



LifeCheck

Companion Guide

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1. Purpose of LifeCheck

LifeCheck was created to provide people with a simple way of looking at their lives to make choices about where to focus their attention for greatest happiness. The fundamental premise is that balance creates overall happiness and having any area in your life out of balance throws the whole thing off. This is a systems thinking approach which believes that looking at a system as a whole rather than individual elements brings about a better outcome. Imagine having a well oiled chain on your bike if your tyres are worn and flat.

2. Purpose of this Guide

The LifeCheck Companion Guide is intended as a companion document for those who like to explore a little deeper. There is some explanatory text about the different elements of LifeCheck and how it works but it is not intended as a help style document – hopefully the app is intuitive enough not to need one of those and what help is needed is provided by the info screens. If you do have those sort of questions please send them to coaching@emeraldcitycoaching.co.uk or if it's a general usability issue please include in a review and modifications will be considered for the next version.

3. Think of the Whole

...or why a wheel? And why not focus on one or two areas?

The wheel is simple. If it's all about balance then it's about your wheel having a nice smooth circumference so your ride isn't too bumpy. LifeCheck is based on a standard coaching technique which uses a wheel as a simple visual aid to see how different elements of a whole are working together.

LifeCheck uses a systems thinking approach which believes that all the areas are interconnected and so changes in one area will impact on others, either directly or indirectly. Positively or negatively.

This means you don't necessarily need to focus on the area which scores lowest to make a positive change there. For example, if health is a concern, taking action around fun & recreation, or making alterations in your physical environment could indirectly raise the health score.

And remember the small print...changes can be negative as well as positive.

For example, a new job could result in positive impacts on money and physical environment, yet if it comes with high levels of stress, is physically demanding or requires long hours or lots of travel could have a negative impact on health, family & friends, significant other and fun & recreation.

LifeCheck allows you to temporarily focus on an individual area and then put it back into the mix to see the overall picture. Your life is your whole life and seeing all the areas together is of most value to you to take action and make a real difference. When making changes in one area it is a good idea to consider the impact elsewhere and not compartmentalise areas. That way lies the road to unintended consequences.

4. Areas

LifeCheck divides 'life' into 8 areas. These are high level divisions with the intention of covering all aspects which have an impact on happiness. The headings may or may not be the sort of language you would use but hopefully they are clear enough for their meaning to be unambiguous. The following sections give a brief overview of each area and some suggestions on how you might explore them further.

Career

Career describes what you do to earn your living. For some this will be a vocation, for others a job. Whichever it is for a lot of people it is how they spend a lot of their time and so can be an important influence on happiness. Is your work environment pleasant or energising or is it demoralising and draining? Are you fulfilled by your work? Is it important to you that your work is fulfilling? What are you looking for in a career?

Family & Friends

These are the people who are closest to you. They make up your immediate network, whether you are related to them or not. The people who you spend your time with and the type and extent of a support network they provide can have a big impact on your overall happiness.

Significant Other

This is your primary romantic relationship. Could be your husband, wife, partner, boyfriend, girlfriend, other half, DH, DW. Or it could be no-one. It is how you feel about this area of your life. You could have a long-term relationship and score low on happiness. You could be single and score it high. This is most definitely *not* saying that you have to be in a relationship to be happy.

Fun & Recreation

How you spend your leisure time; the time when you are not doing what you do to earn a living (Career). This could incorporate friends and family or it could relate to any hobbies, other interests or activities you have. Are you involved in a local community? Do you spend your time engaged in activities which energise you and fulfill you? How do you feel about the amount of time you spend engaged in fun and recreation. And don't think it has to be all worthy, fun and recreation can include any activity that choose to do in your leisure time – watching television is recreation and can be a lot of fun – if it is what you are choosing to do.

Health

How are you doing physically? Do you have any health concerns? And if so are you receiving effective care for them? To be happy with your health doesn't necessarily mean being super fit but if your health prevents you from doing things that you really want to it will have a negative impact on your happiness.

Money

This relates to how you feel about your current financial situation. What is important here is not the amount of money you do or do not have. What is important is how you feel about it. Are you content / satisfied / happy with your current financial situation or is it a source of stress and anxiety? Or somewhere in the middle.

Personal Growth

This is the area that is probably most open to personal interpretation. One person's personal growth is another's fun & recreation. This can cover your spirituality and your spiritual development. It can include your self-knowledge and how you feel about yourself as a person and how you are developing as you go through life. It could equally be about self-improvement or development in respect of learning new skills – eg a foreign language, painting, badminton.

Physical Environment

Your physical environment is what is around you, where you spend your time. It refers to both home and work environments. It can include aspects like your commute. If you are an HGV driver it could include your cab. Anywhere where you spend enough time for what is around you to have an impact on your happiness. Do you smile when you open your front door? Does the flickering light above your desk give you a headache?

Completing the Wheels

LifeCheck is a two-stage diagnostic tool, which simply means that you complete two wheels to create your summary wheel. The first of these is the Happiness Wheel.

5. Happiness Wheel



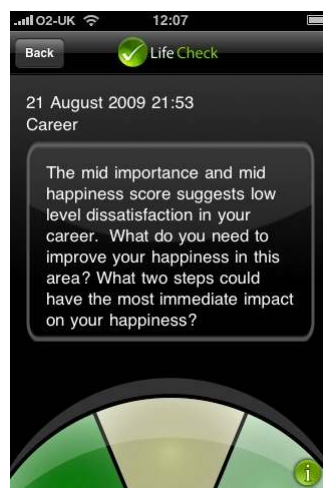
The Happiness Wheel takes you through each of the 8 areas of life in turn asking you to rate your happiness level in that area on a scale of 1 – 10. 1 being not at all happy and 10 being completely happy. There are questions at the top of each section which can be used as prompts or guides for thinking about the area and how you feel about it. Your score should be a snapshot view of how happy you are with this area of your life right now.

6. Importance Wheel



The second stage of the diagnostic is completion of the Importance Wheel. Again, you go through each of the 8 areas of life, this time scoring their importance to you. With 1 being not at all important and 10 being very important. The inclusion of an importance score gives an added dimension to the results in the summary wheel.

7. Summary Wheel



Calculated using algorithms the summary wheel displays the combined results of the happiness and importance wheels. The summary wheel is colour coded so you can see where to focus your attention at a glance.

Tapping the individual areas will show you the results for that area. Based on your scores, questions will guide you as to the action you take next.

8. History View



Styled on the Time Machine the history view lets you track changes over time by viewing all your previous LifeChecks. LifeChecks are stored in chronological order with the most recent at the front. By scrolling back and forth you can see previous LifeChecks and you can view tap on an individual wheel to take it into the summary view.

9. Ways you can use LifeCheck

A few suggested ways you can use LifeCheck:

- Goal setting – choose where to focus your attention
- Regular review – weekly, monthly, bi-annually, on your birthday, New Year's Eve
- Coaching support – as a tool to focus your coaching sessions for maximum results

It would be great to hear about different ways people are using LifeCheck – please send yours to coaching@emeraldcitycoaching.co.uk

Equally, if there are ways you would like to use it that it doesn't currently enable send feedback and suggestions to coaching@emeraldcitycoaching.co.uk for consideration for version updates.