

The science is clear - a smile can lift your mood, lower stress, and even boost your immune system.

There are also mirror neurons in these amazing brains of ours that, when we see someone else smile, they fire as if we are smiling ourselves!

And today - still in the mindset of an aging pandemic - two years later, a smile carries a lot of weight for both the smiler and those receiving that smile.

When we smile, we release endorphins just like when we exercise. Remember, endorphins are natural pain killers for both emotional and physical pain. Besides endorphins, we also release some happy hormones: dopamine and serotonin. You could say smiling is good for your soul.

Did you know that your smile is the psychological foundation for empathy? Our brains are trying to understand the other person - what they are thinking, or anticipating their mood, and replying back with a smile.

Isn't that so cool? Yes, we **are** fearfully and wonderfully made - built to **love**! Designed to care!

Some people have to practice smiling, and others are automatic smilers - but the science always points to smilers being happier, more content, and yes, a lot more resilient than the non-smilers.

Smiling is contagious - and it makes social interactions easier.

Research shows that smiling turns a group into a community - connection **is** the smile!

And it makes people seem more trustworthy, successful, and attractive.



So how do we smile more often so we can enjoy our lives more and become the resilient women we need to be?

- Seek out funny stuff - movies, memes, and jokes. Laughing, of course, only puts a smile on steroids!
- Think happy thoughts/ memories.
- Remind yourself with a sticky note - just draw a smiley face on your sticky note and put it where you need to see it to remind yourself, SMILE!
- Smile as you write out your 3 gratitudes every day - We write out 3 gratitudes in the Take Back Your Life Journal to keep us grounded in gratitude...just smile as you write!
- Decide to smile - to the cashier at the store, the lady on your walk, the representative on the phone - sure, they might not see you, but you will!
- Spend time with positive people - If you're a part of the Hot Melt Sprint group on Facebook - you already know this; if not, get on it!
- Stay mindful - live fully in the present.