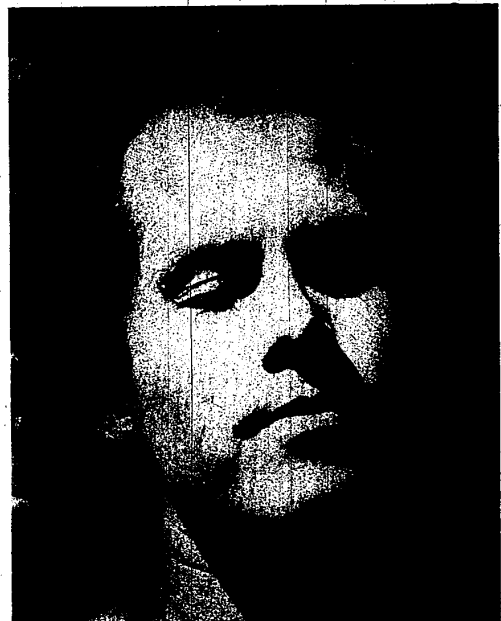
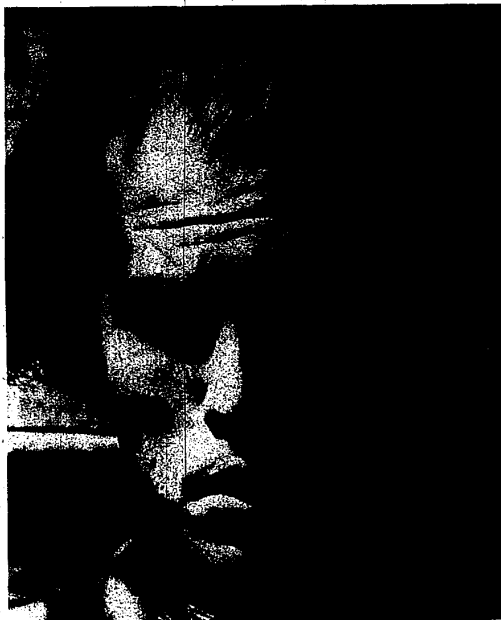




Is happiness elation, the ability to overcome grief or mild tranquility (Photographed by Iona Atkins).



Happiness

What does it mean?

By CHRISTINE WALDEN
and MARY CONNELLY

"Happiness is a warm puppy." If only it were that easy.

The Declaration of Independence guarantees the right to pursue happiness. But what is happiness?

Is it a pretty wife, a handsome husband, a large bank account and smoking the right cigarettes? Or is it feeling good about yourself, communicating with others and coping with everyday problems?

There are two definitions of happiness, according to Dr. Edward Rice, Oakland University psychologist.

"Usually, when we talk about happiness we mean the prince and the princess lived happily ever after. That's something that doesn't happen," Rice said.

"A better definition is a sense of well-being or feelings of fulfillment, a state of being in which one feels he is functioning to the best of his ability and is interested and excited in what he is doing."

FOR SOME, the prince and princess theory is perpetuated by mass communications. Formulas for superficial happiness surface from pop music, TV programming and magazine articles.

"The commercial exploitation of happiness conditions an expectation. Riding a motorcycle isn't being happy. It's fun. We are unsophisticated in our ability to achieve happiness," said Dr. Bruce Danto of Birmingham, director of the Detroit Suicide Prevention Center.

Since happiness is an expected part of living, many individuals shape their lives to fit an image of "happy." According to several psychologists and sociologists, most Americans measure happiness by external factors.

"If somebody says 'all I need is marriage to make me happy,' that's a fantasized assumption that the good aspects will always be present and unalterable," Danto said.

"In order to be a good winner, you have to lose. You have to cope with life when unhappiness occurs."

"HAPPINESS IS generally something to be obtained rather than an inward thing," said Professor Joseph Harry, Wayne State University sociologist.

"The Western orientation is toward activity and activism, that people should be active and assertive and that people who aren't into something and doing something are unhappy and missing out," he said.

While some Americans might pin their hopes on a new job, address or hat, others

claim that those items will not sustain happiness.

"The external really offers no security. It can offer you temporary security but real security comes from within," said Michael Gramlich, coordinator of the New Directions Foundation, Bloomfield Hills, and leader of meditation study groups.

"Everyone is looking for the big bang, big excitement. What they should be looking for is a sense of growth, and satisfaction."

Rice concurred saying, "We think of forces outside ourselves being nice to us. In a realistic definition of happiness, it comes from our feelings about ourselves as a person. You feel that you're ok as a person. You like yourself. You like getting up in the morning. You have basically good feelings that are letting you reap the benefits of activities."

SOME EXPERTS see more people going in, rather than going out, as a route to happiness.

"We're at the watershed between the utilitarian concept of happiness and the romantic, individual concept of happiness," said Nahum Medalia, Oakland University sociologist.

According to Medalia, in America, "individual happiness was translated very largely into economic happiness."

"The more money you had, the happier you were. That was a way to measure happiness," he said.

"We certainly have changed drastically in the last few years. The romantic tradition sees the individual not as striving for happiness in terms of money but in terms of self-development."

"What we're seeing now sociologically is the widespread feeling of failure of the old definition of happiness and a new approach. But our institutions haven't yet grown with the definition."

ACCORDING TO Medalia, current institutions which have a technological, industrial base may be altered by the new definition of happiness.

The emergence of human development groups is viewed as a forerunner of the change.

Meditation, consciousness-raising and self-help groups are vehicles being used by a cross-section of the population striving for inner satisfaction.

Group or no group, happiness through inner examination is suggested by many.

"We should begin to introspect and find out what it is about ourselves that is not very satisfying," said Rice. "Something is going on inside us that is keeping us from feeling fulfilled."

"We certainly have changed drastically in the last few years. The romantic tradition sees the individual not as striving for happiness in terms of money but in terms of self-development" — Nahum Medalia, O.U. sociologist.

What makes us happy?

What does research say about what makes Americans happy?

Professor Joseph Harry, Wayne State University sociologist, outlines the correlates of American happiness discovered by researchers.

- Rich people are happier than the poor.
- Married people are generally happier than singles, deriving satisfaction from a constant relationship with spouse and family.
- Older people are generally happier than the

young. The teen years and those of the early 20s are marked by searching for a stable identity which detracts from happiness. Consequently, happiness seems to increase with age, generally leveling off or decreasing slightly near the age of 60.

- Those turned on to community activities and involved in clubs and organizations are generally happier than those inactive. Western emphasis on activity gives the involved individual the edge on feeling happy.