

## **WHERE HAPPINESS? RAGUNATH**

### **Purpose of these jottings.**

- ✓ *To realize that all of us are born to be happy.*
- ✓ *To learn that happiness is within us though most of us search for it outside.*
- ✓ *To be aware that happiness does not depend on what we have, but on what we are.*
- ✓ *To understand that happiness is the daughter of contentment.*
- ✓ *Quality of life brings happiness within, not so external quantity of possessions and wealth*
- ✓ *To become aware of the hype of our consumerist society that wants us to believe that the more we consume, the happier we shall be.*

### **These Jottings may be useful for:**

- ✓ *Talks*
- ✓ *Recollections*
- ✓ *Awareness sessions*
- ✓ *Self-examination.*
- ✓ *Value Education*

## **WHERE HAPPINESS** (A Parable)

His majesty, King Ragunath, was feeling very sad. Wealth, mistresses, drinks, power, and popularity he had in abundance. Happiness, Joy and Peace he never had!

Sitting on his royal throne disgustedly, he kept saying: “My heart is empty. I feel sad and nauseated. Nobody, nothing can satisfy me!”

On one occasion, the King confided in his attendants. “I am mortally unhappy. I am feeling alone and lonely. All the pleasures and wealth around me torment me. Kindly, give me a remedy, less I die.”

After a long pause, one of his attendants suggested: ‘I can think of only one remedy. Find a truly happy man in your kingdom. Once you find him, live with him in his house; share his meals, even his clothing. Then, only then, your majesty will find happiness and peace.’

Next day, the King dispatched his servants to the four corners of his kingdom in search of a happy man. One of them interviewed a very rich merchant: ‘Kindly tell me – being such a rich and successful businessman – are you really happy?’

The rich man growled: Well, yes. I have plenty of money, houses, a large family, lots of pleasures and comforts. But... there is still so much I do not have. How can I be happy without having got that?’

Another servant met the most popular singer of the kingdom, the idol of the crowds. He told him: ‘You are wanted and liked by all, everybody goes mad after you. Tell me; are you truly happy and satisfied?’

He moaned: ‘I am not! How can I be happy when there are many other singers and actors competing with me for the applause and popularity of the crowds?’

Days went by. The search was a failure. The envoys kept interviewed big professors, writers, bankers, politicians, doctors, generals, artists; but, for all their efforts, they could not find one 'truly happy man' in the entire kingdom!.

On their journey back to the Palace, tired and disappointed, already near the King's residence, they sat under a tree on a riverbank. There, close by, they chanced to see a poor and simple man happily resting under the shadow of a tree merrily whistling and singing away his time..

They explained to him their plight. "The King sent us to his entire kingdom in search of happy man and we found none! Now, we are afraid to meet him. How can we tell him that we found none?"

'How is it possible?' That simple man replied. 'Of course, there are truly happy people in our land! I am one of them. I am very happy and babbling with joy!'

Surprised, they blurted out: "What? You! You a happy person! But you are such poor and an ordinary man! How could we think of that?"

The King's men begged of him: "If you are truly happy, please, come with us to the palace of the King. The King needs you!"

"The King?" Asked the poor man, "needs me? I am a destitute and an illiterate man!"  
 "Yes:" the ministers said, "Please, come with us to the palace."

The King asked the poor man: "Are you truly happy, really happy?"

"Yes, your Majesty, Happy, very happy!"

"Then, please help me!" said the King, "Only you, can help me!"

In surprise the man stuttered:

"I, Your Majesty, help you, the King? I can do nothing!"

"Yes, you can", the King said. "Please, I beg of you, allow me for a time to live in your house, share your clothing, partake your meals, that's all I ask of you. "

"I ... I am so sorry your Majesty!" He replied. "I can't do this for you. I assure you; I never had a house, not even a hut. I have no other clothes than these I wear. I have no other meals than the crumbs of bread. I beg by the roadside!"

### **Points for Reflection and Discussion**

1. Why was King Ragunath so unhappy in his Palace?
2. What could make the poor man on the road so happy? Guess.
3. Why the great men of the kingdom as mentioned in the story were so unhappy?
4. Are wealth, power, popularity, pleasures, honours and the like necessary for happiness? Yes? No? How much? Why?
5. What are the things that spoil people's happiness? List them..
6. How can we help people to be happy?
7. Have you ever met some truly happy people? Mention three of them.
8. Can you guess what made them so happy?
9. Are you really happy in life? How? Why?
10. What do you still miss to be really happy? Explain.

### **Explain the Meaning of the Following Sentences**

- One thing is 'pleasure' another joy.
- Happiness' can coexist with pain.
- Is not he who has more who feels satisfied, but he who needs less
- Happiness is a mind set, not a set of circumstances in life.
- Happiness is found 'nowhere', its right here and there.
- Happiness is not outside there, but inside here.
- Happiness is born of contentment.
- Happiness is not proportionate to what we have, but to what we want. .
- Happiness is based not on 'quantity' but on 'quality' of life.
- Happiness is like a shadow, if you run after it, it vanishes, if you do not, it follows you.
- Christ our Lord never promised us 'pleasures' but joy and happiness.

### **Suggested Ideas for an input**

- We are fooled to believe that we can find happy outside ourselves, that the cause of our happiness lies in external possessions, honours and fame.
- Going out in search of happiness is like a fish going out of the water to seek for joy.
- By searching happiness outside us, we close the door to it.
- Pleasure satiates, happiness delights
- All men are born to be happy and can be happy.
- 'Quality' of life gives satisfaction; 'quantity' causes boredom.
- Our consumerist society goads us to strive for 'quantity', not for quality, thus pushes us to unhappiness.
- The values of modern society are contrary to happiness. The more we have, the more we want. Consequently, the less happy we are.
- Consumerism is the enemy number one of today's man's happiness.
- Consumerist propaganda creates needs it cannot satisfy, makes promises it cannot honour.
- Advertising spoils man's happiness.
- We make ourselves prisoners in the cages our greed fabricates,

## **APPENDIX ONE Suggested Activities**

### **Activity No. 1. SHARING LIFE EXPERIENCES:**

#### **First:**

Name 3 Persons who you feel, have or had JOY IN THEIR LIVES.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

Name 3 persons who have BROUGHT JOY TO YOUR LIFE:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

**Second:**

MENTION THREE JOYOUS MOMENTS OF YOUR LIFE.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Third:**

IN ORDER TO BRING JOY INTO MY LIFE, THE FOLLOWING ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES I HAVE TO MAKE WITHIN ME;

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity No. 2 SKITS:**

- ✓ Divide the participants into small groups of about six to eight each
- ✓ Ask them to prepare some skits or role-plays based on the theme of joy.
- ✓ When the skits are ready, the groups will present them.
- ✓ After each presentation, a little discussion and evaluation will follow.

**Activity No.3 DEBATES.**

- ✓ Have debates among two or more groups on topics like the following:
  - In today's world, man cannot be happy without wealth
  - Modern man is happier than the man of olden times.
  - Technology, science, modern development alone can make our world completely happy.
  - Sickness, poverty and suffering are the great spoilers of happiness

**Activity No 4 CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF ADVERTISEMENTS.**

- ✓ Collect at random advertisements of newspapers and magazines.
- ✓ Distribute them among the participants
- ✓ Based on the ads, ask the participants the following questions
  - What are the promises made in these ads?
  - Can the articles advertised give us what the ads promise?
  - In what way do ads bluff, manipulate and misguide us?
  - What does our consumerist' society do to us?
  - Is "prefabricated", 'canned', 'ready-made' and 'instant' happiness as advertised possible? Why?

**Activity No 5. SLOGAN COMPETITION.**

- ✓ Ask each participant to prepare three slogans on the meaning of happiness.
- ✓ The slogans will be shared with the whole group.

- ✓ The group will select, by vote, the three best slogans

## **Activity No 6 POSTER COMPETITION.**

- ✓ Individually or in small groups ask the participants to prepare one poster on the theme of 'Were Happiness?
- ✓ Once the posters are ready, the authors will explain them to the house.
- ✓ Subsequently. They may paste them on the walls or murals.

## **APPENDIX TWO PRAYER SERVICE**

### **Instructions**

- ✓ We suggest below some bible themes helpful for a Prayer Service.
- ✓ Offer the texts to the group members and ask them to follow these steps.
  - Read the text.
  - Reflect for a while on the text keeping in mind the theme of the day.

### **Bible themes on happiness for reflection and prayer:**

1. Genesis 3/1-24. The Story of Adam and Eve.
  - They were happy.
  - They could have been happy by being plain human beings – creatures.
  - They did not want to be creatures, but Gods. They lost everything.
  - They looked for happiness outside themselves...etc...
2. Luke 15/11-6. The Story of the Prodigal Son.
  - He could have been happy at home...He had everything..
  - He looked for happiness outside the home...drinks, sex, Friends, gambling
  - He lost everything...he became most unhappy.

### **BIBLE QUOTES IN KEEPING WITH THE IDEAS OF THE PARABLE.**

- Prov. 28/6-11 “Better the poor contented than the rich...”
- Prov. 30/8-9 “Give me neither poverty nor riches....”
- Ecc. 2/8-11; 4/7-8; 5/12-15” Vanity of vanities and all is vanity...
- Mt. 6/11 The Beatitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit...
- Mt. 6/19-21 Riches in Heaven. True riches that get neither robbed nor rusted.
- Mt. 6/24-34 God and possessions. Trust in God’s providence.
- Mk. 10/17-27 The Rich Young Man.
- Mk.10/28-31 Get 100 percent out of ‘your riches’.
- Lk. 6/20-27 Where true happiness and sorrow lie.
- Lk. 12/13-21 The rich Fool. He filled his godown, he never enjoyed it.
- Lk.16/14-15 The Teachers of the Law made fun of Jesus because he was not in love with money.
- Lk.16/19-31 Rich man and Lazarus

- Jn.12/4-6; Mt.26/14-16. Judas sells Jesus. He loves money
- 1 Tim. 6/6-10        "We brought nothing into the world. Desire for  
                                  Money is the root of all evil".
- Jam. 1/9-11         Poverty and riches.
- Jam. 5/1-3         Warning to the rich.
- Rev. 3/17-19        "You say I am rich...."