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Maestro's Podium

Resolution to be happy

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I was once speaking to a therapist about his philosophy of treatment, and he said it was to help people be happy. I thought it was a bold comment because the concept of searching for happiness seems to be such a passé and even impossible goal. How did happiness become underrated?

If you look at the media that surrounds us, our culture is based upon being dissatisfied and finding happiness in a new car, or even with a new face. Unfortunately, these are transitory fixes that are not rooted in spiritual and intellectual fulfillment which are much more rewarding and enriching.

This is where art can play an important role in creating a fulfilling life. In these difficult economic times, experiencing something profoundly beautiful or meaningful gives our own lives greater meaning. Sharing a human experience connects us to a larger entity that is expressed through the gifted messages of a Beethoven or of a Picasso. Some may call this entity a Muse or Inspiration, and some may simply describe it as the human spirit.

Today, finding opportunities to experience art is surprisingly difficult. With so much "junk food" entertainment available in inexhaustible amounts on the Internet and television, art that demands more than three minutes worth of attention is deemed not commercial enough to warrant exposure. Convenience has replaced curiosity. As a result, we have a society that is hungry for deep joy and fulfillment.

There's an unexpected reason to start on a path to happiness. A recent scientific study proved that being happy is actually contagious, "infecting" those around you.

So, along with deciding to make a resolution to lose ten pounds or to learn a new language, why not think about making a resolution to be happy? That means surrounding yourself with things that make you happy, including loved ones, people who need you, and beautiful art. Seek it out, celebrate it, and share it with others.



Jung-Ho Pak