



The Futility of Chasing Happiness

by Jason Birkevold Liem
Leadership & Communication Coach
@MINDtalkCoach

I'm probably not the only one who has noticed recently all of the fluff around the constant and relentless striving for the state of happiness. Perhaps for many this is truly one of the major goals in life. Personally I feel this is an empty and rather vacuous objective.

Of course happiness is a wonderful emotion and is associated with physical and mental well-being as well as longevity. But expending great effort and resources chasing happiness for the sake of happiness is simply an effort of futility. It is akin to thinking you can find meaningful depth in superficiality.

People will spend their days thinking there is something wrong if they are not in a constant state of happiness. Seeing the continuous stream of happy and cheerful faces on our Facebook feed can make it seem like everyone we know is in a constant state of bliss.

Happiness is a natural offshoot when we get the fundamentals of life sorted out - when we feel our lives have meaning. What are these fundamentals?

Psychologists suggest there are three fundamental aspects to a meaningful life. The first is when we feel there is a sense of significance and importance. The second is when we feel there is a point to life - where we take ownership in finding a sense of purpose. The third aspect is when we feel a sense of coherence whereby life seems to make sense to us.

For me this is a continual work-in-progress. I am constantly tweaking, adjusting and recalibrating my life to maintain these fundamentals. As a result of my efforts I'm a relatively happy guy who has his share of shitty days.

I believe each of us has to find our own interpretation of life's meaning by taking personal responsibility in achieving these fundamentals. Then and only then do we find genuine happiness.

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