

# JSU CLUB ACTIVITY

## DARE TO BE HAPPY

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**GOAL** The goal of this club is to teach the teens to consider what makes them happy and some Jewish perspectives on achieving true happiness.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION:



Discussion based that can be used anytime. Use *The Worst Day Ever* poem to frame how happiness is a choice and a matter of perspective. The idea that the word *Ashrei* typically translated as “happy” is really a plural word that means “these are the happiness of” indicates there are many forms of happiness.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:



• Copies of *Worst Day Ever Poem*, found here:  
<https://www.poetrynation.com/poems/worst-day-ever/>

### STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS:



Use the *Worst Day Ever Poem* to frame how happiness is a choice and a matter of perspective. Then, lead into a discussion establishing what happiness is and different mindsets to achieve it.

### TAKEAWAY MESSAGE AND TORAH THOUGHT:



**Happiness comes from within struggle:**

“Happiness is the response of the soul to doing what it’s mission is: moving against tension” Rabbi Akiva Tatz

Consider a runner who suddenly finds themselves off course—they stop pushing through the physical exhaustion even though they are still facing tension. Why? They aren’t on course—*Moving against tension only produces happiness when you are moving towards a meaningful goal.*

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## TAKEAWAY MESSAGE AND TORAH THOUGHT (CONT.)



### **Happiness is Gratitude:**

“Ben Zoma said: “Who is rich? One who is happy with their portion” (Pirkei Avot 4:1)  
A happy person is satisfied with what they have and what they are given. Don’t get swept up in comparing yourselves to others—focus on acceptance and gratefulness.

When Leah had Yehuda, she was the first to say thank you. She was especially thankful for her fourth son because it was an extra gift she was not anticipating. We forget we are not entitled to everything and should be thankful for everything as it really is an extra gift.

We are constantly looking at what others have when Hashem gives us exactly we need. We say the bracha of *She’asa Li Kol Tzorki* “*who has provided me with all my needs*” *each morning* which is interestingly in past tense. It is human nature to understand we were given what we needed in the past tense. We should use this bracha to remind ourselves to be more present in our gratitude—especially that it will bring more