

KEYS TO LIVING A FULFILLED LIFE

Written by U.S Immigration News
Sunday, 17 May 2015 03:16 -



One major quest the universe has set every man to pursue as a lifelong preoccupation is the seeking of fulfilment. Besides the actions and reactions attributable to survival instinct, our efforts as humans are naturally channelled towards an earnest pursuit of fulfilment. Any endeavour which does not have the capacity or potential to generate an inherent sense of satisfaction is generally not one, human beings are motivated to undertake. It is rather arduous to attempt to give a precise description of how it feels to be fulfilled, however it seems quite convenient for me to just describe it a feeling that flows from the achievement of desired results, realization of aspirations which meets the individual's inherent needs and produces innate happiness, sense of contentment, sense of relevance, tranquillity, completeness and sense of accomplishment. Fulfilment does not lie in the achievements, per se, it has more to do with the state of mind resulting from the achievements. As I have noted earlier, the end and the ultimate pursuit of humans is fulfilment.

We seek fulfilment on a daily basis just as much as we seek it as a lifelong preoccupation. A lot of people get preoccupied with the pursuit of short term fulfilment at the expense of their long term fulfilment in life while there are some who would rather sacrifice a short-lived satisfaction to gain something that is long lasting. It can be quite fulfilling for someone to spend their annual savings on exotic vacations but there are other people who would rather hold off on the vacation and invest that money to generate returns that could stabilize their finances and ensure that they enjoy several vacations in the future. Neither of these two categories is absolutely right. Sometimes, there is more fulfilment in living in the moment, but most times, there is a greater fulfilment in delaying gratification and holding out for the real deal. Living a fulfilling life has a lot to do with the choice we make

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situation or decision making stage. At every point in a man's life, he will always have to choose between pursuing objectives that provides short term gratification and seeking of something that could lead to a long lasting happiness. Over the next few issues, we shall be discussing on this page, the keys to finding fulfilment in life, starting with the nexus between making the right choices and finding fulfilment.

Make right choices

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The first key to fulfilment in life is, making the right choices. The primary reason people end up being unhappy in life is because they made the wrong choices out of ignorance. There is an old TV game show that used to air on the African Cables few years back, called 'DEAL OR NO DEAL. The high point of the game is when the contestant are asked to select a briefcase ostensibly containing some amount of money out of several identical briefcases, after choosing a briefcase, the moderator of the game will attempt to get the contestant to sell the briefcase and its content to him for a price. If the contestant agrees to sell at the offered or negotiated price, the moderator will then open the brief case sold by the contestant to discover the actual amount inside, usually the briefcase is sold for far less than the offered price. What the moderator capitalizes on in negotiating the purchase of the briefcase is the ignorance of the contestant about the content of the briefcase. The major reason people make bad choices is, ignorance. If one does not have the requisite knowledge or information about something before proceeding to make decision with respect to it, he will most likely make a bad choice. Making decisions based on incorrect or insufficient information leaves one with a very little odds

of finding fulfilment in pursuing that choice. If you do not have a sufficient knowledge of who you are or who you are meant to be, you will easily choose the wrong profession or get in the wrong job or business and miss the opportunity of enjoying fulfilment in that undertaking. If, coupled with your ignorance about who you are and the direction you are heading to in life, you chose to marry someone whom you have insufficient or incorrect information about, you may have struggles and challenges which could make fulfilment elusive in that marriage. If you are not properly informed about human nutrition, you may end up filling your grocery baskets with junk or leading a lifestyle that may eventually create major health challenges that could impede on your fulfilment health-wise. If you are ignorant of what is acceptable in a certain society, you may easily make choices that could set the law enforcement or disciplinary mechanism against you.

For instance, it is often said that relocating to the US for economic reasons is not an option that is suitable for everybody. There are immigrants, who ordinarily should not have abandoned the goodwill and the good life they had established in their country to relocate to the US. but they did, largely because of ignorance about their prospects in the US. They made that choice ignorantly and today they are still struggling to make a success story out of that bad choice. Ignorance impedes the ability to make the right choices and by extension it affects the chances of finding fulfilment. Ignorance is therefore one major enemy that every progressive mind and any person who desires fulfilment must fight and conquer. The choices we make determine whether or not we will find fulfilment in life.

Besides avoiding ignorance, anyone who is desirous of making the right choice must be interested in learning how to distinguish between what they want and what they need (what is good for them). It is not unusual that some well informed people have learnt to restrict their wants to those things that they actually need, but generally, these two things are always at variance. It is therefore important to consider, when making a choice, whether your decision or

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choice should be based on what you want, meeting of which will most likely only produce some sort of short term fulfilment, or it should be based on what you need. A choice made based on meeting a well considered need rather than impulsive desires will most likely generate long term fulfilment. You want candy but you need carrot, you want butter but you need yogurt, you want beverages you need water, you want to pull off five jobs you need to rest to function effectively, you want to start making some fast bucks but you need to go to school, you want to sleep more but you need to work out, the list is endless. When people consistently choose what they want over what they need at every decision making point, they are unwholesomely choosing a path that is bound to lead to unhappiness and disappointment. It is thus pertinent for one to understand and be able to distinguish his needs from his wants as striking the balance in this regard is very crucial to achieving fulfilment in life. Indeed, I believe we will be able to keep things in the proper perspective if we appreciate the nexus between the choices we make and our quest for fulfilment.

Before you make purchases, especially if it is going to be on credit, its best to be sure that what you are committing your future finance to is something that you really need to function well as you pursue your dreams and not just something that makes you high momentarily and then leaves you in a worst state than you were before you succumbed to the temptation to indulge yourself with it. Before you commit your life to any person in a marital union, you really should be convinced that he or she is not just the kind of person you want but also the kind of person you need to be able to effectively pursue and fulfil your purpose in life. In deciding what to do with your time, you have to consider if what you want to do with your time aligns with what you need to be doing with your time in order to achieve the level of fulfilment you are seeking.

You cannot be making random choices and hope to end up finding fulfilment in life. Making the right choices based on sufficient and correct information as well as based on proper perspective on needs and wants are two main factors that constitute a solid foundation for fulfilment in life. Consider the choices you make and be really sure that they are those that can ultimately lead you to your desired end. Fulfilment is the end product of well considered choices, cautiously and consistently made over a reasonable period of time.