

Dear friends and family,

March 14, 2003

By now, you probably all know the background, so I won't go into that, but if the magazine did not circulate through your local papers this past Sunday, I

thought I would send these photos and the magazine cover for you. You can also look up the magazine at [www.usaweekend.com](http://www.usaweekend.com) and the authentic happiness information and a bio on Dr. Martin Seligman at [www.authentichappiness.com](http://www.authentichappiness.com).

ABC flew us to New York Sunday, March 2, where a limo picked us up and drove us to the Time Square Millennium. Once settled, six of JP's buddies and their wives



(all live in New Jersey, Connecticut, and on Long Island) came into the city to meet us. This was one heck of a reunion with autographs, smiles, photos, hugs, and a spectacular dinner at Carmine's where they gave us the best table in the house. After a very early evening, we said good-bye and began to prepare for an early Good Morning America wake-up call.



The call came in forty-five minutes earlier than expected. They asked that we check into makeup and wait in the greenroom in case they wanted to have JP on earlier than expected. We were so excited that we were already up anyway, and literally, all we had to do was take the elevator down 48 floors and walk directly across the street to the side stage door. It was spectacular!

After make-up, they ushered us to the greenroom where several of the news commentators were waiting to go on. I'll have to watch the GMA show to get their names...I am not a daytime TV person. The first guest to arrive was Andrew Firestone, the new Bachelor. He is from Virginia, too. Very nice, young man. He was so excited to meet JP and wanted his autograph right away. It was actually one of the first that JP signed. JP joked him and said that Andrew was probably going to be giving them out long after his fifteen minutes of fame was over. (Somehow though, knowing my husband and after this experience, I doubt this is going to be fifteen minutes of fame...)

Anyway, as a side note, my daughter called later in the day to say, "Hello." She jokingly said, "Yea, yea. JP did great. Now tell me about the bachelor. Did you try to fix me up with him? Did you give him my number" It was cute. JP got a big kick out of that.



The GMA team teased the “Happiest Man in America” story for a solid hour before JP finally went on, and the truth is, the bachelor’s interview ran long taking some time away from JP. They changed how JP was going to be introduced several times. First he was going to be behind the screen just as the bachelor was...changed that...then he was going to be in the studio audience...changed that...then he was going to be seated...changed that. But when all was said and done, it was a terrific interview.



I was sitting in the best possible spot. I did not want to be in the studio audience and since JP seemed a touch anxious, the producer and cameramen let me hang with them. When they shot JP’s segment, I was actually sitting right in front of Diane Sawyer, Robin Roberts and JP between the two main cameras and was able to watch through the camera monitor with the technicians. It was a perfect spot, less than four feet in front of them.

After the show, Ms. Sawyer took us back upstairs to the studio where it was not so noisy, and we took photos and chatted for a bit. We gave her the pasta sauce we had brought for her and she laughed and asked us about it. We also talked about the fact that Virginia Beach had gotten so much exposure lately. She was very gracious and classy, but remained very business like. She did say, though, before we returned to the greenroom that she wanted us to know that we could return to the show anytime. Very nice.

Once back in the greenroom, relaxing and having lunch, the camera men, crew, and the real pretty news commentator (can't remember her name) came in and wanted to talk more about the "Happiness Thing." She said reporting all of the bad news all day long every day gets to you after a while. The truth is, without exception, every person we met - from the limo driver who picked us up at the airport, to the bell hop who helped us into our room, to the grips and camera-men, even the news commentators, wanted to know more about how to be happy in their everyday lives. I have never seen anything like it. It is as if we are all "hungry" for it right now. Once people realized that it was about happiness and being fulfilled and not just some "happy" gimmick, the questions just flowed. They all wanted the website, Dr. Seligman's name, and wanted to know what JP would advise them to do to be happier. It was chilling!

We had an hour before the limo picked us up for FOX news, so we ran back to the room. The three phone lines into the room were all ringing at the same time and JP and I had 20 messages on our cell phones. It was great! We checked them all and that kept us excited and confident for the next interviews.

We did not realize that FOX news is the number one news channel around. It was also interesting to compare the set and studio and the greenrooms for all of these interviews. They were all so different and all treated the story differently. ABC and CNN had beautiful greenrooms with banquet type food set up. They had wait staff who kept everything hot and cleared. FOX was very small and very cluttered and only had coffee-cakes, fruit, water, and coffee. That's it. You could tell they were serious about nothing but the news. The nicest was Connie Chung's. It was extremely plush, complete with a huge flat screen TV to watch. (Now - back to FOX)



It just happened to be a HUGE news day, so things were “hopping.” We met Captain Christian who is the military analyst for FOX in the greenroom. He was wearing a purple heart on his lapel and was very impressive. He actually waited after his interview to shake JP’s hand again, and yes. You guessed it... had more questions for JP about this “Happiness Thing” ...Amazing.

From the FOX studio, we took a cab and went to Mickey Mantle’s place. We had never been and since JP knew Mickey personally and Mickey was mentioned in the article, we wanted to go. Mickey actually had his own nick name for JP. He called him “Goosey” and gave him a pair of cowboy boots for his birthday that JP still wears today.



Connie Chung was the only interview that was taped. It is amazing how that takes some of the pressure off, but they still treat it as if it were live. We arrived and went to the greenroom. Shortly before getting JP for makeup, Ms. Chung’s Executive Producer came in and said that Ms. Chung had seen photos and wanted to know if I would go on the show, too. I was floored and flattered. They rushed me into makeup as time was running short. Before I knew what

was happening, I was seated on the set beside JP.



Connie Chung was incredible. Both JP and I said that of all of the talents we met in NY, she was by far the most personable. We talked about all sorts of things, and she wanted to know all of the ingredients that went into the pasta sauce. She talked with us

about her small garden at their country home and wanted to know more about “The Beach.” After the interview, she laughed so hard and said she thought JP and Maury Povich, her husband, should be married, and then she and I could sit around and have our coffee together all morning.

She and her crew sat and chatted for a long while and even gave us tips on where we should go for dinner. Before we left, JP and I sincerely invited her to come to Virginia Beach to visit and to vacation. She said she really might take us up on that. What a blast! (Footnote – Her office has already called for our address so she can write to us...so who knows!)



After freshening up, we decided to go out to dinner and try to get out of the room to watch the CNN interview. We were right at Rockefeller Center, and JP wanted to go see the ice skaters, so after that, we just decided since time was running short to go up to the Rainbow Room. When we walked in, we went to the lounge to see if there was a TV. No such luck. JP went off to ask the manager, and I simply walked over to the bartender and said, “Excuse me. We are planning to have dinner here, but do you know where we could find a TV so we could see a few minutes of CNN? My husband and I are going to be interviewed on the Connie Chung show in just a few minutes, and we really don’t want to miss it.” His expression changed to a broad smile and he said, “You two are going to be on CNN? With Connie Chung? Come with me!” With that, he walked me right past the piano player into the back area where others were dining. There on the wall was a huge flat screen TV. JP and the manager came over and fiddled with it until they got the right channel. With all of the commotion (they were bringing Champaign and setting up our table right in front of the screen), some of the dinner guests started to ask questions. Before we knew it, JP was being asked to autograph a few magazine covers.

As soon as Connie Chung started to interview us, the piano player, the entire wait staff, manager, and all the dinner guests joined us to watch. When it was over, (I promise I am not making this up), the entire Rainbow Room erupted in applause. Coolest thing I have ever witnessed in my life!

Once again, even after we were seated in the dining room for dinner, the wait staff and other dinner guests would come up and ask questions about this “Happiness Thing.”

From there we went to JR’s on Broadway for after dinner drinks and again met wonderful people who either had seen interviews that day, knew about it, or soon would. It was a riot. We met the famous French artist, Sylvain Copon who was in New York for one of his exhibits and he drew an awesome sketch on a napkin and signed it for us. Then this week he sent us a package with his entire catalogue of his work. Really a nice man.



Tuesday morning there were several radio interviews to do over the phone and more calls from home. Then it was time to go to CNBC. One of JP’s very best friends, Dickie Warhurst, joined us at the studio. This interview was particularly different because it was a “talking heads” kind of thing. The anchors were in the studio in New Jersey, and JP was going to be doing a split screen interview from New York. The cameraman was a great man from Puerto Rico named Victor, and he wanted me to email him info on the lighthouses in Virginia Beach as he is planning on bringing his family here this summer. Real cool! He wanted to know more about his “Happiness Thing,” too.

I thought this was one of JP’s most powerful interviews, because he was looking directly into the camera and not talking to a talent. He was able to put more feeling in his responses and gesture while giving direct eye contact to the

camera. He knew this was the channel that the stockbrokers and traders watch all day on Wall Street, so he was able to talk directly with his peers. He was so good, it was uncanny. They gave him more time, and he was able to go more into depth on this one. The name of his company was shown on the screen the entire time. They loved that, of course...free national advertising, and for such a good story. (I did not get any photographs of this, only a video that I shot while sitting with Victor.)

When this interview was over, we took a cab with Dickie and went to ground zero. We had not been since 9/11 and both JP and I lost friends in the WTC on 9/11. It was incredibly emotional.

We walked in silence after that to a steak house owned by one of Dickie's friend, Charlie Blair. Mark Joseph's is one of the best five steak houses in the world, and I have honestly never had a better steak in my life. But the really neat thing was that while we were sitting in the bar area waiting for our table and talking with Charlie about his own happiness factor, brokers started filtering in after their workday. I was facing the door and could see all of this happening. As they came in, Dickie had left the magazine on the counter and group by group they would look

at the magazine, huddle up for a minute, look down the way at JP and say, "Hey! That's that Happy Guy!" Then all would come over and slap



him on the back or ask for autographs. One man said that his entire floor stopped trading while they watched JP's segment on CNBC. Cool stuff. All of them said that they identified with what JP had said and many of them agreed that they were very happy, too, and that they counted their blessings everyday. There is simply no time to mope and think that life is or has treated you badly. Just make a decision each day to be happy. Period. Very simplistic, but true. Again, a spectacular experience.



The next day our flight was cancelled due to bad weather, so we bought an umbrella and headed out for a walk. JP had never been to the United Nations before and this was the day that Russia was supposedly going to veto the UN Resolution, so we walked the few blocks over to witness that. Very thought-provoking to be there at that time.

Then to a little Irish pub and off to the airport.

Thirty minutes after we arrived back in Norfolk, JP's brother and sister's flight arrived. We laughed and told stories all the way home. Then on Thursday evening, we had a small reception to thank the people who had helped us with all of this. A local TV crew, photographer, and the

Mayor were all on hand. Very nice.

Since then, it has been radio interviews, photo shoots, reception, and luncheons, and JP is to emcee a couple of event this weekend. Then, there is a ru-





mor that we may be going back for a couple of shows in NYC and the West Coast. Then just today there was a call about possibly riding in the St. Patty's Day parade in Chicago and going on a few shows in that area. JP has already done a radio interview with WGN there. Time will tell.

We have started two books; one a small one that can be out very shortly, and one a longer book about his whole life experience and practices he uses to remain happy.

There is a website coming ([www.mrhappyusa.com](http://www.mrhappyusa.com)), speaking engagements, and who the heck knows what else. But through this all, we still know how very humbling this experience has been, and we are very, very grateful.

Thanks to you all for your wonderful support. Once some and of these other appearances are firmed up, I will be sure to let you know. It is time for him to be able to tell the full story and not just give little sound bits.

God Bless,  
Judi Godsey

P.S. We wish to express our sincere gratitude to Nicole Tillman, Emma Inman, and especially to Susan Moore Maddox for helping to make this dream come true!

