

UPDATE YOUR  
*happiness*  
RESUME



“Inside myself is a place where I live all alone  
and that’s where you renew your springs that never dry up.”

- PEARL BUCK

With the downturn in the economy, violence and environmental challenges facing us every day, what makes us happy is often lost in the roar of uncertainty. All the commotion in our lives makes it difficult to hear the beating of our own hearts sometimes. We are so distracted by what’s going on in the world around us that we aren’t aware sometimes of what’s going on inside us, and how days slip by, anonymous and almost unnoticed. We let go of renewing the springs that feed our own well of happiness.

Along with the crashing economic downturn and resulting job losses, you may be one of the many who are putting normal activities on hold while you focus your attention on finding a new job. You may be fervently polishing your resume to shine among the sea of job hunters. I know how arduous that can be. I've spent so many years of my life eagerly and aggressively listing new accomplishments to impress prospective employers, and then helping others create powerful resumes and cover letters when I opened my writing business.

One day, turning my attention away from pleasing others for a change, I decided to take stock of how happy I was and how close to attaining a high position of happiness in my life. So I began listing my "accomplishments" to see how I was measuring up. There I came face to face with how long it's been since I pursued pleasure merely for its own sake. I remembered long forgotten pleasures I enjoyed years ago that had faded in the limelight of obligations. So, I developed a new resume, my "Happiness Resume" that, updated regularly, lets me know if I'm staying in balance and making time to enrich my life, not just satisfy obligations to others.

This resume is not about what I do to put food on my table, it's about what I do to feed my soul.

I followed a standard resume format, but entered very unconventional information. I invite you to follow along and build yours with me; you may be surprised at the impact it can have on your life.

In the Heading, I started with my name (I just put "Jan"; "Janet" reminds me of being scolded me as a child. You should put what you like to be called). Then, instead of putting contact information where I could be reached, I put where I like to be found, my favorite place at the Jersey shore. List that special refuge you cherish; that secret garden, that mountain path, maybe your studio, a library, a golf course. And definitely don't list your phone number (or e-mail address).

Where a professional resume sometimes follows with an objective, I wrote my life's goals. I had a little trouble here because there is so much I want to do, but narrow yours down to what makes your heart peacefully sing. It could be improving your golf game, completing your novel or just being able to enjoy a glass of wine and your favorite decorating magazine when the kids are in bed. Maybe it's starting your own business, but if so, it's not something you're doing just for money. It is your bliss; it makes you feel in flow with that inner spring.

**Next, list your education.** I don't mean where you attended high school or the institution that bestowed your college degree. List life enrichment classes, creative arts classes, or studies you have pursued for you and you alone. Maybe flower arranging, sculpting, creative writing or music appreciation. It could be bowling lessons, but it's anything that has taught you how to enjoy an aspect of your life or brought you closer to what you listed as your objective. I'd forgotten the dance lessons I took with my husband and my intentions to try jewelry-making. I vowed to make time in my life for such pursuits I enjoy.

In a professional resume, you might next list Employment History. But on this resume, you are going to list Enjoyment History. Take stock of what you have done to nurture your spirit and enhance your enjoyment of life. Did you hike down the Grand Canyon or sail the Mediterranean Sea? Did you participate in a community gardening project or plant your own tomato patch your family feasted on all summer? Did you backpack across Europe or soak up the rays on your dock at the lake? Maybe it's taking time to meditate, or enjoy weekend entertaining to share your gourmet cooking talents. List

what you've done for your own enjoyment over the years, not just to please or impress others. This part of the happiness resume shows you if you've consistently made time for your own pleasures, or let them slip by.

**Next, make a section for accomplishments.** What have you done that has made you proud or ecstatic? You can list your children, but not their accomplishments. How about that cooking contest? Your prize roses? Getting your poem published or grabbing that part in a play? Maybe you attained citizenship or got your pilot's license. Maybe you celebrated an anniversary of volunteerism for a cause you advocate.

Resumes often include affiliations. Don't include professional memberships that merely advance your career. List what you participate in for your own personal fulfillment. Are you a member of the local garden club or downtown revitalization organization? An animal rescue group? Don't list your kid's soccer league, but you can list the Acting Guild if it is your avocation, not just your vocation.



Conclude your resume with references. I

listed friends I have known since high school who have laughed and cried with me through all phases of my life, new friends from my painting classes who encourage my artistic talents, and my yoga students who inspire and teach me something in every class I give. Think of those who share your interests and values, appreciate your talents and provide what gives you peace. List those who love you for who you are and nurture your spirit. Vow to cherish and feed these relationships.

When you're finished, review your resume with a critical eye. Do you have the qualifications to fill your life with the happiness you deserve? If not, where are the holes? What should you do to fill them? Are you able to separate your goals from those of your boss or your family? Reward yourself for your accomplishments by doing more of the same. Be sure you have a long and steady enjoyment history and you're feeding your soul with life long learning opportunities. Learn to identify with your own true talents, values and contributions to the universe, not just your career. I keep my resume dynamic, updating it frequently with new accomplishments and other steps I take to advance my spiritual health. I check it to make sure my life remains on course. Updating my happiness resume makes me reassess where I am spending my time and energy. I recognize what I'm doing to enrich my happiness and what I'm doing to merely impress or please others. I know that if I was to suddenly lose my job, but I have a successful happiness resume, that I haven't lost my identity or purpose, only my employment temporarily.



Don't let the roar of the future's uncertainty drown out the spring of happiness that bubbles inside you. You can help make your world, and that of those you touch, flow more peacefully by charting your

happiness and staying on course. Take a cue from Robert Louis Stevenson, who once said "There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world."

So, don't think of your Happiness Resume as merely taking time away from your hectic responsibilities to indulge yourself. It is your duty to keep your springs flowing, to reduce the stagnation of unhappiness in your world, and calm the tide of uncertainty that tends to sweep us away with its strong undertow. Maintain a source for your own spring of happiness, a positive current that will overflow into all of your life, and may even sweep others along while you track your progress and navigate your course for a successfully happy, fulfilled life. Expect success; anticipate abundance in your quest for happiness and you will not be disappointed.

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If you are interested in writing services, yoga lessons or a workshop on building your Happiness Resume, contact Jan at [pinkmoon7@comcast.net](mailto:pinkmoon7@comcast.net).

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