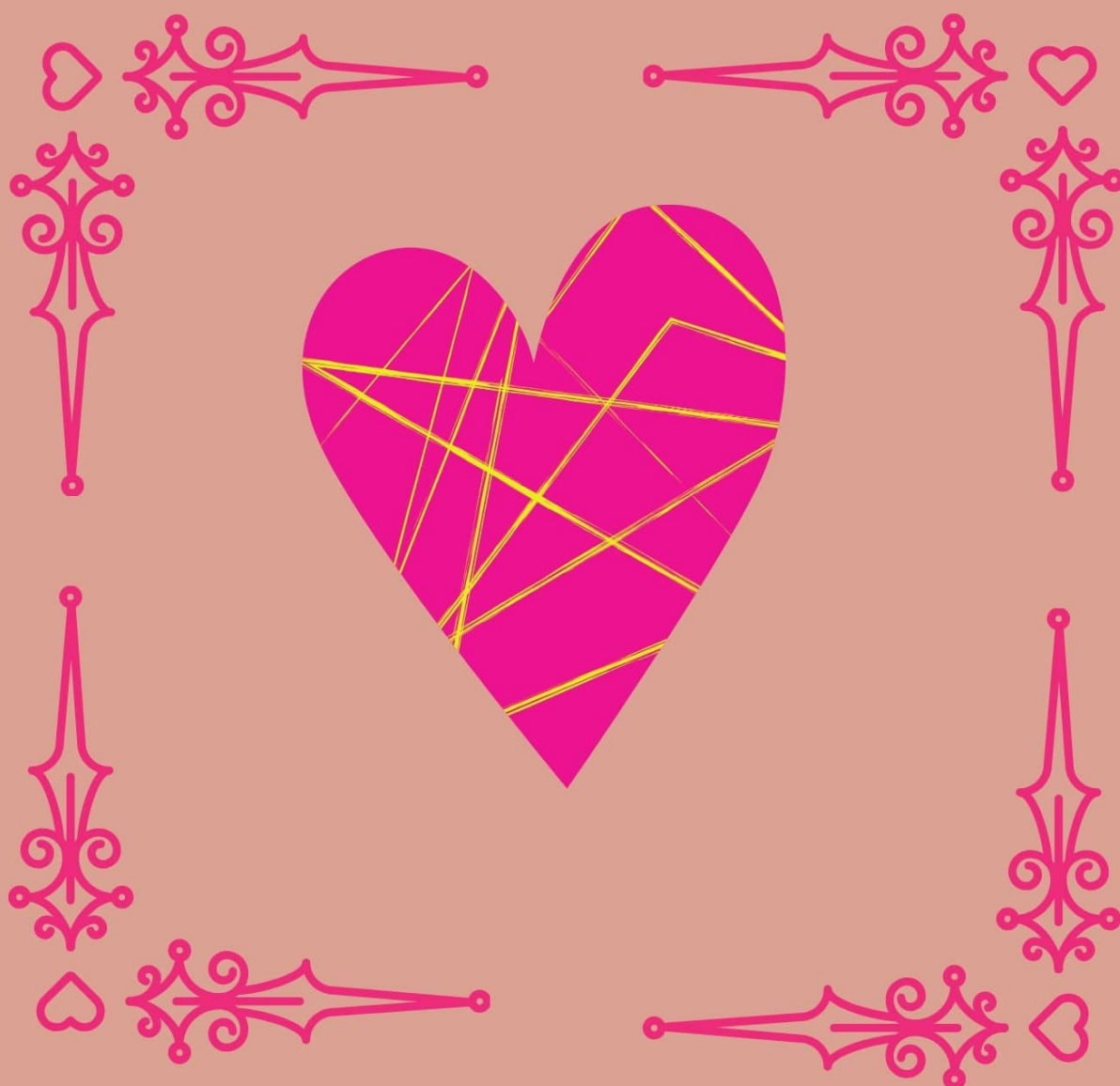


THE SECRET TO TRUE HAPPINESS



A TALKING POINTS LESSON
FOR ENGLISH AND ESL

WWW.MANWRITES.COM

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
The Secret to True Happiness.....	4
Reading Comprehension Questions.....	7
Essential Vocabulary.....	8
Discussion Questions.....	10
What is your Passion?.....	12
Idioms with Heart.....	13
Role Play.....	14
Writing.....	15
Credits.....	16

Introduction

Are you happy?

Do you have any regrets?

Do you have a passion in your life?

The Secret to True Happiness

Read Brian's views on happiness below:

I have been on this planet a long time and I can tell you with an open heart what the secret to happiness is.

The first thing is never live a life filled with regret.

Regret will only tie you up in knots so don't dwell on it.

If you did something and there is nothing you can do to change it — just forget about it and move on. Nothing you can do.

But if you regret something you did that you can change. Guess what? You only have yourself to blame.

And I will tell you this — whatever you feel strongly about in your life, you should pursue those things with all your heart. Because that is what you are meant to do on this earth.

Me, I always fancied myself as a photographer. I had a camera when I was young and I liked to take pictures. And I was good too.

I entered competitions and won some of them. I sold some of my pictures and got some others published in local magazines in my town.

But then I got a little older and I got a job in an insurance company. There is nothing wrong with working in an insurance

company! A had some colleagues that were just made for it. But it was not really in my heart. I didn't really love it. I liked it, sure. But that was as far as it went.

My camera? It collected dust. I used to take it out and tell myself that I would get back into photography. My wife was always very supportive. She told me to take photographs. She knew I loved doing it but I would just put the camera away again and say: Next year when I have more time.

Next year came and I never had the time. I always made up some excuses.

So that is my first piece of advice.

If there is something you really want to do in life — then do it!

Don't hold back and don't let your brain fool you into thinking it's a bad idea or you are not capable of doing it. In this case, you should listen to your heart.

If your heart tells you to be a writer, an artist, a pilot or a farmer — then listen to what your heart is saying because chances are this is the right decision.

The next thing I will say is never let your friends go.

Family often stays with us all our life but friends come and go. We meet new friends and we stick with them for a couple of years, then we drift apart and we lose contact.

We might think about them a couple of times but we let them sail away and we never see them again.

This is something I should have paid attention to over the years. When I think about it I had some really great friends in my life. Sure, we had some arguments — sometimes some really big fights. But we made up and forgave each other.

But in my twilight years now I wish I could talk to these people now. To know what they are doing with their lives and see them get older and become parents, grandparents.

That would be a truly amazing thing. But too late now.

Ah, you see? That's me showing regret. And what did I tell you about that?

Reading Comprehension Questions

Is Brian young or old?

What is the first piece of advice Brian gives us?

What are the two things that Brian says about regret and our ability to change things?

What does Brian say about pursuing our dreams?

What did Brian want to be when he was younger?

Was he reasonably successful at this?

What job did Brian do later in his life?

What did Brian think of this job?

What happened to his camera?

How did Brian's wife feel about Brian's camera?

What is the second piece of advice from Brian?

According to Brian, what is the difference between friends and family?

Did Brian have many friends when he was younger?

What happened to Brian's friends?

Essential Vocabulary

this planet	with an open heart	filled with regret
tie you up in knots	don't dwell on it	move on
pursue	with all your heart	fancied myself as
photographer	camera	competitions
published	magazines	insurance company
colleagues	made for it	in my heart
as far as it went	dust	supportive
excuses	don't hold back	fool
capable	listen to your heart	your heart tells you
pilot	come and go	stick with them
drift apart	lose contact	sail away
paid attention to	over the years	twilight years

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Notebook—*a small book with pages of blank paper that students use to make notes when studying.*

“I left my notebook at home so I was unable to make any notes in my English class.”

Discussion Questions

Do you think Brian has many regrets in his life? Why/why not?

Is there something in your life you regret doing or saying? What is it? Can you talk about it?

How do you feel about things you regret that you cannot change?

Is there something you would like to do in your life? Why haven't you done this? What stopped you?

What do you think stopped Brian from being a photographer? Why didn't he continue this dream?

Do you have a passion for something you like to do? What is it? Can you talk about it for a while?

Do you have a passion for something you would like to do? Why don't you do it?

How do you think Brian would feel some days coming home from work at the insurance company?

Brian talks about letting old friends 'sail away'. What do you think he means by this?

Have you let some friends sail away? Why did this happen?

Which friends do you have now that will be lifelong friends?
How do you know this?

If Brian met up with an old friend of his what do you think they would talk about?

Are you happy in your life?

What makes you happy?

What things are lacking that would make you happy? Why would these things make you happy?

What makes you unhappy? Why?

What things do you think people need to do in their lives to be happy every day?

What is your Passion?

This is an exercise for speaking. Get into pairs.

In your pairs, talk to each other about your passions in life. What is that one thing that you love to do? Something you would secretly love to do as a full-time job or career.

You should say:

- what your passion is
- why you like it/how it makes you feel
- what is it about this passion that makes you so happy
- why you would like to do this as a job or career

Discuss together for some time, then each pair should stand in front of the class.

- Student A should introduce Student B's passion
- Student B should introduce Student A's passion

Idioms with Heart

In Brian's story, he uses a few idioms with the word 'heart'.

- with an open heart
- with all your heart
- in my heart
- listen to your heart
- do what your heart tells you

Did you find out the meanings of all these idioms? Use a dictionary – or the internet – to find out the meanings of all these idioms.

You will need these idioms for the next exercise.

Role Play

This is a role play exercise.

Two friends are talking together. One friend has a passion – something they really love to do. This passion makes them very happy but they also believe that it is not practical.

The friend talks to another friend about forgetting this passion in their life and finding an ordinary job. This job may not make them very happy – but it would also not make them unhappy.

In the role play, the second friend must try to convince the first friend to follow their passion.

You need to use all the heart idioms in the previous exercise.

Take some time to practice your role play.

Then when you are ready, show to all the class.

Writing

Write a short journal piece about your passion. This could be in the form of a private letter to yourself. Or just an entry in your diary.

You should write:

- what your passion is
- why you like it/how it makes you feel
- what is it about this passion that makes you so happy
- why you would like to do this as a job or career

When you have written your journal piece, you can read it out loud in the class. Or, if it is more personal, submit it to your teacher for review.

Credits

This lesson plan is courtesy of ManWrites.

This content is copyright ManWrites 2023 — ManWrites©2023

For more information, go to www.manwrites.com

Or join my mailing list below and I will send you more ESL teaching ideas.

[ManWrites Mailing List](#)