

The Wholeness of You by Swamini Saralananda

This is the eighth part of the serial article, continuation from December 2021 newsletter.

'Happiness Because'

This applies to anything that we enjoy as a "happiness-because", whether it be an ice cream cone or a new relationship. For no other reason but that it is dependent on external things which guarantee no certainty. How many people have said: "Till death do us part." This is not a happy piece of logic to accept because who wants to be dependent on anything or anybody to be happy. Any form of dependency is not comfortable. If we count on happiness from relationships, there is always going to be the tension and disappointment when significant others don't meet our expectations. And counting on happiness that depends on people, situations and things, like suppose when you know you deserve a promotion, it can always come up against blocks. And any obstructions that prevents you from getting what you want usually make you angry or depressed or both.

So then suppose you wanted the promotion so much, then you get it. Before long you find out that you didn't bargain for the huge increase in the amount of stress and time. The family is unhappy that they see less of you and express it in ways you never expected. People in the company who were your friends become distant because of jealousy amongst other things. You were looking forward to the extra clout and prestige you thought you had earned in that company, but all in all it turns out that the loss is greater than the gain. How they say, "Be careful what you pray for, you might get it."

And how many of us ladies have bought some very beautiful expensive shoes but they never lend themselves to get broken in and after enough blisters, off they went to the Goodwill. This all happens more than we like to admit. Whether it's a pair of shoes or a promotion, it's anybody's' guess how happy anything will make me and for how long. Happiness that depends on people, things and situations makes us no promises and "I'm forever blowing bubbles..." For the most part our life is nothing but doing and getting, busy trying to fulfill our desires, trying to get as much happiness as I can. Our desires keep us running and they direct the very course of our life. In spite of all our best efforts, the success in this grabber game

of life never feels like enough. Most of us have heard this one; “The one who wins in the rat race is the biggest rat.” The fact remains, happiness is more like an occasional guest coming to spend some time with me and always leaves in its own time.

Happiness Free From Relativity

Now here a shift in the line of logic. The purpose is to arrive at a way of understanding ‘happiness’ free from all relativity: We all fight off unhappiness as though it is a foreign invader, like a virus in our bloodstream. It is a disease. In our Western culture especially, you can see the flagrant national obsession with avoiding pain at all cost. In fact, take it one step further we can say that there is a societal addiction to instant gratification. We want what we want when we want it, as though it’s our right. After all the American constitution says so by that “pursuit of happiness” clause. I have the right to be happy therefore this also means that I always do whatever I can to keep unhappiness away. This is a natural way of life for the majority of us. Our whole biological system is geared for avoiding pain and drawn towards gaining happiness. Is there meaningful logic behind this?

The answer to this is crucial here. Could it be that our true nature is always innately struggling, profoundly longing, to just be itself? If it makes any sense at all then it is something that I need to see clearly. And I should know it well enough that there are no doubts, that my natural state of being is happiness itself. Suppose on the other hand that my natural state/self is a mixture of both joy and sorrow by nature, that is its reality. Then both of them would feel natural to me and I could slip in and out of them both as something normal since they are natural. We are always most comfortable with what is natural. While of course any joy is comfortable, I feel at home in it, it is the opposite with suffering. Just as when we pick up a virus, the body temperature rises as a fighting response; our immune system kicks into emergency action by increasing our white blood cells and they go on attack moving around in our blood stream to destroy the invaders. It’s just natural for this to happen because the body is programmed such that its normal state is to be healthy. Our body mind complex instinctually ‘seeks’ to maintain wellbeing as its natural state.

To be continued...