

District 42

Mainland Matters



Dr. David Kaufman

Are you ‘super happy’ in your retirement? by Dr. David Kaufman, Professor Emeritus Simon Fraser University

As I pass the two-year anniversary of my retirement, I’ve become obsessed with happiness. Why aren’t more people happy? Why are so many sad and depressed? I understand that young people have many responsibilities and pressures that make their lives challenging. However, I am disappointed to encounter so many unhappy retirees. What can be done about this?

You’ll be surprised to know that happiness has much less to do with the circumstances of your life than you might think. Researchers have found that people

have base levels of life satisfaction that appear to be genetically determined. Still, only half of people’s variation in happiness can be explained by genetics, and only about 10% can be explained by circumstances such as income and health. This leaves about 40% that can be increased through things that people can think and do in their daily lives. In other words, your actions and your outlook on life can significantly increase your happiness.

Not surprisingly, unhappiness is toxic to everyone around you. The famous Terman study from Stanford University followed people for 80 years and found that being around unhappy people is toxic and affects your health and lifespan in a similar way to second-hand smoke. Unhappiness drives people away, creating a vicious cycle that erodes positive connections with family members, friends, and even strangers.

There are some simple (but not easy) things you can do. Your happiness can be greatly affected by your habits of thinking and your actions. Here are five of the worst blocks to your happiness. If you monitor these closely, you can greatly reduce or eliminate them.

Waiting for the future

It's easy to get stuck in the habit of telling yourself that you'll be happy at some time in the future, for example, when you have a new relationship, a new grandchild, or something else. You need to focus on being happy right now, because there's no guarantee of what will happen in the future.

Replaying the past

It's easy to keep replaying in your mind disappointing or even traumatic events from your past. However, nothing can be changed about these events and regretting them only makes you unhappy. Once again, you need to focus on being happy right now, and leaving the painful past behind.

Comparing yourself to others

Jealousy and envy can destroy your happiness, so it's important to give up the habit of comparing your possessions, wealth, looks, or other things to others'. This kind of thinking will keep you feeling

unhappy because there is always someone else who has more than you.

Being pessimistic

The problem with a pessimistic attitude is that it's hard on your mood and causes you to feel unhappy. Also, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you expect bad things, you're more likely to get bad things.

Complaining

Complaining makes you feel worse rather than better. Endlessly talking and thinking about things you don't like just strengthens your negativity and makes those around you unhappy as well. Too much of it can drive other people away.

What's the solution?

To enhance your happiness, you need to shift your perspective. Be honest with yourself or ask your partner or a close friend, "Which of the blocks to happiness described above apply to me?" Then work on changing one of these blocks at a time.

You need to take responsibility for who you are, how you respond to other people, and how you impact their lives. Practice responding to what happens to you in a kind, compassionate, and loving manner. Rather than criticizing or attacking, start to see things from others' point of view. As Richard Carlson says, "don't sweat the small stuff- and it's all small stuff."

Where can you learn more?

If you would like to learn more about being happy, go to <https://amzn.to/3rEkQbW>

Dr. David Kaufman is a Professor Emeritus in the Faculty of Education at Simon

Fraser University and is devoting his retirement to studying and contributing to the topic of happiness. He has conducted research on happiness and recently published a book entitled 'Super Happy: A Practical Guide to Banish Worry, Anxiety, and Stress and Reclaim Joy and Inner Peace' (<https://amzn.to/3rEkQbW>). Dr. Kaufman's online happiness course and

coaching helps people to overcome their challenges and move forward positively in their lives. He is devoting his retirement life to helping others learn and apply the skills to be happy, so they can live their best lives and become 'beacons of light' to inspire and motivate others. He can be contacted at dkaufman98@yahoo.com.



Photo by [Kateryna Hliznitsova](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Sonya Copeland

Member Spotlight on Sonya Copeland

Describe your involvement in education in three sentences.

In 1993, I was an elementary school teacher with what was then the Etobicoke Board of Education and would later become the TDSB. In 2002, I joined the PDSB and remained at the same school until my retirement in July of this year. I taught every grade except for Kindergarten and Grade 8.

What are four things you would like people to know about you?

I loved my time in education--at least I did until the pandemic hit. I found the last three years of teaching very challenging and exhausting. My relationships with students and their parents are the things I cherished and miss the most.

Having and raising my son is still the accomplishment of which I am most proud.

Martial Arts is a huge part of who I am now; I haven't trained actively since the start of the pandemic, but what I learned and practised over the course of 12 years guides everything I think and do.

I'm a huge Disney fan, and the person who most inspired me to be an educator instilled that love in me as well.

What are you passionate about?

I'm passionate about my family and friends. My circle is small, but I love them fiercely. I think it's fair to say I'm passionate about finding joy; I try to find happiness in the smallest things, even if that's just feeding the chickens and watching their excitement (we are currently in Texas, staying on a farm). I'm also passionate about being an ally for the LGBTQ2S+ community. In the last two years of my career, I had the privilege of

being a part of a student-directed “rainbow” club for the junior grades. I wish it could have happened sooner.

What drives you “up the wall”?

One thing that drives me crazy is the incorrect use of punctuation--when businesses use apostrophes to pluralize nouns on their advertisements, e.g. bagel’s, I want to jam a fork in my eye. It’s not that I don’t make grammatical errors--I just figure businesses could pay someone to proofread their flyers and such. To me, it communicates a lack of professionalism and, well, caring. Another thing that drives me up the wall is the lack of recycling options now that we are traveling. I feel massive amounts of guilt when I toss items that we would have recycled in Ontario. I struggle to understand how this is still happening in 2022. Okay--off the soapbox now!

Name two destinations you have visited.

It will come as no surprise that walking through the gates of The Magic Kingdom in Walt Disney World on the first day of school this year was my retirement dream. Walt Disney World is my “happy place”, and after 30+ visits since 1989, it continues to evoke joy and wonderful memories for me. We started our travels on August 2nd; our first extended stay, other than Florida, was in Theodore, Alabama. We spent a month in a cottage by Mobile Bay, and saying it was beautiful, peaceful, and inspirational is an understatement (we are now officially obsessed with pelicans and their “dive bombing” antics). Everything we had

heard and read about “Southern hospitality” is true. We made new friends and experienced life--in large part--like the local residents.

What is one goal you hope to reach in the next 12 months?

I think that I would like to return to being more active and healthier over the course of the next year. Like many people, I hunkered down and ate “comfort food” during the initial lockdown. After a certain age (cue the menopause commercials), it becomes more difficult to undo the results of one’s poor decisions. While it’s challenging to make healthy choices on the road, staying in one place for a month allows for good routines, both in terms of eating and becoming fitter.

Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

I got a couple of tattoos to celebrate my retirement. The first is the grape soda pin from the Disney Pixar movie “Up”; each morning, just as I was leaving for school, my husband, Tom would say to me: “What’s out there?”, and I would reply, “Adventure’s out there!”. That film was the theme for my retirement; we named our Toyota Sienna--the vehicle in which we are traveling--“Carl” after the main character. The second tattoo is a dragon named “Figment”; he is the mascot of E.P.C.O.T. in Walt Disney World. Figment is a figment of imagination, and his character embodies happiness and child-like wonder. He’s a terrific reminder to find joy in the little things, like sharing a cup of coffee with Tom.



Candace and John

Cruise to Alaska by Candace Parsons

This September 2022, my husband John and I went on a delightful cruise to Alaska with John's brother and his wife. Like many people, we were concerned about cruising post-Covid, but felt comfortable with the cruise line and itinerary chosen: Holland America's 7-day Inside Passage. As we live in Langley BC, we liked the fact that this trip both departed from and returned to Canada Place in downtown Vancouver so no flight was required. Also, Holland America required all passengers to present Covid vaccination information and a pre-travel negative Covid test result, so we felt reassured that we and our fellow travellers would be healthy.

The trip was a wonderful combination of days at sea, interesting ports of call, excursions and glacier viewing, incredible food (no cooking or dishwashing for 7 days!), and time to spend reconnecting

with family members. We even hit the dance floor of the BB Kings Blues Club most nights after dinner ... dusting off those ancient dance moves. Ports of call included Juneau, Skagway, and Ketchikan--interesting, historic Alaska towns. In Juneau, we rode the tram up to the top of the hill for spectacular views. In Skagway, we learned about panning for gold (and tried our luck) and also about dogsledding from an Iditarod race competitor and her dogs and puppies. The Iditarod is an annual dogsled race that goes from Anchorage to Nome Alaska; it is 1,000 miles and takes 8-10 days to complete in freezing cold temperatures. In Ketchikan, we were treated to a fabulous Logger Sports Show. Our time on shore was spent enjoying these fun activities and exploring each town on foot.

One of the highlights of the trip was a glorious day spent in Glacier Bay National Park viewing the stunning glaciers from onboard ship. The captain said that the weather had not been as nice in the ten years he had been sailing there. The sun sparkled off the snow, and we were treated to some truly magical views.

Many “extras” are being offered by cruise companies to entice travellers these days, and we appreciated receiving a drink package, crew gratuities, and onboard wifi at no extra charge. We were

also given onboard credits towards excursions and other purchases, so my sister-in-law and I were able to treat ourselves to an amazing massage while at sea. The seven days flew by way too quickly, but a fantastic time was had by all, and we are now excited about planning future trips for 2023. The world has not entirely returned to “normal” but we discovered that it IS possible to travel safely once again. And, of course, we very much appreciated having our RTO-ERO travel coverage in our back pockets.

The Shutterbug Photo Club

reported by Maureen V. Patz

The forming of the *Shutterbug Photo Club* within our RTO/ERO Chapter here in BC originated from the idea of conducting a Photo Contest to obtain a good picture to be printed on the front of our Winter Greetings Card. This task was accomplished and this card will soon be circulated.

Four members promptly responded to the request of looking for interested members to be part of this special photo club which enabled us to form an organizing committee. The basic ideas of what kind of photo was requested and the psi necessary to enable the photo to be printed off were discussed and decided upon. An advertising flyer requesting submissions was designed and circulated for members and/or their family members to send in entries.

Not many submissions were received, no doubt due to it being the summertime and people were having to rely on pictures

they had taken in years past. But sufficient photos came in to permit the competition to go ahead and each one of them were very good photographs and very pleasing to look at.

The first place winner in the contest was David Thomson. His photo was titled: “*East Side, Trout Lake*”. The second place Runner-up was Elaine Marentette. Her photo was titled: “*Winter Wonderland*”. In third place was Linda Talbot. Her photo was titled: “*Winter Sunshine*”.

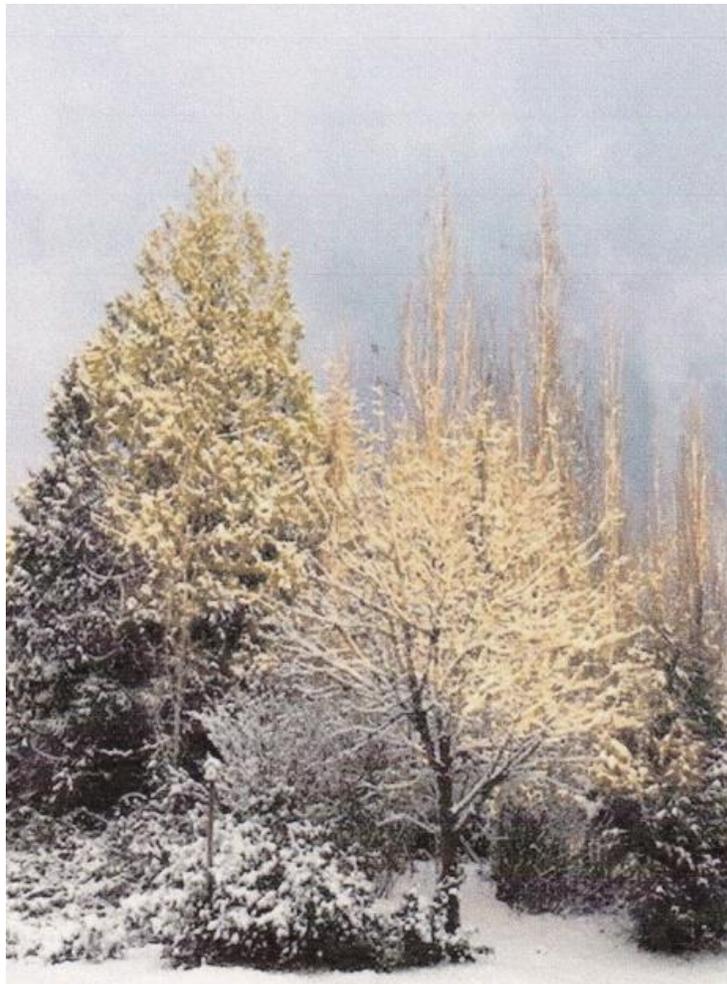
The winning picture will not appear here as everyone will see it soon on their Winter Greetings Card. But here are the beautiful photos of the second place and third place contestants

Thanks go to Imants Straumers for his help in getting our circular out plus being on the Judging Panel. And thanks go also to the other members who joined me on the Judging Panel: Wayne McNiven, Susan Pottery and Elizabeth Kolenc.

As for the future on our Shutterbug Photo Club, it is presently on hold as there aren't enough members showing an interest in it being formed. Due to our BC Chapter membership being so widely spread apart in terms of where they live, it is difficult to get together as one might usually expect of such a club. But Zoom Meetings periodically would be a possibility--say four times a year (one per season) with presenters telling us about their experiences and/or giving tips for improving our own photographic abilities. Also,

there is the possibility of arranging a Photography Day where members could get together with their cameras in hand and learn from one another how to see a good photo before it is taken.

Possibilities are limitless should there be sufficient RTOERO members in BC interested in further developing the idea of this *Shutterbug Photo Club*. Presently it will be kept on hold until another good photo is needed and another Photo Contest can be held.



"Winter Wonderland" by Elaine Marentette



"Winter Sunrise" by Linda Talbot

My Play's The Thing by Gregory Strong



Gregory Strong

I have always loved theatre and this summer I achieved a retirement dream by producing my play, "Tom Thomson Is Missing." As director Richard Eyre writes,

a good play captures the audience's imagination, transforming a room into a world and a handful of characters into a whole society.

At university, I recoiled from the precarious life of a playwright, screenwriter, or director, but I followed my love of theatre by qualifying as a high school English and Drama teacher. "Those who can't do, teach," goes the familiar taunt. In my case, it held some truth. My new school had rehearsal space and a theatre. I directed student actors and had a ready-made audience of students and their parents. Even later, when I became a college EFL instructor, I still incorporated scene work based on novels and films into my classes.



But not until I retired did I find the time and a venue to put together a show for the world outside. For the 38th Vancouver Fringe Theatre Festival in September, I produced a one-act play I had written covering the last days of painter Tom Thomson. A contemporary of the famous Group of Seven, Thomson inspired generations of Canadians and today, his work hangs in the National Gallery in Ottawa. In 2009, a Thomson painting sold for \$2,749,500. Back in 1917, he died at Canoe Lake, Algonquin Park, Ontario in a mysterious accident that some writers suggest was the cover-up for a murder.

To find my actors, I advertised on the free “Vancouver Auditions website” and offered transportation expenses, and the proceeds of our ticket sales. Astonishingly, 61 people applied, most with headshots and CVs. I auditioned twelve over zoom, then had callbacks for eight, luckily finding four very talented emerging artists, including two recent graduates of acting programs at Capilano University and Studio 58, Vancouver Community College. Tristen Foy, who played Thomson so intuitively, actually resembled him. Lauren Crick, (Thomson’s fiancée, Winnie Trainer), could bring forth real tears at Thomson’s death in the play. Hayley Sullivan, (Anne Fraser, Thomson’s friend), delivered a pitch-perfect Scottish accent even though she is Australian. Dylan Araki (Shannon Fraser,

Thomson’s one-time friend) provided a menacing antagonist.

Next came the challenge of finding rehearsal space which can run as high as \$40 per hour, and we had more than 50 hours of practice ahead. At the festival, we were to perform under a covered picnicking area on Granville Island, so Kathi, my wife and co-producer, brilliantly suggested rehearsing for free in a similar park. Big challenges remained: choreographing a dance and a fight scene, sourcing props, finding costumes, recording and editing sound cues, designing and painting a backdrop (Kathi and I painted mock-ups of two Thomson paintings), putting up our posters, writing a press release and contacting the media. When the festival began, Kathi and I even stage-managed the show, setting up props and nightly striking the set under our big tent. With each performance, the actors developed their characters, making them richer and subtler. Small appreciative audiences engaged with our play, one night giving us a standing ovation. At times like that, I felt as if I had run away and joined the circus.



Looking back at the experience now, I’d like to revise that old bromide about teachers’ lack of real-life abilities to this: “Those who know how to teach, often know how to learn.”



In my retirement as I watch family and friends struggle with various illnesses associated with age, and feel my own aches and pains, my credo is to do as much as I can while I can. That means, for at least some of my time, to paraphrase Shakespeare, "A play's my thing."



RTOERO Social News and Events

By Shannon Redmond

October was Social Isolation Awareness Month as recognized by our RTOERO Foundation. Social isolation is linked to premature death and poorer general and mental health (RTOERO, 2022).

Our RTOERO District 42, which covers Mainland British Columbia, is on a mission to decrease senior isolation and

loneliness by providing opportunities for our members to increase social connections, build friendships and support each other as needed.

Many thanks to Elaine Marentette from Powell River, one of our amazing Executive members, who kicked social isola-

tion to the curb at the Milestones restaurant in Tsawwassen on a lovely sunny and warm October 4th. On her way from Powell River to Toronto to visit family and attend the RTOERO Fall forum, Elaine took advantage of the stopover in Vancouver and organized this lovely lunch.

Sixteen members from Vancouver, South Surrey, White Rock, Ladner, Tsawwassen and Coquitlam attended and enjoyed the opportunity to meet each other for the first time or to catch up with old friends. The service and food at Milestones were wonderful and the cost was fully covered by District 42.

We would like to plan a lunch for a group of our members in your area, but we need your help to pick a date and a location. District 42 will pick up the tab. Contact your president Janice Wasik at president42@districts.rtoero.ca for more information.

Save the date: The next district social event planned is our Winter Holiday Luncheon on December 5th at the University Golf Club. Hope to see you there!

Christmas Carols (and Songs!) Quiz

Grab your tablet, or a pencil and paper, and write your answers to the following questions about our favorite Christmas carols and songs! (Answers are at the end of the newsletter).

1. In total, how many gifts were given in “The Twelve Days of Christmas”?
2. Who wrote the popular Christmas song, “Frosty the Snowman”?
3. Who sang “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree” originally?
4. Finish this Christmas song title: “All I want for Christmas is _____”.
5. What was the original title for “The Little Drummer Boy”?
6. In the song, “Last Christmas”, who does the singer give her heart to?
7. “Silent Night” was written by Joseph Mohr and _____.
8. If Elvis isn’t going to have a white Christmas, what type of Christmas is he going to have?
9. Which Christmas carol includes these lines: “The stars in the sky / Look down where He lay / The little Lord Jesus / Asleep on the hay”?

10. What is the Christmas carol, “O Christmas Tree” in German?

11. Who composed the music for “The Christmas Song”?

12. The Christmas song, “Thirty-two Feet and Eight Little Tails” refers to _____.



Photo by David Beale on [Unsplash](#)

It's Time for Scholarship Applications!

Each year RTOERO awards twenty \$3000.00 scholarships to post-secondary students enrolled in programs that lead to careers which benefit seniors in Canada. Fields of study include, but are not limited to, health sciences, medicine, nursing, human services, geriatric health care, research into healthy active living for seniors, architects, designers of age-friendly spaces, critical race studies and teaching or careers in education. District 42 members are encouraged to share the following link with post-secondary students in their lives, including family members. Application criteria, instructions and

online forms can be found at <https://rto-ero.ca/giving-back/scholarships/>. **The deadline for applications is January 13, 2023.**



Photo by Michelle Spollen on [Unsplash](#)

District 42 President's Message

It's turning out to be an exciting year for RTOERO District 42. Our Covid journey has had its ups and downs, but we are gradually resuming in-person activities and reaching out to members all over the province.

The new Executive Team acclaimed in the spring had a barbeque on the back patio of my home in July, and in the fall we set to work planning what to continue on Zoom and what in-person activities to initiate. Our Travel Committee continues to meet via Zoom every other month to share adventures and answer questions about destinations across Canada and around the world. In-person excursions are in the works. Our member luncheon at Milestones in the Tsawwassen Mills Shopping Mall in early October was a great success and included a member from Powell River in addition to a large representation of members in the Lower Mainland. (It was a free lunch thanks to extra funds accumulated during the

Covid lockdown!) Several Executive members have travelled to Toronto to represent our district at all-expenses paid national meetings this fall, with the option of spending additional holiday time with family and friends (at their own expense). We're all looking forward to our Winter Holiday Luncheon in early December at UBC, and who knows what the new year will bring?

Check us out on our District 42 website and on Facebook. Whether you are only able to attend selected events at the present time or want to volunteer to participate on the Executive Team, we hope that you enjoy your involvement with RTOERO. If you have any suggestions, questions or comments, please contact me at president42@districts.rtoero.ca. I'd love to hear from you!

Janice Wasik
President of RTOERO District 42

RTOERO Health Talk!

Mark your calendars.

More information to come:

Health Talk:

Gut Health for every body!

A Zoom presentation by Jennifer Lloyd RHN CHHC

January 25, 2023 at 11 am -12 pm, PST

Jennifer is an excellent speaker who is a registered holistic nutritionist.

Call for submissions from our RTOERO Members!

We're excited to be in the planning stage for our **March 2023** issue of the RTOERO District 42 newsletter! The Newsletter Committee is looking for submissions from our membership to enrich our newsletter and engage our members.

We'd love to get a submission from you! It'd be great to see a picture and/or a paragraph (approx 350-600 words) about:

- an experience in education you had when you were working (for example, a student you remember, a program you were involved in, an award you won, etc.)
- a travel experience you had or are planning. Include pictures if possible.
- a milestone you are working towards or have completed (for example, a skill you are learning, a personal achievement of some kind, an anniversary, etc.)
- a hobby or interest you are passionate about (for example, kayaking, bird watching, scuba diving, music, cycling, cooking, furniture making, hiking, volunteering, etc.)
- If not a written article, then how about a picture you've taken that you'd like to share with other members? Be sure to let us know where and when it was taken.

Are you willing to be interviewed for our "Member Spotlight" section? Or do you know of an RTOERO member who might be? Please email me with this information. We're searching for our next interviewee!

Send your submission to me, Kate Yoshitomi, at eileen372@gmail.com by **February 3, 2023**. Please add "Newsletter Submission" in the subject line. If you're submitting an article, please indicate if you're willing to include your email address in the submission so that members can get in touch with you if they would like more information about your topic. Pictures add great visual appeal, so send in those shots with your submission!

Looking forward to hearing from our members!



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Christmas Carols (and Songs!) Quiz Answers

It's time to check your answers to the Christmas Carols (and Songs!) Quiz!

1. In total, how many gifts were given in "The Twelve Days of Christmas"?
Answer: **364**
2. Who wrote the popular Christmas song, "Frosty the Snowman"?
Answer: **Walter "Jack" Rollins and Steve Nelson**
3. Who sang "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" originally?
Answer: **Brenda Lee**
4. Finish this Christmas song title: "All I Want for Christmas is My _____".
Answer: **Two Front Teeth**
5. What was the original title for "The Little Drummer Boy"?
Answer: **"Carol of the Drum"**
6. In the song, "Last Christmas", who does the singer give his/her heart to?
Answer: **Someone special**
7. "Silent Night" was written by Joseph Mohr and _____.
Answer: **Franz Gruber**
8. If Elvis isn't going to have a white Christmas, what type of Christmas is he going to have?
Answer: **a blue Christmas**
9. Which Christmas carol includes these lines: "The stars in the sky / Look down where He lay / The little Lord Jesus / Asleep on the hay"?
Answer: **"Away in a Manger"**
10. What is the Christmas carol, "O Christmas Tree" in German?
Answer: **"O Tannenbaum"**
11. Who composed the music for "The Christmas Song"?
Answer: **Mel Tormé**
12. The Christmas song, "Thirty-two Feet and Eight Little Tails" refers to _____.
Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner (variously spelled Dunder and Donder) and Blitzen (variously spelled Blixen and Blixem)