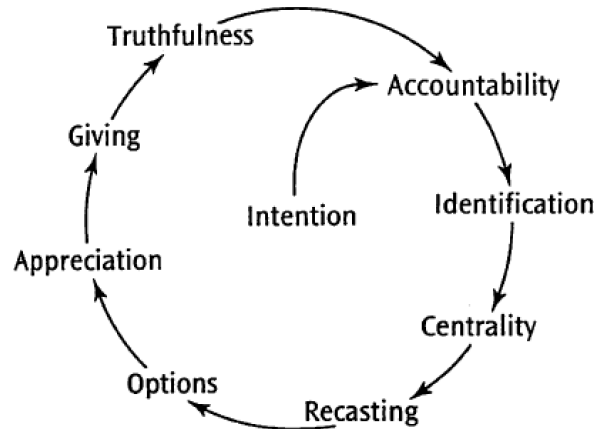


## HOW WE CHOOSE TO BE HAPPY

Rick Foster and Greg Hicks, *How We Choose to Be Happy*,  
(New York, New York: G.P. Putnam Sons, 1999), pp. 6-7

Each of the nine choices made by happy people stands alone as an important and valuable life choice. But when they come together, they create a synergistic system. In other words, when they work as a whole their total result is far greater than the sum of their individual parts. And that synergy creates deep, long-term happiness. If you envision happiness as a wheel, the system becomes clear. Each of the choices flows logically to the next, from intention through truthfulness. As you follow the wheel you'll discover how ordinary people choose to be happy—how, with intention as their driving force, they create the lives they want by living their greatest passions and desires.



1. *Intention*—the active desire and commitment to be happy, and the fully conscious decision to choose happiness over unhappiness.
2. *Accountability*—the choice to create the life you want to live, to assume full personal responsibility for your actions, thoughts and feelings, and the emphatic refusal to blame others for your own unhappiness.
3. *Identification*—the ongoing process of looking deeply within yourself to assess what makes you uniquely happy, apart from what you're told by others should make you happy.
4. *Centrality*—the nonnegotiable insistence on making that which creates happiness central in your life.
5. *Recasting*—the choice to convert problems into opportunities and challenges and to transform trauma into something meaningful, important and a source of emotional energy.
6. *Options*—the decision to approach life by creating multiple scenarios, to be open to new possibilities and to adopt a flexible approach to life's journey.
7. *Appreciation*—the choice to appreciate deeply your life and the people in it and to stay in the present by turning each experience into something precious.
8. *Giving*—the choice to share yourself with friends and community and to give to the world at large without the expectation of a "return."
9. *Truthfulness*—the choice to be honest with yourself and others in an accountable manner by not allowing societal, corporate or family demands to violate your internal contract.