

ACHIEVING TRUE HAPPINESS

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In today's era, happiness seems to be directly proportionate to materialism. It's all about the new promotion or pitch you've bagged, the dream home at Malabar Hill you now live at, the Mercedes Benz C class you drive, the upgrade from your old Honda Accord, the Club you go to, the parties you've been invited to, the brands you wear, the list is endless. The options that surround us are innumerable, giving us pleasure which we seem to term as happiness. But is this really happiness? Can we call a dream car that we have finally purchased happiness? For many, the reply is a quick yes and why not, 'I have worked for it through sweat and blood' is the answer. Then why is it that after the material pursuit, when we reach it, after a while, it no longer seems to give us the ecstasy, it once did and we then need another one to latch onto. No wonder marketers seem to mesmerize us like pied pipers into creating and defining wants for us, setting trends, what's

Empty Space fulfillment: Each one of us has this empty space within us. For some it's the lack of love and a feeling of being desired, for others it could be a craze to command attention and supersede norms of the society, for some, it's a pastime, or comfort, or jealousy and the list is extensive. This space can be fulfilled only momentarily and leaves us soon feeling dissatisfied since the crux of the matter is not addressed, the crux that is far deeper and meaningful than the shallow empty fulfillment. No wonder we seem to think we are happy at one moment and on the other hand, feel sad and dejected requiring the next material pill to prevent us from mental derangement.



Lack of time to introspect: Most of us rarely get the time to introspect on what we really want from ourselves and what is it that can really keep us happy in the long run. We are in a state of frenzy, a rat race that seems to have no bounds, a stampede of one trying to slander the other. When we are young, we want to get into a great college, when arrive there we want to graduate to a profession. The profession you enter barely gives you time, to comfort yourself and learn. On the other, hand it get worse with competition in a dog-eat-dog world; then comes family, kids, relatives, savings, investments, taxes, politics, economy. So no wonder you are like a balloon pressured from all ends, pushed to the point of exploding. So instead of you controlling your life, you seem to be controlled.



Inability to define a long-run meaning to life: We have been acclimatized to gain instant gratification than to fulfill a long-term purpose. An objective that means more to us in the short- run is the pathway no matter even if it may not lead us to our long run goals. Ethics are bent to our requirements and are altered faster than we think. It's beautiful to know that we are handed over with investment options and limited resources. These resources are given to us equally, though we may think otherwise. The investments we make now is what we will reap in the future, in this very life. The ultimate outcome being happiness or regret.



Deteriorating Bonds: There used to be a time when our parents and grandparents used to spend time at something called a playground; family functions and gatherings were galore. Old parents were cared for and children were loved, not just by their parents, but also by other

... the open with one's son is replaced by a fancy 'Play station' birthday gift. A 'Honey I'll be late' love line rather than a 'Honey I'll be early' possibility. No wonder genuine relationships are weakening, and we seem to build our relationship based on what we can get from another and which could enable us to move one step ahead in life. Have you heard much of having a friend who is a beggar?



Self worth based on others: Lets ask ourselves how many times have we based our self-worth on others. We let others set norms and standards of righteousness. We want to belong and be accepted. We want to be loved because we are rich or pretty, how rich or what's pretty and what's ugly is for our neighbours to define. Whether our career is fulfilling, is mostly based on the pay packet and designation rather than our real purpose to serve. If you loose that well paying job your morals are down and you self-worth in a crash. We give our controls to others, they have the right to determine how good or bad we are.

So what is happiness? To simplify it in mathematical terms for better understanding, Happiness is equal to Total available Resources divided by Needs. Greater the needs against a stagnant resource, lesser the happiness quotient. So you may think that even with my standard of living has gone up, why am I not happy and satisfied and keep earning for more. It's simple more needs push you for more resources, reducing your happiness meter and that is why the promotion with a fatter pay packet, does not seem to feel good enough after a while. So then in that case a miser should be really happy shouldn't he? Not exactly; since his total resources are his total needs thus the result is zero. He is living in a fictitious bubble of happiness. What changes the entire scenario, is a word called 'Passion or Non-materialistic purpose'. Now what happens when resources get divided by needs but is added with a non-materialistic passion or a purpose? The result changes to a positive ratio. Thus the resources that you earn to accumulate through needs, when driven by passion leads to mental happiness. Thinking of Mother Theresa, she was not rich but certainly happy due to a purpose to serve, for Yanni a purpose to compose and to be heard. Non-materialistic passion/ purpose could be in the smallest form. I do meet a lot of members across gyms who have this great feel good factor about working out, a simple 1 hour at the gym gets them more elated than an entire day of a high flying job. You may call it endorphins, but I would call it a passion for life. There are others who also have a high standard set for themselves (needs) that pushes them to accumulate more resources but as long as it's not driven by a non-materialistic passion, the results will never be positive and lasting. That's why most material objects that we earn to own, no longer give us that same level of happiness after a while. We spend our limited time, accumulating resources that finally get divided by unwanted needs, at the cost of forfeiting true happiness.



We are living in a high speed world, with each day flying in a wink of the eye. The only time most people get to themselves is the weekend, for most which comprises of only a Sunday. Even that has to be busy, if it's not, it makes you feel gosh! What I am doing with my time? Weekends are jammed packed- shopping, movies or brunches at fast food restaurants in the vicinity. We head back home feeling temporarily satiated from the pleasures derived, that last no longer than a wink, just like the week, heading into the drudgery of work to accumulate resources once again to fuel our ever growing needs. Days and months may go by in this routine, until you get hit by a wall of realization written in bold 'What is it that you really want from life?'. May be the day is today. Ask your self do I really need this much that is driving me passionlessly to gather more resources

