.