

## THE ROAD TO HAPPY: NEW TRAVEL STUDY REVEALS 4 WAYS TO BOOST HAPPINESS

*Do Vacations Make Us More Happy Or Less Happy?  
The Answer – According To New Research – It Depends.*

LITTLETON, Colorado – Just in time for the second annual **International Day of Happiness** (the March 20, 2014, United Nations-inspired celebration dedicated to spreading happiness worldwide), **Monograms** and **Shawn Achor**, positive psychology researcher and **international bestselling author of *The Happiness Advantage***, unveil results from a **NEW Road to Happiness Study**. This 34-item survey of 414 world travelers examines the connection between travel and happiness, and the effect of travel upon stress and energy. More specifically, the new research sheds light on what, scientifically speaking, is the best way to achieve happiness before, during and after a vacation.

“We knew traveling the world can ‘cross train’ your brain to help you see more possibilities in life. But, based on this new research, we have found **that travel can also make people happier, healthier and more productive when they return from a vacation. But not all travel creates happiness,**” said Achor. “**Travel stress can undo the positive effects of travel.** Given this fact, there is a very specific formula needed to make the most of a vacation, allowing us to increase our happiness and overall energy. And having a boost in energy after vacation is a desired result.”

According to the Road to Happiness Study, there are **four (4) primary ingredients needed to enjoy a happy travel experience**. In fact, **97 percent (97%) of travelers report being very or exceptionally happy when their vacation had these components**. Based on survey results, to create the best travel experience, one must:

- 1) **Minimize stress.** When asked about their best trips, only **4 percent (4%) of people reported feeling stressed**. Conversely, on their worst trips, stress played a big role for more than 60 percent of people. Specifically, the **biggest vacation stressors** were:
  - a. **Wasting time figuring things out (28%)**
  - b. **Being unfamiliar with the destination (25%)**
  - c. **Managing transportation (20%)**
- 2) **Plan ahead.** If you want a happy vacation, check spontaneity at the door. According to Achor, “**Our new research revealed that the best – and happiest – vacations for 90 percent (90%) of people were those planned more than one (1) month in advance.** Planning ahead reduces stress and increases the opportunity to anticipate the getaway. And anticipation offers a great happiness advantage.”

- 3) **Make a local connection. On their best trips, 78 percent (78%) of travelers knew a knowledgeable friend in the destination or met with a local guide.** “When you meet-up with a local guide or someone you know, you are better able to connect with the destination. And creating a connection with people and places, cultures and histories, allows us to open our minds and increase our chances of experiencing happiness,” said Achor.
- 4) **Go far & away.** Monograms’ Road to Happiness Study with Shawn Achor also revealed that **85 percent (85%) of travelers’ best trips over the past five years were in locations outside their home country.** This new research mirrors a recent Twitter study that showed that the happiness levels of tweets increased the farther the post was geo-tagged from home.

According to Achor, “Travel requires getting up off the couch, but it’s worth it and you can do it on a budget. Staycations just don’t bring the same happiness and meaning that travel does. **94% of travelers found vacationing far from home found more meaning – and more happiness – during their time off than those who stayed home.**”

According to the Road to Happiness results, **when travelers vacation the right way, adopting the above ingredients, 93 percent (93%) of them enjoyed more energy after returning from their trip:** Something Achor refers to as a “post-vacation glow.” Conversely, **71 percent (71%) of people returned to work with less energy after a bad or stressful trip.**

“Traveling the world can be an amazing – and even better – a happy experience! It should be. You just have to know how to do it right,” said Achor.

Monograms – an international travel company and part of the award-winning Globus family of brands – is providing travelers the “happy” solutions they’re looking for. As part of its all-in-one vacation packages, Monograms offers travelers:

- Hotels in the heart of the destination (no bad hotel stress)
- Transportation from the airport to the hotel and between cities (no logistical hassles)
- A half-day of sightseeing in each city to assist with orientation and front-of-the-line, VIP access into the must-see sites and landmarks (no time wasted)
- An on-site Local Host to act as a personal concierge (local connection and assistance)

“We assume all travelers want to enjoy their vacation and increase their happiness before, during and after their trip,” said Steve Born, vice president of marketing for the Globus family of brands. “Our goal is to make every Monograms trip a happy vacation. It’s a lofty ideal but an important objective because vacations – and traveling the world – should be enjoyable.”

For more information about Monograms, the Road To Happiness Study, visit [www.TravelingHappy.com](http://www.TravelingHappy.com) or [www.Monograms.com](http://www.Monograms.com).

#### **ABOUT SHAWN ACHOR**

After spending over a decade at Harvard University, Shawn has become one of the world's leading experts on the connection between happiness and success. His research on happiness made the cover of *Harvard Business Review*, his TED talk is one of the most popular all time with 6 million views, and his lecture airing on PBS has been seen by millions. Shawn is the author of *New York Times* best-selling books *The Happiness Advantage* (2010) and *Before Happiness* (2013) as well as the award winning children's book the *Ripple's Effect*. He is featured in PBS's *The Happiness Advantage with Shawn Achor* special.

In 2007, Shawn founded **GoodThink**. to share his research with the world. Subsequently, Shawn has lectured or researched in more than 50 countries, speaking to CEOs in China, school children in South Africa, doctors in Dubai, and farmers in Zimbabwe. He has spoken to the Royal Family in Abu Dhabi, doctors at St. Jude Children's Hospital, and worked with the U.S. Department of Defense to promote happiness. Shawn graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard and earned a Masters degree from Harvard Divinity School in Christian and Buddhist ethics. For seven years, Shawn also served as an Officer of Harvard, living in Harvard Yard and counseling students through the stresses of their first year. Though he now travels extensively for his work, Shawn continues to conduct original psychology research on happiness and organizational achievement in collaboration with researchers at Yale University and the Institute for Applied Positive Research.

#### **ABOUT MONOGRAMS**

With nearly 40 offices staffed with more than 200 travel experts that extend as far as Asia and as wide as Europe, Monograms has a rich reputation as a company travelers can depend on to help them simplify travel planning while creating special dream getaways. Monograms affords travelers the power to personalize their vacation without having to take care of planning details or logistics, thanks to the on-site support of a Local Host. With Monograms, travelers are assured their vacation details are taken care of, including hotel, transportation, sightseeing and more, so they can simply focus on having fun. Monograms is part of the Globus family of brands, an award-winning, travel industry leader with 85 years of international travel expertise. The Globus family of brands is a member of Sustainable Travel International (STI).

Consumers can book a Monograms vacation or request brochures by visiting a preferred travel agent or by calling the following toll free number: 1.800.250.7614. For more information, please visit [www.monogramstravel.com](http://www.monogramstravel.com). "Like" us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/monogramstravel).

Travel agents can request brochures by calling toll free 1.800.221.0090 or visiting [www.globusfamilypartner.com](http://www.globusfamilypartner.com).