

Identity **beyond IQ**



HAPPINESS
RESIDES
NOT IN
POSSESSIONS NOT
IN GOLD;
THE FEELING OF
HAPPINESS DWELLS
IN THE SOUL.

DEMOCRITUS (460 - 400 BC)



Despite this, evidence from population surveys, in which people were asked to rate their own happiness or mental wellbeing; shows that mental wellbeing has not improved. This suggests that many of the things we often do to improve our happiness and mental wellbeing, such as more possessions, more money to spend or expensive holidays on their own do not lead to lasting improvement in the way we feel about ourselves and our lives.

Chaired by former minister for mental health, Paul Burstow MP, the Centre Forum Mental Health Commission published its report on the July 2014. After the study for 12 months on the state of wellbeing in England, a group of leading mental health experts came to the conclusion that - The 'pursuit of happiness' must become an explicit and measurable goal of government, if the £105 billion annual cost of mental illness in England is to be reduced.

Scientists have found that although our genes and circumstances matter, a huge proportion of the variations in happiness between us come from our choices and activities. Although we may not be able to change our inherited characteristics or the circumstances in which we find ourselves, we still have the power to change our happiness by changing the way we approach our lives.

The feeling we call "happiness" comes from four special brain chemicals: dopamine, endorphin, oxytocin and serotonin. These "happy chemicals" spurt when our brain sees something good for our survival. Then they turn off, so they're ready to spurt again when something good crosses our path. Our brain rewards us with good feelings when we do something good for our survival. Happy chemicals did not evolve to be on all the time. They evolved to promote our survival.

It may not seem that way because the mammal



We are constantly bombarded with messages about what makes a good life. Advertisers tell us it comes from owning and consuming their products.

The media associate it with wealth, beauty or fame. And politicians claim that nothing matters more than growing the economy.

Thus we are conditioned from the childhood to believe that pleasurable experiences make us happy and are in fact the source of our happiness. So we hunt them out, moving from one pleasurable stimulating moment to another and even more intense. We live for these highlights, punctuate our lives with them. A great deal of time and energy is spent trying to maximise pleasure in the pursuit of happiness, and avoiding its opposite – pain and the associated suffering.

Do any of these things really bring lasting happiness?

Over the last 50 years, Britain has become richer.

brain defines survival based on life experiences from childhood, even though children can't understand survival realistically. It cares as much for the survival of our genes as it does for our body.

Each happy chemical triggers a different good feeling. *Dopamine* produces the joy of finding what we seek—the “Eureka! I got it!” feeling. *Endorphin* produces the oblivion that masks pain—often called “euphoria.” *Oxytocin* produces the feeling of being safe with others – now called “bonding”, and *Serotonin* produces the feeling of being respected by others –“pride.”

If we study the animal kingdom we realise that a hungry lion is happy when he sees prey, which is not philosophical happiness. His happy chemicals cause a state of arousal that releases energy for the hunt. So a lion is thrilled when he sees a gazelle close at hand. His dopamine surges, which revs up his motor to pounce.

A thirsty elephant is happy when he finds water. The good feeling of quenching his thirst triggers dopamine. This experience helps him find water again in the future. The next time he sees any sign of a water hole his brain triggers happy chemicals. The good feeling tells him;“here is what you need.”

Thus, without intent, happy chemicals promote survival. But happy chemicals don't flow constantly. The lion only gets happy chemicals when he finds more prey, and the elephant only spurts when he meets a survival need. In nature, there is no free happy chemical. Good feelings evolved because they get us to keep doing things that promote survival of the body as well as the gene.

Thus the key question is What triggers happy chemicals in the human brain? Is it only the survival or something beyond it?

In the journey of life our experiences, our feelings keep mirroring us that we have forgotten our true nature at the cost of survival. But we over rule our feelings, our emotions. We do not appreciate them, we do not nurture them. We ignore them and keep moving forward in the pursuit of IQ driven experiences. All our social systems and processes train and judge us in the IQ based skills. It seems there is a missing link in the performance metric of life. The more we keep looking for this missing link in the material world, the more we feel empty within. We feel unable to move forward on the track of life and look for a quiet corner to reflect on our performance.

Just at that quiet moment we experience a feeling very different from the past. It's peaceful, it's joyful; it's blissful. Perhaps this is the experience we were looking for; we say to ourselves.

Now we are bit puzzled!

What is it? Who is it? Where did it come from?
 Someone from the within asks

Is it the core, the essence, the being? Is it the true identity beyond the IQ driven existence?

Happy survival motives

Dopamine: *Keep seeking rewards*

Endorphin: *Ignore physical pain*

Oxytocin: *Build social alliances*

Serotonin: *Get respect from others*



In the busy schedule of our daily life we lack a corner to spend few quiet moments to reflect within to rediscover our true self.

We all need a quiet corner in the pursuit of happiness & wellbeing.

Welcome to the Happiness Corner!

In future we shall be spending time to reflect on our true identity and reprogram the belief system of happiness. Till then sharpen the happiness skills

Connect - Connect to people

Be active - Find an activity that you enjoy

Keep learning - Learn new skills to develop self esteem

Give to others - Even the smallest act counts, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word.

Be Aware - Be more aware of the present moment, including your feelings and thoughts, your body and the world around you.

“Happiness is your nature. It is not wrong to desire it. What is wrong is seeking it outside when it is inside”

The great Indian sage of 20th century, Ramana Maharshi.

Dr Samita Bhattacharjee is a Business Excellence Specialist in Tata Steel Europe. She has done her PhD in Theoretical Physics from the Indian Institute of Kanpur and Post Doctoral Research from the Theoretical Condensed Matter Physics Group at the Cavendish Labs, University of Cambridge, UK. Her key passion is the Integration of Science & Spiritual Wisdom for Excellence & Happiness. She enjoys writing articles, organising discussion forums, giving talk & presentation on the above subject.

The profile picture of Dr. Samita Bhattacharjee by Sankhanilay Roy Chowdhury