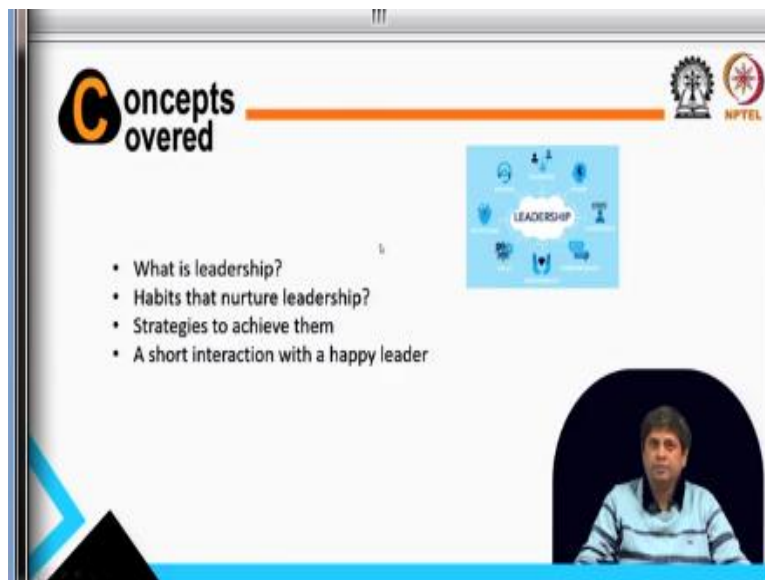


The Science of Happiness and Wellbeing
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Lecture-35
Happiness and Leadership Habits

Morning friends, today's session is on leadership and it contains 2 interesting things. We have already talked about traits which are relevant in the context of happiness when we did in the 15th session. And what we are going to focus on today is how those traits and especially habits which can lead to those traits are relevant and can be inculcated in the context of leadership.

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The second thing that we are going to focus on today is every short interaction with a happy leader which gives us first hand insight into leadership practices and strategies.

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Keywords

- Habits
- Happiness
- Leadership

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What's Leadership?

- *The ability to influence others in order to achieve a goal*
- *The action of leading a group of people or an organization*
- *The continuous process of influencing behaviour*

- Influence
- Inspire
- Others
- Contagion
- Formal – informal

So, if you are talking about what is leadership there are 2 definitions or 3 definitions I have shared with you, the focus in all these definitions is on the concept of influence. And generally if you are talking about positive leadership then we talk about the concept of inspiring others. And obviously when you inspire or you motivate very often there is a contagion and the emotions and the mood that you inculcate gets reflected in the other.

So, the leader has a very responsible role and this applies both to formal and informal context, whether we are talking about groups or organizations or families, in all these contexts these concepts apply equally significantly.

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The slide is titled "What is leadership not about and about?". It features a list of bullet points on the left, a central icon of a group of people, and a video inset on the right showing a man speaking. The top right corner has logos for a university and NPTEL.

- Not superior skill
- Not special gift
- Not making mistakes
- *Understanding others*
- *Taking responsibility*
- *Helping others grow*
- *Instilling optimism*
- *Inculcating team spirit*

Before we go ahead it is very important to understand what leadership is about and what it is not about. If we say that leadership is about superior skills, then most people today would disagree. It is not that the leader is a born leader and it is an innate talent and it cannot ever be inculcated, in other words there are no special gifts. And similarly if we assume that the leader is all perfect, if you are looking at the other extreme, well that is also not true.

A leader is a person just like you and me either thrown into a circumstance or taking up a challenge who decides and who inculcates certain traits has certain habits which finally at the end of the day make this person come out in doing the things that we are talking about in the second part of the slides which is about understanding others, taking responsibility, helping others grow, instilling a sense of optimism and inculcating team spirit.

So, when we take these together we kind of realize what the important contributions of a good leader happen to be, but when we talking about these when we talked about

character strengths we talked about a number of strengths, number of qualities. And these qualities not only make us happier make us stronger in our sense of identity, many of them are also linked to our leadership and we discussed that briefly in session 15 if you remember.

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If you are talking about leadership styles, there have been changes that have been tradition transitions. Leadership was imposed are some people were chosen to be leaders and these people led the way they want it you can talk about kings, you can talk about rulers, you can talk about autocrats, Laissez Faire where you see that the powerful decides how to take things forward if you are talking about transactional leadership which came into existence during the industrial revolution.

You are talking about finding talented people, finding look focusing on efficiency, focusing on production, focusing on management and you have rewards and you have clear goals. But then as we move forward into the 21st century later part of 20th century and 21st century we focus on a kind of leadership which is motivational and influential. And we talk about motivational and influential leadership which often is known as transformational leadership.

The focus is on positive change, we are looking at it as the 2 grids 2 arrows indicate, if it is done well both in terms of efficiency as well as the engagement of the people who are a part of the team there would be a rapid increase. Because you own whatever you are doing, the people who are working with you own what they are doing there is coherence, there is responsibility, there is exchange of let us say work and views.

In terms of equality, understanding compassion and they definitely help transform the workplace significantly.

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The slide features the title "For traits, start with habits" at the top left. Below it is a bulleted list: "• Habits – you don't have to think", "• Habits – routine", "• Habits – regularity", and "• Habits – evolution, progress". To the right of the list is a graphic of two sticky notes hanging from a string with green clips; the left note is red and says "CHANGE YOUR HABITS", and the right note is blue and says "CHANGE YOUR LIFE". In the bottom right corner, there is a video inset showing a man in a light blue shirt speaking. The NPTEL logo is in the top right corner. At the bottom left, there is a red line of text: "• *Virtues and strengths (session 15)*".

But as I told you today's focus again is not so much a leadership, not so much and happy leadership which in itself is a field altogether. It is more about inculcating habits which nurture the traits of leadership. So, in that sense this is linked to the virtues and strengths that we did the last session, in session 15. And the reason we are taking it up after 20 sessions is because leadership is something which is directly linked to workplace.

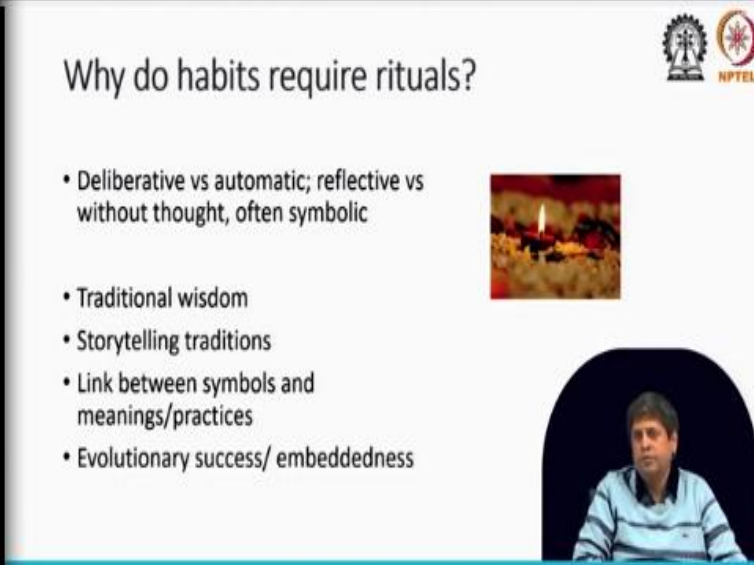
And virtues and strengths were linked to self development, so it is in that context that the 2 sessions are kept widely apart. But it would be a good idea to revisit session 15 and then come back and look at the points that we are going to make today. How are traits different

from habits? Traits generally are things which you have kind of inculcated which are long term which show recurrence again and again.

Habits can also become like traits once they become habits, the important components of habits once they become habits is that you do not have to think about them, they become routine. Traits are called upon from time to time but habits are routine, habits indicate regularity, habits indicate evolution and progress. Because as you learn habits they grow and habits can be refined and habits can also be given up, so you give up bad habits and inculcate good habits.

In the context of leadership what is the relevant of these habits? Mind I repeat again, traits in general cannot be changed, if you know that you have certain traits you can strengthen them. But if you are talking about habits, habits can be created and that is where the transformational component comes in and it is linked to leadership in the same that you transform yourself and at the end of the day you develop the ability to transform others.

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Why do habits require rituals?

- Deliberative vs automatic; reflective vs without thought, often symbolic
- Traditional wisdom
- Storytelling traditions
- Link between symbols and meanings/practices
- Evolutionary success/ embeddedness

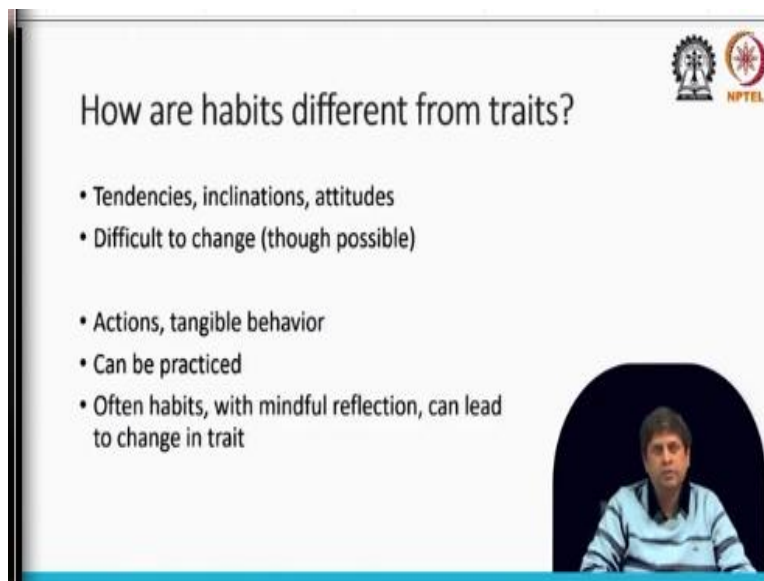
The slide features a small image of a lit candle in a glass holder, surrounded by flowers. In the bottom right corner, there is a small inset video of a man speaking. The slide also includes logos for IIT Bombay and NPTEL in the top right corner.

Very often habits are linked to the concept of ritual. Because you see that habits are initiated deliberately although later on they become automatic and rituals often are

things we do not think about. But rituals give rise to certain habits or are linked to certain habits; say getting up early in the morning is a habit which is maybe a link to somebody's ritual of doing pooja. And very often they are associated with traditional wisdom; certain rituals which survive do so because they have a certain social relational or personal significance for people.

Very often a link to storytelling traditions and they have evolutionary success and embeddedness and hence they are achieved.

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How are habits different from traits?

- Tendencies, inclinations, attitudes
- Difficult to change (though possible)
- Actions, tangible behavior
- Can be practiced
- Often habits, with mindful reflection, can lead to change in trait

We talked a little about the way that habits and traits are different but we will talk about traits being tendencies, inclinations, attitudes and being very difficult to change. Where habits are everyday actions, tangible behaviour to be practiced and can in significant ways strengthen some of the traits that you already have.

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Habits to discuss

- Purpose
- Empathy
- Reward
- Change management
- Perfection
- Self-worth and other worth
- Think different
- Leadership beyond self






We will be discussing the following 8 habits very briefly and the reason we will be doing that is because these habits are very deeply intrinsically linked to leadership in certain ways.

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Purpose

- One of the most powerful motivators
- Purpose for self
- Purpose for others (not necessarily your purpose, but hers)
- Link the two together
- Link work to meaning (for self) - habit
- Link work to purpose (for other) - ritual
- Intrinsic vs extrinsic motivator – go beyond material reward

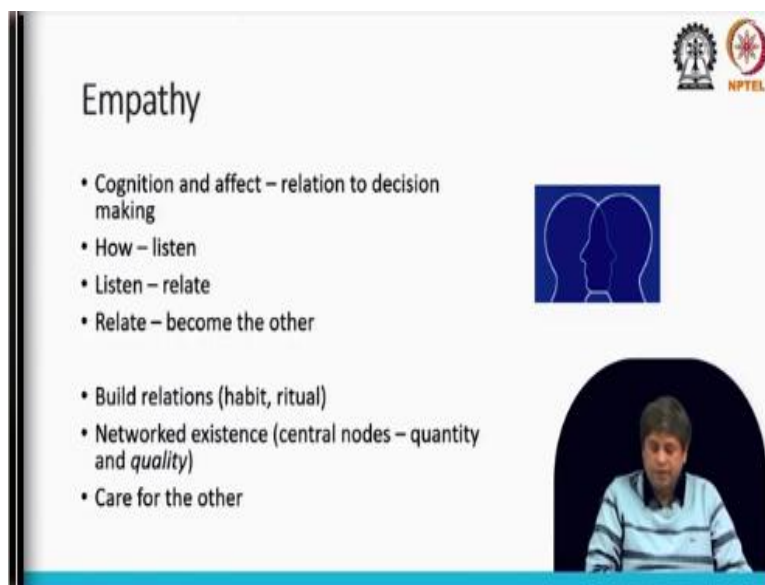



One of the key habits is a sense of purpose and it is one of the most powerful motivators. Purpose for oneself, purpose for others and when you are able to link your purpose with the purpose of the other person who might be somebody who is following you, who is working with you or may be working under you and that is when you see that the efficiency goes up and your leadership is appreciated.

So, one of the important things that need to be done is to identify certain key purposes and to sustain those purposes, remind yourself of them again and again and to act upon them through your daily rituals, daily habits. And let us say that you have the purpose of becoming a musician, then obviously there are a series of habits that are linked to them and they have to be sustained on a daily basis.

And if the purpose is highly motivated then the habits also can be easily inculcated. But in a workplace you can have of the purpose of creating an innovation which is meaningful for you as well as your people around you. And it is in that context probably that the habits which are required for that would form automatically or you would work on those habits.

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The slide is titled "Empathy" and features the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. It contains a list of bullet points and a video inset of a speaker.

- Cognition and affect – relation to decision making
- How – listen
- Listen – relate
- Relate – become the other
- Build relations (habit, ritual)
- Networked existence (central nodes – quantity and *quality*)
- Care for the other


The video inset shows a man with grey hair wearing a light blue and white striped shirt, speaking from a dark background.

Empathy can be reflected in terms of habit. What I am talking about are very often tangible behaviour as I told you. And they can be reflected in terms of how you listen, how you relate, how you put yourself in the position of the other, in a workplace context empathy, developing empathy is a skill which is going to work very, very significantly. It is true that some of us are more empathetic than others; some people are by default more empathetic.

But it is still possible to think empathetically put yourself in the place of the other end then to consider a respond rather than putting yourself in your own position and then responding to a person. So, even if in terms of emotions you may not experience it as intensely as a more empathetic person. It is always possible to put yourself in the position of the other think about what she is going through and then respond.

And if you build up this habit and if you start showing interest in other people and what they do, it is going to be pretty significant in terms of how it can contribute your relationship.

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The slide is titled "Rewards – tangible and intangible". It features a list of bullet points on the left and a video inset of a man speaking on the right. In the top right corner, there are two logos: the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) logo and the NPTEL logo. A small icon of a trophy is also present next to the bullet points.

- Invisible leadership (habit, leads to humility)
- Reward others (ritual)
- Rewards should be symbolic
- Gestures of recognition are linked to identity and self-worth
- Rewards – towards empowerment (then it gets linked to purpose)

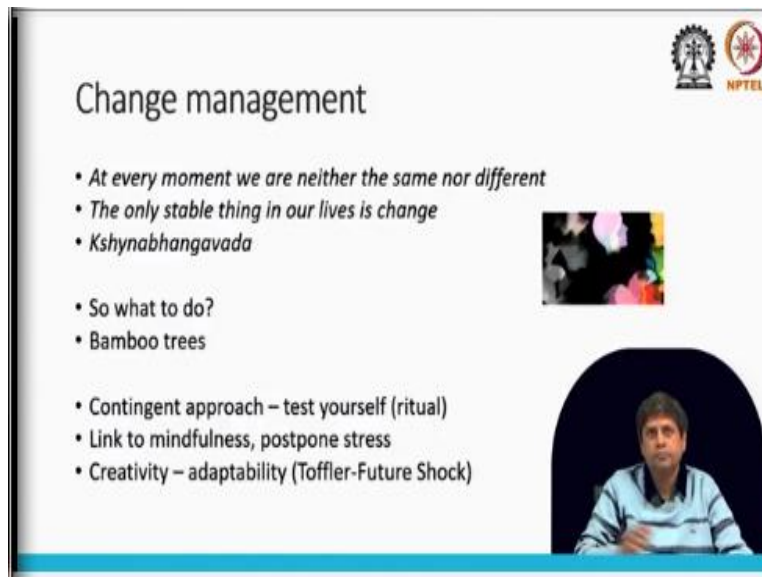
A very important part of any relationship in the context of organization and a habit that we can form is terms of rewards. The rewards can be both tangible and intangible rewards, tangible rewards are not very effective, intangible rewards are. Because intangible rewards very often are their own self-sustaining in the sense that when somebody is doing well a word of appreciation is an intangible reward.

But that intangible reward which does not show anywhere sustains leadership as well as the motivation of the people who are working with you much more intensely. Gestures of recognition which can be linked to one's identity, self-worth and when you do that on a regular basis it does not take away anything from you. Gesture, a nice word, a nod, a pat, a

word of appreciation, going out of your way to send a mail to people who have actually done well, all these things are going to be very, very powerful intangible rewards.

Which again are linked to the concept of empathy, to the concept of emotional intelligence some of the concepts that we had discussed earlier when we talked about character strengths.

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The slide is titled "Change management" and features the logos of IIT Bombay and NPTEL in the top right corner. It contains a list of bullet points on the left and a video inset on the right. The bullet points are:

- *At every moment we are neither the same nor different*
- *The only stable thing in our lives is change*
- *Kshynabhangavada*
- So what to do?
- Bamboo trees
- Contingent approach – test yourself (ritual)
- Link to mindfulness, postpone stress
- Creativity – adaptability (Toffler-Future Shock)

The video inset shows a man in a light blue shirt speaking.

One of the fundamental challenges that we face in contemporary life is change. Change is something which many traditions including Greek tradition as well as Indian traditions have talked about. For instance in the Greek tradition we have this saying that you cannot step into the same river twice or if you are looking at the in the Buddhist tradition you have this kshynabhangavada which talks about momentariness.

But if you are looking at the contemporary world the change is not only a change but it is a rapidly accelerating change something which Alvin Toffler talked about in future-shock when we was discussing about rapidly accelerating change. When we are talking about managerial contexts, when you are talking about context where leadership plays a significant role change is a part of our everyday life.

So, what are the rituals that would help us? What are the habits that would help us? A contingent approach, the ability to think on your feet, the ability to think out of the box, the ability to accept absorb a certain change postpone stress, get focused and to take care of and to resolve the issue then and there. Put challenges to yourself, challenge yourself every day, this is something which is very, very relevant in the context of organizations.

Because the ability to be resilient in the context of how would I put it? Everyday life where things are changing from moment to moment, contingent capability of being able to cope with change is something which is going to be very very relevant. And one can make a habit of it by actually putting oneself through changes, through changing environment, through changing software, putting challenges to oneself.

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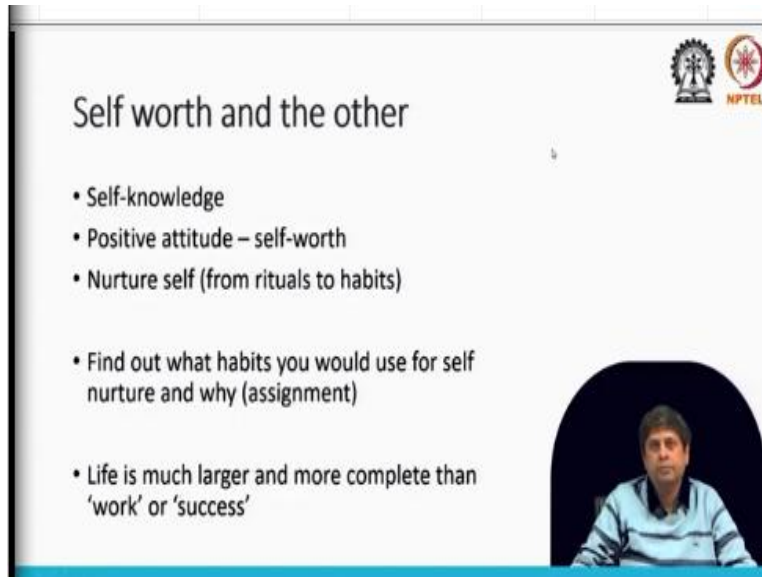
Perfection

- Strive for perfection
- Prioritize (ritual)
- Why – resources are limited – optimization
- “Focus on the best, delegate the rest” (Robin Sharma)

Perfection, perfection is problematic, is a double-edged weapon. At most try for perfection but do not get unhappy if you do not achieve it. And in the context of that also prioritize what you need to be perfect in; you can't be perfect in everything. Focus on the best and delegate the rest as Robin Sharma would say, “which is identify that quality those talents, those abilities indeed which you appreciate the most, you enjoy the most and which are compatible with the demands of the market”.

Focus on those there are many other things that you might be good at, wherever possible do not grab them, decentralize, delegate it to others and focus on the ones which are really good at, make a habit of owning those skills, improving those skills.

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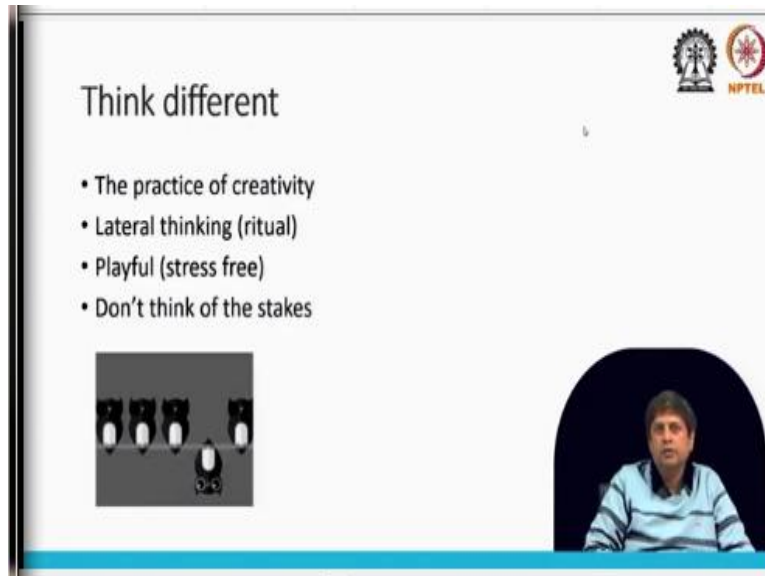
The slide is titled "Self worth and the other" and features the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. It contains a list of five bullet points. In the bottom right corner, there is a small video inset showing a man speaking.

- Self-knowledge
- Positive attitude – self-worth
- Nurture self (from rituals to habits)
- Find out what habits you would use for self nurture and why (assignment)
- Life is much larger and more complete than 'work' or 'success'

Because that is where in terms of market your capability and your demand lies. If you are somebody who has created a kind of a demand for yourself, then based on your abilities people would hire you or people would again and again appreciate you. Self-worth and other, self-knowledge, positive attitude, we have all talked about nurturing the self, find out those habits which would nurture yourself.

For instance there are many people who meditate in the morning or meditate in the evenings, a people who do morning walks, do exercises, people who indulge or concentrate on focus on philanthropy, generosity or gratitude activities. People who try to maintain strong bonds and relationship with others and nurture these qualities. So, qualities which provide self-respect which make you feel respect towards yourself and a sense of meaningfulness about what you are doing, those are the habits which need to be inculcated as well.

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The slide is titled "Think different" in a large, black, sans-serif font. In the top right corner, there are two logos: the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) logo and the NPTEL logo. Below the title, there is a bulleted list of four items:


- The practice of creativity
- Lateral thinking (ritual)
- Playful (stress free)
- Don't think of the stakes

Below the list, there is a small, square, black and white image showing four light bulbs. Three of the bulbs are lit, and one is unlit. In the bottom right corner of the slide, there is a small, circular inset video of a man with short brown hair, wearing a light blue and white striped shirt, speaking.

Thinking differently or being creative is linked to contingent thinking also. It is also a habit which makes you survive in a world where there is too much of competition. Thinking differently as a habit is linked to contingent thinking is also linked to the concept of change management that we discussed a little earlier significantly. Make lateral thinking a ritual, challenge yourself with various kinds of things which challenge your brain which explore your creativity.



Be playful about creative contexts; avoid stress because that is generally the finding that under stressful circumstances the best in you does not come out. Do not think about the stakes when you are thinking differently, you can think about them at a later point of time. If you remember when we talked about creativity activities and different thinking hats, we talk about this that focus when you are being creative, not on what are the risks involved, you can try it out on a pilot project on a small scale. But at that point of time do not inhibit yourself make a habit of it.

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Leadership beyond self

- The story of the old man planting a tree
- What is the meaning of my life?
 - Existentialism
 - Victor Frankol
 - Buddhism
- Transcendence
- Legacy – plan beyond yourself (ritual)



So, leadership is a focus on looking beyond the self. If you are continuously talking about what you will be capable of doing in during your tenure as somebody, then you are no longer talking about transformational leadership. You are no longer talking about a leadership which extends your identity, no longer about a leadership which is talking about empathy. Because you see that when you are talking about there is the story of an old man planting a tree and a young man going there and saying that you are planting a mango tree.

And by the time this tree grows up it might be another 10, 15 years then mangoes will grow and do you imagine that you will be eating those mangoes. And the old man said that he was not planting the tree for himself, he was planting it for the generations to come. So, this ability to search for your meaning beyond yourself, beyond your limited self-identity, the ability to think in terms of transcendence, to create a legacy and plan beyond yourself, make a ritual of it.

Think about it at least once a week think beyond yourself and you find that many of the ideas would get linked to all the other qualities we talked about in terms of empathy, in terms of innovative thinking and many of the other qualities that we would all like to inculcate. Friends, there are many qualities that might work.

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Relationships (self/other)

- Purpose (self)
- Change management (self)
- Perfection (self)
- Think different (self)
- Reward (self/other)
- Self-worth and other worth (self/other)
- Empathy (other)
- Leadership beyond self (other)



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But I believe that the fundamental component that we need to focus on and something which we have discussed in many of the earlier sessions is on connecting with others, prior to that focusing on ourselves of course and then of course thinking about others, relating ourselves with others and then going beyond ourselves to think about others. Perhaps in the leadership context some of the habits that I have talked about if we practice them in our daily lives. Yeah, they are going to lead us to a position where we would be able to achieve in our small or big ways some of the things that I have talked about.

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A short interview with Dr. S. S. Rekhi

CEO, R-Systems, Alumnus, IITKGP

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The final point I would like to make is that after this we have a short interview with Dr. S.S. Reiki, CEO of R-systems and Alumnus IIT Kharagpur, Honorary Chair of the Rekhi center. And he talks about many of the points I made in the context of positive leadership from his own personal experience and the way he has led his life, the way he talks about his life and his work and the way he relates to the people who work in his organization, I hope you will enjoy that please go through it. **(Professor-Professor Conversation Starts: 23:25)**

It is on my computer. Okay sir, I think they, you can see that recording is going on sir. Yes, sir. So, we start here, so just give me a moment because they will edit it in any case of. Good morning Rekhi sir, it is wonderful having you for this short chat in the context of our NPTEL online course on the science of happiness and well-being which we have launched from the Rekhi center of excellence from the science of Happiness IIT-Kharagpur.

And who better to talk to than Dr. Rekhi himself who is so closely associated with the center both as an alumnus of IIT-Kharagpur and as well as the Honorary chair of the center, so thank you for joining us Sir and this particular session is on leadership. And hence we have a few questions for you which relate to leadership, I hope you would be able to response sir with insights. Thank you very much I am very happy to be with you and I congratulate you for this course that you are recording, thank you sir.

So, sir the first thing that we would like to know is that during all our interactions with you we have always found you very happy. On the other hand you are in charge of R systems which is more than 2500 to 3000 employees, so what is your mantra for a happy leader could you say or something sir? Thank you Priyo, that is a great question, probably there are many mantras which make people happy or happier.

I will only talk about one, happiness is an emotion and if you are a safe haven for people to share their emotions with you then I think you make the other person relaxed and calm and happy and that echo brings back happiness into you, I think that is a single mantra which is probably helped us. Thank you Sir and sir in that context you are right now talking about making other people happy, what about your own happiness?

Happiness is other people, if you make the other person happy you will get happy, it is a paradox if you try to find happiness for yourself it runs away from you but if you are able to find it for any other person even one person it just comes back onto you. Thank you Sir, in fact I had another question for you but I think this response kind of answers that because I wanted to ask you how you connect the happiness your own happiness with the happiness of the people around you.

It would be great if you could just share an example that would be great otherwise a generic response would also do Sir. In my organization I guess that is the context you are looking at, yes, I have an opportunity to deal with all these employees and if I can share their emotion again I am coming back to the same issue, if I respect their emotions I think that does a fair amount. Nowadays the time is gone where you counsel people, sermonize people.

People are very intelligent, you are surrounded by very intelligent people but they have emotions and if you respect and care for those emotions it gets you productivity, innovation and happier people. Thank you sir, I think that kind of answers my question sir, in that particular context in a more formal context like the company do you have specific strategies? Do you consider or do you adopt specific interventions in order to look into the well-being and happiness of the company?

In my company I have been fortunate I have very good employees and I let them do their job, I do not micromanage, I do not ask my managers to micromanage and I let give them space enough that really helps. And also we allow them to make mistakes, it is human to make mistakes and if you have the freedom to make mistakes, you will end up doing good R and D research and development and innovation, that is what we found has been very helpful in our organization.

Thank you sir, you actually use any training programs or interventions or do you feel that that is not really necessary in those contexts? There are all sorts of training programs

which are there emotional intelligence and even well-being courses, stress management all of that we do but I am talking about my role when I interact with them, how it works. Thank you Sir, Sir this relates to again workplace because you see that what I would like to know is that does your personal experience show a connection between happiness and innovation and productivity?

Absolutely I think only happy people or happier people can innovate, the other person is so stressed out and is absorbed in his thoughts that he cannot innovate, new ideas, good ideas come to people who are not absorbed in thoughts, who are free of thoughts and that can only happen with a happier person. Right sir, through our personal interactions we know that you are deeply influenced by spirituality; not necessarily by any religion but a sense of spirituality does that also extend to your workplace?

For me religion and spirituality have meant the same, of course you can have spirituality without religion as long as you are looking for a deeper purpose in life. We human beings want a deeper purpose in life, do something bigger than ourselves which is what religion tries to teach you and spirituality obviously wants to you to do that. So, if we can get people to have a meaning in their life, do something which they is bigger their own selves I think they are happier and they are more content.

Sir, these days there is a lot of talk about workplace spirituality that was the context I just wanted to know that what is your take on it? Again if the person gets up in the morning, wants to come to office he feels is needed and wanted in the office and there is a deeper meaning or deeper purpose in his life whatever work he does has a purpose that is spirituality. That is a beautiful response sir and it kind of connects us with the concept of work is God and very, very deeply embedded in our own tradition.

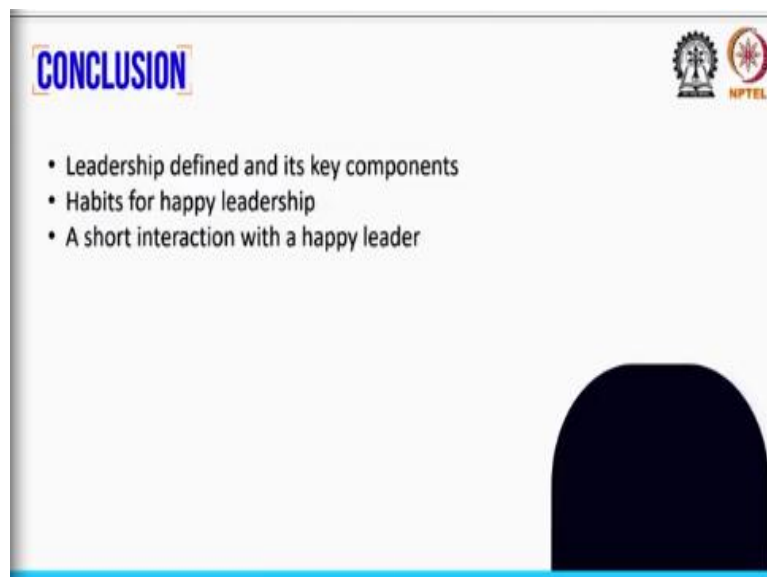
But when it is comes from you in the professional work context the connection is made even stronger Sir. Because this is a very short interaction that we have, I just have one last question for you, it is not a question it is a kind of an advice or a suggestion any quick

suggestion or guideline for our course participants about how to be happy at work? Let me modify this question as to how to be a happy leader?

Our people are going to become leaders, right sir. So, there are 2 types of leaders I have seen one is a very knowledgeable manager, leader, you go to him he gives you a lot of good knowledge and you come out starry eyed and say this is a great leader he has a lot of good knowledge. There is another kind of leader which I call a happy leader you go to him, he does not talk about himself, he talks about you, how you could do things better and when you come out while you may feel that this is a good leader you also feel very good about yourself.

You come out of feeling that I am good, that is a happy leader and I would like our participants to become that kind of happy leader. Yeah that is beautiful sir, I will in fact try to imbibe it in my own life though are no leader but at least for my students I would like to do that, thank you very much sir for this very short but very meaningful interaction with you, we will connect later, Namaste. Thank you Priyo, it was wonderful having me, thank you sir. **(Professor-Professor Conversation Ends: 32:13)**

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So, we have discussed the key components of leadership, we are primarily focused on the habits of a happy leader or habits which lead to happy leadership both in terms of you as well as the organization where you are working. And we have interacted with a happy leader I hope you enjoyed it.

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Thank you very much the references to this session are provided here and you can refer to them, thank you.