

(Please do not write anything except the question number in this space)
कृपया इस स्थान में प्रश्न संख्या के अतिरिक्त कुछ न लिखें।

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उम्मीदवारों को इस हागिए में नहीं लिखना चाहिए।
Candidates must not write on this margin

THERE IS NO PATH TO
HAPPINESS;
HAPPINESS IS THE PATH

There was once a contestant named Jane Marczweski on the reality show 'America's got Talent'. She not only won over the judges with her original song 'It's Okay' but also her chirpy and bubbly personality. Soon, the judges were shocked to know that beneath this radiant exterior was a brave warrior battling terminal cancer. They were even more touched by what she said next — "You can't wait until life isn't hard anymore before you decide to be happy."

ex goodd Counsel

Jane's beautiful statement resonates with the idea that there is no path to happiness; happiness is the path. There are numerous inspiring examples in history who also adopted this attitude. The romantic poet, John Keats,

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Happiness is about love what you do & do what you love =

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kept composing verses celebrating beauty and youth even as he was slowly consumed by tuberculosis. Hellen Keller, despite having all the reasons not to be happy, created history by becoming the first deafblind American to earn a B.A. degree. Their resilience stemmed more from a decision to be happy than an external reason.

Now, what does happiness truly mean? It is generally interpreted as a mental state characterised by positive feelings such as joy and contentment. Happiness can be

categorized into various dimensions: emotional, academic, professional, material, spiritual and moral. Let us now analyze this concept starting from the emotional dimension.

Happiness as an emotion is often affixed to tangible outcomes. With the rise of social media and



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the advent of 'reel culture', there is a tendency to constantly compare our lifestyles with that of others. The habit of exhibitionism creates false needs and a 'fear of missing out', leaving us searching for a path to happiness through some external objects or events. The recent craze around the Coldplay concert in Mumbai reflects this scramble, particularly in the anguished reactions of those unable to get tickets. This pursuit, however, is a futile one that will inevitably lead to disappointment and disillusionment. One has to carve their own path to happiness, by letting go of this illusion of a 'perfect life'. Instead, it would be wiser to rediscover oneself through self-talk, mindfulness and regular acknowledgements of gratitude. Even the smallest things like watching a scenic sunset, reading an

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enriching book and feeding a stray animal can be sources of great happiness.

Speaking of books, the academic dimension of happiness is often seen from a narrow lens today. The joy of learning is overshadowed by the emphasis on ranks, grades and getting ahead of others. Students get disconnected from the outside world in their attempt to succeed in this rat race. They are deluded to believe that the path to happiness is in academic excellence alone. This often leads to tragic outcomes like student suicide, as exemplified by 17 cases in Kota alone (2024), largely among aspirants of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE).

The solution, albeit a difficult one, is in changing the

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prevalent approach towards education. The process of knowledge gathering should be treated with equal importance as the destination, if not more. Extra curricular activities

and value education can also help the students develop a more holistic idea of happiness, as seen in countries like Japan.

As the erstwhile student steps into the professional world, the path to happiness becomes even more elusive. The glorification of the 'hustle culture' leaves people searching for happiness through validation from seniors, promotions and increments. One is often reduced

to a cog in the machine, not knowing where to draw the line amid ever-increasing tasks and incessant deadlines. But where does

this lead? The death of Anna Sebastian, a young employee in the

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Corporate sector, tells a cautionary tale of overwork.

It is important to redefine happiness at the workplace, for joy lies not in finishing an activity but doing it. The employers should strive to create a positive work environment where even minor achievements are celebrated. For example, the firm Hilton celebrates 'Employee Appreciation Week' to express its recognition of workers. Employees themselves can also learn from Bhagavat Greta's idea of "Nishkaam Karma", finding happiness in the learnings offered by a task than its outcomes.

Work is also a means of sustenance, which brings us to the material dimension of happiness. While one's basic needs must be met to live a wholesome

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life, the contemporary culture of consumerism paints a picture of unhealthy acquisitive impulses. Happiness is often misconstrued as the adrenaline rush of purchasing a new product. Soon our closets are crowded with outfits we'll never wear, luxury items we never required and gadgets we don't even know how to use.

While the philosophy of wantlessness is utopian, materialism is also a chimera. As Gandhi Ji said "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed". The recent instance of a professor of IIT Bombay wearing torn socks in a hotel shows that happiness need not depend on what we possess. In fact, the joy of giving often surpasses that of receiving. According to Dalai la : "If



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You want to be happy, practise Compassion."

This brings us to spiritual happiness, which human beings seek by searching for a path to reach God. Ancient philosophies across the world agree that happiness appears to be the momentary flicker of a flame, while pain seems to be continuous. This is reflected in the Buddhist adage "Sabbam Dukkham" (all is suffering). This unhappiness often arises from searching for God in the outside world and disappointment in his absence.

Instead, one can find happiness by realising God in the service of mankind. As the saying goes "Nar Seva hi Narayan Seva."

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Swami Vivekananda's establishment of Ramkrishna Mission and Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity were such endeavours to find spiritual happiness. This is best summed up in Rabindranath Tagore's quote: "I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy."

Despite all these arguments, making happiness itself the path can sometimes be easier said than done. It might create receiver disconnect when said to an individual who cannot even meet his/her basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. Further, there are situations when it is truly difficult to maintain a happy disposition.



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such as the loss of a loved one, a life-threatening injury or dismissal from a job. Happiness then should not become a positivity that is forced upon the sufferer. Pain, too, demands to be felt, and sometimes there is no choice but to feel it.

As the Ramayana says, "Durlabham hi Sada Sukham", i.e. uninterrupted happiness cannot be a reality — rather the alternating cycle of joy and sorrow needs to be embraced.

At the global level, happiness is now a part of research in the form of 'World Happiness Report'. Its findings offer some insightful revelations. Afghanistan is consistently ranked as the world's least happy country due to a

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combination of factors including prolonged conflict, poverty and human rights restrictions, especially for women. On the other hand, Bhutan, despite being a developing country, reports high levels of happiness. It has long emphasized well-being and sustainability alongside economic growth, prioritizing Gross National Happiness (GNH) over GDP since the 1970s. It is thus the perfect illustration of: "Happiness is the path".

All things considered, it can be said that happiness, at least in most cases, is a way of life. As we learn from Jane Marczewski, we can either wait for someone to pour water into the 'half empty' glass or appreciate it.

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for being half-full.
 It is perhaps best to perceive happiness as a flowing river rather than searching for the tantalising particles of gold in its currents. When one reason for happiness is gone, it is upon us to create a new one for ourselves. After all, there are examples such as Dashrath Manjhi, who channelized all his unhappiness after losing his wife to carving a path through a mountain in Bihar. He teaches us to find happiness anew.

Thus, as Nathaniel Hawthorne says, "Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."

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1) Too Complex work!

2) → abstract work up!
(8000 philosophy)

3) → I don't mind philosophy imind
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Complex to sound philosophy!

4) → Stanchy of happiness into
enriched -- spin had --
I could not relate too!

5) Such essay work up are good when
you are in a philosophy conference
work in Essay paper!
Pls keep it simple!

