

Shinzen Young's 'CHART of HUMAN HAPPINESS'

00:00:00 Okay, so the human condition, humanity in general, each one of us in specific, can be
00:00:26 iconically represented this way.
00:00:32 There's a lot of information stored in this.
00:00:36 As far as I can see, everything that's significant for an individual or for us collectively is
00:00:45 iconically represented here.
00:00:49 So what you do is you draw a circle and then you draw two intersecting triangles, and you
00:00:55 draw a couple more circles and a dot, and then we're going to make this into a life
00:01:00 saver, spiritual life saver.
00:01:06 And six compartments.
00:01:09 And you draw an I, U-I-E, C, here, here, feel, the three sense modalities.
00:01:23 There's inner activation for each one of these.
00:01:28 See in, see in right here, that's your mental images.
00:01:33 Hear in, this is your mental talk.
00:01:36 Feel in, this is your emotional body.
00:01:40 But there's also the physical senses, see out, the physical world here.
00:01:46 Hear out, hear the sounds of the world, feel out the physical impact of your body.
00:01:53 So you have the inner and outer visual, somatic, and auditory arisings.
00:01:57 These are our ordinary sensory experiences that create the sense of self on the inside
00:02:04 and physical world on the outside.
00:02:07 And then from the viewpoint of psychospiritual growth, there are certain special states that
00:02:15 are significant.
00:02:16 Physical states, and there's visual, auditory, and somatic rest.
00:02:23 Flow states, visual, auditory, somatic flow.
00:02:26 And within the subjective activation, there's a particular proper subset of positive images,
00:02:36 positive mental talk, and pleasant positive emotions.
00:02:41 The subset of our inner activation that relates to our human goodness is very important.
00:02:46 So that's positive.
00:02:50 So see, hear, feel, in, out, rest, flow.

00:02:57 Good.

00:03:00 To go.

00:03:05 To are the two sides of the spiritual source.

00:03:08 And go, or gone, is what happens when those two sides come together and you have to get

00:03:18 a complete source.

00:03:19 But when there's complete source, there's no self or world.

00:03:24 So the source breaks apart, and in the cleft is born the self and world, at least as we

00:03:29 experience it sensorially here.

00:03:34 Jewish mysticism has a whole thing about tzitzum, how chesed and tvura, the allowing half of

00:03:44 God and the limiting half of God, pull apart and create this cleft, wherein the world arises.

00:03:53 Very, very interesting paradigm, and something we can actually experience.

00:03:59 So this is the world of sensory experience.

00:04:06 Beyond the images, the mental talk, and the emotional body, beneath it is our subconscious

00:04:14 mind, which is, as far as I can tell, a vast world of connectivity.

00:04:29 Now in the objective world, we have behaviors, indicated by little feet, how we walk.

00:04:41 And they basically come in three flavors, good behavior, bad behavior, and ethically

00:04:47 neutral behavior.

00:04:49 This tends to be linked with three objective situations in the world, desirable situations,

00:04:58 undesirable situations, and sort of neutral situations.

00:05:01 So this is the law of karma.

00:05:04 I don't know that it's an exact accountancy across lifetimes, but certainly there are

00:05:11 general tendencies.

00:05:12 What goes around comes around.

00:05:14 And I think it's important to be aware that actions have consequences.

00:05:29 Beyond our personal world of our personal behaviors and our personal situations is the

00:05:34 real world, whatever that is.

00:05:37 Not sure.

00:05:38 I can give you a conjecture what the real world is.

00:05:43 I'm sorry.

00:05:45 Do it.

00:05:46 I will.

00:05:47 But it's just my conjecture.

00:05:50 This I know for sure.

00:05:51 I have absolute confidence that this works the way it works.

00:05:56 But this is the world of sensory experience.

00:05:59 The real world, in my conjecture, is sort of like the subconscious.

00:06:05 It's a vast realm of connectivity.

00:06:09 And you can certainly, in your meditation practice, get the sense that when this collapses,

00:06:16 the inner world of connectivity and the outer world of connectivity merge.

00:06:25 That's a whole other paradigm for enlightenment.

00:06:28 Ichinen sanzen.

00:06:30 Can you see it, Philip?

00:06:36 Oops.

00:06:40 Ichinen sanzen.

00:06:44 One mind moment contains 3,000 worlds.

00:06:52 Actually, 3,000 world systems.

00:06:58 OK.

00:06:59 So that's the tientai in China.

00:07:03 A whole other paradigm for enlightenment, completely unknown in the West.

00:07:07 Died out in China, too, 1,000 years ago.

00:07:10 But someone had an enlightenment based on the experience of this merging with this.

00:07:16 And another guy, also, the Huayan school, very similar notion.

00:07:23 Huayan has influenced the modern Vietnamese master Thich Nhat Hanh.

00:07:29 When he talks about inner being, that's directly from the Huayan tradition.

00:07:36 And that's based on an appreciation of the similarity between these two things.

00:07:42 But anyway, that's a whole other deal.

00:07:46 I like to work here.

00:07:50 When you want to help someone, this is also useful to keep in mind.

00:07:58 How do you help someone?

00:08:00 Well, you want to get a sense of their whole situation.

00:08:04 Now, you may not be able to do something about a lot of their situation.

00:08:08 But it's useful, I think, to have a sense of the whole situation.

00:08:12 So when I am in a position to help someone, I figure out what their sensory challenges are.

00:08:21 Like maybe they have pain.

00:08:24 OK.

00:08:25 But I know if they have physical pain as an issue, then I know that they probably have image talk and emotional reactions to that.

00:08:35 So they've got a sort of sensory challenge.

00:08:38 But I also think about, well, are there behavior changes they need to make?

00:08:43 Is there something that they need to change about their objective situation,

if possible?

00:08:49 Et cetera, et cetera.

00:08:50 So I use this as a sort of matrix to remind me how to organize a plan, a plan to help that person improve their life.

00:09:06 So I think of the sensory challenges.

00:09:09 I think of the behavioral challenges.

00:09:11 I think of the situational challenges.

00:09:14 And then I think of the various mindfulness approaches, the focus options that can work with those.

00:09:23 And so that gives me a framework for suggesting a treatment plan, so to speak.

00:09:37 So let's look at what that treatment plan is in the most general framework.

00:09:51 In the most general framework, we could say that the goal of mindfulness practice is total human happiness.

00:10:04 I have an icon for that, a square smiley face.

00:10:11 So in order to understand total human happiness, we have to understand surface happiness, and we have to understand what I call deep happiness.

00:10:30 Now, total human happiness consists of surface happiness for yourself, deep happiness for yourself,

00:10:38 helping others to achieve surface happiness, and helping others to achieve deep happiness.

00:10:44 If you're doing all four of those, then, or in some way fostering all four of those,

00:10:52 then I say you are experiencing total or complete human happiness.

00:10:58 Now, what most people call happiness is what I would call surface happiness for themselves.

00:11:07 If you ask most people, you know, what will make you happy?

00:11:12 They'll talk about something that comes under, it's only a very small part of what I would call happiness.

00:11:19 It's legitimate, but I would call it surface happiness for the individual.

00:11:25 And here is surface happiness for the individual represented iconically.

00:11:31 So this is what people think they want, and which they actually do want, and legitimately.

00:11:40 It's legitimate to want all this.

00:11:43 But what people really want is over here, and it's sort of related, this is deep happiness.

00:11:50 And if you can have what you think you want and what you really want, then you personally are very happy.

00:11:58 But not totally happy, because when you have what you really want, as you'll see in a minute,

00:12:06 you realize that it's related to what I was saying before, you realize that you is bigger than just one mind and body.

00:12:14 So, okay, with respect to the body, well, no, actually let's start down here.

00:12:25 You ask the average person, what's happiness for you?

00:12:29 They're going to probably answer in this domain, they're going to probably answer down here.

00:12:36 So this is like the sun's coming up, right, and this is like rain and lightning and bad weather.

00:12:44 So most people are going to give you circumstances, objective conditions, that, okay, if I have this, this, and this,

00:12:55 I'm going to be happy, and they're going to name perhaps some objective conditions, which if I can avoid this, this, and this,

00:13:02 then I'll also be happy. So I have the job I want, I have the relationship I want, I have the health situation I want,

00:13:10 I have the financial situation I want, the right people are in power in the government where I live, etc., etc.

00:13:21 These are all conditions and then I'll be happy.

00:13:24 Also, we want to elevate sort of the shiny weather, and I am able to avoid health problems, and I'm able to avoid financial problems,

00:13:36 and the people in my life are not behaving in a way that I dislike, etc., etc., then I'll be happy.

00:13:47 I think you get the general idea. It's a litany of, remember our picture of the human condition?

00:13:55 It's a litany of this. I want these good situations, I want to avoid these bad situations.

00:14:03 So that's what most people will call happiness. But if you look a little more deeply, objective situations,

00:14:11 the reason they make us happy is because of sensory experiences.

00:14:17 If I am a success in a way that I want to be a success, what does that really mean?

00:14:26 That means I get to have the pleasant sensations of people telling me how great I am. A lot.

00:14:32 I know I'm going to have that day after day. Okay, so knowing that, every time I think that thought,

00:14:38 that's a mental image, and a mental talk, and then I get a smiley sensation, and every time somebody tells me how great I am,

00:14:45 I get a smiley sensation. So the reason I want to be a success is so that I can have certain pleasant emotional sensations in my body on demand.

00:14:54 A lot of the time, any time I want to think a certain thought, it feels good in my body, etc., etc.

00:15:02 So really, in the end, situations are desirable because they're desirable if they give us certain sensory experiences.

00:15:13 They're undesirable if they give us an opposite sensory experience. So what

does the body think it wants?

00:15:20 It thinks it wants to elevate pleasant physical sensations and pleasant emotional sensations.

00:15:28 And it does, and that's fine. And what it wants to avoid is unpleasant physical and unpleasant emotional sensations.

00:15:36 What does the mind want? The mind wants answers to this or that. And it wants to avoid don't know.

00:15:46 So that's all good. But what does the body really want?

00:15:53 Something like pleasure, but subtly different. I call it fulfillment or satisfaction. What is it?

00:16:03 It's pleasure multiplied by concentration, clarity, and equanimity. It's the degree to which the body has been trained to have complete experience of pleasure, 00:16:14 or a mindful experience of pleasure. Those two phrases mean exactly the same thing in my way of thinking.

00:16:21 So we think we want intensity, variety, and duration of pleasure, physical and emotional in the body.

00:16:28 And we do want that, but what we really want is satisfaction from that pleasure.

00:16:39 And that turns out to be not just a function of the pleasure, but a function of mindful awareness.

00:16:45 We think we want to avoid discomfort in the body, and that's true and legitimate.

00:16:51 But what we really want is to avoid suffering. And it turns out that physical or emotional discomfort is only ...

00:17:07 What turns it into suffering is lack of mindfulness. So fulfillment equals pleasure multiplied by mindful awareness.

00:17:18 And suffering equals discomfort divided by mindful awareness.

00:17:31 As the mindful awareness gets smaller, the suffering gets larger.

00:17:37 Okay. What the mind on the surface wants is answers to a lot of things on the outside.

00:17:48 What the mind in the deep sense wants is the answer, what am I? See here?

00:18:01 Here the light beams are pointing to lots of things on the outside.

00:18:05 Here the light is shining back on its own origin, seeing what it's always been plugged into.

00:18:12 This is called enlightenment or wisdom.

00:18:18 And actually what we need to avoid is not so much don't know mind.

00:18:25 In fact, we can't avoid don't know mind. Sooner or later, don't know mind gets us.

00:18:29 First of all, every answer that you get generates ten new questions. Have you ever thought about that?

00:18:37 So the answers grow linear, but the don't know grows exponential.

00:18:42 So that's number one. Number two, contrary to what every mathematician and

scientist would have ever thought in the past,

00:18:55 it turns out that modern math and modern science have at their core a tremendous appreciation of limits as to what can be known.

00:19:10 Heisenberg uncertainty in physics, Gödel incompleteness and undecidability in mathematics, don't know moves large in modern science and math.

00:19:27 And important plays an important role.

00:19:31 Thirdly, sooner or later, we're going to get old and stupid. All of us. We're going to be faced with don't know.

00:19:49 So it's good to realize that don't know doesn't have to be a problem.

00:19:58 See, here's like chaos, confusion, doubt, indecision and a frown.

00:20:07 This is don't know as a problem. Conditional happiness or surface happiness comes about when we can reduce don't know itself.

00:20:18 But it turns out that unconditional happiness or deep happiness is related to the elevation or increase of an experience of don't know with a smile.

00:20:32 Don't know with a smile is the meaningful experience of meaninglessness.

00:20:41 That sounds oxymoronic, meaning contradictory in and of itself. Maybe sounds like just some sort of word game.

00:20:51 But there is such a thing as a meaningful experience of meaninglessness.

00:20:57 And actually it comes about when you have a sensorially clear, concentrated and a quantum experience of confusion, doubt, indecision and chaos.

00:21:11 Then that experience actually starts to taste like something that has meaning.

00:21:21 Because you're working through the need to know and that leads to a new kind of knowing.

00:21:27 So in mindfulness practice you get the insights by observing, careful observing and analysis.

00:21:36 But in Zen practice, for example, at least Rinzai Zen, there's a certain amount of observing, that's true.

00:21:45 But also there's this, what they call koan practice, you're given a problem that you cannot solve intellectually.

00:21:53 But then you're pressed to solve it. But you can't.

00:21:57 And you're thrust into a continuous don't know mind state.

00:22:03 Which at some point you stop fighting and then a new kind of knowing starts to flow through you.

00:22:11 So deep happiness is the experience of don't know in an empowering way.

00:22:21 So you see the contrast? Get pleasure versus get fulfillment, which is a function of mindfulness.

00:22:32 Avoid discomfort versus avoid suffering, a function of mindfulness.

00:22:39 Get answers to this or that, by way of contrast, get the answer.

00:22:46 Well, this is a function of mindfulness.

00:22:49 Avoid don't know mind, learn to experience don't know mind as an empowerment.

00:22:56 Well, this is a function of mindfulness.

00:22:59 Now here's the objective world in surface happiness.

00:23:07 Get certain conditions, avoid other conditions.

00:23:10 The objective world in deep happiness is one's objective behaviors.

00:23:21 The surface happiness point of view is, I want this, I want to avoid this.

00:23:27 The deep happiness point of view is, well, if I can improve this and avoid this, I'm likely to get this.

00:23:36 So it's putting first things first.

00:23:40 But how does mindfulness weigh in?

00:23:43 Well, if situations are to a certain extent, I don't claim 100%, I think chance enters in probably, for sure.

00:23:53 But in general, if circumstances are a consequence of behavior, if we have a handle on our behavior with time on average,

00:24:01 it's likely we're going to get the circumstances we want.

00:24:05 However, our behaviors are driven by our sensory experiences, our mental image, our mental talk,

00:24:11 our physical and emotional sensations drive our behavior.

00:24:16 Mindfulness gives us a handle on our sensory experience, that gives us a handle on our behaviors.

00:24:23 That tends to lead to surface happiness.

00:24:29 And besides, concentration and clarity and equanimity not only bring about wisdom mind, they also increase your normal IQ.

00:24:38 I do not have any scintilla of doubt that in my late 60s, now, I am incomparably smarter than I was in my 20s.

00:24:54 Just smarter in the sense of regular old intellectual smarts.

00:24:59 Why did I get smarter and smarter? Because of meditation.

00:25:05 So mindfulness affects IQ, I believe.

00:25:10 So it actually helps with this one.

00:25:15 And, you know, if you have sensory clarity, that can also help you solve problems, etc.

00:25:22 You make positive behavior changes, well, you're likely to have more health and less physical problems, etc.

00:25:34 As a consequence of this, these two can go up.

00:25:39 So mindfulness also has an impact on our surface happiness.

00:25:43 I don't mean to dissurface happiness by calling it surface.

00:25:48 It has a role.

00:25:52 So we want to get both.

00:25:57 So we want to increase positive behaviors, we want to decrease negative personal behaviors.

00:26:03 That's the objective piece in deep happiness.

00:26:08 So I should say, however, that mindful awareness skills alone may not be enough to achieve behavioral changes.

00:26:20 They're very helpful, but you may need some sort of objective accountability structure, like a 12-step program, a therapist, what have you, for behavior change.

00:26:35 In addition to the mindful awareness, they potentiate each other.

00:26:40 So that's sort of what these symbols mean.