

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

HAPPINESS

Session One

The True Nature of Happiness

Course Outline

SESSION 1

THE TRUE NATURE OF HAPPINESS

How do we seek happiness? True happiness and unity.

SESSION 2

HAPPINESS AND SOCIETY

Is happiness natural? Relationship between happiness and law.

SESSION 3

HAPPINESS AND UTILITARIANISM

Bentham, Mill. Gandhi's criticism and an alternative view to utilitarianism. The art of listening: practical exercise.

SESSION 4

HAPPINESS AND PLEASURE

Hedonism, Epicurus and Plato. Necessary and unnecessary pleasures. The Upanishads: satisfaction in oneself.

SESSION 5

HAPPINESS AND THE PLATONIC GOODS

Divine goods: wisdom, self-control, justice and courage. Human goods: health, beauty, strength and wealth.

SESSION 6

REJOICE IN THE PRESENT

Introduction to Marsilio Ficino, renaissance philosopher.

SESSION 7

LAO TZU

Introduction to Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching. Tea ceremony. Exploring effortless action.

SESSION 8

HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT

Introduction to Patanjali and the eightfold system of yoga, meditation, contentment. Finding happiness in work.

SESSION 9

HAPPINESS AND WORK

The principles of work in action.

SESSION 10

HAPPINESS AND WISDOM

The connection between wisdom and happiness. Marcus Aurelius; you don't need much to live happily.

Quotations

Sages' Prayer

May all be happy.

May all be without disease.

May all creatures have well-being.

And none be in misery of any kind.

Tolstoy

Man finds happiness only in serving his neighbour. And he finds it here because in rendering service to his neighbour, he is in communion with the divine spirit that lives within them.

Shri Shantananda Saraswati

Conversations 1974

A king once invited everyone for a feast. He laid down certain rules for this particular occasion... Everyone would have to put on a bamboo jacket. Having put on the jacket one could not bring one's hand near the mouth and so could not eat. He tried the next level and they also failed. Having tried all the other levels in vain, he came to the top level of holy people. They too had to put on the jacket and eat. They found a way out, and instead of eating, they fed each other and enjoyed the feast. Thus everyone knew the trick and all enjoyed the feast.

Marie Curie

The older one gets, the more one feels that the present moment must be enjoyed, comparable to a state of grace.

and

All my life through, the new insights of Nature made me rejoice like a child.

William Blake

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.

For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things through narrow chinks of his cavern.

Practice

To begin this term, we can use the question:

**How would a wise man or woman
increase happiness now?**

This can be applied anywhere at any time.
Just try it and see what is shown.

Remember to practise the Awareness
Exercise two or three times a day.

Diagram

