

ADVERTISEMENT

Home > Opinion >



The fragile promise of happiness

Look closely at what usually passes for happiness: A promotion, a holiday, approval, entertainment.

Acharya Prashant Last Updated : 24 February 2026, 02:31 IST

Join Us

As Trusted

0

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

India | Karnataka | DH Specials | Opinion | World | Business | Sports | Video | Entertainment

▶ Politics ▶ Bengaluru ▶ Health ▶ Education ▶ Technology ▶ Photos ▶ DH Brandspot



Experience a more refined e-paper today

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT

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.

ADVERTISEMENT

Stories You May Like

District renaming plan: BJP’s Tumakuru MLAs go after G Parameshwara

Who is Helle Lyng? Norwegian journalist who sparked online storm after questioning PM Modi

From space to history: Satellite imaging to reveal Lakkundi’s buried heritage

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.

Opinion | Oasis | Panorama

Follow us on :

Follow Us



This Could Be the Best Time to Trade Gold in 5 Years

Access the gold market with leverage up to 1:1000 and tight spreads. Fast signup. No hidden fees. Trading derivatives involves high risk to your capital.

IC | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

Trade BTC and ETH Without Owning the Coins

Explore key perks of BTC/USD and ETH/USD CFDs: trade seven days a week with no commissions under FSA regulation—and enjoy tight spreads from 8.7 USD on a high-performance platform. Trading derivatives involves high risk to your capital.

IC | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

Kolhapur: Best Public Speaking Course for Children

Start Your Child's English Transformation Now!

Planet Spark | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

The cost of hearing aids in Kolhapur might surprise you

Recommended by audiologist

Hearing Loss | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)

Secure Your Child's Future with Strong English Fluency

Start Your Child's English Transformation Now!

Planet Spark | Sponsored

[Learn More](#)