

Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life
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Human Self and Ladder of Joy: Yogic, Sankhya and Vedantic Perspective
Lecture - 39
Self-realization - The Ultimate Joy

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**DIMENSIONS OF HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING
IN ANCIENT INDIAN AND YOGIC PERSPECTIVE**

India ancient thinkers have discussed happiness and well-being in relation to both ordinary states of consciousness and transcendent states in three distinct perspectives viz.,

- Hedonistic,
- Transcendental, and
- Collectivist.

The hedonic perspective is essentially characterized by maximizing pleasure and avoiding or minimizing pain.

Salagame (2003, 2006)

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If you look at the psychological perspective of well-being and happiness and if you compare that with the Indian perspective of well-being and happiness, you see that the Indian perspective includes one unique thing which is transcendental. Indian perspective recognizes hedonism; it also recognizes psychological and social well being. But it includes the transcendental aspect, it also includes the collectivist aspect.

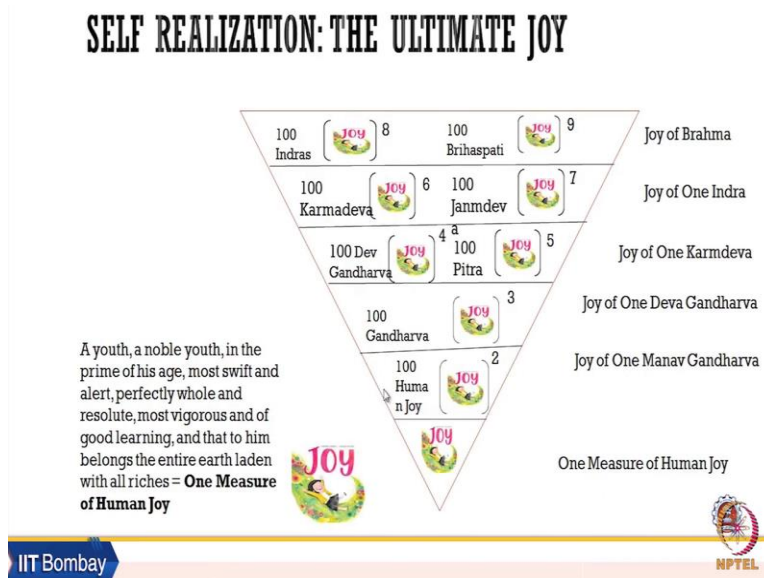
Indian perspective says that individual well-being is actually not possible well-being is always collective, it is always inclusive. So, hedonistic perspective is essentially characterized by maximizing pleasure and avoiding or minimizing pain, Indian perspective has transcendental as well as collectivist perspective as well.

If you compare Indian philosophy with the Chinese philosophy and the western philosophy and this comparison is given in a YouTube film produced by Vishuddhi films the title of the film is Dharma the root of the Indian civilization. I strongly recommend that to watch that YouTube film.

Dharma the root of Indian civilization, in that a comparison is mentioned between western civilization or western culture, Chinese culture and Indian culture. Western culture according to that reference aims at winning over nature, Chinese culture aims at living in harmony with nature and Indian culture the ultimate ideal for Indian culture is transcending the nature and being established in the purusha consciousness or established in Brahman.

So, that is the difference in the philosophical perspective towards life and that is reflected in the Indian system in its perspective of well-being and happiness.

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And this is very sophisticated system. And that sophistication is reflected in the anandavalli given in taittiriya Upanishad. It gives a very interesting algorithmic picture of the increase of joy or ultimate well-being. So, the unit of joy identified in the anandavalli is a youth a noble youth in the prime of his age most swift and alert, perfectly whole and resolute, most vigorous and of learning and of good learning and that of him belongs the entire earth laden with all riches.

That is the one major of human joy, that is taken as the unit. So, 100 of such unit result into one manav gandharv to joy of such 100 entities or hundred of this major result into one manav gandharv. A 100 of manav gandharv constitute joy of one gandharv 100 of gandharv constitute the joy of one dev gandharv the joy of 100 dev gandharv result into 1 pitr. The joy of 100 pitr is equivalent to 1 karmadev joy of 100 karma dev is equivalent to one janmdev and joy of 100 janmdev is equivalent to joy of 1 indr.

Joy of 100 indr is equivalent to 1 brihaspati and joy of 100 brihaspati is equivalent to joy of Brahma. I can suddenly not claim that I have understood that algorithm, but I take the reference of the two scholars. One scholar Dr. Nagaraj Paturi explains this typology as it can be experienced in the human self. Another scholar Dhataraji who explained to me in the form of these being an independent entities and for that also he has given some further references.

What Nagaraj Paturiji suggest that these joys are hidden in the human self. For example, the joy we draw through music and dance that is much more than riches or food and that is comparable to gandharva. Similarly, the joy of being generous the devata means that which gives. So, when we experience the joy of giving something in that moment, we are in the devata state of consciousness and devata kind of joy. Some people they make effort in giving away giving something.

Some people have natural tendency to be giving. They have so much they have a kind of attitude an aptitude wherever they are they start giving to their surroundings to their social and natural environment. So, these are janmdev, sometime when we experience this kind of self that is the joy of janmdev. So, Paturiji explain that which can be experienced at the psychological level.

What I mean to say is that joy has no limits an Indian system yogic system has developed many techniques and methods to experience these joy. But ultimately the joy is of Brahman, brahmanand is the ultimate joy and that is transcendental in nature that is the objective, that is the; that is the ultimate what Indian system and yogic system aim at and that is what yogic system tries to equip human being to experience in their life. So, in that aspect this typology should be considered should be referred.

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Now, the question is if joy is transcendental and hedonism is also part of that psychological and sociological well-being are also important, they are not negated in the Indian tradition, but it also talks about collectivist nature of joy, collectivist nature of well-being and transcendental aspect of well-being the question is how do I indulge, how do I live?

That answer is given in the first verse of Upanishad ishopanishad. By the way I must tell you ishopanishad is greatly admired by Mahatma Gandhi as well. Mahatma Gandhi somewhere wrote that if all the scriptures of the Hinduism are destroyed and only if ishopanishad remains Hinduism can survive, Hindu tradition, Hindu culture can survive. So, the first shloka of ishopanishad says that [FL].

Ish which is comparable to brahma has enveloped whatever is there in the existence, that is the first line, that is prescribed that is not in contrary to what sankhya tradition also says. Purusha that which envelops everything which is the substratum ultimate substratum.

So, ish is mentioned in that term, second line tells us how do I indulge and live. So, this line suggest that when well-being includes hedonism, psychological, as well as social well being, but it is also transcendental in nature how we should indulge. And that is the indulgences of tyag poorn indulgence, not being connected to not being attached with any kind of joy.

If we are not attached to one kind of joy we can transcend those and by keep transcending, we can experience the different levels of joy which is explained in the anandavalli [FL]. We can experience the joy we can experience the bhog only when we are able to sacrifice that, when we are able to transcend that. And that is reflected in another sutra of Prasthanatrayi which says [FL].

Atma tattv the self knowledge which is the ultimate joy experience the ultimate self which is Brahman can occur not through gyanen means knowledge, not through action, not through consumption or indulgence it can come through sacrifice. So, sacrifice is not the ultimate sacrifice, sacrifice of whatever we can sacrifice.

So, when we keep moving ahead in terms of our ability to not get attached to one form of joy we can experience higher forms of joy. And that can result into enlightened living. And that is reflected in the second shloka of the same Upanishad which says that [FL]. We should indulge into karma; we should indulge into action with the desire of living long.

[FL] not when we indulge into life with the sense of sacrifice sense of tyag, we can transcend, we can experience the transcendence and we should live like this and we should desire to live like this for 100 years. And that is the process through which we can experience ultimate joy in our life; we can experience ultimate well-being in our life.

So, in this session we looked at some of the esoteric looking concepts these are suddenly can be understood only with the experience, but nonetheless it is important to mention that and I hope some of you might have better insights about this, some of you might have some experiential basis of these levels of joy.

If you are one of that and watching this video you are most welcome to write us and our team is actually systematically indulge into the research process about the joy and well-being and we are not dry researchers and we are not just researcher in the field. All the team members are the serious sadhakas as well.

So, our PhD scholars who are working in this field of well-being through the yog they not only study well-being in yog, but they are also a committed practitioners, they are regularly practicing yogs. So, there is a experiential basis of our work.

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So, if you are someone who have experienced some aspect of these joy you are most welcome to write down. We end this session with the definition of the well-being as given in the yogic tradition and captured beautifully by Professor Krishna Kumar's paper that it is about hedonism, but it is also about transcendental and collectivist and for that we need to manage at all five koshas. And that is the essence of managing self from the yogic perspective and the Indian perspective.