

#PERSPECTIVE

Weaker bonds: The key to being happy?

All our lives, we have heard how deep and meaningful associations with family were the key to everlasting happiness. From fairy tales and romance novels to soaps and casual social studies, most have kept profound relationships at the forefront of perpetual bliss. Therefore, the unbelievable results of a recent study that show that weaker ties with people can actually bring one greater happiness than deeper connections like love and marriage come as nothing less than shocking.



'Weak ties' are a term coined by US sociologist, Mark Granovetter, in 1973, and refers to those people with whom we have been exchanging pleasantries and small talk since forever. These include that guy who nods at you on the bus every day, it could be the colleague you often find yourself sharing eye rolls with during a high-octane meeting, the little boy you meet on the elevator every day on the way home, or the girl who lives down the hall and passes you by with a smile every day.

According to research, these weak ties form a person's social portfolio and may be doing them more good than they are recognised for. Those who interact with a variety of people every day feel generally happier and more satisfied with their

lives than those with lower levels of social interactions. The in-depth research conducted by Harvard with 50,000 respondents spanning over eight countries yielded this conclusive and incredible result, upon analysing their web of social interactions.

Sceptics may argue that those with a higher number of social interactions may inherently have sunnier personalities and be generally happier people. Researchers, however, have debunked that argument by already taking that characteristic into account. They additionally also factored in that within the few weeks that the participants of the study increased their interactions, they felt overall more satisfied with their lives, regardless of how happy or sad they were by nature.

Introverts may feel like they are better off at home but that too, may not be the best thing for them. According to researchers, another study has indicated that individuals don't often know what is best for their wellbeing and often continue to treat their complacency as satisfaction.

Experts feel that is not how much time you spend with your weak ties as how varied your selection of people is — something known as "diversifying the portfolio". When asked if one should drop his close friends for a bunch of random acquaintances, an expert was known to say, that weak ties can, quite easily, be a stronger predictor for social wellbeing than marriage!

By Munira Fidai

Photo: LS Archives/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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কোমল ও সতেজ

COCOA BUTTER
ত্বকের গভীরে ধরে রাখবে
ত্বকের অর্জিতা বজায় রাখে

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