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**ARTICLE**

**A Quest for Happiness: Understanding Meaning and Means for Education**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Life is a blank canvas of possibility; you are in control of what the finished picture could look like. Everybody wants to be happy. Yet they do not know how to get happiness i.e. which are the different ways to acquire happiness. Nobody wants to suffer, but most do not know how to abandon the root cause of suffering. Some people used spirituality as a mean to get happiness and a life of purpose, incorporating spirituality into the hectic schedules prepares a person for all that life has to offer. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace, and gratitude. Spirituality teaches that the art of living is to find real satisfaction and the true happiness. Spirituality says: happiness comes from within. There are many skilful means for developing wisdom, satisfaction and happiness through spirituality, but positive thinking is also seen as one of the most important ways for attaining happiness. Power of positive thinking is a powerful tool that can lead to a greater personal insight and a flourish of inner happiness. This paper discusses the various ways of being happy. As many of us spend our whole lives searching for happiness, this paper talks about finding true happiness through the practice of positive thinking, avoiding anger and selfishness, and not limiting happiness. Finally paper concludes with some means and ways to build culture of happiness in the educational institution and among learners which carry the same in social life.*

**What is Happiness?**

“Happiness is a state of mind; it’s just according to the way you look at things.” “Happiness” is not only difficult to measure, but it is also difficult to singularly define. You can’t define happiness without using a synonym for happiness, and you can’t interpret it to everyone’s satisfaction. Oxford dictionaries’ Captain Obvious definition for happiness is “the feeling of being happy”. Happiness comes when you feel satisfied and fulfilled. Happiness is a feeling of contentment that life is just as it should be. Perfect happiness, enlightenment, comes when all of your needs fulfilled. Happiness can never be seen, it can only be felt by the one who get it. Everyone has different meaning of happiness. For instance, spiritual leaders like Osho (Rajneesh) explained happiness as something which

comes from within us. Real happiness isn't a product that can be sold. It arises from being one with the world.

In a recent UN report, Norway was declared as the “world’s happiest country”. The top of the list included Denmark, Finland and Iceland. The U.S. came on 14<sup>th</sup> and the U.K. was on 19<sup>th</sup> position. According to an old Chinese saying, “Happiness is something to do, someone to love, and something to hope for.” It’s fair to say that the key ingredients for being happy seem to be feelings of competence and belongingness.

Aristotle made a seminal contribution to the happiness conundrum when he suggested that happiness should be seen as a combination of immediate pleasures (*hedonia*) and a life well lived (*eudaimonia*). Perhaps, another way of translating Aristotle’s observations is by separating three elements of happiness: frequent positive feelings, infrequent negative feelings, and high life satisfaction.

As President James E. Faust (1920–2007) once phrased it, “Happiness is not given to us in a package that we can just open up and consume. Nobody is ever happy 24 hours a day, seven days a week.” but in God’s plan we can do very much to find the happiness we do desire. We can take certain steps, we can form certain habits, and we can do certain things that God and history tell us lead to happiness.

### 1. Choose to Be Happy

Firstly, learn as quickly as you can that so much of your happiness is in your hands, not in events or circumstances or fortune or misfortune. We have choice, we have the power to make our own decisions, we have agency, and we can choose. Happiness comes first by what comes into your head a long time before it comes into your hand. Make happiness a habit. Be happy in every circumstances either they are pleasant or not. If you want to be happy then be happy, do not wait for the time when you will get happiness or anybody or anything will come and give it to you. Happiness has nothing to do with time or persons or thing. Even a single or smallest thing can give you happiness like a single smile can make you happy. You have to create happiness, but firstly you have to decide that whether you want to be or not. When we start a thing it will definitely got completed one day. So before you will go for creating happiness firstly you will have to choose happiness. And being happy is in your hands, you have to be the master of it i.e. you do not have to be dependent on others for it.

### 2. Don’t bind Happiness by Drawing Boundaries

Happiness is everywhere, it just that you have to realize it. Every person has different concept of happiness. It is possible that one thing that lead to tremendous happiness for one person may not have that much worth to another person. Usually people bind happiness with particular day, particular person, things or events. For example, when you celebrate the day you were born i.e. your birthday, everybody wish you “happy birthday” that mean they are saying to you to be happy that particular day because it’s yours birthday. But why we have to

be happy on that particular day? Why we can't be happy every day? Why we have decided the days when we are going to be happy? Why we have labelled happiness with particular day or thing or persons? Why we can't be happy in every circumstances or moments of our life? We are following the trend of happiness rather than strive for it. There is a tremendous pressure to show that we are happy, whether we are actually happy or not.

### **3. Freedom does not always lead to Happiness**

Some people believe that freedom is the only path to happiness and unhappiness arises from constraints. But this is not true. Most often, when we have 'pure' freedom, we suffer. But it is also true that highly restricted contexts are also a sure recipe for unhappiness. So we have to find the middle path which leads to real happiness. Too much freedom can also lead us on wrong path and we end up in suffering. Sometime things give us happiness only when we get them after too much struggle and by removing all the obstacles which are hindering us from achieving that thing. But if we desire for a thing and get it all of a sudden without any efforts then it may not give us that much happiness.

### **4. Negativity, Selfishness, or Anger don't attribute to Happiness**

Positivity, Kindness, forgiveness, pleasantness and faith-based optimism are some of the characteristics of happy people. The power of positive thinking: 'like attracts like'. What this means is that whether we realize it or not, we are responsible for bringing both positive and negative influences into our lives. Where you place your focus can have an intense impact on what happens to you. It is important to understand that we are and only we are responsible for everything that happens in our life. We all have the power to change our destiny. We often see people who always have negative attitude about everything. If you will regularly observe them you will notice that they have every problem for a solution. The thing is that they can never find positivity in anything rather they are the most unsatisfied and unhappy persons. Sometimes there are some moments of our life which are bad but if we will start thinking that our whole life is full of misery then that is negativity which will definitely lead us to unhappiness. If the first five minute of your day are spoiled it does not mean that you will start believing that your whole day will be spoiled too. If you spend your days wallowing in regrets about the past or fears of the future, you'll likely see more negativity appearing, but if you look for the silver lining in every experience then you'll soon start to see positivity surrounding you every day. And that positivity leads to happiness. You can attract anything you wish to attract. A related step along the path toward happiness is to avoid animosity, contention, and anger in your life.

### **Happiness and Educational Implications**

Happiness, although earned from this world, for this world but it is a material to lead to the world beyond non- material. Extreme form of happiness leads to satisfaction and ultimate

pleasure which can only be felt by difficult to be defined and explain. Education has actually designed to achieve this happiness and satisfaction in one's life. How this element of happiness could be brought in education and through education has been one of the content of research in sociology and psychology of education. Happiness need be the integral element of education starting from planning to infrastructure to curriculum and teaching learning process including training of teachers. Happiness although state of mind but at the same times it is infectious. In other words if we create environment of happiness, people around us are happy; we are bound to be happy. One of recent field of supporting happiness is social engineering, which can definitely be practiced in a classroom. Head of the institution and teachers need to be social engineers for the project education. Curriculum can generate happiness by virtue of contents as well as activities. Contents related to literature, social science, fine arts need to be explicitly arranged around objectives of happiness. Other school subjects can also be directed for happiness as it's by product. In fact attaining next level in education should be made matter of happiness rather than just achievement. School co-curricular activities should definitely be directed towards generating happiness all around. Group activities like celebration of national and international days, camps and campaigns for social work, literary activities like poem recitation and cultural activities like dance and singing could well be directed to the objectives of attaining happiness. Talent is a source of happiness and happiness always enhances talent which school co-curricular activities should aim at. It is definitely a source of great happiness for students who do not do well with academics and complement oneself with such achievements. Besides these elements of education an educational institution should be designed and decorated in the spirit of happiness. Learning spaces needs to be designed which give positive energy to the learners, which gets translated in to happiness. Building sections need to flexible and designed and re designed as per the occasion in the school academic and activity calendar. In days of examination it should motivate for high academic performance, on sports day it should encourage for physical vigour and on cultural meet it needs to bear look of fervor and gaiety. School staff including head, faculty and non -teaching need be trained in building and maintaining environment that keeps generating and distributing happiness. While staffing the institution besides subject mastery managements need to assess persons on measures of happiness as suggested in happiness index (Gross National Happiness = GNH) suggested by Bhutan's constitution 2008. It is really human beings in an institution that really matter for spreading happiness. Some sort of in service training could also be organized in schools and colleges to promote culture of happiness. Teachers need to practice ways and means which promote positive attitude and happiness; same should be transfer to the learners. In conclusion we can say that by all mean an institution should try to build an environment of happiness all around by virtue of material

and men, hardware and software, sources and resources. If students are taught in the environment of happiness they are bound to spread the same.

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