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## Life Style: facts you did not know about Happiness

Happiness seems to be the goal of any action that we do and is also the key motivation behind our plans and actions in life. We are often unhappy because we do not know the real source of happy feelings. The quest seems endless and the rewards seem to be far away. Even if we seem to achieve happiness, it is very temporary and we get back to our usual state of non-happy mind sooner than we know. Do we have the power to change this routine? Let's figure out by understanding a few basic facts.

## Happy people are productive people

Before we begin to explore further, let's take a moment to think about why should we bother about it. Well, being happy is an unsaid requirement for any task we undertake. Happiness increases productivity and brings out the creativity in an individual as well as the team. Everyone likes to work, or support, a happy person. So being happy is not just a 'good-to-have' mood but also a responsibility for everyone who wants to be useful to the world in any way.



## It is a state of mind

Everyone has their own definition of happiness and we often find ways to not recognize the bliss that lies within us. It is a known fact that it does not require anything at all to be happy. In fact, we need a reason to be unhappy and most of us excel at finding it. Once we realize that it is in our very nature to be happy, we need not look for reasons for being in a joyful state of mind.

## It does not come from outside

Being happy is an inside job. We may think that if we have a certain amount of money in our bank accounts, love, and respect of other people, good

relationships, time to spend with loved ones, certain luxuries, better parents, better education, better spouse, friends and jobs like our favorite television sitcoms, we will be happy. The truth is that we can feel good with or without any of these things. All these things surely add value to our lives but they are not the source of happiness.



## What is long lasting is true

There are many activities that give us pleasure but we cannot claim to be happy based on them. The reason is that they are short lived. If we look closely, there are many things we do in this quest but end up being disappointed or even sad. Some events take us to cloud nine but soon we are back to square one as far as the happiness quotient goes. Then we look for something new but the same cycle can repeat for infinite times. While choosing these activities we can be wiser and select things that give us long-term benefits even if they require initial few days of struggle.

## It resides in the big picture

Life is not always a piece of cake and we have to face the bitter experiences too from time to time. Happiness, however, is not affected by the circumstances in our life. We can choose to be unhappy by focusing on a temporary event, shortcomings or disappointment. But remember, it's a choice. When we understand the smallness of such events, bliss is not far away. Remember that it is not important to win every battle to win the war.



## A selfish mind cannot host it

It is true that everyone is responsible for themselves but it does not hurt to use some spare time for the benefit of others without expecting anything in return. When you do something for someone for which they cannot repay you right away, good feelings can be experienced instantaneously. On the contrary, one can try sitting and thinking about oneself and observe the difference in the state of mind after few minutes or hours.

## The time to be happy is now

We often tend to think that after a certain problem is solved or certain goals are achieved, or the bad phase passes, we can be happy. A happy state of mind is not a reward which we will get in future. The only way to guarantee happiness tomorrow, is by learning to be happy today. It is already available to us; we only need to activate it. The moment we decide to be happy, we can be. And the best time to do it is now.



# The habit can be developed

If one has been unhappy for a long time, one may find it difficult to become happy again. Negative thoughts may come and attempt to take you back to the old comfortable unhappy self. Say goodbye to those old guests, and entertain some new ones. The good news is that the happiness habit can be developed with practice, just like any other habit – with determination and patience.

# It partly relies on our food intake

We have heard that 'thoughts become things' but do we know that 'food becomes thought'? Very few youngsters know this but it is true that the thoughts that 'automatically' come to our mind are very much dependent on the food we eat. The kind of energy (and mood) our food possesses is transferred to us after we eat it and assimilate it. The cook's thoughts are going to affect your thoughts, and your thoughts will ultimately drive your emotions.

# It can use some movement

Those who play a sport or dance or perform any other physical activity on a daily basis know how it affects the mind. Exercise releases endorphins – the chemicals produced by our nervous system that make us feel good. Playing or exercising on a regular basis can keep us happy. To keep low feelings at bay, just play.

With the knowledge of the above facts, we can conclude that happiness is not something far away but very much within our own reach. We just need to be aware of it. A beautiful state of mind may not just fall in our lap, but we can work to achieve it through our yogic practices and reminder to these attributes.

*Based on wisdom talks by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.*

*Happiness is a state of mind. You can train your mind to be resilient and positive*

*through life's challenges. Discover simple mind management techniques at the*

*Happiness Program.*

