



Teaching Life's Essentials - Happiness

EDUO 9756 1 Semester Credit/Unit

Instructor – Kathy Vining

<mailto:kvining@dominicancaonline.com>

Public Syllabus

Introduction

Welcome to **EDUO 9756**. This class was created as part of a seven course series entitled **Teaching Life's Essentials**. The other courses in the series are:

- **EDUO 9757 Compassion**
- **EDUO 9758 Curiosity**
- **EDUO 9759 Resilience**
- **EDUO 9760 Growth Mindset**
- **EDUO 9761 Inspiration**
- **EDUO 9762 Tolerance**

Isn't it true that great teachers are born not made? We say "not at all". With the guidance of the courses in this series, you can take your teaching to a new level; one that brings the highest degree of satisfaction to yourself and your students. Great teachers are remembered not for the knowledge they impart but for the way they encourage and lift their students' achievement, not just in a subject, but in the important skills of living a fulfilling life. These skills of happiness, of inspiration, compassion, curiosity and resilience are essential for both the learner and the teacher. This course will bring research to inform along with techniques and activities to imbue your delivery of required curriculum with the essence of greatness-both yours and your students'.

Teaching Life's Essentials - Happiness

Course Description

Teachers will read and view research that confirms the importance of developing certain skills and practices to bring about happiness. Following directed practice activities they will engage in a positive attitude and life style that can serve as a model for their students.

Course Goal

To help teachers attain a happy life style that can be modeled to their students

Course Objectives

The teacher will:

1. Read and study given website resources
2. Practice skills that can lead to a happy life style
3. Model their happy life style to their students
4. Project success in creating a happy classroom
5. Communicate with other teachers about happiness

Grading Rubric

Exemplary: A+ to A-	Acceptable: B+ to B-	Unacceptable:
Reflective, thoughtful ideas relevant to the assignment are clearly stated	Satisfactorily completes all assignment	Ideas are not clear or relevant
Very well organized	Generally well organized	Shows little or no organization
Responses show that resources have been well understood	Responses show that resources were read	Few or no facts or specific details from the resources
Free of spelling and/or grammatical errors	Writing contains a few spelling and/or grammatical errors	Numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors make the writing difficult to read

Course Requirements

1. Respond to all *inquiries* in Course Assignments
2. Read all course website links
3. Post at least three comments on the online Forum to other class participants
4. Respond to least one Forum post made by another class participant

Happiness is a skill which can, with practice, become a habit.

Course Assignments

A full list of Resources, Activities and Lesson Plans will be in the actual course Syllabus.

How to Submit Coursework

Preparation: Prepare assignments in either Word or PDF formatting. Mac users of Page can save their work as a Word file. Make sure you place your full name, course number and assignment category at the top of each page. Place all R assignments in one document. Do the same for all A and B assignments.

Document names: Name each document with your last name and assignment letter (BrownAssignmentsR; BrownAssignmentsA; BrownAssignmentsB).

Dropboxes: Place each completed document in the corresponding Dropbox found on the course Moodle page. You will receive feedback from your instructor, but don't wait for it to continue with your coursework.

Forum Postings: Submit all Forum postings using the Forum found on the course Moodle page. Label each discussion post with the number of the assignment it fulfills.

Resources Links

1. 5 Myths of Positive Psychology
2. 10 Ways to Trick Yourself into Being Happy
3. 10 Common Mistakes That Prevent You From Being Happy and Healthy Today
4. Is There a Dark Side to Happiness

Read and Study all of the articles in the Resources Section above

R1 A, B, C. Choose three of the articles. Write about a page for each, reflecting on the significance of the article to you as a person and as an educator. These will be submitted at the conclusion of your course.

R2. Make at least three posts on the Forum that address the most interesting, challenging or important ideas you found in the Resource articles.

R3. Respond to at least two posts by other students.

Read and study the website links below and then respond to A1 – 11

□ <http://www.thebestbrainpossible.com/happiness-is-a-skill/> □
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ak0-toYTRiE>

For one week **consciously** spend each day being warm and friendly to **EVERYONE** you encounter. Smile and whenever possible make a **positive** comment. Prepare for this endeavor by identifying general statements you can make to strangers – like “How are you today?” If the response is “Fine” you could respond with a smile, “Glad to hear it” and then be on your way. Respond to their children, pets or anything you notice that could make a person feel recognized. Make upbeat small talk with the grocery clerk and every service person you come in contact with. At the end of each of the seven days make comments in a *Positive Comments Journal* regarding your feelings and thoughts about that day and your developing skill.

A1. Submit your *Positive Comments Journal*.

Mirror exercise

The objective is to see yourself as your students see you. Practice greeting your students as you look into a mirror. Study and adjust your facial and body language to correspond in a natural cheerful way with positive and encouraging words. Do the mirror exercise for two minutes. Take a break and repeat for another two minutes. Repeat this routine several times.

A4. How did you feel after completing the mirror exercise?

You cannot afford to lose it in the classroom at any time and you are most vulnerable when a student pushes your buttons. To keep in control during these challenging moments, you must first be fully aware of what pushes your button(s).

A6. List here everything that you can think of (even the most personal insults) that a student could say to you that might cause you to abandon your happy, positive and nurturing self.

You are a role model - BE a happy one – It's contagious!

Read and study the website links below and then respond to B1 – B6

- <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/04/AR2008120403537.html>
- <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/ted-talks-education/speaker/rita-pierson/>
- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stewart-a-swerdlow/creating-your-realityall-_b_1649933.html
- http://www.2knowmyself.com/overcoming_the_fear_of_making_mistakes

Happy teachers model their mistakes by showing that it's ok to make them

A local newspaper has written a story about your class and the main reason that the students in your class are so happy. The thrust of the article is that the students are not afraid to make a mistake. They are not afraid because you have made it ok through the playful way you have acknowledged your own mistakes.

B1. Write the article that appeared in the newspaper

* Have fun with this fantasy assignment. Be imaginative, creative and inspirational. The idea is that projected fantasies can create some reality and that some unhappy school kids are distressed because they live in fear that they are going to make a mistake. You have made them happy because they no longer fear making mistakes. It may be fiction now but it could be reality tomorrow!