

## “Happiness” – Holistic Perspectives

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"To me the very essence of education is the concentration of mind and not the collection of acts. If I had to do my education over again and had any voice in the matter I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment and then with a perfect instrument (mind) could collect facts at will."

- *Swami Vivekananda*

### **Introduction:**

The essence of all yoga and spiritual education is the control of mind. It is a must thing for an individual not only for ascending towards spiritual life but also for achieving success in our day to day practical life. Once you control your mind, happiness and peace come as a natural consequence. Almost all our agonies and pains are due to our not having proper control over our mind. Instead of becoming master of our mind, we have become its slaves. It makes us dance from here and there according to its whims. Instead of we dictating upon it, it is dictating on us and pulling and pushing us in various directions. The servant has become the master and the master has become the servant. We have to restore our master status and place the servant in its proper position if we want to be really happy and peaceful again. This means that we should be able to put our minds where we want and keep it. An uncontrolled mind constantly fluctuates from one thought to another. It doesn't want to remain still even for a minute, one thought goes, another comes and this chain never ends. Even while asleep, this restless mind is troubling us in dreams. An uncontrolled and unbalanced mind also gets constantly torn a part by various emotions, viz likes, dislikes, love, hatred, jealousy, revenge, anger, grief, pride, fear etc. Which are generated because of the inability of the mind to face life or world as it really is. Once you conquer your mind, you become a totally transformed person and always peaceful and cheerful. Nobody and no situation in the world can deflect you from your state of equilibrium. You reach a stage where all external circumstances lose hold over you and Surrender themselves to your feet. You can stand like a rock amidst severest opposition and obstacles. You are the king of the kings and have the power to move the whole world, if you desire so.

Before starting the practice to control the mind, we must understand its basic nature and attributes. Any attempt to control the mind without understanding its basic nature and characteristics are bound to lead to failure. That is why most of the people are found saying that even after a practice of many years; they still find themselves where they were in the beginning.

### **How To Modify The Thought Process:**

After learning the basic nature and laws relating to thoughts, we should also ponder over a little as to what a person should do in order to improve his thought processes. There are different ways and means to control and regulate our thought process. Following are some important ways:

**Avoid Random Thinking** : Ensure at various intervals that your thinking is planned and systematic and not random. Unplanned random thinking and day-dreaming are signs of a weak mind and indicates that instead of controlling your subconscious mind you are being controlled by it. Your conscious mind should remain fully alert, in full awareness and maintain its master status controlling his servant (the subconscious mind). By going into loose, idle, and day dreaming state, you encourage the influence of

the subconscious mind on your conscious mind. So ensure that only those thoughts are in your in mind which you really want to think at the moment.

**Make Deliberate Attempts to Remain Positive :** It is the single largest factor in building up of our personality and character. ‘We should make a deliberate attempt in our daily life to view everything positively, even in the most miserable situations. As soon as a negative thought comes to your mind convert it in to a positive one by readjusting your mental attitude.

**Reduce Emotional Elements in Your Thought :** There are emotions (e.g. likes, dislikes, love, hatred, fear, revenge, jealousy etc.) coupled with our thoughts which are playing havoc with our life. The root cause of our emotional involvement is that we take worldly problems and difficulties very seriously. Remember that various trials you are facing in life are coming to you according to a certain law. Nothing in this world happens by chance or by accident. Nothing is designed in the universe to harm us. All these trials are to teach certain lessons to us which we have not yet learnt. They (trials) are not permanent. They are all temporary and will pass away having served their purpose.

Hence use all trials of life as opportunities to learn something instead of cursing and blaming others and never lose balance of your mind and thoughts in whatever miserable situations you are. Observe all your problems like a spectator and solve them with a detached and unbiased mind.

**Be Consistent in Your Thoughts Words and Deeds :** Be consistent inside and outside. Your thoughts, words, and deeds should show resemblance with one another. This is the true test of a righteous person. Normally it is seen now a days that people have two faces. One is their real face and the other is false one to show to others. Their inside and outside don't match. This type of duality of behaviour disturbs the stability of your thoughts.

**Conscious Relaxation:** Off and on whenever you find time, practise conscious relaxation. This is achieved by shifting awareness of mind from thought process to pure perception or pure awareness. Remember you are simply gazing and there are no thoughts involved in it, Similarly you can concentrate on a pleasing sound.

**Practice of Yoga and meditation :** One should also regularly practice Yoga and meditation. If it is practiced correctly it gradually resolves all the conflicts of the unconscious mind and makes the mind pure and strong.

*“ Outer circumstances and events does not create stress.*

*It is our response to them which creates stress.”*

### **PROBLEMS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF LIFE**

Problems are an integral part of life. They will never end. One problem goes, another comes. This is a natural cyclic process in life. Life is designed like this that you will face certain problems and learns the needed lessons to grow further. This is not only with you, it is with everybody. It is very immature to think or imagine that life can be forever comfortable and free of any problem. Change and adversity are the natural law of life. In fact if a person's life is devoid of any problems or challenges, he may be bored to death. So, we should learn to live with problems gracefully.

**Problems come to teach us certain lessons:** Regarding various problems, pains and discomforts which we face in life, try to develop the philosophy that these have not come to frighten us. They have come to us as per certain law. There is nothing in this world which happens by chance or accident. There is a reason for everything which happens to you. You are bound by a great relationship of cause and effect. For every effect there is a cause and for every cause there is an effect. We can derive some benefit and

lessons from every problem of life and exploit it to our advantage. This is a wonderful law of life. If we oppose these discomforts and accuse ourselves and others, we are simply invoking a new chain of cause and effect and making matter worse. In fact you should consider all problems as projects and new opportunities instead of hindrances. Tackle them as you work for a new project or new assignment step by step instead of treating them as something foreign or external to you. Sooner you accept them as a part and parcel of different phases of your life. As you learn many lessons of life, problems in your life will also be proportionately reduced and your life will be comparatively smoother.

**Problems come along with their Solutions :** It is a general experience of life that when problems come to us, their solutions also come along with. This is because problems are not caused to us by the Almighty to harass us or frighten us or punish us. The purpose of problems is to bring out those virtues and finer aspects in us which are still dormant and haven't been awakened and to eliminate the undesirable traits from our personality.

**No problem is permanent :** We should also realize that no problem or difficulty challenging us is permanent. They all will pass! Nothing remains static in this world. Everything is in a state of constant motion. Such is the law. Darkness is always followed by light. There can never remain the same condition always. Even the darkest days of your life will surely pass. Don't run away from problems. Face them with courage boldly. Never quit. Running away is not a way to be free from them.

**No problem is greater than you :** Remember there is no problem in the world which is greater than your strength and which can't be solved. Everything can be controlled, managed and handled with serenity. Hence you should treat the problems and control them like your servant and never allow them to become your master. God is ever available to help us provided we ask for it and join our hands in His hands.

**We should thank god even during problems :** You should also realize that compared to the comforts given to us by God, these problems are so small. While enjoying comforts and luxuries of life, we neither thank God nor do we question why these luxuries have been given to us. But in pains and problems, we always complain.

**Continue to Progress Even During Problems :** Some people think that when all of their problems will be over, they will then start their development plans of life. But the tragedy is that problems will keep on creeping in till the end of life. But this doesn't mean that you won't make any Progress in life. Be positive, work hard and choose your own way for progress.

**Cope with One Problem at a Time :** We all are surrounded by number of problems. If we start thinking and tackling all the problems at the same time, we will become mad and won't be able to solve even one problem properly. The correct approach is that you make a list of all your problems and then first pick up one problem on priority basis and concentrate on that problem only at a time. By coping with one problem at a time, you will find the problem not overwhelming but stimulating. You will enjoy the adventure of problem solving.

#### **SOURCE OF REAL HAPPINESS:**

Attainment of happiness is the innate desire of every human being. Everything we do, we do for the sake of happiness. One gets married not for the sake of a wife or a husband, but for the sake of happiness. One seeks children for the sake of happiness. One pursues a job and earns money for the sake of happiness. This is not surprising because seeking happiness is in our original nature. We will never feel satisfied until we achieve complete happiness an absolute fulfilment that includes perfect peace, love, wisdom and joy. But where does the humanity search for this happiness? In the things of the world, in possessions, in outer conditions, in relationships with other persons. People are frantically searching but they can't find it at the place where they are looking for it and that leads to despair. Happiness lies inside and to attain it we need to turn within and travel toward our inner Self which is the fountain of

infinite joy, peace and bliss and we can drink from it as much as we want. Yoga and meditation are the tools to carry out this inner journey towards our real life.

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