

Is Happiness Possible by Maharaj Kaul?

People often talk of happiness as if it is fully a tangible entity. It is a mental construct that can be totally based on intangibles.

In the course of life human beings go through many experiences and due to them gather an overall atmosphere in the mind. The experiences can be caused by emotions and thinking unrelated with a man's external life. This atmosphere can be compared to a short time experience of cheerfulness and good mood. Because happiness is of a more durable and time-stretched existence of mind, we cannot compare it with transient states of mind like joy, excitement, etc. but can use them only to give an idea of the quality of a mental state called happiness.

A mind is a conglomeration of experiences, ideas, and thinking. It is easy to see how every mind is different, though they can be categorized into a few types. It is also easy to see how happiness is not something that can be created instantaneously. Because of the complexity of minds it is easier for some people to achieve it than the others.

When a matured man is confronted with the question of happiness he starts to look into his life, both external and internal. Often, people are unable to decide whether they are happy or unhappy. That is a good thing because discovery of unhappiness is easier than the discovery of happiness. Let's say that a man finds that he is unhappy, what can he do to change that?. Generally, he will look into his external world to find out the things that might be causing the unhappiness. Let's say he is able to point out the unhappy things and then he is able to eliminate them. But it may still not make him happy. That is because everything we know and do is connected with the inner mind. Inner mind is the more unknown terrain of experience than the external mind.

There have been human beings who have accomplished extraordinary things in

their external lives but yet they have remained unhappy. It is not necessarily their lack of the probity of their inner minds that they were rendered so, it can be because that was the way their being was constructed. That is, some people are almost destined to remain unhappy regardless of the circumstances of their lives.

The knowledge of the inner mind is difficult. It is more so because we live in an age that does not support it. Our age is the age of action and not of reflection. We are supposed to live in action and not get into reflection on the nature of life. According to today's culture everything about life is known, what is required is action to achieve things. That is how materialism happens to be the strongest of our values today. Common people, if they have money, think they can be happy. More money to them means more happiness. So, the greed for money is not accidental but is based on a full-fledged thinking, though resting on certain premises.

It is common wisdom not to think of happiness but to just live. Just to live means just to keep on going through the well established motions of life. But this mechanical way of living does not satisfy some people. These people are generally thinkers, artists, people who have been born in special circumstances, high achievers, and sensitive people.

Happiness should not be made a goal of life because circumstances in both external and inner life can change. One likes to base one's life on unchangeable things. Examples of unchangeable things that a human being can believe in are: duty, goals to improve human life, beauty, truth, etc. A mind based on these values will suffer less heartbreaks leading to unhappiness. Obviously, a life based on personal things is more susceptible to unhappiness.