

THE HAPPINESS ISSUE

Minnesota

Monthly

ARE YOU
THIS
happy?



what
IS IT?

who
HAS IT?

BEST
WAYS to
play LIKE
a KID

how
to
GET IT!

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World of Happy

A U.N. REPORT TRACKS SATISFACTION AROUND THE GLOBE

Beginning in 2011, the United Nations began inviting member countries to participate in measuring the happiness of their populations based on such criteria as material wealth, freedom to make choices, social support, and corruption, as well as physical and emotional well-being. The result is the World Happiness Report, a 155-page document that seeks to chart life satisfaction around the world and raise awareness of happiness as a factor in making public policy.

HAPPIEST CONTINENT

North America

LEAST HAPPY

Sub-Saharan Africa

SCANDINAVIAN

COUNTRIES IN TOP 5

Denmark, Norway, Sweden

RANK OF UNITED STATES

17

COUNTRIES RANKED

HAPPIER THAN

UNITED STATES

Canada, Iceland,

Costa Rica, United

Arab Emirates, Mexico,

New Zealand

LEAST HAPPY COUNTRY

Togo

COUNTRIES WITH

GREATEST INCREASE IN

HAPPINESS BETWEEN 2005

AND 2012

Angola, Zimbabwe, Albania,

Ecuador, Moldova

COUNTRIES WITH

GREATEST DECREASE IN

HAPPINESS BETWEEN 2005

AND 2012

Egypt, Greece, Myanmar,

Jamaica, Botswana —QS

THREE Perspectives ON HAPPINESS Heart

Jack Jablonski's mission of meaning and happiness after devastating injury

Since suffering a paralyzing spinal-cord injury in a hockey game as a sophomore at Benilde-St. Margaret's High School in 2011, Jack Jablonski has become an inspirational public figure, in large part due to his indomitable positive attitude. Today, he hosts a weekly radio show and is beginning his freshman year at the University of Southern California next spring.

"We all have floods and droughts in our lives, but they pass, and your [psychological] bobber is just set where it's set. When I got injured, I was at a real high point in my life. It was winter break, I had just made varsity, all these things were going right, and then I was instantly hit with this big drought. But then a ton of support came flooding in, and that helped to bring me back up."

"Before all this, I hated public speaking. When I got injured, it was a total 180; it completely changed my dreams and goals. Before that I was just thinking about girls and sports."

"Sure, sometimes it's funny to hear someone say that they're too tired to get up and get something five feet across the room. But I understand it.

I remember life before this chair."

"You have to realize that other people have ups and downs, too. People are going through their own issues—family problems or internal struggles that might not be obvious. Focusing on how I can help others—in chairs or on their feet—makes me a better person. I can always help with a good attitude and good advice."

"You have to be happy with yourself first. When my life was blowing up and I was lying in that hospital room, at first I couldn't let in the love and support people were offering me. I had to do a lot of talking with my family and a therapist before I realized that this is going to be a really long life if I'm not happy with myself and what's around me."

"The most important thing to realize is that no matter what you're going through, there's always someone worse off. When things around you aren't going well, look to yourself first. Look at what you can do: Develop your work ethic, focus on kindness to others. No one said life is fair, and some have experienced the truth of that more than others. But it all starts with yourself." —MP



portrait by DAVID BOWMAN