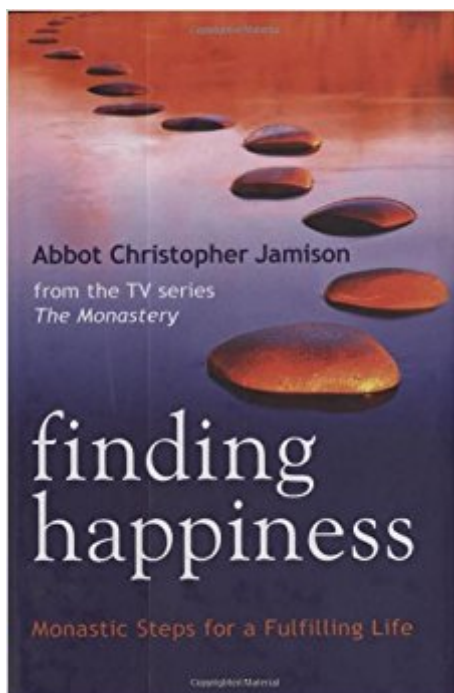


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# Finding Happiness: Monastic Steps For A Fulfilling Life



## Synopsis

Why is being happy such an imperative in our world today? What is the meaning of happiness? In this book Abbot Christopher Jamison turns to monastic wisdom for answers. He explains that, in essence, happiness is a gift not an achievement. It is the fruit of giving and receiving blessings. Following the same accessible and engaging format of his previous book, *Finding Sanctuary*, Abbot Christopher examines different aspects of happiness and tells us what monastic wisdom has to say about them. In doing so, he offers steps for the journey of finding happiness. Christopher Jamison is abbot of Worth Abbey, a Benedictine monastery near London. He is also president of the International Commission on Benedictine Education and sits on the Council of the alliance for International Monasticism, a body that promotes links between monasteries across the North/South divide. He is author of *Finding Sanctuary: Monastic Steps for Everyday Life* and was the host of the popular BBC documentary series *The Monastery*. Watch and listen to what Abbot Christopher Jamison has to say about his book *Finding Happiness*"

## Book Information

Hardcover: 192 pages

Publisher: Liturgical Press (February 1, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0814618782

ISBN-13: 978-0814618783

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #485,166 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #113 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Monasticism & Asceticism](#) #114 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Worship & Devotion > Monasticism & Asceticism](#) #122 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Catholicism > Self Help](#)

## Customer Reviews

Jamison's book is a treasure, for it combines insights from philosophy, monastic sources, psychology and literature, as also stories of human struggles. *Horizons Finding Happiness . . .* is a map of the soul designed for our age: wise, lucid, inspiring, rich; a treasure-chest of gems that do not merely glitter. *The Way* This is a good book that challenges the mind because it is so clearly written. *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* This book is highly recommended to those looking for a book on

spirituality that is based on an ancient and tried tradition. American Benedictine Review  
Finding Happiness: Monastic Steps to a Fulfilling Life takes the reader through a very personalized journey of the soul and spirit. Lost in Books The genius of this work lies in its integration of classical thought (Plato, Aristotle, and Cassian) with more current movements (e.g., cognitive behavior therapy, 12-step programs). Author Christopher Jamison, abbot of the Benedictine monastery in Sussex, holds these frames of reference in delicate balance; the resulting creative tension gives birth to a useful guide to living well. . . . This book is solid food for &#145;personal soul-recovery. &#145; Prairie Messenger It is rewarding to read this lovely book because through it one touches base with oneself as being human and Christian. Through the text the author gently nudges the reader forward once again on the path of effort and virtue. . . . There is a wise Christian behavioral psychology being presented here and one experiences a certain lightness in reading it. For you are advised to &#145;travel light, &#145; to not be dependent on others for one's happiness. And your journey is not meant to be burdensome as there will always be &#145;a word to live by &#145; when one is in touch with the Scriptures. The Furrow [Reading] Finding Happiness has been a transforming experience, calling me to think deeply about the life I'm living and also confirming what I know and am currently doing. Karen O'Connor, Author, Writing Mentor, and Speaker

Christopher Jamison is former abbot of Worth Abbey, a Benedictine monastery near London. He is also president of the International Commission on Benedictine Education and sits on the Council of the Alliance for International Monasticism, a body that promotes links between monasteries across the North/South divide. He is author of Finding Sanctuary: Monastic Steps for Everyday Life and was the host of the popular BBC documentary series The Monastery.

I always like the personal true story from an honest people. This is a true story from an honest people. So it is believable and encouraging.

As expected - as advertised - delivered in a timely manner...

Interesting

Highly recommended for anyone searching for long lasting happiness in life.

Here are my thoughts, hoping to help others. I bought both this and Finding Sanctuary, and some of you who can only get one might be wondering which to choose. Finding Sanctuary sounds more serious than Finding Happiness, but I found that the second book, while both are worthwhile, had more "meat on the bones". If you are just getting interested in Benedictine thought and are looking to get your feet wet, the first one is fine, but if you have already done some amount of reading about Benedict, the Rule, and even Lectio Divina, I would suggest you go right to Finding Happiness. I feel it has more practical help for you in taking more steps into that life. There really is a lot here that you might not have read elsewhere. I hope this helps anyone making their decision. I certainly think that if I had gotten only one, this would have been the one I benefited from the most.

This is a follow-up to FINDING SANCTUARY by Abbot Christopher Jamison, and is just as good. Jamison starts with an interesting "history" of happiness and from there develops a strong case for the stepping stones to living a fulfilled life, by overcoming the 8 negative thoughts. These are acedia (sloth), gluttony, lust, greed, anger, sadness, vanity and pride. Astute readers will notice that one of the original 7 deadly sins, ENVY, isn't on the list. The way to overcome the negative thoughts is by practicing the corresponding 8 virtues, which are spiritual awareness, moderation, chaste love, generosity, gentleness, gladness, magnanimity, and humility. The chapters are all well written and easy to comprehend. The one on Sadness is the best, with Jamison keenly noting that sadness can indeed be "survived." The one thing I would disagree with is that anger and sadness are automatically negative thoughts. Some anger is plainly wrong and sinful, but some isn't. And sometimes we have clearly valid reasons for being sad. Ultimately, as Jamison points out, Happiness isn't "...an object to be grasped but a lifelong process that culminates in a happy death." (pg.177) This is an easy to read book based on the writings of John Cassian, interspersed with the Abbot's observations living in Sussex. Those with a contemplative bent will benefit greatly but also anyone who wishes to live a more fulfilled life. I highly recommend it.

Finding Happiness is one of those rare gems of a book that serenely guides you through the trials of modern day life. Father Jamison takes the reader hand in hand to genuine inner joy. "Are monks happy?" His reply, "They are not unhappy." That grabbed me straight away, along with his question about having a happy death! Having never thought about death being happy, on the rare occasions I think about death. I realised that to have a happy death, equates to having a happy and fulfilled life. With his profound insights, and effective communication, this book remarkably mirrors humanities embedded condition. With such elegance, we're guided through many of the reasons

that make us unhappy. Ultimately the dark clouds dissipate, opening the door to inner happiness, if you so choose... This book is of a solid foundation to make a significant change in your life. Its timing in this troubled era is perfect.

the first part of this book is really good. But the rest of the book just continues about the seven deadly sins. I was hoping for more on the subject of blessing rather than avoiding what causes cursing. this book has been read by my monk friends and they liked it so I guess I will finish the book and get a better understanding of it. Thanks

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