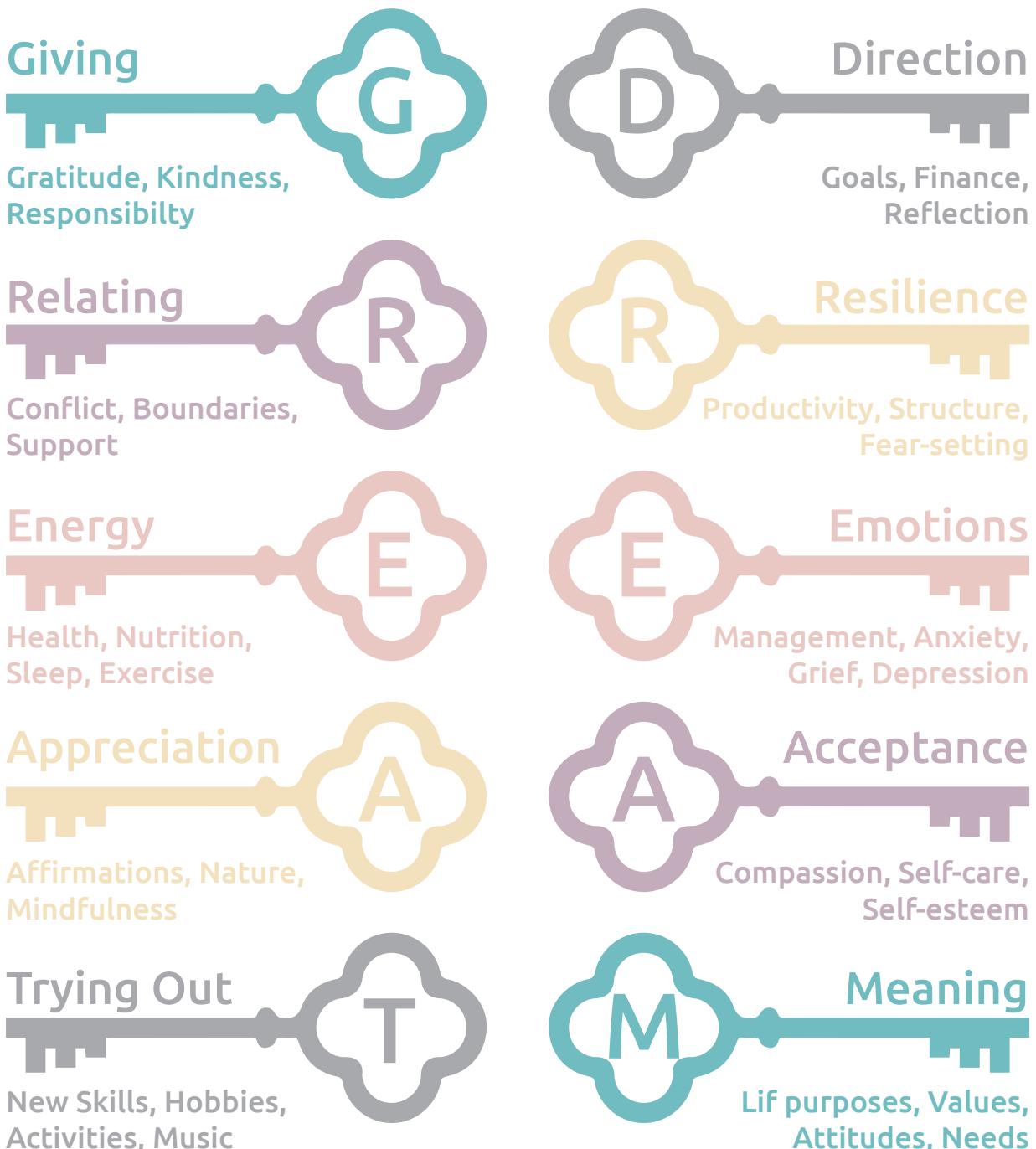


# Understanding Happiness

*Happiness is a concept we all know and use in our everyday life.*

But what does it mean? What makes us happy? How can we be happier?

These are questions we all may ask ourselves at some point in our lives. Strive with SanaMente uses the 10 Keys of Happiness as its framework ([based on the ten keys to happier living by Vanessa King](#)). When these 10 areas are in balance, individuals will lead a happier and healthier life.



# What is happiness?



**Happiness is a subjective term.** It can mean different things to different people. However happiness is loosely defined as an emotional state characterised by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment and fulfilment.



Two keys component of happiness are **the balance of emotions** i.e. you experience more positive feelings than negative ones and **life satisfaction** i.e. how satisfied you feel with the different areas of your life such as relationships and career.



The duration, frequency and intensity of any emotion, including happiness, depends on the importance of the situation to someone, past experience and how that person manages the emotion.

## Types of happiness



JOY



EXCITEMENT



GRATITUDE



PRIDE



OPTIMISM



CONTENTMENT

## How to know if you are happy

**Happiness is not a constant state of joy.** It is more about generally experiencing more positive feelings than negative ones. Some signs a person is happy can be that they:

- Feel more positive than negative
- Feel like they are living the life they want
- Feel the conditions of their life are good
- Know that they have or will achieve what they desire
- Are satisfied with the direction their life is going in
- Know their purpose

Another way to recognise your own happiness is by considering the **five elements of happiness**.

- 1. Positive Emotion:** How happy have you felt recently? How many times have you laughed or smiled? How many moments of gratitude have you experienced?
- 2. Engagement:** How many times have you truly engrossed, focused and felt connected to what you've been doing?
- 3. Relationships:** How much time have you spent with your loved ones? Have you truly spoken and listened to them?
- 4. Meaning:** Do you feel your life have value? Do you know your purpose in life?
- 5. Accomplishment:** What have you achieved? Are you progressing in life?

# How to be happier

There's no one quick and easy solution to becoming happier, rather plenty of small habits you can develop which are known to improve mood. We can also look at the 10 Keys and plan how we can balance and improve each area.



**Giving:** Studies have shown that giving to others, not only helps them but also has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the person doing the giving.



**Relating:** Our mental health and personal wellbeing is tied up in our personal relationships. The more closely we are connected to the people we love, the happier we feel.



**Energy:** Sustaining good levels of mental and physical energy is all about eating, sleeping, and exercising well. Looking after our body is known to improve our mental health and mood.



**Appreciation:** Gratitude and appreciation of the impact of those around you as well as what you have done to positive impact those around you and what you have done for yourself.



**Trying out:** We explore the impact of trying out new things in keeping our minds active, curious, and stimulated. Trying new activities or learning a new skill can boost our self-confidence and mood.



**Direction:** Our happiness can depend on knowing where we are heading in life, what we are doing and the reasons for it.



**Resilience:** We need to be able to adapt in the face of adversity and overcome difficulties otherwise our mood and general happiness will decrease.



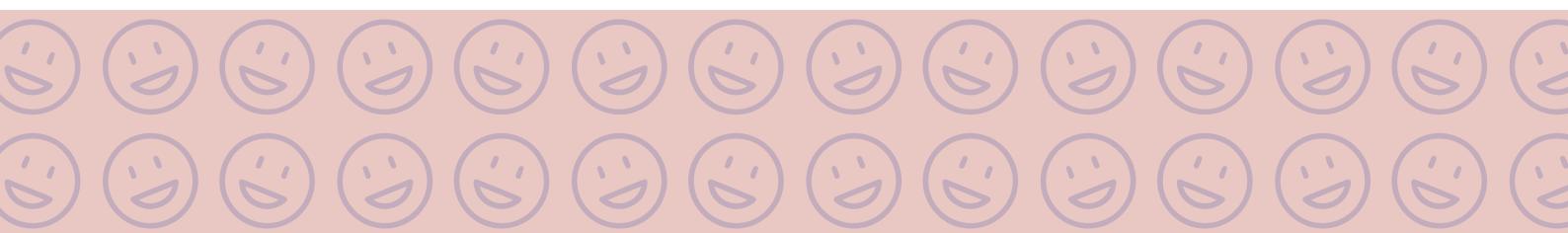
**Emotions:** We all have emotions and there are they to guide us in life therefore understanding and expressing them healthily is key to managing our lives and happiness.



**Acceptance:** Acceptance is the ability to see the reality of a situation, process, or condition without attempting to change it. It's important for our happiness to practice taking care of ourselves as we process situations.



**Meaning:** When we consider the meaning and purpose of life, for each of us this will be different. The ability to accept we are unique is important when we think about our place in the world. Understanding our purpose can generate feelings of contentment and happiness.



# Ways to cultivate happiness

- Focusing on talents and strengths and doing things we are good at can boost our self-confidence
- Learning to accept ourselves
- Seeking out new experiences
- Managing stress levels
- Leading a healthy lifestyle – looking after our body and mind by eating, sleeping and exercising well

**A few small habits you can introduce in your day-to-day life to boost mood:**



Smile more



Exercise



Keeping a gratitude journal



Giving compliments



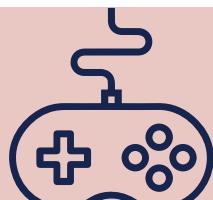
Breathing exercises



Self-care



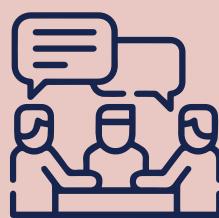
Acts of kindness



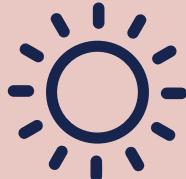
Doing things you enjoy



Eating well



Socialising



Spending time outdoors



Meditation