

Why the Majority of Americans Are Totally Wrong When It Comes to Happiness

Mick Jagger was a rock 'n' roll original. One of his best hits, "I Can't Get No Satisfaction" was the Rolling Stones first No. 1 song in the United States.

They released the song in 1965. The 1960s were as a time of turmoil and inner conflict. It was as if everyone in the '60s were searching for satisfaction.

Mick Jagger could find no satisfaction because this life is not designed to satisfy us.

Accomplishments, accolades, awards and things only provide a temporary happiness.

There is more to life than things.

A New Car

My wife and I recently purchased a Nissan Armada. Sweet ride. We enjoy the SUV because it looks small to the eye, but it is roomy to the passengers.

The Armada has tons of amenities and lots of luxury. And the most enjoyable part was the price.

We made our purchase and dropped by the local ice cream parlor. We both enjoy a hot-fudge caramel sundae with pecans and a cherry. Exquisite.

Our drive home was 20 minutes, and we settled in for the evening. After a few hours, my wife jumped off the couch and opened the garage door.

"What's up?" I said.

“I just wanted to admire my new SUV.”

We did a 20-second gaze at the Armada and went back to the couch.

We did that only once.

After that night, the Armada became a normal part of our life. There is nothing amazing about the Armada story.

But the takeaway is how quickly new things lose their luster.

Things are not designed to make you happy.

“People who spend all their time trying to make money, spend all their money trying to make time. Don’t do this to yourself. Remind yourself that the richest human isn’t the one who has the most, but the one who needs less. Wealth is a mindset.” –Mark Hack

The Everybody Lie

“Everybody is happy” is a lie. We tend to think we are the only ones struggling. We are convinced that everyone has it better than us. Not true.

Everyone struggles. It is often those who live happily who have the most battles. They live happily because they choose to be happy.

Many people have learned that life is as good as you make it. Life is far from easy.

Nice things can make us feel better.

And it is perfectly OK to have nice things. It also feels great to purchase them, but don’t put your happiness there.

Contentment Is the Bigger Win

“I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last you have

revived your concern for me. Regarding this, you did care, but you lacked opportunity. I do not speak because I have need, for I have learned in whatever state I am to be content. I know both how to face humble circumstances and how to have abundance. Everywhere and in all things I have learned the secret, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things because of Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:10-13).

The apostle Paul received a nice gift and was happy to receive it. A gift is always nice. I like his response to the gift. He said, "I have learned to be content." He learned contentment.

He said, "I have had seasons of abundance, and other times, things were scarce." But notice his happiness and contentment were never tied to his outcomes.

He chose to be content regardless of the circumstances.

Ben Shapiro said: "The problem is that what we're pursuing isn't happiness anymore. We're pursuing other priorities: physical pleasure, emotional catharsis, monetary stability. All these things are important, of course, but they don't bring lasting happiness. At best, they're means necessary to the pursuit of happiness."

Contentment is a step higher than happiness. We can learn to accept what we have and be grateful. Keeping up with the Joneses is not a thing anymore.

Minimalists have learned to accept life as it comes. We also learn what's most important in life.

Bigger is not always better, and "the best" is not always necessary.

We can learn to live with less and be content with what we have. Happiness is not the fulfillment of all our wishes.

Chasing Happiness

The constant pursuit of the need to feel happy will end in disappointment. We must stop chasing happiness.

I think happiness catches us.

We rarely know why we are happy. And then there are times it is obvious. My last birthday was great. All my boys came to visit and bought gifts.

We cooked on the grill and ate burgers and cheese dip. The dessert was a spectacular ice cream cake. The gifts were special, but they were not the reason I was happy.

My happiness was obvious—my sons were present. No money and no gifts can supersede being with my boys. The gifts are a bonus, but never the source of true happiness.

“Men can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness.” —George Orwell