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HAPPINESS AND HUMAN NEEDS

Throughout history, philosophers have gravitated to human happiness or the pursuit of happiness as the purpose of life or the human mission. Happiness or the pursuit of happiness plays a critical role in the pursuit of the *Human Mission*. To understand this we start with a discussion of human “Needs”

Human needs and motivations are the prime movers of human life. All human activity is initiated to serve or fulfill needs, motivations or desires. In the absence of a need, motivation or desire, except for their autonomic nervous system, people would remain motionless. For the following discussion all these needs, motivation and desire - are referred to as "Needs".

“Needs” is a defined term, which is developed here. It is for this reason that Needs appears as capitalized.

The fulfillment of human Needs is what drives all human activity other than that which is attributable to the autonomic nervous system and therefore causes any and all human productivity. It is in the pursuit and gratification of these inborn Needs that we find happiness. Human beings pursuing happiness tend to be productive.

Many thinkers have considered happiness the purpose of life. For the individual it is indeed. The pursuit of happiness as a goal of humanity lacks value as it fails the test, “What are the negative consequences of extinction of happy people in a happy society?” The answer would still remain “none” if that were its only achievement. *As a result, the pursuit of happiness can neither serve as the sole purpose of that which provides value to human life nor serve as the mission of humanity.*

Happiness is a personal achievement. It is the goal of each individual and as explained previously, it is not a worthy goal for a society. Individuals through a free-orderly society can structure society and its government in a manner that facilitates the pursuit of happiness, but it cannot impose or legislate happiness. Any attempt by a government to impose or legislate happiness for any citizen or group of citizens inevitably impinges upon the ability of others to pursue their own happiness.

Happiness dealt with here is the work of a healthy mind. There are mental patients who appear happy. The hope is that through the expansion of human perception the incidence of unhealthy minds will diminish or even disappear. Each individual’s challenge is to perceive

one's self. Here each person is charged with understanding and coping through reason with the internal conflicts of one's demanding and sometimes conflicting innate Needs, and one's socially instilled inhibitions or conscience. Or, when lacking socially instilled inhibitions or conscience, very frequently one is presented with a conflict with society's laws. All so, human repressed memories can cause irrational behavior those conflicts with happiness.

Artificial needs such as drug addiction and in some cases spiritual or psychological addiction, too, must be addressed. Inborn human Needs are demanding enough, motivating enough, and proven through evolution to serve human survival well enough to require no additional motivations. Artificial addictions have rarely contributed to human production, dignity or survival. In fact, they have done the opposite. Society should find drug addiction abhorrent as many traditional religions have for millennia.

Many human needs have been given names, categorized and assigned priorities. Here below are eight that are distinguishable by human actions having but one of these motivations. Commonly, one human action results from a combination of Needs. This combining of Needs frequently confuses and obscures the basic motivation for one's actions making self-analysis difficult. Some human actions appear to be purely irrational as they thwart gratification of one category of Needs while attempting to fulfill another. One's pursuit of happiness is greatly enhanced by having the ability to separate these Needs as one evaluates how they influence any specific activities. By being able to separate one's Needs in to categories one can better analyze how each activity contributes to or detracts from one's happiness.

A challenge for humanity is to achieve an ever-greater understanding of how the human brain processes matters relating to the identification and gratification of Needs.

For those with healthy minds, happiness can be experienced through the reasonable gratification of all human Needs. Complete satiation of a human Need extinguishes it and thereby destroys its ability to contribute to one's happiness if only temporarily. But as one Need is gratified, attention then can be directed to other Needs of lower urgency.

It should be stressed here that a healthy mind is essential for achieving success in rationally approaching the elements of happiness. Given that one has a healthy mind here is a rudimentary "road-map" with which to peruse happiness.

The human mind can easily reason that one act, while not directly serving the gratification of a basic Need, can indirectly serve the gratification of one or many human Needs. The monies earned through productive work serve the entire range of human Needs even though the work itself might not. It is this capacity to produce products, not directly consumable, that most commonly distinguishes humans from lower animals.

These Needs are so imbedded in the human psyche that they can impede if not preclude objective thinking. If a new concept is in conflict with one's Ego Needs, Devotional Needs, Security Needs or others, he/she may be incapable of objectively dealing with it. A new concept that conflicts with a professor's stature is unlikely to receive objective review. A new concept that conflicts with the way one expresses his/her feelings about compassionate treatment of

others is unlikely to receive objective review. A new concept that conflicts with the pensioner's security is unlikely to receive objective review, and so on. The obstacles of the mind can obstruct the pursuit of a rational society.

As with all of human perception, total understanding is never achievable and that which is presented here is no final understanding of human motivations. It is an early effort to categorize human behavior in order that one may better understand one's own behavior and that of others with whom he/she must deal. This whole field of human motivation is a rich vein in which to mine, for here is to be found the essence of happiness.

Going back to the early philosophers, has been the discussion of reason over desire or the controlling of behavior that is driven by the pursuit of Needs. Tomes of prose and poems have been written and many more will follow regarding the struggle between desire, passion, or demanding Needs and the controlling force of reason. Much research is promised for this conflict that is compounded by the dominance of one "side" of the brain over the other. The "feeling" "right brain" versus the "rational" "left brain" have different weight in all people and is further complicated by a gender predilection or even prepossession.

No great effort is made here to explain how each category of Needs applies to any individual. It will be up to the reader to personally examine how each applies to him/her.

Basic Body Functions

The first category of human Needs, and probably the one of highest priority, is *Basic Body Functions*. Eating (hunger), drinking (thirst), breathing, sleeping, excreting, regurgitating, coughing, sneezing, scratching, and blinking fall into this category. Human beings find great pleasure in these that, however, when easily gratified, are commonly taken for granted. Being thwarted in the gratification of these Needs can produce an urgent sense of deprivation. Persons with disabilities may find that inability to meet these human needs greatly impairs their success in finding happiness.

Sex

A second Need is Sex. Primitive as it may be, civilized human behavior requires that this motivation be managed discretely in a manner that respects the person and sensitivities of others. It must be managed in a manner that recognizes potential for conflicts with the interests of the family.

Any discussion of human sexual behavior must deal with its most common characteristics while recognizing that the characteristics of each gender are found in individuals of the other to lesser and greater degree. Therefore, statements made about the characteristics of one gender will have application at least to some individuals of the opposite gender.

As opposed to the male's need, the human females sexual needs, in general, can be more frequently met in a structure that is compatible with taking a single mate. Female desires for

mates who are sensitive to all of their Needs are commonly associated with sexual fulfillment. These include *Ego* and *Security* developed below. Commonly, such sensitivity is not instinctive in the human male. So in the interest of strengthening the family, education of males in the fulfillment of these female Needs has merit.

Great importance is given this element of human behavior because its management is crucial to a successful social structure.

The human male has several characteristics incompatible with monogamy. As a generality, *men are sexually visually stimulated* more than women. This is also manifest in other species, inversely, most noticeably in birds through bright plumage, even though the roles are reversed. This makes males more subject to distraction. In and of itself, this would not conflict with monogamy were it not for the fact that *men also become "fixated"*. Man's image of a desirable woman tends not to mature as he ages. This is detrimental to a long monogamous relationship. In general, the sight of women of childbearing years sexually arouses men. Making men even less compatible with monogamy is *promiscuity*. The human male finds sexual fulfillment in the excitement of sexually stimulated energy racing through *unconditioned synapses* those results from involvement with a new partner. These reactions have a foundation in evolution. The genes of the evolutionary forefathers driving old men to pursue young women survived well while the genes of the forefathers that would have had old men pursuing women past menopause fared far worse. Similarly, male genes that would have caused males to be monogamous might disseminate about once a year or so, while genes causing males to be promiscuous disseminated far more frequently. General awareness of this primarily a male characteristic is extremely important to the strength of the family particularly through the important period of raising children. Both the husband and wife must be aware of these human characteristics. The wives cannot anticipate ownership of the husband's sexuality or visa versa. And both must anticipate a declining sexual response toward each other as the response of each develops a "conditioned" response to one another. It is important that couples understand and accept (not deny) this human nature prior to marriage (entering in a Family Contract which is developed in our other writings) and have a plan for dealing with this human condition. Open and honest discussion of each partner's Needs may lead to solutions and avoid the far too frequent catastrophic consequences of infidelity. The commitment of both to the mission of raising the children must have precedence over the emotional involvement and responses commonly attendant to infidelity.

Devotion

The human being has a Need for *Devotion*, a Need to be devoted to others and for others to return the devotion. This may have evolved out of *Sex*. It may be called the "need to love and to be loved". Devotion includes all the different forms of love. It is this devotion that finds fulfillment in a belief in and devotion to God. It is the human Need that drives altruism. It is here that Dare and compassion resides. This powerful human need makes human beings very social animals and its fulfillment is found in social intercourse. It is the motivation that cares for the young, the elderly and the disabled. It is also the human Need that has enlisted the coercive power of government to try and satisfy these many Needs.

Matters of devotion, love, care, and compassion are evidently strongest in people having

a “right” “feeling” brain dominance who will be therefore less influenced by the “rational” “left-brain.” To complicate such matters further, as indicated above, “right and left-brain” dominance appears to be gender skewed. This is a source of the perennial and seemingly irresolvable misunderstanding between men and women. This has been a force to cause democratic governments to ignore individual freedom as it conscripts the population into to the service of providing care and compassion for its citizenry.

Ego

The human being is compelled to evaluate one’s own self. This then becomes one’s own understanding of how he/she fares in the opinion of others. This we commonly call the *Ego*. In any event, for the purposes of this writing, ego is an opinion of one’s own self worth. It can be a powerful drive and for many an endless source of frustration. It may have evolved from *Devotion* but its manifestations are so different and so often in conflict with the gratification of *devotional needs* that it falls within a category of its own. As with other human motivations, there is much to be learned about this human Need. Here too, the seemingly insatiability of this Need can become debilitating to the individual who is incapable of restraining it with his/her rational brain. Self-image is formed in early childhood. Insofar as children are all inferior to adults, it is little wonder that poor self-images are common.

An awareness that one is numerically only one six billionth of humanity (depending upon the total population of human beings at the time) would appear to make the individual too insignificant to provide much satisfaction to one’s Ego. But, one individual can make a contribution many hundred, thousand or million times greater than the average. And for those who don’t, any productive contribution assists those who do.

Achievement is frequently believed to be the product of the achiever, although also frequently, achievers recognize that their parents, some teacher, or others assisted them. In fact, human achievements are a product of the millions of ancestors through thousands of generations who selectively improved the gene pool and preserved the species.

On a personal level, ego is gratified at the point and time one engages others. A personal awareness of a positive response from others contributes greatly to one’s sense of self worth and the “reasonable gratification” of one’s ego.

Pleasures of the Senses

Human beings have a Need to fulfill the *Pleasures of the Senses* - the pleasures of taste, smell, sight, sound, touch and balance. Much time, effort and wealth are allocated to the gratification of each.

Obsession with gratifying any of the sense pleasures or any one of the other human Needs at the expense of the remaining Needs can thwart one’s happiness.

Here we find the motivation for great culinary achievements, for fine achievements in the

visual arts, for great musical composition and performance, and so on. All contribute to the enhancement of the human condition

Curiosity

Curiosity is a wonderful human Need. It is a direct contributor to the fulfillment of the Human Mission. It conflicts with the fulfillment of few other human Needs; in fact, it assists greatly in the fulfillment of other Needs. It can assist humanity to rise to transcendent heights. Curiosity may be the most compelling force for expanding human perception of the universe. Curiosity frequently stands alone and is easily identified but it also combines with other Needs when initiating action by an individual. For example, such may be found in one's earliest sexual experiences. The participants in early sexual experiences are highly motivated by curiosity along with the sexual motivations.

Security

The animalistic instinct "fear of imminent peril" seems to be refined in the human intellect to matters of far less imminent peril. This reaches well beyond the immediate threats to the individual's "well-being". An individual's sense of "well-being" is one's sense of the continued reasonable gratification of his many Needs. The human being has a Need to believe that his/her other Needs will be satisfied in the future. This Need we call **Security**. This Need has a sound foundation in common sense and seems to be a stronger force among females than males*. This human ability to be concerned about the future is a strong motivation that has drawn humans to religion. An understanding of the risks to the security of the human species from extraterrestrial forces would be a strong motivation to extend human perception of the universe.

**All characteristics that appear dominate in one gender seem to appear to some extent in the other.*

Romantic Love

Romantic love is a powerful and sometimes debilitating combination of Needs. As with all Needs, romantic love can vary in intensity in all persons or in one person at different times. This Need, while it can be transitory and unpredictable, might be described as a condition that exists when, to the smitten, one individual becomes the personification of his or her Sexual Needs, Ego Needs, Devotional Needs and Security Needs are manifest in one individual. The force of the convergence of so many powerful Needs manifested in the image of one person can be so strong as to completely disable one's rational processes or at least overwhelm one's ability for reasoning to govern Needs or "feelings". Under the influence of chemical changes in the body, persons in this state can become nearly totally irrational. Too frequently persons in this state are making decisions regarding long-term family matters. Here such persons need the counsel of family, the religious leaders and any other competent people to provide guidance. Only if great respect is established with such counselors will they have any sway with the person

so afflicted. It is considered an “affliction” here because those who are under such influences generally have been stripped of the rational ability to deal with such matters. The afflicted have neither understanding nor concern of the fact that this state is transitory.

The subconscious

For the purposes of this writing, we will place all of the subconscious and congenital motivators together here. Obviously, much human behavior is in the genetic code, is not learned, and in some ways is analogous to the Read Only Memory (ROM) of a computer. Examples are easily observed in lower animals as well as in humans as a newborn suckles. Much investigation is underway into these subliminal behaviors. The subconscious and congenital motivators probably have their greatest impact on one’s self-image *(Ego)*, one’s sense of *Devotion* and one’s sense of *Security*. They also may impact other motivations. Without attempting to establish how or why memory becomes repressed or submerged below or behind conscious recall, it should be noted here that such memories can emerge, causing human responses that seem quite irrational. The challenge is for the individual to know his/her own mind and for professionals in the field to develop methods for helping them to do so. This, as with all other human knowledge, is vastly incomplete. This undoubtedly is a fruitful field in which to do research and add to the body of human knowledge and perception.

Jealousy, envy and covetousness

Jealousy, envy and covetousness, while very powerful motivators, are not basic Needs. Many people live without these feelings. They appear to be hybrids emanating from man’s ego or some combination of Needs. Human beings can live without Jealousy, envy and covetousness - these driving forces that seem to evolve from a feeling of being deprived. Depending upon the depths of feeling about the comparative deprivation, the frustration can cause totally irrational behavior. The emotional feelings of jealousy, envy and covetousness, however, can be directed in a constructive manner to motivate one to improve his or her own ability to better gratify frustrated human Needs. Inability to control these emotions within a framework that respects the person and/or property of others will ultimately deprive the person of living in a free-orderly society.

Individuals and societies place great concern on large disparities of wealth as causing or because of the human motivator jealousy. *But jealousy, envy and covetousness can be engendered by only the slightest disparities.* As a result, these emotions must be controlled within the individual. Efforts to control manage or subdue these emotions through measures that mandate equality among unequal human beings will fail. More importantly, to attempt to do so is to destroy a free/orderly society. Much more is written in our other works about the social, economic and political consequences of these destructive emotions.

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Communist, jihadists and other self-serving leaders have exploited these emotions to the massive destruction of life and property. These are humanities lowest and basest motivations and those who exploit them to the destruction of life and property are the enemies of humanity

and civilization.

Hate

Hate is a passionate emotion that has no redeeming value. It evidently arises from deprivation, real or imagined, in the present, past or future. Hate is the companion of jealousy and must be dealt with in a similar manner.

Happiness

In any event, happiness is to be found in the reasonable gratification of these human Needs. Each person has varying urges in each category, so happiness is to be achieved by each individual's finding the "correct" gratification in each category. There exists a constant conflict between the Needs as they compete for the time and resources of each individual. The individual allocates time to one Need at the expense of/ or the neglect of another. Here the individual must call upon his/her rational brain to resolve the conflict and be at peace with the outcome. To achieve a happy life, one might analyze his/her individual Needs as categorized here to have a reasonably clear understanding of how each impact one's self. One must examine each activity and be aware of just which Need that activity is gratifying. In this way one becomes ever more cognizant of the Needs as they are being met so as to be better equipped for meeting them in the future. The gratification of Needs is life's pleasures. Understanding what those Needs are and how one can best meet them is the path to happiness. Armed with an understanding of what will reasonably gratify each of one's Needs, one can style an environment in which most if not all of his/her Needs will be reasonably met. To over-look or omit any Needs will likely result in failure.

Human Needs, the impetus for all human activity are the motivators that cause humans to be productive. Expanding perception of the universe ever so large or small is what distinguishes humans from the lower animals. Human production is what enables human perception of the universe. Greater human production enables greater perception of the universe.

Much opportunity exists for exploration of human motivation. What is offered here is an outline or framework for a much more perceptive understanding of human motivation.

All of what appears here is the product of the evolution of humanity for lower animal forms and ten thousand generations of homosapiens. Robots having not Needs or these other motivators are without motivation to threaten humanity.