

SDS PODCAST

EPISODE 716:

HAPPINESS AND

LIFE-FULFILLMENT

HACKS



Jon: 00:05 This is Five-Minute Friday with happiness and life fulfillment hacks.

00:14 Welcome back to the Super Data Science podcast. Today, I'm joined by Annie, a 94-year-old woman who is the happiest person I've ever met. Now, I'm quite biased because she is my grandmother, but her happiness is off the charts and a big inspiration to me, so I thought she might have some invaluable tips for all of us. In today's episode, Annie discusses her secrets to happiness, how she maintains flourishing long-term relationships, the routines and mindsets she has to still be living independently, including driving herself everywhere at 94 years old. And she talks about the pace of technological progress in her lifetime, and how AI could enrich her life in the years to come. All right, let's, jump right into our conversation.

01:07 Hi, it's nice to be back with you here.

Annie: 01:09 It's, nice to have you here.

Jon: 01:11 Yeah, it's amazing that It's been two years since we last did an episode with you. Back in Episode number 508, you told us about anthills, and how when ants spend their whole life building an anthill, and then It's so easy for someone to come along and get rid of that anthill. So making all the life's work just waste away in an instant. So on this show, we're primarily about updates in artificial intelligence and machine learning, but we also have episodes on career advice and life advice. So I thought what a better chance than to have you come back on, now 94 years old, and talking about that anthill analogy back in number 508. One of the things that I think maybe makes building that anthill worthwhile for the ants-

Annie: 02:10 For the ants, yes.



Jon:	02:12	... is if they're happy, right? If that feels like the right thing that they're supposed to be doing. So it gets you through all those long hours of building the anthill-
Annie:	02:21	Building.
Jon:	02:22	... yeah. So, you're the happiest person I've ever met for sure. You light up the room... every room that you go into, whether it's people that have known you for decades and decades, or people that you've met just for the very first time. So what's your secret to being happy and to making other people so happy?
Annie:	02:42	Well, because I love people, and when I see them and I love them even more so. Because they're with me and I'm with them, so it makes a day and days go by nicely.
Jon:	02:55	Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. And yeah, I think that's it, I think that's kind of the key thing, is to find things that you enjoy, that you love doing and people that you love being around. It's a special experience to be around. It has this positive feedback loop, where if you are happy to them, you smile to them, they smile back and it just makes everything go by well.
Annie:	03:19	It makes me happy too.
Jon:	03:21	Nice. So, what kind of advice did you have on maintaining long-lasting relationships? You've had lots of people that have been so happy to spend time with you for so many decades; what's the trick there?
Annie:	03:36	They love me too. When we're together, we always make nice time. And I love to be with them, so it just works nicely.
Jon:	03:49	So It's kind of like the trick to maintaining long-lasting relationships is basically just being happy.

Annie:	03:56	Being happy, and seeing them happy, they're with me and I'm with them.
Jon:	04:03	And what if there's conflicts or disagreements?
Annie:	04:08	I just walk away. I don't bud in, so...
Jon:	04:19	And then, what about ideas that you have for people, maybe people are raising their kids, or maybe even their grandkids that are listening to the show, what advice do you have for raising happy kids and happy grandkids?
Annie:	04:33	Just love them, and do what they want to do and help them, to walk with them, and hop around with them, like I used to do.
Jon:	04:47	Yeah. So that idea there is that you want people to... you can't tell them what to do, they have to figure out what they like, but you'll support them.
Annie:	04:58	You support them, it's right, yeah. And you support them, like... even with you. We used to go hop in the malls, and that we used to hop around and used to have fun.
Jon:	05:12	Yeah, so also play is a key thing there-
Annie:	05:13	Play, yeah.
Jon:	05:15	... yeah. So you support people, help them find what they love. So that's something certainly that I got to enjoy from you, is if I got interested in guitar, then you'd make sure I had guitar lessons, and a nice guitar to play on. Or if I wanted to ride a bike-
Annie:	05:31	And ride a bike, and piano-
Jon:	05:33	... play piano, whatever it was-
Annie:	05:35	Yeah, whatever... yeah.

Jon:	05:36	... making sure that I had what I needed. But I think the most important thing was not even buying those things or getting the lessons, but it was the support that you always... when I first started playing guitar or I first started playing piano, I'm pretty bad.
Annie:	05:50	And I used to sit with you and listen, and always praised you how well you did.
Jon:	05:54	That's exactly it.
Annie:	05:55	Yeah.
Jon:	05:56	Exactly. I think that's the key thing for making people feel like, oh, what I'm doing is worthwhile, and I should keep trying and I'll get better.
Annie:	06:04	Yeah, and which you did.
Jon:	06:07	Yep. So you're 94 years old now, and you're still as sharp as anyone else around-
Annie:	06:12	So far.
Jon:	06:14	... and maybe your knees are a little stiff, so that's something. But for being 94 years old, there's no trouble. You're still driving yourself everywhere. You maintain your own home.
Annie:	06:26	Home, yes.
Jon:	06:28	Do you think that there are particular things that you do every day that contribute to your wellbeing?
Annie:	06:35	Well, I guess when you get up and make breakfast, and someone comes to see you, that's very nice.
Jon:	06:43	Yeah. And people phone?

Annie:	06:44	Then people phone always. My neighbors are very nice to me.
Jon:	06:47	Your neighbors are very nice, they all come by.
Annie:	06:50	They do, oh yes.
Jon:	06:52	So yeah, it kind of ties into the same thing. So there's a little bit there with breakfast about still taking care of things yourself a bit.
Annie:	07:00	Yeah.
Jon:	07:00	But I think also the key thing is that part of what makes it easy, and I think studies show this too, is that what keeps people happy and healthy into old age is community-
Annie:	07:11	Community.
Jon:	07:11	... and relationships. And so yes, you have all of your neighbors love you, they come by, people phone you all the time, they visit you all the time.
Annie:	07:18	And go to church.
Jon:	07:20	... yeah, to see people.
Annie:	07:21	To see people there, that makes you happy.
Jon:	07:24	For sure. Yeah, and not just the services themselves, but also the... to go to the community hall and help make-
Annie:	07:33	The hall, yeah.
Jon:	07:33	... bake things and make things for the...
Annie:	07:36	People to sell.



Jon: 07:37 ... for people to sell and support the church, that kind of thing; that all helps too, for sure.

Annie: 07:41 Yes. And people enjoy coming to the... and then when they do come, when they see me, they're very happy to see me in there too.

Jon: 07:50 Yeah, yeah.

Annie: 07:51 Well, at night I think of what I'm going to do next day. Like last week, I had to do some weeding, and put in new grass seeds, and I had to pull out some of the dandelions and crab grass. And then, we went to the store and got some dirt and seed grass, and we seeded it and it looks beautiful. It looks like-

Jon: 08:20 Your garden does look beautiful. The people watching the video version of the show will get to see that.

Annie: 08:24 Yeah. It looks nice, so it keeps me busy and I'm happy doing it.

Jon: 08:32 Yeah. So before you go to bed, you think of what are the most important things I need to do the next day-

Annie: 08:38 Yeah.

Jon: 08:38 ... and you wake up and you have specific projects in mind that you need to do.

Annie: 08:42 Yeah, I got to do that, so it would look nice next day. And I'm happy when I do it, and I'm happy I've done it already, so that makes it nice too.

Jon: 08:54 And then at the end of the day, after you've done all that hard work, what do you like to do to relax?

Annie: 09:00 Watch Jeopardy, or Wheel of Fortune.

Jon:	09:05	Yeah, yeah. And maybe have a cognac or some wine?
Annie:	09:07	Or that too; that goes together.
Jon:	09:12	Yeah, yeah, yeah.
Annie:	09:13	Yeah, yeah. Even my doctor said, "Your age, you could have whatever you want."
Jon:	09:19	Perfect.
Annie:	09:22	Yeah, he did. I say, "Is it possible if I have a drink?" He says, "Your age, you've done it so far; good, keep doing it."
Jon:	09:29	Just keep doing what you're doing, perfect.
Annie:	09:33	And I love being with you people, and it makes it nice.
Jon:	09:38	So that's the best, if that evening time can be with some other people, right?
Annie:	09:41	Oh, yeah.
Jon:	09:41	You watch the Jeopardy, you have some laughs, and have a bit of cognac, a bit of wine with people.
Annie:	09:48	Yeah, that makes it really nice.
Jon:	09:50	Perfect. So in almost the century that you've been around, a lot has changed.
Annie:	09:58	It sure has.
Jon:	09:59	So a lot of new technologies, a lot of new ways of living.
Annie:	10:03	Yes.

Jon:	10:03	What are some of the big things that you think maybe that have been good change or bad change that's happened over your whole life?
Annie:	10:09	Well, good thing... both the phones, which, before we used to listen how many rings that... to when I used to pick up, and each neighbor had the different rings, you know, four rings-
Jon:	10:24	Yeah, because you were on what they called the party line, right?
Annie:	10:25	Yeah, that was a party line.
Jon:	10:29	So anybody could listen to your calls; you just had to listen for your particular ring. What did your ring sound like, do you remember?
Annie:	10:36	It was just like now, they still doing, it has that ring. They still continue the same ring that...
Jon:	10:45	So your ring, the one that you happen to have, is kind of like the one that still today you mostly get?
Annie:	10:49	Yeah, it's still-
Jon:	10:51	Well, that's convenient.
Annie:	10:51	... still rings.
Jon:	10:53	Yeah. And so those phone calls, it's really nice because it means that you can be in Canada, I can be in New York, or in Singapore, or in England and we can still talk in real time.
Annie:	11:05	And for many hours almost. There, a minute cost a lot.
Jon:	11:10	Right, right, right. But now international calls, it's no problem.

Annie:	11:14	No problem.
Jon:	11:16	And we can do face now too. So you know how to use your iPad and do video calls?
Annie:	11:20	iPad, yes, that's an improvement. I could see you, and your sister, and your mom and your friends, whoever on the iPad.
Jon:	11:30	Yeah, it's very nice. Yeah, so now with machine learning and AI, we have all kinds of other helpful tools for us. It's moving along and progressing very quickly.
Annie:	11:39	Very quickly.
Jon:	11:40	Yeah, we might have some very... yeah, I think you'll still have a lot of years left and you're going to see a lot more crazy change in the years to come.
Annie:	11:48	I hope so.
Jon:	11:49	Yeah. Yeah, you never know. You got to enjoy every day, but I think that's true for all of us.
Annie:	11:55	Yeah, it is. It is, and we don't know what's tomorrow going to bring.
Jon:	11:59	Nice, yeah. Well, I guess as one last final question, just to leave people with maybe a big question, I don't know how easy this one's going to be, but is there something you wish you'd done differently in your life?
Annie:	12:15	I don't think so. I think I did everything I did with my children, and my grandchildren. We always had happy times, so that was so special.
Jon:	12:26	Yep, that's the key. It sounds like the main thread through this more than anything else is-



Annie:	12:30	Anything else.
Jon:	12:31	... is, yeah, relationships are the key thing, and just every day-
Annie:	12:35	Every day.
Jon:	12:36	... yeah. Wonderful. Well, thank you so much for taking the time for this.
Annie:	12:40	Oh, thank you for having me.
Jon:	12:41	And yeah, we'll check in maybe again in another couple of years-
Annie:	12:43	Sure.
Jon:	12:44	... and see what other advice you have for us then.
Annie:	12:46	Well, that would be nice. Maybe then I'll have a computer.
Jon:	12:51	You probably will. It'll be-
Annie:	12:52	Instead of a iPad.
Jon:	12:53	... yeah. Yeah, it'll be even... they're going to get easier and easier to use for you. And so I think, yeah, we're going to have even more ways that you can interact with us.
Annie:	13:03	Yeah.
Jon:	13:05	All right, thank you so much.
Annie:	13:06	I thank you. And stay happy and healthy.
Jon:	13:10	That's it, stay happy and healthy.
Annie:	13:11	Yeah.



Jon: 13:14 All right, that's it for today's episode. It was something different from the usual pure tech focus, so please do comment on the episode on social media, tagging me if you have thoughts one way or another. Always love to get your feedback as It's invaluable for shaping the future direction of the show. Other than that, you can support this show by sharing, reviewing, or subscribing. But most importantly, just keep listening. Until next time, keep on rocking it out there my friend and I'm looking forward to enjoying another round of the Super Data Science podcast with you very soon.