

Selected Topics in Psychology
Health and Well-Being
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Module - 3
Lecture - 13
Emotion and Well-being

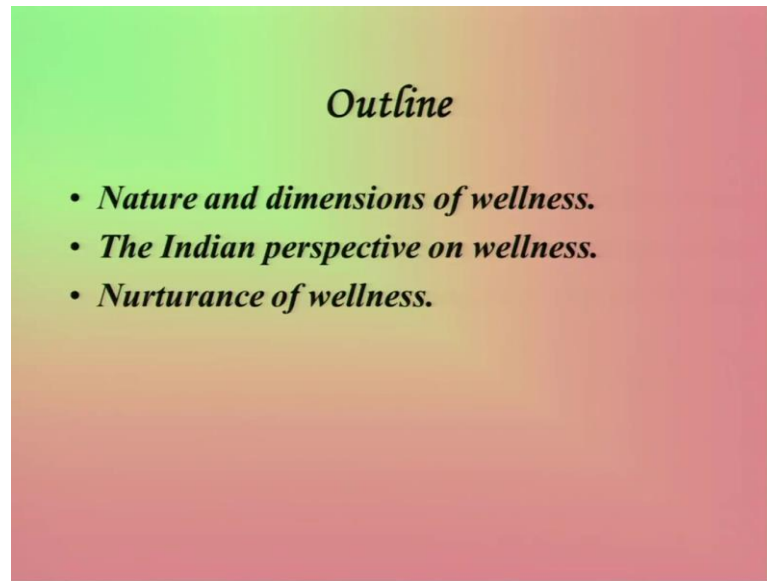
Today, we are going to discuss the Challenge of wellness in Human Life. If you look at human history, we notice that from antiquity, there has been continuous search for good life. What is good life? How one can live good life, has been a perennial question. If you recollect, you will find that Lord Buddha started his journey with the quest for understanding the challenges in life. He found that, there is misery everywhere.

And how this misery can be removed was the main concern, in his analysis? And Buddhism started with this question. We also noticed that, in Vedic period there was a desire, to live a long life, a life with dignity, a life which is rich in terms of pursuing various goals. In recent years, psychologists have shown interest in themes like happiness, well being and a whole new field has emerged with the title of positive psychology.

In particular, the 21st century has been marked by the search for alternative ways to organize life. And to see the implications of thinking, acting and relating in positive ways. If you look at the history of psychology, we will notice that the 20th century was largely preoccupied with negative emotions like anxiety, depression and stress. And that has provided insights, about the kind of difficulties people have.

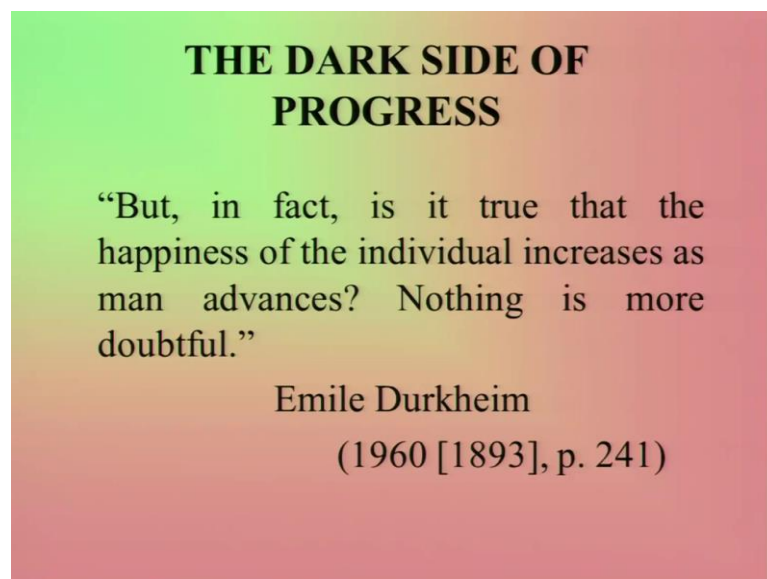
Today, psychological thought has moved in the direction of looking at, what are the possibilities and potentials in human beings? Positive psychology tries to identify the various strengths, which are present in a person? How those strengths can be nurtured? In this context, today's discussion would like to focus on the notion of wellness. Here, we would like to bring in insights from contemporary psychology as well as, what kind of insight is available from Indian thought systems?

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The three important features of today's discussion or the nature and dimensions of wellness, what is the Indian perspective on wellness? And how wellness can be nurtured?

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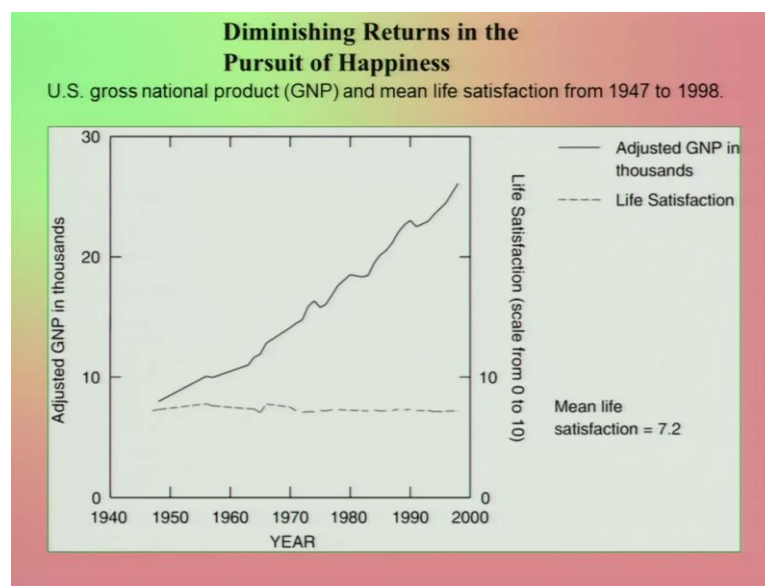


Let us begin with an important quote from Durkheim. He noted long back towards the end of 19th century. But, in fact is it true that the happiness of the individual increases as man advances? Nothing is more doubtful. His observation shows that, the kind of progress that we have made and the kind of changes that are happening in our life are not

unambiguously positive. And with modernity, with industrialization, with technological development, there is equal amount of growth in pathology.

And we noticed that, in developed countries there is increasing problem of depression, anxiety and drug addiction. It requires our attention and it requires an analysis of the causes of such kind of changes. And it also requires efforts to ameliorate the suffering. Let me share an interesting trend, in terms of the relationship between, the economic development and life satisfaction.

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Here, we find that there is increase in GDP. There is increase in income. But, the lower dotted line which shows, the pattern of life satisfaction. And it is intriguing, that life satisfaction remains almost constant. And increase in income is almost linear. So, across this time period, life satisfaction is remaining same. But, the economic growth is at higher level. Now, there is a gap. And this gap creates a challenge.

The challenge is that why it is so that people are not happy? While they have high income? What are the causes of this discrepancy? How we can get rid of those causes and bring in happiness in life and achieve the goal of pursuing good life?

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What is Wellness ?

- It is a positive and sustainable condition that allows thriving and flourishing. It embraces mind, body, society and environment.
- An *auto locus* (*swastha*) person enjoys harmonious interplay of cognition and affect rather than being subjugated to them.
- **SAMDOSHAH SAMAGNISHCHASAMA
DHATUMALKRIYAH
PRASANNATMENDRIYAMANAH
SWASTHYAMITYABHIDHIYATE**

-SUSHURUTA

Let us think about the notion of wellness. Because, in order to understand the causes and developing strategy to live alive, where wellness is present. We need to understand, the nature of wellness itself. Wellness is a positive and sustainable condition that allows, thriving and flourishing. It embraces mind, body, society and environment. What is important to recognize in this presentation is that, wellness is not limited to individual?

Wellness is situated in the context. At the same time, it is a positive condition. And it is a condition that can be maintained. And it is a condition that, helps people to grow, develop and flourish. In the Indian tradition, there is a notion of Swastha, which literally means auto locus. A person, who enjoys harmonious interplay of cognition and affect rather than, being subjugated to them? A person, who has control over his own self?

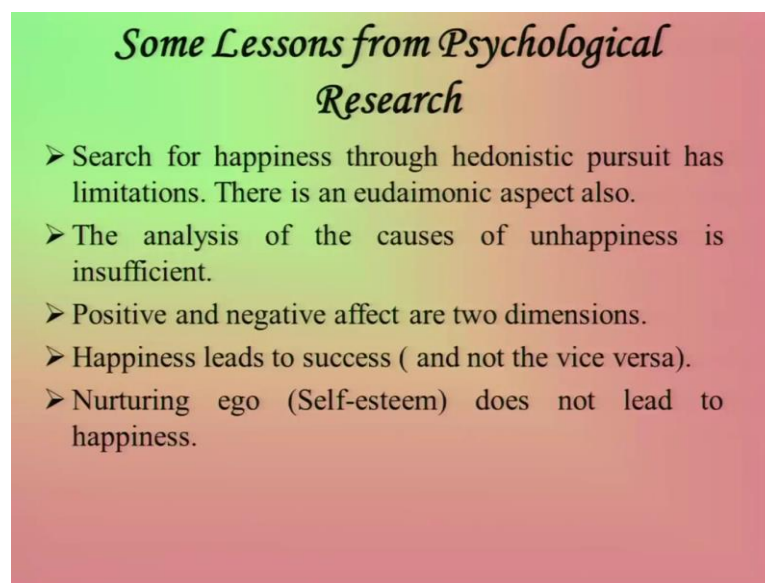
There is another important interesting idea, that comes from the great medicine man from India, who was the first surgeon perhaps, Sushruta. And the idea is that, a kind of balanced state appears to be the right kind of lifestyle, the right kind of arrangement in relation to the environment and functioning of individuals life. I would like to bring this point, before you. Samdosah, Samagnishchasama, Dhatumalkriyah.

Now, this word sum means balance. If everything is in right proportion, if it is in a balanced state. Then, you enjoy a state of happiness and wellness. There is another statement, which tells Prasann Atmendryamanah, Swasthamityabhidhiyate. What is the

meaning of this? It says, aatma, indriya and mann. That is the soul or higher consciousness, the sensory organs and mind.

When, all these maintain a state of pleasure, when all of them are in a condition where they feel delight, then there is a feeling of happiness. So, the point is that happiness is a notion or wellness is a notion, which is more comprehensive, which goes beyond the sensitive pleasure, which relates to mind, which relates to association of human being with the larger existence or higher consciousness.

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Some Lessons from Psychological Research

- Search for happiness through hedonistic pursuit has limitations. There is an eudaimonic aspect also.
- The analysis of the causes of unhappiness is insufficient.
- Positive and negative affect are two dimensions.
- Happiness leads to success (and not the vice versa).
- Nurturing ego (Self-esteem) does not lead to happiness.

Now, I would like to bring home the point that, in the course of psychological studies, researchers have tried to understand, the nature of happiness. And they have come forward with some important insights. Here, we find. So, those lessons that are now available with us. They indicate certain kinds of correlates of happiness. Search for happiness through hedonistic pursuit has limitations.

It has been noted that, happiness has a hedonistic view and also an eudaimonic view. The happiness which relates to material goals, pursuit of worldly pleasure having more and more possessions has certain limitations. Those efforts which are directed to attainment of broader goals, goals for ecology, goals for society. And goals to relate to ones soul provide a different perspective. And a complete state of happiness involves both kinds of concerns.

The analysis of the causes of unhappiness is insufficient. It is very important to realize that, the effort to compensate for unhappiness, in terms of therapy, in terms of counseling is not sufficient. Why I want to emphasize this point is, that a lot of concern of psychologist has been to identify the nature of depression, anxiety and stress, and to create mechanisms to alleviate that to reduce that.

Now, that kind of approach is incomplete and insufficient. We need to find out the nature of the positive state, positive thinking, positive behavior, positive relationship. And how they can be nurtured and maintained? That has become the agenda of positive psychology. There is also a kind of realization. That positive and negative affect are two different dimensions. The fact that a person has positive affect does not mean that, there is no negative effect.

There have been many studies which indicate that, these are two separate dimensions. And they need to be assessed differently through different measures. It is not that one's presence means, absence of the other. There is another interesting finding, which I would like to share with you. And that relates to the association between happiness and successes. The kind of prevailing notion in society is that one, when one has successes then one gets happiness.

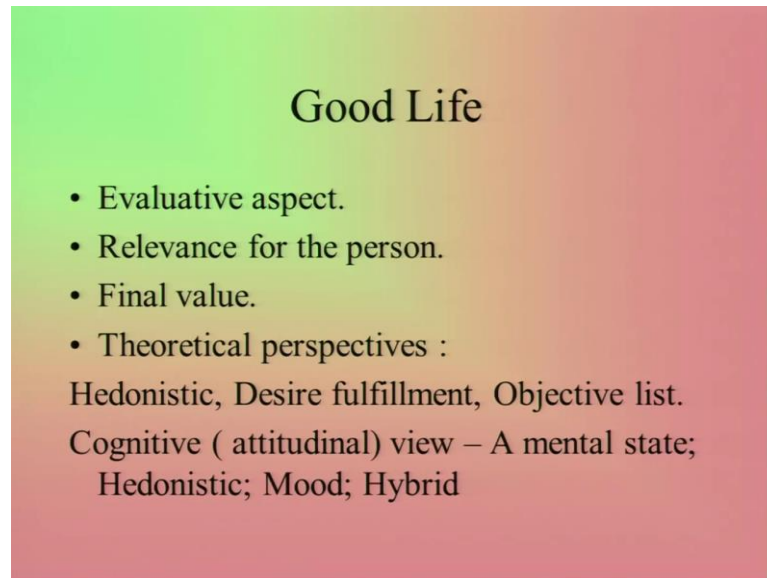
Now, there is a research that indicates that, happiness leads to successes. And in order to achieve successes, you need to do things where you experience happiness. Happiness contributes to growth, development and achievement. The kind of momentary association that you find between successes and happiness is problematic. We will come to this point, later.

There is another series of studies, which indicate that self esteem which was considered to be an important variable is now being looked at with some kind of questioning. And it is being examined that, if there is high self esteem or very high self esteem, it is going to contribute negatively to the growth of individual. The emphasis on egoic states is creating more disturbances in the life of people.

The emphasis on this kind of self, which relates to the materialistic goals, possession of various things has certain limitations. And these points have been elaborated in our discussion on, the notion of self. So, here it is suffice to emphasize that, one needs to

take care of other aspects of self which relate to society and consciousness, when we think about good life, a life which is satisfying, a life what pursuing.

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Good Life

- Evaluative aspect.
- Relevance for the person.
- Final value.
- Theoretical perspectives :
Hedonistic, Desire fulfillment, Objective list.
Cognitive (attitudinal) view – A mental state;
Hedonistic; Mood; Hybrid

Then we need to examine its component. When this question is posed to an individual? That, please tell, what is your idea of good life? Then, there are some concerns which become very obvious. One is that, we evaluate the condition in life, the attainments, the relationship with goals, the future that we envision. So, this evaluation is one concern, when we think about good life.

We also focus on the activities and goals and attainments relation to the individual. Then, there is another concern, which is very serious. That people think about the goals in life. The final goal in life what we really want to achieve? I would like to bring home, this point. That the kind of goals, which are pursued are quite varied. Life itself is considered to be an instrument to achieve certain higher goals. Those goals are considered as values.

In Indian thought, there is a very clear emphasis on pursuing Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. As four important goals, they are known as Purusharthas. Out of these four, the first one Dharma is a kind of mechanism or a central principle, which maintains the relationship of individual with the ecology in which the person lives. Now, it is basic principle Kama, satisfaction of various desires and pursuing various activities.

Artha, pertains to the professional activities and also acquiring various kinds of possessions. So, there is no denial of pursuing for prosperity or seeking wealth. There is no denial of fulfilling desires. But, both have to be performed within the framework of Dharma. So, a life worth pursuing has to emphasize all these goals Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. It is not one goal which is important. It is a balance of goals across these four kinds of pursuits which are relevant.

If we look at the various theories, which have been proposed to explain happiness and well being, we find some interesting propositions. And here, I have listed some of the major perspectives which have been proposed. One considers, an approach which is hedonistic that, seeking positive goals and avoiding negative things. This is one of the major perspectives, which has guided research in psychology for a long time, in many areas.

Then, it is also argued that pursuit of wellness involves desire fulfillment. But, there is no limit to that list and it is very difficult to satisfy, all the desires. They increase and they increase. Then, there is another approach which tries to create an objective list. And then, you can determine that all. If you are able to satisfy once attainment in relation to the items which are listed in that, then you can feel happy. You can feel well being and you can move forward in life.

Then, there is another aspect which brings the notion of wellness at cognitive level or at attitudinal level. And then, it becomes a mental state. It deals with certain kinds of moods or it also refers to a hybrid notion, where moods as well as attitudes both are included.

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Now, people often think in their life. Common man also thinks about the notion of happiness and well being. There are several studies which have tried to interview people. And they have tried to find out, what are the things which mattered in the life of the people? And what are things which are considered relevant to the pursuit of well being? Here, we have some of the key concerns that I have merged, from the study of live people.

Authenticity that, if you live a life where you are able to express yourself? Authentically, pursue your goals. Authentically, then it is a life worth living. Significance of affect is central, if you live in society, if you get the appreciation, if you get love from others. Then, you enjoy life and you feel that, there is well being. And active life and participation in different activities is another component, which has been considered relevant to happy life.

Efficacy and vitality, that you are living a life which is vibrant, which is full of involvement that indicates the state of well being. Good spirit, creativity, experience in fulfillment and resilience. So, the list which is presented here, focuses on individuals growth, individuals involvement and individuals movement in the life of peace. These are the things, which are centered to the experience of well being.

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Perceived Causes of Wellness

- *Mental Strength & Personality Traits, Personal Advantages,*
- *Achievement & Freedom in Life and work, Social Support & Esteem,*
- *Security, and Optimism & Contentment.*

We have also studied which have tried to analyze in experimental, as well as in field settings, the antecedents of wellness. How people may judgment of wellness? And what are the antecedents, which determine wellness of individual? Psychological research has shown that, mental strength, certain personality traits, the advantages which people enjoy, the achievement when people achieve their goals?

When they for example, to better in examination or when they do something more prominently as compared to other individuals. In those movements, they do feel well being. Freedom in life and work is another feature. That, when you are able to pursue goals, according to your choice? Then, perhaps you feel well being. Social support and esteem is another component. Security, optimism and commitment also figure in the list of antecedents.

Here, what we notice is, that antecedents of wellness include those features of life, where growth of an individual is recognized. In all those notions that we have seen here in terms of antecedents. There is emphasis on activity, feature orientation, satisfaction and relating to task and life circumstances, an effective way. These are the features which are present, when we think about the perceived causes of wellness.

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The Contemporary Condition

- We are still not happy some of the time and some people are unhappy most of the time.
- Habituation and adaptation to pleasurable situations.
- Negative social comparison.
- Inequitable reactions to equal losses and gains.
- Adaptive but distressing emotions (e.g. anxiety, depression, anger).

Now, there have been many analysis by scholars, thinkers, philosophers and psychologists, about the general condition that prevails today. These realizations indicate that in general, we are still not happy, some of the time and some people are unhappy most of the time. There are individual variations. There are group variations in the experience of happiness and well being. But, there is a psychological difficulty in organizing our life.

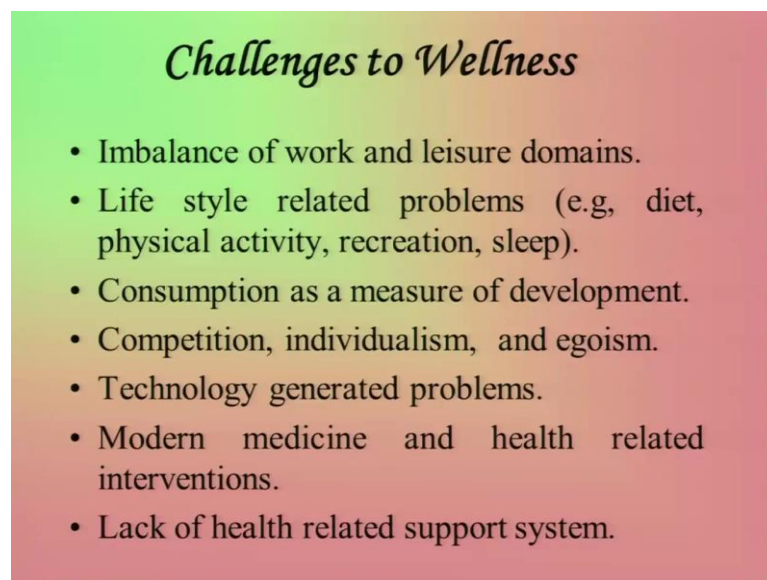
Because of, habituation and adaptation to pleasurable situations, what gives pleasure and happiness at one point of time becomes less pleasurable and provides less degree of happiness. And this, changes the whole scenario. Then, there is another important features that when we compare with others. We always find that, there is some kind of gap between the other person and myself. Now, an individual who compares with others, he compares with one, who is at higher level?

And there is always a possibility that, the person feels deprived disadvantaged or at a lower level of attainment as compare to that person. So, this kind of gap leads to frustration. And it is always present, irrespective level of income. The person compares with the other person or group and feels deprived. Then, there is another interesting observation by various researchers. That, when we lose something, then our affective reaction is stronger?

When we gain something, then the reaction is not so strong. If someone loses a note of 50 rupees, then the feeling the negative feeling is stronger than one, when one gets a note of 50 rupees. So, our reaction, the affective reaction is different. The magnitude or strength of reaction is different, under both the conditions. So, we feel more loose and gain is responded to less effectively. Then, there are adaptive but, distressing emotions.

As I have mentioned earlier anxiety, depression and anger are such negative emotions. They have been certain conditions. For example, anger is important to provide security. Anger is also important to organize our relationship with others, in certain circumstances. But, it also creates certain kinds of difficulties. So, these emotions are also present in us. They also create a challenge in the process of experience in happiness.

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Challenges to Wellness

- Imbalance of work and leisure domains.
- Life style related problems (e.g, diet, physical activity, recreation, sleep).
- Consumption as a measure of development.
- Competition, individualism, and egoism.
- Technology generated problems.
- Modern medicine and health related interventions.
- Lack of health related support system.

In today's world, there are certain things which are happening in our environment, at our workplace, in family life. And they are creating a challenge. And we need to recognize those factors. Today with availability of various gadgets, like mobile and Ipad and other kinds of gadgets which have created, more free time and the arrangement which are now possible to work from different places. Now, work from home has become a major strategy.

The results were possibility that, you are present at any place and you relate to office and to other individuals, you have. In fact, you communication of that kind, that provides freedom. The challenges of a time and space have taken a different shade in today's,

more effective transportation and communication facilities. So, that have created a kind of imbalance between work and leisure. Lifestyle related problems are there.

Just to mention a few of them, the kind of diet, the physical activity, the possibility of recreation, change in sleep pattern. All of them are contributing to the situation which goes against happiness and well being, at physical level as well as psychological level. There is another important development and that considers, consumption as index of development. Those who consume more are considered more developed.

But, with consumption, there are many difficulties. It also leads to wastage. And it also creates a condition where there is a gap. And it also leads to increase in the needs. If you just attain the advertisements on TV, you will notice that there are many needs which are added to our list. Every day, the different advertisements offer various kinds of gadgets, various kinds of engagements. And it is very difficult to deny them, because they are presented in very interactive and very interesting ways.

Competition, individualism, egoism are present in our life. And this point has been elaborated earlier. So, we will now going to the details of that. But, they definitely contribute to the way, we organize our life. There are many problems which are introduced because of the technology. And if we analyze, we will see that the technology has become so important. That human interaction has become mediated by technology.

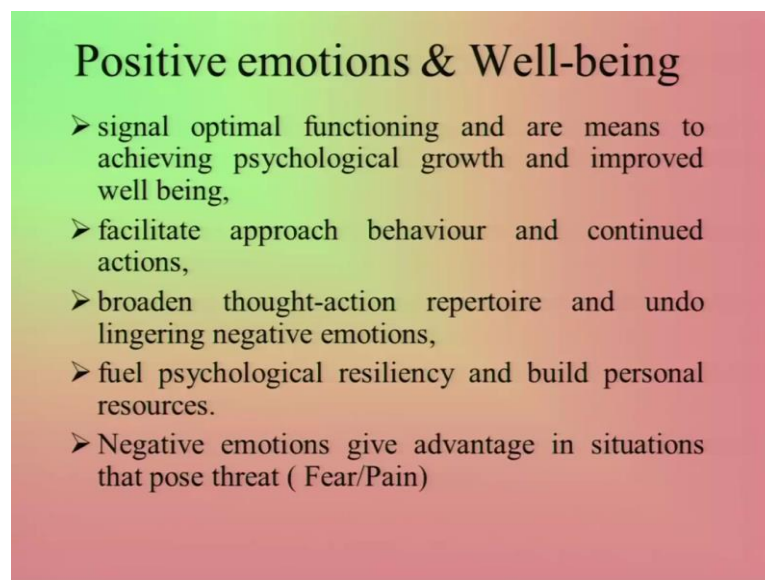
We also noticed that, technology is changing the habits of mind. What we remember? And what we do not like to remember? All these things are being redistributed across various gadgets. And I think that, learning habits are changing writing habits are changing. Now, laptop and mobile, they mediate our activities. Some of my friends say that, they cannot write if they do not sit with their laptop.

The creativity starts the movement, they view the laptop or the keyboard. Then, they start thinking. Modern medicine and health related interventions, which are becoming quite variegated. There are ways of cosmetic surgery. The way one wants to present oneself to society. There are ways in which, one can achieve the color of body. You know about Michael Jackson, who shared one image with the people which was very different than the real image.

Similarly, now there are changes in the ways of an appearance and it has become very important medical intervention. So, things are changing very fast. Lack of health related support system. This is another major consideration. And this point, I have brought out here, because in countries where you cannot make development is uneven. We find that access to health facilities is becoming a big challenge. In India, we find that gradually the health system is being privatized.

And the government support is becoming limited. And the effectiveness of government hospitals is being reduced. Now, this is creating a big challenge. And health and well being are interrelated. And if we do not provide sufficient health support then, it is going to influence, the level of participation, activity and well being of the people.

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Positive emotions & Well-being

- signal optimal functioning and are means to achieving psychological growth and improved well being,
- facilitate approach behaviour and continued actions,
- broaden thought-action repertoire and undo lingering negative emotions,
- fuel psychological resiliency and build personal resources.
- Negative emotions give advantage in situations that pose threat (Fear/Pain)

There is one insight that has come from recent studies, in psychology. And that deals with the consequences of experiencing positive emotions like love, wisdom, gratefulness, forgiveness, humility and other related kind of experiences. It is a very interesting to note that, our understanding of anger, fear has a very long history. And very detailed analysis has been done. The understanding of positive emotions is relatively new.

And current researches, indicate that positive emotions contribute in significant ways, in creating the possibilities for well being and living life more effectively. Let us see, what are the major contributions of positive emotions? The first, a significant learning in the

context of positive emotions is, that positive emotions signal optimal functioning. And they contribute to psychological growth and improved well being.

This is a something very critical. It is critical in the sense that, when you are for instance happy or when you smile, that is smile or happiness indicates that your health is good. Your functioning is effective. But, the most important thing is that the experience of present happiness or smiling, contributes to your further development. It is a guarantee that, you will remain happy and you will become well being.

So, if you increase the account of happiness, you are ensuring your future happiness. You are ensuring your well being for future. So, this is an important learning that, how to create such occasions and how to regulate, the active involvement of an individual, in terms of experiencing wellness and happiness? Then, there is another important observation. This deals with the contribution of positive emotion in terms of providing energy, providing opportunities to engage and behaviors, sustain behavior.

So, if you are interested in some activity then, you are going to pursue and then you are going to contribute, in that particular area. This is a hypothesis, something great. That, when you are happy or when you are experience positive emotions then, it leads to broadening of thought action repertoire. That many good ideas will occur to you. And you will be able to choose different kinds of actions.

It motivates you to think in new ways, in creative ways. Then, there is another important component. That, it is not only that your thoughts and your activities are going to be more variegated but, engaging in positive emotions also removes the effect of negative emotions. And there is one more corollary of this kind of assertion, that it has a spiral. The effect is that it continues. So, if you are happy, it is going to increase your thought pattern and action tendencies.

And this will again lead to positive emotions. So, it will continue. It will create such kind of continuous pattern, in life. Positive emotions fuel, psychological resiliency and build personal resources. And in many situations, experiencing positive emotions provides various kinds of resources in life. So, that you go for different kinds of options and create opportunity for yourselves.

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Handling Emotions

- The experience of bliss (*prasad*) in this world requires nurturing and using friendship (*maitri*), compassion (*karuna*), pleasant behavior (*mudita*) and avoidance (*upeksha*).
- Yoga recognizes the interface at a meta cognitive level and rightly focus on *regulating the cittavrittis*. Handling them wisely is critical to the experiences of well being and health.

The Indian perspective, particular the yoga system offers some methods to organize our emotional life. In everyday life, we meet people of different kinds. And we have to relate to them. There are occasions, when we have to respond positively or negatively? Here, is a prescription to organize our life, in relation to different kind of people. This system says that, one should experience bliss in this world by nurturing friendship with good people, having compassion, having pleasant behavior.

And if someone is negative, someone is not helping, you can do avoidance. You can go for Upeksha. So, these are very interesting ways to relate to people. You can relate positively or you can engage in a relationship, where you maintain a distance. So, it is important to be wise in terms of relating to individuals and organizing relationship in terms of different kinds of emotional tendencies.

Now, I wanted to emphasize that, handling emotions in terms of relationship with other individuals is a challenge where you regulate your behavior through, developing friendship or having compassion or having a pleasant behavior or avoiding. But, it also relates to the cognitive functioning. The yoga system also says that, it is crucial to recognize that, you are in a position to control your cognitive activities.

How you relate and how you not relate? The attention can be regulated. And at meta cognitive level, the cittaverittis a fluctuation of mind need to be regulated. So, it is not only the emotional component but, it is also the cognitive component. In other words, the

cognitive appraisal is also very crucial. How you attain to certain inputs? How you attain to the behavior of other individual, is also critically involved in relating to others.

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- ✓ creates the necessary space for the pursuit of being liberated in life (*Jivan mukta*).
- ✓ strengthens the immune system, increases resilience and furnishes a ground for expanding the notion of self.
- ✓ builds and enhances the life energy required to meet the challenges of life.
- ✓ helps controlling the senses by the mind one engages in action without attachment and excels.


By controlling ones cognition and regulating emotion, one can live a life where emotions do not become burden, where cognition do not create challenges, which are contrary to needs of growth of an individual. Now, that creates a situation. If one develops such state of affair, affairs in life then, perhaps the person becomes *Jivan mukta* or liberated in life. The twin goals of regulating emotions and cognitions are going to contribute to strengthening immune system increasing resilience and providing a basis for an expanded notion of self.

It contributes towards enhancement of life energy to meet challenges of life. It also helps controlling the senses by the mind. And in that way, one can create an agenda for life where the activities are organized, in terms of broader goals. And involvement without attachment is one such strategy, which has been proposed. Now, what is relevance of this yogic idea? The yogic idea is that, you are the master of your life.

You are able to consider yourselves. A person who is in charge of life circumstances? If one is able to realize the limitations as well as potentials, if one is able to see that the true nature is something which is not associated with the worldly objects, which are very temporary which move which come which go. Then perhaps, a different kind of individual will emerge. *Jivan mukta* is a notion which is in some sense ideal.

It is ideal because, it provides a state of detachment and also a state of involvement. It is not merely that, one has live this world and then experience mukhtar are such a situation which is called liberation. But, one can live a life like a liberated being and the liberated being is one who is autonomous and which organizes the actions, according to a balanced mode of functioning.

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Two Major Aspects of Wellness

- **Personal:** Self acceptance, Personal growth, Purpose in life, environmental mastery, Autonomy, Positive relations with others.
- **Social :** Social acceptance, Social actualization, Social contribution, Social coherence, Social integration.

The analysis of a subjective well being in happiness and wellness has been focusing largely at the individual level. And a person who is high in subjective well being is one who has self acceptance, experiences a personal growth, has purpose in life, goals for environmental mastery, autonomy and maintains positive relations with others. But, this is an incomplete picture. It is incomplete in the sense that, it deals with only at personal, deals with only personal well being.

There is also an important component which deals with social well being. And only recently attention has been paid to understanding and incorporating social well being. Also has an agenda for understanding well being, in totality. So, social acceptance, social actualization, social contribution, social coherence and social integration are also equally valuable and important. Here, I would like to refer to an interesting notion which Alfred Adler has proposed.

And that is about social interest, that it is important to see and recognize that, human life is maintained by others. And if one wants to grow and develop, one must have social

interest and do activities relate to other individuals, contribute to the growth of community. These are equally valuable engagements for life which is full of happiness and well being. So, there should be an emphasis not only on personal aspirations or personal achievements or having a state of happiness at individual level.

But, individual happiness is not possible, if we are not attending to the happiness at societal level. I mean, one can see how people do things for their personal growth? And they forget about the society. If you go into the details, corruption will become one example, where this kind of imbalance is present.

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Character Strengths Pertaining to Wellness

- **Wisdom and knowledge**--creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning and perspective.
- **Courage**--Bravery, persistence, integrity and vitality.
- **Humanity**--Love, kindness and social intelligence.
- **Justice**--Citizenship, fairness and leadership.
- **Temperance**--Forgiveness, humility, prudence and self-regulation.
- **Transcendence**--Appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor and spirituality.

Peterson & Seligman (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. Washington: APA

Now, there is another development that has taken place. We have a lot of information about the various personality traits. We have a lot of information of about, various kinds of psychological disorders. We have a manual developed to understand the various kinds of disorders. And that is gone into many additions, lot of researches there. But, there has not been enough effort to examine, what are the positive qualities? What are the human strengths?

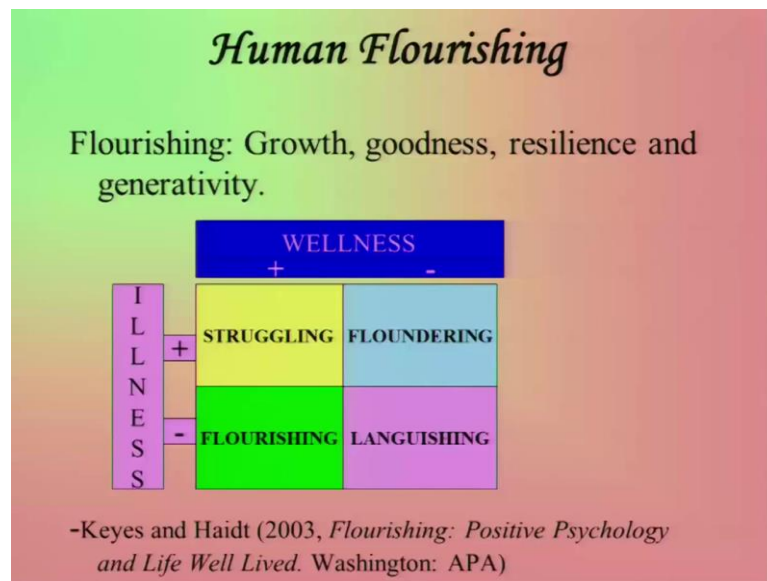
Here, there is an analysis which talks about the various character strengths. I have listed it. It has been developed by Peterson and Seligman, on the basis of various kinds of input examining the text across various traditions, the studies that have been done as well as speculation. Now, they are engaged in developing measure for this. As you can see,

wisdom and knowledge is one. Courage, humanity, justice, temperance and then transcendence, now these six are considered as important character strengths.

And they can be measured. You will also recognize that, they cover concern about individual life. They cover concern about pertain into social life. And they also go beyond that. Not only the individual in community but, going to higher level to think about the nature to think about environment and to have transcendence. So, positive development is an important agenda.

And this agenda has to be pursued through continuous effort. One question which comes to my mind and to researchers, that can we increase happiness? And how happiness can be achieved?

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There is an interesting insight from some researchers. They have introduced the term flourishing. And we find that, flourishing involves growth, goodness, resilience and generativity. Happiness is a process leads to growth of individual as well as society. And the various institutions which are present in any society help to organize life, in such a way that people achieve their goals. And they reach to a condition which is termed as flourishing.

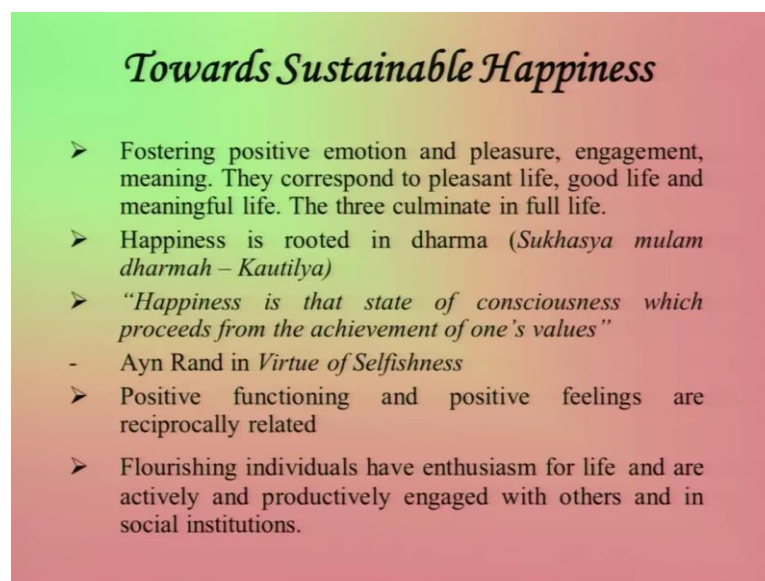
To be more specific, flourishing includes growth, goodness, resilience and generativity. Growth and goodness and resilience and generativity are interrelated. And one has to see,

how they can be permitted? How conditions can be created in parenting, in schooling, in organizational setup, in political sphere, that these goals are realized. It has been observed that, there are two major dimensions, wellness and illness.

And they were combinations. There are different degrees of experiencing illness and wellness. The level, where there is very low illness or illness is absent. And wellness is very high. You have a condition of flourishing. There is a condition where, there is an effort to have wellness. But, there is also a condition which promotes illness. Then there is struggling. A condition, where there is high illness and there is low illness that is floundering.

And one, where is very low illness and also a low level of wellness. Then there is languishing. Now, these are the patterns which may be seen in various societies or communities. And effort should be made to move towards the condition of flourishing.

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Towards Sustainable Happiness

- Fostering positive emotion and pleasure, engagement, meaning. They correspond to pleasant life, good life and meaningful life. The three culminate in full life.
- Happiness is rooted in dharma (*Sukhasya mulam dharmah – Kautilya*)
- *“Happiness is that state of consciousness which proceeds from the achievement of one’s values”*
- Ayn Rand in *Virtue of Selfishness*
- Positive functioning and positive feelings are reciprocally related
- Flourishing individuals have enthusiasm for life and are actively and productively engaged with others and in social institutions.

The question is that, how sustainable happiness? How flourishing can be maintained? How flourishing can be achieved? What we have learnt from literature? What we have learnt from learning from? What we have learnt from a different insight? In different traditions is summarized here. Perhaps, the first important learning is that fostering positive emotion and pleasure, engagement and meaning. They provide a condition, where happiness can be achieved?

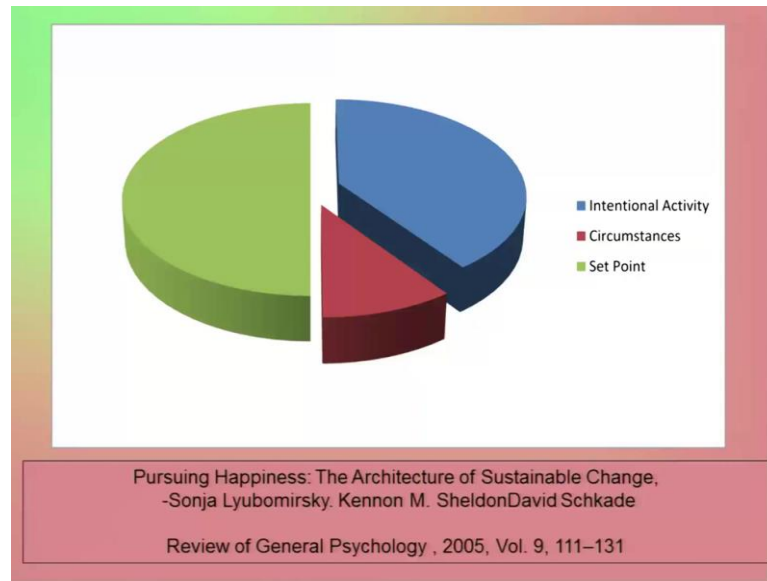
So, the work should be one which promotes engagement, which is meaningful can be one way to intervene to enhance happiness. People make a distinction between pleasant life, where you have sensitive pleasure? Gaining, what you desired? Good life which includes attitude towards life as well as a concern for society. And then meaningful life where you are able to pursue the goals, that you want and search for meaning is complete.

And if there is pleasantness, if there is positiveness and if there is meaning then, you really have full life. But, how this can be achieved? Kautilya in Arthashastra mentions that happiness is rooted in dharma, Sukhasya mulam dharamah. That is, if you live in a society if you create conditions in society, where dharma is maintained. That is, there is order, people respect life, people relate to others positively.

If they try to follow the oft quoted principle of *servye bhawan to sukhina*, perhaps that is a situation when there is dharma and then there will be happiness. Ayn Rand says the same thing, happiness is that state of consciousness which proceeds from the achievement of one's values. So, bringing in value in the center of life, at individual as societal level is key to happiness. Positive functioning and positive feelings both are reciprocally related.

Flourishing individuals have enthusiasm for life. And they are actively and productively engaged with others and in social institutions. The point which I want to emphasize is that, mere materialistic concern following a life in relation to the goal of consumption, is one which goes against happiness. One needs to give space to others. One needs to learn relating to others and societal goals. If both flourish only then, an individual can flourish and society can flourish.

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One of the important studies and a researcher Sonja Lyubomirsky has tried to integrate the literature. And create a model, which recalls architecture of sustainable change, which leads to happiness, makes an interesting observation. The observation is that, there is a set point which is genetically determined. And that contributes to 50 percent of happiness to one's life. The circumstances in life, contribute 10 percent. But, 40 percent is contributed by the intentional activity of an individual.

So, go for exercise. If you do social work, if you contribute to the growth of various institutions, you are going to contribute to development. You are going to contribute to happiness. So, happiness can be enhanced. And intentional activity is something which is quite important and central. And it matters that, how we organize our life? So, we are the master of our life. If we think that, these are the courses of action. If we engage in them with the pursuit of ((Refer Time: 60:29)) values, then we can be happy.

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Conclusion: Going beyond EGO

Well being is not merely a state . It is a process of striving and behaving which helps gaining stability through persistent effort to obtain equilibrium in the midst of continuous change.

It is only through a creative process of self renovation and seeking harmony with others that one may move forward on this unending path of self discovery.

Well being cannot be considered as a state. And we reach to that state, perhaps it is a process of striving and behaving, which helps gaining stability through persistent effort to obtain equilibrium in the midst of continuous change. Life is difficult. Life always changes. And maintaining an equilibrium is the challenge. It is only through a creative process of self renovation. And seeking harmony with others, that one may move forward on this unending path of self discovery.

Happiness and well being really relate to a process of self discovery. And that requires, continuous intra inspection, regulation of self and making decisions and pursuing that. It is a tough demand. But, if you want to remain happy and if you want to see that, society is flourishing, we need to make such decisions to organize our life. I think, this requires attention of parents, schools and other organizations which are central to organizing life at different levels.

In conclusion, I would like to draw attention to the changes that have taken in Indian society. If you recollect, Indians were of the view that, there should be a concern for well being of everybody at physical level as well as psychological level. As we remember, the oft quoted Sanskrit words says Sarve bhavantu sukhinah, Sarve santu niramaya, sarve bhadrani pashyantu, maqasid dukh bhagabhai. Now, here is a desire to see that, everyone is happy.

And this provided an extended scope to deliberate in life, which is very inclusive. And also, there has been emphasis on learning from miseries, suffering, as well as trying to achieve higher goals. In today's world, with the emphasis on materialism, industrialization and globalization, there is more and more emphasis on material gain having all the gadgets trying to have more money.

And the consequence that we are facing is that, there is increase in frustration. There is violence at domestic level, violence at group level, violence at the level of community. Now, one has to rethink about the premises that are, there in the context of globalization. Is it necessary, that we should follow a pattern of life which has led to problems in the developed countries?

We have reached to a point, where the society has to decide about the path that has to be followed, where there the path is. One which leads to technological development, increase in frustration and increase in pathology or one where there is the balanced development, societal growth and well being of everyone. I think, it is important to nurture. And orientation, which recognizes higher values and creates a balance in supplying things in getting things.

And I am reminded of Gandhi ji, who mentioned that the environment, the nature has enough to provide everybody. But, it cannot fulfill the greed. And that is an important lesson. As a society, we have to attain to the conditions in which we live. And the goals that are good for society. Instead of emulating, what is happening in other places and moving in the same direction. It is necessitate that, we critically examine the goals and values, which are relevant and perhaps, relevant to the entire universe.

Materialism has led us to think that, more is better and one should try to achieve more and more. Indian thought has emphasized on, a notion which recognizes the value of containment. Santosh is a term, which has great significance in Indian thought. And there is an emphasis on recognizing the limitations. And enjoying, what one has? And what can be achieved has to be regulated in terms of? What is the conditions in which people live?

So, a balanced approach is necessary. Having a desire to have experience of containment is one, which is emphasized in Bhakti tradition by Kabir and many others. So, it is a part of life. People who are poor do have a experience of happiness? People who have limited

resources also experience wellness. We need to see this. Very important fact that, the entire world is full of various things, desires can be as high as one can think and imagine.

But, that is not the way to organize life. It will lead to more and more frustration. If we increase the range of our desires, as Bhagwat Gita says that these desires once fulfilled, again take place. They reemerge and there is no end to that. I think, almost all Indian traditions emphasize this point that, there should be certain degree of satisfaction in the organization of life activities. And that comes only, when there is a containment or santosh.

This is an important insight. And if we recognize the conditions, the population, the resources and the availability of opportunities and distribution of income, the challenge of equity, one has to recognize that santosh too is important. It does not mean that, one should not make a fraud. But, it is important to recognize the limits within which, one has to work.

Thank you very much.