



In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Joy, Mindfulness and Being Present in GOD's Blessings

Joy is defined as: a feeling of great pleasure and happiness. Some synonyms are delight, jubilation, triumph, exultation, rejoicing, happiness, gladness, glee, exhilaration, elation, euphoria, bliss, ecstasy, rapture.

I think of joy as a state of high fulfillment. I read that one way to seek it is being more aware of what gives us joy in our moment-to-moment lives.

The Quran tells us that [83:24] *You recognize in their faces the joy of bliss.*

[10:64] *For them, joy and happiness in this world, as well as in the Hereafter. This is GOD's unchangeable law. Such is the greatest triumph.*

So, what brings us joy? I know for me joy can come from seeing and thinking about a wonder of creation.

[35:27] *Do you not realize that GOD sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce fruits of various colors? Even the mountains have different colors; the peaks are white, or red, or some other color. And the ravens are black.*

Joy comes from being reminded that the One taking care of creation is so magnificent.

Joy is a moment to moment experi-

ence. One needs to be conscious and appreciative to enjoy it.

We experience the joy of His presence. *"In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore"* (Psalms 16:11).

"Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous: and shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart" (Psalm 32:11).

"The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10).

Often, we're so trapped in thoughts of the future or the past that we forget to experience, let alone enjoy, what's happening right now. We sip coffee and think, "This is not as good as what I had last week." We eat a cookie and think, "I hope I don't run out of cookies."

[47:12] *GOD admits those who believe and lead a righteous life into gardens with flowing streams. As for those who disbelieve, they live and eat like the animals eat, then end up in the hell-fire.*

Instead, relish or luxuriate in whatever you're doing at the present moment—what psychologists call savoring. There are verses in the Quran that remind us to enjoy what we have

been given. [7:144] *He said, "O Moses, I have chosen you, out of all the people, with My messages and by speaking to you. Therefore, take what I have given you and be appreciative."*

[11:86] *"Whatever GOD provides for you, no matter how small, is far better for you, if you are really believers. I am not a guardian over you."*

When we say 'I want this' or 'I want that', what we actually want to do is to work on the joy and appreciation for how much we already have. We want to increase our joy capacity. A goal in my opinion might be to have fewer things and only the things that we get the most joy out of. The need for joy is fundamental; it's a drive towards God.

[20:130] *Therefore, be patient in the face of their utterances, and praise and glorify your Lord before sunrise and before sunset. And during the night glorify Him, as well as at both ends of the day, that you may be happy.*

How can we bring more moments of joy into our lives? What are the tools of joy?

[10:58] *Say, "With GOD's grace and with His mercy they shall rejoice." This is far better than any wealth they can accumulate.*

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Joy in the future can be called hope. Joy in the past can be called memories. I think that to experience true joy, we have to be mindful of God in the present. Mindfulness (I like the term ‘God-fullness’) is being present or aware or conscious. It means feeling the ground beneath our feet as we walk and thanking God for it. Mindfulness means being alive now. Mindfulness means attempting to be appreciative of all of God’s gifts in each moment. It means being attentive and reverent now.

Everyone says they want to live in the present, but there’s a paradox: “If you’re not in the present, you’re not there to know you’re not there,” says Harvard researcher Ellen Langer. “So how do you get there?When you’re actively noticing new things, you become more aware of context and perspective. You end up with a healthier respect for uncertainty, something we are taught to fear. Our baseline state should be mindful; it’s how we should feel virtually all the time.”

[7:99] Have they taken GOD’s plans for granted? None takes GOD’s plans for granted except the losers.

You’ve probably had the experience of driving along only to suddenly realize you have no memory of the past 15 minutes. Maybe you even missed your exit. You just zoned out; you were somewhere else, and it’s as if you’ve suddenly woken up at the wheel.

These autopilot moments are what Harvard’s Langer calls mindlessness—times when you’re so lost in your thoughts that you aren’t aware of your present experience. As a result, life passes you by without registering on you. The best way to avoid such blackouts, Langer says, is to develop the habit of always noticing new things in whatever situation you’re in. That process creates engagement with the present moment and releases a cascade of other benefits. Noticing new things puts you emphatically in the here and now.

So, if joy comes from being mindful of God’s blessings, then we can look at

the fact that God is never unaware (2:255). Just as His attributes of kindness and mercy are qualities His servants seek out, awareness can be too. If we’re aware of our thoughts and actions, we can do better at watching out for the devil tripping us up. We want to be able to learn from this world of a classroom. We want to learn what redeems us, where our mistakes were and are, and why only God can be a God.

[7:32] Say, “Who prohibited the nice things GOD has created for His creatures, and the good provisions?” Say, “Such provisions are to be enjoyed in this life by those who believe. Moreover, the good provisions will be exclusively theirs on the Day of Resurrection.” We thus explain the revelations for people who know.

On the other side we have the verse about being attached.

[18:28] You shall force yourself to be with those who worship their Lord day and night, seeking Him alone. Do not turn your eyes away from them, seeking the vanities of this world. Nor shall you obey one whose heart we rendered oblivious to our message; one who pursues his own desires, and whose priorities are confused.

If we remain aware of our soul’s (the real self’s) purpose, worship God alone, renounce our idol worship and grow our souls, a great reward awaits.

[13:24] “Peace be upon you, because you steadfastly persevered. What a joyous destiny.”

[13:29] Those who believe and lead a righteous life have deserved happiness and a joyous destiny.

[32:17] You have no idea how much joy and happiness are waiting for you as a reward for your (righteous) works.

[56:89] then joy, flowers, and gardens of bliss.

Rizwan

References:

<https://harvardmagazine.com/2007/01/the-science-of-happiness.html>

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Happiness

One emotion that seems to be aligned with our purpose in life is happiness. If I submit to God alone, and happiness is submission to God alone, then happiness is the emotional state that I want to constantly be in.

Happiness is perceived in different ways by different people. Some people may think happiness is obtained with a nice house or car, owning lots of property, having a bunch of money or children and grandchildren. All of these things can create a brief illusion of happiness, but is this the way God describes happiness?

Happiness in the Hereafter is a state of being that we can’t even perceive. It is preserved as a reward for the righteous who believe.

[32:17] You have no idea how much joy and happiness are waiting for you as a reward for your (righteous) works.

Happiness is associated with being busy on Judgment Day, and eating and drinking happily.

[36:55] The dwellers of Paradise will be, on that day, happily busy.

[69:24] Eat and drink happily in return for your works in days past.

Happiness is not just reserved for the Hereafter, it can be obtained in this world and it is the greatest triumph we can achieve.

[10:64] For them, joy and happiness in this world, as well as in the Hereafter. This is GOD’s unchangeable law. Such is the greatest triumph.

The next two verses clarify happiness:

[20:130] Therefore, be patient in the face of their utterances, and praise and glorify your Lord before sunrise and before sunset. And during the night glorify Him, as well as at both ends of the day, that you

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may be happy.

[39:17] *As for those who discard the worship of all idols, and devote themselves totally to GOD alone, they have deserved happiness. Give good news to My servants.*

Praise God and there we have it. Those that glorify God during the night as well as both ends of the day may be happy. Those that devote themselves totally to God alone have deserved happiness. Therefore, happiness is submission to God alone.

Thank God for the Quran to clarify what is associated with happiness. Remember we can't achieve happiness on our own, it only comes through the will of God.

[92:7] *We will direct him towards happiness.*

May God guide us all to true happiness of devoting our entire lives to submission to God alone!

Robert

* * * * *

Be Happy

Here are nine happiness-promoting behaviors, backed by science, with relevant Quran support.

1. Relationships are essential. The happiest (and healthiest) people were those who cultivate strong relationships with others.

[30:21] *Among His proofs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves, in order to have tranquility and contentment with each other, and He placed in your hearts love and care towards your spouses. In this, there are sufficient proofs for people who think.*

[13:23] *They enter the gardens of Eden, together with the righteous among their parents, their spouses, and their children. The angels will enter to them from every door.*

2. Time beats money. A number of

studies have shown that happier people prefer to have more time in their lives than more money.

Worldly Materials Are Nil

[9:85] *Do not be impressed by their money or their children; GOD causes these to be sources of misery for them in this world, and their souls depart as disbelievers.*

[3:14] *Adorned for the people are the worldly pleasures, such as the women, having children, piles upon piles of gold and silver, trained horses, livestock, and crops. These are the materials of this world. A far better abode is reserved at GOD.*

In this world we have a lot of time (73:7), but we don't want to waste it. When the appointed time of death comes, there is no returning; we cannot get another chance.

[36:48] *They also challenge, "When will that promise come to pass, if you are truthful?" [36:49] All they see will be one blow that overwhelms them, while they dispute. [36:50] They will not even have time to make a will, nor will they be able to return to their people.*

[26:102-3] *"If only we could get another chance, we would then believe." This should be a good lesson. But most people are not believers.*

3. It helps to have enough money to pay the bills.

[34:39] *Say, "My Lord is the One who controls all provisions; He increases the provisions for whomever He chooses from among His servants, or reduces them. Anything you spend (in the cause of God), He will reward you for it; He is the Best Provider."*

[93:5] *And your Lord will give you enough; you will be pleased.*

4. It's worth stopping to smell the roses. People who slow down to reflect on good things in their lives report being more satisfied.

GOD rewards those who are appreciative (3:144-5, 4:147). And He has given us so much to be appreciative for (22:36, 28:73, 30:46, 35:12).

[14:7] *Your Lord has decreed: "The more you thank Me, the more I give*

you." But if you turn unappreciative, then My retribution is severe.

[16:114] *Therefore, you shall eat from GOD's provisions everything that is lawful and good, and be appreciative of GOD's blessings, if you do worship Him alone.*

[39:66] *Therefore, you shall worship GOD alone, and be appreciative.*

5. Acts of kindness boost the mood. Research has shown that people who perform acts of kindness report being happier.

[2:110] *You shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat). Any good you send forth on behalf of your souls, you will find it at GOD. GOD is seer of everything you do.*

[3:92] *You cannot attain righteousness until you give to charity from the possessions you love. Whatever you give to charity, GOD is fully aware thereof.*

[19:12-3] *"O John, you shall uphold the scripture, strongly." We endowed him with wisdom, even in his youth. And (we endowed him with) kindness from us and purity, for he was righteous.*

6. Breaking a sweat is about more than burning calories. Studies show that increased levels of physical activity are connected to higher levels of happiness.

Higher Ranks for the Strivers

[4:95] *Not equal are the sedentary among the believers who are not handicapped, and those who strive in the cause of GOD with their money and their lives. GOD exalts the strivers with their money and their lives above the sedentary. For both, GOD promises salvation, but GOD exalts the strivers over the sedentary with a great recompense.*

[5:35] *O you who believe, you shall reverence GOD and seek the ways and means to Him, and strive in His cause, that you may succeed.*

[29:6] *Those who strive, strive for their own good. GOD is in no need for anyone.*

7. Enjoyment is more valuable than material items. People tend to be happier if they spend their money

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on experiences.

And what can be more fun than worshipping God, reading the Quran, or spending time with submitters while learning from each other, and growing our souls?

[73:2-4] Meditate during the night, except rarely. Half of it, or a little less. Or a little more. And read the Quran from cover to cover.

[96:1-5] Read, in the name of your Lord, who created. He created man from an embryo. Read, and your Lord, Most Exalted. Teaches by means of the pen. He teaches man what he never knew.

[73:8] You shall commemorate the name of your Lord, to come ever closer and closer to Him.

8. It helps to stay in the present moment.

[16:1] GOD's command has already been issued (and everything has already been written), so do not rush it. Be He glorified; the Most High, far above any idols they set up.

[20:130] Therefore, be patient in the face of their utterances, and praise and glorify your Lord before sunrise and before sunset. And during the night glorify Him, as well as at both ends of the day, that you may be happy.

[7:205] You shall remember your Lord within yourself, publicly, privately, and quietly, day and night; do not be una-

ware.

9. Time with friends is time well spent. Interactions with casual friends can make people happier, and close friendships—especially with happy people [i.e., submitters]—can have a powerful effect on your own happiness as well.

[5:55] Your real allies are GOD and His messenger, and the believers who observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat), and they bow down.

[18:28] You shall force yourself to be with those who worship their Lord day and night, seeking Him alone. Do not turn your eyes away from them, seeking the vanities of this world. Nor shall you obey one whose heart we rendered oblivious to our message; one who pursues his own desires, and whose priorities are confused.

[49:10] The believers are members of one family; you shall keep the peace within your family and reverence GOD, that you may attain mercy.

Happiness comes from having God in our lives and doing the things that God has commanded us to do. Happiness is Submission to God.

Vicky

Adapted from:

www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/happiness-behaviours-characteristics-science-relationships-kindness-a7843631.html

God Willing

34th Annual Conference

United Submitters

August 2-4, 2019

Tucson, Arizona



God willing, the annual conference of United Submitters International will be in Tucson AZ, on August 2-4. It is an opportunity to remember God, increase our knowledge and meet our brethren in faith (3:191-194, 18:28, 58:11, 49:10).

Registration and hotel details are available online at:

www.masjiduntucson.org/conference/

As usual, attendance will be by invitation only. To help us organize a successful conference—and God has always been generous and gracious towards us—please let us know of your plans as soon as you know. For questions or information please email: info@masjiduntucson.org.