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**Date**:

**Cohort**: (Francom, French, McMahan)

*In what follows, reflect on your learning and personal growth at this point in our course. Consider this week’s readings, multimedia sources, presentations, discussions, activities, etc. To your best ability attempt to integrate these experiences into our own developing understanding of the ‘Good Life’.*

This week we looked into India and analyzed how many contradictions play a role in their happiness and success in a peaceful mind. Most times we believe that we are one thing or another. We assume we can't be both calm and chaotic. Or both love and hate something at the same time. Weiner shows that it is actually possible to experience 2 opposite feelings at the same time. India is described as a place that people both love and hate at the same exact time. It is also described as a place of chaos but calm at the same exact time. These contradictions, among many others, make India so unique and also plays a role in their spirituality and overall culture. Spirituality is very important in India and plays a traditional role in their culture as many citizens take part in meditation or other spiritual practices. Weiner experiences a meditation service where he is asked to also give up 3 sacrifices. This is a very popular practice in India and despite early skepticism, Weiner actually believes he sees genuine happiness in the people practicing. Meditation is a very common cultural practice in India but it is also practiced in many other cultures. I have never practiced meditation but I think that there are definitley many positive benefits to it and I think that trying it even for just a little could maybe boost my happiness and peace. I think that even if it is not traditional “meditation” that they practice, even settling myself and clearing my mind for 30 minutes could be very beneficial to achieving peace. Especially in college, with some much going on in our day to day lives, I struggle to find time to just clear my mind because the second I take a rest then I feel like I should be doing something else potentially more productive. After seeing that it may actually make a difference, I want to be intentional about trying it a few times and even seeing if it just brings temporary relief and peace for just a little bit. Even if it is as simple as trying to shut everything off and just close my eyes for a little while, I think this could have a huge impact on a peaceful mind and calmness. Later in the week, we focus on Utopias and what makes for successful communities. This really made me think and reflect on all of the cultures and countries we have learned about this year. Trying to figure out which had policies that worked and which had ones that did not in order to configure some that would make for the best community. It is hard to think about what would please everyone and make sure that everyone would agree on it so it was kind of difficult to create these regulations and limitations that not only kept everyone safe and orderly but also were in the best interest of each individual and help them be successful. This made me realize how difficult it is to create rules and regulations that will best suit everyone involved. Even just thinking about regulations on our campus, there are always some people who may not agree with it but it is near impossible to make sure that everyone agrees and supports every single one of them. This exercise made me realize how important proper rules and regulations are in a country's happiness but also how difficult it is to create them so that every single person is satisfied.