

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

www.ChooseHappiness.net

About Happiness

From

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Outline

About Happiness

- The cause of our emotions is our beliefs about tomorrow.
- Your knowing you are going to be happy for the rest of your life would make you happy from this moment on.
- There is no problem with feeling happiness.
- The feeling of happiness is a feeling of freedom to the nth degree.
- If I don't believe unhappiness can reach out to get me, I could never fear another person's unhappiness.
- Happiness is just being happy. There is no question of your being wrong.
- There are lots of things that you simply value negatively.

Introduction

In this lecture, Bruce Di Marsico introduces and discusses more about what happiness is and how unhappiness happens.

He describes the feeling of happiness as a feeling of perfect freedom, which is our inherent state, and how there is never a problem with feeling happy.

He talks about how we feel “right now” as we predict we will feel in the future.

He addresses the myth that another person’s unhappiness could be contagious. He also distinguishes between unhappiness, and happily valuing something negatively; for example, happily deciding that you don’t want to see a particular movie.

READINGS

About Happiness

The point I'm trying to make is that the Option Method is to help people to not need help. Do you understand that's essential? Because people believe they need help to not be unhappy.

Heretofore on this planet one has believed that the only way to stop being unhappy was to have power over those things that make us unhappy; that the only way to not be unhappy was to have power over those things that are the cause of our unhappiness or may be the cause of our unhappiness. That's what we sought. Love to cure all the unhappinesses of not being loved. Health to cure all the unhappinesses of illness and disease and pain. Wealth to cure all the unhappinesses of not being able to have the things you want. And they were the answers, the only answers we could have.

So people would try to have any of those three things and they'd always usually be the center of people's fears and unhappiness.

I haven't used the word fear, but I'm going to. Unhappinesses work in a certain way. They work because they're in the future. The only cause of unhappiness is believing you're going to be unhappy. [Believing] that in the future you'll be unhappy. Only a belief in the future can make you unhappy.

I love my dirty little tricks and one is this: If you knew at this time tomorrow that you'd be really unhappy what would you be now?

If you believed you were going to be unhappy tomorrow. You'd be unhappy now. You can't believe you're going to be unhappy tomorrow and wait. You just can't. You're going to be unhappy now. That's the way it works. Even though the unhappiness is now, the belief is about the future.

If you believe that this time tomorrow you are going to be radiantly happy how would you feel now? Radiantly happy. It doesn't even have to happen for us to feel it. The thing is in our believing and our feeling. The dynamics, the cause of our emotions is in our beliefs about tomorrow. There never has to be a tomorrow. That's why you can be happy forever because today you can be happy forever.

It's your knowing that you're going to be happy forever, which can make you extraordinarily happy right now. Your knowing you're going to be happy for

the rest of your life would make you happy from this moment on, wouldn't it? So that's all you're missing. All you need is to know you're going to be happy for the rest of your life. That's all.

Okay. Well maybe we can do something about that. The Option Method comes in there because what you're suffering from is believing that there'll be some limit to your happiness and that you will be unhappy from time to time and that you won't be happy for the rest of your life.

Or perhaps you fully expected to be happy now, forever, and for the rest of your life. Well you can be, but you can't be happy if you are always looking to see if happiness is still there or if it has disappeared.

Happiness is something that happens to you in the same way unhappiness did. It has to be felt as happening to you or it won't feel like unhappiness. It won't feel sincere. It won't feel real and I have no quarrel with how we feel happiness. That's not a problem.

Happiness generally is going to have to feel like it happens to you. You're not going to be able to crank it up because it works by the same mechanisms. The same dynamics as I like to say. Since we don't have machinery parts in us I like to talk about dynamics, which means thoughts working against other thoughts with other thoughts and in conjunction with other thoughts, as opposed to other thoughts, in addition to other thoughts. Those are called dynamics.

All the various thoughts sorting themselves out is the dynamics of a human being and all the various motions within the body are the symptoms of those dynamics.

Happiness is of course a symptom of a certain dynamic that takes place within the body. People will like to talk to you about certain hormones that cause that feeling of happiness, but actually it only simulates it and it's similar to it. It's not the same. The feeling of happiness is a feeling of freedom to the Nth degree, extreme freedom. That's not the feeling of being high. That simulates it and appears like it.

A person who's really happy really knows that they're really free. I'm using the word "really" in order to underline it. That's all. You can forget the underlines. A person who's happy knows that they're free. That is what we call the most wonderful, beautiful feeling in the world. So nobody can define happiness for you. That's stupid. I would never define happiness for you. For all I know it tastes horrible to me.

Happiness is the taste in your own mouth. Remember that. No one else can know that sweetness, that joy because it's your freedom. The only happiness you can ever relate to, the only happiness you can ever know, except perhaps for God's if there is a God who can do this, is your own happiness. That's the only happiness you can know.

If you knew another person's happiness you'd be happy and you'd be knowing your happiness. So happiness is yours and it's like the taste in your own mouth. No one else can judge it and no one else can experience it. Now we can see symptoms of it and be glad for that. 'Hey, you look like you're in a good mood today, Charlie.' Something like that.

But nonetheless the real happiness is in the person. Well, the same is true about unhappiness, regardless of what you hear, unhappiness is the taste in the unhappy person's mouth. Although you can sympathize and although you can reproduce those feelings in yourself, you can be sensitive, you can be hyper-sensitive, but that's like anything else.

You're willing to feel that way, but if you're a psychic actually you only feel it physically. You don't need to feel it as a judgment you made if you didn't make that judgment.

Let's say you walk in a room with a whole bunch of depressed people and all of a sudden you sense that there is depression in the room. You have no intention of being depressed, but somehow you sense it physically. Well as long as you can tell the difference between what you're sensing and what you're creating, no problem.

Well since you wouldn't have a reason to create the feeling you would know you were sensing it. If you don't have a reason to create the feeling, well then you might be like half the hypochondriacs in the world. They don't like the vibes in this room. So, that's just agoraphobia. That's just another form of unhappiness and fear.

They're sensing it and believing and are afraid that it'll affect them. The only reason I'd be afraid of unhappiness is if I thought it could reach out to me and grab my heart, but if I don't have any such belief that any unhappiness in a person could do that, I could never fear another person's unhappiness, right? That's how we can practice the Option Method by the way.

I've seen the most extreme unhappinesses that you can imagine on this

planet and my desire was to help them; not to root it out of myself somehow.

Compassion and sympathy are two different things. Compassion is wanting to help a person know, who wants to know, that maybe they don't have to be unhappy since what I know is that their unhappiness is based on some beliefs of theirs. But the way I would put it to a person who believes that they have to be unhappy in the first place, compassion would be helping somebody who feels that they have no choice about being unhappy to see how the dynamics work. How they brought it into being by their beliefs.

Now for people to say, or for any of us to say we don't intend to be unhappy anytime we're unhappy that's just simply not true. If we look close enough you'll see there's something good about it. There's something that we hope it'll do. Something acceptable in it or we wouldn't be having it.

We're not just merely terrified of it and if we are just merely terrified of it that's because we believe that being terrified of it has got some salvific grace—that there's something healing about being terrified about unhappiness.

So there are people who hate unhappiness. That's not new. Or they're hating sin or anything else. They think by doing such a thing that they're somehow creating a more healthy salvific atmosphere. That's all. That's just a belief. That's all. They're not doing that. They're just experiencing fear and hatred.

The other part of unhappiness is fear, and fear and unhappiness are the same. Fear is being afraid of being unhappy.

Unhappiness is being afraid that you're going to be happy when you shouldn't be. I didn't tell you that before. I just snuck it in. But that's what we found out through the third question. "Why are you afraid not to be unhappy?"

We find out that in the long run, bottom line, although we don't really explain this to ourselves when we get unhappy, see, because remember unhappiness makes you stupid. So we're not so smart as to explain this to ourselves or we wouldn't do it. Unhappiness happens in the dark. It happens in the half light of reason. It happens somewhere in that period when you're waking up in the morning and you wake up. It's not something you can see clearly or you wouldn't do it. "Oh yes, I think I'll drive a nail through my head." No, I don't think so.

It happens in the half light. And so the reasoning is not very good because unhappiness makes us stupid. We are afraid to be happy. What we're afraid of is

that if we were happy we'd be a way we shouldn't be.

So I said fear was the fear of becoming unhappy, but unhappiness is the fear of not being unhappy. Understand me? Even if you don't understand how it goes I'll try to explain it, but you know the words so far.

Start with this. First of all, no one is afraid of poverty. People are afraid of being poor and unhappy. No one is afraid of pain. People are afraid of pain and the unhappiness that comes with it. Nobody's afraid of loss, but the loss and unhappiness. Nobody's afraid of death, but the death and the unhappiness that comes with it. Nobody's afraid of dying, but the unhappiness that comes with it.

There is no thing that any human being is afraid of. So it is very easy to do the Option Method. We ask people what they're afraid of and it doesn't matter what they say because they're not afraid of that.

None of you are afraid and have ever been afraid of anything you said you were afraid of. Did you know that? You never were afraid of anything you said you were afraid of. All you were afraid of was the unhappiness that you thought went with it. That's the rationale of the Option Method.

And why wouldn't you be? So whatever you thought would bring unhappiness with it you'd be afraid of. Even love can be frightening. We put people down. It's current.

Say people are afraid of commitment as if that was some kind of a bad thing, but they're not afraid of the commitment part. They're afraid of the bad part. They're afraid of whatever that is in there that'll make them unhappy, which is probably breaking the commitment or being turned off to the commitment. All commitments are made as a person honestly estimating themselves.

It seems to them that they could love you forever when they say that, just before sunrise or something, or just before that moment that Meatloaf talks about.

We believe ourselves. We don't necessarily mean to lie. We really do believe that we're going to love this forever and love that forever and be here forever and do that for as long as we live. We're talking about present conditions staying the same, forever.

It doesn't count you're turning into a witch or some kind of a bastard, see. It isn't mean to count to that, even though they say "oh, you'll never be a bitch in my eyes." Those are people who just don't understand you. Well those are

wonderful things to hear and fools mean them sometimes, but they're not lying and they're not afraid of commitment in that sense.

What they're afraid of is that what they're promising isn't what you think they're promising and they're afraid that you think they're promising something other than what they're saying. What they're saying is "I, as I know myself, as I believe myself to be, will do this and will do that. I'll see you Saturday in front of the movie theater at eight o'clock." I honestly thought I would do that and if I don't show up Saturday at eight o'clock it isn't because I'm afraid of commitment. It's because of whatever it's because of.

Now, if it's because of between now and Saturday, I start thinking of you, and every time I think of going to the theater with you, I start thinking "What am I going to do after the theater with you? Oh no!" Then I think it again.

"Okay, I'm going to meet her at the theater", and then I think about *after* the theater and--"no, no". Every time I come up with a "no, no" I come closer and closer to not coming at eight o'clock. I wasn't a liar. I was just headstrong.

Maybe I wasn't fully honest of what it would all entail. Maybe I didn't think I'd look. So all I'm saying is that people are accused of things that are actually very nice things and then they're being accused of being afraid of those things, which they really aren't afraid of. They're only afraid of them under another name.

Nobody's afraid of commitment to something that they love. So, you know what I'm saying? So the word fear can't be used that way.

What I'm trying to say is that unhappiness is the fear of happiness. Fear is the fear of unhappiness. In other words, you were never afraid of any of the things you've ever thought you were afraid of. All you were afraid of was the unhappiness that you thought would go with them. That's just simply a truth.

There are no exceptions to it. I've never heard an exception. There are no possibilities of exceptions. Feel free if you come up with any.

And happiness is just that. Being happy. We all know what happy means and it's feeling really free. There is no question of your being wrong, period. There's just no question that the way you feel is the best way to feel. No question. And the point of "no question" is very important, because the Option Method is questions.

So happiness is when unhappiness is no longer a question and you don't need the Option Method to know that you don't have to question your happiness because there's no unhappiness to question.

You would never question your happiness, right? If you're happy you don't question your happiness. So it's something we don't discuss in the early stages of the practice of the Option Method at all because first of all we unhappy people are not really competent to discuss happiness and its causes and lack of causes and where it leads to and what it'll do. No, no, no. That's not the point. You'll be happy. You know how to be happy. And you will know how to be happy.

That's not the problem. The problem is, you're thinking that you know you have to be unhappy. The fear of unhappiness causes unhappiness. That can be easily understood pretty quickly in our lives.

So that every time you're unhappy it's because you're fearing unhappiness. That's all. Even if you're fearing that you're stupid and you didn't learn the Option Method correctly. That's good. That can keep you unhappy for the rest of your life.

Anything that you say, anything that you can identify where you believe it's natural for you to have to be unhappy. I suggest that it's questionable. That it can be questioned. I suggest, and I say to you, "but what if what you're feeling is just really a result of a belief you have or a judgment you're making?"

"Would you like to examine it for the possibility that maybe you could feel better?" And that's what the Option Method practitioner offers. Would you like to examine what you call your unhappiness to see if you could be happier? That's all.

So in the Option Method what I want to know is that if a person is asking for help with their unhappiness or they're asking for advice. Sometimes people hear that there's a wise person around and they want to know whether they need therapy or not, whether they're normal or not or whether they should leave their husband or not or whether they should quit their job or not.

They've heard that there's a wise person around and they want to use them and pick their brains or they've learned that they've decided that they were too negative and they want to be positive. Whatever that means. That makes me dizzy that somehow being positive is better than being negative. I don't think so.

I think that there are things that we love feeling positive about and there are things that we love that we feel negative about and that doesn't have anything to do

with unhappiness.

You probably have very few positive feelings about being run over by a bus. I doubt it. Unless you value yourself as fertilizer. If you promised your parents fertilizer, I can see your point.

But there are lots of things that you simply value negatively. That's not a problem. But people come to what they think a wise person is looking for all kinds of possibilities and all I'm interested in is their unhappiness. That's my only field of competence.

People in the Option Method do not interpret dreams, do not lend you rent money, do not give you advice about your guru, do not try to substitute for your sacraments at church, don't try to take the place of your parents. I don't even like to give geographical directions because I'm not all that good at it.

But giving advice is not our field. That's all. It's just not our field and we just want to keep it straight that why you're here is, if you're a client of mine, is because you want help with your unhappiness. You want help to be less unhappy.

Questions for Reflection

Emotions and the future

- What if you knew that tomorrow, something terrible was going to happen to you. Think of something specific. How would you feel now?
- What if you knew that tomorrow, something wonderful was going to happen to you. Think of something specific. How would you feel now?
- What if you knew that *forever*, every day from tomorrow on, something wonderful was going to happen to you. Think of something specific. How would you feel now?

Fear of happiness

- Are you afraid that feeling happy could be bad for you? For example, that if you felt happy all the time, you would neglect your physical safety? What are your fears?
- Can you imagine feeling perfectly happy, and also choosing to be good for yourself in all the ways you would like to be good for yourself? For example, can you imagine feeling perfectly happy and taking care of your safety?

The feeling of freedom

- Consider the verbs of necessity: “Have To”, “Must”, “Ought”, “Should.” These are defined as verbs that specify limitations on your freedom to act. Make a list in response to these questions:
 - What do you have to do?
 - What must you do?
 - What ought you do?
 - What should you do?
- For each item, consider these two questions:
 - If you want to do something, why do you need a “should” to do it?
 - If you don’t want to do something, why should you?

Make a list of things you happily value negatively (for example, foods you don’t like, books you don’t want to read)

Meditation for the Week

- No one is afraid of poverty, but of being poor and unhappy.
- No one is afraid of pain, but of being in pain and unhappy.
- No one is afraid of loneliness, but of being alone and unhappy.