



the Joy Map



A simple guide to finding more joy
and contentment in everyday life.

by Sheridan Stewart



Getting Started:

Notice What Lights You Up

Joy often gets treated like a destination we'll arrive at once life becomes less busy, less complicated or more perfect.

But life is always offering tiny glimmers, little markers along the path that quietly point us toward greater joy and contentment.

The Joy Map is an invitation to start noticing them.



1. Noticing

Noticing is where the map begins. What gives you tiny moments of aliveness or contentment?

- morning sunlight through a window
- the first sip of coffee
- drinking from a beautiful cup, mug or glass
- hearing birdsong or a favourite piece of music
- *witnessing a beautiful sunrise or sunset*
- *laughing with a friend*
- *being greeted by your dog (even when you haven't been gone for long!)*

Tiny things count.

Noticing these glimmers is an act of mindfulness, and they can become tiny lanterns lighting the path ahead. They are the opposite of red flags that warn us of danger. The more we notice what is good, nourishing and life-giving, the more we begin to experience joy.

P.S. If you're not sure where to begin, start with the natural world



2. Lean In

When you notice something joyful and nourishing, stay there a little longer.

Instead of rushing through the moment, linger.

"Can I give this moment 30 more seconds?"

- Pause to really savour your first cuppa of the day.
- Pause for a few seconds to take in the scenery.
- Turn your speakers up and lean into a favourite tune or switch them off altogether and listen to the breeze.



3. Mine the Gold

Think back across your life.

What once brought you joy that quietly drifted away?

Examples

- painting
- writing
- gardening
- reading for pleasure
- dancing
- long walks

Sometimes joy isn't lost at all.

Sometimes it's simply waiting under a thin layer of dust.



4. Schedule Joy

We schedule meetings, appointments and errands. Joy often gets treated as “when I have some spare time”, but spare time can feel surprisingly scarce and even when a little space appears, we’re often too depleted or distracted to use it in ways that nourish us.

Choose one small joyful act and put it in your calendar.

Examples

- **8:15–8:30 a.m. Monday**
Leave for work 15 minutes early so I can make a cup of tea before my first meeting
- **10.30–11 a.m. Saturday**
Plant some daffodil bulbs

N.B. Research published in the British Journal of Health Psychology found that 91% of people who wrote down an exact plan of when and where they would exercise followed through, compared with just 38% of the control group.



5. Practice Gratitude

Notice what joy is already here.

Not forced positivity.

Not pretending everything is wonderful.

Just noticing what is.

Consider creating a gratitude practice.

Many people find it helpful to take a few minutes at the beginning or end of the day to acknowledge what was good. You might even like to start a gratitude journal, although simply paying attention and taking a moment to appreciate what is already here can be enough.



6. Celebrate Your Wins – all of them!

Finished the thing?

Made the call?

Went for the walk?

You did it, let's celebrate! When our wins go unnoticed, we risk devaluing our efforts, a little pause where we honour what we've achieved gives us the fuel to continue.

These are all beautiful ways to celebrate, with years of tradition behind them. But if we're celebrating every tiny win, that's a lot of cake... and that journey may take an unexpected turn.

Here are a few simple ways to celebrate:

- Tick it off your to-do list
- Use a coloured pen
- Add a sticker that makes you smile
- Text a friend "I did it!" with a celebratory emoji
- Or simply pause with a cuppa and acknowledge what you've done.

NOTE: In the Harvard Business Review article, Celebrate to Win, Whitney Johnson states, "Just as the accomplishments we celebrate don't have to be large, our celebrations don't have to be grandiose; they just need to be meaningful."



7. Celebrate Others: The Ripple Effect of Joy

Celebrate someone else's courage, effort or progress.

We all know perfection is unobtainable and that focusing on progress is far more positive and productive, right?

The other killjoy is: comparison.

Comparison can quietly steal the colour from our own experience. Sometimes it shows up as criticism and sometimes it appears because another person is reflecting something we long for ourselves.

One gentle way to shift this is to move from comparison to appreciation

For example, you see someone with an enviable physique... Instead of:

“That lucky person... I’ll never have that.”

Try: “Look at that strong, capable body. Humans really are remarkable.”

Celebrating others doesn’t take anything away from us. It often expands our own capacity for joy too.



I hope you've enjoyed exploring these tiny, yet powerful, suggestions of how you can enhance joy every day.

P.S The Joy Map is simply a place to begin. If you'd like to explore a little further, I'd love you to join me for **21% More Joy in 21 Days.**

<https://sheridanstewart.com/programs-joyclub>

You
Are
Enough

Sheridan

