

# The secret to a longer, happier, healthier life

by Roze Phillips

“  
*I will give you a hint ...  
it is not money.*

*A Harvard study  
concludes 'good genes  
are nice but joy is  
better!' And joy comes  
from strong, enduring  
relationships.*



'We don't break the community circle of trust', the Finnish people say.

One of the biggest silent killers of today is LONELINESS, especially among older individuals, but not only older individuals.

Older people are lonely and isolated. They don't have many strong bonds left. Younger people are not necessarily isolated, but they are no less lonely. They have weak bonds – my 1 000 Facebook friends, but they lack strong bonds that take years to cultivate. They just swipe left.

Harvard researchers studied the lives of the same individuals over an uninterrupted period of 80 years to understand exactly the secret of a happy and healthy life.

They conclude that having strong, enduring relationships helps us live longer and be happier. Embracing community is key.

And here is the consistent finding, regardless of gender, ethnicity or socio-economic status. Close relationships help protect us from life's discontents, help to delay mental and physical decline, and are better predictors of long and happy lives than social class, IQ, or even genes.

This holds true whether you are from Harvard or inner-city, Johannesburg.

So, on the Cape Flats or any other community that might be classified as having no money, it does not make that community necessarily poor. It makes them without money. Some townships have higher happiness and trust quotients than the wealthiest golf estates. And this applies to times when things are going very well AND times of immense suffering. In strong supportive communities, people share the joys and the burdens of life.

For five years in a row, Finland has ranked No. 1 as the happiest country in the world, according to the World Happiness Report. One of the reasons for their happiness, it is suggested, is the social fabric and the trust that exists between members of society – whether male, female, non-binary, young or old.

A community that trusts is a community that thrives. A country that trusts, is a country that thrives.

So, how can you show up for your community? How can you create more trust? How can you unlock abundance in your community?

Written by Roze Phillips, March, 2023.  
Contact [info@abundanceatwork.co.za](mailto:info@abundanceatwork.co.za).