

No Better Time to Be Happy Than Now

Generally, we convince ourselves that our life will be better once we are married, have one baby and then another. Then, we are frustrated because they reach adolescence and we must deal with them. Surely we'll be happier when they grow out of the teen years. We tell ourselves our life will be better when our spouse gets his/her act together, when we have a nicer car, when we can take a vacation or when we finally retire. The truth is that there is no better time to be happy than right now. If not now, then when? Our life will always be full of challenges. It is better to admit as much and to decide to be happy in spite of it all. As Guillaume Apollinaire said, 'Now and then it's good to pause in our pursuit of happiness and just be happy'.

For the longest time, it seemed that life was about to start, the real life. But there was always some obstacle along the way, an ordeal to get through, some work to be finished, some time to be given, and a bill to be paid. Then life would start. One has to understand that these obstacles are life. There is, in fact, no road to happiness. Happiness is the road. So, we should enjoy every moment. As stated above, a butterfly has only 14 days to live but it still flies joyfully capturing many hearts. Each moment in life is precious, so we should keep winning hearts.

We should, therefore, stop waiting for the school to end, for a return to school, to lose ten pounds, to gain ten pounds, for work to begin, to get married, for Friday evening, for Sunday morning, waiting for a new car, for our mortgage to be paid off, for spring, for summer, for fall, for winter, for the first or the last day of the month, for our song to be played on the radio, to die, to be reborn before deciding to be happy. Indeed, by seeking more than what one has, one actually keeps oneself from enjoying what one already has. Happiness is a voyage, not a destination. There is no better time to be happy than now.

We should live and enjoy every moment as it comes. No one is born happy, but everyone is born with the ability to create happiness. So we should make everyone happy by flashing our sweetest smile. Even when we talk on phone, we should answer with a smile. People can hear it in our voice. Happiness can't be found when we seek it for ourselves. But when we give it to others, it finds its way back to us. That's the mystery of happiness. Regretting over yesterday

and fear of tomorrow are the two thieves, which steal our present. We must live for today. Life will be beautiful. So, we should enjoy our life today because yesterday has gone and tomorrow may never come. Life is like ice. We must enjoy it before it melts.

So, we should always remember one thing. In our bid to get to our coveted goal, we should never ever tie ourselves up so much as to make our life dull and drab. Life is beautiful and human life is more so. So, even while we go about our preparations for the realisation of our dream, we should not stop enjoying life. We should have some time also for fun and frolicking. We should not forget to chill out after a gruelling round of hard work. We should try to fit in our fun time and fun things in a way as not to hinder the advancement of our goal. All that is being suggested here is that we should try to mix and match our goal and fun activities in such a way that it allows us to recharge our battery and takes us nearer to our goal. We must have the power to forget the bitterness of the past to enjoy the sweetness of life in the present.

Generally, many of us keep worried and concerned about something, which, actually, we cannot help and cannot change. We should not be unnecessarily exercised about such things. We should, as much as we can do, tackle the problem at hand, but when we find that it is something we cannot do anything about, we should just stop being bothered about it, without ceasing to do the part you are supposed to. It is like the result of an exam or consequence of an action. We definitely cannot predict as to how a particular result of a particular examination would be like or what would be the consequence of a particular action. So, we should not be overly bothered and hassled about this part.

But we can definitely see to it that all the required effort and planning goes into the preparations for the exam or taking of the requisite action as may be required for the purpose. This truism is something, which has been famously testified to by the Hindu God Lord *Krishna* in the celebrated Hindu holy book the '*Gita*', where he says that we should do our job without bothering about the consequences.

Often, we try to achieve and get more than we need. While dissatisfaction is the spring of human progress, the same should not be allowed to distort our ethics and values, while also snatching our peace of mind. Often, in our bid to survive and succeed, we try to ride roughshod over others, something we should never do. Achievement at the expense of the other, the poor and the deprived is an evil, which never goes very far. In fact, it is possible to escape any and every enemy, but we cannot fly from the relentless pursuit of our own evil deed.

As a land is improved by sowing various seeds, so is the mind by exercising with different studies and reflections. Regular studies and thinking develop our Self and help us develop right attitudes. In fact, with a slight alteration of one's attitude, human beings can actually alter the course of their life. We should always have a positive attitude and a positive outlook towards life. A pessimist always sees the glass half empty, while the optimist would see the glass half full. We should learn to cultivate positive attitude to see our glass of life always as half full. Life is like a flute. It may have several holes and it may seem empty. But if we work on it, the same holes and emptiness produce magical melody. 'GODISNOWHERE' can be read as 'God is nowhere' or as 'God is now here'. Everything depends on how we see it.

Our life is like a tennis match. If you want to win, serve well, return well and play cool. Do always remember that the game starts with a 'Love All'. I don't have time to hate people who hate me, because I am too busy loving people who love me. Two things define our attitude to life: the way we manage when we have nothing and the way we behave when we have everything. Waters of sea can't sink a ship unless it gets inside the ship. Similarly, negativity of the world can't put us down unless we allow it to get inside us.

A life without problems would be like having only one colour in the spectrum or eating the same food every day. If there were no problems in life and if they were not difficult, they would cease to be problems. We should always remember that a sailor sails against the tide, not with the tide as the kite flies against the wind, and not with the wind. So, instead of seeking happiness all the time, we should try to learn to live with whatever we have. Happiness is, indeed, like our crooked shadow. The more we run after it, the more it would run away from us. Peace of mind or peace in life comes not from the absence of conflicts, but from the ability to cope with them. Once we have this ability, we shall learn to be happy anytime, anywhere.

Salient Points

- There is no better time to be happy than right now.
- There is, in fact, no road to happiness. Happiness is the road.
- Happiness is a voyage, not a destination.
- No one is born happy, but everyone is born with the ability to create happiness.
- Life is like ice. We must enjoy it before it melts.
- Life is like a flute. It may have several holes but if we work on it, the same holes produce magical melody
- Waters of sea can't sink a ship unless it gets inside the ship. Similarly, negativity of the world can't put us down unless we allow it to get inside us.
- A sailor sails against the tide, not with the tide.
- Happiness is like our crooked shadow. The more we run after it, the more it runs away from us.

Glossary

Ordeal: an unpleasant and prolonged experience

Truism: a statement that is obviously true

Spectrum: a wide range

Crooked: dishonest