

Do Something Different
Happiness in Action
programme

Theoretical background to the programme

Happiness seems elusive and sometimes we feel that it is beyond our personal control. Yet, increasingly, scientific evidence shows that we can influence our own happiness and has uncovered the type of actions that happy people do regularly. So happiness isn't just a feeling, it's a set of behaviours. More importantly, anyone can develop the kind of daily habits that will boost happiness. This programme is designed to help people do that. It reminds us to do more of the things that make us, and others, happy and to make sure that we prioritise those behaviours and integrate them into our daily lives and habits. This also draws on positive psychology research which has highlighted the most powerful small actions we can all take to boost our happiness, e.g. appreciating what we have, counting our blessings and expressing gratitude.

This Happiness in Action programme brings together a wealth of research, draws on Action for Happiness's Keys to Happier Living and uses the Do Something Different proven change approach and technology. It recognises that knowing what makes us happy simply isn't enough. We have to do it.

Our psychologists have developed a range of micro-behaviours that develop and embed happiness through a series of small actions resulting from behavioural prompts. Or one Do at a time.

How the Do Something Different Happiness in Action programme works

- 1. The pillars of happiness underlying the programme:**
 - **Giving**
 - **Relating**
 - **Exercising**
 - **Appreciating**
 - **Trying out**
 - **Direction**
 - **Resilience**
 - **Emotion**
 - **Acceptance**

2. The diagnostic questions that profile each person according to the pillars above:

How often do you

- make an effort to do things for others?
- put effort into the relationships that matter most to you?
- spend at least half an hour a day being active? (e.g. sport, walking)
- take time to notice the good things in your life?
- try new things?
- do something that makes you feel good about the future?
- find yourself able to bounce back quickly from problems?
- feel good?
- feel ok about yourself as you are?

These questions are answered online using a slider that can be moved from Never to A Lot. (see example screenshot below).

The screenshot shows a web interface for a diagnostic questionnaire. At the top, there is a blue header with the 'NixonMcInnes' logo and 'Something Different' tagline. A navigation menu includes 'Welcome', 'About You', 'Behaviours', 'Habits', 'Wellbeing', and 'Your Do's'. The main content area is titled 'How often do you...?' and contains instructions: 'Move each slider to indicate how often you do the following things. Please be honest, there are no wrong or right answers - just tell us how it is for you.' Below this, there are eight horizontal sliders, each with a question and a 'Not sure how to answer?' label. The sliders range from 'Never' to 'A lot'. The questions are: 'Challenge the status quo in an attempt to make improvements?', 'Proactively look for ways to improve yourself?', 'Go out of your way to make others feel good?', 'Keep your feelings under control when faced with challenging people or situations?', 'Expect a positive outcome when faced with a new challenge?', 'Make a real effort to tune into how others are feeling?', 'Adjust your behaviour depending on who you are with?', and 'Experience surprise at how you react to certain situations?'. At the bottom, there are 'Back' and 'Next' buttons.

3. The unique programme of behavioural prompts (Do's) based on the person's answers to the diagnostic questions

After completing the diagnostic questions each person's unique programme is created by our system. For each question there are three alternative 'Do's' tailored to the different development needs of individuals. The appropriate ones for each person are delivered over the course of three weeks by email, text, and/or app notification.

For example:

How often do you:	NEVER	SOMETIMES	A LOT
do something that makes you feel good about the future?	DO. Are you living in the now? Do one thing for your future-self today. Take the first step towards a goal. Write an action plan, make a call or reservation.	DO. Take the first step today. Think of a goal you're aiming for. Do one thing to get started. Clear a space, make a call, fill in that form, tell others.	DO. Here's a way to be more 'in the moment'. Take a few minutes out and make a self-portrait using whatever materials are to hand. Create, don't judge, enjoy!

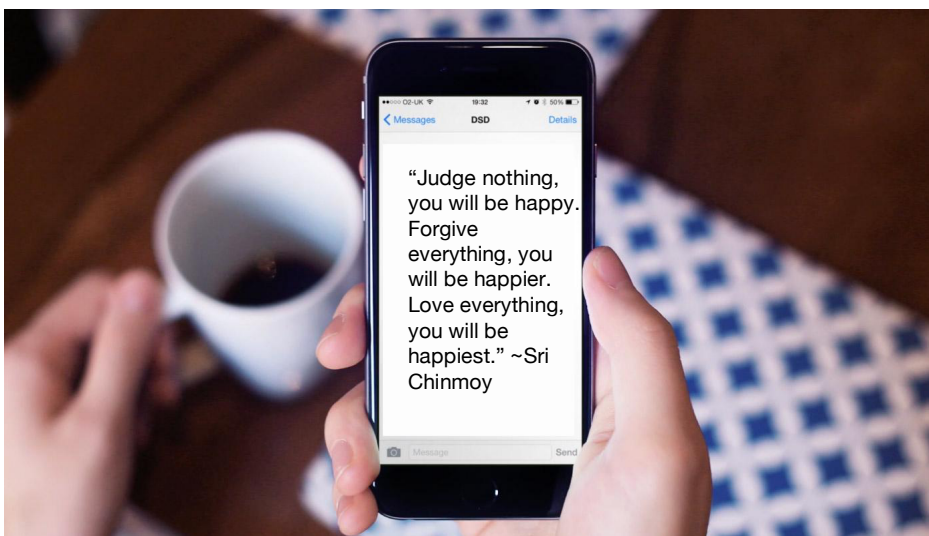
4. A starter Do that everyone signing up for the programme receives

Example:

Befriend a Stranger Day. Talk to 3 new people today, e.g. bus driver, street vendor, barista, homeless person, say Hello to a new neighbour.

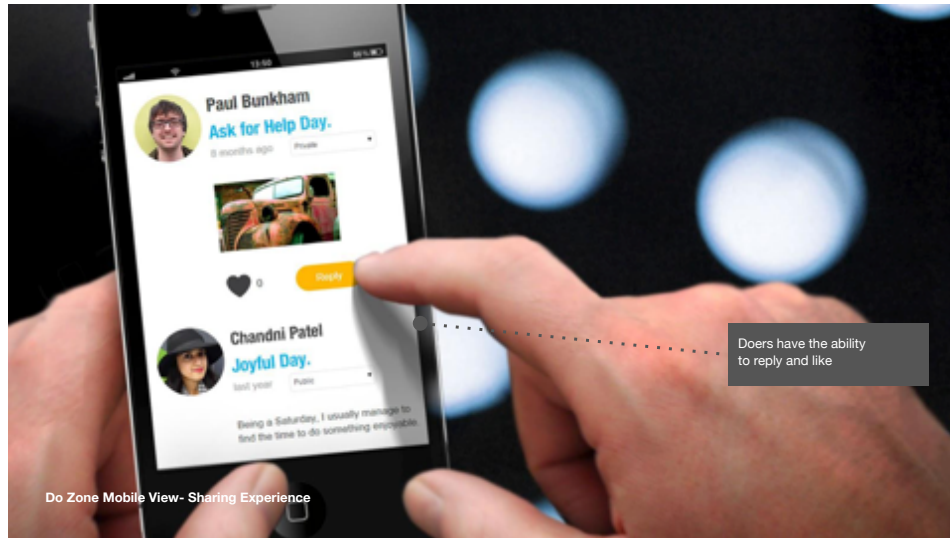
5. On-going motivational messages and support

Throughout their programme, as well as Do's, the person receives regular motivational messages, as well as links to useful resources and a free eBook.

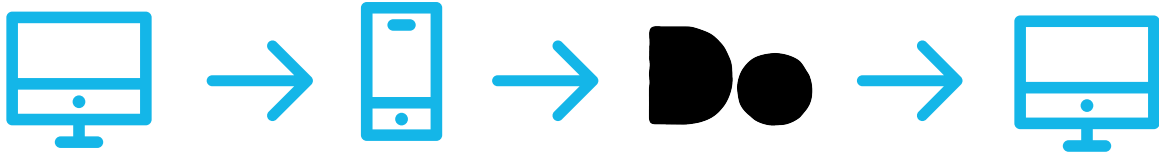


6. An online sharing community

In the Do Zone (via app or online) the person can see all of their Do's, report on them, leave comments, share and get support from others on the programme.



The simple steps to doing something different



Complete diagnostic
Online so programme
Is tailored to you

Get texts to
help you do
things differently

Share in Do Zone
your experience with
others on your
Programme

Complete diagnostic
again, see what's
changed

Do Something Different was developed by psychologists Professor Ben (C) Fletcher and Professor Karen Pine, whose research shows that most people's everyday behaviours are automatic, driven by habit and context, not by rational decisions. In attempting to understand and resolve the barriers that prevent people changing Do Something Different takes account of the limitations of the human mind revealed by behavioural science. This involves understanding how to influence people's automatic choices and break habits to produce beneficial outcomes, both for the individual and for society generally.

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