

Foundations of Happiness



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The main purpose of this research was the extraction of the philosophical and religious foundations of the most important philosophical–religious and psychological subjects which is Happiness, and its difference to Pleasure.

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Happiness is the major concepts of every times and places, and have always been emphasized in different schools by different scholars. It can be investigated from different points of view. Investigation of happiness from the religious, philosophical and psychological viewpoints may be considered as the most important ones; especially the close relationship between religion and philosophy is a very significant matter in this regard.

Paying attention to the factors which have influence on happiness¹ is really considering all virtuous, merits and values and “what’s desirable and worthwhile”.

Those who have recognized these and factors can live happier (Martin, 2006) and this indicates the mighty and magnitude of happiness. It is here that knowledge is truly that cause happiness and so the ways to nurturing it can be discovered.

Happiness is taken from the Greek word ‘Happ’ which means, “Luck or good fortune”². Although there is pleasure in happiness, but happiness is not equal to pleasure, it is much higher than Pleasure; it is a

real, stable and original pleasure which is quite consistent with man's nature. Pleasure is one of the elements of (or subset of) happiness³.

In other words, though there is pleasure in happiness, but happiness is not the same as pleasure. According to Martine (2006) happiness consists of a combination of three distinct elements: pleasure (the emotional sensation of feeling good in the here and now), the absence of displeasure (freedom from unpleasant sensations such as anxiety or pain) and satisfaction (judging, on reflection, that your life is good), thus happiness depends both on feeling (pleasure) and thinking (satisfaction).

Some psychologists and philosophers argue that there is a fourth dimension to happiness, which they variously refer to as 'meaning', 'purpose' or 'virtue'. This embodies the sense that for a life to truly happy it must have some deeper purpose or meaning beyond pleasure or satisfaction. For some people, this fourth dimension means religion, though the fourth dimensions can be included in the other dimensions, especially the element of satisfaction.

Nettle (2005) believes that happiness includes three levels, level one (momentary feelings: joy, pleasure, etc.); level two (judgment about feelings (well-being, satisfaction, etc.); Level three (quality of life: flourishing, fulfilling one's potential, etc.)

Happiness is the overall satisfaction with quality of life⁴. Happiness is being found in, and sometimes identified with, a life of fulfillment – and harmony both within the individual and in that individual's relations with others⁵.

How is it possible for us to reach happiness? It is the most crucial and the important question about happiness which has been put forward regarding happiness through history. If we try to discover the viewpoints in religions and philosophy and psychology, we can achieve a true answer to this question. This causes a common understanding in different societies and among different people which would be much more effective than expressing the differences between different viewpoints.

Researches on psychology of happiness which reveal the similarities between religions, philosophy and psychology, is the other aim of this book. This will probably lead us to this fact that there might be some absolute and true constant standards and criteria for happiness in all times and places, and this also will cause that people not search for happiness from false resources, since all of persons, religions or unreligious because of self-love seek happiness.

Most recent researches concerning happiness and its correlatives have been reported in order that it might be made possible to compare the viewpoints of philosophers and religious Islamic texts with the psychological researches about happiness to reveal and show the similarities of philosophy, religion (Islam), and psychology. This will cause that a general and acceptable framework to be prepared for all people.

Discovering and understanding of the factors that cause happiness can help the people to live happier

and therefore better, to be better individually and socially, and to reach nearer to God and to the aim for which they have been created.

What is really happiness based on? The answer to this question will determine the correlatives of happiness or the effective factors which determine the individuals' happiness. This is all that is meant by the word "foundation" in this book. In other words, foundations of happiness answer these questions: what is happiness? What is the difference between happiness and pleasure? What things cause happiness? Is it possible to reach happiness in this world?

It is also meant by the combination "religious, philosophical and psychological foundations of happiness" in this book those answers that religions, e.g. Islam and in this research, philosophers and psychologists give to these questions.

Divine religions can have a philosophical origin. Therefore, many philosophical reasons can be put forward for the interpretation and justification of religious problems. Thus, there is a very close relationship between philosophy and religion, and then one might expect many similarities between philosophy and religion.

Since these two, in turn, are based upon thinking and cognition, it is quite reasonable that their teachings be consistent with scientific and empirical researches. That's the reason why the main purpose of this research was the extraction of the philosophical and religious foundations of one of the most important philosophical–religious and psychological subjects i.e. happiness.

Although "psychology" can be considered as a sub–set of philosophy, but since it is considered today as a separate and independent discipline, happiness can also be considered as a psychological topic, and many researches have been done regarding happiness in psychology, therefore the main goal of this research is to extract the philosophers, psychologists and religion's (Islam's) view of happiness. Much emphasis is placed on inferring the shared philosophical, religious and psychological foundations.

Non–Muslim and non–Iranian, & Muslim and Iranian, ancient or modern philosophers, were chosen who had some views of happiness and their views and character are reason or proof or all of the worldlings. The major purpose of doing this, was to reach a shared and common model and frame for happiness, or those things that can cause people to reach happiness, which is acceptable for various people of the world today, especially when these philosophical and religious views are compared with the most recent researches.

1. White, 2006.
2. Martin, 2006.
3. Martin, 2006 & Black Burn 2005.
4. Veenhoven, 1996; cited from Hartog and Oosterbeek, 1996.
5. Mackinnon; quoted from Macquarrie and Chidress , 2001.

Cognition of the word

We should know the world as it is. An easy life is the result of the cognition of the world. The Prophet of Islam said that if you knew of the world what I know, your souls would feel complacency from it. He also said in his prayers, “O God! Show the being and universe to me as it is.”

Also, Imam Ali said that everyone who knows the world, will not grieve from it. He does not say the world is full of pleasures; rather, he says that if your knowledge and cognition of the world is real, despite its hardships and in spite of confessing to them, we will not sorrow. Imam Husayn, in the hardest moments of Ashura, said, “O my lord I forbear on Your Decree,” and the more he became closer to death (martyrdom), the more he became happy. Thus, grief and stress due to hardships are rooted in unawareness.

Unawareness causes dissatisfaction, and dissatisfaction causes sorrow and grief. The Prophet of Islam said that God has verily placed, through his wisdom and bounty, welfare and happiness in certitude and satisfaction, and grief in doubt and dissatisfaction. In addition, Imam Ali said that certitude is the best remover of sorrow¹.

A great part of life’s hardship is because of our own stringency, and not for real problems of life. Therefore, we should search for tranquility of life in ourselves and search for it in internal factors. Imam Kadhimi says to take life easy, because God made life pleasant for those people who take it easy. Also, Imam Ali says in this regard, “I investigated and searched through life, and I did not see it save in leaving carnal desires. Therefore, leave these desires so that your life might become delightful”².

The Prophet of Islam says that wisdom comes down from the sky, but it does not come down to the hearths where the tomorrow’s grief is. The Prophet of Islam says that God has placed, because of his wisdom and bounty, welfare and happiness in certitude and satisfaction, and sorrow and grief in doubt and anger.

Philosophy and wisdom sprung from the cognition of the world can bring humans to an admirable position in which they see the universe and its events as they are. They see as beautiful only those things that are beautiful, and they see as ugly only those things that are ugly. They enjoy the good and hate the bad. Therefore, they see no obscenity in what God has created and has brought up because God is:

الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ

“Who has created all things well” (Holy Quran, 32: 7).

There are three essential concepts, each of which is the prerequisite of the next; these are knowledge, attitude, and behavior. The improvement in knowledge should lead to an improvement in attitude, and improvement in attitude should lead to an improvement in behavior. Therefore, a person who has a comprehensive personality and has the above concepts in himself or herself will be more likely to achieve happiness.

Knowledge

The Prophet of Islam said that (real and spiritual) knowledge is a light that God places in the hearts of those He likes. It is evident that it is a heart that deserves such knowledge.

The Prophet of Islam says that if I spend a day in which I do not learn something that makes me nearer to God, may the sunrise of that day not be blessed to me. He also says, “If one person is guided by you, it would be better for you than all the world.

Knowledge, beatitude, and goodness can bring humans to happiness; i.e., if we plan to increase our knowledge and cognition, to get more attached to art and beautiful nature, and to try to be more helpful with people, it will be possible for us to live more happily. There is also an interaction and interrelationship between the above three important key words; an increase in any of them causes an increase in the others.

According to Imam Ali, “thought” (a correct thinking) leads to happiness: “People! Think well, and observe with insight and take lessons and accept admonitions and take the necessary supplies for the hereafter so that you might attain happiness.” In addition, Imam Hasan introduces “thought” as the root of all virtues or goodness.

The Prophet of Islam believes that knowledge or cognition is a way to Paradise, and Imam Ali introduces knowledge as the peak of all virtues³.

The following statement is the expressive language of aware, good, and pious persons: “O God! How can I thank you that Thou taught me not to pass indifferently and unresponsively by the side of the beauty of a flower, freshness of a bloom, flourish of a bud and tenderness of a breeze.”

According to the Prophet of Islam, if the friends of God are silent, their silence is spent thinking, and if they speak, their talk is remembrance (of God and spirituality).

There are many Islamic traditions and Qur’anic verses that indicate the importance of due silence, thought, night, and tears. There are many spiritual positions and tranquilities that are attained only through the understanding of the above factors.

The Prophet of Islam introduces “silence” as the first worship⁴. Imam Ali introduces talking for a long time as a calamity and states that a long speech really makes listeners tired⁵. According to Imam Ali,

“thinking” grows and is increased in the light of such silence, and silence is the garden and cultivation place of man’s thinking. The Qur’an says regarding the silence sprung from cognition,

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

“When they hear what has been sent down to the messenger, thou seest their eyes overflow with tears because of truth they recognize. They say our Lord, we believe; so do Thou write us down among the witnesses” (Holy Quran, 5: 83)

Night is one of the best opportunities for silence, thinking, and spiritual tears. The Qur’an says in this regard,

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

“As for the night, keep vigil a part of it, as a work of supererogation for thee; it may be that thy Lord will raise thee up to a laudable station” (Holy Quran, 17: 79)

Thus, the Prophet of Islam is commanded from God to:

قُمِ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا نَّصَفَهُ أَوْ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْئًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا

“Keep vigil the night, except a little, a half of it, or diminish a little, or add a little, and chant the Koran very distinctly. Behold, we shall cast upon thee a weighty word. Surely the first part of the night is heavier in tread, more upright in speech” (Holy Quran, 73: 2-6)

Pain and Endurance

It is of the most basic and fundamental religious beliefs that the world flows on the basis of divine wisdom, and there is not even one phenomenon or event that has no reason. Thus, it is important for us to know wisdom and expediencies of events. A good life is not a life that is full of pleasures and without pain; rather, a good life is a meaningful life. Therefore, meaningful pain cannot make the aware persons annoyed. The Prophet of Islam said, “No prophet was annoyed like me,” and he still endured and saw the good results of his endurance and patience. These are some of the reasons why the Qur’an says:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ

“Indeed, We created man in trouble” (Holy Quran, 90: 4)

And:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ

“who created death and life, that he might try you which of you is fairest in works, and he is the All-mighty, the All-forgiving” (Holy Quran, 67:2)

Another verse says:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ
وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

“Surely We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and diminution of goods and lives and fruits, yet give thou good tidings unto the patient” (Holy Quran,2: 155)⁶

We will surely face pain and difficulties. According to Imam Ali, the world “is a house surrounded by calamities and well-known for deceitfulness. Its conditions do not last and those who inhabit it do not remain safe”⁷.

If we know these facts and come to know that all these difficulties and pains can surely lead to our perfection, we will not suffer from such problems but the problems will lead to our happiness. If we believe that we will definitely face such problems as fear, hunger, decline in wealth, etc., in this world, then we will surely suffer less from stress, and we will enjoy more mental health. Therefore, we must change our attitudes toward the world and its problems so that we might attain a position in which we see no pain and difficulty, and all that we want will be done because in such a position we only want what God wants, and what God wants will be done.

A believer in one God knows that all the events of the world are meaningful and goal-oriented, not accidental. The Qur’an teaches us that:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا

وَأَبَشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ
وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدْعُونَ نَزَّلْنَا مِنْ غَفُورٍ رَحِيمٍ

“those who have said our Lord is God then have gone straight, upon them the angles descend, saying, Fear not, neither sorrow; rejoice in Paradise that you were promised. We are your friends in the present life and in the world to come; therein you shall have all that your souls desire, all that you call for, as hospitality from one All-forgiving, All-compassionate” (Holy Quran, 41: 30-32)

And the Qur’an also emphasizes the fact that:

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

“surely, God’s friends—no fear shall be on them, nor shall they sorrow. Those who believe, and are god fearing, for them is good tidings in the present life and in the world to come” (Holy Quran, 10: 62)

It adds:

وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۗ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Yet it may happen that you will hate a thing which is better for you, and it may happen that you will love a thing which is worse for you. God knows, and you know not” (Holy Quran, 2: 216)

And:

فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

“it is possible you may be averse to a thing, and God set in it much good” (Holy Quran, 4: 19)

The first symptom of spiritual disorders is to grieve for those things that do not deserve grief.

Asceticism

One of the ways in which humans can achieve happiness is asceticism. The real meaning of asceticism is “not wanting,” not “not having”; real asceticism does not want worldly things to the extent that one becomes so attached to them that he becomes somewhat indifferent to God. Imam Ali says that all asceticism from the viewpoint of the Qur’an has been summarized in this verse:

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ

“that you may not grieve for what escapes you, nor rejoice in what has come to you” (Holy Quran, 57: 23)

Imam Ali says that the fruit of asceticism is peace of mind; he also introduces asceticism as the great comfort. The Prophet of Islam deems asceticism as the cause of comfort of spirit and body⁸.

The Prophet of Islam introduces the affluence of the soul as the real affluence and enrichment. Some people think they should get more possibilities, facilities, and income for their lives to be happier. Such an attitude causes them to try to get more of such things. This state, in turn, makes them become greedy and avaricious. The greedier people become, the more they distance themselves from happiness and tranquility. A greedy person is considered a deprived one. Imam Sadiq says that a greedy person is deprived of contentment, and then he is affected with inconvenience; deprived of satisfaction, he then loses his certitude. Imam Ali says that a greedy person is never seen resting, and Imam Ali also orders people to act with dignity in acquisition of sustenance.

On the other hand, a miserly person, according to Imam Ali, increases his stress, and according to the Prophet of Islam, a stingy person has the least comfort⁹.

As for wealth and worldly things, Imam Sajjad says that there is no one who required a little of the worldly, unless he or she becomes greedy for it. Everyone who obtains more from the world becomes needier. There is no tranquility and comfort in the wealth of the world, but Satan tempts human beings that their restfulness is in gathering wealth and through this leads them to more pain¹⁰. The Prophet of Islam says that whosoever doesn’t desist from staring at people’s wealth will experience lasting grief¹¹. According to the Prophet of Islam, extreme interest in this world increases one’s grief, and piety and asceticism, causes tranquility of health and body.

The Prophet of Islam says that for one who is satisfied with the livelihood (sufficiency) level in life, the least level of life will be sufficient for him. He also says that extreme interest in the world increases grief, and asceticism to the world causes tranquility of the body and heart. The Prophet of Islam believes that those staring at other people’s wealth will always be annoyed, and the fire of anger will never abate from

their hearts.

The Qur'an complains of some people and says:

أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ آيَةً تَعْبَثُونَ وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ

“What, do you build on every prominence a sign, sporting, and do you take to you castles, haply to dwell forever?” (Holy Quran, 26: 128–129)

In addition, the Prophet of Islam says that some people build that which they do not inhabit and gather that which they do not eat¹².

If someone compares himself with those whose worldly things such as money, etc., are better than his, this will cause grief and sorrow in him. The Qur'an says:

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ ۗ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

“so he (Korah) went unto his people in his adornment. Those who desired the present life said, ‘Would that we possessed the like of that Korah has been given: surely he is a man of mighty fortune.’” (Holy Quran, 28: 79)

Therefore, God orders his prophet:

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۗ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ

“Stretch not thin eyes to that we have given pairs of them to enjoy—the flower of the present life, that We may try them therein, and thy Lord’s provision is better, and more enduring” (Holy Quran, 20: 131)

Imam Sadiq says in this regard that everyone who stares at whatever is in the hands of the worldly persons will have lasting grief, and the Prophet of Islam says that the sorrow of such a person will increase¹³.

Faith and Belief in God

Faith and belief in God can be considered as one of the causes of happiness. The Qur'an says in this regard:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ

“Those who believe, and have not confounded their belief with evildoing—to them belongs the true security; they are rightly guided” (Holy Quran, 6: 82)¹⁴.

Imam Ali emphasizes that real believers receive happiness when guided. The word “faith” in Islam (Iman) is taken from “Amn,” which means “secure, safe, tranquility” All of these words denote the close relationship between “faith” and “happiness.” But it should be noted that a kind of faith can lead to happiness that is based on knowledge and cognition of God and all human beings, the world, death, and hereafter. Therefore, the belief of those believers can be acceptable when it is founded on a great insight. That is the reason that the Prophet of Islam orders us to fear God and enlighten our hearts with the light of “faith” so that we might fear no one and nothing save the One God.

Imam Ali says, “Opportunity passes away like the cloud; therefore, make use of good opportunities¹⁵. Thus, losing such a valuable opportunity will cause sorrow and loss. The Qur'an says,

وَالْعَصْرِ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

“By the afternoon! Surely Man is in the way of loss, save those who believe, and do righteous deeds, and counsel each other unto the truth, and counsel each to be steadfast” (Holy Quran, 103: 1-3)

The Prophet of Islam says that the one whose intimate is God will not fear. And Imam Ali says, “Who is there to go towards God like the thirsty going to the water?”¹⁶.

Supplication and prayer of good bondsmen of God remove grief from them. We should put our trust in God, i.e., consign all of our works and life to Him, and then we should do our duty and make efforts as far as is possible for us or consistent with those powers and abilities that God has given us, and finally we should be quite satisfied with those things that occur. These three golden key words can actually lead us to happiness: trust in God, effort, and satisfaction.

Remembrance of God and His Verses

One of the original needs of all human beings is to be with God. God blew His spirit into man; thus, if man is not connected to God, he will not enjoy a happy life. The Qur'an says:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

“Those who believe, their hearts being at rest in God’s remembrance, in God’s remembrance are at rest the hearts” (Holy Quran, 13: 28)

And:

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى

“Whosoever turns away from My remembrance, his shall be a life of narrowness” (Holy Quran, 20: 124) 17.

The Prophet of Islam emphasizes and tells us to associate with someone whose visit causes remembrance of God: his tongue should increase your knowledge, and his morality and deeds should make you anxious and interested in the hereafter.

It should be remembered here that the remembrance of God, according to the Qur'an, causes the rest and tranquility of man's hearts. According to Imam Ali, the happiest persons are those whose hearts and souls wish to worship and obey God¹⁸.

One of the factors of happiness is the remembrance of God. According to the Prophet of Islam, the delight of believers in the world is the remembrance of God, their affection for Him, and acquiring His satisfaction. According to Imam Sajjad, “Through Thy remembrance, is alive my heart”¹⁹.

The Prophet of Islam says that remembrance of death, reading the Qur'an, remembrance of God, and wisdom cause the inner happiness of humans.

God describes the Qur'an as “cure and mercy”:

وَنَزَّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۗ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

“And we send down, of the Koran, that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers; and the unbelievers it increases not, except in loss” (Holy Quran, 17: 82)

And according to Imam Ali, one should “learn the Qur’an for it is the fairest of discourse and understand it thoroughly for it is the best blossoming of hearts. Seek cure with its light for it is the cure for hearts. Recite it beautifully for it is the most beautiful narration”²⁰.

He adds in another part of Nahjul Balagah, “Know that this Qur’an is an adviser who never deceives, a leader who never misleads and a narrator who never speaks a lie. No one will sit beside this Qur’an but that when he rises he will achieve one addition or one diminution—addition in his guidance and elimination in his (spiritual) blindness²¹.

And the Prophet of Islam introduced God as a (spiritual) physician. Imam Ali calls the prophet a physician. Imam Ali, in the pray of Kumail, considers God as the source whose Name is healing and His remembrance is treatment.

Worshipping God

Prayer and worship of God can remove sorrow and cause happiness. Imam Sadiq recommends that when a worldly grief overcomes someone, he should perform ablution, go into a mosque, and pray to God²².

The ultimate goal of man’s creation is submission to God:

مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا

“I have not created Jinn and mankind except to serve me” (Holy Quran, 51: 57)

But those who can achieve such a position as to obtain the necessary knowledge for cognition of God. Because it is impossible to worship God without knowing Him. On the other hand, how is it possible that a person knows God as deserves and does not love Him? In such a case, for the one who knows and loves God, God’s remembrance will cause a sacred tranquility and happiness in him, as the Qur’an says:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

“In God’s remembrance are at rest the hearts” (Holy Quran, 13: 28)

It is regarding such a status that Imam Sajjad says, “My God, who can have tasted the sweetness of Thy love, then wanted another in place of Thee? Who can have become intimate with Thy nearness, then sought removal from Thee?” (The Whispered prayer of the Lovers).

The Prophet of Islam considers the happiness of the believers in meeting with friends, the time of breaking a fast, and worship in the last hours of night.

So much is certain that Adam had a joyful life when he lived in Paradise. But when God ordered him and Eve:

وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“Draw not nigh this tree, lest you be evildoers” (Holy Quran, 2: 35)

And they did not obey, God commanded them:

أَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ ۗ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
عَدُوٌّ ۗ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ

“Get you all down, each of you an enemy of each; and in earth a sojourn shall be yours and enjoyment for a time” (Holy Quran, 2: 36)

Therefore, they entered the earth. Man’s grief started in the separation from paradise and God because man did not feel harmony with this world and worldly materials.

We should only grieve when we are not acting towards achieving the goals for which we have been created, e.g., when we are not a good person, when we do not help others, etc. The Qur’an introduces God’s bounty as the cause of happiness and something that is better than worldly things:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ

“Say: in the Bounty of God—and His mercy—in that let them rejoice, it is better than that they amass” (Holy Quran, 10: 58)

Friendship

Loneliness makes one annoyed. Man likes to be with others and communicate with them. This is an emotional need. Friends can save man from loneliness and make him happy. The happiness of having friends occurs when one can find a friend who is similar to him or her. Imam Sadiq says that one can find his restfulness in his believer brother. On the other hand, one should find an analogous friend for herself or himself, and she or he should keep away from bad persons as far as possible. According to Imam Ali, having little communication with such persons is the cause of keeping one's religion and frees man from nearness to the rebels.

One of the factors of human happiness is having a good spouse. According to the Qur'an:

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُبْلِسُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ

“Of his signs is that He created for you, of yourselves, spouses that you might repose in them, and he has set between you love and mercy. Surely in that are signs for people who consider”
(Holy Quran, 30: 12)

Also,

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا

“It is He who created you out of one living soul, and made of him his spouse that he might rest in her” (Holy Quran, 7: 189)

Happiness is in spouses when there is friendship (love) and mercy between them. In addition, happiness is in having good children, according to the Prophet of Islam²³. The word “man” or “human being” (Insan) in Arabic is taken from “Ons,” which means “affinity.” Some etymologists believe that the origin of the meaning is that affluence, beauty, and affinity in the earth is possible only in the light of the existence of human beings, while other etymologists say that it is because man's life is possible without affinity with others. And some say that it is because he is a manifestation of God's names and these are attuned with him. Some etymologists believe that word is taken from the word “nesyan,” which means “forgetfulness.” As the Qur'an says:

وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ آدَمَ مِنْ قَبْلِ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا

***“And we made covenant with Adam before, but he forgot, and we found in him no constancy”
(Holy Quran, 20: 115)***

It can be concluded from these facts that man should first be the cause of happiness. Second, man’s happiness is obtained through being with other human beings and through being with God; forgetting God causes grief in him.

The Qur’an says regarding some (bad) people:

تَحْسِبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّى ۚ

“You think of them as a host; but their hearts are scattered” (Holy Quran, 59: 14)

And Imam Ali says in this regard,

“You are brethren in the religion of God. Dirty nature and bad conscience have separated you. Consequently, you do not bear burdens of each other nor advise each other. What is your condition? You feel satisfied with what little you have secured from this world while much of the next world of which you have been deprived does not grieve you. The little of this world which you lose pains you so much so that it becomes apparent in your faces, and in the lack of your endurance over whatever is taken away from you”²⁴.

One of the reasons for this is egoism, while affection causes the selfishness to be removed. According to Imam Ja’far Sadiq, the reason for affection towards others is the selection of and preferring the beloved to others. According to the Prophet of Islam, God is the friend of the one who loves him. According to him, the happiest people are those who have relations with good and great individuals. Imam Ali orders us to be with scholars so that we might achieve happiness²⁵.

The Prophet of Islam believes that visiting religious brothers causes happiness²⁶.

Goodness and Helping Others

The Prophet of Islam says of the one who solves a problem of the believers that God will solve 72 of his problems in the world and in the hereafter. According to Imam Sadiq, “Make your (religious) brother happy, so that God would make you happy”²⁷.

The Prophet of Islam said that whosoever wishes his prayer to be heard and his grief to be removed should remove the difficulties of one who has confronted a problem²⁸. One of the factors in removing sorrow and attaining happiness is to pray. The Qur’an says:

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ ۗ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“And Jonah (Dhal-Nun)—when he went forth enraged and thought that we should have no power over him; then he called out in the darkness, ‘There is no god but thou; Glory be to Thee! I have done evil.’ So We answered him, and delivered him out of grief, even so do we deliver the believers” (Holy Quran,21::87-88)29.

Imam Ali recommends that we remove grief and sorrow from ourselves by giving alms³⁰. The Prophet of Islam considers friendship towards the poor as a divine gift, saying to Imam Ali, “God has verily bestowed upon ye the love of the distressed and the poor.” The prophet introduces the best of persons who are more useful for the people.

The Prophet of Islam says that there is a home in the paradise, which is called “house of happiness”; no one enters it except the one who has made the orphans happy. He also says that whosoever causes happiness in a believer has made him happy, and the one who makes him happy has truly made God happy. The Prophet of Islam also says that for whoever removes a disaster from the world from a believer, God will surely remove seventeen disasters from him in the hereafter.

He introduces the best works before God, satisfying a poor man by paying his or her debt or removing a grief from him or her. He also says the best people are the ones we can hope expect and goodness from them and be relieved of their evils. He adds that one who wishes his prayers to be heard and granted and his sorrow to be removed should solve the problems of a poor person. The Prophet of Islam introduces showing kindness toward orphans and paying attention to the poor and distressed as some factors that cause happiness in the hereafter.

We should ask ourselves to what extent we have acted for tranquility of others that we can expect to have tranquility.

The Prophet of Islam asked a person about his feelings toward the believers. He answered that he knows them as himself; what makes them annoyed makes him annoyed, too; and what makes them happy, makes him happy, too. The Prophet of Islam says, “You are the friend of God; none of creatures benefits as you, unless one who is like you. Your success is higher than those who have capital such as wealth, etc. I announce that you are of the wealthy people.” The Prophet of Islam says that loving others for the sake of God is considered as the firmest hold of “faith.”

The Qur’an considers doing “goodness” as one of the factors of happiness in man’s life:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَعِبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَأَفْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“O men, bow you down and prostrate yourselves, and serve your Lord, and do good; haply so you shall prosper” (Holy Quran, 22: 77)

The Qur’an even says that inviting other people to “goodness” can lead to happiness:

وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“Let there be one nation of you, calling to good, and bidding to honor, and forbidding dishonor; those are the prosperers” (Holy Quran, 3: 104)

The Qur’an also says:

فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ

“Be you forward in good works” (Holy Quran, 2: 148)³¹.

Security

Happiness is impossible without security. Imam Ali says that every happiness needs security. The Qur’an refers to the bounty of security in many of its verses:

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ

“So let them serve the Lord of this House, who has fed them against hunger and secured them from fear” (Holy Quran, 106: 3- 4)

God even introduces security as an introduction and background for worship:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ

خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُم
الْفَاسِقُونَ

“God has promised those of you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely make you successors in the land, even as He made those who were before them successors and that He will surely establish their religion for them that He has approved for them, and will give them in exchange, after their fear, security. They shall serve Me, not associating with Me anything. Whoso disbelieves after that, those—they are the ungodly” (Holy Quran, 24: 55)

And it was based on this fact that Abraham when reestablishing Ka’bah, said:

رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ

“My Lord, make this a land secure, and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in God and the last Day” (Holy Quran, 2: 126)³².

Sleep

Since working is one of the factors of happiness, while on the other hand continuous working and effort makes one tired, we need enough sleep, which is in itself one of the other factors of happiness. The Qur’an says:

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا

“We appointed your sleep for a rest” (Holy Quran, 78: 9)

And:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا

“It is He who appointed the night for you to be a garment and sleep for a rest, and day He appointed for a rising” (Holy Quran, 25: 47)

In some verses of the Qur'an, God refers to night as one of the causes of man's tranquility:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا

"It is He who made for you the night to repose in it, and the day, to see" (Holy Quran, 10: 67)

And:

فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ۚ ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ
الْعَلِيمِ

"He splits the sky into dawn, and has made the night for a repose, and the sun and moon for a reckoning" (Holy Quran, 6: 96)³³.

Work

One of the factors of man's life is to work. Imam Sadiq says that if all humans' needs were satisfied, life would not be delightful for them, and they would not enjoy it. Then he adds that the best tact for what has been created for human beings is in the fact that there is a place or position for their efforts so that unemployment might not make them annoyed³⁴.

Health

One of the important factors of happiness is health. All pleasures of life are meaningless unless one is healthy. Imam Ali says that there is no goodness in life save with health. He also believes that through health, life pleasures are understandable. According to him, health is the highest bounty, and no other pleasures are more delightful³⁵.

Humor

The other factor of happiness is humor. The Prophet of Islam considers humor as one of the characteristics of the believers, and he himself was on familiar terms with humor and made himself and others happy. According to Imam Ali, man makes his soul restful in the light of humor³⁶.

Travel

According to Imam Ali, travel can remove grief from people³⁷. In addition to this, the Qur'an mentions the following benefits of travel:

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ [؟]

“Have they not journeyed in the land? Have they not beheld how the end of those before them was?” (Holy Quran, 12: 109)

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا

“What have not journeyed in the land so that they have hearts to understand with or ears to hear with?” (Holy Quran,22: 46)

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ

“Diverse institutions have passed away before you; journey in the land, and behold how was the end of those that cried lies” (Holy Quran, 3: 137)

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

“Say: journey in the land, then behold how the end of the sinners was” (Holy Quran,27: 69)

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ

“Journey in the land, then behold how was the end of those that were before” (Holy Quran, 30: 42)

1. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 23–27.
2. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 137–139.
3. Tayyebi & Moeenoleslam, 2004, p. 67.
4. Cited in Mohammadi Rey Shahri, 1993, vol. 5, p. 433.

5. Aas cited in Barumand, 2001.
6. cited in Pasandideh, 2007, p. 280–290.
7. Nahjul Balagah – sermon 226.
8. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 48–49.
9. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 71–79.
10. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 242.
11. Loqmani, 2006, p. 200.
12. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 167–168.
13. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 100, 107.
14. cited in Akbari, 2006, p. 177.
15. Nahjul Balagah – Saying 21.
16. Nahjul Balagah – sermon 124.
17. cited in Pasandideh, 2007, p. 215– 219.
18. Tayyebi & Moeenoleslam, 2004, p. 144.
19. Akbari, 2006, p. 49.
20. Nahjul Balagah – sermon 110
21. Nahjul Balagah – sermon 176
22. Akbari, 2006, p. 189.
23. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 203–204; 210.
24. Nahjul Balagah – sermon 113
25. Tayyebi & Moeenoleslam, 2004, p. 146–147.
26. Akbari, 2006, p. 47.
27. Akbari, 2006, p. 123– 126.
28. Akbari, 2006, p. 189.
29. cited in ibid, p. 197.
30. Akbari, 2006, p. 201.
31. cited in Loqmani, 2006, p. 49.
32. cited in Pasandideh, 2007, p. 173–175.
33. cited in Pasandideh, 2007, p. 179–180.
34. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 150–151.
35. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 177–178.
36. Pasandideh, 2007, p. 182–184.
37. Akbari, 2006, p. 184–185.

It appears that we can hardly find any philosophers who have not spoken of happiness. It indicates the close relationship between philosophy and happiness. Some of philosophers have written much about happiness, and some less. Investigating the details of their theories regarding happiness is impossible here, especially considering the fact that the main purpose of this book has been description of the correlatives of happiness and those factors (religious, philosophical and psychological) that cause humans to reach happiness.

We have divided here the philosophers' viewpoints concerning happiness into two categories: non-Muslim and non-Iranian philosophers & Muslim and Iranian philosophers.

Non-Muslim and Non-Iranian Philosophers

Philosophical discussion of the concept of 'happiness' has tended to be found mainly within moral philosophy. It is associated especially with the classical utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. The utilitarians assert that happiness is as a matter of fact the ultimate aim at which all human actions are directed and that it is therefore the ultimate standard by which to judge the rightness or wrongness of actions. 'Actions are right', says Mill, 'in proportion as they tend to promote happiness'—that is to say, 'the general happiness', the happiness of all concerned.

Still following Bentham, Mill goes on to equate happiness with 'pleasure and the absence of pain'. For Bentham the identity of 'happiness' and 'pleasure' is quite straightforward. An action's tendency to promote happiness is determined simply by adding up the amounts of pleasure. And subtracting the amounts of pain, which it will produce. It is a matter solely of quantitative factors such as the intensity and the duration of the pleasurable and painful feelings.

Mill is aware that this is altogether too crude. Happiness, he acknowledges, depends not only on the quantity but also on the quality of pleasures. Human beings, because of the distinctively human capacities, they possess, require more to make them happy than the accumulation of pleasurable sensations. They are made happy not by the 'lower pleasures' but by the 'higher pleasures'—'the pleasures of the intellect, of the feeling and imagination, and of the moral sentiments'.

Mill departs still further from the purely quantitative notion of happiness when he recognizes that it is not just a sum of unrelated experiences but also an ordered whole. To say that human beings aim at happiness is not to deny that they pursue more specific goals such as knowledge or artistic and cultural activity or moral goodness, and that they pursue these things for their own sake. These are some of the 'ingredients' which go to make up a life of happiness.

Mill is here attempting, perhaps unsuccessfully, to combine two traditions of thought about 'happiness'. The identification of 'happiness' with 'pleasure' we may call the 'hedonistic' conception of happiness. This we may contrast with what has been called the 'eudaimonistic' conception of happiness. The term comes from the Greek word 'eudaimonia', which is usually translated as 'happiness'. Although one of the Greek philosophical schools, Epicureanism, did identify eudaimonia with pleasure.

The Greek concept lends itself less easily than the English term to this identification. In English one can speak of 'feeling happy', and although the relation between such states of feeling and a life of happiness is not entirely clear, they are undoubtedly connected—one could not be said to have a happy life if one never felt happy. The term eudaimonia refers not so much to a psychological state as to the objective character of a person's life.

The classic account of eudaimonia is given by Aristotle. He emphasizes that it has to do with the quality of one's life as a whole; indeed, he sees some plausibility in the traditional aphorism 'call no man happy

until he is dead' (though he also recognizes that there is little plausibility in calling someone happy after he is dead). For Aristotle happiness is to be identified above all with the fulfillment of one's distinctively human potentialities. These are located in the exercise of reason, in both its practical and its theoretical form. Aristotle is thus the ancestor of one stand in Mill, and of that general conception of 'happiness' which links it with ideas of 'fulfillment' and 'self-realization'¹.

All ethical theories accord some importance to human happiness. They differ first in their conception of what that happiness consists in, secondly in views of how an agent's own personal happiness is aligned with, or traded against, the general happiness, and thirdly in whether it is necessary to acknowledge any other end for human action. The simplest doctrine is that happiness is itself quite straightforward, consisting for example in occasions of pleasure; that agents only do seek or ought to seek their own happiness; and that there is no other possible or desirable end of action. The Cyrenaica may have held a doctrine along these lines. Complexity arises with more subtle conceptions of the nature of happiness. Finally, theories of ethics that are not consequentialist in nature may recognize other ethically important features of action than those arising from the goal of maximizing either personal or social happiness².

In ordinary use, the word 'happiness' has to do with one's situation (one is fortunate) or with one's state of mind (one is glad, cheerful) or, typically, with both. These two elements appear in different proportions on different occasions. If one is concerned with a long stretch of time (as in 'a happy life'), one is likely to focus more on situation than on state of mind. In a short period of time, it is not uncommon to focus on states of mind.

By and large philosophers are more interested in long-term cases. One's life is happy if one is content that life has brought one, much of what one regards as important. There is a pull in these lifetime assessments towards a person's objective situation and away from the person's subjective responses. The important notion for ethics is 'wellbeing' – that is, a notion of what makes an individual life go well. 'Happiness' is important because many philosophers have thought that happiness is the only thing that contributes to wellbeing, or because they have used 'happiness' to mean the same as 'wellbeing'.

What, then, makes a life go well? Some have thought that it was the presence of a positive feeling tone. Others have thought that it was having one's desires fulfilled – either actual desires (as some would say) or informed desires (as others would say). It is unclear how stringent the requirement of 'informed' must be; if it is fairly stringent it can, in effect, require abandoning desire explanations and adopting instead an explanation in terms of a list of good-making features in human life³.

The distinction between happiness and pleasure is frequently blurred. In ordinary Language happiness is frequently used to indicate a more stable, less intense state than pleasure. Yet one could hardly predicate happiness of a life that was altogether without pleasure. While those teleological moralists who have favored utilitarian conceptions of moral obligation have (apart from the late Professor G. E. Moore and his followers) usually adopted a hedonist conception of the end of moral action, those moralists who have combined teleological ideas with the rejection of utilitarianism have inclined to speak of a happy life

as the end of human beings, happiness being found in, and sometimes identified with, a life of fulfillment and harmony both within the individual's relations with others.

In much contemporary thinking about ethics the notion of happiness is frequently invoked in criticism of moral conceptions which exalt such ideas as duty, obedience to superiors and established traditions, heroic engagement, and even commitment, and at least by implication deprecate the significance of the individual's concern for his or her own and others' welfare. Against such views (not without their representatives among avant-grade theologians), the importance of happiness as an unsophisticated, but comprehensive, human end receives justified and intelligible emphasis⁴.

Thomas Jefferson famously wrote in the Declaration of Independence that every human being has the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." For Americans, this pursuit of happiness has been more than just an abstract right. It has also been the concrete inspiration for many millions— among them immigrants, pioneers, entrepreneurs and industrialists— to follow the American dream.

In *The Varieties of religious Experience*, William James wrote, "How to gain, how to keep, how to recover happiness, is in fact for most men at all times the secret motive of all they do, and of all they are willing to endure." What is the happiness that motivates so many? Is it a good thing to pursue? Is it something that can ever be caught?

A look at the evolution of the meaning of the term "happiness" in Western intellectual history puts these questions in a helpful, broader perspective. Happiness was originally understood as a product of chance. Etymologically, the English word derives from the Old Norse *happ*, which means "luck" or "fortune." This etymological connection between happiness and luck occurs in virtually every Indo-European Language⁵.

Socrates and subsequent ancient philosophers argued that happiness is at least partly a function of human choice. By volitionally cultivating virtue, we can develop a character that is more conducive to happiness. The cultivation of virtue requires the development of good habits of thought and action.

With the rise of Christianity, the emphasis remained on the cultivation of virtue, but the means for its cultivation and its expected results changed tremendously. For Christians, Virtue was something that could be achieved only with divine help. And a virtuous life was no guarantee of earthly happiness, but rather a pathway to happiness in the afterlife.

It was in the modern period that happiness was seen not as a function of chance or as a reward for the arduous few, but as a birthright for all. With unprecedented advances in science, technology, and medicine, it seemed that the causes of human unhappiness could be eradicated and that each person would be able to pursue happiness in their own way.

The two most influential types of theories of happiness in philosophy and the social sciences today are hedonic theories and eudemonic theories. For hedonic theorists, happiness is a function of the way we

feel in each moment of our lives.

The psychological researcher Edward Diener, for sample, defines happiness as “subjective well-being” which he operationalizes in terms of high positive affect, low negative affect, and high life satisfaction. In other words, the more pleasant emotions you have, the fewer unpleasant emotions you have, and the more satisfied you are with life, the happier you are. On this definition of happiness, empirical research indicates that most people are, in fact, happy, and that it is possible to become sustainably happier.

For eudaimonic theorists, happiness is more than a function of subjective states. Following Aristotle (whose term *eudemonia* means “happiness” or “human flourishing”), these theorists argue that happiness requires certain objective conditions of wealth, friendship, physical attractiveness, high social status, and good children. For the contemporary philosopher Martha Nussbaum, the list necessary for happiness includes, among other things, living a normal life span, enjoying good physical health, experiencing normal human emotions, and having control over one’s environment.

While Thomas Jefferson and the signers of the Declaration of Independence may be correct that the pursuit of happiness is a fundamental human right, happiness itself seems very difficult to define, and even harder to achieve. Modern optimism about the achievement of happiness has been difficult to sustain, given the intractability of certain diseases, the frequency of natural catastrophes, and perhaps most of all, the high degree of misery humans continue to visit on each other. John Dewey criticized hedonic theories of happiness on the grounds that growth sometimes requires unpleasant choices. He would argue that those who live their lives in the quest for good feelings actually stunt their own growth.

It is good for these and similar critiques to temper naïve optimism about the achievability of happiness and to clear the ground for the hard work of realistic progress. Current Scientific study of well-being and human flourishing may not be able to guarantee everyone immediate happiness, but it may help us learn how to become more effective in its pursuit⁶.

Socrates was the opinion that money and power were not bad in themselves, thus the wealthy might have been admirable if they had earned money virtuously⁷.

Socrates believed that happiness was acquired through doing virtuous deeds⁸.

If other thinkers had preceded Socrates with moral and social criticism, he was certainly the first to challenge his fellows on an individual basis with maxim that “the unexamined life is not worth living” (Ap. 38a). Socrates believes that this is the condition of all human beings – as such they are neither good nor bad, but owing to their needy nature all have a desire for the good and the beautiful, the possession of which would be happiness for them. Because all people want happiness, they all pursue the beautiful to the best of their ability (205a – 206 b). In each case, they desire the particular kinds of objects they take to provide the fulfillment of their needs.

He admits the explanation of the refinement and sublimation that a person experiences by recognizing

higher and higher kinds of beauty (210 a – 212 a). Starting with the love of one beautiful body, the individual gradually learns to appreciate not only all physical beauty, but also the beauty of the mind, and in the end it gets a glimpse of the supreme kind of beauty, the Form of the beautiful itself, a beauty that is neither relative nor a matter of degree.

Suffice it to say that the elevation to a place ‘beyond the heavens’, where the best souls get a glimpse of true being, symbolize the mind’s access to the Form, including the nature of the virtue (247c–e).

Depending on the quality of each human soul, an individual will live either a carnal, earthy life and lose its wings, or it will live a spiritual, philosophical life in pursuit of beauty. In each case, the quality of the beauty pursued will also determine the cycle of reincarnations that is at store for each soul (248c–249c)⁹.

Socrates says that happiness is in a life in which pleasure and knowledge are combined with each other. Reaching such happiness requires striving and endeavor. Those who reach this happiness are really prosperous. Socrates believes that happiness is obtained through preventing carnal desires. The happiness of each individual is acquired through the society’s happiness¹⁰.

Socrates found out that mankind’s happiness is in self–recognition and nurturing one’s spirit and soul. Moreover, He believed that acquisition of knowledge, piety and virtue was the origin of happiness.

Socrates admitted that our true happiness is promoted by doing what is right. When our true utility is served (tending our soul), we are achieving happiness. Happiness is evident from the long– term effect on the soul.

Socrates anticipates Thoreau in arguing that the “unexamined life is not worth living”. For Socrates this meant that happiness and moral living were linked to each other. While we are pursuing virtue, we are in fact pursuing happiness, since to be virtuous is also to be happy. Socrates makes it seem both very appealing and quite possible that there is a relationship between human virtue and human happiness. For Socrates happiness is truly possible only when the soul has been perfected, and so all but the most virtuous are denied happiness.

Like all ancient philosophers, Plato maintains a virtue– based eudemonistic ethics. That is to say, human well–being (eudaimonia) is the highest aim of thought and conduct, the virtues (aretê = ‘excellence’) are the requisite skills and character – traits¹¹.

Plato and Aristotle believed that the happy man is the one who able to think. Thinking is the highest man’s function. A thoughtful person is less dependent on the external and outer conditions. His happiness is inside him, i.e. is dependent upon his inner conditions or powers, while a seeker of fame or wealth, is seeking that which is affected by external conditions, this is a fleeting happiness. Therefore, satisfying fleeting feelings is pleasure not happiness. Happiness is not an imaginary or emotional state. It is a fundamental bond which encompasses all man’s attachments, dependencies or interests. In other words, the real happiness of mankind is in actualizing of his particular perfection. This is rarely obtained

man's happiness is actualizing his potential aptitudes¹². Plato's ethics is based on man's happiness that is to actualize the man's highest virtue. It can be said that this virtue is the real development of man's personality. When the man's soul is in a state which it should be, man is happy¹³.

Plato considers happiness as the highest virtue, and believes that reaching the virtue is the results of acquiring knowledge and episteme. Plato considers happiness as the pure and real pleasure that has a spiritual aspect¹⁴.

The man's highest virtue, i.e. happiness, includes the knowledge and recognition of God. A man who doesn't know the divine aspect of the being can't be happy.

Plato has allocated the chapter twelve of his "republic" to "happiness and unhappiness". He believes in this regard that happiness is circumscribed by a number of properties – freedom, lack of need, lack of fear¹⁵. He adds (in the Republic) that the worst person is also the unhappiest person. Since morality is the rule of the rational mind, then a moral life is far happiness and more desirable.

In the tradition of Aristotle, happiness is broadly understood as something like well – being and has been viewed, not implausibly, as a kind of natural end of all human activities. Happiness in this sense is broader than pleasure, insofar as the latter designates a particular kind of feeling, whereas well – being does not. Attributions of happiness, moreover, appear to be normative in a way in which attributions of pleasure are not. It is thought that a truly happy person has achieved, is achieving, or stands to achieve, certain things respecting the "truly important" concerns of human life. Of course, such achievements will characteristically, they will involve states of active enjoyment of activities – where, as Aristotle first pointed out, there are no distinctive feelings of pleasure apart from the doing of the activity itself¹⁶.

Aristotle considers the happily life as the good life for man. He says that happiness is the soul's activity in accordance with complete virtue¹⁷.

Since the most distinguished, property of man is his power of thought, the more this power is increased, and the higher he will be. Therefore, the intellectual life is the basic provision of happiness¹⁸.

Happiness is the very virtue that is obtained through intellection. Happiness can be acquired morality based on moderation¹⁹.

Aristotle believes that the origin and essence of happiness, that is complete knowledge and spirit purity²⁰. One of the requisites of virtue is that one enjoys those things he should do and hates those things he should not do. "Friendship" and having good friends can help humans achieve to happiness but an average wealth along with a behavior based on virtues is sufficient²¹. Man can reach the highest rates of pleasure following his intellect.

Justice, as Aristotle calls it, is a "complete virtue". It is the precondition of all value, the requirement for any kind of humanity (Nicomachean Ethics). It cannot replace happiness, but there can be no happiness

without it²².

In the argument (10.7) [of *Nicomachean Ethics*] that the life of study is the best life, Aristotle stresses that finest ethical virtues “require trouble, aim at some [further] end, and are choice-worthy for something other than themselves.” (1177b 18–20) These virtues are necessary in light of the human condition, and the person who lives the life of study will choose to do actions that accord with virtue, whenever he has to deal with other people (1178b5–7).

Aristotle argues that happiness, function and morality are closely connected and virtue is depended of all of them. Happiness is the highest of all practical goods.

Aristotle would have agreed that the happiness cannot be helped by philosophy in such an environment because people philosophizing themselves.

Aristotle says that sound ethical thinking should be focused on “eudaimonia”, which we might translate as flourishing’, “well-being”, or “happiness”. Yet Aristotle’s eudaimonia’ signifies something which people can achieve simply by drawing on their natural, human resources²³.

Aristotle in “*Nicomachean Ethics*” believes that we choose always happiness for itself and never for the sake of something else, but honor, pleasure, reason, and every excellence we choose indeed for themselves (for if nothing resulted from them we should still choose each of them), but we choose them also for the sake of happiness, judging that through them we shall be happy. Happiness, on the other hand, no one chooses for the sake of this, nor, in general, for anything other than itself. Happiness then, is something complete and self-sufficient, and is the end of action.

Aristotle in the above mentioned book states that excellent activities or their opposites are what determine happiness or the reverse. That may be the reason why he is of the opinion that happy man will be happy throughout his life; for always, or by preference to everything else, he will bear the chances of life most nobly and altogether decorously, if he is ‘truly good’ and ‘four-square beyond reproach’. Aristotle believes that if happiness is activity in accordance with excellence, it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest excellence; and this will be that of the best thing in us.

Whether it be intellect or something else that is this element which is through to be our natural ruler and guide and to take through of things noble and divine, whether it be itself also divine or only the most divine element happiness. Since the intellect is the best thing in us, and the objects of intellect are the best of knowledge objects, the activity of wisdom is admittedly the pleasantest of excellent activities, and it is to be expected that those who know will pass their time more pleasantly than those who inquire.

The life according to intellect is best and pleasantest, since intellect more than anything else is man. This life therefore is also the happiest. Happiness extends, just so far as contemplation does, and those to whom contemplation more fully belongs are more truly happy, not accidentally, but in virtue of the contemplation; for this is in itself precious. Happiness, therefore must be some form of contemplation.

Thus Aristotle conclude that we must not think that the man who is to be happy will need many things or great things, merely because he cannot be blessed without external goods; for self-sufficiency and action do not depend on excess, and we can do noble acts without ruling earth and sea; for even with moderate advantages one can act excellently.

Epicurus learned to take his pleasure as they came: when they are natural, satisfying them is as easy as attending the body's needs. What is simpler than quenching a thirst? What is easier – except in cases of extreme poverty – than satisfying the hunger for food or sex? What is more limited – a fortunately so – than our natural, necessary desires²⁴.

Epicurus was no epicurean glutton or wanton consumerist, but an advocate of “friends, freedom and thought” as the path to happiness.

How should we be happy since were dissatisfied And how should we be satisfied since our desire are limitless? What a joy it is to eat when one is hungry! What happiness to be no longer hungry after eating! And what freedom to have nature as one's only master! Temperance is a means to independence, and independence a means to happiness. Being temperate is being able to content oneself with a little; the little is not what is important: what matters is the ability and the Contentment. The limitedness of desire, which condemns us to neediness, dissatisfaction, or unhappiness, is a disease of the imagination²⁵.

According to Epicurus one of the tasks of philosophy is saving us the incorrect designs for happiness. He himself had not large house. His food was simple. He drunk water not wine. These were the interests of a man who considered “pleasure” as the goal of life. He didn't want to beguile anyone. His dependence, attachment and interest on pleasure was more than that his accusers to sensuality can even imagine. He, after a intellectual analysis realized what made the life enjoyable. Epicurus believed that the necessary elements of pleasure, though mysterious, are not too expensive.

He considered friendship, freedom and thinking as the main elements of pleasure and happiness. He believed that it was unlikely and improbable that wealth make anyone unlucky and disastrous, but he thought that if we have money but be deprived of the bounties of friends, freedom and analyzed life, we will never be really happy, but if we have these three bounties, but not possess money, we will never be unlucky. Epicurus divided our needs into three categories: some needs are natural and necessary, some are natural but not necessary, and some others are neither natural nor necessary.

According to this, happiness is dependent upon some complex psychological affairs and is almost free from material affairs. We can conclude from his opinions that a little (or a necessary) money might be effective. On man's happiness, but this happiness wouldn't be increased with increasing money. The more money will not deprive us of the happiness, but the rate of our happiness will not be increased as compared with the happiness of the low-income persons. According to Epicurus, when we remove the pains from the needs, simple dishes will have the same pleasure as the sumptuous tables

We will not be happy in expensive cars without good friends, in villas without freedom, in silk coverlets

about with a great anxiety that debar sleeping. Happiness will be greatly low as long as the immaterial needs are not satisfied. Epicurus believed that nothing could satisfy the one, who is not satisfied with a little, and possessing the most wealth can't remove the spirit anxiety and it will not lead to a considerable happiness. It is impossible that our happiness is dependent on those needs that are satisfied with the expensive things²⁶.

Cicero reminds of seeking knowledge respectfully, and believes that no vocation is as sweet as seeking knowledge, it equips us with the good and happily, instruments, it teaches us how to spend our lives satisfactorily.

Lucretius had the same opinion as Epicurus. He helped us to realize to feel the pleasure of the cheap things. According to him, man falls a victim to the abundant and unfruitful pains that he is suffering because of his inability in understanding the limit and border of acquiring the wealth and also in his inability in breeding the original pleasures. Arts can help this orientation be amended.

Augustine says that the reward of virtue will be God himself, who gives virtue, and who has promised Himself to us, than whom nothing is better or greater... God will be the end of our desires. He will be seen without end, loved without stint, praised without weariness (city of God, XXII.30). This is a description of the best state experienced by a person, or something analogous to it, extended without limit, not a combination or structure of all good activities and the like²⁷.

Augustine makes the connection between happiness and the good explicit: "Those who are happy, who also ought to be good, are not happy because they desire to live happily, which even evil men desire, but rather because they will to live rightly – which evil men do not". For Augustine, happiness cannot be attained, nor is it merited, by evildoers²⁸.

Augustine believes that in the inner light of Truth, in virtue of which the so-called inner man is illuminated and rejoices. He thinks that we all do – and ought to – pursue happiness, which he equates with seeking to experience joy. As he sees it, all humans aspire to be happy. For Augustine, the happy life consists of joy. As he sees it, all humans aspire to be happy. For Augustine, the happy life consists of joy grounded in and caused by God, but he is well aware that many people are mistaken about where to find happiness. They do not want to find in God their source of joy. But his view was that the happy life is joy based on the truth, a joy grounded in God who is the truth. Augustine begins his 'confessions' by addressing God, telling Him that "our heart is restless until it rests in you"²⁹.

Thomas Aquinas writes that 'people are perfected by virtue towards those actions by which they are directed towards happiness'. Yet, he adds, human happiness is twofold: 'one depends on human nature and this is something that people can achieve through their own resources [while] the other is a happiness surpassing human nature, which people can arrive only by power of God, by a kind of participation in divinity'. And this participation, Aquinas argues, can be brought about only by God. 'Because such happiness goes beyond what can be produced by human nature', He says. 'People

cannot arrive at it by virtue of what they naturally are; they have to receive from God that by which they may be led to supernatural happiness (St Ia 2ae, 62,1). Or, as Aquinas immediately goes on to say, they need the logical virtues and not just the cardinal ones. For him, the true good for people is not “eudaimonia” but beatitudo, which he takes to be human flourishing, well – being, or happiness in union with God (Cf. ST Ia2ae, 3,8)³⁰.

There were some developments with plenty of significance for other philosophical issues besides the ones raised by quantitative hedonism. One of the most interesting of these was Aquinas’ effort to evolve a view of pleasure that would combine important Aristotelian ideas about it with his Christian doctrines. This effort involved, in particular, locating the notion of the beatific vision that he identified as the supreme happiness. But Aquinas didn’t identify the basis of this happiness as pleasure. Rather, he maintained that we love God *propter se*, because of himself or what he is³¹.

But, Montaigne rejects severely the superficial knowledge seeking, because most of those who seek knowledge superficially are strongly unhappy. Montaigne was of the opinion that only those things deserve for learning that causes us to acquire a better feeling, so it may be a person hundreds of books regarding philosophy but not to have the happiness of those ones have heard nothing regarding philosophy. Montaigne considered as wisdom them more comprehensive and more valuable knowledge, all things that can help mankind to live happily and in harmony with moral principles³².

From the viewpoint of Spinoza pleasure may be produced by a transition from a lesser to a greater state of perfection. Pain may be produced by a transition from a greater to a lesser state of perfection. For Spinoza, perfection is the same as reality (II, Def. VI). The more perfect a thing is, the more real it is. Inasmuch as God is absolutely perfect, God is also absolutely real. God is infinitely perfect and infinitely real. Spinoza argues that knowledge of good and evil arises from the awareness of what causes pleasure and pain. The greatest good of mind, and its greatest virtue, is to know God (IV, prop. XXVIII). If we act according to reason. Then we desire only what is good. If we act according to reason, then we try to promote what is good not only for ourselves but for others.

Spinoza admits that all emotions may not necessarily conflict with reason. Emotions which agree with reason may cause pleasure, while emotions which do not agree with reason may cause pain. Inability to control the emotions may cause pain³³.

Spinoza interprets joy as what follows that passion that passion by which the mind passes to a greater perfection, and by sadness, that passion by which it passes to a lesser perfection. The effect of joy which is related to the mind and body at once he calls pleasure or cheerfulness, and that of sadness, pain or melancholy.

Spinoza believes that virtue and the service of God are happiness itself, and the greatest virtue³⁴.

According to Spinoza since we cannot control the objects that we tend to value and that we allow to influence our well – being, we ought instead to try to control our evaluations themselves and thereby

minimize the sway that external objects and the passions have over us. We can never eliminate the passive effects entirely. We are essentially a part of nature, and can never fully remove ourselves from the causal series that link us to external things. But we can, ultimately, counteract the passions, control them, and achieve a certain degree of relief from their control. The path to restraining and moderating the effects is through virtue. All beings naturally seek their own advantage – to preserve their own being – and it is right for them to do so.

This is what virtue consists in. Since we are thinking beings, endowed with intelligence and reason, what is to our greatest advantage is knowledge. Our virtue, therefore, consists in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding, of adequate ideas. But ultimately, we strive for knowledge of God. Spinoza believes that we do not have an absolute power to adapt things outside us to our use. Nevertheless, we shall bear calmly those things that happen to us contrary to what the principle of our advantage demands, if we are conscious that we have done our duty, that the power we have could not have extended itself to the point where we could have avoided those things and that we are a part of the whole of nature, whose order we follow.

If we understand this clearly and distinctly, that part of us which is defined by understanding, i.e., the better part of us, will be entirely satisfied with this, and will strive to preserve in that satisfaction. For insofar as we understand, we can want nothing except what is necessary, nor absolutely be satisfied with anything except what is true³⁵.

The fact that love is without want makes it all the stronger, all the lighter, and, as Spinoza would say, all the more active³⁶. This lightness has a name, and that name is joy. It has proof, as well, and that proof is the happiness of lovers, I love you: I and joyful that you exist. There cannot be any happiness without love. If love is a joy accompanied by the idea of an external cause, if all love therefore is in its essence joyful, the converse is also true: all joy has a cause (as does everything that exists) and therefore all joy is loving. Love is transparent joy, its light, and its known and acknowledged truth. This is Spinoza's secret and the secret of wisdom and happiness: love exists only as joy and there is no joy other than love³⁷.

Spinoza argues that the mind's intellectual love of God is our understanding of the universe, our virtue, our happiness, our well-being and our "salvation". Spinoza's "free person" is one who bears the gifts and losses of fortune with equanimity, does only those things that he believes to be "the most important in life", takes care for the well-being of others, and is not anxious about death³⁸. In brief, Spinoza thinks one pursues the good because of the benefit it brings to oneself³⁹.

Spinoza believes that if we fall in love with the fleeting things and those things all humans can't acquire an equal amount of them, we will engage in jealousy, fear and rancor. But falling in love with eternal things makes man's spirit and soul happy and makes it free from all kind of grief. Spinoza also believed that it would be harmful if man wants wealth, money, power and physical pleasures for themselves, while if man considers them as a tool and instrument.

Spinoza said that happiness is not something that man waits for reach it in the other world, but he should seek and reach it in this world.

Spinoza believed that the highest happiness is the identification of that unity that joins man's spirit with the total nature, and utilizing of this identification along with other humans. The highest happiness is acquired whenever philosophical insight exists in imagination of that thing which is eternal⁴⁰.

Rousseau says that if man wishes to be happy, he should apply his free will to the extent of his ability. He believes that the happiness of others will increase our happiness. It is not for a personal profit that all people help the general happiness, because there are some individuals that prefer to be slain in the way of their religions or countries. These people are looking for a spiritual happiness that the good sacrifice for the sake of obtaining it⁴¹.

Rousseau introduces patience, endurance, surrender, consent and perfect justice as the only properties that man will take with him from this world, because it is by these that humans can perfect and complete themselves day by day without suffering from the least fear from death reach themselves to the peak of perfection and happiness⁴².

Rousseau says that it is up to us to share the others in our pleasures if we want to have more rates of pleasure. If man is accustomed to judge everything only from his own profits point of view, he will surely justify mistakenly the worst actions. That's the reason why God is a necessary fact for the world. God's grace to us is reinforced by the moral effort we make. This is a worthy of praise effort, because our soul and spirit is captive of senses and body, and cutting this chain is very difficult, and spiritual pleasure is obtained whenever man becomes successful in such an effort. On the other hand, Rousseau believes that we should formulate human inclinations according to his spiritual and physical circumstances if we want to do the best thing for man's happiness. Rousseau says that if man wants to experience abundant and great virtues he should also experience pains and hardships, that this fact is consistent with man's nature⁴³.

The baby should become familiar with the small sorrows if he wants to understand the great bounties and happiness. The baby nurtured in affluence and easy life will never enjoy kindness, cooperation and happiness⁴⁴. If the body is in too security, the spirit will be corrupted.

In Rousseau's society, the people are less and less likely to value their own thoughts and so less likely to achieve happiness.

Kant says that each person enacts laws for his happiness according to his understanding, imagination and senses powers, but a confirmable happiness is along with "deserving". An action is correct practically provided that action maximizes the humans' happiness, and an action is correct intellectually provided that one's intention is maximizing the humans' happiness.

From the viewpoint of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) happiness is the natural reward for virtuous behavior

therefore; behaving morally should lead to happiness. However, this appears never actually to happen. There must therefore be something else that leads people to behave morally. The achievement of the highest Good in the world is the necessary object of a will determined by the moral law which commands us to make the highest possible good in a world the final object of all our conduct, and there must therefore be a reward for moral behavior in the next world. Because happiness clearly does not come about in this life for the majority, there must be a life beyond death in which the reward comes⁴⁵.

Happiness is associated especially with the classical utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. The utilitarianism assert that happiness is as a matter of fact the ultimate aim at which all human actions are directed and that it is therefore the ultimate standard by which all human actions are directed and that it is therefore the ultimate standard by which to judge the rightness or wrongness of actions. 'Actions are right', says Mill, 'in proportion as they tend to promote happiness' – that is to say, 'the general happiness,' the happiness of all concerned. For Bentham the identity of 'happiness' and 'pleasure' is quite straightforward. An action's tendency to promote happiness is determined simply by adding up the amounts of pain, which it will produce. It is a matter solely of quantitative factors such as the intensity and duration of the pleasurable and painful feelings⁴⁶.

Following Bentham, John Stuart Mill goes on to equate happiness with 'pleasure and absence of pain'. Mill acknowledges that happiness depends not only on the quantity but also on the quality of pleasures. Human beings, because of the distinctively human capacities they possess, require more to make them happy than the accumulation of pleasurable sensations. They are made happy not by 'lower pleasures' but by the 'higher pleasures' – 'the pleasures of intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the more sentiments.

Mill departs still further from the purely quantitative notion of happiness when he recognizes that it is not just a sum of unrelated experiences but an ordered whole. To say that human beings aim at happiness is not to deny that they pursue more specific goals such as knowledge or artistic and cultural activity or moral goodness, and that they pursue these things for their own sake. These are some of the 'ingredients' which go to make up a life of happiness⁴⁷.

Hegel believes that humans should seek for the general and total pleasure which is not obtained through satisfying of the partial motives. Hegel considers this total pleasure and satisfaction as happiness. Human beings in the highest position of their perfection incline to happiness and this inclination is impersonal. This natural and innate is free from corruption.

Schopenhauer said that life is full of pains and grief, the more we try to enjoy it, the more we will become its slave and captive⁴⁸.

Nietzsche believed that any worthwhile achievement in life come from the experience of overcoming hardship.

He believed that those who want to be satisfied should welcome every hardship in the life.

He wished grief, sorrow and illness for the ones whom he loved. He was looking for happiness but was of the opinion that one couldn't achieve happiness without pains and hardship. He believed that if you want to utilize the maximum of pleasure, you should surely taste the maximum of displeasure⁴⁹.

Muslim And Iranian Philosophers

Jahez (in *Al – Hayavan*) admits that the spiritual pleasures of the soul (quantitatively or qualitatively) are much higher than the sensory pleasures. It can be concluded from his writings that happiness is reaching the spiritual pleasures and attaining the perfection of the knowledge and recognition, because achieving such a knowledge and facts creates such a pleasure in the man's soul that the sensory pleasures are lowly and weak as compared with it⁵⁰.

Farabi states that one should originate and create the virtues in himself in order that he may reach happiness, i.e. one should acquire those Properties that make his recognition such that he reaches to happiness. We can call these properties as the beautiful morality (disposition) and mind power. Creating the beautiful morality and mind power is the way of reaching to the happiness. Mind power here means those soul's properties that cause man's recognition to be good and consistent with the reality, if a person acquires the ability of desisting from the superficial Pleasure of the ugly deeds, or finds the ability of choosing the average and mean, then he has been nearer to the good morality⁵¹.

Man is usually looking for the sensible pleasures and suspects these pleasures are the aim and perfection of the life because such pleasures satisfy his urgent needs. Since the sensible pleasure is easier to be understood and easier to reach, they debar humans from many virtues and those things which lead man to happiness. While considering the ultimate and coming pain of abominable conducts and indecorous acts will debar man from its immediate pleasure, and considering the ultimate and coming pleasure of the beautiful deeds, makes man to endure their immediate pains, thus, the motive of abominable conducts will be suppressed and the motive for beautiful and good deeds will be facilitated and firmed, and the way to man's happiness will be made easier⁵².

Farabi is of the opinion that reaching the true and real happiness is possible in the Hereafter. He differentiates the real happiness from the imaginary happiness and says that the imaginary happiness is acquired when possessing such things as wealth, esteem etc. Farabi takes much emphasis on the society in reaching and leading humans to the happiness the perfection of happiness is only possible through possessing moral virtues, therefore those whose knowledge doesn't cause them to be purified, they will not achieve happiness in this world and in the Hereafter, Farabi introduces happiness as the greatest virtue and the most complete aim.

He divides the pleasures into two categories: intellectual and sensory, and he believes that the intellectual pleasures are higher than the sensory pleasures, The sensory pleasures makes man nearer to animal and object inclinations; The power which helps mankind in differentiation of these two kinds of pleasures is philosophy and logic. Man can become aware of the real essence of truth and false using

logic and reach to the truth. Thus, the first stage to reach happiness is acquisition of logic so that man's intellect reaches its peak of perfection⁵³.

Ibn Muskuwaih defines the pleasure as the sensation and comprehension of the desirable thing. He considers the intellectual pleasures higher than the sensory pleasures and says that many a man has disregarded and dispensed with the sensory Pleasures in the way to reach the intellectual pleasures. He Believes that the happiness of every creature is in that the creature attains the aim for which it has been created. Ibn Muskuwaih admits the Aristotle's theory concerning man's happiness and states that man's happiness is in the Perfection of both his body and his spirit (soul), thus the perfection of body or the perfection of body or the perfection of the spirit (soul) alone is not sufficient for the happiness of the human beings man's happiness is possible in this world⁵⁴.

Any being is dependent upon the highest aspects of the distinctive acts of that being, when these are considered from the point of view of its completion or perfection, the happiness of man will depend therefore upon the highest aspects of his & actions⁵⁵.

Ibn Sina (Avicenna) believed that happiness is divided into two groups: real or true happiness and figurative happiness.

True or real happiness is in obtaining the happiness in the Hereafter, i.e. in acquiring the eternal grace of God and reaching to the divine bounties. Achieving to such happiness is the desirable and innate aim of mankind and so it is best for all of human beings. But figurative happiness is not an innate and inherent aim for humans, rather it is only called happiness by some people, e.g. some of them think and imagine that happiness is in reaching the sensory pleasures and superintendence in worldly affairs, but the wise do know that happiness is not found in the fleeting and corrupted things. Ibn Sina was of the opinion that intellectual pleasures cannot be compared with the sensory pleasures, but intellectual pleasures can only be comprehended and understood by those who have purified their souls from all kinds of sins and vices.

Avicenna (Ibn Sina) defines (in the Esharat and Tanbihat) pleasure as comprehension of and reaching to that, which is considered as perfection and virtue for the perceptive. He believes that the internal Pleasures _ particularly the intellectual pleasures _ are higher than the sensory pleasures.

Avicenna says that the main reason of some peoples disinterest to acquisition of rational idea, is the involvement of their souls to perceptible things that debar their attention to the rational ideas, and as long as an individual doesn't pay attention to the rational ideas, no enthusiasm will be created for him.

He also says [in Rasael] that so some people suspect that happiness is reaching to sensory pleasures and worldly superintendence but the wise know that none of the sensory pleasures can be considered as happiness, because all of them are along with deficiencies and adversities. Ibn Sina admits that the real happiness is a thing that is inherently desirable and is chosen for itself, there for it is higher than those things which are chosen for other things.

Happiness in the highest thing that human beings are looking for, thus guiding people to happiness is considered is the highest guidance. Avicenna says in "Shafa & Najat" that the real happiness is in that man attains the perfection in speculative and practical powers. An individual who observes moderation in the three Powers, i.e. sensual, indignation, contrivance, and therefore obtains the Virtues chastity, courage and wisdom, will adorn with the virtue justice that is the comprehensive of the three virtues, and this is the perfection of the practical power.

The perfection of the speculative power is in this fact that the rational system and complete form are created in man and he transforms in to a rational world In brief, Avicenna believes that happiness is in achieving the intellectual pleasures, and since these pleasures have different ranks, the happiness will also have different ranks⁵⁶.

In his short essay of "science of the Dispositions", Ibn Sina begins by acknowledging that God is "the one who enriches the soul of the man who is devoted to His virtues and the means whereby he may acquire then for himself". "It is a requisite in human life ", he continues, "that he who would attain perfection must seek for happiness in this world and in the next. It is incumbent upon him, moreover, to perfect his power of discernment by means of many sciences, each of which is explained fully in books that enumerate the sciences.

He must perfect his power of action also in accord with the virtues, whose fundamental qualities are purity, courage, wisdom, and righteousness. Furthermore he must avoid the vices which are directly opposed to these virtues". But when he undertakes to give the opposites of righteousness, he first enumerates the many virtuous qualities that are included in the comprehensive term "righteousness", such as generosity, frugality, nobility, tranquility, steadfastness, etc.

Both al-Farabi and Ibn Sina maintained that the soul has a longing or love for what is above and yearns thus for its own final absorption in to the one. Ibn Sina Pictured the moment when the evil would be raised and the soul of man would look once more upon the Invisible, the triumphant moment when "it is filled with joy , and having become purified from the stain of all flesh , and more aware of the inner meaning of all things , it returns whence it came Through the exercise of reason what is potential within the soul reaches actuality, through the enlightening influence of the Universal Soul, in accordance with the degree of receptivity within the Soul and its state of Preparedness, which is the result of virtues"⁵⁷.

Ghazzali believed that the man's real happiness is the result of knowledge, and the highest know ledges that is the knowledge and recognition of God, because the happiness of everything is in these things in which is his pleasure and comfort, and the pleasure of everything is in those things consistent with his nature, and this consistency is in those things they have been created for⁵⁸.

Ghazzali says that man's happiness is in the recognition of God His and worship and servitude and following the religion is the way of happiness.

Ghazzali believes that no pleasure is like the pleasure of the spiritual vision of God.

The human beings can achieve the pleasure of recognition of God when they are free from overweening, self – glorification and over ambition and the worldly matters do not destroy their inner beings and do not destroy their hearts⁵⁹.

Ghazzali believes (in *Kimia-e-Saadat*) the ultimate degree of man's happiness is reaching to God, and this position is really his paradise, and he has been created for reaching this status and position.

Ghazzali (in *Kimia-e-Saadat*) places much emphasis on this fact that man should seek for the truth of his soul, and should come to know what is his happiness, and in which is his happiness, and what is his misfortune, and in which is his misfortune.

Thus the soul or heart's pleasure is in what is its property and it is created for, i.e. the cognition of the truth of the affairs, and the highest cognition is the cognition of God and those things which are related to him. Those who can reach the cognition of God that have known themselves, i.e., have reached the cognition of themselves, and following the religion is the way to happiness, because man himself is unable to recognize the truth because of his sensuality.

Ghazzali (in *Kimia-e-Saadat*) believes that man's happiness relates to his soul or heart's happiness is in the cognition of God, and this cognition is obtained through the cognition of the greatness and inventiveness of the exalted God. The reason why Ghazzali has such an opinion is that he believes that the happiness of everything is in what its pleasure and comfort is in it, and the pleasure of everything is in what is consistent with its nature and what is consistent with its nature that is created for it.

Khajeh Nasir Tusi considers happiness as the aim of moral purification, i.e. he says happiness is the aim of human soul's perfection. He believes that cognition of God is the highest knowledge and reaching to this highest position is the highest happiness. He considers happiness as the result of virtue, and virtue as the result of purification of man's different natural respects the perfection of man's potential powers, Khajeh says that happiness consists of wisdom, chastity and justice. He believes that the final happiness (man's happiness in the Hereafter) is the desirable aim of life. Evidentially, is obtained through observing the religious teachings. He divides happiness into three categories: spiritual, physical, and Social⁶⁰.

Khajeh Nasir Tusi defines pleasure as comprehension of all that is compatible with the soul and it is considered as virtue, Perfection and happiness. He divides the Pleasures into two categories: sensory and intellectual. The Sensory Pleasures, such as eating, drinking and sleeping, etc. are comprehended by man through apparent Senses. These pleasures have been created in mankind so that the physical needs could be met.

Some People suspect that The Sensory pleasures are the aim of happiness, while the intellectual pleasures are not comprehended through apparent senses, and in spite of being stable, can't be achieved easily Khajeh Nasir introduces the intellectual pleasures as more important than the sensory

pleasures. He considers (in Akhlag-e-Naseri) man's happiness as the ultimate aim of man from his soul's purification refinement and perfection. Man's happiness is not for reaching the sensory pleasures; rather it is the pure pleasures free from all sorts of Pains. Thus, man's happiness is based upon his soul's happiness and it, in turn, is based on achieving wisdom, courage, chastity and justice. There is a firm and deep relationship.

Between happiness and Virtue & perfection, Khajeh Nasir divides man's happiness into three categories: spiritual, physical & social. Soul happiness is when man recognizes the essence of his inner being and be adorned and well – arranged with divine morality and disposition and reaches the stable pleasures. This happiness is obtained through learning ethics, logics, mathematics, natural science, divine science and acting to God's commandments. Physical happiness is when the body's organs are healthy.

Social happiness is concerned with social system of the nation, government, living affairs and population

Man's happiness is meaningless without soul happiness because until man's essence is unknown and until it is not adorned and well _ arranged with divine morality and does not reach God and eternal pleasures, man cannot achieve happiness.

Khajeh Nasir has distinguished the real happiness with two important characteristics:

1) Happiness is a pure pleasure and is not mixed with any pain. A happy man (who has reached happiness) never becomes sad and gloomy, and never regrets. Such a pleasure will be obtained whenever man achieves God's nearness and never commits an action contrary to God's will

2) The real happiness is a constant, stable and unchangeable fact, and therefore it is not affected by vicissitudes of time and changing the peoples' conditions and different problems and calamities, because an individual who has attained happiness doesn't desist from moderation, and not to be hindered or detained from his other personality aspects because of engagement in a practical aspect of his personality. He endures firmly against difficulties and hardships and doesn't lose his security⁶¹.

Khajeh Nasir (in Akhlag-e-Naseri) believes that it is up to man to know which things cause his happiness and which things cause his ناکامی. Khajeh places much emphasis on this fact that it is up to man to know himself. From the viewpoint of Khajeh Nasir a happy man is the one who reaches the goal he has been created for.

Mahdi Naraghi & Ahmad Naraghi consider the absolute happiness as the most ultimate and highest goal of education. Naraghi believes that the highest rank of happiness, which is called "the truth of happiness", or "the true happiness" is the true knowledge and good morality that are inherently desirable for man, Naraghi also considers love and acquaintance with God, that are acquired through obtaining true knowledge and good morality, more deserving for happiness, although true knowledge, good morality, piety, etc. are all considered as virtue and happiness.

Naraghi (in Jameossadat) says that achieving the perfection of happiness or absolute happiness is possible in the light of continual purification of one's properties and powers, i.e. all of the individual's properties and behaviors should become good and deserving such that different events conditions can't destroy them. In other words, the real happiness is when one reaches a position of perfection and spirituality on which no factors can change his apparent or his interior. In this position, man becomes a manifestation of God and His dispositions and his deeds become similar to God's deeds and beauties and goodness are done by him without external motives.

Naraghi admits that happiness is in intellectual pleasures, and believes that if one wants to reach the true and real happiness, he should really enjoy moral education so that his intellectual power may be reinforced, because moral education causes that his intellect to be dominant over his other powers and his soul to be purified from abject moral properties and to be adorned with beautiful human and angel – related dispositions.

This is both an instrument and tool for reaching the eternal happiness and can also be considered as a worthwhile go in itself⁶².

Naraghi believes that happiness can have two aspects: scientific and practical, so the way to reach it requires science and practice (action), therefore an inner transformation needed for reaching the happiness, that is the moral education from the viewpoint of Naraghi should also be mixed with mysticism⁶³.

Tabatabaie, one of the greatest philosophers and thinkers of Iran, believes that happiness is reaching to a state that one has been created to achieve it. Therefore, the real and main aim of mankind is reaching to happiness. Human beings and all the other creatures have been naturally guided to this aim and have also been created in such a manner, and have been equipped with the things consistent with that aim. Tabatabaie considers man's intellect and intelligence or man's nature as a standard and criteria for a happily life .If humans go the way God's prophets have introduced to him, will become happy in this world and in the Hereafter⁶⁴.

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Cognition of the World

Happiness depends on a considerable extent on how we think about the world, as well as our emotional responses. Someone who can think straight and solve real-life problems is better equipped to be happy. Wisdom means being able to understand and deal with the challenges, both great and small, that we encounter in everyday life. Wise people can identify the problem and then work out how to resolve it in a practical way. Wise people also recognize the inherent uncertainties of life, appreciate the limits of their own knowledge, and cope well with ambiguity¹.

There is no objective way to tell you if you have had a good life, a good day, or a good hour. Your life is a success based only upon your judgment.

A study was done recently in which people on opposite sides of an issue were given the same newspaper article to read. The people were asked to read the article carefully and to offer their reaction. On average, people said they thought the article was biased—against their own position. That is, people on both sides of the issue thought the exact same article was biased against their side. The article could not possibly have been biased against both sides of the issue. Obviously, it wasn't the content of the article that drove the reaction, but the perspective of the readers. Life events have the same effect. The same event can be seen positively, or it can be seen negatively. It depends upon your perspective².

Knowing whether someone has recently suffered a personal set-back or personal triumph is not as good a predictor of how satisfied they are with their lives as is knowing how they perceive the causes and consequences of those events³.

What is the shape of the World, What condition is it in? Scientists, philosophers, and kings could offer a never-ending debate on the question. But there is no real grade for the world apart from the one you assign it⁴.

People who have experienced similar life events can wind up with nearly opposite perceptions of life satisfaction. Researchers have compared, for example, people who have received a job promotion, and they found that while some of the people treasure the opportunity others lament the added responsibility. The implication of life events are a matter of perspective⁵.

Faith and Belief in God, and Worshipping Him

Argyle (2004) says Pollner found nearness to God, and having a friendly image from God have

relationship with happiness. Another factor may be a firm faith. Ellison (1991) showed that after continuance of social support and private worship, a firm faith cause happiness. Ellison, et al. (1989) found that intensity of worship (frequent prays and feeling of nearness to God) are the strongest predictors of Satisfaction from life. They also showed that religious beliefs are the most important source of happiness. Pray and prayer can increase happiness and health. Paloma and Pendleton (1991) found that when religious experiences occur in praying, feeling health and happiness maximize. Religious behaviors cause positive excitements. Religious ceremonies create popular feeling, and cause feeling of unity with presence of others.

Religion's benefits broadly divide into four factors: social support, spiritual support, a sense of purpose and meaning, and the avoidance of risky and stressful behaviors. Doing good works through acts of charity provides another sense of connection to community. Often religion can help us feel more included in society, and it can give us a sense of being united and a feeling of continuity in life. The word 'religion' derives from the Latin religious meaning 'to bind together' and this is what organized religion tends to do to its followers. And being connected to others is an important ingredient for happiness, so it comes as no surprise to learn that religious people are generally happier than those who aren't. Slough Volunteer says: "I am a Muslim and Muslims are very community- oriented. Family is everything, so we already understand much of the ethos of happiness that is in the manifesto"⁶. Religion can also make us more compassionate, and the result of our compassion can make us feel better too.

Research, mostly conducted in the USA, has found that religious people tend to be somewhat happier than non- religious people, other things being equal. Religion does provide a firm structure for encouraging people to behave and think in ways that make them feel happier⁷.

Religion can show us the way in a world in which bad things happen. It can teach us that much of what we see is so complex we cannot understand why and how it occurred.

Everywhere in our world there is mystery. Everywhere there are questions. Religion offers answers, religion offers consistency, religion offers hope⁸.

Research on the effect of religion on life satisfaction found that regardless of what religion people affiliated themselves with, those who had strongly held spiritual beliefs were typically satisfied with life, while those who had no spiritual beliefs typically were unsatisfied⁹.

Resilience and Hardiness

The capacity to maintain or restore well- being in the face of adversity is referred to by psychologists as resilience, or hardiness. The evidence confirms that resilient individuals are usually happier than those who are more easily cast down by life's inevitable upsets. Individuals to have supportive personal relationships, persistence, motivation, an ability to plan a head, and practical knowledge¹⁰.

That there are many problems in the world is obvious to anyone, but take comfort in the notion the eventually good prevails. Whether your focus is on the criminal justice system or a spiritual system, realize that those who have wronged the world will eventually pay some price¹¹.

Regardless of the experiences subjects personally dealt with. Whether they had personally, been the victim of a crime or known someone close who had, those who believed the world is ultimately just 13 percent higher level of life satisfaction¹².

Think of the happy times you. Your family and friends have had together. Recalling happiness of the past has the powerful ability to bring us happiness in the present¹³.

When people consciously choose to think back on their past, over 80 percent tend to focus on very positive memories¹⁴.

Having Long- Term Goals

According to research, individuals whose daily efforts relate directly to achieving their longer- term goals tend to be happier than those whose strivings are unrelated to their goals¹⁵. A life that is meaningful and has some purpose to it is more likely to be a happy life. Someone who knows where they want to go, and why, will probably be happier. Studies have confirmed that people who regard their life as meaningful tend to be happier and more satisfied other things being equal¹⁶. We are better equipped to be happy if we can enjoy the present, prepare for the future and avoid dwelling on the Past. Happy people are usually able to think ahead, but they do not spend their lives waiting for some imaginary future or endlessly mulling over bad things that happened in the past. They are also capable, at the right time, of losing themselves in the here and now and relishing the present moment¹⁷.

Studies of older Americans find that one of the best predictors of happiness is whether a person considers his or her life to have a purpose. Without a clearly defined purpose, seven in ten individuals feel unsettled about their lives; with a purpose, almost seven in ten feel satisfied¹⁸.

Without a purpose, nothing matters. You can work forty hours a week, come home to cook, clean, and then take up seventy-two new good habits, but if there is not a reason you are doing it, none of these activities will mean anything to you. ¹⁹

In research on college students, a comparison was made between students who enjoyed lives and studies and students who were least comfortable with their environment. A major difference between the two groups was a sense of underlying purpose in life, which almost twice as many of the former group had²⁰.

Friendship and Social Relations

According to Argyle (2004), social relations have a very great effect on happiness and other aspects of health, and it might be the greatest single cause. In other studies, some evidences have been represented based on this fact that marriage and family life has the strongest effect in satisfaction and happiness. Being with friends is one of the major sources of pleasure. Helping others when distress, causes a friendship experience, which is a positive source of excitement²¹. It was found that adults have a more attention to others' needs than their own needs, in close relations²². Many studies have shown that in 0.3 to 0.4 levels, satisfaction of being with friend have a correlation with satisfaction of life and happiness.

Close friends are a particular source of happiness. Weiss (1973) found that people do need a friendly relation, and a network of relations, to avoid loneliness. Close friends are probable similar in attitudes, beliefs and interests. These similarities and sharing in one another viewpoints, causes their self-esteem to be improved. Social support from friends affects people physically and psychologically. Ross and Mirowsky showed that social support leads to a decrease in depression. Those who have relations with people are less affected by stress and try more actively to cope or adjust with their problems²³. Social relations have a strong effect on health and mortality (death rate); these relations increase or improve health and decrease mortality (death rate).

In a recent survey more than 60 percent of British adults claimed that their friendships were more important than career, money or even family. People with strong social support and intimate friendships visit the doctor less often²⁴. Friendship is extremely valuable, and it is also one of the least expensive ways to be happy. People of all ages report the most positive moods over all when they are with friends. Research has shown that personal relationships contribute more to our mental and physical health than money, fame, conventional success or material possessions.

On average, lonely people have shorter, unhealthier and unhappier lives. On the other hand, happy people make the best friends. In addition, people with close, fulfilling friendships are happier. In a 2005 study by the University of Adelaide in Australia found that keeping up with friends rather than family is the key to a longer life. A strong network of friends and confidants significantly improved longevity. Experts believe this finding could herald a new approach to later life, where friends band together in networks based on similar age and interests.

Another study of 2800 men and women over the age of 65 showed that those with more friends had a lower risk of health problems, and recovered faster if they did fall ill. Meanwhile, a Yale University study of 10,000 senior citizens over a five-year period showed that loners were twice as likely to die from all causes. A 2002 study conducted at the university of Illinois by Psychologist ED Diener and Martin Seligman found that the most salient characteristics shared by the 10 percent of students with the highest levels of happiness and the fewest signs of depression were their strong ties to friends and

family, and commitment to spending time with them²⁵.

Some of our most intense and meaningful experiences are the result of family relationships. While individuality is very important to the developing adult, there are great opportunities for joy and growth that can be experienced within family life. In the overall aim of increasing happiness, the family is exceptionally important²⁶.

Joining groups, participating, volunteering, all these community activities score high on the pleasure scale, and through them comes trust in others. Andrew Mawson says that as people become involved with others and do things together, they come to care about them. So they do some good for other, and improve their own world at the same time²⁷. The American psychologist ED Diener and Martin Seligman investigated individuals who ranked in the top percent of consistently very happy people.

Their most striking finding was that very happy people were highly connected. Compared to averagely happy or unhappy people they had stronger and richer personal relationships. They were also more sociable, more extroverted, and more agreeable. Good relationships may not be sufficient by themselves to make a happy person, because other things matter as well, but they are usually necessary²⁸.

Personal relationships, especially the close ones, are enormously important for happiness; they contribute more than money, fame, conventional success, material possession, intelligence or even health. Psychological research has found that individuals who are generally inclined to assume the best of other people, and therefore to trust them, tend to be happier than those whose inclination is to be suspicious and distrustful²⁹. By and large, happy people do not spend of their time thinking about themselves and dwelling on their own feeling. Rather, their attention tends to be focused outwards on the world around them. The findings from research generally confirm that outward focus is associated with happiness and mental health, including lower rates of depression.

Among other things individuals who are concerned about other people, and not just themselves, are less affected by people, and not just themselves, are less affected by stress. Studies have found that elderly people whose personal goals and aspirations revolve around an interest in the well-being of others are usually happier than those who are concerned mostly with looking after themselves³⁰.

Close relationships, more than personal satisfaction or one's view of the world as a whole, are the most meaningful factors in happiness. If you feel close to other people, you are four times more likely to feel good about yourself than if you do not feel close to anyone³¹.

If you want to know if people are happy, don't ask them how much money they have in the bank. Don't ask how large their take-home salary is. Ask them about their friends³².

Relationships are built on mutual appreciation, and there is no better way to show that appreciation than to tell someone how much you care.

Researchers at the University of Houston have studied the question of why we do not tell people how important they are to us. One area they studied was reaction to sad events like funerals.

One subject, Bill, lost a close family member recently. Some of Bill's friends sent sympathy cards, some sent flowers, some sent notes, and some told him they were there for him. And some did nothing.

Why did some of his friends not say anything?

Perhaps they thought that telling others we care means being vulnerable. For these people, relationships may be more of a competition than a celebration, and competitions are premised on strength, power, and position.

Researchers caution that we don't win at relationships, we win by having relationships³³.

Research on unemployed adults has found that the length of unemployment was less important to a person's self-esteem than the amount of social support received from parents, family members, and friends³⁴.

Even if you are right, there is nothing to be gained from letting yourself become adversarial with your loved ones. Remember how much more important these people are to you than is the issue you are talking about³⁵.

As family members scatter across the country, it becomes easy to forget to include them in your thoughts and in your time. Keep up the contact; share with your family the news of your life. They want to know, and you will feel better if your bond is maintained³⁶.

Studies that examine the importance of family to senior citizens as compared to adult not yet entering middle age show family relationships to be an equally crucial component of life satisfaction for both age groups³⁷.

We no longer live in a time when people know all their neighbors and consider them to be friends. A shocking number of people have never had a conversation with their neighbors, and some could not pick them out of a lineup. Introduce yourself, or invite your neighbor over for coffee. Neighbors are not a great potential source of friendship; they make us feel more comfortable in our homes, which is where most of us spend much of our time³⁸.

Greater community interaction can increase happiness by almost 30 percent³⁹.

Goodness

Doing good also makes us feel good. We establish deep interpersonal relationships and empathy for others, and also has the perfect opportunity to practice flow activities— those things we enjoy and that really take us out of our self. Scientists agree that being kind to others triggers a cascade of positive

effects. It makes us feel generous and capable, and gives us a greater sense of connection with others. In addition, when we do good deed, we are helping more than just the recipient: We are helping everybody. Of course, it feels good to be on the giving end, but psychologist Jonathan Haidt suggests that people witnessing others performing good deeds also benefit; they experience an emotion called 'elevation'. He explains that we get this feeling when we see people behave honorably or act heroically, or when we witness someone show gratitude or help someone else. And when we feel elevated it makes us more open and considerate, and more loving towards humanity⁴⁰.

People who compromise what believe in to satisfy their goals wind up dissatisfied with their accomplishments. If you do not believe yourself to be moral, satisfaction is unattainable⁴¹.

Being happy and being moral buttress each other. People who feel they lack morals report they are half as likely to feel happy compared to these who feel they are moral⁴².

Giving help is a win– win situation, so pay attention to your surrounding and offer the help that you can. It could be as simple as making a habit of holding the door open for the person coming in behind you. It is a gesture of friendliness that makes another person feel better and makes you feel good about yourself⁴³.

Life satisfaction was found to improve 24 percent with the level of altruistic activity⁴⁴.

Money and Income

Argyle (2004) says that some researches have reported a very little relationship between income and happiness. In developed countries, there is a weak correlation between wealth and happiness. This correlation is more in poorer countries. Considering this fact that we spend money for those things, which we are interested in, and since we think that it is money that causes pleasure in us, it is wrongly supposed that happiness roots in money. But other causes of happiness (such as love, more recreation positive attitudes, choosing goals) are less expensive or are free. In addition, some of them cause good income and earnings as well. Making people and countries wealthy, has a very little effect on their happiness, although very poor persons and those who live in very little countries are less happy than those who have a better financial situation.

Money is not even one of the six key factors now scientifically established to affect happiness most: mental health, satisfying and secure work, a secure and loving private life, a safe community, freedom and moral values. Over the past two decades an increasing body of social–science and psychological research has shown there is no significant relationships between how much money a person earns and whether he or she feels good about life. A time magazine poll reinforced this view by finding that money ranked 14th as a major source of happiness for its readers.

Wealth is like health: its absence breeds misery, but having it does not guarantee happiness. And being

in chase of money rather than meaning in life is a formula of discontent. Money generally makes us unhappy and dissatisfied – especially when we compare our own income with that of others. Yes, richer people, in such a case, might be happier – not because of the absolute size of their wealth, but because they have more than other does people do. And the wealth gap harms the rest of us. Income rivalry makes those left behind more miserable than it makes the winners extra happy. But it should also be noted that the winners compare themselves with those ones who are wealthier than them.

People judge wealth relatively rather than absolutely. Competition for money and status is thus a zero–sun game; and the more opportunities there are for comparison–rankings, league tables, and advertising–the greater the dissatisfaction will be. Rich people with a history of mental illness are up to three times more likely to kill themselves than those with less money. According to Seligman, an American positive psychologist, “people who value money more than the other goals are less satisfied with their income and with their lives as a whole”⁴⁵.

Happiness is much more a product of psychological wealth than material wealth. Money and fame are clearly no guarantees of happiness. Money does of course have some bearing on happiness. Whilst it may not add much to the happiness of people who are already well off, it does make a difference to people who have very little. A basic minimum amount of wealth provides a crucial bulwark against many sources of stress and unhappiness. Possessing sufficient money means not having to worry about food or shelter.

Material wealth is not a basic human psychological need whereas, for example, being connected with other people is. A more searching explanation as to why money buys relatively little happiness in wealthy nations rests on three psychological processes, each of which dilutes the psychological benefits of rising wealth. These processes are habituation (‘the shine wears off’), rising aspirations (‘the more you have, the more you want’), and social comparison (‘keeping up with the Jonets’). The pursuit of fame, like the pursuit of wealth, is more often a recipe for unhappiness researchers have found that children and adults whose main aspirations in life center round money, fame or their own physical appearance tend to have poorer mental health than those who are more concerned with intrinsic goals like developing close relationships or helping others⁴⁶.

Wealth has surprisingly little lasting impact on happiness. Acquiring more money or possessions can make us feel better for a while, but the rise in mood tends to be modest and short–lived. We soon get used to what we have and our expectations rise, leading us to want ever more. More importantly, the process of trying to acquire wealth can actually make us less happy if it gets in the way of things that really do matter, such as personal relationships or a sense of purpose and meaning. There is good evidence that highly materialistic people are less happy on average than those who have other priorities in life⁴⁷.

We spend so much time chasing dollars, worrying about dollars, and counting dollars. It may surprise you to learn that satisfaction with life is no more likely among the rich⁴⁸.

A study of life satisfaction looked at twenty different factors that might contribute to happiness. Nineteen factors did matter, and one did not. The one factor that did matter was financial status⁴⁹.

Work

According to Argyle (2004) those who lost their jobs, became less happy. Unemployed persons feel boredom, have a little self-esteem, sometimes become angry, and sometimes emotional indifference appears in them. Unemployed persons were fewer members of recreational groups, less exercised, less associated with others, thus enjoyed less social support, and had more passive recreations for 5 hours in a day⁵⁰.

Work has a huge bearing on our happiness. Work offers far more than money. A satisfying job can bring structure and meaning to life, along with mental and emotional stimulation. This is as true for those engaged in unpaid work, such as caring for their children or elderly relatives, as it is for the highest-earning investment banker. After basic needs are met, pay has surprisingly little influence on job satisfaction. A 2004 report published by the learning skills council clearly showed that happiness is more important to workers than money. It also revealed that 93 percent of teenagers agreed that doing something they enjoy is more important than making money⁵¹.

We are generally happier when actively engaged in some reasonably challenging task, rather than passively witnessing other people's experiences on a TV screen. Happy people spend at least some of their time engaged in meaningful and satisfying activities⁵².

Find something to do, because the feeling that we have too much to do is much more pleasing than the feeling that we have nothing to do⁵³.

In studies of college students, those with more demanding schedules were 15 percent more satisfied with life. Despite the more demanding schedules, the individuals studied did not experience any more stress than those with less to do⁵⁴.

At its best, work gives us a sense purpose and enhances our appreciation of our life outside of the workplace. Appreciate all that your job gives you, and help you appreciate what really matters⁵⁵.

Research on over 1,500 mothers found that working outside the home increased life satisfaction 5 percent and contributed to a feeling of equality in the family⁵⁶.

Exercise

Hills and Argyle (1998) found that the individuals who were members of athletic clubs, got more and better scores in the Oxford happiness inventory as compared with those who were not members of these clubs (Argyle, 2004).

Doctors increasingly prescribe exercise as part of wider treatment for mental illnesses, such as depression, and seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Physical activity plays a role in establishing and maintaining a positive mood and self-esteem. It also improves social integration and decreases anger. It is less passive than popping a pill, and makes us feel that we are regaining control of our life. Research among young offenders, people recovering from drug and alcohol abuse, and those diagnosed with schizophrenia suggest that they benefit too. Exercise can relieve symptoms of premenstrual syndrome and promote restful sleep. Scientist has found that cognitive functioning (mental ability) in the elderly improves with exercise⁵⁷.

Physical activity is an important contributor to health and happiness. People who regularly take physical exercise are usually happier as well as physically healthier than those who spend their days sitting at a desk⁵⁸.

People, who exercise, whether that involves an intense workout or just a regular long walk, feel healthier, feel better about them-selves, and enjoy life more⁵⁹.

Research on physical activity finds that exercise increases self-confidence, which in turn strengthens self-evaluations. Regular exercise, including brisk walks, directly increases happiness 12 percent, and can indirectly make a dramatic contribution to improving self-image⁶⁰.

Sleep

Sleep is not just a biological necessity; it is a neglected source of pleasure. It offers us refuge from pleasant- and unpleasant- life- events. Humans are not built to work at night and sleep by day, but many do. Tired people are less emotionally resilient and often feel 'out of touch' with what's going on in their lives. In extreme cases, sleep deprivation can lead to feelings of persecution and paranoia, depression, weight gain, impaired performance and damaged social relationships. We can survive for longer without food than sleep⁶¹. If one wants to be happy and healthy then she or he must have a sufficient quantity and quality of sleep and at the right times⁶².

Don't skimp on sleep. A full night's rest is fuel for the following day. Rested people feel they work better and are more comfortable when the day is over⁶³.

Quality and quantity of sleep contribute to health. Well-being and a positive outlook. For those who sleep less than eight hours, every hour of sleep sacrificed results in an 8 percent less positive feeling about their day⁶⁴.

Mental Health

Various studies have found that happiness relates more strongly to people's mental health than it does to their objective physical health-that is, their health as assessed independently by a doctor⁶⁵.

Recreation

Recreation can make people happy, and it is very important because recreation contrary to our communications. Job and personality is under our own control (Argyle, 2004).

Travel

Travel can be a source of great joy, broadening our experience of other lives and cultures, making us more adventurous and empathetic, and allowing us the chance to be caught up in flow activities.

According to psychologists, there are seven socio-psychological benefits of travel, they are: 1) Exploration and evaluation of self, 2) Relaxation, 3) Escape from a perceived mundane environment, 4) prestige, 5) Regression to a childlike, Playful state, 6) Enhancement of kind ship relationships, 7) Facilitation of social interaction⁶⁶.

Humor

Argyle (2004), according to the results of different researches, introduces humor as a source of happiness. It can have an important role in increasing social coherence. Laughter is expressing positive emotion. Humor has a causal impart on temper and happiness and it reduces the effect of stressors.

In studies of hundreds of adults, happiness was found to be related to humor. The ability to laugh, whether at life itself or at a good joke, is a source of life satisfaction. Indeed, those who enjoy silly humor are one-third more likely to feel happy⁶⁷.

Your smile makes other people happy, which in turn makes you happy⁶⁸.

Every day yourself some time to enjoy, to be silly, to laugh⁶⁹.

Regularly having fun is one of the five factors in leading a satisfied life. Individuals who spend time just having fun are 20 percent more likely to feel happy basis and 36 percent more likely to feel comfort with their age and stage in life⁷⁰.

Self- Efficacy and Education

Happy people tend to feel more empowered and more in control of their lives than unhappy people do. They are also more likely to feel they have the skills, knowledge and motivation to exert that control- a sense that psychologists refer to as self- efficacy. Research shows that young people who report feeling high self-efficacy are happier on average. Education obviously has a major role to play in developing self-efficacy and a sense of control⁷¹.

Don't write yourself off. If you don't believe in yourself, you won't be able to function⁷².

Across all ages and all groups, a solid belief in one's own abilities increases life satisfaction by about 30 percent, and makes us happier both in our home lives and in our work lives⁷³.

Believing in yourself means thinking you are a capable person, not that you will never make a mistake. Don't think that because you are a talented person you cannot learn from others or you should never be criticized or others want to know how highly you think of yourself⁷⁴.

In studies on married couples, a significant connection is found between rigidity in one partner and discord in the relationship. Where one partner is convinced, he or she is correct and therefore not open to suggestion, the length of time disagreements continue is about three times as great⁷⁵.

When things go peppery, we sometimes start a list of ways we failed, ways we caused the problem. This kind of thinking not only can upset us; it also can keep us from being able to function. The truth is that any situation is the result of some things that are in your control and some things that are out of your control. Do not delude yourself into thinking a bad situation is completely of your making. Remember, it makes more sense to deal with outcomes than with fault⁷⁶.

Happiness does not depend on how bad things happen to an individual. What is more important is whether an individual tends to make negative conclusions about him- or herself when negative events occur. Individuals who think of themselves as the cause of negative events are 43 percent less likely to be satisfied than those who do not⁷⁷.

We need self-reinforcement, a belief in ourselves that is strong and unwavering. Be ready to pick yourself up when you are feeling down⁷⁸.

The tendency to reinforce one's own self-confidence improves life satisfaction by about 20 percent for both men and women⁷⁹.

Love of Learning

Someone who loves learning for its own sake, and therefore continues to learn throughout their life, is much better equipped to be happy, healthy and successful than someone whose learning gland withers the day they leave school. A love of learning remains central to happiness and health throughout the lifespan, including in old age⁸⁰.

Social and Emotional Competency

One of the characteristics of happy people is having at least moderate levels of social and emotional competence. To be happy, one needs basic social skills to form and maintain personal relationships, together with the emotional literacy to understand and deal with the emotional literacy to understand and deal effectively with his or her own feelings and other people's⁸¹.

Take the time to help, comfort, or just be with those you care about when they are in need. You will feel good about your efforts, and it will bring you an even closer relationship⁸².

The need for support or the number of problems individuals face is a less strong predictor of their happiness than the amount of support available to them⁸³.

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6. Hoggard, 2005, PP. 190– 192.
7. Martin, 2006, PP. 114 & 117.
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10. Martin, 2006, P. 57.
11. Niven, 2000.
12. Lipkus, Dalbert, and Siegler 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
13. Niven, 2000.
14. Hogstel and Curry 1995; cited in Niven, 2000.
15. Martin, 2006, P. 56.
16. Martin, 2006, PP. 56.
17. Martin, 2006, P. 62.
18. Lepper 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
19. Niven, 2000.
20. Rahman and Khaleque 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
21. Batson, 1987.
22. Clark & Reis, 1988.
23. Crandall, 1984.
24. Hoggard, 2005, P. 50.
25. Hoggard, 2005, PP. 51 & 54.
26. Hoggard, 2005, P. 113.
27. Hoggard, 2005, P. 172.
28. Martin, 2006. P. 74.
29. Martin, 2006, PP. 80– 81.
30. Martin, 2006, PP. 60– 61.
31. Magen, Birenbaum, and pery 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
32. Niven, 2000.
33. Niven, 2000.
34. Lackovic–Grgin and Dekovic 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
35. Niven, 2000.
36. Niven, 2000.
37. O’Connor 1995; cited in Niven, 2000.
38. Niven, 2000.
39. Sugarman 1997; cited in Niven, 2000.
40. Hoggard, 2005, P. 173.
41. Niven, 2000.
42. Garrett 1996; Panos 1997; cited in Niven, 2000.

43. Niven, 2000.
44. Williams, Haber, Weaver, and Freeman 1998; cited in Niven, 2000.
45. Hoggard, 2005, PP.64–71.
46. Martin, 2006, PP. 144–156.
47. Martin, 2006, PP.68.
48. Niven, 2000.
49. Hong and Giannakopoulos 1995; cited in Niven, 2000.
50. Gershuni, 1994.
51. Hoggard, 2005, PP.72&76.
52. Martin, 2006, pp.53.
53. Niven,2000.
54. Bailey and Miller 1998; cited in Niven,2000.
55. Niven, 2000.
56. Rogers 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
57. Hoggard, 2005, PP. 156–157.
58. Martin, 2006, P. 109.
59. Niven, 2000.
60. Fontane 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
61. Hoggard, 2005, P. 149.
62. Martin, 2006, P. 108.
63. Niven, 2000.
64. Pilcher and Ott 1998 Panos 1997; cited in Niven, 2000.
65. Martin, 2006, P. 105.
66. Hoggard, 2005, P. 167.
67. Solomon1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
68. Niven, 2000.
69. Niven, 2000.
70. Lepper 1996; cited in Niven, 2000.
71. Martin, 2006, PP. 55–56.
72. Niven, 2000.
73. Myers and Diener1995; cited in Niven, 2000.
74. Niven, 2000.
75. Botwin, Buss, and Shackelford1997; cited in Niven, 2000.
76. Niven, 2000.
77. Panos 1997; cited in Niven, 2000.
78. Niven, 2000.
79. Seybolt and Wagner 1997; cited in Niven, 2000.
80. Martin, 2006, P. 208.
81. Martin, 2006, P 50.
82. Niven, 2000.
83. Jou and Fukada 1997; cited in Niven, 2000.

It can be concluded from this research that according to Islam, Muslim and non-Muslim, Iranian and non-Iranian, ancient and modern philosophers all over the world, whose viewpoints were investigated in this book, and all psychological researches stated in this research, spirituality and morality cause humans to reach happiness. In more concrete terms, they all believe that moral virtues, righteousness,

wisdom and knowledge have a very definite and certain influence in leading human beings to happiness. The Qur'an and the Islamic traditions emphasize the role of faith, righteous deeds, fearing of God and patience and endurance against hardships in leading man to feel happy.

Most of philosophers believe that these characteristics have a very high impact on man's happiness. Therefore, we should come to know that it is impossible for us to achieve happiness unless we acquire such properties, i.e. other worldly and abject things can't reach man to happiness, although some humans may mistake their superficial and sensory pleasures for original and stable happiness. It can also be deduced that one of the most important aims of man's creation has been leading him to happiness. Thus, religion and philosophy have confirmed it as the goal of man's creation, and have specified given methods for reaching humans to that goal. In other words, reaching happiness is possible for man but through particular ways and methods.

Happiness is movements in the which terminates to the purpose for which we have been created, that is man's perfection which this in itself can cause happiness, and the happiness in turn is of the highest ranks of perfection and elevation.

There is a close relationship between knowledge, beauty, goodness and happiness. The more man reaches to knowledge beauty and goodness, the happier he will be and the happier he is, the more he will reach to knowledge, beauty, and goodness.

All the religion and philosophy can be summarized in knowledge, beauty and goodness. Thus, through a real religiosity in the real sense of the word, one can reach to happiness so, that kind of religiosity can reach men to happiness which is based on knowledge and philosophy.

There are some characteristics which whatever they increase, the happiness will be increased as well, such as moral virtues, goodness and righteousness, but there are some other things that whatever they increase, man's happiness is not necessarily increased, such as money and wealth that possessing an average of them is sufficient.

It can also be deduced from this book that there is nothing more important in leading man to happiness than knowledge and cognition, because if there is a real knowledge in a person, there will be all the good characteristics such as religiosity, morality and spirituality in him as well, i.e. those factors which can definitely cause happiness.

Happiness is the best standard and Criteria in judgment about the individuals' personalities and behaviors. That is, if a person has not yet attained happiness, his personality and behavior is not completely confirmable.

Unconfirmable grief and sorrows are the definite symptoms of spirit and soul illness, i.e. the person has serious problems in those factors which can cause happiness in him, that is, more virtuous, religiosity, etc. Therefore, he or she soon tries to solve the problems and move on the desirable route.

We can see that happiness is not in searching for the external factors, rather it exists in the internal factors which are mostly in man's ability to acquire them without paying a high price and cost.

When man reaches a position on which he is as he should be, and he behaves as it deserves, and he sees the universe as it is, he will be happy in such a status. So happiness is hidden in gaining a philosophical insight to the being and universe, and is obtained through nurturing different aspects of the individual's personality and nature, and so it is quite consistent with man's nature and personality, and it differs materially with artificial and superficial pleasures.

Making other people happy can cause us to be happy or our happiness to be increased, and it is one of the signs of a person who has reached happiness that he wishes to make other people happy.

As we should consider the factors which can cause human beings' happiness, we should also pay attention to those factors which can cause the peoples' sorrows and grief and according to the viewpoints of religious text and philosophers, are: unbelief, sin, wrongdoing.

We should also know this fact that those who can reach happiness want knowledge, morality, etc, because these things are respectful and important in themselves, not they want to use these things as tools for reaching fame, money, etc.

Most of philosophers also believe that: spiritual and intellectual pleasures are much higher than sensory pleasures, humans should live in such a manner that they can reach happiness, no pleasure is comparable to reaching God, human beings reach recognition of God when they are free from flaunting and seeking fame. Recognition of God is the highest happiness.

The final happiness for Humans in the hereafter through observing religious teachings, happiness is the highest possible thing for human being; happiness is in the perfection of man's speculative and practical powers. This is also all that the results of the most recent psychological researches about happiness show: the improvement of religious, moral and scientific attitude and behavior could have a relationship with an increase in happiness or can cause an increase in it. Thus, it is up to all of people not to mistake happiness for superficial pleasures and not to seek happiness from worldly and material affairs. The people of the world should try to avoid differences by trying to seek and reach the real happiness which is the shared aim of all human beings.

Considering the religious and philosophical viewpoints, confirm this fact that knowledge, religiosity, morality and spirituality have a very important role in leading humans to happiness. Therefore, religious, moral and spiritual education, or education in general, play a crucial role in creating and increasing happiness in individuals and society.

Thus it is suggested, according to the results of this research, that much more attention to be paid to education if we want to have happier students and finally happier people, i.e. educational goals, teaching evaluation methods, educational contents, educational spaces, communications, etc. to be formulated in

such a manner that increase the happiness in students and decrease grief and sorrow in society.

It is also suggested to the future researchers to investigate each of these issues, i.e. educational goals, teaching methods, evaluations, contents, spaces, etc. to what extent have had influence on increasing or decreasing happiness in students and it is also suggested to investigate about this fact that what educational things have impact on increasing and decreasing the students' happiness, and have educational goals, contents, etc. be formulated so that the happiness of the students may be increased.

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