

Ten Secrets to Finding Happiness During the Recession

I love Twitter - not so much for tweeting mundane things about what I'm doing with my time, but for the wealth of information that tweets across my "home page" through the course of the day. Yesterday @cheergiver tweeted a link to the following article from U.S. News & World Report: "10 Secrets to Finding Happiness During the Recession." (By the way, I'd love to "meet" you on twitter - you can find me and follow me at www.twitter.com/drsusanbiali and be sure to say hello!)

I'll give you the link to the article in a moment, but first wanted to summarize and comment on the ten "secrets" for you.

Secret #1: Spend \$20 on an EXPERIENCE rather than on an ITEM

I love this one and totally agree! My husband and I have barely made any new purchases in the last while (we're usually not big shoppers, anyway, so not much has changed). However, we do continually look to spend our money on great experiences. A good movie, an inexpensive but delicious dinner out, a small local driving trip to seek out some new kind of adventure. The reason why experiences are better than things is that the pleasure can live on for a long time in the memory of it - if it was really great, you'll enjoy talking about it for your entire lifetime!

Secret #2: Pursue meaningful life goals

I think this is why when I moved to Mexico to pursue my dreams of dancing and writing, it was so easy for me to go from living a "doctor's" lifestyle in a big city, to living an extremely simple life on a tiny budget in a miniscule one room un-air-conditioned apartment (with cockroaches, yuck!). The things I was able to do, like dance all day if I wanted to, were so meaningful that I didn't even give the "discomforts" of my new life a second thought!

Secret #3: Be open and receptive to what's happening right now, in the moment

I totally agree with this. Whenever things start going badly in my life, after the initial frustration I might feel I always ask myself: "Hmmm...I wonder what's going on here? I wonder what this is really about? What gift is riding into my life, on the wings of this 'disaster'?"

Secret #4: Nurture meaningful relationships

Recession or no recession, this is something that's absolutely free and is the number one predictor of health and happiness in the Western World (hint: money is NOT a predictor of happiness, once you get past a certain basic amount of income; in fact, the more money people have, the more likely they are to be less happy)

Secret #5: Recognized your strengths

Tough times are fantastic for discovering just WHAT you're really made of - you might be amazed at how resilient and resourceful you are, and out of necessity you might discover talents that you didn't even know you had!

Secret #6: Count your blessings

I was feeling sorry for myself yesterday, because there have been all kinds of obstacles this week, preventing me from being able to properly work on my book (which is due tomorrow!). Then I watched "Extreme Home Makeover" last night with my husband - when I saw the challenges that that family lived with so cheerfully, believe me I was counting my blessings.

Secret #7: Keep an optimism journal

Write down your dreams - in tough times, it's a great way to remind yourself that "this too shall pass", and that wonderful things still lie ahead.

Secret #8: Seek advice from your neighbor

Though I'm digressing a bit from the article's point about this, I think you should talk and laugh with and spend time with your neighbor, period! The more friendly social contacts we have in our life, the healthier and happier we are (no matter what else is going on).

Secret #9: Get out and sweat

This is so true, in my speaking presentations I often mention the fact that regular exercise has been shown to be AS EFFECTIVE in boosting your mood as taking an anti-depressant. Amazing!

Secret #10: Do unto others

Absolutely - we know that helping others who need it (especially when you feel that your life is going badly) puts things in perspective and gives you a rush of feel-good natural chemicals in your body. Helping others boosts your mood, and boosts your immune system. If you're stuck between jobs, find some time to volunteer - it'll help immensely, and who knows, you might even make a connection with another volunteer who CAN give you a job.

What ways have you discovered, to create happiness in your life under any circumstances? I'd love to hear about it! Just go to the comment section below, and let me know!

If you'd like to read the entire original article, [click here](#)

About Dr. Biali

Audiences and clients have described Dr. Susan Biali, an award-winning medical doctor, media wellness expert, author, speaker, life coach and flamenco dancer, as "passionate", "real", and "powerful". Formerly a sick, depressed Emergency Medicine resident, Dr. Biali took back her own life and health by learning how to balance her life, listen to her body, and create a life truly worth living. For the past four years, Dr. Biali commuted between her professional life in Canada and her passionate life in Los Cabos, Mexico, where she performed as a professional flamenco dancer for celebrities and exclusive audiences. She and her Latin husband, Armando, even taught Pink how to salsa dance! Today, Dr. Biali teaches others how to discover themselves, create vibrant health, and design the life of their dreams. Frequently featured in media across North America, Dr. Biali is the weekly wellness expert for the national television program *The Daily*, and is currently developing her own television show with a team of producers. She has appeared on MSNBC, The Good Life Network, and in *Self*, *Fitness* and *Hello!* magazines, and was even invited to perform flamenco dance on E! Entertainment Television. Her new book, *Your Prescription for Life*, will be released by New York's Beaufort Books in January 2010. www.susanbiali.com