

It's the little things

An incomplete list of things that make me feel good.

- Being awake before the world starts to stir. Seeing birds chirping away in their own bird universe. When you're swimming and feel weightless. When you're writing or reading and the warm sun lands on your back, or you turn your head just so and a slice of sunlight lands on your face.
- When you feel that what you're writing is maybe good and that whatever impulse made you create it is leaving your body. You feel lighter and happier all at once.
- When something that's been floating around in your psyche for weeks/months finally bubbles to the surface and you manage to capture it on the page.
- Taking my red pen to the newspaper because it really shouldn't be written that way.
- Discovering a writer whose work you love and then falling down a giant internet hole trying to consume everything they've ever written.
- Chats with someone you share a sensibility with. You finish each others sentences, trip over each other's punchlines, echo the rhythms of each other's speech patterns. You can see the joke he's planning to make 3 moves down. It's fun to watch his face contort into the micro-expressions of taking a run up to his joke. Once he gets to the punchline, you still surprise yourself by giggling more than you should. It's the pleasure of knowing that he has enjoyed the moment. It's the comfort of a brain that's familiar to you.
- When an artist/director/writer tugs at your emotions with such deftness and skill that you just melt into a puddle of mush. Creators who are allergic to making art that is gauzy, false, earnest or empty. When you are in the hands of someone who has taken your time and your feelings and expanded them both.
- Art that helps you forget your pain. Art that helps you feel not alone in your pain.
- The moment after a workout when you feel calm and glad that you pushed through whatever inhumane resistance was trying to talk you out of it.
- When you have to order way more food than you need to qualify for delivery and it arrives (with 3 sets of cutlery!) and you eat it all anyway.
- Being a good eater. The first bite into a fresh piece of fruit. The first slurp of hot tea on a cold morning.
- When you get home from a trip and do the whirl of disrobing, unpacking, running a shower, disinfecting electronics and ordering take out to make you feel happy and safe at home again.
- Getting packages in the post - the adult equivalent of Santy visiting.
- Everyday moments that are unifying. The curt-but-warm nod of a fellow country walker.
- Genuine un-ironic enthusiasm in the smallest things.
- Making lists. Ticking things off lists. Deputising technology to take over tasks that used to be my responsibility (remembering things, washing clothes etc).
- Teasing someone you love for a thing you love about them. Teasing that shows that they are known.

- Passing a runner on the road while driving and silently cheering them on.
- Opting out of dumb shit.
- When things dawn on you, when something intellectually/emotionally click into place.
- When I map out my emotions, like Magellan trying to cross an ocean.
- A conversation that feels like an unloading, a stiff valve slips open and lets out some of the hot air that was making you feel stuck and staticy.
- Flashes of girlish defiance and steely determination. (“Go on, underestimate me, that’ll be fun.”)
- The (occasionally existential) effort toward something you believe in, pulling out all the stops to make it work, feeling pulled into the dynamism of doing the work not thinking or talking or worrying about the work, but actually doing the work.
- The good kind of exhausted, that comes with hard labour and seeing your efforts reflected back to you.
- When you lift your head after many hard months of life or work and realise, I am not where I was.