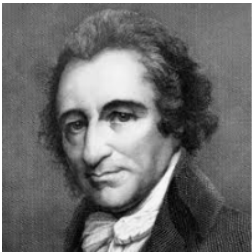


# Inquiring Minds: *How to be a Happier Camper in a Crazy World*

#56 Jan, 2020 “It’s a helluva start, being able to recognize what makes you happy.” ([more](#)) — Lucille Ball

[Introduction](#) Past Issues from 2011 to 2019: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#) [10](#) [11](#) [12](#) [13](#), [14](#) [15](#) [16](#) [17](#) [18](#) [19](#) [20](#) [21](#) [22](#) [23](#) [24](#) [25](#) [26](#) [27](#) [28](#) [29](#) [30](#) [31](#) [32](#) [33](#) [34](#) [35](#) [36](#) [37](#) [38](#) [39](#) [40](#) [41](#) [42](#) [43](#) [44](#) [45](#) [46](#) [47](#) [48](#) [49](#) [50](#) [51](#) [52](#) [53](#) [54](#) [55](#)

## Bringing out the Sun, even in the Cloudy Days of Winter and Chaos



As Thomas Paine said in 1776, “These are the times that try men’s souls.” (He did go on to include women in the rest of the quote which for history buffs is an interesting read in itself. See [The Crisis](#).) Actually, every time and

age has its crises and challenges, but these are particularly challenging because they are both a global and existential threat to the many species, flora, fauna, culture, and civilization as it has evolved over the ages. That we are aware of this is in itself both depressing and encouraging—encouraging because defining and facing up to any problem is the first step to solving it. [Time magazine’s Person of the Year, Greta Thunberg](#) went through severe depression after she learned about man-made Climate Change from her third grade teacher; and was only able to find her way back by getting personally involved (with the support of her family) in speaking out, only in a way one who is on the autism spectrum as she is can do. “I see things in black and white, and the climate crisis is a black and white issue.”



While we all cannot be crusaders because of age, financial, health and other personal struggles, we can do what we can to address these national and global challenges. Yet we have to protect ourselves in the process which can be toxic in itself. In my reading about my recent bout with insomnia and its possible relationship with mood, and through my own experience of what activities make me more upbeat or even joyous if not youthfully ecstatic; [I have come across some very interesting, clear, concise, and fact-based articles which explore the chemical nature of our moods, and how to help change them.](#) Also I would

[like to recommend some recent books, movies, television specials which were uplifting and insightful.](#)

## The Science behind Happiness

“The neurotransmitters **dopamine** and **serotonin** regulate similar bodily functions but produce different **effects**. **Dopamine** regulates mood and muscle movement and plays a vital role in the **brain’s** pleasure and reward systems. Unlike **dopamine**, the body stores the majority of **serotonin** in the gut, instead of in the **brain**.” (for a clear and concise article in *Medical News Today* click [here](#))

## The top 10 ways to Increase Dopamine levels Naturally

- 1 Eat Lots of Protein. Proteins are made up of smaller building blocks called amino acids. ...
- 2 Eat Less Saturated Fat. ...
- 3 Consume Probiotics. ...
- 4 Eat Velvet Beans. ...
- 5 Exercise Often. ...
- 6 Get Enough Sleep. ...
- 7 Listen to Music. ...
- 8 Meditate.

([Short and clear article here](#))

## Best Books, movies, and TV shows

[Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind](#), by Yuval Noah Harari. Best book I’ve read on the whys of history, money, religion, happiness etc. (in libraries)

[News of the World](#) by Paulette Jiles, a National Book Award finalist and a soon to be released movie by Tom Hanks—but as my friend Buz told me, read the book.

*Little Women*, the movie. Part of our culture and so appropriate on many levels.

*A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, movie, “a timely story of kindness triumphing over cynicism, based on the true story of a real-life friendship between **Fred Rogers** and journalist **Tom Junod**”

*60 Minutes*, on Sundays live 7 pm PT on CBS, and <https://www.cbsnews.com/60-minutes/>. A nice mixture between positive stories and encouraging exposés. *-Joe*