



HAPPINESS IS A FUNCTION OF NEED, NOT GREED

You have a fixed amount of two goods: X and Y. You like both X and Y. A kind person offers you a little bit more of only X (or only Y). You accept. You're happier now than you were before. Graphically, you're moving either vertically up or horizontally right. Both movements make you happier than before. The kind person now offers you a little bit more of both X and Y. You jump for it. Graphically, this means moving north-east from where you are now. A movement towards the north-east is logical. If you like something and you can get more of it then you prefer it to the less that you have at the moment. Although intuitively appealing, the hypothesis of 'more is preferred to less' can mean that people fail to separate



greed from need. The kind person again offers you more of both X and Y. You're elated once more. You move a little bit more towards the north-east. The kind person appears again. Again, he offers a little bit more of both X and Y. Again, you happily accept. As you receive more and more of X and Y, you start to become less and less happier than before. You stop becoming happier, when your needs (demand) for X and Y have been fulfilled because there's an upper limit to enjoying X and Y. The kind person offers you more of both X and Y. Now we've reached a critical point. Let's assume you fail to understand that you can't become happier after receiving a maximum of both X and Y, but you say yes to the kind person thinking more will make you happier. What will

happen? You'll be a little less happy than before. You've crossed the maximum amount of X and Y that could have made you happy. You're no longer moving north-east. You're moving towards the south-east now. That's moving downwards, isn't it? You're now getting less and less happy in spite of getting more and more of X and Y from the kind person. After the maximum, if you carry on accepting the kind person's gift, you're surrendering to greed, not fighting any more for need. Money and wealth make us happy only as long as we truly need them. The emphasis is on 'need'. After reaching a maximum, more money and wealth don't necessarily translate to more happiness. After the maximum point, if we still hanker after money and wealth for the sake of doing so, we become greedy. We don't 'need' them, but we chase them in a mad rat race. If you really need something and you work hard towards getting it, you feel happy in the end when you do get it. If you never really needed something to begin with, then wanting it won't feel like a good idea in the end if you do get it. There is a distinction between need and greed. You won't get everything in life, but then you could get something that you need. Which one's better? Food for thought. *Asrar Chowdhury teaches economic theory and game theory in the classroom. Outside he listens to music and BBC Radio; follows Test Cricket; and plays the flute. He can be reached at: asrar.chowdhury@facebook.com*



TRASH TO TREASURE
 BY LABIBA MUSTABINA

ONCE UPON A TIME, IT WAS A JAR



LABIBA MUSTABINA

If there is one thing that's been abundantly lying around in your kitchen, stuffing up the cabinets and blocking your refrigerator, it's the infamous jar. What does a person do with so many jars except throw them in the trash? Well, what if I told you that they'd mean so much more but only on one condition: stop thinking of them as just jars. **It could be a glow-in-the-dark nightlight** Whether you want to perceive this fluorescent jar as a piece of galactic décor or a pretend makeshift crystal ball, making it requires only one thing: a glow stick. All you've got to do is cut open a glow stick with scissors, empty the contents inside the jar, shake it up and turn off the lights to bathe in a fluorescent aura of your "glow jar". If you have trouble finding glow sticks, simply opt for the glow-in-the-dark stars, stock your jar up with them and watch them illuminate your bed-stand as you fall asleep.



How about a twinkling lamp? If you want your room alight with a glittering charm, all you need is a pack of LED twinkling lights, more commonly known as "morich baati" from any local hardware shop. One packet comes with about 10 yards of the lights along with a plug and switch.

Now for the fitting, remove the lid of the jar, cut out a square piece of beautiful fabric such that it covers the neck of the jar and make a hole of about 2cm diameter in the centre. Place the whole string of lights through the hole in the cloth and stash it inside the jar, leaving the plug and switch out. Secure the fabric over the jar head using a rubber band, plug it in and awe away. **It could be a memory capsule too** Take your souvenirs, combine it with the memories you captured in photos from various points in your life and preserve in mini memory capsules. For example, the souvenirs could be shells you collected on a vacation on the beach or that tassel from your graduation hat. Glue a photo that belongs to the memory inside the jar vertically and carefully place the mementos within. Cover the jar with a square piece of fabric, securing it with a ribbon. Most importantly, put up a beautiful label. **Vases are never out of fashion** Every once in a while you'll come across a very shapely jar and when you do,

you'll preserve this jar for a very special calling: flower vases. To refurbish the modest jar you could always go with a classy polished look by spray painting it golden. For a more vintage look, mix a few drops of food colour (blue works best) with some adhesive and water and coat the inside of the jar. Then, simply place the jar in the microwave for 30 seconds (or more if the paint hasn't set). Voila! You now have a vase. **A portable home for your best pal?** I'm not joking. If your best friend is a fish and you cannot imagine a moment passing by without it, find the most gigantic jar, fill the bottom with pebbles and marbles, maybe throw in some decorative plant, fill it up with water and let your "bestie" revel in the comfort of its new home. Oh, please remember to NOT put the lid back on: you don't want to suffocate your fish.

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