

Press Release - for immediate release

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Philadelphia, USA



Photographer and Psychologist Mandy Seligman announces nonprofit Positive Psychology photo sharing platform SeeingHappy.org

Photographer and Psychologist **Mandy Seligman** has launched *SeeingHappy.org* - an online platform for sharing photography to promote individual well-being through art.

Born amidst the gloom of a Covid-ravaged world, the illuminating idea is based on evidence that not only does turning to the positive increase hope and optimism and decrease anxiety and depression, but that positivity also increases creativity.

The platform draws on all the elements of PERMA, the Positive Psychology model designed by Mandy's husband **Martin Seligman**, the founder of positive psychology - Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishments.

SeeingHappy is an attempt to subtly change the way we see the world to orient us to the positive in our lives. It is a kind of photographic gratitude journal for the positives - to increase our well-being at a deeper level than likes on social media or number of followers which, in fact, decreases well-being if used to promote narcissism and competition surrounding a false narrative of life. SeeingHappy is instead a lens of positive perspective and community with deliberate intent.

Mandy says, "SeeingHappy's mission is to bring people together, to share the positive in their lives, to support each other. We are building a community through art and resilience and our common humanity.

"I am a huge believer in positive psychology and its ability to transform lives - the science bears this out. Positivity increases hope, resilience, and creativity and decreases anxiety and depression. I am also a huge believer in the power of art and the humanities to help us navigate better in choppy waters.

"When Covid hit I found myself doing more and more photography. I went to weekly photo lunches and it was wonderful - not competitive and very inspiring. We bonded and looked at each other's photos and we helped each other in myriad ways.

"Soon it became apparent that my camera really mattered for my own happiness. Positive psychology has a number of exercises shown to increase well-being and I discovered that if I generally followed that path I was much happier. I took photos of moments that touched me - people connecting, things I was grateful for, acts of kindness, awe, and beauty.

"I began to think of creating a Facebook page where people could share photos that made them happy. I envisaged it would be full of positive psychology principles;

- Individuals would be more attuned to what made them happy
- Sharing happy photos would spread the joy
- We would be creating a community that was focused on the positive

“I tested this idea out and received touching and overwhelming enthusiasm and support. Karen Guggenheim from The World Happiness Summit immediately supported my vision, and it was then I knew the idea was something that could resonate widely.

“I realised I was going to need help, so I reached out to Australian photographer David Evans, a former photography tutor of mine and now good friend of almost a decade, who without hesitation agreed to come on board. Being across so many timezones in Adelaide, David became the voice of reason for my 4am jitters as I thought and over-thought every scenario and possibility, and we would talk about the meaning of life, Buddhism and the big picture of what we wanted to achieve.

“I also approached my long term photography teacher Jill Galloway Sherman, who agreed to collaborate and has provided constant technical advice and moral support.

“Andrew Trousdale, Master of Applied Positive Psychology student from UPenn also came on board, bringing with him an interest in photography and invaluable experience in the nonprofit and education space. Andrew has a great ability to break things down to think through the practical steps needed to achieve our goals.

“Then there’s Lauren Pittenger, the website designer who translated all our often crazy and seemingly impossible ideas into a functional platform. The fit with Lauren was perfect and we’re so thankful to have her on the team.

“Roger Irwin, a junior at New York University, has also joined us as a research assistant, bringing his already impressive experience in non-profit administration and marketing in particular.

“In many ways, the idea is the antithesis of social media, so I knew it had to be a stand-alone platform and not on Facebook, and I’m so glad we took the time to build it from the ground up.

“The result is **SeeingHappy.org** with 20,000+ views according to google after 4 weeks! Literally at times it felt like a runaway train that I wasn’t in control of but of course I’m thrilled. We are also constantly evolving with so many positive suggestions from the early SeeingHappy community who want us to succeed.”

Mandy adds, “I have created SeeingHappy as a nonprofit so that I can spread positive psychology through photography and increase well-being, resilience and hope. And I want to connect people around the globe because I believe that friends make the world a better place - friends don’t make war, they care about each other. I believe in the power of personal connections.”

SeeingHappy has already garnered the support of many notable organizations and identities in the field of Psychology, including;

- World Happiness Summit - Karen Guggenheim, Founder
- University of Pennsylvania, Positive Psychology Center - Martin Seligman and Peter Schulman
- Tsinghua University - Dr. Kaiping Peng, Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Chair of the Department of Psychology and Dr. Yukun Zhao, Vice Director of the Positive Psychology Research Center, School of Social Sciences
- Positive Acorn - Robert Biswas-Diener
- Action for Happiness UK
- SBCoaching - Flora Victoria, Founder and CEO, Brazil
- Tal Ben-Shahar - Writer, former lecturer in Positive Psychology at Harvard University
- Global Happy Cafe
- Owen Biddle School of Photography

Karen Guggenheim, Founder of the World Happiness Summit says, "Seeing Happy is a powerful way to focus on what is going well in life, what gives us joy and what adds meaning to our lives. Here we can share, savor and build community through images that inspire us individually and connect us together. Mandy has created something truly special."



Next is an app-based version of the platform so people can easily become involved with photos from their smartphones, and plans to help connect SeeingHappy users through an online cafe.

SeeingHappy is co-founded by;

- **Jill Galloway Sherman** - Educator & Photographer, Philadelphia
- **David Evans** - Photographer, Adelaide, Australia
- **Andrew Trousdale** - Master of Applied Psychology, Photographer, NYC
- **Lauren Pittenger** - Web Designer, Philadelphia

For further information visit - <https://seeinghappy.org>

To request an interview with Mandy Seligman, please contact - media@photopublicity.com

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