

Article

The Pursuit of Happiness

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ABSTRACT

This is not a world of suffering. To the contrary, it is a world where it is just as easy to create the opposite of suffering as it is to create suffering. One just needs to know which button to push on the machine of experiential creation. However, because most people are unaware of both how experience is created, as well as what it is they actually want, which is just to feel better, to create and apprehend a more wanted emotional experience, most people go about trying to create experience in a way that is the opposite of the way it is actually created, leaving them pushing the button of resistance rather the button of allowing, in which case they end up producing experiential results that are the opposite of those they intended to produce.

Key Words: pursuit of happiness, unhappiness, Existence, emotional experience, Vedantist, maya, Nature.

Happiness is not to be pursued, but must be created by the Individual who wants it. One can try and pursue happiness, and in that pursuit one may on occasion find it, but as often as not, or perhaps more often, one finds instead the opposite, i.e., unhappiness. The reason this is so is because in the pursuit of happiness one often uses resistance to try and get to where they think happiness is to be found, and in that resistance one creates unhappiness or unwantedness.

That is, when happiness or wantedness is pursued, as if it were something that exists independent and apart from the Individual that apprehends it, then the Individual sees happiness as being somehow inherent in some object or person or status, and they then pursue and go after the shiny object, thinking that once it is possessed that the happiness they believe to be somehow inherent in the thing will then be theirs. And once the person gets the thing, they may, for a moment, feel some happiness, but whatever happiness they feel is not actually coming from the thing they now seem to possess, no matter how much this seems to be the case. Rather, whatever happiness they feel they are themselves creating as a result of their attitude of allowing with respect to the thing they now possess, and it is that attitude of allowing that creates happiness or wantedness, just as it is the attitude of resistance that creates unhappiness or unwantedness.

All experiential wantedness and unwantedness is created by the Individual that is apprehending that wantedness or unwantedness, according to a relation in which they are involved with their Inner Self, with their Soul, with their More Fundamental Individuality, with God, with their Source, with the Tao, with Absolute Existence, with whatever name one wants to give to that Aspect of Ourselves from which our Individual Consciousness flows and is projected, and from which Aspect our Individual Consciousness continues to flow and continues to be projected, as

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long as we remain organically alive and thereby involved in the relations with Existence that create what we apprehend as physical reality.

The True Nature of the Individual is that the Individual, any Individual, is one pole of an Indivisible Duality of Existence, with the other pole of that Indivisible Duality being the Individual Existence that is projecting Itself, as our Individuality, from more fundamental levels of Existential Self-relation into the level of Existential Self-relation where the reality that we call physical reality or physical experience is created and apprehended. Thus, all Individuals are really two Individuals simultaneously; the Individuality we know as our self, and a *More Fundamental Individuality* that we either are completely unaware of, or that we think of as other than our self, as somehow separate from our self, as being of a different nature than our self, as being better than or superior to our self, when in actuality these two poles of Individuality are indivisible aspects of the same Existence, the same Realty. Put another way, all Individuals are really two Individuals, and those two Individuals are not two separate things, rather they are two poles or aspects of a single indivisible Reality.

These two poles of Existence, i.e., the Individual and the More Fundamental Individuality, correspond to the Atman and Brahman, respectively, and the indivisibility and identity of these two poles of Existence is recognized in the Vedantist philosophy of non-duality, which holds that what appears to be these two different things are ultimately both the same thing. The relationship of ultimate singularity and identity between these two poles of Existence is not even possible to grasp conceptually. This is because everything we know or conceive is experiential in nature, and so must appear as either this or that, e.g., as wave or particle, as opposed to being this and that simultaneously. However, What's Actually There as these two poles of Individuality is not an experience. Rather, experience is our apprehension of something created as a result of a relation occurring between What's Actually Here and What's Actually There, and in all cases What's Actually Here and There is the same indivisible Existence functioning as different poles of Individuality. Thus, although what's Actually Here and There is indivisible, when conceiving of Itself, What's Actually Here and There must appear to Itself, from the Individual perspective, as either this or that, i.e., as either the Individual or the More Fundamental Individuality, i.e., as one pole or the other of this experientially created duality, when in actuality it is both simultaneously.

There is only Existence, indivisible and non-dual, i.e., not actually two. All duality, all apparent separateness and divisibility, is an artifact of experience, an artifact of how experience is created as the product of some relation of Existence to Itself, as that product is apprehended by Existence on one side of that relation. Thus, when indivisible Existence conceives of Itself it must do so through the dualizing and polarizing lens of experience, and through that experiential lens Existence must appear to Itself as dual, as two different and therefore seemingly separate things, i.e., as the Individual and as the More Fundamental Individuality, as the Atman and Brahman.

Because what we apprehend as experience must be created through some relation of Existence to Itself in order to exist, in which relation we ourselves are always involved as one of the poles of Existence involved in that relation, and because what we apprehend as experience is that creation as it appears from whatever side of the relation we are on, experience is limited to being or

presenting itself as either this or that. Thus, experience says if something is this, then it is not that, if it is white then it is not black, if it is up then it is not down, and so on. And this mutual exclusivity of being between opposites is true of experience. However, this mutual exclusivity of being between opposites is not true of Existence, because the limitations of experiential nature are not limitations that inhere in the Nature of that which is Itself the source of experience. That is, unlike experience, Existence is not created and so is not limited in the way experience is limited.

That having been said, as much as Existence is indivisible, i.e., non-separable from Itself, it is also Individual. That is, the Reality of Existential Individuality is just as valid and real as the Reality of Existential Indivisibility or Oneness. Put another way, Existence is simultaneously both One and Individual, i.e., Indivisible and Individual. Experience tells us that it has to be one or the other, but experience is wrong in this regard, because for reasons just explained, experience cannot itself convey the actual Nature of Existence, as that Nature is non-experiential, as it is that Nature that is Itself the source and basis of all experience and so of all perceived and conceived duality.

Spirituality tends to stress or focus upon the Indivisible aspect of Existence, upon the ultimate Oneness of everything, as a counterbalance to our usual materialistic focus upon our Individuality and the apparent differences between Individuals that seem to separate this Individual from that Individual. However, in focusing upon the Reality of Existential Indivisibility, spirituality tends to assign a lesser status to the equally valid Reality of Existential Individuality, in as much as spirituality often treats Existential Individuality as if it were ultimately unreal or an illusion. However, this treatment of Existential Individuality as unreal in the context of a focus upon Existential Indivisibility is itself an artifact of experience, because when the focus is upon one aspect of Reality the focus cannot be on the other, experientially opposite, aspect of Reality, in which case the other aspect then seems either unreal or less real, or somehow subordinate to the one aspect. And so when God is considered as the Reality, the Individual must then seem less real or somehow subordinate to that Reality, when that is not the actual relation between these two aspects of Existence.

In the same way, science, in its focus upon physical experiential reality, must view the existence of the very thing that apprehends experience, i.e., Consciousness, as a lesser or subordinate reality, as a created reality, as somehow being produced through the machinations of material reality, even though it is material reality that is itself produced through the machinations of Consciousness-Existence. Again, when the one is experienced as real, the opposite must be experienced as less real or unreal, or as somehow subordinate, regardless of their actual relation.

Thus, even though it is not possible to conceive of Existence as being simultaneously Individual and Indivisible, owing to the unavoidable experiential limitation that makes it impossible for an Individual to be simultaneously involved in the mutually exclusive relations necessary to create and apprehend opposite or complementary experiences, that is nonetheless its Nature.

There is only Existence and experience. There is only that which Exists and what that which Exists creates as reality as a result of its relations to Itself. However, that which Exists and which

through relation to Itself creates experience, does not create experience en masse, but rather does so at the level of the Individual. That is, what the Individual apprehends as experience is not apprehended by the whole of Existence as experience, but is apprehended as experience only by the Individual point of Existence, the Individual point of Consciousness, that is apprehending the experience. Thus, what I experience is what I experience, according to the relations with Existence in which I, as an Individual, am involved, and what you experience is what you experience according to the relations with Existence in which you, as an Individual, are involved. And it is the same for every Individual, including the More Fundamental Individuality, which is also creating experience as an Individual, according to the relations with Existence in which it is involved.

Thus, every Individual, regardless of scale, creates their own reality, their own unique set of experiences, according to how they are being in relation to the rest of Existence, and specifically, according to how they are being in relation to their More Fundamental Individuality. And since, owing to the indivisible nature of Existence, every Individual is inseparable from and so part of every other Individual's More Fundamental Individuality, how one is being in relation to other Individual's is also how one is being in relation to their More Fundamental Individuality.

Most importantly, how any Individual is being in relation to its More Fundamental Individuality is something that is determined by each Individual, according to what that Individual is, in that moment, choosing as its *mode of being*. The Individual's mode of being is nothing more than the Individual's in the moment attitude toward, and relation to, its More Fundamental Individuality, which attitude and relation is always one of either *allowing* or *resistance*, and which attitude is always chosen by the Individual.

Further, no Individual, regardless of scale, can force any other Individual to choose to be in one mode of being rather than the other, as that choice always is always one that every Individual is, in every moment, free to make themselves, which is why the Individuals inherent ability to make that choice is called *free will*, i.e., the Individuals ability to freely choose how it will be in relation to what is ultimately Itself. And because no other Individual, regardless of scale, can force any other Individual to choose to be in one mode of being rather than the other, and because what the Individual creates and apprehends as experience in any moment is determined by what the Individual is, in that moment, choosing as their mode of being, no other Individual, regardless of scale, can force or impose or assert any experience upon any other Individual, because everything an Individual creates and apprehends as experience is a product of how the Individual that is apprehending the experience is Itself, according to its own exercise of free will, choosing to be in relation to its More Fundamental Individuality.

If there were only Indivisibility and not Individuality there would be no experience, because in the absence of the Reality of Individuality there is no basis for Existential Self-relation. All Existential Self-relation is a relation of an Individual to a More Fundamental Individuality, and every More Fundamental Individuality is Itself an Individual relative to another More Fundamental Individuality, ad infinitum, because Existence is infinite and so without boundaries within or without. The concept of wholeness does not apply to Existence, because wholeness implies some external boundary, and such a concept is counter to that of the Reality of

Existential infinity. However, the concept of Indivisibility can be applied to Existence because that concept does not impose limits upon Existence, as long as one remembers that Existential Indivisibility does not preclude the simultaneous Reality of Existential Individuality, including the free will inherent in each and every point of Existence, regardless of scale.

Every Individual, regardless of scale, creates their own reality, their own set of experiences. Period. There are no exceptions because all Individuals are ultimately the same indivisible Existence, and so all have the same inherent ability to choose, in each moment, their own mode of being regardless of what any other Individual is choosing as their mode of being. In other words, each and every Individual, regardless of scale, is *autonomous* with regard to what it is choosing as its mode of being, and so is autonomous with regard to how it is being involved in the relations with Itself that creates what it then apprehends as experience.

To some degree Existence is like a River that is free to choose its direction of flow, and where every Drop in the River is also free to choose its own direction of flow regardless of what the River is choosing as its direction of flow. And even if every Drop chooses to flow in a direction that is the opposite of the direction the River is choosing to flow, the River still flows in the direction it has chosen, and the Drops still flow in the direction they have chosen. This cannot be grasped, but that is how Existence operates in the creation of experience at the level of the Individual, which is according to how the Individual is themselves freely choosing to flow in relation to their More Fundamental Individuality. The River cannot and does not tell the Drops in which direction to flow, and the Drops cannot and do not dictate the direction of flow of either the River or the other Drops. But each Drop must, in each moment, choose and so determine its own direction of flow, and in so doing choose and determine its relation to the River, which relation, as will be described shortly, is the basis of any and all experiential wantedness or unwantedness, happiness or unhappiness, that any Drop, i.e., Individual, ever creates and apprehends.

Regardless of whether or not an Individual is or is not aware of their role in the creation of what they apprehend as experience, and regardless of whether or not an Individual is or is not aware that they are one pole of an indivisible duality of Existence, all experiential wantedness and unwantedness apprehended by an Individual is nonetheless created as a function of how that Individual is choosing, in each moment, to be in relation to the other pole of their Existence, i.e., to their More Fundamental Individuality. And as previously stated, what the Individual is choosing through their exercise of free will is their mode of being, and that mode of being is either allowing or resistant. And that chosen mode of being as either allowing or resistant places the Individual in a relation of either aligned or oppositional flow, respectively, relative to their More Fundamental Individuality, and it is that relation of either aligned or oppositional Existential flow that is the basis of all experiential wantedness or unwantedness, respectively, that is created and apprehended by any Individual, regardless of scale.

Specifically, when an Individual chooses to be in a mode of being that is allowing, that Individual is, in that moment, involved in a relation of aligned flow with their More Fundamental Individuality, in which case the experiences that Individual creates and apprehends in that moment as a result of their involvement in that relation have the quality of wantedness.

Conversely, when an Individual chooses to be in a mode of being that is resistant, that Individual is, in that moment, involved in a relation of oppositional flow with their More Fundamental Individuality, in which case the experiences that Individual creates and apprehends in that moment as a result of their involvement in that relation have the quality of unwantedness. Ultimately, experiential wantedness and unwantedness are the experiential result and product of our choice, as Individuals, to either flow with or against, respectively, the other pole of our own Individuality. Thus, the attractive quality of wantedness and the repulsive quality of unwantedness are like the difference between what is felt when swimming downstream or upstream, respectively, in which case one's own direction of flow is either augmented by or resisted by the river's own direction of flow. However, here it is important to note that if you feel unwantedness it is not because the River is choosing to flow in resistance to you, rather, it is because you are choosing to flow in resistance to the River.

Thus, as previously stated, all experiential wantedness and unwantedness is ultimately a function of how the Individual is choosing to be in relation to their More Fundamental Individuality. But when an Individual is unaware of the presence or functioning of this relation, unaware of their True Nature as that which both creates and apprehends experience, it must then seem to that Individual as if the wantedness and unwantedness they experience is inherent in the experiences themselves, inherent in the objects of experience. Put another way, when one's True Nature is hidden, then the Creator of experience is also hidden, making experience appear to be what's actually there, when What's Actually There is the non-experiential Consciousness-Existence that, through relation to Itself, is creating and apprehending the experience. This is analogous to what happens if one sees what is only a reflection, but is unaware of the presence of a mirror, in which case the reflection appears to be what's actually there, when what's actually there is the mirror.

And once it seems that experience is what's actually there, it also seems that wantedness and unwantedness are inherent in experience itself, in which case the Individual still spends their time trying to do what is in their Nature, which is trying to create a wanted rather than unwanted experience. However, once it seems that wantedness and unwantedness are inherent in experience itself, rather than something created by the Individual that is apprehending the experience, the Individual then acts in accord with their Nature by pursuing those things that they think will, once they possess them, cause them to feel happy, and pushing away those things that they think will, if they do possess them, cause them to feel unhappy. And in this way the Individual chooses unconsciously and unknowingly its mode of being, and so chooses unconsciously and unknowingly the wanted or unwanted quality of the type of experiences it creates and apprehends.

What happens in this method of trying to create experiential wantedness, in unawareness of the actual relation that is responsible for the creation of those experiential qualities, is that one often chooses to be in a mode of resistance in order to either pursue or push away those objects that they think will make them happy, in which case the Individual inadvertently creates for themselves unwanted rather than wanted experience while in pursuit of that which is wanted.

The reason wanted objects seem to make us feel good is because we find them easy to allow, i.e., we reflexively allow them, and so easily enter into a relation of aligned Existential flow, which

relation then creates experiential wantedness. And the reason unwanted objects seem to make us feel bad is because we find them easy to resist, i.e., we reflexively resist them, and so easily enter into a relation of oppositional Existential flow, which relation then creates experiential wantedness. Again though, in the absence of realizing that this relation between the Individual and the Inner Self is always, in every moment, operant, and is what is actually producing the wantedness and unwantedness associated with any experience, it must then seem that those qualities of wantedness and unwantedness inhere in the objects of experience themselves, which appearance leads to what is referred to in Eastern philosophies as *attachment* and *aversion*, which is simply the reflexive clinging to experiences that seem to have a quality of wantedness and the reflexive pushing away of experiences that seem to have a quality of unwantedness, respectively, both of which actions have the Individual choosing, at an unconscious level, to be in a mode of resistance, thereby placing the Individual in a relation of oppositional Existential flow with respect to their More Fundamental Individuality, thereby creating for that Individual an unwanted rather than wanted experience.

In the pursuit of happiness one must see happiness as something to be obtained, as something that exists independent of the Experiencer of it, and this is not the actual nature of happiness. The actual nature of happiness is that it must be and always is created by the Individual that is apprehending it, according to a specific relation in which the Individual is involved with their More Fundamental Individuality. And if an Individual is not choosing to be involved in the relation that creates happiness, then they are choosing to be involved in the relation that creates the opposite of happiness, for although it is true that each Individual gets to choose the nature of their relation to their More Fundamental Individuality, and so gets to choose whether they create in each moment wanted or unwanted experience, it is also true that each Individual has no choice but to choose in each moment to be in one relation or the other with their More Fundamental Individuality, i.e., in a relation of aligned or oppositional Existential flow, and so must in each moment create either wanted or unwanted experience.

And so pursue happiness if you must, but know that there is an easier way, and a more effective way, which is to not pursue it, but to just create it, by choosing in any moment to allow rather than resist, to let be rather than push against. Just try it and see how it feels, i.e., see whether you create and apprehend in the moment of allowing or resistance emotional wantedness or unwantedness, as emotions are the most fundamental experience and so are the most directly and immediately reflective of the aligned or oppositional relation of the Individual to their More Fundamental Individuality, which relation is itself a direct result of what the Individual is choosing as their mode of being in that moment.

Everything we want we want because we think that in having it we will feel better, that as a result of getting what we want that we will experience a more wanted emotion. This is true for both the saint and sinner, as both are moved inexorably by their Nature to create wanted rather than unwanted experience. Thus, the sage pursues enlightenment for the same reason the junkie puts a needle in his arm. There are an infinity of Individuals, but all are composed of the same Existence, and thus all have the same Nature. And yet because they are Individuals, even though they are all acting according to the same Nature, they each produce different experiential results because they are each acting according to that same Nature according to their own exercise of

free will, according to how they and they alone are choosing to be in relation to the other pole of their own Individuality as they seek to create for themselves an always more wanted emotional experience. Put another way, we all want the same thing because we are all the same non-experiential Thing, but because we are also Individuals we each have our own way of moving toward that thing that we all want.

Unaware of our True Nature and so of our role in the creation of what we apprehend as experience, we try to create wanted emotion by arranging external reality in a way that we can reflexively allow. However, in getting that arrangement in place we often choose to be in a mode of resistance, and so create an experience that is the opposite of the experience we wanted to create, i.e., we create unwanted rather than wanted emotion. Also in our unawareness of our True Nature we often forget why it is that we wanted the object in the first place, which is always for the same reason, i.e., to have a more wanted emotional experience, in which case we continue our pursuit of the object regardless of how our pursuit of it is making us feel.

However, if you can realize that the goal is always a more wanted emotion, the creation of a wanted rather than unwanted emotional experience, and that that goal can be reached regardless of the arrangement of external reality, as what is apprehended as emotion is actually a function of a different relation, then it is easier not to cling to the wanted object of experience, or push against the unwanted object of experience, which then makes it easier to choose to remain or become involved in the relation of Existential alignment that actually creates wanted experience. But if you forget or don't realize what it is that you are actually always after, and forget or don't realize the actual cause of experiential wantedness and unwantedness, then clinging to the wanted object and pushing against the unwanted object seem to be the only viable options to get what you want, in which case one then becomes trapped in a self-perpetuating loop, inadvertently creating unwanted experience while in the pursuit of wanted experience.

This is not a world of suffering. To the contrary, it is a world where it is just as easy to create the opposite of suffering as it is to create suffering. One just needs to know which button to push on the machine of experiential creation. However, because most people are unaware of both how experience is created, as well as what it is they actually want, which is just to feel better, to create and apprehend a more wanted emotional experience, most people go about trying to create experience in a way that is the opposite of the way it is actually created, leaving them pushing the button of resistance rather than the button of allowing, in which case they end up producing experiential results that are the opposite of those they intended to produce.

But as they say, it's all good, because even in the inadvertent creation of unwantedness, the purpose for which we came is still being served, as we serve that purpose regardless of whether or not we are cognizant of our True Nature and regardless of the degree to which we create wanted or unwanted experience while we are here. It's just that it's usually more enjoyable to serve that purpose when one understands the rules of the game we are playing, regardless of whether or not one is cognizant of the purpose of the game itself, which purpose is a story for another time.

To learn more about how physical experience is created, as well as the limitations inherent in the creation of experience, I recommend my article, *The Experiential Basis of Wave-Particle Duality and The Uncertainty Principle*, published in the [Prespacetime Journal, Vol 2, No 4 \(2011\)](#).

To learn more about how Existence evolves into that which underlies what we apprehend as the world around us as a result of becoming involved in the progressive relations with Itself that create what it and we apprehend as emotional, mental, and physical experience, I recommend my series of four articles collectively titled; *Existential Mechanics: How the Relations of Existence to Itself Create the Structure of Reality and What We Experience as Reality*, recently published in the [Journal of Consciousness Exploration and Research, Vol 2, No 9 \(2011\)](#).