

Un/Happy Marriage?

Do you think people just wake up one day and suddenly find themselves in a happy marriage?

Having a happy marriage is an intentional choice BUT it isn't as easy as it sounds because of something called *negativity bias*.

Our brain reacts more strongly (and is likelier to remember) negative/painful experiences.

Negativity bias is the brain's way of keeping us out of harm's way, which is why we don't touch a hot stove twice, and shut down when hurt by love.

Negativity bias plays an important role in our health and happiness as long as we manage it instead of letting it control us blindly.

You can override negativity bias by training the brain to focus on little, positive experiences.

Overriding Negativity Bias

Enjoy the present moment – All we have is now. To be happy, stop living in the past or future, and embrace the present moment. Be grateful for your blessings right now while working for a better tomorrow.

Appreciate the little things – Small, positive experiences are happening around us all of the time, but we miss them because of negativity bias and our brain trying to protect us. Choose to intentionally focus on what's right instead of what's wrong. Appreciate the little things, like spending time with kids or a sunset walk.

There's always tomorrow – Squeezing too much into one day is a recipe for being miserable. Give your best effort today by making small improvements. Pick up where you left off tomorrow.

Be the person you want to be – Do you feel as if your current situation is holding you back from being the person you want to be? Perhaps you feel that your current financial situation is keeping you from being adventurous and having fun as a couple. Please realize that you can be the person you want to be regardless of your current situation. You can have fun and be adventurous. Maybe you won't be cage diving with Great White sharks off of Africa next month but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy local/regional adventures.

If you want a happy marriage, find things to be happy about! Recondition your brain. Instead of automatically focusing on pain and problems, which is super easy by the way and comes naturally, intentionally choose to focus on all of the little precious gifts life is blessing you with right now.

Do this and maybe, *just maybe*, one day you will wake and find yourself in a happy marriage.

Until next time, this is Mike Tucker and I want YOU to be mad about marriage!