**Achievement vs. Contentment – Can we start from a State of Happiness?**

What if we functioned from a state of completeness rather than worked towards it in the future? Most of us have the implicit or explicit idea that we need to achieve or work towards something in order to be fulfilled, complete or/and happy. Some maybe so immersed in this way of thinking or what in other terms maybe called the “hamster wheel” that they don’t even recognize it.

What is that “something” that we are running towards? If we say money, material wealth, success, better relationships, health, giving back, helping society etc. what are we hoping that all of this will give us?

The answer is obviously happiness. As Deepak Chopra puts it: “happiness is the goal of all goals”. In other words everything we do is for something else, but happiness is the only thing we seek for its own sake. There is a subtle expectation of future fulfillment in all of our actions, but if you have lived and experienced life long enough, you are probably starting to get disillusioned by this promise.

Can you see the assumption we have: “WHEN, or IFI achieve this or that, THEN I will become happier”? Once you start seeing through this, then a few brave souls might begin to redirect their efforts internally rather than externally, and look inside themselves for fulfillment. A word of caution here as this can be a double-edged sword, where you need to practice self-reflection while being mindful of not making this yet another future goal (thus setting you out of the present moment). Even though it is a necessary step to shift to introspection, a veil is still covering the truth.

What is the truth? The truth is that you can never reach completion, absolute fulfillment and happiness. Why? Because it is already here, it is life itself. These are not my own words, rather what all the great masters across the ages have told us. This is not about developing an aversion towards pursuing activities but the utilization of them in the correct way. Pursue all your dreams, desires, and the experiences you want, but by starting this journey from happiness rather than working towards it.

Can you sense the different flavors each perspective has? Can you sense how one is functioning from lack and the other from completeness? Then you might logically ask: how can I do this? Realize that asking and answering the question “how”, will become another method or approach that your mind might use to try again to achieve another future state, which throws you back in the hamster wheel. There is no “how to”. How does *understanding* take place? “understanding” is not a question of “how” but an instance of realization, an *aha moment* that occurs spontaneously once something is seen clearly, similar to how it is when you first understand a joke at the end of the punch line.

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