

## Happiness

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### POINTS TO DEVELOP

Happiness defies definition-it is not just fun.

Everyone seeks happiness-no matter how rich or powerful.

If happiness is the ultimate goal, the road to it must be carved out, every inch of the way.

Work is necessary to achieve happiness.

The family and its efforts strive to build the road to happiness,

Odds against happiness, which appear as road-blocks and must be built around.

Commitment and contentment as the happiness.

Conclusion.

To this day, happiness has defied definition. Most people tend to equate happiness with fun, good living, plenty of money. If happiness were synonymous with all this, rich people with all their luxuries and countless parties would be perpetually happy. But in actual fact, they are frequently acutely unhappy despite their riches and ability to indulge in fun activities at will. Fun is what we experience during an act-happiness is that intangible something we experience after an act. We may have fun watching a movie, going shopping, meeting friends-these are all activities that afford us fleeting moments of relaxation and enjoyment. Happiness, on the other hand, is a much stronger, deeper, and more abiding emotion.

Happiness remains the goal of every individual whether he or she is the president of the country or a matinee idol or a faceless commuter on the subway. Everyone wants to be happy. But happiness is not a fruit waiting to be plucked off a tree, nor is it sealed and wrapped, complete with expiry date, available for a price on the nearest supermarket shelf. One can achieve happiness only by working for it, Happiness is perhaps the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, but to reach it we must find the way and build a road leading to it, notwithstanding the fact that, at every moment, the horizon appears just that little bit farther away.

The way to happiness is not a smooth, broad highway along which we can cruise at a comfortable speed. It is a path through rocky and rugged terrain and the going can become very tough at times. At these times we have to roll up our sleeves and with pitchfork and shovel make our way onwards. This pursuit of happiness lasts a lifetime and we must be prepared to consistently build on without ever saying "thus far and no farther". Great happiness is earned only by great effort, and effort not in spurts but diligent, constant effort.

In this connection we are confronted with another fallacy, that fun and pleasure mean happiness and thus pain, its corollary, must be synonymous with unhappiness. It is because of this misconception that people avoid the very endeavour that is the source of true happiness. Things that bring us happiness, more often than not, involve some amount of pain. Difficult endeavours—such as the raising of children, establishing deeper relationships with loved ones, trying to do something worthwhile in life—hold the promise of a world of happiness but none of them come without some pain.

Another prevalent belief is that if one were rich enough not to have to work one would be blissfully happy. But a job is more than just a pay cheque. Work holds the key to happiness: doing something which increases confidence and self-worth. It brings on a feeling of satisfaction, of contributing something of value. Job satisfaction comes less from how much one earns than from the challenge of the job. Of course, the pay-cheques matter. It would be time alistic to suggest that one could be happy without a basic shelter, roaming the streets on an empty stomach. Worrying about the next meal would naturally mean forcing happiness to take a back-seat. And if we accept that the satisfaction of our basic needs, as well as the satisfaction of doing something worthwhile is necessary for happiness, we must also accept the need for consistent effort to achieve this.

As "Man is not an island entire of itself", he cannot be happy in isolation. Humans live out their life in the company of their family, friends, colleagues, superiors, even total strangers in buses and lifts. And, brick by brick, they must build their relationship with each one, to lay a secure foundation for their road to happiness. One has to work hard to establish, develop and maintain deep and lasting bonds with those who matter in one's life. The same thing may be observed in the family as a unit. Happy families value pleasures that involve personal effort. When one builds a house and makes a home, it isn't the actual construction of the building that makes it so special. Happiness is not in things; it is in us. Happiness becomes the work and love one puts into any achievement, as a family.

We often carry a picture of a model family in our heads, but family life does not always match our expectations. Strong families know they cannot anticipate all the twists and turns on the road. Their secret ingredient for happiness includes flexibility rooted in love, understanding and a real desire to overcome the odds. Happiness is not the absence of problems but the ability to deal with them. The pot-holes must be filled in, the bumps levelled as one trudges on. It is important here to accept that one is not, and cannot be, happy all the time. Tragedy strikes in the form of sickness and death. So, one must work to overcome the grief, try hard to reconcile ourselves to the sorrow.

Nowadays, priorities seem to have undergone a change. People opt out of relationships, forego child-bearing and rearing, and choose to live breathlessly busy lives all by themselves simply because they are afraid of making a commitment. For commitment involves sacrifice, effort and discomfort. Commitment means investing part of oneself, accepting responsibility, recognising a set of duties, working for something. To be able to find joy in another's joy-that is the secret of happiness. Once again, effort is involved and road has to be carved out gradually, with unceasing attention to cracks and fissures.

Another secret ingredient of happiness is contentment, Contentment waxes and wanes as "we look before and after and pine for what is not". Contentment here does not mean apathy or lack of ambition, just as the commitment mentioned earlier does not mean curtailment of freedom, Commitment teaches us to give so that we may receive, and contentment helps us to cherish the gifts we have received. These things are worth a try even if they don't promise access to the pinnacle of success. Success, after all, has been described as getting what one wants, whereas happiness is liking what one gets.

Thus, we find that the road to happiness is littered with many pot-holes and pit-falls and passes from time to time through uncharted territory where no roads exist at all. We have to traverse this path with care. The vital point to remember is that the effort must be Amaranthine or perpetual, which also has etymological echoes in our Sanskrit "amar" or eternal. If only we accept that the road is always under construction, can we forge ahead to find that illusive abstraction called Happiness!

Essay No. 02

## **Happiness**

What exactly is happiness and what can create it? Though it is defined as the condition of being content, different people may have their own ideas of

happiness. It is a state of well-being characterised by emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. Happiness is a pleasant feeling that is beneficial and yet also intangible and elusive. This elusiveness may come from the fact that some people have the wrong idea of happiness. They believe that the transitory things they seek after, such as money or fame, will give them true happiness, but in actuality they won't. Statistics have shown that the majority of wealthy people are not truly happy. However, other people assert that friends and family are the main sources that bring about happiness. But, whatever the source, happiness is definitely an essentiality and necessity of life. Different people define happiness differently. For some, it means abundance of love, while for others, it means lot of money. It is a relative concept. No two people have the same definition of happiness. It is commonly thought of as having a lot of money, power or fame. But can these things actually make people happy? Happiness is actually more than what most people think it is. It can be mysterious and elusive, sought after by many, but not gained by all. Happiness can come from many different sources but perhaps the most ubiquitous ones are friends and family. Happiness resides not in transient possessions or gold, but instead in the conviction that we are loved. Happiness, which is often thought of as a fairly simple concept, is actually more than what people assume it is. Although this natural mood or feeling is desired by numerous people, it is very elusive and therefore, extremely difficult to obtain. Happiness is frequently sought after but not gained. Though not everybody accepts the utilitarian axiom that happiness is the most essential value, the desirability of happiness is almost undisputed. Happiness is necessary for a successful life. It is absolutely essential to our health and well-being. Statistics have proven that happiness is beneficial to the human race. Happiness, though intangible, is one of the most important aspects of a person's life. Although people can get their happiness from many disparate sources, the most prevalent derivations that engender happiness are family and friends. Friendship improves happiness by doubling our joy and dividing our grief. Though for some people, their idea of happiness is money and fame, most would agree that family and friends also bring great joy and happiness. Frequently, people have the wrong idea of happiness. They believe it arises from just material, ephemeral objects. However, for others, happiness may come from things as simple as hanging out with friends or reading a good book. As Joseph Addison once said, "True happiness arises from the enjoyment of oneself and the friendship and fellowship of companions and kin."