

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

www.ChooseHappiness.net

More on how Unhappiness happens

From

November 11, 1995 Lecture

Bruce Di Marsico

Outline

More perspective on how unhappiness happens

- Finding that you don't have to be unhappy about one thing generalizes to some extent.
- “Want to” is mistaken for “have to”.
- We hope unhappiness will be good for us.
- You can always act unhappy if you find it useful!

Introduction

In this talk, Bruce Di Marsico offers more perspective on how unhappiness happens.

He discusses how finding out that you don't have to be unhappy about one thing generalizes—for example, when you are not unhappy about how someone at work treats you, you will often find that you are not unhappy about how anyone at work treats you.

He points out that when people say they “have to” go to work, they *want to* go to work, because they don't want the consequences of not going to work.

Finally, he notes that, from the perspective of having an effect on the world, you can always act unhappy if you find it useful, and it will have the same affect as actual unhappiness—without the unhappiness part!

READINGS

More about how Unhappiness Happens

So we've got the basic fundamentals down; fear, unhappiness, learned, judgments, emotions, human beings, emotions and events. There are a few other kinds of insights that I'll be glad to share with you as they come up.

When a person learns that they don't have to be unhappy about something that usually has a resounding affect, like dominoes. You find that you don't have to be unhappy about one thing and that carries with it a whole bunch of other things that all of a sudden for some reason you don't have to be unhappy about.

You didn't look at your beliefs about them, but you're not unhappy about them anymore because somehow we peeled the onion and in uncovering why you're unhappy about [something else] you have probably touched on a number of things that you also had that rationale about.

So "dead cousins" probably applies also to dead mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers and dead pets; things like that, if you deal with that as an unhappiness.

Now there're other things. One of the things we know about people, since we know these are all choices, is that people are always doing what they want to do. Some people believe that they're doing what they should do, but that's still what they want to do. Some people believe they're doing what they shouldn't do, but they're still wanting to do it. So in either case all people are always doing what they want to do.

All people in all cases are always doing what they want to do and never not. If someone else is actually doing it--if somebody tied your hands up and are pulling them with cords--okay, we won't blame you for that.

But in so far as you're doing it, you're wanting to do it, even though you don't believe you're wanting to. So people might say to me, "I don't want to go to work today, but I have to", that's what they may say. They may even think they believe it, but the exact opposite is the truth.

The truth is that they want to go to work and they don't have to. See, because the same truth is true for everybody. Nobody has to do anything. They don't have to. Nobody can make them go to work. If you refuse to go to work,

you're not going to work, right? You don't have to go to work. You can stay home and take the consequences. You don't have to go to work.

So anybody who says they have to go to work is not telling the truth and that they say they'd really rather stay home is not telling the truth. The truth is they want to go to work because they want to get paid. They want to go to work for reasons that they have.

Now people don't just like to go to work just for the hell of going to work. There are very few jobs that engender that enthusiasm and certainly the people I talk to when they say they don't want to go to work, but they have to, they're talking about just the opposite of what I'm talking about.

The truth is they don't have to go to work, but they want to. And what do you think they're going to do? They're going to go to work because they want to, not because they have to. They're going to work in spite of the fact that they believe they have to because they have reasons—there're reasons why they want to and that is: they don't want to get fired, they want to have a good reputation with their boss, they want to collect their pay.

They don't want the consequences of not going to work. The same reasons people have for paying taxes. Everybody will say they don't want to pay their taxes, but they have to. I don't know anybody who doesn't want to pay their taxes and who wants the government on their back.

People want to pay their taxes for the same reasons. They don't want the consequences of not paying their taxes. Alright, maybe they don't want to pay every penny, but they want to pay a believable tax and fill out a believable tax form. And they could tell you that they hate doing this on April 15th or whenever it is, but they want to.

People are always doing what they want to even though they describe it as not what they want to, even the so called disgusting things that they steel up the courage to do. It's because they really believe that, all things equal, they want to do this.

They'd rather give mouth-to-mouth to this person than to see them die, etc. Something like that. Or eat this food that a foreigner eats, which they've never considered food before and to them has never been thought of as food, like say lamb's eyeballs.

They'd have to see and they'd have to believe that it won't hurt them and

that they want to be hospitable and gracious to their host or they want to be gracious to their hospitable host and they might in fact steel up the courage to do it, but they can only do it by wanting to. They can't do it by believing they have to or they should. The only way they can want to is to change their beliefs about it from non-food to food. They don't have to believe it's delicious, but they can't believe that it's abominable. You see?

But changing of beliefs is how we acculturate. We can be brought as six year olds to a foreign country and become one of them. We can be taught at 12 years old and become one of them. At about 13, probably not. That's only because we've already decided we're not going to allow more acculturation. We say we've had it with acculturation. I'm only going to become as learned as I want to be and only in the areas that I want to be.

But in the earlier stages we're willing to be persuaded that it's for our good, for our general good even if we can't spell it out. That's how we adapt our morality. That's the way we started believing that things were bad, even if we didn't understand how or why, we understood one thing: it was for our good that we did.

We knew that if we didn't we'd get something like "you don't believe that's bad?" and get some condemnation for not believing it's bad, even if we had no reason to believe it's bad. We knew we were at least expected to believe it was bad or to pretend we knew why it was bad.

So, we acculturate and only by changing our beliefs can we ever change our behaviors. But in the Option Method we're not here to help people eat lamb's eyeballs or spiders for that matter, but just not to be disgusted at the possibility if they don't want to be if they're going to be at a banquet at the embassy. It would be nice if they didn't vomit on the diplomats or any other person who eats in a way that's foreign to you.

Unhappiness is the fear of happiness because that's obvious. You never had to be unhappy about anything and yet you thought it was a good idea.

Whenever you were unhappy in your life you thought that somehow, "oh, that makes sense." Well why did it make sense? Because being happy was abominable and that's what we find out when we ask a person what are they afraid of if they're not unhappy.

If they were happy that would be abominable. And by abominable what I mean is the worst possible way of existence, that it would mean that you loved

what you hated and you hated what you loved and you liked what you didn't like and you didn't like what you did like and you wanted what you didn't want and you didn't want what you really did want.

That it could mean all that to just not be unhappy. That you were an insane monkey and you weren't far wrong because all people somehow resemble insane monkeys.

They operate apparently without much rhyme or reason and very quickly on the unhappy side. You can't trick people into being happy very easily, but you can trick them into being unhappy real easily. "Boo!" Most people reject and repulse, etc., and draw back.

So it can fairly be said that human beings have quite an affinity toward unhappiness. They've long believed in its value and they've long believed in its help. They've long turned to it for help. So it's not strange that anybody should have any trouble not being unhappy. They'd be almost quite unnatural.

But once we know what it's based on, the dynamics behind the unhappiness are just very simple. Well then we can question. Are you really afraid this would happen if you weren't unhappy? Couldn't you act unhappy? Would you have to really be unhappy? If you really think that's the only way of getting out of this hell hole, why couldn't you just sputter and stammer and spit and foam. Couldn't you act that out? Is there no saliva in you?

If you must act unhappy, act unhappy. If you're about to be attacked and you think that acting unhappy is going to really help, can't you throw up on your rapist? They won't want to have anything to do with you.

No one has to actually be unhappy. Any case for unhappiness is merely that, an attempt to make a case for unhappiness, because all you're saying is "this is what I want to achieve, this is what I want to get" and you can have that.

You do the unhappiness in order to get the thing that you want so that you won't be unhappy. That's pretty much like taking your head and throwing it down the block and then saying "excuse me, I've got to go down the block and get my head."

You're making yourself feel that you need something in order to have the right to go get it. When we turn it around and ask people what are they afraid of if they're not unhappy, is that you're taking away my justification for doing what I want. I'm going to be left with my mere selfish self that says I want this, I want

that, I want this, I want that. I have no precedence and I have no support.

But unhappiness, hey, it makes me unhappy. Nobody questions. I can have that ice cream cone before dinner. But the Good Humor truck is here, but the Good Humor truck is here. I saw my cousins do that, my nephews do that. They were perfectly happy and the Good Humor truck came before dinner in the neighborhood.

The Good Humor truck in New Jersey is an ice cream truck. He comes around with ice cream on a stick and stuff like that. These people who are old enough to know decided that to act unhappy might very well work and it does.

So unhappiness tends to then get looked at as if it's being used as a tool. I myself, although I have seen it continuously, don't believe it. I don't believe that people use unhappiness as a tool. I believe that people believe they're going to get unhappy. In fact I know that. They believe they're going to get unhappy and what they're using as a tool is letting you see it, the decision of whether to show it to you or not, whether to demonstrate their unhappiness in whatever form and how badly they need to do that.

Or else we're just talking about faking and that's fine. Then we're not talking about unhappiness. Pretending to be unhappy is just that and that's what I started with.

So since people can pretend to be unhappy and we've done that as children, we didn't ever have to really be unhappy, did we, in order to get what we wanted? The only thing that being unhappy does is keeps us from being happy. It punishes us. When we're unhappy, in effect we've punished ourselves. We've kept ourselves from being happy.

So it must be maybe that we believe that we ought to do that. It's not some small thing that's going on, except for those areas where you think you can afford it, but that we know is big danger. It's a slippery slope because once you think you can afford a little unhappiness, before you know it you're taking it in by the gallon.

Questions for Reflection

- What do you “have to” do?
- What would be the natural consequences of not doing what you “have to” do?
- Do you *want* to avoid what you believe to be the consequences of not doing what you “have to” do?
- Think of a time that you were angry. Could you have happily *acted* angry instead?

Meditation for the Week

- All people are always doing what they want to do.