

# The Happy Ham

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I really do hope after the program tonight, each of you will at least feel like your time has been well spent. Each of our net control stations on ASTEN do our best to provide a wide variety of training that will enrich your experience with emergency communications and Ham radio in general.

The Subject I have chosen for tonight, ask a really simple sounding question, but the answer is quite complex really. Never the less I ask it, are you a happy Ham? No Joke, a happy Ham. I mean do you enjoy the hobby? Let us ask ourselves, am I a pleasant person to talk to? Someone that would leave a good impression on those who try this hobby of ours, to see if it is a hobby that brings something positive to their life as it has mine? Would I enjoy the hobby if others had an attitude like mine and acted the same way I do? If they showed the same courtesy and the same amount of restraint that I do, would it make me a happy Ham. If you or I are not happy hams, it is likely that we are not making anyone else a happy Ham either.

Being a happy Ham may include some soul searching on our behalf. So, let's start with our attitude towards the hobby, and how it might affect others. Do we constantly complain about our hobby? Then maybe we need to look a little further into it and see if we're happy with where we are as an amateur. Being unhappy with where we are is sometimes a problem that is easily corrected by just upgrading or changing our area of interest. Maybe becoming a net control for this net, or maybe a local VHF or UHF net would make you happy. You let me know and I will do my best to assist you in either. On the other hand, if you're already doing those kinds of things and you're unhappy, then maybe you might want to look into being an Elmer or becoming a VE. Whatever you opt for, you need to be happy in doing it, or you'll not only be hurting those you are trying to help, but hurting yourself, because unhappiness leads to unhealthiness as well.

Not only that, an unhappy attitude is a deterrent to others. The unhappy ham does more too hurt Ham radio as a whole, than any other thing I know of. You might have noticed in the past that most people don't act their best when they are unhappy, and inline with that thought, most people that you hear acting up, that spread hate and discontent, are not happy people and it shows. I don't mean to refer to people who simply disagree with me or you, because that might include lots of happy folk. I welcome people's honest opinion, and happy folks can be happy and still disagree.

However, being a happy Ham might mean pausing before replying to a fellow ham, to give moments thought to the impact your words will have on others. You know HF is not a private line, and many folks do listen. Think about what you would need to say, if anything, in order to help those just coming into the hobby to be happy hams as well. I challenge each of us to try being a spark, that enlightens the heart of a new ham, invite them into your group or home and make them welcome to the hobby. You might just be the one who helps change a bad situation into something really good.

My personal view is, if I can't be a happy ham, I will consider fishing or something else I enjoy, because I wouldn't be helping the hobby I say I love. If you love Ham radio and just are not happy with the situation you are in. When it's all boiled down to plain honest truth, you alone will decide if you are going to be a happy ham or not. You and I make the choices of who we associate with and we choose to be or not to be the happy ham.

I know a lot more about people than I do Emergency Communications. The latter I am doing my best to learn and I admit it is not my strongest suit at this point. However I know for a fact that people like being around people, who are happy doing what they are doing. I like to associate with happy people and you do too. I have found when I am happy people like to associate with me. As a matter of fact, people will come more near supporting a happy persons ideas. People are more likely to follow leadership who are happy.

Most people had rather be happy than to be a grouch or be around one, and had rather be around, and work with, people who are happy. I don't mean to say we can't have and use plain English, and political correctness has sent a many down a really sorry path.

We need more people willing to be clear about where they stand. But, there should not be any place in Ham radio, for people who wish to do nothing more than spread hate and discontent, and it doesn't take a rocket science to see the difference. You along know your own motives, and can answer your own questions. I will only try to judge my own self on the subject tonight, and hope you will do the same.

The old saying, you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear holds true to form. You are not going to have a happy group, if you have a bunch of sour apples in the group. There seems to me to be only one real solution to that problem. Each person needs to look at themselves, because the truth is we are not likely to do a whole lot to change anyone else anyway, and if we are not happy, let's see what we can do to make ourselves happy.

I wish such a happy attitude would come across to our served agencies when it comes to emergency communications. You might say, well they don't care about all that silly stuff. Folks, ask our leaders in Emergency communications and they will tell you that the number one problem that served agencies have with ham radio operators, is they say, we cant get along amongst ourselves.

I don't know that I want to be associated with any one group alone, when it comes to ham radio, but I would feel it a privilege at any time to be thought of as, a Ham operator that is just happy to be a part of this wonderful thing we call Ham radio.