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The Spirit of Happiness

During this holiday season, I wanted to share with you some thoughts about spirituality and happiness.

George Valiant, a Harvard professor and author of [Aging Well](#) (a book I highly recommend), gave a speech at the Gallup Positive Psychology Summit a couple of years ago where he presented a "scientific" definition of spirituality. He defined spirituality as a cluster of positive emotions; an internal, emotional experience of a connection with something greater than self. He shared the Prayer of St. Francis, pointing out that what the prayer calls forth are all states of mind currently being studied in the field of positive psychology:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred . . . let me sow love
Where there is injury . . . pardon
Where there is doubt . . . faith
Where there is despair . . . hope
Where there is darkness . . . light
Where there is sadness . . . joy....

Remember, the daily practices of attending to happiness are not just about putting smiley faces on your calendar. They are not focused on "it's all about me". The tips coming from positive psychology research that you read in this newsletter are about deepening and strengthening your connection to life.

I hope that you have an abundance of happiness from that internal sense of spirituality: peace, forgiveness, faith, hope, love and joy.

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