

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

www.ChooseHappiness.net

More on Unhappiness as a Motivator

From

Monday Night Group, 1973

Bruce Di Marsico

Outline

- We believe that unhappiness is necessary to motivate ourselves
- We want our wanting to be clear; we make it clearer by increasing fear.
- Unhappiness gives us extra motivation that we don't need.
- Since we can't know the future, we use unhappiness because we fear making the wrong decision for our future.
- Having reasons to be unhappy reassures us that we want better.
- Ultimately, unhappiness is a motivator for achieving happiness

Introduction

In this excerpt from the 1973 Monday Night Study Groups, Bruce Di Marsico discusses more on unhappiness as a motivator.

If we are unhappy, we believe that unhappiness is necessary to motivate ourselves towards what we want more than other things we also want. We want our wanting to be clear; we make it clearer by increasing fear. But unhappiness gives us extra motivation that we don't need, since we are already wanting more, what we want *more!*

Since we can't know the future, we also use unhappiness to try to guarantee we make the right decision for our future. This is also unnecessary. We already know everything about the future that we know. If we want to gather more information before making a decision, we already know everything we know that would help us make the decision to gather more information before deciding.

Having reasons to be unhappy reassures us that we want better for ourselves, and so, ultimately, unhappiness is a motivator for achieving happiness. But it is unnecessary, since happiness is exactly what we want the most!

READINGS

Believing that unhappiness is necessary to motivate ourselves

We want our wanting to be clear, with no alternative choices, conflicts or temptations.

The way we make it clearer is by increasing fear. Why do we ever begin that? Where did it ever start? Why do we use unhappiness at all? Why do we use unhappiness in any particular incident? Because we believe in it.

Why do we keep being afraid we won't have enough motivation? Because we've given up in the past. It's a cycle. I've proven to myself that I don't have motivation because I've made things very painful, and then stopped because it was so painful. For example, I wanted to be closer to you, and I made that painful, so I gave up on you and went to somebody else. That was my proof to myself that I do give up on what I want.

If events change and what we are doing becomes not worth it that's fine. But usually events don't change, we start changing: We become more unhappy about the traffic, and now it becomes less and less worth it to go to work—but maybe the traffic didn't get worse, it might even have gotten better.

It wasn't that we just simply decided it wasn't worth it. It was because we've been giving ourselves fear and we sold out. It was not that it *really* wasn't worth it, it is just that I made it so painful that it became not worth it. So I'll start the same thing all over again with somebody else or in another circumstance because I know that I'm the villain in this. If it is *really* was not worth it I wouldn't keep doing that sort of thing.

It is fear of being distracted from what you really want more, and in the example that I gave the fear was that I'll be distracted from wanting of your approval into wanting to be honest, when what I want even more is your approval.

This is all under the heading of motivating myself to continue wanting. I become afraid that I will want less rather than more. A corollary fear to this is that somehow I won't know what is more important, all based on fear that I won't continue wanting what is more important.

When you think you're not going to do what you want to do, you call it evil, or unhappiness. You're using the whole belief in unhappiness to motivate yourself, which is based on a lack of self-confidence. The fact that you would dare to think that you might not do what you want to do, you're using that to make sure that you keep wanting to do it. You're giving yourself an extra motivation that you don't need, but you don't know that because you believe you'll give up.

Fear of making the wrong decision

The corollary fear is that I somehow won't know what is more important. "Important" is that which will lead to getting more, that which will be a better preparation for our future life. And therefore, I'm afraid that I will choose the less important thing, the "wrong" thing, and I use this fear to ensure that I keep wanting the "better" thing. And it is not as important that I get what is better in this case, but that if I don't get it, at least it is not a result of my not wanting it. If I don't know the best thing to want at a given moment, in other words the way of getting more ultimately, then what becomes the most important thing is that at least I keep wanting to know what are the best things to want, so that if I can't know right now what the best things are to want at least I must keep alive the desire to know what the best things are, because otherwise without that, I'll *never* know what the best things are.

This is the fear of making the wrong decision. I become afraid that even if I knew what the better choice was I wouldn't choose it, that I wouldn't do what is more important.

I don't know what will lead to more. I don't know what's the best thing to want. I just don't know the future. I don't know with the facts that I have got which will lead to *more* for me, what choice would be the better prerequisite preparation for my happiness. Since I don't know, I become unhappy in order to decide. I fear that in the future I may believe that the other choice, whichever one I didn't choose, would have led to getting me more happiness, and I'm afraid that I might regret my choice. I use the fear to help me. I'm afraid that in the future I'll say, "I should have known better."

In order to reassure myself that I really want whatever is *more*, I must rack my brain and become afraid so that I will be able to say, "I couldn't have known better, I did the best I could have possibly done at the time." I want to assure myself that I don't want to be self-defeating. In case the future comes and it turns out that the other choice would have been the better choice I want to be able to say, "It wasn't because I screwed myself."

So I use fear of not knowing what is more important to *decide* what is more important, to assure myself that I don't want to be self-defeating, and that I take my wanting *more* very seriously. I am afraid that I only made the wrong decision because I really didn't *want* to know what was the better thing for me. I'm afraid of seeing that I'm really a self-defeating son-of-a-bitch.

Having reasons to be unhappy

I'll believe there must be a reason why I'm unhappy, because I will always want more, and if there is no reason to be unhappy, if I don't conjure up a reason, then there seems to be no way to make certain that I keep wanting more. That's why everybody's got a reason why they're unhappy—but it is all bull. When I am conducting a session, I allow for each person's integrity and never push them, and everybody's got their own reason. The ultimate reason is that, even if there wasn't a reason they want there to be one. And many, many times, always in my practice we've come down to: "I don't know, I don't have the reason, but there must be one. There is no reason to be unhappy about this, but I'm unhappy about this"—coming up with good reason that is never really a good reason when they explore it.

Always looking for a reason to be unhappy, always wanting to believe that there's a reason to be unhappy. That way I can reassure myself that I want better, because I'm afraid that I won't keep wanting what is better unless I fear.

The two important things that we want in general: the most important is that at least I assure myself *that* I want. Secondly, my unhappiness at least keeps my wanting alive. Then if I keep my wanting alive, at least then maybe I can know what I want. This is more important than, for instance, a particular thing. A particular thing would be to want a cigarette, to want a drink, to want to walk, to want clothing, to want anything in particular. I'll give up any of those, in fact, I'll screw myself left and right, I'll give up everything, I'll even give up life as long as I keep on wanting –I won't give up wanting.

Unhappiness is a motivator for achieving happiness

I want what I want and I want to keep my wanting alive. It becomes obvious in many cases that this is so painful when there is a deep depression where a person just doesn't want anything. Their scared to death of wanting, because what they want so much, and what we all want so much, is happiness. Ultimately, unhappiness is a motivator toward achieving happiness. What's beyond all these wantings is the wanting of happiness, and that really can conflict with wanting when you're using unhappiness as a motivator for achieving happiness.

I gave you a model all the various ways how we use unhappiness to motivate ourselves and others. We use it motivate ourselves to either get what we want or at least to keep the wanting alive. In my continuing to keep wanting alive the most important thing is that I keep wanting, so what I'll use will be the fear of giving up wanting. Another way of keeping my wanting alive is to keep the importance of the desired thing in my mind, to decide that thing I want is important. I create that by one of two ways: by comparative consistency or by prerequisite preparation.

Happy people do that too, but this is the way in unhappiness we pervert these against us. Certainly in happiness we can invert things: good is not losing a little, better is to not lose more.

Questions for Reflection

Note: in this case, the questions for reflection are an excerpts from the lecture by Bruce Di Marsico

So now make this become real for you. Pick anything, anything that anybody might be unhappy about, and I mean anything. Find out how it is used as a motivator. If you do that right now you'll find out that you're practicing the Option Method. You will all be inventing the Option Method right now for yourself without ever having been told what it is all about. If you just try to find out how unhappiness is used as a motivator, pick any unhappiness, try to find out how it is used as a motivator, you will be creating the Option Method.

Say to yourself, "How do I use unhappiness to motivate myself?" And you say, "Here's an example" and you give an example. And get really deep into that experience.

The idea is, "I use unhappiness to motivate myself."

"Oh, really? How? How am I using it now?"

Meditation for the Week

- Ultimately, unhappiness is a motivator toward achieving happiness.