

# Lauderdale Wellness News

A Monthly Newsletter for the Friends and Clients of Lauderdale Wellness Center

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“I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work” – *Thomas Edison*

## Have Researchers Discovered The Secret Formula To Happiness?

***Plus:* The ONE SIMPLE CHANGE That Could  
Reduce Obesity In The U.S. By 18%**



**L**auderdale – If you want to live a happy and healthy life, then reading the next two pages may help put you on *that* path... fast. Sound too hard to believe? Sure it does. *Especially* with all the “doom and gloom” our economy and country is facing right now.

But the truth is: most of the time, achieving success and happiness is actually easier than *achieving* failure and despair. And...

It is ALWAYS a choice.

### **A Choice That You Can Make Right Now**

What's that, you want proof? Sure thing, here is some amazing and interesting PROOF.

According to a December 5<sup>th</sup> article in Reuters, happiness is *contagious!*

**Here's exactly what that means:** Not too long ago, a team of researchers found smoking and obesity spreads in social circles. Basically, if you have friends who smoke and are obese, you are more likely to smoke and be obese too.

That was *bad news*. But now, the same team of researchers has *GREAT NEWS!*

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, in the British Medical Journal they revealed that getting connected to happy people improves your own happiness.

**Here's how they came up with this conclusion... this is pretty incredible:** Nicholas Christaki (a professor of medical sociology at Harvard Medical School in Boston) and James Fowler (a political scientist at the University of California, San Diego) used data from a huge health study that began in 1948. The study is called the Framingham Heart Study.

Data was kept on 4,700 children of the volunteers of that study.

Volunteers gave many types of personal information over the years including: births, deaths, marriages, divorces, etc.

But what seems to be one of the most important types of information gathered was their list of personal contacts: Personal friends, co-workers and neighbors.

Then Christaki and Fowler measured happiness using a basic four-question survey.

Subjects were asked how often during the past week:

- (1) **They enjoyed life.**
- (2) **They were happy.**
- (3) **They felt hopeful about the future.**
- (4) **They felt that they were as good as other people.**

And the results were simple: 60% with high scores were rated as “happy,” while the rest were “unhappy.”

That's pretty straight forward and simple. But here's where it gets...

### **REALLY INTERESTING...**

The happiest people had something in common: *they had the greatest number of happy people in their social network.*

In other words, *the* people with the most friends, spouses, relatives, etc. who were happy were also *the* happiest people.

"Each additional happy person makes you happier," Christakis said.

"Imagine that I am connected to you and you are connected to others and others are connected to still

others. It is this fabric of humanity, like an American patch quilt."

WOW! Researchers saying we are really all connected! We are not separate entities ...

### **WE ARE LINKED!!!!**

He went on to say that on our "patch quilt," we are surrounded by all of our connections (other patches). These patches are either happy or not happy.

If *happy* patches surround us, then we are happy. Conversely, if *unhappy* patches surround us, then we are unhappy.

Pretty simple – isn't it? So simple, we probably didn't need a Harvard researcher to tell us that we are all connected and having happy people around us makes us happy and sad people make us sad, right?

Well, here's something fascinating about that.

The research showed if a person in your social circle is happy, then your happiness increases 15%. But a negative or unhappy person in your social circle only decreases your happiness by 7%.

### **One Bad Apple Does NOT Spoil the Bunch!!!**

At least not the entire bunch!

You would need twice as many "bad apples" as "good apples" to be unhappy yourself. That is good because there seems to be a whole heck of a lot of negativity out there these days.

Now check this out, it's pretty neat: According to the study, if you have a happy friend, it will increase your happiness by 15%. And, if that happy friend has a happy friend (which is a friend of a friend your chances of being happy increase by 10%.

And, if that friend (a friend of a friend of a friend) has a happy friend, your chances increase 6%.

And here may be the most important part of all this for YOU:

According to the Reuter's article, researcher James Fowler said, "Among other benefits, happiness has been shown to have an important effect on reduced mortality, pain reduction, and improved cardiac function. So better understanding of how happiness spreads can help us learn how to promote a healthier society."

Here's something that fits the economic times of today: In 1984, a study found that saving \$5,000 increased a person's chances of becoming happy by

2%. So, according to Christakis, "a happy friend is worth \$20,000."

Is that number adjusted for inflation? Who knows... or cares!!! ☺

Now for...

### **One Simple Change That Could Reduce Obesity In The U.S. By 18%**

According to a November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008 article in Science Daily: "A ban on fast food advertisements in the United States could reduce the number of overweight children by as much as 18 percent, according to a new study being published this month in the Journal of Law and Economics. The study also reports that eliminating the tax deductibility associated with television advertising would result in a reduction of childhood obesity, though in smaller numbers."

The article goes on to mention that eliminating the tax deductibility of food advertising from corporations would effectively raise the price of advertising by 54%.

It is clear the effects of childhood obesity are staggering. According to a December 13, 2008 article on Dr. Joseph Mercola's website: "Research indicates that there is an 80 percent chance an overweight adolescent will be an obese adult. Over 300,000 deaths can be attributed to obesity and weight in the United States every year."

**But the fundamental question is:** Is it the government's job to regulate good food from bad and, therefore, who can advertise and who can't? Or is it a parent's job and responsibility to raise and educate their child? At this very moment, New York State is proposing "fat taxes." One example is a 15% tax on non-diet soda. Somehow they have concluded that the chemicals in diet soda are better than the sugar in non-diet varieties. Many would disagree. And that is not to say non-diet sodas are good. But we must be careful whom we let decide for us what is *good* and what is *bad*, and what we can and cannot advertise and eventually eat.

Bottom line: You have a brain and your television has an on/off button.

# How 62 Seconds Changed a Life, And An Entire Town

If you had a magic wand and could do whatever you wanted with it, what would you do?

Would you pay off your mortgage? Make yourself younger? Get a new car? Or would you do something for someone else who needs it more?

Tough question.

Well, what if I told you the residents of a small, suburban Massachusetts town came together to create such a proverbial “magic wand” and waved it to change the life of a remarkable young man? And once you read this story, you will know how to use a magic wand... if you ever get your hands on one.

Here’s the story...

With 62 seconds left in the game, Norwell’s boy’s basketball Coach John Willis made a decision that will ensure his memory and legacy as a great man lives on forever.

He yelled to Senior Guard, Andrew Lawson, and told him he was going in the game. Lawson, only 5’4” substituted in for one of his best friends... who hugged him and rubbed his head as Lawson sprinted out on the court.

With only 1:02 left in the game... what was the big deal?

As it turns out, Andrew scored a lay-up in that 1:02 and the gymnasium went crazy as Norwell defeated Hanover 68-51 and stayed unbeaten in its last 18 games.

Even more impressive, Andrew has Down’s syndrome. If it were up to some people... he never would have gotten *that* chance.

Andrew’s parents, Jim and Regina Lawson, always wanted the best for their son. Even though most Down’s syndrome children do not attend public school, they wanted the optimal learning environment for Andrew.

They expected the best out of Andrew and out of his school. With hard work and cooperation, they discovered ways for Andrew to coordinate his classes and learn at his own pace.

But maybe even more important than the “scholarly” education Andrew received was the camaraderie he experienced as an entire town came together to share in his (and their) dreams.

Andrew first joined the soccer team and his teammates all helped out to make sure he got to practice. During the fall of his senior year, Andrew scored a goal on a penalty kick and was carried off the field while the fans went crazy.

And besides his famous 1:02 lay-up, Andrew started a basketball game and scored 11 points in 3 minutes in what is now called “Andrew’s Quarter.”

When Andrew came out of that game, members of the opposing team came over to congratulate him.

There is a video of “Andrew’s Quarter” on the internet at:

<http://www.brightcove.tv/title.jsp?title=1418562363&channel=245991542>

It might be quicker to Google “Andrew Lawson” than trying to type that in, but either way, it is well worth the effort to see Andrew and the entire town that supported him in action.

Andrew was also featured on HBO’s hit series, *Real Sports*. The most amazing part on the show was how his classmates all loved Andrew. They cheered him in the hallways and hugged him whenever he was around.

With so many stories about teenagers bullying other teens (in some cases with the parents’ help!) even to the point of suicide... this was even more remarkable.

Andrew’s parents were quick to thank everyone who played a role in making Andrew’s (and their) dreams come true over those 4 years. And they hope others will see through Andrew’s experience what can actually be achieved. Andrew’s acceptance in school made it easier to be accepted socially. And Andrew was not the only one that benefited from those 4 years. “It’s not ‘Oh, isn’t Andrew lucky,’” Andrew’s mother said. “It’s ‘Aren’t we lucky to have Andrew.’” Who changed more... Andrew... or the town?

Andrew graduated from high school last spring and wants to move away from home and live on his own.

With what he has accomplished already, it would not be prudent to bet against him.

**Did You Know?... 12 Facts You Probably Never Knew About Vitamin D and Sunlight Exposure-** *Vitamin D prevents osteoporosis, depression, prostate cancer, breast cancer, and even effects diabetes and obesity. Vitamin D is perhaps the single most underrated nutrient in the world of nutrition. That's probably because it's free: your body makes it when sunlight touches your skin. Drug companies can't sell you sunlight, so there's no promotion of its health benefits. Truth is, most people don't know the real story on Vitamin D and health.*

1. Vitamin D is produced by your skin in response to exposure to ultraviolet radiation from natural sunlight.
2. The healing rays of natural sunlight (that generate Vitamin D in your skin) cannot penetrate glass. So you don't generate Vitamin D when sitting in your car or home.
3. It is nearly impossible to get adequate amounts of Vitamin D from your diet. Sunlight exposure is the only reliable way to generate Vitamin D in your own body.
4. A person would have to drink 10 tall glasses of Vitamin D fortified milk each day just to get minimum levels of Vitamin D into their diet.
5. The further you live from the equator, the longer exposure you need to the sun in order to generate Vitamin D. Canada, the UK and most U.S. states are far from the equator.
6. People with dark skin pigmentation may need 20 - 30 times as much exposure to sunlight as fair skinned people to generate the same amount of Vitamin D.
7. Sufficient levels of Vitamin D are crucial for calcium absorption in your intestines. Without sufficient Vitamin D, your body cannot absorb calcium, rendering calcium supplements useless.
8. Chronic Vitamin D deficiency cannot be reversed overnight: it takes months of Vitamin D supplementation and sunlight exposure to rebuild the body's bones and nervous system.
9. It is impossible to generate too much Vitamin D in your body from sunlight exposure: your body will self-regulate and only generate what it needs.
10. Vitamin D is "activated" in your body by your kidneys and liver before it can be used. Having kidney disease or liver damage can greatly impair your body's ability to activate circulating Vitamin D.
11. While sunscreen protects your skin from the sun, it also prevents the production of vitamin D.
12. Here in Minnesota, we only get the sunlight required to make adequate vitamin D for a few months out of the year. Even then, we need a significant amount of skin exposed to the sun... Your face and forearms are probably not enough. So for many of us a daily vitamin D supplement should be added to our daily regimen.

*This information should not be substituted for medical or chiropractic advice. Any and all health care concerns, decisions, and actions must be done through the advice and counsel of a healthcare professional who is familiar with your updated medical history. We cannot be held responsible for actions you may take without a thorough exam or appropriate referral. If you have any further concerns or questions, please call our office at (651)917-9800*