

7:45 – 8:45am

Dharma Happiness and Purpose

SPEAKER

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Presenter Disclosure Information

The following relationships exist related to this presentation:

- ▶ Sanjiv Chopra, MD, MACP, has no financial relationships to disclose.

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**Dharma, Happiness and Living With Purpose:
Some Ruminations**

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Dharma (धर्म)

The concept of Dharma is at the core of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism.

It is hard to define but in essence it is the distillation of right action, duty, ethos, moral compass, vocation, authenticity and truth.

What is my Dharma? At age 12, I experienced a remarkable and life changing episode ... and I believe I had a clear sense of what my Dharma should be.



**I Was 12 Years of Age, Woke Up from a Nap
and Was Blind**

St. Columba's High School
New Delhi, India



A Long Distance Call to my Father ...

Dr. K.L. Chopra, FRCP



At age 16, I was fortunate enough to enroll in this prestigious Medical School.
My wife to be, Amita, stood first in the entrance exam (10,000 students applied for 35 open seats).
I also stood first on the waiting list !
I was on my way to fulfilling my Dharma.



When My Father Was A Boy in School His Mother Said to Him:

“Understand and uphold your Dharma, your duty to yourself, your family and to your fellow human beings. Anything gained in this world, whether material wealth or even spiritual knowledge, while neglecting one’s Dharma is futile.”

Your Life is in Your Hands
by Krishan Chopra, M.D.



The Story of Laxman Singh and Smallpox Inoculation

For me, this story captures the meaning of Dharma



Happiness: The sensation of feeling good, being pleased, an internal experience in which the good will is expressed outwardly, extending the positive feeling towards others.

Joy: Experience of extreme happiness, euphoria, a temporary but intense and exuberant sensation.

Bliss: The experience of intense joy, anchored by a sense of connectedness with others and with nature (perfect happiness, great joy)



Happiness **Meaningful Experiences Surpass Expensive Possessions**



Future, Present, and Past

- Anticipating an upcoming visit to a foreign country
- While on the trip, being in the present and enjoying every moment
- Reminiscing about a meaningful experience from the trip: awe of natural beauty, connectedness with friends, laughter



Lottery winners...

What happens to them a year later?

Spinal cord injury and paraplegics...

What happens to them a year later?



Joy

I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.

Rabindranath Tagore



Socrates (469 – 399 BC)

- Claimed that his wisdom and insights arose merely in “knowing that he knew nothing.”
- Argued that happiness is not just bestowed on a select few but could actually be begotten by human endeavor.
- Argued that happiness is *directive* not *additive* .
- Happiness and virtue are inextricably linked.



Traits of Happy People

Happy people have lots of Friends (chosen family).

Happy people have the ability to Forgive.



Friends ... they cherish one another's hopes.
They are kind to one another's dreams.

Thoreau



“A friend is a gift you give yourself.”

Robert Louis Stevenson



Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity.

Khalil Gibran



“The worst solitude is to be destitute of sincere friendship.”

Sir Francis Bacon



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You Can't Be Happy if You Harbor Resentment

- When asked if he harbored resentment against his captors, Nelson Mandela, who had been imprisoned for 27 years, answered:

“Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies.”



A Third Trait

I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I am certain of. The ones amongst you who will be truly happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.

Albert Schweitzer



The Three F's for Being Happy

Friends

Forgiveness

For others



Three F's But Gee, There is a Fourth

Gratitude

The word gratitude is derived from the Latin root *gratia* meaning grace, graciousness, or gratefulness.

Gratitude is a highly prized tenet in Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist teachings.

I am defining gratitude as the experience of something positive gained, coupled with the realization that someone else was responsible for that gain.

I strongly believe that gratitude and compassion can be cultivated.



Get on the Gratitude Express !

- Lifts the mood.
- Improves physical health.
- Increases energy.
- Decreases fatigue.*
- Decreases pain.*

* In patients with neuromuscular disease



Sister 1 (low positive emotion) I was born on September 26, 1909, the eldest of 7 children, 5 girls, 2 boys ... my candidate year was spent in the Mother house, teaching chemistry and Latin at Notre Dame. With God's grace, I intend to do my best for our order, for the spread of religion and for my personal satisfaction.

Sister 2 (high positive emotion) God started my life off well by bestowing upon me a grace of inestimable value ... the past year which I have spent as a candidate studying in Notre Dame has been a very happy one. Now I look forward with eager joy to receiving the Holy Habit of Our Lady and to a life of union with Love Divine.



Positive Emotions in Early Life and Longevity: Findings from the Nun Study

Handwritten autobiographies from 180 Catholic nuns (at mean age of 22 years) was scored for emotional content and related to survival during ages 75-95. **Positive emotional content in early-life autobiographies was strongly associated with longevity 6 decades later.**

Danner DD, et al.
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology;
Volume 80:5;2001

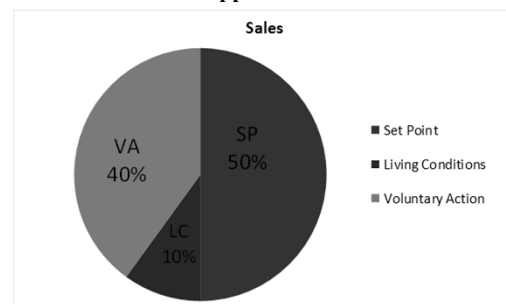


Ancient Reflections and Emerging Science About Gratitude and Happiness

- Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others. Cicero
- I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder. G.K. Chesterton
- To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch heaven. Johannes A. Gaertner



The Happiness Formula



This formula is dynamic and fluid



People Who Regularly Practice Grateful Thinking Can Increase Their "Set-Point" for Happiness by 25%

Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D.



A Reference

Emmons RA and McCullough ME. Counting Blessings Versus Burdens: An Experimental Investigation of Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being in Daily Life. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 2003; Vol 84(2);377-389.



An Excellent Review

Boehm JK and Kubzansky LD: The Heart's Content: The Association Between Positive Psychological Well-being and Cardiovascular Health.

Psychological Bulletin 2012; 1-37



Happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue ... as the unintended side-effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than one's self.

Victor Frankl



Success is not the key to happiness.
Happiness is the key to success.



There is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way.

Thich Nhat Hanh



When I was 5 years old, my mother always told me that happiness was the key to life. When I went to school, they asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I wrote down, "happy." They told me I didn't understand the assignment, and I told them, they didn't understand life.

John Lennon



If you have forgotten the language of *gratitude*,
you will never be on speaking terms with *happiness*.

Anonymous



Question to Siri: What is the secret of happiness?

Siri: It is unequivocally chocolate !



Sign in a Chocolate Shop in Rochester, MN

Money can't buy happiness but it can buy chocolate,
which is kinda like happiness



What Some of My Friends and Colleagues Said Happiness is ...

- Being in the moment and being grateful.
- Breaking bread with friends.
- A choice.
- Knowing you have been good to others.
- When my nest is full. When my kids return home and are asleep in their own beds.
- No clinging, no grasping, no regrets, no anticipation, just being in this moment as it is.
- Being content with what you have.
- Putting a smile on a stranger's face every day.



I Asked the Ultimate Authorities What Happiness is ...

Mira (7 years): Nana, happiness is the joy of love.

Aanya (9 years): Nana, happiness is the warm glow of love in your heart.



The Benefits of Being Happy

Healthier
Altruistic
Positive Energy
Professional Advancement
Immune System Stronger
Empathic
Rewarding Relationships



Amongst the Happiest Countries

Denmark	Singapore
Norway	Switzerland
Australia	Sweden
Bhutan	Canada
Austria	Iceland
Costa Rica	New Zealand



Living With Purpose



“The great and glorious masterpiece
of man is to live with purpose.”

Michel de Montaigne



Achieving Your Purpose

The big secret in life is that there is no big secret. Whatever
your goal, you can get there if you're willing to work.

Oprah Winfrey



Defining Your Purpose Can Come by Reflecting on it or
By Virtue of a Key Moment in your Life

Great leaders often reflect on key events in their life or a
single transformative or ‘magical’ moment. The moment can
be jolting and starkly negative, yet it is momentous.

From it emerges a burning desire to have a laser-like focus
and passion to make that dream a reality.



Experiencing Sorrow Has Its Own Reward

**Most of us will experience sorrow.
When you experience the abyss of sorrow
and emerge stronger and with a clear
purpose, you will have triumphed.**



**One Can Find A Purpose in the
Most Horrific Circumstances**

"We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

Victor Frankl



**"Every life has a measure of sorrow.
Sometimes it is this that awakens us."**

Buddha



**"The good-to-great leaders
never wanted to become larger-
than-life heroes. They never
aspired to be put on a pedestal
or become unreachable icons.
They were seemingly ordinary
people quietly producing extra-
ordinary results."**

Jim Collins



**"Follow your bliss and
doors will open where
there were no doors
before."**

Joseph Campbell



**"Life Finds its Purpose and Fulfillment in the
Expansion of Happiness."**

**Maharishi
1918 - 2008**



A Question Asked of Me at 13,960 Feet

Dr. Chuttani: Sanjiv, if you had to live your life all over again, what profession would you choose, what city and what country would you live in?

Sanjiv: Without a doubt, Hepatology, Medicine, Teaching, Writing, in Boston at Beth Israel Hospital and Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Chuttani: The air here is rarefied. May I ask you the question again when we are at sea level?



The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.

Mark Twain



Having a purpose in life is the wellspring of sustained happiness.

Sir Ken Robinson
in: *Finding Your Element*



If You Could Have One Wish What Would You Wish For ?

- To dance (8 year old girl)
- For my mother to get better, hold my hand and take me to school (8 year old girl)
- A pencil



**No, No, You Don't Understand
You Can Wish for Anything in the World !**

- To dance
- To hold my mother's hand and go to school
- A pencil



PoP Founded With \$25.

- **150 schools** built across Africa, Asia and Latin America
- **10 million educational hours** delivered to children in poverty



I invite you to reflect on what gives you the greatest joy and resonates for you. Take a few minutes now, or later, and reflect on Your Purpose and write it down. You may wish to share it with your closest family members and your friends.



Namaste

I honor the place in you.
Where the entire universe resides.
I honor the place in you.
Of love, of light, of truth, of peace.
I bow to the divinity and spirit within you.



My Purpose in Life

To fulfill my Dharma to teach Medicine, Well-Being, and Leadership.

To do it grounded in humility, and with an ardent desire to learn every single day.

To express gratitude to my family, friends, colleagues, and students who inspire me in countless ways.

