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The fragile promise of happiness

We are constantly told that the purpose of life is to be happy. It sounds harmless, and very few people ever question it. Yet hidden inside this advice is the seed of lifelong dissatisfaction. The moment happiness becomes the goal, the mind also begins running from unhappiness. It starts moving in two directions at once, chasing one thing while trying to escape another. Slowly, the pursuit itself becomes the disturbance.

The one who is always chasing has already accepted something, though he may never put it into words: he believes himself to be incomplete. And a mind that feels incomplete cannot receive anything lasting. It may feel

excitement or relief for a while, but it cannot settle.

Look closely at what usually passes for happiness: A promotion, a holiday, approval, entertainment. None of these are wrong by themselves. But notice how they work. They feel meaningful only because the inner state is already restless and hungry. Happiness is not an independent experience. It is a reaction, a short easing of discomfort, a small rise in the emotional graph produced by changing conditions. And because conditions never stay put, happiness keeps collapsing.



This is not accidental. Happiness, as we understand it today, is largely a conditioned phenomenon. We have been trained to call certain excitements happiness. The thrill of buying something new, the warmth of approval, the comfort of being noticed. Over time, these associations become fixed. Without this conditioning, much of what we chase would lose its appeal far more quickly than we imagine.

Happiness is fragile. It leans on people, outcomes, recognition, moods. Remove one condition, and the structure begins to shake. We know we are happy only because we

remember being sad. Something that depends on its opposite cannot support us for long.

The opposite of happiness is not sadness; it is maturity. Maturity is the willingness to see life as it is, without demanding that it comfort or entertain you. A mature mind does not ask for stimulation; it asks for understanding. And in understanding, something stable arises: Joy. It does not depend on outcomes. It arises from insight, from being aligned with what is real rather than what is merely pleasant.

Happiness glitters and fades. Joy remains, because it asks for nothing. To choose joy is not to gain something new. It is to finally rest.