

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

www.ChooseHappiness.net

Myths of Unhappiness

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Outline

- These are myths of unhappiness
 - Unhappiness exists.
 - The purpose of happiness is to insure against unhappiness.
 - If I do what I should do, I will be happy.
 - I must have things, power, or virtue in order to be happy.
 - My desires could lead me to unhappiness.
 - There is a right way of being.

Introduction

In this writing, Bruce Di Marsico outlines myths of unhappiness.

READINGS

Myths of Unhappiness

The belief that the good and beautiful things that we want or have are good because they ward off or strengthen us against "unhappiness" is the cause of unhappiness.

The truth is that all desires, and the desirability of things or circumstances, come from our happiness.

Conversely, those things and feelings which we don't desire, and those lacks of desire, also come from our happiness. In short, our recognition of what we want or don't want comes from our happiness, not as a need to avoid "unhappiness".

Unhappiness doesn't exist. It isn't real. It seems to exist as a result of a simple belief and the subsequent beliefs that naturally follow from that belief.

1) I can be "unhappy". "Unhappiness" exists and can happen to me naturally. Historically, this was proposed as "evil" exists and can happen to me.

2) Maybe I will be unhappy. I want to avoid "unhappiness". Maybe I can avoid it. Maybe I can strengthen myself against it, or insure against it

3) Happiness is a way of avoiding unhappiness. I can be happy (safely) if I do what will protect against unhappiness.

There are "right and wrong" ways of doing this. Getting what I want will protect me from unhappiness. If I want the "right" things, I will be glad if I get the "right" things.

This is the distinction of good vs. bad in “Good” wanting, thinking, having, etc. vs. “Bad” wanting, thinking, having, doing, etc.

4) If I want what I should want and If I have what I should want and If I behave (interiorly and exteriorly) as I should, I will be happy.

5) The reverse of the above is also held as true. If I don't want, have, behave as I should, I will become unhappy.

Therefore:

6) I must always be and have what I need in order to avoid unhappiness.

And then there is the intervening experience of life's “truth”: “I do not have the power to get or keep what I need to avoid all unhappiness”.

The real truth of life is: There is no need to avoid “unhappiness.”

There is, of course, never enough power to avoid what only exists in one's beliefs, as long as the belief is constantly carried, held, presented and given the existence of an absolute truth in one's mind.

Therefore:

7) Some unhappiness is inevitable and natural, but power and a strong personality (virtue in the old Roman - Greek - Hebrew sense) can go far in warding off much unhappiness, but only if I am vigilant about my desires and the direction they take me.

8) The fear of unhappiness is the same as the fear of losing or not maintaining the

power and virtue necessary to avoid unhappiness.

Life's experience shows that it takes "time" to acquire the strengths and protections needed, both 'things' in the world and in the personality. Love relationships are the perfect model of combining the need for control over the world and one's personality since it is believed that only by control over one's own personality can one earn the "good" personality of the beloved.

Perfectly satisfying sex would be the reward of doing and being the "right" way, which is the best way of eliciting the "right" responses from one's partner which is mutually satisfying (i.e. each "making" the other happy, therefore each making themselves happy in the "best" way, which is to be most satisfying to the other etc.)

9) Since I am not perfectly happy I cannot believe that I can ever know or be certain of what is the "best" to be or have. I can only hope that in time, I can get better, happier, more self-confident – more protected.

10) I cannot trust that all my desires will lead me to greater insurance against unhappiness. I will not trust that all my desires can perfectly lead me into the perfect avoidance of unhappiness.

Even my greatest joys must be hesitant or else I will be carried away to what might not give me the protection I need against unhappiness. I may find myself self-abandoning to joy and pleasure and great happiness, leaving myself unguarded, unarmed, and unprepared for life after these joys end. I will have tasted joy by dropping fear, which was my only protection against unhappiness.

My desires which promise the greatest happiness rewards are only good if they are what I should want and what I can believe will produce the benefits that they should.

Unbridled sexual desires are therefore the epitome of one's self-deceit and carelessness.

If I am to have careless sex then it must not be with someone I want to avoid unhappiness with, namely my beloved or my spouse. I don't want to mislead us into believing we can trust each other's every desire. I know I don't want my beloved to trust me more than I should be trusted.

12) We are all somewhat misled and misleading

Authoritative and authoritarian systems of belief (Philosophy, Theology, Religion, Psychology) become very attractive. They propose more success if we "connect" our values and beliefs to those of these systems. Since they all propose it is good to have fear and unhappiness as a way of avoiding greater unhappiness none will ever succeed.

Unsuccessful (in the sense of deprived of the fruits of the system or punished by the system) members of such systems (Political, Social, Religious, etc.) will find self-determination and personal freedom, reactionary "doing-my-own-thing., I'm my own God-guide, a more attractive alternative to the system.

This appeal is also very negative and based on fear: "I may not do much better but at least I will not be misled by another's self-deception that they know the right way."

13) There is one "right" way" or "There is no right way, there is just some belief system derived from one of these previously listed beliefs, which usually amounts to "doing one's best", or "following the Inner God" through evolution, etc. These Inner Gods of course also believe that unhappiness can and does exist.

14a) This is taught by Inner or outer Gods: one should not do everything one

wants only what one should want.

14b) One should be what one believes one should be.

(I replaced "I" with "one" to show how these beliefs shift from personal experience and advice to becoming points of view and absolute truths through which we see ourselves and the universe: thereby completing the self-alienation process).

15) The "good" things I want such as health and friendship, comfort, pleasure, and happiness etc. are good because they serve for avoiding unhappiness.

16) Happiness is the servant means of avoiding unhappiness.

Happiness is not "good" in itself (as indeed nothing is) but only insofar as it helps me to avoid the devil. Oops! I mean unhappiness.

Happiness and my desire for it are good (and holy) only insofar as they protect me from unhappiness (and evil) and help me get what is right to have, in order to avoid unhappiness.

Happiness and my wanting are only good if they help me get what I need.

Happiness and my wanting are only good if they can help to avoid unhappiness otherwise they deceive.

My happiness and my desires are only good If I can see them produce what I should feel and have.

Questions for Reflection

Which of these do you believe are the truth, not myths? Elaborate your understanding of why these are true.

Unhappiness exists.

The purpose of happiness is to insure against unhappiness.

If I do what I should do, I will be happy.

I must have things, power, or virtue in order to be happy.

My desires could lead me to unhappiness.

There is a right way of being.

Meditation for the Week

- We become alienated from ourselves when our beliefs shift from personal experience and advice to becoming points of view and absolute truths through which we see ourselves and the universe.