

This is Lieutenant Roger McCort from The Salvation Army in Eureka with today's Community Comment.

Some people find Mondays sad or depressing. They might be going back to a job they dislike or perhaps going to school without having finished their homework or maybe they love Winter and just realized that tomorrow is the first day of Spring. Well, whatever your reasons for grumbling may be, you need to let them go! Why? Because today is the International Day of Happiness!

In 2011 the United Nations adopted a resolution which boldly proclaimed the pursuit of happiness to be a fundamental human goal. Acting on that resolution, International Happiness Day began in 2013 as a touchpoint reminding the world that happiness is important in the lives of people everywhere. Yes, even here in Northern California!

If you aren't sure how to be happy on your own, fear not, I have some tools to help move you from grouchy to grinning. Start by taking the happiness pledge. Repeat after me: "I will try / to create more happiness / and less unhappiness / in the world around me."

Great! Now go live that out! How? Here are ten keys to happier living, as provided by the Actions for Happiness Organization:

One: Giving. Doing things for others always results in creating more happiness for yourself, as paradoxical as that may seem.

Two: Relating. Make connection with those around you. How? Practice your listening skills – actually be silent and hear someone out. It goes a long way towards making a meaningful connection.

Three: Exercising. The thought of a walk in the woods or a visit to the gym might make you groan, but actually doing it will make your body happy and the rest of you too.

Four: Awareness. Live your day mindfully. Don't miss the hundreds if not thousands of wonderful things that happen. Small kindnesses, a ray of sunlight, someone who lets you into traffic or even the fact you are breathing.

Five: Try something out. Learning doesn't just happen at a school desk, you know. Studies indicate that keeping your brain active with new things makes you healthier and happier.

Six: Direction. Set some goals. What is one thing you can do in the next six months? What is one you can do before the end of the day?

Seven: Resilience. Hey, sometimes bad things happen, but we choose how we react. If you can't figure out how to change your attitude, choose to ask for help from someone who can teach you.

Eight: Emotional control. Enjoy the little things and be grateful for what you have. Do something that will make you feel good today, like watching a movie, calling a friend, or singing a song.

Nine: Acceptance. This one takes practice! Learn to be comfortable with who you are. Ask a friend you trust to tell you what they think your strengths are and resist the impulse to tell them that they are wrong when they do.

And Ten: embrace Meaning by becoming part of something bigger than just you. Join a club or volunteer at a local church or school. You have a purpose! Live it out.

Have the happiest of Happiness Days! This has been Lt. Roger McCort for KINS Community Comment.