

# The Views on Happiness: A Dialectic Approach

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## Abstract

In the era of commercialization and industrialization, people work day and night to survive in the market. In the struggle of survival, they forget the real meaning of the life. They measure everything in terms of the money. They forget that “Sat”—“Chit”—“Ananda” is the real form of a human being. Human beings in their life pursuing in the search of a true happiness. They identify the man, money, and material as the real source of happiness. Throughout their life, they seek happiness from each of these sources. In fact, they fail to get the same. The present paper is an attempt to reveal the views of ancient Indian scripture on happiness. The paper uses the dialectic method to prove and disprove the various definitions of happiness. The definitions pointing to the material happiness; physical happiness; sensual happiness; intellectual happiness; psychological happiness; and spiritual happiness have been studied. The paper concludes the scope of various sources of happiness. The article ends with various auspicious (Aum Aano Bhadra) things explained in our ancient Indian scripture that can be the sources of happiness.

**Key Words:** Material Happiness; Physical Happiness; Sensual Happiness; Intellectual Happiness; Psychological Happiness; Spiritual Happiness.

## 1. Introduction:

If you will ask of any individual about their goal, you will be getting “happiness in the life” as the response. Every species on the earth lives and dies only and only for the sake of the happiness. The individuals connect and disconnect with other objects in order to get happiness from it. The oriental and easterner thinkers have tried to define the happiness in the different ways. In India, two of the three teachings of Buddha explain the truth of the life in the light of happiness, i.e. “Sarvam Dukham Dukham”, and “Sarvam Kshnikam Kshnikam”. Many scholars believe that the meaning of these truths is that the life of the human is full of miseries. The Revered Pandurang Sashtri Athvale, the founder of Swadhyay Family, interprets it as the “Dukham Api Kshnikam”. He says that the life is the gift of the God that fills up with complete bliss. The Vedic way of life also emphasizes the life with complete bliss i.e. Jivet Sharad Satatm, Modam Sarad Satam. It means that

one should live hundred years of the life with complete bliss. Plato has talked about the two worlds of happiness, i.e. the temporal world of happiness, and the transcendental world of happiness. In his opinion, the happiness in the physical world is the nothing but the projection of the transcendental world. The real happiness does not lie in the object itself, but it lies in the eyes of the beholders. People do not see the things in themselves, but they see what they have meant to say. On the contrary, Aristotle explains the happiness at the mean between two extremes of the life, i.e. one end of the life is complete bliss, and another end of the life is misery. The every individual has to find the meaning of life at the mean of these two ends. Swami Vivekananda teaches that the summation of miseries and happiness in the life is zero. He gives the example of the thirsty people. The level of satisfaction after drinking the water would be at par with the intensity of third they experience.

Here, the realms of happiness discussed from the physical level to the spiritual level. The quotes from the various ancient Indian scriptures have been pointed to define the happiness in the specific realm. The dialectic method has been used to discuss the various viewpoints on the happiness. Firstly, the one viewpoint will have explained, later on that viewpoint will have criticized with another viewpoint. Every viewpoint has been justified with suitable real life examples. The process of discussion will be continued till the spiritual level viewpoint on the happiness.

## 2. Happiness lies in the Material World:

The Indian darshan shatra defines happiness as “Anukul Taya Vedniyam Sukham and Pratikul Taya Vedniyam Dukham. It means that the objects that are convenient for us are the means of happiness and the objects that create obstacles are the means of grief. For example, the car is convenient in transportation, therefore it is the means of happiness, a puncture in the car creates obstacles in transportation therefore it is the means of grief. This definition stresses that the real sense of the happiness lies in the environment in which we are living. Let us say an individual wants to eat the Pizza. The notion of this definition states that it is not the need of an individual force him to eat Pizza. However, the situation in terms of the taste of pizza; the brand of the pizza store; to eating the pizza in the groups convenient time etc. causes an

individual to create wants of eating the pizza. People who believe it is more inclined to get the material pleasure. These people spend their whole life in order to collect and maintain the external objects only. They do not know that the objects that are convenient at one time may not be convenient at any other time. Say in the example, the water is convenient for the person who is thirsty. It does not mean that water is also convenient for the person who does not know how to swim and falls into the sea. The sugar may be good for the normal people, but the same sugar harms the diabetes patients. This is the reason we have to identify some other definition of pleasure that explains the happiness in every situation.

### **3. Happiness lies in the Painless Body:**

The definition concerning the external environment as the sources of happiness does not justify in every situation. In the Neeti Satak, King Bhartuhari defines happiness as "Pratikaro Vyadho eeti" i.e. objects that overcome the pain of the physical body are the sources of happiness. It means that the objects that give you physical pleasure are the sources of happiness for an individual. It tries to connect to the happiness with the physical experiences. The sources of happiness are relative with respect to the need of the body. The people like the cold water in the summer while the warm water in the winter because the physical requirements in both the seasons are different. Similarly, the need of the foods, shelters, and clothes are also relative in terms of physical requirement. The water satisfied the need of the thirsty person that is why it is the source of happiness for him. The definition prescribes Maslow's basic needs as the sources of happiness. It appeals to the active senses of the human beings, i.e. hands, legs, genitals, anus, and mouth. When these active senses tired, it requires the rest. That is the reason why the rest is the source of happiness for an individual. The shoes overcome the pain of legs that is why it is the source of happiness for legs. A machine reduces the pain of hands that is why it is the source of happiness for hands and so forth. The Indian scriptures quote that "Sarir Madhyam Khalu Dharma Sadhnam," i.e. healthy body is the prime instrument to serve the Dharma. Still, this definition does not justify the reason of different wants of the people. As a physical requirement, the people need the healthy nutrient foods, but they want to eat the Pizza; they need the convenient clothes, but they want the fashionable clothes; and so forth.

### **4. Happiness lies in the Sensual Experience:**

The Srimad Bhagavad Gita chapter 2 verse 14 answers the above-mentioned difference. It stresses that the happiness and the misery are nothing but the experience of sensual knowledge with the objects i.e. "Matrasparstu Kontey Shitosna Sukhdukhdha". It conceives that the five senses of knowledge lead the five senses of action. Eyes, ears,

tongue, skin, and nose are the organs of the five senses. The likes and dislikes of these five senses are the root cause of the any kind of wanting. The specific wants are the choice of these five senses. This is the reason why people like sweets instead of bitter foods. The peoples want to follow the taste and preferences of the five organs. In the recent era, the marketers are also targeting consumer by appealing the five knowledge senses in their advertisement. A pleasant experience in the restaurant also appeals the five knowledge senses. The Freudian psychometric analysis on human being also supports this argument. According to him, the unfulfilled need of these five senses causes people to behave positively or negatively. The Jainism Philosophy proposes "Vit Ragay Bhav" i.e. detachment from the attraction and repulsion of the sensual experience. The people tend to put "want" mark for the things which make them happy while they tend to make "Do not want" mark for the things that they do not like. Despite this, in the many cases, people do not get the enjoyment of the contact between objects and senses. Say in the example, a person eats his favorite delicious dinner. He gets the unpleasant news about his relative. The same dinner will not give him the enjoyment as he was enjoying prior to getting the message. Here, the situation, physical condition, five active senses, and five knowledge senses, everything remain the same still he do not feel good with the condition!

### **5. Happiness lies in the Healthy Mental State:**

The missing element in the above situation is the psychological state of that person. Its show that without the good mental state, a person cannot enjoy the object. The ancient Indian scriptures say about the mind that "Mana eva manushyanam karanam bandha mokshayoho" (Bondage or liberation are in your own mind); and "Yen manojitam jagat jitam tena" (If one who wins the mind, wins the whole world). It means that the people who want to get the real happiness in their life need to achieve the mastery over their mind. One should know the nature of the mind and understand the methods of bringing it under the control. A subhashitkar of the Sanskrit write that for a person everything is pleasurable if and only if the mind is present there (Yatra Mano Samlagnam). In the battlefield of the Kurukshetra, the change in the mental state of Arjuna changes his perception of the battle. The philosophies of the Bhakti Sampradaya in India are also moving around the purity of mind and concentration of mind. The mind is also termed as the sixth sense of the human beings. The mind is the common sense and the comprehensive state of the five senses. The all the five senses of knowledge report to the mind, but at same the time mind is able to smell, taste, feel, hear and see independently of the senses. The mind is like a mirror i.e. as you think, so you become. This is the reason why the

Yoga-Gurus are emphasizing the purification and concentration of mind. Without it one cannot really enjoy their life with full of happiness. However, the important matter over here is that who shapes the state of mind. The “wants” are the root cause for creating the discomfort in life and these “wants” being generated by the mind. The “wants” resides in the mind in the form of the traces of sensual happiness. In fact, the mind receives these inputs from the intellect. The intellect receives and collects the stimulus provided by the senses of knowledge. Therefore, without understanding making the intellect powerful one cannot make the mind progressive and sensitive.

### **6. Happiness lies in the Intellectual Understanding:**

The intellect is one of the powerful internal organs of a human being. The entire necessary or unnecessary stimuli to the mind are provided by the intellect. Therefore, in order to purify and concentrate the mind one should develop a positive attitude in their intellect. “Is the glass half-full or half-empty?” It shows the tendency of two people to see the same situation in different ways. Here, the intellect shapes the nature of the mind. Immanuel Kant uses to say, “Understanding makes nature.” The Srimad Bhagavad Gita preaches that “Aatmev hi aatmano bandhuhu aatmev ripuratmanaha” i.e. one who has conquered the mind (by the intellect); that being mind is of friends; but for one whose mind is uncontrolled (by the intellect), that vary mind act as the works of enemies. Let us understand with an example. There were in an accident, two persons lost their one eye on it. In this situation, one was thanking the God for saving his one eye, whereas another one was complaining the God for taking one eye. Here, one who has a positive attitude towards his life is happy with the situation, whereas another one was feeling the misery in the same situation. The intellect makes the differences in both the situation. Revere Dadaji teaches that we cannot make the man happy, but we can give them the vision to be happy. Over the day and night, the people are demanding numerous things from the god. They are making the least of the things that they do not have rather make the list of the things that they do have. Immanuel Kant has nicely explained the roles of the intellect in developing the understanding about the project. He shows that people see the external world through the categories of their intellect. Plato used to say that the idea of beauty is more beautiful than the beautiful things. Similarly, the fear of death is more fearful than the death itself. Despite the importance of the intellect in developing the right understanding about the life, one should have to think of the forces that make the intellect powerful to work. In the morning when we awake, what comes first, the intellect or anything else?

### **7. Happiness lies in the Spiritual Experience:**

The answer of the above question is the “True Self.” In the morning when we awake, first we know the “I” then after intellect starts to understand that I am a man; I am a professor; I am a husband etc. The first dawn of the divinity is to know the “True Self.” The real form of the “True Self” is the Truth (Sat), the Consciousness (Chit), and the Bliss (Aanand). As the gravitation force pulls every element towards the earth, the power of self pulls every human being towards the truth, the consciousness, and the bliss. The Freudian defense mechanism also suggests the bliss nature of the human beings. According to it, we are trying to use justification, projection, daydreaming, identification, sublimation, and escapisms. mechanism to protect the “True Self” from the failures or internal limitations. Because, the “True Self” always remains blissful in any kind of the situation. This is the cause why in some cases we blame our intellect, hands, eyes, or mind for some unpleasant experience in our life. In fact, these defense mechanisms prevent us from experiencing the bliss borne out of the realization of the divine. The intellect is the nearest internal organs to the “True Self.” The Vidur Niti taught us that “Aatmarthey Prithivim Tyajet” i.e. renounces the earth for one’s own sake. Here, the context of the verse is the “True Self” of the human beings. It does not encourage the selfish motives of the people. It is rightly said that the happiness and contentment are nothing but the interaction between objects and subject. An individual can achieve the bliss in the life by realizing the underlying unity of objects and subject. At the moment of the concentration of the mind, the subject takes the form of the object on which it concentrates. This is the reason why the Indian seers recommend the idol of the God as the form for concentrating the mind. However, the above arguments bring us to the next important question: is it the soul or true self, who responsible for the individual’s wants? In fact, the “True Self” is the formless (Nirakar) and the quality less (Nirguna). This “True Self” does not have any desires, wants, anger, lust, or ego. Then the question arises, who are the responsible for the individual’s wants and desires?

### **8. Sudden Decision-Making Power of Mind:**

As per the above dialectic discussion, we have found that no one seems responsible for true wants of an individual, i.e. the environment, body, senses, mind, intellect, or soul. Here, the crux question is that if no one is the driving force for raising the wants than who is doing this. The answer to this problem is the sudden decision-making power imparted to the human mind. In fact, the intellect takes the final decision by thinking in the short-term or long-term perspectives; good or bad; right or wrong; etc. while the mind gives them the options and desires to choose the best one. However, in some situation, the mind uses its sudden

decision-making power, i.e. for examples, a person runs by seeing a snake without any intellectual thinking on it; a person takes his hands from the hot object without any intellectual thinking on it. Some people say it as the sixth sense of the person. In fact, it is the one of the power that has been imparted by God to the mind. In real life, the mind misuses this power and makes the most of the decision behalf of the intellect in spite of knowing the real need of the soul or intellect. This is the reason the teachings of every seer highlight the control of the mind. Look at the meditation or the stress management techniques trained by any spiritual leader, they all are to reduce the options in front of the mind and by that lower the decision-making power of the mind. The time management is nothing but the management of time with the proper intellectual thought process. The time management does not allow the mind to interfere with the a priori schedule. In the meditation, a person concentrates the entire external stimulus to a form on which s/he is meditating. Therefore, the important thing in the life is to obey the intellect and the soul instead of the mind.

#### **Conclusion:**

In the current era, younger generation faces so much of chaos in their personal, social as well as their professional life. The society, media, politician, educationists etc. are targeting them without understanding the real wish on which they will be agreed upon or not. The education provided without knowing the real state of the problem can be dangerous for them. One should understand the wants of them and also to understand who is responsible for the same. The level of happiness is different in each of the above-mentioned context, i.e. the mere objects will give you only the physical pleasure while the objects with the psychological involvement of the mind will give you happiness. The real bills for the life lies in the "Advait" (non-dual) state, where the object takes the form of subject and there is no separation in the objects and subject. Our ancient Indian scriptures often talked about "Aum Aano Bhadra" i.e. Let the noble things come to me from all directions. The Mother (a spiritual collaborator of Mahrshi Aubrbindo), in her book "On Education", gives the glimpse of such noble things i.e. the energy, beauty, happiness, knowledge. These are the noble things in an individual's life. She has talked about physical education, vital education, mental education, psychic education, and spiritual education in her book. The aim of an individual's life is to find out the sources of such noble things and to find out the way to get it from it. However, only knowing the sources of noble things will not serve the purpose. For the example, take the energy as a one of the noble sources. Mere sleep will not give the happiness, but the proper sleep at the right time & place and the right manner will give the real happiness. Similarly, let us consider the

knowledge as a noble thing. One acquired the knowledge by reading the books, but mere reading the books will give them the right knowledge. One has to identify the best book for him and at the same time he has to read it properly at the proper time to get the maximum out from it. Finally, let us make the aim of life to find out the sources of noble things and ways to acquire the same.

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