

SAVINGS CAN BUY HAPPINESS

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A pair of red bottoms is the perfect replacement for a therapist. Money can buy happiness if saving money starts now. Many live by the motto, “Money can’t buy happiness,” to convince themselves that materialistic items do not equal fulfillment. This popular motto, however, is incorrect. Shopping is essential to human happiness, made possible by saving money. Whether it is for groceries or a new designer bag, shopping is crucial for satisfaction. Through savings, when the need comes for retail therapy, one can comfortably shop without the guilt of being unstable in terms of finance.

Shopping is one of the most effective stress relievers. Individuals can use shopping as a distraction from the difficulties they could be experiencing in life. Dr. Scott Bea, a clinical psychologist, explained that the smell of something new, the bright lights, and the colorful displays combine to create an imaginative, sensory experience that can remove us from our own reality. By putting energy into something other than life’s anxieties, one’s focus will be diverted to a more pleasant activity. Shopping also relieves stress by adding a sense of control. Life is full of uncontrollable things, forcing individuals to find control in the smallest of things. According to a 2014 University of Michigan [study](#), shopping for things you enjoy is up to 40 times more effective for giving the shopper a sense of control than not shopping.

Not only does shopping act as a stress reliever, but it also lifts one’s mood. According to a [study](#) by Brunel University, shopping had effects on the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for pleasure. The study also found that dopamine, the “feel-good” hormone, was released when shopping. Dopamine is an [important](#) chemical in the brain that influences many things. This [hormone](#) regulates sleep, increases goal-oriented behavior, controls attention and memory, and stabilizes mood. Dopamine is even used to treat life-threatening health issues such as low blood pressure, poor cardiac output, poor blood flow to vital organs, and septic shock. Low levels of this “feel-good” hormone have been linked to [depression](#) and reduced [motivation](#). There are multiple links between shopping and the release of different hormones, making it a beneficial experience for an individual.

While shopping has many positive effects, constant shopping could lead to a shopping addiction. [Signs](#) of an addiction include financial difficulties due to shopping, difficulty resisting buying unneeded items, and problems at home or work due to out-of-control spending. To

prevent a shopping addiction, do not buy more than can be afforded, as well as taking a week to think about if the item wanted is needed.

Start saving money now to shop your problems away. Try putting \$20 into savings from each paycheck. Treating yourself is important. Shopping may require funds, but so does therapy. Why not use that money to buy something you like?