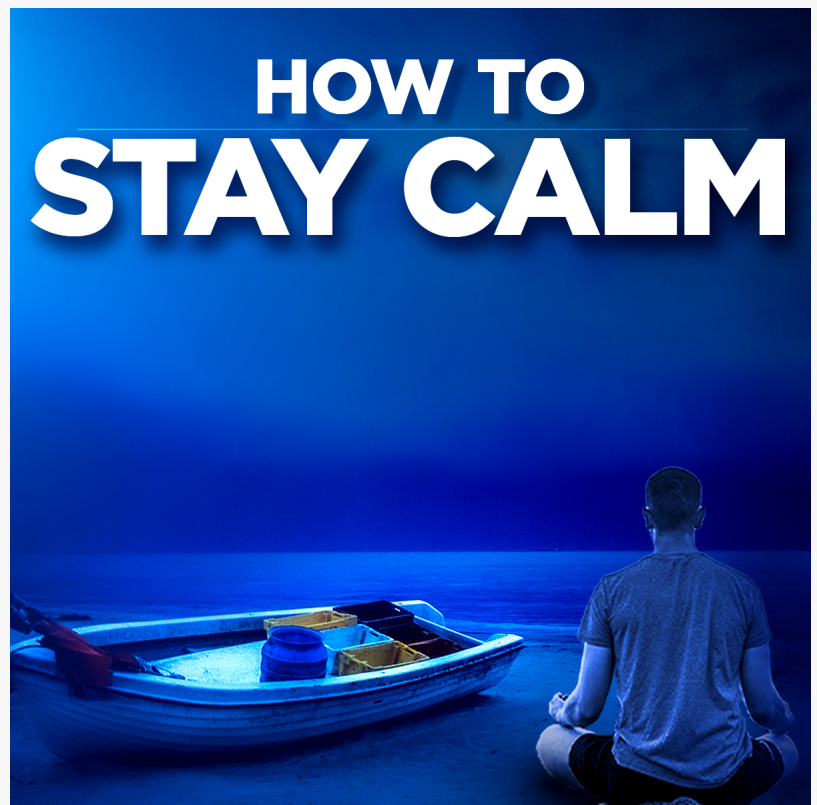


## How to Stay Calm

*We can choose tranquility and acceptance, or pain and upsetness.*

NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA , USA, March 5, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- How is it possible that two people can be in the exact same situation, and yet one person seems unhappy while the other person seems content, or even cheerful? For example, when I was in college, two of my friends were in the same class. At the end of the semester, they both received B's, and one of my friends was really upset with this grade, while the other friend was delighted. How is that possible? If we live long enough, we'll eventually have a collection of examples similar to this one, meaning two people we know experience the same thing but have very different feelings and reactions.



How To Stay Calm

A common scenario that elicits a wide range of reactions is divorce. One person may get divorced and feel depressed for months, sometimes years. But another person who gets divorced may struggle at first, but then bounces back fairly quickly and may even welcome this change into their life. Another common scenario is losing a job. To some people, this loss is devastating, and it may take months to regain the energy to look for a job again. To other people, this obviously conjures up some feelings of loss, but also some feelings of hope and perhaps even excitement at the idea of embarking on a new adventure.

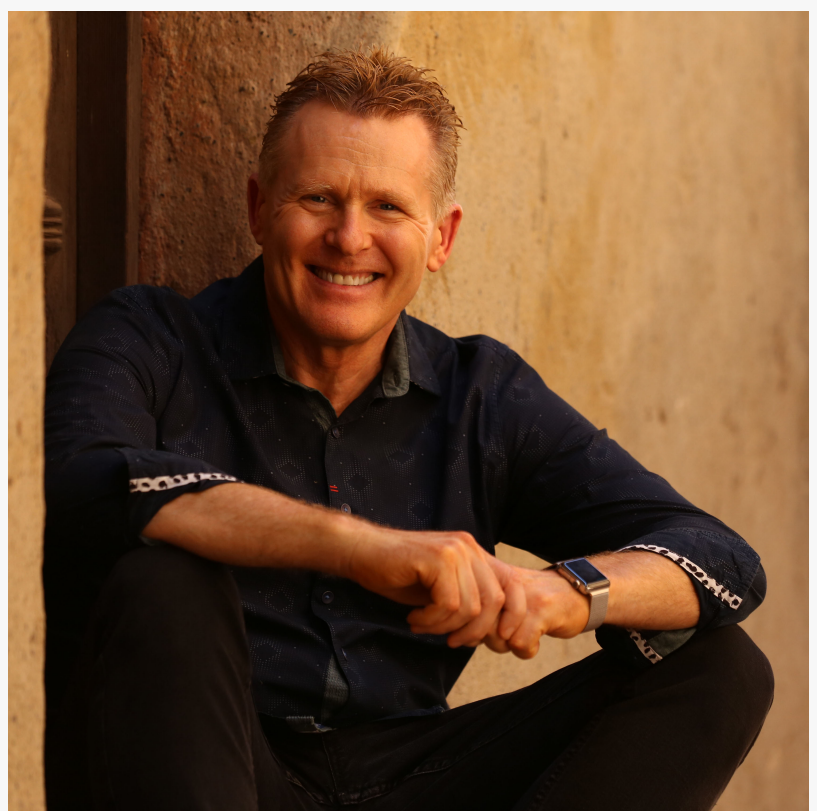
Impatience is a universal feeling we can recognize pretty easily. I'm sure most of you reading this have been at a store or restaurant and have had to wait unexpectedly. You will most likely see two different kinds of people in this scenario - one person who is angry or upset at the inconvenience, and another person who uses this time to do something else. They might get on their phone and answer some emails or strike up a conversation with the stranger next to them. There may have been instances that you were the impatient, angry person, while other times

you were the patient person who chose to simply wait their turn.

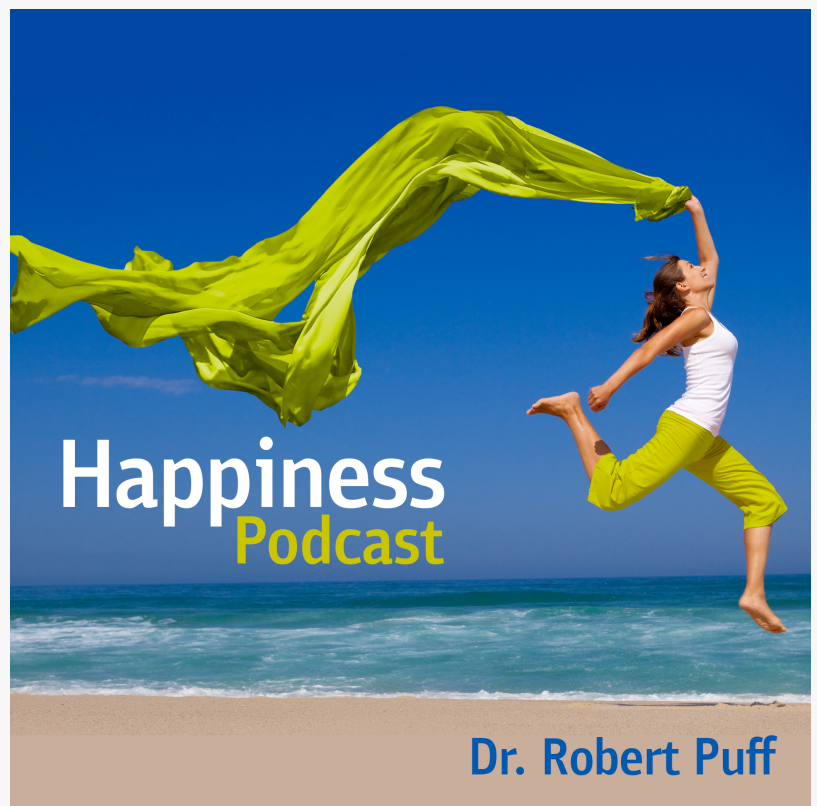
Why is it the case that sometimes we can accept the situation we're currently in and move on, while other times we get really angry?

Sometimes, the anger we feel can seem beyond our control. But to lead a [happier life](#), it's important to understand how to subdue our anger and remain calm in situations that can evoke strong negative emotions. We know it's possible because we have witnessed other people be unbothered in situations that make other people angry. Or perhaps we know from personal experience that sometimes we are capable of keeping our cool while other times it's more difficult, or after the fact, we realize that we shouldn't have lost our temper. Oftentimes we land on this conclusion, even though our anger felt necessary and justified at the time. So how do we learn how to be calm and not let our own reactions ruin our day?

In the play Hamlet, William Shakespeare writes, "Why then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so. To me, it is a prison. Well, then, it isn't one to you, since nothing is really good or bad in itself. It's all what the person thinks about it." What Shakespeare is saying is that our thoughts, the way that we evaluate what is happening, are the cause of our suffering, or the lack thereof.



Dr. Robert Puff, Ph.D.



Happiness Podcast

Let's revisit the example of my two friends from college. The one friend who was so embarrassed

and upset by her B grade was expecting an A. She had placed a lot of weight on this A because she was planning on applying to graduate school the following year, and it was important to her that she received an A in this class to increase her chances of being accepted. My other friend did not place the same pressure on herself. Her only goal was to simply graduate and her expectation was to receive a C or above in each class. So when she got a B, she was content, even delighted, because this grade exceeded her expectations.

Our thoughts and expectations around a certain event or outcome cause us to become upset and react, not the situation itself. Let's break this down a bit more.

I've spent decades of my career working with people who are facing death. Whether they are young, middle age, or older, everyone chooses to approach their death in different ways. For many people, their distress and suffering take away from the possibility of living well, no matter how much longer that is. While other people are more accepting of their death and choose to live life to the fullest, even though it might end quicker than they had anticipated.

There is a choice in every situation. We can choose tranquility and acceptance, or pain and upsetness. Our negative emotions aren't solely caused by the situation, but rather our own thoughts shape how we feel. Once we understand this, we have the opportunity to gain control over our suffering.

Let's talk about how we implement not getting upset at a practical level.

When you first begin to feel upset, it's important to ask yourself 'what am I thinking that is causing me to be upset?' This helps separate your emotional reaction from the current situation. This may seem counterintuitive at first because most of us blame our feelings and reactions on the situation that caused them. However, our thoughts have a lot of power over us! Just like William Shakespeare said years ago, "There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so." We are in control of assigning a feeling or thought to a situation, meaning we have the opportunity to re-assign a positive, or neutral, feeling to a situation that traditionally makes us upset.

After we examine our thoughts, the next step is to explore if these thoughts are serving or helping us. Our thoughts might be helpful in the sense that they could protect us from experiencing something painful. But, they could also cause unnecessary suffering. For example, losing your job is a universally unfortunate and scary thing. Most people would be very upset by this, which is completely justified. In these instances where our thoughts and feelings are justified, it's still important to recognize that our feelings are preceded by our thoughts. So in this case, we have the opportunity of making a bad situation worse by worrying about things that haven't happened yet. For example, you might tailspin down a negative path worrying about all the what-ifs - what if I don't find another job? What if I can't pay my rent in a few months? These thoughts are valid, but they could also contribute to your distress. Another way to think and react in this situation is to look at the facts - I lost my job today, the only thing I can do right now is pack up my things and drive home. Once I'm home and I've processed this, I'll come up with a

plan. We are not worrying about things that have not happened yet, we are solely focusing on the here and now.

An important thing to remember when we're feeling distressed or out of control is this: I may not have control over the external world, but I do have control over the internal world. Meaning, I can't control everything that happens to me, but I do have a say in how I react to things. If I'm feeling upset, I have the power to examine my own thoughts and ask myself if they're serving me. Once we realize that accessing positive or neutral thoughts is a choice, we begin to gain control of our internal lives and can lead ourselves down a path of peace and [happiness](#).

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About the [Happiness Podcast](#):

Do you ever wonder what it takes to lead a peaceful, happy life? Are you curious about the specific steps involved in a self-actualized, limitless life? Are you struggling with anxiety or depression? Or are you just plain tired and want some help? We explore all these concerns and more every week on the Happiness Podcast, which has been downloaded over 9 million times since its inception. Happiness does not happen by chance, but because we take specific actions in our lives to create it.

Dr. Robert Puff, Ph.D., author of 13 books, TV show host, Psychology Today blogger, and corporate trainer, has been studying the actions it takes to reach the highest levels of human achievement for decades, and he wants to share what he knows with you. Come and explore, along with millions of others from the Happiness Podcast, Dr. Puff books and Psychology Today blog, private clients and corporate workshop attendees, the specific steps to take so that you can soar in your life.

To learn more, go to: <https://www.HappinessPodcast.org>

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