



# Chasing Happiness

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Happiness is a surprisingly fickle thing. As you grow older, it tends to get rarer because you finally realise the world isn't always a dazzling place you never knew and is more of a nightmare you hoped it wasn't. Like a bubble, it floats free, dancing, lighting up smiles – and then pops. Like a carefree kid, we tend to chase after that elusive bubble. In my honest opinion, I believe that perhaps every single person strives for control and while that's perfectly fine, sometimes in cases such as happiness, perhaps it's best to leave it alone.

Another opinion: no two people are exactly the same. On that note, I'd rather not tell you things such as "don't chase happiness"; we all go through different paths in life. In fact, we even understand the term differently. So yes, I could simply stop writing at this point and we'd all be off, but I don't want to leave you empty-handed. Therefore, I'd like to share some experiences or at the very least, thoughts, of chasing after happiness.

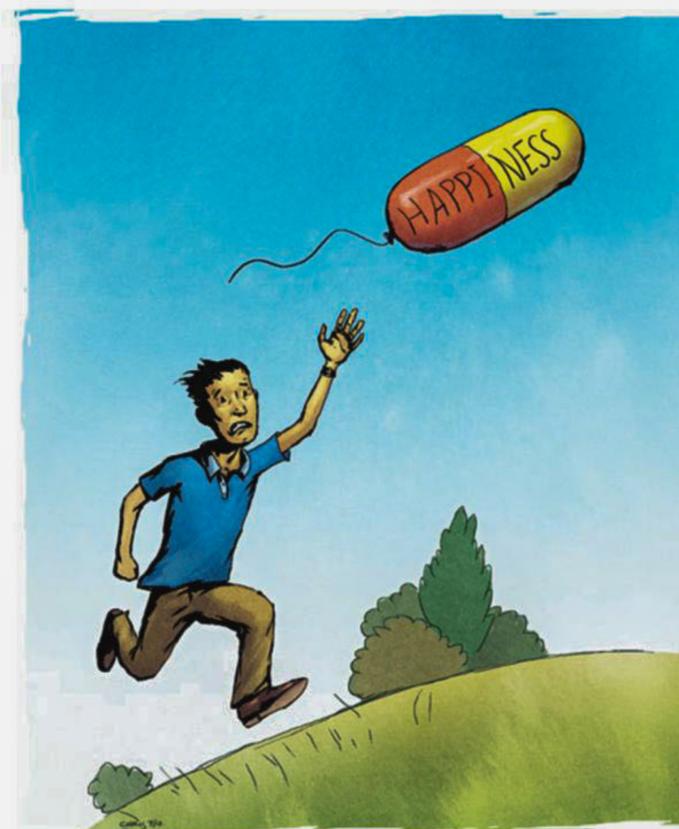
I personally think humans are greedy. The truth is, you'll never actually have enough of something (unless maybe someone force-feeds you a lot at once). Slice after slice, the cake is long gone and you'd still be craving for more. And see, that's the funny part: you got your happiness and you're still chasing it. In other cases, maybe you haven't even realised that you've gotten it, so you're still running after it.

People have this wonderful, revered and sometimes downright terrible ability called "getting used to things". And thus, happiness gets stale. We hate change but sometimes, you have to accept it too. Sure, tell me that kacchi is love, kacchi is life, but have it three meals a day for a month and you aren't going to enjoy it much (neither will your bowels for that matter). To me, life is like this incredibly elaborate dish – it's not just one single spice, ingredient or taste but a spectrum of many different things. Quoting my best friend, "We want to be happy all the time, but as I grew older, I realised that not being happy all the time is okay too. Sometimes you need to be sad or angry or unhappy because it

offers you a different perspective which can be beyond useful."

Speaking of perspectives, ask yourself: how do I even know I'll be happy? And that's the scariest bit because you don't know. The future is a dream in static 'til you get there. In 7th grade, maybe you told yourself popularity is happiness but it wasn't, leaving behind other stuff that could've made you happy because it's not what you wanted. Or maybe you haven't left it behind, but demeaned them because you've convinced yourself that something is missing.

Ironically, despite having yammered on for quite a while now, I haven't actually talked yet about the chase itself. Let's call the goal "the stairway to heaven". You go



on about your merry business, working your way towards it. I think we've already established the fact that in most cases, once you've reached it, you unfortunately do not find Jimmy Page playing an epic guitar solo that might drive you to either headbanging or crying because it's so beautiful. Even if Page is standing there with his guitar, he's going to play that solo and then leave, just like the happiness you're still craving. Your stairway lies on the whispering wind, my friend. In running here, you've run past pastures that are often more beautiful than your stairway.

In the end, the truth is, it's tiring to chase something so subjective and fickle (but mostly because it's abstract). Taking a moment to quote another friend: "It doesn't make sense to chase something so illusory. It's like dedicating your life to catching a butterfly." There is no such thing as "the ultimate happiness". It's not having tons of friends. It's not getting married under the age of 30 and popping out a bunch of kids. It's not having four significant others, simultaneously. Real happiness often remains unappreciated in those fragrant pastures. As silly as this may sound to you, back when I was younger, I loved doing the annual science fairs at my school. I participated in two of the years, but in later years, I sacrificed that memorable fun and studied for good grades I don't even remember anymore. I'd left behind real joy for letters on a piece of paper.

None of this is to imply "YOLO so forget the future". Sometimes you do have to sacrifice small things, like that candy bar if you want to hit your goal weight. But in the end, it's the little things that matter the most. Seriously, I asked around 20 people and it's practically a unanimous thought. Don't chase that bubble – make them instead. Finishing off with one last quote: "You actually miss out a lot when chasing after happiness. If I had to rate it, 4 out of 10. Would not recommend it."

*Rasheed Khan is a hug monster making good music but terrible puns and jokes where he's probably the only one laughing. Ask him how to pronounce his name at [aarcvard@gmail.com](mailto:aarcvard@gmail.com)*