Secret of Sustainable Happiness

Vedic Vision
Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan: “Gross national happiness is more important than gross national product.”
Richer \implies\ Happier?

How do we account for the fact that richer people within societies are happier while societies that get richer don’t get happier?

Social Positioning

Habituation

Ref. Dean Gus Speth's book: The bridge at the Edge of the World: Capitalism, the Environment and Crossing from Crisis to Sustainability, published by Yale University Press
What is Happiness?

An agreeable sensation arising from contemplating the misery of another.

Ref. Ambrose Bierce’s The Devil’s Dictionary
More...
Whenever I am faced with a choice, I try to imagine what all the other possibilities are, even ones that aren’t present at the moment.

Opportunity costs

Ref. Barry Schwartz: Tyranny of Choice, Scientific American
Scenario 2

No matter how satisfied I am with my job, it’s only right for me to be on the lookout for better opportunities.

No matter what I do, I have the highest standards for myself.

High Expectations

Ref. Barry Schwartz: Tyranny of Choice, Scientific American
Scenario 3

When I am in the car listening to the radio, I often check other stations to see if something better is playing, even if I am relatively satisfied with what I’m listening to.

Regret sensitivity

Ref. Barry Schwartz: Tyranny of Choice, Scientific American
I purchased my new Lexus. After driving my new car for a while, now I am looking out for more.

Scenario 4

Adaptation

Ref. Barry Schwartz: Tyranny of Choice, Scientific American
Misprediction

People consistently mispredict how long good experiences will make them feel good and how long bad experiences will make them feel bad.

Ref. Daniel T. Gilbert (Harvard University), Timothy D. Wilson (University of Virginia) et al.
Happiness plots

Early decision-making research by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky showed that people respond much more strongly to losses than gains (depicted schematically in left graph). Similarly, my co-workers and I believe that feelings of well-being initially rise as choice increases (blue line in schematic plot, center graph) but then level off quickly (good feelings satiate). Meanwhile, although zero choice (at the y axis) evokes virtually infinite unhappiness, bad feelings escalate (red line) as we go from having few choices to many. The net result (purple line in right graph) is that, at some point, added choice only decreases happiness. —B.S.
Reasons for Unhappiness

- Opportunity costs
- High expectations
- Regret sensitivity
- Adaptation
- Social Comparison
Affluence

Increased number of choices

Depression

Happiness??
Quality of temporary happiness

- Flickering
- Painful
- Addictive
- Risky
- Illusory
- Stale
Problems of life

- Disease

- Birth
  - Old age

- Death
More Problems of life

- due to other living entities
- due to one’s own body and mind
- due to natural calamities
Energies of Krsna (God)

- External energy: bahiranga shakti
- Internal energy: antaranga shakti
- Marginal energy: tatastha shakti

Behind the laws of nature is the lawmaker
# External Energy → Remote Control

## 5 Basic Material Elements

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<th>Fire/Plasma</th>
<th>Water/Liquid</th>
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<td>Form</td>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Smell</td>
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*Subtle* ➔ *Gross*
External energy

→ Remote Control

Covering potency

Throwing potency

Avaranatmika shakti

Praksepatmika shakti
Marginal energy
Internal energy

→ Direct Control

Eternality  Knowledge  Bliss

sandhini  samvit  hladini
Supersoul

False ego

Intelligence

Mind

Sound

Touch

Form

Taste

Smell

SPIRITUAL

SUBTLE

GROSS
Thank you very much!