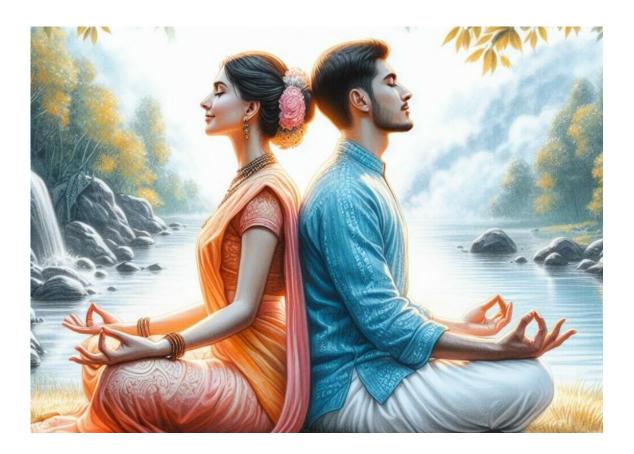
ACHIEVING DEEP HAPPINESS: THE SECRET OF WEALTH AND PROSPERITY

1 February, 2024 by Linden Thorp



You might think of happiness as an elusive emotion, something that comes and goes with the wind. However, a more accurate depiction positions happiness as a state of alignment, where our soul or spirit and our life resonate in perfect harmony. It's when how we feel inside matches the world we navigate through each day. This alignment lets us see clearly, without the haze of discordant desires or forced aspirations clouding our vision.

From a Buddhist standpoint, happiness transcends mere moments of joy. It is a profound realization where all craving ceases and the mind, often compared to a 'wild horse' spooked by negativity and self-doubt, finally comes to rest. This analogy speaks volumes; when self-sincerity becomes our compass, happiness is no longer fleeting but a constant companion.

Some of us seem to be born with this alignment as if there's such a thing as 'happy DNA.' But for many, happiness requires cultivation like a garden - an intentional nurturing of habits and perspectives that encourage growth and well-being. It's not about eternal bliss or uninterrupted contentment; rather, it's engaging with life and self on a deep level that breeds true satisfaction. And self-honesty is key so it is important to know yourself and your true nature - your Higher Self.

The Foundation of Happiness: Process Over Results

Too often, I find people chasing results as their sole means of achieving happiness. They think reaching certain milestones - a promotion, a bigger house, a larger ban balance - another tangible achievement will bring them lasting joy. But happiness isn't just about the results; it's about the process and the journey towards those results.



Consider the common advice to 'stop and smell the roses.' This isn't just about appreciating flowers. It's a metaphor for pausing to appreciate moments in life, an encouragement to find joy in the present rather than postponing it for future accomplishments. When you're fully engaged with the here and now, deeply involved with yourself and your environment, you open the door to bliss.

<u>Mindfulness</u> is key here, as it allows us to break the cycle of negativity that stems from a lack of self-sincerity. By being mindful, you learn to live with intention and engage authentically with your tasks, relationships, and experiences. This approach leads to a sense of happiness that's grounded in the process of living, not just in the milestones you pass.

By focusing on the process, you start to view your life and happiness as an evolving canvas rather than a checklist. This doesn't mean you forget about your goals; it means appreciating the steps you take towards them as much as if not more than, the achievement itself. This mindset lays a strong foundation for happiness that's less susceptible to the ebbs and flows of life's circumstances.

The Foundation of Happiness: Process Over Results

I'm often struck by how many of us chase after happiness as if it's a prize at the end of a race. Yet, what I've come to understand is that happiness is not about sprinting toward a finish line; it's about the rhythm of our steps as we run. The process of living, with all its ebbs and flows, is where true happiness is found. It's not the fleeting moments of achievement, but rather the enduring sense of peace that comes from a life well-lived. Everything you need to accomplish this is right inside you.

One piece of advice I always give is to make time for the present - to 'smell the roses,' so to speak. It's a reminder that when you're totally, blissfully engaged with yourself and what you're doing, happiness naturally flows. This isn't just a throwaway line; it's a practice. But let's get something straight: engaging with yourself isn't just about self-indulgence. It's a sincere dive into what makes you tick, the good and the tough parts.

You might think of the mind as a wild horse, spooked by negativity and a lack of selfsincerity. But when you come to terms with both, and especially when you embrace them, you begin to soothe the horse. You can calm your mind, rein in the <u>negative</u> <u>thoughts</u>, and create space for genuine happiness. This isn't some magic trick; it's about being true to yourself, and it takes practice.

And remember, happiness as a process means giving yourself permission to recognize and accept the full range of emotions. We're not striving for a constant high, but for a balanced state where we can truly say we're at peace with our lives. That is when all the external achievements fade into the background, and the internal victories stand front and centre.

The Path to Enlightened Happiness: Seeing the True Nature of Reality

To march towards enlightened happiness, we look to the profound insight of Buddha, who taught that the greatest happiness unfolds when we perceive the true nature of reality, untouched by the layers of interpretation our minds often place upon it. This is the happiness that comes from the understanding that exceeds our habitual thought patterns and preconceptions.

By training our minds to see beyond these mental constructs, we embark on a transformative journey. This doesn't come easy, as it requires a commitment to practices that peel back the subjective overlays we've formed over our lifetime. It's a form of mental cleansing that aligns our vision with the way things truly are.

Taking guidance from the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, who famously stated that

'Happiness is the meaning and purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence,'

we find alignment between different wisdom traditions. For Aristotle, happiness was achieved through the cultivation of virtue and the fulfilment of one's potential.

The echoes of these teachings resonate with the ideas of modern thinkers like Ayn Rand, who declared,

'Achievement of your happiness is the only moral purpose of your life...it is the proof and the result of your loyalty to the achievement of your values.'

Although her philosophy pivots on individualism and personal strength, it shares a common thread with Buddha and Aristotle: the conception of happiness as an intrinsic part of human existence.

The synergy between viewing reality unclouded by mental constructs and achieving one's values points to a singular truth: happiness is the product of a well-understood and well-lived life. This prepares us to delve into the practical aspects of achieving such a state, particularly as an entrepreneur, in the next section.

Deep Happiness in Entrepreneurship: The Four Stages of Concentration

Embarking on the entrepreneurial journey isn't just about financial gain; it's a pursuit that can lead us to profound happiness. As we dive into our business ventures, we encounter an opportunity for a unique form of bliss that comes through deep concentration. This bliss isn't superficial; it is the result of aligning our actions with our deepest values and can be explained by understanding the four progressive stages of concentration.

In the first stage, we experience bliss when we successfully quiet the mind from distractions and impurities. This is when our thoughts, often scattered or negative, settle into a rhythm while we engage in our work. It's comparable to steering a wild horse away from the fears that spook it. Our tasks, once sources of stress, transform into platforms for joy and satisfaction.

The second stage moves us beyond mere bliss into a state of no mind, where peace is all that exists. In this phase, we are fully absorbed in what we're doing. The chatter of self-doubt, and the anxiety around deadlines, all fade away. We are in a mode of pure creation, and it feels as though our business is an extension of our being.

Following this, we find that the bliss itself starts to dissipate, as stated in the third stage. It's a paradoxical concept: by losing the intense emotions of joy, we gain something far more valuable. The vanishing of bliss signals that we're reaching a profound level of serenity, free from emotional turbulence.

The culmination of this journey is the fourth stage where peace isn't just the absence of unrest; it becomes an encompassing presence. This total peace rejuvenates and allows us to work from a place of clarity and purpose. It's in this final stage where no mind equals deep happiness. Such tranquillity isn't fleeting—it is the foundation upon which sustainable wealth and prosperity are built.

Cultivating Happiness: Achievable Practices for Everyday Life

The quest for happiness shouldn't be viewed as a distant or elusive goal. It's within reach, through the simple yet profound practices we embed into our daily routines. Building on

the foundation of wealth and prosperity, as mentioned in the previous sections, we can develop habits that consistently lead us toward a state of profound contentment.

Practical, everyday actions can have a significant impact on our journey to happiness. Mindful engagement in our tasks, whether they're related to business or personal affairs, allows us to experience joy in the process. Regular reflection on our progress, accomplishments, and even setbacks reminds us of our capacity for growth and helps us appreciate our path.

Integrating these practices into everyday life need not be overwhelming. Start small, with conscious breathing or taking a moment to revel in a job well done. Gradually, these habits become second nature, forming the backbone of a deeply satisfying and happy life.

Ultimately, the richness of our happiness is measured not just by the wealth we accumulate, but by the depth of our spiritual and emotional prosperity. Aristotle and Ayn Rand both recognized that happiness is an end in itself—a reward for the pursuit of our values and a reflection of our innermost selves. This alignment of values and actions fosters an environment where happiness thrives.

Embrace the process. Happiness is more than a fleeting pleasure; it's a profound peace that comes from within, nurtured by our everyday acts of sincerity and pure intention as <u>explore our essence</u>. As we more fully engage with our life's work and passions, we can find that deep, abiding happiness that resonates with the true nature of reality—a happiness that is both our journey and our destination.

