

BEING HAPPY

By: Kathy Peterson, President, PeopleWorks, Inc.

"The greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our dispositions and not on our circumstances," Martha Washington once said. A friend shared a story with me that reminded me of how true this is.

The 92-year-old, petite, well-poised, and proud lady, who is fully dressed each morning by eight o'clock, with her hair fashionably combed and make-up perfectly applied, even though she is legally blind, moved to a nursing home today.

Her husband of 70 years recently passed away, making the move necessary. After many hours of waiting patiently in the lobby of the nursing home, she smiled sweetly when told her room was ready.

As she maneuvered her walker to the elevator, I provided a visual description of her tiny room, including the eyelet sheets that had been hung on her window.

"I love it," she stated with the enthusiasm of an eight-year-old having just been presented with a new puppy.

"Mrs. Jones, you haven't seen the room... just wait."

"That doesn't have anything to do with it," she replied. "Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. Whether I like my room or not doesn't depend on how the furniture is arranged... it's how I arrange my mind. I already decided to love it. It's a decision I make every morning when I wake up. I have a choice; I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work, or get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do."

She continued, "Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away just for this time in my life. Old age is like a bank account. You withdraw from what you've put in. So, my advice to you would be to deposit a lot of happiness in the bank account of memories. Thank you for your part in filling my memory bank. I am still depositing."

Now and then it's good to pause in our pursuit of happiness and just focus on being happy. Remember, happiness is your choice. What do you choose today—happiness or misery?

You are welcome to reprint this article in your newsletter or publication. Please add the following when you do (there is also a photo of Kathy available for download at: <http://www.peopleworksinc.com/preprogram.htm>). Thank you!

Kathy Peterson is the owner of PeopleWorks, Inc., which she began in 1998. Since founding PeopleWorks, Kathy has spoken to a variety of audiences and businesses to help them work more effectively with and through people. To find out more, visit her website at: www.peopleworksinc.com.

