

Happiness: The Being of Human Existence

Joachim Okoroafor, Ph.D

Directorate of General Studies
Gregory University, Uturu,
Abia State, Nigeria

&

Chukwu Peter Damian Ezechi, Ph.D

Directorate of General Studies
Gregory University, Uturu,
Abia State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Happiness, according to vocabulary.com is a sense of well-being, joy, or contentment. For the Aristotelians, another word for happiness is eudemonia which is an ethical theory with the view that the being of human existence and its activities is happiness. According to this theory, all actions of man whether good or bad aims towards happiness. For Aristotle, the being of man is structured for happiness. Yet irrespective of this yearning of the human spirit towards happiness, man still has gone astray! Man has wandered away from his real home to live in the dark of restlessness! Man has fallen from the throne! Man created to exist for only one purpose – happiness, has been blinded by the irrational part of his soul which is his appetite, hence, turning away from the rational part of his soul which is right reason. With this all his activities have no aim in mind, although have really kept man busy doing nothing from day to day, week to week and year to year. With this spirit of insatiability, man is harvesting the end products of restlessness, anarchy, greed, jealousy, comparison, competition, pain, stress, hatred, poverty, sickness and death. These steamed from the insatiable wants for pleasure, power and money, but only one thing is necessary which is Happiness (Eudemonia). Hence, this work is out to analytically unveil the secret of happiness to insatiable humanity laying emphasis on the happenstances around our social domain.

Keywords: Happiness, Human Existence.

Introduction

Human actions should aim at its proper end which is Happiness but everywhere people aim at pleasure, wealth, and honour. But none of these ends, though they have value, can occupy the place of the chief good for which people should aim (Stumpf S. A 1994:100). Man has really drifted away from what life is all about. Being swallowed in abundance, he continues in the spirit of always grabbing without getting enough. Hence,

he cannot give a thought a day on “Why Life?” (Okoroafor J. 2021). Since man has been grabbing and grabbing (vexation of the soul) he has not gotten enough. Give it a thought, man is ready to kill in order to grab what is nothing but shadow. In fact, in all honesty, for the sake of pleasure, wealth and honour man is in the business of killing one another either by physical weapon or by manipulative actions. Hence, according to Thomas Hobbes individuals were creatures of desire, seeking pleasure and are always in the motion to satisfy their desire. Therefore, man in his state of nature war against the other (Mukherjee S. & Ramaswamy S. 2007). In the bid of trying to grab shadow many have been sent to their early graves! Portraying the nature of man, Okoroafor (2021) has this Eulogy to make:

You manipulate to get, and then you get, but is still not enough!
Yes, you want your name to be heard all-over the world; I believe you, but after that, what for? You want the whole world to know that you have arrived; good and fine, if they know, what next? You want to own the most expensive house in the world and ride the best cars, if possible, have different designs of aircraft which is splendid but after all these what is it for when you cannot have peace and joy of the soul. “I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold all is vanity and a striving after wind (Ecclesiastes 1:14).”

This work is not trying to talk one out from acquiring these life supporting elements but is laying a foundation for balance life. Having pleasure, wealth and honour are values of life but the issue is getting the acquisitions of these things right. This is why answering the question “Why Life” is very important. Does having firms, being known all over the world and having all that money can buy aim at happiness or does trying to get them or getting them promote the vexations of the soul? Hence, this work will be trying to strike a balance which will place happiness as the end of life and other things as a means to happiness.

The Four Blocks of Human Existence and Happiness

Here, this work will have a look at what is called “The four blocks of human existence” which are politics, religion, education and economy, to see their effects on the individual and world’s happiness. Through them we will expose these endless struggles and torture of the human spirit.

Politics

Politics is the act of ruling the state (Fagothey S.J (1959). The question is, what are these acts and how are they being administered? Here, these acts can equally be called laws, norms, methods, or guidelines. It can also be called the activities or actions of those in the corridors of power, what they do and what they fail to do. The question then is: what are the ends (purpose) of these laws, norms, methods and guidelines in ruling the state? The answer to this question shows itself on the narration of the happenstances in our nation’s politics of the day. It is believed that these laws, norms, methods or guidelines

are being carried out by someone or some group of people. Who is this someone and these groups of people? What are their aims in carrying out this duty of ruling or leading the state? To some, it is for personal gain and for some it is for the interest of all. To be honest, dear reader, truth must be told. In this our era, it is a clear fact that those practising politics for personal interest have beaten off those practising for the interest of all. Hence, the idea of “if you can’t beat them you join them” is the rule of the game. According to Kalu and Okoroafor (2020), politics of “the now” is the act of “grabbing and grabbing” which definitely cannot be enough.

Selfish politicians cannot get enough for there is nothing like the word “enough” in selfish acquisition. Take a look at what is happening every year during our countries’ elections, is it not killing, bullying and all manner of inhuman actions. Why must we bribe, kill, tell lies and perform all manner of wickedness just to be elected to rule or guide our people? Let us tell ourselves the truth, it is because we are ignorant of the secret of life called happiness, the end point of all our actions. When being elected, what happens? Is it not the same acts of wickedness growing to its brim? Let’s just answer this simple question, “Why all these chaos, anarchy and doom during elections?” Look, no one will prove that they are for happiness and if they are not, then, many of our politicians are all living on waste---life of regret and agony. Therefore, let us live for the substance which is happiness and we will get enough. This is the secret!

Religion

Religion is the link between man and divine. Religion, according to Adeyemo & Inagbor (2020) is creative thinking directed at matters that have to do with the Divine, the purpose of life and life after death from the very beginning of human existence. Today, a clear view of religion unveils the contrary of what religion is meant to be. Religion today is mayhem to humanity. Today’s religion can be seen clearly on the eulogy below:

Religion, look at what you have done to the world? You put on the cloak of a sheep but you are a leopard. Your problem is that you are too smart to be notice. You present yourself as an agent of light but indeed you are an agent of darkness. You have caused wars, rejections, divisions among men when their creator meant for them to live in peace. You present yourself as working for the creator of the universe but in reality you are working to frustrate the works of His hands. In all the nations of the world your actions are just the same.

You present your representatives as angels of light, but they are nothing but agents of darkness causing people to live in abject poverty so as to enrich their own pockets. They present themselves to be saying the truth about the will of God but in reality they are marketers of their own industry. From where will I start to speak? Is there every of their gathering not for self-enrichment? With their self-made laws they cause wars among mankind. God detest slavery, but your leaders have made their members their slaves of burden (Okoroafor 2021).

The question to religious heads is this, “All the while that you have been manipulating men and women in order to get enough, have you gotten enough?” In your acts of exploitations in order to be known as having the biggest cathedral in the world, while your members go hungry, are you still fulfilled? In your use of God’s name to manipulate them to give you all they have, have you gotten enough? Therefore, is it not time for you to put a stop to this your manipulative business. Open your mind and receive this truth. To whatever denomination you belong to ... Christianity, Muslim, Judaism, Hinduism, etc., please, pay attention to what your founder is saying. The founders of all these religions are all saying one thing....”Seek you happiness for all men and all other things shall be added unto you.” Come home you have traded enough on waste! Get the secret: “Happiness for all men” for that is the secret of life and you will find rest for your soul.

Education

Education according to Fagothey (1959:433) means any process of training the physical, mental and moral power of the human being undergoes to render him fit for the duty of life. Leaving the main purpose of education, man has wandered away from her main duty only to be engaged in the business of pursuing shadow. Education is the unveiling of the secret of living good and happy life but yet men have been enslaved with the selfish passion of nature which is the deception of self. Education is really meant to open up to every man the road to happiness, but contrary is the case. The so-called education of now is meant to open all men up to the road to self, which is the act of manipulation. Anyone who can practically manipulate people to get his ways through is now termed to be an educated man. Therefore, today it is “Go to school so as to learn the act of manipulation and be rich.” It is not surprising why many authors’ books that centres on acts of manipulation sell like wildfire. For this reason, life is nothing but acts of manipulation, “Take advantage of whoever is gullible and cheat whoever you can cheat.” Teachers are cheating students and students are cheating their parents. Politicians are cheating the poor masses, and pastors, their congregations. The world has turned to be a world of manipulation. In the world of manipulation what do you see if not pain and agony? Everyone seeks what will benefit him/her irrespective of pain it will cause others. Today’s world is a replica of what happens in the “Animal Farm by George Orwell” where all animals are equal but some are more equal than others! This act of manipulation ends in restlessness. Please, get to know the secret which is contentment whose product is happiness and you will find rest for your soul. Be contented with what you have and you will have enough. Seek you the kingdom of God (happiness) and all other thing shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:33).

Economy

Market, according to Okereke et al (2009) which mean the context and the entire facilities provided by financial institution for there to be favourable condition for exchange of goods and services to take place has really become the home of insatiability. Okoroafor (2020) puts the eulogy of the deplorable state of market institution thus:

Market you have kept men in the state of perpetual agony. It is in you that we first hear the word “hustling.” Hustlers are just manipulators moving in vicious cycle, but cannot get enough. Market, your real name is a place for buying happiness which is the gate of heaven on earth but you have turned it to gate of hell.

The question for all business men and women in the world is this: What are you hustling every day for? Every day that you get up from your bed to you shop, what is it for? Is it to go and manipulate people or is it to go and promote happiness to people who come around to buy from you? You have just one thing that worth your early morning struggles and pains of the scorching heat of the day. That one thing is this... “To promote happiness to others which will in turn promote your own happiness and your rest of mind.” If man’s whole struggle is just to feed the mortal body which he will soon leave behind and go, man then is the worst creature that really deserves to be pitied.

What do you sell? Let it be for the promotion of the secret (happiness) and you will definitely sing the hilarious songs of happiness which according to Aristotle is the end of the human existence (Stumpf S.A 1994). Man should understand that he is in business as a means of promoting happiness for others and for himself. Having gone through this analysis on the on happiness as the being of human existence, one is now equipped better to understand his main reason of being into business and he is now also called to spread this good news. I have seen the worst thing on the face of the earth! Men wallowing in the pit of poverty, pain, agony and death because they have been closed up from knowing the secret, “Happiness for all men (Stumpf S.E. 1994).”

Contentment: The Secret to Happiness

Man has been wearied out due to the game of insatiability which comparison and competition are the two referees, but his chances of quitting this game is still there, so that he can have rest. Though, it may be very difficult for man to quit because he has been in this game for a long time, but the strategy for a way out is ever available. There is another game to join that playing it will restore all that man must have lost in the past game. That game is contentment whose referees are peace and happiness. Hence, it will interest man to know all about this ever-fascinating game called “contentment.”

Contentment according to Merriam Webster Dictionary means the state of being happy and satisfied, a state of being content. Using the second definition “A state of being content” as our working tool to really develop our point will do justice to this analysis. Here, the definition says, “A state of being content (satisfied), it did not say “a place of being content (satisfied). ‘State’ means an inner disposition and ‘Place’ means geographical zone. A “state” meaning an inner disposition has it that it is in man’s power to decide to be happy and satisfied irrespective of what is happening around him. If one is the game of comparison and competition his satisfaction and happiness is not in his own power, it depends then on things which the five senses can see, perceive, touch, feel and taste. Meaning what is physical. This means that one’s peace and happiness depend on

what can be seen. Personalizing this concept, you are happy when you have money, enough clothes, shoes, cars, good houses, etc and sad when you don't have them! You are happy when you feel you are better than the other and sad when you feel the opposite! You are happy when you feel you are living in the best places and mansions in the world and sad when you feel the opposite! According to Plato, you are not just physical, you are a spirit being only using the body which is physical as your house and for this reason physical places and things cannot content (satisfy) you (Stumpf S. E, 1994). This is the reason why irrespective of the physical things you have acquired, the position you have been placed on, they cannot still give you that complete satisfaction unless they have metaphysical presence (use for the sake of helping humanity). Satisfaction (fulfilment) and physical (material) things run in parallel, they cannot meet together. The question is, "Can there be a means of arriving at this state of happiness and inner joy?" Yes is the answer. Here, let us open up to the works of Okoroafor J. "Life: The Secret", on the means of arriving at a state of contentment that brings happiness.

1. Decision

Making a decision is a deliberate act of taking a position on an issue. Taking a decision brings you to either to a state happiness or that of sadness. Make a decision now as you are reading this text that no matter what you are looking or waiting for, that you have enough and for this reason you must be happy. "At the moment of decision your destiny is shaped" –Anthony Robbins. Every moment try to entertain the feelings of "I have enough." As you continue in this practice, soon you will see yourself in the state of "More than Enough." Get to accept this truth: "There is no time in this life you will have enough, for that is the animal nature in man and if you follow it you will definitely end in sorrow and pain." Having enough or not enough is a state of the mind; decision puts you on the side you want. Physical things cannot give you this "enough," only decision can. Who is rich? He who rejoices in his portion (Sayings of the Sages of the Mishnah, 1994).

2. Learn to Enjoy Every of your Moment

There is no moment you will get it enough so that you can start to enjoy. Where are you now? Enjoy the moment! What are you doing now? Enjoy the moment! What do you have now? Enjoy the moment! There is nothing like "Let me wait, after the struggles, I will start to enjoy." There is no such time, for such a moment will not come. Learn to position yourself to be at peace with every moment that comes your way. "Let me accumulate and I will start to enjoy!" According to the Stoics, this is an illusion. Take this from the mouth of King Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived: "I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind (Ecclesiastes 1:14)." I am aware you know the personality of who is speaking here? Is King Solomon, the wisest and the richest man that ever lived. He has seen it all and is advising you to take it easy. Yes, struggling is good for there is no food for a lazy man. "He who did not work should not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10)." "He who refused to work, let hunger bit him very well until his head becomes correct (Sam Adeyemi)." Learn to enjoy your life in the midst of your struggles. Enjoyment is a mental state; it is the

serenity of the mind and peace of the soul. It means living in a state of contentment. You may eat the best food in the world, live in the best house in the world, and wear the best cloth in the world, without this state of contentment; you are not still close to enjoyment. Do not be buried in selfish accumulation of wealth. Learn to extend your helping hands to others in whatever ways you can, for through this, comes true happiness.

Really, what point are we making here? We are simply saying, “Learn to be happy and at ease at every moment of your life. Work all the time for the betterment of mankind but never forget yourself. This is the structure of life.

3. Understand Your Purpose on Earth

Here comes the right master. Until you understand the reason why you are on the planet earth, you will continue playing the game of fools (insatiability) until death takes you out of existence. Make it your duty to consciously create your personal space on earth, for this is the whole duty of a man on earth. Pursuing selfish things for self-ego is nothing but vexation of the mind. Creating your personal space which springs from your gifting and passion is the reason for your stay on this vast acre called the earth. This is your purpose on earth, discover, develop, and leave it as a legacy for humanity; here lays your happiness.

Learn to know your area and there will be enough for you. Once you are able to get this secret of self-discovery, all other things will give way and the spirit of contentment will take over. Here, it will be clear to you that those things that others are fighting for and are ready to kill themselves for are not necessary. They are not the reason why you are on earth; you will see yourself being calm, only to have pity on people via their ignorance. Answering these questions below, you will get to know your purpose on earth, create your personal space and celebrate contentment, the root of happiness.

1. What do have passion doing?
2. What can you do better with little exposure on it?
3. What do you always complain about that is going wrong in your society?
4. Where will you see yourself in the next ten years and be fulfilled?
5. What gift do you feel you have?
6. What do you always like to do during your leisure time?
7. What kind of contribution will you like to make in your community, state or country?
8. Who do you always like his/her company?
9. What will you like to be remembered for years after your death?

Having answered these questions, you must have seen the mirror of your real self and what you are called to do on earth which is the domain of happiness.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Stumpf (1994) ask this question, “How does the soul work to attain happiness?” In answering it he has this to say, “To act in accordance with Right Reason.”

This means that the rational part of the soul (mind) must control the irrational part of the soul (appetite or emotion). Moving further, the mind which is the rational must be equipped with knowledge if it must control this irrational part which consist of both concupiscent passion (love of things and persons) and irascible passion (hate of things and persons). To pursue happiness which is the end of human existence man must also learn to embrace contentment through personal decision to live for the moment and live on purpose.

Recommendations

1. Happiness, though seems to be a common vocabulary in our today's world, should form the basis of our education system both in our secondary and tertiary institutions.
2. I recommend that happiness according to Aristotle's view should take the central stage in the curriculum of all courses in Humanities and General Studies of our universities, for this will equip our students to really understand what life really is.
3. Philosophy as a discipline must also project Happiness as her central focus in all its acts of philosophizing. Philosophers should also add more feathers to the Aristotle's concept of Happiness, hence, project it to the entire world. This will help in stopping the issue of quick money syndrome and restiveness among our youth of this day.
4. The issue of crazy want for honour, wealth and pleasure is really disturbing in this our era. I, hereby, recommend that the concept of happiness should be extended to the corridors of our politics and religious houses.

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