

## **"You Have to Feel It to Be It"** **Junior Boys Retreat 2015**

In the SoulPancake video we watched at the beginning of our retreat, "If You're Happy and You Know It"—they ask this question: "We've all heard it—the more successful you are, the happier you are. But what if it was the opposite? What if being happier actually made you more successful?" The video then goes on to answer that question by illustrating how happiness leads to more success in our lives. This idea has been substantiated in hundreds of studies.

So what makes you happy?

Well, did you know that we are all made from stars? "We are made of star-stuff" is a famous quote by the astrophysicist and cosmologist Carl Sagan and is elaborated on by the scientist Neil deGrasse Tyson when he says, "Recognize that the very molecules that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So that we are all connected to each other biologically, to the earth chemically, and to the rest of the universe atomically."

The delight of this thought is summed-up so beautifully by the Rev. Dr. Michael Beckwith when he says,

"You are the way the stars look back on themselves."

Yes, you!

We are more intimately a part of this glorious universe, and also the kingdom of God, than most of us realize. In Luke 17:21 Jesus says, "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

Also take this into consideration—by being your best self and reaching your goals, while forgiving easily and showing gratitude, you are giving others permission to do the same. Your very presence can benefit the people around you. When your intentions are sourced in love, ripples of peace flow out into the world in unforeseen ways. In Mathew 5:9 Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Wouldn't you say that being open-hearted spreads peace?

So what are your goals, what do you want to accomplish? Picture them in your mind and feel, for a moment, what it will be like when you achieve them? Don't wait for outer circumstances to

define your happiness because you are multi-sensory and can experience the world beyond the traditionally noted five senses by perceiving the world through emotion, and through intuition - so trust your gut. When you take your attention from the world of circumstances, you stop worrying about the past or the future. Instead you turn your attention to the present moment – and you allow worry to dissolve and peace to fill your heart.. Because in that moment of stillness it is easy to see what you have to be grateful for and you see your true potential - “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

You are a co-creator of your life. Because you don't always control what happens to you, but you can decide how you respond. How we act in stressful situations is a measure of our character and often determines the level of success in the goals we set.

Keep your thoughts on your blessings. Gratitude is the engine that can drive your actions, and you can harness that power, like a solar-panel does a beam of light, to move your life in the direction that you want. So nailing down exactly how you want to feel on a daily basis, and choosing love over negativity and affirming it in prayer – you create a path to an inexhaustible energy source. An energy that will divinely shape and move you closer to your true goals.

Keep in mind that you are a walking, breathing piece of the galaxy, who co-creates your world and can spread peace by choosing love in every interaction you have with others. Why would you limit yourself or limit anyone else by holding onto self-doubt or fear? Live from a place of gratitude and become more of what you want to see in the world - you have a new chance every moment to make a positive difference.

So now once again—what makes you happy?

**The video of this retreat can be found at:**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLv1dWNAuBA>**