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### **IT TAKES COURAGE TO BE HAPPY!**

Or, as Mark Twain said, "People in general are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." The courage to be happy is, in actuality, resident within us. It is internal, and, therefore, not dictated to or unduly influenced by external forces or circumstances.

Whence cometh this courage? First, from a genuine self acceptance. This is a positive act of the will -- not a negative avoidance of reality. It is not a shrug of the shoulders -- it is a lift of the head! When we accept, rather than merely acknowledge what we cannot change, our useable emotional energy then is focused on what is changeable.

The courage for happiness is further expressed in choice. Choose to accept significant others as they really are and refuse to "rearrange" them. Avoid those who add to your misery by continually sharing their own doom and gloom. Associate with those who add positively to your life. (You might even have to change jobs, churches, or neighborhoods!) Above all, avoid situations that are troublesome and insolvable.

The courage to choose happiness is not a single step. It happens **MOMENTARILY!** As Michelangelo explained when he produced his great masterpiece: "I took a block of marble and chipped away everything that wasn't David."

From *It Seems To Me*  
By Kenneth Haystead

Read by Ken Haystead  
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