

Happiness

¹Prashant Kumar

Abstract--*Every human being wants to live happily in this world. It is the internal happiness which matters most than the external happiness, which is due to material objects. There are various factors which affect the happiness of an individual. Possessing good health is the first and foremost factor affecting happiness. Healthy people are happier than unhealthy people. Taking proper and balanced nutritional diet also is responsible for happiness. Doing regular physical and mental exercise is a must for good health resulting into a happy being. One has to be honest and truthful throughout his/her life. One has to be positive, honest and truthful in all his/her thinking and actions. Forgiveness is a great quality to lead a happy life. Life is uncertain, so one has to live in the present moment. Life is lived moment by moment, day by day. One has to accept the uncertainties of life. For a happy life, ego i.e. the false sense of self is to be transcended. Finally for living happily, one has to live life himself/herself, so love yourself first, live life the way you feel it is to be lived and not on what other say or what the society thinks.*

Key words-- *Possessing good health is the first and foremost factor affecting happiness. One has to be positive, honest and truthful in all his/her thinking and actions.*

I. INTRODUCTION

To live happily in one's lifespan is the major aim of life. Happiness can be external or internal. External happiness depends upon objects outside you, may it be people or any other material object. Internal happiness comes from within. External happiness is for a short span. It is only the internal happiness which matters the most.

Below are mentioned the factors which are primarily responsible for one's happiness.

II. FACTORS AFFECTING HAPPINESS

2.1 Health

Possessing good health is the core of happiness. Happiness and good health go together. Good health can broadly be divided into physical health and mental health. Normally a good mental health shall have a good physical health and a good physical health shall possess a healthy mind. "What we think we become". If we think that I possess or I should possess a good health then definitely, you will look after yourself to become healthy.

For having a good health, you have to be disciplined every day. You have to sleep and get up as early as possible. A night sleep of minimum 6 - 8 hours is must for good health. Few days it may not be possible due to your work schedule or otherwise, try to make up the next day for lack of sleep. Without proper sleep the body can-not work efficiently during your waking up hours.

¹Director, Department of Naval Architecture and Offshore Engineering, AMET, Deemed to be University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, 603 112, India.

2.2 Diet

One has to take a healthy diet. Healthy diet comprises of a good combination of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, fiber, etc. You must take a very healthy and wholesome breakfast, lunch in moderation and dinner at minimum level. There are two reasons for having healthy breakfast – Biological and Behavioral. Biological reason of having good breakfast is that your body requires energy after a long gap since the last meal dinner till breakfast. This energy will give you physical strength and mental energy to take up various personal and professional tasks during the day. Behavioral reasons are that if you skip your breakfast, you will be dull with low energy till your next meal. Further, it may prompt you to overeat in your next meal, may be lunch or some other meal.

Lunch must be taken in moderation as you require energy for the rest of the day.

Dinner must be taken at the very minimum level as our activities reduce after that and we go to sleep.

There is a mantra taught to me by one of my teachers that for good health, follow the principle of S.O.S. – Less salt, Less oil and Less Sugar. It is applicable for all ages but more for elderly people. Consumption of More salt, More oil and More sugar can give you various lifestyle diseases.

2.3 Exercise

Physical exercise and mental exercise are must to keep you healthy on a long term. Physical exercises like walking, running, biking, playing a sport, etc. are must on a daily basis. These physical exercises keep you healthy and fit. They help in proper blood circulation in the body thus keeping all parts of the body including mind as fit and alert. People who do some physical exercise are found to be fit and less anxious. Exercise improves appetite, digestive system and it also improves sleep. Exercise gives boost to your immune system - by physical exercise one may have normal blood pressure, normal sugar levels and various other body parameters in control.

Mental exercises like playing a sport, chess, a game of cards, solving crosswords and puzzles etc., keep your mind alert and agile. Further meditation also helps in controlling your mind and reducing your stress. When we do a particular job or an activity, the mind works, but some people after taking retirement from active life do not continue with any mental exercise and fall into the trap of dementia (a medical condition associated with forgetfulness).

You have to be physically and mentally active throughout your lifetime.

2.4 Honesty and truthfulness

“No one is more hated than he who speaks the truth.” - Plato

‘Honesty is the best policy’, this quote we have heard many times. So true it is. Being honest and being truthful are the best traits we all must adopt. Every human being commits mistakes. If a person accepts his mistakes, he should be forgiven by other person. This forgiveness gives a great opportunity for that individual to do introspection and correct himself/herself. Here I am not talking about criminal offenders of the law. For them legal provisions are available. It is for the courts to decide punishment or pardon to such offenders. I am talking of people in day to day life. First and foremost, you have to be honest with yourself then only you will be honest to others.

Others may include your parents, spouse, children, other relatives, friends and any other person you are dealing with. I read a message 'Apologize for being wrong, not for being honest'. Parents are the first teachers of a child. Once you show them that you are honest and truthful, they will imbibe the same and would also follow to be true and honest in their lives.

2.5 Love yourself

You can only give (to others), what you have. If you have money, you can give money, if you have hatred and jealousy, you can share that only, if you love yourself, you will spread it to others too. So first love yourself. When a thing is dear to you, you take care of that like a child takes care of his/her toys, an adult takes care of his car etc. So if you love yourself, you will take care of your body and mind. Towards that, you will eat healthy diet, do regular exercise etc., you will love yourself and spread love to others.

2.6 Do good to others

Do good to others and harm no one. Do not think evil for others. Have a positive, healthy and friendly relationship with others be it your family members or friends - the good you do shall come back to you in some form of the other. Even if someone is not seeing your goodness immediately, the almighty is seeing it always. He will return the good to you.

2.7 Always forgive

We all make mistakes. Forgive others who make mistakes against you. Also forgive yourself for the mistakes made by you. Otherwise you will always remain under the feeling of guilt. Once you forgive yourself or the other person, you immediately become free.

2.8 Be positive

Always think positive. We all get positive and negative thoughts in our mind uncontrollably. Try to shed away the negative thoughts. Feel positive about your personality, about your health, about others. See the surge in your energy levels once you start thinking positive.

You can free yourself from the tyranny of negative beliefs by taking responsibility for the circumstances in your life and controlling what you think, you can go beyond your self- imposed limitations. You can choose positive thoughts to dominate your mind and create a triumphant destiny.

Whatever you do, love that unconditionally.

The life negative is rooted in how your parents and others treated you in childhood. Check this out by paying attention to your self-talk. If it's negative, cut it out right there. Say 'No' to all negative self-talk. Change it around to positive affirmations. Learn what you don't know. Avoid procrastination. Also stop reliving unhappy experiences. Understand the power of your subconscious and use it to visualize your way to success.

2.9 Embracing uncertainty

Life is to be lived moment by moment. As you don't know what lies in the next moment (or in the future), the life is uncertain.

To live happily, you must embrace uncertainty. We all want to live in the circle of comfort zone. Comfort zone circle normally gives you a protected life thereby reducing uncertainties. But that is not the design of life. You are not here to live in comfort zone. Life is a challenge, full of uncertainty, and we should accept it totally for our spirit to grow. Be ready, anything can happen next moment. Be ready to accept it. Once you accept this uncertain nature of life, life becomes beautiful. By not accepting, you are denying yourself to live completely in the present moment and thereby avoiding happiness.

2.10 Peace of mind

A human's mind is clobbered with millions of thoughts every moment. You can-not stop these thoughts hammering your mind unless you reach a super meditative level wherein you are able to control your thoughts. But still you need to control these thoughts for your peace of mind.

Some thoughts may be comforting, some thoughts may be disturbing. Whatever the nature of thought is, you have to let it pass. Be a witness of the thought and don't think that a particular thought is actually going to be converted into an actual scenario. Be neutral to a positive thought and be calm in the wake of negative thought.

There are many ways of controlling the thoughts – by meditation, by self-control, by just witnessing it, etc. Every thought is not going to become an actual situation. So do not get disturbed and come in anxiety just because a thought has crossed your mind.

Let life flow like a river. A river flows and makes its own path despite many obstacles and finally reaches its destination. Let life flow like a river. Obstacles will come but find a path bypassing the obstacles till you reach your destination.

2.11 Live in the present moment

Amtitanandamayi Ma (popularly known as Amma or Ammachi) told a group of people to live in the present moment. She told “When you are not sure of even the next breath, it is better to be present in the NOW. Don't waste your time.”

As many thoughts are crossing your mind every moment, taking you to the past or the future. Thus, you stop living in the present moment. Going in the past injuries or worrying for the future will give you very uncomfortable feelings and may sometimes have impact on your health. So, empower yourself, so that, you do not become slave to your thoughts. Start living in the present moment, embrace the present moment completely. Present moment, which is a ‘PRESENT’ to you by the almighty.

2.12 Transcend Ego

Leave or rise above ego. To do that you have to understand what is ego?

Ego is a false concept of our personality. For example if you are holding a particular post in your organization or you are having a certain number of material things, you may think you are a powerful or rich person. But this feeling of being superior or being rich is your ego.

When you were born, you did not take birth with a particular designation in your profession or you did not have all the material things which you possess now. You came empty handed and you shall leave this world empty handed. By this I do not mean for an instance that you should not do well in your personal or professional lives. But by clinging or attaching to your achievements gives you the ego.

Unless you identify your ego, you can-not leave it.

2.13 Conditioning

From the early childhood, as our senses start to grow, the ego starts developing. It starts with your parenting, schooling, college years and thereafter your experiences. All these condition you. You should do this, You should not do this. You are right, You are wrong. So anything you do is seen from conditioned mind. First and foremost un-condition yourself from the shackles of societal thinking and live your life.

2.14 Live your life

Finally, what matters most is how you live with yourself. You are born alone and shall die alone. In between birth and death, you are travelling a distance which shall be in the company of your own family members and other members of the society. Do your duty for your personal and professional commitments but do not forget to live your life. Don't live by the thought that what others shall be thinking of any action you take. If you feel that the action is right for you, live by that of course it does not mean at the cost of others. Your actions should not be disturbing others in fact your actions should be that the whole society is benefitted.

So have courage, follow your heart and live your life.

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