

The Race of Life: The Happiness Factor

Bhutan in Asia sets the benchmark for living a “happy” life. Its culture mandates that “happiness” holds the highest distinction in the realm of daily living. Those citizens living in that country enjoy a much slower and quieter living pace. They maintain a spiritual connection to their world.



(Light shining through the redwoods along Avenue of the Giants, CA.)

Photo by Frosty Wooldridge

Thus, peace and harmony thrive among Bhutan’s citizens. No murders, no headaches, no prescription drugs, no alcoholism, no gridlock, no air pollution, no slums and no social unrest. When I visited that country, I came away with a “happiness factor” that thrives within me today. I caught what they live and incorporated it into my own life in our high speed, high stress society.

How do they maintain “happiness” in a world racing toward some kind of destination on the horizon?

America features almost the opposite culture from Bhutan.

Nearly everyone exceeds the speed limit on our nation's highways. Most Americans buy the fastest Internet provider on the market. They flip TV channels faster than a ping-pong game. Urgency dominates America's fast food joints, laxatives and painkillers.

Pain sufferers buy 131 million doses of popular headache and pain relievers annually.

What makes the difference in the "happiness factor" in Bhutan and the "high stress factor" prevalent in American big cities?

Instead of hell bent to get there, try the Bhutan way of thinking about the quality of your life. Even if you live in a big city, you may gather Mother Nature around you at your office with plants, fish aquarium and relaxed music.



At home, you may create peaceful scenes replete with flowers, plants and paintings that soothe your spirit. You may create a backyard with a waterfall, birdbath and bird feeder.

You may create a "spiritual sandbox" whereby you may take off your shoes daily and thrust your feet into the "biorhythms of the universe" and re-synchronize your body to the pulse of the galaxy.

You may incorporate four quintessential decisions to shift your life from stress to peaceful living:

* Tell yourself each day, "Life is good." Think primal, pure fountain, universal source and energy. Remember your childhood when you played for the sheer joy of movement. Re-introduce "play" into your daily schedule. A walk



along a trail, a quiet moment in your rocker, a swing in the park and bird watching by a pond. Take delight in a dragonfly landing on a Lilly pad. Walk away from the dark night of the soul or anything bothering you—by your intellectual choice through practice. Think of the good.

- Understand and appreciate that, "I am capable; I am joyful and I am enough." Inadequacy and comparisons permeate a large swatch of American life—business, school and social gatherings. This world today stems from comparisons with others. You may choose to be at peace with yourself because you no longer compare yourself to or with anyone. You cherish yourself because you are the only you in the world.
- You did not come to this planet to prove yourself. You arrived in grand style to express yourself, laugh with life, create with life and entertain yourself with whatever passion(s) catches your fancy. Once you seek and strike upon your passions—stress, anxiety and pain vanish into your rear view mirrors.
- Finally, like the Bhutanese people, you gather your happiness factor by engaging your "calming factor" via your connection to the natural world. You impel yourself into wholeness by the little choices that build

on your self-acceptance and finally, your freedom from headaches, pain and anxiety.

What absorbs or thrills you? Okay, engage it. As you do, you feel captivated in life's activities, which, in turn render happiness. Recreate your life to your bearings. Seek that which vibrates with your being. Enjoy the miracle of life pulsating in every cell of your body. As you do, you dwell within the "happiness factor" throughout all your days.

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