

How to be Happy.

So what is happiness?

Happiness might mean the day the mortgage is paid off - or maybe obtaining your first mortgage. Happiness might mean buying your dream car – or it might mean biking to work to ‘stick it to the oil companies’.

Happiness can mean a whole lot of things to a whole lot of people. But happiness can sometimes be confused by daily ‘transactions’ or events in your life that alter your state of mind at that moment. Happiness in this case is very transient, only depending upon experience. But I would like to talk briefly about true, lasting happiness – something we will call joy.

Joy is something that is different than happiness. It is a deep underlying feeling that transcends the daily ebbs and flows of daily life. Joy survives through sickness and loss. Joy is sustained through bad business experiences.

And how do you get joy in your life? *By being content.*

Contentment is something very difficult to master. I have seen pictures of very poor people in 3rd world countries, and although they are physically poor, they hold a contentment that makes them happier people than most of the people I know. I have seen sick people in nursing homes, but although they are not physically able to do much, they have happiness deep inside of them.

If contentment can be mastered, then joy comes naturally. Contentment allows us to not worrying about our own wellbeing, but helps us to look at the concerns of others. The only way you can obtain contentment and joy is to realize that you are not the one in control of the ‘big picture’ of your life. Yes, you are responsible for the day-to-day decisions that you make, whether good or bad. But ultimately we need to understand that our Creator is in control of the ultimate plan of our lives. If we can grasp this, then the easier it is to take our focus off of ‘stepping on the next guy to try and get higher up on the corporate ladder’ and putting more attention on helping others around us.

The North American culture we live in, does nothing to help us understand what contentment actually is. We are only told that finances and power will give us contentment and happiness. We are told that our only purpose in living is to minimize our pain. Unfortunately these things only leave us empty. Many people don’t realize this until they are at the end of their lives.

Although this might seem like a paradox, but the sooner you can come to the realization that you are not in control of the ‘big picture’ of your life, the sooner we take the focus off ourselves, onto others, and experience true happiness.

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