# *THRIVE*

# KINYA GITONGA

Other books by Kinya Gitonga

The How's of Anger [2021]- 'An ultimate guide to controlling your emotions. It equips one with practical strategies and techniques for dealing with anger in a healthy and constructive way.'

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I cannot forget all friends and relatives for the unceasing support I have received consistently. This includes the editing and publishing team for their counsel throughout the publishing process. All your efforts have greatly contributed to the success of my work.

Thank you all very much.

**DEDICATION**

In loving memory of my grandmother, Esther Karimi, who reminded me occasionally of how vital it is to choose to be happy at all times.

To all readers and individuals out there seeking happiness.

## PREFACE

In recent times, most individuals align their actions with the end goal of being happy. Happiness is an emotion that people experience from time to time. It's a part of life, and individuals cannot avoid it. This is reinforced by the fact that happiness is an essential emotion; it is intangible but undeniably present.

Being consistently happy is a valuable skill. Being happy doesn't mean that one is devoid of problems; rather, it means that one encounters problems but learns how to manage them and emerge emotionally unscathed. There's a phrase that says "*laughter is the best medicine.*"

It's important for people to cultivate a culture of happiness at all times. Interestingly, situations that evoke happiness vary from person to person, influenced by numerous factors. This book will provide the reader with essential information about happiness. Through numerous examples, observations, and explanations, this being my second book, I recommend it to anyone seeking to embrace happiness as well as them that are seeking to thrive in life.

# INTRODUCTION

Observing the environments in which individuals reside, it becomes evident that the majority do not prioritize happiness. They often define happiness by achieving external goals first. This perspective has been ingrained in individuals from a young age. Many cultures have conditioned people to believe that factors like marriage, job success, high grades, or wealth automatically lead to happiness, which is far from accurate.

Every person aspires to be happy, even if they don't express it outright. All their aspirations and diligent efforts are fundamentally aimed at increasing their own happiness. This book strives to provide individuals with the capacity and knowledge to recognize that attaining greater happiness is within their reach. Moreover, it aims to help individuals realize that cultivating happiness is not only essential for themselves but also for the well-being of those around them. If this were universally true, all married individuals would exude happiness, and all wealthy individuals would wear perpetual smiles. However, reality contradicts this notion. Even prosperous people and those in committed relationships often grapple with dissatisfaction.

It's important to seize the present moment and cease deferring happiness with thoughts like,

"I will be happy when…" Research indicates that individuals harboring such beliefs tend not to experience happiness when the anticipated conditions are met. For instance, those who postpone happiness until marriage may subsequently focus on having a child or achieving career milestones, remaining in a state of perpetual wanting.

Curiously, many individuals often overlook activities that bring them personal joy, choosing instead to prioritize actions that solely cater to the happiness of others.

*For example, a child talented in football may forsake their talent to allocate practice time for studying in an attempt to achieve high grades, pleasing their parents.*

External factors don't inherently bring happiness. It's important to recognize that happiness originates from within; only then can we authentically feel positively toward others. Health is significantly influenced by happiness. Learning to disregard others' opinions or judgments about us is crucial for our happiness. A contented person is self-assured, unburdened by others' negative perceptions. Let’s strive to maintain a state of happiness, as it also serves as a remedy for the soul.

Throughout the book, individuals will grasp the concept of happiness, unravel associated biases, explore the perspective of religion on happiness, and learn how to regain happiness following moments of sorrow. This composition draws on various branches of psychology: social, personality, clinical, and real-life situation research.

I hold the aspiration that each reader dedicates time to thoroughly peruse and absorb each chapter of this remarkable book. In doing so, they can cultivate a culture of happiness. Recognizing individual diversity, this book offers a range of skills and knowledge that resonate with different personalities. While there are moments when people perceive happiness as overrated, during times of sadness, we yearn for the essence of happiness once more. It's vital to acknowledge that happiness is indispensable. In moments devoid of joy, our sole wish is to rediscover happiness.

# *CHAPTER ONE*

## WHAT IS HAPPINESS?

Happiness is a state where the mind is free from worries, and there is joy and contentment in the present moment. Many say that happiness is based on circumstances in which one feels fulfilled. The situations or circumstances vary from person to person. Happiness is the degree to which one judges their life favorably in terms of satisfaction. This can be a bit confusing to some because individuals may experience negative emotions once in a while yet still feel happy at the same time because they are doing what they have always wanted.

Happiness can also be a state of positive valuation that one has achieved, and this means that it can be anticipated. It is the experience of joy, contentment, or positive well-being combined with the strong sense that one's life is good, meaningful, and worthwhile. Speaking of happiness, contentment and joy are key.

One can't be happy when they feel unsatisfied, nor can they be happy when they feel very sad.

Happiness positively boosts one's well-being. This highlights that the lack of happiness can bring the negative side of life such as mental disorders and diseases.

Sometimes, individuals confuse happiness with short-term pleasure. Short-term pleasure is unstable and temporary, and when it diminishes, we are left feeling lost. However, happiness should be genuine and more lasting as it relates to the mind and the heart.

## PREDICTORS OF HAPPINESS

At any given moment, whether happy or unhappy, happiness has little to do with absolute conditions; rather, it is defined by how individuals perceive situations and how satisfied they are with what they have. Predictors of happiness vary, as many people perceive it differently.

These includes: biological makeup, health, education, social relationships, marriages, and religion. We shall discuss each one at a time in the following order:

- Biological
- Socio-psychological

## BIOLOGICAL PREDICTORS

### Biological make-up

When discussing biological makeup, we are considering a broad range of factors related to happiness, including heredity, genes, neurotransmitters, and the brain. In terms of the brain and neurotransmitters, we will explore their impact on how our bodies respond to happiness in more depth later in this book. At this juncture, let's focus on genes.

Genes are inherited from our parents and significantly contribute to our biological makeup.

Research indicates that genes contribute to happiness by about 35-50%. How does this happen?

Heredity factors can predispose individuals to be introverts or extroverts. Extroverts tend to be more outgoing, social, and enjoy interactions, while introverts are more withdrawn, prefer less socializing, and often find enjoyment in solitary activities. Studies suggest that extroverts are generally happier than introverts because they engage in expressive behaviors more frequently, while introverts tend to work through issues internally, which can be emotionally draining.

This implies that both genes and environment play roles in happiness.

As an extrovert, the environment becomes a factor, including the people you interact with, their responsiveness, how they integrate you into their social circles, and so forth.

HEALTH

Health refers to a state in which the body is well and free from illness. When someone is frequently sick, their mind becomes preoccupied with thoughts of recovery, the well-being of their children, the status of their business during their absence, and similar concerns. This state of constant worry leads to unhappiness and dissatisfaction with their life. Research indicates that while the difference in happiness between happy and unhappy individuals isn't substantial, even small variations matter.

## SOCIAL PREDICTORS

### Money

Money, although material, holds significant value in the modern world. Happy people are often associated with having financial resources, leading some less affluent individuals to think, "I will be happy if I become as wealthy as so-and-so." Surveys indicate that the difference in happiness between these two groups isn't drastically significant.

However, the brain becomes conditioned to associate happiness with money-generating activities, as money serves as a form of reward.

It's notable that some individuals experience moodiness or sadness when they lack money. In fact, some withdraw from social interactions due to diminishing monetary rewards. This illustrates the connection between happiness and money or money-related activities.

**Dr. Anthony M. Crinite IV** states, "The gain or loss of money influences one's emotional state." Simultaneously, it's important to recognize that people desire money for the things it can buy and the accompanying sense of freedom, even though this satisfaction is short-lived. Despite acquiring wealth, the desire persists, prompting individuals to work relentlessly to earn more money, creating an ongoing cycle.

Others who link money with happiness might fear losing their wealth and getting poor.

This fear perpetuates their drive to accumulate more, even when they already have an abundance. This demonstrates that even in abundance, happiness isn't always constant due to inner worries.

## EDUCATION

Education helps people to gain knowledge and skills.

*For instance, due to education, we have gained the knowledge that happiness is essential for one's well-being.* This means that educated people may have worries about life, but at the same time, they are aware that their happiness matters, and this will help them work towards things that elicit happiness and fulfillment.

*For example, an educated parent will support their children's talent no matter what, may it be singing, acting, or cooking because they know doing something one loves elicits joy from within whereas at times non-enlightened parents will force their child to do something they do not like simply because society acknowledges it at the expense of their happiness.*

This is not because they are uneducated; it is because they lack knowledge, especially on the subject of happiness.

## SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Social relationships are determined by those people that surround us; the friends. People have close friends who act as confidants. They are among individuals that we talk to when we have pressing issues. Psychology has reported that when people open up, tension and stress are reduced from their bodies.

They tend to be happier; hence, relating with people well may cause more happiness other than being withdrawn. This is mainly because man is a social being.

## MARRIAGES

Some people may think that marriages mean happiness at all times. But it is common knowledge that *'marriage is not a bed of roses'* as some say. Studies and research show that depending on the person that one marries, individuals can get happy or unhappy. When one marries or gets married to a quarrelsome, selfish, and unforgiving partner, they will end up being unhappy, unlike the vice versa. Divorced and widowed individuals are slightly unhappier than the married ones. Why?

Because these situations come with their negativities like grief, solitude, and such, which is not easy to ward off.

## RELIGION

Religion is a set of beliefs that individuals ascribe to. With religion, one is aware that there is a greater force than themselves that controls their lives and situations; they won't worry so much. This means that religious people are slightly happier than nonreligious people.

This is contributed to by the fact that religious people, even when faced with difficulties, feel as if some other being is in control; hence, they do not struggle so much as their faith helps them maneuver through the issue and vice versa.

With this, we can conclude that both genes and environment play a role in determining or predicting happiness. As we conclude these predictions, it is good to know that people may be happy or unhappy even when presented with a similar situation, maybe because of the genes or environment. In line with this, we can conclude that it is good for an individual to independently figure themselves out and determine what makes them happy and what does not, as individuals are all different.

**TYPES OF HAPPINESS**

Happiness encompasses a wide range of emotions which includes: Contentment, optimism, gratitude and Joy.

CONTENTMENT

Contentment is aligned with being happy and satisfied with what one has, whether it's in big or small amounts. People who are content are always happy with the results they achieve in everything they do; hence, they are always grateful. They are also easy to please as they appreciate rewards given to them.

Contentment makes individuals value what they have and prevents them from desiring what their neighbors have. People today are not content with what they have or how they look, which is why some seek cosmetic surgeries and some covet what others have. Being content with what one has leads to satisfaction with life and events, establishing a culture of happiness.

Acceptance of oneself and things as they are is essential for contentment. Contentment is often strongly influenced by the desire to compare ourselves with others, which is counterproductive.

OPTIMISM

Optimists are people who believe in positivity. They have confidence in the future and always expect success. When a person is optimistic, they see positive potential even in negative situations. When disappointed, such individuals try to find something positive from the situation, leading to increased happiness and overall well-being.

Optimism brings happiness as it fosters a belief in positive outcomes, reducing feelings of despondency or pressure. Optimists tend to remain calm and adaptable.

Those who lack a positive outlook often spend time worrying about the future, which lowers their moods. Thus, optimists tend to live happier lives than pessimists.

**Counselor Ongwang'i** once said, "Make a commitment to being a positive person.' It shifts your focus towards blessings in your life

Life will give you reasons to be miserable, but once you embrace optimism, you attract positive experiences. This is done by looking at any situation with self-belief because mindset is everything.

GRATITUDE

Gratitude involves being ready to appreciate something and expressing thankfulness.

*For example, when Muni bought Alice a chocolate, she expressed gratitude by saying, "Thank you very much. I appreciate this."* This shows that Alice liked the chocolate and felt happy due to Muni's gesture. Gratitude leads to happiness and appreciation.

Grateful people approach difficulties differently. When faced with challenges, like the loss of a loved one, they grieve but also express gratitude for the time spent with the deceased, which can provide energy to persevere in other aspects of life.

JOY

Joy is a profound feeling of pleasure and excitement. During joyful moments, people forget life's difficulties and fully immerse themselves in the present.

Joy is an inner sense of peace and excitement, outwardly manifesting as elation.

All these types of happiness underscore the importance of contentment for genuine happiness. Being content doesn't mean staying stagnant; it means working towards personal growth while also appreciating one's current circumstances. Ultimately, happiness originates from within.

## CYCLE OF HAPPINESS

A cycle is essentially a loop of activities, similar to a lifecycle. Just as the human lifecycle spans from birth to death, the cycle of happiness involves various factors that contribute to happiness and, conversely, the absence of which leads to unhappiness.

According to **Dr. Carol**, an American psychologist, happiness consists of: self-acceptance, autonomy, positive relationships, environmental mastery, personal growth, and purpose in life.

SELF-ACCEPTANCE

Self-acceptance is acknowledging things for what they are, as well as accepting who you really are. This requires individuals to embrace reality. This also means that despite the challenges that individuals face or the imperfections they have, they are still proud of themselves, which is a

great step towards being happy. When individuals accept themselves for who they are, they stop comparing themselves and focus more on enjoying life as it is. They also experience moments as they present themselves, rather than worrying about things they cannot change. With this, they tend to be much happier and joyful as well.

*For example, Ali had an accident that injured his wrist, and he constantly kept his arm in his pocket so that no one would see it. He kept thinking about what to do about his arm, and this made him feel less positive about his life.* Khadija noticed this and enrolled him in therapy.

With time, he learned to love and accept his new self. This made him focus on his future and his work without caring so much about what people would say upon seeing his arm. Ali also stopped desiring to look like other people whom he thought were more well-structured than himself, and this made him a happier and more smiling person. Self-acceptance is something one can learn and is achievable.

AUTONOMY

Autonomy means feeling free and in control of one's life. This creates a sense of independence, confidence, and freedom in decision-making. With autonomy, individuals feel happy about the choices they make.

*For example, Anne works in an oil company and holds a managerial position. She ensures that her subordinates are free to express their opinions and wishes without feeling inferior. Over time, an observer will notice that these workers are always happy and at ease with Anne, and their work is also satisfactory.*

This illustrates how happiness can impact work. Similarly, when one feels free to make personal decisions and believes that their actions are self-driven or self-endorsed, they tend to be happier.

ENVIRONMENTAL MASTERY

Environmental mastery is when one feels in control of situations around them, managing the happenings to address their needs.

**Ilchi Lee** says, "Will you get stuck to the environment? You must choose. Then, you create happiness and you become the master of your life."

*For example, Fiona invested in a shop, and a fire breaks out, burning everything to ashes. She feels unhappy, demotivated, or even like giving up.*

However, she must accept, move on, and try the business again. Similarly, it's wrong for individuals to remain fixated on a lost job or a failed relationship. It's a choice to wake up, gather courage, and start over. With time, efforts will yield positive results. That's the beauty of life—perseverance leads to progress. Mastering our environments is key to happiness.

## PERSONAL GROWTH

Personal growth involves improving oneself in all aspects of life. It's not about competing; it's about becoming a better version of oneself. When one feels they are progressing towards their future self, they experience inner peace, satisfaction, and happiness. Conversely, feeling stagnant can lead to feelings of inadequacy and sadness. It's necessary to keep making efforts even when it feels challenging. Explore areas and activities that can help you make progress.

## POSITIVE RELATIONS

As mentioned earlier, humans are social beings, and it's normal for them to socialize and create friendships. It's important to reciprocate warmth to friends and family. Teens or those who have dated can attest to how much it hurts to be in a one-sided relationship or friendship, emphasizing the need for positive relations.

A two-way friendship fosters a sense of belonging, feeling loved, and cared for, creating widespread joy and happiness. Showing love to family and friends is essential.

PURPOSE IN LIFE

People sometimes struggle to identify their purpose in life. Purpose in life is the reason one wakes up in the morning, even when they don't feel like it, the reason one goes to work, or why one feels the need to live. Understanding one's purpose provides a compass in life, guiding decisions and shaping goals. With this understanding, everything people do takes on meaning, contributing to happiness as they feel closer to becoming the person they aspire to be.

*For example, Eric feels that his purpose in life is to provide for his sickly mother and his children. Despite life's challenges, he wakes up every day to work and earn a living*. This sense of purpose guides his choices, and he avoids actions that would hinder his responsibilities.

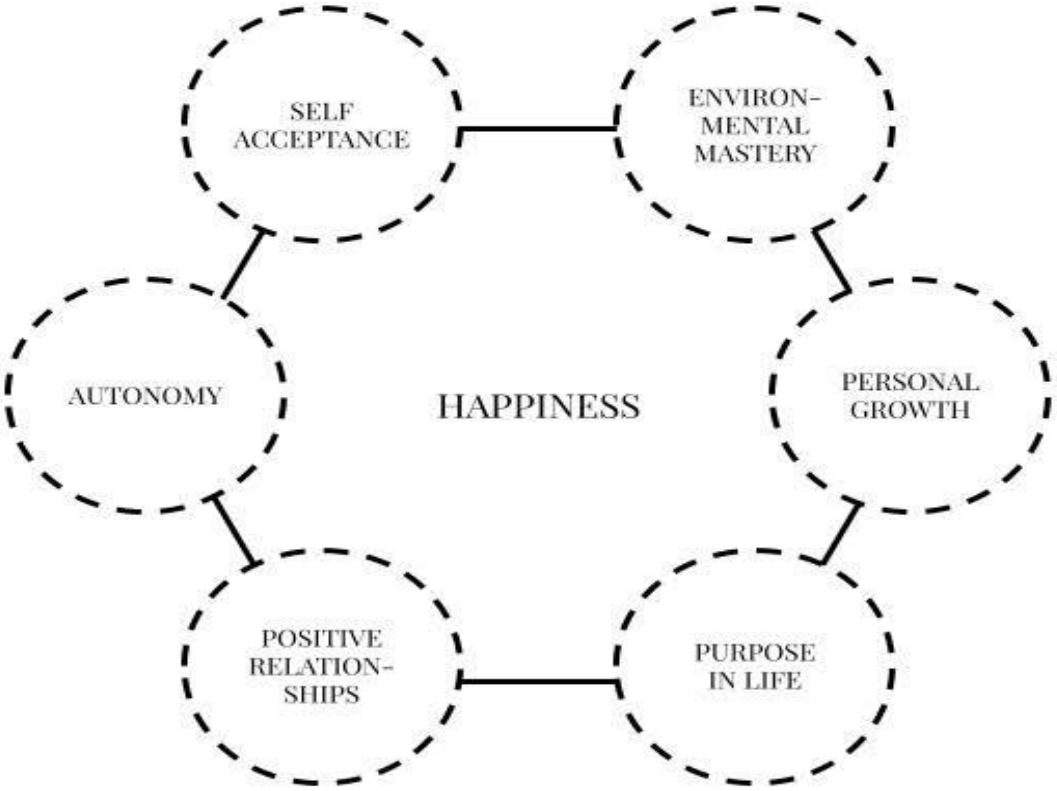
He maintains his health and feels a sense of fulfillment. When he gets a promotion, he feels happier because his career is progressing and he's closer to achieving what he desires—a meaningful life.

These factors contribute to individuals' overall happiness. They become content with themselves and feel in control of their inner selves and the world around them.

It's important to remember that happiness starts with the individual.

These factors together contribute to a cycle of happiness, where embracing self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, and personal growth leads to positive relationships and a sense of purpose in life. This holistic approach reinforces happiness in various aspects of one's journey.

ILLLUSTRATION



## THE PHYSIOLOGICAL IMPACT OF HAPPINESS

DO OUR BODIES REACT TO HAPPINESS?

Happiness is medicinal and this means it is an emotion that positively affects the body.

The human body has hormones and chemicals. There are happy hormones: *dopamine and serotonin* in the brain, and stress hormones named *cortisol*. When one is happy, the heart races normally, everything in the body is normal, and that's why one gets to be healthier.

Apart from that, happiness reduces the level of the stress hormone named cortisol in the body. When one is unhappy constantly or even stressed, cortisol is said to be at high levels in the body, which affects the normal running of body systems.

When one is happy, the brain also signals for the production of dopamine and serotonin neurotransmitters which make us feel joyous and peaceful at the same time. Those who are constantly unhappy are said to have little of these chemicals in their bodies, which then lowers the work of the central nervous system, increasing the likelihood of falling into depression, which is unhealthy.

Smiling actually tricks your brain into raising your mood, lowering a racing heart rate, hence a reduction in stress levels. Share happiness by smiling and remember that smiling is contagious, although some do fake smiles too.

Apart from that, people:

feel relaxed, get a good appetite, have lower blood pressure, a strong immune system as well as good circulatory system. The have quickened recovery as well as good night sleep which reduces the likelihood of getting strokes. Equally they have the ability to concentrate on assigned tasks.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR BODIES WHEN WE GET SAD OFTEN?

According to Alan Prossin, a professor in behavioral sciences, when one gets sad, the brain releases an increase in opioid chemicals. These chemicals tamper with the normal body systems, weakening the immune systems, making individuals become prone to getting a disease.

Sadness itself is not depression, but it is likely to harm the body just like depression does. It wears the body out and depresses it, and that is why at times people feel sore muscles, aching joints, or even headaches. Sadness also causes an increase in the release of the stress hormone; cortisol.

This hormone raises blood sugars and also tampers with the sleeping patterns. This makes the affected individuals behave and feel like someone who carries a load with them, no drive to work or do anything. Just sad. Emotional stress too can be acute, and this can lead to seizures, strokes, shortness of breath, or even dizziness. Majorly the chest is the major recipient of sadness in all genders. It's a delicate region of the body that requires protection and care as other body parts hence it is necessary to protect our bodies.

Research has shown that there is a great relationship between ill health and negative affect. Affect is an underlying state or a mood. This underlying state or the mood has the ability to affect the mind as well as the body. Affect can be positive and negative. Individuals with a positive affect are mostly joyful, they have energy, and they demonstrate high levels of concentration. Individuals with a negative affect are characterized by nervousness, anger, even fear. They easily succumb to stress as well as guilt or shame.

Research has shown that there is a relationship between negative affect and ill health in that unmanaged emotions have an effect on the mind as well as on the body. This is shown by the link between physical health, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors.

*For instance, exposure to constant emotions like anger, sadness, worry, or even stress makes the body upset the normal body chemicals bringing about the production of opioids.*

Opioids upset the normal production of happy hormones which in turn disrupts the immune system.

*For instance: Danny has been under constant pressure at his workplace. He does not address the anger which he feels, instead he represses the hostility which builds up. Day in and day out he looks very bothered, unsettled, and unhappy. On Monday Danny complains of how he has an unending headache, his sleeping and eating habits are also wrecked up.* After some time, his muscles might be sore, and he might be irritable. This affects his social relationships as well as his productivity at work.

When the underlying issues are not addressed over time, he might succumb health issues.

Negative affect generally affects the normal functioning of the body. It is important to embrace a positive effect. This means that over time, individuals learn to embrace positive emotions.

This can be done by cultivating and creating long-lasting emotional resilience. People with a positive affect also have a positive way of handling and dealing with stressing issues hence they rarely succumb to stress and worry.

# *CHAPTER TWO*

# APPROACHES TO HAPPINESS

An approach to something is a way that leads us to understand that thing more. When we talk about approaches to happiness, we shall be looking at aspects that lead to happiness being defined as what it is.

This will help individuals understand happiness more. The difference between levels of happiness is one's perspectives on life, situations, and so on. These approaches include:

- Psychological approaches
- Philosophical approaches
- Religious approaches
- Modern approaches

## PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO HAPPINESS

Psychological approaches to happiness try to explain the context of happiness from a psychological perspective. In this, we shall look at several theories that explain the same and were founded by different individuals. These are: hedonism, life satisfaction and objective list theory.

HEDONISM

This theory is more rooted in the pleasant life. It states that a happy person is one whose life has more pleasure than pain, and this makes them more smiley. This person has a vibrant and pleasant personality, which is seen by those watching too.

This theory holds pleasure over pain, hence meaning that one who does not experience pain is happier.

*For example, when faced with difficulties in life, at times it is so common to feel down and sad, while at the same time envy the person who seems not to be struggling.* You feel that they are happier, and you would be happy too in their place.

**Danny Kahneman**, who is a Nobel Prize-winning psychologist, questions this by asking, "Whose life is it anyway? The experience or the retrospective judge of pleasure?" This question is an eye-opener: who determines happiness, the one experiencing it or the one watching?

LIFE SATISFACTION / Desire theory.

According to Griffin 1986, this theory stipulates that a happy person is one who gets what they want at a given time. This theory does not dictate what one wants, if it's

right or wrong, meaningful or not. As long as you get it, then you are happy.

This means that Joel may want a sweet, even though it's not a necessity. He can do whatever he wants to get that sweet, maybe by stealing or borrowing, but the end result is Joel feels happy after having that sweet.

It is dictated by the one who wants the 'thing,' not an observer. This is because individuals may want several and totally different things, which vary from one person to another.

*For example, Nicky, who is my neighbor, wants a car in order to feel whole and happy, while his wife just wants a peaceful family. These people desire different things, and even if Nicky buys the car without creating a peaceful house, his wife won't be happy. With a peaceful house without a car, Nicky won't be happy.*

This shows totally different desires, but once achieved, they cause happiness. Therefore, we can say that fulfillment can lead to pleasure or displeasure.

OBJECTIVE LIST THEORY

This theory is rooted as a meaningful life theory whereby happiness comes from the things that one holds dearly, values, and finds meaningful in life like careers or even one's health.

This theory goes against the first two in that a happy person is not the one who does not experience pain as in hedonism, and it is not the one who gets what they want; rather, it is the one who has an objective list of what they hold dear in order.

*For example, one may be poor but has good health and a peaceful home, and they are happy.*

HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

For those who feel that happiness is achieved by achieving certain goals, you will be interested to learn that there is what we call a hierarchy of needs. This was invented by Maslow, who was also a leading founder of humanistic psychology. According to Maslow, one had to achieve the following in order to be happy:

## Psychological needs

These are our basic requirements that need to be met for survival i.e., air, food, water, or even sleep.

Humans need food in order to continue living healthily as well as water. When one fails an exam but at least they have basic needs like food and water as well as a roof over their head, it is likely that they will feel a bit happy as some needs are met already. This explains why all parents struggle to provide as little as food to their families.

## Safety needs

These are needs bound to humans for the purpose of their security. They include housing, security for the family, or even savings to help at a time of need.

This makes one buy alarm systems, trained dogs, or even hire security to look over their property. It is joyful to know that you will sleep and wake up unharmed. Right?

## Love and belonging

Humans desire to feel loved and, most importantly, to belong. That's why people interact. Positive social interactions are a vital for happiness and growth.

Humans are social creatures. Unreciprocated human interactions or one-sided friendships cause sadness, while appreciative and welcoming friends bring peace as well as happiness. This can be seen in families, friendships, or even intimate relations.

## Esteem

Esteem is what drives us to seek more than normal. What makes individuals feel confident to try something new or to speak in public. It's what drives them to be authentic, not pride but self-esteem. An individual with high self-esteem is confident. They overlook their flaws, and this makes them a happy person.

**Self-actualization**.

It's the highest achievement where we get to actualize and utilize our potentials fully. Individuals get to become who they wanted to be by pursuing their dreams, continuing education, and such. Here one balances what they wanted to be and who they actually are.

It is important to note that, according to Maslow, one has to attain one level in order to get to the other.

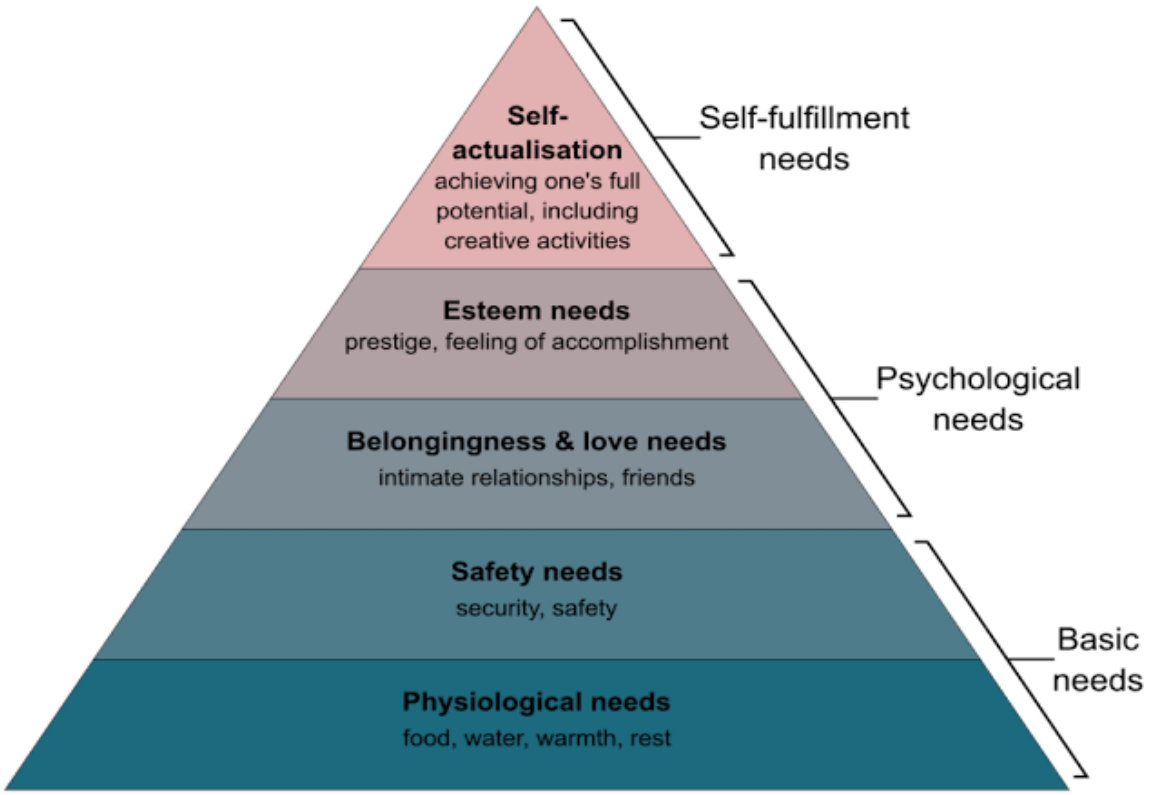
*For example, individuals need to first get basic psychological needs like food before getting into love and belonging in the aspect of getting an intimate partner and marrying*.

At the same time, it does not imply that those at the top are happier. Most people are stuck at lower levels, juggling between marriage and stabilizing, and they wish to attain the other level, hoping to be happy; and once they get it, they realize they are not as happy as they wished to be.

*For example, having had no job, Halima thought that getting a job would make her happy, but she got it, she felt happy, but there were requirements and responsibilities of the same opportunity that weighed her down.* It is important to learn to be happy in your present moment and not procrastinate happiness.

According to Abraham Maslow, the higher one goes in this rank, the closer they get to finding happiness. This is fueled by the fact that humans desire to fulfill their needs and live happily, creating motivation in them. *For example, some desire good grades, join college, graduate, get a job, get married, and later have kids. The more they achieve this, the more they feel like they will be happy. Now, the desire to achieve all this will create a drive to work towards achieving them.* Failure to attain this also causes disappointment or sadness.

Achieving happiness is a journey that requires individuals to master skills necessary for their personal growth.



## PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES

In the philosophy of happiness approach, we shall focus much more on Aristotle's view. Philosophy generally questions the existence of things, and in this context, we will examine the nature of happiness at large.

According to Democritus, an ancient Greek philosopher, happiness does not stem from good luck or external circumstances.

According to Plato, happiness is found in the pursuit of the pleasure of exercising intellectual virtues, '*securing the enjoyment of what is good and beautiful.*'

Ancient philosophers also centered happiness on hedonism, which posits that happiness is centered on experiencing more pleasure than pain; living according to values and pleasure. Christian philosophers argue that all these things alone are not enough because happiness lies in the hands of God. They regard earthly happiness as temporary, as there is heavenly happiness that is eternal. We will discuss religion more extensively later.

Aristotle is also a philosopher who introduced 'the science of happiness' in his book, "The Pursuit of Happiness" (2018).

He poses questions like:

What is the ultimate purpose of human existence? He states that a goal worth pursuing should be desirable in itself, making it worth the pursuit.

He argues that pleasure alone does not lead to happiness, as even animals seek pleasure, while humans possess greater capacities. Humans have the ability to think, which animals lack; thus, pleasure alone does not lead to happiness.

This brings us to his concept of eudaimonia, which means happiness expressing virtue. Aristotle explains happiness as having good moral character or virtues like courage, justice, temperance, and so on. These virtues separate us from animals.

Aristotle emphasizes that virtuous friendship is key to happiness, and choosing things that lead to long-term happiness should be chosen over short-term pleasure.

As Aristotle stated in 2004, "For as it is not one fine day that makes a spring, so it is not one day or a short time that makes a man blessed and happy."

To him, happiness (eudaimonia) is a lifelong goal.

It requires engaging in self-realization activities; The ultimate purpose of human existence is to strive for happiness.

In philosophy, individuals can see that happiness is not universally defined, but we can see that happiness is defined differently by different individuals.

## RELIGIOUS APPROACHES

Typically, religion encompasses what people believe in, their values, and more. When people attend church, they connect and form friendships, constituting their social support. The practice of pouring one's heart out to God, sharing both happy and sorrowful moments, and seeking support and friendship from like-minded believers brings joy.

Religion encourages individuals to help others, and in turn, others help them. This reflects the interdependence of life. Verses from sources like the Bible or the Quran uplift our spirits in times of trouble, offering hope during the darkest moments.

Understanding that some aspects of life are beyond control reduces excessive worry. This awareness allows one to feel secure, knowing that a higher power is watching over them. We will delve more deeply into approaches to happiness in Christianity and Islam later on.

## CHRISTIANITY

**J.I. Packer** said, "*The way to be truly happy is to be truly human, and the way to be truly human is to be godly.*"

Christians believe in God and consider Him the source of all biblical teachings, including those about happiness.

> Philippians 4:4 - "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice."
> Psalms 19:8 - "The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart."
> Psalms 16:11 - "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."
> Proverbs 16:20 - "He who heeds the word wisely will find good, and whoever trusts in the Lord, happy is he."

These verses, among many others, encourage happiness and discourage anger. This suggests that God appreciates a content and joyful heart, rather than constant complaints. This is why Christians are encouraged to rejoice.

## ISLAMIC VIEW ON HAPPINESS

In Islam, happiness is called Falah. It refers to the pleasure and peace enjoyed in this life and the afterlife.

Islam holds that worldly life is not the main source of ultimate happiness. Islamic philosophy asserts that people often sacrifice means of attaining happiness to pursue it.

*For instance, someone in business might sacrifice family time for money. While they find joy in earning money, this desire is never fully satisfied; it continues to grow. This shows that character and circumstances significantly contribute to happiness*

Quranic verse 13:11 emphasizes that God does not change people's conditions unless they change themselves.

This demonstrates that the virtues one learns should be combined with religious virtues to attain happiness. For example, one can be hardworking while also being content and not overly attached to material possessions to achieve happiness.

Quran 20:131 - "Do not strain your eyes in longing for the things that We have given to some groups of them to enjoy, the splendor of the life of this world through which We test them. The provision of your Lord is better and more lasting."

Prophet Muhammad stated, "To smile in the face of your brother is a charity given on your behalf."

In his book "Don't Be Sad," Aadi in Abdullah Al-Qarni states that every commandment aims to make individuals happy. He goes even further by encouraging people to rejoice, remain positive, and find peace.

From these spiritual perspectives, it's important to recognize that everyone faces trials and troubles in life. However, believers are more likely to accept God's decree and lead happy and hopeful lives, free from unnecessary worries.

DISCLAIMER

I'm not attempting to persuade anyone into believing in God; rather, I'm emphasizing that knowing and worshiping God, as well as associating with Him, is the key to happiness. The peace and joy that arise from this connection are truly divine.

What are your thoughts?

**MODERN APPROACHES**

In the modern world, happiness is underrated as well as not prioritized as people work on attaining material possessions. Cultural variations contribute to variations in happiness. This is because culture defines what one holds important and what they do not hold as important.

Looking back in time when all humans did was to live, hunt, and reproduce. Life then was simple.

Then came progress as well as westernization, and the needs of humans changed from mere basic needs to more complex needs.

Research has shown that nowadays, happiness is intertwined with pleasure. According to Kringelbach and Berridge, pleasure is not just a sensation but rather a part of brain activity; hence, this brings in the field of neuroscience to study brain activities.

This has majorly misled many people to use drugs in order to induce pleasure, which they find as happiness, which is not entirely true.

It is a time when suicide rates are high, especially among young people because they feel misunderstood or ignored. Some feel like they are outcasts in their own families just because they do not have an audience. Why? Because parents are busy chasing wealth, careers, or even education. In the world today, this is essential, but some parents end up dictating what their children should be in terms of careers and friends to associate with, not caring if the child is okay with it. They barely spend time with these children; hence, as they make choices for them, they make uninformed choices.

Happiness is not a one-time experience; it is not just a positive mood. It is something that one embraces entirely, even when things are harsh.

This requires parents to embrace it as well. Parents need to listen to their children talk, listen to what the child wants to be, and help them out because this creates happiness in them, and that is what matters, right?

It is vital to personally embrace the thought of change, to not worry too much, to not take too many drugs, and to be a happy person from the inside.

Radiate joy.

# CHAPTER THREE

# REWARDS OF HAPPINESS

When we talk about rewards, we think of positive outcomes that result from our actions. It's widely known that whatever effort we invest over time eventually yields its own fruits or rewards.

Happiness comes with several rewards that many of us often overlook. By becoming happier, we enhance various aspects of life, family dynamics, and society as a whole. This section delves into the rewards that come with embracing happiness, particularly in terms of: Health and well-being, social relations, productivity, development and stability.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Happy individuals not only enjoy life but are also likely to live longer.

Well-being encompasses emotional and mental wellness, as well as overall functioning.

For a holistic sense of well-being, individuals need to prioritize both their mental and physical health.

This leads to an examination of the contributions that happiness makes to health and well-being.

It's evident that without good health, genuine happiness is difficult to achieve. Research has proven that being happy has significant positive effects on health, including: reduced stress levels, strengthened immune system, lower risk of chronic diseases, enhanced cardiovascular health and faster recovery from illnesses.

When individuals prioritize their happiness, they inadvertently promote their overall well-being. Thus, there is a strong connection between happiness and:

- physical health
- Mental wellbeing

MENTAL WELL-BEING

Spinoza argues that "a desire that arises from joy is stronger, other things being equal, than a desire that arises from anger."

When someone is mentally stable, they hold a positive outlook on life and its activities, enabling them to endure challenging times. This positivity makes them open-minded and optimistic consistently, which in turn enables them to seize opportunities as they arise. Happiness enhances communication skills and problem-solving abilities, as it encourages a positive perspective.

Naturally happy individuals don't harbor grudges or dwell on negativity; they readily let go, focusing instead on building a positive outlook from both people and experiences they encounter. Positive individuals possess a willingness to learn, facilitating easy adaptation to various environments.

Happiness contributes to robust mental health, minimizing disorders such as anxiety and depression, which are linked to unhappiness and other factors.

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

Happiness functions as a sort of remedy or relief for the body's systems by:

Reducing stress hormone levels, thereby detoxifying the body and resulting in:

Lowered risk of cardiovascular diseases, including heart-related issues like strokes or cardiac inefficiency.

Combating and reducing bodily stress, enabling increased focus and attention to one's surroundings.

Assisting in weight management through proper diet and exercise.

Lowering blood pressure.

Bolstering the immune system, enhancing the body's ability to fend off infections and diseases.

Research indicates that positivity and happiness foster healthy sleep patterns, balanced nutrition, and social engagement (Sin, Moskowitz, & Wooley, 2015). Happy individuals tend to exhibit lower blood pressure and heart rates, rendering them less susceptible to cardiovascular ailments (Steptoe & Wardle, 2005). Moreover, studies conducted by Zaatar, Johnson, and Davis (2005) suggest that happiness can alleviate pain, particularly when dealing with chronic illnesses.

Surprisingly, happiness is associated with increased longevity. According to Carstensen (2011), the myriad health benefits tied to happiness contribute to extended lifespans compared to those of unhappy individuals.

In essence, the immense benefits of happiness have been demonstrated, with the converse being true as well. Prolonged unhappiness triggers heightened cortisol production, wearing down the body and leading to issues such as high blood pressure, heart diseases, sleep disturbances, overthinking, anxiety, depression, lack of exercise, and a weakened immune system. Clearly, these outcomes are detrimental, while happiness remains beneficial.

## SOCIAL RELATIONS

"Happier relationships, Happier life."

Happiness has a significant impact on social interactions, which are crucial for achieving happiness. These two variables are interdependent. A happy individual is more likely to form bonds easily with others, engaging in free and positive interactions, unlike an unhappy person who often experiences low moods.

The key to a fulfilling life lies in the quality of the relationships you share, not the contents of your bank account or accumulated possessions. Sharing life's experiences with loved ones ensures laughter and happiness.

The science underlying the relationship between happiness and connections is rooted in their inherently social nature.

Family relationships are not as casual as they might appear. Happiness leads to increased positivity and openness, preventing individuals from avoiding interactions. Satisfaction within happy relationships taps into emotions, fostering contentment and calmness.

These connections also help individuals release suppressed emotions. Engaging with others encourages self-expression and disclosure, forming a link between happiness, longevity, and healthier living.

People who avoid social connections are more prone to anxiety or depression due to a perceived lack of meaningfulness in their lives. Lack of connection means missing out on essential self-disclosure, which is crucial for maintaining healthy and productive relationships.

However, this doesn't imply that introverts are inherently unhappy or lead unhealthy lives. Our journey to happiness involves cultivating positive relationships with companions, family, friends, co-workers, and all those in our social sphere.

According to Diener and Martin Seligman (2002), "people with strong ties to family and friends, as well as a commitment to spending time with them, have the highest levels of well-being." This demonstrates that positive relationships directly contribute to one's overall well-being.

Research has shown that patients who have positive relationships with doctors and caregivers respond better to medical treatments. Why? Because these relationships provide people to talk to, share with, and gain encouragement from during times of illness.

Giving social support in these relationships is just as important as receiving it. Thus, we can conclude that positive social relations are crucial for both happiness and overall well-being.

PRODUCTIVITY

When we discuss productivity, we refer to the rewards that stem from one's actions, whether at work, at home, or in various investments of energy. This section explores the advantages of cultivating a happy work culture, including:

**Improved productivity**

Happy employees or happy people tend to be more productive, while unhappy people are less productive. This is because happy individuals tend to be optimistic and focus on tasks assigned to them, which, upon completion, yield rewards. This generally leads to increased production of goods and benefits either the company or the individual.

**Fosters teamwork**

When people are happy together, they collaborate towards achieving shared goals. This means they can gather, discuss, and plan steps to take collectively. Content colleagues readily connect and willingly assist each other in times of need, fostering a sense of belonging among all.

## Better decision-making

Happy people tend to focus on present matters, enabling them to make decisions that guide their project efforts. In contrast, constantly unhappy individuals concentrate on their concerns, which disrupts their ability to focus on tasks at hand. If they do attempt to concentrate, their decisions tend to be irrational.

## Improved problem-solving skills

In a state of happiness, individuals sidestep obstacles and troubles, positioning themselves to efficiently tackle emerging issues. They approach problems thoughtfully, which supports the creation of solutions to existing challenges.

As per Brockies (2002), happy individuals do not dwell on negatives or stressors; instead, they focus on positive ways to navigate challenges.

## Improved personal well-being

A positive work culture reduces absenteeism, as employees feel valued and content in their workplace. This ultimately leads to higher productivity; as happy employees give their best effort. Creating a happy workplace environment benefit both employees and employers on personal and organizational levels.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STABILITY

i. Personal Development

BRIAN TRACY: Personal development is a major time-saver. The better one becomes, the less time it takes them to achieve their goals. Personal development includes one's growth, whether it's on small things like connecting with others or attaining a set goal. How is happiness exactly related to this?

When an individual achieves something, they had targeted, they feel happy and satisfied .

This is part of personal growth where one has to appreciate their tiny steps.

On the other hand, when one is happy, they tend to focus on set goals, which in turn gives fulfillment, development, and satisfaction. When one grows personally, they tend to focus on other aspects of their lives as well as the people around them.

ii. Stability

Stability can exist at work, in attaining set goals, as well as emotional stability, which is a personality trait. These traits help individuals remain balanced, efficient, and content. When one is stable, they feel a sense of inner worth as well as happiness, which in turn influences health and how they relate to others, among other things.

# *CHAPTER FOUR*

# THRIVING

Thriving is a term used to describe a state of prosperity, growth, and success. It also indicates a state where someone is not only surviving but flourishing; overall positive development despite facing obstacles.

## DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF THRIVING

Thriving as a concept encompasses various dimensions. This ranges from personal growth, physical health and well-being, social well-being as well as resilience in times of adversity.

### I. PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

This is a process where individuals seek to improve themselves, acquire new skills, gain knowledge, and also enhance their overall well-being.

Personal growth and development are related to thriving as they contribute to a person's ability to lead a fulfilling and successful life.

The following tips highly contribute to personal growth and development in relation to thriving:

## Knowledge acquisition

Reading and gaining knowledge expose individuals to a vast array of information and perspectives. The gained information helps them make informed decisions, solve problems, and learn how to adapt to different situations in life.

## Skills development

Learning new skills is beneficial as it opens up opportunities for personal and professional growth, leading to a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment.

## Self-awareness and discovery

Individuals thrive when they are able to better understand themselves. Self-awareness and self-discovery are closely related to one identifying their strengths and weaknesses, enabling an individual to make positive changes and set meaningful goals.

## Personal growth goals

Setting and achieving personal development goals really cause a feeling of progress and satisfaction. Achieving set goals also leads to personal growth and development, which is essential towards an individual's overall sense of thriving.

## II. PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

This refers to a person's state of physical body and their overall health. It encompasses various aspects ranging from physical health, emotional state, and dental well-being.

## ASPECTS OF GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

### Physical fitness

Physical fitness means having the capacity to perform daily tasks with ease. It also means the ability to engage in physical activities without excessive fatigue or strain.

### Mental health

Mental health is closely connected to physical health in that good mental health contributes to physical well-being. Mental health contributes to the ability to reason, think, and act right.

### Preventive care

Good well-being is enhanced by regular check-ups and screenings, which help in detecting and preventing potential health issues before they become hazardous. Physical health is also greatly enhanced by vaccinations and immunizations.

Relationship between good health and wellbeing.

a. Energy and productivity.

Pursuing goals really requires good health as it provides the required energy and stamina. It also enhances productivity as one is able to focus.

b. Longevity

Thriving often includes an aspiration to live a longer and more fulfilling life. With good health, an individual is able to have a quality life.

Thriving in general encompasses not only the absence of illnesses but also vitality and a high quality of life, which is related to thriving.

**Resilience and overcoming adversity**

Resilience is an individual's ability to bounce back from challenges, setbacks, and adversity.

Thriving isn't always about continuous success; it can also involve bouncing back from setbacks and adversity.

Resilience is foundational to thriving as it equips individuals with skills to handle setbacks. Adversity also pushes individuals to develop a new set of skills, build their character, and discover their strengths, which are essential for thriving.

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE.

It involves maintaining mental and emotional well-being during difficult times.

It helps individuals stay positive, focused, and adaptable to different situations, which is essential for thriving.

RESILIENCE BUILDING

Building resilience encourages growth in several aspects of life. These include developing coping strategies, problem-solving skills, as well as developing a support system.

Resilience building is key, as it not only helps individuals to thrive but also to find greater fulfillment in their lives.

DIMENSIONS OF THRIVING

Thriving leads to a fulfilling life, which is made up of: Psychological, social and emotional dimensions.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION

This involves a sense of purpose, self-esteem, and personal growth. Thriving individuals often set and pursue meaningful goals, experience a sense of competence, and adapt positively to challenges.

SOCIAL DIMENSION

Thriving is closely connected to social connections and relationships. Having strong social bonds, a supportive network, as well as a strong sense of belonging fosters thriving. Positive interactions with family, friends, and the community equally play a vital role.

EMOTIONAL DIMENSION

Emotional well-being is also key in thriving. It is the ability to manage and express emotions effectively. It enables one to experience emotions like joy, gratitude, and also navigate challenges with resilience and emotional intelligence.

Thriving is holistic as it involves striking a balance in these dimensions, leading to a sense of vitality and well-being in one's life.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HAPPINESS AND THRIVING

Happiness and thriving are  interconnected, with happiness being a component or result of thriving.

## Thriving contributes to happiness

When individuals thrive in various aspects of their lives, they tend to experience greater happiness. Thriving leads to a sense of purpose, accomplishment, and positive relationships.

## Happiness fuels thriving

When individuals experience happiness, whether through positive emotions, life satisfaction, or contentment, they often have more motivation and energy to pursue their goals and engage in activities that enable them to flourish.

Happiness acts as a motivational force, encouraging individuals to invest in their personal growth, relationships, and overall well-being. Happiness and thriving are connected; they reinforce one another. *For instance, happiness acts as a catalyst for thriving as it motivates individuals to pursue personal growth and positive relationships.* At the same time, thriving contributes to happiness by fostering resilience, promoting positive emotions, and enhancing overall life satisfaction. This interplay is central to living a fulfilling and well-balanced life.

# *CHAPTER FIVE*

# CAN HAPPINESS BE MEASURED?

"*Happiness is not tangible. It is a state, emotion, or subjective condition*.

To measure it, one has to involve the party that undergoes this condition or state. This is done by questioning individuals through questionnaires, narrative self-reports, or even surveys. It is coupled with observing external cues of happiness, like a cheerful appearance.

However, some individuals feel that happiness cannot be measured. *For instance, Norrish and Vella (2008) say that happiness should not be a subject of measurement or scientific explanation because it is impossible to subjectively measure it.*

Michael Argyle (2001) says that the main weakness with subjective measurements is that they are affected by cognitive biases, such as the effects of expectations and adaptations, so we do not know how far to believe the scores.

Others, like Ed Diener, feel that happiness is subjective. According to him, people are happy if they think they are, and everyone is the best judge of whether they are happy or not.

The commonly used measurements are the use of questionnaires as well as scales. These include:

A. THE STEEN HAPPINESS INDEX (SHI)

This was brought up by Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson in 2005. This measurement consists of statements of about twenty items where one reads and responds to them by describing how they are at the present time. These choices represent three kinds of happy lives:

Pleasant life; experiencing and savoring pleasures

Engaged life; losing oneself in engaging activities

Meaningful life; losing oneself in valuable and meaningful activities.

Responses range from negatives to extremely positive. Afterwards, a cluster is made from these points before deciding how the individual is, e.g., Question 1.

I dislike my daily routine - 1

I neither enjoy nor dislike my daily routine - 2

I enjoy my daily routine but I do like to get away from it - 3

I enjoy my daily routine so much that I rarely take a break from it - 4

I enjoy my daily routine so much that I never take breaks from it - 5

And so on until the last question 20…"

## EXPERIENCE SAMPLING METHOD (ESM)

Diener studied our subjective well-being. In this research, he found out that subjective well-being fluctuates over time, originating from our personality traits.

Well-being here is measured by looking at the total balance of negative and positive affects at different times, as well as predicting future outcomes. Instruments of observation are used to observe indicators of happiness, like smiling, and objective reports from people around us.

## SUBJECTIVE HAPPINESS SCALE

This was created by Lyubomirsky and Lepper in 1999.This scale has four items, each with multiple choices where an individual selects an answer to the question from the given multiple choices. After several tests and retests, this scale has been considered valid and reliable.

## HAPPINESS SCALE

This was developed by Fordyce in 1977. This scale functions as a questionnaire that assesses emotional well-being as an indicator of subjective happiness. It ranges from 0-10, with rankings of happiness and unhappiness.

It also requires one to estimate the percentage of time they feel happy and unhappy. This scale is considered reliable and valid.

Other methods of measurement include:

**Day reconstruction methods like Veenhoven's happiness diary**

It is a content analysis of life review, a self-report by Danner, addressing the rating of happiness in autobiographies Allensbach rating of cheerful appearance.

**REPORTS**

Reports yield subjective responses and they answer regarding recent life occurrences. Observers like teachers can also be used to assess how happy a student or a person has been lately. We rate through their observations.

**BIOLOGICAL**

Research has made it possible to scientifically determine how happy one is. This is done when one visits a laboratory. The specimen used here is saliva or one's urine, where the laboratory technician tests for happy hormones in the specimen.

**BEHAVIORAL**

Behavior can be studied and observed to determine if one is happy or not. This occurs when we observe the frequency of smiling, frowning, or even hearty laughter.

Multiple assessments should be made to arrive at a conclusion.

While measuring happiness remains a complex endeavor, researchers continue to develop innovative approaches to capture its essence. Whether through self-report measures, objective indicators, or neurological insights, these efforts contribute to our understanding of human well-being.

Nevertheless, the inherently subjective nature of happiness reminds us that while measurement tools can provide valuable insights, they can never fully capture the richness of this deeply personal and multifaceted emotional experience.

## ATTAINING HAPPINESS IN LIFE

In the world we live in today, people have forgotten the ideal essence of happiness; they focus on short-term gratification. All that they do is strive to get more and more wealth, more and more leadership positions, and so on.

Others believe that happiness is an abstract idea out of reach, yet happiness can be attained.

Everyone's perception of a happy life is unique. But how do you attain happiness despite all the negative things we come across?

GRATITUDE

***'With gratitude, everything is gentle.'***

Gratitude is the art of appreciating all that one has.

Despite having trouble and pressures on a daily basis, an individual still has the ability to appreciate all the good things they have. With gratitude, everything is gentle because we focus on the positive bits, starting from basic things like food and shelter. This enhances positive feelings.

Thank people who check on you, thank the stranger who helped you get a cake at the bakery. A simple thank you makes one feel good. You can't say thank you without smiling or feeling good.

HUMOR

***'Laugh your way to happiness.'***

Humor is a state of mind. Also termed as being amusing.

A good sense of humor can be detected by one being comical. Such individuals have the ability to laugh away challenges. Even when angered, they have a way of comically going about it; hence, they possess a humorous temperament.

Humor has the ability to stimulate the release of endorphins, which regulate moods as well as those that give a feeling of contentment.

## CONCENTRATE ON THE THINGS YOU CAN CONTROL

Individuals tend to worry so much, especially about those things that they cannot control. This drains energy, and their attention is solely based on worries, yet they cannot do anything about it. For instance, one cannot control what their friends choose to do with their free time. Let them be, but you can control what you choose to do in your own free time.

This helps individuals do what they can, get satisfied by it, and leave those things that they cannot do.

## TAKE IT EASY

Individuals tend to be tough on themselves. At times, they are not able to attain a certain thing, yet they still want it to become. It is important to support ourselves.

Be kind to yourself. Take a break if need be.

People also tend to criticize themselves so much, which is wrong. Self-criticism is important and necessary for learning to take place, but overly criticizing is wrong as it makes one feel not worthy.

Be easy on yourself, celebrate those things that you have been able to attain, and let those you have not been able to attain be.

SELF-CARE

Self-care is the art of caring for oneself. It can be summed up by eating well, exercising, as well as having enough rest

One doesn't need to become a professional basketball player to feel good; they do not need to be strict on their diet to feel good. They just need to try a little each and every day.

EXERCISING

Exercising, which can be intense exercise or little walks, brings about muscle movements which in turn cause a release of feel-good endorphins. Remember that exercising also gives better body shapes that some are confident about.

SLEEP

A good rest makes individuals feel so fresh, or rather like they have recharged. It makes one wake up happy and feeling good.

Sleep amounts to happiness, unlike those who have less sleep as they tend to be grumpy and easily irritated.

HELPING AND CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

*"At times we are desperately trying to find happiness, but we forget that happiness can be found while helping others."*

Human beings are social, and this means they value interactions. At times they may feel sad or unhappy simply because people do not check up on them. It is good to understand that interactions are mutual. When you feel down, relate to those who are willing to offer support. It is also important to help others.

Join that voluntary group when you are free. It is okay to give back to the community when we get free time. Learn to speak out when bothered. In this way, we are assured of getting help. *A problem shared is half solved.*

## TAKE A BREAK FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

In this era, social media is equated to everything. People do not want to lack data or power to catch up on what is happening . This comes about with time wastage, distractions, and even lack of sleep. Social media comes with certain pressures like comparisons. Individuals showcase what is happening in their lives and those who feel they lack such lifestyles now get stressed out. It is addictive, and it can also snatch happiness. Minimizing time spent online can lead to improved well-being.

## AN EMPOWERING MORNING ROUTINE

What do you do when you wake up? Do you wake up recalling yesterday's feud?

Do you wake up thinking how to get back at the colleague who keeps on angering you? Or do you wake up thanking God for a good day and planning your day well? Why don't you try to wake up feeling good and ordering your day to become the best? This can be attained by waking up and exercising, reading, or journaling. Make a to-do list, eat an ideal breakfast, drink water, and even pray. Do what makes you feel happy; start the day feeling good and don't forget to make it a routine.

## PRIORITIZE YOUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING

Physical well-being revolves around being physically fit, while mental well-being revolves around your mind and your spirit. If an individual fails to take care of themselves, attending to those around them becomes challenging.

Attending to our well-being needs us to take time off and focus on how we are feeling. Learn how to manage stress, connect with others, and address issues bothering you.

## RECOGNIZE YOU HAVE CHOICES

Everyone has choices, and that is what people tend to forget. Individuals can get angered by certain situations and they act as if they were forced to.

*For instance, Joel always wanted to become the top student, but John came out as number one while Joel came out as second.*

*Should he feel sad since he did not manage to score the top position, or should he feel happy as he managed to improve from the sixth position?*

Learn to choose how to respond to and how to handle things around you. Happiness is a choice, and happy people are not held hostage by situations or occurrences.

## LEARN TO SAY NO

Saying no comes with a lot of aftermaths. Some individuals are not assertive; they say yes to things or situations that they feel and know are wrong. Being busy at all times is what some value because it makes them feel important or like they are headed somewhere, but they forget that as much as they are working, they need time off to recharge, plan, and be there for themselves. Individuals might be tired, but they fear rejection or angering clients or friends. They will be there for everyone but forget to be there for themselves.

There is power in saying no. Some ask, how is it possible to say no without feeling guilty or feeling like I am failing? Do you think not attending all functions and taking time off will prevent functions from going on? No, life still continues. Let people brief you on events or requests early enough so that you can plan. Respond by saying:

"I will check my schedule and let you know."

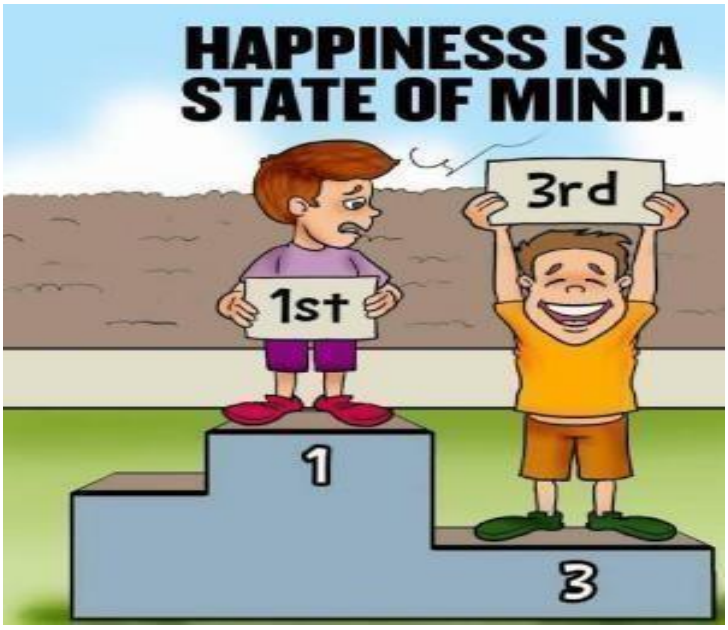
"Sorry, I won't be able to join you today, but I will join the next event."

Doing this makes you prioritize important events. It also makes you say yes from a good place, not saying yes out of fear. This creates happiness because we now know that we can control our lives; we have time for ourselves.

RE-EVALUATE GOALS.

"*We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.*"

Individuals also tend to feel sad when a certain thing they wanted fails. They tend to overwork and get stuck on a certain project even when it is failing. It is okay to change plans and take a different route when one fails. Remember it is not a do-or-die situation. Adapt and accept things as they come along.




REMEMBER:

Happiness is a choice

Happiness is a state of our minds

AROUSING HAPPINESS AFTER TRAUMA.

WHAT IS TRAUMA?

Trauma is a very distressing experience. It might be being involved in a messy accident, maybe getting raped or even nearly drowning among others.

There are three major types:

**Acute trauma** which occurs from a single event like an accident.

**Chronic trauma** which is repeated and prolonged like abuse

**Complex trauma** which is intense. It occurs when one is exposed to several varying traumatic events.

Victims of trauma at times have a hard time overcoming trauma .

Traumatizing scenes keep re-occurring and they can get triggered by hearing or seeing something connected to what they underwent hence, they have trouble concentrating. Some actually are nervous, anxious, angry, ashamed while others resort to alcoholism. All this takes time to fade off before one gets normal again. Before regaining normalcy, there are certain things that we have to do to get on our feet again.

TIPS TO REGAINING HAPPINESS

**Learning.**

Learning is essential in all aspects of life. Regaining happiness is one of them. It is essential to know how negative emotions and behaviors are harmful and that embracing positive behaviors is important. Once we realize that there is more harm in negative behaviors, for instance, holding on to hurtful events, we will get determined to embrace positive emotions and behaviors. Learning this makes individuals realize that the secret to a happy life lies in their own hands. They have to embrace it.

**Reduce your exposure to the event.**

When the occurrence has been recent, probably an accident that one had survived, individuals get curious as they want to find out more and more about the occurrence, which is wrong. It is okay to take a break from social media or from switching across one TV channel to the next.

**Take care of yourself.**

Some events bring other ailments. Probably one survived an accident, but they end up with burns or wounds that act as a painful reminder of the occurrence. It is okay to take a break from work and concentrate on healing.

Some individuals lose items or material possessions during the occurrences. It is okay to move on and not get stuck on such. Accepting the turnout of events is better than getting bitter over the same. Accepting gives individuals an opportunity to accept and plan their next step.

**Social Action.**

Social action is a theory that makes individuals aware that social activism creates empowerment. Such individuals have to realize that despite what they had gone through, they still are human beings; they haven't changed, hence there is no need to be ashamed of who they are.

Through social activities like volunteering, helping others, and other activities, they feel empowered, as they can see positive effects of their work.

**Talk**

*A problem shared is half-solved*, they say. Learn to talk about what you went through. It might be to friends, relatives, or even a therapist. There is healing in talking about what is going on in our lives other than bolting it in. Some individuals have a hard time revisiting the event, but that is okay; with time they open up and talk about it.

**Connect.**

Individuals react differently to events and situations, and this can be seen in trauma. Some individuals actually withdraw from everyone. They become loners. This does not help in healing at all. Don't be a loner, reach out to people you trust, reach out to people who make you feel good.

Connecting can also be by joining a new community; support groups. In support groups, individuals meet others who had similar experiences as ours, and here we get immense support.

**Have fun**

Don't be all grumpy. Have fun; an activity that stimulates happy hormones like endorphin.

This can be done by doing what you like. It can be music; it can be cycling or even movies.

Having fun can also be exercising, which is also an important tool in stimulating recovery.

## Get back to your routine

After traumatic events, most people feel things are not the same again. It's more like everything is upside down, and this makes them quit their day-to-day schedules. It is okay to feel that way, but it is better if we begin getting back to our normal routines.

Even before getting back to work, one can start small with household chores and later get back to work. In order to concentrate and perform well, create a to-do list every day. It helps one stick to the schedule and do what they are supposed to.

THERAPY

Therapy is a treatment that makes someone feel better. It brings about changes after illnesses or unpleasant occurrences that they want to overcome.

Therapy in relation to happiness may take these forms:

## Practice positive psychotherapy.

Positive psychotherapy is therapy that focuses on improving wellbeing and functioning. This occurs by building on positive emotions.

This activity makes individuals resilient, hence protecting them from stressors. It helps individuals develop a sense of meaning in life. When one has a sense of meaning, they are more likely to work towards achieving what they want and therefore attaining happiness.

## Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

This therapy engages individuals' cognitive abilities, which are thoughts as well as their behaviors. In relation to happiness, a counselor will help individuals stop thinking patterns that make them unhappy. They instead learn how not to focus on the stimulus making them unhappy and focus on appraising events of life positively.

Individuals here are able to build awareness of their negative behaviors and thoughts, then they find a way of challenging and changing them. Anytime they are on the verge of thinking about saddening experiences, they reframe their mindset. It helps one resort to positivity.

## Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

This therapy helps individuals accept both reality and how they react to it rather than fighting against it. Individuals who have experienced trauma at times have not accepted how things happened. It is necessary to accept the reality in order to heal.

It also helps individuals deal with the present moment as well as handle what is happening around them without judgment.

## How does this lead to happiness?

Acceptance of uncomfortable thoughts and feelings leads to decreased emotional distress and increased happiness, hence a developed skill of psychological flexibility. This stimulates individuals to focus their energy into healing instead of dwelling on the negative. This therapy emphasizes on acceptance.

*For instance, once individuals who have faced trauma come to terms with the occurrence of certain issues, they are going to handle it and create changes in their environment.*

In relation to arousing happiness after trauma, this model helps clients widen their worldview regarding several aspects that they might be facing as it incites one to take action.

This needs one to engage a professional psychologist or counselor in order to have their guidance all along.

**REMEMBER:**

Avoid recreational substances while trying to have fun or trying to feel better. This is because they are addictive. The substances too make individuals avoid working on their feelings hence they do not stimulate healing.

To heal and be happy again, one has to work on their feelings entirely. See a therapist. At times, one is overwhelmed by events and they cannot handle situations alone, and it is okay to seek help from therapists who will be able to help them maneuver around it.

Take breaks if needed; this is self-care. Attend to yourself first and with this, one is able to get past what they are going through.

# *CHAPTER SIX*

# MYTHS ABOUT HAPPINESS

*Happiness is our ability to be content regardless of what is going on in our life.* - Psychologist Sophia Godkin.

Myths are those things that are not true, and they include the things individuals think happiness is but in reality, it is not. These include the following:

There is something wrong if you are not happy all the time. At times, sadness can coexist with happiness.

*For example, one can be happy that they managed to get a good promotion but still a bit sad as he or she is leaving the office they have been so used to.*

*It is okay not to be okay* as we experience a variety of emotions, and we should not lock them out by trying to exhibit a happy nature all the time.

Individuals believe that to be happy, everything has to work out in their favor .

Happiness is from within and despite what one is going through, they can still be happy by practicing gratitude. Gratitude always makes individuals happy as they appreciate what they have.

Some people believe that their future resembles their past; if they had unpleasant past experiences, they will still progress in the future. This is not true; the future is dependent on an individual. They can heal and get past all those unpleasant past memories.

Some believe that they will be happy when they get money, jobs, or perfect partners or maybe they will be happy when they get married. There are those who relate happiness to short-term pleasures like winning money or taking recreational substances. Remember, happiness is a state of the mind. It is not fixed on anything.

Happiness is not a commodity that we keep chasing; it is from within, and when people realize this, they will begin to tap into their emotions when they need a boost from being unhappy and not tapping into material things.

Why? Because human beings by nature rarely get content. They chase this commodity then the other one and so on. Socrates said, "*He who is not contented with what they have, will not be contented with what they would like to have.*"

## BARRIERS TO HAPPINESS

In life, everyone has choices and lots of reasons to make them happy, but at the same time, most individuals find it difficult to feel so.

Little things are capable of making individuals happy, but the same little things are capable of making them unhappy.

Very little is needed to make a happy life; it is all within yourself, in your own way of thinking. Several factors act as barriers to happiness as they diminish our capabilities to be happy and satisfied with our lives as well as with ourselves. For instance:

## COMPARISON

Comparing oneself with other people is a great barrier to happiness. This does not mean do not admire what someone else has, nor does it mean hate what someone else has; it means appreciating what others have and at the same time getting content with what you also have.

Comparisons make individuals hate what they are as well as dislike how they are progressing in life, which is wrong as it makes them feel so small and insignificant. This can also crush one's self-esteem as well as one's self-image.

There shall always be individuals doing better than you actually are; hence, one might end up belittling themselves. Make it a habit of not comparing yourself to others. Remember what one has is quite different from what you have, and this also includes differences in life progression too.

## LACK OF GRATITUDE

When one is unable to see what they have, they live in a condition of being unhappy by desiring what they do not have. This itself diminishes happiness. When one is able to appreciate what they have and those around them, they then can be happy as they get joy from small little things in life.

At times life can be challenging to individuals, but it is still possible to appreciate the small things in life. Research has shown that people who are more grateful are less likely to be depressed. They are relatively happier, hopeful, and they tend to experience positive emotions. Other than this, they are relatively happier. Individuals can reinforce gratitude by keeping journals of things they are grateful for.

For instance: I'm thankful for these things in my life:

## EXCESSIVE WORRY

Worry is distress that comes with anticipating things which may be real or not, hence creating anxiety or even doubt.

Individuals get worried, especially if it is a subject that has to do with the future. Many people do not live in the present as they are busy ruminating over the possibilities, feeling worried and anxious about possible challenges and consequences.

This worry takes over all aspects of life as one spends much of their time thinking. It may tamper with how one operates. It is important to understand that worrying alone does not change anything; instead, acting on what worries you changes things. People who have a tendency to worry keep on rethinking and dwelling on these issues;

For example;

- Will I make it in life?
- Am I good enough?

At the same time, let individuals learn to appreciate what they have at the moment as they work towards attaining what they want in the future.

Other than that, people can learn to live in the present as this makes one happy. Worry can also be dealt with by investing in one's well-being. Happiness can be found by ceasing to worry about things that are way beyond our will or our power.

BLAME

Blame is something that individuals tend to undergo, especially after things have gone wrong. Some cannot actually move past the failure as they are fixated on blaming themselves or others who are around them. It is important to realize that blame changes nothing; instead, it strains an individual and sucks the energy out of them.

This drains away happiness and joy, creating room for resentfulness.

MEDIA

Social media today has been part and parcel of life. Individuals are bent on following each and everything that occurs online. This includes both good and bad news.

Individuals have made it a trend to follow whatever happens in so and so's daily life, and this creates comparison, which is a barrier.

Other than that, the constant negative news that we are fed with kills happiness as well. They create anxiety and fear. All these acts as barriers to happiness. Look at young people around you today; how many would rather lack food but afford bundles? Several.

This slowly leads to addiction, and they get short-term pleasure from social media, which is cut short with low battery or diminishing bundles.

PERSONALIZING PAIN

Everyone gets hurt at times, which is quite normal for humans. In some situations, certain individuals tend to capitalize so much on things that hurt them. This makes them personalize hurtful things. *For instance, an individual may choose not to speak about what is hurting them; instead, they suffer in silence.*

Sometimes the offender is not aware they did wrong, while the victim holds on to the pain. Despite the good things happening around them, they are unable to enjoy as they still have an unresolved issue at the back of their mind. Personalizing pain is characterized by being overly sensitive, overreacting to minor things, as well as taking issues personally. It is important to choose to let certain issues pass or learn how to let go of stuff.

EXPECTATIONS

Expectations, coupled with hope and actions, are what give us positive results. At the same time, the lack of expectations and aspirations lead to zero or no progress. Expectations can also rob us of happiness. How?

Overly expecting things leads to frustrations. Individuals at times have high or unrealistic expectations which when unmet makes them frustrated and unhappy. For this reason, it is of importance to have ideal and realistic expectations. This leads us to the importance of creating a balance between high expectations and ideal expectations.

CRITICIZING THE SELF

It is a normal thing to fail at times, but it is unhealthy to stay fixated on the failure. This shows the importance of rising again and trying.

At such moments, individuals are prone to failing and getting stuck at it, while most of them begin criticizing themselves.

Some blame themselves for letting themselves down or for doing something which was wrong, bringing about feelings of anger. All these factors are negative states which act as obstacles to happiness. To attain happiness, we have to learn how to be happy as well as admit that we need to be happy.

ACTIVITY

Write down your barrier thoughts and actions. This activity can be guided by what you do and assessing if it helps gain any strengths or does anything good come from it?

What strategies will you adopt to overcome this?

1.

2.

3.

The more we adopt and practice positive strategies which fight barriers of happiness, the more we develop and learn to be a different person altogether.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXCITEMENT, JOY, AND HAPPINESS

Excitement is a feeling of eagerness and enthusiasm; the intensity of feeling. For instance, when children get candy, they get so excited that they cannot wait to open and taste them. The feeling is momentary and it goes away with time.

Happiness can be the feeling of satisfaction and enjoyment from within us.

*For instance, using the example above; Children get excited at the thought of having candy, but at the same time, they are happy for getting the candy. I mean, this is everything that they wanted and they have already gotten it.*

In psychology, we have euphoria which is a state of intense excitement and happiness. Joy is a state of being. It is close to happiness and it also helps us remain calm but aware of the present situations. Joy is derived from the simplest things that we do.

Joy is also being glad and cheerful and it comes when one is at peace with who they are and what they are handling. It is deep-rooted and long-lasting.

*For instance, look at children. They are mostly happy. When their favorite relative or friend shows up, they get genuinely cheerful.*

They might be aware that it is raining and that means they won't play outside, but still, they will continue being cheerful. This means that with joy, one continues being happy despite uncertainty. One has the ability to be calm and at peace.

Excitement, joy, and happiness are almost alike. They all contribute to our well-being. The only difference is what causes them and the nature of the feeling. A person can pursue happiness but still choose joy. It is practice and behavior. It is deliberate and intentional.

# *CHAPTER SEVEN*

# CULTIVATING A HAPPY CULTURE

*What you seek is also seeking you'' - RUMI.*

Surprisingly, everyone experiences happiness, and at times we forsake it as we focus on achieving other things. How do we cultivate a happy culture?

## Stop chasing happiness

Individuals equate being happy with being wealthy, while some equate being happy with achieving certain set goals. This means that we view happiness as a reward and not something we can experience daily, which is wrong. It is important to learn not to spend time chasing goals equating it to being happy.

Can we chase goals and at the same time be happy and cheerful with the way things are going? It is possible.

## Build self-esteem

Self-esteem is being confident in your abilities, believing in oneself more. Individuals sometimes act as self-critics. They might be friendly to their friends and also be supportive towards others, but they forget that they are also important.

## Learn to prioritize yourself.

Be kind and loving towards yourself just like you are to others. Happiness comes from within, and this means that individuals have to embrace who they are and work towards creating a better version of themselves. Improved self-esteem makes people happy. When individuals feel they did something wrong, they should believe in themselves and trust that next time, they will do it better. Other than that, they should treat themselves kindly and fairly, as if they do not want to lose a part of themselves.

## Being present

Individuals sometimes live through situations without being present, as they are psychologically focusing on other things. Being present in all activities that one does helps them make the most out of all situations and occurrences. It also helps one experience happiness at a deeper and more regular basis.

## Appreciate yourself

Happiness will never come to those who fail to appreciate what they already have or what they already are. Many times, individuals look at other people and appreciate what they have done. They exchange phrases like "I am happy for you."

How many times do the same individuals look at what they have done and feel genuinely happy for themselves? Rarely. All that they do is feel down because this or that failed.

It is okay to fail, but it is so important to appreciate yourself at all times.

Appreciate your efforts, work, achievements, as well as accomplishments. Even when reflecting on the past, focus on past achievements too, not only failures. Learn to appreciate yourself all the time.

**Reframe how you approach happiness**.

*Happiness is not something you postpone for the future; it is something you design for the present. ~ JIM ROBIN*

People forget that happiness is internal. They focus on looking for an external trigger which they believe may trigger happiness.

**Reframe how you approach happiness.**

Do not make it a long-awaited goal; make being happy a regular occurrence. Individuals sometimes schedule being happy, like "I will be happy after exam results are released."

Why can't one be happy for successfully completing the examinations and still be joyful as they wait for the results?

## Manage time effectively

Time management has significant influence not only on individuals but also on those around them. Individuals who manage time have the ability to handle several things; they can focus on future goals and also manage present occurrences. Without time management, individuals fail to carry out assigned tasks, they forget meetings, fail to finish assignments, and fail at managing themselves. This in turn increases their likelihood of suffering from anxiety, stress, fear, as well as worry. In most cases, such people are in crisis. On the other hand, those who manage time achieve what they wanted to. They end up doing all that was supposed to be done, and at the end of the day, they feel content and satisfied, leading to happiness. This is because they are satisfied with their efforts.

## Prioritize Your Well-Being

Happiness is reinforced with health. Those who seek wealth must also be healthy to enjoy what they have attained. Prioritizing our physical and mental well-being is vital. Research has shown that the degree to which disease disrupts daily functioning is associated with reduced happiness.

*For instance, when one is unhealthy, they tend to worry so much about their health, and the vice versa is true.* Studies have also shown that people who consider themselves happy have better physical health than those who do not consider themselves happy. It is important to consume things that benefit us health-wise and avoid those that harm us. This also includes abandoning beliefs that no longer serve as beneficial.

# *CHAPTER EIGHT*

# POSITIVE SELF TALK

Self-talks are those conversations that one initiates from within. They are dialogues that are more intrapersonal in nature.

These conversations should ideally be positive and self-encouraging. Such self-talks can uplift and positively impact moods as well as a sense of self-worth. Research indicates that individuals who engage in positive self-talk possess the ability to tackle problems, think differently, and effectively cope with challenges.

*For example:*

*Negative (unhappy) self-talk: "There is no way I can be happy again after all this has happened."*

Positive self-talk: "I can handle this, or it doesn't define me." Other examples of positive self-affirmations include: “I am good enough or I have the ability to succeed."

Positive affirmations possess the power to redirect thoughts and energize us. This practice aids in focusing on the positive aspects of life despite the challenges they may be facing.

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

Happiness is often subjectively measured as individuals report about their own experiences, making it necessary to inquire directly. What are you thankful for?

What actions do I take to enhance my happiness?

1.
2.
3.

INDICATORS OF HAPPINESS.

## Time management

People are said to report that they feel down because time is not on their side. There is so much that they need to do, hence time is running them and not the other way around. Being able to manage time and also have time for the self and others brings joy.

## Ability to set and maintain healthy boundaries

Setting boundaries is essential to human activities. This is because if at work there are no boundaries, individuals always get overworked or pissed off. The same case occurs at home as one does not feel relaxed and such.

Individuals do not understand the need to set boundaries. Some cannot tell what boundaries are.

It is okay to ask for help when needed; it is also okay to speak out and say what you want without feeling bad about it.

## Significant relationships.

These are those relationships that are deemed mutual and beneficial. They are characterized by positive regard as well as making the other person feel valued. Most people are successful and they have all that they want, but deep down, they feel empty.

We might get all material things, but with time, the excitement diminishes, but relationships do not devalue. It is important to connect with people who support you.

**Positive self-image**

People who have a positive self-image appreciate themselves for what they are and what they have done. After making mistakes, they own them up, and they do not keep reflecting on what really happened. Such individuals are content with who they are, and they believe in their ability to do certain things.

People with poor self-image take everything to heart, actually making even relating to them difficult, and this affects their levels of happiness.

**Growth mindset.**

***If you can believe it, you can achieve it.***

Individuals with a growth mindset are those that are willing to learn without getting fixated on one item.

Such individuals believe they are in control of their capacity to learn and grow. This applies to all aspects of life. When one believes that they can study and pass or they have the ability to finish a certain task, they are at ease, calm, and happy unlike those who believe that they cannot do this and that.

When an individual believes that they can do it, they actually invest time in doing it, which brings forth good results as they do better in school, at work, and in life in general, hence heightened levels of happiness. These are the kind of people who happily embrace challenges.

**Seeking validation from others.**

Whatever we believe is what our minds process, and we get stuck on that. Self-talk is very impactful. Some people keep telling themselves that they are not beautiful enough or they lack what it takes to do a certain task, and they have to keep asking others: am I beautiful? How do I look? Do I have what it takes to complete a certain task?

Even after assuring them that they have what it takes, they still feel inadequate. Many at times such individuals fall short of what they expected, and critiques of other people hurt them so deeply.

**Gratitude.**

Happy people are always grateful for everything, including the minor opportunities. You can actually tell as they communicate. Gratitude gives you more to be grateful for. Research has established that gratitude makes individuals feel more positive emotions, which contributes to their happiness.

LEARN TO SPREAD HAPPINESS

Being happy is good, but spreading happiness among others is even better. Individuals at times might want to see all those around them happy, and this means they want to spread or share happiness

With everything that is happening in our day-to-day lives, we need to be joyful and happy; otherwise, people might succumb to stress and depression. Thankfully, you do not have to wait for someone to make you happy; you choose to be happy and share the joy with others around you. How can one achieve this?

**Start with yourself.**

Be happy to make others happy. Remember, happiness starts from within, so start with yourself . You cannot give what you do not have. It is important for one to look within themselves, identify and eliminate that which acts as barriers to their own happiness. Sharing the joy can be done by associating well with those around us.

**Give compliments**.

Human beings are social, and at times, they need appreciation to make them feel better.

*For instance, while walking on the road, you might meet a smartly individual, and you feel they have really done their best*

*to look really nice, or maybe you admire one of their items that they had on*.

It is okay to get courageous and tell them that they look nice.

Spreading happiness and joy does not necessarily need to be tangible; there are still other intangible ways to do it.

**Send a care package**.

The economy might not favor all humans to have everything, and this creates the haves and have nots. It is important to share with those who lack. This might be material and immaterial things. Sharing shows that we are taking into consideration the needs of others, and this recognition makes one feel happy.

**Express gratitude**. Having people around you who ensure you are happy or smile is important. It is equally important to appreciate them and show them you are grateful. This makes them happy as well.

**Show up or be there**.

Humans need support at all times. At times, individuals might be undergoing issues that require others to be there for them, and they might feel low if they do not get this support. Be human enough to support others when they need support, as this is a gentle way of spreading happiness.

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