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Why are Scandinavians so happy?

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WHY ARE SCANDINAVIANS SO HAPPY?

Faculty Forum
Thursday 10 April 2014
John Hasselberg
We are at our best when we are happiest and we are happiest when we are at our best.
“Happiness,” the term that Aristotle uses to designate the highest human good, is the usual translation of the Greek *eudaimonia*. Although it is impossible to abandon the English term at this stage of history, it should be borne in mind that what Aristotle means by *eudaimonia* is something more like well-being or flourishing than any feeling of contentment. Aristotle argues, in fact, that happiness is activity of the rational soul in accordance with virtue. 

There are two kinds of virtue: moral and intellectual. Moral virtues are exemplified by courage, temperance, and liberality; the key intellectual virtues are wisdom, which governs ethical behaviour, and understanding, which is expressed in scientific endeavour and contemplation.
HAPPINESS DOES NOT COME FROM ACCUMULATING THINGS
"Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product."

By H.M. Jigme Singye Wangchuk.

http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/
1) Buddhist cultural values of self-control and moral consideration of other constituencies (all sentient beings)

2) Good’ governance and the formation of considerate social, economic and environmental policies

3) Harmonious relationships between social, economic and environmental constituencies.
THE NEGATIVE CYCLE OF GROSS NATIONAL UNHAPPINESS

1) Western cultural values of self-indulgence and inconsideration of other constituencies

2) ‘Bad’ governance and the formation of inconsiderate social, economic and environmental policies

3) Conflict-based relationships between social, economic and environmental constituencies
### Top of the class

#### 2012 index rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall rank*</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Global competitiveness</th>
<th>Ease of doing business</th>
<th>Global innovation</th>
<th>Corruption perceptions</th>
<th>Human development†</th>
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Sources: World Economic Forum; World Bank; INSEAD and World Intellectual Property Organisation; Transparency International; UNDP; Legatum

*Based on equal weighting of indices †2011 ranking
The state should be a home for its people. 
The foundations of this home are togetherness and fellow feeling. 
The good home does not have privileged and underprivileged, 
favorites and stepchildren.
In it, no one looks down upon another; 
in it, no one tries to gain advantage at the cost of another; 
and in it, the strong to not trample and plunder the weak.
In the good home, equality, consideration, cooperation and helpfulness prevail.

—Per Albin Hansson, 1928
WORLD’S HAPPIEST NATIONS ARE.....

http://www.rferl.org/content/scandinavia_meaning_of_prosperity_index/24267365.html
http://unsdsn.org/resources/publications/world-happiness-report-2013/
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/6563639.stm?lsm
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satisfaction_with_Life_Index
http://www.prosperity.com/#!/?aspxerrorpath=%2Fcountries.aspx
http://thedailyshow.cc.com/videos/yk98ct/the-stockholm-syndrome-pt--1
WORLD VALUES SURVEY

http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/
ON THE LEVEL/DIG DEEPER

Uncovering the Levels of Culture

Artifacts

Visible organizational structures and processes
(hard to decipher)

Espoused Values

Strategies, goals, philosophies
.espoused justifications)

Basic Underlying Assumptions

Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings
(ultimate source of values and action)
1—The organization’s Relationship to its Environment

2—The Nature of Reality and Truth

3—The Nature of Human Nature

4—the Nature of Human Activity

5—The Nature of Human Relationships
POWER RELATIONS IN MODERN WELFARE STATES

Diagram showing the power relations in modern welfare states with three vertices: Germany, Sweden, and the United States, connected by the state, family, and individual.
Om du drömmar om att spela fotboll, ta en fika efter skolan eller att slippa bli bortgift...

...så kan det vara så att din familj och släkt hindrar dig från att leva det liv du har rätt till. Din familj har rätt att bry sig om dig – men inte att kontrollera, kränka eller hota dig, eller tvinga dig till saker du inte vill. I Sverige finns tydliga lagar för att skydda barn och ungdomar – alla barn och ungdomar. Om det här är en vardag som du känner igen ...ska du absolut komma till oss.

Läs mer på dinarattigheter.se eller polisen.se/komtilloss
Buddha once said to the world, ‘You are not the victims of an external law but of an internal cause.’ This ancient principle certainly appears valid today. A hostile person living in utopia is still a hostile person and will even destroy it—unless it can change him or her first. The big challenge, therefore, is for us to integrate the Western and Eastern conceptions of self-actualization and inner peace. The good world helps to permit the good person to be good. It also helps to create good children who are more likely to become good adults.

A third assumption of self-actualization theory is that it very strongly requires a pluralism of individual differences. This requires that we accept hereditary, constitutional, and temperamental differences—and do so in a joyful rather than grudging way. Such true acceptance of individual differences has several key implications that should be stated briefly. Among these notions is the ‘horticulture’ rather than the ‘sculpture’ model of personality growth…. [It] implies a kind of Taoism, an acceptance of what people really are; it necessitates a pleasure in the self-actualization of a person who may be quite different from yourself. It even implies an ultimate respect and acknowledgment of the sacredness and uniqueness of each kind of person…. We have to enable people to become healthy in their own style…. [T]he model of self-actualization so far seems not only cross-cultural but even cross-historical as well. In cultures as diverse as the Japanese and Blackfoot Native American, I have found significant similarities in how the saint or sage is depicted.
Lagom, like the Tao, invokes a cultural preference for moving towards harmony and expressing this balanced way. ‘Lagom is a Swedish word with no direct English equivalent; just right; enough; sufficient, adequate; fitting, appropriate, suitable’. But whereas words like sufficient and average suggest some degree of abstinence, scarcity, or failure, lagom carries the connotation of perfection or appropriateness. Lagom är bäst, literally Lagom is best, is translated as ‘Enough is as good as a feast’ by Lexin, the Swedish National Agency for School Improvement. That proverb is also often translated as ‘There is virtue in moderation’ i.e., a middle way of life.
Of the four experts, Deming, who can be the harshest as a teacher, seems the most humanistic, insisting that it is every person's right to have "joy in work." He used to say "pride" until David Kerridge, a professor at the University of Aberdeen, pointed out that the Book of Ecclesiastes says "joy" in two different verses. Deming, whose one known hobby is writing liturgical masses, switched to joy. He estimates that no more than two in a hundred managers and ten in a hundred workers now have joy in their work.

Why Scandinavian women make the rest of the world jealous

In Sweden, Men Can Have It All


The word "happiness" would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness.

We deem those happy who from the experience of life have learnt to bear its ills without being overcome by them.

—Carl Jung
Their soul happiness was so pure that when they spoke of their experiences they did not feel pain; instead they felt relief and satisfaction of having the ability to have learned through their experiences.

―Elia Medina
In ancient Greek thought, the *temenos* is a magic circle, a delimited sacred space within which special rules apply and in which extraordinary events are free to occur.